

Metapoetry in Modern Arabic Poetry

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The present paper introduces a conscious reading of the concept of poetry by the Arabic language poets. It is assumed that these poets introduce concepts related to Nature or Man or both, or the ambiguity of the concept of poetry and the difficulty of establishing a given definition of it remains to dominate the views of some of them. It verifies the hypothesis and deals with the aim of poetry creativity, whether it is for life's sake or art's sake alone. It finds out that the poets adopt the two views. It also investigates the issue of poetic creativity and its sources. It finds out that modern poets often follow the views of old poets, which indicates an awareness of the poetic process and an intention in taking the path of metapoetry. The paper assumes that it is a poetic purpose like elegy and praise, etc. and that poets deal with it in the way assumed and verified by this paper.

Keywords: *Metapoetry, function, creativity, poetry, inspiration*

Introduction

The study of concepts, terminology and meanings dominates a vast area of Arabic and non-Arabic criticism. Each group is interested in presenting its intricate tapestries on a given signified of a signifier which they believe it requires clarification and explanation. The most complex, differing and controversial concepts are those which are known by everybody but which they differ about, including the concept of poetry whose definitions are over four hundred, most of which conclude that poetry is poetry.

Since this topic has been dealt with extensively, it has become futile to study it alone unless it is linked to a given and well-known art or purpose such as lyrical poetry, epic poetry, dramatic poetry.

As long as the translation of the term "*metapoetry*" does not come up with a real semantic equivalent for this term, this paper prefers its Western term. This paper was preceded by four previous studies which indicated this topic and dealt with a certain aspect of it. They are divided

according to significance into the ten-page study by Dr Huda Fakhruddin, entitled “Metapoetry: Arab Modernity Projects” (Huda Fakhruddin, 2020), which deals with six short texts by modern Arab poets and six corresponding texts by old Arab poets such as Labeed, Abu Tammam and Ibn al-Rumi. She focused her attention on the relationship between these poets and heritage, and the problem caused to some of them, and their stand towards it in terms of bypassing it or being creative from and in heritage.

This attempt is followed by a four-page study by Dr Nahidha Sattar, entitled “The Metapoetry Dominant in the Poetry of the Iraqi Contemporary Poet Hussein Al-Qasid” (Nahidha, 2014). She cites five sections from his poetry from different collections of poems. Al-Mutanabbi (2019) presents two papers dealing with short texts by Lamia Abbas Amara, Nizar Qabbani, Mahmoud Darweesh, Adonis, Ali Jaafar al-Allaq and a line by Abu al-Tayyib al-Mutanabbi, preceded by an introduction and informed comments.

The attempt of Basilios Hanna Bawardi, which is more modest than its predecessors, dealing with “The Latest Collection of Poems by Farhat Farhat *Between the Individual and Society* in half a page dedicated to metapoetry, cites five sections from the two poems “Kayfa Sa’abda Ughniyati” (How Shall I Start My Song) and “Al-Wilada” (Birth) only.

Old poets have the advantage of being aware of an important and sensitive topic frequently disregarded by research despite its utmost importance, i.e. the creativity of every poet stems from his understanding and recognition of the concept of poetry and the function of poetry in life. In fact, each school of poetry is distinguished from the others in employing a given concept or function.

This paper is divided into an introduction, a theoretical background clarifying the concept of metapoetry, and three parts. Part one deals with the concept of poetry by modern age poets. Part Two deals with the function of poetry in their view. Part Three is reserved for the issue of poetry creativity and the visions presented to explain its mechanism. Finally, the paper ends with a conclusion involving the most important points arrived at, and a list of endnotes and references.

Theoretical Background

The word “*meta*” has a Latin origin indicating words difficult to translate into Arabic because it means “*para*”, “*beyond*” or “*extra*”. It is an expression of a great awareness by the poet in which the poem is the topic of the poem, or the poem is in or on the poem, or poetry on poetry.

The prefix “*meta*” is not restricted to poetry as it precedes many fields of knowledge. Critics find that Gerard Genette’s use of the term “*metafiction*” is unpalatable because they believe it

means “under” more than “beyond” or “extra. Researchers have extensively clarified it concerning the other arts and sciences (Farhat, 2020).

