

## Satire and Irony in Emily Naşralla's Novel Flight against Time

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### Abstract

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This study attempts to reveal the role of Satire in the dialectic of Staying and Emigration in Emily Naşralla's novel, *Flight against Time*, (Naşralla 2001) which was created out of the Lebanese Civil War in three main axes: language, character and event, in addition to the literary techniques that Satire generally adopts, and which fit with the three previous axes to achieve the satiric indication and effect. Being an 'anatomical' writing tool that is bitterly critical, Satire managed to 'determine' this dialectic to the advantage of the first side (Staying) due to its psychologically defensive feature that enables the character to determine this conflict in the darkest and most complicated circumstances. Undoubtedly, Satire reinforces the indication of Staying in extremely unusual conditions of the Lebanese Civil War and its indirect 'call' that the text tries to convey to all the Lebanese, with no exception, to hold fast to their homeland and defend it, specifically at the time of ordeal. Satire shows also the clear tendency towards the first side (Staying) of this dialectic in the three axes. Language contributed also to Rađwān's expression of this desire directly and indirectly. Rađwān was not far from taking this decisive decision in his explicit and implicit behavior, movements and desires. The events constitute a third pillar that reinforces this decision and establishes it as a critical and indisputable one. The voice of Staying beats the voice of Emigration and consequently, the voice that repeatedly emphasizes that the Homeland (Lebanon) is above all overcomes!

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### 1. Introduction

Satire as a writing style means showing the shortcomings and vices of society (Britannica, Satire: 467) but the 'vices' are not limited to the moral aspects only, but go beyond them to include all levels of life with no exception. Its power is reflected in its ability to read reality in a deliberate and deep way on the one hand, and its ability to reinforce the satirist's natural immunity in his encounter of the grotesque and distorted changes that storm the current reality on the other (Feinberg 1998:6-7). Thus, this 'encounter' provides him with the necessary ability to look for an alternative to this reality or, at least, to adopt a refusing and resisting attitude. Satire is also based on a very critical capacity that seeks to reveal and 'expose' reality and those who are in charge of it. Thus, Satire constitutes a weapon for the weak and the powerless in his confrontation with any oppressor and every tyrant - no whoever he is (Fā'ūr 1993: 18-19). It is a weapon that tries to 'beat' them in a moral and psychological confrontation that goes beyond any direct physical confrontation, which is generally a foregone conclusion to the advantage of the oppressor and the tyrant. Satire goes beyond 'mere laughter', though it is based on it in a certain way. Its goal is to emphasize the idea that 'laughter' will certainly lead in its natural way to rereading reality and reviewing it seriously, which consequently pushes the reader to adopt the appropriate attitude that is based on refusal, as is said above (Hight 1962: 5).

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\* There is no significance to the order in which the authors are listed.

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I believe that every type of writing seeks to be satirical in the shadow of the distorted grotesque changes that the world witnesses these days at all levels, with no exception. Satire depends on several figures of speech and technical devices that aim to achieve satirical indication in the literary text such as: **Irony**, **Grotesque**, **Paradox**, and **Utopia**. In addition, the writer can employ a number of accompanying techniques that include linguistic styles of: colloquial vernacular words and expressions within standard Arabic sentences (through breaking the grammatical rule), wisecracks, exaggeration, and diminution (Haibi 2012). As said above, the article deals with the role of 'Satire' in the dialectic of Staying and Emigration in Emily Naşralla's novel, *Flight against Time*. The article generally depends on the above mentioned techniques. However, some of these techniques do not appear in all the three axes of language, character, and events because of their absence from the text of the novel. Here is a brief theoretical summary of the techniques that aims to clarify the term and its indications rather than discussing it theoretically as this requires a special study

### 1.1 Irony

Irony is absolutely considered to be one of the most important literary techniques that Satire relies on. Irony is a linguistic tool that causes discord and incongruity between what is expected to happen and what actually happens (Britannica, Irony: 390). It is a form of speech or writing which is intended to communicate a meaning contrary to its literal meaning and gives the effect of contrast between what is expected or desired and reality. For example, you may say: "It was a clever action," (but in reality, you mean: "it was a foolish action") (ibid: 390). Irony is based on important elements that contribute considerably to the formation and creation of indirect indication that irony aspires to achieve<sup>3</sup>. It undermines clarity and directness (Booth 1974: 36-37). Irony is a pattern of words that avoids saying things directly and denies clear meanings. It is a technique that aims to say minimum words, but to charge them with maximum meanings" (Frye 1957: 40). The classical definition of Irony – saying something and suggesting its opposite – has been bridged over by other concepts. Irony is saying something that suggests an endless series of interpretations rather than one specific interpretation. Thus, Irony is an expression of a situation in a way that the situation does not require. Its language is a language that does not help to abridge the idea neither does it help the continuation and connection of the event; it is an isolated language because it intends to be outside the subject. Besides, it intends to not to be understood directly, a language that makes things escape at the moment we arrive at them. Undoubtedly, exact understanding of the indications of Irony is not an easy thing in most cases. Therefore, the ironist/ irony maker, who is the one who closes the structure or rather opens it onto more than one probability, has no choice but to introduce to his supposed reader keys to enable him to find the hidden meaning in the folds of the structure and these keys are generally contextual evidence rather than lexical ones (şabāna 2002: 25-55).

