
Research Article

Symbolism in the modern short story in Palestinian literature: Rāwiah Burbārah and the “white transparent” an example

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Abstract:

This critical article deals with the issue of symbolism, as its transparent employment is evident in the modern Palestinian short story of the writer, Rāwiah Burbārah, through her short story production in her collection of stories “*Shaqā`iq Al-`Asīl*” published in 2007. The research focuses on a short story selected from the collection of the stories of the aforementioned group, which is The white transparent, through a symbolic reading, to defining the features of modern symbolism.

Symbolism is prominent in the modern short story, as the narrator employs symbolism in its integrated concept, using it to express his thoughts and visions within the elements of the story, so he enters the symbolic building in the writer’s style and formulation of the fictional text, adding to it a space of intended gaps and ambiguity and moving away from declarative and specific, so that the writer makes his story a text Literary evasive and clever in its presentation, structure and plot, calling the readers to implement all they possess of the elements of reading, interpretation, deconstruction and composition in order to reach a deeper and optimal understanding of the text and its cause, which is what the writer aims to achieve.

The writer, Rāwiah Burbārah, is considered one of the creative Palestinian writers in the field of fictional writing of all kinds. A few scholars have paid attention to her short stories, which are collected in two collections: “*Shaqā`iq Al-`Asīl*” in 2007, and “*Min Mashī`at Jasad*” in 2008. Therefore, this article is complementary with What has been written about her role in writing short stories, and this article is concerned with the symbolic approach present in her first collection, in order to answer a central question: What are the features of transparent symbolism for the writer, Rāwiah Burbārah, in her short story text “*The White Transparent*”?

Keywords: Symbolism, modern Palestinian literature, short story, Rāwiah Burbārah.

The Palestinian short story

The journey of the short story began in the country at the end of the first half of the twentieth century, and among its pioneers at that time was: Khalīl Baidas (Ghanāyem, 1995: 23). Some researchers believe that the first generation of Palestinian story writers, most of whom experienced the Palestinian Nakba and its repercussions, were young intellectuals. And those who wrote in immature ways due to their lack of experience in fictional writing and their disengagement from interactive fictional literary activity in the Arab world and its sources that were forbidden to them due to the state of military rule until the sixties (‘Abbāsī, 1998: 47-48).

Critics did not view the local stories that were written during the fifties of the last century as artistic stories that raise serious and realistic issues, as the national Palestinian poetry monopolized these issues, at a time when readers dealt with the short stories during them as entertaining texts devoid of a serious and committed approach (Ghanāyem, 1995: 25).

The local short story began to mature with the generation of the sixties, which included a group of writers such as: Emīl Ḥabībī, Zakī Darwīsh, Muḥammad Alī Tāha, Tawfīq Fayyād, Mustafā Murrār, Muḥammad Nafā‘ and others (Ghanāyem, 1995: 42-43), and they were supported by the official and local literary press. Their texts were successively published in Arabic (‘Abbāsī, 1998: 54), and the local story since that time dealt with important social, political and intellectual issues, and expressed the Palestinian concern and the arrogant Zionist state’s policy with the Arab minority in the country (‘Abbāsī, 1998: 21).

The local story developed throughout the seventies, eighties, and nineties, and many transformations entered it in the modern and modernist methods of storytelling. It also affected it and the story writers from the generation of the eighties and nineties, up to the current century, a number of general variables in writing stories in the West and the Arab East, and the growing movement of literary criticism had its role In refining the local fictional experience with more reasons for development and modernization, the compatibility between artistic styles and critical theorizing on the one hand, and the specificity of local fictional writing, its issues, and the reality of its writers on the other hand (Pūlūs, 2012: 25).

Rāwiah Burbārah: The Writer and Her Production

Rāwiah Burbārah, born in the city of Nazareth on 11/27/1969. She was educated in its schools and graduated from the bishop's seminary. Then she moved to live with her husband in the village of Abu Sinan, west of Galilee, and worked there as an Arabic language teacher in the comprehensive secondary school in the village after Obtaining a first degree in the fields of Arabic language and education from the University of Haifa in 1994. She obtained a second degree in the field of Arabic language and literature with distinction from the University of Haifa in 2004, after submitting her thesis on Fāṭimī Shī'ite literature entitled “A Contrasting Reading in the Dīwān of the Fāṭimī Poet Prince Tamīm Ibn al-Mu'izz”. At the end of 2011, she obtained a Ph.D. in Arabic Literature from the University of Haifa after completing her study on “Fāṭimī Poetry between Ordinary and Doctrinal Meanings”.

