

## **A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF MOHAMMAD IBRAHIM ABU SENNA'S AND FEREYDOON MOSHIRI'S POETIC DICTION**

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### **Abstract**

Poetic diction is a symbolic language and mode of expression. This language deals more with deep layers and structures of knowledge and experience; its secret vitality lies in its ambiguity. A poet offers a verbal representation of objects which in turn are intended as substitutes for other objects and phenomena. A poet speaks of oneself in order to treat man in general, thus the expressed 'I' is aimed at the intended 'we' feeding and underlying it. Such a quality accounts for most of the so-called poetic ambiguity, complexity, and mystery. The audience is targeted by an intrinsic, associative poetic diction and style. Thus, the dreamy world of a poet is grounded in their aspiration for deeply impressing their audience and ushering them through a joint journey of intuitive insight and discovery.

The Present article attempts to study the characteristics of poetic diction in the poetry of Mohammad Ibrahim abu Senna and Fereydoon Moshiri. Poetic diction in both poets is simple, understandable, and fluent. Of course, Moshiri's diction is more moderate, modest, and friendly than that of abu Senna's, to such an extent that Moshiri's poetry has been compared to that of Sa'di's. Abu Senna possesses a symbolic diction, what makes his diction complex and his poems difficult to understand. This is the most remarkable difference in style between these two Persian and

Arab poets. The main areas of study in this article are vocabulary, stylistic ellipsis, repetition, dramatic structure, and intertextuality.

**Key Words:** Abu Senna, Arabic, Diction, Language, Moshiri, Persian, Poetry, Style.

## 1. Introduction

According to Alipoor, “Language introduces the mind. Upon reaching the linguistic phase or stage, the mental is ‘expressed’. The mind and its workings and processes are invisible and undefinable, and they become visible only upon linguistic maturity. The mind achieves perfection through language.” (1999: 16)

Some researchers in the area of the genesis of language and its evolution such as al Waraqi argue, “Language, magic and spells, and poetry are synonymous phenomena in human life, and display a powerful relation and correlation upon their own genesis.” (1984: 62) Words are the constituent elements of poetic language. Hence, Hoghooghi says, “Basically, language is the product of lexical combination and collocation within a systematic structure. Poetry transcends language and dismantles its rules, it displaces and rearranges lexical items. This change reflects the clash of those words which comprise poetic structure.” (1989: 341) In poetic diction or language, a word is not the name or label of an object, but it is the object itself, and the poet without relying and aiming at expression and communication puts an object on display, and the audience observes and witnesses things needless of hearing or listening.

Abu Senna (born 1937) is a man of refined sensibility and a fluent style full of charm and beauty. Abu Senna’s expressive manner of articulation and composition is symbolic in nature. His poetry gives his audience the impression of ready wit, yet when they look closer and contemplate the meanings, they come to realize that Abu Senna had not at all aimed at surface meanings. Thus one should say that when approaching poetic diction one should avoid such a futile attempt as seeking a particular or specific meaning.

Expressive fluency is one of the characteristics of Moshiri’s (born 1926) poetic diction. Yaghoobshahi says, “Using a poetic expression, Moshiri speaks of such issues that have more or less engaged people’s daily life and for this particular reason he is closer to the popular, common mind, and has attracted a vast range of poetic audiences among Iranians.” (1994: 116) Dr. Mohammad Reza Shafiei Kadkani introduces Moshiri by saying, “Moshiri has attempted to offer his poems to a vaster social class, only to achieve an unprecedented level of acceptance and readership. The secret behind such an achievement is to be sought in such poetic features as mild, even, and fluent expression. Moshiri’s poems yield most of their beauty and mystery in one sitting, this resembles and echoes the striking instantaneous charm and beauty of Sa’di’s poems, and as such accounts for the public appeal of his poetry.” (Moshiri, 2007: 1634)

## 2. Poetic Diction

Rajaei says, “Language is poetry’s tool or instrument. Poetic language or diction is different from ordinary language. Poetic diction reflects, portrays, and represents thought. In poetry, a word, besides its arbitrary significance, is invested with an associative meaning that is displayed in the form of poetic imagery. In addition to their idiomatic significance, words enjoy a musical or melodic verbal quality, and this quality imparts the dreamy aspect of poetic experience.” (2002: 60) According to Adonis, “Our manner of using language or method of employing words and expressions, demarks poetry from prose. When we place language out of its usual method and manner of expression, and add to it a provocative, astonishing, and astounding quality, we

have created what is called poetry.” (1971: 113) Adonis further claims, “Poetic language acts as the core of a battery which supplies it with energy and power, and in this language, words are like the blood that runs through the body and core of letters and syllables providing the whole body or text with internal, organic life. It is natural that poetic language is some type of inspiration and not explanation and explication.” (1988: 115)

