



## The Influence of Ibrahim Khafaji as Arabic Lyric Poet

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### ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to clarify some literary features of contemporary Arabic poetry in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as an illustration of the prominence of Arabic literature with a particular reference to a modern Saudi poet, Ibrahim Abd Al-Rahman Khafaji. The paper commences with a brief introduction. It is divided into four main parts. The first shows a general idea about Arabic poetry, presenting the status of Arabic poetry as a genre of the ancient-living Arabic literature. The subsequent segment deals with a short survey on contemporary poetry in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its influence. After that, the study moves ahead to examine a significant Saudi poet – Ibrahim Khafaji analytically – and commenting on his influence and contribution to modern Arabic poetry. The fourth part presents a critical-analytical approach to a selected poem of Khafaji, ‘*O Eyelid Slumbering*.’ Finally, the paper comes to an end with a concise conclusion and recommendations.

**KeyWords:** Arabic literature, Arabic poetry, courtly love poetry, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, prominence, Saudi poetry

## Introduction

It is stated that Arabic poetry is the kernel of all other sorts of Arabic literature since the period of pre-Islam. Consistent with this generality, it can be reasonable that the progress and growth of poetry in the contemporary period, among Arabs, is an encouraging measure. In this case, the same might be absorbed in modern Saudi literature seeing as it is typically deemed a central, commanding, and intact part of the Arabic poetry.

Arabic Poetry, like the majority of the best poetry of the universe, is melodious and musical. It is the speech of the soul and the indicator of invisible or unseen facts. Poetry expresses the appeal of nature in expressions, terminologies, and connotations. The Arabic literary writings that perceptibly are inscribed by Arabs at this time unharmed by external influences. It consists unquestionably of poetry, the effort of skilled rhymesters and writers who chant and song of wilderness life and fighting, "lament over the deserted camping grounds, boast of their tribe, and abuse their enemies. It forms a distinct class of poetic composition, which has developed its own literary standards, and attained a high standard of excellence in its way" (O'leary, 2013: 103-4).

The Arabic tongue, with its surprising elasticity, turned out to be a mouthpiece for precise, truthful, and direct expressions. It is worth to mention Faris (1963), who declared that the "language that ranks so high for purposes of eloquence and poetic flight now readily lends itself to the demands of exact and positive expression" (p. 222). The Arabic tongue is mainly rich in the type known as proverbs of literature, "and its proverbs are often appropriately introduced in conversation, letters, and books, and add much force to what is said or written" (Wortabet, 1907, p. 12).

The desire for poetical writing was enthusiastic in the Arabic language. Arabic poetry was infinite and unbounded in number. It is also conveyed, transmitted, and communicated from a mouth to a mouth. Besides, "the poetry is usually delicate and sometimes touches depths of universal experience" (Cachia, 2004, p. 24). "It was of great attraction where all listeners admired them, whatever people were, high or low, rich or poor. Poetry in the Arabic tongue is full of music and exquisite accent" (Dahami, 2015). The Arabic tongue has not just kept on adding to Islam but has been a dynamic medium of cultural and universal renewal and rebirth in the Arabic-speaking lands. Arabic is the nationwide tongue of the head Arabian Peninsula; the body is the Fertile Crescent and the North African countries.

### 1. Arabic Poetry: A Brief Outline

The Arabic poetry is displayed as satisfaction and supremacy of phraseology with sparkles of keenness and vision. Characteristically, Arabic poetry has always denoted the highest literary expression for the Arab nation. Ever since the Pre-Islamic age, the custom and practice "of assembly in the nightfall, in

the tent around the versifier paying consideration to people's lives rehearsed in verse invites listeners to reproduce on the communal and communicative trait that Arabic poetry has possessed ever since its beginning" (Dahami, 2019b). Furthermore, the poet of Arabs, as stated by Motoyoshi (2004), is "wholly dedicated to the task of adequately describing his theme down to its most intimate and, at the same time, most typical peculiarities. There is no doubt that here the Arabs contributed a number of masterpieces to descriptive art" (p. 4).

Arabic poetry can be assessed as an official amount to record Arabs' superb, extraordinary, and impressive deeds. The defenders and clannish genealogies with the indebtedness of morals esteem and appreciate values such as hospitality, munificence, bravery, valor, and tolerance. Arabic poetry is "rooted in the life of the people, that insensibly molded their minds and fixed their character and made them morally and spiritually a nation long before Muhammad welded the various conflicting groups into a single organism, animated, for some time at least, by a common purpose" (Dahami, 2019a; Nicholson, 2004, p. 72). Regularly, Arabic poetry has always denoted the vital literary saying for the Arabic nation.

