

and rhetorician 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī (1010–79 or 1082),<sup>34</sup> believe in a figurative language imitative of a transcendental realm of eternal truth, as a predetermined divine gift to the world. While al-Jurjānī acknowledges the existence of *majāz* in language and draws a distinction between intellectual and linguistic figuration, he still adheres to the scholastic belief that such figurative expressions in the Qur'an should be treated cautiously only. Drawing on such a contested tradition, modern Arabic criticism is faced with the predicament of choosing between hermeneutics and literalness. How, then, does metaphor, or the lack thereof, affect one's perception of and relationship to God and to Qur'anic language today? In this concluding chapter, I argue that if certain conditions are attained, the resurrection of the metaphor debate not only could revitalize the medieval problem of the relations between divine words and their referents but could also expose the epistemological contours of hegemonic religious discourses and their persistence in postcolonial debates. The study of *majāz* reopens an inevitable dialogue between two opposing theologies that may disagree in approaching Qur'anic language but are still in harmony with the semantic subtlety and interpretive multiplicity inherent in the Qur'an. This chapter ultimately demonstrates how Abū Zayd's thought is shaped to inform future negotiations of autonomous critique and academic freedom in Arabic literary thought.

In conclusion, *The Qur'an and Modern Arabic Literary Criticism* characterizes the rise of ultraconservatism and Salafism as a radical defiance of colonial modernity in Egypt. While this defiance has led to a tragic deadlock, it also addresses possible areas of change in the potential bearings of the century-old *Tajdīd* School. By restoring civil dialogue, a constructive critique, and a basic pluralism—tools indispensable in combating not only internal fundamentalisms but also the external hegemonies of orientalist historical discourses—the robust reformist discourse of the *Tajdīd* School continues to defend the progressive legacies of an enlightened Islam.

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## A Cartesian Backfire? Tāhā Ḥusayn, the Qur'an, and the *Cogito*

*One must have tradition in oneself, to hate it properly.*

—Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia*

Theodor Adorno's above statement encapsulates Tāhā Ḥusayn's story and his own tradition. Tāhā Ḥusayn sparked a seismic epistemological shift in the relationship between dogmatic and secular thought in modern Egypt. Almost all of his works include dismissals of well-established and deep-rooted ideas of literary history and cultural traditions, both of which he refers to as irrational, unfounded, or simply just plain wrong. But in this chapter, I aim to show how Ḥusayn's theoretical venture can also inform and illuminate our understanding of tradition. My argument centers on an examination of Ḥusayn's provocative book *Fī al-Shi'r al-Jāhili* (1926) (henceforth *On Pre-Islamic Poetry*). More precisely, with reference to his provocative theory on pre-Islamic poetry, this chapter discusses Ḥusayn's complex relationship with the Qur'an and Arabic literary tradition from both historical and theoretical perspectives. The first part situates his literary training relative to customs and practices of literary criticism in his time. To Ḥusayn, history is inseparable from literary analysis. His argument concerning so-called "pre-Islamic poetry" has an ambivalent relationship with the Qur'an and with traditional Arabic literary criticism. Such a relationship, Ḥusayn contends, must be completely reconfigured. The second part shows passages from Ḥusayn's oeuvre weighed against Descartes's philosophy of doubt, which Ḥusayn claims to adopt. A final goal in this chapter is to show the significance of linking history with literary criticism, and the persistence of this link in Qur'anic exegesis as reflected in the work

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Mohammad Salama, *The Qur'an and modern Arabic literary criticism: from Taha to Nasr*, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018. İSAM DN. 280975