

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.121126295

A STUDY OF PRESUPPOSITION IN MOONIS AL-RAZZAZ'S NOVEL MEMOIRS OF A DINOSAUR

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Received: 01/12/2025

Accepted: 02/01/2026

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ABSTRACT

This study explores presupposition in the novel *Memoirs of a Dinosaur* by Moonis Al-Razzaz, focusing on how implicit assumptions embedded in language contribute to narrative depth, ideological positioning, and reader engagement. Adopting a qualitative pragmatic and discourse-analytic framework, the research examines selected passages to identify major types of presupposition, including existential, lexical, factive, structural, and counterfactual presuppositions. The analysis shows that presupposition functions as a powerful meaning-making strategy that allows the narrator to present contested political and social ideas as taken-for-granted truths. Through presuppositional triggers such as definite descriptions, change-of-state verbs, and evaluative constructions, the text subtly guides interpretation and frames characters, events, and institutions within specific ideological perspectives. The findings indicate that presupposition enhances narrative persuasion by backgrounding assumptions and reducing their susceptibility to challenge. The study concludes that presupposition is not merely a semantic feature but a critical discourse resource that supports thematic development and rhetorical impact. This approach demonstrates the value of pragmatic analysis for uncovering implicit meanings in modern Arabic political fiction.

KEYWORDS: Presupposition; Implicit Meaning; Narrative Strategy; Arabic Fiction

1. INTRODUCTION

The novelist Moonis Al-Razzaz employed all his linguistic skills to convey his heart's deepest feelings and his mind's complex thoughts. The novelist examined various forms of communicative mechanisms and employed various linguistic forms, making no efforts to convey his intentions to his readers and scholars of his work. It would not be an exaggeration to say that he employed all forms of pragmatic mechanisms in their various dimensions. Among the various forms of communicative mechanisms, there are speech acts, deictic expressions, and descriptive expressions, as well as presupposition. What is meant by this term? How has it been employed in Moonis Al-Razzaz's novels, in general, and in *Memoirs of a Dinosaur*, in particular?

Presupposition is a technical term, which has been employed to denote something a speaker assumes to be true before he/she makes an utterance. Hence, it is a feature of speakers, not sentences (Youl, 2010). As a matter of interest, some dictionaries define this term as implication/requirement. Such definition has caused confusion for some scholars.

Linguists and pragmatists have recognized different types of presuppositions depending on the way speaker's assumptions are expressed (Moeschler and Reboul, 1994; Yule, 2010):

1. Potential Presuppositions.
2. Existential Presuppositions.
3. Realistic Presuppositions.
4. Lexical Presuppositions.
5. Structural Presuppositions.
6. Non-Realistic Presuppositions.
7. Counterfactual Presuppositions.

How were these presuppositions employed in Moonis Al-Razzaz's novels? Were they successful in conveying the latent message to the recipient and the scholar?

An in-depth look at the first type of the presuppositions, potential suppositions, reveals that the writer, Moonis Al-Razzaz, used specific words and phrases in his novels. For example, in the context of the question: Why was Abdullah nicknamed 'the Dinosaur'?, the writer used the following words: "It is said that people called Abdullah 'The Dinosaur' for many reasons" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). The latent presupposition in the sentence is acknowledged by the speaker, and the effort made by the speaker to look for other reasons is grounded in the reality of following statements.

In the chapter "From Zahra's Papers," the

presuppositions are evident in his description of a character's gaze, "His eyes were wandering, fixed upon the wall of nothingness, as if his frantic glances were touching a niche in the blocked directions." Here, the frantic nature of the character's gaze is presupposed without any direct verbal communication with Abdullah. The confusion is presupposed, seeking a way out or an opening. It is not explicitly stated, however, and is rather drawn from an unconscious state, contemplating his future and his dreams he hopes to fulfill.

The style continues with formulas that do not explicitly state a meaning, but rather a meaning is understood by the recipient based on the atmosphere. In the chapter "A Fly in a Jordanian House of Levantine Origin," the discussion is about an election and a candidate's propaganda: "The candidate, his uncle the Dinosaur, and the Fly sought the house of the man said to be the notable of the Levantines. In the city crowded with 'forests of tribes' and 'jungles of refugees and displaced persons,' the Fly trembled as they approached the door" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). In this case, the interlocutors do not presuppose the meaning of "forests" or "jungles." Rather, they understand the meaning based on the presuppositions. If they had used the literal definitions, they could have become confused and lost the meaning of the speech.

