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The Autobiographical Element: A Comparative Study of T. S. Eliot's and Robert Lowell's Poetry

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Abstract

A poet, a story teller, or a novelist has ever to rely on his experience in life, making use of all the contexts underlying most of those significant representations, whether abstract or concrete, which surround him during the course of his life. All kinds of literature, drama, poetry, and fiction witness the presence of their creators in almost all their manifestations and minute details of the literary work. Literary authors always rely on their personal experience, to a greater or lesser extent, and the most successful writer is the one who manages to create out of his own particulars something objective, general, and universal.

Both poets, T. S. Eliot and Robert Lowell, deal with and display their own personal experiences in their poetry; that is, both confess their personal touches in their poetry in one way or another--throughout symbols, allegories, direct and indirect descriptions, etc--yet the former manages to appeal to the readers and critics much more than the latter does; that is, Eliot presents his personal experience in such a way that it looks objective; it can be understood alone per se without resorting to the account of his own personal life because it has been made part of a larger structure that gives clues to their explanations. Whereas Lowell's personal remarks can by no means be understood without full awareness of his own personal life, a trait of his poetry that makes it defective.

This paper is an attempt to make a comparison between Eliot's and Lowell's poetic experience, solving the question whether Eliot is, Like Lowell, a confessional poet or not, and how their personal experiences serve their poetic process. Besides, this study makes some touches upon the importance of their personal experience to their poetry as to whether it contributes to their greatness as two modern poets.

المستخلص

يعتمد كل من الشاعر والقصص والكاتب الروائي على خبراتهم الحياتية كما يوظفوا جميع السياقات التي تشكل اساسا لأكثر المخرجات المهمة ما إذا كانت معنوية او مادية التي قد احيطت بهم خلال مدة حياتهم. فجميع الأنواع الأدبية كالمسرحية والشعر والرواية تشهد حضور مؤلفيها في جميع السمات والتفاصيل الدقيقة للعمل الأدبي. فدائما ما يستند جميع الأدباء على خبراتهم الشخصية فيما إذا كانت ذا مدى كبير او صغير في أعمالهم الأدبية، وأن الأديب الناجح هو الذي يستطيع أن يبتدع معطيات موضوعية وعامة وكونية من خلال الموضوعات مدار إهتمامه الشخصي.

يستعرض كلا الشعاعين تي. إس. إليوت وروبرت لويل خبراتهم الشخصية في قصائدهم بحيث كلاهما يضعان لمسائهم الشخصية في قصائدهم بطريقة او اخرى من خلال إستخدام الرموز والإستعارة والتفاصيل المباشرة وغير المباشرة إلخ. إلا أن إليوت يعرض خبرته الشخصية ضمن إطار موضوعي بحيث من الممكن فهمها كما هي من دون اللجوء الى قصة حياته الشخصية لأنها اصبحت جزءا من بناء اكبر الذي يعطي دلالات معينة لتفسيراتها، فيما أن ملاحظات لويل الشخصية لا يمكن تفسيرها باي وسيلة من دون الحصول على دراية تامة بحياته الشخصية وذلك يعد نقطة ضعف في شعره.

يعد البحث محاولة لمقارنة بين إليوت و ولويل من حيث الخبرات الشعرية، مقدما تفسيراً لمشكلة ما إذا كان إليوت يعد شاعراً إعترا فياً كنظيره لويل أم لا وكذلك يعد محاولة لإظهار كيف ساهمت خبراتهم الشخصية في العملية الشعرية، فضلاً عن كون هذا البحث يبين أهمية الخبرات الشخصية لشعرهم وما إذا ساهمت هذه الخبرات الشخصية في صياغة شخصيتهم كشاعرين محدثين كبيرين.

Introduction

The extent to which a work of art is considered successful or not depends on the devices employed by the writer; they are the kind of devices that have long been considered and used and dealt with by the great writers, ancient and modern, whose names glitter with greatness and universality. They are the devices those writers find that they have been to a great extent accepted by the human and general taste of the majority of readers and critics all over the world. They are more effective than those ways of expressions already innovated, which cannot be accepted as easily as those traditional ones, and which last for a very period of time though they assume their presence within the history of literary works and masterpieces.

All forms of literature are supposed to show to great or less extent deviations from the norms. Such a deviation is the greater in poetry than it is in drama and fictional arts. As a matter of fact, the range of deviation in any work of art should be limited to the kind of experience the writer wants to convey in such a way that it should be within the limits of acceptability. One writer may deviate more than what is usual and is accepted by the general sense of the human soul. For instance, when the football player deviates from the normal movement he is supposed to make in a particular situation may turn to be devastating. Similarly, when a writer deviates from the norms more than what is required, his work will by no means be accepted as being a genuine or faithful work of art that represents life with all its manifold aspects.

