The Poetic Montage and the Moment of the Revolutionary in 'Adunīs' Poem: *Hādhā Huwa Ismī / This Is My Name*

Fadi Ma`louf¹

Abstract:

This study deals with the poetic structure of 'Adunīs' poem Hādhā Huwa 'Ismī (This Is My Name), specifically focusing on the poet's employment of the technique of poetic montage as a tool to formulate the poetics of the text. This poem is rich both on the visual printing level and the audio rhythmic level as it employs audio-visual effects within poetic images that move consecutively in a way that appears random and scattered but is actually controlled by the poet's authority to create a compound dramatic poetic text consisting of sequential sections that are deeply connected. Additionally, this poem can trace minute details in the soul of the revolutionary and his life, which constitute a mixture of conscious insistence on undermining already established systems and the deep internal connection with the dream of fertility and resurrection that is expressed by the erotic relationship reflected in some of the sections of the poem.

Keywords: Poetic Montage; Revolutionary; Rhythmic; Structure; Visual; Printing; Poetics; Change

¹ Researcher and teacher – Mar Elias College in Ibillin.

Introduction

In the center of the painting 'Liberty Leading the People' by Eugene Delacroix (1798-1863), which depicts the upheaval of the Parisians in 1830 against their king, Charles X (1757-1836), in defense of the gains of the French Revolution, a woman stands erect on a high rock among the corpses holding a rifle with a spear in one hand, and in the other, she raises the French flag high, while her shirt falling on her chest at the moment of declaring the victory of the liberty of the French people.

If we look closely at the features of this Parisian lady who embodies the image of 'liberty' and 'revolution' against tyranny, we may notice that there is a clear resemblance between the features of her face and body and the features of Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love, beauty and fertility. Probably, Delacroix hints through this resemblance to the intersection between temptation and fertility that Aphrodite represents with the idea of 'revolution', which is the idea of fertilization of life and renewed resurrection.

This study deals with the poem " $H\bar{a}dh\bar{a}$ Huwa Ismi/ This Is My Name",¹ which was written by 'Adunīs (b. 1930) in January of 1969 and published for the first time in *Mawāqif* magazine in the same year.² The poem introduces a dimension that mixes between the violence of the revolution and its temptation, between the cruelty of the rebellious revolutionary who is disinclined to every hollow regime and the transparency of his internal connection to the dream of resurrection and rebirth.

To understand this dimension, the study discusses the structure of the poem through which 'Adunīs established his poetic excavation in the character of the

¹ The study depends on: *al-'A 'mal al-Shi 'riyya* 2: *Hādhā Huwa Ismī wa Qaṣā 'id 'Ukhrā.* Dār al-Madā: Damascus; 'Adunīs (1996b.), 223-239.

²'Adunīs. "Hādhā Huwa Ismī". Mawāqif. Issue 4, (1969), 89-102.

'Revolutionary' and illuminated the moment of the breakout of the revolution, moving between the internal world of the 'revolutionary', his words and actions, through focusing on and highlighting the technique of "Poetic Montage". The study follows the movement of the poet's 'camera' between scenes that observe reality and the movement of the revolutionary in him, on the one hand, and intimate scenes that represent an erotic relationship that this revolutionary is experiencing, which can be read – in one of its dimensions –as a representation of his relationship with the land. So, how does the poet employ the technique of *movie montage* in enriching a poetic structure that reveals this mixture of temptation and revolution?

Undermining the Poetic Writing

[']Adunīs's poem *Hādhā Huwa Ismī /This Is My Name* is considered a milestone in the history of modern Arabic poetry due to the difference, adventure and experimentation that it includes on the level of poetic language and rhythm. [']Adunīs moves with this text from the linear poem to the web-directed poem whose multiple axes intersect without submitting to the principle of organized sequence. It is closer to the principle of sequential interaction in the split of the atom: a collection of sequent explosives that characterize the nature of the internal relationships in 'Adunīs' poetic language which is based on antithetical parallelisms,¹ which are organized within an adjacent structure that the poet weaves in the form of 'movie montage' as consecutive scenes that have no logical relationship among them.

¹ Sa'id, Khālidah. *Harakiyyat al- 'Ibda*'. Beirut, Dār al- 'Awdah, 1982, 106-107.

On the other hand, some critics maintain¹ that the poem, *This Is My Name*, is an initial embodiment of the idea of "the New Writing" that 'Adunīs theorized in several essays that he published two years after writing the poem in *Mawāqif* magazine.² However, and despite the value of these opinions and the significance of their reading of the poem in this context, I believe that the project of the "New Writing' started before the poem and continued to grow and develop after reaching to texts that are more expressive to the idea, and reached their peak in the nineties of the last century. Nevertheless, the poem *This Is My Name* in its linguistic and rhythmic structure constitutes a significant sign in the process of developing the 'New Writing' by the poet, which aimed to 'undermine' the poetic language that preceded it.

In my view, 'Adunīs's book of poems *Aghanī Mihyār al-Dimashqī* (1961) constitutes the real beginning of Free Verse in 'Adunīs's works and is one of the leading books of Free Verse in general, in which the poet shows an extraordinary ability in making the meaning and structure of the poem and the book in general, one unit that describes an intellectual, visionary, artistic-aesthetic project by creating the character of Mihyār and shedding light on its thoughts and perceptions that intersect, to a large extent, with the thoughts and perceptions of the poet himself and his attitude towards culture and life.³

¹ See: Adonis and Abu Deeb. "This Is My Name". *Grand Street*. No.40, (1991), 164-165; Bannīs, Muḥammad. *Al-Shiʿr al-ʿArabī al-Ḥadīth: Bunyatuhu wa ʾIbdālātuhā – al-Shiʿr al-Muʿaşir*. *Al-Dar al-Bayḍa*': Dar Tubqal, 1990, 119.

² See the three essays in *Mawāqif* magazine, issues: 15-18; 'Adunīs. "Ta'sis Kitābah Jadīdah 1". *Mawāqif*. Issue 15, (1971), 5-7; 'Adunīs. "Ta'sis Kitābah Jadīdah 2". *Mawāqif*. Issue 16, (1971), 9-27; 'Adunīs. "Ta'sis Kitābah Jadīdah 3". *Mawāqif*. Issue 17-18, (1971), 6-10.

