



Lexical Choices of Optimism and Pessimism in Assyab's Rain Song

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Abstract

The current paper sheds light on two concepts, namely optimism and pessimism. The etymologies, definitions, types and factors causing them are illustrated. Then, a brief introduction concerning the poem under study followed by the analysis of the whole poem is given.

However, the aim of the study is to find out, depending on the lexical choices that the poet used, whether the mood of the poem is optimistic or pessimistic. It is hypothesized that the poem is optimistic. Data analysis shows how various and different lexical choices Assyab used in his poem to express optimism and pessimism in a unique and marvelous mythical way. He succeeded to use words as he wanted. In other words, all words were under his control. In the same context, Assyab's joy and/or pain, whether for personal reasons or for his country, are drawn brilliantly on his, as it were, portrait of the Rain Song.

The conclusion advocates the given hypothesis, i.e. the general mood of the poem is optimistic rather than pessimistic .

Keywords: optimism, pessimism, optimist, pessimist, rain song..



ملخص البحث

تناول البحث الحالي مفهومي التفاؤل والتشاؤم من حيث أصل الكلمتان وتعريفهما وأنواعهما والعوامل التي تسببهما. ثم قدم البحث مقدمة عن قصيدة أنشودة المطر للشاعر العراقي الكبير بدر شاكر السياب وذكرت في هذه المقدمة بعض التفاصيل التي توضح مناسبة القصيدة. أما هدف البحث فيتركز على معرفة النمط العام للقصيدة وبيان فيما إذا كانت القصيدة ذات نمط تفاؤلي أم تشاؤمي. وذهب الباحث إلى الافتراض بأن النمط العام للقصيدة هو تفاؤلي. وفي الجانب العملي للبحث فقد تم تقسيم القصيدة إلى إحدى عشر قسماً ليسهل على الباحث تحليلها. وقد كشفت عملية التحليل غزارة العبارات والمفردات التي استخدمها الشاعر للتنقل بقارئه ما بين التفاؤل والتشاؤم في عالم أسطوري رسمه بفرشاة كلماته المميزة معبراً عن أحزانه الشخصية وهموم وطنه الذي يعيش الشقاء تارة، وتارة ينثر الأمل والتفاؤل ويتمرد على اليأس. وقد توصل البحث إلى أن الشاعر نجح بشكل كبير في التعبير عن حالتي التفاؤل والتشاؤم ولم يكتفي باستخدام عبارات خاصة لكل منهما بل راح يعبر بنفس المفردات أحياناً عن كليهما لكن بمواقف مختلفة، وأشهر هذه الكلمات كلمة "مطر" التي جاءت لتدل على الأمل في قوله (أكاد اسمع النخيل يشرب المطر) وعلى الحزن في قوله (أتعلمين أي حزن يبعث المطر؟). كما توصل البحث إلى ما يؤكد الفرضية الموضوعية بأن التفاؤل هو النمط العام للقصيدة ويبدو أن الشاعر لم يغفل عن ذلك أيضاً لهذا اختار أن يضع في عنوان القصيدة مفردة (أنشودة) والتي تعني ضمناً (البهجة والأمل).

الكلمات المفتاحية: التفاؤل ، التشاؤم، متفائل، متشائم ، انشودة المطر

1. Introduction

Personal feelings, social events as well as biological and psychological factors have their own impact on the level of optimism and/or pessimism of any person. However, this impact is not necessarily fixed or permanent; it might be a temporal state for some and permanent one for others. Also, it might be situational. That is why, to study a poem, for example, one should have a clear background of the poet's life and the occasion of the poem. Trying to deduce the implicit meaning of the poem, one cannot depend on the literal meaning of words. Conventional meaning alone is not effective. Thus, conventional and non-conventional meanings must be examined together in order to have the right theme of the poem.

2. Aims of the Study

The current study is an attempt to examine the lexical choices of optimism and pessimism used by Assyab in his poem *The Rain Song*. In addition, it aims at finding whether or not those phenomena can be expressed by using the same expressions but in different contexts in the same poem.

As such, it tries to determine whether the poem is of an optimistic mood or a pessimistic one.

3. Hypothesis

The current study hypothesizes that the lexical choices used for optimism are more than those used for pessimism. Hence, the general mood of the poem is an optimistic one.

4. Procedure and Data

Assyab's *Rain Song* is the material to be discussed and analyzed in this paper. The poem is divided into stanzas in order to make analysis easier. However, those stanzas, in turn, are analyzed semantically and pragmatically away from



the custom analysis which deals with the rhyme scheme and other details of the poem.

5. Optimism and Pessimism

Skeat (1993: 316, 344) mentions that the etymologies of the words “optimism” and “pessimism” are the French “optimise” from New Latin “optium” (i.e. the greatest good) and the French “pessimise” from New Latin “pessimus” (i.e. the worst), respectively.