Furthermore, "generosity and hospitality have always featured prominently in Arab nomadic values, constituting an important aspect of murū'a [مروءة muruwwa] (manliness)" (Brown, 2003). Critics approve an impression about the Arabic poet declaring that the concept and view of poetry as a genre of art is clearly recognized and founded since ancient ages. The poet is supposedly the mouthpiece of his nation, as he was the messenger of his tribe. He is their guide in peace and their protector and knight in war. As documented in history, the whole nation or tribe is satisfied to divulge a poet's arrival, protector of its truces, and the one who praises its grandness, dignity, and glory.

As Zaidan defines in the book of History of Arabic Language Literature (p. 50), poetry is pleasant and sharp arts that Arabs call essential or ultimate arts. Several of such delightful and enjoyable arts are poetry, painting, and music. All such leading arts signify nature's splendor and magnificence, where engravings portray nature as prominent, and painting describes it with smooth and regular lines, colors, figures, and shapes. "The single notable art in an otherwise artless existence was poetry" (Bertram, 1937: 7). However, poetry connotes nature with countless thoughts, symbols, and judgments. It speaks with our appreciation and gratitude for nature. In addition, nature shows our satisfaction by using poetry.

Ibn Khaldoun (also written as Khaldūn), in his Muqaddima, highlights that for Arabs, poetry is where wonderful deeds, history, and experience are gathered and met; it is correspondingly the essential reference point for experience, acquaintance, perception, erudition, and wisdom. The Arabic

tongue is rich with proverbs, perspicacity, perceptiveness, and wisdom. To restate the saying of Ibn Khaldoun (1958), "(Poetry) in the Arabic language is remarkable in (its) manner and powerful in (its) way" (p. 373). He then persists in affirming that Arabic poetry is an uncontaminated design or pattern of the model of Arab excellence, quality, and eminence, which donates to the Arabic term *muruwwa*. Similarly, the point is emphasized by Gruendler (2013), and Dahami (2020), pronouncing that "classical Arabic poetry is the literary canon from which medieval Arab linguists, genealogists, and other scholars take evidentiary verses (*shawiihid*) to support their arguments. In this way, ancient poetry 'judges' many a scholarly case" (p. 257).

Reviewers, critics, and scholars, for instance, Nicholson, in his book *Literary History of the Arabs* (2004), as well as Dahami (2018a), draw the attention that Arabic poetry was and still the complete process of literary dialogue. The nation has its poets, who spontaneously express what they thought, felt, recognized, and believed. Their expressions "flew across the desert faster than arrows", and came home to hearts and bosoms of all who heard them" (p. 72). Moreover, Arab poets' attitude to their past poetic legacy and tradition "could be regarded as a reliable indicator of their degree of modernism. As is to be expected, different stages in the development of modern Arabic poetry were accompanied by related changes in the attitude to the past indigenous tradition" (Al-Musawi, 2006, p. 10).

Undeniably, it is the Arabic Poetry that assists, delivers, and helps as a gate through which one distinguishes how to envisage the situation, whether it is moral, ethical, or communal, social or political of the society of the Arabic nation. Above and beyond, it is a defense process and a confrontation against the opponents comparable to the sword. Poetry is sharp and piercing as the blade and too expeditious as the arrow shot from the arch. The Arabic poet is a substantial figure. "For a poet was a defence to the honour of them all, a weapon to ward off insult from their good name, and a means of perpetuating their glorious deeds and of establishing their fame forever" (Hoyland, 2001, p. 212).

Through the Arabic poetry, appraisers might identify that Arabs, in a genealogical model, are open-minded. They were split into clans and tribes in which the young are skilled, taught, and enlightened to be both combatants and poets. To quote Allen (2006), "Arabic poetry raised a distinctive voice that reverberated across the desert, village, and town. Among its functions at religious feasts and commercial fairs was its influence in confirming a common macro culture across the varying micro-cultures of Arabia" (p. 78).

Poetry is of great appeal and value where all hearers appreciated them, no matter what people are, from high class or a low class. Arabic Poetry is full of music, melody, and a superb accent. Still, those

who promote Arab traditions and make the most effective practice of the Arabic tongue are in several examples, "no longer Arabs themselves; few of the legalists, philosophers, historians, poets, storytellers who adorned the Court of Baghdad and made the Arabic language one of the most prolific in literature in the world could boast the blood of Arabia" (Coke, 1929: 77).