Muhammed Abdullah Al-Qawasma prefers the term “*bawh*” (disclosure) instead of the Western term as the poet discloses his poetic secrets. This stand is inaccurate, at least in the researcher’s viewpoint, as it links the definition to a function. A chair is not defined as something to sit on because this is its function, not its definition. A poet, in any poetic purpose or art, particularly in lyrical poetry, discloses himself towards any issue or stand, and disclosure is not restricted to his viewpoint of poetry in terms of its concept, function and inspiration.

The process remains interrelated and complex because when the poet writes, he leaves his consciousness and lives creativity moments. But in metapoetry he is awakened to access the hidden essences and concepts of poetry, the role of the poet in his poetry, his status among poets, his viewpoint on the creative process and interpreting what it is, and his stand towards his predecessors due to the great poetry heritage reaching him, which the modernist poet needs, in the stage of his maturity and uniqueness of his experience, to bypass, rebuild in a new vision or demolish, to build his own poetry world.

In metapoetry, the poet plays the role of the analyst critic in poetry, pondering over another role played by another creator who is the critic, and looks through the mirror of his poetry which tells him that he has to understand: What is poetry? How to reach it? What is his stand towards language? What is his status in his heritage? What is the aim of suffering in writing a poem?

Further, the poet in his metapoetry ponders over or take sides with one of the theories of creativity which stands among suggestive metaphysical worlds such as devils to Arabs. Gods and poetry muse to the Greek, and among creativity depending on the honed aptitude and talent which he has when his soul harmonises and he becomes in the heart of the creative process.

Part One: The Concept of Poetry

The modern Arab poetry contains a large area for the poet’s consciousness of his work, his attempt to present his concept or concepts of what poetry is, and what meaning or meanings it represents to him, which differ, and some conform, from one poet to another. Certainly, they are not specialised critical concepts but fall within poetry itself. i.e., it is poetry on poetry. A possible hypothesis that can be set is that poets poetically deal with their poetry as they deal with any topic. Otherwise, it would not be poetry and would become educational writing. This is not found in modern poetry in the studied example texts.



The inductive reading of metapoetry shows an irregular disparity in the availability of poets dealing with metapoetry in their poetry. For example, a given poet tackles and considers it extensively, whereas others do not. The third class of poets specifies a little area for the topic, and this is not a disadvantage against a given poet because in a single art or poetic purpose many poets are creative, others deal with it casually, whereas another group disregards it. However, dealing with metapoetry remains an indicator of consciousness in varying degrees.

If talent is associated with culture and knowledge and produces a fruitful genius, this requires great poets who adopt big issues to take a stand towards their poetry. Such a stand may be embodied in the poetry, recorded in their introductions or, at least, in the theories of their schools and its views which they adopt.

This part deals with the poetry of the poets who take a stand or stands towards their poetry, introducing concepts and meanings of what they assume or believe to be the real concept of poetry or their own concept which gives them a certain label. However, the researcher's hypothesis remains valid on the basis that they present a subjective poetic vision which has its own specificity and which is distinguished from the visions of other poets to find out to what extent this hypothesis is verified with or without intent.

Since talent is by nature, individual and experiences are private to each person/poet even if cultures are shared. Still, their reception, interpretation and understanding differ with the difference of its readers. Consequently, the expectation that visions are identical or considerably convergent is a goal difficult to reach. Therefore, the possibility that the researcher's hypothesis will be verified is greatly expected. The many definitions of poetry explore what their poetry is encouraged taking sides with the hypothesis of the predominance of difference and differentiation among poets who are creative in their work and base their creative process on different visions, ideas and ideologies.

If the researcher sets another hypothesis of the domain within which the concept of poetry according to modern poets will revolve, that a poet lives in an environment and atmosphere and if he wants to depict something, he has to derive his images and visions from his atmosphere, poets are expected to see their poetry inside their poetry similar to the elements of nature and Man's existence. Namely, he revolves around three realms: Nature, Man, a realm mixing both, and a fourth realm which is the ambiguity of understanding and capturing poetry as many critics did who concluded that poetry is poetry and everything else falls within the part on creativity, as will be dealt with in this paper. Therefore, the researcher prefers to consider the studied example texts through these fields.