To depict imaginary scenes, characters and conditions that can hardly be imagined by ordinary people except in dreams or allusions is supposed to be something unbelievable. To exaggerate the exaggerated and to deviate from what has already been deviated from are two steps to underrate the work of art and may drive it outside the domain of the literary form that has been designated to be included in. For instance, this process occurs in Gulliver's Travels. Literature is considered a deviation from the norms in the sense that in it there is no normal use of vocabulary and syntax and other language points, not to mention the figures of speech which are indispensable in a work of art, be whatever it may; it should be a deviation made for enriching the meaning and not to hide it. The use of these things in literature is considered something familiar, something that has long been accepted by readers, critics, and the authors themselves. Therefore, to deviate from what has already been deviated from cannot be tolerated.

Daniel Defoe has approached reality and depicted the human spirit, using allegory, symbols, and almost all sorts of the traditional figures of speech, and manages to present the kind of fiction that cannot but be called realistic. Despite the fact that he, in many instances, refers to his personal experience, his writings can be understood without being informed of his autobiography. Even those references expressed by means of some untraditional symbols are, to a greater and lesser extent, not as effective and illegible as those expressed by the traditional ways of expression, in so far as they excite some sophistications and complexities.

Any literary work is an utterance and any utterance should convey a message that consists of a meaning. So, if this utterance cannot be interpreted unless an explanation is provided, the utterance is said to have been without the appropriate context in which it must be processed to

produce the required effect. Any literary work is an utterance and any utterance should convey a message that consists a meaning. Therefore, if this utterance cannot be interpreted unless an explanation is provided, the utterance is said to have been without the appropriate context in which it must be processed to produce the required effect. Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren present excellent pondering in many respects relevant to the fact that poetry is a matter of utterance or a sort of saying as they may say in their invaluable book *Understanding Poetry*, and as they put it in the following excerpt:

Poetry is a kind of "saying." It is however a, a kind that many people, until they become well acquainted with it, feel rather peculiar and useless. They feel this way for two reasons: the "way of the saying," the strongly marked rhythms, the frequent appearance of rhyme, and the figurative language may seem odd and distracting; and as for the "nature of the said," it generally contains neither a good, suspenseful story nor obviously useful information. Poetry, in short, may seem both unnatural and irrelevant. (Brooks and Warren, 1976: p.1)

Thus, to add to the unnaturalness and the non relevance of an utterance, whether written or spoken, the poet may definitely distance the utterance from any predictable understanding. When considering the many remarks made in relevance to the essence of poetry it is indicated by Brooks and Warren that poetry is "a response to, and an evaluation of, our experience of the objective, bustling world and of our ideas about it. Poetry is concerned with the world as responded to sensorially, emotionally, and intellectually" (Brooks and Warren, 1976: p. 9) Making use of S. T. Coleridge's remark concerning poetry which implies that poetry "in ideal perfection, brings the whole soul into activity," (Coleridge, in Brooks and Warren, p. 9). They recall another important feature of poetry which addresses all three elements already mentioned, which they call "the multidimensional quality of experience" (Brooks and Warren, 1976: p. 9).

T.S. Eliot's Poetry from the Autobiographical Perspective

Eliot's poetry is closely related to his own personal life. Having his *The Waste Land* in mind, his poetry makes many references to daily situations and places and people that are part of his own personal dealings. What he has presented of them all are objective representations drawn in an objective manner that can be understood without resorting to the study of his own personal life. These references are interpreted in relation to other references and are interpretative and illustrative of other points in the poem. In this poem he attempts themes related to actual life in a way different from the poetry of his time, famous and influential simultaneously:

While the origins of *The Waste Land* are in part personal, the voices projected are universal. Eliot later denied that he had large cultural problems in mind, but, nevertheless, in *The Waste Land* he diagnosed the malaise of his generation and indeed of Western civilization in the 20th century. (<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/t-s-eliot>)

Despite the fact that he, in many instances, has distanced himself from traditional symbols or rather he converts the meaning of the traditional symbol into its opposite, Eliot manages to present a means for the new understanding and new implications contained in the untraditional symbol. The instance to be illustrated in this respect is the one telling of how people in the casino have run away from water when heaven pours it onto them. Water, as a traditional symbol, is to mean life, fertility, spirituality, and moral values. Here, it is made something of which people are afraid and try to avoid. This event, though taken from the real-life experience of the poet himself, it can by no means be considered enigmatic or wanting in some explanation

of the poet's autobiographical points that are relevant to it. The running away from water becomes part and parcel of the entire structure of the poem: it is an escape from purity and is a symbol of infertility, and as shown in the following lines from *The Waste Land*:

April is the cruellest month, breeding
Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing
Memory and desire, stirring
Dull roots with spring rain.
Winter kept us warm, covering
Earth in forgetful snow, feeding
A little life with dried tubers.
Summer surprised us, coming over the Starnbergersee
With a shower of rain; we stopped in the colonnade,
And went on in sunlight, into the Hofgarten,
And drank coffee, and talked for an hour.

