

Memory, Myth and the Military Government: Emile Habibi's Collective Autobiography

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Introduction

This essay examines a body of literary works by the Palestinian writer Emile Habibi. Central to my analysis is the emergence in Habibi's fiction of a form of writing that could perhaps be called collective autobiography – to distinguish it from the more impersonal social history – which meshes personal and popular memory to tell stories of a people in, but not of, a particular time (the period of Military Government) and of a particular place (Palestine) whose existence is unacknowledged. Habibi writes a collective autobiography which is also, in some of his best works, a form of myth, a telling of the story of a people's origins and their fate. In these writings over four decades of literary production, Habibi's choice of genres gradually changes, from romance and tragedy to satire and tragicomedy, as he seeks ways of portraying the paradoxes of Palestinian life in the Israeli state.

Habibi's fictional writing is seen here as belonging to the literature produced by Arabs living in Israel under the Military Government (MG) between the years 1948 and 1967. For it is to this critical period that the bulk of Habibi's writing is devoted, serving as an intimate witness to the early history of Palestinians in Israel, widely

Emile Habibi with Poet Mahmoud Darwish
Source:
al Jabha <http://www.aljabha.org/?i=24799>.

referred to as the “Israeli Arabs.” This fictional writing thus contains considerable autobiographical content, so that the question then becomes how is the MG period portrayed and imagined in Habibi’s work of this period?

An answer may be found by introducing an alternative notion of Palestinian identity in this period, seeing identity in this context as a form of *practice*, survival tactics employed in a game that involves affirmation and rejection, collaboration and resistance but never fixed. One thus questions the very notion of *complex identity*, which continues to dominate intellectual and political discourse on the “Israeli Arab,” a category that never developed into a coherent form of identity. In all likelihood it is the absurd MG experience that eventually allowed Palestinian writers in Israel to empty this category of any meaning. In other words, it is the paradoxical coexistence of the category of *Arab citizenry* with the MG political apparatus that ultimately enabled writers like Habibi to create their most fruitful literary productions.

Historical Background

Nowhere is the Palestinian situation more absurd than in the case of those Palestinians who managed to remain within the borders of Israel. Overnight they became strangers in their homeland and a targeted minority. From August 1948 through December 1966, Israel further imposed a formal military administration on the majority of its Arab-Palestinian citizenry. The MG’s policies towards the Arab minority included ethnic and economic segregation, land appropriation, and restrictions on movement, political, and intellectual activities. The absurdity of this period thus culminated in the odd formation of an Arab citizenry and citizenship consciousness *within* the oppressive apparatuses of the MG experience.

For nearly two decades, Arab Palestinians in Israel were completely cut off from the Arab world, the rest of the Palestinian people, and each other. Trapped in the iron cage fashioned by the MG, the first generation of Palestinians in Israel was born in cultural isolation and national alienation. Access to Arabic-language materials was hardly available. Books and magazines in Arabic were scant and available only to a handful of educated Palestinians. Palestinian writer Fadwa Tuqan recalls her encounters with those Palestinians:

If any of them happened to come across a book in Arabic, he would be overwhelmed with joy. One after another they would take turns reading and copying it as if they had found a treasure. Young Arab visitors from there came to visit me from time to time, drawing my attention to their keen interest in the books on the shelves surrounding my living room. Now and then they would ask for permission to get up and approach the shelves, where they would stand still and stare at the books with evident excitement.¹

In the realm of literary production and reception the establishment of the MG presented a state of rupture rather than continuity. A set of factors contributed to the relative deterioration of literary activity in this period. There was first the restriction imposed by the MG authorities on freedom of movement and cultural activity. This was accompanied by the disconnection from literary and intellectual activity in the Arab world. A crucial factor was the immigration of the majority of educated urban Arabs during the mass exodus of the *Nakba*. Another factor had to do with the absence of stability in a period of extreme uncertainty and confusion.