Onward, from Arabia, the Arabic poetry has come because the nations, lands, and tribes were exceptionally captivated with gainful trade materials and variations of stuff to make available and bequeath literature any possibility of development and evolution. The growth, progress, and expansion of literature can never occur without a rich, opulent, and gorgeous civilization. Consequently, that happened in Arabia; the critic Seignobos (1912), pronounces "towards Arabia, from which they brought gold, agate, and onyx, incense and myrrh, and the perfumes of Arabia; pearls, spices, ivory, ebony, ostrich plumes and apes from India" (p. 81). Additionally, Thaif (1960), in *History of Arabic Literature*, mentions that the Arabs did not arrive at the period of pre-Islam that they boast about until they discovered and skilled in the classical Arabic, which has been completed and touched the zenith of its development and growth (p. 121).

The Arabs are split up into tribes wherein young adults are taught and skilled to be both warriors and poets. The Arabic language in which the oral poetry was primarily collected is referred to by numerous linguists as *fus-ha* (فصحى) or classical Arabic. It is affirmed that *al-fus-ha* of pre-Islamic poetry displays a high degree of intensification and elaboration in its inflectional scheme. Inflectional scheme refers to a linguistic practice where the intensity, pitch, or sound of the voice is acclimated. *Al-fus-ha* is copious in its derivational morphology and a 'synthetic' attraction. It is said that the repetitive patterns of the thematic structure or association, traditional metaphors, and echoed linguistic eccentricities and archaisms designate an oral-formulaic derivation of the sort planned for the poetic ritual of the olden language.

## **2. A Glance at Saudi Poetry**

As a result of the development of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in all aspects of life, Saudi Arabian poetry developed and progressed according to social, economic, and cultural developments. Many elements influenced the revitalization of poetry, such as media, the press, radio, schools, institutes, libraries, printing presses, and other general influences on literature development. In addition to that, there were crucial influences in the revival of poetry, including the Holy Qur'an, the hadiths of the Prophet, and the ancient literature, where Saudi poets have driven perception, imagination, thinking, and symbolism from ancient poetry. It also includes modern literature, where the impact of all the doctrines, poetic movements, and trends that emerged in the Arab countries after the contemporary

renaissance, such as migration literature and free verse. The influence of all these movements appeared in Arab and Saudi poetry. This poetry has been branched into two general divisions. The first is called the conservative movement and the other is called the movement of renewal.

Saudi literature's impact is apparent in rhetoric, writing, poetry, and literary works by various Saudi and Arab writers, along with literary figures. The foremost effects and inspirations of Saudi resurgence or revitalization can be comprehended as historical, didactic, and educational. The country paid great attention to these constituents as the source and fountain of knowledge and civilization.

Arabic literature, predominantly poetry, was the principal of all literary genres in the Arabic countries and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is a central part of the pronounced and sizeable Arabic realm. Consistent with this impression, it can be true that the progress and fruition of poetry in contemporary Arabic literature is an encouraging step. At that argument, the same would be managed to modern Saudi literature because it is naturally believed to be a fundamental, domineering, and vital portion of contemporary Saudi literature. In Saudi Arabia, poetry is a significantly conspicuous literary genre that can be divided into love, lament, irony, sarcasm, religious, praise, heroic poetry, and numerous others.

As soon as both central regions Najd and Hejaz were united and integrated with other counties under one potent country's authority and rule, King Abdul Aziz took the lead. The newly founded country had the advantage of setting up a strong government believed in achieving stability and civilization by facilitating some crucial constituents to reach the nation's prosperity. Constituents such as supporting learning, education, and obtaining knowledge, encouraging the literary and cultural magazines and newspapers as well as a culture might achieve the planned target.

Consequently, the kingdom hurried to inaugurate and support schools, universities, communal colleges, educational establishments, cultural and mass media, newspapers, and many others. All such cultural and educational elements significantly contributed to Saudi literature's revival in general and poetry in particular. The dominant nation is the one that grips the belongings and components of development and advance; that is why the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been affording and encouraging public education and schooling with its all principles and policies free of cost. It is a white page in education that the kingdom pays regular rewards to all scholars in the area of higher education. The result is absolutely prosperity. Additionally, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been hunting for its best to strengthen and renew education at a rapid pace. It is a dominant representation for others in terms of distinction and maintaining the standard. As it is mentioned earlier about the variety of poetry genres, here I present some eminent types of poetry like:

**Love Poetry** (flirtation / romance) seizes a large space in ongoing Saudi Arabian poetry. The poetic prosperity enormously looks like a binary sided golden model. The poets recorded their sentiments on their first side, which resulted from the affection and what leads to it like gathering and separation, happiness, and soothing as well as desire and heartbreak. They depicted their emotions and shaped in this depiction their dexterities and talents. The second side is reserved to articulate their indirect aspirations and objectives. The poets threw in the sentimentalities of all types of literature.