The Realm of Life

This covers all things that the poet regards as representative of his poetry in terms of the concept by linking poetry and nature, and depicting the first as a thing or things dedicated from the latter. The domain of correlation of things has to be from a determined environment in which the poet takes sides. Adonis, for example, believes that the poem and its invention represent an expansion in the narrow scale of Earth which he regards as expanding directly proportionally to the depth and genuineness of poetry invention as if the only outlet out of the narrow life is the creation of life inside it through the poem which expands Earth:

[Live a grandeur and create a poem and go / Increase the expansion of Earth] (Katie Wales, 2014).

The poet bears a meaning that is loftier and wider than every limited perception. For him, writing is an invention because it is a new discovery on an example which may be unprecedented. Mahmoud Darweesh depicts his blood which writes poetry as a squeezing night:

[He is the one who is writing this poem now/ letter by letter, and bleeding by bleeding/ with a black-colored blood, it is neither the crow's ink / nor the crows voice / it is the Night being fully squeezed] (Andre Lalande, 2015).

He depicts the letters of his poetry as the dark night, which supports him with poetic writing, linking the colour of black ink, the colour of the crow and the colour of the night. His blood is a squeezed night, bleeding poetry. He employs colour in presenting his concept and views the poem as an inanimate thing from the nature that moves by the hand of its player. It is the dice throw which turns over unknown possibilities including winning, losing, and drawing and losing because the dice is often cube-shaped contains numbers ranging from one to six and turns over randomly. The poem does the same in Darweesh's concept:

[The poem is a throw of dice]

The poem is a rare gesture and a specific, unprecedented depiction by the poet involving many readings, such as a stroke of luck, a toy which turns over to bring good or bad and its inventor loses. Perhaps this is what he means, as evidenced by his blood which bleeds letter by letter and the suffering he undergoes in writing with his blood. Mahmood Muflih's poem "Qaseedatun An al-Shi'r" [A Poem on Poetry], indicates its content from its titling, believes that poetry is Arabian jasmine, the light of eyes, ember of creativity and a water jug for thirsty people:

[I planted a jasmine tree in her braids, but my people pay no heed to flowers
Poetry is eye-light I used to pour on the lines, and the paper was inflamed
Poetry is an ember of creativity that tortures me, fueled by thoughts, addiction and nerves / . . .
. / Poetry is a jug of water I used to carry, to thirsty people while sun heat was growing]

His concepts of poetry revolve around subjective suffering which he casts in words from the realm of Nature to express an aesthetic feature mixed with pain and agony for his people's disinterest even in flowers which the other words of nature provide with other concepts of poetry: the light of eyes, ember of creativity, and a water jug. Therefore, concepts are numerous for him. Husam Ahmed al-Muqdad in his poem "al-Shi'r" (Poetry) holds the view that poetry is little rain, the wind of passion and a morning sun that starts with a useful burn. The concepts of poetry revolve around the domain of water falling on flowers, the domain of the wind blowing in the lofty tree and the discontinuity and long-distance of the sun which gives warmth and beauty, and poetry which waters the soul like the rain does to the flowers of the cheeks:

[The rain has fallen on the cheeks of our roses, the fresh breezes in the shady garden/ Like the sun or morn whose beams are of benefit, O for its magic, what a limitless status]

His approach is similar to his predecessor in the multiplicity and dissipation of his vision even if it revolves around one field.

The Realm of Man

The concept of poetry in this field is characterised by being linked to everything that would bring closer the poet's vision and perception of poetry in relation to Man. Thus it moves from the abstract to the concrete, or what falls within its domain which becomes with its surroundings a means of expression of meaning which the poet sees his poetry as equal or similar to. Some modern poets tend to see poetry as an image of Man but with special details. Adurahman Shukri believes that it is emotion.

