Structuralism
in Modern Arabic Criticism

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my praiseworthy wife, Sumaya, who helped me to overcome difficulties and gave me a great deal of her love and care and without whom this work would have never seen the light. I also dedicate this work to my two sons, Ammar and Hazim, hoping that it will compensate them for their long suffering while I was so near from them.
DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is entirely my own composition
Acknowledgements

This work would not have seen the light and would have not come to fruition had it not been for the combined efforts of many devoted workers in the academic field who have not failed to give me all forms of assistance in order to allow this literary work to emerge in its present shape which lies between your hands.

Therefore, it gives pleasure to express my sincere gratitude and sense of indebtedness to the University of Bahrain which has sent me abroad to study for a Ph.D. and undertook to support me financially and morally throughout the period of my studies, thus enabling me to complete my work in the best possible way.

I also offer my genuine thanks and appreciation to Professor Yasir Suleiman who did not save any effort in giving me scholarly advice and guidance and to overcoming the difficulties which I faced since ever this work was conceived until its completion, as a literary work.

I also give my earnest thanks and greatest appreciation to Dr. M. V. McDonald, who has supervised this thesis and gave a great deal of his time, effort and advice until the work was accomplished.

I would like also to express my profuse thanks to my mother-in-law, Mrs. M. Badri, who has given me a great deal of sympathy and care at all stages of my research,
and my abundant thanks go to my father-in-law Mr. Muhammad Gharib for his help and encouragement to overcome all the difficulties which I faced in the course of my research.

Also I express my many thanks to the staff of the University of Edinburgh library, especially those working in the Inter-library Loan section for their selfless efforts in helping and supplying me with the required references.

Finally, I dedicate this work to the soul of my late beloved father who implanted in me the love of work and study and who taught me to exercise patience in the face of difficulties. I hope that this work is a true fruit of that spirit which was fostered by him.

To all these and others who have lit the path of research and knowledge before me I offer my sincerest gratitude and recognition.
Abstract

The subject of this study, structuralist analysis of modern Arabic literature, consists of three parts. The first part comprises two introductory chapters. The first chapter deals with the most important critical issues of Arabic literature in the Middle Ages, those of sound and meaning, the 'amūd al-shīr, and the views of those period's critics on those two critical issues. The second chapter is an explanation of the most important critical trends which have appeared in the Arabic literary movement during the phase of critical revival and renewal; included also is a discussion of the most important critical issues which dominated these trends. These trends are represented by the schools of impressionist criticism, the Dīwān group, socialist realism, ideological criticism and modernism.

The second part of this study consists of two main chapters. These are the third chapter which consists of a study of the sources of structuralism in modern Arabic literature through the critical works of some Arab structuralist critics and an exposition of the extent of the influence of European critical schools such as of de Saussure and Claude Lévi-Strauss on those critics. The fourth chapter is a study of the most important structuralist artistic phenomena in the criticism of Arab structuralists and the relation of these phenomena to their sources in old Arabic criticism with an attempt to find the link between structuralism and 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī's theory of construction. These artistic phenomena are: binary opposition, the poetic, textual construction and rhythmic construction.

The third part consists of the fifth chapter, which contains an analytical and practical study of Arabic structuralist criticism through an analysis of the introductions dealing with ruins in five mu'allaqas and a demonstration of the structuralist critical methods of analysing those introductions.
Finally, the conclusion contains a summary of the most important conclusions reached in this study on the basis of analysing the structuralist approach in modern Arabic criticism, especially that devoted to the old Arabic poetry (the *mu'allagas*).
Introduction

Many studies of modern Arabic criticism have been published and these have accompanied the theoretical and practical growth of the subject. A great number of arguments and discussions about it have taken place, through which critics have made their own contributions by way of analysis and the formulation of a critical theory capable of harmonising old Arabic criticism with modern criticism, on the one hand, and with modern European criticism, on the other hand.

Since the second world war and the cultural, scientific and political developments that have accompanied Arabic literature, Arabic criticism has taken directions which accompany these developments, and this has had, sometimes, a negative effect and at some other times a positive one, on the shaping of this criticism. We can identify, through various theoretical studies of Arabic criticism, three critical stages through which Arabic criticism has passed. The first stage is that of emergence and formation and is represented by the old criticism such as that of ‘Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī, al-Jāḥīz, Al-Āmidī, al-‘Askarī, al-Qāḍī al-Jurjānī, al-Marzūqī and other critics. They had a clear influence on analysing and critically appraising old Arabic poetry. Perhaps ‘Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī’s theory of construction, propounded in his books (Dalā’īl al-I’jāz and Asrā’īr al-Balāghah), has made the most important contribution during that period, and its influence continues to bear on our present period. Al-Jurjānī studied the rhetorical image through a full deployment of his literary theory, which entailed something akin to the ideas of construction, which he considered as an organic part of composing poetry without which composition is impossible and can have no value without the context and
the role which it plays in poetry. The composition should not be undertaken for the sake of language ornamentation; rather it is an essential element which co-operates with the grammatical sense in the artistic composition as exemplified by the creative writer's ability to produce his literary material.

The second stage: This is the period of renaissance and evolution during which Arabic criticism was contemporary to modern literary currents such as classicism, romanticism and realism, extending from the First World War to the end of the Second World War. This stage of Arabic literary criticism was characterised by a struggle between the old and the new and between form and content as a result of the social, political and economic conditions that prevailed in Arab society at the time concerned.

The third stage: This is a period of innovation and coming under the influence of European critical trends. This period extends from the end of the seventies till the present day (1996). Contemporary Arab critics were influenced during this period by the structuralist school and the modernist movement which spread in European literature.

Progressing from the above, the researcher has defined the aim of this study as making a contribution to establishing the origins of modern Arabic criticism and charting its artistic directions in an attempt to reveal these directions and to point out their continuity and discontinuity with old Arabic criticism, by way of correlating theory and practice and identifying the influence of the structuralist approach on the modern Arabic critical movement. For this reason I have pursued the following steps in this study:

* Al-Jurjānī, Abd al-Qāhir Dalā'īl al-I'jār, p. 196-197.
First: I have dedicated the first chapter to exploring the most important critical questions which preoccupied the old critics, these being the question of the relation between sound and meaning and the question of the ‘amūd al-shīʿ. I have discussed in this chapter the views of the most important critics at that time, such as al-Jāḥiẓ, al-Jurjānī, al-Qāḍī al-Jurjānī and al-Marzūqī. The question of sound and meaning was of great importance in our critical heritage. Identifying those views helps to identify the critics’ positions in this area and in particular that of ‘Abd al-QāHIR al-Jurjānī in relation to those views. Through his sophisticated analysis, al-Jurjānī managed to destroy the dualism of sound and meaning, by means of his theory of construction. The theory of construction is a compendium of his critical, linguistic and rhetorical views. According to him, language is a collection of interactive relations that bear an intricate web of emotions and feelings. This becomes apparent and clear through construction which is the composition of sentences and the inspiration of their images. This composition represents the essential advantage and distinction of speech. Al-Jāḥiẓ, also, in his book al-Bayān wa al-Tabyīn, attempted to tackle the question of sound and meaning from a new perspective compared with his predecessors. He discovered through his efforts the question of choice and authorship which is considered an element of structuralism in modern times.

The question of the ‘amūd al-shīʿ was not less important than other questions in the works of three old critics, who are: al-Āmidī, al-Jurjānī and al-Marzūqī. Each of them had his own theory, distinct from that of the others, in some respects, and in accordance with them in other respects. The importance of this question is revealed
through the dispute between the traditionalists and the innovators during the medieval literary period. The 'amūd al-shi’r was inspired, where al-Āmidī is concerned, by the argument about Abu Tammām and al-Buḥturī. Al-Jurjānī also speaks about the poetic 'amūd and his theory of it in the context of his argument about Abū al-Ṭayyib al-Mutanabbi. In turn, al-Marzuqī tried in the introduction to his commentary on Diwān al-Ḥamāsa to formulate the conception of the 'amūd al-shi’r in a complete and final fashion by means of combining his predecessors’ theories on the subject.

In the second chapter, I have given an account of the most important critical currents prevalent in Arabic criticism during its second stage, before and after the Second World War, such as the Diwān group, social realism, ideological criticism, impressionist criticism and finally a criticism of modernism. The currents of this period are distinguished by philosophical foundations and artistic characteristics stemming from the struggle between the old and the new and from the influences of literary trends imported into Arab society.

The Diwān group based their critical direction on a revolution in language against music and traditional moulds. They rejected the exploitation of poetic music and the view which considers poetry as material for entertainment and amusement at the expense of human poetic truth. They also rejected any other formula which might compromise the freedom of thought and simplicity of style. According to them the poetic image concentrates on the inspirations of the external image and its psychological dimensions which are linked with the poet’s education and his personal culture, and on
psychological characteristics, similar to the elements and the original materials of the image.

The Dīwānites were influenced by English literature, and they were enchanted by the English critics, particularly the romantic ones among them. However, their enchantment with English romantic poetry did not lead them to rejecting and reversing everything. They called for retaining grammar and the foundations of the language; solid expression and the beauty of pure language delivery; innovation on the basis of the Arabic poem and for linking literature with life and the human soul.

Social realism: I have attempted, through my discussion of this current, to demonstrate the most important principles on which it is based. There is no doubt that this current has derived its foundation from the Marxist method and its features did not become clear in Egypt until after the July revolution of 1952 when the currents of socialist culture started to feed into it, thus leading to the emergence of the leftist trend among representatives of this current. Dialectical and historical materialism are the methodological foundation of this current although the cultural and philosophical roots of the critics representing this tendency varied according to their social consciousness, scholarly awareness and subjective experience. Socialist realism in Arabic literature was based on political and social foundations which aimed at creating a social critique whose object is not only knowing the world but also reshaping it.

Ideological criticism: This current is represented by Muhammad Mandūr after he abandoned the inclination method in literary critique. Perhaps his book *al-Adab wa*
Madhāhibuh, published in 1958, represents his historical conception of the theory of literature. Mandūr raised the banner calling for linking literature with society, by proposing a method which opposes the doctrine of “art for art’s sake”. He is of the view that art and literature have become the guides of life and its continuous progress to the better and to what makes people happier.

Impressionist criticism: Ṭāḥā Ḥusayn is the most outstanding representative of this school. He attempted to expound it in a somewhat brief way as it was not based on clear artistic criteria and it depended principally on the critic’s taste and culture in his interpretation of literary works. Ṭāḥā Ḥusayn adopted the concept of artistic truth as a foundation on which to base his critical appraisal. Artistic truth, according to Ṭāḥā Ḥusayn, is the expression of personal feelings in a language that agrees with life and the prevalent taste of the time. I have attempted, through following Ṭāḥā Ḥusayn’s critique, to demonstrate the criteria of his artistic appraisal which are divided into two phases: the first is that of taste and artistic appreciation, and the second that of analysis and reasoning.

Modernism in modern Arabic criticism: Modern Arabic criticism, from the seventies until now, is characterised by the application of critical theories in an attempt to widen the circle of Arabic criticism. This has resulted in the emergence, during this period, of two artistic terms: Modernism and contemporaneousness. I have tried to show the procedural distinction between the two concepts, and I have also discussed Adonis’ principle of modernism, which considers that the principle of modernism is the struggle
between a system based on traditionalism and a desire which works to change this system. Western modernism has had a big influence on Adonis’ thinking and his modernist manifesto.

The third chapter: This chapter contains a study and a tracking of structuralist sources in modern Arabic critique with an etymological note on the term ‘structuralism’ in the Arabic and the English languages. I have dwelt in this chapter on the concept of structuralism according to structuralist pioneers such as Jean Piaget and Claude Lévi-Strauss, in addition to a detailed account of de Saussure’s structuralist method. It also considers the basis from which the structuralist movement in Europe emerged during the sixties in order to cast its shadows on the movement of modern Arabic criticism in the seventies of this century. I have also considered in this chapter the extent to which developments in the field of linguistics and their influence on the modern linguistic currents resulted in the creation of a favourable ground accompanying the new critical revival. Through his tracking of the sources of structuralism, the researcher has observed that Arab structuralist critics have relied on the same sources although the stylistic formulations vary from one critic to another.

I have also attempted, in this chapter, to ascertain the link between structuralism and the theories of construction according to ‘Abd al-Qahir, and to show the extent to which the Arabic rhetorical heritage is present in Arabic stylistic and structuralist thought.
I concentrate in the forth chapter on artistic phenomena in modern Arabic structuralist criticism. Kamāl Abū Deeb's literary works represent the axis of this chapter, as he is one of the pioneers of structuralist criticism in Arabic literature in view of his many contributions in this area.

Through an examination of structuralist studies, I have tried to shed light on the most important artistic phenomena in Arabic literary criticism which are represented in: (1) binary opposition (2) the poetic (3) textual construction (4) rhythmic construction. I have also attempted to show the extent of affinity between these artistic phenomena and artistic phenomena in old Arabic critique and to elucidate the dialectical relation between these phenomena.

The phenomenon of binary opposition was of particular interest to philosophers such as Hegel and Aristotle and to some of the founders of structuralism in modern times such as the anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss. This interest has led to the raising of a question about the position of Arabic criticism in relation to the concept of binary opposition: is it a new concept in relation to Arabic literary heritage? Or does this concept have deep roots in Arabic rhetoric? Progressing from answering this question, I have analysed binary opposition in Abū Deeb' structuralist thinking, through his analysis of pre-Islamic poetry.

The poetic represents the other phenomenon prevalent in Abū Deeb's structuralist studies, though, through our analysis of his literary works and the views of Abd al-Salām Al-Masaddī on the stylistic construction of language, a pressing question
emerges: what is the procedural definition of the poetic? I have come, through my proposed answer to this question, to the conclusion that the poetic is nothing but a kind of imagination.

The textual construction phenomenon: This phenomenon represents an important axis on which structuralists have based their textual analyses. This has led us to discovering the dialectical relation between the structure and the subject and the mutual effect between the idea of the subject, the structure formation and the constituent elements of the text used by the poet in order to express his emotional experience.

Rhythmic construction is a phenomenon which is entirely connected with the textual construction and this has led Abu Deeb to propose a structuralist interpretation of the trends calling for a change of the rhythmic construction of Arabic poetry. The development at which Abu Deeb aims at in his study of rhythm concentrates on formulating structuralist laws which apply to some metres of Arabic poetry such as 'al-Mutadārik' and 'al-Mutaqārib' with the object of changing al-Khalil's theory of the Arabic poetry metres.

Progressing from Abu Deeb's foundation of his structuralist interpretation of Arabic rhythm the present researcher has attempted to refute this view and to prove that the taf'īlas of al-Khalil's metres are a fundamental prop of poetic rhythm from which poetic texts, old and new, cannot depart, including free verse.
I have devoted the fifth chapter to an analytical and practical study of structuralist critique in Arabic literature through five of the mu'allaqas. I have attempted in this chapter to analyse the introduction on ruins in those mu'allaqas, progressing from a method proposed here for studying structuralist critical works. This method adopts a horizontal approach for studying pre-Islamic poetry and is based on surveying the phenomenon of the structuralist critics' analysis of the introduction on ruins and a demonstration of the extent of such analysis' effectiveness.

The present researcher has relied in his analytical work on the semantic fields of these introduction of ruins and on explicating the general framework which unites them in an attempt to propose a method different from the analytical studies of pre-Islamic poetry which preceded this study such as those of Susan Stetkevych, Rītā 'Awaḍ and Kamāl Abū Deeb.

The present researcher does not dispute the fact that the authors of those studies have made a positive contribution to developing the analytical methods of literary criticism, however he strives, to contribute to the development of those studies and, by so doing, he aims at nothing else than elucidating aspects that have remained obscure, eliminating what he thinks is superfluous and reevaluating some methods which he considers to have been insufficiently appraised. He is also keen in this study to demonstrate the features of old critical questions and to explore the extent of their closeness or remoteness from modern critical thought, on the one hand, and to reveal, on the other hand, their presence in the structuralist trend whether in modern European or modern Arabic criticism.
Chapter One
Artistic Elements in
Medieval Arabic Criticism
Modern Arab criticism embraces a variety of approaches based on various literary sources, e.g. Marxism, Impressionism, Romanticism, and Classicism. In spite of the inherent differences between these approaches, the major topics of criticism - form and content and the 'amūd al-Shīr (principle of poetry) - have been studied and analysed by critics of each method. There appear to be no major differences among the various types of criticism mentioned above, save style and manner of presentation.

This study aims to trace the major elements in medieval Arab criticism, specifically, form and content and 'amūd al-Shīr. Many medieval critics have stated their own vision with regards to the analysis of the aforementioned phenomena. A sample of such critics includes: Abū al-Qāsim al-Ḥasan b. Bishr al-Āmidī (370 A. H), 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī (471 A. H), Abū 'Uthmān 'Amr b. Baḥr al-Jāḥīz (255 A. H), al-Qāḍī 'Alī b. 'Abd al-‘Azīz al-Jurjānī (366 A. H) and Abū ‘Alī Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Marzūqī (421 A. H). This chapter will present the elements of critical phenomena important to these men.

FORM AND CONTENT

This phenomenon is one of the most important features in the work of Arab literary critics who go so far as to consider form and content the main subject of literary analysis, and therefore, an essential element of literary discourse. Literary form (al-lafẓ) is used in two senses: the rhythm of the sentence, and the content. Content (al-ma’na) in medieval Arab writing has four senses: the speaker’s intention; the general idea which arises from the interpretation of the poetic material; philosophical and ethical ideas; and imagination and unusual comparisons. An idea of the use of these terms, form and content, can be derived from any one of the very frequent appearance of the terms in the writing of medieval Arab critics. Al-Jāḥīz writes:
"Meanings are everywhere. Anyone can access them, be they Arab or non-Arab, peasant or Bedouin. But poetry is formulation and a kind of portrayal."

According to al-Jāḥiẓ’s statement, meanings and sounds exist before the constituent parts of sentences. Hence, meanings are everywhere, like a list of words in a dictionary, ready to reform words into reasonable sentences. The second part of al-Jāḥiẓ’s statement “but poetry is a kind of formulation and imagination” qualifies poetry as something which incorporates more than the mere putting together of words into self contained structural units.

On the other hand, al-Jāḥiẓ places emphasis on the congruence between meaning and sound. He divides this into four types: congruence between meaning and sound; congruence between one word and another word; congruence between utterance and the audience; and congruence between utterance and the context, muqtaṣā' al-ḥāl.

In fact, the above four consistencies exist in speech, are very important for any speaker and audience, and could be called grammatical consistencies and pragmatic.

Some Arab literary researchers have thought that al-Jāḥiẓ gives priority to form while ignoring meaning, and so consider him a leader of the school of form.

Al-Jāḥiẓ specifies certain characteristics which he believes are paramount for efficient thinking on the part of the reader. "Noble expressions which have been chosen

majallat al-adab, 1965, p. 132-133, the second edition, ,

الجاحظ، أبو عثمان عمر بن بحر، الحيوان، الجزء الثالث، ص 131-132، الطبعة الثانية،

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al-Jahiz's statement, meanings and sounds exist before the constituent parts of sentences. Hence, meanings are everywhere, like a list of words in a dictionary, ready to reform words into reasonable sentences. The second part of al-Jahiz's statement "but poetry is a kind of formulation and imagination" qualifies poetry as something which incorporates more than the mere putting together of words into self contained structural units.

On the other hand, al-Jahiz places emphasis on the congruence between meaning and sound. He divides this into four types: congruence between meaning and sound; congruence between one word and another word; congruence between utterance and the audience; and congruence between utterance and the context, muqtasha' al-hal.

In fact, the above four consistencies exist in speech, are very important for any speaker and audience, and could be called grammatical consistencies and pragmatic.

Some Arab literary researchers have thought that al-Jahiz gives priority to form while ignoring meaning, and so consider him a leader of the school of form.

Al-Jahiz specifies certain characteristics which he believes are paramount for efficient thinking on the part of the reader. "Noble expressions which have been chosen
over others and which are simple and free from redundancy are attractive and appealing to the intellect."

He continues:

the expression should not be vulgar and unusual unless the speaker is a nomad. Unusual speech will be understood only by unusual people, just as vulgar speech will only be understood by vulgar people. There are different levels of speech, reflecting the different levels of people’s understanding. Therefore, speech contains eloquent and non-eloquent and witty elements alike, and people use speech of these types for praise and condemnation alike.

The main points of al-Jāḥīz, as represented in this excerpt, are: form should be simple; the words in that form should be appropriate to the subject; the form should not be eccentric but adequate to the reader’s thought; and the diction should not be arcane, but understood by all.

Al-Jāḥīz implicitly gives priority to form when he rejects the definition of rhetoric given by al-‘Attābī. In al-‘Attābī’s opinion the rhetorician explains or persuades his audience of his point of view. This process defines the speaker as a rhetorician. But al-Jāḥīz does not agree with that definition because al-‘Attābī ignores literary form. According to al-‘Attābī, even the non-Arab could communicate his intention successfully using incorrect words to both the intellectual and the layman. Al-Jāḥīz would not consider this rhetoric. He writes:

...
al-‘Attabī does not mean that everyone who has the ability to make you understand his intention is eloquent. Nor does he mean that any indigenous person who makes his intention clear using incorrect diction is eloquent. How could such a half-Arabised country person be eloquent as we can understand the speech of the non-Arab peasant who, in reply to the question, “Why did you buy the female donkey?”, responds, “To ride it and to produce babies for me.”

The word “to ride” in the Arabic has two different meanings: “to mount” and “to have sex”. The above examples demonstrate that al-Jāhīz was mindful of meaning in his analysis.

With regard to poets who have merely paraphrased the work of others, al-Jāhīz asserts that the poets in his generation are usually seeking to quote a rhetorical and noble meaning from any writer and then attribute it to themselves without acknowledging that they look to the meaning of the words as a guide.

According to al-Jāhīz, there are some words and poems whose meanings make sense only to the person who created them, and nobody could copy these. In support of his view, al-Jāhīz cites a few lines from the poet ‘Antara describing a fly:

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visited by every virgin rain cloud bountiful in showers that have left
every puddle gleaming like a silver dirham

and there the fly sits alone, unceasingly
humming away, like a toper raising his voice in song

trilling, the while he rubs one leg against another
just like a one-armed man bending to strike the flint.6

This notion could lead us to the conclusion that meaning, not form, was the
crucial element of speech for al-Jāḥiẓ. However, in al-Jāḥiẓ’s view, there is a degree of
cohesion between form and meaning. “If the meaning is of high quality, noble in form, of
good rhetorical structure, and expressed in a natural way without any affection, then the
literary creation will be as effective as rain on good soil.”7 This statement seems to
indicate that al-Jāḥiẓ was striving for a balance between form and meaning. But the
uniqueness of the Holy Qur’ān, as demonstrated in its overall structure, forced al-Jāḥiẓ
to focus on form at the expense of meaning.

The mid 9th century ushered in a new trend in literary analysis- identification of
the origin of a literary meaning. Al-Jāḥiẓ was not in favour of this trend and instead
placed priority on form. He was a widely read, highly educated writer and found no

difficulty recovering meanings from various works. Meaning could be, therefore, readily obtained from the ideas the poet expressed. Where critics made mention of meaning, it should be in terms of how writers could express their meaning in a higher form.

On the contrary, however, some medieval critics consider meaning and sound equally as does Bishr b. al-Mu'tamir. He asserts that the noble meaning should be cast in noble sound, whereas meaning and sound must not be regarded as high or low according to the level of speech, whether that be of high class or low vulgarity. Nobility should derive from the consistency and suitability both of meaning and sound with regard to the circumstances of the audience.

Ibn Qutaiba classifies form and content into a number of different types

First: good sound with good meaning, such as a line of abu Dhu'aid al-Hudhalî:-

The psyche is desiring if you make it desirous but if you bring it back to reasonable things it will be satisfied.

This line, in his view, is from an excellent poet as it contains a perfect sound and meaning.

Second: good sound with no excellent meaning behind it, such as the following:

When we had finished from Mina with all we needed
and everyone had touched the corners
and our luggage had been fixed on camels
while people did not look to who will leave early morning
then we began to chat with one another
while the camels' necks streamed through the wide riverbeds.9

In Ibn Qutaiba's view, the above lines are very clear; that is: we had been in Mina
(a sacred place near Mecca in Saudi Arabia which every pilgrim must visit), and after we
had finished the pilgrimage ceremony, we kept our camels ready to leave, then we
chatted with each other through the journey. Hence, the above meaning was on a par
with the sound, and there is no meaning beyond this. However, 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī
did not share the views of Ibn Qutaiba. Al-Jurjānī is struck by some points which lay
behind the above lines. He establishes a link between sound and the meanings through a
rhetorical approach, such as his comments on "when we had finished from Mina all that
we needed". This expression, he says, contains a lot of meaning. The poet wants to say
that he finished all the pilgrimage ceremonies by mentioning the last ceremony to give an
indication that he is free from all religious duties, and had prepared himself to go back
home. Moreover, the metaphor in the third line is very attractive when he says: while the
camel’s necks streamed through the wide riverbeds. Usually water is streaming through
valleys, not necks. But the poet wants to tell us that the journey was very comfortable,
and that it was smooth and without any obstacles, like water running smoothly into the
wide riverbed.10

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Apparently, al-Jurjānī refers in the above analysis to his theory of construction in which he asserts that the words do not make sense until they are constructed in a certain way and arranged and harmonised in one pattern rather than another.

Ibn Qutaiba’s third type is good meaning with insufficient sounds such as the following line:

The honourable man does not blame as he blames himself and the man will be made honourable by a virtuous friend.\(^\text{11}\)

This line is perfect in meaning because it contains a wise saying (hikma), though the sound does not suit the meaning.

Summarizing Ibn Qutaiba’s view, it seems that he fails to balance sound and meaning. He does not treat them as a component of the whole context, and therefore ignores sound and stresses meaning - he considers form as a shape of ideas.

On the other hand, Abū Hilāl al-‘Askarī follows previous critics in analysing form and content. In his Sirr al-Šīnā’atāin he stresses important characteristics of form such as simplicity, flexibility, and perfection in constituent parts of speech.\(^\text{12}\) He also follows al-Jāḥiz’s approach in giving priority to sound. He writes:

The concern is not to present meaning which anyone can access, be they Arab or non-Arab, peasant or Bedouin, but poetry should be perfect, clear, beautiful, perfect in harmonisation, free from redundancy, and therefore, sound cannot be satisfactory unless it

\(^{11}\text{Ibn Qutaiba, Sirr al-Šīnā’atāin, ed. A. R. S. Hikmat (Cairo: Dar al-Kitāb, 1998), 88.}\)

contains these characteristics.\textsuperscript{13}

Examining the above statement, it seems that he gives priority to sound over meaning. Rhetoric is based on perfection of sound because marvellous speech and a high standard of poetry are not merely vehicles to convey the meanings-poor sound could play a similar role. If sound is flexible, beautiful, with reasonable meaning, then one could consider a work which has this as a good piece. Still although al-'Askarī gives priority to the sound, he does not ignore meaning. Rhetoric, in his view, is clarity of meaning and embellishment of sound, though his situation also forced him to consider figures of speech (\textit{al-badī'}). This situation, in this author's opinion, occurred because al-'Askarī involved himself in an abstract analysis of form and content without looking deeply into the effect of sound in the literary context.

Ibn Rashīq al-Qairawānī pursues a different trend to previous critics. He believes that the sound is like a body and the meaning is its psyche. They join each other as soul does a body, where both of them become weak or strong depending on the other.\textsuperscript{14} His view is valid as it postulates the importance of unity between sound and meaning. But, in fact, he did not study form and content deeply enough to explain the influence of one on the other through a literary study according to the rhetorical approach based on the theory of construction of al-Jurjānī.
Al-Jāḥīz’s critical ideas had a significant impact on the critical study of literature as a whole. ‘Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī was a staunch supporter of al-Jāḥīz’s theories. Al-Jurjānī argued that to misunderstand the theories of al-Jāḥīz is to misunderstand Arabic rhetoric and its artistic norms. One of al-Jāḥīz’s prominent theories of critical analysis was that individual words should be examined in the context of the work rather than in isolation, as was the wont of some critics of his time. Al-Jurjānī, further reinforcing al-Jāḥīz’s ideas, similarly rejects the concept of the importance of individual words on the basis that there is no virtue in the words as isolated units. He writes: “Single words are equal by virtue of their being single. It is only through context that preference can be given to some words over others.”15 Al-Jurjānī later expands on this idea: “One might be content with the meaning of a word in a specific context, but then be discontented when that same word appears in a different context.”16 Al-Jurjānī, therefore, could not accept the view which separated form from content. He regarded as inadequate the convictions of these who accorded more importance to meaning while ignoring form.

The rationale which compelled medieval writers to divide a poem between meaning and form was rejected completely by al-Jurjānī. He sees a unity in meaning and form. Meaning must derive from the words, which, in order to be most effective, should

15 “ أن الألفاظ لا تتفاوت من حيث هي ألفاظ مجردة، ولا من حيث هي كلم مفردة، وأن الألفاظ تثبت لها الفضيلة وخلافها، في ملاءمة معنى القصيدة معنى التي تكتبها، وَاشيءه ذلك، مما لا تتعلق له بصريح النظم.” الجرشاني. عبدالفؤاد. دلال الاعجاز. ص 38 ، تحقيق محمد رشيد رضا، الطبعة الرابعة. القاهرة 1367 هـ.

16 “ أن ذلك ترى الكلمة تروقك وتؤنك في موضوع ثم تراها بعد ذلك تنقل عليك وتوضحك في موضوع آخر، فإنك كتبت الكلمة إذا حسنها حسنها من حيث هي لفظ، وإذا استحققت المزية والشرف استحققت ذلك في ذاتها وعلى افتراضها دون أن يكون السبب في ذلك حال لها مع اخواتها المجاورة لها في النظم فيما اختلف بها الحال، ولكنت أما أن تحسن أبداً، أو لا تحسن أبداً.” المرجع السابق نفسه. ص 38 – 40.
be in an ideal context and believes that idea and meaning in order to be most effective, should be in a perfect context. In order to achieve that kind of perfection of arrangement, the meaning must first be properly arranged in the author’s mind. Literary texts necessarily have a particular characteristic as a result of the individual author’s unique arrangement of words which enables him to point his desired literary portrait. Al-Jurjānī therefore could not agree with medieval critics in making a distinction between meaning and form. He believes that the construction of the piece should be given high priority, since the conception of construction is based on meaning and sound. He argues that the arrangement of the words in a particular construction is not what you have in your mind, but it is a result of the construction of meaning. Moreover, he looks to the words as the bearers of meaning, so it is certain that the words follow the same meaning in their positions. Hence, if the meaning claims to be the first in the psyche, the words must be first in the utterance. 

Kamāl abū Deeb writes, in *al-Jurjānī’s Theory of Poetic Imagery* (p. 28), that al-Jurjānī asserts that the arrangement of words establishes a set of relationships between them. This, al-Jurjānī argues, can only mean that the arrangement is achieved by constructing a subject-predicate relationship between two nouns; by using one noun as an adjective of the other; by using a noun as the object of a verb, etc. These types of relationships are necessarily between meanings and not words. Therefore, he states, there can be no doubt that the arrangement of words in the utterance inevitably follows the arrangement of the meanings in the psyche. He writes:

“If words were emptied of their meanings, so that they became mere sounds and echoes of letters, it would not occur to any mind that an arrangement and construction were required in them, or that

17  واعلم ان لم ترى أدنى من حملة الألفاظ وتناولها على النظم الخاص ليس هو الذي طلبه بالذكر، ولكنك شيء يقع بسبب الأول (أي المطلوب الأول وهو المعنى) ضرورة من حيث إن الألفاظ إذا كانت أرفع للمعاني، فأنها لا محللة تتبع المعاني في مواقعها، فإذا وجب لمعنى أن يكون أولا في النفس وجب في الفاصل السابق عليه أن يكون مثله أولا في النطق.

المراجع السابق نفسه ص 42-43 .
defined positions should be given to them, or that one of them should be uttered before another.”18

Al-Jurjānī, in presenting his theory of construction, applies his theory to examples of poetry and verse from the Holy Qurʾān. He disagrees that some words should be given priority over others. He wants to see words in harmony with each other. In other words, he considers words as in this general context. For example, he quotes the following verse:

“And it was said, ‘(O) Earth, swallow thy waters; and (O) heaven, abate! And the water subsided, (and) the affair was accomplished, and the Ark settled on Al-Jūḍī, and it was said: ‘Away with the people of the evildoers.”19

al-Jurjānī illustrates the beauty of the word which is derived from the relationship between the words in the context of the verse and from the arrangement between them.

“The origin of the glory of the verse lies in many facts: the fact that the earth was addressed, then commanded, and in that the particle used to address it is the yā without using ayya (as in yā ayyatuhā al-arḍ’), and in using water in the genitive link with the pronoun “your” rather than saying ‘swallow the water’ (‘ibla’ī al-mā’); then, having addressed the earth and commanded it to perform the particular task allocated to it, in addressing the sky and commanding it to perform its (allocated) task (The glory lies in saying) then ‘the water was absorbed’ (wa ghīḍa a-l-mā’), using the verb in the passive form, which indicates that it was absorbed only due to an order from a commander and from the power of a powerful one, and then asserting this by saying ‘and the thing was over’ ( wa quṣṣaṣa a-l-amr), then mentioning the event which is the end result of all these actions, and it settled on al-Jūḍī ( wa istawāt

18 يقول الجرجاني: إن الأمر على ما قلنا: من أن اللفظ تبع للمعنى في النظم، وأن الكلم ترتيب في النطق، بسبب ترتيب معانيها في النفس، وأنها لو خلت من معانيها تشترط أسماء وأصداء حروف لما وقع في ضمير ولا هجو في خاطر، أن يجب فيها ترتيب ونظام، وأن يجعل لها أمكنا ومنازل، وأن يجب النطق بهذه قبل النطق بتلك.

المرجع السابق نفسه ، ص ٤٥ ١٩

قال تعالى: وقيل يا أرض إلهي ماطك، يا سماء ألمي، وغيض الاماء، وقيدي الأمير، واستوت على الجوادي، وقيل بعدا للقوم المظلمين.

سورة هود، الآية ٤٤
‘alā al-Judī); then in referring to the Ark implicitly before mentioning it explicitly, which is the prerequisite of achieving magnificence and of indicating the greatness and nobility of the status of something; then in closing the verse with ‘it was said’ as it had been opened with’ it was said’. Do you believe that any of these qualities which fill you with a feeling of awe by their inimitable (power) is due to the words as acoustic elements and the pattern of them occurring successively in the utterance? Or rather is all this power due to the fascinating harmony between the meanings of the words?”

In the above analysis, al-Jurjānī illuminates the beauty of the rhetorical image, which is based neither on sound nor meaning alone. Because there exists an appropriate relationship between them in the general context of the verse, the construction has artistic beauty where the meaning is allowed to flourish into a beautiful shape.

It seems that al-Jurjānī stresses certain facts in his theory of construction.

First, sound should be appropriate to the literary situation. For example, when we are writing, we do not arbitrarily put words in a string, but we express meanings, hence sounds may be considered as a symbolic vehicle to evoke meanings. Sound succeeds not because of any external form, but in its ability to create meaning which we want to express.

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20. يقول الجرجاني: وعلم أن مبدأ المعظمة في أن تودي الأقداس، ثم أمرت، ثم في أن كان التداء ب (بـ) دون (أي) نحو (يأيتها الأرض)، ثم اهتمام العناية إلى الكاف، دون أن يقال: إيلاء العناية، ثم أن أتبع نداء الأرض وأمرها بما هو من شأنها، نداء السماء أمرها كذلك بما يخشى، ثم أن قيل (وغيض السماء) فجام الفعل على صيغة (فعل) الدالة على أنه لم يغض الا بأمر أمر، وقدرة قادر، ثم تأكيد ذلك وترقيم بقولة تعالى (وقضي الأمر) ثم ذكر ما هو فائدة هذه الأمور، وهو استناد على الجودي، ثم استمر السفينة قبل الذكر، كما هو شرط الخدمة والدالة على عظم الشأن، ثم مقابلة (قيل) في الخاتمة بالقل ودالة في النافذة. أثرى لشيء من هذه الأفكار التي تملأ بالاعجاز روعة، وتحضر عند صورها هيئة تحيط بالنفس من أطوارها، تعلقا بالفعل من حيث هو صوت مسموع، وحرف توايلي في الطقوس؛ أم كل ذلك لما بين معاني الأفاظ من الأشكال؟

الجرجاني، عبد القاهر، دلالات الأشعار، ص 37.
Second, an author intending to write a poem or literary text should not look to sound or meaning independently or one ahead of the other. The literary creation should be based on both sound and meaning in a natural way. Therefore, sound should be built up according to such literary requirements as well as produce the meaning.

Third, the virtue of rhetorical speech does not refer to sounds individually or to the characteristics of sound, but refers to the ability of sound to evoke the literary situation which it has to express.

These facts direct one to the realisation that al-Jurjānī looks to sound through construction; characteristics of sound belong to the meaning, where sound is a vehicle of the author to convey his experimental poetic, particularly when congruency occurs between sound and meaning on the one hand and the feelings which the author tries to express. Al-Jurjānī in his theory rids himself of the binary opposition of sound and meaning in literary work, which affects literary criticism: studies since then regard the poetic image as a whole unit.

Al-Jurjānī believes that the central point in the overall structure is the suitability of the words in their context. The reasons for this are twofold: the meaning of the word makes demands on the preceding and following words, and expression cannot precede meaning any more than meaning can precede expression—they are produced simultaneously. In fact, there is no distinction between expression and meaning. The author must give equal attention to both, else the literary product will include meaningless words. This suggests that the meaning would be unclear if the author used words in an inappropriate style for their context. Consequently, literary perfection can only come from perfection in meaning and diction.

THE PRINCIPLE OF POETRY—'Amud al-Shi'r

The theory of the principle of poetry is one of the major elements in Arab criticism. Many medieval Arab critics pondered this subject, including: al-Āmidī, in al-Muwāzana bayna al-Ṭā'iyyayn; ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-'Azīz al-Jurjānī, in al-Wasāṭa bayna al-Mutanabbī wa Khuṣūmih; and al-Marzūqī, in Sharḥ Dīwān al-Ḥamēsā. Before presenting their arguments, a brief consideration of the word ‘amūd will prove beneficial. ‘Amūd can be translated reasonably closely into English as “prop, shore, pier, buttress; stem (of a glass)” (Wehr). This definitions implies fundamental support, without which the object being “propped” or “shored up” would undoubtedly collapse. The use of the phrase, ‘amūd al-shi'r is meant to suggest that there are definitive principles of poetry—that there are fundamental elements of poetry—without which the poem’s meaning would collapse, i.e., be unintelligible to the reader. Al-Āmidī was the first Arab critic to use the phrase ‘amūd al-shi'r in the aforementioned work. He writes: “al-Buḥtūrī is a talented poet. He follows his progenitors’ approach and does not quit the principle of poetry ‘amūd al-shi'r which is very well known.” Very well known to al-Āmidī and his peers perhaps, for he nowhere deemed it essential to define the phrase he repeats many times throughout his work. Having established that al-Buḥtūrī observed the principle of poetry, al-Āmidī compared him with another poet, Abū Tammām, to elicit some rules of poetry which al-Āmidī regards as basic.

