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A Critical Reading of The Artistic Image In Modern Poetry: Omar Abu Risha, Mahmoud Darwish, and Amal Dunqul As A Model

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Abstract: The artistic image gives value and strength to poetic texts. It is the mechanism without which the poetic text cannot be straight. In addition, studying its subject aims to address the central structure that revolves around the aesthetics of poetry, and through it the poet's experience is expressed so that the artistic image can portray his feelings and emotions that are based on a semantic basis for critical treatment. The current study aims to provide a critical reading of the artistic image in modern poetry by providing a critical reading of the poetic images presented by Omar Abu Risha, Mahmoud Darwish, and Amal Dunqul, who sought to raise the poetic pace with innovative linguistic methods and diverse images to increase the effectiveness, openness, and suggestive fertility of the poetic text. They relied on patterns to express the poetic nature of the poetic text, which was embodied in diverse and multiple images that gave the poetic text dynamism and renewed life that breathes through the words and verbal structures that the poet deposited in the structure of his poems that form his poetry collections.

Keywords: artistic image, Omar Abu Risha, Mahmoud Darwish, Amal Dunqul

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1. Introduction

It is no exaggeration to say that the artistic image is one of the most important critical and artistic standards indicating the poet's uniqueness and distinction, and a fundamental feature of his independence with an artistic approach that is heavily relied upon in the study of poetic texts. The image is one of the most prominent tools used by poets in constructing their poems, embodying their feelings and emotions, and expressing their human and cosmic ideas and perceptions [1], [2]. It is also one of the most genuine expressions of the emotions and feelings that stir within the soul and is considered the most precise and effective means of conveying messages to others. Modern poets have given great attention to the artistic image, focusing on the way it is formed and constructed, and on the nature of the relationships among its various elements, to the extent that it has become a prominent feature in their poetic texts and a distinguishing mark indicating the development and advancement of Arabic poetry and its keeping pace with the changes, requirements, and needs of the age. This is due to the differences in the nature of imagination and in the overall concept of poetry among our modern poets [3], [4].

Research Problem: The most important feature that distinguishes the language of poetry is the sincerity of expression of ideas and emotional thoughts through suggestive language. The image is the most artistic part of the structure of modern poetic texts and the main feature characterizing poetic modernism. Therefore, critics and scholars have emphasized the importance of linguistic beauty in its expressive characteristics, inspired by the internal sensations of figurative images, which later became a criterion for the quality of poetic composition [5]. The study seeks to answer the following question:

to what extent have the modern poets Omar Abu Risha, Mahmoud Darwish, and Amal Dunqul succeeded in employing the artistic image in their poems and collections?

Study Objectives:

The study aims to:

- Identify the nature of the artistic image.
- Provide a critical reading of the artistic image in the poetry of Omar Abu Risha, Mahmoud Darwish, and Amal Dunqul.

2. Materials and Methods

The researcher relied on the descriptive-analytical method to examine the structure of the artistic image in the poetry of Omar Abu Risha, Mahmoud Darwish, and Amal Dunqul, considering it the main element in the internal structure, characterized by elements of surprise, paradox, and expansive imagination that opens horizons for readers to engage in multiple and open interpretations.

First Section: The Concept of the Artistic Image

The term "artistic image" is one of the most widely used terms in the study of modern poetic texts, as it is the effective means that enables us to perceive the poet's experience and the vessel that contains that experience through the elevation of language and the unleashing of the potentials of words. The image grows within the poet alongside the poetic text itself and is not a separate form; thus, the strength of poetry lies in suggestion through poetic images, not in the mere declaration of abstract ideas or in exaggerating their description, which would render emotions and feelings closer to generalization and abstraction rather than to vivid depiction and specification. Hence, the image holds a special importance.

It is difficult to find a comprehensive and definitive definition of the artistic image, as it is one of the modern terms introduced into Arabic criticism [6]. However, among the most prominent definitions presented for the artistic image are the following:

1. It is "a form evoked by poetic words in the mind, provided that this form is both expressive and suggestive at the same time".
2. It is "the artistic form that words and expressions take after being organized by the poet within a special figurative context to express an aspect of the complete poetic experience in the poem, utilizing the energies and potentials of the language in meaning, structure, rhythm, truth, metaphor, synonymy, antonymy, parallelism, harmony, and other artistic expressive tools. Words and expressions are the primary material from which the poet crafts that artistic form or draws his poetic images".
3. It is "a linguistic formation shaped by the artist's imagination from multiple sources, foremost among them the sensory world. Most images are derived from the senses, alongside the undeniable presence of psychological and intellectual images, though these are less frequent than sensory images".
4. It is "a special method of expression or a form of signification, whose importance lies in the particularity and effect it imparts to a meaning. However, regardless of this particularity or effect, the image does not change the nature of the meaning itself; it only alters the way it is presented and the manner in which it impacts the recipient".

Based on the aforementioned definitions, it can be said that the artistic image is one of the poetic tools on which poets rely to express their feelings in a more attractive and engaging manner.

