
How the Visual Form of the Poem Serves the Poetic Indications? An Analytical Reading of Two Poems by the Poet Anwar Saba

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doi: <https://doi.org/10.37745/ejells.2013/vol12n1119>

Published January 14, 2024

Citation: Baransi R.A.J. (2024) How the Visual Form of the Poem Serves the Poetic Indications? An Analytical Reading of Two Poems by the Poet Anwar Saba, *European Journal of English Language and Literature Studies*, Vol.12, No.1, pp.1-19

ABSTRACT: *The place in the creative space of poetry has always been a focus of sight, and a subject that occupies the pioneers and scholars of this art, who have counted the place as an integral part of the identity of both the poetic text and the poet alike. The concept of 'place' is not exclusive to the physical space or geographical space in which events take place but an important element that demonstrates the relationship between man and place, identity, belonging, and the origins that bind man to the past and present, and the characters with their concerns, feelings, pains and hopes. In my talk about the place in the poem, I do not deal with these concepts only; I actually go beyond it to talk about the space that has geometric dimensions over which words are arranged, how these words are designed, the relationship of blackness to whiteness above this visual space, or what we might call the visual formation of the poem. This study seeks to discuss the features of the thematic and visual location in two selected poems of the poet Anwar Saba, to monitor the relationship between the spatial expressions mentioned in each poem and their visual spatial formation, and how they serve or complement each other, and their visual spatial formation, and how they serve or complement each other.*

KEYWORDS: Place in literature, visual poetry, poetry twisted into itself.

INTRODUCTION

Who Is Poet Anwar Saba?

Poet Anwar Saba is a Palestinian poet who was in Haifa in 1947. After Palestinian Catastrophe (Nakba) in 1948, his family moved to the village of Al-Jish, his father's birthplace. when he was 10 years old, his family moved to Akka, and then returned to Haifa in 1964 .Anwar joined the Institute of Applied Engineering-Technion, and graduated from the Construction Engineering Branch, and worked as an engineer and a teacher. He is also a visual artist whose paintings have been displayed in several exhibitions. He participated in individual and common ones, and has published three poetry collections: 'Azf 'Ala Khaserat al-Kalimaa/ *Playing on the Flank of the Word* (2010), *Farashat 'Ala al-Waraq /Butterflies on Paper* (2015), and *Jil al-Şahrā' / The Desert Generation* .(2019)

In an interview, he indicated that, during his life in the village of Al-Jish, he was affected by its mountains, valleys, picturesque views, sky, the birds of the thresholds, as well as by the sea of Akka, its wall, its alleys, the smells of spices in its markets, and friendships with its youths.¹

When asked about his motives for resorting to writing poetry, he said: "Writing is an obsession that you are not able to break out of. It besieges you the whole day and he doesn't settle down or calm down until you take the pen and starts writing. So, I'm writing to get away from this obsession, and then I publish what I wrote to those who care about literature and poetry."² As for his aim of writing, he says: "The goal is to liberate that energy stored in my mind and to share my life philosophy with others; I emphasize what matters to me, and refer to the social subjects that we suffer from criticizing what is in us."³

As he states, Saba has been influenced by a number of poets and authors, including Nizar Qabbani (1923-1998), Mahmoud Darwish (1941-2008) and Samih al-Qasim (1939-2014). He was also influenced by the Jordanian poet Amjad Nasser (1955-2019), whose poems smelled of authentic Bedouin nature, as Saba says. Besides, he was influenced by Adonis (Ali Ahmed Sa'id, 1930 -) for his theorization, and deconstruction of ideas, and the poetic religious and political poetry event; Bader Shakir al-Sayyab (1926-1964) and his longing to Jaykur and the ghost of death that chased him, and poet Taha Mohammad Ali (1931-2011) and his simple and virgin poetry.

Other poets and novelists that influenced Saba are: Jibran Khalil Jibran (1883-1931), Mohammad al-Maghout (1934-2006), Ahlam Mosteghanemi (1953-), 'Alaa Hlehel (1974-), Waciny Laredj (pronounced Wasini al-A'raj (1954 -), Taha Hussein (1889-1973) in addition to a large number of international writers.

As for the philosophical works that influenced him, Saba mentioned Gilgamesh⁴, *Religion and Ideology* by Mohammad al-Rahmouni, *Madkhal Ila al-Tanwir al-Oropi* by Hashem Salih, *Greek mythology*, *al-Rahbana wa al-Tassawuf* by Mohammad 'Abd al-Ḥamid, etc. These works open connected channels that enrich the reader and his thoughts and elevates him to the level of international thought.⁵

Prominent Themes and Issues in Anwar Saba's Poetry

In his poems, Saba addresses several social philosophical issues such as the definition of homeland, and poses several questions in this area, including: Is 'homeland' the navel chord that connects the past to the ambiguous future? Is it the tongue, history, civilization, habits, nostalgia, heritage and memories? Is it enlightenment, openness, and free thought? Is homeland itself for the well-being of

¹ <https://pulpit.alwatanvoice.com/content/print/369779.html>

² <https://pulpit.alwatanvoice.com/content/print/369779.html>

³ <https://pulpit.alwatanvoice.com/content/print/369779.html>

⁴ It is a poetic epic of Mesopotamia, the Land of the Two Rivers, Hiddekel and Euphrates, and considered to be the oldest of great literary works and the second oldest religious texts left over from that period.

⁵ <https://pulpit.alwatanvoice.com/content/print/369779.html>

the hungry and lavish? And to which homeland does the free air above the border wire belong? Is it thought that sets the boundaries of the homeland or it is the homeland that sets the boundaries (Saba, 2015, p. 7-9) ⁶.