As far as the relation with women is concerned, the author talks about the reason why Zahra loved the "Dinosaur," beyond the conventional standards of beauty, color of the skin, or the largeness of the eyes. He lets the woman get the meaning through the presuppositions conveyed rather than the words themselves. For example: "Zahra said she loved me because I was a pale-faced young man with sunken eyes; in my melancholy eyes were the signs of a dreaming poet that reminded her of the Romantic poets" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). Are sunken eyes beautiful to a woman? Does the pale face necessarily lead to the truth she said? It is well known that "beauty is in the nose, charm in the eyes, and grace in the mouth." Moreover, paleness is not necessarily the subject of love poetry, while red is the color of beauty and attraction, as is proved by the proverb: "Beauty is red" (al-Maidani, 1996).

The second type of presupposition, existential presupposition, is also present in a number of constructions in the novel, especially in noun phrases. When a speaker uses this type of expression, he/she is committed to the existence of the entities named (Yule, 2010). One of the examples of this type of presupposition, as found in

the novel, is as follows: "The hidden commonality between us is vast and rich" (Al-Razzaz, 1994), confirming the discourse about Abdullah the Dinosaur. He also explains their state as follows: "Our moods clash, our fingers intertwine" (Al-Razzaz, 1994), referring to the bond of comrades and brothers in revolutionary thought, as described by his neighbor.

Al-Razzaz discusses the national issues with the same pragmatic approach. In the chapter "Thus Zahra Spoke," with regard to the unstable financial situation, the speaker's utterance reads: "The collapse of the dollar should be treated in the 'Fahs' clinic for psychiatric and neurological diseases. There, they treat the 'collapse,' and the dollar is 'collapsed'" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). The speaker's utterance itself diagnoses the state of Arab society, both linguistically and semantically, and predicts the unstable future waiting ahead, thus becoming the existential presupposition.

Al-Razzaz tries to form the image of the protagonist of the novel, Zahra, with regard to the real revolutionary soul and feminine love, with the existential undertones: "Zahra is the planet of the vast future, a planet that emerged from the crater of a history of violence, madness, destruction, and death" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). Thus, the existential antecedent "the vast future" underlines the consequences of "violence," "madness," "destruction," and "death," all of which Arab society as a whole had experienced and are now the "nightmares of the dinosaur."

Love and war are intertwined, as are politics and swimming, and these are the realities. In the novel *Memoirs of a Dinosaur*, the image takes its meaning as they stand in the "circus":

"A sea of spectators; a trainer plays with a dolphin. Comrade Zahra and I were swimming in the river, far from the eyes of the Jordanian students. She was washing her body in the radiance of the sun, spreading her flowing hair in the water. The Party was not against swimming, but 'dignity' is the antithesis of love. How can a militant love a woman (merely a woman) when the Nation has not yet liberated Palestine? Furthermore, 'if you are afflicted [with sin], be discreet'" (Al-Razzaz, 1994).

Here, the author describes the concrete reality of the love of militants, which fades into the background and gives way to the pre-existing cause of existence: "the liberation of Palestine."

Within the boundaries of revolutionary political thought, the "narrator's secrets" and the "intellectual intentions" of the author are revealed. Revolutionary thought is presented by the

intellectual dimension, and the truth of it all is synthesized by the author by connecting the authenticity of heritage and its roots with the state of the defeated Nation, as illustrated by the image of Abdullah the Dinosaur's love:

"Abdullah the Dinosaur adores Al-Shanfara and Ibn al-Farid, the brigand poet cast himself out of the tribe, and Sufi poetry, while Zahra adores prose poetry, specifically the collection (Lan) by Unsi Al-Hajj" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). The presence of the brigand poet al-Shanfara characterizes the presence of tribal rebellion and social non-conformity. However, the brigand poet al-Shanfara was not one of those lawless brigands, but rather one who adhered to the Sufi thought process, as described by Ibn Al-Farid. Sufi Union and Cohesion with the "Sacred Cause" are of primary importance, as the Sufi believes.

