

A New Horizon in an Old City

Amin Shunnar, *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* Magazine, and the Intellectual History of 1960s Jerusalem

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Abstract

This article offers a window into the intellectual history of Jordanian-ruled Jerusalem during the 1960s by means of a deep study of *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* (New Horizon) – a Jerusalemite cultural and literary serial, which ran from 1961 to 1966 under the editorship of Palestinian poet Amin Shunnar (1933–2005). The bulk of *al-Ufuq al-Jadid*'s content took Palestine as a core concern and saw in it a creative intellectual impetus. This article parses the contents of *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* and the writings of its editor on the 1948 Nakba to evoke a picture of cultural life in Jerusalem on the eve of Israeli occupation.¹

Keywords

Jerusalem; Nakba; *iltizam* (commitment); Amin Shunnar; *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* (New Horizon); intellectual history; print culture; Jordan; Palestine

Shunnar: When did [you] begin writing?

Malhas: Right after the Nakba. Unquestionably, the Nakba had been the catalyst.

—“Colloquim on the Short Story,” *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* (May 1962)²

Jerusalem has often been cast in binary terms: East versus West, Old versus New, tradition versus modernity, stasis versus progress. Indeed, former inhabitants

of East Jerusalem during its Jordanian period (1950–67) remember it as a “feudal, clannish” place with “little cosmopolitan outlook;” “a city at a dead end” arrested by the religious traditions precariously residing within its ancient walls.³ West Jerusalem, in contrast, has been exalted as the city’s “more dynamic half;” a modern metropolis, home to art galleries, fashion boutiques, and lively coffee shops.⁴ After the 1948–49 Arab-Israeli War, East Jerusalem fell under the dominion of an illiberal monarchy that saw the city as a cultural and political challenge to its rapidly evolving seat of power in Amman. East Jerusalem may have been reunited with its western counterpart in 1967 by Israeli fiat, but it has since become an occupied city encroached upon from all angles by an Israeli government keen on squeezing out its Palestinian inhabitants to replace them with Jewish settlement.

In place of binaries and dichotomies, I put forth here the story of an intellectually vibrant East Jerusalem in the 1960s, where different ideational and critical trends wrestled and where contradictory notions about nation and literature coexisted. I retell this aspect of the city’s history through an examination of that period’s print culture and literary journalism. In particular, my historical inquiry is guided by a deep study of *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* (New Horizon), a Jerusalemite “little magazine”⁵ that ran from 1961 to 1966 under the editorship of Palestinian poet Amin Shunnar (1933–2005).⁶ I read in *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* the intellectual upshots of a fraught political moment in Jordanian and Palestinian histories through the lens of “Jerusalemite modernism” (*al-hadatha al-maqdisiyya*), a literary movement it represented and advanced. Jerusalemite modernism may have borrowed from comparable modernist movements in Beirut and elsewhere in the Arab world but its priorities and characteristics arose from the socio-political and cultural conditions experienced in Jerusalem and by Jerusalemites during the final days of Hashemite rule. The bulk of *al-Ufuq al-Jadid*’s content – be it short stories, poems, articles, or news reports – took Palestine as a core concern and saw in it a creative intellectual impetus. Thus, *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* represents an inimitable register of post-1948 Palestinian writing and thinking that warrants analysis. This article dissects the contents of *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* and the writings of its editor on the Nakba and its effects; assesses his position on the day’s intellectual battles from modern poetry to *iltizam* (commitment in literature); and repurposes the magazine’s local reports to evoke a picture of cultural life in Jerusalem on the eve of Israeli occupation.

A Poet and a Periodical

In June 1967, Amin Shunnar exited Jerusalem for the last time and settled in Amman until his death on 18 September 2005 – days shy of the forty-fourth anniversary of *al-Ufuq al-Jadid*’s first issue.⁷ Shunnar may have lived into his seventies, but he did so reclusively in the fashion of a Sufi hermit.⁸ Dispossession after the 1967 war and the 1970–71 civil war in Jordan weighed heavily on the sensitive Shunnar. He ceased to publish and chose to lead a lonely, pensive life with minimal social contact. Mahmoud Darwish lamented Shunnar’s wasted brilliance and isolation, seeing in him “a [poetic]

talent that self-destructed too soon.”⁹⁹ This article, though, presents Shunnar at the height of his career as poet, editor, critic, and novelist between 1961 and 1966.

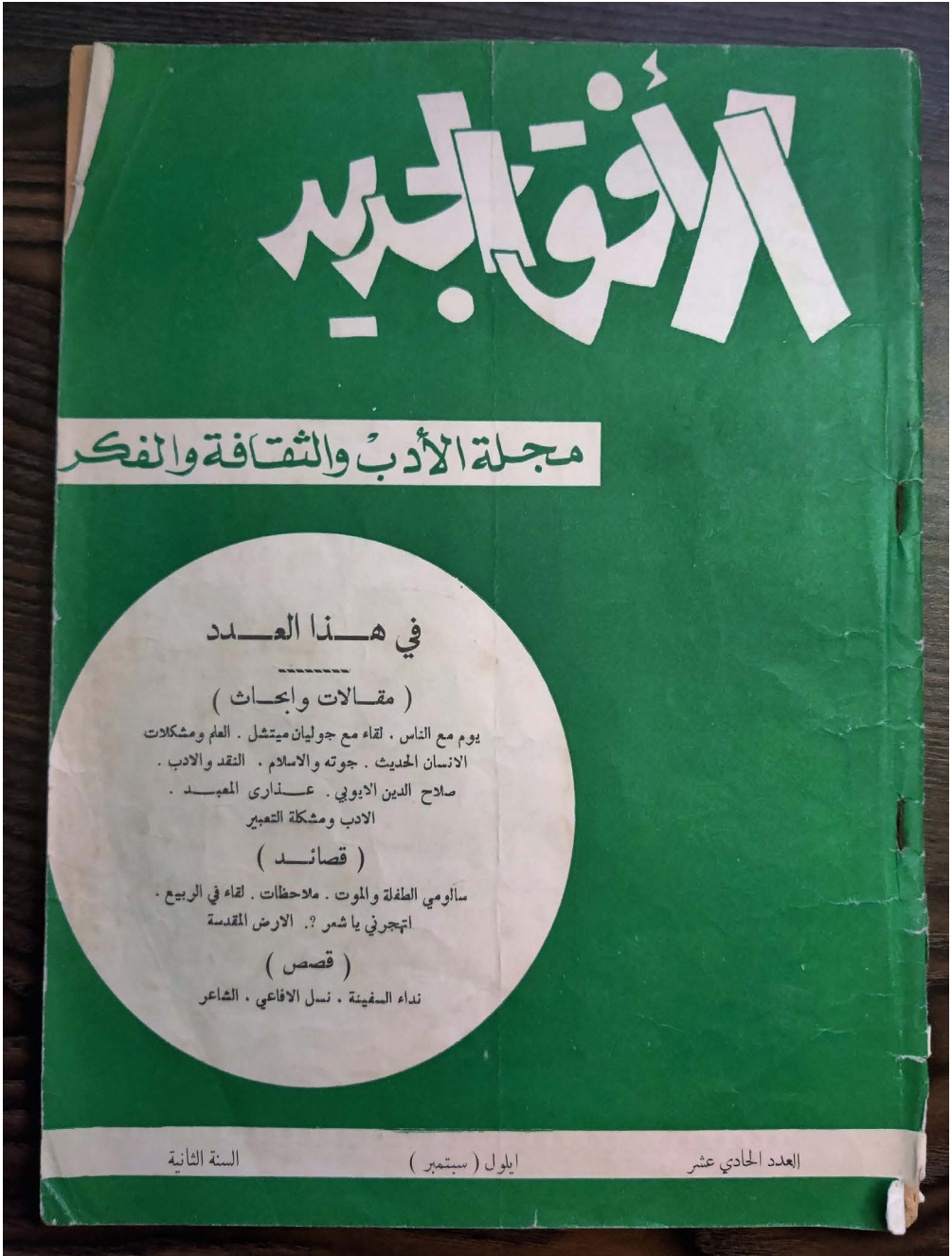


Figure 1. Front cover of *al-Ufuq al-Jadid*'s September 1963 issue. Photo by author.

