

DOI: 10.7596/taksad.v7i1.1428

Citation: Badra, M. (2018). Poetics, Ritual and Politics in Two Plays by Şalah 'Abd Al-Şabur: Toward an Aesthetics of National Regeneration. *Journal of History Culture and Art Research*, 7(1), 157-165. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.7596/taksad.v7i1.1428>

Poetics, Ritual and Politics in Two Plays by Şalah 'Abd Al-Şabur¹: Toward an Aesthetics of National Regeneration²

Mahasen Mahmoud Badra³

Abstract

In two of his poetic plays, *The Princess Waits* (1969), written under the ruling of the second president of Egypt Gamal Abdel Nasser (1956-1970 in office) and *After the King is Dead* (1973), written after Nasser's death, Şalah 'al- Şabūr presents the character of the Poet – who symbolizes the collective conscience of the nation – as the savior figure. In both plays, after a symbolically ritualistic duel, the Poet manages to kill the oppressor and rescue the heroine (Princess\Queen) who represents the oppressed nation. In *After the King is Dead*, he offers the Queen a long sought for dream, the "child" that symbolizes the hope for national rebirth. In his multi-layered philosophical, mythical and political strata of themes that combine the paradoxes of life and death, love and treason, fertility and barrenness, resistance and submission, Şabūr dramatizes his political reformist visions. Giving the two plays the allegorical framework of a folk tale, and ironically using ritual hymns and dances, the author synthesizes the classical traditional techniques with the modern experimental forms. In two superb theatrical pieces, he managed to produce an artistic carnivalesque show that brings together Greek and Oriental myths, ritual, the masque genre, Aristotle, Pirandello, Brecht, Maeterlinck, and Becket. 'Abd Al- Şabūr's two plays represent a step on the road for an art that may lead the Arabic nation to a state of regeneration that has been quested and sought for by many. They can be regarded as a tentative aesthetics of the sought for democratic utopia or the so-called "Arab spring" of today.

Keywords: Political theatre, Rituals, Comparative literature, National regeneration, Arab spring, Şalah 'Abd al- Şabur.

¹ I use ALA-LC Romanization tables transliteration <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpsd/roman/roman.html>

² This paper was presented in COMPARATIVE LITERATURE 17 organized by DAKAM (Eastern Mediterranean Academic Research Center) 10-11 March 2017 Istanbul, Turkey.

³ Assistant professor at the English Department, Faculty of Arts, Kafr el Siekh University, Egypt. E-mail: mahasenbadra@yahoo.com

Introduction

For any reformist artist, spreading the truth, raising the awareness of people and inciting them to think freely and clearly is the ultimate goal of art and the way to national regeneration. In his essay, "Politics and the English Language," George Orwell writes: "and to think clearly is a necessary first step toward political regeneration." (Orwell, 1946, p. 253) Valcav Havel in his article "The Power of the Powerless" raises the same point when he mentions the case of Alexander Solzhenitsyn, a Russian man of letters who was expelled from his country in 1974 for his outspoken criticism of the Soviet Union communist system. Havel regarded Solzhenitsyn as "the dreadful wellspring of truth, a truth which might cause incalculable transformations in social consciousness, which in turn might one day produce political debacles unpredictable in their consequences." (Havel, 1979, p.9).

Ṣalaḥ 'al- Ṣabūr (1931-1981) is an Egyptian poet and playwright whose art and poetic theory reflect his political views and his visions on the way to national regeneration. For him the artist is the one who is responsible for arousing his people's political and social awareness. The aim of most of his poems and plays is to revive people's awareness and to incite them to think how to change their actuality. Such objectives are derived from his idea about the theatre as a vehicle for social and political change and his sense of responsibility as a poet. In his book, *My Life in Poetry* he writes:

Artists and rats are the best among other creatures to intuit danger. Yet, while the latter run and throw themselves into the sea to flee from the sunken ship, the former stay to bang bills, screaming mouth full to save the ship or sink with it ('Abd I- Ṣabūr, 1977, p. 98-9).⁴

