

An Intertextual Reading of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and Qays Ibn al-Mulawwah's *Layla and Majnun*¹

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Abstract

The originality of intertextuality begins in the field of literary criticism. Most of literary scholars have expanded the research of intertextuality to many other fields, for instance, the linguistics. More recently, they have had a growing interest in exploring the interrelations between literary texts without, however, focusing on how readers have generated these connections. With the development of intertextuality in linguistics, this paper attempts to deal with intertextuality with a particular focus on places in two famous literary works: William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* as representative of English and Qais Ibn Al-Mulawwah's *Layla and Majnun* as representative of Arabic within the borders of contrastive studies. English and Arabic are two universal languages with rich literary legacy and this legacy is full of cultural load which carry the traits of men of literature. Among these traits is intertextuality which is assumed to be the plain through which literary men tried to communicate rhetorical intentions. Accordingly, the present paper is a new attempt in the realm of English and Arabic contrastive studies that aims at sorting out intertextual features in those classical works that represent English and Arabic.

Introduction

As known in the linguistics related literature, language is a social fact. It has been claimed by many scholars that language is socio-culturally transmitted i.e. De Saussure (structuralism) and Dell Hymes (Functionalism), thus language is an expressive tool of our state of the soul and mind and literary language is one of these sub-tools to do so.

Literary language is seen as one expression of language, and is seen as an integral facet of cognition as mentioned by Langacker (2008). Stockwell on the other hand asserts that "there is nothing inherently different in the form of literary language; it is reasonable and safe to investigate the language of literature using approaches produced in the language system in general,"

Meanwhile, Carter and Nash assert that the same analytical procedures and schemas cannot be seen as being applied across a range of texts (2002: 7), (1990: 29). The comprehension processes, basic techniques, function of information and experience, and also the memory products produced, are all the same for literary works as they are for simplistic narratives, according to Walter Kintsch (1998: 208).

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The origins of Intertextuality

Intertextuality can be defined as, based on an article by Thomas (2005: 1), the interrelation between various texts, and starts from the examples of “clear reactions” of one text to a wider conception in which “there is not a single text that does not possess traces of other texts within itself”. However, Kristeva (1966), who first coined the concept of intertextuality, defines it as “a universal phenomenon that elucidates the communicative interconnections between a text and the other and text and context”, as cited in EL. J. (2015:77).

Moreover, Zengin (2016: 301) defines intertextuality as “a way of interpreting texts which focuses on the idea of texts’ borrowing words and concepts from each other”. He argues that each writer when writing a piece of a text he/ she borrows or quotes from other previously written texts such as impressions, references, citations, quotations, etc. since the writer him/herself is affected by other texts in a way or another. He (ibid) states that intertextuality emphasizes that whenever texts are interpreted Many of the interpretations and consequences surrounding those cited texts will shape the critic's interpretation of the text in question in view of the text(s) to which it applies or from which it has traces.

Additionally, Zoonen (2017:1), refers to the intertextuality as a concept which indicates that all texts whether they are written, spoken, formal, informal, or even an artistic piece of a text, are all related to each other in somehow. He also states (ibid) that media and other online content such as blogs are all considered as texts, including visual and audio contents. He argues that the word derives from literary research, but it was popularized in the 1970s and 1980s by critical media academics to research various popular genres. The concept is currently gaining traction with media psychologists as well. The origins of the idea of intertextuality are represented in this entry, with legendary examples such as James Bond and Lady Gaga. Different degrees and measurements of intertextuality are also discussed. It is shown that intertextuality is not only a conscious product of authors, poets, and media creators, but also of unique perception and reading processes (ibid).

Intertextuality from English Perspective

Intertextuality, as previously defined, is the interrelationships among texts that shape the meaning of a given text. It generates a related meaning or harmony in different works, examples of intertextuality figures in English include: allusion, calque, plagiarism, quotation, translation, parody, and pastiche (Hallo, 2010:608).

From this perspective, intertextuality is considered as an important aspect in second and foreign language studies, referred to as ESL and EFL, likewise, reading and studying literary texts is a fundamental part in language learning and cultural knowledge (Williams, 2013:163-189).

