

The Mirage Epic: Sadalla Wannous's Allegory of Colonial Globalization

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Abstract

Sadallah Wannous (1941-1997), the leading Syrian dramatist, who spent most of his production years exhorting the masses to uphold the values of freedom and democracy, warns, in his late plays, of the perils of global capitalism. In his allegorical play, *The Mirage Epic* (1995), he comments on the modernization of Arabic societies through the interaction of a small village with a wave of economic investment. As Abboud Al-Ghawi, a Faustian figure, transforms the village into a huge tourist and commercial establishment, the village is swarmed with commodities, and people gradually become opportunistic. The play presents a panoply of characters symbolizing a mosaic of stereotypes in an unnamed Arabic society: the romantic poet, the compromising cleric, the unyielding idealist, the peasant who loses his land, and the women who are fascinated with the sparkle of possessions. The introduction of free market capitalism changes the indigenous culture. The depiction of people's humanity and capacity to love is mainly informed by pre-wealth and post-wealth conditions. As the agrarian system is uprooted and people are converted to a life of commercialism, they are irretrievably caught up in the vicious circle of financial need and moral depravity. The byproducts of modernity--materialism and consumerism--are presented as facets of globalization which, in turn, is dramatized as a new form of colonialism that deeply affects people and controls them.

Key words: globalism, modernity, postcolonial drama , Syrian drama, Wannous

Introduction

Sadallah Wannous (1941- 1997), one of the Arab World's leading dramatists, was mainly concerned with the quest for freedom which varied in manifestation throughout his dramatic productions. While his early plays deal with existential ideas, his more mature work aims at raising awareness of immediate factors that tighten the shackles on Arab citizens. These include despotic governments, police states, ideologies, colonialism, and religious fundamentalism. However, in his last plays, especially in *Malhamat Al Sarab* [The Mirage Epic] (1995), written while the author was fighting the last stages of cancer, he followed up his pursuit of freedom within a totally different perspective. *The Mirage Epic* deals with the repercussions of the modernization of the Arab world. It depicts the devastating results of the sudden urbanization of a poor village. The play was written with a sense of urgency and contains strong polemics against commercialism and free market capitalism. One might wonder if Wannous perceived globalization, urbanization, or modernity as opposed to the freedom of Arab people. *The Mirage Epic* requires thoughtful interpretation of the play's message and Wannous's intentions, for it seems puzzling on the outset that such a progressive writer would argue against a civic life style or entrepreneurial adventure. This analysis requires delving into Wannous's biography, his dramaturgy, as well the views he put forth in his non-dramatic works

Wannous's Ideological Background

Born to a poor farming family in the small village of Hussein Al-Bahr, Syria, in 1941, Wannous spent most of his life in an urban setting. After his high school in 1959, he studied journalism in Cairo, Egypt (1963), and theater in Paris (1968). He returned to Syria to work and write in Damascus for the rest of his life (Sakhsoukh, 1998, p. 17). Wannous was revolutionary at heart; he was guided by the existential philosophy of Albert Camu and Jean Paul Sartre. He read Ionesco and Becket, who informed his earlier artistic production. In the sixties, he was influenced by Jean Vilar and Bernard Dort in Paris. After he was shocked by Syria's defeat in the June 1967 war against Israel, he joined the students' protest at the Sorbonne. While there, he was greatly influenced by Karl Marx, Michel Foucault, Jack Derrida, Gilles Deleuze, and Roland Barthes. As a consequence, Wannous left behind his existentialist ideas and was inclined to Erwin Piscator, Bertold Brecht, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels (Sakhsoukh, 1998, p. 18). Having learned a great deal about European culture and theater, he maintained strong ties with his own culture. He realized that his own theater should not copy the European forms, but should acquire a distinct Arabic identity, reflecting local culture and making use of native forms. Consequently, his subject matter always deals with the concerns and issues of Arab people in their quest for freedom and liberation from multiple forms of oppression.

Despite his western education, Wannous was critical of western influences and hegemony over Arabic thought and life style. He was passionate about modernizing the Arabic society, but his perspective of that version of modernization does not overlap with that in the west. In his discussion with Antoun Maqdesi, a critic and professor at Damascus University in 1991, published in *Cultural Margins* in his *Complete Works* (2004), Wannous agreed with him that:

Middle Eastern Renaissance thinkers, since Rafea Rafee Al-Tahtawi, were aware that modernism necessitates modernizing all political, social and intellectual components of the society. However only transient and temporal successes were achieved...In the last two decades the status quo in Arabic countries deteriorated

and the subjugation to western capitalism has been made complete... So, modernism was adapted to the Arabic world in the form of appearances and commodities, to complement social life, and borrowed history and expressions to complement intellectual life (Wannous, 1971, p. 521).

