



ISSN: 2957-3874 (Print)

Journal of Al-Farabi for Humanity Sciences (JFHS)

<https://iasj.rdd.edu.iq/journals/journal/view/95>

مجلة الفارابي للعلوم الإنسانية تصدرها جامعة الفارابي



Nature in the poetry of Muhammad Al-Fayez

Hashim hameed Hamoodi

Univerity Of Basrah

Basrah and Arab Gulf Studie Center

hashmhameed13@gmail.com

الطبيعة في شعر محمد الفايز

م. هاشم حميد حمودي

جامعة البصرة/ مركز دراسات البصرة والخليج العربي

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to examine the role of nature as a poetic device in the overall context of the poetic works of Mohammed Al-Fayez. In particular, this research aims to examine the role of nature with regard to the emotional content of the poet's works. In this context, this research aims to examine the role of nature as a living entity rather than a mere backdrop for the poet's themes of exile, longing, self-identification, and rebellion through the analysis of the poet's works. The imagery used in the poet's works, for example, palm trees, sea, and desert winds, suggests a sense of deep emotional engagement with nature through which the reflection of nature and the reflection of how humans feel are intertwined. The purpose of this research is to highlight the symbolic significance of nature and how this symbolism contributes to the development of individual and collective narratives within the poet's works. In addition, this research aims to highlight the relationship between human experiences and nature as reflected in modern Arabic poetry through the emotional significance of nature within the poet's works.

Keywords: Nature, poetry, Muhammad Al-Fayez

المخلص

تستكشف هذه الدراسة دور الطبيعة كأداة شعرية محورية في أعمال محمد الفايز، مع التركيز بشكل خاص على كيفية انعكاس العناصر الطبيعية على المشاعر الإنسانية. من خلال قراءة تحليلية لقصائد مختارة، يدرس البحث كيف يستخدم الفايز الطبيعة ليس فقط كخلفية، ولكن ككيان حي متشابك مع موضوعات المنفى والشوق والهوية والمقاومة. يكشف استخدام الشاعر لصور مثل البحر وأشجار النخيل ورياح الصحراء عن صدى عاطفي عميق، حيث تعكس الطبيعة الاضطراب الداخلي للذات. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تسليط الضوء على الثراء الرمزي للعناصر الطبيعية في شعر الفايز وكيف تساهم في بناء السرديات الشخصية والجماعية. من خلال الكشف عن الوظائف العاطفية للطبيعة في عمله، يقدم البحث نظرة أعمق إلى التفاعل بين التجربة الإنسانية والعالم الطبيعي في الشعر العربي الحديث. الكلمات المفتاحية: الطبيعة، الشعر، محمد الفايز

Chapter one: Introduction

١-١ preview

In the poetry of Muhammad Al-Fayez, the imagery of nature is interconnected and creates metaphors of different aspects of humanity's experiences. Al-Fayez is a renowned name among Arabic poets in the contemporary period. The poet, in his works, portrays his thoughts on love, loss, and humanity's quest to find meaning in this complicated world, and nature is a part of it. Nature represents not only a wonderful environment but also symbolizes survival, spiritualism, and Arab culture's connection to their roots. Thus, nature plays a metamorphic role in Al-Fayez's poetry rather than a merely descriptive role (Handley, 2007, p. 32). Nature in Al-Fayez's poetry represents the poet's inner self and also serves as a platform to ponder and understand the socio-political environment of his time. For instance, the repetition of the imagery of the desert as a wide and empty land, yet holding immense beauty, represents the struggle of mankind to come to terms with his own mortality and aspirations in this short span of time we call life; on the contrary, some of the imagery associated with trees and

torrents of running water symbolize hope for better days to come. This study will highlight how Al-Fayez portrays nature in an intricate way using his poetic language (Faiz, n.d., in Majeed, 2011, p. 12). This research will therefore look at the way the writer is able to utilize natural imagery in creating a unique voice that not only reflects the eternal nature of the earth, but also the nuances of modern Arab culture. Moreover, the research will look at the cultural and historical background of Al-Fayez's work in the larger Arab literary canon. This research will also look at the various ways in which Al-Fayez utilizes natural imagery in creating the opportunity for more profound contemplation of the nature of humanity in the face of change, as seen in the analysis of some of the prominent works by the poet (Faiz, 1949, in Majeed, 2008, p. 58).