One of those basic elements is the idea that the language used in poetry should be natural to both the poet and his intended audience, yet should not prohibit the poet from experimenting with language to convey specific effect. Al-Āmidī writes:
The greatest defect the poet could produce [in his poetry] is unnatural language. Artificiality could lead to an excessive burden on the reader, as in the cases of Salih b. ‘Abd al-Quddūs, et al., to the point that their poetry has been ignored. There is a limit to everything, and the offending poets have exceeded that limit, turning right into wrong and beauty into ugliness.  

However, al-Āmīdī says that he does not want to discard the use of what he calls artificial language, but fears that the use of such language will become excessive and alienate the audience. Al-Āmīdī found in al-Buḥtūrī’s approach to poetry the essence of good poetry — some artificial wording, but not so much as to overload the poem. He remarked that al-Buḥtūrī excels (like all poets) in creating poetry because he employs originality, clear and understandable wording, appropriate rhyme which does not detract from the meaning of the poem, and metaphors which enhance the meaning of the poem.

Style is also a major principle of poetry. Part of ‘amūd al-shi‘r holds that the individual elements of the poem, e.g., the distribution of emphatic vocalised wording, should be in harmony, such that a melodic whole is the resultant outcome. According to al-Āmīdī, ‘amūd al-shi‘r requires of its poets that their poetry should achieve its objective easily, clearly, and without strain, while simultaneously avoiding oversimplification which would spoil the poem. Poetry of this kind in not related to ‘amūd al-shi‘r. Making this point, he quotes this line from al-Buḥtūrī:

"..."
Poetry is a glance which is sufficient to convey its meaning and is like lengthy, frivolous chatter.

The introduction of wisdom and philosophy into a poem could change its structure into a very complex piece. Al-Āmidī argued that when elements of Greek philosophy, Indian wisdom, and Persian literature are grafted into Arabic poetry, the poem necessarily exhibits the unusual sounds and irregular structure often incompatible with the aims of 'amūd al-shi'r. However, if such a work exhibited eloquent description and a clear vision, then the poet would be producing wisdom, philosophy, and beautiful meaning, rather than merely copying it. Nevertheless, al-Āmidī concluded that such a man was not a poet at all, but a wise man or perhaps a philosopher, because his poetry differed so much from the Arab approach.25

al-Āmidī went on to qualify 'amūd al-shi'r still further by contending that the poet was elucidating consciousness in his work, not ideas. Consequently, poetry should have a simple and natural structure, reflecting both pre-Islamic and current usage of language. Even so, the archaic words used by poets of the a'rābī and badawī tradition should be rejected as unnatural language to the “modern” poet[i.e., the poets contemporary with al-Āmidī]. He wrote: “If it is reprehensible for the pure Arab speaker to use such archaic language, it will be reprehensible of the modern author to use

الباجي... وَالشَّخْصَ لِمَهْجُ تِكْفِيِّ إِشْتَارَتُهُ وَلِيسَ بِالْهِذَّرِ طَوْلَتْ خَطَّةُهُ

يقول الأمدي: وَهَذَى يُمَتَّعُ فَاحِظًا السَّمَعَةَ مِنْ فَلْسَةِ يُونَانَ وأَحِيَّةَ الْفَلَسَةِ أَوْ أَدْبِ الفُرْسِ وَيُكَوِّنَ أَكْثَرَ مَا يُوْرِدُهُ مِنْهَا بِأَلْفَافِ مُتَعَلَّقَةِ وَيُنِسِّجُ مَضْطَرِبَ وَيُنُفِّقُ فِي تَضْمِيعِ ذَلِكَ شَيْءَ مِنْ صَحِيحِ وَسَلِيمِ النَّظَرِ فَلَنَا لَهُ، فَفَدْ جَنَّ بَحَكَمَةَ وَفَلْسَةَ وَمَعْنَى لَطِيفَةَ، فَإِنَّ شَجُّ دُعَوَّنا حُكْمَا، أَوْسُمَّنا فِلَسُوفَا، وَلِكَ، لَا سَمِيَكَ شَعْرًا، وَلَا تَدْعُو بَلَيْغَا، لَانَ طَرِيقَكُ لَيْسَ عَلَى طَرِيقَةِ الْمُرْبِبِ وَلَا عَلَى مَذَاهِمُهُ.”

المرجع السابق نفسه. ص 447 – 450.
language which is not natural to his audience."  

al-Āmidī made this statement as a chastisement of Abū Tammām. He disapproved of Abū Tammām's use of wording which ran contrary to 'amīd al-shī' r. Al-Āmidī also holds that 'amīd al-shī' r takes into account the use of metaphor, Istī‘āra. A metaphor might be thought of as an eloquent simile from which the linguistic indicator of comparison has been omitted. Once the relations between the individual parts of the simile are clear, the metaphor as a whole should similarly be clear and thereby accessible. Al-Āmidī asserts that Arabs would use a metaphor if the original meaning was already suited to the intended metaphor. As proof of this, he cites a couple of lines from a poem by Imru’ al-Qais:

and I said to the night, when it stretched its lazy loins followed by its fat buttocks, and heaved off its heavy breast.”

In this lines Imru’ al-Qais compared the act of a camel stretching out its body to the night stretching out before him.

Al-Āmidī added that if the metaphor is to be clear, it must have an effective vehicle to deliver its meaning. He writes: “An individual word may have suitable meanings, depending on the context in which the word is placed. If the word that is meant to convey the metaphoric meaning is of this type, then it would not serve to use

26. "وَأَيْفَاءُ لأَنَّ هَذَا يَسْتَهْجَنُ مِنَ الأَعْرَابِيِّ الْقَحَّ الَّذِي لاَ يَتَأَمَّلُ لَهُ وَلَا يُلْبِسْهُ ، وَأَيْنَاءُ يُنَبِّئُهُ عَلَى عَادِةَ وَطِبْعَهُ فَهُوَ مِنَ الْمَفْهُومِ الَّذِي لَا يَمْلِكُ لَهُ وَلَا يَمْلِكُ مَا يَمْلِكُ الْلَّذِي يَتَأَمَّلُ مِنْهُ أَنْ يَسْتَهْجَنُ."  

27. "وَلَوْ أَسْتَمَتَّ الْأَلْبَابُ الْمَعْنَى لَا لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ أَنْ يَكُنْ لَا لَمْ يَكُنْ لَا لَمْ يَكُنْ لَا لَمْ يَكُنْ لَا لَمْ يَكُنْ لَا لَمْ يَكُنْ لَا لَمْ يَكُنْ لَا لَمْ يَكُنْ لَا لَمْ يَكُنْ لَا لَمْ يَكُنْ لَا لَمْ يَكُنْ لَا لَمْ يَكُنْ لَا لَمْ يَكُنْ L. 266.  

المراجع السابق نفسه. ص 266.
that word as part of the metaphor.”28 Al-Āmīdī was attempting to express his conception of the near metaphor. An example from the work of Abū Dhu’āib al-Hudhalī should shed some light on this issue of the near metaphor:

If death inserts his nails
Every amulet will be useless.29

In this excerpt, al-Hudhalī is expressing the view that there is no protection from death, using the familiar and solid objects of a nail and amulet to illustrate a larger meaning, i.e., the meaning of life and death.

To conclude, for al-Āmīdī, the fundamental bases of good poetry are the principles included in ‘amūd al-shi’r. There are four major points to ‘amūd al-shi’r, which he stresses in his book, al-Muwāzana. First, the principle of style - simple, familiar wording, avoiding uncommon or unusual language. Second, the principle of meaning, based on simplicity and clarity. The poet ought to describe emotions in his poetry since poetry itself tends to elicit an emotional response from the reader. This, then, is why he disapproves of difficult arguments and complex ideas which in themselves demand a disproportionate share of attention. Third, the principle of imagination - al-bādi’, the art of using a figure of speech. An imaginative figure of speech may be used to beautify elements of the poem so long as they are used conservatively. Fourth, the poet should use the image of the literary picture naturally, else the structure of the poem will be alien to the principle of metaphor. Al-Āmīdī believes that there are two conditions which
would produce the perfect metaphor: clarity and accessibility of the language. Every metaphor which does not conform to these points must be rejected.

The poetical theory of al-Āmidī seems to derive from his admiration of certain characteristics found in ancient poetry. His emphasis on these characteristics underlies his conservative approach, which is based on disapproval of the excessiveness of al-Badi’, and of complex ideas, which he consigns to the realm of philosophy and logic rather than poetry. It seems plausible that al-Āmidī’s assessment came about as a reaction against the civil and cultural developments of the Islamic world during his lifetime. Against this backdrop, al-Āmidī’s theoretical principles of poetry may well be a rejection of the then current developments in poetry and literature and a reaffirmation of the original Arabic sources of this poetry.

Al-Qādi al-Jurjānī’s Theory of Poetry

Al-Āmidī undertook comparisons between al-Buhtūrī and Abū Tammām. He sought to present the approach each took to poetry and analyse their strength and weakness. Al-Jurjānī in his book, al-Wasāṭa bayna al-Mutanabbi wa Khūṣumihī, compared al-Mutanabbi to a variety of other poets in an effort to re-establish al-Mutanabbi’s reputation as a poet. He sought to demonstrate that poets of any age, pre-Islamic or contemporary (to his time), could make mistakes. It was therefore unfair to focus on the imperfection of al-Mutanabbi’s poetry at the expense of his creativity. Al-Jurjānī remonstrated: Look at pre-Islamic and Islamic collections of poetry. Can you find even one single poem which is free from defect, either in sound, construction, meaning, or inflection?30

30 ودَوَلَّ هَذِهِ الدَّوَارِ إِلَّاَ إِلَىَ هُمَا فَبَذِّكَ تَرَىَ قَصَيْدَةً تُسِلِّمَ مِنْ بَيْتٍ أَوْ أَكْثَرَ لَا يِعْمَكَ لَعَابُ الْقُدْحِ فِيهَا ، إِمَّا فِي قَلْحِهِ وَنُظُمَهُ ، أَوْ تَرْتِيِبَهُ وَتَقْسِيمِهِ ، أَوْ مَعَاناً ، أَوْ أَعْرَابِهِ. “الجرياني، أبو الحسن علي بن عبد العزيز، الوساطة بين المنتهي وخصوصه، 1985، القاهرة. دار إحياء الكتب العربية، القاهره.
His challenge thus issued, al-Jurjānī attempted to answer specific charges levelled against al-Mutanabbi by comparing him to poets with secure reputations. For example, it was suggested that the harmonisation of elements in al-Mutanabbi's poetry was unstable. Al-Jurjānī observed that the poetry of Abū Nuwās also lacked a degree of stability in its harmonising effects. He concluded that al-Mutanabbi's harmonisation was more stable than that of Abū Nuwās and al-Mutanabbi was, therefore, the better poet. In stating that, al-Jurjānī was not at all dismissing his contemporary poets, merely calling attention to the fact that all poets have their faults and should be read accordingly.

In his arguments, al-Jurjānī used al-Āmidī's definition of 'amūd al-shi'r. What al-Jurjānī fully understood the term to mean is not easily identifiable from his writing. He did make some specific references to elements of 'amūd al-shi'r, for the purposes of comparing and judging poets. The elements that he stressed are: noble and accurate meaning, eloquence of sound, accurate description, clarity of simile, frequency of famous lines and rare proverbs, and frequency of intuition. Al-Jurjānī believed that the best poetry observes these key elements of 'amūd al-shi'r, and avoids the use of alliteration, antithesis, and metaphor.31

Clearly, al-Jurjānī's idea of the perfect poem is not completely in line with al-Āmidī's view of the perfect poem. The only common ground between them, with respect to the principles of poetry, is clarity of simile. In broader terms, the two critics are not separated by the chasm which one would suspect. Both men insist on so-called "natural" poetry. But where al-Āmidī regards artistic treatment (ṣan'ā) as a worthy topic

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31 وَكَانَ الْمُرْبِعُ إِمْامًا تَفَاكَأَ بَينَ الْشَّعْرَاءِ فِي الْحَدَّةِ وَالحَمْسِ: يَنْفَعُ الْمَنْهَى وَرَسْمَهُ، وَجَزَاءُ الْفُطْرِ.

31 11 أَمْثَالَهُ وَشِوَارِدُ أَبِيَتَهُ، وَلَا تُعْدِبَ بِالْجُنُبَاءِ وَالَّذِيَةِ، وَلا تَحْفَلْ بِالإِبْدَاعِ وَالإِسْتِعْتِراةِ أَيْ حَصْلَ لَهَا

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of discussion, al-Jurjānī declares that poets concentrating solely on artistry (ṣanʿa) have no poetical talent, and the topic was at best marginal.

The different views of these two men taken together seem to suggest that the principles of ʿamīd al-shīr were derived from pre-Islamic poetry. The point is better taken with al-Āmidī’s approach, who bases his theory on pre-Islamic norms and customs. Al-Jurjānī, for his part, makes comparisons between poets of the pre-Islamic period and his own contemporary period.

Two points suffice to summarise al-Jurjānī’s critical approach. First, his presentation of principles of poetry was neither clear nor specific. He referred in the main to six points, though what else he understood by the terms, and more importantly, what he wanted his reader to understand, remain obscure. Second, his book ʿal-Wasīṭa reveals that he can be seen as having a more flexible view than al-Āmidī.

Al-Marzūqī’s Theory of Principle of Poetry

Form and content are major topics whose analysis engages a wide spectrum of critics, including al-Āmidī, al-Jurjānī and Abū-ʿAlī b. Muḥammad al-Marzūqī. Al-Marzūqī offers his opinion on ‘the characteristics and fundamental elements of poetry in his introduction to the Ḥamāṣa of Abū Tammām’32. His inspiration is drawn from all previous critical views, but he accepts only specific elements from each of those views.

Al-Marzūqī’s definition of ‘amūd al-shīr incorporates the following four points: noble and accurate meaning, eloquent sound, accurate description, and clarity of simile. To this he adds three more elements to his critical approach: coherence of structure and rhythm; suitability of the noun as a metaphor (al-musta’dar minhu) with the subject of the comparison (al-musta’dar alahu), as well as the suitability of the vehicle of the metaphor for its ensuing design: and the suitability of keeping the rhyme scheme even.33

al-Marzūqī developed eight measurements with which to test for the elements of his principles of poetry; these are:
1. Perfect mind and ease of understanding.
2. Natural talent of the poet.
3. Quotation, which means the ability of the poet to memorise many poems.
4. The ability of the poet to use the technical forms of poetry.
5. Clarity and ability to distinguish between good and weak poetry.
6. Sharpness and expertise in criticism.
7. Intellect and sharpness.
8. Length and continuity of practice.

These elements are not entirely new. They are the same points formulated by al-Jurjānī, but with a key difference - the perspective from which these elements are considered. Al-Jurjānī seems to have assumed that the elements of poetry were considered by the poet as he created the poem. Al-Marzūqī seems to have assumed that the critics (and possibly the audience) brought with them the elements of poetry when they examined the final product. Al-Marzūqī believes that the poet was never under any obligation to heed these elements of poetry: these elements were best left in the hands of the critics. He writes:

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“These are the elements of the principles of poetry in the Arab critical approach, and whoever follows it accurately in his poetry will be considered a creative poet and a good performer. On the other hand, the evaluation of whoever fails to follow the principles of poetry will be according to his ability to do so. This is the consensus approach which has been followed up to now.”

When we compare the views of al-Marzūqī with those of al-Āmidī and al-Jurjānī, two important points emerge. First, al-Āmidī attempted to establish certain rules, drawn from a study of al-Buḥṭūrī’s poems, which themselves were based on ancient, i.e., pre-Islamic, poetical rules. Al-Marzūqī, as well as al-Jurjānī, attempted to establish general characteristics of both classical and modern poetry. Second, al-Marzūqī and al-Jurjānī appear to lean in the direction of generality. This leaning tends to allow and encourage others to express themselves creatively and develop new ideas.

Furthermore, al-Marzūqī and al-Jurjānī accept their contemporary poets, such as Abu Tammām and al-Mutanabbī, while attempting to extract the benefits of the ancient poets. Indeed al-Āmidī, al-Jurjānī, and al-Marzūqī may be said to have introduced nothing exceptionally new to literary criticism, but more reflected and developed upon what had been the mainstream of Arabic literary criticism from pre-Islamic days to their own century. One might even consider al-Marzūqī’s approach the culmination of the previous views on poetical structure, much of which looked to pre-Islamic poetry as the ideal.
Conclusion:-

In sum, it seems clear that form, content, and ‘amūd al-shi’r are the fundamental concepts of the Arabic literary critic. In this chapter I have developed the discussion in detail, and have introduced some of the outstanding Arab critics of the Middle Ages to help us assess the contribution to their contemporary critical movement. The question remains as to whether such men as al-Āmidī, al-Jurjānī, and al-Marzūqī, were making original contributions to their field, or were they more expanding ideas which went back to the pre-Islamic era. In the next chapter I will study and discuss this question as well as some other related issues. My aim is to establish an introduction to Arab critical theory and analysis with relevance to approaches which are based on European critical theory, such as structuralism. In so doing, I hope to illuminate the European influence on new Arab critical approaches to literary criticism.
Chapter Two
Contemporary Arab Literary Criticism
At the beginning of the twentieth century, Arab literature experienced a resurgence. A literary restoration movement attempted to encourage new contributions to Arab literature, different from works produced during the Ottoman period. The poet Maḥmūd Sāmī al-Bārūdī (1838-1904) endeavoured to produce poems based on Umayyad and ‘Abbāsīd poetry that were relevant to his times. Literary criticism experienced its resurgence after World War II. New points were posed, such as the concepts of traditionalism and modernism, as well as the revisiting of older concepts, such as content and form.

**Concept of Traditionalism and Modernism**

These movements were very important to the development of 20th century Arabic literary criticism. Some critics supported traditionalism while others were inclined to modernism, aiming to join the literary renaissance movement in Europe. The tension between the two approaches was based on literary language. The traditionalists preferred to return to the Arab’s flourishing past of literature and bring it into the present, hoping to make a firm connection between the poor Arab production of the present and past success. Some figures often associated with traditionalism include Muṣṭafā al-Manfalūṭī and al-Shaikh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Bishrī. The modernists aimed to establish a new literary language suited to the recent developments in Arabic culture and society, bringing it to its present form. Figures often associated with modernism include Ṭāḥā Ḥusayn, ‘Abbās al-‘Aqqād, Zakī Mubārak, and Muḥammad Ḥusayn Haikal.

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1. The modernism referred to here is different from the modernist movement in European literature. Modernism in that context tends to be concerned with a particular set of cultural or aesthetic styles associated with an artistic movement which originated around the turn of this century and continued to dominate the various arts until recently. See Madan Sarup. *Post-structuralism and Post-modernism*, 2nd ed. (London, 1993) P 129.
**Form and Content**

Form and content were the major points in medieval Arab literary criticism. As was demonstrated in Chapter 1, ‘Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī and al-Jāḥiz, to name but a couple, have studied these points in detail. Modern Arab literary criticism raised form and content again as one of the main points in their critical works, though they studied it in a different light. The approaches comprising modern literary criticism include Realism, Socialism, and Psychoanalysis. According to these approaches, form and content has a mandatory place in literature: to place stress on purposeful meanings which would help explain social problems of the day. This chapter is going to stress three particular approaches to literary criticism: the al-Dīwān Group, Socialism, and Impressionism.

**Al-Dīwān Group**

The al-Dīwān Group approach to literary criticism was considered a new approach in Arabic criticism during the first quarter of the twentieth century. The prominent figures of this group were ‘Abbās Maḥmūd al-‘Aqqād, Ibrāhīm ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Māzinī, and ‘Abd al-Rahmān Shukrī. The Al-Dīwān Group shows its influence of Romanticism when it criticises Classicism. Al-‘Aqqād conceived of some romantic critical principles in his book *Shu‘arā ‘Miṣr wa bi’ātuhum fi al-Jīl al-Māḍī*. He emphasised originality and “sensuous truth” in poetry to elicit the poet’s feelings in his work. Al-‘Aqqād, in his analysis of Shawqī’s poetry, did not find any indication of the poet’s personality. He therefore summarily dismissed the work as unnatural and theoretical.

The most important point in the al-Dīwān approach seems to have been the poem’s unity. Al-‘Aqqād remarked that faultless poetry is distinguished by the
completion of homogenous ideas. Explaining this idea, he gave examples such as the fact that a statue would be incomplete without its limbs, and a portrait would not be complete without its constituent parts, and the musician’s composition would be defective if it were missing notes, or worse still, if the notes were not in harmony. Good poetry is the same: it must have all its essential elements in their appropriate places so as not to undermine the unity of the work.2

The second principle of al-Dīwān’s approach is the difference between nobility of sound (lafz) and eloquence. Representing this construct is al-Māzinī. He wrote that some poets think of their poems in terms of a kind of talking embellishment or eloquent trick. The poem should be an expression of the poet’s feelings, of his consciousness. The eloquence of the poem also expresses feelings, but feelings that are meant to elicit a specific emotional response from the reader.3

The focus of the al-Dīwān group, in distinguishing the poet’s use of eloquence, was poetic fact and poetic philosophy as an element of the poem’s structure. Poetic fact should not be confused with scientific fact, where one finding can displace another if the latter is found to be an improvement on the former. With poetic facts, no such

2. يقول عباس العقاد: "القصيدة الشعرية ينبغي أن تكون عمل فني يكمل فيه تصوير خاطر أو خواطر متجانسة، كما يكمل التمثال بأعضائه، والصورة بأجزائها والحن الموسيقي بأغامته، بحيث إذا تغيّرت النسبة أخلي ذلك بوجود القصيدة وأفسدها." العقد، عامر. معارك العقاد الأدبية، دار الجيل، الطبعة الثانية 1982، ص 134.

3. يقول المازني: "إذا الشعر الحديث يختلف مفهومه عن اعتباره عند بعض الشعراء زخرفاً قوياً أو حيلاً بديعية، إذ كان عبارة عن الإحساس الذي يعترف به المرء لنفسه سنة الخلوة بها، ويرمز له بما هو أقرب إلى الصورة التي هو بها في نفس الشاعر، أما القصاصة فهي إحساس كذلك ولكنه يصب في أذهان أخرى ويلغي فيها طلبنا لعطيها أو التماشى التأثير فيها." العقاد، عباس محمود. بحث في اللغة، بدون تاريخ، ص 104.
replacement takes place. However contradictory the two poetical facts may be, the harmonisation of each in its context protects it from being superseded. In facts, the contradiction itself can produce a whole new meaning in the poem. Al-'Aqqād wrote:

"The original poem should not go beyond poetic fact, and the poem's spirit must agree with the spirit of the poetic fact because the only truth of a human being is what is inside, his feelings, and the way he expresses those feelings."

If a poem is going to express feelings properly—to have the right expression of meaning—the poetic facts should be different. Poetic facts will necessarily vary with the period and society in which the poem was composed, not to mention the condition the poet finds himself inside that period and society. Al-'Aqqād quotes a few lines from an Arab poet describing how quickly the night passes for him:

the night passes quickly, and so does the walker
unless the ground is rough and full of stones

later in the poem he says:

The night was long, but no wonder, for paradise is eternal. And there are many ways of reaching paradises.

According to Al-'Aqqād, the poet was expressing feelings of joy in both sets of circumstances. He added that for any one of us sometimes time seems to pass too quickly because of the enjoyment we are experiencing, and sometimes time seems to
pass more slowly, yet we look to the future when we know we shall enjoy life. The above comments illustrate what is meant by the difference between scientific fact and poetic fact. Science will stipulate that the night is neither short nor long, but determined by the earth’s rotation and its position in its elliptical orbit about the sun. Poets will argue that the perception of the night is more important than its calculated length, and there is no contradiction in one’s imagination. Having said that, some poets do contradict themselves in spite of the license to stretch poetic fact.

Thus Zuhayr ibn Abi Sulma writes:

Stop at the ruins the ages do not change
But indeed winds and rains have changed them.

Although the ruins have not been changed by the ages-i.e., the civilisations that have come and gone since the creation of the original structures-the winds and rains have made changes to the structures which alters their appearance and diminishes the memory of those who built them.
Abū Nuwās worked what he believed to be Zuhayr’s meaning into a new poem:

For whom do ruins become more beautiful  
In spite of long emptiness and pleasantness of breeze,

Damage has passed them, so that they seem to wear  
despite their emptiness, a garment of bliss.7

Abū Nuwās disagreed with Zuhayr’s feeling that the ancients’ works have been decayed by the seasons. Though they are physically empty, the ruins are beautiful. They have not diminished because it is human emotion which keeps them alive. So long as humans live, so shall ruins.

Poetic philosophy is similar to poetic fact, except that it rarely has any effect on the poem’s structure. It is mostly a source of creativity. The basic principle of poetic philosophy is analysis which reveals a new meaning to the poet. And the poet is the only one who knows how best to use that new meaning as it becomes a reflection of his imagination. Therefore, poetic philosophy’s variability and richness of meaning helps the poet dive deeply into himself. The poem which expresses the personality of the poet is, in Al-'Aqqād’s opinion, the perfect poem.

The al-Dīwān group consider in their literary work each poet on his own merits. Their approach to literary criticism stresses the poet’s development of poetic meaning using traditional forms of expression such as eloquence, description, and imitation of classical structure. Hence, modernism should exist in a language which creates new expressions of meaning. Al-'Aqqād sought to present this approach to literary criticism by analysing the poetry of Ahmād Shawqi. He writes:

7 - يقول أبو نواس:
لمَّن دَمَّن تُرْدُدَ حَسَنٌ رَسَومٌ  
تَجَالُ البَلْيِ عَنْهُنَّ حَتَّى كَأَلْما  
ديوان أبي نواس، ص. 243.
"O great poet, you have to know that the poet is one who feels the essence of things, and does not count them and explain their shapes and colours. The merit of the poet is not in saying what these things resemble but in explaining the essence of things and what connection they have with life. People do not look to the poem just to hear it or look at it, but they would like to tell the others about the good poem which they have heard and share it with their more sensitive friends. And if you are aiming for a simile to say that this thing is red, and then you go on to give other examples with the same redness, you add nothing apart from repeating several examples of the red colour instead of one. But the simile should have a clear impression and influence on the audience, because all people can see shapes and colours perceptibly as you see them. But simile is transferring feelings of shapes and colours from one to another, hence, the power of feelings to go deep into things which could distinguish one poet from another. For this reason the poet's speech has influence, and the audience would like to understand because his speech gives life, like a mirror which increases light. On the other hand, the poet must reflect what has been described on the audience's feelings as blood is the source of nutrition and the flower is the source of perfume, and that is the talent of a substantial poem, while the worst poem is the artificial and counterfeit which leads to ambiguity of feelings.

*leads to ambiguity of feelings.*
Al-'Aqqād’s analysis is evidence that the general elements of al-Dīwān group’s approach to literary criticism are based on Romanticism which concentrates on the internal world of the poet. Although Romanticism denotes different ideas in various European countries, there are some general characteristics which seem common across a wide spectrum. These characteristics include attention to imagination, nature, myth and symbolism, and the notion that the poetical world is a great knowledge.

Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, and Keats are the poets most often categorised as romantic poets in English literature. Blake believed that all mental images possessed or represented a higher and more permanent reality than the world of the five senses. On the other hand, Wordsworth was led by the paths of his own Romanticism. He held that natural and spontaneous feelings, arising independently of conventional standards, were precious for themselves. He further believed that his early ballads had tapped into the rich ore that is natural feeling. In his words, Wordworth’s aim was “to trace, truly though not ostentatiously, the primary laws of our nature, and to follow the fluxes and refluxes of the mind when agitated by the great and simple affections of our nature.”

There is little room to doubt that the al-Dīwān group’s approach to literary criticism was influenced by these figures. The topics which it stressed related to what Arab societies were looking for: freedom of thought. Al-'Aqqād himself admits that “We are both admirers and creators of Romanticism. We benefit from it and guide ourselves by its light.” Therefore, the al-Dīwān approach chose themes such as nature, myth,
imagination, and symbolism to express their ambitious goals for Arab poetry. The conflict between the *al-Dīwān* group and the classicists was grounded in the traditional elements of form and content.

Al-ʻAqqād’s approach to literary criticism may be classified into romantic approach and biographical approach. The romantic approach focuses on the self-expression of the poet. The biographical approach focuses on the poet’s life and the poem as a piece of the poet’s autobiography. Al-ʻAqqād demonstrated this two-tier approach when he analysed the poetry of Ibn al-Rumī. He commented, “Ibn al-Rumī compensated for our lack of knowledge of his life through his poetry. It contained many special characteristics, not ordinarily available in the works of other poets. His poems enable us to closely observe his life.”

In spite of the *al-Dīwān* group’s view on the modernisation of poetry through Romanticism, they were also influenced by classical Arab poets.

Compare this selection of classic and modern Arab poets.

Sometimes I get angry at life, then I hate it.

A man can get lost between despondence and hope.

—ʻAbd al-Rahmān Shukri, a modern poet

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12. “لا أن ابن الرومي يعرضنا بعض العوض عن ذلك النقص الكبير (معنى كلمة الاختيار الواردة عنه) بخاصة فرصة فيه ليست في غيره من الشعراء هي مراقبته الشديدة لنفسه وتسجيله وقائع حياة في شعره.”

13. يُقول عبد الرحمن شكري:

أجَّنَّ بالعِشِّ طُورُوا ثُمَّ أُفِضَّهُما أَضْعَعَ الشَّمْرَ بِبَلَدِ السُّيَّاسَةِ والأَمْلِ
I am trying to be patient, watching hope,
how hard life is unless there is a space for hope.\textsuperscript{14}

Al-\textsuperscript{-\text{Tu}}ghr\textsuperscript{-\text{i}}, classical poet

or

Death has enfolded whatever there was between me and Muhammad
and nothing can bring back to life what death has enfolded.\textsuperscript{15}

--Abu Nuw\textsuperscript{s}, classical-medieval poet

Time has enfolded what ever love was between me and you
and nothing can bring back to life that which your time has enfolded.\textsuperscript{16}

--Al-M\textsuperscript{a}zini, a modern poet

The above selection demonstrates that the \textit{al-D\textsuperscript{w}\text{\textacuted}n} groups were cognisant of the classical style of Arab poetry. This would seem to suggest that they did not reject Arab classical thought as completely as they claimed.

Summarising the \textit{al-D\textsuperscript{w}\textsuperscript{a}n} approach, there are four points to consider. First, the structure of the poem must support a unified whole, not merely unity among its various lines. In addition, there must be an emotional connection between each line of the poetry, thereby proving the poet has included a variety of feelings, which ultimately raises the quality of the overall expressiveness of the poem. None of this can be achieved unless the poet has adopted modern style, thought, and feelings. Second, poetry must reflect the poet's inner psyche. Third, the poet must pay attention to the beauty of sound. And

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{14} يقول الطّغرستي:
  ما أَضِيقُ المَعْيِشَ لَوْلا فَسَحةُ الأَمْلِ

  \item \textsuperscript{15} يقول أبو نواس:
  طَوْرِي المَوْتُ مَا بَيْنَي وَبَيْنَ مَهْمُد

  \item \textsuperscript{16} يقول المازني:
  طَوْرِي الْبَلْدُ مَا بَيْنَي وَبَيْنَكُ مَنْ حَوْرَ
finally, poetry should be free from any restrictive influences which would confine the feeling and thoughts of the poet to a minimum of expression in a dynamic description.

Al-‘Aqqād worked to establish new principles in modern Arab poetry through his literary conflict with the literary restoration movement, headed by Aḥmad Shawkī. This debate was based on the fundamental questions of form and content. al-‘Aqqād demanded that changes in content should accurately portray life with the clearest self expression possible. Moreover, the content looks to express the personality and character of the poet. But al-‘Aqqād also demanded that certain rhyming schemes be ignored. He insisted on unrhymed verse and the freedom of the poet to change the rhythm of the poetry as often and in whatever manner he chose. Al-‘Aqqād believed these measures would keep Arab poetry alive and growing.

**Socialist Realism**

The Marxist approach is one of the contemporary trends in Arab literary criticism. The principles of this approach came to the fore in Egypt following the Egyptian revolution of 1952. Socialist ideology and beliefs permeated throughout Arab culture, including literary criticism. The men most associated with the socialist movement in Arab literary criticism were Muḥammad Muḥīd al-Shūbāshī, ‘Abd al-Ḥamān al-Khumaisī, Maḥmūd Amīn al-‘Ālim, ‘Abd al-‘Azīm Anīs, Muḥammad Mandūr, Louis ‘Awād and Ghālī Shukrī. This group demanded from literature that it incorporate a social criterion. This criterion should look to answer questions like: does the writer have freedom of engagement in his society’s problems? And at what level of freedom of engagement should he become involved? The writer must ask of his work what function and value it serves in the society.
The critic’s vision from the socialist realism perspective focused on the degree of freedom in society, which almost inevitably limits or expands the degree of freedom for the writer. But the writer does not have to comment solely on the society’s shortcomings. Amīn al-Ālīm maintained:

When we say that writers should concentrate on society’s issues and problems, we do not wish to place constraints on writers’ freedom to express themselves. We would not argue that their literary works must be revolutionary slogans, social solutions, or political statements. Artistic engagement the text is not contrary to freedom of expression, and it should not be achieved at the cost of art. 17

The socialist realism approach seems to be grounded in historical and dialectical materialism; philosophy and knowledge act as sources for the critic to draw on. Mahmūd Amīn al-Ālīm advocated that:

The sources of knowledge in this approach are based in general on dialectical relationships between binaries of certain concepts in literature which always lead to new, valuable units, exceeding the binaries of content and form, present and past, partial and general, objective and subjective, epistemic and creative, unity and disunity, and relative and absolute. Between these interactive binaries the literary creation will arise, and the systematic analysis of dialectical criticism is based on these binaries. 18

17 Amina Alim when we implied the existence of a relationship between the community and its structure, the structure and the community, and the community and the individual, we would like to emphasize that the relationship between the community and the individual is not limited to a static relationship, but it is dynamic and evolving. The community is not static, but it is always changing and evolving, and the individual is not static, but it is always changing and evolving. The community and the individual are always in a state of interaction, and this interaction is not limited to a static relationship, but it is dynamic and evolving.

18 El-Husn Alim the sources of knowledge in this approach are based in general on dialectical relationships between binaries of certain concepts in literature which always lead to new, valuable units, exceeding the binaries of content and form, present and past, partial and general, objective and subjective, epistemic and creative, unity and disunity, and relative and absolute. Between these interactive binaries the literary creation will arise, and the systematic analysis of dialectical criticism is based on these binaries.
Content and form are a major point in Arab literary criticism, both in medieval and modern literature. The socialist realism approach also dealt with this point, except that they stressed content with very little mention of form. As ‘Abd al-Mun‘im Tulayma expressed it, “The content of a literary work demands a specific form, hence, the function of form in a literary work is secondary.” Conversely, some of the dialectical critics did not separate content and form. Mahmūd Amīn al-‘Alīm and ‘Abd al-‘Azīm Anīs, in their book *Fi al-Thaqāfa al-Misrīyya*, asserted that there is no separation between content and form. They assert that the successful literary work must strick a balance between content and form, while the unsuccessful work has no harmony between content and form. Therefore, Cubism which focuses on form, and Surrealism which stresses content, are incomplete artistic approaches.

al-‘Alīm and Anīs insisted on social content in literary works, but did not ignore their artistic structure. They believe in the intrinsic value of literature, and believe that the engagement of society’s perceived shortcomings could help the writer develop his artistic style. On other hand, if the writer chooses to ignore the social aspect of his writing, then his artistic style will suffer and the structure of the work will descend unchecked into chaos. Al-‘Alīm and Anīs write:

*Tawfiq al-Ḥakīm’s attitude to life defines his artistic wording, and way of thinking, and the undeveloped characters which abound in his plays. Tāhā Ḥusayn did not incorporate the details of realistic

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19 Ḥanūfī al-‘Alīm, *al-Thaqāfa al-Misrīyya*, al-‘Azīz Anīs, *Tawfiq al-Ḥakīm’s attitude to life defines his artistic wording, and way of thinking, and the undeveloped characters which abound in his plays. Tāhā Ḥusayn did not incorporate the details of realistic*.

20 Ḥanūfī al-‘Alīm, *al-Thaqāfa al-Misrīyya*, al-‘Azīz Anīs, *Tawfiq al-Ḥakīm’s attitude to life defines his artistic wording, and way of thinking, and the undeveloped characters which abound in his plays. Tāhā Ḥusayn did not incorporate the details of realistic*.
life, whether in town or countryside, as can be seen in his narrative Duʿāʾ al-Karawān. This attitude of Ṭāhā Husayn meant that his narrative was cast in an emotionless form. However, a study of the attitude of the writer should not touch on what he is writing about, but should be able to reveal these aspects through his artistic talents.21

The conceptual framework that Al-ʿAlim and Anīs worked from is that the content should be a reflection of social events and that the literary scene should contain social content which presents the important elements of the work. Focusing on social literary content in this manner does not mean that the importance of form is forgotten, because the scene and the meaning in literary works should be based on collaboration between them. Accordingly, literature should be founded on realistic epistemic, socialist, and historic themes. Hence, the literature can be either an objective or subjective creative expression. If this were not the case, the writer would drift from the domain of pure literature to the domains of sociology or psychology. Therefore, according to Al-ʿAlim and Anīs, content and form should be worked as a unit of literary structure.

Literature based on realism does not insinuate that the piece should be derived from a report or speech. Nor does a basis in reality suggest that literature must have a missionary tone, or instigate its readers to action. Furthermore, realistic literature does not require that the product be optimistic or pessimistic, but realism according to the

21- أن موقف تواغيق الحكيم من الحياة هو الذي يحدد صياغته الفلسفية في هذا النمط الكروي، وهذه الشخصيات الجادة غير المتطورة التي تزدهم بها مسرحياته، وعدم استيعاب حسن لواقتنا الحيّ بتصاصه المفاعلة المتطرفة سواء في الريف أو المدينة في (دعاء الكروان) هو الذي أفرع صياغة هذه القصة من الحركة، وجعلها أقرب إلى التجريدات النمطية، وهكذا فإن دراسة موقف القالب أو الأدب من الحياة لا تمس أبداً قلبياً ما يكتب وما يخلف، بل يساعد على الكشف عن كثير من الأسرار الفلسفية الخارجية.

