

# Interwoven Genres and Their Impact on Constructing a Narrative Writing Strategy: A Study of *the Prince (Al-Amir): Passages of Iron Gates* by Wassini Laredj

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## Abstract

This study investigates the intergeneric interaction in the modern Arabic novel, taking *Al-Amir: Masalik Abwab al-Hadid* (*The Prince: The Paths of the Iron Gates*) by Wassini Laredj as a case study. Rather than being limited to the narration of historical events or the celebration of a national hero, the novel reshapes its narrative fabric in a creative manner through the functional integration of different literary and non-literary genres—i.e., epistles (private and official), speeches, moral exhortations, and biographical sketches. Generic hybridization generates a linguistic and stylistic

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mosaic that enriches the novel's artistic form and broadens its ideological horizon. The paper discusses the ways in which these intertwined genres are employed as a means of fostering linguistic diversity and serving the novel's general narratorial strategy—first and foremost, the East-West civilizational dialogue that forms the thematic core of the text. Prominent in the discussion is the role of the epistolary genre as a non-confrontational medium of communication enabling the narrator to avoid overt ideological polarization and offer subtle reconciliatory discourse. Where do speeches and moral teachings have rhetorical and persuasive, the biographical element gives historical texture and emotional weight. The findings indicate that the embedded genres are neither ornamental nor superficial but structurally essential. They play a dynamic role in narratorial guidance, in enriching the polyphonic voice of the narrative, and in allowing the novel to navigate difficult historical and cultural terrain. This approach emphasizes how the contemporary Arabic novel transcends rigid genre divisions and embraces literary hybridity as a strategy of aesthetic enrichment and critical intervention. Ultimately, the book demonstrates that genre interpenetration is not an optional stylistic choice, but a narrative strategy that enriches the novel's capacity for nuanced discourses on identity, memory, and intercultural dialogue. The result is a work that not only entertains and informs but also redefines the boundaries of narrative in Arabic fiction.

Keywords : Genre Hybridization, Linguistic Diversity, Narrative Strategy, Epistolary Form  
East-West Dialogue

#### Introduction

Perhaps the first concept that comes to mind upon hearing the phrase *interspersed genres* among scholars in narrative studies is the significant role these genres play in enriching multilingualism within the linguistic tapestry of the novel. However, this study does not aim to remain solely at this point. Rather, it seeks to analyze the broad impact of these inserted genres in determining the course of the story, particularly when the narrator employs them as a consolidating device in constructing a planned narrative strategy meant to achieve specific goals of narration. Such an approach unfolds on multiple narrative moments and phases, each of them having the narrator's constant battle with the reader through a function of narrative conflict and resolution in that the narrator tries to persuade and influence the reader's consumption of the work.

Narrative narration, in its true artistic capacity, transcends entertainment and suspense. It aspires to persuade and emotionally affect the reader. In the contemporary literary context, this reader has become increasingly problematic—resistant and inquisitive—no longer passively accepting ideas without scrutiny or debate. This evolving readership has compelled the modern narrator to abandon traditional narrative strategies that have become ineffective due to the heightened critical awareness of this new type of reader. entertainment and suspense.

Hence, the narrator has to look for alternative narrative techniques that allow the delivery of complex discourses in an unbroken and uninterrupted manner.

This narrative approach is achieved in the works of Waciny Laredj, whose work presents a text full of conflicting ideologies that challenge the reader's interpretive skills, whether they are affiliated with any ideological faction. The narrative text at stake, *The Prince: The Trails of the Iron Gates*, is predicated on the attempt to reconcile opposing views between East and West. The author is fully aware that the novel embodies a dialogue between two civilizations situated on opposing ideological and cultural spectrums. Accordingly, this research endeavors to answer two principal questions: First, how have these extraneous genres contributed to the establishment of multilingualism within the novel? Second, how has the author employed them as a vehicle for attaining his pre-established narrative objectives?

