

BASRAH HERITAGE

A Quarterly Refereed Journal Specialized in Basrah Heritage

Issued by

Al-Abbas Holy Shrine Department of Islamic Knowledge and Humanitarian Affairs Basrah Heritage Center Third Year - Volume No.3 - Issue No.8 Shawwal 1440 A.H / June 2019 A.D



Secretariat General of

Al- 'Abbas Holy Shrine



Basrah Heritage Center

Print ISSN: 2518 - 511X Online ISSN: 2617-6734 Mobile: 07800816579 - 07722137733 Email: basrah@alkafeel.net Consignment Number in the Housebook and Documents in Baghdad: 2254, 2017.

Iraq - Basrah

Al-Abbas Holy Shrine. Department of Islamic Knowledge and Humanitarian Affairs. Basrah Heritage Center.

Basrah Heritage : A Quarterly Refereed Journal Specialized in Basrah Heritage \ Issued by Al-Abbas Holy Shrine Department of Islamic Knowledge and Humanitarian Affairs Basrah Heritage Center.- Basrah, Iraq : Al-Abbas Holy Shrine, Department of Islamic Knowledge and Humanitarian Affairs, Basrah Heritage Center, 1438 hijri = 2017-

Volume : illustrations ; 24 cm

Quarterly.-Third Year, Volume 3, Issue 8 (June 2019)-

ISSN : 2518-511X

Includes bibliographical references.

Text in English ; summaries in English and Arabic.

1. Basrah (Iraq)--History--periodicals. 2. Arabic Language--periodicals. 3. Arabic literature--periodicals. 3. Muslim scholars (Shiites) 4. Husayn ibn 'Alī, d. 680 A.Title.

LCC : DS79.9.B3 A8373 2019 VOL. 3 NO. 8

DDC : 910.45

Cataloging Center and Information Systems - Library and House of Manuscripts of Al-Abbas Holy Shrine In the Name of Allah Most Gracious Most Merciful

This day I have perfected your religion for you and completed my favor to you. I have approved Islam to be your religion

(From Surat Al-Maida - verse (3))

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4- An abstract in Arabic or English, not exceeding one page,150 words, with the research title, should be delivered with the paper.

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6- All sources used in the research paper should be fully

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11- The ideas contained in the research paper manifest the viewpoints of the researchers themselves; it is not necessary that they come in line with the general policy of the Journal. The research papers arrangement is subject to technical priorities.

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Opening Address

In the Name of God, Most Merciful, Most Compassionate There is no doubt that the heritage of Basra is both extensive and comprehensive. It is also open for new critical perspectives with the aim of examining and exploring this rich heritage in line with recent intellectual requirements. On our part, as broad-minded editorial board, we are keen to have the contributions of rigorous research work that seek to shun the stereotyped portrait of Basra heritage. Yet, the Basra cultural memory has retained intellectual contributions and literary masterpieces that have been transferred from one generation to another.

The research papers of this issue endeavor to produce divergent approaches to Basra heritage. One attempt prompts the importance of investigating Basra heritage as exemplified in studying and highlighting a succinct manuscript about the biography of Sayyed Abdulla Al-Jaza'ery. Another paper tackles the biography of Abu Yahya Al-Saji Al-Basri (died in 307 of Hijra) showing his scientific contributions in Qur'anic studies and noble traditions (Hadith). The third paper is about the revolution of Imam Hussain as cited in Basra sources. the fourth paper inquires about Basra scholars' efforts through Ibn Aqeel Explication. The fifth paper is about the contributions of Basra scholars in the field of religious studies in Andalusia as reflected in the indexing if Ibn Khair Al-Ashbeely. Also, there is a paper on the British control of Basra (1914-1915) and finally the research paper entitled "Poetic Space in the Prose Poem: A Critical Reading of Kareem Hameed's Poems (in English). Hopefully, this issue will be enjoying and useful.

Editorial Board

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A Critical Reading of Kareem Hameed's Poems

الفضاءُ الشِّعريُّ في قصيدةِ النَّثر قراءةٌ في نصوصِ (كريم حميد) الشِّعريّة

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ABSTRACT

Kareem Hameed's poems can be looked upon as prosaic texts. In his poems, Hameed tends to mix his concerns with his Homeland. The poem, thus, turns to be a miniatured homeland. The poet employs his text thresholds to crystallize his meanings.

The poem's architecture is based on repeated structures. The poet also presents a holistic and inconceivable image that cannot be recognized perceptibly. Instead, recipients would recognize the images as sensations emptied of time. Kareem's poems are linked to some previous poems through certain 'dialogues' to be reproduced as contemporary texts.