³ 'Adunīs points out on the cover of the first edition of this book, published by Dār Majallat Shi'r (1961) that the character of Mihyār al-Dimashqī "reincarnates his

In his two succeeding books of poetry, Mihyār's character flows into the sap of the poems and the poet hints at it implicitly and even explicitly in some poems of his book *al-Masraḥ wa al-Marāya/ Theater and Mirrors* (1968)¹ and reaches with *'This Is My Name'* into a new and deeper embodiment of a character that carries the same spirit, as we shall see, but through the employment of a poetic structure that rises into a higher position.

The Russian Formalists see that Form in poetry consists of the total tools and artistic styles that distinguish the literary language in the text, which prepares the receivers to the state of "de-familiarization" that shakes their familiar look on the world and pushes them into 'seeing' things in a new and original way.² However, these tools and styles cannot be effective if they are not organized by a tight and strict geometric thought that recollects the horizons of the emotional experience and grants it a poetic dimension. This geometric thought that organizes the total relationships is called the 'poetic structure',³ which is the

- ¹ See, for example, 'Adunīs. *Al-'Amāl al-Shi'riyya 1: Mihyār al-Dimashqī wa Qaṣā'id* '*Ukhrā*. Damascus: Dār al-Madā, 1996: 361, 370, 405, 450.
- ² Baldick, C. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, 225-226.
- ³ The study of poetic structure was the center of attention of several studies that accompanied modern texts. They are generally based on some earlier important studies that were inspired by an article by Jan Mukarovsky that was published in 1940. See the article in: Mukarovsky, J. *On Poetic Language*. Lisse: Peter de Ridder Press, 1976.

thoughts, problems, tendencies, and embodies his life and experience". For more information about the dimensions of this character and its intertwinement with 'Adunīs, see: Barakāt, Ḥalīm. "Aghānī Mihyār al-Dimashqī wa 'Alam al-Shi'r al-'Aghnā". *Shi'r*. Issue 23, (1962), 109-124; For contemplation on its philosophical dimensions, see: Dahir, 'Adil. "Al-Tashakhşun wa al-Takhaṭṭī fi Aghānī Mihyār al-Dimashqī". *Shi'r* Magazine. Issue 24, (1962), p.108-137.

special impression that distinguishes one poet from another, through which, defamiliarization takes place, and the significant indication and message are revealed (if the poet or poetry chooses to be of a message).

This study tries to look at the poetic structure from a comprehensive and geometrical perspective and highlights the tool of 'montage',¹ which is common in the world of filmmaking, a valuable technique in the poetic structure of *This Is My Name*, which can also be applied to reading the dynamics of the poetic structure in other long, modernist poems by 'Adunīs and other poets. This study tries to discuss the ways in which montage as a technical device, works in the text.

Modern critical schools discuss the issue of the movement of poetry from being an oral speech, that is received by the ear, into a written one that the reader receives through sight on paper.² This movement provides the poet with several sources that enable him to enrich the poetic impression of the text and to contribute to the conveyance of the poetic lightning and generation of textual indications through printing and punctuation, so that intersection between the

Other important articles about the Poetic Structure, see: Lotman, J. *The Structure of Artistic Text.* Ann Arbor: Dept. of Slavic Languages and Literature, University of Michigan, 1977; and: Riffaterre, M. *Semiotics of Poetry.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978.

¹ Several studies dealt with the relationship between cinema and poetry. See the introduction to the study *Modernist Montage* to know more about the employment of the technique of montage in literature in: Sitney, A. *Modernist Montage*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1990, 1-16.

² See 'Adunīs' point of view about this issue in his establishing article in *Mawāqif* magazine; 'Adunīs. "Ta'sis Kitābah Jadīdah 2". *Mawāqif*. Issue 16, (1971), p. 9-27.

poetic text and visual art mix with the development of the visual poem.¹ It is worth mentioning that *Mawāqif* magazine, which was established by 'Adunīs, accompanied this type of poetry and frequently published samples of it.

However, the structure of the poem *This Is My Name*, which benefitted from this modernization and the available typing and printing tools, did not make the text subject to the written marks only but mixes between the printing effects that establish the shape of the written text and the impact of the rhythmic effectiveness that are specific to the Arabic meters. This combination of the modernist elements and classical poetic elements contribute to the production of dramatic dynamics that is revealed through consecutive scenes that integrate image, sound and movement, and reflects the coordination between them to create the effective *poetic moment*. In light of these developments, we may say that the choice of scenes and their arrangement, play the main role in the formation of the poetic structure which characterizes this poem.

The Printing Layout and the Design of the Poetic Structure

Distribution of the words on the white of the page is an indicative textual sign. A quick look through the sixteen pages of the poem enables the reader to recognize two main types: sections or stanzas of long lines that look like a prosetext (but the words do not fully reach the ends of the lines) as well as sections of short lines of no more than five words. Between the sections of long lines and the sections of short lines, there are no printing or textual separations. The poet moves between them without any preparation. Moreover, the lengths of these sections vary without any specific order.

¹ To review primary definitions of the Visual Poem, see: Cuddon, J. A. A Dictionary of Literary Terms. London: A. Deutsch, 1997, p. 495; Baldick, C. The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms, 187; Preminger, A. Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1965, 607.

On the other hand, the poet employs the size of the typing font of the letters: some sentences are emphasized through enlarging the font and or by bold typing. Thus, these sentences look like subtitles or probably form important central sentences in the context of the text that the poet wants to highlight. He increases significance by leaving some space before and after them. These sentences appear in the following order (in brackets – the page number): (4) روطني في لاجئ (4) MY HOMELAND IS A REFUGEE IN ME; أوطني في لاجئ العم الحضارة – هذا القادر أن أغيّر: لُغم الحضارة – هذا (10) ، (5) معو اسمي ABLE TO CHANGE: THE MINE PLANTED UNDER CIVILIZATION THIS IS MY NAME; (15) معر الميت الرماد ولا الريخ (15) معر العدى المعند غير الجنون (17) NEITHER THE ASH NOR THE WIND AM I; (16) مالام (17) NEITHER NOTHING REMAINS BUT MADNESS.

