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The Impact of Anglo-American New Criticism on Modern Arabic

Discourse: The Case of *Shi ʿr* (Poetry Magazine)

A Ph.D dissertation submitted by

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Declaration of Originality

I declare that this thesis is my own original work, and that it has not been submitted in any form for any other degree or professional qualification. I certify that anything taken from or based upon the work of others has its source explicitly cited.

Yousef Hamdan,

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"من يكتب حكايته يرث أرض الكلام ويملك المعنى تماما"
محمود درويش

He who writes his story inherits the land of speech and possesses the meaning completely
Mahmūd Darwish

"المغلوب مولعٌ أبداً بالافتداء بالغالب في شعاره وزِيَّه ونحلته وسائر أحواله وعوائده، والسبب في ذلك أنّ النفس
أبداً تعتقد الكمال في من غلبها وانقادت إليه."
ابن خلدون

The defeated is always obsessed with following the example of the victor in his slogans,
dress, dogma and all of his conditions and habits. This is because people always believe in the
perfection of those who defeated and dominated them.

Ibn Khaldūn

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Abstract

New Criticism has had a profound impact on Arabic critical thought since the early 1950s. The reasons behind this vary from one critic to another. Some have employed New Criticism to analyse the poetic movement of *Shi^cr al-taf^cīla*, and its new poetic features that required innovative critical tools. Other critics' use of New Criticism was based on their familiarity with English literary thought and schools of criticism.

While some Arab critics, such as Iḥsān ^cAbbās, ^cIzz al-Dīn Ismā^cīl and Ilyās Khūrī, partially employed New Criticism, others, such as Rashād Rushdī and his students, confined themselves exclusively to New Criticism, viewing it as the only appropriate approach to literature. Members of *Majallat Shi^cr* employed many New Critical ideas, deeming them to be the modern concept of poetry. Through an in-depth reading of the articles in *Shi^cr*, and a comparative approach based on thorough study of New Critical writings, this thesis demonstrates that the majority of the critical ideas and concepts which appeared in *Shi^cr* were based on New Criticism. Additionally, the thesis illustrates that many of *Shi^cr*'s critics, particularly Yūsuf al-Khāl who dominated the magazine, showed a great deal of fascination with the New Critics, Eliot in particular.

The *Shi^cr* critics' use of New Criticism appeared to be, particularly on the theoretical level, an imitation to such an extent that one cannot find any new critical ideas in al-Khāl's works. Additionally, the New Critics' concepts were predominantly theoretical and largely unsupported by examples from Arabic poetry, with the exception of Jabrā's and Khālida Sa^cīd's works. In this way, *Shi^cr* critics' contention that modern Arabic literary thought should be creative while seeking to evade the imitation of classical literary and critical accounts was fallacious as they merely replaced one form of imitation with another. Furthermore, *Shi^cr* critics called for many ideas without providing literary justifications or examples. One instance pertains to their encouragement of the use of colloquial Arabic instead of the standardised form. Furthermore, other critical problems, such as issues involving poetic ambiguity and language, were tackled insufficiently.

For these reasons, this thesis characterises the relationship of *Shi'ar* critics to the New Critics as not only one of fascination and imitation, but also as a parental paradigm similar to a father-child relationship. Initially, I sought to find in *Shi'ar* new critical concepts and developments resulting from the use of New Criticism and simultaneously based on modern Arabic literature. However, much to my dismay, I discovered that the magazine's critical project based itself, to a great extent, on the New Critical concepts without questioning or challenging them. This behaviour appears analogous to children's imitation of their parents as an ideal form of behaviour.

Introduction

This dissertation explores a range of critical issues which are related, in their general framework, to the reception and adaptation or, as it were, the “naturalisation” of Western critical schools and methods in modern Arabic criticism. As one form of interaction with the West, this adaptation has continuously appeared, at a time when Arabic culture aspires to establish a balanced relationship with the West which is neither based on subordination, nor hinders its quests for singularity and uniqueness. Doubtless, such quests can only be attained if the Arabic critical methods are not estranged from the Arabic intellectual and cultural contexts. Criticism is part of the general cultural structure in which literary, intellectual and philosophical constituents together form the cultural heritage of a nation. As such they determine its potential and efficacy for knowledge-production as well as contributing to the overcoming of its cultural problems.

In the more specific framework of this thesis, I explore the impact of New Criticism on modern Arabic critics, starting with the impetuses which drove them toward it. Additionally, this study investigates the degree of consistence between the cultural and philosophical backgrounds of Arab critics and the critical concepts of New Criticism, looking at its levels of manifestation and employment both theoretically and practically, as well as its successes and failures. Lastly, this study discusses the influence of the use of New Criticism on the developing contribution of Arab critics.

New Criticism appeared in the Arab world as one phase in its journey of modern critical thought which began with the neo-classical school in which the bases of the classical Arabic tradition were revived. However, neo-classicism was soon disregarded in favour of modern Western approaches which were flourishing in Europe and America. One should note, however, that both approaches - reviving the classical Arabic tradition and adopting Western trends - express the endeavours of modern Arabic criticism and its search for a critical framework that is able to function effectively throughout the objective circumstances of the modern Arab world.

In this regard, it is important to look at some broad contextual differences, both culturally and historically, between the Western and Arab worlds, whilst recognising that these generalisations do not do justice to the specific histories of particular nations and cultures. While what is generally referred to as the Western world has seen a long and gradual development of capacity and indigenous governance in various aspects of life, Arab societies have had a different experience. The Arab world has been shaped by: 1) Ottoman rule (in its weaker stage); 2) Western colonial forces before and since the end of Ottoman rule; and 3) conflicts of power and political corruption, into the present. As a result of these forces, Arab territories have experienced problems including ignorance, poverty, and political violence. Through processes of global interaction and the uneven spread of modernity, cultural communication between the Arab and Western worlds has been generally marked by the overwhelming dominance of Western culture over most aspects of economic, political and technological development in the Arab region.

The use of the Western critical schools in both studying and judging Arabic literature is one of the outcomes of this predominance of Western culture in the Arab world.¹ This kind of criticism did not lead to new critical concepts or to new literary thought. As such the critics were not able to produce an autonomous critical reaction, thus having to import new Western schools of criticism as a reaction to the initial ones. This phenomenon applied to most modern Arabic criticism. For example, the concepts of New Criticism, followed by Structuralism and Post-Structuralism (themselves developments arising from New Criticism and other critical schools) were introduced into the Arab world through separate processes. These schools, among others, were introduced into Arabic criticism as individual projects.² Why did using New Criticism fail to yield to new concepts that supported or rejected what the New Critics had introduced? And why did some modern Arab critics change their critical attitudes with the appearance of every new Western critical school?

¹ Sa'd al-Bāzi, *Istiqbāl al-ākhar: al-Gharb fī al-naqd al-ʿarabī al-muʿāṣir* (Beirut: al-Markaz al-thaqāfī al-ʿarabī, 2004), p. 50. All quotations from Arabic sources are my translations.

² ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Hammūda, *al-Marāyā al-muqaʿara: Naḥwa naẓariyya naqdiyya ʿarabiyya* (Kuwait: ʿĀlam Al-maʿrifā, 2001), p. 190; Shukrī ʿAzīz Māḍī, *Min ishkāliyyāt al-naqd al-ʿarabī al-ḥadīth* (Beirut: al-Muʿassasa al-ʿarabiyya li al-dirāsāt wa al-nashr, 1997), p. 20.

The reason why I chose to study New Criticism relates to its vast influence on modern Arabic critical thought since the early 1950s. While °Abd al-°Azīz Ḥammūda, in his well-known book *al-Marāyā al-muḥaddaba*³ and in his later one *al-Khurūj min al-tīh*⁴, inclusively examines the preoccupation of the majority of modern Arab critics with Western critical and literary schools that appeared after New Criticism - Structuralism and Deconstruction in particular - he emphasises his approval of New Criticism as a better choice than the latter Western schools. On the contrary, this thesis shows that the uses of New Criticism by Arab critics caused similar problems to that which Ḥammūda found in his studies of later schools. These include the disregard of classical Arabic literary and critical accounts; the difference between critical theory and application; both the simplification and exaggeration of the use of some Western critical concepts; the lack of originality in modern critics' theorisation of Arabic literature; and finally the uncritical fascination of many modern Arab critics with Western critics. These problems appeared in the works of Rashād Rushdī and his students, including Ḥammūda himself. In this dissertation, I demonstrate that the critics who employed New Criticism were not able to produce innovative critical theory based on Arabic literature and classical criticism.

One can argue that the influence of Western critical schools on modern Arabic ones stems from the general influence of Western literature on modern Arabic literature. This observation is correct and is a positive sign; it shows that this literature is vital and its practitioners are not narcissistic or introverted. However, it can be argued that Arabic literature remains independent and is grounded in the Arab literary heritage along with various cultural and historical circumstances. While keeping in mind some Western influence, modern Arabic literature is without doubt a natural development of classical Arabic literature and consistent with the changes that have occurred in the social and cultural life of the Arab world. Conversely, modern Arabic criticism seems to be an imitation of Western critical

³ °Abd al-°Azīz Ḥammūda, *al-Marāyā al-muḥaddaba* (Kuwait: °Ālam al-ma°rifa, 1997).

⁴ °Abd al-°Azīz Ḥammūda, *al-Khurūj min al-tīh: Dirāsa fī sulṭat al-naṣṣ* (Kuwait: °Ālam al-ma°rifa, 2007).

accounts rather than a natural development from classical Arabic criticism and modern Arabic literature. The Western influence on modern Arabic literary criticism is so pervasive that one cannot find a single innovative idea in the works of some critics. The chief examples of this in my thesis are the works of Rashād Rushdī and Yūsuf al-Khāl. For the above reasons, I characterise the relationship of *Shiʿr* critics to the New Critics as not only one of fascination and imitation, but also as exhibiting a parental paradigm similar to a father-child relationship.

Despite the massive influence of the New Critics on modern Arabic literary criticism, there has been a lack of studies examining its uses in the Arab world. Three books discuss issues relating to the use of New Criticism in the Arab world: Nabīl Rāghib's *Rashād Rushdī* in 1993, Muḥammad ʿAzzām's *al-Naqd al-Mawḍūʿī* (objective criticism) in 1999 and Ibrāhīm Khalīl's *al-Muthāqafa wa al-manhaj* (acculturation and methodology) in 2011. The first is a biographical book written in honour of Rushdī by one of his students.⁵ The author discusses Rushdī's critical and literary works including the New Critical concepts. He highlights these concepts as part of Rushdī's career without precisely identifying Rushdī's role in developing these concepts. The author then quotes one hundred and seven pages from Rushdī's books labelling them as "selected quotations from Rushdī's critical writing."⁶

After a general introduction to New Criticism, the second book mentions the use of some of the New Critics' concepts by Rashād Rushdī and Jabrā Ibrāhīm Jabrā in a superficial manner. For example the author copies six sections of Rushdī's *Mā huwa al-adab?* literally without a single comment on any of them. The only difference is that the author divided the first section of Rashād Rushdī's book, 'the Rhetoric of Literary Work,'⁷ into two sections: the Objective Correlative and New Criticism.⁸ The author then copies five full sections verbatim: Objectivity of Literature, Literature and Life, Form and Content, Science and Literature, and Criticism of Critical Trends.⁹ The third book, *al-Muthāqafa wa al-manhaj*, is a general study about the use of many Western literary schools in the Arab world including New Criticism.

⁵ Nabīl Rāghib, *Rashād Rushdī* (Cairo: al-Hay'a al-miṣriyya al-ʿamma li al-kitāb, 1993), p. 12.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 201-308.

⁷ Rashād Rushdī, *Mā huwa al-adab?* (Cairo: Maktabat al-anglo al-miṣriyya, 1960), pp. 1-11.

⁸ Muḥammad ʿAzzām, *al-Manhaj al-mawḍūʿī* (Damascus: Ittihād al-kuttāb al-ʿarab, 1999), pp. 77-80.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 80-91.

The author briefly points to the similarities between a few concepts of the New Critics and some Arab critics including Iḥsān ʿAbbās, Jabrā Ibrāhīm Jabrā and Khālida Saʿīd. As this book is a general study, it mentions the New Critics' ideas generally and does not analyse the use of these ideas by such Arab critics. Additionally, the book does not include all works published by the critics discussed. For instance, it references only two of Rushdī's books, *Mā huwa al-adab?* and *Fī al-fann wa al-ḥubb wa al-ḥayāh*.¹⁰

Unlike the aforementioned studies, this dissertation examines the use of New Criticism by a wide range of critics from across the Arab world. The thesis tackles the various trajectories of using the New Critical concepts by Arab critics. While some critics, such as Iḥsān ʿAbbās, ʿIzz al-Dīn Ismāʿīl and Ilyās Khūrī aimed to use New Criticism in analysing the poetic movement of *Shiʿr al-tafʿīla* and its new poetic features that required innovative critical tools, others, such as Rashād Rushdī and his students, were motivated by their familiarity with English literature and criticism in general, and the New Critics in particular. While the first group partially employed New Criticism, the second confined themselves exclusively to this school, viewing it as the only appropriate approach to literature.

This thesis then concentrates more specifically on the employment of the New Critical concepts in the Lebanese *Majallat Shiʿr* and its second branch, *Adab*. The reason I chose *Shiʿr* as the main focus of my thesis is that it was one of the most famous modern critical projects to be open to Western culture and literary thought. New Criticism was the most influential Western critical approach to shape the critical project of the magazine.

¹⁰ Ibrāhīm Khalīl, *al-Muthāqafa wa al-manhaj fī al-naqd al-adabī* (Amman: Dār majdalāwī li al-nashr wa al-tawzīʿ, 2011), pp. 36-40. In his brief introduction about the New Critics, the author considers Northrop Frye and his myth criticism within New Criticism. (pp. 21, 24, 46). In fact, Frye with his myth criticism represents a different conception of literature. "Literature", Frye argues, "is written within what I call a mythological universe..., because literature continues the mythological habit of mind." Northrop Frye, *Spiritus Mundi: Essays on Literature Myth and Society* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976) p. ix; quoted in Vincent B. Letitch, *American Literary Criticism from the Thirties to the Eighties* (New York and London: Routledge, 2010), p. 119. The New Critics, Frye adds, separate literary works from the system of literature, and from its communal or archetypal grounds of literature. Letitch, *American Literary Criticism*, p. 121. A literary text, for Frye, is part of a network of other texts, which in return lead back to myth, "the most abstract and conventional of all literary modes." (p. 121). Khalīl here does not distinguish between the use of myth as a poetic symbol or image and the method of myth criticism. Another misconception about the New Critics is that the author names the New Critics as the New Aristotelians, (p. 50) which was a description of the Chicago School's critics who formed a reaction against the New Criticism. (p. 52).

Additionally, it raised many problematic issues related to Arab and Western traditions; literary novelty; Arabic colloquial and standardised language; classical poetic prosody; and the new movement of *Shiʿr al-tafʿīla* and the prose poem. Furthermore, many important Arab poets and critics participated in *Shiʿr* by joining the editorial board or publishing in it.

There are a few studies focussing on *Majallat Shiʿr*. Although some of them mention that the critical project of *Shiʿr* was influenced by Western schools, none of them studied this influence in-depth, nor focussed on the influence of New Criticism specifically. These studies can be loosely divided into four categories: poetic, ideological, historical and critical studies.

The poetic studies to examine *Shiʿr* are Kamāl Khīr Bīk's *Ḥarakat al-ḥadātha fī al-shiʿr al-ʿarabī al-muʿāṣir*¹¹ and Otared Haidar's *The Prose Poem and The Journal Shiʿr*.¹² In its wider study of Arab modernity, *Ḥarakat al-ḥadātha* focuses on the first stage of *Shiʿr* (until 1964) and identifies it as an important player in the emergence of, and struggles over, Arab modernity. The book thus situates *Shiʿr* within the poetic movement toward modernity. This study also concentrates on the formal transformations that *Shiʿr*'s poets underwent in relation to poetic language, diction and structure. The biggest and most important part of this study is its analysis of the rhythmic structures of modern poetry, including poetry in *Shiʿr*. It begins with the origins of Arabic prosody and its subsequent development, tracing its history until the modern poetry of *Shiʿr*.

Haidar's *The Prose Poem and The Journal Shiʿr* focuses on the issue of the prose poem and the role of *Shiʿr* in its appearance and evolution. The author pursues the origin and development of the prose poem both in the West and the Arab world along with its position in *Shiʿr*'s project as a modern literary magazine and a media framework. She also investigates various critical theories and perspectives on the prose poem in the West and in the writings of prominent Arab critics in the era of *Shiʿr* and beyond. However, the largest section of the book is dedicated to textual

¹¹ Kamāl Khīr Bīk, *Ḥarakat al-ḥadātha fī al-shiʿr al-ʿarabī al-muʿāṣir*, Tr. Lajnat aṣḍiqā' al-mu'allif (Beirut: Manshūrāt al-mustashriqīn al-fāransiyyīn, 1978).

¹² Otared Haidar, *The Prose Poem and the Journal Shiʿr* (UK: Ithaca Press, 2008).

analysis of the prose poem in the writings of three *Shiʿr* poets: Muḥammad al-Māghūṭ, Adūnīs and Unsī al-Ḥājj, who are usually referred to as the pioneers of the prose poem in Arabic. In her discussion of the position of *Shiʿr* in Arabic modernity, Haidar views the magazine as a victim of the attacks against its modern project and in particular against the practitioners of the prose poem who “were the major targets.”¹³ However, the author does not discuss the discourse of *Shiʿr*’s modern project that sparked these attacks against the magazine and led some of the practitioners of the prose poem in *Shiʿr*, most importantly Adūnīs and Muḥammad al-Māghūṭ, to leave the magazine and to join the campaign against it. To make her argument consistent, she had to exclude many important issues from her discussion. These include the contradiction between the attitude of *Shiʿr*’s members toward Arab and Western traditions and the issue of colloquial language.

There are two studies approaching *Shiʿr* ideologically: *al-Ḥadātha al-ūlā*, penned by Muḥammad Jamāl Bārūt,¹⁴ and Sāmī Mahdī’s *Ufuq al-ḥadātha wa ḥadāthat al-namaṭ: Dirāsa fī ḥadāthat majallat Shiʿr*.¹⁵ These two studies concentrate on the ideologies which steered the works of both the poets and critics of the magazine. In particular, they focus on the relationship between the members of the magazine and the Syrian Social Nationalist Party, Arab nationalism, *Majallat al-Ādāb* and those who attacked the magazine. However, they did not examine the effect of Lebanese nationalism on the opinions of some *Shiʿr* critics, such as al-Khāl. Both of them condemn the attitude of Yūsuf al-Khāl towards the Arabic language and heritage and criticise the enormous influence of Western literary thought on the magazine’s members.

Al-Ḥadātha al-ūlā is distinguished by its explanation of the aspects of *Shiʿr*’s members’ poetry through ideological methods. For instance, the author interprets the symbols

¹³ Ibid., pp. 73, 80. The book refers to the magazine as a monthly journal (p. XV), but this seems to be a typographical error as it is mentioned later on that it was a quarterly magazine. P. 75.

¹⁴ Muḥammad Jamāl Bārūt, *al-Ḥadātha al-ūlā* (Emirates: Ittiḥād kuttāb wa udabā’ al-Imārāt, 1991).

¹⁵ Sāmī Mahdī, *Ufuq al-ḥadātha wa ḥadāthat al-namaṭ: Dirāsa fī ḥadāthat Majallat Shiʿr* (Baghdad: Dār al-shu’ūn al-ʿāmmah, n.d.).

of Phoenician mythology in the poetry of *Shiʿr* members according to the relationships between the magazine's members and the Syrian Social Nationalist Party. Furthermore, it traces the appearance and development of the Arabic prose poem since Jubrān Khalīl Jubrān up to *Shiʿr*.

Although Muḥammad Jamāl Bārūt mentions that *Shiʿr*'s project was influenced greatly by Western literary thought, he does not give any specific references. While Sāmī Mahdī echoes a similar sentiment, he concentrates on the influence of French literary thought, particularly Surrealism, Symbolism, and the French prose poem, on *Shiʿr* focussing predominately on Adūnīs.

Regarding historically-based studies, the only relevant book¹⁶ is Jāk Amātiyīs al-Sālisī's *Yūsuf al-Khāl wa majallatuh Shiʿr*.¹⁷ This study is a descriptive and biographical piece of research. It focuses sequentially on Yūsuf al-Khāl's life starting with his parents, studies, work, and the influence of Anṭūn Saʿāda's ideas on his thought. In addition to al-Khāl's role in *Shiʿr*, this study explores its activities, issues, members and literary work, including the form of new poems published in the magazine and the opposition to it. As a historical study, the aim of this book is simply to pursue al-Khāl's life.

Finally, *Shiʿr* is generally mentioned and discussed in many studies focussing on modern Arabic literature and criticism, such as Salma Khadra Jayyusi's *Trends and Movements in Modern Arabic Poetry*.¹⁸ However, the only study devoted to the examination of the critical issues in *Shiʿr* is *Qaḍāyā al-naqd wa al-ḥadātha: Dirāsa fī al-tajruba al-naqdiyya li Majallat Shiʿr al-lubnāniyya* by Sāndī Abū Sayf.¹⁹ The author discusses critical issues highlighted in the magazine, including the aspects of literature and modernity; form of poetry; artistic renewal; the prose poem; and the attitude of the magazine towards

¹⁶ Many other historical and literal studies, on individual poets and critics who worked with *Shiʿr*, discuss issues related to *Shiʿr* as a stage in the career of those individuals, but not as an entire critical project. For example see: ʿAbd al-Raḥīm Marāshda, *Adūnīs wa al-turāth al-naqdī* (Jordan: Dār al-Kindī, 1995), pp. 45-60.

¹⁷ Jāk Amātiyīs al-Sālisī, *Yūsuf al-Khāl wa majallatuh Shiʿr* (Beirut: Dār al-nahār, 2004).

¹⁸ Salma Khadra Jayyusi, *Trends and Movements in Modern Arabic Poetry* (Leiden: Brill, 1977), vol. 2, pp. 601-604.

¹⁹ Sāndī Abū Sayf, *Qaḍāyā al-naqd wa al-ḥadātha: Dirāsa fī al-tajruba al-naqdiyya li Majallat Shiʿr al-lubnāniyya* (Beirut: al-Muʿassasa al-ʿarabiyya li al-dirāsāt wa al-nashr, 2005).

commitment in literature and issues of poetic form. The author highlights the use of some concepts in *Shiʿr* that are borrowed from French literary thought, particularly from Symbolism.

While this thesis benefits from these studies in approaching the cultural attitudes of *Shiʿr*'s members, it further investigates the influence of the ideological and cultural opinions of *Shiʿr*'s members on the magazine's discourse in general, and its literary and critical thought in particular.

The thesis then analyses the use of the New Critics' concepts in *Shiʿr* and *Adab*, highlighting the level of reliance on, and development of, these concepts, both theoretically and in their application. It also demonstrates the level of congruity, or lack thereof, in New Critical concepts with other critical concepts in *Shiʿr*, along with the cultural backgrounds of its members. After a detailed analysis of *Shiʿr*'s critical project and its relationship with New Criticism among other Western literary schools, I illustrate that *Shiʿr*'s members espoused the New Critics, Eliot in particular, and their conservative theory of tradition, viewing Western poetry as the tradition on which modern poetry should be based. Simultaneously, the magazine's members based their attitudes toward Arab literary tradition on generalisations, viewing any use of it as repetitive and the opposite of modernity. Therefore, I argue that there appear to be two conceptions of tradition in *Shiʿr*: the Arab tradition which should be disregarded in order to be creative, and the Western literary tradition which should be followed in order to be creative. For these reasons, I characterise the reliance, or rather fascination, of *Shiʿr*'s members, especially al-Khāl, with the Western literary tradition as much like a parent-child relationship. The Western literary heritage and its critical account, particularly that of the New Critics, appears in *Shiʿr* to be an ideal literary paradigm to follow.

Although *Shiʿr*'s editorial board repeatedly declared that the magazine was exclusively for poetry and literary thought without promoting any ideological notions, one cannot disregard the ideological backgrounds of some of *Shiʿr*'s members and ideological conflicts over the magazine. This is particularly so with regard to ideologies which were

territorially-based, such as Lebanese nationalism that viewed Lebanon as culturally and historically independent from the surrounding Arab region. This ideological explanation is crucial for issues such as the attitude taken against the Arab heritage and the encouragement of *Shiʿr*, and al-Khāl in particular, to use colloquial Arabic instead of the standardised form, with no literary justification. This led many members of the magazine to resign and caused many ideologically-biased conflicts, most notably that held with *Majallat al-Ādāb*. However, the fascination with the West is not necessarily due to ideological reasons, but is, rather, a wider phenomenon extending beyond *Shiʿr* and the ideologies of its circle. Additionally, some *Shiʿr* critics like Jabrā showed no ideological bias, despite his being greatly influenced by Western literary thought in general, and New Criticism in particular. Bearing in mind Jabrā's familiarity with Western literary thought, his use of the New Critics' concepts was based on practical needs to study modern Arabic poetry and to show and celebrate its genuine features. This is applicable to many other critics beyond *Shiʿr*, such as Iḥsān ʿAbbās and Ilyās Khūrī, whose critical experiences are different, as will be discussed in the second chapter.

This thesis approaches the matters at hand with an in-depth analysis, whilst also using a comparative approach based on a thorough study of New Criticism. It comprehensively analyses the majority of the literary and cultural attitudes of the Arab critics on whom the thesis focuses, taking into account the influence of the historical context and background of those critics. It also considers phenomena in literary and critical studies as part of the general cultural and historical context at the time, particularly regarding the phenomenon of fascination with the West. With respect to the comparison with the New Critics, this thesis inclusively traces the New Critical ideas in the theoretical and applied critical writings of many Arab critics who represent the main categories of the uses of the New Criticism. Additionally, this thesis concentrates on the use of the New Critics' ideas in *Majallat Shiʿr*, and its second branch *Adab*, along with the publications of *Shiʿr*'s writers outside of the magazine.

The thesis is divided into four chapters, each of which is preceded by a short introduction explaining its structure and subject.

The first chapter discusses the literary and cultural context in the Arab world before the appearance of *Majallat Shi'ar*, demonstrating that this context stemmed from the historical circumstances of the region. It also describes the founding of *Shi'ar* along with its members, activities, problems and its final decline and closure. This includes both preliminary information on the magazine and analysis of its members' attitudes towards many cultural and literary issues. The chapter analyses the influence of the ideologies and cultural attitudes of *Shi'ar*'s members towards both Arabic and Western heritage and literature, as well as the language and methodologies used in the magazine.

The second chapter discusses New Criticism in the West and its main concepts. It highlights the differences between New Criticism and other literary formalist schools. Thereafter, it explores the uses of the New Critics' concepts in the Arab world from the mid-fifties of the twentieth century onwards, along with the reasons that led some Arab critics to employ them both in theory and application. The chapter examines the works of four key critics who used New Criticism, representing different forms of its employment. This is followed by a discussion of the translation of the New Critics' works into Arabic, in terms of the books chosen to be translated and problems that exist within these translations.

The third chapter explores in detail the uses of the New Critics in *Majallat Shi'ar* and *Adab*, along with many publications of *Shi'ar* critics. It highlights the importance of theorisation for modern poetry as it appeared in *Shi'ar*. It also discusses the use of different Western literary theories in the magazine, particularly Symbolism and New Criticism, and how it is possible for these two schools to appear in *Shi'ar* simultaneously. It compares the intellectual backgrounds of both the New Critics and *Shi'ar*'s writers with their critical concepts, focussing on the reasons that led *Shi'ar*'s writers to follow the New Critics. The chapter also analyses the impact of the New Critics on the attitudes of *Shi'ar*'s members towards many literary issues, including the role of consciousness and unconsciousness in poetry, poetic ambiguity and complexity. It also considers many concepts related to the theory of objectivity in poetry, particularly the following concepts: the impersonal concept of poetry,

the objective correlative and the poetic image and myth. The chapter identifies the level of the reliance of *Shi'ar* critics on New Criticism, labelling it as the Parental Paradigm.

The fourth chapter examines the impact of the New Critics on *Shi'ar*'s conception of the function of literature. It compares the concept of commitment in literature between New Criticism and Marxism. The chapter examines the use of this concept in *Shi'ar*, along with the idea amongst the New Critics that the meaning and value of literature are aspects of literary structure. It highlights the similarities between the attitudes of the New Critics and *Shi'ar* critics towards the issue of formalism and human knowledge in literature. The chapter also tackles the views of both sets of critics on the issue of literary and scientific knowledge and of literary and scientific language. Finally, it analyses *Shi'ar*'s members' justification, particularly that of al-Khāl, for their encouragement of colloquial Arabic.

Chapter one

Majallat Shi' r 1957-1970

This chapter sets out the context in which *Majallat Shi' r* appeared along with its members, activities and problems, and its final decline and closure. This includes both preliminary information on the magazine and analysis of its members' attitudes towards many cultural and literary issues. The chapter is divided into four sections, as follows:

The first section discusses the literary and critical situation in the Arab world before *Majallat Shi' r*, showing that the literary and critical thought of this region was a result of its circumstances and part of its general historical situation. It also concentrates on the initial critics and their role in directing modern Arabic literature as well as their reliance on Western criticism.

The second section presents *Majallat Shi' r*, its members and activities. It also focuses on the cultural attitudes posed in the magazine and the disagreements which existed within it along with the key ideological reasons behind these disagreements.

The third section analyses the attitudes towards both Arabic and Western heritage and literature as one of the main results of the ideological discords. This section also discusses some aspects of the language and methodologies used in *Majallat Shi' r*'s discourse and the impact of its members' cultural attitudes towards them.

The fourth section discusses *Majallat Shi' r*'s suspension in 1964 and its revival in 1967. Additionally, it discusses the magazine's scope and the main characteristics of its work in the second stage along with its final disappearance in 1970.

1.1. Literary and Critical Situation before Shi 'r's Establishment

Arabic literature witnessed a period of recess during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as a result of many historical and political circumstances which affected the Arab world. The situation in the region deteriorated in the nineteenth century as the Ottoman Empire gradually lost central over provinces and saw increasing dissension. The most significant of these circumstances was the lack of opportunities for formal education, which, where it existed, had as its only aims maintaining traditions and social values.²⁰ Although there were educational movements in Lebanon, Damascus (mostly led by missionaries and local Christians) and Cairo, "other places seem to have been left in the dark until the twentieth century...illiteracy continued to prevail in these other places."²¹ In addition, education was limited to the elite²² and intellectuals became "a social class having special privileges. At times, they resisted any intellectual reform that would threaten their position."²³

The class system affected most of the region severely. While the representatives of the Ottoman central government and the military leaders had at least nominal control over most of al-Hilāl al-khaṣīb (the Fertile Crescent), the Turkish upper class and European traders dominated the socio-economic life of Egypt "rather than the Egyptians who were occupied in every sense of the word."²⁴

²⁰ Hamilton Gibb, Alexander Rosskeen, and Harold Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West: A Study of the Impact of Western Civilization on Moslem Culture in the Near East* (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 160.

²¹ Ami Ayalon, "The Syrian Educated Elite and the Literary Nahda" in *Ottoman Reform and Muslim Regeneration*, ed. Itzhak Weismann and Fruma Zachs (London: I. B. Tauris and Co. Ltd., 2005), pp. 127-128.

²² Hishām Sharābī, *al-Muthaqqafūn al-‘arab wa al-gharb* (Beirut: Dār al-nahār, 1978), p. 16.

²³ ‘Alī Maḥāfza, *al-Ittijāhāt al-fikriyya ‘ind al-‘arab fi ‘aṣr al-nahḍa 1798-1941* (Beirut: al-Ahliyya li al-nashr wa al-tawzī‘, 1975), p. 13.

²⁴ Sharābī, *al-Muthaqqafūn al-‘arab*, p. 16. Relevantly, local traders had to compete unevenly with Europeans whose goods and commerce were exempted from taxes. While local traders had to pay twenty percent of their goods' value as taxes, Western traders paid only four percent. See ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Dūrī, *al-Takwīn al-tārīkhī li al-umma al-‘arabiyya: Dirāsa fī al-huwiyya wa al-wa‘ī* (Beirut: Markaz dirāsāt al-wiḥda al-‘arabiyya, 1986), pp. 124-125; Muḥammad al-Za‘īm, "Tijārat ḥalab fi al-qarn al-tāsi‘ ‘ashar" *Majallat al-Kalima* (num. 1-2, January-February 1949), p. 108. In addition, many European banks received permits to open branches in the region alongside companies working in agriculture and mining. This weakened local labourers who were already poor and pursued by the Ottoman officials to serve in the military. Muḥammad Jamāl Bārūt, *Ḥarakat al-tanwīr al-‘arabiyya fī al-qarn al-tāsi‘ ‘ashar* (Damascus: Manshūrāt wizārat al-thaqāfa, 1994), pp. 16-17.

While Arab societies were suffering from the aforementioned problems, a new era of Western influence commenced with the French campaign in Egypt in 1798, and then continued through the occupation of Arab territories by Western countries.²⁵ This prolonged the problems of the region and obstructed the society from overcoming its difficult circumstances. The people had to begin a new struggle to resist occupations which imposed their military, economic, political and cultural leverage in the region.²⁶

In such circumstances, Arab communities could not grow gradually and naturally. Continued trouble and confrontations led people to feel that their entity and identity, in terms of nationalism, religion, language and heritage, were threatened internally and externally. Consequently, rigid social and religious trends and conservative thinking grew in the absence of freedom, democracy and pluralism, which are the necessary fundamentals for growth and the enrichment of philosophy, literature and critical thought. Many subjects became off-limits and specifically any perceived threat to the principles of nationalism, religion and culture was censured.

Obviously, literature and criticism are deeply impacted by the general historical circumstances surrounding them. They are part of the general cultural structure wherein literary, intellectual, political and philosophical constituents all combine to form the civilizational structure of a nation. Literature and criticism, like the other facets of this civilizational structure, have traditionally been seen to be in recession during the decline of the Ottoman Empire. Again, the most crucial cause behind this literary weakness was the lack of solid educational structures, in particular the teaching of Arabic language and literature. Most people who sought education relied on informal and religious (mosque-based) education that was limited to religious studies and language norms. In the nineteenth century, there were

²⁵ The French campaign in Egypt had an intense influence on the cultural and educational development of Egypt to the point that it is at times deemed to be “the true starting-point of the nahḍa.” Paul Starkey, *Modern Arabic Literature* (Washington, D. C.: Georgetown University Press, 2007), pp. 25-26. However, the French campaign and the increasing presence of the West in Egypt and other Arab territories along with their occupation by Western countries overwhelmed the region. This created a sense of fascination with the West which resulted in an undermining of local cultures. This issue will be discussed shortly.

²⁶ Sharābī, *al-Muthaqqafūn al-‘arab wa al-gharb*, p.18.

only two universities in Syria and Lebanon: the Syrian Protestant College (1866, currently the American University in Beirut) and Jāmi^cat al-Qiddīs Yūsuf (1875) which was founded by French missionaries.²⁷

Consequently, Arabic literary thought was confined to limited models, depicting and imitating some older poems. Arabic poetry in the early nineteenth century was "benighted in every meaning of the word."²⁸ The Egyptian scholar Shawqī Ḍayf described the impact of the Ottoman reign on literature by saying "our literary life collapsed alongside our intellectual life. One became unable to find a single good writer or poet to enjoy."²⁹ This applied to criticism as well. Critical studies focused only on poetic words, linguistic issues, prosody, rhyme and some rhetorical aspects such as those manifested in Shākir Shuqayr's book *Miṣbāḥ al-afkār fī nazm al-ash^cār* (1873), which is a description of rhythmic models of Arabic poetry and offers no new artistic viewpoint.³⁰ Although the period before the late nineteenth century is undergoing new literary historical scrutiny, it is important to recognise that for rising intellectuals then, the earlier literary production including criticism seemed, at best, stale.

The nahḍa (renaissance) movement (roughly 1820-1914)³¹ played a considerable role in the development of thought, culture and education and was generated by prominent intellectuals like Rifā^ca al-Ṭaḥṭāwī and ^cAlī Mubārak in Egypt, and Buṭrus al-Bustānī in Lebanon, among others.³² They were involved in many important projects which aimed to develop the region, including the development of the translation movement, the building of

²⁷ Maḥāfza, *al-Ittijāhāt al-fikriyya*, pp. 211-212.

²⁸ Jayyusi, *Trends and Movements*, vol. 1, p. 25.

²⁹ Shawqī Ḍayf, *al-Adab al-^carabī al-mu^cāṣir fī Miṣr* (Cairo: Dār al-ma^cārif, 10th ed), p. 21. Jabrā Ibrāhīm Jabrā stated that the corruption and enslavement of people by the Ottoman governors affected all aspects of life in the region especially on the intellectual and cultural levels. Jabrā Ibrāhīm Jabrā, *Aqni^cat al-ḥaqīqa wa aqni^cat al-khayāl* (Beirut: al-Mu'assasa al-^carabiyya li al-ṭibā^ca wa al-nashr, 1992), pp 72-73; *al-Fann wa al-ḥulm wa al-fi^cl* (Beirut: al-Mu'assasa al-^carabiyya li al-ṭibā^ca wa al-nashr, 1988), p.306.

³⁰ See: "Miṣbāḥ al-afkār fī nazm al-ash^cār" (25-11) in: Muḥammad Kāmil al-Khaṭīb (ed), *Nazariyyat al-shi^cr: Qaḍāyā wa ḥiwārāt al-nahḍa al-^carabiyya* (Damascus: Wizārat al-thaqāfa, 1997), vol. 1, p. 31.

³¹ The nahḍa was not an organised movement, but rather it was a loose grouping of intellectuals and its influence differed from one region to another. Starkey, *Modern Arabic Literature*, pp. 23-24. The nahḍa consisted of various trends including religious, political, social, educational and artistic projects. For more details about these trends see Maḥāfza, *al-Ittijāhāt al-fikriyya*.

³² Anwar al-Jundī, *al-Fikr al-^carabī al-mu^cāṣir fī ma^crakat al-taghrīb wa al-taba^ciyya al-thaqāfiyya* (Cairo: Maṭba^cat al-risāla, n d), p. 38.

educational institutions, teaching in Arabic and efforts to modernise the language itself, development of the media, and educational missions to the West.³³ Although Madrasat al-alsun (the School of Translation), which was established by Muḥammad °Alī (Egyptian viceroy 1805-1848, nominally answerable to the Ottoman Sultan) in Cairo, was mainly interested in the translation of science, it also translated a few literary works.³⁴ Yet there was much more translation in Syria and Lebanon than in Egypt. This was due to the influence of missionaries and the long-standing relationship between the Christians in the Levant and the West, which had caused Western languages to become more widespread in Syria and Lebanon.³⁵ The important translations that were published in the nineteenth century included the translation of the Holy Scripture by Nāṣif al-Yāzījī (1800-1871) and Aḥmad Fāris al-Shidyāq (1804-1888) while Adīb Ishāq (1856-1885) translated Jean Jacques Rousseau's *On the Social Contract* and many of Jean Racine's and Voltaire's plays.³⁶ One of the most famous and influential translations was Homer's *Iliad* by Sulaymān al-Bustānī in 1904. He skillfully used Arabic poetic form in his translation and wrote a long introduction in which he explained some literary concepts and the rhythmic poetic models that he had employed.³⁷ During the last third of the nineteenth century, many translators and intellectuals from Syria and Lebanon fled to Egypt from the Ottoman provinces. This helped the development of the literary, translational and media movements in Egypt.³⁸

Along with translation, many magazines took part in enlightening people and publishing ideas of the nahḍa. These included Ya°qūb Ṣarrūf's *Majallat al-Muqtataf* (1876), *Majallat al-Hilāl* (1892) edited by Jūrjī Zaydān and Farah Anṭūn's *Majallat al-Jāmi'a* (1897)³⁹ as well as *Majallat Abūllū* (Apollo magazine)⁴⁰ (1932) and *Majallat al-Kātib al-Miṣrī* (1945).⁴¹

³³c Abd al-Raḥmān al-Rāfi°ī, *Tārīkh al-ḥaraka al-qawmiyya wa tatawur nizām al-ḥukm fī Miṣr* (Cairo: Maṭba°at al-nahḍa, 1930), p. 33.

³⁴ For example Muḥammad °Uthmān Jalāl translated Molière's works among others.

³⁵ Starkey, *Modern Arabic Literature*, p. 30.

³⁶ Nadhīr al-°Azma, *Madkhal ilā al-shi°r al-ḥadīth* (Jiddah: al-Nādī al-adabī al-thaqāfi, 1988), p. 12.

³⁷ Sulaymān al-Bustānī, *Muqaddimat al-ilyāda* (Beirut: al-Maṭba°a al-kathūlīkiyya, 1953), pp.103-109.

³⁸ Ḍayf, *al-Adab al-°arabī al-mu°āṣir fī Miṣr*, p. 25.

³⁹ See: al-°Azma, *Madkhal ilā al-shi°r al-ḥadīth*, p. 10.

As a result of the *nahḍa* and the political circumstances of the region, the second half of the nineteenth century saw new factors emerge in Egypt. These included relative social freedoms, the translational and scientific movements, the appearance of newspapers and magazines, the arrival of Syrian and Lebanese intellectuals, the publication of works of classical Arabic literature, scientific missions and nationalist ideologies. This enabled many writers to recognise the merits of classical Arabic literature, especially in its golden age (the °Abbasid Age), and to feel that the strained ornamentation of literature in the Ottoman period was hugely inferior to what had come before. Accordingly, there were various attempts to restore the vitality of Arabic literature,⁴² accomplished most successfully by Maḥmūd Sāmī al-Bārūdī (1839-1904). While he relied on traditional poetic form, he was able to rescue the poetic style of the nineteenth century from being full of embellishments, empty ornamentation and superficiality by relying on "the best examples of classical poetry which, because of their framework, diction, idiom, and phrase structure remained models of excellence."⁴³ Aḥmad Shawqī (1869-1932) and Ḥāfīz Ibrāhīm (1871-1932), among others, continued and developed the neo-classical school of poetry initiated by al-Bārūdī. They regained for Arabic poetry its original vigour and mastery of expression, linked poetry to its roots and delivered it from the relative inactivity of the preceding era, conventionally labelled the "Age of Decadence".⁴⁴

The neo-classical movement flourished all over the Arab world and remained the cornerstone of modern Arabic poetry. Its basic achievement was to revitalise the poetic and linguistic ability of poets at this time and to eliminate the stagnation of centuries of decadence. Expeditiously, Arabic poetry developed alongside and positively interacted with

⁴⁰ See: Iḥsān °Abbās, *Ittijāhāt al-shi°r al-°arabī al-mu°āšir* (Amman: Dār al-shurūq li al-nahsr wa al-tawzī°, 2001), p. 22.

⁴¹ See: °Alī Shalash, *Ittijāhāt al-adab wa ma°ārikuh fī al-majallāt al-adabiyya fī Mišr* (Cairo: al-Hay°a al-mišriyya al-°amma li al-kitāb, 1991), pp. 14, 25, 49, 52; °Alī Shalash, *al-Majallāt al-adabiyya fī Mišr: Taṭawwuruhā wa dawruhā* (Cairo: al-Hayy°a al-mišriyya al-°amma li al-kitāb, 1988).

⁴² For many names of poets who took part in these endeavours see: Ḍayf, *al-Adab al-°arabī al-mu°āšir fī Mišr*, pp. 43-44.

⁴³ Jayyusi, *Trends and Movements*, vol. 1, p. 37. Al-Bārūdī was educated at military schools, which were not offering literature, and he never attended al-Azhar's lessons which were based on a narrow system of education and on firmly entrenched tradition. However, he read *Dīwān al-ḥamāsa* and the anthologies of the classical poets. For further information see: *ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 36-38.

⁴⁴ For more information about these poets see: *ibid.*, p. 46.

many new poetic trends, including Western poetic schools and particularly Romanticism. This development sparked the enormous transformation of poetic structure that appeared from 1947 in Iraq under the name *shi^cr al-taf^cīla*⁴⁵ and was pioneered by Nāzik al-Malā'ika, Badr Shākīr al-Sayyāb and °Abd al-Wahhāb al-Bayyātī. These Iraqi poets were involved in national movements against poverty, oppression, political and social corruption and the submission of local governments to occupying powers.⁴⁶ Certainly, *shi^cr al-taf^cīla* had an effect upon the majority of poets over the Arab world, as well as on literary magazines including *Majallat Shi^cr* and *al-Ādāb*. Since then, various poetic achievements have been realised according to its new form and it has been the predominant form of poetry in Arabic.

However, the *Nahḍa* movement was severely weakened by the end of the nineteenth century.⁴⁷ The political situation and the resulting restriction of freedom were the key causes of this weakening. In 1878, the Ottoman Sultan °Abd al-Ḥamīd II suspended the new constitution and parliament only two years after its establishment and this suspension lasted until 1908.⁴⁸ °Abd al-Ḥamīd oppressed intellectuals and many of them had to flee, particularly those in Syria and Lebanon.⁴⁹ Similar events were witnessed in Egypt, where Majlis Shūrā al-Qawānīn (the parliament) was established in 1866 during the rule of the Khedive Ismā'īl, but was dissolved in 1879, after which Western presence, financial interests and influence grew and culminated in Britain's occupation of Egypt in 1882.⁵⁰

Although the awareness of European culture among intellectuals helped propel the emergence of *Nahḍa*, it also meant a new cultural predominance of forms and values seen as Western. The interaction with the West was unbalanced, symbolising the relationship between

⁴⁵ *Shi^cr al-taf^cīla* is a liberation of fixed patterns of classical Arabic poetry, including number of feet (*tafā'īl*), rhymes, symmetry and the equilibrium of a poem's lines. *Shi^cr al-taf^cīla* allows poets to end the poetic lines flexibly without keeping their number of feet fixed. This means that *shi^cr al-taf^cīla* still has the same kind of prosody with flexibility regarding the number of feet, according to the meaning, emotion and poetic image. See Jayyusi, *Trends and Movements*, vol. 2, pp. 534-556. Because of *shi^cr al-taf^cīla*'s reliance on the fundamental feet of the classical poetic line, many critics rightly refused to name this poetry as *al-shi^cr al-ḥurr* (free verse).

⁴⁶ Bīk, *Harakat al-ḥadātha*, p. 42.

⁴⁷ Maḥāfza, *al-Ittijāhāt al-fikriyya*, p. 10.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 23; and see °Abd al-Karīm Gharāybiḥ, *Sūriyya fī al-qarn al-tāsi^c ashar* (Cairo: Ma'had al-dirāsāt al-°arabiyya al-°ālamīyya, 1961), p. 26.

⁴⁹ Sharābī, *al-Muthaqqafūn al-°arab wa al-gharb*, p. 18.

⁵⁰ Maḥāfza, *al-Ittijāhāt al-fikriyya*, p. 23.

the stronger occupier and the weaker occupied. This resulted in fascination with Western culture and its progressive scientific methods and this fascination was only increased by exposure to military invasion and the advanced military strategies used by Western armies in the East.⁵¹ The fascination was influential on literary thought and led to an enthusiasm for modernist trends, which attracted a very high degree of interest from Arab intellectuals. "The starting point or the first seed of modernism was planted through the colonial encounter with the West during its occupation of Arab territories, which at the same time overwhelmed the region with Western scientific accomplishments. This resulted in the partial undermining of local culture, resulting in a sense of alienation and loss of independence."⁵²

Regarding critical thought in that era, despite the gradual development of modern Arabic poetry from the School of Revivalism onward, there has been a lack of advanced critical theorisation by Arab critics based in the region over the last century. This was due to Arab critics neither relying on classical critical traditions to develop new theories nor following the example of the earlier poetic movement in the development of poetry to guide the formation of new Arab critical theories. Some of the pioneering critics in the nineteenth century began their careers with a presupposition that there was no Arabic criticism on which they could rely. In *Manhal al-wurrād fī ʿilm al-intiqād*, Qusṭākī al-Ḥimṣī (1858-1941) argues that "criticism never existed within Arab heritage nor did Arab critics name or identify it."⁵³ Scholars, he adds, could not find even one book translated from Greek,⁵⁴ and classical critics were "like a little child pushed by instinct to stand and walk, but he sits and falls down more than standing, and to continue trying to walk without insight or a plan to guide him, might lead him to fall into a hole and to die."⁵⁵ Although this book highlights a few significant critical issues such as objective criticism, freedom, and rationalism, its argument is based on the idea that literary criticism does not exist in the Arab heritage. Nor does the book consider

⁵¹ Hammūda, *al-Marāyā al-muqaʿcara*, p. 27.

⁵² Shukrī ʿAzīz Maḍī, *Min ishkāliyyāt al-naqd al-ʿarabī al-ḥadīth* (Beirut: al-Muʿassasa al-ʿarabiyya li al-dirāsāt wa al-nashr, 1997), p. 180.