Whatever this homeland is, it is the need that man seeks, and if he owns it, his name will climb the roads like jasmine, the soil will blossom under his feet if he visits it barefoot, the crops of his land will grow more, his wheat will grow on the tops of mountains, and his roots will extend to the springs of life. When man finds a homeland, grandparents will return as pigeon flights and drop off their shoulders the loads of years, and tear up passports and stop wandering. They will build houses and inhabit them, they will plant vines and eat their fruits; the presses will be filled with oil, peace will come, and there will be no room to spoil it. (Saba, 2010), p, 95-96).⁷

In one of the collections of his poems, Saba addresses the issue of the Nakba from its human aspects and its cultural and psychological impact on the generations that have lived it, or those that have suffered from it. We read his call to his readers to think about those whose banners have been alienated and displaced from the face of place, angry, hungry and with worn shoes, covered by death and poisonous rain falling around them (Saba, 2019, p.88-90)⁸

These people, whose blood, whose children's bodies, whose grandparents' corpses are on the face of the earth departed like caravans of shadows, (Saba, 2019 p. 11-12),⁹ the y got lost, with no crime, like sheep without a shepherd, with cracked feet and bent backs, writing on the earth the names of their villages with blood of bleeding dusty feet (Saba, 2014, p.87-90).¹⁰

They bet on the love of life and on a key hidden in the chest of their sheikh, crouching between the ribs, breathing memories from his lungs and licking from his chest his longing for the doors of the houses (Saba, 2014, pp. 83-86).¹¹ Those are the houses, walls and windows, which they left filled with the smells of their owners. They also left the stones hear the hissing of their voices and the songs of their children and the steps of their feet, the arcades smelling their sweat and the flavor of their heated brown bread.

However, the soil, the air, the stone, the mud, the tree and the wood all ask when they will return (Saba, 2015, p. 98-100).¹²

Through a literary intertextuality with the poem of "The Will of Life" by Abu al-Qassem al-Shabbi (1909-1934) ¹³, the poet states that they will undoubtedly return to their strength, dreams and joy of

⁶ From Saba's poem "al-Watan" from Saba's collection *Farashat 'Ala al-Waraq*.

⁷ From Saba's poem "Hona Tajid Laka Watanan" from his collection *Farashat 'Ala al-Waraq*

⁸ From Saba's poem "Rayat wa Alwan" from divan *Jil al-Sahra* '.

⁹ From Saba's poem "Man Saraqa al-Nar", from his collection *Jil al-Sahra* '.

¹⁰ From Saba's poem "Tariq al-Alam", from his collection *Farashat 'Ala al-Waraq*.

¹¹ From Saba's poem "al-Nuzuḥ", from his collection *Farashat 'Ala al-Waraq*.

¹²From Saba's poem "Judran wa Shababik", from his collection *Farashat 'Ala al-Waraq*.

¹³ You can read the poem in the collection of *Aghani al-Hayat* by Abu al-Qassem al-Shabby, 1900, p.167-170

their days as that dark night must be revealed, and justice must prevail; tears must be erased, and the wound must heal" (Saba, 2019, p. 88-90)¹⁴ .

The reader of Saba's poems will inevitably see that he lists the details of the story, the evacuation, the displacement, the Nakba, the displacement, the camps, and the dream of return, homeland, identity and the human beings, makes his poems an entry point to criticism, freedom of thought and expression. Saba criticized the current situation of the East, citing the pain and human suffering caused by wars and revolutions, and the situation of children, women and the elderly, of deprivation, hunger and misery, of murder and homelessness. This is evident in his collection *The Desert Generation*, about which the poet 'Ola 'Uwaida writes: "Words that have grown up at the tear of pain and parting, bearing the voice of a poet obsessed by the burning of absence, the pain of departure and the tear of nostalgia; a poet searching for a lighthouse in the labyrinth of absurd loss scattered across the pages of life (...). Anwar Saba is a worried poet who suggests what lies in his heart in poetry paintings, in poems charged with pain and sadness, leaning on religion, myth, intertextuality and other artistic methods, and reflecting the aches of life and the colors of alienation "(Saba, 2019).¹⁵

Saba did not confine his poetry to committed issues; he even gave us love poetry, making the woman a poem that sings to her finest details and elevates her to the highest degree of perfection. A little of her charm is enough to drift a stream of insanity, and the north is lost from his compass, which makes him look for her to find water in the desert. He looks for her face and the almonds of her eyes, spectrum and her apricots, the taste of her air and the smell of the milk of her lips which he got addicted to (Saba, 2019, pp. 65-67).¹⁶ For this woman, for the one hundred years woman, and for that woman whose name and the image of her scruffy heart he on the steps of days, writing about his moments of his fascination by her charm, about his burning and his arrest as a slave in her femininity, about the memory of her meeting on the seat, the meeting in winter, and the rituals of adoration of the gods and its rules.¹⁷

This confirms that Saba's poetry is not limited to historical and national issues that are immersed in time and space, and that, in the words of Rushdie al-Madhi, he is "a poet who sits behind a speech porch, a buzzing sparrow soaring with his anxiety and questions, and haunted by human concerns, overlooking the secrets of existence, travelling to the farthest areas, is search of the human common things. He weaves his poetic identity outside the ordinary creative things (...). He seeks an attitude in life and a position in literature in which he finds himself unflattering, nonmalignant and non-submissive because he has an established belief to the degree of fanaticism to what he sees a right and

¹⁴ From Saba's poem "Rayat wa Alwan", from his collection *Jil al-Şahra* '.

¹⁵ Endorsement on the back cover page of the collection of *Jil al-Şahra* '.

¹⁶ From Saba's poem "Lahazat Huyam" in his collection *Jil al-Şahra* '.