Bakhtin and De Saussure

Researching intertextuality in reality necessitates a definite or solid term that can be used as a reliable identifier. To put it another way, when presented with a real-world definition of discourse, the principle must be ready to identify an utterance or a conversation as intertextual or not, with a logical explanation for why. However, despite being regarded as the field's first debater, Bakhtin does not come up with a suitable candidate because he never actually used the expression. Neither did Saussure (1974), who is also credited with an even earlier hand in the creation of intertextuality studies (Mason, 2019:3).

Since Ferdinand de Saussure's, a Swiss linguist, semiotics and structuralism are regarded as the foundations of modern literary theory (Plett, 1991: 8, and Allen, 2000: 8), it

is in somehow wrong to say incorrect to the claim that intertextuality arose from Saussure's ideologies. By comparing the timelines of Saussure's ground-breaking *Course in General Linguistics* (1915) and Eliot's "Tradition and Individual Talent," it is right that Saussure comes first (1919). However, since both Saussure's and Eliot's linguistic ideas were influential at the time, and Eliot's theory was applied at a time when intertextuality was not yet a popular phenomenon in literary studies, there has been no perceived disadvantages to beginning with Eliot (Zengin, 2019:305).

Both, Saussure and Bakhtin, however, did a great work concerning the "dialogic conceptualisation of the world" which concentrated on the correlating nature of things, which contributed subsequently in various studies in the field of intertextuality (Bakhtin 1981, 1984a, 1984b, 1986; Saussure 1974). It is worth mentioning that Bakhtin (1984a) argued that the notion of dialogism illustrates that "discourse is derived from other discourses".

Kristeva's Theory

Kristeva is the first theorist who draws the attentions to the term 'intertextuality', and she provides a broader definition. She (1980: 36) states, "a text is a permutation of texts, an intertextuality in the space of a given text". Once again, the definition provided by Kristeva does not dispute the conceptual validity, and it is so vague, when it comes to describing intertextuality of discourse, in order to put it into effect (Mason, 2019:5).

According to Kristeva (1974:59-60), an individual text can be seen as "insertion of other texts, where at least one other text can be found". This means that the meaning of a given in any given text is directed towards a preceding or "synchronic literary corpus" and the "transposition of one (or several) sign system(s) into another". She (ibid) argues that there is a dimensional textual space in any insertion planes, where any text is related to two axes, i.e. horizontal and vertical axes. This textual space consists of three coordinates, as she illustrates, the first dimension is "the writing subject", the second one is the addressee, and the third and last one is the exterior texts. The horizontal axis links the writer or the writing subject to the addressee or the text's reader, while the "vertical axis" links the text to different texts. Words' meaning is defined horizontally and vertically at the same time. Words in the text belong to both, to the writer and the addressee or reader, thus, the whole text belongs to the writer as well as the reader.

Michael Riffaterre

Another prominent figure, Riffaterre is a French literary theorist and critic who pursued the structuralism approach, and who attempted to tackle intertextuality with more linguistic impacts than his predecessors. His work regarding intertextuality (1984, 1990) gives a serious consideration to "the role of the reader in identifying and understanding intertextual references" (Mason, 2019:6).

Riffaterre (1987) was primarily interested in the connection text-reader relationship. This desire, however, cannot be resolved with his epistemic views, particularly if the fact that readers live outside of university English departments is taken into account. As a consequence, even within the limits of a single essay, his writing oscillates widely between acknowledging that different readers have different meanings and pretending to want to accept them on the one hand, and enforcing a universality of response where the critic's understanding is often logically superior on the other.

When it comes to testing of the readers outside the university, Riffaterre uses a simple deficit model approach. Variations in reader's perceptions and understanding of intertextual indications in any text is based on unintentional faults from the standpoint of lesser

experienced or achieved parties, a lack of adequate retrieval, and inexperienced interpretation, culminating in the retrieval of inaccurate meanings, according to this model (Mason, 2019:6). This defected approach undoubtedly has its origins from ontological setting on literary meaning which considers it as firm, situated and fixed within the text. This viewpoint is reflected in the conceptual metaphors of "DISCOVERY" and "RECOVERY" which run through Riffaterre's entire body of work, according to Mason (ibid). He argues like if the right intertextual connections are there to be discovered by someone with the right literary tools and expertise for deciphering the passages: there are differences in response and recognition, but they can be explained by human error. This defected approach is necessitated by the ontological perspective on literary connotations, which recognizes it as maintained, established, and situated within the text.