Literary language is not monolithic; rather, it is "a layered, multilingual language, manifested through its tangible appearance, resonating with the expression of the Other's gaze" (Bakhtin, 1987, p. 60). The stratification of language corresponds closely with the stratification of genres. The novel constructs its linguistic architecture from a variety of linguistic building blocks, incorporating other literary forms such as the epistle, the article, the poem, and even non-literary forms such as the folk song. Moreover, the novel's appropriation of these genres does not halt at linguistic boundaries. It ventures beyond them, utilizing these forms as navigational tools or a roadmap for the articulation of its ideas—ideas that narrative prose alone may struggle to fully convey.

This narrative opportunism—borrowed metaphorically from one of the novel's own characters—reflects a strategic embrace of the language of the interspersed genre. The narrator appropriates this language not only to adopt its external form but to embed and discharge the text's intellectual and ideological charge within it. As Rachid Qariba (n.d.) asserts, the narrative "displays a thousand faces and wears a thousand costumes; it borrows decorative tools from other genres only to quickly seize them, exercising ownership, endeavoring to adapt them, and striving to present itself in its most resplendent form" (p. 6).

Perhaps the reason behind this capacity lies in the "space of freedom available in the narrative technique, and the interaction of the elements of artistic construction within it with the aesthetic characteristics of these genres" (Zabadi, 2009, p. 50). Accordingly,

all languages can find their place within the unique framework of the novel, which is capable of accommodating various language types, stylistic manifestations, and professional registers—including both social and non-social dialects... All these languages may be summoned by the novelist to coordinate his themes and to dilute the indirect expression of his intentions and value judgments (Hamdawi, 2011, p. 139).

Aligned with this narrative tendency, the language of the novel under study actively incorporates numerous literary and non-literary genres to mediate its discourse with the reader. These genres are prominently present throughout the narrative fabric of the novel, inviting a deeper excavation of the text to uncover its modes of construction, which rely on activating and deploying the generic properties of various forms. These genres are employed in accordance with diverse artistic visions, adapted for the functional and thematic purposes of the novel, while also playing a central role in introducing multilingualism into the narrative fabric. This is particularly evident in the employment of literary genres of Arab origin, foremost among them the epistolary genre, which stands out as the most pervasive.

### 1. The Epistolary Genre

According to *Lisan al-Arab*, the word *risāla* (letter/message) is derived from the verb *rasala* (to send), signifying a dispatch or transmission. It refers to a written composition prepared by the author for a particular purpose and directed to another person, encompassing both response and discourse. A *risāla* may serve as a written communication on diverse topics that resist limitation, ranging from expressions of emotional or sentimental significance to matters embedded within specific social contexts (Ibn Manzur, n.d.; Zabadi, 2009, p. 94). The epistolary genre thus appears in several forms, including fraternal letters, administrative (*diwaniyya*) letters, and literary letters.

#### a. Fraternal Letters

This form of epistolary writing plays a decisive role in *The Prince*, functioning as a discursive tool that facilitates the unfolding of narrative significance. Through this medium, the initial threads of connection are woven between two emblematic figures representing Arab-Islamic and Western civilizations—namely, Prince Abdelkader and Bishop Monsignor Debouch. This connection is carefully structured according to the narrative plan adopted in the novel. One of the pivotal scenes appears in the form of a letter written by the French bishop to Prince Abdelkader, pleading for the release of his captive brother:

My lord Sultan... You do not know me, but I am a steadfast man, devoted to serving God, as you are. If I were capable of riding a horse today, I would be to you instantly, not afraid of the night or the wind's howling. I would stand at the entrance to your tent and address you in a voice unwavering—should my assumptions about your nature prove true: return to me my brother who has fallen into your custody. I may not be able to come myself, but I beseech you to accept my representative in this task, bearing a letter from me that I hope will be blessed by God. I have no gold or silver to offer, only the prayers of a sincere soul and the gratitude of the family on whose behalf I write, for your immense generosity... (La'raj, 2005, p. 55)

This epistolary exchange establishes a key narrative bridge, not only advancing the plot but also reinforcing the novel's central theme of cross-cultural dialogue.