¹⁷ You can read a number of love-poems in the collection *Jil al-Şahra* ', in Saba, 2019, p.58-83, and in *Farashat 'Ala al-Waraq*, Saba 2015, p.47-80, and from the collection *'Azf 'Ala Khaserat al-Kalima*, Saba, 2010, p.47-66.

a duty in order to keep his poem true to the details of reality even when it is drowned out by the absurdity of existence" (Saba, 2015).¹⁸.

Place Manifestations in the Collection: "Playing on the Flank of the Word"

In defining the place in the poetic space, it was said that it is the birth of a language that possessed a dual nature, between words and sensations, and that it does not depend only on language, but also on fiction as one of its main pillars. We see the poet go beyond the crust of reality to what can be contradictory with it. However, it can be a possible reality despite that. This fantasy about the place and non-reality can be considered additions and aesthetics that are added to the poetry text (Barakat, 2015).

The scholars went on to mention the significance of the places, and considered their indications and symbols as keys to revealing what the poetic text hides of secrets of history, stories and emotions that are related to the place and the poet. Some of them have also stated that poets diagnose the place and its assets of living and nonliving objects, pumping into them bloods of life and give them the quality of survival, immortality and sometimes holiness (Al-Rabi 'i, 2017).

It is no secret to the poetry reader to determine the relationships between the place, the environment being talked about, and the movement of people and their features. It is not possible to talk about personalities, entity and existence without talking about the place, where the place is the focus of the presence of man and the real witnessing factor onto the landscape of life and the diversity of humanity by the diversity of places. The place lends special qualities and attributes to the characters in terms of belief, color, mood, behavior, habits and composition. Therefore, it can be said that man is the product of his place, and the diversity of characters is born of the diversity of places, their specifications, various combinations, and numerous political, social and historical events (Sharatah, 2015).

This relationship between place and man brings us back to the statement of our poet Anwar Saba, when asked about his relationship with the place and the manifestations of the places in his poetry. He said that he cares about the place for its role and importance in preserving images, people and events, and that he had written, through it, many of his memories.¹⁹

However, the reader of his poetry, as a whole, and his collection of poetry "Playing on the Flank of the Word" in particular, finds himself in front of a poet who shows special interaction with the place, not based on stating the places, or naming them by their real names, or describing the relationship between them and the living human entity therein, as if by that, he was going beyond the geographical limits to raise his text to immortality and refuses to it be constrained by a specific and limited environment or time. There are several levels of place that appear in this collection of poetry, which consists of forty-six poems, including:

¹⁸ Endorsement of the book on the cover page of the collection *Farashat 'Ala al-Waraq*.

¹⁹ From an interview with the poet in the Poetry-Column at the following site:

:https://omny.fm/shows/zaweyat-kol-alqasaed/9e2c4965-0440-4cd1_af76ad690063a760 .

• **The Stated Place**

The collection of poetry does not mention and name specific places, except for very few places that do not exceed three, namely: **First:** in the poem "Khawabi al-Zayt wa al-Dami'/Jars of Oil and Tears, "where he says at the end:

- حكايتنا يا ولدي حكايتنا كلنا...
- حكاية أرض مشتاقاة لأصحابها
- حكاية فلسطين".

"Our tale, my son, is the tale of all of us

A tale of a land longing for its owners

The tale of Palestine" (Saba, 2010, p. 70).

He also adds at the end of the poem a remark in which he points out that it is a gift to his friend Adil Malshi about the story of his grandparents "Odeh" and "Lea", who were children at the time of the occupation of the village Kufr Kanna.

- **Second, in the poem "Yasoon", Saba says at the end:**

- "لأنّ الفجر بيتك، استرح
- على الكرمل لحظة
- أغمض عينيك.
- لا تنم.
- استقرئ أطياف روى
- تزهر كلوز الجليل حيناً
- وأخالها تلفظ الأنفاس حيناً".

"Because dawn is your home, rest.

On Carmel for a moment

Close your eyes.

Don't sleep.

Extrapolate spectrums of visions

which flower like the Galilee almond flowers at a time,

and think that they utter their last breaths at the other."(Saba, 2010, p. 75).

Third: In his appendix to the poem "Cities of Salt", Saba notes that the poem was written following a visit to New York (Saba, 2010, p. 101). It is noteworthy that the mention of places in these three places is does not exceed the fact that they are merely rigid geographical areas. The poet, in this way, invites his reader to return to read the poem and search between its lines for the landmarks and history of Kufr Kana, Carmel and Galilee, and thus, link between the features of New York and its features as they are described in the poem. He reveals to us about this city or that city, and what happened in this or that, and what influenced him and inspired him to write. If the writer had given up documenting these references, these specific few poems would have given up their historical time-bound and place-bound historical role, and left the reader in front of events and characters that do not necessarily reflect Kufr Kana, Galilee and other places and the human being everywhere.

• **The Metonymic Places:**

The metonymic names of places that the poet uses are very few. He chooses one or two metonymic, metaphorical symbolic nicknames of certain places as we see in his poem " Sayyed al-Bihar/Master of the Seas":

"أَيُّهَا الْحَائِرُ الثَّائِرُ"
اقطع من جبل النار
حجرًا حطّم به آلهة الذهب
آلهة الحديد والخزف

O bewildered revolutionary!
Cut a stone from the Mountain of Fire
A stone to smash with it the gods of gold
The gods of iron and porcelain. (Saba, 2010, p. 11).

"The Mount of Fire" here is a metonymy for Nablus, which was named the Mount of Fire as a result of attacks by its people on the French army, after it was defeated at Walls of Akka.

The French army used Nablus Mountains as a way back, but once the people of Mount Fire heard the news about Napoleonic Army's passing by the Nablus Mountains, they rushed to the mountains, and set fires to undermine enemy gatherings and tents, which lead to significant casualties in the soldiers, and thus, Napoleon called Nablus "The Mount of Fire." ('Azazi, 1900).