Intertextuality in Arabic Criticism

If we follow the concept of intertextuality and its origin in Arabic criticism, we find that it is a new term for an old critical and literary phenomenon. Arab critics had been anciently aware of the phenomenon of intertextuality in the poetic and prose discourse as an essence property in Arabic culture. Many terms almost related to intertextuality appeared such as "implicitness (implicatures), quoting, innuendo, pastiche, plagiarism.

Before that we find that Arab poets realized the necessity for the poet to communicate with and take from his poetic heritage and to look for a lead. Antarah ibn Shaddad said: "Have the poets left in the garment a place for a patch to be patched by me; and did you know the abode of your beloved after reflection

And Ka'b ibn Zuhayr

We only say a reiteration

Recycling speech in a repetition"

Referring to the existence of intertextuality in Arab poets, another reference is found in the saying of Imam Ali: "Had not been repeated, speech would have finished."

Tracing the effect of intertextuality in old Arab critics appeared under other terminologies with forms approach the new term from distance. It is noted in this regard that Arab ancient critics had used the term plagiarism when poets used the forms and ideas of others even with modifications. They referred to the similarity of forms and meanings used by poets. Aljahid restricted his definition of plagiarism to verbal one. Ibn Rasheeq pointed that plagiarism is a wide road that no poet can avoid.

Tracing intertextuality in the old Arab poetry, we find the balance made by Al-Amady between Abu Tammam and Al-Buhry which also reflects a sort of intertextuality.

The phenomenon of intertextuality is recognized and agreed by critics and poets with differences in terms of its consequences. In their definition of this phenomenon, Arabs have depended on western critics. They paid attention to the term of intertextuality in the seventies after the wide spread of this term in western studies at that time.

Explicit Mythological Intertextuality in *Romeo and Juliet*

It is a well-known fact that English had greatly been affected by Latin and was forced to be analysed in the mould or the framework of Latin. Latin is also the language of the Bible and a symbol of Christianity. However Latin with the high esteem given to it, brought with it the historical and cultural factors of its native speakers i.e. Greek, so the mythological

factor was alive and brought through many classical works of those great Greek philosophers and poets like Homer and others. The Elizabethan writers like Shakespeare tried to adapt these classical myths to make them exert pragmatic functions in the text, the term adaptation was explained by D'Angelo (2009:33):

“The first mode of intertextuality is adaptation. According to the American Heritage Dictionary, an adaptation is “a composition that has been recast into a new form.” To Ingeborg Hoesterey, an adaptation is “the modification of artistic material transposed from one genre to another”. To Julie Sanders, “an adaptation signals a relationship with an informing source text or original”

Extract (1)

“You are a lover. Borrow Cupid’s wings

And soar with them above a common bound.”

Act one. scene Four. 17-18

In the quote above, Cupid is alluded to by Mercutio in a scene where he met the love-sick Romeo and offered him advice. Cupid in Roman mythology, is the son of the goddess Venus, the goddess of love and beauty of the Romans, whose name in Greek is the goddess Aphrodite. Cupid was always famous as a child carrying arrows, he was very beautiful, and his arrow was striking humans causing them to fall in love, he was often depicted as a little luck child in the form of a two-winged angel with a love arrow, and sometimes his being blindfolded was depicted as a symbol that love is blind and that we do not have the power to choose those whom we love. Cupid is famous for his bow weapon, which if he hits someone, he will make him mad in love.

It is remarkable that with reference to classical mythology in which Cupid’s wings were regarded as a mark of his volatile dynamic nature thus he had the capacity to force people be in love and out of love very quickly. Cupid is used as metaphor via inter-text by Mercutio to describe Romeo the weak lover, who should behave like a real brave man. The wings of Cupid are alluded to exemplify the ability for falling out of love with Rosaline on part of Romeo.