In his article, "Theatrical Poetic Expression: Between Self Contemplation and Openness to the Meaning" A. Sallam draws the attention to 'Abd al- Ṣabūr's idea of the poet as the icon of national regeneration in most of his plays. He points out: "The idea of the "savior" in his theatre is represented in the character of the poet" (Sallam, 2008). This is true of four of his five poetic plays in characters like El Hallaj, The Poet, Sa'id and Karandal. 'Abd al- Ṣabūr's poetic views are by no means set apart from the political burden of a poet who wishes to change the world: "I am no sad poet, but a suffering one, that so because I do not like the universe and within my heart I bear – as Shelly called it – a lust to reform the world." ('Abd al- Ṣabūr, *My Life in Poetry*, 1977, p.135)⁵.

The present study aims at exploring 'Abd al- Ṣabūr's political visions about the artist's role in leading his country to national regeneration as reflected in *The Princess Waits* (1969) and *After the King is Dead* (1973). His reformist views and his visions for national regeneration run through the two plays where he delineates two kingdoms suffering from a state of national decay that is manifested in many aspects including despot usurpers, military treason, submissive subjects, and the beneficiary political elite found in most decayed states. His views on the nature of rule and the character of the ruler are examined as delineated through a variety of classical and modern artistic techniques.

***The Princess Waits* (1969)**

The Princess Waits is written in an allegorical form telling the story of a banished Princess who lives with her three maids in a secluded cottage in the dark forest. Like Beckett's famous play, the central action is "waiting". She has been waiting every night for fifteen years for the arrival of Samandal, her father's chief guard who seduced her to kill her asleep father and usurp the crown. He then banished her with her three maids to the forest. Each night, she and her maids enact those events in "nightly passions" to ruminate the past in a ritualistic performance where weeping and laughing mix to entertain the Princess who,

⁴ Translation mine.

⁵ Translation mine.

nevertheless is still waiting for the arrival of the lover/killer to come back to restore their old love and offer her the child. Beckett's impact is apparent in the absurdity of the repeated nightly passions and the futility of waiting for someone who never comes for fifteen years. Yet, unlike Beckett's Godot, Samandal arrives at last. The play opens with one of those nightly passions in which the maids, putting masks, play their usual roles as the sleepy Father and Samandal, while the Princess plays her own role in the events. During the show Karandal, a stranger poet knocks at their door asking to take shelter during the night to "finish [his] song" ('Abd al- Şabūr, *The Princess Waits*, p. 60). However, not waiting to be allowed in, he sits in the front left corner of the stage looking at the door giving his back to the audience. The Princess and her maids continue with their show till they reach the weeping episode where acting turns into true weeping. At this point, the long awaited Samandal arrives at last to beg the Princess for forgiveness and to ask her to accompany him back to the kingdom and restore her sovereignty. He reveals the fact that his rule is "cracking under [his] feet" (p.75) and that the people and the soldiers are revolting against him. He reminds her of their old love and promises her of a new beginning and the long desired "child". The Princess, now torn between love and hatred, submission and revenge, cannot decide what to do; "Go away, Oh don't go, stay!" (p. 66) "Shall I love you? Shall I hate you?" (p.59) Preventing the hesitant Princess from being moved and deceived once again by Samandal's fake tears, Karandal rapidly stabs him and teaches the Princess how to be a true sovereign. He leaves her with the three maids preparing to go back to her palace and reunite with her people.

Y. Halawy refers to an old Iraqi folk tale that 'Abd al- Şabūr may have used as an allegorical background to the play. It tells the story of Saboor who besieges Satroon's fortress without being able to break into its fortified walls. Looking down from the windows of the fortress, the latter's daughter admires Saboor and, hoping to become his wife, she gives him her father's keys to help him break in. Still, never trusting her for the treason she has committed against her father, Saboor kills her after seizing the fortress. (Halawy, 1981, p.141)⁶ The symbolist technique of Maeterlinck is easily traced in many devices in the play including the mysterious mood that prevails the play, the death doom that hovers over the action, dark forests, secluded cottages and the sudden appearance of strangers.