Shunnar was born in 1933 in al-Bireh. He completed his secondary schooling in 1951 and soon after taught Arabic at the Ibrahimiyya College in Jerusalem.¹⁰ Throughout the 1950s, Shunnar published poetry in Jerusalemite papers – *Filastin*, *al-Sarih*, and *al-Jihad* – and in pan-Arab literary serials such as *al-Adab*.¹¹ In 1961, Shunnar attracted the attention of the owners of Jerusalem’s *al-Manar* newspaper and publishing firm (Dar al-Manar), who saw potential in the young poet and singled him out to command their forthcoming cultural and literary magazine, *al-Ufuq al-Jadid*.¹² Palestinian journalist Jum‘a Hammad was the magazine’s founding editor but his role was ceremonial and lasted for mere months. It was Shunnar who ended up editing and curating every issue of *al-Ufuq al-Jadid*, from its inception on 30 September 1961 until its demise on 31 October 1966. In addition to his regular editorials, Shunnar composed nineteen poems and authored dozens of literary critiques, book reviews, and philosophical essays throughout the magazine’s five-year run.¹³

Al-Ufuq al-Jadid was a passionate, personal affair for Shunnar. From his “tiny office,” Shunnar scrutinized every word that appeared in the magazine, corresponded with readers and contributors, posted invitations to events sponsored by *al-Ufuq al-Jadid*, and offered advice to budding poets.¹⁴ Atop his editorial duties, Shunnar absorbed himself in matters of distribution, printing, and cover design.¹⁵ In the second issue of *al-Ufuq al-Jadid*, Shunnar patently laid out the intellectual and manual labor he had undertaken to put together the magazine.

The first issue of your magazine, how was it prepared, curated, and printed? You may rightfully retort, “None of this is my business! All that matters to me is to consume the ‘main dish’ as I would like” . . . But do not I have the right, as well, to provide you with “the receipt”? Listen thus.

A stream of written contributions hits my desk; this is followed by a process of reading, sifting, and selecting what ought to appear in a given issue. As soon as this process concludes another begins, that of planning. Planning is first done on paper, with materials arranged in a form that pleases the reader, as you have seen. Thereafter, the printing press is contacted; and their “huge” machine is then set in motion to carve out the beautifully crafted plan unto the mud of reality . . . This would have not been possible without the press first agreeing to spare us their time and energy for a few days determined by “the logic of numbers and accounting.” Only then were we able to determine, for you, my dear reader, the date of our first rendezvous . . .

. . . All this is uncomplicated in comparison to the mother of problems: organization! Specifically, the assembling and arranging of materials for the printing press . . . They would say: this subject did not fill the sheet, fill it! This topic exceeded its allotment, cut it down! And I would cry: No, no, we must stick to the plan I designed.

. . . There is far more which one could detail, but I merely hoped to disclose to you the magazine's invoice; and for it you owe us nothing since you have gratefully paid off your share.¹⁶

A tad dramatic, this quote underscores Shunnar's devotion to the venture that was *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* as well as his attentiveness to its day-to-day operations.¹⁷

Shunnar was equally keen on turning his magazine into a democratic forum during an era of authoritarian rule in Jordan and most of the Arab world, a sentiment he stated from the first issue of *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* in September 1961: "We aim for this magazine to be a meeting place where varying tendencies engage [and] a domain where ideas, from all horizons, tussle earnestly and productively."¹⁸ Jordanian novelist and parliamentarian Fakhri Qa'war remembered Shunnar – his Arabic teacher at Ibrahimiyya College – as an "open-minded, creative human," whose tolerance and grace were reflected in his cultivation of *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* into a fertile ground for the emergence of diverse forms of thinking as well as in the care he conferred upon young writers.¹⁹ Throughout his editorial career, Shunnar remained faithful to making *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* accessible to a multiplicity of viewpoints. Therefore, it was not surprising to find, at times within the span of a single issue, contributions from those holding as divergent views as the Nasserite Iraqi poet 'Abd al-Wahhab al-Bayati; the liberal-leaning Jabra I. Jabra; the leftist, feminist Syrian novelist Ghada al-Samman; or the conservative Islamist Muhammad I. Shaqra.²⁰

Al-Ufuq al-Jadid published poetry and short stories, covered and promoted art exhibitions, and included primers and full studies on a range of topics: from philosophy, psychology, and astronomy to linguistics, history, and religion.²¹ The magazine's cohort coordinated a series of public lectures; conducted interviews with local intellectuals or those touring Jerusalem; and organized symposia on topics such as: science and the modern human, the crisis of Arab thinking, and literature east and west of the Jordan River. Shunnar also commissioned the translation of material into Arabic, including forty-six short stories by three dozen authors – with the lion's share of translations stemming from the American literary canon, including several short stories by Pearl Buck, John Steinbeck, and Ernest Hemingway.²²

As an editor and an educator, Shunnar also wished to keep his readers abreast of cultural happenings in the region. He thus regularly solicited friends to send *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* reports covering literary events, book launches, and musical concerts in Baghdad, Cairo, Damascus, and Beirut.²³ The late Palestinian poet and critic 'Izz al-Din Manasra recalled his first meeting with Shunnar in October 1964 before leaving for Cairo University. A villager from Hebron, Manasra visited Shunnar in his Jerusalem office with a basket of grapes in hand. And though Manasra felt embarrassed by his rustic gift and dreaded the meeting, Shunnar greeted him calmly and invited him to publish his poetry in *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* and to serve as its correspondent in Cairo.²⁴ Even as Manasra began to lean leftward during his studies in Cairo, Shunnar continued to publish his contributions and, in a later meeting, told him that what ultimately mattered is "creative ability and multiplicity in thought" not partisan politics.²⁵



Figure 2. Coverage of one of *al-Ufuq al-Jadid*'s symposia on the topic of modern science and a picture of its participants (left to right: Hind al-Husayni, Yusuf al-Najjar, 'Abd al-Rahim 'Umar, and Amin Shunnar). Photo by author.

Shunnar's commitment to promising authors from either bank of the Jordan River was most apparent in the arena of the short story, employing his magazine and his critical intellect to sharpen their skills. Across seventy-plus issues, Shunnar sanctioned the publication of 117 short stories by forty-six writers, who mainly hailed

from Jordan, Jerusalem, and the West Bank.²⁶ Shunnar and seasoned critics evaluated published short stories and extended recommendations in a dedicated section titled “In Critical Balance” (*fi mizan an-naqd*).²⁷ After 1967, this generation of short-story writers – which benefited from Shunnar’s generosity and convened on the pages of *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* – came to modernize the short-story genre well beyond Jordan and Palestine and took the magazine’s name as their historic moniker: *jil “al-Ufuq al-Jadid”* (“New Horizon” Generation).²⁸ This youthful cohort – which included the established Palestinian novelists Mahmud Shuqayr and Yahya Yakhluḥ – experimented with the literary genre, publishing short stories that took the Nakba and the Palestinian experience as central themes.²⁹ Over the years, the quality of these short stories improved, particularly with regards to the Nakba, as writers gave up tropes of “lost paradise” and instead attended to the tragedy’s density in individual and social terms and contemplated questions of “struggle, nostalgia, and consciousness.”³⁰ Indeed, a member of that generation of short-story writers, Subhi Shahruri, suggested that *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* represented a “point of rupture” in the history of Palestinian letters, thwarting “the literature of bereavement, sad oranges, and lost paradise.”³¹