In addition to that, there are some noticeable textual references. The poet employs the mark of ellipsis repeatedly at the ends of the sections with long lines, and sometimes he adds them at the beginning of the lines¹. He also intentionally lowers the number of full stops in the same section to the minimum in several places, which confuses the readers and leaves them puzzled. How can one read the following sentence, for example: النقى دم تحت نهديها /my days are female fire under her breast² Should a comma (a pause) be put after the word (أنش)/fire) or after (أنش) moreover, the poet at times intentionally typed in bold some sentences without enlarging the font.³ For example: ⁴

¹'Adunīs. *Al-'A 'māl al-Shi 'riyya 2: Hādhā Huwa Ismī wa Qaşā 'id 'Ukhrā*. Damascus: Dār al- Madā, 1996, 238-239.

² Ibid., 226.

³ Ibid., 224.

⁴Adonis and Abu Deeb. "This Is My Name", 158.

I glimpse a word /

around which we are all mirage and mud.

'Umru' al-Qays couldn't shark it and al-Ma'arrī is its child,

Under it al-Junayd caved in as did al-Hallaj and al-Niffarī/

Sometimes, the poet intentionally clarifies the function of certain sentences by pointing out under them in brackets that they are منشور / a placard¹ or منشور / clandestine manifesto.² For example:³

The nation has reposed In the honey of the pulpit and the rebec. The creator has fortified it like a moat And sealed it. No body knows where the door is. Nobody asks where the door is.

(A clandestine manifesto)

This printing layout shapes the general structure and design of the text and establishes the poetic structure, its general limits as well as primary features. The reader becomes occupied with these signs and marks through several various questions: What is the indication of these distinctive and different masses in length and in width? What is the indication of the employment of the ellipsis marks (...) at the beginning and the end of the sections of long lines? What is the value of bold capital letters? What is the cause of the reduction of full stops? Do the 'placard' and 'secret leaflets' define specific places, times and events?

¹'Adunīs. *Al-'A 'māl al-Shi 'riyya 2: Hādhā Huwa Ismī wa Qaṣā 'id 'Ukhrā*. Damascus, 224.

² Ibid., 226.

³Adonis and Abu Deeb. "This Is My Name", 154.

These questions accompany the readers as they enter the process of deep reading of the dramatic movement of the text.

The Rhythmic Structure and Creation of the Emotional Dimension of the Character/ Event

The poem is established on two central rhythms: the rhythm of al-Khafīf Meter (in the sections of the long lines), and the rhythm of al-Ramal Meter (in most of the short lines), in addition to the rhythm of al-Mutadārak Meter in limited sections or phrases (whose peculiarity will be discussed below). In addition, the movement from one meter to another is not sharp or abrupt as there is a certain investment of the common feet (taf'īlāt), especially between the main meters of al-Khafīf and al-Ramal, while the lines that are written in Mutadārak meter are nearly separate. Nonetheless, the poem, in general, is mudawwar (without caesura) ¹ as the metrical structure reveals, and as 'Adunīs himself states in his opening references of his Complete Works that were published by Dar al-'awda in 1988.²

Variation in poetic meters is not futile, and choice of the rhythm of the meter is a live representation of the spirit of speech and its nature. Rhythm, like theatrical music, wraps the speech with its atmosphere and expresses the emotional overflow that the speech and 'poetic event' include.

² 'Adunīs. *Al- 'A 'māl al-kmāila 1*. Beirut: Dar al- 'Awdah, 1988, 7.

¹ Al-Bayt al-mudawwar (round line of poetry) is a line in which the last word in the first half (hemistich) is divided. The second part of the divided word starts the second half (hemistich) in order to make the meter correct and complete. In modern Arabic poetry (Free Verse) the poets allow themselves to end the line with a part of the foot (taf'īla) and add the remaining part to the next like. About Tadweer in modern poetry, see: Al-Hamidī, Nasser and Muḥammad al-ʿUrābī. *Taṭawwur al- Bunya al- ʿIqa ʿiya fi al-Shi ʿr al- ʿArabī al-Muʿaṣir*. Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Intishar al-ʿArabī, 2012, 168-173.

Therefore, the readers notice that the connection of al-Khafīf Meter, which is a compound meter of the two feet / tafa'īl: *mustaf'ilun* and *fa'ilātun*) with the long lines that are close to prose in their printing form, and the connection of al-Ramal Meter with the sections of the short lines that are closer to lyricism and clarity, are intended to express two paths that accompany each other throughout the poem. They accompany and sometimes touch, and this contact can contribute to the deep reading of the text. It is possible to say the same thing about the nature of the lines that are written in the Mutadārak foot (taf'īla), including their shortness that might express speed and excitement. Besides, our query about the value of *tadwīr* (lack of caesura and division of the word between the two hemistiches) and its referential allusion harmonize with this reading. Making the poem rounded, (without caesura), is necessarily a structural value in the poem.¹

The two meters are likely to form two voices of two different characters or two voices of the same character in two different conditions or levels. In both cases, there is a certain reference to a connection, whether internally or externally, with the dramatic structure of the text. Hence, readers ask about the nature of al-Khafīf Meter and the indication that it might carry. They also wonder about the nature of al-Ramal Meter.

It is worthwhile mentioning that al-Khafīf Meter is one of the simplest and closest to the soul, and because of its over-simplicity, it sounds like prose.² If readers relate that with the printing shape of the large sections, they will notice the relation between the meter and the prose writing on the white paper. On the other hand, the small sections take the foot (taf īla) of al-Ramal Meter, which is one of the most important lively lyrical meters on which 'Muwashahāt' were

¹ Compare: Sa'id, Khālidah. *Ḥarakiyyat al-'Ibda'*, 116-117.