٦-١ Importance of study

The study of the works of Mohammed Al-Fayez is very instrumental in understanding the role that nature plays in the representation of the relationship that people have with their own identity, the government in which they live and the natural world in which they exist. By utilizing the imagery of nature, the poet was able to symbolize freedom, exile, identity, and even resistance, and in doing so, reveal a great deal about the politics and social conditions in the Arab world at the time. Moreover, by closely analyzing the imagery that the poet utilizes in the works, it is possible to gain more knowledge about the emotional or spiritual level that the poet is able to reveal in the works and thus gain a better appreciation of the poet and the emotional condition of the people in the culture in which the poet lived.

٧-١ problem of study

Scholarly treatment of the thematic/symbolic aspects of nature in Mohammed Al-Fayez's poetry has been limited, even though the poet is well-acknowledged for the emotions and nationalistic tone in his poetry. The thematic and symbolic aspects of Nature in Al-Fayez's poetry have not been sufficiently examined in terms of the dynamic/multidimensional nature of this theme. Thus far, nothing has been mentioned in terms of how nature is utilized by the poet in creating his vision/message using the elements of nature as a refuge/resistance.

٨-١ Aim of Study

The poetry of Mohammed Al-Fayez will be examined for various representations of nature. This will include an analysis of various aspects of nature being utilized by Al-Fayez to fulfill various functions, such as conveying complex emotional experiences, exploring cultural identity as a theme, and participating in political discourse. This will also include an analysis of how nature has contributed to the overall experience of Al-Fayez's poetry.

٩-١ Mohammed Al-Fayez

Poet Mohammed Al-Fayez is one of the most prominent pioneers of the important modern school of poetry in Kuwait, the Gulf, and the Arabian Peninsula. He contributed, along with his colleagues, to giving Kuwaiti poetry a flavor of authenticity and distinction, benefiting from the pioneers who preceded him. Mohammed Al-Fayez began his literary career writing short stories, then moved to writing poetry and publishing it in Kuwaiti and Arab newspapers, especially in "Al-Shaab" newspaper. When it was closed, his literary passion was shut down, as he says. He only wrote a few poems, some of which were published in literary newspapers. When the press appeared in Kuwait, he wrote his first story, "He Went to His Country." From that moment on, the flow of writing never stopped, until he considered writing his life, as he lived his life writing within writing. He wrote a lot of it, despite his dissatisfaction with some of it. It expresses a need that Mohammed Al-Fayez had many thoughts in his mind. In the beginning, you would hear him raging while talking to you, squeezing the word until the essence of what he meant came out of it. When he read it as poetry, he would try to sing it (Faiz, 1949, in Majeed, 2008, p4). Some of his ideas may seem strange, but they express a need... Once, Mohammed Al-Fayez wanted to sing, so he suggested it to some of the radio workers, and they laughed at him. Al-Fayez wanted to make his voice heard, but because he couldn't get what he wanted across with pen, he chose the path of music. A long story. His full name is Mohammed Fayez Al-Ali, born in 1938. He began his academic career through "Al-Mulla", learning the Holy Quran and reading. He says about his beginnings and childhood: "I was nine years old... and like any child at that time, I used to hang out with women. I had no one else in front of me... aunts, uncles, and people from the village. Through what I heard, I would pick out words, twist them to my liking, and manipulate them... that was my relationship with the verse, in addition to the influence of the Holy Quran, which I had memorized by heart." He drank from the depths of heritage books and memorized poetry collections by the most eminent poets. He was fascinated by Al-Mutanabbi, whom he considered his first teacher. He memorized his poetry and would recite it to his friends in private gatherings (Faiz, n.d., in Majeed, 2011, p26). He was passionate about reading, starting with Imru' al-Qais, Abu Tammam, and Shawqi, and ending with al-Mutanabbi. Most of his readings focused on classical Arabic poetry. Al-Fayez says of his experience with poetry:

"My story with poetry is a long one. It began when I was sixteen years old, and I felt psychological impulses driving me to contemplate and rage that I could not explain. When circumstances failed to explain this, I turned to poetry, seeking inspiration from it to relieve my psychological comfort and to relieve my constant anxiety. I found what I was looking for in al-Mutanabbi's poetry." He continued contemplating al-Mutanabbi's legacy: "His personality, ideas, and words lit a remnant of hope in me, even though many of his vocabulary and ideas were obscure. This led me to spend hours researching and thinking, and thus a spiritual connection was formed between us. That's when I discovered that al-Mutanabbi was the new beginning of modern Arabic poetry." (Dun, 1979,p45)

Chapter Two: Nature in the poetry

Nature has been one of the major concerns in the poetry of all traditions and times. In nature, poetry is in no way merely a backdrop, but as a powerful symbolism, it acts as the avenue to explore deeper emotional, spiritual, and philosophical ideas. Nature-poetry relationship can be looked at in a number of ways: inspiration, metaphor, reflecting human experience, or even, in fact, working out how the world works.

