Rare Ignorant "Jahiliyyah" Poems, in the Light of Intertextuality Theory

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Abstract

This research aims to highlight intertextuality in a collection of rare pre-Islamic poems by obscure poets who did not achieve sufficient fame, except for subtle references in biographical, literary, and poetic works. The focus is on defining intertextuality as a complex linguistic phenomenon with various types, relying on the recipient's knowledge and culture to discern it. Intertextuality represents the fundamental characteristics of literary creativity, indicating the intertwining or interconnection of texts and their interaction to produce new texts that embody a relationship of simulation or imitation among poetic texts. This involves identifying shared words, meanings, and ideas among derived poets through accumulated experiential knowledge on one hand, and the expressive creative ability of the poet on the other. The poet's unique style, which adheres to internal or external intertextuality in its various forms, emerges, along with the phenomenon of influence and impact between them in the same era. The study also explores the extent of the intertwining and interconnectedness of texts.

Keywords: *Intertextuality, Impact, External Intertextuality, Internal Intertextuality, Recipient.*

1. Introduction

Literature, in general, is the fertile ground for poetic texts. In ancient Arabic poetry, we find reflective mirrors of intertextuality that reveal the extent of interaction between poetic texts, each echoing the other and mirroring the environment that gave rise to them. Additionally, this concept is encapsulated in the critical heritage, primarily focused on poetry as the central pivot of Arab literary culture. Poetry has become the primary focus for exploring the theory of intertextuality. The research is divided into the following axes: The first axis presents the general framework of intertextuality theory, providing definitions that explain the concept and critical opinions indicating early awareness of textual interconnection in pre-Islamic poetic texts. The second axis delves into the mechanisms of intertextuality and its applications in rare pre-Islamic poems. It explores external, internal, and self-references by poets, as well as intertextuality in themes, ideas, and meanings. The research raises questions, such as whether the repeated intertextual references among pre-Islamic poets were intentional, a result of conscious will and purpose, or whether it was an automatic, unconscious process where texts intertwine. It also explores the possibility that repeated intertextual references may have originated as a reliance on the oral memory's reservoir.

The study aims to highlight intertextuality within the bounds of the pre-Islamic era, specifically showcasing diverse and recurring intertextual relationships among obscure poets of that time.

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The study adopts an analytical approach, building upon a portion of previous studies that explore the relationship between intertextuality in pre-Islamic poetry and ancient Arabic criticism. Examples of such studies include:

- "Analysis of Poetic Discourse: Intertextuality Strategy," by Mohammed Muftah, Dar Al-Bayda Cultural Center, Beirut, Dar Al-Tanweer, 1st edition, 1985. This study is considered significant in elucidating the phenomenon of intertextuality, explaining its concept, and presenting its application to poetic discourse for the Arabic reader.
- "The Idea of Literary Theft and Intertextuality Theory," by Abdul Malik Mortada, Literary and Cultural Club, Jeddah, Vol. 1, 1991. This study explores the relationship between the issue of literary theft and intertextuality, aiming to identify common aspects between a known issue in ancient Arabic criticism and a modern theory emerging from contemporary Western literary studies (Intertextuality in Ancient Arabic Criticism, p.6).
- Intertextuality in the Critique of Abdul Qaher Al-Jurjani," by Mohammed Abdel Matlub, Literary and Cultural Club, Jeddah, Vol. 3, 1992. This study focuses on addressing a specific issue raised by a particular critic (Intertextuality in Ancient Arabic Criticism, p.7).
- Form and Quotation: Two Aspects of Intertextuality in Ancient Arabic Poetry, by Thomas Bauer, 1993, translated by Mohammed Fuad Nanaa, Dar Al-Bashair Kuwait, p. 362, 2000. The researcher in this study examines the phenomenon of intertextuality to study the formal structure in pre-Islamic Arabic poetry (Form and Quotation: Two Aspects of Intertextuality in Ancient Arabic Poetry, p. 8).

Intertextuality Theory

The term "intertextuality" is mentioned in the Arabic language with the meaning of connection. It is stated, "This vein 'tanasa' in such a way and its connection, meaning it is associated with it" (Lisan Al-Arab, 14/163, article "Nass"). In Taj Al-Arus, it is used to signify contraction and congestion: "The man's body contracted, and the people 'tanasa,' meaning they crowded together" (Taj Al-Arus, 18/179). The latter meaning closely approximates the modern concept of intertextuality, where the interweaving of texts is very similar to their congestion in a particular text (see Intertextuality in the Poetry of Pioneers, p.14).

2. Framework And Basic Concepts

The term "intertextuality" is defined in various ways. Julia Kristeva, for instance, views every text as a mosaic composition of citations, where each text is an absorption or transformation of other texts ("Intertextuality: Theoretical and Practical Aspects," p. 14). Laurent, on the other hand, indicates that it signifies interconnection, meaning the establishment of a relationship between texts with different modalities (Analysis of Poetic Discourse, p. 121).

