

**THE TRADITIONAL STRUCTURE OF SENTIMENTS  
IN MAHFOUZ'S *TRILOGY*:  
A [COGNITIVE] BEHAVIORISTIC TEXT ANALYSIS\*<sup>1</sup>**

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The works of the Egyptian novelist Nageeb Mahfouz (Najīb Mahfûz) have received considerable attention from native Arab as well as Western literary critics and scholars. Mahfouz's *Trilogy*--the tripartite novel which portrays the traditional life of one urban Cairene family--has been particularly emphasized. Numerous studies hold the *Trilogy* to be an ethnographic and folkloristic description of an important traditional segment of Egyptian society,<sup>2</sup> a record of the history of the emergence of modern ideological and other related national trends,<sup>3</sup> and a landmark in the 'evolution' of the Arabic novel.<sup>4</sup>

They typically analyze the work into "characters," "other characters," "structure,"

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[\* This article appeared in: *Al-<sup>5</sup>Arabiyya: Journal of the American Association of Teachers of Arabic*, Vol. 9, nos. 1&2 (October, 1976), pp. 53-74. Minor editorial changes were made in this re-printing, these are placed within brackets. Note: in the printed text note 89 is repeated; consequently notes 90-108 are misnumbered.

It is also included in: *Critical Perspectives on Naguib Mahfouz*, Trevor Le Gassick, ed. (Three Continents Press, 1991), pp. 51-70. Last paragraph summing up folkloric influence (nn. 107, 108) missing.

\* Original pagination is indicated within angular brackets: < > : < 54 > = p. 54 in the original].

\* Endnotes in the original were converted to footnotes.

\* For technical considerations, under-dotted Arabic letters are given here as underlined letters.]

< 69 > ABBREVIATIONS: B.Q. = *Bayna al-Qasrayn*; Q.Sh. = *Qasr al-Shawq*; S. = *al-Sukkariyyah*. [Cairo, 1960].

\*\*All the italics [emphases] and deletion marks (...) in the citation of original texts are mine.

<sup>1</sup> The author would like to express his appreciation to the Ford Foundation for providing funds during the year 1972-73 for the study of "The Brother-Sister Syndrome in Arab Culture." The present work deals with a literary expression of the syndrome.

<sup>2</sup> See for example, Fawzî Al-<sup>5</sup>Antîl's "Al-Mujtama<sup>5</sup> al-miṣrî kamâ tuṣawwiruhu riwâyat *Bayna al-Qasrayn*" (The Egyptian Society as Illustrated by the Novel of *Bayna al-Qasrayn*), in: *Al-Majallah*, March, 1958, pp. 99-106.

<sup>3</sup> See Ghâlî Shukrî, *Al-Muntamî, dirâsah fî 'adab Nagîb Mahfûz* (*Al-Muntamî, A Study of the Literature of Nageeb Mahfouz*), Cairo: 1969, pp. 15-70 and 218-230; Galâl Al-Sayyid "Târikhunâ al-qawmî fî *Thulâthiyyat Nagîb Mahfûz*," (Our National History in Nageeb Mahfouz's *Trilogy*), in: *Al-Kitâb*, Jan., 1963, pp.70-79. See also Salih J. Altoma's "Sociopolitical Themes in the Contemporary Arabic Novel: 1950-1970," in: *The Cry of Home: Cultural Nationalism and the Modern Writer*, H.E. Lewald, ed., Knoxville: 1972, pp. 351-373; especially pp. 352-353.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Tâhâ Husain, *Min 'adabinâ al-mu;âṣir* (From our Contemporary Literature), Cairo: n.d., pp. 80-87.

"language and dialogue," and other similarly classificatory units.<sup>5</sup> Lists of individual characters, individual acts, individual "folk" scenes and utterances<sup>6</sup> are provided. Such atomistic approaches destroy the unity of the work and have often led to interpretations which reflect the critic's own impressions as to what a particular component meant and what role it played. Being "Turkish," for example, is interpreted in widely varying ways. One writer sees that for Mahfouz, the "Turkishness" of a character or a trait in the *Trilogy* "carries mildly derogatory clichés," and that he imparts none of the "anti-Turkish feelings" which characterize another novelist's works.<sup>7</sup> Another student reads into this very trait feelings of hostility on the part of the novelist, [Mahfouz], and a desire to exterminate any and everything that has to do with Turks!<sup>8</sup> Similarly one author interprets one female character, [Aishah], as symbolizing "beautiful Egypt in her anguishing grief ...,"<sup>9</sup> while another student reads the role of that same character as "something foreign, unacceptable and unessential ... anything which comes from her womb must die."<sup>10</sup>

Although some previous studies speak of the 'psychological'<sup>11</sup> aspects of the novel, these aspects also receive impressionistic and fragmentizing treatment, often from an ethnocentric<sup>12</sup> perspective. These studies dwell only on the 'logical' (or cognitive); the emotional, and the relationship between the logical and the emotional, are left untreated. Many things in a person's cognitive world (i.e. things which one knows about) have an affective (sentimental or emotional) dimension, such as love, hatred, despise and admiration. To a large extent these sentiments determine the type and the direction of an individual's action vis-a-vis these components. A 'normal' person moves towards things which he likes and away from or <54> against things which he dislikes.

*Bayna al-Qasrayn*, *Qasr al-Shawq* and *al-Sukkariyyah* portray the stages of childhood, late adolescence (or early youth) and manhood, respectively, in the life of a Cairene. The pivotal character in the entire work is Kamal, a fictitious name for the

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<sup>5</sup> See for examples: Sasson Somekh's *The Changing Rhythm, A Study of Najib Mahfuz's Novels* (Leiden: 1973), pp. 113-133; and Al-ʿAntil's "Al-Mujtamaʿ al-misrī ...."

<sup>6</sup> See Somekh, *The Changing Rhythm*, pp. 133-136; also Al-ʿAntil, "Al-Mujtamaʿ al-misrī ...." See note no. 24, below.

<sup>7</sup> Somekh, *The Changing Rhythm*, p. 113, n. 1.

<sup>8</sup> See Mattityahu Peled, "Religion My Own: A Study of the Literary Works of Najib Mahfuz," (UCLA, Ph.D. dissertation, University Microfilms, Ann Arbor: 1971), pp. 168-172.

<sup>9</sup> Tâhâ Wâdî, *Ṣūrat al-mar'ah fī al-riwâyah al-muʿâṣirah* (The Image of the Woman in the Contemporary Novel), Cairo: 1973, p. 361.

<sup>10</sup> Peled, "Religion My Own," p. 171; see also p. 184.

<sup>11</sup> Nabîl Râghib argues that the *Trilogy* ... belongs to the psychological <70> school" and treats the novel as such; see *Qadīyyat al-shakl al-fannî ʿinda Najib Mahfuz* (The Issue of the Artistic form as Treated in Nageeb Mahfouz's works), Cairo: 1967, pp. 125-198.