Al- Amir responded in another letter:

Monsignor Antoine Debouché... I received your letter and understood your intention. I was not at all surprised by the generosity and kindness it conveyed, given what I have heard about you. However, allow me to record a personal observation as a servant of God and a friend to humanity: it was your moral duty to request the release of all Christian prisoners we have detained since the war resumed following the dissolution of a futile treaty—not merely one individual, regardless of his identity. Your action would have carried even greater moral weight had you also advocated for the Muslim prisoners languishing in your own prisons. Love for your brother what you love for yourself... (La'raj, 2005, p. 56)

These two letters illustrate the initial attempt to gauge the sentiment and consciousness of the two opposing parties. The language employed is marked by a tone that upholds the highest standards of respect and appreciation, affording each side a glimpse into the ethos of the other. This mutual insight subsequently informs the evolution of future dialogues that contribute to bridging the civilizational divide. As a result, the epistolary genre transcends its role as an external or “alien” literary form, becoming instead a foundational element of the narrative structure itself. It not only integrates with the novel's fabric but actively furnishes the narrative, aligning with its thematic purposes.

As Ghanmi (2013) explains, “fiction writing is thereby founded upon the form of letter-writing, as a kind of textual strategy aimed at revealing different worlds, directed toward both the self and the broader world” (p. 127). The function of the epistolary form does not end with its structural presence as a fundamental narrative component. Linguistically, it also contributes to the multiplicity of narrative language through its tendency toward simplicity and clarity—eschewing ornate literary embellishment in favor of communicative precision. This aligns with the broader principle in literary composition that each genre possesses a distinct linguistic mode tailored to its specific function and aesthetic identity. In this context, the epistolary form takes its place as a unique narrative register within the novel.

A close reading of the text reveals that the epistolary genre dominates the narrative landscape in terms of frequency and impact. This prevalence is attributable to the novel's foundational premise, which revolves around interrogating historical narratives and patiently excavating their depths to uncover pivotal events. Moreover, the letter form emerges as a versatile medium, employed periodically to redirect the narrative's trajectory and to fulfill its overarching objective: the facilitation of cross-cultural rapprochement between East and West.

In order to catalogue all the fraternal (Brotherhood) letters presented within the narrative, while simultaneously highlighting the multilingual dimension of their linguistic construction and

the semantic depth of their communicative content, we have chosen to organize the data into the following table:

Illustrative Table 01: *Fraternal Letters Featured in the Novel*

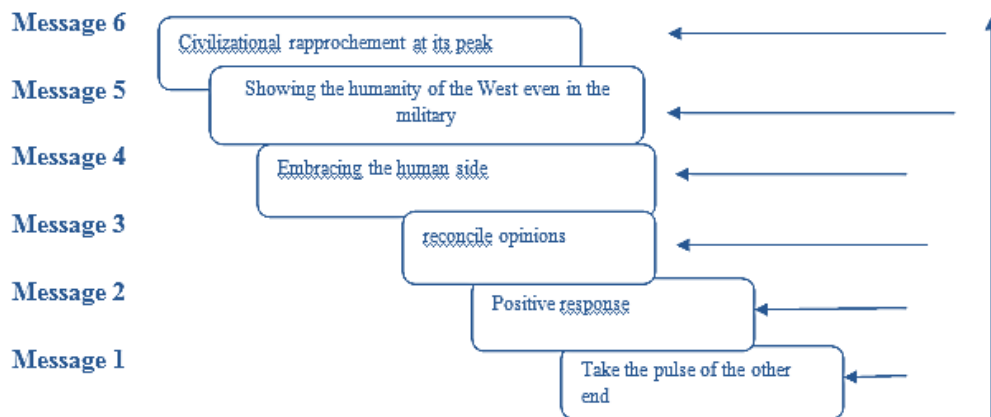
Sender	Addressee	Topic	Its impact on multiplicity	Semantic Destination	Page
Monsignor Deposch	Al-Amir Abdelkader	Petition for release of prisoner	Direct/ explicit/concise/ precise/simple language	Take the pulse of the other end	55
Al-Amir Abdelkader	Monsignor Deposch	Approval of the petition	Direct/ explicit/concise/ precise/simple language	Demonstrate aptitude and positive response	56
Al-Amir Abdelkader	Monsignor Deposch	Invitation to visit	Adding a heritage/religious/simple, clear/poetic language	reconcile opinions	61
Al-Amir Abdelkader	Monsignor Deposch	Responded to a previous letter accepting the request and a reminder of the promise to seek the release of some Muslim prisoners	Direct/ explicit/concise/ precise/simple language	Embracing the human side	324