The Nakba’s Horizon

Jordan’s political atmosphere constricted considerably over 1957–58; two thunderous years that had seen the dissolution of Sulayman al-Nabulsi’s progressive government, the prohibition of political parties, the merger of Syria and Egypt into the United Arab Republic, and a bloody coup deposing the Hashemite monarchy in Iraq.³² Even as these developments heartened Jordan’s opposition front of Arab nationalists, Ba‘thists, and communists, King Hussein managed to defuse internal and external threats to his crown through a campaign of repression and with the apprehensive support of London and Washington.³³ With the break of the 1960s, in an attempt to segment the country’s political opposition and to drum up the loyalty of the (East) Jordanian population, the Hashemite cultural regime enacted what had been retroactively labelled as a process of “bedouinization” – endorsing an exclusivist nationalism that appealed to primordial ties of “religion, tribe, clan, and family” and that othered Palestinians in radio, music, soccer, and food.³⁴ These national and cultural transformations intensified the alienation of West Bank and Jerusalem Palestinians and rekindled the flame of a separate Palestinian identity inside the “unified” kingdom – a development that would hit its apex in 1964–65 with the establishment of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the rise of the militant wing of the Palestinian National Liberation Movement (Fatah).³⁵ This independence was detectable in Shunnar’s *al-Ufuq al-Jadid*, whose literary preoccupation designated it as a site of elusive resistance, where political messages panning the “Arab regime” (*al-nizam al-‘Arabi*) – a polysemous yet nebulous target – were variably cloaked in the garb of short stories, poems, or critical essays. Displays of this increasingly autonomous Palestinian identity appeared in *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* between 1961 and 1966, perhaps best exemplified in the magazine’s attitudes toward the Nakba and its legacies.

Shunnar inaugurated *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* with an editorial outlining the magazine's motives and aims. Although such opening gambits were common practice, what was unprecedented was Shunnar's treatment of the Nakba as his magazine's *raison d'être* from the start: "Exactly in this country – where the horizon of the Nakba stretches before our eyes and where the nation of aggression stands in our face as a ringing reminder of our people's infirmity and failure – there is dire need for a literary renaissance that depicts the catastrophe's horrors and vividly perpetuates its memory."³⁶ Even more, Shunnar intended for *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* to be a springboard for a movement in arts and letters "which relives the Nakba's diverse emotions . . . and discloses its torments potently and piercingly."³⁷ As a whole, *al-Ufuq al-Jadid's* first issue foretold Shunnar's zeal to spotlight Palestinian voices. It featured an autobiographical short story by Mahmud al-Irani recounting expulsion from Jaffa and the miseries of refugee life; a painting by Palestinian artist Kamal Boullata portraying what appears to be an aging refugee donning a *kufiya*; a critical study of the poetry of Fadwa Tuqan by Palestinian academic 'Isa Boullata; and an account of upcoming publications and translations by Palestinian exiles Samira 'Azzam and Salma Khadra' Jayyusi.³⁸

Shunnar returned to address the Nakba and its literary outcomes in November and December 1961. He bemoaned that, despite their preponderance, literary expressions of the Nakba – or *adab al-nakba* – had foundered in communicating its gravity.³⁹ According to Shunnar, Nakba literature had been characterized so far by "distasteful verses, jarring slogans, lame efforts, and boorish outcomes."⁴⁰ To counter this, Shunnar advised future writers, poets, and artists to produce works stemming from the peculiar experiences of the Nakba and to do so genuinely without "conjuring ideas or aesthetics external to our individuality, sentiment, and sensibility."⁴¹ Shunnar closed by warning that the question of Nakba literature was not simply aesthetic but existential and historical. Failure to illustrate the Nakba and its pains creatively meant that the historical record would write off Palestinians as a people whose tragedy "removed them from their homeland and robbed them of their affects and their humanity."⁴²

With Shunnar having fired the first salvo, debate over the Nakba and its literary outputs soon engrossed established authors alongside lay readers and Palestinian refugees. By the end of 1961, *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* had received dozens of letters and postcards on the topic – most of which stressed the need for a literature capable of captivatingly and originally articulating the profundity of the Palestinian Nakba.⁴³ One such letter maintained that the Nakba had become the raw material of "false slogans" and "skin-deep, contrived ardor."⁴⁴ Another letter hoped for a Nakba novel that could acutely convey its experiences to a global audience, proposing John Steinbeck's *The Moon Is Down* (1942) as a yardstick.⁴⁵

Impassioned exchanges about the Nakba, its meaning, and its literature were not limited to *al-Ufuq al-Jadid's* first year. One noteworthy discussion unfolded in early 1964, shortly after *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* announced the results of its short-story contest. The main theme of the contest, as Shunnar stipulated in July 1963, was the "Palestinian Nakba, in its impacts or manifestations."⁴⁶ The jury withheld the first prize, citing the lack of a worthy contender from the forty-plus submissions they had

received. Instead, they selected eight short stories for the remaining prize pool with the promise of serializing them across *al-Ufuq al-Jadid*'s third year issues (1963–64).⁴⁷ A reader from Irbid wrote to *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* in March 1964 taking issue with the entry submitted by Palestinian writer Subhi Shahruri, which took third place in the contest, criticizing it as a “mediocre story that failed to voice the Nakba.”⁴⁸ Shahruri responded in the following issue, stressing the need to define the Nakba before passing judgment or posing criticism, and adding that the Nakba’s immediate meaning differed from its comprehensive effect. The former referred to the specific events of 1947–49 and the mass exodus of Palestinians, whereas the latter concerned the Nakba’s legacy as the harbinger of crises in the Arab world and as the root of Palestinian and Arab failures in the contemporary period. Shahruri blamed the critic for overlooking the fact that his short story had dealt with the Nakba in the second, far-reaching sense. In closing, Shahruri opined that the Nakba could not be limited to its palpable economic, social, and political harms. Why? Because the Nakba has effectively become “our general environment and the air we breathe, penetrating every aspect of our lives including our dreams ... [and our] unconscious.”⁴⁹

In January 1965, Shunnar dedicated one of the magazine’s lengthiest issues to the thorny subject of Nakba literature.⁵⁰ In preparing this special issue, Shunnar posed the following question to Arab and Palestinian intellectuals: “None of the Nakba literature that had been published thus far merits memorialization as an existential record of its history. How would you interpret this curious phenomenon?”⁵¹ Shunnar opened the special issue by suggesting that much of what has been produced under the banner of Nakba literature was driven by a “mercurial affection [which] chokes literature’s breath of life.”⁵² Moreover, the absence of a work of Nakba literature worthy of veneration reflected larger civilizational crises in the Arab world. However, breaking out of this cycle of stagnation was not impossible. “This tomorrow,” according to Shunnar, would be within reach once Palestinians and Arabs are no longer “spun by the Nakba’s vertigo and crushed under its weight.”⁵³

Jabra Ibrahim Jabra was the earliest to entertain a response to Shunnar’s query. He disavowed Shunnar’s assured tone and felt that it was impetuous to pass final judgment on Nakba literature. A more productive question, Jabra suggested, would have been about “the Nakba’s bearing on literature.”⁵⁴ Since 1948, no work of literature or poetry could escape “the Nakba’s atmosphere and psychological world,” even if it does not deal outright with “the subjects of refuge, exile, valor, martyrdom, or any other tragic aspect of the Nakba.”⁵⁵ Jabra implored Shunnar and other intellectuals to uphold all works of Nakba literature – regardless of their caliber and canonical value – and to treat them as “existential records” and parts of a greater Nakba archive.⁵⁶ Salma Khadra’ Jayyusi likewise objected to Shunnar’s arbitrary assumptions about Nakba literature and explained that our “entire lives have been touched by the Nakba and all [Arab] writing had been inspired by it.”⁵⁷ Jayyusi found a fair amount of Nakba literature to be of “good and very good quality;” however, the discrete and scattered nature of this corpus prevented these works from receiving the exposure they deserved.⁵⁸ This cross-examination of Nakba literature equally ensnared a young ‘Izz

al-Din Manasra. He suggested that, in spite of its abundance, Nakba literature did not reach the level of a “world literature.”⁵⁹ This ill-fated actuality was due to three main reasons, according to Manasra: the unending disagreement over the basic causes of the Nakba; the reluctance of eminent Arab intellectuals to produce works that would enrich the Nakba’s canon; and, the lack of historical knowledge about the Nakba in the Arab cultural field and its marginal resonance therein.⁶⁰