The study of modern Saudi love poetry requires an all-around sweeping acquaintance of what the poets said in rural areas and towns. Recognizing what the early poets composed in this drive and what the modern creative person of Arabian nations structured is of great importance to support this poetry movement in Saudi Arabia. It also necessitates exposure to the distinct environment in which several Saudi love poets, like Ibrahim Khafaji, determine their works. In doing so, it simplifies the return of the divisions to the origins and elucidation of forerunners' impact on successors and the connection of this sort of literature with its counterparts in other Arabic countries. Thus, critics can reach a reasonable overall decision and close to fair judgment on love, poetry or what is called flirtation in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

An accurate study is not fully undertaken without appreciating and tasting. It might be arguable that this type of poetry forms great affluence in terms of both sizes and in case of the views, it comprises. In the kingdom, this poetry is mostly restricted to the woman alone. Approximately none of the Saudi love poets attempted to include flirtation expressions of male love. In spite of being some poems externally looking like coping with males, their genuineness stood in contradiction of it, tracking the tradition of Saudi love poetry in this respect. In light of this argument, it can infer a number of positions, assess several emotions, sentiments, feelings, and fervency, which show their realistic and invented images.

**Glory and Enthusiasm:** The modern poets moved and were encouraged to another impressive type called the nationalist poetry, which covers the glory of the nation and enthusiasm of its people. The poets enjoyed composing poetry of only the grandeurs of nationalism, Saudi and Arabs. It is poetry, which means a poem that portrays citizens' difficulties, challenges, and worries. Their ambitions, hopes, and their interpretations of such issues are persuasive, influential, and cogent.

**Social Poetry:** Social Poetry is believed to be one of the new drives of poetry, regardless of its energies being found in the Abbasid phase like what it is found and read in the poetry of Abo Al-A'la Al-Ma'ry. Nevertheless, the modern poets made up considerable treatment of social questions and expressed their apprehensions to purify, on the one hand, the social environments as they communicated about poverty and its grounds as well as about deception and disloyalty, which spread among people. On the other

hand, they expressed their apprehensions to show satisfaction on some unpolluted social conditions as they communicated about loyalty, honesty and fidelity. Furthermore, they treated the misconceptions and their influence over some people of society. Besides, the poets wrote poems on woman education, forming friendships and social correlations.

### 3. Khafaji: The Saudi Lyric Poet

Ibrahim Abd Al-Rahman Husain Khafaji was born in the holiest land; it was Mecca, in 1926. Khafaji is a contemporary Saudi poet from the region of Makkah Al-Mukarramah, which was known as Al-Hijaz before the establishment of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and he comes from a literary and cultural family. Ibrahim Khafaji was known for his poetry that is related to the Saudi nature and environment, which he has driven his themes for his poems from the abundant popular collection, such as the folkloric muwashahat, (يماني الكف والصهبه) Yamani al-Kaf we al-Sahbah, and many others, so to be titled as the jeweler of the Saudi song.

Ibrahim Khafaji began his educational life at Al-Falah School in Makkah Al-Mukarramah, joined Al-Lasilkiah<sup>1</sup> School, and graduated from it in 1942 (1364 AH). In 1972, he joined the Institute of Administration in Cairo and obtained a diploma in Business Administration and Financial Management. He wrote many poems sung by Saudi and Arab singers. Khafaji's talent for poetry began at an early age, where his selection of words is characterized by simplicity and sweetness. He is one of the most famous poets who wrote the particular Hijazi expression; his poems fascinate and attract the most prominent Saudi and Arab singers since his lyrics are characterized to be sung.

It is said that his first lyric was titled '*O Eyelid Slumbering*' (يا ناعس الجفن ' Ya Na`sat Al-Jafn ), which was set to music and sung by the musician Tariq Abdul Hakim in 1942 (1364 AH), and then renewed by the well-known Saudi singer Mohammad Abdo. Mohammad Abdo is one among those who chant and intone with Khafaji's poems. Ibrahim Khafaji has occupied a large area of Saudis and Arabs' memory due to the richness of poetry production known to him, especially the lyric poems of all kinds. Khafaji is considered the poet of the entire kingdom, singing in his poems about love, enthusiasm, nationalism, the principles of the true religion, and others. In his poems, the poet touched on the two most important dimensions of concern to the general public, namely the national dimension.

Ibrahim Khafaji had the creative ability to highlight photography's aesthetics through the poetic image in the flirtatious context that was drawn in his lyric poems in particular and in the poetic image for all other purposes. '*O Eyelid Slumbering*' is an instance that reflects the poet's creativity of love poetry. Generally, the poet's poems were eminent and distinguished by the aesthetics of rhythm, whether in the vocabulary and the rhythm of poetry, or the rhythm of the musical sentence, which

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<sup>1</sup> the Wireless



remains the most crucial feature of Ibrahim Khafaji as a writer of the sung poem. Khafaji's musical phrase is distinguished by its well-formulated and lightweight tone.