⁵³ Qusṭākī al-Ḥimṣī, *Manhal al-wurrād fī ʿilm al-intiqād* (n. p., n. d.), vol. 1, p. 10.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

translations of Aristotle's *Poetics*, first translated into Arabic in the early tenth century by Abū-Bishr Mattā ibn Yūnus (d. 939).⁵⁶ Thereafter, Aristotle's work was translated many other times and explained and abridged by many philosophers.⁵⁷

The assumption made by al-Ḥimṣī that classical Arabic criticism did not exist resulted in a view that privileged Western critical accounts as a satisfactory alternative. Hence many critics since the 1920s have applied Western theories to Arabic literature, and this created a gap between literature and theory. This includes renowned critics such as Ṭāhā Ḥusayn (1889-1973), the critics of Jamā'at al-dīwān and those around the journal *Abūllū*, among others.

The influence of Ṭāhā Ḥusayn as a critic on modern Arabic culture was extremely important. He supported the new classical poetic movement of the turn into the twentieth century and beyond, Aḥmad Shawqī and Ḥāfiẓ Ibrāhīm in particular.⁵⁸ In his book *Fī al-shi'ar al-jāhili* (1926) he applied the scientific method of Sainte Beuve and Taine to pre-Islamic poetry which led him to doubt the historical reality of pre-Islamic poetry. This book was of particular importance because Ṭāhā Ḥusayn was the first of modern scholars to scrutinise the historical reality of classical poetry and open it to further criticism.⁵⁹ However, he did not pioneer new theory about these aspects of Arabic poetry; rather, he relied on many Western philosophical concepts and was extremely enthusiastic about adopting Western culture.⁶⁰ He and others, such as Salāma Mūsā (1887-1958), were leading proponents of a view in tension with emerging Arab nationalism – that is Egyptian nationalism, trying to link the history of Egypt with Europe instead of the Arab world.⁶¹ Apart from Ṭāhā Ḥusayn's interest in Shawqī and Ibrāhīm, he was interested in classical Arabic poetry and he expressed a few opinions

⁵⁶ Aristū, *Fann al-shi'ar*, tr. Ibrāhīm Ḥamāda (Cairo: Maktabat al-anglo al-miṣriyya, n d), pp. 44-45.

⁵⁷ See Aristū, *Fann al-shi'ar*, tr. °Abd al-Raḥmān Badawī (Beirut: Dār al-thaqāfa, 1973).

⁵⁸ See: Pierre Cachia, *Ṭāhā Ḥusayn: his Place in the Egyptian Literary Renaissance* (London: Luzac, 1956); Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age: 1798-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 324-340.

⁵⁹ Hourani, *Arabic Thought*, p. 327.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 328-329.

⁶¹ See: Ṭāhā Ḥusayn, *Mustaqbal al-thaqāfā fī Miṣr* (Cairo: Dār al-ma'ārif, 1993), p. 25; Salāma Mūsā, *Fī al-ḥayā wa al-adab*. (Cairo, n. p., 1961), p. 74.

about modern poetry that were not artistically justified and differed from the majority of critics' opinions.⁶²

The first criticism against the neo-classical movement was launched by Jamā[°]at al-Dīwān (al-dīwān group) in Egypt in the 1920s-1930s. This consisted of [°]Abbās Maḥmūd al-[°]Aqqād (1889-1964), [°]Abd al-Raḥmān Shukrī (1886-1958) and Ibrāhīm al-Māzinī (1890-1949). They generally based their criticism and most of their work on English poetic concepts, particularly those drawn from Romanticism.⁶³ This was a problematic issue, because they tried to force Arabic poetry to be congruent with their theorising knowledge which was derived neither from their poetic experience nor from their reaction to neo-classical poetry. Therefore, they were not able to apply their theorising to their own poetry, whose features were very similar to what they had criticised in classical poetry.⁶⁴ They composed their poetry with "dogmatic expression, the parceling of thoughts and ideas into geometric divisions, the sudden introduction of aphorisms that end with the two hemistich verse, etc."⁶⁵ This poetic weakness led to sweeping rejection of their poetry by many critics such as Mārūn [°]Abbūd who scoffed at al-[°]Aqqād's poetry.⁶⁶ Furthermore, they were not directed by poetic phenomena in their theorising on poetry, as witnessed amongst Romantic Arab poets, but instead they adopted English poetry theorising⁶⁷ as wholesale and tried to translate it to their writings about Arabic poetry.

In addition to the lack of genuine talent, Salma Khadra Jayyusi justified the poetic failure of Jamā[°]at al-Dīwān as due to "the resistance of the tools of Arabic poetry at the time", which meant that a "genuinely unhappy mood could not be successfully expressed in

⁶² For example, his praise for [°]Abbās Maḥmūd al-[°]Aqqād's poetry (al-[°]Aqqād's poetry will be discussed within Jamā[°]at al-dīwān's work) rightly provoked the anger of Lebanese critic Mārūn [°]Abbūd. See: Mārūn [°]Abbūd, *°Alā al-miḥakk: Naẓarāt wa ārā' fī al-shi'ar wa al-shu'arā'* (Beirut: Dār al-[°]ilm li al-malāyīn, 1946), p. 16.

⁶³ Jayyusi, *Trends and Movements*, vol. 1, p. 152 and 154.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 155.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 155.

⁶⁶ [°]Abbūd, *°Alā al-miḥakk*, pp. 226-278. Although they robustly attacked new classical poets especially Aḥmad Shawqī, they could not prove their poetic shortcomings through the examples they gave. See: Jayyusi. *Trends and Movements*, vol. 1, pp. 169-170.

⁶⁷ See [°]Abbās Maḥmūd al-[°]Aqqād, *Shu'arā' Miṣr wa bī'ātuhum fī al-jīl al-mādī* (Cairo: Maktabat al-nahḍa al-miṣriyya, 1937), pp. 192- 193.

poetry."⁶⁸ This in my view is erroneous, because Romantic poetry had been and was being successfully written in Arabic by many poets including Jubrān Khalīl Jubrān, ʿIlyā Abū Mādī, Nasīb ʿArīḍa, Abū al-Qāsim al-Shābbī and ʿIlyās Abū Shabaka among others, whose Romantic successes were studied by Jayyusi herself.⁶⁹ In addition, many great literary works were translated beautifully into Arabic around this time, including Homer's *Iliad*, and the hugely successful poetic movement of *shīʿr al-tafʿīla* appeared in 1947 while Jamāʿat al-Dīwān's members were still writing. In fact, it was the attitudes and philosophies of Jamāʿat al-Dīwān that were at fault. Their poetry was restricted by the theoretical concepts they adopted from English criticism and their desire to apply those concepts to Arabic poetry. Ironically, although they called for a renewal of Arabic poetry, they greeted any attempt to do so with harsh criticism. Examples of this included their vehement attack against *Majallat Abūllū*, especially Aḥmad Zakī Abū Shādī,⁷⁰ despite the similar Romantic concepts they shared,⁷¹ and al-ʿAqqād's rejection of *shīʿr al-tafʿīla*, which he considered prose.⁷²

The problems of Jamāʿat al-Dīwān were also found in other critical projects of the first half of the twentieth century. This included *Majallat Abūllū*,⁷³ which included works by various poets from the Romantic, Symbolic, realistic and Surrealist trends, among various others.⁷⁴ However, the magazine's criticism, especially essays by Aḥmad Zakī Abū Shādī, was employed in theorising only Romantic concepts.⁷⁵ This indicates that the magazine's poetic theorising was isolated from the poetry itself. The dominance of Romantic poetic concepts is surely unjustifiable in a magazine that was open to all poetic trends. Perhaps this bias was

⁶⁸ Jayyusi, *Trends and Movements*, vol. 1, p. 157.

⁶⁹ See her study of Arabic Romanticism in *ibid*, vol. 2, pp. 361-464.

⁷⁰ ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Dasūqī, *Jamāʿat abūllū wa atharuhā fī al-shīʿr al-ḥadīth* (Cairo: Maʿhad al-dirāsāt al-ʿarabiyya al-ʿālamīyya, 1960), p. 222.

⁷¹ About *Abūllū*'s romanticism see: Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Minʿim Khafājī, *Dirāsāt fī al-adab al-ʿarabī al-ḥadīth wa madārisuh* (Beirut: Dār al-jīl, 1992), vol. 2, pp. 70-72.

⁷² Muḥammad Mandūr, *Maʿārik adabiyya* (Cairo: Dār nahḍat Miṣr li al-ṭabʿ wa al-tawzīʿ, n d), p. 38.

⁷³ *Majallat Abūllū* (1932-1934) was open to all poetic styles and did not reject classical poetry in its new poetic project; on the contrary, Aḥmad Zakī Abū Shādī invited Aḥmad Shawqī, the most famous poet of neo-classicism, to be the head of the magazine. See Khafājī, *Dirāsāt fī al-adab*, p. 56.

⁷⁴ Al-Dasūqī, *Jamāʿat abūllū*, p. 279.

⁷⁵ Khafājī, *Dirāsāt fī al-adab*, vol. 2, p. 72.

because the predominant theorist in *Majallat Abūllū*, Abū Shādī, was a Romantic, although his poetry, as Jayyusi pointed out, was considered weak and dilapidated.⁷⁶

Individual critics such as Mārūn °Abbūd (1886-1962) in Lebanon and Muḥammad Mandūr (1908-1965) in Egypt played important roles in explaining many poetic phenomena and supporting new poetic forms. Most of °Abbūd's criticism was applied rather than theoretical and welcomed new forms of prosody in Arabic poetry.⁷⁷ He rightly rejected al-°Aqqād's poetry and the praise it was given by famous critics such as Ṭāhā Ḥusayn.⁷⁸ Mandūr's criticism, meanwhile, analysed many aspects of modern poetry and encouraged the use of some aesthetically valuable new ways of poetic expression such as what he called *al-shi'ar al-mahmūs*,⁷⁹ which aimed at keeping poetry free of an oratorical tone. However, most of his critical theorising was borrowed from different critical schools, the historical, social, psychological and linguistic in particular,⁸⁰ and he restricted himself to realist theory.⁸¹

Neither °Abbūd and Mandūr, nor their contemporaries, established the theoretical foundations for modern Arabic criticism. Like other critics in the first half of the twentieth century, their applied criticism remained incomplete or restricted by foreign critical concepts, while their theorising imitated Western literary theories instead of relying on the literature to either develop an indigenous criticism upon the bases of classical Arabic criticism or to react against it. This suggests that modern Arabic criticism did not rely on a solid intellectual or philosophical background, which is necessary to guide and develop critical thought. Regarding the last point, studies of classical Arabic criticism have often tried to show that some classical Arabic concepts are similar to modern Western accounts. Some critics aimed to show off the pre-eminence of classical Arabic by claiming certain similarities to modern

⁷⁶ Jayyusi, *Trends and Movements*, vol. 2, pp. 375-376.

⁷⁷ Mārūn °Abbūd, *Dumqus wa urjuwān: Ta'liqāt °alā hāmish al-shi'ar* (Beirut: Dār al-thaqāfa, 1966), p. 17.

⁷⁸ °Abbūd, °*Alā al-miḥakk*, pp. 226-278.

⁷⁹ Muḥammad Mandūr, *Fī al-mīzān al-jadīd* (Tunis: Mu'assasat ibn °Abd al-Lah, 1988), p. 77.

⁸⁰ See for example: Mandūr, *Fī al-adab wa al-naqd* (Cairo: Nahḍat Miṣr li al-nashr, n d).

⁸¹ Muḥammad al-Nuwayhī, *Thaqāfat al-nāqid al-adabī* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 1969), p. 390.

Western theoretical concepts, which led others to feel that this legitimised reliance upon Western criticism.⁸²

II. 1. *Majallat Shi'ar*

Since its inception, *Majallat Shi'ar* has been known as a modernist project, open to Western culture and aiming to enlighten its audience. It was quickly able to attract the attention of both literary writers and critics over the Arab world.

Shi'ar was established in Beirut in 1957⁸³ by Yūsuf al-Khāl (1917-1987), who had returned from America two years previously, where he had been working at the United Nations as a member of the Lebanese mission.⁸⁴ The contemporary Syrian poet Adūnīs (1930) joined him in establishing and editing the new magazine.⁸⁵

Al-Khāl was educated in American schools in Syria and at the American University in Beirut.⁸⁶ This, in addition to his experience in America (1948-1955) where he enjoyed the development of Western life and literature,⁸⁷ contributed to the shaping of his cultural and ideological attitudes. He began to think about introducing aspects of Western poetry to the Arab world.⁸⁸ He met Adūnīs in October 1956 in Beirut to discuss the establishment of a magazine that would embrace modern literary concepts.⁸⁹ Immediately after this meeting the two began inviting a number of prominent literary writers and critics to participate.

⁸² Examples of this included Kamāl Abū Deeb who tried to show that al-Jurjānī was a structuralist, which was sweepingly criticised by °Abd al-°Azīz Ḥammūda in *al-Marāyā al-Muqāccara*. See for example pp. 16-17, 46.

⁸³ The first issue of *Shi'ar* was published in January 1957, and continued until its first cessation in 1964. It was reissued in 1967 for three years until its final demise of the magazine in 1970.

⁸⁴ Yūsuf al-Khāl was known in academic circles for his collection of poems entitled *al-Ḥurriyya* (freedom) and for his poetic theatre. In 1947 he became chief editor of *Majallat Ṣawt al-mar'a* (the voice of women magazine) published by the Lebanese Women's University, and in 1952 he was made chief editor of *al-Hudā Journal*, founded in New York. After his return in 1955, he worked as a teacher of Arabic literature at the American University in Lebanon. Rūpart al-Yasūcī, *A°lām al-adab al-°arabī al-mu°āšir* (Beirut: al-Sharika al-muttaḥida li al-tawzi°, 1996), vol. 1, pp. 526-527.

⁸⁵ Adūnīs was known already for his selection of poetry *Qālat lī al-arḍ*. See: °Alī al-Shar°, *Binyat al-qašīda al-qašīra fī shi'ar Adūnīs* (Damascus: Ittiḥād al-kuttāb al-°arab, 1987), p. 9.

⁸⁶ Al-Sālisī, *Yūsuf al-Khāl*, p. 33.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

⁸⁸ See: °Abd al-Wāḥid Lu'lu'a, "Qaḍiyyat al-shi'ar al-ḥurr fī al-°arabiyya", *Shi'ar* (num. 43, Summer 1969), P. 58.

⁸⁹ Abū Sayf, *Qaḍāyā al-naqd wa al-ḥadātha*, pp. 15-16.

Khalīl Ḥāwī, Nadhīr al-ʿAzma, Nadīm Nuʿayma, and Razzūq Asʿad Razzūq soon joined them. Together they formed the so-called Tajammuʿ *Shiʿr* (Poetry Group) and held the foundational meeting of the magazine, which was intended as a quarterly magazine specialising in poetry and literary criticism, before publishing the first issue in January 1957.⁹⁰ Yūsuf al-Khāl was the chief editor, Adūnīs was the secretary,⁹¹ and others contributed including: Shawqī Abū Shaqrā⁹² (b. 1935), Unsī al-Ḥāj (b. 1937) and Jabrā Ibrahīm Jabrā (1919-1994).⁹³

In addition to the editorial board, many important Arab poets and critics from around the region published poetry and critical essays in the magazine. The work of prominent Iraqi poet Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb (1926-1964) appeared many times; he once joined an editorial board meeting and participated with the group in the Rome Conference on Arabic Literature in 1961.⁹⁴ Despite al-Sayyāb's good relationship with al-Khāl, to whom he used to send regular letters, both personal and critical, expressing his opinion of the magazine,⁹⁵ he left *Majallat Shiʿr* in 1962, preferring to publish his poetry in *al-Ādāb*. Furthermore, the Iraqi poet Nāzik al-Malāʾika (1923-2007) published some of her poems and critical studies in the magazine, and used to attend the meetings of the editorial board in the early stages of the magazine's life. However, in *Majallat al-Ādāb*⁹⁶ she wrote against *Shiʿr* announcing her preference for *al-Ādāb* and for working with it.⁹⁷ Similarly, Muḥammad al-Māghūṭ (1934-2006), who was embraced by the magazine in which he published a collection of poems *Ḥuzn*

⁹⁰ Yūsuf al-Khāl quoted the name of the magazine from a famous American magazine called *Poetry* in Chicago edited by Harriet Monroe appeared in 1912.

⁹¹ Yūsuf al-Khāl and Adūnīs were firstly in agreement on the adoption of innovative concepts for Arabic poetry, and Adūnīs' fame started to be widespread as a poet and critic. The first issue mentioned that Adūnīs had many collections of poems ready for publication and the magazine would issue them in succession. He would prove through these poems that he was not just the most important of his generation, but if he were to have the opportunity would be a popular worldwide poet. Hayʾat al-Taḥrīr, "Akhbār wa qaḍāyā", *Shiʿr* (num. 1, January 1957), p. 109. However, al-Khāl and Adūnīs disagreed about many cultural and literary issues. This will be discussed in detail below.

⁹² Poet and teacher of Arabic literature, and prize-winning poet of *Shiʿr* for the best poetic production of 1960. See: *Shiʿr* (num.13, January 1960), p. 4.

⁹³ Bīk. *Ḥarakat al-ḥadātha*, p. 63. For more details about the editors and participants of the magazine see Haidar, *The Prose Poem*, pp. 75-77.

⁹⁴ For full details see: *al-Adab al-ʿarabī al-muʿāṣir: Muʾtamar Rome, October 1961* (Beirut: Aḍwāʾ, 1962).

⁹⁵ For more details see: Abū Sayf, *Qaḍāyā al-naqd wa al-ḥadātha*, p.16.

⁹⁶ The dispute with *Majallat al-Ādāb* will be discussed shortly.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

fī daw' al-qamar (1959) and “who was recognised by many as a pioneer or the pioneer of the prose poem,”⁹⁸ later returned to attack the poetic ability of *Shi'c'r*'s editors, rejecting some of its cultural attitudes and undermining the significance of the prose poems written in the magazine.⁹⁹ Nizār Qabbānī¹⁰⁰ (1923-1998), Buland al-Ḥaydarī¹⁰¹ (1926-1996) and Sa'c'dī Yūsuf¹⁰² (b. 1934) also participated in the magazine several times. According to Kamāl Khīr Bīk, Yūsuf al-Khāl, Adūnīs, Khalīl Ḥāwī and Nadhīr al-°Aẓma were the major poets who formed the magazine's core outlook.¹⁰³

With regard to critical studies, *Shi'c'r* published many works by its members and other scholars such as Khālida Sa'c'īd, who was the writer of many critiques both applied and theoretical, that were relevant to the modern concepts of poetry.¹⁰⁴ In addition, Rūz Gharīb¹⁰⁵ (1909-1996), Ghālī Shukrī¹⁰⁶ (1935-1998), °Abd al-Wāḥid Lu'lu'a¹⁰⁷ (b. 1931), and several others published critical essays.¹⁰⁸

Tajammu'c *Shi'c'r* undertook many activities, in addition to the magazine itself, aimed at achieving its modernist project. This included a weekly symposium, known as 'Khamīs *Majallat Shi'c'r*' (Thursday poetry magazine), which was held to discuss various issues of poetry and criticism.¹⁰⁹ In addition, Yūsuf al-Khāl founded a publishing house to print works that were compatible with the principles of his modernist magazine. Modern collections of

⁹⁸ Haidar, *The Prose Poem*, p. 80.

⁹⁹ Abū Sayf, *Qaḍāyā al-naqd wa al-ḥadātha*, p. 18.

¹⁰⁰ Nizār Qabbānī, "Shu'ūn Ṣaghīra", *Shi'c'r* (num. 2, April, 1957), pp. 17-22.

¹⁰¹ Buland al-Ḥaydarī, "Ḥadīth al-sana al-qādima", *Shi'c'r* (num. 24, spring 1969), p. 65.

¹⁰² Sa'c'dī Yūsuf, "Arḍ zahrān" (139-140), *Shi'c'r* (num. 17, Winter 1961), pp. 139-140.

¹⁰³ Bīk, *Ḥarakat al-ḥadātha*, p. 63.

¹⁰⁴ Khālida Sa'c'īd habitually used the pen name 'Khuzāmā Ṣabrī'. See: "*al-Bi'r al-mahjūra* li Yūsuf al-Khāl", *Shi'c'r* (num. 6, Spring 1958), pp. 136; "*al-Ba'c'ath wa al-ramād* li Adūnīs" (92-109), *Shi'c'r* (num. 5, Winter 1958), p. 92.

¹⁰⁵ "Al-Maḍmūn waḥdahu lā yaṣna' al-shi'c'r", *Shi'c'r* (num. 44, Autumn 1970), p. 65; "al-Shi'c'r al-ḥadīth ḥaraka thawriyya maḥtūma", *Shi'c'r* (num. 37, Winter 1968), p. 9.

¹⁰⁶ Ghālī Shukrī, "Ḥawla naqd al-shi'c'r", *Shi'c'r* (num. 41, Winter 1969), p. 132; and "Shā'ir bilā qaḍiyya", *Shi'c'r* (num. 27, Summer 1963), pp. 90-97.

¹⁰⁷ °Abd al-Wāḥid Lu'lu'a, "Qaṣīda ḥadītha fī mīzān al-sharḥ wa al-tahlīl", *Shi'c'r* (num. 42, Spring 1969), p. 54.

¹⁰⁸ See some other names: Abū Sayf, *Qaḍāyā al-naqd*, pp. 17- 19.

¹⁰⁹ Initially, these symposia took place in The Plaza Hotel, and were open to the public. Shortly afterwards, the session was confined to the members of the magazine and areas of discussion were expanded to include philosophy and culture matters. See: "Akḥbār wa qaḍāyā", *Shi'c'r* (num. 7-8, Summer-Autumn, 1958), p. 58. The venue moved to The American University Alumni club, then to Yūsuf al-Khāl's house. See: Mahdī, *Ufuq al-ḥadātha*, p. 39.

poems were the first works published, and these included *Qaṣā'id ūlā* (1957) by Adūnīs, *al-Bi'r al-mahjūra* (1958) by Yūsuf al-Khāl and *Tammūz fī al-madīna* (1959) by Jabrā Ibrahīm Jabrā.¹¹⁰ With the success of their magazine, Tajammu^c *Shi^cr* announced in 1959 an annual prize for the best works of epic poetry, anthology and drama published during the year.¹¹¹ After five years of publishing the magazine, the group established a new branch called *Adab*¹¹² (literature). Jamā^cat *Shi^cr* announced that the new branch's aim was to expand the work of *Shi^cr* to include all literary genres.¹¹³ In fact, it seemed to be more a product of *Shi^cr*'s conflicts with *al-Ādāb*, as will be discussed later.

II.2. *Shi^cr*'s cultural project

Shi^cr's members declared that their project's aims were purely poetic and for the purpose of developing literary thought. They were, according to themselves, motivated by neither political nor ideological loyalties.¹¹⁴ This was reiterated with reference to *Adab* which was established in order to expand beyond the interests of *Shi^cr*, which was exclusively for poetry, to include all artistic and literary fields.¹¹⁵ However, most issues that were addressed within the magazine were inflected by the ideological attitudes or backgrounds of *Shi^cr*'s members. The internal discord that existed amongst *Shi^cr*'s members as well as external conflicts, especially with *Majallat al-Ādāb*, were provoked by their ideological leanings. These conflicts led to many members resigning and to the ban on the circulation of the magazine in Syria and Iraq.¹¹⁶ More importantly, the ideological attitudes of *Shi^cr*'s members deeply affected the major critical and literary viewpoints expressed in the magazine, such as the attitudes toward Arabic heritage, Western literature, modern Arabic literature and language.

¹¹⁰ Abū Sayf, *Qaḍāyā al-naqd*, p. 20.

¹¹¹ Yūsuf al-Khāl, "Min ra'īs al-taḥrīr", *Shi^cr* (num. 10, Spring, 1959), p. 5.

¹¹² Edited by Yūsuf al-Khāl as well. The first issue appeared in Winter 1962, and it continued until Autumn 1963 (8 issues).

¹¹³ "Ilā al-qāri'", *Shi^cr* (num. 20, Autumn 1960), p. 5. For more details about *Shi^cr*'s activities see Haidar, *The Prose Poem*, p. 75.

¹¹⁴ Yūsuf al-Khāl, "Min ra'īs al-taḥrīr", *Shi^cr* (num. 12, Autumn 1959), pp.3-4.

¹¹⁵ Yūsuf al-Khāl, "Dawrunā fī ma'rakat al-nuhūd", *Adab*, (num. 1, Winter 1962), p. 6.

¹¹⁶ "Al-Ifitāhiyya", *Shi^cr* (num. 4, Autumn 1957), p 2.

The ideologies which influenced the magazine's members were primarily Syrian and Lebanese nationalism. The idea of Syrian nationalism sprang from Buṭrus al-Bustānī's (1819-83) thought and his periodical *al-Jinān* (1870-86). Although al-Bustānī supported Ottoman nationalism¹¹⁷ which called for liberty, equal rights and decentralisation, he stressed a local territorial loyalty to Syrian patriotism. In 1875, some Christians who worked with al-Bustānī created a small group appealing for the independence of Syria and Lebanon.¹¹⁸ One of the reasons behind this movement was that the Christians were looking for a society to which they could entirely belong. After all, the empire was a Muslim state.¹¹⁹ The solution for them was an independent Syria across the whole of geographical Syria from the Taurus Mountains to Sinai (meaning currently Syria, Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon, Iraq, Cyprus, Sinai, Iskenderun which became in 1939 the city of Hatay in Turkey)¹²⁰ under the protection and support of European powers.¹²¹ Syrian nationalism had many supporters, most of whom were Christians.

¹¹⁷ Ottoman nationalism turned into Turkish nationalism with the Young Turks movement after the rule of Abd al-Ḥamīd II 1908. The Young Turks' philosopher Ziya Gökalp saw that the only way to solve the empire's problems was to impose one national sentiment on it based essentially on language and race. Therefore, "Ottoman nationalism turned into Turkish nationalism." Hourani, *Arabic Thought*, pp. 282-283. Turkish nationality encompassed those who spoke Turkish and were of Turkish origin, whose interests should be strengthened by the government. Moreover, other ethnic groups should be turned into Turks by insisting on the use of Turkish in schools and government. *Ibid.*, pp. 282-283. Although this group improved local government along with the security and emancipation of women, the people rejected its policies because it was a threat to their languages and political rights. The result was that Arab nationalism emerged overtly and many groups including Armenians, Albanians and Kurds began to demand their national rights. *Ibid.*, p. 285.

¹¹⁸ The importance of this group lay in showing the awakening of the Syrian Christians' political consciousness. Fruma Zachs and Basilius Bawardi, "Ottomanism and Syrian Patriotism in Salim al-Bustani's Thought" in *Ottoman Reform and Muslim Regeneration*, ed. Itzhak Weismann and Fruma Zachs (London: I. B. Tauris and Co. Ltd., 2005), pp. 111-112.

¹¹⁹ Hourani, *Arabic Thought*, pp. 274-275.

¹²⁰ Anṭūn Sa'āda, *al-A'māl al-kāmila* (Beirut: Mu'assasat sa'āda li al-thaqāfa, 2001), vol. 7, p. 319.

¹²¹ This appeared in the writing of al-Bustānī and others since the 1860s and the name "Syria" became widely used with pride. This idea was especially widespread among the American mission schools' students who were mainly Orthodox and Protestant Christians and later Muslims and Druzes. Thus, an independent Lebanon meant for them the domination of the Maronites and of French Catholic culture and government. They thought that Syria would make them neither a minority nor dominated by another group. However, there were some Catholics who accepted the idea of Syria because of the influence of the Belgian Henri Lammens who was teaching at the Jesuit University of Beirut. He supported the idea of Syria, did not like Islam and Arab nationalism, and firmly distinguished between Syrians and Arabs. Hourani, *Arabic Thought*, pp. 275-276. Some Arab nationalist ideas appeared within the Syrian supporters' writings, particularly the importance of Arabic language for the unity of all Arabs. Those included al-Bustānī and Ibrahim al-Yāzījī who wrote a poem in which he called on Arabs to remember their past greatness and to awake. Nevertheless, most Christians were skeptical of Arab nationalism because they believed that it might be a new form of "Islamic self-assertion." *Ibid.*, p. 277.

Two Lebanese writers in particular, George Semna and Shukrī Ghānim, resisted the ideas of Arab nationalism declaring that "Syrians are not Arabs, indeed there is no Arab nation."¹²²

This Syrian nationalism was further developed by Anṭūn Sa'āda (1904-1949) who established the Syrian Social Nationalist Party.¹²³ He introduced its constitution on November 21, 1934. Its fundamental purposes were to create a national Syrian renaissance restoring the vitality and strength of the Syrian nation and to organise a movement aimed at achieving the complete independence of Syria, demonstrating its sovereignty and raising the level of its socio-economic life.¹²⁴ It rejected the ideology of Arab unity and did not consider language or religion fundamental components of a nation.¹²⁵

Regarding Lebanese nationalism, the society to which Christians hoped to belong, for some Christians such as the Maronite Bulus Nujaym, took the form of an independent Lebanon under the protection of a European Catholic power.¹²⁶ Lebanese nationalists argued that Lebanon was separate from other Arab territories, as it was Christian, Mediterranean and linked with European countries. They believed Lebanon was not Arab, but rather that it was an independent country that emerged into history in the time of the Phoenicians as a Mediterranean nation.¹²⁷ They felt that the country could not continue without a deep link to the West, "the great home of her culture, and can only be at ease, internally and externally, if the West is strong."¹²⁸ Christianity was essential for the Lebanese nationalists; Lebanon was a haven for Christians amidst Muslims. Most of the movement's members possessed European culture, education and language.¹²⁹ They were strongly attacked by many parties, in particular

¹²² Ibid., p. 289. George Semna was the spokesman of the group and published a plan to achieve the Syrian state under the protection of the French. Ibid., 289.

¹²³ Sa'āda, *al-A'māl al-kāmila*, vol 2, p. 9.

¹²⁴ Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 41-46.

¹²⁵ Ibid., vol. 5, pp. 246-247. The party expressed its thought in a more Arab model to include Iraq even if the name "Syria" had to be changed to "Surāqiyya". Ibid, vol. 7, p. 312.

¹²⁶ Hourani, *Arabic Thought*, pp. 274-275.

¹²⁷ Ibid., p. 320.

¹²⁸ Ibid., p. 322.

¹²⁹ Ibid., p. 319.

by both Arab and Syrian nationalists. Anṭūn Sa^cāda argued that the Lebanese nationalists were asking for Christian sectarianism using support from the French.¹³⁰

The most extreme Lebanese nationalists were the Maronites who exploited the advantages of Western prerogatives which were available for the Christians of the region.¹³¹ Their sense of belonging to the West was supported by their familiarity with Western languages and literature.¹³² The Maronites rejected all cultural, ideological or national projects that would reduce their sectarian advantages or threaten their privileges. Therefore, they rejected secularist thought and called for total separation, not only from Muslims and Arabs, but also from other Christian doctrines.¹³³

II.3. Cultural affiliation

The exploration of cultural identity was one of the most influential issues in determining the shape and trajectory of *Majallat Shi^cr*'s project in general and its cultural and literary perspectives in particular. It also reflected the magazine's members' ideological beliefs which prevented independent literary thought and provoked disagreements that distracted their attention from literary and critical pursuits.

Lebanese nationalism and the Syrian Social Nationalist Party exploited links to the Mediterranean to create a sense of cultural identity, which was highlighted by the magazine. Most of *Majallat Shi^cr*'s members were former members of Anṭūn Sa^cāda's party, according to announcements made by the magazine itself.¹³⁴ Although they had resigned from the party, it continued to influence their cultural and literary attitudes. The clearest example of this influence can be seen in their repeated references to the sense of belonging to the civilization

¹³⁰ Anṭūn Sa^cāda, *Fī al-mas'ala al-Sūriyya*. (Beirut: Dār al-fīkr li al-abḥāth wa al-nashr, 1991), pp. 99-100.

¹³¹ Bārūt, *Ḥarakat al-tanwīr al-^carabiyya*, p. 27.

¹³² Edward Saïd, "al-Liqā' al-^carabī al-īnglīzī", *Majallat Fuṣūl* (vol. 11, n. 4, Winter 1993). p. 154.

¹³³ Bārūt, *Ḥarakat al-tanwīr al-^carabiyya*, p. 29.

¹³⁴ The Editorial Board, "Akhbār wa qaḍāyā", *Shi^cr* (num. 12, Winter 1959), p. 136. The main proponents of this trend were Yūsuf al-Khāl (he converted to Lebanese nationalism), Adūnīs, Nadhīr al-^cAzma, Fu'ād Rifqa, Khālida Sa^cīd, Khalīl Ḥāwī (converted to Arab nationalism), Munīr Bashshūr and Muḥammad al-Māghūṭ, among others. Maḥdī, *Ufuq al-ḥadātha*, p. 20.

of the Mediterranean in literary and critical contexts.¹³⁵ Syrian Social Nationalists considered the Mediterranean the origin of Syrian civilization, with which it should reintegrate in order to restore its civilizational identity.¹³⁶ This theory separated Syria from the rest of the Arab world on the basis of its different environment, history and consequently nationality and identity. Syria was neither an eastern nation nor did it have “an eastern mind” (*‘aqliyya sharqiyya*).¹³⁷

Lebanese nationalists adopted the Mediterranean concept and restricted it to Lebanon, which they claimed as the oldest civilization, first established by the Phoenicians. Lebanon was both a haven for Christians in a region populated by Muslims, and a stand-alone nation that was Mediterranean, Christian and linked with Europe, while other Arab countries were culturally very different.¹³⁸ No development, for Lebanese nationalists, could occur without adopting the Western model and any reform should draw on Western precedents.¹³⁹

The most fervent critic of Lebanese nationalism among *Shi‘r*'s members was Yūsuf al-Khāl who had been a member of the Syrian Social Nationalist Party. First, he believed that the nationalist revival was the sole route to a Syrian renaissance¹⁴⁰ and that "Syrian genius excelled all other nations' geniuses."¹⁴¹ Despite his enthusiasm for Syrian nationalism, he abandoned it for Lebanese nationalism. While he was in America, he applied for the post of the head editor of *Jarīdat al-Hudā* (al-hudā journal), which was dominated by Lebanese Maronites, avid supporters of Lebanese nationalism. The Maronites rejected his application because he was known to be a Syrian nationalist. However, he obtained the post because he declared his belief in Lebanese nationalism and in an independent Lebanon.¹⁴² Al-Khāl

¹³⁵ For example see: Khuzāmā Ṣabrī, "*al-Bi‘r al-mahjūra* li Yūsuf al-Khāl", p. 144; Adūnīs, "*Qaṣā'id fī al-arba‘īn* li Yūsuf al-Khāl", *Shi‘r* (num. 18, Spring 1961), p. 181; the Editorial Board, "Akhbār wa qaḍāyā", *Shi‘r* (num. 18, Spring 1961), p. 183; Unsī al-Ḥāj, "Masīhiyyat al-mantiq wa ‘abathiyyat al-īmān", *Shi‘r* (num. 20, Winter 1961), p. 97.

¹³⁶ See: Bārūt, *al-Ḥadātha al-ūlā*, p. 14.

¹³⁷ Anṭūn Sa‘āda, *al-Niẓām al-jadīd* (Damascus, 1950), p. 345.

¹³⁸ Suhayl Idrīs "Al-Shi‘r wa al-ḥadāra al-‘arabiyya", *al-Ādāb* (num. 2, February 1961), p. 65.

¹³⁹ Sharābī, *al-Muthaqqafūn al-‘arab*, p. 22. This trend was represented in *Shi‘r* by many including; Yūsuf al-Khāl, Unsī al-Ḥāj, Shawqī Abū Shaqrā and ‘Iṣām Maḥfūz, among others. Maḥdī, *Ufuq al-ḥadātha*, p. 20.

¹⁴⁰ Al-Sālisī, *Yūsuf al-Khāl*, p. 42.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 53.

seemed to possess real belief in Lebanese nationalism, a fact which appeared in his writing at that time and which he never appeared to abandon. He published at that time a poem entitled 'Lebanon' as well as many articles in which he praised Lebanese heritage.¹⁴³

Al-Khāl's ideological standpoint dominated the general position of *Majallat Shi'ar*. He raised in the magazine many issues that seemed to be related to the idea of Lebanese nationalism. Lebanese literature was highlighted as a literature that was more capable of renewal than Arabic or Syrian literature.¹⁴⁴ Arabic literature was perceived to be inadequate and insufficient because al-Khāl wanted to exclude and reject it rather than improve it. Per contra, the magazine's members introduced Western literary heritage as the proper course to be followed.¹⁴⁵ Furthermore, Yūsuf al-Khāl called for the use of colloquial instead of classical Arabic language. He argued that the standard language was no longer able to keep abreast of human development in all areas of literary creativity¹⁴⁶ and that it was responsible for the decline of Arabic literature.¹⁴⁷ He published poems in *Shi'ar* written by vernacular poets,¹⁴⁸ and he wrote a critical study in the colloquial language on the collection of poems also composed in colloquial by Mīshāl Trād.¹⁴⁹

Al-Khāl seemed to be aiming at achieving the Lebanese nationalists' agendas and his cultural project appeared territorially specific. He sternly attacked the classical Arabic language and Arabic heritage. He tried to employ the Lebanese vernacular as an alternative to the shared Arabic language, and to distinguish Lebanese literature from Arabic by rejecting

¹⁴³ Ibid., pp. 53-54.

¹⁴⁴The Editorial Board, "Akhbār wa qaḍāyā", *Shi'ar* (num. 2, Spring 1957), pp. 96-99.

¹⁴⁵ "Akhbār wa qaḍāyā", *Shi'ar* (num. 15, Summer 1960), p. 138. This was supported by publishing many Western poetic works in every issue of the magazine. In some issues, there were more Western poems than Arabic ones. For example see *Shi'ar* (num. 18, Spring 1961); (num. 19, Summer 1961); (num. 13, Winter 1960; (num. 24, Autumn 1962. The magazine also concentrated on Western literary news more than Arabic. For example see "al-Akhbār", *Shi'ar* (num. 15, Summer 1960), pp. 140-145. However, this played an important role in introducing Western literature to the Arab world.

¹⁴⁶ Yūsuf al-Khāl, "Naḥwa shakl jadīd li shi'ar 'arabī jadīd", *Shi'ar* (num. 31-32, Summer-Autumn 1964), pp. 122-123.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 127.

¹⁴⁸ For example see Mīshāl Trād, "Kizbī" (lie), *Shi'ar* (num. 1, Winter 1957); Mīshāl Trād, "Rāsī makshūf wa shakl al-qamar bi zinārī", *Shi'ar* (num. 36, Autumn 1967), p. 9.

¹⁴⁹ Yūsuf al-Khāl, "Al-Lugha al-shi'riyya wa al-lugha al-maḥkiyya", *Shi'ar* (number 4, Summer 1957), pp. 195-196. Although some members of the magazine took part in al-Khāl's attack on standard Arabic by describing it as rigid, invalid and incapable, none of them published anything in the colloquial. The issue of language will be discussed in detail in "poetic language" in the fourth chapter.

aspects of Arabic literature and heritage, as well as by espousing a new kind of literature. While he did not provide artistic justifications for such beliefs,¹⁵⁰ al-Khāl's intransigence on these issues was very obvious. He elected to dissolve the magazine because his implementation of the colloquial was unsuccessful. He described the controversy surrounding the language matter by saying that it was a major issue facing the magazine at that time, which had "either to penetrate the wall of language, or to perish by falling in front of it."¹⁵¹

In this light, *Shi'ar's* repeated announcement that it neither espoused nor supported any ideological or political perspective was a fallacy. In fact it was a mere façade, in order to avoid being targeted by those who were opponents of Lebanese nationalist views. Hence I can say that the rejection of ideology in *Shi'ar* was based on ideological grounds. This also influenced the magazine's use of certain critical concepts that wall off literature and criticism from ideology such as New Critical concepts, as will be discussed later.

This issue produced a strong reaction against Yūsuf al-Khāl and those who supported him and brought the magazine into conflict with the multilateralists including *Majallat al-Ādāb*, Arab nationalists and many Arab poets and critics including some of *Shi'ar's* members. The most influential of those included Muḥammad al-Māghūṭ who rejected the prejudice against Arabic literature and preferred to work with *Majallat al-Ādāb*. After his departure, he described *Shi'ar's* members by saying that "if they heard the name of al-Mutanabbī,¹⁵² al-Ma'arrī¹⁵³ or any other figures from Arab heritage, they became angry and upset."¹⁵⁴ Khalīl

¹⁵⁰ For the lack of justifications for the colloquial issue see pp. 220-223, and for the attitude against classical Arabic literature see pp. 48-55.

¹⁵¹ Yūsuf al-Khāl, "Bayān", *Shi'ar* (num. 31-32, Summer and Winter 1964), p. 8. For more examples on the language issue see: Ghāzī Barākis, "al-ʿAwāmil al-tamhīdiyya li ḥarakat al-shi'ar al-ḥadīth", *Shi'ar* (num. 16, Autumn 1960), p. 117. Unsī al-Ḥāj, "Ma'ziq mā warā' al-lugha", *Shi'ar* (Summer-Autumn 1964), p. 131.

¹⁵² Al-Mutanabbī (915-965) is one of the most highly regarded classical Arab poets. He was born in Kufa, Iraq and spent nine years (948-957) at the court of Sayf al-Dawla, one of Ḥamdānid princes in north-east Syria. In 957, al-Mutanabbī moved to Egypt where he enjoyed the patronage of the Ikshīdīd ruler Kāfūr for five years. Following his years in Egypt, he returned to Iraq where he was killed by brigands near Baghdad. For further information see Ibrahim A. Mumayiz, *Introducing al-Mutanabbī* (Baghdad: Ministry of Information, 1977).

¹⁵³ Abū al-ʿAlā' al-Ma'arrī (973-1058) is one of the great classical Arab literary writers and the most famous blind Arab poet. He was well-known as a poet, prose writer and philosopher. Al-Ma'arrī was born in Ma'arrat al-Nu'mān in northern Syria and travelled to Baghdad where he taught Arabic poetry, language and rationalism. A main theme of his philosophy was the issue of reason and logic against the

Hāwī also left *Shiʿr* because he began to support Arab nationalism. He republished his collection of poems *Nahr al-ramād*, which had been issued by *Shiʿr*, adding names of some Arab regions which were not included in Syrian or Lebanese nationalists' agendas. Arab nationalists believed that the entire Arab world was their territory. Many others resigned from *Shiʿr* including Jūrj Ghānim, Nadhīr al-ʿAzma, Khālida Saʿīd and Adūnīs.¹⁵⁵

II.4. The Disagreement with Adūnīs

The most important discord among *Shiʿr*'s members was between Yūsuf al-Khāl and Adūnīs, which led to the withdrawal of Adūnīs from the magazine. Adūnīs played a major role in *Shiʿr* as a theorist and poet and publicised the major issues of the magazine. However, soon the disagreement mainly with al-Khāl appeared to change the course of the entire magazine.

Al-Khāl justified the disagreement with Adūnīs by claiming that the latter had tried to control the magazine and to subdue the magazine to his own interests in addition to money issues.¹⁵⁶ Adūnīs pointed out that he disagreed with al-Khāl about many cultural matters in general and poetic in particular. That discord, Adūnīs added, was not limited to theorising, in fact it included applied issues and "we published many times in *Majallat Shiʿr* works about which we had disagreed."¹⁵⁷

The real disagreement between Adūnīs and al-Khāl was ideological, focusing on considerations of cultural identity. As a believer in the Lebanese nationalist ideas, al-Khāl

claims of conventions, tradition, authorities and religion. For further information see ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Mīhriz, *Abū al-ʿAlāʾ al-Maʿarrī wa kibriyāʾ al-ʿaql al-insānī* (Syria: Dār ṭarṭūs, 2009).

¹⁵⁴ Muḥammad al-Māghūt, "Nukhbat *Majallat Shiʿr*", *al-Ādāb* (January, 1962), p. 58.

¹⁵⁵ While Adūnīs and Saʿīd officially resigned from *Shiʿr* in 1964, others resigned approximately between 1960 and 1962. Additionally, many poets and critics who used to publish some of their writings in the magazine without participating officially in the editorial board left the magazine, such as Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb, ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Bayyātī, Salmā Khadrā al-Jayyūsī and Nāzik al-Malāʾika.

¹⁵⁶ Al-Sālisī, *Yūsuf al-Khāl*, p. 86.

¹⁵⁷ Adūnīs, *Hā anta ayyuhā al-waqt* (Beirut: Dār al-ādāb, 1993), p. 109.

"declared his secession from Arabs"¹⁵⁸ as well as his "conclusive abdication of the Arab heritage."¹⁵⁹ Instead, he felt that he belonged to the European heritage and literature.¹⁶⁰

Adūnīs took part in *Shiʿr*'s attack against Arabic heritage and seemed in the beginning to be in harmony with al-Khāl. However, he rejected the Lebanese nationalist attitudes and considered the entire Arab culture to be part of the Mediterranean region and at the root of his identity. Writing in the magazine, he addressed al-Khāl: "Since the destruction of Baghdad by Hulagu, Arab life itself became a continuing collapse. You considered this matter evidence of the collapse of the Arabs, thus you announced your separation and stood on the other side. For myself, on the contrary..., I declare my entire fusion with the Arabs in terms of existence and fate."¹⁶¹ This position toward Arab identity appeared early on in the magazine's history. While *Shiʿr*'s members used the concept of Mediterranean as a critical term, Yūsuf al-Khāl among others limited his consideration to Lebanon. He described the collection of poems by Shawqī Abū Shaqrā *Khaṭawāt al-malik* by saying that¹⁶² "it is a product of a Lebanese Mediterranean mountain, Abū Shaqrā was able to be the pure unadulterated face of Lebanese poetry."¹⁶³ Whilst Adūnīs integrated Arabs into the Mediterranean concept, he described al-Khāl's poetry as "a return of Arabs to the pure origin which would unite us with the free and dynamic powers of our heritage. These powers are the link which has the ability to re-unite us - as Arabs – with the history of human enterprise. It can re-connect what was disconnected between us and the Greek continuing through Christianity – between us and the Mediterranean heritage – that is the pioneer and cradle of

¹⁵⁸ Abū Sayf, *Qaḍāyā al-naqd*, p. 37.

¹⁵⁹ Khuzāmā Ṣabrī, "*al-Biʿr al-mahjūra* li Yūsuf al-Khāl", p. 141.

¹⁶⁰ Unṣī al-Ḥāj, "Masīhiyyat al-manṭiq wa ʿabathiyyat al-īmān", p. 93.

¹⁶¹ Adūnīs, *Zaman al-shiʿr* (Beirut: Dār al-sāqī, 2005), p. 241. Adūnīs considered connection between Arab heritage and the neighbouring cultures. Arab heritage is part of a larger legacy and can neither survive nor be supplemented if it was separated from that legacy. The Mediterranean, starting from Cartagena across Alexandria and Beirut and to the end of Antakya, is the real framework that "enriches our cultural sources." The Editorial Board, "Akhbār wa Qaḍāyā", *Shiʿr* (num. 18, Spring 1960), p.183. In this context, Adūnīs argues that Arab unity can only be achieved in the form of territorial unity of Arab societies, which consist of North Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, the Nile Valley and al-Hilāl al-Khaṣīb (the Fertile Crescent) Bīk, *Ḥarakat al-ḥadātha*, p. 80.

¹⁶² Emphases are mine.

¹⁶³ The Editorial Board, "Akhbār wa qaḍāyā", *Shiʿr* (num. 18, Spring 1961), p. 83.

human civilization."¹⁶⁴ Adūnīs here believed in the Mediterranean heritage according to the Syrian Socialist concept, but the new element is to mention the Arab nation, not the Syrian or the Lebanese. Evidently, Adūnīs called for the alignment with the Mediterranean culture and he even saw this culture as a return to the origin of the Arabs. This shows that the ideological discord between Adūnīs' attitude and the rest of *Shi'ar's* members started earlier than Adūnīs's departure.

More importantly, Adūnīs was responsible for the project of publishing classical Arabic poetry which began in summer 1960. It was announced that selections of classical Arabic poetry would be published as a part of the magazine's work.¹⁶⁵ When Adūnīs stopped publishing in the magazine, which was one year before he officially left in 1963, the magazine stopped the classical Arabic project without any comment about it. Later, Yūsuf al-Khāl admitted that Adūnīs went beyond the project's aim which was to summarise classical Arabic poetry in 300-400 pages.¹⁶⁶ In the twenty-second editorial of *Shi'ar* a sweeping condemnation against the celebration of ancient Arabic poetry was made with the intention of criticising Adūnīs, though this was not made explicit. Muḥyī al-Dīn Muḥammad argues that those who like European poetry can read and enjoy European classical poetry since it is different from modern poetry only in the level of its development. Per contra, "the difference between us in the Arab world and Imru' al-Qays [a famous pre-Islamic poet] is formidable, it is a difference based on categorisation. Therefore, indeed, the return to the past; to classical Arabic poetry, is an insanity, even I can say it is the hostility to the present."¹⁶⁷ The condemnation was published while Adūnīs was issuing selections of Arabic poetry in *Shi'ar*. Evidently, this shows ideological prejudice and duplicity in dealing with Arabic and European heritage. The declaration suggests that proponents of this view rationalised an interest in

¹⁶⁴ Adūnīs, "Fātiḥat al-tajriba al-masīḥiyya fī al-shi'ar al-^carabī" (73-84), *Adab* (num. 4, Winter 1962), P. 73.

