

A Reading on Precursors of Certitude in Umalbaneen Chronicle in terms of H.T.T.

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Preliminaries:

As a corollary, *Precursors of Certitude in Umalbaneen Chronicle* lends itself to the Al-Husseini theatre theory^١, since it is a verse drama and pays much heed to man as an individual and as a cynosure of life. In all the while, it endeavours to salvage him from everything abominable, that's why it reverts into the past to strike a note of importance to the paragons reputed for sangfroid and nonpareil philanthropy.

For the nonce, the creator of such an artwork is to exert himself to convey the events in modern diction, or rather in Quranic expressions ,as per usual in the Al-Husseini theatre theory prolific products that flirt with all the prowess in any society; Ridha Al-Khufaji ,before all, is a poet and finds great delight and honour to plough such a dramaturgy line ; as he ,in a TV interview ,declares : "it's a climacteric in my life to transpire Al-Husseini theatre issues to all". That's why the cosmopolitan attitudes in the pen of Al-Husseini theatre theory creators strike deep roots in their chef d'oeuvre.

The rest of the introduction is stratified under the main headings below:

١. The storyline.
٢. The language.
٣. The translation and innovation.
٤. Imagery.
٥. The play as a drama.
٦. Construction and ideas.
٧. The characters and responses.
 - ١ -the story

On stage, the narrator appears in three multifaceted characters; a novelist, an ordinary man, and a portraitist. In part, they narrate an iota of the coming events, in part; they convey the sense of the present faith to such everlasting paragons in the human mind. In tranquility, Umalbaneen summons all her stamina to state that for paradise there is a price, as a hint to her ultimate destiny, after her soliloquy terminated, scene two lures the readers and audience to the kinks and fissures of her vision in having a notable niche in Islam and paradise. The dramatist accelerates the tempo of the action as the vision deciphering surges into sight of the audience; a dream comes true! Imam Ali`s brother, Akeel, is to betroth a goodly wife to his brother, Ali Binabitalib (Peace be upon him and his progeny).What's to the point is that Umalbaneen father, Sheikh. Hazam, takes delight and honour to have such a man, then Fatima consents to have Imam Ali as a husband under no condition. Here comes the first technique in the play ,the shuttle from the past to the present, the dramatist manipulates such a device in

^١ Ghazi, Haider, Al-Moosawi, *Al-Husseini Theatre theory under Explication*, (Al-Najaf :Al-Dhia Press,٢٠١١) ٢٦-٩, such a theater believes that Al-Hussein is a humanitarian shout to all human kinds.

scene four; as Al-Hussein emerges into the stage to negotiate with Al-Wali about the oath of fealty, adamant and staunch Al-Hussein grows in the caliphate palace: Thou are too petty to wade into doing so", shouted he . Consequently, the caliphate entourage cowers and Imam Al-Hussein plunges into meeting his Hashemite coterie. In scene five, Umalbaneen fluctuates between anxiety and faith; on stage alone, she iterates that we all belong to Allah and only to Him is our return. Further and further, the mother whets morale of her sons to fight and shield Imam Al-Hussein at all costs and they respond ,in return, to the sacred duty Allah choose to the selected figures. One by one, she reminds them of their father reputed for sangfroid, faith and the main conflict between evil and good. Heartedly, Al-`Abass casts pleasure and content into the soul of his mother as he illustrates the main sophisticated issues inculcated in her mind:

We do represent thee

Never do we blink the eyes a moment

O Imam of the nation¹.