² See: 'Ali, 'Abd al-Rida. Mūsīqā al-Shi'r al- 'Arabī, Qadīmuhu wa Hadīthuhu: Dirāsah wa Tatbīq fī Shi'r al-Shaţrayn wa al-Shi'r al-Hur. Amman: Dār al-Shurūq, 1997, 139.

composed Al-Ramal, linguistically, is a type of quick walking,¹ and the quick rhythm contributes to the lyrical side of these sections. Finally, al-Mutadārak Meter which is based on a short foot (taf'īla) of ($f\bar{a}$ 'ilun and its possible versions) engulfs the atmosphere with a state of motivation and excitement, and quick movement, will be examined with discussing the dramatic structure of the poem.

This rhythmic structure, accompanied with the printing distribution as a structural reflection, embodies the human experience and existential conflict that are described in the poem *This Is My Name*. The formal elements mentioned, and other details that cannot be introduced in this quick description, stem from the need to describe the emotional experience and define its initial features; the printing distribution determines the scene of events and creates a specific frame for the features of the experience, while the rhythm enriches the spirit of the place and draws the emotional and psychological details that the *I* / *First-Person Speaker* lives in this text.

The Dramatic Structure, the Poetic Montage and the Moment of the Revolutionary

The discourse in 'This Is My Name' is introduced through the first-person singular in harmony with the title and with our perception of a human being who desires to talk about his identity and, certainly, about what distinguishes him or belongs to him. The "I", then, is in the center of the speech, whose purpose is its clarification and revelation. Therefore, may wonder who the speaker is, and whether he represent himself, a group of people, or perhaps a certain value.

It is appropriate here to think about the central expression in which the speaker describes himself: ا قادر أن أغيّر: لغم الحضارة، هذا هو اسمي "ABLE TO CHANGE: THE MINE PLANTED UNDER CIVILIZATION - THIS IS MY

¹ Ibid., 91.

NAME". Readers notice that the speaker (I), is a project of change; he is a person who is confident of his ability to make difference in reality and history (culture/ civilization); he expresses his desire in revolutionary change in a decisive and violent way) undermining civilization (لغم الحضارة). He raises the questions: What is the reality that he lives in and what does he aspire to? What is the "disease" of the culture that he wants to undermine? Is it the human materialistic culture that is based on wrong foundations? Or does he have a project against the condition of the culture that he belongs to and its intellectual and social types that he does not agree with? Does the term "culture" imply the static writing that submits to preconceived molds and forms? Is the culture that he intends to undermine the culture of violence, war, domination and occupation?

In light of this reading and these questions, Readers explore the identity of the first-person speaker (I) and conclude that he is a revolutionary who aspires to build a new culture. Here, readers can hear the voice of the implied author, whose message is revolution and change and the pursuit to establish and stabilize the identity of the modernist individual, who is critical of the existing regimes on the road to achieving a free future of humanity. This, in turn, corresponds with the character of the author 'Adunīs whose focus of thoughts is guided by this approach.

The (I) speaker does not move in the sphere of the poem alone, and the poem always aspires to a state of addressing and communicativeness. Let's try to define the addressee in the following section:

And here is my flame erasing

I entered your pool I have a city beneath my sorrows the green branch a snake and the sun a black...

Come forward poor of the Earth cover this age with rags and tears cover it with the body which seeks its warmth . . . the city is arches of madness / the revolution should give birth to its own children I held, I buried millions of songs and came (are you in my grave?) Give me your hands to feel follow me My time has not come yet and the cemetery of the world has come / For all the sultans I have ashes / Give me your hands follow me...

¹'Adunīs. Al- 'A 'māl al-Shi 'riyya 2: Hādhā Huwa Ismī wa Qaṣā 'id 'Ukhrā, 224.

ABLE TO CHANGE: THE MINE PLANTED UNDER CIVILIZATION – THIS IS MY NAME

(A placard) 1

Clearly, the speaker moves in the fifth line from addressing "You" (the female) to addressing "the Poor of the Earth" and then returns in the last line to address "You" (the female). That movement takes place through sudden unprepared for turns. Readers wonder about the addressed female, if it is the revolution, liberty, homeland, A companion of struggle or a sweetheart, and how they should read the relationship between the addressees.

Shifting between the pronouns is not always logical, and it can be interpreted through searching the relationships between the text sections, as the perspective of the reader would indicate. Movement from one scene to another is not necessarily logical all the time, and it can take place unexpectedly, without prior notice, just as the scenes of movies.

Absorption of the moving picture in discourse or rhythm in this poem is made available by the cinematography and montage techniques. It seems that the poet here is like a director of a modernist surrealistic movie with modernist surrealist features that does not introduce the event in a chronological order but shows "states" from different places and times in order to introduce one idea that combines them². Let's examine the cinematic feature of the text through the following section:

¹ Adonis and Abu Deeb (1991), pp.151-152.

² Throughout the last century, the cinema art has developed tools of photography, writing and direction that created relationships with the modern art of fiction, which led to a large creative intersection in the artistic and expressionistic techniques. Certain major directors managed to deepen the poetic impression of the image, its associations and

symbolism. We notice the employment of flashback and foreshadowing, the employment of dream, myth and documentary besides observation of movement between the internal worlds and external worlds. We also notice the perfection of employment of the close shot and distant shot and camera angle in focusing on events or features or symbolism and allusion in addition to other techniques. To know more about these poetic features in the cinema, which we see intersect with the style of structuring the poem *This Is My Name*, the reader can consult, among other sources, the movies of the Russian director Andrei Tarkovsky (d. 1986), specifically his important movie "The Mirror" in 1975, which describes the director's biography through movement between the period of his childhood before the Second World War and the period of the War itself and afterwards, making use of 'memory', 'dreams', images from events and wars in different parts of the world in an ambiguous illogical way that is parallel with the Stream of Consciousness technique. For a critical review of the cinema poetics, especially by Tarkovsky, see: Turovskaya, M. *Tarkovsky: Cinema as Poetry*. London: Faber and Faber, 1989, 94-101.