A divergence in vision exists between the classical poetic "pillars" preferred by Abdullah the Dinosaur and Zahra's preference for prose poetry, as represented in the collection titled Lan. These are truths the narrator wishes to reveal, and he does so in the latent, pre-existing style that the pragmatist's analysis demands. There is no better proof of this than the remainder of the passage:

"She adores the word lan because it is negative." Her negation of the idea of future love is represented by the semantic value of the negative particle "lan," which represents the idea of the future. According to linguistic definition, "lan is a particle of subjunctive, negation, and future reference... and it can be used for supplication (Ibn Hisham, 1979). The intent of the narrator was to indicate the negation/exclusion of Zahra. On the other hand, he intends the supplication for survival. Lived reality in the chapter "The Political Dinosaur" becomes fully present in the form and content of the narrator's acute sensibility. He tells the Dinosaur: "The war in Lebanon is sectarian; the sects are killing." The Dinosaur answers him: "Rather, it is a war between isolationists and Arabists; between reactionary, right-wing fascists and progressives biased toward life and humanity" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). What was really happening in the narrator's soul crystallized in the form of the lexical field: war, sectarian, sects, isolationists, Arabists, reactionaries, right-wingers, fascists, progressives.

The reality of politics in the novel is also personified in the form of the concept of love, as in the descriptions of Zahra:

"Zahra loves the novel *The Good Soldier Švejk*, *Candide*, and *The Little Mountain* by Elias Khoury. As for her infatuation and adoration, she reserves

them for the novels of James Joyce, Virginia Woolf (who committed suicide), and Tayseer Spool (who also committed suicide), and the paintings of Van Gogh (who suffered a nervous breakdown and bouts of madness, then also committed suicide)" (Al-Razzaz, 1994).

This form of love encompasses all the stages that lead to the final result, which is the loving of the "cause" and the ultimate sacrifice for it, until the point of madness, death, and suicide. The truth is personified in the shadows of words and names, in accordance with the principle that the name indicates the named, just as the verb indicates the events of the nouns (Sibawayh, 1988).

Realistic presupposition manifests in the novel in the form of the use and application of verbs, which are considered established facts. This can be summarized in the following equation:

$$\text{Action} \leftarrow \text{Presupposed Information} = \text{Fact}$$

Al-Razzaz used this in different contexts, such as the following description of Zahra:

"When Zahra, Abdullah's wife, withered, she told him she began to feel sudden bouts of exhaustion, and the neighbors pointed to signs of wilting in Zahra's pale, faded gaze" (Al-Razzaz, 1994).

To affirm that the above is a fact rather than a supposition, the text continues:

"He would jump as if stung and scream: 'Mere delusions!'" (Al-Razzaz, 1994).

His actions of jumping and screaming raise the information from the level of supposition to the shores of certainty.

He continues describing the condition of Zahra, which is a reflection of the "withered" Arab reality. She hides the secret of the withering of her body just like she hides the secret of the membership in a secret organization. Finally, the truth is revealed to Abdullah, who falls from the heights:

"Zahra hides the secret of her body's renewal and its ability to surprise me every day despite the meager years... She hides the secret from me because she is addicted to secret organization. I discovered that I am the one who is withered and fading, not she" (Al-Razzaz, 1994).

Thus, the truth becomes evident in the declaration of the helplessness of Abdullah the Dinosaur in front of Zahra:

"I would have named our son 'Shihab' [Meteor] had we been blessed with him, but sustenance is not always linked to effort; we strived, yet we were not provided for" (Al-Razzaz, 1994).

The truth emerges in the wish he makes, in the

failure to achieve the goal, and in the ability to communicate through the intended name, "Shihab."

The realistic presupposition shapes the current political issues in the world. He wrote:

"When the socialist system fell," led by the Soviet Union and Mikhail Gorbachev... " when bombs rained down on Iraq, when Zahra's hair flowed through the folds of the hijab, the 'Gaza-Jericho First' project landed on the table... and the resonant slogans tumbled from the bells like clouds withholding rain" (Al-Razzaz, 1994).

The above events were described by the following verbs in suggestion and movement: fell, poured, flowed, landed, tumbled... all of which imply the meaning of "falling," along with the temporal adverb "when". Consequently, the above events became existentially present after being in a state of potentiality. To taste the sweetness of the victory of his hopes, he sought to stay in the world of dreams in order to establish the desired reality, for what is more capable of projecting a reality to which man aspires than the dreams of man, even if it is an illusion?

In the chapter "From the Nightmares of a Fly," he said:

"Where there is no bond except the bond of the dream! And no dream exists that does not turn into a nightmare if realized! So let us leave dreams in the mind, and prevent them from migrating into reality" (Al-Razzaz, 1994).

