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The American University in Cairo  
School of Humanities and Social Sciences

**Three Spiritual Narratives:**

**A Reading of Hermann Hesse, Ibn Tufayl and Naguib Mahfouz**

A Thesis Submitted to

The Department of

English and Comparative Literature

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of Master of Arts

**Muna Khattab**

Under the supervision of

**Dr. William Melaney**

**January 2017**

The American University in Cairo

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Has been approved by

Dr. William Melaney

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Date

To my mother and father

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## ABSTRACT

The current thesis examines how narrative form harmoniously coordinates the motif and the physical nature of the fabula to present three levels of the journey, the physical, the metaphorical and the narratological. This study offers a reading of three novels, Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha*, Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* and Naguib Mahfouz's *The Journey of Ibn Fattouma*. These novels are spiritual journeys that suggest how literature can be read as narrative. My use of narratology throughout this thesis engages the role of the fabula and the function of metaphor in the overall development of each novel. My analysis relies on the theoretical principles and definitions set forth by Gerald Prince in *Dictionary of Narratology* and Mieke Bal in *Narratology: An Introduction*. Both critics have dealt with the interaction between fabula and narrative in their contribution to narrative theory. Vladimir Propp's more formulaic method has been used in this thesis to analyze the structure of each novel.

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## **Introduction:**

### **Narratologies of the Spiritual Journey**

A story can be told in many ways. The recounting of the same basic components of a story, such as characters, time, place and events, is a distinct process. A distinction in narratology is made between fabula and narrative strategy. A fabula is defined by Gerard Prince as “[t]he set of narrated situations and events in their chronological sequence; the basic STORY material” (29). In contrast to the fabula, Prince refers to “the set of narrative procedures [that are] followed or narrative devices used to achieve some specific goal” (64). Mieke Bal defines fabula as “a series of logically and chronologically related events that are caused or experienced by actors” (5). She defines a narrative text as “a text in which an agent relates (‘tells’) a story in a particular medium, such as language, imagery, sound, buildings, or a combination thereof” (5). In distinguishing fabula and narrative, Bal writes: “The assertion that a narrative text is one in which a story is related implies that the text is not identical to the story” (5). Narrative demonstrates an “emphasis on the structuredness, not the linguistic nature” of the text, and, in that sense, the word text is used “interchangeably with ‘artifact’” (6).

The narrative process allows us to locate all elements in a fabula, such as characters, events, place and time. Narrating implies a movement from one place to another, be it a change in personality, passage of time, interaction among characters, or physical movement across space. The reader goes on a trip from the beginning to the end of the narrative, which does not have to be the end of the fabula and does not have to follow the same logical order of the fabula. A narrative, therefore, is a journey, with its own starting point, destination, route and means of transport.



Vladimir Propp incorporates analysis of recurrent motifs, voice and perspective, plot and subplot progress and types of characters into a reading of the text not only as a vehicle but as an integral part of the text. Propp uses functions to chart folktales (79). Each function includes acts in the narrative that occur in a certain order to play a specific role. Explaining the use of functions, Prince argues that “no function excludes any other and, however many of them appear in a single tale, they always appear in the same order” (36). The Proppian structure of functions includes motifs. These are elements in the narrative, such as characters or events, that are recurrent throughout the fabula (Prince 55).

The interaction between the narrative and the fabula becomes even more complex when the plot line of the fabula is a journey about progress and movement from a starting point to a destination in a physical and material sense. If that journey is not only physical but is also an allegory for a spiritual journey, then the fabula, narrative and allegory become three layers of a single journey, or three journeys intertwined in a single process. Novels that present physical journeys as spiritual allegories often follow similar patterns and suggest how fabula and narrative are interrelated. The three novels that will be discussed in this thesis and according to these principles are Hermann Hesse’s *Siddhartha*, Ibn Tufayl’s *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* and Naguib Mahfouz’s *The Journey of Ibn Fattouma*.

*Siddhartha* was written by German-Swiss novelist, Hermann Hesse, in 1922. It is a novel that deals with the protagonist’s search for a higher self. It is a journey of self-improvement. The protagonist is trained as a Brahmin and is adored by everyone. Nevertheless, he does not feel fulfilled and believes there are more spiritual and psychological levels of existence to be attained. He embarks on a journey in search of mentors or groups to join in order to reach that higher level. His journey is a succession of decisions. He tries and rejects different mentors and

methods. His journey culminates in an accumulation of experiences that lead climactically to a form of inclusive ascension and ultimate oneness with life.

*Hayy Ibn Yaqzan* was written by Andalusian philosopher, Ibn Tufayl, in the early twelfth century. The novel follows the birth of Hayy Ibn Yaqzan, who is brought up by a gazelle on an island. The traumatic experience of the death of the gazelle that raised him prompts him to dissect her body to search for her soul. This leads him to a search for the essence of life, and to questions about creation and a Supreme Being. He meets another man from a nearby island. Both visit the island where Hayy attempts to explain his method of scientific and spiritual oneness, but failing to do so, he returns with that man to Hayy's island to resume their worship of the Supreme Being found in all creation.

*The Journey of Ibn Fattouma* was written by Egyptian novelist, Naguib Mahfouz, in 1983. The novel follows Ibn Fattouma, who is disappointed in the corruption he sees in his homeland. He learns from his mentor of a land of perfection, the road to which is fraught with dangers. He travels through other countries, observing their different systems. The novel ends as he begins the final stage of his travels, which leads toward the utopian land of his dreams.

These three novels use the physical journey as an allegory for the search for perfection. All three also see perfection from a spiritual perspective. The narrative form of all three also adapts to the physical journey made by the protagonists. In each novel, a specific terrain is followed. Siddhartha emphasizes the role of the river as the conduit to his evolution to spiritual existence. Hayy Ibn Yaqzan embraces the island as the sphere of his experiments, both scientific and spiritual, and his ultimate safe haven. Ibn Fattouma's journey repeatedly and consistently highlights the desert as the path, observing the sun in its rising and setting in every stage of his journey until he is at the threshold of the utopian destination.

Each writer relates spiritual perspectives to the terrain of the journey that the protagonist takes. Hesse describes his spiritual endeavor in terms of gliding in the river—“you should let yourself be carried away,” and adds, “you shouldn’t resist”—which in many ways reflects Siddhartha’s submission to the river itself (Serrano 21). Ibn Tufayl addresses his readers in his introduction to the novel, explaining that in reading philosophy it is important to realize the steps of a higher order rather than just blindly following a faith, “I want only to bring you along the paths in which I have preceded you and let you swim in the sea I have just crossed” (103). His description echoes the motif of swimming to reach the shores of a safe haven and prepares us for the allegory of the island. In an interview concerning his novel, *The Journey of Ibn Fattouma*, Mahfouz refers to Sufism as a mirage, saying, “I love Sufism as I love beautiful poetry, but it is not the answer. Sufism is like a mirage in the desert” (El-Shabrawy). He uses a desert metaphor to call attention to the physical and spiritual aspects of the protagonist’s journey.

The current thesis examines how narrative form harmoniously coordinates three levels of the journey—the physical, the metaphorical and the narratological. The analysis of the three texts entails a reading of their narrative structure and its relation to the motif of a spiritual journey. The conclusion of the thesis argues that narrative structure performs a coherent but complex role in literary texts that assume the form of spiritual journeys. Narrative forms are more than a vehicle for the fabula but can incorporate the details of the fabula, echoing its progress and reflecting its motifs. The connection between fabula and narrative is shown to be irreducible to a mere sequence of events, but the physical side of a journey can exert an influence on allegorical components that suggest spiritual goals. The three aspects of my analysis—fabula, narrative and metaphor—are shown to have different meanings, even when they can be related thematically and in terms of how language is used in literary texts.

## Chapter One

### *Siddhartha*: Narrating the River

*Siddhartha* is presented as an account of the protagonist's journey. The plot progresses with the clear aim of following the physical journey and the spiritual search of Siddhartha, culminating in his final change, thus simultaneously ending the physical and spiritual journeys. Siddhartha's growth as a character relies heavily on the temporal element, as he changes after spending a considerable time in every stage. This focus on temporality enhances linearity. The linearity of presentation starts with the premise that Siddhartha is the focus of the entire narrative. However, the name of Siddhartha takes us beyond linear chronology when it introduces an element of the unchanging. As Misra puts it, "The creation of Siddhartha as a separate character from the historic Buddha seems to be based on the etymological meaning of the word 'Siddhartha'. Siddhartha means, 'one who has attained his goal'" (115-16). Siddhartha, then, by his very name, is a seeker, a traveler, an individual on a spiritual journey. Seemingly familiar, the narrative can be described in simpler terms as a *Bildungsroman* with a twist. Molnár writes, "The literary tradition to which this work belongs is easily defined as that of the *Bildungsroman*, an epic narrative that traces the protagonist's path toward self-realization. But the type of self-realization Hesse speaks of belongs to a different tradition; it bears the name of mysticism" (82). This twist or addition to the *Bildungsroman* is enhanced in *Siddhartha* by pairing the narration with a spiritual motif.

The journey of Siddhartha has the metaphor of a river as a central motif. Siddhartha travels to various places, but in the final phase of his journey, the river he crosses gains considerable focus in the narrative. The river crossing itself acquires significance as the ferryman becomes Siddhartha's last friend and teacher before he achieves transcendence. The other side of

the river, where Siddhartha stays with the ferryman and shares the latter's house, is where Siddhartha receives Kamala, the love of his life, one last time, and where she dies and meets his son for the first time. The final revelation that leads to Siddhartha's transcendence is directly linked to the river, the voice that only the ferryman taught Siddhartha to heed and the wisdom that he learned from the river. The river, therefore, is the motif that runs through the entire journey. Indeed, as Heraclitus claims, "You never step in the same river twice." Nevertheless, Siddhartha describes the river as saying, "It is the same which I crossed on my way" (Hesse 101). He then wonders at the river in which "the water continually flowed and flowed and yet it was always there; it was always the same and yet every moment it was new" (102). This combination of familiarity and novelty is true of Siddhartha, who changes from one step to another but is still the same Siddhartha. He embraces those changes and lets them shape him, just as the river assimilates influences but remains on course. Indeed, the river metaphor starts early: "Dreams and restless thoughts came flowing to him from the river" (5). The novel adopts the motif of the river and offers an ever-changing yet familiar pattern that reflects the changing personas of the protagonist who somehow remains the same throughout the narrative.