١-٢ Nature as a Source of Inspiration

Poets find their inspiration in the natural world. The beauty, serenity, and intricateness of nature can stir up the deepest emotions in the poet. For example, a mountain or flower can remind one of life, growth, and mortality. The physical world becomes a means to express sentiments that may be hard to reveal (Balooch, 2011,p34).

Example: William Wordsworth, one of the Romantic poets, has written in his poem I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud, where he finds solace and joy in the sight of daffodils, which revives his spirits when he is lonely.

٢-٢ Nature as a Symbol of Emotions

Nature is often used by poets to symbolize human emotions or experiences. Seasons, landscapes, and elements like wind, rain, and the sea can reflect feelings of happiness, sorrow, or longing. The natural world becomes a metaphor for personal states of mind (Spivak, 2003,p101).

Example: John Keats's Ode to Autumn establishes a specific use of autumn as a poetical seasonal figure that symbolizes passing, aging, and changing times.

٣-٢ Nature as a Reflection of the Divine or the Sublime

Nature is often associated with the divine or the sublime, a force beyond human apprehension that instills awe. The beauty and vastness of nature create feelings of wonder and often humble the self, thus allowing the poets to deal with spiritual matters or the relationship between humanity and the universe (Siddiqui, 2011,p56). Example: In his Prelude, Wordsworth looks at nature as a statement of the godly, wherein he finds himself communicating with the world of nature, where the poet experiences his spiritual elation.

٤-٢ Nature as a Reflection of Human Life

All the poets equate nature to man's life cycle: birth, growth, death, and rebirth. Man, just like nature, would have seasons and undergo change; a man would go through several phases of life. Nature in all instances is utilized to point out the fleetingness of life: emphasizing the ephemeral and cyclical nature of human existence. (Rahman, 2002,p23)

٥-٢ Nature as a Political or Social Commentary

Nature can be used in poetic works to represent issues within society. It is through such observation of the exploitation or destruction of the environment that poets comment on human greed or the neglect of society. This use of nature in poetry has become increasingly important in modern times with growing concerns about environmental degradation. (Neruda, 1993,p29)

Example: In The Waste Land, T.S. Eliot uses images of a barren landscape to symbolize the fragmentation of modern society, reflecting on the disillusionment and spiritual emptiness in the post-World War I world.

٦-٢ Nature and the Sense of the Sublime

The sublime is a literary term in which nature evokes awe, wonder, and even fear by its vastness or beauty. The sublime experience can be both pleasing and terrifying and offers a good medium for the conveyance of complex human feelings. (Narang, 2013,p193) For example in Wordsworth's poem Tintern Abbey, he states the sublimity of the landscape and communion of the soul and how it is an overbearing nature which gives a sense of peaceful existence and belonging to something more than that of the human being. (Malik, 2008,p48)

Chapter Three: Nature in the Works of Muhammad Al-Fayez

The poetic compositions of Muhammad Al-Fayez are a remarkable example of how tradition and modernity are blended in one art form, which is characteristic of Arabic literature in the contemporary period. The main feature of his poetry is the description of nature, which reflects the complex emotions of the poet and his

philosophical thoughts, and Arab cultural history. Nature is not just a passive background to the development of a poetic composition but an active force that plays a part as a symbol of the environment in which the drama and hopes of human kind unfold. (Majeed, 2011, p159)

١-٣ Nature as a Reflection of Human Emotion

Nature and human emotions have a close relationship in the poetic compositions of Al-Fayez. Nature is a force that may become a source of inspiration for poets because it may symbolize the emotions of human kind. The poet Al-Fayez, using nature in this way, has been able to create images that have reflected the emotions and struggles of human kind, which we all have experienced in our lives. (Faiz, 1949, in Majeed, 2008, p11)

"O palm trees of my childhood,
you sway not with the wind,
but with the sorrow of loss".