المراجع السابق نفسه، ص29-30.
dialectical view is the artistic value in the structure of the literary text. This artistic value is not limited to a few sentences or paragraphs liberally distributed throughout the work or coming at the end. Artistic value is the overall content of the text, not just the idea expressed therein.

Many Marxist critics refuse to consider that literature or artistic value acts as a mirror to society because realism in literature is often more rich than the realism of life itself. ‘Abd al-Mun‘im Tulayma articulated the point thus: “Literature is not meant to represent real facts as a photograph does. Literature’s raison d’être is to fill the gap in reality, to correct its shortcomings and define a new reality.” Tulayma seems to be expressing the view that literature is a result of the writer’s choice of socially real facts. This choice is neither arbitrary nor spontaneous. It is based on the writer’s thoughts and feelings based on his experiences.

The dialectical criticism approach recognised the objective relationship between social reality and creative literature, whether in literary content or artistic form, and then attempted to analyse the structure of content and form in a historical and social context.

The Ideological Approach and Social Realism

It may be useful to articulate the relationship between the ideological approach to literary criticism and the social realism approach to literary criticism. The purpose of literature, according to the ideological approach, is not just to reflect on the present society’s problems, but to insist on the ideal society. Literature would thus guide society

22 *Fal'adab lab qa'itatru li tusaur muhahilata waqayat al-waqay at-al-‘azam (al-‘unwargitay) wana ya'qumama ila ma bismil waqayat, lan al-adab wala kan musaddar waqayat, la illaha illa ta’amal al-‘alay al-waqay ilay akmal al-ma yisahah ma nafs wala la ma ya‘rhus be min jegid.*

to a better existence, to a better reality than the present one. That better reality need not be limited to any social system, as the social realists would argue. Literature should aim to present the general human condition. Muḥammad Mandūr ventured to put forward a different approach: art for art’s sake. In Mandūr’s view, art for art’s sake had not been accepted in his own era due to changes of lifestyle; in the 1950’s, Arab society’s political and literary trends ran contrary to one another; Mandūr added that literature and art should aim to develop a full and rich life. Mandūr was aware that the writer is a full member of society and is therefore influenced by its problems. The writer must adopt a position outside his environment so that he is not drowned in the tears of his society. Finally, Mandūr insisted that literature must not be an automatic response to society’s ills but must take into account the general beauty and artistic elements intrinsic in literature.

The ideological approach of Mandūr is often considered an explanatory approach based on interpretation. The goals of literary work and analysis are to produce a creative piece which draws the reader into the text so that he also understands what lies behind the text. Mandūr’s approach may also be considered an evaluative approach based on common critical rules used by the majority of critics. Still further, Mandūr’s approach may be considered a guiding approach to literary criticism which aims to clarify people’s needs and establish guidelines for the writer about those needs without restricting the writer’s freedom.

Despite the apparent comprehensive nature of Mandūr’s approach, he does not provide any practical answers to the reader as to why his approach is more advantageous than others. His approach seems to have been based on looking to criticism to act as a study of the text and a means of differentiating literature. Towards that end, he advocated the use of linguistic theories to aid in the analysis of the text. Mandūr is, however, quite vociferous about what literary criticism should not include - scientific analysis. He writes:
"One who wants to understand the human being according to the theories of psychology is like one who wants to dissect the butterfly with an onion knife."  

The development of literary criticism has often gone hand in hand with the development of literature itself. As trends in literature have shifted from romanticism to realism, with a focus on society’s ills, ambitions, and solutions, so too has literary criticism shifted from the esoteric stage of interpretation according to the beauty of the individual elements to a system of analysis based on relatively clear principles and ideology. Ideological criticism, therefore, according to Mandur, has been influenced mainly by socialism and to some extent existentialism, both of which sought to gauge literature on its social merits rather than its beauty alone.

The existentialists believed in the main that the writer had to develop his own techniques to express his view regarding his life experiences and the ills of society. The Socialists concentrated on keeping literature oriented to society and the individual’s life based on socialism. They regarded their rules as the guiding force of literature and criticised negativism and fugitive romanticism. Ideological criticism appears to merge these two philosophies. It attempts to explain the sources of literature and art as well as the aim and function of various writers. In doing so, Mandur argues that recent experience should take precedence over past experiences if those past experiences have no bearing on the writer’s present life and society. He maintains that this specific topic could have different angles according to the ways in which each writer is dealing with it.  

References:
23 "الذين يريدون فهم النفس البشرية بفضل نظريات علم النفس أما يريدون تشرح فراشة بسكينة بصلب" مندور، محمد، في الميزان الجديد، دار نهضة مصر للطباعة والنشر، القاهرة 1963، ص 38.
24 "إن الموضوع الواحد قد يصب فيه آداب مختللفين متناقضين متافضين تبعا لاختلاف نظرة كل منهما إليه ومختلف طريقة مطالعته له" مندور، محمد، النقد والنقاد المعاصرون، مكتبة نهضة مصر، القاهرة 1972، ص 24.
Mandūr also voiced his opinion on the decision by many critics, be they medieval or contemporary, that form and content was a central issue to Arab literary criticism. He disagreed. He felt that one should distinguish between form and content because the human aspect of the poem, the human content, must have a suitably beautiful form. Beauty in form and content must be of the highest standard. The poem is not like a report with a standardised form, but has a metaphoric form - the expression of which is not merely language but rhythm as well. In sum, Mandūr seemed to have been arguing that artistic form must take the lead over content. He requested burgeoning writers to make every effort to "keep new content within a suitably beautiful artistic form whether it be a poem, play, narrative, or essay".

Mandūr’s overall vision of literary criticism, therefore, can be said to encompass the following elements: perfection in form; a renewing of both form and rhythm; and a revival of subtle meaning. He wrote: "These elements (socialist realism) give the poem great strength and accessibility to the heart, and consequently ability to achieve its excellent human aims."

The intellectual conflict about content and form and the relationship between them had led to some vagueness as to the function of each on its own. This situation divided the literary criticism community, setting the classical and romantic approaches to literary criticism against the realistic approach. Two views developed as a consequence:

25. بيري منتشر أنه على الأدباء وخاصة الشعراء منهم أن يبذلوا جهوداً كبيرة للملامسة بين المضمون الجديد والصورة الفنية الجميلة الموحية سواء أكنت تلك الصورة قصيدة شعر أم مسرحية أم قصة أم مقالاً تقارياً.

26. "إن الوسائل الفنية تزيد (تياز الواقعيية الاشتراكية) قوة ونفعاً إلى القلوب وبالتالي قدرة على تحقيق أهداف الإنسان الحالية الخصيرة.

المراجع السابق نفسه ص 74
art for art’s sake and art as life. Mandür stated that the reason this split occurred was due to a misunderstanding of the relationship between content and form. He wrote: “Art is an effective means of giving the content strength, closeness to the psyche, and the support to reach its goals.”

Earlier in this chapter, we saw how the socialist approach to literary criticism was faced with some fundamental questions about the freedom of the writer in a given society, and the answers they furnished. The ideological approach to literary criticism was faced with many of the same questions: how much freedom does the writer have in his society; to what extent should he delve into his society’s ills and express this in his literature; what right does the critic have to make demands of the writer to choose certain topics over others; and if the critic cannot dictate subject matter, should his role be restricted to analysing the work as it stands and stating his opinion of it?

The engagement of the writer in society’s problems and his freedom to choose a topic is one of the most difficult literary puzzles to solve. Mandür believed that the process of selecting a topic in any of the arts was every bit as important to the final work as the topic itself. The ideal artist is the one who chooses a topic which is relevant to people’s lives. The critic should encourage writers who choose such a topic. But then Mandür raised the concern that such support might be tantamount to unduly influencing other writer’s choices of subject. The question for Mandür was how far can the critic determine the writer’s choice of topic without infringing on the writer’s freedom and creativity. The present author believes that Mandür emphasised the freedom of the

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27 ان الفن وسيلة فضالة في تقوية المضمون وتقريبه من النفس، ومساعدته على تحقيق أهدافه.
المراجع السابق نفسه، ص 74.

28 الى أي حد يمكن أن يسمع الناقد لنفسه بأن يتحكم في اختيار الأدباء والفنانين لموضوعاتهم وأن يدعوه إلى هذا النوع وذلك من الموضوعات دون أن يكون في علمه اضطراب بحركة الأدب وتصعيد
مجال الاختيار لملكات الخلوق والابتكار عند بعض الأدباء والفنانين الموهوبين.
المراجع السابق نفسه، ص 10.
writer. He wrote: "the ideological approach does not like to dispossess the writer or artist of his creative freedom."  

The ideological approach to literary criticism, according to Mandūr, seems to have three functions. First, an interpretative analysis of the literary work which helps the reader understand the aim or aims of the piece. In this role, criticism has been considered to have its own creative freedom which might alter the very work the critic is examining—much to the horror of the author. Second, an evaluation of the work at various levels, such as form and content and diction. And finally, to introduce the writers to the requirements of society and what readers expect to see without ordering them to write solely towards those requirements. Hence the assertion that Mandūr supports the writer’s freedom to choose.

**Impressionistic Criticism**

Ṭāḥā Ḥusayn is one of the Arab critics who illustrated the impressionistic critical approach to literary criticism through his own literary work. Ṭāḥā Ḥusayn’s work seems to suggest the strong influence of his culture on his approach. His approach to literary criticism involved the scientific method. He writes: "We have not to follow any restrictions except the scientific method." Ṭāḥā Ḥusayn wanted to combine in his critical approach the scientific method with the critical approach of impressionism. Criticism, in his view, is impressionistic yet anchored in artistic truth. Artistic truth for Ṭāḥā Ḥusayn is the manner in which personal feelings are expressed in a style of language harmonious with the flavour of the period. By this he does not mean memorial

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29. قالمنهج الإيديولوجي لا يردد أن يسلب الأديب أو الفنان حريةاته.

30. مندور، محمد، النقد وال النقد المعاصر، مكتبة نهضة مصر 1972، ص. 227.

"يجب الانتقاد بشيء، ولا نذعن لنهم إلا مناهج البحث العلمي الصحيح - حسين، مص. مستقبل الثقافة في مصر، ص. 37."
truth, but expressive truth. He adds that literature not based in truth will lead to restricted literature. Literary freedom is a clear indicator of artistic truth. Táhá Ḥusayn defines freedom as truth which leads to artistic beauty and pure expression of feeling.

In his analysis of Abū Nuwās’s poetry, Táhá Ḥusayn writes:

“Abu Nuwās did not like truth because it was truth. He was not a preacher or a hermit, but he was a poet who liked to be honest in his poems and talk to the people in a way they could understand. Therefore, we were favourably impressed by him. Abu Nuwās liked truth in a practical or in an artistic way.”

The second principle in Táhá Ḥusayn’s approach is the inclination (taste) of the qualified critic. He writes:

My reading of literary works is based on the heart, inclination, and the disposition of love for beauty which strives for the ideal. The great writer has a strong influence on my thoughts which makes me forget myself.

This statement leads us to believe that Táhá Ḥusayn’s approach was based on three points. First, the original element in creative reading is the artistic beauty. Second, one of the characteristics of the ideal writer is his ability to maintain his influence on the reader’s thought and stimulate the reader to delve into the text without analysis of the text - just enjoyment of the artistic effort. Finally, the evaluation of the text should take place in two stages: inclination and artistic pleasure followed by analysis and explanation.

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31. "لم يكن أبو نواس مؤثرا للصدق لأنه صدق، لم يكن واعظا أو ناسكا، وإنما كان شاعراً يصدق في شعره ويحب أن يتحدث إلى الناس بما يفهمونه، فينال موضع الأعجاب والتقنّة، كان يحب الصدق حبا عملياً أو قل يحب الصدق حباً فنياً.

32. فيما أقرأ الأدب البلجي ودوفي، وهما أجح لي من طبع يحب الجمال ويطمح إلى مثله العليا، والكاتب المجيد عندي هو الذي لا أكاد أصحبه لحظات حتى ينسيني نفسي، حسنين، ط: 1، مصول إلى الأدب والشعر، دار الكتاب اللبناني، بيروت، 1973، ص 281.
The vital point of literary criticism in Tāhā Ḥusayn’s view is impressionism and inclination towards beauty. These are the aims of creativity.

He therefore maintained, in his study of al-Mutanābbī’s elegiac poetry, dedicated to some of the relatives of Sayf al-Dawla:

“This poetry [elegiac poetry] contains many excellent poems, yet it is not the best poetry he has produced in elegy. The reason for that, in my opinion, is because he produced this kind of poetry as a kind of duty. He used his head more than his heart; his work lacked those essential feelings of the heart.”

Thus, Tāhā Ḥusayn is judging the work from his impressionistic view of literary criticism founded on his own personality and inclination in criticising the work.

His guidelines for literary criticism become even more apparent in the course of his analysis of the panegyric poetry addressed to Sayf al-Dawla in his book Ma’ār al-Mutanābbī. He writes, for example: “This poem, in my opinion, is the best in al-Mutanābbī’s collection, because it is one of the rare poems in which the poet’s mood is sweet and is not burdensome to the reader and listeners.”

Although our aim is not the study of Tāhā Ḥusayn in detail, it will prove beneficial to present his contribution to Arab literary criticism through some examples of his impressionistic approach. Thus on reading one of these poems he says, “When you read this poem you will feel more comfortable with it than any poem in the collection.” “This qasīṭa is one of the most...”
wonderful poems al-Mutanabbi composed for Sayf al-Dawla; read some of its lines with me and you will know that I am not lavish in my praise".  

Modernism

The term "modernism" is often used to identify what are considered to be the distinctive features of this concept: sensibility, form and style of literature and art since World War I (1924-9). There is a striking correlation between modernism and recent (at that time) literary production of poetry, novels, and stories. This wealth of information might help to shed some light on certain aspects of modernism which were stressed in its early formation. These aspects can be classified into two basic categories: the temporal aspect and the semantic aspect. Despite the close relationship between modernism and recent works, the modernist critic must not necessarily restrict himself to discussing modern works. The time in which the piece was composed and how it relates to the contemporary definition of the goals of modernism proves of special interest to the modernist critic. It is this temporal aspect that must be taken into account. There may be no connection between modernism and the time at which the creative literature was produced. Thus there may be a long period between the production of a literary text and the modernist approach, hence the literary text could not be considered as a contemporary work. Therefore, in our opinion, the temporal norm is not adequate to specify the concept of modernism.

A semantic aspect must be introduced to add to our understanding of the temporal aspect and enable us to appreciate literary texts in the context of modernism.

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35 - ويشع في نفسك خفة وطريا ولا تجدها حين تقرأ أي قصيدة أخرى من قصائد المنتسب (فقالت لك أن هذه القصيدة أروع ما قال المنتسب لсыف الدولة من الشعر وأقرأ بعض أبياتها أني لمست مسرفا فيما أقول). المرجع السابق نفسه ، ص 235.

This concept of modernism appears to be almost wholly different from its renaissance counterpart in Egypt, led by Maḥmūd Sāmī al-Bārūdī and Aḥmad Shawqī. This artistic renaissance movement strove to merely revive and renew medieval literature.

The Arabic speaker may be confused by the term ḥadāthā because it can have a number of meanings, all of which are closely related. For example, ḥadāthā can mean revival or renaissance, as in the words baʿth and Īhya', or it can mean renewal, as in the word tajdīd.

Those critics who wish to discuss modernism must endeavour to keep these meanings distinct. Perhaps some new terms could be added to the Arabic language for the modernist critic. In any case, modernism, in the sense of renaissance, has tended to mean that creative thought has to be expressed through an imitation of the classical heritage which has all too often led to artificiality and artistic weakness. This has often affected many Arab societies, and without a poet of inspiration and genius who is able to work within and simultaneously control the medium, the idea of renaissance will continue to weaken modernist artistic efforts. The central point that must be addressed is a severance in thought between the contemporary period and the past. Such an action is justified by the following: the critic who was involved in the renaissance movement was not at liberty to criticise the heritage - he merely accepted its value. And criticism which is not separated from history tends to live in the past. Poetry which is produced under the influence of the historical approach will only recycle what has come before, and society will be mired in the past - the poetic experience will cease to be innovative. This is the modernism of the renaissance movement: poetry should emulate the past masters and not create new works.
This analysis could lead us to conclude that *tajdīd* is a near synonym for *Ihya'*. There is superficial difference in meaning between the words, but *tajdīd* as a literary term rests on certain sociological factors, such as political instability and economic and social difficulties among Arab societies. The word *tajdīd* has been used by both medieval and contemporary literary critics. Ḥāzim al-Qartājannī is a critic of the former category. He insisted that poetry must be new and not a mere repetition, that the poem should be beautiful and inspire wonder, and that the poet should use his diction to develop the structure of the poem. For that reason, Ḥāzim al-Qartājannī felt that simplistic language should be ignored and only a language of beauty should be employed, for beautiful images in the reader's mind will lead the reader to the wondrous. However, he also stated that language of exquisite beauty is often difficult to explore.37

That conflict is at the heart of the meaning of *tajdīd*, and in some respects this difficulty can be said to interfere in the creative process. Al-Qartājannī tried to resolve this matter of the relationship between creative thought and *tajdīd* by establishing a link between *tajdīd*, imitation, and creative wonders which will lead one to acquire knowledge by a process of something unknown. Although al-Qartājannī applied imitation to his solution, *tajdīd* can still be regarded as a new concept in the contemporary period, defined as having the basic objective of re-evaluating literature related to political orders of Arab societies from World War II to the early 1970's. This concept was a major landmark in the liberation movement which operated throughout the diverse approaches to literary criticism. Each approach had its own underlying set of rules, but *tajdīd* almost universally meant a concentration on poetry to liberate it from first classical forms and then from classical ideas.

The idea behind *tajdīl* and liberty of literature in those thirty years was not to follow western approaches of social and literary thinking in blind imitation, but rather to adopt them as good, mature models of literary criticism. Arab critics subsequently began to follow European poets and rebel against poetic rhythm. Having said that, it seems that some of those who claimed to embrace *tajdīl* and represent the liberationist approach to literary criticism may have been repeating the theories of famous romantic critics and poets. Consequently, the influence of European literature on Arab literature tended to be superficial and immature at times in comparison with the modernist movement which was then spreading across Europe.

The liberation movement was spreading in Arab societies at the same time. Many found themselves forced to look at developing social trends and scrutinise them rather than discuss other current issues of lesser importance. Literary realism arose amidst these circumstances, having formed its own set of rules which concentrated far more deeply on the interior structure of the text. The chief aim of literary realism was a shift towards humanism, defined as a revolutionary experience designed to force the masses to understand themselves and to take their place in the sun.

When the realists directed their arguments against the romantics, their arguments seemed dominated by theoretical discussions. After World War II, a clash developed between the classical school and those who held to *tajdīl* as the means of literary criticism, caused by accusations of ambiguous analysis and dubious sources. When realism appeared, its tenets were sufficiently developed to offer some explanation of the development of *tajdīl* and how it was going to completely reshape the classical mentality.
After examining the concepts of modernism and its near synonyms such as renaissance, it seems that the most critical differences between them took place due to generation gaps, not only between old and young critics, but between medieval and contemporary critics as well. The quarrel helped to partially distinguish between real artistic creativity and the illusion of artistic creativity which is completely unrelated to the creative experience as a means of discovering artistic intuition. It is also important to avoid theoretical approaches to literary criticism as a means of analysing the function of modernism in literature. The value of modernism is not its emphasis on experimentation with new words and structures. The value of modernism lies in its presenting a living model which discusses creative ability as a means to recognise one’s culture and understand one’s world.

There are many critics who disagree with this narrow definition and see the function of modernism more in terms of its direct role in both literature and criticism, some focusing on form and content. They argue that to understand literature, both the language and the content must be clear - then will the criticism of the work be best understood. Moreover, the content is primarily responsible for leading the reader through the creative text and critical dialogue, while the new diction leads one to the language of both literary and critical text. Modernism would seem to involve a dualistic approach to literary criticism of content and diction. The modernists view of content attempts to study artistic aims and liberate the critic from fixed classical rules. Their view of diction attempts to discover one’s own creative ability and artistic performance without the need to follow a static set of rules. As such, the final creative work will most likely force the critic to review his own rules if the literary work has gone beyond the critic’s usual conventions.
In light of the views of modernism above, it seems that the interpretation of the concept of modernism has been constrained in both wording and meaning. It stands to reason that one cannot discuss modernism without reference to the creative work itself. In fact, it is entirely plausible to suggest that criticism applies to a creative work in so far as it wishes to influence the production of a new work (paralleling the original text), concerned with analysis, reform and recognition of the relationship between disparate parts of the text. Modernism should be applied to the literary work which is grounded in reality, demonstrates a full understanding of the creative experience, and then reaches that artistic plateau which explains the author’s sensations. Even so, one must take care not to assume that modernism dictates the need for new concepts of reality and the use of a finite set of ideas. Thus, if modernism is in contrast to other approaches, it must always be an experimental approach.

The content should be new and relate to the author’s frame of mind. This will help the author to discover his own reality and simultaneously associate his unique situation in the wider human context just as the form reflects the new artistic experience. Modernism, as presented here in, is the understanding of the creative process, the association between heritage and reality, and production of concepts expressed through ideal creative texts.
Chapter Three
Sources of Structuralism in Arab Contemporary Criticism
Arab approaches to literary criticism, such as Impressionism, Romanticism, and the Ideological approaches have had a positive effect on the appreciation of literary works whether contemporary or medieval. Each of these approaches had in turn been influenced by European literary critical approaches. The literary works of al-‘Aqqād, Ṭāhā Ḥusayn, and Mandūr provide a good indicator of that influence. Then in the 1960’s, structuralism took root and soon flourished among many Arab literary critics. These Structuralists, among them Adonis, Kamāl abū-Deeb, ‘Abd al-Salām al-Masādī, Ṣalāḥ Faḍl, Khālida Sa‘īd and ‘Abdallah al-Ghadrīdhāmī, attempted to establish a new method of literary criticism.

The Arabic word for “structure” which is of importance here is al-binya. This noun derives from the triliteral root of bana. In order to fully comprehend the meaning of structure in literary terms, it will be helpful to consider the wider definition of the word. In both the Arabic language and European languages, the broad meaning of the word can be defined as “arrangement and interrelationship of parts in a construction.” (Collins English Dictionary) Having said that, the exact definition of “structure” varies within the arts and sciences. For example, in the field of chemistry, structure tends to denote “the arrangement of atoms in molecule of a chemical compound” (Collins English Dictionary); or in the field of geology, “the way in which a mineral, rock, rock mass, or stratum, is made up of its component parts” (Collins English Dictionary).

For literary purposes, this thesis shall define structure as a rational system, not having physical characteristics, but instead a means to interpret the constituent parts of the text and their logical relatedness. Indeed, this approximates to the general definition of literary structuralism: “literature that interprets and analyses its material in terms of oppositions, contrasts, and hierarchical structures...” (Collins English Dictionary). Two of the main points in structuralists’ thought tended toward determining the superficial
relationships between parts of the text and determining the intellectual system the author used to link those relationships throughout the text as a whole.

One of the most fruitful attempts to define literary structuralism as it developed in the 1960's was made by Jean Piaget. He writes:

"As a first approximation, we may say that a structure is a system of transformations. In as much as it is a system and not a mere collection of elements and their properties, these transformations involve laws: the structure is preserved or enriched by the interplay of its transformational laws, which never yield results external to the system nor employ elements that are external to it. In short, the notion of structure is comprised of three key ideas: the idea of wholeness, the idea of transformation and the idea of self-regulation."1

The anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss developed a competing set of three principles to define the notion of structure, as related by John Sturrock. First, language is to be studied in itself before turning to a study of its relationship to other systems (be they historical, sociological, or psychological) - internal structure takes precedence over external functions. Second, speech, as the audible manifestation of language, is to be broken down into a finite number of minimal elements, such as phonemes on the phonological level. Third, the elements of a language are to be defined by their mutual relationships. These relationships are of two kinds: paradigmatic relationships between elements which can be substituted for each other; and syntagmatic relationships between elements which can combine together. Sturrock comments that Lévi-Strauss has adapted these three principles to his own anthropological ends.2

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Piaget and Lévi Strauss each seem to focus on a specific theme: a system of language which is based on controlling the units of text. Ferdinand de Saussure is considered the founder of modern linguistics whose influence extended to the formation of theory for contemporary literature. He emphasised the distinction between *langue*, the social aspect of language, and *parole*, the individual relation of the system in actual instances of language. He writes:

"Our definition of language assumes that we disregard everything which does not belong to its structure as a system; in short everything that is designated by the term 'external linguistics'."^3

De Saussure’s approach to linguistics might be said to be the foundation of structuralism, and a presentation of his central ideas of *langue* and *parole* will prove beneficial.

*Langue*, according to de Saussure, should contain many elements which work together as a system to produce the complete picture of the language. Thus, the ideal definition of language would be a system of signs. De Saussure stated that these signs are of two types; signifier and signified, which shall be considered a bit later. Of language he writes:

"A language might also be compared to a sheet of paper. Thought is one side of the sheet and sound the reverse side. Just as it is impossible to take a pair of scissors and cut one side of paper without at the same time cutting the other, so it is impossible in a language to isolate sound from thought, or thought from sound. To separate the two for theoretical purposes takes us into either pure psychology or pure phonetics, not linguistics."^4

*Parole* may be defined as the substance of internal and external linguistics in the structure of the text. De Saussure added speaking of *parole*:

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^4- Ibid P.111.
“As far as internal linguistics is concerned, the situation is quite different. Any old order will not do. The language itself is a system which admits no other order than its own. This can be brought out by comparison with the game of chess. In the case of chess, it is relatively easy to distinguish between what is external and what is internal. The fact that chess came from Persia to Europe is an external fact, whereas everything which concerns the system and its rules is internal. If pieces made of ivory are substituted for pieces made of wood, the change makes no difference to the system. But if the number of pieces is diminished or increased, that is a change which profoundly affects the ‘grammar’ of the game.5

This last example of the chess game demonstrates some principles of structuralism: that language is a system based on relationships between elements as a unit, and that internal linguistics is more important than external linguistics. The history and development of language has less bearing on contemporary literature than the current net system of relationships between the elements of the text. De Saussure’s ideas can be said to support the structuralist approach against the historical approach to studying linguistic topics. Therefore, structuralism should be based on separation between structure and history.

Examining the two previous excerpts from de Saussure’s work, it seems clear that de Saussure developed his ideas along two lines: the study of language as a system of differences and speech as the endproduct of that language: and a criticism of previous approaches such as historical and comparative. In his view, language and speech sit opposite one another. Language is an intellectual stock of any group or nation, while speech is what the individual has chosen to use from that intellectual stock of language to express his idea. R. Scholes analysed de Saussure’s concept in his work Structuralism in Literature. He commented:

‘His [de Saussure] definition is unusual in that it distinguishes three levels of linguistic activity: langage, langue and parole. Langage is the broadest aspect, for it includes the entire human potential for speech, both physical and mental. As such, it is simply too broad

5 - Ibid P.23.
and undefined an area to be studied systematically. Langue, however, is defined precisely by virtue of its systematic qualities. For Langue is “language” as we use the word is speaking of the English “language” or the French “language”. Langue is the language system which each of us uses to generate discourse that is intelligible to others. Our individual utterances are what Saussure calls parole. Thus language is linguistic potential, langue is language-system, and parole is individual utterance. For de Saussure, the central object of linguistic study must be the language-system. Language-systems, because they are social products, are conventional. In speaking English we have an infinite number of potential utterances at our command, but these are based on a finite number of words and grammatical relationships. And these words and relationships are aspects of a single system”.

The binary langue/parole has a distinct effect on language-system in a given period which de Saussure called Synchronic and Diachronic. Synchronic is considered a horizontal theme based on unchanging relationships between ideas without any inference of time. Diachronic is considered a vertical theme based on antecedent or a change over time between relationships of ideas. De Saussure looked to diachronic linguistics critics who study every phenomena in language, always mindful of the historical element, much like a person who wants to look at an unchanging scene: he must move around to gauge the scene from various angles, but must not move through time in order to take in each perspective. Synchronic linguistic critics’ analysis will lead to ambiguity in understanding the same scene.

Returning to the theme of signifier and signified, according to de Saussure, it was based on arbitrary relationships between utterances because the signifier does not contain any indication of the content of that which is signified. He writes:

“For some people a language, reduced to its essentials, is a nomenclature: a list of terms corresponding to a list of things. For example, Latin would be represented as: ARBOR, EQUUS etc. This conception is open to a number of objections. It assumes that ideas already exist independently of words. It does not clarify whether the name

is a vocal or a psychological entity, for \textit{ARBOR} might stand for either. Furthermore, it leads one to assume that the link between a name and a thing is something quite unproblematic, which is far from being the case. None the less, this naïve view contains one element of truth, which is that linguistic units are dual in nature, comprising two elements.\footnote{De Saussure, Ferdinand. \textit{Course in General Linguistics}. P.65}

Therefore, the connection between sound and concept appears to be arbitrary. For instance, one must use a signified word, such as \textit{nkht} (sister), if one wishes to be understood. There is no connection between the sounds “\textit{u}”, “\textit{kh}”, “\textit{t}”, the signifiers, because these sounds can be found in many different languages. De Saussure’s themes do not easily lend themselves to a single definition of structuralism.

In spite of these varying definitions, structuralism did manage to have a unique influence on modern linguistic studies. In the second half of the 20th century, structuralists constructed their structural literary approach on the basis of identifying the method of arranging the structure of one’s culture. This method is often concealed, and the researcher must strive to find it. Structuralists centre their findings on the linguistic structure of the text, without any reference to the author’s ideology, referential source (i.e., society), or historical context. Nor do the individual elements of the text concern the structuralists. They appear to be solely interested in the study of the text’s overall system of constituent parts. Structuralists, therefore, first have to isolate the text from its environment (the author, society, historical context) and then they can study the interior structure of the text as an abstract work, yielding the framework of the text.

Structuralism in Arab contemporary literary criticism was initially a component in the linguistic approaches to literary criticism. Hammādī Şammud, a contemporary Arab critic, wrote: “For many reasons, Arab contemporary literary criticism does not avoid
linguistics approaches. Arab critics strove to involve structuralism in their criticism of Arabic literature."8 Moreover, Muḥammad Barada admitted the influence of structuralism on Arab contemporary literature in general and on Moroccan literature specifically.

“We live close to Europe, and in particular to France, so Moroccan and, for that matter, all Arab contemporary literature has to confess that it has been influenced by structuralism.”9

In the 1960’s literary critics at large were involved in linguistic studies as their main approach to literary criticism. Arab critics during that period of flourishing literary thought were eager to understand new approaches to literary criticism in line with the changing cultural, social, and poetic attitudes. Once the new thinking was fully comprehended, Arab critics incorporated it into criticism, abandoning their old critical principles, all the while keeping a keen eye on maintaining objectivity in their criticism. It seems that modern Arab structuralists were alienated from subjectivity in literary studies, which is amply demonstrated in their reaction against historical, psychological, and sociological approaches, since these concepts, in many Arab critic’s views, tended to sidestep the literary text itself.

In presenting the Arab structuralists, it is important to bear in mind that although each critic used slightly varying methods to analyse a text, they each drew from the same source and reference material such that, by and large, their conclusions were fairly homogenous. The Arab structuralists were influenced by a new language of criticism, which was propagated by Roland Barthes. This famous structuralist derived his unique
language from analysing literary texts. It seem to be based on undifferentiated language, or as Arab critics often say “explosion language” ("lughat al-tafjir"). This method seemed to have led Barthes to ignore the syntax and subsequent semantics of the text in favour of his paradigm of language. The use of Barthes’ “explosion language” introduced a high degree of vagueness into critical terminology, creating a wide gap between the critic and the reader.

‘Abd al-Salam al-Masaddī serves as a good illustration of what is meant by a high degree of vagueness in critical terminology. In his analysis of an Ahmad Shawqi’s poem, Wulida al-Hudā he described the poem in terms of “zāhirat tawzi’il-qanawāt al-maṣrūfa iblāqhiyan” “the phenomena of the channels of distribution dedicated to conveyance,” and “al-jihāz al-shirī” the “poetical apparatus(or system)”, and “al-jihāz al-maṣhūmī”, the “conceptual system.” And making his analysis even more complex, he introduced the use of mathematical tables. Even so, it is possible to determine that there are two main points al-Masaddī stresses in his analysis of Shawqi’s work: separation form and interpenetrating form.

Separation form has certain unique characteristics dependent upon its context, according to and characterised by a clear and evident harmony of the text. Al-Masaddī expounds his ideas by emulating mathematical equations. He writes that separation form is like a series of unknown values multiplied in sequence, such as \( A \times B \times C \times D \), and so on. He goes on to say that interpenetrating form is the collection of the various parts of the poem for the purpose of formulating a new structure, but still keeping the general sense of the poem. Transferring this idea to an algebraic equation yields \((AB + BC + CD) \times (DB + BA + AC)\). Al-Masaddī concludes at the end of his analysis that:

If we transfer the above analysis to formal language, we would have:

- **Vision theme 1** = \((AB + AB) \times (BE + BE)\)
- **Vision theme 2** = \((LN + LN) + (LR + LR)\)
- **Vision theme 3** = \((RH + RH) \times (HX + HX)\)
It was from this that al-Masaddī believed *Wulida al-Hudā* was produced.¹⁰

Reviewing this previous material, it is possible to conclude that structuralism in Arab literary criticism was based, at least in part, on western structuralist approaches. Many Arab critics presented various ideas of what they felt structuralism should focus on. The title of ‘Abd al-Salām al-Masaddī’s book, *Style and Stylistics*, speaks for itself. He presented the principles of stylistic and structuralist thought in Europe generally and France specifically, naming some of the key figures in European structuralism. Among them was Michel Riffaterre, whose book, *Essais de stylistique structurale*, he reviewed.

Shukrī ‘Ayyād in his study *Madkhal ilā ‘Ilm al-Uslub* concentrated on the theory and practice of the theory of style. In addition he explored the relationship between style and linguistics as well as the relationship between literary criticism and histories of literature and rhetoric. In a separate study, *Iltijahat al-Bahth al-Uslub* ‘Ayyād gives an overview of topics related to style and linguistics, citing many well known figures, such as Charles Balley, Stephen Ullmann, Leo Spitzer, Siegfried J. Schmidt, G.P.Thorne, Michael Riffaterre.

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¹⁰ يقول المبدئي: - أول معلم نظامي للعناصر الدائمة في تركيب الظاهرة الأسلوبية هو نمط التفاصل، والذي تأتي المصطلح بوجهها متزامنة بذاتي في وقائعها على السلوكيات الأدائية في ضوء من التداخل الموضعي للتنبيه في جميعها سمات تمييزية في طبيعتها متصلة في النظريات حتى لكأنها سلسلة من العناصر الجبرية تأتي في معاينة متعددة لموارد عقلية شكلها *A* *x* *B* *x* *C* ونظام الانتشار الثاني هو التداخل وفيه تتسارع الأجزاء في توأمر دوري بحيث ينتج مختلفاً بعض الكلي لا يعبيذك السياق صورة مطابقة لما ورد في السياق الذي في البداية لك أنها ملء زوج مع مكونات جديدة فيصل من المعاد ومن المستفيد تركيب طارئ يتحايد بالواجهة العام عن طريق البعض المتوازي ويفصل عن مستقلة يلمع بعض الجزء المستحدث. وهكذا لو حصلت الظاهرة إلى تشكيك صوري لحللت على معاينة جبرية طارئ الرمزي: (*A* + *B* + *C* + *D*) × (*E* + *F* + *G* + *D*)
Abū Deeb in *al-Ru*ūṭ al-Muqanna'ā outlined some of the approaches to literary criticism which had influenced his work. He wrote that his own study of pre-Islamic poetry was grounded in what he called "the conceptual context", which seems to have been composed of methodological, theoretical, critical, philosophic and linguistic components. He believed that this notion of conceptual context was not suited to classical Arabic and Orientalist studies of Arab poetry. He went on to list the five major approaches which, he said, not only influenced his work, but had a far reaching impact on many critics of the 20th century: a structuralist analysis of myth and anthropology, advocated by Claude Lévi-Strauss; Formalist analysis of narrative, such as that of Vladimir Propp in his study of the structural morphology of the fairytale; a linguistic and semiotic analysis, found especially in the works of the Structuralist Roman Jakobson; a Marxist analysis based on the relationship between literary works and social structures, as developed by Lucian Goldman; and analysis of oral editing in narrative poetry and the function of formulae in its creation, as developed by Millman Parry and Albert Lord.  

11 يقول كمال أبو ديب: ينتمي هذا البحث في سياق تمثيلي معاصر جذريا للسياق الذي تمت فيه دراسات الشعر الجاهلي حتى الآن، ويورد عن نوافذ منهجية ونظرية، ودقيقة، ولغوية لتشكل في إطار المعتاد الشامبي التي طغت على كلا الدراسات العربية وتطرح الاستجواب الجاهلي للدراسات الشعرية العربي، ويشرح هذا البحث في تشكيل المنظور الذي يعاني منه الشعر الجاهلي في هذا البحث الإجراءات التي تحققت في خمسة تيارات بحتة متعددة في هذا القرن:  

1- التحليل البنائي للأسطورة كما طوّره كلاود فيتش شروت في الأنثروبولوجيا البنوية.  
2- التحليل التنظيمي للحكاية كما طوّره فلانديمر بروب في دراسته للكتب الشاملة لحكايات الأدوات.  
3- مناهج تحليل الأدب في إطار معتادات التحليل النفسي والدراسات الفلسفية والغموضية وشكل خاص عمل رومان ياكوبس والبنويين الفرنسيين.  
4- التي نتاج من معتادات أساسية في الفكر المركسي والذي أولى عناية خاصة لكتاب العلاقة بين بنية العمل الاجتماعي ووالبيئة الاجتماعية (الاقتصادية، والسياسية والفكرية) ولعل لوسان جولدمان أن يكون أبرز النقاد الذين أسهموا في تطور هذا التيار.  
5- تحليل عملية التناسب النشفي في الشعر السردي ودور الصيغة في ألمة الخلق كما طوّره مسلم باري والبرت لورد.

 pimpinelli: للدكتور محمد عبد كمال. أبوديب، المذكورة في المقدمة، نحو منهج بنوي في دراسة الشعر الجاهلي. من 6–10 الهيئة المصرية العامة للكتاب . 1986
Having thus named these five approaches. Abū Deeb went on to explain that their contribution to his study was of an indirect nature, and that in fact he does not necessarily agree with everything they had to say.

But, he says, I try to consider the major themes of each approach, and although there are many differences between this study and these approaches, they still have an effect on my critical analysis and emphasise the components of al-shi’r al-Jāhilī. Indeed, one cannot study al-shi’r al-Jāhilī without considering through objective analysis the relationship between different social, economic, and political structures.