Siddhartha starts his journey as a Brahmin. Trained in philosophy and meditation, his personality attracts admirers among all age groups and genders, "That was how everybody loved Siddhartha. He delighted and made everybody happy" (5). We sense a confidence bordering on arrogance, a determination bordering on obstinacy. This is hinted at with Siddhartha paying little attention to his follower and his ruthless decision to leave his home in spite of his father's pain. His father even noticed how, before he left, his son "seemed tall and a stranger to him" (11). We also see his self-discipline, his rebelliousness and courtesy. The early depiction of Siddhartha's personality furnishes the narrative with a basis that can be used to monitor the changes that occur

in his character as the novel progresses. According to Bal, “Once a character's most important characteristics have been selected, it is easier to trace transformations and to describe them clearly” (125-26).

It is possible to consider Siddhartha's early experience at his hometown as the source of the river. Psychologically, the Brahmin training, the admiration of the community and the parental shelter all provided Siddhartha with the motivation for his quest and just enough knowledge and experience to embark on the journey. They form his origin, just as a well or a lake can provide a source for a river to dig its route. Narratologically, Siddhartha's origin and early experiences lay the ground for the linear narrative as his departure provides the track for the movement of the story. Indeed, Siddhartha, unsatisfied in his training as a Brahmin, sets the pace for the narrative as a search as he “beg[ins] to feel the seeds of discontent within him” (Hesse 5). He is never satisfied nor convinced with what he achieves. This defines his search. He is constantly looking for a purpose to his life, a meaning to his existence. His first stop is with the Samanas. He joins them and pushes himself beyond what he had perceived is possible. He learns two valuable lessons, fasting and waiting.

The river motif manifests itself as the journey progresses. It is possible to visualize the stages of Siddhartha's journey as the various natural terrains that a river traverses. The austerity of the Samanas resembles a desert, or a dry and rough terrain that a river passes through like someone waiting for rain that seldom comes, and, consequently, suffering the onslaught of dehydration. This serves as a metaphor for the fasting and waiting that Siddhartha endures. When they are first introduced, the ascetic Samanas are described in terms that match the description of a desert, “Around them hovered an atmosphere of still passion, of devastating service, of un pitying self-denial” (9). The narrative of this stage is as dry as the terrain it reflects, as there

are few events that take place and fewer changes, with long descriptive passages of nothing but waiting and fasting and their effect on Siddhartha. This is seen in the repetition of words, when Siddhartha decides he has “one single goal—to become empty, to become empty of thirst, desire, dreams, pleasure and sorrow—to let the Self die” (Hesse 14). The first emptiness here is that of thirst, a reference to dehydration.

Nevertheless, Siddhartha does not feel that the asceticism and harshness of the Samanas’ life is what he seeks. If anything, Siddhartha’s attempt to conquer his own consciousness only makes him more aware of it. As Butler puts it, “One cannot consciously rid oneself of oneself [...], since any ridding process undertaken with that intention will only further confirm the presence of a conscious self” (118). He moves on. Meeting Gotama at the grove, Jetavana, Siddhartha encounters for the first time a personality that has a much deeper following than his personality ever attracted: “[T]hey were astounded to see the large number of believers and curious people who had spent the night there” (Hesse 26-7). We sense pride in Siddhartha’s rejection of becoming a follower of the Buddha. His challenging of Gotama signifies a higher stage in his rebelliousness. This is no longer the son overgrowing the father, nor the sheep leaving the flock, but now the believer abandoning a faith. As much as the Samana experience achieves the opposite of Siddhartha’s goal by asserting his consciousness rather than deleting it, so does his experience at Gotama’s grove bring to his attention the beauty of the natural world and, therefore, makes him want to indulge in the world rather than escape from it: “The world about him, from which he had fled, he now finds attractive and good. He must not seek to escape life but face it, live it” (Malthaner 106).

This stage also reflects a terrain usually associated with rivers and deserts: the mirage. This is emphasized when Siddhartha departs from this stage perhaps sooner than any of the other

stages. Alternatively, it is possible to see this stage as an oasis, a special place with features that differ from everything around it. Indeed, Gotama's grove is described as allocated specifically for him and his followers, implying that they are cut off from their surroundings, or at least that they do not blend in with their surroundings, which resembles a mirage, an anomaly in a desert. Narratologically, the brevity of this stage is reflected in the detailed descriptions of clothes, gardens and people that exceed what we encountered in the shorter chapter. Siddhartha himself does not do much but takes all this in, signifying that the rich details fail to change him.

The first mention of love occurs in this section as Siddhartha admits he loved Gotama, foreshadowing the increasing role that love plays in the subsequent stages of the narrative. Siddhartha's next phase assumes a different shape. He meets Kamala and Kamaswami. Kamala teaches him the game of pleasure and the throes of passion. Kamaswami teaches him the lust for power and wealth. Siddhartha had learned to trade, to use his power over people, to enjoy himself with a woman. Kamala and Kamaswami address the latent pride that we sensed earlier: "He was suddenly overwhelmed with a feeling of pride" (Hesse 58). Siddhartha sheds his self-discipline and his austerity as he joins the masses, the crowds of people who live for pleasure and compete for no apparent reason. At first, he proudly thinks he can be in control: "For a long time Siddhartha had lived the life of the world without belonging to it" (75). Gradually, however, "The world had caught him; pleasure, covetousness, idleness, and finally also that vice that he had always despised and scorned as the most foolish—acquisitiveness" (78-9).

The river takes a sharp turn in this phase and lingers on in an urban setting. The sensuality and materialism that distract Siddhartha parallel urbanization with its architectural structures, challenging and distracting city dwellers from the beauty of the river. Siddhartha's growing inability to engage in religious practices such as fasting and waiting is accompanied by



the gradual tainting of nature by urban pollution. The narrative becomes more complex in this section as Siddhartha becomes more involved with his surroundings. We get lengthy paragraphs narrating incidents mixed with descriptive passages of Siddhartha's emotions. The familiar simplicity that emerged earlier in the narrative is replaced by a more layered complexity that departs from a one-dimensional focus on events and the response that they elicit.

Siddhartha eventually snaps out of his delirious life of sensual pleasure and material concerns. He moves on, this time running away to cross the river to a destination with which he is still unfamiliar. This crossing changes Siddhartha forever. He meets the ferryman, Vasudeva, and decides to live with him, learning his secrets, impressed by his ability to converse with the river. Vasudeva is like his river. He absorbs and listens: "It was one of the ferryman's greatest virtues that, like few people, he knew how to listen" (Hesse 104). More than any other of Siddhartha's teachers, Vasudeva teaches by first listening to him. Indeed, Vasudeva has no claim to being a teacher: "'You will learn it,' said Vasudeva, 'but not from me. The river has taught me to listen; you will learn from it, too'" (105). He is a guide to the language of the river. He is literally a ferryman. He helps Siddhartha cross the river and transcend to his final transformation.

The narrative employs the symbolism of the river in this stage. This phase of the narrative marks the penultimate transition for Siddhartha before his transformation. In its final stretch, the river flows uninterrupted before it reaches the flowing waters. Indeed, the narrative mirrors that stretch, covering the longest section of the novel, smoothly bringing Siddhartha together with the ferryman but not yet with the river. The river remains the ferryman's domain and Siddhartha remains the welcome guest. Similarly, the narrative progresses with no clear end in sight, but with a comfortable linear progression with no special turn of events, substantial changes or increasing depth.

At this stage in the narrative, Kamala visits Siddhartha with their son whom Siddhartha does not know about. She dies at the ferryman's home. Kamala's death does not foreshadow Siddhartha's death but his transformation:

“Have you attained it?” she asked. “Have you found peace?”

He smiled and placed his hand on hers.

“Yes,” she said, “I see it. I also will find peace.”

“You have found it,” whispered Siddhartha. (Hesse 113)

With Kamala's death, once again, Siddhartha is lured into another life, this time that of fatherhood, “He felt indeed that this love, this blind love for his son, was a very human passion, that it was Samsara, a troubled spring of deep water” (122). Siddhartha realizes that he succumbed to a temptation of another kind. He knows passion: “This emotion, this pain, these follies also had to be experienced” (122). Siddhartha remembers Kamala “had once said to him a long time ago. ‘You cannot love,’ she had said to him and he had agreed with her” (122). Apparently, now, for the first time, he experiences love through his feelings for his younger self, young Siddhartha, the son Kamala named after him. Indeed, as Nakasone writes, “Love is the strength that is nurtured in young adulthood. This strength grows out of the struggle between intimacy and isolation” (247). The seeds of love planted during his life with Kamala have grown after he abandoned her and bear fruit with his son. Yet it is at this time that he is abandoned. His son leaves him after Siddhartha's inability to bond with him: “Full of rage and misery, he found an outlet in a stream of wild and angry words at his father. Then the boy ran away” (Hesse 123-24). Siddhartha follows him and never finds him.

The torrents of emotion that overwhelm Siddhartha are akin to the ups and downs of a waterfall. Emotions that are suppressed throughout the narrative are released culminating in the

sense of guilt that Siddhartha experiences as he remembers leaving his father. The ending, however, is not circular. Memory and guilt only show that Siddhartha has become a father, just as the river towards its end becomes a source for something beyond it. The narrative is tumultuous like Siddhartha's emotional struggles. Its pace quickens with shorter sentences and emotionally charged dialogues.

The novel ends with Siddhartha returning to the ferryman, who in turn decides to leave, sensing his approaching death: “‘Yes, I am going into the woods; I am going into the unity of all things,’ said Vasudeva, radiant” (Hesse 137). Siddhartha, now alone, is found by his early follower, Govinda. Bending over to kiss Siddhartha's forehead, Govinda sees a vision of faces and bodies, good and evil, human and non-human, all at once: “He saw all these forms and faces in a thousand relationships to each other, all helping each other, loving, hating and destroying each other and become newly born. Each one was mortal, a passionate, painful example of all that is transitory” (150). Govinda sees in Siddhartha what neither Siddhartha nor the reader has seen until that moment in the narrative. Siddhartha has changed. He has transformed into a being who harbors a multitude of pure forces that place Siddhartha above the spiritual sphere of even the Buddha himself.