These are the nightmares from which nothing prevents except clinging to the dream in the mind, so that reality remains happy and the distress of nightmares is driven away. However, events in the Arab world, in particular, and the world, in general, are moving at a pace that surpasses the speed of light, so it becomes difficult for the writer to keep up with these events: "In truth, events in the world and in our region follow, exceed, and surpass one another at a speed exceeding light; the writer of the daily novel gasps behind the events, forced to cross out, change, and amend his daily schedule" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). This represents the exhausting fatigue that dominates the Arab homeland, as indicated by the verbs: follow, exceed, gasp, and forced, all of which are verbs of exhaustion, toil, and hardship, which all cause agitation and make the discourse a reality. Then, the darkness of loss and the labyrinth appear in the world, which is full of confusion and anxiety: "I burst into the street; I was met by an autumn breeze that separates the myth of an enthusiastic, believing teenager from the senility of an elderly man. I wandered amidst the

mosaic of overlapping times and the labyrinths of wedded directions" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). This represents the feeling of loss and disorientation, as indicated by the contradictions: the myth of the teenager and the senility of the elderly man, which appears after the linguistic creativity of the writer, indicated by the use of the terms autumn and senility, which all represents the truth of the "saying verb".

Pragmatists have identified the nature of the realistic presupposition: "the presupposed information that follows a verb like 'know' can be treated as a fact" (Yule, 2010). In addition, the verb "to know" upon which the meaning of the concept of knowledge/knowing is based, "is based upon perceiving the thing in its true essence. There are two types of perceiving the essence of the thing: the perception of the essence of the thing itself, and the judgment of the thing by the existence of something present in it, or the negation of something negated from it" (Al-Isfahani, 2011). In light of the meaning of the concept of knowledge/knowing, the expressions used by Al-Razzaz highlight the judgment of the thing by the existence of something present in it, realizing the pragmatic principle of presupposition.

The lexical presuppositions used in the novel take the forms of certain expressions that confirm the "success" of the lexical item if the speaker of the utterance takes the expression as presupposing another concept not mentioned in the utterance. Clear examples of the use of lexical presuppositions in the novel are:

"He emphasized that Kuwait is pan-Arabist and will not shoo away a fly; furthermore, a fly is the best trainer for the new Kuwaiti generations. Kuwait cannot do without this great trainer, who built its glories in the world of boxing, specifically in the flyweight division" (Al-Razzaz, 1994).

However, in reality, Kuwait is not "pan-Arabist" in this sense, i.e., it is an Emirate, and its glory is not related to the world of boxing; these are underlying concepts not mentioned in the text. Furthermore, lexical words confirm the success of the communicative process through the meaning they instill in the forms, such as:

"After much persistence, the Dinosaur agreed to seek the mediation of his mother's clan notables to pledge their votes in favor of the internationalist candidate" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). He presupposed that they might not vote for his candidate, and thus he used the verbs to enable the success of his intent:

agreed, to pledge, alongside diligent effort:
persistence, seeking, to reach the goals.

In "Thus Zahra Spoke," the novelist aimed to instill memory with life, to live a state of pride away from humiliation, as his imagination dictated, thus enabling the verbs to have "success." He said:

"Come, emerge from the belly of the despair you love, from the ruins of memory; come to the spaces of the imagination tree... Arise... to smell the letters of my Semitic languages carved in a stale yet fresh memory" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). Thus, he enabled the success of his call through lexical words:

come, emerge, love, smell... to reach the intended meaning away from illusion, ambiguity, and vagueness, and it is the Semitic language carved in the heart of the Arab since ancient times, and he calls for the renewal of its impact to enable a robust communicative process.

He talks about the condition of the Arab in his homeland, about the remnants of current principles: "Why do we, the children of Old Amman, stand in long queues before the extinct Citadel Museum... the mountain with the decomposing remains of noble corpses?" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). The action of transformation and empowerment is stressed in his statement, "Why do we turn into shadows?" as a result of this action appears later, after reality is presupposed: "Why do we stand," and what we stand before is "that with decomposing remains," and its owners are "noble corpses." All this proves once again his appeal for success, achieved through continuous work, diligence, and perseverance, resulting in liberation and resurrection of life in the times of our ancestors. The author is a traditionalist renewed, a heritage-seeker, a seeker of the new.