Furthermore, he argued the importance of analysing these approaches completely in order to understand the relationship between these approaches and entire social structure. Finally, in his analysis of al-shi’r al-Jāhilī, Abū Deeb treats it as a single linguistic whose structure is dictated by semantics and related to the relationship between the poem’s individual components.

Binary opposition was one of the major components of the text of a poem that Abū Deeb stressed. He described al-shi’r al-Jāhilī as containing many examples of this concept. He writes in al-Ru’a al-Muqanna’a:

"ولا يعني ما يقال هنا أن هذا البحث تطبيق لمناهج جاهزة أو تقل لها من المجالات التي استخدمت فيها أولاً إلى مجال جديد ، بل إنه لا يعني أن هذا البحث يتبني الأطراف النظرية لهذه المناهج جمعاً. كل ما يعنيه هو أن البحث يتم في إطار من الوعي النظري الدقيق لهذه المناهج بما تثيره من شكلاته ، ورغم أن العلاقة بين أسس البحث وبين كل من هذه التيارات تقارب من حيث طبيعتها ودرجة تأثيرها فإن هذه التيارات جمعها تظل ذات حضور فعل على مستوى الوعي النظري في عملية التحليل التي يؤديها وفي ما يدوره من أطراف ، كما يسهم هذا الحضور في تعريض الوعي بمكونات وخصائص الشعر الجاهلي.

المرجع السابق نفسه ، ص 6 12 .

دراسة الشعر الجاهلي لا يمكن أن تكتمل في غياب تحليل علمي دقيق لما يكشف عنه هذا الشعر وعلاقات سائدة ضمن البيئات الاجتماعية والاقتصادية والسياسية .

المرجع السابق نفسه ص 11 .

12"
"The study of a large number of examples of al-shi’r al-Jahili demonstrates the basic role that the concept of binary opposition plays in many respects and allows us to clarify it as a literary term. For example, the mechanism of obliteration in the ruined camp-site sets in motion a contrasting movement. That function leads to the disappearance of the camp-site from satirical and elegiac poetry, because this type of poetry is representative of destruction or, at the very least, negative activity akin to the ruins. Therefore, establishing a relationship between al-shi’r al-Jahili and fairytale and myth will lead to new approaches. The most important potential approach is how to shift the reading from the level of reality to the level of imagination, from historical reading to semiotic reading, and from classical reading to structuralist reading; for structuralist reading aims to explain the mechanism of the text and the configuration of the individual units, as well as the configuration between these units and the text as a whole."14

‘Abdallah al-Ghadhāmī has devoted the first part of his book al-Khatī‘a wa al-Takfīr to presenting the principles of modern linguistic approaches as an introduction to his practical study. He writes:

"Modern linguistic criticism tended to concentrate on the text which gave rise to theories of textuality and poetics. This focus on text only was inadequate. Literary reading should consist of active critical aims to establish an investigative process and language of reading works according to structuralist poetics. This is, an
ambitious literary project to create a metalanguage (lughat al lugha)."

The most influential author on al-Ghadhdhami in this respect seems to have been Roland Barthes. Al-Ghadhdhami expressed his admiration for the literary critic who, he said “was a pioneer of literary criticism for twenty five years” and “had a special ability to encourage the development of literature.” Al-Ghadhdhami went on to praise Barthes literary works for their creativity and the scope of his thinking, to be found presently not only in literature, but the social sciences and semiology.

Structural criticism was not limited to “short” poems. Structuralists also turned their attention to epic poetry. Qāsim al-Muqdad, in Handasat al-Ma‘nā fī al-Sārd al-Uṣūrī al-Malṭamī ‘Gilgāmesh begins by providing a summary of the influences of structuralist and linguistic approaches on his own literary works. He cites the work of Todorov who established the basic principle of narration which was then taken up by Propp. He then cites Grimmas, who linked Propp’s analysis to the structuralism of Lévi-Strauss and the linguistic approach of Hjelmslev which was founded in a semiological approach. Finally, he re-emphasises the steady influence of Barthes. Having thus acknowledged the influences in his work, he goes on to state that “My basic aim in this
study is to explain the structural system of narrative in accord with the results of French structuralists.17

The first full trial of Arab literary criticism of a narrative work was al-Naqd al-lughawi wa al-adabi nažariyyan wa taḥṣihiyyan by Maurice Abu Naṣir. In his introduction, Abu Naṣir lists the main sources of his work, including Russian Formalists, Grimmas, and Lévi-Strauss. From the structuralists he took their definition of the distinguishing features of narrative and description. He also derived much benefit from a study of the narrative function in narrative works. This aspect of his study he credits to the work of Genette and Philippe Hamon. Later in his work, he discusses the “World of Meaning”, which was based on some theoretical points from various sources.

One of these sources was Umberto Eco, from whom he took the term L’unite Culturelle, though Abu Naṣir did not explain the function of this term in the context of his article. Abu Naṣir gained from Lévi Strauss the function of mythical characters. Again, Abu Naṣir provides no explanation of what this term means to him and how he used it. Indeed, a comprehensive understanding of the function of mythical characters cannot be attained unless one understands the bulk of ideas expressed in Lévi-Strauss’

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17 يقول قاسم المقداد: "قبل أن نرسم الخطوط العامة للمنهج التحليلي الذي سنأخذ به في هذا الكتاب لابد من الإشارة والاعتراف، في نفس الوقت، بأن المنهاج والتيارات المعمول بها حتى الآن، والتي في الطلب، بدءا بالوظائف السردية التي تحدث عنها فلانديمو بروب في كتابه الذي أصبح اليوم من المراجع الكلاسيكية في مجال التحليل السردي ومن ثم جوليان غريمس الذي زار بين تحليل بروب وبنوية ليغي شتراوس وعلم اللغة عند يهودا، كماذكر أيضا المساهمة الفائقة والعامة للباحث المعروف لودورف الذي رسم الخطوط الأولي لقواعد السرد القصصي، في كتابه الشهير قواعد الديكابريون. أما رولان بارت فهو الذي كان السبب في توجهنا هذا، لأنه كان فوق كل المدارس و فوق كل التيارات. إن هذا الأساس في هذا الكتاب كمكم في كشف النقاب عن التنظيم البنائي للقصة، مستقدين في ذلك إلى النتائج التي خرجت بها البنوية الفرنسية في هذا المجال."

المقداد، قاسم. هندة المعنى في السرد الأسطوري الملحمي- جلجامش، دار السؤال، دمشق الطبعة الأولى، ص 17- 18، 1982.
structural analysis of myth and then compares that with Propp’s view. The comparison is necessary because both men do not concentrate their energies equally on content and partial changing in the narratives or myths, which have the same significance, i.e., the relationship between narrative parts. Lévi-Strauss called this relationship mythical units, coming after three other units, sound, constituent, and semantic.

Abū Nāṣir’s approach to literary criticism can be summed up in the following four points:-
First, he cited the importance of the influence of contemporary western criticism in narration theory.
Second, he attempted to combine structuralist concept with sociological concepts, especially those of Umberto Eco.
Third, his use of other author’s terms did not match the original meaning. This change in the meaning of terms led to a degree of vagueness in his work.
Finally, his work presents individual components of various literary approaches but does not delve into any in-depth explanation of the whole approach or for that matter, provide extensive background material.

Yūsuf Nūr ‘Awaḍ, a structuralist critic, maintained in his literary criticism of al-Ṭayyib Śāliḥ, from a structural criticism viewpoint, that the structural approach helps the researcher identify the interior component of literary works.18 This criticism was divided into two sections. The first section is his description of stylistic and structural approaches to literary criticism; the second is the application of structuralist principles to al-Ṭayyib Śāliḥ’s assorted pieces. However, in this second section, it seems as if ‘Awaḍ has all but forgotten what he wrote in the first with regard to structuralism.

18 أن المنهج الذي سأتبعه في دراسة أعمال الطيب صالح القصصية هو المنهج البنيوي وهو كما أساليب منهج يتيح للدارس أن يتعلف على مكونات العمل الداخلية. عرض يوسف نور الطيب صالح في منظور النقد البنيوي، ص. 105، مكتبة العلم، جدة 1983.
In his analysis of Şāliḥ's "Wedding of al-Zain" (عرس الـزین), 'Awaḍ's comments on selected passages from the narrative do not readily demonstrate a structuralist approach, but seem closer to an impressionistic interpretation. For example, 'Awaḍ portrays Şāliḥ's presentation of the central character, al-Zain, as if Şāliḥ had taken many quick snapshots, so quick that "a person does not have time to catch his breath," each of which represents a particular aspect of al-Zain. 'Awaḍ believes Şāliḥ painted the picture of al-Zain in this way to communicate through the structure of the work the instability of al-Zain's personality, "which is like that of a fitful animal."19

Throughout the study of structuralism, one major issue has yet to be discussed: to what degree was rhetoric, emanating from the Arab heritage, integrated into Arab stylistic and structuralist thought? Al-Jāḥiẓ, al-'Askarī, and many other medieval critics, including al-Jurjānī, al-Āmidī, and Ibn Qutaiba, could not escape concentrating much of their attention on rhetoric in their literary works since they are based on a linguistic approach. But before their answer to this question can be properly presented, it is necessary to examine their concept of rhetoric in the Arab literary heritage. Abu Hilāl al-'Askarī, in al-Ṣīnāatalāin, identified three potential meanings implicit in the rhetoric of Arabic sources. The first is that rhetoric can be used to achieve a certain goal. The second use of rhetoric is as exaggeration which gives the impression that the subject, speech or text reaches a higher level. Finally, al-'Askarī wrote that rhetoric could be used to directly convey the meaning of the text to the audience.

This last point, conveyance, is similar to the term in modern linguistics, i.e., the speaker aims to convey his message to his audience plainly, without any intention of

19 تلك لقطات سريعة شبيهة بتنقلات الكاميرا، لا يكاد الإنسان يلتقط أشفاهه معها ولكنها تصب جميعًا في شيء واحد هو اللوحة الكاريكاتورية التي رسمها الكاتب لشخصية الزين وهي الشخصية اللاحقة القائمة التي تجسد صورة حيوان ضال لا يعرف الاستقرار. المرجع السابق نفسه، ص 142.
influencing the audience. However, conveyance has the unique capacity to impart a message to an audience that is not there to hear it. It is possible that the speaker may be talking to one person, but be talking about another. There is yet another possibility. The speaker may be speaking to one person with the intention that the person convey his message to another or others, such as during Muhammad’s (SAAS) famous farewell sermon in which he repeated seven times: “have I conveyed it? O God be witness.” This statement drew the faithful’s attention to the importance of conveying the message, especially since this sermon contained many religious and life tasks which concerned the believer.

Al- Jāḥiẓ, in al-Bayān wa al-Tahyūn, portrays rhetoric as a synonym for writing, so that both concepts of conveyance-conveying a message to a person either about someone else or for the purpose that person should convey the message to others-have the same meaning. Al-Jāḥiẓ considers the function of both of them as irrelevant to natural speech, and therefore not representative of normal expressions between people. Al- Jāḥiẓ further argued that writing should maintain a healthy distance from normal sounds of expression. There are many examples of Al- Jāḥiẓ’s view that rhetoric is the domain of written communication. Commenting on ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd and ibn al-Muqaffa’, he wrote that they were “rhetoricians because of their pens and their tongues using the language of rhetoric of the poet and rhetoric of the pen”. In support of his idea, al- Jāḥiẓ quotes Bishr ibn al-Mu’tamir, “One is able to convey rhetoric with the pen as easily as with the tongue.”

20}
Al-'Askari believed that rhetoric was concerned basically with sound and the meaning was strictly secondary. He considered the eloquence of speech, of rhetoric, as characteristic of the language and not the speaker. In addition, he said that the central affect of rhetoric is upon refining and beautifying the pronunciation of the wording and the expressions of the text.\(^{21}\) Returning to al-Jähiz, he discussed many aspects of Arab literary criticism, some of which relate well to modern linguistic studies. Two such points which occupy a part of al-Jähiz's literary works are syntagmatic and paradigmatic constructions. Al-Jähiz did not use these contemporary names, but called these concepts al-Shāhid and al-Mathal (الشاهد والمثل) respectively. A syntagmatic construction denotes or concerns “the relationship between a word and other members of a syntactic unit containing it” (Collins English Dictionary). A word may be said to have a syntagmatic relation with other words which occur in the sentence in which it appears, but also have a paradigmatic relation with words in that sentence that could be substituted for the original word. The following diagram will help illustrate this principle:

\[
\begin{align*}
I & \leftrightarrow \text{gave} \leftrightarrow \text{Tracy} \leftrightarrow \text{the} \leftrightarrow \text{book} \\
& \quad \downarrow \\
& \quad \text{passed} \\
& \quad \downarrow \\
& \quad \text{handed} \\
& \quad \downarrow \\
& \quad \text{threw}\end{align*}
\]

al-Jähiz understood these two linguistic themes, though he expressed them in slightly different terms. He used the following text as a means of illustration of recognising the beauty of the text through these two themes.

\(^{21}\)Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics,p 369
“Khalid was beautiful, but was not tall, “Abū Ṣafwān, you are beautiful,” said his wife. Abū Ṣafwān said, “Why do you say this when I do not have the principles of beauty-neither [the height], nor the garment, nor the hood.” He was asked what he meant, and Abū Ṣafwān answered, “the principle of beauty is height, and I am not tall; the garment of beauty is whiteness, and I am not white; and the hood of beauty is black hair, and I am grey-haired. So you should say: you are handsome and witty.”

In this passage, the principle of beauty and its garment have a kind of syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationship.

Kamāl abū Deeb, in his Fi al-Shī'riyya, concentrates on syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationships as important themes of the text. He writes: “This study aims to trace the poetic in the text by recognising the relationship between heterogeneous parts of the text according to their semantic, syntactic, sound, and rhythm levels, as well as their paradigmatic and syntagmatic relationships.” Jonathan Culler asserts that paradigmatic and syntagmatic relationships are essential facts in linguistic theory. He writes:

“In order to make explicit the integrative capacity of an element one must define its relations with other items of the same level. These distribution relations are of two kinds. Syntagmatic relations bear on the possibility of combination: two items may be in a relation of reciprocal or non-reciprocal implication, compatibility to incompatibility. Paradigmatic relations, which determine the possibility of substitution, are especially important in the analysis

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23ِ - يقول الجاحظ:- وكان خالد جميلا، ولم يكن بالطول، فقالت له أمرته: انك لجمال بالأعمال، قال كيف تقولين هذا وما في عمود الجمال ولا رداء ولا برنسه، فقيل له ما عمود الجمال، فقال الطول ومست طويلة، ورداه البضاعة ومست بأبيض وبرنسه وسواد الشعر وأنا لشمع، ولكن قولى انك لملبسي ظريف، الجاحظ، كتاب الترتيب، ج 1 ص 340.

24ِ - يقول كمال أبو ديب:- تطمئن هذه الدراسة إلى رصد الشعراء في تجسدها في النص، منطقة في- المرحلة الحاضرة الأولية - من اكتشاف العلاقات التي تتناصى بين مكونات النص على الأصعدة الدلالية والتكرييبة والصوتية والابداعية، وعلى محوّر النص: المنسوج، والتشريفي. أبو ديب، كمال، في الشعراء، ص 18-19، مؤسسة الأبحاث العربية، الطبعة الأولى 1987.
of system. The meaning of an item depends on the differences between it and other items which might have filled the same slot in a given sequence.\textsuperscript{25}

This author takes the view that rhetoric is founded on two principles: linguistic and value elements. Rhetorical analysis should evaluate the literary text not from the perspective of the aestheticism of its descriptions and norms, but from the perspective of syntactic relationships between parts of the poetic image. The poetic image will display differences in language from one poet to the next. This difference is often considered one of the main principles of the contemporary theory of poetics: that literature is not just a collection of simple sentences, but that these sentences have been transformed into signs in a literary system. Tzvetan Todorov wrote:

"Yet literature is not a "primary" symbolic system (as painting, for example, can be, or as a language is, in a sense) but "secondary": it utilises as raw material an already existing system, language. This difference between linguistic system and literary system cannot be uniformly observed in every instance of literature: it is at its minimum in writing of "lyric" or sapiential type, in which the sentences of the text are organised directly among themselves; at its maximum in the text of fiction, in which the actions and characters evoked form in their turn a configuration relatively independent of the concrete sentences which cause us to know it."\textsuperscript{26}

This is not the only aspect of rhetoric that must be considered. As motioned before, sound also plays a significant role which works within the context of the text. This context should contain value and relationships between sounds. Hence, the subject of rhetoric can be broken down into four components: world, creativity, literary text, and recipient. These components work together based on the relationship between them and the text.


The concept of metaphor could help explain how rhetoric contains linguistic and value principles. Metaphor is the use of sounds which have known and specific meanings which, as al-Jurjānī points out in a different context, provide a variety of meanings. In simpler terminology, the use of metaphoric language associates the specific meaning of one noun with another. Metaphor (Isti'ara) should most likely be based on linguistic relationships between parts of the poetic image. This should normally lead to both the creator of the poetic image and the recipient of the poetic image (i.e., the audience) forming similar pictures in their imaginations.

An analysis of a verse (al-A'raf, verse No. 157) from the Holy Qur'ān clarifies this idea: “and follow the light that has been sent down with him...” the “light” in this verse means evidence and clarification which God had sent to the prophet Muḥammad (SAAS). Exploring the relationship between “light” and “evidence/clarification” further, it is apparent that the words do not emanate from the same semantic field since light is perceptible while clarification is non-perceptible, i.e., one cannot touch or see “clarification.” Finally, it seems clear that the word “light” on its own, without the syntagmatic relationship with other words, could not provide the specific meaning which was intended in the Holy verse.

The metaphor in this verse is based on the central point of “the light” and the verb “to follow,” as in, “to be inspired by.” Individuals are encouraged to follow, to be inspired by, Muḥammad (SAAS) because of the perceptible evidence of the light which was divinely sent to him. The beauty of metaphor in this verse arises from the
relationship between the past tense of the verb "to follow", the direct object, "the light", and the connection clause "sent down with him." Al-Jurjānī’s treatment of this verse maintains that there is no connection between "the light" and evidence apart from when the heart has been exposed to the evidence, akin to the eyes being crossed by light. This similarity, then, according to al-Jurjānī, does not produce variety, natural, or a constituent shape, but it is an intellectual picture.²⁸

Another means of determining the meaning and working of a metaphor is provided by Imru’ al-Qais:

and I said to the night, when it stretched its lazy loins followed by its fat buttocks, and heaved off its heavy breast.

The rhetorical critics consider metaphor, such as the one used in the verse quoted above, as a kind of embodiment of poet’s accumulation of many metaphors, each aiming to keep its place beside the other. In this way, the author can create the image. He creates a stretched backbone for the night with buttocks following the backbone and the chest. The beauty of metaphor in these lines is that the function of the metaphor, according to al-Jurjānī, is to turn an inanimate object into a living object, a speechless object into a well spoken individual, and a concealed meaning into a revealed meaning.²⁹

al-Jurjānī’s view seems to take into account the valuable point in the metaphor. Therefore, one could say that his analysis is based on linguistic relationships between the

²⁸ يقول الجرخاني: فليس الشبل الحامل من الدور في البيان والاحقة نحنوهمالا ان القلب اذا وردت عليه صار في حالة شبيهة بالجلس إذا صادف الدور، وهذا كما تعلم شبه لمست تحصل منه على جنس ولا على طبيعة وعيزية، ولا على هيئة وصورة تدخل في الخلق، وإنما هو صورة عقلية. الجرخاني، عبدالفتاح، أسرار البلاغة، ص 87-88، دار احياء العلم - بيروت، الطبعة الأولى، 1992م.

²⁹ يقول الجرخاني: فاناك لتترى بها الجمال حيّا ناطقا، والأجم فصيحا، والأجسام الخرس مبينة، والمعاني الجلية.
sounds which produce a harmonisation between backbone and stretches, following and buttocks, and farness and chest. The relationships between words do not come arbitrarily, so the poet chose stretching for the backbone to illustrate how long his night was, since his psychological condition is full of difficult problems. The opposition between "following buttocks" and "heavy chest" draws a shape of a poetic image, and therefore, al-Jurjānī stresses how metaphor works between sounds and literary text.

Muḥammad Mandūr asserted in his book Fi al-Mizān al-Jadīd that the disparity between literature and other art forms was the subjection of the idea and the consciousness to the sound. Literature, according to Mandūr, is a kind of self-exression through sounds. Sounds act as the vehicle by which the writer or speaker communicates his meaning, much as the painter who uses colour to express his ideas, or the sculptor who moulds his ideas in space.30

In this author’s view, metaphor is most likely based on a comparison between linguistic relationships like a simile, but the metaphor is more discerning than a simile. A metaphor works according to substitution or movement between the diverse semantics of words. Therefore, the meaning in a metaphor is not presented directly to the audience, but must be compared with another meaning according to the use of simile between them.

In addition, literary works are founded on two elements: the structure of relationships of language signs and the relationship of language signs within this syntactic structure. Therefore, defining words in isolation does not contribute to an understanding of the literary work without recognising relationships between sounds as linguistic units.
based on the sequences of the structure of syntax. This approximates al-Jurjānī's view that the sequences of structure of syntax have a definitive meaning in speech. 

al-Jurjānī, in his theory of construction (al-Naẓm), emphasises the relationship between sounds through their context. The advantage of this theory is that the entire phrasing leads to the poetic image, and the sounds are reduced to raw material, a vehicle for meaning. One of the central critical literary rules of al-Jurjānī is the collaboration of sounds and the interaction of linguistic relationships with each other in their contact in order to convey and create the literary image. This is the underlying concept of an image with meaning derived from its context.

Structuralism stresses the ability of literature to use language flexibly, in manners in which language would not normally be used. Literature, therefore, has its own mechanism to turn normal language into literary image. And it is becoming increasingly difficult to fully understand the poet without recognising the rules of literature; the poem should obtain its meaning from a general system of linguistics.

The present author believes that structuralism most likely has an essential role in the theory of construction (al-Naẓm). Construction is not the mere joining of sound, but contemplation of the meaning of the syntax and its interaction in the context of the language. The language, in turn, contains many relationships inside the text, couched in artistic phrasing. Such artistic phrasing should not treat sentences like pearls and string them together arbitrarily to keep them together. The author must create each element of the text with much forethought and insight so that the sentences are joined together perfectly to elicit the full and true meaning and sound of the text.

31 يعرف الجرجاني النظام بقوله: ليس النظام شيئاً غير توازي معاني النحو وأحكامه فيما بين الكلم. الجرجاني، عبد القادر: دلائل الأعجاز، ص 394، الطبعة الرابعة 1367 هـ.
Al-Jurjānī’s theory of construction contains many principles of structuralism and, in the main, supports this author’s definition of constructions. He wrote that the construction is not about arranging sounds, but about phraseology of meaning. In addition, he states that the construction of speech is not merely a combination of letters placed end to end, but speech must have semantic fields to help words fit into special shapes. Therefore, the purpose of speech construction is consistency of meaning in accordance with an intellectual concept.32

Returning to the concept of rhetoric, in conclusion, it can be stated with a fair amount of confidence that rhetoric is at least a medieval linguistic art which established some of the basic principles of modern stylistic and structuralist approaches. Rhetoric theory in contemporary Arab criticism has affected many contemporary Arab Structuralists. ‘Abdallah al-Ghadhdhāmī, in his study *al-Khaytā' a wa al-Takfīr*, extracts most of his examples from medieval rhetorical criticism. For instance, he states that al-Qartājānī stressed language as an essence of literary work and creativity which should be based on proficiency in applying the paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations which is principles of structuralism.33

al-Ghadhdhāmī quotes an example from Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī to support his idea of signifier and signified which, he writes, is based on four themes: a material entity, an intellectual entity, a verbal entity, and a written entity. These four themes contributed

32 يقول المراجع: ليس الغرض بنظرة الكلم أن تواكب ألفاظها في النطق، بل أن تواكبها لذاكها وتلاقى معانيها على وجه التائه الذي افتقد العقل، وكيف يتصور أن يقيد بها إلى أفعال الألفاظ في النطق، بعد أن تثبت أنه نظام يعتن فيه حال المنظوم بعضه مع بعض.

المراجع السابق نفسه ص. 41

33 يقول المراجع: ويركز القرطاجي على أن اللغة هي لب التجارة الأدبية، وهي حقائقها، وعلى أن الإبداع يكمن في توظيف اللغة توظيفاً جمالياً يقوم على مهارة الاختيار (الاستدلال) وإجادة التأليف (السياق) وهي عناصر المدرسة البيروية.

الشاذلي، عبدالله مهدي، الخطابية والتلفظ، ص. 16، الطبعة الأولى 1985 م.
to the broader explanation of the function of semiology. Al-Ghazālī sees the tree, for instance, as a material entity. Yet, when the tree is nothing more than a picture in the mind, then it becomes an intellectual entity. When the word “tree” is spoken and heard, taking on the verbal entity, or written and read, taking on the written entity, then the intellectual entity also comes to bear because a mental image of a tree is formulated in the mind. In this case, a signifier requires another signifier and sound produces an image.

Terrence Hawkes describes the above idea in terms of contemporary European linguistic theories.

“In essence, this overriding device of alienation has one main purpose, to shock us out of the anaesthetic grip our language maintains on our perceptions. As we have already seen, Saussure points out that native speakers tend to assume a necessary ‘fitness’, an unquestionable ‘identity’ between signifier and signified, between the ‘sound

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34 يقول الغزالي: - وقد يحسن لنا هذا أن نستعين بأبي حامد الغزالي لإنواء أفكارنا عن علاقة الدال بالمبدل والتي
تتحرك عندنا على أربعة محاور هي:

1- الوجود العيني
2- الوجود الذهني
3- الوجود التنظيمي
4- الوجود الكتني

فالشيء له وجود العيني كشجرة نابية في الأرض ثم يكون لها وجود ذهني، وهو أن ينشأ لها في ذهن الإنسان صورة تقوم في الذاكرة، وبأتي الوجود التنظيمي وهو كلمة (ش-ج-ر-ة) ولهذا لا يشير إلى الوجود العيني وإنما يشير الوجود الذهني، لأن نطقنا بهذه الكلمة لا يحضر الشجرة التي على الأرض وانما يشير صورتها في الذهن، فالبال هنا يثير دلالاً آخر للنظر يجلب صورة، ثم يتحول الوجود التنظيمي إلى كتابة، والكتابة تثير فيما النظر لأن أول منفعل إذا صادفنا المكتوب هو أن تقوم بنطقه، وهذا النظر يجلب صورة المتطورة. وهذه هي حركة الإشارة شرحها الغزالي دون أن ينبهها (إشارة) ولكن شرحه سبق عصر علم السيمولوجيا بتورون ولم يأت هذا العالم بشرح أكثر من هذا الذي جاء به أبو حامد.

المرجع السابق نفسه، ص 44-45.
image’ made by the word ‘tree’ and the concept of an actual tree. This assumption is the basis of language’s anaesthetic function.”

Shukrī ‘Ayyād in Madkhal ‘ilā ‘ilm al-Uslūb compares Ibn Khaldūn’s definition of style to Chomsky’s theory regarding transformational grammar. ‘Ayyād considered Ibn Khaldūn’s definition as the perfect view of linguistic creation. In this sense there is, in ‘Ayyād’s opinion, no difference between Ibn Khaldūn and Chomsky, according to whose theory there exist deep structures in the mind of everyone who uses a language, by observing, which anyone can create an infinite number of sentences that he has not heard before.

Kamal abu Deeb stresses the influences of Arab rhetorical criticism on contemporary Arab criticism in his study Jadaliyyat al-Khafā’ wa al-Tajallī, stating that many critics do not yet realise the culture and philosophy that is at the root of medieval rhetoric. Indeed, he feels it is this lack of recognition that is one of the reasons why Arab linguistic studies have yet to embrace the linguistic studies of Ferdinand de

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35. Hawkes, Terence. Structuralism and Semiotics. P. 70
36. "ولنذكر هنا سلوك الأسلوب عند أهل هذه الصناعة وما يريدون بها في طلاؤهم، فأعلم أنها (فكرة الأسلوب) عبارة عنهم عن المفاهيم التي ينجم فيه التراكيب، أو القائل الذي يفرغ فيه.

أين خلدون، المقدمة، الباب السادس والأربعون: "في مناهج الشعر ووجه تعلمه.

37. يقول شكري عبيد: لا يکاد يختلف ابن خلدون في عمليه الخلق اللغوي عن النظرية التي يقول بها تشومسكي الآن، وهي أن تما أبیة عمیقة فی ذهن كل مستعمل للغة يستطيع بمراواتها أن يخلق عددًا لا يحصي من الجمل التي لم يسبق له سماعها.

عبد شكري، مدخل إلى علم الأسلوب 24، الطبعة الثانية 1992 م، مشارات أصدقاء الكتاب، القاهرة.
Saussure, whose work was so often anticipated by the work of medieval Arab critics, including the unique criticism of ‘Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī.38

In conclusion, structuralism in Arab contemporary criticism was influenced by European structuralism, and Arab structuralists still do not seem to have their own methodology to deal with literary works. Therefore, most literary criticism was relegated to combinations of theories, while modern critics influenced by medieval Arab critics also tended to specialise in linguistics and rhetoric.

38 يقول أبوذيب: ومن الجلبي أن الثقافة العربية المعاصرة لم تستطع حتى الآن أن تتحمل هذا السراث الفكري والفلسفي تمثلاً جيداً، وأن التراث اللغوي التابع من فردينانت دو سوسير ما يزال غريبًا عليها غرابة شبه مطلقة، وأن كانت أهم أسس النظرية جزءًا من التراث اللغوي العربي كما يتبلور في عمل ناقد فذ هو عبد القاهر الجراحاني. (راجع من أجل هذه النقاط كتابي: al-Jurjani’s Theory of Poetic Imagery. 1997. أبوذيب، كمال، جدابية الخفاء والتحدي، مص 11 الطبعة الثالثة 1984 دار العلم للملايين.)
Chapter Four
The Phenomena of Structuralism in Modern Arab Criticism
A structuralistic approach to contemporary literature drives a literary revolution which leads to the development of new approaches in contemporary literary criticism far removed from the inherited tradition. This revolution, in the context of Arab literary criticism, aims to scrutinise medieval approaches to literary criticism and reshape them in a contemporary format: it does not accept the views of impressionists, who seem to focus on an explanation of words followed by a comment on those explanations. This chapter will discuss the artistic phenomena in structural criticism and the degree to which individual structuralists use the precepts of structuralism in their literary analyses. In so doing, the contributions of both the structuralist and stylistic approach to Arab criticism in the second half of the twentieth century will be defined. In addition, this chapter will show how structuralist critics used their art to influence Arab thinking with respect to their culture, poetry, and the Arab’s very being, by way of eliminating ideologies that were too shallow and fragmented, substituting ideologies that were more complicated, yet more objective and comprehensive.1

The subject of artistic aspects of structuralism is presently not without controversy, since these artistic aspects are still in the evaluative stage. Various perspectives of artistic aspects have been treated in a variety of ways by individual structuralist critics, even though they would all appear to proceed from the same set of general ground rules. Abū Deeb’s literary works, for example, seem to exhibit four particular artistic aspects: binary opposition, the poetic, the poem structure and rhyming. So pervasive are these four points that they may be considered as fundamental to

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analysing Abū Deeb in both his theoretical and his practical works. Having said that, a link between the aspects of binary opposition and the poetic predominates. This link seems to have been deliberately created in the internal textual structure, the goal being to stimulate and excite the reader’s appreciation of the language of the text and thus of the beautiful wording in a poetic context.

According to Abū Deeb there is also a link between the poem’s structure and rhyming, though this is a dialectic one, since the poem’s text is a complete unit which contains the basic components of sound, words, and sentences. The formation of the text should rely on a certain interplay between these basic components, such that they arrange the sounds, words, and sentences into a definitive order. As such, the dialectic relationship leads to a new critical understanding based on two points: the components of the unit and their semantic relationship, and the semantic structure.

Binary opposition originates in the actual experience of the poem itself as a principal component of much pre-Islamic poetry. Its function is to assist in the development of a poem by creating linguistic relationships. Therefore, it is not unreasonable to expect that binary opposition will govern the structure. Far from being merely an analytical tool, binary opposition is also a philosophical concept which has concerned philosophers and intellectuals from Aristotle to Hegel.

Hegel’s study of binary opposition was conducted within the framework of the dialectical triangle of theory, opposition, and final product. The final product is produced from the dialectic relationship between the theory and opposition. Comparing Hegel with Claude Lévi-Strauss, it is readily noticeable that Lévi-Strauss followed Hegel’s lead in adopting his “food triangle” of raw, processed, and rotted. However, Lévi-Strauss departs from Hegel in that there is no dialectic relationship between the three
components. Instead, his view emphasises the binary opposition of raw and fresh food or raw and processed food which leads in the end, he believes, to opposition between culture and education. Thus, the function of binary opposition in Lévi-Strauss' view is not concerned with the conflict inherent in opposition, but is concerned with the establishment of a balance between the differences of the opposition. In sum, the distinction between Hegel's and Lévi-Strauss' approach is the dialectic conflict of binary opposition. Therefore, it is possible to transform the concept of the total relation into a partial, in the view of Strauss, whereas no such transformation can be achieved with Hegel's.

Lévi-Strauss viewed binary opposition as representative of the entire basic structure of all languages, and considered that the principle of binary opposition and binary distinction are the same. The interaction between the two types of binary aspects generated some conceptual misunderstanding. Yet such misunderstandings could be clarified by the very nature of the point of conflict in each view.

As already noted, the concepts of binary opposition and distinction are not new to the 20th century. Aristotle posited these two concepts and developed a view based on two elements: proof and negation, or A vs. (-A). So far, binary opposition has been described in terms of three components. Aristotle's view fits this model in that two of the three components in the triangle can be interpreted as the "proof" and the third is the relationship between them. For example, the opposing relationship between high and low is based on measurement. However, this does not apply to all variables A and B, such as a book and a camel, since there is no direct relationship between these two objects. Therefore, binary opposition is highly specific. In the example of high versus low, both elements are a result of the human reaction to an individual's sense of the natural balance of things. Clearly, a book or a camel do not share this special relationship.
Aristotle also indicated a second type of third component of the three-term triangle. He expressed the binary opposition in terms of a set of odd and even numbers which requires the domain of natural numbers as a substratum. The substratum serves as the third term. However, the binary distinction between odd and not-odd numbers does not require the domain of natural numbers because the term not-odd includes all types of numbers which are, of course, not odd numbers, such as fractions, approximation, etc.

The existence of the concept of binary opposition going back at least as far as Aristotle, if not further, makes it somewhat difficult to conceive of life without binaries. Raman Selden's insightful words expressed this matter adeptly: "Forms of binarism are present in human thought from the earliest times. Dualism in philosophy and religion (subject and object, God and man, mind and external world, organic and mechanical, temporal and eternal, and so on) are the very foundations of entire world-views". A. J. Greimas expressed similar views, though he chose examples less esoteric, and more grounded in basic semantic units, such as light and dark, male and female, and horizontal and vertical.

Binary opposition dominated European criticism and philosophical conceptualization during the 1960's. Did binary opposition similarly dominate Arabic criticism and philosophical concepts? It has already been noted that binary opposition dates back to pre-Islamic poetry, and therefore will have held a place in Arabic criticism for some time. As binary opposition developed in Arabic criticism, it tended to incorporate the terms antithesis (تَبَاق) and comparison (مَعَابِلَا). تَبَاق is the use of two contrasting words in juxtaposition, such as first and last, stand and sit, etc. مَعَابِلَا is the use of

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two words in a specific relationship, as demonstrated in the following lines from Abū Tammām's poem. On the Capture of Ammūriyya:

The sword is truer than the book
On its edge is the border between seriousness and jocularity

White swords, not black pages
In whose text exists doubtful and uncertain clarity.4

The antithesis or binary opposition of seriousness and jocularity is fairly transparent in these lines, where the muqābala contributes to the regularity of rhythm. The Ṭibāq of white and black highlights the sword's function as clarity and that of the literary text as opaque and uncertain.

A different dimension of muqābala is explored in Muḥammad al-Hādī al-Ţārābulṣī's study of the poet Aḥmad Shawqī. al-Ţārābulṣī examines variety, positioning, meaning, the function of comparison in general, and how Shawqī benefited from his particular use of binary opposition. Categorising comparison as linguistic and contextual comparison, Al-Ţārābulṣī came to the conclusion that Shawqī's use of linguistic comparison was very limited, and did not contribute in any significant way to the literature or poetry. However, al-Ţārābulṣī believed that Shawqī's use of contextual comparison was reasonably sophisticated.

Contextual comparison is based on a distribution of facts. The distribution varies with the individual poet through the use of two semantically opposed phrases. Shawqī’s description of the queen bee will illustrate this point:

4. يقول أبو أحمد: السيف أسود النكتة مسند الكتب
في منشورات أنيس القصيد
بقيت الصفحات لا سبيل الصحائف
في هذه الجدّة بين الجدّة واللعبة
Ascending in work from work descending.\(^5\)

Shawqî expresses both the meaning of the movement of the bee and the meaning of difficulty through the opposition of ascending and descending. His ultimate goal is to combine both meanings into a single unit.\(^6\)

The discussions among structuralists on binary opposition, in terms of tense, inspired al-Ţarâbulsi to advance the concept of tense relations, i.e., that the opposition need not be made explicit within a single text, but is rather to be sought within a whole body of poetry. In addition, he felt that by combining the various oppositions in the text in such a way that there would be an unavoidable comparison between the function and character of each opposition - the differences between them would be even more distinct. Even so, the perfect binary opposition cannot escape the tight distribution of the wording over the course of the poem’s line.

Al-Ţarâbulsi explained that tight distribution is akin to composing the structures of both parts of the comparison and stitching them together in a single line, thereby distributing the individual components on either side of the division between the two hemistichs. He cites a line from Shawqî:

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\(^5\) بصف أمحمد شوقى ملكة النحل بقوله: 
فالمصر محضر صاعد منه بدرة.

\(^6\) فالصعود بقابلة في اللغة النزول، أما الانحدار فيقابلة التسلق، لكن الشاعر في مقابلته الصعود بالانحدار لم يكتف بالإشارة إلى الحركة العمودية التي في مقابلة الصعود بالنزول، ولا بالتعبير عن معنى مشقة التحرك الذي يفهم من مقابلة الانحدار بالسلق بل الجمع بين المعنيين: معنى الحركة ومعنى المشقة معاً.

الطراحلي ، محمد الهادي، خصصاص الأسلوب في الشعر، ص 103-143 منشورات الجامعة التونسية 1981.
"Innovation with deliberation is safe
but headstrong innovation leads to stumbling.\(^7\)

In this excerpt, four words are tightly distributed on either side of the
"seam." Their identical metre generates the ideal rhythm without compromising the
meaning or semantics. From this example, it is possible to suggest that *muqābala*
(comparison), *tībāq* (antithesis), and binary opposition are parallel concepts.