To the last extent, the mother bestows her blessings upon the sons one by one and throws light on their father, the ever victor , to prod them into altruism in its entirety. In the aggregate, Basheer surges into the stage to herald that Imam Al-Hussein and his bevy fall martyrs and his family caught in captivity. First, he never informs Mohammed Bin Al-Hanafeia, Al-Hussein's brother, about the repercussions of the battle, then he breathes all the events to Umalbaneen who collapses at the moment , she fathoms that All-Hussein slaughtered at the hand of Umayyad army, then only then, she musters all her stamina and intrepidity to shout: "far far be it from us to be held in humility". In this regard, the toiling mother concatenates all the events from the moment of the vision , she had before being married to Imam Ali , to the moment she receives such information, life and evil exude despondency the more, Umalbaneen truckles to Allah only the One and only the more: "By Allah never ever slip Hussein from the living memory", shows she .

¹- The language

In diction, there are two major premises; denotation and connotation; the former stipulates transparency in constructing an image; words mean nothing but what they mean in precision. Yet the latter takes hold of multilayered dimensions; words permeate through different layers of meaning; Ridha Al-Khufaji, intermittently, employs both to transpire his pivotal issues to the readers; his free verse takes root and branch in *Precursors of Certitude in Umalbaneen Chronicle* or sooner than endeavours to delineate the mere characters as modern and dynamic:

**O the lady of the benevolent,
These are sacred moments,
Shot through with glad tidings,
Now, it's thy dream coming true,
By the blessing of Him,
Heave thy anchor,
It's thy destiny calling thee,
To the most honest
To the most chaste home
In existence¹.**

¹ Al-Khufaji ,*Precursors of Certitude in Umalbaneen Chronicle* ,p. ٤٤.

The Quranic expressions thrive in the play, since most of the characters adhere essential doctrines of Islam, that's to say, Al-Hussein loses himself to religion and Islam. On the plus side, Ridha Al-Khufaji is an Islamic littérateur, and believes that the Quranic touches hold main issues in a text high and prominent; such touches guide man to perfection and satisfaction, in this regard, Mathew Arnold certifies:

It is important, therefore, to hold fast to this: that poetry is at the bottom a criticism of life; that the greatest of a poet lies in his powerful and beautiful appreciation of ideas to life, to the question: how to live?^١

All in all, the clique of evil appeals to connotation crevices to conceal truth and equivocates ,if need be , in time the coterie of good reverts into denotation to cast transparency and candour into the context:

**But it concerns the living,
Not the dead,
It's commonly agreed about the consultation system,
So why do thou render it into inheritance,
And who grants thee the right to do so?"**

In the above-mentioned excerpt, the atmosphere manifests itself as sublime and transcendental, and the images flow as a river meandering. The persona ,here, is Al-Hussein himself, that's why diction shades into different levels, from one character to another, from a knight to a layman ; the entourage, as usual , takes hold of colloquialism as it has its say in the play; elocution juxtaposes the pivotal characters and recedes from the minor ones:

**O the lady of Had not Akeel Binabitalib fathomed thee,
In specificity,
As thou are the one,
For such a niche,
Never he would embark into us.**^٢

^٣-Imagery

In the short terms, *Precursors of Certitude of Umalbaneen Chronicle* is a narrative play. The persona stratifies certain events happened in the past, thus the dramatist manipulates the shuttle technique to take a move from the past to the present and vice versa. Most of the characters and events elucidated as precise and accurate as Ridha Al-Khufaji takes seizure of visual and auditory images to pinpoint a meant fact. In scene two, the dramatist exploits some galactic images to delineate a vision:

**Thou art to have from him that sparkling moon,
And those illuminating planets,
By Allah, thou deserve such a niche,
Thy great honour, ingrained traits and prudence,
All cast thee into having such a great man.**^٤

^١ Al-Khufaji ,*Precursors of Certitude in Umalbaneen Chronicle* ,٤٣.

^٢ S.H. Burton, *The Criticism of poetry* ,(London : Longmam, ١٩٧٤), ١٣٧.

^٣ Al-Khufaji ,*Precursors of Certitude in Umalbaneen Chronicle* ,٢٨.

^٤ ibid, p. ٢٤.

^٥ Al-Khufaji ,*Precursors of Certitude in Umalbaneen Chronicle* , ١٦.