<sup>12</sup> See for example, Francis X. Paz, "Women and Sexual Morality in the Novels of Najib Mahfuz," *Congresso de estudos Arabes e Islamicos*, 4th (Coimbra-Lisboa: 1968) pp. 15-26. Paz concludes that "... love implies knowledge and compassion and how can that come about in this male vanity culture which is Egypt ...." (p. 25). The same application of psychological arguments from an ethnocentric stand is evident in Peled's writing.

novelist himself.<sup>13</sup> In view of the fact that Kamal represents Nageeb Mahfouz, the novel is an expression of Mahfouz's experiences, real or fictitious, and will be so treated.

The experiential world of Kamal is described through his perception, definition and evaluation of specific individuals, events, and objects in his environment. Kamal's own actions, as well as his perceptions of the actions of others, occur within the limitations set by his own cognitions and experiences. The experiences described in each stage correspond to those characteristic of the particular age-group in Kamal's community, or rather the social circle, within which he moved. These experiences also correspond to the general cultural and social characteristics of the time period.

Kamal's world is interwoven with the worlds of others who surround him, such as his father, brothers, and so forth. The novel gives glimpses into the lives of other members of the family as they interact with Kamal and frequently as they interact with others in their own social and cultural circles. In a number of cases these complementary scenes tended to eclipse the main plot, but such dominance of secondary--though important--issues is only ephemeral. Due to the salience of the acts and qualities of some of these non-pivotal characters<sup>14</sup> and scenes most critics have tended to overemphasize their roles. Kamal's childhood experiences in *Bayna al-Qasrayn* represent an inaugural situation. The sentiments which prevailed among members of Kamal's social group determine the nature of the network of relationships among the main characters and the directions of their actions. Consequently, these sentiments determine the plot.

This study is a cognitive behavioristic analysis of the *Trilogy*; it recognizes the fact that human actions are responses to specific motivations. I hope to prove that the basic motivating force to which Kamal (i.e., Mahfouz himself) is responding is a powerful affectionate tie to his sister ʿAishah.<sup>15</sup> As a psychological trait this tie is stable, consistent, and thoroughly pervasive throughout the twenty-seven year span of the novel. It is a personality trait which Kamal acquired during his childhood. It manifests a number of basic behavioral characteristics; 1) it does not change radically throughout Kamal's life and is therefore marked by *stability*; 2) it is congruent with the other sentiments portrayed in the work and is therefore marked by *consistency*; and 3) it tends to influence Kamal's

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<sup>13</sup> Fu'ād Dawwārah, "Nagīb Maḥfūz fī ʿidihī al-dhahabī" (Nageeb Mahfouz on his Golden Anniversary), in: *Al-Kitāb*, Cairo, Jan., 1963. See also Aḥmad Moḥammad ʿAtīyyah, *Maʿā Nagīb Maḥfūz* (With Nageeb Mahfouz), Damascus: 1971, p. 24.

<sup>14</sup> For example, in "The Novels of Najīb Maḥfūz" (Columbia Univ., Ph.D. dissertation, University Microfilms, Ann Arbor: 1972) p. 131, Francis Paz states: "The two sisters, Khādīja and ʿīsha are not so interesting. But they do illuminate the role of the young woman of that time." Paz, thus, misses the entire psychological implication of the role of the sister in Kamal's life. Also compare the treatment of "Characters" in Somekh, *The Changing Rhythm* pp. 113-127; Somekh (p. 126) states: "Amīna [the mother] ... is definitely the axis around which the whole Trilogy revolves." Al-ʿAntīl, "Al-Mujtamaʿ al-miṣrī ...," cites only the character of Aḥmad ʿAbd-al-Jawwād [the father] (p. 100).

<sup>15</sup> See Hasan M. El-Shamy, "The Brother-Sister Syndrome in Arab Culture: a Preliminary Report," in: IX ICAES [International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences] Supplement II, Plan of the Congress and Resumés of Contributions. (Chicago, Ill., 1973). Abst. no. 1717. On the behavioristic analysis of texts, see El-Shamy, "Behaviorism and the Text," in: *Folklore Today. A Festschrift for Richard M. Dorson*, L. Dégh, H. Glassie, F. Oinas, eds. (Bloomington, Indiana: 1976) pp. 145-160.

life in different situations and contexts and is therefore marked by *pervasiveness*.<sup>16</sup>

More importantly, the study demonstrates that the *Trilogy* manifests all the basic characteristics of an important segment of Egyptian and Arabic *folk* narratives. Not because it describes folk quarters or because it registers folk sayings, but because the work is a product of the very sentiments which <55>sustain its counterparts in folk oral traditions.

All three parts of the novel begin and end with familial situations which involve Kamal. Mahfouz inaugurates his *Trilogy* by presenting the milieu in which Kamal lives--its characters, places, acts and abstracts. Kamal's attitudes towards these components are gradually revealed and defined. In the beginning the social circle in which Kamal moves is confined to the nuclear family within the household. The circle expands and multiplies progressively to involve other members of the growing 'family' which develops into a lineage. The second and third parts of the novel deal with situations created by this expansion. Most of the *Trilogy* however is related from Kamal's perspective.

Each character in the novel is perceived in a variety of roles and sets of relationships. Ahmad ُAbdul-Jawwad, for example, is presented through his roles of father, husband, friend, playboy, etc. Amina appears as mother, wife, mother-in-law, etc. Kamal plays the roles of youngest child, son to the father, son to the mother, a brother to male siblings, a brother to female siblings, a friend, an enamored person, a member of a social class, a maternal uncle, a brother-in-law, a thinker and so forth. An analysis of these various roles and relationships follows.

## CHILDHOOD

### Parents and Children

Significantly the novel begins with the introduction of the parents. The mother is hardworking and affectionate. She loves and is loved by her children. She respects and fears the father (her husband) and considers him her "master". She often acts as a go-between the children and their fearful father. Kamal is sympathetic to her especially with reference to his father's harsh and loveless treatment of her. However, Kamal is occasionally reminded of his mother's role as a representative of the terrorizing father especially when she has to resort to the father to discipline her children.<sup>17</sup>

The relationship between Kamal and his father is one based on respect, awe, fear and 'love'. This 'love' between father and son seems to be more of a culture value than an actual sentiment based on affectionate interaction. This type of love was subdued to stronger negative sentiments. Mahfouz describes this complex situation: "As for love, every member of the household loved the man [father] to the extent of worship, thus love for him seeped into the heart of the youngster [i.e., Kamal] due to the influence of the environment; it however, remained a gem hidden in a closed container of fear and

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<sup>16</sup> 16. These are characteristics of interpersonal response traits. See David Krech, et al., *Individual in Society* (New York: 1962), pp. 111-114.

<sup>17</sup> 17. B.Q., 58-59; 315.

terror."<sup>18</sup>

A number of details stress the sentiments of fear and awe which Kamal and all his siblings felt towards the father, especially concerning the father's <56> rights to inflict bodily harm, In situations where Kamal expected some reward for the cleanliness of his hands, the father instead repeatedly threatened to cut them off,<sup>19</sup> A more serious threat to Kamal's ego was his father's (jocular) threat to have him castrated, The young boy took the matter seriously: "... even circumcision itself ... [the father] used it as a tool for terrorizing him ..." to the extent that the boy "... thought that it was actually possible for them to add what remained for him to what was removed."<sup>20</sup>

Kamal and all his siblings always avoided the father and were relieved when they smelled his perfume in the air for it declared his departure, Kamal's actions followed in the direction of his sentiments, He moved, both physically and socially, away from his father.