### 1.2 Grotesque

The art of Grotesque<sup>4</sup> is concerned with description of the strange, distorted and different reality with tools that are not less strange and grotesque, distorted and grotesque. It is a technique that combines the comic element, which causes laughter, and the tragic element, which causes tears in an extremely strange and queer way.

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<sup>3</sup>. Many studies have dealt with the issue of Irony in general, and other studies give more care to other details and elements and suggested systems for re-establishing the indications of Irony.

Undoubtedly, any literary work should have certain basic elements, mainly: a sender and a receiver of the message. These elements should be available in the irony in order to be achieved. However, irony is not satisfied with that, and demands additional elements that turn the literary structure into an ironic structure by providing it with more diversion and disguising of this linguistic structure. Among these elements are:

- Sender/ Doer Irony maker
- Receiver Aware receiver that recreates the message
- The Message Irony Structure/ is subject to re-interpretation

Among the most important types of irony that different studies mentioned, I want to specify two types because of their popularity: Verbal Irony and Irony of Events. See: şabāna 2002: 25-91, 91-181. See also: Ibrāhīm 1992: 202-217; Booth 1974: 36-37; Muecke 1969: 34-63.

<sup>4</sup>. The term 'Grotesque' (and its equivalents in other languages) is of Italian origin. The Italian terms "La Grottesca" and "Grottesco," constitute the original term of Grotesque and Grotta or Grotto, which means 'cave'. The Grottos are the places where the drawings were found for the first time during the excavation works about the Roman houses in the 15<sup>th</sup> century; first in

It is a state of strange mixture of senses that cause laughter and tears at the same time. The reader in such situations wonders whether to laugh or cry (Tāhā 2009). This combination of two opposites points out a satiric condition by all measurements. Its aim is to go beyond the tragic or the comic in order to achieve the real indication.

### 1.3 Utopia

According to *Online Etymology Dictionary*, the term 'Utopia' comes from Modern Latin, which means "nowhere". The word was borrowed from the a Greek word that consists of two parts (ou), which means (not) and (topos), which means (place). The term (Nowhere) was coined by Thomas More (1478-1535) and used as a title of his book (1516) about an imaginary island enjoying perfect legal, social, and political systems. Thus, the meaning of Utopia (nowhere) refers to non-existing place on Earth in reality. The meaning of the term was extended to refer to any perfect place, and at present it means the "ideal city," or the "virtuous city" (Bleich 1984: 7-25). Utopia presently indicates the philosophy and thoughts that deal with the issues and cares of humanity on Earth in an attempt to establish a human entity that achieves earthly happiness and considers 'perfection' to be the principal goal for social and political solutions and any other issues that are related to human concerns. The pursuit to establish an imaginary or virtual world with regard to the issue of Utopia, whether directly or indirectly reflects the attitude that refuses the level to which reality has reached in it its withdrawal, backwardness and melancholy. This situation generates "collision" which indicates outright polarity between the desired and sought after reality and the absurd reality. The collision leads to the 'exposure' and revelation of the transgressions of reality and its drawbacks and vices.

### 1.4 Paradox

According to *Online Etymology Dictionary*, "The term "Paradox" comes directly from Latin "Paradoxum," which is borrowed from Greek 'Paradoxon, which means "contrary to expectation, incredible." The word consists of two parts: "para-" which means "contrary to," and "doxa,' which means "opinion." The term "paradox' refers to a "statement that is seemingly self-contradictory, yet not illogical or obviously untrue." In other words, the original meaning of the statement or situation sounds or seems to be incomplete or even impossible, but after investigation and close examination, it proves to be true. The issue of paradox appears to be in its origin an issue of philosophy and logic (šabāna: 43). Paradox is considered by philosophers and logicians as an issue of difference between two concepts or issues, positively and negatively. For example, we say: (B) is true and (B) is untrue, i.e. lying. Therefore, this paradox is considered 'repulsive' because it is contrary to the logic. Paradox goes beyond the external level because it reveals an astonishing fact after examination and investigation. Literary paradox stipulates the existence of a skilled reader who possesses a special faculty and an extraordinary aptitude and ability to penetrate the depths of the external paradoxical statement in order to prove its truth despite its external contradiction and feasibility. In this way, this exposure contributes to the description of the extent of the absurdity of reality and reinforcement of the presence of Satire through the employment of this technique in the literary text.

## 2. Satire and Irony in Flight against Time

As said above, the discussion of this dialectic will be made through three basic axes: language, character, and situation through the literary techniques that have been introduced briefly in the previous sections. It is necessary here to point out that none of the three axes deals with all of the four techniques as the employment of the techniques is decided basically by the material of the novel. Therefore, we notice that certain techniques appear in a certain axis, while another axis might include one technique only.