Although a poet by training, Shunnar paid a great deal of attention to the arts scene in East Jerusalem and his magazine documented local exhibits and opened its pages to Palestinian artists. In April 1963, for instance, *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* covered an art exhibit held in Jerusalem and interviewed its participants. The Nakba and its tragic scenes inspired many of the paintings and sculptures at this exhibit, as reflected in the titles of the works on display: “Refugee Women at a Spring,” “The Dispossessed,” “The Tent,” and “Behind the Barbed Wire” among others.⁶¹ The artists – who hailed from both banks of the Jordan River and who were evenly divided between men and women – regarded the Nakba as “a starting point” and a force thrusting them to “illustrate the hope of return.”⁶² In his report, Shunnar intimated that this exhibit promised a bright future for the arts in Jerusalem and signified “the crystallization of an artistic renaissance . . . which will express, truthfully and forcefully, the calamity of Palestine and which will reveal the dawn of [our] imminent return.”⁶³ Shunnar had what he ached for in the following year, with East Jerusalem hosting exhibits for three Palestinian artists. In January 1964, an exhibit in the Ambassador Hotel featured works of the Nablus-born ‘Afaf ‘Arafat upon her return from an arts fellowship in England.⁶⁴ Arafat’s paintings adorned *al-Ufuq al-Jadid*’s February 1964 issue and a young Vladimir Tamari reviewed her works. In May 1964, another exhibit was organized by Isma‘il Shammut and Tamam al-Akhal – a wedded pair and lifelong artistic partners. This was not the first time *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* featured Shammut and Akhal; indeed, reproductions of their artwork regularly graced the magazine’s covers and pages.⁶⁵ In an interview about their 1964 exhibit in Jerusalem, Shammut and Akhal identified the Nakba as the spark of their creativity and the “school” to which their paintings belonged – as opposed to any other established tendency.⁶⁶ Shammut stressed the need to convert Jerusalem into a hub for Nakba art (*fann al-nakba*) through exhibits and educational programs. Doing so would not only eternalize the memory of the Nakba among Palestinians but would broadcast their national cause via the universal language of art. Shammut compared his artistic mission to that of a “soldier” and considered his paintings “a weapon [he] brandish[es] to defend [Palestine].”⁶⁷ In concert, Akhal argued that painting represented a potent tool to record a people’s history and to convey their experiences to a global audience. It was this desire to chronicle the Nakba that animated her work and Shammut’s. Ultimately, Akhal believed that her paintings and Shammut’s – which stemmed from their personal tragedies of dispossession from Jaffa and Lydda, respectively – constituted a “historical register . . . of our humanity as a people.”⁶⁸

Within the intellectual history of the Arab 1960s, *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* was without equal. No other magazine treated the Nakba as its *raison d’être*. No other magazine

focused on Palestinian concerns so intensely and so frequently. Pan-Arab serials and circles gave core Palestinian topics, including the Nakba, only marginal coverage before 1967. Consider, for instance, how the 1957 Arab Writers' Congress in Cairo spoke of Palestinians as an abstract mass of a "million refugees" and how they reduced their plight to an imperial plot against the "sacred cause" of Arab unity.⁶⁹ Shunnar's *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* by contrast entertained dozens of theoretical debates on the Nakba, with those presented here only a miniscule portion. Further, the magazine and its editor took practical steps toward developing a distinct Nakba literature. This was evident in the care Shunnar devoted to short-story writers. He organized colloquia on the future of the short story; tended to young talents and gave them constructive criticism; and designed a contest for the Nakba short story in 1963. *Al-Ufuq al-Jadid* therefore surpassed its animus. More than just a magazine, *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* was the nexus of a full-blown modernist intellectual movement in Jerusalem. This movement, with Shunnar at its head, succeeded in establishing East Jerusalem as a center for modernist arts and letters. Crucially, *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* and Shunnar achieved this at a time when the Jordanian administration shored up Amman as the kingdom's cultural capital and consigned Jerusalem to the status of a tourist attraction.

To Commit or Not to Commit

Despite its preoccupation with the Nakba and other Palestinian concerns, *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* did attend to its Arab sphere and to the intellectual battles unraveling around it. *Al-Ufuq al-Jadid*'s lifespan, 1961–66, coincided with escalating disputes over literary commitment (*iltizam*)⁷⁰ and poetic modernism⁷¹ across the Arab world. Shunnar was mindful of these intellectual battles and held personal views on them. Still, Shunnar wanted *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* to be a "free-for-all field of play," where everyone was welcome regardless of their intellectual and literary politics: "This magazine is not bound by a specific trend in literature nor does it belong to a particular school of thought . . . it is an establishment whose wealth derives from a fidelity to principled ideas and whose *modus operandi* lies in the advancement of independent thinking."⁷² *Al-Ufuq al-Jadid*'s first symposium in September 1961 addressed these region-wide dynamics and spelled out the priorities of the magazine and of its nascent cohort. The symposium's participants – Shunnar, Palestinian author Mahmud al-Irani, and Jordanian intellectuals Husni Fariz and 'Abd al-Karim Khalifa – conceded that the raging issue of "commitment (*iltizam*) versus freedom" was a distraction and a "fad," a vain battle whose warring factions were detracted from producing literature "emanating from dilemmas on the ground."⁷³ For Shunnar and his guests, *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* should not decree that writers "comply with a specific tendency"; rather, it should labor "to create a fitting creative environment," wherein budding talents from both banks of the Jordan River could prosper.⁷⁴

Although Nakba arts and letters were key concerns for *al-Ufuq al-Jadid*, Shunnar did not see their future in *iltizam*. Why? Because *iltizam* "defiled the purity of the word" and its partisans reduced writing to the ammunition of their "futile and savage

war.”⁷⁵ Shunnar also decried art’s lost potential in the age of *iltizam*: “Art was once an escape, a haven, and a salvation. . . . Why has art become a captive and a serf; ordered, directed, and commanded?”⁷⁶ Instead, Shunnar appealed to Palestinian writers and artists to leave behind the “incessant controversy surrounding *iltizam* and the purposefulness of literature” and to create works that rise to “the level of life – our life – in its depth, acuity, and density.”⁷⁷ Shunnar was not alone. Fadwa Tuqan, when asked about the topic in an interview with *al-Ufuq al-Jadid*, stated that she “neither accepted nor tolerated *iltizam*” and refused to be a “poet for the cause” – as did her brother Ibrahim Tuqan.⁷⁸ Drastically, she added that she would favor “deadly silence” over the composition of poetry fitted to a mold or circumscribed by an issue.⁷⁹ For Tuqan, “genuine poetry” had no blueprint from which to work.⁸⁰ It was simply stimulated (not stipulated) by the truth and spontaneity of personal and national misfortune.⁸¹ Shunnar’s poetry in *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* echoed these values. His poems – written in free verse (*shi’r al-taf’ila*) – were deft and elegant; modernist in construction and contemporary in vocabulary, yet heavily grounded in the mud of the Nakba and its lived effects and affects. Such was the case in “*al-Sa’m*,” (“Tedium”), one of Shunnar’s early poems in the magazine, where he described the bleak and weary nature of the Palestinian condition and the futility of Arab solidarity, which offered Palestinians nothing more than contempt and the negation of their autonomy.⁸²

Joseph, thus, sunk deep in the well

And the night squeezed its light from his eyes . . .