Rāwiah Burbārah held several positions and jobs through which she served the Arabic language, its curricula, and teaching staff in the country. She worked in guiding Arabic language teachers through her work as a lecturer in teacher completion courses, as well as through her work as an Arabic language guide in secondary schools in the Druze community, and as a language guidance center. In addition, she worked as a lecturer of the Arabic language at the College of Western Galilee, and as an inspector for the contents of Arabic literature and its curricula for the post-primary stage at the Curriculum Planning and Development Center in the Ministry of Education, until she was appointed, during the year 2011, as a concentrated inspector for the Arabic language in the field of literature, and she is an active and generous personality in her field of work. Her participation in study days, seminars, seminars, completions, and courses that sponsor the areas of the Arabic language and its literature are many.

Rāwiah Burbārah is included among the well-known local female writers, as she published a number of literary works. Her collection of short stories, “*Shaqā`iq Al-`Asīl*” published in 2007, was the first of her literary productions. Then, another collection entitled “*Min Mashī`at Jasad*” published in 2008. Then her collection of short stories “*khatī`at al-Narjes*” was published in 2010, and she has works Translated into English, Hebrew and German (‘Abbūd, 2012: 193-194).

The short story of Rāwiah Burbārah

The short story experience of Rāwiah Burbārah, is an important and pivotal world, as the beginning of her era in story writing with the writing of the short story, she monitors, through her fictional production, the reality of her local Arab community in the country, and devotes a significant space to women's concerns and issues. She invests her short stories in monitoring outstanding issues related to two central axes: society and women. The author's visions and aspirations are expressed in a rich narrative language that often approaches the emotional and emotional poetic style. The language of the writer in her narrative texts is a means to achieve the goal represented by monitoring the fragile reality in a sober, non-fragile language, so that she governs her phrases tightly, and activates the monotonous, idle language and its spent vocabulary. Boring familiarity, so the linguistic side comes within her interests, presenting story paintings studded with narrative language that sometimes astonishes the recipient.

The author, through her short stories in general, presents attempts to formulate reality and reveal the axes of individual and collective distress related to the situation of women and their existence within the traditions of eastern and local societies, in an effort to present the recipient reader with an opportunity to produce reality and formulate it in a real way that reveals the suffering and prejudice that follows marginalized and weak personalities and women in our societies who are vulnerable to themselves. It is the writer's method and means that aims to convince the recipient in her society of the need for change and enlightenment.

Most of what the writer created in the art of the short story, through her experience in “*Shaqā`iq Al-`Asīl*”, “*Min Mashī`at Jasad*”, and “*khatī`at al-Narjes*” is characterized by being the throes of texts that tend to exaggerate emotions and emotions mixed sometimes with passages dominated by tinges of sadness and anxiety, and through which the writer appears She is interested in employing the narrative style and adapting it to serve the content, as she is aware that writing short stories is a complex and difficult matter, to the extent that some scholars considered it the most complex type of creative writing among the various literary genres (‘Obīd, 2010: 3-5).

Symbolism

The concept of a symbol appears among linguists and literary critics as an analogue to the word or the linguistic sign and the sign, although there are certain differences between them, the four of them are different in their concepts. In employing Western terminology in Arabic literature and its modern criticism (Sharshār, 2002: 70).

The Arabic lexicon refers to the meaning of hidden and puns without being explicit in presenting the meaning, which is associated with the concept of symbolism in its modern, inclusive idiomatic form, as it means that textual reference sent to the reader as a moral link between him and the overall text (Ḥusīn, 2007: 60-61).