The metonymy is used here to raise the text from the likelihood of framing it into a specific Space. The searcher for the expression "Mount of Fire" sees that it is not confined only to Nablus. We also read about the "Mount of Fire" in Azerbaijan, or specifically the city of "Baku", the "Mount of Fire" in "Turkey" and the "Mount of Fire" in Medina, in Saudi Arabia. Besides, we read about "Mount Sinai", which God burned it when he talked to Prophet Musa (Moses), and the brethren of the Israelites (Exodus 19:18), which leads the reader to ask a variety of questions: Is it the Mount of Fire that the speaker, who speaks in the poem and asks the reader to cut a stone from it to smash the gods of gold, associated with the Palestinian city of Nablus and the revolt, rebellion, resistance and persistence that it has witnessed, or is associated with the symbol of the Mountain of Fire in Saudi Arabia regarding the Judgment Day and the fire that will continue for three consecutive months, or to another event that is related to the mountains of fire that we read about in other parts of the world?

Therefore, reading such a text requires an educated, knowledgeable reader who has skills that enable him to probe the poetic depths of the poetic text and decipher it and its closed symbols. Here, I may mention another example of the "metonymic place", which is: the phrase:

"الحلم وحي الآلهة"
تصدّع مدن القباب
مدن الأجراس والمنابر
محو لذاكرة الزمان والمكان"

"Dream is the revelation of the gods

"Cracking of the cities of domes
The cities of bells and platforms
Erasing of the memory of time and place" (Saba, 2010, p.13).

The domes return us to Jerusalem and the 13 domes of the Al-Aqsa Mosque make us wonder whether Jerusalem is the metonymic place in the poem, and how it relates to the dialogue between the speaking "I" and his voice about prophecy, speech and dream.

• **The Nowhere:**

Maybe this type is the predominant in the collection of poetry, and we mean by it "the remote, unknown or undetermined place" and we might say it is mobility, migration, exile, removal, departure and deportation.

Expressions that do not indicate a specific place are often used in collection of "Playing on the Flank of the Word", but they only give the general features, or refer to the Nothing, the vacuum, the nowhere, and mobility and, etc., and I mention, as an example, the words: "vacuum"²⁰, "roads"²¹, "boat winds", "sun blowing place" (Saba, 2010, p. 18), "al-Mada" (Saba, 2010, p.69)²², "here", "there", "the ends" in Saba's poem "Ḥadith al-Nihayat", where he says:

- "من هنا نرى ما لا نراه من هناك
- هنا النهايات ملعون هذا المكان"

"From here we see what we don't see from there"
Here are the ends; this placed is damned "
(Saba,2010, p. 21) ²³; "al-Manfa" (Saba, 2010), p. 73).

²⁰ The phrases that indicate 'vacuum' are repeated in more than one place in the collection such as the poem "Hiwar/Dialogue". See Saba, 2010, p.18.

²¹ This word is repeated in several subjects. For example, in the poem "Sanadiq" and the poem "Ishtiyag wa Sumum", which will be analyzed below, (Saba, 2010, p.29, p.47), and in the poem "Don Quixote", the poem "al-Sabiq", and in the poem "Sariq al-Shumous", we read the word "al-Tariq"(See: Saba, 2010, p.23, 43, and 65). The word "al-Duroub/Roads" appears also in his poem "Hayra" (Saba,2010, p.35). Examples of this type appear in several places.

²² And in the poem "Sadiqi wa Ibn al-Gharib". Saba, 2010, p.89.

²³ The employment of the lexical pairs "huna" and "hunak" is repeated in other places such as his poems "Yasoon", and "Ḥiwar Ḥazin with Darwish" in which he says:

"فأنت منّا وفيّنا وما لنا لك
هنا
لن تبحث عن هنا من هنا
صُحُفنا لك
تلفازنا
كتبنا لك
كيف تمضي!"

You're one of us and in us,
And what is ours is yours
Here,
You'll not look for the 'here' from the 'here'
Our papers are yours

Perhaps the poem "Sifr al-Takwin/Genesis", which is based on Christian religious intertextuality, is the most expressive of the Nowhere as it expresses the nothingness before creation, vacuum, nonexistence and chaos.

Saba says:

"قبل البدء
لم يكن شيء
لم يكن مكان أو فراغ
لم يكن تاريخ، ضوء، بُعد
أو حتى هواء
كان اللاشيء
في وسط اللاشيء"

"Before the beginning
There was nothing
There was no place nor a vacuum
There was no history, light, dimension
Or even air
There was the nothingness
In the middle of the nothingness". (Saba, 2010, p.36).

It sounds that the poet, by employing these expressions, he alludes to the fact that the place has an expression of the problem of identity, loss, the vacuum that befell the homes after the departure of their inhabitants, and the unending dialectic between their return and survival in exile. Through these expressions, Saba also expresses philosophical subjects, cases of religious and Sufi spirituality, and literary contents that fall into what is known as self-folded poetry, as we will see shortly.

The Thematic Place and the Visual Place in the Poems "Inshitarat/Fissions" and "Ishtiaq wa Sumum/Longing and Poisons"

The place, at the thematic level, in the two poems "Inshitarat" and "Ishtiaq wa Sumum" seems absent, or we might say it is of the third type that we have identified earlier, namely, the Nowhere that does not express a well-known city or a neighborhood that the poet has gone through and has decided to pump into it the aesthetics of language, poetry and imagination. The spatial expressions in the two poems are very limited and therefore indefinite and non-indicative of a defined geographical area. For example, in the poem "Inshitarat", we read the terms "pyramidal vacuum" and "paved ground", and in the poem "Ishtiaq wa Sumum" we read the terms "roads" and "that road". However, what draws

Our television
Our books are yours
How do you go!?! (Saba, 2010, p. 74, 86).

attention in the two poems and makes them a material for analysis, is their distinction in terms of visual space and its relationship with the indication or connotation, which takes me back to the philosopher's definition of Place as: "An area or space with geometric or topographic dimensions that are controlled by measurements and sizes" (Alsafi, 1989, p. 785).