. . . Dear God, if I were to dwell here, I would be torn apart by the sword
of tedium.

And, if I were to be extracted by the feet of ants dipped in blood,

I would trade my spirit for penitence . . .

. . . [Joseph:] My soul wishes for a hurricane of flames

To exacerbate the pain; to resurrect the memory in my heart.

Only then I could live with my body and soul

Away from the well, free from deceit.

Yet what have I endured but tedium,

Chewing my days, grinding my soul, and disgorging my heart,

Before disposing of me like bits of ember.

What if I yell from the pit of my misery: “O, Sama’!”

And my melody becomes mightier than the hand of death . . .

. . . Ugh, if my shrieks could shake off

The darkness of the well and force the serpents to retreat in humiliation.

Yet, every time I frightfully screamed: “O, Sama’! It is you
Who bridges the abducted body and the stabbed soul.”
She would ridicule me. She would deny me.
She would shout – as the ants listened on the walls of the well:
“There is no point in waiting. And for the defeated no escape.
Dead you are . . . and your well bottomless.”⁸³

In his critical texts, Manasra claimed that Shunnar’s poems – and those who took inspiration from him in *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* – had as their objective “the destruction of . . . Nakba poetry [*shi’r al-nakba*].”⁸⁴ This was far from the case. Rather, as the prior section proves, Shunnar and *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* sought to develop a distinct form of Palestinian art, poetry, and literature. A literature that renounced *iltizam* without rejecting its focus on the real world. A literature that embraced modernism without mimicking its fetish to experiment for the sake of experimentation. And, most significantly, a literature which defied the Nakba’s negative impact and mutated its tragedy to a modernizing, creative force of change. Shunnar’s poetry in *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* thus signified a move from the realm of theory to that of praxis; from conceptualizing a Nakba literature to composing it. In effect, what Shunnar offered his readers – in and through *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* – was an indigenous and modern poetic formula capable of expressing the pains of the Nakba without hyperbole.

Unfortunately, however, the modernist movement that *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* engendered was obscured not so much by the magazine’s demise in 1966, but by what came to be known as “resistance literature” (*adab al-muqawama*). And, as the irony of history would have it, it was on the pages of *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* where the Galilee’s resistance poets first appeared – slightly before their espousal by Ghassan Kanafani and Beirut’s periodicals.⁸⁵ The 1960s writings of Kanafani – simultaneous to *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* – had proposed the evaluation of literature in terms of a given text’s reflection of the “commitments and tasks of the Palestinian cause.”⁸⁶ In distinguishing certain literature as resistant – and therefore Palestinian – Kanafani sought to delimit a Palestinian canon that omits the anxieties of exile in favor of nationalist pragmatics. To put theory into praxis, Kanafani introduced the reader to the poetry of Mahmoud Darwish and other Galilee poets as a model to be emulated by future writers. Kanafani thus shirked the abstract poetry of exile in favor of the concrete “poetry of the occupied land,” which sharply portrayed Palestinian resistance inside Israel. After the 1967 war, Kanafani’s literary theory that measured Palestinian writing against a yardstick of resistance would be translated in military terms with the PLO’s institutionalization of a Palestinian national culture that sanctified the rifle. Ultimately, I argue that both the notion of resistance literature and the “lost years” narrative, which claims that Palestinians were in a state of cultural and political inertia in the Nakba’s immediate aftermath, complement one another.⁸⁷ Jointly, they efface Palestinian thinking of the 1948–67 period – *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* presenting a case in point – as either non-resistant and thus insignificant and unworthy of canonization, or as non-extant due to the debilitating shocks of the Nakba.⁸⁸

Conclusion

Despite his take on the debates of his day and despite his literary preferences, Amin Shunnar was exceptionally democratic in his editorial role. Shunnar included classical metered poems alongside modern free ones, and published the opinions of those who attacked him. In one instance, a conservative critic objected to Shunnar's slippage into the realm of "cryptic and symbolic poetry" – a reference to Shunnar's 1957 poetry collection, *al-Mash'al al-Khalid* (The eternal torch), composed in classical verse.⁸⁹ Even more, the critic indicted *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* for its participation in a "poetic Nakba," disseminating poetry that was "nauseating" and foreign to the Arab spirit.⁹⁰ Shunnar gracefully responded by elucidating that the magazine welcomed all kinds of poems – metered or not – and that its only criteria were sincerity and artistry.⁹¹ Manasra, likewise, noted Shunnar's democracy and cited that *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* has been described as "a magazine owned by the Muslim Brotherhood,⁹² edited by an existentialist-Tahriri poet,⁹³ and filled with contributions from communists, Arab nationalists, Ba'athists, monarchists, independent leftists, and liberals."⁹⁴ Still, the question begs: why *al-Ufuq al-Jadid*? Why Shunnar? And why Jerusalem?

Al-Ufuq al-Jadid – not just as a magazine but as a sweeping intellectual project – stands as an exceptional chapter in the intellectual history of Palestinians, albeit one that is underhistoricized and undertheorized.⁹⁵ After the expulsion of 1948, *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* succeeded in intellectually, if not physically, repatriating Palestinians in Jerusalem and in offering them a literary home from where they could ponder their exile and its antinomies. *Al-Ufuq al-Jadid* was unlike any of its contemporaries. Its contents encompassed the diversity of Palestinian intellectual history before 1967 in poetry, short stories, criticism, and essays. Shunnar shepherded this diversity of voices into a peculiarly Palestinian modernist movement. The events organized by *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* and its coterie transformed East Jerusalem into a central node within the larger map of Arab modernisms in the wake of World War II – a modernism whose beating heart was the Nakba. Still, being in Jerusalem – and thus on the margins of 1960s Arab intellectual history – accorded Shunnar and his magazine critical distance from the heated intellectual battles waged in Cairo and Beirut. In effect, this participation from the periphery allowed *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* to escape doctrinaire positions espoused by magazines such as *al-Adab*, *al-Thaqafa al-Waṭaniyya*, and the Egyptian serials commandeered by the likes of Yusuf al-Siba'i, the brigadier-cum-intellectual and cultural trustee of Egyptian president Gamal Abdul Nasser.

Despite its openness and vigor, *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* did not escape the usual fate of most little magazines: bankruptcy and eventual dissolution. *Al-Ufuq al-Jadid*'s closure coincided with Jerusalem losing out to Amman as Jordan's cultural capital after years of systemic neglect from the central government.⁹⁶ The magazine's parent company, Dar al-Manar, responded to the situation in 1966 and elected to cease operations in Jerusalem and to move to Amman together with their printing press.⁹⁷ The move was also prompted by Dar al-Manar's unwillingness to continue funding what they deemed to be "a source of deficiency" for their business.⁹⁸ Escalating problems crushed Shunnar

and *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* that year, with the Jordanian Ministry of Education delivering the coup de grâce when it reneged on its subscriptions to the magazine.⁹⁹ According to Palestinian critic Khalil al-Sawahri, the ministry's subscriptions and donations had kept the magazine afloat and without them *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* was no longer a tenable undertaking.¹⁰⁰ Shortly after its last issue in late 1966, Shunnar penned a eulogy for *al-Ufuq al-Jadid*, whose closure he felt as a "cataclysmic loss."¹⁰¹ He accused Jordanian and Arab cultural authorities of failing to subsidize the magazine and lamented that *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* had sprouted in soil hostile to critical thought.