¹⁶⁵ "Min al-turāth al-shi'arī al-^carabī", *Shi'ar* (num. 15, Summer 1960), p. 91. This was described by Adūnīs as the first of its kind in Arabic modernity.

¹⁶⁶ Kāzīm Jihād, "Muqābala ma^c Adūnīs" in *Qaḍāyā al-shi'ar al-ḥadīth* (Beirut: Dār al-shurūq, 1984), p. 306.

¹⁶⁷ Muḥyī al-Dīn Muḥammad, "Ilā al-qāri'", *Shi'ar* (num. 21, Winter 1962), p. 5.

Western poetry by saying that Western poetry relies on its ancient heritage, but at the same time they regarded the poetic Arab heritage as not worthy of consideration.

After his withdrawal from *Shi'ar*, Adūnīs continued the project of publishing classical poetry¹⁶⁸ and issued his enormous book *Mukhtārāt min al-shi'ar al-ʿarabī* in which he suggests that Arabic poetry has great capabilities that enabled it to express all kinds of human experiences from pre-Islamic poetry on, and to discover "the feelings of ancient Arabs that life is fragile, impermanent and corrupted by death."¹⁶⁹ Poetry held for pre-Islamic Arabs an existential sense expressing the superior questions of human life.¹⁷⁰ This book seems to be a retreat from his previous position toward Arabic poetry, when he played an important role in *Shi'ar's* campaign of accusation against Arabic poetry and heritage. In addition, it is a rejection of every single accusation of *Shi'ar's* members against Arabic poetry. During his work with *Shi'ar*, Adūnīs described Arabic literature as rigid and wretched, and said it could not express deep experiences and important subjects.¹⁷¹ He argued: "Arabic poetry is completely empty of metaphysic sense... and its influence barely exists not only in Arabic poetry but also in Arabic mentality... it does not go beyond the surface of the world".¹⁷²

In contrast, in *Mukhtārāt min al-shi'ar al-ʿarabī*, Adūnīs argued that ancient Arabic poetry was vital, various and rich with different trends of expression and thought. This included metaphysical tendencies which were meditations on the meanings and phenomena of life and metaphysical life. Additionally, he talked about poetic depiction and imaginative styles of Arabic poetry¹⁷³ as well as the various modes of expression available in the Arabic language.¹⁷⁴ He delivered opposing opinions on many traditional issues that were treated

¹⁶⁸ Adūnīs, *Hā anta ayyuhā al-waqt*, p. 183.

¹⁶⁹ Adūnīs, *Mukhtārāt min al-shi'ar al-ʿarabī* (Beirut: al-Maktaba al-ʿaṣriyya, 1964), vol. 1, pp. 15-16.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 16.

¹⁷¹ Adūnīs, "Al-Dīwān al-jadīd li Amīn Nakhla", *Shi'ar* (num. 22, Spring 1962), p. 113; Adūnīs, "Muḥāwala fī taʿrīf al-shi'ar al-ḥadīth", *Shi'ar* (num. 11, Summer 1959), p. 89.

¹⁷² The Editorial Board, "Akhbār wa qaḍāyā", *Shi'ar* (num. 15, Summer 1960), p. 150.

¹⁷³ Adūnīs, *Mukhtārāt min al-shi'ar al-ʿarabī*, vol. 1, pp. 30-31.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 11-12.

negatively in *Shiʿr*, such as Arabic love, chivalric and war poetry in addition to the overall development of Arabic poetry.¹⁷⁵

However, the more obvious embodiment of the ideological conflicts between Adūnīs and *Shiʿr*'s members was the issue of colloquial and standard language. Adūnīs stood strongly against the use and the call for colloquial language instead of standard language. Although Adūnīs's rejection of the idea of replacing the standard language by the colloquial did not explicitly appear in the magazine, it was the crucial issue that led to his withdrawal from it. In contrast to Yūsuf al-Khāl, Adūnīs argued that whatever the language used, this in itself does not in any way impede innovation, nor is it responsible for enhancing development. In his opinion, it is the human mind which hinders progress and creativity.¹⁷⁶ Standard Arabic, he suggested, is the language of a civilisation and it is a precise means to express complex thought. The colloquial is embryonic in comparison to the standard; thus it cannot take its place.¹⁷⁷

The ideological conflicts embodied in the attitude towards language and heritage led Adūnīs to leave the magazine after issue num. 27, Summer 1963. Adūnīs's resignation was announced by Adūnīs himself and by the magazine. The departure of Adūnīs was one of the main reasons for the closing of *Shiʿr*. After the disappearance of Adūnīs's name from the editorial board, the magazine published two double issues,¹⁷⁸ and called the second one "the last number,"¹⁷⁹ and then publication ceased for three years.

III.1. The Western and Arab cultural paradigm within *Shiʿr*'s discourse

Cultural communication between the Arab and Western worlds has been marked generally by the overwhelming dominance of Western culture over most aspects of Arab economic, political, scientific, military and technological development in the modern era.

¹⁷⁵ See the introduction of the first and second vol. of *Mukhtārāt min al-shiʿr al-ʿarabī*.

¹⁷⁶ Adūnīs, *Hā anta ayyuhā al-waqt*, pp. 133-134. None of the magazine's members including Adūnīs and al-Khāl addressed the controversy about language as an ideological issue considering it a literary and artistic problem.

¹⁷⁷ Adūnīs, *Fātiḥa li nihāyāt al-qarn*, (Beirut: Dār al-ʿawda, 1980), pp. 60-61.

¹⁷⁸ Num. 29-30 and 31-32.

¹⁷⁹ See: *Shiʿr* (num. 32, Autumn 1964).

This dominance was extremely influential on an intellectual level, leading to "sharp and conflicting intellectual attitudes, selectivity and double standards. The last two are prominent features of contemporary Arabic discourse."¹⁸⁰ The search for ready and fast solutions under the pressure of political, financial and ideological conflicts resulted in intellectual and epistemological dependency as well as submissive educational institutions. This appeared through studies that imported their methodologies and perspectives rather than producing them, adopted uncritical thinking styles and remained alien from the social and cultural reality of these territories. "Therefore, the function of social sciences in the Third World became a reproduction of Western values, including the same models of development."¹⁸¹

In hindsight many scholars confessed that they realised the defects generated by their lack of knowledge of the classical heritage and their failure to question imported methods that were applied to Arabic social and cultural reality. For example, the scholar of philosophy Zakī Najīb Maḥmūd (1905-1993) admitted that he, among others, never paid attention either to Arab heritage or to Arab society in his long research career until the last stage of his life. He discovered that investigating Arab society and culture according to methods and perspectives from the historical and cultural context of other societies was terribly flawed. Simultaneously, many scholars as Zakī Najīb Maḥmūd kept ignoring the Arab heritage, describing it as unimportant without providing supporting studies about that heritage. This general phenomenon drove modern Arab methodologies to be on the one hand isolated from the nature of Arab society, and on the other hand imitative, repetitive and unproductive.¹⁸²

The same fascination with Western culture affected modern Arabic criticism to a great extent. Modern trends began in the Arab world with the dawn of the colonial era, when the West predominated over most levels of Arab life.¹⁸³ The critical adaptation of Western modernist methods neglects the fact that Western Modernism came from the cultural, social, economic and philosophical mutations that occurred in the West and it neglects the historical,

¹⁸⁰ Kamāl ʿAbd al-Laṭīf, *Qirāʾāt fī al-falsafa al-ʿarabiyya al-muʿāṣira* (Beirut: Dār al-ṭalīʿa, 1994), p. 50.

¹⁸¹ Al-Bāzīʿī, *Istiqbāl al-ākhar*, p. 16.

¹⁸² Zakī Najīb Maḥmūd, *Tajdīd al-fīkr al-ʿarabī* (Cairo: Dār al-shurūq, 1971), pp. 5-6.

¹⁸³ Māqī, *Min ishkāliyyāt al-naqd al-ʿarabī*, p. 180.

critical and literary experience of the Arab world.¹⁸⁴ Therefore, modern Arabic criticism "does not represent a natural evolution of classical Arabic poetics, but rather an attempt to produce an Arabised version of modern Western theory by which most contemporary Arab critics seem to be overly fascinated."¹⁸⁵ This resulted in contradictions, wherein every modernist in the Arab world uses different modernist models according to the Western place or institution in which he/she was trained.¹⁸⁶

In addition, many modern Arab critics changed their critical attitudes with the appearance of each Western critical school. For instance, Kamāl Abū Deeb and °Abdallah al-Ghadhāmī were structuralists, then post-structuralists,¹⁸⁷ with many problems in understanding and applying these concepts,¹⁸⁸ and finally they became cultural critics.¹⁸⁹ Consequently, critical terms and concepts became ambiguous and contrary¹⁹⁰ leading to critical texts described as "talismans or obscure writing."¹⁹¹

The adaptation of Western critical thought in *Shi'ar* was a turning point within modern Arabic criticism that pioneered the extreme reliance on imitating Western criticism after the 1970's. The concept of Western and Arab criticism represented an irreconcilable dualism reflecting ideological disagreements within *Shi'ar*'s members more than balanced literary perspectives. In addition, *Shi'ar*'s members did not show that their project aimed to develop and build on Arabic criticism by selective use of some Western critical insights, but rather they demonstrated a great deal of fascination with Western theory in general. Thus, their opinions were extreme and ranged between a complete rejection of Arab heritage and a total adaptation of Western modernism. This occurred alongside changing attitudes towards Arabic language and the reliance on presuppositions and generalisations against Arabic literature

¹⁸⁴ Ḥammūda, *al-Marāyā al-muqa'c'ara*, p. 56.

¹⁸⁵ Balqīs Khālīd al-Karakī, *Approaches to Poetry and Cognition in Classical Arabic and Western Poetics*, PhD dissertation (University of Cambridge, July 2007), p. 7.

¹⁸⁶ Ḥammūda, *al-Marāyā al-muqa'c'ara*, p. 52.

¹⁸⁷ Ḥammūda, *al-Marāyā al-muḥaddaba*, p. 254.

¹⁸⁸ Ḥammūda, *al-Marāyā al-muqa'c'ara*, pp. 145-49; p. 123; pp. 45-46.

¹⁸⁹ See °Abd al-Lah al-Ghadhāmī, *al-Naqd al-thaqāfī: Qirā'a fī al-ansāq al-thaqāfīyya al-°arabiyya* (Beirut: al-Markaz al-thaqāfī al-°arabī, 2000).

¹⁹⁰ Muḥammad °Anānī, *al-Muṣṭalahāt al-adabiyya al-hadūtha: Dirāsa wa mu°jam engīlzī-°arabī* (Cairo: al-Sharika al-miṣriyya al-°ālamīyya li al-nashr - longmān, 2003), pp. 7-8.

¹⁹¹ Ḥammūda gave many example of this kind of texts such as Muḥammad Miftāḥ's writing. See *al-Marāyā al-muqa'c'ara*, p. 101.

without delivering investigations that rationalised the magazine's viewpoint. Naturally, as we have seen, this led the magazine to many internal and external confrontations that resulted in many withdrawals from the magazine and to its first and the final demise.

III.2. Arab heritage

Majallat Shi'ar's attitude towards Arab heritage and Arabic literature appeared in a lecture delivered by Yūsuf al-Khāl presenting the literary and critical thought of the magazine.¹⁹² Al-Khāl titled his speech "Mustaqbal al-shi'ar fī Lubnān" (the future of poetry in Lebanon), which suggests that the aim of the magazine was restricted to Lebanese poetry rather than Arabic. Evidently, this was influenced by Lebanese nationalist perspectives that called for the separation of Lebanon from the Arab world, as discussed earlier. By the end of his lecture, al-Khāl had summed up the basis of the revival of Lebanese poetry revealing the ideological prejudice in the magazine's discourse. This prejudice can clearly appear if we compare the point he made about Arab heritage to those he made about Western heritages.

Al-Khāl's approach to Arabic heritage was expressed in his emphasis on

achieving an awareness of the intellectual and spiritual Arab heritage, understanding it as it really was, and declaring what is revealed from this understanding while evaluating it with no fear, bias or hesitation.

يجبُ وعيُ التّراثِ الرّوحيّ-العقليّ العربيّ وفهمهُ على حقيقته وإعلانُ هذه الحقيقة وتقييمها كما هي، دونما خوفٍ أو مسايرةٍ أو تردد.

When it comes to the European heritage, his approach is comparatively different. He pays closer attention and his relation to this heritage seems more compassionate. He encourages his audience to

¹⁹² The Editorial Board, "Akhbār wa qaḍāyā", *Shi'ar* (num. 2, Spring 1957), pp. 96-99.

fathom the intellectual and spiritual European heritage, understanding, integrating and interacting with it.

يجب الغوصُ إلى أعماقِ التّراثِ الرّوحيّ- العقليّ الأوروبيّ وفهمه وكونه والتّفاعلُ معه.

Al-Khāl used *wa^cy* (awareness) regarding Arab heritage and *al-ghawṣ fī a^cmāq* (to dive into the depths) with regard to European heritage. The difference between these two expressions is obvious. While *wa^ci* is related to general knowledge, *al-ghawṣ fī a^cmāq* means literally to dive into deep water and it means metaphorically to fathom something of profound importance and sophistication. The notion of diving calls to mind “depths” in the plural, which suggests the greater value of the field under study. In addition, he says, we should understand both Arab and Western heritage; however he labeled the Arab heritage *‘alā ḥaqīqatih* (for what it really is), which suggests that there is some hidden truth needing to be discovered. Accordingly, this truth must be published and evaluated *kamā hiya* (honestly) suggesting that the current perspectives towards heritage are false and unrealistic. This publicising and evaluation should be done with no fear, hypocrisy or hesitation. The truth – which needs to be aired to get rid of fear, hypocrisy and hesitation - suggests that it is wretched and miserable. On the contrary, al-Khāl called for *becoming* the Western heritage (*kawnuhu*). This suggests that principles of European heritage should be totally adopted and applied without mentioning any hint about questioning or revising that heritage. To make his point clear, al-Khāl added that the interaction with European literature enabled Lebanese poets to get beyond the confines (*al-inkimāshiyya*) of ancient Arabic poetry.

Al-Khāl's statement seemed to be the primary vision dominating the course of the magazine, and those who did not follow al-Khāl had to leave. Throughout its life, *Shi^cr* made enormous criticisms of all Arab heritage whether of literature, critical thought, linguistic studies or philosophy.¹⁹³ The magazine's members argued that classical Arabic literature did not express human experiences and vision, they even claimed that it was inhuman. In his praise of Adūnīs' collection of poems *Awraq fī al-rīḥ*, Mājid Fakhrī, one of *Shi^cr*'s critics,

¹⁹³ The Editorial Board, "Akhbār wa qaḍāyā", *Shi^cr* (num. 24, Autumn 1962), p. 158.

identified the aspects of human experience as the human confrontation with life's major issues such as death, poverty, love, anxiety and belief. Adūnīs could show his poetic ability through these existential issues.¹⁹⁴ On the contrary, classical Arabic literature, Mājid Fakhrī added, did not have such qualities. It did not go beyond the formal-verbal embellishments, descriptions of nature and narration of events depicting only visual scenes without any kind of human meaning. This is "the most ignoble sort of poetry, in which the author exaggerates the verbal preciousness without paying attention to what his signifiers stand for. Arabic poetry - *as is known* - is full of this kind of poetry; it is a description and verbal preciousness from which not a single ancient Arabic poem is free."¹⁹⁵ All features and stages of the development of Arabic poetry became within *Shi'ar*'s discourse negative phenomena and were cited as evidence of the faults and shortcomings of Arabic poetry. For example, Arabic poetry in the °Abbasid era witnessed many developments in both structure and content, and a lot of successful experimentation such as the use of many philosophical perspectives and poetic ambiguity wherein poems required deep contemplation to be understood.¹⁹⁶ However, these poetic features were considered within *Shi'ar* simply to be prosodic matters or as *al-jasāla al-lafziyya* (eloquence) and thus as superficial poetic facets. This "created the boring poetry of Abū al-°Atāhiya, pursuance of odd analogies in Abū Tammām's poetry, extremely complicated prosodic experiments and *al-iltizām bimā lā yalzam* (committing to unnecessary regulations) such as in al-Ma°arrī's poetry."¹⁹⁷ It is important to note that all *Shi'ar*'s descriptions of Arab heritage generally and of literature in particular are generalisations and theoretical standpoints, which do not rely on practical studies or definitive examples rationalising the magazine's opinions. The figures mentioned in the above quotation are described in a few words without any explanations or examples, in order to present these attitudes as public and

¹⁹⁴ Mājid Fakhrī, "Awrāq fī al-rīḥ li Adūnīs", *Shi'ar* (num. 8, Winter 1958), pp. 70-71.

¹⁹⁵ Mājid Fakhrī, "Mādat al-shi'ar", *Shi'ar* (num. 3, Summer 1957), p. 87.

¹⁹⁶ For instance Abū Tammām's poetry included sophisticated depictions, many levels of meaning and interrelated poetic analogies and similes. See: Jābir °Aṣfūr, *al-Ṣūra al-fanniyya fī al-turāth al-naqdī wa al-balāghī °ind al-°arab* (Beirut: al-Markaz al-thaqāfī al-°arabī, 1992), p. 216; °Abd al-Qādir al-Rabbā°ī, *al-Ṣūra al-fanniyya fī shi'ar Abī Tammām* (Beirut: al-Mu'assasa al-°arabiyya li al-dirāsāt wa al-nashr, 1999).

¹⁹⁷ Ibrāhīm Shukrallah, "Risāla min al-Qāhira", *Shi'ar* (num. 2, Spring 1957), p. 93.

agreed truth. Mājīd Fakhrī described Arabic poetry as verbal-formal embellishments; his addition of "as is known", which I italicised, seemed to deem these descriptions a general axiom.

Contrary to his later book *Dīwān al-shiʿr al-ʿarabī* which is very positive and complimentary to pre-modern Arabic literature, Adūnīs had taken part in shaping *Shiʿr*'s discourse on Arabic literature. He argued that Arabic poetry was poor and bland, and that the poetic Arab heritage did not exhibit experiments that would help and enrich modern movements.¹⁹⁸ As previously cited, Adūnīs stated that "Arabic poetry is completely empty of metaphysic sense... and its influence barely exists not only in Arabic poetry but also in the Arab mentality... it does not go beyond the surface of the world."¹⁹⁹

Arabic heritage appeared in *Shiʿr*'s discourse empty of creativity and full of repetition. Al-Khāl argued that creative movements should get rid of the aspects of constancy and solidity which he saw as overwhelmingly characteristic of Arab philosophical, literary and critical heritage and culture in general.²⁰⁰ Adūnīs added "Arabic culture is repetitive and imitative. It rotates within a closed and previously identified world without movement."²⁰¹ Additionally, they argued that Arabic criticism played a negative role in developing literature and culture and helped freeze the features of literature. Arabic criticism restricted poetic rhythms, meanings and vocabularies that limited poets.

Most poets obeyed critics following in the footsteps of pre-Islamic poets and did not change aspects of pre-Islamic poetry... this led to unfruitful imitation and total submission to the pre-existing limits and laws. Arabic poetry was affected and was unable to recover until the beginning of the twentieth century. Indeed poetic

¹⁹⁸ Adūnīs, "Urāwidu yā amīrat al-wahm", *Shiʿr* (num. 10, Spring 1959), pp. 8-9.

¹⁹⁹ "Akhbār wa qaḍāyā", *Shiʿr* (num. 15, Summer 1960), p. 150.

²⁰⁰ Yūsuf al-Khāl, "Tisaʿ qaṣāʾid li Robert Frost", *Shiʿr* (num. , Summer 1962), p. 97.

²⁰¹ Adūnīs, "Muḥāwala fī taʿrīf al-shiʿr al-ḥadīth", p. 89. This idea, which appeared many times in *Shiʿr* as is seen in the previous and following footnotes, seems to be the basis of Adūnīs' later problematic and enormous book *al-Thābit wa al-mutaḥawwil* in which he described most of Arabic heritage as stagnant and imitative. Adūnīs, *al-Thābit wa al-mutaḥawwil: Baḥth fī al-ibdāʿ wa al-ittibāʿ ʿind al-ʿarab* (Beirut: Dār al-sāqī, 1994).

subjects, meanings, descriptions and similes froze in restricted models that were delivered from predecessors to successors....²⁰²

Furthermore, the history of the Arabs does not have the foundations to create advanced knowledge: "according to the last five thousand years of history, this region produced neither industry, philosophy nor politics."²⁰³ In such circumstances, the editorial board argued, Arabic poetry was only "a search for god or prurience" (*baḥṯ ʿan al-khāliq wa shiʿr shahwa*).²⁰⁴

Accordingly, Arab culture within *Shiʿr* was mummified into stagnant models and it displayed, as al-Khāl suggested, no individual dimension; rather it was "a cluster of abstract metaphysical ideas. It was obedience not freedom, indoctrination not discovery."²⁰⁵

Shiʿr's views on the Arab heritage relied on selectively excluding various elements. Its writers repeatedly considered only one Arabic definition of poetry, which is Qudāma Ibn Jaʿfar's definition, "poetry is rhymed metrical speech," or in Arabic, "*al-shiʿr kalām mawzūn muqaffā*."²⁰⁶ Although *Shiʿr*'s members repeated this definition (as limits imposed on poetry), they never discussed the context in which it had been originally said. Qudāma Ibn Jaʿfar wanted to identify poetic elements by using means of logic. However, the existence of these poetic elements in a poem does not necessarily mean it is a good poem.²⁰⁷ No attention was given to Qudāma's explanations of the categories, characters and relations of these poetic elements nor to indicative frameworks *al-ʿuṭur al-dalāliyya* consisting of nature and human beings.²⁰⁸ In addition, there was no mention of the fact that "the community of critics moved beyond these basics to consider other facets of poetry: ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī considered the function of images, analysing those that appeal to reason ʿaqlī and to the imagination

²⁰² Ghāzī Bruks, "al-Qadīm wa al-jadīd fī al-shiʿr al-ʿarabī ʿamma ḥattā awākhir al-qarn al-tāsi ʿashar", *Shiʿr* (num. 12, Autumn 1959), p. 101.

²⁰³ The Editorial Board, "Akhbār wa qaḍāyā", *Shiʿr* (num. 24, Autumn 1962), p. 158.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 158.

²⁰⁵ Yūsuf al-Khāl, "Tisaʿ qaṣāʾid li Robert Frost", p. 97.

²⁰⁶ Qudāma Ibn Jaʿfar, *Naqd al-shiʿr*. ed. Kamāl Muṣṭafā (Egypt: Maktabat al-Khānjī, n d), p. 17.

²⁰⁷ ʿĀyish al-Ḥasan, "Naẓariyyat al-maʿnā ʿind Qudāma Ibn Jaʿfar", 41-53, *Silsilat al-ādāb wa al-ʿulūm al-insāniyya* (Syria: Jāmiʿat Tishrīn, num. 2, vol. 27, 2005), p. 44.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

takhyīlī."²⁰⁹ *Shi'ar* deemed classical Arabic rhetoric and criticism, which should have been the foundation of modern Arabic criticism, as prosodic restrictions and not related to poetic imagination and meaning.

Therefore, the magazine paid no attention to much of what Arab critics had said and were saying about the nature of poetry, leading to an epistemological break with them. Hence al-Māghūṭ argued that the defect of *Shi'ar* was that it relinquished Arabic heritage and its context and content. This resulted in the search for "an alternative from outside Arabic history and library."²¹⁰

Accordingly, *Shi'ar's* project seems rootless and not derived from the nature of Arabic literature or Arabic critical thought. *Shi'ar* adopted the results of Western critical studies and required Arabic literature to be changed and stylised accordingly. The obvious example of this is *Shi'ar's* theorising of the prose poem which was mainly stated by Adūnīs in his article 'Fī qaṣīdat al-nathr'²¹¹ and Unsī al-Ḥājj in the introduction of his collection of prose poems *Lan*.²¹² Both Adūnīs and al-Ḥājj heavily relied on French critics' theorisation, rather than analysing and relying on the Arabic prose poems.²¹³ Equally telling and perhaps more important, a recent study by Kāzīm Jihād, *Adūnīs muntaḥilan*, accuses Adūnīs of literally stealing a large part of his well-known essay 'Muḥāwala fī ta'rif al-shi'ar al-ḥadīth' which was published in *Shi'ar*²¹⁴ from works by French critics. The author substantiated the accusation by comparing Adūnīs' writing to many French critics' theorisations.²¹⁵ This, in addition to the

²⁰⁹ Roger Allen, *The Arabic Literary Heritage: the Development of its genres and Criticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 106.

²¹⁰ Muḥammad al-Māghūṭ, "Qaḍāyā al-adab wa al-udabā'", *Majallat al-Ādāb* (num. 1, 1962), p. 57.

²¹¹ See Adūnīs, "Fī qaṣīdat al-nathr", *Shi'ar* (num. 14, Spring 1960), pp. 75-83.

²¹² See Unsī al-Ḥājj, *Lan* (Beirut: al-Mu'assasa al-jāmi'iyya li al-dirāsāt wa al-nashr, 1982 [1960]), pp. 9-21.

²¹³ See the fourth chapter, p. 207.

²¹⁴ *Shi'ar* (num. 11, Summer 1959), pp. 79-90.

²¹⁵ Kāzīm Jihād, *Adūnīs muntaḥilan: Dirāsa fī al-istiḥwādh al-adabī wa irtijāliyyat al-tarjama* (Cairo: Maktabat madbūlī, 1993), pp. 105-133. Ṣabrī Ḥāfīz described Jihād's evidence against Adūnīs as invulnerable. See Ṣabrī Ḥāfīz, *Ufuq al-khiṭāb al-naqdī: Dirāsāt nazariyya wa taḥbīqiyya* (Cairo, Dār Sharqiyyāt li al-nashr wa al-tawzīc, 1996), p. 195. Sāmī Maḥdī compared long parts of Adūnīs' writing to many surrealist concepts which resulted in almost all *Adūnīs's* writing producing a re-representation of surrealist concepts. See Maḥdī, *Ufuq al-ḥadātha*, pp. 158-174. Sāmī Maḥdī added; Adūnīs later in the seventies did the same thing with respect to the concepts of Structuralism. See pp. 174-177.

hidden ideological conflicts mentioned previously, shows not only the lack of a balanced standpoint and original or independent vision, but also the lack of credibility.

It seems important to point out that many recent studies have reviewed the methodological importance of classical Arabic criticism. The most famous of those is °Abd al-°Azīz Ḥammūda's *al-Marāyā al-muqa°c°ara* (Concave Mirrors).²¹⁶ Ḥammūda suggests that Arab heritage was filled with advanced linguistic and critical tendencies and concepts that are rich enough to serve as the basis for a developed linguistic and critical theory.²¹⁷ His study is not a narcissistic defense of classical Arabic criticism; rather, the author explores the foundations, components and applicable capability of linguistic and critical thought. Ḥammūda does not want to sanctify or adopt wholesale the intellectual background of classical Arabic theory, but rather to build and develop the methodology and objects of that heritage²¹⁸. What is more, Ḥammūda criticises studies of classical Arabic criticism which try to illustrate similarities with Western critical concepts in order to legitimise their use of Western criticism rather than reviving and employing classical Arabic criticism.²¹⁹

Ironically, *Shi°r* was immune to this accusation as it never used Arabic critical concepts in theorising, application or comparison. Instead, *Shir*'s members saw this heritage purely as a limitation or restraint that prevented the development of Arabic literature; thus, they believed, modern literary thought should pay no attention to it. The obstacle preventing Arabic literature from being global is Arabic heritage as well as Arabic language, they believed.²²⁰ Al-Khāl revealed his preference to abandon Arabic heritage:

²¹⁶ Ḥammūda tries to introduce classical Arabic criticism and rhetoric as an approach more suited to the Arab context than Western schools. The problems of modern Arabic criticism are due to modern Arab critics studying Western criticism at the expense of classical Arabic criticism. Ḥammūda, *al-Marāyā al-muqa°c°ara*, p. 270. The title of this book means that classical Arabic criticism is underestimated in the modern age as the image in concave mirrors is smaller than the object itself. This project has received acclaim culturally and wider acceptance yet it has not been carried further by other critics.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 194.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 174.

²¹⁹ The clearest example Ḥammūda gives is Kamāl Abū Deeb in his study on al-Jurjānī '*al-Jurjānī's Theory of Poetic Imagery*', in which he tries to say that al-Jurjānī was a structuralist preceding modern Structuralism. *Al-Marāyā al-muqa°c°ara*, p. 176, and see al-Karakī, *Approaches to Poetry and Cognition*, p. 49.

²²⁰ See for example: Yūsuf al-Khāl, *al-Ḥadātha fī al-shi°r* (Beirut: Dār al-ṭalī°a, n d), p. 6; Shawqī Abū Shaqrā, "al-Layl fī al-durūb li °Umar al-naṣ", *Shi°r* (num. 7-8, Summer-Autumn 1958), p. 69; Fakhrī. "Mādat al-shi°r", p. 89.

Our comrades over there in the sands preferred

رفاقنا هناك في الرمال آثروا

to remain under the mercy of heat, uproar and boredom

البقاء تحت رحمة الهجير والتقيق والضجر

but we prefer to leave

ونحن نؤثر السفر²²¹

Salmā Khadrā al-Jayyūsī, who herself published poems and articles in *Shi'ar*, criticised Yūsuf al-Khāl strongly for rejecting anything relevant to Arab heritage:

Al-Khāl speaks as if he was alien from us. Our life has lots of reasons to make a real revolution, thus we are still revolutionaries. However, our revolution can not occur through those who separate themselves from the developing dynamic core of the revolution and criticise it from outside as aliens. The revolution comes from deep inside the Arabs and it is heightened by sincere people who give, from within, the greatest impetus. If al-Khāl truly wants to serve our life, he must return to its heart. Indeed the stray alien should find his way back home.²²²

III.3. The Western paradigm

Herdsmen told us here

أخبرنا الرعاة ههنا

about islands there which love hazard

عن جزرٍ هناك تعشق الخطر

and hate omission and anxiety

وتكره القعود والحذر

about islands scuffling with destiny

عن جزر تصارع القدر

and growing seeds turning wastelands to cities

وتزرع الأضراس في القفار مدنا

letters of light praising achievements

حروف نور تكتب السير

²²¹ Yūsuf al-Khāl, *al-A'māl al-kāmila* (Beirut: al-Ta'āwuniyya al-lubnāniyya li al-ta'lif wa al-nashr, 1973), p. 232.

²²² The Editorial Board, "Akhabār wa qaḍāyā" (risāla min Salmā Khadrā al-Jayyūsī), *Shi'ar* (num. 15, Summer 1960), p. 133.

The Western cultural paradigm is seen in *Shi'ar*'s project as an extreme opposite to Arab culture portrayed as typified by darkness, deafness, paralysis and the grave.²²⁴ *Shi'ar*'s argument was an extension of the nineteenth-century intellectuals (who will be discussed shortly), who suggested that the West comprised the entire human civilisation and that humanity was united as one. *Shi'ar* espoused Western culture as the sole source of fertility and development to guide its project. The magazine's members argued that this adaptation aimed to revive and rescue the thought of "this Mediterranean part of the world which had insufficient knowledge which prevents it taking part in the course of modern civilization."²²⁵ *Shi'ar* displayed East and West as incongruent, the East represented by the desert relying on repetition and apathy, and the West represented by the sea containing creativity and human venture. This was an embodiment of the concept of the Mediterranean (as the root of the Western and Syrian or Lebanese civilization). In his study *al-Ḥadātha al-ūlā*, Muḥammad Jamāl Bārūt traces the impact of Syrian nationalist thought on Yūsuf al-Khāl's poetry. He interprets the sea in al-Khāl's poem 'Thulāthiyyat al-baḥr' as a hope to return to the historical roots of the Mediterranean civilization. This appears in the poem through communication with Western civilization and separation from Arab civilization's desert. The urban symbols of civilization, Bārūt argued, recall the cities that are "*al-warā' qubruṣ al-ḥabība, al-warā' qurṭājanna*"²²⁶ (beyond beloved Cyprus, beyond Cartagena).

Shi'ar used similar slogans to those of nineteenth-century Christians who believed that the West absorbed and developed all human civilisations and occupied the centre of human activity and the unity of cultures. For *Shi'ar* Western heritage is an aggregate and represents all humanity. For example, in *Shi'ar*'s response to Salmā Khadrā al-Jayyūsī, the editorial board said, "You speak about Western civilization by using (we) and (them), which is a mistake. It

²²³ Al-Khāl, *al-A'cāmāl al-kāmila*, p. 234.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 199.

²²⁵ Hanrī al-Qayyim, "Barīd *Shi'ar*", *Shi'ar* (num. 22, Spring 1962), p. 138.

²²⁶ Bārūt, *al-Ḥadātha al-ūlā*, 21.

is our civilization as much as it is theirs."²²⁷ Hence Western culture including its modernism is a global concept and a consequence of the entire human heritage and applied to all cultures.²²⁸ Al-Khāl suggests that the requirement for the advancement of civilization is to rely on the strength of mind and spirit, and these have a common heritage which he called "the heritage of humanity."²²⁹ However, this human heritage and culture gets limited to the West as "the representative of human civilisation accumulated throughout history. It was labeled as Western due to the fact that the West or Europe developed it more in the last thousand years than any other geographical region."²³⁰

These are very similar to some nineteenth-century Arab intellectuals' viewpoints on the West, with which they were extremely fascinated. For example, Naṣrallah al-Dallāl (1841-1883) argued that "Europe could in the nineteenth century absorb the civilised heritages (including Egyptian, Akkadian, Phoenician, Arab heritage...) and develop them in a new qualitative way."²³¹ The world from the time of the Phoenicians on, Naṣrallah al-Dallāl added, is one unity that appears through the interrelation and interaction between its parts. The world reached the purest level of unity in the nineteenth century in which Europe occupied the center of the world.²³² The result of both the arguments of the nineteenth-century intellectuals and al-Khāl was to adopt Western culture as the path of development and renaissance. No change can be made without reliance on the West, an idea explicitly expressed by al-Khāl: "renaissance can happen through being deeply and inclusively influenced by the West, [the East] should aim to adapt and follow the West to a considerable degree."²³³

The universal centralisation of the West in *Shi'ar*'s project is not limited to the modern era; rather it is an ancient truth. The magazine's members justified their criticism of ancient

²²⁷ The Editorial Board, "Akhbār wa qaḍāyā", *Shi'ar*, num. 15, Summer 1960, p. 131.

²²⁸ Yūsuf al-Khāl, "Qaḍāyā al-shi'ar al-mu'āsir li Nāzik al-Malā'ika", *Shi'ar* (num. 24, Summer 1962), p. 152.

²²⁹ The Editorial Board, "Ilā al-qāri'", *Shi'ar* (num. 15, Summer 1960), p. 6.

²³⁰ The Editorial Board, "Akhbār wa qaḍāyā", *Shi'ar*, num. 15, Summer 1960, p. 138.

²³¹ Bārūt, *Ḥarakat al-tanwīr al-ʿarabiyya*, p. 55.

²³² *Ibid.*, p. 55, and see: Fransīs Marrāsh, *Riḥlat bārīs* (Beirut: al-Mu'assasa al-ʿarabiyya li al-dirāsāt, 2004), p. 41.

²³³ Yūsuf al-Khāl, *Dafātir al-ayyām: Afcār ʿalā warāq* (London: al-Rayyis li al-kutub wa al-nashr, n. d.), p. 13.

Arab culture by saying that Arabs were open to Persian and Indian heritages rather than Grecian and Christian civilisations, which resulted in "the degeneracy of Arab culture."²³⁴ Simultaneously, although *Shi'ar's* members repeatedly mentioned that it concentrated on human literary experiences and great writers of the human heritage,²³⁵ they never gave an example of the experience or perspective of any Arab poet or writer.²³⁶

From the preceding discussions, it is clear that *Shi'ar's* project ignored Arabic literary activity entirely, and not only with respect to philosophy and literature, but also with regards to the entire Arab culture. In this regard, Ibrāhīm Shukrallah pointed out in the magazine in 1960 that "there is a wonderful phenomenon in *Shi'ar* that some of the magazine's figures have a French culture and others have an American culture. If both of them come together, that would lead to a great result, to cultural wealth."²³⁷ This statement clearly shows the excessive adaptation of Western cultures and the total absence and renunciation of Arabic.

Furthermore, this deems cultural components as objective and neutral things, and abolishes the ties between culture and its social and historical roots that appeared through this supposed combination of cultures. This is applied to the magazine's perspective on modernism and literary thought, mentioned above, as human and universal. In fact, this claim is a mere attempt to justify and legitimise the over-adaptation and imitation of, and the fascination with, Western concepts and culture, wherein "the extreme borrowing causes the

²³⁴ "Ilā al-qāri'", *Shi'ar*, num. 25, Winter 1963, p. 10.

²³⁵ For example see; Mājid Fakhrī, "Mādat al-shi'ar", p. 189; the same issue, "Akhhār wa qaḍāyā", p. 111; Adūnīs. "Muḥāwala fī ta'rif al-shi'ar al-ḥadīth", pp. 79-90; Yūsuf al-Khāl, "Qaḍāyā al-shi'ar al-mu'āshir li Nāzik al-Malā'ika", p. 151.

²³⁶ This did not include all writers publishing in *Shi'ar*. For example, Jabrā Ibrāhīm Jabrā celebrated Arabic literature, heritage and culture. For example see, *Ta'ammulāt fī bunyān marmarī* (London: al-Rayyis, 1989), p. 25, p. 95, p. 102, *Aqni'at al-ḥaqīqa wa aqni'at al-khayāl* (Beirut: al-Mu'assasa al-'arabiyya li al-dirāsāt wa al-nashr, 1992), pp. 27, 59. More importantly, Jabrā studied the influence of ancient Arabic literature and heritage on universal literature. For example see *Ta'ammulāt fī bunyān marmarī*, pp. 16-18, 20-24. In addition, Nadhīr al-'Azma published many studies on classical Arabic literature. See *Uday ibn Zayd al-'Abbādī, Shakhṣiyyatuhu wa shi'ruhu* (Beirut: Dār Majallat *Shi'ar*, 1960); *al-Mi'rāj al-sūfi: Qirā'a thāniya fī al-turāth* (Damascus: Dār 'Ala' al-Dīn, 2000). Similarly, Balqīs al-Karakī wonders why 'Ādil Dāhīr, one of *Shi'ar's* critics, ignored Arab philosophers in his study on Adūnīs *al-Shi'ar wa al-ujūd: dirāsa falsafiyya fī shi'ar Adūnīs* (poetry and being: a philosophical study of the poetry of Adūnīs) in which he considers only Western philosophers. Al-Karakī said "I cannot understand why a study on this topic in Arabic, about the works of an Arab poet, does not include even one work by a medieval Arab philosopher or critic." Al-Karakī, *Approaches to Poetry and Cognition*, p. 13.

²³⁷ The Editorial Board, "Akhhār wa qaḍāyā", *Shi'ar* (num. 14, Spring 1960), p. 107.

illusion that global and cultural history is homogeneous, moving into another illusion that is the belief in the universality of critical and literary norms. Obviously, it is incorrect, resulting in cultural dependency or in complete imitation at best."²³⁸

Criticism works on literature, and literature is a product of historical, social and linguistic components in addition to the aesthetic and artistic tastes of a culture. Although literatures of different cultures may have similarities and literary taste is changeable, literature remains more relevant to its culture and society. The level of literary similarities relies to a great extent on the level of similarities between cultures, experiences and historical-social circumstances. Regarding the fact that literary taste is changeable, as a result of the development of culture and communication with other cultures or for other reasons, change is slow and related to cultural shifts even if they are influenced by external elements. At times, literature incites change; even so, it still interacts inside culture since the original inspiration of literature is the cultural circumstances surrounding it. Literature can be more universal if it expresses the human experiences of its own culture.²³⁹ Simultaneously, literary criticism acquires one of its main requirements through making the cultural memory of literature more vital, active and enduring. Literary theory elucidates literary phenomena and its historical and cultural conditions, which rely on certain philosophical perspectives. This makes the precise transfer of theory difficult, despite the fact that theory can seem as objective and universal as any electronic device. In fact, "it grows from one particular place, time, culture and language. It remains tied to that place and language" and when theory is transported or crosses a border, it "comes bringing the culture of its originator with it."²⁴⁰ In addition, the transferring of theory across different cultures may lead to changes in the theory itself, which might be interpreted differently than at its origin, as well as changes in the culture encountering it.²⁴¹

The scholar of comparative literature, Owen A. Aldridge, argues that "in the East, the most

²³⁸ Ḥsān ʿAbbās, "Anā dhālk al-rāʿī", *al-Karmil* (num. 51, Spring 1997), p. 101.

²³⁹ Jabrā Ibrāhīm Jabrā, "Hawājis al-naqīdayn fī masraḥiyyāt Ghassān Kanafānī", in his *Yanābīʿ al-ruʿyā: Dirāsāt naqdiyya* (Beirut: al-Muʿassasa al-ʿarabiyya li al-dirāsāt wa al-nashr, 1979), pp. 19-29; Jabrā, *Aqniʿat al-ḥaqīqa wa aqniʿat al-khayāl*, p. 260.

²⁴⁰ J. Hillis Miller, "Border Crossings, Translating Theory: Ruth", in *The Translatability of Culture*, Sanford Budick and Wolfgang Iser (ed.), (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. 210.

²⁴¹ Al-Bāziʿī, *Istiqbāl al-ākhar*, p. 17.

common effort has been to apply Western critical theories to Eastern writings. Unfortunately neither method provides readers of hemisphere with much feeling for the literary climate of the other."²⁴² Even among relatively homogeneous cultures, like those in Western Europe and America, there are still difficulties in transferring theory.²⁴³ Every culture must single out its theoretical needs and thus look for theories and perspectives that help it express its existing cultural experiences and enable it to develop its ability to theorise.²⁴⁴ Hence awareness of other cultures' achievements is important in the development process, but not to the extent that any other culture is taken as a comprehensive civilised ideal or cultural guide.²⁴⁵

Accordingly, the presence of culture is essential to the development process and to interacting with other civilisations. Ironically, *Shi'ar* used the idea of universality as a negation of local aspects of culture and Arab identity and thus their version of universality did not include Arabic literature and culture. Accordingly, Arabic literature should follow what *Shi'ar* considered as the universal literature and so must imitate and transfer what occurs in "alive languages and great literatures" into Arabic. "Otherwise, how can we claim that we belong to civilisation?"²⁴⁶ Universality became for *Shi'ar* a way to absent Arabic literature from their project. In the same way it was used as a norm to justify changing poetic and critical perspectives, so at times certain perspectives were justified with reference to the methods of Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Eliot or other Western figures.²⁴⁷ *Shi'ar's* project adopted the results of Western literary thought mechanically in the name of humanity and universality, without taking into account intellectual or literary differences or historical circumstances.

²⁴² A. Owen Aldridge, *The Reemergence of World Literature: A Study of Asia and the West* (London: Associated University Presses, 1986), p. 11.

²⁴³ Edward Said, "Traveling theory", *The World, The Text and The Critic* (London: Faber and Faber, 1983), p. 234. This argument does not claim that literary theory cannot be influenced by other cultures or be active in many cultures synchronously. Some theories started in one culture and flourished more in another such as Deconstructuralism, which appeared in France but thrived in America.

²⁴⁴ Jabrā, *Aqni'at al-ḥaqīqa wa aqni'at al-khayāl*, p. 64.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 181.

²⁴⁶ The Editorial Board, "Akhbār wa qaḍāyā", *Shi'ar* (num. 21, Winter 1962), p. 129.

²⁴⁷ For example; "*Qaḍāyā al-shi'ar almu'āsir li Nāzik al-Malā'ika*", p. 151.

IV. Non-objective discourse

Majallat Shi'ar's discourse contained many methodological problems that weakened the work it purported to do. Many of *Shi'ar's* attitudes were built on exaggerations and generalisations that were unsupported by concrete examples. The clearest instance of this can be found in their descriptions of Arabic literature, which were absolute and did not focus on specific eras or writers, considering Arabic literature as one monolithic entity, era or style. The magazine issued many judgments on the entirety of Arabic literature and culture, claiming "it is not metaphysical", "it does not go beyond the surface of the world", "it does not have human experiences", "it is full of embellishments" and so on. These accusations were merely theoretical and contrary to the opinions of many of the magazine's members, including Jabrā, Nadhīr al-^cAzma²⁴⁸ and Adūnīs (in his book *Dīwān al-shi'ar al-^carabī* mentioned above) among others, who celebrated Arabic heritage and literature.

Many critical attitudes were published within *Shi'ar* based on ethnic background and biological ineluctability. Al-Khāl stated that Arabic novels do not give details of events and characters due to the nature of Arabs. Semitic people, including Arabs, struggle to express details, private experiences and realism. Therefore, it is to be expected that these people "created legends and religions and confronted nature with amulets, magic spells and superstitions rather than with the mind and science."²⁴⁹ Needless to say this argument is not scientific, but it reflects how al-Khāl's views on cultures and literature were based on arbitrary and racially suspect statements or ethnic ideological grounds. Al-Khāl supposed that Arabic novels do not contain details and produce only superficial events and characters, which is clearly incorrect.

Furthermore, al-Khāl contrives to use folklore, legends and religion, marks of a rich heritage and important sources of modernist literature all over the world, as evidence of a lagging, backwards mentality in Arabic literature. All civilisations have legends and religions and have faced nature, in some historical eras, with the help of mythical spells and amulets,

²⁴⁸ See: Jihād Fāḍil, *Qaḍāyā al-shi'ar al-hadīth*, pp. 440-442; Nadhīr al-^cAzma, *al-Mi'raj wa al-ramz al-ṣūfī: Qirā'a thāniya fī al-turāth* (Damascus: Dār 'alā' al-dīn, 2000).

²⁴⁹ Al-Khāl, *Dafātir al-ayyām*, p. 208.

but this is hardly evidence to say that they are by nature “mythical” or that they have remained captive to superstitious beliefs. Al-Khāl confined the entire heritage according to legends and religions and ignored the scientific, philosophical and literary accomplishments of the classical Arabic heritage to study and explain natural phenomena among other scientific issues. Al-Khāl also ignored philosophical attempts to sort the sciences of the Arabs into categories including mathematics, natural sciences, engineering and astronomy.²⁵⁰

Similar to al-Khāl's argument, Ghāzī Brāks in *Shiʿr* suggested that Romanticism was more widespread and influential in the Arab world than Symbolism because "the nature of the East generally is more inclined to Romanticism than to Symbolism."²⁵¹ There is no reference explaining the meaning of the “nature” that makes Arabs more inclined to Romanticism.²⁵² Nature and race in some of *Shiʿr*'s writing became critical tools in extreme form. This led Muḥyī al-Dīn Muḥammad to justify the superiority of Abū Tammām's poetry by saying that he was not an Arab or not part of the Arabic tradition. He went beyond the naivete and poetic weakness of Arabic poetry because "he was alien to Arab culture and his father was Greek."²⁵³ This, on the one hand, shows a narrow attitude toward cultural production and, on the other hand, is unsupported by any historical evidence.

In his praise of the two poetic lines by the Lebanese poet Adīb Maḥzar:

دموع السهى ودماء الغروب وتسري قبيل المساء تناجي
غداؤها وتتام الطيوب هنالك حيث تحل الأمانى

al-Khāl described them as unprecedented in literary Arabic history saying "when has there been previously in Arabic poetry before this verse an evening voicing a soliloquy or spring sleeping as the human being sleeps? Or even, when were there stars filled with tears and

²⁵⁰ See: ʿUmar Farrūkh, *Tārīkh al-ʿulūm ʿind al-ʿArab* (Beirut: Dār al-ʿilm li al-malāyīn, 2002). Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm ʿAṭīyya, *Dirāsāt fī tārikh al-ʿulūm ʿind al-ʿArab* (Cairo: Dār al-thaqāfa li al-nashr, 1991).

²⁵¹ Ghāzī Bruks, "al-ʿAwāmil al-tamhīdiyya li ḥarakat al-shiʿr al-ḥadīth", p. 130.

²⁵² There are many other imprecise generalisations in *Shiʿr*'s discourse resembling this. For example within the magazine's rejection of revolutionary poetry, Muḥyī al-Dīn Muḥammad said that this kind of poetry "might exist in Arab culture only, no other contemporary culture shares this with Arabic". Muḥyī al-Dīn Muḥammad, "al-Shiʿr al-thawrī wa al-shuʿarāʾ al-ʿArab", *Shiʿr* (num, 17, Winter 1961), p. 145.