Second Section: Analysis of the Artistic Image in the Works of Omar Abu Risha, Mahmoud Darwish, and Amal Dunqul

First: The Artistic Image in the Poetry of Omar Abu Risha

One who reflects upon the nature of imagery in Omar Abu Risha's poetry and the aesthetic philosophy he adopted in shaping that imagery will closely perceive the depth and modernity of his artistic vision. His intent was to make his poem a pristine creation and a highly unique and personal perspective on existence [7].

3. Results and Discussion

1. The Symbolic Image:

The poem "Eagle" stands as one of the finest examples of Abu Risha's work in this regard. In it, he presents the story of an eagle displaced from its summit position, forced down to the valley against its will. Weak and vile birds grew greedy and began to compete with him over his food and prey, despite the insignificance of these spoils, showing their contempt and scorn for him. This stirred a spark of anger within the eagle and awakened a sense of pride. He regained some of his determination and resolved upon one of two fates: either to ascend back to the summit, his natural place, or to fall into the abyss, embracing death with honor and dignity. Gathering all his remaining strength, he hurled himself towards the summit, but fell onto it shattered [8].

The eagle stood, writhing in hunger,
Above a scattered corpse on the dusty sands,

While the lean vultures pushed him with their tender claws.
With fierce claws and a short wing,

A tremor of maddened pride surged through him,
Pride surged through him, trembling like one seized by fever,

And he dragged himself across the ashen horizon.
The ruins of a hollowed form,

When he entered the dark depths and crossed
Beyond the limits of imagined realms,

A scream burst from him, shaking the horizons, And he fell, a corpse, upon the lofty
peak
Into the embrace of his long-abandoned nest,

O eagle, shall I return as you have returned?
Or has the valley slain my very soul?

The symbolic aspect of the poem has attracted much attention from critics, with interpretations varying and multiple readings emerging. This is evidence of the richness and fertility of the symbol, as well as its continuous resonance and radiance. Among these interpretations, the summit has been considered a symbol of noble emotional relationships and idealistic love, while the valley has been seen as a symbol of base sexual relationships. The eagle, on the other hand, is interpreted as the poet, who suffers from a deep conflict, torn between the two positions [9]. Another interpretation also views the eagle as a symbol of the Syrian people, who had their country occupied by the French. The eagle was

displaced from its rightful place, "the summit of glory and freedom," to the valley, where it endured the slavery of colonialism and the brutality of the occupiers [10].

This symbolism is also evident in the poem "The Nightingale", where the poet uses the songbird as a symbolic figure to reflect political and national issues. The poet introduces this poem with a quote from Al-Jahiz, "The nightingale does not sing in a cage," which is a call for freedom and a rejection of restrictions and servitude. The poet begins by talking about the hunter and the nightingale [11].

A dream he abandoned in comfort,	Can the lamentation bring him back?
If only the hunter knew what he had caught.	The nightingale was not meant to be caught in his trap.

He quickly painted an image of the nightingale, imprisoned in his cage with his faithful female companion, comforting him. Yet, he appeared in pain, disturbed, lamenting and resentful of his chains, trying to break them with his beak. When he failed, he refused to eat, resembling a political prisoner on hunger strike in protest against the injustice. His only food was crumbs offered to him in the cage, which his soul rejected. He curled up, weeping, then renounced life and the living. He refused to leave behind offspring who would suffer the humiliation of slavery after him.

He found himself scattering his melodies, And his compassionate mate remained by his side. She extended comforting gestures to him, yet he felt lost, How many times had his beak tightened with a lump of sorrow.	As if he were scattering his own liver, Remaining as he once was, true to his oath. He spread his wings in his sorrow, Then extended them, pecking at his chains.
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is clear that the poet projected his own pride and defiance onto the nightingale, transforming it into a revolutionary rebel. This is something that finds its justification in the social and political reality the poet lived through when he wrote the poem in 1944.

The imprisoned nightingale, "the occupied homeland," took on multiple forms of resistance and rejection. When lamentation and wailing proved ineffective, it intensified its resolve and rebellion, rejecting its world, renouncing those around it, and refusing to breed in its cage, fearing it would pass on shame and slavery to its offspring. This act is an explicit call for rejection and revolution, a vibrant image of defiance and rebellion. The poet relies on the service of the symbol and suggestion [12].

He folded his lament, yet,	The lament did not suffice, nor did it find him
He rejected his world, and took no course.	A nest, nor did he carry anything but his renunciation.
As if, from the length of time that passed, Pride prevented him from passing it on.	From the folly of time and its schemes, The offspring will endure the humiliation of the chains after him.

2. The visionary image:

In the poem "*The Ruin*", which describes a Roman structure that only speculation can speak about its past, the poet is struck by the ruin's lack of thorns and the brilliance of its clean soil. He says to himself, "Death stands before its victim, wounded by pride, for it cannot harm it any more than it already has" [13].

