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Vitality as a Source of Art in the Artistic Image

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Abstract

When we chose this title for our research, we took into consideration, before embarking on its completion, that there are other sources of art within the artistic image. Foremost among these is imagination, with its influential effectiveness in shaping the idea of the image and its details. Among these sources is the artistic coherence between the components of the image. Vitality, therefore, is a source of art in the artistic image, resulting in the growth of the elements of life in the image and their flow. The subject of the applied research material will be the book entitled "The Vitality of Conflict Image in the Painting of 'Tard' in Arabic Poetry" by Dr. Jabeer Saleh Al-Qar Ghuli. Describing this book as applied material, all its evidence comes from images of conflict in the painting of 'Tard' in Arabic poetry. Additionally, it encompasses the theoretical framework that comprehensively covers the terminology that forms the structure of the analytical study. The book also contains other merits that have increased our interest in this study. Among these merits is the meticulous chronological investigation of the creation, development, expansion, and spread of the conflict painting among Arab tribes. Furthermore, there is an anthropological research spirit that focuses on studying the collective culture among Arab tribes, with a particular emphasis on the tribe of Hudhayl, considering it a unique human fabric with distinct emotional and social characteristics. When asked to describe myself as a researcher highlighting these features, I would say: Hudhayl distinguished itself from other Arab tribes by its interaction with sorrow, turning it into a heritage, celebrating it, and confronting the vicissitudes of time. Hudhali sentiment is the most Arab sentiments that deal with sorrow. The proof of this is that the anthology of Hudhayl was collected by poets, not lyricists except for one poet among them. When we peruse this anthology, we are moved by the lamentation of men, those who had the largest share in the history of "Sa'alika." The majority of the "Sa'alika" were Hudhali, which suggests the nature of the economic life, undoubtedly demanding and difficult, driving the tribe's sons to seek livelihood through fighting and violence.

1. Introduction

Before discussing the vitality and its source in the painting of 'Tard,' it is necessary for us to examine the concept of vitality, which we have chosen as the subject of our research. The professor has presented several definitions from Western and Arab critics, revealing that the effectiveness of the image lies in its vitality, whether in its structure or in its internal arrangement between phrases and words. This interconnection between partial images and their firmness, making them a semi-unified pattern, is what creates an impact on the recipient and stirs their emotions. Thus, the image fulfills its function and exerts its influence in the text and on the recipient, as a lively, moving entity that distinguishes itself from other images in other art forms. (Studies and Models in Poetry Schools and Criticism, p. 79).

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2. The Concept of Vitality

The vitality, as intended by the author, entails infusing spirit and movement, generating activity within the text, leading to a profound emotional impact on the recipient. It transforms their imagination into a stage filled with movement and interactions, thus imbuing the text with dynamism in capability and strength.

The space in which these images were born is rugged and harsh, and these two elements are responsible for fertilizing the imagination of the poets of Hudhayl, as stated by the author ("The Vitality of Conflict Image," p. 18). This is an opinion indicative of the author's keen critical spirit, having extensively studied many Hudhali texts, where he found their beauty latent in this active element. This is what distinguishes Hudhayl poetry from others, particularly in terms of vitality and movement. The professor observes that the psychological effects left by the environment of Hudhayl on its inhabitants made them wary and anxious, constantly anticipating difficulties and crises around every corner and turn. The geography of the land is considered a significant factor in distinguishing Hudhali texts from their counterparts in other texts (The Vitality of Conflict Image, p. 18).

The Hudhali poets injected a new color into the anthology of Arabic poetry, characterized by movement, life, and dynamism. They imparted a sense of embodiment and concretization to poetry, giving it a new identity. Through this, the poet was able to furnish the Hudhali text, filled with appearances, growth, movement, stability, and movement between them, in addition to the sincerity of the emotional experience.

3. Vitality in Abu Dhu'ayb's Poetry

Before we commence our exposition on highlighting the movement and vitality in the poetry of Abu Dhu'ayb Al-Hudhali, it behooves us to inquire why Dr. Jabeer Saleh Al-Einiyah chose it over other poems of Abu Dhu'ayb? And what is the relationship between "Tard" and vitality?

