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In the Eras of Anthropology and Cross-Cultural Studies

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Firstly, I would like to congratulate the journalist and novelist “Ammar Bourouis” on the release of his literary production, entitled “Sardinia Nights” was published in July of 2022 by Dar Al-Watan Al-Youm. Algeria.

I want to clarify that this impressionistic text about the novel does not suggest that I have fully grasped its rhetoric, unlocked its linguistic eloquence, or completely understood its meanings upon completing its reading. The novelist, being the creator of the work, possesses a deeper understanding of its eloquence and meaning, as it reflects their personal experience. Therefore, they are more knowledgeable about the intricacies of the novel compared to any other writer who may delve into its pleasant words and vocabulary.

“Sardinia Nights” is a remarkable novel in terms of its structure, narrative, linguistic richness, and suggestive expressions that delve into social and anthropological realities, capturing various developments and contradictions. In my view, the novelist, Ammar, stands as the focal point and main hero of the story. However, through semiotic analysis, “Sardinia Nights” reveals deeper layers of meaning, significance, and symbolism beyond its beautiful verbal construction.

As an initial observation, the novel emerges as contextual narrative rich in symbolic interactions, encapsulating the essence of sixty years of the novelist’s life (1961 – 2020), laden with burdens, aspirations, and hopes. It seems that “Sardinia,” the Italian island, serves as a powerful symbol wherein icons and signs intersect from every angle. Could it be that in the writer’s imagination, “Sardinia” represents the beautiful imagery emerging from the worn-out, fragmented image of Al-Zaitouna municipality, a place Ammar envisioned as a model community in Algeria?

The novel unfolds with vivid descriptions of Sardinia’s landscapes, streets, old buildings, hotels, and cafes, prompting one to wonder whether these visuals are drawn from journalistic reports or merely the writer’s imagination. The mention of “Zabuga,” a name recurring throughout the novel, led me to inquire whether it’s a region within Al-Zaytuna municipality. To my surprise, I learned that “Zebuga” is a fictional village, its name derived from the Amazigh word for olive.

As the story progresses, Sardinia emerges not only as a physical setting but also as a refuge in the abstract writer’s imagination,

symbolizing an idealized environment juxtaposed with the harsh realities of Al-Zaytouna. Through binary oppositions such as good versus evil, love versus hate, and beauty versus ugliness, the writer presents a nuanced portrayal of human experiences, reflecting the quality of life.

The novel adopts a captivating literary style, blending narrative rituals with journalistic elements, offering insights into Algeria’s collective consciousness from independence to the present day. At its core, “Sardinia Nights” centers around the human condition, with characters like “Bashir” embodying the struggles of Algerians faced with political, economic, and social challenges, leading to migration and cultural displacement.

“Bashir” symbolizes not just a character but every Algerian grappling with the complexities of identity and belonging, particularly in the context of illegal immigration and cultural alienation. Through Bashir’s journey, the novel transcends mere storytelling, offering profound reflections on Algeria’s post-independence history and the enduring quest for a sense of home and belonging.

In essence, “Sardinia Nights” stands as a significant literary contribution to Algeria’s contemporary narrative, weaving together personal stories with broader historical and societal themes, inviting readers to ponder the complexities of identity, migration, and belonging in the modern world.

In conclusion, “Sardinia Nights” emerges as a compelling exploration of identity, migration, and belonging set against the backdrop of Algeria’s post-independence history. Through vivid storytelling and rich symbolism, the novel delves into the complexities of human experience, offering nuanced reflections on social, political, and cultural realities.

Ammar Bourouis, the novelist, intricately weaves together personal narratives with broader societal themes, inviting readers on a journey of self-discovery and introspection. By juxtaposing the idyllic imagery of Sardinia with the harsh realities of Al-Zaytouna, Bourouis captures the dichotomy of hope and despair, beauty, and hardship, inherent in the human condition.

Through characters like “Bashir,” the novel confronts the challenges of migration and cultural displacement, resonating with

readers on a deeply personal level. Ultimately, “Sardinia Nights” stands as a poignant testament to the enduring quest for belonging and the resilience of the human spirit in the face of adversity.

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