

**Modern Algerian Theatre:
Translations And Critical Analysis of
Three Plays By Kateb Yacine
Abdelkader Alloula
and
Slimane Benaissa**

By

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ABSTRACT

This thesis argues that the assumption that there is no tradition of theatre or the performing arts in general in the Arab World because Islam does not allow figurative arts is not well founded. It shows how and why new theatrical trends have emerged in the Arab World and have become successful. Thus, the study starts with Chapter One - 'The Arab World And Theatrical Tradition' - which is a general survey of Arab theatre including aspects of performance arts throughout history. This is followed by a survey of the emergence and development of modern Algerian theatre in which the factors behind this emergence and the success of the three trends described in this study are analysed. These are illustrated through three plays by three major contemporary playwrights in three similar sections each including a biography of the author with particular emphasis on his theatre career and his views on theatre in Algeria and an annotated translation of a selected play followed by a commentary. A major concern of this work has been to make available through original translations important plays from the contemporary Algerian theatre that have not previously been published. Chapter Two deals with Kateb Yacine and includes three parts: a) The life of Kateb Yacine - b) An annotated translation of Falistīn Maghdūra (Palestine Betrayed). - c) A commentary on the play.

Chapter Three deals with Abdelkader Alloula and includes a) The life of the playwright - b) An annotated translation of Al-Ajwād (The Story of The Generous People) - c) A commentary on the play.

Chapter Four deals with Slimane Benaissa and includes: a) The life of the playwright - b) An annotated translation of Bū'lām Zīd Al-Guddām (Carry on Bū'lām) - c) A commentary on the play.

The thesis closes with concluding observations.

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PREFACE

In this study we shall show the three major trends in contemporary Algerian theatre have emerged. The trends will be illustrated through the three most important practitioners - Kateb Yacine, Abdelkader Alloula and Slimane Benaissa - with a representative play from each playwright, respectively Falastīn Maghdūra (Palestine Betrayed), Al-Ajwād (The Story of the Generous People) and Bū'lām Zīd Al-Guddām (Carry On Bū'lam).

The background to these latest trends in Algerian theatre is described, as are the factors which caused them to appear. This has been done by first providing a general historical survey of aspects of Arab traditions in the performing arts, followed by a study of the emergence and development of modern Algerian theatre. This shows that, by drawing on the national traditional heritage and on traditional performing arts - forgotten, ignored or considered irrelevant by most modern Arab playwrights - new trends of theatre have developed which identify more closely with national culture and the expectations of the public. The three plays have not been chosen through personal preference, nor are they necessarily the best and most acclaimed in the new repertoire, but they are typical of the new trends and they were the only ones available in script form when the research involved in this thesis was undertaken. Although a script of Mohamed, Prends Ta Valise was available, Palestine Betrayed was chosen to highlight another aspect of Kateb Yacine's theatre which is not only concerned with Algeria but also with international issues.

The research work for this study includes material on the Arab world in general and on Algeria in particular. It comprises essentially material on theatre, oral tradition and traditional performing arts. The translation of the plays from Algerian Arabic into English is, to the best of our knowledge, the first of its kind and illustrates the new trends in contemporary Algerian drama.

The work of translation was very difficult for several reasons. The plays are unpublished and one of the major problems is that the language used does not follow definite norms of spelling and grammar and required detailed knowledge of Algerian Arabic, modern Arabic and French so that certain words and phrases could be deciphered. The script of Palestine Betrayed was provided by an actor; it is in bad condition and very badly printed and the content had to be checked with the help of a tape recording of the play because Kateb Yacine was not available. Carry On Bū'lām is also badly printed and the script was checked by the playwright who suggested some passages should be removed. The Story of the Generous People is the only script which was very clearly printed.

Several performances of the plays, and of the rehearsals of Palestine Betrayed in 1976, were attended as part of the research. In interviews with Slimane

Benaissa and Abdelkader Alloula, Algerian theatre, the playwright's work and the plays referred to in this study were discussed with them. Other sources of information were journalists and people involved in theatrical activity. This approach related mainly to Benaissa and Alloula because there is hardly any material about their work in comparison with Kateb Yacine. Because of his early reputation, Kateb Yacine has been and still is the subject of many papers, dissertations and theses. However, Benaissa and Alloula each provided a compilation of articles and papers about their work which they had kept up to date.

The quotations in the text come from two different languages - Arabic and French. We have determined to render all of them in English for the purposes of consistency.

We have included a system of transliteration which is different from the one commonly used in Algeria. Arabic names and words appearing in references have been reproduced in their original transliterated form and show differences with the symbols used in the system we have chosen.

VII
TRANSLITERATIONS

| | | | |
|-----|---|----|---|
| . | ع | . | ر |
| gh | غ | b | ب |
| f | ف | t | ت |
| q | ق | th | ث |
| c/k | ك | j | ج |
| l | ل | h | ح |
| m | م | kh | خ |
| n | ن | d | د |
| h | ه | dh | ذ |
| w | و | r | ر |
| y | ي | z | ز |
| | | s | س |
| | | sh | ش |
| | | ṣ | ص |
| | | ḍ | ض |
| | | ṭ | ظ |
| | | z | ز |

Short Vowels

a ا
u و
i ي

Long Vowels

ā ا
ū و
ī ي

CHAPTER I

The Arab World and Theatrical Tradition¹

There is a general belief amongst Western scholars of theatre that Muslim societies in the Arab World have no theatrical tradition. Dramatic arts, they have argued, were imported from the West and first appeared in Egypt and Lebanon in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Most scholars, historians, critics and orientalist outside the Arab World - and indeed, many commentators inside it as well - have agreed, claiming that drama could not have developed there because Islam does not permit representation of the human form whether in fine arts, plastic arts or the performing arts. Because of this prohibition, any development of a theatrical tradition would have run counter to Islamic ethical principles. Furthermore, the argument runs, since the entire universe is governed, ruled and organised by Allah according to Islam, there was no need for a dramatic tradition to symbolise, articulate and exemplify the human comedy or tragedy, conflict and suffering.

The view still commands powerful support and is reflected in most works dealing with the arts in the Arab World and in individual Arab countries. A recent publication on Algerian theatre begins with the following words:

Although some spontaneous forms of drama have existed in Arab-Muslim Societies, one cannot speak of the existence of theatre in the Islamic tradition, in the Western sense of the word. Certain commentators, such as Michael Habart, in his preface to Henri Krea's Séisme, vehemently defend the existence of a theatrical tradition particular to Islam. He identifies this in certain pre-theatrical forms: farce, mime and other forms of popular expression.

Nonetheless, even though this type of artistic expression does exist, we must accept that a genuine theatrical phenomenon does not exist in Arab countries. The very meagre bibliography of Arab theatre criticism that exists indicates how few people have thought theatre a worthwhile subject for study precisely because of the lack of this tradition.²

Opinions like these have also received reinforcement by academic reference to the medieval philosopher, Averroes, whose work has been interpreted to support the view that the Arabs had no idea whatsoever about drama. Although Western scholars do accept that the legacy of classical Greece was translated and transmitted to the West by Arab scholars, they claim that the Arab translators did not understand words like

¹ This part was published in Arab Affairs, Vol. 4, Summer/Autumn 1987, under the title "Arab Theatrical Tradition", pp. 53-65. The review is published in London by the League of Arab States.

² Baffet, Roselyne. Tradition Théâtrale et Modernité en Algérie p. 17, l'Harmattan, Paris, 1985.

tragedy and comedy. Thus, when Averroes translated Aristotle's Poetics, he translated 'tragedy' and 'comedy' by 'panegyrie' (encomium) and 'satire'.

This academic consensus that the theatrical arts did not exist in Arab societies is now so widespread and deeply rooted that it has acquired the status of received wisdom and is no longer questioned. Indeed, the consensus is now so strong that a sceptical observer must question the underlying purpose of the arguments that have been used to define it. Is the consensus merely intended to prove that Islam prohibits theatre? Or is it intended to demonstrate that, because this art form is not indigenous to the Arab World and is appropriately judged by universally accepted - European - norms, it is inherently Western in origin and hence reinforces the concept of Western cultural superiority? In any case, how seriously can all these arguments be taken and how objective are they in reality? After all, whatever approach they adopt, they all start from one basic axiom - that Islam is a hindrance to this particular art form.

Historical evidence does suggest that the early converts to Islam did effectively abandon their cultural past, accepting instead the values of the new religion. However, this does not mean that no theatrical tradition had ever existed amongst them. Nonetheless, those scholars who defend the thesis that Arab theatre does not exist maintain their argument by characterising any element of that cultural past which did relate to the performing arts in general and to drama in particular as pre-theatrical forms. They go on to argue that, even if some spontaneous forms of drama did exist they did not develop into a genuine form of theatre because they were smothered by Islam.

The argument seems excessive, however. Even if it is true that Islam was inimical to theatre, it is a little difficult to believe that its introduction could have created a spontaneous tabula rasa. Indeed, how can a new order being established in any society not adapt itself to that society? In fact, for these arguments to be uncritically accepted the reader would need to have an apocalyptic vision of history and social order to envisage the complete destruction of a society and its spontaneous resurrection into a new order as a result of Islam.

An Alternative View

An alternative view would seek to establish a more historical approach to the problem and might well start from the proposal that the arguments put forward by these scholars are misleading because they stem from the notion of 'pre-theatrical' forms and from the assumption that Islam actively forbade any form of human representation - hence all figurative art. In fact, there is no mention in the Koran of any kind of prohibition of such representation. Nonetheless, even if some academic critics of the

Arab theatrical tradition do accept this fact, they then resort to arguments based on popular interpretation of the Koran or to certain of the *ḥadīth* (the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad), to justify their claims.

In reality - and despite these long sustained prejudices to the contrary - Arab-Muslim societies have long traditions in the performing arts and in drama in particular. These traditions have been dismissed simply because they do not comply with Western norms. At this point a caveat is in order, for there were instances where religious authorities did condemn or criticize and even ban certain forms of artistic expression. For instance, the *quṣṣās*³ who appeared with the advent of Islam and became an element in propagation of the teaching of the Koran and the Prophet Muhammad within the context of the mosque were condemned and eventually banned. However, this occurred when they developed their proselytic techniques into what was virtually an independent art form by applying personal creativity and imagination to the basic texts. Such an approach clearly outraged Islamic principle and thus, inevitably, they were considered as heretics. Another form of drama which was and still is considered heretic is the *ta'zyeh* - the equivalent of the Christian mystery plays - which is performed every year during *'āshūra*⁴ to commemorate the killing of Hussein.⁵ The bans on these forms of theatrical expression were inevitable, however, because of their close identity with doctrinal issues.

At the same time, it is interesting to note that the only forms of theatrical expression that are accepted by academic critics of Arab theatre as genuine are those traditions which orthodox Muslims would consider heretical. The reason seems to be that they expressed revolt and rebellion against established power and established religious authority - as if all drama was simply born from revolt and conflict. Yet, such approaches merely implicitly confirm the long established cultural traditions of the Arab World which extend back far beyond the advent of Islam and which also form part of a cultural continuum that stretches forward to the modern day. If indeed, conflict, revolt, thirst for knowledge or reconciliation with natural calamity are inherent in a dramatic tradition, such a tradition has existed within Middle Eastern literature since the fourth millennium BC. It is characterised by the Epic of Gilgamesh.

³ *quṣṣās* are another kind of story-tellers. They appeared with the advent of Islam and were used in the propagation of the new religion which meant that their material was mainly drawn from religious stories.

⁴ *'āshūra* is the tenth day of *Muḥarram* the first Muslim month. It is also the day on which Hussein died. (See note 5.)

⁵ Hussein (also written Husayn) Ibn Abī Tālib, grandson of the Prophet Muhammad. He died in the battle of Karbala on *Muḥarram* 10 - 61 (October 680) against Ibn Ziyad's army. He and his brother Hassan were denied the succession to the throne by Mu'āwiya. The Shi-ite Muslims commemorate the death of Hussein in lament hence the processions of the *ta'zyeh*.

The Epic of Gilgamesh

The Epic of Gilgamesh, the famous King of Uruk in Mesopotamia, goes back to the fourth millennium BC. Although incomplete and much older than Homer's Iliad it is still one of the finest epics which has survived through the centuries and has appeared in many ancient languages, such as Sumerian, Akkadian and Hittite. Indeed its influence may well have spread farther afield, for an active debate over whether Asiatic legend and mythology had any influence on Greek literature continues. However, as Sanders suggests:

If Greek lyric of the seventh century is modern, the Greek Epic still belonged in part to the same legendary world of Gilgamesh, the King of the ancient Uruk. It would have been historically possible for the poet of the Odyssey to hear the story of Gilgamesh, not garbled but direct, for ships from Ionia and the Islands were already trading on the Syrian coast. At Al-Mina and at Tarsus the Greeks were in contact with the Assyrians... It is less the case of prototypes and parentage than for similar atmosphere. The world inhabited by Greek bards and Assyrian scribes, in the eighth and seventh centuries, was small enough for there to have been some contact between them... Therefore it is not surprising that Gilgamesh, Enkidu, Humbata should seem to inhabit the same universe as the gods and mortals of the Homeric Hymns, Hesiod's Theogony, and the Odyssey. Common to all is the *mise en scène*, a world in which gods and demi-gods fraternise with men on a fragment of known earth which is surrounded by the unknown waters of ocean and the Abyss.⁶

The Epic of Gilgamesh is indeed one of a series of important literary documents produced by the rich civilisation of Babylon. These works represent the first formal attempts by man to express his thoughts and ideas on life and its meaning through art. It was written long before the Old Testament, the Rig Veda in India or the Avesta in Persia. Indeed, literature in mesopotamia - Iraq - was recorded at least One Thousand years before any other known literature elsewhere.

Insofar, therefore, as cultural traditions form part of a continuum that underlies specific cultural and religious events, this unique literary phenomenon provides the roots and forms one of the distinct aspects of an authentic Arab dramatic tradition. The Epic of Gilgamesh is the prototype of drama because of the nature and the aspects of the story it tells. As Sanders points out, "Through the action we are shown a very human concern with mortality, the search for knowledge, and for an escape from the common lot of man... If Gilgamesh is not the first hero, he is the first tragic hero of whom anything is known."⁷ And in his search for knowledge because of his own ignorance he falls into the chaos of anxiety, while his escape from the chaos only brings him into a

⁶ Sanders, N.K. - The Epic of Gilgamesh, Penguin Classics, Harmondsworth, England, new version 1973, pp. 45-46.

⁷ Ibid. p.7.

situation characterised by further and violent anxiety and tragedy. Gilgamesh is, in short, the epitome of what may now be described as Theatre of the Absurd. This aspect of the Gilgamesh legend is thoroughly analysed by Chakib El-Khouri in his Le Théâtre Arabe de l'Absurde where he argues that:

What we call 'Théâtre de Boulevard' today is just a superficial and decadent deviation, whereas the works of contemporary playwrights of the absurd really constitute a continuity in theatrical tradition stretching back to Gilgamesh, the pioneer hero.

In this context, the importance of an analysis of Iraqi theatre stems from the fact that the Epic of Gilgamesh is the original form of drama, particularly in this part of the Arab World. It follows, therefore, that the theatre of the absurd is neither an imitation of modern western drama nor is it influenced by it; for civilisations align and interact through access to common sources based on human experience. Gilgamesh, the historical hero, and the epic which now encapsulates his legend, are in fact two elements that have been perpetuated throughout dramatic experimentation today: Gilgamesh in the contemporary Theatre of the Absurd, and the Epic in its traditional theatre form.⁸

Indeed, El-Khouri in his detailed investigation of the Epic of Gilgamesh and the Babylonian literary tradition gives ample evidence of this form of drama and shows how it has a bearing - together with other traditional material - on contemporary Arab playwrights of the absurd, like Tawfik Al-Hakim and Youssef Idris in Egypt, or Issam Mahfouz and Raymond Gebara in Lebanon.

Yet quite apart from this somewhat arcane link with experimental Arab theatre today, the Epic of Gilgamesh has a direct relevance to more popular and traditional forms of Arab literary expression, as an analysis of its structure makes it clear. The Epic itself opens with a prologue:

I will proclaim to the world the deed of Gilgamesh. This was a man to whom all things were known; this was the king who knew the countries of the world. He was wise, he saw mysteries and knew secret things, he brought us a tale of the days before the flood. He went on a long journey, was weary, worn out with labour, returning he rested, he engraved on a stone the whole story.⁹

It is interesting to note here the striking similarity with the form and style adopted by the modern *maddāḥ* or *ḥakawātī* (story-teller). The prologue is followed by several episodes related to important events in the life of the hero. There is no doubt that it is Gilgamesh who is the central figure, for, although the gods are omnipresent within a metaphysical world, the Epic of Gilgamesh is determinedly secular and not part of a religious ritual. It is divided into twelve long poems, originally inscribed on twelve

⁸ El-Khouri, Chakib - Le Théâtre Arabe de l'Absurde, ed. A.G. Nizet, Paris 1978, pp. 15-16.

⁹ The Epic of Gilgamesh, op.cit. p. 61.

different tablets, and there have been many suggestions that it was originally recited or presented in some other form during a twelve day festival. The structure of the Epic, like the epic in traditional form, is reflected in the repetition of long passages, words and greeting formulae.

These are familiar characteristics of oral poetry, tending to assist the task of the reciter, and also to give satisfaction to the audience. A demand for exact repetition of favourite and well-known passages is familiar to any nursery story teller, along with fierce disapproval of any deviation, however slight, from the words used when the story was told for the first time. Now, as then, an almost ritual exactitude is required of the reciter and the story-teller.¹⁰

Hence the very structure of the Epic of Gilgamesh would have inevitably given birth to the tradition of the story-teller whose art was and still is widespread throughout the Arab World. It thus plays a crucial role in the formation of Arab theatre, since the Arab theatrical tradition derives, in large part, from popular forms of literary expression, such as the 'Theatre of Shadows' and the story-teller.

Popular Theatrical Traditions

It is only in the late 1960's that Arab scholars, mainly individuals connected with the theatre, started to point out that the popular art forms of the 'Theatre of Shadows' and the story-teller were, in reality, genuine theatrical forms which corresponded to the artistic needs of Arabic society and its understanding of the universe. Although the 'Theatre of Shadows' has not survived the onslaught of colonial and post-colonial experience, the story-teller is a symbol of Arab theatre which is of universal significance and is thoroughly embedded in the modern Arab theatrical tradition.

The story-teller is part of a very old and intensely rich oral tradition which stretches back to the pre-Islamic period when the art form had many and varied functions. There were many kinds of story-tellers whose diversity was reflected in the wide range of titles they received. In fact, this diversity makes it difficult today to distinguish between the different categories of the story-teller that did actually exist and it is only by investigating the minute differences in their activities that they can be categorised. Even then, because the activities were so similar and the differences relatively minor, confusion still persists over their real nature. Indeed, the real differences in performance and technique between story-tellers described as *ḥākiya*, *sāmīr*, *muḥaddith*, *quṣṣās*, *maddāḥ*, *gawwāl* or *rāwi* are still unclear. Nowadays, however, the position has been simplified and there are basically only two types of story-tellers who are given different names in different regions of the Arab World.

¹⁰ Ibid. p.48.

The *ḥākiya* or *muqallid* (imitator) used to perform his stories in the souk, before pilgrims to Mecca, or before private audiences in the evening. His art is very similar to that of the *sāmir* in the sense that his material is essentially epic and relates the heroes and heroic events. The *muqallid* also took part in major cultural events, such as the 'Ukaz festival which was held every year and lasted for two weeks. The festival was an important economic, political, social and cultural event which attracted numerous Arab tribes. Alongside poets who read their poems in competitions the *muqallid* entertained his audience with epic and mime. This one-man show still exists throughout the Arab World.

The pre-Islamic Era produced many epics, such as "The Days of the Arabs", "Zir Salem" or "Antara" which even today are still used, with minor changes which adapt them to new circumstances, by the contemporary story-teller. Originally these stories were usually told during evening sittings (*samar*) by the *musāmir*. The evening is traditionally a favourable time of day for the story-teller, for his audience will be relaxed and attentive. His material, taken from the epic tradition, touches essentially on historical themes which relate to major local events of the past, to battles fought between tribes, to the history of a tribe and of its ancestors. Indeed, originally, every tribe or major family had its *musāmir*; thus the modern *musāmir* can be regarded as the bearer of local tradition or even as the historian of a particular tribal group in the modern world who constantly updates his repository of local oral tradition, thus sustaining and nourishing popular interest in the past. He acts, in fact, as a repository for the tradition known as "The Days of the Arabs". It is a tradition that has been analysed by Youssef Rachid Haddad, who has commented that:

The number of Days is very large. These prose stories are a remarkable source for an understanding of pre-Islamic life, particularly as regards genealogy, social and religious affairs, moral values, concepts of hospitality, courage, generosity, perspicacity, honour, loyalty, love of freedom and the sense of communal life. Their main function is to acquaint us with the spirit of chivalry as exemplified by ancient Arab heroes. For centuries, the story-teller has kept the popular memory of those heroes alive. After all, each individual has to know the exploits of his ancestors, each tribe transmitted its history orally from generation to generation... "The Days of the Arabs" are born from the mouth of the story-teller and they are the common property of the tribe. It is only from the eighth century onwards that they were collected and recorded on manuscripts and in books... for the tribes, the conception of time and space was confined to those important events used by the story-tellers as a historical background... In one sense, the pre-Islamic period has only left a vague and very scanty written literature which has become the subject of major debates among historians. It was a period of an essentially oral culture. Islam, however, elaborated new conceptions of history which went back to the beginning of the world, whereas history for the bedouin tribes was limited to their own activities and horizons,

unlike Islam which defined history in religious and prophetic terms through its references to Moses, Jesus and Muhammad.¹¹

Even today story-tellers play an important role in the same context. Indeed, many people throughout the Arab World first learn about the history of Islam or discover the tradition of legend and epic from the *maddāḥ* or the *muqallid*. Originally, the *muqallid* and the *musāmir* would have shared their story-telling activities with the clown, a figure also known in many other medieval societies and who would appear at court, in fairs and in the souks. Today, however, he has disappeared, leaving the story-teller with the field of popular history and legend to himself.

The Story-Teller and Islam

The advent of Islam brought many changes to oral tradition. Writing spread rapidly and encouraged a perceived need to record poetry, tales, stories, legend and epics. The deeds, words, thoughts and statements of the Prophet were also recorded in the great collection of the *ḥadīth* and codified as a guide to an appropriate lifestyle, the *sunna*, all formalised through the *sharī'a* (religious legal code) itself drawn from the Koran.

As a result, the new society's need for the oral historical traditions of the *muqallid* or the *musāmir* declined, simply because of the spread of literacy. However, it is significant that both institutions in fact adapted very well to the new order and managed to perpetuate the oral tradition. In fact, Islam enriched their repertoire and added new political, social and religious material to it. Indeed, it was precisely because the oral tradition was so strongly established and because of the way the *muqallid* and the *musāmir* were important in popular cultural tradition, that Islam had to turn to the same techniques itself in popularising its message. The result was the *quṣṣ* or *quṣṣās*, an institution which developed so rapidly, because it was clearly so well adapted to the environment, that it took on an independent existence which threatened Islamic orthodoxy. The inevitable result was that the institution had eventually to be banned by the authorities.

The *quṣṣās* developed alongside the spread of Islam. He was intended to operate within a religious context, presenting to his audience religious epic stories. The institution thus paralleled the *muqallid* who dealt in tribal epics. According to Youcef Rachid Haddad:

The tribal trend represents the continuity of the tribal heritage as honoured by the old story-tellers whereas the Islamic trend follows the

¹¹ Haddad, Youcef Rachid - Art du Conteur, Art de l'Acteur, ed. Cahiers Théâtre Louvain - Louvain - la Neuve, 1982, p. 28.

Islamic principles transmitted by the *quṣṣas*. The history of the Prophet's conquests and battles was both recorded in books and transmitted orally by the *quṣṣās* who developed them in their own style and turned them into popular 'literature'. In the biographies of the Prophet, we find the history of the battles also told in a popular way and in a style similar to that of the Days of the Arabs.¹²

However, the *quṣṣās* tended to glorify the life of the Prophet Muhammad and exaggerate his deeds and exploits. The reason for this tendency was both social and religious. On the one hand disseminating knowledge about Islam and persuading their audiences of the value of strict adherence to Islamic precept was their primary function and the embodiment of such values within a historical figure was a simple way of making the message accessible to an audience conditioned by oral tradition. On the other hand, the *quṣṣas* had also to face competition which, no doubt, led to distortion of the inherent message in a desire to capture audience attention.

With the economic and political evolution of Arab society as a result of Islam and the conquest that followed the Prophet's early ministry, the *muqallid* (the traditional bedouin and tribal story-tellers) accompanied their tribal clientèles. Many of them came as a result, to settle in Iraq in Basra and Kufa: two towns which came to dominate the social, economic and cultural life of the early Islamic empire. They added to their traditional tribal repertoire new elements drawn from Islam and from the new events associated with Islam. They would perform for tribes in public squares, in the mosques and in the main market place. They were very popular and highly appreciated in Iraq.

The *quṣṣās* were originally largely a response to this success and, as the new Islamic world developed, two types of *quṣṣās* appeared - one official, used as an instrument of propaganda and drawing only on Islamic sources, and the other using the same material but adding to it his own material and imagination. The second type of *quṣṣās*, actually appeared after the Prophet had died, while the first type had already developed during the Prophet's lifetime. The second type, however, rapidly gained importance as he developed his art and repertoire. Although his function was primarily religious, he would use the Koran freely in his own independent literary inspiration. His material consisted of anecdotes, stories, myths and legends often derived - but not exclusively from religious sources with primary purpose of stimulating audience interest.

Because of the religious material used by the *quṣṣās*, he often acquired a prophetic persona in the popular mind. He therefore also acquired considerable influence which obviously irritated the religious authorities, particularly the orthodox leadership. The Caliph 'Ali, for instance, expelled the *quṣṣās* from the mosques because

¹² Ibid, p. 40.

of the danger he considered them to represent. Indeed after the death of 'Umar and under the caliphates of 'Uthmān and 'Ali, there was a period of extended disruption. In the confused atmosphere, the *quṣṣās* were very active and influential. They were also an easy target for officialdom to blame for the disturbances, because of their role in popular culture. As a result they were soon accused of fomenting trouble by encouraging the emergence of different religious sects. The process has been admirably described by Youssef Rachid Haddad:

...the *quṣṣās* developed rapidly, mainly, as we have seen, during troubles (*al-fitnah*) which took place after 'Umar, under 'Uthmān and 'Ali. This development was due in no small measure because the story-tellers were committed to their social and demographic environment. The *quṣṣās* therefore expanded their repertoire and their stories became richer in form, content and performance. The issue of performance is particularly noteworthy, for contemporary observers of the *quṣṣās* phenomenon commented not only upon the text but also on the way the story was told and on the social conduct of the story-teller. Indeed, it was no accident that the listener-spectator of these events could not concentrate - unlike the solitary reader of a text - on the artistic manifestation of the story independently of its creator and reciter. Popular oral expression was, in short, and is similar to popular theatrical expression in the sense that it is intimately related to its creator and producer. Furthermore, the personality of the reciter is more profoundly related to what he relates than is the personality of the classic actor to the role he plays. Indeed, what interests us in the role playing of the actor is the way he uses all the available technical means (voice, stature, etc.) to produce a theatrical effect. We are not interested in whether an actor plays perfectly the role of an evil man or a genuine hero, is himself bad or good. This, however, is not the case when an Arab story-teller presents a story. Often the story-teller uses his own characteristics and behaviour as they affect his daily life. Through such illustrations drawn from life - his life - he generates empathy and emotion in the listener-spectator. The same thing occurs in popular theatre for the spectators constantly compare the role the actor plays with the way he appears in daily life.

For all these reasons, it seems to us that the socio-political circumstances with which the Arabs were familiar had encouraged the story-tellers' art and helped them to practice their profession and perfect their techniques... In fact, the *quṣṣās* became dangerous when he used besides words, other artistic means to express his ideas. The word, sacred and respected in traditional Arab-Islamic society, seemed to be threatened by the *quṣṣās* who ignored the 'laws of God'. As the *quṣṣās* developed his art in this sense, he integrated into it the domain of the spectacle and thus began to stray onto dangerous ground. Yet, although Islam may have rejected the figurative arts because of the ḥadīth, religious doctrine of Islamic tradition, they did not cease to exist in Arab society at a popular level, despite constant official harassment. The fact that there is little comment about them in doctrinal studies merely reflects religious and political power. We find the same attitude in Church (particularly when it is integrated in the state) towards actors and the theatre. The attitude of St. Augustine (4th-5th centuries AD) and that of the Byzantine Church towards actors, representation and theatre contrasts with the attitudes of the pre-Islamic Era (4th century AD) and compares well with attitudes adopted towards story-tellers after the first Islamic period, particularly those groups who acquired increasing

popularity and distinctiveness because of their innovations in presentation. They moved closer to the notion of spectacle as they failed to respect the strict letter of the transmitted texts and experimented beyond the limit of Koranic interpretation. They added in other stories, tales, legends and events of the day, largely using imagination and techniques to attract the listener-spectators. They resorted to the world of fairies, myth and legend and mingled scenes from the life of the Prophet and other religious figures from Judeo-Christian tradition, as well as Islam.¹³

The *quṣṣās* developed their art further in the eleventh and twelfth centuries during the Abbasid period which saw a tremendous development in science, humanities, literature, Greek translations and religious works. The *quṣṣās* were as active and as productive as were scientists and scholars in the intellectually sympathetic atmosphere. In the succeeding centuries, however, the *quṣṣās* were to be banned from the mosques and condemned as heretics as religious orthodoxy was enforced. The result was that the two separate art forms of *muqallid* and *quṣṣās* were to be merged. Whereas the *quṣṣās* developed from simple speech into movement and mime, the story-teller/imitator, the *muqallid*, moved from mime to speech. The two techniques have, therefore, reached the same mode of expression along different historical paths.¹⁴

Tradition and Modernity

Today, therefore, there is a single popular tradition that extends from Morocco to Iraq, although the artist himself is known under a variety of names - *muqallid*, *maddāh*, *rāwi*, *gawwāl*, *hākiya* - depending on the country or region concerned. However parallel to this form of expression, there is another which has survived and developed, mainly in Egypt - the *musāmir*.

Western domination of the Arab World through colonialism and cultural influence has resulted in the establishment of Western theatrical traditions associated with the proscenium arch theatre. It is a form totally alien to Arab cultural patterns. Nonetheless, Western drama has become accepted, has attracted an audience, produced playwrights, actors and directors. It has, in short, become the norm of drama in the Arab World as it has elsewhere. From the late nineteenth century until the present day, the Arab World has produced playwrights, many with world-wide reputations. The situation has persuaded many scholars that they can precisely date the birth of Arab theatre, with the most common dates quoted being 1847 for Lebanon, 1846 for Egypt and 1923 for Algeria. On the other hand, any form of expression, any art form, which does not comply with the norm embodied in the aesthetics associated with Western views of the performing arts is not considered drama or a proper theatrical form of

¹³ Ibid, pp. 51 and 53.

¹⁴ Ibid, p. 66.

expression. These assumptions are so deeply rooted in the Arab mind today or, more precisely, in the version of Westernised Arab élites, that any authentic and genuine Arab form of theatre, such as the *muqallid* or *maddāḥ*, is considered cheap, vulgar and decadent. True theatre is experienced in a physical setting derived from a Western tradition and is still dominated by names such as Molière and Shakespeare. The Arab World has not been alone in adopting these prejudices for they have been adopted widely elsewhere as well, such as in Africa. Nor is the tradition, in itself, lacking in relevance or value for the Arab World. However, insofar as it has implied the destruction (or the partial destruction in some regions) of indigenous art forms, its effect must be depreciated.

However, the popular indigenous tradition began to be revived seriously in the 1960's. Young and talented dramatists and actors became aware of the wealth of their heritage and started to draw upon it. Experiments based upon it are now being carried out throughout the Arab World and have already produced plays of high quality. While the traditional *maddāḥ* (*muqallid*) still performs in the market place or in the café, the modern artist is brought onto the stage. Writers like Antoine Malouf, Issam Mahfouz, Jalal Khouri (Lebanon), Youssef Idriss, Mahmoud Diab, Ali Salem (Egypt), Youssef Al-'Ānī (Iraq), Moncef Souissi (Tunisia), Tayeb Seddiqi (Morocco), Abderrahmane Kaki, Kateb Yacine, Abdelkader Alloula, Slimane Benaissa (Algeria) to name but a few, are making extensive use of the art of the *maddāḥ* and most of the other traditional performing arts. They have literally revolutionised Arab drama. The difference with Western theatre is exemplified by the example of Tayeb Seddiki in Morocco who draws huge crowds to a stadium (not a theatre in the normal Western sense) to watch and 'participate' in his plays. It is an example of what must be the ultimate goal of theatre, the festival with total communion amongst the participants, whether actor or audience. In an even more encouraging sign of the revival of an indigenous theatrical tradition, the examples of Arab theatre - mainly based around the art of the story-teller - have at last started to reach beyond the boundaries of the Arab World. Experimental theatre based on the *maddāḥ* has now been seen in Paris, New York and Rome. Although that has been an extremely limited contact, still confined to small experimental theatres, it represents an important breakthrough in establishing the credentials of indigenous Arab theatre in the wide world. It also shows how, with less prejudice, more permeability and openness, Western culture could gain much from Arab culture and broaden its view of the world.

This new experimental form of theatre is not yet well established in the Arab World nor is it yet the model which contemporary Arab theatre follows. It is, however, an original form which identifies with Arab culture and thus responds to people's needs and expectations. Unlike the typical Western form of drama which is limited to a

segment within the intellectual élite, it reaches wider audiences and appeals to more popular taste. The borrowed Western form went through different stages of imitation, translation, adaptation and experimentation in different Arab countries but has, to some extent, failed to fulfil its aims because: "The absorption of several centuries of theatrical experience at one time could not have acted as a stimulant to dramatic innovation because the experiments related a totally different dramatic reality."¹⁵

Arab dramatists, in short, poured local dramatic content into a borrowed form. It was an experiment which did not succeed because as A. Laroui argues: "Arab society could never give the [borrowed] theatrical form the content which really fitted in."¹⁶

Recent experiments, however, show that the essence of the problem is in fact not necessarily that of borrowed form and local content but is, instead, essentially a question of content itself. J.E. Bencheikh argues that, "...the question is not to find a content which fits in a borrowed form. But one should ask whether such content could create its own form, whether defined as such or not."¹⁷

A study of Algerian theatre shows that after decades of experiment and research, some Algerian playwrights have now found "a content which creates its own form." It should not be assumed that this new form of drama is uniform throughout the Arab World, nor does this imply that Arab culture is unitary. Every Arab country has its own specific features marked by individual historical and cultural evolution.

The Birth of the Algerian Theatre

Like all the Arab countries, Algeria has not avoided the claim that it had no theatre tradition. Indeed, the advent of this art form in Algeria is usually dated as being in 1921. This date, in fact, is extended to other Arab countries as well and many scholars argue that an Egyptian company under George Abiad, touring Algeria in 1921, triggered off the creation of Algerian Theatre. This is partly true because the visit was met with great enthusiasm by Algerians who took pride in the idea of 'Arab' theatre given the prior exclusive control of French theatre over drama in Algeria. The Egyptians, however, came with a borrowed form of drama - a form which already existed in French Algeria. However, because they were an Arab company performing in Arabic, they acquired added appeal because of the sense of Arab nationalism then prevailing in Algeria. The question still remains, however, as to why an Egyptian company and not the French theatre already well established in Algeria, should have initiated the idea of a specific Algerian theatre given the fact that the form was common

¹⁵ Bencheikh, J.E., in Tradition Théâtrale et Modernité en Algérie, op. cit. p. 198.

¹⁶ Ibid. p. 198.

¹⁷ Ibid. p.199.

to both cases. The reason might well be because, as mentioned earlier, the core of Algerian theatre already existed through the substantial pre-theatrical forms which had and still have a strong bearing on popular drama. If this is true, then neither of the reasons given really explains the beginning of modern Algerian theatre. Furthermore, as Roselyne Baffet comments:

Algerian theatre owes its existence to a tradition of struggle and opposition acquired during the recent history of the country. From the banning of *karaguz* in 1842 to the exile and clandestine nature of the theatre of combat just before independence, the history of the Algerian theatre is closely linked with political struggle. Indeed, political commitment has always been the major characteristic of this theatrical form.¹⁸

The 'Theatre of Shadows' or *karaguz*¹⁹ arrived in Algeria from Turkey via Sicily and was one of the main forms of leisure in large towns throughout North Africa - such as Fez, Tangiers, Oran, Algiers, Constantine and Tunis. It consisted of the projection onto a screen of the shadow of puppets manipulated by one man, who also spoke the dialogue. The stories were based on the adventures of the hero *Karaguz* and became politicised after the invasion of Algeria by France in 1830 with *Karaguz* changing from his role as virile hero to that of victor over the French. The anti-French overtones led to the prohibition of the 'Theatre of Shadows' in 1843, although it survived as an underground activity in Algiers and Blida. Likewise the *maddāh* who had also condemned and attacked the French occupation, found himself harassed and often arrested.

The history of the Algerian theatre thus started well before 1921, even though the French invasion had caused its demise. The Egyptian touring company in 1921 then simply injected new enthusiasm for the idea of a modern Arab theatre as opposed to a French one.

Emergence of Three Cultural and Theatre Groups

The period after the first World War was one of political and social unrest, due mainly to the fact that the Algerians were still denied the most basic human rights and refused any kind of reward for their contribution to the war in the French army. This led to a general feeling of discontent and a stronger nationalist spirit, especially amongst the young Algerians whose political awareness developed and increased as they became more involved in the creation of cultural and social societies. The different manifestations of political and social unrest found expression in newspapers and magazines such as L'Akhbar, L'Ikdam, El-Balagh El-Djazairi, as well as in debates.

¹⁸ Baffet, Roselyne. op. cit. p. 180.

¹⁹ From the Turkish - *kara geus* - meaning - black eyes.

The cultural life of the time was mainly dominated by poetry, pamphlets and short stories. The need for the assertion of an Algerian personality led most Algerians to turn to the Arabic language with its own cultural and historical expressions. Their motto reflected the feelings: 'them and us', 'their religion and ours', 'their culture and ours'. This cultural revival was to a certain extent associated with the birth of three cultural groups:

- a) L'Association des Etudiants Musulmans Algériens: mainly composed of young students from Arabic and Koranic taught schools.
- b) Al-Muhadhiba: a cultural society founded by Tahar Ali Chérif which concentrated on the production of plays in literary Arabic.
- c) El-Mutribyia: a music society founded by an Algerian Jew, Edmond Yafil; it later incorporated sketches and plays.

The Egyptian company which visited Algeria in 1921 performed its plays in literary Arabic; the small Algerian élite who were educated in this language, took pride in its use and urged the newly born groups to use it as well. However, this resulted in a total failure and the Al-Muhadhiba company was to disappear soon after its creation. The other two groups survived but their experience in literary Arabic was ephemeral for they realised that:

We were faced with the major problem of literary Arabic. It was agreed that it was the only noble language for the stage. So be it - but the halls were empty or full with guests, which commercially was the same. The very noble literary Arabic was useful for great evenings where the pundits, who came to honour us, paid for their seats with warm compliments. And that same élite had not only free access to the theatre but it could not even help us to start [a theatre] or to use their presence as good publicity; the reason was... **THE AUDIENCE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND THE TEXTS WE PERFORMED.**²⁰

Indeed, the problem of language was very important since the vast majority of Algerians were denied access to education, and the very few who were educated fell into two categories:

- 1) those who attended French schools and who usually did not go beyond the third or the fourth form at the *lycée*,
- 2) those who attended Arabic schools or *médersas*²¹ which were very limited in number, under strict French control, and whose syllabuses had a strong emphasis on Islamic teachings.

The latter produced a cultural minority which was very conservative, very narrow minded as regards religion and claimed Arab-Muslim culture as their

²⁰ Bachetarzi, Mahieddine - Mémoires (1919-1939), SNED, Alger, 1968, p. 60. The emphasis is the same in the original text.

²¹ *médersa* - transliteration of the Arabic *madrassa* - school.

unchallengeable prerogative. this minority regarded itself as the *'Ulāma*, or the learned men of Islamic culture and belief, people of wisdom and knowledge, and hence the guardians of Arabic and Islamic culture. They developed an arrogant and often scornful attitude towards ordinary people. The illiterate masses were therefore rejected by the French, looked down upon by the Muslim élite and even cut off from it. Social relationships within Algerian society in terms of culture and ideology were those of dominant/dominated, educated/illiterate and were reflected in French rejection of and contempt for Algerians, matched by Algerian rejection and utter disdain for the French. Alongside this divide was the Algerian élite which considered itself the spiritual guide and leader of the ordinary people, whilst in part tacitly accepting the French presence. For its part the vast majority of the population equated the Arabic educated élite with those religious men endowed with a knowledge of the Koran - the Word of God - and wisdom. The one small faction which dismissed both the French presence and the Algerian élite elements was composed of young Algerians who were politically and socially conscious. Their main concern was the plight of the ordinary people which led them to struggle against religious and social taboos, ignorance, superstition and illiteracy.

It was the social and cultural divide, coupled with this new politically aware group which led to the use of colloquial Arabic or Algerian Arabic rather than 'Classical' or 'Literary Arabic' and thereby to the growth of a popular theatre. The use of literary Arabic in drama had an audience of philistines and pseudo-intellectual pedants "who paid for their seats with warm compliments". The question was then: "What would serve the Algerian theatre best? Applause from 150 intellectuals (of which 149 were guests), or 1,200 spectators who would come to see a play they understand."²² The switch to Algerian Arabic was the obvious and necessary requirement for survival, and the experience of the first two years after 1921 was vital because it set the path for the young theatre.

Bachetarzi and the Mutribyia Company (Fl. 1920's)

A new theatre took shape in the 1920's under the initiative of Mahieddine Bachetarzi and Ali Sellal (known as Allalou) who both had a certain knowledge of the arts because of their acquaintance with the French cultural activities of the time (music, opera, theatre). Their enterprise started without any financial aid whatsoever. Furthermore, the young pioneers were still in their teens, living with parents and helping in small family businesses. Allalou was well read in Arabic literature and had a talent for playwrighting and costume design, while Bachetarzi was already a well known tenor

²² Bachetarzi, Mahieddine, *op. cit.*, p.26.

singer in Algerian classical music known as Andalusian music.²³ He had started as *hazzāb* (Koran readers) at the *Jāma' Al-Kabīr* ('Grand Mosque') in Algiers until Edmond Yafil, a Jewish teacher of music, noticed his talent and encouraged him to join his company of Andalusian music, El-Mutribyia. With the help of Yafil's teaching and sponsorship, Bachetarzi developed his knowledge of music, gained fame in North Africa and Europe and was quickly introduced to the artistic world including such figures as Saint Saens, Charles de Galland and Laho Serror.

Bachetarzi took an interest in the creation of an Algerian theatre only when he had become an established and famous singer. His first attempt was performances of fifteen-minute sketches in the concerts of El-Mutribyia. These proved very successful and became an important part of the billing. From then on the combination of music, dance and sketches won fame and popularity for the company, which became well established at the Kursal (a concert hall in Algiers) and the Trianon cinema. These first timid attempts, in short, proved very fruitful and resulted in the creation of a theatre-public.

1926: The Young Algerian Theatre Takes Off

"1926, a great year? Yes, of course! It was a year of major importance for the Algerian theatre; it provided it with 'ITS' play and 'ITS' actor in the sense that the Algerian audiences found what they had been waiting for and have spontaneously approved and adopted it."²⁴

Indeed, 1926 was a landmark in the history of the Algerian theatre for it was to determine the nature of drama in Algeria for a long time to come. Two major factors contributed to this - one play and one actor. Allalou wrote the full-length play in Algerian Arabic - Djeha²⁵ - based on the adventures of the folk hero, Joha, from folk tales known throughout the Muslim world. The play was in fact a kind of review, a juxtaposition of actions and farces based on the adventures of Djeha. The success and popularity of the play provided a good test for determining the taste of audiences for drama. Djeha and the previous sketches performed at the Kursal and the Trianon cinema showed that comedy suited Algerian audiences best. On the other hand, the arrival of Rachid Ksentini on the stage introduced a particular style of acting. Indeed, both play and actor - Djeha and Ksentini - released the innate qualities of Algerian theatre which had been latent for so long. Djeha and Ksentini opened a new era for theatre: "For the first time, some Algerians heard a play which spoke to them in their language, a play which was made to measure for them. ~~It is true that only one thousand~~

²³ This was the type of music which was developed in Andalusia and found refuge mainly in North Africa. It has still retained its original form based on seven modes and comprising twenty-four 'opuses', of which two are lost.

²⁴ Bachetarzi, Mahieddine - op. cit. p. 63.

²⁵ The spelling is varied: Goha - Joha - Jeha - Djeha - Djoh'a.

~~which was made to measure for them~~. It is true that only one thousand people saw the play, but they described it to others so much that everybody knew about 'Djeha'.²⁶

It is worth mentioning that the Opéra d'Alger, reserved exclusively for French theatre, opened its doors for Djeha in the same year.

A New Impetus: Rachid Ksentini (1886 - 1950's?)

Rachid Ksentini, whose real name is Rachid Billakhdar, is often associated with Villon, Molière, Abu-Nuas and Verlaine. He was nicknamed Ksentini (a man from Constantine, the capital city of eastern Algeria because his father was from Constantine. He grew up in 'Bouzaréah' on the outskirts of Algiers among Spanish children who taught him the guitar and initiated him to theatre and opera. In 1914, he left Algiers to work in the merchant navy, a move which enabled him to travel throughout the world. He then left the merchant navy and started travelling around France.

His taste for drama led him to work as a stage-hand, and extra in several theatres in Paris, and in 1926 he came back to Algiers where he was asked by his friends Bachetarzi and Allalou to act in a comedy - Bou - Akline. In this play the Algiers audiences discovered him to be a great comedian. Starting his theatre career at the age of 40, he was to give a major boost to the Algerian theatre and make a great impact that introduced a new dramatic style: "He gave the Algerian theatre glamour, life and originality which his successors envied much but could never equal."²⁷

He later withdrew from comedy because of his success as a singer. Realism was the main characteristic of his work-

All critics stressed the realistic aspect of Ksentini's theatre which implied different things: during his time, Ksentini depicted the customs of Algiers society without any compromise. He brought to the stage characters which were close to reality, like the urban bourgeois from Algiers or the simple countryman visiting the city. He was very harsh in revealing their faults, he also brought them on stage and confronted them with their own daily problems: marriage, child upbringing, westernisation, relations with civil servants... etc.²⁸

Ksentini was both actor and author at the same time. He had no discipline and no respect for a script; furthermore, the plays he wrote and the characters he created were centred around himself and the main parts were made to measure for Ksentini the comedian.

²⁶ Bachetarzi, Mahieddine - op. cit. p. 63.

²⁷ Roth, Arlette - Le Théâtre Algérien de Langue Dialectale (1929 - 1954), Maspéro, collection "domaine maghrébin", Paris, 1967, p. 47.

²⁸ Ibid. p. 47.

Characterisation was based on the inter-dependence of the main character with the personality and skill of Ksentini. However, his lack of discipline was compensated by a great talent in improvisation to such an extent that he would add lines to his part or change them completely during a performance.

His style of acting was heightened by very expressive miming, which brings him in line with the *Commedia dell'Arte* and the *maddah* tradition. Stereotypes like the avaricious judge, the drunkard, the charlatan and the counsellor were brought alive on stage. His language - the vernacular of Algiers and the bedouin - was very rich. He had certainly learned a great deal during his travels about the art of European theatre, but this was reflected only in his stage techniques, as the form and material of his theatre were typically Algerian. The strong impact he made on the Algerian theatre can still be felt as Bachetarzi makes clear:

If one wants to draw out the specific characteristic of Ksentini's works, one will obviously have to admit that he had greatly contributed towards a popular and specifically Algerian theatre... He brought the "son of the people" - himself - straight from the Kasbah to the stage. That is why he had a direct impact on the people; he did not even have to make the effort to identify with it, he "WAS" the people.²⁹

Growth, Development and Expansion: 1927-1933

In 1927, Mahieddine Bachetarzi started to write and brought a new dimension to the Algerian theatre - didacticism. His first play, Djouhala Mouddaina Fil-Ilmi (The Charlatans), is a virulent attack against taboos, the conservative Muslim priests and the charlatans who, he believed like many of his contemporaries, were a social disease spreading all over the country. They were usually known by the name of 'marabouts' and were persons who pretended to be mystics endowed with the knowledge of Islam and above all with soothsaying and the power to cure some mental and physical illnesses.

Bachetarzi wanted the young theatre to be a school: "Given the conditions of the Algerian people at that time, the urgent task of [our] Arab theatre was to educate them."³⁰

Rachid Ksentini wrote his first comedy in 1928, Zwadj Bouborma (The Marriage of Bouborma) which won him more fame. Thus the combined talents and efforts of Bachetarzi, Allalou and Ksentini were to boost the young theatre.

²⁹ Bachetarzi, Mahieddine, op. cit., pp. 397-398.

³⁰ Ibid, pp. 77-78.

The Algerian stage found its first actress in Marie Soussam, an Algerian Jew who married Rachid Ksentini, which is really another milestone in the history of Algerian theatre often overlooked by critics and historians. By now the theatre was well established and found itself capable of taking on the task of performing around the country at certain times of the year.

On the political side everything had gone smoothly up to then: "The old rigorous Muslims looked at us with disdain, but their disdain was silent. The French administration did not pay attention to a student pastime."³¹

But from 1932, the developing Algerian theatre started to experience problems from fundamentalist Muslims and from the French authorities. During *Ramadan* in that year the Algerian stage saw the production of six plays by Ksentini which drew 8,000 spectators, but it also upset conservative Muslims, a good number of whom started to petition the French administration: "We had a perfidious enemy: the clan of the Muslim charlatans could not get over the fact that our fellow citizens filled up the Opéra six times in a month."³²

Additional problems with the French administration were generated by Faço, (They Are Aware or You Can't Fool Them), a play by Ksentini, adapted and rewritten by Bachetarzi. The play was in fact a mild attack on 'marabouts', Muslim fundamentalists and French rule. Bachetarzi tends to exaggerate the political and educational impact of the play as well as the penalties it engendered. Nevertheless, the production subsequently prevented the Algerian theatre from appearing at the Opéra d'Alger more than once a year. From then on all plays were scrutinized by the authorities and special permission had to be sought before plays could be performed. The Algerian theatre had now become a common enemy of both administration and the Muslim élite. Although Faço brought problems and drew more enemies, it enhanced Algerian theatre and enlarged its audiences. The new theatre and the hostile official approach was crucial: "But our enemies did not realise that they were developing our image in the eyes of the Algerian people and strengthening our moral prestige."³³ This phenomenon was not new: under French rule any prohibition brought about greater solidarity among Algerians.

1939 was another turning point: a new generation of young talent appeared on the stage and a contract was signed with the management of the local radio station for the presentation of music and drama. The same year showed more maturity in skills but it also saw three major setbacks: Bachetarzi went bankrupt in his theatrical activities

³¹ Ibid, p. 141.

³² Ibid, p. 146.

³³ Ibid, p. 230.

and had to turn to his singing in order to survive; the French authorities exerted more pressure putting the company under strict control, severely limiting its freedom of expression; and the Second World War broke out, bringing the company to a temporary halt.

However, in 1946 Mustapha Kateb obtained permission to establish the first 'Troupe Municipale Arabe' at the Opéra d'Alger. The directorship was given to Bachetarzi, the 'troupe' was financially supported by the Opéra and all its members received monthly wages. In short, the Algerian theatre had become an institution, falling into the lap of the colonial authorities and becoming totally tied down to its dictates. Nevertheless, the young generation with actors like Mustapha Kateb, Mohamed Touri, Mustapha Badie and Abderrahim Rais gave a new impetus to the Algerian theatre in that they had a better knowledge of the intricacies of the stage and the techniques of acting than their predecessors. Being permanent residents at the Opéra d'Alger brought two advantages: firstly, they had adequate economic and technical conditions and secondly, since the Opéra used to host many European artists, mainly from France, they had the opportunity for better training and the improvement of their skills. They had intensive training in the art of theatre and later in 1953 a Department of Arabic Diction and Elocution was created at the Conservatoire of Algiers.

With the start of the Algerian revolution in 1954, the Troupe Municipale lost most of its members as some joined the 'maquis' and others went to Paris where they produced plays for the North African community denouncing French colonialism. This led the French administration to put an end to their activities in 1955. This meant that they would have to engage in underground activity or exile. As a result Mustapha Kateb and other actors were asked to create the 'Troupe Artistique du FLN' in March, 1958, in Tunis.

The new company performed its first work a month later in Tunisia, then travelled to Libya and Yugoslavia. The work was essentially a review entitled Algeria and its Regions presenting the different regions of the country through various costumes and music. The purpose was mainly to inform people that Algeria, contrary to French propaganda, was not part of France but had its own history and culture.'

Abderrahim Rais who produced the first show, also wrote a play - The Children of the Casbah, which the FLN company also produced. From 1961, tours included the U.S.S.R., China, Morocco, Egypt and Syria. The last performance took place in Iraq in 1962 when the independence of Algeria was finally declared.

The original founders of the FLN theatre were not concerned with stage techniques and aesthetics. They were more concerned with informing their foreign audiences about the Algerian struggle against colonialism and saw the theatre as the mouthpiece of the revolution abroad.

Nevertheless, it was mainly the people involved in the 'Troupe Artistique du FLN' who were to start the TNA ('Théâtre National Algérien') after independence. It is this that explains the strong influence they exerted on the TNA and the prevailing aspects of struggle, revolution and socialism.

Form

Until 1939, the productions of the Algerian theatre had been predominantly sketches which were tailored for the taste of urban audiences who were the main clientele of El-Moutribyia. The consisted basically of Andalusian music and/or folk music and dance (namely the belly dance). Thus the first steps of the Algerian theatre were sketches added to the concert bills. It took five years, from 1921 to 1926, to gather a sizeable audience and develop its taste for drama.

The main aim was to entertain, so farce and comedy were tailored to the taste of a public which generally was not ready to watch full-length plays, especially tragedies, without the addition of music and dance - the performance was a spectacle, a variety show, a characteristic which lasted until 1933.

The sketches fell into two categories - they were either based on a series of adventures of a main character or on the juxtaposition of short scenes or playlets. the technical standard was very low and lengthy dialogues seemed to be the norm. It is a pity that the scripts of most plays were not published and were therefore lost. The only available source is a few of Ksentini's sketches and Bachetarzi's Mémoires where we have detailed accounts of their different productions.

Audience and Venues

An important characteristic of the early Algerian theatre was its flexibility to perform anywhere, except in the open air. This is a point it had in common with the *karaguz* or 'Theatre of Shadows'. As mentioned earlier, the first attempts at the art of the theatre took place at the Kursal and the Trianon cinema where El-Moutribyia used to hold its concerts. Audiences grew with the development and expansion of the company, which became famous throughout North Africa, and was invited to perform in different towns by many young Algerians organised into societies called

'Associations Musulmanes'. These groups showed interest, concern and eagerness for the experience of the new Algerian theatre.

The Algerian theatre had started on the initiative of young Algerians from poor backgrounds. Substantial support, material and financial aid were lacking, this meant that it had neither good facilities nor a suitable theatre - the Algerian stage was a café, a garage, a warehouse, a cinema and, occasionally, the Opéra d'Alger or some provincial theatre, while a rented room in the Kasbah was both the place for rehearsals and the permanent office.

El-Moutribyia performed first in Algiers and occasionally in Blida and then reached other towns towards the end of the 1920's. It is worth mentioning that most towns and boroughs visited by the company were situated in the northern part of the country. Villages were generally excluded. Hence the audience was mainly an urban one, because the socio-economic conditions of the time and of the company itself did not allow a wider scope. On the question of place and performance, Bachetarzi points out that:

Are they going to tell us: "Since you wanted to keep the popular tradition, you should have performed in public squares." This would have been possible before the First World War and perhaps even today, but it was not possible in the 1920's because we would have been depreciated in value in the eyes of our popular audiences.³⁴

There was therefore a deliberate choice made to perform indoors only. This automatically excluded villages because of the lack of adequate facilities. Although performances could take place in a barn, for example, the fact is that this opportunity was rarely sought out. The main reason was basically financial: the young Algerian theatre was self-supporting and survived via the box office. Rural audiences could not afford a ticket, however cheap. In fact, Mahieddine Bachetarzi does not use the word 'popular' (*populaire*) in the right sense when he refers to "our popular audiences" (*notre public populaire*). Should he have actually used it at all? Bachetarzi and his friends came from an urban society and belonged to a specific class of shopkeepers and craftsmen, all of whom had a primary or secondary education (which by Algerian standards was a good achievement at that time) in French and/or Arabic. This specific class was based at that time mainly in the Kasbah, where remains of Turkish culture and way of life still existed, and people confined themselves to religion and to that way of life. This often translated itself into an attitude of arrogance towards anybody from outside the Casbah and, in particular, towards villagers and peasants. Such attitude also appeared in many sketches and plays, even after Independence.

³⁴ Ibid, pp. 400-401.

The Audiences

The structure of Algerian society as it appeared in its cultural manifestations up to Independence in 1962 provided two kinds of audiences: the larger one which was rural and illiterate on the whole and the other which was urban and educated.

After 1830, the ruthless French invasion eventually resulted in the complete upheaval of Algerian society and the total destruction of its culture, which struggled to survive through scattered and impoverished remnants as story-telling, poetry, music, dance and some religious rituals.

In fact, the rural populations saw their cultural life limited to bards, *maddahs* and folk musicians who would appear on market days and occasionally at weddings. These relics of a culture, once so rich, were to witness another major blow during the armed struggle between 1954 and 1962. The urban populations also suffered from the French occupation, but their culture survived better despite constant pressure. The dislocation of Algerian society under French domination engendered a new socio-economic pattern which in turn determined new cultural conditions. Thus, the entire socio-economic system was completely destroyed as a result of genocidal attacks and confiscation of land and property. The education system which was widespread throughout the country (the rate of illiteracy was very low) was also completely destroyed. Thus the rural populations found themselves uprooted both socially and culturally.

These historic factors bred new forms of expression mainly through poetry and story-telling - sorrow, despair and revolt against the enemy were predominant themes. These historical considerations were typical of the psychological and cultural characteristics of the rural audiences. In the urban areas the situation was not as bleak because the resistance against the French was weak and ephemeral, and therefore people there did not suffer as much as those in the countryside and the socio-economic system was not deeply affected. Consequently, cultural life was able to survive. Whilst urban populations had cohabited with the French and gradually became permeable to their culture, rural groups adopted an attitude of unquestionable and irreversible rejection. Bachetarzi, who was deeply involved during that period says:

This was a period of fusion, of intellectual intercourse, which tended to bring together the different ethnic groups in the country. This was a brotherhood between the Muslim, Jewish and Christian youths in every field of the arts, in culture and in sport which went beyond the frontiers to reach Morocco and Tunisia.³⁵

³⁵ Ibid, p. 18.

In fact, the urban Algerians were not only open to the influx of culture, their permeability gradually led to their mixing with the French youth and to a kind of brotherhood with them. It is worth mentioning at this stage that the Jewish population was totally integrated with the Algerian way of life; they spoke Arabic and were deeply involved in the cultural activities of the time, indeed, some of the best composers and musicians in Arabic music were Jews.

All these considerations indicate that urban populations bathed in a favourable cultural atmosphere and that they were ready to absorb alien cultural elements beside their own; the overall picture was that of a cultural desert in the rural areas and a sort of renaissance in the towns, especially in Algiers.

The historical development of Algeria determined cultural trends and hence the nature of dramatic spectacle. In this respect, the pattern of rural cultural activities and audience was homogeneous - bards, folk musicians (mainly bag-pipes and drums) and in particular the *maddāh* would draw the same kind of audience (mainly illiterate) in the market place. In Algiers and other towns there were more art forms and local culture was richer and more versatile. This was reflected in different kinds of audience for concerts, music-hall, opera, cinema and theatre.

General Evaluation of the Period 1921-1954

From 1921 to 1954, the initiators of the Algerian theatre were both authors and actors, an ambivalence which was reflected in the way in which an author would write a play and create a main character for his own interpretation. Indeed, this can still be seen today with performers like Mohamed Touri and Kaci-Tizi Ouzou. Before the armed struggle broke out, Algerian theatre suffered from a great weakness in the structure and development of plays and a very awkward use of theatre techniques - the style of the bard and the *maddāh* prevailed, involving lengthy and heavy soliloques. There was also a total absence of tragedies in colloquial Arabic, the only ones which existed being written in literary Arabic and being performed very rarely before small audiences. These plays emerged from the 'Ulāma Movement' whose task it was to glorify the Arab-Muslim history and culture. Their authors brooded over the past and overpraised it; they tended to present it as a well-spring of pride and culture.

The socio-economic conditions of the period and in particular the lack of a coherent ideological trend and a sufficiently homogeneous social or political experience did not allow the emergence of tragedy. Furthermore, there was no competent Algerian writer with a clear-cut vision of the upheaval, dislocation and dereliction that had been inflicted on society - essentially, the tragedy of Algeria - to convey it through a good

play. The Algerian theatre had to wait for Kateb Yacine to do this. There is no available evidence to suggest that Algerians were ready for tragedy at that time.

Many critics overlooked the important role played by music and dance alongside drama - the Algerian audience of that period would not conceive of a spectacle without them. Indeed, the first steps of the Algerian theatre experience were attempted in the concerts of the El-Moutribyia company, with music and dance playing so vital a role in the promotion of theatre that in the 1930's songs were incorporated in plays. From 1946 to Independence in 1962 the same pattern persisted together with the addition of translations or adaptations of European classic writers, mainly Molière, to the repertoire. The theatre of the FLN was used as a vehicle for the popularisation and the glorification of the revolution, but it also suffered from the same technical weaknesses and defects of its predecessors. However the lack of competent playwrights was the major problem. Since Independence, the Algerian theatre had become a national institution enjoying great financial support, but it has not overcome many of the problems and the weaknesses mentioned above.

The Period After National Independence

Independence led to the taking over of all theatres left by the French and which were mainly located in the North. The TNA ('Théâtre National Algérien') was created as a public institution in 1963 under the Ministry of Information and Culture. Its administrative structure is considered to be the best in the Arab world and Africa - a general manager, a secretary general, an arts committee, a technical department, a department of public relations and a secretariat - but this has also meant that the TNA has had the monopoly of all professional theatre activity in the country except in radio and television. Unfortunately the encouraging and impressive name of the TNA was not (and still is not) reflected in the quality of the product. The contradiction lies within the organisation itself namely in the inability and impracticability of the organisation to achieve desired aims and standard, particularly in problems of centralisation. These had led to many management problems and problems in productions of plays for large audiences in different parts of the country. The lack of playwrights led to the translation and adaptation of plays from the general theatrical repertoire, especially plays reflecting the political guidelines of the government - broadly socialism and struggle against imperialism - and thus names like Brecht or O'Casey topped the repertoire list. Productions were well spaced out and in order to fill the gap foreign groups were invited, mainly from France, Morocco and Tunisia. In order to tackle some of these problems the TNA was decentralised in 1970 and regional theatres were created: TNA - 'Théâtre National Algérien' based in Algiers: TRO - 'Théâtre Régional d'Oran'; TRAC - 'Théâtre Régional d'Annaba et de Constantine'. The TNA gathered

together most of the people in the 'Troupe Municipale d'Alger' and the 'Théâtre du FLN' - six directors (Alloula, Hachemi Nouredine, Allal Mouhib, Hadj Omar, Mustafa Kateb and Rouiched) and eight actors in 1963. Up to 1978 there was only one director, Hadj Omar, and thirty-five actors. After a good start and in spite of big efforts to publicise its plays through radio, the press and even television, the TNA failed to attract large audiences except for concerts of Andalusian music or folk music. The irony was that a *maddāh* performing in Port Said Square right opposite the Opéra d'Alger would gather more than two hundred people which was a larger audience than the TNA.

The experience of the TNA was very important in that it provided a paradigm against which the trends of the Algerian theatre as a national art form after Independence (namely the amateur theatre, the theatre of Kateb Yacine, Abdelkader Alloula and Slimane, Benaïssa) could be measured and assessed. There are several reasons why this major institution should have failed where the theatre of the generation before 1946 succeeded. The most prominent and pertinent include the fact that, as discussed earlier, Algerian audiences especially in Algiers, could not conceive of going to the theatre if the bill did not include music and dance as well as the play. Bachetarzi and his friends had to adapt to this situation throughout their careers: "This prejudice prevailed for a long time and it did not encourage the performance of major plays. It had certainly harmed the Algerian theatre and it took many years to eradicate it - in fact, it has still not completely disappeared."³⁶

The previous generation had created a large theatre public responding to its demands and catering for its taste - so why should the Opéra d'Alger in the hands of the Algerians have failed to attract large audiences? A full answer to this problem would require a complete sociological study of theatregoers in Algeria, but there are some obvious reasons that can be easily identified. A large section of the new generation was not acquainted with the theatre and the TNA failed to reach them, or even hang on to those who had a first taste of drama. On the other hand, there was a myth surrounding the Opéra d'Alger - people used to see in it (and to a certain extent still do) the exclusive place of culture and entertainment for the French and the élite. The TNA has not tried to demystify this social label attached to the Opéra d'Alger nor to transform the other theatres left by the French. It stubbornly uses techniques and the proscenium arch which are still alien to the majority of Algerians. Most productions revolve around adaptations of foreign plays, the theme being the struggle against imperialism and the socialist revolution, while the few Algerian plays fell into sterile moralising about the revolution or some social taboo. Furthermore, it wraps itself up in the obstinate idea that there is a lack of playwrights or a lack of interest in the drama of potential writers. Yet the publication of plays both in French and literary Arabic never stopped, indeed

³⁶ Ibid, p. 47.

both famous and interesting writers, including Assia Djebbar, Mohamed Dib, Tahar Ouwettar, Noureddine Abba, Djamel Amrani and Mustapha Hacıene, never had their plays performed on the Algerian stage. A factor which was outside the responsibility of the TNA, was and still is censorship, which the Tunisian critic Mohamed Aziza - speaking about the Arab Theatre - described in extremely precise terms:

The [Arab] dramatist finds himself in a situation where he is faced with a stronger political authority, and with a unique omnipotent party which has become the norm in most Arab countries. Therefore, he seems to have only two attitudes to adopt: either keep out of the way and practice self-censorship or follow the "movement", that is the official guide-line.³⁷

In view of this the TNA had no other choice but to be totally committed to party politics. However, any evaluation of the TNA cannot be totally negative for even if it failed in certain areas, it certainly made a big step forward in acting techniques and brought interesting works to the Algerian stage such as Don Juan (Molière), The Taming of the Shrew (Shakespeare), The Plough and the Stars and Red Roses for Me (S. O'Casey), Mother Courage and her Children - The Exception and the Rule - The Caucasian Chalk Circle (Brecht). Another achievement to be praised is the creation, in 1965, of the 'Institut National d'Art Dramatique et de Chorégraphie', which is the fruit of the prolonged efforts of Mustapha Kateb, who strongly believed in the Algerian theatre. He believed in the young generation and saw in it the best potential for the development of drama in the country, hence his idea to create an institute for that purpose. Unfortunately his dream did not materialise for in 1974 the drama section of the institute was closed for undisclosed and mysterious reasons.

After decentralisation in 1970, the regional theatres of Oran and Constantine were more successful than their counterpart in Algiers. While the TNA stagnated or even declined, they turned away from the translation and adaptation of foreign plays to collective writing. Alloula in Oran and later others in Constantine introduced new methods and techniques of production. They put an end to the proscenium and the traditional European stage, and geared their theatre towards more flexible productions, so as to perform anywhere - in cafés, schools, factories, cinemas. Their enterprise was slow to take off, but proved to be successful to a certain extent. In other words, the success or failure of the TNA, or the Algerian theatre as a whole, is linked with the concept of drama and theatre and its intrinsic dynamics and mechanisms, as much as with its social and artistic rapport with society. Present-day theatre activity shows that there is a definite shift in audiences from the TNA to the more successful new trends of the three kinds described below. Has the TNA become alien to the Algerians? Are we

³⁷ Aziza, Mohamed - Regards sur le Théâtre Arabe Contemporain, Maison Tunisienne de l'Édition, Tunis, 1970, p. 20.

back to square one, to the situation of the twenties, with the French theatre and the pioneers of the Algerian theatre? The answer is clearly positive and the comparison evidently true.

The Amateur Theatre - Laboratory and Pulse of Algerian Society

The main focus here is the amateur theatre after Independence, although a few groups did exist before 1962. The two main youth organisations took the lead: JFLN - 'Jeunesse du Front de Libération Nationale', and SMA - 'Scouts Musulmans Algériens'. Their theatrical activity was limited to sketches, short plays and sometimes to plays based on the armed struggle or the 'glorious' Arab-Muslim past. From 1964 many amateur groups were created throughout the country; they emerged in a period of almost total cultural stagnation when the TNA was unable to cover the whole country. However the main reason for the emergence and the quick expansion of the amateur theatre is more socio-political in nature - new social, cultural and political problems arose and people saw in the TNA a cheap purveyor of entertainment and leisure rather than a catalyst to translate and express the preoccupations of a developing country. The result was that new forms of expression were sought to cater for the later concerns. Many young Algerians (generally under 25) from different walks of life took the initiative to create theatre groups to express their views on stage. There are now more than 100 groups throughout the country and none of them has benefitted from any financial or material help from the government until very recently. Exclusively based on the initiative, enthusiasm and charisma of young individuals, the experience of the amateur theatre was to give a new and important dimension to the Algerian theatre; it has widened its scope and, to some extent, changed its course.

Didacticism or Agit-prop Theatre?

This amateur theatre is totally committed to the struggle for socialism. Its aim is to identify with the workers and peasants and to educate them; all the themes tackled by the different groups are entirely based on social, cultural and economic problems, as well as on the struggle of the Third World and colonised countries. The overall picture which emerges from the various plays is the emphasis on the struggle for socialism which is seen as the only answer to the problem of Algeria and, in particular, to those of the poor classes; and on the international scene, the continuous struggle against imperialism and international capitalism which are shown as the main cause of problems and backwardness of the Third World. The amateur theatre gave a fresh impetus to the Algerian stage and in twenty-five years of existence the groups have held four conferences and eighteen festivals.

Pulse of Algerian Society

Collective creation helped the amateur theatre deal with most social, political and cultural problems: all burning issues were approached without prejudice. No political speech, newspaper or magazine, T.V. or radio programme had ever tackled openly and objectively the situation of Algerian women, juvenile delinquency, corruption, or abuse of power, but the amateur theatre movement had done so. The way these problems were analysed and presented made the amateur theatre the pulse of Algerian society. However, this was only true of the period before 1971-72, because new major political events were to affect the amateur theatre and give it a new dimension. Indeed, the introduction of the 'Agrarian Revolution', the 'Charte Socialiste des Entreprises' and free health care redirected the whole of the theatrical activity towards these three issues; most plays were henceforth based on the new division and distribution of land, involvement of workers in the management of factories and the issue of free healthcare. The result of this was disastrous for the amateur theatre fell into propaganda and declamation of slogans. These new areas of interest gradually put an end to the outstanding groups which were outspoken in their choice of social issues, and of high standard. Harassment by the party - the FLN - finally^{PNL} paid to all their efforts to survive in these adverse circumstances.

The New Amateur Theatre or the Art of Declaiming slogans

The success of the experiments prior to 1971-72 led to new groups sprouting up in every corner of the country - in universities, schools, factories, youth clubs, social clubs amongst others. After that period, however, Algerian youth saw the 'Agrarian Revolution' and the 'Charte Socialiste' as the major achievements in the struggle for socialism. They saw their task in this struggle as that of an *avant-garde* to protect and defend the rights that had already been acquired by it. These were the 'Acquisitions of the Revolution' to use the current expression. They took for granted the idea that the amateur theatre was totally integrated in the 'toiling masses' and so they produced plays for peasants and workers. The resolution adapted at the Amateur Theatre Conference held in Saida from 31 March to 11 April, 1973 defined the nature and the object of collective creation as follows:

This type of creation both strengthens the spirit of friendship and mutual cooperation within the group, and raises creation to a higher standard. This allows for a better and richer exchange of ideas and for self-criticism and evaluation. It will also help improve the forms of expression and content, avoid the risks of erroneous interpretation by each contributor and correct them - socialise them...³⁸

³⁸ Bendimered, Kamal - "Premier Séminaire des Amateurs de Théâtre: Quand le Théâtre s'interroge", in AlgérieActualité, 22-28 April, 1973, pp. 16-17.

At the same conference, leaders and members of different groups agreed to define their theatre as:

... the democratic expression of a youth which is aware of all the problems facing the Socialist Revolution in its different stages... Its major role is to participate in the education of the masses. The role should, in no way, be played outside a social, democratic and progressive content. In other words, it must contribute to raise the cultural standard of the masses.³⁹

Positive aspects of collective creation can be identified in most of these groups but the political consciousness they aim to raise regarding the progression of the socialist revolution remains the ideal and their contribution towards improving the cultural standard of the people continues to be a project: the reality is that very few groups develop along the lines defined by the conference or in accordance with the standards put forward. The experiences of the period after 1972 have proved very poor in artistic terms - both in form and content. A poor knowledge of theatre, the low political, cultural and intellectual standard of members and their deficient understanding of socialist ideology has led to the declamation of sets of slogans in the place of true drama. Abdelkrim Djaad, a reporter of the weekly newspaper Algérie Actualité writing about the twelfth Amateur Theatre Festival held in Mostaganem, summed up the situation as follows:

It all consisted in getting on the stage to pour out one or several messages, totally ignoring any form of stage direction. So much so that, at times, all performances fell into sterile speech - a jumble where everything is mixed indiscriminately and without any fear of the ridicule. Truly, the amateur theatre is in bad shape. We have, throughout this festival, noticed the dreadful rapprochement of this young theatre with the theatre of Kateb Yacine. Thus, we can see the influence of the author of Mohamed, Prends Ta Valise in every play. One can profit from such influence only if one has adequate intellectual potentials and appropriate political training... The average age does not exceed 18. The members of this theatre are students or young workers who are still learning and developing but who also have at the moment the overwhelming desire and need to act on stage and express themselves.⁴⁰

Most new groups, therefore, fail to convey their message because they confine themselves into an easy pattern of declaiming slogans. However, even if standards have fallen in recent years, the amateur theatre will certainly improve thanks to its regular and rich contacts with the public; indeed, this experience which is based on collective creation, is seen more as a collective activity than as a show. The activity is both entertaining and educational and bears an independent character in that the audience learns from the group and vice-versa. With experience, permanent contacts and debates

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Djaad, Abdelkrim - "Renforcer les rangs c'est bon, structurer c'est mieux", in Algérie Actualité, 2 - 9 August, 1978, p. 11.

with their public, the amateur groups will improve their artistic knowledge and the quality of their work.

A Laboratory

The Algerian theatre has never witnessed as many experiments and as deep research as with the amateur theatre. In the latter, once the subject matter is decided upon the play takes shape through a long process of experiments and adjustments. The language used is always the ordinary colloquial Arabic which, because of its limitations, is enriched and 'kneaded' into a standard language, this includes the use of French and literary Arabic phrases and dialogues as appropriate. The groups usually split into teams and carry out surveys into their subject matter. For instance, the group 'Théâtre et Culture' of Algiers carried out a large scale survey in different strata of society, both rural and urban, for the play Algerian Women which is about the plight of Algerian women. Music is extensively used either on tapes, records, or played live on stage. It varies from classical, through country and western or middle eastern, to local music. Constantly bearing in mind that the receiver is the ordinary person, theatre techniques acting or otherwise, are used appropriately. Actually the artistic nature of the amateur theatre is evident because of its essence: it is primarily committed to a kind of theatre meant for and concerned with the working class and ordinary people. This implies, to a certain extent, the use of popular material and aesthetic forms which are translated and expressed in a theatre accessible to all. Whilst recognising the amateur theatre's weaknesses and immaturity it still remains close to the realities of the country for it is above all the spontaneous expression of a youth disillusioned, disappointed and mainly disgusted with propaganda, injustice and abuse of power. Unlike the professional theatre, "The amateur theatre was and still remains for many a social practice, an outlet for the contradictions lived by the children of the war of liberation who are at present exposed to a process of change never equalled before in this country."⁴¹

Furthermore, the general age and social composition of the amateur theatre is dominated by youth: 60% students (both secondary and high education), 30% workers and 10% unemployed⁴². This major characteristic reveals the vitality and concerns of youth, thus, "We can guess the need to speak and to understand which are hidden within this youth."⁴³

It must be noted, however, that the enthusiasm or disappointment expressed above reflects the success or failure of the amateur theatre in its evaluation.

⁴¹ Balhi, Mohamed - "Quatre paradoxes pour un théâtre", AlgérieActualité, 19 - 25 March, 1981, p. 10.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

Two Examples of Amateur Theatre

Although there were several interesting groups throughout the country, the two groups which epitomise the nature of successful amateur groups are 'Le Théâtre de la MER' and 'Théâtre et Culture'. They both give detailed accounts of the characteristics and mechanisms of their theatre in programmes handed out during performances:

1) Théâtre et Culture

The author participated in 1969 in the survey on the play La Femme Algérienne and in debates, held after some of the performances. The experience was very successful and the rapport established between actors and audience was so fruitful that many scenes and lines in the play were changed several times thanks to the comments and contribution made by people from different walks of life. The programme notes pointed out that their work was a 'collective creation' continuously developing from the original conception of a play to its performance. Everyday the members of the group met with friends and regular spectators to work on the project, but once the play was completed, it was never definite, for the group insisted that: "The main concern is to explain to the audience that what they have seen is only one alternative, and that the play will be completed through debates which take place after each performance."⁴⁴

2) Le Théâtre de la MER

This group was created in the late 1960's and ceased its activities in the mid-1970's. It was more active than 'Théâtre et Culture' and produced more plays. They worked on two levels: one full-length play of 90 minutes and a few short plays, produced and performed every two months. This theatre saw itself as, "... a combination between a training school and a theatre research centre"⁴⁵, with the main concern to work towards,

A scientific technique for a popular Algerian theatre; which meant:

- 1) A type of acting devoid of any illusion of reality.
- 2) Simple but varied acting - no dazzle, no frills.
- 3) All actors wear a basic costume and one or several fittings so that the character which is represented stands out clearly.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Introduction in programmes handed out before performances.

⁴⁵ Ibid

⁴⁶ Ibid.

Thus the actors aimed to stimulate the spectator to think and criticize, to make comments, and even to join the actors, for once again they insisted that, "In the end, the sole judge is and always will be the working people."⁴⁷

It seems that both groups had a binary conception of theatre practice, particularly the 'Théâtre de la MER'. They had the merit of being able to make a swift and smooth fusion of Algerian techniques on the one hand, and Brechtian and 'Happening' techniques on the other hand. The influence of Brecht was felt in the sense that principles like identifying with the characters, or seeing the theatre as magic and the 'fourth wall' are rejected. The Algerian techniques were those of the *maddāh* encompassing all the skills and intricacies of a one man show and the *halqa* in terms of architecture or shapes of the stage. Unfortunately, neither of the two groups survived: the members of 'Théâtre et Culture' split because of the lack of amenities and financial aid; the 'Théâtre de la MER' had signed a contract with the 'Ministère du Travail et des Affaires Sociales' to perform in technical colleges⁴⁸. In 1971 Kateb Yacine was allocated a special budget by the same ministry to lead the same group which had by then lost most of its founding members, under the name 'Action Culturelle des Travailleurs'.

A Great Pioneer in Contemporary Algerian Theatre: Kaki

Abdelkader Ould Abderrahmane known as Kaki is at present manager of 'Le Théâtre Régional d'Oran'. He is considered by Algerian critics as one of the most interesting and original of the few contemporary Algerian dramatists. He took an interest in drama in his early teens and started his theatre career at the age of 20 when he founded a workshop theatre 'Le Théâtre Laboratoire' in the 1940's in the town of Mostaganem near Oran (Western Algeria). His concept of drama and hence the experiments he carried out and developed over the years are a unique and outstanding experience in the history of Algerian theatre, particularly in the cultural desert of post-Independence Algeria. While the TNA indulged in the adaptation of foreign plays and a sterile and excessive praising of the revolution, Kaki set out to create a theatre moulded in the traditional cultural heritage, namely in oral tradition. Three major aspects characterise his theatre: *shi'r malhūn* (rhymed verse), *halqa*⁴⁹ and *maddāh*. His plays are all epic poems, structurally divided into short sequences, which deal with historical, social or political matters. The language used is that of the traditional poets, the bards,

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ These are colleges for technical training run by the same ministry.

⁴⁹ *halqa* - meaning ring or circle. The spectators sit in a circle round the *maddāh*. There is always exchange of words and comments between the *maddāh* and the spectators.

the *maddāḥ* and the *maddahāt*⁵⁰, which is an elaborate and sophisticated form of the Algerian vernacular in terms of syntax, vocabulary and original innovation in the transposition of the techniques of the *halqa* and the *maddāḥ* on the modern stage. The transposed *maddāḥ* keeps his traditional role by introducing the story, commenting on particular episodes or events, in the action which is enacted behind him and directed by him like an orchestra before its conductor. We believe that this technique is a major contribution to Algerian theatre in particular, and to theatre in general, for Kaki has succeeded in combining, in a smooth and subtle way, the techniques of the *maddāḥ* and the *halqa*, of Stanislavsky and Brecht, of the 'happening', of the 'Theatre of Shadows', and of the Greek chorus and chorus leader.

The first of the above relates to the use of traditional material, the second to the acting technique - of identifying with the character by the actors behind the *maddāḥ*, the third to the alienation effect, the fourth to audience participation, the fifth to the projection of the shadows of the actors on to a screen, and the sixth to instances when the action is switched to centre-stage gathering the actors as a chorus and the *maddāḥ* as chorus leader. Furthermore, the action is backed by percussion on traditional drums back-stage. Unfortunately Kaki has not been paid the tribute he deserves and he is still denied the status of a great dramatist on a national scale although his name is very popular in the west of the country and his experiments stimulated similar ones among amateur groups, on Abdelkader Alloula, and particularly on Yousef Seddiki the famous Moroccan dramatist who uses Kaki's technique⁵¹ to perform in large market places like Jāma' Al-fna in Marrakech or even in football grounds. Kaki is certainly an important man of the theatre in Algeria but he does not stand out as a playwright.

Conclusion

Although the Algerian theatre still suffers from a lack of playwrights and amenities, it has developed a dimension (both in form and content) which is specifically Algerian. Aesthetics and content are picked and brewed in the national cultural heritage, and in present-day problems and issues common to the ordinary people. In commenting on the first generation of the Algerian theatre up to 1954, Arlette Roth pointed out:

There is one aspect, however, which seems to characterise the Algerian theatre... it was not born out of translated works from the Western repertoire. It was stimulated by the Middle-Eastern initiative

⁵⁰ *maddahāt* - feminine, plural of *maddāḥ* - women singers who usually perform at weddings.

⁵¹ In a short essay - "La chanson de geste sur la scène ou l'expérience de Ould Abderrahmane Kaki" - printed by the University of Oran in 1981, Sidi Mohamed Lakhdar Barka reported an interview with Kaki who had asserted that Seddiki (who is also his friend) started exclusively with his techniques.

and by the French productions which were in fashion in Algiers, but it had tried from the beginning to develop original plays by drawing upon a traditional heritage. The translation and adaptation of classical works started many years later when it had developed and became an institution which needed to produce more.⁵²

The theatre of the FLN and the TNA up to the late 1960's did not bring many changes. The historic contingencies of both periods before and after the armed struggle channelled the Algerian theatre towards the glorification of the guerillas and the mystification of the revolution.

It is worth noting that neither the war of Independence nor the following period brought any changes. The plays which glorify national awareness and the struggle of the patriots remain trapped in an overwhelming moralising... The structural conditions which paralysed the old theatre have not yet changed.⁵³

It seems that the different theatre experiences - the first generation, Kaki and the Amateur Theatre - have two things in common - struggle and search for identity. This, in fact, is a reflection of the problems and preoccupations of Algerian society. Bachetarzi and his friends struggled to found a theatre and create a public for it and they also fought against various constraints imposed by the French authorities and Muslim fundamentalists. Even allowing for the political and socio-cultural conditions of the time, the didactic character of the first generation theatre is rather mild. Furthermore, if Bachetarzi insists, as he does in his Mémoires, on the educational and militant aspect of his theatre, it is only to defend it against the label of 'bourgeois theatre' given to it by some post-Independence left wing intellectuals:

But it was not 'form' which characterised our theatre it was its 'content', it has never been bourgeois in the sense that we did not have any idea about the art of the playwright who writes to express himself. We thought of theatre as a megaphone to amplify the people's voice and to clarify it in order to get a better awareness of people's problems. The author must fade away before his audience. All this leads to a theatre of combat.⁵⁴

If Bachetarzi and the Moutribyia operated mainly in towns for financial and other reasons, the amateur theatre is non-commercial and has reached larger urban and rural audiences. It has the great merit of having furthered collective creation and has brought about many innovations. Indeed, "Through the participation of all members of the group and often including the spectators, collective creation fosters the epic form of theatre... and enhances the didactic aspect of this kind of theatre."⁵⁵

⁵² Roth, Arlette - op. cit., p. 167.

⁵³ Ibid. p. 101.

⁵⁴ Bachetarzi, op. cit. p. 401.

⁵⁵ M'rah, Ali - "Expérience de création collective dans le théâtre algérien", in Europe, no. 567-568, July-August, 1976. pp. 176-179.

Furthermore, it has partly solved the problem of the lack of playwrights through collective creation and paved the way for a new and dynamic type of theatre. It has even influenced professional theatre, particularly the regional professional theatres of Oran, Sidi Bel Abbès and Constantine which started to write and produce plays collectively. The 'Théâtre de Constantine' is so far the most outstanding and the most prolific. Success here is assessed mainly on the ground of audience appeal and attendance because collective creation does seem to have its limitations. This, in fact, led two experienced men of the theatre, Abdelkader Alloula and Slimane Benaïssa to give up collective creation and resort to their own creative talent which has proved highly innovative and successful. However, the number of successful productions is limited and the audiences are growing larger and more demanding, thus - short supply despite high levels of demand. Slimane Benaïssa stated that Kateb Yacine, Abdelkader Alloula, the 'Théâtre de Constantine', and himself cannot meet the demand, "...what can we do? We are just four drops in a desert."⁵⁶

Indeed, four theatres based in different cities, who travel throughout the country - when the material and financial support is available - can in no way meet the increasing demand. They always play to full houses whenever and wherever they appear. Despite all the efforts it is making and the material and the financial support it is getting, the TNA is still trapped in the same problems and is unable to reach or attract a large public.

To promote professional theatre and the TNA, in particular, the ministry of culture introduced a theatre festival - 'The National Festival of Professional Theatre' - in 1985, which is to be held every year, organised and administered by the TNA. The first three festivals attracted large audiences and each performance played to full houses. These events are exceptional in the cultural desert prevailing in the capital city and in the country in general and have proved that there is a big demand for drama. They have also proved that the TNA still fails to meet people's expectations; the TNA productions did not get a favourable response from either the audience or the press. Abdelkader Alloula with the TRO ('Théâtre Régional d'Oran') was the exception: his Al-Ajwād, (The story of the Generous People) won most prizes at the first festival; it was restaged for the second festival and Al-Khubza (Loaf of Bread), which was first produced in 1972 won the first prize at the third festival. Kateb Yacine was invited to the first festival only and was excluded from the other two events; a new version of Palestine Betrayed was presented. Slimane Benaïssa was totally ignored, yet, the irony is that, on the fringe of the third festival, his play Babūr Ghraq (A Ship Sank) which was programmed for one week, was performed for five weeks by popular request.

⁵⁶ Interview we had with Benaïssa on January 12th, 1988.

As we shall see, in the works of Kateb Yacine, Slimane Benaïssa and Abdelkader Alloula, successful contemporary Algerian theatre is formed through the exploration and integration of cultural and social factors relevant to a popular audience. It is in this respect that the theatre exemplified by these three playwrights and other amateur movements has succeeded and the operations of the establishment (TNA), by comparison, failed.