[O Bird of Paradise, poetry is emotion]

And that it bears various meanings associated with Man, such as a beauty's mirror, depiction, remembrance, pleasure and feeling:

[Poetry is indeed a mirror for a beautiful lass, she is Life, with its pros and cons / Poetry is indeed portrayal and reminder, and joy and faithful imagination/ Poetry is indeed feeling of whatever a jinni has said or a jinni has meant]

He introduces many concepts from him and from others, all of which preceded by the restrictive particle "إنما" (indeed). The depiction is an opinion adopted by al-Jahidh in his words "Poetry is indeed craftsmanship, a sort of weaving and a type of depiction. He also believes that:

[Poetry is indeed is the heart whose palpitation is stirred, and poetry is indeed to motivate a motive]

This results in a set of concepts, which the poet sees as equal to poetry in his view, and all of which revolve around Man, his various acts and his surroundings. That start from the beauty's mirror, which is a life that brings good and both, depiction, pleasure, imagination and feeling, all of which are restricted to the domain of Man. Akl Al-Jar believes that poetry is a companion and that it is the companion in the wine drinking gathering in his poem "Ya Shi'ru Dunaka" (O Poetry, Take):

[O Poetry, Take this festival, after that of Ukaz / Leave 'Hassaan' and 'Tarafa' away, all of us are sons of the Time/ You are the Companion and all magic and grandeur]

He develops an equation that abolishes the limits of time by replacing Ukaz Market of poetry with a festival he is attending, and Hassaan bin Thabit and Tarafa bin Al-Abd with himself and his companion which is his poetry which he sees as the controller of every charm and fascination. Thus, poetry becomes an amuser, a companion and an entertainer. Furthermore, Nizar Qabbani sees poetry as a king to his palace; not every person is allowed to enter because he is in a position of criticising the ambiguity of some who claim to be poets:

[Despite their whips and jails, poetry is a king and they are only gatekeepers at his gate / How shall I enter in the poem while the gardens of beautiful poetry are all damaged! / .../ A poem is not what write with my hands, it is what eye-lashes write] (Ali Mawla, 2000).

He introduces two concepts of poetry. The first is that poetry is unattainable and inaccessible such that its domain is not accessible by any person who alleges to be a poet. The second is that he does not write with fingertips but with suffering, bitterness and crying. He introduces the two concepts because he is in a position that requires that, and both (the king and eyelashes) are from the realm of Man.

Ibrahim Tayyar in his poem "Kama Shi'ta Ya Shi'r" (O Poetry, As You Like) introduces the concepts of his poetry by assigning it the status of the judge, reigning, abandonment and obstinacy, and describing it as a baby that has not been weaned yet, and as the soul:

[As you wish, O poetry! You are the judge, you owned my hand, you owned the pen / . . . / Shall I satisfy you, Poetry? Fie! Who are you but an infant who is not yet weaned / . . . / I took you out of my body like the soul, and I revived it from the bottom of nothingness]

But his concept grows more when he concludes his poem with his last concept:
[Leave me fighting alone, because I am poetry organised in body]

Thus, he narrows down all his above-mentioned concepts by saying that the human / the poet is poetry itself, not separate from it. Thus, meanings revolve around the human/poet who defiles silence and stirs the fire of passion, resulting in humanisation traits lent to poetry. Mahbuba Haroon sees it as her wish, companion and the one entrusted with her heart in her poem “Ys Shi’ru Mahlan” (O Poetry, Wait) whose title shows what it means, in her words:

[O Poetry! Wait, you are all dreams for me, you are the buddy, do you want to punish me? / You are the keeper of the heart and all its contents, and I sought in you answers to all my questions].