The river finally reaches its destination and transforms into something else, merging with the sea perhaps, or becoming diffused into the soil to unite with the earth. Similarly, Siddhartha is transformed. Govinda sees him as everything and everyone. Govinda kisses Siddhartha's forehead as the sparkling reflections of faces drink from the river like the millions of living beings who are touched by it. The narrative ends with an explosive last paragraph, breathlessly combining the appearance of faces and light, only to culminate in one long sentence that echoes not a conclusion but a transformation, a diffusion into a much wider space. This compares to the

river that does not end but become part of a bigger space, like Siddhartha who transcends himself and becomes part of a larger entity.

The narrative pattern in the novel is solidified by a recurrent element. At each stage, Siddhartha meets a teacher, learns new values or skills and then rebels against the teacher before departing. The repetition of this pattern involves a journey as a linear progression with stops or stations that are generically similar to other elements but differ in their details. Only the ending is different. The final destination is reached when the traveler enters an open space that is at once transformed by the journey and liberated from its constraints.

Proppian formulaic analysis is applicable to the pattern of Siddhartha's movement from one venue to another. The pattern is the same in each venue. It can be laid such that (1) Siddhartha meets a mentor who teaches him a new path; (2) he receives arduous training in a new venue or method; and (3) he becomes successful in the new place he lives in and masters the lessons he learns so that (4) he gradually feels an emptiness after he masters the new techniques and questions them; (5) he decides to depart and seek a new venue; and (6) his departure is met by some resistance from his mentors, or at the least by surprise. The final stage of the journey embraces all of the previous stages and allows him to accept what he has learned.

Propp's motifemes are seen in *Siddhartha* as the mentors that the protagonist meets in addition to Govinda, Siddhartha's admirer, who is the most recurring character in the fabula. Govinda is infatuated by Siddhartha in the preparatory stage when Siddhartha is a Brahmin but moves out of Siddhartha's shadow when they meet Gotama. Govinda then decides to stay with Gotama and not follow Siddhartha. He does not recognize Siddhartha after the latter changes during his submersion in the material world of Kamaswami and Kamala. He does not recognize him yet again when Siddhartha meets him at the deceased ferryman's home. Govinda is the one

who communicates to the reader the transcendence of Siddhartha, for when he kisses Siddhartha's forehead, the transformative vision is narrated through Govinda's point of view. Govinda, therefore, is a vehicle for measuring Siddhartha's change, a tool that traces the changes that occur to the river along its journey in different terrains.

Siddhartha's teachers are mainly stereotypical, flat characters in the beginning, but they become more fully realized as he progresses in his journey. The Brahmins, the father and the ascetics, are all stereotypical teachers. Even Gotama is traditionally esoteric at first, but perhaps makes the transition towards becoming a more accessible teacher when he shows a mild surprise and displays a knowing smile at Siddhartha's rather heated frustration: "The Buddha's eyes were lowered, his unfathomable face expressed complete equanimity" (Hesse 34). Hesse depicts Siddhartha as a new Buddha. This is emphasized by the death of Gotama before Siddhartha's transcendence. The differences between Siddhartha and Gotama underline Siddhartha's emergence as a new, more informed Buddha. Indeed, as Brown writes, "the elements in Siddhartha's life which are akin to those in Gotama's are there to lend the character the aura of a Buddha, and the elements which are foreign are there to convey the newness and distinctiveness of the novel's wisdom" (194).

After Gotama, the teachers interact more positively with Siddhartha as an individual rather than as a follower or a member of the herd. The balance of power switches as Siddhartha succumbs to Kamaswami and Kamala. He is no longer the same rebellious and over-confident student. His departure from Kamala is not an open rejection as during previous stages. Departure is an escape, not a confrontation. He escapes from himself as much as from Kamaswami and Kamala.

The ferryman, Vasudeva, Siddhartha's most enduring teacher, eventually develops into a round character when he decides to depart to a peaceful death. Siddhartha's last teacher is the most unlikely: his son. The reluctant teacher is in fact a reluctant student. By failing to teach the one person who matters to him most, his son, Siddhartha gives away his dual role as student and teacher. He becomes an inspiration, an existence, a multitude of all roles and voices. The river, in this respect, becomes the one ongoing teacher that Siddhartha has, symbolizing the journey and the narrative itself. As such, the narrative *is* the journey, the teacher and Siddhartha himself. The vivid progression of the narrative in *Siddhartha* as it echoes the linear trail of a river is clarified by the following figure:

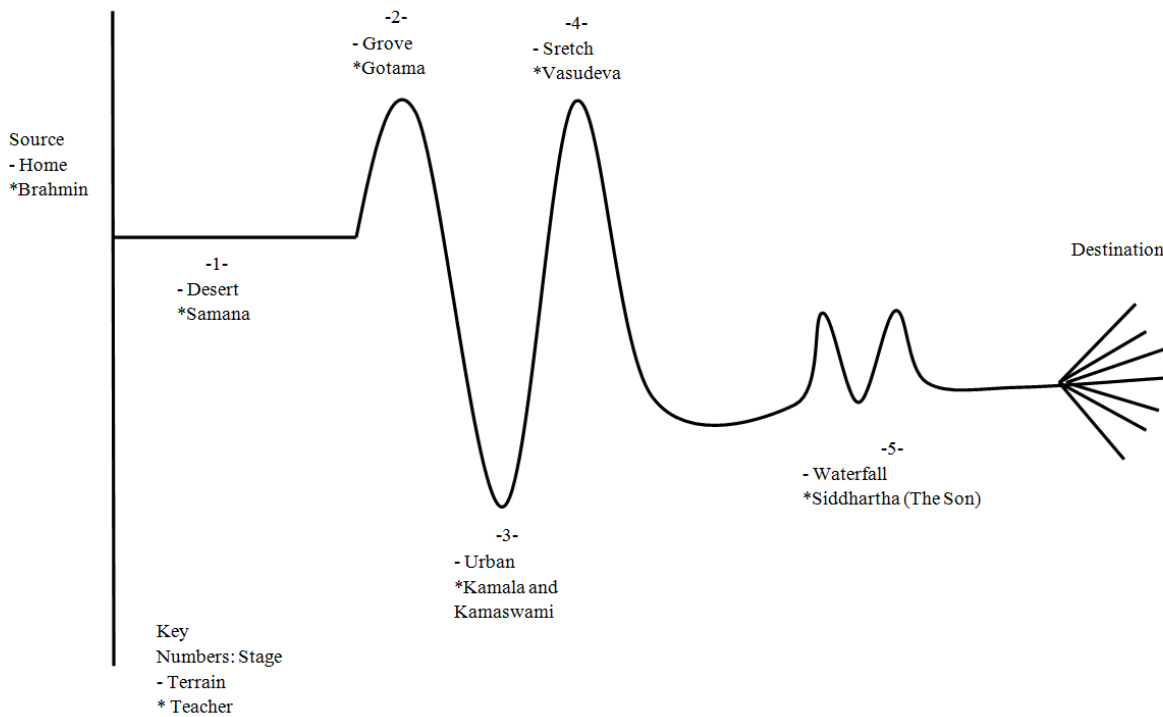


Fig. 1. Narrative Trajectory of Siddhartha's Journey

The figure marks the following features of the narration/river/fabula: (1) the Stage reflects narrative progress. Stages are designated as the source and numbered until the destination; (2) the Terrain reflects the river motif. Each terrain is described as the metaphorical

equivalent of terrains crossed by the river; (3) the Teacher reflects the fabula as developed through the characters who teach Siddhartha, intentionally or unwittingly. The figure shows the correspondence among all three elements, emphasizing how all of them revolve around Siddhartha, making him the skeletal structure of each element.

## Chapter Two

### *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan: Narrating the Island*

Ibn Tufayl's literary work, *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan: A Philosophical Tale*, is as its title proclaims a philosophical narrative (referred to in this chapter as *Hayy*). The narrator openly declares that he is relating an account of a character called Hayy to illustrate specific philosophical notions. The allegorical aspect of the narrative, however, does not detract from its intricate structure and does not render it an oversimplified or flattened didactic fable. *Hayy* is structured according to premises that emerge at the beginning of the text. This literary work does not involve a separation between allegorical narrative and philosophical discussion. The narrator draws conclusions from the allegory at the end of the fabula that imply a circular movement. The duality of beginning and end is emphasized throughout the fabula and in the general structure of the text. The fabula recounts the story of a man on an island. It begins with his life on the island, progresses towards his brief departure and ends with his return.

From the perspective of the island motif, the novel expresses the duality and circularity of narration. Duality starts with the very structure of narrative, which is divided into two levels. Prince discusses the levels of narration within the context of diegesis. He defines diegesis as “[t]he (fictional) world in which the situations and events narrated occur (in French, *diégèse*)” (20). He then categorizes diegesis into diegetic levels, specifying that a diegetic level is “[t]he level at which an existent, event, or act of recounting is situated with regard to a given DIEGESIS (*diégèse*)” (20). In that respect, an extradiegetic level is “[e]xternal to (not part of) any DIEGESIS (*diégèse*)” (29). The same levels of diegesis can be applied to narrators. Consequently, there is the extradiegetic narrator, who is not part of any diegesis, while for the diegesis there is the intradiegetic narrator, “belonging to the diegesis presented in a primary



narrative by an extradiegetic narrator” (Prince 20). As such, in *Hayy*, both levels and their narrators exist. There is the prime narrative sphere that includes the authorial presence of Ibn Tufayl as he presents his philosophical argument. This includes the fabula of Hayy Ibn Yaqzan, the allegory that Ibn Tufayl recounts to prove his arguments. Ibn Tufayl assumes the role of narrator at different levels. He can at once be referred to as the extradiegetic narrator and the intradiegetic narrator. Bal refers to the potential for a difference in function that pertains to the same narrator since “there is an external focalizer distinguished in function, not identity, from the narrator. This external focalizer can embed an internal, diegetic narrator” (163).

The text begins and ends with the extradiegetic narrator, who begins by explaining to us the need for the intradiegesis and ends by drawing conclusions from it as he returns to the extradiegesis. Ibn Tufayl’s choice of narrative form to communicate his philosophical argument is described by Hawi as motivated by his attempt to influence his reader to experience the concepts that he discusses: “Therefore, Ibn Tufayl, it is clear, envisaged that the narrative form would create an atmosphere which would enable the reader to accompany Ḥayy on his intellectual and emotional adventures” (325).

