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THE SEEING AND THE BLIND: INTERDISCURSIVITY IN ARAB POLITICAL DISCOURSE

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ABSTRACT

The Camp David Accords were considered crucial political agreements in the 1970s. They caused a huge political controversy among their supporters and opponents. This article argues that the political discourse of Sadat, the Egyptian president at that time, played an important role in mobilizing Egyptians to support the Accords. To prove this argument it employs analytical tools from critical discourse analysis and pragma-dialectical theory. The aim of the article is to explain how Sadat's political discourse played a central role in persuading the average citizens to side with his approach. To tackle this question, the author analyzes the interdiscursivity between political and religious discourses in the major speech delivered by Sadat few days after signing the Accords. It also analyzes the strategic discursive maneuverings that were employed to demonize his opponents. In addition to drawing a connection between binaries such as peace/war and richness/poverty, Sadat employs religious discourse in order to de-legitimize his opponents, depicting them as 'Imams of ignorance and idolatry' who are straying into darkness, while his supporters are depicted as enlightened, seeing believers. Thus, religious binaries have replaced political disagreement, whereas faith and disbelief have replaced support and opposition; and the Camp David Accords were represented not as a political agreement but as a semi-religious stance.

Key Words: Arab political language, Interdiscursivity, Sadat, Religion and politics, Camp David Accords, Egyptian-Arab relations, Critical Discourse Analysis, Argumentation, Presidential speech.

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1. Camp David Accords: Strategies of description and labelling

The signing of the Camp David Accords on 17th of September 1978 is considered one of the political events that have sparked off wide-scale controversy that continues today. The peoples and individuals concerned with the Accords were divided between supporters who described it as a 'Peace Gate', and opponents who considered it a 'Trojan Horse'¹. It is not easy to find a party with a middle ground between the

supporters who called for 'settlement and peaceful co-existence' and the opponents who resisted 'surrender and forfeit'. These two views were reflected at the level of political discourse in deciding whether to retain the name of the location after which the Accords were named or to arabize it. Those who viewed the Accords as a Trojan horse arabized the name, designating both the location and the Accords 'David's Stable'ⁱⁱ. And, those who viewed the Accords as a step towards peaceful co-existence, or did not make a public stand against the Accords, used the American name, i.e. Camp David. The two designations in themselves signified a distinct awareness of the event and its natural consequences for those involved. In this sense, the very act of designation became a symbol of support or opposition, and hence a tool of realizing such support or opposition.

Discrepancy in positions towards Camp David is not restricted to political analysts; but extends—as previously indicated—to the peoples and nations. In a preface to the book he edited on Camp David ten years after it was signed, Quandt delineates, in hedged terms, the discrepant positions in different parts of the world:

For most Americans, Camp David stands out as a proud moment in their recent history. Politicians regularly embrace the Camp David Accords as the center piece of American policy in the Middle East. But elsewhere the reactions have been less positive. Many in the Arab world see Camp David as the cause of their misfortunes. Israelis are, on the whole, more positively inclined, although arguments abound as to what Camp David implies for the future. The Soviets speak of Camp David as a model to be avoided at all costs, and Europeans have long since concluded that a new approach to Arab-Israeli peace making is requiredⁱⁱⁱ.

Though the American writer states, in a nutshell, the positions of the parties involved towards the agreement, he dismisses the position of the principal party – the Egyptians, in their capacity as a people, not an administration.

It can be argued that the majority of Egyptians supported reconciliation with Israel; hence the measures taken to secure this reconciliation, which culminated in Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in November 1977 and the consequent signing of the Camp David Accords in 1978 and the Peace Treaty of 1979. This support was manifest in the massive demonstrations that Sadat was met with upon his return from both Jerusalem and from Camp David. That being said, it is worth noting that, under post-revolution regimes, it was not difficult to assemble Egyptian masses to demonstrate popular support for resolutions or persons that they knew little about or perhaps did not support at all. However, it appears that many Egyptians took to the streets out of a genuine desire for political peace, which was twinned with economic prosperity in the dominant political discourse. This overwhelming support took a number of Egyptian politicians by surprise. For instance, Ali Sabri, a notable politician in the Nasserist era, says: 'I was not surprised by Al-Sadat's visit to the occupied city of Jerusalem; nothing on his part could surprise me. It was how well the people took it which took me by surprise.'^{iv}

Such unpredicted support by Egyptians raised many questions; most importantly: Why did most Egyptians support reconciliation with Israel? It seems that the political discourse of the time played a major role in rallying support. Muhammad surveys some of the discursive factors that influenced this support, including the use of a simple political discourse that is based on contradictory binaries^v. With regard to war and peace, as two determinative choices, the political discourse of the time associated war with poverty and peace with wealth. Moreover, to justify Egypt's unilateral peace with Israel, which dissipates the opportunities of Arab lands that endured the throes of war to restore their usurped territories, the discourse capitalized on the Egyptian/Arab binary. In this sense, the Egyptian was the one who made sacrifices in money and blood on behalf of the Arab who benefited from the increase in oil prices. As a result, the Egyptians got poorer and the Arabs got richer by accumulating wealth at the expense of the Egyptians. These binaries are very simple and clear. This allowed them to disseminate easily amongst the Egyptian people, particularly in the absence of any counter discourse.