In classical poetry, words are affected and fancy and their formal aspect makes up the poet’s primary interest and concern, whereas in romantic or symbolic poetry a word’s meanings and musical overtones are the main concern of the poet. In a sense, poetic language has descended from a sphere of beautiful luxury down to the living ground of common human life. Rajaei believes, “Poets aim at producing a language that would reflect and transmit existing human pain and suffering, dominating emotional sensibility. This requires that language possesses a new structure compatible with modern life, so that language could stand for common human life and state of affairs without descending into trite colloquialism.” (2002: 61)

Kheirbak notes, “New poets have worked hard to bring their language closer to ordinary language. Their aim has been to place poetic language at a level that would address public concerns and ideals through a more powerful relation.” (1986: 129) Adonis believes “An Arab poet’s identity is not to be defined and decided by the form of language used by preceding poets, but it is the main characteristic of the Arabic language that forms that identity, for it is national language that forms and establishes the nature and identity of any given nation in the world. Thus it is unity of language and not expression that decides the identity of poetic legacy in the Arabic speaking world, because every poet’s speech and words is in fact the product of their identity in a common language.” (1985: 9)

Language in new or modern poetry is the product and outcome of two phases of development and evolution in the language or diction of classical poetry. Classical diction is aristocratic, luxurious, fancy and euphemistic. Munif says, “Ornate and ornamental diction, according to Adonis resembles a doll or the marbles, or smooth, decorated stone pieces in a necklace.” (1984: 71) In the first stage of evolution, classical diction transforms into romantic and symbolic diction directing its focus on the musical significance and overtone of words. In the second stage, poetry descends from the dreamy crystal domes and palaces down to common human life and setting in order to portray this humble world of reality and be an emotional and intellectual representation of the modern poet’s inner world which is inflected with spiritual and philosophical crises.

This new approach to and understanding of poetic diction as an instrument of exploring existence next to the need for linguistic unity causes every poet to develop their own peculiar language and diction in order to be distinguished from other poets. It is certainly true if we say that every qasida is marked by its unique diction and style. Hence, Rajaei believes, “Poetry is not an expression of existence, but is pure existence and experience, like any objective, tangible object.” (2002: 61)

### **3 The Use of Words in abu Senna’s and Moshiri’s Poetry**

#### **3.1 The Use of Words in abu Senna’s Poetry**

Since it is a word’s function and responsibility to show other than to say, the poet would pay attention to such aspects as color, sound ... while selecting his vocabulary, so that the external object would be recreated verbally and in full form. Sartre holds, “Every word is an object, whereas an author sees each word as a cover holding a meaning or concept, language is a goal or objective for the poet, and no phenomenon is more important than it. Thus thinking of words is a

type of commitment for a poet. The poet feels and touch words and forms knowledge about their existence.(n.d.: 18)

The principle of selecting words is of special importance to poets. In the course of this selection, poets follow no specific rule or principle, and more often follow that aesthetic taste and talent they firmly believe in. Those poets have pure faith in this process who do possess an exact memory and a rich storehouse of vocabulary. Alipoor argues, “According to a poet, each word resembles a living human being. It moves and lives, and since no two similar people are ever totally identical, no one can find two completely synonymous words in any given language.” (1999: 51)

In new or modern Arabic poems, a word is used for the sake of reference. A word which is used by abu Senna has a poetic significance beyond its apparent, literal meaning. Moreover, a poet’s capacity is measured by the novel meanings and associations he considers for his choice words. The beauty of a poem depends on the beauty of its words. Meanwhile Adonis says, “The beauty of poetic diction depends and relies on the structure and relations of poetic vocabulary.” (1978: 17)

The use and application of vocabulary in abu Senna’s poems demonstrates his capacity in handling words and his artistic prowess in arranging and combining those select words. Thus according to al-Waqad, “Poetry to abu Senna is an inspiration of the soul of words and not a mere composition of them.” (2007: 46) Abu Senna opens “I travel in the Heart” saying: “And this is the full-moon coming from the east, /Green as the dove in myths and legends, /Blue as the water in the seas, / Red as love. /Yellow as death in a country that does not want you, /White as the day, as the noon.” (Abu Senna, 1985: 61)

Abu Senna displays a commendable and beautiful manner in using words. This beautiful and artistic manner is not limited to word level, but is also evident on the level of such conjunctions as the opening ‘and’. It is as if the poet is uttering his qasida as the continuation of an internal emotional state. The word ‘full-moon’ is a key word in the qasida around which the whole poem revolves. Abu Senna avoids using the single word ‘moon’ and prefers to use a compound word as full-moon as a more beautiful and artistic substitute. In modern Arabic poetry, the use of ‘full-moon’ instead of ‘moon’ is common and established. Abu Senna, too, has used “full-moon’ in order to impart the spiritual and psychic implications and associations of this term.