Shawki Bazee in “Ila Aina Ta’khuthuni Ayuhal Shi’r” (O Poetry, Where Are Taking Me)⁽¹⁹⁾ believes that writing poetry is a woman who wants the death of the poet as her dowry. The same happens with writing poetry, where the poet outlines all the suffering of its writer. He ends up by saying that his age is an endowment for (writing/the woman):

[Writing is nothing but a woman / who does not want less than death / as dowry for her / So lose living to win words]

The Realm of Nature and Man

Some poets, in their concepts and visions of poetry, combine the fields of nature and Man. They see poetry as things relating to nature, as mentioned above in the realm of Nature, and things relating to Man, as mentioned above in the realm of Man, in the single poem. Their texts do exclusively have a special vision from a single field or domain, as in the two views of Ali Mahmood Taha al-Muhandis, in two places. The first is (Mahmood Muflih, 2005):

[Poetry is the rhythm of life and its chanting, and the dream of its youth in early spring / A voice that articulates the secrets of life, but it is a spirit and a creative thought / a mind’s leap which hunts the flash of lightening, invading the stars carelessly]

And the second is:

[O People! Poetry is spirituality, and brightness of a heart in an ignited thought / . . . / Poetry is the music of life, spontaneously flowing from every boiling vein]

A combination of the items of life and Man occurs in “rhythm, chanting, dream, sound, word, soul, creativity, leap, spirituality, brightness, music.” In “Hayatuka Ya Shi’r Ma Baynana” (O Poetry, Your Life Is Among Us) by Mahmoud al-Shathali Khaznadar, poetry has esteem, and he sees it as miraculous and has a sign:

[Your life, O Poetry, is between us, I swear with the Psalms, are of esteem / In every age, it has a sign, and in everything, the orbits revolve around it]

Then he borrows from the phrase “In some eloquent speech there is magic.” and lends it with the point that poetry is a cup of wine and that it is Canopus which is the high star, indicating the fame it grants:

[You are in every language, magic of eloquence and cup of wine / You are in every nation, the Canopus of progress and fame]

Then he returns to nature to borrow from it the phrase “the sea swimmer”:

[Poetry is to translate from you, O sea-swimmer]

Nature and Man are present in his vision which he starts from these two fields which dominate the visions and perception of Abulqasim Al-Shabi in his poem “Ya Shi’r” (O Poetry). In both poems, Man is “the mouth of feeling, scream of the soul, the echo of the heart’s crying, tears, exploding blood, the companion of my youth, craving’ and nature is ‘the chant of these birds, the beauty of sunset lights, the whisper of evening waves, my bird):

[Poetry! You are the mouth of feeling, and the scream of the melancholic soul / You are the echo of the crying of the heart and of the stranger in love / O Poetry, you are tears hanged on the eyelashes of life / O Poetry, you are blood that explodes from the wounds of creatures / O Poetry, you revelation of the living existence, the language of angels / O Poetry you are the chanting of those smiling roses / O Poetry, you are beauty of the charming sunsets / Whispers of evening smiling bewildered waves / O flute of my loved dreams, companion of my youth]

He does the same in another poem by combining his vision of the concept from the two fields of nature and Man because they stem from one poet who has the same vision repeated in his poetry. He sees it as being from the realm of Man: a splinter of his heart, a piece of his existence, and a story about his life, and from the realm of Nature: an image from his existence, chants and lute, and the wonderful glass of wine.

Muhammed Sultan al-Yousifi combines the two fields in his perception of his poetry, which he expresses through a part of it which is the letter. He sees it as a pulse of the letter remaining in the blood, he sees it wounded, he sees it a teardrop and a flame and sees writing as a sea with

a rower, a mountain which he cannot get enough of, as the flame, sea and fountain are from the realm of Nature. Everything else is from the realm of Man:

[But the pulse of letters remain in my blood, and if I abandon the letter, I shall regret it for long / O Poetry, O my wounded letter, here am I, nothing but you deserves my longing / The best of writing is that what is written in wisdom, and the most sacred is what comes without artificiality / Poetry is but a tear, clear and rolling down without stop / Poetry is but a flaming torch, which can never be quenched]

Sumaya Adil alludes to these two fields when she introduces her own term of poetry, in her words:

[It is climax of feelings that chanted in me, so I joyfully opened my cages to it / A bayt which is proudly standing on the islands of eloquence, floating upon a bayt of sincerity] (Husam Ahmed al-Muqdad, 2019).

