

Abstract

This thesis focuses on the debut collection of five short stories, *Men God Forgot* (1946), by the Francophone writer of Egyptian origin, Albert Cossery. The thesis aims to analyze and discuss the function of sleep, dreams, and oneiric aesthetics in this collection of short stories, which embodies micro-stories of the inhabitants of the poor peripheries of the Egyptian capital.

The study begins by presenting the context of the life and work of the author who, despite living in France for many years, in the collection portrays the city of his childhood, Cairo, through a dream narrative with elements of magical realism. It also examines the influences of the oneiric aesthetics of the period, the writer's minimalist lifestyle and the apotheosis of laziness, which are closely related to the utilization of the images of sleep and dreams in his literary works. The thesis also presents a perspective on dream and sleep phenomena from the standpoint of contemporary dream and sleep science.

The key section of the thesis is devoted to a detailed analysis of the representations of sleep and dreaming in individual stories in Cossery's collection, particularly on the thematic and narrative levels. Sleep, dreaming, and the oneiric aesthetic are examined as metaphors of passivity, laziness, and regression for the characters on a personal and existential level. They are also examined in relation to political realities as images of social transformation, revolt, and the post-work society, to demonstrate that the narrator uses dream motifs as socio-critical commentary through which he creates an original political imagination.

Key words: Albert Cossery, *Men God Forgot*, Sleep, Dream, Oneirism, Cairo, Egyptian Francophone Literature