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Bimonthly Review of the English Department, Cadi Ayyad University at Beni Mellal. Editor: Khalid Chaouch.

EDITORIAL

Pen Circle
on-line

With the help of Mr. **Abderrahmane MODAKKIR**, a second year student at the English Dept., , *Pen Circle* is now available *online* (see website below). This is a good initiative that deserves encouragement indeed. The website does not of course include all the previous issues because we are still setting them, but we hope we hope to make all the data ready as soon as possible. There are even suggestions of opening a dialogue forum for students of our Department... Why not!?

This year, we are witnessing a kind of passiveness in what concerns contributions. Since our students are fervently expecting each new issue, they should all the same think of contributing to it.

This is the occasion to inform our readers that, from now on, any contribution will also be displayed on *Pen Circle* website, and will accordingly have the opportunity to be consulted by a greater audience. We then request you to provide us with your contributions and to publicize this website among friends and English readers.

So, please, do visit *Pen Circle* website on:

www.pencircle.be.tf

Wadi Symphony in Bni Mellal

Ever since Spring, I was waiting for torrents to come. The earth around me was so dry that it began to moan and to show wide open thirsty mouths. There was no drop of water on my course, even though I had been reputed for being the most dangerous wadi in Bni Mellal. My silt was no longer as damp as it should generally be during this season. Despair overwhelmed me and I began to believe that it would be another drought year. I prepared myself for another long sleep. People around me forgot about my glorious years; some of them, driven by the predicament of housing, even dared to build their house-like shacks on my banks and even squeezed some space onto my course. Didn't they know that I swore to come back to my course? ...

(To be continued on p. 2)

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⇒ **Pen Circle**

Cadi Ayyad University.
Faculty of Letters,
Department of English.
BP. 524.
Beni Mellal.
Fax : 023 48 17 69.
Email: edbm@caramail.com

Editorial Board: My Lmustapha Mamaoui, Mohamed Rakii.

Wadi Symphony in Bni Mellal

(from page 1.)

One good night of November, when everybody was cherishing a Ramadan night, the first drops of rain, brought by a sudden furious nightingale, woke me from my cold sleep and warned of torrents to come. Ropes of rain came down in buckets. Not more than an hour later, I was filled to the brim. It happened so quickly that I could no longer steer the current of muddy water that was forcing itself in my course. The alliance of sky and earth in bringing water from everywhere gave me no time to arrange things for my neighbors and to save what could be saved. I confess that, at that very moment, I felt I was in all my glories. But when I suddenly discovered that I began to lose control over the force of water, I tried vainly to steer it and all that it brought: mud, clay, dirt, mire, silt, slime, sludge, slurry, muddy furniture of worn out civilization, and the scum of cheap technology.

Maybe you won't believe me – or at least you will be surprised – if I tell you that I was sincerely thinking about the poor people around me. I personally did all I could to skip them the worst, but to no avail. Yet, I have no sense of guilt because I know that the responsibility of many casualties falls on people themselves: Call them administration, public affairs, local authorities, civil society, or just citizens. These are in my view empty words. People, it seems, never look for lasting solutions; they easily forget history. Whenever such an unfortunate thing happens they all frown at me and say that it's all the fault of *al-Handaq*. That's the name they gave me since the dawn of time. But they seldom take the bull by the horns and face the real problem.

Yes, here I am and here I lie: *al-Handaq*, the glorious wadi of Bni Mellal. Tell you one more thing: the people of this city have only one choice: they have either to cope with me in times of peace, or I shall cobble them together in times of flood.

Me, AL-HANDAQ,
Mellali Wadi Forever.