ملخّص البحث

يمكن أنْ تُوصف نصوص (كريم حميد) الشِّعريَّة بأنَّها قصائد نثر، هذا من جانب. أمّا من جانب آخر، فقدْ مزج الشّاعر همومَه بالوطن، فأصبحت القصيدة عنده وطناً مصغَّراً، أمّا من ناحية الدلالات، فقد وظَّف العتبات النصِّيَّة من أجل إنتاج دلالاته، والقصيدة عنده من ناحية البناء ينهض معهارها على بنية تكراريّة، كذلك نجده يقدِّم صورة كلِّيَّة لا تُدرك حسِّيَّا، بل يستشعرها المتلقِّي على شكل أحاسيس مفرغة من الزمن. ويعتمدُ الشَّاعر على مرجعيّات معيَّنة تتمثّل في نصوصٍ سابقةٍ تتحاورُ معها قصائده، ليُعاد إنتاجها بوصفها نصوصاً معاصرةً.



1. Introduction

Language plays a vital role in producing political discourse as poetry represents "a consciously aesthetic organization of language." ⁽¹⁾ Thus, "poetic discourse is a distinguished verbal type." ⁽²⁾ Due to its suggestive potential, poetry can transform the denotative meaning of a word into another one since poetic experience is but a linguistic experience charged with kindled emotions and passions that the poet could subject into his purposes in accordance with his visions and capacities." ⁽³⁾

As the poet uses language in a different way from others, "being inspirational,"⁽⁴⁾ the poetic discourse handles language "as a changeable phosphorous material, and therefore it is considered to be a linguistic revolution ····."⁽⁵⁾ In poetry, poetic words and terms contribute to the formation of poetic world more than any other medium. This is due to the fact that the imperfection of the literary work is not the result of unsuitable ideas but because of inappropriate language as cited by Pound. ⁽⁶⁾ Others maintain that "any cultural modernity is based on language - in revival, renewal

or revolutionary forms." (7)

To be sure, the linguistic word acquires its aesthetic aspects when it is used in certain contexts, as language is naturally dual: both explicit and implicit. The poetry potential emanates from the suggestive power of language taking into account that each word has a number of meanings dictated of course by the context concerned.⁽⁸⁾ Many words become obsolete with time. The creative poet can revive these words with new meanings decided by the displacements offered by the nature of poetry itself.

Besides, the word acquires dominant meanings through its presence in a certain context. It may call for other words. A word like "life", for instance, may indicate meanings such as 'hope', 'success', 'existence', 'resistance' and other positive features. The word "death", on the other hand, may recall 'tomb', 'pain', 'orphanhood', 'wound', etc. These two words, however, serve as a motivator or stimulator for other words.

The phonetic aspects, which represent one of the symbolic systems of language, help in reading poetic



texts. The poetic structure is the first of the constructional structures in the poem that has two functions: positive and negative. The first function is in charge of identifying the meaning of the word; the second maintains the difference between a certain word and other words. ⁽⁹⁾ One specific sound in a word or the text could bear the germ of the meaning when it has a dominant value in the text. In this concern ,the meaning of the poem is influenced by the sounds of the words more than the meanings of these words. ⁽¹⁰⁾

The word in the poetic discourse moves across structural patterns that identify its present value as "the word is, in fact, a focal point which constitutes a meeting-place for a number of meanings that lead to the same semantic field."⁽¹¹⁾ Besides, poetry makes the word yield meanings that cannot be obtained outside poetic contexts. ⁽¹²⁾

Modern Arab poet tends to employ stylistic structures that embroider his new poetic discourse. He may build up a number of varied entities each of which dominates the other. Also, the poet may deviate from the general rules of

language to create some kind of 'confusion' in a number of aspects.⁽¹³⁾

2. The Structure of the Poem

In Kareem Al-Darraji's poems, 'homeland' constitutes an obsession that haunts him and so his poem turns to be his homeland where the homeland becomes a poem. This is clearly observed in his two anthologies namely The Director: an Unknown Winner and When Does Daytime Wake Up?, both in Arabic. In these two anthologies, there are a number of points that cannot be ignored. The cover painting contains two meeting faces, raised hands and a peeping eye painted with four colors: red, yellow, black and blue. Also, these two anthologies, right from the beginning, supply textual restrictions for reading through publicizing the meanings (subject) of death, bewilderment and sadness. This has been implemented via mixed colors and sharp lines that formulate puzzled faces. Yet, the poet did not ignore the subject of 'hope' linked to blue color.