The word ‘full-moon’ in the above-mentioned piece is accompanied by such seemingly contradictory adjectives which upon closer inspection, are an apt expression of the spiritual and psychic frame of mind of the speaker-poet’s. ‘Full-moon’ apart from being red and white, is also green and yellow. Colors in this qasida have a significance beyond their literal and surface meaning. They refer to the internal agitation of the poet. Besides the colors, there is also mention of other things in the second stanza of the qasida that also betray the speaker-poet’s internal anxiety. There, one comes across such expressions as ‘return time’, ‘the lightning chewing me’, ‘the corpse of my dream’, ‘the void of distances’, ‘mirrors of the evasive breeze’, ‘piercing pain’, ‘the winter of bitterness’, ‘bones of old life’. All these expressions abound with the speaker-poet’s internal feelings and emotions springing from his sense of loss and alienation. Since this qasida has been composed in Iowa in 1980, one should say the qasida reflects the poet’s bitter experience and memory of homesick, nostalgia, and alienation.

### 3.1.1 Verb Structure in abu Senna's Poetry

'Adnan believes, "Abu Senna use the present tense frequently in his pomes to reflect the eternal and perpetual nature of the events and laws he puts in verse." (1989: 79) In "The Star Cries in Heaven" abu Senna uses a dramatic style closely related to the verb structure he employs. He opens the poem in the present tense:

"Here, we are floating, my love! Once again, /On the river of eyelids, / We float and the storms/ smile in the eyes, /It is that sterile rain, /Met by the memory of centuries."

After this abu Senna uses the past tense by saying:

"It was rained by heavy tears, and it fled from one grass, / to another grass ..., /It slept on the sword of comfort, / Awaiting the swords of the Moghuls ..."

Abu Senna concludes the qasida with this final question:

"Can ugliness give birth to beauty, /The star cries in heaven: /When is resurrection due?" (Abu Senna, 1985: 210-213)

Abu Senna uses verb tenses step by step to fulfil his need to first bear the present tense as witness to his current situation and then resorts to the past tense in order to emphasize the historic aspect of his poem. As a result, one can say that this qasida reflects the poet's cries springing and stemming from the bottom of his heart. In "The Dream of a Shahid/Martyr," abu Senna stresses the imperative mood:

"Cast another glance, for I am, / leaving now and I am forgetting .../ Resurrect this ruin, / And weave armor from blood, from these bones, /Start now and rise, /And change the wind, the shape of the festival, /Change the sorrow and the history of place." (Abu Senna, 1985: 178-184)

Abu Senna has used terms that refer to martyrdom seeking and victory. Al Seyyed says, "The imperative mood used in the qasida is used in a sequence and reminds one of the epic style." (1999: 76) Moreover the use of such effective and impressive terms as 'armor', 'wind', 'festival', ... reflect the poet's experience and his use of the epic style.

Abu Senna attempts to use words and epic style while expressing his experience on patriotism and war, thus moves away from his delicate romanticism. Although he uses gentle and mild words in his poems, yet he semantically and pragmatically attempts to adapt his words to his experience. Thus in the qasida called "In the Face of the Crows of the Border" he says:

"The captives of your love and romance, O Palestine! / Did not carry you a bouquet of jasmines, / On love's great date, /They carried fire flowers in the wounded heart, / They made your love a bomb." (Abu Senna, 1985: 178-184)

### 3.2 The Use of Words in Moshiri's Poetry

Moshiri's Poetic diction reveals a link between the classical and the modern in Persian poetry. In its most simple and fluent form, Moshiri's poetic diction is a bridge between the old and novel. This link is so natural that Moshiri's audiences altogether see themselves alongside past and present culture.

In his poetry, Moshiri uses very simple and understandable words. Every word is used in its own meaning. He is the poet of tender, pure, and nice words. He has been detached from affected poeticism all his life. For instance, he describes the cotton workers of Gorgan City in northern Iran by the following fluent and understandable terms:

"The most miserable people on earth, / In those bottomless fields, in that swamp, / Son after father, O God! / Generation after generation, / Are born poor, / Remain poor, / Die poor, / The most miserable people on earth, / 'Tis not their body, but the regret of dying in piece, / That they carry to the grave in that realm of terror." (Moshiri, 2007: 867)

In order to approximate spoken discourse, contemporary poets make use of colloquial words. Such people as Nima, Akhavan Sales, and Sepehri have made much use of these words in their poems. However, someone like Moshiri who is well-versed in classical Persian poetry rarely adopts colloquial expressions. Thus we read:

“Alas, O my sore heart! In this short term of existence, /My head is set on fire by your long sighs, / Out of my soul, in the shell of poetry, you made a pearl, and said men of vision shall buy it for do it.” (ibid: 894)

“I desired you, and I craved you till I was breathing, / I was burning with remorse, and your love was enough for me, / Your love was enough for me, for this wake flame used to enlighten my cage’s long nights.” (ibid: 920)

“Well done love! Well done! /All your arrows landed right in place.” (ibid: 1054)

“His cries, / In the last moments, / Were lost amongst the racket of the stone-hearted, /But, / Still, there remained one word on his shaking lips, / That was, /*People*.” (ibid: 1333)

Moshiri’s language although being simple and straightforward is not commonplace. Even though the common people understand this language and love it, it is still refined and elevated. Moshiri, himself, describes his language saying:

“I speak by the tongue of water, birds, the breeze, and the moon, / To the people of my time, / By the tongue of leaves, / The pain of the tree, / Under the ruthless whips of lightning and wind, /I have opened as a door before people’s eyes.”

Or, saying:

“I speak like you in each and every word, /It is years, since I have been speaking to you in this language, / Have been crying ...” (ibid: 982)

### 3.2.1 Syntactic Inventiveness in Moshiri’s Poetry

Inventiveness in the field of words can take place in different manners. One such example is replacing pronouns for a noun phrase like ‘a drowned person’s’ by using an objective pronoun like ‘it’ in order to complement such verbs as punch, pluck, and skin; and as such cause a concealment of the noun phrase. This shift produces a type of foregrounding. An instance of such inventiveness could be observed in Moshiri’s poem “The Drowned”:

“A drowned person’s hands are in yours, the waves, /punch it, / pluck its hair, skin it, /It has drained all your powers, /It has plundered all your life.” (ibid: 993)

Among other features of Moshiri’s poetic diction is reversing the order of a head noun and its premodifier:

“That bird of the self, as soon as the cage of the chest crashed, /Flapped its wings and flew away with its wings burnt, / That self that was fed up with the pain of days, / No matter what blocked its way, took off.” (ibid: 886)

“The ear of the earth is not used to my sighs, I am a heavenly wing-broken bird, /Even if they have not denied me water and grain, /Alas, they have denied me a companion.” (ibid: 1207)

“In the memoirs of abul ‘Ala I read that he lived more than ninety years, /In different cities he associated with peoples various, / He was heavy hearted for all the inhumanity he saw.”

### 3.2.2 Syntactic archaism in Moshiri’s Poetry

Besides the inventiveness of modern poets in developing a peculiar language, a certain return to past syntactic traditions and their revival is noticed in the works of some poets to such an extent that this return and revival would mark the sole secret of these poets’ success in the area of poetic verbal talent. Undoubtedly, such revival of past vocabulary and structures is among the most remarkable signs of linguistic excellence for some contemporary poets. Thus a poet uses

archaic words instead of frequent, current terms or would revive their old pronunciations or spellings. Shafiei Kadkani says, “This matter gives peculiarity to poetic diction, for when old or archaic linguistic structures replace their common, everyday equivalents, language and diction gain merit and distinctiveness.” (1979: 24)

Breaking linguistic norms through archaism is acceptable only when the artistic worth of the work is added and the collocation of the archaic with the new or contemporary is performed with certain witticism and would agree with the artistic requirements and nature of poetic expression; otherwise, diction would not bring about any sublimity, and instead it would lead to a bathos. Thus the old-fashioned language of some traditional poets is quite different from most of the artistic foregrounding achieved through archaism.

Even Nima Yushij, the pioneer of modern Persian poetry, aware of the potentiality and inherent energy of archaic language, has called contemporary poets to make use of such capacity. Hassanlee says, “From among the thousands of archaic words, which have become obsolete, poets should find such words that are both mild and at home with their styles. Therefore, I recommend that poets be not inattentive when it comes to the close reading of old poets. Poets should study these works and build up a working wordlist for themselves.” (2012: 173)

### **3.2.3 Archaism in Function Words in Moshiri’s Poetry**

In a simple definition, one can say that archaism in function words reflects a poet’s deviation from using words in their contemporary usage, meaning, or structure by following earlier poets’ semantic and structural tradition. At any rate, function words also have their special flexibility in terms of meaning and application combined with changes they have undergone down through millennia of Persian prose and poetry. Such tradition has always been a deciding factor in the style of poets interested in archaism. Some contemporary poets have made precise use of the archaic potential of content words and function words. All these contributions display an effort on their part to produce an independent and private diction.