### 2.1 Ironic Satiric Language

Raḍwān, the dweller of the small village/ hamlet (ḍay'ah) in *Flight against Time* wonders in his colloquial ironic language and suspects everything in Beirut. Beirut for him is another different world in comparison with his small village. He wonders more when the talk is about emigration to another country. There is no doubt that the village and Beirut in the Pre-War period are two different worlds, but Beirut and the immigration countries (Mahjar) are two worlds but they have many common things. However, the condition of similarity and dissimilarity are clearly divided by a clear formula. The small village represents attachment to the roots and preservation of customs and traditions, while Beirut represents the immigration countries (Mahjar), their development and threat (Cooke 1996: 148).

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Rome and later throughout Italy. These drawings appeared first in basic arts such as: drawing, sculpturing, murals, and architecture. They were known of their ornamental characteristics or as the technique known by (Ornamental Grottesque). See: Wolfgang 1963: 19.

The colloquial dialect reinforces the ironic satiric language in a special way. Raḍwān feels that he has exited from his kingdom and world when he arrives in Beirut, his first station, where he has to complete the application of his travel to visit his sons in Canada. The more the time of travel/emigration approaches, the more the conditions of irony and satire that Raḍwān live in increase: "the axe came closer to the roots of the tree, and the tree cannot escape." (24-25). Naturally, the external and direct meaning of this statement is not the intended one. Consequently, we cannot depend completely on the external level of the meaning in our attempt to define its indication as the internal, ironic meaning is the intended one. The axe is the 'emigration and travel' and the 'tree' represents Raḍwān who is rooted in the earth of homeland. However, the tree cannot escape or get rid of the axe, as if it were his inevitable fate. Emigration was imposed on Raḍwān, otherwise, he would not think about it even as a casual thought. The end of this statement produces its satiric indication in the words "the tree cannot escape" or in the "intended internal hidden meaning" in "emigration is inevitable." This meaning bears an allusion to the arbitrary reality – the war that imposes new facts in its absurdity. It seeks to scatter the sons of the same homeland and tear all the possibilities of their communication and staying in their homeland. Besides, the war eradicated the feelings of regret and guilt from the souls of the emigrants, which reinforces the presence of ironic emigration in all its dimensions. Satire reveals this reality in a distinguished ironic style. The existing destruction and mad murder threaten to uproot the tree from its roots, as if homeland in its bloody condition forced its children to emigrate. Homeland is supposed to be the lap that gathers and embraces its children under its wings, but it is not supposed to force them to emigrate, and in that we feel there is severe and bitter irony. The tree, which is a symbol for homeland, the land itself and the attachment to the roots, represent Raḍwān, which deepens the effect of satirical irony. Consequently, if the homeland sends its children out of its heart arbitrarily and madly, then the uprooted son has nothing more but to satirize this reality, refuse it and reinforce his natural immunity by his constant emphasis on his deep roots in the Lebanese history. Raḍwān's physical separation from his homeland and his small village do not abolish his satirical and refusing attitude that exposes the vices of his society in his treatment of these issues.

The dialectic of Emigration and Return lays its heavy weight on Raḍwān's shoulders when he arrives in Canada and faces the new reality, which is not less horrible and fearful than that in Beirut. The two realities rob Raḍwān of the dearest values that he believes in, but the difference between them is that the Canadian reality robs him without destruction and murder, while the reality in Lebanon does that through destruction and murder. Raḍwān's satire of the new/ other/ strange reality, which is supposed to be an alternative to his original reality, emphasizes his refusal to this new reality and his uncovering of its drawbacks and vices, which are not less severe than those of the original / homeland reality despite its arbitrariness and madness: Tell me, Umm Rimūn, have the agricultural experts in America tried to move an old age oak-tree that has been living for a thousand years? I mean trees like the oak-trees and olive trees of the Jūra area!" (ibid., 189). Raḍwān does not intend to convey the literal meaning of agriculture and replanting a tree; he specifically intends to hint at the future postponed meaning of the ironic sentence, to reveal the alternative reality. He intends to uncover the reality of the alternative homeland, to satirize it, and to express his refusal to it in order to reinforce his rootedness in his village and homeland. Raḍwān wants also to strengthen his immunity against this reality, which is imposed on him as an alternative to his homeland against his will. The person who is rooted deep in his land and homeland cannot grow and develop except in his original land and earth, despite its cruelty. Death in the immigration country (ḡurbah) is not exempt from Raḍwān's satire, either. He exploits every emergent event to refuse the new reality.