Literary Criticism

The Title

THE TITLE of a novel is part of the text – the first part of it, in fact, that we encounter – and therefore has considerable power to attract and condition the reader's attention. The titles of the earliest English novels were invariably the names of the central characters, *Moll Flanders*, *Tom Jones*, *Clarissa*. Fiction was modelling itself on, and sometimes disguising itself as, biography and autobiography. Later novelists realized that titles could indicate a theme (*Sense and Sensibility*), suggest an intriguing mystery (*The Woman in White*), or promise a certain kind of setting and atmosphere (*Wuthering Heights*). At some point in the nineteenth century they began to hitch their stories to resonant literary quotations (*Far From the Madding Crowd*), a practice that persists throughout the twentieth (*Where Angels Fear to Tread*, *A Handful of Dust*, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*), though it is now perhaps regarded as a little corny [= often heard or repeated]. The great modernists were drawn to symbolic or metaphorical titles – *Heart of Darkness*, *Ulysses*, *The Rainbow* – while more recent novelists often favour whimsical, riddling, off-beat titles, like *The Catcher in the Rye*, *A History of the World in 10½ Chapters*, *For Black Girls Who Consider Suicide When The Rainbow is Not Enough*.

For the novelist, choosing a title may be an important part of the creative process, bringing into sharper focus what the novel is supposed to be about. Charles Dickens, for instance, jotted down fourteen possible titles for the serial novel he planned to start early in 1854 (...) Most of these suggest that at this stage Dickens was preoccupied with the theme of Utilitarianism as incarnated in Mr Gradgrind. His ultimate choice of *Hard Times* is consistent with the broader social concerns of the finished novel (...)

Perhaps titles always mean more to authors than to readers, who, as every writer knows, frequently forget or garble [= distort] the names of books they claim to admire. I have been credited with novels called *Changing Wives*, *Trading Places* and *Small Change*, and Professor Bernard Crick once mentioned in a letter that he had enjoyed my *Having It Off*, but perhaps he was having me on. (I couldn't tell which of my books he was referring to.)

David Lodge, *The Art of Fiction*. London: Penguin Books, 1992, pp. 193-6.

The Poet's Corner

This corner is devoted to all kinds of attempts by **all students** in poetry or poetic criticism. Such writings should be typed, otherwise written in handwriting as clear as possible, and submitted to the Department office. Attempts, either published or not, will not be returned.

The Homeless

In the dim corner of our empty city he sits
Conversing with the wind that sweeps
 [the dirty streets.
With the words he fills the atmosphere
 [with pain
The sky turns grey and sadly begins to rain.

A Feeling

Here in the land
Where rocks and cactus reign
I stand
Feeling old age pile up
Like a snake going up a tree
Pain crawls to the tips of my hair
My heart shakes
And splits into a pair.

Dreams

Across the river of our short past
My thoughts freely sail away
Passing by emotions, joys and love lost
The river's tears splash on my face
To wake and see the light of day

Moroccan Poet BACHIRI.

Moroccan Literature in English, a selection from the **First Forum for Moroccan Creative Writers in English**, organised by the English Department (Oujda) in collaboration with the British Council. (Publications de la Faculté des Lettres N° 47, Série : Colloques et séminaires N° 14, pp. 45-46.)

'Age Sixteen in Palestine'¹

I play with time,
As a prince plays with a horse.
And I play with the days,
As children play with colored beads.

Today I celebrate
The passing of one day after another.
Tomorrow I shall celebrate
The passing of two days past yesterday,
Drinking the toast of yesterday
To commemorate the morrow.
Thus I live on.

When I fell off my bolting horse
And broke my arm,
I felt the hurt in the finger that
 had been wounded
a thousand years ago.

And when I commemorated the fortieth
 day of Acre,
I broke into tears for Granada.

And when they tied the noose
 around my neck,
I loathed my enemies,
Because they stole the bandage from
 my neck.

Mahmoud DARWISH,

Mahmoud Darwish, a leading Arab poet from the village of al-Barweh in Galilee – Palestine. His symbolist poetry, which is of great subtlety, expresses at once his political and social as well as his existential concerns. The recipient of many world literary awards, his poetry has been translated to over twelve languages.

Source:
JOSOOR, (the Arab American Journal of Cultural Exchange & Thought for the Future.) Maryland, USA, Winter-Spring 1994, pp. 36-37, 41.