The Arab world, according to both Wannous and Maqdesi, has been unable to rise and achieve progress, not because of the lack of creativity among writers and thinkers, but because much of its talents have been wasted. The reason according to them is “the hegemony of the consumerism that destroys the souls of young people and makes them hollow. Look at them, they are crazed by buying commodities; videos, recorders, fashion, cafes” (Wannous, 1971, p. 522). Wannous agrees with Maqdesi that “This consumptive pattern is linked with opportunism”, which is detrimental to values such as “honor, honesty and perseverance” (Wannous, 1971, p. 522). With progress, freedom, and sovereignty in mind, the visionary dramatist proceeds fervently to write his play, *The Mirage Epic*, about his consternation regarding the perils concomitant with the modernization of Arabic countries

Allegorical Presentation of Globalization

The Mirage Epic alludes to the seeming progress that some Arabic countries have achieved through grand construction projects and a fancy life style. However, this “Epic of Progress” (Wannous 1995, p. 734) as Bassam- the school teacher- labels it, is in fact, a fake progress. It is, as the title suggests an “Epic of Mirage”. The play uses a combination of Dracula and Faust themes in order to comment on the impact of globalization on the Arab world. Abboud Al-Ghawi (meaning tempter), a Faust figure, is persuaded by his hunch-back servant (a Mephistopheles figure) to rejuvenate his depleted energy by visiting his hometown and sucking fresh, young blood from his fellow countrymen and women. Abboud Al-Ghawi and the servant have had a pact by which the servant gives him ultimate power and wealth on the condition that Al-Ghawi has no scruples about destroying other people's lives. In the time of the play, Al-Ghawi is required to harm the village of his nativity, a stipulation to which he intends to execute with a heart of flint. He approaches the villagers with a business enterprise; he offers alluring prices to purchase their farming land and builds a fancy tourist center including a mall, a casino, and a nightclub. Supported by the government, he presents his project as a wonderful opportunity to modernize the village. The tourist enterprise urbanizes the village and creates needs that were never necessities in the past. The poor villagers who sell their land enjoy a temporary state of wealth. They develop special predilections for the luxury commodities available in the fancy shops and spend irrationally. Some of them throw away their wealth in Casino gambling and in the wooing of courtesans. The simplicity and purity of rural life as they have known it is gone and is replaced by a callous life style where brothers kill each other and women turn to prostitution. The peasants lose their means of production and are eventually impoverished. The new profit-yielding job that emerges as a result of this modernization is that of the opportunistic mediator between the entrepreneur, the government, and the people. But such a job is unproductive and cannot be considered as a healthy alternative to the old system of agrarian production. The village is modernized in spectacle, but this is just a simulation of modernity. The rural society has been converted to urban capitalism at the expense of the upstanding morals and sovereignty of the society.

The allegorical dramatization works according to simple logic; The attraction of materialism is irresistible. It creates unnecessary cravings. People overspend and eventually fall into financial deficit and moral ruin. This fall into the abyss is dramatized repeatedly in parallel scenes where characters of all walks of life go through similar trajectory of rise and fall. Despite the fact that all characters are flat stereotypes and the scenes do not lead up to an escalating climax, the play manages, not only to edify the audiences but also to entertain them with a combination of pathos and vivid satirical depiction of aspiration, tantalizing desires and greed.

Once people are touched by the craving for material gain and the glamour of luxury, they are stunned, for they are in a conflict between fear of reaching out to wealth and the fear of rejecting it. Fatima describes the people's bewilderment:

This morning, when I went to the spring, I felt that the village has changed and that people have become strangers. I envisage all the people I met had hazy looks in their eyes, their faces were distracted, moving as if sleep walking. Even women were exhausted and silent. Each one fills her water jar and staggers home. ((Wannous, 1971, p. 631).

At the beginning, everything seems too good to be true. Business is booming; Yousef, the shop keeper, will expand his little shop to a supermarket. The romantic poet and singer, Yassin will record albums which will rid him of destitution for life. Karima and Zahia the previous wives of Al-Ghawi will fall into money again. The enterprise will modernize the village and promise prosperity and wealth to all. However, the lure of riches changes lives and moral bases.