The peak of her warbling feeling and the lofty house on the islands of eloquence present a human nature for poetry and its concept to the poetess who combines the two fields as Jamal Mursi does in his poem “Matha Takool Al-Qasa’id” (What Do Poems Say) which weaves a great overlap and an entanglement between nature and Man, and what this textural overlap between them constitute as if there is an immature mask which the poet puts through his poems such the that the two sounds combine but after he paves the way for this mask:

[What do the poems say? / The poems say / Sometimes it is true, and sometimes we tell lies/
He sees it a sun / and like the sun, obliterated from my space / by clouds that come]

He combines Man and nature:

[In my body, the coldness of feelings live / if you were mad on me / and am filled with warmth when you just appear]

Then he kneads it with nature:

[Some of them are like the mirage for which we walk / when thirsty / thinking it a flowing water / just to come back, after much toil, / empty-handed to the orchard of our dreams]

Then the poems explicitly mention through the words of their poet that they are this combination between nature and Man:

[The legend of combining the high morning and the feelings]

The Field of Ambiguity of Poetry

It is not uncommon that some poets take a stand different from the others and cannot or prefer not to introduce a given concept of poetry in their poetry. Some critics, after reviewing a large number of his definitions, end up defining poetry as poetry because poets believe that poetry is a message and should not be an aim to achieve any ideology whatever its type is. Poetry is not a weapon in a battle, whether it is fought legally or not. Poetry is poetry because it represents in itself an entity and an existence which do not fall within strict concepts that employ it in favour of a party, a group or a religion. Therefore, some are puzzled in its definition, and a blur overwhelms the poet's vision, and thus he presents it in the way he feels or wants it. Hisham Basha says:

[O Poetry! What is wrong? Why you do not show up no matter how much I try to paint you? / And if I see you existing by me, I see that you never exist / If I smell you in me I feel you or silence is mentioned / I realise that I neither smelt, nor felt nor realised]

He does not depict, state, or express a feeling or a certainty for his poetry which remains hard to understand and realise. Nada Nasr in her poem "Nida Sha'ira" (The Call of A Poetess):

[O poetry, unveil yourself, I see you hiding today, my ink dried out, and I do not know why / You were waiting for my caravan to come so that you run as a blowing wind in its footsteps]

Poetry is something mysterious, inaccessible, and its essence dominating it cannot be understood. Therefore, she breathes poetry, feels it and feels puzzled. Jameel Dari, in his poem "Ya Shi'r" (O Poetry), while he has a sad heart in his well-protected fortress, says:

[O Poetry / Why do not you sick / As the pigeons did? / How to reach you / you are father than the shadows of Time / Farther than the clouds? / ... / You are the beginning and the end / ... / How to get at you / And you are in a highly protected tower? / ... / How to? / And there is no way towards the impossible / but madness]

Ali Jaafar al-Allaq, in his poem "Bakiyyat Al-Saqf" (The Reminder of the Ceiling), sees poetry as bitter, causing misery, and generating conflict between the dream and memory. However, he does not dare to present his understanding or thinks it is hard to understand or inexplicable:

[What a bitter poem are you / In which both predators are tortured: / Dream / and Memory]

Muhammed Madhi al-Jawahiri, in his poem "Ajib Aiyahal Shi'r" (O Poetry, Reply), argues against understanding poetry by others, in his words:

[They think poetry is an ember for the seekers, whenever they may want, or a commodity for sale]

Part Two: The Function of Poetry

Poets vary in their vision on poetry as they do in its concept. Each poet has his own vision through which he can determine the aim and function of his poetry. Poetry, naturally, is an art. The function of poetry is divided into two schools. The first believes that art is for art's sake and has no given commitment towards anything. The second believes that art is for life's sake and should serve certain messages by communicating them in artistic ways. Is it normal that poets take one of the two aims as a means to the aim of writing poetry.