The play teams with political symbolism; Samandal is a symbol for every despot who usurps the throne through illegal means and who seeks to patch his worn-out legitimacy through pseudo lawful procedures to continue deceiving his blinded people. The Princess is the oppressed nation that is divided between two opposite inclinations, i.e., accepting the status quo and surrendering to the tyrant on the one hand, and resisting oppression by revolting against him on the other. Paradoxically and typical of all oppressed and submissive nations, the Princess still hopes for a better future under the rule of the tyrant, in spite of all injustices and blood shedding. "You are my love and pole and you killed my father and pole" (p. 62). The child that she has been dreaming to have by the killer/lover, for 15 years, stands for the nation's dream of a better future that is by no means achieved on the hands of the despot ruler.

The three maids stand for the helpless oppressed public who surrender to oppression by adapting their daily life to ruminating their suffering and who distract themselves by faking laughter that fails to heal their wounds. Those usually resist the revolutionaries that seek to save them at first. Karandal who is given poetic attributes represents the revolutionary artist, the collective conscience of the nation and its persistent will to uproot injustice and to get rid of the tyrant. Like all revolutionaries, he is at first dismissed by the maids as a mad intruder, yet he insists on "finishing [his] song" and confronting Samandal.

⁶ Translation mine.

After The King is Dead (1973)

The political tenor in *After The King is Dead* is more directly emphasized through the allegorical story of a childless despot King who engages in a nightly mime with the Queen pretending that they have a child that is nothing but a bundle of clothes. Longing for having a true child, the Queen who has long been captivated by the barren king, takes the chance of his death and seeks to liberate herself and achieve her dream. She tries in vain to convince any of the King's entourage to go with her away and offer her a child, but neither of them accepts to go with her. Instead, they absurdly try to revive the dead King by asking her to lie beside him so that "the black bird of death" may leave his body and let him come back to life. It is only the Poet who offers to help the queen flee from the palace of death. After revealing his long concealed love for her, he runs with her to the side of the river where he first saw and loved her, with the resurrected hope in the Queen that he may offer her a child. The conflict begins with the arrival of the Executioner who comes by the order of the King's entourage, to take the Queen by force back to the palace to help the dead King come back to life. A ritualistic duel takes place between the Executioner and the Poet, ending with the triumph of the latter who manages to blind the former with his "flute", takes his sword and finally kills him. A happy reunion of the liberated bride/Queen and the victorious, however wounded bridegroom/Poet takes place at the cottage by the side of the river where the Queen is supposed to be offered the "child" by the Poet. At this point, Three Women commentators appear on the stage to announce that the author offers the audience a chance to choose the best end from among three suggested endings. Three different endings or "solutions" are dramatized separately on the stage to offer "three stock human reactions to any problem" ('Abd al- Şabūr, *After the King is Dead*, 1973, p. 108).

The first ending – denoting the tendency to "complain to the higher powers of fate and to ask for justice" (p. 108) – presents the Queen being taken by force by the Kings' men to accompany him to the underworld. A modern counterpart of Orpheus, the Poet is shown to be embarking on a journey to Hades to restore his Queen through appealing to "The Destinies Tribunal" that gives the absurd verdict that the Queen should be "cut and halved and distributed between the Poet and the King" (p. 116). The Poet refuses the verdict and recedes his plea to save the Queen. The second of the suggested endings is "to wait and do nothing, putting one's trust to time." (p. 108). The King's men wait for the Executioner to come back with the Queen. The Poet and the Queen wait for the child to be born and to reach the age of twenty to go back to the palace and restore the kingdom. However reaching the decayed palace, they find the King's men asleep around his corpse for twenty years. Shocked and disappointed at the miserable state of his long promised kingdom, the youth decides that any attempt to reform the palace will go in vain and decides to destroy it and build it anew. However, this is too late, for the Prince of the Western shore has already usurped the rest of the palace and all of them are now prisoners in the hall. The third ending which is "to face up to the situation, no matter how difficult or complex and act" (p. 108), introduces the Queen and the Poet after the death of the Executioner, going back to restore the palace. Carrying his sword, the Poet\knight manages to drive away the king's entourage and to restore sovereignty for his Queen who decides to open her palace for the poor public. Regaining her full sovereignty, she orders the Poet to become her companion and sing for her songs of "A better, brighter future" (p. 125).