As for the opening of the poem, it is an intentional modification of the familiar beginnings in ancient Arabic poetry, but it is consistent with the title. Ancient poets were accustomed to addressing themselves or their companions and seeking their presence when standing upon the ruins. Here, the poet addresses his own self, represented by his feet, seeking to stand upon the structure that has become a ruin. In his realization of this transformation caused by time, the poet is astonished, and it throws him into a stupor, perhaps foretelling such a fate for himself [14].

Stop, my feet: for this place

"It causes a person to lose touch with their senses."

Then, he embodies this transformation in one of the most profound and suggestive poetic images. It is one of those images that does not reveal itself to just any poet, but rather to one who offers a high price in effort and intelligence. The poet sealed it with his words [15].

"Sand and the ruins of a collapsed structure." "Its heights search for its foundation."

The poet continues his astonishment and reflection, drawing inspiration from the present to portray the past. He is struck by wonder, asking, "Was this life, with all its noise and tumult, its beauty and movement, truly here? What need is there to question the rocks or awaken the dead, when this undefeated knight, 'Time,' tells the full story of the ruin and its history?" Even the spiders are overwhelmed by the desolation of the ruin, rushing in fear to escape the stages of decay and annihilation they have witnessed [16].

"Should I interrogate the rock about its side,
The hooves of time's horses have churned?" "Shall I awaken the dead from their grave?"

It nearly speaks of its misery.

It cannot suckle the thorns from its chest, The owl does not describe its head,

And those spiders are terrified." It seeks to escape from its prison."

Then, the poet quickly immerses us in an atmosphere of challenge and intense conflict. This ruin, threatened by decay and annihilation, is under siege by its enemy, "Time," which relentlessly attacks it. However, the poet wants to inform us that time, the enemy of humanity, is defeated, for its deadly weapons have become ineffective. The hands of destruction are weary and fearful, and the sword of death is dull when facing the ruin. But it is a decisive, severing sword, as it rebounds into the chest of its bearer, drowning in the depths of despair [17].

"The hand of destruction has grown weary of it,
Here, illusion shakes off its phantoms." "And it began to fear the harm of its touch,

And death commits suicide in its despair."

3. The Narrative Image:

The poet Omar Abu Risha employed the narrative form in his poem "*Hakadha*" ("Thus"), a social and nationalist poem that presents an image of the conflict between those who possess something and sell even themselves. In fact, the conflict in the poem is unbalanced because the poet focused on exposing the position of the first party without

analyzing from within the position of the second party in the conflict. The poet structured his poem starting with his saying [18].

He cried out, "O slave, spread the and ignite the cup, and make the bed
fragrance resound

Let's look at the plot structure in Abu Risha's poem *Dalilah*. We find that it is a traditional plot in which events are arranged logically. The beginning captures a moment of lust in an atmosphere of intoxication and revelry, where the woman pledges to visit her lover in beautiful "Vienna." However, her lover considers it a fleeting whim, not binding himself to fulfilling it. Days pass, and he almost forgets everything that happened.

I did not believe you when you said, "I will And I meet you in beautiful Vienna
come to you"s.
You said it, after you staggered, swaying And slender lips laid down the kiss
with your glass.

The poet then shifts to narration to tell us about the events of the second phase of his story, where events intertwine and causes and effects become more complex. The longing between the lovers became unbearable, and each of them collapsed into the other, surrendering to a fierce passion ⁽¹⁹⁾.

I did not believe you, I did not believe my I did not believe your sweet kisses
eyes
So I collapsed, holding onto your arms On my seat, and I had no way.

In the conclusion of the narrative poem, the lover returns to his homeland one day, but the ending of the lovers' relationship is disappointing. His longing led him to her house, but as soon as he arrived, he saw something unexpected. Her house had turned into a den of vice [19].

And I stopped at your house, how it hurt Standing there, humiliated!
My eyes grew heavy as it appeared I have two specters seeking entry,
I heard the echo of a libertine's kiss. My drunkenness, a wicked man, and his
companion.

He turned back from the house and did not meet the unfaithful lover, and there was no further effort to encounter her. But he decided to turn his experience with her into a message, asking her to tear it up; for he would not surrender himself to another deceitful experience [20].

Tear up this letter, for I I said in it what I didn't want to say,
A new thing, so I became a libertine, oh
Dalila.
Have no room in my structure for a fool. I said in it what I didn't want to say,
A new thing, so I became a libertine, oh
Dalila.

4. The Dramatic Image:

The poet Abu Risha is one of the great contemporary poets who worked early on to modernize contemporary poetry by focusing on the dramatic aspect. We see this in the poem "In the Trench," where the dialogue begins with one soldier speaking to his comrade in the trench, and his comrade remains silent. His role here is similar to that of a secondary

character in a classical play, with no significant importance except as a tool that allows the first soldier to express his inner thoughts. Thus, he asks his friend to wait before firing until they get closer to the enemy's southern side in complete darkness. However, their inevitable fall into an ambush is certain, and at that moment, they unload their hatred with bullets directed at the enemies [21].

Do not throw the fire, my brother,	We want to hit the target,
For we cannot discern things,	In this blind darkness,
Wait, they are coming,	They will not avoid the path,
Within a step's distance from us	Our hateful will strike.