My homeland chases me like a river of blood / the forehead of civilization is a moldy pit / I collected a throne was reincarnated as a lantern/

Damascus became infatuated Baghdad grew tender / the sword of history is broken in the face of my homeland / who is the fire who is the flood?/

You were a desert when I arrested the snow in you I split like you into sand and fog I cried you are a god in order to see his face to erase what sand and fog I cried you are a god in order to see his face to erase what links me to him I said I fused my body with your body you are the trough filled with my waves I am the night barefoot when I inserted you into my navel you procreated as a path in my steps you entered my infant water / Seek the light be rooted in my wilderness and wandering

¹ 'Adunīs. Al- 'A 'māl al-Shi 'riyya 2: Hādhā Huwa Ismī wa Qaṣā 'id 'Ukhrā, 229-230.

A fruit-bearing numbress creeps round the head a dream under the pillow my days are a hole in my pocket the world has decayed /Eve is pregnant in my trousers /

I walk on the ice of my pleasures / walk between the baffling and the inimitable walk in a rose / the flowers of despair wither and sadness rusts / an army of crushed faces crosses history an army like a thread an army that has succumbed and surrendered, an army like a shadow / I run in the voices of victims alone over the lip of death like a grave walking in a ball of light

We fused the blood of the beloved ones protects like eyelashes I heard your pulse in my skin (are you a forest?) The barrier has collapsed (Were you a barrier?) The sea gull asked a thread in the sea which the captain was spinning the snow of a traveler sang a sun it couldn't see (are you my sun?) My sun is a feather which drinks the space / the lost one heard voice (are you my voice?) My voice is my time your voluptuous pulse and your breasts are my blackness and every night my whiteness A cloud crept, so I surrendered my face to the flood and wandered aimlessly in my ruins.../ ¹

The following is a discussion of the text based on the technique of movie direction, as a sample that represents the structure of the text.

The focus of the poem, as aforementioned, is on the (I), the first-person singular speaker, the resisting dismissive revolutionary, who lives in a state of conflict with reality. Thus, he is the central character/ hero, around whose personal experience all the 'scenes' revolve. The reader's vision about the dimensions of this revolutionary and his revolution is deepened with every new

¹ Adonis and Abu Deeb. "This Is My Name", 156-157.

image or 'scene'. The scenes are paralleled and meet without always having a clear connection between them. The movement from one scene to another, seems as if it occurs by association, but we see that it is established on the poet's/ director's artistic vision that employs the technique of 'free association' for the scenes within that vision.

The dramatic movement in the text is clear and it is made prominent by the movement of the verbs and their frequency, on the one hand, and the second person pronoun that the readers confused with its interpretation from line to line, on the other hand. However, the development of the dramatic plot is not traditional and the alignment of the scenes and their sequence make the text closer to automatic writing, and closer to the logic of the 'dream' and the readers must be 'a good interpreter of dreams' during their reading.

The Reader's Camera captures the (I) speaker when he is facing the tragedy of his homeland, as it is hinted in the subtitle above the section: روطني في لاجئ MY HOMELAND IS A REFUGEE IN ME. This leads readers to see him as a person who is suffering for the suffering of his homeland (What is Homeland? Is it the Country? The Language? The World?). He wants to turn reality upside down and change it (In the scene: a writer is writing the secret circulations/ a demonstrator holds a placard...). He criticizes the forehead of culture (civilization) describing it as the Mossy Bottom (al-Qāʿ al-Ṭuḥlubī/ الطحلبيَ الصاحلي). Here, through the contrast between "the forehead of civilization" and "The Mossy Bottom", images from modern culture come to mind: images of brutal imperialistic military troops, images of the materialistic consumptive society. That express power, externally, but, internally, they express the collapse of the human values (Should we remember here the poet's poem, from a previous

period – *Qabr min 'Ajl New York/ a Grave for New York*).¹ The Camera then returns to the (I) Speaker: "I collected a throne was reincarnated as a lantern" – despite the destruction of his homeland and the fall of the crown of his kingdom (authority and sovereignty), he tries to collect what remained of his determination and dignity to form a lantern (light) to guide his homeland. Damascus wandered, which means "was lost" and Baghdad was broken, and this might be an allusion to the political and social condition during the dominion of al-Ba⁶ th Party regimes, which ruled Damascus and Baghdad, and it may be – on a different axis – an allusion to the stagnation and superficiality of the way the Intelligentsia dealt with their culture (Baghdad and Damascus are among the most important cultural capitals in classical times and modern times). Then he asks: من الطوفان؟ /Who is the fire who is the flood? In both cases, there is search for a radical change that reminds us of Mihyār al-Dimashqī and is connected with the term "The Mine Planted Under Civilization".

The 'director' moves to a new scene that is defined by the presence of a female addressee. this addressee has many interpretations: beloved woman, homeland, Liberty, Language, etc. When the scene is photographed, the presence of the woman and observation of her relationship with the (I) speaker has an indication which refers to everything that was mentioned, and the receivers must see through the eye of the external and the eye of the symbol, and chose freely any interpretation that they like.

In directing this scene, the 'director' imagines the relationship between the (I) speaker and the addressed woman as a sexual love relationship. The (I) speaker unites with the addressee: أنت الصحراء حين أسرت الثلج فيك انشطرتُ مثلك (You were a desert when I arrested the snow in you I split like you

¹ 'Adunīs. *Al-'A'mal al-Shi'riyya 3: Mufrad bi Şighat al-Jam' wa Qaşā'id 'Ukhrā.* Damascus: Dār al-Madā, 1996, 105-130.

After that, in a dream-like scene, the (I) speaker recalls the image of an "army" of smashed faces and sees himself at the edge of death alone, running in the voice of the victims. Then he sees himself walking in a ball of light. This moment, which looks illogical to the reader, is united thematically by a state of passionate love, freedom and revolution. What unites him structurally and artistically is what is called in literature and art Stream of Consciousness, where the (I) Speaker moves between his external world and his internal world, as the employment of the 'dream' technique shows.