Raḍwān exploits the state of death, which cancels any probability of a better reality quite well in order to refuse the new reality and satirize it. It seems that he, indirectly and ironically, feels strange and sees death in homeland as something good because the dead person can get his complete rights of mourning, sadness, crying and sorrow. He also prefers death that goes out of the depth of homeland (Lebanon) to cold death in occurs in the immigration country (Canada), which lacks enthusiasm, deep sorrow, and sadness. I would like to point out here that my emphasis on ironic emigration as a characteristic of satiric writing in this novel stems from the fact that it constitutes an ancillary element in emphasizing the ugliness and absurdity of the war. It is a war, murder and constant threatening that substitute curiosity, enjoyment, and yearning to see the children and grandchildren living in normal conditions. The emigrant's psychological condition (specifically Raḍwān) emphasizes the irony of emigration, which was imposed on him by force due to the ironic motivation originally.

Repent and remorse that overcome Raḍwān on his arrival in Canada, where his children live appear to be ironic signs in themselves, because his emigration to see his children and grandchildren after long separation and long period of life in a foreign country are expected to erase these feelings of repent and remorse. The feeling of irony establishes another and more important formula for Raḍwān: his standing beside homeland in its ordeal (non-emigration) is more important than anything else, including meeting his children and grandchildren after long separation. Emigration is weakness but homeland needs strong arms to face the changes and transformations of the bloody war.

## 2.2 The Ironic Satiric Character

The dialectic of Homeland and Emigration (Mahjar/ gurbah) constitutes the foundation of the paradox that Raḍwān lived in *Flight against Time*. Raḍwān's life can be divided into three stages:

- a) The First Stage is the preceding period of his traveling from Lebanon to visit his sons and grandsons in Canada. The events of this stage take place in his small village of Jūrat al-sindyān and in Beirut ;
- b) The Second Stage is the stage that witnesses his travel to Canada, which he intended to be a short visit to his sons;
- c) The Third Stage constitutes the events that follow his return from Canada to homeland (Lebanon).

The influence of war is clear in the three stages directly and indirectly. Consequently, the irony that Raḍwān went through in its three stages constitutes the irony of war by all measurements. These stages are characterized by a fundamental dialectic that revolves around them. It is the dialectic of staying and emigration during the war that Raḍwān represents in all its dimensions. It has been shown above on more than one occasion that anything that is a product of the war is ironic, different, unusual, exceptional, and lacks consensus. If the previously mentioned dialectic is a mere product of the world, then there is no doubt in its irony. If we argue that the dialectic of *Staying and Emigration* is an example of irony, at least as a thought, what would we say if we argue about it at the level of actual practice? There is no doubt that irony appears clearly and shows the reality of the war and its absurdity on the one hand and the condition of confusion and perplexity that the individuals experience on the other. The **First Stage** in Raḍwān's life starts with his decision to travel to visit his sons in Canada, specifically through the submission of his application to travel in Beirut and making the necessary arrangements. The decision that Raḍwān takes seems to be an ordinary one that does not raise irony or wonder, but its timing, which is subject to the bloody reality, makes his decision necessarily ironic. Raḍwān decides to travel after the breakout of the war, but the decision at this time raises the moral question of leaving one's homeland at the time of crisis and ordeal. However, many people find endless justifications to the necessity of leaving particularly during the war, but the considerations are different for a character like Raḍwān, who comes from the depth of the Lebanese land, the son of the village who is deeply attached to his roots, the careful person about his land and Lebanon in general. For Raḍwān, Lebanon and its earth are as dear to him exactly as his sons. How can he give them up when they need him in time of ordeal? Therefore, Raḍwān confirms from the first moment that his travel is only for a short visit to his sons to be sure about their safety and he will surely return to homeland after that.

From the beginning, we notice that Raḍwān takes a decision to the advantage of homeland without hesitation. Raḍwān's psychological condition in the first stage (at the Canadian Consulate) emphasizes his confusion and fear of the following: "His inner self laughed at him and repeated: Your fear from the interview is postponed and the present fear is because of the rocket." (ibid., 18) The rocket which Raḍwān fears from is the 'electric lift'. If this indicates something, it indicates his anxiety about the idea of traveling in general and the extent of his attachment to his homeland in general and his village in particular. He does not feel at home except on the land of the small village with all its aspects. The internal travel (Village-Beirut) to complete his travel arrangements put Raḍwān in a prominent state of anxiety and confusion that intensify his feeling of estrangement. This emphasizes his irony because he sees 'Beirut' to be a threat to his 'rural identity.' (Saba Yared 2001: 215-228) We can imagine how he would see his departure and separation from his village and all his homeland and traveling overseas. In spite of the completion of the flight procedure, Raḍwān does not believe that his travel is going to become a fact and will be an inevitable reality till the booking is made. His disbelief stems from his over anxiety about the travel. The intermediate period of hope that Raḍwān lives through extends from the moment of the completion of the travel procedure till he receives a letter of approval of his application from the Consulate. This period shows his refusal of emigration in principle: "There is no escape from this booking. The flight has become certain. The axe came closer to the root of the tree, and the tree is unable to escape." (ibid., 24-25) Raḍwān's words in this context indicate a certain irony.