Materialism which is a by-product of modernization is seen as harmful for the indigenous Arab culture. The socio-economic structure of the village is uprooted by the influx of luxury commodities. The time-tested stable class-structure begins to shift. Marriage across classes that was once unthinkable is now possible. Adeeb, the son of the janitor, who shows signs of scruple-free opportunism and capitalist appetite, acquires wealth through mediation and spying on people; the government pays him for his treachery. Thus, with his new wealth, despite his base origin, he can now be an acceptable match to Samira, the daughter of the dignified village landlord. The marriage of aristocracy to low life is not seen as a healthy sign of flexibility, but as a sign of cultural and moral degeneration. This has a realistic reference to many social and economic changes across the Arab world. Moreover, traditional art is threatened of becoming extinct. On the grand opening day, Yassin's folk songs and his Rababa, a mono-string instrument, cannot be heard amid the loud music of the full orchestral instrument and fireworks. The crumbling of Yassin's crude tune is a metaphor of the defeat of the rural culture by the dazzle of the city. This is viewed by Yassin's daughter as a tragically heartbreaking failure of her own father and as the death of local culture.

Not only does culture decline; family ideals of fraternity and mutual support are easily replaced by individualistic greed. Having been reared and educated in the village, Marwan has moved to work for the government in the capital city. Eventually, he forgets his loyalty not only for the village, but also for his family. Out of arrogance and selfishness, he does not acknowledge his debt to his brother, Ameen, who has provided for his upbringing and education. Marwan fights Ameen ferociously over his right to sell the land and eventually kills him. The

reference to Able and Cane in the scene subtitle stresses the destructive effect of greed that infects the family members and the village community as a whole.

Although a great deal of pathos is aroused in the killing scene, no catharsis is aroused, because Ameen lacks the complexity of a tragic hero. Both brothers are flat characters that only serve as stereotypes of urban self-indulgence in one, and rural honesty in the other. It is worth mentioning that Wannous was opposed to Aristotelian theater on the basis that catharsis evokes feelings of complacency. Being influenced by Brecht, his theater addresses the audience's intellect rather than their emotions. The incident mainly teaches a simple lesson through the binary oppositions of Marwan and Ameen's standpoints. The dichotomy between the city and the country here signifies the clash between modernity and tradition. It seems that Wannous, near the end of his life, sacrifices the complex characterization for the sake of immediacy and urgency of his message. City lifestyle is presented in this play as lacking in human compassion. It contributes to the severing of family ties, whereas the country is a purer place capable of fostering ethics. The ethical superiority of the country over the city might be ascribed to a nostalgia towards the playwright's own childhood belonging. His vision here might be mistaken for a romantic point of view, but Wannous, as an intellectual, is too sophisticated to be considered a romanticist. In a more symbolic dimension, the village can be seen as a representative of a developing Arabic country that the writer belongs to, while the city represents the hegemony global capitalism that he dreads. This interpretation can help clarify the message of the play.

Wealth and the urban life style, symbolic of free market capitalism, prove to have a detrimental effect on almost all of the village inhabitants, even the most idealistic of them. Yassin, the village's romantic poet and singer, being at odds with his wife, vehemently refuses the marriage proposal of the aged Al-Ghawi to his daughter, Rabab, who is 18 year old. The wife, who becomes fascinated with Al-Ghawi's convoy of luxurious cars, deadens her conscience and camouflages the "purchase" with an ethical term 'marriage.' Eventually, Yassin is coerced into consenting to the marriage proposal when he falls in debt to Al-Ghawi. He initially is guided by Al-Ghawi to invest his land purchase price in a music record business but is eventually swindled out of his capital. Thus, Yassin and his family are totally destroyed by the glamour of city life and prosperity. All of the other characters are devastated by this change. Fadda's previous discontent with her poor husband changes to insatiable greed. Dergham's wife fights with her husband ferociously over possessing an automatic washing machine and other luxury commodities. The effect of luxury is devastating to the local culture. Homes are broken and souls are rendered hollow.

Furthermore, global capitalism is presented as adverse to ethics. Honor, one of the most significant values of the village culture, is marred forever. Once safeguarded and revered, sexual morality is now crumbling away. Prostitution arises as a consequence of the newly introduced life style of consumerism. Al-Ghawi, with his promise of luxury and high life style, is able to marry the prettiest and youngest of women, has connubial pleasure with her for several months, then divorces her, leaving her dejected with no prospects to remake her life. Karima and Zahiya, two of his previous wives, are still bewitched by the transient glorious charm they witnessed when they were married to him. Having been divorced, they are still under his Dracula-like influence. They are now the "living dead" who are hypnotized by the Satan figure, the servant.