2. Religion and the Peace Discourse

Muhammad pointed out the role that the 'religious frame of reference' in Sadat's speeches served functions: first, propagating the project among the Egyptian people while ensuring no resistance or objection; second, covering the true agenda behind it^{vi}. The present research argues that religious discourse served a third function: that of criticizing the opponents of Sadat's reconciliation scheme within and outside Egypt, as well as restraining attempts to refute or object to the scheme. The study also argues that was achieved through the interdiscursivity between political and religious discourses. This is illustrated by studying intertextuality with the Qur'an in Sadat's political speech – and the resulting interdiscursivity between religious and political discourses – and by examining how interdiscursivity was constructed in order to criticize the opponents of the peace initiative.

3. Intertextuality and interdiscursivity

Interdiscursivity is one of the forms that a relationship between texts can take^{vii}. It occurs when different discourses or genres intervene in a communicative event. A more general concept that encompasses this and other textual relationships is *intertextuality*. According to Fairclough interdiscursivity follows from and is inherently connected with intertextuality^{viii}. Both concepts emphasize the importance of a historical understanding of texts as transformations of the past (represented by stable convention and past texts) to the present.

I use Fairclough's approach in analyzing intertextuality and interdiscursivity which focuses on the means by which the text combines social and historical aspects as well as different discourses and genres^{ix}. Accordingly, investigating interdiscursivity means connecting text with context, examining how discourses and genres are configured in "orders of discourse", how different discourses and genres are combined, and how texts are produced and interpreted based on a particular social context^x.

4. Interdiscursivity in the Camp David speech

In the wake of signing the two Accords of Camp David on 17th September 1978, Sadat delivered a speech before the members of the Egyptian Parliament on the 4th October. Egyptians watched or listened to a live transmission of the speech on radio and television. The speech stated the terms of the two Accords and mentioned some of the circumstances surrounding the signings. The speech also addressed those opposed to the Accords. This speech had special significance for the following reasons:

- First, it is the first speech directed to the Egyptian people after signing the Accords.
- Second, it was delivered after the positions of those opposed to the Accords had become clear; hence, intensifying the speech's role in directing the conflict between supporters and opponents.
- Third, as a consequence of the above, the speech clearly reflected—and perhaps shaped—the position adopted by the Egyptian regime and its supporters towards the parties concerned with the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the redrafting of the map of enemies of and allies. This position remained almost unchanged until the end of Sadat's time in office.

4.1 The thematic divisions of the speech

Thematically, the speech was divided into four sections. First, the commemoration of Abd al-Nasser's death, as Sadat had not delivered the usual speech on his anniversary. This section only amounted to 2.2 percent of the whole speech (about 250 words out of a total of 11,240 words). It included praise of the person of Abd al-Nasser, in addition to common statements on the pros and cons of the 1952, and more common statements on the significance of the 1971 Corrective 'Revolution' and the 1973 war in making amends for some of the weaknesses of the 1952 revolution. This section was delivered in classical Arabic that abounded in traditional rhetoric such as metaphors, slogans and resonant phrases.

Soon the speech shifted to the Accords of Camp David and related matters. This section was comprised of two parts. The first part stated some of the terms of the two agreements as well as some incidents that took place during the negotiations, with repeated thanks to President Carter and the American administration for their mediation. The second part was an attack on the Arab states which opposed Camp David. The words used in this attack amounted to ten percent of the whole speech (approximately 1,209 words out of a total 11,240). Indeed, if we also add the paragraphs directed to the Arab states without any

direct criticism, the amount of space given to the Arab states (whether criticizing their position from the Camp David Accords or calling for them to join the agreements) would be even greater. In this case, these words would make up seventeen percent of the speech (1,938 out of 11,240)^{xi}. The third section of the speech dealt with the internal situation in Egypt. The previous statistics reveal that the speech devoted a significant amount of attention to the Arab position towards Camp David.

4.2 Intertextuality with the Qur'an

In this part, I analyze the intertextuality of the speech – in conclusion to the paragraphs about the first Accord of Camp David – with verses nineteen to twenty two of Chapter thirty five (*Fater*) of the Qur'an. Proving the intertextuality of the foregoing text may be a lengthy process, but it will make it easier to follow through the detailed analysis that I seek to offer. It will also set the pragma-textual context where the intertextuality occurred, which is essential to understanding how this intertextuality operates. Referring to the Arab states that opposed the Accords, Sadat says:^{xii}

"I sincerely call upon all the parties participating in the construction of this great historical evolution (...). I call upon King Hussein to perform his duty and I call upon those in charge in Syria to partake in negotiations for a withdrawal from the Golan Heights. The path has been well-paved for this, since what applies to Sinai will definitely and specifically apply to Golan (...).

What is going on today on the Arab theatre and in the camp lead by the Soviet Union? Syria is striking at Lebanon: enters into Tal Al-Za'tar to liquidate the Palestinians, strikes at Muslims, and then within days turns against the Christians. Just days later, insult is added to injury and Syria devotes its arms to striking at the Palestinians and liquidating the Lebanese. Isn't this their camp? i.e. the camp of the Soviet Union and of insusceptibility, objection and all the other words and slogans. In the meantime, an agonizing tragedy is going on in Morocco, between Moroccans and Algerians, where Arab brothers are killing each other using Soviet weapons given to the Algerians on that front. Then there is the so-called Southern Yemen!! It is not even worthy of mention after selling itself, its land and its dignity (...).