### Husband and Wife

Kamal's perceptions of the types of sentiments between husband and wife are revealed through the patterns of interaction between numerous couples throughout the novel. Rarely was there a marriage based on love between husband and wife; Kamal's parents exemplify this type of traditional relationship. The husband is the master and his actions are indisputable regardless of their nature.<sup>21</sup> For example, Amina tried once to "politely" draw her husband's attention to her own resentment of his not returning home until midnight, "He held her by the ear and said in his powerful voice in a resolute tone: 'I am a man, the absolute master, I do not accept any comment on my actions. You have only to obey; be careful not to make me obliged to discipline you.'"<sup>22</sup>

Another situation arises in which Mahfouz (or Kamal) specifies the attitudes of a husband towards his wife, Yaseen, Kamal's half brother, had an arranged marriage with Zaynab. "Yaseen's disappointment in marriage caused him to occasionally find towards her a revenge-like desire and on other occasions a sort of intermittent hatred,"<sup>23</sup> Additional statements stress the dispensability of a wife and the strong attachment a wife has with her own family. Yaseen thinks: "A wife is like a shoe which a man can cast off any time,"<sup>24</sup> Khadeejah, Kamal's elder sister, even after having given birth to two sons, "still considered ... [her husband's family] 'strangers' to some extent." She did not

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<sup>18</sup> 18. B.Q., 60.

<sup>19</sup> 19. B.Q., 25-26.

<sup>20</sup> 20. B.Q., 59.

<sup>21</sup> B.Q., 58, 60, [n. missing in main text].

<sup>22</sup> B.Q., 8-9.

<sup>23</sup> B.Q., 382.

<sup>24</sup> B.Q., 470; Q.Sh. 417. The significance of these folk sayings goes beyond their literal meanings; they are a part of a larger folk value system. Treating these sayings as mere colloquialisms (see also note no. 6) allows only for partial understanding of their role in the work. for a discussion of the erotic significance of the "shoe" in folk culture, see Hasan M. <71> El-Shamy, "Beide?" *Enzyklopädie des Märchens*, II, (Walter de Gruyter, Berlin), pp. 85-89.

"exclude even her husband,"<sup>25</sup> Similarly, *ʿAishah*, the younger sister of Kamal, calls in anguish at her deceased loved ones. She names only her father and her two sons and daughter.<sup>26</sup> Notably Kamal's two rivals for *ʿAishah*'s love--her husband Khaleel and her brother Fahmy--were not mentioned.

### Siblings

Kamal had four siblings who included two brothers--Yaseen, a half <57> brother from the father, and Fahmy, a full brother--and two sisters--Khadeejah and *ʿAishah*. The siblings were first introduced in this order according to their sex, then their age. Priority is always given to the male over the female and to the alder over the younger--a social observance in Kamal's family. As a general rule Mahfouz maintained this sequence. On a number of occasions however, the younger is mentioned before the older or the female before the male. Such cases are always indicative of the speakers own preference to one person over the other. In situations which indicated a desirable asset, *ʿAishah* is always cited before Khadeejah.

Kamal's siblings were sketchily introduced at the outset of events, their diverse personalities and roles are developed in a cumulative manner. Initially the brothers receive little attention. We learn only that Yaseen who held a minor job, was "massively fleshy" while Fahmy, the law student and the pride of the family, Was "of towering height and of lean body." Fahmy also "... except for his slenderness, was an image of his father."<sup>27</sup>

In contrast to the initial casual description of the two brothers, the two sisters, *ʿAishah* in particular, are given a more scrutinizing description, especially with regard to their physical appearance, Khadeejah was "... dark and her facial features were saliently contradictory," Mahfouz continues: "She was in the twentieth year of her age ... she was strong and stout .... As for her face, it had derived from the parents' features in a disharmonious manner."<sup>28</sup>

From the outset, Kamal's preference for *ʿAishah* is evident. His partiality for her over Khadeejah is manifested overtly through assigning to her desirable characteristics, and covertly through the use of certain words which reveal this preference semantically, *ʿAishah* was "gold haired," "radiating a halo of beauty and comeliness," She was "in the sixteenth [year] of her spring, an image of exquisite beauty; she was of slender body and stature ... She had a full moon face adorned by a fair complexion adorned by a reddish [i.e. rose] color, a pair of blue eyes which she adroitly selected from the father along with the mother's tiny nose."<sup>29</sup> Khadeejah had influence over her brothers due to services she rendered to them, Meanwhile for the brothers, *ʿAishah* "seemed ... like a beautiful

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<sup>25</sup> Q.Sh., 189-190.

<sup>26</sup> S., 266.

<sup>27</sup> B.Q., 23.

<sup>28</sup> B.Q., 23, 33-34. Note the use of the words 'age' and 'spring' in reference to Khadeejah and *ʿAishah* respectively. See also note no. 39.

<sup>29</sup> B.Q., 34.

symbol in her comeliness, attractiveness and uselessness."<sup>30</sup>

The attitude of Kamal's two elder brothers towards  $\zeta$ Aishah was similar to that of Kamal. However the relationship between each of the elder brothers and the beautiful sister does not receive the same type of attention from the author as the relationship between her and Kamal. This emphasis on Kamal's sentiments is understandable since the novel is related from Kamal's viewpoint. Thus Mahfouz registers Kamal's awareness of the fact that "indeed Yaseen talks love at her openly and whenever Fahmy speaks to her about one matter or another, he does not lack stares of admiration [for her]."<sup>31</sup> Meanwhile Khadeejah was the butt for the brother's teasing and jocular ridicule,<sup>32</sup>

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The differences between Khadeejah and  $\zeta$ Aishah, as the brothers perceived and reacted to them, partly determined the type of relationship between the two sisters.<sup>33</sup> Mahfouz observed; "Naturally Khadeejah did not comprehend the differences which set her apart from her sister ... On the whole, she sensed towards her feelings of jealousy ... This led the beautiful young lady [i.e.  $\zeta$ Aishah] to be annoyed with her most often."<sup>34</sup>

Because Khadeejah was still unmarried, suitors for  $\zeta$ Aishah were turned down; this act contributed to the fostering of resentment between the two sisters. Hostility between the sisters was only briefly interrupted when  $\zeta$ Aishah moved to her husband's home at the Shawkats, It was resumed, however, as soon as Khadeejah joined the Shawkat family through marriage to the older brother of  $\zeta$ Aishah's husband, Within the Shawkats' household the rivalry between the two sisters, always generated by Khadeejah, continued.

The relationships between the two sisters represent a set of attitudes. Khadeejah's negative attitude towards the more favored sister, which was openly detailed, corresponds to Kamal's attitudes toward his elder brothers, which was less explicitly delineated. The influence of the two brothers on Kamal was largely negative. Kamal's perception of his brothers influenced his perception of his own physical appearance and consequently of himself in general. He contrasts his looks to theirs and experiences a sense of physical inadequacy (which was later reinforced by his school mates).