²⁵³ Muḥyī al-Dīn Muḥammad, "al-Shiʿr al-thawrī wa al-shuʿarāʾ al-ʿArab", p. 146.

hopes braided?"²⁵⁴ Al-Khāl praised these two lines only for their similes, which are, as al-Khāl himself admits, insufficient to build a critical judgment despite their beauty. Furthermore, these similes are simple and we can find many similar and more complex similes in classical poetry. It was common for classical poets to use characteristics of the human being to personify objects, animals or even ideas and phenomena such as death, sickness, night, love, hate and so on. Al-Khāl's comment reveals that his knowledge of classical Arabic literature was shallow and that he constructed his view on theoretical suppositions unrelated to the literature itself. In his statement, al-Khāl compared Adīb Mazhar's verses - two poetic lines abstracted from a long poem - to Arabic poetry in general without referring to any particular study of Arabic poetry. Of course, modern poetic movements have developed hugely important new ways of expression and new perspectives, which resulted from complex developments through history of both literature and social life, and which did not exist in the premodern heritage. However, this does not mean that the past is deficient or unimportant to those historical movements, as al-Khāl's statement suggests.

Furthermore, many articles published in *Shi'ar* contain poetic examples out of context which distort them. Al-Khāl described a poem by one of the most famous °Abbasid poets al-Mutanabbī as direct and reported speech:

Good planning comes first, and courage comes next

هو أول وهي المحل الثاني²⁵⁵

الرأي قبل شجاعة الشجعان

Although al-Khāl repeatedly called for the organic unity of poetry, stating that no part of a poem can carry poetic value if it is separated from its poetic context, he isolated one line of al-Mutanabbī's long poem and used it as an example of poetry's direct speech. The good planning and courage mentioned in this verse are part of the personality that the poem tries to create and one of many standpoints and comparisons found in the poem. In addition, both

²⁵⁴ Yūsuf al-Khāl, "Itijāhāt al-adab al-lubnānī", p. 4.

²⁵⁵ Al-Khāl, *al-Ḥadātha fī al-shi'ar*, p. 95.

good planning and courage are subjects of verbs in the poem and have varied cases ranging from human beings to animals. Al-Khāl ignored or did not realise that classical poems were constructed through meaning, perspectives and images, that their relationships were expressed through a poetic view in the poem or by creating a poetic personality.

Madanī Sāliḥ similarly dealt with many poets including al-Mutanabbī, Aḥmad Shawqī and Jarīr among others, developing an attitude that before *Majallat Shiʿr* Arabic poetry was poor, direct and frozen.²⁵⁶ Contrary to this verbal assault, Jabrā, who was named as *Shiʿr*'s correspondent in Iraq, among others strongly celebrated al-Mutanabbī's poetry and considered him as one of the greatest poets of human history. Jabrā compared the poetic characters of al-Mutanabbī and Shakespeare,²⁵⁷ concentrating on their use of dramatic features, imaginative contemplations and poetic astonishment, and how various aspects of their poetry are harmonious.²⁵⁸ According to Jabrā, al-Mutanabbī created congruent, rich, ambiguous characters that made him one of the most important poets not only of Arabic literature, but also within universal literary history.²⁵⁹

Shiʿr's criticism seemed at times to be a series of accusations that insulted both the public and literature and limited the possibility of objective criticism in the magazine's discourse. The magazine described those who criticised it as products of degeneration imitating the past. Al-Khāl declared his disdain for the critics, saying "ultimately we are ignorant people", therefore "it is not strange that the people are disfigured into ragtag groups and these in return are deformed into a herd."²⁶⁰

In addition, instead of studying the methods of comprehending ambiguity and its role and dimension in modern poetry, Ḥalīm Barakāt argued that the people could not understand Adūnīs's poem 'Marthiyat al-qarn al-awwal' because "these people look for gleefulness in

²⁵⁶ Madanī Sāliḥ, "al-Adā' al-mawḍūʿī wa al-adā' al-dhātī fī al-shiʿr al-ʿarabī", *Shiʿr* (num. 19, Summer 1961), pp. 125-138.

²⁵⁷ This comparison aimed at studying al-Mutanabbī's poetry, not the work of Shakespeare, so the results are more related to al-Mutanabbī's poetry.

²⁵⁸ Jabrā Ibrāhīm Jabrā, "al-Mutanabbī wa shiʿruhu: al-Tanāquḍ wa al-ḥall" in *Yanābīʿ al-ruʿyā*, pp. 30-35.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

²⁶⁰ Yūsuf al-Khāl, "al-Fikr wa al-hurriyya", *Shiʿr* (num. 44, Summer 1970), pp. 4-5.

poetry, music and drawing and they are scared of contemplation and thinking."²⁶¹ This discourse was provocative and led to confrontations between the magazine and many literary figures including some of the magazine's members. The magazine used inappropriate language to identify many critical issues such as poetic metres and Arabic standard language. The magazine's language was undisciplined and not neutral, thus it appeared to be aggressive and provocative. Examples include statements like: "indeed Arabic poetic metres are empty skulls, or even grottos for disbelief indisposing the free people... this language is frozen and these rhymes are bullets", thus "we have to resurrect and move away from dead people in order to launch a new life"²⁶²; "literary heritage is a blind imitation and a putrid swamp".²⁶³ Ghāzī Brāks described love poetry as inhuman and immoral. "Pornographic literature *al-adab al-dā'ir*, which focuses on the mere physical seductions and provokes sexual lusts and desires that was represented by most of Arabic love poetry, desecrates the lucid poetic message."²⁶⁴

Shi'ar's editorial board never mentioned anything about members who left the magazine, despite their strong criticism of the magazine's direction.²⁶⁵ However, the board sweepingly attacked many former contributors to the magazine who had never officially acquired membership of *Shi'ar*. These included Salmā Khaḍrā al-Jayyūsī, Nāzik al-Malā'ika and Iḥsān 'Abbās. The magazine attacked 'Abbās because he did not rely on *Shi'ar* in his study *Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb: Dirāsa fī ḥayātihi wa shi'rihi*. Firstly the editorial board mentioned that 'Abbās's book was poor and incoherent and then they said that the author did not consider *Shi'ar* "because he is a prisoner of a spiteful, hypocritical, erratic and exploitative gang that embraced him literarily and academically." Then, they disparaged the knowledge of

²⁶¹ Ḥalīm Barakāt, "Ḥawla marthiyat al-qarn al-awwal", *Shi'ar* (num. 15, Autumn 1960), p. 148. There are many other examples resemble this, such as Madanī Šāliḥ's description of Arab people as ignorant with bad literary taste. Madanī Šāliḥ, "Ḥawla al-adā' al-mawḍū'ī wa al-adā' al-dhātī fī al-shi'ar al-'arabī", p. 126.

²⁶² Abū Shaqrā, "*al-Laylu fī al-durūb* li 'Umar al-Naṣ", pp. 68-69.

²⁶³ Bruks, *al-Qadīm wa al-jadīd fī al-shi'ar al-'arabī*", p. 98.

²⁶⁴ Bruks, "*al-'Awāmil al-tamhīdiyya li ḥarakat al-shi'ar al-ḥadīth*", p. 120.

²⁶⁵ For example see: Muḥammad al-Māghūṭ, "Nukhbat *Majallat Shi'ar*", *al-Ādāb* (January 1962).

the author about al-Sayyāb saying "what does Iḥsān ʿAbbās know about Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb and about his poetry?"²⁶⁶

Although *Shiʿr* announced that it was open to all poetic trends, it actually rejected all kinds of poetry outside regardless of its success. It might seem that *Shiʿr* rejected previous and contemporary literature in order to legitimise itself as a new literary movement, but the problem was that *Shiʿr* violently rejected all literary movements and did not consider any of them important stages of literary development. This rejection included classical literature, the new classical movement, Romanticism and Symbolism, continuing up to the poetry of the fifties and sixties, which was a very rich stage in modern Arabic literature, particularly with regard to the new poetic movement of *al-tafʿīla*, which attracted the majority of poets across the Arab world including those of *Shiʿr*.²⁶⁷ However, ʿIṣām Maḥfūz suggested that the poets of *al-tafʿīla* movement, especially Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb, followed a limited poetic model and failed to keep pace with the modern poetry appearing in *Shiʿr*.²⁶⁸ It seems here that what Maḥfūz referred to in using the term 'modern poetry' was the prose poem, since most of the magazine's poets were writing *shiʿr al-tafʿīla* and al-Sayyāb was one of them. In addition, al-Khāl argued that the poetic legitimacy of *shiʿr al-tafʿīla* would be depleted soon and would retreat with the rise of the prose poem.²⁶⁹ He later attacked many of the poets who were espoused by the magazine. A noteworthy target was Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb,²⁷⁰ whose poetic publications in *Shiʿr* played an important role in making the magazine famous. He also violently attacked ʿAbd al-Waḥḥāb al-Bayyātī, accusing him of debasing his poetry through private commissions and exploiting his own talents for financial gain.²⁷¹ He also leveled this accusation at Khalīl Ḥāwī.²⁷²

²⁶⁶ The Editorial Board, "Qaḍāyā wa akhbār", *Shiʿr* (num. 42, Spring 1969), pp. 104-105.

²⁶⁷ For example: Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb, Nāzik al-Malāʾika, ʿAbd al-Waḥḥāb al-Bayyātī, Saʿdī Yūsuf, Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Muʿṭī Ḥijāzī, Amal Dunqul, Nizār Qabbānī, among many others.

²⁶⁸ ʿIṣām Maḥfūz, "ʿIndamā yastajdī al-shiʿr al-rāḥa wa al-salām", *Shiʿr* (num. 29-30, Winter-Spring 1964), pp. 97-99.

²⁶⁹ Al-Khāl, *al-Ḥadātha fī al-shiʿr*, pp. 60-61.

²⁷⁰ Al-Khāl, *Dafātir al-ayyām*, p. 59.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 312.

²⁷² Fāḍil, *Qaḍāyā al-shiʿr al-ḥadīth*, p. 294.

As mentioned before, on many occasions al-Khāl tried to diminish the importance of Adūnīs's poetry and said that his poetic ability began to decline after he left the magazine.²⁷³ More importantly, after *Shiʿr* praised the French poet Saint-John Perse and published some of his poetry translated by Adūnīs,²⁷⁴ al-Khāl criticised his poetry for being declamatory, verbally ornamental, simplistically rhymed and rife with unsuitable vocabulary. He said that he regretted that *Shiʿr* had published Perse since the very beginning of the magazine, saying "that was a disastrous hour."²⁷⁵ In fact, the change in al-Khāl's opinion about Perse's poetry was not objective; it was part of the conflict with Adūnīs. Al-Khāl criticised Perse only after Adūnīs showed interest in the French poet and published some of his poetry in his magazine *Mawāqif*.²⁷⁶

At the time of the boom of the Arabic novel in the 1960s, led by writers such as Najīb Maḥfūz, many critics began to show interest in the new form, including in *Majallat Adab*.²⁷⁷ Al-Khāl, however, was describing the Arabic novel as in decline due to its use of standard Arabic, in addition to claiming, without much justification, that it was weak.²⁷⁸ One of the extreme examples that nicely expresses al-Khāl's rejection of all literary trends is found in an article of his on Egyptian magazines, which managed to attack, in the space of a single page, the head editor of *Majallat al-Majalla*, the novelist Yaḥyā Ḥaqqī; the head editor of *Majallat al-Risāla*, Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Zayyāt; the head editor of *Majallat al-Thaqāfa*, Muḥammad Farīd ("he froze while the world kept walking"), and its story section editor Maḥmūd Taymūr ("he was not honestly responsible for the development of the Arabic story"); the head editor of *Majallat al-Masraḥ*, Rashād Rushdī ("his issue is well known"); and the head editor of *Majallat al-Shiʿr*,²⁷⁹ Abd al-Qādir al-Quṭṭ ("his concept of literature is lagging").²⁸⁰

²⁷³ Al-Khāl, *Dafātir al-ayyām*, pp. 224-225.

²⁷⁴ See num. 4, Autumn, 1957, pp. 38-89; num. 17, Winter 1961, pp. 175-177.

²⁷⁵ Al-Khāl, *Dafātir al-ayyām*, p. 322.

²⁷⁶ See for example: "Jafāf", *Mawāqif* (num. 29, Autumn 1974), pp. 127-130.

²⁷⁷ See Nūr al-Salmān, "Daʿwa ilā al-luyūna fī al-uslūb wa al-taʿbīr", *Adab* (num. 3, Summer 1962), pp. 118-122.

²⁷⁸ Al-Khāl, *Dafātir al-ayyām*, pp. 17, 311.

²⁷⁹ This is an Egyptian magazine with (al) different from the Lebanese *Majallat Shiʿr*.

²⁸⁰ Al-Khāl, *Dafātir al-ayyām*, p. 124.

In contrast to these fierce rejections, *Shiʿr*'s members created around themselves a cosy scholarly and literary aura through their control of the magazine and the cultural section of *Jarīdat al-nahār*, which was edited by Unsī al-Ḥāj. The magazine did not look beyond its members except in order to criticise. Khālida Saʿīd wrote many times on the work of her husband Adūnīs using her pseudonym Khuzāmā Sabrī.²⁸¹ She also wrote on many of *Shiʿr*'s other poets such as Yūsuf al-Khāl,²⁸² Unsī al-Ḥāj²⁸³ and Muḥammad al-Māghūṭ (before his departure).²⁸⁴ Many members of the magazine wrote on Adūnīs while he was working there, including Mājīd Fakhrī²⁸⁵, ʿĀdil Ḍāhir²⁸⁶ and Ḥalīm Barakāt.²⁸⁷ Unsī al-Ḥāj wrote on Shawqī Abū Shaqrā,²⁸⁸ Nihād Khayyāṭa wrote on Unsī al-Ḥāj²⁸⁹ and so on. Thus *Shiʿr* appeared a narcissistic movement, confining creativity as the exclusive property of its members without taking into account any kind of poetry or any poet outside the magazine.

Shiʿr blamed all problems of Arabic literature on standard language and suggested that they could be solved if it were abandoned; that "the Arabic language is our catastrophe."²⁹⁰ Al-Khāl suggests that if Arabic poetry was written in colloquial language instead of standard, it would overcome the aspects of and reasons for its weakness and would "lead us to vast fertile valleys and create through language the hope of revival and eternity."²⁹¹ However, this view regarding the potential of colloquial was mere theorising and was not based on either literary experience or examples written in colloquial revealing that hidden power. At the time of the first disbandment of *Shiʿr* in 1964 only one colloquial poem had been published in the magazine by Mīshāl Ṭrād, which was followed by al-Khāl's essay regarding it.²⁹² In this article, al-Khāl criticised Ṭrād's colloquial poetry for being

²⁸¹ See Spring 1957; Winter 1958.

²⁸² "Al-Biʿr al-mahjūra li Yūsuf al-Khāl", p. 136.

²⁸³ "Lan li Unsī al-Ḥāj", *Shiʿr* (num. 18, Spring 1961), p. 149.

²⁸⁴ "Ḥuzn fī dawʿ al-qamar li Muḥammad al-Māghūṭ", *Shiʿr* (num. 11, Summer 1959), p. 94.

²⁸⁵ "Awrāq fī al-rīḥ li Adūnīs", *Shiʿr* (num. 7, Summer 1958), p. 70.

²⁸⁶ "Al-Tashkīṣ wa al-takhaṭṭī fī Aghānī mihyār al-dimashqī", *Shiʿr* (num. 24, Autumn 1962), p. 108.

²⁸⁷ "Aghānī mihyār al-dimashqī wa ʿālam al-shiʿr al-aghna", *Shiʿr* (num. 23, Summer 1962), p. 109.

²⁸⁸ "Khaṭawāt al-malik li Shawqī Abū Shaqrā", *Shiʿr* (num. 19, Summer 1961), p. 97.

²⁸⁹ "Qaṣīdat al-nathr wa Lan li Unsī al-Ḥāj", *Shiʿr* (num. 25, Winter 1963), p. 97.

²⁹⁰ The Editorial Board, "Qaḍāyā wa akhbār", *Shiʿr* (num. 35, Summer 1967), p. 145.

²⁹¹ Al-Khāl, *al-Ḥadātha fī al-shiʿr*, p. 61.

²⁹² *Shiʿr*, num. 4, Autumn 1957, p. 109.

traditional, non-united, descriptive and for using abstract symbols.²⁹³ However, al-Khāl mentioned these unfavourable elements without discussing concrete examples from Ṭrād's poetry. It is thus impossible to cite any poetic examples from al-Khāl's critical article to demonstrate his criticism of Ṭrād concretely—an example of how criticism in *Shi'ar* was often unlinked to close analysis of Arabic texts, or at least did not attempt to show the linkages to readers.

Importantly, al-Khāl himself continued to write in standard Arabic, while calling for its replacement with colloquial. "Not another *Shi'ar* poet or critic ventured to write in colloquial"²⁹⁴ although many critics called for its use.²⁹⁵ Similarly, *Shi'ar*'s members deemed the prose poem to be superior to all poetic patterns and the alternative to prosodic poetry, including *shi'ar al-taf'ila*. The prose poem, Unsī al-Ḥājj argued, is "the most significant achievement of modern poets, on the two levels of technique and content."²⁹⁶ Furthermore, Adūnīs saw poets of the prose poem as more important than poets of metric poetry and viewed it as "the highest revolt in the poetic form."²⁹⁷ Meanwhile, *Shi'ar*'s members launched a massive advertising campaign and offered awards for prose poems. However, the important poetry of the magazine's key poets (except al-Māghūṭ's poetry) was written according to the prosody and rhyme of *shi'ar al-taf'ila* and "showed the unique prosodic tone of Arabic poetry."²⁹⁸ In addition, the theorising of *Shi'ar* on prose poems, mainly by Adūnīs and Unsī al-Ḥājj, relied to a great extent on the French critic Suzanne Bernard as mentioned above.

This shows that the magazine was led by presuppositions and abstract views that were not derived from their literary experiments. There were no poetic examples of either writing in colloquial or a prose poem to justify the magazine's extreme enthusiasm for them, which was in any case replaced by "killing questions" in only a few years. Even al-Ḥājj began to

²⁹³ Ibid., pp. 109-110.

²⁹⁴ Bīk, *Ḥarakat al-ḥadātha*, p. 114.

²⁹⁵ For example see: Ibrāhīm Shukrallah, "Risāla min al-Qāhira", pp. 94-95; Tawfīq Hannā, "I'ādat al-shi'ar ilā al-ḥayā", *Shi'ar* (num. 25, Winter 1963), p. 134. For more details about this matter see the fourth chapter pp. 221-223.

²⁹⁶ Al-Ḥājj, *Lan*, p. 18.

²⁹⁷ Maḥdī, *Ufuq al-ḥadātha*, p. 53.

²⁹⁸ Bīk, *Ḥarakat al-ḥadātha*, p. 117.

despair, saying "is it surprising to now question what we called the renaissance of Arabic poetry? Has it begun to stumble? Is it in crisis? Has the creativity of its pioneers dried up? Has it begun to freeze and to look forward and back while it is still in its first prelude? Has its activity depleted its initial strength?"²⁹⁹

The transformation from what was considered an artistic revolution into crisis and desperation suggests that the basic viewpoint of the magazine rested on incautious enthusiasm that sought swift achievements and alternatives to poetic form and prosody. Adūnīs argued that the reason why *Shiʿr* failed was that "it could not move into production, having successfully carried out the negative action of destroying the classical poetic fortress."³⁰⁰ I think that *Shiʿr* could not move into production because it wanted to "destroy" and separate itself from classical literary forms instead of developing them. It did not take into account that literary forms are the result of the experiments and experiences of writers and their need to express social, historical and cultural circumstances. Simultaneously, *Shiʿr* gave theoretical high esteem to poetic aspects while the majority of its published poetry carried different features. This can be seen in the difference between its metric poetry and its theorizing on the prose poem.

V.1. *Shiʿr*'s Hiatus in 1964

Shiʿr's project aimed to change all features of Arabic culture and literature. It was a call for infinite demolition; through slogans such as "mutiny", "rejection of everything",³⁰¹ "destruction, destruction, destruction"³⁰² and "unlimited revolution."³⁰³ *Shiʿr*'s call appeared while the Arab region was facing very difficult political, social and economical situations. The most sensitive developments were the Palestinian issue, the feeling that the danger of occupation was still continuing, the Egyptian war of 1956 with Israel, France and Britain, and the projects of Arabic unity such as the Syrian and Egyptian union in 1958. In such

²⁹⁹ Al-Ḥāj, "al-Asʿila al-mumīta", *Shiʿr* (num. 27, Summer 1963), p. 7.

³⁰⁰ Bīk, *Ḥarakat al-ḥadātha*, p. 109.

³⁰¹ "Min raʾīs al-taḥrīr", p. 5.

³⁰² Al-Ḥāj, *Lan*, p. 13.

³⁰³ The Editorial Board, "Akhbār wa qadāyā", *Shiʿr* (num. 27, Summer 1963), p. 117.

circumstances, it was logical that nationalist ideologies, such as Jamāl °Abd al-Nāṣir's unitary thought, flourished.

Shi'c's project was to reverse the tide; it presented fragile views unrelated to the nature of the needs of the historical era of Arabic culture and literature. The main cultural opinions of *Shi'c*, especially about Arabic and Western culture, relied on unbalanced propositions that allowed its oppositions to strongly criticise it. Literarily and critically, and yet with an uncritical wholesale acceptance, *Shi'c* adopted certain outcomes of Western literary and critical history and called for Arabic literature and criticism to change accordingly. It seems that such a call would only have eliminated culture, language and history. As that was impossible, it was logical that the magazine would encounter multilateralists inside and outside it.

Shi'c's main outside opposition was *Majallat al-Thaqāfa al-Waṭaniyya*³⁰⁴ and, more importantly, *Majallat al-Ādāb*. *Al-Thaqāfa al-Waṭaniyya* adopted Socialist concepts and Realist literature and was known as an opposition to the cultural institutions relevant to the West such as the Franklin Institution and the World Organization of Free Trade.³⁰⁵ Simultaneously *al-Ādāb* espoused Existentialism, Arab nationalism and the concept of commitment in literature.³⁰⁶ Both of them were based on ideological principles more relevant to the circumstances of the Arab world in the 1950s than *Shi'c*, particularly with respect to hopes for Arab unity. Therefore, they, especially *al-Ādāb*, offered a welcoming environment for all opponents of *Shi'c*.

Despite the strong influence of *Shi'c*'s external conflicts, particularly with *al-Ādāb*, it was the internal disagreements between the magazine's members about the above mentioned issues that had the most impact and that led the magazine to its closure. Al-Khāl dominated the entire magazine and all of those who disagreed with him had to leave and stop publishing in it, whether they were officially members of the editorial board or not. Those who had to leave included very active figures: Adūnīs, Khālida Sa°īd, Muḥammad al-Māghūṭ, Khalīl

³⁰⁴ It was founded in 1953.

³⁰⁵ Bārūt, *al-Ḥadātha al-ūlā*, p. 48.

³⁰⁶ Abū Sayf, *Qadāyā al-naqd*, p. 31.

Hāwī, °Abd al-Wahhāb al-Bayyātī, Nāzik al-Malā'ika, Salmā Khadrā al-Jayūsī, and Badr Shākīr al-Sayyāb among others.³⁰⁷

It is important to highlight that some of those who published in *Shi'ar*, such as Jabrā and al-Sayyāb, were not involved in the magazine's ideological tendencies or policies. Although al-Sayyāb left *Shi'ar* preferring to publish in *al-Ādāb*, which led the magazine to abuse his poetry, he did not mention why he stopped publishing in *Shi'ar*. However, the difference between his outlook and that of *Shi'ar* can be seen in his early address on literature delivered at the Rome conference on Arabic literature in 1961, in which he stressed totally different points of view from *Shi'ar*. While *Shi'ar*'s members expressed their opinions on Arabic colloquial and standard language and the "lag of Arabic literature", al-Sayyāb delivered an opposing view that emphasised the activity and ability of Arabic literature and the role of commitment in Arabic literature in the modern era.³⁰⁸ In addition, al-Sayyāb's poetry was totally different from *Shi'ar*'s in its immersion in and embrace of Arabic culture. It expresses the hopes, pain, yearning, sadness and happiness of Arab people from within the Arabic perspective, culture and place. Simultaneously, he adopted modernist poetic models and positively interacted with Western literature, especially T. S. Eliot.³⁰⁹ He represented a good example of balanced and constructive interaction with Western literature.

Regarding Jabrā, his writing shows that his attitude towards Arabic culture and literature was totally different from every single point of view expressed in *Shi'ar*. He repeatedly stressed the ability of Arabic language and literature to interact with modernist literary trends³¹⁰ and celebrated classical literary experiences and linguistics, as well as the interactions of classical Arab scholars with other civilizations through translation.³¹¹ Contrary to the insistence of *Shi'ar* that it was necessary to achieve a break with the Arabic literary

³⁰⁷ Many critics published a few times then left it, such as Iḥsān °Abbās who sent only one letter to *Shi'ar* without any comment on it. (Iḥsān °Abbās, "Risāla min al-Sūdān", *Shi'ar* (num. 6, Spring 1958), pp. 116-119) and Ghālī Shukrī who published in *al-Ādāb* that he regretted having published in *Shi'ar*, which led to al-Khāl's sarcasm. Al-Khāl, *Dafātīr al-ayyām*, p. 138.

³⁰⁸ *Al-Adab al-°arabī al-mu°āṣir: Mu'tamar Rome - October 1961* (Beirut: Aḍwā: 1962).

³⁰⁹ See Khaldūn al-Sham°a, "al-Muthāqafa al-ilyūtiyya", *Fuṣūl* (num. 3, Autumn 1996), pp. 62-73.

³¹⁰ Jabrā, *Ta'ammulāt fī bunyān marmarī*, p. 132.

³¹¹ Jabrā, *Aqni°at al-ḥaqīqa*, p. 191.

heritage to renew literature, Jabrā's view was that literary renewal should take into account previous literary experiences to be able to carry out real renewal, according to the needs of expression. Thus, modernity must affirm what has been done previously, since that was and is the path to modernity.³¹² Jabrā argued that interaction with others, including the West, is natural and important, but this interaction requires Arabs to rely on the "conscience and identity of the nation" to develop and maintain their culture, because there is no ideal civilised model to be followed.³¹³

According to the above essential differences, I find it strange that Jabrā could maintain what seemed a good relationship with *Shi'ar*, especially taking into account that the magazine was famously intolerant of differing opinions. This might be because Jabrā was physically distant from the magazine and its policies; he worked in Iraq and it was from there that he sent his contributions to the magazine. He kept himself out of ideological conflicts and seemed to have comfortable relationships with all schools of thought and emergent cultural trends.

The many internal and external conflicts destabilised the magazine, especially after it began losing many of its active members. As a reaction to this instability, *Shi'ar* began to claim that its renewal of language and poetic styles aimed to enrich Arabic heritage and to boost its poetic and artistic values.³¹⁴ The magazine, the editorial board argued, contributed in "the war of renaissance" through a new understanding of Arabic heritage as simply human heritage.³¹⁵ Al-Khāl deemed *Shi'ar*, in his answer to *al-Ādāb*, the real heir of Arabic heritage, saying that "our defense, in brief, in front of those [*Majallat al-Ādāb*] is that we are the real heirs of Arabic heritage and you are the fake heirs, we represent creative development and emerged from the best parts of the heritage, while you are fusty and your closed mentality is based on the worst parts of the heritage."³¹⁶ To back up their credentials the magazine

³¹² Jabrā, *Ta'ammulāt fī bunyān marmarī*, p. 175.

³¹³ Jabrā, *Aqni'at al-ḥaqīqa*, p.181.

³¹⁴ The Editorial Board, "Ilā al-qāri'", *Shi'ar* (num. 22, Spring 1962), p. 6.

³¹⁵ "Al-Ifitāḥiyya", p. 4.

³¹⁶ Riyyād Najīb al-Rayis, *Thalāthat shu'arā' wa ṣaḥafī* (London: Riyyād al-Rayis, 1996), p. 202; Abū Sayf, *Qadāyā al-naqd*, p. 36.

dedicated an issue to the recent Algerian revolution.³¹⁷ However, these new claims were clearly unharmonious with the general attitudes of the magazine, so it was easy for others to refute them as did *Shiʿr*'s ex-member Muḥammad al-Māghūṭ in the pages of *al-Ādāb*.³¹⁸

Ideological tension dominated the relationship between *Shiʿr* and others and prevented productive artistic and literary discussion; if such discussion occurred, it consisted of superficial conflict more than artistic debate. The clearest instance of this was the argument between *Shiʿr* and *al-Ādāb* over which of them successfully adopted modern poetry. *Shiʿr* stated that "it is the deepest and the most fully complete embodiment of the modernist poetic movement"³¹⁹ and that it was the sole magazine specializing in poetry in the Arab world.³²⁰ *Al-Ādāb* refuted this claim and, in turn, saw itself as the pioneer of the modernist poetic movement, saying that "*Shiʿr*'s members forget that *al-Ādāb* appeared four years before *Shiʿr* and all poets of the modernist poetic trend gathered in *al-Ādāb*."³²¹ In sum, these discussions were infertile, uninteresting and superficial and they were very far removed from productive investigations of new styles of modern poetry.

Shiʿr had to pause in 1964 not because of "the wall of language", as al-Khāl said, but rather because of the ideological conflicts hidden behind the language that scattered the magazine's members. The remaining members with al-Khāl did not revise the struggling magazine's policy, but rather they lashed out at those who had left. Unsī al-Ḥāj, for example, attacked the missing members by saying that they were less than expected: "is it right that what we deemed a lot was actually the least? Is it right that there were a few among us who were corrupted by a short time in the heart of the war and who became idols?"³²²

³¹⁷ Num. 17, Winter 1961.

³¹⁸ Al-Māghūṭ, "Nukhbat *Majallat Shiʿr*", *al-Ādāb* (num. 1, 1963), p. 58.

³¹⁹ Adūnīs, "Muḥāwala fī taʿrīf al-shiʿr al-hadīth", p. 90.

³²⁰ "Min raʾīs al-taḥrīr", p. 4.

³²¹ "Ulāʾik al-muzayyafūn", *al-Ādāb* (num. 3, March 1961), p. 67.

³²² Unsī al-Ḥāj, "al-Asʾila al-mumīta", *Shiʿr* (num. 27, Summer 1963), p. 8.

After the disappearance of Adūnīs's name from the editorial board, the magazine published two double issues,³²³ and called the second one "the last number."³²⁴ Publication then ceased for three years.

V.2. Revival of *Shi'ar* in 1967

Shi'ar was restarted after three years from the printing house of *Jarīdat al-Nahār*, which was headed by al-Khāl.³²⁵ *Shi'ar* did not talk a lot about its hiatus, stating that it was voluntary and that it enabled the magazine to avoid repetition and to become more diversified, making a strength of "the fact that it lost some of its members who died or despaired and others who abandoned it because they never were with it."³²⁶ The magazine tried to revive the same issues that it had posed previously, including poetic renewal, standard and colloquial language and the same views on Arabic literature and heritage,³²⁷ along with the debate about the prose poem³²⁸ and the publishing of colloquial poems.³²⁹ However, the magazine could not recapture its original popularity. There were many political and cultural changes in the Arab world as a result of the military defeat in the war of 1967, which were a huge challenge. People of the region were full of despair; intellectuals were understandably obsessed with discovering the reasons behind that defeat, and thus there was no room for the intellectual luxury of *Shi'ar*'s statements.

Shi'ar attempted to contribute to the prevailing atmosphere and published poetry about the war and about nationalism, such as Maḥmūd Darwīsh's early poems³³⁰ and dedicated an issue to the poetry of the Palestinian problem,³³¹ despite its long-standing rejection of committed and nationalistic literature. The magazine also changed many of its previous

³²³ Numbers 29-30 and 31-32.

³²⁴ See: *Shi'ar* (num. 32, Autumn 1964).

³²⁵ Al-Sālisī, *Yūsuf al-Khāl*, p. 92.

³²⁶ The Editorial Board, "al-ʿAwda", *Shi'ar* (num. 33-34, Winter-Spring 1967), pp. 7-8.

³²⁷ For example see: ʿIṣām Maḥfūz, "Jamāliyyāt al-shiʿr al-ḥadīth", *Shi'ar* (num. 36, Autumn 1967), p. 109.

³²⁸ Shawqī Abū Shaqrā, "Qaḍāʾ wa Qadar lā mawzūn walā muqaffā", *Shi'ar* (num. 33-34, Winter-Spring 1967), p. 152.

³²⁹ For example see: num. 36, Autumn 1967, pp. 9-16.

³³⁰ See: Maḥmūd Darwīsh, "Arbaʿat qaṣāʾid", *Shi'ar* (num. 35, Summer 1967), p. 9-17.

³³¹ Num. 38, Spring 1968.

opinions in order to regain a place within the cultural milieu. For example it confessed the importance of neo-classical poetry, which it had always strongly attacked, including the work of Aḥmad Shawqī: "although his poetic plays failed, he pioneered through them new styles of poetic expression and created unique poetic stanzas... we welcome him as an important stage in the development of Arabic poetry."³³² In addition, *Shiʿr* adopted the language of confrontation with the enemy; the editorial board argued that culture had been a dangerous weapon used by enemies of the Arabs to control the people of the Arab world.³³³ Al-Khāl added that the problems of literary matters in the Arab world were affected by the enemy, who has been trying to deprive the Arabs of literary taste, the mark of civilization. "The enemy wants us to lose literary taste and to lose even aesthetic sense, since literary taste or aesthetic sense is the essence of urbanization. If we lose this, we become a footnote and a wasteland open to be occupied and stolen."³³⁴

The second stage of *Shiʿr* went beyond literary and critical interests and was fundamentally disorganised. In addition to political issues, the magazine published writings on environment, society and on various cultural events such as plays, singing, dancing, travel writing and so on.³³⁵ Otared Haidar states that the magazine's previous character with its focus on the prose poem disappeared in the second stage, which focused on "visual arts, fiction, interviews and private news of writers."³³⁶ After the 44th issue, the magazine disappeared – this time without any statement about a "language wall" like the one which had announced the 1964 hiatus.

³³² The Editorial Board, "Akhbār wa qaḍāyā", *Shiʿr* (num. 35, Summer 1967), p. 147.

³³³ The Editorial Board, "Qaḍāyā wa akhbār", *Shiʿr* (num. 36, Autumn 1967), pp. 165-166.

³³⁴ Yūsuf al-Khāl, "al-Fikr wa al-ḥuriyya", *Shiʿr* (num. 44, Summer 1970), p. 5.

³³⁵ For example see: num. 34, Spring 1967.

³³⁶ Haidar, *The Prose Poem*, p. 76.

Chapter Two

New Criticism in the West and the Arab World

This chapter sets out the ideas associated with New Criticism both in the West and the Arab world. It focuses on the key critical and literary concepts of the New Critics along with their use by Arab critics. This chapter is divided into two sections as follows:

The first section defines New Criticism and the New Critics along with their major critical concepts and attitudes towards other literary schools. It also singles out New Criticism as a formalist critical school, distinguishing it from other formalist schools. Finally, it sets out the decline of New Criticism in its original home.

The second section analyses the employment of New Criticism in the Arab world from the mid-fifties onwards among other Western critical schools. It scrutinises the reasons that led some Arab critics to employ it in their critical theory and application. In addition, this section discusses the works of four key critics who used New Criticism, representing different forms of its employment. This is followed by a discussion of the translation of the New Critics' works into Arabic in terms of the books chosen to be translated and problems that exist in these translations.

I.1. New Criticism in the West

New Criticism appeared as the name of a critical school in 1941, when John Crowe Ransom published his well-known book *The New Criticism*.³³⁷ In this book, Ransom discusses the ideas of some leading New Critics including T.S. Eliot, I.A. Richards, William Empson and Yvor Winters. Despite their agreement regarding literary and critical concepts, which are considered to be the basis of New Criticism, Ransom concentrates on their differences of opinion on literary thought. "Undoubtedly there is agreement among them, but anyone reading through Ransom's *The New Criticism* will also be struck by the extent of their disagreement."³³⁸ This allowed some critics to repudiate the existence of this school, principally that no defined system of theoretical aesthetics (we have to except Richards's works) was formed by the New Critics and "not only are they lacking a foundation of aesthetic theory, but some of them even prefer to be so lacking, in order (as they think) to preserve their literary sensitivity in an uninhibited state."³³⁹

In addition to those studied in Ransom's book, many others can be named as New Critics: the Fugitives,³⁴⁰ R. P. Blackmur, Kenneth Burke, Yvor Winters, F.R. Leavis, Cleanth Brooks, William K. Wimsatt, Rene Wellek and many others.³⁴¹ Some of these critics' works were influenced by the imagist poet and critic Ezra Pound, by Romanticism, by works

³³⁷ John Crowe Ransom, *The New Criticism* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, Inc., 1979[1941]). The term had been used before Ransom, by Joel E. Springorn in a different sense in an address delivered at Columbia University in 1910. Edwin Berry Burgum, *The New Criticism: An Anthology of Modern Esthetics and Literary Criticism* (New York: Prentice-Hall, INC., 193), p 3. "The New Criticism." Alex Preminger, and T.V.F. Brogan (eds.), *The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* (Brogan: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 833. Some call New Criticism 'Analytical Criticism' such as Cleanth Brooks in his book *The Well Wrought Urn: Study in the Structure of Poetry* (London: Harcourt Brace, 1975). This is due to what is known among the New Critics as "close reading" which is an intensive analysis of the work of literature. The Arab critic Muḥammad °Anānī wrote a book with this title: *al-Naqd al-taḥlīlī* (Cairo: Maṭābī° al-hay'a al-mišriyya al-°āmmah li al-kitāb, 1991).

³³⁸ William Van O'Connor, *An Age of Criticism-1900-1950* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1952), p. 162.

³³⁹ Murray Krieger, *The New Apologist for Poetry* (Minneapolis: the University of Minnesota Press, 1956), p. 6.

³⁴⁰ This refers to a group of poets and critics from the southern states of America who gathered at Vanderbilt University in the early 1920s where they published a magazine called *The Fugitive*, which focused on politics and poetry. They were traditionalists and regionalists, opposed to the industrial and urban development of the northern American States. The group was distinguished and had among its members Allen Tate, John Crowe Ransom, Donald Davidson and Robert Penn Warren. J.A. Cuddon, *A Dictionary of Literary Terms* (London: BPC Hazell Books Ltd, 1979), p. 281.

³⁴¹ For further details see: Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, p. 19.

produced particularly by Coleridge whose thinking was influential on a lot of modern critical schools. "In this sense, then, the New Criticism is not new--it is a continuation of nineteenth-century English criticism. It is undoubtedly more intensive than Coleridge. And it is undoubtedly new in that it borrows from contemporary anthropology, philosophy, and psychology."³⁴²

However, the movement pre-existed the name that Ransom gave to it. New Criticism remained as a leading critical school from the early 1920s through to the later 1950s, although some critics continued to support and defend it for a long time afterward. The most prominent of those was Murray Krieger who was a vocal opponent of Structuralism and Deconstruction. He introduces his ideas in his book *The New Apologists for Poetry*. However, the 1920s to the 1950s was the most important period in terms of quantity, variety and intensity of new critical discourse.³⁴³

The stage of New Criticism was characterised by widespread diffusion, with many critics believing in its formal principles which attracted considerable interest in the works of New Critics.³⁴⁴ They were able to disseminate their beliefs effectively in literary quarterlies,³⁴⁵ universities, literature departments, college textbooks and curricula.³⁴⁶

I.2. Instructional Concerns

New Critics resolutely stood against existing approaches to the academic critique of literature, including philology, bibliography, historical scholarship and literary history, which "dominated university instruction, publication and promotion."³⁴⁷ However, the concepts of New Criticism spread in academic circles, and most New Critics were academics or working at universities, such as Richards at Cambridge and Harvard, Empson at Cambridge, Yvor

³⁴² O'Connor, *An Age of Criticism*, p. 162.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 174-175.

³⁴⁴ For hundreds of titles of papers and books related to this subject see: Morton Dauwen Zabel, *Literary Opinion in America* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1950), pp. 840-879.

³⁴⁵ For example: T.S. Eliot's magazine called *The Criterion* (1922-1939), *Scrutiny* edited by Leavis (1932-1953), *Southern Review* edited by Brooks and Robert Penn Warren (1935-1942), *the Kenyon Review* edited by Ransom (1938-1959) and *The Sewanee* edited by Allen Tate.

³⁴⁶ Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, p. 24.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

Winter at Stanford, John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate and Murray Krieger at Minnesota, Brooks and Wimsatt at Yale and Blackmur at Princeton. In addition, the Fugitive group used to meet weekly at Vanderbilt University to examine and assess their own poetry. Their style of analysis impacted the analysis of New Critics in general, which is based on a practice known as 'close reading'. William Empson admitted that he had been influenced by the Fugitives in writing his book *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (1930),³⁴⁸ which he wrote as a thesis in 1928 while a student working with Richards, by whom he was directed towards the question of language and its various meanings and functions in poetry.³⁴⁹ Soon after its publication as a book in 1930, Empson's thesis became a model for analysis according to New Critical principles.³⁵⁰

Ransom begins his analysis by stating that "discussion of the New Criticism must start with Mr. Richards. New Criticism very nearly began with him."³⁵¹ Richards worked in Cambridge on aesthetics, literary theory and criticism, producing his well-known books *Principles of Literary Criticism* (1924) and *Practical Criticism* (1929), among others.³⁵² Most of his works which belong to New Criticism were written at Cambridge, where he analysed the written examination responses of students to a selection of short anonymous poems. The cause of Richards's disappointment was the fact that his students were studying for honours in English in one of the most expensive educational institutions and many of them were poets and expecting to become teachers of literature in universities. He found out that they were barely able to read the selected poems without having the authors' names or historical information. He drew out from this process a list of common difficulties in reading poetry.³⁵³

³⁴⁸ William K Wimsatt and Cleanth Brooks, *Literary Criticism: A Short History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1957), p. 637.

³⁴⁹ Rene Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism, 1900-1950*, vol. 5 (London: Jonathan Cape, 1970), p. 238.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 275-276.

³⁵¹ Ransom, *The New Criticism*, p. 3.

³⁵² For full details see: Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism*, vol. 5, pp. 222-224.

³⁵³ Examples of these difficulties are misunderstanding of plain sense, meter, rhythm and figurative language; reliance on stock answers, personal religious attitudes, narrow critical approaches. See: I.A. Richards, *Practical Criticism: A Study of Literary Judgment* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner 1929), pp. 13-17. In 1938 Richards published another book as *Interpretation in Teaching* in which he applied his theory of education to prose. See: I.A. Richards, *Interpretation in Teaching* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1938).

"The overall goal of *Practical Criticism* was to analyse and ultimately improve the teaching of literary studies. It provided a highly articulate model to use in university classrooms."³⁵⁴ While sifting the students' comments on the poems, Richards appeared himself to be an 'astute reader'. His approach of scrutiny reading was "extremely provocative in the rise of a new criticism,"³⁵⁵ and mainly from his analysis of poetry and his focus on the interaction of words and imagery "comes the impact on the New Criticism."³⁵⁶

Although Richards was criticised by many New Critics, particularly regarding his psychological interests in reading poetry and in the reader's reaction to what he reads, his approach to analysing poetry influenced many New Critics. In his thesis mentioned above, Empson drew on Richards's theory of poetic language and meaning concentrating more on poetic forms and ways of interpretation. Most of his writing was "specifically inspired by Richards."³⁵⁷ Many others were influenced by Richards, including; Blackmur who stated that "no literary critic can escape from his influence", and all the Fugitives, particularly Ransom, Allen Tate, Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren among others.³⁵⁸

Ransom, for his part, attempted to make a profession of criticism: "rather than occasional criticism by amateurs, I should think the whole enterprise might be seriously taken in hand by professionals. Perhaps I use a distasteful figure, but I have the idea that what we need is criticism Inc, or criticism Ltd."³⁵⁹

The New Critics' interest in improving the teaching of literature distinguished their works and led them to produce strategies to improve reading and interpretation of poetry. It culminated in their characteristic way of analysing poetry: 'close reading' and analytical criticism. This resulted in their publishing a multitude of analytical studies of poetry aimed at developing ways of reading literature generally and poetry in particular. Brooks and Robert

³⁵⁴ Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, p. 38.

³⁵⁵ Ransom, *The New Criticism*, p. 45.

³⁵⁶ Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism*, vol. 5, p. 234.

³⁵⁷ Stanley Hyman, *The Armed Vision: A Study in the Methods of Modern Literary Criticism* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1952), p. 293.

³⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 340.

³⁵⁹ John Crowe Ransom, *The World's Body* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1968), pp. 328-329.

Penn Warren issued a study entitled *Understanding Poetry: An Anthology for College Students*, targeting - as is obvious from the title - college students and posing problems of misinterpretation and 'close reading' of poetry.³⁶⁰ *Understanding Poetry* did "more than any single book," Rene Wellek stated, "to make the techniques of the New Criticism available in the classrooms of American colleges and universities and to present the techniques of analysis as something to be learned and imitated."³⁶¹ Similarly, in 1943 the two authors published *Understanding Fiction*,³⁶² and in 1946 Brooks and Robert Heilman published *Understanding Drama*.³⁶³ Rene Wellek and Austin Warren's *Theory of Literature* 1949 disseminated the theoretical principles of New Criticism and "aimed at graduate students and professors, unlike *Understanding Poetry*, designed for undergraduates."³⁶⁴

Fundamental questions of reading and interpretation of literature are prevalent throughout the New Critics' publications, such as "How to read a page?"³⁶⁵ Why do we study a specific poet such as Shakespeare? What makes Shakespeare Shakespeare?³⁶⁶ "Why are some of the poems good and others definitely bad?"³⁶⁷ What is a picture, a poem? What gives the experience of reading a certain poem its value? How is this experience better than another?³⁶⁸

Universities were the place in which the principles and fame of New Criticism were established. "Eliot excepted, all of the New Critics pursued lengthy careers teaching in colleges and universities. Many of their works were published by university-funded quarterlies and presses."³⁶⁹

³⁶⁰ Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren, *Understanding Poetry: An Anthology for College Students* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1950), the introduction.

³⁶¹ Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, p. 33.

³⁶² Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren, *Understanding Fiction* (New York: F. S. Crofts and Company, 1943).

³⁶³ Cleanth Brooks and Robert Heilman, *Understanding Drama* (New York: Henry Holt, 1946).

³⁶⁴ Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, p. 34.

³⁶⁵ Hyman, *The Armed Vision*, 309.

³⁶⁶ Rene Wellek and Austin Warren, *Theory of Literature* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1949), p. 6.

³⁶⁷ Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism*, vol. 5, p. 235.

³⁶⁸ Richards asserts that all previous criticism has been unable to answer such fundamental questions. I. A. Richards, *Principles of Literary Criticism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul), pp. 5-6.

³⁶⁹ Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, p. 39.

I.3. Key Concepts of New Criticism

New Criticism was launched from the rejection of many former critical schools and literary approaches, starting with Eliot's rejection of the French Symbolist movement³⁷⁰ and its mystical or occult assumptions.³⁷¹ Although Romanticism influenced modern literature and criticism, including New Criticism,³⁷² its concepts of poetry were rejected by New Critics. For them, poetry is not the "spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling" nor is it the product of the heart, or "the poet... unpacking his heart in words."³⁷³ It might be the representation of something that the poet has never known or seen; Eliot said that emotions "which he (the poet) has never experienced will serve his turn as well as those familiar to him."³⁷⁴

This attitude against Romanticism brings to light the concept of 'impersonality' or 'objectivity' that looks at the literary work as an objective matter not as an expression of personality. In this sense the New Critic gives no attention to the ideas of the authors, their thinking or intent, nor to the reactions of the readers and their beliefs. W.K. Wimsatt and M. C. Beardsley wrote a famous essay called "The Intentional Fallacy"³⁷⁵ in which they reject the search for the author's intention, meaning or emotion in a work of literature since it is not included in the text itself. In another essay, "The Affective Fallacy,"³⁷⁶ they reject the project of studying the impact of works of literature on the readers or their reactions towards it.

In contrast to Romanticism, Eliot argues that a poet does not have a personality to express in his poetry; he has only impressions and expressions which he combines in peculiar

³⁷⁰ A nineteenth century literary movement which was led by the French poet Mallarmé. This movement was a reaction against Naturalism and Realism. Symbolists believed that art should express truths indirectly. Thus, they preferred highly metaphorical art with symbolic and spiritual meaning. They were hostile to obvious depictions, declamations and matter-of-fact descriptions. Art's goal was to describe the ideal in a concrete form, which had no aim in itself, but to express the ideal. For more information see: Anna Balakian, *The Symbolist Movement: a Critical Appraisal* (New York: Random House, 1967).

³⁷¹ Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism*, vol. 5, p. 209.

³⁷² Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria* is considered to be "the bible of modern criticism, it was a century in advance of its time, and only the inadequacy of the knowledge available to him kept Coleridge from founding modern criticism." Hyman, *The Armed Vision*, p. 11. Richards among others gave Coleridge special attention. See: *Coleridge on Imagination* (London: K. Paul Trench, Trubner, 1934).