The battle between us and that front has deep roots; most powerful of which is that this country poses a danger and a threat to all those regimes. In Syria, where there are physical liquidation, detention centers and the Mazza prison. In Iraq, where there are death sentences and people being dragged on the streets. As for Libya, I do not need to mention what is happening there at the hands of that mad child. And in Algeria, prisons and detention centers (...).

(...) However, I declare before you and before our people, from this very platform: This is what Egypt was able to accomplish at this point; and if the 'No's' camp in alliance with the Soviet Union could accomplish more, then we would hail and support them. Indeed, we would hail them, support them, and thank them. And if any Arab regime were able to fulfil all our aspirations, *we would be the first to say 'Yes' to it with the utmost sincerity and fullest support*. All truth to Allah the Almighty, when saying: "*The blind and the seeing are not alike; nor are the depths of Darkness and the Light; nor are the (chilly) shade and the (genial) heat of the sun: Nor are alike those that are living and those that are dead. Allah can make any that He wills to hear; but thou canst not make those to hear who are (buried) in graves.*"^{xiii}

Now moving on to the second part of the Camp David Accords..." [Emphasis by the author]

4.3 The Represented Binaries: what it means to be seeing or blind?

The textual reference in the speech is to verses from the Qur'anic chapter thirty five (*Fater*). Books of *tafsir* (interpretation of the Qur'an) do not mention specific reasons for the revelation of these verses. Chapter thirty five deals with several subjects, but its main theme is emphasizing the truth that Muhammad is a messenger sent by Allah, and classifying people in terms of their belief in the Prophet into believers and non-believers. Non-believers are reprimanded by calling them mindless and comparing them to the infidels of previous nations. This intertwines with other topics such as ascribing natural phenomena (rain, fruit, wind, seas, day and night, sun and moon) to the omnipotence of Allah, and describing paradise that has been

promised to believers and hell that has been promised to non-believers. The chapter stresses that the infidels disbelieved messengers and that disbelief is a natural reaction by the infidels towards messengers (see 35:24-25). Thus, it can be said that the central theme of the Chapter is the validation of Muhammad's mission and stating the reward of believers and the punishment of non-believers. There is a tangible degree of symmetry between the main theme of the Chapter and that of the speech. The speech aims to persuade the addressees to support the Camp David Accords and to accept their terms. It also uses the carrot-and-stick, making accusations and threats to opponents, and distributing hopes and promises among supporters.

The verses used in the speech, involve a number of physical and natural binaries that are used in a metaphorical sense to represent dogmatic binaries. The verses did not explicitly state the nature of these dogmatic binaries, on which authors of books of *tafsir* disagree. This allows the verses to be used to represent other binaries without a direct clash with the original text and without the need for modification. This is further enhanced by the absence of a particular historical context (revelation *raison d'être*), which renders them—in theory—amenable to various (re)contextualization. In the context of the present speech, these qualities represented the binary of the supporters and the opponents of the Camp David Accords.

4.4 Why the Verses from Chapter thirty five?

The binary of the seeing and the blind occurs in four different locations of the Qur'an (6:50; 13:16; 35:19-22; 40:58). This raises an important question: Why is the intertextual reference in the speech to the verses in Chapter 35 rather than any of the other Chapters with the same binary?

A possible *prima facie* explanation would be that the verses in Chapter 35 contain more opposite binaries than any of the other chapters. Chapters 6 and 40 only contain the binary of the seeing and the blind. Chapter thirteen contains the same binary which is linked to a second binary: darkness and light. In Chapter thirty five, however, presents three linked binaries in addition to the binary of the seeing and the blind, *verse* darkness and light, shade and heat, and the living and the dead. Such palpable material binaries belong to the domain of general human experience; some of them are more related to people living in desert environment (heat and shade), while others identifiable to all humans across different environments and cultures. Surely, the more numerous the material binaries are, the more profound the contrast between the abstract binaries represented. Thus, the verses with the greatest number of binaries - and the more varied in terms of human experience - were selected.

There may be yet another reason for using these verses in particular: the issue of non-equivalence between the binary of the blind and the seeing is formulated as a question in two of the four locations: **Say: "can the blind be held equal to the seeing?"** (6:50; 13:16). This question may be treated either as a rhetorical question or as a real question. In both cases, the question encourages the addressee to use their judgment and probe their knowledge. It gives the addressees the opportunity to reach their own answer to the proposed question. The addressee is invited to participate in the meaning-making process and to complete the construction of discourse. This is because every question demands an answer, even if the question is only rhetorical. Similarly, a question may be the key to confronting and refuting the claims of the speaker, as a yes or no question may be answered in the affirmative or in the negative. However, it is to be noted that the possibility of a response being transformed into an act of resistance is conditional; it is constrained by the addressee's capacity and desire to treat the question as a literal rather than rhetorical one. On the other hand, the inequality of the elements of the binaries in Chapters thirty five and forty is expressed in a definite, declarative, assertive sentence: "Not equal are the blind and those who (clearly) see" (35:19; 40:58). This construction does not give the addressee any room to question the inequality of these elements – even rhetorically.