CHAPTER II
KATEB YACINE

i) A Restless and militant life

Born on August 6th, 1929, in Constantine, the eastern provincial capital of Algeria, Kateb Yacine belongs to a family of strong Arabic and Islamic culture. His father was 'Oukil Judiciare' (attorney-at-law) well read in both Arabic and French. Yacine first went to Koranic school in Sédrata, another eastern town where his father was working, but was soon to experience a significant turning point in his early childhood when he went to a French school - 'lions' den', for many Algerians - at the age of seven. His father decided that Arabic education through religious teachings was useless and that Yacine should learn French, the dominant language of the time, and also the language which could secure him a good future. Thus Yacine was cut off from his very dear friend and companion, his mother, with her stories and games. His father was moved to Bougaa (formerly Lafayette), a little town in Kabylia, and Yacine went to the 'Lycée Eugène Albertini' in Sétif until 1945 when he was 16. The demonstrations of 1945 and the ruthless French reprisals were a tragic milestone in the history of Algeria and a major turning point in the life of Kateb Yacine. On May 8th, 1945, the population took to the streets in Guelma, Sétif and Bougaa and Yacine found himself among the demonstrators in Sétif:

I felt the strength of ideas...
I found Algeria full of Anger
I went with the leaflets
I burned them in the River
I drew a plan on the sand...
A plan for future demonstrations.
...I shall fight...¹

He was arrested. The experience of prison was for him of the utmost significance, a bitter-sweet, tragic-happy revelation: "It is also at that time that I accumulated my first poetic urges. I can still remember some insights I had. Retrospectively, they are the most beautiful moments in my life. I had discovered the two things I cherish most: poetry and revolution."² When he was released from prison he was neither allowed back to the *lycée*, nor was he interested in further studies. So he left Sétif and started travelling in eastern Algeria, mainly between Annaba and Constantine, where he met new people, particularly Ben Lounissi³, and the woman he loved dearly, Nedjma the name which was to be the title of many poems and his first novel. His literary career started in 1946 when a bankrupt printer ('Imprimerie du

¹ Kateb, Yacine - Nedjma, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1966, p. 180.

² Romi, Yvette - "Le Maghrébin errant", in Le Nouvel Observateur, no. 114, 18 - 25 Janvier, 1967, p.31.

³ Kateb Yacine found in Ben Lounissi a friend and a mentor who is transposed in Nedjma as Si-Mokhtar.

Réveil')⁴ in Annaba published his collection of poems - Soliloques . The eagerness of Algerians to buy the work of an Algerian poet (even illiterate people) enhanced his nationalist position and encouraged him to become militant. In 1947, he went to Paris for a short stay and came back to Algiers to work for the left wing paper Alger Républicain⁵, as a reporter. He left the paper after two years and took different jobs: he even worked as a docker at the port of Algiers for a time. When his father died in 1950, he went again to France to look for work which took him from Marseilles to Paris through Lyon, among other towns. When he reached Paris in 1952, he met Armand Gatti, the French dramatist, and was soon surrounded by a circle of like-minded friends. He had already published a few poems and was working on others which appeared mainly in the French periodical Esprit. Once in Paris he gave up looking for a job to lock himself in different *chambres de bonne* on the top floors of Paris apartment buildings, or some shabby hotels to work on his first novel Nedjma and his first French play Le Cadvre Encerclé⁶. Yves Benot, the French critic believes that it was at that time that Kateb acquainted himself with the works of Faulkner, Dos Passos and Dostoievski. "There was more reading to do - Faulkner, Dos Passos or Dostoievski, as if to extract some secrets from them."⁷ Nedjma was published a year and a half after the start of the Algerian war of independence in November 1954. War meant exile and more wandering; he travelled widely in Europe, Scandinavia, Belgium, Germany, Yugoslavia and Italy before going to Tunis and then living in Florence for a year.

The first version of his first play Le Cadavre Encerclé appeared in Esprit: the first act was published in December, 1954 and acts two and three in January 1955. It was performed first in Tunis in 1958, then Jean Marie Serreau produced it during the same year in Brussels. The play was not allowed to be shown in France until 1967 when it was produced at the TNP ('Théâtre National Populaire') under the title La Femme Sauvage. In fact this production was an adaptation combining parts from Le Cadavre Encerclé and Les Ancêtres Redoublent de Férocité. The final version of the play was published in 1959 in a trilogy, Le Cercle des Représailles⁸ which comprises Le Cadavre Encerclé, La Poudre d'Intelligence (a farce), Les Ancêtres Redoublent de Férocité, and a dramatic poem Le Vautour.

After Independence in 1962 until 1970, Kateb Yacine alternated between living in France and Algeria. During that period he published his second novel, Le Polygone

⁴ There is no reference to the name of the publisher.

⁵ Alger Républicain was a left wing paper published in Algiers and headed by Henry Alleg; it was forbidden in 1955 when Edgar Faure was 'Président du Conseil' in France. It reappeared in 1962 with the Algerian independence to be suppressed for good in 1965 by the Algerian government.

⁶ Published in Esprit n° 221, Decembre 1954, pp. 689-706, and n°222, Janvier 1955, pp. 74-100.

⁷ Benot, Yves - "L'oeuvre de Kateb Yacine: Poésie et Vérite d'Algérie (1956-1966)", in La Pensée, n° 132, Avril 1967, pp. 102-114.

⁸ Kateb, Yacine - Le Cercle des Représailles, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1959.

Etoilé in 1966; he was also approached and asked to take high positions in the government but turned down all propositions because of his dissatisfaction and discontent with the policies being carried out in the country. He became very restless and felt that he was running dry in his literary career, but 1967 was to be another turning point in his life, another impetus which determined and paved a new path for him: a short visit to North Vietnam. "In a word, I was a sick man when I arrived in Hanoi. I came back cured... So, what I saw in Vietnam was for me a refreshing and stimulating experience, the beginning of a revival."⁹

He had been deeply affected by the squabbles between the Soviet Union and China, which led to a breach in relations between them. As a result, his strong belief in socialism and his optimism over developments in both countries had been shattered. But his trip to Hanoi was a cure, for it raised his hopes again. He was enchanted with the progress of socialism in that country, so much so that the Vietnamese struggle for freedom and socialism was to influence his later works. Back from Vietnam he started work on another play L'Homme aux Sandales de Caoutchouc, (The Man With Rubber Sandals)¹⁰ to be published in 1970. The same year he made another trip to Vietnam (where he met General Giap and the Prime Minister, Phan Van Dong) and to the Palestinian camps in Lebanon. The struggle of the Vietnamese and the Palestinians was of prime importance and significance to Kateb Yacine who had in fact been affected by and interested in events in Vietnam since 1947 when he was reporting on foreign affairs in Alger Républicain. He had already started sketches of a future work on Vietnam. Thus "L'Homme aux Sandales de Caoutchouc is the outcome of an awakening"¹¹ and the conflicts in both Vietnam and Palestine are "two remarkable and exemplary struggles which led to the writing of two plays"¹², the second play uncompleted at that time and dealing with Palestine. L'Homme aux Sandales de Caoutchouc was also a first contact with the Algerian public for Algeria bears a great similarity with Vietnam in terms of struggle against 'imperialism' and struggle to build socialism, hence:

This revelation gave me a new strength. The way I wanted my country to be was a kind of birth on Vietnamese soil... [the play] expresses my vision as an Algerian in the full sense of the word. There are now two spheres of interest for Algeria: Vietnam and Palestine... The play comes at a time when the Algerian people are in a state of emergency. This is an opportunity for them to find themselves and mobilise again¹³

⁹ Du Theil, Jean Marc Martin - "Kateb Yacine - Avant premiere - "Ce que j'ai vu au Vietnam a été pour moi l'aube d'une renaissance", in Lettres Françaises n° 1410, 17-223 Novembre 1971, pp. 16-17.

¹⁰ Kateb Yacine - L'Homme aux Sandales de Caoutchouc, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1970.

¹¹ Du Theil, Jean Marc Martin, op. cit., p. 16.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

The play was to act as a one way ticket to Algeria and then in 1971 Kateb Yacine wrote and produced his first play in Algerian Arabic or *Arabe populaire* (to use his words) with 'Le Théâtre de La Mer'. Mohamed, Prends Ta Valise¹⁴. This discusses the Algerian emigration to France, another important present day issue. The play was the realisation of an old dream and the fulfillment of a long term and anxious desire to write about the topic in a way that was popularly accessible. "I have come back to what I always wanted to do: a political theatre produced in a language that is broadly accessible to the largest public possible. From now on, I am going to use two languages: French, but mainly vernacular Arabic."¹⁵

Kateb Yacine broadened the scope of 'Le Théâtre de la Mer' so that Mohamed, Prends Ta Valise was performed not only in technical colleges run by the 'Ministère du Travail et des Affaires Sociales' like previous plays, but was also taken throughout the country to schools, factories, villages and the 'Villages Socialistes Agricoles'¹⁶ The play gained tremendous success in France and Algeria and Kateb Yacine was allocated a special budget by the same ministry to found the new group, 'Action Culturelle des Travailleurs' based in an old flat in Bab El Oued, a densely populated quarter in Algiers. Because of his convictions, Yacine now found himself, as before, in an ideal situation, for Algeria was experiencing an unprecedented economic, social and ideological revolution which happened to meet the aspirations of the "*perturbateur*" - the disturber of illusions. Believing in a radical socialist revolution in Algeria but eager for his freedom, he has a propensity to avoid and criticise dogma: "I want to disturb illusions at the very centre of upheaval. The revolution itself must also be revolutionised for it also has its habits."¹⁷

Kateb Yacine - the Algerian 'Amazigh'¹⁸

With Mohamed, Prends Ta Valise, Kateb Yacine had another 'refreshing' experience for he identified with the broad mass of the poor and deprived people, particularly the peasants for whom he always had the deepest sympathy and understanding. His most exciting and illuminating experience with the peasants was in prison in 1945:

It is precisely this large mass of peasants which was absent in history. Everyone took his own way to find himself. I can remember that it was in 1945 that I started to understand and that I discovered the Algerian peasant. Why? Because one does not choose one's friends in prison. The majority of the prisoners were peasants. At that time I

¹⁴ Unpublished.

¹⁵ Du Theil, Jean Marc Martin - op. cit., p.17.

¹⁶ Housing estates for the workers of agricultural cooperatives.

¹⁷ Romi, Yvette - op. cit., p.31.

¹⁸ *Amazigh* is the Berber word for 'free', hence 'the free man of the free land'.

discovered that the peasants had a greater inner wealth and that their world was richer than the world of educated people.¹⁹

For the next three years after 1971, the play was to be his "battle-horse, a play expressed in the language of the common man."²⁰ Actually this quotation illuminates two major issues in Yacine's theatre. First, the language medium which, he thinks is of paramount importance and to which he constantly refers in every interview. "If I want to be understood by the common people, it is in their language that I must address them."²¹

Second, he conceives of his theatre in terms of fighting, combat and struggle. There is a recurrent terminology of war in his plays, in interviews and in speeches. Bearing in mind that Arabic, that is literary Arabic, is officially the 'National Language' - the Government's 'battle horse' and that Islam is the religion of the state, it is difficult to see how it is possible for Kateb Yacine - an outspoken opponent of the same language and the same religion and attacking many policies - to be sponsored by a department of government yet being able to carry on his 'battle' or his agitation (*"perturbation"*), or even to be free at all. The situation is explicitly contradictory in terms of logic but not implicitly for there are political and ideological contingencies which act in Yacine's favour. Indeed there are political tendencies in the country branded as revolutionary within official policies - such as the 'Three Revolutions', agrarian, industrial and cultural - which happen to meet some of Yacine's revolutionary ideas and visions in a legal and legitimate context and act as a buffer against any pressure or constraint direct or indirect. However, this does not exclude the fact that Yacine is harassed or hampered in his task: his plays were and are still banned from appearing on television, radio and the TNA; even today they are not programmed through the channels of the RTA, the Algerian Radio and Television. Kateb Yacine was also banned many times from giving public lectures or making speeches in public. Yet, ironically the first time after Independence when the TNA had a full house (except for some music festivals) was in December 1976 when the theatre of Kateb Yacine performed, for the first time, the play La Guerre De Deux Mille Ans (first produced in November, 1974). A special permission was granted for Yacine to use the TNA thanks to a special week of support for the people of the Western Sahara organised by the party. But the success of the play was followed and matched by the prohibitions mentioned above.

¹⁹ Lemmouchi Ammar and Tlili - "A Bâtons Rompus" - interview with Kateb Yacine at a Secondary School in Sedrata on May 21st, 1973.

²⁰ Djemai, A. - "Kateb Yacine: Dans ma langue de chaque jour" in La République (Oran), 6 Mars 1973.

²¹ Du Theil, Jean Marc Martin - op. cit., p.17 (and repeated in other interviews).

In 1974, he produced La Guerre De Deux Mille Ans²² an historical play mainly about the struggles in Algeria, Vietnam and Palestine. In 1976, he produced a revised version of the play to highlight the tragedy of Palestine. He first entitled it La Guerre De Deux Mille Ans - Version Palestine, then changed it to Falīstīn Maghdūra (Palestine Betrayed)

In the summer of 1976, he was invited to take charge of the theatre of Sid Bel Abbès in Western Algeria which meant better material and housing facilities for all members of 'L'Action Culturelle des Travailleurs'. Was this sudden and mysterious generosity to help him in a genuine way, or to keep him away from Algiers? Substantial evidence is not available to assess either but the moving to Sidi Bel Abbès certainly reduced and limited his scope in terms of reaching more regions, Algiers being geographically the central point. Consequently, he found himself more or less confined to the west of the country, but not tied down, for his group would still travel occasionally three or four hundred miles to perform in central or eastern Algeria. Pressures and restrictions have not ended: he is still often banned from performing for a certain period of time, sometimes up to six months. The troubles²³ in the country about Berber culture and the true identity of Algeria as opposed to 'Arabism' of which Yacine is a prominent and staunch modern pioneer and champion, led to more harassment and the banning both of the group from performing for more than six months and of Yacine from speaking in public. But he kept fighting, always bearing in mind the land of *Amazigh*, the land of the free men, to score a major point by performing a revised version of Mohamed, Prends Ta Valise, entitled Al-Khubza Al-Murra (Bitter Bread), in Tizi Duzou, capital of Kabylia, during a 'mini festival' to celebrate the first anniversary of the Kabyle revolt in the spring of 1980. In spite of all these constraints which certainly have some impact on the group as a whole and ending in frustrations, Kateb Yacine managed to produce four plays after Mohamed, Prends ta Valise : La Guerre De Deux Mille Ans in 1974, Falīstīn Maghdūra (Palestine Betrayed) in 1976, Malīk Al-Gharb (King of the West) in 1978 and Al-Khubza Al Murra (Bitter Bread)²⁴ in 1981. All these plays have had a resounding success throughout the country and in France, mainly among students, youth in general, workers and left wing intellectuals. But there is alcohol and hashish in Yacine's plays, the characters swear, the 'bourgeois' and religious figures are attacked and ridiculed, and people revolt. Kateb Yacine has always been open in his attacks against religion and government policies. This obviously meets with angry reactions to which he is not unaccustomed. Indeed, his early works which were written in French had already brought him many enemies mainly among Muslim fundamentalists and conservative Algerians. Now the enemies have grown larger in number bringing together 'bureaucrats', bourgeois',

²² Unpublished but an extract in French appeared in Europe. No. 567-568, Juillet-Aôut, 1976, under the title "La gandourie sans uniforme", pp. 86-87.

²³ Demonstrations which took place in Kabylia and Algiers in the spring of 1980.

²⁴ Unpublished.

government officials and religious leaders. However, the most outspoken and dominant opposition is among religious people: present day Algeria is witnessing an unprecedented Islamic revival essentially due to and encouraged by the Islamic revolution in Iran. But all these difficulties and hostile reactions are in a way good publicity, which is both an impulse to Yacine's theatre and an extra dimension to the myth surrounding him. The hostility and the disdain of the establishment is, however, matched by the people's esteem for him and the pride they take in having a major Algerian dramatist. Ironically and despite the success and reputation he has in Algeria, it is in France that he was awarded 'Le Prix National de Littérature' in 1986 for his latest publication, L'Oeuvre en Fragments.²⁵

²⁵ Kateb, Yacine - L'Oeuvre en Fragments, inédits littéraires et textes retrouvés, rassemblés et présentés par Jacqueline Arnaud. Collection "Littératures" de la Bibliothèque arabe, Paris, Sindbad, 1986.

ii) PALESTINE BETRAYED

Cast in order of appearance:

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Rabbi | Jewish soldiers |
| Chorus | Arabs of Palestine |
| Moses | Sultan (of Egypt) |
| Merchant | Nassar |
| Man | Sultan 'Abdallah |
| Merchant's guard | Courtiers |
| Rabbi's guard | General |
| Mad man | Palestinian People |
| First Drunkard | Bunq̄iba (of Tunisia) |
| Second Drunkard | Wassila (his wife) |
| Muhammad | People(of Tunisia) |
| English Officer | Policeman |
| Mufti | Police officer |
| Chorus leader | Students |
| 'Ā'isha (Muhammad's wife) | Kissinger |
| Beggar | Mrs. Sadat |
| Father Dinar | Assad |
| Esther (Moses' fiancée) | Sadat |
| Nazis | Arab Sultans and Emirs |
| Hitler | Palestinians |
| Arabs | Arab Presidents and Kings |
| Jews | Palestinian chorus |
| The Fanatic | Egyptian chorus |
| Herbert Samuel | Workers |
| France | First man |
| America | Second man |
| England | Third man |
| 'Abd Al-'Aziz (King) | Fourth man |
| Roosevelt | Two soldiers |
| The Gandur People | |
| Moshe Dayan | |

Props:

- Costume rail, about six foot long with costumes hanging. It stands up stage and remains there with all other props throughout the performance.
- Three trunks with props, behind costume rail.
- Broom - 2 trays - small ladder - flags and emblems representing England, France, America, Nazi Germany, Arab States... etc.- Different costumes - Banjo, *darbūka* (or *tabla* = drum), pipe.

Note: Many stage directions are missing in the original text. All stage directions appearing in our translation are based on the original text and on notes taken by the translator during rehearsals and performances.

TABLEAU 1

(The Great Rabbi enters followed by the chorus, each one of them holding a book. The Rabbi psalmodises, the chorus repeats after him.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Chorus | "Hinneh mah tov u mah na'im Shevet akhim gam yakhad!" ²⁶ I am wounded but not aware Said our prophet Moses! |
| Voices from the Chorus | That's Moses the roadsweeper. He spent all his life sweeping the desert. |
| Rabbi | Our prophet Moses was a shepherd in the Sinai until he saw a bush lit by God. ²⁷ |
| Chorus | Shalom our Rabbi! |
| <i>(The Rabbi still psalmodising crosses the chorus throwing punches left and right.)</i> | |
| Voices from the chorus | Our rabbi has gone mad. He thinks we're sand bags. |
| Rabbi | Our prophet Moses was a shepherd in the Sinai until he saw a bush lit by God. It was and it was not burning. |
| Chorus | It was and it was not burning! |
| Rabbi | Moses heard a voice coming forth from the bush which was lit by God. |
| Chorus | Lit by God! |
| Rabbi | No Jew should approach fire on Sabbath. |
| Chorus | Shalom Rabbi! |
| Moses | Dear Rabbi, please pay me. I have been working for a very long time for you, here in the synagogue. |
| Rabbi | My son, you will be paid a hundredfold by God. |
| Moses | Then I must die to live. |
| Rabbi | No mention of money in the house of God! |

TABLEAU 2

(Moses goes to sleep. The rabbi sets his broom on fire.)

| | |
|-------|---|
| Moses | Fire! Fire! Fire! |
| Rabbi | Miracle! Holy miracle! The broom of Moses is burning. It is lit by God! |
| Moses | My broom! |

²⁶ These two verses are in Hebrew, meaning: How pleasant and how delighting is sitting together with brothers. From the Bible - Psalm:133,1. The first verse in Arabic rhymes with the first verse in Hebrew.

²⁷ In the text 'stick'.

Chorus The broom of Moses is lit by God!

Moses My broom!

(The chorus carries Moses in triumph)

Chorus Long live Master Moses!

Moses My dear broom!

Chorus Long live our prophet Moses!

Moses My new broom!

Chorus Long live our prophet Moses!

Moses Let me have my broom back!

Rabbi Go my children. Tell the people, Tell all the believers.
That our prophet Moses is back,
That he is among us now.
Hurry my children, Hurry!

Chorus Our prophet Moses is back!

TABLEAU 3

Merchant Dear God, protect our prophet Moses!

Chorus This man is rich and highly respected by the rabbi. Let him in.

Rabbi Rejoice merchant! Rejoice! Our prophet Moses is back. He is among us
here in the synagogue!

Merchant Rabbi, I promise you that this synagogue will be the richest temple in the
world. *(To the chorus)* My children, by order from our prophet Moses and
in order to please him you are as from now employed in the synagogue.

Chorus Long live our prophet Moses!

Merchant Hurry get two trays. Put one at my feet and the other at the rabbi's.

Chorus And the prophet?

Rabbi The prophet... no, no he doesn't need one.

Merchant He's right. There is no need.

(The two guards exit and come back carrying two trays)

TABLEAU 4

Chorus I am wounded but not aware
Said our prophet Moses!

Man I've come to see the prophet.

Rabbi The prophet is listening to you.

Merchant Come in! Come in!

Man Prophet of God, my wife, my children and I live in one room only. Well, we live on top of each other. What do you think I should do?

Moses Get a cat and a dog...

Man A cat and a dog?!

Moses A goat and a sheep...

Man Yes I can get them.

Moses And twenty four rabbits...

Man Twenty four rabbits! It's a lot.

Moses And finally get a tortoise.

Man That's all?

Moses That's all. Listen, put them all in your room. They must stay with you for seven days and seven nights. Come back next Sabbath.

Man Yes Master!

(On his way out he is stopped by two guards.²⁸ They are standing behind the rabbi and the merchant who are sitting. There is a short space between them to suggest the entrance to the synagogue.)

Merchant's guard For the state!

Rabbi's guard For the synagogue!

Man *(leaves singing)* I am wounded! I am wounded!..

(The action stops for a few seconds to suggest the passage of time. The man comes back.)²⁹

Moses Well?

Man I spent the most horrible week in my life. The dog kept barking and fighting the cat for seven days and seven nights. The sheep was sick and the goat ate my provision of salt. The tortoise is always out, shunning everybody. And the rabbits are driving me mad. Oh! Those are worse than the children.

Moses Get rid of the dog, the cat and the tortoise
Sell the goat and the sheep.
Kill the rabbits and have
A big dinner with your family
Come back next Sabbath.

Man Yes Master.

Merchant's guard

Rabbi's guard For the state! For the synagogue!

(Enter a mad man.)

²⁸ The guards are asking for money because the merchant and the rabbi have decided to charge a fee for people who want to see the 'prophet'.

²⁹ In the text - 'a week later'.

Mad Man O friends of God! O wretched!³⁰ (*goes to Rabbi*)

Rabbi Walk in.

Mad Man Prophet of God, I have come to visit you.

Moses Come in, come in,
you little vermin³¹

Mad Man I was sleeping in the stable and all of a sudden I had a vision. Then I was feverish and started to rave.

Moses Didn't you feel as if someone touched you tenderly on your forehead?

Mad Man Someone touched me?

Moses Very gently.

Mad Man Maybe.

Moses You were saying that this happened to you in the stable.

Mad Man Yes, yes.

Moses That must be the tail of your horse, that's all.

Mad Man If I had a horse I wouldn't sleep in the stable.

Moses All prophets begin like this.³²
Actually it is a holy horse
Visiting you in the future,
Hurry and enrol in the cavalry.

Mad Man May God protect you Prophet!

Merchant's guard

Rabbi's guard For the state! For the synagoguc!

(The mad man leaves slowly; enter first visitor)

Man O friends of God!

Mad Man *(from back stage)* O wretched!

Moses Now tell me, don't you feel your room is more spacious?

Man A big relief and a big difference with the previous days.

³⁰ The literal translation is 'sons of dogs'. In Algeria beggars address people thus, 'O friends of God, please...' or 'O believers...' Therefore the contradiction in the text is interesting because the author is implying that the 'believers' or 'friends of God' are 'bastards'.

³¹ There is rhyme and alliteration in the text. The literal translation would give: 'visit, visit, o sparrow'. The word sparrow does not fit in the text and is used for rhyme and alliteration.

³² Meaning 'all previous prophets started their career in stables'.

- Moses You solve problems by complicating them more.³³ If I were you I would sleep out in the open air.
- Man Evertime I come to visit the prophet I find the merchant and the rabbi by the door. I'm up to the neck with debts, my wife left me and my children roam the streets. But I can say that I have seen the prophet, our prophet Moses, the Prophet of God.
- Merchant's guard This way out! For the state!
- Rabbi's guard For the synagogue!

(All exit singing "Hinne mah tov u mah na'im... ". Moses stays on stage.)

TABLEAU 5

(Enter two drunkards)

- Moses So this is my job: to lie all the time for the benefit of the merchant - in the synagogue! together with a mad rabbi.
- First Drunkard This is a sacred wine!
- Second Drunkard This is a divine herb!³⁴
- First Drunkard So, we are employed...
- Second Drunkard And wage earners! To our prophet Moses! *(he drinks)*
- Moses If I was still Moses the roadsweeper I would join them.

(Enter Rabbi)

- Rabbi Oh! Oh! Oh my God! They're drinking! They're smoking! On Sabbath! In the Synagogue! Moses beat them!

(The two drunkards run out)

- Moses What have they done?
- Rabbi They have broken the law. Beat them with your stick. What are you waiting for?
- Moses My stick... So it is not a godly staff. Now I understand you. You, bastard!

(He beats the rabbi and exits, running)

³³ Literally 'mix it then it clears up'. This is a common adage in Algeria, meaning that if someone is wrapped up in problems he should not worry much because with time things improve.

³⁴ Herb means hashish. Divine: typically Algerian, said of anything very pleasant.

TABLEAU 6

(Enter the two drunkards)

First Drunkard Our prophet Moses has gone mad, he beat the rabbi and stole his donkey.

(Moses comes back running with the donkey)

Moses Everybody knows the rabbi's donkey. The Jews are after me; I must disguise.

(Enter Muhammad)

Moses Hey, you! aren't you Moses' neighbour?

Muhammad Moses? Where is he? All the Jewish neighbours are waiting for him at his door step. He must have messed it up.

Moses As you are his neighbour, what do you think of him?

Muhammad I like him but I suspect he is a Zionist.

Moses Moses is not a Zionist and he has done nothing wrong. He just went to the market and asked me to leave his donkey with you.

Muhammad Good old Moses, he still trusts me.

(Exit Moses - Enter the two drunkards.)

(Muhammad pushes the donkey. The two drunkards see him)

TABLEAU 7

First Drunkard That's the rabbi's donkey.

Second Drunkard An^d that's the Arab thief.

Muhammad Hurry up, run away. Oh! stupid donkey! Alright then, you'll have to deal with them on your own, I can run faster than you.

(The two drunkards agree with each other.)

First Drunkard You take care of the donkey and I run after the thief.

Second Drunkard Alright.

Muhammad Moses the road sweeper fooled me again. Just because they saw me with his donkey they're accusing me of stealing. How am I to get home now? Well, I must disguise.

Moses *shalom!*

Muhammad *assalām!*

Moses *assalām?* He must be an Arab who has lost his way.

Muhammad *shalom?* Where is this wandering Zionist going?

Moses Where are you going?

Muhammad Home.

Moses Your home?

Muhammad Yes

Moses Where do you live?

Muhammad There.

Moses Where is 'there'?

Muhammad Just here.

Moses Where is he going? I think...

Muhammad He's following me.

Moses Whew! We certainly have arrived.

Muhammad That's the village *(They go to sleep. One minute later they are woken by a cock crow.)*

Moses Great! God sent me this cock.

Muhammad Where does he think he is running after that cock which must be mine? Maybe he wants to buy it.

Moses I've come to invite you to eat chicken.

Muhammad I was coming to invite you.

Moses Good, but you'll invite me when you are in your house.

Muhammad I am in my house.

Moses Come on, you must be mad. What's your village?

Muhammad Palestine, and yours?

Moses Israel.

Muhammad If this cock could speak, he³⁵ would say...

Moses Israel.

Muhammad Palestine.

Moses Israel.

Muhammad Palestine.

³⁵ We are using 'he' instead of 'it' because there is no neutral pronoun in Arabic - there is only the feminine and the masculine like French - and also because 'cock' is personified in the text.

TABLEAU 8*(Enter an English Officer)*

English Officer Stop it! On behalf of the British Crown I order you to leave this cock.

Moses It's my cock.

Muhammad It's mine.

Moses The cock belongs to me.

English Officer No it's England's cock.

Muhammad And this is my village.

English Officer No it belongs to England.

(The English Officer and Moses shake hands and conspire against Muhammad.)

Moses and the English village! Israeli village!
English Officer

TABLEAU 9October Demonstration³⁶*(The chorus sings the Internationale)*

Chorus Artisans, peasants and the people's army
Took the power in Russia.
Workers and peasants are joining fists
Only struggle can bring socialism.³⁷
Artisans, peasants and the people's army
Have brought down the reign of feudalism.
The Soviet Workers Councils took control
immediately
And the road to freedom and glorious era
Was opened before humanity and the poor
toiling masses.
This is a worker's first joining a
peasant's fist
Only struggle can bring socialism
This is a worker's fist.
Glory to all those who arise
For Revolution is a glorious act. Against
the laws written by the hands Of the
feudalists and the capitalist swines
This is an international revolution
The French sailors have raised the red flag
And arrested all their officers.
Strike after strike, thunder will
Clear the fog and make the seeds grow.
Workers and peasants are joining fists
Only struggle can bring socialism.

³⁶ We do not know why the author has used this tableau at this stage.

³⁷ In the text 'socialism comes only with struggle'.

TABLEAU 10

*(Muhammad steals olives in the Mufti's garden)*³⁸

Muhammad Hard life, horrible and hard life!..., I live on the Mount of Olives but I'm reduced to steal olives... Onions!.. Tomatoes!.. what a marvelous garden! Moses and Jesus entered it once, why not Muhammad?

(Enter Mufti)

Mufti Who are you?

Muhammad Muhammad.

Mufti Muhammad who?

Muhammad Zitūn.³⁹

Mufti You are in the Mufti's garden.

Muhammad Sorry, I thought it was the garden of Allah.⁴⁰

Mufti What has it got to do with Allah?

Muhammad Alright, alright, I'm going.

Mufti Stop there! I want to know what you were nosing about here.

(Enter Chorus)

TABLEAU 11

Chorus We want bread! We want work! Let's go to the Mufti.

Chorus leader Long live *Mufti Seyf Addīn Ḥādī Amin!*⁴¹

Chorus Seyf Addīn Ḥādī Amin! (bis)

Muhammad This is the Chief Mufti of Palestine. He owns all the land⁴² in the region.

Chorus Dear Mufti we are starving and food is rotting away in your fields. Please, give me a job. The Zionists are buying the best land and we are left with no bread, no work and no homeland.

Mufti My children, I do sympathise with you, yes I do understand your problems. That is why I am defending you before the Great Nations and the Arab Sultans have committed themselves to help you.

³⁸ -14 The word in the text means both 'garden' and 'field'. In this tableau as in others Muhammad gets the nickname 'Mūḥ-Zitūn'. 'Mūḥ' - short for Muhammad, it is particularly used in the slang of Algiers. 'Zitūn' means olives. Thus the author associates between Muhammad and olive to give the new character the name Muhammad Zitūn.

³⁹ see 13.

⁴⁰ We have opted for 'Allah' instead of 'God' to keep the Islamic connotation and the irony of this tableau.

⁴¹ Ḥādī Muhammad Amin Al-Husseini - appointed Mufti of Jerusalem in May 1921 and President of the Supreme Muslim Council in January 1922.

⁴² In the text the word is 'all the fields' - implying 'all the land'

| | |
|----------|--|
| Chorus | Long live our Mufti! He is the best leader in the Arab world! Long live our mufti! He is defending us! |
| Muhammad | The mufti is defending his land not you. |
| Mufti | You heretic! |
| Chorus | You heretic! |
| Mufti | Ignorant! |
| Chorus | Ignorant! |
| Mufti | Traitor! |
| Chorus | Traitor! |
| Mufti | Scoundrel! |
| Chorus | Scoundrel! |

TABLEAU 12

(Enter 'Aisha, Muhammad's wife)

| | |
|----------|--|
| 'Aisha | I am hungry! I am starving! |
| Muhammad | Join me, eat. |
| 'Aisha | Are you pulling my leg? I'm not a goat to eat raw olives. |
| Muhammad | Thank you dear God but your olives can't be as good as the Mufti's onions. |
| 'Aisha | Well, well! so you were hiding these tomatoes to eat them by yourself! |
| Muhammad | Pity on you Tomatoes! When olives and onions fall on the ground they can be picked, not you Tomato, if you drop you drop dead. |
| 'Aisha | You can eat one, but where shall I cook the others? |
| Muhammad | What? Is the pot broken? |
| 'Aisha | You know it's not our pot. |
| Muhammad | Whose pot is it then? |
| 'Aisha | Last time I borrowed it from the neighbour. Now it's your turn to get it from her husband. |

(Muhammad goes toward Moses who is sitting upstage to get the pot.)

| | |
|----------|---|
| Muhammad | <i>assalāmu 'aleyk Moses!</i> ⁴³ |
| Moses | <i>shalom!</i> |
| Muhammad | Can I borrow your pot? |

⁴³ 'Peace be upon you' meaning 'hello'. This is the way all Muslims and Arabs greet each other. We have used *assalāmu aleyk* and *shalom* as they are in the text to keep the flavour of the dialogue.

Moses Here, take it.

(Muhammad starts to eat, the donkey joins him.)

Muhammad Who invited you?

Āisha Let him eat, that's the rabbi's donkey.

Muhammad Damn the rabbi who educated you⁴⁴! you scared me, if you were the mufti's donkey you could tell where I got these tomatoes from.

(Muhammad takes the pot back to Moses.)

Muhammad Here is your pot.

Moses You left one tomato.

Muhammad Your pot was pregnant. This is what it gave you, congratulations.

Moses Just crazy!

Muhammad Can you lend me your donkey?

Moses It is the rabbi's donkey; if they see an Arab riding him I'll lose my job at the synagogue.

Muhammad Listen Moses, I need your donkey...

Moses The donkey's lost, I don't know where he is.

(Sound of donkey braying.)

Muhammad What? Come on! I just heard him bray.

Moses Come on! You believe a donkey and not me?⁴⁵

(Enter Rabbi threatening Moses.)

Rabbi Moses, Come here! You know Moshe⁴⁶, our Master Moses was a shepherd in the Sinai before he founded the State of Israel. I want you to take care of my donkey and stay away from the Arabs.

(All exit.)

⁴⁴ Beautiful aliteration and assonance in the text with the words *rabb* (God) - *rabbi* (rabbi) - *rabbāk* (educated you).

⁴⁵ Literal translation. This is taken from a Joha tale. We shall mention and discuss the different tales used by Kateb Yacine in the text analysis.

⁴⁶ We have kept the Jewish name as used in the text.

TABLEAU 13

(Muhammad and Moses come back singing.)

| | |
|----------|--|
| Muhammad | Palestine is like a spinning top. Here is a Jew with an Arap whop ⁴⁷ |
| Moses | Here is a Jew with an Arab Wallop ⁴⁸ Palestine is like a spinning top. |
| Moses | It's time for the meeting. |
| Muhammad | What shall I do with this donkey? |
| Moses | And what shall I do with this one? |
| Muhammad | Let's take them with us. |
| Moses | It's a secret meeting. If we get arrested? |
| Muhammad | We'll tell them it's the donkeys who created the trade union. ⁴⁹ |
| Moses | Well, if you think of it, the true worker is the donkey. |
| Muhammed | To have a good friend is nice. |
| Moses | A good friend has no price. ⁵⁰ |

TABLEAU 14

(Enter 'Aisha crying)

| | |
|----------|--|
| Muhammad | What's the matter? |
| 'Aisha | My father has died. |
| Muhammad | Look, we are husband and wife, we must both share joy and sorrow. So, go and mourn your father and let me chat with Moses. |

(Aisha exit crying)

| | |
|----------|---|
| Muhammad | I can't sell my donkey either dead or alive. I can't sell my wife, but I can sell my house. Business is business. |
|----------|---|

(Enter Aisha carrying a large pot. Muhammad takes it from her hands and puts it on her head.)

| | |
|----------|--|
| 'Aisha | What's the matter with you? Are you mad? |
| Muhammad | Business is business. Farewell dear house. Times have forced me to sell you. But I must paint you first. |

47 - 23 In the text - 'A Jew and a crazy Arab' - 'A Jew and a pennyless Arab' with alliteration, assonance and rhyme in the words 'spinning top', 'crazy' and 'pennyless Arab'

48 see 22

49 This is a very bitter attack on the leaders of Algerian trade unions. This sequence is also used in the writer's other plays.

50 In the text - 'why did I mix with him to sell my coat', and, 'why did I associate with him to sell my jumper'. The words 'coat' and 'jumper' are transliterations of *paletot* and *tricot*, they are used to keep the rhyme. The connotation of the verses is good friendship between Muhammad and Moses.

(Muhammad is painting his house and singing. Enter a beggar.)

Beggar O friends of God! O wretched! *(to Muhammad)* - Listen!

Muhammad Yes?

Beggar Come down!

Muhammad I'm busy!

Beggar I told you to come down!

Muhammad I already told you I'm busy!

Beggar I'm telling you again, come down!

(Muhammad gets down)

Muhammad What do you want?

Beggar Charity please!

Muhammad Come up with me.

(Both on the ladder)

Beggar Please give me a penny.

Muhammad May God help you! I'm personally stuck with my own problems.

Beggar Why did you call me up then?

Mohammad Why did you call me down?

(Muhammad beats the beggar who runs away. Enter Father Dinar)

TABLEAU 15

Father Dinar⁵¹ Is this house for sale?

Muhammad Yes sir.

Father Dinar I give you one hundred dinars for it.

Muhammad Business is not my trade. My grandfather was a blacksmith and a farmer, he left us THIS...

Father Dinar What? This old nail?

Muhammad This rusty old nail is the only thing I possess, it's all my fortune. If you're buying the house you must leave it as it is.

Father Dinar What kind of madness is this..?

Muhammad Take it or leave it. EVerything is for sale except my grandfather's nail.

⁵¹ In the text *Bū Dīnār*: *Bū* meaning 'father of...' and *Dīnār* is the currency name used in many Arab countries. Here the name refers to the character of the rich Arab merchant. We were faced with the alternative of using 'Father Shilling', 'Father Penny' or 'Father Sterling' but we thought 'Father Dinar' fits better because 'Dinar' reflects the identity of the Arab merchant.

Father Dinar Let's go to sign the deeds.
 Muhammad But on one condition, the nail must be mentioned.
 Father Dinar Alright let's go.

TABLEAU 16

(Enter Rabbi, Moses and Esther his fiancée.)

Rabbi (*singing*) My children, I'll let you a house
 From the greedy man⁵²
 My children I'll let you a house from Father Dinar.

(To Father Dinar) Father Dinar, do you have a house for sale?

Father Dinar Yes I have a house for you.

Rabbi An Arab's house?

Father Dinar A house behind Solomon Tomb. It used to belong to a vagrant by the name of Muh Zitūn. But you know that I'm exposing myself to danger. If the Arabs hear that I'm trading with the Jews, they'll kill me.⁵³

Rabbi I know *(He pushes Moses aside)* Let me introduce you Esther, Moses' fiancée. She's looking for a house.

Father Dinar Oh I'll do anything for beauty!⁵⁴

Moses Indeed... What else?

TABLEAU 17

(Enter Hitler with Chief Mufti of Palestine. Some members of the chorus stand aside to play the role of Nazis).

Nazis Heil Hitler!

Hitler The struggle against communism is the first priority.⁵⁵

Nazis Heil Hitler!

Mufti (*Singing*) Hitler came upon us eh! (bis)
 Hitler came upon us, O God be with us.
 Islam and Arabism, Arabism and Islam
 Half the world belongs to us. As for the Jews
 Hitler himself will exterminate them⁵⁶

(Hitler and the Mufti shake hands)

Nazis Heil Hitler!

⁵² The word in the text means 'broker' in Algerian but it has the connotation of 'greedy'.

⁵³ The author alludes to Palestinians who sold properties to Jews.

⁵⁴ In the text 'for the sake of beauty I try very hard'. The author has been constantly sarcastic about the Muslim clergy and the rich.

⁵⁵ In the text 'it is the first duty'.

⁵⁶ In the text 'Hitler will exterminate them on his own'.

Chorus (*Singing*) Hitler came upon us eh! (bis)
 Hitler came upon us
 O God be with us!

TABLEAU 18

Mufti Death to the Jews!

Arabs Death to the Jews!

Rabbi Death to the Arabs!

Jews Death to the Arabs!

*(Battle between Arabs and Jews)*⁵⁷

Muhammad Hit me Moses and show the Arabs that I'm not a Jew.

Moses What do you want me to do? The Jews too think I'm an Arab.

Muhammad They're setting fire to your house.

Moses Yours is already burning.

*(They start to sing a lament song.)*⁵⁸

You left me lamenting and crying
 And my tears are useless. Please
 Help me friends! Help me neighbours.

Arabs Death to the Jews!

Jews Death to the Arabs!

The fanatic Where is that son of a bitch who frequents Moses?

Chorus Moses ran away.

The fanatic I'm looking for Muhammad. Does he live round here?

Chorus Yes. He doesn't live far from here.

Chorus leader You hold this wall and I'll go to call him.

The fanatic The wall?

Chorus This wall is very old and it may fall. What's the matter? Come on, hold it.

The fanatic Alright, go and don't be long.

⁵⁷ We do not know which battle the author is referring to but there were riots in 1929 and mainly between 1936 and 1939 known as the Arab Revolt.

⁵⁸ The words and tune are from a popular Algerian song entitled "Please Friends".

TABLEAU 19*(Enter Muhammad)*

- Muhammad Why are you puffing and struggling
And your back against the wall is breaking?⁵⁹
- The fanatic I'm holding the wall because it may crumble. And I'm waiting for Moses'
neighbour, that scoundrel.
- Muhammad If you have to hold the wall, why don't you use your stick as a support?
- The fanatic Do you think it's a good idea?
- Muhammad Let's see. *(He takes the stick and beats him.)*
- The fanatic *(screaming)* Oh! Oh! Oh!
- Muhammad You see, there is nothing wrong with the wall.
So leave it for it doesn't need you at all
And don't be afraid, your religion won't fall.⁶⁰

TABLEAU 20

- Moses O Wall! O Wall!⁶¹ My dear Wall, you are the only thing left for me in this
religion!⁶²
- Muhammad Hello! Hello Moses! You beetle face, give us a kiss!⁶³
- Moses You are always leaving, always coming back, always wandering like a
mosquito.⁶⁴
- Rabbi O Wall! O Wall! Moses! O Wall! O Wall!
- Muhammad Come on, stop playing the fool!⁶⁵
- Rabbi Shut up you heretic and go away! You should show respect for a place like
this. This is the wall where our ancestors used to lament. *(He turns his
back and starts to lament).* O Wall! O Wall!
- Muhammad Sticks out! Tiles in!⁶⁶
- (Enter Herbert Samuel)*
- Herbert Samuel *(to Rabbi)* Let me introduce myself! I am Sir HERBERT SAMUEL, BRITISH HIGH
COMMISSIONER in PALESTINE!⁶⁷
- Rabbi This is a sacred wall.

⁵⁹ Literal translation. This is another Joha tale.

⁶⁰ Literal translation. We believe that the author added the phrase 'don't worry about your religion to keep the alliteration and the assonance.

⁶¹ Wailing Wall.

⁶² In the text assonance between the words *dīn* (religion) and *dunia* (life).

⁶³ Literal translation. Very poor and meaningless line. 'you beetle face...' is added to keep assonance and rhyme with Moses.

⁶⁴ In the text 'you left and you came back and you're still turning like a beetle'.

⁶⁵ The word in the text derives from the word *mrābī* which gave *marabout* in French and English but with the meaning of soothsayer or mystic.

⁶⁶ Literal translation.

⁶⁷ Samuel Herbert Louis - First British High Commissioner of Palestine (1920 - 1925).

- Herbert Samuel *shalom!*
- Rabbi *shalom!*
- Muhammad He is both English and Zionist. He was lamenting, now he has become High Commissioner.⁶⁸
- Herbert Samuel (*to Muhammad and Moses*) Your presence in the demonstrations⁶⁹ proves that you are dangerous agitators. You have twenty-four hours to leave the country.
- Rabbi You claim to be a Zionist and you deport Moses your Jewish brother?
- Herbert Samuel Moses will go and come back. It's obvious that this is just a cover up.⁷⁰
- (The rabbi waves goodbye at Moses. Herbert Samuel replies.)*
- Rabbi *Shalom!*
- Herbert Samuel *Shalom!*
- Moses *Shalom!*
- Muhammad So, this is it! You're colonising me!
- Moses Speak to the rabbi.
- Muhammad Do you think I'm a fool? As soon as I turn my back you take my house.
- Moses What do you want me to do?
- Muhammad Well they can deport me, they can put me in jail, but my roots are here and here I shall stay and die.
- Herbert Samuel That's the criminal! Arrest him!

TABLEAU 21

- Rabbi Every land you touch with your feet is yours!⁷¹
- Chorus Every land we touch with our feet is ours!
- Rabbi Nobody can resist you!⁷²
- Chorus Nobody can resist us!
- Rabbi "And thou shalt consume all the people which the Lord thy God shall deliver thee, thine eye shall have no pity upon them."⁷³
- Chorus And our eyes shall have no pity upon them.

⁶⁸ This is a very good play on the words 'lament' and 'Commissioner' which we are unable to bring into English.

⁶⁹ Op. cit footnote 32.

⁷⁰ This is an Algerian idiom, its literal translation is 'let me cover the sun with a sieve'.

⁷¹ Deuteronomy Ch. 11, v.24 and Joshua Ch.1, v.3.

⁷² Deuteronomy Ch.11, v.25.

⁷³ Deuteronomy Ch. 7, v.16.

Mufti (*singing*) Walk on the land of God the most helpful
 Be the soldiers of the Lord of the Universe
 Palestine belongs to us and not to strangers.⁷⁴

(Enter English Officer, Moses, Muhammad and the cock.)

Jews Israel!

Arabs Palestine!

English Officer (*to a Jew*) This Arab is after you.

Jews Israel!

English Officer (*to an Arab*) The Jews are the cause of all our problems.

Arabs Palestine!

Mufti Let the scoundrel who has harmed the cock answer me. And if you like its legs add more spices.⁷⁵

(Enter two officers representing France and the U.S.A.)

France My English cousin has not invited us to the battle.⁷⁶

America He eats the beaten cock by himself and he sells the winner.

France I told you he wants everything for himself.

America We must get the U.N. involved in this.

England Muhammad, if you were not a coward you would fight for independence.

Ā'isha Hit him Muhammad!

England Moses, you're going to win. Just give me time to tame the Arabs.

Rabbi Come on Moses, give him a good punch!

Jews Israel!

Arabs Palestine!

America Stop it at once! I order you by law to separate these cocks!

England You have ruined me you scoundrel.

America Don't soil your reputation. Let the Arabs and the Jews fight for you.
 Cock-fighting is a sin on sacred land.

Chorus Ooh! Ooh!

America Cock-fighting is over. We shall switch to sport, boxing, punches.

Voice from the chorus The Organisation of the Big Nations organises a big match Muhammad Zitiun vs Moses the roadsweeper.

⁷⁴ These lines are from an Algerian patriotic anthem.

⁷⁵ Literal translation.

⁷⁶ Literal translation.

| | |
|--|--|
| Jews | Israel! |
| Arabs | Palestine! |
| Rabbi | You know Moses, I trained to become a boxer ever since I was a child but in the end I chose to be a rabbi. This is my family tradition, we're all rabbis from father to ancestor. And if you come to think of it this rink ⁷⁷ is not a synagogue and you're not a boxer ⁷⁸ alone against the Muslims who the more you hit them the more they want. |
| Mufti | "O you who have attained to faith! If you help (the cause of) God, He will help you, and will make firm your steps." ⁷⁹ |
| Chorus | Seyf Addīn Ḥādīj Amīn! (3 times) |
| England | The Zionists must not let the Arabs win their independence. |
| France | The Arabs must keep fighting Israel if we want them to forget our presence in their country. |
| England | Agreed. |
| America | Let me referee ⁸⁰ the match because I'm American that is I'm new and they don't know me yet. |
| <i>(The match starts. The Jews win.)</i> | |
| 'Āisha | O Muhammad! |
| <i>(Muhammad turns round. Moses hits him.)</i> | |
| Arabs | Allah! |
| Chorus leader | What a mess! They're one hundred million Arabs and five hundred million Muslims, and they lost! |
| 'Āisha | The Arabs are not properly armed but the Jews are supplied from East and West. |
| America | Moses won in the first round. |
| Jews | Israel! Israel! Israel! |
| Arabs (<i>crying</i>) | Oh! Oh! |
| America | Don't worry I shall organise other matches for you. |
| France | Good idea. ⁸¹ |
| England | We'll get rich. |
| Voice from chorus | America, France and England are happy with their plan. Their interest is to sell arms. |

⁷⁷ 'Rink' is transliterated in the text. It is also used in Algerian.

⁷⁸ 'Boxer' in the text is the transliteration of the French word *boxeur*, also used in Algerian.

⁷⁹ The Koran, ch.47, v.7. Translation by Muhammad Asad (see bibliography).

⁸⁰ The transliteration of the French word *arbitre* is used in the text. This word passed into Algeria.

⁸¹ In the text the word used means 'it's sticking' implying 'it's great'.

America, England and France Now we're going to sell you arms!

Jews Israel! Israel! Israel!

Arabs (*in a dirge*) He was hit with the Koran
Then stunned by Moshe Dayan
He was hit with the Koran
And got his skull broken.⁸²

TABLEAU 22

Arabs (*singing*) Where to, where to Oh 'Abd-'Azīz?

Moses Where does this Sultan come from?

Muhammad This is a great Sultan. We have brought him on a special ship⁸³ and to spare him any change to his habits in the desert we have pitched a tent for him on this very ship so that he can relax and breathe the fresh air just like what he is used to in the desert.

Moses I've never seen such^a thing.

Muhammad Well, you see, the President of America, the greatest country in the world, is himself coming to meet him in the sea.

Roosevelt Very pleased to meet you!

'Abd Al-'Azīz Me too.⁸⁴

Roosevelt What can I do for you?

'Abd Al-'Azīz It is you Mister President⁸⁵ who wished to see me.

Roosevelt The Jews living in my country want to go back to Palestine.

Abdulazīz Impossible.

Roosevelt The Jews will be just a few amid the Arabs. They will help them in everything, especially in agriculture where they proved very successful.

'Abd Al-'Azīz You gave the Jews millions of dollars. If you had given them to the Arabs they would have done the same if not more.

Roosevelt The criminal Hitler exterminated several million Jews.

'Abd Al-'Azīz Well, you should explain to those people that the genocide is not the responsibility of the Arabs. You have supplied them with arms, then why don't they go and fight Hitler instead of harassing our brothers in Palestine.

⁸² In the text 'he hit him with the Koran and broke his head.'

⁸³ The word for ship is *babūr* from the French word *vapeur*, and 'vapour' in English. Hence, *bateau a papeur* or steam ship.

⁸⁴ Literal translation.

⁸⁵ The Algerian particle *ṣī* is short for *sayyad* meaning mister, sir, gentleman. It is always used in Algerian as a mark of respect.

- Roosevelt The Free World relies on your Excellency specially you as the Guardian⁸⁶ of Mecca, the Sacred House of God.
- 'Abd Al-'Azīz Impossible, Palestine is a sacred place for the Arabs.
- Roosevelt Let's forget about this. I've come to talk about the war. We need a few harbours for our warships.⁸⁷ We're also interested in a large base for our warplanes.
- 'Abd Al-'Azīz I am willing to help you Mister President but I don't want any foreign rule like in Egypt, Syria or Iraq.
- Roosevelt As long as I am president of America I will not allow any attack on the Arab people.
- 'Abd Al-'Azīz We won't sell an inch of our land but you may rent the necessary areas for a period of five years after which you'll leave us a part of the arms.
- Roosevelt And we ask you not to attack our friends and you must push back any enemy attack.
- 'Abd Al-'Azīz And on your part you must help the Arabs towards independence.
- Roosevelt After the war there will be no more colonialism. As for Syria and Lebanon De Gaulle has promised their independence and I shall remind him of his word. Now let's talk oil, gas, business.⁸⁸ I give you four dollars a barrel and build a 750 kilometre pipe line.⁸⁹ As a token of my friendship, take my chair, the only dear possession I've ever had in my life.
- (He gives him the wheelchair.)*
- The Gandūr People⁹⁰ "His (seat of power) overspreads the heavens and the earth, and he alone is truly exalted tremendous".⁹¹
- Chorus Where to, where to O 'Abd Al-'Azīz?

TABLEAU 23

- Moshe Dayan The Arabs are confused. The English have agreed with us and they are already leaving. They agree with us to kick the Arabs out of Palestine.
- England *(to Moshe Dayan)* Take these arms and don't say a word.
- Moshe Dayan "But because the Lord loved you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh King of Egypt."⁹² Thank God the Most Powerful!

⁸⁶ In the text 'Guard'. The author uses the word 'guard' instead of 'Guardian' either for the purpose of irony or he did not think of the title given to the King of Saudi Arabia as 'King and Guardian of the Two Sacred Places'. (Mecca and Medina). He is called the 'Guardian of the Two Sacred Places' (*Ḥāris Al-Ḥaramayn*).

⁸⁷ In the text 'ships carrying arms'.

⁸⁸ Transliterated in the text.

⁸⁹ In the text the word 'pipe line' is the transliteration of the French word *tuyau*.

⁹⁰ 'Gandūr' from *Gandūra*, a traditional men's robe with wide short sleeves and a long 'v' neck worn mainly in North Africa. The author stereotypes the Muslim clergy and the ruling classes of the Arab world in these robes and turbans round their heads.

⁹¹ The Koran ch.2, v.255, in Assad Muhammad, *Qur'an*, Dar Al-Andalus, Gibraltar, E.J. Brill, London, 1980.

⁹² Deuteronomy, ch. 7, v.8.

Jewish soldiers Thank God the Most Powerful!

(Moshe Dayan addresses the people of Deir Yassine in Palestine)

Moshe Dayan Order to the people of Deir Yassine: you have a quarter of an hour to leave your homes.

(The Jewish soldiers fire and kill many people)

‘Aisha They killed everyone.

Moshe Dayan This is what is awaiting all of you if you don't leave Palestine.

Arabs of Palestine *(singing)*

How often have I wondered
About the Palestinian Revolution
About the blood of young men
Gushing and soaking the whole country!⁹³

TABLEAU 24

Chorus *(singing)* Speed up flying carpet!
I'm longing for the Nile.
I've travelled much
And now I find the way
Home too long!⁹⁴

Father Dinar Your Majesty, only engineers from Japan can deal with the building of the new city. Great Britain will purify our sea water. The United States will deal with the agrarian reform. Finally staunch officers from Hitler's time⁹⁵ will organise our army.

(The Sultan falls asleep. Father Dinar and Nassar carry him to his bed.)

Nassar His Majesty is tired, I'm taking him to his bed.

Father Dinar I must do my duty too.

(They put him in his bed. Father Dinar finds money under the bed. Surprised, he goes to Nassar.)

Nassar What is it?

Father Dinar The Sultan keeps a lot of money under his bed. Come, take a look, the bed of this rat is full of money.⁹⁶

Nassar Take this money and gold with you and go. Take the Sultan to the French Riviera.⁹⁷

Father Dinar *(aside)* This is a *coup d'état*...
(to Nassar) This is a *coup d'état*?⁹⁸

⁹³ The author has adapted the words to the tune of a popular Algerian song composed just after Independence in 1962. The title is "How much I wonder" by Rabah Dariassa - The last two verses in the text read - 'And the blood of young men is dripping and flowing everywhere'.

⁹⁴ Lines from the Egyptian song *Busāt Al-Rīḥ* ("The Flying Carpet") by Farīd Al-Atrash.

⁹⁵ Literal translation.

⁹⁶ Literal translation.

⁹⁷ Transliteration of *Côte d'Azur*.

⁹⁸ Transliteration of *coup d'état*. We opted to keep the French word.

- Nassar No, this is just a little score between us. Once in Europe, give him the money and the gold. And tell the press that the Free Officers never touched a hair of the king. We are not communists.⁹⁹
- Chorus (*singing*) Speed up flying carpet!
I'm longing for the Nile!
- Nassar I am Nassar and you are Nassar.¹⁰⁰
- Father Dinar And one of us is a loser.¹⁰¹
- Chorus I have travelled much
And now I find the way
Home too long!

TABLEAU 25

(Enter Muhammad. He goes to sleep.)

Mufti (*calling for dawn prayer.*) "Allāhu Akbar! Allāhu Akbar!.. Prayer is better than sleep!"¹⁰²

- Muhammad There is nothing wrong with sleep.
- ‘Aīsha Get up, it's dawn!
- Muhammad Later!
- ‘Aīsha You told me to wake you. Come on, get up!
- Muhammad Later!
- ‘Aīsha Get up! This is the right time to look for work.
- Muhammad Later, I said!
- ‘Aīsha Later?

(She gets a pail of water and pours it on him.)

- Get up!
- Muhammad Bitch! I asked you to wake me not to startle me.

⁹⁹ Transliteration of *communiste*. The word is used in Algerian.

¹⁰⁰ We have kept the second 'Nassar' which in fact is a word meaning 'victorious' to keep the alliteration in the text.

¹⁰¹ Literal translation.

¹⁰² Lines from the call for prayer at dawn.

TABLEAU 26

(Muhammad Zitūn goes out. On his way he meets Sultan 'Abdallah and his men. It is their hunting day.)

Sultan May God protect us!¹⁰³ Why should we meet with this miserable face early in the morning? I hope he won't bring us bad luck in our hunting.¹⁰⁴

General¹⁰⁵ It's a bad omen!

Sultan Put him in jail!

Muhammad The Sultan and his court have arms to hunt and we the people have nothing to liberate Palestine.

Sultan By the way, have you thought of releasing the vagrant we met this morning?

General He refuses to go your Majesty.

Sultan What do you mean?

General He refuses to go, he wishes to see you.

Sultan Bring him in!

General Yes Your Majesty!

(Muhammad is brought in.)

Sultan Here, take this money. This morning I was afraid the hunting started badly. But praise be to Allah, I have never had a better day.

Courtiers Praise be to Allah!

Muhammad I don't know who brought bad luck to either of us, you or me.

Sultan This time you are forgiven. But I don't want to see your face in this kingdom anymore.

(Exit Muhammad)

TABLEAU 27

General Ben Gourion and Moshe Dayan have agreed with us, we can take the land of the peasants they have deported from Palestine.

Sultan We must retain the Jordan River for ourselves.

General So far Ben Gourion has left us only the West Bank.

Sultan It's not enough, we need the road to Haifa.

General Here comes General Dayan, Commander-In-Chief of the Israeli armed forces. Let's discuss it with him.

Moshe Dayan *shalom!*

¹⁰³ Literal translation. Phrase often uttered before anything or anybody thought to be of bad omen.

¹⁰⁴ In the text - 'and we are going hunting'.

¹⁰⁵ The word is transliterated in the text and commonly used in Algerian.

| | |
|--|---|
| Sultan | <i>assalām!</i> I am going to pray for Palestine and explain to the people our new policy. |
| Palestinian People (<i>singing</i>) | And the treacherous leaders Sold Palestine in the name Of Arab Unity! ¹⁰⁶ |
| Muhammad | Brothers! Brothers! Are there any Palestinians among you? |
| Palestinian People | We are all Palestinians, refugees, exiled... |
| Muhammad | You're in trouble! |
| General | The King! |
| Chorus | Long live the king! Long live King 'Abdallah Al-Hashimi, descendant of our prophet Muhammad! Long live the king! ¹⁰⁷ |
| Sultan | <i>Allāhu Akbar!</i> |
| General | <i>Allāhu Akbar!</i> |
| People | <i>Allāhu Akbar!</i> |
| Muhammad | Thank you King of Jordan for the money you gave me this morning. I like hunting too, so I brought a gun with your money. |
| Sultan | There is no God but Allah... |
| Muhammad | And Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. ¹⁰⁸ |
| <i>(He kills the Sultan.)</i> ¹⁰⁹ | |
| Sultan | Ah! <i>(He kills Muhammad.)</i> ¹¹⁰ |
| People | Allah! My Shoes! My shoes! ¹¹¹ |

TABLEAU 28

| | |
|------------|-----------------|
| Moshe Dyan | Israel! Israel! |
| Jews | Israel! Israel! |
| Arabs | Nassar! Nassar. |
| Nassar | National unity! |
| Arabs | Nassar! |

¹⁰⁶ Sang on the tune of "How much I wonder" op.cit. footnote 63.

¹⁰⁷ Abdullah Ibn Hussein - First king of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Assassinated on July 20th, 1951, as he was leaving Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.

¹⁰⁸ "There is no God but Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah" is the Euphonious utterance of the basic formula of the Islamic faith; also referred to as the 'testimony'.

¹⁰⁹ Assassination of King Abdullah op. cit. footnote 83.

¹¹⁰ This is a confusing stage direction because Muhammad reappears later. In other versions of the play we have seen, there is no such act.

¹¹¹ The people are running to pick up their shoes because they were praying in the mosque. This is a cynical description of the reaction of the people to the killing.

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Nassar | Arab unity! |
| Arabs | Nassar! Nassar! Nassar! |
| England(<i>to France</i>) | Take the Sinai. |
| France | I'll supply you with planes and warships. |
| Jews | Israel! |
| Arabs | Palestine! |
| America | So, the match ¹¹² has started without me, and I am the referee! Cease fire! |
| England and France | Ceasefire? |
| England | Don't stop, keep firing. |
| France | Go on, charge. |
| Moshe Dayan | The Sinai is for me. |
| America | Stop it, you have soiled the Blue Helmets. ¹¹³ |
| England | They are barbarians ¹¹⁴ my friend. |
| France | They don't want to stop. |
| England | Well, since they don't want to stop, we shall send the paras. ¹¹⁵ |
| France | Ours are already there. |
| Moshe Dayan | The Sinai is for me. |
| Nassar | The swines are conspiring against me; they have already reached Port Said. |
| Soviet | On behalf of the Soviet Union I order you to cease fire. If you don't I shall fire a missile at you. |
| England | What? Are you going to give in to Russia? ¹¹⁶ |
| France | We are stronger. |
| America | The match is over, I have a meeting at the club, the Club of the Big Gods... |
| England | Who have the atomic bomb! ¹¹⁷ |
| Moshe Dayan | What? Do you think Nassar won't have his revenge? |
| America | Don't worry, I shall have a whole army on Arab territory under the cover of the U.N.. |

¹¹² The word 'match' is transliterated in the text.

¹¹³ Referring to the United Nations peace keeping troops.

¹¹⁴ In the text *swēfdj* plural of *sufēj* which is the transliteration of *sauvage*. The word has acquired another meaning in Algerian, that of naughty, horrible, rough...

¹¹⁵ The word is transliterated, it is also adopted in Algeria.

¹¹⁶ In the text *rūs* (Russia).

¹¹⁷ Transliteration of *la bombe atomique*.

| | |
|--|--|
| Moshe Dayan | Israel! |
| Jews | Israel! |
| Arabs of Palestine (<i>singing</i>) | Backed by Russia and America He knocked him down treacherously Then looked at him disdainfully. ¹¹⁸ |
| Jews | Israel! Israel! |
| Arabs | Nassar! Nassar! Nassar! |
| Muhammad | Yes you are Nassar the victorious and I am Muhammad the wretched. |
| Nassar | Let me give one blow! |
| Arabs | Let him give one blow! |
| Nassar | The prophet and his disciples will back me. |
| Jews | The prophet and his disciples will back them. |
| <i>(The battle starts, Moshe Dayan devises a stratagem and wins. Nassar runs away leaving his shoes behind.)</i> | |
| Muhammad (<i>singing</i>) | He gave him the officer's defeat And left him run bare feet Oh, he knocked him down. |

TABLEAU 29

(Enter Būnq̄iba¹¹⁹ followed by his wife Wassīla.)

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| People (<i>singing</i>) | O Būnq̄iba, your fortune Has brought us misfortune ¹²⁰ |
|---------------------------|--|

(Exit Wassīla. A group of people get round Būnq̄iba and start inflating him.)

Muhammad (*to group of people*) What are you doing?

| | |
|--------|---------------------------------|
| People | We are inflating the president. |
|--------|---------------------------------|

| | |
|----------|-------------------|
| Muhammad | Is this your job? |
|----------|-------------------|

| | |
|--------|---|
| People | We couldn't find a different job, so we keep inflating the president day and night, non stop. |
|--------|---|

| | |
|----------|--|
| Muhammad | Aren't you afraid he <i>will explode</i> ? |
|----------|--|

| | |
|--------|---------------------------------------|
| People | Yes, we actually want him to explode. |
|--------|---------------------------------------|

| | |
|----------|------------------------|
| Muhammad | I don't think he will. |
|----------|------------------------|

¹¹⁸ The words rhyme in the text. The last verse literally means - 'And stood at his head.'

¹¹⁹ The author is again playing on names. It is obvious that the character is President Bourguiba. The slight change of 'r' into 'n' gives the name a funny meaning, thus the president becomes 'Būnq̄iba' that is the 'pecker'.

¹²⁰ On the tune of a Lebanese song "Yā Ghzeyyē!" sang by Fayrouz.

- People Good things take time.¹²¹
- (Enter an American)*
- Būnq̄iba America is sending us dollars!
- People Dollars! Dollars! Dollars!
- (The Tunisian police beat the people who want to show the truth and unveil the traitor.)*
- Policeman *(beating a man)* Here, take this!
- Man *(screaming)* Oh! oh! oh!
- People O Būnq̄iba, the dollars
Are for you and your darling¹²²
- (singing on the same tune)*
- Būnq̄iba There is no war of liberation in South Vietnam. America is not against the independence of that country.
- (The police come down again on the people and tell the president to be harsh and punish hard.)*
- Policeman *(to colleague)* Slap him!¹²³
- People Long live President Būnq̄iba!
Long live the President of the Free World!
- (Student's enthusiasm encourages the people.)*
- Students So, we now receive the friends of Israel!
- (The people become aware after the students enthusiasm.)*
- People Būnq̄iba is a traitor... death to the traitor!
- Police Officer Mister President, the students and the people are burning the American Embassy.
- Būnq̄iba Get the party leaders and burn some Jewish shops. Put the students in jail..
- People *(singing on the same tune)* O Būnq̄iba, be damned.
For you're not ashamed.¹²⁴

TABLEAU 30

(Death of Gamal Abdul Nassar President of the Republic of Egypt.)

- Jews *(crying)* O Wall! O wall!
- Arabs *(crying)* O Nassar! O Nassar!

¹²¹ Algerian proverb meaning that if one wants good results, a good outcome... etc, one has to wait and be patient.

¹²² In the text the verse reads 'For the ḥabīb and the ḥabība'. Ḥabīb is the first name of Bourguiba, it also means the 'beloved' - ḥabība is the feminine of ḥabīb. However, the president's wife's real name is Wassīla.

¹²³ In Algerian the word also implies noise produced by the slap, thus a hard and harmful slap.

¹²⁴ The second verse reads - 'damnation follows you' - and rhymes with Būnq̄iba.

Moshe Dayan Cry! Moan! Lament! Why are you wailing?
 Jews We are not the only ones, the Arabs are also crying.
 Moshe Dayan What happened to them?
 Jews They lost Nassar.
 Moshe Dayan Nassar is dead? *(He laughs)* Ha, ha, ha!
 Arabs *(crying)* O Nassar! O Nassar!
(Enter Sadat with his wife)

TABLEAU 31¹²⁵

Chorus *(singing)* Nassar is dead, here comes Sadat
 Sadat the womanizer
 Sadat with Kissinger
 Are singing and dancing away

Kissinger *(singing and dancing)* These are small steps
 Come along and dance
 Come along fathead
 Run away from hell¹²⁶
 We'll cover you with dollars.

Mrs. Sadat Dollars! Dollars!

Assad O Sadat, you are very bad
 There is no more talk to add
 Help! Help! Help!

Sadat You President of Syria
 No more talk, and no hysteria
 If you want to understand
 Come and dance with our friend.¹²⁷

Kissinger You Commander of the Faithful
 You King Hussain the joyful!¹²⁸
 Take a few steps to the right (bis)

Arabs*(singing)*¹²⁹ Assad and Sadat
 Sadat and his ladies
 Sadat and his luxuries
 His cannons and his planes.

Mrs. Sadat Come to Egypt, you are most welcome.

Sadat Let me give a blow.

¹²⁵ On an Algerian folk music tune. The type of music here is meant for dancing.

¹²⁶ The word in the text also means 'fire'. This may imply the USSR as Egypt had strong links with Moscow.

¹²⁷ The verses rhyme in the text. We have added 'hysteria' and changed 'boss' by 'friend' to keep the rhyme.

¹²⁸ We have added joyful to keep the rhyme.

¹²⁹ The same tune as the previous one but sang on a slower tempo to make it a dirge.

Chorus I shall give a blow the priests' way¹³⁰ and save my neck.

Moshe Dayan (*addressing the Jews*)

- On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abraham, saying, "To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the River Euphrates, the land of the Hittites, the Gir'gashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Per'izzites, the Jeb'usites, and the impotents." ¹³¹

Jews My God! They're all Arabs?

(*Enter the Mufti with Arabs*)

Mufti (*singing*)

Walk on the land of God the most helpful!
Be the soldiers of the Lord of the Universe!
Palestine belongs to us and not to strangers! ¹³²

(*Fighting between Arabs and Jews*)

Mrs. Sadat You have liberated the Sinai, O darling!¹³³

Arabs (*singing*)

He is perplexed, one-eyed Moshe is perplexed
He is perplexed, one-eyed Moshe is perplexed
The Free World is perplexed.¹³⁴

(*Kissinger helps Dayan stand up*)

Arabs Punch him! Come on, more!

(*Sadat walks back, he doesn't want to fight. Moshe Dayan attacks; Kissinger pretends to stop the fighting.*)

Mrs. Sadat Darling!...

Palestinians

(*Singing*) He gave him a blow in Ramadan!
We thought he was the winner,
But now he is the loser,
He fell on his head.

TABLEAU 32

(*Arab Sultans and Emirs in negotiations with Kissinger about oil.*)

Voice from chorus They are trading the people's wealth at the expense of the free peoples.
They're having a good time.

¹³⁰ The author is making a very interesting allusion. The word in the text is *istolba* plural of *īālāb* which in standard Arabic means student. In Algerian, it originally meant 'student in Islamic studies' but acquired the meaning of 'Koran teacher' or 'a man of the clergy'. This refers to the 1973 war with Israel which coincided with the Yom Kippur and the tenth day of Ramadan.

¹³¹ Genesis - Ch. 15, v. 18 to 21. We do not know whether the author has used the French or the Arabic translation but he has not kept the order of the names in the Bible. He has also left out the following names: the Ken'ites, the Ken'izzites and the Kad'monites. He added the word 'impotents' in allusion to present day Arabs.

¹³² op.cit. footnote 49.

¹³³ Transliteration of the French *mon chéri*.

¹³⁴ In the text the verb used is 'to shit' with the meaning of 'diarrhoea'. The allusion is to the constant material support given by the USA to Israel.

Arab Sultans and Emirs(*aside*) This is the time for oil¹³⁵

And our weapon is oil
Let's put the price up,
Let's put the price up.

Kissinger

You little sultan, you were living
On broad beans¹³⁶ and cooking oil,
I gave you oil and you became rich,
Now you have turned into a monster showing your teeth
But don't worry, you'll get enough of the whip.

Palestinians

And the treacherous leaders
Sold Palestine in the name
Of Arab unity!

Palestinian Hymn

If they attack the refugee camps
I shall not surrender.
Even if they kill hundreds and thousands,
I shall not surrender
What to expect from the Arab leaders?
They have not liberated Palestine.
But they are laughing at me
Never, shall I surrender
And in Tal Azza'tar and Nabatieh
Never, ever shall I surrender
Cut me up, break my ribs
Come on, beat me up.

Assad(*singing*)

Syria entered Lebanon!
Syria entered Lebanon!¹³⁷

(*speaking*)

Enough is enough Yassar Arafat!
Kneel down and it's over
Enough is enough!

(*Massacre of the Palestinian people with the consent of Arab Sultans and Presidents*¹³⁸.)

Palestinians(*singing*)

In Tal-Azza'tar, we have seen
Arab Unity
In the blood of young men
Gushing and soaking the whole country!

(*Kissinger and the Arab Presidents and Kings dance on the bodies of the victims.*)

¹³⁵ Transliteration of the French *pétrole* meaning crude oil.

¹³⁶ This refers to the Egyptian habit of eating beans which has become a matter of prejudice and irony in Algeria.

¹³⁷ Syria intervened in Lebanon on 31st - 1st June 1976. The Arab League convened an urgent meeting of foreign ministers in Cairo on 8th June 1976. The meeting decided on an Arab Peace Keeping Force' - the Syrian army in Lebanon.

¹³⁸ The massacres of Tal-Azza'tar took place in August 1976. The author refers to the 'Cairo Meeting' hence the Arab intervention and the massacres which followed.

Chorus (*singing*) Assad and Sadat,
 Women and luxuries,
 Canons and bombers.
 This is the clan of the officers
 Who run away bare feet.
 The land of Palestine is deserted,
 The land of Lebanon is dead.
 Damn Assad and Sadat,
 Sadat with women
 Comfort and luxuries
 And all sweet things
 Assad and Sadat
 With pretty girls
 In flashy cars
 With nice drinks
 Enjoying life
 The swine is having a good time¹³⁹
 Sadat and the ladies.

(Enter Assad and Sadat each one thinking of what to do in case they see the King of Mecca¹⁴⁰ angry and upset. To make things easy for him they pretend to show him the right way.)

Assad Dear cousin you are upset, why be upset?
 Geneva¹⁴¹ is the right place for the right people
 Dear cousin, why be upset?
 Come to Geneva!

Sadat Dear cousin you are upset, why be upset?
 Geneva is the right place for the right people
 Dear cousin, why be upset?
 Come to Geneva!
 Dear cousin you are upset, why be upset?

(Enter the Palestinians who are aware that they are carrying the heavy burden.)

Palestinian chorus Arabism is like a broken brick.
 Islam destroyed it further
 Adding another Arabism with Europe
 All made in America.

TABLEAU 33

Egyptian chorus When the sun drowns in the ocean of mist
 When the wave of darkness sweeps the world
 When sight fades in the eye of those who can see
 When your way is lost in a maze of lines and circles
 You that wanders and seeks and understands
 You have no other guide but the eyes of words.¹⁴²

(Workers from the toiling mass which works hard and waters the land with its sweat but has no right to it are complaining about the high cost of living.)

¹³⁹ There are three words in this verse but we are unable to read the third word. The verse reads: 'The dog is living...' We have opted for 'having a good time' to keep the meaning of 'good life' in the song.

¹⁴⁰ Meaning the King of Saudi Arabia. The author is ironic here.

¹⁴¹ The Algerian phrase, 'to have shoulders' means 'to have connections'. The author uses the word 'shoulders' to keep the rhyme with 'upset' and 'Geneva' which is transliterated from the French 'Genève'.

¹⁴² Song by the Egyptian poet and singer. Sheikh Imam.

Workers Sadat has increased the price of bread and oil.
 First man Not only bread and oil, but bread, oil, sugar and meat.
 Second man Even cigarettes¹⁴³ and parafin¹⁴⁴.

(Mrs. Sadat walks in the middle of the crowd. She is recognised. A man points at her.)

First man That's the wife of Sadat the swine.
 Second man What's her name?
 Third man Jihān.
 Fourth man Jihān, the people are starving!
 The people are naked, they have no clothes!

Chorus Jihān, the people are naked!
 Jihān, the people are hungry! *(They demonstrate)*

(Enter Sadat with two soldiers ready to shoot.)

Sadat Fire!

(Chorus sings and calls for the revolution.)

Chorus Deprived workers!
 Chained workers!
 Enough! enough!
 Only grenades and bullets
 Will bring an end.
 This is a worker's fist
 Joining a peasant's fist
 Only struggle will bring
 Socialism!¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ The word used in the text is 'smoke' which is the general word for cigarettes, tobacco and smoke.

¹⁴⁴ The French word *gaz* (gas) gave *gēz* (parafin or crude oil) and *gāz* (gas) in Algerian. Parafin was until recently used throughout the country in oil lamps and portable stoves.

¹⁴⁵ Kateb Yacine has changed the words of the Internationale but kept the tune.

iii) Commentary

This play was first produced in 1976 as a revised version of La Guerre De Deux Mille Ans, a play about the history of Algeria and its different struggles. It also included sequences about Vietnam and Palestine. Its original title was La Guerre De Deux Mille Ans - Version Palestine, then it was changed to Falastīn Maghdūra but it is generally referred to as La Palestine. It is still performed in Algeria but with changes in content corresponding to new events in Palestine. Despite its continuous success the play was never shown on Algeria television or broadcast on radio, the reasons being essentially religious and political - Kateb Yacine's attacks against religion, religious leaders and Arab leaders or Arab régimes.

Plot and Structure

The main theme of the play as suggested in the title, is the betrayal of Palestine, not the betrayal of Arab Palestine as one might be tempted to think on first consideration, but the betrayal of both Arab and Jewish communities. Moses and Muhammad are both good friends and neighbours suggesting in a schematic way the kind of relationship that existed between the two communities and which has been replaced by open war. The play suggests that both communities are victims of religious, economic and political manoeuvring. The connivance of the clergy and capital on either side in their own interests aims to use religion to manipulate both communities and to create a confrontation. The conflict intensifies as outside elements prey on the country. The Zionist movement with the help of Britain and the United States and the sense of European guilt over the massacres of the Jews in the Second World War, establishes the state of Israel which leads to more violence inside the country and confrontation with neighbouring Arab countries. War breaks out and escalates as Britain, France and the United States interfere in order to sell arms. They intervene every time a conflict breaks out to sell more arms. In the process, the Arab leaders, manipulated by the United States and acting in their own interests betray the Palestinians. The result is that the two communities have been completely torn apart thus creating two separate entities, one under the name of Israel and the other, the Palestinians persecuted by Israel, imperialism and its allies including some Arab countries. The wandering Jew is replaced by the wandering Palestinian.

The play involves 61 characters, some real and some fictitious in 33 scenes of unequal length. The historic events are neither chronological nor do they follow a linear pattern. The play, as a result, lacks coherence. Kateb Yacine constantly shifts the action forward and backward, in space and in time. The spectator is swung from one period to another, from one situation to another through fast changing scenes which work almost like a puzzle that he has to solve by establishing the links between them in order to reconstruct the main theme of the play and its ultimate message.

The play operates on three major levels: religion, economics and politics. First it suggests that religion is a creation by men for the exploitation of other men and thus works hand in hand with capital for the same purpose - Rabbi and Merchant use Moses and the synagogue as a means to make money; Mufti, the rich landowner, diverts his people's attention who are starving through Islam and promises; Moses is not paid for his work by Rabbi and Muhammad steals olives in Mufti's garden, both victims being used as symbols of their respective communities. Furthermore, religious leaders like Rabbi and Mufti are also political leaders. The playwright thereby, implies that religion, capital and political leadership work together if they are not one and the same thing - Mufti is a religious leader, a rich landowner and a political (nationalist) leader. Although leaders engage their communities in conflict they deal in business with each other: Father Dinar buys a house from Muhammed and sells it to Rabbi who will rent it to Moses and his fiancée.

The characters are either fictitious like Muhammad, Moses, 'Āisha, or real like Sadat, Kissinger, Moshe Dayan, or even countries like America, France, England and used as symbols or stereotypes to represent an attitude, an action, or a situation. Thus the involvement of foreign powers - Britain, France, the United States and the Soviet Union (in one instance only) - and of Arab countries, is portrayed through schematic characters and scenes. For instance the conflict between Arabs and Jews is represented as follows:

- Cock fighting: riots, massacres and confrontation stirred by England, watched by France and stopped by America who wants to "move to sport, boxing and punches" and organises:
- Boxing matches: between Muhammad and Moses, that is between Israel and the Arab countries. Muhammed is no longer a Palestinian but an Arab. The successive 'matches' in the 'boxing ring' correspond to the successive wars in the Middle East which are organised by the 'cousins' America, England, and France and refereed by America.
- Hussein, Assad, Nassar and Sadat respectively represent Jordan, Syria and Egypt united against Israel but this unity has shown its efficiency in the massacre of Palestinians in Tal-Azza'tar. In Tableau 32, for example:

(Massacre of the Palestinian people with the consent of Arab Sultans and Presidents)

Palestinians (*singing*)

In Tal-Azza'tar we have seen
Arab Unity.
In the blood of young men.
Gushing and soaking the whole country.

The same Arab leaders exploit their people and are at the head of repressive governments. They are attracted to the American dollar, as suggested in the characters of Sadat and Būnq̄iba and their wives. Thus the whole issue seems to be a game

organised by America and dictated by the dollar, in other words, by the interests of the ruling classes.

What the play seems to highlight is that the struggle of Palestinians is the same struggle throughout the world and concerns all the poor, colonised and exploited people. It is, therefore, a class struggle on the international level. This is a recurrent theme in Kateb Yacine's plays, although there are more precise references to other struggles. The play about Vietnam, L'Homme Aux Sandales de Caoutchouc makes references to Algeria, Palestine, Black Americans and Africa and La Guerre De Deux Mille Ans or Mohamed, Prends Ta Valise also contain similar references and call for revolution.

Source of the Play

It seems that Kateb Yacine had undertaken a tedious task of documentation in preparing this play. In fact, he is known for carrying out thorough research for his plays. He travelled to Vietnam and worked for three years for L'Homme Aux Sandales de Caoutchouc. He also visited Palestinian camps in Lebanon and worked for about the same time for Palestine Betrayed. This work covers history books, newspapers, magazines and reviews, radio and television recordings, film documentaries, interviews, literary works, folk literature, music, poetry, anecdotes, the Bible and the Koran. In the case of Palestine Betrayed he essentially deals with the history of Palestine and the Middle East. He has borrowed verses and references, for instance to the Burning Bush and to Moses and his rod, from the Bible. He has also used verses from the Koran.

The historical material he has selected is of two kinds: well known events like riots, wars, political, military and religious figures and less known or concealed facts which official history, mainly in the Arab-Muslim world avoids mentioning - such as Hādj Muhammad Amin Al-Husseini a wealthy nationalist extremist, Mufti of Jerusalem and President of the Supreme Muslim Council¹⁴⁶ who was behind several riots and anti-Jewish massacres in the 1920s and 1930s. His extremism led him to support Nazism and meet Hitler in 1941. Another aspect which is rarely mentioned is that Herbert Samuel, the first British High Commissioner of Palestine (1920-1925) was a fervent supporter of Zionism. This information is condensed and compressed in humorous or satirical scenes, a good number of which are transpositions of stories about Joha the folk tale hero.

In popular oral tradition Joha is an ambivalent character. He is naive, idiotic, simple and silly but he is also sly, clever, witty, shrewd and cunning. If he appears simple and behaves foolishly it is to deceive people, usually the sultan, the rich or the priests. He always acts on behalf of justice and his enemies are always taken in. Joha is

¹⁴⁶ Elected in January 1922.

also famous for his seething repartees and remarks. The facetiae of Joha are, with minor differences, common to many societies:

On the eastern coast of Africa the facetiae of Djoh'a are attributed to Abû Nuâs. But our hero is known in Nubia (Djawh'a), in Malta (Djah'an), in Sicily and Italy (Giufa or Giucca). We also find him in Albania (Giucha). However, in Yugoslavia, Armenia, Bulgaria, the Caucasus, Georgia, Russia and Turkestan people mainly know him as Nasr al-Dîn Khôdja.¹⁴⁷

Kateb Yacine first used Joha under the name - 'Nuage de Fumée' ('Cloud of Smoke') - in La Poudre d'Intelligence¹⁴⁸ a farce with an arranged succession of sketches based on facetiae of Joha which the playwright reshaped and adapted to the theme of the play and to his new hero. He thereby created 'Nuage de Fumée' a Marxist philosopher engaged in a perpetual struggle against the Sultan (feudal system), the Merchant (the rich), the Cadi (judge - legal system) and the Mufti (Islam). In all works published after La Poudre d'Intelligence - sketches published in magazines and newspapers¹⁴⁹ and L'Homme Aux Sandales de Caotchouc and in all unpublished plays performed in Algerian Arabic - 'Nuage de Fumée' becomes Muhammad a character who shifts within the play between a symbol representing the people - an exploited worker, an ordinary citizen or a peasant - and a revolutionary. Most sketches in his early works published in French reappear in all the later plays in Algerian with some slight changes. The following table indicates the plays where the facetiae of Joha and some sequences in Palestine Betrayed appear: (PI - La Poudre d'Intelligence; HSC - L'Homme Aux Sandales de Caotchouc; MPV - Mohamed Prends Ta Valise; G2 - La Guerre De Deux Mille Ans.)

¹⁴⁷ Dejeux, Jean - Djoh'a, Hier et Aujourd'hui, Editions Naaman, Sherbrooke, Québec, Canada, 1978, p. 16.

¹⁴⁸ In Le Cercle Des Représailles, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1959.

¹⁴⁹ Mainly in the French literary magazine Esprit.

| Sequences in: | | |
|---|--|---|
| Palestine Betrayed | Titles of other plays with titles of tableaux ¹⁵⁰ | Original Facctiae |
| Tableau 1 | G2. The Boxing Rabbi | |
| Tableaux 2,3 & 4 | G2. The Return of Moses Sweeper and Prophet | Tableau 4: a)Joha and the Poor Man b)Joha and the Man Who Had a Dream |
| Tableau 5 | G2. Moses Becomes Conscious | |
| Tableaux 7 & 8 | G2. Colonisation of Palestine | |
| Tableau 9 | MPV. HSC and G2 | |
| Tableau 10 | MPV and G2. Muhammad Steals Olives in Father Dinar's Garden | |
| Tableau 12 and The Sequence of the donkey | PI | Joha and the pregnant Pot. Joha and the Young Man |
| Tableau 13 | MPV and G2. Muhammad and Moses: Friends and Neighbours | |
| Tableau 14 | PI and G2 | Joha and the Beggar |
| Tableau 15 | PL HSC. MPV and G2 Muhammad and the Nail | Joha's Nail ¹⁵¹ |
| Tableau 16 | G2 - Father Dinar Sells Muhammad's House to Rabbi | |
| Tableau 17 | G2. Hitler Takes Power and Mufti Relies On Him to Liberate Palestine. | |
| Tableau 18 | G2. Religious Riots | |
| Tableau 19 | G2. The Fanatic | Joha and the Wall |
| Tableau 20 | G2. The Wailing Wall | |
| Tableau 21 | G2. The Major Powers Organise Cock-Fighting and Boxing Matches between Moses and Muhammad. | |
| Tableau 22 | G2. President Roosevelt Offers His Armchair to 'Abdul'aziz King of Saoudi Arabia. | |
| Tableau 23 | G2. Massacres of Deir Yassine (Palestine). | |
| Tableau 24 | G2. Coup d'Etat in Egypt. | |

¹⁵⁰ Titles of Tableaux in Mohamed, Prends Ta Valise and La Guerre De Deux Mille Ans appear in handouts given before performances

¹⁵¹ Has become an idiom for someone determined not to move

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Tableau 25 and 26 | PI and G2 |
| Tableau 27 | G2. Execution of King Abdallah of Jordan. |
| Tableau 29 | G2. President Bourrequibat ¹⁵² Denies the War of Liberation in South Vietnam, Betrays Palestine and Acts Severely Against the Students. |

It appears clearly that out of the 33 scenes in Palestine Betrayed 26 with 7 Joha anecdotes are borrowed from previous plays. The new scenes which Kateb Yacine added appear mainly at the end of the play. Mohamed, Prends Ta Valise also borrows a great deal from La Poudre d'Intelligence, L'Homme Aux Sandales de Caotchouc, Le Polygone Etoilé¹⁵³ and other published sketches and in turn La Guerre De Deux Mille Ans borrows from all the previous works. It seems, therefore, that each new play is a revised version of the previous one with a selection of scenes and added new material. All works, starting with L'Homme Aux Sandales de Caotchouc, are part of what Kateb Yacine calls "La Fresque" (The Fresco) a continuous creation of additional sketches incorporated in plays dealing with 'the struggles of peoples throughout the world' and portraying new developments in world events. Consequently the plays are never completed in a definite and final form. For instance, the version of Palestine Betrayed in this study has been altered many times and some scenes such as the one on Bounqiba, have been removed and others added as a result of new developments over the Palestinian issue. Thus Kateb Yacine argues that: "We are engaged in a kind of theatre which raises new problems. The texts we have established are approximate texts because situations change, develop. Political theatre involves such incessant changes."¹⁵⁴

The other source of material is music and song. The author uses well known songs and tunes in Algeria, both Algerian and other Arab songs. He keeps the tunes and changes the lyrics when appropriate, using new words to portray or comment on a situation. The songs are often short and contain only two or three verses and/or a refrain, as with the songs "The Flying Carpet" and "Tal-Azza'tar".