Optimism, on one hand, is the tendency to look on the more favorable side of events or conditions and to expect the most favorable outcome (www1. 2013; np). Grandel (1969) cited in Al-Ansari, 2002: 4) maintains that optimism is the expectation for achieving success in future. Webster (1970: 1584, 1585) defines optimism as the tendency to expect the possible things or dwell on the most hopeful aspects of a situation. Dember *et al.* (1989:103) point out that optimism is a personal aptitude to seeing and/or understanding things positively. Pessimism, on the other hand, is the tendency to see the worst aspect of things or believe that the worst will happen, i.e. it emphasizes the bad part of a situation rather than the good (www2.,www.3., 2013: np). In the same context, Hornby (2006: 944) adds that in pessimism the controlling feeling is that a bad thing will happen and that something will not be successful.

In fact, the interest of studying those phenomena goes back to the Age of Enlightenment in Europe; the philosophers of that age adopted three points of view: optimistic, pessimistic and suspicious. The first view is represented by Leibniz (1646 – 1716) who argues that this world is the best possible of all worlds and that evil is important for a better and nicer world. Also, he claims that man could be better than what s/he is on at the time being. As for the second view, it is represented by Voltaire (1694 – 1778) who rejects Leibniz's optimism and insists on the evil of this world, the evil of society, the evil of

human desires and the evil of nature. The last view, the suspicious one, is represented by Hume (1711 – 1776) who, despite all the evidence of both optimists and pessimists, does not depend on one. He assures his suspicion of the ability of man to reach to a neutral solution for the problem of optimism and pessimism. Thus, he can neither be considered optimist nor pessimist (Shukargi, 2011: 58, 60, 63).

However, Arafat (2009) states that optimism and pessimism might be due to different factors such as: biological factor, i.e. it is concerned with the genetic inheritance, social factor which includes the role of society in imposing the habits, norms and traditions on human being personality, as well as economical and political factors. Therefore, employment has a great effect to arouse the pessimistic feeling of individuals. To add, wars, political conflict and unrested society contribute a lot to the feeling of optimism and pessimism.

The Greek physician [Hippocrates](#) (460–370 BC) suggests that there are four fundamental personality types: (Al-Ka'ki, 2009: 8; Arafat, 2009:1-2)

a. Sanguine

The sanguine [temperament](#) is fundamentally sociable and pleasure-seeking; sanguine people are impulsive and charismatic. They tend to enjoy social gatherings, making new friends and tend to be boisterous. They are talkative and not shy. Sanguine people are warm-hearted, lively and optimistic.

b. Choleric

The choleric temperament is fundamentally ambitious and leader-like. They have a lot of [aggression](#), [energy](#), and/or [passion](#), and they try to instill that in others. They focus on getting a job done efficiently. However, they can quickly fall into deep depression or moodiness when failures or setbacks befall them.



c. Melancholic

The melancholic temperament is fundamentally [introverted](#). People of this type are often perceived as very cautious. They can become preoccupied with the [tragedy and cruelty in the world](#) and are susceptible to depression and moodiness. They are self-reliant and independent. However, they can get so involved in what they are doing that they forget to think of other issues.

d. Phlegmatic

The phlegmatic temperament is fundamentally relaxed, quiet, rational, curious, and observant. They are ranging from warmly attentive to lazily sluggish. They prefer to observe and to think on the world around them while not getting involved. They may try to inspire others to do the things which they themselves think about doing. They may be shy and often prefer stability to uncertainty and change.

6. Assyab's Rain Song 1

"Rain Song" is one of the most famous poems of Assyab's. In this poem, Assyab using his rich, creative and marvelous poetic ability succeeded in expressing his reluctant and tortured feeling. He noticeably managed to change his real personal and political experiences, which are characterized by disappointment, into skillful and brilliant poetic verses. It is very clear that the poet through a mythical style of writing introduces to the world his home, city and village where he was born in as well as the tales of its people and some parts of the city which are unknown even for the local citizens themselves. He brilliantly put the simple life with its entire burden not only of Iraqis' but of all Arabs at that time in a mythical way. His unique style of narrating love and pain had captured the attention of many critics and writers.

¹ Badir Shakir Assyab is a famous Iraqi poet. He was born in December 24, 1926 in [Jekor](#), a town south of [Basra](#) in [Iraq](#). He graduated from the Higher Teachers Training College of Baghdad in 1948. At the end of the 1940s he launched, with other poets, the free verse movement.

Moreover, the poem includes a mixture of feeling. It swings between optimism and pessimism; it is not clear whether the poet is optimist or not. Sometimes, as a reader starts to feel optimist, he loses this feeling soon and consequently becomes pessimist; and vice-versa.

7. Data Analysis

a. Analysis of the word “Rain”

The word “MATAR” (Rain) has various meanings as it is used in the whole poem:

- As a natural phenomenon that refers to the falling of water from the sky, the poet says:

كأن أقواس السحاب تشرب الغيوم .. وقطرة فقطرة تذوب في المطر

"It is as if archways of mist drank the clouds, And drop by drop dissolved in the rain."

This phenomenon is preceded by condensation and the clouds composition after that the water falls from the sky down.

- As a source of sadness and pessimism when the poet says:

أتعلمين أي حزن يبعث المطر؟

"Do you know what sorrow the rain can inspire?"