Arabic rhetoric defines four broad categories for the concept of *muqābala*:
Genitive construction, which is the ratio of two similar numbers, such as twenty is double
ten, or the relative hierarchical position of one to another, as in father to son and master
to slave; contradiction, such as black and white; presence and absence, as in the case of
being blind versus being sighted; and positive and negative; such as ‘Ammār is sitting and
‘Ammār is not sitting, respectively.

Keeping two terms or meanings opposite on one level leads to the contradiction
in meaning, while on a different level, the meanings can be made to condide more closely.
The following excerpt from *ibn al-Rūmī* demonstrates the principle that positive and
negative comparison can occur without any contradiction in meaning:

> They are not heroes who pierce with spears
> but they are heroes who are judicious
>
> and they are not heroes in war
> but they are heroes in peace.\(^8\)
The comparison is one of war and peace, defining what makes a hero.

**Mutābaqa** means correspondence, or that two contradictory meanings are placed in congruence with one another. **Mutābaqa** is derived from the saying in Arabic: this one is *ṭābaqa* with that one, i.e.; the two are equal. **ṭībāq**, as was mentioned earlier, is the juxtaposition of contrasting ideas, though in truth, the term denotes more than this one meaning in Arab rhetoric. These various shades of meaning are not of primary concern here. Instead, a couple of examples will highlight some artistic concepts in structural thought. **Di’bil** says:

**Do not be amazed, O Salma at a man**

**on whose head grey hair laughs, so that he weeps**.⁹

The **ṭībāq** in this line is evidenced by the use of the words “laugh” and “weep”. This kind of antithesis is sometimes referred to as pure antithesis. Similarly, **al-Mutanabbi** exemplifies this idea of pure antithesis:

**I visit them when darkness pleads for me**

**and leave them when morning brightness lures me away**.¹⁰

Here, “dark” and “bright” complete the **ṭībāq**.

We may recall that Arabic medieval critical terms are often used by modern critics, though with added dimensions to fit their contemporary context. The structuralist critic **Abū Deeb**, in his analysis of the mu’allaqa of Labīd, stresses binary opposition

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⁹. يقول دعبل الخزاعي: ضحك المشهدي برأسه فكره

لا تعجبي يناسم من رجل

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وأشني وبياض الصبيح يغري بي
which appears to dominate the *mu'allaqā* from beginning to end. The type of binary opposition developed when describing the movement of the ruins is used throughout the structure of the poem, such as dry and wet, still and dynamic. Abū Deeb’s approach to binary opposition allows him to consider near synonyms as binary opposition, such as thunder-clouds and gentle-showers. Abū Deeb writes that this use of binary opposition “is outside the norm - the components of the binary opposition do not contradict each other - and as such has a life of its own.”

Abū Deeb’s search for binaries was very effective, finding them in less obvious places, such as this line from the *mu'allaqā* of Labīd:

and the great-eyed cows that had lately calved stand over their broods

while in the spreading plain the little lambs form their flocks.

Abū-Deeb considers the fact of the wild cattle living with their young as a binary opposition in the sense of near synonyms, creating a new meaning of its own. Along these same lines, Abū Deeb sees a binary opposition between two animals whose manners of giving birth differ, such as the gazelle, whose young are born live, and the ostrich, whose young are hatched. It is fair to say that binary opposition is an essential element of Abū Deeb’s analysis of *mu'allaqā* of Labīd.

In this author’s opinion, binary opposition should properly be the contradiction between two words or sentences in opposition to each other. According to this

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11 - أنظر كمال أبوديب في الرؤى المفقودة - نحو منهج ينوي في دراسة الشعر الجاهلي، الهيئة العامة المصرية للكتاب 1986 .


يقول لبيد ابن أبي ربيعة:

والعُين سَاَكِنة عَلَى أَطْلُالِهَا ـُ~
interpretation, Abū Deeb was not using binary opposition, but binary distinction. The Socratic art of definition employs binary distinction as its method, e.g., the definition of justice is achieved by distinguishing what is just from what is not. The method of binary distinction demands a different kind of attention from that of binary opposition. In a binary opposition, one’s attention is equally divided between the two terms. In a binary distinction, however, it is mainly focused on the positive term. Additionally, the device of binary distinction is used mainly to focus attention progressively on the object of definition. The different procedure articulates the scope of a universal concept.

Lévi-Strauss discovered his structural universal of binary opposition in his investigation of totemism and kinship in certain primitive societies - there was no guarantee that the validity of the same structural universal was not to be limited to the locus of its discovery. The critics assembled their structural universal for literary analysis through their investigation of modern European poetry. Once more, there was no guarantee that these universals would be valid and useful in analysing the poetic structure of other ages and other cultures.13

Abū Deeb did succeed in utilizing his literary knowledge to search and follow binary opposition that was scattered throughout the mu‘allaqa of Labīd and in attempting to link them to the semantic context. Yet, it seems that the efforts spent in searching for this binary opposition did not explain the final conclusion of the mu‘allaqa. The general conception of the mu‘allaqa shows what the poet himself is suffering, whether psychologically or socially. An example from the mu‘allaqa:

The abodes are desolate, halting-place and encampment too, at Mina; deserted lies Ghawl, deserted alike Rijam,

and the torrent-beds of al-Rayyan - naked shows their trace,

13 - Seung, T.K. Structuralism and Hermeneutics, p.159.
rubbed smooth, like letterings long since scored on a stony slab;
blackended orts that, since the time their inhabitants tarried there,
many years have passed over, months unhallowed and sacrosant.

The star-borne showers of Spring have fed them, the outpouring
of thundercloud, great deluge and gentle following rain,
the cloud that travels by night, the sombre pall of morn,
the outspread mantle of eve with muttering antiphon.

Then the branches of aihaqan shot up, and the ostriches
and antelopes brought forth their young on both valley-slopes,
and the great-eyed cows that had lately calved stand over their brood
while in the spreading plain the little lambs form their flocks.

Then the torrents washed the dusty ruins, until they seem
like scrolls of writing whose text their pens have revivified,
or the back and forth of a woman tattooing, her indigo
in rings scattered, the tattooing newly revealed above them.\(^{14}\)

Halting-place and encampment, unhallowed and sacrosant fill the role of binary
opposition in this passage. A question which arises from this discussion is, does the
binary opposition in the \textit{mu'allāqa} play the separate role of interpretation of poetic
lines? In the present author’s view, although the rhetorical function of binary opposition
exposes the influence of the text’s meaning, it is not able to guide the text semantically.
In other words, the semantic field, which could be derived from the text, already
struggles to explain the poetical journey which had just taken place. The \textit{mu'allāqa}
begins with a psychological conflict merited by life’s continuity and ends with a
formulation of social mores and human attitudes.

Abū Deeb applied himself and his singular use of binary opposition to a study of
Abū al-Hindi’s poem, entitled \textit{Wa fūrata misk}. Abū Deeb maintains that the time index of

\(^{14}\) Arberry, A.J. \textit{The Seven Odes}. P 137-138 (\textit{The mu'allāqa} of Labid).
the poem is completed by the essential binary opposition of night and day. He also argues that there is another essential binary opposition present in the notion of classical beverages and new beverages - the new beverages defined by Abu Deeb as intoxicating drink - representing the tandem dimensions of risk and intoxication, and restraint and fear.

The present author believes Abu Deeb has not only invented the classical drink and new drink, but again strayed across the boundary between binary opposition and binary distinction. There is nothing essentially new in the existence and consumption of alcoholic drink. Such behaviour dates to pre-Islamic times, and its continued consumption is a matter of conflict between the group moral and psychological pressure and the individual.15 Truly, the classical drink could be better named as milk. Clearly, alcoholic drink is not the direct opposite of milk, since the set of non-alcoholic beverages will include a wide range of drinks. Therefore, it would be more accurate to describe the relationship between milk and alcohol as a binary distinction.

The poetry of Abu al-Hindî is often called wine poetry because of its extensive use of wine as a central theme. This kind of poetry often contains two elements: alcohol and women in a dialectic relationship. This aspect of wine poetry is well exemplified in the mu'allaga of `Amr ibn Kulthûm:-

Ha, girl! Up with your bowl! give us our dawn-draught and do not spare the wines of El-Andarina,

the brightly sparkling, as if saffron were in them whenever the mulled water is mingled with them,

15 يقول أبو ديب: وهذّه الثنائية تعمّق رؤية القصيدة تخلق تناقضًا مطلقاً بين السمات الأخلاقية والتفصيل الجماعي وبين الذات الفردية. أبو ديب، كمال، جدلية الخفاء والتحلي، ص 78.
that swing the hotly desirous from his passion
when he has tasted them to gentle mellowness;

you see the skinflint miser, when the cup’s passed him,
suddenly holds his prized property in derision.

O Umm Amr, you’ve withheld the beaker from us
from right to right it should have been running ___

Literary analysis of this kind of poetry should be based on a firm understanding of
the symbolic dimension of similes and metaphors, else the image the poet wishes to
create will lose its value, and the poem will revert to little more than an interesting
exercise in rhyme.

The poetry of Abū al-Hindī revolves around the same two semantic themes as
‘Amr in his mu’allaqa: an inclination towards alcohol, and an inclination towards
women. There is an unbalanced relationship between them as the two terms move
abruptly from one line to the next. ‘Amr begins with his inclination towards women,
i.e., “Ha, girl”, then changes to alcohol, “Up with your bowl....our dawn-draught” etc.,
then back to women, and then on to alcohol again. Could this erratic pattern point to a
troubled mind? It seems more likely that the poet has deliberately placed stress in specific
areas, using specific articles of simile, such as “like” (al-kāf, ka’nna), to present various
features of alcohol in a perceptive way.

With respect to Abū Deeb’s view that the time index was delineated by night and
day as an essential binary opposition, it seems more the case that night and day were
continual. The span of time over which the revellers enjoyed their drink was from one
day to the next. More importantly, the physical space of time had changed from a

simple measure to pleasure - pleasure which lasted until songs of joy turned to songs of sorrow with the coming of the day, expressed in the last line of the poem:-

The horn of the sun does not appear until it likes

I see a village around me, its boundaries quaking ...

The vanishing of physical time is linked to the vanishing of consciousness brought on by drink; the poet considers the singing of a slave girl at midday as the tears of lady who has lost her lover, therefore, he treats as equal singing and weeping at a point in a vanished time. Thus he is losing his awareness of the tragedy when he goes back to the world of alcoholic forgetfulness, and he says:-

and a wine that resembled the eye of the rooster before it roosts

I drank it without being harmed by it

The poetic image of Abū al-Hindī treats alcohol as a harmless pastime. Abū Nuwās worked the image slightly differently:-

And I offered a morning draught of wine (khamr) before the rooster’s dawn,

and already the beat of the night’s rising stars is upon us.

In light of these examples, the case for Abū Deeb’s assertion that night and day were binary opposition is neither effective nor sustainable.
The Poetic: The second aspect of Abu Deeb's structuralist conceptualisation is the poetic. He devoted an entire volume to presenting, explanation, and defending the condition for its formation. He writes:

The way in which to define the poetic aspect is through the synoptic structure. The poetic text is, therefore, a relational grid of primary component of the text. These components could exist on their own without even being poetic. Only through the flow of the text the relational networking occurs between the opposed components. That relation is the sole creator of the poetic aspect and simultaneously acts as an indicator of its existence. 20

Establishing the poetic in this manner is an attempt to resurrect language as the creator and not the created. This draws us to the issue of the semantic unit, where speech can be viewed through two analysis angles: either speech stems from the lexical unit or speech stems from the analytic unit. If the speaker's words are concerned with the meaning of their formulation, then such speech falls under the semantic unit's heading.

Abu Deeb believed that the poetic aspect was not a product of modern literature; many attempts to study the poetic aspect preceded his own times. He commented that his study aimed to present an explanation of the structural analysis of the poetic through its semiological and structural manifestation, particularly through its relational and synoptic aspects. In this Abu Deeb acknowledges that he is by no means pioneering this analytical approach. 21 Yet he is determined to define the poetic aspect in new, different ways, aiming to reach his audience more effectively. He developed the concept of poetic as a

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20 يقول أبو دين: لا يمكن أن تتصف الشعرية الا من حيث أن تكون أو تتبيل، أي في بنية كلمة، فالشعرية، لأن خصائصها عالائمة، أي أنها تجسد في النص للشبكة من العلاقات التي تنمو بين مكونات أولية سماها الأساسية أن كما منها يمكن أن يقع في سياق آخر دون أن يكون شعريا، لكنه في السياق الذي تنشأ فيه هذه العلاقات، وفي حركته المتواصلة مع مكونات أخرى لها السمة الأساسية ذاتها، يتحول إلى قاعية خط الشعرية ومؤثر على وجودها.

21Roslan, کمال فی الشعریة، ص 14 الطبعة الأولى 1987، مؤسسة البحث العربية.

راجع أبو دين في المراجع السابق نفس ص 10-11.
function of the “gap”, which he defined as the area of tension created by the introduction of the linguistic components or any components related to what Jacobson termed the “symbolising” system. This system takes place in a context where the relationships within the system may have two different dimensions. First, natural relationships derived from criteria and tasks of the mentioned elements and organised in a natural linguistic structure. Second, these relations may be incompatible and wholly unnatural. It may be a conflicting relationship within the context just presented of complete compatibility and homogenous relation between its components. In other words, the poetic aspect, according to this conceptualisation, should have designs on locating a word in an unexpected context which draws a disproportionate amount of attention from the reader.

Abū Deeb sampled the poetry of Adonis to elucidate his point. Adonis wrote:-

Because I am walking.

Although a complete sentence, it is a sterile sentence - it does not convey the mood of the poet. Adding a short descriptive phrase does not always alter the sterility of the line, as:

Because I am walking, I am tired.

This is the expression of a physical ailment, not necessarily invoking an emotional response. However, Adonis develops his poem to read in full:

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22 يلمع أبوذيب في تعريف الشعرية بطرق مختلفة لإصاله إلى المتلقي بطريقة إجرائية، إذ أنها في التصور الذي ينجم من وظائف مكونات اللغة ونحوها: مسافة التوتر، وهذا المفهوم يدعى الفضاء الذي ينشأ من الأحجام مكونات اللغة، وأي عناصر تنتمي إلى ما يسميه باكوين (نظام الترمز) في سياق تقوم فيه علاقات ذات معنى تميز، فهي: علاقات تقوم باعتبارها طبيعية نابعة من الخصائص الوظيفية للمكونات المذكورة، ومنظمة في بنية لغوية تمتلك صفة الطبيعة والألفية، ولكنها: علاقات تمتلك خصائصية للإجانس أو اللطيفية، أي أن العلاقات هي تحديدا لا متانة لكونها في السياق الذي تقدم فيه تطور في صيافة التجانس. المرجع السابق نفسه، ص 21.
Because I am walking,...
Because I am walking, I am tired
Because I am walking
My coffin follows me. 23

The introduction of the word “coffin” into the context of the poetic sentence leads one to question how “coffin” relates to the preceding sentence - what links the two sentences? Such questioning is a direct result of the dialectic relation that exists between “death” and “walking”, which is that death only consumes those things which have the capability of movement.

The poetic aspect creates some linguistic excitement with its positioning of a word in an unexpected context while simultaneously omitting an expected word. Al-Sayyāb illustrates this principle in his poem “Song of the Rain”:

I call the Gulf, oh Gulf
Granter of pearls, oyster and death
And the echo repeated
Like sobbing
Oh Gulf

23. يقول أدونيس:
لأنني أحلم....
لأنني أمشي أتعب
لأنني أحلم
أدركني تعب
أدريني نعشي
أدونيس، الأثاث الكاملة ج 1، ص 197، 1997
Granter of oysters and death. 24

Examining the components of the poem, it seems that there is an action and its reaction is represented by the “calling” the poet made to the Gulf. The action is the call to the Gulf, which is the granter of pearls and oysters - life, in a sense - and equally, death. The echo may be considered the reaction, and though it repeats the message, the echo conspicuously leaves “pearls” out of the equation. This most likely indicates that without the pearls, the Gulf is lifeless, though not dead. The “sobbing” echo is pessimism, sobbing often considered the deepest state of internalised crying. This poem serves to illustrate another dimension of Abū Deeb’s concept of the poetic as an element of the semiology of literature which does not explain the work as a whole, but attempts to determine the conventional symbols used to facilitate meanings of realisation.

‘Abd al-Salam al-Masaddī looks at the language from the point of view of stylistics. He maintains that the emphasis on theorising seems to be a deductive and reflective one. We find researchers and scholars relying on logic in their attempt to define literary speech. They view literary speech as a creation of a language out of a language, that is to say, a poetic language which substitutes for the primary language,
which acquires the artistic aspect of the language at issue. This definition, simply put, is the creation of literary speech by transforming an existing language.\(^{25}\)

It is important to remember that Abu Deeb’s expression of the poetic was not limited to what he called the “gap”. He also believed that the poetic aspect formulates the structure of the relationship between the text and the audience. The poetic of text acts at the same time as an indicator of the depth of that structure. Roland Barthes articulated a parallel view that such structure distinguished between the “text of pleasure” and the “text of bliss”. He wrote:

“Text of pleasure: the text that contents, fills, grants euphoria; the text comes from culture and does not break with it, is linked to a *comfortable* practice of reading.

Text of bliss: the text that imposes a state of loss, the text that discomforts (perhaps to the point of a certain boredom), unsettles the reader’s historical, culture, psychological assumptions, the consistency of his relation with language. Now the subject who keeps the two texts in his field and in his hands the reins of pleasure and bliss is an anachronic subject, for he simultaneously and contradictorily participates in the profound hedonism of all culture (which permeates him quietly under cover of an *art de vive* shared by the old books) and in the destruction of that

\(^{25}\) يحاور عبدالسلام المسدي اللغة وبياناتها الأساسي بقوله: تتركز حل المكتسبات النظرية في تعريف استيطاني إنساني يرجع فيه أعمال الفكر الأساسي إلى منطق اللغة فيخرفون الخطاب الأدبي يكون (خلق لغة من لغة) أي أن صانع الأدب ينتج فو تلقى لغة موجودة فيمثلا لها لغة وليدة هي لغة الأثر الفني، ويعتبر هذا التعريف كافًا لإشكالية الوجود والعدم، فالحدث الأدبي خلق، ولكن الخلق متغير، إذا لم يخلق ولا شيء يفتى، وكل موجود متحول، فالخطاب الأدبي تحويل لموجود.

المستدي، عبدالسلام، *الأسلوب*، ص 117 الطبعة الثالثة - بدون تاريخ - الدار العربية للكتاب.
culture: he enjoys the consistency of his selfhood (that is his pleasure) and seeks its loss (that is his bliss). He is a subject split twice over, doubly perverse.”

The poetic strives to achieve an atmospheric tension in the structure of the text. Such tension revolves around the artistic creativity that exists between the poetic aspect and the audience, the poetic and mythical, the poetic and rhythmic, and the poetic and heritage. Still the question remains, how should the definition of the poetic be precisely defined? If the only definition available is the one that has been presented by Abū Deeb in his book *Fī al-Shi‘riyya* then how could we confirm such a definition in clear form? It seems clear from the above analysis that the definition relies solely on the background of the critic, where a referral analysis could deal with such criteria. It also seems that such absolute conceptualisation of the poetic is often allusive. It relies, according to al-Qarṭājanni on evoking the imagination of the audience and the fact that the audience has the capacity to receive the complete poetic image, which includes the sound and meaning of the poetic style.

The definition of poetic as either a concept of tension, as per Abū Deeb, or a concept of pleasure and bliss, as per Barthes, is congruous with the concept of beneficial metaphor, as put forward by al-Jurjānī. Al-Jurjānī maintains that the advantage of beneficial metaphor lies in its ability to produce rhetoric in terms of noble imagery. Thus,

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27. يبدو لنا أن الشعرية بهذا المعنى المطلق لا تخرج عن كونها نوعا من التخيل، إذ التخيل في رأي حازم القرطاجي، هو أن تتمثل للسامع من فئات الشعر المحيط أو معانيه أو أساليبه وتسمية، وتقوم في خياله صورة أو صور ينغلب لتخيلها وتصورها، أو تصوّر شيء آخر بها انفعالا من غير رويه إلى جهة من الأまさط أو الأقصاء.
rhetoric has acquired yet another use, that of conveying meaning with a minimum use of language.  

Rhetoric in this context sheds new light on Abū Deeb’s questioning of rhythmic distribution. Specifically, does rhythmic distribution suffice to create the poetic? Abū Deeb quotes a line from the poet al-Mutanabbi as an answer to his own question:

[A] If generous towards the noble, you will possess him and if generous toward the plebes he will rebel.

The classical answer is that the rhythmic distribution is not sufficient to create the poetic.

[B] If you are generous with the noble, you will possess him and if you are generous with the unnoble he will rebel.

The classical answer is that the above line is perfect in terms of rhythm.
The classical view, then, would answer the two questions presented as that the poetry is the type that acquires classical and familiar rhythm. Abū Deeb does not consider the sample from al-Mutanabbī as poetry at all, because, in his view, it possess a non-rhythmic distribution and the two excerpts are synthesizations of ready-made concepts that could be absorbed by man's experience in the form of a linguistic statement which bridges the "gap" of tension. However, in adopting this approach to poetry, Abū Deeb has gone beyond the confines of normal poetic analysis since a non-rhythmic piece cannot automatically be dismissed as an improper poem. Indeed, there are many examples of classical poetry which were constructed with non-rhyming verses. Additionally, poems which reflect wisdom, and may be unrhymed, cannot be excommunicated from the realm of poetry since they represent a philosophical statement. Such statements have been moulded in various artistic fashions that touch the audience in a special way. A few lines from Abū al-Qāsim al-Shābbī shall clarify the matter:

[A] Perhaps the people one day will be seeking for a life God will respond.
[B] If the people one day seek a life God will respond.30

Sample A above begins with the preposition “perhaps” while sample B begins with a conditional phrase. This small different changes the rhythmic aspect, though both may still be considered poems because the rest of the verse keeps the rhythmic balance. That rhythmic balance creates a highly active rhythm for the poem which forces itself on the audience, controlling the audience completely.

Summing up the discussion on this point, the poetic aspect is a method that depends in the educational background of the critic, and the poetic derives from rhetoric which contains a metaphor and metonymy.

30 يقول أبو القاسم الشافعي:

إذا الشعب يوما أراد الحياة
 فلا بد أن يستجيب القدر (هذا البيت مستقيم الوزن)

إذا الشعيب يوما أراد الحياة
 فلا بد أن يستجيب القدير (هذا البيت محضر منهم الوزن)
The Structure of the Text

The structure of the text is considered a fundamental unit for analysis by structural critics, revealing the dialectical relationship between the structure and content. If it is the case that content influences the structure, then it seems reasonable to state that the content, through unique wording, creates the special relationship between itself and structure. It performs this function by creating rhythm and poetic images, using symbols of myths and evoking beauty by means of metaphorical similes and metonymy. Each of these instruments is considered a component of the poetic text. The poet is at liberty to use them to express his instruments and his feelings, is considered a component of the poetic text and composed in the poem’s unique poetic structure.

Arab medieval literary criticism considers the individual line of poetry as the basic unit of the text. Ibn Rashiq al-Qairawānī conceived of the individual line of poetry as a house. Talent, knowledge, practice and content form the overall structure of the house, representing the earth, the foundation, the door, and the resident respectively. The rhythm of the poem serves to strike a balance between the various houses. Taken together, medieval Arab literary critics view each line of poetry as a house of meaning, though this should not be understood to indicate that the interaction between the houses is any less significant.

Arab modern critics have some very different ideas regarding the structure of the text generally and the structure of ancient poetry specifically. Many have conceived of the individual line of poetry as incapable of providing the poet with more freedom to
express his feelings. Adonis contends that modern Arab literary critics do not completely accept the configuration of a poem as it is, but they also do not accept the classical configurations as examples to imitate. He demands that the structure of the text should be free from any standard form and should remain subject to the resolve of the artist alone. Muhammad al-Nuwayhī concurs. He feels that free verse allows the poet to express his feelings on many topics which is difficult to do in classical form.

Adonis goes on to argue that the ancient Arab poem is constructed with many repeated independent units—the sentences—with no link in its internal system. The only link between the lines of the poem is its rhythm. Modern poetry, by contrast, derives its beauty from the single line in terms of the unit of independent repeated lines and the rhyme which control repeated unit. He concludes that modern poems are a coherent unit, various and lively, and the critical analysis of modern poems should be on the whole form and content.
According to Adonis’ perception of the poem, it seems that his view is not fully thought out: he would rather consider the poem on the strength of its overall performance than the individual lines of poetry, though he concedes that stressing the individual sentence may be the way forward for modern writers.

This change of thinking may be due in part to the influence of al-Nafri. Adonis wrote that al-Nafri’s style of writing has unexpected results, since language as he uses it does not exist but is an originator. Furthermore, the act of writing the poem does not merely proceed to embrace the ideas which come to mind, but functions as an essential component of the expression of the ideas, perhaps containing the ideas in its very structure. The text should, therefore, be open to all ideas at the moment the poem is created. It seems plausible that the general ideas which influenced Adonis’ thoughts were twofold. First, the process of the writing of language is an originator and not something already created. Second, that the process of writing should be open and the way in which the poet wishes to expresses himself should form itself immediately.

Adonis’ approach has raised many questions. For example, what does it mean to say that the language should form itself? Similarly, what does it mean to say the expression should form itself? And finally, how does one define an open form of writing? In the present author’s opinion, it seems that Adonis argued in his critical theorising that the one responsible for discarding the human ego from poetry is not the one speaking or writing, but the one who is writing and speaking language through the literary text. Priority is thereby given to the language at the expense of history. The open form of writing leads to destruction of the organic unity of the text, which Adonis was most likely aware of in his early critical writing.
It is worth recalling another view of poetic writing by Muḥammad Muftāḥ from his book *Dināmiyyat al-Nāṣ*. He suggests his own classification, intent on providing an accurate definition of literary text. He based this definition on dividing the poem into noble poetry, which contains many characteristics of poetic text, and normal poetry, which as one might expect, contains fewer characteristics of poetic text. Some of the characteristics of noble poetry include the symbolism of sound, the semiology of the word, the harmony of the world, and the harmony of space. These four elements, in his opinion, constitute the deepest structure of poetry.

**Symbolism of sound.** This type of writing encompasses such devices as inserting letters or words into the piece, or using words in different ways by changing the letters to produce common semantic units. The poem "*The train passed*" by Maḥmūd Darwīsh is one example of the symbolism of sound:

The train passed quickly
passed by me, and I,
like the station, do not know
whether I am welcoming people or wishing them farewell
Welcome; on my platforms are a
Coffee shop
Offices
Flowers
A telephone
Newspapers
Sandwiches
Music
And a rhyme
By another poet who will come and wait.35

The purpose of including this poem is to show the diversity of structure, not to analyse it, which would mean looking at the whole poem to define the relationships between these words.

**Semiology of the word:** contemporary poets have been seemingly influenced by semiological approaches. This is most evident in their use of names of different figures, and connotations, mixed with both ancient and modern terminology to produce different meanings, like a metonymy. Adonis often borrowed literary figures from Arab classical literature for use in his poetry, such as Abu Nuwās appearing in his own elegiac poetry.

**Harmony of world:** This element is based on metaphor, but not in a traditional sense. Muḥammad Muftāḥ in fact seems to have felt that traditional metaphor was a hindrance to the poet’s imagination, concerning the poet in time and space. Muftāḥ believes that modern metaphor frees the poet to employ words in a flexible manner. He

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35 يقول محمود درويش في قصيدته (مر القطار):  
مر القطار سريعا  
مر بي وأنا  
مثل المحطّة، لا أدري  
أود أع أم استقبل الناس:  
أهلا فوق أرصفي  
مفي،  
مكاتب،  
ورد  
هاتف،  
صحف  
صدوقيات وموسيقى،  
واقية لشاعر آخر يأتي ويتنظر  
درويش، محمود، لماذا تركت الحصان وحيدا، ص ٦٥، الطبعة الأولى ١٩٩٥م.
gives the examples of smelling through the eyes, or hearing by mouth and looking from the ears. Essentially, Muftah is in favour of transferring the abstract to the perceptible, the non-living to the living.

**Harmony of space:** There are two features of this element. A) The length of the poem and its metre will affect the semantic meaning, and therefore the function of measuring in the poem is not only to discover the rhythm of the poem, but to explain the semantic concept which lay behind it. B) The composition of a number of words can also mean that they impart meaning, for example, "I love you" is different from "you are the one whom I love". The difference here is that the second sentence introduces the element of specification. Both of these characteristics should constitute equal allocations of the noble poem, else, the poem will fall under the normal heading.

At the heart of these components is language. Language, according to modern approaches to writing poetry, is considered fundamental to art. Moreover, new language attempts to utilise the many suggestions of words which have occurred throughout history and attempts to utilise the capacity of poetic image. The modern poet creates a special world of different shapes and unfamiliar people with the poetic language through the use of lexical words which exist in different contexts. These lexical words do not follow the normal harmonisation context, resulting in the severing of the relation between the sound and meaning in the poet's mind. This, then, often has the effect of creating ambiguous words.

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36 يقول محمد مفتاح: فمن معاني الشعر الراقي: رمزية الصوت، قصيدة الكلمة، اسمجار العالم، انسجام الفضاء، هذه الأيقونات الأربعة (كما يسميها مفتاح) هي ما يكون البنية الشعرية المعيبة، أما إذا تناول بعضها أو طغى بعض منها على بعض، فإن الخطاب يكون شعرًا ولكنه ليس راقيًا، وفي أسوا الأحوال، فإننا نحكم إلى مقصودية المبدع أو الاجتماعي النص لثبت أنه شعر. مفتاح، محمد، دينامية النص، ص. 56 الطبعة الثانية 1990م.
Once again, Adonis provides an example of this kind of thinking:

Still *shahriyār*

Was holding his sword to harvest

Hugging the jar of winds and bottle of ashes

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*Shahrazād* had forgotten

To light the secret ways

In the circuit of veins

She had forgotten to light the gaps

between the face of the victim

And the steps of *Shahriyār.* 37

Adonis here chooses the traditional story of *Shahrayār*, since it is full of the noble characteristics of humanity. He stresses these characteristics with an allusion to the statement of al-Ḥajaj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī. "I see heads that are ripe and ready to be plucked".

37 يقـول أدونيس في قصيدة ( أغنية) :
لـم بـزل شهـريار
حاملا سـيفه للحـصاد
حاضننا جـزءة الـرياح وقـارورة الرـماد
*****
نسيت شهـر زاد
أن تضـيء الدـروب الخفـية
في مـدار العروق
نسيت أن تضـيء الشـرق
بين وجه المنـحية
وخطيـه شهـريار

أدونيس، الآثار الكاملة ج 2 ص 166، دار العودة بيروت 1971
Although the words used in his poems are lexical, they are not used linguistically to produce a recognisable meaning. Consider the phrase “to light the way”. This is a common expression with a relatively familiar meaning. However, when Adonis adds the word “secret” to the middle of the phrase, the expression becomes fairly ambiguous. The genitive construction of “In the circuit of veins” narrows the shape of veins to a linear shape and contrasts that with the non-linear shape of “circuit”. In addition, the phrase “the way” seems to require a linear shape in the poetic world no matter its shape in the real world.

The expression “light the gaps” is similarly common, but the lack of normality in this sentence comes from the lighting between the face of the victim and the steps of *Shahrayār*. This lighting could not happen unless the classical poetic structure had been deconstructed. Therefore, the poetic text should be considered as a whole structure, and this structure should contain sound, words, sentences, and harmony. The interaction between these four components produce the poetic image and rhythm.

Sound should not be forgotten as an important component of the structure of the text. Many critics often conceive of the sound as an effective vehicle for eliciting a feeling of beauty in the audience. The poet produces his poem based on the choice of the sounds, and the harmony between them, to keep the audience feeling what the poet felt when he created the poem. Shukrī Ayyād asserts that such an influence could happen between feelings and perceptible effects of language because impressions of sound have the capability to influence both speaker and audience alike. However, the capability of the sound cannot play a role unless put in the context of the linguistic structure.
‘Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani writes: "Single words are equal by virtue of their being single. It is only through context that reference can be given to some words over others."38

Diction, therefore, has an effect on the structure of the text. The individual word should have special characteristics, which includes some semantic fields which do not exist in a linguistic context for normal words. Thus al-Ghadhdhami maintains that the poet could introduce a word not to establish it as a new daily word, but to establish new ideas in the reader’s imagination.39

Stated succinctly, in the structure of the text, the sentence acts as the main unit while the individual word acts as a cornerstone of the sentence.

The literary text consists of many sentences to create the final shape of the text. Thereafter, the sentence is constituted through the interaction of different semantic fields of the sentence and reformed into syntactic and morphological structures. However, every word in a specific semantic field or from another semantic field could have a syntactic response with another semantic field whether it is real or metaphorical. Some of these responses are acceptable, and the audience should readily understand them, while others are unacceptable and could lead to confusion amongst the audience.

38 يقول عبدالعال الجرمني: أن الكلمة روتوك وتونسك في موضع، ثم تراها بعينها تتقل، عليك وتحملك في موضع آخر.

39 يقول الغدامي: أن الشاعر يجحد الكلمة من مخزن اللغة لا يستهلكها، وإنما يطلقها بذراء لزرع جديد ينبت في خيال القارئ، ودخلها في دورة الكون الكبرى.

الغدامي: عبدالعال محمد الخطيب والتكفير، ص 229 الطبعة الأولى 1985 م.
The language of contemporary poetry rests on the effects of signifiers in the structure of text. Poets tend to combine daily language with certain features of European poetry to create a new concept of contemporary poetry. A question arises from this practice: Is the poetic language based on normal language? In other words, how much of the poetic language is based on daily language that people ordinarily speak?

Adonis often establishes different functions of poetic language—such that it will be distinguishable from normal, everyday language—to create the internal structure of the poem. As part of his overall approach, Adonis makes every effort to take advantage of the many sources available to him, such as Jubrān Khālīl Jubrān and his imaginative lexical work, and pieces from writers involved in French symbolism such as Baudelaire, Mallamé, and St. John Perse. The following poem by Adonis “The Indications” should illustrate his approach:

I had mixed fires and snow
Neither fires nor snow understand my forests
And I will be obscure and friendly
I live in the flowers and the stones
I lose consciousness
I explore
I see
I excite
like a light between the magic and the indication.40

40. يقول أدونيس:
مزجت بين النار والثلوج
لن تفهم القلب الغابسي ولا الثلج
وسوف أبقى غامضاً أليفاً
أسكن في الأزهار والجحارة
غيب
لستقصي
أرى
أمواج
كالضوء بين السحر والأشعة

أدونيس ، ديوان كتاب التحولات والهجرة في أقاليم الليل والنهار ، ص 12 ، الطبعة الأولى 1965 بيروت.
The poetic structure of this poem, taking the commentary of Adonis as a guide, could suggest that the language of medieval poetry is based on expression, or superficial dealing with reality.

Conversely, the modern poet strives to change the expression of language to creation. Therefore, the modern poet’s goal is to express his feeling in new ways and, in the process, establish changeable and questionable languages. Recall that Adonis would concede that such activity does not lend itself to the production of clear and concise poetry, unlike medieval poetry with its goal of clearly and succinctly expressing a specific idea. The modern poet does not produce his poem according to one idea, ideology, mindset, or logic, but is guided by his own intuition and a degree of spontaneous revelation.

It seems that Adonis was probably influenced in this respect by T.S. Eliot. Eliot wrote:

"we can only say that a poem, in some sense, has its own life; that its parts form something quite different from a body of neatly ordered biographical data; that the feeling or emotion, or vision, resulting from the poem is something different from the feeling or emotion or vision in the mind of the poet".

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41. يُقول أدونيس: يتعلم الشعر الجديد إلى أن يؤمن لغة التساؤل والتغيير، ذلك أن الشاعر هو من يخلق أشياء العالم بطريقة جديدة. أدونيس، زمن الشعر، ص 16 - 17 الطبعة الثانية، 1978 بيروت.

42. ولكن كان الموضوع طبيعيًا في الشعر الوصفي أو التصوري أو الحادثي الخالص، لأنه يهدف إلى التعبير عن فكرة محددة أو وضع محدد، فان هذا الهدف لا مكان له في الشعر الحقيق. فالشاعر لا ينطلق من فكرة واضحة محددة، بل من حالة لا يعرفها، هو نفسه، مرفعة دقيقة، ذلك أنه لا يخضع في تجربته للموضوع أو الفكرة أو الايديولوجية أو المثل أو المنطق. إن حسائه، كروية، وفعالية وحركة، هو الذي يوجه ويأخذ بيده.

43. أدونيس، مقدمة للشعر العربي، ص 120، الطبعة الرابعة 1983 دار المردة بيروت.

44. Eliot, 1920:x.
Following Adonis theoretical statement, important questions arise: what is the disadvantage of using a specific idea to express feeling? Do the poet’s feeling and imagination force him to interact with his surroundings? If the poet adopts Adonis’ vision of the poet, and does not express his feelings with reference to certain ideas, subjects, ideology, etc., that he is familiar with, but instead with reference to things outside his literary experience, what is the source of the poet likely to be? Adonis does not seem to make a substantial effort to solve the ambiguity created by his own theory, his theory of creation.

Creation, in this author’s view, should be based on ideas; then the poet tries to formulate those ideas in the context of his feelings. If he does not, the idea remains little more than a collection of nouns and verbs. Arab traditional and contemporary poetry does not first invent the idea and then produce a poem to suit. The contemporary poet must interact with his surrounding circumstances, whether limited to his personal world or the wider environment of the politics and society in which he is immersed, and then express his feeling through the poetic text. For example, Imru’ al-Qais wrote:

Often I've been off with the morn, the birds yet asleep in their nests.
My horse short-haired, outstripping the wild game, huge bodied.

Charging, fleet-fleeing, head-foremost, headlong, all together
the match of rugged boulder hurled from on high by the torrent,

a gay bay, sliding the saddle-felt from his back’s thwart
just as a smooth pebble slides off the rain cascading.

Fiery he is, for all his leanness, and when his ardour
boils in him, how he roars-- a bubbling cauldron isn’t in it!

Sweetly he flows, when the mares floundering wearily
kick up the dust where their hooves drag in the trampled track;
the lightweight lad slips landward from his smooth back, he flings off the burnous of the hard, heavy rider;44

In this poem, Imru’ al-Qais describes a hunting journey in ancient Arabian society. The description does not attempt to accurately portray physical reality but creates a poetic image through the use of symbolic language to convey the feeling of the hunting journey.