¹⁵² Kateb Yacine plays on late President Bourguiba's name. It becomes Būnq̄iba in this play.

¹⁵³ Kateb Yacine. Le Polygone Etoilé, Le Seuil, Paris, 1966.

¹⁵⁴ Allesandra, Jacques "Le Théâtre Revolutionnaire Algérien" in Travail Théâtral, 32-33, December 1979.

Function

Palestine Betrayed, like all Kateb Yacine's plays, is political in nature and is another aspect of his "théâtre de combat". He has always felt deeply concerned about Palestine and Vietnam as well as over the tragedies of other people. His early rebellion against colonialism and his condemnation of the evils and injustice suffered by Algeria are also expressed for Vietnam, Palestine, Black Americans, South Africa and Central and Latin America. Mostefa Lacheraf, a major Algerian intellectual and sociologist writes about Kateb Yacine in the following words:

The intensity with which Kateb Yacine had always felt the painful suffering of the Algerian people, was equalled only by that which never ceased and which still continues to move him deeply and motivate him about the Vietnamese tragedy and the interminable martyrdom of the Palestinian people. Just as was the case with Algeria, he does not translate these colonial tragedies into conventional or circumstantial literature. With L'Homme Aux Sandales de Caotchouc and Palestine Trahie [The Man With Rubber Sandals and Palestine Betrayed] he remains the only Algerian and Arab playwright to have probed so deeply as to reach the most sensitive reality of imperialism and its monstrous Israeli reflection, the evil shadow of Western hegemonies, enemies of the Third World.¹⁵⁵

Kateb Yacine feels that the struggle is not over in Algeria and that the Algerian people, although concerned about Palestine, should know the real and objective aspects of the Palestinian tragedy. Thus, in talking about his play on Vietnam (L'Homme Aux Sandales de Caotchouc) and also referring to Palestine, he has stated that:

The play expresses my vision as an Algerian in the full sense of the word. There are now two spheres of interest for Algeria: Vietnam and Palestine... The play comes at a time when the Algerian people are in a state of emergency. This is an opportunity for them to find themselves and mobilise again.¹⁵⁶

The statement and the purpose of the play are explicit and call for a continuous struggle. It suggests that the struggle of the Palestinians is not isolated but concerns everybody and thus is of an international dimension. The 'enemies of the Palestinian people', of the working class, hence of the 'Revolution' are named and the mechanisms of their strategies unveiled and exposed in a succession of satirical sketches. Thus the play starts by unveiling the nature of religion and its aims as well as the 'true' role of the clergy. Both Islam and Judaism are shown to serve the interests of a minority, to keep people in ignorance and poverty and exploit them. All the first scenes involving Rabbi, Mufti, Merchant and Father Dinar - religion and capital - on one hand, and on

¹⁵⁵ Lacheraf, Mostafa - "Kateb Yacine, sous Le Double Symbole de la Mémoire Créatrice et du Souvenir Partagé", in Actualité de l'Emigration, No. 72, 14 January 1987, pp. 22-27.

¹⁵⁶ Du Theil Jean Marc Martin, "Kateb Yacine - Avant-Première - "Ce que j'ai vu au Vietnam a été pour moi l'aube d'une renaissance", in Lettres Françaises No. 1410, 17-23 Novembre 1971, pp. 16-17.

the other hand Moses, Muhammad and people - ordinary people, members of the working class - are explicit in intent and comment.

Islam, Judaism, Zionism and England 'have created a conflict between Palestinians and Jews'. Then Zionism with the involvement of the three superpowers in the Middle East are shown to plot against the Palestinian and Arab peoples with the connivance of some Arab governments for their own interests. Some sketches expose or allude to the disunion of Arab governments, their treason, the oppression of their people or their submission to the United States.

This manner of proceeding from the unwonted is one of the author's favoured pedagogical strategies. It urges the spectator to reconstruct, by himself, with the information he already has the link between the different political realities. The potentials of discovering and understanding consequently become limitless. The spectator is never passive. His imagination is constantly provoked and his emotions channelled.¹⁵⁷

It seems that Kateb Yacine's aim here is to inform the spectator, to teach him the real nature of the Palestinian struggle so that he can understand the mechanisms of politics and exploitation and react in joining the struggle. The average people in the Arab World and even in the Western World are misled into believing that the conflict is between Arab and Jew. The author aims at correcting such attitudes in exposing the dividing role played by Islam and Judaism in the conflict as well as that played by Zionism and imperialism. The spectator is also informed about other facts which official history tends to cover up and is expected to condemn them as the playwright does. The Mufti of Palestine was a rich landowner, a religious extremist whose racism led him to support and meet Hitler. In an analysis of L'Homme Aux Sandales de Caotchouc which in fact also applies to subsequent plays, Denise Louanchi writes:

Kateb proposes a political reading of history by multiplying the evocation of facts generally kept silent which he juxtaposes with 'historical' facts. The history lived and made by oppressed classes and peoples calls on the oppressors' official history to account [for its acts]...[Palestine Betrayed] is, therefore, a revolutionary and deliberately political play... It invites the proletariat in all countries to think about the stake of a struggle which, although distant, is still their struggle because, in the end, it is a class struggle.¹⁵⁸

Kateb Yacine has repeatedly stated in interviews that his "theatre of combat" is aimed at the workers:

Audience is not something in the absolute... Here theatre must make Revolution, since we have extended our field of action to the workers, since we are aware that we are addressing them... It is very

¹⁵⁷ Baffet, Roselyne - Tradition Théâtrale et Modernité en Algérie, L'Harmattan, Paris, 1985, p. 134.

¹⁵⁸ Louanchi Denise - "Un Essai de Théâtre Populaire: L'Homme Aux Sandales de Caoutchouc de Kateb Yacine," in "Hommage à Kateb Yacine", special issue of Kalim No. 7, Office des Publications Universitaires. Alger, March 1987, p. 193

important to define an audience, one's audience... that is why we do not want to address what people call the general audience.¹⁵⁹

Palestine Betrayed is certainly a very successful and popular play in Algeria and among the North African community in France but whether it achieves the author's aim in reaching 'the people' (the workers) and reflects his claim that his theatre is "*un théâtre populaire*", a theatre for the common people, for the workers, is, as we shall see, rather debatable.

Language

Since Kateb Yacine returned to Algeria to start theatre in the vernacular, he constantly defines his theatre as "*un théâtre dans la langue du peuple*", a theatre in the language of the people. For instance he argues that:

"I have come back to what I always wanted to do: a political theatre produced in a language that is broadly accessible to the largest public possible. From now on, I am going to use two languages: French, but mainly vernacular Arabic."¹⁶⁰

I

"If I want to be understood by the common people it is in their language that I must address them."¹⁶¹

However, it is worth noting that Kateb Yacine does not write Arabic or Algerian Arabic as such. His plays are created collectively, with the actors of 'L'Action Culturelle des Travailleurs'.¹⁶² He often translates sequences he has already written in French and the actors contribute by suggesting lines, words or phrases. This collective approach has not produced a homogeneous language in comparison with the French used in his early work, nor is this language rich because of the low standard of education of the actors and their lack of command of traditional culture or the language it uses. There are many instances where, in order to keep the rhyme, words are used out of context, e.g. in Tableau 20, to keep the assonance 'ūsa' in Mūsa (Moses) the following words are used: *khanfūsa* (beetle) - *būsa* (kiss) and *namūsa* (mosquito). We have in fact translated literally the lines concerned to point out this linguistic weakness. At the same time, there are sequences where the language is colourful and witty as in the scene where Muhammad borrows the pot from Moses or at the boxing match. The overall impression is of an uneven use of language. The play is then helped by its thematic content and its highly satirical sequences. The claim that the language the playwright uses is the language of the people is rather debatable. He argues that he uses

¹⁵⁹ Interview in the daily newspaper La République (Oran), 7 November 1972.

¹⁶⁰ Du Theil, Jean Marc Martin - op. cit. p. 17.

¹⁶¹ Ibid. Statement repeated in other interviews.

¹⁶² The group has moved to Sidi Bel Abbès (Western Algeria). Now known as 'Le Théâtre Régional de Sidi Bel Abbès'.

"the language of the people, the language of the street".¹⁶³ Judging from our own knowledge and experience of Algeria, this is rather vague. What is 'the language of the street'? one may ask. Furthermore, unlike the plays of Benaïssa and Alloula, Palestine Betrayed is less accessible to other Arab audiences outside North Africa, precisely because of its language which uses a typically Algerian vocabulary extensively.

Performance Devices

Kateb Yacine's theatre is very flexible and does not rely on settings or many stage props. In Palestine Betrayed the stage is bare; there is only a costume rail with costumes on it and three trunks holding props behind it. The performance starts with live music played on a banjo, a *darbuka* (drum) and a pipe, with the actors singing and acting short extracts from the play to 'warm up' the audience. The musicians play downstage right and remain there throughout the performance except when they join the other actors to play small parts. Lighting is elaborate when the performance takes place in a theatre and minimal or not used at all if it takes place in other venues. Each actor plays up to six different characters. Changes of costume and removing or wearing new props to represent new characters take place on stage, either beside the costumerail or behind it. This, the playwright says, prevents the spectator from identifying with the character.

One major aspect about the play is that the characters are divided into 'oppressors' and 'oppressed'. Thus all the costumes and props are worn by the oppressors whereas the oppressed wear ordinary, casual clothes. Muhammed, Moses and Chorus wear jeans and tee-shirts or plain shirts, but Mufti and Rabbi wear robes, respectively representing the traditional Muslim and Jewish clergy, Father Dinar and Merchant wear silk caftans, America, England and France wear either hats or shirts with their respective national emblems, while Hitler wears a wig and a moustache and a swastika on his right arm.

The acting techniques of both sides also operate as opposites. The oppressors speak on a commanding, threatening, forbidding or soft, sweet hypocritical tone. They often use raised voices, whereas their opposites speak with gentler and more humane voices. The former are schematised into stereotypes and puppets and thus move in a mechanical way (there is a great deal of mime) but the latter move in a more natural and flexible manner.

There are also opposite lighting effects: bright lights on the 'oppressors' but soft lights on the 'oppressed' except when the chorus sings the Internationale. However, as mentioned earlier, if the performance takes place in a venue with no lighting facilities, the acting area remains lit all the time.

¹⁶³ Interview in El-Moudjahid Culturel, no. 156, 4 April 1975.

Because of the highly satirical and humorous nature of the play, every suitable performance device is used to generate laughter among the spectators. Thus Kateb Yacine combines the techniques used in conventional comedy and farce and those used by individual comedians.

Music and song, on the other hand, contribute a great deal to the atmosphere of the play and constantly change - expressing lament, criticism, comment or joy and dancing. Because of the popularity of the songs and the tunes, the spectators often join in the singing, clapping their hands.

The general pace of the performance is very fast, particularly the change of scenes, and the spectator is constantly exposed to new situations. It is left to him to make the link between the different scenes and draw his own conclusions. The combination of all these performance devices is designed to meet Kateb Yacine's aim of theatre as 'total theatre' and every performance as a festive party.

Indeed all the press reviews of his plays mention the festive mood in Kateb Yacine's theatre, something we have ourselves noticed during performance. Laughter generated by the humorous and satirical content of the play, together with music and song are the main causes. However, one may argue that Palestine Betrayed is a good play in its own right and shows the author's great skill and ingenuity in handling his material and in the way he compresses decades of history into one scene and a major event into one line. But the spectator cannot avoid feeling that the play is not new to him. As has been mentioned earlier, it contains 26 scenes and 7 Joha anecdotes already used in previous plays - mainly in La Guerre De Deux Mille Ans. The author argues that he is not repeating himself and that such remarks come from 'discontented intellectuals'. He further clarifies his position:

It depends on what repeating oneself means. We have produced something like four or five plays. Their themes are not the same. Perhaps the form is the same, perhaps the language used is the same, perhaps song is used to a great extent... But there is a whole world between this and repetition. It seems to me that it is one of those questions that only certain intellectuals ask. The intellectuals are not happy. I do not care. They are not happy because the man who wrote Nedjma no longer writes novels like Nedjma; he no longer writes in French, he no longer writes for them, he addresses the people, he addresses the workers.

In fact, they say this because they have no idea of what a political work is. My answer is that if repeating oneself means struggling for socialism of the time, then I shall repeat myself as long as it will take... If these people think that theatre is leisure, that one must find new little things to entertain them, as for me I carry on with a theatre of combat which will not change at all, which will never change... till my death...

Yes, it is true that I speak about the struggles for national liberation, Vietnam, Palestine, Angola... But if this is repeating oneself, then they are blind... Yes, it may happen that we take a scene from

Mohammed, Prends Ta Valise to insert it in La Guerre De Deux Mille Ans. If this is what they call repeating oneself, then they are formalists.¹⁶⁴

This long argument is worth considering because it raises interesting questions. First, would 'the people, the workers' not lose interest and enthusiasm watching a performance of Palestine Betrayed if they had already seen all previous plays and would Kateb Yacine not ultimately fail to reach his chosen public if, as Bergson suggests, repetition kills the comic effect? Second, and it is perhaps temerarious to assert this, there is a fundamental contradiction between the playwright's statements and the aims of his theatre on one hand and the nature of his plays and the techniques he uses on the other. Indeed, it is very unlikely that 'the people, the workers' - the average Algerian worker - is able to relate certain scenes to real fact or even to establish a link between scenes. Is he for instance able to relate Moses' broom burning to the burning bush? Is he also able to relate Mufti's singing "Hitler came upon us..." to Hitler coming to power and their meeting, or the Internationale to the 1917 October Revolution? Even many educated Algerians would be unable to do so, for Palestine Betrayed requires some knowledge of the Bible and a rather thorough knowledge of history to be fully grasped. It seems that Kateb Yacine's referential sphere is outside and beyond the sphere of the people he addresses and fits the sphere of the intellectuals he wishes to avoid. This, however does not imply that Kateb Yacine fails to reach his target audience, nor does it imply that the latter cannot understand his theatre because the message always gets across and every performance is thoroughly enjoyed.

¹⁶⁴ Bliidi, Maâchou - "Le Théâtre à Coeur Ouvert", interview with Kateb Yacine in Algérie Actualité No. 676, 28 September - 4 October 1978.

CHAPTER III

i) Abdelkader Alloula : A Life Devoted To Theatre ¹

Abdelkader Alloula was born on 8 July 1939 in the town of Ghazaouet on the western coast of Algeria near the Moroccan border. As a child he went to a primary boarding school in Ain El-Berd (ex. Oued Imbert), then to the 'Collège Moderne' (secondary School) in Sidi Bel-Abbès. In 1954 he went to the 'Lycée Ardaillon' in Oran the capital city of Western Algeria. His father was a gendarme in the French police force until 1953 when he decided to move to Oran with his family. Before he found a new job and in order to feed his family he worked as a public letter writer by the main post office. It was a year of hardship and this experience affected Alloula so deeply that it had found some echoes in Al-Khubza (Loaf of Bread) a play he wrote in 1970. His mother was a housewife like most Algerian women of her time, Alloula stopped his studies in 1956 when he was in the sixth form. The decision came in 1956² when Algerian students went on strike against French rule. After 1956 self education was his only way of continuing to study.

Family and Cultural Background

Alloula acquired his first initiation into Algeria's traditional cultural heritage through his aunt. He remembers with emotion how his brother and himself used to wait with excitement for the evening when their aunt would tell them stories and recite poetry. The aunt who was a devout Muslim had been unhappy with her marriage which was very short lived - she had decided to divorce one week after the wedding. She then devoted her life to religion and charity work. Her great knowledge of traditional medicine made of her the doctor of the poor in her neighbourhood. Because Alloula and his brother were very fond of her and because she had no children of her own, their parents allowed them to live with her until they had to go to school. Alloula tells us about her phenomenal memory and her wide knowledge of the national cultural heritage and history, a knowledge which involved a good command of language³, religion, folk-tales, legends, dates of events, local anecdotes, proverbs, rhymed verse, in short "a very good knowledge of Algerian popular culture and its language⁴." When he went to boarding school in Ain El-Berd at the age of ten, he was not totally severed from the

¹ Most of the information given here is based on an interview we had with Abdelkader Alloula on September 24th 1988 in his office at the 'Théâtre d'Oran' and a curriculum vitae he handed to us.

² The Algerian FLN party which was leading the armed struggle against French occupation had called for a general strike: a one week strike for employees and shopkeepers and a one year strike for school children and students.

³ The Algerian vernacular.

⁴ Alloula's phrase in our interview, op. cit.

rich world which his aunt represented and which he cherished, for his father continued that initiation by providing him with another aspect of traditional culture. He used to take him to most religious festivals and rituals held in the region particularly to those held at the sanctuary of Sidi Ghanem who is one of his forefathers and where his sister was the priestess of the shrine. Apart from their religious and often pagan aspects, these events had a major popular cultural and social significance for they gathered large crowds and offered a wide variety of entertainment ranging from poetry, story-telling, music and dance to magic. Although such events have diminished in number in the last two decades⁵, they still attract many people and Alloula is a regular and fervent attendant. The *aswāq* or markets which are held in different villages and towns on different days of the week and which are the main venues for the *maddāḥ* were also and still are a favourite attraction for Alloula. The experience of these social and cultural events has been of major importance to Alloula and has had a strong bearing on his work, in fact it has guided Alloula the playwright, director and actor to develop a new form of theatre which draws heavily upon traditional cultural elements.

Alloula's Theatre Career

The rich experience that Alloula has accumulated since his childhood with story-telling, festivals and rituals and in the traditional markets developed a taste for the performing arts and a desire to act. In 1955, when he was at the 'Lycée Ardaillon' in Oran, he joined a youth theatre group called 'Al-Shabāb' ('Youth') which was part of the 'Association de Jeunes', a youth club on Rue de Chanzy. At the same time he joined 'Madrassat Al-Fath'⁶ an Arabic teaching school to pursue his education in Arabic. His first experience in acting with 'Al-Shabāb' was the role of a girl in a collectively written play. A member of the group who was rehearsing the role of the girl withdrew one week before performance day. His friends thought that he played the part so well and that he had talent for acting which encouraged him to take other parts in subsequent productions. The theatre group used to organise seminars, workshops and talks on the art of theatre which was a good starting school for Alloula. However, these activities were adversely affected but did not cease as the war of liberation gained momentum in the late 1950s and some members of the group left or joined the maquis. After Independence in 1962 the group was reorganised by Alloula and his friends and given the name of 'Ensemble Théâtral Oranais'. Alloula worked with the new group for one year only, for 1963 was to be a major turning point in his career. The management of the 'Théâtre National Algérien' which was founded in the same year, were touring the country to recruit young talents - Alloula was an obvious choice and he was offered a

⁵ This is due to the sustained campaign against them by the Muslim clergy and by Muslim fundamentalists.

⁶ These schools were started in the 1940s by the 'Ulāma Movement' to revive Arab culture and Islam.

job as a professional actor in Algiers. Soon after this he acted in five plays which were produced by the TNA in Algiers in 1963: The Children of the Casbah and The Oath⁷ by the Algerian playwright Abdelhalim Raïs, Hassen Terro by Rouiched another Algerian playwright and actor, Life is a Dream by the Spanish playwright Calderon de la Barca and Molière's Don Juan. In 1964 he acted in Sean O'Casey's Red Roses for Me and in 1965 in Shakespeare's The Taming of the Shrew and in Oe Honden (which was given the title - The Dogs) by the Belgian playwright Tone Brulin.

The talent and potential he showed in the theatrical arts earned him promotion to the post of director in addition to his acting career. Thus he directed Al-Ghūla (The Ghoul) by Rouiched in 1964, Al-Sultān al-Hā'ir⁸ (The Sultan Who Could Not Make Up His Mind) by the Egyptian playwright Tawfik Al-Hakim and Sikak Al-Dhahab (The Fifteen Strings of Gold, a chinese play from the Ming dynasty by Zhu Sú Chèn) in 1967.

He was dismissed from his post in 1968 because he disagreed with the TNA on theatre practice⁹ and was unemployed for one year. This resulted in another major turning point in his career: he went back to Oran to join the 'Théâtre Régional d'Oran' (TRO) to write and produce his own plays. He was to give an impetus to the TRO which was stagnating at that time and be a major contributor to the development of contemporary Algerian theatre. This substantial contribution ranges from playwriting, directing and acting to cinema, television, radio, the training of new actors, giving talks and undertaking research in these performing arts which are part of Algeria's cultural heritage. The following list shows some of these activities since 1969.

He wrote and directed:

- 1969: Al-Alag (The Leeches)

- 1970: Al-Khubza (Loaf of Bread)

- 1972: Homq Salīm (The Insanity of a Rational Man) adapted from Gogol's Diary of a Mad Man.

- 1973: Al-Mayda (The Table) written with the actors of the TRO

- 1974: Al-Manfūj (The Yield) written with the actors of the TRO

- 1975: Hammām Rabbi (Rabbi Baths) and Hūt Yā'kul Hūt (Big Fish Eat Small Fish) written with Benmohamed

⁷ All plays written in colloquial Arabic were never published; even contemporary plays are not published. The state owned publishing companies and the few private printers believe that there is no readership, therefore no market for such works.

⁸ All foreign plays were and still are translated into Algerian colloquial Arabic including works from Arab countries.

⁹ Abdelkader Alloula did not give us details about the dismissal.

- 1980: Al-Agwāl (Sayings)

- 1984: Al-Ajwād (The Story of the Generous People) produced in 1985

He wrote two scripts which were directed by Mohamed Ifticène for the 'Radio Télévision Algérienne' - RTA in :

- 1972: Gorine

- 1982: Jalti

He acted in two films which were directed by El-Hachemi Chérif in:

- 1969: Al-Kilāb (The Dogs) and

- 1971: Al-Tarfa (The Rope)

He was also the commentator in two films:

- 1983: Būziān Al-Kali by Hadjadj.

- 1985: Combien Je Vous Aime (I Love You So Much) by Azzeddine Meddour.

In 1967 he wrote and produced three programmes in French for the French language 'channel 3' of RTA¹⁰ on Sophocles, Aristophanes and Shakespeare.

He is at present senior director at the 'Théâtre d'Oran' and runs the 'Co-opérative de Théâtre'¹¹ which is a workshop theatre specialising in research and experiments on traditional material.

Traditional Culture and Alloula's Theatre

After a long and rich experience in theatre Alloula has come back to the world he has cherished since childhood, the world of the *halqa*¹² and story-telling. It took him about twelve years to develop an art form which makes full use of the art of the *maddāh*. The itinerary towards this form started with his first play - Al-'Alag (The Leeches) which deals with bureaucracy and abuse of power. It shows Hadi H'Mida, a bureaucrat who has close relations with the local bourgeoisie and who takes advantage of his position to use public money and services to his own benefit¹³. The *maddāh* is

¹⁰ The Algerian radio and television network has four radio channels which broadcast in standard Arabic for 'channel 1', Kabyle (Berber) for 'channel 2', French for 'channel 3', and Spanish and English for 'channel 4', the last two sharing three hours of broadcasting a day.

¹¹ Abdelkader Alloula created this workshop with friends in early 1988. It is privately run and is totally separate from the 'Théâtre d'Oran'.

¹² *halqa* meaning circle or ring, refers to the circle formed by the spectators round the *maddāh*.

¹³ This theme is recurrent in many amateur plays and even in professional theatre, cinema and television.

present in this play but his role is limited to comments on the behaviour of Hadi H'Mida and his bourgeois friends. He is in a way the mouthpiece of the common people but he does not take part in the action. The *maddāh* is also present and plays the same role of commentator in Al-Khubza (Loaf of Bread) and Hammam Rabbi (Rabbi Baths). The first play is about Si-'li a public letter writer who decides to write a book which he will entitle Loaf of Bread. It portrays the poor living conditions of the lower classes of society and their daily struggle. The second play is about the second phase of the Agrarian Revolution which started in 1971. It exposes the problems faced by peasantry and calls on them to defend the land reform. Most critics¹⁴ agree that in all three plays the role of the *maddāh* is rather marginal and not fully integrated in the development of the action, a factor which reduces the impact the author wanted to make. They also point to the folklike and rather funny appearance of the *maddāh* who is supposed to look dignified. This criticism is justified because Alloula was making his first attempt to use the art of the *maddāh* in drama. Furthermore, the period from 1968 to 1975 was a major period of experimentation mainly for the amateur theatre which was at that time flourishing and developing in parallel with Alloula's theatre. Also, Alloula had close contacts with amateur groups which were mainly concentrated in Western Algeria. It was a period of mutual influence and exchange. Alloula argues that: "... the amateur theatre is in fact a major reservoir for our national theatre; it is at the same time an excellent school."¹⁵

Alloula was going through a period of experimentation and he has certainly learned a great deal from his own experience and from the amateur theatre. If the three plays show weakness - mainly in the use of the *maddāh* - they are still positive developments because they represent both the fruit of many years of experimentation and the embryonic phase of his new form of theatre. In fact the lessons Alloula drew from the weakness of his previous plays and his failure to make full use of the *maddāh* paved the way to a more mature and elaborate form where the narrative and the *maddāh* become the dynamic theatrical forces. When asked about his new form of theatre, Alloula described it as follows:

When I speak of the new theatre I think of a new type of arrangement which is different from the Aristotelian construct. This refers to both the [national] traditional heritage and to the world's [cultural] heritage... Through our experiments we have initiated a new approach, we have thus realised that the classic type of construct was not suitable for us. We have introduced new elements like the *maddāh*. And if, at first, this gave a folkloric impression, it led us to grasp and understand the implications... We can say that what we are doing has left the Aristotelian mould behind. We have dropped all aspects of illusion, identification and theatrical illustration. The result of our investigations

¹⁴ Mainly the Algerian dramatists and the press.

¹⁵ Annon., "Alloula: Le comédien imprime la vie au théâtre", in El-Moudjahid, 25 September, 1988.

cannot be evaluated until the completion of the third part of our trilogy. Later we shall start a deeper and more thorough research on cultural heritage, particularly on communication.¹⁶

Alloula started this trilogy with Al-Agwāl (Sayings) in 1980. The whole play is based on the narrative and divided into three monologues: The Resignation, Ghasham (worker) and *Zīnūba Bent Būziān Al-'Assās* (Zīnūba the warden's daughter). The three monologue-tableaux refer to the struggle of the Algerian working class. The narrative structure of the play calls more for listening than for watching because the language used does not require the support of theatrical devices other than voice and body movement "nor does it necessarily require lighting in most parts of the play."¹⁷ Alloula considers this play as a bridge between his previous works and his new plays.

Al-Ajwād (The Story of the Generous People), first produced in 1985, is the continuation of Al-Agwāl and prepares for the third part of the trilogy, Al-Lithām¹⁸ (The Veil) which Alloula is working on at present.¹⁹ Alloula insists that this trilogy does in no way represent a final and definite form of his theatre. On the contrary, he believes that his continuous personal research along with the work and experiments undertaken in the 'coopérative de théâtre' (the new workshop theatre he runs in parallel with his job at the 'Théâtre d'Oran') will result in a richer and more elaborate form or even to a new form of theatre. In this respect Alloula's contribution to Algerian theatre is of major importance because he has touched on cultural areas not yet fully exploited. It is also a contribution to theatre in general and in particular to African and Arab theatre. It would be therefore interesting to compare Alloula's experience to similar experiences in African and Middle-Eastern countries.

¹⁶ Chérif Ouazani and Brahim Hadj Slimane, interview: "Rencontre Avec Abdelkader Alloula - La Quête des Dires", in Algérie Actualité no. 1161, 14-20 January 1988.

¹⁷ Abdelkader Alloula's opinion in our interview, op.cit.

¹⁸ *al-lithām* is a scarf or veil worn round the face and under the eyes for disguise, to hide the face and or to protect the face from the dust.

¹⁹ Alloula was still working on the play when we met in September.

ii) The Story Of The Generous People

By

ABDELKADER ALLOULA

Cast:

- NARRATOR
- Four characters contributing to the story-telling.
The actors taking this part will play the roles of:
- RIBŪHI ḤABĪB
- THE KEEPER
- CLEVER JALLŪL and
- MALE WORKER
- TEACHER
- PUPILS
- FEMALE WORKER

The play is in seven episodes, namely:

- 1 - THE STORY OF 'ALLĀL
- 2 - THE STORY OF RIBŪHI
- 3 - THE STORY OF QADDŪR
- 4 - THE STORY OF 'AKLI and MNAWWAR
- 5 - THE STORY OF MANṢŪR
- 6 - THE STORY OF CLEVER JALLŪL
- 7 - THE STORY OF SAKĪNA

Note.

There are no stage directions whatsoever in the original text. Those appearing in our translation are based on notes taken during performances. The ending of the play is not marked in any obvious way - by action or the actors.

EPISODE ONE: THE STORY OF 'ALLĀL

(The narrator, wearing a red cloak and playing the banjo, presents the story of 'Allāl. He is sitting on a chair front-stage, left.)

Narrator (*singing*)

'Allāl the roadsweeper is a guy quick with his broom.
 When he has swept his part of the street and collected people's rubbish
 He takes a stroll in one of the main streets of the city.
 To relax after a hard day's work and drive away his worries.²⁰
 First he rolls a cigarette and tucks it under his hat.²¹
 Then puffs out his chest as if he had medals to display.
 Crosses his hands²² behind his back and starts to walk slowly
 like a minister dragging with him an important delegation.
 He strolls on the pavement with a dignified attitude
 And looks at the goods displayed in the shop windows with care²³
 As if he was checking between the genuine and the fake.
 Admiring the wealth produced by his fellow workers²⁴ at the workshop²⁵.
 'Allāl the roadsweeper is a guy quick with his broom.
 When he has swept his part of the street and collected people's rubbish
 He takes a stroll in one of the main streets of the city.
 To relax after a hard day's work and drive away his worries
 He often stops for visits which demonstrate his dignity and heed.
 He walks aside with a heavy stride to see things better.
 Asking himself questions and answering them in long speeches.
 He hardly smiles, he prefers to put on a harsh look instead.
 "Oh this is too expensive even though it is the new fashion."
 "Oh but don't forget that the manufacturing of such product
 is as difficult and complex as melting iron. The people who make it are surrounded
 by fire and terrible heat."
 "Oh take care of the poor and make sure they have something to eat."²⁶
 "I wonder why goods of quality have disappeared. Why did you hide them?"
 "Tell me why these goods are of very poor quality they are so bad they make you
 believe they're produced from muck."²⁷
 They're so bad that they would sadden and depress their maker."
 "Look at the poor their desires are smothered and frustrated."
 'Allāl the roadsweeper is a guy quick with his broom.

²⁰ The word *waswās* means 'evil' or 'evil temptation' and has a religious connotation. It is referred to in the Koran in *Ṣūrah 'AN-NĀS'* (MEN) that is ch. 114, v. 4-5 which Muhammad Asad (see bibliography) translated as follows: "...4) from the evil of the whispering, elusive temper, 5) who whispers in the hearts of men." (p.987). But in vernacular Algerian it also acquired the meaning of - 'worry' - 'anxiety' and 'doubt'.

²¹ We have opted for 'hat' although the word in the text means 'fez'.

²² In the text- ...'crosses his arms'.

²³ In the text- ...'looks at the shops from a distance'.

²⁴ *qrāynu* is mainly used in Western Algeria, it means - 'his colleagues, his friends, his mates'.

²⁵ *warsha* means - site, building site, workshop. The author may have translated the French word *chantier*.

²⁶ In the text - 'protect the poor so that he can find what to put on the table.' The author is criticising the government for not helping the poor. Indeed there is no social security for the unemployed or the poor.

²⁷ The word in the text also means - 'sewage'. The author is referring to poor quality goods produced in Algeria and sold to common people. Goods of good quality are often sold and distributed among officials.

After he has swept his part of the street and collected people's rubbish
 He takes a stroll in one of the main streets of the city.
 To relax after a hard day's work and drive away his worries
 He stops now and then to rest from the weight of his boots.²⁸
 He greets people on his way showing joy and gladness.
 To end his walk he enters the supermarket²⁹ with intent and purpose.
 And wanders among the stalls with their large display of goods.
 'Allā the roadsweeper is a guy quick with his broom.
 After he has swept his part of the street and collected people's rubbish
 He takes a stroll in one of the main streets of the city.
 To relax after a hard day's work and drive away his worries
 Thumbs hooked³⁰ on the belt he walks along with a light step.
 He adds a smile and people shy away they are afraid of him.
 Some of them hold their noses and say he stinks³¹.
 Some others feel sorry for him and wish him fast recovery.
 He continues his window shopping still making comments³².
 "This product looks rough though wrapped you can tell it's not genuine.
 No wonder this is what the private sector produces for the supermarkets.
 And the workers have no right to speak their mouths are shut.³³
 Their jobs are not secure and their labour is just hired."
 "Tell me, why are these goods damaged and piled up in corners?"
 "Do you know that the workers who produced them are on strike?
 The workers of the public sector are struggling to secure their bread
 Because cheap imported goods are threatening their jobs."
 "I think we should listen to the workers and follow their advice."
 "They can unite and organise themselves to starve you all."
 'Allā the roadsweeper is a guy quick with the broom.
 After he has swept his part of the street and collected people's rubbish
 He takes a stroll in one of the main streets of the city
 To relax after a hard day's work and drive away his worries.
 After the walk and the game with himself³⁴ he lights the cigarette
 And rushes out of the city aiming for home.

EPISODE TWO: THE STORY OF RIBŪḤI

(Circular rostrum centre-stage backed by animal cages, as in a zoo. Four actors and the narrator stand around it. They present the story of Ribūḥi. The director should feel free to divide the lines among the actors. We suggest that the cues are taken every time the name of Ribūḥi is uttered)

Ribūḥi is known as Ribūḥi Ḥabīb, 'the Friend'³⁵. He is a blacksmith by trade and works in one of the municipal workshops³⁶. You may say he is old because he is about sixty. He's a bit short and you can see on his body the scars left by the hammer and the anvil. He has a dark brown complexion. Two front teeth missing and one

²⁸ Transliteration of the French word - *bottes*.

²⁹ Literal translation of the French word - *galeries* meaning - 'department stores' which were called - 'Galeries Françaises' under French rule. After Independence the stores have been nationalised and the name changed to - 'Galeries Algeriennes'.

³⁰ In the text- ... 'fingers on the belt'.

³¹ In the text- ... 'he has the smell of dead (or rotten) animals'.

³² We have added this verse to make the transition and give sense to the next lines.

³³ In the text- ... 'their voices are strangled'. Allusion to the poor working conditions and exploitation in the private sector.

³⁴ In the text- ... 'when he finishes the game.'

³⁵ We have added the word - 'friend' - to keep the connotation intended by the author for the name 'Ḥabīb'.

³⁶ Many workshops and services, i.e. sewage works, gardens are under the authority of the municipal councils - official name: 'People's Councils' - in Algeria.

shows its root. White curly hair: well his hair is so white that when he takes off his hat you'd think he's wearing a sheepskin wig.³⁷ Blacksmith 'Ribūhi the Friend' is very broad-minded and highly appreciated by his fellow workers, dockers and factory workers. Well he is loved by all the poor people. When Ribūhi speaks you feel as if his words had the scent of a rose or as if they were works of art pouring out of his mouth and they are so sweet and melodious. This is the result of long years of strife and hard experience which taught him a great deal about life. His principles and the things he stands for are known by everybody. He is constant either in good or bad times, always the same conduct. Anything he suggests to people is a positive solution, be it a row over the trade union, a strike for higher wages or neighbours quarreling about leaking water pipes³⁸; his reasoning is clear and far-reaching as if he had a crystal ball³⁹. His advice always bears fruit whether it takes too long or no time at all. Even words like 'I don't know' or 'I am wrong' sound so nice that people accept them happily. When people ask his wife Mariam about his news she answers: "The poor man is tired as usual; well he carries the heavy burden of our problems and worries."⁴⁰ When he meets his friends they keep him long and if he doesn't turn up they go to his house and take him out. They enjoy his company so much that they keep him all night debating matters and weighing up solutions as if he was the councillor of the poor. He always brings home something with him, food or other goods.⁴¹ Ribūhi the Friend is extremely affectionate with most people as he is extremely calm and collected, content and humble; yes modest even in the way he dresses. He usually wears a blue, grey or brown overall on top of which comes a coat. You never see him without that coat in winter as in summer⁴²; it's as if that coat was glued on him. He has large hidden pockets in that coat, a relic from the time of armed struggle; he calls them the avant-garde pockets. From time to time he fills them with sweets for the kids but before he hands them out to them he would tease them first.⁴³ And although his hands were huge he would play with his fingers inside those large pockets then draw forth sweets like a magician. Ribūhi feels concerned about the problems of the young in the neighbourhood, he often talks and listens to them just as he does with the old.

Recently the young lads of the area talked to him for a long time, they were complaining about the zoo. They told him in detail about the terrible living conditions of the few existing animals, how the management are starving them and how every month an animal dies. They told him about the serious state of the monkey who stretches his arms out of the cage begging for food and help, about the wolf who stands on the side of the fence and howls, and also about the eagle who stealthily edges his way towards the peacock keeping an eye on her in case she⁴⁴ forgets his presence and sticks her head out of the cage.

³⁷ In the text- ... 'as if he had on his head dry figs with ash colour which makes your mouth water.' The ash colour of dry figs is due to the flour used to preserve them. This is a common traditional method used in Algeria.

³⁸ Referring to people living in blocks of flats. Because there is hardly any maintenance and because the buildings are old, such problems often occur and cause quarrels among neighbours.

³⁹ In the text- ... 'Indian mirror'.

⁴⁰ Often used in reference to the husband as the head of the family, the bread-winner who must take care of everything.

⁴¹ This is a very common practice in Algeria. On their way home men stop to buy things like fruit, cakes, sweets.. etc and it is expected of them to do so. Almost every father is met by his children in the street or on the door-step and asked 'Papa, what did you bring us?'

⁴² In the text 'coat' is the transliteration of the French word *par-dessus*.

⁴³ In North Africa men often buy sweets to give to children of the neighbourhood.

⁴⁴ Arabic doesn't have the neutral pronoun 'it', things and animals are either masculine or feminine. We have kept the gender as used in the text because of the character's attitude towards the animals. Later in the text he will be addressing them as friends.

Our friend listened to them with care and told them that he would take the matter in his hands and promised to do something happen what may. The following day he visited the zoo and saw the starving animals crying from hunger and pain. He heard the comments of the visitors, how disappointed they were about the zoo and how sorry they felt for the animals. He also saw some people laughing and throwing stones at the monkeys; he stopped them and told them off. After the visit he studied the matter in depth and decided a strategy. The first stage was to approach the different municipal departments and talk to various agents. The first told him: "I'm sorry, there is nothing I can do for these animals. I have no power and no authority, you might say I'm as idle as someone wasting his time in a café". The second one told him: "First, change the trade union committee then we can discuss general matters". The third said: "We're stuck with people's problems and mischiefs and you come here to add those of the animals of the zoo." The fourth told him: "Even if we are lucky to get them some food we can't give them water because of the existing drought." The fifth said: "Mr. Ribūhi, you're a very nice and respectable man. You had better take my advice and forget this matter, it's too hard and dangerous for you. It's as if you were carrying a bomb. This is a political matter which concerns the nation." The sixth said: "You're right, this is an honourable initiative. Give your advice to the animals and count on me for full support." The seventh told him: "Well my friend, you should know that we have studied the matter at a very high level; we are not playing here you know. Yes, we have taken this matter seriously and studied it in detail. We have come out with the decision to allocate the necessary budget to the animals and in future we shall bring them hazel-nuts from Greece, almonds from Germany and coconuts from Kenya." The eighth said: "At least the animals are housed; but what about me? I live with my wife and six children in a tiny living room on the roof of a building and what's more, you have to walk on all of us to go to the toilet." The ninth said: "Indeed, god tells us to protect animals. Oh! Thank you, talking of Allah you've just reminded me of my prayer.⁴⁵ Sorry I have to go, it's prayer time... excuse me, I must close⁴⁶ the office. The tenth said: "A public garden which has no tigers, no crocodiles, no jerboas and no vipers does not deserve any attention". The eleventh told him: "You were seen talking to students and pointing scorn at the statue of Emir Abdelkader.⁴⁷ There is no doubt they influenced you, that's why you come here to cause us trouble.⁴⁸ You want us to leave important matters and deal with marginal and insignificant things. Do you want us to lose our jobs?" The twelfth agent laughed and said: "Thank you very much Mr. Ribūhi, it's been a long time since I laughed - Thank you... thank you. I tell you what, you should go to the cemetery, it belongs to the municipality too you know. Well I hope you go there and come back with the same joke as the one about the thirsty monkey or even a better one." The thirteenth gave him a short answer: "Well... I... you see..."

Well, blacksmith 'Ribūhi the friend' didn't give up and carried on his mission, he went to talk to the man in charge of feeding the animals. The man replied: "Yes, it breaks my heart to see the poor things starving like that... I did everything possible to help and save the poor animals. Sometimes I even take food from my children to bring to them. Unfortunately food is expensive and my wages are low. And what's more, even that little bit of food I bring, I do it in secret because the regulations forbid this to prevent food poisoning!"

⁴⁵ The Muslims must pray five times a day. The reference here is to the second afternoon prayer.

⁴⁶ The word in the text is typical Algerian dialect for shut, close and lock.

⁴⁷ In the text- ... 'the horse who kicks' - refers to the statue of Emir Abdelkader mounting a horse. The statue shows the horse with his fore-legs off the ground. Artistically the statue is considered as a failure and people make jokes about it. Emir Abdelkader is the Algerian chief who led the resistance against the French invasion of Algeria in the 1830's.

⁴⁸ In the late 1960's and early 1970's, because of their frequent and repeated demonstrations the students were considered as trouble makers by the authorities.

(A very short pause, then the narrator shouts Ribūḥi's name. The presentation continues as before.)

Ribūḥi the Friend!

At the end of this long study our friend, Ribūḥi the blacksmith took a final decision and thought of a solution which will save the animals. He organised a group of solidarity with the youths of the neighbourhood. The task was to meet every evening and collect as much food as possible, anything they could lay their hands on, meat, chicken, bones, wheat, bran, bread, grass, vegetables and fruit. When it gets dark Ribūḥi enters the zoo, he would jump, crawl and go through many obstacles to bring food to the poor 'prisoners'. He has been bringing food for more than a month going through so much trouble, running and hiding behind trees or in bushes to avoid the security man because if he gets caught his important mission will fail. The animals got used to Ribūḥi and he became their friend as they loved him very much. They could smell his presence from a long distance and get excited, and when he arrives they greet him with joy. The peacock opens her feathers wide like a beautiful painted fan; the parrot shouts 'hello... hello... hello' and makes a lot of noise; the monkey dances happily and somersaults in the air and the duck... oh! the duck quacks so loud you'd think it's a warm applause

(Three actors exit and one remains to take the role of Ribūḥi - miming feeding the animals, he talks to them.)

Ribūḥi: Hello! Hello my children! Good evening! Here take this. Gently... and be quiet, my mission is secret. Here... stop your noise... you, stay away... it's not your turn yet... Here... oh! you got used to jump on me from behind! you'll have to stop this bad habit... you lot are free, you can fetch food but these... the poor prisoners for the pleasure of mankind... Here, gently... hush!... behave yourselves, I have enough to feed you all, so each one his turn and in good order my children... Let's start with the monkeys, they're closer to man in looks...look... look how he's dancing... today I brought you some quince; I think the lads picked them from Mr. Ḥāj Brahīm's garden... Poor Mr. Ḥāj Brahīm... the burden of his wealth is heavy on his back... yes, poor Mr. Ḥāj Brahīm... Here, take... gently and don't be greedy; you know greed is bad either in animals or in mankind... Come here my little girl, have some food... yes the whole neighbourhood can live on Mr. Ḥāj Brahīm's left-overs... You're laughing at this monkey; well there is nothing wrong in what I said, is there? well is there? look, look how he's falling all over the place with laughter... The eagle... oh yes the eagle... here I am my friend... come on, stand back... stand back from the fence and fold your wings... here is food for you... Hey! spare my hand! that's my only possession you know... stay back, here is a nice piece of lean meat... you know I had to get up early to get it from the slaughterhouse⁴⁹...yes sir, that piece of meat comes from the municipal slaughter-house⁵⁰... look at the monkey laughing at me, look... you like the word 'slaughter' hey?.. It's the slaughterman who gave me all this meat... and in return he just asked me to grind his knives... He thought I was taking the meat to my children, so he said 'you know Mr. Ribūḥi, you're not the only one to have eagles⁵¹ I have six of them and they all like lean meat'... Here have a bit of chicken, I know you like it... now you're coming back to life... your neck is straight now... I'm coming Fox.. here I am... oh! my friend, you stink, your smell makes me dizzy... here, you too like meat and here are some bones for your dessert...they'll keep you busy; I know you get bored and fed-up, they didn't think of your leisure, no they didn't bring

⁴⁹ - The author first (30) uses the word *batoir* from the French *abattoir*, then he uses the proper Arabic word for slaughter-house (31).

⁵⁰ See 30.

⁵¹ This is a characteristic in the Arab world. People refer to their children as 'lions', 'eagles'.. for boys and 'gazelles', 'doves'... for girls to show their pride and satisfaction. In Arab culture aspects of courage, speed, stupidity... etc., found in animals are borrowed to describe people.

you T.V. sets to watch Egyptian soap operas⁵² and football matches, no... you know, if I had time I would teach you and your 'friend', your neighbour the wolf to play cards; I would teach you to play draughts to pass the time and enjoy yourselves, yes I would teach you also how to lift your hind leg when you want to pee to stay clean and get rid of your horrible smell... Here, take some fruit... No these berries are not for you, I brought them for my friend the weasel; look, there he is watching me and sticking his moustache out of the fence... Here take this fox and tomorrow when the kids come to see you stand up straight, display your beautiful tail and let them take nice pictures of you... I must go to the peacock and the ducks, they are making an infernal racket... silence! Is this a demonstration?... Do you want the keeper to catch me? I must find a way to keep the parrot and you lot quiet... Look at the pigeons or the birds or the ostrich, look how quiet and well behaved they are and patient too... Look at the partridge and the guinea-fowl, they're very quiet, aren't they?.. Try to behave like them... all right, here, have some more... Where is the maize?... no this is wheat; good lord! it's incredible, you also find the noisy and voluble and the quiet and sly among animals!... And here is our clever weasel... here is some food for you. Here, take it... dear old boy! How are you my friend? Look, look at him... you're very good at appearing miserable, aren't you? You're trying to induce me to fulfil some of your desires, I can see it, the way you're tilting your head to the side and softening your eyes. Oh yes I can see it. If you could speak you would tell me: "Dearest friend, tomorrow, if you have time to spare and if you happen to be near the market, could you please buy me a pound of cherries, my wife is pregnant and she is craving for them." Oh! you little scrounger! Cherries are very expensive, they're beyond reach; a pound of cherries costs more than a pair of shoes, come on have some maize... yes it's maize...

(Enter the keeper holding a stick.)

Keeper Stop there!... Stop! Stand still... I said stand still, hands up! slowly... Come on, hands up!

Ribūhi What's wrong with you poor man? Why are you shouting at me from a distance? What's the matter? Why are you trembling?

Keeper I said stand still!... One more step and I'll throw my stick⁵³ at you!

Habib If you throw your stick at me you might miss me and hit the poor giraffe standing behind me, then you'll be in trouble, you will lose your job. It's alright if you hit me, yes it's alright if I get wounded but the giraffe... the giraffe is the property of the state, that's the problem...

Keeper Hands up I said!... Where is the bloody whistle?... Where is the bloody thing?...

(Ribūhi executes the order and puts his hands up.)

Habib Sir, calm down and listen to me... If you throw your stick at me or use your whistle you'll be in trouble. You see these dogs and cats, they are my companions and my body-guards, one move and they jump at you; look how they're staring at you ready to attack... they will tear you to pieces. So, believe me and put your stick down... Let's talk then, don't be afraid, walk slowly.

Keeper Look here, I said stand still! Another step and you'll get my stick; there is nothing to talk about. What are you carrying?

⁵² The author is referring to people's discontent and criticism of Egyptian soap operas shown daily on Algerian T.V. at 7 p.m..

⁵³ The word *zarwāt* is mostly used in Western Algeria. It also means whip, stick, baton.. etc.

- Ḥabīb You can come behind me and see for yourself... come nearer... come on sir...
- Keeper What's in the bag on your right shoulder, weapons?... It's weapons hey?... You're carrying a bomb hey?
- Ḥabīb No, it's just some prickly pears and two aubergines.
- Keeper Oh! Prickly pears hey?... Good joke... yes keep joking... The police won't be long to arrive... just wait... Prickly pears!... Just wait and they'll give you plenty of pears!.. Aubergines? The truncheons and the boots are coming soon!
- Ḥabīb So I'm going to stand like this, hands up, waiting for the police to arrive?
- Keeper Yes! Thank God! At last we've caught you little hero; this is a great day and I shall celebrate this event; yes today is the end of all the trouble and worries you caused us... I said stand still and keep your hands up!... So it's you half man, a dwarf, you put us in a mess and caused everybody so much bother, so much worry... Is there anybody else with you?
- Ḥabīb No, there is nobody apart from the dogs and the cats of my neighbourhood who follow me, well I mean they follow the sausages⁵⁴ I'm carrying... my friends are outside... Can I drop my hands? I'm tired.
- Keeper You can, but watch it... one wrong move and I bring you down. Get ready Mr. Aubergine man for a good thrashing.
- Ḥabīb Look, why don't you put your stick down and come nearer, we can discuss the matter and talk sense.
- Keeper I see! Forget it if you are trying to fool me... Al-Hāshmi the man standing in front of you is a man of principle, an honest man, yes a man of integrity... if you have hard currency⁵⁵ and if you are thinking of corrupting me, just forget it... Come on straighten up and keep still.
- Ḥabīb I'm far from that, I'm not the type to have hard currency or to corrupt people. come on Mr.⁵⁶ Al-Hāshmi, that's far fetched.
- Keeper Keep telling lies, I know your kind... you're a spy... yes you're a spy, no doubt about it, it's obvious... You're a spy, a saboteur, an agent of imperialism... and your mission is to undermine the revolution and destroy the country. That's it, your contact is either through the Japanese in the gas plant of Arzew or through the Italians in the town of Battywa⁵⁷... And what's more, I think I have seen you before in the Town Hall by the Trade Union's office.
- Ḥabīb Calm down Mr. Al-Hāshmi, what's this nonsense about imperialism, I work for the municipality like you... I'm Ribūḥi Ḥabīb the blacksmith.
- Keeper Ribūḥi Ḥabīb... incredible... what else? They're right, yes you're definitely a spy... Ribūḥi Ḥabīb is your better, he is a gentleman and he is far superior to you... you

⁵⁴ Kosher North African sausages which are spicy, known as *merguez*. The French settlers brought the recipe to France and some European countries. They are also sold by some butchers in Soho (London).

⁵⁵ Transliteration of the French word *devises*.

⁵⁶ In the text the abbreviation *sī* is derived from *sayyad* (Mr. - Sir) - Also a mark of respect.

⁵⁷ Both towns are industrial towns on the western coast of Algeria. The Japanese and Italians are engineers and technicians working for their respective contractors in Algeria.

are... straighten up! You're tempting me to break your neck. You're not even worth Ribūḥi's spit, you traitor... Ribūḥi Ḥabīb is a giant, he is seven foot high and you are so small, you don't even reach his waist.

- Ḥabīb Listen to me...
- Keeper Shut up and keep still!.. What did you want to say?
- Ḥabīb Look Mr. Al-Hāshmi. I am Ribūḥi Ḥabīb... I am short by nature and I look even smaller to you because the giraffe is behind me... I don't know any Japanese and any Italians, I don't know any foreigners apart from the Maltese who works with us.
- Keeper Well, actually I don't know Ribūḥi the blacksmith; I never met him because I work at night, that is the truth but they say he's dark, tall and strong... they also say he's dignified and impressive but you...
- Ḥabīb I am Ribūḥi Ḥabīb the blacksmith, the dark, the hunch-back, believe me... I work for the municipality like you... Here is my card... look... look at my hands... I haven't done anything wrong; I've just brought some food for the poor starving animals.
- (He hands a card to the keeper who just glances at it.)*
- Keeper Exactly! It's about food that we are checking on spies. Yes, it's about food that everybody is concerned... there is an incredible hustle in the Town Hall and the city council is so worried.
- Ḥabīb Oh! Is that so?.. They have woken up, have they?
- Keeper Yes, they have taken a firm stand... Take your card, I can't read... Anyway the photograph looks like you but don't worry the police won't be long, they will know your identity and where you come from... I think you come from Tchad the way you look.
- Ḥabīb I live just behind the zoo... I am the spy of the poor... Look brother I am Ribūḥi Ḥabīb and if you want to be convinced, if you want a proof all the lads of the neighbourhood will turn up at my signal. They're all outside surrounding the zoo and watching over me ready for a signal to attack.
- Keeper Of course! That's why they come sometimes to distract me, asking me about the time or the way to the railway station... It's a whole strategy you set up here and I, like a fool, keep watching the sky all night for helicopters to land or spies to come down in parachutes. A war strategy indeed... Now I can believe you're Ribūḥi Ḥabīb... excuse me, let me shake hands with you⁵⁸... you know Mr. Ḥabīb they say you're a champion⁵⁹ at organising things... please forgive me... I'm under pressure my friend, I'm under pressure.
- Ḥabīb Mr. Al-Hāshmi, if you have information tell me why I'm giving them so much trouble.
- Keeper It's very serious my friend, I know everything in detail and I know that everyone in the Town Hall is extremely worried... Do you know, I was coming to your house to get some advice on this matter... incredible! What a coincidence⁶⁰!... I don't believe you're here facing me... Mr. Ḥabīb you got them all thinking, they are puzzled and worried as they believe the matter has reached a serious level... yes sir, they're

⁵⁸ In the text 'let me kiss you'. Kissing is a common habit in the Arab world for greeting or apologising.

⁵⁹ In the text 'a devil' which in Algerian has the connotation of someone very clever.

⁶⁰ In the text 'destiny' because of the belief in fatalism.

troubled alright, let me start from the beginning. The problem started about a month ago.

Ḥabīb

Please carry on talking while I feed the animals; yes 'this is the era of much talk and riddles' as the proverb says... Look this is the bomb you were afraid of, it's food for the poor giraffe... so... look at her beautiful eyes...

Keeper

About a month ago I was in bed and I had a dream; in that dream I was preparing a barbecue and the children were all excited running round me. The wife told me to grill the meat very well so that the fat doesn't upset the children's stomachs. Anyway, I went to sleep just after supper and I was still dreaming away when the wife startled me; I woke up shaking. She said the manager of the public gardens wanted to see me. In fright I said he must have smelled the smoke of the barbecue. She urged me to hurry up saying that the manager looked rather tense and worried. What brought him here? I hope there is nothing serious. He never came to my house. In that fright I went out in my dressing gown and asked him to come in for coffee. He said he was in a hurry... He asked me whether I was really feeding the animals at night. I did not deny it; I said: "Yes I gave the monkey a piece of bread and the peacock a few olives... it's nothing, it's just the left-overs from my dinner, I couldn't bear to see them starve..." He said: "I'm not talking about bread; they were given meat and biscuits"... Meat?... I didn't know what to say; then I swore to him that we didn't have meat at home for twenty-three days.

Ḥabīb

You counted them.

Keeper

From pay day... As soon as I get my pay I rush to the butcher's and buy five or six pounds of horse meat for the kids... He said that the situation was rather dangerous and there were risks... The rules don't allow the feeding of animals by strangers...and the veterinary surgeon has warned against it... I said "what has a foreigner to do with the animals of this country?" He said the veterinary surgeon is a doctor for animals and added "try to learn your language you fools"... "Whoever is feeding the animals with meat intends to poison them, I'm sure, and furthermore our animals are not used to meat which means that if they don't die from food poisoning they will die from diarrhoea... because our animals are used to rotten vegetables and rancid bran... you know Al-Hāshmi, the incident happened at night... and at night you are the only one on duty, you're the only one in charge and no one else... so watch out and don't fall asleep," then he drove away in the official car... I went back to bed hoping to get my dream and my barbecue back but there was no way I could go back to sleep; I spent all night inspecting the zoo. There are two men who come from time to time and sit under the willows; they bring wine with them and talk about politics; sometimes they give me a glass, they say "it'll warm you up"... But that night I asked them to leave, they said to me "why do you want us to go away, have they built a new mosque in the zoo?" I told them about the situation and the trouble caused by meat. They swore they had nothing to do with it and that they only eat wholemeal bread and olives and drink wine. Anyway, two days later they found a monkey in the female cage, they were embracing and cleaning each other... the veterinary surgeon went mad... They were puzzled at how the monkey went into his neighbour's cage and locked the door behind him... The ostrich left her shelter, she went out for a walk; they found her strolling and swaying her back near the large pond... a young ostrich was following her closely, he was chatting her up...

Ḥabīb

Well, it's me who put the monkeys together, I also let the ostrich out... but I forgot to close the door behind me...

Keeper

You got us all puzzled and worried Mr. Ḥabīb... and there is a lot more I want to tell you.

- Ḥabīb** Forgive me... I was wrong... Look at the poor animals, look how they're following our discussion, it's as if they want to speak, as if they want to give their opinion... You see? They too are asking for democracy... Continue, tell me more Mr. Al-Hāshmi.
- Keeper** From that night on I became more alert and checked every part of the zoo. But no matter how hard I looked and inspected, no matter how vigilant I was, I couldn't find any spy... Please tell me my friend, tell me how you managed to do it.
- Ḥabīb** My young friends watch out for me from outside. They learned to hoot like owls in order to give me detailed information about your movements.
- Keeper** Incredible! This is great strategy. So, your friends were watching over the 'watchman'⁶¹, they had their eyes glued on me!.. And yet they say the masses are stupid, they can't organise themselves... Anyway, food reaches the animals at night even in bad weather... we were puzzled and things got worse because after two weeks the animals went on strike, they refused the food from the municipality... but their health improved very much and the veterinary surgeon was so happy that he went on holiday... yes my friend the animals recovered and became healthy... the monkey became very active and happy, he entertains visitors and winks at girls.. and the she-monkey screams her head off and covers her eyes with her hands every time the attendants bring her food. This led one of the poor attendants to write a letter and complain about her. The poor man couldn't understand the situation; he said in his letter that the she-monkey was induced to pick on him because everytime she sees him she curses him and wishes him death⁶². Some civil servants said "they want to overthrow us, they are causing trouble. Yes it's the zoo attendants who urged the animals to strike and they're using this opportunity to get a pay increase"... Anyway⁶³, a few days later a row burst out among those civil servants and they started to fight and accuse each other... one accusing the other of collecting the eggs of the geese every morning; another said "I know you're feeding your family on the ducks of the state"; another said "we are all helping ourselves⁶⁴... those who don't take from the zoo take the meat meant for the animals, and what about the lambs, yes the lambs for sacrifice on 'Īd, the holy ⁶⁵ day, you remember last year, we all had a hand in it, we all slaughtered those lambs in the public garden."
- Ḥabīb** Yes you are right the matter has gone too far...
- Keeper** Wait, there is much more... yes it went too far and to cover up everything they gathered documents and sent them to the council for examination.
- Ḥabīb** Look at the wolf, he's listening to us and look at the ostrich, she is hiding her head in her feathers... So..?
- Keeper** I'm going to have a look and come back soon, the police may come to investigate... I don't want them to arrest you.
- Ḥabīb** Don't worry, the lads are watching for us and anyway they told you about the police just to blow the matter up and scare you. If they are to investigate they would do it in

⁶¹ We have used 'watchman' to keep the repetition of watch in the text.

⁶² Allusion is made here to superstition.

⁶³ The phrase *bi-enniyya* in the text, literally means 'with faith' or 'with good intention' or 'with honesty'. The phrase is used with these meanings throughout Algeria but in the West it is also used with the meaning of 'anyway'. This phrase will appear very often in the text.

⁶⁴ Reference to existing corruption and embezzlement.

⁶⁵ There are two holy days among others in Islam called 'Īd - 'Īd-Al-Fitr which is celebrated at the end of *Ramdān*, the month of fasting, and 'Īd-Al-Adhā, the holy day of sacrifice when people sacrifice the lamb, a rite in connection with Abraham.

broad daylight, we are not at war... anyway, carry on... you were saying the matter got worse...

- Keeper Yes Mr. Ḥabīb, it got really serious when the council opened the file on the zoo the workers started to send letters complaining about the different departments. Someone was asking why they were keeping the doves in cages, he said doves are the symbol of freedom and after all we have fought for freedom ourselves and we are still fighting for it... Another one said monkeys should wear trousers, they should look decent... Someone asked for a piece of land to build a house on and in return he would bring an elephant from Ethiopia because his brother-in-law works there and offer it to the zoo; he said we would smuggle⁶⁶ it into the country... Anyway, the municipal council opened an enquiry and called people for interrogation... The council heard the most incredible and amazing stories... They were asking people only one question - "What do you think of the zoo?" Oh my god! YOU should have heard the answers... you had - "this is the first time I hear of the existence of a zoo in our city... do these animals belong to the state?" and - "we should build a shelter for the night keeper right in the middle of the zoo with a small window on each side so that he can watch better"...
- Ḥabīb If they take up this suggestion you're finished, you'll become a prisoner.
- Keeper Someone suggested to put the eagle in international competitions, he would win gold medals because he is a unique eagle, he is strong and can fast for a whole month. Someone else said "the food which is brought in secret to the zoo is foreign food... that's what happened in some African countries"...
- Ḥabīb Yes the food is foreign, it comes from outside, from outside the municipality.
- Keeper Another one said "I have nothing to do with it, I only work for the municipality and the food you're talking about, the food smuggled into the country is a matter which concerns the customs because this is contraband." And another one said "these smugglers are the enemies of the country, they are saboteurs, they want to poison our animals, they want to infect them with one of the dangerous diseases from Europe and let them out to attack our people, so watch out! watch out!" This one got applause. He also suggested to tether the animals inside their shelters. Another one told them "yes I took a few ducks, but I took them to the municipal summer holiday camp, well it's obvious I took them for our children." Another said "I swear that I am innocent, God is my witness, I wanted to take the parrot home and raise him just for a good deed and I had applied to you in writing but you rejected my application"... Another one said "apart from a bit of cinnamon⁶⁷ and some dates⁶⁸ I took from the she-elephant I didn't take anything else, I don't like animals anyway, and if you want me to pay for what I took, fair enough I shall pay but on condition that everybody else pays." And another one told them "you know? imperialism... imperialism has great potentials and various means for its operations. What can a poor keeper armed with a stick do against spies who enter the zoo at night with weapons and sophisticated equipment? Well, he needs a tank⁶⁹." Oh Mr. Ḥabīb they went on and on... By the way, on this point what if they brought me a tank? And do you know? I can't even ride a bicycle⁷⁰... Anyway, the file got thicker and thicker, heavier and heavier and everybody in the council and municipality was more worried and more tired; they

⁶⁶ The word in the text is *trabendu* meaning 'smuggling' or contraband. It is a slang word used only in Western Algeria. Reference to the excessive smuggling of goods in and out of the country.

⁶⁷ In the text 'bits of cinnamon' or 'sticks of cinnamon'.

⁶⁸ In the text the word *ghars* means date paste. It is made of very soft dates which are squashed together with their stones and wrapped in goat skin.

⁶⁹ Transliterated in the text.

⁷⁰ In the text *bsclāt* from the French *bicyclette*.

were all lost... well even now, at this very moment, even if I arrest you the matter remains unsolved... Hey Mr. Ḥabīb, what about sending them a letter about the tank?

Ḥabīb No, not yet, the animals still need food and care... but you can join us and give us a hand since our operation is still secret.

Keeper Right away, I'm willing to help you in any way I can.

Ḥabīb All the neighbourhood feels concerned about the zoo and they're all committed for the well being of the animals. We won't drop the matter until they find a positive and fair solution... The zoo is situated in the poor part of the city and the rich don't feel concerned about it at all, they take their children to Europe because European zoos have more animals and offer a wider range of entertainment... therefore we can say that this zoo is the people's zoo, it's our children's garden and you're in a better position than me to know who comes here everyday... So, if you want to help us you must get up early in the morning before the attendants come to work and clean the animals shelters; you must do it every day to keep the animals healthy and get rid of their horrible smell.

Keeper You can count on me Mr. Ḥabīb, I shall start tomorrow morning... I have a ladder at home, I shall use it to get to the giraffe.

Ḥabīb And spread the news that the spies of imperialism have ceased their operations in the zoo.

Keeper That's easy, I can do it. I will say "the spies phoned me and said that the workers of the municipality were too hard and clever for them." I will also say that they have changed their plans, they intend to enter homes, they will mingle with the T.V. pictures and enter... houses... is that good?

Ḥabīb Find something acceptable, something people can believe..you know we have already started to build bigger and better shelters for the animals in one of the municipal workshops; we have also made contacts with friends in other services to improve and embellish the zoo for our children.

Keeper Good Lord! Just a few minutes ago you looked small and now I see you as big as the wall facing me.

Ḥabīb *(miming feeding a guinea-fowl.)*

- Here have some more my girl... look this guinea fowl lost all the feathers from her neck because she was constantly sticking her head out of the fence to pick grass, but now... here look new feathers are growing...

Keeper I must go now... duty calls... well you carry on then.

Ḥabīb I have almost finished, there is only the Turkey-cock... the guinea-pigs... and the gazelle to feed.

Keeper Please call me anytime you need me, don't hesitate... please.

Ḥabīb There are some dockers who have been dismissed; some of them have been out of work for more than ten months; as the celebrations of the holy day are approaching we have decided to collect donations for them... go to your work... I'll call on you tomorrow or the day after and tell you more about it.

Keeper Up to you... Look dear friend, when you are finished leave from the other side please; take the main alley, the one with flowers, palm trees and fences on each side, I shall open the gate for you.

Habīb Tell the lads I won't be long, tell them also that you delayed me.

Keeper Did I?

Habīb I mean you kept me talking... (*addressing the dogs and cats.*) Be quiet you, I said until I finish... priority for the prisoners... you lot can find food outside... come here my pretty gazelle... Mariam loves you, you know she keeps asking the neighbours for bread; if they have anything left over they bring it to me and say "take it to your gazelle"... come to me my girl... come symbol of beauty and freedom.

(They exit - Black out)

EPISODE THREE: THE STORY OF QADDŪR

(The narrator sitting on a chair and playing the banjo. He presents the story of Qaddūr)

Narrator He built high walls and houses
Mortar and bricks took all his energy and sweat
Today is Friday, he leaves the site to travel home
He can't wait - he is longing for his wife and children.
Qaddūr packed his clothes, he is going to have a rest
He said good-bye to his friends and left happy and proud
Friends, you are lonely, I shall bring you food⁷¹ from home, he said.
He got on the bus smiling and his eyes shining with joy.
He built high walls and big houses
Mortar and bricks took all his energy and sweat
Today is Friday, he leaves the site to travel home
He can't wait - he is longing for his wife and children
He thinks of Faṭīma the wife he loves dearly
Qaddūr wants to see his children to forget the hard work
Qaddūr wants to see his children and be happy
Warm family atmosphere that's what he wants.
The journey is long, not a word, he just sighs
He kept thinking of his little daughter Mariāma
Who forgets he is her father and calls him uncle
She calls him uncle like an orphan calls a stranger
She is shy, he gives her sweets and she goes to him
He built high walls and big houses
Mortar and bricks took all his energy and sweat
Today is Friday, he leaves the site to travel home
He can't wait - he is longing for his wife and children
He got off the bus and ran all the way home
But found his house filled with sadness and misery
Faṭīma was in bed, she was ill, she looked white and weak
And little Mariāma was doing the housework.
What happened, why this tragedy, where are my children
Qaddūr was wondering in a state of shock and despair.
The neighbours opposite are mourning, the father is dead
'Aīsha is helping⁷², there are many friends and relatives
The little ones went to fetch water and the eldest is out
He left school and now he is wandering in the streets
Like a vagrant and putting himself at risk
He built high walls and big houses
Mortar and bricks took all his energy and sweat

⁷¹ In the text - 'provisions'.

⁷² In the text *taftal*- meaning 'to roll couscous'. The way to make couscous is to roll semolina gradually adding flour and water to obtain pellets which are then rubbed through a net.

Today is Friday, he leaves the site to travel home
 He can't wait - he is longing for his wife and children.
 Though tired he put on a happy face to cheer Fatīma
 We missed you she said with a sigh wiping her eyes
 He leant and kissed her on the forehead then went out
 He pulled a packet of henna⁷³ and put it on her chest
 I shall dye my hair with it next Friday she said
 Here is the housekeeping money, he said, I'm going to have a bath
 And get you some medicine, I shall be back before the funeral.
 Repair the roof before it falls down and buries us she said.
 He built high walls and big houses
 Mortar and bricks took all his energy and sweat
 Today is Friday, he leaves the site to travel home
 He can't wait - he is longing for his wife and children.
 Qaddūr had his day's rest, he spent it under the rain
 Trying to solve the various problems his family faces
 He had no time to play with his children or stay with his wife
 He got up early to start another week of hard work
 His wife looked at him and with a smile wished him well
 Hoping and praying next Friday he would rest
 Hoping and praying things won't get worse.
 He built high walls and big houses
 Mortar and bricks took all his energy and sweat
 He can't wait - he is longing for his wife and children.

EPISODE FOUR: THE STORY OF 'AKLI AND MNAWWAR

(Circular rostrum with the narrator and four actors standing round it. They present the story of 'Akli and Mnawwar the same way as the story of Ribūhi.)

Narrator

There was between 'Akli and Mnawwar a strong relationship, a bond of great friendship; neither hides anything from the other and neither does anything without consulting the other.

They had a kind of innocent affection for each other and their friendship was genuine and sincere. No one could intrude and spoil their relationship. Obviously they would disagree now and then in their discussions but they never fight. Indeed there was a great friendship between 'Akli and Mnawwar. 'Akli, may he rest in peace⁷⁴, died more than ten years ago yet the bond of friendship between the two is live and still exists.

There was between 'Akli and Mnawwar a pledge, a pact. In fact it's that pledge which until now strengthened their bond. 'Akli and Mnawwar worked together for a long time and had numerous experiences; they learned a lot from each other. They were both working in a high school⁷⁵, 'Akli was a cook and Mnawwar a porter. They liked each other and became friends the first weeks after they met, it was a few months after Independence.

⁷³ In this case the henna is in its natural form that is dry henna leaves.

⁷⁴ 'May he rest in peace' or 'Mercy of God be upon him' is a phrase always used when someone speaks of someone dead. It is often used in this scene.

⁷⁵ 'thānawiyya' - secondary - is the legacy of the French *lycée*. In this case it is a boarding school. Because of the limited number of high schools under French rule and up to the mid-seventies, children from villages and small towns would go to the boarding high school in the nearest city. There are no more boarding schools now as the government built schools (primary and secondary) in the most remote areas.

As we⁷⁶ said earlier, 'Akli is dead but for Mnawwar he is still working and making himself useful although indirectly. Mnawwar thinks that his friend is still working with him in the school. 'Akli was tall and slightly overweight he had a long waxed moustache⁷⁷ and a loud but nice voice. He used to speak clearly and with eloquence, he was also straight. Mnawwar is rather short and ten years younger than 'Akli; he grew up in the country and he still lives by the values he was taught. There was a great friendship between 'Akli and Mnawwar. During one of their regular evenings they talked as usual about their school and its problems, about the parents who didn't want to organise a meeting on the treasurer who embezzled a lot of money with the help of the butcher and other suppliers, and also about the stationery. They talked about various problems and their possible solutions; they sighed with pity and said the state should play its role in education. To end the discussion 'Akli stood up and said that he had an idea germinating in his mind, an idea in the interest of the school. He said "I'll let it develop⁷⁸ tonight and tomorrow we shall have a cultural session and talk about it... I feel a bit tired, my knees are aching and as you can see I had a bit too much to drink". "Do as you wish my friend," said Mnawwar then he accompanied him home. The following day they met as agreed and discussed 'Akli's idea. "I want to offer my body, I mean my skeleton to the school and I want you to be in charge of the execution of this wish," said 'Akli - Mnawwar was shocked, "God save us! Almighty God help us!... Why think of such ideas my friend, why?... you see brother, you see where alcohol leads to?... You offer the skeleton, your own skeleton to the school?... Dear God, Almighty God take this evil idea off my friend's mind... you offer your bones to the school?... It's more than ten years that we are friends and I never thought you'd come up with such an idea... If anybody upset you in this school just tell me... here I am with my cane, yes the forefathers' weapon, it's behind me and I can still use it with great skill you know⁷⁹... Anyway, who upset you and made you discard your body?"... - "Let me explain said 'Akli, I will die before long, the time is approaching⁸⁰... from what they told me at the hospital I think my liver is seriously damaged by wine and it has started to degenerate"⁸¹... - "That's just worry and nostalgia brother!"...

- "No... nobody knows about this except you. I have considered the question seriously and thought that two or three years after my death you dig out my bones and gather them to make a skeleton for the school... it will be used in natural science⁸² classes... As our school lacks teaching materials my skeleton will be useful for our children and it's better for the country to use mine rather than import one from abroad, from France" .⁸³

- "Almighty God save him! Why should you wish death to yourself? This is heresy⁸⁴.. thank God you're still in very good health and as strong as a bull."⁸⁵

⁷⁶ Story-tellers in North Africa never use the first person singular. The pronoun 'we' is used to make a transition as in this case (or 'as we were saying'). The nature of their material requires reported speech, hence the use of 'he, she, they said, did, told...etc.'

⁷⁷ The wearing of this kind of moustache was very common among Berbers from Kabylia (north-central part of Algeria), usually worn by middle-aged men. It is also worth mentioning that 'Akli is Kabyle and his name is used only by this race.

⁷⁸ In the text 'I shall let it brew...'

⁷⁹ Mnawwar is from the country and indeed the cane was used as a weapon.

⁸⁰ Phrase commonly used and meaning 'the time of death [which is decided by God] is approaching.' Another phrase - 'the decision of death is in the hand of God'.

⁸¹ In the text 'it has started to break slowly into little pieces'.

⁸² Literal translation of the Arabic name. Again a legacy from the French system where the subject is called *science naturelles*. The subject includes, through the different school forms, the study of man, animals, birds, fish and rocks.

⁸³ France in the same context has the meaning of foreign country, abroad, overseas.

⁸⁴ In the text the word literally means 'you ignore' hence 'to be ignorant', 'ignorant of God', 'ignoring the existence of God'... etc.

⁸⁵ In the text 'stronger than the Spanish bull'.

- "The end Mnawwar, the end I can see it coming soon. I want to serve more, I want to be more useful to the school, the school where we worked most of our life... I want to be of some use in the teaching and training of the youth..."

- "Your nationalistic passion is fantastic, yes it's so strong that it is urging you to offer your bones... why go so far?... You want us to dig you out of the grave, build you up... and put you to stand here, inside the school like an ornament?... This must be the books you read on philosophy and history which turned your head... Please repent and come back to God... or, I tell you what, go and have a bottle or two maybe they'll take this evil idea off your mind." "I thought the matter over and considered all aspects"... said 'Akli.

- "you crazy fool, stop blaspheming, God may bring us an earthquake this very night... maybe the school will collapse and we all die except you, saved by God..."

- "Another school will inherit and benefit from my bones. You know Mnawwar death comes to everybody, there are some who expect it to come suddenly and others who are ready for it... it's a matter of choice..."

- "Incredible! 'Akli this is incredible, instead of leaving your bones to rest in peace in the mercy of the Almighty you want to offer them while they're still sustaining your body."

- "After all they are my bones and I am their owner and what's more, the law protects private property..."

- "you're right, yes it's your bones... people leave castles and treasures behind and you want to leave me your bones." Mnawwar looked at his friend and knew that he was determined, then he said "I'm sorry 'Akli, let me get over the shock and give myself time to think about this matter tonight; tomorrow, God willing, we'll have a good discussion and examine the question thoroughly, you'd better go home now and have some rest, try also to think more about it... 'Akli, since you wish to become a public property I will not bother you anymore... We shall, keep the vertebral column intact to preserve the value of the present"...

There was a great affection between 'Akli and Mnawwar. They talked in secret and studied the matter over and over again. Every night they examined one aspect, they studied the scientific aspect and learned how the bones are assembled; from a philosophical point of view they said that Islam calls for learning and sacrifice; they also approached their problem from the legal angle, they looked in many books, they also went through the constitution in detail and found no clause which forbids their project.

'Akli and Mnawwar agreed more and more and had a better understanding of the matter. 'Akli wrote a letter then asked Mnawwar for his finger, "give us your finger... come on brother give us your finger", at which Mnawwar replied - "you are the public property, not me... send them your own finger, after all it's you who are making the donation".

- "Come on brother, give us your finger I said."

- "You are their property not me, so send them your own finger... you are making the donation not me."

- "Come on give us your finger, you can't sign properly, can you? So come here and put your finger print as a signature next to mine."⁸⁶

⁸⁶ A practice introduced by the French for illiterate people. The signature is the print of the right index.

Then they set off to execute their project and approached different departments; the answers they got were incredible, answers like - "In The Name Of Allah The Most Gracious The Dispenser Of Grace, Blessings And Prayers Be Upon The [Last And] Best Of His Messengers⁸⁷... now to answer your question I say that it is the Red Cross people who know about these things, they will solve your problem", and - "your project reminds me of the pharaohs... our country is taking another direction... you should submit a social report, a project that is useful for the country... think about it more... you have a large variety of social problems to choose from" - and - "you got the wrong address, are you trying to get us into trouble with the Department of Museums?" - Someone thought that 'Akli was already dead, he said "my deepest sympathy... but you will have to wait until there is a ministry for such affairs." They were also told - "We are bringing a substantial number of skeletons from India. As you know India is our friend and a developing country like us. Furthermore the skeletons we are bringing are genuine but they are alive, and they can walk too," - and - "after the gentleman's death and his burial get two witnesses who must also be dead to sign and state that the gentleman's soul has really risen to heaven, then the rest of the procedure is simple." The last agent started to complain saying "I see... you offer meat to the others and bring me the bones to gnaw... they all bought cars... they all bought villas... except me... except me... except me."

'Akli and Mnawwar didn't give up, they kept insisting until they succeeded. The administration dealing with the matter accepted the offer and replied officially to 'Akli and at the end of their document they thanked him and congratulated him as 'Akli the brave militant who offers his body in the interests of science... After their congratulations and their thanks they hoped the skeleton was in good condition and the life of the donor short. 'Akli and Mnawwar jumped with joy when they received the reply... then Mnawwar fell to his knees and started a prayer to thank God, and 'Akli rushed to the off-licence for a couple of bottles which he drank straight away then came back to his friend and said - "now my mind is at rest, I can die in peace now... You keep an eye on me just in case I get dizzy or I get hit by a car... I am now the property of the state and you are my sole and responsible guardian."

There was between 'Akli and Mnawwar a warm affection... 'Akli, Mercy of God be upon him, died more than ten years ago and after all this time Mnawwar remains faithful and loyal to his friend, he still keeps deeply in his heart that love for his friend, the love which strengthens the bond between them.

(Blackout. the narrator moves to the other end of front-stage, the actors exit.)

⁸⁷ This invocation is always used by Muslims just before they start anything in daily life i.e. a speech, writing, eating, driving, travelling... etc. We have opted for the literal translation of the 'Best Of His Messengers' because it is meant by most Muslims. We have added [The Last] to make the reference to the prophet Muhammad. The other invocation is "In The Name Of Allah The Most Gracious, The Dispenser Of Grace, Blessings And Prayers Be Upon Our Master Muhammad The Messenger Of Allah And Upon All His Family And His Companions". The first part of this invocation "In The Name Of Allah The Most Gracious, The Dispenser Of Grace" is the original invocation opening the Koran and starting all the *Surāt* (chapters) except *sūrah* number nine. It is also an invocation used in daily life.

⁸⁸ Allusion to corruption and embezzlement.

(A minimal setting representing a class-room. - A few pupils playing. Enter a woman-teacher in a white blouse.)

- Teacher⁸⁹ Please sit down... thank you... Last time we studied in our natural science class the external and internal structures of the human body as well as the cells and the tissues. Today we shall study the skeleton... silence, silence, please! We shall look at the number of the bones and the different parts of the skeleton... today's lesson is related to the study of bones... it is short and easy but our school gives it a particular importance in the sense that it has in its possession a genuine human skeleton... silence please!... It is a skeleton of a man who was a cook in this school. His name was 'Akli Amezghān, mercy of God be upon him... therefore our lesson bears a particular importance since we have something unique in its kind... On the other hand, Mr. Mnawwar, the school porter... silence please!.. the well known and respected Mr. Mnawwar will bring the skeleton soon... The porter was the cook's closest friend and now he is the sole guardian entrusted with the remains of his friend. Mr. Mnawwar is known to everybody for he has an exceptional art of relating stories particularly when he talks about the life of his friend 'Akli... Therefore it would be useful for us to try and convince Mr. Mnawwar to stay with us and participate in our class... silence! The aim is to make our guest talk about the cook... in other words he will bring his dear old friend to life, thus what he says would be useful for our lesson as it will help you in other subjects... silence! Call Mr. Mnawwar and let's try to induce him to talk but let's do it in a clever and polite manner and avoid confusion... silence!... Here he comes, take your seats. *(Enter Mnawwar)* Today our lesson is on the skeleton... welcome... welcome Mr. Mnawwar!
- Mnawwar Good afternoon my children!
- Pupils⁹⁰ *(all together)* Good evening⁹¹ Mr. Mnawwar!
- Mnawwar Here he is well wrapped and covered, looking decent⁹² as required by religious law. Your Uncle 'Akli, mercy of God be upon him... well, learn about him and get some knowledge, the country will benefit from you. Let me get on a chair to uncover the poor man. *(He removes the sheet covering the skeleton.)* Here he is... here is the marvellous man...
- Teacher *(pointing at an apron tied round the skeleton.)*
- What about this?
- Mnawwar This is a cook's apron⁹³.. it is the apron he used to wear at work and it is the only thing he left behind... I tied it round his waist to cover his lower part⁹⁴... I wanted him to look decent... well it's a good thing to be decent but I think you're confused my daughter, things are mixed up in your head.
- Teacher In fact...
- Mnawwar Shall we take it off teacher? All right then... since it is for an educational purpose let's remove it. *(He starts to untie the apron)* Actually he used to say frequently, one shouldn't be shy to talk about things related to science... Well teacher, here he is

⁸⁹ The teacher speaks in modern standard Arabic.

⁹⁰ For the pupils the author uses *al-jamī'* which means 'all' or 'the whole group'. We have opted for 'pupils' because of the context adding 'all together' between brackets when the pupils respond all together.

⁹¹ We have kept the meaning of the greeting in Arabic although we do not think that classes are held in the evening.

⁹² The allusion is about the covering of the lower part of the skeleton.

⁹³ In the text 'the belt of the profession'.

⁹⁴ In the text 'I tied it round his waist for decency.'

naked. I shall come back and fetch him when you finish your lesson... You may get as close to him as you wish but don't touch him. Teacher, when you finish send La'raj Ben Difa to call me because I want to twist his ears all the way back to the classroom; he needs to be punished for smoking and for calling me "weasel-face"...(*addressing a pupil*). You think I didn't see you hiding behind the tree? (*turning to the teacher*) He was sitting on the pavement, legs crossed and puffing away... smoking a cigarette... yes smoking a cigarette bigger than him. Anyway, see you later my daughter...

- Pupils (*all together calling him back*) - Mr. Mnawwar!.. Mr. Mnawwar!.. Mr. Mnawwar!..
- Mnawwar What's going on?.. What's the matter with you? Are you demonstrating or what...?
- Pupils (*they repeat*) Mr. Mnawwar!.. Mr. Mnawwar!.. Mr. Mnawwar!..
- Teacher Silence!... Silence!...
- Mnawwar Do you want me to lose my job? You're making an uproar and the head-teacher is outside in the court-yard. What do you want?
- Teacher Mr. Mnawwar, they want you to spend a little of your time with them and talk about your friend 'Akli.
- Mnawwar They always play this trick on me teacher... these kids get on my nerves you know - they don't like to study and they always find excuses... What am I going to do with them now?
- Teacher Let's talk together about the skeleton; I speak to them about the bones and you talk to them about the man.
- Mnawwar If I'm not wrong, I think you're on their side, yes?
- Teacher If you leave they'll make a racket and there is nothing I can do.
- Mnawwar You're not the type to give in or be overpowered... we know each other well. You know teacher... my friend called for the learning of science, he always insisted on science... yes, science... but there is nothing I can contribute in this field... The kids want to play, they're still young and not fully aware of the importance of learning.
- Teacher (*addressing the pupils*) Shall we let Mr. Mnawwar go back to his work? (*She puts her arms up and waves a 'No' signal to the pupils*)
- Pupils (*all together*) No! No! Mr. Mnawwar!... Mr. Mnawwar!
- Teacher Silence!.. Silence!.. you see, they don't want you to leave...
- Mnawwar You're behind everything teacher... Shall we let Mr. Mnawwar go?... - and you stretch your arms up... why, am I going to work up in the air? Why don't you show the door?... Now I'm in serious trouble with Mama⁹⁵... she's waiting opposite the gate... I told her that I would be back in five minutes; she's going to think I'm late on purpose, well that's it, I've had it.
- Teacher I will talk to her and explain everything... I will tell her that you helped us with our lesson.

⁹⁵ His wife.

- Mnawwar She won't say anything in front of you but she'll get at me, later... (*looking through the window*) Look... look at the way she's standing at the gate... like a soldier... a long scarf tied round her head⁹⁶, she's resting on her cane.
- Teacher Silence!
- Mnawwar (*to pupils*) You're laughing hey?... (*to a girl*) Linda Al-Dja'būri, you'd better not show yourself to your aunt Mama because you'll get the cane for what you did...(*to teacher*) - what do you want me to say about the skeleton?
- Teacher Tell us about 'Akli, introduce him, then...
- Mnawwar The late 'Akli Amezghān was born in 1920 near the town of Bordj Menayel⁹⁷... He emigrated at the age of eighteen. He came back in 1946. The same year he got married⁹⁸, he took his wife with him and left his parents⁹⁹. He started to work in this school as a cook assistant and stayed here until 1956 when he was arrested and put in prison till 1962¹⁰⁰. After he was arrested his wife and children went back to Bordj Menayel... His wife died in 1961. His children grew up and stayed with their grandfather and as for him he didn't marry again. After Independence he came back to work in this school... in a way it was him who started again the catering in this school. The budget was limited during the first period of Independence and he was feeding the kids with lentils, beans and macaroni. It was during that period that we met and became friends. The first day we met, the poor man noticed I was shy and not at ease. I had just arrived from the country and urban life was all new to me¹⁰¹ - "let the cane hang on your arm like a gentleman or a broker¹⁰², don't hold it tight like a shepherd, it scares the children... you are a free man now, relax and enjoy yourself" ... (*he puts the cane on his arm and as if he were addressing his friend says*) - 'Akli, like this?... (*to pupils*) And now good bye!
- Pupils Mr. Mnawwar!... Mr. Mnawwar!...
- Teacher Take a seat... relax... (*pointing at her desk*) Here, you have a chair and a table... please sit down.
- (*Mr. Mnawwar sits at the desk*)
- Mnawwar Great, really great!.. Funny times! This is indeed the funny century our forefathers predicted¹⁰³... everything is upside down, the porter sits at the desk and the teacher stands up! If Mama comes in and sees me in this position she would scream with joy and say 'come on give me more money for the housekeeping since they have increased your salary.'

⁹⁶ Most old women in Algeria tie a small turban on top of a scarf round the head.

⁹⁷ A town in Kabylia, north-central Algeria.

⁹⁸ In the text 'his parents married him'.

⁹⁹ Usually young men stay with their parents when they get married but this is gradually disappearing.

¹⁰⁰ This is during the War of Independence - 1954 - 1962.