The myth requires a worth-while contemplation, hence Martinez-Falero (2013:482) argue that myth has always played a crucial role in human societies, as we can find attested in inscriptions and figures carved from the Middle Palaeolithic and in more complex forms (with an obvious correspondence with more complex rituals) from the Neolithic and Bronze ages far beyond the symbol, the myth has shaped the thinking of these societies, it has allowed to explain natural phenomena, generally linked to rituals (for example, in Eleusis or Abydos, with cults established in the second millennium before our era, with the harvest as a reference), or as a memory of what Eleazar Meletinski calls the proto-ancestors (2001: 169-184), or mythical ancestors of a lineage or a people, which would so welcome the cult of family ancestors as the divinization of heroes and kings of Indo-European origin, according to doctrine of Georges Dumézil.

The pragmatic implication here is that Romeo should be as strong as any other human lover to make up his mind decisively.

Extract (2)

“O, then I see Queen Mab hath been with you.

She is the fairies’ midwife, and she comes

In shape no bigger than an agate stone”

Act one. Scene Four. 58-60

Queen Mab is referred to by Mercutio in the preceding quote. It is known in classical mythology that Queen Mab is the queen of the fairies. The "Queen Mab" is a fairy in mythology that is recurrent in many literary works during the Elizabethan era. She was considered as a symbol of power, honour, death and love. The preceding themes were overwhelming the story of Romeo and Juliet.

Such intertextuality is used here for the purpose of mockery or irony in order to mock the undue prominence that Romeo puts on his dreams. Queen Mab is alluded to be re-contextualized to Romeo's false ambition. The Queen Mab assisted people in the getting their dreams true. Mercutio tells Romeo ironically that dreams are only illusions of thoughts, and illusions; hence, Romeo as a grown up man becoming less confident by his dream is as silly as an adult amusing the fantasy of Queen Mab.

The Indirect Implicit Intertextuality of Place

The concept of place in Imru Al Qais (Layla and Majnun) is an overwhelming one, however it is employed indirectly implicitly as it reveals the cultural preconceptions of the ways of life and conceptualizations of the concrete surrounding environment. The daily interactive relation between poets and nature is reflected in their poetic insights and that is the reason why one can always find them sing of the land and creatures due to their symbolic significance. The diversity and selection of places in this poem reflect the poet's interest to increase poetic diction and what serves for aesthetics of the text.

Home Land

A careful look at Layla and Majnun will reveal that Land had an overwhelming effect of intertextuality in that was mentioned many times and for various effects. Several extracts are to be presented for the relevant analysis:

إذا سِرْتُ فِي الْأَرْضِ الْفَصَاءِ رَأَيْتَنِي
أَصَانِعَ رَحْلِي أَنْ يَمِيلَ جِيَالِي
يَمِينًا إِذَا كَانَتْ يَمِينًا وَإِنْ تَكُنْ
شِمَالًا يُنَارُ عَنِّي الْهَوَىٰ عَنِ شِمَالِيَا

If I march in the open lands you will see me
Trying to let my horse obey my destination
Heading to the east or heading to the west
My passion to Layla is just like occupation

In the above extract, the allusion to place references and the pragmatic implications behind them are significant for the ultimate effect of the poem. This is an implicit intertextuality since the reference is directly made to the land as part of the folk's conceptualization of land (Sharifian: 2017) as a cherished property. Such a cultural conceptualization is well realized in the pre-Islamic Arabic poetry, which often was based on romanticizing the poet's memory of his tribal homeland intensifying his emotional

attachment to it. This can be characteristically found in well-known poems of the pre-Islamic poet Imru al Qais.

The land where one is raised plays a strong and active presence on the human soul; because it is related to human consciousness from an early age so he stores in many things in his memory like emotions, positive or negative memories. one`s land is not just a survey, a plot of land, or a geographic space that does not mean anything for this human being, it is an integral part of his life; So We find it inherent in many poets` imagination. They chant the names of the places, countries that had impact on them as in (امرؤ القيس) Imru Al Qais lines:

قفَا نَبِكِ مِنْ ذِكْرِي حَبِيبِ
سِفْطِ اللَّوَى بَيْنَ الدَّخُولِ فَحَوْمَلِ
وَقَوْفًا بِهَا صَحْبِي عَلَيَّ مَطِيهِمْ
يَقُولُونَ: لَا تَهْلِكْ أَسَى، وَتَجَمَّلِ

Let us stand and mourn together on the beloved and home
Remembering the sands of Dakhool and Hawmali
My company who were riding their horses encouraged me
Oh man! Stop grieving, you have to take it easily!