Ibrahim Khafaji is a poet who represents the value and wealth of Saudi literature. His poetry was and still a beacon shining with his beautiful and attractive vocabulary that rises above the ranks of great literature. His poems are born of feeling and emotion, evoking tones of love and emotional conscience. Ibrahim Khafaji, the poet, inhabits Saudi people and Saudi literature and intone about affection and the homeland through his poetic works. Khafaji wrote about flirtation, in which he revealed the image of the lover and the image of the beloved in his poetry.

In his poems' contemplative reading, the reader finds many poetic purposes between religious poetry and mourning poetry. Social poetry and these purposes confirm the breadth of poetic drives for Ibrahim Khafaji. They vary in the diversity of occasions and motives that stimulate the poet's readiness and provide him with an abundance of meanings and feelings that he renders into sweet poetry, whose pure implications flow with serenity and tranquility. The sentimental definition of poetry by William Wordsworth is greatly applied in the lyrics of Ibrahim Khafaji, as we shall see in analyzing a piece of poetry in the next part of this article. However, we need to recall to the mind the saying of Wordsworth that shows the utmost tranquility of feeling. "Poetry shows 'the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity'" (Dahami, 2018b; Waugh, 2006: 53). The poet himself and his lyrical spontaneity made him a pioneer in this poetry field from other poets of his time.

Ibrahim Abdul-Rahman Khafaji is an undying name and is dignified in the memory of Saudis and Saudi lyric poetry. His stardom and position are renewed in people's hearts and throughout the Arabian Peninsula and large parts of the Arab space. He has enriched the Saudi poetry encyclopedia with a considerable number of lyric poetry that is chanted by several giants of Saudi vocalists as well as Arabs. His poems were and still constitute the greatest common denominator among Saudi singers, such as the Mohammad Abdo, Talal Maddah, Abdul Majid Abdullah, Abadi Al-Jawhar, and many others who chanted many of his poems, which exceeded 600 lyric poems. Khafaji's lyrical poems have helped a number of artists rise to the summit of glory and fame. The poems of Ibrahim Khafaji were not shared by Saudi singers only but also by several famous singers in the Arab world.

In addition, many Arab worthy singers sang many of Khafaji lyrics, such as the Lebanese Samira Tawfik, the Lebanese Wadih As-Safi, the Egyptian Sharifa Fadel, the Tunisian Hayam Younis, the Qatari Ali Abdel Sattar, and others. Many of the poems won international artistic awards, including the poem 'أشقر وشعره ذهب' 'Blonde with His Hair is Gold,' which won the award of Best Song in the early 1970s from the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). Furthermore, Khafaji has been awarded the

Medal of Merit of first-class in 1985 from King Fahd ibn Abdul Aziz in recognition of his creative poetic efforts, particularly in composing the Saudi National Anthem. Additionally, Umm Al-Qura University rewarded him in 1994 (1416 AH) for his success in composing the poetic expressions of the operetta 'Brides of the Kingdom' (عرائس المملكة). The Assembly of Culture and Arts in Jeddah has awarded him with recognition in 1999 for his distinguished efforts in the world of lyric poems in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The Literary Club also lionizes him in Makkah Al-Mukarramah in 2009 (1431 AH), and in 2012 he is lionized with the King Abdul Aziz Medal of the First Class.

Khafaji struggled and called for upholding the national artistic culture and the opening of art and literary institutions and sought for a revival of the theater. He left a rich artistic legacy that is echoed and preserved by generations after his passing away. Khafaji caused and left to the new generation patriotic literary works that preserve nearly a century's history. Khafaji is called the master of Saudi-song-poets. He died at the age of 90 years in 2017, leaving behind a magnificent cultural and literary legacy.

#### **4. *O Eyelid Slumbering*: A Courtly Love Poem**

The majority of his lyrical poems are of great literary worth. '*O Eyelid Slumbering*' is one of them which deserves an analytical and critical analysis and *wasf* (description). When a thinker deals with a title like *O Eyelid Slumbering*, he/she directly activates his/her heart and mind before his tongue. The phrase is romantic, sentimental, and idealistic because it is more imaginative than real, particularly when such a thinker ponders deeply about the phrase's connotation. If we imagine a slumbering eyelid, we need to visualize a female as a symbol of beauty. Consequently, the connection is among a triangle of beauty – a beautiful female, an attractive eyelid, and relaxation – in which they are combined to create utmost courtly love and passion. We are in front of a very profound phrase that sets for contemplation a right place.