With its last issue this week, the journey of *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* magazine has ground to a halt. The seeds of its morbid fate have been planted in its viscera since birth . . . This magazine did not germinate in a healthy environment, because in our enormous Arab world there exists no foothold for genuine cultural magazines. It was born an alien and lived its short life as do vagabonds: sheltering in the shade, muttering to the few, and fading day-by-day like a candlelight . . .

. . . Why was this magazine fated to death? Do not ask me. Pose the question to the cultural regimes in our Arab world. Why have they chosen to spurn the pure and bright word? . . . Do not ask me. Pose the question to the masses of readers enslaved by nude imagery, excited by the frivolous and the pallid, and delighted by the vacuum of chaos! Do not ask me. For the magazine's final issue was a witness, a foretoken, and an indictment.¹⁰²

The Jerusalemite modernism that Shunnar's *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* embodied did not go unnoticed, nevertheless. The high priests of Arab modernism in Beirut – Unsi al-Hajj, Yusuf al-Khal, and Shawqi Abi Shaqra – surely recognized it in 1968 when they awarded Shunnar and the Jordanian Taysir Sbul first place in a literary contest organized by *Mulhaq al-Nahar*, the Lebanese newspaper *al-Nahar*'s weekly cultural supplement, which featured over a hundred submissions from all corners of the Arab world.¹⁰³ In spite of this moment of fame and acknowledgement, Jerusalemite modernism was quickly forgotten. Yet, this probably had more to do with the movement's inopportune historical timing than with any lack of ingenuity. The movement that *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* represented and Shunnar headed was caught between two transformative moments in Arab intellectual history. On one end, it was buffeted by the boisterous deliberations over *iltizam* and the modernization of Arabic poetry (*al-hadatha al-shi'riyya*). And on the other end, it was overshadowed by the monster that was Kanafani's resistance literature and the poetry of the occupied land. In the final analysis, Shunnar and *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* provided a unique modernist experiment and put forth an alluring literary prototype – that of a modern Palestinian literature grounded in the reality of the Nakba and unencumbered by avant-garde excesses. Sadly, this experiment and this prototype did not survive the tremors of 1967. Shunnar himself retreated after

the 1967 war and occupation and the carnage of Black September in 1970, giving up poetry and leading a cloistered life in Amman.

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Endnotes

- 1 All translations are by the author unless otherwise noted. Research for this article was partially supported by a grant from the Palestinian Museum, Birzeit. Portions of this article were adapted from my award-winning doctoral dissertation: Adey Almohsen, "On Modernism's Edge: An Intellectual History of Palestinians After 1948" (PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 2021). This article offers a primer for a fuller investigation of Jerusalem's print culture and intellectual history during the Jordanian period that is the focus in my evolving monograph (see author's bio).
- 2 Amin Shunnar, ed., "Nadwat *al-Ufuq al-Jadid*: ma' al-qissa" [*al-Ufuq al-Jadid* colloquium: on the short story], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 1, no. 16 (May 1962): 20.
- 3 Quotes culled from the descriptions of the city's former inhabitants, including American diplomat Eugene Bird and Palestinian surgeon and Jerusalem native John N. Tleel, from: Kai Bird, *Crossing Mandelbaum Gate: Coming of Age between the Arabs and the Israelis, 1956–78* (New York: Scribner, 2010), 3; Laura S. Schor, "Jordanian Jerusalem: 1948–67," in *Sophie Halaby in Jerusalem: An Artist's Life* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2019), 112; and John N. Tleel, *I Am Jerusalem* (Jerusalem: Dimitri Road, Old City, 2000), 106.
- 4 Bird, *Crossing Mandelbaum Gate*, 3; Schor, "Jordanian Jerusalem," 114.
- 5 Many "little magazines" are printed literary serials that defy custom, celebrate experimentation, and dwell on the fringes of intellectual culture. Little magazines – being rebellious by nature and non-commercial in intent – have attracted avant-garde writers unable or unwilling to publish their work in the "dignified press." It is not surprising, therefore, that the history of little magazines had been bound up with modernism the world over. Editors of little magazines have contributed likewise to the medium's peculiarities. Shunnar in *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* viewed the commercial press with apprehension and attributed to it much of the Arab world's cultural failings. Not unlike his international peers, Shunnar stressed the need for literary modernization and reform. Eric Bulson, *Little Magazine, World Form* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), 1–4, 21–22. Frederick J. Hoffman, Charles Allen, and Carolyn F. Ulrich, *The Little Magazine: A History and a Bibliography* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1947), v, 1–5; Amin Shunnar, "Qari'i al-'aziz [My dear reader]," *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 1, no. 17 (June 1962): 47; Amin Shunnar, "al-Turath al-Mu'asir" [Contemporary heritage], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 3, no. 11 (October 1964): 1.
- 6 Ziyad A. Salama, "Amin Shunnar: masira adabiyya wa fikriyya" [Amin Shunnar: a literary and intellectual journey], *Afkar* (Amman), no. 253 (2009): 84.
- 7 Salama, "Amin Shunnar," 85.
- 8 For more on Shunnar's Sufism, refer to: Muhammad Abu Rumman, "al-Tasawwuf ghayr al-mar'i: al-adab wa-l-thaqafa wa-l-fann" ["Invisible" Sufism: literature, culture, and art], in *Asrar al-tariq al-sufi: mujtama' al-tasawwuf wa-l-zawaya wa-l-hadhrat fi la-Urdun* [Secrets of the Sufi path: Sufi society, spaces, and practices in Jordan] (Bonn and Amman: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2020), 305–15.
- 9 Hamdi al-Sakkut, ed., *Qamus al-adab al-'arabi al-hadith* [Dictionary of modern Arab literature] (Cairo: al-Hay'a al-Misriyya al-