General Bijoux	Al-Amir Abdelkader	Declaring the inability to implement the agreement and providing advice	Direct/ explicit/concise/ precise/simple language	Showing the humanity of the other (even the military) almost to the points of view	537
Al-Amir Abdelkader	Monsignor Deposch	Checking in and complaining	Adding a heritage/religious/simple, clear/poetic language	Reaching the stage of cultural rapprochement	549

An analysis of the data presented in the table reveals that the sender is most frequently Al-Amir, suggesting that the initiative for civilizational rapprochement originates primarily from his persistent efforts. This repeated initiative on the part of Al-Amir implies a deliberate insistence on fostering dialogue and mutual understanding—an observation that warrants critical reflection.

The fraternal letter functions as a dynamic narrative instrument, contributing both to the initiation and the advancement of the novel’s structural framework. Through this form, we observe a gradual convergence of the trajectories of the two civilizations, progressing in an upward arc and culminating in a point of alignment or congruence in the final message. This progression is visually represented in the following diagram:

**Illustrative Diagram:** *The Role of the Fraternal Letter in Structuring the Narrative Trajectory Toward Civilizational Rapprochement*



Source: Prepared by the authors.

**B. Diwaniyya (Administrative) Letters**

“Diwaniyya” letters are those specialized in the administration of state affairs and are typically characterized by their clarity, precision, and conciseness (Zabadi, 2009, p. 96). Given the nov-

el's thematic foundation—centered on recounting pivotal moments from the life of the national hero, Prince Abdelkader, and his complex relationship with the Other, shaped by conflict and negotiation during and after violent colonial confrontations—the narrative incorporates numerous historically grounded dialogues. These are often anchored in authentic documentation, most notably letters of an administrative (diwaniyya) nature, which serve to illuminate the “shadow zones” of history that have either been neglected or intentionally obscured.

In one such letter, the Governor-General writes to the Minister of War:

All of this seems to me extremely sensitive. I propose sending General Trezel, the Chief of Staff of my army, to inspect the site, verify all of the raised facts, and gather the necessary information... If Dumichiel remains in Oran, it will be difficult to persuade him on the matter of Abdelkader. (La'raj, 2005, p. 124)

This letter disrupts the linear narrative flow when inserted within a scene featuring dialogue between Ibn Duran and Prince Abdelkader. Its inclusion reorients the narrative structure by altering both its discursive form and linguistic register, thereby transporting the reader across genres, languages, and events. Such intergeneric transitions enrich the stylistic diversity of the novel's language, creating a polyphonic texture comprised of multiple stylistic modes and dialectal variations. These shifts, woven into the novel's fabric, reflect the broad spectrum of narrative and literary forms it accommodates.

Among the various expressive forms employed, the diwaniyya letter proves particularly potent in shaping and directing the narrative path. It assumes a pivotal role in the novel's compositional and communicative processes, owing to the narrative strategy that revitalizes this historical form by recontextualizing it for fictional purposes. In this way, it becomes a narrative hinge—both structurally and semantically—through which meaning is generated and extended. As Mikhail Bakhtin (as cited in Watar, 2002) affirms, “genres introduced into the novel lose their former characteristics and undergo artistic transformation” (pp. 169–170).