The Queen represents the fertile aspiring nation that is worthy of a potent ruler but trapped with an impotent despot who stole her freedom and deprived her from the future. The sterile King who is presented as a variation of Eliot's Fisher King in the "Waste Land"; is a prototype of selfish impotent despots unworthy of their promising nations. His sexual failure itself is used as an objective correlative for his political inefficiency and his inability to achieve prosperity for his state.

The Poet stands for the artist who is capable – in 'Abd al- Şabūr's view – for awakening the national conscience and prompting his nation's dreams for the future. His flute matches Karandal's dagger with

which he killed the oppressor. It also symbolizes the power of the truth the artist possesses to raise social conscience and defeat the lies of the oppressor. From among the King's men the poet is the only true lover who is ready to sacrifice his life for the Queen. His blood that is shed while defending her against the Executioner is welcomed eagerly by the bride/Queen as a precious holy Henna with which she happily emblems her hands and her hair, in a key ritual that precedes their wedding and revives her strength.

The Tailor represents the vulnerable subject who flatters the oppressor to protect himself from his evil. The King orders the Executioner to cut the Tailor's tongue to prevent him from telling the commoners that it was he who made the King change his mind about the national color. Like the Passenger in 'Abd al-Şabūr's *Night Traveler*, he is a prototype of all the oppressed who humble themselves to extremes to please the oppressor, yet they can never protect themselves from his brutality. Restoring her sovereignty at the end, the Queen prefers to keep him around her as a relic reminiscent of the painful past, "A man who fell down from the window of the past" (p. 92). He turns to be an icon of injustice and oppression that should be always kept somewhere in the national memory so as not to relapse to despotic rule in the future.

With the exception of *After the King is Dead*, 'Abd al- Şabūr wrote his plays under the reign of Nasser, which was regarded by many as a totalitarian oppressive regime. He resigned to the excessive use of symbolism, myths, folk tales and allegories that allowed him to give free lace to his political ideas without having to clash with the authorities. In three of his plays, Egypt is symbolized by the heroine. As A. Sallam denotes, "[Egypt] is the fatigued lost Layla in *Layla and the Maniac*, the Princess waiting in exile for fifteen years and the Queen in his last play waiting for deliverance from captivation and barrenness." (2008)⁷. Sex is a recurrent element in all of the three plays, symbolizing variably the nature of the relationship between the male\ruler and the female\state. In *Layla's* case she suffers from deprivation and sexual hunger in her relation with the sincere but impotent poet Said, which leads her to seek fulfillment in the arms of the virile but barren Hosam. The Princess similarly suffers from banishment and sexual deprivation on the hands of the traitor/lover who seduced her to kill the king and seize the crown. It is only the Queen who achieves full sexual fulfillment with the Poet who offers her the Child, after saving her from captivation. The recurrent dream of the child, in each of the three plays, stands for the nation's hope in national regeneration and a better future.

Awareness as the Key for National Regeneration

Two different images of Egypt representing two different levels of national awareness are presented through the two characters of the Queen and the Princess, the former being more mature and powerful than the latter. The Queen knows her dream (the child) from the very beginning while the Princess is rather naïve and she lacks the initiation, power and clarity of vision that the Queen has. Unlike the queen who liberated herself from the decayed palace as soon as she could, the Princess remained captive to her paradoxes and illusions for fifteen years. While the Queen is the main active factor behind the revolutionary act, the Princess remains at its periphery till the end when she begins to acquire her true sovereign character.