Moshiri, unlike other contemporary poets, does not attempt to make use of archaism in his poetry. In his collected works one can spot only one such instance:

“I, now, next to you, am awaiting, / Have a light of hope on the way, / If you, my old confidante, a good tidings, / Bring unto me, I swear by your beloved soul, / I shall offer my soul as a reward.” (Moshiri, 2007: 992)

Nevertheless, archaism in contemporary poetry covers a broad range of old poets’ stylistic techniques. Contemporary poets practicing archaism, aiming at stylistic distinction and peculiarity, would make use of all of their predecessors’ techniques without transcending the prescriptions of syntactic rules and frameworks, creating new capacities and forms aligned with the aesthetic objectives at hand.

## **4 Ellipsis in abu Senna’s and Moshiri’s Poetry**

### **4.1 Ellipsis in abu Senna’s Poetry**

‘Ashri Zaayed says, “When the aesthetic philosophy and artistic usage of ellipsis appeared in Arabic poetic and critical approaches and tendencies, this technique acted as a deciding element and function of poetic reference in the modern Arabic qasida, to such an extent that almost all modern qasidas employ this technique.” (2008: 56) Therefore, abu Senna writers “Love Song” saying:

“Wake up! You can still be neither a badge nor a grave, / And, still this bloodshed can stop, /And, your beauty can remain for an age ... and an age ... /And it can still ... it can still ...can still ...still ... / Wake up! I love you.”

In fact, here, abu Senna is addressing Egypt, his homeland which he loves dearly, whose love he has inherited from his father and ancestors. Although Egypt has been subdued, humiliated, and mocked by invaders, usurpers, and oppressors, he still loves it from the bottom of his heart, because he believes that he can make up all this loss for his dearest country.

The poet feels that words cannot express and describe Egypt’s loss, so he resorts to ellipsis. As one can see in this poem, abu Senna continues clipping ‘And it can still ...’ until he ends up having a mere ‘still ...’ only to refer to the unspeakable about the critical condition of his homeland. Such clipping and ellipsis reinforces the implicative value of the poem. The poet’s purpose in using the word ‘still’ is twofold. Such omission first represents the poet’s hopelessness and frustration about the prospect of achieving freedom and independence for Egypt. Second it can be a reflection of the poet’s faint hope of the possible fulfillment of his hopes and wishes no matter how farfetched they seem to be at the moment.

As the poem continues, after abu Senna omits the above mentioned words, he uses the phrase ‘wake up’ and thus intends to detach the qasida from its previous content. The poet concludes the piece with a solemn confession using ‘I love you’. It should be mentioned that despite all the doubt and hesitation inflicting the poet in this qasida the only certain point of faith is his unconditional love for Egypt, thus he expresses his ultimate faith and passion for his homeland by ‘I love you’.

#### 4.2 Ellipsis in Moshiri’s Poetry

One of the common techniques in contemporary Persian poetry which is widely used by Moshiri is ellipsis. Consequent ellipses, often unconventional, both achieve brevity and defamiliarization thus making the reader part of the creative process of the poem. Moshiri says, “In my poems, there are several instances of omitting the verb, and I believe the readers can feel the verbs for themselves:

“What are you? For each wave of your smile, /I am like a wandering boat, in a whirlpool!/At which dawn, on which white horse did you ...?/ By which god have you been ...?/ From What world do you ...?/ On which shore, from which shell did you ...?/ In which meadow, along which breeze have you ...?/ From which cup have you been ...?” (2007: 19)

The omitted verbs are as follows arrive, created, come, come out, blown, intoxicated. Apparently, the poet has preferred to omit them instead of mentioning them.

The above piece can be reproduced in full as follows:

“What are you? For each wave of your smile, / I am like a wandering boat, in a whirlpool!/ At which dawn, on which white horse did you arrive?/ By which god have you been created?/ From What world do you come?/ On which shore, from which shell did you come out? / In which meadow, along which breeze have you blown?/ From which cup have you been intoxicated?”

There are many other instances of ellipsis in Moshiri’s poems in which the omission of transitive, intransitive, and auxiliary verbs adds to the beauty of the poems. Another example is Moshiri’s ‘Amir Kabir’:

“Still the wind’s moaning ... /Still the wind’s wailing ... / Still the deaf ears of heaven, that old charmer! / Still we are waiting at the doors of that public bath, / So that you may gracefully come out, O, the sun of the world.” (Moshiri, 2007: 242)

The omitted verbs are ‘is heard’ or ‘can be heard’, or any other verb that can fill in the gap.



A poet who omits the most basic part of a sentence, that is, the verb, undoubtedly seeks such aesthetic ends as arriving at brevity and further melody in the poem. In poetic diction, that ellipsis which is rooted in an aesthetic sensibility would create adequate brevity and charming ambiguity.