To analyze the role of the message in general, and the Diwaniya message specifically, in the *Al-Amir*'s novel, we have compiled all the Diwaniya messages, interspersed with the narrative text, within the following table. This compilation aims to delimit the messages, emphasizing the linguistic features that constitute multilingualism within them. Additionally, it seeks to demonstrate the semantic impact of these messages on the narrative discourse. The corresponding table is presented on the following page:

Illustrative Table 02: Diwaniya Messages Included in the Novel

Sender	Addressee	Topic	Its impact on multiplicity	Semantic Destination	Page
The	French	Send a gen-	Provide military/simple,	Clarify the impact	



Governor General	Minister of War	eral to inspect the situation in Algeria	clear/precise concise language	of the prince's resistance in confusing the colonizer	124
Tigran angular presenter	Al-Amir Abdelkader	Refusal to obey and submit to the decisions of the Al-Amir	Sufi /Religious/Tactful /Bold/Simple	Clarifying the thought of the civilizational prince based on the establishment of a state through his policy of reunification and unity	256
Al- Amir	Marshal Qali	declaration of war	Direct/ explicit/concise/eloquent/ precise /simple language	- The prince's war was in defense of honor and self, not for his bloody nature - France is the one who sought war with its practices	300
Sidi Mubarak, one of the prince's successors	General Bijoux	Challenge and promote the prince's victory	Simple/Bold/ Orbital/min	Giving an idea of the Prince's impact on those around him	313
General Lamoisier	Al-Amir Abdelkader	Consent to give security and deportation to an Arab country	Direct /Eloquent /Explicit /Concise/ Accurate /Simple Language	Showing the details of the Al-Amir 's surrender and the extent of its impact on the colonizer, as evidenced by his quest to put down his revolution in various ways	475
General Lamoisier	Duke Domal of Algeria and Crown Prince	Notification of the decision taken and solicitation of sponsorship	Direct/ explicit/concise/ precise/simple language	Documentation of the terms of the Prince's surrender,due to what will happen next	475
Napoleon	Lord Keith	Protest against arrest and quarantine of freedom	Straightforward/Historical/Concise /Accurate/Simple Language	- Citing them to prove the Prince's right to deportation and release	504

				- Show the points of convergence between the two civilizations in support of the narrative endeavor	
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Source: Prepared by the authors.

Through the table, the impact of the Diwaniya message on guiding the narrative becomes evident. It is strategically used to alter the direction of the story, diversifying the events by invoking prior positions and speeches. This serves to break the monotony of storytelling, as the message imposes its dialogue and language on the recipient, compelling them to engage either through response or commentary. The narrative subsequently resorts to timelines, where the present summons the past through rhetorical sequences and expressive indicators. These sequences engage in a dialogue, using distinct languages to communicate, hybridizing them in the process. This results in the creation of a linguistic pluralism that enhances the linguistic balance of the novel. Ghanmi (1997) states: "The message in the world of the novel becomes one of the narrative sanctities of the worlds of the novel, and has narrative and aesthetic functions, including accelerating the time of storytelling, mixing the times of speech, remembering, and increasing the forms of speech in the novel" (Ghanmi, *The Arabic Fiction Discourse*, vol. 2, p. 127).

### 2. Public Speaking

Rhetoric is at the forefront of oral-pigmented expressions in prose discourse, representing nomadism with its features that lean toward antagonism. In this context, the spoken word possesses the power of action, while sentences are characterized by their empathy rather than overlap. There is also a tendency toward collectivist styles in contrast to analytical approaches (Qatt, 2009). Public speaking is defined as speech intended to persuade and influence, relying on core pillars such as verbal communication, audience engagement, persuasion, and grooming (Hassan, 1979).

It is perhaps this very feature that the narrative text under study celebrates, incorporating it into its linguistic fabric. This is due to the nature of the subject, which questions history. The novel stands at a critical juncture in national history, specifically during the early periods of French colonization in Algeria. Consequently, its narrative material is derived from the conflict between the Algerian people and the French occupation—a confrontation that necessitates each camp leader to convince all parties of the feasibility and legitimacy of their respective endeavors and positions. This dynamic allows rhetoric to occupy a significant role within the narrative, as it communicates the novel's visions.