As for Bakhtin, he did not explicitly use the term "intertextuality" but employed the term "dialogism" to denote the interplay between different expressions. When extracting its components from various expressions, intertextuality is seen as the interrelation of texts with each other ("Analysis of Poetic Discourse," p. 122, 124). Genette, in his theory of intertextuality, states, "The problem of intertextuality is linking several texts together into one text without destroying each other... because intertextuality speaks a language whose vocabulary is the sum of all existing texts" (Theory of Intertextuality, p. 156).

3. Intertextuality In Arab Literary Criticism

If we trace the statements of ancient critics regarding intertextuality, we find that the idea of the intertwining and interconnectedness of texts is familiar in ancient Arab traditions. The Arabs were aware of the interweaving of texts, whether in poetry or prose. However, they were not precisely acquainted with the exact meaning of the concept of intertextuality (see Intertextuality in Pre-Islamic Poetry, p. 9). Criticism, in the past, dealt with this concept meticulously and scientifically, based on the distinction and differentiation between other terms in the rhetorical field, such as (embedding, quotation, plagiarism, contradictions, etc.) (Intertextuality in Modern Arab Criticism, p. 7). These terms adhere to specific rules and standards that must be followed to avoid exceeding the boundaries of plagiarism. Ibn Tabataba (322 AH) notes: "Those who follow this path need cunning and careful consideration of meanings, borrowing, and disguising them so that they are hidden from critics, and the meanings become obscure to them. They then claim it as their own, using borrowed meanings in a different genre than the one they took them from. If they find a meaning in enigma or love, they use it in praise, and if they find it in praise, they use it in satire..." (The Measure of Poetry, p. 81). From Ibn Tabataba's words, it can be understood that those who navigate the path of organizing poetry can borrow words and meanings from another genre, such as prose, and rephrase them to create a new meaning that stands out as if it is unprecedented. He also says: "And if you scrutinize all the poems of the poets, you will find them proportionate, either closely or remotely" (The Measure of Poetry, p. 81).

Furthermore, the phenomenon of influence and impact among poets plays a significant role in the process of composing poetry. Abdul-Malik Murtadha indicates that intertextuality involves the exchange of influence and relationships between one text and other literary texts, a concept well-known in Arab criticism under the term poetic thefts (The Idea of Poetic Drives and the Theory of Intertextuality, p. 91). Additionally, the social context in which poetic texts are sought during the era of pre-Islamic poetry is a recognized factor for poets and listeners. It serves as a reference system that endures over a long period, acting as material for intertextuality. Even if a poet possesses genius, originality, and uniqueness, they are influenced by their social environment and peers. This influence becomes clear and evident in poetic texts (Reception of Pre-Islamic Poetry in Modern Studies, p. 125).

Mohammed Muftah argues that influence can be natural, spontaneous, assumed, and chosen simultaneously because the pre-Islamic poet is confined within the boundaries of the oral and social context of his culture in learning and preparing his poetry. This is evident in the ancient poetic stances, which are the most powerful ancient sources (Intertextuality as a Gateway to the Study of Poetic Texts, p. 133). These stances are the starting point for creativity in poetic texts, along with their possessiveness of symbolic capacities that require contemplation, narration, and enjoyment of their artistic atmospheres (Critical Vision of Poetic Creativity in Arab Critical Heritage, p. 1).

4. Intertextuality In Rare Ignorant "Jahiliyyah" Poems

Intertextuality takes various contrasting forms among poetic texts, embracing each other in diverse and gradual ways. This, in turn, leads to several types, including:

External Intertextuality: This is the relationship that connects a later literary text with a text or paragraph from a previous or contemporaneous work. However, it does not belong to the

same author. It can occur between different poets (Intertextuality as One of the Issues of Modern Arab Criticism, p. 12). An example can be found in the verse of the poet Muhriz bin al-Mukabbar al-Zuby (Rare Pre-Islamic Poems, p. 193):

The poet expresses the chastity of the one adorned with chains after Salma, and the longing endured after the covenant and entering.

Abu al-Tamhane al-Qayni responds to him in his verse (Rare Pre-Islamic Poems, page 212). For whoever seeks refuge with Dhat al-Silasil, like the return of tattoos on the backs of fingers.