Arab poets, all over the ages, were known for their courtly love poetry. It is that sort of virtuous love poetry that has limits. The poets used to describe different aspects of their imagined beloved, but the border of their imagination is only description and thoughts. They go no further because of two commitments; the first for pre-Islam poets, which is conceived by nobleness, decency, and dignity implanted in all Arab people from childhood. After Islam, the second for poets who realize the religion's instructions should honestly apply and put it into operation. Consequently, whatever they produce of adoring and romantic expressions and phrases, they remain mere articulation that does not reach action.

Khafaji is a skilled imitator of the poets of Al-Muwashahat (Muwashshah), which is spread in various Arabic countries and Islamic states, particularly Andalusia (Al-Andalus). "It is said that the

*muwashshah* and *zajal* are lyrical songs that have their origins in the Arab countries but were improved in Andalusia. When Muslims inaugurated North Africa, they found a kind of music that is different from theirs. A number of historians and researchers support the idea that music during pre-Islam was part of that world. They believe that music came from the Arabian Peninsula and transformed by the Arab-Muslim tribes who migrated to North Africa then to Andalusia” (Dahami, 2015).

*O Eyelid Slumbering* is the opening of the platonic lyric, which is sung by several singers such as Tala Maddah, Tariq Abdul Hakim, and Mohammad Abdo. It bears inside profound pictures, symbols, and images that can be applied to the poet himself as well as to all lovers who adore love and passion. The poem includes the following verse lines:

يا ناعس الجفن أرحم جفني المجروح<sup>2</sup>

O sleepy eyelid, have mercy on my distressed eyelid

The poet commences this platonic lyric by begging his imagined addressee to show a type of mercy on his injured eyelid. The verse line indicates that the addressee is a beautiful woman. She is sleepy; however, the poet is distressed and his eyelid cannot meet the sleep because his mind is preoccupied with thinking of his imaginary gorgeous lady. Two pictures are envisaged in this verse line that shows the speaker in the first picture suffers from sleeplessness because his mind is busy contemplating his favorite and her beauty. Because the mind is busy, the eyelid cannot get relaxation to sleep. The result is unconscious injury and distress. On the other side, the poet foresees his lady to be blessed with relaxation and the slumbering eyelid symbol.

يا مايس القد، صدك زاد قلبي جروح

O you the owner of the elegant body, your repulse intensified the wounds of my heart

In the second verse line above, the poet changes the sort of discourse between the speaker and his imagined remote beloved from supplication into complaining. The speaker is perplexed; he praises the elegance and grace of his fictional darling, portraying her, metaphorically, as the one who has a slim charming body. However, his complaint is apparent when he visualizes that she is not paying him any care, which increases his heart's spiritual wound. It is frustrating when he is unable to solace his mind, eye, and heart with what he aspires. Concerning the verse device, we find that the word (المجروح *almajrowh*), which means the injured or distressed, rhymes with the word (جروح *jurowh*), which means injuries. Furthermore, the first words of the two lines are alliterating with clear consonance in (ya na'es (يا ناعس), which means 'sleepy' of the first line, and (ya maes (يا مايس), which refer to elegance or gracefulness of the second line.

حبك شغل فكري وحسنك ملك أمري

<sup>2</sup> The lyric poem is quoted from this link <https://www.wneen.com/lyrics/2099>

Your love occupied my attention, and your prettiness possessed my affairs

In the third line, the poet declares that his beloved totally attracts him to the degree that his love for her makes him think of nothing except her. All the time, days, and nights his mind is contemplating her and his heart is pulsing because of love. He confirms that her beauty has possessed his conduct as if he is a slave to her beauty. In this line, we discover alliteration clearly in words like (حبك *hubek*) that refers to 'loving you' and (حسنك *husnek*) that refers to 'your beauty.' Also, there is an internal rhyme in the same line in words like (فكري *fikri*), which refers to the occupied thought and (أمري *amri*), which refers to the poet's affairs, concerns, and doings.

وأنت ما تدري أنك ملك الروح

And you do not realize that you are the owner of the soul

It can be said that the whole piece of poetry is like a chain connected with ideas from the beginning to the end. So, this verse line is associated with the previous one that increases the process of love from the speaker's side towards the unclear absent beloved. The poet is still in his one side dialogue addressing the assumed darling. It is a kind of *wasf* or description which is very famous in Arabic poetry by all poets of romance and other genres. "As an essential area of the Arabic poetic language, *wasf* (description) is inevitable in the poetry of Arabia" (Dahami, 2019c). Back to the line in which the poet confirms his views about the lady. As he indicates, she has possessed the speaker's soul even if she does not realize it.