Titles of poems play an important part due to their

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symbolic capacities. These titles represent a craw for the poet's texts and also keys for unknown horizons. To be sure, many of Al-Darraji's poems cannot be fathomed without decoding the titles. The titles of poems mostly have compound structures that sometimes depend on the nominal sentences, verbal sentences or even phrases. This phenomenon points to the poet's desire to deepen his ideas and express manifold aspects without resorting to allusion that may weaken the idea. The compound structure of the poem infiltrates into the essence of the poem becoming as such part of its structure. In his poem "When We Do Wrong," عندما نُخطء التقدير the title extends both horizontally and vertically penetrating the structure of the poem. It therefore monitors its rhythm and maintains its intellectual build-up. For instance, the phrase 'when we do wrong' is repeated 3 times in the poem where a partial idea is crystallized each time.

In the poem entitled "When Does Daytime Wake Up?", it is noticed that this phrase (the title) is repeated a number of times in the poem. The only change made is

in the placement of the pronoun in various places as for example: "When do you wake up, o Daytime?" Why then does the poet resort to repetition? In fact, repetition in Kareem Hameed's poems is an artistic feature linked to the architectural build-up of the poem. In this connection, his poems move in a linear manner by repeating the build-up of the main theme of the poem. His poem "A Chair that Writes Down Its CV" includes the following:

> Out of everything I've made Out of every thought and cleverness Out of every malice and slyness I made of wood, steel and gold ... Of ivory, marble and mud.

The first line has the phrase "Out of everything" which is repeated then 3 times where a new phrase starts taken from the word "made" in the first line. The first line in the poem seems to be the nucleus of the poem from which many ideas originate. After these repetitions, the poet uses "mud" which represents the origin of life - again a form of repetition.



In the poem "A Purged Prayer", another type is used:

Stand up …

O, devout

Spread out \cdots

And wipe your white forehead.

Certify …

This poem consists of 5 stanzas each starts with an order: "Stand up", "Spread out", "Wipe", "Certify", "Don't forget." The poet may sometimes replace orders by using interdiction which is not much different from orders, possibly to break the repetitions used.

3. The Language of the Poem

In his poems, the poet takes the position of a fighter trying hard to change reality, and sometimes to announce the death of such reality. This is a tradition that Romanticism has known since its inception. Yet, the real protagonist witnessed in Hameed's poetry declines to reconcile his reality. This is clear from the type of language used in his poems where the individual lives with the group without coalescing with their reality. When the poet expresses the positive ego, he expresses it as singular which forms a contradictory duality with the negative ego. The other ego, however, for the poet is expressed as plural. Hameed's poem "You Have a Shortened Time" shows the first ego in the singular:

> You are Devout

Pious

A brilliant genius .

In his poem "A Chair that Writes its CV", he says:

I saw off kings and sultans

It is typical of the ego-- other duality. Here, one can notice the singular ego versus the other (plural).

This idea is promoted in other poems. The poet calls 'invaders' as strangers. Such denomination includes also

natives who take similar attitudes. In his poem "Graves that Speak", the poet reveals how land rejects their bodies:

Strangers, You die with no guns With no pens Strangers You die tearless Or even a moment of sadness on homelands.

Here, what attracts our attention is the way adopted to express the other (in plural). The meaning generated from this phenomenon indicates that the poet faces his fate alone in addition to other individuals or groups. Yet, he does not refer to defeat, but rather to the difficulty of encounter:

Oppressive,

The sultan raids me every night.

He knocks at the door every month,

The jailer takes me.

Another feature in Hameed's poems is his interest in

time, expressing the poet's sensation of things. It is an internal time that emanates from language, yet establishes its special meaning. Readers can observe various forms of this time in his poems. Time can be spatial as in

I searched for you for a time

In Arabic, this sentence is traditionally verbal. Yet, the value of the verb 'searched' بحثت is not represented in its traditional past tense, but rather in its obscurity or nonentity. Nevertheless, the poet cannot escape the authority of the traditional tense. He, therefore, resorts to restrict it when he uses the phrase "before Romans." The poet's focus on the past tense form points to evanescence and the past through which he has endeavored to limit time. Moreover, the poet designates his movement from the past to the present as 'return' عودة "I'm back to time." The poet tries to remember the history of man, and how man has a natural disposition for killing since the appearance of the first man. The poet, however, realizes "that the time of poetry is vertical. It stops the present moment heading for depth with the aim of destroying the linear time and changing it into a time

of memory." ⁽¹⁴⁾ Such feeling of time infiltrates the poet's consciousness sometimes, but mostly his unconsciousness. In the following two lines:

Every day, the sultan storms me. Every night I dream of sorrows.