Conveying the feelings of an event is not new to poetry. The Romantic poet Ibrāhīm Nājī describes the feeling of sunrise in a poem entitled The Ruins (al-Adal):

Awakening destroys the night’s dreaming
And the night is gone, and night is a friend
And the light is clearly warning
And the morning has appeared like a fire
And the world is as we know it
And lovers have gone away45

The poetic image of the morning appearing like fire transforms the natural phenomenon of the dawn, typically associated with hope, renewal, and peace, into a

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44. Arberry, A.J. The Seven Odes P.64-65

45. يقول ابراهيم ناجي في قصيدة الامثال:

يشمل امرئ القبس، شرح المعلقات العشر، الزرواني،

ويقول ابراهيم ناجي في قصيدة الامثال:

يلفتة طائفة بآخالالذكرى

وأذا القبض على النظير ينثر في طرّ الفاصل

وأذا القبض على المثير ينثر في طرّ الفاصل

وأذا الأطراف كثيرة فنثر في طرّ الفاصل

وأذا الأطراف كثيرة فنثر في طرّ الفاصل

وأذا الأطراف كثيرة فنثر في طرّ الفاصل

وأذا الأطراف كثيرة فنثر في طرّ الفاصل
phenomenon of destruction which takes away his friend and ends life. This kind of poetic image provides the audience with a unique insight into the working of the poet’s mind.

Returning to Adonis, despite the difficulty inherent in his theories of poetry, he often cites traditional literary figures of Islamic history, for example, al-Ḥusayn the son of the caliph ʿAlī ibn abī Ṭālib, cousin of the Prophet Muḥammad (SAAS). Many Islamic historians consider al-Ḥusayn a martyr, hence Adonis writes:

> When the spears were fixed in al-Ḥusayn’s heart
> I saw every flower sleep on the shoulder of al-Ḥusayn
> I saw every river is walking in the funeral procession of al-Ḥusayn
> Today I am whole and complete
> My voice is recognised by earthquake, the children and the spring.46

Adonis expresses his experiences by using a traditional figure to embody a contemporary meaning and, ultimately, a new attitude, different from other poets such as Amal Dunqul.

Amal Dunqul uses the same traditional figure to disguise his contemporary Arab society’s desperate attitude. He writes:

> I have been to Karbalā’
> The Shaikh told me that al-Ḥusayn
> Had died because of a gulp of water
> If al-Ḥusayn’s words ...
> And al-Ḥusayn’s swords
> And al-Ḥusayn’s loftiness
> fell without the power to save the truth from
> the gold of princes

46 ي تعالى صوت أدفنيس بصوت الحسين فيلم وتحول إلى رمز يومي إلى أن التضحية سبيل
النشراء، فيقول:
وجينما استقرت الرواح في حضانة الحسين
رأيت كل زهرة تنام على كتف الحسين
رأيت كل نهر يسير في جنابة الحسين
اليوم أكملت وانتقلت
صوتي فيهم الزلزال والأطفال والبرباع
can the chatter of poets save the truth.47

It seems in this piece that Amal Dunqul uses a specific historical event to support his political view. The argument of Adonis perhaps reflected his re-reading classical Arab poetry, particularly Sufi poetry such as that of al-Nāfīrī, and the theoretical and textual influences of European poetry as well as the symbolic poetry of France.

In the present author's opinion, there is no doubt that Adonis' theoretical idea goes beyond the literary text; one cannot create a text in ambiguous space, nor can one deny the continuity of language throughout the ages. What distinguishes the poetic language from other language is the concept and meaning of that language which represents the spirit of the society in which the poem is written. In addition, it is important to bear in mind that it is all but impossible for the poetic language to embody the meanings and concepts the poet wishes without reference to familiar ideas and ideology.

Moreover, the poet should not construct his poem to convey a standard idea, but instead should convey a kind of reality that is both real and unreal, that is suggestive of daydream, a mixture of symbol and truth. Each and all of these components force the audience to search for and find what lies beyond the text. And all the while the poet is shaping his poem, the poem fills the poet with a unique energy which drives the poet to

كانت في كربلاء
قال لي الشیخ أن الحسن
مات من أجل جرعة ماء
إن تكن كلمات الحسن
وسيرة الحسن
وجلال الحسن
سقطت دون أن نقذ الحکم من ذهب الأسراء
أفقت أن نقذ الحکم شرارة الشعراء
create a world dictated by the poem itself. Poetry, in this sense, is like a dream, both evoking the poet’s feelings and expressing his endurance through the poetic language which controls his emotion. Wolfgang Iser states the case well:

“A literary text must be conceived in such a way that it will engage the reader’s imagination in the task of working things out for himself, for reading is only a pleasure when it is active and creative. In this process of creativity, the text may either not go far enough, or may go too far, so we may say that boredom and overstrain form the boundaries beyond which the reader will leave the field of play.”

The poetic creation should, therefore, have a rhythmical base to link the poetic creation and emotional rhythm of the creator. Hence, Abu Deeb, in his structuralist approach, endeavoured to represent a structural interpretation to the flexibility of the rhythmical structure of Arab poetry. He asserts that the development of the principle of rhythm was based on the notion that poetic rhythm derives from the repetition of certain feet of a verse’ metre. When the metre has changed so many times, it will have changed the overall rhyming structure. The structure should break with routine and subsequently impart a new richness to Arabic poetry.

Abu Deeb in his study of rhythm, sets out to establish some ground rules for metres of Arabic poetry, such as mutadārik and mutaqārib. The most important item in his study for revamping the normal rhythmical structure is the repetition of the unit of the

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49. وقد أمكّن صياغة مبدأ للتطور الإيقاعي، وهو مبدأ التركيز الذي يقرر ان تركيز الفاعلية الشعرية على نمط واحد من نظم التشكلات الإيقاعية، هو النمط الوحيد المسوية (حيث ينشأ الإيقاع من تكرار تفجئة واحدة عددا من المرات)، ستؤدي إلى حدوث تطورات جوهرية في بنية التشكلات الإيقاعية أحد أغراضها كسر الربط التي تنشأ من التكرار المطلق، وخلق تنوعي إيقاعي غني، وقد حاول أن أظهر انطباع هذا القانون على الشعر العربي في مرحلته الحاضرة. "أبووبي كمال، جدالة المفتاح والدجى، ص 93 – 94.
feet of the verses' metre [SL] or fa'ilun and inserting the unit which contains the components' opposite number [LS] in structure of poetic metre. In the case of mutadarik metre the opposite of fa'ilun would be 'ilun-fā, since both units contains the same phonemes, fā and 'ilun. And 'ilun-fā is equivalent to fa'ulun. One would then expect the metre to take the form:

fa'ilun fa'ilun fa'ulun fa'ilun

or fa'ilun fa'ulun fa'ilun fa'ilun

Abu Deeb when developing the rhythm of al-Khalīl, emphasised the above phenomenon which occurs frequently in modern Arab poetry, particularly in Adonis' poetry. He suggests three new ideas:

1- Both of fā and 'ilun are considered as rhythmical phoneme.
2- The result of both phonemes produces the rhythmical unit; and
3- The repetition of rhythmical units leads to the production of the rhythmical formation.

He finishes by stating that he believes that his terminology is more accurate than al-Khalīl's, which includes such (presumably unnecessary) terms as: al-Sabab, al-Watad, and al-Baḥr.

It will be worthwhile briefly representing the outlook of Ibrāhīm Anīs regarding the mutadarik metre. He contends that the examples of mutadarik metre are the same as examples in the works of the prosodists. He does not, however, cite the source of his examples. Prosodists maintains that the rhythm to either side of the "seam" of the mutadarik metre is:

fa'ilun fa'ilun fa'ilun fa'ilun

Modern Arab poetry typically dispenses with this metre, though there are some poets who employ mutadarik, such as al-Ḥuṣarī:-

Oh! night of the lover, when will the morrow come?
Is the appointed hour nigh?  

Ahmad Shawqi uses the same type of metre in some of his verses. Abu Deeb, analyses the metres of al-Khalil in their classical and new shape, both based on the phonemes of \textit{fā} and \textit{‘ilun}, for example:

\textbf{Tawil metre}

The classical shape is:

\begin{align*}
\text{\textit{fa’ulan}} & \quad \text{\textit{mafā’ilun}} & \quad \text{\textit{fa’ulan}} & \quad \text{\textit{mafā’ilun}} \\
\quad -0-0 & \quad -0-0-0 & \quad -0-0 & \quad -0-0-0 \\
\end{align*}

The new shape is:

\begin{align*}
\text{\textit{‘ilun}} & \quad \text{\textit{fā}} & \quad \text{\textit{‘ilun}} & \quad \text{\textit{fā}} & \quad \text{\textit{‘ilun}} & \quad \text{\textit{fā}} & \quad \text{\textit{‘ilun}} & \quad \text{\textit{fā}} \\
\quad -0 & \quad -0 & \quad -0 & \quad -0 & \quad -0 & \quad -0 & \quad -0 & \quad -0 \\
\end{align*}

\textbf{al-Hazaj metre:}

The classical shape is:

\begin{align*}
\text{\textit{mafā’ilun}} & \quad \text{\textit{mafā’ilun}} & \quad \text{\textit{mafā’ilun}} \\
\quad -0-0-0 & \quad -0-0-0 & \quad -0-0-0 \\
\end{align*}

The new shape is:

\begin{align*}
\text{\textit{‘ilun}} & \quad \text{\textit{fā}} & \quad \text{\textit{fā}} & \quad \text{\textit{‘ilun}} & \quad \text{\textit{fā}} & \quad \text{\textit{fā}} & \quad \text{\textit{‘ilun}} & \quad \text{\textit{fā}} & \quad \text{\textit{fā}} \\
\quad -0 & \quad -0 & \quad -0 & \quad -0 & \quad -0 & \quad -0 & \quad -0 & \quad -0 & \quad -0 \\
\end{align*}
Putting his theory into practice, Abū-Deeb relates an excerpt from the poem *People in my country*, by Ṣalāḥ ʿAbd al-Ṣābūr:

*People in my country are predatory like Eagles.*

Abu-Deeb analyses the verse in terms of

- o - o --o --o - o --o --o --o --o

He goes on to assert that changing the rhythm in this manner supersedes al-Khalīl’s theory since the new approach assists the audience in discovering the rhythmical aspects of Arab poetry. Abū-Deeb’s view seems to be based on demanding a variety of poetic rhythm while aspiring to avoid the routine classical metre and provide the poet more freedom to express his feelings.

Arab poets who had immigrated to the United States of America reformed and modernised the classical metre through the processes of terzairamas, and non-rhyming verse. Jubrān Khalīl Jubrān represent this new class of poet. He wrote:

*The night was calming down, and in the dress of calmness dreams were hidden.*

*And the moon had moved, and the moon had eyes watching the days*

*Oh! daughter of the field, come let us visit lovers vineyard*

*Wishing that we could quench with that juice the burning of yearning.*

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52.

53.
Abū al-Qāsim al-Shābbī also uses a half *mutadārik* metre with a variety of rhymes like a terza rimas *muwashshah* system. He writes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be silent, oh! wound</td>
<td>أَلْبِنَبُ عَدُودُ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mourning time died</td>
<td>هُوَ الْمُفَتَّلَمَاتُ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The morning finally arose</td>
<td>إِلَى الْمَبْصِرَةَ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Free verse was adopted as more Arab poets imitated the style of their adopted homeland. Free verse is based on the repetition of words and lines as well as synonyms grouped uniquely together. As such, free verse spans a wide range of poetry without the restrictions of standard rules, making itself available to a much wider group of aspiring poets.

In the present author’s opinion, while modernisation is advantageous to the poet, with its absence of rules and regulations, the classical rhythm, with its set rules, still holds much value for the individual poet. This brings to light a host of questions. Do al-Khalll’s metres restrict the poet from writing poetry freely but in a manner that confines his ideas and feelings as well? Does the Andalusian *terzarima* restrict the poet in a manner to al-Khalll? Are the poems above by Jubran Khalr and al-Shabbī obstructing the poet’s freedom of expression? If the answer is no to these questions, then how could one

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الموشح هو أحد قرون الشعر العربي، وهو مكون من أفعال وأبيات (أو أسماء وأعاص أو أفعال وخرجات كما تسمى أحيانا)، فالأفعال هي تلك الأجزاء المنقولة في الوزن والقافية والمد، والأبيات تلك الأجزاء المنقولة في الوزن والعدد لا في القافية. ويرجع أن الموشح نشأ بالأدب أو المشرق في أواخر القرن الثالث للهجرة، وسبب انتشاره صلاحيته للغاء وانسجامه مع لغة الكلام للوام، فهو يحتل من بين قواعد الفصحى وخاصة الأعراب، ولما سمى كذلك تشبهاً له بالوضاح أو القلاعة التي تنظم حباتها من اللؤلؤ والمرجان.  

يستعمل أبو القاسم الشماشي نصف وزن المختار ويبتدأ في القول، فيما يشبه نظام الموشحات، إذ يقول: 

أَلْبِنَبُ عَدُودُ إِلَى الْمَبْصِرَةَ 

وَمَهَّنَ دُلْنَسْعَوَزَ وَمَهَّنَ دُلْنَسْعَوَزَ 

وَلَفِي الْمَلَىّ كَبِيْرَةَ 

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consider that al-Khalil metres make the classical rhythm an obstacle to literary creation, as per Abū Deeb?

Free verse, it seems to this author, laboured to free itself from the metric system of al-Khalil, but in the final analysis, it could not; the poet’s free verse follows the same rhythm as that set out by al-Khalil. In “Songs of love” by Šalāḥ ‘Abd al-Šābūr, evidence of this struggle is perceptible:

Oh! Hope smile
Oh! Flowers bud
Oh! Thirsty sip
Oh! Single singing bird
No sooner landing than flying.56

The poets of free verse quite often falls in disorder of their structure by using rhythmical prosody inconsistently. The modern poem’s rhythm is then reduced to a grouping of feet in the meter. Mahmūd Darwish, in his new collection, “Why have you left the horse alone”, writes:

The train passed quickly         [two different feet]
I was waiting                    [one and a half feet]
On the platform for a train which had passed [two and a half feet]
And the passengers had gone     [two and a half feet]
To their days and I was          [one and a half feet]

56. ينقول صلاح عبد الصبور في قصيدته (أناشيد الغرام) من ديوانه “الناس في بلادي”:
Still waiting.\textsuperscript{57} [one and a half feet]

In this poem, the poet does not comply with a known standard of arranging the feet, and so his poem is fractured into multiple feet. There is evidence that the arrangement of feet during many periods of poetry were/are a central feature of the poem’s structure.

Abū Deeb’s claims for modernisation are grounded in the same feet throughout, irrespective of whether he labels his theory the rhythmical core, the rhythmical unit, or the rhythmical variation. That rhythmical core consists of \textit{fā} and \textit{‘ilun}, and his rhythmical unit results from the addition of the two \textit{fā ‘ilun}. This is essentially suggestive of the same ideas of al-Khalīl. Abū Deeb’s attempt to supersede al-Khalīl with a new rhythmical system was a serious attempt, but in this author’s view, failed because implicit in his system is the requirement of certain poetic feet. Furthermore, the new poetic metre of Abū Deeb can not be substituted for the classical rhythm for two reasons. First, Abū Deeb claim seems to invalidate al-Khalīl’s prosody in Arab culture. Second, al-Khalīl formed his poetic rhythm in the context of the current trends in poetry of his time, and therefore his verses are unencumbered.

Abū Deeb seems to have oriented himself toward the goal of deconstructing classical rhythm and pressing ahead with irregular poetry, avoiding free verse because of

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{57} يقول محمود درويش في قصيدته (مر القطار) :

مر القطار سريعا
كنت أنتظر
على الرصيف قطرا مر
والمصرف المسافرون الى
ليتهم ... فلا ما زلت أنتظر

درويش، محمود. ديوان لماذا تركت الحصان وحيدة. ص 22 الطبعة الأولى 1995م.
\end{flushright}
the difficulty in controlling the rhythm. Yet his study verifies the richness of classical poetry by exposing the wide range of rhythmical feet which does not exist in modern free verse poetry. From Abū Deeb’s point of view, one might wish to enquire about the methodological criticism of poetry, vis-a-vis the rhythmical structure of the classic, modern or free verse style of Arabic poetry. That is to say, should these three styles of Arabic poetry conform to a standard metre or not?

To answer in the affirmative would be to accept something that is not consistently true by the measure of any researcher in Arabic or European literature. The methodology of criticism must be objective and precise. This means subjecting the free verse to a rhythmic self-diagnostic and a test measured against a large group of modern poets from various cultural environments. Such a methodology should protect the vivid factual and characteristic features of the poem.

Reiterating the conclusion reached concerning Abū Deeb, his primary aim was to substitute a new rhythmic scheme for that presented by al-Khalil. This was a serious, concerted effort and contributed to poetry the notion that new metre could be and should be utilised by modern Arab poets. What vitiates his work is a disturbing lack of evidence, despite some partial attempts to demonstrate that his methodological approach was not very much different from that of al-Khalil. He quoted, for example, a few lines from al-Mutanabbī in support of his work:

He built it (his kingdom) to a very high standard while spear met spear and waves of death chopped around it. 58

Abu Deeb stipulates his feets in the metre in the following form:

\[
\text{fa'u fa'u lun fa'u fā fa'u fā fa'u}
\]

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58 يقول المتلابي: وسَمَّى المَنْهَأَا حَدَّوَاهَا مِتَلاَطٌ وَمَنْهَأَا تَفْعَّولَ القُنْثَاءِ،
There is perhaps no better way to illustrate Abū Deeb’s analysis of al-Mutanabbi’s verse than by furnishing Abū Deeb’s own words, which will show his tendency to unjustifiably place a great burden on the verse, he writes:

“The splendid movement vis-a-vis rhythmical modelling and the successive plunging into stretched upward sonic endings in the first hemistich and undulating horizontal endings in the second all ascertain an artistic culmination which seldom had any Arabic poet surpassed. The maturing tension of the structure in the first hemistich particularly the musical exuberant resolution in it flows from the whole descriptive image and within the inner movement of the artistic creativity.

This proves that al-Mutanabbi feels a deep excitement and surmise that the structure of Saif al-Dawla is stable and unshakeable.

The perfection of the vowels here and the termination of every sequence with an unvowelled consonant embodies the feeling of stability referred to above, since the same comes as a result of the alifs which rise up and remain firm after their first ascent.”

Having thus expounded his structural theory, Abū Deeb then goes on to state that all metric values rely on values emanating from the long metre. This for Abū Deeb is the
point of departure from al-Khalil’s metric system which Abū Deeb considers fixed. Thus the occurrence of a different view of the analysing approach does not mean that the fundamental base is invalid and this is because that the modern poets basically do not deviate in their poetry from al-Khalil’s feet, perhaps the difference takes place in the metric structure on which they compose the poetry and set up the verse, so that it seems as if these poets compose their verses in contrast with those of al-Khalil.

Al-Khalil’s metric system consists of a sixteen metre which contains ten feet subdivided into two groups: 1) pentameters, represented by fa’ulun and fā’ilun; 2) eight foot heptameters, represented by mustaf ‘ilun - mustaf ‘ilun - fā ‘ilatun - fā ‘ilatun - maf‘ulatun - maf‘ulatun - maf‘alān - mutafa ‘ilun - maf‘ulat. These are the feet on which the free verse is normally based, there being little difference between them except a) the number of feet in the free verse are eight, hence discarding mustaf ‘ilun and fā ‘ilun, b) the order of the feet. The order of one system of feet may fall under one, two, or three metres, depending on the infrastructure of the metre, whereas free verse is often based on one metre only without restrictions on the number of feet: one verse may contain one, two, or perhaps even three feet.

A presentation of Adonis’ “Invitation for Death” will best demonstrate the extent of the application of the system just described.

He descends between the adventures and the rocks
meets with those who are lost
in the pottery of brides, in the whispering of the seas
declares the revival of the roots
the revival of our wedding parties, ports and singers
decrees the revival of the seas.60

Note the continuous metre in this example of free verse poetry which does not extensively differ from what the poem would be if it were arranged in two lines. Observe also that fa'ilu is here called al-qabḍ thus eliding the fifth consonant from fā 'ilun while fa'ulun interchanges with fā'ilum; fā'il. This process equalises the number of vowels in each of them even though they differ in arrangement. Another useful piece to help clarify the matter is the following poem by Maḥmūd Darwīsh, entitled “Identity Card.”

Write
I am Arab
and my identity card number is fifty thousand
I have eight children

60_

بقول أدبيس:

يحيط بين المجازيف، بين الصخور
فعلن فاعل فعالن فعالن فعال
يتلاقى مع التائهين
فلن فاعلن فاعلنا
في جزائر المراتس، في راشات البحار
فعلن فاعلن فاعلنا فاعل
يعلن بعث الجذور
فعلن فاعل فعال
بعث أعراسنا والمراقبة والمشددين
فعلن فاعلن فاعلنا فاعلنا
يعلن بعث البحار
فعلن فاعل فعال

أدونيس، أركان مهار الدمى، الآثار الكاملة ص 338.
and the ninth of them is coming after summer
Are you angry?61

Maḥmūd Darwīsh’s poem is attributable to the ʿwāfīr free verse metre. Objectively if we compare the poem with the ʿwāfīr free verse metre, the poem’s feet are indeed almost identical, taking the form mufāʿalatun mufāʿalatun faʿūlun to either side of the seam. It becomes clearer that free verse poetry will most likely be based on some variety of fixed metre even though some of its details differ as a result of the individual line’s requirements.

61

 يقول محمود درويش:
 سجل
 ٥٥٥٥
 فاعل
 أناعربي
 ٥٥٥٥
 مفاعلاً
 ورقم بطاقي خمسون ألف
 ٥٥٥٥ ٥٥٥٥ ٥٥٥٥
 مفاعلاً مفاعلاً مفاعلاً
 وألفالي ثمانية
 ٥٥٥٥ ٥٥٥٥
 مفاعلاً مفاعلاً
 وتسعم سيأتي بعد صيف
 ٥٥٥٥ ٥٥٥٥ ٥٥٥٥ ٥٥٥٥
 فصول فصول فعلن فعلن
 فهل تغضب
 ٥٥٥٥
 مفاعلاً مفاعلاً
 درويش، محمود. أوراق الزهر. ص ٩
There can be little question that Arabic criticism, both medieval and modern, does not deny the author the right of creation and development of artistic aspects on which future Arabic literature, and particularly Arabic poetry, will be based. Yet it is often difficult for the poet to completely ignore the foundations of artistic and metric forms. One of the most compelling is the prosody system which is based on a complete break with the old system in favour of the new. The concept of finding a radical substitute to al-Khalil’s metric system may prove insurmountable in the end because adopting this system necessarily implies ignoring the whole medieval poetic legacy, depriving the new poetry of a vast, rich heritage of intellectual intercourse. Abū Deeb’s views are far from the final word on al-Khalil’s metric system, since his views are an appropriate criticism for only parts of the system. Abū Deeb’s vision is, at times, temporal, contradictory, and identical to the prosaic diversification and modernisation of Arabic poetry and rhetoric. He does not, therefore, seem to evaluate poetry in its modern aspects but its rhetorical aspects.
Chapter Five
Analytical Study of Structural Criticism in Modern Arabic Literature
During the last decade of the twentieth century the movement of modern Arabic literary criticism has witnessed a dialogue the echo of which has not yet died away, about the methods of appreciating, understanding and analyzing creative work. This dialogue has been greatly affected by the movement of Western literary criticism during the sixties. During that period there appeared currents calling for innovation in the fields of critical analysis such as structuralism, semiology, and deconstruction. However, this dialogue has not resolved the theoretical dispute about those issues, and that is because the method with which the critic has approached his subject, represented in creative work, is merely a practical exercise of his theoretical understanding of the literary issue as a creative activity. Also, formative effects including the nature of the critic's culture, components of his personal taste, his ideological and theoretical persuasion, as well as the literary ones, are involved in his theoretical understanding.

Structuralism is a fragmented theory. Both its origin and development represent separate efforts that coincide in the attempt of secularising the textual study of literature. The previous chapters have examined the sources of structuralism and its artistic manifestations in modern Arabic literary criticism. This chapter will focus on an analytical study of works based on structural criticism. An analytical study has been chosen for it does not oppose structuralism, but instead attempts, through theory and practice, to define structuralism's methodological value and its procedural effectiveness. Throughout the past decade of this century up to the present day many critical works which follow the structuralist method in critical analysis have been published, the most important of these being the works of Kamāl Abū Deeb, represented in *al-ru'a al-Muqanna'a, Jadaliyyat al-Khafā' wa al-Tajallī, Fī al-shi'ātīyya, and Fī al-Bīnayya al-Iqā'īyya Fī al-Shīr al-'Arabī*, the study of 'Adnān Ḥaydar, *The Mu'allaga of Imru' al-Qays: Its structure and meaning* I, and the study of Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych, *Structural

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*1* See the third and fourth chapter in this study.
Interpretation of pre-Islamic Poetry and New Directions, and another study, in Arabic, under the title of The Arabic poem and the Rite of Passage and a study by Rītā ‘Awāḍ entitled "Binyat al-Qaṣīda al-Jāhīyya- al-Ṣura al-Shi‘riyya Laddā Imru’ al-Qays".

From the titles of these critical works it is evident that all of them contribute to the stream of analysis of pre-Islamic poetry. This chapter shall focus on analyzing the works of Abū Deeb in his critical discourses on pre-Islamic poetry, for he represents the structuralist tendency in modern Arabic literary criticism. Before attempting this it is necessary to pose a number of questions which represent the basis of this study, these are:- Do these critical discourses and their outcomes represent a basis which applies to all the poems of pre-Islamic poetry? Have these critical discourses succeeded in revealing their uniqueness while dealing with the texts of pre-Islamic poetry? And lastly, why this focus on applying structural criticism to pre-Islamic poetry and not other poetry, such as modern free verse? This study attempts to propose some answers to this group of questions.

The critical discourses of Abū Deeb are characterized by a penetrating critical ability and vision which combine the elements of critical analysis. The influence of Western structural criticism has given a free rein to his intellectual background in defining his critical direction while carrying out his analysis. Evidence that he attempts to apply those ready-made methods to pre-Islamic poetry presents itself by way of his demonstrating his adherence to structuralism:

"It has become the last of three movements in the history of modern thought after which it is impossible to see and to inspect the world in the same manner. With Marx and the concepts of dialectic and class struggle, in particular, it became impossible to inspect society in the same way as Marx’s predecessors examined it. With modern art, after
Picasso has painted his chairs - in Roger Garaudy words - it became impossible to see a chair in the same way as before. And with structuralism and the concepts of synchronically, binary oppositions and the insistence that the relations between signs, not the signs themselves, are what convey meaning, it became impossible to examine reality - man, culture and nature - as it was seen by those who preceded structuralism.2

Other critics, such as ‘Adnān Ḥaydar and Susan Stetkevych, have followed the same method in applying ready-made critical methods to pre-Islamic poetry in their structural analyses of Labīd and Imru’al-Qays’ mu’allaqas.

The updating of the analytical methods does not necessarily mean these new methods were followed in practice, according to those methods that are foreign to the nature of the pre-Islamic texts and are forced on them. Instead, the method which enables the critic to interrogate and characterize the text should arise from the creative work, the text itself, based on what technical tools are at the disposal of the critic’s creative capabilities.

The method proposed here to carry out the study of works of structural criticism adopts a direct route in studying pre-Islamic poetry, which is based on an examination of
the phenomenon of analyzing the “ruins” introduction in the structural critics’ analyses of pre-Islamic poetry and demonstrating its effectiveness in such analysis.

Language, within its ordinary framework, is a communication tool. In a literary work, it is a source for evoking and moving the finest feelings and emotions. Therefore, language in the creative process takes on an allusive function which is not connected with the denotational and logical aspect of language. In order to accomplish this, it is necessary to have synthetic relations which emerge through the literary image. Thus, if the image is formulated in a literary and artistic mould, it imparts an aesthetic value to the creative work, the image having already been assimilated by the artist’s talent and remoulded in the infinite correlations which the language context provides.

At the beginning of his textual discourse on the mu’allaqa of Labid Abū Deeb says: “This method, i.e., (his method), makes use of modern theories of criticism and structuralism, and in particular, the method of structural analysis of myth as developed and applied by Claude Lévi-Strauss.”

Progressing from this statement Abū Deeb carries out his critical analysis, focusing on the phenomenon of binary opposition, considering it as an essential component of pre-Islamic poetry. Therefore, he tries through them to establish a dialectical relation which arises from the core of the structure of the experience, as embodied in the poem itself. Thus he provides a list which shows the prevalence of binary oppositions throughout the poem.
Abū Deeb goes on to analyse the “key” poem - as he calls it - based on this declaration of his. This researcher does not see any reason why Abū Deeb calls it the key-poem, as the mu’allāqa of Labīd is not the only mu’allāqa in pre-Islamic poetry which is laden with literary images and complex relations, nor is it crucial to reading and analysing pre-Islamic poetry. Despite this, Abū Deeb does not give a reason for applying this term to this mu'allāqa. He commences his analysis progressing from the binary opposition basis which he considers to control the movement of the poem in its details and as a whole, in a changing time framework.

The binary oppositions which Abū Deeb proposes in his analysis of the mu’allāqa of Labīd do not go, in this author’s view, beyond being antithesis and contrast, for conformity in Arabic rhetoric is achieved, as Ḥāzim al-Qarṭājānī says:-

“By putting one of the two opposing or different meanings in a suitable position in relation to the other. Antithesis is divided into pure and non-pure. A pure antithesis is to unexpectedly oppose a word with what opposes it in terms of meaning. Jarīr says:-

“He who provides you with good by his right hand, keeps evil away from you with his left.”

His saying “provides” and “keeps away”, “good” and “evil” are pure antithesis, and an example of this is the saying by Di’bil:-

“Do not be amazed, O Salmā at a man On whose head grey hair laughs, so that he cries.”

4 يقوق جرير: وبابسط خسير فيك كيكم بمينك ويقابلض شكر عنك كيكم بحن عليما

5 يقول دعيل: لا تعج بي الباسلم من رجل ضحك المشيشيب برأسك فيك كي
Non-pure antitheses are divided into comparing something with what occupies the place of its opposite and contrasting something with what is different from it. Where comparing something with what occupies the place of its opposite is concerned, the following verse by al-Sharif al-Radi is an example:

"I cry while he smiles and darkness is between us,
Until it was lit by his mouth and my tears."\(^6\)

where "smiles" occupies the place of (laughter) in the contrast.

On the other hand, the contrastive of different things involves comparing something with what approximates its opposite, thus 'Amr ibn Kulthum says:

"how we take the banners white into battle
and bring them back crimson, well-saturated\(^7\)

One of the best examples of the intensification of comparison, expressed in the best possible and most eloquent way, is al-Mutanabbi's verse:

"I visit them while the dark of night enfolds on me,
And I turn away while the white of the morn clings to me."\(^8\)

In this verse the two kinds of antithesis meet: the pure which is between dark (black) and white, and non-pure which is between "visit" and "turn away".

\(^6\) يقول الشريف الرضي: حتي أضنهاء بغيشه، ودموعي

\(^7\) يقول عمر بن كنثوم: باذن إحدى الرؤيات بيضت

\(^8\) يقول المتنبي: أزروهوم وسماود الليل يشفع بسي
Abū Deeb, in his persistent search for binaries, ends up contriving them. One of the comparisons which he considers as a binary opposite (gazelle/ostrich), in the sixth verse, is based on his explanation that gazelles multiply by bearing, embryo formation and birth inside the mother’s womb and body, as in the case of humans, while ostriches multiply by laying eggs and hatching them, outside the mother’s body, unlike humans. In the sixteenth verse:

But what think you still of the Lady Nawar, so far away bonded with her broken, new cord alike with the old.

The binary opposition between bond and cord does not show that there is a binary opposition since bond is a kind of cord. And in the twenty second verse:

With a lean camel to ride on, that many journeyings have fined to a bare thinness of spine and shrunken hump

he considers that there exists a binary opposition between spine and hump. However, in this author’s opinion there is no binary opposition between them - the spine is a backbone which extends from the nape of the neck to the rump, or to the bottom of the back; and the hump is a piece of fat on the camel’s back.

In the twenty ninth verse:

they returned at last determined upon a firm resolve unwavering-and success in a decision is of solid purpose.
Abū Deeb considers that there is a binary opposition between "determined" and "success in a decision". Determine means to find out or establish precisely, decide or settle (Oxford English Reference) and success in a decision has the same meaning. Therefore, in this author’s opinion, a binary opposition could not be established between the two words.

In the thirtieth verse:

the thorns pricking her hind hoofs, the summer winds
swelling and swirling about them in scorching blasts.  

he considers there is a binary opposition between "swelling and swirling" and "scorching blasts". In this author’s opinion, the literary meaning of the above line does not give any indication of a binary opposition since there is no contrast in either the sound between the two phrases or in their meanings.

Finally, Abū Deeb considers "code" and "ideal" in Labīd’s saying:

sprung of a stock whose father laid down a code for them,
and every folk has its code of laws and its high ideal.

as a binary opposition. But in this author’s opinion code means “way” and “an obvious matter”, while ideal means “an example: a model to be followed”. Therefore there is no opposition between the two words.

It is clear from what has preceded that Abū Deeb’s possession of a structuralist intellectual model has led him to try to impose it on the poetic text and establish a
relation between these words and his interpretation of the text. If, however, this author re-examined the above excerpts, then I would find that the last words in the verses were joined to what preceded them, "bond and cord", "spine and hump", "determined and success in a decision", "swelling /swirling and scorching blasts", "code and ideal" the purpose of this being to complete the literary image and give it a conclusive significance.

By way of demonstrating the effectiveness of a binary opposition I quote below the following verses from the *mu‘allaqa* of Labid:

> When the assemblies meet together, we never fail
to supply a match for the gravest issue, strong to shoulder it,

a partitoner, bestowing on all the tribe their due,

granting to some their rights, denying the claims of some

for the general good, generous, assisting liberalty,
gentlemanly, winning and plundering precious prize,

sprung of a stock whose father laid down a code for them,

and every folk has its code of laws and its high ideal

unsullied is their honor, their deeds are not ineffectual,

for their prudent minds incline not after capricious lust,

They have built for us a house whose roof reaches very high

and to it have mounted alike the elders and young of the tribe.

So be satisfied with what the Sovereign has allotted;

He has divided the qualities among us, knowing them well,
and when trustworthiness came to be apportioned among a tribe
the Apportioner bestowed on us an exceeding share. 15

The above verses concentrate on one subject, and that is the poet's pride in
himself within his tribe. Having gone through a long journey in his mu'allqa through his
struggle with time and for the confirmation of life, he returns to what he considers one of
the fundamentals of his continuing existence and the rebirth of life afresh: resorting to
pride in himself and in his tribe. In order to accomplish that he relied on three essential
elements of pride, which are: justice, hospitality and good lineage. In lines 78, 82, and
84 of the mu'allqa, Labîd clarifies the pride of his tribe as they always have a qualified
leader to solve any conflict in his society and give a sharp opinion in whatever problems
they have, moreover, their honours are fineness and their deeds are not ineffectual as
they have high standards of trustworthiness. In line 79, he asserts that justice was spread
throughout his society as the sovereign preserves it even if he loses the respect of people.
This justice is based on generosity between members of his tribe. The above elements of
pride do not arise arbitrarily. They are derived from fundamental characteristics of his
tribe which they still believe in. These elements are not single elements that relate to the
individual himself, rather they require a society in which they are practised in order to be

15. Arberry, A. J. The Seven Odes. P 147
maintained. The situation here is routine and the poet employs it in his cultural store in order to draw a picture which encompasses and includes all these essential elements. The image here appears positive on the surface but its motion is negative because it rises in one direction towards the ego in a routine rhythm, compared with the above unit and the unit of ruins at the beginning of the *mu'allaqa* which is characterised by a violent motion towards the confirmation of life. Therefore, through the previous comprehensive unit (unit of pride) and what it contains in terms of thoughts of pride in oneself, a binary opposition between motion and stasis is formed in the semantic meaning between the two previous units and not through the word construction as Abū Deeb thinks.

**The introductions on ruins in pre-Islamic poetry**

Pre-Islamic poetry is characterised by a special kind of artistic construction. Some poems start with the poet stopping by the ruins, describing their details, past and present, the remains and signs, and what the wind and the rain have done to them. He describes in the poem stopping and dismounting from his she-camel or camel’s back and asks his friends to pause with him over them. This leads him to describe his she-camel and his journey on it through the desert.

In view of the fact that the introductions which deal with ruins are an artistic phenomenon which very frequently accompanies pre-Islamic poetry, the theories about them are numerous and the critics differ in their interpretation. Mary Catherine Bateson says:-

"The poem begins with a *nasib*, a section designed to evoke nostalgia and sympathy on the part of the listener: this consists of a reminiscence about a lost beloved which is often tied to a description of the desert encampment which was the scene of their love and many include a description of the beloved and of the lovers’ separation. From this position he could go on to state with conviction whatever he pleased. From the description of his beloved’s departure, he often went on to
describe a journey of his own, by horse or by camel. This second theme is designed to establish his merit as a man, a member of the desert community, in addition to his merit as a poet. The third theme is a description of the hardships undergone by the poet while traveling to his patron. The third section is the part in which, in a poem with a purpose- of which zuhayr’s is the outstanding example- the poet can really say what he wishes, having included the earlier parts as a necessary formality, like the correct form of greeting.”

On the other hand, Susan Stetkevych says:-

“I shall concentrate my effort in the present study on trying to explain the form of the traditional poem and its surprising dominance over both poetic imagination and its outcome in the light of the rite of passage as formulated by the anthropologist Van Gennep. By applying this ritual model to Arabic poems I hope to prove that the form of the poem is not a formal control which restricts poetic imagination, rather, it is a basic pattern which allows the poet to express his personal experience through a form which has, at the same time, psychological, tribal, mythological and ritual dimensions”.

Stetkevych also says:

“It is known, and rather obvious, that the traditional Arabic poem is built on a triple form consisting of erotic, travel and pride/praise, and all the poetic images are characteristic of each of these parts. Nevertheless, the significance of this form remains as one of the

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16 Bateson, Mary Catherine. Structural Continuity In Poetry. P 25-6-7
17 Amal al-badawt al-wasir fahm-i hadith al-hajj yuqbiha ilayhi makhtum kital lalsadat al-fiqiyyah wa-siyasat al-muhabah (rite of passage) "النهج والاتجاه الشعري في حوض طقس العبارة، ومن الملاحظ أن القبضة الشعرية ليس هناك شكل يُقيد الخيال الشعري، بل هو أساس طبيعي يسمح للشاعر بأن يعبر عن تجربته الشخصية من خلال شكل ذي أبعاد نفسيّة وفلاسفيّة وطرسيّة وأسطوريّة في نفس الوقت."
mysteries of Arabic literature and we still ask ourselves: ‘Why did this triple form dominate poetic imagery and imagination and its outcome from the pre-Islamic period until the beginning of our century?’ The reason for this was not the narrowness of the Arab poets’ creative imagination, as some critics have claimed, rather, the truth is that the rules and the formal and notional laws of Arabic poetry (or what is called ‘amud al-shi’r) were imposed on the poet to the point whereby anything that violates the concept of the poem - or somehow missed it out - was not considered poetry.” 18

It is clear from the above views that the problems of pre-Islamic structure is still a subject of discussion and that critics are still trying to apply to it laws which they have invented. While these laws may be suitable for some other cultures and poetic texts, they are not as suitable for some. Despite the efforts of Bateson and Stetkevych, it would appear that they have fallen into a conundrum which needs to be closely examined.