The revolutionary moment for the Queen comes when she decides to shed her illusions and face the King with the sordid reality:

Queen: This is an empty bed in which illusions only move: Illusory arms, illusory legs This is a child of words. Have you believed the game? What a trick time has played on us! The words have grown into

⁷ Translation mine.

shadows and ghosts. We have no child. We have no child. ('Abd al- Şabūr, *After the King is Dead*, p. 70)

Faced with the power of reality, the King's strength begins to dwindle and he begins to sense the approach of "the black bird of death". The timing of the King's death suggests that the end of any despot will come only when the nation sheds its illusions and faces reality; It is the moment that the Queen faces him with his impotence and with what he really has given her; "A kingdom, and no child.\ A past and no future." (p.72). The moment the Queen decides to revolt against the king and ask for an alternative father of her desired child is the very moment she manages to overcome her sickness;

(Bursts into tears) Let me take a lover. Either you find me one who would give me a son, or set me free to roam the earth. (Gets up from the bed) Choose a man to fill my womb ... (The King suddenly collapses into a chair looking extremely tired. He gazes fixedly in front of him and speaks as if addressing an apparition.) ('Abd al- Şabūr, *After the King is Dead*, p.71-3)

In this scene, 'Abd al- Şabūr's idea about the importance of awareness as the only way to national rebirth is explicitly presented; the first step to the liberation from the despot rule is shedding illusions, facing reality and seeking the usurped rights.

The Character of the Ruler for 'Abd al- Şabūr

'Abd al- Şabūr's views about the nature of rule and the character of the ruler predominate his theatre. The idea of the concentration of all legislative, executive and judiciary authorities in the hand of a totalitarian ruler is a recurrent motif that appears in three of his five plays. In *Ma'sat el Hallaj* (Murder in Baghdad) when Abo Omar the flatterer judge praises the Khalif for having in his hand "the balance and sword of justice", Hallaj objects: "they are never combined in one hand" ('Abd al-Şabūr, *Ma'sat el Hallaj* (Murder in Baghdad), 1972, p. 236-7). The same idea is also present in *Musafir Lil* (Night Traveller) in the words of the Ten-coated Man: "investigate mercifully and hit fiercely." (1969, p. 473). In *After the King is Dead*, the King is a prototype of all totalitarian despots:

King: I own the state. Therefore, I am the state, everything and everyone; the court, the treasury and the seat of wisdom. I'm the temple, and the hospital and the jail, The cemetery too; I am the one and all. (p. 13).

In a debate between the King and the Queen on what kind of kings their illusory child is going to be, their contradictory views of the true king are revealed. As an incorrigible tyrant the King discloses his twisted concept of a potent king, which contrasts sharply with that of the Queen who wants her child to be "a humane king"

Queen: He will grow up to be a kindly king beloved of all

King: You mean he will be weak, despised by all; a toy in the hands of his courtiers; A joke on the tongues of his subjects; the butt of mockery and ridicule; (p. 67).

In *The Princess Waits*, the behavior of Samandal when faced with troubles, is characteristic of a military illegitimate ruler who seeks to satisfy his fidgeting people with pseudo-legitimate procedures by restoring the lawful weak sovereign whom he can control.

Typical of most elites in all politically decayed societies is the servile entourage of the King, who seek to preserve him even after his death, because their existence is dependent on the continuation of the despotic system. As Valclav Havel puts it: "The entire pyramid of totalitarian power, deprived of the element that binds it together, would collapse in upon itself, as it were, in a kind of material implosion" (1979, p. 4). The entourage's utter paralysis and their entire incapacity to manage the state affairs after

the King's death is manifested in their absurd disparate attempts to bring him back to life and to propagate the lie that he speaks – while dead – asking them to bring back the Queen, "I need the Queen" (p. 83), which none hears except the Vizir. Such behavior is typical of submissive subjects under long lasting totalitarian regimes. "[T]hey must live within a lie" Havel states, "They need not accept the lie. It is enough for them to have accepted their life with it and in it. For this very fact, individuals confirm the system, fulfill the system, make the system, are the system." (Havel, 1979, p. 4). The problem of the Queen does not end with the King's death; the true confrontation is between the aspiring nation and the pillars of the decayed system or what is claimed in the present time as "the Deep State".