Consider the voices of the preachers as expressed in this passage:

A. The Imam

"After the noon prayer, the Imam stood in the foreground and preached to the people under heavy rain..."

"God hears the suffering of believers. Praise be to Allah, goodness has begun to descend on us. I preach to you that a telephone stood on my lame master and my master Muhyiddin, and preached to them an authority that will descend from their flesh, a knight who is nothing like him, in it from the Spirit of God and the death of the Mujahid and the characteristic of the prophets. Today, this sultan will be pledged to fight the remnants of the invaders who stole the country and the dignity of the servants, infidels and apostates in the plains up to the borders of Oran. We will all go to the shrine of Sidi Abdelkader. Help him, may God help you." (La'raj, 2005, p. 82)

B. Al-Amir Abdelkader

In his Friday sermon, Al-Amir Abdelkader did not introduce new ideas but instead focused on the occasion that led him to summon everyone to deliberate on the country's and the people's situation before expressing his heartfelt thoughts:

O Lord, I mean, the war was imposed on me, and I did not impose it on anyone. And Allah doth know what ye conceal and what ye reveal. You're the first to invite me to the task I am on? Are you the first to support conspiracies against this government that you demanded to suppress corruption? How can a government survive without taxes? How can it survive without a sincere understanding and support from everyone? Do you think that any part, no matter how small, is allocated to my personal expenses or to the expenses of my family? What I demand represents what the Prophet's law obliges you to do and what you must offer as good Muslims, and it is in the hands of a sacred trust to uphold faith and truth. (La'raj, 2005, p. 127)

The Al-Amir then prayed the noon prayer with his leaders and guests, using the opportunity to address the new situation, especially following the arrival of new weapons:

People, starting today, the war will enter its decisive day, and this little tyrant will know that time has changed. He must realize, once and for all, that there is one and only authority in this country, pledged by all tribes. I swear to defend the banner of Islam, and I will fight everyone who denies my authority, which is the authority of God. Anyone who helps our enemies is our enemy and an enemy of his religion. I assure those who are martyred in this invasion as they fight the apostates behind the walls that their reward with God is great, and on earth they will be honored like the one who fought the invaders and the infidels. (La'raj, 2005, p. 271)

C. General Clause:

Residents of Algeria, my appointment to the French property government in North Africa is a work of great significance for the good intentions of the King of the French. Whatever the complexi-

ties of the situation that await me, I have full confidence that I will achieve peace with the help of the administration and the population. As for the outlaws, we will punish them severely, whatever their rank and wherever they are found. I will encourage all agricultural work in large parts of this land and bring European farmers to benefit from their experience to serve this land. (La'raj, 2005, p. 172)

D. General Bijou Thomas:

I have made great efforts to persuade my country to take full and final possession of Algeria. I needed a large army, equipment, and infinite sacrifices, but my voice was not heard at the time. I made great efforts to persuade others to pay attention to my opinion, and now the Arabs must be subdued, and total war must be waged. The flag must remain the only flag that flies on African soil. The necessary war we are fighting today is not the ultimate goal. There is no use in a campaign without settlement. I would be an enthusiastic centenarian if I could establish something permanent for France. (La'raj, 2005, p. 303)

Through these examples, it becomes clear that the message was not the sole tool guiding the narrative, as the sermon follows the sequence of events. In Example (a), the sermon reveals the prevailing situation before the inauguration of Abdul Qadir Sultana, as it contributes—thanks to its characteristics, which focus on "verbalizing and confronting the masses, with the aim of provoking their feelings to persuade them" (Qatt, 2009)—to a call for turning toward Al- Amir and pledging allegiance to him. In Example (b), the sermon unveils the prince's economic policy and objectives, providing us with a clear understanding of the situation at the time. Following this, the prince's second sermon in the same example portrays another aspect of his policy, one based on unifying the regions through his strict dealings with apostates and those who refuse to submit under his banner and authority.