³⁷³ Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism*, vol. 5, p. 229.

³⁷⁴ T.S. Eliot, *Selected Essays* (London, Faber Faber, 1951), p 210.

³⁷⁵ W. K. Wimsatt and M. C. Beardsley, "The Intentional Fallacy," *The Verbal Icon Study in the Meaning of Poetry* (The University of Kentucky Press, 1954), pp. 3-18.

³⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 22-39.

and unexpected ways. "Impressions and expressions which are important for the man take no place in the poetry, and those which become important in the poetry may play quite a negligible part in the man, the personality."³⁷⁷ The poet's biography, emotions, thoughts and meaning are different from what the poem contains, the poem "has its own life."³⁷⁸

Many trends in American criticism before the appearance of New Criticism were rejected by these critics.³⁷⁹ The New Critics opposed Impressionistic criticism³⁸⁰ because in their opinion it focuses on non-contextual elements, the reader's impressions and reactions, which are unrelated to the nature of literature. Impressionists hold attitudes towards literature with no analytical criteria or explanation. The critical reading should "analyse the literary work carefully and in detail."³⁸¹ Eliot said that he could not remember a single book or the name of a single critic who is representative of Impressionistic criticism "which aroused my ire thirty-six years ago."³⁸² The historical critical school was rejected as well; it was neither relevant to literary criticism nor to the essence of literature. New Critics wanted to use no biographical or genesis elements in studying poetry³⁸³ and to "see the best work of our time and the best work of twenty-five hundred years ago with the same eyes."³⁸⁴

New Criticism separates literature and ethics. It is not the duty of literature to offer advice and morals.³⁸⁵ No social background or political resources are of literary concern. Hence they rejected "socio-economic-political" products from literature, as well as Freudian, Marxist, Propaganda³⁸⁶ analysis, Philology and Cultural studies.³⁸⁷ The New Critics stood

³⁷⁷ Eliot, *Selected Essays*, pp. 19-20.

³⁷⁸ T. S. Eliot, *The Sacred Wood* (London: Methuen, 1928), p. x.

³⁷⁹ For information on those trends see: Rene Wellek, "The New Criticism: Pro and Contra", *Critical Inquiry* (vol 4, Spring-Summer 1978), p. 612.

³⁸⁰ Impressionism was firstly a school of painters who were particularly concerned with the transitory effect of light. This term crept into literary criticism to depict the fleeting impression from a subjective point of view. It is not interested in a precise representation. The resulting impression depended on the perception of the spectator. See: Cuddon, *A Dictionary of Literary Terms*, pp. 325-326.

³⁸¹ O'Connor, *An Age of Criticism*, 165.

³⁸² T.S. Eliot, *On Poetry and Poets* (London: Faber, 1957), p. 108.

³⁸³ Wimsatt, *Literary Criticism*, p. 548.

³⁸⁴ Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism*, vol. 5, p. 199.

³⁸⁵ See: Wimsatt, "Poetry and Morals" in: *The Verbal Icon*, pp. 85-100.

³⁸⁶ Propaganda literature is a kind of literature designed to influence public opinion regarding a social or political issue, often by appealing to people's fears and prejudices. During the Second World War, both Germany and the United States produced feature movies that functioned as propaganda literature.

determinedly against Neo-Humanism³⁸⁸ and its concern with ethical norms at the expense of aesthetics. While ethics come first, for them, and aesthetics matter only incidentally,³⁸⁹ Ransom argues that "the modern poet is intensely concerned with the possibility of creating aesthetic effects apart from moral or social considerations: he cares nothing about morals, or God, or native land."³⁹⁰

The New Critical study concentrates on the work of literature itself, on the components of literature, the relationship of words with each other, sentences with each other, images with each other and so on.³⁹¹ The text is considered an independent structure. In this way, poetry is "distanced and depersonalised-objectified."³⁹²

The New Critics disliked science. It is "a totalitarian state" and gives no attention to personalities or to their natural interests.³⁹³ Scientific discourse has only neutral or functional roles and has no texture or beauty, thus it can not sustain the human being's life. "We live more according to the pattern of our arts" that work "in accordance with the preferred pattern of our lives."³⁹⁴ The Fugitives saw science as

the villain of history which has destroyed the community of man, broken up the old organic way of life, paved the way to industrialism and made man the alienated, rootless, godless creature he has become in this century. Science encourages utopian thinking, the false idea of the perfectibility of man..., Tate

Kathleen Morner, and Ralph Rausch, NTC's *Dictionary of Literary Terms* (Chicago: National Textbook Company, 1975), p. 175.

³⁸⁷ Wellek, "The New Criticism: Pro and Contra", p. 615.

³⁸⁸ An American literary movement that flourished between 1915 and 1933, led by Irving Babbitt, Paul Elmer More and Norman Foerster. It aimed at upholding human dignity and moral rectitude and the importance of reason and the will. It was anti-Romantic, anti-Realist and anti-Naturalist. Cuddon, *A Dictionary of Literary Terms*, p. P.422.

³⁸⁹ O'Connor, *An Age of Criticism*, p. 104.

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 108.

³⁹¹ I.A. Richards, *Speculative Instruments* (London: Routledge and K. Paul, 1955), p. 82.

³⁹² Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, p. 28.

³⁹³ Ransom, *The New Criticism*, p. 43.

³⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

says bluntly: poetry is not only quite different from science but in its essence is opposed to science.³⁹⁵

A literary work is an organic structure that cannot be divided; it is one unit, rather than a dualistic conception of form and content. Its unity increases to the point of being complex and 'close-knit' and it is impossible "to change a word or the position of a word without impairing its total effect."³⁹⁶

What is significant in studying literature, for the New Critics, is the text itself, as mentioned above. Literary texts are ambiguous structures; therefore critics need to apply close reading of individual works and analyse rhetorical figures and shades of meaning. Close reading attempts to specify the textual unity, which is characterised by special qualities, the meaning of the work,³⁹⁷ and the notion that the text is intricate, ambiguous, efficient, and unified. The New Critics insist on the fundamentally metaphorical and therefore miraculous powers of literary language.³⁹⁸ What is more, the summary of a work of literature and its reformulation do not correspond to the work in any way. New Critics subordinate incongruities and conflicts through taking into account paradox, ambiguity and irony as subduing divergences and insuring unified structure.³⁹⁹

The formal method of New Criticism expanded and developed throughout the 1930s and 1940s, and was the focus of critical studies written in English. Although its force appeared largely spent by the 1950s, "the truth is that the New Criticism survives and is prospering, and it seems to be powerless only because its power is so pervasive that we are ordinarily not even aware of it." Although this statement was made in 1984, one could argue that in the twenty-first century, many assumptions of New Criticism remain alive and well in

³⁹⁵ Wellek, "The New criticism: pro and contra", pp. 618-619.

³⁹⁶ Wellek, *Theory of Literature*, p. 15.

³⁹⁷ For New Critics, the meaning of a poem is its structure which includes tone, metaphors, feeling and human experience. They believed that the structure of poetry and its meaning are the same thing and rejected the distinction between form and content. Rene Wellek, "The New Criticism: Pro and Contra", p. 618.

³⁹⁸ Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism*, vol. 5, p. 255.

³⁹⁹ Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, p. 26.

sections of the Western academy. The thought of New Criticism has been perceived as "the nature and definitive conditions for criticism in general."⁴⁰⁰

I.4. New Criticism and other Formalist Schools

Formalism refers to many literary movements that see art as a matter of style and technique which might be more important than what the writer wants to say.⁴⁰¹ The main formalist approaches include Russian Formalism, the Prague Linguistic Circle, Structuralism and Deconstructionism, along with New Criticism. Despite their similarities regarding the literary form, their critical and literary concepts differ in diverse ways.

Although Russian Formalism⁴⁰² and New Criticism worked separately from each other,⁴⁰³ both shared many similar critical views. Like the New Critics, the Russian Formalists refused, in investigating literature, to take into account any knowledge or circumstances outside the literary work, either related to the author, reader, religion, history or society, which was predominant in academic studies.⁴⁰⁴ Additionally, both schools concentrated on the form of literature and shared "a language-oriented criticism, centered on the close scrutiny of autonomous verbal constructs, conceived as highly structured and unified patterns of miraculous poetic language."⁴⁰⁵

However, there are many differences between the literary and critical views of each school. These differences primarily resulted from the fact that the New Critics believed that

⁴⁰⁰ William E. Cain, *The Crisis in Criticism, Theory, Literature and Reform in English Studies* (Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), p. 109.

⁴⁰¹ Cuddon, *A Dictionary of Literary Criticism*, p. 277.

⁴⁰² It emerged in 1915-1916 at about the same time as the appearance of New Criticism and consisted of two groups: the Moscow Linguistic Circle 1915-1920 which was led by Roman Jakobson and Boris Tomashevsky; and the Petersburg Society for the Study of Poetic Language 1916-1930 whose main figures included Victor Shklovsky, Boris Eichenbaum and Yury Tynjanov. The Russian Formalism's heyday was in the early twenties and it became part of the Prague Linguistic Circle when Jakobson moved to Prague and began working with its linguistic circle. Peter Steiner, "Russian Formalist School", *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, ed. Roman Selden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), vol. 8, pp. 11-12.

⁴⁰³ Russian Formalism first became known in American and English criticism through Wellek's and Warren's *Theory of Literature* (chapters 13 and 16) 1949, and through Victor Erlich's *Russian Formalism: History, Doctrine* published in 1955. Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, p. 46.

⁴⁰⁴ Victor Erlich, *Russian Formalism: History, Doctrine* (Netherlands: Mouton and Co., 1955) pp. 34-37.

⁴⁰⁵ Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, p. 46.

literature impacts on human experiences and values. Although the New Critics separated literature from all sources of investigation outside the work of literature, they asserted the relationship between literature and life and explored the literary characteristics with expressions relevant to the human experience and to the cognitive dimension of literature. Richards argues that criticism needs a theory of evaluation and communication to achieve its main duty which is "to discriminate between experiences and to evaluate them."⁴⁰⁶ Literature, for Richards, labours to stabilise conflicting impulses of the reader.⁴⁰⁷ Many New Critics disagreed with Richards's pragmatic view about the influence of literature on the reader as is clear in Wimsatt's and Beardsley's essay "The Affective Fallacy" mentioned above, and rejected any kind of pragmatic methods or political and social readings. However, they stressed the influence of literature on the human being's life, the interpretation of poetry and most of their writing aimed at creating strategies for reading and improving the understanding of literary works.⁴⁰⁸ Evidently, interpretation and reading literature focuses on individual works and is related to the meaning, even if it is special and different from scientific meaning.⁴⁰⁹ Relevantly, criticism is important "for the health of poetry, of language, and ultimately of society."⁴¹⁰

Per contra, the Russian Formalists were neo-positivist and believed that literary criticism "can be fully logicalized as many other discipline of science is."⁴¹¹ Thus they developed a descriptive criticism and evaded interpretation of individual works of literature, passing over the issue of cognition and meaning in literature.⁴¹² What is important in studying literature for the Russian Formalist is "not literature in its totality, but literariness."⁴¹³ What

⁴⁰⁶ Richards, *Principles of Literary Criticism*, p. 2. Therefore he attempted to create criteria for reading literature and analysing the experiences resulting from it throughout his books.

⁴⁰⁷ I. A. Richards, *Science and Poetry* (New York: Haskell House Publishers, 1974), pp. 18-19 and see *Principles of Literary Criticism*, p. 283.

⁴⁰⁸ Many examples can be given such as Richards's writings particularly *Principles of Literary Criticism* and *Practical Criticism*; Brooks's and Warren's *Understanding Poetry* and *Understanding Fiction* among others.

⁴⁰⁹ The New Critics' attitude towards the meaning of literature will be discussed in the fourth chapter.

⁴¹⁰ Wellek, "The New Criticism: Pro and Contra", p. 616.

⁴¹¹ Ewam Thompson, *Russian Formalism and Anglo-American New Criticism* (Netherlands: Mouton and Co., 1971) p. 150.

⁴¹² *Ibid.*, 150.

⁴¹³ Erlich, *Russian Formalism*, p. 146.

gives a literary work its literariness is not its meaning, but its language and form.⁴¹⁴ Therefore their studies concentrated on literary language and mere form of literature and they derived their literary concepts from linguistics. Russian Formalism aimed at discovering the basic structure of literary texts and to what extent the new works of a literary genre are coherent with the structural feature of that genre.⁴¹⁵ They mostly focused on rhythm, meter, literary genres and narrative fiction, avoiding interpretation and evaluative criticism.⁴¹⁶

The New Critics and the Russian Formalists differentiated between the poetic and referential functions of language. Literary language, Richards argues, has no referential value; it refers to itself and its function is emotional, not scientific. It operates like musical phrases, therefore it cannot be judged as true or false.⁴¹⁷ However, literary language supports and organises emotions and attitudes⁴¹⁸ and it conveys a special meaning that needs interpretation and makes the study of the verbal structure concentrate upon the structure of the meaning.⁴¹⁹

Throughout his career in the Prague Linguistic Circle and with many American universities,⁴²⁰ Roman Jakobson developed his and other Russian Formalists' ideas which influenced the thought of Structuralism both in Prague and in America. He distinguishes six functions of language; the poetic one has no referential function and what is needed is to focus on the verbal message for its own sake.⁴²¹

The Prague Linguistic Circle⁴²² set out the structural studies of language and theory of literary and poetic language in accordance with modern scientific thought. Jakobson coined

⁴¹⁴ Ibid., 147.

⁴¹⁵ Thompson, *Russian Formalism*, pp. 104-105.

⁴¹⁶ See Wellek, "Euphony, Rhythm and Meter" (159-176) and "the Nature and Modes of Narrative Fiction" (219-234), *Theory of Literature*.

⁴¹⁷ Richards, *Principles of Literary Criticism*, pp. 267-268.

⁴¹⁸ Ibid., p. 273.

⁴¹⁹ Cleanth Brooks, *Modern Poetry and the Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. xii.

⁴²⁰ Jakobson moved to Prague in 1920 and then to America in 1941. For his importance and influence on both Structuralism and linguistics see: Derek Attridge, "The Linguistic Model and its Applications" in *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, v. 8, pp. 73-78.

⁴²¹ Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, p. 208.

⁴²² It appeared in 1926 at Charles University in Prague by Vilem Mathesius, Rene Wellek and Jakobson among others. They were concerned with theoretical linguistics and poetics and utilised the works of Ferdinand de Saussure and Russian Formalism. During the German occupation of Czechoslovakia, many members had to leave Prague including Wellek and Jakobson, and it was dissolved by 1947.

the term 'Structuralism' as a description of their work which aimed at studying the whole structure of language and literature and at revealing the inner development and laws of language and systems of literature.⁴²³ It focused on the aesthetic function, without any exterior aim, and turned "an instrument into an end."⁴²⁴

In contrast to the interest of the New Critics in the individual works, the Prague School deemed the essence of literature latent in the ensemble of the artistic habits and norms of the artistic structure that is beyond the individual. It viewed every work as an individual verbal discourse related to "the system of language, which is also common property and transcends every actual language user."⁴²⁵

Structuralism in France, Prague and later in America notably relied on linguistic studies and terminology that were mainly introduced by Ferdinand de Saussure and those who followed his lectures *Course in General Linguistics*.⁴²⁶ He distinguished language from speech⁴²⁷ and deemed linguistics a synchronic field concerned with the relations between two elements "within a given state of a system", and not concerned with the diachronic relations of an element in a state of a system and "the equivalent element in a prior or subsequent state of the same system."⁴²⁸ In accordance with Saussure's differentiation between language and speech, Structuralism deemed the essence of literature a set of conventions and costumes applied in a specific genre, beyond the individual works, as the individual acts of speech

Lubomir Dolezel, "Structuralism of the Prague School", *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, vol. 8, pp. 34-37.

⁴²³ Ibid., p. 37.

⁴²⁴ Ibid., p. 40.

⁴²⁵ Ibid., p. 48.

⁴²⁶ This book consists of Saussure's lectures that were delivered at the University of Geneva 1906-1908 and published by his students. His lectures helped to promote semiology and Structuralism in anthropology, linguistics and literary criticism. Jonathan Culler, *De Saussure* (Stanford Terrace: the Harvester Press Limited, 1976) p. 8.

⁴²⁷ Language in Saussure's linguistics means a set of laws and conventional associations that exist in the minds of all language users and make speech possible. Speech is the individual use of language. Language is "comparable to a symphony in that what the symphony actually is stands completely apart from how it is performed." Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, tr. Wade Baskin (London: Peter Owen Limited, 1959) p. 18.

⁴²⁸ Attridge, "The Linguistic Model and its applications", *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, vol. 8, p. 65. For details about the use of linguistics in the modern theory of literature see: *ibid.*, pp. 58-84.

apply the laws of language.⁴²⁹ Structuralism in literature tries to define the system of literature by moving from the study of language to the study of literature. The literary system consists of the relationships "among works over the whole field of literature."⁴³⁰

In *The Meaning of Meaning*, Richards and Ogden criticise Saussure's view of language signs, which deems that the meanings of words do not rely on their references, but on the conventional and arbitrary structure of language. Words' meanings, for both authors, depend on things to which they refer and words reflect their references, though both words and references are different in nature.⁴³¹ The meanings of words are the products of the human experience, since words themselves mean nothing and the users of a language make them have meanings.⁴³² However, the referential value of words differs in literature. Richards and Ogden differentiate between the *symbolic* uses of words and the *emotive* ones. While the *symbolic* uses are deemed as statements and relate to the communication of references, the *emotive* ones, which appear in literature, refer to no references, and instead they express or excite feelings and attitudes.⁴³³ The separation between the *emotive* language and references resembles the attitudes of Structuralism mentioned above, but it differs from it in that it still relates to the human experience through feeling and attitude. Furthermore, the reader and the process of reading are essential in Empson's classification of poetic ambiguities, which considers different grades of reading.⁴³⁴ This humanist and experimental method of investigating the features of literary language continued throughout the New Critics' career and even their most formalist enthusiasts such as Wimsatt contained some sense of human experience and of history in studying literature.⁴³⁵

⁴²⁹ Dolezel, "Structuralism of the Prague School", *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, v. 8, p. 48.

⁴³⁰ Robert Scholes, *Structuralism in Literature: An Introduction* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), p. 10.

⁴³¹ I. A. Richards, and C. K. Ogden, *The Meaning of Meaning: a Study of the Influence of Language upon Thought and of the Science of Symbolism* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, 1944), pp. 6-7.

⁴³² *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

⁴³³ *Ibid.*, p. 149.

⁴³⁴ Wimsatt and Brooks viewed this interest in the reader as overstated, so Empson's analysis aimed to classify types of readings instead of poems. Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism*, pp. 638-639.

⁴³⁵ Although the New Critics rejected historical literary scholarship and reliance on biographical information, they had some historical sense that related to the history of words in the language and their previous usages. Wimsatt, "The Intentional Fallacy", *The verbal Icon*, pp. 10-11.

By the end of the 1960s, the appearance of Deconstructionist⁴³⁶ philosophical and critical concepts threatened the humanist philosophical, literary and critical schools including New Criticism. Deconstructionism was a continuation of the European philosophies that aimed at disposing of Platonism and metaphysics.⁴³⁷ This had the result that literature was investigated according to philosophical concepts and questions and that French and German philosophies are "now much more taught in English departments than in philosophy departments."⁴³⁸ This distinguishes the framework of Deconstructionists from the New Critics who were not interested in the problems of European philosophies and were influenced by their social, ideological and conservative perspectives, such as the attitude of the Fugitives towards capitalist society and their and Eliot's views of the old 'unified sensibility' of Christian society.⁴³⁹ In comparison to the New Critics' humanist trend, the Deconstructionists believed that language which can produce a unified and clear sense is ideal and a mere dream.⁴⁴⁰ Hence they denied the idea that literature carries truths or human experiences which correspond to something essential in human beings. Literature, for Deconstructionists, is "the persistent naming of a void, the perpetual discovery of the blindness...and of the new blindness which made it possible to cure the old. Literature ceases to be a place where the perturbed spirit can find rest and inspiration, where human beings can go to find their own deepest nature manifested..."⁴⁴¹ This significantly threatened the New Critical thought and

⁴³⁶ Deconstructionism emerged predominantly in the United States in the 1970s. The key figures in its establishment were the French philosopher Jacques Derrida, who taught in France and America mainly at Yale and the University of California, Michel Foucault and Paul de Man. Deconstructionists argue that it is impossible to reach an integrated or coherent understanding of a text whatever it may be. The process of reading and interpretation is purely artificial and irrelevant to the extent that it tries to elicit "truth," since anything that could be considered an essence of the text is missing and absent. There is no coherent or homogeneous text. Furthermore, the meaning is absent, various and non-existent at any point or center. See: Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, pp. 267-306.

⁴³⁷ Jacques Derrida repeated Heidegger's argument that the metaphysical method of thinking (Platonism and religion) dominated the philosophy of the West including Nietzsche. Additionally, figures such as St Paul, Descartes, Kant, John Stuart Mill and Marx "are simply episodes in the history of metaphysics." In turn, Derrida argues that even Heidegger's discussion could not go beyond metaphysics. Richard Rorty, "Deconstruction", in *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, v. 8, pp. 168-170.

⁴³⁸ Ibid., 168.

⁴³⁹ See pp. 177-183, 190 of this thesis.

⁴⁴⁰ Rorty, "Deconstruction", p. 186.

⁴⁴¹ Ibid., p. 194.

led Murray Krieger to defend the humanist ideas of the New Critics. In the context of his reaction against Deconstruction, he says:

If belief in the poet's power to find embodiment in the world is a myth, it has been, for the critical tradition in the West from its beginnings, the necessary fiction that has permitted more than two millennia of our greatest poems to speak to us. Few critical schools in our history have done more than New Critics did to give them voice. Thanks in large part to these critics... the poems have been there, speaking as they do, as if there is a presence in them.⁴⁴²

Deconstructionism considered language a "play of differences" and objectivity no more than intersubjectivity. Thus there is "no point in talking about the interpretation which gets the text right."⁴⁴³ In this light, all of the New Critical concepts of literature and reading, their views of the power of language and importance of ambiguity⁴⁴⁴ are illusions for Deconstructionists. The New Critics' concept of organic unity cannot be proved since their readings of literature show a plurality of meanings, not one, and those meanings are radically opposed to each other. Thus these readings display "an endless process of self-unravelling, self-betrayal, self-subversion."⁴⁴⁵

Krieger stressed the New Critics' positive vision of literature which represents a "human triumph," "creation of verbal meaning," and the unique power of poetry. He resisted 'the blankness and faithlessness' of Deconstructionism and chose "to remain responsive to the promise of the filled and centered word, a signifier replete with an inseparable signified which it has created within itself."⁴⁴⁶

⁴⁴² Murray Krieger, *Poetic Presence and Illusion: Essays in Critical History and Theory* (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), p. 112.

⁴⁴³ Rorty, "Deconstruction", pp. 182-183.

⁴⁴⁴ The ambiguity is an inevitable result of the power of language and an indispensable feature of the most important utterances, especially poetry and religion. Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism*, p. 641.

⁴⁴⁵ Rorty, "Deconstruction", p. 173.

⁴⁴⁶ Krieger, *Poetic Presence and Illusion*, p. 173.

I.5. Decline of the School

New Criticism had begun to lose its "revolutionary aura" from the late 1940s when its critics turned away from formal studies of literature and became concerned with other kinds of study. For example, Eliot published *The Social Function of Poetry* in 1945⁴⁴⁷ amongst other writings in which he declared that it is impossible to separate literary criticism from other grounds. Critics neither exclude social nor religious judgments from literary criticism.⁴⁴⁸ When he taught English at Harvard University in the late 1930s, Richards was already moving away from criticism, becoming interested in the theory of basic language amongst other things.⁴⁴⁹ Others were associated with New Criticism for a short time only. Leavis preferred cultural studies, Yvor Winters turned to moral criticism and Kenneth Burke pointed to interdisciplinary theoretical systems.⁴⁵⁰ Having adopted socialist thinking, he said that "the analysis of aesthetic phenomena can be extended or projected into the analysis of social and political phenomena in general."⁴⁵¹

New Criticism and its formal project had been attacked from many sides since its foundation⁴⁵² including by Marxists, Freudians and historians. Later it was attacked by the Chicago critics,⁴⁵³ as well as critics working from various psychological and sociological perspectives. In addition, other theorists and scholars mounted more critiques of New Criticism including Reader Response critics,⁴⁵⁴ Structuralists, Deconstructionists, feminist

⁴⁴⁷ See: *Critiques and Essays in Criticism 1920-1948*, ed. R. W. Stallman (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1949), pp. 105-116.

⁴⁴⁸ Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism*, vol. 5, pp. 177-179.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 224.

⁴⁵⁰ Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, p. 25.

⁴⁵¹ Kenneth Burke, *The Philosophy of Literary Form: Study in Symbolic and Action* (Baton Rouge: University of California Press, 1941), p. 39.

⁴⁵² For full details see: Hyatt H Waggoner, "The Current Revolt Against the New Criticism", *Criticism: A Quarterly for Literature and Arts* (vol. 1, num. 3, summer 1959), pp. 211-225.

⁴⁵³ The Chicago School emerged from the University of Chicago in the early 1950s as a reaction to New Criticism. Its major feature was that it affirmed the equal importance of linguistics, philology, the philosophic analysis of ideas and the history of the theory. Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, pp. 60-76.

⁴⁵⁴ Reader Response Criticism appeared in the late 1950s and its heyday was from the late 1970s-1980s. It argued against the text-centered criticism of formalism, advocating instead a reader-oriented approach. It focused on the epistemological, linguistic, psychological and social constraints on the reader. It often ignored aesthetic value and the role of history. See: *The New Princeton Encyclopedia*, pp. 1014-1016.

critics, ethnic critics and leftist cultural critics. The attacks on the school were "so numerous, widespread and intemperate by the early 1970s, that its role became one of scapegoat."⁴⁵⁵

Krieger continued to praise the New Critics and validate their role in developing literary criticism. Yet, despite Krieger's defense of the project of New Criticism which continued until the late 1970s, it had ceased to exist since the 1950s as an innovative and original school. This "was clear for both adherents and opponents."⁴⁵⁶ But the critical concepts of New Criticism are still extremely influential in the popular critical schools which followed it.

II.1. New Criticism in the Arab World

Modern Arabic literature witnessed very swift changes and developments, with different levels of success and failure. In addition to the neo-classical poetic movement, many poetic trends appeared in the Arab world during the twentieth century, including Romanticism, Symbolism, *Adab al-Mahjar*,⁴⁵⁷ literary translations along with the appearance of the Arabic novel, short story and theater. This required changes both in poetic language and in the classical patterns of Arabic poetry, resulting in the appearance of the new poetic pattern of *shi^cr al-taf^cīla* that is at times called *al-shi^cr al-ḥurr* (free verse) in 1947.⁴⁵⁸ Accordingly, literary criticism needed new methods and concepts in order to develop alongside literature particularly if we take into account that these literary trends did not continue long enough to develop proper critical methods. *Shi^cr al-taf^cīla* appeared seventy

⁴⁵⁵ Leitch, *American literary criticism*, pp. 48-49.

⁴⁵⁶ Gregory Castle, *The Blackwell Guide to Literary Theory* (Malden, AM; Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2007) p. 122; and See: Frank Lentricchia, *After The New Criticism* (London: Athlone Press, 1980) p.xiii.

⁴⁵⁷ This refers to the poets who emigrated from the Arab world particularly from Lebanon and Syria to North and South America because of economic and political situation. Those included Jubrān Khalīl Jubrān, Mīkhā'īl Nu^cayma and Ilyā Abū Māḍī among many others. See ^cIsā al-Nā^cūrī, *Adab al-mahjar* (Cairo: Dār al-ma^cārif, 1967).

⁴⁵⁸ Many critics rightly refused to call this new poetic form 'free verse' since it still follows Arabic prosody and it is only free in terms of rhyme and the number of *al-tāfa^cīl* (feet) in the poetic line, which was specific in classical poetry. See Jabrā, *Aqni^cat al-ḥaqīqa wa aqni^cat al-khayāl*, p. 216.

years after the start of the neo-classical school and all other literary schools arose during this period.

The predominant critical concepts in the first half of the twentieth century relied on Western criticism as mentioned in the first chapter. The need for new kinds of criticism was multiplied with the predominance of *shi^cr al-taf^cīla* and its poetic features, such as the dramatic elements, long poem, the use of everyday language⁴⁵⁹ and the extension of the use of legend symbols. The majority of studies on *shi^cr al-taf^cīla*, particularly in its early stage, ranged between relying on the classical poetic prosody or Western poetics accounts. The typical example of the first case is *Qaḍāyā al-shi^cr al-mu^cāṣir* (issues in contemporary poetry) published in 1962 by Nazik al-Malā'ika who considered herself the first to discover the new poetic pattern. In her book, she deemed the new poetic trend exclusively related to poetic rhythms and meter, thus she attempted to extract norms for it similar to the classical prosodic method.⁴⁶⁰ Poetry appears in her book to be a mere musical and formal phenomenon and without giving credit to other justifications of poetry to exist. In this way, poetic object and artistic style are supplementary components. I agree with Ilyas Khūrī's comment on al-Malā'ika's book that the theorisation of "modern Arabic poetry had its first tragedy which is to separate poetic form and content... the attempt to codify poetry in previously existing patterns according to the classical ones, aiming not to discover new musical values but to keep the old ones."⁴⁶¹

The reliance on Western accounts continued the criticism of the first half of the last century. The influence of New Criticism, among the Western critical schools, was notable and various. This use of New Criticism appeared first with the first publications of Iḥsān °Abbās, and then it became more widespread throughout the Arab world. Although some of the New Critics' ideas appeared as early as 1951 in essays, translated by Rashād Rushdī, which were

⁴⁵⁹ This does not mean the use of colloquial language or vernacular poetry.

⁴⁶⁰ Nāzik al-Malā'ika, *Qaḍāyā al-shi^cr al-mu^cāṣir* (Beirut: Maktabat al-nahḍa, 3rd ed., 1967), pp. 28-32.

⁴⁶¹ Ilyās Khūrī, *Dirāsāt fī naqd al-shi^cr* (Beirut: Dār ibn rushd, 1979) p. 204.

written by many critics such as T. S. Eliot,⁴⁶² they did not have much influence on literary studies until the 1960s. One of the reasons behind this late appearance might be the predominance of the Romantic trend between the 1920s and 1950s. Another reason is that the majority of well-known critics who were trained in the West headed to France.⁴⁶³ This was influenced by the heritage of *al-bi^ʿthāt al-^ʿilmiyya* (the educational missions) in the nineteenth century after Napoleon's campaign in Egypt, wherein the majority of students went to France.⁴⁶⁴ In addition, those who headed to England and America were mostly Romantics such as the Jamā^ʿat al-Dīwān and *Majallat Abūllū* groups. Udabā' al-mahjar's poets in America also were Romantics. Some other critics who studied in England espoused other kinds of critical thought such as Salāma Mūsā who was socialist⁴⁶⁵ and Fakhrī Abū al-Su^ʿūd who worked on comparative literature and the origins of arts.⁴⁶⁶

New Criticism became notably used within Arabic criticism after 1955. The appearance of the new pattern of *shi^ʿr al-taf^ʿīla* was one of the reasons behind this, as mentioned above, and some poets were influenced by American and English modernist poetry especially that of Eliot. Some Arab critics at that time overly employed Eliot to the extent that Muḥammad Muṣṭafā Badawī rightly described this employment as “fascination” and provincial.⁴⁶⁷ For instance Muḥammad al-Nuwayhī attempted to interpret Arabic poetry according to Eliot's viewpoints on literature particularly Eliot's argument that poetry should use the language of everyday speech. He translated Eliot's essay “The Music of Poetry”⁴⁶⁸ as a method to his book *Qaḍīyyat al-shi^ʿr al-ḥadīth* (the issue of modern poetry) in which he compared examples of Arabic poems including classical ones with the Egyptian spoken

⁴⁶² *Mukhtārāt min al-naqd al-adabī al-mu^ʿāṣir*, tr. Rashād Rushdī (Cairo: Maktabat al-anglo al-miṣriyya, 1951).

⁴⁶³ Those included Aḥmad Ḍayf, Ṭāhā Ḥusayn, Muḥammad Mandūr, Muḥammad Ghunaymī Hilāl and Tawfīq al-Ḥakīm.

⁴⁶⁴ ʿUmar Ṭūsūn, *al-Bi^ʿthāt al-^ʿilmiyya fī ʿahd Muḥammad ʿAlī wa ʿAbbās al-Awwal wa Sa^ʿīd* (Alexandria: Maṭbaʿat Ṣalāḥ al-dīn, 1934) p. 7.

⁴⁶⁵ See Hinrī Riyāḍ, *Salāma Mūsā wa al-manhaj al-ishṭirākī* (Beirut: Dār al-thaqāfa, 1960).

⁴⁶⁶ See Fakhrī Abū al-Su^ʿūd, *Fī al-adab al-muqāran wa maqālāt ukhrā* (Cairo: al-Hayʿa al-miṣriyya al-ʿamma lī al-kitāb, 1997).

⁴⁶⁷ M. M. Badawī, *A Critical Introduction to Modern Arabic Poetry* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1975), p. 263.

⁴⁶⁸ Muḥammad al-Nuwayhī, *Qaḍīyyat al-shi^ʿr al-ḥadīth* (Cairo: Maḥad al-dirāsāt al-ʿarabiyya al-ʿālamīyya, 1964), pp. 17-24.

language, in order to show that Eliot's essay is applicable to Arabic poetry.⁴⁶⁹ The author devalued poetry that was written with complicated language such as his condemnation of the majority of al-Mutanabbī's poetry.⁴⁷⁰ Other poets whose poetry is sophisticated such as Abū Tammām's⁴⁷¹ poetry are excluded from his study. Additionally, al-Nuwayhī's discussion of the appearance of *shīʿr al-tafʿīla* in Arabic was based on the same grounds. He considered the new poetic movement simply in terms of its aim of using the language of everyday speech.⁴⁷² His study, on the other hand, was exclusively of poetic phenomena that conform to everyday speech. He did not investigate important issues like poetic ambiguity, complexity, the usage of legends, long poem and dramatic aspects among other.

Many critics applied and translated the New Critics' method to the investigation of Arabic poetry, including Iḥsān ʿAbbās, Muḥammad al-Nuwayhī, some of *Majallat Shiʿr*'s members and ʿIzz al-Dīn Ismāʿīl. Furthermore, many Critics employed New Criticism because of their familiarity with it. Most of these were trained or resided for a while in England or America where came to know New Criticism, such as Rashād Rushdī, Jabrā Ibrāhīm Jabrā, Shukrī Sarḥān and Yūsuf al-Khāl. In addition, many of the New Critics' works were translated into Arabic from the 1950s onwards as well as other books discussing their critical method. The following is a detailed discussion of the employment of New Criticism by Arab critics who were not members of *Majallat Shiʿr*. This represents the main trends of using New Criticism by Arab critics.

Iḥsān ʿAbbās was the first Arab critic to use New Criticism to investigate modern Arabic poetry and his work reflects the approaches of Arab critics to modern poetry. Rashād Rushdī and his students represent critics whose employment of New Criticism resulted from their familiarity with English criticism and literature. ʿIzz al-Dīn Ismāʿīl embodies academic

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid., pp. 48-49. Also see Muḥammad al-Nuwayhī, *Ṭabīʿat al-fann wa masʿūliyyat al-fannān* (Cairo: Maʿhad al-dirāsāt al-ʿarabiyya al-ʿālamīyya, 1958), p. 59.

⁴⁷⁰ Al-Nuwayhī, *Qaḍīyyat al-shīʿr al-ʿādāth*, p. 71.

⁴⁷¹ Abū Tammām (803-845) is one of the greatest classical Arab poets and the composer of *al-Hamāsah*, one of the most famous anthologies of classical Arabic literature. He was born in Jasim in Syria and lived in many places including Damascus, Cairo, Khorasan and Baghdad where he spent many years at the court of Caliph Muʿtaṣim. He finally died in Mosul. For further information Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych, *Abū Tammām and the Poetics of the ʿAbbāsid Age* (Leiden : Brill, 1991).

⁴⁷² Al-Nuwayhī, *Qaḍīyyat al-shīʿr al-ʿādāth*, pp. 92-93.

critics who used various critical methods including New Criticism. Ilyās Khūrī employed some aspects of New Criticism despite his Marxist ideology. Muḥammad Zakī al-°Ashmāwī applied New Criticism to classical Arabic poetry and tried to show that some classical Arabic criticism is similar to New Criticism. This is followed by a discussion of translations of the New Critics' works into Arabic.

II.2. Iḥsān °Abbās, the First Step

As early as 1955 Iḥsān °Abbās (1920-2003) published two books that were the first writing in the Arab world to show the influence of New Criticism. The first was *Fann al-shi°r* (poetics) which was an educational text aiming at explaining fundamental principles of the history of poetic theory.⁴⁷³ These theories range from the Aristotelian concept of imitation to the movement of Imagism⁴⁷⁴ and some of the New Critical concepts.

°Abbās briefly explains the principles of the Imagists, their concern that the poetic language is a visual and concrete one and that images are the essence of the poetic and intuitive language. The main Imagists, Ezra Pound and T. E. Hulme, °Abbās adds, emphasised clarity, precision and compression and Pound considered poetry an image that shows rather than tells, it presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time.⁴⁷⁵ What is important in this is that °Abbās mentions the influence of Imagism, particularly of Pound, on T. S. Eliot. However, he concentrates only on Eliot's poetry rather than his critical viewpoints. The book traces the history of poetic theory, not the history of

⁴⁷³ Iḥsān °Abbās, *Fann al-shi°r* (Beirut: Dār al-thaqāfa, 3rd ed.), p. 5. I think that this title is misleading because it refers to Aristotle's *Poetics* and does not represent any new theory or concept. Additionally, it seems that he meant by the history of poetic theory that of the West, because he mentions the classical Arabic account only once (pp. 191-195), on which he published another huge book *Tārikh al-naqd al-adabī °ind al-°arab* (the history of Arabic literary criticism).

⁴⁷⁴ A poetic movement which flourished in England and America between 1912-1914 and stressed the virtues of clarity, compression and precision. The Imagists considered a precise and clear image the essence of poetry and they emphasised that poetry should use the language of everyday speech. The Imagists best known were T. E. Hulme, Ezra Pound, Amy Lowell, Richard Aldington and Hilda Doolittle. *The New Princeton Encyclopedia*, p. 574.

⁴⁷⁵ °Abbās, *Fann al-shi°r*, p. 94.

poetry itself; thus it would be more understandable if it explained the influence of the Imagists on Eliot's criticism⁴⁷⁶ or applied a specific critical theory to it.

Additionally, the author discusses some of the New Critics' ideas, like the difference between science and poetry according to Cleanth Brooks who limited poetry to feelings and attitudes rather than objective scientific truths.⁴⁷⁷ Then he identifies the analytical formal trend of English criticism which aimed at studying literature itself regardless of its author or any kind of information outside the work. It seems that °Abbās had not yet recognised the New Critics as a school; he called these critics Richards's and Empson's trend. He discusses Richards's experiments at Cambridge and his and other critics' concern with the unity of a poem. They stress, he adds, that critics should be able to reconcile conflicts and divergences; to discover the aspects of the poetic styles and the balance and harmony among contradictions; and to prove that the poetic work is an organic unity. What is more, °Abbās applies these concepts to two classical poems by al-Mutanabbī and Abū al-°Alā' al-Ma°arrī, trying to show that both poems are poetic unities and that their conflicting components are in harmony.⁴⁷⁸ In his analysis of al-Mutanabbī's poem, he stresses the importance of its images and symbols to discover its unity and meaning. He argues that the poem which begins with

ليالي بعد الظاعنين شكول طوال وليل العاشقين طويل

The nights since my beloved's departure have become long like the nights of lovers consists of conflicting elements: the individual feeling and the collective, despair and victory, al-Mutanabbī's vanity and praise for Sayf al-Dawlah, tender images and images of war. As a result of these opposites, °Abbās argues, the poem seems disjointed. However, they achieve harmony when they are viewed as two opposite poles: fear and victory. Fear is necessary to highlight the importance of the victory through which fear itself is banished; a fear that is embodied in the scene of the beloved's departure and in the memories of her, as well as the

⁴⁷⁶ Eliot, Richards and Ransom, among other New Critics, were influenced by the Imagists' concern with poetic form, technique and poetry to hold the closest possible association of word and object. See *The New Princeton Encyclopedia*, p. 574.

⁴⁷⁷ °Abbās, *Fann al-shi'ar*, p. 194.

⁴⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 209-215.

Euphrates's fear of the horses and al-Dumustuq's (prince of ancient Rome) fear. On the other hand, this victory does not appear suddenly, but rather it is preceded by the image of powerful horses and their violent movements which occupy a large part of the poem. The horses lead to Sayf al-Dawlah whose appearance is brief to allow al-Mutanabbī to return, but this time with pride and without fear, which has been banished by the victory. Through careful analysis, all elements of the poem become united and in harmony with each other.⁴⁷⁹

°Abbās seems to be aware of the New Critics' rejection of any attempt to study the author's feelings or emotions through his poetry. He argues that if we try to study al-Mutanabbī's psychology through his poem, we depart from Richards's criticism and follow those who consider poetry a reflection of the author's psychology.⁴⁸⁰

°Abbās seems to be convinced of some of the New Critics' ideas, particularly the organic unity and the importance of focusing on literary work rather than the history or the author's psychology. He complains that contemporary Arab critics do not deem the literary work as an organic unity and do not concentrate on the work itself.⁴⁸¹ He emphasises the importance of the poetic images and symbols as bases to study the unity and structure of the poem. He draws heavily on the New Critics, particularly Richards's analytical method.⁴⁸² He adds that although the study of poetry and poetic images is formal to a large degree according to those critics (Richards and Empson), it is not a mere formal investigation of words' voices and meter. "The real reader" achieves poetic pleasure by analysing the entire poem and discovering its organic unity: the relationship between its components, particularly between the images and other parts of the poem.⁴⁸³ He applies these concepts to many poems, concentrating on the sense that the poetic pleasure comes from the analysis of the images, not from the meter or music.⁴⁸⁴ He takes the same attitude as the New Critics toward Romantic

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid., pp. 210-212.

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 212.

⁴⁸¹ Ibid., pp. 200-201.

⁴⁸² Ibid., pp. 238-239.

⁴⁸³ Ibid., pp. 239-242.

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid., pp. 238-246.

emotional poetry, criticising it for holding fake emotion because this cannot be embodied in the poem itself or in its unity.⁴⁸⁵

In his book *ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Bayyātī wa al-shiʿr al-ʿirāqī al-ḥadīth*, which was published in the same year as *Fann al-Shiʿr* (1955), ʿAbbās re-identifies the Imagist movement in order to rely on it as a method of studying al-Bayyātī's collection of poems *Abārīq muhashshama* (shattered pots). I think his reliance on Imagist concepts is problematic because of two considerations. First, al-Bayyātī was part of the new poetic movement, whose project and aspects was not well-defined or complete at that time. This approach will look for what is compatible with the chosen method and ignore or condemn what is not. Second, the concept of image and poetry as it appears in al-Bayyātī's poetry is different from the Imagists' viewpoint as ʿAbbās himself points out. Poetry for Imagists is "a visual and concrete language" and its "great aim is accurate, precise and definite description."⁴⁸⁶ ʿAbbās translates a typical example of Imagists' poetry by T. E. Hulme⁴⁸⁷ and comments on it that what is intended by the image is the image itself and its form, and nothing behind it.⁴⁸⁸ Hence, the Imagists, as ʿAbbās argues, strip poetic language of its every meaning, and every simile carries a precise image without holding any signified or connotation. Per contra, images of al-Bayyātī's poetry are part of his poetic means of expression, which are meaningful and supported by their connotations. The aim of image is to fill every word with inspiration and suggestion. Thus poetic language is a curtain, which conceals latent meaning.⁴⁸⁹ For example, in his discussion of al-Bayyātī's poetic scene:

The sun, scrawny donkeys, flies

الشمس، والحمر الهزيلة، والذباب

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 246.

⁴⁸⁶ Wellek. *A History of Modern Criticism*, vol. 5, p. 150.

⁴⁸⁷ The example is:

Above the quiet dock in midnight
Tangled in the tall mast's corded height
Hangs the moon. What seemed so far away
Is but a child's balloon, forgotten after play

Iḥsān ʿAbbās, *ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Bayyātī wa al-shiʿr al-ʿirāqī al-ḥadīth* (Beirut: Dār Bayrūt li al-ṭibāʿa wa al-nashr, 1955), p. 10.

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 10.

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 13.

and a soldier's old shoe

وحذاء جندي قديم

is passed from hand to hand, and a peasant staring into space:

يتداول الأيدي، وفلاح يحدق في فراغ:

“At the outset of the new year

"في مطلع العام الجديد

my hands surely will be filled with money

يادي تمتلئان حتما بالنقود

then I will buy that shoe”

وسأشتري هذا الحذاء”

and the crowing of a cock that has escaped its cage,

وصياح ديك فرّ من قفص

°Abbās argued that this scene depicts a village's market and its people. He added that this image does not stand in and for itself. Rather it indicates a miserable poverty that leaves donkeys scrawny and leads the farmer to dream only of buying an old shoe. Hence al-Bayyātī leaves behind the Imagists' principles and indeed his poem exemplifies the opposite of those principles, as his words indicate attitude and suggest meanings.⁴⁹⁰ However, °Abbās decided to study al-Bayyātī's poetry according to the Imagists' views because some aspects of his poetic images were similar to the Imagists' poetry.⁴⁹¹

I think these technical similarities are not enough to adopt the Imagist poetic concept in this study, especially if we take into account that °Abbās's book is not a comparative study, but rather aims at investigating the nature of modern Arabic poetry and Iraqi poetry in particular.⁴⁹² Moreover, he states that he believed al-Bayyātī was not influenced by the Imagists' poetry but that the realistic nature of his poetry needed and invented similar techniques of Imagist poetry.⁴⁹³ Consequently, °Abbās selects what is compatible with the Imagist view, such as poetic images and symbols separate from the entire body of poems in

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid., pp. 11-14.

⁴⁹¹ Ibid., p. 20.

⁴⁹² Ibid., p. 3, 8. This also obvious in the book title *°Abd al-Wahhāb al-Bayyātī wa al-Shi'ar al-°irāqī al-ḥadīth*.

⁴⁹³ Ibid., pp. 7-8.

which they are used,⁴⁹⁴ though he stressed the unity of poetry.⁴⁹⁵ He discusses the unity of the poetic images rather than the unity of the entire poem. Other issues which are outside the Imagists' interests were discussed. For example he studies poetic ambiguity and the reason for its inclusion in al-Bayyāṭī's poetry. This is related to the issue of literary analysis, which is more related to the New Critics than to the Imagists. Thus he quoted Eliot's explanation of the ambiguity and analysed poetic symbols relying on their previous uses and connotations similarly to the New Critics' approaches.⁴⁹⁶

Nevertheless, this book was of significance because it introduced al-Bayyāṭī to the literary sphere as an important poet; it was the first study to investigate his poetry. Additionally, the author, through his analysis of al-Bayyāṭī's poetry, seems to be fully aware of the complexity of modern poetic phenomena and skillfully explores the poetic images, raising many poetic issues for further investigations.

In 1969, °Abbās published his book *Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb: Dirāsa fī ḥayātihi wa shi'rihi* which seems to be quite different from his book on al-Bayyāṭī. He investigated al-Sayyāb's poetry, relying on his psychology and the historical context. The author explicitly announced his attitude towards the importance of history and the knowledge of a poet's life to study his/her poetry, and the importance of poetry in studying history and the poet's psychology.⁴⁹⁷

However, °Abbās employs some New Critical means in his book, specifically in his discussion of the long poems, poetic symbols and legends. This is because these poetic issues needed an analytical approach to discover their aspects. Thus his discussion of these poetic means was more artistic and formal than historical, and very similar to the New Critics' analysis. In his study of al-Sayyāb's poem *al-Mūmis al-'amyā'* (the blind prostitute),⁴⁹⁸ °Abbās explores the poetic features of the poem and its paradoxes. The components of the

⁴⁹⁴ For example see *ibid.*, pp. 52-55, 67-69.

⁴⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁴⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 31-34.

⁴⁹⁷ Iḥsān °Abbās, *Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb: Dirāsa fī ḥayātihi wa shi'rihi* (n. p., n. p., n. d.), p. 1, pp. 2-3, pp. 6-9, 17, 21-23.