In addition, Hawi states that Ibn Tufayl uses the narrative structure in defense of philosophy, which he must have felt was threatened in an age that wavered between hard logic on one extreme and radical religious thought on the other. Ibn Tufayl hoped that “[e]mbodying his ideas in a story was an innocent means of showing the public that philosophy is not a ‘cursed and a bad’ skill practiced by infidels and that it does not necessarily annul faith or oppose religion” (325). Indeed, Hawi argues, Ibn Tufayl in writing this work was trying to popularize the philosophical method by humanizing it. Therefore, as Hawi puts it, “The dramatic form of

the treatise, together with the Introduction, makes the point that philosophy is neither entirely conceptual nor infallible” (Hawi 325).

Aravamudan, however, does not see Ibn Tufayl’s use of narrative as unusual for the time when it was written. She argues that “[n]arrative was a principal mode of information gathering; storytelling was experimental, provisional, and sought antipodean alternatives from utopian critique; and pseudo-ethnographical writing also encouraged satirical exposé and self-cancellation” (196). In that sense, she believes that “[t]he narrative as a vehicle can treat more abstract problems such as cause and effect, accident and essence, or phenomena and noumena” (201).

Indeed, Ibn Tufayl sets out to discuss the abstract concept of illumination and how it is appropriated by other philosophers. The text begins with Ibn Tufayl discussing his predecessors in an attempt to decide which one of them is closer to the ideal of a true philosopher. Avicenna enjoys Ibn Tufayl’s most positive attention and is named “the prince of philosophers” (Ibn Tufayl 95). Ibn Tufayl believes that the true philosopher is the one who is able to reach further than anyone else. He sees Avicenna as the most well-rounded of his predecessors and the most insightful. He describes a sense of sublimation that he experienced following the stages recommended by Avicenna, saying that “ecstasy [ . . . ] is one of a number of stages in the progress of the devotee” (96).

He writes about Avicenna’s approach in this way: “Now these states, as Avicenna describes them, are reached not by theorizing, syllogistic deductions, postulating premises and drawing inferences, but solely by intuition” (197). In an attempt to expound on Avicenna’s work, Ibn Tufayl recounts an allegory that he professes to have borrowed from Avicenna himself: “To give you a brief glimpse of the road that lies ahead, let me tell you the story of Hayy Ibn Yaqzān,

Absāl and Salāmān, who were given their names by Avicenna himself” (Ibn Tufayl 103). With those words, “the narrator is extricated from the context of the story” (Hawi 336) and the narrative of *Hayy* begins.

The intradiegesis begins with Ibn Tufayl, now the intradiegetic narrator, informing us of the two possible origins of Hayy’s existence. The first supposition is natural. Hayy was created fatherless and motherless out of a perfect alliance of natural elements at a specific moment on a fictitious, uninhabited island. The coordination of weather, soil and sea reached a point that allowed the creation of a human being out of the island’s soil. Thus, Hayy is the biological equivalent of Adam. The second account relies on a rumor spread by people who believe that Hayy is the offspring of a royal woman in a neighboring country who entered into a secret marriage. Her marriage was hidden from her brother, the King, because of his jealous rejection of her suitors. Fearing for her son’s life, she nurses him, puts him in a box and places him in the sea, hoping the winds of mercy will carry him to safety. His box is opened when it gently reaches the shore of the island. The story here bears close resemblance to the origin story of Moses.

Duality emerges early in the narrative with Ibn Tufayl assuming the role of both the extradiegetic narrator and the intradiegetic narrator. It is enhanced at the outset of the intradiegesis with the two origin stories of Hayy. Both accounts are unified by their echoing of Quranic, and more generally Abrahamic, accounts. The first account copies Adam’s creation. The second is borrowed from Moses’ story. The intradiegesis then progresses as an independent story with little commentary from the intradiegetic narrator concerning the philosophical argument of the extradiegesis. For the most part, the two diegeses do not intertwine but unfold in parallel spheres, maintaining the duality that emerged at the beginning of the narrative.

The circularity of the narrative is not only seen with respect to intradiegesis eventually returning to extradiegesis. It is also clear from the intradiegesis itself. The fabula begins and ends on the island. After the two alternative origin stories of Hayy, the fabula takes a single course. The newborn Hayy is found and nurtured by a deer on the island. He grows into an observant and instinctive boy. He responds to the death of his mother-deer by putting his inquisitive faculties to work. The death of the mother figure sees Hayy embarking on his journey. He dissects the deer, looking for the source of life inside her. He learns from observation that the organs inside her may be vital but are all united by an immaterial element that gave them motion and gave the deer all of her distinctive traits, rather than a motionless collection of material organs in a case of flesh, muscle, bone and hair. Further observation leads him to understand that this is the case with all other moving beings on the island. Hayy discovers the notion of the soul.

It is interesting to note the parental absence from this segment of Hayy's narrative. In the version of his birth on the island due to natural conditions, the parents are non-existent. In the version where he does have parents, he is torn away from them and their presence is never restored at any other point in the narrative. Even more emphatically, the only presence of a paternal figure is a mother-figure, in the form of the gazelle, and Hayy dissects its body. Lauri describes the significance of Hayy's dissection of the gazelle: "This dissection marks a transitional moment in the development of Hayy's character; by destroying the body of the mammal who had fostered him, he affirms himself as an independent, rational being" (26-7). In that sense, Hayy achieves his independence and individuality in every aspect of his life, from his origin and birth, to his first awakening. Indeed, it is at this point that Hayy's name acquires its significance. His first name, Hayy, means "alive" in Arabic, while his family name, Ibn Yaḡẓān, means "son of the Awakened." Hayy as alive is seen in his parentless birth or at the very least in

the parentless upbringing. His awakening is seen in the turning point of knowledge that initiates his scientific and spiritual journey and his return to being parentless.

Hayy's exploration leads him to discover plants. He discovers the movement of celestial objects, the sun, the moon and planets. He even discovers fire. The influence of Greco-Roman narratives is clear in the Promethean aspect of Hayy's discovery of fire, which is tamed by Ibn Tufayl into another building block of Hayy's path towards the illumination of the Supreme Being, the Creator, rather than linked to Prometheus's rebellion against the Olympians that earned him gruesome punishment in the original myth. As his exploration of the elements of the island develop, Hayy reaches an understanding that all those elements are connected through a single force, immaterial, ephemeral, and absolute. He refers to this force as the necessarily existent Being: "But it was already quite clear to Hayy that this necessarily existent Being transcends physical attributes in every respect" (Ibn Tufayl 135).

Hayy's realization that there is a supreme being leads him to increasing self-awareness. He develops the sense that his existence must be purposeful when he notices that all elements around him have a purpose. He resolves that his purpose must be to imitate the perfection of that force, that unifying creator. His creator puzzles him, however, and he resumes his journey of exploring the island, with the hope that by knowing his surroundings more, he can learn more about the supreme being. He believes that his goal is to know himself more, which reveals how the Socratic principle of self-knowledge has influenced the novel. Hayy's approach to the quest for self-knowledge is to delve deeper in order to reach the true self that enables him to understand the Supreme Being: "The whole outward self, the objective, corporeal being he could perceive, was not his true self; his true identity was that by which he had apprehended the Necessarily Existent" (136).

Propp's motifeme in *Hayy* is the Supreme Being, who is recurrent throughout Hayy's exploration and in his final decision to return to the island. The presence of the Supreme Being as the sole motifeme enhances the circularity of the narrative around a personal center from whom Hayy's journey begins and towards whom it progresses. Propp's notion of formulaic analysis can be applied to Hayy's exploration of the island. With each new discovery, the following pattern can be discernible: (1) Hayy is curious about the new animal/plant/organism; (2) he examines the physical features of his new discovery; (3) the physical examination leads to an analytical attempt to link the new discovery to earlier ones; and (4) the analysis leads to spiritual mediation that refers the new and old discoveries to a supreme being. These steps occur in all Hayy's discoveries, including, with some variation, his meeting with Absāl, whom Hayy tries to attack, then analyze and study, only to end in the final stage of mediation accompanied by Absāl.

The circularity of the narration is reinforced by the elaborate focus on the circularity of the island. This motif is enhanced as the route of Hayy's journey. Indeed, he travels in circles around the island to explore it. This is highlighted when he observes the circular movement of the celestial objects and tries to emulate their movement to better understand them: "In addition, Hayy prescribed himself circular motion of various kinds. Sometimes he would circle the island, skirting along the beach and roving in the inlets. Sometimes he would march around his house or certain large rocks a set number of times, either walking or at a trot" (Ibn Tufayl 146). The circular motion develops from an attempt to understand the movement of faraway objects that cannot be reached and studied physically into a method of proximity to the Necessarily Existent, for "at times he would spin around in circles until he got dizzy" (146).

Hayy experiments with the new practice and turns it into a form of communication with the Supreme Being:

His method of becoming like the heavenly bodies in the third respect was to fix his mind on the Necessarily Existent Being, cut away the bonds of all objects of the senses– shut his eyes, stop his ears, use all the force at his command to restrain the play of imagination– and try with all his might to think only of Him, without idolatrously mixing any other thought with the thought of Him. Often he would aid himself by spinning around faster and faster. (Ibn Tufayl 146-47)

Hayy's movement achieves the same functions that meditation achieves. Without assuming an ascribed form of worship, it becomes his prayer. As a matter of fact, in this episode, Hayy has discovered prayer. The description of the circular movement is a thinly disguised reference to the dervish dance, the Sufi whirling, that has the performer engage individually or in a group in a rhythmic circular motion that increases in speed. The narrator describes Hayy's movement as matching that of the whirling performers:

If he spun fast enough, all sensory things would vanish; imagination itself, and every other faculty dependent on bodily organs would fade, and the action of his true self, which transcended the body, would grow more powerful. In this way sometimes his mind would be cleansed, and through it he would see the Necessarily Existent– until the bodily powers rushed back, disrupting his ecstasy, and reducing him once more to the lowest of the low. Then he would start over again. (147)

Hayy's progress in his spiritual journey is interrupted by the presence of other characters who enter his sphere. They were from another island, near the same island that in one account

was Hayy's place of origin: "Near the island where, according to one of the two conflicting accounts of his origin, Hayy was born, there was, so they say, a second island, in which had settled the followers of a certain true religion, based on the teachings of a certain ancient prophet – God's blessing on all such prophets" (Ibn Tufayl 155-56). The second island embraces a new religion. The description of the nameless new religion implies monotheism, and suggests the three Abrahamic religions unified as one.