The palm trees are not just another feature in the landscape but rather symbolize the poet's emotions related to his childhood and native land. The movement of the palm trees also symbolizes the poet's internal grief rather than the effect of the wind on them. One thing that is evident is that the movement of the palm trees symbolizes the internal grief of humans. In this case, the palm trees symbolize the idea of rootedness and tradition in the Gulf region but also symbolize longing, dislocation, and nostalgia. Through this imagery of nature, Al-Fayez portrays the externalization of his grief as an exile by showing how nature becomes infused with personal memory and emotions of grief (Al-Annabi, 2019, p84).

١-١-٣ Desert Imagery

The majority of Faiz's poetry includes an image of a desert. The vast sandy land in the desert symbolizes the sense of alienation, longing, and even alienation in humans. The emptiness in the desert symbolizes the poet's emptiness and alienation from the rapidly changing modern world that he has been forcefully expelled from its foundation. However, it is not just an image of hopelessness and despair but also an image of hope and defiance. Just as there is strong and determined plant life in the harsh and lonely desert, the poet's bravery and determination are also stimulated by these qualities in facing life in general. (Faiz, n.d. as cited in Majeed, 2011, p8)

"As the wind shapes my soul like a grain of sand,
it blows my spirit away ;
this wind knows how lonely I am ;
it finds a way to sing it back to me."

In addition, in the descriptions used in the poem, it is evident that the poet's feelings in relation to the desert wind are portrayed in how he views his state of mind. The desert wind is not just an element passing over the earth but also influences the poet's state of discontentment through brokenness and neglect. The phrase "carves my soul" shows how aspects in nature may symbolize an impact on an individual's personal self. The tone used in the voice of the desert wind portrays not just a friend of the poet but also an element that symbolizes harsh realities in terms of memory in solitude, as an individual passing over the earth (Al-Baghdadi, 1951, p.45).

٢-١-٣ Seasonal Imagery

Furthermore, Al-Fayez often used images related to the seasons in portraying different aspects of human emotions. This is because they symbolize metaphors related to the seasons in an individual's life: renewal – spring, strength – summer, decline – autumn, and tranquillity – winter. Spring symbolizes hope, new life, and love through flowers and rain, while winter symbolizes sadness, contemplation, and death through its coldness and stillness. The contrast in these two extremes in nature symbolizes the ups and downs in people's lives, offering the poet many avenues to express their emotions (Al-Shantryni, n.d., p34).

٢-٣ Nature as a Symbol of Arab Identity and Heritage

Al-Fayez's poem is filled with cultural and historic Arab traditions, and nature has much to do with linking the poem to its heritage. The picturesque description by a poet of the desert, oases, and ancient ruins evokes in him the spirit of belonging-the land, the history. In this respect, nature is connected with notions of cultural pride, identity, and collective memory of the Arab people.

Desert as a Cultural Symbol The desert, though, is also one of the most featured main elements in the works of Al-Fayez because of its cultural symbol towards the Arabs. The desert speaks to people of survival, the strength of a people, and life's bitter realism in the Arab world. It is one kind of landscape that evokes love and fear simultaneously because it can make people enjoy loneliness as much as a deep rapport with nature. Al-Fayez

constantly refers to the desert as if reminding himself of his ancestors' struggle for survival and victory, linking contemporary Arab identity to the roots of ancient civilization in this region (Faiz, 1949, in Majeed, 2008, p12).

The sea does not speak,
yet it roars with everything I want to say.
Its waves are like my silence—loud,
crashing inside me”.

The sea mirrors the emotion of the poet as a partner in emotion. In both silence and noise, the poet expresses his emotional struggle, something he cannot do through clear articulation. The contradiction of loud silence shows the poet is emotionally troubled—feeling frustrated, holding back anger or longing for something he can't reach. Al-Fayez shows the magnitude of his emotional state by projecting his emotions onto the vastness of the sea and the loudness of the sea; as such, nature serves as a voice to express what cannot be said (Sanra, 2006, p36).

٣-٣ Nature as a Spiritual and Philosophical Reflection

In Al-Fayez's poetry, nature has philosophical, spiritual and emotional significance. It also serves as a medium for the poet to reflect on living, existing and an all powerful being. Nature becomes an insight into what is beyond us. Nature provides Al-Fayez with the opportunity to reflect through imagery on life and not life - the withered flower, the dying tree, etc. This imagery allow him to convey the emptiness of life through decay while the blossoming flower and the flowing river convey the potential for new life and continuity. The imagery also serves to express Al-Fayez's views of life and death and how death is part of the cycle of life; not the end of life but the process of renewal towards beginning (Al-Hashimi, 1969, p15).