⁴⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 68-73.

poem's action, including characters, place, time and the development of the events, are in harmony with the structure of the poem and its paradoxes. The prominent characters fall into two categories; wicked people and miserable ones, and all nobles have died or have been exiled. The place is a poor and run-down city which has had a long history of corruption, war and darkness. In such an atmosphere, the prostitute loses her eyes and beauty after she had lost her father. Then °Abbās analyses the symbols and legends employed in the poem, such as that of Oedipus, arguing that they highlight some characteristics of this woman. Paradoxes play an essential role in the structure of the poem and in composing the personality of the prostitute. The main paradox that continues throughout the poem is that this woman carries a glowing lamp although she is blind; it is to let others see her. Ironically, this lamp shows only her blindness and thus distances the customers from her. This increases her misery and hunger.⁴⁹⁹ °Abbās criticises the extravagance of the use of legends, symbols and paradoxes, which aim, according to him, to show the culture of the poet more than being essential to the poem. I agree with him regarding the legends, but I do not regarding the paradoxes,⁵⁰⁰ which seem to be very meaningful in their poetic context. For examples, the police protect prostitution for their sake rather than out of virtue; the insects fill up on refuse, while the people are in extreme hunger; and virtue and goodness are on sale, but no one shows interest. These paradoxes, which °Abbās considers unimportant, represent the sense that the prostitute is a victim of the mistakes of society, which does not ensure the security of its people, nor do the police perform their duties properly.

Similarly, °Abbās discusses another long poem of al-Sayyāb, which is *Unshūdat al-Maṭar* (rain song). First, he briefly discusses the poem itself and its poetic components, without referring to the outside world or to the poet's psychology.⁵⁰¹ He shows the unity of the poem. Although the poem has many contradictory symbols such as rain - sterility, fertility - hunger, birth - death, and water - thirst among others, they are in harmony with each other. The structure of this poem is based on conflict, which requires opposite elements which then

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid., pp. 68-69.

⁵⁰⁰ Ibid., pp. 70-71.

⁵⁰¹ Ibid., pp. 74-76.

become unified through the predominance of rain and fertility. This is very typical of the New Critics' analysis in that it concentrates on the poem, not on the author or on its history and does not use any information from outside the poem. In addition, it interprets the poem and compromises deviations and its components to show its unity and harmony.

However, in a separate section, °Abbās returns to the study of the psychology of al-Sayyāb through these poems, exploring the stages that they represent in the course of his life and the history of Iraq, along with the comments of the people and other poets pertaining to them.⁵⁰² This echoes the fact that his methodology is closer to being eclectic in its aims and strategies.

°Abbās's last book on modern Arabic poetry was *Ittijāhāt al-shiʿr al-ʿarabī al-muʿāṣir* (trends in contemporary Arabic poetry) 1977, which appears totally different from New Criticism or even from being aesthetic or artistic. He declares in the introduction that his approach is documentary and related to the deep thought of poetry, which aims at exploring thought and psychological phenomena.⁵⁰³ In this book, °Abbās focuses only on the intellectual attitudes of contemporary Arabic poetry such as the attitude towards cities, time, heritage and society among others. Evidently, this approach completely separates the poetic form from content, deeming it a meaningful phenomenon, though he had argued that the separation of poetic form and content is the very problem of modern Arab critics.⁵⁰⁴ In addition, it does not take into account any aesthetic or artistic dimension.

°Abbās never fully adopted New Criticism and his use of it was partial and irregular as is evident in his book on al-Sayyāb. Although this use sprang from his study of modern Arabic poetry, it did not pioneer the establishment of a proper and specific methodology based on modern Arabic poetry. His approach in his book on al-Bayyātī fully relies on a Western method ranging between Imagism and New Criticism. His book on al-Sayyāb relies heavily on the history and psychology of the poet, and partially on New Criticism. Finally, the

⁵⁰² Ibid., pp. 76-79.

⁵⁰³ Iḥsān °Abbās, *Ittijāhāt al-shiʿr al-ʿarabī al-muʿāṣir* (Kuwait: °ālam al-maʿrifa, 1998), p. 6; see a full review of this book in: Khūrī. *Dirāsāt fī naqd al-shiʿr*, pp. 207-226.

⁵⁰⁴ °Abbās, *Fann al-shiʿr*, pp. 200-201.

approach of his book towards contemporary Arabic poetic trends is not clear and does not include all poetic components, as mentioned above, though it aimed at being inclusive of modern Arabic poetry. It is important to mention that ʿAbbās translated a few books, some of which are related to New Criticism, and this will be discussed in the translation section of this chapter.

II.3. Rashād Rushdī and his students

Rashād Rushdī was the most enthusiastic Arab critic to believe in New Criticism. His enthusiasm resulted from his familiarity with English literature and criticism and his education at the University of Leeds in the late 1940s along with his work at Yale University in 1955. Thereafter, he taught English literature in Egypt for the rest of his career.⁵⁰⁵ He applied only the principles of New Criticism and struggled in the dissemination of the school. He considered the approach of New Criticism to literature as the sole critical approach capable of defining the value of a literary work, raising literary taste and creating the ability to distinguish between what is artistic and non-artistic.⁵⁰⁶

In 1959, Rushdī co-wrote *Madhāhib al-naqd al-adabī* (trends of literary criticism) with Suhayr al-Qalamāwī, Muḥammad Ghunaymī Hilāl and Muḥammad Mandūr. Rushdī was responsible for the first two chapters of the book; the first was on the nineteenth-century critical schools in which he criticises the critical methods that were predominant before New Criticism and quotes Eliot's criticism of them.⁵⁰⁷ In the second he identifies the differences between New Criticism as a school that was interested in literary traditions, and Romanticism which was a revolution against traditions and interested in individual feelings.⁵⁰⁸ He explains Eliot's essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent" and his views on many literary issues, particularly Romanticism and literary traditions.⁵⁰⁹ Rushdī's discussion of the New Critics'

⁵⁰⁵ Rāghib, *Rashād Rushdī*, p. 4.

⁵⁰⁶ Samīr Sarḥān, *al-Naqd al-mawḍūʿī* (Cairo: Dār al-jīl, n d), preface.

⁵⁰⁷ Rashād Rushdī, Suhayr al-Qalamāwī and Muḥammad Mandūr, *Madhāhib al-naqd al-adabī* (Cairo: al-Dār al-qawmiyya li al-ṭibāʿa wa al-nashr, 1959), pp. 3-9.

⁵⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁵⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 10-15.

ideas is brief, because the book is an educational text and very small (55 pages). Rushdī wrote the first 15 pages, and the rest of the book focused on other critical schools. However, the importance of this book was that it declared the first avid Arab supporter of New Criticism, and provoked a long literary disagreement between Rushdī and both Muḥammad Mandūr who was a Realistic critic and Muḥammad Ghunaymī Hilāl who was a Romantic.⁵¹⁰

In the same year, Rushdī issued his book *Fann al-qīṣṣa al-qaṣīra* which was an application of the New Critical principles including the idea of organic unity, literature as non-paraphraseable and the objective correlative.⁵¹¹ He drew on Cleanth Brooks's and Robert Penn Warren's *Understanding Fiction* in which they aim at explaining how to read fiction⁵¹² and analyse, throughout the book, many stories showing the traditions of fiction. Similarly, Rushdī applies the same method in studying many stories, none of which are Arabic, and some of which had been analysed in *Understanding Fiction* without any addition.⁵¹³

Throughout his career, Rushdī published many other books aiming at spreading New Criticism. He rejected what the New Critics had rejected. The initial step that critics must take in the critical process, he declares, is to abandon their previous passions, attitudes and ideas toward the literary work they want to study. Otherwise, they would see their own ideas and attitude in the work rather than the work itself.⁵¹⁴ Additionally, there is no relationship between the personality of an author of literature, his/her culture or ideology, and his/her literary work; it is independent of the author.⁵¹⁵ He rejects Impressionistic criticism, Romanticism and the Marxist School as well, arguing that they cannot study the nature of literature.⁵¹⁶ Almost all New Critical concepts were employed in Rushdī's works, especially

⁵¹⁰ Mandūr did not distinguish between New Criticism and Art for Art's Sake deeming both of them empty of meaning and mere formal criticism. Muḥammad Mandūr, *Ma'ārik adabiyya* (Cairo: Dār al-nahḍa li al-ṭibā' a wa al-nashr, n d), pp. 62-71.

⁵¹¹ Rashād Rushdī, *Fann al-qīṣṣa al-qaṣīra* (Beirut: Dār al-^cawda, 1959).

⁵¹² Brooks and Warren, *Understanding Fiction*, p. 1.

⁵¹³ For instance Rushdī's analysis of Luigi Pirandello's War pp. 83-96 is heavily based on Brooks's and Warren's analysis in *Understanding poetry* pp. 165-173. Rashād Rushdī, *Fann al-qīṣṣa al-qaṣīra*, pp. 83-96.

⁵¹⁴ Rashād Rushdī, *Maqālāt fī al-naqd al-adabī* (Cairo, Maktabat al-Anglo al-miṣriyya, 1962), p. 5, pp. 48-49.

⁵¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁵¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

organic structure⁵¹⁷ and paradox which he emphasised as necessary to study in a critical process in order to reveal the unity of a literary work.⁵¹⁸

There are a few issues related to Rushdī's criticism which have not been discussed in previous studies⁵¹⁹ and which need to be clarified. Rushdī's use of New Criticism sprang from his knowledge of English literature and criticism as a specialist in English literature, not from his familiarity with Arabic literature. Therefore, he had never analysed or applied his theoretical concepts to an Arabic poem and his criticism was mostly theoretical. He applied it only to stories, few of them in Arabic. Additionally, Rushdī's discussions rely on examples from English literature such as Ernest Hemingway, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (in his discussion of the objective correlative,⁵²⁰ which is Eliot's typical example), along with many other in *Mā huwa al-adab?*. His total reliance on New Criticism seems contradictory with the New Critics' idea about literary traditions that he repeatedly quotes and explains. He repeats Eliot's and other New Critics' stress that literary talent is not enough to create great literature, but talent should be supported by the full knowledge of literary traditions and former writers of the language and culture in which poets write.⁵²¹ Rushdī's definition of literary traditions in Arabic was based on the history of Western literature, in particular English literature, without giving room to any Arabic poet, and when he points to Aristotle he never includes his influence on classical Arabic literary thought or philosophy.⁵²² This is due to Rushdī's specialism in English literature; his knowledge of Arabic literature was shallow.

Another contradiction resulted from the fact that Rushdī introduces New Criticism as a cohesive school which it was not; meanwhile he adopts almost all of the New Critics' concepts, although some of them are not in harmony with others. For example, Rushdī heavily relies on Eliot's view that what appears in poetry is different from the poet's psychology and feelings, adding that the more separate poetry from the poet's feelings the

⁵¹⁷ Rashād Rushdī, *al-Naqd wa al-naqd al-adabī* (Beirut: Dār al-^cawda, 1971), pp. 40-41.

⁵¹⁸ Rashād Rushdī, *Naẓariyyat al-drāmā min Ārisṭū ilā al-ān* (Beirut: Dār al-^cawda, 1975), p. 196.

⁵¹⁹ About the previous studies see pp. 10-11.

⁵²⁰ Rashād Rushdī, *Maqālāt fī al-naqd al-adabī*, p. 62.

⁵²¹ T. S. Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent", *Selected Essays* (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1972) pp. 13-14.

⁵²² Rushdī, *Maqālāt fī al-naqd al-adabī*, pp. 39-40.

better the poetry. Rushdī translates many of Eliot's statements about this.⁵²³ At the same time, he espouses Richards's argument that poets compromise or stabilise their psychological and emotional impulses and feelings through their poetry. In return, literary works compromise the readers' impulses.⁵²⁴ How is it that literary works transfer the psychological processes that happen in the author's mind to the reader, and yet the work and the process remain at the same time separate? This confusion resulted from the fact that Rushdī did not explain the difference between Eliot and Richards, regarding their treatment of thought and feeling. Eliot asserted that "a poem is a fusion of thought and feeling",⁵²⁵ which means that feeling is part of the literary object and cannot be embodied outside literature. Richards "from the first has endeavored to maintain a careful distinction between the emotional state produced in the reader (the balance of impulses...) and the means used to produce this emotional state."⁵²⁶ Richards, therefore, stresses the need for two theories; first, to study the effect of literature, which he calls theory of value;⁵²⁷ second, a theory of communication to analyse literary work.⁵²⁸

Additionally, Rushdī does not explain that many New Critics rejected Richards's attitude mentioned above. Ransom reveals that Richards's argument of balanced poise is "not only a mere hypothetical, but that this particular hypothesis, if accepted, would destroy criticism. For if the balanced poise is, as Richards says it is, in our response and not at all in the structure of the stimulating object, then the labour of criticism in analysing the poetic object is vain."⁵²⁹ It is also vain, Ransom adds, for the poet to put "his poem into shape; and what the proper shape would be we are not likely to know..."⁵³⁰ Relevantly, Rushdī never mentioned the later changes that occurred in some of the New Critics' viewpoints on literature, such as Eliot's later consideration of social and religious judgments in criticism;

⁵²³ Ibid., pp. 64-65, *Mā huwa al-adab?*, pp. 1-2.

⁵²⁴ *Maqālāt fī al-naqd al-adabī*, p. 69; *Mā huwa al-adab?*, pp. 37-39.

⁵²⁵ Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism*, p. 623.

⁵²⁶ Ibid., p. 623.

⁵²⁷ Richards. *Principles of Literary Criticism*, p. 44.

⁵²⁸ Ibid., p. 175.

⁵²⁹ Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism*, p. 620.

⁵³⁰ Ransom, *The New Criticism*, p. 32.

Leavis's preference for cultural studies; Yvor Winters's turn to moral criticism; and Kenneth Burke's turn to interdisciplinary theoretical systems.⁵³¹

What is more, Rushdī influenced some of his students who were specialists in English literature first in Cairo and then in Britain or America. Those included Samīr Sarḥān, Muḥammad °Anānī, °Abd al-°Azīz Ḥammūda and Māhir Shafīq Farīd. They published books on the New Critics' principles, mostly very small, under Rushdī's supervision. Sarḥān wrote a book titled *al-Naqd al-Mawḏū°ī* (objective criticism) in which he briefly tracked the development of objective criticism, starting with Matthew Arnold who was the first to call for an objective criticism. Sarḥān then displays the impersonal theory as it appeared in the New Critics' writings particularly those of Eliot, pointing out that Arnold's criticism was still based on socio-political perspectives which were eliminated by the New Critics.⁵³² °Anānī wrote *al-Naqd al-taḥlīlī* (analytical criticism) to discuss Cleanth Brooks's argument that literature, on the one hand, enlightens people about the nature of life and themselves, on the other hand, knowledge that results from literature is different from scientific knowledge.⁵³³ °Anānī goes with the aspects of criticism according to Brooks, especially his stress on analytical method and the independence of literature from history.⁵³⁴ What distinguished this book is that the author applied the theoretical concepts that he explains to a short poem by Aḥmad °Abd al-Mu°ḥī Hijāzī.⁵³⁵ This was the first and as far as I know the sole Arabic poem analysed throughout Rushdī's and his student's New Critical project. As late as 1983, °Anānī published a textbook titled *al-Adab wa funūnuh* (literature and its arts) which was totally based on New Criticism.⁵³⁶ The book is an introduction to literary thought along with its basic terms and genres.⁵³⁷ One would suppose that such a book should have attempted to show various approaches to literature as long as its aim was not to explain New Criticism, but rather to set

⁵³¹ See p. 94 of this thesis.

⁵³² Samīr Sarḥān, *al-Naqd al-Mawḏū°ī*, pp. 11-12.

⁵³³ Muḥammad °Anānī, *al-Naqd al-taḥlīlī* (Cairo: al-Hay'a al-miṣriyya al-°amma li al-kitāb, 1990), pp. 12-13.

⁵³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁵³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 119-126.

⁵³⁶ Muḥammad °Anānī, *al-Adab wa funūnuh* (Cairo: al-Hay'a al-miṣriyya al-°amma li al-kitāb, 2010), p. 8

⁵³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

out literary thought, terms and genres in general. The author rejected what is typically rejected by the New Critics and avoided schools which appeared after New Criticism, although the book was issued after the appearance of many new critical methods.

°Abd al-°Azīz Ḥammūda published °*Ilm al-jamāl wa al-naqd al-ḥadīth* (aesthetics and modern criticism) in which he concentrates on the influence of Benedetto Croce on New Criticism particularly its attitudes to the independence of literature, the difference between scientific and literary knowledge and unity of literature.⁵³⁸ Finally, Māhir Shafīq Farīd issued in 1970 *al-Naqd al-injlīzī al-ḥadīth* (modern English criticism) which displayed English and American critical schools including New Criticism. The author discusses many critical methods briefly and then states his preference for the New Critics' principles and their formal-objective method over other schools, particularly Romanticism.⁵³⁹

II.4. °Izz al-Dīn Ismā°īl

During his academic career, Ismā°īl moved among several literary schools and concepts, such as aesthetics,⁵⁴⁰ psychology,⁵⁴¹ ideology⁵⁴² and analytical method in his *al-Shi°r al-°arabī al-mu°āšir*. The latter aims at studying aspects of modern Arabic poetry. The author concentrates on many important phenomena of modern Arabic poetry in terms of theory and application. Those include the relationship with heritage, the new pattern of meter and rhyme, poetic images and symbols, ambiguity, the employment of both legend and dramatic aspects in modern poetry, along with the poetic contents. This book was of

⁵³⁸ Ḥammūda became well known for both his review of the use of Western critical schools, which appeared after new criticism, by modern Arabic critics, and for his looking for critical alternatives within the Arabic critical tradition. In his book *al-Marāyā al-muḥaddaba* (Convex Mirrors) he strongly criticises the use of western modernist schools in the Arab world since the ideas held about these schools are larger than their reality. In other words, these approaches loom larger in modern Arabic criticism than they should be. This meaning can be inferred from the title of the book Convex Mirrors where the image in these mirrors is larger than the object itself. This is to say that modern Arab critics are extremely fascinated by Western critical schools. Throughout the book, he compares New Criticism to subsequent schools, revealing that it is the origin of them. Ḥammūda, *al-Marāyā al-muḥaddaba*, pp. 138-139. About his other book *al-Marāyā al-muq°ara* (Concave Mirrors) see footnote num. 216.

⁵³⁹ Māhir Shafīq Farīd, *al-Naqd al-injlīzī al-ḥadīth* (Cairo: al-Hay'a al-mišriyya al-°āma li al-kitāb, 1970).

⁵⁴⁰ °Izz al-Dīn Ismā°īl, *al-Usus al-jamāliyya fī al-naqd al-°arabī: °Arḍ wa tafsi°r wa muqārana* (Cairo: Dār al-fikr al-°arabī, 1955).

⁵⁴¹ °Izz al-Dīn Ismā°īl, *al-Tafsi°r al-nafsī li al-adab* (Cairo: Dār al-ma°ārif, 1963).

⁵⁴² °Izz al-Dīn Ismā°īl, *al-Shi°r fī iṭār al-°ašr al-thawrī* (Beirut: Dār al-qalam, 1974).

significance because it is thorough and analyses various poetic examples particularly regarding new poetic phenomena like dramatic aspects and the use of legend in modern poetry.⁵⁴³

He employs some of the New Critics' concepts among others in his analysis particularly those of Richards and Eliot. His argument about the new pattern of modern poetry relies heavily on Richards's psychological understanding of poetic influence. The new poetic meter, Ismā'īl argues, immediately yields to the feelings and psychological situation of the poet. A poem is a musical image that organises our scattered feelings and emotions; we are satisfied by the work of literature only because it organises our emotions and integrates them within a unified framework. The work, then, transfers the balanced feeling to the reader.⁵⁴⁴ Ismā'īl here explains the new metrical form according to Richards's view on poetry in general which includes all components of poetry. Thus Ismā'īl's argument seems hypothetical and abstract, and does not explain how this works. What makes this more complicated is that he looks at the psychological influence of new poetic meters as the aesthetic basis of modern poetry which differentiates it from classical poetry.⁵⁴⁵ In my opinion, this is more applicable to classical poetry than to modern poetry which replaces the lyrical aspects, including the obvious musical impact of reciting poetry, with new aesthetic means such as the use of dramatic aspects, symbols and legends. Additionally, he counts poetic meter and rhyme the most essential part of aesthetic poetic value.⁵⁴⁶ This underestimates all poetic means and values and makes them inferior to meter and rhyme, and does not include prose poems as part of modern poetry.

In his discussion of poetic image, Ismā'īl stresses the idea that emotion and thought cannot be separate from the poetic image which they embody. "Emotion in poetry", he argues, "is the image; both of them are one thing."⁵⁴⁷ He reiterates the unity of the poem which is thus

⁵⁴³ 'Izz al-Dīn Ismā'īl, *al-Shi'r al-ʿarabī al-mu'āṣir: Qaḍāyāhu wa ḥawāhiruhu al-fanniyya wa al-ma'nawiyya* (Beirut: Dār al-ʿawda, 1966), pp. 195-222, 278-322.

⁵⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 63-64.

⁵⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

⁵⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 65, 124.

⁵⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

non-rephraseable because normal language makes the poem lose its components and unity.⁵⁴⁸ Influenced by Eliot, the author argues that emotion and thought are one unity in poetry, where emotion echoes human experience and thought represents its objective framework that embodies emotion.⁵⁴⁹ However, Ismā'īl returns and separates poetic content from form. He discusses in the third section of his book the meanings that appear in modern poetry separate from the poetic structure. Evidently, this is contradictory with his stress on the unity of poetic form and content.

Additionally, Ismā'īl's reliance on William Empson's *Seven Types of Ambiguity* in his discussion of poetic ambiguity is considerable. He quotes Empson's differentiation between obscurity which results from the syntax and structure of the sentence and ambiguity that is an imaginative description related to thought and emotion.⁵⁵⁰ Ambiguity is an essential part of poetic beauty which comes from the mythical references used in poetry, poetic symbols and metaphor that deal with objects illogically.⁵⁵¹ The author's tackling of poetic ambiguity is merely theoretical, relying on Empson's argument without explaining poetic examples or discussing how to comprehend poetry.

II.5. Ilyās Khūrī

Ilyās Khūrī's general outlook on the study of literature relies in part on the Marxist perspective, counting literature as a part of the ideology of a society, where ideology forms its cultural superstructure.⁵⁵² Critical study, Khūrī argues, should put literature within its social and cultural framework.⁵⁵³ However, his approach to modern Arabic literature in general and poetry in particular maintains formal literary interests, which are similar to many of the New

⁵⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 193.

⁵⁴⁹ Ibid., pp. 280-281.

⁵⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 189-190.

⁵⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 191-192.

⁵⁵² Similar to Khūrī, Khaldūn al-Sham^ca followed theoretically the New Critics' formal ideas in his book *al-Shams wa al-^canqā'* (the sun and phoenix). Later in his book, he pointed out that art and literature reflect the nature, problems and development of society. Khaldūn al-Sham^ca, *al-Shams wa al-^canqā'*: *Dirāsa fī al-manhaj wa al-naẓariyya wa al-taṭbīq* (Damascus: Itiḥād al-kuttāb al-^carab, 1974), pp. 56-57.

⁵⁵³ Ilyās Khūrī, *Dirāsāt fī naqd al-shi^cr* (Beirut: Dār ibn rushd, 1979), p. 5.

Critics' concepts. Although this seems contradictory with his Marxist viewpoint, both Marxist and formal aspects of Khūrī's works are in harmony. The critical process, according to Khūrī, consists of two stages: the first is to read and evaluate the literary work itself along with its structural and emotional components, the second is to link the work to both the general literary form, which is part of ideology, and to social experience.⁵⁵⁴ Hence the concept of literature, for Khūrī, is more than formal interests, though literature first should be investigated in and for itself in order to identify it properly and accordingly continue the critical process.

What is more notable in Khūrī's formal approach is his reliance on literary work, its form and artistic means, not according to a previous or ready theory. In other words, he does not espouse a specific formal theory of criticism (as New Criticism) and apply it to poetry, rather he analyses components of poetry itself. However, he was influenced by some analytical techniques of New Criticism particularly making contradictions compromise with each other, and close reading, which was the essential base of Khūrī's criticism.⁵⁵⁵ Although he does not follow the New Critics' theoretical concepts, he extracts from Arabic poetry a few similar concepts to New Criticism including unity of a poem, non-paraphraseability of poetry and the essential role of poetic image and symbol in the structure of poetry. He attempted to characterise modern Arabic poetry by analysing poetry itself and comparing it with classical poetry in order to show its ingenuity. This, in my view, is an excellent way of dealing with a new poetic movement since it examines the new phenomenon immediately and does not force it to be compatible with an already existing theory. Despite Khūrī's Marxist view, he does not investigate the new poetic movement in terms of his ideology, but applies his Marxist beliefs after his literary analysis. Khūrī's analysis is rich in the details of the modern poetic movement and explores the most important of its phenomena including poetic image, symbol,

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 5-6, and *al-Dhākira al-mafqūda: Dirāsāt naqdiyya* (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-abhāth al-^carabiyya, 1982), p. 9.

⁵⁵⁵ Khūrī, *Dirāsāt fī naqd al-shi'r*, p. 20.

dramatic aspects, structure of long poem, rhythm and poetic unity along with what is unsuitable to modern poetry such as Romantic expression.⁵⁵⁶

His analysis of the unity of al-Sayyāb's poem *Unshūdat al-maṭar* is based on the relationships between the poem's symbols, legends, emotion and attitudes, which are in harmony with each other, though some of these elements seem contradictory.⁵⁵⁷ The symbols that appear contradictory include: Ishtar⁵⁵⁸ and her shadows throughout the poem, the mother who died but goes on dwelling in a tomb, light and darkness, rain and dryness, fertility and hunger, children and slaves. They, Khūrī argues, represent a combat within the life cycle and a struggle for human salvation, which is corrupted by darkness, enslavement and death amongst other things. The life cycle is shown through the structure of the poem, which begins with the image of life in Ishtar's eyes, though she is not mentioned explicitly, then she disappears, allowing the dead mother, hunger, darkness and useless rain to take over the scene.⁵⁵⁹ The continuous rain and calling for new life ultimately lead to Ishtar's return to predominance and to a new birth. Khūrī also analysed the overlapping relationship between symbols, rhythm and structure, arguing that poetic meaning cannot be identified separately from the poetic structure and form, because it loses the duality and complexity that appear in the entire body of the poem.⁵⁶⁰

Furthermore, the symbols in the poem are not statements and do not represent specific cases and attitudes, rather their form is identified according to their poetic context. For instance, rain has various meanings throughout the poem; when it appears in Ishtar's eyes, it shakes nature in order to give a new life, birth and fertility. Rain, however, represents a different meaning when Ishtar disappears; it becomes an odd sound in gutters, an ugly image in the mother's tomb, a terrifying feeling in the snake hole. Water in the Gulf gives rise to pearls and to shellfish and death, thus it might echo motherland and foreignness. This

⁵⁵⁶ Khūrī showed this through his analysis of many poems by al-Sayyāb, Adūnīs and Maḥmūd Darwīsh in his book. *Dirāsāt fī naqd al-shiʿr*.

⁵⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 36-37.

⁵⁵⁸ The Assyrian and Babylonian goddess of fertility, love and sex.

⁵⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 36-39.

⁵⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

pluralism is harmonious with the complex image of life in the poem, which is unified through plurality. The plurality, poetic symbols, dramatic aspects and multiple viewpoints in the poem, reveal that the Romantic form of poetry is exceeded and becomes insufficient to express such a complex type of poetry.⁵⁶¹

Additionally, Khūrī's analysis of the poem's symbols calls to mind Eliot's objective correlative. Life issues, meanings and attitudes, Khūrī argues, are expressed through symbols, which are distant and separate from their references, though not totally, and thus cannot be read according to reality and historical truth. Moreover, they do not describe reality pragmatically, rather they should be looked at as poetic means and according to their poetic context.⁵⁶² This shows that Marxist critical theory has nothing to do with reading and analysing poetry in Khūrī's works. Its work is appropriated to deal with the outcome of the reading process. After his analysis of al-Sayyāb's poem, therefore, Khūrī positions the poem within his poetry and within modern Arabic poetry along with its historical reference. He points out that this poem is a resurrection poem, which represents the Arab people's dream of revival and revolution in the 1950s. This dream manifests as a revival demand that was expressed as Ishtar and fertile symbols, struggling against dryness and darkness.⁵⁶³

II.6. Muḥammad Zakī al-^cAshmāwī

Al-^cAshmāwī's interests include classical and modern Arabic literature and criticism. He employs a few ideas of the New Critics both in theory and application, which raise a few literary issues within his works. He argues that a work of literature is unified including its images, feelings and experience,⁵⁶⁴ as it is organic unity in which every element is essential for the rest of the work.⁵⁶⁵ Similar to Eliot, al-^cAshmāwī says that thought and emotion are fused in literature. Accordingly, thought, philosophical and social content cannot be separate

⁵⁶¹ Ibid., p. 28.

⁵⁶² Ibid., p. 17.

⁵⁶³ Ibid., p. 58.

⁵⁶⁴ Muḥammad Zakī al-^cAshmāwī, *Dirāsāt fī al-naqd al-mu^cāṣir* (Beirut: Dār al-nahḍa al-^carabiyya, 1983), pp. 300-301.

⁵⁶⁵ Muḥammad Zakī al-^cAshmāwī, *al-Ru'yā al-mu^cāṣira fī al-adab wa al-naqd* (Beirut: Dār al-nahḍa al-^carabiyya, 1983), pp. 18-19.

from their literary vehicle and the artistic value of both form and content comes from their overlapped relationships.⁵⁶⁶ Nevertheless, he differentiates in his studies between literary form and content, concentrating mostly on meaning and history. In his studies of classical poetry, he focuses mainly on meanings, poets' psychologies and their attitudes towards many historical issues like tribe and society.⁵⁶⁷

Additionally, al-^cAshmāwī asserts that meanings and subjects have no artistic value by themselves; rather they obtain this value from the writer's individuality and experience.⁵⁶⁸ This is similar to Romantic thought which was severely rejected by the New Critics. However, when he discusses the objective idea of literature, he attempts to compromise his romantic individuality with it. When literary experience, he argues, is complete, writers forget themselves and the gulf between subject and object disappears. Therefore, "there is no contradiction at all between this viewpoint and Eliot's and his group's objective perspective."⁵⁶⁹ Despite his saying this, his approach to literature throughout his works was clearly Romantic. He built his analysis of poetry on the poet's psychology, suffering and emotion, such as his study of Abū Nuwās.⁵⁷⁰ Relevantly, al-^cAshmāwī employs Eliot's objective criticism many times in his books, including his integration of thought and emotion⁵⁷¹ and his stress on the idea of awareness of tradition and heritage. Regarding the latter, al-^cAshmāwī explicitly follows Eliot, arguing that writers are required to be aware of the past in their present. Writers are aware, in the process of creating, of not only the

⁵⁶⁶ Muḥammad Zakī al-^cAshmāwī, *al-Adab wa qiyam al-ḥayā al-mu^cāšira* (Beirut: Dār al-nahḍa al-^carabiyya, 1980), pp. 311-312.

⁵⁶⁷ See: Muḥammad Zakī al-^cAshmāwī, *al-Nābigha al-Dhubyanī* (Cairo: Maktabat al-dirāsāt al-adabiyya, 1960), and *Mawqif al-shi^cr min al-fann wa al-ḥayā fī al-^caṣr al-^cabbāsī* (Beirut: Dār al-nahḍa al-^carabiyya, 1981).

⁵⁶⁸ Muḥammad Zakī al-^cAshmāwī, *Qaḍāyā al-naqd al-adabī bayn al-qadīm wa al-ḥadīth* (Beirut: Dār al-nahḍa al-^carabiyya, 1984), p. 32.

⁵⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁵⁷⁰ *Mawqif al-shi^cr min al-fann wa al-ḥayā fī al-^caṣr al-^cabbāsī*, p. 190. Abū Nuwās (756-810), one of the well-known classical Arab poets, was born in Ahvaz, Iran to an Arab father and a Persian mother. He grew up in Basra, Iraq and then moved to Baghdad where he enjoyed the patronage of Hārūn al-Rashīd and his son al-Amīn. He left behind traditional desert themes to deal with urban life and the pleasures of wine and drinking (*khamriyyāt*), and ribald humour (*mujūniyyat*). For further information see Philip F. Kennedy, *Abu Nuwas: A Genius of Poetry* (Oxford : Oneworld, 2007).

⁵⁷¹ Al-^cAshmāwī, *al-Adab wa qiyam al-ḥayā al-mu^cāšira*, p. 234.

contemporary writers, but also of those from the past. This historical sense, including the past and the present, is what makes a writer both traditional and innovative.⁵⁷²

Al-^cAshmāwī attempts to show that the modern formal critical account of the West, particularly of Eliot and Richards, is similar to the classical critical account of Arabic.⁵⁷³ He concentrates on al-Jurjānī's theory of *al-naẓm*⁵⁷⁴ which aims at explaining *i'jāz al-Qur'ān* (miracle of Qur'ān) and creates the basis of poetic criticism.⁵⁷⁵ Al-Jurjānī's theory is based on differentiating between the meaning of a word as a single element and its meaning in a structure or context. A word out of context carries an abstract meaning which might refer to various references and therefore it means nothing. This word obtains a concrete and specific meaning by the context in which it works, has complicated linkages to the constituents of the context and can be either correct or not.⁵⁷⁶ This is applicable to metaphors, similes and other means of expression.⁵⁷⁷ Syntax, in al-Jurjānī's theory, exists not only to regularise forms of speech, rather it plays an essential role in comprehending meanings and in analysing the components of speech.⁵⁷⁸ Accordingly, al-Jurjānī unifies content and form as what gives meaning is the context and the structure of speech and both meaning and form are produced together at the same moment.⁵⁷⁹ Furthermore, al-Jurjānī analyses many examples including poetry, which shows that meaning, in his theory, does not mean general thought, wisdom, morality or philosophy, rather it meant specific images of thought, emotion and voices within specific contexts.⁵⁸⁰ Al-^cAshmāwī follows this with many statements by Eliot and Richards

⁵⁷² Ibid., p. 194.

⁵⁷³ Al-^cAshmāwī, *Qaḍāyā al-naqd al-adabī al-mu'āšir*, p. 320.

⁵⁷⁴ Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī (d. 1078) is a renowned Persian scholar of Arabic language and rhetoric, a grammarian and a literary theorist. He was born in Gorgan in which he remained throughout his life. His most famous contribution was his theory of *al-naẓm*. Al-Jurjānī explained the theory of *al-naẓm* in his two well-known books *Asrār al-balāghah* (Secrets of Rhetoric), and *Dalā'il al-I'jāz* (Intimations of Inimitability). It is a theory related to syntax, rhetoric and meaning by which al-Jurjānī attempts to prove that the miracle of the Qur'ān is based on its entire structure and the overlapping relationships of the text components. For further information see Kamal Abu Deeb, *Al-Jurjānī's Theory of Poetic Imagery* (Warminster : Aris and Phillips, 1979).

⁵⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 302.

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 303.

⁵⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 345.

⁵⁷⁸ Ibid., pp. 313-314.

⁵⁷⁹ Ibid., pp. 316-317.

⁵⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 328.

showing their similarity with al-Jurjānī's theory, such as their interests in unity of form and content and the importance of context.⁵⁸¹

However, al-°Ashmāwī in this comparison did not highlight the context of al-Jurjānī's study, which aims at introducing his theory on 'the miracle of the Qur'ān' as based on its structure and context.⁵⁸² Thus the author did not differentiate between poetic meaning and other kinds of meanings including Qur'ānic ones. Although al-°Ashmāwī celebrates al-Jurjānī, he criticises him for not focusing enough on issues of poetic voice, meter and rhythm.⁵⁸³ Thus al-Jurjānī, he adds, could not use the language method completely as modern critics and linguists do.⁵⁸⁴ I believe this criticism is invalid since it, on the one hand, did not take into account that al-Jurjānī's main preoccupation was not merely poetic, rather it was about the relationship of words and speech to meaning and theological interpretation, and it was a reaction to the theological perspective of *al-Mu°tazila* (an Islamic theological movement) on the Qur'ān.⁵⁸⁵ On the other hand, it is unrealistic to require a critic or linguist of a thousand years ago to be similar to and achieve what modern critics and linguists have done with the help of scientific developments.

II.7. Translations

Many of the New Critics' works have been translated into Arabic since the early 1950s. This movement of translation relied on individuals, thus it has been random in terms of the chosen works for translation. Eliot's works of both poetry and criticism should be excepted; most of his works were translated many times, due to the particular interest in him shown by Arab poets and critics. Rashād Rushdī translated three of Eliot's essays: "Tradition and the Individual Talent," "The Function of Criticism," and "Poetry and Philosophy." While translating most of the first essay which was the most referred to in Arabic criticism, Rushdī

⁵⁸¹ Ibid., pp. 320-328 and 332-336.

⁵⁸² °Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī, *Dalā'il al-i°jāz*, ed. Maḥmūd Shākir (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, n d.), p. 9.

⁵⁸³ Al-°Ashmāwī, *Qaḍāyā al-naqd al-adabī al-mu°āṣir*, p. 329.

⁵⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 373.

⁵⁸⁵ See the editor's introduction to *Dalā'il al-i°jāz*, pp. (° - °).

summed up the last two concentrating on the idea of objectivity and that critics should separate literary works from the outside world.⁵⁸⁶ In 1963, Laṭīfa al-Zayyāt translated several of Eliot's essays including those which had been translated by Rushdī.⁵⁸⁷ Since then, many of Eliot's essays and books have been translated in journals and books, most notably a huge book of three volumes translated by Māhir Shafīq Farīd.⁵⁸⁸ Furthermore, many of Eliot's poems have been translated by others including Yūsuf al-Khāl both in *Majallat Shi'ar* and in his book *Mukhtārāt min al-shi'ar al-amarīkī* (anthology of American poetry) along with the translation of many studies about Eliot.⁵⁸⁹

Another important translation is Richards's *Science and Poetry* in 1960 and *Principles of Literary Criticism* in 1963 by Muḥammad Muṣṭafā Badawī. Both are referred to by many Arab critics with respect to Richards's views on language, aesthetics and literary value, particularly as they are well-translated and offering precise psychological and literary idioms.⁵⁹⁰ In addition, there are Arabic translations of several books that show the approach of the New Critics towards modern poetic trends. These books are; Stanley Edgar Hyman's *The Armed Vision* translated by Iḥsān °Abbās and Muḥammad Yūsuf Najm in 1960; William Van O'Connor's *An Age of Criticism* translated by Ṣalāḥ Aḥmad Ibrāhīm in 1960; seven essays of Allen Tate's *Collected Essays* which consists of forty essays translated by °Abd al-Ruḥmān Yāghī in 1961, though the translator did not elucidate that the translated essays are only part of the book;⁵⁹¹ M. L. Rosenthal's *The Modern Poets: A Critical Introduction* translated by Jamīl al-Ḥusnī in 1963; Wimsatt's and Brooks's *Literary Criticism: A Short History* translated by Ḥusām al-Khaṭīb and Muḥyī al-Dīn Ṣubḥī in 1973; Rene Wellek's and

⁵⁸⁶ *Mukhtārāt min al-naqd al-adabī al-mu'āṣir*, pp. 45-59.

⁵⁸⁷ *Maqālāt fī al-naqd al-adabī*, tr. Laṭīfa al-Zayyāt (Cairo: Maktabat al-anglo al-miṣriyya, 1963).

⁵⁸⁸ *Al-Mukhtār min naqd T. S. Eliot*, tr. Māhir Shafīq Farīd (Cairo: al-Majlis al-°lā li al-thaqāfa, 2000).

⁵⁸⁹ This includes; F. O. Mattiessen's *The Achievements of T. S. Eliot*, translated by Iḥsān °Abbās in 1965; Fā'iq Mattā's *Eliot*, translated by the author in 1966; Raymond Williams's *Drama from Ibsen to Eliot*, translated by Fāyiz Iskandar in 1967, and *T. S. Eliot, Critic and Dramatist: A Collection of Critical Essays* by various contributors, translated by Māhir Shafīq Farīd in 2001.

⁵⁹⁰ The two books were reissued in one volume with an introduction by the translator in 2005. See *Mabādi' al-naqd al-adabī wa al-°ilm wa al-shi'ar* (Cairo: al-Majlis al-°lā li al-thaqāfa, 2005).

⁵⁹¹ Translated as *Dirāsāt fī al-naqd* (Beirut: Maktabat al-ma'ārif, 1961).

Austin Warren's *Theory of Literature* translated by Muḥyī al-Dīn Ṣubḥī in 1985⁵⁹² and F. R. Leavis's *New Bearings in English Poetry* translated by °Abd al-Sattār Jawād in 1987.

What is notable in the above survey is that the majority of these translations are mainly about Eliot and the attitude of the New Critics towards modern poetic movements, particularly those that were translated in the early 1960s, which reflects the importance of Eliot's legacy regarding the modern poetic movement (in addition to the fascination with him mentioned above) and the need of Arab critics to have a new approach to studying modern poetry in Arabic. Furthermore, there seem to be a lack of educational and analytical studies, the most distinct features of the New Critics, though the translated books contain much poetic analysis. Only Richards's *Principles of Literary Criticism*⁵⁹³ is educational and analytical; in addition two further books came out very late; Wellek's and Warren's *Theory of Literature* in 1985 and William Empson's *Seven Types of Ambiguity* translated by Ṣabrī Muḥammad Ḥasan in 2000. Other books such as Richards's *Analytical Criticism* and Brooks's and Warren's *Understanding Poetry* among many others have not been translated yet.

Additionally, although the main critical idioms of the New Critics were translated and used properly by Rashād Rushdī in his translation of Eliot's essays and by Muḥammad Muṣṭafā Dadawī in his translation of Richards's *Science and Poetry* and *Principals of Literary Criticism*, there are terminological problems in other translations. "The genetic fallacy", which points to criticism that is based on information about the sources of literature such as its history, place and author, was translated by Ṣalāḥ Ibrāhīm as *al-mughālaṭa al-asāsiyya*⁵⁹⁴ meaning the basic or fundamental fallacy; it should be translated as *al-mughālaṭa al-nushū'iyya*. In the same book Ibrāhīm translated "the affective fallacy" and "the intentional fallacy" as *al-mughālaṭa al-mutakallaḥa* and *al-mughālaṭa al-muta°ammada* successively.⁵⁹⁵ The first means faked or forced fallacy; the correct term would be *al-mughālaṭa al-*

⁵⁹² This book was translated again by °Ādil Salāma in 1992.

⁵⁹³ Edmund Wilson's *Axel's Castle* translated by Jabrā Ibrāhīm Jabrā in 1979 can be added as it is based on poetic analysis though not according to New Criticism.

⁵⁹⁴ O'Connor, *al-Naqd al-adabī*, tr. Ṣalāḥ Ibrāhīm (Beirut: Dār ṣādir li al-ṭibā°a wa al-nashr, 1960), p. 255.

⁵⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 245-246.

ta'thīriyya. The second means the intended fallacy; the accurate term is *mughālaṭat al-niyya* or *al-qaṣḍiyya*. Additionally, Ibrāhīm translated objective correlative as *al-tabādul al-mawḍū'ī*⁵⁹⁶ which should be *al-mu'ādil al-mawḍū'ī* or *al-badīl al-mawḍū'ī* as Jamīl al-Ḥasnī used it in his translation of Rosenthal's *The Modern Poets*.⁵⁹⁷

In their translation of Hyman's *The Armed Vision*, °Abbās and Najm translated Eliot's term "tradition" as *al-ittibā'iyya*⁵⁹⁸ which carries a negative connotation of imitating what is previously achieved. Eliot's term holds a positive meaning, i.e. the importance of tradition for new innovative writings which show and build upon what has already been written, incorporating it within their novelty. A better term would be *al-taqālīd* into which Rusḥdī had translated the English term in his translation of Eliot's "Tradition and the Individual Talent" nine years previously. Relevantly, °Abbās and Najm translated "cognitive content" as *al-muḥṭawā al-'irfānī* meaning gnosis or mystical knowledge; the accurate version is *almuḥṭawā al-idrākī*. They translated the "emotive or evocative meaning" of poetry, as the opposite of scientific meaning, as *al-ma'nanā al-bā'ithī aw al-ithārī*⁵⁹⁹ which is not clear at all; it should be *al-ma'nanā al-infī'ālī aw al-muthīr li al-shu'ūr*. Hyman's description of some of Blackmur's poetic analysis as "alive to every possibility of ambiguity" (p.-244), which means that his analysis is intensive and meticulous, was translated by the two translators as *lā madkhal li ghumūd fih*⁶⁰⁰ suggesting that Blackmur's analysis is clear which is not intended by the English origin. The correct translation is *mutanabbih li kulli ihtimālāt al-ghumūd*.

Additionally, there are problems in some translations resulting from not comprehending the context of the original text properly. °Abbās and Najm translated, in *The Armed Vision*, "the poet must be very conscious of the main current, which does not at all flow invariably through the most distinguished reputations" into

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid., 236. Other problems in this translation include; intellectual criticism translated as "*al-naqd al-dhihnī*" p. 235; metaphor, diction translated as "*al-majāz wa al-lugha*" p. 239; context translated as "naṣ" p. 248.

⁵⁹⁷ M. L. Rosenthal, *Shu'arā' al-mdrasa al-ḥadītha: Dirāsa naqdiyya*, tr. Jamīl al-Ḥasnī (Beirut: Mu'assasat franklīn li al-ṭibā'a wa al-nashr, 1963), p. 123.

⁵⁹⁸ Hyman, *al-Naqd al-adabī wa madārisuh al-ḥadītha*, tr. Iḥsān °Abbās, Muḥammad Yūsuf Najm (Beirut: Dār al-thaqāfa, 1960), vol. 1, p. 142.

⁵⁹⁹ Ibid., vol. 2, p. 120.

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid., vol. 2 p. 18.

"على الشاعر أن يكون واعيا على التيار الكبير الذي لا يغير مجراه أبدا خلال أفضاء المشهورين."⁶⁰¹

This translation means that the poet should recognise the main current which is represented only by the most famous poets, while the English sentence suggests that the main current is not necessarily presented by the famous poets. This problem, at times, led some translators to use vague words as for instance in translating "texture, tension, pseudo reference" as "*al-dībāja, al-infi'āl, al-istidlāl al-mutakallaf*" by Ṣalāḥ Ibrāhīm⁶⁰² in succession. While *al-dībāja* and *al-istidlāl al-mutakallaf* do not clarify the precise meaning of texture and pseudo reference, *al-infi'āl* is a misleading translation for tension.

Furthermore, the translation of Wellek's *Attack on Literature* by Ḥannā °Abbūd in 2000 has several problems, because the original text was translated sentence by sentence without considering the structural differences of the two languages. Mostly, the translator used very short sentences sequentially, which is stylistically odd in Arabic. Worst of all, °Abbūd translated many critical and literary idioms as literal words such as his translation of close reading as *al-qirā'a al-mughlaqa* which means "closed reading" and "the heresy of paraphrase" as *al-sharḥ al-harṭaqī*.⁶⁰³ In addition, there are a few parts of *The Armed Vision* omitted from the translation. The most important is the seventh chapter, "Christopher Caudwell and Marxist Criticism" (pp. 168-238), and twenty five lines from the next chapter on Blackmur, p. 245 along with a few other places.⁶⁰⁴ In °Abd al-Raḥmān Yāghī's translation of Allen Tate's *Collected Essays*, which included only seven essays out of forty seven as mentioned above, there are fifteen pages omitted from the second essay from 21-35.⁶⁰⁵ The missing pages described the linguistic concepts, particularly those of Morris, on which the rest of the essay is based; their omission makes Yāghī's translation of the essay completely

⁶⁰¹ P. 145.

⁶⁰² O'Connor, *al-Naqd al-adabī*, p. 254.

⁶⁰³ Wellek, *al-Hujūm °alā al-adab*, tr. Ḥannā °Abbūd (Damascus: al-Ahālī li al-ṭibā'c wa al-nashr, 2000), p. 161.

⁶⁰⁴ In the fifth volume of the translation of Wellek's huge book *A History of Literary Criticism*, there are 41 lines omitted from the Arabic version p. 399.

⁶⁰⁵ °Abd al-Raḥmān Yāghī, *Dirāsāt fī al-naqd*, p. 98.

incomprehensible.⁶⁰⁶ I do not think that these omissions are intended as there is no justification for them.

In conclusion, New Criticism appeared in Arabic criticism at the beginning of the second half of the twentieth century. The reason behind its late appearance compared to other Western schools was that most of the critics who were trained in the West went to France, and those who went to Britain and America were principally interested in Romanticism. Rashād Rushdī, along with a few of his students, was the first of those who studied in the West to espouse New Criticism. His primary motivation was his knowledge of the New Critics as he was a specialist in English literature and criticism. Rushdī's critical career, and to a great extent those of his students, relied completely on the New Critics and added no new critical views. Additionally, their literary theorisation was for the most part simplified and they very rarely applied it practically to Arabic literature.