Bateson considers that the ruins are part of the erotic aspect and this seems to be in error, since the unit of ruins is completely independent. It has its own relations and images, distinct from the images of erotic poetry. It appears to this researcher that Bateson was influenced by the traditional view which maintains that the introduction of ruins leads to erotic poetry, and at the same time, an expression of feelings of love and distance which the poet suffers when he stops and cries over these ruins and over those

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18 من المعروف ، بل من المسلم به ، أن القصيدة العربية التقليدية مبنية على شكل ثلاثي مكون من النسبة والرجيل والثعلج أو المدح ، ومن الصور الشعرية الخاصة بكل جزء من هذه الأجزاء ، ومع ذلك مايزال معنى هذا القالب لغزا من الغاز الأدب العربي ، ولا نزال نتعامل ; لماذا كا هذا القالب الثلاثي يسيطر على الخيال والنتاج الشعرين من العصر الجاهلي حتى بداية أثنا هذا ؟ لم يكن سبب ذلك ضيق الخيال الخلائق عند الشعراء العرب ، كما أدلى بعض النقاد ، بل الحقيقة أن قواعد الشعر العربي وقوانينه الشكلية والمعنوية أو ما يسمى بمعنود الشعر فرضت على الشاعر لغاية أن ما خرج على مفهوم القصيدة - أو لم يلمح إليه بطريقة ما - لم يعتبر شعراء.

المصدر السابق نفسه. ص 55.
who dwelt in them. Therefore, and on the basis of the traditional view, Bateson considers that the introduction of ruins is an official and necessary form, rather similar to the correct and proper manner of greeting, so that non-observance/non-respect of the commonly accepted rules of greeting is considered as a kind of deviation from commonly accepted taste.

However, Stetkevych has based her view on a reasoning approach, whereby she considers that all pre-Islamic poetry is formulated in one triple form, the elements of which are erotic, travel, and praise, according to formulation and moral rules or what is known as the principle of poetry (‘amīd al-shi‘r). This view aims at laying down a theoretical foundation on which she builds her method of analysing pre-Islamic poetry, without regard to the introduction of ruins as an artistic unit, and analyses it in such a way as to reveal its artistic mechanism.

Critics can become confused. Such confusion takes the form of generalisation in their analyses of pre-Islamic poetic texts. The generalisation is a result of not distinguishing between pre-Islamic poetry, in particular, and Arabic poetry generally, throughout its different periods. In addition, what applies to pre-Islamic poetry does not also necessarily apply to the poetry of the Umayyad era, or the ‘Abbāsīd era. Pre-Islamic poetry has its own elements and cultural tradition, in the same way as poetry in the Umayyad and the ‘Abbāsīd periods has its own cultural tradition. The language used in pre-Islamic poetry involving the introduction of ruins and its poetic imagery differs radically from those of the ‘Abbāsīd poetry. This leads us to Abū Nuwās’s revolt against the introduction of ruins, for he resorted to attacking the ruins and stopping by them. An example of this is:-

“Do not stop by the remains and the ruins
And by a desolation which is like the ragged powder of southern wind
Join us instead to drink a red vintage in the morn
Which resembles the redness of fire or the smoothness of pearls.\(^\text{19}\)

His attack on the ruins is mixed with a strong sense of bitter irony about the ruins and those who stop over them:

"Mad is he who cries over the remains of a dwelling
And bewails worn out ruins in a stony land

When he is asked: 'what is making you cry?', he says: 'a dove
Which cries over a squab with a mournful voice

She reminds me of a homely quarter in a wasteland
And of a wild dove moaning in a stony cavity and a great rock

While I cry over wine because
It was prohibited in the revealed Book."\(^\text{20}\)

\(^{19}\) His attack on the ruins is mixed with a strong sense of bitter irony about the ruins and those who stop over them.

\(^{20}\) His attack on the ruins is mixed with a strong sense of bitter irony about the ruins and those who stop over them.
This trend has more ancient roots, which go back to pre-Islamic poetry itself, and to one of its famous *mu'allaqas*, that of 'Amr ibn Kulthum, which he starts by describing wine:

Ha, girl! Up with your bowl! give us our dawn-draught and do not spare the wines of El-Andarina,

the brightly sparkling, as if saffron were in them whenever the mulled water is mingled with them,

that swing the hotly desirous from his passion when he has tasted them to gentle mellowness;  

It is clear from the previous samples that the language of poetry and the structure of the poem differ not only from one period to another but also from one poem to another, which makes generalisation difficult. Stetkevych's adherence to her method of the rite of passage in moulding pre-Islamic poetry in the triangle of erotic, travel and pride/praise. This has led her to explaining this by way of the poets' clinging to the 'āmūd al-Shīr.

The term 'āmūd al-Shīr did not appear in old Arabic criticism until al-Āmidī used it in his book, *al-Muwāzana*, for the first time. He used the term in three places when comparing al-Buḥṭurī and Abū Tammām. He states: “The poetry of al-Buḥṭurī is that of a natural desert Arab, and in accordance with the doctrine of earlier poets, and he never

_yīnqul ʿumrūn bīn kāthīm:_

ُلا ِبِيِلَةَ ِبِكَ حمْسَرُ ِبِكَ أَنْدَرَنِسْا  
اذا مَسَا ِبِئْسَا خَالِطَتْهَا ِسَهْلَنَا  
اذا مَاذاقَهَا حمْسَرُ ِبِكَ أَنْدَرَنِسْا

*meshashīta kāsān ḥāṣṣat fīhihā*  
*ājjarū bi dī lībānisūna ʿānīn ʿašrūn*
departed from the familiar ‘amūd al-Shi’r’. He also says: “When al-Buḥturi was asked about himself and Abu Tammam he said “He went deeper than me where meaning is concerned, but my poetry is better constructed than his in ‘amūd al-Shi’r’.” He also says: “Al-Buḥturi’s friend said: ‘It so happened that al-Buḥturi has not departed from the poetry ‘amūd and its usual form, despite what we find in his poetry by way of metaphor, pun and antithesis’.”

This term, according to al-Āmidd, was not unknown. However, no one mentioned this allegedly familiar ‘amūd, under this name, before al-Āmidd. This author concludes by saying that al-Āmidd tries to establish his view on poetic writing through analysis, meanings, and imaginations. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Jurjānī, and al-Marrūqi, expressed their points of view on this critical issue which has also preoccupied the minds of old critics. I do not wish to speak at length on this point here, because I have spoken about it in some detail in previous chapters of this study.

The structural composition which was prevalent in constructing the pre-Islamic poem came to an end when the ‘Abbāsid state was established, and with the change in the manifestations of Islamic civilisation in that era structural composition did not last until this century, as Stetkevych states. The cultural change led to a change in the poets’ cultural structures, thus ruins, the she-camel and the trip through the desert ceased to be

22. البحترى اعترابى الشعر مطبوع، وعلى مذهب الآراء، ومافارق عمود الشعر المعروف:’

الأمدي، أبو القاسم الحسن بن بشير، الموازنة، ص 4، الطبعة الرابع دار المعارف 1960.

23. "مثل البحترى عن نفسه وعن أبي تمام، فقال: كان أغوص على المعاني مني، وأنا أقوم بعمود الشعر منه."

المصدر السابق نفسه، ص 12.

24. "قال صاحب البحترى: وحصل البحترى أنه ما فارق عمود الشعر وطريقة المعروف، مع ما نجده كثير في شعره من الاستعارات التحمس والمطابقة."

المصدر السابق نفسه، ص 18.

25. أنظر اللسان الثاني من هذه الدراسة.
the axis of their textual structure. Palaces, gardens, wine, court boys and women and wars became, instead, subjects which inspired the poets' imagination and upon which they built their textual structure. Poetry, especially during the ‘Abbāsid period, was rich with rhetoric and verbal decoration, which had an effect on the poetry of the Ottoman state later, when rhetoric and metaphor were used beyond excess.

Adonis, in his vision of the pre-Islamic poem, takes a different line with the object of finding the difference between it and the new poetry movement which is based, according to Adonis, on principles such as:-

"...the artistic point of view; the ancient Arabic poem is a collection of verses, i.e. a collection of repetitive independent units which have no internal order, but are connected by the rhyme and based on the metre, while brevity is their general characteristic".26

He goes on, in his comparison, to say:-

"The ancient poem consists of artistry and meanings, while the modern poem is a distinct experience. The ancient poem is the language of public taste and grammatical and rhetorical rules, while the new one is a personal language. The ancient one is based on the clear easy metre which is imposed on it from outside, while the new poem is based on a rhythm which springs from within, and therefore is an innovation the use of which requires good mastery and talent and not just the application of the metre. There is only one form in all the ancient

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26 من الناحية الفنية، يرى أن القصيدة العربية القديمة مجموعة أبيات أي مجموعة وحدات مستقلة متكررة لا يربط بينها نظام داخلي، إنما يرتبط بينهما القافية وهي قائمة على الوزن، والإيجاز طابعها العام.

poems, while every modern poem has its own form, whether it is prosaic or metred, or prosaic and metred at the same time".27

Adonis makes a marginal comment on his above mentioned point of view:-

"It is worthwhile noting the exceptions in some of Abū Nuwās and Ibn al-Rūmī’s poems. In Arab medieval criticism there are some indications regarding the unity of the poem. Al- Jurrānī asserts that the poem is constructed on “introduction, a dealing with the subject and a conclusion”, while al- Marzūqī speaks of: “the meshing together and the harmony of the composition”, but this remains remote from the modern concept of unity, for the unity of the modern poem is based on its linguistic and intuitive structure. Unity was also present in the long poems in Arabic poetry, but they were a collection of meanings and views, and there is not a single general idea which directs and dominates them."28

Adonis progresses, in his above mentioned view of the ancient poem, from a comparison between the ancient and the new and the revolutionary or modernism approach with which the Arabic literary movement has become obsessed from the
1970's until the present day. The following question arises here: is it necessary, in order to modernise Arabic poetry, to demolish the ancient poetic heritage and to build the new texts on its ruins? And, what is the justification for modern critics and poets' obsession with all those old texts which were produced more than fifteen centuries ago?

Arabic society, which was characterised by tribalism, during the pre-Islamic period, and by statehood in the Islamic period and especially during the Umayyad and the 'Abbāsid periods, is a society which has its own philosophy which produced this heritage that shapes the Arabic mentality till the present. Had it not been for the concept of the poem, in its traditional structure, the modern poem, with its new structural form, would not have been born. Therefore, it was through this intellectual and spiritual continuity between the new and the old that the Arab civilisation was born, and this is true to the point that we cannot sever this link and start from nothing.

In his comparison between the ancient and the modern poem, Adonis gives examples of textual terms which lack procedural definition. He says, for example: "The old poem is the language of public taste and of grammatical and rhetorical rules, while the new is a personal language and is based on rhythm which springs from the inside."29 His descriptions 'personal language', 'rhythm' and 'intuitive' are floating terms which could not be represented procedurally, for they are personal impressions which give rise to laxity of language, thus leading to the abandonment of artistic controls and to releasing them into an indeterminate space.

The confusion in the critical awareness and knowledge in the modern poetic experience has led to the confusion of defining its ground. There are still those who follow any movement that originates outside the circle of Arabic culture, in order to use it as a model for Arabic poetry, whether it is a poetic or a critical movement, as if Arabic

29 - Adonis. Zaman al-Shi'r. p. 39, 2nd ed. (Beirut, 1978)
creativity has not produced any convincing work on its own Arabic territory. The result of this tendency could lead to distorting the poetic experience by emptying it of its uniqueness and dressing it in a garb which is not of the essence of its artistic structure. Therefore, this researcher considers that old Arabic poetry is a heritage which possesses its own artistic uniqueness and tools which came to be one of its features and they can not be judged according to the claims of modern theorists that the ancient Arabic poem is a mere collection of unconnected views and meanings.

Adonis returns, in his book “al-Shi’riyya al-‘Arabiyya”, to give a different view from his previous one, which is, in this researcher’s view, a negation of the first one. He says:-

“There is no doubt that pre-Islamic poetry, whatever the critical and evaluative message about it is, is our first poetry and that in it, as such, the meeting of Arabic expression and life were based, as well as the meeting of the Arab with himself and with the Other, for it was not a mere practice of language, but also a practicing of life and existence. In this poetry, the first Arabic awareness of history and time is represented, and in it is hidden a great deal of the collective Arabic sub-conscious. When we read it today it reminds us of our first voice and we listen to how the sounds of language embrace history and man. It is the first artistic embodiment of our language with which we say what we are and open our roads through the darkness of the unknown. In this, it is not only our first memory, but also the first spring of our imagination”.30

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30 - "لا شك أن الشعر الجاهلي ، أيًا كان الخطاب النقدي أو التقويمي عنه، لنا هو شعرنا الأول ، وأن فيه ، يوصفه كذلك ، "تأسس لقاء الكلام العربي الأول مع الحياة ، ولقاء الإنسان العربي مع ذاته ومع الآخر ، فهو لم يكن مجرد ممارسة للكلام ، وإنما كان أيضا ممارسة للحياة والوجود. وفي هذا الشعر يمثل الرعي العربي الأول بالتاريخ والزمن ، ويختبئ جزء كبير من الأسلوب الجماعي العربي. فمن نزره اليوم نتذكر صوتنا الأول ، ونغمي إلى أصوات اللغة كيف كانت تحضن التاريخ والإنسان. إنه التحسين الفني الأول الذي نقول بهما ما نحن ، ونفتح بهما دروبنا في عتبة المجهول ، وهو في هذا ليس ذاكرتنا الأولى فحسب ، وإنما هو أيضا البندو العرفي الأول لخلينا." د. أدونيس، الشعرية العربية، ص 29 دار الأدب 1984.
From Adonis's view we find that a big discrepancy has risen in the structure of Arabic thought, and has clouded the view of the ancient Arabic poem, as a result of the distorted reflection of imitating, previously, Western models such as Keats, Coleridge, Eliot, Neruda, Lorca and others. The essential feature of Arabic culture is concentrated in its ability to achieve its own essence against the basic variables that exist between Arabic and the Western cultures, as each of them has its historical character and its path of knowledge which is subject to language characteristics that are impossible to borrow.

Abū Deeb differs from his predecessors in that he considers the introduction about ruins to be a strict traditional legacy which the poet is obliged to follow. He goes, in this respect, as far as misunderstanding Ibn Qutaiba's statement:—

"I have heard that some men of literature say that the composer of Odes began by mentioning the deserted dwelling places and the relics and traces of habitation. Then he wept and complained and addressed the encampment, and begged his companion to make a halt, in order that he might have occasion to speak of those who had once lived there and afterwards departed; for the dwellers in tents were different from or villagers in respect of coming and going, because they moved from on water-spring to another, seeking pasture and searching out places where rain had fallen. Then to this linked the erotic prelude and bewailed the violence of his love and the anguish of separation from his mistress and the extremity of his passion and desire, so as to win the hearts of his hearers and divert their eyes toward him and invite their ears to listen to him, since the song of love touches men's souls to love dalliance and the society of women, in such wise that we find very few but are attached thereto by some tie or have some share therein whether lawful or unpermitted. Now, when the poet had assured himself of an attentive hearing, he followed up his advantage and set forth his claim: thus he went on to complain of fatigue and want of sleep and travelling by night or the noonday heat, and how his camel had been reduced to leanness. And when .... he knew that he had fully
justified his hope and expectation of receiving his due meed from the person to whom the poem was addressed, he entered upon the panegyric and incited him toward, and kindled his generosity by exalting him above his peers..."31

We note that Ibn Qutaibah does not attribute this view to himself but starts instead by saying: "I have heard that some men of literature say that...." This clearly suggests that he has quoted others. He goes on after that to comment on the above quotation by saying: "The glorious poet is he who follows those styles and distinguishes between these sections by not allowing any of them to dominate [his] poetry, and without speaking at length, thus boring the listeners, and without cutting off, while the souls still thirst for more".32

In his evaluation of Ibn Qutaiba's conception, Abū Deeb agrees with Ibn Qutaiba and says that the poem is not based on three parts and that Ibn Qutaiba does not state that the poem contains "an essential subject" preceded by two other "non-essential subjects".33

It seems clear that the textual analysis of the ancient Arabic poetry shows that the introduction of ruins and the structural composition of the poem were not arbitrary. At the same time, the structure was not viewed as a materialisation of an accustomed tradition the departure from which is considered as departure into the realm of

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31- Translation by R. Nicholson, Literary History of the Arabs, pp. 77-78.
32- فالمشاعر المجدد من سلك هذه الأساليب وعدل بين هذه الأسات فلم يجعل واحدا منها أغلب على الشعر، ولم يبطل فیهم السامعین، ولم يقطع وبالنفوس علی المزید. المصادر السابق نفسه، ص 75-76.
33- ونظرة سريعة إلى مقطع ابن قتيبة تظهر فورا أنه لا يؤكد أن القصيدة يجب أن تكون لها ثلاثة أجزاء، وأنه لا يعلن أن القصيدة تحتوي على موضوع حقيقي يسبقه جزآن آخرين ليسا موضوعين حقيقيين. أبوديوب، كمال آل الروئي المصنعة، ص 103.
innovation. This author will examine through his analysis of the introductions of ruins in pre-Islamic poetry, the contents of these introductions and their structure, in terms of the intricate elements which serve the object of the text as a whole and its artistic unit.

The introductions of ruins have occupied great areas of the critics’ studies and researches, who have tackled them in static trends, like the ruins themselves, without attempting to establish a link between them and their creative author’s imagination. This led to their analyses being conventional and devoid of any artistic glow, such as al-Zawzanî’s commentary on the seven mu’allaqas and al-Khaṭîb al-Tabrîzî’s commentary on the ten mu’allaqas. I have not come across, in modern studies, those who tackled pre-Islamic poetry, especially the introductions of ruins, by employing an artistic critical method which gives that heritage its due appropriately, other than Kamāl Abū Deeb’s study al-Ru‘a al-Muqanna‘a where he made a sophisticated effort to apply his structuralist method to pre-Islamic poetry, (although I disagree with his style of dealing with the subject and with his analysis).

I shall begin this study of the introductions of ruins of the seven mu’allaqas, with the mu’allaqa of Labîd, which he opens by saying:-

The abodes are desolate, halting-place and encampment too,
at Mina; deserted lies Ghaul, deserted alike Rijam,

and the torrent-beds of Er-Rayan—naked shows their trace,
rubbed smooth, like letterings long since scored on a stony slab;

blackened ors that, since the time their inhabitants tarried there,
many years have passed over, months unhallowed and sacrosanct.

The star-borne showers of Spring have fed them, the outpouring
of thundercloud, great deluge and gentle following rain,
the cloud that travels by night, the somber pall of morn,
the outspread mantle of eve with muttering antiphon.

Then the branches of aihakan shot up, and the ostriches
and antelopes brought forth their young on both valley-slopes,
and the great-eyed cows that had lately calved stand over their brood
while in the spreading plain the little lambs, form their flocks.

Then the torrents washed the dusty ruins, until they seem
like scrolls of writing whose text their pens have revivified,
or the back and forth of a woman tattooing, her indigo
in rings scattered, the tattooing newly revealed above them..

So I stood and questioned that site; yet how should we question rocks
set immovable, whose speech is nothing significant?34

We find that the vocabulary which dominates this scene of ruins is characterised
by desolation and obliteration with words such as desolate, naked, ruins, many years

34 Arberry, A. J. The Seven Odes. P. 142
have passed over, thunderclouds, rock. Simultaneously, the poem is permeated by references to reconstruction and the beginning of life in phrases such as “the star-born showers of spring have fed them”, “the clouds that travel by night”, “the somber pall of morn”, “then the branches of aihaqān shot up”, and the “ostriches and antelopes brought forth their young”, and “the great-eyed cows that had lately calved and stand over their brood”.

Three major elements stand out in this scene representing the natural cycle of life; these are: barrenness, rain and fertility. They are linked by association, i.e. barrenness invites rain in order to negate it, and rain leads to fertility, i.e., in order to negate sterility and barrenness. Thus rain is the common denominator between the elements, and both elements represent opposites, each of which negates the other. However, they meet before the beginning, i.e. in the barrenness. Therefore, the following question arises: What is the poet’s purpose in choosing these elements? Is it, as the traditional view maintains, just an introduction about ruins in order to cry over the beloved? or does it represent renewal and continuity which in their turn renew the effect of time, as manifested in the new beginnings, fertility and promise, amid desolation, obliteration and severance, as Abū Deeb says?35

In fact, this author does not see how it is possible to extricate the poet’s psyche, who lived during that period, with its subsequent load of feelings and their ties with the environmental and their intellectual background, and to analyse it on the basis of modern critical visions, based on completely different cultural and environmental backgrounds. At the same time, this author does not see any justification for separating modern poetry from the ancient. A poem is not just an engineered construction of words. The death of the author should not mean isolating the text from his feelings and emotions and negating

35 أبودبي، كمال ، الزروى المقنعة، ص 30

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its rhetorical content. The text should be integrated into his life, and this cannot be done other than by recalling the poetic image and employing it in a manner that serves the idea of the text.

I would like to augment this conception by pointing out the indicative relations of the scene of ruins. This is represented in three themes as follows:

1. a. the dwellings are obliterated  
   b. the ruins do not respond  

2. a. the floods reveal the ruins  
   b. the floods erode the soil  
   c. rainfalls  

3. a. plant growth  
   b. peaceful animals  

I call this the theme of wasteland  
I call it the theme of water  
I call this the theme of plants

The first theme “wasteland” is characterised by stillness and motionlessness. The second, “water”, is characterised by potency. The third, “plants”, is characterised by a moderate motion which could be described as lushness. The semantic relations of meaning between the three themes are revealed in the positive relation between the second and third theme, as it is because of the rainfall that plants grew and animals felt secure in the place and settled in it. However, the semantic relations between the second and the first theme is a negative indirect relation, because the ruins, from a time point of view, existed before the rainfall and the rising floods, thus they were not caused by the rain. There is also an indirect semantic relation between the first and the third theme based on the opposition resulting from the second theme, i.e. the rainfall and the rising floods.

Thus, according to this conception, the meaning of the poem is a complex relation between expressed events and other symbolisms of objective reality, resulting
from the entanglement of these themes which relied in their construction on imagined images. The construction of the images is not homogeneous, from a time point of view, as the poet’s creative moment does not coincide with the time that caused the ruins, nor did it witness the rainfall or make the land fertile. Each theme has its own time-frame, different from the other. Therefore, the poetic images in this scene of ruins are imagined images.

Hazim al-Qarṭājanni has demonstrated the productiveness and activity of the imagination in the various arts, including sculpture, painting, music, theater and poetry. He considers mental imagination as one way of producing fantasy, despite the differences and distinction which exist between fantasy and imagination. Perhaps he was influenced by Ibn Sīnā and his theory that imagination aids understanding and mental conception in some sciences requiring imagination, such as geometry.

This researcher maintains that mental conception does not lead to imagination, because imaginative awareness is necessary in the first place in order to conceive hypotheses and conceptions arising from a specific imagined situation, and this indicates a contradiction - in Hazim’s words, the interchangeability of imagining and mental conception, as imaginative awareness is the faculty that organises conceptions and synthesises the unity of the appearance in all its multiplicity and heterogeneity.

If we are to look at the mu'allaga of Imru’al-Qais where he says in its introduction:-

Halt, friends both! Let us weep, recalling a love and lodging
by the rim of the twisted sands between al-Dakhul and Hawmal

Tuwdih and al-Miqrat, whose trace is not yet effaced
for all the spinning of the south winds and the northern blasts;
there, all about its yards, and away in the dry hollows
you may see the dung of antelopes spattered like peppercorns.

Upon the morn of separation, the day they loaded to part,
by the tribe’s acacias it was like I was splitting a colocynth;

there my companions halted their beasts a while over me
saying ‘Don’t perish of sorrow; restrain yourself decently!’

Yet the true and only cure of my grief is tears outpoured:
what is there left to lean on where the trace is obliterated? 36

We find that the poet begins the poem with an emotional shock as represented in
the imperative “Stop”! (in the dual), which is laden with the feeling of submission and
devotion to those lifeless ruins. The dead man obliges us to stop, when passing by his
grave, to ask for mercy for him and to mention his merits and good points. Imru’ al-Qais
stop by the ruins and his cry suggest feelings full of grief and loss. This is a spell in which
the poet takes refuge whenever his powers wane. We find evidence of this in another
proem by the same poet, where he says in its introduction:-

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36- Arberry, A. J. The Seven Odes. P.61
Halt, friends both! Let us weep, recalling a love and kindness
And a ruin whose signs were obliterated a long time ago

Many years came upon them after me and they have become
Like the letters of Psalms in the scriptures of monks.37

He also says in the introduction of another poem:-

O desolate ruin! may you be greeted in the morn
But how is it possible to greet those who lived in forlorn times?

Alas! to the hope of greeting them! other than greeting a happy immortal
Who has few worries and never sleeps over anxieties

These are the dwellings of Salma in a barren space
Upon which incessantly black clouds copiously rained.38

The poet's insistence on stopping by the ruins and crying over them may seem to
be a confirmation of the traditional view which interprets stopping over the ruins as a
necessary corollary of opening the poems, and subsequently, it does not have an intrinsic
value, as the refrain in poems sung by a choir. However, we discover after some scrutiny
that the ruins are a symbol with which the poet expresses himself, attributing the ruins

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and obliteration to himself. When he cries over the ruins, he cries, in fact, over himself and stands in front of them as if in front of a mirror that reflects his inner feelings which have exhausted him. Thus, he carries the history of life within him, focusing the passage of time in one point in time, i.e. when the dwellings turned into ruins, blackened remains and desolations. The poet’s stop has a symbolic dimension “because he starts with reality and does not sketch it, rather, he refers it to the self, where material features and their natural relations collapse and upon their ruins new relations, conditioned by the poet’s subjective visions arise.”

Ritā ‘Awad refers Imru’ al-Qais’ stop over the ruins to symbolic, ritual and mythological dimensions, which are, according to her, an artistic work stemming from a collective heritage and addressed to the group, and neither a subjective document nor a reflection of external reality. Poetry is a symbolic art form and not and imitation of objective reality, nor is it a representation of real phenomena. In her analysis, Ritā ‘Awad adopts a theory which she burdens with a load greater than its capacity as she tries to employ her cultural repertory in to show that Imru’ al-Qais’ stop over the ruins was a ritual stop. She maintains:

“the thing that supports the hypothesis that the stop is of a ritualistic significance is that the poet did not stop just by himself, but he turned this action into a shared collective act in which others participated. He suggests, from the very first word in his poem, that he is not relating a personal event nor is he expressing a personal sorrow, rather, he is participating in a collective act and being inspired by a cultural legacy. Also, one of the poet’s reasons for choosing the dual is that the (alif) of the dual suggests sublimity and height which is implied by stopping,

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39. لا بد من الواقعي ولكنه لا يرسم الواقعي بل يرده إلى الذات، وفيها تنهار معالم المادة وعلاقاتها الطبيعية لتقوم على انشاؤها علاقات جديدة مشروطة بالذات للشعر.

or standing still. This also harmonises with the erect figure, in addition to realising the number three, by declaring the presence of two of his companions. As well as indicating the plural in Arabic, the number three is a regular primary number in human civilisation, especially in the religions of the Mediterranean region, such as the belief in the Christian trinity, the resurrection of Jesus Christ three days after his burial which is related to Jonah’s salvation three days after being swallowed by the whale, in Judaism, and the belief that God had three daughters: al-Lāt, al-‘Uzza and Manāt, in Arabic paganism”.

Rītā ‘Awad attributes to the stopping in the mu’allaqa a symbolic dimension which is of a ritual religious significance. But the question present itself: does a symbol have a referential value which the poet turns into a mask by which he expresses himself? The stop, according to Rītā ‘Awad, is an action imbued with the feelings of awe and respect. Therefore, in this author’s opinion the reason for the poet’s choice of the (alif) of the dual, when he addressed his two companions, is not because it indicates the loftiness of an erect figure, as much as it indicates the stilling of the passage of time and the change of its path, for the function of the imperative tense is that of warning and the carrying out of an action different from the existing routine.

41 ولعل ما يعزز الافتراض بأن الوقوف مداولا مطلقًا أن الشاعر في هذه القصيدة لم يقف وحده، بل جمل ذلك الوقوف فعلا اجتماعيا يشارك فيه أخرون، فأحرف من الكلمة الأولى في قصيته أنه لا يروي حدثًا شخصيًا ولا يعبر عن هم ذاتي بل يشترك في فعل اجتماعي، ويستهم تركاث ثقافيا، ولعل من أساليب اختياره للنشيدة كون ألف المشي توجي بالتسامي والإهتفان الذي يترضى الوقوف وتمسجم مع صور التامة المنتصبة بالإضافة إلى كونها تحقق العدد الثلاثة بعلن وجود رفيقين صحبة الشاعر، والثلاثة مع كونه عدد يفيد صيغة الجمع في اللغة العربية، وهو عدد تميزه أصلي في الجماهيرة الإسلامية وبالخاصة في الأديان التي ظهرت في منطقة البحر المتوسط، كالإيمان بالثالوث المسيحي، وقيامة المسيح بعد ثلاثة أيام من دفنه والمرتبطة رمزيا بنجاة يونان بعد ثلاثة أيام من ابلاع الحوت له في اليهودية، والاعتقاد بأن لله ثلاث بنات من اللات والمزى ومنها في الشريعة الرسولية:

المصدر السابق نفسه، ص 185-186.
The purpose of Imru’ al-Qais and his companions’ stop was to mourn. The crying which accompanied his stop makes us feel that we are faced here with a symbolic construction which has its own significance, for the act of crying speaks of man’s suffering of mental and material pain. Crying is not of the nature of men in the Arabic tradition, rather, it is of the nature of children and women because they cannot withstand difficulties and pain. A man does not cry until the circle of mental and bodily anguish is tightened on him, leading to severe agony and the weakening of his powers. Therefore, Imru’ al-Qais’ crying here raises a question: Did Imru’ al-Qais and his two companions actually stop and cry? If the answer is affirmative, then how could this have happened to someone who is acknowledged by all pre-Islamic society as a knight, whose chivalry is evidenced by his poems. At the same time, he is the descendant of a noble family of a high stature. He says:-

Had what I am striving for been a basic life
I would have been happy with little money and would not ask

But I am seeking a noble glory
And noble glory is achievable by those who are like me

For man as long as the last breath of his soul lasts
Cannot reach the edges of grave matters and mirages. 42

He refers to the she-camel he rode as she crossed the desert in pursuit of the noble glory which he aspired to achieve in his poem.

42 يقول اميره القيس:
فَلَوَّ أَنّ مَا أَسْعِي لَأَنْنِي مُعِيشةً
وَلا يَدْرُك المَجْهَد المَؤْتَمَّ أَثْمَالٌ
بَمَدْرَك أَطْرَافَ الخَطْوَوَبُ وَلَا الْ
وَمَا العَمْرُ مَا دَامَتْ حَشائِشَةً نفْسِه.
ديوان اميره القيس . ص 39 .
On her back there is a young man like whom earth did not bear a rival
Who more than anyone honours promise and is more faithful and patient.43

He combined, in this verse, all the good characteristics which are not to be found
in any other person. His cry is that of grief rather than a physiological cry. This assumption is supported by his statement “Let us weep, recalling a love and a lodging”. It is a purifying cry that releases the charge of sorrow which overwhelmed him when he recalled the memory of those ruins. This is a different position from that of Ritā ‘Awaḍ and Susan Stetkevych. Ritā ‘Awaḍ considers crying over the ruins as a compensation for water with held by a sky that refused to irrigate the parched land, this being another form of the praying for rain.44 Stetkevych also considers crying as a form of sterility because tears are a salty liquid and, as such, a symbol of sterility.45

When comparing the mu‘allaqas of Imru’ al-Qais and Labid we find that the semantic fields of the introduction of ruins, in both mu‘allaqas, meet in one point and differ in another. In order to detail the semantic fields of the mu‘allaqa of Imru’ al-Qais I would like to present the following diagram:

1. a. crying over the ruins
   b. ruins- not entirely obliterated
   c. features of the ruins
   ← I call this the theme of wasteland

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43.(cols. 14-16): يقول أمرى الفيس في قصيدته سما لك شوق بعد ما كان أفصرا: على لي لا فتي لم تحمل الأرض مثله أسر بعيشاق وأرفع وأصبر

44.(cols. 14-16): نرى Ritā عوض أن البكاء على الأطلال تعويض عن الماء الذي حسبته السماء ورفضت أن تروي الأرض المجدية به، وانه صيغة أخرى م، صيغ الاستياء . عوض، Ritā، بنية القصيدة الجاهلية، ص 187

2. a. recalling memory
b. longing cry → I call this the theme of memories

The first theme, wasteland, is characterised by motionlessness, while the second, memories, is characterised by motion, because longing is a mental and emotional activity and, as such, is a moving theme. The two themes, here, have a reciprocal positive binary relation, and at the same time, a similarity appears between the first theme, wasteland, in the case of Imru’ al-Qais, and the first theme wasteland, in the case of Labīd. Also an implicit relation of similarity appears between the two themes of water and plants, in the case of Labīd, and the theme of memories, in the case of Imru’ al-Qais. This is exemplified by Labīd’s artistic allusions in the theme of plants and the growth of vegetation which led gazelles and ostriches to visit that grove, thus resulting in reproduction and augmentation. This, as a whole, refers to the nature of human life which requires a kind of stability, security and love in order to complete the process of reproduction, which is, in the case of humans, a rational process rather than a brutal, instinctive one, as in the case of animals, where the human condition is not necessary. Behind this process stands an emotional feeling and a longing, missed by the poet, but is contained in the second theme memories, in the case of Imru’al-Qais.

This researcher considers that the two units about ruins, in the case of both Labīd and Imru’ al-Qais cases, are characterised by two poetic attributes, these being motionlessness and longing, where motionlessness is represented, in both cases, by the silence of the ruins and their steadfast stand through time, without answering questions but abridging a past life which is subject to the dialectics of survival and extinction. These ruins have survived with their signs and their timeless personality, but at the same time, they are nevertheless perishable because they are devoid of the elements of life and are empty of human life which is instrumental for settlement. The longing represents both
poets’ desire to create a secure and stable life, but this desire takes a different form for both of them. Labid embodies his longing by the rainfall, growth of vegetation and the visiting of peaceful animals and their reproduction, as a realisation of a desire which he feels in himself against the hardship of time which turned everything around him into a lifeless desolation.

Imru’ al-Qais, however, finds the object of his longing in the manifestation of a loving caring life which he misses at that point in time, through the sorrow which overwhelmed him and made him ask his friends to prevent him destroying himself. His friends’ advice would not have been forthcoming had it not been for the near destructive state into which his longing and pining had led him. This longing and pining would not have ended had it not been for the outpouring of his tears. The poet’s choice of the phrase “then my eyes overflowed with tears” is not arbitrary, because flooding does not happen without the presence of a great volume of water which could not be contained, or gather in one place, because of its strong flow, thus leading to an overflowing torrent. Longing and pining have stirred Imru’ al-Qais and he embodied them in the overflow of tears. The fa’il (overflowed) is a particle of conjunction which implies order and succession, indicating that the overflow of tears was an inevitable result of strong pining. We also find a similarity between the semantic meaning of Imru’ al-Qais’ saying:

Then my eyes overflowed with tears of passionate yearning upon my throat, till my tears drenched even my sword’s harness.46

and Labid’s:-

and the torrent-beds of al-Raiyan naked shows their trace,
rubbed smooth, like lettering long since scored on a stony slab; 47

The overflow of tears which poured out, in the case of Imru' al-Qais, until they wetted the sheath of his sword, has, thus, erased all the effects of longing and pining, while the torrent-beds of al-Rayyān have become bare and plantless at that moment in time, having been previously full of life. This does not agree with what Abu Deeb’s view, i.e. that the unit of ruins is governed here more by death and change, drought and extinction, than the similar unit in the key-poem is. Thus we find - as Abu Deeb says - that the manifestation of life, fertility and continuity are more faint in the erotic poem than in the key-poem. 48

Our analysis differs from Rītā ‘Awāḏs’ in that the image of a ruin in the mu’allaqa of Imru’ al-Qais involves two images that stand side by side: the image of external ruins and the image of fertility generated, which arises by human awareness, thus achieving a psychological balance for man and substantiating his concern with confirming the victory of life. 49

I continue my horizontal method of analysing the introduction of ruins in pre-Islamic poetry and would like next to consider the mu’allaqa of Ṭarafa ibn al-‘Abd where he says in its introduction:

There are traces yet of Khawla in the stony tract of Thahmad apparent like the tattoo-marks seen on the back of a hand;

47. يَقُولُ لَبَيْدٍ: خَلْقَا كَمَا ضَمَّنَّ الْوَحْيُ سَلَالَهَا
48. لَبَيْدٍ: كَمَا الْوَرَأَ الْمَقْتَعَةُ صَ ١٢٨.
49. عَمْوُضٍ، رَيْتَا، بَنِيَةُ الْقُصْدَةَ الْجَاهِلِيَةِ، صَ ١٨٩.
there my companions halted their beasts a while over me saying ‘Don’t perish of sorrow; bear it with fortitude!’

The litters of the Maliki camels that morn in the broad watercourse at Wadi Dad were like great schooners from Adauli, or the vessels of Ibn Yamin their mariners steer now tack by tack, now straight forward;

their prows cleave the streaks of the rippling water just as a boy playing will scoop the sand into parcels.  