¹ The original title of this section is "SIXTEEN"; but for the sake of contextualization, we suggest the above title.

Pungent Quotations

In this column, we present a choice of quotations by a prominent personality in art, literature, politics, history, philosophy, science etc. Any suggestion or contribution is cordially welcome.

Thus Spoke ... Albert Einstein²:

“If only I had known, I should have become a watchmaker.” [Of his making the atom bomb possible. Quoted in *New Statesman*.]

“Art is the expression of the profoundest thoughts in the simplest way.”

“The process of scientific discovery is, in effect, a continuous flight from wonder.”

“Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler.”

“A theory can be proved by experiment; but no path leads from experiment to the birth of a theory.”

“Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind.” [*Out of My Later years*.]

“If you want to find out anything from the theoretical physicists about the method they use, I advise you to stick closely to one principle: Don't listen to their words; fix your attention on their deeds.”

“Nationalism is an infantile disease. It is the measles of mankind.” [*The World As I See It*.]

Source:
J. M. & M. J. Cohen, *The Penguin Dictionary of Modern Quotations*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd., 1980 (2ed edition), pp. 107-109.

² U.S. physicist, born in Germany: formulated theory of relativity (1879 - 1955).

***** CULTURAL NEWS *****

‘CALL FOR PAPERS’

The English Department at the Faculty of Letters, Beni Mellal, will organize on February 25 – 26, 2003, a Conference on:

English Language Teaching at the Moroccan University: Evaluation and Assessment

Participants are expected to focus on the following issues:

- Teaching materials/methods
- Syllabus content evaluation
- Students’ evaluation

The deadline for submitting abstracts is: Friday 17 January 2003.

Abstracts should be sent to:

Faculty of Letters,
English Department,
Hay Ouled Hamdane,
23 000, Beni Mellal.

E-mail: edbm@caramail.com

The Organizing Committee.

Call for Papers

The local branch of The Moroccan Association of the Teachers of English, (**MATE**) and the English Dept. at the Faculty of Letters, Beni Mellal, will jointly organize a Conference-Debate on the topic:

Teaching/Learning English: Bridging the Gap between High School And University in Morocco.

This manifestation, which will take place in the Academy on March 17th, 2003, at 15.00 *p.m.* will be opened by two short talks:

- “*Extending the notion of error: Cases of overuses in learner productions*” by Jamal. Koubali (English Dept. Beni Mellal)
- “*The Status of English Language Teaching and Learning in Moroccan High School*” by Said Elmouhtarim (Omar Ibn Alkhattab High School, Labradia, Beni Mellal)

This event will surely be an opportunity for teachers of English both in High school and in University to discuss common issues related to this topic. More focus will be put on the following axes:

- ✓ Teacher’s/Learner’s expectations
- ✓ Problems/Obstacles (of students)
- ✓ Recommendations; suggestions; solutions

MATE
B.P. 412 Principale,
Beni Mellal
Tel. 063 47 88 98.

English Department,
Faculty of Letters,
B.P. 524, Beni Mellal
edbm@caramail.com

Creative Pens

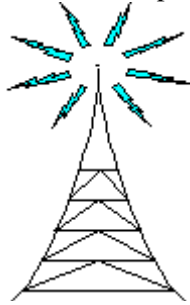
Frog Story

Once, there was a race ...



of frogs.

The aim was to reach the top of a high tower.



A lot of **frog-people** gathered to watch the race and to encourage the racing frogs.



The race began.



In fact, **people** probably did not believe that the frogs would reach the top; you could hear only sentences such as:
*"It's a waste of time !!!
They will never do it !"*



And the frogs began to lose courage and resign, except one that continued to jump and climb and...



People did not stop saying :
*"... What pain !!!
It's a waste of time!
We told you they'll never do it!..."*



And the frogs acknowledged defeat, except the same little frog

that insisted on **her** course.