- ‘amma li-l-kitab, 2015), 127.
- 10 Ibrahimiyya College was a primary and secondary school founded in 1931 in Jerusalem by Palestinian educationalist Nihad Abu Gharbiyya (1913–2009). “Mu’assis al-kuliyya wa bani sarhiha al-shamikh” [The college’s founder and builder of its lofty edifice], Ibrahimiyya College website, online at www.ibrahimieh.edu/articles/view/18 (accessed 1 March 2021); Salama, “Amin Shunnar,” 84.
- 11 Shunnar published his first poems in Jerusalem’s *al-Sarih* when he was a high school student in 1949. In 1957, Shunnar selected some of his early poems and collated them into a collection titled *al-Mash’al al-Khalid* (The eternal torch). Ibrahim Khalil, *Amin Shunnar: al-sha’ir wa al-Ufuq* [Amin Shunnar: the poet and the horizon] (Amman: Matabi’ al-dustur al-tijariyya, 1997), 16.
- 12 Salama, “Amin Shunnar,” 84.
- 13 Khalil, *Amin Shunnar*, 15–17.
- 14 Shunnar even dedicated a regular section of the magazine to amateur writers titled New Talents (*mawahib jadida*). There, young writers shared drafts followed by critical comments from Shunnar and others. Ziyad A. Salama, *Amin Shunnar – ustadh al-jil: dirasa fi fikrihi wa adabihi* [Amin Shunnar – the generation’s educator: a study on his writings and thought] (Amman: Wizarat al-Thaqafa, 2020), 483.
- 15 Khalil, *Amin Shunnar*, 15–17.
- 16 Amin Shunnar, “Qari’i al-‘aziz,” 47–48.
- 17 Mohammad Shaheen, professor emeritus of English, University of Jordan, recalls a “drained” Shunnar “squatting” outside the printing press to make sure proofs of a given issue of *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* were organized and published to his liking. Salama, *Amin Shunnar – ustadh al-jil*, 488.
- 18 Amin Shunnar, “Qari’i al-‘aziz,” 49.
- 19 As quoted in Muhammad ‘Ubaydallah, *al-Qissa al-qasira fi Filastin wa al-Urdun: mundhu nash’atiha hatta jil* al-Ufuq al-Jadid [The short story in Palestine and Jordan: from its genesis to the generation of *al-Ufuq al-Jadid*] (Amman: Jordanian Ministry of Culture, 2001), 42. For examples of Shunnar’s support to young writers, consult Salama, *Amin Shunnar – ustadh al-jil*, 486, 490–91.
- 20 See, for example: *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 1, no. 3 (November 1961); vol. 1, no. 16 (May 1962); vol. 2, no. 10 (August 1963); vol. 3, no. 1 (December 1963); and vol. 3, no. 4 (March 1964). Palestinian novelist Mahmud Shuqayr also recalled how Shunnar made it possible for Jordanian communists banned and persecuted by the regime and its intelligence services – to send their different contributions to *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* under pseudonyms. Shuqayr quoted in Salama, *Amin Shunnar – ustadh al-jil*, 483–84.
- 21 ‘Ubaydallah, *al-Qissa al-qasira*, 42–43.
- 22 ‘Ubaydallah, *al-Qissa al-qasira*, 52–53. Short stories authored by these three American authors appeared in *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 1, no. 15 (May 1962); vol. 2, no. 1 (November 1962); vol. 2, no. 10 (August 1963); vol. 2, no. 11 (September 1963); and vol. 3, no. 8 (July 1964).
- 23 ‘Ubaydallah, *al-Qissa al-qasira*, 42–43.
- 24 ‘Izz al-Din Manasra, *Haris al-nass al-shi’ri: shahadat fi al-tajriba al-shi’riyya* [Guardian of the poetic text: testimonies of poetic experience] (Beirut: Dar kitabat, 1993), 65.
- 25 ‘Izz al-Din Manasra, “Amin Shunnar: al-Quds tajma’una (shahada)” [Amin Shunnar: Jerusalem unifies us (a testimony)], *Afkar*, no. 241 (2008): 74.
- 26 ‘Ubaydallah, *al-Qissa al-qasira*, 52–53.
- 27 Shunnar and *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* signaled their interest in modernizing and developing the craft of the short story east and west of the Jordan River early and on more than one instance. Two issues from May 1962 reported on the outcomes of a colloquium Shunnar organized around the topic of the short story, which included three veteran authors: Mahmud Sayf al-Din al-Irani (1914–1974) from Jaffa, ‘Abd al-Rahim M. ‘Umar (1929–1993) from Tulkarm, and Amin Faris Malhas (1923–1983) from Jerusalem. During the colloquium, Shunnar and Amin Malhas discussed the possibility of starting “a society for the short story that would be sponsored by *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* and tasked with helping amateur writers in all possible ways.” Moreover, *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* dedicated its November 1962 issue to the short story. “Nadwat *al-Ufuq al-Jadid*: ma’a al-qissa,” *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 1, no. 15 (May 1962): 6–9; “Nadwat al-Ufuq al-Jadid: Ma’ al-qissah,” *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 1, no. 16 (May 1962): 17–20; *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 2, no. 1 (November 1962); ‘Ubaydallah, *al-Qissa al-qasira*, 208–10.
- 28 ‘Ubaydallah, *al-Qissa al-qasira*, 52–53.
- 29 ‘Ubaydallah, *al-Qissa al-qasira*, 211–13; Salama, *Amin Shunnar – ustadh al-jil*, 499.

- 30 ‘Ubaydallah, *al-Qissa al-qasira*, 26–27, 52–53, 211–13.
- 31 Salama, *Amin Shunnar – ustadh al-jil*, 480–81.
- 32 Avraham Sela, “The West Bank under Jordan,” in *The Palgrave Handbook of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*, ed. P. R. Kumaraswamy (Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 283–93.
- 33 Lawrence Tal, *Politics, the Military, and National Security in Jordan, 1955–67* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 54–66.
- 34 Joseph Massad, *Colonial Effects: The Making of National Identity in Jordan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 71–79; Beverly Milton-Edwards and Peter Hinchcliffe, *Jordan: A Hashemite Legacy*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2009), 37–39.
- 35 Sela, “West Bank,” 283–93; Naim Sofer, “The Political Status of Jerusalem in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan 1948–67,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 12, no. 1 (1976): 79–84.
- 36 Amin Shunnar, “Hadhihi al-majalla” [This magazine], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 1, no. 1 (September 1961): 1.
- 37 Shunnar, “Hadhihi al-majalla,” 1.
- 38 *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 1, no. 1 (September 1961): 14–15, 18, 21–22, 35.
- 39 Neither Shunnar nor his contemporaries appear to have ever defined the term *adab al-nakba* (Nakba literature). Rather, their writings imply an intersubjective understanding of Nakba literature to mean any fiction and non-fiction writing by Arabs or Palestinians that takes the 1947–49 Nakba as a core inspiration, concern, theme, trope, or impetus.
- 40 Amin Shunnar, “Hawla adab al-nakba” [On Nakba literature], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 1, no. 4 (November 1961): 1.
- 41 Amin Shunnar, “Adab al-nakba” [Nakba literature], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 1, no. 5 (December 1961): 1.
- 42 Shunnar, “Hawla adab al-nakba,” 2.
- 43 “Munaqashat” [Debates], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 1, no. 5 (December 1961): 41.
- 44 Hasan al-Tal, “al-Ihsas wa-l-mufakkir al-mujahid” [Perception and the fighter-thinker], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 1, no. 6 (December 1961): 44.
- 45 Ahmad Hasan Abu ‘Arqub, “Adab al-nakba” [Nakba literature], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 1, no. 6 (December 1961): 45.
- 46 “Shurut al-musabaqa” [Terms of the competition], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 2, no. 9 (July 1963): 11.
- 47 “Nata’ij al-musabaqa” [Competition results], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 3, no. 1 (December 1963): 85. The first prize was seven Jordanian dinars, equivalent to two hundred U.S. dollars in 2022.
- 48 Abu al-Qasim, “Munaqashat” [Debates], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 3, no. 4 (March 1964): 46.
- 49 Subhi Shahruri, “Munaqashat” [Debates], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 3, no. 5 (April 1964): 43–45.
- 50 Translations from this issue of *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* on Nakba literature alongside an introduction to it – prepared by Adey Almohsen and Nora Parr – will be published next year in the *Journal of Arabic Literature* as part of their special issue titled: “Palestine as Theory.”
- 51 Amin Shunnar, “Hawla adab al-nakba,” 3.
- 52 Amin Shunnar, “al-Nakba wa-l-adab” [The Nakba and literature], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 4, no. 1 (January 1965): 1–2.
- 53 Shunnar, “al-Nakba wa-l-adab.”
- 54 Jabra Ibrahim Jabra, “Hawla adab al-nakba,” *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 4, no. 1 (January 1965): 3–4.
- 55 Jabra, “Hawla adab al-nakba.”
- 56 Jabra, “Hawla adab al-nakba.”
- 57 “Liqa’ ma’a Salma al-Khadra’ al-Jayyusi” [An interview with Salma Khadra’ Jayyusi], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 1, no. 23 (September 1962): 33–34.
- 58 Salma Khadra’ Jayyusi, “Hawla adab al-nakba” [On Nakba literature], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 4, no. 1 (January 1965): 70.
- 59 ‘Izz al-Din Manasra, “Hawla adab al-nakba” [On Nakba literature], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 4, no. 1 (January 1965): 71–72.
- 60 Manasra, “Hawla adab al-nakba.”
- 61 Amin Shunnar, “Nadwat *al-Ufuq al-Jadid*,” *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 2, no. 7 (May 1963): 33–34.
- 62 Shunnar, “Nadwat *al-Ufuq al-Jadid*,” *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 2, no. 7 (May 1963): 33–34.
- 63 Shunnar, “Nadwat *al-Ufuq al-Jadid*,” *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 2, no. 7 (May 1963): 33–34.
- 64 Vladimir Tamari, “Fi ma’rad al-fannana ‘Afaf ‘Arafat” [On the exhibition of the artist ‘Afaf ‘Arafat], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 3, no. 3 (February 1964): 51–52.
- 65 Issues include: 1, no. 7 (January 1962), 3, no. 8 (July 1964), and 4, no. 1 (January 1965).
- 66 Khalil al-Sawahiri, “Isma’il Shammut: al-fannan wa-l-nakba” [Isma’il Shammut: the artist and the Nakba], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 3, no. 8 (July 1964): 36–41.