The author, nonetheless, offers an inherent critique of that peculiar religion. The practice of the islanders is described as reliant on physical symbols and concrete images. There is a direct reference to clergy or religious scholars and imams, whose preaching institutionalized religion. There is also a hint at the politicization of religion as the king himself adopts it, which resulted in the people adopting it as well. A subtle reference to the caliphate is discernible here. It is not clear whether the people living under the caliphate join the new faith out of their own accord or because it is the king's faith. The description of the new religion on the neighboring island underlines the socio-political implications of the institutionalization of religion, which comes at the price of despiritualizing and deindividualizing it:

Now the practice in this religion was to represent all reality in symbols, providing concrete images of things and impressing their outlines on the people's souls, just as orators do when addressing a multitude. The sect spread widely throughout the island, ultimately growing so powerful and prominent that the king himself converted to it and made the people embrace it as well. (156)

The duality is maintained in the fact that there are two islands and two new characters. Their introduction emphasizes this duality:



There had grown up on this island two fine young men of ability and high principle, one named Absāl and the other Salāmān. Both had taken instruction in this religion and accepted it enthusiastically. Both held themselves duty-bound to abide by all its laws and precepts for living. They practiced their religion together; and together, from time to time, they would study some of that religion's traditional expressions describing God—exalted be He—the angels He sends, and the character of resurrection, reward and punishment. (Ibn Tufayl 156)

Parallelism is maintained as the main feature of duality in the novel. The two accounts of Hayy's birth are related but exist independently. The two islands are neighboring but are separate. Similarly, the two characters, Absāl and Salāmān, are friends who share the same devotion to their island and its faith but adopt distinct approaches to that faith. Salāmān is the more literal believer, while Absāl is the more spiritual: "Absāl, for his part, was the more deeply concerned with getting down to the heart of things, the more eager to discover spiritual values, and the more ready to attempt a more or less allegorical interpretation. Salāmān, on the other hand, was more anxious to preserve the literal and less prone to seek subtle intentions" (156).

Absāl is depicted as the seeker, the searcher who is not satisfied with the literal and the material. He therefore decides to move to the neighboring island, rumored to be uninhabited and suitable for his desire for solitude and meditation: "For Absāl had heard of the island where it is said Hayy came to be. He knew how temperate, fruitful and hospitable it was and how easy it would be, for anyone who so desired, to live there in solitude" (157). An encounter occurs between Hayy, who now rarely emerges from his cave of meditation, and Absāl, who is new to the world of meditation. The initial encounter is violent. Hayy captures Absāl, perceiving him as an intruder and, therefore, a threat. Absāl sees Hayy as an uncivilized wild inhabitant of the

island and a danger to his life. Yet, Hayy reads genuine fear in Absāl's eyes and his instinctive mercy overtakes his need for survival:

When he got a good look at his captor, clothed in hides still bristling with fur, his hair so overgrown that it hung down over a good part of his body, when he saw how fast he could run and how fiercely he could grapple, Absāl was terrified and began to beg for mercy. Hayy could not understand a word he said. But he could make out the signs of fright and did his best to put the other at ease with a variety of animal cries he knew. Hayy also patted his head, rubbed his sides, and spoke soothingly to him, trying to show how delighted he was with him. Eventually Absāl's trepidation died down and he realized that Hayy did not mean him any harm. (Ibn Tufayl 158-59)

Hayy and Absāl soon become friends. The narrative emphasizes the wealth of knowledge enjoyed by Andalusian scholars, boasting Absāl's training in linguistics and translation, among other disciplines, that enabled him to communicate with Hayy and even teach him Absāl's language. The Renaissance concept of education is clearly anticipated in Absāl's broad scholarly training. Although two characters were introduced, Salāmān and Absāl, on the neighboring island, only one character, Absāl, remains with Hayy, making them two again. Duality recurs in the pairing of characters.

Hayy and Absāl progress from accounts of each other's life to more profound discussions of faith and its influence on achieving an elevated human existence. Each gains the respect of the other. To Absāl, Hayy "surely, was a man of God, one of those who 'know neither fear nor sorrow.' He wanted to serve as his disciple, follow his example and accept his direction" (160). Hayy also found no "contradiction with what he had seen for himself from his supernal vantage

point. He recognized that whoever had offered this description had given a faithful picture and spoken truly” (Ibn Tufayl 160-61).

Absāl then invites Hayy to accompany him to the neighboring island to talk to Absāl’s faithful and learned community. There Hayy attempts to convey his experience. Yet, his interest in transcending the literal practices of the community is rejected even by those who ascribe to the faith he now adopts: “Hayy Ibn Yaqzān began to teach this group and explain some of his profound wisdom to them. But the moment he rose the slightest bit above the literal or began to portray things against which they were prejudiced, they recoiled in horror from his ideas and closed their minds” (162-63).

Eventually, “Hayy despair[ed] of helping them and gave up his hopes that they would accept his teaching” (163). He decides to return to his island. Absāl decides to return as well:

So, saying goodbye to them, the two left their company and discreetly sought passage back to their own island. Soon God–exalted be He–gave them an easy crossing. Hayy searched for his ecstasy as he had before, until once again it came. Absāl imitated him until he approached the same heights, or nearly so. Thus they served God on the island until man's certain fate overtook them.” (165)

The significance of the decision made by Hayy, as a protagonist, to return to his space highlights his lack of comfort in moving outside his personal sphere. Bal elaborates: “The move can be a circular one: the character returns to its point of departure. In this way, space is presented as a labyrinth, as unsafety, as confinement” (137). Indeed, it is possible to see Hayy as confined by his own space, his soul, his ascendance, as much as the inhabitants of the other island are confined by their own spaces. It is possible, however, to develop Bal’s notion of the return as a sign of confinement and see it as a reversal. Perhaps it is a rejection of the pervasive practice of

preaching and the influence of Greek Sophism on Islamic philosophers that Ibn Tufayl seems to criticize in his description of Ghazālī as sacrificing consistency for successful preaching (Ibn Tufayl 101). Habib writes: “The argument and action of this narrative implies that Ibn Tufayl embraces the possibility of a qualified cosmopolitanism, provided that society is protected from what he calls ‘newfangled’ sophistic teachings, and that the genuine philosopher does not compromise his happiness and way of life in the futile attempt to enlighten others” (98).

The relationship between Absāl and Hayy is an allegorical dramatization of an encounter between the logical and the spiritual, the material and the immaterial, the social and the instinctive, the communal and the individual. Absāl and Hayy merge to form the true philosopher of the extradiegesis. Absāl’s experience, drenched in socio-political and urban sophistication, needs the instinctive purity and wildness of Hayy’s existence to acquire credibility. Similarly, Hayy needs the conflict with society to clarify his beliefs and to solidify his faith. His return to the island completes the circle. The return of Absāl with him ends the search by uniting the two islands. Their unity ends the intradiegesis.

The story returns full circle to the extradiegesis with Ibn Tufayl assuming once more the role of the extradiegetic narrator. He comments on his attempt to offer the readers “a fleeting glimpse of the mystery of mysteries to draw them to true understanding and turn them away from this other, false way” (Ibn Tufayl 166). Ibn Tufayl refers to his allegory as part of his philosophical treatise, which he argues fills a scholarly void as his predecessors have not fully used it for fear of being misinterpreted, “In treating of this openly I have broken the precedent of our righteous ancestors, who were sparing to the point of tightfistedness in speaking of it” (165).

The circular narrative then concludes with the extradiegesis sealing the narrative as a scholarly enterprise with Hayy's fabula serving as an allegory within the scholarly argument.

The narrative structure of *Hayy* can be illustrated using the following figures:

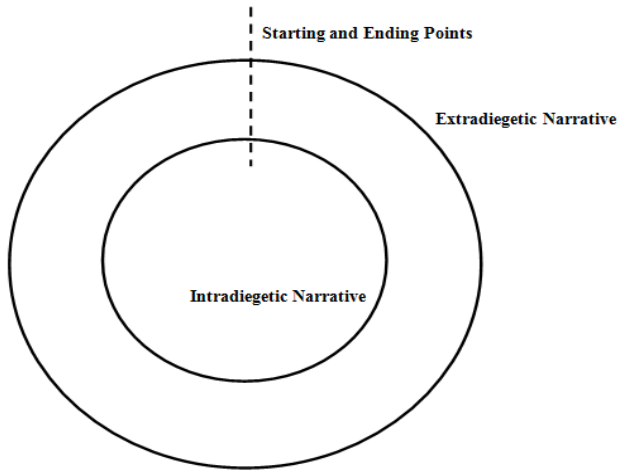


Fig. 2. Extradiegetic and Intradiegetic Levels

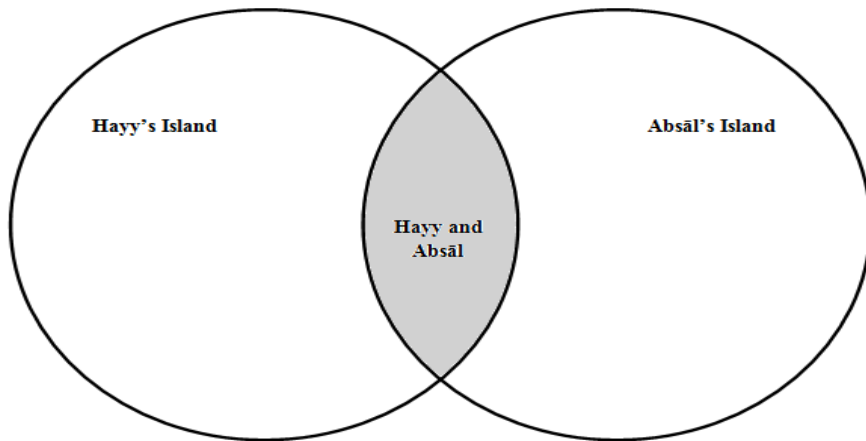


Fig. 3. Interaction between Hayy and Absāl

In fig. 2, the two diegetic levels, the extradiegetic and intradiegetic, begin and end within the same circle. In fig.3, the two islands interact in a shaded area, where Hayy and Absāl meet, but otherwise remain two separate spheres.