The context in which Kamal expresses this sense of physical inferiority vis-à-vis his two brothers is extremely important; this expression occurs as an integral part of his expressions of his love and attachment to his favored sister. Kamal used to daydream about  $\zeta$ Aishah. A cigarette advertisement poster served as a secondary stimulus for his fantasies about his beloved sister and himself. On his daily trip home from school, little Kamal used to pass by a cigarette shop. "He ... stopped under its billboard combing his little eyes up and down the color poster which depicted a woman reclining on a divan, a cigarette between her crimson lips ... He privately called her ...  $\zeta$ Aishah, because of

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<sup>30</sup> B.Q., 24.

<sup>31</sup> B.Q., 156.

<sup>32</sup> B.Q., 24.

<sup>33</sup> This aspect of the novel reflects how one's own concept of himself is affected by how his social group views him. This established psychological doctrine escapes Paz; he views it simplistically as a mere "stylistic [?] device which is forced," on the novel, and argues: "... Kamal's sisters, their different temperaments and dispositions being rather *naively* [my italics] reflected in their physical constitution." See Paz "Women ..." p. 18.

<sup>34</sup> B.Q., 34; see also B.Q., 33.

similarities between the two of them as represented in the golden hair and the blue eyes. Although he was [only] about ten, his admiration for the lady in the picture exceeded every estimate ... how many a time did he fantasize himself sharing her lavish life with her, [enjoying] a luxurious room ... or sitting near that beautiful girl with aspiring glances to her dreamy eyes. However, *he was not as handsome as his two brothers ... perhaps he was the closest in looks to his sister Khadeejah.*"<sup>35</sup>

Kamal's love and emotional attachment to *ʿAishah* were deep. His love for his mother and, more importantly, for the elder sister Kahdeejah, is qualitatively different from his love for *ʿAishah*. Thus Mahfouz states, "This mother he loves more than anything else in the world ... Here is Khadeejah who is playing the role of *another mother* in his life ... And here is *ʿAishah* who loved him greatly. He responded to her love with love to the <sup>59</sup> extent that he would not drink a swallow of water out of the water pot without inviting her to drink ahead of him so that he would place his lips on the spot which had been wetted by the moisture of her mouth."<sup>36</sup>

Kamal's attitude towards *ʿAishah* and towards her characteristics is very pervasive; it diffused and influenced his perceptions of numerous other persons and many aspects of his life. He, cognitively or non-cognitively, identified with *ʿAishah*, in one measure or another, all of his romantic love experiences. Later on, he also identified his own lot in life with hers.<sup>37</sup> Contrary to all other members of his family, little Kamal even liked the oppressive British soldiers because they had fair complexions, with blonde hair and blue eyes, "just like ... *ʿAishah*."<sup>38</sup>

Little Kamal had his aspirations. During a visit to a saint, he solicits the saint's aid in achieving his goals in life; these goals are given as follows: to have freedom to play, "that *ʿAishah* and Khadeejah remain [unwed] at home forever", that the character of the father be changed, that the mother may live infinitely, that he may get enough allowance, and that all "enter Paradise without trial."<sup>39</sup> Kamal's aspirations did not involve his two brothers.

Considering the intensity of Kamal's love for *ʿAishah* and his desire to be close to her on one hand, and that the two elder brothers expressed similar sentiments of affection towards the same sister on the other, the development of a competitive feeling between Kamal and his two elder brothers was unavoidable. The expression of the sentiments underlying this competition is mostly achieved indirectly.

### **Brother's Wife and Sister's Husband**

The mutual affection between the brother and sister represents a stable set of dyadic relationships. The introduction of a third party who may compete with the brother or the sister for the affection of the beloved sibling generates a sense of hostility towards the intruder. For example, when Fahmy expresses interest in Maryam, the daughter of a neighbor, as his future wife, Khadeejah (the sister who is closer to Fahmy in age) objects.

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<sup>35</sup> B.Q., 57.

<sup>36</sup> B.Q., 75; see also note no. 67.

<sup>37</sup> Quoted below, see note no. 99.

<sup>38</sup> B.Q., 462.

<sup>39</sup> B.Q., 193. Note the order in which *ʿAishah* and Khadeejah are mentioned. See also note no. 28.



Mahfouz observes that although Khadeejah and Maryam were friends, Khadeejah "... easily turned against her friend ... [Khadeejah's] heart refused to accept her as a wife for her brother."<sup>40</sup> Similarly, when Zaynab, Yaseen's first wife, joined the household, Khadeejah viewed her with "... irony and distrust, seeking defects and shortcomings in her ... [she] received her joining the household and *winning* her brother in marriage with nothing but covert distress."<sup>41</sup>

Likewise of course, the relationship between a brother and his sister's husband is largely negative. The brief, but explicit, picture which Mahfouz presents of the sister's negative attitudes towards the wife of a brother is a counterpart of the detailed and recurrent picture of the negative attitudes <60> between Kamal and his sisters' husbands, especially *ʔAishah's*.

The marriage of *ʔAishah* generates in Kamal feelings of 'loss, and having been betrayed. At the beginning Kamal enjoyed the festive atmosphere of the wedding which made him feel "as if he were the groom of that night" and because he saw *ʔAishah* fully "made up with cosmetics to a degree that he had not dreamed of before."<sup>42</sup> However he was particularly alarmed; "he kept on pulling his mother's hand and pointing at the bride and groom ... as if arousing her enmity and fighting spirit to ward off a horrible evil."<sup>43</sup> Kamal was disturbed because of "... *ʔAishah's* move to that house which they have begun to call hers; this move was made in spite of him." This is also so because "no one could convince him of the logic or usefulness" of the move nor assure him as to "when ... *ʔAishah* would return to us."<sup>44</sup> Kamal felt that his family tricked him; thus he "bitterly" declares: "You have deceived me!"<sup>45</sup>

One experience in particular seems to have been traumatic for Kamal. On *ʔAishah's* wedding night Kamal informed his mother that he had spied through the keyhole on *ʔAishah* and her groom, Khaleel. In a compulsion-like manner he proceeded to relate to her: "I saw ... *ʔAishah* and Mr. Khaleel sit on the sofa while ... he kept holding her chin between [the palms of] his hands and he was kissing her." In spite of the painful punch that his mother dealt him, he still inquired, "Mother, why is he kissing her?" Kamal stopped his inquiry only when his mother stated, "you bring up this subject again, I will tell your father." She had advised him earlier, "If your father were to hear you, he would kill you."<sup>46</sup> Kamal ceased to ask about the incident, but what he experienced on the night of the wedding of his beloved sister never ceased to haunt him for the rest of his life.<sup>47</sup>

Kamal's traumatic experience was not limited to *ʔAishah's* marriage and moving away. His relationship with her suffered drastic changes when she became a married woman. This change reinforced Kamal's hostile attitude towards Khaleel whom he considered to be responsible for his having been deprived of *ʔAishah*.

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<sup>40</sup> B.Q., 144.

<sup>41</sup> B.Q., 345-346.

<sup>42</sup> B.Q., 291.

<sup>43</sup> B.Q., 290-291.

<sup>44</sup> B.Q., 313; see also p. 294.

<sup>45</sup> B.Q., 314.

<sup>46</sup> B.Q., 314.

<sup>47</sup> See notes nos. 49, 69, 91, 92.