After lexical presuppositions, there are structural presuppositions, which are inherent in the very structure of the sentence. Here, information is treated as a presupposition, that is, as something accepted to be true. In other words, information given after a question is treated as a known state. This type of sentence is very common in Al-Razzaz's novel. There are numerous examples of this. Here are a few: "I wonder, what do the words say? Shall I tell him the neighbors' news? Will he say to me: I love you?" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). Here, there is a discourse narrated by Zahra about Abdullah the Dinosaur, and she knows the answer. This is emphasized by the words which precede the question: "What remains unsaid is the most important and dangerous; our relationship is a ball of threads woven by a language that marries the daily with the essential, through gesture and faith" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). Zahra continues her questions while the Dinosaur babbles in his sleep; he is

perplexed by her words yet aware of their truth, trying to evade understanding the answer: "I do not know what Zahra meant when she said she loved me after the secrets of my handwriting were revealed to her" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). He is recalling known information while trying to evade the answers to the questions.

The question persists, delving into the essence of the "Dinosaur's" memoirs, the process of their creation, and the rhetoric used in the discourse: "How were the memoirs of Abdallah the Dinosaur written?" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). Confusion exists in a state of reality and non-reality, and in the use of the first and third person: "He has not yet decided whether to write the Dinosaur's memoirs in the first-person or the third-person. Therefore, I, Abdallah the Dinosaur, have resolved to write in both forms" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). This is a fatal fluctuation between the self and the "other," between the personal angst and the national causes—the answer to which is hidden in his soul and immortalized in his memory.

Structural presupposition appears in different forms in the novel, especially in the struggle of opposites. This happens when the narrator intellectually connects two different things. Zahra, who is fully aware, asks: "I will not remove the pictures of Stalin, Abdul Nassir, or Sayyid Qutb from the wall... she says: How do you maintain the harmony of these images?" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). The harmony lies in maintaining the different spectrums of the Arab society with its multifaceted leanings. He explains his doctrine further: "... the Dinosaur ignores her question while she murmurs: All of them were against America... or colonial Britain" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). The common denominator is clearly stated in the question: all the different sides are against the colonial powers, represented by America and Britain.

The Dinosaur explains his condition and the rectitude of his doctrine, while Zahra asks the question regarding its usability: "What have we gained from your rectitude and your ruler, which is as sharp as a sword?" The answer is already predetermined, and the remaining sentence follows: "nothing but imprisonment, displacement, and hunger" (Al-Razzaz, 1994).

The Dinosaur's nightmares dictate questions to Zahra, which affirm what has already become a foregone conclusion, like the question he asks: "Why don't you knock on the door?" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). His question is followed by the answer he gives himself: "Perhaps you think I am humble because I was a militant" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). He also

reveals his desire to be in a position of power when he says: "I realized instantly... that he wants to play the role of the Pharaoh, especially toward me, who was his party superior and who reminds him of the days of rejection" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). These nightmares and memories are dictated by the series of questions he asks, while Zahra constantly tries to reach the Dinosaur's heart and reveal what she believes to be his innermost feelings: "Why don't you write a poem about love? About women? About passion? About me?.." (Al-Razzaz, 1994).

Presupposition in the novel is used to refer to the reality and significance of the interrogation. Regardless of whether it is "ascertainment" or "conception," the significance of the speech to the speaker and the interpretation to the recipient have multiple meanings, which are true to the intentions of the sender. In addition, the speech, particularly the question, could have been intended to inquire about the subject, or the speaker could know the answer but is reluctant to say it, or could be thinking about it. These are classified into primary, solicitous, or disavowing, depending on the purpose of the question, as discussed by Al-Jurjani (1983).

The "incorrect" or "unrealistic" presuppositions come after these types. In other words, it is a presupposition believed to be false. There are a number of instances in the novel that illustrate this presupposition, for example:

"Imagine that Sa'id the Pimp, the former comrade, the nationalist to the bone, who spent the prime of his youth in prison for the sake of Arab unity and Palestine... has become a loathsome, fanatical regionalist" (Al-Razzaz, 1994).

There is a contradiction between the loathsome attribute "pimp" and the positive nationalistic attributes "former comrade" and "spent the prime of his youth in prison."