The MG period barely managed to produce two novels. These are Atallah Mansur's *Wa-Baqiyat Samira* (Only Samira remained), and Tawfiq Fayyad's *al-Mushawwahun* (The disfigured), published in 1962 and 1963 respectively. A close examination shows that a common feature characterizing these two novels is the priority given to social and local aspects over the political and national, testifying to the absence from the literary discourse of this period of a national horizon and identity.²

Both authors received no encouragement whatsoever to pursue further literary endeavors. They were rather flooded with negative criticism by Arab Communist critics who then dominated the literary scene inside Israel. In an article dated 1965, Palestinian communist writer Emile Tuma criticized literary works published in the semi-official newspaper *al-Yawm* for their failure to account for the political reality of the time. According to Tuma, the bulk of these works lack a sense of national identity and character, unlike literary works being published in Egypt, Syria, and Lebanon.³

Upset by the harsh criticism of *Samira* in the communist press, Mansur wrote his next novel in Hebrew under the title *bi Or Hadash* (In new light), thus testifying to the unhealthy atmosphere that pervaded the literary scene in this period.⁴ This tense polemical atmosphere reflected a state of crisis and anxiety, forecasting the subsequent internal conflicts and contentions over issues of Arab identity in the nascent Jewish state. In the meantime, the quest for identity as a direct expression of broader national unity was exclusively treated on the pages of the communist press, while independent writers continued to preoccupy themselves with social themes and everyday experiences, with fragmentary references to illegal infiltrations, spying, village-Kibbutz relations, and tensions among local farmers, the mukhtar, and the military governor.

A prominent political and intellectual figure of the MG generation was Emile Shukri Habibi (1922-1996). Habibi was a founding member of the Communist Party in Israel and was elected three times to the Israeli Knesset. He was also a leading journalist and editor-in-chief of the prominent Arab periodical in Israel *Al-Ittihad*, where he published a host of articles and editorials on political, social and cultural issues. The bulk of Habibi's literary works are set in the MG period. There he spent his formative years and produced his early literary works, to which we must now turn.

Memory and Narration in Emile Habibi's Fiction

Habibi's autobiographical writings during the MG period attempt to capture fragments from his personal memory and the memory of his people in works of romance and tragedy. This is manifested in Habibi's first story "Bawwabat Mandelbaum" (Mandelbaum Gate), published in the periodical *Al-Jadid* in Haifa in March 1954, and appearing later in Habibi's short-story collection *Sudasiyyat al-Ayyam al-Sittah* (The hexad of the six days) in 1970.

The story takes place at the Mandelbaum Gate, located in East Jerusalem and serving as a crossing point between the Jordanian and Israeli sectors of Jerusalem. It thus was the stage on which daily encounters between various groups of Palestinians were played out. In this story Habibi recreates the moment when his mother leaves her family in Palestine to go live with her son in Damascus when she could no longer bear to be separated from him. This is how Habibi recalls the event, relating it to his first writing experience, in his short autobiographical account *Siraj Al-Ghuleh*, published nearly forty years later:

"As for you, you may stay here [in Palestine]. For your life awaits you and you can still wait for them [your exiled brothers]." It is with these words that I left my mother Um Wadi' when we parted company on the Israeli side of the Mandelbaum Gate. I did stay in the end, as I returned to Haifa and wrote my first story in the State of Israel on the Mandelbaum Gate.⁵

The narrative is given dramatic force when Habibi inverts the metaphorical departure from Eden by recalling the Gate officer's statement: "whoever steps out of here will never return."⁶ This scene is further dramatized when the mother declares her metaphorical death before the family gathered in Jerusalem to bid them farewell on the eve of her departure: "I lived until I saw my mourners with my own eyes." The narrator then intervenes to capture the full irony by commenting on the situation of the Gate's officers: "The law of death does not apply to them: those who leave never return. Nor does the law of heaven: those who enter it never step out."⁷

The drama reaches its climax in the scene with the granddaughter. While her grandmother crosses the border to the other side, the little girl, overcome with emotion, follows her into the non-man's land forbidden to civilians. The narrative culminates in a scene of romantic humanism, where the Israeli officers find themselves at a loss over how to react to the Arab child who had unwittingly broken the law. They are thrown into a state of extreme embarrassment and shame. The image of the little girl is highly romanticized here. It draws on a utopian expression of free will and ultimate freedom manifested in a child's innocence. This is combined with the tragic image of the departing mother, and the two images are conjoined in a scene of romantic tragedy.