Ṭarafa ibn al-‘Abd did not stop long over the ruins in his introduction, as Labīd and Imru’ al-Qais did. He was satisfied with only a quick concentrated reference indicating the ruins perpetual survival like a tattoo on the hand. There is, in his fleeting reference, a semantic meaning which reveals his close association with those ruins and his closeness to them, in the same way as a tattoo on a hand is so close to man himself. This always makes remembering the ruins and longing to them a renewable process. It is a spell to which he turns whenever his memories are stirred - a state of affairs which made his companions give him advice and prevent him, at the same time, from giving in

50 Arberry, A. J. The Seven Odes. P.83

_reply_to_tattooing_hand.png
to those memories which could lead to his devastation. We notice that the second verse is not much different from the fifth verse in the mu'allaga of Imru' al-Qais other than by the last words in the second part of the two verses (تجمَّل - تجَّلَد) [tajammal / tajallad]; both words mean patience against time. The invitation to be patient, here, was brief and direct, following a passing reference to the ruins, as a quick reaction to the fleeting appearance referred to in the first verse by (apparent تلويح). This is in variance with the invitation by Imru' al-Qais's companions asking him to be patient in the face of his tragedy, made after the first four verses in which Imru' al-Qais gave a detailed account of his suffering. This supports the assumption that Imru' al-Qais's anguish was deep, as he could not express it other than after creating several sophisticated verses embodying his artistic vision.

Ṭarafa's introduction of ruins develops into a description of the trip on Mūlikī howdahs in the second part of the introduction. This researcher maintains that travel is an objective equivalent of ruins represented in the obliterated remains, as travel depends on the dialectics of the wrecked present and a replenishable future.

Ṭarafa began his trip in a different fashion from other poets. They usually start by describing the trip and the traveling animal and they spend a long time describing the she-camel taking them to the dwellings of the beloved, as Labīd did by describing his she-camel in thirty-two verses which begin with the following verse:

with a lean camel to ride on, that many journeyings have fined to a bare thinness of spine and shrunken hump

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51 تَلَََِّيْ تَِِّهْلَمَْ دُبَيْتَهُ وَتَِهْنَيْنَ بِهِمَا وَالَّيْنَ يَدْعُو هُمَا فَأَحْقَقَ صُلُبُهُمَا رِسْمَانَهُمَا

فِيْتَِّكَ إِذَا رَفَعَتَ اللَّهُوَمَاتَ بِمَشْحَسٍ
and ends with this one:-

Upon such a camel, when dances the shimmering forenoon haze
and the hills draw on their vaporous mantle, the white mirage.

Ṭarafa, on the other hand, sums up his trip in three verses, by metaphorically
using a ship as a method of travel to the dwellings of the beloved. However, he did not,
as a matter of fact, use a ship as a method of travel, he used a camel instead, attributing it
to the quality and speed of a ship in the sea, in order to create a kind of identification
between the ship and the camel which helped him reach his destination:-

A young gazelle there is in the tribe, dark-lipped, fruit-shaking,
flaunting a double necklace of pearls and topazes.52

Ṭarafa’s trip starts there where he ended up, by reaching the circle of beauty,
where he embarks on a journey of a different kind - a journey into pure aesthetics, where
he creates another kind of identification between the she-camel and the beauty of the
human female. He commences his journey by saying:-

Ah, but when grief assails me, straightway I ride it off
mounted on my swift, lean-flanked camel, night and day racing

and ends it with the following verse:-

Such is the beast I ride, when my companion cries

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52 _يقول طربة بن العيد: ظاهر مطلني لؤلؤ وزيرجرد في الحيّ أحوي ينفعن الوُرد شاِد_
'Would I might ransom you, and be ransomed, from yonder wastel!"53

I do not propose to analyse the *mu'allaqa* of Tarafa ibn al-'Abd and to elaborate the poem’s foundations. I would like instead to concentrate on throwing some light on the poetic image in the introduction of ruins and the relations of its semantic meanings. The image involves the following two themes:

1. a. permanence of the ruins
   b. longing to the ruins
   I call this the theme of wasteland

2. a. Ships cut their way through the sea
   b. the lost sailor
   c. water dividing into two parts
   I call it the theme of water

The first theme (wasteland) is characterised by motionlessness and repetitiveness of the rhythm of movement, while the second theme (water) is characterised by violent motion, presented by the power of the ship’s thrust forward and the division of the seawater into two parts. This results in a positive binary relation between the two themes which contributes to the development and growth of the text, from a static condition to full vigour of motion. This contrasting relation reveals the effectiveness of the symbolic imagination which springs from the identification of the ship with the camel, because the geographic environment of pre-Islamic society is somewhat remote from the experience of sea and ships. Seafaring as a method of travel was not known in a desert society which depended on horses and camels instead for travel. This researcher considers this image as
an innovation in the content of ruins of the pre-Islamic poem, which the poet drew from the culture and the depository of knowledge possessed by that society. The image, here, is an essential realisation of the imagination which exercises its creativity freely, in isolation from cause and effect. Creative imagination and poetic imagery overlap and each of them is manifested in the other in a way that allows a periodic exchange of meaning, in the context of the relation between action and reaction and the connection between function and attainment. This leads us to considering images as an equivalent of imagination.

Imagination, here, has a synthetic character the elements of which are camels and ships. These two elements lead us to the two themes of the semantic relation referred to above, i.e. the positive contrasting relation between the theme of wasteland and water. The introduction of ruins seems in the end to be outwith the traditional view of ruins, in so far as it consists of stopping over the ruins, crying over them then undertaking an arduous trip to the dwellings of the beloved. Thus the introduction in question enters the entangled relations that exist between the concentrated poetic images, and this leads to revealing the introduction’s infrastructural contents as represented in the dialectics of existence and non-existence.

We move on to considering the *mu‘allaqa* of ‘Antara which begins with this introduction of ruins:–

Have the poets left a single spot for a patch to be sewn?

Or did you recognise the abode after long meditation?

O abode of ‘Abla at al-Jawa’, let me hear you speak;

I give you good morning, abode of Abla, and greeting to you!
For there I halted my she-camel, hug-bodied as a castle, 
that I might satisfy the hankering of a lingerer;

While ‘Abla lodged at al-Jawa’, and our folk dwelt 
at al-Ḥazan and al-Samman and al-Mutathallim 

All hail to you, ruins of a time long since gone by, 
empty and desolate since the day Umm al-Haitham parted. 54

The *mu'allaga* of ‘Antara starts with an essential question which reveals his deep knowledge of the pre-Islamic poetic heritage. It states a basic truth, namely, that the poets, hitherto, have exhausted all exalted meanings and did not leave for him a virgin field from which to draw his textual material. At the same time, he boasts at the beginning of his poem about his poetic mastery and that, despite his general condition, he is capable of artistic innovation which amounts to a high degree of excellence.

The context of ruins in the *mu'allaga* of ‘Antara is different from the same context in the other *mu'allagas*. His stop over the ruins, here, is not a pathetic stop permeated with a passive attitude in relation to those desolate dwellings, it is instead a

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54 Arberry, A. J. The Seven Odes P.179
stop which expresses a positive vision of them. This positive vision is represented in the following three points:

First: In the manner of the interjection, in that it is addressed to an interjected noun which is defined in the possessive case (O abode of ‘Abla) which specifies the dwelling, i.e. it is ‘Abla’s house and not any other dwelling, as is the case in the previous mu‘allaqas.

Secondly: The tenderness of the dialogue when he asks that dwelling to speak out and the opening of that dialogue with a greeting and a prayer for its safety and permanence because it is his beloved’s house, to which he attributed the qualities of mellowness and tenderness (غضيض طرفها، طوع الغلاق).

Thirdly: In his standing tall and firm in front of those ruins to inhale the perfume of memories, is one of the strongest manifestations of similarity between the poet and those ruins.

For there I halted my she-camel, huge-bodied as a castle, that I might satisfy the hankering of a lingerer.

The introduction of the poem rises upwards, from the first verse, in an escalating line, towards a confirmation of power and sublimity. ‘Antara surprises the reader, in the first verse, by asking a question whose answer confirms a known fact, and by trying to supersede that fact with his new text, despite the implicit collective consensus on it.
dialogue starts, amid an atmosphere saturated with a firm knowledge, in a friendly manner, then the poet moves away from it by talking about his steadfastness and pride in himself, as evidenced in his saying: “for there I halted my she-camel, huge bodied as a castle” which suggests that his stop was not by chance; rather, it was meant as such. This stop is as firm as a palace’s magnificence and stable structure. This justifies our view that the poet identifies himself, here, with the ruins in their eternal permanence and endurance. His choice of words which indicate power and strength confirms that identification even more. His family dwells in ‘al-Ḥazan, al-Ṣammān, and al-Mutathallim’, all of which are places with names that suggest the qualities of solidity and strength. One of the meanings of ‘al-Ḥazan’ and ‘al-Ṣammān’ is that of hard stones used by ancient Arabs to ignite fire. ‘al-Mutathallim’ is a place name which indicates severity and strength. Solid objects do not break easily nor do they bend, instead, they split, at the very worst, i.e. break at the edges. Thus the semantic relations accelerate, in the text, from the very beginning of the introduction to the end. This contradicts Abū Deeb’s view stated in the following quotation:-

“The place names abound in the basic photographic focus of the poem, which I term the focus of the closed/the open. For example, ‘Abla’ is mentioned for the second time within the framework of al-Jawār in the full sense of the word, indicating openness. However the poet is in al-Ḥazan and al-Ṣammān, both of which are connected with wilderness, sorrow and reticence. Then we have al-Mutathallim which indicates cracking and splitting. Soon after these implicit indications are revealed in the next two verses which crystallise time’s destructive action (ruins of a time long since gone by empty and desolate.....) and ‘Abla’s arrival in an inaccessible land, because the people in this land are my enemy and they are roaring like a lion (its people are in the land
of the bellowers;) which makes it difficult to reach, even the trip to it is exhausting."

Therefore, the unit of ruins runs according to a special language order, based on assertion and denial, that moves contemporaneously with the poet’s psyche and the evolution of his personality. ‘Antara was one of three black Arabs in pre-Islamic society who were: ‘Antara ibn Shaddād, Khufāf ibn Nudba and al-Sulaik ibn Sulaka. The social situation of ‘Antara played a prominent role in the formation of his cultural legacy, whereby his textual innovations were an expression of the ego and a compensation for the feeling of inadequacy.

According to the above statement the analysis of the mu’allaqa of ‘Antara should place emphasis on the social circle within which he grew up, for it is the stimulus for his creative mu’allaqa. The anxiety and the sharp tension which dominate the poetic experience, according to Abu Deeb, is nothing but an expression of the ego when faced with its most difficult psychological moments when confronting social customs prevalent at that time. However, Abū Deeb strayed away from that essential fact, in his structuralist method, and he flew high over the horizon of verbal terminology despite the availability of the poet’s psychological traits, such as heroic acts, bravery, engagement in battle, black skin and hospitality, for his analysis. Abū Deeb says:-

"The greatest anxiety is revealed, in the text, in the poet’s position itself: between blaming, greeting, expectation of a response and an
unparalleled heroism, on the one hand, and absolute weakness in front of his beloved, on the other. The absolute weakness appears through the presence of visitors preventing him from visiting her, and from the presence of other unspecified things which hinder his visit. Also, he poses an anxious question: "how to visit her " for what comes after (qad) is nothing but an excuse for the poet not to engage in heroic experience, which represents, for him, the essence of his existence and that of the poetic text which he produced.58

It is evident from this that the structuralist method which Abu Deeb applied to this text is characterised by language shrewdness. He then returns, at the end of his analysis, to confirm the basic theme of the poem, i.e. the expression of heroic experience which motivated ‘Antara to create his text. It is this that leads him to say that the social environment, in which the text was produced, has played a great role in analysing the text and revealing its artistic contents, and it helps our awareness of the poetic image which dominates the text.

I would like to present another textual experience by Zuhayr ibn Abi Sulma’s experience which motivated ‘Antara to create his text, which he begins by saying:-

Are there still blackened orts in the stone-waste of Ed-Darraj and El-Mutathallam, mute witnesses to where Umm Aufa once dwelt?

A lodging where she abode in Er-Raqmatain, that appears

58. *بيِد أن قلب النص الأعظم يتجلى في موقف الشاعر نفسه: بين الظلم والحية ورواج الاستجابة والبطولة التي لا تعترف حدوداً وبين الحجوز المطلق أمام الحبيبة المتماثلة في إشارته إلى وجود الزائرين الذين يمنعون زيابته وليى وجود أشياء أخرى لا تعترفها تمنع زيارته ثم في تساملع القلق (كيف المزار وقد) لأن ما بعد (فقد) ليس إلا عذراً لاعتدام فعل البطولة من قبل شاعر تشكيل تجربة البطولة جوهر وجوده وجوهر النص الشعري الذي ينتجه."
like criss-cross tattooing upon the sinews of a wrist-
there the wild cows and white antelopes wander, herd upon herd,
and their young ones spring up out of their several couches,
There it was I stood after twenty livelong years,
hard put to it to recognise the lodging, deeply as I meditated:
blackened stones marking the spot where the cauldron was slung
and a trench like the debris of a cistern still unbreached.
When I recognised the abode, I said to that lodging-place.
‘Good morning to you, lodging-place: well may you fare!’

Zuhayr begins his *mu‘allaqa* with a sense of mental bewilderment about the
blackened ruins because they do not respond to him. The relation between him and them
is negative, despite their closeness to him, like the tattoo on the arm. They are near and
far. At the same time, the poet is torn by a dialectical relation with them based on his
knowledge and ignorance of them: they are as close to him as a tattoo tightly hugs the
arm, they are also remote because he could not recognise them other than after some tedious effort.

We are faced with an introduction of ruins dominated by thorny relations, the theme of which is knowledge and doubt. I shall point out next the semantic theme of this introduction of ruins, in order to reveal its constituent features. The unit of ruins, here, appears preoccupied with a dialogue of the self, based on an essential knowledge which forms the theme of the text's main body, with the object of affirming the right of, and the interest in, self-preservation.

The feature of ruins, here, seems to be built on silence, doubt, then knowledge and dialogue. These foundations are characterised by a meaningful dimension, thus interlacing with each other and forming a larger artistic unit which leads to knowledge and certainty, despite the length of time between the historical past and the moment of producing the text. Doubt is born after the silent dwellings refrained from answering the poet. This perplexes him and makes him doubt whether they were the dwellings he was seeking, or have they changed and been turned into other dwellings? His recognition of them turned doubt into certainty (hard put to it recognise the lodging). The introduction follows this line until the poet confirms his knowledge of the those dwellings, then he starts his dialogue and prays for their safety.

One may think, after a superficial reading of the text and in accordance with the traditional analytical view, that the introduction represents a stop over ruins. However, this researcher considers that this introduction is a major ring, among the text's other rings, from which another ring branches off, characterised by questioning in (تیمی خلیلی هل تری من تلمان) (Look well, my friend-do you see any litter-borne ladies traveling along the high land). The purpose of this question is to ascertain what is going
on in the poet’s society, by way of struggle, the basis of which is the uncertain knowledge of the true state of affairs and the manners of settled life. This ring is related to another ring, namely, that of oath and confirmation of knowledge as represented in (فَأَسْمَتُوا يَمِينًا، وَقَدْ قَاتَلُوهُمْ، فَأَصْبَحَتُمُ). (so I swear, a solemn oath I swear, and you declared, So thereafter you found yourselves). We notice the gradual rise of knowledge from the unit of ruins, the unit of the trip then the unit of oath until the poet reveals his declaration of knowledge which he seeks, in his text. He begins this declaration by saying:-

Ho, carry this message from me to the Confederates

and Dubyan: ‘Have you now sworn every binding oath?’

Do not conceal from Allah whatever is in your breasts hoping it may be hidden; Allah knows whatever is concealed,

and either it’s postponed, and put in a book, and stored away

for the Day of Reckoning, or it’s hastened, and punished betimes.

War is nothing else but what you’ve known and yourselves tasted, it is not a tale at random, a vague conjecture;

when you stir it up, it’s a hateful thing you’ve stirred up; ravenous it is, once you whet its appetite; it bursts aflame,

then it grinds you as a millstone grinds on its cushion; yearly it conceives, birth upon birth, and with twins for issue-
very ill-omen are the boys it bears you, every one of them
the like of Ahmar of ‘Ad; then it gives suck, and weans them.

Yes, war yields you a harvest very different from the bushels
and pieces of silver those fields in Iraq yield for the villagers.  

This declaration of knowledge is distinguished by the dominance of words which
confirm it. It begins with the opening (لا) “ Ho” in order to emphasize facts which the
poet’s society may not know. He follows it with the affirmative فلا تكتمـن “Do not
conceal” which endorses word and meaning in “Allah knows whatever is concealed” and the style of exclusiveness and specification in War is nothing else but what you’ve known and yourselves tasted ” and the
conditional style in when you stir it up, it’s a hateful thing you’ve stirred up;” and the absolute object in order to point out the kind of fighting and
its ferocity “ then it grinds you as millstone grinds on its cushion” in
addition to his use of فأـ “then” which indicates a sequence of events whereby the war
grinds and destroys them thus creating a new pessimistic generation. This represents a

60 Arberry, A. J. The Seven Odes P.115-6

يقول زهير بن أبي سلمى:
ألا أبلغ الأخلاط عندى رسالة
فلا تكتمن الله ما في نفسكم
يؤخر فووض حق في كتاب فيهـ
وما الحرب إلا ما علمتم وذقتـم
منى تبعوها تبعوها دمغـة
فتعكركم عرك السراج بتأملهاـ
فتنتح لکم علمان أشتام كلهم
فتمعن لکم ما لا تستـ لأهلها
الرزؤنی، شرح المعانيات العشر – 143- 145
very undesirable end result, as it is a product irrigated by blood and therefore could only produce a blood stained fruit.

The declaration of knowledge does not end by giving an inventory of facts only, it also goes on to list self-evident facts which were known to the people, as conventions, and endorsed by civil societies, as a constitution for human values, hence, the last ring of the text confirms the ring of oath and stabilises the foundations of knowledge which society has accepted. Thus, Zuhayr says:-

Whoever refuses to yield to the ends of the spear’s iron heels
shall surely bow to the sharp tips mounted on their upper shafts.

Whoever keeps his word goes unblamed; he whose heart is set
on the sure path of piety needs not to fear or falter.

Whoever is in terror of the ways Death may come, Death shall yet slay him
though he aspire to mount to heaven on the rungs of a ladder.

Whoever, being in abundance, grudges to give of his abundance
to his own folk, shall be dispensed with and reviled.

Whoever fares to foreign parts, reckons an adversary his friend;
whoever respects not himself is not respected by others

Whoever defends not his water-tank with his goodly weapons
will see it broken; whoever assaults not others is himself assaulted.

Whoever acts not blandishingly in many matters
shall be ground by sharp molars and trampled by camel’s pads.  

This unit is dominated by a grammatical ‘engineering’ represented by the conditional article, verb and object. It contains nine conditional sentences in which the same conditional article من "Whoever" is repeated.

The conditional sentences run in a parallel time sequence, contemporaneous with producing the text, and are futuristic, at the moment of being received, thus they represent an accumulation of knowledge originating from the past (وقت بها من بعد) (there it was I stood after twenty livelong years), and extending to the present moment (the moment of producing the text) and goes on, to rest in the future, when the moment of creativity ceases to produce, giving rise to the creativity of the recipient who begins to understand the semantic relations that exist between the units of the text. At the end of his *mu'allaqā*, Zuhayr sums up that with which he began it, in the introduction:

I know what is happening to-day, and what passed before that yesterday but as for knowing what to-morrow will bring, there I’m utterly blind.  

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61 - Arberry, A. J. The Seven Odes P.117

62 - Ibid 118
This conception makes clear the co-operation between the circles of the text which divide it, in the final analysis, into two sections whereby the theme of knowledge is the common denominator between them. These circles are represented by the following diagram:

The context of time of the text does not run at the same rate. Every unit has its own time which is consistent with its indicative meaning. The present tense dominates the unit of ruins with the exception of "I stood, recognised" whose notional context refers to the poet’s accumulation of knowledge. However, the present tense of this unit is not meant as such, because the time of producing the text is not contemporaneous with the historical time of the ruins. Stopping over the ruins and holding a dialogue with them did not take place at that creative moment, in time, rather it preceded the time of creating the text. This assumption is supported by the timing of the unit of the trip where the past tense dominates. This shows the creative activity of the author’s imagination in synthesising these images in such a manner as to make them look as if they are contemporaneous with the time of producing the text. The unit of oath does not start in the present tense in "so I swear, by the Holy House about which circumambulate" and also ends in the present tense as in "beasts paid in parcels by one tribe to another as indemnity" while the past dominated the time distance between them being a time of narrating the historical events, as in The narrative time is distinguished from the abstract past tense by its strong connections with the sum of narrated events. Narration in general depends on two basic foundations:
First: It contains a story of some sort which includes specific events.
The second: It specifies the style of telling the story. This style is called narration.\(^6\)

As the unit of oath is one that requires strong affirmation, it was dominated by the present tense as in: تكتمن، تخفي، يؤخر، فيوضع، تباعوها، تضر، تعرككم، فتنتج، ترضع، تظلم، تغل، تغل.
The present tense here is not restricted to the present moment in time, it extends instead into the future in order to express the continuity of action متى تباعوها تباعوها ذيما. "when you stir it up, it’s a hateful thing you’ve stirred up;" فتغل لكم ما لا تغل فتغل لكم غلمان “very ill-omened are the boys it bears you

"Yes, war yields you a harvest very different from the bushels”.

The time context of the unit of values is divided into two equal parts, and the conditional sentence represents an effective factor, in both parts. For this reason the conditional verb is the present tense while the answer is in the future as a necessary outcome of the conditional verb

(ومن يفص أطراف الزجاج فإنه يطيع العوالي) (ومن يوقف لا يذم) (ومن يفص قلبه .... لا يتجسح) (ومن لا يكرم نفسه لا يكرم)
The time context is given at the end of the text:-
I know what is happening to-day, and what passed before that yesterday, but as for knowing what to-morrow will bring, there I’m utterly blind.

as present and is similar to the beginning of the poem in its momentary presence:-
Are there still blackened orts in the stone-waste of Ed-Darraj and al-Mutathallim, mute witnesses to where Umm Aufa once dwelt?
This similarity between the times of beginning and ending represents a significant contradiction resulting from knowledge أعلمنا “I know” contradicting doubt and the negative interrogation in أمن أم أوفى سنة لم تكلم as in the first line of mu’allaq. The beginning and the end of the text clearly indicate the theme of knowledge which dominates the text, and at the same time, it represents the logic of human civilisation in acquiring and practicing knowledge. Human civilisation began by posing anxious questions about events taking place around humanity until it reached, through experience, the stage of science and knowledge. This supports our view that the scene of ruins and the scene of precise description of the trip are concentrated symbolic and imagined pictures which help the creative writer make use of his cultural depository.

Thus, the effectiveness of the time context as one element of the whole textual structure becomes very clear. It transforms reading a text, from both the traditional perspective which is based on reading and explaining the words of the text and from the direct descriptive reading of the purpose of the text, as in the commentary by al-Khatib al-Tabrizi on the ten mu’allaqas and al-Zawzanî commentary on the ten mu’allaqas, as well as other commentaries on pre-Islamic poetry, into a perspective which fathoms the relations of the text and reveals its hidden contents and imparts vitality and dynamism into it, having stood silent like a ruin.

Despite Abu Deeb’s pioneering attempt to study the pre-Islamic text making use of modern techniques based on the structuralist method, this researcher considers that the structuralist method has dominated Abu Deeb’s attempt and seized the reins of his analysis, instead of him adapting it for delineating the texts. Literary analysis has thus become remote from the concept of literature. Its language has become dependent on

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64 أظهر عاصم, أفتحي أحمد, في مراة الشعر الجاهلي, بدون تاريخ, الناشر منشأة المعارف بالاسكندرية.
engineered expressions, terminology and symbols which transform the analysed text into a philosophical and mathematical treatise, where the reader needs to have a philosophical talent in order to decipher its symbols. For this reason, Abū Deeb exhausts himself in creating tools and devices with which he attacks the text in order to prove what he wants to say. He artificially invents the theory, then he applies the text to it. This causes him to fall into a great deal of trouble and pretense. We think that, in order to get out of the circle of traditional analysis and to impart the spirit of modernity to the study of texts, it is necessary that the theory should arise from the body of the text, by the action of the critic's culture and his new vision of the Arabic literary heritage.

To demonstrate Abū Deeb's method of analysing time in the mu'allaga of Zuhayr I quote the following from one of his work:-

"I shall distinguish in principle between two times, "time of action" and "time of narration". By the time of action I mean the time in which the experience happened, or the historical event took place. This is a linear time which does not have, by its very nature, holes which could put one event before or after the moment of its occurrence. By the time of narration I mean the time in which the text is happening; this is the time of speaking, or spoken time. It is a specified present time which begins the moment the speaking starts and ends the moment the poet stops. I shall add to these two times a third one which I shall call "time of the text". By this I mean the time of engaging in the actual composition of the text, in time, and it is, in effect, a relation between the time of the action and the time of the narration. One of its characteristics is that it is not specified by the actual existence of one text, rather it is formed on the level of the structure as a whole and could be both linear and non-linear, in a way that makes it possible to place a subsequent moment before another one, preceding it historically. Thus, the crucial significance of distinguishing these three times will become apparent
This is a theoretical introduction created by Abū Deeb at the outset of his study of Zuhayr's text. As we see, it includes three kinds of time: time of action, time of narration and time of text. He defines the time of text in a very opaque way whereby it could have no actual existence in the body of the text. If we follow his analysis we do not find any analytical reference to the time of text except the mention of the term. Instead, Abū Deeb concentrates on the time of action and the time of narration because they are easy to follow, to describe and it is easy to identify the relation between them and the structure of the text as a whole. This made him stray away from his path and to enter the wilderness of mathematical language equations. Abū Deeb states:

“The text is born without a tendency to anxiety [I]. I shall give the starting point in time the symbol (A1)... for the expression “mute”, could not belong to the same time theme apparent in (A1) and should belong to a moment in time which precedes speaking, this is (AN), which remains unknown and unidentifiable, for the moment, other than in its linear relation to (A1) but it could be identified later.

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65 Samażer Mbitiwa biin Zamin (Zamin ful) wa Zamin ful Aṣmadul zamin dh adda fi biin al-jihari or habadul tariqu, wa Aṣmadul zamin dh adda fi biin al-jihari or habadul tariqu. }
However, the interruption in time does not happen on the level of the
narration time which continues, but on the level of the action time, on
the one hand, and on the text time, on the other, on the first level.
(AN) indicates that the event which comes after the speech precedes, in
experience, the event represented in the action of speaking (..... آمن)
On the second level, (AN) indicates that the time of the text is not a
linear time, but a non-linear [lit. splittable] time, as it commences at the
moment of speaking, in the first place, from the sentence (A1),
however, it comes after it by a moment of time which does not actually
supersedes it, rather, it precedes it, thus creating a time formula which
has the following language structure:-
A1 (M1) +AN(M2)+ ........
However, its time structure is:-
AN(M1)+(A1(M2)+66 ........

The above quotation from Abu Deeb clearly demonstrates how his analysis is
dominated by mathematical terminology and symbols for the sake of proving the thought
with which he is obsessed. This results in the text losing its literary spirit and turns it into
language constructions, closer to logic than to literature. This researcher considers that
the study of the text should be parallel to the text itself and should circulate in its orbit
and reveal the semantic relations that exist between its units, by outlining the features of
poetic images and their effect on the structure of the text as a whole, until the textual
analysis achieves its purpose, i.e. by producing an analytical text which is like a shadow,
in relation to the original text.

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66 تقييم الفقرة السابقة على طولها حتى تتضح صورة التحليل عند أبي ديب وكيفية تشخيصه للنصوص. 
راجع أبو ديب، الروأي المفتوحة، ص 108 - 607.
Conclusion:-

Perhaps this study of the introduction about ruins in pre-Islamic poetry has made a humble contribution by revealing the function of ruins and their symbolic indications in the structure of the poem, as a whole, their relations with other units of the text and the significance of their intertwining in the body of the text. Hence I can say:-

First: Every poetic text has its own artistic mechanisms and constituent elements which could not be applied in general to other poetic texts. Doing this results in the artistic experience losing its substance and turns it into a lifeless construction.

Secondly: The application of modern (ready-made) analytical theories to old poetic texts, such as the mu'allaqas, and the casting of the critic's intellectual and ideological vision on them could produce a theoretical declaration devoid of real understanding of the nature of the studied text and could turn into an abstract study remote from the spirit of literature.

Thirdly: It became clear to this researcher - and surprisingly so - that the attempts of structuralist critics were focused only on the texts of old Arabic poetry. This confirms the originality of those poetic models and their presence in our literary conscience, because of their characteristically good composition which immortalised them through the centuries. At the same time, this proves that the modern poem has not yet reached the goal of the old one, where the application of modern theories becomes difficult. We do not wish to generalise this opinion over all modern poems because there are exceptions worth stopping at.
Fourthly: Symbol and imagination in the introductions about ruins represent a basic element in forming the poet’s creative vision, on the one hand, and the critic’s, on the other. We have seen, through our analysis, that stopping by the ruins was not an actual stop and that there is nothing in the old Arabic heritage to indicate that. This supports our hypothesis of the creative activity of the poet’s imaginative talent, and how this talent was employed in drawing the poetic image.

Fifthly: We find, through studying Abū Deeb’s analytical method, as applied in his lengthy study of pre-Islamic poetry, that he bases his theory on the principle of binary oppositions which he has borrowed from Lévi-Strauss’ structuralist analysis of myth. Abū Deeb adopted binary oppositions as a basis for textual analysis which led him to forcibly apply them to the structure of the old poetic text. He strayed away from his path in his attempt to create them, although they are built on contrast and antithesis, in their direct sense, e.g., 

\( جنوب وشمال (سیب ومثل ) دخول فصول ) (عرصلا وقیعان ) \) This theory of analysis empties poetry of its essence and originality, as a structure which possesses its unique characteristics, poetic images and indicative symbolism. Therefore, Abū Deeb’s analysis failed to reveal the symbolism of the poetic image, despite a great deal of artistic observation which represents a pioneering attempt at textual analysis. They stimulated many critical attempts to reread ancient Arabic poetry with new visions based on interrogating the text and revealing its artistic indications.
Conclusion

Structuralism in modern criticism drew the attention of writers and critics to an intellectual movement which aims at establishing an analytical method for literary creativity different from previous traditional methods, and it is from this that the idea of this study has progressed. Through it I have attempted to study structuralist analysis in modern Arabic criticism and to show the extent of its kinship with the old Arabic heritage or the extent of its discontinuity from it. In the light of this study and the conclusions at which I have arrived at the end of every chapter I can sum up these conclusions as follows:-

First:- The questions of sound and meaning and that of the poetic 'amūd al-shi‘r is one of the old critical phenomena which was analytically tackled by the old critics who formulated their laws. Also these two phenomena have become the axis of critical studies in modern times. By using his critical faculty 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī has defined the place of sense in the literary text. This is exemplified in the process of construction which is an art, and thus not limited to sounds only, or to meaning only, but is rather embedded in the composition which basically makes the suitability of a sound in a given place dependent on its meaning and the meaning of the context in which it is arranged, thus making it necessary to put it in that place. However, the question of sound and meaning has attained new concepts and dimensions in contemporary criticism. The modern trends such as the social, realist, psychological schools and the Dīwān group have approached this question through the artistic vision of each of them, thus leading to the emergence of the phenomenon of engagement in literature which gives priority to contents which aim at serving the causes of human society. Al-'Aqqād strongly calls for changing the content so as to turn poetry into an expression of the self towards life and existence.
Secondly:- Modern critics have not arrived at a defined vision of these two phenomena, as well as not adding anything new to the old efforts. The critics’ contribution to analysing these two phenomena is based on their cultural backgrounds and their political affiliations which makes it equal, in the end of the day, to the old critic’s vision. Engagement in literature according to socialist realism - by way of example and not to the exclusion of other schools - does not refer to the attitude of the writer who creates the poetry, rather it refers in principle to the content of the artistic structure of the text. Also, some critics representing socialist realism paid special attention to the content and were scantily concerned with form, while others did not distinguish between form and content. This supports the conclusion which I reach, that this artistic phenomenon is characterised by continuity and perpetuation from the old right to the modern age.

Thirdly:- Arab structuralist critics have derived their structuralist method from Western structuralism and were influenced by the anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss and Louis Althusser in structuralist Marxism, Jaques Lacan in structuralist psychoanalysis and Roland Barthes in literary structuralism. However, despite being influenced by Western structuralists they did not manage to escape from the Arabic critical heritage which is present in their thinking and analysis. Thus we can say that the sources of structuralism in the Arab structuralists’ analysis turn around two axes: a Western axis represented by the modern critical school and an Arab axis illustrated by the structuralists’ leaning to the Arabic critical heritage and its presence in their critical analyses. This conclusion is confirmed by the following statement of Abū Deeb who is one of the pioneers of structuralist criticism in modern Arabic literature: “Modern Arabic literature has not yet managed to assimilate this intellectual and philosophical heritage very well. The linguistic heritage of Ferdinand de Saussure is still completely alien to it,
despite the fact that its theoretical foundations are part of the Arabic linguistic heritage as crystallised by the work of an outstanding critic such as ‘Abd al-Qāhir Al-Jurjānī.

Fourthly: Many artistic phenomena have appeared in the structuralist analysis in modern Arabic criticism, and these represent artistic axis on which the structuralists have leaned. These phenomena are binary opposition, the poetic, textual construction and rhythmic construction.

The present researcher has surveyed these artistic phenomena and having tracked their source has ended up emphasising that binary opposition is a philosophical concept which has received the attention of thinkers and philosophers from Plato up to Hegel, in our present age, and thus it represents an old intellectual extension. The researcher has proved through his study of the binary opposition phenomenon that it is not a new term or concept in Arabic rhetoric. Antithesis and juxtaposition are not different from the binary opposition through which the poet aims at expressing meanings in a precise manner by way of making their antonyms salient. The researcher has attempted through this study to demonstrate Abū Deeb’s exaggerated use of binary opposition in his analysis of the mu‘allaqat of Labīd and how his obsession with it has led him to create this binary opposition forcibly.

The second phenomenon is the poetic, and here the researcher is of the view that in both its interpretation, as tension or as pleasure and satisfaction according to Barthes, it is equivalent to the concept of beneficial metaphor according to ‘Abd al-Qāhir Al-Jurjānī. The poetic in its pure sense, according to Abū Deeb, is nothing else than imagination, for imagination as ʿAbd al-Qāhir Al-Jurjānī sees it is the act of the listener’s realisation of the meaning of the poet’s sound through the images, so that an image or

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images are created in his imagination and he is affected by conceiving them mentally - and by conceptualising them or imagining something else through them - without reflection, and this leads him to a feeling of relaxation or depression. Therefore, the researcher is of the opinion that the poetic is an avenue which relies on the cultural authority of the critic in his understanding and characterisation of the literary text. In addition, the poetic is an extension which has its historical roots in the discipline of rhetoric because of its use of metaphor and metonymy.

The third phenomenon, textual construction, was much discussed by old and modern critics. Old criticisms made the poetic verse into the “house of meaning” emphasising that the meaning should interact with the construction. However, the modern critics are of the view that the old poetic verse has ceased to be a free domain in which the creative self, as conditioned by emotional experience, could move freely, and hence the conceptions of modernism and contemporaneousness have progressed to define the textual construction and the form of writing. Perhaps Adonis is the best representative of this trend. The modernist vision of the form of writing in general and the poetic text in particular for which Adonis has called, because he has been influenced by Nafii’s Sufi style of writing, consists of creating thought and an unexpected world, as if the language here is not what is created but the creative itself. In addition, the modernist vision of writing progresses from the space of ambiguity and lack of clarity, while the expression of a precise idea or a definite situation has no place in true poetry, as Adonis puts it.

However, the researcher is of the view that this vision cancels the self (the ego) as it does not constitute the speaker or the author, but rather it is the language itself in the flow of the text. This cancellation of the ego leads to the privilege of the language. The researcher also emphasises that creativity must be based on an idea in which the poet
focuses his feelings and vision, otherwise language could turn into a slab of nouns, verbs and articles.

As for the phenomenon of rhythmic construction, it is one of the artistic phenomena which has occupied a big space in the structuralist critics’ analysis. Abū Deeb devoted a lengthy study to it with the object of finding a radical alternative to Al-Khalīl’s rhythm. However, the researcher is of the view that Al-Khalīl’s metres are well established although each critic’s perspective is different. Difference in visions or analytical methods does not imply the unsuitability of the original rule, this being so because modern poets have not essentially abandoned the Khalīl taf’ilah. The researcher continues to raise an important question about this significant issue: why the insistence on finding a radical alternative to the Khalīl prosody? This insistence leads, in the researcher’s view, to ignoring the old poetic heritage which is based in its construction on Al-Khalīl’s metres, on the one hand, and on the other hand to severing the link between the past and the present and to creating a new flimsy poetic situation lacking in cultural authority.

Al-Khalīl’s rhythm emerged from that great creative heritage, such as the mu’allaqas, and the poets could then express their experiences and emotions and whatever was on their mind in order to create immortal poetry which has how become a target for structuralist analysis. This immense poetic wealth, whether pre-Islamic or medieval, contains many issues and topics, and those metres have never represented a fetter that denied the poet the right to move freely within the space of the poem. We ask: how could it become a fetter limiting the poet’s freedom while the later were writing free verse in modern times?
Fifthly: from his study of the introduction about ruins, the researcher holds the view that:

- Every poetic text enjoys an artistic independence where its elements are concerned and we cannot combine all poetic texts within a single framework, because to do so results in the artistic experience losing its content and turns it into a repetitive lifeless construction.

- The structuralist analysis of pre-Islamic poetry does not spring from the texts themselves, rather, it represents ready-made visions intended to accord with pre-Islamic texts, and sometimes these visions were forcibly applied to those texts.

- The introductions about ruins depend in their composition on symbol and imagination, as there has not been in poetic history a real stopping during which the poet would have wept over his beloved ones. Stopping by the ruins was not a moral commitment towards poetic composition, rather like the offering of due greeting as Bateson maintains. Had this view been correct then all pre-Islamic poems would have adopted such an artistic framework.

- Abu Deeb’s analysis of the introduction about ruins is not the only one capable of illustrating the meaning of these introductions. Although he makes sound points sometimes, and departs from the text, at other times, the researcher is of the view that Abu Deeb’s method is an eclectic method that concentrates on certain dimensions which agree with his direction while keeping away from other dimensions which lie outwith it. The essential issue here is this: can we make a comprehensive and exclusive structuralist analysis of a text? To which we reply, comprehensive ‘no’, exclusive ‘yes’, in that the literary critical theory defines what should be considered
as literary phenomenon and excludes from its framework that which lies outside its theoretical focus.

The influence of modern European schools on modern Arab critics has made them present these schools and theories in an unqualified form, without due attention to the poverty of these trends, thus making them appear as the only ones in their areas. This is what happened with structuralism in Arabic criticism. Also the critics’ faithfulness towards what they have borrowed from has caused them to not take care to make it agree with the origins of Arabic thought and has given the impression that these schools suffer from austerity and lack awareness of their first origins in the Arabic heritage.
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