

Thesis Title: Symbols used by the writers of Al-Raabita Al-Qalamiyah in their literary writings

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Abstract

Al-Raabita Al-Qalamiyah, was the organization of Immigrant Arab writers. The ideal purpose of “Pen-League” was to take Arabic Literature to the height and zenith of new developments in the literary world, particularly in English and French Literature. In my research work, I have discussed the immigrant group and their literary activities and the role of North Mahjar group in particular, in Arabic literature. As the topic is dealing with the symbols of Al-Raabita group, the focus is on simple symbols not symbols defined by the symbolism movement. To differentiate the symbolism movement and simple use of symbols, a brief chapter is discussed about the development of symbolist movement and symbols in literature. Also special mention is given to the topic of symbols and role of symbols in literature. The use of symbols is an essential way of expressing one’s inner thought in literature, likewise in the Arabic literature. Therefore, this thesis discusses the symbols used by the members of Al-Raabita Al-Qalamiyah in their writings. I have put efforts to bring forth the different ways of using symbols in the Al-Raabita literature. In my research I have highlighted the use of symbols in the literature produced by Al-Raabita Al-Qalamiyah movement within their works and also I have described, what a complete theme of the poem or prose work symbolizes.

Also, it is important to remember that Al-Raabita movement having Eastern bases, was greatly inspired by the Western literature, and hence acted as the bridge between the literatures of East and the West. With the efforts of the Al-Raabita members, the new style, free from the clutches of classical bondage, came into Arabic literature, which totally changed the traditional style of Arabic Literature.

Following are the important findings of the thesis:

1. The Al-Mahjar was dominated by the Al-Raabita Al-Qalamiyah literary circle, where as Jubran Khalil Jubran was the most renowned and famous literary person known in the West and East for his literary contribution. In the field of using symbols, Jubran is prominent among whole Al-Raabita Al-Qalamiyah, nay in whole Al-Mahjar.

2. The exact period of Symbolism in English and Arabic literature is not having clear boundaries but the Symbolism in English literature was reaction and second current of Romanticism while as in Arabic literature Romanticism was not yet established as a perfect trend to have a second current. Symbolism and Romanticism in Arabic were mere imitating elements from Western literature.
3. The direct and indirect gates of development of Arabic literature are related to Al-Raabita Al-Qalamiyah, for their approach in writing which created an atmosphere of criticism and discussion in Arabic literary circles. This criticism and discussing the literature, was the indirect source of development by Al-Mahjar, whereas the use of new literary trends and techniques was direct source.
4. Symbolism in English literature gave way to Surrealism and Expressionism, while in Arabic literature Symbolism movement was established very late and ended very soon.
5. Traditional Symbols are employed within the Al-Raabita's 'literary piece' of writing, while as a complete 'literary piece' is often having a perfect symbolic meaning, symbolizing poets state of realization regard the particular 'writing piece'.
6. Mikhail Nu'aymah was influenced by Tolstoy's ideas and style of literature, as his use of symbols in certain part of literature is directly influenced by Tolstoy. Besides, his religious symbols are combination of many religious and mystical doctrines.
7. 'The Prophet' of Jubran Khalil Jubran, is out and out symbolic work, reflecting multi-dimensional aspect of Jubranian ideas and thinking. The idea of poet-prophet is what 'The Prophet' defines, having healing power in words. To the best of it, 'The Prophet' has expressed religious and mystical approach of Jubran.
8. Eliya Abu Madi, under the influence of Jubran and Nu'aymah used symbols in different ways. In 'Al-Jadawil' he reaches the acme and zenith of perfection, being the unique writer of Al-Raabita circle. In later stages he has sings of tracking back to classics and traditionalism, presented in 'Al-Khama'il'.
9. Nasib U'raida, is also influenced by Jubran and Nu'aymah, hence he too employed symbols from Christianity and other religious texts of East. He employed the symbols from the metaphysical ideas of Ibn Sina, Umar Khayyam and Shirazi's in his writings, observed in his poem 'O Soul'.
10. Nostalgia is widely used field of symbols in all the Al-Raabita Al-Qalamiyah members, but the idea of 'feeling and longing' for homeland is reflected sometimes by the use of symbols from nature while as sometimes it is reflected by the religious and metaphysical symbols, defining the spirit of East. The traditional and personal symbols, both are utilized in the expression of nostalgia.