The story is an extravagant example of what I call the *absence of a national horizon* in MG literature. For in "Mandelbaum Gate" Habibi makes no reference to



Emile Habibi as young man on a family picnic, undated photograph. Source: *al-Jabha* <http://www.aljabha.org/?i=24799>

where the gate is located. Yet in his 1991 novel, *Saraya bint al-Ghul* (Saraya, the daughter of the ogre), where he recounts the story anew, he integrates a fairly detailed note on the location of the gate.⁸

This change reflects the shifting orientation of Habibi's fictional writing towards the broader readership of the Arab world. Indeed, his later novels and stories, published after the abolition of the MG, are replete with details and references that address the Arab reader outside Israel. Perhaps one way of looking at this shift in Habibi's writing

is to see it as an increasing desire by Habibi to enter the corpus of national Arabic literature, meshed with a genuine reorientation towards the broader spectrum of national Arab identity.⁹

Habibi's second story, "Akhi Allathi lam talidhu Ummy" (My brother to whom my mother did not give birth) presents another example of Habibi's early phase of writing in a tragic mode. It is a story about Habibi's relations with the Jewish "Other." Written in Hebrew, it appeared in 1988 in a special issue of the periodical *Politica*, published by the leftist organization Ratz, on "Arabs in Israel Writing on Themselves." The protagonist of the story is a Jewish soldier called Abraham bin-Tzur, to whose human kindness and generosity Habibi is especially indebted. In the story we also encounter Habibi's father, brother, grandfather, grandmother and uncle Rashid.

In this story there is a scene where Habibi encounters an Israeli soldier who requisitions the family house in Haifa and refuses to leave it. In a moment of silent confrontation, Habibi and the soldier are drawn into a state of deep embarrassment, which leaves the two caught in the liminal space of tragic silence engulfed by embarrassment and pity.¹⁰

In another story, entitled "Marthiyyat Al-Salta'un" (The crab's elegy), Habibi recounts a tragic scene in which he and a Jewish friend recall the plight of his people in the wake of the *Nakba*. The narrative achieves dramatic tension as the two friends enter evacuated Arab houses in Haifa to find cups still full of coffee which people did not have the time to drink in the chaotic frenzy of forced expulsion. In the story Habibi also recalls how Arab villages, towns, and families were separated by barbed wire, where the only communication available was through ululation (*zaghareed*); the only language they had which Israeli soldiers on the border could not understand.

Another theme that appears in this story is that of the informers (*mazru'un*) whom the Israeli authorities planted among the Arab population. Habibi recounts here how the authorities placed spying devices everywhere in Arab towns and villages, a situation that plunged his close friend into a state of extreme fear and caution. There is a moment when Habibi and his friend find themselves forced to communicate in

whispers, body language, and silent gestures. Succumbing to a sort of psychological breakdown, Habibi's friend finds refuge in alcohol addiction as the only remedy to help him survive his extreme silence, thus winning the title "the hostage of two prisons" (rahin al-mahbasayn).¹¹

From these three representative stories emerges a fair picture of the first stage in Habibi's autobiographical fiction. This stage is characterized by romantic humanism and dramatized tragedy employed to depict the MG period and the shocking consequences of the *Nakba*, still fresh in the memory of those of its victims who remained in the parts of Palestine that became Israel. It is thus preoccupied with the local rather than the national, drawing on themes of expulsion, ethnic segregation, and the denial of freedom of speech and movement. In short, it may be seen as essentially a literature of *immediate survival*. This perhaps explains the dearth in this phase of Habibi's writing of genuine reflections on questions of identity and a shared historical experience.

This is quite understandable in light of the historical instability and uncertainty that characterized this period. Another factor has to do with the fact that Arabs in Israel during the MG period could not yet rid themselves of the idea that the State of Israel was an ephemeral event, accompanied by disconnection from the Arab world and the loss of a national horizon. It was only with the eventual internalization of Israel's existence that the question of a shared historical experience was more fully brought to the literary scene. It is also with this state of internalization of the Israeli presence that the Israeli "Other" was finally brought into sharp focus.

In the case of Palestinians in Israel the formation of a shared consciousness of the traumatic historical experience required a fair degree of redemption and emotional distance from the past as well as the development of a cynical approach to reality. This is because it appears to have been almost impossible for Palestinians under the MG to fully grasp the absurdity of their situation. Only in retrospective introspection could Palestinian writers form a vivid and comprehensive image of the MG period; a fact shrewdly manifested in Habibi's *The Pessoptimist*, published nearly a decade after the abolition of the MG.