It is observed that the text of "Al-Dhabi" is juxtaposed with another poetic verse by a contemporary pre-Islamic poet named Al-Qaini. The textual interconnection occurs in the passage "Aftat Zat al-Silasil," between two synchronous verses of the same era. It was an external, partial intertextuality without changing the wording of the two verses. The intertextuality aligned with the emotional state experienced by the poets during the events of the land of leprosy, known as the Ghazwat Dhat al-Silasil. The poets pause there and reminisce about the past and the natural factors that affected these lands, such as winds, rain, and floods that blurred the features and landmarks of the territories. The poets of the pre-Islamic era invoked intertextuality in constructing their poetic texts, relying on structural adherence and imitation in the organization of the poem as a natural approach followed by the poets of that era. This produced poetic texts with a traditional structure. Additionally, they depended on the collective memory of oral tradition. Through other examples, we can observe repeated intertextualities among more than one obscure poet of that era in a segment of a corresponding paragraph to a poetic verse. As the poet Ubaid bin Al-Azzi Al-Salami stated in his poem (Rare Pre-Islamic Poems, p. 125):

"I stood by it, tears flowing out of love for it, almost to the point where the sun was about to set.

Bashr bin Aliq Al-Ta'i intertextually responded in his verse (Rare Pre-Islamic Poems, p. 187):

I stood by it at the break of day, riding my camel, questioning it, until it gathered to speak.

And Abdullah bin Salim Al-Azdi intertextually responded in his verse (Rare Pre-Islamic Poems, p. 201):

I stood by some of its dwellings, casting off the side motives, as numerous as the layers. And Abu al-Tamhan Al-Qaini intertextually responded in his verse (Rare Pre-Islamic Poems, p. 212):

I stood by it until the morning shone, questioning it, just as it became clear to the inquirer".

"The intertextuality is evident in more than one verse in the poetic examples mentioned. It appeared in the paragraph (I stood by it), meaning the poets standing in the same scene, contemplating the remains of the homes of loved ones. They mentioned the locations, the names of valleys, mountains, and plains, questioning them about the beloved and the days of their youth. Some of them were deeply moved by the sight, standing there for a long time, with tears flowing from the longing for memories (The Scene of Death in the Eyes of Abu Dhu'ayb and Sa'diyya bint al-Shumardal, p. 2). This poetic scene is considered a characteristic of pre-Islamic poetry because it is closely tied to the emotions and memories of the poets. This indicates the existence of textual interconnection among the poets of the same era (Proverbs, Morals, and Their Semantic Significance in Pre-Islamic Poetry, p. 266). Intertextuality is

repeated in another scene of Hatim al-Tai, where he mentions his generosity and kindness in his verse (Rare Pre-Islamic Poems, p. 199)".

"I argue that generosity is not a detriment,
nor does a miserly soul escape its own disgrace".
Ubaid bin Al-Azzi Al-Salami echoes in his verse (Rare Pre-Islamic Poems, p. 199):
"I argue that generosity does not diminish wealth,
nor does withholding prevent the increase of abundant wealth".

"Note that intertextuality comes with a slight modification that does not negatively affect its meaning (Intertextuality in the Poetry of Pioneers, p. 34). The poet talks about the noble virtues of his people, the Banu Salaman, with their deep-rooted glory, known for their generosity and the blessings they enjoy, surpassing those around them.

(Rare Pre-Islamic Poems, p. 199).

Internal intertextuality: "It is the relationship between a later literary text and one or more texts or paragraphs in the author's own work" (Intertextuality: A Modern Arabic Literary Critique, p. 14). It comes in two types:

The first: Internal self-intertextuality, is the relationship between previous and subsequent literary texts, contemporary to the poet himself, within his poetry collection. Zuhair bin Mas'ud Al-Dabi said (Rare Pre-Islamic Poems, p. 88)":

"Until darkness fell upon him, she passed by him like a torrent of filth".

Intertextual connection with another poem of his in the verse:

"Until, when we said, 'Avoid him,' and now he is brought to the seducer." (Rare Pre-Islamic Poems, p. 93).

In the first verse, the poet narrates the story of the bull visited by darkness, with rain pouring down, seeking refuge under a tree's branches. In the second verse, the poet depicts the bull's escape and its fear of predatory dogs, realizing that fighting is inevitable for survival. (Rare Pre-Islamic Poems, p. 88, 90).

The second type is Internal Dialogic Intertextuality, which is the relationship between different parts of a single text in the poem by the same poet (Rare Pre-Islamic Poems, p. 14). Adi bin Wadaa said (Rare Pre-Islamic Poems, p. 52):

In the first verse, the poet is calling upon his weapons when they become silent, asking his loyal companions and allies for assistance. In the same poem, the poet continues the intertextuality by saying (Rare Pre-Islamic Poems, p. 54):

"If I am blind, then ask the people whether the dread of a man with a scar is settled".

The poet presents in these two verses an artistic and poetic image, engaging in a dialogue with his beloved. He questions her about the people who have dispersed, depleted their supplies, and become fearful and cold. In doing so, he showcases his generosity and leniency, reflecting his admirable qualities of courage.