However, when juxtaposing this with the other side, we observe that the colonial forces aimed to achieve their goals through attrition and looting. They disguised their negative intentions under the guise of positive forms, such as offering assistance, bringing civilization, and establishing peace, as shown in Example (C). These intentions, however, were quickly revealed as the prince's revolution exposed the true nature of the colonizers, particularly in Example (D), where the colonial existence becomes threatened to the point where flattery or hypocrisy can no longer prevail.

The trick of the colonizer, even if it is based on fallacy and misinformation, is in this novel based on rhetoric, taking advantage of the impact of its meanings on the souls of the addressees. This indicates the exploitation of the influential function of this rhetoric in highlighting preaching statements to achieve the function of fallacy and form a cover that obscures the truth of the preacher and hides the truth of his sermon" (Arous, 2010, pp. 281–282).

Here, we discuss the art of preaching and its overlap with the art of resurrection, drawing parallels to the novel. This convergence of gender relations and rhetoric plays a crucial role in shaping the narrative.

The novel erases some of its language from rhetoric when it comes to positions of persuasion and influence on others, as the language came in the folds of speeches (A–B) thickened with religious vocabulary derived from the Qur'an and Sunnah. The preacher is based on the journey of persuasion to win over others and influence them. These speeches are characterized by brevity, short sentences, and sometimes rhyme, such as "they stole the country and the dignity of the servants," in accordance with the custom of this race in our Arab heritage. It should be noted that the speeches of Al- Amir in the novel may be in the language of the writer, as many of the prince's speeches are characterized by the beauty of the language and rhythm.

In examples (C–D), the narrative preferred clarity and accuracy, taking into account the specificity of the speaker, especially since they do not belong to the Arabic tongue. Fakhri Abu Al-Saud states: "*As for the influence of Arab literature on Islam, it was more comprehensive, longer-term and longer-lasting for many reasons...*" (Fakhri Abu Al-Saud, 1997, pp. 81–82).

The narrative contrasts the speeches of Al- Amir with those of the colonial figures, such as General Clausel and General Bijou Thomas, whose speeches are focused on the colonial administration's goals. Their rhetoric aims to disguise the true motives of the French colonizers (land acquisition and exploitation) while presenting their actions as benevolent and focused on peace and civilization. Their speeches emphasize the control over the land and suppression of opposition in a way that contrasts with the emotional and religious language used by Al- Amir in his speeches.

### 3. The Testament (or Will )and Its Significance:

Basma Arous discusses the testament as a genre with an accomplished practical purpose, simplifying its content, which is represented by a set of orders, teachings, and bites. These commandments, particularly in the context of vicegerency, have deep historical roots in Arabic literature. Arous notes that "the testament is included in some political speeches, and preaching, such as the farewell sermon..." (Basma Arous, *Interaction in Literary Generations*, Arab Propagation Foundation, Beirut Lebanon 2010, p. 294).

In the novel, the testament plays a crucial role as a form of guidance, with a specific example where the guardian speaks to Al-Amir Abdelkader: "*Abdul Qadir, my son, horses are like humans, they feel sad and sad when we insult them...*" (La'raj, 2005 , p. 606). This testament provides advice not only on the treatment of horses but also, by extension, on leadership and governance. The testament's inclusion in the narrative is not arbitrary; it serves a deliberate purpose of emphasizing compassion, soft leadership, and the importance of not resorting to violence and harshness. The

language of the testament is modest, but its message is universal, applying both to the treatment of animals and to governance.

The testament serves as one of the key tools in the novel's broader thematic exploration of governance, compassion, and civilizational rapprochement. The act of offering advice to Al- Amir through the testament suggests a leadership style based on compassion rather than violence. This message is essential not only in the context of horse care but also in preparing Al- Amir for the complexities of ruling and governing a nation. The inclusion of this testament in the narrative highlights the moral foundation of the Arab tradition, one that balances severity in religious matters with softness and compassion in everyday dealings.

By blending the genre of the testament with elements of both the classical and colloquial styles, the novel introduces linguistic and stylistic diversity that enhances its depth and complexity. This blending of languages also reflects the larger civilizational themes explored in the novel, positioning the testament as a vital instrument in the narrative's portrayal of moral leadership.