The speech selected the verses which do not allow the addressee to scrutinize the inequality in the binaries introduced by the speaker to represent the opponents and supporters of the Camp David Accords. Moreover, the assertive style used does not allow—at the textual level—for any skepticism. This construction renders the addressee a passive participant in the communication process. The addressees have no option but to believe what they receive, and are not offered any motivation (linguistic or otherwise) to use their judgment

or exercise their legitimate right to criticism. Hence, we may say that the speech used the verses which offered the maximum degree of contrast in the binaries presented on the one hand, and which deprived the addressee of any opportunity to question what is presented on the other hand.

4.5 From Intertextuality to Interdiscursivity: Or from disagreement to blindness

The foregoing verses are part of a sacred text that is perceived —by Muslims—as divine. The actual textual speaker in these verses is God, and the addressees are His worshippers. The speaker and the addressees are bound by a relation of possession: A people's God is their king, lord and owner, and the people are his worshippers and possessions. The speaker addresses a specific group of addressees—those who believe in Him and worship Him. The relationship between the speaker and addressees necessitates a mandatory response of absolute faith and complete belief on the part of the addressee. The best that the addressee can do with the text is to try to understand its meaning in order to act upon it. All the problems that may arise during the interpretation process are ascribed to the limited mental faculties of the addressee as opposed to the divinity of the speaker's text. Those who deviate from the rules that bind any response to the speaker's discourse – that is, absolute faith and complete belief – are expelled from the circle of Muslims and believers and are punishable by the guardians of the creed (believers and Muslims) until they revert. Thus, these deviants are banished from the text by being excluded from the concept of the Muslim *jama'a* (i.e. the circle of Muslims), and are treated as infidels or non-believers^{xiv}.

In theory, the Camp David speech belongs to political discourse on the one hand, and to the genre of presidential speeches on the other. In presidential speeches, the relation between the speaker and the addressee is defined as a president-citizen relationship. Such a relation falls within a framework of mutual rights and duties, and is governed by a social bond that is determined by the constitution. Presidential speeches are a kind of political discourse which is perceived, in the Aristotelian tradition, as a kind of consultative discourse where the leader presents to the citizens what he has done, is doing and intends to do in order to inform them as well as consult them^{xv}. A presidential speech is directed to every citizen without exception. It is a general discourse which does not exercise religious, racial or political discrimination, since it is based on the concept of 'citizenship' which transcends these differences. Also in theory, there are no constraints on the responses of the addressees to a presidential speech. This response may take any of a wide range of forms: discussion, argumentation, acceptance, refusal, belief, disbelief, support, objection, justification, refutation. The relationship between the speaker and the addressees should not be affected by any of these responses. For, the addressee who discusses, refutes, rejects or objects to the president's speech is exercising a legitimate right by virtue of his citizenship. Not only must the president accept this discussion, objection, etc., he has a responsibility to provide an environment where this right may be exercised^{xvi}.

Having defined the characteristics of divine religious discourse and human political discourse, the following two observations can be made: First, there is a profound difference between religious and political discourse at the discursive level, reflecting the difference between the human and the divine to the pious believer. Second, religious discourse has exceptional power derived from the exceptional regard that religious people assign to the source, that is, the divine. This exceptional power does not apply only to those who believe in the text; it also applies – perhaps to a greater extent – to those who do not believe in it. This is because this power translates into the power to exclude opponents discursively and physically, not to mention that religious discourses are commonly immune to all forms of opposition and resistance. Hence, it can be said that the symbolic capital—in Bourdieu's terms—of religious discourse is greater than that of political discourse, especially in the Arab world^{xvii}. Also, according to Bourdieu, it can be said that the discourse with greater symbolic capital has more power to control, dominate, discriminate and exclude; i.e. more power to attain and exercise authority^{xviii}.

Thus, when a politician integrates religious discourse to achieve interdiscursivity, this lends more power to the politician and to his discourse. This appears to be a logical conclusion, but logical reasoning does not explain how exactly that interdiscursivity between religious and political discourse results in a more

powerful political discourse. This question is left to discourse analysts and rhetoricians to answer, and so; the present study is a step on the quest for an answer.

The present study argues that interdiscursivity in the Camp David speech results in the transmission of the binaries of seeing and blindness, darkness and light, etc. to the opponents and supporters of the Camp David Accords. These binaries are metaphorical representations of dogmatic binaries, and as I have stated above, books of *tafsīr* differ in their interpretation of the dogmatic equivalents of these binaries. I shall refer to al-Zamakhsharī's interpretation of these verses, since it incorporates a great deal of what other interpretations have mentioned. In his interpretation of the verses, al-Zamakhsharī says:

(The seeing and the blind) are a representation of the infidel and the believer...or a representation of the idol and Allah (all glory to Him); (darkness and light) and (shade and heat) are a representation of truth and fallacy and the reward and punishment they lead to; and (the living and the dead) are a representation of those who became Muslims and those who did not and persisted in idolatry...^{xix}

The following table illustrates the effect of interdiscursivity between the speech and the verses according to al-Zamakhsharī^{xx}:

Political Speech	Qur'anic Discourse	Interdiscursivity (Political-Religious Discourse)
Opponent of agreement x Supporter of agreement	Blind x Seeing ↑↓ Non-believer x Believer	Opponent of agreement x Supporter of agreement ↑↓ Blind(non-believer) x Seeing (believer)
Opposing agreement x Supporting agreement	Darkness x Light ↑↓ Fallacy x Truth	Opposing agreement x Supporting agreement ↑↓ Darkness (fallacy) x Light (truth)
Outcome of opposing agreement x Outcome of supporting agreement	Heat x Shade ↑↓ Punishment of fallacy x Reward of Truth	Outcome of opposing agreement x Outcome of supporting agreement ↑↓ Heat (Punishment of fallacy) x Shade (Reward of Truth)
Non-believers in the agreement x Believers in the agreement	Dead x Living ↑↓ Infidels x Muslims	Non-believers in the agreement x Believers in the agreement ↑↓ Dead (Infidels) x Living (Muslims)

As illustrated by the table above, interdiscursivity transforms the act of opposing Camp David from a form of political disagreement – which the leader is constitutionally required to protect and provide a suitable environment for it to be exercised – into a fallacy and a stray into darkness in the religious sense. Moreover, opponents of the agreement are transformed from citizens exercising a legitimate right into ‘obstinate infidels’ in the religious sense. Meanwhile, supporting Camp David is transformed from a political action into an act of ‘faith’ and ‘truth’; and the supporter is transformed from a citizen making a political choice into ‘seeing enlightened believers’. There is no doubt that these transformations serve several functions which will be addressed in the following section.

4.6 The ‘Not ...but...’ Argumentative strategy

The speech adopted a special strategy in dealing with the Arab opponents of the Camp David Accords. This strategy was clearly visible in the excerpt above. In order to understand this strategy, we need to first pinpoint the goals that the speech aimed to achieve – with regard to the Arab states. The first goal was to confront the Arab states' criticisms of the Accords Arab states. These criticisms may be inferred from Sadat's response to them: 1) It is a unilateral reconciliation with Israel, which comes at the expense of the other 'frontline states' whose land is still occupied, particularly Syria, and at the expense of the Palestinian cause at all its different levels (especially Jerusalem). The Arabs understood, as the speech itself reveals that the Accords reflect a decision by the Egyptian administration to abandon the rights of the other Arab states, in exchange for Sinai. 2) The Egyptian administration squandered a real opportunity that would have allowed the Arabs to secure their full rights which was the Geneva conference. Hence, according to this criticism, the choice of unilateral peace appeared hasty, compromising the opportunities to reclaim Arab right through other means. 3) Finally, the Accords reveal that the Egyptian leadership chose to turn its role in the Arab-Israeli conflict upside down in exchange for Sinai. This implied reshaping the map of alliances and enemies; whereby Israel and the United States turned from traditional enemies to Egypt into friends and allies. In the meantime, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Southern Yemen, Algeria, the Soviet Union and others turned from 'friends', 'brothers' and 'allies' into 'enemies'. The speech under study is a clear manifestation of this transformation.

Throughout the speech, the criticisms made (or would have been made) by the Arabs against Camp David were refuted. To achieve this, an argumentative style based on negation and recanting was adopted (e.g. 'the agreement is not...but...'). The excerpt above contains the central argument with the discourse of the opposing Arabs—the discourse which is textually non-existent, yet intertextually existent. Sadat responds to the first criticism of unilateral reconciliation, stating that the Accords do not apply only to Egypt, but also to Jordan, Syria, Palestine and Lebanon. He calls upon the Arab states to join Camp David, assuring them that he has made all the necessary arrangements for the reclamation of the occupied Arab territories just like Sinai. In response to the second criticism, concerning the abortion of the means for securing a better outcome for all the Arabs, Sadat claims that his intention was not to abort the Geneva conference, but to stimulate the conflict. He correlated this with his promise to abandon Camp David if the Arab states could come up with a better alternative. Sadat refutes the third criticism, regarding the reformulation of the map of allies and enemies, by saying that the Camp David Accords do not clash with the principles of the Arab alliance; but that they are in harmony with the goals formulated and realized through the Rabat resolutions. Moreover, Sadat repeatedly refers to the 'sister Arab states' and 'Arab brothers', and emphasizes moments of Arab solidarity in a textual reference that Camp David has not affected the map of allies and enemies.

4.7 Strategic Maneuvering^{xxi} and Interdiscursivity

At face-value, Sadat's argument appears very convincing: he calls upon the Arabs to reclaim their lands which he had supposedly secured for them, or to abandon Camp David entirely if they can find a better alternative while referring to their brotherhood and stressing that he is vigilant to remain their ally. This reasoning leaves the ball entirely in the court of the other party (the Arabs). This reasoning performs the speech act of 'inviting', which would only become meaningful with the acceptance of the invitee. Another speech act performed here is that of making a conditional promise, which would remain unfulfilled until the condition is met. Sadat stresses that he has fulfilled his duties, and that the other parties must now fulfil their own.

A number of questions arise in light of the above: Why did the Arabs refuse both the invitation and the promise? Why did they find it unbelievable that Egypt was still on their side as it had been before Camp David? Why didn't they 'fulfil their duties' after the Egyptian administration offered them all what they wanted and more?