He admits the negative impact of rain on human beings and nature. Therefore, he likens rain to spilled blood, to hungry and poor people, orphans and to dead people when he says:

المطر كالدم المراق .. المطر كالجوع وكالأطفال والموتى

"Every tear wept by the hungry and naked people

And every spilt drop of slaves' blood."

Hence; rain causes a great pain for the society in which the poet lives and consequently it causes a pain for the poet himself.



- As a source of happiness: "Rain" is used to refer to smile that symbolizes a new dawn. The poet mentions the benefit of rain. Rain is a source of optimism and a giver of life:

أكاد اسمع النخيل يشرب المطر.. واسمع القرى تئن ، والمهاجرين ... يصارعون بالمجاديف وبالقلوع ،

عواصف الخليج، والريعود، منشدين: مطر... مطر...

"I can almost hear the palm trees drinking the rain

Hear the villages moaning and emigrants

With oar and sail fighting the Gulf

Winds of storm and thunder, singing

Rain. . . rain"...

Rain provides human beings with hope and gives them motive to struggle for life and to work hardly. The repetition of the word "Rain "as a song expresses the hope which can only be achieved through work .The song is to sing with principles that human beings believe in.

- Rain is a source of morbidity that is the benefit of rain does not belong to people of place wherein it falls but to their enemies .Although there is rain ، there is hunger too, the poet expresses this idea by the following lines:

وكل عام حين يعشب الثرى نجوع ... ما مر عام على العراق ليس فيه جوع

"And every year when earth turned green the hunger struck us.

Not a year has passed without hunger in Iraq.

Rain".....

b- Analysis of the whole poem

First stanza

عَيْنَاكَ غَابَتَا نَخِيلِ سَاعَةِ السَّحَرِ ،

أَوْ شُرْفَتَانِ رَاحَ يَنَآئِ عَنْهُمَا الْقَمَرُ .

عَيْنَاكَ حِينَ تَبْسُمَانِ تُورِقُ الْكُرُومُ

وَتَرْقُصُ الْأَضْوَاءُ ... كَالْأَقْمَارِ فِي مَهَرٍ

يُرْجُهُ الْمَجْدَافُ وَهَنَا سَاعَةَ السَّحَرِ
كَأَنَّهَا تَنْبُضُ فِي غَوْرَيْهِمَا ، النُّجُومُ ...

*"Your eyes are two palm tree forests in early light
Or two balconies from which the moonlight recedes
When they smile, your eyes, the vines put forth their leaves
And lights dance . . . like moons in a river
Rippled by the blade of an oar at break of day
As if stars were throbbing in the depths of them
translucent"...*

The words carrying optimistic meaning in this stanza which starts with very optimistic words those are *Aynaki* "your eyes", *Ghabata Nakheel* "palm trees forest", *Al Sabar* "early light", *Shurfatan* "balconies". *Al Kamar* "moonlights recede", *Tabsuman* "smile", *Turiku Al -Kuroom* "grapevines bloom", *akmar* "moons", *Naber* "river", *Nu joom* "stars". Throughout these words human beings feel optimists for life.

Although there is no mark for pessimism in the word level; however, it is hidden among the lines of stanza. The night is not mentioned as a word but the words of the stanza personify the night.

The most optimistic and pessimistic lines of the first stanza can be shown in the first line *"Your eyes are two palm trees in early light"* there are silence, calm, and reassuring. The poet describes his country "Iraq" with optimistic words although everything is difficult. In the second line:

"Or two balconies from which the moonlight recedes."

The ambition of the poet gets obvious. He likens the eyes of his beloved to two balconies to set free from night. The line is optimistic and the poet tries to escape from the reality.

The symbols of optimism and pessimism in the first stanza such as the words *Two forest* "refer to depth and ambiguity". *Palm trees* "they refer to the connection with environment and they are a symbol of the country".



Moon light recedes: "when it recedes the beauty, charm , and ambiguity of the eyes . *Vines* , the poet chooses the vines because they have a connotation to the ecstasy of the smile.

Second Stanza

وَتَغْرَقَانِ فِي ضَبَابٍ مِنْ أَسَى شَفِيفٍ
كَالْبَحْرِ سَرَّحَ الْيَدَيْنِ فَوْقَهُ الْمَسَاءُ ،
دِفْءُ الشِّتَاءِ فِيهِ وَارْتِعَاشُهُ الْحَرِيفُ ،
وَالْمَوْتُ ، وَالْمِيلَادُ ، وَالظَّلَامُ ، وَالضُّيَاءُ ؛
فَتَسْتَفِيقُ مِلءَ رُوحِي ، رَعَشَةُ الْبُكَاءِ
كَنْشُوةِ الْطِفْلِ إِذَا خَافَ مِنَ الْقَمَرِ !

*"And they drown in a mist of sorrow translucent
Like the sea stroked by the hand of nightfall;
The warmth of winter is in it, the shudder of autumn,
And death and birth, darkness and light;
A sobbing flares up to tremble in my soul
And a savage elation embracing the sky,
Frenzy of a child frightened by the moon".*

In this stanza; the oppositeness is dominant. There is a mixture between positive and negative words.