Plato had defined it as "the container of multiplying assets, the place of change and movement in the perceived world, the world of real phenomena" (‘Abd Almu‘ti, 1984, p. 124). Aristotle said that it was the direct nonmoving limit, the container, or the containing surface of the containing object, which is in contact with the apparent surface of the contained object (‘Abd Al-Ra ḥman, 1987, p. 171). From this, we understand that the place contains things but is not independent of them, accepts them, forms itself and regenerates by them and through them, and is willing to accept any movement and any form (Haniya, 2012, p. 16). These philosophical definitions of the place make me consider the space of the white page as a place that contains the poet's expressions and images. They are the immobile boundary that is in contact with the contained text, on which the poet designs the order of the letters, the words, the parts of the words, the line and its color, and other things and excesses that make it impossible for the recipient to be satisfied with just listening to the rhythms of the poem, or the indication of his words, without considering the special form of printing that the poem has adopted and forms a second language that cannot be ignored in deducing the meaning, as we do in our handling of visual poems that are considered one of the most experimental and daring poetry genres species to penetrate the limits of the traditional Arab poetry form and shape, as they are based on a combination of linguistic poetic signals and non-linguistic visual signals, exceeding by that the clear boundaries of Arabic poetry as they are composed, written and directed to the eye to enjoy them and be occupied by them, just as the ear, or more, if we may say so.²⁴

There is no doubt that the first look at the two poems confirms their inclusion in the framework of "visual poetry", as they exhibit a special visual formation, where each one, by itself, creates a striking, self-contained visual form that affects the process of reading and the ability to deduce meanings. Thus, the architecture of the poem as a whole constitutes a special drawing that relates, in one form or another, to the indications and connotations behind it.

²⁴ Bawardi refers to the movement of the Arab culture with free poetry and prose poem, from culture of the ear to the culture of the eye, which is a change of the mental traditional Arab concepts, which had been accustomed to the culture of hearing and rhetoric, and communicating meanings only via the language of voice and intonation. It is also an elimination of the limited recipient's role in the mental interaction process, and that the language of the text is transient and ends when the rhetoric process has ends. (See: Bawardi, 2003, p. 180. See also, *The Culture of the Ear and the Culture of the Eye* in Ben ‘abd Al-‘Āli, 1994).

The Texts of the Two Poems

Why Two
Visual
Poems?

أَشْتِيَاقٌ وَسُمووم .
 اسْتَيْقِظْ مِنْكَ مُرْغَمًا . أَلَمْ يُحَاصِرْنِي كَانِيَابُ
 أَفْعَى . أَضْعُ أَقْبَعَةً رُجُولَتِي وَأَشْرَبُ قَهْوَتِي
 عَلَى عَجَلٍ . بِطَرِيقِي إِلَى يَوْمِي
 أَدْرَبُ قَلْبِي . أَخْتَهُ لِأَنْ يَتَمَرَّدَ
 يَنْتَقِمَ لِكِرَامَةِ مُسْتَبَاحَةِ .
 مَا أَنْ يَرَاكَ
 حَتَّى يَعُودَ شِفَاقًا . ضَعِيفًا كَجَنَاحِ فَرَّاشَةٍ
 تَحْتَرِّقُ فِي
 وَهَجِ اللَّهْيَبِ . أَحْوَالِ
 الْهَرْبِ لِأَنْفِذَ مَا تَبَقِيَ مِنِّي
 وَلَكِنْ لَا أَعْرِفُ إِلَى آيِنٍ تَنْجِيهِ
 الطَّرِيقَاتِ . أَعْرِفُ فَقَطْ تِلْكَ الطَّرِيقَ
 الَّتِي تُوْدِي إِلَيْكَ . تُنَادِينِي . اسْتَجِيبْ صَاحِرًا

ا
ن
ش
ط
ا
ر
ا
ت
 انظُرْ هَذَا
 القَرَاغَ الْهَرَمِيَّ .
 لَيْسَ مَعِي سِوَى
 أَنْزِ وَأَصْبِغْ . أَمْشِي
 عَلَى أَرْضِيَّةٍ مَرْصُوفَةٍ
 بِالْحُرُوفِ . يَطْوِيهَا عِنْدِي
 تَتَبَعُ . تُرِيقُ كَالنَّهَبِ . تَرْفَعُ
 أَعْيَانَهَا جَانِحَةً تَسَارِعُ كَالضَّوءِ .
 فِي الشَّمَلِهَا طَلْقَةٌ تَوَلَّى إِلَى الْفَجْرِ .
 تَتَوَهَّجُ . تَسْطَعُ كَنُورِ أَوَّلِ شَمْسٍ . سَلَسْتَرِيًّا
 عُلُوقًا . أَحْبَبْتُهَا . لِنَمْنِ بَرِيئَتِهَا . فَتَتَكَلَّفُ عَلَى إِبْصِمِي أَوَّلَ الْمَجْرَاتِ .
 ا ك ت ب ا ل ح ر ف ص و ت ك و ا ل ك ل م ه ش ع ر

Visual poems are considered a product of two messages together: the iconic message, which is realized in its holistic form, and the linguistic message, which requires a more analytical and more attentive reading. In this composite message, words play a special role, as it forms, through its letters, the external image (Longree, 1976, p. 63). Bonn defines visual poems as poems that intended to seen, and the combination of painting and poetry is not counted an evasion or compromise, but rather a synthesis of the essential principles of each art (Bohn, 1986, p. 2).