## **5. Repetition in abu Senna's and Moshiri's Poetry**

### **5.1 Repetition in abu Senna's Poetry**

One of the distinguishing features of contemporary poetry is the lexical repetition. The poet repeats a word, phrase, or poetic line in their qasida. Nazik al Mala'ka says, "What is meant by repetition is insistence and emphasis on a given poetic word or phrase to which the poet has most attentiveness." (1983: 676)

A poet employs repetition as a means that would enrich the meaning and solidify the artistic form and structure of their work. Undoubtedly, repetition is one of the principal and essential features of language. At the end of "Bloody Observations in an Indifferent City" abu Senna uses the following repetition:

"Indifferent, /Survival or death, / Indifferent, /Survival or death, /O God! O God!/ How are the days to come?/ How are the days to come?" (1985: 141)

The repetitions used in the above poem signify the poet's bitterness and devastation. In another qasida called "When I Lost You" abu Senna opens the qasida using repetition again:

"At 6 p.m. every night, /Used to come the memory of, / The memory of the plants growing in words, / The memory of life's first dreamy night, /The memory of the first song the river sang for two." (ibid)

Sometimes, a whole sentence is repeatedly used across different lines. An example is to be found in the qasida called "A Question to the Sphinx":

"And, you leave me with the fatal question:/ Will happy days come?" (ibid, 168)

In this qasida,abu Senna uses this question in three instances, in order to confuse or take aback the reader by referring him backwards to the beginning of the poem, so that the reader may be placed in the poet's initial and dominant mindset.

### **5.2 Repetition in Moshiri's Poetry**

In Persian poetry, too, repetition would usually create beauty. Shafiei Kadkani says, "Repetition is one of the most forceful elements of impression. In fact, it is the best means to impose one's beliefs on someone else." (1979: 99) When a verb is repeated, its aesthetic effect is more remarkable, because it is, by necessity, the verb that imparts the core meaning in an utterance.

Moshiri, too, like abu Senna has employed repetition in his poems. In this regard, Moshiri says, "Old poets in order to show their mastery would usually commit themselves to using one or more words in every line. I find this work absurd and artificial, and far from poetic nature and taste, because true poetry should flow from the poet's mind smoothly and free from any such commitment or restriction. However, one day a friends who had read "From the Land of Peace" said that in the 14 lines of the poem called "The Wolf" this same word has been repeated in all lines, something I had no knowledge of." (1996: 225)

"A Wise man said that a stubborn wolf, / Is hidden within every man's character, /Thus a great unescapable battle is on, / Day and night between man and wolf, / And it is not in man's power to subdue this wolf, / Only a man of thought knows the outlet, /For many a wretched and weak, / Have strangled the wolf within"(Moshiri, 1996: 225)

Contrary to what Moshiri claims, there are many poems of his that contain word and sentence repetition. For instance, in “A Glance Full of Cries” verb repetition is found:

“Heaven’s heart, he was searching hard, /Searching, searching, / .../ For someone in heaven, as if he was Searching, /Searching, Searching, / .../ Shaking, /Shivering, / Twisting, /Shivering, /Steering, /Shivering, / Spinning, /Shivering ...” (ibid, 1016-1019)

On the subject of repetition, Alipoor says, “In today’s poetry the repetition of verbs is done either for the sake of emphasis or in order to maintain the rhythm and melody that should echo on in the reader’s ears and mind so that the line or the poem would give them a sense of infinity. Moreover, contemporary poets use repetition as a means to reinforce the sensory and emotional transmission of their ideas. Repetitive verbs make the reader experience the familiar on a different note, through a different channel, and this makes them reiterate that information and walk the same path as that of the author’s. It should be noted that sometimes repetition can lead to association of meanings.” (1999: 90)

## **6. Dramatic Structure in abu Senna’s and Moshiri’s Poetry**

### **6.1 Dramatic Structure in abu Senna’s Poetry**

It is a common practice among contemporary Arab poets to use dramatic elements in their poems; therefore, they have somehow drifted from the lyric style. Certainly, abu Senna is in favor of dramatic poetry, not because he has published two plays, “The Arabian Hamza” or “The Walls of the Castle”, but because his lyrics relate a dramatic sense and feeling. The poet’s use of dialogues establishes the dramatic form. Al Deeb says, “By reading such texts a sense of realism and similitude would be created in oneself. The dramatic quality of poems dismisses weariness from the audience.” (1996: 199)

In abu Senna’s poetry, the dramatic element and dialogues are of two types, the external and the internal. The external dialogue between two people or more, as seen in the qasida called “A Question on Death”:

“Where are you going to? /With that wizened garden of your dreams, / Opposed by the clouds? /I pass on to the azure world, / And this book whose, / Chapters are not through? / I will writer in eternity, / And this beauty which, / You used to love, /Is nothing but froth.” (1997: 41-42)