They consequently become tempters who cannot be resisted even by the Sheikh and the landlord; the most austere and pious of men. The Dracula theme is relevant here, for the irreversible effect of commercialism is compared to the infamous Dracula bite that leaves its victims to be the living dead. This brings to mind an earlier play, *Youm Min Zamanina* [A Day of our Time] (1993) in which the effect of the policy of *infitah*, which means openness to the world market, creates a spread of prostitution into the whole society. School girls and the teacher's wife work for Madam Fadwa, the brothel owner, while Sheikh Mitwally, the representative of the religious authority, refuses to see the spread of immorality. The governor, representing political authority, approves of Maisoon, his own daughter, who pimps the school girls for Madam Fadwa. According to him, the daughter is the offspring of modernity that enabled her with the tools of "utility" "profitability" and "flexibility" (Wannous, 1993, p. 224). These agreeably resonating terms are, according to Wannous, the camouflage of ethical decay. As sexual morality is considered the zenith of ethics and honor in Arabic culture, prostitution in these two plays metaphorically heralds the death of all values. Moreover, as prostitution entails the destruction of meaningful and permanent family relations, the plethora of prostitution examples in Wannous's drama signifies the degeneration of solidarity and phenomenal social relations characteristic of Arabic society.

Not only is the Dracula theme informative in depicting the menace of capitalism, but also the Faustian theme is significant in depicting moral dilemma connected with capitalism. However there are notable differences between the mentality the informs the western Faust and perspective that leads the characterization of 'Wannousian Faust'. The western Faust figure- the protagonist of a well known legend, the tragic hero of Christopher Marlow's *Doctor Faustus* (1604) and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Faust* (1808)- marks the transition from the middle Ages to Renaissance. This figure embodies the Renaissance spirit of humanism and aspiration. Faust in western tradition is the symbol of the human longing for emancipation and revolt against man's limitation. The tragic flaw in Faustus's case is that his love for excessive pleasure outweigh his love for knowledge, thus he falls as a slave to the devil. In this way the tragedy falls short of hailing the Renaissance spirit of learning and Faustus' punishment is reconciliatory with the Medieval conservative outlook. Wannous's Faust, in comparison, does not have any of Marlow's or Goethe's tragic grandeur or aspirations. Abboud Al-Ghawi, or Wannous's Faust is simply an infernal sinner who instantly arouses the condemnation of judgmental medieval- like audience. No positive connotations of the Renaissance 's will to adventure or power or pleasure or learning are allowed for his characterization. He has sold his soul to the devil and is not remorseful about destroying the lives of the naïve villagers. His tourist and commercial enterprise - with the contemporary relevance to modernization- is polemically presented as colonialism; a diabolical invasion of people's financial security and sovereignty. Any admiration with the urbanization and modernization of the world of the play is offset by the straight satanic intentions of both About Al-Ghawi and his servant the Mephistophilis figure. So Wannous's dramatization of Faust does not echo the Renaissance spirit. On the contrary, it reverses the Renaissance aspiration and favors the Medieval perspective. For informed audience, such dialectics can run counter to the play's effect. However, for an audience who simply equate the devil with vice, Abboud Al-Ghawi's introduced world market is instantly conceived as wicked. In this way, Wannous's use of Faust figure is evacuated from the original complex early Renaissance reasoning. It straightforwardly communicates a moral judgement on capitalism.