¹⁰¹ There was a large rural migration towards the cities after independence as a result of war.

¹⁰² In Algeria a broker is more a go-between in business deals. The connotation of the word *samsār* is 'that who extracts money', the greedy.

¹⁰³ We do not know whether this unfounded and rather superstitious prediction exists in other Arab countries but in Algeria the story refers to the fourteenth century in the Muslim calendar (twentieth century A.D.). Some time in the past people predicted that our century will know an unprecedented upheaval of moral and religious values and that it could be the end of the world.

- Teacher It is the skeleton which gives the body its shape and its upright posture; it holds the muscles and protects the inner soft structure of the body. The skull protects the brain and the rib cage protects the heart and the lungs. There is a total of 206 bones in the skeleton.
- Mnawwar Yes 206... I have counted them. *(To a pupil)* Write... Write... *Sakkūm Al-Ghūti*, write down 206... you've been playing with your hair since the beginning of the lesson, I have noticed you.
- Teacher How did you count them Mr. Mnawwar?
- Mnawwar My friend used to teach me... He used to bring his books and cattle bones every evening and explain to me everything... he wanted to make sure I knew how to put his skeleton together... I can't remember the names of all the bones...he was teaching me in French... I can remember... *le crâne* and *le fémur*¹⁰⁴... The words he taught me sounded like swear words. He would check that I learned them by heart and he would repeat "remember well, 206... 206"... so much so that whenever Mama saw him coming to the house she would say "your friend 206 is coming"... It's true... 206... he didn't lie... When I brought my friend out of the grave I counted them one by one... three bones from the hand were missing... I stayed in the grave looking for them... The poor policeman¹⁰⁵ who accompanied me was startled when he saw me count the bones and put them in the basket..."What are you doing?,"he said, be afraid of God!' I said that three bones were missing to make 206. It's my late friend's wish... I took my friend's skull, shook the earth off then I kissed it and said "It's my friend's wish, he wanted me to." I kept the policeman waiting, he sat on the next grave, holding his head in both hands then he said: "Look man, if you reach Master Azrael¹⁰⁶ intact, give the jinns a party". I said "I promised to take care of these bones... so 206 is 206."["Digging out human bones! I don't understand", he said]¹⁰⁷ I told him that I was used to bones and that he shouldn't be afraid. I didn't want to talk more as I noticed that he was rather afraid of me, he had one hand on his holster and he was holding the witness with the other. Every time I picked up a bone and cleaned it he said a prayer... Anyway I gathered all the 206 bones of my friend and said to the policeman "lets go now". He said "thank God!" and called me names. On our way out of the cemetery I was carrying the basket in one hand and holding the policeman's hand with the other because he was stumbling and praying all the way. "Sod this horrible job," he said. "Actually, I said, they should train you for such things"... "One more word and I will arrest you", he said... At the gate, the cemetery warden finished him off. When he saw the policeman was pale he said "I'll get you some water, let me get the gourd from the grave,, I keep it in the grave because water stays cold... If you want to lie down come to my place here in this hut, it's nice and cool, the atmosphere of the cemetery gives it a nice coolness... yes, just lie down and relax, don't worry..."
- Teacher There are three parts in the skeleton of the human body: the bones of the head, the bones of the trunk and the bones of the limbs. In the head we have the bones of the skull and the bones of the face. The skull comprises eight bones which are flat and saw-toothed, they are interlocked together by the tiny teeth on their edges to form a

¹⁰⁴ These words do not appear in the script. There are two blank spaces. We suppose they are missing because the script is typed in Arabic and the typist forgot to add them in French, so we have opted for *le crâne* (the skull) and *le fémur* (the femur) just to give two examples of french names of bones Mr. Mnawwar remembers.

¹⁰⁵ We have translated *darki* meaning *gendarme* in French by policeman because we couldn't find the exact equivalent in English.

¹⁰⁶ 'Azrael' is the angel of death.

¹⁰⁷ This is an alternative translation because we have felt that close a translation of this line would not make sense in English; it is as follows; "Meat he said, meat is not touched after six or seven days."

solid box, not entirely closed, which protects the brain inside it. The back-bone of the skull is called the occiput... Have you written everything down?

Pupils (all together) Yes Miss!

Teacher Mr. Mnawwar, so?

Mnawwar What do you mean 'so'..? As you can see I'm in good health, I'm all right, just fine...

Teacher I mean what happened after the cemetery?

Mnawwar I spent the first nights on my own with my friend's skeleton... Poor Mama went to stay with her relatives. She said that she was scared and that she would come back after I had assembled the skeleton and taken it elsewhere... Anyway, I followed his instructions, I put the bones together and built the skeleton - I assembled him just as you see him¹⁰⁸ now - Then I went to fetch Mama... I must confess, I was scared the first night too... (To the skeleton) I'm sorry 'Akli but I never lied to you before... Goodness me, he has a frightening look... Thank God I had thought of the Koran to keep me company... I read *ṣūrāh*¹⁰⁹ 'Al-A'raf' that is 'the Faculty of Discernment'¹¹⁰ - it too has 206 verses - and I would read each verse to each bone... My in-laws came to see 'the creature' which made Mama leave home... I asked them to come in for coffee and meet my friend who was standing behind the wardrobe¹¹¹. They refused and said "It's all right we can have a look from the door step..." Mama understood and came back home on her own. I wrote to 'Akli's father in the bit of Arabic I know. Poor me, he replied in Berber¹¹² and I could find nobody to read the letter for me... it was a long letter, at the end he quoted some verses from the Koran which helped me guess that he was upset with his son and myself and that he considered us polytheists. His poor sister explained to me later... one year, during 'Id celebrations¹¹³ she came to visit her brother in our house; she stayed with us for three days... Before she left she gave me her address and said: "If you need a female skeleton write to me... I would like to stand next to my brother and keep him company"... Mama was crying and I didn't know what to say... I said: "you don't need to trouble yourself.. they're going to import plastic skeletons". The first days were a bit difficult because of what I had done... The whole neighbourhood heard about the skeleton and my house was invaded by people... God knows the number of sick people who came to me asking about 'Master Mnawwar the Healer'¹¹⁴... Kids would climb up the wall, hang on the window grid¹¹⁵ and look... And women! every minute a woman comes to ask Mama - "Dear sister, tell me, I hear you have a chained female ghost in the house and she's giving you trouble..." and Mama would say: "That's only Mnawwar's poor late friend...if you want to see him I'll uncover him for you." One of those weird women came to me and said: "Here is fifty pounds, I want to hire the hand of the skeleton, I just want to roll some couscous with it and I'll bring it back"¹¹⁶ What a mess it was!

¹⁰⁸ Mnawwar personifies the skeleton. He refers to his friend, that is why we have opted for 'him' instead of 'it'.

¹⁰⁹ *ṣūrāh* is a chapter in the Koran.

¹¹⁰ We thought it useful to follow the Arabic title with its English equivalent.

¹¹¹ *māriu* is taken from the Spanish word *armario* - wardrobe.

¹¹² In the text 'the Amazigh language'. Amazigh is the original Berber word for Amazigh people, meaning 'the free people'.

¹¹³ 'Id celebrations, see footnote 46.

¹¹⁴ Allusion to people's superstitions and their belief in charlatans thinking they are endowed with supernatural powers to cure and predict the future. These charlatans are addressed as 'Master...'

¹¹⁵ What is meant in the text is a kind of fence outside the window fixed on a grid which is fixed on the wall. The children actually hang on the fence.

¹¹⁶ This is for witchcraft. There are many stories about witches who use hands of the dead to roll couscous with. The aim is to make the person who eats the couscous

- Teacher The bones of the face: there is a total of 14 bones which form one single unit except the lower jaw-bone where the lower teeth are fixed. Each side of the lower jaw-bone is connected to the temple-bone by a round extremity called the 'condyle'. The slightly bent shape of the condyle and the transverse cavity between the condyle and the temple-bone allow the vertical and lateral movements of the lower jaw.
- Mnawwar He was very intelligent. What a brain! A brain he filled with books and wine. (*To the skeleton*) Sorry about that my friend, you know I love you and have respect for you... Oh yes, he learned a lot all by himself. Because he was a widower he used to read and study books all night and sometimes he would make remarks like "look, look at this explorer, look how far he had been!"... Sometimes he comes late and excuses himself saying "Mnawwar, the kids kept me talking!"...
- Teacher Sorry Mr. Mnawwar, but what were you saying about 'Akli'?
- Mnawwar I said that he loved science and reading... He was articulate not like me... His conversations were nice and interesting. When he's had a few glasses he starts to talk about the workers and their historic achievements, I was amazed and it seemed to me that those workers were carrying the globe... I would just sit close to him and drink in his words... At night, when I go to bed Mama says "your friend 'Akli drinks but the smell of wine sticks on you"... His drinking was good... If he had lived one or two more years I would have fallen into the same trap. One year we celebrated November 1st at school¹¹⁷ and 'Akli made delicious cakes. The head-teacher liked them very much and took some home, on his way out he thanked 'Akli and asked him how he made the cakes and what he laced them with 'Akli answered: "I laced the cakes with rose-water and my head with brandy".
- Teacher The bones of the trunk: there are two parts in the trunk - The vertebral column and the rib cage. The vertebral column is a bone chain which stretches up along the middle of the back and to which are connected the head and the ribs. The vertebral column has 33 units most of which have a similar shape, they are called 'vertebrae'... Mr. Mnawwar, the nose is a bit crooked, isn't it?
- Mnawwar Yes it was damaged in prison... He was really a man of honour and dignity... (*looking through the window*) Here comes the baker... she'll count them loaf by loaf and if there is only one missing she calls the head-teacher.
- Pupils (*all together*) The head-teacher... The head-teacher.
- Mnawwar Oh my God! I've had it!... (*to teacher*) you see where you got me, holding me?... (*Pretending to scold the pupils*) We told you a hundred times not to lean on the walls, you dirty them with your shoes!.. You are forcing us to paint them every month... and when you go out of school behave yourselves, no disorder, no noise and no embracing... boys on one side and girls on the other, coming in or going out!... Understand?...
- Pupils He's gone... He's gone... He's gone...
- Mnawwar He's gone... Let's get back to science (*to teacher*) Please...
- Teacher The rib cage: it is a set of bones which surround the heart and the lungs and protect them. We have the thoracic vertebrae at the back, the sternum at the front and the ribs. There are three categories of ribs: a) - seven pairs of true ribs - b) three pairs of false ribs - and c) two pairs of floating ribs.

insensitive. The person (usually it is intended for men rather than women) would therefore have a hardened heart which would respond to and obey only the person who cooked the couscous.

117 November 1st (1954) date of the beginning of the Algerian War of Independence.

- Mnawwar (addressing a girl) - Fayza!.. Fayza!..
- Teacher What's wrong with Fayza Mr. Mnawwar?
- Mnawwar She's biting her nails... if she carries on I'm afraid she'll get to the phalanges.
- Teacher The bones of the limbs. 1) The upper limbs...
- Mnawwar His hands teacher, he made wonders with his hands. He could bone a whole lamb and keep the original shape... When he cooks beans people lick their fingers... He is a maestro teacher, when he lifts the lid to add salt in the pot you think he was sowing seeds.... He would hold a frying pan with boiling oil and run as if he was dancing... When he cleans rice, his hand goes to and fro so gently that you fall asleep if you watch him... oh! eggs, when he breaks eggs you think he was picking flowers... 'Akli produces gold from his hands... you know teacher, my friend's hands were a source of goodness... Just a smell and he could tell you what the food tastes like... Those who used to work with him loved him and respected him. He taught them to work in silence and under strict rules... He used to tell them "work with your brains... think before you lift your hand"... He was amazing teacher, you know, he could smell things a mile away... One day he said to me: "Mnawwar, the treasurer will come tomorrow and tell me to cook sausages for lunch and for dinner because the kids like them, that's what he will say. But I know what to say, I will tell him that I saw the butcher on his way to his office and I could smell rancid fat on him. Do you know what? If he insists on cooking sausages I'll tell him everything is ready just get us some skin!" ... And that's what happened, exactly as he had predicted... Another time, when we were trying to get the permission for me to remove the bones from the grave after his death, we were talking to the man in charge of cemeteries... He said it wasn't under his responsibility and belched... 'Akli told him straight away that his wife had put too many breadcrumbs in the meat-balls... The poor man ended up forgetting what we came to see him for and kept asking 'Akli about cooking recipes - "how do you prepare Yorkshire pudding?... What about almond cakes?... Do you use thyme or bay leaves for big fish?... and walnuts are used in mince pies¹¹⁸ or in mixed nut pies?"¹¹⁹ Sometimes, when he comes for a chat at home, Mama gives him *her food to taste* and asks him what's missing, she often asks him for advice... he would tell her for instance "you put too much safran" or "today you bought goat meat", she gets upset and tells him that he was drunk that day... Great hands teacher, he had great hands, mercy of God be upon him... He had big hands because he was a hefty man, otherwise he would be able to tie two hairs together... He used to make bombs during the armed struggle... He had a contact with a young man who was working in a laboratory and who used to bring him the materials. He told me once that he had made a very small bombs and wrapped it in egg shells, it looked like a boiled egg... I asked him to show me how to make bombs... He refused and said he wouldn't teach me to destroy but show me how to make things and be constructive... He was very skillful indeed, a maestro... and courage!.. He was very brave teacher, he was never afraid of death. In 1974 on the night he breathed his last he was lying down... Mama was praying and I was reading the Koran. He woke up a few times and raising his head, he told me..."Use copper wire to assemble the bones because it doesn't oxydise. Apart from my crooked nose everything else in me is perfect... oil the bones every year and cover the skeleton whenever you can... The more useful is the skeleton the greater your merit"... My brother was very brave, you know even at that moment when Mama was crying he comforted her...

¹¹⁸ This is our own translation for these cakes. The first type has a croissant shape and stuffed with crushed almonds; this is mainly a North African recipe. The second type is common to North Africa, East Mediterranean countries and the Middle East under the name *baklava* or *baqlāwa*.

¹¹⁹ see 118.

- Teacher The upper limbs are connected to the trunk through the shoulders which comprise the clavicle and the shoulder blades. The upper limb is mobile and has three parts: a) the arm.
- Mnawwar It has one bone only - the humerus.
- Teacher b) The forearm, it has two bones which are...
- Mnawwar The radius at the back and the ulna at the front.
- Teacher c) There are three parts in the hand...
- Mnawwar The carpal - There are eight small bones in the carpal.
- Teacher The metacarpal
- Mnawwar It has five long bones.
- Teacher The fingers.
- Mnawwar We know that there are five fingers in the hand but the fingers have three phalanges each except the thumbs which have only two... *(looking through the window)* look,...look... The Arts teacher is early... he's going to have a little chat with Huriya, he's going to talk to her about cultural activities, about union activities and about love activities...
- Teacher Did you say love Mr. Mnawwar?
- Mnawwar 'Akli was joyful and always optimistic... If you excuse me, I have things to attend to...*(calling a pupil's name)* Khāmsi!... well, excuse me I must go now... Teacher, Khāmsi Fu'ād is yawning, he's going to fall asleep on the table... and I'm afraid Mama rings the bell before time... when you finish with the skeleton of my friend the cook send La'raj Ben-Difa for me... Before his last breath he got up and urged me saying "work for science Mnawwar and do anything you can for science". You know my children, just before he died he said to me "science, Mnawwar, science... when science will spread in our country and will be available to the humble workers like you and me... when they will be using it in their skills and daily life, our country will have a second Independence... then our people will get rid of their problems... all problems... Mnawwar I'm offering my body for the purpose of that high goal"... Mercy of God be upon him, he was a great man... He was a far-seeing man, a man of principle... Excuse me teacher... Now I must think of something to get away from Mama... Good bye my children!
- Pupils Good bye Mr. Mnawwar!
- Teacher The lower limbs are connected to the trunk through the bed-pan... Silence!... Two bones constitute the bed-pan, they are the sacrum and the ilium... The mobile parts of the lower limb are the thigh, the leg and the foot. *(lights and voice fade slowly)* And... and... and...

EPISODE FIVE: THE STORY OF MANŞŪR

(Bare stage - lights on the narrator sitting on a chair. He tells the story of Mansūr. He speaks a few lines then sings playing the banjo.)

Narrator *(speaking)* Manşūr packed up his things smiling quietly: he has received the decision to retire from work. The manager congratulated him and said "you're free from the hard work and the sweat." It's like that nice feeling when you come out of a hot bath. He greeted his friends good bye energetically shaking hands but hiding his sorrow. He was sad and words were hard and heavy to say. He stood by the machine wondering; he put his pack on it and sighed. Then he put his arms round it and kissed it, you'd think there was something between them. He talked to it nicely with gentleness and respect. He said "I'm old now, I'm leaving to have a peaceful rest; you are tired and falling to pieces, soon you will be a heap of scrap."

(singing)

This is the final day for our parting was their verdict
 Many years together have gone like a dream
 I was always standing by you to keep you company
 For years and years I stood by you like a pillar
 Manşūr packed up his things smiling quietly
 He received the decision to retire from work
 He put his pack on the machine and stood wondering
 He embraced the machine and kissed it gently
 There must be a special relation between them
 He addressed it with respect and spoke gently
 I have lived with you longer than I stayed with my wife
 Always loyal, faithful and honest with you
 I never let you down and never left you alone
 Except in illness or in strikes for wages
 Look at the tattoos you printed on my hand
 Look how my body leans on you gently
 I know you well and I know what's inside you
 I have learned to recognise all your tunes
 Sometimes your behaviour is nice and blameless
 And sometimes you are treacherous like a mad dog
 Wearing a muzzle and attacking people with rage
 If I forget myself and lean on you you tear my flesh
 How much did you drink of my blood
 How many mouthfuls did you take
 Manşūr packed up his things smiling quietly
 He received the decision to retire from work
 He put his pack on the machine and stood wondering
 He embraced the machine and kissed it gently
 There must be a special relation between them
 He addressed it with respect and spoke gently
 Don't be hard on my young substitute be gentle
 If I was given time and the necessary tools
 I would have improved you and stopped your creaking
 You would produce more and save on oil
 There would be less risk and work more pleasant
 I shall give your secrets to the young lad
 I shall give him every information and every trick
 To tame you and ride you like a horse
 The young lad shall win and be your master
 For he is strong and ready for the confrontation
 Manşūr packed up his things smiling quietly
 He received the decision to retire from work

He put his pack on the machine and stood wondering
 He embraced the machine and kissed it gently
 There must be a special relation between them
 He addressed it with respect and spoke gently
 When we first met I thought you were a phantom
 I liked you and in respect took off my hat and bowed
 I thought you'd help me build castles and make me fat
 I pored my sweat in you and gained neither wealth nor joy
 He embraced the machine and kissed it gently
 There must be a special relation between them
 He addressed it with respect and spoke gently
 Work with you gave me honour and dignity
 Standing near you I saw hard work and pride in the factory
 I found in unity unshakable strength and pride
 He embraced the machine and kissed it gently
 There must be a special relation between them
 He addressed it with respect and spoke gently
 It's time to go and I am leaving in peace
 Farewell machine let us part good friends.

(Blackout. The narrator moves to the other end of front stage.)

EPISODE SIX: THE STORY OF CLEVER JALLŪL

(Bare stage - the narrator moves centre-stage joined by four actors. They tell the story of Clever Jallūl the same way as in the previous episodes)

Clever Jallūl¹²⁰ is a clever man and he strongly believes in social justice. He loves his country dearly and wishes it develops quickly to give a better life for the majority. Clever Jallūl is always helping people, he always does his best when they're in need. He is meticulous and very clever when it comes to plan things but he has one weakness - he loses his temper quickly and gives way to his anger¹²¹ which makes him react foolishly. His wife and his children love him and have respect for him; they know how to tackle his weakness, how to deal with him, how to be patient with him and calm him down. They know he is a generous and affectionate man, always willing to help and give useful advice. If he happens to raise his voice a little bit they all fall silent and look down, they leave him^{to} get his anger out not minding even if he breaks a plate or bangs on the table. When he calms down Zohra his wife kisses him and says to her children "your father Jallūl is just and stands for right against wrong, I wish you resemble him," then she adds a smile, "if it wasn't for the poor and their trouble he would be an important personality in the capital"... Clever Jallūl knows how to talk to his children, he gave them a sound upbringing and bred into them the love for work, affection for others, modesty and good manners. When he talks to them about politics and other important things he expresses himself according to their knowledge and their level of understanding... when he tells his little girl stories about 'Master 'Ali'¹²² and 'The head of the ogress'¹²³ he knows how to embellish the tales with idioms from daily popular language. Thus 'Master 'Ali has engraved on his

¹²⁰ The character's name is Jallūl Al-Fhāyimi. The second name is too obvious in meaning and it is intended by the author. It means 'the clever', 'that who understands' or 'that who wants to know (or to understand)'. We thought it interesting to translate this name and keep the author's intention.

¹²¹ The verb *yatnarvaz* is derived from the French word *nerveux*, hence 'to get angry', 'to lose one's temper...

¹²² 'Ali is the fourth *khalīfa*, successor after Prophet Muhammad. He has become a hero in many folk-tales throughout the Muslim world.

¹²³ Another well known folk tale in the Arab world.

sword all the aims of his holy mission, that is his fight among the poor and the destitute to eliminate heresy and raise the dignity of mankind... In the story of 'Ḥadīdwān'¹²⁴ everybody says the little boy falls in the little pot and disappears, but Jallūl calls him 'Ḥadīd Wān', 'The Iron of Wān'¹²⁵ and the story becomes based on Wan Yank the young and brave Vietnamese and the ogress the little boy fights changes into an ogress who sprays napalm from her mouth and fools people with shoddy goods... Clever Jallūl takes on him people's problems and knows how to solve them, he listens to his neighbours and gives them advice, but he has one weakness - he loses his temper quickly and gives way to his anger which makes him react foolishly. His neighbours know about this so before they go to see him for advice they ask his wife Zohra first to know whether his 'mood is clear or cloudy'. They all know that although he is hyper-sensitive he hates to see people get angry or get critical about things before they analyse them. They also know that he listens to them with care and attention and that he doesn't miss a single word of what they tell him. If ever someone gets carried away in his talk and swears at the government Jallūl springs out of his seat, gives him a stony look and then fires at him with a burst of words as if he was shooting at him with a machine-gun, he would say: "You have gone beyond the limit my friend, let me remind you that there is true democracy here in this house but the democracy we agreed on in this house differs from some other democracies... In our house freedom of speech means rational, sensible and intelligent speech without petty criticism and swearing... Our understanding of democracy is intelligent analysis with firm and positive stands... So if you want to criticise the government this way go down town, the rich have opened cafés for this purpose." Clever Jallūl is a handy man he can repair electricity, T.V. sets and fridges, he can also drive. He often teases the green-grocer, he would say "give me two pounds of this but please don't take from the front, leave the nice fruit for display as it is just in case a foreigner comes to buy, we don't want him to laugh at us, do we? I am a fellow-citizen, so give me two pounds from that bag where there is a mixture of unripe and damaged fruit."

Jallūl is incredible at organising a queue, indeed he has a good experience with queues. If he joins a queue in disorder and confusion he puts it right just in two or three words, "brothers, he would say, listen to me brothers... let's form a nice military rank, it's easy, we can do it, you see if we get organised each one of us would save ten minutes and if we do it every day we would save ten minutes here and ten minutes there. So we would save one hour in a month, twelve days in a year and a whole year in thirty years." When he takes a bus in a rush hour he holds his breath and stretches up to make room for people¹²⁶. When he goes to a union meeting he knows how to speak and draw the attention on important matters and principles but he has one weakness - he loses his temper quickly and gives way to his anger which makes him react foolishly. During the summer holidays he takes his family to the beach only once, from dawn to late afternoon. And to protect them from the heat of the sun and give them shade he makes a shelter in a split of a second, stretching a large sheet¹²⁷ over a few reeds. Jallūl is good at talking to taxi drivers and he knows how to start a conversation with them, for instance he would say: "They're letting you down, yes they don't care about you... they gave you small cars and yet you are doing such a service to mankind, you can't take many passengers, these cars are tiny... In fact taxi drivers run a better service than public buses... you pick up and drop people every twenty yards... They should give you cattle-trucks to use as taxis and serve the public interest better".¹²⁸ Yes Jallūl can talk well but he has one weakness - he loses his temper quickly and gives way to his anger which makes him react foolishly... When clever Jallūl goes to an office for a document he knows how to greet the civil

124 'Ḥadīdwān' is a folk tale similar to 'Tom Thumb'.

125 Translation of 'Ḥadīd Wān.'

126 Allusion to overcrowded buses.

127 In the text the word *ḥāyāk* means a large white piece of light cloth which women use to cover themselves when they go out. It is worn mainly in Algeria, Tunisia and Libya.

128 Allusion to the terrible public transport system and the taxi drivers who take advantage of the situation thus making much money.

servants, he knows how to watch and let them take time over their work. He can tell who among them has connections and who hasn't¹²⁹, as he can tell between a strict and honest official and a corrupt. If the police stop him in the street during one of their sanitation campaigns Jallūl produces in a flash his identity card, his occupation card, his election card and his union card¹³⁰ and speaks to them politely; if he can't get into the police van¹³¹ quickly he trips on the first step and because he loses his temper quickly and gives way to his anger he reacts foolishly. Clever Jallūl can talk about religion and its moral and humanitarian values. He read about religion and about our Master Muhammad The Messenger Of God, Peace And Blessing Of God Be Upon Him.. He knows how to explain things to his children and warns them against dangerous trends. He always tells his children that Islam is the religion of equality, the religion of consultation and solidarity with the poor and not the religion of darkness and violence¹³². Oh yes, he knows a lot but he has one weakness - he loses his temper quickly and gives way to his anger which makes him react foolishly. Clever Jallūl can analyse all kinds of situations, he is also well aware of the things going on in the country. He knows the prices of leases on flats, the price of a plot of land for construction, the rate of foreign currency on the black market¹³³... Jallūl cannot use connections to get something¹³⁴ but he knows for sure and he saw for himself how unthinkable and unbelievable things do happen and how impossible things to do are achieved through CONNECTIONS. Clever Jallūl knows how demagogic speeches are put together. He learned the Constitution by heart and he read the National Charter so he knows when someone ignores them or distorts them but he has one weakness - he loses his temper quickly and gives way to his anger which makes him react foolishly. Clever Jallūl the quick tempered man works at the city hospital in the maintenance unit, his job is to clean and repair medical equipment. He started to work in the hospital twenty years ago. At the beginning he was a porter at the main gate dealing with visitors but as he loses his temper quickly and acts foolishly he got himself into trouble and was brought before the disciplinary committee for sanctions... He is punished every time he appears before the committee. They kept moving him from one clinic to the next and that's how he moved from the gate to the Blood Transfusion Unit, then to Emergencies, then to Gastro-enterology, then to Intensive Care, then to Cardiology, then to Gynecology... then... then... then Jallūl moved and moved from one clinic to another, he learned a great deal on his occupational journey, getting one more experience every time he moved. He received good training and ended up with a good position - Technician: specialized in the maintenance of medical equipment. Clever Jallūl knows a bit of medicine... He can make an injection and read prescriptions, he can stitch small wounds and extract wisdom teeth, he can diagnose jaundice and discern kidney stones on X-rays¹³⁵. He is a champion¹³⁶ in the maintenance and repair of medical equipment... Although he loses his temper quickly and gives way to his anger which makes him react foolishly

129 Allusion to civil servants who have connections in higher circles and who are therefore protected in case of misbehaviour or incompetence.

130 A French legacy which became worse. One is expected to have and carry such identity cards.

131 In the text 'the blue van' because police cars and vans are blue.

132 Indirect attack on fundamentalism and pseudo-religious people.

133 Algeria does not belong to the world monetary system and the 'Dinar', the Algerian currency is not exchanged on the international market. There are also very strict laws to export foreign currency. This has led to the emergence of a foreign currency black market. The situation is similar to that existing in the East European countries.

134 *la'lāwi* is a folk dance typical to Western Algeria. It mainly consists in shaking the shoulders. The author is referring with irony to 'connections'. In Algeria, the phrase - 'to have shoulders' - means to have connections. In the text - 'the dance of the shoulders' (*la'lāwi*) - hence, using connections.

135 In the text *clīshiyāt*, this is the plural of *clīshī* from the French *cliché*, the negative of a film, hence the X-ray negative or film. Most Algerians would use the word *rādyu* rather than *clīshī* - *rādyu* from the French *radio*, short for *radiographie* meaning X-ray.

136 In the text 'outstanding'.

he learned from all the trouble he had at work how to make the most of things and thus educated himself. Finally Jallūl was appointed at the unit of legal medicine - mortuary unit¹³⁷. He was in charge of the refrigeration system checking the pipes and the temperature, now and then he would repair pressure equipment or electricity... in general his job consisted in keeping the corpses in their drawers at a temperature of 15°C below 0... In this unit, that is the 'corpses warehouse'¹³⁸ and because of its tranquility, Jallūl has become somehow less tense and much calmer. The corpses don't disturb him, they're all frozen in their drawers and the mortuary assistant¹³⁹ is rather a placid man who keeps to himself and who doesn't make any discrimination or take bribes. In a sense Jallul has become a self-controlled man in the morgue, he knows that his file is rather heavy and if he makes another mistake he will be dismissed, he was notified officially that his appointment at the mortuary was his last chance to keep his job and secure his family subsistence for he was near retirement. He was also reminded that the door of the mortuary opens onto the street... Jallūl has somehow cooled down.

(All exit except the narrator who remains in his position)

(Enter Jallūl running. He will be running around the stage all through his speech.)

Jallūl I am Clever Jallūl and I am stupid because I haven't learned anything from my troubles, yes, I have no shame... I am cursed and trouble is always after me... Those who insult me and tell me off are right... Those who have shortened my name and call me 'Jallūl' are right, they also call me Jallūl 'the meddlesome', 'the trouble maker' and they are right. If I was in another country they would have sentenced me, they would have put me to prison for life... they would have sentenced me to death... I am stupid and have no shame, I am nothing... I deserve to be kicked... beaten up... tortured... I deserve the whip, the stick... Beat me up, there on the back, on the shoulders, on the sides, on the buttocks, on the knees... I deserve slaps on the mouth... Clever Jallul is a nuisance, a parasite, a social evil... Tie me up and beat me, kill me!... Why are you leaving me alive? Stitch my mouth and cut my nose and keep on beating... beating... beating!..

Narrator Poor Clever Jallūl was appointed at the mortuary as a skilled worker. There was only him, the mortuary assistant and the corpses, and one day as he was working in the quiet atmosphere of the mortuary he was suddenly faced with a problem. He was happy and content working in the cool and peaceful atmosphere until he suddenly found himself with a problem... a problem he did not expect... The problem was so sudden and unexpected that he nearly lost his temper and reacted foolishly... So, to avoid losing his temper and in order to keep his self-control and remain cool he went to the wash-room¹⁴⁰, he was lucky the door was open, and he poured three buckets of water over himself, then he went out running in the hospital and round all the units... He was running from fear, the fear of losing his temper, of being overcome by anger, the fear of making a total mess.

Jallūl Run Jallūl run... You wanted this, nobody forced you... you see where cleverness leads to?.. I deserve a beating... They should put me in the hands of six or seven staunch and hefty riot-policemen¹⁴¹ who must be vindictive and ready for action... They should beat me and kick me and punch me and... and when my six or seven

¹³⁷ In the text *la morgue* which is exactly the French (and English) word 'morgue'.

¹³⁸ Literal translation.

¹³⁹ In the text 'the man who washes the corpses'.

¹⁴⁰ In the text 'the morgue assistant's room' that is the room where the corpses are cleaned.

¹⁴¹ In the text *siyānās*. This word is actually a phonetic pronunciation of the abbreviation 'C.N.S.' in French which is 'Corps National de Sécurité' that is the Algerian riot police force which takes after its French counterpart the 'C.R.S.' - 'Compagnie Républicaine de Sécurité'.

brothers get tired, they should let the dogs on me... yes dogs who should tear me up and where-ever there is a bit of flesh left they should bite... you know Jallūl, you are a cursed man and trouble is constantly after you... Run for your misfortune run... you see where social justice and free health care¹⁴² got you?.. See?.. Run!.. Run because you're a pain, nobody gets away with you, you don't let anybody get away with anything, doctors, workers... the lot... Now you've ended up running not knowing where to go... You see? People steal medicine, meat, glasses, bottles, sheets, fruit, sugar, coffee anything they can lay their hands on... and you? You nag at them, you fight them... Well, here you are now running... Keep running then... Go troublemaker go... You stupid, can't you see? They are not yet used to free health care, they have not grasped its meaning yet... No it's you who haven't understood anything, you're just stubborn... They know very well what free health care is all about and they talk about it¹⁴³... The poor and the destitute?!... Come on, run my boy and shut up, you deserve a beating, pinching, yes... I wish someone would pinch me and leave bruises all over my thighs... You think you have inherited this hospital from your father Al-Barūdi... Well my friend, you never leave anybody alone... You're like a rabid dog... Beat me up!.. Please beat me up!... Beat me up!

(Two workers, a man and a woman enter on Jallūl's last lines, pushing a food trolley.)

- Female Worker Poor Jallūl, I think he lost his mind. This is the third time he passes near us swearing.
- Male Worker Yes, I think he's gone mad as you say... I have never seen Jallūl run... I have never heard him swear... It's true that he loses his temper, we all know that but he wouldn't run or swear like this, he would puff up his chest like a 'lion', straighten up then roar.
- Female Worker What shall we do 'Uthmān?.. We can't leave him run wildly all round the hospital.
- Male Worker I don't understand this my friend... Clever Jallūl running madly!.. Praise be to God!.. This is impossible.
- Female Worker Come on, suggest something. shall we just watch him and let the enemies rejoice?
- Male Worker Be quiet, please!.. Clever Jallūl can't go mad.
- Female Worker The man is taking to his heels and you're telling me he hasn't gone mad... That's where we're best at, watching.. God help him if he's gone mad.
- Male Worker Be quiet and calm down... Even if he's gone mad, well it doesn't matter because he's leaving a good record behind him... he made history... I wish we could all achieve what he achieved and then go mad... it wouldn't matter.
- Female Worker Come on, do you want to leave the poor man in this terrible state?.. Well, say you want him to kill somebody and go to prison¹⁴⁴...
- Male Worker Be quiet woman... Be patient... In an hour or so you'll be seeing Jallūl with a knife, come on, do you think he's like your doctor who would cut off ears for patients who suffer from their gall-bladder? Calm down, let's wait and

¹⁴² Allusion to the defence of free health care.

¹⁴³ Very bitter attack in these lines about the chaos existing in hospitals and the health care system in general.

¹⁴⁴ In the text 'and leaves orphans behind'; this refers to Jallūl going to prison and leaving his children behind if he kills someone.

see before we take any decision... You know Rīma, I think this running is just a trick... a piece of tactics... Rīma, if we interfere we'll mess it up for him... Rīma, I think he's just pretending to be mad in order to discover something.

Female Worker

Let him run then... Jallū! Jallū!... 'Uthmān my brother, I'm filled with sadness, I can't stand still... Clever Jallū, the be'sṭ of mēn falls like this?

Male Worker

Organise a funeral now... Call 'Ūda and Qādiriya¹⁴⁵ and start mourning... yes, heat up the atmosphere with your crying and wailing¹⁴⁶.

Female Worker

Look 'Uthmān, the best of men has lost his mind, the just and righteous man has become a laughing stock. 'Uthmān, it's the problems they have been causing him which brought him down, it's true and there is nobody like him, not a single official, no one in the union can equal him...

Male Worker

Give us some quiet, I tell you Clever Jallū can't lose his mind just like that. He is a very deep man, a man holding numerous principles and values... Clever Jallū can't fall... He is strong, intelligent and his mind is deep like a sea... like a mountain... like an aeroplane...

Female Worker

That's why he's running wildly... (*crying*) Oh 'Uthmān, my brother!

Male Worker

Calm down for goodness sake!.. let me think... it's a trick... This is a trick good woman... Here he comes all red and still running.

Jallū

Beat me up!.. Tear me up!.. Print on my lips the words 'Shut up'... So Mr. Clever, we're against the people?.. against free health care?.. I have proofs... There is only a tiny minority of doctors who love their country, who love their people and who work conscientiously... Those who sympathise with the poor are very few... Most doctors are what we may call... charlatans... well, they differ just slightly from charlatans... Some of them are qualified and sworn in but the rest qualified God knows how¹⁴⁷... Mr. Clever, free health care doesn't mean confusion, it must be organised... We would like to organise it with the people concerned, those who need free health care... we want to organise it openly, sincerely, fraudlessly... I am stupid... I am thick... Beating is no good, I can get used to it... I need something worse... yes a hot red iron to brand me... yes go, brand me... So, you have proofs?.. Somebody with proofs shouldn't run... Run at your old age?.. run then.

Male Worker

You see... I told you he's planning something... You've heard him speak about proofs, haven't you? Judging from the way he is running it must be a complex scheme, and if I'm not wrong his trick will cause havoc in the Ministry of Health; how clever, a brain indeed!.. Did you see how he was stamping on the ground, how determined?.. The proofs you fool, the proofs!

Female Worker

I didn't understand anything the poor man said... If he was sane he would ask us to run with him and then explain to us everything.

Male Worker

He was talking to us in symbols... You don't understand... The question of proofs means 'keep off otherwise you'll be in trouble'... If he needs help he

¹⁴⁵ Names of women.

¹⁴⁶ The word *nadaba* means 'to lament' or 'to wail' but in North Africa women wail and literally scratch their cheeks with their finger-nails as if in hysteria.

¹⁴⁷ Very bitter attack against incompetent doctors. Also reference to some doctors who qualify through corruption.

- will ask for it openly without fear. Don't you remember the strike he organised openly in broad daylight and for which he got two months¹⁴⁸?
- Female Worker He always speaks for justice... He always says that health care must be a priority in society, if you want to improve productivity take care of people's health... The poor man is in a sweat.
- Male Worker That's water... can't you see his pockets and his shoes? It's water... would sweat do that? Would it leak from his shoes¹⁴⁹?
- Female Worker I didn't pay attention, I was trying to catch his eye to see if he recognises me.
- Male Worker He did and he looked at us... you insist that he's mad... If he went mad some of the administration people would have stopped him and tied him up.
- Female Worker He made many enemies in the hospital and yet to be honest he is the most affectionate, the most helpful and the most generous of all of us.
- Male Worker It's a pity he loses his temper quickly and gives way to his anger then reacts foolishly. He started on the wrong foot right from the beginning... He was alright until he got to grips with one of those people who sell their blood and beat him with a stick.
- Jallūl Come on, keep running... Run... So you're tired... Clever, you're tired hey?.. You think you're the only one running hey? The mortuary assistant too must be running and praying. Why are you running?.. Well just like everybody else... The whole people are running after something¹⁵⁰... You think you're better?.. You should be taken ill and brought to us... (*he stops then changes his mind*). Come on, take to your heels if you don't want them to catch you.
- Female Worker The second time he was dismissed for three days... He was caught bringing cartons to the patients so they told him he was trading in the hospital and that he was a racketeer. He told them "[As the saying goes] - he hit me and ran crying to the judge.¹⁵¹ I thought I was doing a favour by helping the poor patients, the floor is too cold for them to sleep on so I brought the cartons for them to use as mattresses."¹⁵²
- Jallūl Run my friend, you have nothing to tell me, the hospital is all yours and do as you please... Our job is to plant flowers around the hospital and water them, the rest is all yours... you call us *mafia*, you want socialism, well go ahead... go on my brother... Leave us in our darkness and go on with your ideas... You say we are corrupt? Well suppose we are corrupt.. but what about you, what are you doing? Well go on then...Hell is not enough for you Jallūl... Even if they sentence you twice it won't be enough... Run... Come on, run.

¹⁴⁸ A dismissal without pay for two months.

¹⁴⁹ In the text 'šabbāt' from the French *savates* or the Spanish *zabato*.

¹⁵⁰ A play with words here, the common phrase 'to run after something' means to try and get or solve something, hence people spend their time trying to solve their problems.

¹⁵¹ Old saying. We have added '[As the saying goes]' to make the link and introduce the saying.

¹⁵² Another attack about the lack of proper facilities and equipment in hospitals.

- Female Worker I hear his file weighs more than ten pounds¹⁵³... How come they haven't dismissed him?
- Male Worker Dismiss him? Are you mad? If ever they make the mistake to sack him they'll get a revolution in the hospital and blood will be gushing in streams.
- Female Worker The third time it was the letter, wasn't it?
- Male Worker Yes, it was the report he wrote and handed out to the workers... We put it up behind the door of our unit. He wrote about the hospital from top to bottom referring to the training of the workers, the nurses and the doctors... He said that the standard of the professors was poor and overlooked by the administration... that the hospital is not big enough given the large population for the region... that the clinics are separate and independent from each other with no cooperation and co-ordination whatsoever. He also wrote about a unit saying it is organised like a palace and the patients are like Kings and princes and their court... about confusion in management and the distribution of medicine... that there is a shortage of something every day, one day it's the stitching thread missing, the next day it's the syringes and another day there is no water... about the foreign staff who take medical equipment¹⁵⁴... He got five weeks for that one.
- Jallūl Have a little rest if you're tired Jallūl... Come on breathe, you're a free man... What's the matter with you? Why are you so frightened? - Can I help you sir? - Is this the hospital brother? Yes it is, can't you see blood all around? Can't you see we're pushing the ambulance?.. Sorry brother but what you see in front of you is not an ambulance... Anyway, what can I do for you? - I had my belly cut open, look I'm holding my guts with my hands... where is the casualty unit? Which way?.. Push the ambulance with us, I'll show you the way... - Hey sir! The hospital entrance is on this side!.. Of course you can't see a policeman standing by the gate, what do you want? - I have come for treatment, I hope God will save me. - What? - I have lost my foot... it's cut off and I'm carrying it with me... I have tied the leg... look...- I can see the shoe sticking out of your pocket, I'm not blind... the doctors have gone, there is nobody in at the moment, leave your foot here we'll give you a receipt, and God willing, come back tomorrow. And against pain, tonight sprinkle wild rue on the wound and cover it with dried meat... come on now brother, off you go!
- Female Worker The fourth time he was great; it happened when he was doing night shifts. A group of men were accompanying a bride-groom it was the first night of his honeymoon, they said he couldn't do it, he's tired and needs an injection to revive him, parents on both sides are waiting for the proof of her virginity,¹⁵⁵ he must do it tonight... I like the way he told them off and chased them telling them that the *jihād* should be in science and learning not against women... He got a week.

¹⁵³ Meaning many reports and complaints about Jallūl.

¹⁵⁴ These lines are again a bitter (and we think objective) attack against incompetence of medical staff, corruption, embezzlement, discrimination, abuse of power, dishonesty of foreign staff...etc.

¹⁵⁵ In the text the word *jallūl* is only used in Western Algeria. It means 'a cloth'. In this context it is any of the bride's clothes (usually the night-shirt) which must be stained with blood when she loses her virginity. It must be done on the first night of the wedding and the cloth shown to parents and relatives (and sometimes close friends) as a proof of the bride's virginity. This practice has disappeared in most places.

- Male Worker And the fifth time when he helped a woman deliver her baby by the door of the maternity ward... He was carrying a bottle of oxygen when he saw the baby drop and the mother fall on the floor. In a split of a second he threw the bottle of oxygen against the door and broke a glass then pulled a knife and cut the umbilical cord, he took the baby from its feet like a rabbit and went up running. When he was brought before the disciplinary committee he told them that he had previously helped his wife Zohra deliver the first three babies and that he had to assist the poor woman who was delivering her baby on the door-step of the maternity ward. He said the poor woman had either a poor husband or had nobody to take care of her... He got two days for the glass he broke.
- Female Worker 'Uthmān, my brother, I think Jallūl is tired, he's dragging his feet, I don't think there is any trick in this running. Look, he's tired.
- Male Worker Jallūl doesn't get tired.
- Female Worker Let's join him and see.
- Male Worker So you want us to run with him? Calm down woman. If we join him everybody in the hospital will start running behind.
- Female Worker I'm running with Jallūl and happen what may... and you stay watching like a rejoicing enemy!¹⁵⁶
- Male Worker Alright woman, let's all run... the more people the more strength.
- (Both start running and join Jallūl)*
- Jallūl It's my fault... It's my fault *(turns to the two workers)* what are you doing here? You left your work to join me? Leave me by myself, one is enough... go back... Go back, I'm going to finish soon anyway... I'm going to stop after one more round or two...
- Both Workers We have finished our work.
- Male Worker Judging from your pace and determination I think you are preparing yourself for the local race¹⁵⁷. Am I wrong?
- Jallūl No, I'm just letting the steam off... I'm trying this trick to calm down... just to avoid another mistake...
- Male Worker *(to female worker)* You see? Then why all the panic? 'Hurry, Jallūl has gone mad!.. Hurry!' I told you Jallūl is wise and he knows what he is doing.¹⁵⁸
- Female Worker Thank God he's alright.
- Male Worker May God keep you calm.
- Female Worker Well since it's a trick let us run with you, I mean just to keep you company.

¹⁵⁶ Very common expression used by women who believe that their enemies rejoice if something bad happens to them.

¹⁵⁷ The party is the 'F.L.N.' party which is the only party in the country. Sports are among its activities.

¹⁵⁸ In the text the idiom *shārāb 'aqlu* - literally 'he has drunk his reason' meaning 'he is -wise-rational-collected-aware...etc.'

- Male Worker Tell us what happened Jallūl... Get it off your chest, we are with you... (*to woman*) Come on you, run properly... Tell us Jallūl, we may learn from you.
- Jallūl There is nothing to learn... It's just my temper... I'm running to calm down, then I shall go back to work... Turn, turn this way along the main laboratory then carry on behind the Urology Unit... the workers and patients are all outside waiting to applaud and encourage me when I pass.
- Male Worker. I wish you success in this run, may God help you.
- Female Worker Please Mr. Jallūl; try hard and control your temper... I feel sorry when you get dismissed for weeks every time you make a mistake in anger... so please calm down and if you want us to run with you all night we are ready... We did it before with others so we shall do it with you.
- Male Worker Pour it out... get it off your chest, you'll feel better.
- Jallūl I was busy working at the mortuary, I left the door of the main refrigerated room open, that's the room where we keep the corpses in drawers. From time to time ice covers the pipes and the water inside freezes and clogs them; so I was breaking and scraping the ice off the pipes with a little ice-pick. 'Abbās Ace¹⁵⁹ the mortuary assistant was also on his own in his little room which is on the other side, he was psalmodising¹⁶⁰ and cleaning the marble surface on which he washes the corpse... Anyway I was breaking the ice with the ice-pick when I suddenly saw somebody come out of the mist, he was pale like a white sheet and bony, he was totally naked.
- Female Worker Good Lord!
- Male Worker God You Are The Almighty!
- Jallūl I was frozen with fear... I couldn't even say a prayer¹⁶¹... I was trying to recall a prayer but in vain because words were flowing from my mouth, I didn't know what I was saying and he was looking at me... I kept trying to recall a prayer telling myself "Praise be to God, we are doing well, they have given us everything, they have even imported food"... I was scared and I thought if he touches me I'll hit him with the ice-pick. We kept looking at each other... He opened his eyes wide and I stared at him... At last I recalled my prayer then I said to him very loudly "If you make one move I will break your neck"... 'Abbās heard me, he stopped psalmodising and asked me who I was talking to... I said "it's one of those who haven't been washed who wants to leave". He didn't answer me nor did he come to help me, he rolled his trousers and took to his heels saying he was late for the afternoon prayer... I didn't see him when he rushed behind me, I just saw his silhouette and felt a gust of wind... Judging from that gust he must have hit a van and overturned it... Anyway the fellow looked human, he leant on the wall and said with difficulty: "Hello". His lips were blue and they were chattering when he spoke... I asked him what he wanted and introduced myself, I said "I am Clever Jallūl and you, who are you? Are you human or djinn?"... I started to recover from my fright... Then, very

¹⁵⁹ In the text 'Abbās 'A' - nickname. 'A' is the first syllable in the name 'Abbās. We thought it interesting to use 'Ace'.

¹⁶⁰ Reciting the Koran.

¹⁶¹ It is not exactly a prayer. The *shahādah* is the faith in the unity of God and the prophethood of Muhammad. It is epitomised in the *kalīma* - "There Is No God Except Allah, Muhammad Is His Prophet" - Jallūl could not remember the *kalīma* because of fright.

slowly I started to move back. He asked me if I had a cigarette, I said I didn't smoke... He started to follow me as I was stepping back... his joints were creaking... I stopped, looking at him from a distance and showing him the ice-pick... He was still moving his limbs... He took the assistant's jacket, it was hanging on the wall, he looked at it and said : "It's made in France". Then he put it round his waist.. I thought he couldn't be a djinn, he must be a human being... After a few minutes he wanted to get near, I brandished the ice-pick and told him to stop. He said: "Please tell me, where is hell?" "God save us, I said, this is the morgue... This is where you take off for heaven... This is a hospital." He said: "What am I? Am I dead or alive?" "How should I know, I said, ask your God, I'm just a humble human being... a worker..." "You are Azrael" he said... "God help me!.. I am Jallūl!" He insisted that because of the ice-pick I was carrying and because of my fiery look I was Azrael... There were two corpses lying behind me, we kept them on the table until they go down, I pulled the blankets which were covering them and threw them to him, I said: "Here, wrap yourself, get warm maybe you're a human being." He went on: "Please tell me, where is hell? Please!..." "Listen to me sir, we are on earth, I said, I told you this is a hospital"... "Where are the doctors and nurses then" he replied... I said: "The assistant took them along when he ran away." He insisted that I was Azrael and that I was pulling his leg. If I was your Master Azrael I would have blown your brains off against the wall... Master Azrael won't pull your leg sir"... He pleaded with me again and asked me about the hospital main entrance, he said he was living on earth and went to the hospital for an X-ray on his liver... He thinks that's where he gave up the ghost... He asked me to look at his back and see if they didn't leave a needle or a pair of scissors because he said he didn't know what happened to him at all. "Stay where you are, I said, don't move... sit down... sit down, I'm going to enquire about your case, I'll be back soon"... He asked me why I should make enquiries; I said I was going to look in the records. He asked me not to go and told me that he remembers all his wrong deeds and that he was ready for punishment... I told him that what he was saying was blasphemy, he said it was the plain truth and started enumerating: "I gave bribes to send my son to school, I gave bribes to get the water supply, I gave bribes to get a job, I swore at home, I swore at the football ground, I sold cement on the black market, I used to switch off the T.V. when it was news time, I swore and criticised at the café, I accepted bribes"... I stopped him: "What's your name?" It doesn't matter now, he said. "You said they brought you here about your liver?" "It's my deeds¹⁶² which brought me here" he replied then went on: "I didn't fast at Ramadān, I swindled my father's fortune, I ate pork...." As he went on I withdrew slowly without him noticing and I ran out... I locked the door behind me... He started banging on the door and shouting "Master Azrael! Master Azrael, the ice-pick man!..." I ran and went to enquire about him in the different units, Intensive care, Psychiatry, Surgery, Gastro-Enterology... you name it, and I kept asking - "Aren't you getting your dead wrong?" and the answer was - "No, all our dead are recorded"... Thank God I was lucky to meet Zina the nurse, she said: "Jallūl there is an incredible panic in our unit, there is a patient who has been in for two days, we thought he was sleeping until he started to smell, so we realised that we had reported another patient dead"... I said: "Go and tell them to bring the dead man and take the one alive, I locked him inside the morgue"... "What have we done?" she said, and she went off running and tearing her hair¹⁶³ in panic. I said: "Thank God the drawers were all taken so they left him on the tiled surface near the door otherwise he would have gone." Then I went back to the mortuary... Half an hour later there was

¹⁶² Meaning my evil deeds.

¹⁶³ See footnote 127.

confusion and the open space by the mortuary became like a market... They brought the dead man and the doctors came running... The man inside the morgue bolted himself and said "I'm not coming out, I want Azrael..." His old mother arrived and asked to take her son to bury him, we told her that he was alive, she said that he only remained alive in the hearts and thanked us... she went on, "we shall bury him tomorrow God willing, here, I brought all the documents, look, the medical report and here is the death certificate issued by the registry... Give me my son... all his relatives have come for the funeral." Her poor son was banging on the door and shouting and people were asking - "Is he naked... Is he frozen?... Has he grown a beard?"... Someone said: "Praise be to God, now the dead resuscitate in our country!"... Another man said: "It's Clever Jallūl who spoke to the dead and told them we should establish a paradise in our country"... And the poor fellow was still banging on the door... The real dead man's relatives arrived and found the corpse outside, half of them were insulting and the other half screaming... The mother of the man inside was sticking to me, following me wherever I went, she was holding me by the sleeve saying: "Please come tonight for a couscous in memory of my son, come and join us, we are keeping an all-night vigil¹⁶⁴... let me give you the address, it is easy to find, ask anybody about the house of Būkhāri the docker and they'll show you"... The doctors were asking what the man looked like... Zina wanted us to break the door... Half of the dead man's family were insulting and spitting with anger, the other half were looking for the morgue assistant and the man inside was screaming his head off: "I'm not coming out! I have done my share, it's enough!.. Let me rest in peace now!... I am in a palace here, everything is spotless clean and the tiles are all white... I'm fine and everybody here is fine, they're all naked having a siesta in the cool atmosphere!.. I'm not coming out!".. His mother was still holding me and insisting on her invitation... Some members of the trade union bureau arrived with the police, followed by the people from the administration... The crowd got bigger... A policeman took his baton and asked: "Is this the dead man who is causing trouble?".. My temper started to boil... The old woman pulled a shroud from a bag under her arm and said. "Here take this to wrap your brother after you've washed him"... The policeman unveiled the corpse and said he knew the man...The patients started to arrive in two's and three's, one of them called me from a distance and said, "Please uncle Jallūl let us see, open the door and let him out, let us watch, we have no television, there is no cinema, prisoners are better off than us... your hospital is pitiful, give us some entertainment, give us some joy... no wonder my sight has become blurred in this place." The old woman was telling me in the ears "His mother's name is Ḥalīma and his father's 'Adda, here this is for you..." and she put fifty pence in my hand. I could hear the policeman shout: "Order!.. where is the genuine dead and where is the fake?"... I threw the money to the old woman and I took to my heels... I left the situation still confused and the trade union officials haven't arrived yet so I thought I'd better go and change air before I do something crazy and lose my job... Things must have calmed down by now and I'm feeling better, I have cooled down... well, you see how I have controlled my temper? And you, always after me - 'It's a pity you're quick tempered, it's a pity you're hyper-sensitive, it's a pity you're a bundle of nerves...' Anyway if you want to keep running carry on, I must go now, good bye...

Male Worker

Yes, go, go to your work, you wise and clever man...

¹⁶⁴ The tradition is to recite the Koran. In the text 'we are bringing the priests' meaning 'they are coming to recite the Koran'.

Female Worker

Yes, go and God be with you!.. Poor Clever Jallūl is a righteous and wise man indeed, thank God he has managed to overcome his weakness in the end... He used to lose his temper quickly and give way to his anger which made him react foolishly.

(They exit - Blackout)

EPISODE SEVEN: THE STORY OF SAKĪNA

(Bare stage. The narrator sings the story of Sakīna standing front stage and playing the banjo.)

Narrator

(singing) Poor Sakīna the gem of the factory staff.
 Is crawling now she cannot stand on her feet
 There is no cure she can't go back to the shoe factory
 That is what the doctors announced today¹⁶⁵
 The poison in the glue is the cause of the tragedy
 Poor Sakīna the gem of the factory staff
 Is crawling now she cannot stand on her feet
 The factory warden brought the news this morning
 He had a lump in his throat and couldn't speak
 As if he was dumb, he was just drying his tears
 Our Sakīna is crippled and forsaken now
 They have given her up, our gem was sacrificed
 She urges you to be careful and avoid the catastrophe
 For the danger is your neighbour it lives in the glue
 Come on girls he said move and get organised
 Sakīna our jewel is a victim, she is a cripple
 Now she is crawling, she cannot stand on her feet
 The girls were silent, now they're all in fear
 They mourned long and shed tears for Sakīna
 Work slowed and the machines changed their noise
 As if they were crying for the absent girl
 Mourning spread and filled the atmosphere
 Sorrow and lament settled in with darkness
 Poor Sakīna the gem of the factory staff
 Is crawling now she cannot stand on her feet
 Her behaviour brought her the name 'Gem'
 She was lively and nice to everybody adding
 Skill, experience and outstanding planning
 Bright in analysing any problem or situation
 How precise and eloquent when she speaks
 Her speech is sweet and comforting and how honest
 She knows how to talk about future prospects
 Urging the girls to fight for their right and for justice
 Her speech is clear and always ending with a smile
 Poor Sakīna the gem of the factory staff
 Is crawling now she cannot stand on her feet
 Lament girls your poor friend sits still in a corner
 Her legs are dead she lost her elegant posture
 Sakīna is not here and her friends are worried
 They are all recalling her words and her riddles
 The poor Sakīna the jewel used to say
 When the boss belched my stomach ached¹⁶⁶
 They are all thinking of her sweet words and her laughter
 The poor Sakīna the jewel used to say

¹⁶⁵ '... announced yesterday at the hospital'.

¹⁶⁶ In the text '...my intestine got tied' meaning the boss belches because of too much food in opposition to her hunger.

Our shoes are good only if you put them away
 If you don't wear them and walk bare foot¹⁶⁷
 They are all thinking of her dignity and personality
 The poor Sakina the jewel used to say
 If you find words of justice being trampled on
 Save them and remember you may need them in future
 Poor Sakina the gem of the factory staff
 Is crawling now she cannot stand on her feet
 The girls at the factory decided to make a collection
 They said we must unite and condemn this crime
 We must support her when she lodges her complaint
 At home poor Sakina is sitting against the wall
 Her legs wrapped in the past¹⁶⁸, she is abandoned
 But she is smiling and comforting her children
 And also joking to encourage her husband
 Poor Sakina the gem of the factory staff
 Is crawling now she cannot stand on her feet
 Sakina's job and her tragic fate were discussed at home
 Do not despair she said since my hands are spared
 I shall find a boss who will bring me work home
 I shall work sitting and earn our daily bread
 Even the boss will be saving on my fares
 I shall work for you said her little daughter
 I shall bake bread and sell it in the street¹⁶⁹
 No darling success in your studies is more important
 Poor Sakina the gem of the factory staff
 Is crawling now she cannot stand on her feet
 All the neighbours heard about what happened
 Many were shocked and came with coffee and sugar.¹⁷⁰

(Black out)

¹⁶⁷ Allusion to the bad quality of shoes which usually tear quickly.

¹⁶⁸ We kept the image in Arabic.

¹⁶⁹ It is common to see children and old women selling home made bread in streets and markets.

¹⁷⁰ This is a very common practice among the poor to bring coffee and sugar when visiting either on happy or sad occasions. It is meant as a contribution to help the hosts.

iii) Commentary

This play was first produced in 1985 at the 'Théâtre Régional d'Oran'. It was performed soon after at the 'First National Theatre Festival' held in Algiers in September 1985 and a few weeks later in Tunisia at the 'Deuxièmes Journées Théâtrales de Carthage' in October. It won five awards overall: the awards for Best Production and Best Direction in Algiers and the awards for Best Production, Best Direction and Best Set in Carthage. The actor Sirat Boumédiène from the 'Théâtre Régional d'Oran' won the award for Best Leading Actor at both festivals.

Plot and Structure

Al-Ajwād is the second part of a trilogy linking Al-Agwāl (Sayings) and Al-Lithām (The Veil - forthcoming). It is in seven separate episodes which tell the story of different people and which are arranged in three main tableaux presented alternately with four stories sung by the narrator. Thus the play opens in a light humorous way with 'The Story of 'Allāl' the roadsweeper. 'Allāl is a hard working man who meticulously sweeps his part of the street. After work he proudly strolls down the street he has been sweeping.

The second episode tells 'The Story of Ribūḥi' the blacksmith, a warm hearted and caring trade-unionist who organises an underground network to feed the sick and neglected animals of the local zoo. Ribūḥi's action causes concern and panic among the local officials and reveals their petty theft, deceit and corruption.

'The Story of Qaddūr' is a song about a bricklayer who works and lives with his fellow workers on a building site and who visits his family only at weekends.

The second tableau tells 'The Story of 'Akli and Mnawwar' and the strong friendship between them. Mnawwar tells how he had made a pledge to 'Akli who, feeling that he was going to die soon, had decided to donate his skeleton to the school where he used to work after his death. The story reveals a complex bureaucratic machinery where incompetence, prejudice, hypocrisy, and corruption seem to be the rule.

The following episode is a song which tells 'The Story of Manṣūr' an old man who is retiring from work and who, on his last day in the factory, addresses an elegy to the machine with which he spent all his working life.

The third tableau, 'The Story of Jallūl', is where the play reaches its climax. Jallūl, a hospital worker tells in a masochistic run about his rebellion against the chaotic and corrupt administration of the hospital where he works.

The play ends with the narrator singing in a lament 'The Story of Sakīna' the girl who is crippled by poison in the glue used at the shoe factory where she works.

The seven episodes of this play are separate and have no apparent or obvious link between them. A director producing this play can arrange them in any way he thinks appropriate to his own approach. Although the playwright accepts this approach¹⁷¹, he prefers to keep 'The Story of Clever Jallūl' as the third tableau because he believes that it is the culminating point of the play. The tension created is so great that it can only be released by laughter.

What binds the episodes together is the message suggested by their content. The stories relate to different people and to different situations but point to the injustice, the corruption and the chaos in Algeria's social and economic system. The victims are the common working people who belong to the lower class of society. At the same time they reveal the kindness, the warmth and the generosity which prevail among such people. Thus the title 'The Story of the Generous People' alludes to the generosity of the people in the play and Abdelkader Alloula argues that:

...the word 'Al-Ajwād' literally means 'the generous' in its original sense. In my opinion, and to a certain extent, this sums up the main idea, the essence of the play. The latter is a fresco of daily life or, rather a few moments in the life of the toiling masses, of ordinary people, of daily human landscapes. The fresco tells and reveals how precisely these 'anonymous', 'humble', 'unnoticed' or 'rejected' people are generous, how they deal with the major problems of society with optimism and deep humanity within the bounds of their limitations...

The general structure of the play links three main themes interspersed with four songs. All elements in the play are autonomous in terms of content but they are linked by what I would call 'major elements of content' or 'base blades'..¹⁷²

The structure of the three tableaux is very similar to that of the *maqāmāt* - session or *séance* - an Arab literary genre close to the picaresque form which was "created by Al-Hamadhānī and consolidated by Al-Ḥarīrī"¹⁷³ in the eleventh century. The alternation between the tableaux which are highly lyrical and the songs is essentially a Brechtian approach. Thus Alloula combines traditional elements with a modern technique. He argues that: "...Brecht has been and still is a determining

¹⁷¹ Our interview with Abdelkader Alloula on September 24th 1988, op. cit. in footnote 1 of "Abdelkader Alloula: A life Devoted to Theatre".

¹⁷² Djellid, M'Hamed, "Interview de Abdelkader Alloula", Oran, October 1985 (Forthcoming).

¹⁷³ "The 'makāma' was created by Al-Hamadānī and consolidated by Al-Ḥarīrī... In summary, the original 'makāma' appears to be characterised fundamentally by the almost exclusive use of rhymed prose (with the insertion of verse) and the presence of two imaginary persons, the hero and the narrator" In - (C.Brockelmann - [CH. Pellat]), The Encyclopaedia of Islam, Volume VI, Fascicules 99-100, Leiden - E.J. Brill, 1986, p. 109.

stimulus in my work, with his theories and his own artistic work. I am tempted to say that he is my spiritual father, or even better, my friend and my loyal fellow traveller."¹⁷⁴

Indeed the influence of Brecht on Alloula is very strong and it is clearly reflected mainly in his early works.

Each of the three main episodes has a particular structure in that the story is presented in two stages. The characters and the background of the story are first introduced and presented by the main narrator and/or by the actors playing the role of narrators. Then the story develops through action involving the characters in their own situations. The overall structure is therefore a series of portrayals presented alternately through reported speech - narrative, and direct speech (or dialogue) - and action. It uses a dual pattern of growth in complexity which gradually builds up tension in the play. The four songs start with an appraisal of 'Allāl's meticulous work, his professional conscience and his pride. The story combines a delicate sense of humour about 'Allāl strolling down the main street and window shopping with his awareness about the variety of goods displayed, quality and price range, with his frustration about the national production system. The tension builds up with succeeding songs, from the hard working and living conditions faced by Qaddūr the bricklayer to the sadness of Mansūr the retiring worker, and finally reaches a climax with the tragic fate of Sakīna, the good natured girl, the 'gem' of the factory. At the same time the four songs point at social injustice and exploitation and at the humility, warmth and generosity of the lower social classes. On the other hand, the tension generated in the first tableau has the same ascending pattern of complexity. It gains momentum in the second tableau and finally reaches its climax with the utter aberration of the health system. It is also released in the laughter which greets the adventure of Clever Jallūl.

The alternation of the seven episodes gradually unfolds the bitter reality of a corrupt, unjust and decadent socio-economic system. At the same time it reveals the struggle of poor and humble people to keep their integrity and remain generous in their confrontation with such a system.

Source of the Play

The source of the material in Al-Ajwād originates mainly from the realities of daily life in contemporary Algeria. Alloula has developed this point:

I draw [my characters] from daily life, from the reality of every day. There is obviously an aesthetic and artistic treatment and a complex work of creation. My characters start, proceed from reality and their target is the reality of the spectator. Life, reality... provides us

¹⁷⁴ Djellid, M'Hamed. op. cit.

continuously with materials, themes, ideas and pretexts which irrigate our artistic and social conscience and urge us to create, imagine, invent... The models I seek are found in the life of our people. Society, with its preoccupations, its struggles, its contradictions, its values, its hope, is better reflected in the most deprived social strata... Because I am deeply rooted in [this society], the characters are drawn from these social strata. When those characters are dramatised they can become extremely eloquent and thereby help the artistic performance to assume a wide social function... In fact, my major heroes are part of ordinary and anonymous people, of people who are ignored and rejected.¹⁷⁵

It is worth noting that although the element of fiction is important in the play and certain situations seem unreal, the facts and the characters drawn from daily life are not exaggerations. There are many Ribūhis and Jallūls struggling with a corrupt bureaucracy; there are also many Qaddūrs and Sakīnas who are exploited and who live on a pittance in a society which claims to be socialist. In fact Alloula has just picked a few examples from a wide range of similar situations.

In terms of form and performance of Al-Ajwād, Alloula has extensively borrowed from the art of the *maddāh* as described in the opening chapter and further on in Alloula's words - which he has adapted to the requirements of the modern stage.

Language

The nature of theatre or style Alloula has opted for is essentially based on narrative which alternates between prose and epic - the two fundamental elements in the art of the *maddāh*. The influence of folk literature and poetry on language form and style is very clear in Al-Ajwād. The four poems sung by the narrator and accompanied on a banjo are clear and obvious examples of *al-shi'r al-malhūn*, traditional Algerian rhymed verse sung by bards and the *maddāh*. The prose is also similar to that of folk tales, the *maqāmāt* and the material used by the *maddāh*. The Arabic language used in Alloula's recent plays is what most North African linguists call *langue médiane* (middle language). This is a brushed up and improved language with a vocabulary which is a compromise between modern standard Arabic and vernacular Algerian Arabic and a syntax which is much closer to modern Arabic. This is a requirement Alloula could not escape from for several reasons. First, drama requires a rich vocabulary and a subtle syntax which standard Algerian vernacular lacks. Second, Alloula wanted to depart from the usual clichés and archetypes which have so far prevailed in the language used in Algerian theatre. But the most important reason reflects the widespread education in modern Arabic since Independence in 1962 and the high degree of literacy throughout the country. Alloula took this into consideration by using the 'middle language' in drama although he also sometimes uses regional words, idioms or phrases from the

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

Oran region and also 'algerianised' French words. In short, Alloula's language combines borrowings from the traditional heritage and present daily life and from modern standard Arabic, the language used in education and by the press. Good examples of this are the teacher giving her science class and Mnawwar the caretaker. She addresses her pupils in modern standard Arabic whereas Mnawwar engages in a narrative using a refined and improved version of spoken Algerian and all the terminology in the modern language for the different parts of the skeleton and the different administrative services. The syntax too is that of the standard language which helps in pacing speech. In fact it is not common to hear people use words like *thānawiyya* (grammar school) or *haykal* (skeleton), or in other scenes words like *warsha* (building site - workshop), *arwiqa* (department stores), *hayy* (district or neighbourhood) or even *baladiyya* (town hall) for they would use regional or French words. Nonetheless, people in general are in daily contact with standard Arabic through the mass media and therefore have no problem understanding Alloula's language. The use of idioms or phrases from the region of Oran which are obviously selected and understood by everybody, add flavour and colour to the play.

On the other hand, the structure of the four songs follows the general pattern of traditional rhymed verse which is highly appreciated for its imagery and rhyme. Alloula has excelled in the composition of 'The Story of Qaddūr' and 'The Story of Sakīna'.

The combination of all these elements results in a rich and colourful language.

Function

It is interesting to note that most, if not all contemporary Algerian playwrights and theatre groups define themselves as 'socialist' and declare their commitment to the 'working class' - the 'toiling masses' - the 'deprived masses'¹⁷⁶ - in their struggle for justice, democracy and better living conditions - in short for a better society governed by socialism. They also share in a unanimous denunciation of injustice, abuse of power, exploitation, lack of democracy and demagoguery - negative and evil elements which should not exist in a country which claims to be socialist. These attitudes are obviously reflected in their plays with varying degrees of clarity, eloquence and quality. Most groups mainly in the amateur theatre world, have opted for a political theatre an 'avant garde theatre', but have often fallen into the trap of cheap agit-prop and sloganising. After a long experience in theatre Alloula has departed from agit-prop and direct denunciation to develop a new form using the narrative. The three main tableaux in Al-

¹⁷⁶ Terminology used by writers, theatre groups, intellectuals, the mass media, the FLN party, government officials etc.

Ajwād are fables where humour and irony dominate and operate in a dialectic process. They expose a confrontation between one or several characters and a specific situation. The outcome is the revelation of all sorts of evil within the system. The moral condemnation of such evil is inherent in the structure of the play, for example, the absurdities of bureaucracy are revealed. The nature of the tableaux also aims at creating laughter among the audience thus stimulating another form of denunciation through mirth. The playwright does not, however, primarily seek a connivance or a sympathetic response from the audience. Instead he aims at persuading the spectator to visualise, imagine and recreate in his own way the situations presented for him on stage because Al-Ajwād,

... is first of all a discourse, a statement of a reality: a reality to which we are close in our daily life but which we cannot necessarily see; a reality which the discourse discloses, not on the model of a didactic discussion, nor on the model of emphatic identification ... but on the model of traditional speech, the kind of speech which traditional culture calls so rightly *al-ma'na* [figure of speech] which has two simultaneous levels of meaning - one explicit, the other implicit. Hence the words extend in both directions - continuously showing the right and the wrong side of things, a reality and what is beneath it, one side and another of a person... There is no plot in the classical/Aristotelian sense of the word but [the play] aims at intriguing the spectator, at simply leading him to look at what he thinks he already knows... Alloula does not teach lessons, nor does he build the future, he just lifts a small part of the curtain on reality and on those who are most able to change it namely the workers.¹⁷⁷

Al-Ajwād is in a way a tribute Alloula pays to the workers' generosity and solidarity, to their integrity and their revolt against bureaucracy and a corrupted system. The play also calls for justice and a fair society. Commenting on Al-Ajwād Alloula says:

... it is a show of more than three hours, a feast for the eye, the heart and the mind. First of all I wrote and produced this play for those who work and produce in our country towards a free and democratic society, a society free from the exploitation of man by man... Here we are dealing with a theatre of narrative and not any longer with the theatre of walk-on action of the Aristotelian type as practiced in Europe since the beginning of the century and as we have practised it in Algeria since the 1920s. It is therefore a theatre which borrows both from the traditional cultural heritage and from the universal theatrical heritage in terms of form. It is also a theatre which, in terms of content, starts from daily problems, from the real daily life of our people... The aspects of form and content are induced within and from a global vision, a vision which aims at reasserting the social function of theatrical arts in our society, a theatre which is directed primarily at the spectator..., finally a theatre where the spectator breaks with the traditional habit of being a

¹⁷⁷ Benyoucef, Mohamed, "A Propos de "El-Adjouad" de Abdelkader Alloula, Oran, August 1985 (to be published).

'consumer' and a 'watcher' to take a new function, that of a 'co-creator'.¹⁷⁸

The performance of Al-Ajwād is certainly a "feast for the eye, the heart and the mind". Alloula skillfully and harmoniously combined music, movement and colourful costumes to enhance the narrative of his play. Because of the nature of its material and the social problems it touches upon - which are drawn from real Algerian daily life - Al-Ajwād also reaches a large section of people who experience similar problems. However, it is doubtful whether it can "profoundly concern the spectator" because the average Algerian spectator does not need to be reminded of the problems he already faces every day. He knows what to do to change the situation, as the strikes during autumn 1988 and winter and spring 1989, and the riots in October 1988 have made clear. Nonetheless the humour and irony in the play generate laughter which is both a condemnation of the system as well as a revenge upon it, and a communal catharsis, a release of the frustrations. The play thus leads the audience to recognise and identify with the situations it reveals and through the common experience of laughter that it generates, unites them for a moment, for the period of the performance. Yet, Al-Ajwād is certainly not a pessimistic work. It calls, instead, on the spectator as a worker to resist the system and thereby offers hope. The spectator leaves the performance not just intrigued or strained by what has been revealed but relieved and relaxed.

Finally, because of the play's structure and the positive response it has received and continues to receive in Algeria, as well as at the 1985 Carthage festival, Al-Ajwād could appeal elsewhere particularly in Third World countries.

Performance Devices

Alloula considers Al-Ajwād as the most "accomplished of his plays." It is for him the achievement of many years of work and experimentation as playwright and director. Technically, it departs from his previous works because he has changed his own approach. As he states: "There is a kind of metamorphosis, especially since Al-Agwāl and I think that this metamorphosis is far from coming to an end."¹⁷⁹

Alloula has reduced his stage technique to the methods used by Brecht and the '*maddāh*'. He claims that it has been the rural audiences which have dictated his new conception of theatre and his new stage techniques:

Indeed the new audiences - either peasants or of peasant origin - had a different attitude to the performance of the play. The spectators used to sit on the floor to form, in a natural way, a *halqa* [circle] round

¹⁷⁸ Alloula, Abedlkader, "Une Expérience En Cours" - A paper prepared for the Tenth IATC Conference - Berlin, 15-21 November 1987 (forthcoming).

¹⁷⁹ Djellid, M'Hamed, Op. cit.

the stage which led to a total change in acting and direction of the play which was conceived for a closed space and for a spectator sitting in front of the stage had to be reconsidered...[So] we started to remove many parts of the set and many props for the purpose of improving visibility and for a better view of the action. After about ten performances, we found ourselves acting without sets and with only a few props, just with what was strictly necessary. The actors have to adopt their acting to the new situation, but how could they do it when they had spectators facing them and others behind them? Some spectators used to turn their back to the stage claiming that they could listen better and during the debates following the performance, the discussions touched more on what was said than on what was shown, visualised. The spectator had astonishing abilities for listening and memorising... From such experiences which led us to reconsider our conception of theatre, we have rediscovered the secular value of traditional performances of the *halqa* type. Entrances and exits did not mean anything any longer. Everything had to be done in a closed circle - thus no wings. An actor could go and sit among the spectators to smoke a cigarette without surprising anybody.¹⁸⁰

The change in acting techniques meant the adoption of the art of the *maddāḥ* whose performance:

... takes place in the open air on market days. The spectators sit on the ground rubbing shoulders and form a circle of five to twelve metres in diameter. Within this circle only the *maddāḥ* moves. He is generally accompanied by one or several instruments. Using his voice, his body and a simple cane, the bard gives a performance by narrating an epic or particular story taken from social life. He interprets in his own way all sorts of characters. His voice is, more than anything else, his favoured instrument in the development of his show. He has a wide vocal range and a particular command of different narrative categories. He moves directly and without transition from a murmur to a cry, from a normal delivery to a verbal trance and from lament to singing.¹⁸¹

Alloula's stage techniques have changed considerably through experimentation and research and they are certainly different from what they were in the 1970s. The influence of traditional culture and of the traditional story-teller or *maddāḥ* is obvious and what is described above is to a great extent reflected in Al-Ajwād. Indeed Alloula has carefully selected and skillfully applied the techniques of the *maddāḥ* in this play. However, although Al-Ajwād shows innovation and skill, is successful and has won acclaim, its performance runs for "three hours and fifteen minutes" which makes it rather too long. Alloula, however, argues that it is of normal length and that: "some spectators find it long but most of them find its duration normal."¹⁸²

At the same time it ends rather abruptly and the last song, 'The Story of Sakīna', seems rather superfluous. Alloula could have closed the play with 'The Story of Jallūl' which is the tableau in which the play reaches its climax. The last song, unfortunately,

¹⁸⁰ Alloula, Abdelkader, op. cit.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Djellid, M'Hamed, op.cit.

brings a somewhat melodramatic note to the general atmosphere of the play. It is, however, likely that the playwright decided to have such an ending deliberately to imply that the 'stories' in the play are aspects of real daily life and that similar 'stories' continue to happen in that real daily life, in which case there is a mutual projection of reality into the play and of the play into reality. The ending then would be justified but not obvious to the spectator.

N.B. A. Alloula gave me copies of the forthcoming papers and allowed me to use them.

CHAPTER IV

SLIMANE BENAÏSSA

i) How Benaïssa Came To The Theatre

Slimane Benaïssa was born on 11 December 1943 in Guelma in the Aurès region of Eastern Algeria. At the age of five, he attended primary school being taught both in French and Arabic, the former language being used under French administration and the latter being provided unofficially by the *Mzābi*¹ community. This meant that, unlike the majority of his generation, he had a sound education in Arabic, "I received a real education in Arabic"² - as he puts it. At the age of thirteen, in 1956, he went to the *collège technique*, a boarding technical college in Annaba a major city on the eastern coast of Algeria and very near Guelma. He worked as a lathe-operator and milling engineer. He passed his B.E.I. - Brevet Élémentaire Industriel - equivalent to O'level, but stopped his studies in 1961 as the 'OAS'³ (the French colon secret army) increased its terrorist activities against the population. After Independence, in 1963 he was sent to France by the Ministry of Health to train in the maintenance of medical equipment but he interrupted his training two years later. He was by then rather sad and disappointed:

I left the factory for two reasons. Firstly, I realised that our training simply meant creating a cheap labour force. The other reason was that I had a French friend of my own age who used to work on a machine next to me at the factory. He died because of a stupid accident at work. This tragedy affected me deeply adding to my disappointment, so I left to work in a repairs and maintenance company.⁴

His parents who had moved to Algiers in 1963, had financial difficulties. This led Benaïssa to recognise that he had a duty to return and take care of them. He came back in 1967 and took a job as maintenance technician at the 'Hôpital Mustapha' the main teaching hospital in Algiers. He was very eager to pursue his studies but he had to wait for his elder brother to return from the Soviet Union, where he had taken a doctorate in nuclear physics in 1968, in order to take over the family responsibilities. In the same year Benaïssa passed the entry exam to the Faculty of Science at the University of Algiers where he studied mathematics, and joined 'Théâtre et Culture' an amateur theatre group which was located near the University. Cultural life in Algiers in

¹ The *Mzābi* or *Mozabites* as called in French are the Algerian Berbers in the *Mzāb* region situated in south eastern Algeria and bordering the Sahara desert. The regional capital city is Ghardaia. The *Mzābi* are usually a closed community. A large number of men emigrate to the north leaving their families behind. They are mainly shopkeepers and traders mainly in grocery and fabrics.

² Our interview with Benaïssa on 6 January 1987. Most of the material in this section is based on this interview and on another one on 12 January, 1988.

³ OAS: Organisation des Armées Secrètes. A terrorist organisation set up by the French settlers and some army generals to oppose the granting of Independence to Algeria by the French government under De Gaulle.

⁴ Interview, op.cit.

the late sixties and early seventies was buoyant and Benaïssa was in the midst of it through his deep involvement with 'Théâtre et Culture' which was very active at that time. Between 1969 and 1971 he took part in several plays. He also translated and produced Kateb Yacine's La Poudre d'Intelligence (Intelligence Powder), contributed to the collective production of La Femme Algérienne (Algerian Women) and wrote a play entitled Al'Sha'b, Al-Sha'b, (People, People). It is during this period that he realised that he did not really want to pursue his studies and opted for the theatrical arts instead, "I understood that what suited me best was theatre, but I had two obligations: I had to fulfil my moral pledge towards my father who wished that I complete my degree, which I did, and I also had to do my 'National Service'.⁵

Soon after he finished his military service in 1974, he was asked by Zamoum from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Kateb Yacine to reorganise and lead the theatre group 'Action Culturelle des Travailleurs' which Kateb Yacine had managed since 1971. The theatre group was facing many internal problems and "was falling apart".⁶ He accepted the offer and redirected Kateb Yacine's Mohamed, Prends Ta Valise (Pack Up Your Bags Mohamed) which the group was performing at that time and which was in great demand throughout the country. He also took the major role in the play and worked for one month until he found it impossible to continue with "a group which was very difficult to live with"⁷. This led him to "make suggestions and propose a different method of work to Kateb Yacine who rejected them and who imposed his own terms."⁸ Benaïssa left the group but chance was on his side for:

The same day as I left the group I was nearly hit by a car as I was crossing the road. The driver happened to be a friend - Ghrib Mohamed - he parked the car and we went for coffee. He asked me to bring the group to perform Mohamed, Prends Ta Valise for the workers of SONELEC⁹ where he was head of a department. I said that I had left but I offered to organise cultural activities in the company. He accepted the offer and I started work two days later with a group of fifteen people.¹⁰

Benaïssa's new job was not only to entertain the workers but also to get them involved in the entertainment process itself. His experience with the company was a collective production of a play about oil and world politics entitled La Situation Economique En Algérie.¹¹ Benaïssa says that the play was a stereotype of what the amateur theatre was producing at that time. "It was about oil and all the associated issues like Palestine, Mousaddeq affair, nationalisation in Algeria etc."¹²

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ SONELEC 'Société Nationale Des Equipements Electroniques'. A national company dealing with the manufacture of electronic equipment.

¹⁰ Interview, op. cit.

¹¹ Benaïssa could not remember the title of the play in Arabic and we were unable to find records, apart from the French title mentioned in a programme for the play Friday.

¹² Interview, op.cit.

However, his enthusiasm soon faded away as the play generated problems. He was confronted by the company's trade-union¹³ on the night of the first performance. Trade-union officials were outraged at certain scenes of the play and they wanted him to remove them:

There is a scene where rabbis chant extracts from the Bible which I had translated into Arabic but the style made them sound exactly like the Koran. They were scandalised - "How dare you have a rabbi chant the Koran?" I insisted that it was a translation of the Bible but they would not have it.

The other reason was that all political characters were named and interpreted. I played Boumédiène with his accent and manners. We had Ben Bella, Mousaddeq, De Gaulle etc., They argued that I should not have interpreted characters who were alive. My reply was - "Do we have to wait for them to die to speak, to express ourselves?" This obviously added to the conflict between us.¹⁴

Benaïssa asked his friend, Ghrib Mohamed to arbitrate, but the latter was going away for three weeks and told him that "on his return he wanted to see substantial work otherwise he will not be able to defend him inside the company"¹⁵. This was a tragic 'ultimatum'¹⁶ for Benaïssa. Two days later all the members of his group left except two, Omar Guendouz and Hamid Oubikibir. Nonetheless, he took up the challenge:

I had to present a play in twenty days. Omar Guendouz had just graduated from the 'Conservatoire' and had never acted before and Oubikibir who was an academic and an intellectual was more a moral support and a good critic rather than a man of theatre. I already had a vague idea of a play about two men, one young and one older, in the desert... I worked on this idea and that is how Carry On Bū'lām came about. In twenty-two days the play was completed and ready for showing.¹⁷

But his problems with the trade-union were not over. At the first performance given on 23 April 1975 at the 'Salle de l'ONAMO',¹⁸ the trade-union officials once again disapproved of his ideas and decided to ban the play, although his friend, Ghrib Mohamed was pleased with it. Three months later three friends of his - Kamel Bendimred a well known journalist, Malek Bouguermouh a theatre director, and Baba Ali manager of the 'El-Mouggar'¹⁹ cultural centre - thought the play was worth supporting and helped to produce it again. It was performed at 'El-Mouggar' on 5 June

¹³ All companies and institutions have a trade-union according to the 'Charte Socialiste des Entreprises' decreed in 1971.

¹⁴ Interview, op. cit.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ ONAMO: 'Office National De La Main d'Oeuvre' - similar to the British Job Centres.

¹⁹ 'El-Mouggar', as spelt in French, is a cultural centre in the city centre, usually used as a cinema but also used as a venue for plays, public lectures, exhibitions and music concerts.

1975. The performance was a good opportunity for Benaissa to make some cogent points: "I stopped acting in the middle of the performance and denounced the trade-union officials who were in the auditorium. The following day, Kamel Bendimred published an interview with me in Algérie-Actualité.²⁰

At this time, the late President Benmédienne was attending a conference of Islamic States in Lahore, Pakistan and in his speech said: "I will not go to paradise on an empty stomach"²¹. By coincidence, his statement was similar to a line spoken by Bu'lam in Carry On Bū'lām and which refers to God and the after-world - "If He punishes me, I'd rather be punished on a full stomach." The President's words appeared on the front pages of the national press the following day. At the same time the conflict between Algeria and Morocco got worse.²² These factors led the trade-union officials, "... to say to themselves: "this is the play of the time!" They associated Benmédienne with the character of Bu'lam and King Hassan of Morocco with that of Sekfali. So I had my play back on stage."²³

After two months of performances throughout the country the play was presented at the 'Tenth Mostaganem Festival'²⁴ where "it was welcomed beyond any expectation".²⁵ It has been performed more than 600 times since then.

In February 1977 Benaissa was appointed manager of the 'Théâtre Régional de Annaba' by the Ministry of Culture and Information and worked there for one year. During this period he wrote and produced two plays, Yūm Al-Jam'a Kharju Ryām (Friday)²⁶ which is the continuation of Carry on Bū'lām and Al-Mahgūr (The Despised) based on The Ill-treated Apostle by the Russian playwright Andrei Makainok. One year later, in February 1978, he was called on by the ministry to take up the post of 'Directeur des Théâtres et de l'Orientation' in Algiers. However, a few months later he was taken seriously ill with mastoiditis and went to Paris for an operation. During his absence he was dismissed from both his posts in Annaba and at the Ministry of Culture and Information, and accused of bad management of the Annaba theatre. He was brought before the court and acquitted after the trial, but the ministry were not satisfied with the verdict and appealed the case. Again Benaissa was acquitted

²⁰ Interview, op.cit.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Conflict over the annexation of the Western Sahara by Morocco.

²³ Interview, op. cit.

²⁴ The Mostaganem Festival is the amateur theatre festival held every summer in Mostaganem.

²⁵ Interview, op.cit.

²⁶ "Yūm Al-Jam'a Kharju Ryām" is the title of a very popular Algerian folk song. The theme is about a young man dreaming and fantasising about beautiful girls he meets on Friday. The title means - beautiful girls come out on Friday. The word *ryām* means 'gazelle' in Algeria and it is used as an image for beautiful girls. The play is about the fantasies of three young workers sharing a bed-sitting room on Friday, their day off work.

because of lack of evidence and unfounded accusations brought by the Annaba Theatre trade-union²⁷, and received damages. His troubles did not stop there, however. Soon after the second trial he and his wife had to take their son who had a severe lung problem to Paris for treatment. They were penniless and had to turn to friends and to the Algerian immigrant community for help. While he was very anxious about his son's health and above all about the operation he underwent on 10 December 1979, he received a summons from Algeria to appear before another court in Annaba on 12 December. On 11 December he took the plane for Annaba leaving his son behind in the intensive care unit. "I shall never forgive any bureaucrat on earth for this. I did not even know what I was going to court for."²⁸

Obviously Annaba Theatre had not given up and had brought the case before another court. Nonetheless one week later Benaissa was acquitted once more. After such experience he had only one option: "I swore never to work for the public administration again. That is how I decided to go independent, to set up my own theatre."²⁹

He started his own theatre in 1980 and today it is the only private theatre in Algeria. He does not have a proper base - theatre building or office. Because of the flexible nature of his theatre which uses minimal sets and not more than three or four actors, rehearsals take place in his flat or in any rented space available. As to the venues, the customer who hires the show provides the place for the performance.