He considers himself to be a 'tree' as a representation of his roots which are deeply rooted in the Lebanese depths. He is a tree that is uprooted from its land by force without any objection on its side. The uprooting operation, which is shown in the previous intermediate period, stresses Radwān's internal desire not to travel and leave his homeland. Satire in this novel tries to observe the fate of those who are increasingly attached to homeland whenever its conditions become severe and its tragedies increase. Can their homeland, in return, return their favor in the shadow of war that tears it from inside? Satire takes care also to show the refusing attitude of the character to the absurd reality. Raḍwān refuses to leave his homeland to be swallowed by the heating up fire.

**The Second Stage** in Raḍwān's life is his visit to his sons in Canada. It is the stage of the actual emigration and physical separation from homeland. Emigration in the shadow of the war for people like Raḍwān and his wife is supposed to constitute an outlet and escape because they cannot bear the atrocities of war on the one hand, or bear the terrible life that they go through without having any support or assistance from their sons on the other. Raḍwān, however, looks at 'emigration' from a clear ironic point of view. He sees it as a step of burning that includes a lot of more remorse, which makes him emphasize constantly that his visit is a temporary one. The visit gives him the opportunity to have direct contact between him and his sons and grandsons, whom he has not met yet. So, it can relieve him of his anxiety that has overcome him for a long time. From this perspective, there is no doubt that his travel is a positive step. However, the considerations differ and turn into irony when they are related to a Raḍwān's character, which is originally. This becomes clear through his new feeling of disharmony with the environment, which he often tries to emphasize and whenever the opportunity presents itself: How cold and the "last resting place" in this country is! How dreary and cold the death of the foreigner is! (ibid. 247) Raḍwān's previous speech refers to a more general and more thorough meaning than the apparent one. He certainly does not mean "the cold weather in a foreign immigration country (Ghurbah) but the death of social relations and people's care about each other even in the issue of death, let alone their talk about social life and their daily relations with one another. This text undoubtedly emphasizes Radwān's ironic character. As the new environment in which he lives is ironic for him, he cannot speak in its shade except in ironic speech.

The homeland reduces the difficulty of the effect of more difficult and more painful issues on the individual such as the issue of death. If death is inevitable to any human being, Raḍwān wishes that it would happen in his homeland, where the dead person receives the respect that he deserves. In a foreign country, the individual loses a lot of his respect that he gets in his homeland. Through the techniques of irony in the characters, Satire expresses the size of the tragedy that he lives during the war. It also emphasizes the necessity of the appearance of another voice that resists the movement of collective emigration of the people from their homeland in time of crisis and ordeal. The reality of war again determines the irony in Raḍwān's character. For him, the geographical dimension does not cancel the emotional and spiritual closeness to homeland. On the contrary, it adds more glow and necessity to it. In this way, the reality of war puts Raḍwān in the critical **third stage** of his life when he decides to return to his homeland that lives in a state of extremely high absurdity and madness. This decision, which is faced by extreme objections by everyone around him due to its risk, reemphasizes his ironic character, because his decision of return to his homeland means in a natural expected situation his return to the warm blossom and roots, but Raḍwān's condition and his decision are different from the expected situation. In fact, his decision plays exactly the opposite role and it constitutes the last ironic station that he has passed through. Raḍwān determines the dialectic of emigration and staying by taking this decision because he believes that the individual has to stay and stand by his homeland while it is passing through its darkest circumstances. Raḍwān does not put up with the belief of many people regarding their treatment to homeland. He feels that they love their homeland when it is in its best conditions, when it provides them with security and safety, but they give it up when it is hit by a calamity and is helpless, weak and is on the verge of death. In return, homeland itself does not live a natural life neither does it control the rhythm of its reality. It is the Civil War that destroys homeland and leads it according to its special logic of murder, destruction and death. The freedom from worry and tranquility that the homeland guarantees for its people in the natural days are destroyed by the War in a painful way. Raḍwān is kidnapped and murdered after his return to his homeland so that his irony completes its circle in a final murderous end: The betrayed one was at his home that night, and with him, there were a group of neighbours and friends chatting and drinking coffee, when three masked armed people called him to go out and recognize a suspicious man, whom they claimed to have found nearby the town.