As the soldiers approach, getting closer and moving slowly and cautiously as if anticipating what lies ahead, the two soldiers realize that the advancing force is large, but there is no escape from confrontation. They open fire, and the others respond. The ground around them ignites, and the battlefield transforms into a piece of hell, spewing flames [22].

They drew closer to us...	They see... they are many.
They drew closer...	
They came... the load of death stirred.	Oh, the earth burns with fury,
And oh, how hell howls...	And it opens its mouth with flames,
As it closes its bleeding eyelid.	Upon the bodies of its slain.

The gunfire ceases from both sides, and a heavy silence settles. The entire nature calms, except for the voice of this soldier, who spoke earlier, addressing his companion, drawing attention to the scattered corpses, the severed hands, and the scattered heads [23].

Here are severed hands	here is a head, here is a foot
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But he does not prolong his speech, for he feels his feet clashing and aching, and his strength failing, with pain spreading through all his limbs. He realizes a shard has pierced his chest, and its fire has extinguished in his blood. He turns once more to his companion, about whom we know nothing, and advises him to save himself. Death is inevitable for the speaker, and he bids farewell to his homeland and the world, along with his friend, as he breathes his last.

Goodbye, my precious homeland,	Goodbye, pleasures of the world,
Goodbye, my brother, I	My time has ended, goodbye... Oh

5. The Psychological Image:

The poet was extremely confident in himself, consumed by a sense of greatness due to his feeling of superiority that made him stand out among the poets of his time. Many of his poetic impressions carried an air of arrogance, wrapped in a sense of heightened emotionality. In his poem "Jabal" (Mountain), he says.

Never, throughout my pride, have I been	Nor angry when my path is criticized,
hateful,	
For how many mountains sleep beneath	His cheek and his tail are playgrounds for
the stars.	the herders.
I looked at the world, but found no place	Whether I am great or small, I do not
in it,	reproach,

And no position of dignity ever felt small For I have my share in the side of truth,
to me.
Oh, the loneliness of the free, how long the And the depths of the roads are filled with
journey. darkness.

The poet also expresses the harshness of the alienation that those with strong will and delicate feelings experience in their homelands, when they are overlooked, and the celebration is directed towards those less deserving, even to the intruders in their lands.

The country ignored his matter and fell Her ears were deaf to the pain of his heart,
silent,
Opened its chest to every intruder, And the corner of his mouth mocked in
defiance,
And served him a cup of joy, brimming, While the youth of art is thirsty in his
homeland,
It was not out of ignorance, but... The cat desires the blood of his children

The other form of the psychological image in the poet is rooted in the reality of his sorrowful emotional state and the deep feeling of grief due to the shock he experiences from the reality of the nation and homeland, a reality that he has long suffered from in pride. This reality has continually served as a source that nourishes his psychological imagery, causing him to express what resembles a lament and revealing a hidden pain in his words.

Those are our banners, shy and So where are the valiant ones who once stood
lowered, behind them?
Why are they, when the call for And her sword is sheathed in the scabbard of
vengeance rose, turning back? humiliation.

In reality, the dignity of the individual stems from the dignity of the nation. And the poet, whose soul overflows with pride and vigor in his personal life, feels wounded when his nation is humiliated and its honor sinks into the mire of defeat. The poet's psychological state reaches a point where he nearly loses his balance and strays from objective positions. Thus, we see anger overwhelming him, causing him to lash out at both himself and his nation, perceiving it as stripped of all positive attributes, and he laments, saying.

My nation, do you have among the A pulpit for the sword or for the pen?
nations
I meet you while my gaze is lowered Ashamed of your bygone past
And my tears almost fall in vain With the remnants of pride and pain

The nature of these feelings and the sense of shame and humiliation come only from a soul inhabited by pride, which is weakened by submitting to humiliation and waking to find its enemies rising high.

The poet reveals the true reasons for the death of his soul and the pain of his feelings when he addresses the nation with the tone of a furious, rebellious man, saying.

Israel's banner rises high In the sanctuary of the cradle and the shadow
of the shrine
How could you close your eyes to Why do you not shake off the dust of
humiliation and not resist? accusations?

Why did you advance and retreat Vengeance calls out, yet you do not avenge without purpose?

The matter was not limited to the reality of the nation and the condition of the homeland as a psychological source deepening the poet's feeling of sorrow; another source also emerges, represented in the pain of estrangement that settled in the depths of his soul. Traveling became a special state in the poet's life, as no homeland lasted for him. He spent most of his life between failure and fleeting joy, while his soul was deprived of the warmth and reassurance it longed for. Thus, he expresses these vague emotional states.

A voice is calling me in my ear	From him came the songs of a delightful dream
From where? I do not know, yet	I hear and the night listened with me
Oh sister, I am leaving, so calm your fear	Grant me your blessing and fall asleep peacefully
I am the one whose strings were melted	And pour it as healing upon the suffering

Second: The artistic imagery in Mahmoud Darwish's poetry: The artistic images in Mahmoud Darwish's poetry were diverse and varied to express what goes on in his psyche and their impact on the audience through entertaining, persuading, and charging them emotionally, as he dedicated most of his life to serving the Palestinian cause.