The discourse has produced two speech acts: inviting and promising. However, it can be argued that this was only a form of strategic maneuvering, aiming to convince the Egyptian citizen that the Egyptian administration has done its best and that the Arabs were the ones who rejected the invitation to join Camp David in order to restore their lands, and that they have failed to produce an alternative that would persuade

the Egyptian administration to abandon Camp David as promised. Therefore, it is 'their' problem, whereas 'we' have done all we can for 'them'.

The speech had two main goals: First, to persuade the Egyptian citizen that Egypt is toiling for the interest of the Arabs, who are not prepared to look after their own interests. Second, to proceed with unilateral reconciliation with Israel, which would result in isolating Egypt from the Arab-Israeli conflict. Yet, these two goals are contradictory and, in theory, irreconcilable!

This is where interdiscursivity comes into the strategic maneuvering. The speech tendered an invitation and a promise, in addition to emphasis of Egypt's allegiance to the Arab position. However, the invitation and the emphasis were recanted through the interdiscursivity with the Qur'anic verses which strongly differentiate between two groups: 'us' versus 'them' (i.e. those in favor of Camp David and those against it). On the other hand, the promise was conditioned on a future action, but the speaker restricted the promise to an extent which rendered it void before allowing an opportunity for the condition to be met. In order to comprehend how the speech was able to achieve these contradictory goals, we need to follow the semantic flow of the excerpt dealing with the Arab position towards Camp David.

The flow of the text is semantically unsystematic. It begins by criticizing the passive positions and negative attitudes towards the Accords on the grounds that they collectively freeze the situation, that they are nothing but slogans and gambles, and that those who adopt such attitudes do not care about the suffering of the Palestinians as much as Sadat does. Sadat plays on the emotions of the opponents, pleading with them to heed the cries and moans of the Palestinians (like he did) and to rush to join Camp David. Sadat then presents the 'accomplishments' of the Camp David Accords, stressing that they did not stray from the goals that the Arabs had set in the aftermath of the 1967 defeat, and that they do not only secure Egyptian rights, but also those of the other frontline states (Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine). Sadat then calls upon the leaders of these countries to believe his version of the proceedings of Camp David. He goes on to relate the role that Egypt played to serve the Arab causes; and accuses some of the opposing Arab states (including the frontline states) of being agents of the Soviet Union and of maltreating their people in the absence of democracy. Sadat presents the relationship between Egypt and these countries as one of countries at war, stating "the battle between us and that front has deep roots; most powerful of which is that this country poses a danger and a threat to all those regimes". "They fear that," he says, "they fear that more than anything else" because, according to him, "here in Egypt there is democracy; there is a haven of safety and security".

The foregoing discussion reveals that the semantic flow of the text as based on a contradiction between what the words say and what they mean. The text says that Egypt would never enter into a verbal battle with its Arab brothers, while simultaneously directing some very painful criticism towards Arab states and leaders. Moreover, Sadat promises to accept any alternative initiative that the opposing front may produce, but then uses interdiscursivity to state that there is no way of comparing what he has provided with anything they may provide.

This contradiction confuses the addressee who seeks to make meaning of what they receive. This confusion grows due to the presence meaning gaps, such as the gap between the meanings of the phrases immediately preceding the Qur'anic verses in the speech, and the meaning of the verses themselves. In these phrases, Sadat declares that he is prepared to accept "with the utmost sincerity and fullest support" any action on the part of the opposing Arab front that would "fulfil all our aspirations". Emphases are laid on this meaning by using performative verbs such as hail and applaud. However, the speaker shifts suddenly to the Qur'anic verses, which are only prefaced with 'All truth to Allah the Almighty who says...' What is the connection between the promise of sincere acceptance and these verses containing contrasting material/dogmatic binaries which afford no similarity or equivalence, but rather repel and cancel each other out? If the whole speech is based on placing Egypt and the Arabs on two opposite sides of the conflict by splitting them into 'us' (the Egyptian regime or the Egyptian people) and 'them' (the Arab regimes or the Arab people), then who are the living and who are the dead? Who is the sighted and who is the sightless? Who is living in light and who is

living in darkness? Who is the believer and who is the infidel? Finally, who is this 'prophet' who seeks to guide those who have strayed, and who are those 'dead' stayers who would not be guided?

The text does not allow a wide margin for interpretation. For, Sadat had just declared that he would bear the responsibility and fulfil the mission. The responsibility and the mission here are not a personal choice, a social obligation, or a national necessity; but a divine inspiration. Hence, in the same speech, Sadat thanks God, saying: 'I thank you, Lord, for you inspired me until I delivered what I had promised'. If Sadat received divine inspiration directly from God, then divine sustenance was also directly from God; and this is implied in the speech when Sadat says "God's hand is above ours". The speaker retained the title of 'the believer' for himself, and left the others no seat but that of 'infidels'. Hence, the opponents of Camp David become the '*Imams of ignorance and idolatry*'^{xxii}, and the Arab states are reduced to a bunch of 'No's' that have allied themselves with the 'atheist', faithless Soviet Union. Would a 'believer' abandon his responsibility and mission and follow an 'infidel'? Is it sensible to await an alternative to Camp David from 'blind', 'dead' people who live in 'heat' and 'darkness'? The probable reply to both questions would be 'No'. No, the blind or dead cannot produce a better alternative to Camp David; this is the best that the enlightened and divinely inspired believer was able to achieve, so why wait? Hence, interdiscursivity invalidates the 'sincere' promise, since it has become impossible for the other party to meet the condition placed. There is no need to even to think of abandoning Camp David now that the speech act has been so tightly constrained through interdiscursivity. The speech resorted to interdiscursivity as a form of strategic maneuvering aiming to capitalize on the immense rhetorical effect of the Qur'anic text. Thus, argumentation, which uses logical reasoning, was combined with interdiscursivity, which produces a rhetorical impact, in order to achieve the highest possible degree of discourse effect.