(T. S. Eliot, *The Wasteland*)

As shown herein above, spring time which is considered a season of life, propagation and happiness is turned as a symbol of cruelty in Eliot's terms. This is so because Eliot wants to transport the traditional symbol into something else—something that trespasses man's cultural and traditional beliefs into something beyond life, prosperity and spirituality. Rain is a symbol spiritual purgation when it is especially poured down in spring time—a symbol of life—makes people run away from it. What Eliot wants to say in this regard is that people have run away from purity, purgation of the soul and gone far away from the word of God by wasting their time in having a cup of coffee:

Eliot learned how to handle emotion in poetry, through irony and a quality of detachment that enabled him to see himself and his own emotions essentially as objects for analysis... . He learned how to use the sordid images of the modern city, the material "at hand," in poetry, and of even greater consequence, he learned something of the nature of good and evil in modern life. (<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/t-s-eliot>)

It should be noted that Eliot's poetry exposes the kind of medium through which he can create an appeal to the public inasmuch as it forges it and deplores general issues pertaining to the modern man's experience everywhere, and at the same time he deviates from the traditional forms and structures of poetry. He concentrates, in *The Waste Land*, on the separation of the people from one another and their separation from the word of God.

On the other hand, as far as his literary criticism, he concentrates on the isolation of the artist from his arts and audiences with the view that his arts should not interfere with his personal experiences; that is to say, his arts should be as objective as possible. This is the reason why Eliot repudiates the past and shows a negative attitude towards Romanticism: "Eliot's poetry is more complex and less immediate in its imagined realization. It is centered on the entire worldview and interpretation of human existence, the philosophy – which can best be called 'classical' – which is at the heart of Eliot's genius and his creativity, as a poet (as it was as a critic)" (Barry Spurr, 2011). Throughout the poem, the protagonist enquires where spring time starts, which is the time of love and procreation; he also asks about the time when he shall have a rebirth out of his pains and sufferings.

Robert Lowell's Poetry from the Autobiographical Perspective

Robert Lowell, an American poet, figured out after WWII and is considered the first to attempt what is called to be “Confessional Poetry,” which is said to have been a post war movement and which waned in the 1960s. This kind of poetry greatly concentrates on the minute details—significant and insignificant—of the writer:

Now of course poetry had used biographical details before, but what I think made confessional poetry different is the minutia of detail that poet dwells upon. It’s not just a major event that frames a lyric, but a developed composition around an obscure detail that many times the poet doesn’t let the reader in on. It presents a challenge to the reader. There’s a dislocation; you can’t fully grasp what the poet is referring to, and yet the poem is aesthetically whole. (stela<http://ashesfromburntroses...>).

The deviation of Lowell from the traditional norms and his use of vague references, symbols, comparisons and the like can by no means be considered true literature. He talks about things which cannot be apprehended by any reader or critic unless they are seen in the light of his own autobiography:

The literary merit of Robert Lowell's poetry has been in question for the past fifty years. Critics focused on Lowell in the context of Confessionalism. They offer readings of his poetry which emphasize the need for confessional detail in order to understand the context and the true meaning of his poems. (<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/t-s-eliot>)2021, pp. 2-3)

Autobiography must be excluded from all great literature, for literature, as inferred from the writings of the great writers, ancient and modern, should express as objectively as possible the literary experience whatsoever. William Shakespeare’s greatness as a poet and dramatist does not embrace his own personal life and experience; yet little is known about his life.

It is true that the artist may draw from his experience in life, from his environment, from his friends and relatives; yet the true artist should present these things without the least return to his biography or autobiography. For a work of art is supposed to be perfect in all its manifestations and should be taken for granted that it does not consist of any doubt, gap, questionings and the like, which may hinder full understanding and full enjoyment of it. To leave the minute details of an artist’s personal experience in a work of art unexplained, vague, and enigmatic can be considered a point of weakness.

Authors sometimes find themselves obliged to write in their biographies something to clarify, illustrate or explain what has already been vague in their literary works, despite the fact that critics try to create a genre of this kind of literature and call it autobiographical which may also consider it to be modern contemporary literature and they devise a name like the confessional poetry or the confessional novel, as is the case with writings of Virginia Woolf, especially Mrs. Dalloway and To the Lighthouse, for which the novelist has provided many autobiographical remarks for the comprehensive understanding of them all on the part of the reader.