1. Symbolic imagery:

Mahmoud Darwish distinguished himself from other poets with his unique and creative symbols, which made him stand out. He drew inspiration from many symbols filled with implications and connotations to express his feelings, emotions, and experiences. Mahmoud Darwish says in his poem "The Land":

I am the land
And the land is you, Khadijah
Do not close the door
Do not enter from the vase of flowers and the clothesline
We will drive them away from the stones of this long road

The symbols, signs, and gestures found within Mahmoud Darwish's poetry do not easily reveal their meanings. Instead, their interpretation requires the evocation of the poet's artistic lexicon and following the intertwined contexts and images of the poem. We see him using the symbolism of a woman named "Khadijah" to represent the homeland, Palestine, and the long road symbolizes the path of resistance and struggle. He says:

Your eyes are a thorn in my heart
They hurt me... yet I worship them and protect them from the wind.

The woman in Darwish's poetry has become a symbol for the land and homeland, as he says:

O eagle bound in chains without reason,
O mythical death that once loved,
Your red beak still in my eyes,
A sword of flame,
And I am not worthy of your wing,
All I possess in the presence of death
Is a forehead and anger.

The eagle symbolizes freedom, and the chains symbolize slavery and imprisonment. The brevity and precision of expression in creating the image are noticeable, along with the powerful meaning. Moreover, it strongly evokes the feelings of the reader and stimulates the mind. The symbol here is more than a simple binary of signifier and signified; it is deeper, drawing the reader to engage, thus achieving the desired effect. Darwish says:

I have this small land, a room in a street,
On the ground floor of a building on a mountain,
Overlooking the sea breeze. I have a wine-colored moon, and I have a polished
stone.
I have a share of the scene of waves traveling in the clouds, and a share
Of the journey of creation's beginning, a share of Job's journey,
And of the harvest festival, and a share of what I owned, and a share of my mother's
bread.
I have a share of the lilies of the valleys in the poems of the ancients.
I have a share of the wisdom of lovers, who love the face of their killer, the slain.

The land in Darwish's poetry moves beyond its geographical and spatial bounds; it summons the ancestors who perished in the sacred land. The association of the symbol of the land with the journey of creation transforms the land into a symbol of exile, loss, and ultimately pain, grief, and sorrow. Thus, Darwish employs his symbols in a highly meaningful way; he even has his own lexicon. The moon, for example, has become a symbol of the goddess of femininity and all that is associated with it. He says:

A, B, and Y
How we used to bite the earth
Like a child bites a peach
And throw it away like the evening
In the dress of the temptress.

Mahmoud Darwish draws inspiration from Islamic symbols; these letters remind us of the opening verses of some chapters of the Quran, and our poet uses them to express his stance on his cause, as if saying we possess both the language of the Quran and the land.

2. The personal image:

The poet Mahmoud Darwish employed figures such as: Al-Sayyab, Suleiman Al-Najab, Hammurabi, and Homer, and made some of them titles for his poems, just as Abu Tammam was a symbol of modernity and the revolt against artistic norms in the Abbasid era. He addresses him in the way friends do, as Mahmoud Darwish says.

If you return alone, tell yourself:
The exile's features are different...
Didn't Abu Tammam grieve before you
When he met himself:
Nor are the homes the same homes

It is evident in these poetic lines the artistic density carried by the personality of "Abu Tammam" as an objective counterpart to the contemporary character in its revolution against traditional standards, which automatically makes us associate it with the suffering of the modern poet, especially in his confrontation with himself and his society, and his creation of new artistic frameworks that align with his creative experience, which becomes

richer through the use of these prominent figures, helping the audience to grasp their implications.

Mamdouh Darwish also adapted modernist figures, who left unforgettable marks on the movement of contemporary Arabic poetry, by incorporating them into his textual context to add artistic and semantic dimensions. He exemplified this in his poem "Do You Remember Al-Sayyab?".

Do you remember Al-Sayyab, shouting into the Gulf's echo:
Iraq, Iraq, nothing but Iraq...
And only the echo responds.
So, be Iraqi to become a poet, my friend.

As for the invocation of religious symbols that carry ideological and doctrinal weight, we find that Mahmoud Darwish was keen on fusing Islam, Christianity, and Judaism into one unified purpose, which is human peace, as he says

In Jerusalem, I mean inside the old wall,
The words are like herbs from the mouth of Isaiah,
The prophet "If you do not believe, you will not believe."
I walk as if I am someone else. And my wound is a white rose,
Evangelical. And my hands like two doves
On the cross, fluttering and carrying the earth.
I do not walk, I do not fly, I become someone else in the manifestation,
The manifestation. No place, no time. So who am I?
I am not I in the presence of the ascension. But
I think Only the prophet Muhammad
spoke in Standard Arabic. And what comes next?