During his first visit to his sister after her marriage, Kamal wondered aloud, "Aren't you coming back to us?" The answer came from her husband who had just entered the room, "Mister Kamal, she will not return to your home." Kamal's reaction was that "He felt towards him rejection, avoidance and strong hatred which were about to become entrenched in his heart ..." <sup>48</sup> Kamal insisted on seeing *ʔ*Aishah alone. The details of this event reveal Kamal's desire to possess his sister in a way similar to his daydream. "She thought he would be satisfied with sitting with her in the hall, but he pulled her by her hands to the bedroom and slammed the door after them to the extent that it shook violently." Once they were alone in the bedroom he scrutinized the bedding and interrogated her about where she sleeps and where her husband sleeps. He was "suspicious" and "ashamed" to ask <sup>61</sup> about what he saw through the keyhole on her wedding night. <sup>49</sup>

Kamal's following visits to *ʔ*Aishah were disappointing for during his frequent visits "... he was not rewarded with his old *ʔ*Aishah, in her stead he would find another who is made up with cosmetics ... In addition, no sooner would he be alone with her than her husband--who does not leave the house--would catch up with them." <sup>50</sup> Considering that Kamal once was deeply gratified with *ʔ*Aishah's being made up with cosmetics, <sup>51</sup> his new resentment of her being 'made up' may be due to her being beautified for someone other than himself.

The same type of hostile feelings prevailed in a later encounter between Kamal and *ʔ*Aishah's husband. *ʔ*Aishah was about to give birth to her first child and Kamal was anxious. He wanted to see the child "... as it came out." Yaseen advised him, "Wait until the baby is your own baby boy." <sup>52</sup> Little Kamal spent his day at school as "a body without a soul, his soul had wandered to Al-Sukkariyyah [where his sister lived]." There Kamal sees his father and becomes "guilt-ridden". <sup>53</sup> The sister's husband "just as it has been customary" received him coolly. Kamal agonized over his sister's painful condition, "he, again, imagined her body folding and unfolding ..." Finally *ʔ*Aishah's husband orders Kamal: "Go downstairs, kid, and play." Kamal was humiliated. "He retreated dragging his feet and embarrassed; it was too hard for him to receive this cheap reward for the agony of his waiting ..." <sup>54</sup>

Kamal was very eager for his sisters to visit their home. Mahfouz observed that "Truly, Kamal was the happiest of all with his two sisters' visit whenever it came. During the visit he enjoyed profound happiness clouded only by his worrying about its anticipated end." <sup>55</sup> Kamal blamed his two brothers-in-law for making his happiness short-lived.

The separation of Kamal from his mother at the end of early childhood, though he

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<sup>48</sup> B.Q., 334.

<sup>49</sup> B.Q., 336.

<sup>50</sup> B.Q., 363.

<sup>51</sup> B.Q. 291; see also note no. 43.

<sup>52</sup> B.Q., 546.

<sup>53</sup> B.Q., 546.

<sup>54</sup> B.Q., 548.

<sup>55</sup> B.Q., 522.

viewed it as an injustice,<sup>56</sup> resulted in no such lingering painful experience. Also Kamal would have preferred to see society rule that his brother Yaseen move out of the house when he got married, but not his sister.<sup>57</sup> He also blamed his father and mother "for remissing in Aishah to the extent of giving her up to others."<sup>58</sup>

It is significant that Mahfouz brings Kamal's childhood stage to a close with little Kamal singing:

"Visit me [even] once a year;

It is sinful [i.e. terrible injustice] to desert me completely."

Kamal's yearning for the visit (presumably his sister's) takes place as his father comes home with the news that Fahmy, Kamal's brother, died a martyr at the hands of the British.

<62>

## EARLY YOUTH

The stage of Kamal's late adolescence (or his early youth) is presented in *Qasr al-Shawq*. Kamal's social circle is somewhat larger, his world is expanded and its components are relatively diverse. Yet, the sentiments and attitudes outlined in his earlier life stage remain basically constant. Also, the structure of these components of Kamal's personality is unaltered.

Kamal, now seventeen years of age and doing well in his final years in high school, is somewhat sophisticated. Against his father's wish he opts to study philosophy and become a teacher. Kamal tempers his childhood sentiments with philosophical, sometimes academic, views. These views often affect the *intensity* but not the type of his feelings vis-à-vis the components of his world.

The patterns of interaction between Kamal and his father remain basically the same. Both Kamal and Yaseen "... maintained airs of politeness and submission, but their hearts were free, or *almost free*, of fear ..." <sup>59</sup> Later on, however, Kamal becomes slightly rebellious; he declares: "My father is ignorant crudeness [personified], and you [mother] is ignorant tenderness. As long as I live I will remain the victim of these two opposites." <sup>60</sup> Kamal is determined to "desert" <sup>61</sup> the father's home, but such a move never materializes.

Yaseen receives a considerable amount of attention not only through the presentation of his sexually immoral adventures and scandalous conduct, but also through Kamal's abstract judgements of him. Kamal's feelings for his half brother were ambivalent and seemed to be a "mystery" for Kamal himself: "... he held for him true brotherly love, he could not resist ... feeling that he was facing a tame beautiful animal, ... he could not avoid finding towards him a feeling of despise, tempered with sympathy and friendliness; however [this feeling] sometimes ... was not free of a sense of admiration or rather

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<sup>56</sup> B.Q., 79.

<sup>57</sup> B.Q., 328.

<sup>58</sup> B.Q., 294.

<sup>59</sup> Q.Sh., 24.

<sup>60</sup> <72> 60. Q.Sh., 413.

<sup>61</sup> Q.Sh., 412.

*envy*.<sup>62</sup>

At this stage Kamal expresses a merely less hostile attitude towards his two brothers-in-law. For him, their manners, interests in life, and their "sluggish looks" "... were truly laughable and despicable." However he balances these negative feelings with mild positive considerations; he explains: "... luckily, despise does not preclude kindness, wishing [for] them good fortune, and friendliness."<sup>63</sup> Notably love is not one of his sentiments towards these two in-laws. In another context, Kamal finds them naive and ignorant; he wonders: "How can knowledge have a value in itself for [such] two happy oxen?"<sup>64</sup>

Meanwhile, Kamal's love for his two sisters, especially *ʿAishah*, is maintained. In their new milieu the antagonism between the two sisters continues; Khadeejah, as she did before, persistently generates friction between herself and her sister. She even goes as far as accusing *ʿAishah* of "treachery"<sup>65</sup> against their mother.