Another important reason behind the use of New Criticism in the first half of the last century was the appearance of the *shī'r al-tafīla* movement with its new poetic features such as dramatic elements, long poems and legendary symbols. Furthermore, the influence of T. S. Eliot on several Arab poets and critics of that time led to the use of the New Critics. Iḥsān °Abbās was the first of all Arab critics to use New Criticism and Imagism in 1955, and this was very influential on his studies of Arabic poetry. He benefited most from the New Critics' analytical method; however he soon left the New Critics' principles as a result of his reliance on history and poets' biographies. Many Arab critics followed °Abbās in applying New Criticism to Arabic literature. The use of the New Critics' concepts by these Arab critics varies; the most successful was the use of contextual analyses found in Ilyās Khūrī's works and some of the works of °Izz al-Dīn Ismā'īl. Several critics exaggerated their reliance on the New Critics' theory in studying Arabic poetry. Examples of this included al-Nuwayhī's use of

⁶⁰⁶ See Tate, *Collected Essays*, pp. 35-48.

Eliot's account of poetic rhythm and normal speech and °Izz al-Dīn Ismā'īl's discussion of poetic ambiguity without the use of examples from Arabic poetry.

Regarding translations of the New Critics' works into Arabic, although many works have been translated from the first half of the twentieth century, translation has been the work of individuals and thus the translation movement has lacked coherency and organization. Notably, works about and by Eliot were translated most, because of his influence on Arabic poetry and the fascination of some literati with him. There has been a lack of translations of the educational and analytical books that were of the greatest interest for the New Critics. There are problems with the works of the New Critics which have been translated into Arabic, principally related to the choice of the proper critical terms and comprehension of the original texts along with omission of parts of the origins. These problems stemmed largely from the translators' lack of effort, as most of the important critical terms were properly used in the early translations of Muḥammad Muṣṭafā Badawī and Rashād Rushdī.

Chapter Three

The Concept of Poetry in *Majallat Shi'ar* and New Criticism

This chapter discusses the influence of the New Critics and *Shi'ar*'s writers' theorisation of the concept of poetry. It also focusses on the intellectual background that led the New Critics to espouse specific poetic concepts rather than others and on the intellectual background of *Shi'ar*'s writers that led them to follow the New Critics. This chapter consists of six sections, as follows:

The first section examines the attention that *Shi'ar* critics devoted to developing a new theory of poetry. In addition, it highlights the Western critical schools that influenced *Shi'ar* critics, precisely French Symbolism and Anglo-American New Criticism and how these two schools could influence *Shi'ar*'s writers simultaneously. The second section discusses the intellectual background of the New Critics, including their religious and social viewpoints, and how this background influenced their poetic concepts. Furthermore, it studies the intellectual background of *Shi'ar* critics and its level of harmony with their use of the New Critics' poetic concepts.

The third section examines the attitude of both the New Critics and *Shi'ar* critics toward the use of consciousness and unconsciousness in poetry. The fourth section focusses on the similarities between *Shi'ar* critics' description of poetry as complex and ambiguous and the New Critics' account. The fifth section examines the employment of the New Critics' theory of objectivity by *Shi'ar* critics, particularly the following concepts: the impersonal concept of poetry, the objective correlative, the poetic image and myth.

The sixth section highlights the reliance of *Shi'ar* critics on the New Critics' account of tradition and whether this was consistent with their critical and cultural attitudes. This section includes a subtitle "the Parental Paradigm," which characterises the reliance of *Shi'ar* critics on the New Critics' account of tradition and which is a conclusion to the entire chapter.

I. The importance of theorisation in *Shi'r*

Shi'r's members attempted from the founding of the magazine to contrive a new poetic concept, aimed at keeping pace with modern poetry, as one of the main objectives of the magazine. In an article published a few months before the appearance of *Shi'r*, Yūsuf al-Khāl announced his rejection of the concepts of poetry and poetic trends that were prevalent in Lebanon at that time and stressed the need for a new concept of poetry.⁶⁰⁷ This was followed by another article, "Fī māhiyyat al-shi'r" (the essence of poetry), in which he explained his ideas concerning the correct concept of poetry.⁶⁰⁸ In addition to al-Khāl, many of *Shi'r*'s writers discussed aspects of poetry and poetic concepts published in articles and books both inside and outside the magazine. However, the *Shi'r* critics' theorisation and application demonstrate the strong influence of various critical schools, mainly New Criticism and French Symbolism.⁶⁰⁹

The encounter of these two schools resulted from the fact that some of *Shi'r*'s writers, such as al-Khāl and Jabrā, were influenced by Anglo-American culture, while others, including Adūnīs and Rineh (René) Ḥabashī, were influenced by French culture. What made the synchronic use of both New Criticism and Symbolism in *Shi'r* possible is that both schools have many ideas in common such as deeming literary works as visions, unified, refusing to express emotions and ideas directly and using poetic words and signs as direct symbols. Moreover, Eliot, Ezra Pound and T. E. Hulme among other English poets and critics, who influenced the New Critics, "were most powerfully influenced by the French Symbolists."⁶¹⁰ More precisely, the New Critics' ideas of impersonality and Eliot's concept of "the objective correlative" were derived from the French Symbolists. The Symbolists argued that emotions cannot be expressed in literature directly, rather they should be evoked. Baudelaire stressed that every colour, sound and odour is 'conceptualised' emotion.

⁶⁰⁷ Yūsuf al-Khāl, "Ittijāhāt al-adab al-lubnānī", *Majallat al-adīb* (August 1956), p. 13.

⁶⁰⁸ Yūsuf al-Khāl, "Fī māhiyyat al-shi'r", *Majallat al-adīb* (November 1956), pp.3-6.

⁶⁰⁹ Although the New Critical concepts dominated the critical view of *Shi'r*, many critical trends appeared in the magazine, such as Romanticism.

⁶¹⁰ Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism*, p. 597.

Mallarmé, “insisting that poetry was made, not of ideas, but of words, devoted himself to exploring the potentialities of words conceived as gesture or as modes of emotive suggestion, and treated the interplay of words as a kind of ballet or a kind of musical organization.”⁶¹¹

These ideas were espoused by critics at *Shiʿr*, who stressed that components of poetry are not intended for themselves, rather they are part of the emotion, vision and human experience that poetry embodies. Al-Khāl argued that beautiful poetry is not distinguished by its pure music, colour and shadows. He added that this is precisely what some deceived Symbolists think because they do not understand the meaning of Symbolism. Beautiful poetry is also not based on “Sufi unconsciousness” as the advocates of pure poetry argue. Beautiful poetry is differentiated by the capability of expressing human experience and emotion while developing them to the level of human literature beyond their time and place.⁶¹² In addition, Rineh Ḥabashī pointed out that the poet, according to Baudelaire, can discover through poetic symbols, the relationships between various subjects and therefore the unity of the world.⁶¹³

Adūnīs’s familiarity with the French literary schools, particularly Symbolism and later on Surrealism, influenced his viewpoint on many literary issues. A significant instance is his attitude toward classical Arabic poetics and poetry, which he believed was similar to literary trends in French. Therefore, he moved from agreeing with *Shiʿr*’s majority views concerning Arabic literature espoused in the early years of the magazine to show a growing interest in studying and publishing Arabic poetry as discussed in the first chapter. In his lectures at Collège de France 1984, Adūnīs confessed that he did not discover the importance of Arabic poetry from inside Arabic culture and its knowledge structures, but rather from his acquaintance with French poetry. He said that

⁶¹¹ Ibid., pp. 667-668.

⁶¹² Al-Khāl, “Fī māhiyyat al-shiʿr”, p. 6.

⁶¹³ Rineh Ḥabashī, “Nazarāt fī al-shiʿr”, *Shiʿr* (num. 4, Autumn 1957), pp. 90-92.

reading Baudelaire changed my understanding of Abū Nuwās and showed me the excellence of his poetry and his modern position.⁶¹⁴ Reading Mallarmé revealed to me the modern features of Abū Tammām's poetic language. Reading Rimbaud, Nerval and Breton led me to discover the Sufi unique experience and its gorgeousness. Reading modern French criticism demonstrated how modern were the critical insights of al-Jurjānī, particularly regarding poetic-expressive characters.⁶¹⁵

However, it was the New Critical concepts of literature that dominated the general outlook of the magazine. Many critics who were mainly influenced by French criticism used New Critical ideas such as myth, the importance of literary heritage and unity of literature. Those critics include Adūnīs, Rineh Ḥabashī and Khālida Sa'īd.⁶¹⁶ This is due to the predominance of al-Khāl who heavily adopted New Criticism.

II. Intellectual Background of Literary Theory

Although the New Critics insisted that literature was independent from ideology and religion, their literary concepts can be connected to their cultural, religious or ideological backgrounds. Literary theories throughout history can be referred to wider contexts in which they appeared and to the concept of the human being operative at certain times. For example, Plato's disapproval of poetry stemmed from his concern about saving Athens from decay, which was impossible, according to Plato, by emotions that poetry provokes in the audience. Per contra, Aristotle coined his concept *catharsis* to say that poetry helps people and civilisation by balancing the audience's emotions and discarding bad ones. In a very different

⁶¹⁴ The concept of modern for Adūnīs means a set of poetic features that go beyond time and thus can be found in ancient literature. Adūnīs, *Muqaddima li al-shi'r al-ʿarabī* (Beirut: Dār al-ʿawda, 1979), pp. 99-100.

⁶¹⁵ Adūnīs, *al-Shi'riyya al-ʿarabiyya*, p. 86.

⁶¹⁶ Khālida Sa'īd employed both French criticism and New Criticism before she left *Shi'r* with Adūnīs. However, in her later book *Ḥarakiyyat al-ibdāʿ*, she heavily relied on Deconstructive theory and reader-response criticism. She argued that a poem cannot be complete; it is a potential interplay with the reader. Every reader creates this text and fills it with his/her personal characters. Khālida Sa'īd, *Ḥarakiyyat al-ibdāʿ*, p. 94.

era, Art for Art's Sake was a reaction to the predominance of scientific methods and didactic and propagandistic uses of literature.⁶¹⁷ Romanticism originally referred to Rousseau's notion that "man was by nature good, that it was only bad laws and customs that had suppressed him." Human beings, according to the Romantic viewpoint, are "an infinite reservoir of possibilities."⁶¹⁸ On the contrary, the classical view believes the human being is "a creature intrinsically limited, but disciplined by order and tradition to something fairly decent."⁶¹⁹ These brief examples from the history of literary thought highlight the idea that literary and critical concepts are not separate from the cultural and philosophical background of their times.

Regarding the New Critics, they had conservative points of view about society, tradition, religion and therefore literature. They strongly rejected the Romantic form of individualism and its implication for literature, and preferred classical literature. They expressed this very strongly and often reductively. For instance, Eliot said that the difference between classical and Romantic literature "seems to me rather the difference between the complete and the fragmentary, the adult and the immature, the orderly and the chaotic."⁶²⁰ Allen Tate described classical literature as perfect, complete and whole, thus there is no efficient name suitable enough to describe it, neither philosophically nor historically. For the purpose of study, Tate temporarily named it "the creative spirit."⁶²¹ Conversely, he disliked Romanticism and viewed it as "the thin cry" and "self-pity" which revolted against science.⁶²²

Eliot explicitly pointed out that he was "a royalist in politics, an Anglo-Catholic in religion and a classicist in literature."⁶²³ The rejection of Romanticism meant rejection of the Romantic form of liberalism as the greatest goal of the human being and the main end of

⁶¹⁷ Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism*, pp. 476-477.

⁶¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 660.

⁶¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 660.

⁶²⁰ Eliot, *Selected Essays*, p. 26.

⁶²¹ Tate, *Collected Essays*, p. 91.

⁶²² *Ibid.*, 92.

⁶²³ Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism*, p. 658.

personality.⁶²⁴ He refused to consider the Romantic view that the only authority over the poet is his/her “inner voice.”⁶²⁵ There should be rules of conduct in literature and criticism, which allow critics to value literary works.⁶²⁶ Hence Eliot announced that “there may be a good deal to be said for Romanticism in life, there is no place for it in letters.”⁶²⁷ The modern society of the West is, for the New Critics, dehumanised, controlled by secularism and without morals. In such a world which “substitutes means for ends,” the defeat of the spirit is inevitable.⁶²⁸ A society which relies on machines, Tate argued, has lost its spiritual and moral norms and thus “is no longer related to human being.”⁶²⁹

The American southern critics known as “the Fugitives” believed that the ideal society is united or organic, represented by “the old agrarian ideal.” Tate contended that even if this society does not, or could not, exist, “we must affirm its necessity, if only to explain the disunity of being which is the primary fact of the human condition.”⁶³⁰ The modern world suffered the decay of manners, religion, morals, and codes which led it to violence and chaos.⁶³¹ Ransom, who was the Fugitives’ leader and theorist, wrote a book “in defence of orthodox religion, God without Thunder which... is an excellently reasoned and dramatic attack on the enemy: Comte, naturalism, science and liberalism.”⁶³² The New Critics strongly criticised the capitalist industrial society, preferring “a cooperative agrarian community.”⁶³³ The New Critics’ literary concepts were consistent with their wider social and political views, although they strictly separated the poet’s and critic’s beliefs and emotions, and their literary works. They stressed the importance of literary traditions for modern literature and preferred classical literature over Romantic as mentioned above. Literary novelty, for the New Critics,

⁶²⁴ D. E. S. Maxwell, *The Poetry of T. S. Eliot* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul – Broadway House, 1961), p. 17.

⁶²⁵ Eliot, *Selected Essays*, p. 27.

⁶²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34.

⁶²⁷ Eliot, *The Sacred Wood*, p. 32.

⁶²⁸ Tate, *Collected Essays*, p. 382.

⁶²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 384.

⁶³⁰ Allen Tate, *Essays of Four Decades* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), P. 378.

⁶³¹ Tate, *Collected Essays*, p. 301.

⁶³² Hyman, *The Armed Vision*, p. 92.

⁶³³ Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, p. 35.

should be derived from, and based on, classical literature.⁶³⁴ Additionally, their idea of unity in literary works and organic theory is perfectly consistent with their view of a united or organic society. They viewed literary works as complete and miraculous entities⁶³⁵ and they believed that literature is knowledge,⁶³⁶ that “metaphorical language is inherently religious.”⁶³⁷

With regard to the intellectual background of the critics at *Shi‘r*, despite their differences, they agreed on the idea of freedom as a basic human condition and the rejection of all kinds of previous norms as discussed in the first chapter. This seems closer to the critical concepts coming from French criticism, along with Romanticism, than with those of New Critics. Therefore, while al-Khāl was discussing the importance of freedom in writing poetry, he referred to French figures such as Baudelaire and to the Romantic Edgar Allen Poe,⁶³⁸ rather than to Eliot or other New Critics by whom he was significantly influenced. Al-Khāl’s concept of the human being seems similar to the Romantic individualist view. He argued that the human being is the master of being and nothing can be attained without liberty and a secular mentality.⁶³⁹ Modernity, he added, raises the importance of the independent individual view of human beings, God and the universe.⁶⁴⁰ Adūnīs fully embraced this idea of freedom throughout his career and insisted that human beings, particularly artists, are the ultimate source of values “whose essence is based on their liberty.”⁶⁴¹ Many others writers at *Shi‘r* believed in personal values and that no previous norms whatsoever should be imposed upon the poet.⁶⁴² Writing poetry, al-Khāl said, without relying on previous examples and

⁶³⁴ See the last section of this chapter.

⁶³⁵ Krieger, *Poetic Presence and Illusion*, pp. 204-205.

⁶³⁶ Knowledge here does not mean historical, political or any kind of pragmatic knowledge. Rather, it is a specific sort of knowledge. See chapter four.

⁶³⁷ Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, p. 35.

⁶³⁸ Al-Khāl, “Qaḍāyā al-shi‘r al-mu‘āṣir”, p. 138.

⁶³⁹ Al-Khāl, *al-Ḥadātha fī al-shi‘r*, p. 12 and 16; and see Abd al-Majīd Zarāqīṭ, *al-Ḥadātha fī al-naqd al-‘arabī al-mu‘āṣir* (Beirut: Dār al-ḥarf al-‘arabī, 1991), p. 203.

⁶⁴⁰ Al-Khāl, “Naḥwa adab ‘arabī ḥadīth”, *Adab* (vol. 2, num. 1, Winter 1963, pp. 7-13), p. 9.

⁶⁴¹ Adūnīs, *Zaman al-shi‘r*, p. 43.

⁶⁴² Khālida Sa‘īd stressed that poets should keep in their poetry their personal signs. See “*al-Bi‘r al-mahjūra* li Yūsuf al-Khāl”, pp. 143-144.

norms, is more difficult and valuable because norms “make a paved way that makes poets feel safe and stable. It is like a wall protecting the prisoners within it from deception.”⁶⁴³

Yet, apparently incompatibly, most of the magazine’s members, al-Khāl in particular, adopted Eliot’s view of tradition and argued that poetic novelty cannot occur without full understanding of heritage and that modern poetry cannot be understood and taught without starting from classical literature.⁶⁴⁴ This is contradictory to their attitude toward tradition and to their rejection of all previous norms of writing. Some critics at *Shi‘r* were not of the magazine’s rejection of traditions as previous norms and this kept their acceptance of Eliot’s view of tradition consistent with their critical discourse. For example, Jabrā and Nadhīr ‘Aẓma celebrated heritage as the basis of modern development and compared modern poets with classical ones to illustrate the extent of novelty and development.⁶⁴⁵ Adūnīs did not contradict the idea of liberty and rejection of previous forms despite his great concern about heritage. He studied the heritage of Arabic poetry according to the idea of novelty and kept comparing poets with previous ones to show the level of their liberty and novelty.⁶⁴⁶

Another problematic issue, pertaining to the intellectual background of *Shi‘r*’s writers and related to the New Critics, is that some of *Shi‘r*’s critics grumbled particularly about the domination of science and the mechanical style of life. Al-Khāl described modern society, being run by machines and scientific methods, as a nightmare.⁶⁴⁷ Since spiritual values, Khālida Sa‘īd suggested, were eliminated in the new era of science, human life became miserable and chaotic, and it is the duty of the poet to take the prophet’s place in order for society to regain its spiritual values.⁶⁴⁸ Moreover, As‘ad Razzūq’s argument about the use of myth in modern Arabic poetry in his book *al-Shu‘arā’ al-tammūziyyūn*, which was issued by *Majallat Shi‘r*, was based on the confrontation between modern poets and modern scientific

⁶⁴³ Al-Khāl, “Qaḍāyā al-shi‘r al-mu‘āṣir”, p. 142.

⁶⁴⁴ The Editorial Board, “Akhhār wa qaḍāyā”, *Shi‘r* (num. 17, Winter 1961), pp. 173-175.

⁶⁴⁵ Nadhīr ‘Aẓma, “Shi‘r al-niḍāl al-jazā’irī wa al-tajriba al-ḥadītha”, *Shi‘r* (num. 17, Winter 1961), p. 152; Jabrā, *Ta’ammulāt.*, p. 18.

⁶⁴⁶ The idea of his well-known book *al-Thābit wa al-mutaḥawwil* is based on this. See Adūnīs, *al-Thābit wa al-mutaḥawwil*, 4 volumes. And see Adūnīs. *Muqaddima li al-shi‘r al-‘arabī*, pp. 13-69.

⁶⁴⁷ Al-Khāl, “Bayna al-mithāl wa al-wāqī‘”, *Adab* (vol. 2, num. 3, Summer 1963, pp. 5-8), p. 7.

⁶⁴⁸ Khālida Sa‘īd, *al-Baḥth ‘an al-judhūr* (Beirut: Dār majallat shi‘r, 1960), p. 9.

life. He thought of Eliot as an ideal example of this confrontation and studied modern Arab poets accordingly.⁶⁴⁹ Similarly, Unsī al-Ḥāj studied al-Khāl's poetry and clearly pointed out that modern poetry condemned the emptiness of modern scientific life where religion and spiritual values were defeated.⁶⁵⁰

This confrontation between Arab poets in the fifties and sixties and the modern scientific society is problematic. The real problem of the Arab world was not the domination of science and scientific style of life, rather it was the lack of science and high-ranking education along with political problems, particularly the influences of colonial occupation. It seems that some of *Shi'r*'s members were importing the problems of Western societies and directing their literary attitudes accordingly. In some ways, they appeared as though they were a group of elitists living a different life from the majority of the people. In a different context, al-Khāl reveals that the real problem of Arab society is the lack of scientific methods and that it needed to deal with the modern world scientifically and secularly.⁶⁵¹ In his later discussion of Arabic modernism, Adūnīs pointed out that some aspects of Arabic modernism resemble Western modernism while scientific modernism and revolutionary changes of thought and culture do not exist in the Arab world. "This makes modernism seem for many Arabs to be an alien and borrowed matter."⁶⁵²

As mentioned above, the New Critics maintained conservative religious views. Even a critic like Kenneth Burke, who did not practice Christianity, held Christian theology "to be the most complete world vision and ethical paradigm."⁶⁵³ This was strongly related to the New Critical view of tradition. "The source of Eliot's tradition may be a literary need, but its ends are social and religious..."⁶⁵⁴ Literary tradition was a refuge from personality, but also it was a refuge from another enemy, namely Protestantism as a rebellion against tradition. Eliot stated, in his *After Strange Gods*, "When morals cease to be a matter of tradition and

⁶⁴⁹ See As'ad Razzūq, *al-Shu'arā' al-tammūziyyūn* (Beirut: Majallat *Shi'r*, 1959).

⁶⁵⁰ Unsī al-Ḥāj, "Masīhiyyat al-mantiq wa 'abathiyyat al-īmān", pp. 93-94.

⁶⁵¹ Zaraqit, *al-Ḥadātha fī al-naqd*, p. 203.

⁶⁵² Adūnīs, *Fātiḥa li nihāyāt al-qarn*, p. 322.

⁶⁵³ Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, p. 35.

⁶⁵⁴ Hyman, *The Armed Vision*, p. 85.

orthodoxy - that is, of the habits of the community formulated, corrected and elevated by the continuous thought and direction of the Church - and when each man is to elaborate his own, then personality becomes a thing of alarming importance.”⁶⁵⁵

For *Shi‘r*’s critics, although the majority of them had a clear religious background, the only one who maintained a clear religious view was al-Khāl. He argued that Christianity was his link with Western heritage, stating that “I am a Christian poet, Christianity is a part of my heritage, rather it is its essence and core...”⁶⁵⁶ Furthermore, al-Khāl’s conception of human beings is derived from Scripture, since the human being in his writing was created in God’s image and shape. The human being, for al-Khāl, shares some attributes with God, such as existence, freedom, desire and the ability to create. In his poetry, al-Khāl condemned the weakness of these features in modern human beings, which created life crises:

وهذا الزاحف العاري الإنسان/ إنسان على شاكلة الله⁶⁵⁷

Is this creeping and unclothed thing a human being? / is it a human being in the image of God?

Al-Khāl expressed his views about literature with a language similar to that of religion. He argued that literature, as well as religious life, suffers from sin and therefore both need salvation and a prophet to lead them. The death of Jesus was the redemption of the people and so literature too needs its prophet and salvation.⁶⁵⁸

III. Poetry between Consciousness and Unconsciousness

Poetry, for the New Critics, contains both conscious and unconscious features. The latter resulted from the influence of French Symbolists who emphasised the importance of unconsciousness in the arts. The poet, for the French Symbolists, can be a “voyant” and seer

⁶⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 82.

⁶⁵⁶ Al-‘Ikish, *As’ilat al-shi‘r*, p. 153.

⁶⁵⁷ Al-Sālisī, *Yūsuf al-Khāl*, p. 140.

⁶⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 141-142.

if released from consciousness. “To this end the poet would make use of drugs, alcohol, debauchery - anything that broke down the control of reason and freed the faculties from their ordinary inhibitions.”⁶⁵⁹ On the contrary, the role of consciousness in New Criticism came from the New Critics’ classical and traditional opinions, which involve norms and values that the poet should consider, in addition to their own moral values.

Unconsciousness, in New Criticism, is related to the definition of poetry generally and to the process of creation which gives poetry its otherworldly characteristics that prevents it from being fully understood. Rene Wellek argued that there are few things to be said about poetry and these ideas or things “turn out either to be false or to say nothing of significance.”⁶⁶⁰ Therefore, critics never discover “what poetry is, in the sense of arriving at an adequate definition.”⁶⁶¹ The source of poetry, Wimsatt argued, is not something that critics or philosophers can measure, as is the case with wisdom, but “a sort of genius and inspiration.”⁶⁶² The process of writing poetry is partly unconscious and poets do many things upon instinct for which they “can give no better account than anybody else.”⁶⁶³ The poetic aspects occur naturally, similarly to “the way the bee makes honey or the spider secretes a filament.”⁶⁶⁴ Therefore, the New Critics disliked the genetic criticism that focuses on what happens in the process of writing and on the role of context in poetry. After writing poetry, the poet might become “merely a reader in respect to his own works.”⁶⁶⁵

The poet has a unique ability to see what is special in normal activities which seem uninteresting to other people. Eliot contended that the poet gathers a great number of experiences and concentrates on them, which “does not happen consciously or of deliberation.”⁶⁶⁶ Eliot described poets as possessing a special sensibility that enables them to “amalgamate disparate experiences.” “The ordinary man’s experience” Eliot added, “is

⁶⁵⁹ Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism*, p. 594.

⁶⁶⁰ Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism*, vol. 5, p. 177.

⁶⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

⁶⁶² Wimsatt, *The Verbal Icon*, p. 7.

⁶⁶³ T. S. Eliot, *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism* (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1933), pp. 129-130.

⁶⁶⁴ Hyman, *The Armed Vision*, p. 83.

⁶⁶⁵ Eliot, *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism*, p. 130.

⁶⁶⁶ Eliot, *Selected Essays*, p. 21.

chaotic, irregular, fragmentary. The latter falls in love, or reads Spinoza, and these two experiences have nothing to do with each other, or with the noise of the typewriter or the smell of cooking; in the mind of the poet these experiences are always forming new wholes.”⁶⁶⁷ Poets, through their sensitive and discriminating faculties, indirectly record the experiences that are worth being recorded and perceive changes that should be made, and therefore the poet “is regarded as a seer and the artist as a priest.”⁶⁶⁸

However, consciousness, for the New Critics, also has an important role in the composition of poetry. Wimsatt called the poetic work “the artefact work” and the poet “the artificer.”⁶⁶⁹ Poets show their craftsmanship by revising their works and making every element of their work relevant to the rest. This is part of the labour of writing and, for Eliot, is the larger element in the process of writing, where the poet carries out “sifting, combining, constructing, expunging, correcting, testing.”⁶⁷⁰ Because of this conscious labour, every element of a poem is assigned some task and is fused with the rest of the poem. “Poetry succeeds because all or most of what is said or implied is relevant; what is irrelevant has been excluded.”⁶⁷¹ Eliot pointed out that a great deal of writing poetry should be conscious and deliberate and if consciousness and unconsciousness are misplaced, poetry is destroyed. “The bad poet” Eliot stated, “is usually unconscious where he ought to be conscious, and conscious where he ought to be unconscious.”⁶⁷² Consciousness plays a significant role, objectivising personal feelings and visualising abstract ideas. Eliot’s doctrine of the objective correlative, which the poet should create to express his ideas and feelings, is a stress upon craftsmanship.⁶⁷³ The most decisive statement relating to the importance of consciousness came from Winters, pointing out that the poet “must remain fully in control of his poem; there must be no French-symbolist nonsense about letting the reins lie loose upon the horse’s neck,

⁶⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 287

⁶⁶⁸ Richards, *Principles of Literary Criticism*, pp. 32-33.

⁶⁶⁹ Wimsatt, *The Verbal Icon*, pp. 4-5.

⁶⁷⁰ Eliot, *Selected Essays*, p. 30.

⁶⁷¹ Wimsatt, *The Verbal Icon*, p. 5.

⁶⁷² Eliot, *Selected Essays*, p. 21.

⁶⁷³ Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism*, p. 668.

allowing him to find his own way.”⁶⁷⁴ This extreme statement resulted from Winters’s viewpoint that writing poetry involves moral evaluation and judgment. It is not enough, he stated, that poets discover the verbal equivalent of their state of mind and emotions; they must judge and evaluate these emotions and should know where they are going.⁶⁷⁵ Per contra, Eliot stresses that the poem has a life of its own, which “acknowledges its resistance to direct control by the poet.”⁶⁷⁶

Similar to the New Critics’ attitude towards defining poetry, *Shiʿr*’s members saw that poetry cannot be inclusively identified. The editorial board stated, “What is poetry? We do not know, or we cannot know.”⁶⁷⁷ Even the poets themselves do not have enough knowledge about the nature of their poetry and they cannot fully identify it.⁶⁷⁸ In his *Muqaddima li al-shiʿr al-ʿarabī*, Adūnīs went further than *Shiʿr* when he denied the existence of any definition, principle or abstract feature of poetry, stating that “there are no absolute aspects that determine the essence of poetry.”⁶⁷⁹

The process of composing poetry, for those writing in *Shiʿr*, requires the poet to be unconscious at one stage and conscious at another. The first stage of writing poetry occurs unconsciously and the poet does not fully control it. The poet is compelled to express his experience and “it is like a woman delivering her baby, she has to push it into the world.”⁶⁸⁰ This is quite similar to the New Critics’ description of composing poetry as a matter of instinct, that it happens in the way that the bee gives honey. Nadhīr Azma, among many others, used the simile of delivering a baby mentioned above,⁶⁸¹ and Majid Fakhrī described poets in the creative process as either geniuses or insane, since they can see and feel what ordinary people cannot.⁶⁸² Al-Khāl emphasised the unconscious role, deeming art a product of

⁶⁷⁴ Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism*, p. 670.

⁶⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 670.

⁶⁷⁶ Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism*, p. 673.

⁶⁷⁷ The Editorial Board, *Shiʿr* (num. 33-34, 1967, Winter – Spring), p. 7.

⁶⁷⁸ Ḥabashī, “Nazarāt fī al-shiʿr”, p. 91.

⁶⁷⁹ Adūnīs, *Muqaddima li al-shiʿr al-ʿarabī*, p. 107.

⁶⁸⁰ Jūzīf Abū Jūda, “Nidā’ al-baʿd, li Jūrj Ghānim”, *Shiʿr* (num. 5, Winter 1958), pp. 110-111.

⁶⁸¹ Nadhīr Azma, “Shiʿr al-niḍāl al-jazā’irī wa al-tajriba al-thawriyya”, *Shiʿr* (num. 17, Winter 1961), p. 151.

⁶⁸² Fakhrī, “*Awrāq fī al-rīḥ* li Adūnīs”, p. 72.

“vision and creative imagination, not of reason and meditation.”⁶⁸³ He employed Eliot’s account of unconsciousness, emphasising the role of emotions and dreams in composing poetry.⁶⁸⁴ He argued that “poets begin the process of creation with a vague impulse or with a feeling of the problems of being. When their work is done and their impulse becomes a poem, they find, if they are truly talented, that there is no relation between what they wanted to say and what they actually say in the poem.”⁶⁸⁵ Al-Khāl also emphasised the role of consciousness in composing poetry, describing the process of writing as “creation” in the above quotation, which suggests the use of reason. He stated this very clearly: “Art, including poetry, is a labour of reason and its essence is creation. It is labelled as labour since the poet’s mind prepares and constructs it, and it gets pregnant with it. After that, the poet forms poetry concretely. It is a creation because it brings abstract ideas to concrete shape, visualising them.”⁶⁸⁶ Al-Khāl reveals that the role of reason is to assist in visualising abstract ideas and that the poet constructs his poetry deliberately. However, al-Khāl involves unconsciousness in this statement when saying the poet “gets pregnant with it,” which points to the simile of birth. This is typical in al-Khāl’s account of composition; he mostly brings both consciousness and unconsciousness together. He argued at another point that the poet becomes aware of his poetry “both with heart and reason together.”⁶⁸⁷

Nadhīr al-ʿAzma went further in explaining the role of consciousness and unconsciousness in composing poetry. He argued that poetic visions and ideas unconsciously grow in the poet’s psyche over a long period of time and create various emotions which are not as clear as political or social ideas.⁶⁸⁸ After the birth of the poem, the role of craftsmanship comes in, to construct it rationally and to help it evolve as a work of art. Therefore, “volition and spontaneity, consciousness and unconsciousness, participate in the

⁶⁸³ Yūsuf al-Khāl, “Bayna al-mithāl wa al-wāqiʿ”, *Adab* (vol, 2, num. 3, Summer 1963, pp. 5-8), p. 6.

⁶⁸⁴ Al-Khāl, *al-Ḥadātha fī al-shiʿr*, p. 19.

⁶⁸⁵ Yūsuf al-Khāl, “Mafhūm al-qaṣīda”, *Shiʿr* (num. 27, Summer 1963), p. 81.

⁶⁸⁶ Yūsuf al-Khāl, “Fī māhiyyat al-shiʿr”, p. 3.

⁶⁸⁷ The Editorial Board, “Akhbār wa qaḍāyā”, *Shiʿr* (num. 2, Spring 1957), p. 98.

⁶⁸⁸ Al-ʿAzma, “Shiʿr al-niḍāl al-jazāʾirī wa al-tajriba al-thawriyya”, p. 156.

process of creation.⁶⁸⁹ Evidently, this view resembles the New Critics' account, particularly that of Eliot. What is notable is that even those critics who were mostly influenced by French criticism used the New Critical approach in this regard. Shawqī Abū Shaqrā viewed his experience of writing poetry as an unconscious event first which is then revised, deleted from and added to deliberately to improve the poem.⁶⁹⁰ Similarly, Unsī al-Ḥāj argued that after the birth of the poem the poet sifts through it, changing and adding. The poet, he added, struggles before and after the appearance of the poem.⁶⁹¹

Adūnīs provided a number of explanations for the process of creation, ranging between using reason deliberately and being a state of madness. In *Zaman al-Shiʿr*, he argued that poetry is conscious labour which requires preparation and training, adding that “it is craftsmanship and culture.”⁶⁹² However, this view is much less common in Adūnīs’s writings than the unconscious account. He characterised the case of writing poetry as madness, where the poet reduces or eliminates the pressure and limitation of reason. The case of madness, he added, helps the poet to be free from the limitations of wisdom, sobriety and tradition. Therefore, it is the most important case of creative writing.⁶⁹³ In this instance, Adūnīs is influenced by the French Symbolist view mentioned above, in addition to other French schools, particularly Surrealism.⁶⁹⁴ Additionally, Adūnīs viewed poetry as a Sufī and supernatural vision⁶⁹⁵ which, as he admitted, he took from the French poets Rimbaud, Nerval and Breton.⁶⁹⁶ Clearly, this is different from the New Critical view which was employed by *Shiʿr*’s members.⁶⁹⁷ Adūnīs provided this view in his writings outside *Shiʿr*.

⁶⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 156.

⁶⁹⁰ Zarāqīṭ, *al-Ḥadātha fī al-naqd*, p. 178.

⁶⁹¹ Unsī al-Ḥāj, “*Khaṭawāt al-malik*”, p. 102.

⁶⁹² Adūnīs, *Zaman al-shiʿr*, p. 304.

⁶⁹³ Adūnīs, *Fātiḥa li nihāyāt al-qarn*, p. 269.

⁶⁹⁴ See Maḥdī, *Ufuq al-ḥadātha*, p. 164. It is important to mention that the idea of unconsciousness is similar to the idea of “shayṭān al-shiʿr” in classical Arabic criticism, by which some of *Shiʿr* critics might be influenced.

⁶⁹⁵ See Adūnīs, *Muqaddima li al-shiʿr al-ʿarabī*, pp. 118-120.

⁶⁹⁶ Adūnīs, *al-Shiʿriyya al-ʿarabiyya*, p. 86.

⁶⁹⁷ Eliot rejected the “mystical or occult assumptions” of the French schools which aimed at expanding the poetic sensibility beyond the limits of the normal world. Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism*, vol. 5, p. 209.

Jabrā heavily adopted the New Critics' account, writing in *Shi'ar* and also in certain other venues, stressing that poetry cannot be defined scientifically and that the process of writing poetry involves both consciousness and unconsciousness. He argued that poetry cannot be justified or identified scientifically and writing it is like a magical process resulting from reason and nerves. It is, he added, magic which entices the poet and is controlled by the poet at the same time.⁶⁹⁸ The role of reason comes after the magical impulse when the poet starts revising and improving the poem. In his article in *Shi'ar* about the Lebanese poet Tīrīz °Awwād, Jabrā contended that the poem comes to the poet suddenly and unconsciously, and following this, the poet starts improving and sifting through it. The logic of the poem, he argued, is not a rational logic, but rather is a complicated vision.⁶⁹⁹ He emphasised the importance of being strictly aware in composing poetry and of the poet controlling the structure of the poem. He condemned what he saw as disconnected images describing that as a Surrealist's way of creating poetry since every element of it should be important for the rest of the poem.⁷⁰⁰

It is obvious that the New Critics' characterisation of the process of composing poetry dominated the view of *Shi'ar*'s writers, wherein poetry begins unconsciously and then the poet sifts through it and deliberately constructs it. However, *Shi'ar*'s members occasionally characterised the composition of poetry more similarly to the Romantics' argument, which deems poetry as a spontaneous expression of feelings and emotions without sifting through it consciously. In *al-Rihla al-thāmina*, Jabrā stated that poets express their feelings and release their emotional problems.⁷⁰¹ Unsī al-Ḥāj argued that poetry comes from the feelings gathering in the poet's psyche and the poet cannot change anything in his feelings.⁷⁰² Similarly, Shawqī Abū Shaqrā described poetry as a delicious food coming to the poet who finds his/her will in

⁶⁹⁸ Jabrā Ibrāhīm Jabrā, *Mu'āyashat al-namira wa awrāq ukhrā* (Beirut: al-Mu'assasa al-°arabiyya li al-dirāsāt wa al-nashr, 1992), p. 8.

⁶⁹⁹ Jabrā Ibrāhīm Jabrā, "Al-Tajruba fī biyūt al-°ankabūt", *Shi'ar* (num. 35, Summer 1967), pp. 84-86.

⁷⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 88-89. See similar discussion in Jabrā, *Ta'ammulāt fī bunyān marmarī*, pp. 125-126.

⁷⁰¹ Jabrā Ibrāhīm Jabrā, *al-Rihla al-thāmina* (Beirut: al-Maktaba al-°aṣriyya, 1967), p. 98.

⁷⁰² Zaraqīṭ, *al-Ḥadātha fī al-naqd*, p. 215.

it.⁷⁰³ Al-Khāl also minimised the role of craftsmanship and previous norms in writing poetry,⁷⁰⁴ and he once defined modern poetry as “*ṣarkha min al-qalb*” (a shout from the heart).⁷⁰⁵ However, this view is not common in *Shiʿr*’s critical discourse and is not in harmony with its members’ critical points of view which involved craftsmanship along with rejecting Romanticism. This evidently appears in *Shiʿr*’s emphasis on impersonal poetry and the importance of traditional and classical literary norms as will be discussed shortly.

IV. Poetic Complexity and Ambiguity

Poetry, for the New Critics, is a supernatural entity which had to be studied ‘worshipfully’ in keeping with their theological values. They described the constituents of poetry and its metaphorical language with “religious or sacred terms.”⁷⁰⁶ In his study of the ontology of poetry in *The World’s Body*, Ransom argued that “there is a miraculism or supernaturalism in a metaphorical assertion.”⁷⁰⁷ A literary text, for the New Critics, is intricate and complex, and they stressed “the fundamentally metaphorical and therefore miraculous powers of literary language.”⁷⁰⁸ Allen Tate viewed poetry not as an experiential or practical order, but as a mythical order, without which the human being becomes a cruel animal without a soul, order, or aim.⁷⁰⁹

Additionally, the New Critics emphasised that all components of a poem are in harmony and have complicated and overlapping relationships with each other. The poem consists of various elements of meaning and language which are fused in the body of the poem and open it to endless varieties of ambiguity and contradiction.⁷¹⁰ In order to discover the harmony of a poem, one should analyse it to ensure that nothing in it contradicts anything

⁷⁰³ The Editorial Board, “Akhbār wa Qaḍāyā”, *Shiʿr* (num. 25, Winter 1963), p. 141.

⁷⁰⁴ Al-Khāl, *al-Ḥadātha fī al-shiʿr*, p. 154.

⁷⁰⁵ Al-Khāl, “Muḥāwalāt fī tafhīm al-shiʿr al-ḥadīth”, *Shiʿr* (num. 29-30, 1964), p. 103.

⁷⁰⁶ Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, p. 29.

⁷⁰⁷ Ransom, *The World’s Body*, p. 139.

⁷⁰⁸ Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, p. 30.

⁷⁰⁹ Tate, *Collected Essays*, p. 47.

⁷¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 79-80.

else.⁷¹¹ Therefore, Cleanth Brooks labelled poetry as *The Well Wrought Urn*, the title of his book, arguing that words in poetry are juxtaposed in a unique and sudden form, while continuing to modify each other along with violating their ordinary meaning.⁷¹² Hence, ambiguity in poetry is not only anticipated, but it is “the core of poetic significance.”⁷¹³ The New Critics’ presumption that poetry is highly complex and full of intricate semantic interrelations prompted them to prefer metaphysical poets such as John Donne and modern poets such as Eliot over Walt Whitman and other “loose Romantics” who were mostly ignored by the New Critics.⁷¹⁴

The New Critics’ idea of poetic complexity and ambiguity is strongly related to their method of reading poetry which is known as “close reading.” The New Critics concentrated on exegesis along with analysing poetic texts in order to discover poetic interrelationships and complex meanings.⁷¹⁵ With a simile O’Connor described the poem as a monster which cannot be defeated, which represents his view of the complexity of poetry and thus the importance of analysis of poetic texts for the New Critics.

The poem is even more formidable than the monster...there is only one way to conquer the monster: you must eat it, bones, blood, skin, pelt and gristle. And even the monster is not dead, for it lives in you, is assimilated into you, and you are different, and somewhat monstrous yourself, for having eaten it. So monster will always win, and the critic knows this.... All he wants to do is to give the monster a chance to exhibit again his miraculous powers.⁷¹⁶

Shi‘r’s critics partially concurred with the New Critics in deeming poetry a supernatural and complex entity. Poetic components, ‘Iṣām Maḥfūz argued, have highly complicated and

⁷¹¹ Ibid., p. 125.

⁷¹² Brooks, *The Well Wrought Urn*, p. 6.

⁷¹³ Hyman, *The Armed Vision*, p. 272.

⁷¹⁴ Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, 26.

⁷¹⁵ See chapter two pp. 81-82.

⁷¹⁶ O’Connor, *An Age of Criticism*, p. 175.

overlapping relationships which are necessary to express the complexity of the world.⁷¹⁷ The reason behind this complexity, which is obvious in Maḥfūz's statement, concerns the complex nature of life. Interestingly, this is the precise explanation Eliot provided when he argued that poets should "dislocate" language into their meanings and be extremely comprehensive, more allusive, and indirect in order to express the complexity of modern civilization.⁷¹⁸ Adūnīs described poetry as miraculous⁷¹⁹ and al-Khāl considered it as a magical and unusual world, arguing that words in poetry integrate together and labour differently to express unique meanings indirectly and illusively.⁷²⁰ Artistic work, for al-Khāl, is superior as it is unified and its components are in harmony with each other.⁷²¹

Significantly, *Shi'ar's* members pointed out that poetic discourse is superior to other kinds of discourse and uniquely it can illustrate hidden and overlapping relationships in human psychology and life which cannot occur through the use of ordinary or scientific discourse. ʿIṣām Maḥfūz suggested that poets need to integrate various dimensions of life through complex images which are not useful in ordinary language.⁷²² Al-Khāl argued that poetry employs everyday experiences and raises them to the level of visions.⁷²³ *Shi'ar's* members preferred metaphysical poetry which illustrates experiences through visions, intuitions and images. Metaphysical poetry, the *Shi'ar's* editorial board stated, fuses within it various, and possibly contradictory, elements of feeling, emotion and meaning.⁷²⁴ *Shi'ar's* writers explained this superiority by referring to poetic images as a way of integrating contradictory elements. However, *Shi'ar's* members did not analyse the metaphorical relationships between contradictions that come together in the poetic image.⁷²⁵

Differently, the New Critics explained the superiority of poetry through metaphor and paradox. Wimsatt and Brooks argued that details and general ideas exist in all kinds of human

⁷¹⁷ ʿIṣām Maḥfūz, "ʿIndamā Yastajdī al-shiʿr al-rāḥa wa al-salām", p. 118.

⁷¹⁸ Eliot, *Selected Essays*, p. 289.

⁷¹⁹ Zarāqīṭ, *al-Hadātha fī al-naqd*, p. 165.

⁷²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 179.

⁷²¹ Al-Khāl, "Fī Mahiyyat al-Shiʿr", p. 6.

⁷²² ʿIṣām Maḥfūz, "ʿIndamā Yastajdī al-shiʿr al-rāḥa wa al-salām", p. 118.

⁷²³ Al-Khāl, "Maḥmūm al-qaḍṣīda", pp. 85-86.

⁷²⁴ The Editorial Board, "Akhbār wa qaḍāyā", *Shiʿr* (num. 19, Summer 1961), p. 123.

⁷²⁵ See pp. 159-161.

discourses, but “it is only in metaphor, and hence it is par excellence in poetry, that we encounter the most radically and relevantly fused union of the detail and the universal idea.”⁷²⁶ Things and ideas have in poetry metaphorical relationships that make them hold different meanings from that of science or real life. This made metaphor, for the New Critics, the essence of poetic discourse and therefore they focused exegesis and criticism on “metaphor before and above all.”⁷²⁷ Beside metaphor, paradox is, for Brooks, an essential aspect of poetry, according to which truths and ideas uttered in poetry should be understood and, thus, are different from reality.⁷²⁸ By paradox, Brooks added, poetry can demonstrate that what appears common is uncommon. In this way, everyday things and the prosaic are poetic. In short, poetry discovers the novelty of everyday things and excites feelings “analogous to the supernatural, by awakening the mind’s attention from the lethargy of custom.”⁷²⁹

Shiʿr’s members espoused a view, identical to that of the New Critics, that poetry combines elements which may seem contradictory and compromises them.⁷³⁰ Al-Khāl pointed out that poetry penetrates the surface of contradictory and confusing phenomena while showing their harmony, order and compatible meaning.⁷³¹ Furthermore, Mājīd Fakhrī argued that poetry discovers the mysterious relationship between various things and awakens attention to the charm and beauty of normal things.⁷³² However, *Shiʿr*’s critics did not explain how poetry accomplishes this task. Additionally, they deemed ambiguity one of the most important modern poetic features.⁷³³ However, *Shiʿr*’s critics (except for Jabrā and Khālida Saʿīd) employed only Eliot’s account in their justification of poetic ambiguity. Al-Khāl completely adopted Eliot’s four points justifying the difficulty of reading modern poetry:⁷³⁴ first, some poets express themselves only in obscure ways; the second concerns the novelty of

⁷²⁶ Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism*, p. 749.

⁷²⁷ Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, p. 29. For further details see “metaphor and the tradition”, in *Modern Poetry and the Tradition*, pp. 1-17.

⁷²⁸ Brooks, *The Well Wrought Urn*, pp. 1-2.

⁷²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁷³⁰ Al-Khāl, *al-Ḥadātha fī al-shiʿr*, pp. 15-16.

⁷³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 14, 82.

⁷³² Fakhrī, “Māddat al-shiʿr”, pp. 87-88.

⁷³³ Asʿad Razzūq, “Eliot, mukhtārāt shiʿriyya”, *Shiʿr* (num. 9, Winter 1959), p. 90.

⁷³⁴ Frank Kermode (ed.), *Selected Prose of T. S. Eliot* (London: Faber and Faber, 1975), pp. 92-93.

modern poetry; the third pertains to the reader's previous anticipation that a poem is difficult and obscure; the fourth is that modern poetry does not have what the reader is accustomed to finding in poetry, which is identified meaning.⁷³⁵ Several other *Shi'ar* critics used the same account, or at least part of it. These critics included Khālida Sa'īd,⁷³⁶ Īlī Hāwī⁷³⁷ and As'ad Razzūq; the latter used Eliot's four points in his discussion of poetic ambiguity.⁷³⁸ Razzūq added a fifth reason related to Eliot's poetry, which is that Eliot was a religious poet and this influenced his poetry. Therefore, the reader has to share the beliefs of the poet in order to understand the poem. Razzūq quoted Eliot's statement that "I cannot, in practice, wholly separate my poetic appreciation from my personal beliefs."⁷³⁹ Eliot made this comment after he moved beyond his formalist opinion which separated the poet's and reader's beliefs from the poetic statement. Razzūq juxtaposed two quotations from both of Eliot's stages, which made the second statement of Eliot contradictory with his fourth point. Belief is a kind of identified meaning that is included in what Eliot deemed to be missing from modern poetry. Additionally, the previous justification of poetic ambiguity concerns, for the most part, the poet and the reader and not the poetic text itself.

Shi'ar's members, specifically al-Khāl, did not use practical studies done by Eliot or other New Critics, particularly those of Richards and Empson's *Seven Types of Ambiguity*. *Shi'ar*'s writers mostly used theoretical arguments concerning the idea that ambiguity is an essential aesthetic element in modern poetry or the result of using myths and symbols. There was a dearth of practical studies that concerned how to comprehend ambiguity in modern poetry. This issue only appears in Jabrā's and Khālida Sa'īd's works through their analysis of many modern poems.⁷⁴⁰ Even As'ad Razzūq's book *al-Shu'arā' al-tammūziyyūn*, in which he examined the use of myths in modern poetry, did not pertain to the role of myth in poetic

⁷³⁵ Al-Khāl, *al-Hadātha fī al-shi'ar*, p. 82.