The verb النصهرنا we melted, points again the scene of the previous passionate sexual love. The speech turns to be with 'tou, intersecting with 'the blood of the beloved' that protects like eyelashes, in a fantastic mixture that moves readers to the indicative dimensions of 'You, whose pulse the (I) speaker hears in his skin. He starts a series of questions: (Are you a forest?), (Were you a barrier?), (Are you my Sun?), (Are you my voice?). Directing this image of this section is a real and fascinating challenge. The director can move between scenes that draw, mainly, an image of 'liberty', which is the spine on which the discourse of the text leans.

At the end of the section, there is a scene of clouds that creep and cover the sky, forecasting a flood. The director focuses the camera on the face of the (I) speaker, who devoted himself completely to his project of change and redemption.

After observation of these special details of one section, which presented as a sample for the development of the meaning in the text, a question could be raised: How do the parts of the text correlate and interconnect as a whole? What is the dramatic thread that connects them?

The dramatic structure of the text develops between two structural powers, which I call: *unity and variety*. In fact, what unites all the parts of the text is basically, the (I) Speaker, who is present in all the 'scenes' of the poem. The poem observes his experience and its dimensions. Variety, however, appears in more than one form: transformations of pronouns, polyphony (multiplicity of voices), variety of verbs and tenses, and multiplicity of meters (mainly: al-Khafīf, al-Ramal, al-Mutadārak) that accompany all that.

The present and the past intertwine in the time frame randomly, without any definite or counted chronological sequence, and this is connected to the nature of automatic writing that is faithful to the internal illuminations within the human soul. It seems that the poet employs this type of writing as an artistic tool in this mixture. However, there is a certain moment of the present from which the dramatic development starts. It is supposed that this moment should be highlighted as the focal moment from which the interpretation of any thought or image starts. This moment lies in the central statement: منابعة الحضارة، (Able to Change: The Mine Planted Under Civilization – This Is My Name).

Time in this statement is the Present that looks at the Future. The present participle أقدرُ /able is equal to the present simple verb/ قادر (I am able/ I can).

The ambition of the (I) speaker is to change civilization and reality. The other parts of the poem do not often take place in the present reality; they are a journey inside the depths of this revolutionary through which reflects his experiences, thoughts, memory, dreams and reality.

The most present linguistic mold is the verbal sentence that starts with a past verb which refers to a time that preceded the time of the statement. Then we find that the poet sings the image, or more precisely, recreates it by intensifying the present verbs in it. He says:

You were a desert when I arrested the snow in you I split like you into sand and fog I cried you are a god in order to see his face to erase what sand and fog I cried you are a god in order to see his face to erase what links me to him I said I fused my body with your body you are the trough filled with my waves I am the night barefoot when I inserted you into my navel you procreated as a path in my steps you entered my infant water / Seek the light be rooted in my wilderness and wandering

A fruit-bearing numbness creeps round the head a dream under th pillow my days are a hole in my pocket the world has decayed /Eve is pregnant in my trousers /

I walk on the ice of my pleasures / walk between the baffling and the inimitable walk in a rose / the flowers of despair wither and sadness rusts / an army of crushed faces crosses history an army like a thread an army that has succumbed and surrendered, an army like a shadow / I run in the voices of victims alone over the lip of death like a grave walking in a ball of light.¹

¹ Adonis and Abu Deeb. "This Is My Name", 156. (See the Arabic text with the translation above).

readers notice here the vitality of movement between tenses and verbs. The past tense establishes the time frame ،(كنتِ، صرختُ، صرختُ، حاسدتُكِ، تناسلتِ، دخلتِ) (كنتِ، أسرتُ، انشطرتُ، صرختُ، جاسدتُكِ، (were, arrested, split, cried, fused, inserted, procreated, entered). This is what makes us see – as we have seen in the most parts of the text – that there is a *flashback* of events which preceded the "moment of revolution" (قادر أن أغيرَ...) (able to change). It is a flashback that ignites the moment and deepens its presence. The use of the Present Tense (أمحو، يجمع، (erase, links, walk) and the Imperative (استضيئَ، تأصلِي) (Seek the light, be rooted) renews the memory that contributes to the intensification of "the moment of revolution" and deepening our understanding of this revolutionary and the dimensions of his revolution. Notice in the following section how the poet conveys the echoes of the thoughts of the (I) Speaker, pointing out that he "is reading a "secret leaflet":

> الأمّة استراحت/ في عسل الرباب والمحراب / حصّنها الخالق مثل خندقٍ / وسدّه. / لا أحد يعرف أين الباب / لا أحد يسأل أين البابْ. (منشور سرّيّ)¹

The nation has reposed in the honey of the pulpit and the rebec.

The creator has fortified it like a moat and sealed it.

Nobody knows where the door is.

Nobody asks where the door is.

(A clandestine manifesto)²

The section describes the condition of the nation that reposed to the primitive lyricism and worshipping it describing it as "honey" / a roof for wishes. Its "belief" immunized it and shut the door of reasoning (ijtihad) and change, and thus, no one knows nor asks about the door of liberation. Here the poet moves

¹ Adunīs. Al- 'A 'māl al-Shi 'riyya 2: Hādhā Huwa Ismī wa Qaṣā 'id 'Ukhrā, 227.

² Adonis and Abu Deeb. "This Is My Name", 154.

between a complete event that he describes as a fact (through the past), and the miserable present (through the present tense), which sheds light on the social structure which the I speaker resists and is stimulated to change.

The change in Tenses intertwine with the transformations of pronouns and polyphony (multiple voices). One may point out that this sounds logical as we see the whole poem as a movement between the spacious distances of memory and dream and the moment of reality, which is reflected, as mentioned, through what we call "Poetic Montage". Let's see the transformation of pronouns in the following section and try to interpret it within the frame of this thought:

سلام

لوجوهٍ تسير في وحدة الصحراء للشرق يلبس العشب والنارَ ... سلامٌ للأرض يغسلها البحر سلامٌ لحمّها... عُرُيكَ الصاعقُ أُعطَى أمطاره يتعاطانيَ رعدٌ في نهديَ اختمرَ الوقت تَقدَّمْ هذا دمي أَلقُ الشرق اغترِفْني وغِبْ أضِعْني لفخذيك الدويّ البرق اغترِفْني تبطّنْ جسَدي ناريَ الْتوجِّهُ والكوكب جرحي هدايةٌ أتهجَّى... أتهجَّى نجمة أرسمُها هاربًا من وطني في وطني في خطى أيامه المنهزمه يا رماد الكلمه هل لتاريخيَ في ليلك طفلٌ؟¹

¹'Adunīs. Al- 'A 'māl al-Shi 'riyya 2: Hādhā Huwa Ismī wa Qaṣā 'id 'Ukhrā, p.238.