#### 4. Biography and Heterogeneous Structure

The biography, in its general definition, is: "My research reviews the life of the writer or the life of a celebrity, highlighting through it the achievements that have been achieved in the path of the life of the speaker" (Sheibandi, 2006, p. 6). The novel about the Al-Amir does not deviate significantly from this framework, as it explores the life of Al-Amir Abdelkader, beginning in his youth—specifically at the age of twenty-three—when his father, Sheikh Muhyiddin, took him in 1828 on pilgrimage to Mecca. During this journey, he visited several Arab countries such as Tunisia, the Hijaz, the Levant, Iraq, Jerusalem, Damascus, and the shrine of the author of *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*, Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi. This journey suggests the profound impact of religious culture and a level of intellectual maturity, which would later be confirmed through his fondness for books such as Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddimah* and Ibn Arabi's works, as stated in the novel:

"Abdelkader extended his hand towards *al-Muqaddimah* by Ibn Khaldun. The manuscript on which he wrote his many notes, which came from the Maghreb..." (La'raj, 2005 , p. 74)

"He leaned with his back and then opened the book, which did not change hands from the divine signs, and paused a little at the section about 'the stranger who filled his heart and eyes':

'Hey... so where are you from, O stranger who has been estranged...'" (La'raj, 2005 , p.505)

It appears that the biographical genre has significantly contributed to enabling the emergence of other literary forms, such as the folk tale and expressive modes like the miraculous theme, to surface within the narrative framework. This intertextual presence suggests the genre's dynamic role in the artistic construction of the novel. Furthermore, the linguistic mosaics resulting from this intersection—where languages converge according to their contextual functions—enrich the narrative with diverse stylistic layers. These include formal classical Arabic, infused with religious rheto-

ric, alongside colloquial expressions and cultural idioms that reflect the social and political environment of the time.

In this way, the biography transcends its historical function, becoming not only a record of a significant life but also a medium for collective memory, cultural identity, and literary innovation.

### Conclusion

The findings of this study confirm that intergeneric forms in *Al-Amir: The Paths of the Iron Gates* are not incidental literary devices but deliberate structural and ideological components within a consciously designed narrative strategy. Through the skillful employment of various textual modalities—letters, sermons, testaments, and biographical sketches—Waciny Laredj crafts a complex narrative that resists genre purity in favor of textual plurality and ideological depth.

Most notably, the epistolary form emerges as a privileged channel through which the narrator constructs a dialogic space between culturally and historically opposed figures, such as Al-Amir Abdelkader and Monsignor Antoine Dupuch. These letters do not merely function as narrative interludes but operate as rhetorical tools to mediate tensions and facilitate symbolic gestures of empathy, reconciliation, and mutual recognition. Similarly, the inclusion of formal and religious speeches, often laden with scriptural and ethical references, serves to authenticate ideological positions and stir emotional identification in readers.

The will or moral testament—though brief—is no less significant. Its intimate tone and allegorical undertones not only reinforce the protagonist's moral worldview but also add a folkloric flavor that deepens the narrative's linguistic layering. Meanwhile, the autobiographical vignettes, echoing the traditional form of the *Sira* (Prophetic biography), anchor the novel in both literary heritage and historical gravitas, enabling a fusion between the mythic and the real, the personal and the collective.

The cumulative effect of these intergeneric devices is the creation of a narrative that mirrors the complexity of its historical context and aspires to transcend the boundaries of national and linguistic identity. The novel emerges not only as a literary work but also as a cultural manifesto, advocating for a humanistic vision rooted in understanding, dialogue, and ethical responsibility.

In this light, *Al-Amir* exemplifies the modern Arabic novel's potential to function as a multi-dimensional platform—a space where literary form, historical consciousness, and ideological engagement coalesce. Through its intentional genre-crossing, the novel affirms the power of literary hybridity to capture the multiplicity of human experience and to act as a bridge between divergent cultural worlds. Thus, the use of intergeneric forms becomes a narrative strategy of both aesthetic innovation and civilizational diplomacy.

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