Al-Einiyah chose these particular poems of Abu Dhu'ayb as they represent some of the most genuine elegies expressing an emotional experience, reaching the zenith of completeness and fervor. They encapsulate rich emotions and artistic sincerity, synergizing to create a vibrant emotional experience. (The Vitality of Conflict Image, p. 26)

They are considered a masterpiece of art, embodying the refinement in expressing a poignant emotional experience and intense sentiment. (The Vitality of Conflict Image, p. 53)

As for "Tard," it is perceived as "a tool to express the poet's experience through imagery, representing clear artistic coherence." (The Vitality of Conflict Image, p. 26) The "Ayniyah" poem encompasses all the elements of sublime art, which is why it has been the subject of research and study for scholars of various disciplines.

Abu Dhu'ayb begins his "Ayniyah" with the lines:

"Is it from the adversities and its fears that you agonize?

For time does not spare those who falter."

"The passing of time was likened to a person who blames, thus the one being likened to, the human, was omitted, and there remained one of its essential elements, which is 'blame', metaphorically speaking."

In these verses, the poet delineates his philosophy of life, reflecting his psychological reactions and the surrounding circumstances. He does not overlook highlighting the environmental

aspect in his poem, a prominent presence throughout the text. Literary critics have termed this aspect as "what surrounds the text," referring to the influential circumstances surrounding the creator, including environment, culture, events, and the intertwining of social and psychological factors. (*The Vitality of Conflict Image*, p. 27)

The poet astonishes us when he speaks of the wild donkey, using it as a source of solace and comfort for himself, portraying it as the defiant, towering figure atop a summit. This depiction symbolizes the poet's acknowledgment of the transience of life, as represented by the demise of the donkey, exemplifying the power of fate. (*Diwan Al-Hudhaliyyin*, p. 4).

"The epochs do not remain in their events,
Rather, they endure atop a lofty peak filled with glory and restraint."

The poet surprises us after this introduction with additional depictions of the defiant donkey, after repeating the first half of the verse, providing a detailed portrayal of the story of the wild bull. It roams the fertile pastures, active herds dancing around it, before meeting its inevitable fate at the hands of a skilled hunter, as described in the verses:

"The rustling of the Mustache persists.
As if it were a slave to the descendants of Abu Rabi'ah, the Musab'ah.
He ate the meat greedily, and gentle speech persuaded him,
Like a canal, while troubles vexed him.
So, we entered the chambers of cold, pure water,
On the pebbles of the courtyard where the locusts disappear.
We drank, then heard a whisper nearby,
The honour of the veil, and the suspicion of a rattling sound.
He threw, and from the javelin of a courageous man,
An arrow soared, and its feather trembled."

This scene embodies the elements of movement and vitality, as perceived by the professor in his statement: "The element of vitality is entrenched in this image, represented by the movement of its characters and surroundings. The playful activity and struggle of the herds in the pasture, and their journey towards the new spring, are evidence of this. Then comes the moment of conflict, whether with the hunter or fate, where movement intensifies prominently, imbued with emotions, passion, and sensations, granting it vitality and intensity." (*The Vitality of Conflict Image*, p. 34)

The meticulous observation of the poet in capturing the stimuli of anxieties in the souls of the image's characters did not escape the scrutiny of Professor Doctor. This is evident in his keen portrayal of the ominous triggers perceived by the characters, such as the alarming sound foretelling danger, which is the sound of the bowstring in the hands of the hunter, as described in the verse:

"We drank, then we heard a whisper nearby,
The honour of the veil, and the suspicion of a rattling sound."

In this verse, the poet adeptly captures the sense of foreboding and unease felt by the characters upon hearing the faint yet ominous sound, represented by the drawing of the bowstring, signifying imminent danger.

The Hudhali poet demonstrates remarkable artistic skill in portraying scenes that are not only aesthetically pleasing but also reminiscent of scenes from global cinema. He vividly depicts

such scenes, as expressed in his verse: "It is the sound of the bowstring in the hand of the hunter. Fleeting moments, the herds hesitantly react to the mysterious sound, their ears pricked." (The Vitality of Conflict Image, p. 34).

The professor delves deeper into this splendid scene, recognizing the vitality within it, and offers a critical insight: "The herds, whose submerged legs disturb the water, will not flee without causing a commotion, as their movements agitate the water around them, creating a splashing effect. Without a doubt, this image surpasses the beauty of a running animal scene, as it possesses unique shades." (The Vitality of Conflict Image, p. 34).