Death ≠ Birth

Autumn ≠ shudder

Hunger ≠ rain

Dark ≠ light

Winter ≠ warmth

The words carrying optimistic meanings are *Shafeef* "translucent", *Baher* "sea" , *Millad* "birth", *Dhiyaa* "light", *Robey* "my soul", *Nashwa* "elation", *Tu aniqu* "embracing" , *Smaa* "sky", *tefl* "child" .

The words carrying pessimistic meaning are *Dhabab* "mist", *Assa* "sorrow", *Shitaa* "winter" , *Khareef* "autumn" , *Al Mawt* "death" , *Dhalam* "darkness", *Al Bukaa* "sobbing" , *Wah shi* "savage", *Nashwa* "frenzy", *Khafa* "frightened", *Qamar* "moon".

Moreover, this stanza is full of ambiguity. It straddles the gap between optimism and pessimism. As it were, it is a battlefield to depict the argument between the antinomies such as "death/birth". Therefore, all these optimistic and pessimistic words are used to show the struggle between what they refer to.

The word "sobbing" has two references: one as concrete and the other as an outlet to get rid of the pain of soul. The words "mist" and "sea" in the second stanza are connotations of sadness because they denote the poet's sorrow.

Third stanza

كَأَنَّ أَقْوَاسَ السَّحَابِ تَشْرَبُ الْغُيُومَ
وَقَطْرَةً فَقَطْرَةً تَذُوبُ فِي الْمَطَرِ ...
وَكَزَكَرَ الْأَطْفَالُ فِي عَرَائِشِ الْكُرُومِ ،
وَدَغْدَغَتْ صَمَتَ الْعَصَافِيرِ عَلَى الشَّجَرِ
أُنْشُودَةَ الْمَطَرِ ...
مَطَرٌ..مَطَرٌ... مَطَرٌ ...
تَتَأَبَّ الْمَسَاءُ ، وَالْغُيُومُ مَا تَزَالُ
تَسِيحُ مَا تَسِيحُ مِنْ دُمُوعِهَا الثَّقَالُ .

*"It is as if archways of mist drank the clouds
And drop by drop dissolved in the rain
As if children snickered in the vineyard bowers
The song of the rain
Rippled the silence of birds in the trees
Drop, drop, the rain
Drip
Drop the rain
Evening yawned from low clouds
Heavy tears are streaming still*



The Rain is full of activity in this stanza because it represents hope for human beings. The children and even birds get optimistic. The tone of optimism and happiness is getting louder and louder. The poet says:

"It is as if archways of mist drank the clouds."

These archways are the same of triumph arches in their connotations.

"And drop by drop dissolved in the rain."

In the moment of dripping rain, the poet is as optimistic as children because it is raining.

Words expressing optimism and pessimism in the third stanza can be noted clearly. The words referring to optimism are so dominant in this stanza. They are represented by *Akwas* "archways", *Sahab* "clouds", *Qatra* "drop", *Tathub* "dissolved", *Kar Kar Al atfal* "children snickered", *Ara -aish* "bowers", *kurum* "vines", *Daghdagha* "rippled", *Shajar* "trees", *Tatathaab* "yawing". While the pessimistic words are represented only by *Samt* "silence" and *Masaa* "evening".

The word *Sahab* "clouds" on the contrary refers to the debut of anxiety and the word *Qatra* "drop" denotes retreating the missing hope in life.

The most optimistic and pessimistic lines of the third stanza are: "*As if children snickered in the vine yard bowers*" this line shows the hope which will come true in the future; and "*Rippled the silence of birds in the trees*" which refers to freedom and breaking the restraints. Finally, the repetition of rain refers to rain in nature as in:

*"Drop, drop, the rain
Drip.... Drop the rain".*

Fourth stanza

كَأَنَّ طِفْلاً بَاتَ يَهْدِي قَبْلَ أَنْ يَنَامَ :
بِأَنَّ أُمَّهُ - الَّتِي أَفَاقَ مُنْذُ عَامٍ
فَلَمْ يَجِدْهَا، ثُمَّ حِينَ لَجَّ فِي السُّؤَالِ
لَا بَدَّ أَنْ تَعُودَ قَالُوا لَهُ : " بَعْدَ غَدٍ تَعُودُ .. "
وَإِنْ تَهَامَسَ الرَّفَاقُ أَنَّهَا هُنَاكَ
فِي جَانِبِ التَّلِّ تَنَامُ نَوْمَةَ اللُّحُودِ
تَسْفُ مِنْ تُرَابِهَا وَتَشْرَبُ الْمَطَرَ ؛

*"It is as if a child before sleep were rambling on
About his mother, a year ago he went to wake her, did not find her
Then was told, for he kept on asking
"After tomorrow, she'll come back again "
That she must come back again
Yet his playmates whisper that she is there
In the hillside, sleeping her death for ever
Eating the earth around her, drinking the rain "*

This stanza is the climax of pain and suffer. The poet expresses his suffer because he finds an outlet which is never closed as long as the poet is singing for optimism. However, there is an inclination to an orphan child; and that the orphan is a symbol of all people in Iraq. "Mother" here is a symbol of Iraq . The word "mother" has three connotations :

a. When the poet says *"that she must come back again "* he confirms that she will come back , and so "Iraq " has the ability to come back and wake up again, the ability which human beings themselves do not have. Hence, the word *"mother"* has an optimistic meaning because there is a hope that Iraq will come back .