Yet the water images give much shrift to the fact that Umalbaneen is to have so great a role in life and so prominent a niche in paradise, the dramatist makes use of some auditory images to concentrate upon a mother adhering utter faith:

**He plunges into the soul thoroughly,
As a waterfall,
Of sacred source,
Or do I stymie my dream?
Myself?
My soul?
From being sprinkled with springs of faith,
As Akeel calls for me,
To recommence the bout of Al-Zahra,
the daughter of the prophet.'**

In time, the olfactory images creep into the events to highlight the state of despondency and sorrow; the soothsayer describes the eminent days as climactic;" her horoscope augurs ill"¹, the dramatist paves the way to coming dusty events as the mother loses all her sons. In time, the image of ferocity iterated in the play to illustrate the atmosphere of the battle between a coterie and a profuse number of knights, such a battle lacks any sense of equivalence. In the last scene, Basheer portrays the ultimate battle as ferocious, so it bounces in the mind as bloody and blatant:

**It happened between
a great Umayyad army led by
`Amir bin Sa`ad Bin Abiwakass and Shamir Bin Thealjawshin,
and a righteous bevy, veined with the helpmates
of the messenger of Allah,
such as, Habeeb Bin Mudhahir Al-Asadi,
led by Imam Al-Hussein !"**

The poetic imagery drags the human mind and heart, flesh and blood, didacticism and hedonism into one image inculcated in the living memory, that's why some lines linger in hearts so long we do live.

ξ-Translation and Innovation

It might be argued that translation as a process stipulates certain nexuses between a language and a culture^ξ. That's to say, the translated text should be, by hook or crook, a cynosure where a different kind of cultures surges into being. In *Precursors of Certitude in Umalbaneen Chronicle* there are certain humanitarian issues man responds to unconsciously; philanthropy, gallantry, stoicism and altruism prevail in the human soul without any preliminary, such are the cornerstones into which all the human colours, race and walks wade into peace and passion.

In furtherance with the above tenets, it is preferable for the translator and the creator to be in one historical moment; it is more likely to share common congeniality and to keep fidelity intact. In this regard, they are simpatico, that's to say, they have the same sympathy to certain points. In the play, the translator and the dramatist pay much heed to Al-Husseini theatre theory whose main manifestos

¹ ibid,p.13.

^ξ Al-Khufaji ,*Precursors of Certitude in Umalbaneen Chronicle* , ٥٣.

^ξLawrence Venti , *The Translator's Invisibility* , (London: Creative Print, ١٩٩٧), ٣٠٦.

stipulate humanitarianism, intimacy, forgiveness and philanthropy. Ridha Al-Khufaji exploits the Quranic expressions, as previously stated, that's why the translator depends mainly upon the idiomatic structure to keep in parallel with the original text.

Of his techniques the greatest are the modern coinage of words and the "curbed gallop" in light of the free verse to portray certain images palpitating with life and truth. Thus, the translator drags the original text into free verse to keep the content intact. However, fidelity hovers throughout the text; people fail to fight shedding tears, as the play premièred in the university of Babylon and Kufa on Monday, April ١٦th, ٢٠١٢:

Ye men of Yethrib !

Ye cannot stand (the attract) !

Hussein slaughtered, in tears eyes,

Whose scattered corpse at Karbala sand

Peripatetically whose speared head on the move.^١

On account of the fact : " In a poem the words should be a pleasing", asserted Marianne Moore," to the ear as the meaning is the mind"^٢, with the curbed gallop tackled in the play, Ridha Al-Khufaji casts more and more attention to the way people both hear and see; the historic present or rather the fictional present permeates throughout the lines to bid the events ring true and vivid^٣. All the events narrated in line with the present tense, so there is a sense of intimacy and cordiality between the actors and the audience ; all the pivotal characters sting at the hearts strings of the readers and the audience as well. In consequence, the historic present paves the way to the cosmopolitan targets Al-Husseini theatre theory pants after^٤.