3. The mythological imagery:

The poet's mythological references varied between Canaanite, Babylonian, Pharaonic, and Greek. In short, everything human is consumed by the fire of experience, transforming into a complete text, poems, and verses that history bears witness to, he says:

"O people of Canaan, celebrate
The spring of your land, and ignite
Like its flowers, O people of Canaan, stripped of
Your weapons, and complete
It is fortunate that you chose agriculture as your profession
It is unfortunate that you chose the orchards
Close to the borders of God."

The poet has called upon the entire myth of the land of Canaan, going beyond explicit statements to hints. Phrases such as: 'O people of Canaan, stripped of your weapons / It is fortunate that you chose agriculture as your profession / It is unfortunate that you chose orchards close to God's borders' urge the reader to recall the myth of 'Baal,' the chief deity of the Canaanites. He was considered the god of war, storms, rain, and fertility. According to the myth, 'He would strike with his sword, and the rains would scatter, strike with his staff, and rivers would flow, strike with his spear, and trees would flourish, strike with his rod, and cattle would follow, open his arms, and lambs would be born.'

We also find the mythical image in the poet's words:

It is as if they come from fate to fate,
Their destinies are written behind the text,
Greek in Trojan form,

White or black,
They neither broke nor triumphed,
And they did not ask: What will happen tomorrow morning,
And what after the Homeric wait?

Here, the poet deliberately alludes directly to the myth, urging the reader to fully recall it. This presence grants the text an extended symbolism, similar to the Homeric myth whose people were deceived by victory, only to meet their downfall without a glimpse of hope for the future. Thus, this myth became the myth of the Arab people who relied on trust without taking action to preserve their noble values, choosing instead the sidelines to merely watch, sheltered behind their fragile wall. Their enemies did not even need a Trojan horse. Through this text, Mahmoud Darwish demonstrated the human and universal dimension of his experience. Moreover, the true artistic value of the myth and its ability to deepen the meanings and connotations of the poetic text became clear.

Third: The Artistic Imagery of Amal Dunqul:

The Egyptian poet Amal Dunqul is considered one of the contemporary Arab poets committed to dedicating his pen to serving the causes of the Arab nation, describing its wounds and suffering under the shackles of oppression, slavery, and colonization.

1. Sensory Imagery:

The poet Amal Dunqul employed this type of imagery to express his poetic and emotional experience in a manner that makes him draw upon what his eyes perceive in his material world. He establishes exchanges between the material and the spiritual through a new vision that borrows legitimate relationships from human life, breathing life into both the tangible and the intangible through personification, embodiment, and the breaking of barriers between the material and the abstract. Such an immediate perception of the relationships between things presents the poetic image in its most splendid form and deepens its meanings, as he says :

Do not reconcile
Even if it deprives you of sleep.
And remember:
If your heart softens toward the women clad in black
And their children, whom smiles have abandoned,
Remember that your niece, Al-Yamama,
A flower wrapped — in her youthful years —
In mourning garments.

The poet portrays remorse as having cries that deprive the addressee of sleep and robs him of rest. He also depicts the smile as engaging in conflict and dresses the flower in mourning garments. In the first event, the cries deviate from their usual nature as an audible, intense sound that strains the vocal cords, and remorse departs from its original psychological and abstract concept, resulting in a new dual structure that takes on a material form and an aggressive character. It practices screaming fiercely and stands against sleep—a phenomenon that is also intangible—preventing one from tasting sleep even for a moment.

In the second event, the smile does not appear in its usual form, where it typically reflects a human behavior associated with a known psychological state, namely joy. It does not manifest ordinarily through the parting of the lips, revealing the whiteness of the teeth, accompanied by the sparkle of the eyes. Instead, it appears in a tangible form as a being aware of its actions, differentiating between the spontaneous, innocent smile and the forced, hostile one that emanates resentment and hatred.

2. The Mental Image:

The mental image is based on deep intellectual engagement because its constituent elements are abstract and conceptual. It involves transitioning from sensory concepts toward abstract concepts or communicating among abstractions through rhetorical mechanisms, resulting in an artistic brilliance that enriches imagination and illuminates meaning in a way that delights, astonishes, and carries its aesthetic appeal in its strangeness.

Amal Dunqul says ⁽⁴⁵⁾:

They will say
"We are your cousins."
Tell them: "They did not honor kinship with those who perished."
And plant the sword in the forehead of the desert
until the void responds.

This image is characterized by a dialogic nature that facilitates abstraction and for which the poet assigns characters. The first character is absent but is implied through the verb "they will say," referring to those advocating reconciliation. The second character is Kulayb's brother, Al-Zir Salim, whose role the poet limits to merely following Kulayb's commands: "Tell them," "Plant." The third character is Kulayb himself, both absent and present, dead and alive.

Out of this quasi-dialogue, pivotal poetic images emerge, and two components collaborate to complete the scene.

Despite the embodiment suggested by the "forehead," grasping its meaning remains elusive, with abstraction still dominant, especially when considering the word in its full syntactic context: "Plant the sword in the forehead of the desert." Here, the term regains its ambiguity, its meaning expanding from a graspable, specific concept to an open one whose boundaries dissolve into the vastness of the desert.