Maroof Abdulghani Al-Rusafi is one of the poets who believe that poetry is a means in life that the poet has to perform as stands require. He wants to thank the Lebanese in his words:

[Lend me a tongue, O poetry, just to thank, and if you do not thank, you are not poetry / . . . / for Beirut has sacred rights on me, so thank her on behalf of me]

His poetry is a means to an end that he wants to reach. If it not reached, such poetry is not poetry in his opinion. This trend is a continuation of a long history of using poetry for praise and earning money or depending on it as a means of compliments and personal and official communications which despise poetry by employing it to perform a function that undermines its status. Mahmood Muflih believes that poetry is not a field for earning money and compliments:

[You are a [paid] Bard? This is nonsense! What a shame for those who danced and sang pf poetry / . . . / the time when our poems used to visits Places that have gold is gone forever]

Thus the function of poetry has been detracted throughout a long history in which poets adopted this aim which became a famous poetic purpose, i.e. praise for the purpose of earning money. He declares the end of that time expressing a vision rather than a conformation because using poetry for earning money will continue, even if it decreases but it does not end. Husam Ahmed al-Muqdad reiterates this sense, indicating that poetry is an aesthetic message that elevates its poet to the Orion. Therefore, its poet transcends requesting a reward:

[I never care for a title, I never seek to get a bounty from committees of literary men / The poem is part of me, and classical verse is my companion, in summer, autumn, spring and winter / I give my poems to the public, as I make them with tears, pain and suffering / I ride them towards beauty and transcend with them even Gemini] (Abdulsalam Muhammed, 1996).

His aim remains requesting beauty and elevating towards it. Some poets believe that poetry has specific functions depending on the nature of the relationship between the poet and poetry. Still, it remains sublime, elevating the poet to clouds as Nada Nasr says:

[We were two lovers, with no pretext to divide us, and art is taking us up to reach the clouds]

Nizar Qabbani believes that writing in this age requires a victim who is its writer who exterminates his soul and dedicates his heart as a price of writing which is his message in life. His capital is the words that he uses creatively, and it is only he who can combine them in a creative way that makes him a unique poet who knows the function and aim of his poetry:

[What is poetry? What is the pain of writing? What are the vision? The first victims do we have are the writers] (Bawabat al-Shuaraa, 1990).

Jameel Dari believes that, according to some of them, it is an image of the concept of poetry when he states that he draws in words, but he believes that he draws by his poetry to restore the freshness of the vision. Poetry is a clarification of the things whose essence is lost and their unattractive and pale appearance remains, and the poet restores it through his vision by drawing things, bringing back their brightness:

[I will keep drawing the picture of things / In your eyes / Till I restore the freshness of vision / and sip your wine-like cheek / in this darkness]⁽³⁶⁾

Thus, poetry becomes a source for restoring the vision or a dew like a song which interprets the flower weakened by thirst and wants to quench, in the words of Ibrahim Shakarna:

[O poetry! Your dew is like a song which go to the flowers to drink]

Sumaya Adil believes that poetry is neither occupation nor a threatening sword. She takes it outside the domain of money earning and living through the price of words into elevation through a message and advancement of its function:

[Poetry has never been a profession, nor a sword to threaten people with]

Muhammed Mahdi al-Jawahiri believes that the message of poetry is remedying pains and exploding sores and that it is immortality as it is one of the most powerful drugs which are a medication rather than just a cure:

[With what nourished the mind of you, you relieved stress, and remedied pains with those masterpieces / . . . / It exploded some sores that are unbearable, and such sores cannot be excised by a bistoury]

Part Three: Creation of Poetry

The process of poetry creation has remained hard to understand for a long time due to the difficulty in realising and understanding the mechanism in which this thing, which is beyond sensory perception, is realised. What is curious is the poet's capability to create what others cannot in the process of generating incomparable meanings.

Predecessors adopt some metaphysical interpretations for poetry creation made by the Greeks, being a source of inspiration from the gods or muses of poetry. On the other hand, the old Arabs maintained that its origin is genies and devils, which send it from Abqar Valley, which is its homeland. Every poet had a certain devil which he gives a certain name such as al-Hawjal, al-Hawqal, etc. Some maintain that it is a heavenly flash thrown in an unknown way into the heart of the poet who is haunted by heavenly ideas.