‘Abd al- Ṣabūr’s Poetic Theory and His Theatrical Techniques.

The political views of ‘Abd al- Ṣabūr and his vision about the way to national regeneration are explicitly revealed through the artistic genres and the technical devices that he chooses for conveying his message. He couples the classical traditional with the modern experimental in a way that reveals his wide knowledge of the world art. However, far from boasting erudition, ‘Abd al- Ṣabūr's theatrical techniques are derived from his poetic theory that is based primarily on making use of all human tradition as a universal legacy, a theory that is apparently colored by a conviction of Eliot's ideas about tradition as presented in his well-known essay, "Tradition and the Individual Talent". ‘Abd al- Ṣabūr agrees with Eliot's view of art and literature as an accumulative renewable legacy owned and added to by all true artists. In his book, *My Life in Poetry*, he declares the aim of using myths: "Using the myth is not merely showing off your knowledge, but it is an attempt to give the poem more depth and to move the experience from the subjective personal level to an intrinsic human level". (‘Abd al- Ṣabūr, 1977, p.148)⁸. Hence, his aim from resorting to myths, folk tales and allegories is to widen the scope of his work and to universalize his message beyond localized and narrow temporary political concerns.

Likewise, rather than an imitation of a typical Greek feature of drama, ‘Abd al- Ṣabūr's use of ritual is bound to the thematic purport of his work. In the two plays under study, ritual is meant for ironical purposes. The masque that used to be performed in Milton's age to entertain and glorify kings and queens is now used by ‘Abd al- Ṣabūr to draw attention to the follies and impotence of the King and the absurdity of the hesitant Princess and to lay bare the infirmity of their entourage. Thus, ‘Abd al- Ṣabūr reverses the traditional use of ritual and explodes the masque device from the inside by using it as a tool of mockery rather than of eulogy. In *The Princess Waits*, the "nightly passions" that imitates the sixteenth century masques in which princes and queens shared dancing with their courtiers, are ironically used by ‘Abd al- Ṣabūr to mock the Princess's entrapment in self-blame on past sins and her inclination to live in false illusions. Likewise, the love songs of the women while entertaining the King, their excessive flirtation and coquetry draw attention to their artificiality and emptiness on the one hand and to the King's incorrigible impotence on the other. Like performers in a Greek Dionysian ritual, the three maids and the Princess have a double identity; they are participants in a nightly ceremony mimicking a past event that suddenly turns true by the arrival of Samandal.

Besides the classical features of his theatre, ‘Abd al- Ṣabūr's manipulation of modern avant-garde techniques draws attention to his versatile genius. Those include the expressionistic technique of choosing typical nominations for his characters, the absurd theatre of Beckett and Pirandello and the epic theatre of Brecht. In *The Princess*, the nightly passions scene is parallel to Pirandello's technique of the play within the play. In *After The King is Dead*, the influence of both Brecht and Pirandello on ‘Abd al- Ṣabūr is evident in the devices he uses to constantly remind his audience of the fact that what is presented to them is merely an artistic show. Brecht's alienation effect reigns supreme in the play

⁸ Translation mine.

through the Three Women commentators who very often intrude to cut the action and address the audience with statements like: "our business is mimesis, as the stage-manager told us, quoting the director who had quoted the playwright who had quoted Aristotle. For a very long time ago, Aristotle declared that the object of all art was imitation." ('Abd al- Şabūr, *After the King is Dead*, p. 78). Moreover, their commentary on the action is completely detached from the characters' conflict. The scientific facts about anthropology and their discussion on the nature of the show deliberately increase the distance between the characters and the action on the one hand, and the audience on the other. 'Abd al- Şabūr resigns to this technique because the essence of the alienation effect is to block the spectator's emotional involvement that hampers critical thinking; he wanted to stir his audience to think freely and criticize the character's follies rather than sympathize with their misfortunes.