b. The word *"Refaq"* playmates in the sixth line *"Yet his playmates whisper that she is there"* has a reference to the friends who are working and fighting to set their home free .So, this word emphasizes that mother is a symbol of home.



c. The poet says "*Eating the earth around her, drinking the rain*", therefore, the "*mother*" is as a symbol of Iraq which is suffering from hunger not the mother as a human being who has died. As for the following lines, they carry optimistic and pessimistic meanings:

- "*As if a child before sleep were rambling on*" the poet shows the child as symbol of hope in the future
- "*About his mother a year ago he went to wake her, did not find her*"

Here, mother is a symbol of colonized state.

- "*That she must come back again*" the poet insists on setting Iraq free.
- "*Yet his playmates whisper that she is there*" the whisper here refers to sorrow and frightened of soul.
- "*In the hillside, sleeping her death forever*" this line denotes death and destruction

The words carrying optimistic meaning are *Tiflen* "a child", *Umumho* "his mother", *Afaqa* "wake", *Ghaden* "tomorrow", *Labuda* "must", *Rifaq* "playmates". Whereas the words carrying pessimistic meaning are "*Yabthy*" rambling", *Yanam* "sleep", *Falem Yageduba* "did not find her", *ljja* "kept on", *Sual* "asking", *Tu hamisu* "whisper", *Hunak* "there", *Tasifu* "eating", *Turabaha* "earth around her".

Fifth stanza

كَأَنَّ صَيَّادًا حَزِينًا يَجْمَعُ الشَّبَّابَ
وَيَنْشُرُ الْغِنَاءَ حَيْثُ يَأْفُلُ الْقَمَرُ .
مَطَرٌ ... مَطَرٌ ...
أَتَعْلَمِينَ أَيَّ حُزْنٍ يَبْعَثُ الْمَطَرُ ؟
وَكَيْفَ تَنْشِجُ الْمَزَارِيبُ إِذَا انْهَمَرَ ؟
وَكَيْفَ يَشْعُرُ الْوَحِيدُ فِيهِ بِالضَّيَاعِ ؟
بِلا انْتِهَاءٍ - كَالدَّمِ الْمُرَاقِ ، كَالْجِيَاعِ ،
كَالْحُبِّ ، كَالْأَطْفَالِ ، كَالْمَوْتِ - هُوَ الْمَطَرُ !

"As if a forlorn fisherman gathering nets

Cursed the waters and fate

And scattered a song at moonset

Drip, drop, the rain

Drip, drop, the rain

Do you know what sorrow the rain can inspire?

Do you know how gutters weep when it pours down?

Do you know how lost a solitary person feels in the rain?

Endless, like spilt blood, like hungry people, like love,

Like children, like the dead, endless the rain "

Sadness and pessimism are dominant again. They get increased until they overcome optimism and happiness. The word "Rain" here brings sadness to the poet himself. He cannot discriminate between what is negative and what is positive. There is no difference between love, children and death.

The words carrying optimistic meaning are *Saiyad* "fisherman", *Yanthuru Al ghinaa* "scattering a song", *Yaafalu Al qamaru* "moonset", *Hub* "love", *Atfal* "children", but the words carrying pessimistic meaning are *Hazinan* "forlorn", *Shibak* "nets", *Yalanu* "cursed", *Al miyah* "waters", *Al qadar* "fate", *huzen* "sorrow", *Tanshuju* "weep", *Inhamara* "pours down", *Al dam* *Al muraq* "spilt blood", *Al jeeya* "hungry", *Almanwa* "the dead".

As for the lines which have an optimistic and pessimistic meaning, they are:

- *"As if a forlorn fisherman gathering nets "*

The fisherman, according to the poet, symbolizes Iraqi people who are struggling for life. As the Iraqi goes to do his work, rain interrupts him, so he is sad.

- *"And scattered a song at moonset "*

It is a symbol of pain from which Iraqi people suffer. "Moonset" is just like *moonlight recedes* "because there is fear. There is a relationship between



the child in the first stanza and the fisherman because both are frightened by moon.

- *"Drip drop the rain.... Drip drop the rain"*

The repetition of the word "Rain" refers to the struggle and the revolution in Iraq.

- *"Do you know what sorrow the rain can inspire?"*

Rain is a source of sadness, therefore, it causes a great pain for the poet

"Endless, like spilt blood, like hungry people like love

Like children, like the dead, endless the rain"

The word "Endless" devotes the pessimism in the poet himself. It refers to continuous frustration. Whereas the rest of the words have a reference to the amalgamation (combination) of optimism and pessimism in the poet himself.