On internal dialogue al-Waqad says, “By internal dialogue it is meant that in a play one person has two voices. One of these voices is that public, external voice, that is, the voice through which he calls others’ attention to himself, the second voice is that which is not to be heard by anyone.” (2007: 52) Abu Senna’s “Bloody Observations in an Indifferent City” is one such example:

“My name? The tree of blood! / My name? A breaking lamp! / My name? What do names mean? / I am being killed. / Do not ask by whom?/ Grudge? It is spreading this season. / Who is killing me? /Desperation?/ The lord of this mute capital city.” (1985: 139)

In the poem “The Enemy Brothers”, abu Senna stresses another dramatic element, which is relying on polyphony to reflect the multiplicity and diversity of characters involved in the dramatic action:

“Is it stretching on a map of Flowers?/ Will the brothers supply it with swords and food?/ Chorus: The brothers’ tanks are arresting dawn, /Djasir: hunger and weeping, /A lying voice: / Bread wagons will arrive at night, /A voice on the radio:/ Only death is allowed, / To cross the streets of Beirut, /Djasir: I am afraid, / O my son! Families will come to the trees of Palestine, / With sweets and virid peace.” (ibid; 187)

The narrative style is among those other dramatic elements that are present in abu Senna’s poems. In this style, the qasida is divided into parts and each part has a title and specific number

of lines all of which lead to the dramatic unity of the qasida. “Sad Rural Songs”, “Until Love Moon Rises”, “Man’s Age”, “Seeing New York” are among the poems composed in this style.

### **6.2 Dramatic Structure in Moshiri’s Poetry**

When one studies Moshiri’s collected works, “The Reflection of Dawn’s Breath”, they would notice that all through this collection there is only one poem called “The Wild Beauty” that uses external dialogue between two characters, a fisherman and his wife:

“Wife: At dawn, when you head into the waves’ mouth, / My patience would be plundered by separation, / Fisherman: I am only a simple fisherman, / God has set my portion and daily bread in the waters, / Wife: The sea has smitten you a hundred times, / Let go of this wild beauty, / Fisherman: Whenever these waves call on me from afar, / They fill me with love, desire, and passion.” (2007: 1362)

### **7 Intertextuality**

Movahedizadeh says, “Intertextuality is seen when a poet or author employs the knowledge and experience of others in their own prose and poetry.” (2010: 148) It is worth mentioning that intertextuality is a critical criterion which allows one to consider the different features inherent in a text.

The reason why one cannot find or decide an original or unique meaning for a contemporary text is that no contemporary work is original. Every work is in one way or the other under the influence of earlier works, and it gains its identity by transforming those earlier works. In other words, one should seek a reference to an earlier or a contemporary work. According to Movahedizadeh, “A characteristic feature of the human mind is that it should make use of its active and dynamic experience.” (ibid) The author and his ideas are at one point influenced by the ideas of others and at another point impress the minds of others.

Therefore, it can be concluded that an author is primarily a reader, and every text contains a lot of other texts that are responsible for molding it on different levels; an author lives in a human world and is in close contact with different effects, signs, events, and phenomena in their surroundings, where they live their personal lives and are inevitably influenced by all these experiences, that leave their impression on their minds. It is impossible to commit to paper any verbal experience that is not rooted in one’s mental store house of experiences.

Thus, a point worth mentioning is that the author of any text, be it in prose or poetry, would draw on their mental store and experiences, and effect such changes as addition, reduction, and innovation in their experiences, what would lead to the distinctive quality of their works. This outlook has become prevalent in almost all literary history and theory and requires that any literary analysis or study consider the concept of intertextuality seriously.

#### **7.1 Intertextuality in abu Senna’s Poetry**

Since old times, Arab poets have adopted famous religious, literary, and epigrammatic texts as part of their own poetry. In the contemporary era, literary adoption has become more common, because poets want to bridge the contemporary qasida with earlier poems and religious, cultural, national, and mythic concepts in order to enrich their works. Therefore according to Abdul Motalib it is not an exaggeration if one says, “Return to the past or calling to the past is an example of poetic innovation.” (1997: 61)

Abu Sennahas shown less tendency to literary adoption and intertextuality. However, one can cite scattered instances in his qasidas, what puts on display his artful use of this means, what in turn reveals his rich art and literature. Abu Senna's qasida called "Prophecy Hidden in Blood": "What do the stars tell? / What do the leaves in his palm tell of Sodom?/ As Badr, Heteen, and al Qadesiya shine, / What will last?" (1985: 175)

In these lines abu Senna has been inspired by Abu Tammam who says:

"The white leaves, not the black leaves, / therein lies doubt and suspicion plain"

Also in a poem called "The New Dress" abu Senna draws on T. S. Eliot's "Wasteland":

"Of what use is little rain there, / In the Waste Land?" (ibid, 119)