Symbolism requires two levels: the level of sensory things that are taken as a template for the symbol, and the level of the intangible states to which it is symbolized. As for the symbol idiomatically; It is a word that carries inspirations, and it is the meeting point of the creative artist and the recipient reader (al-Khatīb, 2000: 4). The symbol is a technique that the writer invents and employs in order to be able through it to express the feelings and feelings that circulate in his chest, so he expresses the depths of the human self with images, meanings, and sentimental connotations that cannot be achieved. Realizing it in a direct physical form (al-Jundī, 1972: 46). The symbol is distinguished in that it is indirect and specific, so it does not disclose what is meant directly, and it is a symbol of the methods of expression, where the word symbol is usually used in other than what was developed

for it, and it in itself does not have any special meaning, unless it is in a specific context that is determined according to it. Thus, it refers to the cultural stock of the recipient in the interpretation stage.

Modern literary criticism relied on its interest in symbolism and symbolism on a long history that was often associated with philosophies and theology, which could be called narrative coding (McEwen, 1998: 13-17).

Through its philosophy, the symbolist doctrine calls for the necessity of contemplation and abstaining from taking into account the appearance, because every sensory appearance is a symbol and a metaphor for a reality other than the apparently perceived truth. It indicates that symbolism kept reality within its external realism, but it did not take it as a material for artistic experimentation as did the realists, but rather it extracted it and penetrated its soul and depths and employed it in its symbolic style (Khalaf, 2007: 122).

Symbolism in Western literature is based on a set of artistic and stylistic characteristics that characterize its handling of the concept of symbol in the literary text. Among the most prominent of these characteristics are ambiguity and ambiguity, the adoption of the language of suggestions and interpretations, the employment of myths and heritage, and the correspondence of the senses. From renewing its position, intensifying images and indirect expression, breaking traditional and familiar linguistic ties, and creating a displacement that depends on the correspondence of the senses (Al-Ayyūbī, 1983: 33-34; Khalaf, 2007: 127-135).

The Palestinian allegory

The Palestinian short story resorted to the symbolic method and the artistic coding system in the local short narrative text, following the urgent need to employ symbolism to express the opinions of writers and creators, in light of the imposed political reality after the Nakba, which resulted in the survival of the Arab minority in historical Palestine, which was transformed by the new political reality. The symbol was an auxiliary tool that enhanced literary activity in the country during the fifties, sixties, and seventies of the last century. His readings of the short fictional text, and his removal from the constraint of direct, defining reading to the field of suggestions and correspondence of the senses, thus escaping both of them from the shackles of censorship and authority (Naqqāsh: 137).

Therefore, the employment of symbolism in the local short story was not a formal artistic measure, but rather a necessity that reflects the awareness that story writers and literature experienced during that dark historical stage, during which the short stories dealt with patriotic contents, foremost among them the issue of land, resistance, and the relationship of the Arab citizen with the Jewish state and its institutions (Abū al- Shabāb, 1977: 97).

Short story Palestinian writers continued to employ symbolism in their stories and local narrative productions, and developed their symbolic methods in a way that serves the latest issues in the Palestinian reality, both at home and abroad.

Symbolism in “*Shaqā`iq Al-`Asīl*”

Realism dominates in most of the texts of the collection “*Shaqā`iq Al-`Asīl*”. It is a short story collection consisting of twenty-five short nonfiction texts, most of which focus on female issues, sexuality, the relationship with the male, and masculine authority in society. In it, the author employs the method of transparent symbolism, sometimes in a simple and uncomplicated manner. With shallow dimensions and an irregular pace, leading to observing the situation indirectly within the plots of some stories in her aforementioned group, the space for symbolic employment in the entirety of what was mentioned in the group is not large when compared to the space for realistic narration that is close to specification and directness.

Transparent symbolism appears in some of the stories of the “*Shaqā`iq Al-`Asīl*”, as is the case in the story “The Secret of the Cave and the Cover of the Beautiful”, which tells the story of ‘Abd al-Jabbār, who was made by chance a hero and a mighty in the eyes of people, and whose true nature was revealed by Ḥasnā` after she entered a cave that people thought that a genie belonging to ‘Abd al-Jabbār inhabits it and makes a terrifying sound, so she left the cave dragging behind her Zahlūl al-Bahlūl while he was groaning, revealing the falsehood of ‘Abd al-Jabbār’s heroism, who was afraid to enter the cave (Burbārah, 2007: 34-37). Ḥasnā` symbolizes the successful female who is able to outperform men. This story refers the reader to realizing the true reality through principled positions consistent with a living reality in which women take the initiative in many aspects of life.