Radwan dashed enthusiastically, to give help, and he had no sooner stepped out than the three armed men raised their weapons in his face, and the face of anyone who would think to raise his voice. And thus, they moved him in their Land Rover car to an unknown place (ibid., 265). Raḍwān did not imagine that the reality of his new homeland is so cruel and absurd. He did not even try to convince himself that the traditions and customs and standards have been destroyed by the war machine. He remained till the last breath believing that his homeland has pity on its children despite the hard calamities. His certainty is really ironic, as the new reality requires caution and precaution rather than blind trust. His blind trust in his homeland in its craziness led him to his murder. He dashed in his usual enthusiasm to offer help without knowing that he was dashing to his death. This blind trust delivers a heavy weight blow to Raḍwān and the text alike. This collision that is caused by the irony of 'trust' and security reveals the worsening and grotesque distorted condition that his reality is undergoing in the shade of war. Undoubtedly, it also confirms Raḍwān's ironic character and the satirical condition of this reality which constantly points out its dangerous transgressions. Thus, Raḍwān's return is an ironic return by all measurements. His death proves the helplessness of his homeland and the ugliness of the reality that dominates it. Satire does not take care of the correctness of the decision that Raḍwān takes as much as it takes care of its necessity as if it hints that staying in homeland is better than leaving it, especially in time of crisis and ordeal. It is a decision that supports the satirical indication in the text as it shows the character's continuous objection to the reality. Raḍwān's murder is not exactly the last station in the series stations of irony that he has passed through. The condition in which he appears in his death constitutes another station of irony. The imagined smile on Raḍwān's face while he was laid constitutes a bitter irony; he faces his murder by his compatriots by complacency and a smile. He does not care to his death in this ugly way but he is 'content' and 'pleased' about his existence among them while they were doing their duty to him in his last minutes. The scene emphasizes his compatriots' zeal, of which Raḍwān has always prided in.

Satire in its bitter irony is a significant weapon in confronting the bloody reality. Raḍwān's content and his smile after his death are satirical scenes by all measurements. They do not give opportunity to death and war to triumph despite their superiority in ability and possibilities. On the one hand, Raḍwān's ironic smile settles down the deadly irony through which the characters live during the war, as the case is among the previously mentioned characters, and it shows the urgent need of Satire on the other. He is fully certain that the confrontation between the individuals and the war machine is undoubtedly foregone to the advantage of the war, and his laid body is the best evidence. Therefore, the technique of Satire remains the weapon that enables the individual to defeat death, even if it is merely a moral defeat. The moral aspect insists on refusing the murderous reality, which guarantees that the war-instrument will not infiltrate into the souls of the individuals and deeply overpowers them. This weapon of Satire constitutes a window of hope that immunizes the defensive psychological mechanism of the individuals and recharges it with a capacity that assists them in their persistence and confrontation and steadfastness. Through the ironic situations that the characters go through, Emily Naṣralla calls for another voice and another spirit to encounter the war; a spirit that adheres to the choice of moral confrontation by the use of the weapon of Satire as a potential and available possibility that can dissipate the dream of war to settle in the people's life permanently.

### 2.3 Ironic Satiric Attitude

Raḍwān's journey was subject to the effect of war in all its stages, exactly like the journey of Little Ghandi but with differences in events in every tale. Each tale has dual directions. Lebanon – Canada, which represent the first direction, and Canada-Lebanon, which represent the second direction. Raḍwān's journey can also be divided into three basic stages that 'embrace' the satiric events: Pre-Travelling Stage, Travelling Stage and Post-Traveling Stage, which is the Stage of Return to Beirut. The Pre-Traveling Stage witnessed ironic satiric events that can be summarized in the stage of completing the travel-procedure at the Canadian Embassy in Beirut. Raḍwān gives the impression that his travel has started while he is still in his hometown, Beirut. He considered his travel to Beirut to complete the travel procedure as a travel that is not less important than his travel to visit his sons on Canada. His ironic treatment to Beirut as if it were a ḡurbah/ foreign country undoubtedly becomes an ironic issue as Beirut is still part of his homeland, which he loves crazily. Raḍwān's irony which appears in his consideration of the 'lift' as a 'rocket' conveys a first rate ironic meaning and situation. Satire is not limited to Raḍwān's consideration of the 'lift' to be a 'rocket' nor to his impression that implies his 'ḡurbah'/ being a stranger in Beirut, but includes this ironic event in general as an indicator of Raḍwān's attitude about the idea of travel in principle. Raḍwān's ironic behavior exposes an attitude that he insists on and attaches to strongly, which maintains that it is necessary for every Lebanese to stand by homeland and not leave it, specifically in time of crisis and ordeal.

We can conclude the following: If these are his considerations and behavior while he is still in a geographical place that he knows well and loves strongly (Beirut), what will he do when the idea of traveling comes true and becomes an inevitable reality? Raḍwān's arrival in Canada and his meeting and staying with his sons and grandsons does not change a lot in his attitude regarding emigration and leaving homeland in time of crisis and ordeal. In fact, it is possible to argue that his arrival deteriorated the presence of his attitude. Raḍwān's behavior in Canada led to ironic events of the first degree. His existence in his sons' and daughter's laps after a long period of separation is expected to remove his feeling of being a stranger. However, Raḍwān's behavior was like the behavior of someone who felt that *gurbah* was heavy on his heart, or like someone who could not bear his separation more and was waiting for the suitable opportunity to return. Undoubtedly, Raḍwān's declaration regarding his return to homeland took the form of irony, especially that homeland was undergoing an ordeal and tragic circumstances that makes it a complete state of threat. Raḍwān was completely aware of this fact but he adopted "the proportional formula", which means that the more the ordeal of homeland increases and its conditions deteriorated the more the need and necessity to return to stand by homeland increased. Therefore, Raḍwān started preparing his family (his wife and children) to accept his hard decision to return. "His declarations in this context were given in portions that postpone the final decision to a decisive stage. Raḍwān began these indirect "signals" by reference to an unusual issue, which is 'death in *gurbah*/Mahjar' and this was a 'clever' reference through which he hinted at his hidden decision.