Sixth stanza

وَمُقْلَتَاكِ بِي تُطِيفَانِ مَعَ الْمَطَرِ
وَعَبْرَ أَمْوَاجِ الْخَلِيجِ تَمْسَحُ الْبُرُوقُ
سَوَاحِلَ الْعِرَاقِ بِالنُّجُومِ وَالْمَحَارِ،
كَأَنَّهَا تَهْمُ بِالشُّرُوقِ
فَيَسْحَبُ اللَّيْلُ عَلَيْهَا مِنْ دَمٍ دَثَارَ .
أَصِيحَ بِالْخَلِيجِ : " يَا خَلِيجُ
يَا وَاهِبَ اللَّوْلُؤِ ، وَالْمَحَارِ ، وَالرَّدَى ! "
فِيرْجِعُ الصَّدَى
كَأَنَّهُ النُّشَيْجُ :
" يَا خَلِيجُ
يَا وَاهِبَ الْمَحَارِ وَالرَّدَى ... "

*"Your two eyes take me wandering with the rain,
Lightning's from across the Gulf sweep the shores of Iraq*

*With stars and shells,
As if a dawn were about to break from them, But night pulls over them a
coverlet of blood. I cry out to the Gulf: "O Gulf,
Giver of pearls, shells and death!"
And the echo replies,
As if lamenting:
"O Gulf,
Giver of shells and death"*

This stanza, however, emphasizes the progress of pessimism. The connotations of optimism have a weak role. Night is dominant and the revolution is still hidden.

The words carrying optimistic meanings are *Muklataiki* "your two eyes", *Tatefan* "take me wandering", *Tamsahu* "sweep", *Al Buruq* "lightening", *sawabel Al Iraq* "the shores of Iraq", *Al mahar* "shells", *Lulu* "pearls". Whereas the words that carry pessimistic meanings are *Tahemu be Al Sharq* "dawn were about to break", *yas habu* "pull over", *Dm* "blood", *Dythar* "coverlet", *Al Ru ud* "thunder", *Sada* "echo", *Al Nasbeej* "lamenting", *Amwaj Al Khaleej* "waves of Gulf".

In this stanza, the poet repeats the word "*Gulf*" because it symbolizes rescue and destruction at the same time. The poet appeals to the "*Gulf*" because he realizes that "*Gulf*" is the giver of the goodness and it grants people pearls and shells. Anyway, it gives sometimes salt brine and destroys everything. When the poet calls for the gulf, his voice is echoed. Therefore, pessimism invades the poet's feelings.

The connotation of *Am waj Al Khalij* "tide and ebb of Gulf" is considered as having a pessimistic meaning although it seems as having an optimistic meaning. Tide and ebb, here, refer to the revolution and change in Iraq, there is no rest. Waves of Gulf have also a reference to fury, roar, restless, and bad impression, not only of the Gulf but of the poet himself also. The word "*Stars*" has a pessimistic meaning because stars are part of



night which pulls over a coverlet of blood to dawn before its breaking. The stars are linked to shells which have, on the contrary, an optimistic meaning.

As for the lines which have optimistic and pessimistic meanings, they are:

- *"Lightning's from across the Gulf sweep the shores of Iraq"*

Here, the word "Lightning" has an optimistic meaning. It has a reference to human beings who are rebelling against injustice.

- *"As if a dawn were about to break them"*

This line has a meaning of hope .

- *"But night pulls over them a coverlet of blood"*

This line has a pessimistic meaning .It denotes violence in Iraq.

- *"Givers of pearls, shells and death!"*

The pearls and shells are linked with death in this line because life is very difficult in Iraq at that time.

- *"And the echo replies"*

It implies that everything is missed.

Seventh stanza

أَكَادُ أَسْمَعُ الْعِرَاقَ يَذْخُرُ الرُّعُودُ
ويخزن البروق في السهول والجبال ،
حتى إذا ما فَصَّ عنها ختمها الرِّجَالُ
لم تترك الرياح من ثمود
في الوادِ من أثر .
أكاد أسمع النخيل يشربُ المطر
وأسمع القرى تئنُّ ، والمهاجرين
يُصَارِعُونَ بالمجازيف وبالقلوع ،
عَوَاصِفَ الخليج ، والرُّعُودَ ، منشدين :
مَطَرٌ ... مَطَرٌ ... " مَطَرٌ ...
وفي الْعِرَاقِ جُوعٌ

*"I can almost hear Iraq husbanding the thunder,
Storing lightning in the mountains and plains,*

*So that if the seal were broken by men
The winds would leave in the valley not a trace of Thamud.
I can almost hear the palm trees drinking the rain,
Hear the villages moaning and emigrants
With oar and sail fighting the Gulf
Winds of storm and thunder, singing
"Rain ... rain ...
Drip, drop, the rain ...
And there is hunger in Iraq"*

The words carrying optimistic meaning in this stanza are *Asman* "hear", *Iraq* "Iraq", *Yathkhar* "husbanding", *Ru ud* "thunder", *Yakhzun* "storing", *Brook* "lightning", *Subul* "plains", *Jibal* "mountains", *Reejal* "men", *Lam Tatrak* "leave not", *Al Reyah* "wind", *Thamud* "Thamud", *Al Wadi* "valley", *Athar* "a trace". The words, however, carrying pessimistic meaning are *Asman* "hear", *Nakheel* "palmtrees", *Qura* "villages", *Ta unu* "moaning", *Al muhajireen* "emigrants", *Yu sari un* "fighting", *Majadeef* "oars", *Awatif Al Khaleej* "storm of Gulf", *Ru ud* "thunder", *Munshadeen* "singing", *Ju a* "hunger".