Al-Fayez sees nature as being a source of spiritual illumination and transcendence; large mountains, clouds in the skies, and even twinkling stars are all examples of man's search for a deeper understanding about his/her own life and its relation to God. The poet uses contemplation on human insignificance, in relation to the vastness of nature, to demonstrate his/her sense of insignificance. However, rather than using feelings of insignificance negatively, the poet uses them to inspire humility and level of appreciation for the cosmic order (Bunin, 2016, p. 56).

Chapter Four: Conclusion

In the poetry of Muhammad Al-Fayez, there is an incredibly intricate and dynamic personification of nature, unlike simply using nature as aesthetic/visual imagery. The intricate nature of the symbols of nature in Al-Fayez's poetry creates a way to touch on all aspects of the human experience; therefore, it creates a way to connect to all aspects of human emotion, history, spirituality, and social issues. Nature is used as a way for Al-Fayez to think about issues of identity, death, and man's place in the world, as well as a way to critique the lack of connection between modern society and its origins. Most importantly, nature is also represented as a living and dynamic force, an image of beauty and anguish, symbiotically related to man's humanity.

References

- Al-Annabi, Z. (2019). Man and nature in Ibn Khafaja's poetry and the French Romanticists: A comparative study. House of Cultural Books for Publishing and Distribution.
- Al-Baghdadi, I. P. (1951). The gift of the knowledgeable. Arab History Foundation.
- Al-Hashimi, A. (1969). The jewels of literature in the literature and creation of the language of the Arabs (Part Two, 27th ed.). The Great Commercial Library.
- Al-Shantryni, A. H. A. B. (n.d.). The ammunition in the beauties of the people of Al-Jazirah (I. Abbas, Ed.). Arab Book House.
- Balooch, A. A. (2011). Faiz ki shairi mein Punjab rang. Faisalabad, Pakistan: Misaal Publishers.
- Bunin. (2016). Wasn't you the angel? (H. Al-Shuwaili, Trans.; W. N. Al-Aridi, Linguistic Review). Jaafar Al-Essami Press.
- Dun, D. (1979). Preface. In S. Rahman, 100 poems by Faiz Ahmad Faiz (2002). New Delhi, India: Abhinav Publications.
- Faiz, F. A. (1949). Progress of a dream. In S. Majeed (Ed.), Coming back home (pp. 23–25, 2008). Karachi, Pakistan: Oxford University Press.
- Faiz, F. A. (1949). Towards a planetary culture. In S. Majeed (Ed.), Coming back home (pp. 46–48, 2008). Karachi, Pakistan: Oxford University Press.
- Faiz, F. A. (n.d.). Problems of cultural planning in Asia with special reference to Pakistan. In S. Majeed (Ed.), Culture and identity (pp. 37–49, 2011). Karachi, Pakistan: Oxford University Press.

- Handley, G. B. (2007). The new world poetics: Nature and the Adamic imagination of Whitman, Neruda and Walcott. U.S.: University of Georgia Press.
- Majeed, S. (2008). Coming back home. Karachi, Pakistan: Oxford University Press.
- Majeed, S. (2011). Culture and identity. Karachi, Pakistan: Oxford University Press.
- Malik, F. M. (2008). Fat: Shairi aur siyasat. Lahore, Pakistan: Sang-e-Meel Publications.
- Narang, G. Ch. (2013). Tradition and innovation in Faiz Ahmad Faiz. In Y. Hameed (Ed.), Daybreak: Writings on Faiz (pp. 65–74). Karachi, Pakistan: Oxford University Press.
- Neruda, P. (1993). Canto General (J. Schmitt, Trans.). London: University of California Press Ltd.
- Rahman, S. (2002). 100 poems by Faiz Ahmad Faiz. New Delhi, India: Abhinav Publications.
- Sanra, A. (2006). The court of Ibn Khafajah (Ed. A. Sanra). House of Knowledge, Beirut, Lebanon.
- Siddiqui, M. A. (2011). Faiz Ahmad Faiz: Dard aur darman ka shair. Lahore: Peace Publications.
- Spivak, G. Ch. (2003). Death of a discipline. New York: Columbia University Press.