Also by (طرفة ابن العبد) Turfa Ibn Al Abd:

لِخَوْلَةَ أَطْلَالٍ بِبُرْقَةٍ تُهَمِّدِ
تَلُوحُ كِبَاقِي الْوَشْمِ فِي ظَاهِرِ الْيَدِ
وَقَوْفًا بِهَا صَحْبِي عَلَيَّ مَطِيهِمْ
يَقُولُونَ: لَا تَهْلِكْ أَسَى، وَتَجَدِّدِ

These are the ruins of Tahmad, were Khawla used to live
The ruins are distinguished just like the tattoos in the hand
My company who were riding their horses encouraged me
Oh man! Stop grieving, you have to boldly stand!

The poet`s passion to Layla has reached its limits, in his journey he tilts his flight to the right if it is to the right, and to the left if it is in the north. The pragmatic implication of land is the extensive emotional state of the lover represented by the land which has become an integral part of Emotion; hence the two images are thematically inter-textually linked.

The affiliation to the land and its significant relation to the poet`s longing to Layla can be found in other lines in the poem. It can be noticed that the enchanted poet is attached to the earth and its soil, land shares with him his joys and sorrows during his unfulfilled love when Layla refused to fulfil his proposal, so he kissed the land, saying:

أبوسُ ترابِ رجلِك يا لُوَيْلي
ولولا ذاك لا أَدعى مُصابا
وما بَؤسُ الترابِ لِحَبِّ أرضِ
ولكنَّ حُبُّ من وطىء الترابا
جُننْتُ وقد أصبحتُ فيها
محبًّا أسْتَطيبُ بها العذابا
ولازمْتُ القفارَ بكلِّ أرضِ
وعيشي بالوحوشِ نَمًا وطابا

I hold the sand on which you happened to stand, woe to me
If it weren't that, they wouldn't call me distressed
I didn't do that for the sake of the sand itself
I did it for the one whose foot on the sand pressed
I've become a crazy man in her love
A passionate lover who likes to be distressed
I kept dwelling the deserts of the lands
My living in the wilderness prospered, I confessed

The direct reference and repetition of land and soil in the previous poetic text has its pragmatic implication of emphasis, that is the love of the insane for his beloved, his love for her is deeply connected inside him and this is reflected in the inter-textual reference to the connection to the land with which he is obsessed in the same way.

The poet also used vocabulary like (نما) (طب) as a sign of continuing to live in a deserted life because of her love, and he is to stay in that deserted land as he found it-self reflecting, which and reminds him of his great loss.

The place where one lives is a witness to what he has gone through from emotional experiences to beautiful memories. The indications of the place varied in the poem. Through this diversity the poet paints his richest poetic experience; he wanted to reflect his sense of loneliness that is a result of bitter memories so one can notice his longing for home land:

أجنُّ إذا رأيتُ جمالَ قومي
وأبكي إن سَمِعْتُ لها حنينًا
سقى الغيبُ المجدُّ بادَ قومي
وإن خَلتِ الديارُ وإن بَلينا

I long for my people when I see their camels
I cry when hearing their longing for me
The rain has watered their lands though
Despite empty or ruined they may be

Conclusion

The study has uncovered significantly that archaic discourses that arrive to us through history are a truly rich source of material to be analysed with the goal of contrasting literary men's intellectual trends and their manipulation of linguistic sources.

Based on the theoretical and practical insights, the present paper has found out that intertextuality is an inherent feature of literary texts both in Arabic or English languages. In the Arabic data, the intertextuality of place is overwhelming and spread all over the data due to the fact that (Place) has a special intimate image to the Arab people who at that time lived a Bedouin life in the desert. The image of home and sacred places is highly alluded to since it is rooted in the Arab culture hence giving rise to emotional aesthetic effects. Unlike the Arabic data, the English data contained no place intertextuality.

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