Autobiographical writings, when used for the sake of interpreting and explaining the artist's vague references and symbols, cannot be seen otherwise than as a means of translating one language into another. How could poetry be considered poetry without being sensed and understood and enjoyed at the moment of its recitation? Otherwise it will turn into a guessing game or an enigma, and therefore it will have no effect whatsoever. It has been suggested that one cannot understand Lowell’s poetry unless one ponders into his autobiographical elements, “otherwise one will be completely lost” (stela<http://ashesfromburntroses...>). This is not to deny

the importance of the writer's life and personal experiences to the shaping factors of his own sensibility.

It may be suggested that the lines of confessional poetry are said to be casual factual matters showing ordinary speech because they lack the perfect poeticalness; that is, they do not sound poetical as if they were giving the tinge of conversational speech between two friends which is peculiar to them and which cannot be fully understood unless one learns the autobiographical implications. Hence, confessional poetry has been disparaged by critics though it achieves some sort of success:

When confessional poetry succeeds, it really seems to capture a moment in time like no other poetic form. However, I will say that in my opinion it fails more often than not, mainly because one ultimately says, so what, and given the lack of poetic device, it becomes a “so what” that lacks craft. I will also say that I regard Lowell as the best of the confessional poets (stela<http://ashesfromburntroses...>).

To have a clear look at the poetry of Lowell, especially his poem entitled “Waking in the Blue” which is regarded a downright autobiographical poem as shown in the following lines:

The night attendant, a B.U. sophomore,
rouses from the mare's-nest of his drowsy head
propped on The Meaning of Meaning.
He catwalks down our corridor.

Azure day
makes my agonized blue window bleaker.
Crows maunder on the petrified fairway.
Absence! My hearts grows tense
as though a harpoon were sparring for the kill.

(This is the house for the "mentally ill.")

(Lowell, “Waking in the Blue”).

In the excerpt hereinabove, one may be completely lost unless one resorts to the description of the poet's personal experience in this respect. Lowell's “Waking in the Blue” links his personality to his past when he spent a period of time in an asylum where he suffered from the mental disease that afflicted him and the loneliness that might kill his heart. Besides, he was frequently institutionalized because of his mental illness. Hence, a close look at the autobiographical elements related to this poem greatly contributes to the understanding the poet's personal experiences on the one hand and the universal experiences which he exposes in this confessional poem on the other: “The general impression of his earlier poems was that of agonized violence and visionary energy directed against the darker aspects of the socio-historical milieu of modern times” (Kil-Joong Kim, 1984).

On the other hand, Lowell has admired Eliot's poetry which shows some significant affinities with Lowell's poetry in terms of the use of ironic representations, the use of myth and symbols, the use of quotations borrowed from other writers and poetic allusions. According to Stephen Regan (2024), Lowell admits that Eliot can be considered a confessional poet. But, Eliot confesses his autobiographical element in a more generalized and universal way in that the reader does not need to return to his biography or autobiography in order to understand his poetic allusions and symbols.

Conclusion

Any kind of poetry can be dealt with from many perspectives of which the autobiographical one cannot be exempted in this respect. Both Eliot and Lowell have relied on the personal experiences they encountered during their lifetime considered under the heading of modern poetry. Generally speaking, modern poetry is to have been symbolic and, in certain instances enigmatic and ambiguous. The latter traits can be found in the poetry of both poets; yet what distinguishes one poet's allusions from another is the fact that understanding Eliot's poetry does not need, to a great extent, a resort to his autobiography, whereas Lowell's poetry, on the contrary, needs a great deal of autobiographical representations to help readers fully understand what his allusions mean though his poetry is classified among great literary media as far the aesthetic criteria are concerned, and this is the main reason why his poetry has developed a genre of poetry that is called confessional. Therefore, Eliot can by no means be called a confessional poet accordingly.

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Juxtaposition with Particular Reference to the Qur'anic Joseph Story

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Abstract

This paper revolves around the use of a literary and rhetorical idiom called juxtaposition with particular reference to the Qur'anic Joseph story. It gives in detail its definition and importance in both literary and ordinary speech. It can be considered a structural device insofar as it exposes the element of contrast which implies highlighting contradictions among things, images, or characters to create a striking effect and showing certain comparisons for the sake of bringing about the element of persuasion. Examples of juxtaposition from daily and literary representations shall be illustrated besides the examples of juxtaposition that have been pinpointed in the Qur'anic Joseph story. Juxtaposition as a rhetorical element is mainly meant to convince the readers of certain representations and to entertain them inasmuch as it consists of an aesthetic value and shows certain comparisons for the sake of making the ideas and images very clear and prominent. Hence, the paper is threefold which consists of three sections- juxtaposition in ordinary life, juxtaposition in literary works and juxtaposition in the Qur'anic Joseph story.