## Chapter Three

### *The Journey of Ibn Fattouma: Narrating the Desert*

Mahfouz's *The Journey of Ibn Fattouma* is a narrative of allegories (referred to in this chapter as *Ibn Fattouma*). Rather than presenting us with an allegory of a specific aspect of human existence, Mahfouz depicts for us a series of allegories, and strings them together within the framework of a meta-allegory or primary allegory. The narrative trajectory of the fabula is structured to follow the protagonist's journey. The protagonist, Ibn Fattouma, is named after Ibn Battouta, a medieval Moroccan traveler whose journeys are among the most important surviving travelogues. While not following Ibn Battouta's account, Mahfouz builds his narrative around the physical structure of a travelogue. As a result, the narrative is neither linear nor circular. Ibn Battouta is not traveling in a straight line.

He is also not returning to where he started. Every chapter begins with a new journey. The route of the new journey is never described as anything but venturing in the desert, watching the dawn. The similarity between the two narratives is also seen in the destination. As Ouyang puts it, "The objective of the journeys too may be deemed the same: both are narratives of the journeys to the 'House of God'; pilgrimage to Mecca in *Ibn Baṭṭūṭa* and to Utopia where God's words rule in *Ibn Faṭṭūma*" (87). Indeed, the nature of the travel narrative focuses on the protagonist as the center of the narrative. According to Sabry Hafez, this exemplifies an important feature of Arabic literature in which "[t]he character was a major element of the plot, occupying a central position in the writer's priorities" (108). Mahfouz, therefore, was using a narrative form associated with classical Arabic literature that "made positive heroes, from the historical to the mythological, a major source of narrative inspiration" (108).

The sun then is the only guide. It is the companion accompanying the caravans that Ibn Fattouma joins throughout his travels. Ibn Fattouma's constant awareness of the sun, the only element he mentions at the opening of every journey, centralizes it, placing it at the heart of his travels. Journeying from Mashriq to Haira, we find "[t]he caravan moved off in a darkness that betrayed the first glimpses of dawn" (Mahfouz 51/56). From Haira to Halba, the pattern persists: "We plunged into the gentle darkness of dawn" (79/83). It remains the same traveling to Aman, "The caravan moved off, cleaving the dawn darkness" (113/119), and on to Ghuroub, "The caravan plunged into the darkness of the dawn" (133/141). Only in the last part of the journey, as the travelers head towards the utopian destination, Gebel, do we find only dawn and no darkness: "At dawn the caravan left the land of Ghuroub" (145/155). Indeed, the sunrise is finally described, shedding light on the road: "The rising of the sun revealed a flat desert throughout which were scattered many wells" (145/155). The final chapter is entitled, "The Beginning" (145/155), implying that the arrival to Gebel, which is not narrated, is only the beginning and that the entire narrative was a preparation for that stage, just as real wakefulness begins with the dawn.

Ibn Fattouma, therefore, is orbiting the sun, with its dawn lining the stretch of the desert. This movement is not circular since it does not return to where it started. It is orbital, following a course that does not falter, without reaching its destination. In a sense, the destination loses its significance compared to the journey and the stops made along Ibn Fattouma's route.

The current chapter analyzes the narrative strategy that Mahfouz uses in *Ibn Fattouma* and that resembles the physical journey of the protagonist. Ibn Fattouma journeys in the desert, starting at dawn, and stops at different cities, spending different intervals of time in each city, depending on the circumstances, sometimes even marrying a local woman and starting a family

or getting in trouble and serving time in a local prison. The only constant in the novel is the desert and the sun. The narrative progresses in a pattern that reflects the journey with travel occupying much less space and fewer details than the cities that are full of characters and plot twists. This structure emphasizes the barren repetitiveness of travel in contrast to the richness of the oases met along the way. The journey, however, never reaches an end. The only hint of destination that Ibn Fattouma seeks is the city of Gebel, which is mentioned as the next stop at the end of the novel, ending the narrative with no account of whether the next stop is indeed the final destination. The mystery is enhanced by an entire world painted in *Ibn Fattouma* with little reference to time and space, for we know neither the era nor the location of this imaginary universe. Mahfouz convinces us that “he has conceived a total universe and the story is only a glimpse of it” (Beard 26). There is little reason to believe that the journey will come to an end at any specific point.

The narrative becomes diffuse as the fabula manifests itself. The novel starts with the family background of Ibn Fattouma. He is the child of an octogenarian man and a seventeen-year old woman named Fattouma. His step-brothers from his father’s earlier wife name him Ibn Fattouma, which is Arabic for the son of Fattouma, thus dissociating themselves from him as a blood relation. As Beard puts it, the choice of names delivers a “sense of contingency, of accidents and slight gestures: in *Ibn Fattûma* the fact that his name reflects a family conflict (his mother Fattouma is a young wife of an older father) sets in motion a whole family history (the name suggests his alienation from the hostile older brothers) which we intuit but never witness” (26).

But there is more to be said about the choice of this name. The name Fattouma is a nickname of the name, Fatima. Fatima has strong significance in the novel. It is the name of the



daughter of Prophet Muhammad and the wife of his cousin, Ali. She is a central figure in Islamic tradition, both for Shia' and Sunni Muslims. She is also culturally and politically significant in Egypt, as the powerful Fatimid caliphate named after her started in Egypt and ruled North Africa, South Mediterranean Europe, the Levant and even Hijaz, from the tenth to the twelfth century CE. Fatima is the only female in Islamic history to have an entire caliphate named after her, the Fatimid caliphate. The naming of this caliphate departs from the tradition of naming caliphates after the first caliph who starts a dynasty, such as Abbasids after Abbas or Umayyad after Umayya. During the Fatimid caliphate, Al-Azhar mosque and university were established. Indeed, this fact is emphasized in the novel as Fattouma's father is called Al-Azhari, in other words, he is associated with Al-Azhar, a term used to the present day to refer to graduates of Al-Azhar University.

In addition, Fatima is considered an early inspiration of Sufi spirituality, as her poems after the death of her father exemplify the spiritual search for the unified image of both a father and a prophet, an image that recreates a lost ideal that she only felt when her father was alive. This search becomes a motif recurrent in subsequent Sufi poetry. Ibn Fattouma, therefore, is the symbolic offspring of the Islamic tradition in Egypt, specifically of the only matriarchal dynasty in Islamic history, and a testimony to Sufi spirituality. Interestingly, the real name of Ibn Fattouma is given as Qindil, which means 'lantern.' The search of Qindil is a search for illumination, combined with a spiritual background as established by his nickname and related to the Sufi origins of Fatima. Commenting on Mahfouz's Sufi references, al-Mousa notes "Mahfouz's attempt to use Sufi doctrines and practices to establish a kind of native version of epic machinery" (37). Mahfouz's Sufi allegories partake of the general atmosphere in the Egypt of his time. Al-Mousa goes on to write: "Of course, it is not on record that Mahfouz is affiliated

with any Sufi order, but his remarkable attraction to Sufism in his fictional writings reflects the extent to which Sufi activities are spread in modern Egypt” (Al-Mousa 37).

Ibn Fattouma’s journey is an allegory of a global traveler. His travels take him to new lands and kingdoms, all unknown to him. The allegory begins with Ibn Fattouma disturbed by the corruption in his nameless Homeland. He is consequently advised by his mentor, Sheikh Maghagha al-Gibeili, to seek a land known as Gebel, where the worlds of spirit and social justice have found perfect union. The mentor himself tried to reach it once but was interrupted on the way by a civil war occurring in one of the kingdoms. The kingdoms reflect a concern set out at the beginning: the balance between social justice and spirituality. The fabula develops as a search, not just internal, but societal and even political. The dramatized backdrop of war and conflict communicate with the profundity of human emotions and thought inside Ibn Fattouma. Beard explains: “On the one hand we have the formulaic city scenes and the interviews with local authorities who articulate each set of values, and on the other hand a human story, with its detours and changes of pace” (26).

The narrative strategy is episodic. While Prince defines an episode as “[a] series of related events standing apart from surrounding (series of) events because of one or more distinctive features and having a unity” (27), Mahfouz’s use of episodic narrative is closer to the Arabian Nights’ tradition. In *The Arabian Nights*, one of the stories told by Shahrazad is the tale of the three dervishes recounted in “The Story of the Porter and the Three Ladies” (Mahdi 80-180). The three dervishes are related, but each one has his own story. Similarly, the kingdoms Ibn Fattouma visits are separate entities that warrant separate narration, but they become geopolitically interrelated as the narrative progresses. Bal points out that there is a “difference between the various episodes of one plot, and various sub-plots” (203). *Ibn Fattouma’s* use of

episodes corresponds to Bal's definition. The episodes do not constitute a subplot, but are all semi-independent stages of the same plot. Indeed, the episodes in this case, once grouped together, can "determine the general rhythm" (Bal 101). This rhythm can be seen in the narrative functions recurrent in each land that Ibn Fattouma visits.

Propp's formulaic analysis can be applied to *Ibn Fattouma's* episodic visits. The structure of the narrative incorporates a series of acts that are repeated in every land visited by Ibn Fattouma. The narrative faithfully follows that pattern: (1) Ibn Fattouma journeys with a caravan of travelers; (2) he observes the sun and the desert; (3) the caravan reaches the gates of a new kingdom; (4) the travelers are received according to each kingdom's customs; (5) Ibn Fattouma learns about the kingdom and becomes part of it, either through a mentor or a woman with whom he becomes romantically involved; (6) Ibn Fattouma does not leave with the caravan and seeks an independent life in the new kingdom; and (7) he eventually leaves the kingdom, either because he falls out with authorities or because the kingdom undergoes an unsettling change.

Ibn Fattouma very early declares his reasons to embark on his journey "I shall visit Mashriq, Haira, and Halba, but I shall not stop, as you did because of the civil war that had broken out in Aman—I shall visit Aman, Ghuroub and Gebel" (Mahfouz 14/18-19). This turns the journey into a challenging search for a utopian society that focuses on social justice and spirituality. It is possible, therefore, to see every land or country that Ibn Fattouma subsequently visits as allegorical for the attempt to achieve utopia. The names of the countries are symbolically significant. His homeland, described as the home of Islam, is introduced in the first chapter as simply: "The Homeland". It is clearly a Muslim country and a reflection of the comfort zone that a spiritual traveler would pass through in travelling to countries of other faiths.