هويتك والهوى يضني، وسحر عينيك جنني

I fancied you, and fancy exhausts, and the charming eyes made me mad

The related chain of *wasf* continues, but now the picture is clearer. The poet realizes that the love and passion which entangled him with his lady is not sweet. But, on the contrary, such love causes pain, agony, and suffering. Why? Indeed, because this fondness is from one side, the lover shares his passion with a hidden or fictional beloved.

On the one hand, in this verse line, the speaker confirms his state of fancying the beauty of his favorite; on the other hand, he also affirms that such passion, fondness, and love fatigue and enervate. The last phrase – your charming eyes made me mad – can be interpreted in two ways. The first typical understanding of it can tell that the eyes are gorgeous to appeal to the degree of being unconsciously disturbed and moved. We easily discover internal rhyme in the same line in words like (يضني *yuthni*), which refers to being exhausted and (جنني *jannani*), which means made me furious.

وصدك بالدلال يفني، يا ليتك يوم ترحمني

And your refusal by coquetry perishes, I wish you a day have mercy

Several times in the poem, the poet starts with the conjunction *and* as a device of connecting lines as well as the meaning. In the above line, he uses the word *and* and extends the previous line's purpose and the one before. The line, in its first part, is perplexing because of the ambiguity of the intended meaning. The reader conceives contrasting connotations when the speaker talks with his fictional favorite showing that the process of refusing leads to departing this life but as a result of coquetry. It might be natural to say that rebuff brings about perishableness without mentioning dalliance. In the second part, the speaker shifts to supplication again, requesting his favorite to show mercy one day. It is a wish to denote future hope, but it is probable, not sure.

تجيني وتحييني، تواصلني وتدنيني

You, to come and enliven me, contact me and bring me closer

The wish continues as an aspiration in the thoughts of the poet. The speaker's dreams hopefully come to him in order to bring life to his spirit. His ambition extends that his fictional darling finds a way of conducting him and making him near beside him. The line is composed of four verbs and two conjunctions of the word *and* since the meaning is associated with the previous and following lines.

بنظرة عطف تغنيني، تنسي عيني كثر النوح

With a look of sympathy make me rich, make my eyes forget the plenty of lament

The petition method appears in this line because it is associated with the previous two verse lines. The dreaming speaker is still waiting for a positive response with a petitionary look to make him vivid. Being vivid will make his sad and distressed eyes forget the many times weeping and expression of grief.

تعال يا حبيب قلبي، تعال أسعدني في حبي

Come, o you the love of my heart, come, and make me happy in my tenderness

The line above shifts to a sort of temptation, alluring his beloved to share happiness and the adoration of the heart. The poet insists on asking her to share exaltation with the intention to let love as a type of cheerfulness. This line, in particular, reminds us of Christopher Marlowe in his play *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus* when the main character Doctor Faustus tries to show his affection with the spirit of the incarnated Helen of Troy, whose beauty was a cause of the war between Troy and Sparta that burnt thousands of ships. The main character Faustus shares the same feelings of Khafaji but about the beauty of Helen, saying:

Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.

Here will I dwell, for heaven is in these lips,

And all is dross that is not Helena (Marlowe, 2005, p. 106).

Likewise, we recall Ben Jonson in the lyric articulated by Volpone in the play Volpone, which starts with "Come, my Celia, let us prove" (Ben Jonson, 2005, p. 129). Ben Jonson, through his speaker, Volpone, tries to allure Celia, singing:

Come, my Celia, let us prove,  
While we can, the sports of love,  
Time will not be ours for ever,  
He, at length, our good will sever;  
Spend not then his gifts in vain; p. 129

Furthermore, Ibrahim Khafaji applies a concept of metaphysical poetry when he sues the *carpe diem*, which refers to enjoying the present. *Carpe diem* "has become the name for a very common literary motif, especially in lyric poetry. The speaker in a carpe diem poem emphasizes that life is short and time is fleeting with the purpose of urging his auditor—who is often represented as a virgin reluctant to change her condition—to make the most of present pleasures" (Abrams, 2015, p. 46). Comparing the contemporary Arabic poet Ibrahim Khafaji with both the Elizabethan poet and dramatist Christopher Marlowe and the renaissance man Ben Jonson, we find similarity in the call for love, but the sort of love is different among the three. The love for Khafaji is platonic or courtly love poetry.

تعال قول إيه ذنبي، كفاية هجر يا حبي

Come, say what my sin, enough desertion my love

The poet asks his imagined darling to reply to him about his query if he made a mistake, a defect, or failing. As a type of allurements, the speaker requests his idol to stop her deserting by accepting meeting him because she is so dear to him.