Key Words: Rhetoric, juxtaposition, Contrast, Comparison

1. Definition of Juxtaposition

Juxtaposition may be defined as the process of setting two or more things, images, situations and characters side by side for the sake of making comparisons or instances of contrast to expose certain effects. The etymology of the term juxtaposition shows that it is a Latin expression composed of two words: "juxta" and "pose," as it is clearly shown by Biespiel when he draws the term back to its origin: "The etymology of juxtaposition, from Middle English, from Latin and French, essentially means to position object X near object Y. Juxta: that's Latin for "next to...and pose... to place...to pace next to...the connection has to do with proximity and immediacy" (Biespiel, 2019).

2. Juxtaposition in Daily Life

It is found in daily life that juxtaposition of colors or the juxtaposition of shapes that contrasts each other. For contrasts and comparisons are conducive to a better understanding of things, images and characters. An example from actual life may show a child crying on a peaceful beach. Here is the description of the contrast between noise and peacefulness. Moreover, juxtaposition may create humorous and shocking situations as it may actually happen in actual life such as the exposition of rich and poor people or the placing of a clever student with a stupid one. So, by placing two contrastive ideas, images or characters, attention is focused on two distinctly different things which give a better understanding of the relevant situation: "it is

shown that under reasonable conditions, juxtaposition preserves strong soundness. Under reasonable conditions, the juxtaposition of two consequence relations is a conservative extension of each of them. A general strong completeness result is proved" (Schechter, 2021). Exposition cannot be exempted from actual life situations; the light of the planets can be seen at night due to the existence of darkness: hence, there is the contrast between light and darkness that are placed side by side. Juxtaposition is thusly meant to point out the differences between or among things. A girl with a black hair can be juxtaposed with another with a light blonde hair. An interesting effect of juxtaposition can be inferred from two photos of which one shows a sunny green farm and another showing stormy black atmosphere.

3. Juxtaposition in Literary Works

William Shakespeare's *Macbeth* shows a subtle juxtaposition between good and evil; the good is represented by King Duncan who has already met his General Macbeth and approved his achievement, not to mention the promotion bestowed upon him, whereas Macbeth and his wife are planning a plot to kill him and get control over the throne. Bernard Shaw has attempted to juxtapose idealism with materialism in many of his dramas. For example, he juxtaposes the capitalistic ideals represented by Sartorius with the idealism of Henry Trench in *Widowers' Houses*. Here, Shaw juxtaposes a point of view with another point of view. The first believes in the supremacy of materialism; the second, with the supremacy of idealism. In his *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, Shaw juxtaposes poverty with affluence to help indicate his cynical criticism of the capitalistic society.

When placing two ideas or things side by side the writer, as a matter of fact, pinpoints the significant theme of his writing, for the characters' way of thinking, their moods, the scenes in which they appear and the depiction of contrastive characters contributes to the reader's understanding of things which are unfolded beyond the literal level of the work of art. The spectators of Shaw's drama should have realized the great change in the character of Mrs. Warren, changing from a very poor woman to the leader of a capitalistic prostitution run all over Europe. This juxtaposition is one aspect of the structure of Shaw's drama. It unfolds how much the individual is oppressed and how so miserable Miss Warren had been before she adopted the illicit path, not to mention the idea that Shaw unfolds the cruelty of the political system of the time that does not show any sympathy or any sound solutions for poverty.

The situation in which the thirsty sailors in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* by S. T. Coleridge is shown against a background of a great ocean, which gives the impression that how much those sailors are suffering, and at the same time it creates a striking effect in the mind of the reader, and as it is shown in the following lines from the very poem:

Water, water, every where,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, every where,
Nor any drop to drink.

(Coleridge, 1798, lines: 119-123)

To add, Coleridge creates two contrastive images; the image of the ship that moves so fast and the sailors are happy because they are facing no problem, and the situation in which the ship completely sticks in one place for a long period of time, which points to the sailor's sufferings and sadness. Hence, when the poet juxtaposes many and various things he aims to create a particular effect and emphasize a particular thought. To sum up, juxtaposition supposes the

occurrence of two things or more side by side so as to highlight particular differences among ideas, images, characters, actions and situations which may be juxtaposed with one another. Thus, for example the good-natured yet innocent Cinderella can be juxtaposed with her evil step-relative that tries to destroy her. Hence, the good qualities of Cinderella are highlighted by exposing the evil woman. The reader is enabled to compare and contrast two characters so as he can attain a better understanding of things.