The first country Ibn Fattouma goes to is Mashriq. The name means the place of sunrise. The narrative trajectory is established at this stage, with the sun as the source. It is interesting that the number of countries visited or lived in by Ibn Fattouma correspond to the number of planets believed to be in orbit during pre-modern times until the seventeenth century. In that sense, Mashriq might imply the land closest to the sun. This could also be viewed chronologically, with Mashriq as the earliest civilizations, closest to the dawn of human societies. The narrative is then a temporal as much as a spatial journey, traveling across the social and spiritual evolution of the human race. Indeed, in Mashriq the people embrace sexual freedom and do not accept most social institutions that were formed in later societies. They mate publicly in ceremonial festivities under the light of the moon, which is worshipped in a manner that echoes the paganism of pre-Abrahamic cultures. In this land, Ibn Fattouma lives with a woman called Arousa. When he tries to indoctrinate their five children with his faith, he is exiled from Mashriq, the land of mystery and sensuality.

The second journey stretches the narrative structure as much as the fabula. The new land is Haira, which means confusion or uncertainty. Haira is a highly disciplined military society. Arousa is enslaved and brought to Haira. Ibn Fattouma's attempts to reunite with her fail, however, as Haira's chamberlain desires Arousa himself. Consequently, Ibn Fattouma is unfairly thrown into jail for twenty years. His years in jail are narrated as a lapse of time, where he knows little of what happens outside. Similarly, the narrative is presented abruptly with no real explanation for the character's imprisonment. We are not provided with any alternative perspective. We do not meet other characters after Ibn Fattouma is released who bridge the gap in the narrative: "[A]fter a day or a year another voice said, 'War may break out between Haira and Halba'" (Mahfouz 72/77). The narrative mirrors the loss of time in the protagonist's life.

Haira is an allegory for the age of medieval to pre-modern times, an age where raw despotic and military power reigns supreme.

The next stop is the land of Halba, which means an arena. Diversity is the predominant social value in this land. This is emphasized as Ibn Fattouma meets a new love interest, Samia, a Muslim pediatrician, and finds out that Arousa has escaped to Halba as well and married a Buddhist man. The diversity and insistence on individual freedom we see in Halba is a reference to modern Western ideals and, more generally, to left-wing and liberal notions. Halba, however, as an arena, is also a combat zone, both for the ideas of its inhabitants and also for the neighboring kingdom of Aman, against which Halba seems to be preparing to wage a war. Ibn Fattouma's choice to leave Halba and go to Aman out of his own free will reflects the principle of free will emphasized in Halba. It also supports the narrative progress. In a sense, Mahfouz chooses narrativity over the closure of the fabula as much as his protagonist chooses the search over stability.

The land of Aman is, as its name indicates safety in Arabic, obsessed with security. Discipline and order are seen as the pinnacles of social justice, but they come at a toll, as individual uniqueness is stifled. Politically, the tense pre-war enmity between Halba and Aman suggests the cold war, with Halba as Western European countries and the US, whereas Aman is the Soviet Union, communism or the Eastern Bloc. It is more generally right-wing and utilitarian.

The first four kingdoms Ibn Fattouma visits are thinly disguised allegories for socio-political systems that, while clearly criticized in the novel, are also approached as valid realities that cannot be dismissed. The allegorical representation of the four countries offers "schematizations of political organizations, all believable, all in their way capable of evoking

loyalty, allow[ing] us to imagine a political dialogue which we may not agree with, but which is sincere, naïve, and powerful” (Beard 27).

The next stop is perhaps the most complex of all. Ghuroub means sunset. This is clearly the land farthest from the sun, towards the demise of human civilization. Nothing much happens in Ghuroub as far as the fabula or the narrative are concerned. Nevertheless, it is crucial for both. It relies on character development. Ibn Fattouma delves deeper into his soul and questions his journey. In a sense, Ghuroub may be a postmodern era of doubt and emptiness, where the journey of humanity with all its beauty, love, injustice and bloodshed must be questioned. The narrative resumes as characterization is interrupted, for Aman attacks Ghuroub, prompting Ibn Fattouma to seek his last stop, Gebel. In a sense, *Ibn Fattouma*'s semi-apocalyptic chapter seems to predict a wave of right-wing ideologies that will sweep across humanity as it approaches its final days.

The narrative structure ends without closure just like the fabula and the journey. Ibn Fattouma and his caravan believe they can see Gebel looming in the horizon, but we never learn whether they reach it. The narrative does not involve any major shifts as it moves towards its conclusion. Gebel means mountain and refers to Paradise or to Moses, as the first of the three Abrahamic figures, and the one who talked to God on Mount Sinai. In that sense, Gebel cements the notion that spirituality originates in Egypt. The sun was first worshipped in ancient Egypt. Mount Sinai, the earliest symbol of Abrahamic religions, is in Egypt. Moreover, the very names Fatima and Al-Azhari pertain to the Egyptian development of Islam. With the Mashriq as sunrise and Ghuroub as sunset, it is possible to see Gebel as the realm of dreams, the ideal that cannot be reached, falling outside time and place, like death. The Homeland, then, would be located anywhere on the spectrum of kingdoms or lands, but we do know it cannot be the first, as

Mashriq is closest to the sun, nor the last, as Ghuroub is the farthest. The Homeland, therefore, is somewhere between Mashriq and Ghuroub.

In *Ibn Fattouma*, Propp's motifs mainly assume the form of two sets of characters: mentors and love interests. In each land, the protagonist meets a man who teaches him about the new land symbolizing the patriarchy of socio-political systems everywhere, and a woman with whom he falls in love, symbolizing the instinctive matriarchy of human nature that is denied by the authority of various social orders and political regimes. The mentors start with Sheikh Maghagha al-Gibeili at the Homeland, whose travels inspire Ibn Fattouma's own. The name Gibeili is derived from Gebel, the mountain, and is maybe a miniature form of *Gabal*, thus meaning a small mountain. This can indicate the religious reference of the sheikh as a preacher, and makes his failure to reach the ideal land of Gebel a statement about the failure of institutionalized religion, as opposed to enlightened spirituality, to achieve an ideal society. Moreover, Gibeili ends up marrying Fattouma after her old husband dies. It is possible to assume that she intentionally chose Gibeili to mentor her son as an excuse to bring Gibeili into the house. The Oedipal jealousy Ibn Fattouma feels is mixed with a desire to challenge his mentor and achieve what he could not achieve. Ibn Fattouma feels betrayed by the two people he loved the most and implicitly condemns a system that merges religion and social norms.

The second and third mentors are comparable: Fam, from Mashriq, and Ham from Haira. Both names can be references to Sam and Ham, the children of Noah in Abrahamic stories, and are considered the origins of human races. This sets the first two lands, Mashriq and Haira, as stages in antiquity. Both mentors are not learned preachers or members of the institution, but rather simple small business owners. Their vocation refers to a stage before the institutionalization of social and religious practices.

The Halba mentor is another Muslim sheikh. His name, Hamada, is a modern nickname for Mohamed and Ahmed, both names of the Islamic prophet Muhammad. In contemporary culture, the name Hamada has slightly negative connotations of playfulness and lack of depth. It is possible that Sheikh Hamada is a critique of contemporary Western religions which seek to modernize spirituality and force issues of social and political bearing upon it, rather than understand its origins and deeper dimensions.

The Aman mentor is Fluka. His name means a boat, indicating the selectivity of the Aman system, which only allows the elite to select their leader. This elite group includes the best of every main profession, resembling a Noah's ark of sociopolitical privilege and safety. Fluka himself does not allow Ibn Fattouma much space and follows him like his shadow, emphasizing the surveillance of Aman society.

The last mentor Ibn Fattouma meets is a nameless sage in the land of Ghuroub. He is more like a monk, living in a forest, whose role is merely to assist the travelers through a transition to Gebel. The wilderness in Ghuroub is matched by its uncouth sage, who has little claim to organized religion or socio-political order, thus echoing the final stage of self-reflection and meditative assessment of one's life as it approaches its end.

While the mentors in Ibn Fattouma's life serve as markers of the transitions in the narrative, the women in his life are significant as elements of narrative continuity. The mother, Fattouma, is the Oedipal mother-figure who turns from the saintly figure of her namesakes, Fatima and Al-Azhar, into a sexualized woman who plots to have her lover teach her son in order to have him in the house. She sets the motif of the lost matriarchy that is recurrent in the narrative. She is mirrored by Ibn Fattouma's first love, Halima, who is forced to leave him to marry the chamberlain of the sultan of the Homeland. The link between Halima and Fattouma is



interesting. The name Halima is a reference to Halima Assaidia, Prophet Muhammad's wet nurse. Both women, therefore, are clear references to the matriarchal origin of Islamic spirituality. Their disappearance from Ibn Fattouma's life denotes the fading out of the matriarchal influence on spirituality.

The women in the lands that Ibn Fattouma visits confront the same issues symbolized by Fattouma and Halima. In Mashriq, Arousa, which means both a bride and a doll, evokes sensuality but blatantly criticizes the objectifying of women in ancient mythology and religious lore. In Mashriq, Arousa represents both the process of sexualization, through the mating rituals and promiscuity of Mashriq, and also motherhood, as she bears Ibn Fattouma children. Unlike other characters in the fabula, Arousa appears in all subsequent lands. Arousa is the human dramatization of each land she appears in. In Mashriq, she is a sexual/maternal figure, providing a primitive view of the female. In Haira, she is captured by the army of Haira, and a chamberlain from Haira frames Ibn Fattouma and jails him to have her for himself in a twist that starkly reminds us of the Homeland chamberlain who takes Halima from Ibn Fattouma. She thus represents the military totalitarianism of Haira. Arousa shows up again in Halba. This time she willingly marries a Buddhist merchant when she despairs of seeing Ibn Fattouma again. In that sense, she mirrors the individual freedom of choice that Halba highlights.

Arousa, therefore, carries her symbolic significance, a combination of Fattouma and Halima, to condemn the lands that Ibn Fattouma visits of the same objectifying of women. Only in Ghuroub, Arousa never shows up physically, but the sage of the forest tells Ibn Fattouma that she has already gone to the utopian land of Gebel, which she has earned because of her suffering. Her non-physical presence echoes the immaterial atmosphere of Ghuroub. If Arousa is the epitome of matriarchy, then she belongs in the utopian perfection of Gebel. If she is the Eve to

Ibn Fattouma's Adam, then she has redeemed herself and has returned to Paradise. It is possible to see Arousa's arrival at Gebel before Ibn Fattouma as a condemnation of the patriarchy and the misogyny of various socio-political systems that have appeared in the history of humanity.