غرامك زاد أفكاري، وطيفك وحي أسراري

Your passion increased my thoughts, and your spectrum is the inspiration of my confidences

In this verse line before the final, the poet indicates that his thirst, compared to the addressee, has increased his thoughts of devotion, affection, and passion. He adds that her spirit is the inspiration and revelation of his beliefs and intimacies because such views and intimacies are mostly secrets.

ونجمك في الهوى ناري، كوى قلبي وزاده جروح

Moreover, your luminary is fiery in passion, ironing my heart and increasing wounds

The poet concludes his piece of lyrical poetry with this line, where he tells about his beloved that she is as if the luminary imagined as fiery because of love. Love increases the feelings to a vehement degree but spiritually. This sort of fervent love is ironing the heart and expands it with injuries.

## Discussion and Argument

Modern Arabic poetry is inclined to have a bit of freedom in its regulations. Many poets prefer to be closer to the free verse or unrhymed verse in writing poetry because it is a little easier than classical rhymed poetry. Ibrahim Khafaji is not from such poets. The poem, '*O Eyelid Slumbering*,' is not fully rhymed in all its lines; however, there are lines clearly show the identical rhymed expressions like the words (المجروح *al-majrouh*) which mean the injured, (جروح *hurouh*) that refers to injuries, (الروح *arrouh*) which means the spirit, (النوح *annaouh*) that means crying, (جروح *jourouh*) denoting to injuries. Their locations are in the first, the second, the fourth, eighth, and twelfth lines, respectively.

Therefore, the third, the fifth, the sixth, the seventh, the ninth, the tenth, the eleventh are rhymed with the following rhyming words: (أمري *amri*) that means my affairs. The next is (جنني *januni*), which means made me mad, (ترحمني *terhamni*) refers to mercy; in the seventh line, you find (تدنيني *tednini*) that means to make me closer to you. In the ninth and tenth lines, you find the same expressions (حبي *hubi*) (حبي *hubi*) that indicate my love. The final rhymed word is (أسراري *asrari*), which means my secrets. The rhyme scheme of this piece of poetry can be arranged like AABABBBABBBA.

## Conclusion

Generally, the lyrical poems of Ibrahim Khafaji could be evaluated as some of the praiseworthy significance of the Saudi literature. It comprises interesting modern attitudes and culture among Saudi and Arab poetry within the contemporary age. Khafaji '*O Eyelid Slumbering*'s poem had been taken to light as a piece of poetry of excellent dexterity. Khafaji could fashion the perceptiveness of astounding attraction and provoke the activeness of attracting essentials and poetic qualifications. The poem incorporated some influential and noteworthy reactions thoroughly by the enhancement of individual confidence. Definitely, the poetic symbols, metaphors, and (*wasf*) descriptions heightening the merits of contemporary Saudi poets who meaningfully influenced the growth and advancement of Saudi and Arabic literature on the whole and contemporary poetry specifically.

This paper attempted to review and go over the symbolic and invoking descriptions in the verse lines of Ibrahim Khafaji, a hunter of modernism and semi-freedom of verse rules in Saudi Arabia literary revolution. The study is an endeavor to shed light on Arabic poetry's magnitude, which demonstrated its deep-rooted inventiveness since ancient ages until nowadays. It likewise a try to succinctly place literature in Saudi Arabia, a vigorous developing Arabic country encouraging education, literature, and culture in addition to supporting modern Saudi poets and men of literature. A prominent one of them is Khafaji, who intensely added a conspicuous contribution to contemporary lyric poetry's revival. Khafaji wrote and practiced writing love lyrics as well as national poetry. '*O*

*Eyelid Slumbering*' is an example of his creativity in dealing with unique and profound love poems. It might be stated that the mentioned poem, like many others, touched considerable and noteworthy inventiveness and inspiration regarding Khafaji's ability and gift in energizing Arabic poetry as a resource of communicating the personality that represents the literary society.

As per the analytical study elucidates, the paper pursued a sensible manner associated with some substantial Arabic lyric poetry points. The studied piece of poetry of Khafaji is a poem, an instance of countless Arabic love poems. *O Eyelid Slumbering* depicts distinct Arab standards, illustrations, and values towards the resurgence and revival of contemporary Arabic poetry in the modern stage of development.

### **Recommendation**

One of the important difficulties that faced the researcher is the paucity of the documented or published materials about the works of the poet Ibrahim Khafaji in English as well as Arabic. The poetry of Khafaji must have been collected, published, and studied for being a crucial literary figure who produced a considerable number of poems of different genres, incredibly the lyrics.

It is recommended that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's related authorities support and encourage documenting and publishing such poems as a heritage of the nation's production. The works of Khafaji must have been preserved, collected, and published. Furthermore, several studies of such a topic need to be followed because of the significance of probing the depth of Arabic literature in English, presenting a raw well that is not fully discovered.

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