UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

A CRITICAL LINGUISTIC READING INTO
THE APPEAL OF GIBRAN KHALIL GIBRAN’S
THE PROPHET

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By

NIDAA HUSSAIN FAHMI AL-KHAZRAJI

Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

September 2014
In the Name of Allah, the Merciful, the Most Merciful

Whatever mercy Allah opens to people, none can withhold; and whatever He withholds none can release after Him. He is the Almighty, the Wise.

(God Almighty has spoken the truth)

(Surah Fatir, Verse 2)
To My Father Hussain Fahmi, My Husband Mohammad Saied, My Son Waleed, My Daughter Hadeel And To My Late Brother Malik Hussain Fahmi

Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in Fulfilment of the Requirement for Doctor of Philosophy

A CRITICAL LINGUISTIC READING INTO THE APPEAL OF GIBRAN KHALIL GIBRAN’S THE PROPHET

By

NIDAA HUSSAIN FAHMI AL-KHAZRAJI

2014

Chair: Associate Professor Mardziah Hayati Abdullah, PhD

Faculty: Modern Language and Communication

This study analyses the appeal of The Prophet (1923), the widely read best-known masterpiece of the Lebanese writer, poet, artist and philosopher Gibran Khalil Gibran (1882-1931). Gibran was a key figure in the history of modern Arabic and English literature in the early 20th Century. Gibran’s masterpiece, The Prophet, is a volume of twenty-eight prose-poems full of wise sayings, representing wisdom of a prophetic quality. It has not been out of print since it was first published, and has sold more than ten million copies in English language alone. It has also been translated to more than twenty-five languages. Using a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach that incorporates a Positive Discourse Analysis (PDA) perspective, the study analyses the text at macro and micro levels and identifies aspects of the book that contribute to its appeal.

The findings show that universal themes and global messages are explicitly or implicitly addressed in the discourse of The Prophet. The universality of the issues dealt with, as well as the open, realistic manner in which they are addressed, make them relatable to readers. These themes and messages arise out of dialogues or narration involving the protagonist/author, who is portrayed as a godlike figure and font of wisdom. From this figure, positive lessons
and exhortations are offered, their messages of hope adding to the appeal of the book. The CDA-PDA perspective also discusses the positive/negative ideologies in the text and the part they play in the appeal of the book. Finally, the study looks at the use of metaphors to see how they aesthetically construct thinking, beliefs and social behavior. The book thus owes its appeal to the reflection of Gibran’s ideology and thoughts, and his grasp of life’s complexities as well as the need for a message of hope and utopian ideals to combat the reality of a world that is far from ideal.

This discursive and textual analysis of what is largely poetic text is an interesting exercise in applying a CDA-PDA framework to a literary text. It shows how works of arts are important to society and culture by transmitting ideology. Constitutions of cultural power are generated from the structures of meaning at work, and mechanisms that operate in the poetic text generate ideological effects.
Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

PENELITIAN LINGUISTIK KRITIKAL TERHADAP DAYA TARIKAN TEKS THE PROPHET KARYA GIBRAN KHALIL GIBRAN

Oleh

NIDAA HUSSAIN FAHMI AL-KHAZRAJI
2014

Pengerusi: Profesor Madya Mardziah Hayati Abdullah, PhD

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Dapatan kajian menunjukkan pelbagai tema dan mesej yang bersifat sejagat dan global yang terkandung dalam wacana The Prophet secara tersurat dan tersirat. Sifat sejagat isu-isu dan cara isu tersebut di kemukakan secara terbuka dan realistik menyebabkan mereka mudah dihayati oleh para pembaca. Tema dan mesej dalam teks ini terkandung dalam dialog atau
penyampaian cerita oleh protagonis/penulis yang diberi watak dengan ciri ketuhanan serta sumber ilmu dan kebijaksana. Watak ini memberi pengajaran dan sahutan yang melahirkan harapan justeru menambahkan daya tarikan buku ini. Perspektif CDA-PDA juga membincangkan ideologi positif/negative dalam teks ini serta peranan yang dimainkan oleh ideologi tersebut dalam menjadikan teks ini begitu menarik. Akhir sekali, kajian ini meneliti penggunaan metafor sebagai alat estetika dalam membentuk pemikiran, kepercayaan dan tingkahlaku sosial dalam buku ini. Daya tarikan teks tersebut adalah kerana pencerminan ideology dan pemikiran Gibran, kebolehan beliau mendalami kerumitan hidup serta keperluan manusia untuk menerima harapan dan konsep dunia utopia untuk menangani reality dunia yang amat tidak sempurna.