Similarly, in the second image, "until the void responds," despite an attempt to anthropomorphize — moving "void" from a non-existence into an existence capable of communication — the image delves even deeper into abstraction, given that the mechanisms of listening, seeing, and interacting are absent among the elements of the image, which are composed of mere illusions.

3. The Symbolic Image:

Among the symbols found in Amal Dunqul's poetry is his use of natural symbols, such as the apple, in the context of acknowledging sin and guilt. He presents sin as an inherent and rooted trait in humanity by recalling a religious story — the story of Adam and Eve and the forbidden tree — as he says ⁽⁴⁶⁾:

I feel, before your eyes,
something within me weeping.
I sense the sin of the past laid bare between your hands,
and a cluster of apples in two green eyes.
Shall I forget the journey of sins in two paradises?
And until when?
My sins torment me far from your appointments,
and my desires burn me near your clusters.
And in my chest,
a boy, with crimson nails and burdened with the past,
draws upon the soil of the soul,
upon the ruins of my ruins!

It is as if Amal Dunqul speaks with the voice of every Arab with a living conscience, wailing and weeping with flowing tears over what the Arabs have neglected in the past.

The sin of the past stirs in the soul and the spirit wounds that never heal, portraying that sin as a cluster of apples that the poet longed for, yet by doing so, burned himself just as he burned the soul of our father Adam, peace be upon him, and expelled him from Paradise.

The reader may interpret the meanings Amal Dunqul intended, revolving around politics and the deterioration of the nation's condition, including their betrayal of the trust — most notably the trust of Palestine.

In another poem titled "*The Rain*", Amal Dunqul similarly employs the natural symbol to suggest the same political themes, reflecting the squandering of trust, as he says:

And the rain falls
And washes the trees
And weighs down the green branches with fruit
Oblivion is revealed
About stories of tenderness
About memories of love
Lost to time
Nothing remains but engravings on the branches
A heart pierced by an arrow
And two words
That fade away in an embrace
Beside me... two butterflies
And you, my beloved, a bird on a journey

It appears that the rain, which symbolizes goodness, fertility, and growth as a natural phenomenon brimming with life and movement, was employed to symbolize the glorious past filled with heroism and achievements. However, it eventually became a forgotten and wandering relic, burdened with tales of oblivion and longing, lost to the passage of time, leaving behind only inscriptions and memories.

In the poem "*The Shame We Fear*," Amal Dunqul seems to reproach the Arab nation for its negligence and inertia, which gave birth to an indelible and unforgettable shame throughout history. In expressing this meaning, he employed the symbol of "Oedipus" when he said :

This is the one they dispute over
Tell them about his mother, and about his father:
It was you and I
Who, when we gave him birth, cast him upon the mountaintops to die!
Yet he did not die—
He returned to us, the fierce vigor of memories
We dared not lift our eyes to meet him
We dared not lift our eyes
Toward our deadly shame.

Thus, the poet's emotions overflow with feelings of sorrow and regret over the negligence of the nation, for a shameful disgrace has become attached to its history — a disgrace born of betrayal and failure, leaving the Arabs humiliated, unable to lift their heads. Yet Amal Dunqul once again turns to symbolism, employing the Greek literary figure "Oedipus" to represent this shame. Amal Dunqul affirms that this disgrace must be corrected, and that, deep within, the nation aspires for reform and the rectification of past mistakes.

Oedipus has returned, searching for those who cast him into death

We are the ones who cast him into death.
But this time, we shall not lose him,
Nor shall we let him go astray.

Amal Dunqul says:

Will my blood — between your eyes — turn into water?
Will you forget my bloodstained cloak,
And wear — over my blood — garments embroidered with gold?

We find that within the scope of the image, a number of tangible elements interact, imposing the particularity of colors to the extent that the image becomes tinted with a pattern of redness. This reddish pattern draws its tone from the color of blood — an element that is present in nearly every line, either through the direct mention of "blood" or through words that imply it, such as "stained." We can assume that this staining is none other than with the blood spilled on the garment of the wounded, betrayed Kulayb.

The poet freely invokes the image of blood from the very first line, overwhelming it in both color and substance, to the point that it becomes impossible to replace the nature of blood with any other liquid, such as water. Although both share the quality of being "liquid," blood cannot take on the colorlessness or transparency of water. Thus, blood transforms from its physical reality into a symbolically charged substance

Amal Dunqul says:

Do not reconcile!
What guilt does that dove bear,
To see her nest suddenly engulfed in flames
As she sits atop the ashes?!

Here, the desired poetic image manifests itself gradually. At first, in the opening line, the "dove" appears — a bird slightly smaller than a pigeon, often portrayed in tales and the *Kalila wa Dimna* stories as a victim of the cunning of foxes, wolves, and jackals. Its eggs and chicks are often preyed upon, and its nests are destroyed. Countless are the tragedies of this wild bird, which possesses none of the traits of predatory birds save for its ability to fly.