The poets' puzzlement and astonishment over this process is not a child of this modern age. It is also not restricted to a given nation because creativity is a common humanitarian feature not limited to certain people. Still, it is individual in all the nations and human races.

The puzzlement of poets in the modern age over their curiosity and interest in interpreting this complex process, which arouses the curiosity of all people, continued. For example, Mahmood Darweesh adopts the view of old Arabs who ascribe it to genies or the Greeks who ascribe it to gods. He leaps to reduce the distance between a poet and a prophet by stating that it is an inspiration:

[I could have been not inflicted / with the genie of the pre-Islamic Mu'alaka poem / Or it is it is a matter of revelation, and not a genie, or a mythical god: / I could have been not lucky / and revelation is the lot of the lonely ones / . . . / I have no role in the poem / Unless the revelation is interrupted / The revelation is the lot of the skill if you are diligent/ . . . / we called him the servant of the gods in myths / we who wrote the texts for them / and hid beyond the Olympus/]

He distinguishes between luck and the poem, viewing the former as:

[It is luck and luck has no name / We may call it mourning our fate / or call it the mailman of the sky]



He combines everything that would be a source of poetry without missing the skill, which is a cornerstone in the creative process. Elaborating on the glorious poet, Aql Al-Jar outlines his vision:

[You could imagine that his quill is made of the reed of heavens!]

He states that it is the result of a metaphysical power of which he does not present any specific mechanism, as if the pen which writes is the leader of the process because its origin is not from the worldly reed but the reeds of paradise in the other world. Husam Ahmed al-Muqdad believes that poetry is craziness, genies playing music or magic:

[Poetry is said to be lunacy among poets, or genie's music, a tree's bing / Clouds the sky sends in succession, to pour mercy on green meadows / .../ Given to you by an artist, rather a magician who is unique in tidings and opinions] (Dal Al-Awda, 2004).

It, therefore, treads the common area between the prophet, magician and poet, all of the whim, in his opinion, receive news from the sky, combining art with magic. Mahmood Muflih adopts the holy aspect of the vision and reverses the view of ascribing poetry to the devil by ascribing it to al-Rahman (Allah):

[If your poetry is ascribed to the devil, my own is ascribed to al-Rahman (Allah)] (Bawabat al-Shuaraa, 1990).

This is not depending on a source rather than another, but it is an adverse response to the view of the devilish source of inspiration. It does not express a mature vision because al-Rahman (Allah) does not give poetry to poets in revelation; rather al-Rahman's source is restricted to inspiration. Muhammed Mahdi al-Jawahiri alludes to the origin of poetry inspiration in his words:

[Did you abandon poetry without any try, or poetry which you tried is not amiable / In fact when poetry needs a tributary, phantoms shall appear to you in the forefront (Dal Al-Awda, 2004).

He presumes the existence of phantoms of poetry as if it is related to prescience and cannot be explained by the talent associated with culture and the ability and desire in creativity.



Conclusion

The creativity of metapoetry is not restricted to a given age or a given poet. It occupies a vast area in modern Arab poetry. As if there is a mirror in front of which the poet stands to express his poetry, function and creativity through his poetry, thus he gets out of the creative subconsciousness into consciousness through his work and takes the role of the critic. Apparently, poets introduced many concepts of poetry, all of which are related to four fields hypothesised in the paper: nature, Man, combining nature with Man or with the strangeness of the concept, which poets adopt for their poetry, as being ambiguous. This hypothesis has been verified.

Poets look into the function of their poetry. Some of them see it as a means of thanking; others see that it is something else, that its aim is purely aesthetic, that it restores the attractive appearance of things, and that it is immortality and remedying pains.

Moreover, it turned out that they dealt with the poetic creativity issue to search for its mechanisms and reasons, and they found out nothing different from what the others dealt with, as being from an origin beyond reality such as gods, genies, devils, as well as luck, magic, etc. It also turned out that the other hypothesis of the paper is verified, i.e. that modern poets view poetry as any other poetic purpose. They also get influenced by their atmosphere to express it. Therefore, their images are not apart from their reality and atmosphere in which they live.



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