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A strong new component is introduced into Kamal's personal life when he meets *ʿAydah* Shaddad, the sister of his friend Husain Shaddad. *ʿAydah* is a slender, tan complexioned, french taught aristocrat. She lives with her parents, her brother and younger sister, Bodour, in a villa at the outskirts of *ʿAbbasiyyah* Desert. Kamal socializes with his upper class friends including little Bodour. He falls in love with *ʿAydah*; however, she seems to have been only friendly towards him without sharing his love. She marries Hasan Saleem who is closer to her in social rank. The extent to which *ʿAishah* has influenced Kamal's life becomes evident when *ʿAydah*'s physical characteristics are always correlated in Kamal's mind with those of his sister *ʿAishah* (and far less frequently with those of the older sister Khadeejah).<sup>66</sup>

During a family chat, *ʿAishah*, feeling "somewhat jealous" of Khadeejah's plumpness, states, "... slenderness is [nowadays] ... fashionable." The words evoke in Kamal's mind a reminiscent trend, thus "... Kamal's heart throbbed when the word 'slenderness' reached his ears ... He ... scanned with his dreamy vision the faces with which he has been in love from the beginning, especially the fair complected face from the trace of whose lips he had for a long time been infatuated with drinking water ..." Kamal senses the impropriety of such an act, especially at his age, "he recalled this memory bashfully ..."<sup>67</sup>

Kamal's feelings and experiences with *ʿAydah* are also constantly measured to, contrasted and often identified with his feelings and experiences with his sister *ʿAishah*. While he was once in the garden of the Shaddads' villa waiting for his friends Husain and *ʿAydah*, "An idea which for a long time promised him happiness in such a situation as this one, occurred to him: to fill a glass with water and drink it hoping that he might touch with his lips a spot which her [i.e. *ʿAydah*'s] lips might have once touched as she

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<sup>62</sup> Q.Sh., 26; see also note no. 80.

<sup>63</sup> Q.Sh., 34-35.

<sup>64</sup> Q.Sh., 47; see also note no. 85.

<sup>65</sup> Q.Sh, 254; see also pp. 37, 272.

<sup>66</sup> Q.Sh., 49.

<sup>67</sup> Q.Sh., 49.

drank."<sup>68</sup>

On the night of  $\zeta$ Aydah's wedding, Kamal recalls the traumatic experience which he suffered during the night of  $\zeta$ Aishah's wedding. He roams around  $\zeta$ Aydah's villa and converses with himself: "... do you remember that which you saw through the keyhole? Alas over the deities who roll themselves in the dust."<sup>69</sup> Kamal has a compulsion to go through his earlier experience. "He would contently surrender what remains of his life for one glance through this window! It is not a trivial matter to see the worshipped-one during the privacy of her wedding [night]."<sup>70</sup>

Just as Kamal during his childhood refused to think of his sister as a sex object, he viewed  $\zeta$ Aydah in the same manner; for him both girls were deities. The fair, plump body of a prostitute leads him to wonder: "... how is  $\zeta$ Aydah's body ... frequently she appears in his memory as if she had no body. Even what he [can] recall of her slenderness, tan complexion, and elegance rests in his soul like abstract meanings."<sup>71</sup> He considered her to be "... above marriage."<sup>72</sup>

Events leading to the fulfillment of Kamal's childhood desire to keep  $\zeta$ Aishah to himself "forever" were set in motion with Fahmy's death; they were accelerated during the latter portion of this stage of his life. He does not marry. Meanwhile  $\zeta$ Aishah's family falls seriously ill. This leads Kamal to think, "As a child how hard did he wish that  $\zeta$ Aishah would return to her old home; now how much does he fear that she would return disabled and broken hearted."<sup>73</sup>

As is the case with the first and the third, Kamal's second stage in life is brought to a close with a twofold situation.  $\zeta$ Aishah's husband and two sons die; only her already ailing beautiful daughter survives. As Kamal and Yaseen receive the news of their deaths, they also learn that Sa'd Zaghloul died. Meanwhile Yaseen must go home to his wife Zannoubah who is about to give birth.

## MANHOOD

The stage of manhood in Kamal's life is portrayed in *al-Sukkariyyah*. The household, presented at its outset, is now composed of the two aged and often ailing parents, Kamal,  $\zeta$ Aishah and her only child Na $\zeta$ eemah. The old servant woman Um-Hanafi--herself a divorcee--plays a secondary role.

The sentiments characteristic of Kamal's behavior founded during childhood and tempered and channeled during early youth persist through his manhood. During this phase of his life Kamal is more reflective. Even as an intellectual Kamal's philosophical readings are geared to his own personal needs and his affection for  $\zeta$ Aishah. He reads to "escape from loneliness ... , to reconcile himself by participating in [reading about] victory over desire ... , to lessen his feelings of  $\zeta$ Aishah's misery ... , or to quench his

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<sup>68</sup> Q.Sh, 168.

<sup>69</sup> Q.Sh., 342.

<sup>70</sup> Q.Sh., 356; see also B.Q., 331 and S. 335.

<sup>71</sup> S., 134.

<sup>72</sup> S., 371.

<sup>73</sup> Q.Sh., 460; see note no. 47 73. [Not n. 75 as it appears in the text].

heart's thirst for love ..."<sup>74</sup>

Kamal's attitudes towards his three nephews and one niece are congruent with his attitudes towards his sisters and brother. His role as an affectionate maternal uncle becomes prominent, while his role as a paternal uncle is negligible. The strong attachment between Kamal and the children of his sisters began as an idea in his childhood and continued throughout the course of his life. The affectionate relationship between brother and sister produces a strong positive bond between the brother and the children of the sister. Kamal is affectionate towards his sisters' children and is flattered when the children's mother or family friends repeatedly instruct them to model after their maternal uncle (i.e. Kamal himself).<sup>75</sup>

Kamal's exceptional feelings of love and admiration for *ʿAishah* are extended to *Naʿeemah*, her only child. *Naʿeemah* has her mother's looks. Mahfouz states: "Kamal's admiration for the beautiful young lady was the same as his admiration for her mother earlier."<sup>76</sup> Even at this mature stage,<sup>77</sup> Kamal regards *Naʿeemah*--as he did *ʿAishah* and *ʿAydah* before--romantically, as an asexual being. For him she was "... a fistful of light," and he wonders, "how can animality have any role [to play] in this meek <65> creature?"<sup>78</sup> He is uneasy about the idea of *Naʿeemah*'s marriage to *ʿAbdul-Munʿim*--her paternal as well as maternal cousin--for "... she is too dear to him [Kamal] for any creature to get tired of her."<sup>79</sup> Similarly, his attitude towards *Khadeejah*'s two sons is "... admiration combined with wishing to have their good qualities."<sup>80</sup> They are "close to his heart" and he continued to love them in spite of the fact that the political and philosophical inclinations of each of the two differed radically from his own.

Kamal's ambivalent feelings towards *Yaseen* are extended to his son, *Rudwan*, a "beautiful", conceited homosexual.<sup>81</sup> *Rudwan* studied law, and through his opportunism and homosexuality turned out to be a power broker. Contrary to his close and affectionate ties with his sister's children, Kamal viewed *Rudwan* in competitive terms, particularly with reference to women. Thus Kamal sorrowfully wonders about *Rudwan* as compared to himself: "During her [youthful] time, had *ʿAydah* seen him she would have been enamored with him. And if he were to cast a casual glance at *Bodour* [*ʿAydah*'s sister], he would have preoccupied her with being in love with him."<sup>82</sup>

During this stage the relationship between Kamal and *Khadeejah*'s husband receives less attention. With the death of *ʿAishah*'s husband, Kamal's antagonism towards his

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<sup>74</sup> S., 17-18.

<sup>75</sup> Q.Sh., 47; S., 149, 340. Compare also Q.Sh., 92; S., 32.

<sup>76</sup> S., 16.