Then, the image shifts, and another dove appears — but this dove is not one with a living nest. Rather, it is a dove described as "sitting" and "upon the ashes," evoking an atmosphere of mourning and grief. This is thus a humanized dove, bearing not only the symbolic name of the bird but also embodying human sorrows. Her tragedy lies not in the loss of her eggs and chicks, but in the loss of her father, Kulayb — the victim, slain not by a jackal, but by another human being, making the two doves — the bird and the person — both confronted with the inevitability of blind fate.

Ahmad al-Dosari comments:

"Man burns his own homeland — his nest — with his own hands. The devastating force that annihilates this nest is, once again, a human act, for man himself embodies destructive power. The burning of the nest and the swallowing up of the resting young in their place of warmth is a killing of human dreams, a slaughtering of the homeland as the cradle of those dreams" ⁽⁵²⁾.

Amal Dunqul, assuming the persona of the dove and donning her mask during her lamentations for her slain father, speaks in a moment of delirium, imagining Kulayb's return after his absence, envisioning the procession of his homecoming surrounded by halos and light ⁽⁵³⁾:

Stand up, young men!
For he who comes from the womb of the unseen,

Who waded with his legs into a pool of blood,
 Yet no spray scattered upon him,
 And no stain appeared upon his garments.
 Stand up for the crescent that curves,
 Becoming halos of light upon every face and door.
 Stand up, young men!
 Kulayb returns,
 Like a phoenix that has burned its feathers,
 So that the truth may shine more brilliantly,
 And so that its robe — in the light of the sun — may glow more splendidly,
 Unfurling the wings of tomorrow
 Over cities rising from the memories of ruin!

In this relatively long scene — compared to the preceding passages, and indeed larger than a single image — we observe that the poetic imagery is deeply imbued with ancient history. It extends into the Greek heritage and draws upon its myths, thereby intensifying the intellectual weight of each image — not merely through evoking the brilliance of the past, but by creating a radiance that projects into the present and the future.

In the first image, we notice that eyes are fixed in response to the call and command of the dove, awaiting the arrival of her supposed hero. Yet no one is able to see anything. Although the use of the relative pronoun "who" suggests an intelligent, conscious being whose form might be perceived, no such figure appears. This is because he is a conscious being perceived only by the mind, lacking any tangible stature or limbs that would define a normal human figure. He is a being "born from the womb of the unseen," veiled from sight, with legs that wade through a pool of blood, yet protected by his sanctity from any splatter or stains upon his garments.

Who, then, is this mysterious, miraculous being? Is he Odysseus, the legendary hero famed for his wondrous adventures across islands and seas over many long years, culminating in his return to his homeland and his faithful wife, Penelope? If so, who is Penelope who rises to greet him? Is it the "dove" with her patience, hope, and longing?

Yet no hero — however legendary or supernatural — can ever replace, through the dove's eyes, her own Kulayb, whom she has mythologized in her own way, envisioning him as a crimson, blood-tinged moon among the shining stars. Here, Kulayb is not merely a human; he manifests as a celestial crescent that transcends human form, transforming into a full, radiant moon whose luminous halos extend toward the dove and toward all faces and doors. He embodies Amal Dunqul's hope for the return of hope itself, just as the moonlight returns in its appointed cycles.

In the second image, the poet continues to employ mythology to enrich the symbolic wealth of the scene. Within the same celebratory atmosphere marking Kulayb's return, his daughter, the dove, once again calls upon the youth to rise — this time to welcome Kulayb, who returns like a phoenix that has burned its own feathers.

4. Conclusion

The artistic image is considered one of the most important means through which a creator can convey ideas in a way that captures and draws the reader's attention. It grants the poetic text its value and strength, representing a mechanism without which poetry cannot truly stand. This study has led to a set of findings and recommendations.

First: Findings:

The study reached the following conclusions: • The artistic image constitutes one of the core elements of a literary work since ancient times. It is a modern critical term to which

contemporary critics have devoted considerable attention, moving beyond its traditional concept.

- Modernist poets contributed significantly to the artistic modernization of the contemporary classical poem, especially in constructing the artistic image. They renewed its structure and built alternative metaphorical relationships that encompassed both aesthetic and thematic dimensions. This clear distinction is evident in their ability to craft language, generate meanings, compose images, and produce poems with an organic unity that protects them from disintegration and weakness.
- Omar Abu Risha, Mahmoud Darwish, and Amal Dunqul succeeded in portraying meanings by disrupting the conventional lexical relationships of words and establishing new connections that compel the recipient to understand the intended message.
- The symbols, signs, and gestures embedded in the poetry of Omar Abu Risha, Mahmoud Darwish, and Amal Dunqul do not easily reveal their meanings or unfold upon a first reading; rather, their significance emerges through the invocation of the poet's artistic lexicon.
- The artistic image in the poetic production of Omar Abu Risha, Mahmoud Darwish, and Amal Dunqul was diverse and reached deep emotional resonance.

Second: Recommendations:

The study recommends the following: • The necessity for researchers to devote greater attention to the critical study of modern poetry.

- The need for future researchers to focus on studying the critical contributions of modernist poets, given the scarcity of research and studies addressing them, despite the richness of their poetic achievements.

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