

Analysis of the Narrative *Al-Baḥth ‘an al-Shams* Based on Eric Landowski’s Square of Semantic Systems



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Abstract

The novel *Al-Baḥth ‘an al-Shams* by Ezzedine Jalaouji, a contemporary Algerian writer, reflects the reality of the Palestinian land and the struggle of its people for liberation and the recovery of a lost identity. This study adopts Eric Landowski’s semiotic–semantic framework, particularly the square of semantic systems, as the theoretical basis for analysis. According to Landowski, meaning in narrative emerges through actions such as persuasion, inducement, encouragement, adaptation, and chance, and with the centrality of action, multiple semantic layers are generated.

The main objective of this research is to analyze the semantic systems operating within the novel based on Landowski’s model. The significance of the study lies in its contribution to understanding how semantic systems can be discovered and interpreted across different narrative texts. The findings indicate that the narrative begins with a tense atmosphere and the introduction of the “subjugated” character as a static actant. Subsequently, the “stranger” enters the narrative with the aim of persuading the subjugated figure to resist the “rival.” Through a series of challenging persuasive actions, the stranger ultimately succeeds in activating the subjugated character, leading to the expulsion of the rival and the destruction of the barrier constructed by him and his supporters. In the final stage, with the realization of convergence and the formation of actantial competence, the subjugated character transforms into an active agent with a positive orientation. Through his action, Palestine—represented as the value object of the narrative—achieves liberation. Overall, the programmed semantic system dominates other semantic systems in the novel, driving narrative progression, generating new events, and transforming the existential state of the narrative actants.

Keywords: Semiotics; Semantic Systems; Eric Landowski; Ezzedine Jalaouji; *Al-Baḥth ‘an al-Shams*.

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