In one of my previous studies, entitled "The Visual Poem in Modern Arab Poetry" (Abu Jaber, 2006), I divided the visual poems into three levels, depending on the visual techniques they employ. The *first* level includes poems based primarily on the use of multiple visual techniques such as fragmentation, whiteness and blackness, frames and margins, punctuation marks and aesthetics of the Arabic calligraphy and print line, without changing the traditional direction of the written lines from right to left.

The *second* level adds to these techniques the change in the construction of the poetic line, to be free to start from any point, and in any direction. Thus, any point in the vacuum becomes possible to the beginning or end of the poem. The lines take a wavy or straight form in any direction, indifferent to the traditional reading path that has been followed over time.

The *third* level is based on the integration of the art of painting and poetry, either by paralleling the poetry text with a drawing that is particularly consistent with it, contributing to giving it a special depth and distinction, or by making the drawing designed from the letters of the poem itself, which makes the text more confusing and ambiguous on the one hand, but more distinctive and profound on the other (Abu Jaber, 2006). If we look at the texts 1 of the two poems, we note that they belong to the third level, as the letters form lines for an indicative visual drawing, which directs the act of reception,

and influences the meaning of the language text to such an extent that makes the reader wonder: If the poetry text can be established without it, what is the poet trying to tell us by giving both poems a special composition in their visual space, and what is the relationship between the place on the substance level and the visual place in each of them? And what is the general content of each poem? And what did the visual composition of the content add to the content? The mere reading of the title of the poem "Inshitarat/ Fissions", which is not written as a separate title from the poetic text and has no special space at the top of the page, will surely show us the relationship between content and visual form. The poet separates the letters of the word "Inshitarat" and makes them crumbly and stretched over five lines in a pyramidal hierarchical form that helps him design the letters "alef/ ا" in the word that suggests the ribs of the pyramid, and the letter "ت/ ت", which exceeds the size of the rest of the letters to make it the base of the pyramid.



If we look attentively at the perfection of the shape, we note that it resembles a pyramid, but words paint only its, its left half and its base. The right section remains empty whites, whose whiteness is not disturbed by a letter or a punctuation mark.

The relationship here is clear between leaving the right side of the page blank and mentioning the "pyramidal emptiness" in the first phrase in the poem: "Enter this pyramidal emptiness"; as if the poet paints for us where he enters, maybe an escape, or a purity or a desire to be alone.

To this place or nowhere, the "pyramidal vacuum" takes the Ego speaker with him by ear and finger, and we ask about the necessity of each other and need for them to be in a closed space of vacuum. However, as we continue to read, we understand that the vacuum floor is paved with letters whose rhythm rises, gathering and scattering like goods of a merchant who artistically displayed them. They looked as glamorous as gold, as bright and glowing as the first light of the sun, lifting their necks to

be picked up by the visitor who entered the vacuum, with nothing but an ear that could listen to the rhythms and choose their best, and a finger that would help him pick up what he liked from them, so that it seemed like the first galaxies had intensified on his finger.

The poet chooses to draw for us, through the last line, this paved floor with letters that he walks over, exploring their elements, solving their enigmas, and reincarnating their glamour, and thus, they intensify over his finger like a galaxy. The question that arises here is: Why did he choose to liken this output to a galaxy? Why didn't he say the "Mu'allaqa/long classical poem" or any other word? What does the word "galaxy" add to the situation described by the poet?

The Ego-speaker who enters the pyramidal-vacuum may be a lover who describes the state of his adoration that makes him a lost walker in a vacuum, confused about which words and letters he should choose to express himself. The letter writes the voice of the beloved and the word a poem for her, or perhaps he is a poet who describes the state of isolation that overcomes him as the idea haunts him, making him wander to dig for the letters and rhythm that are more expressive of that state.

And he, namely the poet, from the first moment the idea arises until the moment of labor and the birth of the poem, lives in a state of frustration, unconsciousness, or perhaps rave. He feels that all language lexicons are available to him, all letters are displayed and glamorous, and he has only to make the good choice, composition and integration, as if the vocabulary of the language and its letters were the countless stars in the galaxy that are associated together with the forces of mutual attraction, and revolve around a common center, which is the idea in the poet's condition. This brings us back to what is known as self-folded poetry, or meta-poetry, which means poetry that uses the space of poetic text to sow the poetic concerns that the creator of the text suffers during its creation, which implies that the subject of the poem becomes the poem itself (Mamdouh, 2012). In meta-poetry writing, the poet plays the role of a theorist or critic who, through his poetry text, discusses various issues related to poetry, writing, the birth of the text, etc.²⁵

²⁵ You can read more about the style of Intertextuality in: Fakhr al-Din, 2022.