In *Thus Zahra Spoke*, the latter reveals her state and condition to the Dinosaur: "You imagine that I am incapable of breaking into a sweat, and I imagine that you are incapable of playing the role of an employee" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). Zahra states false facts about herself and the Dinosaur, despite the fact that both are capable of action. Zahra and the Dinosaur share qualities and their relation through wrong presuppositions; Zahra says: "Perhaps he sees me as a mere phantom, perhaps he perceives nothing of me but my scent" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). Nothing proves the wrongness of the lie more than the transposition of the senses, where the sense of sight is expressed through the sense of smell instead of saying "he does not smell me" or

"nothing but my eyes." This is proven by the continuation of the quote: "... but rather a single thread in the veil of my scent; I wonder, did he ever notice the color of my eyes? The body is radiant, renewed, shifting, and transmigrating..." (Al-Razzaz, 1994).

Incorrect presuppositions may also be based on the interaction between the Dinosaur and Zahra in the report on the political information, i.e.: "The Communists might return to power in Moscow; there is a coup... the Red Army, Zahra: the... where is the radio?" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). The idea that the Communists are coming back to power in Moscow, as stated in the text, is false, and this false information is stated in the form of a presupposition. The speaker also diminishes the credibility of the information by using the particle *might* with the verb in the present tense form, which reduces the probability of the event taking place.

The speaker continues with the narrative and uses the verb in the form of "imagine" i.e.: "Imagine, without cameras, he also sold the family tree" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). The request for intellectual visualization, i.e., without cameras, also shows sarcasm and the delivery of false information. Are cameras used, as the speaker implies, in order to reveal the content of the conscience? The verb *imagine* means conception/visualization. It carries the connotation: "a concept perceived by the elite rather than the common folk, such as the image specific to humans characterized by intellect and reflection" (Al-Isfahani, 2011). The use of the verb in the form of "imagine" is also similar in the use of the verb in the form of "ignores," "desires," and "believes," none of which are stated in the form of truth, and therefore it becomes an unrealistic statement. The evidence for this is: "I believe that I (perhaps) loved you without knowing..." (Al-Razzaz, 1994). The context that follows also shows that the information delivered in the statement is false: "My soul told me she was mocking me. My eyes lied." The context that precedes the statement also diminishes the information with the use of the word "perhaps."

However, incorrect presupposition still surfaces elsewhere in the novel, as the speaker again uses the word "considered" which means there was a possibility of something happening, as in "I used to consider the fly the source of my strength or my personal dignity" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). The intention behind this is again highlighted by what follows, as it is a negation: "I would withdraw with politeness and tact, while resentment ate at my heart, and an

overwhelming sense of defeat devoured my innards" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). Is there ever a withdrawal that is not a result of defeat? The incorrect presuppositions of the speaker continue as he lives in a "dream of what he desires," as in the scene where Zahra held him against her chest: "Zahra cast a withered glance at the bed and pressed him to her chest—an embrace suggesting understanding, reproach, and tenderness all at once" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). This is a narrative that does not reach any sort of reality, but is rather a narrative of fantasy and dream, as highlighted by Zahra's state of being: "Zahra's face withered and she did not utter a word," and his confusion as he asks, "Has my love for you changed, Zahra, now that you have withered?" How else would there be an embrace when her face has withered and her tongue has frozen "without uttering a word"?

Moreover, his aspiration for union with her is reflected in his dreams and in his existence in moments of imagination: "Perhaps I am walking in my sleep... suddenly a phantom of Zahra emerges; I perceive nothing but her scent... and the echo of my voice resonates. I am walking" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). This is a life of dreams and imagination rather than reality and truth, in which the pragmatic principles of "incorrect presuppositions" prevail. What are dreams if not phantoms dictated by hours of illusion, a reflection of unfulfilled needs?

It is told of the poet Mahmoud Sami Al-Baroudi that he saw his daughter in a dream upon his arrival in exile in Sarandib (Sri Lanka):

A visiting phantom of 'Samira' arrived at night,
And what is a phantom but that which the
thoughts narrate? (Al-Baroudi, 1988).

The phrase "narrated by thoughts" of the above poem is a clear explanation of the dreams of Moonis Al-Razzaz and the behaviors reflected in them.

These assumptions, as mentioned earlier, are followed by "counterfactual presupposition," whereby what is presupposed is not only false but the opposite of the truth or the contrary of reality. Evidence of this in the novel can be cited as: "Zahra was not withering; on the contrary, she was blooming more, blushing like young girls... the Dinosaur sees her withering..." (Al-Razzaz, 1994). In other words, the withering of Zahra contradicts the reality of the novel, as she is blooming more and more. In addition, the Dinosaur states: "Were it not for Zahra, her fiery scent, and her understanding of my fluctuating moods and phases, I would have put an end to all this farce" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). In other words, the Dinosaur would not have mood

swings if it were not for Zahra, as she understands him. Thus, there would be no mood swings, contradicting the reality of the novel, as evidenced by the use of *if not for*, whereby "it links the non-occurrence of the second element to the existence of the first" (Ibn Hisham, 1979).