Metamorphosis

It was *The Pessoptimist* that won Habibi his high ranking in Arab national literature.¹² The novel was printed three times in its first three years and was reviewed in prominent periodicals in both the Arab world and Israel. There was also a triumph of individual style in the novel. It employed an original mode of narration that broke away from the prevalent fictional modes dominating the literary scene in the Arab world. Additionally the novel also reflected a literary metamorphosis in Habibi's autobiographical fiction.

"Spanning over twenty years and two wars (1948-1967),"¹³ *The Pessoptimist* was Habibi's first serious attempt at depicting the absurd situation of the Arab population that remained within the borders of the new state of Israel after the mass expulsion of

the *Nakba*. It is also a rare testimony to the struggle for self-definition and quest for identity in Arabic literature in Israel. It brings to the fore a set of contending forces of collaboration and resistance, individual treason and communal loyalty, defeat and rebellion, death and regeneration, terror and heroism, crisis and redemption, cowardice and adventure, human and supernatural forces.

“The main character in the novel, Saeed the luckless pessoptimist, is a comic hero, a fool, in fact, who recounts the secrets of his life in the form of a letter to an unnamed friend.”¹⁴ This paradoxical figure of a traitor-informer protagonist does not in fact stand on the opposite side of the heroic character. “[H]is stupidity, uncanny candor and cowardice make him more the victim than the villain.”¹⁵ His subversive movement in time and space involves the mapping of the homeland, challenges the hegemonic structures of the MG, and brings to the fore its horrific absurdity. For it is through the protagonist’s movement in time and space, through his maneuvering and teasing, and through his cynical approach to the MG system that the category of the “Israeli Arab” is ultimately emptied of any meaningful content. In the process, Saeed is also allowed to undergo transformation, therapy, catharsis, imaginary emancipation and fantastic salvation.

Saeed’s quixotic character is not completely fictional. In an interview dated June 1996, Habibi already confirmed the autobiographical and realistic origin of the character of his ill-fated pessoptimist:

In the past I used to lie and say that the character of Saeed the ill-fated was my opposite-self. Yet I now find myself at an age when I no longer need to lie. In *The Pessoptimist*, to be sure, I was writing to a great extent [about] myself. His rationality is my own rationality to a considerable extent.¹⁶

Instead of the loud and direct political tone that dominated Habibi’s early writing and the bulk of Palestinian literature of the time, *The Pessoptimist* managed to achieve the same political objectives with mockery, wit, irony, sarcasm, ridicule, candor, paradox, linguistic twists, and word-play. This transition is embodied in Habibi’s new philosophy of laughter employed as a means of redemption, shrewdly promulgated in Habibi’s play *Luka ‘ bin Luka ‘* (1980):

Laughter is a very sharp weapon with only one edge. If all the prisoners laugh together at the same moment and continued to laugh, will the jailer then be able to laugh?¹⁷

The Pessoptimist thus represents a transition from the genres of romance and tragedy that characterized Habibi’s stories under the MG to those of comedy, tragicomedy and satire. This transition is crucial to the understanding of the process of identity formation in Habibi’s literature. For, to invoke Hayden White, while romance and tragedy reflect resignation to the world, comedy and satire express redemption and triumph over it by attaining to a state of maturity through internalizing the blows the

world and fate might inflict.¹⁸

Habibi's next novel *Ikhṭīyah* was published in Nicosia, Cyprus, in 1985.¹⁹ The novel takes a step further in autobiographical fiction as it shifts from chronological and flashback narration techniques to the stream of consciousness technique intermeshed with extensive motion and cinematic drama. Caught in a sudden traffic jam on a Haifa street, Habibi recounts distant episodes from the past interwoven with a host of ghostly memories. A metaphor for Palestine, *Ikhṭīyah* is the name of a mysterious girl whom every Palestinian boy in Haifa loved without having the courage to declare it to her. In colloquial Palestinian Arabic, *ikhṭīyah* also means sin. These two connotations, Palestine and sin, become inextricably tied together as Habibi invites both the reader and the protagonist narrator to accept their share in the common guilt and human responsibility for the fate of *Ikhṭīyah*, thus confronting us with the moral challenge: who among us is without *Ikhṭīyah* (sin)?