So marked is that the acts of innovation in the play stern the prow of the text to globality; the translator, dexterously and expertly, bifurcates the stage into two halves, the first occupied with the historical events, Imam Al-Hussein with his coterie versus Umayyad army, in time, the second half, the front side of the stage, shot through with three modern figures; two novelist and a girl portraitist. Here comes a nexus between the past and the present; history repeats itself with different colours. Combine that with the content of the portrait the girl is tingeing and the way the male novelist plunges into the stage ,it's definitely to remind the man in the asphalt city of : " there is no brave youth but Ali, there is no sword rendering services but Zulfigar", so the present permeates through the past .In scene four, the novelist, rigorously and pertinacious , takes seizure of the halt of an Umayyad knight endeavouring to put the invitation to sword. In a trance, the novelist, at the nth power of his voice, shouts: "Hussein is from me, I am from him". On the rampage, the present breaks into the past to strike a note of importance that in modern age there are Husseinist roots and branches palpitating with sangfroid and philanthropy, that's why the past-to-present configuration technique flirts with the modern audience. Man is more likely to share some traits with past nonpareil ,so long he utters nay to despotism, nay to injustice and nay to mundane ephemeral desires ,such abstinence is more likely to be in full swing, whereas abomination is to be on the decline ; nay lingers in all ages. To the last, the portraitist tinges a dove

^١ Al-Khufaji ,*Precursors of Certitude in Umalbaneen Chronicle* ,٥٥.

^٢ Michael Meyer, *The Bedford Introduction to Literature*, (Boston: Quebecor World, ٢٠٠٥), ١١٩.

^٣ R.L.Trask, A dictionary of Grammatical Terms in Linguistics, (Cornwall: T.J. Press, ١٩٩٣), ١٢٨ ; Randolph Quirk, A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language, London: Longman, ١٩٨٧), ١٨٣.

^٤ Ghazi Al-Moosawi, *Al-Husseini Theatre theory under Explication*, ٢٨.

hovering over Al-Hussein head to convey that Al-Hussein martyrdom erects germinating principles of martyrology to mankind.

So far do scene five and six admit that Umalbanean gives preponderance to some words a female doctor and secondary school girl share with to reach consensus between the past and the present. The past-to-present configuration digs great pillars in terms of emotionality and morality of the content ; the doctor consecrates her toiling hours to the ailing people, the secondary school girl gives much shifts to her study and knowledge to reimburse the lost smile of her parents. In time, Umalbanean loses everything to Islam and justice, thus there is a trajectory from the past to the present. In time, the portraitist, from the very outset, appears on stage engrossed in her oil colours and brush strokes; sometimes she scrutinizes the events and then resumes depicting the past events and figures, none perceives what a kind of a portrait she intends to tinge ; readers and audience pant after the content of the portrait. Then only then, the penultimate speech in the play deciphers both the thematic issues and the technical targets beyond the oil colour on the white canvas. The portraitist adjusts the easel to the audience, all at a twitter; she decodes her strokes in some lines from the *Spanish Tragedy* for Thomas Kyd:

O eyes no eyes, but fountains fraught with tears,

O life, no life, but lively form of death!

O world, no world, but mass of public wrongs,

Confused and filled with murder and misdeeds¹.

In the aforementioned excerpt, the persona finds nothing to extenuate his dejection, then Kyd rebukes none but vices and evil for relegating man into a passion slave; innocence flourishes, as experience sprouts. Such is to increase fidelity and intimacy, and drags the whole play into cosmopolitan writing orbit². The Pas-to-present technique thrives much in the front line of the stage. Last but not least, the novelist terminates the play with a notion to Charles Dickens:

If Hussein fought to quench his worldly desires, (as alleged by certain Christian critics) then I do not understand why his sisters, wives and children accompanied him. It stands to reason therefore that he sacrifices purely for Islam.