The phrase :Every day" refers to the repetition of an action and not to its actual occurrence. It also does not indicate time in its linguistic sense as time operates in the poet's unconsciousness. The phrase used in the second line "dreams of sorrows" reinforces this point of view. Such phrase refers to the future, but semantically it has a sense of the past. The language of Hameed's poems is that of every day concerns. It does not adopt the principle of destroying the laws of language. ⁽¹⁵⁾

4. Imagery

Hameed's poems can be termed as prose poems. These poems "are based in fact on the unity of contradictions, not only in form only but also in their essence." ⁽¹⁶⁾ The poet himself recognizes the importance of images in his poetry.

The idea of imagery leads us to rhetorics, as the poet, while trying to keep away from the traditional images, cannot avoid rhetorical styles. As a modernist poet, one can find a lot of traditional images in his poems such as "our heavy nights, years passed, days betrayed you, fortified borderline cities strangle him, our houses are barricades and trenches, flavor dies, as if it plunges into, etc."

The formation of images in Hameed's poems is linked to time. This is susceptible to present a holistic image that cannot be realized tangibly. It is rather realized and received by readers in the form of feelings and sensations devoid of time. Such a holistic image can be carried by a certain word. The word "Lebanon", in Hameed's poem "Lamentation of Pictures of Babylon," constitutes a pivotal point for the poem's expected meanings such as "gladness of heart, depth of soul, and endurance of pain." This provides an opportunity to build up a mental picture which harmonizes with the meanings of the poem. The word "Lebanon" creates suggestive relationships on the level of the text and publicizes all positive aspects making the text anticipate a



better future.

One distinctive characteristic of Kareem's poetry is that his poems hold a 'dialogue' with other poems especially with those of the prominent Basri poet Bader Shaker As-Sayyab. The poet tends to borrow as-Sayyab's poems with the aim of clearing up the image and granting it some emotional dimensions. This is not intertextuality for me, but this phenomenon can be called as a 'dialogue' (17) as has been used by Bakhtin. Hameed's poem "When Does Daytime Wake Up?" holds a dialogue with As-Sayyab's famous poem "The Song of Rain." In the first stanza of the poem, the poet borrows the word "song" أنشودة and builds it up with the word "land" الأرض; as the land receives rain, Kareem's poem "Song of Land" embraces As-Sayyab's poem "Song of Rain" and becomes its artistic incubator. The poet does more than this as he makes As-Sayyab's text harmonize with his text.

> Did you know the sort of sadness revived? If fire flared up in reeds

Sparrows and the hungry stay homeless, no furniture, no firewood.
Darkness and alienation,
Death and the hungry
Fire in the reeds ….
Fire in the reeds ….

No one day passed with no blood in Iraq.

No hunger, no fire!

This last image seeks to summon the previous image and tries to emphasize it by drawing the same atmospheres without transforming it into a new context. The imagery presented by Hameed intends to help readers to understand the associations of As-Sayyab's poetic texts. As such, a dialogue is held between the two texts leading to suggestive and holistic images to be reproduced by the recipients.



- Poet Kareem Hameed incarnates the sorrows of a homeland into a poem. This poem in its turn transforms into a small homeland.

- The poet is interested in producing his meanings making use of the paintings of the cover pages of his anthologies and ending with the titles of poems.

- The build-up of his poems is based on a repeated structure.

- His poems pay due attention to the voice of the individual (the voice of the nation) that faces dangers.

- The poet is interested in the literary time which is an internal time that takes various forms.

- The poet presents a holistic image which cannot be recognized sensibly. It is perceived by the readers in the form of sensations and emotions which are devoid of time.

- The poet holds a dialogue with other texts produced by well-known figures.

Endnotes

* A poet from Basra who is writing the prose poem. He attempts to depict reality in all its pains and aspirations. He also makes use of poetic heritage in his poems.

1. An Essay on Criticism (in Arabic), p. 127

2. Functional Meaning in the Structure of Poetic Language (in Arabic), p. 13

3. Linguistic Structure of As-Sayyab's Poetry (in Arabic), p. 18

4. Approaches of Literary Criticism between Theory and Practice, pp. 18-19

5. Dispute of Reading (in Arabic), p. 57

6. "Truth of Poetry" by Michael Hamburg. Al-Adab Al-Ajnabia Magazine, No24, p.32.

7. Position of Modernism (in Arabic), p. 221

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- 16. Prose Poem from Boudlaire to the Present (in Arabic), p. 143
- 17. Conversational Principles, p. 82 and after.

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