In this fascinating narrative, personal and collective memories underlie a tragic tale culminating in the death of *Ikhṭīyah*. These are memories of renting bicycles and pedaling to the beach, fragrant citrus orchards, and delicious *tabun* bread, all colored by the innocence of childhood love. This serene rhythm of life is destroyed by the tragedy of the *Nakba*, a rupture shrewdly captured in the narrative. This is how Habibi summarizes what one assumes was his own childhood and the life of his people in the years before the catastrophic tragedy: "The whole world was ours; life was delightful and everything was permissible, especially during school holidays and popular occasions. Our country encompassed both the world and the hereafter."²⁰

In the 1991 novel titled *Saraya bint al-Ghul* (*Saraya, the ogre's daughter*), Habibi goes in a new direction, the supernatural folk-tale. The novel is at once semi-autobiographical and a fairy-tale that weaves romance with politics. According to Habibi, the title *Saraya* is taken from an old Palestinian tale which may also be known in other parts of the Arab world. It concerns an inquisitive young girl who is kidnapped by an ogre on one of her daily walks in the hills. The novel takes place on the shore of what was once a Palestinian village called Al-Zeeb before the creation of the state of Israel. The narrator is sitting on a boulder off the shore when he spots a ghost-like female figure walking towards him. The novel also explores the Habibi family tree, describing each member as fruit, where the image of fallen fruit becomes a symbolic theme. It is also a story of a people recounted through the protagonist's journey in the Via Dolorosa.

The novel also draws on a fascinating amalgam of ancient and biblical narratives, popular tradition, Arabic, Islamic, and Quranic vocabulary. This is how Habibi recounts his life journey in one of the novel's most fascinating scenes:

There was uncle Ibrahim's cane, bared and standing before me – a shaft of light down which angels were descending from heaven and then ascending again, and not taking me with them. I grabbed hold of the cane, and moved my grip along it. My fingers felt the first ring, the Oedipus complex, and I heard his voice above me, saying, "Go!" My fingers felt the second ring,

the Tower of Babel complex, and his voice came to me, saying, “Go!” My fingers then felt the third ring, the Isaac complex, and he shouted at me, “Go!” Finally my finger felt the secret handle, the key of knowledge – and his fist above. He, again, cried out at me: “Go!”²¹

This is how Habibi recounts his birth:

He was born on the shore of Haifa, during the days when Wadi al-Nisnas – where he was born and where he will be resurrected – was one of the wadis of al-Karmel whose waters flowed directly into the sea. He learned to fish just as he learned to walk upright on his own two feet, and just as he learned how to fly across the surface of the water as he swam. When they cut off the sea from them, and the catastrophe of 1948 hurled them into the depths, so that they barely had time to catch their breath – I asked myself: “Does a drowning man take up fishing?” They considered their walking on two feet a miracle more disturbing to their Jewish cousins and fellow citizens than Christ walking on the surface of the Sea of Galilee, to say nothing about the nerve of one among them who took up fishing.²²

It is not clear whether this is the voice of the narrator, the protagonist or another character, for the event is told in both the third and first persons. This casts an intriguing ambiguity over the autobiographical elements, allowing the reader to wonder as he or she wanders over a larger expanse of imaginative engagement with the author.

Saraya takes on a supernatural, folk-tale-inspired reconstruction of individual and collective memories. Weaving a highly sophisticated narrative, the novel also reflects a sense of redemption from the burden of the past and the political anxiety of the present. By situating itself in the realm of the symbolic and supernatural, the novel also manages to imbue the experience of the Palestinian catastrophe with shades and shadows of universal meanings.

The question that persists is how to explain the transition in Habibi’s literature from the historical to the supernatural, so greatly manifested in his later novels, notably *The Pessimist*, *Ikhfiyah* and *Saraya*? Perhaps one way of looking at this transition is to see how collective memory functions in the first place. I suggest that since collective and popular memory may not always be able to retain a historical event for a long time, it is only when that historical event is reconstructed into a supernatural formulation, perhaps transcending folk-tale into myth, that it could be preserved and recalled for generations to come.

Conclusion

Memory of the past, anticipation of the future, and the absurdity of the present may be taken as the parameters within which any nation's reality, most particularly Palestine's, may be viewed. That might be one construct within which Emile Habibi's literature can be fruitfully situated. Mockery, wit, humor, irony, sarcasm, ridicule, candor, paradox, laughter and tragicomedy: these are the intellectual and emotional attitudes and corresponding literary devices and genres that constitute Habibi's finest invention – pessoptimism. And it is in the fusion of the two poles of optimism and pessimism, in the liminal space marked by the path between redemption from the past and uncertainty of the future, where the present dissolves into the timeless and is postponed for the sake of creation. It is the present reflected in the mirror, allowing an internal transformation, the bridge upon which past and future could meet and the present be transcended.