This ironic event reveals Raḍwān's hidden intentions. Death is death in its final outcome, whether it is in homeland or in the Diaspora. Raḍwān's claim that there is a 'cold death' and a 'warm death' is an ironic claim that contradicts logic and the expected feelings. Satire in this event tries to highlight the hidden side of this indirect event, which is Raḍwān's aim that appears in this statement. Raḍwān's choice of the event of death is not taken arbitrarily in any way, as he chose the commonly agreed on even and the cruelest one, which is death. It seems that Satire represents Raḍwān's view that says: Homeland is better than Diaspora in all conditions, including the condition that is not subject to time and place in any way- death. When it occurs in homeland, it assumes a different trait, especially the surrounding of the family of the deceased and his compatriots to give him the respect that he deserves. Raḍwān realizes that he has no choice at a certain stage but to escalate his allusive statement about 'return' to homeland:"and he will not stay to die here, not matter how comfortable the journey will be." (ibid., 250)

The events started taking a more serious and practical impression even on the verbal level. Raḍwān states for the first time that he will not stay in the Diaspora despite all the "temptations," particularly 'security'. He thinks about the issue of return in the shadow of the circumstances that homeland is undergoing, at a satirical and ironic level, and formulates the entailed events in a Satiric and ironic form also. It is unreasonable that someone should think about return to burning place that knows nothing but murder and absurd destruction, even if this place is 'homeland' itself rather than any other place. Satire accompanies Raḍwān in his insistence on his attitude and follows the stages of his decision on this issue, which shows that these ironic events, which reveal the characters' insistence on returning to homeland in the shadow of destruction and deterioration, emphasize the tragic condition that homeland undergoes. Satire emphasizes that 'insistence' is an act of resistance and confrontation of first degree, which indicates refusal to submission to and satisfaction with the reality of destruction and murder that is imposed by force. Raḍwān reaches a state that he does not bear anymore, and therefore, he takes his decision secretly in his own mind in a final way:" He posed the question to himself, and opened his eyes in the morning dreamingly, and decided in his heart to take his decisive decision before the sun of that day sets. He will not stay on the island one more day; he will pack his clothes and return. Yes, he will return, even if Heaven falls on Earth (ibid., 252). Raḍwān 's decision cancels all the speculations and probabilities that he might possibly stay, and simultaneously emphasizes the ironic events that cannot be doubted. Raḍwān returns to the lap of his destroyed and burnt homeland. His insistence on returning constitutes the particles that emphasize the irony of the event in general and magnifies its satiric effect, as if he were saying: The most important thing is the 'return' and after that, no matter what would happen! By that, satire emphasizes the idea that ironic events (the real war) require decisions that are not less ironic to cause a kind of balance in the reality or to try that at least. Raḍwān's actual return to his homeland established irony in the events that resulted from it. His decision to return was the first actual and effective ironic decision that he takes, and his last move that he took: Canada – Homeland (village) is escape to the danger, not away from it.



This movement confirmed that the state of 'waiting' in the shadow of the War lost its meaning completely, and other practical measures must be taken that parallel with or attempt to parallel with the current reality (Cooke 1996: 158-160). There is no doubt that 'escape to danger rather than away from it, as generally happens in normal situation, constitutes an ironic event, that results in a lot of ironic events. Raḍwān is betrayed in his homeland and specifically in his village, where he is supposed to find complete safety and security, but instead he is driven to death. This event, which shows Raḍwān's kidnapping and killing by his compatriots, the bitter irony that I have always stressed in the stages that precede Raḍwān's actual return (i.e. the stage of hints at his return). The details that complement this event establish the ironic elements in the right way. His enthusiastic hasty rush to give help when it was demanded constitutes significant details and particles of this event. This can be called the 'ironic impulsive rush' of the character that falls a victim to its irony without being aware of the potential risk that lies in it. I think, and in an ironic way, that he responds to the 'call of his homeland', but in reality he was responding to the call of his murder and inevitable death! The irony of events in this novel does not end with Raḍwān's murder, but his murder constitutes a bitter irony: Umm Na'mān said: Raḍwān's forehead was sweating during the period in which he was laid in the church, and at certain points, she imagined that his face was relaxed and around his mouth and eyes, there was a shade of a smile. When I passed the news to sons of the deceased, they did not comment with any word. (P. 267). However, Raḍwān does not leave any "fortune" to death and the reality of war. I have mentioned in the previous chapter of this study the term of the 'satiric smile of death' which draws this event in a highly satiric irony. There is no doubt that the 'smile' and 'death' do not go together, and irony is evident in this scene in an obvious way. Raḍwān in his death smiles a smile of a victorious person, and this smile constitutes an ironic statement that is not less ironic than the previous scene. He smiles because he is in the lap of his homeland, irrespective of the form of his existence in the lap of his homeland (whether it is death or another form).