The Role Played by Religion

In the midst of this ethical dilemma, religion cannot offer any panacea. Muslim clergy in this play, as in all of Wannous's drama, are easily duped to believe the media propagated by those in power. Sheikh Abbas stands at the pulpit for the inauguration of the mosque, praises God, and naively exudes praise on the two philanthropists, the donor of land on which the mosque is constructed, and Abboud Al-Ghawi for vitalizing the village and bringing money and profit (Wannous, 1995, pp. 692-3). In fact, Al-Ghawi's real motivation behind building the mosque is devious: "The mosque will be an incubator that produces murders, fanaticism and darkness." (Wannous, 1995, pp. 654). Once greed is already set in the souls of people, they "will seek worldly rather than celestial matters. Their piety is hypocrisy, their prayer is sycophancy." (Wannous, 1995, pp. 654). Having been influenced by Marx, Wannous dramatizes religion as "the opium of the people" (Marx, 1982, p.1). Fadda, the poet's greedy wife, resorts to a life of piety after despairing of ever getting financially satisfied. In Wannous's early play, *The King's Elephant* (1969), belief in providence and fate helps people tolerate the pains of oppression and stops them from rebelling against the oppressor. In *Rihlat Hanzala Min-al-GHafla Ila-l Yakaza* [Hanzala's Journey from Unawareness to Awakening] (1978), the Dervish, a Sufi aspirant, deters Hanzala from "thinking as it can lead to suspicion, suspicion leads to the loss of souls. But acceptance leads to gratefulness and gratefulness leads to faith." (Wannous, 1978, p. 42) In later plays such as *Youm min Zamanina* [A Day of Our Time] (1993), Religion endorses the government's policies, a situation which is a witty commentary on the actual role played by the religious institution in the reign of Assad dynasty.ⁱ Clerics have always supported the president by propagating a *fatwa* or religious decree that dissent against the ruler is prohibited in Islam.ⁱⁱ In Wannous's *a Day of Our Time*, the Sheik prevents Farouk from denouncing the spread of prostitution in the town and provides a religious argument that supports the governor's policy of pragmatism and openness. (Wannous, 1993), pp. 213-215). However, in his last play, *The Mirage Epic* (1994), religion is either a recourse from despair, as in Fadda's case, or a tool conducive to darkness and violence. Approaching the end of his life, the playwright grows more critical of the potential adverse effect of religion. Having witnessed a wave of fundamentalism in the seventies followed by the formation of Al-Qaeda in 1988, Wannous grows more censorious toward religion than ever. In his exchange with his conversant, Al-Maqdesi, he agrees with him that, "We came across other previous fundamentalist waves, but nothing is compared to this. It is horrible, narrow minded, full of hatred and violence" (Wannous, 1971, p. 523). In this play. Wannous's visionary character Zarqaⁱⁱⁱ foretells that religion will lead to fanaticism and extremism. Thus, religion has no place in Wannous's search for a solution to the decline of values experienced as a byproduct of modernity.

The Thrust of the Play's Censure Versus its Artistic Quality

The ethical degeneracy in *The Mirage Epic* cannot be cured by religion, and the play points the audience towards the real cause of the problem. It denounces capitalism and consumerism, imported from the west, and presents them as a new modality of colonialism that work in collaboration with local authorities. Abboud Al-Ghawi's satanic enterprise is sponsored by the Mayor, for it will "totally change the life in this town. This is what I am ambitious for. I want utility for all, and I want the village to have a prosperous happy life after prolonged deprivation and misery (Wannous, 1995, p. 622) Similarly, in an earlier play, *A Day of Our Time*, the governor rejects the old system, preaches "openness" and adapts new words to his dictionary such as "utility," "commission," "profit," "seizing the opportunity," "flexibility," and

“general relations” (Wannous, 1993, p. 224). However, with tourist enterprise comes the excesses of the rich and technological advancement that does not allow the people to acquire the means of producing it, a situation parallel to the dependency of the Third World on the production of progressed countries. The enterprise in the first play, the utilitarian frame of mind in the earlier play, and the enterprise in the later are seen to refer to the policy of open market *infatih* that was implemented in Egypt in the reign of President Mohamad Anwar Sadat after the 1973 war with Israel. It also comments menacingly on the inclination of the Syrian authorities towards the policy of open market in the nineties, for “the year 1992 and the following years witnessed the onset of openness to the private sector, contrary to the socialist orientation in the previous years.” (Al-“Athar, 2010, p. 1). The land of the village peasants is a metaphor of homeland that should be protected from colonialism. Moreover, the consumerism denounced in *The Epic Mirage* seems to comment on the actual materialism that invaded some of the gulf countries like UAE and Saudi Arabia. Such *infatih* policy is presented in Wannous’s drama as shortsighted. Bassam, the mouthpiece of the playwright, indignantly asks if it “is progress and flourishment that we sell the land which used to feed us, in order to buy with its price imported food and equipment that steals the mind and energy.” (Wannous, 1995, p. 734). The popular proverb- “He who sells his land finds it easy to lose his honor” (Wannous, 1995, p. 732)- resonates with the audience’s insecurity about their own sovereignty. Patriotic zeal is aroused in the auditorium as the audiences are enabled to equate the financial disaster that befalls the villagers at the end of the play with the *infatih* policy that has made their country dependent on global capitalism. The moral of the play is polemically delivered in a lecture like sermon with the school teacher exhorting:

Yes, there is a Satan. It is this regime, a follower and servant to the foreign masters. The one that has transformed the country to a night club for foreigners and the rich, and a market for profligacy and consumerism. (Wannous, 1995, p. 733).