5. Functions of Interdiscursivity in the Speech

In addition to invalidating speech acts and employing strategic maneuvering, interdiscursivity fulfils two functions in the present speech:

5.1 Exclusion

Exclusion is realized by emphasizing absolute segregation between non-complementary, non-equivalent binaries that repel each other. Therefore, in the same sense that it is impossible for blindness and seeing, darkness and light, shade and heat, life and death (and the dogmatic binaries they represent) to co-exist, it is equally impossible for the Egyptian administration and the opposition front to co-exist. This translates in practice into the impossibility of cooperation or dialogue between them.

5.2 Provocation and Verbal Battles

The signing of the Camp David Accords was preceded and followed by verbal battles between the Egyptian regime and some of the Arab regimes opposing the agreement. Sadat's speeches played a big role in triggering these battles and turning them into a verbal war. It can be argued that using the Qur'anic verses is part of a verbal battle that had commenced at an earlier point in the speech. The verses segregate the elements of the contrasting binaries, so that while one party is attributed with positive qualities, the other party is attributed with negative – perhaps demeaning – qualities. The speech used the verses to attribute the qualities of blindness, darkness and death to the opponents of Camp David, and the result is a provocative discourse. In this respect, the Camp David speech was the first of a series of speeches which may be designated 'the speeches of provocation and verbal battles'. These speeches featured verbal battles between Sadat on the one hand, and some Arab leaders, the Soviet Union and the countries that opposed Camp David on the other hand. These speeches are valuable material for the study of 'provocation and verbal battles' in Arab political discourse. They are also part of the Arab discourse of political criticism, which is a discursively-charged discourse that temporally spans from the second half of the 20th century and spatially from the Atlantic Ocean to the Persian Gulf, and still affects Arab politics today. We will only focus on two aspects of this function.

The first aspect deals with the role that verbal battles played in sabotaging the Egyptian-Arab relations at the formal political level and distorting the awareness of the Egyptian citizen of these relations at

the cognitive level. From a political perspective, these verbal battles deepened the schism between Egypt and most of the Arab states, especially after signing the peace treaty. From an epistemological perspective – which is more important in this study – these verbal battles and the discourse that was generated around it (especially in the official Egyptian media) constituted the main discursive repertoire for most of the Egyptian citizens, particularly for those who did not have access to any alternative discourse in an age of limited options. Hence, the discourse of provocation and word battles were meant to shape the average Egyptian citizen's awareness of Egyptian-Arab relations and their opinions and attitudes towards them. Indeed, some of the effects of this discourse may still be deeply engraved in the minds of many Egyptians today.

The second aspect relates to one of the provocation strategies – that of delusion. In order to ensure that Egyptians subscribed to the strategy of provocation and verbal battles, Sadat intentionally altered the two parties of the conflict. Sadat blurred the features of the real parties (the supporters and opponents of Camp David) and construed it into a conflict between 'Egypt' and the camp led by the 'Soviet Union': between 'civilization' and 'retardation', 'freedom' and 'tyranny', 'faith' and 'disbelief', etc., and finally between 'Egyptians' and 'the Arabs'. One of the outcomes of this strategy was that it deepened the feelings of condescending superiority towards the Arabs to the extent of chauvinism. This was associated with redefining the 'identity' of Egypt and Egyptians, which served to cut Egypt off from the rest of the Arab region^{xxiii}.

6. Conclusion

I began this paper with a question about the reasons behind the acceptance of most Egyptians of Sadat's approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict. I illustrated how Sadat's political discourse played a central role in persuading the average citizen to accept his approach. In addition to drawing a connection between binaries such as peace/war and richness/poverty, the same political discourse employs religious discourse in order to de-legitimize its opponents, depicting them as 'Imams of ignorance and idolatry' who are straying into darkness, while supporters are depicted as enlightened, seeing believers. Thus, religious binaries have replaced political disagreement and faith and disbelief have replaced support and opposition; and the Camp David Accords was represented not as a political agreement but as a semi-religious stand.

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Notes

ⁱ This expression was used in an interview with Sadat in a Kuwaiti political newspaper on November 8th, 1978. The interviewer mentioned that the Arab states regard the Camp David Accords as a Trojan Horse; that is, that the Accords would turn into a cunning scheme to defeat them.