- 67 al-Sawahiri, "Isma'il Shammut," 40.
- 68 Tamam al-Akhal, "al-Fann wa-l-mujtama' wa-l-nakba" [Art, society, and the Nakba], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 4, no. 1 (January 1965): 16, 76–7.
- 69 Adey Almohsen, "Arab Critical Culture and Its (Palestinian) Discontents after the Second World War," *Arab Studies Journal* 29, no. 1 (2021): 56–83.
- 70 An Arabic term meaning "adherence." It refers to the notion of committing a work of art or literature to the socio-political facts on the ground as well as to the concerns of the masses – whomever they may be. *Iltizam*, which evolved in the Arab world during and after the Second World War, was the complex product of "local Arab influences (e.g., the critical works of Lebanese 'Umar Fakhuri and Ra'if Khuri as well as the poetry of Palestinian Ibrahim Tuqan) alongside both Jean-Paul Sartre's idea of engagement in literature and the Soviet model of socialist realism." Almohsen, "Arab Critical Culture," 75, note 6.
- 71 On the history of poetic modernism in the post-WWII Arab world, refer to: Almohsen, "On Modernism's Edge," 63–98; Mahmud al-Dab', *Qasidat al-nathr wa tahawwulat al-shi'riyya al-'Arabiyya* [The prose poem and transformations in Arab poetics] (Cairo: al-Hay'a al-'amma li Qusur al-Thaqafa, 2003); Huda Fakhreddine, "The Prose Poem and the Arabic Literary Tradition," *Middle Eastern Literatures* 19, no. 3 (2016): 243–59; Otared Haidar, *The Prose Poem and the Journal Shi'r: A Comparative Study of Literature, Literary Theory, and Journalism* (Reading: Ithaca Press, 2008); Mounah Khouri, "Prose Poetry: A Radical Transformation in Contemporary Arabic Poetry," *Edebiyat: Journal of Middle Eastern Literatures* 1, no. 2 (1976): 127–49.
- 72 Amin Shunnar, "Min ma'alim al-tariq" [Milestones], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 1, no. 2 (October 1961): 1.
- 73 Amin Shunnar et al., "Nadwat al-Ufuq al-Jadid" [Colloquium of *al-Ufuq al-Jadid*], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 1, no. 1 (September 1961): 23–6.
- 74 Shunnar et al., "Nadwat al-Ufuq al-Jadid."
- 75 Amin Shunnar, "'Indama dunisat al-kalima" [When the word was defiled], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 1, no. 7 (January 1962): 1.
- 76 Amin Shunnar, "'Ala al-tariq" [Along the way], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 1, no. 3 (November 1961): 1.
- 77 Amin Shunnar, "al-Lu'lu' wa-l-mahar" [The pearl and the oyster], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 1, no. 8 (January 1962): 1.
- 78 "Liqa' ma'a Fadwa Tuqan" [Interview with Fadwa Tuqan], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 1, no. 13 (April 1962): 6–7.
- 79 "Liqa' ma'a Fadwa Tuqan."
- 80 "Liqa' ma'a Fadwa Tuqan."
- 81 "Liqa' ma'a Fadwa Tuqan."
- 82 Jabra said as much in more than one of his essays on *iltizam*. See Almohsen, "Arab Critical Culture," 68–69.
- 83 Selections from: Amin Shunnar, "al-Sa'am" [Tedium], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 1, no. 11 (March 1962): 10. I thank Hamad al-Rayes and Huda Fakhreddine for their comments on my translation of the poem.
- 84 Manasra, *Haris al-nass al-shi'ri*, 118.
- 85 Manasra, *Haris al-nass al-shi'ri*, 66, 118.
- 86 Kanafani's articles on resistance literature first appeared in the Beirut-based literary supplement he edited between 1964 and 1967, *Filastin: Mulhaq al-Muharir*. In 1966, Kanafani's collected and edited his articles on the topic into a book published by Suheil Idris. Two years later, he expanded and modified the book and sent it to the PLO's Research Center. Ghassan Kanafani, *Adab al-muqawama fi Filastin al-muhtala 1948–66* [Resistance literature in Occupied Palestine] (Beirut: Dar al-Adab, 1966), 9–10.
- 87 I borrow the term from Rashid Khalidi. Although he coined the term, Khalidi did not sufficiently explain why these years were lost, nor did he prove otherwise. He poses the term as a critique of the historiography but reinforces it implicitly in his writings on the period. Khalidi is not alone. Edward Said had claimed as much in his monumental book, *The Question of Palestine*. Rashid Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 177–79; Edward Said, *The Question of Palestine* (New York: Vintage, 1980), xv, 158.
- 88 This paragraph's arguments were adapted from Almohsen, "On Modernism's Edge," *passim*.
- 89 Mustafa Z. al-Kilani, "al-Ma'ida allati yasdur 'anha al-nas ja'i'in" [The table that leaves people hungry], *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 1, no. 14 (April 1962): 46–7.
- 90 Kilani, "al-Ma'ida."
- 91 Amin Shunnar responded under Kilani's

- critical comments in: *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* 1, no. 14 (April 1962): 47.
- 92 This refers to the Muslim Brotherhood leanings of the owners of Dar al-Manar, though, as suggested by the content of *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* as well as their daily *al-Manar*, they were not doctrinaire in their Islamism.
- 93 Referring to Hizb al-Tahrir, a pro-caliphate Islamist party founded in East Jerusalem in 1953 by the Haifa-born cleric Taqi ad-Din an-Nabahani. I certainly believe this is an unfair assessment of Shunnar's complex character and politics – let alone of *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* as a diverse literary undertaking.
- 94 Manasra, *Haris al-nass al-shi'ri*, 136.
- 95 In French and English, to my knowledge, there is not a single study on Shunnar or his magazine. In Arabic, there exists a fair amount of literature on *al-Ufuq al-Jadid* (several of which were cited in this article). Most of this literature, however, is either descriptive or biographical. Save for the valuable testimonies of *al-Ufuq al-Jadid*'s contributors like Manasra and Shaheen, there is very little analysis of *al-Ufuq al-Jadid*'s place and role in Palestinian and Arab intellectual and literary histories.
- 96 Massad, *Colonial Effects*, 230–36; Kimberly Katz, *Jordanian Jerusalem: Holy Places and National Spaces* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005), 67–89; Sofer, “The Political Status,” 84–90.
- 97 From a 1994 interview with Jum'a Hammad in ‘Ubaydallah, *al-Qissa al-qasira*, 51.
- 98 ‘Ubaydallah, *al-Qissa al-qasira*, 50.
- 99 ‘Ubaydallah, *al-Qissa al-qasira*, 51; Salama, *Amin Shunnar – ustadh al-jil*, 500–502.
- 100 ‘Ubaydallah, *al-Qissa al-qasira*, 51.
- 101 Amin Shunnar, “*al-Ufuq al-Jadid*,” *al-Manar*, 8 November 1966, 6.
- 102 Shunnar, “*al-Ufuq al-Jadid*.”
- 103 “Nata’ij musabaqat *al-Mulhaq* li-l-riwaya” [Results of al-Mulhaq’s literary competition], *Mulhaq al-Nahar*, 26 May 1968, 12.