PEACE

To faces ambling in the loneliness of the desert,

To the East draped in grass and fire peace to the Earth

washed by the sea peace to its passion ...

Your thunderbolt of nakedness

grants me its rains thunder grips me in my breast Time has fermented O advance this is my blood the glow of the East scoop me and vanish

lose me the thunderclap is for your legs the lightning scoop me take my body as lining for your body / my fire is the orientation and the planet my wound is guidance I spell... /

I spell a star which I paint,

running away from my homeland in my homeland.

I spell a star which he paints

in the footsteps of his vanquished days.

O ashes of the Word.

Does my history have a child in your night? ¹

Readers notice in this section that there is polyphony and transformation of pronouns between the lines 3 and 4 (in the Arabic text); and then between 7 and 8 (in the Arabic text). In the first lines, the speech is directed towards the (I) Speaker that accompanies us throughout the poem, which returns in the short lines to regain the authority of speech.

The lines 4-7 convey speech that is said by a loving female. (Does she symbolize a feminine gender object?). This integration between 'voices' and pronouns occurs in several places without any preparation and without a clear textual clue, which allows for many interpretations and constitutes difficulty in

¹ Adonis and Abu Deeb. "This Is My Name", 164.

reading the poetic image. This 'dispersion' is the same feeling that accompanies the image that has indefinite features in the dream. Falling into confrontation with these addressing transformations scatters the reader who cannot come up with any kind of "certainty". However, readers wondering if these images connected with the focal moment, "the moment of the revolutionary," that was mentioned before.

In the first lines, the (I) speaker gives his greeting and peace to the land of the country that the sea washes (which has a hint towards regeneration and purity) and to its love. Then, his association moves him from its "love" to addressing a loving woman (the Land of the country? Freedom?) who calls him to mix and fuse into her and be absent in her body. So, he creates a new language (... || spell|), through which he looks for a star / a light in the night of his homeland, wondering: "Does my history have a child in your night?" Child is a sign of hope in the middle of the night of homeland.

One of the queries that require deeper treatment here is the relationship of metrical variation with the dramatic structure of the poem. Does the movement from the feet (taf'īlāt) of one meter to the feet of another meter (al-Khafīf, al-Ramal and al-Mutadārak) have any effect on establishing the indications of the poem?

In my view, each of these rhythms accompanies a different level (register) of speech and it contributes directly to creation and establishment of the dramatic structure:

 The sections that are based on al-Khafif meter are sections that take place inside the intellect of the (I) speaker. The statements and utterances describe his internal world, his dreams and memory, the formation of his thoughts and his psychological background as a resistant and revolutionary human being. Therefore, we find that the speech is characterized by illogical movement between one image and another which are not connected by anything except the speaker's experience.

- 2) The sections that are based on al-Ramal meter are clearer and lyrical. They appear to be the essence of his internal experiences and their outcome. (Notice the poet's employment of the word "additional" (thus) at the beginning of two main sections, which points out that what he has said is connected to the speech in the preceding speech). Readers notice here that the voice is the voice of a poet who expresses his hidden and inner feelings that were revealed in the preceding sections. He expresses in an actual way and with the employment of a voice that goes out from the internal worlds to the external world but without being completely separated, and this is expressed by the technique of "Tadweer" (absence of caesura). His movement can be presented like in moviemaking as a poetic material through which a comment is made on the event. It appears on the level of discourse that it is directed to the audience or the receivers who follow the "the movie-poem".
- 3) The few sections that are based on al-Mutadārak rhythm, especially the central sentence: "قادر أن أغيّر: لغم الحضارة، هذا هو اسمي" (Able to change: the Mine planted under civilization, this is my name) is the place where the internal excitement and movement meet with the external movement the movement of anger and revolution against the prevailing, and the act of blowing up.

These three axes meet in drawing the dimensions of the revolutionary character and show how the state of resistance and change possessed that revolutionary who writes a secret circulation or holds a placard in a demonstration, or looks for a way to turn the scales of reality upside down. He is the revolutionary who has no affiliation or identity to distinguish him except his revolution against every prevailing, corrupt and dead thing in the life of man on several levels.

Indications and Conclusions

After this reading process, it can be said that the "indication" is not the most important thing that the reader reaches. The indication is significant as a subjective "personal" relationship that connects the reader to the text and makes the reader a part of the history of the text and its value and vice versa. The value of 'indication' poetically lies in its being a new point of view that reveals one of the different dimensions of the text and crowns the process of the personal reading of it. The text is always larger than the total indications; it is capable of weaving a new relationship with every new potential reader, whose identity is still moving and incomplete.

The poem describes the world of a refusing revolutionary, who does not surrender to a static stagnating reality. This, as mentioned above, is the condition of the poet himself, as it is noted in his biography and attitudes.

Khālidah Saʿid describes the poem as "the revolutionary changer and redeemer who declared his 'fire' in the Palestinian revolution and made his blood the 'sign' of the presence".¹

A quick look at the first issues of *Mawāqif* magazine, which can be considered the mirror of the poet's concerns and interests in that time, it can be noticed that the magazine devoted more than one issue to shed light on this revolution and criticizes it on both the level of knowledge and level of fighting

¹ Sa'id, Khālidah. Harakiyyat al- Ibda', 99.

and the on the 'feda'i' (guerilla fighting) activity being a renewed dimension of the gloomy submissive and static reality.¹

Ismiyya Darwīsh, however, sees the poem in its national dimension² and finds connection between the poem and the 5th of June Communique', in which he criticizes the Arab situation after the 'Naksa' of 1967 on its different social and cultural levels.³ I would like to emphasize the value of this reading, too, by referring to the mentioned statement that intersects with the poet's desire to 'plant a mine under the prevailing civilization (culture) and creating new relations with reality. He says: "The issue of the conflict that the Arab world enters goes beyond the political and national frame to something farther and deeper, to the man himself in his final entity".⁴ He maintains that the political revolution is connected to the life of the Arab creators as the real adventure of creativity: unity between thought and the world. "It is natural that the revolution on the national, political level must be lined with a revolution on the level of creativity and thought".⁵ From these words, we can understand the meaning of 'undermining the civilization'. The change that the poet calls for is a radical change in the principles of human thought and creativity.