ⁱⁱ The Libyan President Muammar Al-Gaddafi used the term 'Dawood's Stable' in reference to 'Camp David'. The term has since gained currency in Arabic political discourse. The term is still in use in the formal political context today. Al-Gaddafi used the same term in his speech to the Arab Summit in Damascus in March 2008. The complete speech is available at: <http://www.akhbar-libya.com/index> (retrieved on April 1st, 2008). The arabized name derives its critical power on two grounds: first, the translation of the word camp into *إسطبل*, among whose referential meanings is the 'horse stable'; second, is the arabization of the name 'David' into 'Dawood' *داود*: a king and prophet of Israelites whose 'star' or 'shield' has become Israel's emblem.

ⁱⁱⁱ William B. Quandt. (Ed.). *The Middle East: Ten Years after Camp David*. (Washington: Washington Brookings, 1988), 1.

^{iv} Extract from an interview with Ghali Shokri in: Ghali Shokri. *The Intellectual and Power in Egypt* (1990), (Cairo: *Akhbār Al-Yum*), 165.

^v Abd al-Aleem Muhammad. *Alkhetab Alsadati: Tahlil Alhaki alideology* (The Discourse of Sadat: Analysing the Ideological Field). (Cairo: Alahaali, 1990), 263-270.

^{vi} Ibid, p 248.

^{vii} In addition to interdiscursivity, there are other concepts to explain different relationships between texts such as what Paul A. Chilton, Christina Schäffner (eds.). *Politics as Text and Talk: Analytic Approaches to Political Discourse*. (Amsterdam and Philadelphia: Benjamins, 2002, 23) refer to as *re-contextualization*, which refers to shifting from one genre to another within the same text, and *dialogism*, which refers to the relationship between texts that respond to other texts or anticipate them.

^{viii} Norman Fairclough. *Critical Discourse Analysis: the critical Study of Language*. (London: Longman. 1995), 134.

^{ix} Norman Fairclough. *Analysing Discourse: Textual Analysis for Social Research*. (London: Routledge, 2003, p 65-66) distinguishes between genres and discourses. A discourse is associated with a specific field of knowledge or experience, such the fields of religion or politics. A genre on the other hand is associated with a particular activity for communicative purposes such as interviewing, which may take the form of a job interview or a television interview...etc.

^x Norman Fairclough. Intertextuality in Critical Discourse Analysis. *Linguistics and Education* 4, pp 269-293.

^{xi} The position adopted by the Arab states towards Camp David was repeatedly featured in most of the speeches that Sadat delivered after his return to Egypt, and in most of his press and televised interviews. Examples include: the speech he delivered in his encounter with Egypt's judges on October 10th, 1978; his speech on the inauguration of the Egyptian Parliament on November 4th, 1978; his speech to the people of Sinai after Eid Prayer at Al-Qantara-Sharq mosque on November 10th, 1978; and his speech at Suez Canal University on November 15th, 1978.

^{xii} Muhammad Anwar Sadat. *Khutab wa Ahadeeth* (Speeches and Interviews). (Cairo: The Egyptian Information Services, 1978).

^{xiii} Translated verses are from the Yusuf Ali English translation of the Qur'an.

^{xiv} Abdul Latif, Emad. Interdiscursivity between political and religious discourses in a speech by Sadat: Combining CDA and addressee rhetoric. *Journal of Language and Politics* 10:1 (2011), 50–67. Amsterdam: John Benjamin's.

^{xv} Aristotle. *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse*. Trans. George A. Kennedy. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p 75.

^{xvi} Abdul Latif, 2011, *ibid*, pp 167-168.

^{xvii} Pierre Bourdieu. *Language and Symbolic Power*. (Cambridge: Polity. 1991), 164-179.

^{xviii} Abdul Latif, 2011, *ibid*, pp 167-168.

^{xix} Jār Allāh Maḥmūd Ibn 'Umar al-Zamakhsharī. *Al-Kashshāf 'an Ḥaqā'iq at-Tanzīl* ("The Discoverer of Revealed Truths"). (Cairo: Maktabat Misr, 1995, part 3), 630.

^{xx} I use the (X) mark to denote antonymy, and the double-headed arrow (↔) to represent equivalence between material and dogmatic binaries according to al-Zamakhsharī.

^{xxi} Frans H. van Eemeren, H. & Peter Houtlosser. "Strategic Maneuvering: A Synthetic Recapitulation". *Argumentation* 2006, 20, 381–392, p 383) define strategic maneuvering as 'the efforts arguers make in argumentative discourse to reconcile aiming for rhetorical effectiveness with maintaining dialectical standards of reasonableness'. This definition predicates the maxim of contradiction between argumentation and rhetoric, or between the psychological rhetorical effect and argumentation using logical reasoning.

^{xxii} In his speech to the Egyptian Parliament on January 28th, 1980, Sadat says: 'Even before finalizing the Accords, and before reading them, the Imams of ignorance and idolatry set out to attack Egypt'.

^{xxiii} One of the manifestations of shifting in this speech is the unusual repetition of the word 'Egypt', which was mentioned 68 times, mostly in the context of comparing Egypt with the rest of the Arab states. It can be said that the 1975-1981 period witnessed a radical change of in the characteristics of the perceived group that Egypt and Egyptians belong to, and that one of the goals of this transformation was reshape Egyptians' awareness of their relationship with the Arab world.
