Khalil I. Al-Fuzai: A Writer from Saudi Arabia

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Abstract:
Khalil I. Al-Fuzai is a literary writer from Saudi Arabia. He introduced his culture to others and managed to address many social, political, and religious issues he saw in his society. In this short article, Al-Fuzai will be introduced to the readers of this journal.

Key Words: Al-Fuzai, Saudi, short story, postcard.

Khalil I. Al-Fuzai was born in Al-Jasha, a small village in Al-Ahsa, the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia in 1940. 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. After a while, he turned to journalism.

Later, Al-Fuzai joined Al-Youm Newspaper where he held different posts: a proof reader, copy editor, and finally an editor-in-chief in 1984. He resigned in 1991 to give his entire attention to his own business. Furthermore, he went to Qatar, a neighboring state, in 1973, and shared in establishing Dar Al-Ahad for Journalism and Distribution.

Al-Fuzai used to write for different publications in various fields, and in particular for 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. He tries in his stories to introduce simple and real pictures of the Saudi Arabian society. These collections of short stories include: Palm Tree and the Watch (1977), Women and Love (1978), Thursday Fair (1979), Some Suspicion (1993), Torture That Does Not Die (1998), Rhythms for the Coming Time (1999), and A moment of Collapse (2000).


Here I have two short translated examples of his writings\(^1\): "Postcard" where the narrator finds himself alone, struggling with abstract ideas like hope, truth, beauty, happiness, etc., and "If Reason Is Known…” where the narrator emphasizes the influence of money in any of our decisions.

Postcard\(^2\)

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 . . that drought will be followed by rain which will change desperation into blooming trees of flourishing 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.

3/8/1998\(^3\)
If Reason Is Known...

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 disk of the sun is about to disappear in the horizon, and the café owner lights up his electric lamps. . ears can hear the Muazen’s call to the prayer from a nearby mosque.

His quarrelsome friend responds, “There are two reasons: number one is that I know her family, and the second reason is that I am looking for comfort and rest: how wonderful it is when you return to your house and find everything as 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 one is my love for a familial atmosphere. A small family. a wife and children. all that is good, isn’t it?”

“Did I say, ‘three reasons . . .?’ No. In fact, there are four reasons. 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 age is proceeding fast; it should stop at the station of marriage.

“Did I say, ‘there are four reasons to marry?’ No. There are five and the fifth is that one of my friends has married one of her friends and he has recommended her for me to marry since a while.”

His quarrelsome and vehement disputer is not convinced with all the reasons mentioned above. . his looks are doubtful. so that he admits his intentions, saying, “Did I say, ‘five reasons?’ The truth is that it is one reason; she is a school headmistress and has three big buildings.”

And they go to the Maghrip prayer.

Translator’s Notes:


2- “Postcard”: this story was translated from the following Arabic source:


113-116.

3- 3/8/1998: date found in the original text.

4- “If Reason Is Known...”: this story was translated from the following Arabic source:


89-93.

5- Muazen: a Muslim who calls to congregational prayers.

6- Maghrip prayer: a prayer Muslims make at sunset.

7- 11/25/1997: date found in the original text.