<sup>77</sup> Some writers judge Kamal's perception of women as ignorant or naive; see Somekh, op. cit., 1 18-19; Paz, "Women ...," 17; Paz "The Novels ..." 136-137. Such interpretations of Kamal's character miss the emotional foundations for Kamal's attitude.

<sup>78</sup> S., 147.

<sup>79</sup> S., 152.

<sup>80</sup> S., 154. Mahfuz uses the word *ghibtah* to denote this attitude; compare his use of *hasad*, i.e. malicious envy, in note 62.

<sup>81</sup> S., Chapter no. 50, especially pp. 358-360.

<sup>82</sup> S., 334-5.

brothers-in-law is subdued. Residuals of past antagonism still linger however. Ibraheem, Khadeejah's husband, assumes Kamal is still antagonistic towards him and his deceased brother, thus he reminds Kamal: "... you used to accuse us of having stolen your two sisters and *never forgave* us for that."<sup>83</sup> Similarly, Ibraheem's casual remarks about the success of Kamal's childhood friend is taken by Kamal as "a bitter criticism aimed at himself personally."<sup>84</sup> Even when Ibraheem seriously compliments Kamal, Kamal holds the view of his brother-in-law to be ridiculous and thinks: "Even mules occasionally pass judgement."<sup>85</sup>

Kamal continues to avoid his father. At the age of sixty-seven the father is ailing and must remain at home. He is totally subdued and dependent on others. He needs both his cane as well as Kamal for his weekly outing to the mosque. The father complains: "Kamal keeps me company in a snatching manner, just like a guest."<sup>86</sup>

The emotional foundations underlying Kamal's attitudes towards his sister *ʿAishah* and his sweetheart *ʿAydah* are expressed anew via another female figure--Bodour Shaddad, the younger sister of *ʿAydah*. Through these expressions the emotional continuum which links *ʿAishah* to *ʿAydah* to Bodour is established. An associative process specifies the link among the three women in Kamal's mind. Without knowing her identity, Kamal accidentally meets Bodour. By now the Shaddads had suddenly lost their wealth and consequently the head of the family had died. The remaining members of the Shaddads now had to live simply. In spite of the non-aristocratic context in which Bodour lived she "... reminded him of *ʿAydah* ... then he found himself thinking of *ʿAishah*!"<sup>87</sup>

Bodour is receptive to Kamal's restrained attempts to court her. In a manner typical of the middle class Egyptian youth, she arranges to accidentally run across him on the street. Kamal is convinced that Bodour can be his by marriage if he were only to ask. He refuses, however, to take the decisive steps. Typically, he wishes that she would marry someone else so that "he would be freed from his agony."<sup>88</sup> He finally sees her walking hand in hand with a young man in downtown Cairo. For Kamal, her companion seemed to be "neither a brother of hers nor a lover."<sup>89</sup> He concluded that he was her husband. At

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<sup>83</sup> S., 152.

<sup>84</sup> S., 31. The friend is Fou'ād al-Hamzāwī.

<sup>85</sup> S., 153.

<sup>86</sup> S., 203.

<sup>87</sup> S., 326.

<sup>88</sup> S., 337.

<sup>89</sup> S., 336. Note the association between the words: *gannah* (Paradise) and *gharīzah* (instinct). In Cairene colloquial Arabic a garden is called *gunainah* (i.e. little paradise). In other contexts, Mahfouz uses the word 'gharizah' to refer to what may be labeled "sexual drive" (See Q.Sh., 356, where he speaks of "the upsurgings of instincts" during *ʿAydah*'s wedding night). This association suggests that the unsatisfied 'instinct' was sexual, rather than the mere need for play, as the passage overtly suggests. The appearance of 'sin,' or guilt, in the same context tends to support this argument.

It is worth noting in this respect that Mahfouz frequently mentions that Ahmad Abd-al-Jawwad--the father--was referred to by his numerous <73> concubines as "brother." See: B.Q., 256; Q.Sh., 92, 429; S., 18, 129, 252. Similarly, potential marriage partners are referred to as 'our son' and 'our daughter.' See B.Q., 265; Q.Sh., 156; S., 145.

their sight Kamal regresses. A toy shop which evoked in him "memories of his childhood" functions as a secondary stimulus and a series of mental images serve here as a means by which Kamal's emotional crises is directly externalized (i.e. verbalized). The contents and sequence of Kamal's regressive thoughts over his childhood are highly indicative of the cause-effect relationships between specific negative childhood experiences and his present situation. "In his childhood he was not given the chance to enjoy this [i.e., such a toy] *paradise*, thus he grew up harboring an *instinct* which was not satisfied and the proper time for satisfying it has elapsed."<sup>90</sup> Kamal senses the impropriety of that unsatisfied 'instinct'. "Perhaps there was some *sin* in the past which he is [now] unknowingly redeeming. Perhaps it ... [was] a passing event, or a situation that he suffered."<sup>91</sup>

The present dilemma in Kamal's life is, at least partly, a product of his traumatic experience during ʔAishah's wedding, and his sense of having been deceived by his parents when he lost his beloved sister. He must "think twice about that agony which is lined with a mysterious *pleasure*. Isn't it that [agony] which he had tasted in ʔAbbasiyyah's Desert while gazing at the light coming through the window of [ʔAydah's] wedding chamber. Was his hesitation towards Bodour a device to push himself into a similar situation so that he may retrieve *old feelings* and get drunk on both their agony and pleasure together."<sup>92</sup> It is only natural for us to conclude here that the memory of ʔAydah's wedding night is associated in Kamal's mind with that of ʔAishah's; Kamal himself has outlined this connection before.<sup>93</sup>

Kamal's lingering resentment for his father also emerges in the same regressive situation. He fantasizes himself a child again, but "at the same time with his grown up mind." This daydreaming takes him back to his own home. "He would go back to play in the house-top *garden* ... with a heart full of ʔAydah's [or perhaps more accurately, ʔAishah's] memories, or to go to ... ʔAbbasiyyah in 1914 to see ʔAydah playing in the garden ... or to address his father with a lisp and tell him that the war is going to break out in 1939 and that he [the father] will die after one of its air raids."<sup>94</sup>

Kamal kept his sexual activities with prostitutes and his romantic love feelings completely separate. For him marriage was associated with industry and work, while love is in no way linked to marriage.<sup>95</sup> The emotional <67> continuum which leads Kamal to identify Bodour with ʔAydah, and ʔAydah with ʔAishah, generates this sense of guilt. He is in love but he also experiences aversive feelings at the very idea of marriage to the girl he loves. This anxiety-generating conflict is summed up in Kamal's words about Bodour, "I do love her but I hate marriage." He also more specifically senses his aversion towards marrying her; he "could not resist seeing her, nor could he deny his love for her, nor

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<sup>90</sup> [89.1] S., 338. [Appears in main text, (p. 66) as n. 89bis/repeat].

<sup>91</sup> S., 338-9. This statement may also be read: "think twice ... wasn't he [himself] the one who tasted it ...."

<sup>92</sup> See note no. 69.

<sup>93</sup> S., 338.

<sup>94</sup> The separation between love and marriage permeates the entire work. Numerous statements express this view explicitly: see for examples: Q.Sh., 404-405; S., 35-37, 325, 342-343, 392.