Not content with this observation alone, the professor identifies another scene within it, even more imaginative and refined than the previous one, referring to the "glimpse of the frightened herds seeking refuge with their stallion, finding solace in him, yet he is not devoid of fear himself, for he, too, clings to her out of dread."

Then the professor transitions to the second scene of the defiant donkey, in which the poet repeats the same line: (Diwan al-Hudhaliyin, 1/10)

The passage describes the relentless battle between the wild bull and the vicious dogs, with the bull's heart being inflamed by fear as it encounters the break of dawn. Seeking refuge in the protection of its horns, it casts its gaze over the horizon with wary eyes, confirming what it hears with a cautious nod. The professor discerns in the poet's depiction a vivid portrayal of the bull's continuous struggle against the harmful dogs, particularly in the verse:

"We provided her with two generous libations,
As if from the praised morning dew, they were drawn forth.
As if two generous patrons, when desired,
Would quickly bring to him the well-cooked drink."

The professor interprets this as the bull's defiant stance against the attacking dogs, likening its horns to two gallant warriors armed with spears, ready to repel any assailants.

The passage suggests a sense of weariness that has affected the relationship between the bull and the hunting dogs, as indicated by the poet's mention that the bull has endured the struggle against the dogs. This reference by the professor to the weariness in the depicted relationship underscores the bull's determination in facing the hunting dogs, engaging in numerous trials against them, which presumably would entail the killing of many, contradicting his description as a pair of gallant warriors who do not tire.

Another image in the text highlights the vitality, as expressed in the verse:

"The hearts of the barking dogs palpitated,
And when they saw the truthful dawn, they panicked.
He seeks refuge with the vigilant sentinel.
When a drop of rain heals him, and his rest becomes restless.
He casts his gaze into the unseen with narrowed eyes,
His eyelids lowering, his gaze verifying what he hears."

In this verse, the dogs' agitation and the bull's reaction to the approaching dawn illustrate the vitality of the scene. The bull seeks solace in the protection of its horns when it hears the confirming dawn, casting wary glances with its eyes and confirming what it hears with a nod of its head.

The weight and slowness of this imagery, laden with pain and suffering, depict the poet's sadness and separation from his children. The bull's fierce battle with the dogs mirrors his

struggle with pain, reminiscent of the heaviness of the night upon Imru al-Qays due to the weight of his grief over his father's death, as expressed in his verses:

"A night, like the waves of the sea, cast its veils upon me,
With all kinds of worries to test me.
Oh, what a night, as if its stars
In every corner of the firmament were tied with a tether."

Just as this pain was slow, so was the poet's sorrow, perhaps intending with the dogs to symbolize his loss of his children. The battle serves as an objective equivalent in the poem, albeit shielded by the arṭā from the raindrops, yet who will shield him from the lurking arrows of death?

The phrase (The menacing dogs made his heart tremble) suggests that fear reached the bull's delicate membrane that lies beneath the heart, evoking an impression that he drew inspiration from Surah Yusuf, where it is stated, (He fell in love with her) (Surah Yusuf, verse 30). Particularly, Al-Hasan's interpretation of (He trembled with love) (Taj Al-Arus, 23/518) seems more apt in conveying the meaning from love and passion to fear and awe, given the fine line between them!

Among the depictions of the resolute figures, there is the image of the knight who prepares for war, taking the shield as his refuge from arrows, as in the verse:

The passing of time does not remain consistent in its events,
A sentient one, the blade's edge sharpened.
The shield protected him, even his face,
From its heat on the detestable day, burning.
He advances with it, swift horses breaking their reins,
With the reins slipping, the stirrups loosened.
Dawn drew near it, its flesh gashed.
With the spear, as fingers dig into it.
As it necks the bridle and the reins,
One day, a bold one was given the chance to plunge.
They called out and their steeds matched pace,
Both heroes of the encounter, deceived."

The verses depict the knight's armor as a barrier from the intense heat of battle, protecting him until his face shines brightly. The imagery further captures the preparation for battle, where horses neigh and riders urge each other on, both bold in their readiness to engage.