The first four lines have a very optimistic meaning. All the words are used to refer to a dreamy world and a hope in life. The last six lines carry pessimistic meanings and pessimism is the dominant according to the words that are used.

In this stanza, the poet outlines the cause of his pessimism which is represented by the colonization. He sings for the dream of revolution. He wonders how everything gets into air thin and vanishes just like mirage, so the rain carries no hope.



Eighth stanza

وينثر الغلال فيه مَوَسِّمُ الحصاد
لتشيع الغربان والجراد
وتطحن الشّوان والحجر
رَحَى تَدُورُ في الحقول ... حولها بَشَرٌ
مَطَرٌ ... مَطَرٌ ... مَطَرٌ ...

*"The harvest time scatters the grain in-it,
That crows and locusts may gobble their fill,
Granaries and stones grind on and on,
Mills turn in the fields, with them men turning . . .
Drip, drop, the rain . . Drip ... Drop "*

In this stanza, "rain" is depicted as a source of pessimism .The poet's dream is diminished. There is no sign of optimism; the image of pessimism is represented by crows and locusts. The poet has made his mind to leave his country to a foreign one.

The words carrying pessimistic meaning are *Yanthuru* "scatter", *Al Ghilal* "grains", *Mousem* "time", *Hsad* "harvest", *Li taashbaa* "gobble", *Gherban* "crows", *Jarad* "locusts", *Tat hanu* "grind", *Shwan* "granaries", *Hajar* "stones", *Raha* "mills", *Tadoru* "turn in", *Al Huqul* "fields", *Al Basher* "men", *Matar* "rain".

Ninth stanza

وَكَمْ ذَرَفْنَا لَيْلَةَ الرَّحِيلِ ، مِنْ دُمُوعٍ
ثُمَّ اَعْتَلَلْنَا - خَوْفَ أَنْ نُلَامَ - بِالمَطَرِ ...
مَطَرٌ ... مَطَرٌ ...
وَمُنْذُ أَنْ كُنَّا صِغَارًا ، كَانَتْ السَّمَاءُ
وَيَهْطُلُ المَطَرُ ، نَعِيمٌ فِي الشِّتَاءِ
وَكُلَّ عَامٍ - حِينَ يُعْشَبُ الثَّرَى - نَجُوعُ
مَا مَرَّ عَامٌ وَالْعِرَاقُ لَيْسَ فِيهِ جُوعُ .

*"When came the night for leaving, how many tears we shed,
We made the rain a pretext, not wishing to be blamed
Drip, drop, the rain..... Drip, drop, the rain
Since we had been children, the sky
Would be clouded in wintertime,
And down would pour the rain,
And every year when earth turned green the hunger struck us.
Not a year has passed without hunger in Iraq."*

Here, pessimism is dominant again, the rain is as a source of morbidity because it is useless for people, the poet says

"And every year when earth turned green the hunger struck us.

Not a year has passed without hunger in Iraq "....

The rain, however; is as a source of optimism and a symbol of revolution, therefore; it carries a hope. There is a confusion represented by the antinomies: *Earth/Green, Green/Hunger, Times / Grains*

The word "*tears*" denotes that the poet again strives to find a vent from his sad world and to move into a serene one, therefore, he deliberately chooses such words.

The words carrying pessimistic meanings in this stanza are *Thrafna* "shed", *Laila* "night", *Al Rabeel* "leaving", *Dumuaa* "tears", *I'talalna* "made a pretext", *Khanf* "not wishing", *Nulam* "blamed", *Al Shyttaa* "winter", *Yabtil* "down would pour", *Kula am* "every year", *Yaashubu* "turned green", *Al Thara* "earth", *Najuaa* "the hunger stuck us", *Am* "year", *Al Iraq* "Iraq", *Juaa* "hunger".

Tenth stanza

وينثر الخليج من هباته الكثار،
على الرمال، : رغوهُ الأجاج، والمحار
وما تبقى من عظام بائسٍ غريق



من المهاجرين ظلّ يشرب الردى
من جُتّة الخليج والقرار ،
وفي العراق ألف أفعى تشرب الرحيق
من زهرة يرُبُّها الرفاتُ بالندى .
يرنُّ في الخليج وأسمعُ الصَّدى
مطر ... مطر .. مطر .

*"The Gulf scatters fuming froth and shells
And the skeletons of miserable drowned emigrants
Who drank death forever
From the depths of the Gulf, from the ground of its silence,
And in Iraq a thousand serpents drink the nectar
From a flower the Euphrates has nourished with dew".
I hear the echo..... Ringing in the Gulf:
"Rain. . . Drip, drop, the rain. . . Drip, drop"*

Here, the poet presents an image of the hope looking for an outlet throughout pessimism .He tries to get rid of his pessimistic feeling as much as he could. He would like to work for future with new hope . As it were, he wages a war against darkness by light, against ignorance and literacy by knowledge, virtue against evil, optimism against pessimism, and happiness against sadness.