Another example is: "If he said to you, 'Take what he said to me...' how would you react? .. I would turn my face away and distance myself..." (Al-Razzaz, 1994). The speech was never made and therefore is counterfactual. He also made use of the particle *law* (if), which means "the non-occurrence of one thing due to the non-occurrence of another" (al-Irbili, 2009). In this regard, the speech and the reaction are equal in that the speech never occurred and therefore the reaction never occurred.

In describing the state of society and his call to unite to fulfill the goals, the poet says: "O poor ones, unite... O Arabs, unite... and I shall champion every oppressed person whom injustice has crippled..." (Al-Razzaz, 1994). The above quote is not necessarily contradictory to reality but is rather a far-off aspiration or dream that is yet to come to fruition. In fact, the following quote is an example of the counterfactual nature of reality: "It seemed as though he were walking in a dream, searching for a lost object he seeks; he believes (perhaps) in his deep depths that the waking path to this object is blocked" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). The counterfactual nature of reality is achieved through the use of the lexical field: "dream," "lost object," "seeks," "perhaps," and "blocked."

This contradiction occurs most frequently in what Al-Razzaz hopes for in terms of political and social reality. This is a "muddled dream" which never sees the light of reality but rather contradicts it. Al-Razzaz writes, "What do you wish to be? Perhaps you distinguish in your subconscious that you do not want to be an Arab... to be like 'Rambo!'" (Al-Razzaz, 1994). Is Al-Razzaz's hope possible, as he formulates it as a "wish"? How is he ever going to be non-Arab? This is pragmatics' mechanism of operation, based upon a counterfactual presupposition.

2. CONCLUSION

Pragmatics, through the prism of "presupposition," has gone through all the different facets of Moonis Al-Razzaz's novel "Memoirs of a Dinosaur." Through different kinds of presupposition, it has managed to deconstruct the text, uncovering hidden meanings, and finally reach layers of meaning not accessible through any other linguistic or philological model. The

deconstruction was precise, as presupposition types are specific, leading to a clear appearance of semantic results. This is only natural, as structure follows form, and word choice determines significance. The choice was restricted to only "presupposition," without referring to a similar term, "entailment" (Yule, 2010). This is because, as Yule points out, "entailments" derive directly from what is being said, regardless of what the speaker believes, and are necessarily communicated, even if not directly stated. Furthermore, because of their nature, "entailments" do not come under the realm of pragmatics' contemporary discussions, as is the case with "presupposition," which is speaker-dependent (Yule, 2010).

For this reason, "presupposition" rather than "entailment" was employed, in addition to choosing *Memoirs of a Dinosaur*, which portrays a model of the tragic hero who stands firm on his stances without compromise, despite his being aware that he is on his way to destruction. Thus, *Memoirs of a Dinosaur* and its two heroes, "Abdullah the Dinosaur and Zahra," would be considered new forms of the tragic hero in the Arabic novel (Radwan, 2002). This is clear in Zahra's discourse, as follows:

"But I prefer the tragic victim—the counterpart who knows in advance that fates are stronger than him, yet he charges forward and does not shrink back... yes... I prefer the victim drenched in pride over the victor cloaked in arrogance" (Al-Razzaz, 1994).

The novel diagnoses the reality of life and seeks to establish a future plan to free the Arab people from the grip of ignorance, hunger, and exploitation. The call to action is given by Zahra:

"Emancipate yourselves from ruminating on the past and embrace new dreams growing from the womb of old, rusted dreams... emancipate yourselves from the old language... emancipate yourselves" (Al-Razzaz, 1994).

The Dinosaur, on the other hand, is aware of all variables of this new era, as well as the re-emergence of darkness in regionalism. Despite all this, *Memoirs of a Dinosaur* has artistic, political, and social value that makes it superior to others.

Based on the above, it is possible to conclude that there is a constant overlap between the real and the unreal, the actual and the imaginary. As far as formal criticism is concerned, this overlap is related to the pragmatic approach, which examines the direct meanings of words as well as their potential significance, as presented in this analysis of the novel.

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