Abu Dhu'aib, in his depiction of the prepared knight for battle, was "driven by a psychological motive, as represented by the shield in his view" (Vitality of Conflict Imagery, p. 41). The portrayal of the knight in "The Resolute Figures" was not complete until it was added to the characters of his tableau. The scholar perceives that Abu Dhu'aib's description of the horseman had "loopholes that are not trivial because it did not stem from a realistic experience; neither he nor the Huthailiyyin in general were horsemen, so they did not know the qualities, virtues, and flaws of horses" (Vitality of Conflict Imagery, p. 41). We agree with the professor's assertion because the Huthaili environment is mountainous. Despite this shortcoming, it is "evidence of the intensity of emotion and the sincerity of the emotional experience in the creator" (Vitality of Conflict Imagery, p. 46). As for the Huthaili's statement: "While their bridles and reins interlock,

One day, an audacious one was granted the chance to plunge.
They called out and their horses coincided,
Both of them, champions of the encounter, were deceived."

The professor perceives that this "knight with experience and practice in wars resembles the story's hero; hence (both of them are heroes of the encounter, deceived), or perhaps it's fate, or one of its messengers" (*Vitality of Conflict Imagery*, p. 41-42).

The researcher did not suffice with identifying the sources of vitality in *Al-Ayniyya*, but rather searched for them in his other poems as well, focusing on a poem in which he says:

"By Allah, there remains over the days a traveller,
The region of secrets, four years old, chirped."

The professor and researcher chose this poem because it represents, through its included elements of structure, formulation, and narrative spirit, the fundamental basis upon which Abu Dhu'aib built his splendid artistic creativity in his *Al-Ayniyya* poem.

"The poet made the chosen poem, akin to *Al-Ayniyya*, a field for expressing his stance on the two main issues that occupy any sensitive individual, with ethical responsibility and social commitment - like the poet, orator, and priest - which are: creation and mortality. His expression of them came within a narrative framework inherited during his upbringing in a cultural environment with clear features and limited traditions. He then added to it from his spirit and experiences significantly" (*Vitality of Conflict Imagery*, p. 53-54).

The professor-researcher noticed Abu Dhu'ayb's eagerness to infuse vitality and vigor into the prey in his imagery. Despite his efforts, the vitality depicted in the poem was limited. The professor stated, "A limited area of the pasture is apparent in the text when the females drink. The image of this pasture is dull in color, with indistinct features, except for what rises and falls from it. These features are insufficient to create an image that captivates the reader's attention and stimulates their imagination. Hence, the vitality in the scene diminishes compared to its counterpart in the "*Ayniya*," where the females frolic in a lush and vibrant pasture. The vitality dwindles when the creator neglects the element of movement in his imagery, as he depicts the flock's females."

According to the professor's opinion, this did not detract from the poem's artistic status. He stated, "There is no indication here that diminishes the value of this poem. Instead, its ranking in the artistic aspect may be lower than that of the "*Ayniya*," which is a credit to the poet, as it is evidence of the evolution in the field of literary creativity. It underscores the importance of the creator's meticulousness, deliberation, and self-review in the literary creation process."

We notice the precision of the professor in monitoring the levels of vitality in the texts of Abu Dhu'ayb *Al-Hudhali*, whom he chose as a model for his research. He showed meticulousness in presenting tangible evidence of Abu Dhu'ayb's artistic advancement, by offering an example of limited vitality in one instance, followed by an example rich in vitality.

4. Conclusions

Vitality is an active and essential element in creating artistic imagery, and it can manifest in various forms of imagery.

From the perspective of the researching professor, the primary conduit for vitality in artistic imagery is the element of movement, with the chosen focus of the study being the depiction of hunting scenes in Arabic poetry.

The researching professor demonstrates adeptness in selecting the text that became the focal point of the study, namely the poem "*Al-Ayniyya*" by Abu Dhu'ayb *Al-Hudhali*, which he

composed in mourning for his children. Within this poem, Abu Dhu'ayb addresses the fundamental dichotomy that has preoccupied humanity, namely the issue of life and death.

The scholarly aspect of the professor's analyses is highlighted through his examination of the vitality element in the works of various poets. This is evident in his familiarity with the presence of this element in the output of individual poets and within the poetic environment that nurtured their creativity.

Through his work, the professor exemplifies a critical principle characterized by a meticulous consideration of the context surrounding the text. This principle, which some critical schools have overlooked, has been emphasized by eminent critics such as the late Dr. Ahmed Matloub, who urged critics to pay attention to it, thereby delineating the contours of criticism in the twenty-first century.

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