And Wadaa also said in a corresponding manner between two verses in one of his poems (Rare Pre-Islamic Poems, p. 58):

"If you express goodwill, let it spread in the hearts, and if you fear, then do not.
Woe to you if you show animosity; it's a severe harm, and it's worse for you to exhibit it".

In this depiction, the poet repeatedly associates with the paragraph "If you show goodwill," cautioning the woman against falling into love and friendship and exaggerating them. He warns her that she will face separation and torment from a man quick to sever affection.

As for Hujaz bin Awf Al-Azdi, he also engages in association between two verses in the same poem, saying (Rare Pre-Islamic Poems, p. 72):
"With a raid, like the howling of a wolf,
He seeks revenge against my companion while he sleeps.
They seek revenge against my companion or kill me,
A noble, generous, and forgiving victim".

In this painting, the poet portrays the raid he undertook, likening it to the howling of a wolf, and emphasizes the imminent danger in it. It's a remarkable, swift, and astonishing depiction of the qualities it carries (Rare Pre-Islamic Poems, p. 70).

Abdullah bin Salim Al-Azdi also engages in association in the same poem with his words (Rare Pre-Islamic Poems, p. 203):

"I have not seen the like of the daughter of Abi Wafaa,
In the morning radiant, in the thicket, I'm not fond of.
I have not seen the like of her with a slim branch,
When she moves, her firm limbs are generosity and goodness.
I have not seen the like of her with hooves of milk,
Her generosity is like fresh cream and goodness".

The poetic tableau reveals intertextuality through the repetition of expressions reflecting the significance the poet aims to convey to the audience. The poet depicts the daughter of Abu Al-Wafaa as the southern thick land mixed with stones and sand surrounded by water. He portrays other places like mountains and the black rock that he has not seen the likes of.

The core of intertextual analysis, as described by Muhammad Muftah, lies in the notion that the writer or poet is a reproducer of previous content within certain limits of freedom, whether produced for themselves or others. This implies that it is trivial to say a poet may absorb, engage, or juxtapose their previous works. The texts interpret each other and ensure coherence between them (Intertextual Analysis, p. 12, 125).

Muftah's statement demonstrates that the pre-Islamic poet generates their poetry within a settlement of intertextuality, whether external or internal. This is due to the frequent connections and intersections among most poetic texts between poets of the same era or within the poetry of the same poet.

Repetition in vocabulary, colloquial expressions, styles, structures, purposes, images, and themes in pre-Islamic poetry, especially in preliminary passages like al-Tall, al-Ghazal, al-Dhan, al-Tayf, al-Khayal, and al-Shaib, as recurring motifs inherited from the desert nature of the pre-Islamic environment, indicates intertextual phenomena within the context of the oral culture (Intertextuality in Literature and Criticism by Muhammad Jameel Shalish, p. 17). However, the individual experience of each poet asserts itself on the poems to highlight the poet's identity and unique mark.

Moreover, intertextuality is closely linked to the audience, and revealing intertextualities between texts is only possible when the audience is unaware of the overlaps between them. In the pre-Islamic era, the audience possessed a poetic taste and a discerning insight capable of perceiving the intertextual connections between multiple poets. This is attributed to the collective repository of texts in the memory based on memorization, repetition, and improvisation (Intertextuality in Pre-Islamic Poetry, p. 19).

The recipient, whether a poet or a listener, is a product of the oral culture that relies on hearing, recitation, and reflects the community's awareness during that era. Pre-Islamic poetry was characterized by collective norms that could not be deviated from. Arabs regarded it as a communal heritage, adhering to specific conventions. Ancient critics like Ibn Qutaybah emphasized the necessity for poets to follow the methods of the ancients to achieve artistic mastery. Hence, a tendency towards imitation is evident in their poetry (Impact of Orality in Textual Practices - Case Study of Pre-Islamic Poetry Blog, p. 6).

The recurrent realistic and intellectual images used by pre-Islamic poets reflect their innate connection to life (Love of Life in Pre-Islamic Poetry by Salam, p. 1). On another note, their poetry distinguishes itself with its poetic and melodic structure, primarily relying on two fundamental elements: external rhythm, represented by meter and rhyme, and internal rhythm, encompassing sound levels, prosody, and semantics. Therefore, poets adhered to the prevailing taste in their environment, following the critical standards and artistic principles common in their era (The Poetic Structure in the Poetry of Abdul Amir Al-Hasiri, p. 102).

5. Conclusion

After this overview of some opinions of ancient critics, we observe that intertextuality wasn't explicitly mentioned in old Arabic critical writings, but it intertwined with various terms like quotation, inclusion, and borrowings. However, they weren't explicitly aware of the precise meaning of the concept of intertextuality.

Upon examining rare pre-Islamic poems from some obscure poets, we notice that intertextuality manifested in poetic texts in both its external and internal forms. From this, we can affirm the early awareness of the existence of textual connections in

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