Wannous is raising awareness of the need to resist commercializing the Arab world. The people in such countries are unsuspecting of the implications of this change and thus are unable to avert the consequent disaster. Only Zarqa, the visionary character, and Bassam, the educated villager, can see this peril and urge the people to protest “before they are led to slaughter” (Wannous, 1995, p. 733). As Zarqa is being killed by the ignorant villagers for her premonitions, she delivers her last oration in which she desperately insists on the need for raising awareness. “One day people will see for themselves that what they rushed for is only death and destruction. At that time, they will need one who will provide them with knowledge and direct them to the escape exit.” (Wannous, 1995, p. 733). Gone are the Brechtian epic theater techniques that Wannous practiced and mastered in many plays such as *The Adventure of the Slave Jaber's Head* (1970), *A soirée with Abi Khalil Al Qabani* (1973), *The King is King* (1977) and *The Journey of Hanzalah from Unawareness to Awakening* (1978). Perhaps his sense of urgency of the importance of the subject matter and the shortness of his diseased life had their toll on his theatrical creativity and contributed to allegorical dramatization where the message is pounded repeatedly in multiple scenes till the final moral is given in a lecture-like address. With such an ending, the message of the play is crystal clear. It is a desperate cry to raise awareness against commercialism and globalism, for they are a new form of colonialism.

Conclusion

The Mirage Epic, is an allegory of some Arabic societies, while unsuspecting, are invaded by economical colonization which takes alluring shapes. As Wannous continues writing feverishly while fighting cancer, his at politicizing the masses is at its zenith. He sacrifices some of his theatrical complexity and excellence for the sake of raising awareness and giving across his political message clearly and vigorously. In this play he shift the focus from the need for freedom from local oppressive political regimes and social norms to the need for liberation from a new form of economic colonization. Although Arabic countries were decolonized in the first half of the twentieth century, Wannous's later drama, fifty years later, can well be considered postcolonial literature since it aims at resisting the hegemony of global capitalism over Arabic countries which still have developing economies. As an educated writer who is well versed in European thought, he craves freedom and modernity. However, as a Marxist, he is set against the by-products of modernity, namely materialism and consumerism which deeply affect people and control them. These are presented as facets of globalization which is the neo-colonialism^{iv} of the modern world.

Notes

ⁱ Although the administration of Al-Baath party and Al-Assad regime are secular. They have used clergymen of all religions and denominations in order to support the Assad rule and legitimize his totalitarian policy. (Syrian center for News and Studies 2013, p. 1)

ⁱⁱ The Sharia law stipulates that it is prohibited to conflict with the ruler or rebel against them unless the ruler is proven to be infidel. This is because dissention causes corruption and great evil. The security is disturbed and rights are lost. It becomes unfeasible, neither to deter the unjust nor to support the victim. However, if it is proven that he is infidel, dissention is not prohibited if people are capable of removing him from power. If they are not capable they should not dissent. If dissent causes more harm, they should not dissent in order to care for the well fare of the people. The religious rule that is agreed in consensus is "It is not allowed to remove evil with more evil. On the contrary, one should prevent evil with whatever can remove it or reduce it" "The rule of dissention against the sinful rulers" (Imam Bin Baz, 2016, p. 1)

ⁱⁱⁱ The name Zarqa alludes to a famous legendary figure- Zarqa Al-Yamama who was able to see from a distance of a three-day-ride. Her tribe relied on her in order to warn them of approaching enemies. Becoming aware of her gift, the enemy soldiers proceeded while camouflaged by tree branches. Zarqa warned the tribe members of the approaching army but they thought she was going insane. They chose to ignore her warning and consequently were brutally attacked by the raiding army. Zarqa then was caught, her eyes plucked out and was crucified

^{iv} "Neo-colonialism" is a term coined by Childs and Williams,(1997, p. 5) . It refers to the period after de-colonialization when newly independent nations realized that although colonial armies and bureaucracies might have withdrawn, western powers were still intent on maintaining maximum indirect control over erstwhile colonies via political, cultural and above all economic channels such political, cultural and economic domination.

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