In March 1982 he produced a preliminary version of Babūr Ghraq (A Ship Sank). The final version was performed in December 1983. But the play came under the censors' scissors and was banned until April 1985. Nonetheless, with this play Benaissa became an established playwright and director in Algeria like Abdelkader Alloula and Kateb Yacine. Like Carry On Bū'lām it won wide acclaim from the press and from the public. It has always played to full houses wherever it was performed and after more than 500 performances at home and abroad there is still a big demand for it. Yet, despite national and foreign recognition and to the astonishment of both press and the public, Benaissa has not been invited to participate in the annual National Theatre Festival which started in 1985. The reasons for this exclusion are not known even to the playwright himself. But even if he was still ignored by the organisers, he still performed to a full house every evening for five weeks on the fringe of the third festival in January 1987.

²⁷ Like other institutions, theatres also have trade-unions.

²⁸ Interview, op. cit.

²⁹ Ibid.

While working on future projects, Benaïssa is still performing Carry On Bū'lām and more frequently Babūr Ghraq at home and abroad, essentially for the North African immigrant community in France and Belgium.

Family and Cultural Background

Slimane Benaïssa's family origins are interesting in the Algerian context in the sense that his grandfather, a *Mzābi*³⁰ (a member of the Berber minority in the *Mzāb* a south eastern region of the edge on the Sahara desert) married outside the community. At the time, such an action was considered virtually sacrilege. He settled near Tebessa by the Tunisian border. When he died the *Mzābi* community according to tradition and principle took care of his son who was only six. The *Mzābi* community are usually shopkeepers and traders in the Tell region of Northern Algeria, and Benaïssa's father was brought up in such environment until he started his own business selling textiles. He also married outside the community and when he moved to Guelma in the Aurès region: "People would call me or my brother "the son of the *Mzābi*" if they were Arabs and "son of the Arab" if they were *Mzābi*, just as they used to describe my father. For the French settlers we were simply called Arabs"³¹

Thus the young Benaïssa grew up in an environment of four different worlds, *Mzābi*, French, Arabophone and *Shāwi* (Berbers of the Aurès region). His father was very fluent and eloquent in the Berber languages - *Mzābi*, Kabyle and *Shāwi* - and in Arabic both modern and Algerian which he was very keen to teach him. As Benaïssa recollects: "He used to speak a refined and polished language. He was so eloquent that you would think he was a barrister."³²

As a child he used to help in the family business and thus used to travel with his father to various town and village markets. This was another form of education for the markets were an ideal forum for him to meet different people from different regions and with different habits. He could also enjoy the performances of story-tellers, folk poets and singers.

We used to go almost every day to the souks to sell textiles, so I was in perpetual contact with people and their various problems. I had views on a wide spectrum from all the social categories from those who lived in remote villages high on the mountains, to my school friends both Algerian and European. My father also used to teach me how to speak to different people and in different situations - how to speak to a peasant, a townsman or a woman for example. I used to move with ease from one micro-world to another.³³

³⁰ *Mzābi*, op cit footnote 1.

³¹ Interview, op.cit.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

This experience has benefited him a great deal for it became one source of inspiration for him as a playwright, director and actor. Furthermore a sizeable amount of material in his plays, mainly variety of language, of accent and voice range, is borrowed from his childhood environment and experience.

Theatre Career

Slimane Benaïssa's first experience in theatre was when he joined the amateur theatre group 'Théâtre et Culture' in 1968 in Algiers. This group was one of the most active groups in the country in terms of experimentation and research on original material and form. The form of the theatre they adopted was that of 'tableaux' or tableaux/ashes, a sequence of short scenes tackling different aspects of one major theme, usually of socio-political nature. They used to perform for different social categories but their major supporters were usually students and workers. The group became a major pioneer of what is now known as amateur theatre, as Benaïssa argues: "we were virtually the founders of this form of theatre."³⁴ He was one of the main contributors to the collective production of La Femme Algérienne, a controversial play about the harsh situation of Algerian women in a male dominated society. The play was performed for one year 1969-1970 because of its appealing theme and the polemical debates it generated. In 1970 he translated and produced Kateb Yacine's La Poudre d'Intelligence, a farce based around the adventures of 'Nuage de Fumée', (Smoke Cloud) a modern version of the legendary Joha.

His first attempt at playwrighting was with People, People in 1969, a play written as a homage to the Algerian people in the usual amateur theatre form. He was to depart from this form with his last contribution to the collective production of a play about oil when he joined the SONELEC company.

After my experience in Mohamed, Prends Ta Valise, I wanted to try for the last time this form of theatre, a form in which I did not believe any longer. I could see that this form of theatre was somehow defective but I did not know why. It was adaptable to collective creation and was very practical but it could not solve all the problems.³⁵

It is with Carry On Bū'lām that he started his own form of writing, a form which is mainly dictated by material constraints and which aims at a highly practical and flexible mobile theatre. The cast is always small and the only play with five characters is The Despised; there are two characters in Carry On Bū'lām, four in Friday and three in A Ship Sank. In fact the plays most performed and most requested by the public and which Benaïssa himself prefers are Carry on Bū'lām and A Ship Sank. A van is all he uses when on tour, for himself, his actors and whatever props or set he needs. There are hardly any exits in any of his plays, his characters are together

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

and always present on stage. This means maximum economy in props, of light changes and of movement. Benaissa's theatre is very successful and always plays to full houses. However, it is hard to tell whether he will change his form of theatre or even if the present form will always appeal to the public as Algeria is witnessing continuous changes of style and content in cultural life.

ii) CARRY ON BŪ'LĀM

by

SLIMANE BENAÏSSA

Cast:

Sekfali

Bū'lām

Technocrat

Props:

A push cart with books - 2 square wooden boxes. Bu'lām wears plain ordinary casual clothes. Sekfali wears traditional Algerian clothes: *gandūra* (robe) turban and *burnous* (cloak).

ACT I - SCENE ITHE SNAKE

(The shadow of Bū'lām³⁶ praying is projected on a screen. Faint music of the muezzin³⁷... After his prayer he goes front stage and puts his shoes on. Enter Sekfali.)

Sekfali Bū'lām..! Bū'lām..!

Bū'lām What is it?!

Sekfali A snake!

Bū'lām So What?

Sekfali What do you mean "so what"?.. suppose³⁸ it ate me, suppose it jumped on me, suppose it strangled me?..

Bū'lām Well, it didn't eat you, it didn't jump on you, nor did it strangle you - why do you say "suppose"?

Sekfali *Bien sūr*³⁹ I say "suppose".

Bū'lām Always with your "suppose"... suppose the earth is lifted up, suppose the sky falls, suppose the mountain crumbles down, suppose the river breaks its banks, suppose I lose my way, suppose I get hungry, suppose we die...

Sekfali Without suppose there are no suppositions... pose is part of suppose and suppose is part of supposition... Suppose there was no pose, supposition wouldn't contain suppose... because supposition derives from position and it is suppose which derives from pose, that is the position of the whole supposition.⁴⁰

Bū'lām Where was this bloody thing?

Sekfali It is a being which was among the beings!⁴¹ Among the living! In life!⁴² How should I know about its being here?

(Bū'lām kills the snake with a shoe and presents it to Sekfali...)

Sekfali Bū'lām! Bū'lām!... What is it?

Bū'lām Pose in position, the snake was in a corner position.⁴³

(When Sekfali sees the snake he draws back in disgust but he is mainly frightened.)

³⁶ Bū'lām is behind a screen.

³⁷ *muezzin*: Muslim priest who calls for prayer.

³⁸ The word *lukān* means 'if' or 'what if'. We have opted for 'suppose' because Sekfali is going to play on the word *kana* (to be) and its derivatives; 'suppose' is the closest alternative.

³⁹ *Bien sūr*. This is uttered in French. It is rather surprising that he should use French words because he is (as the play develops) a staunch advocate of Arabic.

⁴⁰ We have omitted the translation of 'that's all' because we think it does not fit here.

⁴¹ Sekfali is still playing on the word to be. Here the word should be 'living things' or 'existing things'.

⁴² The author uses two juxtaposed words meaning 'world' and 'life' but they both mean 'life' in Algerian, more so in this context.

⁴³ The word is *coin* in French and adopted in Algerian. The author uses it to keep the rhyme.

- Sekfali God is limitless in his glory. He has the power to create anything.⁴⁴
- Bū'lām Indeed, you're right, God has the power to create anything.
- Sekfali He has the power to create anything because He is Almighty - and being Almighty He has the power to create anything.
- Bū'lām Sekfali, God sent us⁴⁵ this snake just at the right time... just as we have no food left... let's cook it - what do you think?
- Sekfali Cook it? No, I don't think it's *ḥalāl*.⁴⁶
- Bū'lām We have nothing to eat.
- Sekfali Nothing at all?
- Bū'lām Either we eat snakes or snakes will eat us⁴⁷, choose.
- Sekfali Wait. I'm going to check this in the books...
- Bū'lām Yes, go..

(Bū'lām doesn't seem concerned about what the books will say, he puts the snake in a pan. Enter Sekfali with a push-cart full of books. He sits down and starts reading.)

- Sekfali The leading scholars in the science of snakes and monkeys said only good things about them... Abū Sofīān Al-'Ankabūṭī tells us how the people of Souf⁴⁸ used to eat green snakes, and also how they used them in medicine... Bū'lām, what colour is the snake?⁴⁹
- Bū'lām It is green and its eyes are blue.
- Sekfali Al-Barūdī of the Bānī Barūd tribe says that the snake is composed of three things - venom - flesh and skin. He further writes that scientific analysis led to the logical conclusion that venom is deadly, hence the flesh is not *ḥalāl* whereas the skin is. Master Mind⁵⁰ of the tribe of the Great Minds⁵¹ writes that in China and Japan people eat snakes, monkeys, cats, dogs and all similar species... Bū'lām, do you know why the Chinese have slanted⁵² eyes?
- Bū'lām Why..?

⁴⁴ Interjection. Often used in admiration or surprise.

⁴⁵ The expression is often used when something or someone turns up when needed, thus 'God sent it' - 'God sent him/you..'

⁴⁶ In Islam there are certain restrictions regarding food and drink. Pork and alcohol are forbidden - *ḥarām* whereas any other flesh is allowed - *ḥalāl* providing it was slaughtered according to ritual rules.

⁴⁷ This is a pun referring to the abuse of certain officials. This implies that one should react against any form of abuse. Algerian audiences love this kind of remarks.

⁴⁸ The names of the scientists are the creation of the author. He plays on the name Al-'Ankabūṭī - Mr. Cobweb - to enhance his irony.

'Souf' or 'Oued Souf' is a region in Southern Algeria.

⁴⁹ The question is asked in literary Arabic to give Sekfali the attitude of a learned man.

⁵⁰ Again the author plays on names. Here the words are Mr. Clever or Great, or Genius.

⁵¹ The prefix *bānī* means 'sons of' hence 'tribe'. The author uses the same word for 'clever man' and 'clever tribe'. Because of the connotation we have opted for 'Master Mind' and 'Great Minds Tribe'.

⁵² The author means 'slanted' but the word he uses in the text is 'crinkled'. It is possible that the author could not think of a different word. On our part we cannot think of a word for 'slanted' nor do we believe it exists in Algerian Arabic.

- Sekfali Because they eat snakes...
- Bū'lām Is that so?
- Sekfali He who lives among a community for forty days becomes a member of that community⁵³ and he who eats an animal resembles that animal...
He who eats snake resembles the snake.
He who eats pork resembles the pig.
He who eats rat resembles the rat.
- Bū'lām And he who eats mutton?
- Sekfali He resembles the *ḥalāl*...
- (Bū'lām hands the pan with the cooked snake to Sekfali.)*
- Bū'lām It's ready, let's eat.
- Sekfali What's ready?
- Bū'lām The snake is cooked, I cooked it.
- Sekfali Who is going to eat the cooked snake you have cooked?⁵⁴
- Bū'lām You and me, is there anybody else with us?
- Sekfali Forget it... Look, try to find a snake and bring it to eat its fellow snake. I won't eat... and what's more, even the books haven't given me a definite answer...
- Bū'lām Listen, those who wrote these books lived in comfort. They were not wandering in the desert; they were refined people and they used to eat fine food, that's why they were put off by snake... But we...
- Sekfali How do you know about these people..? What about the teachings of religion? No messing with the law of Islam.⁵⁵
- Bū'lām God be praised and so be His law... If the dogma applied to a decent and comfortable life we would abide by all the principles and be accountable for our deeds... But, here we are in the middle of nowhere, not to say that we are in the land of snakes⁵⁶. So, where is the justice, where is the law to solve the problem? Come on, say to yourself God gave you this food and let's eat...
- Sekfali No thank you.
- Bū'lām Come on!
- Sekfali No.
- Bū'lām Look... if you are afraid of God, remember that "God Is Much-Forgiving, A Dispenser Of Grace."⁵⁷
- Sekfali "God Is Severe In Punishment."⁵⁸

⁵³ This is an old Arab saying.

⁵⁴ The word cooked is also repeated in the text.

⁵⁵ The word is *sharī'a* meaning - Islamic code of law.

⁵⁶ Another pun referring to abuse of power, repression...

⁵⁷ and ⁵⁸ These are two recurrent verses in the Koran. They are often used by people for either excuse when doing something forbidden by Islam or something wrong, or for warnings against such doings.

⁵⁸ see ⁵⁷.

- Bū'lām "God Is Much-Forgiving, A Dispenser Of Grace."
- Sekfali "God Is Severe In Punishment."
- Bū'lām Never mind!⁵⁹ If He punishes me, I'd rather be punished on a full stomach...
- (Bū'lām is eating watched by Sekfali who is meditating but also put off and depressed.)*
- Sekfali Do you know what God said?
- Bū'lām *(Still eating)* What did he say?
- Sekfali He said "You are forgiven for your deeds when in necessity."⁶⁰
- Bū'lām What does it mean?
- Sekfali You are forgiven for your deeds when in necessity. Simple. It means that if you are in doubt, it is left to you to sort yourself out.
- Bū'lām Can't you say plainly I am hungry? Come on, eat... try, just a taste.
- (Sekfali moves nearer Bū'lām to eat, hesitates then starts shouting.)*
- Sekfali No! No! This is all your fault, you don't know that you are taking us to our death!
- Bū'lām I didn't ask you to follow me!..
- Sekfali I am not so mad as to follow a vagrant like you. I was alright until I found myself dragged into this situation... I was minding my own business, now I'm caught in people's problems... Terrible destiny, I was living in a home, now I am wandering in the desert. I was with my children, now I am lonely... Time⁶¹ has bound us and God is bearing witness.
- Bū'lām Sekfali...
- Sekfali It's all over... There is no Sekfali... no Oum Kalthoum... no Farid Al-Atrash... no music and no musicians⁶²
- Bū'lām Look, I know one thing, I am not going to live again what I have been through before,
Enough with misery
Enough with humiliation
- Sekfali Enough with blasphemy
- Bū'lām Enough with hunger.
If I am shown a country where I can live decently, a country where I can work, a country where there is plenty, I shall go, be it at the other end of the planet. So make up your mind, follow me or go your way but give us some peace, leave me alone...
- (Bū'lām goes to lie down for a nap. Sekfali goes to him and utters...)*

⁵⁹ The author uses the French expression *tant pis*. We doubt very much whether an Algerian like Bu'lām or in fact any average Algerian would use such expression in their speech.

⁶⁰ Proverb in literary Arabic.

⁶¹ The author uses the word history.

⁶² It is common in Algeria to repeat the negation of anything in a long sentence just to say 'it is over' - 'it is finished' - 'no more'... Oum Kalthoum and Farid Al-Atrash are Egyptian singers.

- Sekfali Shit!⁶³ What shall I eat now?
- Bū'lām Eat your head.⁶⁴
- Sekfali I mind my own business..? Alright, so I must mind my own business?.. But that's my problem... I'm no longer able to think... I'm no longer able to think... What sense is left in me now that I have become a vagrant among the vagrants... mad among the mad? I.. I who studied the science of life, the science of this world and beyond, I have neither lived fully in this world nor have I seen the Last Day.⁶⁵ Why God! Tell me why!
- Bū'lām Will you shut up!
- Sekfali Alright... I have stopped... I am going to pray, God is greater...

(Sekfali leaves stage mumbling. Bū'lām sleeps.)

- Bū'lām I swear to God that if there are people like him in paradise I won't go. It's too much brothers! It's too much!⁶⁶

SCENE II

PRAYER

(Bū'lām sleeps. Sekfali comes back.)

- Sekfali Bū'lām! Bū'lām!
- Bū'lām What's the matter?
- Sekfali Get up!... Get up!
- Bū'lām What do you want me to do? Be clear..
- Sekfali Get on the cart.
- Bū'lām What do you want me to do?
- Sekfali Get on the cart... Come on.
- Bū'lām Alright, I'm on the cart, so what?
- Sekfali Today is Friday, we must pray and to pray I must call for prayer, to call for prayer I must be on something high. So you get on the cart and I climb on your shoulders, this way I shall be high.
- Bū'lām Maybe it's not Friday... How do you know?
- Sekfali Since you don't know when is Friday, well, yesterday is Friday, tomorrow is Friday, the day after is Friday and every day of God is Friday.

⁶³ Interjection mainly used in Eastern Algeria, meaning 'get off', 'shit', 'no way', 'never'... depending on the situation.

⁶⁴ Literal translation of this common expression. A similar expression equally used is 'eat my thighs'.

⁶⁵ The Day of Judgment or the End of the World.

⁶⁶ When in a similar situation to that of Bū'lām, one would often address one's complaint to people in general by uttering either 'brothers' or 'people', or to God.

- Bū'lām Did you find the *qibla*⁶⁷, the direction to Mecca?.. Which way do we face to pray in this desert?
- Sekfali The *qibla*?.. Look, we shall face this way, then this way... and this way... and this way.
- Bū'lām You mean that the *qibla* is in the middle of the cross-roads.⁶⁸
- Sekfali Exactly...Come on, hold on to me, hold on to God, hold on to me, hold on to God, hold on to me...⁶⁹
- Bū'lām Do I hold on to you or hold on to God?
- Sekfali I hold on to you, you hold on to me and we all hold on to Him.⁷⁰
- Bū'lām Oh no... we shall fall!
- (Bū'lām gets down, goes back to his place, kneels down and rests on his heels⁷¹. Sekfali tries to get on the cart. He notices Bū'lām is sitting...)*
- Sekfali Bū'lām! Don't move.
- Bū'lām What's the matter?
- Sekfali Don't move... bend.
- (Sekfali climbs on to Bū'lām's shoulders. Bū'lām lifts him.)*
- Bū'lām Hurry up, you're heavy!
- Sekfali Bū'lām, I can see a village.
- Bū'lām Look hard, maybe it's my town.⁷²
- Sekfali No, this is a small village.
- Bū'lām It is a socialist village in my country.⁷³
- Sekfali What?
- Bū'lām I shall explain to you later... just hurry.

⁶⁷ The *qibla* is the direction of Mecca which the Muslims face in prayer.

⁶⁸ The word in the text is the transliteration of *quatre chemins* (four paths, roads, ways). It is nonetheless commonly used with its own Algerian meaning - cross-roads - without the word 'cross'. The right word in French is *carrefour*.

⁶⁹ In literary Arabic the meaning is cling, stick, tie-up, press. The word is used in Algerian but with further meanings e.g. take, hold, hold on. The expression 'hold on to God' is essentially used to comfort someone depressed or under stress thus the meaning is 'believe in God', 'be patient'. However, it is used as a pun in the text.

⁷⁰ This usually means 'hold on to nothing'; it is also used as a vulgar interjection. But the author plays on the words to give them a physical meaning resulting in irony, Bū'lām and Sekfali are going to fall.

⁷¹ The position is exactly like the Japanese traditional way of sitting.

⁷² The word means 'my town', 'my country', 'my city', 'my homeland'.

⁷³ Literally 'city, socialist village of my country'. Our translation is according to the context: Sekfali sees a village - Bū'lām believes it is a village in 'his socialist country' the country they are going to.

Sekfali Wait until the words of God reach those people... *Allāhu Akbar!*..⁷⁴

(Because of Sekfali's weight, Bū'lām falls on his knees Sekfali remains seated on his shoulders.)

Sekfali "Deeds should be with sincere intentions⁷⁵, we sincerely wanted to call for prayer but we couldn't make it. May God strengthen our devotion.⁷⁶ In The Name Of Allah Most Gracious, Most Merciful⁷⁷.

Bū'lām Sekfali!

Sekfali What is it?

Bū'lām I am under...

(Sekfali gets up, goes to his previous place. Bū'lām goes back to his corner. Sekfali makes his Friday sermon.⁷⁸)

Sekfali Prayer and Peace, then..

Bū'lām What?

Sekfali *Be quiet.*

Whether we have been and whether you have been, there has been no being like those who had been before us⁷⁹. Let us worship Him like those who worshiped Him before us. Let us praise Him like those who praised Him before us. And to the Lord, let us be most grateful. Like those who had been before us... and peace be upon you⁸⁰. Bū'lām, come on. let us pray!

Bū'lām I have already performed my prayer, may God accept yours.

Sekfali Let us recite the *Fātiha*⁸¹ then.

(Both get up and stand front-stage facing the audience with hands open and raised up to heaven.⁸²)

Sekfali Bū'lām, repeat after me.

Bū'lām Alright.

Sekfali Follow me.

⁷⁴ *Allāhu Akbar!* is repeated three times at the beginning of the call for prayer by the muezzin and also at the beginning of each prayer. There are five compulsory prayers a day.

⁷⁵ A saying by the prophet Mohammad. Muslims often refer to the prophet's sayings or hadith. In - Al-Hāfidh Shihab Al-Dīn Abī Al-Fadhl Al-'Asqalānī called Abī Hajar. *Fath Al-Bārī Bi-Sharḥ Al-Bukhārī*. Egypt. 1959. V.I, p. 144..

⁷⁶ The word used in the text means 'make sure' or 'consolidate our intentions'.

⁷⁷ This verse appears at the beginning of every chapter, *ṣūrah* of the Koran. It is also uttered by all Muslims when they are about to do something like eating, writing, driving...

⁷⁸ This is the sermon delivered in the mosque on Fridays. The equivalent is the Sunday service in the Christian Church.

⁷⁹ Predecessors, previous generations, people who lived in previous periods are always referred to as 'those before us'. Sekfali is just mumbling he is not conducting the service properly.

⁸⁰ Always used at the end of prayer and also in daily life where Muslims use it as a greeting for 'hello' and 'good bye' for instance.

⁸¹ The *Fātiha* is the opening chapter of the Koran. It is always quoted in prayers and religious ceremonies including the engagement ceremony.

⁸² Muslims raise up their hands when reciting the *Fātiha* or when making a wish.

- Bū'lām Alright.
- Sekfali Oh God, spare us from severe punishment and from torture in hell!
- Bū'lām O God dispense your grace on us for you are most gracious, most merciful!
- Sekfali O God, forgive us for our sins!
- Bū'lām O God, give us our daily bread!
- Sekfali O God, spare us from hunger and poverty!
- Bū'lām O God, most convincing convince us and make us content!
- Sekfali O God, keep the devils away from us!
- Bū'lām O God, keep the devils away from us!
- Sekfali O God, guide the inexperienced in the right path!
- Bū'lām O God, keep our steps firm in the right way to fortune!
- Sekfali O God, make him change his mind so we come back!
- Bū'lām O God, give us more strength to carry on!⁸³
- Sekfali Make him change his mind so we come back!
- Bū'lām O God, give me more strength to carry on!
- Sekfali To come back.
- Bū'lām To carry on.
- Sekfali Bū'lām, you're not repeating what I say.
- Bū'lām Look each one has his own *Fatiha*. God knows Bū'lām and Bū'lām knows God.
- Sekfali What a face to be known to God!
- Bū'lām I would have thought God didn't discriminate.

(Bū'lām gets up and starts to pack up. He puts the scattered utensils in the cart.)

⁸³ The verb for 'give more' and 'carry on' in the text is the same except for 'carry on' the Algerian verb is 'I give more forward'. However, the repetition of the word in the text gives the line a pleasant assonance.

SCENE III

BŪ'LĀM'S HISTORY

- Sekfali What are you doing?
- Bū'lām We carry on... we are not taking root here, are we?
- Sekfali Mind the books! Why do you persist with your carry on, carry on?... Tell me please, what is urging you, what is the evil force behind you?
- Bū'lām Belhamlaoui.⁸⁴
- Sekfali Belhamlaoui?
- Bū'lām Haven't you heard of Belhamlaoui the FELLER?⁸⁵
- Sekfali No, I wouldn't know fellers.
- Bū'lām When France was tyrannising this country, when our brothers were living under total oppression, when my parents used to recite the Koran in their hearts and bow to strangers, when I was a child often with snot running from my nose and flies all over me.
- Sekfali Please don't speak about snot...
- Bū'lām All that time, Belhamlaoui used to sell tangerines in the market and people thought he was mad because he used to say
*"Aujourd' hui les mandarines
 Demain les grenades."*⁸⁶
 O people⁸⁷ there is more to come."⁸⁸
 Belhamlaoui had a few dogs, he called them A, B, C, D, E and they were all Arab dogs. Do you know what he used to say: "these dogs which were sent by God and the prophets and the angels are now ill treated, oppressed and colonised by DOGS".⁸⁹ He was damn right.
- Sekfali Therefore he was one of those dogs.
- Bū'lām Oh no! He died a martyr.
- Sekfali May he rest in peace.
- Bū'lām Time went by and nobody saw Belhamlaoui or his dogs until his corpse was brought into the market place. His back was riddled with bullets. His feet were covered with thorns; the soldiers were standing at his feet and the dogs lying over him. He was holding a piece of cloth showing the Algerian emblem. It was the first time I saw the Algerian flag, the first time I saw the Algerian emblem. Since that day he was called Belhamlaoui Bū'lām - Hamlaoui Bū'lām... (*Bū'lām smiles, then he resumes*) One day,

⁸⁴ Belhamlaoui was a saint who lived in Eastern Algeria. He was famous for his generosity towards the poor and his strong personality. The name became a legend and is associated with anybody strong and fierce.

⁸⁵ The word in the text is *fallāg* meaning 'tree-feller'. During the war of liberation it took the plural form *fallāga*. It was used by the French to refer to the Algerian members of the maquis. We have used 'Feller' to keep the pun.

⁸⁶ The two lines are in French in the text.

⁸⁷ The literal translation would be 'O Arabs', but in Algeria - sometimes when one addresses people, appeals to them or talks about them - the meaning is people in general.

⁸⁸ Literally - 'fortune is still ahead'.

⁸⁹ Referring to the French occupants.

Belhamlaoui was walking down the street, he bumped against a French woman.⁹⁰ She said "Can't you be careful, dirty Arab⁹¹". Belhamlaoui turned back, looked at her a few seconds then said

"We are dirty because of you.
You are clean thanks to us.
But we shall wash some day."
She replied "What cheek! And on top of that he speaks French".
Do you know what he replied? "On top of tops, there is the Arab top Madam"⁹²

Belhamlaoui could speak French and what he enjoyed most was swearing in French... Bitch, cow, cunt, twerp, wog, jackass... he knew them all by heart until the day he was killed and brought to the market place. My name was S.N.P. Larbi, I was called a foundling⁹³. When we got our independence I asked the Algerian government to change my name. So I called myself BELHAMLAOUI BŪ'LĀM. They gave names of martyrs to squares, streets, schools... so I considered myself a street called BELHAMLAOUI BŪ'LĀM,⁹⁴

- *Aujourd'hui les mandarines*
Demain les grenades
There is trouble ahead
O people!!

SCENE IV

FIRST DÉPARTURE

(Bū'lām pushes the cart. Sekfali follows him.)

Bū'lām (Says a poem)

"The clairvoyant can see through the bottom of the pot."⁹⁵
And everybody can see through the sieve.
And the brave tramples on the viper's head.
And the swimmer dives in deep seas.
And the muezzin⁹⁶ calls from the minaret.
And wheat grows where the pick has passed.

⁹⁰ The word in the text is *rūmiya* a woman from Rome. It goes back to the Roman presence in North Africa. In modern times it means any European woman. The masculine is *rūmī*.

⁹¹ In French in the text; commonly and extensively used by the French.

⁹² In French in the text but the word in the text is 'market' which we have translated by 'top' to keep the idea of *par-dessus*.

⁹³ In the text, French abbreviation 'S.N.P.': *Sans Nom Patronymique*. meaning without surname. Under French legislation any illegitimate child is called S.N.P. until he is twenty-one to choose a surname.

⁹⁴ Very bitter irony on the part of the author. In other words Bū'lām is saying 'I am like a carpet to be trodden on'.

⁹⁵ This verse is by Adb-Al-Rahmān Al-Majdūb, in Scelles-Millie (Jeane) et Boukhari (Khélifa) - Les Quatrains de Medjdoub le sarcastique. Paris - Maisonneuve et Larose - 1966, p. 51. - Al-Majdūb lived in Morocco, he died in 1958. The other verses are by the author.

⁹⁶ The muezzin is the man who calls for prayers from the minaret of a mosque.

(After the poem he sings a song.)

Tell me black raven
 Bird of freedom
 From your skies
 Can you see my country
 Tell me when
 I reach home
 My folk and I
 Will be happy
 Stop my wandering
 For home and settle
 And make all happy
 Work for all because
 Jobs are plenty
 In prosperity
 My way shall run
 My hopes have
 Lasted too long
 Through pain and sorrow
 I shall pass but never
 Shall I bully
 Tell me black raven
 Bird of freedom
 From your skies
 Can you see my country.

(They travel round the stage then resettle.)

ACT II SCENE V

'ARABISATION'⁹⁷

- Sekfali Did you say you can't read?
- Bū'lām You talk of reading when I don't even know how I'm alive.
- Sekfali Did your parents go to school?
- Bū'lām In all my life I went only twice to school. I learned "In The Name Of Allah Most Gracious, Most Merciful" and war started, so I fled to the mountains.
- Sekfali Was your father educated?
- Bū'lām My father went to school only once. He learned "In The Name Of Allah" and the war started so he fled to the mountains. He didn't come back, he died there; mercy of Allah be upon him.
- Sekfali And your grandfather, was he educated?
- Bū'lām Look here, even if you go twenty times through my family tree from son to ancestor, you'll find that we all knew war, we all took to the maquis and all of us had no education... that's why they call us the mountain people.⁹⁸
- Sekfali Well, everyone has his own destiny... some people are at the top and others are at the bottom anjso on.

⁹⁷ 'Arabisation' is the official policy for the use of Arabic instead of French first in education and gradually in administration.

⁹⁸ Derogatory expression meaning 'stupid and backward', 'a yokel', often used by people from the city against people from rural areas.

- Bū'lām What about you, were your father and grandfather educated?
- Sekfali Oh, we are all educated, we are all brainy.⁹⁹
- Bū'lām So you were never involved in wars.
- Sekfali We fought with education... with education, you see.
- Bū'lām Tell me, can you get killed when you fight with education?
- Sekfali Well, as far as we are concerned, Allah saved us...
- Bū'lām Yes Allah saved you..."
And Allah protected you... because we fought on our feet and those who fell outnumber those still standing... mountains, ravines.. soldiers...¹⁰⁰
- Sekfali Come on, let's be serious! I don't know where you are taking us... Look, since we are travelling together I am going to teach you to read.
- Bū'lām I'd love to, who would say no to education.
- Sekfali Tell me, you know absolutely nothing?..
- Bū'lām I know a bit of French which I learned at the time when the French soldiers used to arrest us and question us; things like, Where do you live... In the village. Did you see guerillas... I didn't see. Do you have children? Yes, Five. You're lying. I'm lying, I'm not lying sir. Arabs are jackasses. No sir... yes sir. We learned many things with punches, you know...
- Sekfali Not those things, come on! I am talking about Arabic.
- Bū'lām Arabic? I know only 'A' in Arabic because there is a song which goes like this: "'A' my sultan and exile is torturing me."¹⁰¹
'A' is the king.
- Sekfali Do you know 'B'?
- Bū'lām B? No, there is no song on that...
- Sekfali B as in *bāb*, *bīr*, *barāka*.¹⁰²
- Bū'lām Like *Bīru*, *bīra*, *bulitiic*.¹⁰³
- Sekfali That is not Arabic.
- Bū'lām Why not? All Arabs have *bīrus*, they all like *bīra* and they all indulge in *bulitiic*.

⁹⁹ Although the word in the text is commonly used to refer to people educated in Islamic theology, these latter are often pedantic and pretend they know everything. The author is being ironic here, hence our choice of 'brainy' instead of 'intellectuals' or 'professors'...

¹⁰⁰ The author alludes to battles, particularly the resistance against the French occupation of Algeria - the resistance in the maquis.

¹⁰¹ First verse of a popular song from Eastern Algeria. The letters of the alphabet are used in acrostic order and used at the beginning of each verse.

¹⁰² The corresponding English words are 'door', 'well', 'benediction'. the transliteration is used on purpose because we believe it keeps the mood of the scene.

¹⁰³ The corresponding words are 'bureau', 'beer', 'politics'. As Arabs cannot pronounce the consonant 'p' in general, they say 'b' hence *bulitiic*. These are French words commonly used and part of the spoken language in Algeria.

- Sekfali God forbid!
- Bū'lām Nowadays there is less prejudice about such things...¹⁰⁴
- Sekfali Look, instead of *biru* you should say *maktab*, *maktab*, *maktab* and instead of *būliiic* you should say *siyāsa*, *siyāsa*.¹⁰⁵
- Bū'lām Oh, no, you're wrong. You can say *siyasa* when you are polite, civilized, gentle... But when you use force and violence it becomes *būliiic*. My father used to say 'use *siyāsa* with your brother and *būliiic* with France, because in *būliiic* there is 'bunch'¹⁰⁶, bomb, bombing... I don't think you have understood anything...
- Sekfali Look, when you say *maktab*, you pronounce M, K, T and B which are Arabic letters therefore you are speaking Arabic.
- Bū'lām Why, when you say *birū* don't you pronounce B and R which are Arabic letters?
- Sekfali They are Arabic consonants but uttered in a foreign language.
- Bū'lām So, they are traitors in your view.
- Sekfali Exactly... they betrayed Arabic and adopted French.
- Bū'lām The swines... B and R traitors! You're getting deep, and since I am your brother, please teach me Arabic through French and French through Arabic so I can learn Kabyle, *sūr*.¹⁰⁷
- Sekfali Good night...

(Sekfali goes to sleep. Bū'lām makes his bed. Night atmosphere.)

- Bū'lām Master Sekfali, you didn't tell me what you call *bīra* in Arabic.
- Sekfali May Allah save us from such people...
- Bū'lām Sekfali, are you going to sleep without food?
- Sekfali Is there anything to eat?
- Bū'lām What is left from this morning. *(He hands the pan with the snake to Sekfali.)*
- Sekfali God forbid!¹⁰⁸

(Sekfali talks while preparing his bed with care.)

- Sekfali Bū'lām, tell me, are there Arabs in this country of yours?
- Bū'lām Of course. Who else, Greeks?
- Sekfali You never know... Bū'lām, these Arabs speak Arabic?

¹⁰⁴ In the text 'there is less 'God forbid'. Implying that people are less prejudiced nowadays unlike conservatives and prejudiced people like Sekfali.

¹⁰⁵ *siyāsa* means 'politics' in literary Arabic but in Algeria it took the second meaning of 'gentleness', 'tact'.

¹⁰⁶ We have used 'bunch' to translate *būnya* which is a distortion of the French word *poignée* (handful or handle) or *poignet* (wrist) and which means 'a punch'.

¹⁰⁷ The word is in French in the text. This is another note of irony in this line about learning Arabic.

¹⁰⁸ Interjection used when one is confronted with something bad or thought forbidden by religion. Also used in situations of discontent or disapproval.

- Bū'lām Of course. What do you want them to speak, Chinese?
- Sekfali You never know... Bū'lām, these Arabs who speak Arabic believe in God?
- Bū'lām They believe in God. What do you want them to believe in, Abū Daghiūs?
- Sekfali You never know... Bū'lām, since these people are Arabs who speak Arabic and believe in God, why should we go to their country? Like them, we are Arabs, we believe in God and we speak Arabic...
- Bū'lām In my country, Arabs are all new. They speak new Arabic and they believe in our old God that is the everlasting God.¹⁰⁹
- Sekfali So, you are implying that we are old, out-dated and cheap, we are nothing.
- Bū'lām Listen Sekfali, all I'm saying is that there are many things in my country that you don't know.
- Sekfali You are calling me ignorant?
- Bū'lām You simply don't know.

(Sekfali is upset, he gets very angry.)

- Sekfali I, a man of great knowledge, you call me ignorant.
I, a brainy who knows every event and the whole Koran
Who knows philosophy and every trick
Who knows all about fidelity to God and hypocrisy
Who knows arithmetics and fractions
I am ignorant!?
- Bū'lām Yes, you are ignorant.
- Sekfali My knowledge includes the twentieth century, the twelfth century, the thirteenth century, the fourteenth century, I even know the coming century and I have learned it by heart... I am still ignorant?
- Bū'lām You are ignorant and shut up.¹¹⁰
- Sekfali Good night.

(They go to sleep but Sekfali starts to psalmodize loudly.)

- Bū'lām Sekfali!
- Sekfali What is it?
- Bū'lām Psalmodize in your heart.
- Sekfali So I am ignorant...

(They go to sleep... Music.)

¹⁰⁹ The author raises a point of controversy in Algeria. He is implying that Algeria is a modern society, people speak modern Arabic unlike the conservatives but believe in the same God. We shall elaborate on this point in our text analysis.

¹¹⁰ The author has withdrawn the next lines by Bū'lām and Sekfali: bottom of page 21 in the original text.

SCENE VIDREAM AND NIGHTMARE

(Bū'lām gets up almost somnambulant and addresses the audience.)

Bū'lām I saw my country in a dream.
 The nearer I get the more I see it in my dreams
 A country full of nice things.
 Beautiful houses
 Kids all nicely dressed
 Coming out of school
 My country is a paradise
 With rivers flowing underneath
 Yes paradise with rivers flowing underneath.

(Sekfali gets up screaming.)

Sekfali Bū'lām, we're in trouble! in trouble! I saw it!

Bū'lām What did you see?

Sekfali I saw your country.

Bū'lām So what? I saw it too.

Sekfali My God, a country upside down.
 No resemblance whatsoever between people.
 Whoever is sitting doesn't seem to be sitting,
 Whoever is climbing doesn't seem to be climbing,
 Whoever is walking doesn't seem to be walking,
 Whoever is sleeping doesn't seem to be sleeping,
 And whoever is awake doesn't seem to be awake.
 A country with beastly behaviours.
 Jostle someone and you get knocked down,
 Open your mouth and you get your teeth down your throat.¹¹¹
 A country with deep rooted and ever lasting people.
 Good Lord!

(Sekfali sits down and continues to mumble. Bū'lām addresses the audience.)

Bū'lām *(to audience.)* Is this a human being?.. He is a malediction.¹¹² *(to Sekfali)* - Even your dreams are rotten. Look, you saw a dark country because your sight is blurred and if people are neither going up nor coming down because you are inert just like a plain jar standing in a corner¹¹³, then listen - you can invent as many stories as you like, I won't believe a word you say until I see the proof with my own eyes... Goodnight.

(Bū'lām goes back to sleep. Sekfali taken by fear gets dizzy and is transported into an ecstatic dance. Bū'lām gets up, he is furious.)

Bū'lām You are a bloody curse! Look, if you're going mad, keep off, leave me alone! If you lost your senses, I am still able to reason.¹¹⁴ So, please do me a favour and stop all this nonsense. In your company, no food, no drink, no sleep, no... nothing!

¹¹¹ Literally you swallow your teeth. The other possibility for this expression is - 'you get a knuckle sandwich'.

¹¹² Other meanings: curse, calamity, trouble, pain.

¹¹³ Popular idiom commonly used for someone dull, boring, inactive... Literally 'you are like the leaning jar which makes you neither cry nor laugh'.

¹¹⁴ Literally 'if you are floating I am still swimming.'

- Sekfali I am anxious Bū'lām, I am anxious and scared!.. I don't know where you are taking me, so how can I relax? Because, when I don't know where I am going I get scared... Fear is crippling me Bu'lam and I am anxious!..
- Bū'lām Look, we are in the desert and in the middle of the night, so what can I do to cheer you up? Do you want me to bring a flute¹¹⁵ and play you some music, bring dancers to entertain you or organise a wedding? So tell me, what do you want me to do?
- Sekfali Let's have a wedding?
- Bū'lām Great! A wedding, a beautiful wedding outdoors! Just like that!
- Sekfali I shall invite all my friends and everybody who wants to share my happiness. I shall ask my sons to divorce and we shall all remarry and have a big feast.
- Bū'lām If you want a wedding, prepare it yourself.
- Sekfali Of course I shall prepare it myself... Get out of my house! Out!
- (Exit Bū'lām.)*
- Sekfali The wedding will be great
The guests will be great
A wedding with great music
The musicians will be great
The wedding will be fine
And the jealous will cry of envy
A wedding with big flashy cars
To tease my enemies
We shall barbecue lamb
Drums, pan-flutes and bedouin songs
A wedding of high class
Brightened up with our presence
A wedding to be remembered
Then I shall relax and feast.

SCENE VII

WEDDING¹¹⁶

(Sekfali addresses imaginary guests. His greetings are either warm or cold according to the social status of the guest.)

- Sekfali May Allah grant you happiness too! May Allah enlighten you too!¹¹⁷ Hello! Hello! O welcome! Welcome! May Allah grant you wealth and happiness! *(Then he stops to address a group of imaginary guests. Bu'lam will enter during this speech and sit on the cart.)* - We have been brought up in wealth and dignity, in prosperity and honour. We never knew scandal or humiliation...We used to do as we pleased, yes anything we wanted. Unfortunately time has changed and things did not last. Well, there is nothing left as tramps and vagrants have become people of honour and dignity... Farewell good old days.

¹¹⁵ *ghāyta* is a folk-music instrument in the shape of a clarinet.

¹¹⁶ The author has altered the beginning of this scene; instead of the puppets it is Sekfali who greets imaginary guests. Bu'lām enters when Sekfali addresses a group of guests.

¹¹⁷ Most Muslims use these courteous expressions and others in the same pattern 'May Allah...' for good wishing, for expressing gratitude...

Bū'lām I have been brought up in want and poverty. That's what I got from life. My father was roaming about bare feet¹¹⁸ and my mother was delivering her babies in caves.¹¹⁹ Now I must carry on... and you push the cart.

SCENE VIII

DUEL WITH POETRY¹²⁰

Bū'lām Push the cart, we carry on.

Sekfali I can't.

Bū'lām Well, if you can't leave it, throw it away.

Sekfali If I throw it away what shall I have? I can't live without books.

Bū'lām Look I had no sleep, no food, no rest... I can hardly move.

Sekfali Bū'lām, if neither of us can push the cart, let's go back then.

Bū'lām We carry on and no more of this talk.

Sekfali If that's what you want, let's have a game, the winner will rest and the loser will push the cart.

Bū'lām Right. Let's play dice.¹²¹

Sekfali No, I can't play dice.

Bū'lām Cards?

Sekfali Cards are forbidden... Let's play something *ḥalāl*, something allowed by Islam, something pure.¹²²

Bū'lām Since when *ḥalāl* things include game and gambling?

Sekfali Look, I say a verse and you say a verse which begins with the last letter of my verse.

Bū'lām What? Say that again.

Sekfali I say a verse and you say a verse. Your verse must begin with the last letter in my verse.

Bū'lām And you think this is a game?

Sekfali For instance.

Bū'lām For instance.

Sekfali "We vow,
By bombs falling down and destroying everything

¹¹⁸ Very common expression to describe a destitute.

¹¹⁹ Said of women both destitute and bringing many children.

¹²⁰ Intellectual game with verse mainly in the Middle East. However, as Arabs are very fond of poetry even illiterate people play this game.

¹²¹ This word is mainly used in Eastern Algeria.

¹²² We have already mentioned the 'allowed' and the 'forbidden' in footnote 11. We have added '... allowed by Islam' for clarity.

And by all the pure and noble blood that is gushing." 123
Give me a verse starting with 'G'.

Bū'lām ^G
Gāteran, gararara gararan! 124

Sekfali You got it.

(Each one gets on a podium and faces the other.)

Bū'lām You start.

Sekfali I start?... No, you start.

Bū'lām Come on, start.

Sekfali "They came towards you dragging iron behind them
They looked as if they were mounting legless horses." 125
This is from the great poet Al-Mutanabbi. Give us one starting with 'S'.

Bū'lām She has not sent news¹²⁶
What happened to my love
What happened to her
What happened to my love
I wonder what happened to her¹²⁷
- 'R'!

Sekfali Name of the poet.

Bū'lām This is from the great poet. I don't know his name. 'R'!

Sekfali Reconstruction we shall start¹²⁸
We shall build like our predecessors
We shall build and do like they did¹²⁹
- This is from the great and famous poet... I don't know him either, 'D'.

Bū'lām D, dee, dee...¹³⁰

Sekfali 'D', come on hurry!¹³¹

Bū'lām Don't be afraid of the unknown

123 These are the starting verses of the Algerian National Anthem. Bū'lām uses vernacular Algerian in this game whereas Sekfali uses literary Arabic.

124 We have added this verse to start with the letter 'G'. It is in context with the National Anthem. Bū'lām sings this verse.

125 Two verses from the Arab poet Al-Mutanabbi. In Abū Al-Tayyib Aḥmad Ibn Al-Ḥusayn (called Al-Mutanabbi), *Divan*, Dar Sader - Dar Beyrouth, Beyrouth, 1958, p. 486.

126 This is the second verse in the original text. We have put it first to start with letter 'S'. By the author.

127 Algerian popular song.

128 We have added this verse to start with the letter 'R'.

129 These lines are Sekfali's own invention.

130 Bū'lām is thinking of a word. He repeats the letter *wāw* (w).

131 The Playwright suggested that the following passage should be removed. They are pages 29, 30 and 31 in the original text.

Be brave and go ahead with them
 Don't feel sorry about the past
 The world is live for you and me¹³²
 - 'E'.

Sekfali "Even if I am of the last generation
 I am capable of inventing what
 The pioneers did not invent."¹³³

(Bū'lām gets down and goes to Sekfali.)

Bū'lām This is from the Koran.

Sekfali It is poetry.

Bū'lām I tell you it's from the Koran. My teacher knew more than sixty chapters of the Koran by heart and he used to say these verses.

Sekfali Alright. So it is from the Koran and isn't Koran better than poetry?

Bū'lām We agreed on poetry and not on what's better, so you are the loser and now push the cart.

Sekfali Well! The one who recites the Koran is called a loser?

Bū'lām Come on! Koran is Koran and poetry is poetry, so don't mix.

(They leave. Bū'lām walks ahead. Sekfali pushes the cart.)

Bū'lām Where are you going?

Sekfali This way!

Bū'lām Listen, we carry on and the road is this way!

Sekfali Since I am pushing the cart I go this way.

Bū'lām Alright! I push the bloody cart...

(A moment later Sekfali stops thoughtful.)

SCENE IX

NEW GRAMMAR

Bū'lām What's the matter? Are you tired? Fed up?

Sekfali I'm pondering.

Bū'lām Peace be upon you!

Sekfali Tell me Bu'lām, is there electricity in your country?

Bū'lām Yes there is.

Sekfali Are there machines?

¹³² By the author.

¹³³ Statement made by the writer Abū-Al-'Alā-Al-Ma'arri. In - Aḥmad Ibn 'Abd Allah (Abū Al-'Alā), Al-Ma'arri, Āthār Abi Al-'Alā Al-Ma'arri, Cairo, 1965, p. 298 and p. 451.

- Bū'lām Yes there are machines.
- Sekfali Look here Bū'lām, your country is mentioned in these books. I read about it and I actually know it well.
- Bū'lām Forget your books.
- Sekfali Here, look what Abū Daghiūs¹³⁴ said!
- Bū'lām He said nothing.
- Sekfali What do you mean, "he said nothing"?.. it's written here.
- Bū'lām I said, forget your books. If my country exists in your books I won't go, I won't bother to visit it.

(Bū'lām takes two little books out of his basket.)

- Bū'lām My country is here in these two little books.
- Sekfali The Agrarian Revolution and The Socialist Sector.¹³⁵
- Bū'lām My country is here.
- Sekfali What is 'socialist'?
- Bū'lām I didn't find socialism in your books.
- Sekfali I read about it and I know it well... But explain to me... Well... I mean I have forgotten it, remind me.
- Bū'lām Socialism is derived from social and from a grammar point of view, socialism is a subject of a new kind and the sign of its principle is in the agrarian revolution.¹³⁶ Reaction and Imperialism: subordinating and subordinate and the sign of subordination is Zionism. Agrarian revolution: subject and object and the sign of action is the model socialist village.¹³⁷ The volunteer volunteering: volunteering: verb in the present and the sign of the presence is Sunday.¹³⁸ This is Arabic, with or without analytical grammar.
- Sekfali Workers, peasants... labourers, workers, peasants, labourers... They mention only workers and peasants.

¹³⁴ Abū Daghiūs is an imaginary name used by the author.

¹³⁵ The Agrarian Revolution is the land reform in Algeria. The Socialist Sector refers to the workers' management in industry, known as 'Gestion Socialiste des Entreprises' (G.S.E.). They were respectively decreed on 8 November and 16 November, 1971.

¹³⁶ In the original: *jārr* and *majrūr* are grammatical terms referring to words which syntactically require the genitive case. Literally, they mean 'pulling' and 'pulled'.

¹³⁷ 'Socialist villages' are housing estates for peasants working in farming co-operatives. Arab grammarians distinguish between two types of sentences: nominal and verbal. Each type has its own terms for 'subject' and 'predicate'. So far as the 'socialist villages' are concerned the 'verbal sentence' terminology is used probably to indicate the 'cause' and 'result'.

¹³⁸ Sunday used to be the day-off, now it is Friday.

- Bū'lām That is all there is in my country. What else do you want them to talk about? Cholera?
- Sekfali Tell me, is it possible to do business in this country?
- Bū'lām Small or big business?
- Sekfali We're not kids... I mean foreign trade.
- Bū'lām Out of question... You may have a small business if you like but no foreign trade. You see all the people in small business are on an equal footing with the workers and everything else belongs to national companies.¹³⁹ In my country everything is national, the police¹⁴⁰ is national, the army is national and when a factory is very big it is called a national company.
- Sekfali What will become of us if everything is national?
- Bū'lām You too will be national¹⁴¹ otherwise you'll be in trouble.
- Sekfali I am a better nationalist than you.
- Bū'lām You, a nationalist?
- Sekfali If socialism was true socialism and nationalism true nationalism you wouldn't mix them. Come on, don't mix things!
- Bū'lām Listen, nationalism without socialism is nothing and socialism without nationalism leads to disaster.
- Sekfali How stubborn you can be... We are talking politics and that's a waste of time.
- Bū'lām *Bien sûr*,¹⁴² we should talk politics.
- Sekfali Before the French came to this country we were brothers and independent.
- Bū'lām So they say...
- Sekfali The French came and colonized us.
- Bū'lām So they did.
- Sekfali Then we struggled and forced them out of the country.
- Bū'lām Indeed.
- Sekfali Then we became brothers and independent again.
- Bū'lām So they say...
- Sekfali Please tell me, where did you find this socialism of yours?
- Bū'lām The people brought socialism.
- Sekfali The people brought nothing about you fool; the people have nothing to bring about. And what's more, anybody related to the state does not work with heart and hand.

¹³⁹ Most companies are state owned in Algeria.

¹⁴⁰ In the text it is the Arab word for *gendarmérie* which does not exist in English speaking countries.

¹⁴¹ 'You too will belong to the state.'

¹⁴² In French in the text.

- Bū'lām Why, do you think that someone who works for the prefect¹⁴³ does his job heartily?
- Sekfali If he doesn't work willingly, he works with the stick.
- Bū'lām That's where we disagree.
- Sekfali My goodness! How stubborn!... Look, I'll give you an example, a general example in general of a director general of general affairs.¹⁴⁴
- Bū'lām I'm afraid you'll get it all mixed up.¹⁴⁵
- (Exit Sekfali.)*
- Bū'lām I'm sure he doesn't have a clue.

(While setting the props into an office, Bū'lām describes his city.)

¹⁴³ Prefect or French *préfet* that is the *préfet de police* or local governor.

¹⁴⁴ The author is ironic about pompous and pedantic people like Sekfali.

¹⁴⁵ The literal translation of the text is 'I'm afraid you'll blind it.'

ACT IIISCENE XDESCRIPTION OF THE CITY

Bū'lām

In my country there is work for everyone and jobs are secure... There are many factories and each one of them employs thousands of workers. Just wonderful. You'd see a thousand employees, even the top people¹⁴⁶ work in the same place, start at the same time and leave at the same time. We start work all together and stop all together; the only difference is that instead of the calls for prayer there is a hooter.¹⁴⁷ I can see them going to work in groups - Hello Muhammad! Hello 'Ali! Hello 'Utmān! All friends, all united... What I like most about my country is organisation, each one has his job, each one has his responsibility, each one according to his ability... There is no arrogance, no snobbery - 'I am your superior because I am educated', 'I am nothing because I am a manual worker' or 'He comes in a BX70SR and I come in my Shanks's pony Mark II'¹⁴⁸, there is none of that. If someone is educated, good for him, I wish him all the best, but only if his education is sound and useful to help me get a house or build a school for my children. No fake education to take me for granted and laugh at me.¹⁴⁹

No... It's hard to accept, it's wrong.¹⁵⁰

I believe that someone educated gains more intelligence, more understanding, more wisdom... In fact it's the educated who should help the illiterate, but you find in our time, in this distorted world that it's the illiterate who advise the educated.¹⁵¹ There is no such crazy mess in my country... the educated person is just like anybody else; you may work with your head or with your hands or with your feet, you're all on the same footing... because my country is the people's democracy.

¹⁴⁶ Meaning the 'bosses' or management officials.

¹⁴⁷ Here the author is very sarcastic. He seems to say 'we are not annoyed by the calls of the muezzin for prayer. We have a proper hooter to start and stop work'. Furthermore he seems to imply - 'we do not waste time in stopping work to pray every time the muezzin calls'.

¹⁴⁸ One goes to work in an expensive car and another goes on foot. We have tried to remain close to the text.

¹⁴⁹ The literal translation of this idiom is 'he takes me for a bridge for him to use'. In Algerian 'to take someone for a bridge' means 'to take someone' for granted.

¹⁵⁰ This is the first time the author uses Kabyle (Berber language spoken by a large proportion of Algerians) in the text.

¹⁵¹ This is an attack on people with limited abilities or with very limited education holding high positions in the country.

SCENE XITHE DIRECTOR GENERAL¹⁵²

(Paso-doble music. Enter Sekfali dressed as Director General. He sits on the desk.)

Sekfali This is not my company but I shall put a sign with my name.

Bū'lām Get off!

Sekfali I shall call for strong and competent people when I have problems and dismiss them when things get easy... The Director General! One!

Bū'lām Serves the people.

Sekfali You shut up when I speak!
One! The Director General is to make people serve
No messing with service¹⁵³.
Either you work for me or I work for you.
Either you depend on me or I depend on you¹⁵⁴.
All the rest is humbug.¹⁵⁵
Two! People must respect the Director General, and in order to respect him they must fear him because there can be no respect without fear.
Means of intimidation! Meaning the methods of intimidating people:
You need a porter¹⁵⁶ because you want a guard he has to be cool and dry, deaf and impassive. He must also check the time clock¹⁵⁷. That's the right porter.
Three! The bureau must be large, yes very large. Anybody who walks in would feel lost. Thus, if you feel lost you are intimidated; when you are intimidated you are respectful and when you are respectful it is easy to impress you. After all life is all based on cheating, on fake, on impressing people. Be a fake and you succeed in life. So the bureau must be HUGE, HUGE, HUGE! and the secretary FLESHY, FLESHY, FLESHY!

Bū'lām I get the meaning when you say it once; why should you utter it three times?

Sekfali Because in Arabic there is the singular, the dual and the triliteral.¹⁵⁸
The triliteral refers to somebody who lived in the twentieth century by the name of Papa Screen from Televisionville who belongs to 'Once upon a time' tribe¹⁵⁹. Well, it's not my fault.
Anyway, I also want a '*salle de bain*'¹⁶⁰ because I like to bath in a deep tub, and after a good bath I like to take a shower and after a shower I feel fresh¹⁶¹ because the Director General should feel fresh.

¹⁵² In French in the text 'P.D.G.' - *President Directeur General*.

¹⁵³ The word used is 'work' but the connotation is 'serve'.

¹⁵⁴ Another connotation; in the text 'you work for me or I work for you'.

¹⁵⁵ In the text 'the rest is *flūsh*.' The word *flūsh* may come from the English word 'flush' but it means 'humbug', 'strange', 'odd', 'suspicious'.

¹⁵⁶ In the text it is the French word *planton* which is used in Algerian. Transliterated in the text.

¹⁵⁷ This is also another French word adopted in Algerian, *pointeuse* is transliterated in the text.

¹⁵⁸ This shows Sekfali's ignorance because 'triliteral' means 'triangle' or 'a three-letter word'. In this context it means 'plural'.

¹⁵⁹ The writer attempts to express sarcasm by using terminology from the world of T.V..

¹⁶⁰ Transliterated in the text and meaning 'bathroom'.

¹⁶¹ In the text *frīshk* from *fraiche*

I also want a big secretariat with a Kabyle girl, a girl from 'Annaba, a girl from Oran and a girl from Mzāb¹⁶².

Bū'lām Can you see national unity in this secretariat?

Sekfali Shut up! And when I die I shall have a statue.¹⁶³ I shall have a statue at the entrance of every factory so the workers can see their boss every morning when they come to work. Tell me Bū'lām, what do you think of this style?

Bū'lām I don't think it's secure!¹⁶⁴

Sekfali Is that so?

Bū'lām This style is for stars¹⁶⁵. 'Ali Riyāhy¹⁶⁶ had this kind of life before you.

Sekfali Is that so?

Bū'lām It's for sportsmen, for those who drink¹⁶⁷...

Sekfali Is that so?

Bū'lām What's wrong with you? You look like a *mafiosi*¹⁶⁸

(*Sekfali stiffens in his position. Bū'lām sings front-stage.*)

Bū'lām
 Sometimes
 He behaves like a staunch socialist
 He joined the revolution head long
 Filling his pockets with money
 While people agonise from hunger
 Sometimes
 He regrets the Boss¹⁶⁹ with sadness
 He takes the factory for his home
 A commander with full power giving orders
 And people shall stand up and salute
 Sometimes
 He betrays and joins imperialism
 Sometimes
 He plans and spreads rumours
 Satan never lied in his life
 And people agonise from illness
 This is what reaction is about
 You're intelligent so wake up and see
 When I left nothing had remained
 This is what reaction is about
 It's contained in a dead donkey you know.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶² Cities and regions in Algeria.

¹⁶³ Transliterated in the text.

¹⁶⁴ The literal translation is 'any wind that blows will take you'.

¹⁶⁵ In the text the word is 'singers'.

¹⁶⁶ A Tunisian singer.

¹⁶⁷ The Algerian idiom is 'those who throw'.

¹⁶⁸ The author has added *mafiosi* in its original spelling.

¹⁶⁹ In the text the word used is *brīfi* that is *préfet*.

¹⁷⁰ By the author.

- Bū'lām Stay still as you are... we'll turn you into a statue and engrave at the bottom "An Important Director attending a serious meeting on grave matters relating to severe troubles and acute problems"... You bloody trouble!!¹⁷¹
- Sekfali You see I am a statue.
- Bū'lām That who buys a statue from the colonial period, that who wants to see his home ruined, see his factory go bankrupt and his country collapse... Well that someone is exploiting people. That's what he is and that's what he is doing.
- Sekfali Are you saying that I belong to the colonial period?
- Bū'lām Yes you do.
- Sekfali I am a better socialist than you.
- Bū'lām What kind of socialism?
- Sekfali I am a socialist who does not belong to the people.¹⁷²
- Bū'lām Your kind should make ablutions and purify themselves before they speak of socialism.¹⁷³
- Sekfali Shall we bet?
- Bū'lām Bet?
- Sekfali We bet on who is the better socialist.
- Bū'lām How?
- Sekfali We both write a poem and then see whose poem is more socialist. They say deeds should be with sincere intentions, then poetry should be with pennants.¹⁷⁴
- Bū'lām Come on, you start.
- Sekfali The peasant said
Come to success¹⁷⁵
Come to the country to find morning
Because in morning you find beauty
The tears from your eyes have stopped
And today feast is all for you
The whole universe is in joy
And for you there is food plenty
For you acres and acres on this earth
And in moonlight you'll be given a key.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷¹ The writer uses in Arabic 7 derivatives of the root *hamm* which all denote 'importance' and 'seriousness'. To achieve the same effect in English we used synonyms.

¹⁷² The author uses the same word for 'masses'. We opted for 'people' to avoid the political register and remain close to the general mood of the play.

¹⁷³ Implying 'you should be clean and honest before you speak of socialism, just as you do before your prayers'.

¹⁷⁴ Sekfali is being bombastic as usual. He likes to show off. He would have poetry on pennants and banners.

¹⁷⁵ In the text the word means 'fortune', 'wealth'.

¹⁷⁶ This is obviously flat poetry. 'Key' refers to house.

- Bū'lām Good Lord! What a shame!
Poets have fallen very low
Their poor verse is the mark
Of their shallow minds
Nothing left, nothing left but
Dry and sterile poets.
- Sekfali Come on, let's hear you.
- Bū'lām I knew very hard times
When I was a sharecropper¹⁷⁷
Hard work and straw pricking my eyes
Yes I was a sharecropper working
For the cheapest of mankind
When the big day arrived
The day to share the fruit of work
Out! I was sent away.
- Sekfali Bu'lām my son, we are still wandering in the desert and you want me to follow you...
You know, I shall lose a lot in this country of yours, I shall lose my fortune. All the
land is owned by the state.
- Bū'lām I have nothing to lose apart from poverty and trouble.
- Sekfali What about going back?
- Bū'lām We carry on.
- Sekfali If you come back with me, I will give you a job as a sharecropper and a hut. I will
take you with me to the markets and from time to time I will buy you a pan-flute¹⁷⁸.
You will see how I do business. I will get you a wife... I will get you a nice woman
and when you have children I will send them to school, when they finish junior
school¹⁷⁹. I will give them jobs. What else can you ask for?¹⁸⁰...
- Bū'lām I can see the kind of glory we want.
The glory each one of us so much desires
Aim for it and from lethargy shake free
Hand in hand march and look at it
Are you happy to remain asleep
Let us raise our pennants high
This is my advice, hurry and let
All those living in the realm of inertia
Know¹⁸¹.
That's what revolutions are about; if you have any pride get to action.
So, that's what he's wishing me - a hut and a job as a sharecropper. Well, that's
exactly what the French did. They starved us - huts and sharecropping that was our
life.
Anybody who doubts what I'm saying is alienated. What has become of us people?
People, what are we doing? Look at the Vietnamese, a very poor people who kicked

¹⁷⁷ Sharecropping was a very common practice by absentee landlords. The sharecropper farms the land and gets only one fifth of the crops.

¹⁷⁸ Traditional flute made out of reed which produces flat sounds. It can be a yard long.

¹⁷⁹ In the text it is the transliterated French word *certificat* meaning 'Certificat d'Etudes Primaires' which, in the old French education system, is the certificate children take at the end of primary school. Only children who were not allowed to go into secondary education take this exam which was the case of most Algerians who had the chance to go to school.

¹⁸⁰ The author has withdrawn the next two lines, p.43 in the original text. They refer to the Koran: 1; 6; 7.

¹⁸¹ In the text 'those who wish to remain lethargic'.

America out of their country and look at us living in miserable conditions! All we think of is how to exploit each other. Wake up! Organised people are defeating imperialism and we are still at "I give you a hut, I take you as a sharecropper". What has become of us people? People, what are we doing?

(Sekfali jumps on Bū'lām and ties him up.)

Sekfali So you're taking me to the people's country?

Bū'lām Well well!

Sekfali And now?

Bū'lām And now what?

Sekfali Well look at yourself.

Bū'lām So?

Sekfali So! and...

Bū'lām No...

Sekfali No nothing.

Bū'lām No nothing?

Sekfali No nothing, no nothing!

Bū'lām No...

Sekfali What?

Bū'lām No... I said...

Sekfali What did you say?

Bū'lām I said suppose...

Sekfali Suppose what?

Bū'lām Suppose... I mean...

Sekfali You mean what?

Bū'lām I said thank you.

Sekfali My pleasure.

Bū'lām Bless you.

Sekfali Thank you.

Bū'lām My compliments.

Sekfali Thank you.

Bū'lām May God enlighten you.

Sekfali Thank you.

- Bū'lām I wish you long life.
- Sekfali Thank you.
- Bū'lām Nothing happened.
- Sekfali Nothing showed.¹⁸²
- Bū'lām Nothing showed.
- Sekfali Nothing showed, nothing.
- Bū'lām We carry on.
- Sekfali No, we go back.
- Bū'lām We carry on!
- Sekfali Why did I come with him, why?
- Bū'lām I didn't ask you to follow me.
- Sekfali I am not stupid to follow someone crazy like you.
- Bū'lām Shut up.

(Bū'lām pushes the cart violently.)

SCENE XII

SEKFALI'S DEATH

(Bū'lām pushes the cart violently and moves quickly.)

- Sekfali Slow down... Slow down. Bū'lām... Bū'lām, stop!
- Bū'lām What's wrong with you?
- Sekfali My legs are giving in, I can't walk, stop I'm telling you, stop!
- Bū'lām Look, don't shout at me, I am not your slave.¹⁸³
- Sekfali The slave is superior to you because he knows he is a better slave than you. And what's more, you don't even know whether you are a free man or a slave. You are like a 'sparrow hanging between air and sky'.¹⁸⁴
- Bū'lām Well remember that neither air nor sky are your property. If I wasn't afraid of God¹⁸⁵ I would leave you here to rot.
- Sekfali No Bū'lām, don't leave me. Put me in your heart, put me in your mind, put me in the cart! Bū'lām, please have some mercy, the time has come!¹⁸⁶ What are you going to find in this country?

¹⁸² Very common expression used in Eastern Algeria. We have given a literal translation. Sekfali unties Bū'lām on this line but this is not indicated in the original text. We took note of this during a performance.

¹⁸³ The word used means both 'slave' and 'black person'. Originally it meant only 'slave'.

¹⁸⁴ Literal translation of the text meaning 'you are unconscious', 'lost', 'frivolous'.

¹⁸⁵ Always used when people think that what they want to do is wrong.

¹⁸⁶ Sekfali is agonising. We have used a literal translation for 'death has arrived'.

- Bū'lām The things which suit me.
- Sekfali Why, you know I was nice to you and helped you. You'll find worse than me ahead.
- Bū'lām There can't be anyone worse than you.
- Sekfali Thank you Bū'lām. It's all my fault, I read so much and learned so much to be right in everything, but now I am wrong. With you I got it all wrong. Still you are more wrong than me, worse, you are blind and unaware of your blindness.
- Bū'lām You're wrong because you see things from one side only,¹⁸⁷ you've always studied on your own and you're wrong. It's your books which messed up your mind¹⁸⁸ and crippled your feet.
- Sekfali There is nothing better than books.
- Bū'lām Look at you, you yourself are a book.
- Sekfali If you knew the value of books and the importance of the past you wouldn't be in such a state.
- Bū'lām Thank God I am the one who is carrying you. The only thing interesting in some of your books is history because it tells you about the past. And if you are referring to revolutions, well they mean a lot more to me than to you. People before us worked hard and wrote books, if we work hard and study hard we'll do better.
- Sekfali Do better? Your kind?
- Bū'lām Yes, we'll do more and better. As the saying goes "Wake up and stand before they start to sound off about themselves"¹⁸⁹ - we were, we were!!..
- Sekfali Indeed, we were great, we were chosen, we were noble, WE WERE, WE WERE, Yes WE WERE!
- Bū'lām 'We were, we were, we were' - alright! but we shall be after all, what did they achieve?
 If they preached nobility, we shall preach justice.
 If they preached pomp and circumstance, we shall preach justice
 If they honoured kings, we shall honour the peasants
 If they sounded princes, we shall sing the poor
 If they wrote books we shall write history
 If they achieved civilization in Andalusia
 We shall achieve the civilization of work and workers
 This is the difference between past and future and whoever is unable to understand it will end up in a cart like you.
- Sekfali Oh! My heart! Oh! My back! Bū'lām, carry me on your back and go where you wish, do as you wish. I am finished, I am cold.

(Bū'lām carries Sekfali on his back and pushes the cart at the same time.)

- Sekfali Bū'lām, if you reach this country don't forget our identity¹⁹⁰. You know Bū'lām, identity is everything. If it was not for identity we wouldn't be what we are now. Identity is the tradition of our forefathers. I love my grandfather but I didn't know

¹⁸⁷ The literal translation of this common proverb is, 'if you do the accounts on your own you will find extras'.

¹⁸⁸ In the text 'which soiled your mind' or 'which gave you a rotten mind'.

¹⁸⁹ Algerian proverb implying 'tell about your deeds in society before others start to lie and boast about things they never did.'

¹⁹⁰ The word in the text means also 'personality'.

my great grandfather. Just the same I love him too. My grandfather had a moustache, grandfather, grandfather, grandfather, identity, identity...

(He dies on Bū'lām's back. Bū'lām buries him.)

Bū'lām I too love my grandfather but I love my children more, I adore them. I don't want to lose my grandfather or my children but if my grandfather comes to die may God save my children.

(Bū'lām carries on alone - Music - City sounds.)

SCENE XIII

EPILOGUE

(The technocrat enters with a notebook in his hand.)

Technocrat What's your name?

Bū'lām Belhamlaoui Bū'lām.

Technocrat Date of birth?

Bū'lām In forty-five we were in trouble, in fifty-four they were in trouble,¹⁹¹ I was born in between.

Technocrat Place of birth?

Bū'lām THE ALL YOKELS VILLAGE.¹⁹²

Technocrat Father's name?

Bū'lām Shahīd 'Abd Al-Qādir.

Technocrat Mother?

Bū'lām Raḥma daughter of Mārzuḡ.¹⁹³

Technocrat Now go for a check up. Be here at eight o'clock tomorrow morning.

Bū'lām Thank you very much.¹⁹⁴

(The technocrat goes out. Bū'lām says the final poem.)

This is the construction era
Socialist construction we opted for
To that who says 'no' we say 'no to reaction'
To that who says 'why' we say 'why domination'
To that who says 'impossible' we say 'never exploitation'
To that who says 'the people' we say 'free people'
That's all because

¹⁹¹ There is a mistake in the original text. The dates are - 45 and 54. 'forty-five' refers to the uprising on May 8th 1945 against the French and the massacre of Algerians. 'Fifty-four' refers to November 1st 1954 date of the beginning of the War of Independence.

¹⁹² Implying 'a poor and desolate village'.

¹⁹³ Common way of relating to people in rural Algeria.

¹⁹⁴ The expression is 'May God bless your parents.'

This is the construction era and in this construction
We have established socialist equality
Revolution is marching on and if you're late
It won't wait for you there is no time wasting
History is marching on
We have made history
And we are not afraid
My country will be socialist
My language will be socialism
My identity will be socialism
My whole being is socialism
If you accept it God bless you
If not bang your head against the walls
The walls of the socialist villages.

¹⁹⁵ The author makes use of a common idiom in this context to stress on 'the socialist villages'.

iii) Commentary

Carry On Bū'lām was first performed in Algiers on 23 April 1975 at 'Salle de l'ONAMO'.¹⁹⁶ At that time Benaïssa was in charge of cultural activities - *animateur culturel* - in SONELEC. These activities were part of SONELEC'S social activities.¹⁹⁷ Carry On Bū'lām was also his first major play. Benaïssa produced it and played the part of Bū'lām with Omar Guendouz in the role of Sekfali. The play has now been performed more than 600 times to audiences throughout Algeria as well as in Paris, Brussels, Venice and Kuwait. Despite its success both at home and abroad it has never won any award for the simple reason that Benaïssa was excluded from taking part in any of the theatre festivals that take place in Algeria.

Plot and Structure

Sekfali, a middle aged man, and Bū'lām who is younger than him, are travelling across the desert towards a socialist city which also happens to be Bū'lām's dream. During their journey they are faced with problems and situations which gradually reveal each personality and their mutual antagonism. The play starts with a conflict of opinion on whether eating snake is *ḥalāl* (allowed by Islamic law) or not. Since he is not sure, Sekfali looks for an answer in the books he is carrying with him in a push-cart but he does not find any mention about snakes. As the play develops more conflicts appear with the succession of situations generating opposition between the two characters on subjects such as history, origins, language, grammar, literature and other aspects of social, political and economic life. The journey towards the socialist city gets hard and the conflicts add more tensions. These lead Sekfali to try to convince Bū'lām to return but the latter is determined to carry on, hence the title of the play. Bū'lām has decided to break with his previous life and look towards a new one, towards a better world whereas Sekfali who has a passive vision of the world and takes refuge in a reassuring conservatism wants to go back.

Although both characters and the different situations are imaginary they are echos of real aspects and characteristics of contemporary Algerian society. Indeed, the conflicts represented in the play and the contradictions they reveal exist not only in Algeria but in most Arab-Islamic societies. They are generated by ordinary situations which in themselves give more details and clues about the characters as the play develops. In fact, both Sekfali and Bū'lām are defined as opposed characters right from the beginning of the scene entitled 'The Snake'. The play opens with Bū'lām praying which means that he is a devout Muslim but a Muslim who will very soon disagree over

¹⁹⁶ Op. Cit. in section Slimane Benaïssa's biography, footnote 18 and SONELEC in footnote 9.

¹⁹⁷ All national companies have a department of social activities for the workers and their families. They include sport, excursions, camping holidays, social games, library, music, etc.

a problem of a religious nature with his companion Sekfali who is also a Muslim. The two travellers have run out of food but a snake appears and Bū'lām kills it then cooks it and starts to eat. Sekfali refuses to eat and goes through his theology books to see whether Islam allows the eating of snake meat. Thus the two characters are defined through their attitudes towards an Islamic prohibition on food. Whereas Bū'lām appears to be a realistic and pragmatic Muslim, Sekfali stands firm and shows his dogmatism and conservatism in choosing to stay hungry.

The play builds on this antagonism and develops through a building up in a series of confrontations and conflicts between Sekfali and Bū'lām. The pattern of the following scenes remains the same - mutually opposed attitudes over issues common to Algerian society. The conflict shifts to history, language, culture and economics to culminate in political antagonism which is the playwright's aim. Sekfali will boast about his educated forefathers who sought knowledge (implying theological knowledge) and Bū'lām refers to his forefathers who gave up everything and took to the maquis to resist the French occupation. Bū'lām has no complex in using French words which passed into Algerian while Sekfali objects to this by resorting to classical Arabic. One identifies with Arab classics, the other with Algerian traditional poets and singers. The climax is reached with one identifying with the bourgeoisie and even feudalism and the other with ordinary workers.

The play is divided into thirteen scenes including the epilogue arranged in three acts. Its structure which is based on growing complexity shows a simple progression on the surface but it is also planned on an ideological level because the play develops ideological conflicts in order to show that it is essentially ideological opposition which is the ground for political antagonism between Sekfali and Bū'lām.

Source of the Play

I always wanted to write something about two men, one middle-aged and the other in his twenties. Perhaps it is the result of the psychological relation with my father, a fantastic man who had experience in life and who was very open-minded in comparison with the majority of men of his generation.¹⁹⁸

We cannot speculate that Benaïssa wanted to create the opposite to his father in the character of Sekfali. However, he draws his material from the realities of Algerian daily life and from his own experience. The conflicts and the contradictions which emerge in the play are inherent in Algerian society and may be classified into three main areas: religion, nationalism and socialism.

The religious attitudes and interpretations that are portrayed are varied and correspond to those that occur in daily life. In reality, they range from official claims

¹⁹⁸ Our interview with Slimane Benaïssa on 6 January 1987.

that Islam is compatible with socialism or even that Islam is in its own way socialism, to codes of social behaviour and to prohibitions on certain foods. It is, for instance, common to come across people debating whether Islam allows women to make up or not, whether it permits interest on loans and deposits.

Feelings can run high in Algerian society over the nature of the past as expressions of bitterness, anger, deception and even remorse can occur at times as to who resisted French occupation, who contributed to the armed struggle for Independence, who collaborated with the French and who did not feel concerned at all. Indeed everybody who suffered destruction of property, exile, torture and imprisonment as a result of their participation in the armed struggle feel angry and bitter when they see others reap the fruits of Independence, opportunists take over from the French settlers and the genuine revolutionaries - those who really bore the brunt of the war - rejected and forgotten. Paradoxically, those who have not benefited in any way from Independence and live in the utmost poverty are those who gave everything and sacrificed most lives for Independence - the peasantry.

Questions of language and culture are related to one of the most critical issues in present day Algeria - national identity. This has generated considerable polemics and has led to the emergence of Berber movements claiming an Algerian Berber identity. The dispute over language and national identity arises from several factors which in themselves deserve to be the subject of detailed studies. However, the main factor can be summarised as follows. There was for a long time a minority educated in Arabic mainly through Koranic schools. It saw itself as the learned élite speaking a classical language and looked down on the mass of ordinary people who speak the vernacular languages - Algerian Arabic and the Berber languages. The impact of French occupation in terms of language and culture on Algerian society was very powerful as a large number of Algerians have been educated in French and thus use the language daily. French is still the language of business and administration. After Independence Arabic (literary, modern or standard Arabic) was decreed the official language of the state. It began to be taught in education and introduced in some public services such as the courts, the post office and the various state registries. Successive governments have insisted that Algeria is an Arab-Islamic country and must in order to regain its full identity, go back to its Arab-Islamic roots. This, however, denies the Berber origins and specific characteristics of the country. The issue is not about Islam, nor is it about Arabic, provided it is modernised and adopted to modern times. It is, instead, about identity and culture.

The other major frustration among people comes from a scandalous contradiction in the economic and political system. People are told that 'the socialist revolution' and all socialist policies that are implemented are for their benefit. Reality shows the emergence of a new class of officials and technocrats who, through their

positions, have become rich at the expense of the majority. Wrongly planned and badly implemented policies, bad management and corruption have led to a serious situation resulting in numerous strikes throughout the country and to serious riots in October 1988.

Although the characters and the situations described in Carry On Bū'lām are imaginary, they correspond to the realities of contemporary Algerian society. Sekfali and Bū'lām do not exist in reality but they translate common situations and attitudes inherent to Algerian Society. Benaissa argues that: "What fascinates me is the conflict we live through in Algeria. Creation requires an author to read his society and there is no theatre without the expression of the conflicts within a Society."¹⁹⁹

Function

The purpose of the play is to show that political conflicts are generated essentially by ideological conflicts. In the end the play reveals the political nature of the conflict between Sekfali a bourgeois and a reactionary and Bū'lām a fervent socialist. But to lead the spectator to this conclusion the play gradually exposes the ideological conflicts between the two characters starting from the first scene. Benaissa explains that:

In my plays it is always the first scene which sets the level of the language, the level of humour and the level of political pre-occupation... At the end of this scene the audience should know who the characters are, just as they should get used to both the language and the approach... A maximum of communication must be reached at different moments in the play. This is why I believe that theatre should clarify or describe situations in a critical manner.²⁰⁰

The first scene presents a familiar situation over food prohibitions. But the spectator is unable to opt for either Sekfali's or Bū'lām's point of view because he recognises himself in both characters. The play then follows the same pattern in exposing the spectator to other situations which are familiar in their daily life and which reflect major concerns on national identity, culture and socialism. The audience is gradually and emotionally involved in the conflicts between Sekfali and Bū'lām and at the same time discover their own contradictions. R. Baffet's comment on the play is, in this respect, of interest:

The approach works, emotionally speaking, from the most crucial to the less crucial. Thus the audience is more sensitive to the position of Bū'lām and Sekfali in relation to prohibitions on food than to the Gestion Socialiste des Entreprises. When the audience has experienced the characters at the different vital moments in the play, it will be able to understand better their political position at the end of it. If, however, we show their political position before we have clarified their ideological

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

behaviour (as the state theatre does), the audience will continue to be confused, a confusion which a theatre of social criticism aims to clarify.²⁰¹

Indeed, in opposition to the state theatre (the TNA and agit-prop) which, like many amateur theatre groups discuss political situations and propose, for political choices like 'socialism' or 'socialist revolution' or 'struggle against imperialism' which in the end are only flat slogans, Benaïssa goes deeper. He highlights the ideological conflicts and contradictions. He argues that:

It is no longer a question of operating on a political level. I mean that I essentially take an interest in ideological conflicts. In this respect I can see three spheres: one with a passive Arab-Islamic tendency - one with a very Westernised petite bourgeoisie which is the compromise with the western World and a third which is a genuine Algerian ideology - simple and based on few things but which at the same time tries to be honest and authentic in its rejection of the other two spheres. I use it as a frame of reference, for instance, Bū'lām does not exist in society but I need this standard ideology to dismantle the other two. Bū'lām is abstract but I only use him to dislodge Sekfali who is a traditionalist and a reactionary. Even in performance he voluntarily stands aside to make room for Sekfali.²⁰²

The play aims to show at one and the same time both the real nature of Sekfali and the reasons why Bū'lām is determined to 'carry on' towards his 'socialist city'. As the conflict between the two characters builds up Sekfali is caught out, mainly in scene VII (WEDDING) and scene X ('THE DIRECTOR GENERAL') which reveal Sekfali's selfishness and the personal interests which hide behind his 'devotion to Islam', his 'education' and his 'knowledge'. Because of people like Sekfali and because of all the wrongs and injustices in society Bū'lām has decided to leave for a better world.

One major characteristic of Carry On Bū'lām and Benaïssa's other plays is the fact that the playwright always isolates his characters from the outside world and uses confrontation to break their outer shell and gradually reveal their inner self, their inner feelings and thoughts, their frustrations and their dreams. Sekfali and Bū'lām, for instance, are alone in the desert. In Friday, the continuation of Carry On Bū'lām, three young men in a bed-sitter are first confronted with each other then with a woman. In A Ship Sank, three men are on board a small broken-down ship in the middle of the sea and totally isolated. In all three plays situations are created to trigger off confrontation and conflict. The situations are such that there is no intrusion from the outside world and the characters are totally isolated. They must thus depend on themselves. At the same time, the spectator is also confronted with himself and his own contradictions.

²⁰¹ Baffet, Roselyne, Tradition Théâtrale et Modernité en Algérie L'Harmattan, Paris, 1985, pp. 118-119.

²⁰² Our interview, op. cit.

Carry On Bū'lām is still very successful in Algeria and among the North African immigrant community in France and Belgium. It also won acclaim in Kuwait which, because of its socio-political nature, is a good yardstick by which to evaluate the suitability for Arab-Muslim audiences elsewhere. Indeed Kuwaiti audiences saw in the play the denunciation of religious fanaticism and identified Sekfali with Muslim fundamentalism in Iran.

Language

Benaïssa's language matches his characters well and clearly reflects the nature and levels of conflicts and contradictions they experience. It is well adapted to the situations depicted and gives them added substance and momentum. Although both Sekfali and Bū'lām speak 'standard Algerian Arabic'²⁰³ there are two major differences in the way they speak which reveal their social and cultural status and which add tension to their conflicts. Bū'lām speaks the simple and modest language of the average ordinary Algerian whereas Sekfali uses a pompous and arrogant vocabulary borrowing words, phrases and proverbs from classical Arabic and Islamic tradition. It is an approach typical of the old fashioned élite. In their 'DUEL WITH POETRY' Bū'lām cites from a wide range of authentic traditional verse and song but Sekfali quotes from famous Arab classics like Al-Mutanabbi and Al-Ma'arri.

Many French words have passed into Algerian and are now used spontaneously in ordinary daily life. In making use of them, Benaïssa seems to challenge the classical language and its purist champions. This is well expressed in the scene called 'ARABISATION' when Sekfali teaches Bū'lām Arabic:

- Sekfali - Do You know 'B'?
- Bū'lām - B? No, there is no song that...
- Sekfali - B as in *bāb*, *bīr*, *barāka*.
- Bū'lām - Like *Bīru*, *bīra*, *bulitiic*.
- Sekfali - That is not Arabic.
- Bū'lām - Why not? All Arabs have *bīrus*, they all like *bīra* and they all indulge in *bulitiic*.
- Sekfali - God forbid!
- Bū'lām - Nowadays there is less prejudice about such things...
- Sekfali - look, instead of *bīru* you should say *maktab*, *maktab*, *maktab* and instead of *bulitiic* you should say *siyāsa*, *siyāsa*.

....

²⁰³ We mean by 'standard Algerian Arabic' a neutral language devoid of regional words and phrases.

- Sekfali - Look, when you say *maktab*, you pronounce M, K, T and B which are Arabic letters therefore you are speaking Arabic.
- Bū'lām - Why, when you say *bīru* don't you pronounce B and R which are Arabic letters?
- Sekfali - They are Arabic consonants but uttered in a foreign language.
- Bū'lām - So they are traitors in your view.
- Sekfali - Exactly... they betrayed Arabic and adopted French.
- Bū'lām - The swines... B and R traitors! You're getting deep, and since I am your brother, please teach me Arabic through French and French through Arabic so I can learn Kabyle, *sūr*.
-
- Bū'lām - Master Sekfali, you didn't tell me what you call *bira* in Arabic.
- Sekfali - May Allah save us from such people."

This scene shows clearly Sekfali's narrow mindedness, his prejudice and his arrogance towards Algerian Arabic. To him even the word beer is taboo and should not be uttered because alcohol is forbidden in Islam. This, however is a fake attitude as his utter hypocrisy is later revealed, for instance in 'THE DIRECTOR GENERAL' scene where he fantasises about things amongst which some are against the Islamic code of conduct like his perverted attitude towards secretaries and his dream to have a statue after his death. Furthermore he uses French words which he condemned Bū'lām for using:

- Sekfali - The bureau must be large...
- .. I also want a *salle de bain* because after a good bath I like to take a shower...
- ...I also want a big secretariat.

All the following words are borrowed from French: *bureau* ('bīru'), *salle de bain* (bathroom), *douche* (shower) and *secrétariat*.

It appears that Benaissa, through the linguistic confrontation between Sekfali and Bū'lām, demystifies classical Arabic as the 'noble and sacred language'²⁰⁴ and gives Algerian Arabic a more respectable status. Although his language appears simple he has made great efforts to make it work on stage for it is indeed accessible not only to Algerian audiences but also to any Arab audience despite the presence of French and local words and phrases. Benaissa's ability to communicate in this accessible language is certainly due to his background and his education. ~~As mentioned in his biography, he had been exposed since his childhood to Berber, Algerian Arabic, and was educated in:~~

²⁰⁴ In the sense that classical Arabic is often referred to as the language of the Holy Koran.

~~is certainly due to his background and his education.]~~ As mentioned in his biography, he had been exposed since his childhood to Berber, Algerian Arabic, and was educated in both French and modern Arabic. In fact he has a good command of these languages and a good knowledge of their corresponding cultures.

Performance devices

With Carry On Bū'lām Benaïssa has shifted from agit-prop methods to a new form which he wants to be simple and accessible to ordinary audiences. He argues that:

After my experience in Mohamed, Prends Ta Valise [by Kateb Yacine], I wanted to try for the last time this form of theatre [with a play on oil], a form in which I did not believe any longer. I could see that this form of theatre was somehow defective but I did not know why. It was adaptable to collective creation and was very practical but it could not solve all the problems. Now I am more concerned about communication, about my relationship with the audience. Since I am anxious about the audience I must use a language, a code and ways of performance that people can understand and do not feel alienated.²⁰⁵

Benaïssa insists on using all aspects of language and voice such as eloquence, diction, rhythm, pace, tone and vocal range. Because of a long standing and deeply rooted oral tradition Algerians are, in general, very sensitive to words and to the different language registers. Benaïssa has chosen to exploit this as he has the right experience and material available in his background and his life experience. He remembers his father reminding him every time they went to the souk (market) when he was still a child: "Remember not to speak the urban way, people will laugh at you. So you must speak like them, behave like them..."²⁰⁶

Sekfali and Bū'lām are a good illustration of all these aspects and the actors who play these roles go through a wide range of speech delivery. Indeed the entire play is essentially based on speech. The acting area is limited as there are hardly any props. In fact the sequences where the pan and the push-cart are used could be mimed. Lighting is simple and reduced to a few spotlights to mark the beginning and the end of some scenes. This flexibility allows Carry On Bū'lām to be performed in any location. It was for this reason that it was able to travel so much at home and abroad and reach so many people even in remote areas, like Hassi Messaoud an oil field in southern Algeria. Benaïssa explains that because:

Algeria is a huge country and audiences are scattered, it is extremely hard to make a tour with a play. One is obliged to create a 'guerilla-theatre' to be able to perform anywhere - no set, no props, just two or three actors and no technicians back-stage. Everything depends on the actor. What remains is language, performance, the level of conflict and the rhythm of the play.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁵ Our interview, op. cit.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

As a playwright, director and actor Benaïssa sees his text in relation to performance. He has always played the role of Bu'lam and his acting technique borrows from the traditional story-teller (*maddāh*) poets (rhymed verse) and daily life. The acting technique he developed for Sekfali projects mainly arrogance and hypocrisy; it consists of a wide range of manners and behaviour proper to the traditional Muslim clergy, land owners, rich merchants - the old élite educated in Arabic and old fashioned Arabic teachers.