The final example of juxtaposition to be considered in this regard is the fact that T. S. Eliot uses the literary device juxtaposition in order to bring together different and contrastive ideas in his most famous poem "The Waste Land." In it, he juxtaposes the image of spring time represented by April with the image of winter, and at the same time he creates an ironic situation in which he shows that April is cruel; winter, warm—an idea opposite to the reader's expectation. Besides, he presents the image of lilacs blooming in the "dead land, which brings about the contrast between life and death, and as it is shown in the following extract from the poem itself:

April is the cruelest month, breeding
Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing
Memory and desire, stirring
Dull roots with spring rain.
Winter kept us warm, covering
Earth in forgetful snow, feeding
A little life with dried tubers.

(Eliot, quoted in Brooks and Warren, p. 297)

Very good examples of juxtaposition can be found in William Blake's poetry, especially his two collections of poetry entitled Songs of Innocence and Songs of experience which conduce to the many and various contradictions and contrasts necessary to fix the thoughts he wants to convey. For example, "The Lamb" from the first collection juxtaposes "The Tiger" from the second collection which conduces to the contrast between innocence and cruelty. The significance of this contrast lies in the fact that Blake poses a philosophical question whether the Allah who created innocence represented by the lamb created cruelty represented by the tiger.

4. Juxtaposition in the Qur'anic Joseph Story

The beginning of the Joseph story is juxtaposed with its end. At the beginning of the story, Joseph's half brothers conspire against him and put him in the well so that some merchants may take him as a prisoner. The conspiracy has been successful, and Joseph is taken to Egypt where he has been reared by the minister (Wazir) and then he himself becomes a minister.

The Joseph story witnesses two settings that juxtapose each other. They are the land of Canaan and Egypt. In the first place where Joseph has been reared by his father the Prophet Jacob, he is still a boy taken by his adult half brothers to be put in the well so as to get rid of him. In the second place where he is sold to one of the dignitaries (Aziz), it happens that Joseph becomes a minister thanks to the power of God that teaches him the interpretation of dreams.

The Joseph story begins with a dream dreamed by Joseph that can be interpreted to mean that he would be great in the future as his father advises him not to inform his jealous half brothers of it because he knows already that due to Allah's revelations that they may prepare a conspiracy against him because of their jealousy: "Behold, Joseph said to his father: 'O my

father! I did see eleven stars and the sun and the moon: I saw them prostrate themselves to me. Said (the father): "my (dear) little son! Relate not thy vision to thy brothers, lest they conceit a plot against thee: for Satan is to man an avowed enemy" (The Glorious Qur'an, Joseph Sura, sign no. 5)." But, his half brothers have plotted a plan to get rid of him insofar as he is not equal to them in power: he is a boy and they are ten half brothers. Hence, this situation shows a significant juxtaposition in that at the beginning of the story the half brothers appear to be superior towards Joseph and are able to convince their father to take Joseph with them to the wilderness where he can play as they proposes to their father. But at the end of the story, the half brothers appear to be inferior to the adult Joseph who is now a minister controlling the provisions to be distributed to other nations. In many instances, they appear before him in a humiliating manner when they have not yet recognized his identity as their half brother whom they once put in the well. They beg him to give them charity in a humiliated manner: "Then, when they came (Back) into (Joseph's) presence they said: "O exalted one! Distress has seized us and our family: we have (Now) brought but scanty capital: So pay us full measure, (We pray thee), and treat it As charity to us: for God Doth reward the charitable" (The Glorious Qur'an, Joseph Sura, sign no. 88).

The beginning of the story is juxtaposed with its end, and it starts with a dream and ends with its fulfillment as Joseph's dream comes true: "And he raised his parents High on the throne (of dignity), and they fell down in prostration, (All) before him. He said: 'O my father! This is The fulfillment of my vision Of old! God hath made it Come true'" (The Glorious Qur'an, Joseph Sura, sign no. 100)

Betrayal and conspiracy are elements of romance and juxtaposition figures out in this respect. Joseph's half brothers have been seduced by Satan to make a plot against him, an incident that juxtaposes the attempt of the wife of Aziz and her woman friends seduce him, and when they fail to do so, they have prepared a plot to imprison him. Joseph prefers prison to the illicit relation which they seek. Their plots can be put side by side with Joseph's plot to have with him his full brother Benjamin. Hence, many plots in the story juxtapose one another. Even Allah who already knows that Joseph's half brothers are jealous of him and they sure would harm him at any time, He makes a plot against them by constructing the circumstances that have made Joseph a minister responsible for the food supplies of Egypt and the nearby countries and by making his half brothers knell in front of him at the end of the story:

And he raised his parents High on the throne (of dignity), And they fell down in prostration, (All) before him. He said : " O my father ! this is The fulfillment of my vision Of old ! God hath made it Come true ! He was indeed Good to me when He Took me out of prison And brought you (all here) Out of the desert, (Even) after Satan had sown Enmity between me and my brothers. Verily my Lord understandeth Best the mysteries of all That He planneth to do. For verily He is full Of knowledge and wisdom. (The Glorious Qur'an, Sura Joseph, verse no. 100)

It is significant to note that the incident that causes Joseph to be imprisoned juxtaposes the incident that he is taken as captive by the traders who sold him at a cheap price in Egypt. This juxtaposition unfolds the intensity of Joseph's character and his ability to endure calamities, and at the same time it increases the reader's sympathy towards him.

At the beginning of the story Joseph appears to be helpless towards what his brothers may act against him and they succeed in getting rid of him by putting him into the well, but at the end

of the story all things turn upside down as they become helpless and humiliated towards Joseph's plot against them. Thus, Joseph appears to be victorious over them. This example of juxtaposition is very significant in that it creates the kind of contrast that may knit the entire story: "It was revealed in one Chapter, from the beginning to the end. It is the complete story and experience of Prophet Joseph. We learn about Joseph's joy, troubles, and sorrows, and more with him through the years of his life as he arms himself with piety and patience, and in the end emerges victorious" (Stacey, 2008). It is worth mentioning that the power of Allah juxtaposes all the powers of evil that surrounds Joseph during the course of the development of his life. Here, Allah plays the role of the *deus ex machina* employed in the great Romances of Shakespeare and other dramatists. Allah has planned everything for the sake of Joseph's safety and his attempt to rid the Egyptian nation of an inevitable famine and to bring the children of Jacob and their posterity to settle down in Egypt. Thus, the power of Allah has been juxtaposed with the powers of evil that may cause great catastrophes "And God hath full power and control over his affairs; but most among mankind know it not" (The Glorious Qur'an, Sura Joseph, verse no. 21).

The juxtaposition contributes to forming the genre of the story which is Romance, and at the same time it unfolds certain aspects of human nature and provides a profound understanding of the series of events contained in the plot of the story. Moreover, this juxtaposition has strengthened the structure of the story by creating a contrast that unfolds the differences among characters and situations and also the similarities among them. Hence, the argument is strengthened and creates an emotional response on the part of the reader, not to mention that it adds more meanings and themes to the story. Thus, for example, Joseph's half brothers have lied to their father that they take Joseph with them to the wilderness so as he may play and spend a good time when they, as a matter of fact, hide a conspiracy against him. This lie is juxtaposed by their second lie when they tell Joseph that Benjamin's full brother, Joseph, had once stolen something, which is a lie that does not affect Joseph for he hides it in his heart and does not unfold their illicit behavior towards him, which increases exasperation, a feeling of intense irritation or annoyance, on the part of the readers: "They said: "If he steals, There was a brother of his, Who did steal before (him). But these things did Joseph Keep locked in his heart, revealing not the secrets to them" (The Glorious Qur'an, Sura Joseph, verse no. 77). Furthermore, those lies can be juxtaposed with Zulaikha's lie to her husband that Joseph has already intended to harm her and injure her dignity: "But she in whose house he was, sought to seduce him from his (true) self; she fastened the door and said 'Now come my (dear one)! He said: "God Forbid" (The Glorious Qur'an, Sura Joseph, verse no. 23). Allah has protected him, for had Allah not intervene in this situation, she might have managed to allure him: Allah has turned "away from him (All) evil and shameful deeds," (The Glorious Qur'an, Sura Joseph, verse no. 24). Another significant juxtaposition is found in Zulaikha's confession of her attempt to seduce Joseph, for her confession juxtaposes both the confession of the ladies whom she calls to see Joseph and the confession of his half brothers that they have already done harm to him after he uncovers his identity to them.

The Joseph story can be regarded as a dream-vision story because it consists of many and various dreams that juxtapose one another. In the first place, Joseph's dream of the eleven stars and the sun and the moon that kneel towards him is to juxtapose three more dreams, of which the first is dreamed by the King; the other two, by the two Joseph's prison fellows who have

separately dreamed of two different dreams. Joseph interprets their dreams aright: the first will “pour out wine for his lord to drink,” and the other will be sentenced to death. Being crucified, the “birds will eat from off his head” (The Glorious Qur’an, Sura Joseph, verse no. 36). The fourth dream is the King’s: “And ‘one day’ the King¹ said, “I dreamt of seven fat cows eaten up by seven skinny ones; and seven green ears of grain and ‘seven’ others dry. O chiefs! Tell me the meaning of my dream if you can interpret dreams” (The Glorious Qur’an, Sura Joseph, verse no. 43) He dreams a strange dream that can by no means be interpreted by his entourage except by Joseph whom Allah has taught him how to interpret dreams. Having interpreted the King’s dream aright, Joseph has become minister and made progress and development in matters of food and economy. The situation in which Joseph has been taken captive and a slave then juxtaposes the situation in which he is a successful minister.