The Text of the Poem: "Ishtiyaq wa Sumum"

أشْتِيَاقٌ وَسُمُومٌ .
أَسْتَيْقِظُ مِنْكَ مُرْهَقًا . أَلَمْ يُحَاصِرْنِي كَانِيَابُ
أَفْعَى . أَضْعُ أَقْبِعَةَ رُجُولَتِي وَأَشْرَبُ قَهْوَتِي
عَلَى عَجَلٍ . يَطْرُقُنِي إِلَى يَوْمِي
أَدْرِبُ قَلْبِي . أَخْتَهُ لِأَن يَتَمَرَّدَ
يَنْتَقِمَ لِكِرَامَةِ مُسْتَبَاحَةٍ .
مَا أَنْ يَرَاكَ
حَتَّى يَعُودَ شَفَافًا . ضَعِيفًا كَجَنَاحِ فَرَّاشَةٍ
تَحْتَرِقُ فِي
وَهْجِ اللَّهْيَبِ . أَحَاوَلُ
الْهَرَبَ لِأَنْقِذَ مَا تَبَقِيَ مِنِّي
وَلَكِنْ لَا أَعْرِفُ إِلَى أَيْنَ تَنْجُو
الطَّرِيقَاتُ . أَعْرِفُ فَقَطْ تِلْكَ الطَّرِيقَ
الَّتِي تُؤَدِي إِلَيْكَ . تُنَادِينِي . اسْتَجِيبْ صَاحِرًا

Unlike the poem "Inshitarat", the title of this poem "Ishtiyaq wa Sumum", takes its usual visual space, written in larger and more prominent stripes, leaving a void between it and the first line of the poem. The title makes us question the relationship between the two words they form it. Are Ishtiyaq/Longin and Sumum/ Poisons two accompanied interconnected situations, or are the poisons caused by Ishtiyaq/ Longing or do the words express contradictory poles? If the poet has chosen a title that is grammatically incomplete, why is he determined to place the point in the title, which is not an accepted practice in the language, and we do not find it in the whole in the collection of poetry? Actually, we find the dot in only five titles of all poems! What is the point that the poet is trying to say?

We read the poem, and see that the speaking ego/I begins by describing a state of pain and fatigue caused by thinking about the female who he addresses, saying, "I wake you up from you", as if she were his dream that leaves him no room for rest and tranquility, or interruption. She causes him pain that traps him like snake tusks. He tries to free himself from it, to hold himself together, and act as if everything is going as usual. He drinks his coffee, prepares to go out, and struggles in urging his heart to rebel, not to submit, and to restore his violated dignity, as if this female was a cause in his humiliation, and making him almost completely surrender to her, and the mere thought of her is a risk in his dignity.

The heart responds to the speaking ego/I briefly to end with meeting her. Once he sees her, his heart weakens and becomes wing of a burnt butterfly. All of his attempts to escape fail; he doesn't know where to, and where the roads are going; he knows only one road; it is the one that leads him to her. This road calls him; he responds without any resistance, as if now we understand something about the relationship between toxins and longing. The speaker's ego/I is living in a state of longing, besieged

by her spectrum (the female addressee), but he knows that submission to this longing will infect him with the poison of the snake that besieges him, because to responding to the call of longing means to be total submission, and total disconnection from the world and perhaps from oneself, and only responding to her.

If we look at the visual space and the form of the arrangement of the words of the poem, we see that the poet designed a visual form resembling a butterfly, which is associated with his phrase "once he sees you/ he becomes transparent and weak as a wing of a butterfly." (Saba, 2010, p. 47). If we look at the visual space and form the arrangement of the words of the poem, we see that the poet designed a visual form resembling a butterfly, which is associated with his phrase "once he sees you/until he comes back transparent, weak as a butterfly wing" (Saba, 2010, p. 47). He seems like he is painting his psychological condition that flutters between longing and pain, and his weakness in front of her, and his burning because of her. The question that arises is: "Why did he choose a butterfly rather than other things? Why didn't he draw the snake mentioned in the text or its tusks, the flames, the roads or maybe the heart? What does a butterfly perform as a living object that other creatures do not perform? This question takes us back to reread the collection of poems in an investigatory way, and we found that the word "butterfly", "beds" or "butterflies" appeared in it almost ten times. This confirms that the word has indications for the poet. If we go back to search for the connotations of "butterflies", we find that they relate to different areas. In the religious sphere, for example, in the Holy Quran, for example, "butterflies" are mentioned as a symbol of resurrection on the Day of Doomsday :

"يَوْمَ يَكُونُ النَّاسُ كَالْفَرَاشِ الْمَبْثُوثِ"

*It is a Day whereon mankind will be like moths scattered about
(The Holy Korn, Surat al-Qari'ah 101:45).*

Spiritual interpretations indicate that "butterflies/moths" are a symbol of resurrection and Doomsday Day. Socially, we read that the butterfly symbolizes "idiocy". The proverb says, "more foolish than a butterfly", because it approaches the fire and dies. The "Butterfly" also has several symbols according to diversity of religions, civilizations and cultures. For, the Irish people, the "butterfly" symbolizes "the passing away child", while the ancient Egyptians believed that the dead's soul becomes a butterfly after leaving the body. The "butterfly" is also a symbol of "realization of aspirations" for other peoples, or "bonds of beautiful love" between husbands and wives for Romanian people, (Al-Qawasmi, 2016). In many contexts, the "butterfly" is a symbol of 'self-sacrifice for others, emancipation. It also carried indication of beauty and decline, as well as a symbol of fertility, spring and regeneration, and permanent movement for self-fulfillment and achievement of goals, and a symbol of the impact that it can actually cause in reality despite its weakness, which can be the secret of its strength (Husseini, 2012). As stated in the physical philosophical theory of the effect of the movement of the butterfly wings, which is an expression that encompasses the idea that small differences in the present may lead to large differences in the future. For example, if a butterfly flutters its wings in China in the Far East, the impact of this fluttering in itself is weak, something almost negligible, but over the time this fluttering can lead to disturbances and waves in the air, and in a certain period of time, after one or more years, it could contribute to a hurricane in America on the other side of the globe, or perhaps it contributes in preventing a hurricane elsewhere (Smith, 2016, p. 22).

In Sufism, the "butterfly" is a symbol of complete fusion in the divine self, or of the Sufis themselves, as we see in the book of *al-Tawasin* in al-Ḥallaj (Abu al-Mughith al-Hussein Ben Mansur al-Ḥallaj 858-922), "as they fly around the lamp of truth, the knowledge of God, and the path of cognitive and existential redemption (Ḥamada, 2014, 281, 2014).