In general the play develops swiftly and coherently describes ideological conflicts and contradictions inherent in Algerian society. They are well translated through the conflicts between Sekfali and Bū'lām and through expressive use of language. It seems, however, that the final scene is rather ambiguous because the significance of Bū'lām reaching the socialist city and getting a job is not clear. Does the author mean to imply that Bū'lām is rewarded for his determination, that the values represented by Sekfali are dead and that socialism exists? If such is the case, then the play ends with a moralising note which the author claims to avoid. However, this scene makes the link with Benaïssa's next play Friday and, in this context, makes more sense. Indeed, in the latter play, Bū'lām shares a bed-sitter with two friends and he reveals his frustrations and deceptions in his new world. It would then be more appropriate to begin Friday with the scene in question and end Carry On Bū'lām with the death of Sekfali and an indication of Bū'lām continuing his journey towards his socialist city. The play would then end with a question mark over Bu'lam's dream world which is to be revealed in the next play.

CONCLUSION

The three plays in this study share two major aspects in common: comedy through irony and satire together with denunciation and protest. In Palestine Betrayed Kateb Yacine aims to show that originally Arabs and Jews lived together in peace as good neighbours and friends and that the conflict in Palestine was generated first by the two main religions involved - Islam and Judaism - and then developed and increased by Zionism, Western powers such as Britain, France and the United States and the betrayal of Palestine by some Arab leaders. These factors are criticized and denounced through satire in a series of tableaux. The play tackles a problem of international importance and breaks through national boundaries to acquire a universal dimension by calling on all exploited people to unite and continue the struggle against injustice and imperialism.

The Story of the Generous People is a bitter attack and protest against the abuses and the injustices of a corrupt system. The title of the play refers to the generosity and the good nature of Alloula's characters who - despite their poverty and the problems they encounter in their daily life because of the aberrations of a system ruled by incompetence and corruption - care about their work and about society as a whole. In this play too, irony and satire are major supports of the different tableaux and alternate with the songs which function as comment. The overall tone is optimistic and the message seems to be one of hope and faith to the 'generous people', to the ordinary Algerian worker, not to give up because there are still ways to beat the system. The kind of problems portrayed in this play are in many ways similar to those in other developing countries and it seems that The Story of the Generous People would appeal to audiences in those countries as it does in Algeria. It would be even more successful in developed countries because of its original form and humour.

Slimane Benaïssa has opted for a kind of theatre with a minimum of characters and props, thus Carry on Bū'lām involves only two protagonists, a push-cart and a few other accessories. Benaïssa's theatre is different from the other two because he not only protests against wrongs in Algerian society but he also challenges a wide spectrum of values and received ideas and brings to the surface the malaise and anxiety of society through an approach based on ideology. The conclusions to be drawn are that the problems and the contradictions which exist in contemporary Algerian society are of an ideological nature and if there is progress to be made it is only by doing away with taboos, hypocrisy and conservatism and by assuming one's true national identity, history and culture in order to move towards socialism. Here again irony and humour prevail.

It is no coincidence that these three plays -as samples of the three major trends in contemporary Algerian theatre - belong to the 'theatre of protest' genre. It is a long-standing tradition which goes back to the French occupation of Algeria in the nineteenth

century when the *maddāh* and the *Karaguz* (Theatre of Shadows) changed the nature of their material to criticize, condemn or protest against the French occupant and injustice he brought. It was a tradition that lasted until independence.

Throughout its history Algerian theatre has already developed essentially through comedy which is a form which seems to be favoured by Algerian audiences. The first major play in Algerian Arabic was *Joha* a comedy written by Allalou and produced in 1926. The comic folk hero still finds echo in contemporary Algerian theatre, mainly with Kateb Yacine who makes extensive use of the facetiae. The traditional *Joha* always plays tricks on notables or rulers and ridicules them. When confronted by the rulers or when in trouble he always finds a solution and comes out on top. *Joha*, like many other folk heroes in other cultures, is a means by which dominated people take revenge on the ruling class, a means to release their frustrations, and also a weapon of defence against those who exploit them. If the social function of humour, irony, satire and laughter is to ridicule, take revenge, demystify or release frustrations, as a shared experience for instance, and also as a shared and hidden agreement as Bergson suggests, it seems that this is precisely the aim of the three playwrights in this study and indeed of most contemporary Algerian theatre.

As we have seen, modern Algerian theatre developed through different stages. It started with improvised sketches by young enthusiasts who had no training in the art of the theatre. It then developed through the creation of full length plays until the 1940s. Later, a new generation with more training took over and produced plays which were mainly adaptations of the world repertoire at the 'Opéra d'Alger' from the mid-1940s until 1954 when the war of Independence started. During the armed struggle the FLN theatre group in exile was not very productive despite its best efforts. After Independence in 1962 the 'Théâtre National Algerien, which was very active, produced a large number of plays (mainly political) from the world repertoire and very few national plays. In the 1960s and 1970s plays were produced through collective writing in the regional theatres, essentially through the amateur theatre. With the exception of Ould Abderrahmane Kaki who started his own experiments in Mostaganem much earlier, it was only during that period that experimental work took place in search of new forms. So far the performing arts which exist in the cultural heritage, particularly in the oral tradition, have been ignored while Western theatrical forms have been used or adapted.

The three playwrights in this study have benefited a great deal from the previous experiences of Algerian theatre as a whole. They have, each in his own way, extensively drawn from the Algerian traditional cultural heritage to develop theatre forms which are original and highly successful as they also seem to suit public taste and identify with their expectations. The art of the *maddāh*, in particular, has been and still is being thoroughly studied and adapted to the requirements of the modern stage. The

revival and development of some traditional performing arts and certain aspects of traditional culture such as folk tales and rhymed verse into new forms of theatre has proved to be successful and viable not only in Algeria or North Africa but also in the Middle East where similar attempts are just as successful or even more so like the Palestinian 'Hakawati' theatre group who seem to win more and more acclaim among European audiences.

Kateb Yacine apparently does not wish to modify his approach whereas Slimane Benaïssa and particularly Abdelkader Alloula still pursue research and experimentation. One major area where Kateb Yacine differs from the other two playwrights is language which, in his case, is not elaborate enough and rather limited to the ordinary Algerian or North African audiences. Benaïssa and Alloula, on the other hand, use a language which corresponds to the changes and evolution of Algerian society. If, as Benaïssa says "language acquires the standards of those who speak it"²⁰⁸ then the language spoken nowadays by the average Algerian is certainly richer and of a higher standard than the language spoken ten or twenty years ago. The influence of French is still felt but people are more exposed to modern Arabic through the media, some public services and administration and the environment itself - names of streets, different signs, posters. This takes place alongside the education system which operates in Arabic. Benaïssa and Alloula have adapted their language to this change which helps towards a better expression of ideas in their plays because, "Colloquial Arabic as we know it is unable to carry a discourse which aims at expressing the complexity of society as it exists. One must exploit language through all its registers."²⁰⁹

This, Alloula and Benaïssa certainly do and their language is developing towards standard Arabic, the language beyond regional and colloquial boundaries and understood by all which makes their plays accessible to Arab audiences outside North Africa.

The forms developed by the three playwrights are well established and Alloula and Benaïssa are still exploring new material from the cultural heritage. It is, however, interesting to note that most of contemporary Algerian theatre, including the new trends studied here, is based on plays involving characters as stereotypes and that, as Benaïssa remarks' "everybody avoids the *théâtre à personnages*²¹⁰ because of the lack of competent and well trained actors."²¹¹ It seems that Benaïssa overlooks the fact that his theatre or stereotype characters in general also require great skill. Furthermore, if attempts are made in the direction of developing characters with psychological depth, the *théâtre à personnages* may well flourish in the future. This implies that it is rather

²⁰⁸ Our interview with Benaïssa on 12 January, 1988.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Implying - characters with psychological depth.

²¹¹ Our interview, op cit.

premature to say that the three trends will remain as they are or even change or give way to new forms because there is still potential available. Furthermore, the recent dramatic political change towards democracy and a multi-party system means more freedom of expression and will certainly contribute to a major development of the arts in general and cinemas and theatre in particular.

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C. Journals and Periodicals Published in Algeria.

The following contain mainly play reviews and reports on cultural activities.

1920 to 1939

- L'Afrique.
- L'Afrique du Nord Illustrée.
- L'Algérie.
- La Brèche.
- Le Courrier Nord Africain.
- La Défense.
- La Dépêche Algérienne.
- La Dépêche Coloniale.
- La Dépêche de Constantine.
- La Dépêche de l'Est.
- La Dépêche Oranaise.
- L'Echo d'Alger.
- L'Echo de la Presse Musulmane.
- L'Entente.
- L'Ikdam.
- La Lutte Sociale.
- L'Opinion Libre.
- Oran Républicain.
- Le Parlement Algérien.
- La Presse Libre.
- La Presse Nord Africaine.
- Progrès.
- Er-Rihala.
- At-Takaddum.

La Voix Indigène.

1939 to 1945

Alger Républicain.

La Dépêche de Constantine.

Dernières Nouvelles.

Le Messager.

Le Parlement Algérien.

La Quatrième République.

1945 to 1954

Ach-Chabab.

Alger Républicain.

Alger Soir.

L'Algérie Libre.

Dernière Heure.

L'Echo D'Alger.

Egalité

Le Jeune Musulman.

Le Journal d'Alger.

Liberté.

La Voix des Jeunes.

Between 1954 and 1962 there was hardly any activity apart from the 'Troupe du FLN.' which was operating outside Algeria and whose activities were mainly reported in L'Action de Tunis and El-Moudjahid which was published by the FLN in Tunisia.

1962 to 1988

The following contain a large number of play reviews, articles, and papers on Algerian theatre and many interviews with playwrights and people in the theatre.

Algérie Actualité.

Al-Halqa - TNA.

Al-Sitar - TNA.

AN-NASR.

Ech-Chaab.

El-Moudjahid.

Flash - TNA.

Kalim.

République (d'Oran.)

Révolution Africaine.

Promesses.

L'Unité.

Voix Multiples.

D. Journals and Periodicals Published in France

The following contain essentially publications by Kateb Yacine and articles and papers on him.

Actualité de l'Emigration.

Algérien En Europe (L').

Annuaire d'Afrique du Nord.

Cahiers Nord-Africains.

Esprit.

Europe.

Jeune Afrique.

Lettres Françaises.

Lettres Nouvelles (Les).

Monde (Le).

Nouvelle Critique (La).

Nouvelles Littéraires (Les).

Nouvel Observateur (Le).

Quinzaine Littéraire (La).

Revue De L'Occident Musulman et de la Méditerranée.

Témoignage Chrétien.

Temps Modernes (Les).

and

Action (L') - Tunis.

E. Kateb Yacine.

1. - Published Works

Soliloques, (poems), Imprimerie du Réveil Bônois, Bône, 1946 (out of print).

Abdelkader et L'Indépendance Algérienne, Alger, En Nahda, 1948. (Public lecture delivered in Paris on 24th May 1947 at Salle des Sociétés Savantes).

Nedjma, (novel), Le Seuil, Paris, 1956.

Le Cercle des Représailles, (drama, including Le Cadavre Encerclé, La Poudre d'Intelligence, and Les Ancêtres Redoublent de Férocité, followed by a poem "Le Vautour") Le Seuil, Paris, 1959.

Le Polygone Etoilé, (novel), Le Seuil, Paris, 1966.

L'Homme Aux Sandales de Caoutchouc, (drama) Le Seuil, Paris, 1970.

L'Oeuvre En Fragments, (Inédits littéraires et textes retrouvés, rassemblés et présentés par Jacqueline Arnaud), Sindbad, Paris, 1986.

2. - Unpublished Plays*

Mohamed Prends Ta Valise.

La Guerre de 2000 Ans.

Falīstīn Maghdūra.

Malik Al-Gharb.

Al-Khubza Al-Murra.

* We have attended performances of all these plays.

3 - Theses and Dissertations on Kateb Yacine

Alessandra, Jacques, Le Théâtre de Kateb Yacine, 3^e cycle²¹², Nice, 1980.

²¹² 3^e cycle = Doctorat de Troisième Cycle.

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- Benachour, Nedjma (Tebbouche), Politique et Production Littéraire chez Kateb Yacine, D.E.A.,²¹³ Constantine, 1974.
- Bensetti, Lahouia, Le Champ Sémantique de la Femme dans les Romans de Kateb Yacine, D.E.A., Oran, 1976.
- Bouchentouf, Abdelkader, William Faulkner et Kateb Yacine, 3^e cycle, Montpellier, 1982.
- Bousaha, Hassen, L'Héritage Culturel Occidental dans L'Oeuvre de Kateb Yacine, Maîtrise, Paris III, 1975.
- La Technique Romanesque chez Kateb Yacine, 3^e cycle, Paris X, Juin 1980.
- Chebani, Abdelkader, Le Substrat Arabo - Maghrébin dans Nedjma et le Cercle des Représailles de Kateb Yacine, 3^e cycle, Ter Lettres, Bordeaux III, 1976.
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- Couenne Michel, De la Blessure à la Révolte: Kateb Yacine dramaturge politique, Caen, 1977.
- Grandpierre, Sylviane, Le Théâtre Algérien Contemporain. L'exemple de Kateb Yacine, 3^e cycle, Paris XII, 1980.
- Guénaoui, Aomar, Le Théâtre Algérien en Langue d'Origine: Le Retour à la Halqa?, Mémoire, CET, UCL, Belgique, 1987.
- Matmati, Frieda Mohamed Prends Ta Valise de Kateb Yacine (établissement du texte), Maîtrise, Aix, 1976.
- Le Théâtre Dialectal de Kateb Yacine: établissement du Texte et Traduction, 3^e cycle, Aix, Juin 1982.
- Mekki, Dalila, Eléments Pour Une Analyse de la Production du Texte Satirique chez Kateb Yacine, D.E.A., Alger, Janvier 1985.
- Nekkouri, Khadidja, Le Mythe des Ancêtres dans l'Oeuvre de Kateb Yacine, Maîtrise, Alger 1974.
- Le Discours Mythique dans le Cercle des Représailles de Kateb Yacine, 3^e cycle, Aix, 1977.
- Touabti, Fadila (Laouar), La Tradition Orale dans La Poudre d'Intelligence de Kateb Yacine; Réactualisation et Utilisation de Djhoha, D.E.A., Constantine, 1975.
- Zouhir, Latifa, Le Thème de la Colonisation chez Feraoun, Kateb, Mammeri, Memmi, Maîtrise, Tunis, 1970.

²¹³ D.E.A. Diplôme d'Etudes Approfondies.

F. Works by Abdelkader Alloula¹

1. - Unpublished Plays

1969 - Al-'Alag.

1970 - Al-Khubza.

1972 - Homq Salīm, (Adapted from Gogol's Diary of a Mad Man).

1973 - Al-Mayda (Written with the actors of the 'Théâtre Régional d'Oran').

1974 - Al-Mantūj (Written with the actors of the 'Théâtre Régional d'Oran').

1975 - Hammām Rabbi.

- Hūt Yā'kul Hūt (Written with Benmohamed).

1980 - Al-Agwāl.

1984 - Al-Ajwād.

1989 - Al-Lithām.

2. - T.V. Scripts

1972 - Gorine, directed by Mohamed Ificène - Radio Télévision Algérienne (RTA).

1982 - Jalti, directed by Mohamed Ificène - Radio Télévision Algérienne (RTA).

G. - Plays by Slimane Benaissa - Unpublished²

1969 - Translation and adaptation of Kateb Yacine's La Poudre d'Intelligence into Algerian Arabic.

- La femme Algérienne (Collective creation with "Théâtre et Culture").

- Al-Sha'b, Al-Sha'b.

1971 - La Situation Economique en Algérie.

1975 - Bū'lām Zīd Al-Guddām.

1977 - Yūm Al-Jam'a Kharju Ryām.

- Al-Mahgūr (Based on Andrei Makainok's The Ill-Treated Apostle).

1982 - Preliminary Version of Babūr Ghraq.

1983 - Final Version of Babūr Ghraq.

1 - 2 We have seen both films and attended performances of all plays except La Situation Economique en Algérie and Al-Lithām.

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APPENDICES:

Falīstīn Maghdūra (Palestine Betrayed)

Al-Ajwād (The Story Of The Generous People)

Bū'lām Zīd Al-Guddām (Carry On Bū'lām)

8 ; EPILOGUE

Le technocrate entre un carnet à la main

تي : واش. اسمك
 بو : بلحلاوي بوعلام
 تي : وكت زايد
 بتو : في الرابعة والخصين الزاقات علينا
 تي : في الرابعة الخصين الزاقات عليهم انا زايد ما بيناتهم
 تي : وين زايد
 بو : نزايد نفى د ولور. البوجادية كمين الفلاحاي
 تي : باباك واس اسموا
 بو : شهيد عبدالقادر
 تي : امك
 بو : رحمة بنت مرزوق
 تي : روح جوز لغزيت وغدا على الساعة الثامنة تكون هنا
 بو : الحما لديك

Le technocrate sort BOUALEM dit le poème final .

هذا عهد البنيان
 والبنيان اشتراكي احنا الى خير. بناه
 ولي يقول لا انقولوا لا لرجعية
 ولي يقول علاثر، اقولولو علاثر. السيفلرة
 ولي يقول محال انقولولو محال الاستقلال
 ولي يقول الشعب انقولولو الشعب حر هذا ما كان
 هذا عهد البنيان
 والبنيان فيه ميزان
 اشتراكي احنا الى ابنينا

بو : انعم اديروا اكر كيما قالوا .
 " تم يا متضرع - قبل ان يقبلو كان وكان "

س : انعم كنا عظاما كنا فضلا كنا كبراء كنا كنا كنا

بو : كنا كنا كنا بصح لا بد انكونو واشدارو الى قبلنا
 اذا هما دعاو من الغنامة يا حنك ندعاو بالمردالة
 اذا هما ادعو من الفخم والحماس
 اخنا ندعوا بالعسـدالة

اذا هما كرو بالسلطين احنا انكرو بالفلاحين

اذا هما غناو الامراء احنا انقنيو الفترا "

اذا هما كتبوا كتب احنا نكتبوا التاريخ

اذا هما داو حاضرة الاندلس احنا انديرو حضارة العمال والعمل
 هذا هو الفرق بين الماضي والمستقبل والى ما فهمتم هذا الفرق يعني كما انت
 اندلع في شريطة

س : اي تلبى اي اجنابى يا بوعلام همزنى قسوق ضهرك وروح واين سفيت وادير الى ي
 بنيت انا خلاص انا بسردت .

BOUALEM parte sur son don SEXFALI

et pousse la charrette

س : يا بوعلام انا وصلت الى هذيك البلاى ماتنسا شى شخصيتنا الشخصية يا بوعلام هي اصح
 لكان مكان هذيك الشخصية لكان مارنا الى كان .

الشخصية هي سيرة الاجداد انا انحب جدى بجد جدى كنت ما نعرفووش لكن انحبو
 جدى كان عندو شلاغم جدى جدى جدى الشخصية الشخصية

Il court sur le d e de BOUALEM . BOUALEM l'enterra .

بو : انا ثانى انحب جدى لكان انمز اولاد وما بغي لا انضبع لا جدى لا اولاد
 واذا ضاع جدى الله لا يضيع اولاد

BOUALEM part seul . Musique bruit de la ville .

S . AGONIE ET MORT DE SEKFALE

BOUALEM pousse la charette avec colere et avance rapidement
SEKFALE le suit .

س : بوعلام بلعقل . . . بوعلام بلعقل .
بوعلام حبس
بو : واشبيك

س : راني انحس في رجلايا سقلوا اما نقدر شر، نمشي حبس راني انتك - حبس
بو : اسمع ماتعيل شر، علي انا منيشر، اصيف عندك
س : لصيف خير منك خطر هو يهرف روحا وصيف خير منك واما انت ما اعرفت
روحك اصيف والا حر . . . راك زاوشر، معلق بين سما ودهوا
بو : يك السما ما هو اسماك والهوا ما هو هواك .

لكان ما انخاش من رب انخليك ترشر، هنا حتى اسوع يشبع من الدور انتاعك
س : لا يابوعلام ما اتخالينيشر، ديرني في قلبك ديرني في بابك ديرني في الشريطة .
يابوعلام ترحم علي الساعة ره لنتت واشرا رايح تلتني في هذا البلا .
بو : نلتني الي سمدني .

س : وانا ما سمد كثير، التدام تلتني اعرضني .
بو : اعرضني ما كشيانشر،

س : صح يابوعلام هذا اثر كامل علي راي انا الي قرئت واحفظت هاشر، ما نفلطشر، حتى
صحت غالب معك لكن انت غالب اكر مني راه، صادق العمى واما فتشر، بروحك
بو : الي يحسب وحدوا دائما يفضلو والي يتري دائما وحدو غالب لكن انتاعك هما
الي خمبولك راسك ولميحولك اركيك
س : ما كشر، خير من الكتب

بو : انت في ذاتك راك اكتاب

س : لكان جيت تصرف قيمة الماضي واليكوب لكان ما كشر، في الحالة الي راك فيها
بو : الحمد لله راني الطبع فيك

لمخير في الكتب الماضي عند قيمة تاريخية وذا بيك على الثورات . الثورات اعز
علي اكثر من اعز عليك . الي بلنا خدموا واشتهدوا دراو كتب اذا نخدموا
ونشهدوا انديرو ما خير منهم .

س : انتم ادروا خير

- س - اعيشك
ب - افسينك
س - ما صروا لرا
ما - ما يمر والوا
س - ما طار والوا
ب - ما لماز والوا
س - ما مارو ولو والوا
ب - ما مارو ولو ولوا
ب - انزيد وللتدام
س - آه لالا انطو للور.
ب - انزيد التدام
س - واش، راني واش، راني
ب - ما تتلكش، تبمني
س - انا منيش، ميمول انتبيح الممتبل
ب ب اسكت.

BOUALEM pousse la charette violement .

- ایسوی

ز - ؟

- و درک

ز - و زرک

-

ز - هکاتشوف

- ژو

ز - و

- ما

ز - ما ولوا

- ما ولوا

ز - ما ولوا

- من

ز - کفه

- لا قلت

ز - و اثر قلت

ز - قلت لکان

و - لکلن واش

- لکان یعنی

ز - یعنی واش

- و اثر قلت ؟

ز - قلت الصبح

- اسلمک

ز - انت زاده

- ! عزک .

بد اک نیک

س - انورک

بداهنیک

هذا هو الثورات اذا عند النيف

هذا ما اتمنالي غير قربي و حرقت خماس
فرنسة واش درتلنا يكتملتنا هكذا قربة

خمس و عيشوا !!

اجميع اللي ستد في هذا الكلام ستعمر

وللي هو عربي وين رانا يالمرب واين رانا يا العرب

شعب كما شعب لفتبام

حفيان خبزج المركان واحنا في خالست

فقوو تخلف نويين نستعمر يعلنا الحنونوي يستعمر خو

شموم امنذمة ره تكوي فا لا سبريلية

واحنا مزال في نينيلك قربي وانديرك خماس واين رانا

يا العرب واين رانا يا العرب

Sekfali se jette en trahise sur Bouâlem

et le ligote avec une corde
س: اعمل مديني لبلاز الشعب .

يا بوعلام يا اولبدي احنا مزال لاصحراء وأنت باغبي اتبمني
 ا ا ا ا ا ا في هذا اللبلار انا نخسر بزاف فخر مالي ارض تقع اروع للدولة .
 ب: أنا ما عندي ما نخسر غير الهم والمزربة .
 س: لسا ما نرجع للبلور .
 ب: انزيدوا للقدام .
 س: لسا ان اتولي امميا انديرك خماس عندي و نهيلك قربي . . . ونديك اتصوق
 امسايا وسعة على سعة نشريلك قسبة
 واتشونني كفاه انبيع ونشري
 وانزوجك . . . انشفلك امراء تصلح بيك وكمدوا عندك الدراري انقرهملك و كبلحتوا
 نلسرتفكة انديرهم يخدموا اعندي واش خصك

و اذا لمبس الكنوب واش يقلك .
 و اذا حملت الصرات واش يبتلك .

ب: اني آراي المجد الذي نبني
 اتمام لالمالمة بالوحشيين
 فمرونو نحوه ودعوا التوانني
 وستيرو سرة الرحل الوستيدي
 ايمعجبكم بأن نبني رتورا
 عن الملبياء نرفف فالقيود
 ندمحت وفي هذا ابلاغوا
 لتوم راغبين عني الجمودي

بِكَيْ اتُولُوا انْشَا اَعْمَالُوا بِالنِّيَاتِ اَهْمَلِ انْمَا الشَّمْرُ بِالرِّيَاتِ -

ب: اَيْتْ اَبْدَه

س: تَمَالِ النَّلاَحُوا

حِي عَلَى الْفَلَاَحُوا

فِي الرَّيْفِي لَكَ صَبَاَحُوا

وَفِي الصَّاحِ لَكَ صَبَاَحُوا

الْدَمْعُ مِنْ عَيْنِكَ حَمُوا

الْيَوْمَ لَكَ اَفْرَاَحُوا

الْكُونِ لَكَ اَفْرَاَحُوا

وَفِي الْاَكْلِ لَكَ سَمَاَحُوا

وَفِي الْاَرْضِ لَكَ اَبْلَاَحُوا

نَبِي السِّدْرِ لَكَ مَفْتَاَحُوا .

م: بَا وَحْدِي عَلَى الشَّمْرَاءِ كَيْلَاَحُوا

نَبِي اَكْلَامُكُمْ جَاَحُوا

م: اَيْتِي فَبِهِم وَالْوَاظِلَاَحُوا

ب: اَيْتِي مَدِينَتِي كَكُنْتُ خَمَّاس

رَالْتَبِينِ اَعْمَاءِ اَعْبُونِي

خَدَمَتَا عِنْدَ عَرْتِ النَّاسِ

بُرْتِي الْمَاكَلَهَ مَوْزُونِي

ب: حبس كماراك انديروك ستاسي كما ركوه نكتبوا من تحت

مدير هام في اجتماع هام على الهضوم الهامة والهم الهام ياهم !!

س: اشت رني ستاسي

ب:

اللي يشري ! سلطت من عهد الاستعمار اللي يشري

اللي حب داروا تخله الشركة اتاعوا تفلس .

وابلادوا اتريب اخذم هذا الشيد

عند اللي يشري استاتي من عهد الاستعمار .

ب: انا من عهد الاستعمار .

ب: انت من عهد الاستعمار .

س: انا! اشراكي خبير منك

ب: انا! ينده وجنده الاشتراكية .

س: انا اشتراكي مشي مع الشعب انا اشتراكي (

ب: يادزيك حقتهم اتبل ما يهالروا اشتراكية يتونسو .

س: نتخطلروا

ب: نتخطلروا ؟

س: نتخطلروا شكون اشتركي خبير من خوه .

ب: كفة نتخطلروا

س: شريف انت دير شمر وانا اندير شمر وانشوف اشكون شمر اشتراكي اكر من

لسنر .

بيد عذري تع تيرة

س: شوف كتبني شوي اشوي قلبي حبس

Sekfali se fige dans sa position
Bouâlem à l'avant scene chante .

ب: بعض امن الساعة + تلتاه أشتراكي زلم
دخل الثورة بكرعوا + وعمر في اجيابوا
والناس جايعه اثلثف

بعض امن الساعة + تلتاه على لبريفي ندم
دير الشركة كداروا + ينكم بتكمام
والناس يستمد وتثف

بعض امن الساعة + تلتاه امع الا نبريلية اشتم

بعض امن الساعة + التاه نالدعيات أنضم
ونخرج من ادماغوا + ما اكدب ابليس في لحيثوا
والناس اموضر والتثف

هذا احال الرجعية + يا الفاهم افطن وانهم
احل الرجعية + كرحت ما ابقى فيها والوا
رهي في احفارميت يا الفهام

ثانيا البيروا لبد اكون أكبر اللي يدخل فيه يتبحر واللي اتبحر اخاف واللي
خاف اقادرك واللي تادرك اتنجم أتهف والدنيا كطمة هفات هف اتعيش

نحب البير أكون أكبر أكبر أكبر

ومكت أكون أخشينة أخشينة أخشينة

ب كل مرة أنفهمك وعلاه ثلاثة مرات

س خاطر فالعربية كايين المفرد والمثنى والمثلث

المثلث يدعوا وحد الانسان عاش في القرن العشرين واسموا عمي سمعوا أبو شاشة

التلفزيوني من قبلت هذا الي كان : الله غلب

وانحب ثاني (سال دي بان) خاطر أنا كحمم نغرق وكنعرق نضرب دوش وكي

ندرب دوش نرجع فرشك والمدير بعد أكون فرشك

ونحب سكرطرية كبير فيه وحدة عنبية . وحدة قبيلية . ووحدة وهرنية . وحد مزبية

. ب ما شفت الوحدة البولنية في السكرتارية

س اسكت وكينموت اندير به استاتي 1

انديرو به استاتي واديروها في باب كل اوزين بيه العمال كيف يدخل الصباح يشوف

امالمهم بوعلام قولي واش اتخم في هذا الحطة .

هندي

ب اواه على على ارجل واحده الريح الي جاء يدك

س هندي

ب هندي تع معنيين درهما علي الرياحي تبتلك

س هندي

ب هندي تع سبورتيف تع هدوك اللي لوحوا

س هندي

!

SCENE XI LE P . D . G .

Sur une musique de Passo-doble . Sekfali rentre déguisé
en B ; B . G . Monte sur le bureau .

س: هذا الشركة ما هيثان يالي لكن اندير فيها العلامة ان يالي

بو: طرز

اندور بيا اجمايح اكونوا الصحاح اجيوني كتحصر وانرحلهم كثيرير

المدير آولا !

بو: فدي خدمت الشعب

س: كتكلم انت اسكت !

(1) المدير في تخديم الشعب الخدمة ما امعماش اللعب

يا تخدم عندي يا نخدم عندك

ياتخدم اعليه يا نخدم اعليك

الباتي قاع افلوش

(2) المدير لبد الناس اتنادروا و به اتقدر لبد اتخافوا خطر ما كان اقدر ابلا خوف

وسائل تخويف الناس

بموني كناه اتخوفوا الناس

يلزم () ابلا نط لبد اكون عصاص - اركيك - اطرش - اعزى - اعس لبونتوز -

هذا كالي يصلح

(3) البير لبد ايكون اكبير .

بو: انا ابلادي فيها الخدمة اتبات خدام تصبح خدام تسممة متهنني
 في فيها لزنات وزين واحد اخدام بالالوف هذي دنيا والا خللني . . . لتلقى
 الف المينين حتى لف تراس داخلين يخذ موا في مضرب واحد في ساعة
 وحدة يخرجوا في ساعة وحدة . بالجمع كندخلوا في رحبة و نخرجوا في
 رحبة غير في ابلاست لذان كاين لسران هذا ما كان . . . انشفهم اجمع
 اجمع داخلين صح يا محمد ! صح يا علي ! صح عثمان قع متخوين
 متحدين . . .

انا اللي يتجيني في ابلادي هو النبلام . . . كل واحد في خدمتوا كل
 وحد والمسؤولية انتا عوا كل وحد على احساب عرفوا . . ما كانش هذا
 التشناف والتكبير انا نسو خير منك خطر قاري وانا ما نسواش نخدم ابديه
 و هو اجي با 70 كلمتر وانا انجي السوا سنديس كرعية
 اللي اقراء الله زيد من عندي امبصح اذا اقرا لي اقريت الصبح به
 بينلي دار امسيد لولادي قنطرة وانا اقريت الفستي بش يحسبني
 قنطرة ليه

لا . . . يتور

انا في عقليتي اللي اقراء ازيد فالفهامة ازيد فالسياسة وللعقل . . .
 قال الحقيقة اللي اقراء هو اللي ساعة اللي ما اقراش لكن في هذا الزمان
 لمسوج تلقى هذا اللي ما اقراش هو اللي سناغف اللي اقراء لكن انا
 ابلادي ما فيهاش هذا الشكيل . . . القاري كايها الناس اللي يخدم
 ابراسوا ابديه والا ابكرعيه قع ككف . . . خطر انا ابلادي هي
 الديمقراطية الشعبية .

الفصل الثالث

بو: جنبها الشعب

س: الشعب ما اجيب والرايا غالط الشعب ما عند ما اجيب .
وانزيد انقلك اجميع اللي يعود عند الدولة ما يخدم ابقلبوا .

بو: وعلاه اللي يخدم عند لسريفي يخدم ابقلبوا ؟

س: اذا ما يخدم ابقلبوا يخدم بالزلاط .

يو: على هذا ك الزلاط اللي مشنا متفهمين

س: كداش رائسكا خشين لا حولة لا قوة
شوف دركا انمشلك مدير عام للشؤون العامة على العموم العام .

بو: خيف لا تصميها .

Sekfali sort

بو: والله ما افهم فيها حبة .

Bouâlem tout en instalant le decors
en forme de bureau ; decrit sa ville

س: كعاد كل شي وطني اهمل احنا واشرا نكونوا

بو: انت ثاني يا اتكون وطني يا زقات اعليك.

س: انا وطني خير منك .

بو: انت وطني ؟ انت

س: لكن الوطنية وطنية والاشتراكية اشتراكية ما اتخلطوثر انتم ثاني ما اتخلطوثر

بو: اسمع اسمع

الوطنية ابلا اشتراكية كوالوا .

والاشتراكية ابلا وطنية اتورد للاملاك .

س : كداش راسك اخشين . . . ني دركانظيموا وقتنا و نهظروا بولتيك .

بو (bien sûr) نهظروا بولتيك.

س: اقبل ما جات افرنسا كنا خوي و مستلين

بو: هك قالوا

س جات افرنسا واستممرتنا .

بو: هذي

س: امبعد حرينا و خرباهما .

بو: هذي

بو: وارجمنا خاوي و مستليل

بو: هك قالوا .

س: قللي يرحم والديك هذا الاشتراكية امنين حيتوها .

بو: الاشتراكية ما القتهاش فالكتب انتاعك

س: اقتها و قريها ... لكن فهمنا ... فكرني انسيت

بو: الاشتراكية من المشترك

ومن نحت الاعراب

الاشتراكية : مبتداء من نوع جديد وعلامة مبدئية الثورة الزراعية

الرحية والانبيرية : جار ومجروبية وعلامة جره الصهيونية في اوله ...

الثورة الزراعية : فاعل ومفعول به وعلامة فعله القرية النموجية ...

تطوع المطوع :

تطوع : فعل حاضر وعلامة حثاره يوم الاحد .

عنه اللفة المصرية و مكاكون التمريب والا ما اكونش .

س: عمال فلاحين . . . خدمين عمال فلاحين خدمين . .

هذوا ما يبتاروا غير على العمال والفلاحين .

بو: هذا كما كان في ابلادي على واش اتحبهم يبتاروا على الكوليرة ...

س: قللي هذا البلاد كثر ما نجموا انديروا فيها تجارة

بو: اكبير والا صغير ...

س: امع الخارج . . اولينا ادراي

بو: امع الخارج غير العنب والوا . . . اذا تحب ادير تجارة صغيرة صح خنطر

التجار اصغار في ابلادي كالعمال والباقي قع شركات وطنية .

بو: انا في ابلادي كبل شي وطني الذرك وطني الجيش وطني ولزين كعود اكبير

يسفك شركة وطنية .

SCENE IX Nouvelle grammaire

بو: واشربيكاعيت ؟ مليت ؟

س: راني انخمم

بو: السلام عليكم . . .

س: بوعلام ؟ قللي ابلارك فيها الضو

بو: فيها الضو

س: فيها المشنات

بو: فيها المشنات

س: انواع تشوف ابلارك رهي فالكتوب . . . وانا قرها و نعرفها . . .

بو: خطينا من الكتوب انتاعك . . .

س : شوف شوف آبو دغيوس قال !

بو: ما قال والوا . . .

س: كفه هذا ما قال والو . . . هي ليكمكتوبه

بو: اخطينا من الكتوب انا لكان ابلادي فاللكتوب انتاعك من روحلهاثر . . .

Bouâlem sort de son couffin deux e . . . petits livres

بو: انا قح ابلادي راهي في هذا الزوج اكتب اصفار

س: هذي الثورة الزراعية

وهذا القطع الاشتراكي

انا ابلا راهي اصنا

س: واش هذا الاشتراكي

بو: تدلك هذا قران الطلب انتاعي كان حافظا غير ستين حزن وكان ثقل هذا الصورة

س: هي آسیدی هذا اقران . . . والقران ما شوش خیر من الشمر . . .

بو: احنا اتفتنا على الشمر ما اتفتنا شر على ما اتفتنا شر على ما خير منوا . . . اهمله
تسم خاسر والطبع الشريطة .

س: صح اللي ينطق بالقران يسمه خياسر

بو: القران قران والستمر ما اتخلطشر ما اتخلطوش ياناس . . .

Ils partent Sekfali pousse la charette
Bouâlem devant

بو: واين رايح ؟

س: بمن !

بو: اسمع انريد للتقدم والطريق رهي من

س: انا كنتبع الشريطة انروح من

بو: هات انا انطبع

Après un moment de marche
Sekfali s'arrête pensif

ن

س: نضربكم من جانب الغرب ناعب
ينادي بادي في ربيع حياتي

يا

SEKALI descend de son podium et
va vers Bouâlem

بو: يا آياي ياي

س: تسمحلي يا بوعلام هذا اما هوثر شمر

يو: تسمحلي هنا البيت مشروف في أكد ميت الشمر

المليون الشعبي بلقرات

س: وان جات هذا الاكدمية ؟

بو: كندخل لغوات الاكدمية جات فالنبة اللولة علي يد كلصرة .

دير فيد اللي حبيت

وتصرف واشر اسموا الاياي اسموا بيت

واعطينا وخذ باليا .

س: يا غزالا نقضي التمهيد

ولم يوني اليوم بنسند

دل

بو: دزامناهم والاتخاف الثنية

ولا ييكى الماضي الدنيا خياليك ووليا

اليف

س: اني وان كنت الاخير زمانه

لاآت بمالم تستنطه الا وائل

BOUALEM descend du podium et va
vers Sekfali

بو: هذا تران .

س: هذا شمر .

ومشينا في طريق مشمر

رارا

بو: رارا . . . روح يا الشايب روح
قمح المليونري يا ماواش اسلونري

للي للي

س: لليلة اشكوا ان في نفسي حاجته
تمر بيها الايام وهمية كما حيا
يايا

بو: يا . . . يا خراد على اياي في وصت القوم .
والشرات ادور عني تتمايح
ما تلتكيا وعدى انت السيوم .
السفنات امكسرة وانا رااياج

ح

س حصاني كان دلال المنايا
عمالاها وشري وساع

ع

بو: عزني يا كرام في راءت لبنات
سكنت تحت النحوز نارى مقديا
قلبي سافر وراح مع الضمى حزية

يا

بو: البارج وانا ابشبابي فارج
كلن في عمرى قرنين

بو: هذا بيت الشاعر الكبير منسرفوش .

نون

س: نبني كما كانت اولئنا
لتبني ونفعل مثل ما فعلوا .
من الشاعر الكبير المشهور . . . انا ثاني ما نعرفوش . . . واو .

بو: واو وو وو

س: واو غاول

بو: ولى يازقى لا تروحي للابعد
بيني وبيك الصاهد مزال .
هذا من الشعر . . . انقلك

بو: قول انا . واشراحت سمعة سمعة .
يظرنني سلان الشعر

ب لام

بن: لام

بو: لام

س: لا تقل اصلي وفصلي ابدا
انما اصل الفتا ما قد حصل

لام

بو: لا ترخسي و لا ذلي ولا تقولي ليام كانت
قد اشر قلبي قلبي علي بصد كما نك .

كاف

س: كم بنينا من خيال حولنا

بو: جباري هذي لصبة

س: مثلا

بو: مثلا

س: قسما بالنزلات المحقات
والدما الزكيات الطهرات
اعطيني بيت بيد بالـ

بو: تا تترن تررن)

س: نكافحمت

Ils prennent chacun un podium
face à face et monte dessus

بو: اهدانت .

س: انا نبدة ؟ . . . الا اهدانت

بو: هي ابدا قلنا .

س: اتوك بمرون الحديد كانما
سروا بجياد ما لحسن قوائم
هذا من الشعر الكبر المتنبى
ايه اعطينا وحد بالمسيم

بو: مل احبين مالوا ما افضيه كان
مل احبييس مالوا هذا كالى كان

نون !

س: اسم الشاعر

SCENE VIII LE DUEL DE POESIE

بو: انزیدوا القدام اطبع الشریطه

س: ما نجمش .

بو: اذا ما نتجمش قیسها لوحها

س: واذا قستها واشربیقالي انا بلا اکتوب ما نقدر انمش

بو: اسمع انا ما اقدت . ا اکتبت ماریمت . جهد اننادم عند حد .

س: یا بوعلام اذا انت ما تقدر وانا ما نقدر اید انولوا للور

بو: انریدوا القدام ؤ ما اتعودش هذا الهناره

س: کمدت هک نلعب لعبه اولیلی ینلعب اریح واللی ینخسر انا ببع الشریطه .

بو: صح نلعبوشا شکشکه

س: اوه ابوعلام انا خطیني شکشک

بو: نلعبوشا کرطه

س : الکرطه احرام . . . نلعب لمب احلال

بو: من وکت لحلال فیه اللعب .

س: شففت انا انقلک بیت شمروانت اتقول بیت شعر بید الحروف الاخر تع البيت
انتاعي

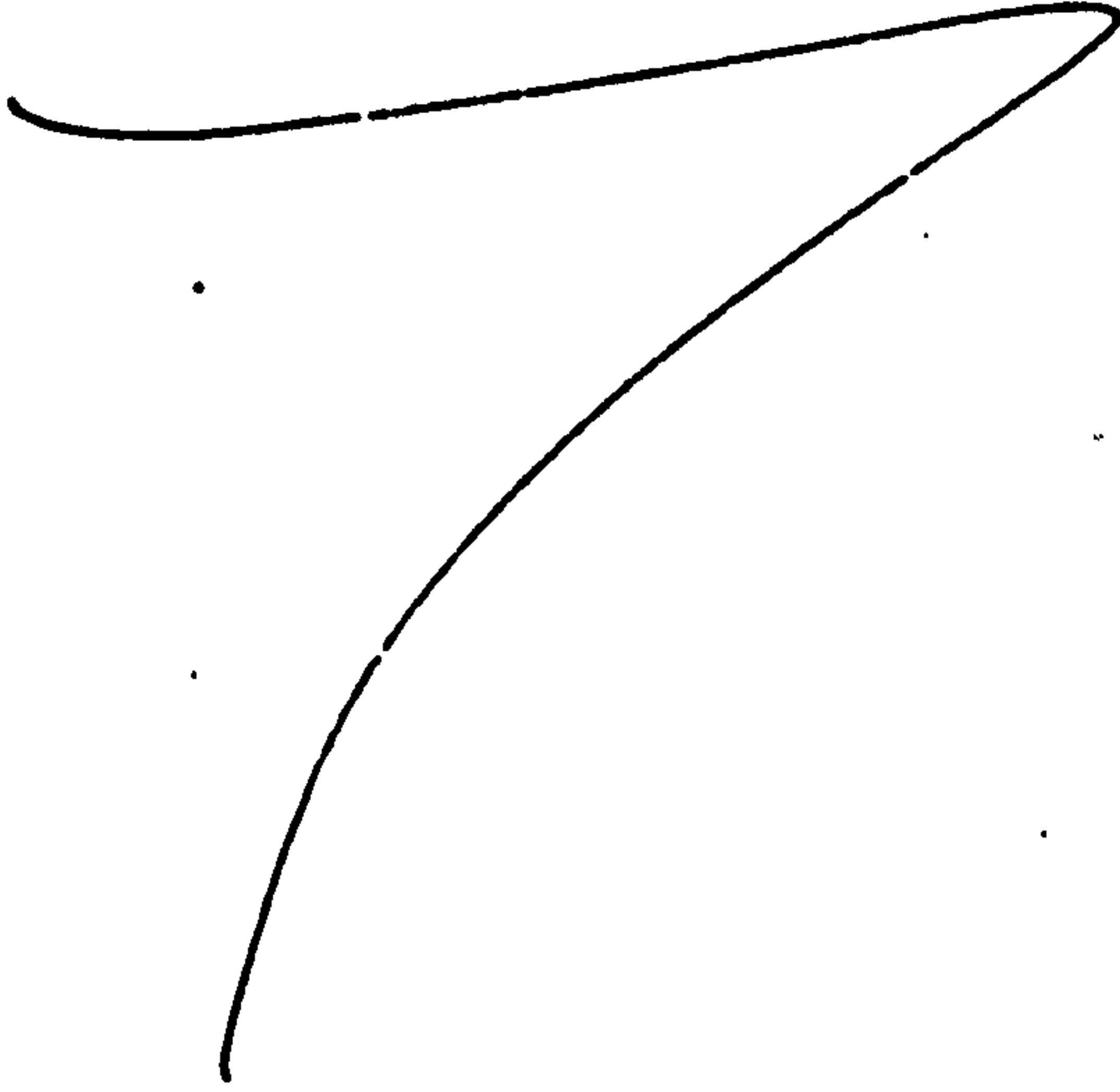
بو: کفاه کفاه ؟

س: انا انقول بیت شمروانت اتقول تیت شعر البيت انتاعک بید بالحرف الي فا لید
البيت انتاعي .

س: اتربينا فالعز فالخير فالمال ما اعرفنا اتبهديل ولا احشومة...
 كبا اللي احبها انديرها كنا انديروا اللي انحب لکن الدنيا ما ادم اعليها
 ادم كمار الهامل والسارح عندهم الشان... ابقى على خير يا زمان .

BOULEM rentre . S'asseai sur la charette

بو: انا اتربيت فالهم والمزربة هذا كما اعطت الدنيا باب كان يجي حفيان
 وليمه تولد فالفران . ودر كانزيد القدام...
 وأنت اللي اطبع بالشريطة .



(٢٥)

س: اندير عرس مالکبار
يحظروا فيه ناس الکبار
اندير عرس بتولوييل
يحظروا فيه قوم ياليل
اندير عرس زيــــن
و بالفيلة اموتوا الجسدين
اندير عرس بطكسيات
والمدية اشفوني في حيات
اندير عرس بالمشوى
بالطبول زرنه وغنا بدوى
اندير عرس تع افلان
کن کونوا احنا الکون البيان
اندير عرس يقعد تاريخ
و سهد نقهن وانشيخ

Pendant que Sekfali déclame son poème, à l'avant-scène. On installe à l'arrière scène des marionnettes géantes, qui représentent les invités. Sekfali s'adresse à elles. Les fait parler.

- Mariage -

الله اعنيك انت زادا الله انورك انت زادا الله اثبتك انت زاده الله الله انت زاده الله
اعيشك انت زاده

س: الشتى الشمس الحال - الشتى البرد اصحات . صبت . اه . ولرا

اسكنوا يا انسى . . .

خلوها تقراء اشوريه
باب قال استنيت استنيت
كلحقت المليون هذا هو . . .

بو: هذا عبد هذا موصية حتى لمنام افزد اعليك اسمع اذا شفت ابلاري
ظلمة خطر الفيوزات انتاعك طممين .
واذا ما شفت فيها ما طالع ما هابط .

خطرانت ما طلع ما هابط قمند كالزير لتكي ما اظحك ما تبكي
شف كتمني اتخرج فالدعيات ما نمن الا اذا شفت بميني . . . تصبح على . . .

Boualem repart dormir . Sekfali, prit de vertige, par la peur, .
se lance dans une danse extatique. Boualem se relève furieux.

بو: يا مصية اذا ريج تهبل ما تهلنيش امساك . اذا انت وفد كالماء انا مزلت انسرم
تعمل امزية يدرينا عن الشكيل .
امساك ما نكلوا ما نشربوا ما نرقدوا مان . . . نديروا والسوا .

س: ذاق خطري يا بوعلام ذاق خطري وءخفت . . . ماني عرف وين راك مديني كنادا تدبني
ما أنخافش انا كمنرفش واين راني رايح انخاف . . . الخوف ره قتلني يا بوعلام ذاق
خطري ذاق خطري ! . . .

بو: اسمع رنا سفالصحراء وءراه نص ليل واش اتخبني انذير انوسندلك على خا طرك .
اتحب انجيليك غيطة وء دركانصيط لك انجيلك شطحات اد رولك)
انديرك فيشطة انديرك عرس واش اتخبني اندير . . .

س: اه انديروا عرس

بو: ودير عرس ني لبطحت الله الله اكبر بصلات النبي . . .

س: اندير عرس انعرض اجميع احبابي وء ناسي اللي محبوا يفرحوا امنيا . . . انا ك .
انقول لولاري طلقوا له انمودوا الزواج وء تسرسوا واندير عرس . . .

بو: اتحب ادير عرس قم بيه وحدك .

س: مخلوم انقول بيه وحدي . . . اخرج من داري اخرج . . . !

SCENE VI REVE ET CAUCHEMAR

Boualem se lève presque en somnabule et s'adresse directement au public.

بو: انا ابلاردي شفتها فالمنان .
 قد ما انترب اليها قد ما انشوفها في المنام
 لار اتكون واش من تويل
 واش من سكتان
 ادراري انشوفهم خرجين من الصيد
 تمع في كسوة عيـد
 انا بلاردي جنات عند تجرى من تحتها الانهار
 جنات عند تجرى من تحتها الانهار

Sekfali se lève en hurant.

س: يابوعلام آزقات اعلينا يابوعلام . . . اركات شفتها . . . شفتها

بو: واش شفت

س: شفت ابلاردي

بو: ومبعد انا ثاني شفتها .

س: ابلار امقلبة يالطيب هذا اما يشبه الهماذا ولخر ما يشهد للخر .
 اللي قاعد ماهوا قاعد والي طالع ماهوا طلع
 اللي ماسي ماهوا ماشي . . . اللي رقد ماهوا رقد
 واللي فيق ماهوا فايق .
 ابلار دزني نغفس اعليك
 اللار حل نمكتبلع ابروسك
 ارلار حبههم خالدين فيها ابدا
 يارسول الله . . . !

Sekfali s'assoit et continue à marmoner Boualem au public.

س: تصبح على ختير

Ils s'allongent pour dormir. Sekfali se met à psalmodier à haute voix.

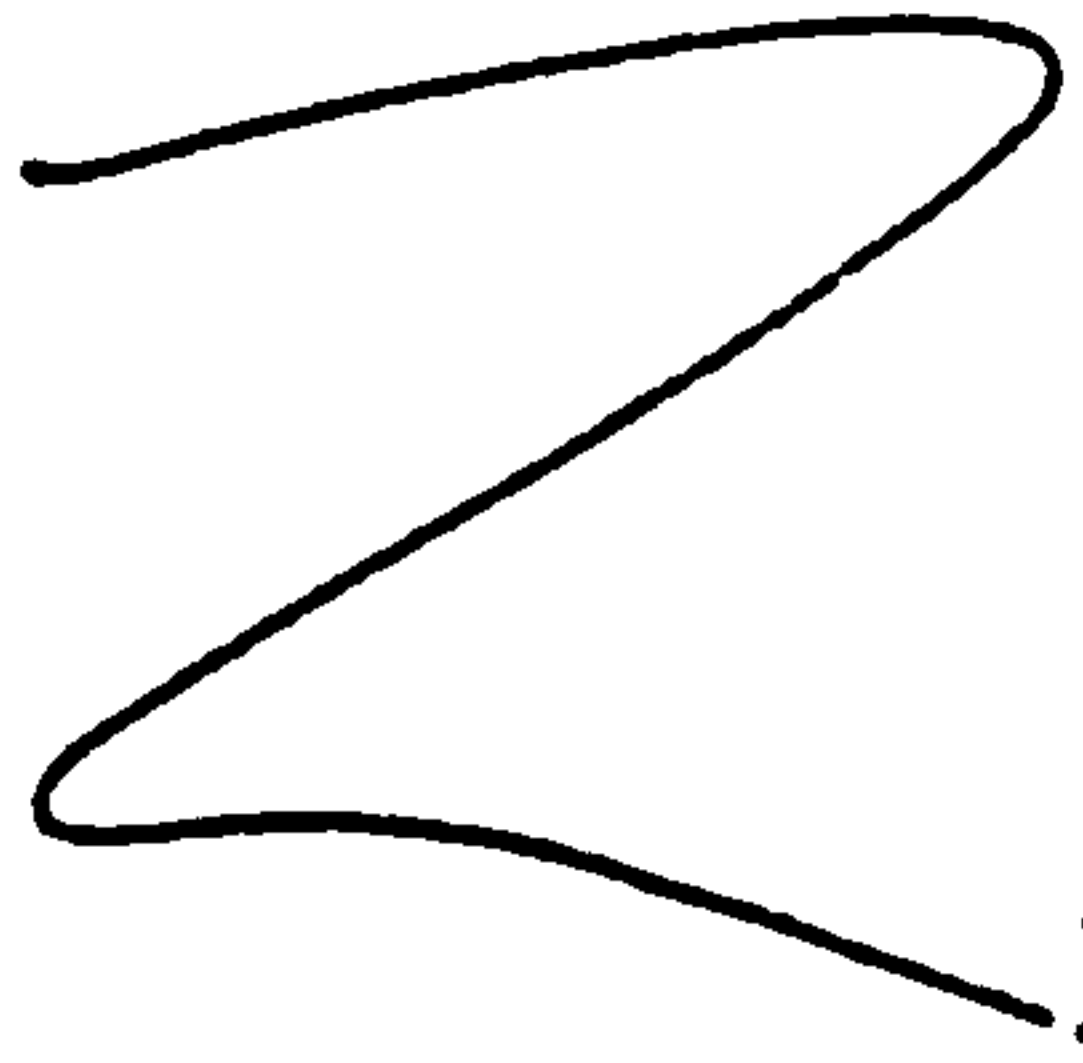
بو: ها سکنالی!

س: واش کین

بو: سبج فی قلبک

س: هیه انا ما نعرفش. . .

Et ils dorment. . . Musique.



س: اما احنا اقدم احنا ما نسواوش احنا والوا

بو: يا سكفلي واش انتلكانا في ابلادي كاين بزاف اصوالح انت ما تسرفهمش

س: انا ما نعرفش

بو: انت ما تعرفش

• Sekfali est vexé s'meporte dans une colère noire.

س: انا اللي علوم ربي قع في رائي انا ما نعرفش

انا اللي قارى الصرات والصورا

انا اللي قارى الفلسفة والمفسنة

انا اللي قارى التوحيد والنفاق

انا اللي قارى الحساب والاحزاب

انا ما نعرفش

بو: انت ما تعرفش

س: انا اللي قارى قرن 20 قرن 12 قرن 13 قرن 14 حتى القرن اللي سزال ما جاش تاري

وحفظوا ما نعرفش؟

بو: انت ما تعرفش وسكتنا .

س: ذوالعقل يشفي فالنعمي بمقله

وا خرا الجهالت والشقاوت ينعموا

لا يحد عنكم من عدو دممة

وارحم شبا بكم من عدو نزحموا

بو: لا يسلم الشرف الرفيع من الاذى

حتى يراق على جوانبك الدم

ومن العدو ما ينالك نفسه

ومن الصداقة ما يضر ويؤلم

هذي قلها المتنبي و عربينها .

س: بسم الله الرحمان الرحيم من هذا العباد

بو: يا سكفالي ترقد ابلا ما تكل

س: واش كاين ماكله

بو: تع الصباح (lui tend la gamelle avec le ser-pent.)

س: استغفر الله
Sekfali tout en préparant minutieusement sa couche.

س: بوعلام قللي هذا البلاد فيها لعرب؟

بو: فيها لعرب هل واش فيها رقریق

س: اشكوان يصرف

س: بوعلام وءهذ العرب بهظروا عربية ؟

بو: يهظروا عربية وازش حبيتهم يهظروا الزقلمية

س: اشكون يصرف

س: بوعلام هذا لعرب اللي ينهظروا عربية يمنوا ابربي

بو: يمنوا لبربي هل بشر حبيتهم يمنوا ابدغيوس *

س: اشكوان يصرف

س: بوعلام كمدوا اعرب يهظروا عربية وء يمنوا ابربي واش مديا لبلاد الناس احنا

ثاني اعرب وء نمنا ابربي وء يهظروا عربية

بو: انا في ابلا دي لعرب اجدد وء يهظروا عربية اجديده وء يمنوا ابرنا للقديم
يعني ربي تع ديمة .

س: حشى ! حشى !

بو: الحنش، اقلال اقلال . . .

س: اسمع به اتقول بيروا يلزم اتقول

مكتب ، مكتب ، مكتب .

و به اتقول بولتيك يلزم اتقول

سياسه ، سياسه ، سياسة .

بو: آوه ركغالط

لسيائيه كتكون بالسياسه ، و كتكون بالخشانة بدبزة تسمه بولتيك خطر انا

باب كان اقول دير السياسه امع خووك والبلتيك امع افرنسية خطر بولتيك فيد بونية

بومبة بوترطيقه آوه انت ما افهمت والوا

س: اسمع كتقول مكتب تنطق بالمبم بالكاف بالتاء بالببا اللي هم احرف عربية تسمى تنظر

بالعربية

بو: وعلاه كتقول بيرو ما ننطقش بالببا والر اللي هم احروف عربية .

س: احروف عربية لكن ينطقوا باللغة الاجنبية

بو: اهمله على احسابك يسماوه حركية .

س: هي بدات غدعوا اللغة العربية وراحوا للرمية .

بو: ابني اكبلاب . . . الببا والبر حركيه ؟

تشوف اكبدت آدورلي هخني انا خووك مدبيك اسلمني العربية بالفرنسية

والفرنسية بالعربية همدبية تعلم ~~فهم~~ لقب ميليه .

س: لتصبح على خير

Sekfali part s'endormir, Boualem prépare son coin pour
dormir aussi. Ambiance de nuit.

بو: شيخ سكفالي ما قلتليش البيرة واش اسمها بالعربية

بو: والله اصطركم . . . خطر احنا درنا القرة ابكر عيننا الطيح اكر من النايط . . .
وهذي احيال وهذي اشراشف . . . هذي عسكر . . .

س: اخطينا من هذا الشكيل شوف انا ما نعرف وين داك مدينا مدنا امع بعض
انعلمك تقراء

بو: انا مدبياً اشكون اللي قول لاغخ لقرية

س: قلني ما تعرف والبوا والبوا

بو: نعرف اشريه افرنسه . . . خطر ككانوا يحكمنا في لغاف العسر .

Où tu habite..... Au Douar. Tu as vu les Fellagas.....

J'ai pas vu. Tu as des enfants. Oui Cinq.

Tu mens . Je mens . je mens pas Mr.

Les arabes c'est des cons.

Non Mr. Oui Mr.

بد بدبوز اتعلمنا بزاف اصولح

س: اخطينا ! اخطينا ! انا نهظرا كعلی السربية

بو: آ السربية انا من السربية ما نعرف غير آليف خطر كاين واحد لفنية اتقول
آلف يا صلطني والمجران اكوني آليف
آليف هو السلطان .

س: والبوا تعرفها ؟

بو: البوا ؟ . . . اوه ما كان حتى اغنيا اعليها . . .

س: البوا كما باب - بير - بركه

بو: كما بيروا - بيرة - بولتيك -

س: هذي ما هيش عربية

بو: كفاه مشي عربية ؟ قع لعنرب عندهم بروات قع يبنفوا البيرة وقع اديروا البولتيك

S V - L'ARABISATION

س: قنتلي ما تمرفش تقراء؟

بو: انا منمرفش كفاه رني عايش وانت تمظرلي على لقراية

س: والديك ما قروكش؟

بو: في احييتي رحمت مرتين للجامع اتعلمت بسم الله الرحمان الرحيم وبمعد جات (الثرة) اهريت للجبل .

س: و بياك بيان قاري؟

بو: باب رح انهار واحد للجمع اتعلم بسم الله و جات (الثرة) رح للجبال مات التم ما ولاش الله يرحم

س: وجدك كان قاري .

بو: اسمع اسمع انا كتطلع للجدره انتاعي عشرين مرة من البر للجد تلتانا قع اعربنا القرة وطلمننا للجبل والقراية والوا . . . على هنديك اعيط لنا الجبال

س: كل وحدو سمد . . . كايين اللي طالع كايين اللي هابط كايين . . . كايين . . .

بو: قلي وانت بياكو وجدك كانوا قريين

س: احنا قع قريين قع علامه .

بو: اهمله ماد رتوش القرة

س: ذرناها بالقراية . . . بالقراية .

بو: القرة بالقرية فيها الموت

س: احنا ربي اسطرنا

بو: والله اسطرنا . . .

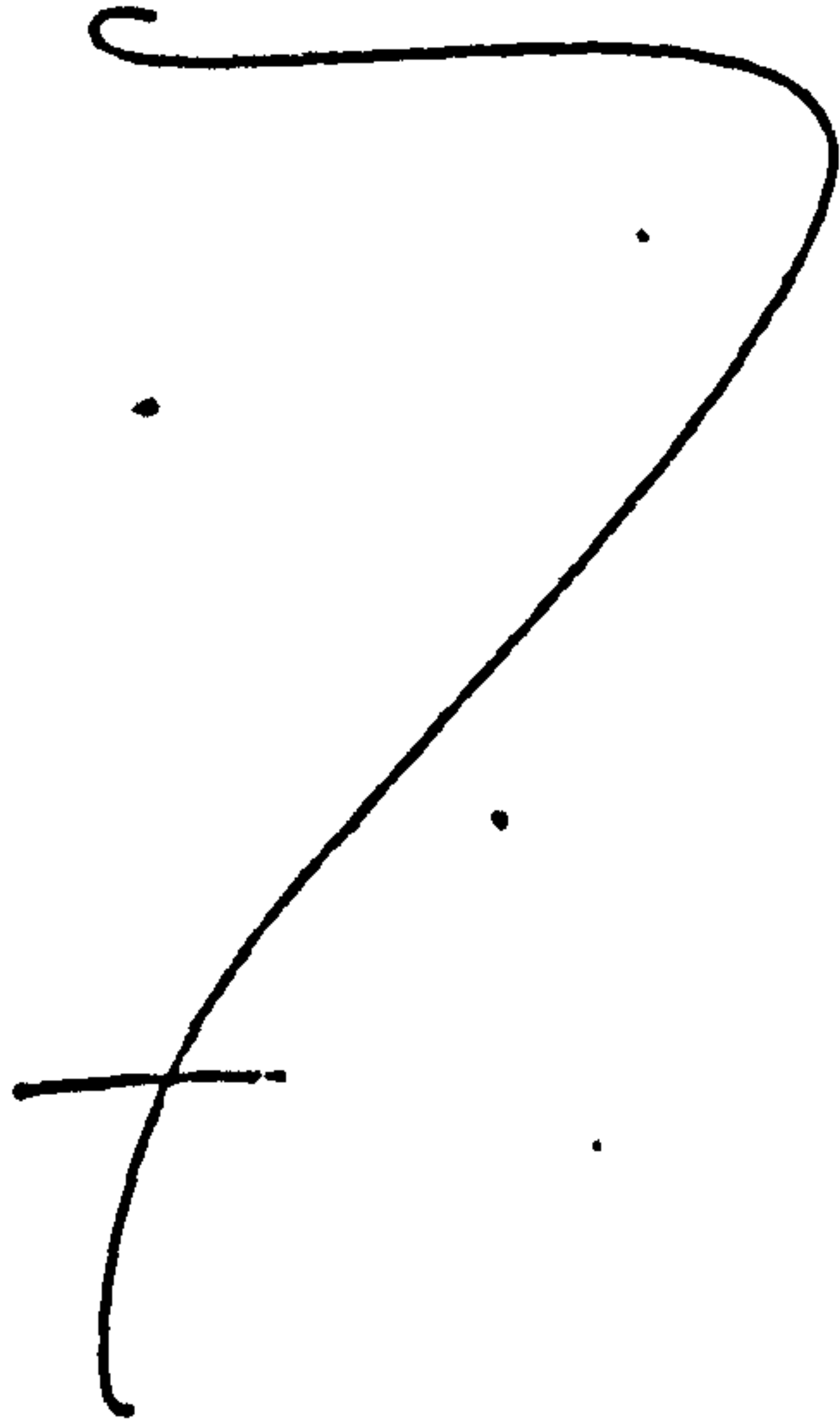
الفصل الثاني

16

اتكون الخدمة وكلنا نعمل
الخير ! فيه يجري وادي
هذي اقرون شاد نتامل
على الهم نمدى والانمدى
يا طير الحريا اعراب لكحل
في اسماكم نا شفتوا ابلا دي

ف

Après un circuit étudié, en mise en scène , ils se réinstallent
comme auparavant en changeant de place.



S IV PREMIER DEPART

Boualem pousse la charette, Sekfali le suit.

(Poème dit)

هو:

الشواف اشرف من قع القصمة .
والفريال اشنوا منوا اقاع الناس
والحبيد يعمفس يعمفس على راس لفصة .
والسوام اعوم في بحر لا لواقياس

فهب

المؤ دن لزموا من علو الصمعة
والقمح ينبت وين اعقب الفاس

~~عين كوربي م رمتهم~~

~~وانت انا كوربي م رمتهم~~

(chanson du départ)

يا طير الحريا غراب لكحل
في اسماكم ذا اشفتوا ابلا دي
خبروني وكنه نوصـل
لنتهنني و يتهنوا ابادي
ما الفرية لفريب اولي يدخل
ليترصم و يفرح ابميدى

بالحملاوى كان يتكلم لفرنسوية وكان يحالوا النسب بالفرنسية . . .

Putain, Vache, Con, Connard, Bicaud, Bounioul

كان قع حفظهم (par coeur) حتى النهار اللي قتلوه ووجسوه.

انا كان اسمي (SNP) العربي كستقلينا اطلبت من الدولة الجزائرية اتب

اسمي و سميت روجي بلحملاوى بوعلام .

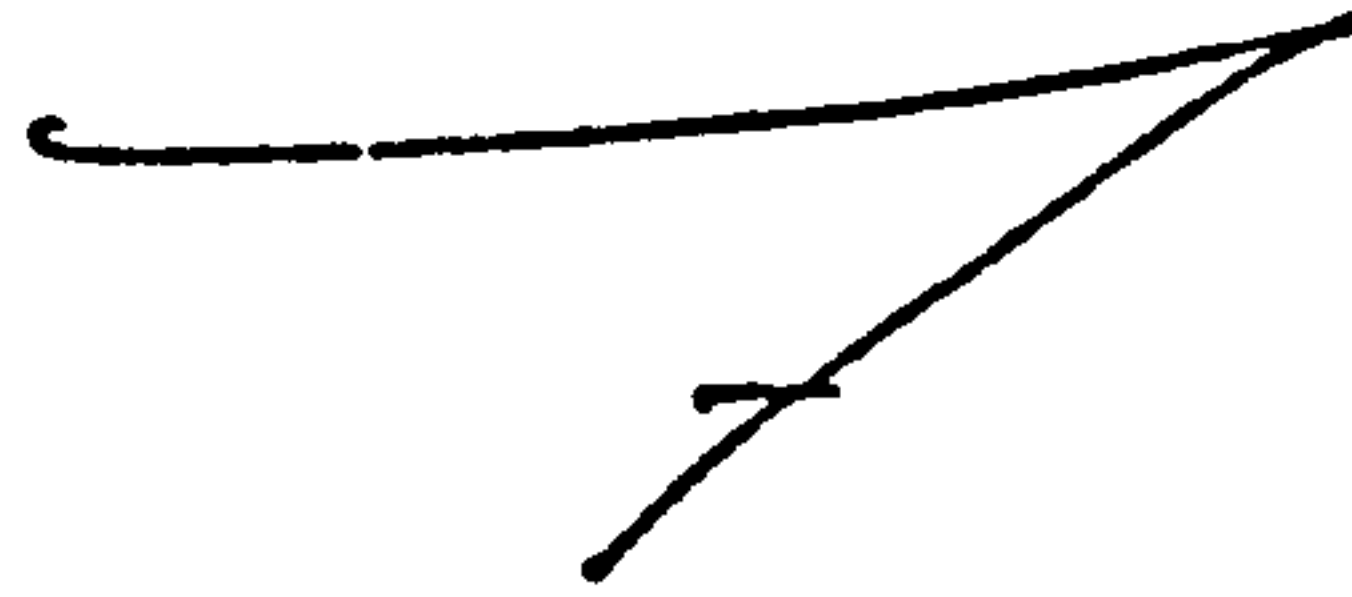
الشهداء اسموا عليهم ابلايس اطرق امدارس انا احسبت روجي اطريق اسم

بلحملاوى بوعلام

aujourd'hui / les mandarines.

Demain / les Grenades.

داهي أزقت القدم الحرب آه!!



الملاشكة واللي رخسوا واندلوا واستعمروا اضروابهم لكلاب و عند الحيق .

س: احمله هذا كلب بين لكلاب

بو: حشاك . . . بلحملاوى مات شهيد . . .

س: الله يرحموا . . .

بو: روح يا زمان وجي يا زمان بلحملاوى لابن لا بن لاهولا كلاهوتى النصاراللي ج

في ساحت السوق هدرروا امخرب بالرصاص

رجليه امفلقين بالشوك

المسكرو واقفين عند راسوا

اكلابوا مرميين اعليه

وكان شاد في يد شليق امصور اعليه اعلام الجزائر هديك اول مرة اللي

فيه اكلام الجزائر . ومن هذا اكا النهار شفت فيه اعلام الجزائر . ومن نسن

النهار سموه بالحملاوى بوعلام . حملاوى بوعلام . . .

Boualem sourit et continue son récit.

بلحملاوى كان وحيد امره مشي وقاس وحد الرصيد

نتقتل هي تطلوا

„Tu peux pas faire attention, espèce de Sale Arabe.

بلحملاوى دلها مبز امصها اسوى و قلها

Nous sommes sales à cause de vous.

Vous êtes propres grâce à nous.

Mais il viendra un jour, on fera la lessive.

جسوت حيا- par-des- Quel toupet, il parle français, par-des-
sus le marché

تعرف واش قلها

Par-dessus tous les marchés, il y a
le Souk, Madame.

S III HISTOIRE DE BOUALEM

س: واش راكادير ؟

بو: انزیدوا القدام . . . ريحين نترصموا هنا . . .

س: بلاك على الكتوب ! . . . انت رايمين انزید القدام انزیدوا القدام . . . تالسي . . .
والديك واش من هم اطبع فيك واش من ريح ادز فيك.

بو: بلحملاوى . . .

س: بلحملاوى ؟

بو: بلحملاوى الفلاق ما تسممش بيه 1 .

س: انا الفلاق خطيني .

بو: ككانت افرنسة شد عقبه وا حدور في هذا البلاد ككانوا حوتنا اذتسلي .
حلنهم حالت النازعات غرقا .

ك ككانوا ولدية ايسبحوا القرآن في اقلوسهم وييايموا الوكليين الحمد .
ككت انا اصغير ملى عشرة سنين ولخنونة خرج من نيفي والدبان بي .

س خلينا ما الخناين

بو: كان بلحملاوى في هذا الزمان ابيع المندرين فاصوق و كان اتسري .
حسبين مهبول .

Aujourd'hui les mandarines
Demain les grenades

يا والخير القدام يا لمرب آه

: بلحملاوى كان امربي الكلاب وكان امسميهم أ . ب . ت . ج . ح .

بو: يواكلابوا اعرب تصرف واش كان اتقول : اللي حبهم ربي والا نبيا . . .

هو: ياربى تبت اقدمنا في طريق الخير

س: ياربى اهديه و نرجعوا للسر !

هو: ياربى زيدني قوة وانزيد القدام .

س: اهديه ونرجعوا للسر!

هو: ياربى زيدني قوه وانزيد القدام

س: يرجع السر

هو: انزيد القدام

س: يابوعلام ماركش اتقول كما انقول انا

هو: اسمع كل وحد والفاحة اتا عوا ربي يفسرف بوعلام و بوعلام يسرن ربي

س: هذا الوجه اللي ربي يفسرفوا

هو: جاب ربي ما ادريرش بالوجوه .

**Boualem se lève, débarrasse le campement, il ramasse les
ustensils éparpillés par terre, et les met dans la charette.**

(9).

س: ان كما وان كتم ما كانوفي الكون كائنات كما كانوا الذين من قبلنا .
فنعبد الله كما عبده من قبلنا .
ونحمدوه كما حمدوه من قبلنا .
ونشكروه شكرا جزيلا
كما كانوا الذين من قبلنا . . . والسلام عليكم
بوعلام ايه نوض انصليوا !

يو: انا صليت بصد الله يقبل اعليكم

س: احطه نوظ نرفدوا الفاتحة

Les deux se lèvent et se dirigent vers l'avant-scène.
Les mains ouvertes . au ciel face au Public.

س: بوعلام قول كما تقول انتا

يو: انقول كما اتقول انت

س : تبعنني

يو: انتعك.

ياربي استرنا من العقاب الشديد ومن عذاب النار

يو: ياربي ارحمنا ابرحمتك انت الرحمان الرحيم

س: ياربي اسطرلنا عثوننا .

يو: ياربي ارزقلنا الصير .

س: ياربي احفظنا من الجوع ومن الشر

يو: ياربي قمننا ابقمتك انت القناع المين

~~س: ياربي اهذي الصغار الى طريق المستقيم~~

س: ياربي ابعده اعلينا الشياطين

يو: ياربي ابعده اعلينا الشياطين

س: ياربي اهذي الصغار الى طريق المستقيم

بو: شوف اسوي بلاكا بلادي .

س: اوه هذا فلاح اصغير

بو: بلاد فلاح اشتراكي تع ابلادي

س: واش هذا

بو: امهد انفهمك هي غول .

س: اسنه اكلام ربي يلحق الهدوك العباد .

الله أكبر

Boualem écrasé sous le poids de Sekfali s'écroule, tombe à genoux.
Sekfali reste assis sur les épaules de Boualem.

س: انما الاعمال بالنيات انوينا آنا دنوا ما قدرناش ياربي ثبت نيتنا .

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم . . .

بو: يا السكنالي .

س: واش كاين

بو: رني ما لتحت .

Sekfali se lève, rejoint sa chaise.

Boualem rejoint son coins.

Sekfali fait son discours du Vendredi.

س: الضلات والسلام اما بعد !

بو: واش كاين

س: ادرب النج

س: اليوم جمعة و ليد انصلوا واباه اصلي لبذ ان اذن وباه ان اذن يلزم سحر
مضرب عالي اطلع فوق الشرطه وانا نطلع فوقك اهداكون عندي مضرب عالي

بو: و بلاك البارج يوم الجمعة . . . و اين اعلى بالك

س: البارج جمعة و بعد غد وجمعة و كل يوم ربي جمعة كما تعرفش و كنت الج
وغدوة الجمعة

بو: القبلة صبتها . . . في هذا الصحراء امين انصلوا .

س: القبلة ؟ . . . شفاصلوا من . . . ومبحد انصلوا من و من . . . و من)

بو: على احسايك القبلة في نص (الكت شمان) (quatre chemins)

س: هيه يدات . . . هيا شدفيا شدفني ربي شدفيا شدفني ربي شدفيا . . .

بو: يا وانشد فيك والانشد في ربي ؟

س: شد فيا وانشد فيك و قع انشدوا فيد .

بو: آوه . . . انطرحوا . . .

Boualem descend de la charette et rejoint sa place.

Il s'assoit les genoux pliés, les fesses sur les talons.

Sekfali essaie de monter seul dans la charette. Il remarque

Boualem assis.....

س: بوعلام ! ما تزغذش

بو: واش كايين .

س : ما تزغذش . . . طبس :

Sekfali monte sur les épaules de Boualem qui le soulève.

بو: غول ركاثقيل !

س: بوعلام رني انشوف وحد الفلاج

س: طزلا!
وانا درك واش نكل

بو: كول راسك

س: انظبر راسي م... صح ياربي انظبر راسب؟ التمه صبتوني انخم...
واش ابقالوا من تدبير... واش ابقالوا من تدبير... واش ابقالوا من را.
كعدت همل امع الهمال... مهموال امع لمهابل انا اللي اقرت علم الد
و لخره ماشفناه الدنيا ما عشناها ولخره ماشفناها.
لاه ياربي لاه !!!

بو: يا واتسكتنا ولا لا

س: هنا اسكتنا... هنا اسكتنا...! انروح انصلي ربي اكبير...
Sekfali quitte la scène, en marmonant. Boualem Dort.

بو: والله والله لكان الجنة فيها عبادة كما هذا انا سروحش يا خوتي بزاف (est trop)

S II LA PRIERE

Boualem dort, Sekfali revient.....

س: بوعلام! بوعلام!

بو: واش كايين؟

س: نوظ!... نوظ!

بو: واش باغي ادير فهم روحك؟...

س: اركب فوق الشريطه

بو: واش باغي ادير؟

س: اركب... اركب

بو: هني اركبت واش حار...

س: واللذرورات احكام هي وللذرورات احكام معنتها واذا ازقات
اعليكم طهروا رسنانكم

بو: اما تمرفش اتقول جعت كايها الناس . . . ايه اروح قرب ذوق ولسو الس
Sekfali s'approche pour manger, hésite et se révolte.

س: اوه ! اوه ! هذا وقع اسباييك مديا للموت ابلا ما اعلا بالكا.

بو: انا ما قتلكش تبعني !

س: انا مشني مهبول اتبع هامل كما انت ابنا دم اكون لباس اعليه حتى يلن ر
في محنة امكركر كت في غرضي حتى عدت في غرض الناس
ابداري حتى ترميت فالصحاري كت بولا دي حتى اصبحت حصل في فوئادي
الوعد ارمانا والتاريخ ربطنا وثرني شاهد اعلينا .

بو: ياسكفالي

س: لا ابقي سكفالي لا ام كلشوم لا فريد الا طرش لا عياط ولا غياط
طرطوا

هذا الشبي اللي ركم اديروا فيه احرام هذا الشن عيبه هذا الشبي ادي
منعروف هذا الطير ، واين ريحه اتوصلكم ريحين تنتبوا السما

بو: اسمع اناري قالي اللي عشت ما ابنت اسريد انعيشوا

المزينة _____ y'en a marre

الذل _____ y'en a marre

س: الكفر _____ y'en a marre

بو: الجرع _____ y'en a marre

اذا قلولي كاين ابلاد فيها لميشة والخدمة والخير انا هذا البلاد
انرحلها ولو اتكون في اخر الدنيا اذا عينك اتبع تبع واسكت واذا مانعكثرت
هي الطريق قدامك سمحني عفيني

Boualem, part s'allonger pour une sieste. Sekfali vient jusqu'à
lui, et au-dessus de sa tête, lui lance.

س: واين اعرفتهم انت هذا الناس . . . ؟ والشريعة الشريعة ما امهاتش الله

بو: تبرك الله على الشريعة . . . لكان الشريعة تطبق في امهشة مترعية كنعود را

اعيشين على احساب الشرع يحكم اعلينا الشرع

اما احنا رانا فالثالث الخالي ابلا ملي رانا في ابلاد لحنوشة وين اشعر ر و

شريعة اللي تفريها

ايه ارواح تكل و قول ربي اعطاني . . .

س: لا لا صحة .

بو: ارواح

س: لا لا

بو: ~~ارواح~~

س: ~~اللي~~

بو: اسمع . . . اذا بيك على ربي ان الله غفور رحيم

س : ان الله شديد العقاب

بو: ان الله غفور رحيم .

س ان الله شديد العقاب

بو : (tant pis) اذا عقبني اعقبنني شيمان

Boualem mange, Sekfali le regarde...

Sekfali, dégoûté, déprimé, médatatif.

س: تعرف واش قال ربي ؟

بو: واش قال (Tout en Rouge)

س: قال " وللظرورات احكام "

بو: واش معنتها . . . " وللظروراتي احكام ؟ "

ابو قمقوم من بني قمقوم أقول أننا في الصين وفي اليمن يكل لحنوشة لقرودة
لقطط لكلاب وما يشبه لذلك
آبو علام تعرف وعلاه الشنوي عندهم عندهم أمكمشين

بو: أعلاه . . . ؟

س: خطر يكلوا لحنوشة . . .

بو: شوف ؟

س: من عاشرة قوما اربعينة يوما صار منهم ومن اكل حيتا توصف بيها . . .
اللي يكل لحنش يشبه للحنش
اللي يكل لخلوف يشبه للخلوف
اللي يكل الطبة يشبه للطبة

بو: واللي يكل لكباش ؟

س: هذاك يشبه للحلال . . .

Boualem tend à Sekfali la gamelle avec le serpent cuit.

بو: ايه تكل ره طاب

س: واش اللي طاب

بو: لحنش طيب و طاب

س: واش كون اللي ربح يكل هذا لحنش اللي كيب نورا و طاب ؟

بو: انا وانت كثر ما امقنا ~~طاب~~ . احنا . . .

س: بزرگنا . . . اسمع روح شوف كثر ما تلتقى احنش روح جيها يكل ابن عسوا انا
انا خطيني وزييد يزياده حتى اكتاب ما اعطاني اجواب اسحيح . . .

بو: اسمع اللي كتبوا هذا الكسوب ما اهر ليهم ما صير بنا ما ترما وش فالصحراء كـ
رانا مرميين كانوا ناس غزو ذلال و تفشاش على هذي بك اللي عافوا لحنش
اما احنا

س: سبحان الله العظيم يخلق الله ما يشاء .

بو: في هتي عندك الحق يخلق الله ما يشاء .

س: يخلق ما يشاء لأنه قدر وفي كونه قد يخلق ما يشاء . . .

بو: يا سكفالي وقيله هذا الحنش حيوا ربي اسوه اسوي . . احنا بفد ما عندنا .
نكلوا . . . واش اتخم لكان انطيهوه ؟ . . .

س: انطيهوه ؟ ! اوه ما ظنيتش احلال . . .

بو: ما عندنا ما نكل والوا

س: والوا والوا . . .

بو: يا نكلوا لحنوشة يا لحنوشة يكلونا خير .

س: اسنه انروح انشوف لكتوب . . .

بو: روح شوف . . .

Boualem sans se soucier de ce que diront les livres, met le serpent

à cuire. Sekfali rentre sur scène en poussant devant lui une charette
remplie de livres, il s'installe, et se met à les consulter.

س: العلماء الكبار في علم لحنوشه لقرودة ما قالوا غير الخير اعليهم . . .
ابوسفان المنكبوتي اخبرنا كفاه السوافه كانوا يكلوا لحنش لخبر ويستمر
في بعض من الادوية . . .
بوعلام ! ما لون هذا الحنش ؟

بو: هذا اخضر وعنيه زرق .

س: ولعيادوا بالله . . .

البرودي من بني برود اقل باللي فنا لحنش ثلثه احوايج السم - اللحم - والجا
وقل باللي علم التفسير اقول بقول معقول بللي السم قتال اللحم احرام والجا

احلال .

S I - LE SERPENT

En ombre Chinoise Boualem fait sa prière sur une musique étouffée de Muedzen.... Il finit sa prière, s'avance vers l'avant-scène. Pendant qu'il remet ses chaussures, entre Sekfali en hurlant...

س: بوعلام! بوعلام! ..!

بو: واش كايين؟!

س: احنش!

بو: هه وامبمد...

س: كفاه هذا امبمد... لكان عنطني لكان اكلاني لكان نقر اعليه لكان اخنتني

بو: ياكما عثكش ياكما اكلكش ياكما نقرش اعليك وعلاه اتقول لكان؟

س: (بيانسير) انقول لكان!

بو: انت ريمه ابهذا لكان انتاعك... لكان الارض تتهزل لكان السماء اطيح لكان
الجبل اريب لكان الواد ايفيغ. لكان نهمل لكان النجوع لكان انبستوا...

س: ابلا لكان ما كان كوان... الكون في لكان وه لكان في الكون... لكان ما
كان الكان ما اكون كوان... خطر الكائن الكوان خالق الكائن والكار...
الكائن كن فكان هذا ما كان.

بو: وين كان هذا الهم وين كان؟

س: كان فالكائنات؟ فالدنيا؟ فالحيات واين نعرف اعليه وكش! ..!

Boualem ayant une chaussure à la main, d'un coup violent tue le serpent, et le présente à Sekfali...

س: بوعلام! بوعلام! .. واش كايين

بو: كائن الكون لحنش كان فالكوان (coin)

Sekfali à la vue du serpent, recule lentement l'air dégoûté, et surtout apeuré.

النص الأول

BENAÏSSA Slimane.

BOUÂLEM ZID EL
GOUDEM.

بُوَعَالَمَ زَيْدِ الْقَدَمِ

1975

Versian

قالوا: يلزم نتاحدوا ضد الجريمة
ونكاتفوها لما ترفع الشكاية
في مسكنها سكينه على الحيط متوركة
ملحفة الماضي على رجليها مريمه
وهي تتبسم وتصبر في أولادها
مرارا تزج قصدها تشجع راجلها
جوهرة المصنع سكينه المسكينه
زحفت خلاص ما تقدر توقف على رجليها
دار في المسكن الحديث على الخدمة والنكبة
قالت لا تياسوا مدام سلخوا يدينا
نوجد معلم يجيبلي للدار السلعة
نخدمها بالقعاد وايط حق المعيشة
حتى النقل المعلم يخرج رابح معاينا
أنا نخدم عليك قالت بنتها الصغيرة
نطيب المفلوع وندل بيه في الزنقة
لا يا عزيزتي أقرى وانجحي ديك الفائدة
جوهرة المصنع سكينه المفلوعة
زحفت خلاص ما تقدر توقف على رجليها
الجيران واصحاب الحومة سمعوا بها
الكثير فزعوا حاملين السكر والقهوة

سلوكها الحسنة مع الجميع ونشاطها
مدربة سكية تعرف للتنظيم بـارزة
في تحليل المشاكل والظروف ذكية
ولما تخاطب تركب المعنى بدقة
حديثها حلو يفاجي ويرتكز على الجدا
تعرف تتكلم على الأفاق الرعيـدة
وتحس البنات على الحق والعدالة
تعبيرها واضح تختتمه بالتبسيمة
جوهرة المصنع سكية المسكينة
زحفت خلاص ما تقدر توقف على رجليها
أبكوا يا بنات المخلوقة حاملة في الركبة
رجليها ماتوا ضاعت وقفها الصلبة
سكية غايبة وزميلاتها في حيرة
كلهم يفكروا في معانيها وكلامها
كانت الجوهرة سكية تقول المسكينة
تترع المعلم تلوات عندي المصراية
كلهم يفكروا في حديثها الحلو وضحكها
كانت سكية الجوهرة تقول المسكينة
ضباطنا مليح لو تخبيه وتشي بالحفا
كلهم يفكروا في عزها ومواقفها
كانت سكية الجوهرة تقول المسكينة
إذا في طريقك اوجدت كلمة الحق طايحة
أرقد واستحفض بها غدوة تصيبها
جوهرة المصنع سكية المسكينة
زحفت خلاص ما تقدر توقف على رجليها
عولوا الخدامات يتغاروا وبلّوا لها

سكينة سكينة سكينة
 جوهرة المصنع سكينة السكينة
 زحفت خلاص ما تقدر توقف على رجليها
 ما تبرى ما ترجع لخدمة الأحذية
 هكذا صرحوا بالأس أطباء المستشفى
 سقم اللصيقة هما أسباب البليقة
 جوهرة المصنع سكينة السكينة
 زحفت خلاص ما تقدر توقف على رجليها
 عسان المصنع جاب الخبر هذا الصيحة
 فزير على العصار وبالكم يمسح في الدمعة
 سكينتنا قال أصبحت عديمة مريسة
 نشات جوهرتنا ضحية خلاص حشوها
 طلبت منكم تتحذروا ضد المصيبة
 الخطر مجاوركم ساكن اللصيقة
 قال اتحركوا يا بنات ونظوا الخطية
 جوهرة المصنع سكينة مروسية
 زحفت خلاص ما تقدر توقف على رجليها
 البنات صمتوا سكنت في بطونهم الرهبة
 تخشعوا طويل وسالت الدمعة على السكينة
 تعوق العمل والآلات تفير حشوها
 عاد شبه اللديب كاللي بكيات على الغاية
 عام الحزن على الجو وزاد في الورشة ظلمة
 جوهرة المصنع سكينة السكينة
 زحفت خلاص ما تقدر توقف على رجليها
 ساوما جوهرة المصنع على سيرتها

بعدهم وعود من الإدارة . . . أقوى الشعب . . . شرطي خرج من تحت الحزام
الخرزانة وقال وين هو الميت اللي داير ثورة ؟ . . . بدأت تطلع لي القرينة للراس
. . . العجوز خرجت من تحت باطنها الكفن وقالت لي هاك باش تسترخوك مسن
بعد ما تفسل له . . . الشرطي عرى على الميت وقال هذا يعرفه . . . المرض
بداو يجيوا بالزوج وبالثلثة واحد منهم لفاي من بعيد وقال لي فرج فرجنا
يا عمي جلول شوية حل الباب وخليه يخرج فرجنا ما راكم دايرين لنا لا تلفزة
لا سينما المحابيس راهم خير منا . . . سبيطاركم راهم يشف فرحونا شوية . . .
عليها ما وليت تفرز والو عيني القلبوا ، نسمع في العجوز تقولي في الوزن أمه
يسموها حلينة وبوه عدة هاك هذى ليك ودارت لي ميا دورو في يدي نسمع في
الشرطي يقول . . . تنظوا . . . وين هو الميت الصحيح ووين هو الميت المزور . . .
قست للعجوز دراهمها وانطلقت نجرى . . . خليت الدعوة مخبلة عاد ما دخلوش
فيها جماعة النقابة قلت لروح بدّل الهواء لا نطفرها في روعي . . . في هذا
الساعة تكون صحات الدعوة شوية وأنا بردت جنوبي . . . هاني تغلبت على
الترفزة وأنتم دائما جايبينها ورايا خسارة تتقلق خسارة عصبي خسارة مرفز . . .
أسمعوا اذا بغيته تريدوا تجروا أجروا والله يكون في العون . . .