The transparent symbolism in “*Shaqā`iq Al-`Asīl*” conceals a political reality linked to the author's vision of some well-known historical facts. This is evident in the use of symbolism in the story “Qānā, the First Miracle”, which tells the story of a young boy waiting for a new day to reach the age of seven, waiting for a Christmas party. His birthday was eagerly awaited, and his innocent dreams loomed over him, but the bombing by the enemy hit his village that morning. Their house is destroyed, his sister dies in pieces, and he miraculously escapes death with his mother. The story reaches its climax with the little boy's wish on his birthday that his sister's soul would reach the seventh heaven quickly; So that one of the bombing planes would not hit her and kill her twice in a row (Burbārah, 2007: 124-130). The story of “Qānā, the First Miracle” refers the reader to the Lebanese Qānā massacre that took place in 2006, three days before the text was written.

“The White Transparent”

The story tells the story of a woman who goes to the psychiatrist's office, wearing a white, transparent dress; This was in order to treat her from the reincarnation of many women’s souls in her body, and because of the intensity of her fear for herself and her

fear of them, so the doctor started to hear her, so she relaxed and entered into a temporary coma, during which she freed the women living in her, and various dialogues took place between her and the doctor, and among those female personalities was: “Jean Dark”, then “Josephine”, the sweetheart of Napoleon Bonaparte, then “Rabi’a al-‘Adawiyyah”, the Sufi ascetic known for her adoration of the divine, then “Rīta”, the sweetheart of the great Palestinian poet Maḥmūd Darwīsh, then “al-Zabbā”, and at the end of the story they all wake up from coma, and the woman waves to him. She stretched out on the treatment bed with her hands and then came out like a ghost, leaving the doctor stunned (Burbārah, 2007: 12-18).

Symbolism in “*The white transparent*”

“*The White Transparent*” is an exciting story in its transparent, symbolic dimension. It has vivid surreal characteristics, the most important of which is the alienation of reality. The central female figure in it is torn between her present awareness of herself and her awareness that is imprisoned by the limitations of her struggles, her femininity, her ecstasy, her memory, and her poisons. All of these are elements of the core of female reality, but they are present in the context of the story. Through the female heritage metaphors that represent a state of alienation towards the distant past, then some surprising fantasy perceptions appear in the story, which meet with wondrous worlds mixed with subjective reality. ability to prove its presence. However, all this remarkable combination leads to the realization of the male, represented by the character of the doctor, “how dangerous this Eve is, who carries all the females of history in her sleeve” (Burbārah, 2007: 18).

The title “*The White Transparent*” symbolizes clarity, innocence, honesty, and truth that cannot be questioned. The title has a clear connection with the text. The central character in it, who is the narrator of the events of the story and the central narrator, wore transparent white clothes when she went to the psychiatrist so that he could see each of the The women who live in it, so that he does not accuse her of madness (Burbārah, 2007: 12).

Most of the central dialogue space in the story, which takes place between the treating narrator and the doctor, takes place in five scenes that mediate the events and material of the text. Society and human civilization, and thus the transparent symbolism of the text is based on metaphors and usages of female figures, five of whom represent the role of women and their great contribution, which there is no room for questioning, as they are clear and transparent contributions that are seen, observed and inferred from many reliable sources.

The first character appears represented by Joan of Arc, as it was stated in the text: “Joan of Arc emerged from this translucency that lay on her body... a young woman who embraces principles and longs for struggle” (Burbārah, 2007: 14), and the female figure borrowed here symbolizes the female resistance fighter Who gave everything she owned and her life for the sake of her cause and her dignity. In the story, Joan of Arc suffered from harsh work in the factory, which stripped her of her femininity in the midst of self-realization with the workers until the labor struggle achieved its goal. The working woman is a mighty fighter who works with the man to make their glory together. She claims that for herself alone. Rather, she offers all the ingredients she possesses of sacrifice and then accepts to be hidden behind the scenes of glory and fame. The first of May, which is the sign of the workers’ victory and their global struggle, confirms this, as it came from the words of the narrator in the story: “She did not wait for “Zorro” to come to her on His white horse. Rather, he rode the mask of manhood. and fought and presented to each of you “Zorro” his feast on the first of May” (Burbārah, 2007: 14).