<sup>95</sup> It is significant that Mahfouz uses these two highly illustrative words. *Jufoul* refers to running away in fear aimlessly, while *nufour* may be translated as a strong dislike or aversion.



ignore his *nufour* and *jufoul*<sup>96</sup> of the idea of marrying her!"<sup>97</sup> Mahfouz also recognizes the abnormality of this situation; Kamal's intellectual friend, Riyad Quldus, diagnosed Kamal's state by telling him, "You are sick and refuse to get well."<sup>98</sup>

Kamal's third stage in life is brought to a close<sup>99</sup> with the scene of the mother's inevitable death "within three days." Yaseen and Kamal must prepare for different events. Yaseen needs to shop for his expecting daughter, while Kamal needs to buy a new black tie to mourn his mother. Yaseen will return to his own home while Kamal will return to the family home. Implicitly, Kamal will be returning to a home where only he and *ʿAishah* will remain. This was his childhood dream.

Both the brother and the sister have undergone drastic experiences which make their staying together socially acceptable. Kamal is aware that "She lost her offspring while he lost his hopes. She amounted to nothing just as he amounted to nothing. Whereas her children were flesh and blood, his hopes were lies and illusions."<sup>100</sup>

Thus, in its entirety, the novel dealt with a situation in which a little boy loved one of his two sisters, and he competed with his elder brothers for her affection. The boy suffered from the parental and societal blocking of his want to be with his favorite sister.<sup>101</sup>

In spite of social and cultural changes,<sup>102</sup> a stable pattern of sentiments is expressed as follows: brother-sister mutual love; sister-sister rivalry; brother-brother rivalry; child-parent(s) hostility; husband-wife hostility (or lack of love and affection); brother-sister's husband hostility; sister-brother's wife rivalry; and brother-sister's child affection.

The novel reorganizes the social situation so that the brother and sister attain a reunion under socially acceptable conditions. The plot eliminates the brother's competitors for the love of the sister; Fahmy dies a martyr, Yaseen must leave home because of his scandalous conduct; the sister's husband and children die. The father and the mother die. The other sister and brother continue to live away from the original 'home.' No situation develops which may force Kamal's two surviving siblings to return to the old home. Meanwhile Kamal fails, or refuses, to add a new member into the family's "home" by marriage. finally, only Kamal and *ʿAishah* end up together in their old "home."

Critics have attributed numerous aspects of Mahfouz's work to foreign literary and philosophical influences. Some attribute much of the contents of the *Trilogy* to Zola's naturalist school; meanwhile others argue that <68> the unfulfilled love which dominates

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<sup>96</sup> S., 332.

<sup>97</sup> S., 332.

<sup>98</sup> Some writers miss the emotional congruence between the ending and the contents of the novel. Paz, for example, writes: "... the very abruptness with which the novel ends is startling, especially since it comes to a pessimistic conclusion, reflecting futility, frustration and renewed fanaticism [!]." "The Novels ...", p. 143.

<sup>99</sup> S., 234-6. Other similarities in the physical developments and social life between *ʿAishah* and Kamal are expressed elsewhere; see S., 152, 239.

<sup>100</sup> See notes nos. 57 and 58.

<sup>101</sup> Somekh, for example states that "... the major theme of the novel is that of change in life and society," op. cit., p. 128; and that in al-Sukkariyyah "... the break with the past is total." op. cit., 129.

<sup>102</sup> Wādī, op. cit., p. 335; see also Louis *ʿAwaḍ* quoted in Somekh, op. cit., p. 109, n. 2.

the work may be an "overripe nineteenth century European romanticism."<sup>103</sup> These two crucial aspects need not be necessarily of foreign origin. Narratives which portray in detail the fate of successive generations within a family (or tribe) from birth to death are well known in Arabic folk literature; such a narrative is known as *seerah* (i.e., life history). *Al-Hilaliyyah*<sup>104</sup> is an example of this genre. Similarly, explaining a person's character and physical appearance in terms of heredity and kinship is an established folk tradition. Furthermore, the structure of sentiments which determines the course of action, i.e. the plot,<sup>105</sup> in Mahfouz's *Trilogy* is typical of Egyptian and other Arabic folktales, especially those belonging to the genres of *Märchen* (magic tale) and novella (realistic or romantic tale). Such folktales however deal with fewer psychological themes, and actors and with confined situations. Naturally some tales include a number of collateral themes. One folktale which expresses the brother-sister theme from a female's viewpoint may be summarized as follows:

Once there was a man and a woman; they had a girl and a boy.  
The man and the woman died and the girl lovingly raised her brother.  
Against the sister's advice, the brother married. The brother's wife hated the sister, mistreated her and slandered her to her brother. The brother delivers his sister to an old servant and instructs him to kill her. The servant is compassionate and leaves her in the wilderness.

A man rescues the sister and marries her. She bears him children.  
The children grow, inquire about their maternal uncle, and demand to see him. The husband is reluctant to give his wife and children permission to go, but he finally relents.

In disguise the sister tells her brother her story. The brother learns the truth and gets rid of his own wife (usually by killing her) and is reunited with his sister and her children.

[The sister's husband is usually ignored!]<sup>106</sup>

The tale manifests a number of sentiments and attitudes which are identical with their counterparts in Mahfouz's *Trilogy*. The most important of those sentiments are the love and affection between brother and sister, and the importance of the maternal uncle to his sister's children. Both the novel and the tale reorganize the social situation to allow for

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<sup>103</sup> Paz, "The Novels ...," p. 136.

<sup>104</sup> It should be pointed out that *Al-Hilaliyyah* also deals with three generations. See ʿAbd-ul-Ḥamid Yūnus, *Al-Hilaliyyah fi al-tārikh wa al-'adab al-shaʿbi* (Al-Hilaliyyah in History and Folk Literature), Cairo: 1956, especially pp. 101-116.

<sup>105</sup> Somekh states, "... the author appears ... to have had no sound plan in the first place." He however adds, "I shall try to show ... that the very lack of unity in technique and style is functional—in other words, that it is a design in itself." op. cit., 128. See also note no. 98 above.

<sup>106</sup> This tale belongs to Type 872\*, *Brother and Sister*. See Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson, *The Types of the Folktale* (Helsinki: 1964). for the past five years the present writer has been studying 39 Middle Eastern variants of this tale (see note no. 1). The results of the study will be published in the near future.

the sister to be reunited with her brother. This reunion is the motivating factor for both types of literary expressions.

Whatever effect the European schools might have had on Mahfouz's *Trilogy*, their influence by no means amounts to the impact of Egyptian lore. Perhaps it would be more appropriate to seek Mahfouz's literary roots in the folk narrative repertoires of his mother and the old family servant <69> Um-Hanafi, his two raconteurs.<sup>107</sup> Perhaps they did fill Kamal's (Mahfouz's) head with "medieval superstitions,"<sup>108</sup> but in addition they instilled into him the forms and contents of his thoughts, feelings and expressions.

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<sup>107</sup> See B.Q., 76; Q.Sh., 459; S., 389.

<sup>108</sup> <74> Somekh, op. cit., 128. Kamal himself had resented this fact; see Q.Sh., 413. See also note no. 60.