At the end, all the frogs withdrew from the race, except this little frog that, alone and with a tremendous effort, **reached the top of the tower !**



The others wanted to know how she did it. One of them approached her to ask **her** how she won the contest...



and discovered that the little frog was... **DEAF !**



Never listen to those **people** who have the bad habit of being negative ... because they steal the best hopes from your heart!



Always remember the power of words that you hear or read. That's why, be always



POSITIVE!

In short: When someone tells you that you can not realize your dreams, be always as **DEAF** as a post!



Have a good time!

Pen Circle Frog.

20 Clues, n° 15

**Looking for Clues
among Fruits**

The answers to the 20 clues below are hidden in the fruit names at the end of each line. To find them cross off some of the letters in each fruit's name, reading from left to right.

Example:

- Tailless monkeyAPE.....APPLES

1. celebrity..... STRAWBERRY
2. shellfish with pincers..... CRANBERRY
3. break or openingGRAPE
4. era ORANGE
5. untruth..... LIME
6. male forename..... LEMON
7. crusade..... WATERMELON
8. tart.....PINEAPPLE
9. be offMANGO
10. dove's sound.....COCONUT
11. undergarment..... PLANTAINS
12. forbid.....BANANA
13. babies soft food PAPAYA
14. kind, pleasant QUNICES
15. celebritySTARFRUIT
16. round green seed PEACH
17. Close to..... NECTARINE
18. like..... PEARS
19. demonstrations APRICOTS
20. weeps CHERRIES

20 Clues, n° 14:

1. cat 2. we 3. okay 4. hose 5. ant 6. mar
7. oat 8. gaze 9. ice 10. she 11. ark 12. one
13. lead 14. sea 15. ear 16. nose 17. age 18. lure 19. rich 20. woo

CROSSWORDS (N° 15)

- 1- American city where the Declaration of Independence was first adopted.
- 2- Capital of Cuba – Some of them live in North Africa, others live in the Middle East.
- 3- Climbing, clinging, evergreen plant with five-pointed leaves – Staining or coloring substance – Number – New Hampshire.
- 4- TV channel.
- 5- The supposed killer of J. F. Kennedy. – Hashish.
- 6- Playing card with one spot on it – Nocturnal mouselike

- flying animal – Alcoholics Anonymous.
- 7- Modal used to express obligation and advisability – French donkey – double consonants.
- 8- Ask (a question) or raise (a problem) – Boat built by Noah, which survived the Flood (*pl.*) – Decilitre.
- 9- 'Hello' – South American bearded president.
- 10- Monosyllabic answer – oll korrekt – Compete in a race
- 11- Far from being impure – Iranian news agency.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
1												
2												
3												
4												
5												
6												
7												
8												
9												
10												
11												

- A- Socrates hobby horse.
- B- Find it in 'havoc' – I Owe You (reversed).
- C- Same as the first word in 3 across – Moves its tail – An international organization upside down!
- D- Los Angeles – He can be a university degree holder, an unmarried man, or both.
- E- In addition to – allow or enable.
- F- Time of fasting – Find it in 'acorn'.
- G- A reversed egotistic pronoun – American poet, Imamu Amiri ...
- H- French definite article – Thank you!
- I- Personal.
- J- When repeated in print, it indicates laughter – Triple consonants.
- K- Arab founder of sociology.
- L- Burnt remains – Whole quantity or number (of) – Reversed indefinite article.

Solution for N° 14:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M		
1							O		N	M		D	C		
2		M	A	S	T	E	R	P	I	E	C	E			
3	C	O	L	O	U	R		I	C	E		N	T		
4	H	U	M	A	N	R	I	G	H	T	S		R		
5		L	A	P		S		G	E	I	S	H	A		
6	C	O	M				O	E		N		U	M		
7		U	A	E			U	P	R	I	G	H	T		
8	H	I	T	S			N	E	Y			O	F		
9		Y	E	S	M	A	N			F	O	L	I	O	
10	M	A	R	E			R			P	L	A	Y	R	
11	I				N		M			A	I	T		A	M
12	K	O			C	U	E			E			A	M	E
13	E	R			E	L	D	E	R	S			L	I	D