العامل :

روح . . . روح يا الفهايمي العاقل روح تخدم

العاملة :

روح الله يحاونك . . . جلول الفهايمي مسكين دقيق في السيرة وذكي في الخطبة
مزية اللي تغلب في النهاية على الضعف اللي كان فيه . . . كان عصبي يتقلق تتغلب
تتغلب عليه الترفزة يزعف ويخسرهما .

راها مصلحتنا مقلوبة واحد عندنا ميت هادو يومين كنا حاسبينه راقد حتى
بدا يريح مريض آخر رانا مسجليه ميت . . . قولي لهم يجيبوا الميت ويحسرو
يدوا الحي راني مبلع عليه في لاهورق . . . مطراي قالت . . . ها بالنيسة
مشات تجرى وتتدب في حنوكها . . . قلت لها انزبة كانوا القجورى عامرين حطوه
غير فوق الزليج عند فم الباب كان يروح ما يوليش وليت أنا للمصلحة . . . نصف
ساعة من بعد تخلطت الدعوة عادة، ديك البطحة اللي عند الباب كالسوق . . .
جابوا الميت وجاوا يجووا الأطباء . . . السيد اللي داخل " لاهورق " بلح
على روحه بالزكروم الدخلاي وقال لهم : ما نخرجش جيبولي عزيزين . . . جات
أمه عجوز كبيرة قالت أعطوني ولدى نديه ندفنه قلنا لها راه حي قالت
قعد حي في القلوب أجربا وأجركم . . . غدولا ندفنوه ان شاء الله ها هما
الكواغظ كلهم عندي هنا: بيان الطبيب وها شهادة الوفاة مسحوة من البلدية
. . . أعطوني أوليدى أمله كلهم جاوا للدفينة . . . السيد ولدها راه غير
يطبطب ويلقى والناس اتسقي . . . عربان؟ . . . جامد؟ . . . نايسة فيسه
اللحية؟ . . . واحد قال الحمد لله اللي راهم يحياو العوتى في بلادنا . . .
واحد آخر قال الفهايمي هو اللي اخطب على العوتى وقال لهم نديروا جنة في
بلادنا . . . السيد راه غير يطبطب . . . لاحقو ناس الميت انتاع الصبح
صابوا ميتهم برى في البطحة نصفهم يسب ونصفهم يتوغ . . . الفجوز أمة
الآخر وبن ما نروج اتبع في حاكمتي من الكم وتقول لي أنا وراسك أرواح تاكل
طعيمة هذا الليلة للحسنة رانا دايرين الطلبة أرواح تقسر . . . نعتك الدار
ساهلة سقي على البخارى اللي يخدم في المرسى التالي في الناس يوربك . . .
الأطباء يسألوا كيف داير المجنون . . . زينة تتول كسروا الباب . . . عائلة الميت
اللي قاعد برى نصفهم يدفل ونصفهم يحوس على الفسال والسيد لداخل يطبطب
ويلقى ما نخرجش خدمت حقي بركاني . . . خلوي نرتاح . . . الدعوة ملوكية
اهنا . . . الدعوة نظيفة كلها زليج بيض والشعب هابي مرتاح كلهم زلطة
وقيلين في برد الحال . . . ما نخرجش . . . أم السيد ما زال قابضة في من الكم
وتأكد . . . لاحقوا وحود من الفرع النقابي والخلية معاهم الشرطة . . . لاحقوا

تعرف سقسي ربك أنا اللآ عبد ضعيف . . . أنا زوفرى . . . أنت عزيزين قال . . .
يا لطيف . . . أنا جلول . . . زاد قال على حساب المطرقة اللي راك رافدها والصدد
اللي خارج من عينيك أنت هو عزيزين . . . كانوا حدايا زوج موتى مدوديين
مخليينهم باش يفتشوا فيهم قلحت من فوقهم الزور وقستهم له قلت له هاك حتمي
روحك حتمي عظامك لعل أنت انسان . . . جهنم وبين صدقة على الوالدين . . .
يا ودّي أحنا هنا على وجه الأرض . . . هذا سبيطار قلت لك . . . وبين الأطباء
وبين الفارمليات قال . . . الفسأل اداهم في الهربة . . . أنت هو سيدنا
عزيزين وراك تقسر علي . . . لو كان جيت سيدك عزيزين او كان ضربتك بضربة يلصق
مخك في الحيط . . . سيدنا عزيزين ما يقصرش يا وليدي . . . زاد قال أنا الله
يرحمني ويرحم أمة محمد دخلت للمستشفى مين كنت على وجه الارض باش يفوتوا
لي الراديو على الكبد . . . جاب لي ربي ثم اللي خرجت عمري . . . شوف انا
وراسك لظهري فتش ربما انساوا ابرة واللا مقص ما بيث عارف تاع كيف صرالي . . .
حدك ثم قلت لك . . . أقعد وبين راك . . . أقعد . . . ربح نروح نسلخبر على قضيتك
ونولي . . . علاش تروح تستخبر ؟ . . . نشوف في الدفتر . . . ما كان له يا سيدي
. . . أنا شافي على المعصيات اللي درتها وقابل العقاب . . . قلت له هذا كفر
. . . قال هدى صراحة وأبدى يعد . . . عطيت الرشوة باش يدخل ولدي للمدرسة
عطيت الرشوة يطلقوا لنا الماء عطيت الرشوة باش دخلت نخدم . . . فايرت هي
داري عايرت في ملعب الكرة بعت " السيماء " مارشينووار طفيت التلفزة لما وصلت
نشرة الأخبار عايرت في القهوة كليت . . . حبسته . . . كيف سماك الله ؟ قال
ما يهمش الآن . . . جابوك على الكبد قلت ؟ . . . جابوني فعابلي . . . كليت رمضان
كليت رزق أبأ وكليت شوية خلوف . . . خليت يعد غفلتو غير بالشوية وخرجت
نجرى . . . بلعت من وراي الباب . . . قعد يطبطب ويحلى سيدنا عزيزين سيدنا
عزيزين أرواح نحكي لك على جواز السفر سيدنا عزيزين مول المطرقة . . . مشيت
نجرى وبقيت ندور في الأجدحة ، الاعاش الأمراض العقلية ، الجراحة ، أمراض
المعدة ما عيبت نسال : ما راكمش غالطين في العوتى أنتاعكم . . . ألا أمواتنا
كلهم مجردين . . . مزبة زمزبة ربي تلاقيت مع زبنة المرضة قالت لي : يا جلول

العائلة :

ما طرالي

العلم :

عظمة الله القمار .

جلول :

بكشت . . . تلفت علي الشهادة . . . أنا نحوس على الشهادة في راسي وهو
الكلام ومتغلب علي وفايض من في وليت غير نخرج ما حاصي ما نقول والسيد راه
يشوف في . . . لنا راني نحوس على الشهادة ونقول في راسي : الحمد لله
رانا غاية راهم عاطيينا كل شي جايبين لنا الماكلة من الخارج . . . خفت قلت
لو كان يمسي نضربه بالطرقة . هو يخزر في وأنا نخزر فيه . . . هو يحل
في عينيه وأنا نخون فيه . . . طاحت على الشهادة . . . قلت له تقرب
يطيحوا ستيك . . . قلت له زهر . . . عباس سمعتي نهدر . . . حبس التجويد
سقاني من بعيد قلت له راه واحد من هادواك اللي بلا تفسال باغي يخرج . . .
ما ساعدني ما رد علي قلفط سرواله وزاد فيه كالبرق . . . قال العاصر . . .
مين فات بحدايا يجري ما شفتش شفت خياله وحسيت بالزف . . . على حساب
الزف يكون دخل في كاهو وقلبه . . . ما بالنية السيد الآدامي في الصفة
ادرك على الحيط قال لي بمشقة : السلام عليكم . . . شواره زرق وبتكلموا
كالقباب . . . قلت له واش كاي . . . أنا جلول الفهايمي وأنت واش تكون انسان
واللأ جان . . . بدأت ترجع لي الروح . . . بديت نوخر غير بالشوية قال لي
ما عندكش قارو قلت له ما نكميش أنا نوخر وهو متبعني . . . مفاصله يوزوزو . . .
ربعت والمطرقة في يدي وبقيت نشوف فيه من بعيد . . . قعد هو يحرك في قوايه
. . . خدي الفسته انتاع الخسال كانت محلقة شاف فيها مليح قال : سلحة
فرسا دارها على حجره استربها روجه . قلت في نفسي هذا ماشي جان هذا
انسان . . . بعد شوبه حب يقربلي ارفد للسماء المطرقة وقلت له حدك ثم . . .
قاع من فضلك جهنم وين ؟ . . . يا لطيف قلت له هذي " مرق " من هنا تقلع . . .
هذا مستشفى . . . قال وانا واش نكون حي واللاميت . . . واط كيفاش بخيتني

العامل :
:

لا ميين هكذا غير خلىنا نجروا معاك نونسوك بعد ...

العامل :
:

أحكي لنا واش صايو لك يا جلول ... فاجي على عمرك رانا معاك ... أجرى مليح أنتي ... قول جلول ربّما نستادومن كلامك .

جلول :
:

ما عندكم ما تستفادوا ... غير النرفة راني نصبن فيها بكرعي ... بحركها ونرجع لخدمتي ... دورو ... دورو من هنك على المخبر المركزي جناح الأراض البولية نفوتوا من وراه ... الخدامين والمرضى كلهم راهم برى يستنوني نفوت باش يشجعوني وبصفقوا عليّ .

العامل :
:

نتمنى لك تلجح في هذا الجربة ان شاء الله .

العامل :
:

أنا وراسك يا السي جلول اجتهد واتخلب على النرفة ... راك تشفني ميين تخصرها وتدّي في جنابك، بالثمن أيام وبالخسطاءش يوم غير هدن واذا بغيتنا نجرو معاك قام الليل أحنا واجدين ... أجرينا مع آخرين تحسا أنت .

العامل :
:

فرغ ... فرغ يا جلول ترتاح .

جلول :
:

كنت خدام داخل المصلحة عند الموتى حال بيت " الباب " البرد الكبيرة بيت التجورة ، كنت أنظف في الأنابيب ساعة على ساعة الثلج يغلف عليهم ... الماء في داخلهم يولي كالجليد قاسح ويحصرهم ... ما بالنية أنا من جهة وحدي نخدم بالمطرقة وعباس " العا " الفسال وحده كذلك من الجهة الأخرى في البوبتة متاعه يجود وينقي في الرخامة اللي يخدم عليها ... أنا لضرب بالمطرقة حتى نشوف واحد السيد خارج لي من الضباب معضم أخضر وعريان كما جابته امه .

العاملية :

أنا نجرى مع جلول واللي فيها فيها . . . أقعد أنت تتفرج كالشفاية .

العامل :

أيا يا لآلآ قاع نجرورا . . . المحامية تغلب . . .

جلول :

أنا الظالم . . . أنا الظالم . . . واش جابكم ليا . . . ؟ سمحوا في خدمتكم
وجايين تلبها معايا . . . ؟ خلوي غير أنا بزاف . . . أيا ولو . . . ولوراني على

كل حال قريب نكمل . . . نزيد دورة واللا زوج ونحبس . . .

العاملية والعامل :

أحنا رانا مكلمين (الخدمة) خدمتنا .

العامل :

جينا نساندوك يا الضي جلول .

العامل :

إذا ما خفتش ربي يكذبني على حساب الخطوة والتحزيمه راك تحضر في روحك باش

تشارك في مسابقة الحزب ؟ . . . ياه . . .

جلول :

اللا . . . راني نبرد في الجلوبي . . . نجرّب في هذا العقسة باش نتغلب على

اعصابي . . . باش ما نخسرش . . .

العامل :

شفتي وأنت تتعوفي . . . أجروا جلول هبل . . . أجروا . . . قلت لك جلول مذعور

وشارب عقله . . .

العاملية :

الحمد لله على السلامة .

جلول :

الله يحمّد رايبك .

إن شاء الله الليلة باش ما يساطرش عليك الجرح درى عليه الحرمل ودير فوق
منه الخليع . . . أيا خويا ما أجرى .

العامل : :

أعجبني أنا في الرابعة من كان خدام بالليل . . . وعود جابوا عريس مكستم قالوا
راه تعبان خاصة أبرة باش يتقعد أهله وأهل العروسة راهم يستنوا في الجلطيطة
. . . . أعجبني جلول مين جرى وراهم وقال لهم روحوا يا الجهال الجهاد فني
العلم ماشي في الزائة . . . أدى سبع أيام .

العامل : :

الخامسة مين قبل المرأة عند باب المصلحة أمراه التوليد . . . كان مخرج معاه
قرعة الأوكسين . . . شاف المرأة طاحت وطاح منها الزبودر . . ارمى على الباب
القرعة طاحت على الزاجة كسرتها وفي رمشة من العين جيد العوس قطع السرة
خاد الصبي من رجليه كالقينة وطلح يجرى بيه لما وقفوه أمام لجنة الطاعة
والتأديب قال لهم الزهرة مرتي وأنا اللي قبلتها في الثلاثة الأولين والمرأة مذى
اللي تريد على عتبة العيادة يا راجلها زواني يا ما عندها اللي يقوم بيها . . .
ضربوه بيومين على الزاجة اللي كسرهما .

العامل : :

يا عثمان خويا جلول راه يبان لي عيان راه يجرجر في كرميه وهذا الجرية ما فيها
حتى غسة . . . شوف مليح عيا .

العامل : :

جلول ما يعياش .

العامل : :

للتحقوا بيهم ونشوفوا .

العامل : :

هيا ابغيتي نجروا معاه ؟؟ أهمدى يا مرأة . . . اذا دخلنا نجروا معاه قاع
السبيطار ينوض يجرى وراه جلول .

العامل :

هبلتي يطردوه . . . ؟ لو يغلطوا ويطردوه المستشفى ينقلب على قفاه والدم اللي راه هنا يسيل سواقي يولي يطوش على عشرين مترة .

العامل :

في الثالثة ألبيرة

العامل :

نعم . . . التقرير اللي داره ووزعه على العمال . . . أحنا علقناه عندنا في المصلحة وراء الباب . . . جايها من الكافة انتاع السبيطار وطالع بيها حتى للسطح . . . يتكلم على تكوين العمال المرضى والأطباء . . . على الأساتذة قال ضعيف وما عاطييناهش قيمة . . . المستشفى غير كافي نظرا لعدد سكان المنطقة . . . الأجنحة مفصلة على بعضها بعض ما يتعاملوا ما ينسقوا بيناتهم . . . كايين المصلحة اللي منظمة كالمملكة فيها الملك الأمراء والحاشية . . . الفوضى في التسيير وفي الدواء . . . نهار مكاش الخيط والغدوة ما كاش الابرة والنهار الثالث ما كاش الماء . . . والأجانب دايرين رايسهم في الأدوات الطبية . . . أدى فيها شهر وثلاث أيام

جلول :

إذا عبيت يا جلول ربح شوية . . . اتلفس أنت حر . . . مالك خايف قاع هاك . . . واش خاصك يا السي محمد ؟ ههك المستشفى يا خوبا . . . نعم هنا ما راکش تشوف في الدومات . ما راکش تشوف فينا ندمروا في سيارة الاسعاف . . . هذي قبالتك ماشي " لا ميلانس " اسمح لي خوبا . . . ما عليهش واش خاصك ؟ . . . راني مفقور شوف مصاربي في يدي . . . وين تروح ؟ واش من جهة تأخذ . . . ؟ أدمر معنا السيارة نوربك في طريقنا . . . يا السي محمد المستشفى يدخلوا له من هنا . . . معلوم ما راکش تشوف في الشرطي واقف واش خاصك ؟ . . . جيت نداوى طالب من الله يسترني . . . كيفاش ؟ كراعي طار . . . انخس وراي رافده معايا . . . حازم الساق . . . شوف . . . راني نشوف في الصباط خارج من الجيب احسبتي عما . . . الأطباء خرجوا ما كان حد في هذا الساعة . . . حظ كرايك هنا نعطوك ورقة وولي غدوة

العامل :

خصارة تتغلب عليه النرفة يزغف ويخصرهما في البداية بداها عوجة . . . كان غاية يدخل ويخرجها تخاصم ومع واحد من ذوك اللي يبيعوا دمهم . . . صرعه بالطرق . .

جلول :

أجرى ماه . . . أجرى . . . عييت ياه عييت . . . عييت الفهايمي ياه . . . حاسب روحك غير أنت تجرى ياه . . . الفسال حتى هو يكون يجرى وبقراً في آية الترسى . . . علاش تجرى ياه . . . ها كيفك كيف الشعب . . . الشعب كله راه يجرى . . . أنت خير منهم . . . ؟ أنت تستهل تمرن ويجيبوك لعندنا . . . أيا هز كرميك وانطلق لا يحكموك .

العامل :

في الثاية ضروه بثلك أيام . . . صابوه مدخل كراطين للمرضى . . . قالو له راك تببع وتشرى راك داير طراباندو في السبيطار قال لهم اضربني وابكى وسبقني واشتكي . جبت الكراطين للمرضى داير الخير في المساكين باش يفرشوم الأرض باردة عليهم . . .

جلول :

أجرى يا حبيبي أنا ما عندك ما تحكي لي المستشفى ليك دير فيه اللي يهوى لك . . . احنا نزوقوه من برى ووفرسوا فيه الورد . . . والباقي عليكم . . . راكم تقولوا باللي احنا ما فنيا وانتما بغيثوا تديروا الاشتراكية همالا ديروا . . . ديروا يا خوبا ديروا . . . خلونا احنا في عييتنا وانتما ديروا . . . راكم تقولوا باللي احنا ناكلوا . . . يا سيدي نديروا باللي احنا ناكلوا . . . وانتما واشراكم تديروا . . . ها ديروا . . . أنت جهنم وقليلة فيك يا جلول . . . أنت يقطسو لك مرتين وقليل . . . أجرى . . . أجرى باه .

العامل :

يقولوا على ما سمعت باللي الملف الادارى أنتاه يوزن خمسة كيلو ونصف ركل . . . كيفاش حتى ما لمردوهمش؟

العامل :

ايوى شفتي . . . قلت لك راه داير برنامج . . . سمعته يتكلم على الحجج ياه . . .
على حساب الجربة هذى راه فاتها طويلة واذا مة خفتش ربي يكذبني العفسة
العفسة هذى غادية تتطرق في وزارة الصحة عغربت والله الا عغربت شفتيه
كيف معول ويدق في الارض . . . الحجج يا محاينك الحجج .

العامل :

أنا قاع ما فرزتلهش الكلام المخلوق . . . لو كان في عقله يدخلنا معاه في الحوية
ويفسر لنا .

العامل :

كان يتكلم معانا باللغز . . . أنت ما تفهميش . . . نهربت الحجج معنتها بعدوا
لا يقيسكم الرش . . . لو كان محتاج للاعانة يطلبها جهار جلول ما يخافش . . .
ما تشفيش على الاضراب اللي نظمه في النهار النهار وأدى عليه شهرين .

العامل :

مسكين . . . دائما في فمه كلمة الحق . . . دائما يقول الطب من أهم الوسائل في
المجتمع اذا بغيتهو تحسنوا الانتاج اعتنوا بالصحة . . . راه المسكين يسيل بالحرق
من كل جهة وطريق .

العامل :

عذاك ماء . . . ما شفتيش الجيوب والصباط كيف مشمخين . . . هاو العرق قاع
هاك . . . يخرج من الصباط . . . ؟

العامل :

ما انتبهش مليح كنت متبعة عينيه باش نشوف اذا يعقلني . . .

العامل :

اعقلنا وهزّ راسه . . . أنت راكي باغية تهليليه بالسيف . . . لو كان هبل لو كان راهم
بعض من الادا. ريبين تفضوا بيه وكفوه .

العامل :

دار العديان في المستشفى وفي الحق مسكين هو الحنين والكريم فينا قاع كيما رانا

الحاملة :

الراجل الرقبة يا عثمان فقد عقله الحادل المسقم يصبح ضحك يا عثمان خوياً
... المشاكل اللي بيناتهم عليه هما اللي طيحوه يا عثمان خوياً حقي وما
كيفه حد لا مسؤول ولا نقابة يا عثمان ...

الحامل :

جلول الفهايمي ما يهبلش قلت لك سكتينا . جلول الفهايمي حاسي بلاقاع حامل
معاه كاميو من المبادئ والقيم ... جلول الفهايمي ما يطيحش .. مخه منظم
متين ... مخه بحر ... جبل ... طيارة .

الحاملة :

مذاك علاش المسكين راه يجرى وطالق العجاجة ... يا عثمان خوياً .

الحامل :

اسكتي " يا " يرحم اللي ماتوك خليبي نشرب عقلي عفسة ... هذى عفسة
يا خيرة ... أنا ميقتن باللي عفسة هذى تكون عفسة كبيرة ... ما هوفايست
حمر وبشالبي ..

جلول :

كولوني ... كولوني ... أرسو على شواربي كلمة أسكت ... صار هكذا يا السي
الفهايمي أحنا ضد الشعب ... ضد الطب المجاني ... عندي الحجج ... كايطة
كمشة قليلة من الأطباء اللي يحبوا وطنهم وشعبهم واللي عندهم الضمير المهني
... قلال اللي يشفهم المسكين ... الأغلبية في الأطباء يتسماو ... قزادرية ..
يختلفوا غير غير شوية على القزادرية ... وحود حالفين وموفرة فيهم البلاد
والآخرين طالعين على باب الله ... الطب المجاني يا السي الفهايمي ماشي
الفوضى لازمه يتنظم ... مدا بينا ننظوه مع مواليه اللي محتاجين ليه ...
ننظوه بالجهار في النهار القهار ... أنا ما نسواش ... ما نحشمش ...
السوط ما ينفعش بيرهش ... سفود أحمر جمرة ... وأكوى ... أكوى ... صار
عندك الحجج؟ ... اللي عنده الحجج علاه يجرى ... أجرى ... أجرى على
كبرك .

شفت وين يوصلوا العدالة الاجتماعية والطب المجاني ... ياه ... أجرى ...
أجرى صعيب جلول يا لطيف، ما يطلق حدّ لا ادارى لا طبيب ولا عامل ... ها
راك اصبحت تجرى مط صايب لوين الناس تسرق الدواء . اللحم . كيسان . قرع
ملاحف . خضرة . سكر . قهوة . كل ما يطيح على اليد وأنت جاييها وراهم
تصهي وتدابز فالناس ... ها راك اصبحت تجرى ... ها أجرى ماه ... روح
يا جلول الخصايمي روح ... الطب المجاني ما زال ما اطبعو عليه وما زال ما
فهوه مليح يخلي دار وعدك ... أنت اللي ما زال ما فهمت مليح وخنشن راسك
... الطب المجاني راهم فاهمينه يا المحوج مليح ويعرفو كيف يقصروا عليه
بيه ... الفقراء والمساكين !! ... يا ودى أجرى واسكت أنت تستهل القريض
... من صاب اللي يقرصني ويزرق لي الأفخاذ ... السبيطار هذا كاللي خلاه
لك البارودى بوك في التربة ... غير كاشر ما كاشر ينون، يعومش جلول ولد
البارودى ... ما طلقت حدّ يا بن عمي ... كلب مرهوج ... سوطوني ...
سوطوني أنا خوكم سوطوني ... أقرصوني .

الحاملة :

مسكين جلول فلت من عقله وقيل ... هي الثالثة من المرات وهو يفوت علينا
طاير يسبّ .

الدامل :

وقيل فلت كيما راكي تقولي ... عمرى ولا شفت جلول يجرى ... عمرى ولا سمعته
يسب ... هو يتترفز صح هذا معروف ولكن ما يجرى ما يسبّ ينسف صدره
" كالسبح " يجعد الوقفة ويزهر كالسبح .

الحاملة :

واش نديروا يا عثمان ؟ ... نخلوا المخلوق هايج يجرى ويدور في المستشفى ؟

الدامل :

والله ما عرفت يا بنت الناس ... جلول الفهايمي يجرى خاديه التكون !! سبحان
سبحان الله الواحد القهار ... هذا محال هذا .

يخرج في تقاعد ... جلول كاللي برد اعصابه .

جلول :

أنا الفهايمي ما نسواش ... اما متالبني الهم ... عندهم الحق اللي يسبوني
... عندهم الحق اللي مسميني جلول الفضولي ... " جلو " لو كان راني عايش
في بلاد اخرى لو كان راهم " حكموا علي بالا " سجنوني على طول الحمر ...
لو كان راهم حكموا علي بالاعدام ... ما نسواش أنا ... يلزمني السوط ...
السوط ... اللكوط ... هراوة زبوج هذى هي بالقلبوزة واجبد أعطيه السوط
على الظهر الاكتاف لجناب ... القعد والركايب ... نستهل السقلة في الفم ...
جلول الفهايمي بلية ... آفة اجتماعية ... اربطو جلول الفهايمي بسوطه
أقتلوه ... علاش مخلييتي حي؟ ... خيطوا لي في واقطعوا لي نفي تنجحوا ...
والسوط ... السوط ... السوط .

جلول الفهايمي المخلوق كان خدام مهني في مصلحة تحميل العوتى غير هو الجثث
والفسال حتى هدف عليه مشكل . كان مهني خدام في السكات ويرد الحال حتى
طاح عليه مسكل ... مشكل ما كانش متوقعه ... الكشكل خرج له صدفة وكانت
غادية تتغلب على جلول النرفة ويخسرهما ... باش ما ينتلقش ويتحكم في أعصابه
مشى يجرى عند الفسال كانت الغزية البوبتة متاعه بحلولة قاس على روحه ثلث
طواسي ماء وخرج يجرى ... يجرى في السبيطار يدور السبق على الأجنحة ...
يجرى خوفا اذا تحكمه القربنة ويخسرهما نهائيا .

جلول :

أجرى يا جلول أجرى ... أنت بنخيت حد ما رغم عليك ... شفت الفهامة وبين
توصل ... أنا ستاعل الضرب ... نستهل يحرشوا فيا ستة والأ سبعة من
" سياناس " " " يكونوا زورق متان محلفين ومتحزمين كما ينبغي ...
أيا والسوط ... السوط ... السوط ... ومن بعد ما يعيار دوك خاوتي ستة
يطلقوا علي الكلاب ... خليمهم يبشوني ... وبين ما باقية الهبرة يعضوا ... أنت
يا جلول حلالك مالج وتاتعاك المصيبة خطوة بخطوة ... أجرى على عقابيك أجرى

في الصيانة خدمته ينظف ويسقم الأجهزة الطبية هذا عشرين عام من اللي
بدا يعمل في المؤسسة في البداية داروه عند باب المستشفى متكلف بدخول
وخرج الزوار ولكن من داك عصبي ويخسرهما على روحه وقفوه أشحال من مرة
... أمام لجنة الطاعة للتأديب ... كل ما يوقف يحاقبوه ، ، ، يبدلوه من
المصلحة اللي يكون فيها ويعطوه خدمة أخرى ... هكذا تنقل جلول الفهايمي
من الباب الكبير الى مصلحة نقل الدم من بعد الى مصلحة الاستعجالات الطبية
من بعد الى جناح أمراض المعدة ثم الى جناح الامعاش ثم الى جناح امراض
القلب ثم الى جناح أمراض التوليد ... ثم ... ثم ... ثم جال جلول جال داخل
المستشفى من جناح الى جناح وخاد دروس عديدة في المسافة المهيسة
تجربة وراء تجربة تكون جلول وحصل في الخدمة على مرتبة مليحة : تقني . مختص
في صيانة الأجهزة الطبية .

جلول الفهايمي خاطف شوية من الطب ... يعرف يدير الابرة ويقرا وصفة الطبيب
... يعرف يخيط الجرح الصغير ويقلع ضرس العقل يعرف لبوسفير ويصرف
يقرا الحجرة في كليشيات الكلوة ... بارز في الصيانة وتصليح آلات المستشفى
... و لو عصبي يتقلق تتغلب عليه النفرة يزغف ويخسرهما عرف جلول من
خلال المصائب الحديدية اللي عاشها في الخدمة عرف، كيف يستفاد . اجتهد
وعرف كيف، يكون نفسه ... جلول اصبح تابع مصلحة الطب الشرعي وحفض الجثث،
" لا مورتق " أصبح متكلف بجهاز التبريد مراتب على الأنايب على بدل " الحما "
الحرارة الزائدة ساعة على ساعة يصلح محرك الضغط والا الكهربا مهتمه بصفة
عامة تبقى البيوت لخفض الموتى باردة منخفضة تحت الصفر ب 15 درجة ..
في المصلحة هذي " مستودع الموتى " جلول الفهايمي كاللي برد شوية همّـد
أعصابه بحيث الجناح هادن . الموتى في قجورهم لكم جامدين ما يهولوا
والفسال سكوت ما يدير بالوجوه ما يحكم رشوة . في الجناح الثلج جلول كاللي
استعقل شوية الملف الاداري اللي تابعه ثقيل واذا زاد ازبلها يطرد من الخدمة
عالميه بصفته رسمية . مصلحة حفن الجثث بابها يعطي لخارج المستشفى
وبالنسبة لجلول آخر مصلحة يخدم فيها جلول الفهايمي بولاد اولاده وقريب

حاقربنكم عاطيين لكم هذا السيارات الصغار وأنتم دايرين خير كبير في
البشرية هذا السيارات ضيقين وما يركبوش لكم الفاشي . . . في الحق راكم ألتسم
اصحاب الطاكسيات تفيدوا أكثر من حافلات " الحكومة " . . . راكم ترفدوا وتنزفوا
كل عشرين متر . . . لو كان راعم عاطيين لكم كوامن الختم تديرهم طاكسيات تشيدوا
المصلحة العامة أكثر . يعرف يتكلم جلول ولكن فيه ضعف : عصبي يتتلق .
تتغلب عليه النرفة يزغ ويخسرهما . . . لما جلول الفهايمي يروج يسحب وثيقة
من الادارة يعرف يحيي موظفين الدولة يعرف يتفرج فيهم ويخليهم يخذوا نصيب
غروضهم . يعرف يميز من فيهم مكاف ومن اللي بلاشي . . . يعرف يميز من اللي
فيهم صريم ومن اللي فيهم لاهف ووكل . . . اذا رجال الشرطة وقفوه في وسط
الطريق في إطار حملة من حملات النظافة . يعرف جلول بسرعة يجبد بطاقة
التعريف البطاقة المهنية بطاقة الانتخاب والدفتر العقابي يعرف يتكلم بأدب مع
الشرطي ولكن ما يعرفش يركب بسرعة في السيارة الزرقاء . يعثر دائما في الدرجة
الاولى بحيث : عصبي . يتتلق . تتغلب عليه النرفة . يزغ . ويخسرهما .
جلول الفهايمي يعرف يتكلم على الدين وعلى القيم الخلقية والاساية اللي فيه .
قارى على الدين وعلى سيدنا محمد رسول الله عليه الصلاة والسلام . يعرف
جلول كيف يفسر لأولاده ويحذرهم من الميول الخطيرة . دائما يقول لهم .
ديننا الحنيف دين المساواة دين الاسلام ديم المشاورة الكرامة والتضامن (من)
مع الفقراء ولا دين العنف والضمون يعرف . . . يعرف ولكن فيه ضعف . عصبي
يتتلق تتغلب عليه النرفة يزغ ويخسرهما .
جلول الفهايمي يعرف يحلل الوضع ويعرف يشرف بوضوح في كل ما هو جاري في
البلاد يعرف بشجال راه يسوى مفتاح السكنى اشحال تسوى قسمة الارض للبنساء
وبشحال راهم يتبادلوا دراهم فرسا . جلول ما يعرفش يشطح العلاوى ولكن عتق
وشاف كيف تنشق البحور وكيف تتحول الجبال لما تنهز الأكتاف . جلول الفهايمي
يعرف كيف يتركب الخطاب الديماغوجي . حافظ الدستور وقارى الميثاق الوطني
وبفيق اللي يعفسهم والأ يستخطاهم ولكن فيه ضعف عصبي . يتتلق تتغلب عليه
الnerفة . يزغ ويخسرهما . جلول الفهايمي العصبي خدام في مستشفى المدينة

منهم يسهي يديه الكلام ويكفر على الحكومة جلول يقفز قفزة وحدة ويبلق عيديه
يرزه بالكلام السريع كاللي يثقب فيه بالرشاش، ويقول له : راك تعديت الحيد
يا حبيبي ننبهك احنا في الدار هنا الديمقراطية كايه صح ولكن الديمقراطية
اللي متفقين عليها في دارنا تختلف على بعض الديمقراطيات الأخرى
حرية التعبير في دارنا تحي التصبر العلي واليزن ما فيها لا عيب لا معايير
ولا كفير . . . الديمقراطية عندنا احنا فيها التحليل الذكي والوقف الصلب
الإيجابي . . . اذا بغيت معايير الحكومة بهذا الصفا هود للبلاد را هم أصحاب
المال حالين اشحال دن قهي لهذا الهدرة . جلول الفهايمي يعرف يخدم
بيديه يعرف يسقم الضوء التلفزة والتلاجة يعرف يتسوق كذلك يزج مع مول
الخضرة ويقول له : اعطني كيلو من هذه ولكن ما توزنا ليش من هذه الخضرة
الشابة اللي راك مزوق بها الوجه هذي خليها . كما هي توالم يفوت شسي
أجنبي باش ما يضحكش علينا أنا ولد البلاد أوزن لي من اللي دايرها في القفا
ديك اللي حبة خامجة وحبة خضرة .

جلول غربت في الدالة عنده تجربة صحيحة في الدالة . اذا وصل على دالة
فوضوية مخيلة كلمتين ثلاثة يماوبها يتقدم يرفع صوته ويقول : يا الخاوة .
يا الخاوة . . . اسمعوا لي يا الخاوة . . . نديروا صف عسكري جميل شي ساهل
وأحنا قادرين عليه واذا تنظمنا كل واحد متا يربح عشرة دقائق واذا في كل
يوم نربح عشر دقائق من وعشرة من في شهر نربح ساعة . في عام نربح 12
يوم وفي 30 سنة نربح عام كله . لما يأخذ الحافلة جلول . . . وقت الزحام
يعرف يطبق جسده ويقطع النفس باش ما ياخذش من حق الآخرين . يعرف
يأخذ الكلمة في الاجتماعات النقابية ويركز على الصحيح والمبدأ ولكن فيه ضعف .
عصبي يتقلق . تتغلب عليه البرفزة يزغف ويخسرهما . في العطلة الصيفية يدي
جلول الزهرة وأولاده للبحر يفججوا يديهم مرة فريدة من الفجر للمشيشة
حين ما يوصل على شط البحر يسقم لهم حطة في رمشة من العين . . . بربع تصب
وحايك الزهرة يماوب لهم قعدة فيها الظلال ملوكية . يعرف جلول يتكلم مسح
سائق الطاكسي ويعرف كيف يفتح محاه الطريق للهدرة ، يقول له را هم حاقرينكم

.....

الفهائمي :

جلول الفهائمي كريم ويأمن بالكثير في العدالة الاجتماعية يحب وطنه باخلاص
يمتني ابلاده تنمي بسرعة وتدهر فيها حياة الأغلبية . جلول الفهائمي ماد
يده باستمرار لقراينه يوقف بحزم وقت الشدة ويساهم بكل ما يقدر عليه ضد
الخبينة . دقيق في السيرة وذكي في الخطة ولكن فيه ضعف : فضلي : يتطلق
تتنلب عليه الدرفة يزحف ويخسرهما زوجته واولاده يحبوه ويقادروه . يعرفوه له
ضعفه ويحرفوه كيف يتصرفوا معاه يوقروه وبسايسوه عارفينه حنين كريم وبرشد
للطريق الفيدة . حين ما يوقع صوته بدرجة كلهم يسكتوا ويحطو عينيهم يخلوه
يخرج زعافه ولو يكسر طبسي . واللا يضرب بقوة على المائدة . . . لما يبرد
من الزعاف الزهرة مرته تناقه وتقول لولادهما . أبوكم جلول عادل وينصر
على الحق من صابكم تشبهوله وباش تخير الجوّ تريد بالضحكة لو ما المغنبا
ووصاينهم لوراه أبوكم أما وللا شخصية كبيرة في الحاشية
جلول الفهائمي يحرف كيف يتحدث مع اولاده . مربيهم على الصواب وغار من
فيهم حب الحمل الجيد الحنان والتواضع والحشمة . لما يتكلم لهم على السياسة
والأمر الكبيرة يحرف كيف يحبر على حساب وعيهم ومعرفتهم لما يحاجني
الصغيرة فيهم على السيد " علي " ورأس الخول يحرف يلبس الحديث ويضرب
المثل بالحياة اليومية . السيد على جاعله ناقش على سيفه . أبعاد المهمة
اللي كان يدتارد من أجلها : في سبيل الله . مع الفقراء والمساكين في تحطيم
الخرافة ورفع كرامة الانسان حديدوان اللي يقولوا عليه طاج في قديرة
ما بان حديدوان مسميه . . . حديد . . . وان . . . يانق الفيتنامي الشجاع والخولة
اللي يتصارع معاهما جاعلهما جلول تطلق من ثمها النابالم وتطمع الناس بالقراوج
. . . . جلول الفهائمي يحرف يحلل ويعرف يتحمل المشاكل يراي على جيرانه
كذلك ولكن فيه ضعف : عسبي يتطلق تتنلب عليه الدرفة يزحف ويخسرهما .
جيرانه عارفين هذا وقبل ما يشاروره حتى يسألوا الزهرة اذا صاحي واللا مخيم
كلهم عارفين هذا باللي ولو عسبي يكره اللي يتخشش واللا يسب بخير ما يحلل
كلهم عارفين باللي يسمع لهم بامتعام وما يضيع من حديثهم حتى كلمة ولما واحد

- . عرفت بالعمل حولك العزّ والكرامة .
- . شفت بحداك في الصنع الجهد والشهامة .
- . وجدت في الوحدة القوة الصلبة والهمة .
- . تنهت وعنقها تقول بيناتهم ذمّامة .
- . خاطبها بمحلة ومدوه عاطيها قيمامة .
- . حان وقت الشور وأنا خارج في سلامامة .
- . الوداع يا الآلة نفترقوا بلا نقمامامة .

- . أشحال اشربتني من دمي اشحال بلعتني من جنة
- . رزم قشه المنصور بالصمت والتبسيمة
- . سرحوه في تتاعد يريح من الخدمة
- . أوقف عند الآله حيران حط فوقها الرزمة
- . تنهت وعنقها تقول بيناتهم ذمة
- . خاطبها بمهلة ومدوه عاطبها قيمة
- . أشفقي على الشاب خليفني كوني رحيمه
- . لو ساعدوني في الوقت والآلات اللازمة
- . كنت بحسبك ما تبقى اتوعي كالهامة
- . يقوى فيك الإنتاج وما تاكني دسومه
- . ينقص ثياب الخطر وتحلى وراك اللقمة
- . تعطي سرك للشاب بخليه له محسمة
- . باش يطوعك بسرعة ويقودك كالبهمة
- . يتغلب عليك الشاب ويقيسك ردمية
- . راه متين في القوة ومتحضر للهجمة
- . رزم قشه المنصور بالصمت والتبسيمة
- . سرحوه في تتاعد يريح من الخدمة
- . أوقف عند الآله حيران حط فوقها الرزمة
- . تنهت وعنقها تقول بيناتهم ذمة
- . خاطبها بمهلة ومدوه عاطبها قيمة
- . تشفي لملقانا الأول ظهرتي لي وهمية
- . حبيبتك يا احترام احببت وقلبت الدمامة
- . كنت ظان نبي بيك جنة ونربي الشحمة
- . صببت فيك عرقي ما استفيت ما تلت زمامة
- . تنهت وعنقها تقول بيناتهم ذمة
- . خاطبها بمهلة ومدوه عاطبها قيمة

المنصور :

رزم قشه المنصور بالصمت والتبسيمة : سرحوه في تقاعد يريج من الخدمة
قال له المسؤول بصحتك تهتيت من التحب والحما كالي خارج من السخون
مستلذ التحميمه ودع اصحابه بحماس ملثم على الخمة داخله حزبن لسانه
ثقيلة عليه الكلمة اوقف عند الآلة حيران حط قوقها " الرزمة
تتهت وعنقها تقول بيناتهم ذمة . خاطبها بمهلة وهدوء عاطيها قيمة
أنا كبرت وخارج في راحة منعمة . وأنت رشيتي عن تريب يمبيوك عرمة .

- . حكموا علينا بالفراق ما يوم الخاتمة .
- . بعد ما تعاشرنا سنين فاتو كالماتمة .
- . أوقفت معاك طويل وستا، بمدارمة .
- . سنين عديدة وأنا بجنبك كالدعممة .
- . رزم قشه المنصور بالصمت والتبسيمة .
- . سرحوه في تقاعد يريج من الخدمة .
- . أوقف عند الآلة حيران حط فوقها الرزمة .
- . تتهت وعنقها تقول بيناتهم ذمة .
- . خاطبها بمهلة وهدوء عاطيها قيمة .
- . بعداك عشت أكثر من ما جمعت مع الحرمة .
- . طول الصهد وأنا ليك وافي صافي الهزيمة .
- . من غير أيام المرض والاضراب على السومة .
- . ما تخيبت ساعة عليك ما رخت التحزيمة .
- . شوفي ليدي أشحال رسني فيها من وشمة .
- . شوفي لجسدي كيف يتقوس عليك برخممة .
- . داخلك بحرفه مليح خافضك النخممة .
- . طبعا، سابات لين وحلو ما عليه لومة .
- . سعات غدار كلب ماجوم لاهف بلا كاممة .
- . اذا سهيت ودركت عليك تغزري لي اللحممة .

الجميع :

تبقى على خير يا السي المنور .

المعلمة :

عظام الطرف السفلي يتصل الطرفان السفليان مع الجذع بواسطة قسم ثابت يدعى :

الحزام الحوضي . . . سكوت . . . الحزام الحوضي الذي يتألف من عظمي الحوض

وعظم العجز . . . أما القسم المتحرك من الطرف السفلي فيتألف من ثلاثة

أقسام : (1) الفخذ (2) الساق و (3) القدم .

و . . . و . . . و . . .

المنور :

فيه خمس عظام طويلة .

المعلمة :

الأصابع .

المنور :

عددها خمسة . هذا معروف ولكن للأصابع ثلاثة سلاميات ما عدا الإبهام
فيتألف من زوج سلاميات . . . شوف . . . شوف . . . المنشط الثقافي واصل
قبل الوقت . . . باش يروج يقصر شوية مع حورية على النشاط الثقافي والنشاط
الثقافي والنشاط الخرامي

المعلمة :

الخرامي قلت يا السي المنور

المنور :

السي عكلي كان زهواني ودائما متفائل . . . اذا تسمحوا لي دروك لشغالي
خمسي . . . اذا! سمحوا لي بروج دروك لشغالي . . . خمسي نواد راه نعان
يتاوب ماشي يرتد لك يا معلمة على الطاولة . . . وماما بخافها تحفص على
الناقوس . . قبل الوقت . . . لما تكلموا يهبلك الطبايح صديقي ابحتي لي لصرح
بن ديفة باش نجي نديه . . . قبل ما تخرج منه الروح ناخ . وأكد لي بحماس
اخدم العلم يا منور وسبل اللي تنذر عليه . . . تبار، ما يلقف قال لي ، يا
وليداتي . . . منور . . . منور العلم منور . . . لما ينتشر العلم في بلادنا
وبتملكوا فيه الخدامين البسطاء قرابينك وقرابيني . . . لما تعودوا يتصرفوا بيده
في عمالهم وحياتهم اليومية ذاك الوقت بلادنا تحصل على استقلال ثاني . . .
شعبنا ذاك الوقت يتخلم من مشاكله . . . كل المشاكل . . . جسدى يا منور ماديه
في سبيل هذا الهدف الحالي . . . رحمه الله الراجل . . . الراجل . . . صاحب
الوقف والنظرة البعيدة . . . اسمحي لي يا معلمة . . . ما زال لي ما ما كيف
ندير (معا) باش نسلك منها . . . تبتار على خير يا وليداتي .

له السلعة . . . يحكي لي المسكين صنع وحد المرة قنبلة غير صغيرة وغلف
عليها بقشور ولد الجاج كأنها حبة بيض مشلية طلبت منه يورى لي كيف
صنع القنابل قلت له علمي لعل قال الّا اليوم راه وقت آخر نعلم لك
تبني ما نعلمكش تهدم غربت كان والله الّا غربت وشجاع شجاع
يا معلمة قناع ما يخافش من الموت الليلة اللي خرجت عمره المخلوق في 74
كان مكسل ماما تشهد له وأنا نقرى في البردة عليه . ساعة على ساعه يفتن
يقعد راسه ويوصيني العظام تشدهم بسلاك النحاس ما يصديش ما غير يفي
اللي معوج شربة كل شيء في صحيح أدهن العظام من العام للعام والّا
صبت الطاقة غف الهيكل ما دام الهيكل يفيد ما دام تنزاد لك الحسنات
. . . . شجاع خويا شجاع ماما تبكي عليه وهو يصبر فيها

المعلمة :

يتصل الطرفان العلويان بالجذع بواسطة قسم ثابت يدعى الحزام الكتفي وهو يتألف
من عظمين (1) لوح الكتف (2) الترقوة . أما القسم المتحرك من الطرف العلوي
فيتألف من ثلاثة عظام : (1) العضد .

المسور :

فيه عظم واحد : النقا

المعلمة :

(2) الساعد : فيه عظامان هما :

المسور :

الزهد من الخلف والكعبرة من الأمام .

المعلمة :

(3) اليد تتألف من ثلاثة أقسام

المسور :

المعصم : فيه ثمن عظام قصيرة

المعلمة :

المستطير .

العظام وبوتفه من جديد طرف فوق خوه . . . اللوية اللي يطيبها يأكل الا سان
عليها اصباعه . . . غريت اليد يا محلمة مين يحرى على القدرة ويرمي الملح
تقولي عليه راه يزرع في القمح . . . القلة بزبتها تخلي يرفدها ويجرى بها تقولي
عليه راه يرقص . . . الرز مبن يتيه يده تبقى ماشية جايه كالوجة اذا
طولتي فيها الشوفة يدك النحاس . البين هو التالي مين يفقصه تقولي راه
يقطف ثي الورد . . . عكلي يخرج الذهب من يديه . . . يد عكلي صديقي عنصر
يا محلمة . . . الماكلة غير بالريحة يعرفها كيف حوالها . . . اللي كانوا يخدموا
مناه يحبوه بزاف ومقاديريه كان منظمهم بالسنتيمتر " ومعلم " ومعلم لهم
يخدموا بالسكات . . . يقول لهم أخذوا يربصانكم . . . تبل ما ترفد اليد يفكر الراس
. . . يشم على زوج كيلومتر يا محلمة . . . أنا نخلع فيه . . . وحد النهار قال لي
منور غدوة المحتمد يجيني للمطبخ ويقول لي نديروا المرقاز للشبان فطور
وعشاء رانهم يبخوه . . . كيداش عرفت نقول له . . . شفت الجزار فايت يحوس على
المحتمد وشميت فيه ريحة الشحم . الخامل . . . مين يجي يتكلم لي على المرقاز
نقول له راني موجوده بعد . . . أنت ما عليك غير تدبر لي في المصارين . . . وكما
كان الحال كما شمها وقعت . . . نهار آخر مين كنا نجرزا على التسريح باش
يخلوي نخرج العظام من الجبابة كما نتكلما مع مسؤول المقابر . . . السيد
قال لنا أنا خاطيني وتترع . . . شم عكلي الريحة قالو مرتك كثر الكبابه في الكفتة
. . . عشا السيد ناسي القضية اللي قصدناه عليها ويسأل في عكلي . كيف
تندار السفيرية وكيف تطيب المحشة . الحوتة الكبيرة يديرزا فيها الرد
والا الزعيترة . القرقاع يجي في كعب غزال والا في باقلاوة . . . ؟ ماما ساعة
على ساعة مين يجي يقصر عندي في الدار تعطيه يدوق لها الماكلة تسقيسه
واشر . خاصها . تعطيه يدبر عليها . . . مين ينبها يقول لها مثلا كثر زعفران
والا شربتي اليوم من لحم الحنزي يخيضها الحال ونقول له راك مزنزلها اليوم
يا ولد آزرغان . . . يدين يا معلمة يدين والله يرحمه . . . يديه كانوا خشان على
حساب القامة انتاعه ولكن قادر يعقد الشعرة مع ختها . . . كان يصنع قنابل
عهد الثورة المسلحة . . . كان داير الخيط مع وحد الشاب خدام في المخبر يجيب

الجميع :

الدير... الدير .

منور :

آ وخضي... شفتي وانت تشدى في... ياك قلنا لكم ووصيناكم شحال من مرة
ما تتوركوش على الحيطان... راكم توسخوهم بصبا بيظكم... راكم تلزموا علينا
بيضوا في كل شهر . ولما تخرجوا من المدرسة اخرجوا في نظام... بلا زقى وبلا
تعناق... في الدخلة وفي الخرجة البنات من جهة والأولاد من الجهة الأخرى
... سمعتوا ؟ ...

الجميع :

راح... راح... راح... راح... راح...

منور :

راح... راجعوا للعلم... تفضلي .

المعلمة :

القفس الصدري : وهو مجموعة من العظام تحيظ بالقلب والرئتين لحمايتهما ويتكون
من الفقرات الظهرية من الخلف - عظم القفص والأضلاع في الأضلاع (1) أضلاع
حقيقية وعددها 7 أزواج (2) أضلاع كاذبة وعددها 3 أزواج (3) أضلاع سائبة
وعدها زوجان .

منور :

فايزة... فايزة...

المعلمة :

واثر، بها فايزة يا السي المنور ؟

منور :

راها تاكل في ضفارها خفتها تلحق للسلاميات . "

المعلمة :

عظام الاطراف : (1) الطرف العلوى .

منور :

ال... ال... ال... ال... ال... ال... ال... ال... ال... ال... ال...

اتعلم يقرأ وحده من ذاك كايين عايش مجال يبات يقرأ - يبغي في الكتب
... شوف ... شوف هذا أستاذ الجغرافية هذا وين اوصل ... يجي متعطش
ويحصل في يقول للتلاميذ شدي منور بالهدرة ...

المعلمة :

اسبح لي واش كنت تقول على عكلي ؟

منور :

قلت لك باللي السي عكلي كان يحب القراءة والعلم ... يعرف بغير ماشي كيف
حالتى ... كان كلامه حلو ومفيد ... مين يقرب كيسان ويبقى يتكلم على العمال
وخصايلهم التاريخية انا ندوخ وبيانولي كالي دوك العمال رافدين الكرة الأرضية
... نربح ونقرب له وبتن شرب في كلامه ... في الليل مين نسامي ماما
تقول لي صاحبك عكلي يشرب وانت تلصق فيك ريحة الخمر ... شرابه حلو ...
لوزاد عاش عام واللا عامين كنت تطيح معاه في البلية . وحد الـام احتفلنا
في الداخلية بعيد أول نوفمبر . وعكلي دار لهم حلويات لذيذة . المدير عجباته
الحلوة كلي شحال وادى معاه حبيبات للدار مين جاء خارج شكر عكلي وسقساه
كيف صنع الحلوة هذى قال له باش راك مسقي الدعوة ؟ ... جاوب عكلي الحلوة
راني مسقيها بماء زهر وراسي مسقيه بماء حياء .

المعلمة :

عظام الجذع : يشمل هيكل الجذع العمود الفقري والتفصير الصدرى . العمود
الفقري هو سلسلة عظمية تمتد وسط الناحية الظهرية ... يرتكز الرأس على العمود
الفقري كما تستند عليه الأضلاع من الخلف وترتبط الأطراف ... يتألف العمود
الفقري من 33 وحدة عظمية معظمها متغاثل في الشكل تدعى الفقرات ...
العظم الأنفي يا السي منور معوج شوية ... اللا ... ؟

منور :

مذاك عوجوه له في السجن ... كان مولى ليف ويحب وطنه ... ما هو الخباز
داخل ... درك تحسب له السلعة خبزة بخبزة ... واذا خاصاتك خبزة يا الحوا
" المدير "

كل ليلة نقرأ عليه " سورة الأعراف " . . . حتى هي فيها 206 آيات . كل اعظم نقرأ عليه آية نسألي جاءوا يشرفوا الحية اللي خرجت عليها ماما . . . قلت لهم . . ادخلوا تريحوا وتشربوا قهيوه تقدم لكم صديقي راه واقف بحد ي الماريو قاضي صالحه . . . قالوا الا . . . غير من هنا ومن غم الباب ونرقبوا . . . ماما فهمت ورجعت لدارها غير وحدها . . . كتبت لأب عكلي بالحربية على حساب ما نعرف كان المرحوم مخلي لي العنوان جازيني " بالله " باللثة الامازيغية ماصت من يقرأها لي جواب طويل خاتمه بأية قرآنية ، فهمت من خلال هذوك السطور باللي غايضة الحال ومعتبرنا أنا وابنه شركين أخته المسكينه فهمتني من بعد جات وحد الحام ترور خبيها عندي في العيد هيفنا ثلاث أيام . . . لما جات ماشية أعطاتني عنوانها رقات لي اذا محتاجوا ميكل عظمي انتاع امراة اكتب لي أنا واجدة نونس خوبا ماما قعد تبكي وأنا ما عرفت ما نقول لها ، قلت لها . . . ما كان لاه تفبني نفسك راهم جايبين هياكل بلاستيك من الخارج الأيام الأولى كانت صعبية شوية على المهمة اصحاب الحومة كلهم سمحوا وداري رجعت سوق . . . اشحال من واحد جاني مقروض يستقي على سيدي منور الجبار الدراري يتشبثوا مع شبك النافذة والنساء كل دقيقة تجي واحدة تستخبر على ماما خيتي قالوا باللي راهما عندهم ورحاية مسلسلة تهولت عليك هذاك غير النريب المرحوم صاحب منور اذا بنيتي تشوفي انعري لك عليه وحدة من ذوك النساء جابتلي خمسين ألف وقاتت لي اكرى لي يد الميت ببركش بيها طعيمة وتردها لك ياخي خالة .

المعلمة :

عظام الوجه : يتألف الوجه من 14 عظمة جميعها ثابتة عدا عظام الفك السفلي الذي تنخرس فيه الأسنان السفلية . يتصل طرفا الفك السفلي مع العظمين السمديين بامتداد مستدير يدعى : " اللقمة " تمتد اللقمة والتجويف بشكل عمودي ومائل قليلا مما يسمح بحركات رفع وخفض للفك السفلي وبعض الحركات الجانبية

منور :

رأس كان عند رأس محمره شراب وقراءة اسمح لي يا حبيبي نحبك ونحترمك اتعلم

قال يلصن بوما خدمة . . . قلت له في الحق لو كان رادم يدر بكم على هذا الخدمة . . . قال تريد كلمة نذك . . . عند الخرجة زاد عساس الجبابة كمل على الدرسي المسكين شافه صفر قال له نجيب لك ميهة باردة راني داير التلة في القبر (تبرد) . . . واذا بغيت تريح أدخل عندي هنا في البراكة واتكسل راه فيها برد الحال . . . اتكسل وخلي ربي يدير تاريل
المعلمة :

يشتمل الهيكل العظمي على ثلاثة مناطق . . . عظام الرأس ، عظام الجمجمة ، عظام الجذع ، وعظام الأطراف ، عظام الرأس ، تشتمل على : عظام الجمجمة وعظام الوجه عظام الجمجمة : تتألف من ثمانية عظام مسطحة تتصل مع بعضها البعض بتضاريس دقيقة كأسنان المشار وتتألف هذه العظام علبسة عظمية صلبة مفلقة تقريبا تحمي الدماغ في داخلها . . . يسمى العظم الخلفي منها بالعظم القفوي . . . انقلتوا ؟ . . .

الجميع :

نعم .

المعلمة :

أيوى يا السي منور كيفاش ؟

منور :

كيفاش أيوى . . . راكي تشوفي راني بصحتي لا بأس بخير وعلى خير . . .

المعلمة :

كيفاش من بعد الجبابة . . .

المنور :

الليلة الاولى بتهم وحدي مع هيكل صديقي . . . ماما المخلوطة صرت عند غاشيها قالت لي نخاف . . . النهار اللي تركبه وتديه لجهة أخرى تولى . . . ما بالنية كما كان مهمي بنيتوا . ركبتة كيما راكم تشوفوا فيه ، مشيت نرد ماما . . . في الليلة الاولى حتى أنا خفت نقول لكم الصبح . . . اسح لي يا السي عكلي عمري ما كذبت عليك . . . يا بني عمي وخزرتة اشحال تخوف . . . مزية كنت صايب باش نتونس . . . كنت

منور :

نعم 206... أنا حاسبهم... أكتب... أكتب... يا السكوم الفوتي أكتب
206... من اللي بدأ الدرس وانت تفتل في شعرك راني حاطلك الولهية

المعلمة :

كيفاش حاسبهم يا السي المنور ؟...

منور :

كان المرحوم يقربني عليهم... ساعة على ساعة... يجيب محاه للسهرة كتب
واعظام البقرى و يفهمني باش تصرف من بعد كيف تركبه... ما شفاش على
الأسامي كلهم... كان يقربني بالفرنسلوية... نشفى على...
و... كانوا يخرجوا من فمه كالكفرية... كان يحفضني مليح
وبغرف يكرر... أشفى مليح... 206... 206... حتى عادت ماما مبيين
تشوفه جاي تقول لي راه قاصد لعندك 206 صاحبك... وفي الحق... 206
.. ما كذبهاش... نهار اللي خرجت حبيبي من القبر... حسبتهم واحد بواحد
... تلفولي ثلاثة من مشط اليد... بتيت ندور في القبر ونحوس... الدركي
اللي كان مضايا واقف... انخطف المسكين شائني بحسب ونحط في القفة .
ونعاود نفرغ في الارض بحسب ونرد في القفة . قال لي راسه رايك تدير... خاف
ربي... قلت له خاصي 3 باش نقفل 206 . المرحوم موسى... أرفد راسي صاحبي
انفضته من التراب وقبلت عليه قلت له المرحوم موسى... الدركي حكمته
وقعد على القبر المجاور حكم راسه وقال لي أنت اذا وصلت صحيح عند سيدنا
عزيزين دير وعدة للجنون... هذي أمانة يا حبيبي قلت له 206... هي 206
... اللحم قال لي اللحم ما ندرووش بيه على ستة ايام والأربعة... قلت له
ما تخافش راني موالف والعظام أنا... ما بنيتش نكث الهدرة متاه شفته كاللي
خايف مني شاد في الشاهد بد وداير على جواء المسدس اليد الأخرى... كل ما
أأخذ عظام ونمسحه يبدأ يلطف... لميت صاحبي مقبول 206 عظام في القفة
وقلت للدركي ديا بسم الله . عايرني وقال لي الحمد لله... لا علينا صدينا
خارجين من القبرة أنا شاد القفة بيد ونقود في الدركي الأخرى يحتر ويسبي

منور :

نعم 206... أنك حاسبهم... أكتب... أكتب... يا السكوم الفتوي أكتب
206... من اللي بدأ الدرس وانت تفتل في شعرك راني حاطك الولهسة

المطلمة :

كيفاش حاسبهم يا السي المنور ؟...

منور :

كان المرحوم يقربني عليهم... ساعة على ساعة... يجيب معاه للسهرة كتب
واعظام البقرى و يفهمني باش تعرف من بعد كيف تركبه... ما مشفاش على
الأسامي كلهم... كان يقربني بالفرنساوية... نشفى على...
و... كانوا يخرجوا من فمه كالكفربة... كان يحفضني مليح
وبخرف يكرر... أشفى مليح... 206... 206... حتى عادت ماما مبيين
تشوفه جاي تقول لي راه قاصد لعندك 206 صاحبك... وفي الحق... 206
.. ما كذبهاش... نهار اللي خرجت حبيبي من القبر... حسبتم واحد بواحد
... تلفولي ثلاثة من مشط اليد... بقيت ندور في القبر ونحوس... الدركي
اللي كان مضايا واقف... انخطف المسكين شائني نحسب ونحط في القفة .
ويعاود نفرغ في الارض نحسب وبرد في القفة . قال لي واشراك تدير . . خاف
ربي . . قلت له خاصني 3 باش نقفل، 206 . المرحوم موهبي . . أرفد راسي صاحبي
انفضت من التراب وقبلت عليه قلت له المرحوم موهبي . . . الدركي حكمته
وقعد على القبر المجاور حكم راسه وقال لي أنت اذا وصلت صحيح عند سيدنا
عزيرين دير وعدة للجنون... هذي أمانة يا حبيبي قلت له 206... هي 206
... اللحم قال لي اللحم ما ندروش بيه على ستة ايام والأسبعة . . قلت له
ما تخافش راني موالف والعظام أنا . . ما بخيتش نكثر الهدرة معاه شفته كاللي
خايف مني شاد في الشامد بد وداير على جواء المسدس اليد الأخرى . كل ما
نأخذ عظام ونمسحه يبدأ يلطف . . لميت صاحبي مقبول 206 عظام في القفة
وقلت للدركي دنيا بسم الله . عايرني وقال لي الحمد لله . . لا علينا صدينا
خارجين من القبرة أنا شاد القفة بيد ونقود في الدركي الأخرى يحثر ويسمي

18 سنة . رجع للبلاد في سنة 1946 بعد ما تزوجوه مواليه في نفس السنة
ارفدي مرتة وخرج على والديه ، دخل يخدم كمساعد طباخ في هذا المدرسة . في
مديك المدة . خدم فترة طويلة حتى 1956 اسجن حتى سنة 1962 . حين
ما احكم مرتة وأولاده رجعوا لبرج منايل مراته ماتت في سنة 1961 ،
وأولاده كبروا وقعدوا عايشين مع جد هم من جهته هو ما عادوش الزواج . بعد
الاستقلال رجع لهذا المدرسة يخدم يسمى هو اللي حل من جديد الداخلية
في الأيام الأولين ما كاش كايين المال عاد داخل على التلاميذ غير عدس خبيز
لوبية ومقاروة ، أنا عرفته وتحببت معاه في مديك الفترة النهار الأول
ببني المسكين شافني دهشان عاد كيف خارج من البادية قال لي المطرق ديسره
على الدراع . هكذا خليه فعلق كالتقاسد واللا الصامري ما تحكمش هكذا
كالراعي تخلع الدراري راك حرّ اليوم اتحم ياك هكذا يا السي عكلي . . .
والسلام عليكم .

: الجميع

. السي منور السي منور .

: المعلمة

اتفضل، ربح اتحم ما هي الطاولة وما هو الكرسي اتفضل .

: المنور

غاية والله الرغبة هذا هو قرن 14 البواب قاعد والمعلمة واقفة لو
تدخل علينا مائة وتصيبني في هذا القعدة تضرب علي تزغوبتة وتقول لي زيدني
في المصروف ما دام زادوك في الخلصة .

: المعلمة

الهيكل العظمي هو اللي يحطي للجسم شكله وقواه الثابتين . عليه ترتكز العضلات
وهو اللي يحي الأجزاء الداخلية الرخوة . وعظام الجمجمة تحيط بالدماع وتحميه
والقفص الصدري يحي القلب . والرئتين ، الهيكل العظمي فيه 206 عظام
بالجملة .

: المنور

المعلمة :

سرحوا السي المنور يروح لشغاله ... ؟ ...

الجميع :

الآ... الآ... السي المنور... السي المنور...

المعلمة :

سكوت... سكوت... شفت ما حبوش...

المنور :

كل شيء من تحتك يا معلمة... سرحوا للسي المنور وأنت تطلعي يدك للسماء
علاش راني طالع نخدم في السماء... سرحوا المنور اعني الباب... ماما اليوم
لندب لي بيد القط... خليتها مقابلة الباب... قلت لها غير خمس دقائق
ونولي درك تحسبني درتها بلحاي وتدير لي سعدي في يدي .

المعلمة :

نتكلم معاها ونفهمها... نقول لها باللي ساعدتنا في الدرس.

المنور :

في وجهك ما نقول والو على خاطر تحبك ولكن من بعد تخرجها في... شوفي...
شوفي... كيفاش (محصبه) راما واتمة عند الباب... كالجندى... معصبة
عوجي على راسها وداركة على الخيزرانة .

المعلمة :

سكوت .

منور :

تضحكوا اتم... أنت ليندة الجعبوري راما فيك الحلفة غير ما تبايشن لخالتك.
مامة... واشربنييتي بحكي على الهيكل .

المعلمة :

اتكلم لنا على عكلي قدمه لنا بعد...

المنور :

السي عكلي امزغان المرحوم مزبود في 1920 بقرب برج منايل... اغترب وهو في عمره

المنور :

واش كاين... واش بيهم ؟ منظمين مظاهرة واللا واش... ؟

الجميع :

السي المنور... السي المنور... السي المنور...

المعلمة :

سكوت... سكوت... سكوت...

المنور :

حابين تلحبولي بخبزتي ؟ المدير يدور في الحوش وأنتم منوضين علي الحياحية؟
واش كاين ؟

المعلمة :

طالبين بك يا السي المنور تبقى شوية معاهم في القسم وتحكي لهم شوية
على صديقك السي علي .

المنور :

دائما يديرولي هذا العفسة... يا الأساتذة يدمروهم يا اما ما يبغوش
يقروا يصيبوا السبايب... كيف، ندير معاهم درك .

المعلمة :

تكلوا بزوجنا على الهيكل أنا على الحظام وأنت على ما كان حاملهم... الانسا

المنور :

اذا ما خفتش ربي يكذبني حتى أنت من جهتهم الآ .

المعلمة :

لو تخرج... يديرنا ضجة ويتغلبوا علي... .

المنور :

أنت ما يتغلبوا عليك يا معلمة... تعرفوا بعضنا بعض... المرجوم يا معلمة
موصي على الحلم... العلم... العلم... وثم العلم... وأنا لماعندي ما
نجيب في هذا الميدان... هذو حابين يقصروا ما زالهم صغار وماشي عابيين.

الجميع :

مساء الخير يا السي المنور .

المنور :

ها هو مخلص مستور كما قالت الشريعة هيكل .

عكم علي رحمه الله . . . اقرزا عليه واستنفعوا تستنفع منكم البلاد . . . اسحر لي ناخذ الكرسي نقلع عليه . الخلاف مسكين . . . ايوى . . . ها هو الراجل الزين . . . ال

المعلمة :

وهذا يا السي المنور ؟ . . .

منور :

هذا محزام الحرفة . . . الطابلية متاع الخدمة انتاع المرجوم هذا ما خلى في التريكة . . . لبستها له للسترة . . . السترة مليحة يا بنتي والدعوة راسا عندك مخلطة .

المعلمة :

في الحق . . . ! . . . آ . . .

المنور :

نقلعوها . . . ايا يا لالة . نقلعوها . . . ما دام في اطار التكوين نقلعوها . . . حتى هو كان يقول دائما لا حياء فشي العلم . . . ها هو حجره عريان يا لالة . نرجع نديه بعد ما تكملوا الدرس . . . قربوه قدما تنجموا تحبوا ولكن ما تمسوهش . . . خين ما تكلمي ابعتي لي لخرج بن ديفة . النمس يلخالي . . . هكذا نبرم له وذنيه مع الدريق على الدخان اللي راه يكيمه . . . حسبتني ما شفتكش كيف كنت تتدرق وري الشجرة ؟ تاعد على الرصيف يا سيدى داير كراع على كراع وينقر . . . يشرب في الدخان . . . يكبي في قارو أطول منه . ايا الله يحاونك يا بنتي . . .

الجميع :

السم المنور . . . السم المنور . . . السم المنور . . .

المعلنة :

أجلسوا من فضلكم . . . شكرا . . . درسنا قبل اليوم في إطار العلوم الطبيعية الشكل الخارجي لجسم الانسان والشكل الداخلي للجسم درسنا كذلك الخلية والنسيج سندرس اليوم الهيكل العظمي . . . سكوت سكوت من فضلكم . . . الدرس يتناول احصاء العظام تصنيفهم وأجزاء البنية . . . الدرس هذا تابع علم العظام . . . سهل بسيط في محتواه وقصير ولكن مدرستنا

تعطيه أهمية خاصة بحيث فشي كسبها كواد بيداغوجي هيكل عظمي انساني حقيقي . . . سكوت من فضلكم . . . كان الانسان صاحب الهيكل الذي سنطبق عليه الدرس عن قليل طباخ داخلية المدرسة . كان اسمه عكسي أمغان رحمه الله . . . درسنا يكتسي من هذا الجانب أهمية بالغة بحيث لنا شيء فريد في نوعه . . . من جانب آخر السي المنور بواب المدرسة . . . سكوت من فضلكم . . . السي المنور المحترم هو الذي سيأتي لنا عن قرب بالهيكل . . . كان البواب الصديق العزيز للمرحوم وأصبح اليوم الحارس الظنين على بقايا الصديق . . . السي المنور مصروف لدى الجميع وبتميز في تعبيره بطريقة حارة في السرد . في الرواء على وقائع عكسي . . . نحتبر اذن . . . أن في فائدتنا نلزم بقدر ما هو ممكن على السي منور البواب يجلس معنا وبشاركنا في الدرس . . . سكوت . . . الهدف من وراء هذا جعل من الضيف يتكلم لنا على الطباخ . . . بمعنى آخر يلبس الهيكل الذي كان له الصديق، العزيز بالاس . . . قادر كلام البواب يأخذ ثقل بيداغوجي لدرسنا كما قادر يفيدكم في مادة من المواد التعليمية الأخرى . . . سكوت . . . انشدرا معنا السي منور ونتحايلو معاه باش يتكلم ولكن بصفة ذكية ومحترمة في نفس الوقت ولا بصفة فرضاوية . . . سكوت . . . ها همز . . . خذوا كراسكم . . . درسنا . . . اليوم على الهيكل العظمي . . . أهلا . . . أهلا بك يا السي المنور .

منور :

مساء الخير وليداتي .

لصديقه وقال له . . . الآن تقدر سموت هاني مرتاح البال من جهتك أرمي
العين على خواك . اذا شئتني تتدهشر . . أحرزني لا تقلبني سيارة أنا
أصبحت ملك الأمة وأنت الحارس المسؤول عليّ .
كانت بين عكلي ومنور مودة حلوة سكر . . . عكلي رحمه الله وفاته الميئة
ومات هاذو عشر سنين فايته ورغم هذا من شق الموت ، باقي منور وافسي
محافظ على الرابطة وفي قلبه ما زالت العلاقة حيّة كانت ذمة الفعالية
بيناتهم وهي اللي متنت الحقدة . . .

ابحث لهم الصبح متاعك . . . أنت تتبرع واللاً أنا . . . هات صبحك يا خويا . . .
انت المملوك . . . ابحت لهم . الصبح متاعك . . . أنت تتبرع واللاً أنا . . .
هات صبحك . . . امضي معايا في الرسالة . . . ناضوا من بعد يجروا باش يحتقوا
الأمية وعندهم ما سمحوا في المشقة . . . قصدوا أصحاب المراتب المعينة
وعندهم ما سمحوا في المسافة . اللي قال لهم : بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
والصلاة والسلام على أشرف المرسلين ثم بعد : الصليب الاحمر هو اللي
عنده خبرة وقادر يفصل لكم هذا القضية . . . واللي قال لهم : مشروعكم
مذا يفكر في الفراغة . بلادنا راما خادية طريق أخرى . . . قد خولنا
مشروع اجتماعي اللي يفيد البلاد . . . زيدوا فكروا . . . المشاكل في الميدان
الإجتماعي راما منها وعليها واللي قال لهم : راكم غالطين في العنوان واللاً
باغيين تخلقوا ليا نزع مع قسم المتاحف . . . واللي قال لهم : . . . عظم
الله أجركم وأجر الجميع . . . زيدوا استنوا حتى تتكون وزارة خاصة بهذا
الشؤون . . . اللي قال لهم رانا جايين من الهند عدد لا بأس به من الهياكل
الهند بلاصديقة وفي طريق النمو كيفنا . . . زيد بالزيادة الهياكل هذوا
عظمية وفي نفس الوقت حية تنمشي واللي قال لهم . . . بعد ما يعوت السيد
وتدفنوه دبروا على زرع شهود يكزنوا حتى تما موتى يأكدرنا لنا باللي وبعضوا
باللي الريح طلعت لمولاها من بعد الشيء ساهل . . . واللي قال لهم : ها
والناس الآخريين تدولهم اللحم والشحم وأنا تجيبولي العظام نكد . . . قاع
داروا طونوبيلات . . . قاع داروا فيلات . . . بقيت غير أنا . . . غير أنا . . . غير
أنا . . .

عكسي ومنور حرسوا على القضية وما فشلوش . . . وفي النهاية نجحوا المحييين
بالأمر قبلوا بالهدية . وردرا رسميا على الطلب في آخر الوثيقة شاكرين الموقف
الشجاع شاكرين المناضل عكلي اللي يهدى في سبيل الحام . . . وبعد الشكر
متنبيين يكون الهيكل سليم البنية ويكون أجل المتبرع تصير المدى . عكلي
ومنور طارو للسماء بالفرجة حين ما وصلهم الجواب . . . منور طاج للأرض
سجد ومنور ركعتين . . . عكلي انور . . . لاجابت أشم . . .

... واشأ أداك لهذا الحد ، ، ؟ راك حابنا نخرجوك من القبر وبعادولك
... توقفوك هنا مثل الشبح داخل المدرسة ؟ ، ، ، ، مذكروا الكتب

اللي تتراهم على الفلسفة والسياسة هما اللي غدروك ، ، ، ، استخفروك . وارجع
لعولاك أنا خوك ، ، ، ، والآ روح أضرب قريحة والآ زوج ربما تحمي هذى
الفكرة الشيطانية ، ، ، ، قال عكلي خمت طويل في الموضوع ودرست الجوانب
كلها ، ، ، ، يا خلى دار شرك من تجهلش ، ربما يسلم علينا ربي زلزلة في
هذا الليلة بعد ، ، ، ، ربما الثابوة تتردم . وكلنا موتوا ما تبقى غير أنت
واقف ، محبك ربي ؟ ، ، ، ، قال عكلي ثابوة أخرى تستفاد من عظامي وتصبح هي

الوارثة . الموت على كل إنسان يا منور ، ، ، ، كآين . اللي يستنها تهتف عليه
صدفة وكآين اللي متحضر لها ، ، ، ، قضية اختيار ، ، ، ، اعجب يا عكلي خويا عجب
عوض ما تخلي عظامك في راحة القبر مستورين في رحمة القهار تتبرع بهم وهما
عاد فوق منك ، ، ، ، ياك عظامي وانا هولاهم قال عكلي والقانون يحيى الملكية
الخاصة ، ، ، ، هده الحق عظامك جاروب منور عظامك ، ، ، ، الناس تخلي وراها
القصور والكنوز . وانت خليلي اعظامك ، ، ، ، شاف مليح في صديقه شافه
مصم . شي رايه زاد قال له : خليلي نفكر ، يا عكلي ، هذا الليلة في القضية
بعد ما تزوج علي الدهشة وقدوة اذا كنا من الحيين نتناقشوا مليح وندرسوا
على كيف الهمة روح ترتاح وزيد عمق في التفكير من جيهتك ، ، ، ، في
المستقبل يا عكلي . ما نعاك ما نضرب لك على الكتف مدام نارى تصبح
ملك الدولة ، ، ، ، نخلو لك سرسور الظهر مستقم لا تضحاف الهدية .

كانت بين عكلي ومنور مؤدة حلوة اهتموا مع بعض كثير بالقضية وتحدثوا في
السر لويل ، على الهدية . كل ليلة يدرسوا جانب ، من المهمة درسوا الجانب
الخلقي : كيف تتركب العظام وفي الجانب الفلسفي . قالوا : الدين الحنيف
يدعي للحلم والتضحية ودرسوا الجانب القانوني فتشوا في الكتب وفلا و
الاستور . ما صابوا حتى مادة تنفي التملية .

قوى التفاهم وزاد تمتن بين عكلي ومنور حول المهمة كتب عكلي رسالة رسمية
وقال لعد ، حارت ، ، ، ، حارت ، ، ، ، حارت ، ، ، ، حارت ، ، ، ، حارت ، ، ، ،

نديروا جلسة ثقافية وتكلموا عليها . . . راني تحبان شوية من ركابي هذا
الليلة وكما راك تشوف شربان شوية . دير محسب يهوالك يا حبيبي جاوب
منو. ناض ورافقه وصل صديقه حتى الحتبة ، الخد من ذاك عكلي ومنو ر
جمعوا كما هو محدد . على الكفرة اللي بايتة تخدر . مولاها قال لرفيقه .
تهدي جسدي ، يعني هيكلي العظمي للمدرسة ونديرك أنت المتوكل في
تفليذ الوصية . . . يا حافظ يا ستار . يا شديد العقاب يا الزاحد القهار
. . . . راش اداك لهذا . انكرة يا ولد أما راش اداك . . . شفت الشراب وبين
يوصل يا عكلي خويا . . . تهدي الهيكل العظمي . اللي انت راكب عليه
لثانوية ؟ . . . يا العالم الحميد . القهار ، يا رب الارض والسوات امحي
من مخ حبيبي هذا الفكرة المشوذة . . . تهدي عظامك للمدرسة ؟ . . . هذو
عشر سنين فايقة وانا محابك عمرى ولا ظيبتك تخرج لي بهذا الخرجة . . .
اذا هالك شي حد هنا في هذا المدرسة قول لي راني أهنا . . . المطرق
. . . مطرق الأجداد راه غير هنا حداى وبدّ خوك مزال ما زالت خفيفة . . .
شكون اللي غضبك قاع . هالك حتى اصبحت حاي تسيب فريستك ؟ . . .
نصهطك . قال عكلي ما بقى ليش بزاف ونوت . أجلي قرب . . . على ما قالوا
لي في المستشفى كبدتي من الخدر بدات تتنّز وتفتت بالشوية . . . هذاك
غير الوحش يا عكلي خويا . . . الا . . . من ميرك ما راني مخبر حد . في
القضية . فكرت رقلت بعد ما نوت بدامين رالا ثلاثة تجبدوا عظامي من
تحت الارض وتصاوبوهم . . . تركبو بهم . . . تركبو بهم هيكل عظمي يبقى ملك
لثانوية . . . يستعملوه للدروس في العلوم الطبيعية . . . عدام مدرستنا فقيرة
من ناحية الأدوات " المدرسية " . . . البداغوجية . يستفادوا بيه اولادنا
وأحسن من اللي يستوردوا واحد من الخارج من فرنسا . . . يا حافظ العقاب
تقول على روحك بالموت . . . تجهل وأنت ببركة الله مجهد على ثور اسبانيا ؟ . .
أجلي يا منور . أجلي راني نشوف فيه يظل . . . وحاب نزيد نشيد هذا الثانوية
اللي خدمناها . . . نشيد في التعليم . . . نشيد في تكوين الشبيبة . . . يا عكلي
خويا الوطنية متاعك خارقة للعادة . . . الوطنية امتاعك راك موصلها للعظم

عكلي ومنور .

كانت بين عكلي ومنور صداقة كبيرة صحبة متينة رابطتهم حدًا ما يدسّ على
خوه . واحد منهم ما يدير شيء بلا ما يشارر الآخر .
كانت بين عكلي ومنور مودة حلوة ، محبة تلبية صافية ، ما تادر الخير
يشيطان بيناتهم وبخلوضها . يتناقشوا ويتناقذوا صح ولكن عزمهم ولا يتنايفوا .
كانت بين عكلي ومنور صداقة كبيرة . عكلي رحمه الله توفى هذا عشر
سنين فايتة ورغم هذا من تق الموت باقية رابطتهم علاقة حية .
كانت بين عكلي ومنور ذمة . معاهدة ديك الذمة هي اللي زادت في المحبة
دفعة هي اللي حتى لليوم بيناتهم معاهدة .
عكلي ومنور بندهوا وجربوا طويل مع بعض كل واحد أدى من خوه فوائد
كثيرة ، كانوا بزوجهم خدامين في ثانوية . عكلي طباخ ومنور بواب تحارفوا
في الخدمة شهر قليلة من بعد الاستقلال تصادقوا وتحابوا حين ما تحارفوا
في الأسابيح الأولى .
عكلي قلنا توفى ولكن بالنسبة لمنور ما زال يخدم و تفيد ولو بصفة غير مباشرة
بالنسبة لمنور ما زال صديقه معاه في الثانوية .
كان المرجوم عكلي طويل القامة وسمين شوية الشلغمة مبرومة والصوت عالي في
الذمة . كانت تخرج الكلمة من فمه صافية هوزونة ما ملفة ما مكسة .
منور قصير وصغير على عكلي بعشر سنين كابر في البادية وما زال محافظ
على القيم اللي في صخره شربها كانت بين عكلي ومنور صداقة كبيرة ، نسي
سهرة من اليسهرات قصروا كما في عاداتهم على مدرستهم . زعلى مشاكلها
على الآباء اللي ما حبوش يتنظوا وبديروا جمعية على وكيل المصرف اللي
اللي ضارب ضربته مع الجزار واصحاب البيع وبالجملة . وقصروا في دديك
الليلة . دديك السهرة على الأدوات المدرسية . قصروا على المشاكل وعلى
الحلول وبعد ما أكدوا باللي لازم الدولة تقترم في مجال التكوين بدورهما تنهتوا
مع بعض بأسفين . باش يختمول المناقشة . ناض عكلي وقال لصديقه بتت
ق من ذمة في حال المدرسة بخار الحفرة . ان . في العلاقة مع

- الصغار يسقوا والكبير هايم خارج للبلاد .
- خلى قرابته عاد تالف سايقاته هبلية .
- ابني وعلا كب جهده في البخلي والياجور .
- ترك بالجمعة الشانطي قاصد لداره يزرر .
- وحش الدراة والاولاد ثقيل في صدره كالكور .
- كفل العيان لزر لفظيمة سامسا .
- قالت : توحشناك تلهدت ومسحت عينيها .
- حتى وبعد ما خلاها قبل على جبينها .
- جبد ارطل حنة حطها مكسة على صدرها .
- الجمعة الجاية قالت نكون دؤينة بيها .
- نروح لحم ونشري لك الدواء قال لها .
- هاكي الصروف نرجع بالخف تبيل الدؤينة .
- قالت سقم السقف لا يطيح يبرد منسا .
- ابني وعلا كب جهده في البخلي والياجور .
- ترك بالجمعة الشانطي قاصد لداره يزرر .
- وحش الدراة والاولاد ثقيل في صدره كالكور .
- فوت راجته تدور جرى في الشتاء قضامسا .
- مشاكل عديدة ما ساعده الزقت يفهلها .
- ما جمع مع الدربة غوته ما شبها .
- بكر وخرج حزين راجع للملسة وتحبها .
- ودعاته زوجته تبست وعمزت راسها .
- الجمعة الجاية لحل ترتاح فيها .
- لحل تضيب الحنة زادت ثي ثقلها .
- ابني وعلا كب جهده في البخلي والياجور .
- وحش الدراة والاولاد ثقيل في صدره تالكور .

- . الصفار يسقوا والكبير هايم خارج للبلاء .
- . خلّى ترايته عاد تالف سايقاته هبلسة .
- . ابني وعلا كب جهده في البنلي والياجور .
- . ترك بالجمعة الشاطي قاصد لداره يزور .
- . وحش المرأة والاولاد ثقيل في صدره كالكور .
- . كفل العيان نر لفظيمة سامسا .
- . قالت : توحشناك تلهدت ومسحت عينيها .
- . حتى وبعد ما خلاها قبل على جبينها .
- . جيد ارطل حنة حظها مكسة على صدرها .
- . الجمعة الجاية قالت نكون مزينة بيها .
- . نروح لحم ونشري لك الدواء قال لها .
- . هاكي المصروف نرجع بالخف قبل الدفينة .
- . قالت سقم السقف لا يطبخ زبردنا .
- . ابني وعلا كب جهده في البنلي والياجور .
- . ترك بالجمعة الشاطي قاصد لداره يزور .
- . وحش المرأة والاولاد ثقيل في صدره كالكور .
- . فوت راعته تدور جرى في الشتاء قضاها .
- . مشاكل عديدة ما ساعده الزقت يفصلها .
- . ما جمع مع الدرية غوته ما شبها .
- . بكر وخرج حزين راجع لللسة وتحبها .
- . ودعاه زوجته تبسمت وهزت راسها .
- . الجمعة الجاية لعل ترتاح فيها .
- . لعل تضيب المحنة زادت في ثقلها .
- . ابني وعلا كب جهده في البنلي والياجور .
- . وحش المرأة والاولاد ثقيل في صدره كالكور .

قـدور :

ابني وعلاً كب جهده في البخلي والياجور تراك بالجمعة الشاطي قاصد لداره يزور .

- . وحش المرأة والاولاد ثقيل في صدره كالكور .
- . رزم حوايج الخدمة ماشي يريح قـدور .
- . ردع اصحابه زاد السبق يشالي فحسور .
- . قال : تجيب لكم الحزين تم قاعدين بسور .
- . ركب متبسم فرحان يلح في عينيه لسور .
- . ابني وعلاً كب جهده في البخلي والياجور .
- . ترك بالجمعة الشاطي قاصد لداره يسزور .
- . وحش المرأة والاولاد ثقيل في صدره كالكور .
- . في خاطره طحيمة وحنان مراته فطيمة .
- . قال : نشوف اولادي نمحي التيب نفاجي الخمة .
- . نغطس في الجو الأمللي نشرب جخيدة .
- . طالت المسافة نسف طويل ما قال كلدة .
- . باقي يفكر في الصغيرة بنته مريممة .
- . اللي تنساه تنادي له عمي كاليتيممة .
- . بالحلوة يجلبها يدرب لها الحشممة .
- . ابني وعلاً كب جهده في البخلي والياجور .
- . تراك بالجمعة الشاطي قاصد لداره يسزور .
- . وحش المرأة والاولاد ثقيل في صدره كالكور .
- . نزل يجرى عتب وجد المسكن في ربلدة .
- . فطيمة مريضة مدودة صفرة مدبالمة .
- . ومريمة تقضي مقلطة لباسها مدبلمة .
- . زين اولادي ، وبين البنت ، ما سباب هذا الخيلة .
- . عايشة في الجنازة تفتل ، عند الجارة المقابلة .