°-The play as a drama.

In light of the main manifestos of dramaturgy, *Precursors of Certitude in Umalbanean Chronicle* lends itself to the stage devices, *since* it ramifies into meandering extents of plot, subplots and vague issues. In part, it is a tragedy; the protagonist incarnates all the humanitarian principles, in time, the antagonist purports the feline stratagem and twisted expressions. All he desires is to have the oath of fealty. Thus , the man to man conflict emerges into existence in a shimmering desert devoid of knightship precepts and major Islamic doctrines. The play appears in print in ٢٠٠٧ and then acted in ٢٠١٢ on the Babylon university theatre under the auspice of The English department, college of education for humanities with esteem and patronage from the head of the department Professor Doctor Fareed Hammeed Al-Hindawi who vehemently and fervently emits, as usual, the rays of light to Al-Husseini theatre theory as of ٢٠٠٧ to the moment.

¹ <<http://www.SpanishTragedy.edu/map/writers/k-l/strategies.htm.p.43>> (Retrieved on ٠٤-٠٣-٢٠١١)

² J.A. Cuddon , *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, (England :Clays Lid, S T Ives plc, ١٩٩٩) ٩٤٦-٥١.

Before then, the play heaves into view on Kufa university theatre and drags all the students of English departments in the college of education and college of art into securitizing the events and responding to the language and actors, as Dr.`Abass, head of English department in the college of education, declares, without respite: "it is a great artwork", yet Dr.Abdalhussein, head of English department in the college of arts, wonders: "It's a blessed step in the academic orbit". In the interim, the audience fails to fight weeping, to the extent they imagine that the actors are not students: "they are teachers, they have utter confidence and a fluent language". Consequently ,Umalbaneen with her martyred sons hails in these two universities as an emissary of humanity and knowledge.

٦-Construction and Ideas.

The plot structure of the play manifests itself at the very outset. In time ,there is one main plot with three subplots buttressing the essential one; Al-Hussein storyline heaves into view as he determines to repair to Karbala, the first subplot comes to the fore as the dramatist, Ridha Al-Khufaji, exploits the past-to-present configuration in the play , sometimes, he shifts from the past to the present and vice versa; the first sub-plot escorts Imam Ali`s brother, Akeel Ibnabitalib and the acts of the betrothal, yet the second one surges into the stage as Umalbaneen receives the information about her decapitated sons, in time, the last subplot solidifies the main one; Al-Hussein falls martyr, and people are in tears, here comes the novelist to pollinate the present with the past, as she highlights a locus to Charles Dickens glorifying Al-Hussein revolution; Al-Hussein lingers, so long we are in pursuance of his principles.

Structurally accounting, Ridha Al-Khufaji concatenates the events in a logical way right down to the dénouement and deviates from the historical information to provoke man into suspense and excitement. Al-Hussein martyrdom and the Quranic expressions evidently silhouette against the play in its entirety, but the dramatist braids well the plot structure with the characters; Al-`Abass ,a pivotal character, takes the brunt to extenuate the state of despondency and agony his mother truckles to, that's why the dramatic irony rotates around his destiny, in part, the audience perceives the fate of such men in full bloom, in part, they care not that they are at sword point. Such a technique creates an atmosphere of tragedy, since there is underlying sympathy in hearts; Umalbaneen has a vision, then only then, it comes true, in any event, deep agony and despondency lurk in the rest of the vision. Furtively, the soothsayer conceals a jot of the truth for not casting dejection into the heart of the lady. In the face of death, sword, blood and slaughter ,the Hashemite planets surge into the battle with free will and utter faith to stern Islam to originality.

٧-The Characters and Responses.