These available indications take us to another meta-poetic indication, where the poem becomes a deep representation of the poet's revolution in poetry itself. The modernist refusing and dismissive poet of the classical ancient

¹ See, especially, the special issue about ³Adunīs' criticism of the Palestinian Revolution in: *Mawāqif*, Issue 8, Second year, April (1970).

² Darwish, Ismiyya. Masār al-Taḥawulat: Dirāsah fi Shi 'r 'Adunis. Beirut: Dar al-'Ādāb, 1962, 79.

³'Adunīs. *Fātiḥah li Nihayāt al-Qarn*. Beirut: Dar al-'Awdah, 1980, 9-33.

⁴ Ibid., 22.

⁵ Ibid., 23.

attitudes according to which poetry was written, introduced a project that blows up every framed thought that is content with the ancient and does not get out of its door in order to express his own personal and intimate experience with the language- a project in which the generic borders melt in the crucible of writing that mixes every style of expressing the writing-self and its original experience.

On the other hand, the poet who has multiple 'names' and 'nicknames' and changes his position and approach regarding the Syrian Nationality to Arab Nationality and to Socialism – as his rivals accuse him – responds in this poem declaring the essence of his identity and 'original' name, which is: The Mine of Civilization and Constant Revolution. His name is the refusal and dismissing of the prevailing; his identity is dynamic, constantly regenerating and pursuing change.

These indicative levels are some of what can be produced by the poem, which is capable of creating other spaces of indication according to the reader who reads it, whether on the personal private level or on the social, political and cultural levels in any place that revolts against injustice and stagnation. With this specific particularity, it is possible to consider the text as an immortal modernist text in the history of writing.

Summary

The unity of temptation and revolution in Delacroix's painting is the strict postulate of art in the face of all forms of death, injustice, tyranny, corruption and mortality of the human being. 'Adunīs, as we have seen in his poem, deepened that unity between the energy of love and energy of liberty in his description of the moment of the revolutionary and stressed the ability of the human being to make change.

In order to create the character of the revolutionary and draw its features, the poet employed the technique of movie-photography and filming, including

arrangement of the scenes in adjacency that does not commit to be sequential or logical, but develops in the spontaneity of the consecutive images in the dream. The study calls this kind of technique 'Poetic Montage'. Through the employment of this structural tool, the poet managed to intensify the moment of the revolution that is represented in the statement "قادر أن أغيّر: لغم الحضارة، هذا هو اسمي" (Able to change: The Mine planted under Civilization. This Is My Name). Thus, he managed to move the reader through the statement into distances in the internal world of the revolutionary, his memory, dreams, reality and ambition, employing the printing layout of the words on a white page in building the general frame and structure, resurrecting the rhythmic capacity of the meters of the traditional Arabic poetry and making them a significant value in the establishment of the deep structure of the poem.

This poem, which is established on written and oral elements that are combined coherently and melted in the crucible of the dramatic style, in a highly poetic language of symbolic dimensions that send different indications, constitute a developed model of modern Arabic poetry that contributed to deviation from the main traditional poetic body and to opening of a condition of experimentation that has dominated the Arabic poetry since the seventies of the twentieth century. Thus, this poem holds a special historical value in the developmental path of modern Arabic poetics, one of whose dimensions is interrelationship and deep interconnectivity between the poetic image and the movie montage.

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لحظة الثائر و"المونتاج الشعريّ": قراءة في البنية الشعريّة لقصيدة أدونيس "هذا هو اسمي"

الملخّص:

تقرأ هذه المقالة البنية الشعريّة لقصيدة الشاعر السوريّ أدونيس (ولد 1930) "هذا هو اسي"، عبر النظر في توظيفه آليّة المونتاج السينمائيّة كأداة لتشكيل شعريّة النصّ.

تضيء القصيدة تجربة شخصيّة ثائرة على الواقع، تسعى إلى إحداث تغيير جذريّ في التعاطي مع العالم. لكنّ الكشف عن عالم هذه الشخصيّة الداخليّ وسلوكها في الواقع أوجب الشاعر بأن يتنقّل بين طبقات مختلفة من علاقة هذه الشخصيّة مع ذاتها ومع العالم. في هذه المقالة نرصد هذه الطبقات وأسلوب الشاعر في التنقّل بين عالم الشخصيّة الداخليّ وفعلها على أرض الواقع، والتشابك الذي يحدثه هذا التنقّل بين عنفيّة الثورة وإغوائها، بين قسوة الثائر الرافض النافر من كلّ نظام أجوف، وشفافيّة صلته الداخليّة الصميمة بحلم البعث والولادة الجديدة.

القصيدة الغنيّة على المستوى البصريّ (الطباعيّ) والإيقاعيّ السمّعيّ، توظّف المؤثّرات البصريّة والسمعيّة ضمن الصور الشعريّة التي تتلاحق على نحو قد يبدو عشوائيًّا مبعثرًا؛ لكنّه، كما نرى، محكوم بإرادة الشاعر تكوينَ نصّ شعريّ دراميّ مركّب من مقاطع متلاحقة تتّصل عمقيًّا، وقادر على رصد تفاصيل دقيقة في نفسيّة الثائر وحياته، التي هي مزيج من الإصرار الواعي على لَغم المنظومات المستقرّة والصلة الداخليّة العميقة بحلم الخصب والبعث الذي قد تعبّر عنه العلاقة الإيروتيكيّة المنعكسة في بعض المقاطع.

BOOK REVIEW