Analisis wacana dan tekstual yang dijalankan ke atas teks yang bersifat kesusasteraan merupakan usaha yang menarik kerana kajian ini menggunakan kerangka CDA-PDA yang jarang digunakan untuk teks sastera. Namun kajian ini menunjukkan bagaimana karya sastera adalah penting sebagai wahana ideologi dalam masyarakat dan budaya. Kuasa budaya dibentuk dan dijana daripada struktur makna, dan mekanisme dalam teks puisi boleh menjana kesan ideologi.
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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 25 September 2014 to conduct the final examination of Nidaa Hussain Fahmi Al-Khazraji on her thesis entitled “A Critical Linguistic Reading into the Appeal of Gibran Khalil Gibran’s *The Prophet*” in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U. (A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy with DISTINCTION.

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This is to confirm that:
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• supervision responsibilities as stated in the Universiti Putra Malaysia (Graduate Studies) Rules 2003 (Revision 2012-2013) are adhered to.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRAK</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPROVAL</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECLARATION</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>xiv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td>xv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</td>
<td>xvi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Background of the Study</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Rationale for the Study</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Purpose and Objectives of the Study</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Research Questions</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Theoretical Considerations for the Study</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5.1 A Positive Discourse Reading of the Text</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5.2 Utopian Appeal</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5.3 Critical Discourse Analysis</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5.4 Conceptual Metaphor Theory</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 Scope of the Study</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7 Significance of the Study</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8 Definition of Key terms</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.9 Chapter Summary</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 LITERATURE REVIEW</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Introduction</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Gibran Khalil Gibran’s Life (1883-1931)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.1 Gibran’s Childhood</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.2 Gibran of America</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.3 Gibran of Lebanon</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.4 Era of Agony</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.2 Arab American Literature</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.1.3 Gibran’s Art
2.1.4 Gibran’s Works
   2.1.4.1 Arabic Works
   2.1.4.2 Works in English, Prior to Gibran’s Death
   2.1.4.3 Posthumous in English
2.1.5 The Death of the Prophet
2.1.6 Previous Studies about the Works of Gibran
   2.1.6.1 Books of Biography
2.2 Approaches to Critical Discourse Analysis
   2.2.1 Discourse / Text
      2.2.1.1 Literary Text
   2.2.2 Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)
      2.2.2.1 Developments in CDA
      2.2.2.2 Principles of CDA
   2.2.3 Critique of CDA
2.3 Conceptual Metaphor Theory
   2.3.1 Types of Conceptual Metaphor
   2.3.2 Poetic Metaphor
2.4 Summary

3 METHODOLOGY
3.1 Research Design
3.2 Book Selected for the Study
   3.2.1 Text Selected for the Study
   3.2.2 Text Format and Unit of Analysis
3.3 Framework for Analysis
   3.3.1 Procedure for Analysis

4 DATA ANALYSIS
4.1 Universal Themes and Messages
   4.1.1 Theme and Format of The Prophet
   4.1.2 Universal Themes
      4.1.2.1 Semantic Macrostructures and Macro-rules
   4.1.3 Universal Appeal in The Prophet
      4.1.3.1 Unshakable Belief in Love and Life
## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction 139
5.2 Summary of Findings 139
  5.2.1 Themes 139
  5.2.2 Message Appeal 140
  5.2.3 Gibran’s World 140
  5.2.4 Identity and Us/Them Relation 141
  5.2.5 Poetic Metaphor in the Data 141
  5.2.6 The Appeal of *The Prophet* 142
5.3 Insights from the Research 143
5.4 Recommendations for Further Study 144
5.5 Concluding Remarks 145

### REFERENCES

APPENDICES 161

BIODATA OF STUDENT 218

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS 219