The second borrowed character, Josephine, the Empress of France and the mistress of the French Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte, appears with the doctor asking about some soft spots in the patient’s body, and she says to him: “It is Josephine waiting for Napoleon’s return, so she does not prepare her body to receive his warrior body that exudes the scent of homelands” (Burbārah, 2007: 14), and it symbolizes within the context of the text the woman whose beauty and seduction overwhelm her, and who seduces the man, so he clings to her and makes him forget all his worries and burdens, so he throws himself between her ribs in order to rest from all his troubles and stimulate his aspiration and charge his great energy from her and from her tenderness, warmth and love, and with every invasion of her body with his instinctive weapon he used to pave for a military invasion with his military weapon.

The third character, the well-known Islamic worshiper and ascetic Rābi’a al-‘Adawiyyah, appears after the doctor asked the narrator about a smell emanating from her body; She answers him: “It is the incense of Rābi’a al-‘Adawiyyah. From completely sensuality, then the state shifts from imperceptible love to love in its tangible sense, represented by the fourth borrowed character, Rīta, the mistress of the Palestinian poet Maḥmūd Darwīsh, who appears in the text after the doctor asked the narrator about a small gap in her body; So she answers him: “Rīta left her to me with her hazel eyes... after Darwīsh embraced her with his alienated love” (Burbārah, 2007: 16). The love between the charming female and the young man infatuated with her falls within the antagonistic relationship that threatens existence, the entity, and the cause in which the lover believes. It is the forbidden love that causes men to lose their homes and plunges them into their deadly alienation.

The quintet of borrowed traditional female characters in the story ends with the doctor asking about the antidote that is running in the body of the female narrator who is treated, as he thinks that it is for Queen Zanūbya, so the narrator corrects him by saying: “No, it is for the customer, when the minister “Qusayr” cut off his nose to deceive her, so she drank poison from A ring on her finger, saying: “In my hand, not in ‘Amr’s hand” (Burbārah, 2007: 17), and the female figure in this concluding stage that completes the dialogue symbolizes the woman of pride and dignity who prefers death by her own hand to humiliation and

submission to the enemy, as she put an end to her life before her enemy conquered her. Who deceived her to insult her and seize her property.

Five women chosen by the writer, Burbārah, and borrowed from ancient and contemporary history, both western and eastern, to symbolize in a transparent and uncomplicated manner women and their greatness, and remind men that behind the greatness of men in history are women who stand and contribute to making the glory that men share and attribute to them without the woman's share in it appearing famous.

Conclusion

These papers attempted to identify the features of symbolism in its simple and transparent concept in the stories of the group “*Shaqā`iq Al-`Asīl*” by the local writer, Rāwiah Burbārah, in an attempt to answer a pivotal question related to what the features of transparent symbolism are for the writer Rāwiah Burbārah in her short story text “*The White Transparent*”.

Through its investigations, the research dealt with the local short story with a brief historical reading, then dealt with the biography of the writer, Rāwiah Burbārah, then dealt with her short story, and presented a brief conception of the concept of symbolism and its characteristics, and stopped at the symbolism in the local story, all the way to it in the stories of the group “*Shaqā`iq Al-`Asīl*”, ending with an objective and symbolic analysis of the story “*The White Transparent*”.

After reading the text of “The White Transparent” it became clear that the writer had borrowed five female characters who had conjured them up in a way that serves the plot of the story and conveys the dialogue from one scene to another so that a symbolic meaning of the text becomes evident through all of them, which is the message that the writer seeks to send to the recipient through symbolic codes of the transparent, clear and easy type. It is not abstaining from understanding and realizing the reader, and therefore the writer's symbolic style in the story has become a transparent style in the sense that it uses clear symbolic signs that fall within the so-called sign, away from symbolism in its integrated allegory concept.

The lack of condensation of the texts gathered in the “*Shaqā`iq Al-`Asīl*” and grafting them with elusive symbolic motifs that require more depth and intelligent interaction from the reader than is the case with the text, calls us to describe the symbolism of the text as transparent and clear symbolism.

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