According to al-Waqad, "Although the poet has put a direct question, but "The Wasteland" reminds one of such ideas as ostracism, collapse, and suffering." (2007: 50)

In "Elegy for Salah Abdul Sabur", abu Senna adapts the Quranic verse that reads: "Perish the hands of abu Lahab, and perish he!" by saying:

"Would it please you, if we love death after you have passed? / "Perish his hands", /You were cruel to us, / You who never fancied the cruel." (1985: 82)

By drawing on that Quranic verse, abu Senna expresses the extreme poignancy and bitterness he has felt upon Salah Abdul Sabur's departure. In the qasida called "I Travel in the Heart", abu Senna mentions only one word:

"Farewell, /Barren deserts, /Barren deserts, / My heart only pounds for those boughs, / Covered with leaves of grief, falling, /Autumn." (ibid: 63)

The word "barren" stands for the Arabic word "bid, plural bayda" meaning a desert so vast and empty. (Azarnoosh, 2000, under bid). The use of this word reminds one of those old poets who would speak of easygoing she-camels, the deserts, and the dunes. Al Mtuanabi is one of the poets who upon leaving Egypt addresses the New Year in a sad qasida saying:

"O, New Year! In what mood did you return?/ Only to repeat the past? Or, to renew things?" (n.d.: 270)

In a poem called "Lament for abi Firas al Hamdhani", abu Senna addresses abu Firas and makes his character a persona or mask with which to condemn reality:

"You head on toward, / Perfection.../ Aba Firas you seek, / Arabic Glory, /There is no reason, / Why you should bend your head, /Though misfortune has befallen, / And everybody else advises escape." (1997: 37)

## 7.2 Intertextuality in Moshiri's Poetry

Moshiri is well-versed in classical Persian poetry, and holds in high esteem the paragons of Persian poetry. He has borrowed and cited many lines or concepts from classical poets, namely Hafiz, yet this might have been an unintentional act on his part.

"O, God! Am I dreaming? / With such a distant road ahead and a late meeting in sight, /Still here, / As my hand touches an instrument and I start speech/In Hafiz's words/ Dancing and graceful are/ The dark-eyed Kashmiri beauties!" (Moshiri, 2007: 880)

"No soul, as they are intended to, shall know/ What this emissary of love/ has artfully committed./ Look into the air/ Up to the heavens/ A cup of wine has been brought down from Hafiz's winery." (Moshiri, 2007: 880)

Moshiri in one of his poems called 'O Shahriyar' has drawn upon Shahriyar's mathnavi called 'God's Voice' when he says:

"He sang in his sad voice;/ He wanted to plant 'God's Voice', / In people's souls, /Lest, he draws evildoing, wicked people, / Into the ways of humanity ..."

In another part of this poem, Moshiri is inspired by one of Shahriyar's famous qasidas, 'Shahriyar's Poetic Journey' which opens as:  
"Where is Alexander's throne? Where is that rich monarch?/ Read from this history the account of this world's infidelity."

Inspired by these lines Moshiri says:

"He was leaving and singing in a sad voice, / Say no more of 'My Homeland,' / Nor speak of 'My Creed' to any congregation or assembly, / Enough with Christian-Muslim controversies, / In my sight love is creed, / The World is my homeland."

In his qasida, Shahriyar had spoken as such:

"Where is our homeland? Leave that 'My Homeland' myth./ One is our creed. Leave that Muslim-Christian controversy./ The world is my home. Love is my Creed./ Whether a Muslim or a Christian, whether in Asia or in Europe." (ibid: 1206-1209)

Fereydoon Moshiri is among those poets who have abundantly used intertextuality in their poems. In addition to the poets mentioned above, Moshiri has drawn upon and been inspired by such poets as Sa'di, Nimtaj Salmaasi, Ferdowsi, Khayyam, and Baba Tahir.

### **Conclusion**

1- Poetic terms in abu Senna are mild and delicate and express meanings beyond their literal sense. Abu Senna uses terms to express specific meanings. He expresses a term and follows it with another alternative meaning, but Moshiri uses very simple and straightforward terms which are easily understandable, that is, each term is used in its own original sense.

2- Abu Senna and Moshiri make use of ellipsis in their poetry, and they have been successful in this regard. Ellipsis leads to brevity and aids the audience to take part in the process of forming the poem at hand.

3- Abu Senna uses successive repetitions in order to enrich meaning and establish artistic structures. However, Moshiri unintentionally and unwittingly has repeated a given word or term, for he believes most repetition is useless and absurd.

4- Most of abu Senna's poems are composed in a dramatic structure, but Moshiri has used the dramatic structure in only one qasida.

5- Intertextuality is part of both poets' poesy, but unlike their contemporaries is less frequently used by them.

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