Before all, the microcosm and macrocosm , as concepts, strike deep roots in the play, since the storyline and the characters incarnate highly purified principles of sangfroid and stoicism man adheres to without demure or reserve. Umalbaneen is a mother to all women chaste, noble and benevolent, so she is both a microcosmic and macrocosmic protagonist, in time, the other characters keep in parallel with sublime precepts man desires to have . That's why it's to consider that the play itself is a cosmopolitan writing for its utter globality ; it concerns all the human beings with all intents and purposes, colour and race; it shed light on virtues and vices of man regardless of his blood and flesh.

In light of characterology there are three compendiums serving to dissect the characters to their mere bones:

a-Type.

b-Social.

c-Place.

Under the heading of type, all the characters in the play are dynamic and grow bit by bit, in wisdom and altruism; the evil cliques brag of having vices, on the contrary, the righteous preen upon having virtues. What's to the point is that the novelists, at the very onset, grabble through the events and then they confess that truth must out at any price.

Best of all, the social status of the characters is of importance, the dramatist, in all aspects, endeavours to portray them as individuals and typical of the virtues and vices they incarnate throughout the events of an artwork; in the play, Umalbanean is of highly respected pedigree and deserves to be a stepmother to Imam Al-Hassin and Al-Hussein, as Imam Ali's brother, Akeel, believes during the acts of the betrothal. That's , such characters are mere voices of peace and wisdom in the troubled society.

What's more, the place of the character designates his desires, state and psychological and moral precepts. Not only does Al-`Abbass, with his brothers, extenuate his mother's anxiety and dejection, but also he casts contention upon the readers and audience as he whets the morale of his brothers all; Imam Al-Hussein, in the Umayyad palace, divulges his mere gallantry and faith. On the aggregate, there is a nexus between the characters and the place they live in. The dramatist pays heed to such characterological principles, as he delineates his characters as lingering archetypes to have a tragedy whose protagonist goes without a fault and ploughs ,with free will, a path palpitating with martyrdom.

On stage, all the actors go with thorough empathy, to the extent they could not help channeling themselves into their reality; though Dr, Iyad Al-Salami, the director, persists in elucidating the fact that actors should have a line of demarcation between what they feel and what they have to transpire :

It is our concern to render written words into a kind of cinematography on the stage; each has to stage-manage a character multiform, histrionics – extirpating and stentorian.

In the mind's eye, they do stick to the historical and social depth of the figures they acted. Day in day out, they bring what they have memorized into life and circadian rhythms ; Buthaina, as Umalbanean, instructs her daughter to be nothing but pious and gallant at the face of calamity: "it is an honour to me and my family to perform so profuse a role in life'

No less forcibly, `Abass Hakeem, as Imam Al-Hussein and Basheer, commits his entire speeches to memory in a month and envisions that there is a stepping stones to take the finger into transcendentalism , several times, in rehearsals and the première, he loses hold of his tears for the dilemma and calamity Al-Hussein finds in Karbala: "the play, in its entirety, rejoices the heart of the quick and the dead and redounds to morality ,diction and structure". At heart, Ja`afir `Aesa, as Mohammed Bin Al-Hanafeia, Al-Hussein's brother, exudes great empathy to his character, to the extent, he innovates some touches on stage, as is the case with Maithim , as Al-Wali, who sticks to the character delineation, that's why there is no a sense of histrionics on stage.

There is no a clear divide between his being and the character; on the stage, Ali Ghazi, as Imam Al-`Abass, feels and at the very onset, his anxiety and enthusiasm gnaw the heart ,but then he does hurdle: "Not an iota we do to such and such pillars

in the whole universe, but we never cease doing ". For Nadhhal Salih one symbol plays so impressive a role in such a verse drama, the character of Thumama encompasses my days and nights: "man has to be man in all that struggle, yesterday Thumama, today us, Allah willing". In time, Alaa Salah ,the portraitist, pins her hopes on the fact that one sufficient image propagates many a viewpoint, for her , it's of importance to transpire such morality and edification in the society. Without such reverence ,all the students actors never relish having a plum; they ,heartily and potently, lay hold of their roles as sand merits erecting a nest sand by sand.

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