

# **The Crime of Writing : Narratives and Shared Meanings in Criminal Cases in Baathist Syria**

par Zouhair GHAZZAL

## **SOMMAIRE**

### **Cases by chapter**

#### **Prologue**

#### **From the primal scene to the crime scene**

#### **Plan of the book**

#### **Acknowledgments**

#### **Transliteration**

### **Chapter 1. The political economy of crime**

- The civic foundations of the new post-Ottoman legal order
- This is not good enough to stay
- Criminalizing the economy
- Bailouts of so-called credit collectors
- What happened to the personality ?
- The old sultanic order and the new civic virtues
- Why the demonstrability of crime has become that important
- The blueprint of undecipherable statistics

### **Chapter 2. What would stand as enough evidence ?**

- What is enough evidence ?
- The aura of witnessing
- Memory, time, and forgetting
- Between performance and morality: why direct interrogation is all that matters
- The crime of writing The unspoken honor
- The unveiling of the mute ground of discourse
- Wither Oedipus ?

### **Chapter 3. There is no crime where there is madness**

- What happened ?
- The insane shepherd-who-writes
- The criminal case as a legal artifact
- Is he competent to stand trial ?
- Was he insane ?
- My client is known to be an idiot
- Writing insanity
- The accused is now in a borderline state
- Common understandings and misunderstandings

### **Chapter 4. Auto-biographies: Self and Other in Confessional Criminal Narratives**

- Matters of fact
- Autobiographical confessions

- Crime or suicide ?
- Anatomy of a confession: the unwritten law of abuse
- I admit that I was abusive towards my teenage daughter, but does that make me look like a criminal worthy of incarceration ?
- All those silent observers
- The father's gaze and the daughter's guilt

#### **Chapter 5. The death penalty, torture, and due process**

- So that they may become a lesson to others: why the death penalty still matters
- When does torture become commonplace ?
- The death penalty is too little for people like that
- Let's keep everything in secret
- Contents VII You must become independent
- Torture and its limits
- Torture as the obscene supplement of Law
- There is something wrong with my wife's sexuality
- That which we dare not speak about
- Strong mother, weak son-in-law
- The semantics of love and sexuality
- They spoke too much, or too little
- Selective use of language, key-wording, and language games
- That immoral thing
- When the Law enjoys itself

#### **Chapter 6. The problem of reciprocity in honor killings**

- From "murder" to "honorable killing"
- My husband and my mother were not lovers
- Rethinking reciprocity in honor killings
- Negotiating sexual freedom
- Struggling with motive
- Swingers: unconventional hedonistic lives, and the exchange of sexual partners
- The price of sexual freedom
- Oedipus unbound
- Documenting the indescribable
- Triple rapes
- Denying the facts, finding the truth

#### **Chapter 7. When punishment is left to the judiciary: Kin wars between shared meanings and law**

- How did you do such a thing ?
- Are you kin affiliated ?
- Potential victims
- The crime of writing Parsing the narrative threads
- Relatives are always a surprise
- Murder and the dynamics of kinship
- Witnessing the everydayness of kin, violence, and sexuality
- Wouldn't it have been simpler ?
- The kin who surprise us

#### **Chapter 8. A danger to society: they must therefore all disappear**

- Arson and matricide: the daughter rehabilitates the law
- The violence of the mute woman and the power of speech
- The emergence of the criminal spectator
- I tempted him with some money
- I saw my divorcée lying down with her new fiancé
- Shameful sex in the vicinity of the husband's corpse
- Tales of sexual jouissance

#### **Chapter 9. The place of third parties in land crimes**

- Honor, kin, land, and modernity
- The landed aristocracy
- Anatomy of a murder scene
- The return of the repressed
- The mantle of the father
- Right-of-passage
- Typology of a police report regarding the relatedness of the assailants: how local relations of power are interpreted and processed
- Keying into the kinship database
- Mitigated (cross-)examinations
- The political economy of land and crime
- They had abused of their relationship to society
- Murder always implies a third party

#### **Chapter 10. Photoshopping the president: Men at work in the age of socialism**

- A crook should know how and when to quit
- A crook who went too far
- Accounts, reflexivity, and indexical expressions
- Why is such a metamorphosis important ?
- Petty thefts and pernicious crack habits
- How dangerous were they ? 518

#### **Chapter 11. Le moment de conclure**

#### **Relevant penal code articles**

#### **Glossary**

#### **Bibliography**

#### **Index**