In Halba, Ibn Fattouma marries another Muslim woman, Samia, whose professional success echoes Western ideals of the working woman. Nevertheless, she fails to attract his love adequately to keep him from resuming his travels. Samia, like most of Halba, represents the diversity and freedom that is appealing to Ibn Fattouma but is never enough to satisfy his thirst for perfection. Her presence does not continue like Arousa's presence. She marks a temporary pause in the journey during Ibn Fattouma's residence in Halba. Only Arousa mirrors Ibn Fattouma's narrative trajectory.

While preparing for his journey, Ibn Fattouma describes how he sees his destination, Gebel: "The land of Gebel presented itself to the eye of my imagination like some much-loved star mounting its throne behind the other stars" (Mahfouz 15/19). It is possible to visualize the narrative trajectory that Mahfouz weaves in *Ibn Fattouma* as a planetary orbit, akin to the solar system as illustrated in the following figure:

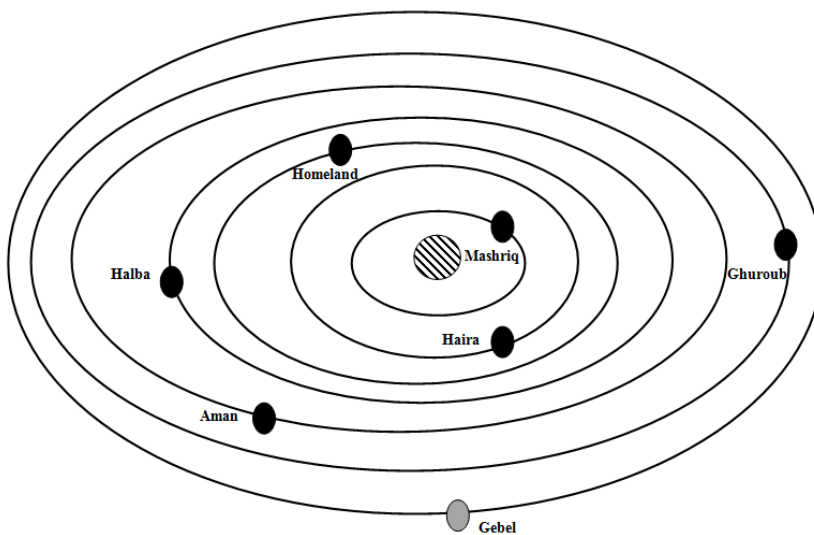


Fig. 4. The Narrative Trajectory of Ibn Fattouma's Journey

The sun is central, with a number of planets circling it in the same oval pattern, arranged according to their distance from the sun. The sun is metaphorically the origin of civilization, hence the recurring dawn scene at the outset of each caravan journey to a new land. The movement of the planets progresses in distance from the sun, but still revolves around it, with Gebel, therefore, as the distant unknown, the place after sunset, or Ghuroub. The folktale quality of the fabula creates the sense of wonder even when it is reread, as Beard writes: “Every time I reread *Ibn Fattouma* I am drawn in by the plot just as one is drawn into any successful novel, naively hypnotized; I follow the characters, and though I am less surprised each time at what happens, I am drawn into the reverie of Ibn Fattouma’s final destination, his project of reaching the mystical land of Jabal—both a geographical accomplishment and a spiritual one” (26). In that sense, Mahfouz weaves his narrative structure to create a repetitive sense of hypnotism, just as his character hypnotically follows the sunrise and sunset.

## **Conclusion:**

### **The Journeys Revisited**

The narrative strategies of the three works, *Siddhartha*, *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, and *The Journey of Ibn Fattouma* share significant similarities. Needless to say, they also display key differences. Interestingly, the differences among the narrative strategies of the three novels still serve to enhance the similarities as they present variations on shared techniques. All three narratives adopt a narrative trajectory that utilizes physical space. The journey motif, central to all three, is materialized in a specific mode of movement towards the destination.

The narration follows the pattern of the physical journey. This is achieved through narrative continuity. The narrative flows or is interrupted in a manner that reflects the physical journey. In *Siddhartha*, the journey is purposefully linear, as the protagonist journeys from a starting point to an end point, passing by cities with the indication of earlier stops behind him when he moves on. This is reflected in the frequent stops he makes, from the time he spent with the Samanas, Gotama's garden, the city of Kamaswami and Kamala, all the way to the ferryman's cottage. There is no indication of going back. This is emphasized as he is followed by Kamala, indicating that he moves forward. In *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, the journey is circular. It ends where it begins. The protagonist starts off on an island, visits a neighboring island, and returns to his island eventually. The perfect circle of the narrative is preserved by the fact that even the new character introduced in the fabula meets Hayy on Hayy's island. In *The Journey of Ibn Fattouma*, the journey is orbital, spiral and progressive. The protagonist travels across the globe, follows the sun's movement, from sunrise to sunset, always in the desert. He never goes back, ending any circularity, but he does not follow a strictly linear movement, as his travels seem to take him deeper into uncharted territories. Each land the protagonist visits is a stretch of the

spiral, while the ending of each stop and the beginning of the following one are connected by the reiterated description of the caravan traveling by dawn. The narrative is just like a spiral, always evolving into another orbit.

In addition to the elaborate shape of the route, each novel highlights a physical terrain traversed by its protagonist for all of the journey or at least its most prominent part. The narration mirrors such terrain as covered by the protagonist in a progressive movement. In *Siddhartha*, the narrative flows with little pause. There are no unknown gaps in the narrative. All the elements of the fabula are accounted for, including those that take a longer period of time. The period Siddhartha spends with Kamala is described, giving detailed examples of his actions and their influence on his personality. The narrative continuum in its uninterrupted and expansive flow in that sense embodies the river motif that is central to the journey. In *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, the narrative is circular and enclosed on itself. It echoes the island that restricts the journey. Even the move outside the island is to another island. Both Hayy and Absāl are themselves like two islands that intersect at some point only to resume their separate trajectories, with Absāl transitioning from his circle to Hayy's. The isolation of Hayy and the insulated narrative that focuses on his story mirrors the isolation of the island, with outside influences emerging as either undocumented accounts or passing incidents. In *The Journey of Ibn Fattouma*, the narrative relies on episodic stops. The journey itself takes place in the desert with stops at inhabited lands with no indication of civilization between one land and the other, thus placing the lands as oases or cities scattered in an unforgiving stretch of desert. This is echoed by the semi-independent stops in each country.

On a spiritual level, each fabula is a journey of spiritual, intellectual and psychological change for the protagonist. The narrative strategy echoes that as well by following the

metaphoric dramatization of each journey. In *Siddhartha*, the changes that occur to the protagonist are evolutionary. His journey is full of ups and downs. He reaches spiritual and intellectual heights at each point followed by a lower point that leads to his rejection of the new stage he is in, from the Samanas to the final stage with the ferryman, until he embraces all facets of his life. The narration is thus full of ups and downs as well, alternating between turning points of sudden change or decision to move on, and longer narrations describing the state the protagonist is undergoing. These turning points resemble the mutations that catalyze the final transformation of the protagonist. In *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, the protagonist acquires knowledge with little interference or friction with other characters, but through research and discovery. From dissecting his foster-mother the gazelle to classifying plants, he builds blocks of knowledge and pairs them with meditation to reach his convictions. The narration follows this progress by providing profound illustrative passages that describe organisms leading conclusive statements about the links among all creation, thus enforcing combining detailed passages of academic practices with lengthy meditative passages. In *The Journey of Ibn Fattouma*, the protagonist's character development is based on overcoming obstacles rather than evolving like Siddhartha or learning like Hayy. He needs to cross the countries that separate him from Gebel, and needs to do so in one story. The narration offers a reassuring repetition of the starting scene at each new part of the journey, thus underlining how various crossings and obstacles are followed by more hurdles and obstacles.

In all three novels, a recurrent motif is a unifying element throughout each journey. This motif is Govinda in *Siddhartha*, the Supreme Being in *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, and Arousa in *The Journey of Ibn Fattouma*. The choice of the motif is coordinated with the thematic focus of each novel. *Siddhartha* focuses on the notion of the individual mentor, hence the choice

of Govinda, an admirer and a disciple. In *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, the direct connection to the Necessarily Essential is all important, hence the focus on the Supreme Being. In *The Journey of Ibn Fattouma*, the social construct is the most fundamental aspect, hence highlighting Arousa as marriage.

Perhaps the most significant difference among the three novels is the presentation of the destination. This involves a depiction of both the motivation and the character's perception of the destination itself. In *Siddhartha*, the protagonist is fueled by his dissatisfaction with himself and his present achievements. This motivates him to seek a quest for personal improvement. The motivation highlights the fabula as a journey of personal relationships, where Siddhartha evaluates each method or life style he encounters. In *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, the protagonist seeks a better understanding of his environment, rather than improvement. By seeking such knowledge, he embarks on a journey of self-discovery that links him to the world around him. His interaction with people is more of a missionary nature as he tries to explain his spiritual venue to those people, after his initial encounter with Absāl who at once becomes Hayy's teacher when he teaches him his language and Hayy's student when Absāl follows Hayy's spiritual journey. In *The Journey of Ibn Fattouma*, the protagonist never loses sight of his destination. He is motivated by anger at his community for its moral failings, including what he perceives as the betrayal of his loved ones. His encounters with the various peoples of the lands he visits are informed by comparisons with his community, and only propel him further to seek the utopia he believes is better than all the societies he visits.

To conclude, the destination and the motivations of each story differ. Siddhartha starts out not knowing what his destination will be. Hayy realizes he already lives in his destination and returns to it. Ibn Fattouma has his perfect society in sight and strives to reach it. The journey

in each case is ultimately a search. The trajectory each one takes is a motif derived from the world around us and beyond. For Siddhartha it is a river voyage, for Hayy it is the exploration of an island and for Ibn Fattouma it is an astronomical discovery of the stars in the desert sky or even a journey in space and time. In all of these trajectories, the narrative strategy embodies crucial motifs and presents the fabula in a manner that reflects the shape and terrain of the journey.



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