Conclusion

The way both plays are ended is denotative of hope, beginning anew and a promising future. In spite of the deplorable realities and the cumbersome mood that prevail the two plays, a sense of reconciliation and remedy pervades the denouement that points to a sense of reunion between the sovereign and the people. The Princess' speech to her maids before going to her palace suggests a renewal of character and a sense of a newly acquired maturity. Moreover, 'Abd al- Şabūr chooses to conclude the three suggested endings of *After the King is Dead* by the best one – that is "to face up to the situation, no matter how difficult or complex and act." (p. 108) – to reflect a sense of relief and freedom and to spur in the audience the initiation to choose and take a positive attitude. As A. Sallam puts it: "'Abd al- Şabūr endeavored to deconstruct the social and political system in the actuality of our political regimes. He seeks to deconstruct the demagogical speech of the regimes and their historical domination over their peoples." (Sallam, 2008)⁹.

Finally, assessed in the light of a universally acknowledged political predicament in the Arabic world where the issue of awareness is a key issue, the two plays provide an early reformist aesthetics on the way to national regeneration. Such plays are perhaps the harbingers of the so-called Arabic Spring art that flourished with the revolutionary winds that lately pervaded many Arab nations. Such art is meant to introduce the long-sought-for way for freedom and to revive the collective political awareness that the Arabic nations seem to be in a bad need of for ages.

References

'Abd al-Şabūr, Ş. (1969). *Al Amira Tantażir (The Princess Waits)*. Translated from Arabic by S. Megally, (1975). Cairo: General Egyptian Book Organization.

'Abd al-Şabūr, Ş. (1969). *Musafir Lil (Night Traveler)*. Translated by M. M. 'Inani, (1980). Cairo: General Egyptian Book Organization.

'Abd al-Şabūr, Ş. (1972). *Ma'sat el Hallaj (Murder in Baghdad): A Verse Play in Two Acts*) Translated from Arabic by K. I. Semaan. Leiden: E. J. Brill.

'Abd al-Şabūr, Ş. (1973). *B'd an Yamout al Malik (After the King is Dead)*. Translated from Arabic by N. Seliha, (1986). Cairo: General Egyptian Book Organization.

⁹ Translation mine.

'Abd al-Ṣabūr, Ṣ. (1977). *Hayaty fi al-Shi'r (My Life in Poetry)*. Beirut: Dar el Awda.

Halawy, Y. (1981). Al-Ostora fi al-Shi'r al-Arabi al-Mo'aser (Myth in the Contemporary Arabic Poetry). *Fosoul*. 1. Beirut, Lebanon, October, (pp. 135-152).

Havel, V. (1979). The Power of the Powerless. Translated from Czech by Paul Wilson. Retrieved from: <http://www.vaclavhavel.cz/index.php?sec=2&id=1&PHPSESSID=6353c37f52b627bd51adde4e5299918a&setln=2#.pdf>

Orwell, G. (1964). Politics and the English Language. *Horizon*, [e-journal] 13, (76) pp. 252-265. Retrieved from: https://archive.org/stream/PoliticsAndTheEnglishLanguage/Politics%20and%20the%20English%20Language_djvu.txt [Accessed on 13\10\2015].

Sallam, A. (2008). Al Ta'beer Al Masrahi Al Shi'ri Bayn al Ta'mol al Zati wal-Infitah 'alal Ma'na (Theatrical Poetic Expression: Between Self Contemplation and Openness to the Meaning). *Al Hewar Al Motamaden (Civilized Dialogue)*. 2348. Retrieved from: <http://www.ahewar.org/debat/show.art.asp?aid=141435> [Accessed on 8/4/2016].