The words carrying optimistic meaning in the lines above are *Yanthuru Al Khaleej* "the Gulf scatters", *Hibatu boo* "gifts", *Al Kithar* "lavish", *Al-Mabar* "shells" . Whereas the words carrying pessimistic meaning are *Raghwa* "forth", *Ajaj* "fuming", *Itgam* "skeletons", *yaa is* "miserable", *Ghareq* "drowned", *Muhajireen* "emigrates", *DHala* "forever", *Yashrab* "drank", *Al Rada* "death", *Laja* "depths", *Al Khaleej* "gulf", *Iraq* "Iraq", *Alf* "thousand", *Afah* "serpents", *Tabrab* "drink", *Al Raheeq* "nectar", *Zahra* "flower", *Yureha Al Furat* "Euphrates has nourished", *Al Nada* "dew", *Sada* "echo", *Yarin* "ringing".

Eleventh stanza

في كلّ قطرة من المطر
حمراء أو صفراء من أجنة الزهر .
وكلّ دمة من الجوع والعراة
وكلّ قطرة تراق من دم العبيد
فهي ابتسام في انتظار مبسم جديد
أو حلمة توردت على فم الوليد
في عالم الغد الفتي ، واهب الحياة .
ويَهْطُلُ المَطَرُ ..

*In every drop of rain
A red or yellow color buds from the seeds of flowers.
"Every tear wept by the hungry and naked people
And every spilt drop of slaves' blood
Is a smile aimed at a new dawn,
A nipple turning rosy in an infant's lips
In the young world of tomorrow, bringer of life.
And still the rain pours down."*

The words carrying optimistic meaning in this stanza are: *Qatra* Hamra "red colour buds", *Safraa* "yellow colour", *Aj neeha* "seeds", *Damaa* "tear", *Al Jee yaa* "hunger", *Al Orat* "naked", *Qatra* "drop", *Turaq* "spilt", *Dm* "blood", *Al Abeed* "slaves", *Ib tisam* "smile", *Indhethar* "aimed", *Mabsam* "dawn", *Jadeed* "new", *Halama* "nipple", *Tawaradet* "turning", *Fam* "lips", *Waleed* "infant", *Al Ghad* "tomorrow", *Fata* "young", *Al wabeb* "bringer", *Al hayat* "life", *Yahtulu* "pours down".

In these words which are very colorful, joyful and optimistic the poet concludes his poem. He picks out the words precisely in which each has a reference to smiling future. He sings with the language of optimism and dream. He employs the word *Al Ghad* "tomorrow" because it has a reference that this dreaming world has not constituted yet, and also the employment of colors carrying profound connotations and symbols to the



revolution and the next days in Iraq. However, other words like *Al Jee- yaa* "hunger", *Al Orat* "naked", *Al Abeed* "slaves", seem to carry pessimistic meaning, but on the contrary they embody the elements and the instruments of eruption of the revolution which the poet supports. The rain pours down not only from the clouds, which have carried optimistic meaning in the third stanza, but from the blood and tears of naked, hunger and slaved people. So, out of people's suffering optimism and hope spring out embodied by infants who suck milk of hope from the nipples which have optimistic meaning.

8. Conclusion

The present study is an attempt to shed light on the lexical choices of optimism and pessimism which Assyab used in his poem The Rain Song. Our preceding discussions show that the poet has used certain expressions for either optimism or pessimism. Yet, some expressions are used to express both optimism and pessimism but in different contexts, among these words; the word *Nashwa* in the second stanza is used twice. In the first time, it refers to optimism because it embraces sky as the poet says, "*And a savage elation embracing the sky*". It is translated into "elation" meanwhile; in the second use it is translated into "frenzy" and considered as a word of pessimism because it has a relationship with the fear of moon.

Also, the word "moon" is a connotation of optimism in the first stanza because it is away from the "balconies". *Or two balconies from which the moonlight recedes*. Whereas in the second stanza there is a connotation of pessimism for linking to the fear of the child, he says "*Frenzy of a child frightened by the moon*".

The word "Child" is mentioned in the second, third, fourth, and fifth stanzas as a sign of optimism but only in the ninth stanza it is mentioned

as carrying a pessimistic meaning, so some critics indicate to the poet's unfixable childhood .

Also, the reader may find himself in bewilderment as he reads the words which carry more meanings or connotations such as "*Rain*", "*Stars*", "*Thunder*", "*Moon*", and "*Clouds*". So, after reading these words one could touch different feelings and ponder in the various connotations and images that s/he may depict. The poet deals with universal lexemes accurately, so he gives the flow to the readers to live in optimistic and pessimistic feelings .The usage of lexemes refer to nature as "Palm tree", "Vines", and flowers and lexemes of creatures as "human being", "weep", "tears", "crows", and locusts which arouse the reader to think about the various aspects of life .

Optimism is the dominant mode, because the poem is a song and the word song as an independent element has an optimistic meaning. Furthermore, the repetition of the word "*Rain*" as song strengthens optimism. The first stanza expresses optimism, and pessimism appears in the second one gradually being equalized with optimism until it becomes the dominant before the last two stanzas. Eventually, optimism returns back to overcome pessimism in the last stanza. In general, however; the data analysis advocates the suggested hypothesis.



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