Habibi's autobiographical stories from the MG period were meant to express the fresh memory of the tragic catastrophe, colored by romantic humanism, and preoccupied with the local; however his later novels, notably *The Pessoptimist*, *Ikhfīyah* and *Saraya*, are more and more orientated towards the collective expression of memory and identity. Yet it is not the sort of fixed and loaded expression of identity that declares the superiority of the ideological over the aesthetic, but rather one which takes into account the absurdity of life under the MG period without scarifying its literary ground.

Habibi's later novels also manifest a major evolution in style. They introduce a set of sophisticated modes of narration, notably tragicomedy, satire and the deft handling of the supernatural, which in turn reflect a state of redemption from the haunting burden of the past.

We can thus identify three stages of transition in Habibi's work: redemption from the past and its historical burden, a "pessoptimism" towards the present, and a supernatural, fantasied recreation of reality. Here the superiority of the symbolic over the historical, the collective over the personal and the national over the local are all intensified by the triumph of a distinct Habibian style free from conventional and prevalent literary forms.

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Endnotes

- 1 Fadwa Tuqan, *Al-Rihla al-As'ab* (Amman: Dar as-Suruq, 1993), 17.
- 2 See Mahmud Ghanayim, *The Quest for a Lost Identity: Palestinian Fiction in Israel* (Harrassowitz Verlag: Wiesbaden, 2008), 31.
- 3 Quoted in Ghanayim, *The Quest for a Lost Identity*, 31-2.
- 4 Atallah Mansur, *Bi-Or Hadash* (Tel-Aviv: Qarni, 1966).
- 5 Emile Habibi, *Siraj al-Ghūlah: al-Naşş, al-Waşīyah* (Hayfa: Dar Arabisk, 2006), 97.
- 6 Emile Habibi, *Sudāsīyat al-Ayyām al-Sittah; Al-Waqā'i' al-Gharībah fī Ikhtifā' Sa'id Abī al-Naḥs al-Mutashā'il; wa-Qīṣaṣ Ukhrā*. (Cairo: Dar Shuhdi, 1983), 209.
- 7 *Sudāsīyat*, 211.
- 8 Emile Habibi, *Khurrafiyyat Saraya bint al-Ghul* (Haifa: Arabesque Publishing House, 1991), 101-2.
- 9 See in this respect, Ghanayim, *The Quest for a Lost Identity*, 122.
- 10 Recounted in Emile Habibi, *Siraj al-Ghūlah*, 41.
- 11 *Sudāsīyat*, 201-7.
- 12 Emile Habibi, *Al-Waqā'i' al-Gharībah fī Ikhtifā' Sa'id Abī al-Naḥs al-Mutashā'il*: (Al-Quds: Mansurat Ṣalah al-Din, 1977).
- 13 Emile Habibi, *The Secret life of Saeed: the Pessoptimist*, trans. Salma Khadra Jayyusi, and Trevor LeGassick (Brooklyn, N.Y.: Interlink Books, 2002), xi.
- 14 Habibi, *The Secret life of Saeed*, xiii.
- 15 Habibi, *The Secret life of Saeed*. xiv.
- 16 Interviewed by Ahmad Rafiq Awad, Munzir 'Amir, Liyana Badr and Zakariyya Muhammad in *Masharif*, 9 June 1996, 19.
- 17 Emile Habibi, *Luka' bin Luka': Thalāth Jalasāt amāma Sundūq al-'ajab Hikāyah Masraḥīyah* (Al-Naşirah: Dar thalathin Azar, 1980), 60-1.
- 18 Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 7-11.
- 19 Emile Habibi, *Ikhfīyah* (Niqusiya, Qubruş: Muassasat Bisan Bris, 1985).
- 20 *Ikhfīyah*, 30.
- 21 Emile Habibi, *Saraya, the Ogre's Daughter: a Palestinian Fairy Tale*, trans. Peter Theroux (Jerusalem: Ibis Editions), 92.
- 22 Habibi, *Saraya*, 22.