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RESEARCH ARTICLE

AL-FUZAI:A SAUDI ARABIAN WRITER

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Abstract

Khalil I. Al-Fuzai is a Saudi Arabian literary scholar. He shared his culture with others and was effective in addressing many of the social, political, and religious problems that he saw in his society. Al-Fuzai will be presented to the readers of this journal in this short article.

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Al-Fuzai as a Saudi Arabian writer

In 1940, Khalil I. Al-Fuzai was born in Al-Jasha, a small village in Al-Ahsa, Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province. He grew up, and went to the elementary school there in that village. Then, he continued his studies at Al-Mahaad Al-Elmy (intermediate and secondary school) in Al-Ahsa until he was twenty years old.

In his twenty-one, Al-Fuzai left to Dammam, a nearby city, searching for work. There he worked for the Ministry of Education, then for the Ministry of Information. Later, he decided to pursue a career in journalism.

Al-Fuzai then went on to work for Al-Youm Newspaper, where he worked as a proof reader, copy editor, and eventually editor-in-chief in 1984. In 1991, he resigned to focus entirely on his own business. In 1973, he also traveled to Qatar, a neighboring country, to help create Dar Al-Ahad for Journalism and Distribution.

Al-Fuzai used to write for a variety of publications in a variety of areas, including the Al-Youm Newspaper. He addressed various political, literary, social, and critical issues. He participated in preparing and presenting some TV and radio programs. In addition, he presented in many conferences as well.

Furthermore, Al-Fuzai has written several collections of short stories. In his writings, he attempts to present clear and realistic depictions of Saudi Arabian society. He wrote *Palm Tree and the Watch* (1977) and *Love and Women* (1978). In late seventies, he wrote *Thursday Fair* (1979). In addition, he wrote collections like *Some Suspicion* (1993), and *Torture That Doesn't Go Away* (1998). We shouldn't forget his *A Moment of Collapse* (2000).

Al-Fuzai has written some article-combined works: *Speeches on Literature* (1966), *Journalistic Thoughts* (1981), and *Chapters on Loving Homeland* (1992). Later, he managed to publish *Questions That Cross Each Other* (1999).

Here are two brief translated examples of his writings¹: "Greeting Card," in which the narrator finds himself alone, grappling with abstract ideas such as hope, reality, beauty, happiness, and so on, and "When Explanation Is Understood..." stresses the importance of money in any decision we make.

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Greeting Card²

He brings a postcard and writes:

I am alone, spinning from the darkness of the evening a garment of beauty. I know that distance does not prevent the heart from hope while it collects fragments of memoirs and gathers the remains of memory. I know that the night garbs with a gown of calm... no need to strip the conscience of longing for the promising future ... however ...this intersecting unification of time and place ...plants wishes during the seasons of happiness, and gives the mind the comfort of truth ... the drought will be followed by rain, which will turn despair into flowering fields of wishes and beautiful hopes.

I am alone—yet I have the weapon of determination that scatter storms of whims and clouds of sadness ... dreams create a world of beauty and transparency that will grant the heart to fly in different skies ... and provide the conscience the enjoyment of travelling towards the verge of happiness and frontiers of gaiety ... the bond of love may not split its tie.

After writing those words, he reads them again, and he does not forget ... he remembers that she has chosen somebody else, so he tears the postcard ... and engages wholly in reading a newspaper.

3/8/1998³

When Explanation Is Understood...⁴

His friend amusingly and maliciously asks him, “Why did you divorce bachelorhood, which you have been famous for calling to—especially when we know that your monetary status does not allow you to marry? And all of us know that what is between you and bankruptcy are firm bonds.

The sun's disk is about to vanish below the horizon, so the café owner switches on his electric lamps...ears can hear the Muazen's⁵ call to the prayer from a nearby mosque...

His quarrelsome friend answers, “There are two reasons: number one, I know her family, and number two, I am looking for warmth and rest—how wonderful...it is when you get home and everything is the way it should be...food is ready ...clothes are clean . . your house is tidy.

“Did I say, ‘there are two reasons?’ No. Indeed, they are three ...the third is my fondness for a warm and welcoming setting. A small family ...a wife and children ... all that is good, isn't it?

“Did I say, ‘three reasons ...?’ No. There are four explanations for this...the fourth is that I am getting older, and if I do not marry right now, I will not find the one who will accept to marry me later ...the train of life is speeding up; it needs to come to a halt at the station of marriage.

"Did I state that we should consider four justifications to get married?" No. There are five, and the fifth is that one of my colleagues married one of her friends, and he has been recommending her to me for marriage for quite some time." His acrimonious and stubborn opponent isn't persuaded by any of the above explanations... his expressions are cynical... so he admits his motives, asking, "Did I say, 'five reasons?' The fact is that it is one of the reasons; she is the principal of a three-building school."

And they make their way to the Maghrip prayer⁶.
11/25/1997⁷

Translator's Notes:-

1. I translated many short stories for Kalil I. Al-Fuzai like: “TheCrazy Street”,“No Rendezvous”and “Thursday Fair”
2. “Greeting Card”: The following Arabic text is the source of this story:
Al-Fuzai, Khalil. A Moment of Collapse and Other Stories. لحظة انهيار و قصص أخرى. Tabouk: Tabouk Literary Club, 2000: pp. 113-116.
3. 3/8/1998: This date is found in the original text; apparently it is the date of this piece of writing.
4. “When Explanation Is Understood...”: this story is taken from the Arabic source:
Al-Fuzai, Khalil. A Moment of Collapse and Other Stories. لحظة انهيار و قصص أخرى. Tabouk: Tabouk Literary Club, 2000: pp. 89-93.

5. Muazen: a Muslim who calls to congregational prayers.
6. Maghrip prayer: a prayer Muslims make at sunset.
7. 11/25/1997: See what is written above in note No. 3.