To strengthen the structure of the story, there appear other examples of juxtaposition. For example, the King dreams of seven weak cows that swallow seven fat ones; the seven weak cows juxtapose the seven fat ones. He also dreams of seven dried spikes and other seven green ones. The interpretation of the dreams juxtaposes the dreams themselves, for Joseph tells the King that there will come seven years during which food supplies should be kept for the next seven years of famine that will befall the surrounding countries.

At the beginning of the story, Joseph’s half brothers stain his shirt (garment) with fake blood to deceive their father of the notion that Joseph has already been eaten by the wolf. This very image of the shirt juxtaposes the image of Joseph’s shirt torn by Zulaikha from behind which proves his innocence. It is important to note that the two images do not only juxtapose each other but they also parallel each other: “the structural parallelism in the story is frequently reflected in linguistic parallelism, some of which will be noted in the verses pertaining to the parallels cited” (Mustansir Mir). Moreover, Joseph’s two shirts already mentioned juxtapose the one which is to be thrust upon his father’s face, so that he will, by the will of Allah, regain his eyesight. Thus, the first shirt deceives Jacob that his son Joseph has already eaten by a wolf, the second shirt proves Joseph’s innocence and the third one restores his father’s eyesight. Those incidents appear to be very impressive besides their aesthetic value.

In sum, juxtaposition in the Joseph story plays a significant role in that it results in creating many examples of contrasts pertaining to the structure of the story, creating a better understanding of the action and contributing to the unity of the story itself. Besides, juxtaposition has individualized particular events by citing together similar or different things together to make the story have a strong canvas weaved by a significant rhetorical device as such. Hence, differences and similarities are made obvious by means of placing two similar or different images, objects, characters or situations, which in turn help to add force to an argument, excite an emotional response and create more tremendous meanings.

5. Conclusion

It has been made clear that the rhetorical device called juxtaposition plays a significant role not only in literature, but also in actual life. It serves to create contrasts that strengthens the structure of the story and produces particular comparisons that function in many and various ways, for they act as a buffer to enhance a better understanding of things, images, situations and even characters. By using juxtaposition many representations have already been emphasized. Moreover, juxtaposition unfolds the plan and the main course of the development of events in the story or in any significant linguistic representations. As to the Joseph story,



one can realize that juxtaposition is conducive to contrasts and comparisons and contributes to organizing the text and adding more insights and deeper knowledge on the part of the reader by creating vivid, illustrative and expressive imagery. Examples of juxtaposition in the Qur'anic Joseph story have been pointed out. They are rhetorical elements whose function is to crystallize particular representations which are made prominent insofar as they serve to strengthen the structure of the story, and at the same time they expose aesthetic values.

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المستخلص

يدور محتوى البحث حول استعمال العنصر البلاغي الذي يعرف بالتجاور او المجاورة وبإشارة محددة الى قصة يوسف القرآنية. يعطي البحث تعريف هذا المصطلح البلاغي بالتفصيل ويشير الى اهميته في الحديث الأدبي والحديث الاعتيادي. يعد هذا المصطلح عنصرا تركيبيا لانه يوفر عنصر التضاد الذي يتضمن لقاء الضوء على التناقضات بين الاشياء والصور والشخصيات ليحدث تأثيرا لافتا للنظر ويبين مقارنات معينة من اجل تحقيق عنصر الاقتناع. سيتم عرض وتوضيح امثلة عن التجاور من المعطيات اليومية والادبية الى جانب امثلة التجاور التي تم تشخيصها بدقة في قصة يوسف القرآنية. فعنصر التجاور الذي يعد عنصرا بلاغيا يهدف بالدرجة الاولى الى إقناع القراء بمعطيات محددة وتسليتهم طالما أنه يتضمن قيمة جمالية ويوضح مقارنات معينة من اجل جعل الافكار والصور بارزة وواضحة جدا. لذلك يتضمن البحث ثلاثة ابعاد متمثلة في ثلاثة مباحث تحت العناوين "التجاور في الحياة الاعتيادية" والتجاور في الاعمال الادبية و " التجاور في قصة يوسف القرآنية".