This event that combines distorted ugly death on the one hand and the smile on the other satirizes and exposes the scandalous reality. It appears that it is reality that is exposed and uncovered rather than Raḍwān in his death, and in this situation there is another irony. Satire, thus, reinforces the natural immunity by emphasizing a very significant truth, which is the truth of resistance and confrontation that is not limited to real resistance. Satire reveals a new instrument of confrontation that is limited to the moral aspect (smiling in the face of war reality at the time of death). Raḍwān smiled because he was sure that his compatriots will gather around him and give him the respect that a compatriot deserves. He smiled because he was certain that he finally was able to satirize the reality of war that withdrew under the effect of this unity that it failed to disperse. The mad, absurd and ironic reality of war "embraced" events which are not less absurd and ironic. However, these events would not "grow" except in an absurd and ironic reality like the reality of war. In view of the above, Raḍwān's return or his final movement towards homeland constitutes an irony in all its details and particles. Raḍwān's return was a fully ironic journey, a return to death rather than an escape from it, as it should be in a natural condition.

## Conclusion

This study deals with the role of Satire and Irony in the dialectic of 'staying' and 'emigration' by the Lebanese writer, Emily Naṣralla in three axes: language, character and attitude. Satire depends on several literary techniques that demonstrate constant presence in achieving satirical indications. The most important techniques that Satire generally employs and which are discussed in this study include: irony, grotesque, utopia and paradox. The study shows that the dialectic is determined at the end to the advantage of the first side - staying, and this outcome fits the writer's intellectual attitude. Satire in its turn 'exposes' reality and 'anatomizes' it and establishes its absurdity in its pursuit to reinforce the individual's role in the shadow of such a grotesque reality on the one hand, and the necessity of adopting a refusing attitude on the other. The dependence of the study on common quotations in most of the axes is intended to emphasize that the choice of 'staying' overcomes the choice of 'emigration' in all the axes and techniques. It also reinforces this attitude specifically in the shadow of the grotesque and tragic circumstances. Thus, the novel constitutes a loud cry in the face of war and absurd reality on the one hand, and in the face of those who "betrayed" and preferred 'emigration' or, in more accurate words, preferred 'escape' to standing beside a collapsing homeland, on the other. In his behavior in the three axes, Raḍwān plays the role of the free and original honest 'compatriot' who is always thankful to homeland and never breaks a promise to it. He returns his full gratitude to his homeland that embraces him in its lap, bestows its fortunes and security upon him generously. Raḍwān does not give up his homeland to bleed heavily and to be exhausted by destruction and bombarding.

There is no doubt that Raḍwān's death in this ugly way at the end of the novel conveys an effective indication. It shows the extent of melancholy and absurd reality on the one hand and undoubtedly emphasizes that 'staying' is 'superior' to 'emigration' in significance, rank and necessity. In this particular case, death becomes a secondary issue if the more important condition – return and staying in homeland- is achieved. Satire contributes considerably to the transformation of the 'difficult' and 'impossible' into 'possible' and 'achievable' through its observation of the most minute details and its 'fragmentation' of this reality with its content that is established on its absolute weirdness, and emphasis that return in this case becomes fully equal to the adoption of the refusing attitude to such reality. In fact, it goes beyond talking about the attitude/ act into its achievement. In this way, return/ staying turns into something which is more than a mere declaration of a refusing attitude. It indicates a real confrontation that defeats reality morally, to say the least. The conclusion that is implied here is that every individual, who cares for his homeland, has to take a similar measure and behave in a similar way. Otherwise, homeland will be left to ruination, destruction and death. To sum up, this study stresses and shows that the writer Emily Naṣralla, who is not known to be as a satiric novelist in her nature, employs this style (Satire) to depict an absurd and gloomy reality to emphasize the power of Satire to criticize, analyze and reveal, which consequently reinforces the writer's ability in general to emphasize this attitude that refuses such reality. It seems that by this employment, Naṣralla emphasizes that the best way to deal literarily with the reality of Civil War is Satire. The writer satirizes reality around her by revealing it, analyzing it, and showing its many shortcomings, dangers and transgressions that are not accepted by common sense. Generally, when we satirize reality and reveal it, we reduce our psychological pressures that are caused by reality itself. In this way we, consolidate our natural immunity, which in turn, considerably emphasizes the refusing attitude to a violated reality such as the Civil War. Emily Naṣralla's cry in facing this unreasonable and absurd condition is more powerful and more effective by the use of Satire.

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Satires resembles irony. For instance a satire that spread in America, I cannot believe I live in a country that forced Barack Obama to show his birth certificate, but won't make Donald Trump show his taxes. This example of satire is making fun of how our generation doesn't value time and spends more time virtually than in reality. 5.3k views · View 396 Upvoters. Souhitya Sen, Looking for punny answers.