الحساس :

إذا احتاجيتي نبي المستقبل يا السي الحبيب للمساعدة ما تحشمس جبتك جاه
ربي . . . أقصدني .

الحبيب :

عندنا عمال من الميناء مطردين رانا نلؤلهم العيد قرب نهار يومهم كايين
فيهم اللي أكثر من عشرة شهر ما ظريش نظرية . . . روح تخدم . . . نقصدك
كما قلت غدوى واللاً بعد غدوى نفهك ونقصرها مليح على القضية .

الحساس :

كما بخيت . . . لما تجي خارج يا الراجل الزين يا نوح المدينة ما تتختلش . . .
جبت لك جاه ربي فوت من الجهة الأخرى فوت في وسط الطريق الكبيرة ديك
الطريق اللي مقوسين عليها النخل ومزرة على الأطراف بالورد تصيبني قدامك
حال في وجهك الباب الكبير .

الحبيب :

قول للشبان باللي راني قريب نكمل وقول لهم باللي أنت اللي شديتني .

الحساس :

حشاه .

الحبيب :

شديتني بالهدرة . . . أسكترا أنتم عليّ حتى نكمل قلنا . . . الأُسبُقية للمسجونين
. . . أنتم ماكلتكم برى . . . أيا لعدي با الفزالة . . . مريم تبخيك صدعة
الجيران على الخبز اليابس . . . اللي عندها شي قرصة يابسة تدها لي للفزالة
. . . أيا لعدي يا بنتي يا . . . رمز الزين والحريّة .

قبل ما يجوا الخدّامين . أصلح ونظف السجّات هكذا تقدروا نتابعوا في
السر مهمتنا والهوايش يتنقوا وما تبقاش فيهم هذا الريحة الكرومة .
العساس :

من غدوى الصبحاح يا السي الحبيب تقدر تتكل عليّا . . . الزرافة نطلع لها
بالسلوم راه عندي بعد واحد في البوتة .
الحبيب :

واطلق الخبر قول باللي جواسيس الامبرالية ما بقاش يدوروا في الجنينة .
العساس :

حاجة ساهلة . هدى تقدر عليها . . . نقول باللي الجواسيس ضربوا لي
تليفون وقالوا لي : أنتم أصحاب البلدية واعربن علينا . . . نقول باللي راهم
الجواسيس بدلوا البرنامج وراهم باغيين يدخلوا للديار . باغيين يتسرسبوا مع
صور التلفزة ويدخلوا . . . للديار . . . ياك .
الحبيب :

شوف على كلام يكون مقبول . . . من جهة أخرى رانا بدينا نصنعوا في ورشة
للبلدية في سجّات جديدة واسعة ولايقة . . . فتلنا كذلك خيطان مع
الطلحات الأخرى يعاونونا نشبحوا الحديقة لولادنا .
العساس :

سبحان الله قبيل كنت تبان لي قصير ودروك راني نشوف فيك كي الحيط قبالي .
الحبيب :

هاكي تریدی يا بنتي . . . شوف للفورغرة هدى طار لها الريش من عنقها . . .
مين ما تصيب ما تاكل المخلوقة تخرج راسها من الشباك تلقب
الحشيش شوف مليح بدأ الريش يثبت فيها من جديد
العساس :

أنا نروح نضرب دورة . . . نخدم شوية . . . نخليك تكمل مهمتك .
الحبيب :

ما بقاليش حاجة كبيرة . . . ديك الانقليز . . . أرب الهد . . . والغزاة .

قال لهم نقترح عليكم تربطوا الهوايش لداخل في سجناتهم . . . اللي قال أنا
أديت البراك صح أديتهم للمخيم الصيفي متاع البلدية . . . يتسمى اديتهم .
لولا دنا . . . اللي قال أنا باري وزبي راه شاهد بغيت ندى البغاء للدار
عندي تربيته في سبيل الله ودرت لكم طلبية ولكن ما قبلتوش . . . اللي قال
من غير شوية " قرافة " وشوية غرس " للفيلة " ما أديت هايشة ما بنفسي
الهوايش واذا ابخيتوني نخلد، لكم اللي أديت بسم الله ولكن بشرط كل من
أدى يخلص . . . اللي قال. الا مبريالية . . . الا مبريالية لها امكانيات ووسائل
عديدة هذو جواسيس راهم يدخلوا للجنان بالليل مسلحين ومتجهزين عساس
الليل مسكين واش يدير بطرقه . لازمه يالأقل " طنك " . قالوا ما قالوا
يا السي الحبيب . في هذا الباب والخوف، اذا يجيبولي " طنك " وأنا بسكلات
وما نحرفش سوقها . . . ما بالية ملف ، ملف الحديقة ائثال على المجلس
شطته والبلدية . . . وحتى لليوم ولو حكنتك مزال الأمر مطروح . . . واش
رايك يا السي الحبيب نديرو لهم برية على " الطنك " .

الحبيب :

اللا الحيوان ما زالوا محتاجين للمأكلة . . . تقدر من جيبك تحاوننا مدام
مدام القضية في السرية .

الحساس :

بسم الله يا سيدي أنا واجد نعاون السي الحبيب على الراس والعين وقليل .
الحبيب :

أصحاب الحي كلهم متحملين بقضية حديقة الحيوان كلنا ملتزمين وما نطلقوا
القضية غير اذا كان حل ايجابي متقول . . . هذا الحديقة مجاورة الأحياء
الشعبية . . . دوالين المال ما يجيبوش أولادهم لهذا الجنة يدورهم ساعة
على ساعة لاروا يتخرجوا في الحيوان زاشياء أخرى مسلية ومكونة أكثر من ما في
هذا البلاد . . . تقدرنا نحتررا اذا سمحت باللي الحديقة هذي حديقة
الشعب ، حديقة اولادنا على كل حال رلك انت عايش فيها ومنها وراك تشوف
من في كالمهم . . . المالك . . . اذا . . . المالك . . .

واللي يتكلم على المصلحة العامة . واحد قال لهم علاش دايرين الحمام في القفص . . . الحمام يرمز للحرية ومعنا كافحنا وما زالنا نكافحوا في سبيل الحرية . . واحد قال لهم شواذي ديروا لهم اسراويل السترة مليحة . . . واحد قال لهم اعطوني قطعة من الارض للبناء باش نبي نجيب لكم فيل من الحبش نسيبي راه خدام ثم ، الفيل ندبر راسي ونجيبه لكم نقطه " تراباندو " كبرت . . . المجلس البلدي فتح البحث في هذا المجال . . . استدعوا الناس باش يسمع منهم . . . اسمع المجلس الحجب المعجب . . . اللي يوقف، يسألوه سؤال واحد واش رايا، في الحديقة الكبيرة ؟ . . . حديقة الحيوان ؟ . . . أيوى وارواح تسمع اللي قال: أول مرة راني نسمع بالحديقة اللي فيها الحيوان . . . الحيوان مذر تابعين رزق الدولة ؟ اللي قال : عساس الليل بنوا له بركة في وسط الحيوان ونديرو له في كل جنب طوبقة صغيرة باش تسهل عليه الحسة . .

الحبيب :

الخوف يأخذوا بهذا الرأي وبسجنوك .

العساس :

كاين اللي قال: تعطيك غسة النسر نقد موه للمسابقات الدولية يجيب لنا ميداليات ذهبية . عفريت صلوب يشد في السيام يقدر يقعد شهر بلا مأكلة . . . اللي قال المأكلة الل راها توصل خيانة للهوايش جاية من الخارج . . . هكذا وقع في بعض البلدان الافريقية .

الحبيب :

المأكلة من الخارج نعم . . . خارج البلدية .

العساس :

اللي قال أنا خاطيني أنا خدام في البلدية المأكلة اللي راها تدخل خيانة مذي من مصلحة الجمارك . هذا " تراباندو " . . . اللي قال مذو عديان البلاد رادم يخربوا خابن يرمجوا الهوايش يركبوا لهم مرض خطير من أمراض اوروبا ويطلقوهم بهجوا علم الشعب حذار . . . حذار . . . هذا صفتوا عليه . .

بالتشويش . قالوا أصحاب الجنان هما اللي دربوا الهوايش على الاضراب . . .
قالوا أصحاب الجنان حابين يستفلوا الفرصة باش نزيدولهم الخلصة . . .
ها بالنية بالشوية بالشوية ايامات من بعد يا سيدى شعلت عند ذوا الادارين
الادارين . . . ناضت بيناتهم الفتنة عادرا يتعايروا . . . هذا يحصل في هذا
. . . واحد يقول لخواه أنت اللي في كل صبحه تروح تلم بيض الوز . . . الآخر
يقول لخواه أنت اللي داير رايك في براك الدولة . . . والآخر اللي يقول لخواه
قاع رانا تدا . . . اللي ما يديش من الجنينة يدى من اللحم اللي يجيبوه
من " الباطوار " للهوايش، وزيد ياك الحام اللي فات كباشنا . . . كباش العيد
ياك قرسناهم في جنان البايلك .

الحبيب :

عندك الحق الدعوة وصلت . . . وصلت بحميد . . .

الحسا - س :

استنى نزيدك . . . كبرت وباش يخوهم داروا ملف ودفحوه للمجلس يفتي فيه .

الحبيب :

شرف للذئب كيف؛ ماد وذهه والحمامة شوف كيف مدرقة راسها في ربشها . . .
ايوى . . . ؟

الحسا س :

الروح انطل ونولي نحكي لا ربنا يهدفوا رجال الدراك والشرطة باش يباحثوا كما
قالوا . . . نخاف يهدفوا ويطلعوك .

الحبيب :

ما تخافش الشبان برى يعسوا علينا وزيد قالوا لك على رجال الدراك غير باش
يعظمو المسألة ويخوفوك . . . اذا يجيوا يباحثوا يجوا في النهار القهار . هذى
ماشي حرب . . . غير زيد احكي خلات .

الحسا س :

كبرت يا السي الحبيب كبرت . . . حين بدأ المجلس يدرس في ملف حديقة
الحيوان بداوا الخدامين يرسلوا في البروات اللي يتكلم على المصلحة الخاصة

الحبيب :

شواى انا اللي قاربت بيناتهم والنحامة كذلك . . . ما رديتش الولهة ونسييت
بابها مفتوح من زرايا . . .

الحساس :

مولتنا يا السي الحبيب . . . ما زال نحكي لك صار ما صار .

الحبيب :

اسمحو لي . . . غلظت . . . ف للهوايش مساكين كيف متبحين الحديث وحابين
يتكلموا . . . يحطو رايبهم . . . شوف كيف يطالبوا حتى بما بالديموقراطية . . .
زيد احكي يا السي الهاشمي .

الحساس :

زبرت أنا العسة من ديك الليلة ولكن عييت ما حسن رعييت ما نحضي ما قدرت
نلقف هذا الجواسيس . . . كيف كنت اتدير أنا وراسك ؟ . . . خبرني . . . ؟

الحبيب :

الشبان احبابي يحسوا عليك من برى وبالتمشيرة قلدين الهامة يعطوني المعلومات
الكافية على تحركاتك .

الحساس :

خبطة والله الى خبطة . . . صغار كانوا عسسين على التساسوين ما نتحرك اتبعوا
فيا كالضامة . . . ويقولوا الاصب ما يحرفش يتدغم . . . ها بالنية نزيد لك . . .
الماكلة توصل للحيوان بالليل ولو تصب الشتاء والا ينوض الريح . . . حرنا . . .
يكفيك الحال . عادوا الهوايش بعد اسبوعين يخضبوا على الماكلة اللي تجيهم
من البلدية كاللي دايرين الاضراب . . . صحتهم تحسنت والبيطري كاللي فحرج
وخرج عطلة . . . صحة الهوايش تحسنت . . . شادى ولى ناشط يزمن الناس
يضحك ويخز للحزبات من جهتها شادية كل ما عمال البلدية يحطو لها
الماكلة تبقى تتوغ وتدير يديها على عينيها . . . واحد من ذواك العمال المسكين
ما فهمش الوضع دار فيها بره قال فيها حرشوا عليه شادية براها كل ما
تشوفه تفول عليه بالموت بعض من الادارين بغار يقلبوا بنا الحميرة وبتهمونا

الحبيب :

مطلع الحساب .

العساس :

من نهار الخلصة . . . نير يحطوني الدربهمات نقصد الجزار نشرى ذوك زوج
كيلو لحم واللا ثلاثة . من لحم الحود وندى للدرارى ينقهاوا . . . قال الدعوة
فيها خطورة . . . القانون يمنع هذا الشيء . . . والبيطرى موصى . . . وهذا
الأجنبي قلت له واش دخله في هوايش الجزائر . . . البيطرى ردّ عليّ طبيب
الهوايش ، اتعلموا لنتكم ياخي امرب ياخي . . . اللي راه يحطي اللحم
للهايش ناوى يرمجهم بلاشي ما همش مطبوعين على اللحم اذا ما يوتوش
مروجين يركبهم الهرار . . . هوايشنا هوالفين الخضرة الخامجة والنخالة
الخاملة . . . الامر يا الهاشي وقع بالليل . ريسى بالليل أنت هو المسؤول
الوحيد . . . حدّ ما قاسم معاك الكلافة . . . حضر بالك ما ترقدش. وزاد فيه
السبق بسيارة البلدية . . . وليت لثراشي للدقى قلت ربما نزيد شي منام
الملفوف . حرم علي العساس في ذاك النهار والليل كله وأنا بجري داخل
الحديقة كانوا وحدين زوج يجو من الليل لليل يصربوا طواسي تحت الصفصاف
ويقهرورا على السياسة خطرة على خطرة يكرموني بكاس ساكين باش ندفي جنابي
. . . طردتهم . . . قالوا لي علاش تلمرد فينا بنيترا جامع في الحديقة ؟ . . .
قلت لهم الوقت راه شين رفبمتهم على اللحم . . . حتى دما حلفوا لي من
جهتهم . . . راك أنت . . . بنفسك تشوف قالوا احنا متاع زيتون ، فول ، وخبز
الزرع . . . ما بالنية يومين من بعد صلبو شادى في سجنه شادية صابوهم
متعاقبين يفلوا لبعضهم بعض . . . البيطرى أنبل . . . حارز كيف دار شادى
. . . حل السجنة دخل على جارتة وبلغ زراه الباب . . . الدحامة يا سيدى
حتى هي خرجت من مسكنها . . . ما بونا اللا تحوس . . . تتزعبل جوايه
السهرج الكبير . . . تتمشى وتتكل من وراها شاب يبست وبتبع فيها خطوة
بخطوة . . .

الحبيب :

اذا في خبرك يا السي الهاشمي أحكي لي كيفاش حتى أصبحت البلدية مقلوبة
على جالي .

الحساس :

صايرة كبيرة يا السي السيد المهام وأنا جايب الخبر بالحرف على كل شي . . .
سبحان الله كنت قاصدك للدار باش تدبر علي في هذا القضية . . . شوف
المكتوب اتابع ربي . . . لو ما بيشر، نشوف فيك قبالي ما نأمنش . . . السي الربوحي
الحبيب هو مول الدعوة راه هولتهم وصايرة كبيرة . . . نعم بدأ لك من
الاول القضية انطلقت قول وحد الشهر بالتقريب .

الحبيب :

اذا سمحت أنت تجكي وأنا سد الماكلة للهوايش، كيف ما قالوا ناس " را "
زمان الهدرة والمثزل . . . ما البراية اللي حسبتها قبلت وخفت منها . . .
جايبها للزرافة المسكينة . . . ايوى . . . شوف ما أزيبهم عينيها . . .

الحساس :

هذا شهر بالتقريب كنت راتد لنوم في رزحي نشوي في الملقوف والدخان غابني . . .
الدراري يدوروا علي والنراة تنزل لي طيبه طليح لا يضرهم الشحم ما . بالنية
أنا هكذا راتد بعد عشة الليل حتى زهزمتني المرأة فطنت مخلوع قالت . . .
مسؤول الحدائق جاء يحوس عليك . . . بالخلة قلت لها راه شم رائحة الملقوف
قالت خف رحك راه يبان مقلق . . . نعم كالي مخطوف خير ان شاء الله عمره
ما جاني للخيمة . . . خرجت له مفتزن في عباية وعرضت عليه يدخل يشرب قهوة ق
قال مقلق . . . سألتني بجهد انت اللي اعطيت للهوايش ياكلوا بالليل ؟ . . .
رديت نعم رميت لشادي شوية مطلوع وللطاروس حبات زبتون . . . حاجة قليلة
اللي شاءت علي من الحشاء شفوني . . . قال ما بيشر، نتكلم على المطلق اعطاهم
اللحم " القوفريط " . . . اللحم ؟ . . . ما عرفت كيف نبرر روجي حلفت له .
- والله ما دخل لداري اللحم هاذو ثلاثة وعشرين يوم .

رانت .

الحبيب :

أنا هو الحداد الاكحل المحدررب صدقتي . . . عامل مثلك في البلدية . . . ها البطاقة . . . قرب . . . وهلك شوف يدنيا . . . جبت شوية مأكلة للهوايش راهم ضايحين ساكين ما درت عيب .

العساس :

على هديك المأكلة اللي رانا نعسوا في الجواسيس . نعم . . . على هديك المأكلة راه صاير ما صاير . . . على المأكلة البلدية مقلوبة والمجلس في حيرة .

الحبيب :

ايوى صار هكذا فطنو . . . ؟ . . .

العساس :

نعم واقفين واقفة صحيحة . . . هاك البطاقة ما نعرفش نقرى . . . الصورة اللي فيها تشبه لك على كل حال ما تخبش ررحك ما يبطوش زي جو رجال الدرر ونشوفوك مين جاي . . . أنت على حساب الشوفة جاي من التشاد .

الحبيب :

أنا جاي غير من وراء الجنان . . . انا جاسوس الفقراء . . . أنا الحبيب يا خويا واذا بنيت تحقق ذرك نضرب تصفيرة يهجموا أولاد الحوة كلهم راهم نسي هذا الساعة وراء الشباك متجندين يعسوا محوطين على الجنينة . .

العساس :

ايه هذا اعلاش ساعة على ساعة يجو يلهموني عمي أشحال راهما الساعة . . . المحطة من فضلك عمي من نخضولها . . . دايرين برنامج حربي رانا كالبهيم نبات نصن في السماء للجواسيس كانش طيارة عمودية . تحط واللا جاسوس يهود بالبراشيت برنامج حربي على المحقول درك عاد أمت باللي انت هو الحبيب الروحي . . . اسمح لي نسلم عليك . . . يقولوا عليك يا المسي الحبيب عفريت في التنظيم . . . اسمح لي أنا خوك . . . مولوني يابن عمي مولونسي . . .

العساس :

هندي ياه ؟ ... اتمسخر... اتمسخر... درك ما يطولوش ويوصلوا رجال
الدرك والشرطة... استنى تشوف... الهندي!... درك تشوف الباكور
اللي غادي تاكله... الدجال؟ الركله والصفعة .

الحبيب :

هيا بقى هكذا تستنى في رجال الدراك والشرطة وبيديا للسماء ؟ ...

العساس :

نعم الحمد لله... اليوم نخرج وعده ما رانا لقفناك يا الزعيم... اليوم
عاد نتبهوا منك ومن المحنة اللي ربيتنا فيها... قلت لك أوقف مجتهد
وطلح يديك... صار أنت هو مول الدردبة نصف براد شينا وليحنا...
انت وعدك هنا والآن معاك آخرين...!

الحبيب :

من غير هذو ققط وكلاب الحومة اللي في جرتي متبعين ريحة المرقاز ما كان
حتى واحد في الجنان معايا... اصحابي برأ... تقدر نهوّد يدينا
شوبه عيبيت .

العساس :

هسودهم بالصبح رد بالك... تترنم تطيح. وجد روحك يا مول الدجال... اليوم
تاخذ ما خذي الزود نهار العيد .

الحبيب :

حط مطرقتك وقرب لي نتكلموا بالعقل ونشاهسوا .

العساس :

نعام باغي تخدمني راء، غالط... المي الهاشمي اللي واقف قبالتك ما يباع
ما ينشري... واذا تحتنا، " الدوفيز " نيمر ما كان لاه تتكل تفويبي... اتجمد .

الحبيب :

أنا ما رجه " الدوفيز " يا السي الهاشمي واشرادنا لهذا الكلام .

... لو جاء عندي الوقت ندرىكم انت "صاحبك" والذئب جارك ...
نعلم لكم تلحبوا ترد . نعلم لكن تلحبوا الضامة باش. تللعوا الضيقة ...
نعلم لكم، ترفدوا الكراع لما ترشوا الماء باش. ما تبقاش، فيكم هذا الريححة
المكرومة ... هاك شوية فاكية ... اللآ اذا سفيزف ... ماشي ليك
... جايبه لصاحبى النمى ما راه لهيه مكمش عينيه يخزرفى ومخرج
شلاغمه من الشباك ... هاك ... يا الشعب هاك وغدوة لما يزورو ك
الأطفال أوقف مسقم ... بين مليح كحالتك باش يدوا منك صورة
جميلة ... نروج للطاووس والبط رادم دايرين ضجة ... سكتونا هدى
مظاهرة هدى ... حابين تفضحوني مع الهساس؟ أتم والببغاء يلزم لى
ندبر عليكم ونصيب لكم حيلة ... شوفوا الحمام الوعل والحمامة كيف عاقلين
وصابرين ... شوفوا للحجل والخرغر كيف ساكتين ... غير منهم شوية
... أيا يا سيدى هاكم ... وين هو الذرة ... اللآ هذا قم سبحان
الله حتى الحيوان فيهم البلبال والسكوتي الذاكى . والحيلي النمى ...
هاكم ... هاكم ... النمى . النمى ... الحيلي ... كيف راك
يا النمى ... شوف شوف كيف يحرف يتمسكن ... شوف باغي يشربني شوف
كيف يميل رأسه ويذبل عينيه شوف لوجاء قادر يتكلم كان يقولي : السي
الحبيب غدوة ان شاء الله لو ساعدك الوقت وفّت على سوق المدينة اشرى
لي من فضلك ارطل حب الملوك دير حسنة المرأة كرمك الله راها تتوحم
حاملة ... آه يا الزردى ... حب الملوك راه يكوى ، الكيلوراه يسزى
اكثر من ثمن صباط هاك تاكل الذرة ... ما الذرة ...

الحساس :

أوقف ... أوقف ... أحبس كما راك ... قلت لك أوقف وارنّد يديك
للسماء ... غير بالسياسة ... أرفد أرفد ..

الحبيب :

واش بيك يا المنبون واش كايين ... واش بيك دهشان تنذر في من بعيد

هذي نقطعها فيكم انتم أحرار وتقدروا تسيطوا وحدكم الماكلة
. أما هذو مساكين مسجونين في خدمة البشرية
شت غير بالسياسة بالسكات والنظام عندي ما يكفيكم كل واحد
منكم بحقه ، بالدالة وبلا هماج يا ولادي ببدو بشوادي راسم
أقرب للإنسان في الصفة شوف شوف كيف يشطح شوف
جبت لك اليوم شوية صفرجل اذا ما خفتش ربي يكذبني قلعوه الشبان
من جنان السي الحاج ابراهيم معذورة معذرة السي الحاج
ابراهيم غاترفي الظال مفرقح هناك غير بالحقل اللهفة
ما هي مليحة لا عند العبد ولا عند الهايشة كولي يا بنتي كولي
نعم المال اللي شايط على السي الحاج ابراهيم قادر يحيش الربع في
الحومة الصفرجل هذا يتسمى الاولاد تبرعوا باسم السي الحاج
ابراهيم ما فيها عيب منكم انك هذي يا شادي ياك ياك
. شوف شوف كيف يتمرغد شوف السر السر
دياني يا السر بعد شوية وختر بعد على الشباك ولم جدحيك
هناك حاول على يدى راني نحتاجها هناك ما نكسب بعد
ها هي هبرة لحم هذي بكرت عليها وشقتت حتى للباطوار نعم
الهبرة ديك جاية من المسلخ البلدى شوف شادي كيف يضحك شوف
. مجباتك كلمة المسلا الدباج هو اللي دبّر هذا الهبرة
متابل اذا عطاني خدانة سنهم له أحسبني مسكين أداى اللحم للدرارى
تالي حتى انا عندي النسورى يا السي الربوحي عندي ستة تبرك الله
في الدار وكلهم يبغوا ياكلوا الهبرة هناك زيد شوية دجاج بعرفك
تشتهيه غير بالسياسة عليك بدات ترجع فيك الروح عنقك
تجدد الثعلب هاني جيتك يا الثعلب يا بن عمي ربحك شحال
شينة تسكر هناك هناك اللحم أنت ثاني ما هما
العضام اللي تحبهم باش تنثني سنك بعد النشاء تصيب بالأقل
هناك

خير منها . الثالث عشر قاله : أم شوف ايه زاد الربوحي الحبيب الحداد تابع الدعوة وتكلم مع الخدام المكلف بطعم الهوايش . قاله السيد : صحّ راهم يشفوا . دوت كل ما في جهدى باش ننقذ المخلوقات ونريح الحسنات نقلع ساعات على ارلا دي ونجيب لهم ولكن الخضرة غالية وخلصتي ضعيفة ونزبدك حتى الشيء القليل اللي نجيبه بعطيه بالخيانة . القانون يمنع خوفا لا يكون الرهج في الماكلة .

" الربوحي الحبيب "

في ختام الدراسة خاد الربوحي الحبيب الحداد موقف، ودبر على حلّ للنجدة نظم حلقة تضامية ودخل محاه الشبان في العملية . عادو كل يوم وقت المغرب يلحوا كل ما يقدرزا يحملوا عليه من مأكولات . لحم . دجاج . عظام ، قمع ، نخالة ، خبز ، حشيش ، خضرة ، وفاكية ، وحين ما يطيح الليل يدخل الربوحي سرّيا للحديقة يتشبّط ويتلبّد المخبون باش يفرج على المسجونين أكثر من شهر وهو يجيبهم في الماكلة في المهمة داخل الجنان يتلزم عليه يجرى ويتخبّل من وراء الشجر خوفا . اذا الناس اللي يبات يحني يلقفه وتتشل الحركة . الحيوان والفوا الربوحي الحبيب الحداد ، عادو يحبّوه ويشمّوا ريحته من بعيد ، عادوا كل ما يوصلهم يفرحوا بيه ويرحبوا بيه أحسن رحاب . الطاووس تفتح كالغزيرج كحالتها وترسم برشها الملون لوحات عجيبة . الببغاء يندطق بأهلا . . . أهلا . . أهلا مدوى الجو ، القرد يشطج زاهي ينقز ويدير " كمبرائيس " في السماء والبط . . . البط يوقرق كأنه قايم بتصفيقة حارة .

الحبيب :

أهلا . . . أهلا يا وليداتي مساء الخير عليكم .
شت غير بالسياسة . . المهمة سرّيا . . شت سكتربا أنتم بحدوا
عليا نلهي بكم من بحد شت راكم والفتو تهجوا (على) ورايا . . .

قاله : حتى تبدلوا مكتب النقابة ذاك الوقت عاد يتكلموا على الصلحة العامة . والثالث قاله : حصلنا في العباد وماكرها . ابغيت أنت تربد لنا هوايش الحديقة وحرها والرابع قاله : قاع اذا كتب ربي وضرنا لهم الماكلة راه اليوم الجفاف وما عندناش مين نجيبولهم الماء والخامس قاله : اذا تساعفني يا السي الحبيب الحرطاني غير خطيك من هذا القضية . أنت راجل زين ونية هذا الشي صحيب عليك . كأنك رافد قبلة القضية تمس أولاد البلاد وداخلة في السياسة . السادس قاله : عندك الحق والموقف هذا يشرف . ضبر أنت على الهوايش وأنا وراك واجد بمد يد المساعدة . السابع قاله : درسنا القضية على مستوى عالي يا صاحبي حسبنا رانا بقصروا واللاً . نعم درسناها سيقان وطوابق وفليناها كما قالت الشريعة . حدّنا للحيوان الميزانية الضرورية في المستقبل يا المسكين نجيبولهم على حساب التخريط . البندق من القريق اللوز الكوكاري من الالمان والجزر الهندي من كينيا . الثامن قاله : الهرايش راهم بالأقل عاطيهم السكنة شوف لحالتي أنا اللي مرفد عايش كالقرادة في ستيقة ساكنين فيها أنا والراة والدراري . ستة . حتى تحفنا كلنا باشر تقطع لبيت الماء . التاسع قاله : ربي موسى على الحيوان فهم مخلوقات . الله . فكرتني الله يفكرك بالشهادة . اسمح لي تبلع . المكتب وروح نصلي الحاضر والحاضر قاله : جنان البايك اللي ما فيهش بنمرى " والكروكوديل " الجربوع . واللفحة ما يستهل الهدرة . الحادي عشر قاله : شفاك تتكلم مع الطلبة وتشير بدراعتك بالمرء ، اللي يمك هما اللي عمرك من غير شك وبحثوك لمنا باش تهوسنا تخلق لنا مشاكل عراقيل تخرجنا من العمل الفيد وترزم علينا نلهو في الأمور الحامشية . والثاني عشر قاله : الله يعظيك الصحة . يا السي الحبيب جبت لنا ضحكة هذا زمان ما ضحكنا . بارك الله فيك . نتمنى ان شاء الله تروح ترزق المقابر حتى هي تابعة للبلدية وتجيّب لنا من ثم ضحكة تكون كما هذي متاع شادي اللي ربقه انشف واللاً

الربوحي الحبيب الأسمر واصل الى درجة عالية .
في الحنونة وخدمة الأغلبية . الحداد الأسمر واصل . الى درجة عالية
في الهدنة ، التواضع والقناعة حتى في اللبسة ظاهرة على الحبيب
البساطة ، ساتر جلده ، بثياب في أغلب الأحيان بالية ، في الالوان
زرقاء . رمادية ، والا قرفية ، فوق الثياب للتغلاف يدير . " برتسو "
كان صيف أو كانت مستا " البرتسو " مخيط في قفاه في البطان جيوبا
سربة ، بقات فيه هذا لطبيعة من وقت الثورة المسلحة . مستسي
دوك الجيوبا جيوب الطليحة . ساعة على ساعة يدس . فيهم للأطفال ل
الحلوة . قبل ما يقسم عليهم حتى يفرجهم ، يلحّب صباعه ولو يديّه
خشينة ويخرج من " البرتسو " الحلوة كالي ساحرهما الربوحي يحتني
بزاف بمخار الحي يتناقش معاهم ويلاطفهم يهتم كذلك بكبار السن
سكان الحيّ يفقدهم مرة على مرة وجميع معاهم .
في ما يخبر بمخار تحدثوا معاه بلوبل أخيرا واشتار له على حديقة
المدينة . كلموه طوبل على الحيوان القليلة اللي فيها . قالو له خسارة
عليكم . صحاب البلدية مخليينهم جياع في كل شهر تنزيح منهم مايشة :
القرد في حالة خطيرة . مخرج يديه من السجنة للصداقة . الذئب
مدور . على الجنب ويحور ، والنسر يتدهشر وينازع محول . عيديه على
جارتة الطاووس يستنى فيا تسهى وتخرج من الشباك راسها .
الربوحي الحبيب الحداد . تحمل بالقضية قال لهم من أجلكم وفي خدمتكم
ولو بقطيع الراس نتجندو نلتزم بالمهمة . الخد من ذاك زار الحديقة
وحقق شاف بحيينه الحيوان تتوجع صايمة . سمع الزوار يتأسفوا على
حالة الحديقة . نهى على وحود قاعدين يضحكوا وبرموا للقرد الحجر .
بعد الزيارة درس القضية . درسها بدقّة وعول على خطة . في أولها
قصد المكاتب وتكلم مع بعض من الاداريين في البلدية . الأول قاله :
الله غالب وما عندي طاقة . وما عندي ما ندير للهوايش المرتبة اللي راني

الريوحي :

الريوحي الحبيب في المهنة حدّاد ، خدام في ورشة من ورشات البلدية . في السنّ يعتبر كبير ما دام في عمره يحوط على الستين . في القامة قصير شوية . السندان والمطرقة خلاّو فيه العارة . لونه أسمر بلوطي . وسنّيه واحدة واقفة جدرتها تبان وزوج غائبين . شعره أشهب كرد مبروم والشيب ما ترك شعرة اذا عنقل الشاشية يظهر كأنه يستف فوق رأسه تين يابس مرمد يشهي .

الريوحي الحبيب الحداد مشروح الخلق ، رائق محبوب ، بالكثير عند الخدامين قرابته . عمال الميناء البلدية والوحدات الصناعية . معزز بالقوة عند اللذين متالبتهم المسكنة . الريوحي الأسمر حديثه مهطر كأنه ماء زهر مقطر . والكلمة تخرج من فمه منقوشة تلمع موزونة في الثقل . وحلوة في اللغمة من خلال المصائب اللي تعانر معاها . والتجارب العروبة اللي شرب منها حجر في داخله فوائد ومعلومات كثيرة ، المبادئ اللي يقودوه والمواقف اللي ياخذها معروفة لدى الجميع ، وجه واحد في الوسع وفي الشدة ، الخطة اللي يمشي عليها واللا . اللي يقترحها مهما كانت الظروف ، فتنه حول النقابة اضراب من أجل الخلصة ، أو جيران متخاصمين على الماء صالحة ، فريدة ، تحليله يوضّح ويرمي للبعد يدقق كأنه رافد معاه مراية الهند . الريوحي تدبيره يخرج "أخ" الأجل قصير أو طويل . حتى كلمات ما تعرفش أو أنما غالط حلوبين في فمه وينقللوا بسهولة ، لما واحد من الجيران يسأل زوجته مريم على خبار السي الحبيب الريوحي تردّ عليه : تعبان كالعادة متحمّل المخلوق بمصائبنا . ومشاكل المنفينا اذا جمع مع أصحابه يشدّوه . واذا تغيّب عليهم بنهار يقصدوه للدار ويخرجوه . الليل وما طوله وهو يسبح في الهموم ويوزن في الحلول مولى خيمتي يا ناس مستشار البؤساء . كل ما يدخل للدار يدخل معاه قضية جديدة .

- . دوك اللي يخدموها أصواتهم مخنوقة .
- . أيامهم مرمونة وجهودهم مسروقة .
- . قول كيف بارت هذا السلعة وثقات معرمة .
- . اللي نتجوها في اضراب حالة مشومة .
- . عمال القطاع العام يحموا على اللقمة .
- . سلعة الخارج سيدي كسرت السومة .
- . أسمعوا للمنتجين ديروا على كلامهم .
- . قادرين يزغفروا ويتنظفوا ويجوعوكم .
- . علأل الزبال ناشط ماهر في المكناس .
- . حين يصلح قسمته ويرفد وسخ الناس .
- . يمر على الشارع الكبير زاهي حواس .
- . باش ينجح بعد الشقاء يهرب شوي للوسواس .
- . لما يكمل اللعبة يشمل القارو .
- . وبترك المدينة بالزربة قاصد لداره .

- . هذا السلعة غالية ولو بدعة جديد ة .
- . خدمتها يا سيدى صعبة مذوبة حديد ة .
- . صانعها محوط بالنار في سخانة شديد ة .
- . حافظوا على الفقير يصيح ما يحط فوق المائدة .
- . السلعة الزينة غبرتوما علاش مخزونة .
- . قافرة خلاص يا سيدى وصدعتها معفونة .
- . ينغبن منتجها هي في الحما معجونة .
- . شوفوا للقليل اشواقه راما مفتونة .
- . علال الزبال ناشط ماهر في المكناس .
- . حين يصلح قسمته ويرقد وسخ الناس .
- . يمر على الشارع الكبير زاهي حواس .
- . باش يمزج بعد الشقاء يهرب شوى للوسواس .
- . يحبس مرات باش يريح من ثقل البسوط .
- . يحيي الناس في طريقه يشالي بسبوط .
- . يدخل معمد للأروقة في كمال الشوط .
- . ويدور وسط البضائع وبشوف ما محطوط .
- . علال الزبال ناشط ماهر في المكناس .
- . حين يصلح قسمته ويرقد وسخ الناس .
- . يمر على الشارع الكبير زاهي حواس .
- . باش يمزج بعد الشقاء يهرب شوى للوسواس .
- . الصباغيات على الحزام والخطوة خفيفة .
- . زايد يضحك والناس راحبة منه خايفه .
- . اللي يسد نيفه ويقول فيه ربة الجيفة .
- . واللي يحسن عونه وبدعي له بالشيفة .
- . هذا السلعة مخدوعة تبان خشينة مزوقة .
- . صنع القطاع الخاص يا سيدى للروقة .

لعباد القادر تلوثة

علال :

علال الزبال ناشط ما هر في الكناس
حين يصلح قسته ويرفد وسخ الناس .
يمر على الشارع الكبير زاهي حواس
باش ينزح بعد الثرة يهرب شوى للواس .
يرشق قارو بروم تحت الشاشية .
ينسف صدره كاللي مطلق الحاشية .
وراء الظهر يتي الذراع ويثقل الحاشية .
كأنه زبير جايل في جيبه حاشية .
يخطوى فخور للرصيف وأعليه نخشة .
ويطل من بعيد في انحنيت المساحة الخيشة .
كأنه يراقب في المليحة والفسوشية .
معجب بالخيرات خدمة قرأينه في انورشة .
علال الزبال ناشط ما هر في الكناس .
حين يصلح قسته ويرفد وسخ الناس .
يمر على الشارع الكبير زاهي حواس .
باش ينزح بعد الشقاء يهرب شوى للواس .
يوقف مرارا مهتم وقور في الزيارية .
يتماطى على الجنب باش يدق اللظيرة .
يسأل نفسه وجاوب دكر البدرية .
يضحك بجهد واللا يشالي تقبح اللظيرة .

الأجـ واد

مهد المصادر وواحدة

المسرح الجهوي بوهرن

ساحة فاتح نوفمبر . وهران



الأجواد

عبد القادر علولة

**PAGE
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الخدمتين .

يا خدمتين ومحرومين يا مسلمين رجلين ورا من

مخلا من مخلا من ما يكون خلا من غير بالتنازل والرضا من

هذه د بزة زفرية لا حقه د بزة فـ _____ لاح

لشتمرا كية ما تجي غير بالكفـ _____ لاح

عَمَّالٌ مِّنَ الشَّعْبِ الْخُدَّامُ الَّذِي كُلُّ شَيْءٍ مَّقَاهُ بِعَرَقِ جَبِينِهِ
وَمَا يَسَا لَشَفِيهِ . مَا هُمْ يَشْكُونَ مِّنَ الْمَعِيْشَةِ الَّتِي غَلَّتْ
اَلْخُدَّامِيْنَ : السَّدَاتُ رَاهُ زَادَ فِي الْخَبِزِ وَالزَّيْتِ .

وَ اِحَدٌ مِّنَ الْخُدَّامِيْنَ : مَا شَيْءٌ غَيْرَ الْخَبِزِ وَالزَّيْتِ . الْخَبِزُ
وَ الزَّيْتُ وَالسُّكَّرُ وَاللَّحْمُ .
اِخْرَى : حَتَّى مِّنَ الدَّجَانِ وَالْقَارِ .

مَرَّةً السَّدَاتُ تَفْوُتُ وَسَاءَ الشَّعْبُ تَتَبَّرُ لَكَ يَعْزَفُهُ' وَاحِدٌ

مِّنَ الشَّعْبِ وَوَرِيَّتُهُمَا (مَا هِيَ مَرَّةً السَّدَاتُ)

وَ اَمِّنَ الشَّعْبُ : هَا هِيَ مَرَّةً السَّدَاتُ الْخَبِيْثَةُ .

وَ اِحَدٌ اِخْرَى : وَ اسْمُهَا ؟ اِخْرَى : جِهَانُ . اِخْرَى : جِهَانُ

الشَّعْبُ جِهَانُ ، جِهَانُ الشَّعْبِ عَرِيَّانُ . (مَثَلًا مَرَّةً)

مَنْظُمَةٌ : جِهَانُ الشَّعْبِ عَرِيَّانُ جِهَانُ الشَّعْبِ جِهَانُ .

يَدْخُلُ السَّدَاتُ مَتَّبِعُونَ بِزَوْجٍ عَسْكَرٍ بِمَا شَرَّ السَّلْمَةِ وَالنَّارَ عَلَى الشَّعْبِ

السَّدَاتُ : اَطْلُقُوا النَّارَ . (الشَّعْبُ الْخُدَّامُ يَخْتَفِيْ بِمَا دِي بِالثَّوْرَةِ

الا سده يا بن عمي راك مشنن، اعلا ش هذا التشنن اف

السدات، ارواح الجن اف انديسرك لكت اف

يا بن عمي اعلا ش مشنن اف ارواح الجن اف

(هذه الدبارد من السدات والا سد لملك مكة المكرمة)

يدخل شعب فلسطين اللي الحمد . بل الثقيل فوق ظهره لكن فايق به .

شعب فلسطين : الحروب طويبة مخروبو بيبة

زاد لها الا سلام الحروبية منح اروبو بيبة

كلشم مريتك اف ان

مصريين :

اذا الشمس فرقت في بحر الغمام

ومدت على الدنيا موج الظلام ومات البصر في عيون البصائر

وغاب بالبريق في الخاطوط والك وايتزر

يا ساير يا د اير يا بو المقضية ما فيش لك د ليل غير

ما عمري بمعمري ما ارفع يدي
 وفي تل الزعتر والنبيطي
 ما عمري بمعمري ما ارفع يدي
 قطموسزقوا ظلمي هيا انطريبي



الاسد : سوريا دخلت لبنان سوريا دخلت لبنان .
 الاسد : يا سر وبركات من يا سر عرفات اخضع لي وفرات يا سر

وبركات .
 تهليم الشعب الفلسطيني من ارض الشات العرب سلا امين ورياس

الشعب الفلسطيني يتشد : ايه في تل الزعتر شفتنا الوحدة العربية

- غير دم الشبان ايتقدم وسيزرع في كل اثنينية
- كسفة ر والرياء والحرب والعلوك يشعلحون في الضحا يا

الشعب : الاسد والسدات السدات والسيدات بالحطة واللبنات
 مدا فع و ليرات .

السلاطين وامراة الحرب بينتقم : هذ ، ساعة البترول : وسلا حنا هو

البترول : انما طلع سومت البترول : انما طلع سومت البترول

كسنبجر : يا سلامان الزيت والبقول انما اغنبتك بالبترول

وانت اليوم ارجعت لي غول ، ضرك انشبعك بالقزول .

شعبا فلساين : والربا من الخدا عين را هم با شه فلساين

با سم الوخدة العر بيته

نشيد فلساينسي

لو هجنو علينا وانا واخنا في المشيمات

ما نرفع يدي لو منينا والافه مننا

شوا حنا مندنا ريبين من زعمات الحربية

منحروو فلساين وينه نكو غنا

ما عنري بعنري ما ارفع ايدي

وفي تل الزعترو والقبلي ما عنري بعنري ما ارفع يدي

زوجة السدات ، راک حررت السينائي ، انت اسبح يا موشي راک
حررت السينائي ، وسلكتك راک .

الحرب ، راه محير موشي لصور راه محير راه محير ديان
لصور راه محير راه محير العلم الحرا عبا ما يحر (2)

كسنتو موشي (يساعده)

الحرب ، اعلييه زدليه .
السدات يرجع للور من جيش يحارب . موشي يد جس كسنتو
يخبر عنه الموكدة . زوجة السدات تلحق عمل زوجنا المثلوب

زوجة السدات ، حبيبي

شعب فلسطين ، ضربه ضرب في رمضان ، زعمه اغلب ولا غلبان

اساح على راسه .

ملا ، ايمن الحرب مع كسنتو في مفا همة ينتحم على البترول

يبهو ويشترو في رزق الشعب وعلى ، اهر الشعوب ، الحرة يتملكوه .

مدا فح ولبيا رات .

زوجة السدات ؛ هيا المدمر وخرابا .

السدات ؛ خلني نضرب نضرب .

المجموعة ؛ نضرب ضربة الطلبة ونسلتك رأسي .

موشي ديان للهود ؛ هناك النصارى الالهك عاهد ابراهيم وتل له

نحطيك هذه البلاد لاجيال الالية من نهر النيل حتى

نهر الفرات ؛ بلاد الحثيين ؛ والجرجما شيين ؛ والاموريين

والكنعانيين ؛ والفرسيين واليبانيين ؛ والحيثيين .

اليهود ؛ هذا كل اعرب يابورب .

يدخل المفتي مع الشعب العربي ؛

المفتي ؛ سيروني ارض الله المحين كوجنود زبي العال المنين

فلسدائين لنا ولا لنينير

مركة بين العرب واليهود ؛

الشمس: فما صرنا لها وجاء السدات، السدات والسيدات، كسنجر

مع السدات يشعل ويحرك .

كسنجر: هذو خدوات اصغار ارواح تشعل يا خسار هينا

اهرب من النار نخنيوك بالدار .

السيدة السدات: الدار الدار .

الاسد: يا السدات الخبيث ما بشي حتى حديث (الخبث الذميت

الخبث الذميت)

السدات: انت رئيس الشام ما عندك حتى كلام، اذا اتحسوس نفهم

اشعل مع لمعلم .

كسنجر: يا اميرر الموه منين (وانت يا المليك حسين) دير،

خسار

خدوات على لمن دير خدوات على لمن .

الحرب: الاسد والسدات والسيدات بلحمه ولبنت امدا فع

ابونقيبہ : ايسہ رحوشفو مسوہ لبين الحزب، امرقو احوانت

ليهود ، والداللبه ديرم ديروهم في الحبس .

الشعب : ومن رايح يا بونقيبہ تلحقك المصيبة .

وفات جمال عبد الناصر رئيس الجمهورية (مصر)

يا حيدلہ يا حيدلہ يا حيدلہ . (يبتؤ)

العرب يا نا صر يا نا صر يا نا صر .

موشي ديان : ابكونوحو اند بو واشتستناو .

اليهود : مناش ووحيد نا ، العرب ، ثا ني را هم يبتكو .

موشي ديان : واشريهم ؟

شعب اليهود : مات لهم نا صر .

موشي : نا صر مات (يضحك) ها ها ها ها

العرب : يا نا صر يا نا صر .

يدخل المذات مع زوجته (الرئيس الجديد) بهت بعد وفات ناصر)

الشعب: اي اي اي

الشعب: د لا راي يا بونقيبه للحبيب والحبيب

بونقيبه: ما كان في جنوب افيتنام حتى حرب التحرير،

امريكا ما هيش تهمدد على استتلال هذا البلاد.

تمود الشرارة: لما بالتم دبد على الشعب شي للي تقولو سرفق.

الشرارة: سرفقو.

الشعب: يحيى الرئيس بونقيبه يحيى الرئيس المالحمر.

حما س الالمية يتربي ارادة الشعب.

الالمية: اماله نرك رانا نمتقيلو في احباب اسرا نيل!

بعد حما س الالمية يتدامن الشعب.

الشعب: بونقيبه خاين... السموت للخاين.

الشرارة: سيدي الرئيس الشعب ز الالمية راهم يحرقو في سفرات

المريتان.

هذه هي عند منكم !؟

مال شعب: ملتي ناش عند منة اخرى

الشعب: ليل ونهار لو بلا منعياً وا النفخو الرانيس بونقبيد

مع الزيتون: وما خفتوش اعليه يطر ابق .

الشعب: ايه النفخوه باش يار ابق .

مع الزيتون: اواه هذا ما يار ابق .

الشعب: الشغل لمليح يبدالا .

يبدخل مركاني .

بونقبيد: امركا تبعنا الدار

الشعب: الدار الدار الدار

الشرارة التونسية تنزرب الشعب اللي يحب يبرهن على الحن ويكشف الخائن

الشرارة: هناك منذ . (ينزرب الشعب)

العرب؛ مثله ينزرب ضربيه .

ناصره النبي والصحابه يكون نفسي .

اليهود؛ النبي والصحابه يكونو معهم .

المعركة تبدأ، موسى يلح بلحبه وينجح فيها ناصرتهرب ويخلي صباطه

مع الزيتون؛ ضربه ضربة النباط ماء، يجري بلا صباط

كسر لسه رساله

بعد المعركة يفرغ المسرح يدخل بونتييه وتدخل وراه

وسيلة.

الشعب؛ ديننا راك يا بونتييه اعمل فينا موصييه

تخرج وسيلة ويبقى بونتييه في الوسط، الورد حوليه جماعة

تمزيقيه، يدخل مع الزيتون

مع الزيتون؛ واشراكم الديرو يا جماعة؟

الشعب؛ رانا ننفيخوفي الرايس .

مع؛ هذه خدمتكم هذه هي خدمتكم ؟

مركان اسيا دي عندي اجتماع في النادي ، النادي انتاع الرسوب
فرنسا

لكبار .

انليز : اللي يكسب البسب اطميتك .

موشي ديان : وا شن تحسب نا صرنا يهخلفش النار .

مركان : متخافش باسم الامم المتحدة انخلي لك العسكر في

الاراضي الحربية .

موشي : اسرائيل .

اليهود : اسرائيل .

عرب فلسطين : ضربيه ضربيه الخيان معه الروس والمريكان

اوقف عند راسه .

اليهود : اسرائيل اسرائيل .

العرب : ناصر ناصر ناصر .

مع الزيتبون : انت ناصر وايا ناصر .

ناصر : خليني نضرب بضميريه .

موشي ديان : لبيّ السينلي .

مركان : بركاوا ، وسختولنا الكسك لزرقي .

فرنسا :

اقليز : ياخي سواج .

فرنسا : ما حيبوش تحبسو .

اقليز : كعادتك كذا ندخلو فيها البرشتيت .

فرنسا : انتوعنا لحتو .

موشي ديان : لبيّ السينلي .

ناصر : اشمايتا تفشوعاي . : : : و صلوبي حتم البور سعيد

السفيات : باسم الاتحاد الشباني نا مركم تحبسو القتال

ولا نبيمت عايكم ما رونغ .

اقليز : واش را يتحين تمارو اللروس؟

فرنسا : رانا قويتين عليهم .

مركان : اسيا دي الما تراخلا ص عندي اجتماع في النادي ،

مواز

موشي ديان : اسرائيل اسرائيل :

اليهود : اسرائيل اسرائيل

العرب : عرب : ناصرون .

ناصر : وحدة قومية .

العرب : ناصرون .

ناصر : وحدة عربية

العرب : ناصرون ناصرون ناصرون

الاقليز : ليك السيني .
فرنسي : نبعثك دايورات وبراير للحرب .

اليهود : اسرائيل .

العرب : فلسطين .

مركان : صار الماتش يبدأ بلا بي واننا هولربينتر ايا جسمو القتال

مركان

فرنسا منح الاقليز : جسمو القتال .

اقلير : اضرب ماتجيسش .

فرنسا : روح ازدم

شعب فلسطين : احنا الكمل فلسطينيين ، لا جنينين ، منها جريسن
محمد : امه تهررت اعليكم .

الجنرال فاسليك .

المجموعة : يحيى المليك ، يحيى المليك عبد الله الهاشمي الذي من
من شجرة نبيينا محمد . يحيى المليك .

السلطان : الله اكبر .

الجنرال : الله اكبر .
الشعب : الله اكبر .

مع الزيتون ، صحبتيا مليك الاردن بالدرهم الذي اعديتني الصباح

انا ناني اشريت السلاح للصياد

السلطان : لا اله الا الله .

محمد : ومحمد رسول الله (ويقتل السلطان)

السلطان : اي (قتل مع الزيتون)

الشعب : الله
صبا طري صبا اي

الجنرال : بن قريون وموشي ديان متافقين معنا .

انجمو ندو الاراضي انتاع الفلاحين اللي خرجهم من فلسطين

السلطان : لا بد ، نملكو نحر الاردن .

الجنرال : بن قريون حتى الضرك متخلنا غير الجهة الشريفة

السلطان : ما يكفيش ، يلزمننا اطرسق الحيفة .

الجنرال : ها وجاه الجنرال موشي ديان قا يد الجيش الاسرائيلي

نتفنا همومنا .

موشي ديان : الشلوم .

السلطان : السلام .

نمشي انصلي على فلسطين باش نفهم الناس في هذه السياسة

اجديدة .

شعب فلسطين : والرياس الخدا عين رآهم باعو فلسطين باسم الوحدة

المصريين

محمد الزيتون :

يا جمعة كما شها فيكم فلسطينيين ؟

السلطان : قل لي الحاصل انتاع الصباح مفكرت من خرجه من
الجيس.

الجنرال : ما حببتش يا سيدي .

السلطان : كذاش هذا محببتش .

الجنرال : محببتش خرجت بحب بسببتك سمك .

روح جيبوا .

الجنرال : حاضرو .

السلطان : هاك اخذ هذا الدراهم ، الصباح اناك محبير ، خايف

لا صياتي تبدا ، بشال مشوم : ولكن الحمد لله عسري

ما صيد كما اليوم .

اصحابه انما ليك : الحمد لك .

محمد : ما نعرف اشكون : باب الشر العسر .

السلطان : هذه المرأة راك : بما مني : يكن منزيتش ان حساب نشرف

مخلقتك في هذه المملكة .

عائشة : نوحياً ك قلت لي نوحياً .

محمد : منبعمد .

أيا نوح هذا هو الوقت يا شرانج تحوش على الخدمة .

محمد : قلت لك منبعمد .

عائشة : منبعمد (عائشة تتفحش برؤفد وترفد سائل بالماء وتكبوطيه)

هيا نوح .

محمد : اه يا بنت الحرام قلت لك نوحياً ما قلت لكشرا خلعني

يتخرج مع الزيتون من داره يتلاقى مع السلطان عبد الله السلطان رابع

للصيادة .

السلطان عبد الله : اعوذ بالله مع صباح ربي صبخنا على وجه

اللحم وحننا رايحين للصيادة .

البنرال : هذا فال مشوم .

السلطان : ارميه في الحبس .

مع الزيتون : السلطان وجبابه عندهم السلاح باشر يصيدوه ، والعرب

معندنا شر السلاح باشر انحررو فلسه ماين .

بودينار : هذا كوديه لا ؟

نا صر : لا هذا احسا باصخير بينتنا كتر مملو الا روبا اعدايه

الدرآ هم والذ هب وقول للصخفيين يا لي الضباط لحرار

عمرهم ما ينسر شعبه واحده من رآ من المليك ، احنا مناش

كنست .

المجموعة : بساطا وان يسا جنيل انا مشنا في الراد النيل

نا صر : انا نا صر ، وانت نا صر .

بودينار : واحد فينا يكون نا صر .

المجموعة : انا لفيت كثير ولتيت : ابعده عاي يا مصر لويسل

المعلم : يا معلم يا معلم يا معلم يا معلم يا معلم يا معلم

المنفي : الله اكبر الك اكبر ، الصلاة خير من النوم .

محمد : حتى النوم ما عندك ما تقول فيه .

عائشة : نوضروا الفجر .

محمد : من بنسعد .

غير مهتد من يبياني . ابري فلسطينيا تصفتينا ما ، لبحر

والمرسكان يقوم بالا حلال الزراعي .

ضباط اصحاب من وقت ان لا يرتبنا الجيش .

السلطان يرتد ، يتلمر تجمان ناصر وودينار يرفدوه يدوللنراش

ناصره او ميني السامان غابيه نحيا انرقد وفي افرا شيه

بودينار : انما شاني انتموم بزا جبي .

عند يرتد ، ويشرف تحت افراشه مفرش الدراهم السلطان .

يستوجب بودينار ياخش زرايه ناصر واشكاين .

ناصره واشكاين ؟

بودينار : السلطان عند الدراهم هم بزاف تحت افراشه ارواح اتشو

اتشرف الفار مفرش الدينار .

ناصره شد هذا الداه والذهب والديشه للكوتل زور دا زور

بودينار : متبول في نفسه : هذا كوديدال (انقلاب)

عسكر الیھرد : الربید ، قویا

كلمة من موشي ديان الى سكان ديرتسين .

موشي ديان : امر سكان ديرتسين : عندكم ربح مائة باس

تخرجون من دياركم

عسكر الیھوي المتواثروا على الشعب العربي ويقتلوكثير منهم .

عائشة : السكان الكل تتلوهم .

موشي ديان : يا هرواش يستنى ذككم انكم انا ما خرجتوش من

فلساين .

عرب فلساين : ايه قد اش نفكر في الثرة الشدا انبيسة

غير دم الشين يقيد امر وسبب في كل ثنية

انقلاب في مصر السلدان وزوج بنات يشاحو .

المجموعة : بسا ، الريح اوان يا : جنيدل انا مشتاق للواد النيل

انا لفتت كتير ولقيت البعد علي يا مصر لوتيل

بودينار : جلاله المايك لمدينة اجديدة ما يصنعها غير

روزفلت، بحد هذه الحرب ما يبقى حتى استعمار، في ما
يشعر سوريا ولبنان دي قول عا هد هم با لا استقلال، وانا انزيد نسكره

في كل سنة، ضرك اشوا نهدرو بتقول، قاز بيمز، نعطيك

اربع دولا رفي البتية، ونديترولكم تيو اطويل فيه 1750 كم .

وبا شرفنا نهدرك محبتتي، شهيدك هذا الكرسي الشهي، العزيز اللي نكسب

نكسب في حياتي .

شعب القندور، وسح كرسية في السموات والارض وهو العزيز الحكيم .

الشعب، وين، وين، وين يا عبد العزيز .

موشي ديان، لعرب داينين ولتليز رايتحين، معنا متقين

نخرج العرب من فلسطين .

انتليز، خذ هذا السلاح ونسرب النح

موشي ديان للعرب .

موشي ديان، خذكم الرب بيده عوينا ونجحكم من دار العبودية

من يد فرعون ملك مصر الرب بيده عوينا .

عبد الحمزى : محال عند الحرب فلما بين ارض مقدسة .

روز قلت : مثلينا من هذا الشئ . بيت نكلمك على الحرب نخا جو

مرسة او مرسات باش انفتو منها بوابر السلاح ، ومنذ بينا

محطة اكبيرة للطيا رات الحرب .

عبد الحمزى : واجد بما شانها ونك يا سي البريزدان ، ولكن

ما نحب حتى حكم اجنبي كما في مصر وسوريا والمراة .

روز قلت : ما دمنسي رانيس امريكا ما نسمحش باش تتهدد على

الشعب العربي .

عبد الحمزى : ما نبيدو حتى شبر ، نكرولكم الا رانسي السدت

خمسة سنسن ، ونصيب من السلاح يرجع لينا .

روز قلت : وحننا ندالمب منكم ما تدجموش على احبا بنا في العالم

وترو بالقون هجمات الحدو .

عبد الحمزى : مو من جهتمك اتطونو كقاع لعرب الا مشلال .

روزفلت: ليهود ، اللي عايشين عندنا في امريكا جتو

• يرجعوا لفلسطين

• عبد العزيز: محال

روزفلت: ليهود يكتنوا اقال في وسط الحروب، يبعوا ونهم
في كل حجة ، وبالاخص في الزراعة ، وهذا الشيء را هم نا جحين

فيه .

عبد العزيز: ليهود اعليتهم الد لا ربالملايين ، ولو كان

اعليتهم للحرب يد يرو كيفهم ولا اكر منهم .

روزفلت: المجرم اتل راقتل قداش من مليون يهودي

عبد العزيز: وهذا الناس لازم نشمهم ماشي على ظهر

لحرب ، ليهود مسلحين من عندكم اعلاش ما يرحوش

يحاربوا اتلار و محمد بن يتهد دو على خوتنا في فلسطين

روزفلت: العالم الحر يتكل على شخصيتك العظيمة

• بلخصوص انت عسا من على مكة المكرمة بيت الله الحرام

الموباء وين وين وين يا عبد العزيز وين

موسى : امنين جاء هذا السلطان ؟

محمد : هذا ، سلطان كبير جبناله ببور خاص

وداله خيمة فوق الببور . باش يتنسم ويتنسم و

يتشم الهواء ، كما موالدة ، في الصحراء .

موسى : عمرنا ماشفتنا هذا الشيء .

محمد : مملوم كعاد رئيس امريكا اكبر دولة في العالم

يتبي هو بنفسه يستقبله في وسط لبحر |

روزفلت : للعليك : تشرفنا بك .

عبد العزيز : انا ثاني .

روزفلت : واش حبيني انديرله ؟

عبد العزيز : انت هو ياسي لبريزيدان اللي حبيت ، اتشرفني

(وانا واش حبيني انديرله ؟

عائشة : الحروب معتمد على السلاح وليهود مسلحين

من الشرق ومن الغرب .

المركان : موسى اربع في الدورة الاولى .

اليهود : اسرائيل اسرائيل اسرائيل .

الحروب : اوار

مركان : ما تتلقون انتم ملككم مبركا : اخرين .

فرنسا : حكمة .

لتليز : اتعرف معنا .

المركان ونه رنسا ولتليز شرحه وبالغاية التي دبرها فاندتم

با شريبيج والسلاح .

ف ا م ونبركا انبييتولكم السلاح .

اليهود : اسرائيل اسرائيل .

الحروب : حربه حربه بالتقوان . زاد صرعه موسى ديان
حربه حربه بالتقوان كسرله .

تابع
36

محمد : يا شبي حالة اميات مليون عربي و خمسميات
مليون مسلم هكذا واتفلبينا :

المفتي : يا ايها الذين امنوا ان تنصروا الله ينصركم
وينثبت اقدامكم .

الحرب : سيف الدين حاج امين سيف الدين حاج امين
سيف الدين حاج امين .

لقليزة : يلزم الصهيونيين ميخلتوش لحرب يستقلو
فرنسا : يلزم لحرب يكما فتحوا اسرائيل يا شينسما وا
حاضرنا في بلادهم .
اقلية متافقين .

مرنان : نلتوني نعمل اربيترا ، انا مريكانني : يا اي اجديد
مزالو مايت روضونيش .

مركة تدا اليهود يخلبو .

عائشة : يا محمد ا ه

محمد يدور ينسرباموس

الحرب : الله .
محمد : يا بني حالة اميات مليون عربي وشرا ميا عليون

وكتبتني اتشون، هذا الرينس ما هوش جامع وانت ما كاش

بكسور ووحده اني ضد المسلمين ، اللي قد ما تسلمهم

يسقلوك زيد .

احببوهنا .

مركان : باسم الثنون نامركم اتفرقوهذا اسرادك
 اقليرز : وخذ تني يا خبيثم . مركان : ماتوسخوش
 ارواحكم ، شلتو العرب واليهود يضربو عليكم . معركة
 السرادك احرام في ارض مقدسة . المجموعة : او او .
 مركان : اخلا من معركة اسرادك ، اندوروها اسبور بوكس
 د بزة . جمعية الدول لكبار اتعلم وتحتظر معركة

اكبيرة ، محمد الزيتون سيد موسى الكناس .

اليهود : اسرائيل . العرب : فلسطين .

الربّي : شفيا موسى من صغري وانا نتعلم نكون

بكسور ، ولكن وليست ربّي ، هذا هي الشاة اخنا ربّي بين

من البو للجد .

مشاركة المترادك .

الربّي : كل ارض تحفسوها ابر: بليكم تكون ليكم .
المجموعة : كل ارض تحفسوها بر: بلينا اتكون ليينا .

الربّي : واحد ما يتشد ريشد قداً مكم .

المجموعة : واحد ما يتشد ريشد قداً منا .
الربّي : تما كلوا ا: بيمين الشحوب: اللي دفعها لك رب الاهلك ولا

تشفن عينك عليهم .
المجموعة : ولا تشفن عيننا عليهم :

العشّي : سيروقي ارض: الله المشين كنو: بنود ربّي التالعين

فلسامين لسننا و لالانريتنا

يد: لقليني وسوس وممد وسردواك .

اليهود : اسرائيل .

العرب: فلسامين .

لقليني: هذا الحربي سمزل عليك (لليهودي)

اليهود : اسرائيل .
اليهود : العرب: فلسامين
لقليني: المحمد . الحم الكل باني من

الربّي : شلوم .

مخند : من جهة انتليزي ومن جهة صهيوني ، كان

يندب ولا مندوب .

هربرت : انا انتم حضرتكم في المناورات ابا بين بالي

مشوشين اكبار ، عندكم ربعة وعشر يمان مائة باه

تخامو البلاد .

الربّي : تمتدعي بروحك صهيوني ، وتحاوز شكوك موسى

ليهودي .

هربرت : موسى يرون ويلي غير ثلثي انثلي الشمس

بلخر بال .

الربّي يتمول الثلوم المرسي يداويه : هربرت ، شمرا

الربّي : شلوم .

هربرت : شلوم . موسى : شلوم

مخند : سار هذا استتصرتوني . موسى : اهدر مع الربّي

مخند : تحسبيني اامنه غير انا نادر راسي انت تملك

مما سي . موسى : وانا واش تحبيني انواسي .

مخند : انا لثني ولا مباحي ، انا يموت قاسي

هربرت : انا هو العجر حبسوه .

المجموعة : موسى امرباء . فانتيك : راني انحوس على محمد

قل لي يسكن امناء؟

المجموعة : ايه ، ما هوش ابعيد ، شد هذا الحيط وانا

انروح انعيدله .

فانتيك : الحيط؟

المجموعة : هذا حيط قليم يتنجم يتلبيح . واش شيتيك ؟ شد .

فانتيك : صحه روح وما طبيلناش .

محمد : واش بيك تتمصر والمارك مع الحيط مكسر؟

فانتيك : راني مكالي الحيط لا يتلبيح ، ونستنى في مشير

موسى القبيح . محمد : اذا كان لازمك تكالي الحيط ديرله

اركيزة بدنه الصاء فانتيك : يعني هذا راي . محمد :

محمد : هات اتشوف (ياخذ محمد العصا ويحليله شربات

بالصا) فانتيك : اي اي اي . محمد : شفت كفا شرا ،

الحيط لابا مرعليه وما هوش محتاج باش تكاليه
اماله الحيط

العرب : اتلار جانا نامي اتلار جانا نامي اتلار جانا نامي

وتكون معنا هـ

المفتي : السموت لليهود ، العرب : السموت لليهود .
الربّي : السموت للعرب ، اليهود : السموت للعرب (مشاركة بين العرب

واليهود)

محمد : اضربي يا موسى وربي الحبيب بيهلبي . ما نيش ايهودي

موسى : وا شرا تحبيني انديرك حتمنا ليهود

حسبوني عربي .

محمد : هاهم يخرقوني دارك . موسى : ايت تاني دارك

راه تخرقتهم (لثمن محمد وموسى يقتوا)

خلقتي نواع نبيكي ما فساد ابكايما شرع الله يا لحباب

معكم يا جيتي سررا

العرب : السموت لليهود ، اليهود : السموت للعرب .

فانتيك : وين هيرولسا لخرام انلي ايتشالدا موسى ؟ .

الربّي : دا رِعيزي ؟
 بودينار : دار احد قبر سيدنا سابمان ، كان مكنها واحد العامل اسمه
 منح الزيتون ، بصح رالي امعرون يوحي للهلاك ، لو كان العرب يسمع بيبا
 بيبا تشري وبيع لليهود يقتلوني اعلو بالك

الربّي : علو بالي . ان قدك ! يمتير خطيبات موسى ، را هي انحوس على دار

بودينار : او شي خا طر الزين نحصلي بدير .

موسى : ايد هذه خد منة :

عتلار والفتي انتاع فلاسين .

نعيز : هيل هتو ،

هتلا ر : الكفاح ضد الشيوعية : هلا الذي يجب الاول
 نزيس : هائل هترو .

الفتي : ايتلا رجناهي اتلار جنادي اتلار : بنا يارتي وتكون معناه هي

الاسلام والعروبة ، الحية والاملام نصراند : سينا لبنا ماشا اليهود اتلار

وحده يتضي عليهم

يخسر ومع بعضا م هم

نا زيس : هائل هتلمو

الطلاب: راني انقلك احبب

محمد: واش تسحق .

الطلاب: الصداقة على وجه ربي .

محمد: اطلع معيا .

الطلاب: على وجه ربي اعلميني سردي .

محمد: الله ينوب انا لول ربي حاصل في روجي .

الطلاب: املاش طلعتني معك .

محمد: وانت اعلا ش جبدمني ؟

يضرب محمد مع انه الاب الملاب يضرب . يدخل بودينار .

بودينار: هذه الدار للبيح ؟

محمد: انعم سيدي .

بودينار: تعطيك فيها 100 دينار .

محمد: التجارة ما شي حرفني . جدي كان مير جينا خداد ومن جينا

اخرى فلاح هذا واش خلا نا .

محمد : التجارة هي التجارة

تخل عائشة في يدها قدرة ينسج هلهام محمد ودرها لها فوق رأسها

عائشة : وا شريكك اهلست !

محمد : التجارة هي التجارة ، ابقى على خير يا قربي العزيزة ، اتحتم على

علي الوقت باش انبيحك ، وقبل ما نبيحك يلزممني انبيضك .

محمد يخبري . . . ويبيض في داره ،
دار البهضاء بلا حبيط وانا عربي منزله وطب .

يبدخل الطلاب .

الطلاب : يا احبا برسي يا ابني كلاب . اسمع

محمد : واش كاتين

الطلاب : احبيط .

محمد : راني مشغول

الطلاب : قلت لك احبيط

محمد : قلت لك راني مشغول

موسى ، اجتمع سري ، ولو كانا احيينونا .

محمد ، انقلهم بالي لحيبر هما اللي دارو المنديكا .

موسى كصحى الخروف الخدلى انقلهم للمح هو الحسلو .

محمد ، اشرا لاني للمخاطمة حتى المشيح البلملو

موسى ، اكش اداني المشا ركة حتى المشيح المشركو

يشربو تدخل عائشة بيكي .

عائشة ، اي لي

محمد ، واشريك ؟

با با مشكين مات

محمد ، امضح انت اما مرتي وانا رجاك يلومنا نقمضو الضحك والبكا

امال روحي ابكي على بابك وخلصني انقصر مع موسى

تخرج عما نضه بيكي .

محمد ، ما تنجمنش امضح احسان لابي ولا ميت . ما تنجمنش امضح مرتي

لكن انجم امضح داري . التجارة هي التجارة .

محمد : اوه، اوه، ضحك وانا نسمع نبي، يتحقق هنا .
 ا و ا و ا مال تامن احمار وانا ما تا منيش .
 موسى : اوه، اوه، مال اتصدق احمار وانا متصدق قنيتش .

يدخل الربّي يتحدد على موسى .

الربّي : موسى اروح احنا ، بيدنا موسى ، يا موسى كان راعي في السين

السيناي قبل ما يا سس دولة اسرا ئل . اتجيك تسرح بالحمار اتاعى ،

واخطبك من الحرب .

يد يخرجو ، ومن بعد يربح محمد مع موسى

محمد : فلسطين كيف الزريرط اعرابي وعربي مشبوط

رايح الربّي مبغى ايهودين لعربي

موسى : ايهودي وعربي منزلوط فلسطين، كيف الزريرط

احنا زوج الرجال في طبقة العمال

موسى : الحق وقت الا : تمام .

محمد : وا شاندير بالحمار هذا؟

موسى : وانا وا شاندير ايهذا؟

محمد : ند يوهم معنا؟

محمد: ينحل لدين رب الربي اللي ريتاك ، خوفتني كن
بيت احمار المفتي كنت تعرف، امينين جيت هذه اما

اما ام .
محمد يرجع البرمة الموسي .

محمد: اما هي البرمة انتاعك .

موسي : راك انصيت حبة اما ام .

محمد: برومتهك كانت بالكروش هذا واش بيت مبروك

عليك .

موسي : ياخي مبروك .

محمد : قبل لي ما تنجمنش اتسلفني لحمار انتاعك

موسي : اده هذا احمار الربي لوكان يشوف عربي راك

عليه استحتني من خدمتي في جامع اليهود .

محمد: اموسي راك تسمع استحققت احمارك . . .

موسي : لحمار اتمل ما تعرف وين راج . . . (سئول حمار يفتح)

عائشة : اتعجب تاكل واحدة والاخرى فاش انطبيهم ؟

محمد : واش البرمة انكسرت ؟

عائشة : ياك ما عن برمتنا .

محمد : امال انتاع من ؟

محمد : عائشة : المرة الاخرى اتسلفتها من عند الجار وانشرك دالتك

روح اتجيبها من عند رجليها

يروح محمد يتجيب البرمة .

محمد : السلام عليك يا موسى .

موسى سلم

محمد : اتعجب اتساعلي البرمة اتنا عمك

موسى : هاك اتفضل .

محمد يبدأ ياكل يتبي لحمار ياكل مسه

محمد : اشكون عرضك انت ؟

عائشة : شلبيته برك هذاك احمار الرتي

المفتي : جاهل

المجموعة : جاهل .

المفتي : ثاين .

~~المجموعة : خاين .~~

المفتي : خبيث .

المجموعة : خبيث

تد مثل عائشة .

عائشة : جعتت بالجرع .

محمد : اياي باسم لله .

عائشة : تنسخرتني ، احسبتني معزناكل الزيتون اخضر بي

محمد : يكثر . نبيك يارب اوتناك ما يجوس كصل المفتي

عائشة : صارتك امشي هذا الماطم ليك باشر تاكها بالسرقه .

محمد : يا وخلي عليك يا طما لم . الزيتون والبصل راطيح وتلم ام انتي

اذا لمحت رحتي .

المجموعة : هيا انرحوا انشفوا المفتي

يحيا المفتي سيف الدين حاج امين سيف الدين حاج امين سيف الدين حاج امين

من عند هذا هو المفتي الكبير انتاع فلسفلسين ، ولبحا ير الكل ليه .

المجموعة : يار المفتي متنا بالشر والخبر في جنائك خامج اديني نخدم

عندك

الصهيونيين يشرو الارض لمليحة وحا اعدنا ابلاش لا خبز ، لا خدمة
لا وامر .

المفتي : انعم يا اولادي راني فهمكم وندافع اعيلكم قدام الدول لكبار

املا امين الحرب عهدوني .

المجموعة : يحيا المفتي انتاعنا ، هولمسير في العالم العربي يحيا المفتي

هو اللي دا فع اعلينا

محمده : المفتي يدا فع على البحاير بانتاعه ما شي عليكم

المفتي : كافر

المجموعة : كافر .

محمد يسون الزيتون في جنان سيف الدين .

محمد : مزربة ، مزربة كحلة ساكن جبيل الزيتون وما تسرق غير الزيتون

البصل الدمام ، يا جنان من عجب ، موسى وعيسى فاثوم ، هنا

وسعد علاش ميفوتش .

• يدخل المفتي .

الفتي : اشكون انت ؟

محمد : محمد .

المفتي : اشكون هذا محمد ؟

محمد : منعد الزيتون .

المفتي : راك في جنان المفتي اعنا .

محمد : اه اسمحلي ، انا احببت اجنان الله

المفتي : واثر دخل ربي في الحساب .

منعد : صه صه راني رايح .

المفتي : احبب انحب نمرفو واشركت اتششراشنا

المجموعة : الخبز الخدمة الخبز الخدمة

من مال من عمل _____ السفيرة _____
 الدوا الحكم _____ فالحيث من _____
 وفتح للاثمانية و ابقات الحمال الكاد حين _____
 لريث التحريث _____ والحمد الزيت من _____
 هذه د بزة زفرية لحتة د بزة فلاح الاشتراكية ما تدعي
 غير بالكساح هذه د بزة زفرية _____
 المجد للجمع من ثار والثورة عمل زيت من _____
 نمد العلم التوا من المكتوبة باليد ين يدشن الاقدا عبة
 وراس المال الثمانية من _____ هذه ثوة عال لمبنة
 البحر بين الفرنسوين رفع العلم لخمرو جيسواك نابا ادم
 نمره على نمره الرعد _____ يقبلح النيباب ونببت الزيمة
 هذه د بزة زفرية لحتة د بزة فلاح الاشتراكية ما تدعي
 غير بالكف _____ ح

موسى : السردوك انتاعبي

الانقليزي : لا سردوك لقليز

محمد : ودا ناد واري

الانقليزي : دوار الانقليزي

يضاف الانقليزي موسى الاسرائلي ويتخامزو على محمد .

موسى والانقليزي : دوار لقليز . دوار اسرائيل .

مناشرة التوير

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| وَجَنُودُ شَعْبِيَّتَيْنِ | الجموعة : عمال وفلا حين |
| فِي رُوسِيَّة | الدوا العسكر |
| لِحَمَّةِ دَبْزَةِ فِلاح | هذه دبزة زفرتينا |
| غَيْرَ بِالْكَفِّاحِ | الاشتركية ما تعجبني |
| وَجَنُودُ شَعْبِيَّتَيْنِ | عمال وفلا حين |
| الاقليم اعيننة | الميتو حرك |

موسى : ايا اذبلت واسم د وارك ؟

محمد : فلسطينيين . وانت

موسى : اسردىل .

محمد : ولوكان هذا السردوك بجا . يتكلم يتقول ...

موسى : اسرائيل .

محمد : يتقول فلسطينيين

موسى : اسرائيل
محمد : فلسطينيين .

يدى بل الضابى الاقلىزي

الضابى الاقلىزي : اجسوا هنا . باسم المملكة البريتانية نامركم اتخليوا هذا

السردوك .

موسى : سردوكي

محمد : سردوكي انا

موسى : وين النبىء ؟

محمد : اننا برك .

موسى : وين رايح هذا ، وقيل . . .

محمد : راه ايتبع فينا

موسى : اوف اصلنا صح

محمد : ها سوالك وار .

يرقدون في زوج بعد اذ تبتة يسعدو البيردوك يعوعش يشدلو .
موسى : ايهواه هذا السر دوك بيا به ربي

محمد : وين ينسب في روتو هذا يجري رياه سردوك ما يكون غير ليا ، اتوالم

يحب ايشو ريه .

موسى : بيت نحرشك ، اكل الباج

محمد : كنت جاري نحرشك .

موسى : ايه نحرشني كنكم في دارك

محمد : راني في داري .

المكران الثاني : صحه روح

محمد : زاد ارضه ابي موسى الكاظم ، اعلى جبال احماره تهمسني بالسرقه

ومسرك كفاش ان يدخل الهاني ؟ يلزمني انبديل الصفه

موسى : الشلوم

محمد : السلام

موسى : السلام ، هذا يكون غير عربي مستودر

محمد : الشلوم من وايح هذا ؟ الصبي يرضي العامل ؟

موسى : ومن رايح ؟

محمد : للدار .

الدارك ؟

محمد : ابيه
موسى

موسى : ومن تمكن ؟

محمد : الحيد

محمد : موسى وبين هو؟ ايهود الهمزة راهم ايتبروفيه
 قدام بابداره ، وشيله زيلتنا الكناس .

موسى : اماله انت بنار موسى ، واشراتفنم فيه .

محمد : نشتيه ، ولكن شاك فيه يكون صهيوني

موسى : موسى مهوش صهيوني ، ومفعل حتى زيله ،

راع يتسووي برك : صنتي اسناتي نك هذا لبحمار

محمد : ياخي موسى مزال حنده ، النشة ثينه .

محمد يابيع لبحمار يشنفود زون اسكار .

السكران الاول : هما هو احمار اثري .

الثاني : هما هو التمويبي انسارق .

محمد : ازرب اجري ازار ، ياشي احمار ، د پتر اسك

وحدك ، انا نجرني غير مثل منك

السكران يتفاهم مع صاحب .

السكران الاول : اسمع انت اكلت ، بالحدار ، وانا نجرني

وراء السارق .

يبر: مع موسى للمسلمين يه: بن ومغ لخصار

موسى: احسن الربيع معروف والناس الكل تعرفه ليهود

راهم اعقابى شرك انبديل و: يحيى .

يد: نيل محمد بلا قيده موسى .

موسى: اسمع ما كثر انت: بار موسى ؟

موسى : ايه كيون منزلت موسى الكناس ننتت بضرب فيها

كما هو .

الربّي : ابا يا ربّي يضرِبو ويتكيفون انهار السببت في

بجامع ليهود ا موسى اعد ايديهم ا البريحه .

موسى : واثر د ا رو ؟

الربّي : اتحدوا وا على القنون ، اعد ايديهم ا البريحه بلحمنا

واثر دك تستنى ...

موسى : المتصلة ... ا عمال ما هميش نتمسبة ربا نية

بمرا ا فهمتلك يا ابن الحرام

يضرِب موسى الربّي بالحصا ويخرج .

يد خلوزون استنار

السكران : 1 نبيينا موسى ا هبل .

الثاني : اضرِب الربّي وسرن له الحصار .

الراييل : كل ما نجى انزور النبي نلقى الربى والتا بر عند
الباب . انى شارق في الكريدي ، لمره هربت اعلي ، الذ راى

هملوه ، ولذن نعيم نقول ونحما ود بلي شفت نبيينا

موسى ، يا نبي الله .

اسماء التا : من ، من ، نخر : لاد رلة .

الربى : للجامح .

يشمر : لاكل ينمنو را نى منا اول : وما ناه

موسى : هذه : من من ان نضل نكذب في فائدة التاجر ، وفي

الجامح مع ربى منمنون .

السكران الاول : هذا اشرا به مقدس .

السكران الثاني : هذا : خشيشة امرية .

الاول : امثال ، انما مر ثنين .

الثاني : وشمل : يمين .

فيشا اب : نبيينا من .

موسى : امان هذيك ما تكون غير اكمال الحصان
انتاعك برك .

المهبول : كورن جيا عنيدي احصان ما نباش في الكوري
موسى : جميع الانبيا تبدا هكذا
موسى : هذا احصان رباني جايك في المستقبل ، ازر ب

روح اتقا جي في عسكر الخيل .

المهبول : الله يحفظك يا نبينا .

الحصان : لدا لدا : لل دولة .

الحصان : للرجل : للجامع .

الرجل : يا حبا ب ربي .

المهبول : يا بني كلاب .

موسى : ايواه قلبي شراك الدبع ما حسيتش بالتساع في

بينتك ؟

الرجل : رحمة كبييرة وقرني اكبير مع الايام الاولى .

موسى : نلتاها تدينا ، كن بيتنا منك انرون

انبا تيره .

الرجل؛ بيت انشور النبي .

الربي؛ اتفضل .

المحبول؛ يا نبي الله تجيت انزورك .

موسى؛ زور زور زور يا زور . .

السبول؛ كنت راقذ في الكوري حتى تخيلتي واحد الشىء ر

ربا ني حكمتني الحمة وتهولت .

موسى؛ ما حسبتش كتي واحد، فسك على جيبينك

بخرانة؟

السبول؛ واحد مسني؟

موسى؛ تخير بالعتل .

المحبول؛ وثيله .

موسى؛ كنت تقول بلتي هذا الشىء، صار لك في الكوري

المحبول؛ انعم ايه .

الحماس مع النبي : للجامع

الرجل : رأيي معطوب رأيي معطوب

يرجع الرجل بعد سبع ايام .

موسى : ايسره

الرجل : اراء عقيمت جسمته كقطه سبع ايام وسبع الياالي والكلب ينبح ويتعمارك

مع القط ، الكرش يتنل . يرب : من سخره ، المعصرة اكلاتي لشكارت الملح ، الفكرون

يتنل هارب من حب يستحرف بواذ ، والثمين . يارني ، من ذك اكثر من اذ رأي .

موسى : نوح القيد والكلب والفكرين ، بسبع الاكش بالحمزة ، اذبح الثمين ودير

بهم زودة انت وارلاذك ، ورجع لي اذ السبب الجاي

الرجل : انعم سيدي

الحماس التاجر : للدولة

الحماس النبي : للجامع

المشبول : يا حباب ، يي يا ابني كلاب

الربيع : قدا والكبا ١

موسى : معزة وكبش .

الربيع : نعم اندد برهم .

موسى : وربيع وعشرين اثنين .

الربيع : ربيع وعشرين اثنين . . . بزأف .

موسى : وفي اثنين سبب فكرون .

الربيع : هذا مكان .

موسى : هذا مكان ، اسمع د يرههم في البيت ، ويلزم

يعيشو معكم سبع ايام وسبع ليالي ، وربيع لي السبت

الجاي .

الربيع : نعم سيدى .

الحما رمع التا : لدة

الحما رمع الربيع : للجامع

التابيره از ريسو روحو بهيبو زوج سنهات وحده حياتها

تدآم ر:بليتا . و اخري عند ر:بليتا الربّي .

المجموعه : والنبي ؟

الربّي : النبي لالا ما يلزمش .

التابيره عند الحق ما يلزمش

التمسنا سين يشر:جوير:تويزوج سنهات في يديهم

المجموعه : راني محاموب وما داري قلبها نبينا موسى

الرجل : بيت انشوف النبي .

الربّي : رد النبي را ، يسمع فيك

التابيره : اتفضل اتفضل .

الرجل : يا نبي الله راني ساكن بيت وعندة بيّ بمرتي

واولادي مكد سين علي بخدمنا بخدمه ، علي احساب

رايك كذا شندير ؟

موسى : بيب قدا ، وكلب .

- موسى، مُصلحتي البديدة .
- المجموعة، يسحبنا نبينا موسى .
- موسى، ردّ ولي مُصلحتي .
- الربّي، رُوحو سَمِعوا الشعب والمؤمنين بسا لي نبينا
- موسى ارجع وراه امننا بينتنا في هذا الجمع وروحيا اولادي
- رُوحو .
- المجموعة، نبينا موسى ارجع .
- التابير، يا ربّي احفك نبينا موسى .
- افراد، هذا عنده الد راحم الربّي يقادره بزا شيا، مثله
- يد مثل، الربّي، اخرج اخرج يا تابير نبينا موسى ارجع وراه
- امننا بينتنا في هذا الاجتماع .
- التابير، يا ربّي انما همدك بالي هذا الاجتماع يكون اغنى
- اجتماع في العالم، اولادي بامر نبينا موسى وفي شيا اراه
- من النوم راكم اموتلفين .
- المجموعة، يسحبنا نبينا موسى .

الرَّبِّي : فِي بَيْتِ رَبِّي مُكَانَ حَتَّى هَدَّرَهُ عَلَى الدَّرَاهِمِ .

مُوسَى يَرْقُدُ الرَّبِّي يَرْجَحُ وَيُشْعَلُ الْمَكْنَسَةَ انْتَاعَ مُوسَى .

مُوسَى : الْفَارَ النَّارَ النَّارَ

الرَّبِّي : يَا مُعْجِزَةَ يَا مُعْجِزَةَ الْإِهْيَةَ الْمُصْلِحَةَ انْتَاعَ مُوسَى شَعَلَتْ فِيهَا النَّارُ

مِنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّي .

مُوسَى : مُصْلِحَتِي ؟

الْمُجْمُوعَةُ : الْمُصْلِحَةَ انْتَاعَ مُوسَى شَعَلَتْ فِيهَا النَّارُ مِنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّي !

مُوسَى : مُصْلِحَتِي !

الْمُجْمُوعَةُ تَرْفَعُ سَيْدَنَا مُوسَى وَتَقُولُ

الْمُجْمُوعَةُ : يَيْحِيَا سَيْدَنَا مُوسَى

مُوسَى : مُصْلِحَتِي : الْحَزِينَةُ

الْمُجْمُوعَةُ : يَيْحِيَا نَبِينَنَا مُوسَى

• رآه يحسب فينا اشكايه الرمل .

الربي : سيدنا موسى كان راعي في السيناي حتى شاف خشبة شعله فيها النار

من عند ربي تلهب رطلهم بيش .

• المجموعة : تلهب رطلهم بيش .

الربي : سيدنا موسى اصبح سموت جبار من خشبة التي شعله فيها النار من عند

ربي . ← *Brutage* .

• شعله فيها النار من عند ربي .

الربي : اليوم السبت حتى ايه ربي ما يقرب الار .

• المجموعة : شلم سيدنا ابي .

موسى . انا

الربي : عند ربي يا ربي

الفصل الثاني من ماضي وحاضر الشعوب
فلسطين

الربّي الكبرّ انتاع اليهود مع المجموعة كل واحد منهم في يده كتاب ، الربّي
يقول وهما يطودوه .

| | |
|------------------------|-------------|
| المجموعة ؛ آيتي ما طوف | او من ننا |
| ش شاي قادي | قام يام قنا |
| را نبي معطوب | وا من داري |
| قلها نبي ننا | موسى |

افراد ؛ ها هو موسى الكناس طول احياته وهو يكمن في الصحراء

الربّي ؛ مدنا موسى كان راعي في السبيل حتى شاف خشبة شعله فيها النار

من عند ربّي .

المجموعة ؛ الشلوم سيدنا الربّي .

افراد ؛ الربّي انتاعنا وقيل اهل يتحسب فينا اشكاير الرسل

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Action Culturelle des Travailleurs

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النشأة الثقافية للعامل

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مغادرة

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