In our return to the poem, and the relationship between the visual space in it and the butterfly symbol, we might say that the speaking Ego/I in this poem, through the expression "as a butterfly wing burning in the glare of flames", is perhaps a man, who expresses a complex state that he lives in his relationship with the female as in moving away from it, he gains life, strength and determination. But when he approaches her, he no longer finds a way to defend his age, just as the butterfly adores light, and approaches it, even though this approach leads to burning and decimation. We may be inclined to feel that this man exaggerates in depicting his surrender to this relationship, and that this subordination and acquiescence is not to the female, but is perhaps a representation of the relationship between man and his hometown, which, however far he tries to keep away from it for unhealthy social conditions, returns to it as a submissive to his longing to it despite the poisons in his memory. On the other hand, we might say that the relationship between the speaker in the addressee whom he is addressing, using the pronoun "you" might be a relationship between a person and any habit that he is addicted to, and in vain he tries to quit, and this habit can be the "writing habit," as the "butterflies" are the fluttering thoughts, and perhaps the colliding thoughts in the poet's mind, and the moment of burning wings is the moment of labor and feeling dead then giving birth, namely, the birth of the poem, as if the poet is tired of the mission of writing, or maybe he's tired of the issues that he's trying to break, but all his attempts fail, as he finds himself led by the events that take place around him, and to the thoughts that take place in his mind, and as a result, he responds submissively without any attempt at rebellion, or revenge.

This approach of analysis brings us back to the self-wrapped poetry, where the poet depicts through his text the relationship between him and the poem, or the writing process, and addresses issues related to poetry in a special symbolic context, manifested here through the "butterfly" to leave us wondering: Is the relationship between poet and poem as the relationship of love and commitment symbolized by the "butterfly"? Or is it what the butterfly symbolizes in Sufism such as fusion in the self, where the poet melts into himself, or in the poetic text and lives a state of circulation and rotation around one center, which is the idea until reaching the moment of light and birth of the text? We may also wonder whether the writing process is an example of the impact of the burning of the butterfly wing, as the poet writes a text, which is an act that he believes is usually unnoticed, but its impact is far-reaching, spanning years, especially when scattered texts meet in a whole collection of poetry.

Thus, we can say that the poet has been successful in integrating the indications and the visual formation in the poem, as well as the thematic place as a visual space, as we find on the thematic level, the word "roads" and "road" in the following phrase: "I don't know where the roads are going; I just know that road that leads to you" (Saba, 2010, p. 48). This expression is related to the movement of "butterflies", which follows only the roads that lead them to light, where their decimation is. Besides, butterflies are also linked to what the butterfly symbolizes in psychology, namely, the desire to move

from a state to a state and to bring about change on the personal or intellectual level, which is the situation in which the speaking ego/I of the poem, which ends with submission and surrender.

Before the conclusion of the talk about the visual shape of the poem, although the butterfly drawing is clear, where the two wings are up and down, and the middle line is its body, it can be said that this formation may be interpreted as a sand clock that the speaking ego/I turned over, declaring rebellion and resistance its relationship with the addressed female, though the crucial moment that was supposed to end the relationship completely restores the heart of the clock as if nothing had been among the first decisions.

It should be noted here that the poem does not end here, as on the following page, we find an additional passage, arranged as follows:

لأشتياق
في العيون
في الأصابع
في الشفاه
ولشموم في الذاكرة.

For longing
In the eyes
In the fingers
In the lips
Poisons in the memory.

This latest passage confirms the contradiction and confusion of the Ego-speaker in the poem, between longing and poisons, between connectivity and boycott, between the past and its impact on the present; it may be more like the impact of effect of the butterfly wing, expressed in shape and content in the text, and the shaking of the butterfly wing that we might sense through these last lines, and their suggestion of the oscillation, or perhaps the movement of the sand grain in the sand-clock.

Summary

Poets have tried hard to demonstrate the social, human and psychological dimension of the place, and not only dealt with it as areas and spaces, but also as renewed living being, a reflection of a living dynamic perpetuity. The researcher tried in this study to monitor the relationship between the place as a dynamic living being that expresses a certain indication, and the place as spaces, vacuums, and drawings that the poet succeeded in designing them in such a way that serve the indications. The researcher also illustrated that through two poems: The poems "Inshitarat/Fissions" and "Ishtiyah and Sumum/ Longing and Poisons", from the poet's collection "Playing on the Flank of the Word", which

are the only two visual poems in all of Anwar Saba's poetry, but they offer a good example of the relationship between form and content.

The two poems also emphasize the importance of *sight*, the print form or textual space that has become a basic structure of poetic structures, and that it is "a rich clue that guides the act of receiving" (Ibn Ḥamid, 1996, p. 99). It provides written words with a specific explanation, lends symbolic indications to their semantic concept and expands their content (Longree, 1976, p. 67).

It also affirms that printing structures of all kinds have meanings that cannot be conveyed in other ways, and it also achieves many goals simultaneously, such as highlighting of the poem structure, setting the punctuation marks in the text, and guiding the reader to read correctly. It also focalizes on the imagination and defines the shape, style and perspective drawing for the main purpose of the poem. Besides, it activates the reader's imagination, and encourages him to create a series of mental images and link them to those contained in the text (Bohn, 1986, p. 68).

On the other hand, visual form in the two poems that were analyzed, is a means of expanding the boundaries of poetry as an art and of expressing the poet Anwar Saba, who is also known as a visual artist, and a means of reaching a wider audience, as the employed structures introduced an element of pleasure and challenge, by distancing the classical linear elements, thereby pushing stability and mono-production.

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