⁷³⁶ Sa'īd, *al-Baḥth 'an al-judhūr*, p. 13.

⁷³⁷ Īlī Hāwī, "Adīb Maẓhar, rā'id al-tajdīd", *Shi'ar* (num. 5, Winter 1958), p. 87.

⁷³⁸ Razzūq, "Eliot, mukhtārāt shi'riyya", p. 90.

⁷³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 91; and see Maxwell, *The Poetry of T. S. Eliot*, pp. 93-94.

⁷⁴⁰ See pp. 153, 201-202 of this thesis.

ambiguity.⁷⁴¹ This resembles ʿIzz al-Dīn Ismāʿīl’s study of the poetic ambiguity that I have examined in the second chapter in which he relied on the New Critics’ previously existing explanation of ambiguity without actually analysing any Arabic poem.

However, those who concentrated on how to comprehend ambiguity in modern poetry among *Shiʿr*’s members are Jabrā and to a lesser extent Khālida Saʿīd. Both explored many modern poetic works and analysed poetic images, symbols, myths and how to comprehend contradictions in poetry. Khālida Saʿīd argued that it is the duty of criticism to bridge the gap between modern poetry and the people. Critics, she added, should translate poetic ambiguity and analyse complex images, myths, words and general meanings.⁷⁴² In practical terms, Saʿīd published many articles in *Shiʿr* in which she examined new poetic works, analysing their symbols and images. For instance, in her study of Adūnīs’s *al-Baʿth wa al-ramād*, she analysed symbols and myths used in *al-Baʿth wa al-ramād* such as the phoenix, fire and symbols of redemption. Importantly, Saʿīd explained how contradictory elements in Adūnīs’s volume are harmonious with each other, such as burning fire and the spring.⁷⁴³ However, she at times studied the use of some poetic symbols not textually, but according to the poet’s biography and psychology. She explained the use of fire by Adūnīs as corresponding to his Sufi ancestry and Alawī sect and to his father’s death by burning.⁷⁴⁴ Similarly, she examined Fadwā Ṭūqān’s use of destiny symbols, explaining this as a result of the poet’s religious beliefs.⁷⁴⁵

Through his study of poetic works, published in and outside of *Shiʿr*, Jabrā viewed poetic ambiguity as a very important aesthetic and meaningful element in modern poetry.⁷⁴⁶ In his analysis of Tawfīq Ṣāʿigh’s *Fī jubb al-usūd*, he identified the elements that seem contradictory in his poetry which included love-hate, justness-injustice and revaluation-submission. He argued that although these contradictions appear in one poetic personality,

⁷⁴¹ See Razzūq, *al-Shuʿarāʾ al-tammūziyyūn*.

⁷⁴² Saʿīd, *al-Baḥth ʿan al-judhūr*, pp. 13-14.

⁷⁴³ Khuzamā Ṣabrī, “Adūnīs fī *al-Baʿth wa al-ramād*”, p. 99.

⁷⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 99-100.

⁷⁴⁵ Khuzamā Ṣabrī, “*Wajadtuhā* li Fadwā Ṭūqān”, *Shiʿr* (num. 4, Autumn 1957), p. 105.

⁷⁴⁶ Jabrā Ibrāhīm Jābrā, “*Fī jubb al-usūd*”, *Shiʿr* (num. 15, Summer 1960), p.87.

they are still in harmony because they highlight various dimensions of the confrontations between the created and the creator along with the uneven conflict between human beings and God, the evictor and evicted. It is this conflict between people and the subject of love, wherein the beloved becomes the torturer and redeemer along with the ideas of life and death simultaneously. Hence, this kind of poetry appears to be a continuous attempt to integrate contradictions and to fuse different poles. It explores what is hidden in the psychology of the human being where it is difficult to differentiate between acceptance and rejection where yes might be equal to no.⁷⁴⁷ What is significant is that Jabrā's argument relies upon, and is extracted from, an analysis of poetic texts, illustrating how to read modern poetry. Additionally, Jabrā analysed, in detail, poetic symbols and myths in *Fī jubb al-usūd*, particularly those originating from Scripture which are not known to the reader and therefore help explain the ambiguity of *Fī jubb al-usūd*.⁷⁴⁸

Importantly, Jabrā pointed out that poetic ambiguity and contradictions are not aesthetic or poetic in and of themselves. If they do not hold complex thought experiences, feelings and emotions, they are not poetically successful.⁷⁴⁹ It is understandable that poetic visions are ambiguous and mysterious to a great extent, but this ambiguity loses its poetic value if it is totally incomprehensible. This occurs when poets do not consciously control the poetic vision and composition. Jabrā analysed Adūnīs's *al-Masraḥ wa al-marāyā* as an example of the loose control of consciousness over poetry. As previously noted, Adūnīs was employing Sufi, French Symbolist, and Surrealist views about the elimination of the conscious role in poetry. Jabrā contended that there are many consecutive Sufi visions in *al-Masraḥ wa al-marāyā* which are far beyond being consciously deployed.⁷⁵⁰ He analysed the poetic symbols, language, and structure revealing that Adūnīs used many symbols and repeated many phrases to express the same, redundant vision. Therefore, the repeated phrases and symbols in *al-Masraḥ wa al-marāyā* are not related to his poetic vision, making the book

⁷⁴⁷ Ibid., pp. 105-108.

⁷⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 116.

⁷⁴⁹ Jabrā Ibrāhīm Jabrā, "al-Tanāquḍāt fī *al-Masraḥ wa al-marāyā*", *Shi'ar* (num. 39, Autumn 1968), p. 113.

⁷⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 113-114.

completely ambiguous while causing it to lose the capability to inspire.⁷⁵¹ Additionally, Jabrā compared *al-Masrah wa al-marāyā* with Adūnīs's other works and analysed their contradictory images and myths along with how they fused harmony into the structure of the poems.⁷⁵² Jabrā concluded that Adūnīs wanted to use Surrealist images and he consciously imposed symbols, myths, phrases and figures in his book which cannot be harmonised with each other or retain similar meaning.⁷⁵³

V. The Objective Theory of Poetry

V. 1. The Impersonal Concept of Poetry

The separation between the personality of poets and their poetry is one of the most obvious indications reflecting the influence of New Criticism upon *Shi'ar*'s writers. This issue implies the rejection of many literary schools, including Art for Art's Sake and Romanticism. Similar to the French Symbolists, the New Critics deemed sound, colour, odour and other components of art the only way to express emotions, as previously discussed.⁷⁵⁴ This suggests that the components of art are neither pure symbols nor are meant for themselves, and art is not pure beauty as the Art for Art's Sake critics believed. However, the main aim of 'impersonalism' is to illustrate the idea that literature is a 'closed system' meaning that beliefs and truths that appear in literature, and correspond to reality, are not the essence of literature and should be irrelevant to the critic's appreciation of literary works.⁷⁵⁵ The New Critics' impersonal concept of literature represented the antithesis of the Romantic view that the essence of literature is to express the writer's emotion. Instead, the New Critics emphasised the literary object and focused attention "not upon the poet but upon the poetry."⁷⁵⁶

⁷⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 114-116.

⁷⁵² Ibid., pp. 119-121.

⁷⁵³ Ibid., pp. 122-124.

⁷⁵⁴ See pp. 128-129 of this thesis.

⁷⁵⁵ Hyman, *The Armed Vision*, p. 83.

⁷⁵⁶ Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism*, p. 665.

Romantic poets, Tate illustrated, imposed their personal emotions and wills over their poetry without systematic method.⁷⁵⁷ Eliot expressed his rejection of the Romantic way of expressing feelings and emotions in literature very strongly, stating that “the poet has not a personality to express.”⁷⁵⁸ The poet, for Eliot, is a unique ‘medium’ where experiences and expressions are combined suddenly and in a special way.⁷⁵⁹ “Poetry is,” Eliot added, “not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality.”⁷⁶⁰ The New Critics disapproved of the idea that poetry springs from the heart and poets unpack their hearts in their poems. Richards refused to consider poetry “the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings.”⁷⁶¹

Shiʿr’s members took the same attitude as the New Critics towards the Romantic personalised method of expression. In his comment on the poetry of the Lebanese Romantic poet Ilyās Abū Shabaka, al-Khāl disapproved of Abū Shabaka’s Romantic poetry as it did not show the features of modern poetry. Modern poetry, al-Khāl argued, is not based on abstract ideas and personal feelings, but on the organic fusion of these ideas and feelings in symbols, myths and images.⁷⁶² Many *Shiʿr* writers used the same words used by the New Critics, particularly those of Eliot, about the importance of the separation between poets and their personalities. Those critics included Fuʾād Rifqa, Jabrā and al-Khāl. The latter argued that poets should sacrifice their personalities in composing poetry and objectify their personal feelings. Through this separation, he added, the poet can create a poem which has its own

⁷⁵⁷ Tate, *Collected Essays*, p. 100.

⁷⁵⁸ Eliot, *Selected Essays*, pp. 19-20.

⁷⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

⁷⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 21. Many critics claimed that Eliot’s impersonal concept of literature is contradictory to his concept of the objective correlative, which is that the poets try to find ‘verbal equivalents’ for their emotions and feelings. These verbal equivalents should evoke the same feelings and emotions in the reader. However, the poem is not allowed to hold such personal emotions. Additionally, “the poet gets rid of his emotions by sublimating them in his poem’s objectivity and, by means of this device, he shifts his emotional burden from his own shoulders to those of his audience.” Krieger, *The New Apologist*, pp. 48-49. Ransom deemed Eliot too psychological and therefore not classical enough because of his concern with the “affective experience” on the reader. Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism*, p. 669. Ransom described this Eliot’s statement as “very nearly a doctrine of poetic automatism.” Ransom, *The New Criticism*, p. 152. Similarly, Winters criticised Eliot for viewing poems as if they had their own lives, which makes the poet “merely an automaton.” Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism*, p. 669.

⁷⁶¹ Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism*, vol. 5, p. 229.

⁷⁶² Yūsuf al-Khāl, “Abū Shabaka wa al-shiʿr al-ḥadīth”, *Shiʿr* (num. 13, Winter 1960), pp. 116-118.

life.⁷⁶³ Al-Khāl illustrated that when poets finish writing their poems, they find no connection between what they wanted to say in their poems and the poems themselves. Poets do not have personal meanings or specific ideas to express and those who have such things are not real poets. Hence, poets cannot tell what they feel nor can they write their meanings in prose.⁷⁶⁴ Obviously this calls to mind Eliot's statement that "the poet has no personality to express." It is also the same argument of Wimsatt and Beardsley in their essay 'the Intentional Fallacy' in which they argued that the intention of poets has no place in their poetry. The poet might have an idea of what to say before composing poetry, but what is created is that "his former concrete intention was not his intention."⁷⁶⁵ They added that poets do not possess ownership of their poems as they belong to the public, to the language and to human knowledge. Therefore, poets do not have the right to interpret or explain their poems.⁷⁶⁶ Furthermore, al-Khāl added that poets discover their motivation to write poetry during the process of composing poetry. This is the exact formulation of Eliot in that "what the poet really felt could only be expressed precisely in and through the poem, which is to say that he had to discover it through the act of composition."⁷⁶⁷

In addition to al-Khāl, many other members of *Shi'ar* espoused the same idea. Jabrā argued that, in reading poetry, we are not interested in what the poet wanted to say, and even that is not useful to know. What we are interested in is only the poem.⁷⁶⁸ Similarly, Fu'ād Rifqa refused to study the personality of Badr Shākir al-Sayyāb in analysing his poetry, arguing that this might be of interest only for the historian.⁷⁶⁹ Rifqa claimed that the modern concept of poetry is different from that of Romanticism; it is not a spontaneous overflow of feelings, nor is it a Romantic dribbling of emotions. He added that spontaneous labour in composing poetry should not go beyond the first step after which poets spend their conscious

⁷⁶³ Al-Khāl, "Maḥūm al-qaṣīda", p. 82. This is literally from Eliot when stating that "a poem... has its own life." Eliot, *The Sacred Wood*, p. x.

⁷⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 81, 83.

⁷⁶⁵ Wimsatt and Beardsley, "The Intentional Fallacy" in *The Verbal Icon*, p. 5.

⁷⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

⁷⁶⁷ Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism*, p. 668.

⁷⁶⁸ Jabrā, "al-Tajruba fī Bayt al-*ankabūt*", p. 88.

⁷⁶⁹ Fu'ād Rifqa, "*Unshūdat al-maṭar*", *Shi'ar* (num. 17, Winter 1961), p. 166.

efforts to objectify their feelings.⁷⁷⁰ Rifqa severely criticised Fadwā Ṭūqān's poetry as Ṭūqān expressed her feelings directly and emphasised her personality. He added that Ṭūqān did not enrich her feelings to make them universal and common.⁷⁷¹ Furthermore, ʿĀdil Dāhir stated that poets should eliminate their personalities and objectify their feelings within the body of their poems.⁷⁷² Similarly, Unsī al-Hāj based his criticism of *Aṣābiʿunā al-latī taḥtariq*, the novel of Suhayl Idrīs who was the head editor of *Majallat al-Ādāb*, on his rejecting the Romantic ways of expression. Al-Hāj argued that Idrīs's novel expressed loose personal feelings and abstract ideas directly and without artistic form.⁷⁷³ Many other *Shiʿr* critics participated in the rejection of the Romantic view of literature and in the importance of objectifying ideas and feelings in poetry.⁷⁷⁴

Similarly, Khālida Saʿīd stressed the idea that modern poetry does not use direct personal feelings and is not centred on the poet's personality.⁷⁷⁵ She argued that directly expressed ideas make poetry incomprehensible, similar to what appears in al-Khāl's *al-Bi'r al-mahjūra*, the ambiguity of which prevented the reader from understanding it. She illustrated, for example, that the novelty of al-Khāl's poetry springs from his dislike of the complexity of modern mechanical civilisation and his longing for the ancient Christian simplicity.⁷⁷⁶ This suggests that al-Khāl presented his personal belief as an abstract idea instead of embodying it in images or, to use the New Critics' terms, instead of dramatising it. When al-Khāl embodied his thought with images and objects, the ambiguity became transparent and attractive. She added that it is not the duty of poets to discover new emotions and problems (this is the literal sentence of Eliot),⁷⁷⁷ but to contextualise the era in which they lived by embodying emotion.⁷⁷⁸ Significantly, Saʿīd analysed al-Khāl's book illustrating that

⁷⁷⁰ Fu'ād Rifqa, "ʿAnāṣir al-qaṣīda", *Shiʿr* (num. 13, Winter 196), pp. 114-115.

⁷⁷¹ Fu'ād Rifqa, "ʿAṭīnī ḥubban li Fadwā Ṭūqān", *Shiʿr* (num. 18, Spring 1961), pp. 147-148.

⁷⁷² ʿĀdil Dāhir, "ʿAnāṣir al-tajdīd fī shiʿr Muṭrān", *Shiʿr* (num. 13, Winter 1960), p. 89.

⁷⁷³ Unsī al-Hāj, "al-Shahāda wa al-istishhād fī qabḍat al-ghurūr wa al-dīʿāya", *Adab* (num. 4, vol. 1, Autumn 1962), p. 116.

⁷⁷⁴ For other example see Kamīl Saʿāda, "Shiʿr jadīd fī nathr jadīd", *Shiʿr* (num. 26, Spring 1963), pp. 110-118; Nizār ʿAbbās, "Shiʿr Saʿdī Yūsuf", *Shiʿr* (num. 23, Summer 1962), pp. 147-148.

⁷⁷⁵ Khālida Saʿīd, "al-ʿAwda min al-nabʿ al-ḥālim li Salmā al-Jayūsī", *Shiʿr* (num. 13, Winter 1960), 99.

⁷⁷⁶ Khuzāmā Sabrī, "al-Bi'r al-mahjūra li Yūsuf al-Khāl", pp. 139-140.

⁷⁷⁷ See Eliot, *Selected Essays*, p. 21.

⁷⁷⁸ Khuzāmā Sabrī, "al-Bi'r al-mahjūra li Yūsuf al-Khāl", p. 136.

he did not objectify his meanings and personal feelings nor did he embody them in poetic images. Therefore, some ideas were direct and without poetic form as if they were decisive findings.⁷⁷⁹ As previously discussed, this reflects the gap between al-Khāl's poetry and his poetic theorisation in which he emphasised the importance of objectifying abstract ideas and personal feelings and refused to express them directly. Per contra, when Khālida Sa'īd studied al-Māghūṭ's *Huzn fī daw' al-qamar*, she celebrated his way of expressing feelings and meanings through poetic images and analysing his images and their sources.⁷⁸⁰ Through her analysing, she stated that the significance of al-Māghūṭ's poetry was that he transferred the abstract meaning to poetic objects: to people, events and land.⁷⁸¹ However, while discussing the kinds of knowledge that the critic must possess in order to study modern poetry, Khālida Sa'īd argued that it is the duty of the critic to discover the circumstances that led to the poem, along with the emotions and meaning of the poet, not only at the time of writing the poem but from the poet's childhood on.⁷⁸² In addition, she at times focused on the personal meanings and feelings of the poet, as in her study of Fadwā Ṭūqān, along with explaining some poetic elements according to the poet's life.⁷⁸³ Evidently, this does not fit her emphasis that modern poetry objectifies personal meanings and feelings and also does not express them directly. Why does modern poetry objectify those meanings and feelings within the poetic text, which means that the personality of the poet is not shown in the text, and simultaneously allow critics to analyse a poet's emotions in poetry?

Conversely, Adūnīs disagreed with *Shi'ar*'s members, particularly with al-Khāl, about the idea that modern poetry does not express abstract thoughts and feelings. Impersonality is, he argued, not the right criterion to apply to the appreciation of poetry as great poetry is necessarily comprehensive and about human beings in general. Therefore, it must convey abstract ideas and feelings.⁷⁸⁴ Abstraction is not, for Adūnīs, non-poetic by nature. Rather it

⁷⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 140.

⁷⁸⁰ Khuzāmā Ṣabrī, "*Huzn fī daw' al-qamar*", pp. 94-100.

⁷⁸¹ Ibid., p. 94.

⁷⁸² Sa'īd, *al-Baḥṭh 'an al-judhūr.*, pp. 15-16.

⁷⁸³ Khuzāmā Ṣabrī, "*Wajadtuhā li Fadwā Ṭūqān*", pp. 102-110.

⁷⁸⁴ Adūnīs, "Barīd *Shi'ar*", *Shi'ar* (num. 28, Spring 1961), pp. 176-177.

depends on how it is used. Abstraction is not poetic when it is a distractive and ornamental element without participating in poetic and human experience. On this basis, Adūnīs criticised Amīn Nakhla’s poetry, emphasising that his poetry is a group of abstract meanings and ornamental words that does not form or express a human experience.⁷⁸⁵ Adūnīs added that abstraction creates important psychological and spiritual cases in poetry. Poets can infuse the abstract ideas and phrases with striking inspiration and metaphysical meanings.⁷⁸⁶

V. 2. The Objective Correlative

The other part of the objective theory of literature, following from rejection of the Romantic way of expression, was to identify the method of objectifying or “dramatising” personal emotions and abstract ideas. There were two sources that had an influence over Eliot in his objective correlative doctrine: the French Symbolists⁷⁸⁷ and the Imagist Ezra Pound. The latter believed that poetic images were the essence of poetry and poetic meaning is charged in poetic images. Pound was strongly influenced by his study of the Chinese language. He used the style of the Chinese written characters which present things concretely. Reading Chinese is like watching objects which are related to the words which describe them.⁷⁸⁸ Pound saw the Chinese way of writing as an ideal for poetic language. Poetic language, for Pound, should provide concrete meaning by using “picturable” elements while avoiding abstractions. This provides poetry with “subtlety and precision,” and it makes what the poet “wanted to say: not this, and not that, but precisely this.”⁷⁸⁹ Pound’s theory aimed at using material images to express immaterial meanings. Poetry, for Pound, is “a sort of inspired mathematics, which gives us equations, not for abstract figures, triangles, spheres, and the like, but equations for the human emotions.”⁷⁹⁰

⁷⁸⁵ Adūnīs, “Al-Dīwān al-jadīd, Amīn Nakhla”, pp. 112-113.

⁷⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 112.

⁷⁸⁷ See p. 128-129 of this thesis.

⁷⁸⁸ Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism*, p. 663.

⁷⁸⁹ Ibid., pp. 663-664.

⁷⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 664.

However, Eliot was the critic who completed the issue of impersonality in New Criticism by stating that poets have no personality to express and they are only a medium. The most impersonal conception of Eliot was in his essay ‘Hamlet and his Problems’ in which he coined the term ‘the objective correlative’. Eliot argued that

The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an ‘objective correlative’; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience are given, the emotion is immediately evoked.⁷⁹¹

This concept concentrated its attention on the poetic text and its structure instead of the author and his/her intention or feeling. The critic should be concerned with this mediation, the form of the object in which the meaning is objectified. Eliot argued that the problem of Hamlet is that his emotion is bigger than the dramatic device in the play and “nothing that Shakespeare can do with the plot can express Hamlet for him.”⁷⁹²

Shi‘r’s members employed Eliot’s concept of objective correlative comprehensively without using the term itself in most situations.⁷⁹³ At times, some of *Shi‘r*’s writers used not only the idea of the objective correlative, but also the same words as Eliot. After arguing that modern poetry should objectify meanings and emotions, Khālida Sa‘īd used Eliot’s phrase through which he criticised *Hamlet*. Sa‘īd stated that Fadwā Ṭūqān’s emotions were bigger and stronger than her language that described her trembling emotions without embodying their complexity. The emotion in Ṭūqān’s poetry

⁷⁹¹ Eliot, *Selected Essays*, p. 145.

⁷⁹² *Ibid.*, pp. 145-146.

⁷⁹³ The only use of the term ‘objective correlative’ was by ‘Ādil Ḍāhir in a letter sent from New York to the editorial board of *Shi‘r* in which he described a lecture delivered by Eliot at Yale University in 1962. Ḍāhir added that Eliot considered his term difficult to defend and it was more applicable to a ripe character like Coriolanus than to Hamlet. ‘Ādil Ḍāhir, “Risāla min New York”, *Shi‘r* (num. 22, Spring 1962), pp. 123-124.

holds tension, consciousness and will, but all of this is stronger than Ṭūqān's poetry.⁷⁹⁴ This is Eliot's exact criticism of *Hamlet*, which was mentioned previously; it suggests that Ṭūqān did not create an objective correlative that could express her emotion, thus she had to express it abstractly. Different from Ṭūqān's poetry, Khālida Sa'īd found that Nāzik al-Malā'ika's successful poetry embodies thought and emotion with characters, events and concrete things that have independent features and suitable circumstances. Therefore, her poetry is evidently modern and free of abstraction and ornamental description.⁷⁹⁵ Al-Khāl argued that the reason why he labelled poetry as a creation is that poetry brings abstract ideas to concrete shape, "visualising them."⁷⁹⁶ Similarly, he argued that poetry transfers personal experiences of the poet through an appropriate artistic form.⁷⁹⁷ In this form, ideas and emotions are created as concrete elements,⁷⁹⁸ or as Jabrā labelled it, as visualised images.⁷⁹⁹ Furthermore, Rineh Ḥabashī stated that poets put their experiences in words creating the atmosphere that expresses the poet's original experience.⁸⁰⁰

Shi'ar's Critics tracked the concept of the objective correlative in two main points: poetic images and myths.

V. 3. Poetic images

Shi'ar's writers argued that while modern poetry relinquished abstract ideas and personal emotions, poetry developed new ways to express such things. One of the most important of those ways was through poetic images that have the ability to embody personal meanings and to make them independent from the poet.⁸⁰¹ This is the exact function of the objective correlative as explained by Eliot. Although *Shi'ar*'s members

⁷⁹⁴ Khuzāmā Sabrī, "Wajadtuhā li Fadwā Ṭūqān", p. 106.

⁷⁹⁵ Khuzāmā Ṣabrī, "Qarārat al-mawja li Nāzik al-Malā'ika", *Shi'ar* (num. 3, Summer 1957), p.95.

⁷⁹⁶ Al-Khāl, "Fī māhiyyat al-shi'ar", p. 3.

⁷⁹⁷ Al-Khāl, "Qadāya al-shi'ar al-mu'āṣir li Nāzik al-Malā'ika", *Shi'ar* (num. 24, Autumn 1962), p. 151.

⁷⁹⁸ Al-Khāl, "Fī māhiyyat al-shi'ar", p. 3.

⁷⁹⁹ Jabrā, "al-Shi'ar wa al-naqd al-jāhil", *Adab* (num. 1, vol. 2, Winter 1963), p. 80.

⁸⁰⁰ Rineh Ḥabashī, "Al-Shi'ar fī ma'rakat al-wujūd", *Shi'ar* (num. 1, Winter 1957), p. 92.

⁸⁰¹ Al-Khāl, "Abū Shabaka wa al-shi'ar al-ḥadīth", p. 117.

devoted significant attention to the poetic image, they did not provide a clear definition of it. However, the features of the poetic image can be extracted from their writings as follows:

First, the poetic image is a device which turns meaning into a poetic element and transforms it from direct speech and prose to the poetic level. If meaning in poetry is not embodied in images, it loses its poetic characteristics.⁸⁰² Fu'ād Rifqa stated that the embodiment of meanings in poetic images is one of the main characteristics of poetry. *Shi'ar*'s writers repeatedly disapproved of direct meaning or personal emotion in poetry.⁸⁰³ For instance, Unsī al-Ḥāj severely criticised Yūsuf al-Khaṭīb's *ʿĀ'idūn* for expressing meanings and emotions directly without a poetic vehicle. He illustrated that *ʿĀ'idūn* is a group of meanings that are not any different from prose or everyday speech.⁸⁰⁴ Similarly, Nizār ʿAbbās argued that the direct emotions of the Iraqi poet Saʿdī Yūsuf imposed a Romantic impact over his poetry and made the reader see his tears and loud words directly.⁸⁰⁵ Per contra, Khālida Saʿīd analysed Muḥammad al-Māghūṭ's *Huzn fī Daw' al-qamar*, illustrating that this book is based on poetic images which express al-Māghūṭ's meanings and emotions concretely.⁸⁰⁶ She added that these poetic images are a very rich treasure of poetic excellence enabling al-Māghūṭ to compose his poetry without rhyme, classical rhythm or direct meanings.⁸⁰⁷

Second, the material of poetic images can be anything suitable to the poetic context. Rineh Ḥabashī argued that poets can make their images of anything they can imagine; there is no image that cannot be poetic. The only condition is that the image should be appropriate to the poetic context and able to express the poetic experience.⁸⁰⁸ Khālida Saʿīd analysed the material of the poetic images in many poets' works, most notably Adūnīs and al-Māghūṭ. The latter, she argued, made his poetic images of small,

⁸⁰² Fu'ād Rifqa, "Al-Baḥth ʿan al-judhūr", *Shi'ar* (num. 14, Spring 1960), pp. 86-87.

⁸⁰³ *Ibid.*, pp. 86-87.

⁸⁰⁴ Unsī al-Ḥāj, "ʿĀ'idūn li Yūsuf al-Khaṭīb", *Shi'ar* (num. 11, Summer 1959), pp. 91-92.

⁸⁰⁵ Nizār ʿAbbās, "Shi'ar Saʿdī Yūsuf", pp. 147-149.

⁸⁰⁶ Khuzāmā Sabrī, "Huzn fī Daw' al-qamar", p. 96.

⁸⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 95, 97.

⁸⁰⁸ Ḥabashī, "al-Shi'ar fī maʿrakat al-wujūd", p. 92.

trivial and discarded things such as “cows slashed on the back, beasts contemplating their hoofs, the elderly breast, prostitutes, slaves and thieves ...”⁸⁰⁹ Adūnīs’s images are, Sa‘īd stated, based on various things including myths, history, everyday objects and psychological meanings.⁸¹⁰

Third, the poetic image is meaningful since it comprises the body of meaning, which means that it is not merely an ornamental or rhetorical device. Al-Khāl argued that modern poetry does not use ornaments or decorative images, but it uses meaningful images that inspire historical and psychological meanings.⁸¹¹ Fu’ād Rifqa stated that the poetic image should spring from the meaning and be appropriate for it, which means that it defines the poetic form.⁸¹² In another place, Rifqa stressed that the poetic image should focus on human beings and reflect their psychological and existential meanings.⁸¹³ While analysing Adūnīs’s *al-Ba‘th wa al-ramād*, Khālida Sa‘īd stressed that Adūnīs’s poetic images are part of the poetic context and are appropriate for the attitude that the poem tries to create. For example, when the context was optimistic, images came from spring, gentle rain and tame animals. When pessimism took over the context, the images turned to picturing a monster, violence and death.⁸¹⁴ This attitude resembles that of the Imagists and the New Critics who stressed their rejection of meaningless rhetoric and ornaments. They highlighted that thought and vision are fused in the image and expressed “their horror of the cliché, horror of rhetoric and the grandiose, of every oratorical and facile manner.”⁸¹⁵

Fourth, *Shi‘r*’s members primarily deemed rhetorical figures, particularly similes and metaphors, to be ornaments and therefore not poetic images. This was part of *Shi‘r*’s

⁸⁰⁹ Khuzāmā Sabrī, “*Huzn fī daw’ al-qamar li Muḥammad al-Māghūṭ*”, pp. 96-97.

⁸¹⁰ Khuzāmā Sabrī, “*Adūnīs fī al-Ba‘th wa al-ramād*”, p. 107. In his study of Adīb Mazhar’s poetry, Īlī Ḥāwī argued that poetic images are not necessary concrete images, which he considered Symbolist, but might be psychological or abstract ones like those of the Surrealists. Accordingly, Ḥāwī classified poetic images used by Mazhar into Surrealist and Symbolist. Īlī Ḥāwī, “*Adīb Mazhar, rā’id al-tajdīd fī al-shi‘r al-‘arabī al-mu‘āṣir*”, pp. 87-90.

⁸¹¹ Al-Khāl, *al-Ḥadātha fī al-shi‘r*, p. 80.

⁸¹² Fu’ād Rifqa, “*al-Ba‘th ‘an al-judhūr*”, pp. 86-87.

⁸¹³ Fu’ād Rifqa, “*Unshūdat al-maṭar li Badr Shākīr al-Sayyāb*”, p. 165.

⁸¹⁴ Khuzāmā Sabrī, “*Adūnīs fī al-Ba‘th wa al-ramād*”, p. 107.

⁸¹⁵ Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism*, p. 659.

writers' attitude toward the Arabic heritage in which rhetorical figures played a significant role.⁸¹⁶ Al-Khāl pointed out that in addition to abstraction, expression by images allows modern poetry to abandon ornamentations and classical rhetorical means such as similes and metaphors. Instead, modern poetry, he added, creates living images containing historical and psychological suggestions.⁸¹⁷ Rhetorical figures and symbols are one-dimensional and reflect the relationship between two specific terms or concrete things. Poetic symbols, according to al-Khāl, should not be abstract or rely on single words. If this were the case, they would be similar to linguistic puzzles, rather than helping to include the meaning of life and history.⁸¹⁸ In his later writings, Adūnīs emphasised the abundance of similes and metaphors for poetic images by modern poets.⁸¹⁹ Similes, Adūnīs contended, combine two concrete sides and therefore are far from the nature of being. Similes create mechanical and incomprehensive relationships between human beings and the world, since things of the world appear in similes as shapes, not meanings or functions. On the contrary, the image, Adūnīs added, allows for unity with the world and discovers the world's nature and essence.⁸²⁰

Regarding metaphor, none of those who rejected its function in the modern poetic imagination explained the reason behind this rejection. Their accounts do not consider the role of similes and metaphors in creating poetic images. While a simile is a comparison of two separate sides (not necessarily two single sides; for example *tashbīh tamthīlī* (analogy) is a comparison of two sets of words or two sentences),⁸²¹ a metaphor creates

⁸¹⁶ See Jābir ʿAṣfūr, *al-Ṣūra al-fanniyya fī al-turāth al-naqdī wa al-balāghī ʿind al-ʿarab*.

⁸¹⁷ The Editorial Board, "Akhhār wa qaḍāyā", *Shiʿr* (num. 2, Spring 1957), p. 98.

⁸¹⁸ Al-Khāl, "Dūlāb li Mīshāl Ṭrād", *Shiʿr* (num. 4, Autumn 1957), p. 110. This argument is what Allen Tate called allegorical poetry in which the characters, images and symbols refer to specific practical ideas, losing the ability to be wholly and comprehensive. Tate argued that in this case the practical meaning has more existence in the poem than the poetic form. Therefore, Tate stated that "allegorical poetry seems to me to be inferior." Tate, *Collected Essays*, pp. 95-96.

⁸¹⁹ Adūnīs, *Zaman shiʿr*, p. 13 and *Ṣadmat al-ḥadātha*, p. 99.

⁸²⁰ Adūnīs, *Ṣadmat al-ḥadātha*, p. 99. Similarly, Khālida Saʿīd deemed similes as the weakest type of images since they are a comparison of two things, not an integration of them. She added that an image, which is created by a simile, relies on a formal relationship between two things and has no meaningful relationship beyond the concrete form and therefore is superficial. Khuzāmā Sabrī, "*Huzn fī ḍaw' al-qamar* li Muḥammad al-Māghūṭ", p. 97.

⁸²¹ W. P. Heinrichs, "Rhetorical Figures" in Julie Scott Meisami and Paul Starkey (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature* (London, New York: Routledge, 1998), vol.2, p. 661.

new features for the sides of the comparison and integrates them into a new context. Therefore, metaphorical words gain new meanings and relations in the new context.⁸²² After refusing to deem metaphors as ornaments, Wimsatt and Brooks argued that metaphors are “borrowing between and intercourse of thoughts, a transaction between contexts.”⁸²³ Hence, contradictory elements can come together in the poetic image by having metaphorical relationships. Many *Shiʿr* critics argued that poetic images combine contradictions and show the relationship of different entities⁸²⁴ without explaining how this happens or the nature of relationships between component images.

Accordingly, *Shiʿr*’s critics gave the poetic image two functions. First is the function of the objective correlative which is the events, characters, or scenes that objectify the poet’s emotions and meanings. Second is the function of metaphors which enables the poetic image or poetry in general to combine different or contradictory elements. For example, Khālida Saʿīd described Adūnīs’s poetic phrase “*al-ḥaṭab al-ḥalūb*” (milking wood) as an image that can combine contradictions. “*Al-ḥaṭab al-ḥalūb*” is an image which is part of a large sentence which encompasses a more complex image.⁸²⁵ Evidently, the relationship between wood and producing milk is metaphorical as it is not part of the features of wood to produce milk. This is to say that wood gains a new feature which is not indigenous to it. In using metaphors, words and phrases are shifted from their ordinary usage to new contexts or are at odds with other components of a context, where they can produce new meanings.⁸²⁶ Metaphors enable words and phrases to hold meanings that have no real equivalents, i.e. the pre-Islamic metaphor “the claws of death” wherein “there is no part of death which could be compared with claws.”⁸²⁷ The relationship between death and claws is similar to that of milk and wood. This is to say that Saʿīd labeled the metaphor as an image without differentiating between metaphors

⁸²² ʿAṣfūr, *al-Ṣūra al-fanniyya*, pp. 226-227.

⁸²³ Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism.*, p. 645.

⁸²⁴ For example see Ḥabashī, “al-Shiʿr fi maʿrakat al-wujūd”, pp. 90-91.

⁸²⁵ Khuzāmā Sabrī, “Adūnīs fi *al-Baʿth wa al-ramād*”, p. 107.

⁸²⁶ Preminger and Brogan, *The New Princeton*, p. 760.

⁸²⁷ W. P. Heinrichs, “Metaphor” in Meisami, Julie Scott and Paul Starkey(eds). *Encyclopaedia of Arabic Literature*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), vol. 2, p. 532.

and images or pointing to the importance of metaphor for constructing poetic images. Most images that Sa'īd studied were of similar metaphors such as “all people are a tail of a wolf” and “she is a light feather traveling unaccompanied.”⁸²⁸

Fifth, the poetic image is a precise way to express psychological and vague meanings that cannot be expressed in other ways. After emphasising the importance of poetic images, Yūsuf al-Khāl stated that one of the main modern poetic aspects is *al-tahaddudiyya* (precision). He explained that poetry is not vague magic or an unconscious expression of a psychological state, but it is a concrete expression of an experience that is promoted to be universal beyond place and time.⁸²⁹ Recall that Pound said that the poetic image provides “subtlety and precision” in poetry. Additionally, Khālida Sa'īd argued that if abstract meanings and emotions are expressed as thought symbols and signs without having embodied poetic images, they become either direct speech or incomprehensible.⁸³⁰ This is, she added, what made al-Khāl's poetic meanings very ambiguous. Per contra, when he embodied his meanings in images, they became more attractive and much richer with inspiration.⁸³¹

Sixth, the poetic image appeared in *Shi'r* as a main critical device and many *Shi'r* critics focused on this issue in their critical studies. For example, Nabīh Ghaṭṭās based his comparison between Ṣalāḥ °Abd al-Ṣabūr and °Iṣām Maḥfūz on their method of using poetic images as an objective correlative without using the term itself. He argued that although °Abd al-Ṣabūr expressed his meanings and emotions through images and was influenced by Eliot's way of expression, he could not eliminate his abstract ideas and personal emotion. His images were not fused with his emotions, meaning that his images were imposed on his emotions.⁸³² Ghaṭṭās added that contrary to °Abd al-Ṣabūr, °Iṣām

⁸²⁸ Khuzāmā Ṣabrī, “Adūnīs fī *al-Ba'ṭh wa al-ramād*”, pp. 107-108.

⁸²⁹ Al-Khāl, “Fī māhiyyat al-shi'r”, p. 4.

⁸³⁰ Khuzāmā Ṣabrī, “*al-Bi'r al-mahjūra* li Yūsuf al-Khāl”, p. 136.

⁸³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

⁸³² Nabīh Ghaṭṭās, “Min Khārij al-wāqi' ilā bāṭinihi – *A'shāb al-ṣayf*”, *Shi'r* (num. 25, Winter 1963), p. 122.

Mahfūz fused his emotions and meanings in images.⁸³³ He continued analysing Mahfūz's poetic images and how they objectify his emotions to the point of eliminating every detail referring to him.⁸³⁴ In addition, As'ad Razzūq directed his essay on Nadhīr al-°Aẓma's *al-Laḥm wa al-sanābil* to the place of poetic images and the poet's personality. He implicitly criticised °Aẓma for making his poetry dependant on his personality. °Aẓma's volume, Razzūq illustrated, expressed the poet's personal experiences. Although the poet used some poetic images which gave his poetry some objectivity, the book remained the poet's curriculum vitae.⁸³⁵ By the end of the essay, Razzūq emphasised that it is not enough that poets express their thoughts and emotional problems or their society's main problems. "They have to objectify these problems and promote them to be universal beyond place and time."⁸³⁶

Ironically, while Khalīl Muṭrān was known as a Romantic, °Ādil Ḍāhir described his poetry as impersonal and relying on poetic images. He argued that Muṭrān dramatised his emotions through events and images which objectified the poet's emotions. This made his poetic images complex and charged with feelings and objectified meanings beyond subjectivity. Ḍāhir added that this style of expression made the poet's personality disappear behind a wall of objectivity.⁸³⁷ I believe that this description is inappropriate to Muṭrān's poetry, particularly with regard to examples that Ḍāhir used in his argument. The Romantic subjectivity is obvious in those examples where every scene is looked at through the poet's eyes. For example, Ḍāhir quoted a stanza showing how the poet united the phenomena of nature and his emotion and how both the poet and natural images are integrated. It is, however, clear that this stanza expresses the poet's personal view toward that natural scene. It showed the image of nature at sunset and the entire scene appeared in the mind of the poet. This is clear when Muṭrān says, halfway through that stanza:

⁸³³ Ibid., p. 123.

⁸³⁴ Ibid., pp. 123-133.

⁸³⁵ As'ad Razzūq, "al-Laḥm wa al-sanābil li Nadhīr al-°Aẓma", *Shi'ar* (num. 6, Spring 1958), pp. 132-133.

⁸³⁶ Ibid., p. 135.

⁸³⁷ °Ādil Ḍāhir, "°Anāṣir al-tajdīd fī shi'ar Khalīl Muṭrān", p. 89.

وخواظري تبدو تجاه نواظري كلقى كدامية السحاب إزائي

My emotions toward what I see seem to bleed like the flow of clouds over me

والدمع من جفني يسيل مشعشعا بسنا الشعاع الغارب المترائي⁸³⁸

The tears stream from my eyes, diluted by the ray of light descending

Evidently, the poet's personality is the center of the stanza along with other images, which appear as not separated from the poet but rather as viewed through the poet's perspective within the poem. ʿĀdil Ḍāhir imposes the idea of objectivity which dominated the theoretical view of *Shiʿr*'s members and this shows the gap between theory and application.

VI. 4. Myth

Many *Shiʿr* critics emphasised the importance of myth as one of the main features of modern poetry.⁸³⁹ The use of myth in modern poetry has two dimensions; it is a way of thinking and a way of expression.

The first point, as previously noted, concerns the idea that the use of myth in modern poetry implies an opposing attitude to scientism and scientific styles of life. Allen Tate illustrated that poetry not only uses myths but also its order is mythically-based which protects human beings from the mechanical styles of life and from losing their souls and objectives.⁸⁴⁰ *Shiʿr*'s members espoused the same view as the New Critics toward the use of myths in poetry. *Shiʿr*'s editorial board argued that the need for myths in the modern era is as important as ever because human life in the modern era has no poetic values and is dominated by materialistic, rather than spiritual norms.⁸⁴¹ They added that modern poets discover, by using myths, the way to express the real sense of life as they are not part of the modern unspiritual life and are able to challenge the logic of materialism: the logic of gold and iron.⁸⁴²

⁸³⁸ Ibid., p. 88.

⁸³⁹ Fu'ād Rifqa, "al-Baḥṭh ʿan al-judhūr", p. 87.

⁸⁴⁰ Tate, *Collected Essays*, p. 47.

⁸⁴¹ The Editorial Board, "Akhbār wa Qaḍāyā", *Shiʿr* (num. 3, Summer 1957), p. 112.

⁸⁴² Ibid., pp. 112-113.

Khālida Saʿīd stressed the idea that myth can express the eternal problems of human beings, such as birth, death, revival and eternity, more than any others.⁸⁴³ Significantly, Saʿīd argued that myth expresses the authentic attitude of the ancient human being to existentialist problems at a time when thought was not separate from life.⁸⁴⁴ This is similar to Eliot's concept "the unified sensibility," which refers to what he sees as an ancient state of mind when thought and feeling were unified together and all beliefs, philosophical ideas and personal emotions fused within this unified sensibility.⁸⁴⁵

The second point, myth as a way of expression, is our concern now. The primary feature of using myth in modern poetry for *Shiʿr* critics was that it was viewed as an objective correlative of the poet's emotions and abstract meaning. Al-Khāl described modern poetry as not holding abstraction. Rather, it embodies meaning in myths and folklore along with poetic images.⁸⁴⁶ Furthermore, al-Khāl explained the reason why Mishlīl Ṭrād's poetry is based on description, abstraction and Romantic emotion as he did not use historical symbols or myths.⁸⁴⁷ ʿIṣām Maḥfūz argued that the correct way to express ideas in poetry is by finding a suitable myth or a mythical character.⁸⁴⁸ Relevantly, Khālida Saʿīd based her analysis of Adūnīs's poem, *al-Baʿth wa al-ramād*, on the idea that Adūnīs expressed his meanings in this poem by using the myth of the phoenix. Adūnīs, she argued, embodied his meaning and the problems of the human being including birth, death, emptiness, eeriness, hate and love. "This myth", Saʿīd added, "is the framework of Adūnīs's meanings which fused within it like thought and language fuse together. The fire of the phoenix appears as it flows in the veins of the poem."⁸⁴⁹ Evidently, this is the exact method of Eliot's objective correlative, while not using that exact term. Saʿīd stressed the same idea by describing Adūnīs's way of expression

⁸⁴³ Saʿīd, "al-ʿAwda min al-nabʿ al-ḥālim li Salmā al-Jayyūsī", p. 97.

⁸⁴⁴ Khuzāma Ṣabrī, "Adūnīs fī al-Baʿth wa al-ramād", p. 101.

⁸⁴⁵ Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism*, vol. 5, p. 187.

⁸⁴⁶ Al-Khāl, "Abū Shabaka wa al-shiʿr al-ḥadīth", p. 117. Regarding folklore, it was combined with myth as in al-Khāl's statement. However, Khālida Saʿīd argued that despite the importance of folklore, it cannot be equal to myth as myth is more comprehensive and richer with human meaning. Saʿīd, "al-ʿAwda min al-nabʿ al-ḥālim li Salmā al-Jayyūsī", p. 97.

⁸⁴⁷ Al-Khāl, "Dūlāb li Mishlīl Ṭrād", p. 109.

⁸⁴⁸ ʿIṣām Maḥfūz, "Rafʿ al-wāqiʿ ilā mustawā al-ustūra", *Shiʿr* (num. 33-34, Winter 1967), p. 147.

⁸⁴⁹ Khuzāma Ṣabrī, "Adūnīs fī al-Baʿth wa al-ramād", p. 94.

as the embodiment of meaning and she also said the myth “wears” the poet’s experience.⁸⁵⁰ It is important in this matter to point out that Sa‘īd started her analysis by defining the meaning of the phoenix, comparing it with *al-‘anqā’*, the Arabic version of the phoenix.⁸⁵¹ Her goal in making this comparison was to say that *al-‘anqā’* is *khurāfa* (fable) and not the same as the phoenix which is well-known in the West and used by many Western poets such as Shakespeare and the Frenchman Pierre Jean Jouve. She added that *al-‘anqā’* “might be a deformed distortion of the Syrian-origin phoenix by desert dwellers.”⁸⁵² In fact, Sa‘īd’s comparison does not include what she ultimately concluded. She described two versions of *al-‘anqā’* from classical Arabic literature expressing the same idea of the phoenix with slight differences regarding the shape of *al-‘anqā’* and the mode of its death. For example, she quoted al-Qazwīnī’s account of *al-‘anqā’* in his *‘Ājā’ib al-makhlūqāt* in which *al-‘anqā’* lays a new egg and one of the parents burns itself according to the gender of the new baby.⁸⁵³ This is not only the same idea of redemption and regeneration that the phoenix expresses, but almost the same form of the story and way of death. Hence Sa‘īd’s differentiation between *al-‘anqā’* and the phoenix is inaccurate and her argument that Adūnīs had used the Syrian version of the phoenix used by Western poets, seems to be biased toward the Syrian Socialist ideology which argued that Syria was neither part of the Arabic territories nor their thought; but rather had its own thought that went back to the time of the Phoenicians.

In addition to the objective correlative, some *Shi‘r* critics added other features to myths in poetry. Al-Khāl argued that myth deepens and enriches meaning in poetry and expresses what ordinary words cannot.⁸⁵⁴ Khālida Sa‘īd explained this same idea more concretely, viewing myth as a poetic way of inspiration and expressing the fundamental problems of human beings indirectly.⁸⁵⁵ Sa‘īd gave examples of the general meaning of myths like regeneration and restoration in the phoenix myth, the search for eternity in Gilgamesh

⁸⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 94-95.

⁸⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 92-93.

⁸⁵² Ibid., p. 94.

⁸⁵³ Ibid., p. 93.

⁸⁵⁴ Al-Khāl, *al-Ḥadātha fī al-shi‘r*, p. 95.

⁸⁵⁵ Khālida Sa‘īd, “al-Uṣṭūra fī al-shi‘r al-mu‘āṣir”, *Shi‘r* (num. 12, Autumn 1959), p. 118.

and the sacrifice for knowledge in Prometheus.⁸⁵⁶ Importantly, Saʿīd analysed the multiplicity of meaning in the phoenix myth in Adūnīs’s *al-Baʿth wa al-ramād*. For example, she studied the meanings of the phoenix’s fire as it appears in the poem, arguing that those meanings are harmonious and lead to each other. Among those meanings are that fire suggests the connection between life and death, knowledge, redemption and heroism.⁸⁵⁷ Similarly, Saʿīd criticised Asʿad Razzūq’s book, *al-Shuʿarā’ al-tammūziyyūn*, which is a study of myth in the poetry of five of *Shiʿr*’s poets: al-Khāl, Khalīl Ḥāwī, Adūnīs, al-Sayyāb and Jabrā. Saʿīd illustrated that Razzūq focused only on the meaning of myth, arguing that this book is “an analysis of thought and not literary criticism.”⁸⁵⁸ This is evident in Razzūq’s book which does not discuss the artistic way of using myth by modern poets or the mythical influence on the poetic structure. He concluded that myth is important in modern poetry as a way of embodying the poet’s experience,⁸⁵⁹ revealing the idea of the objective correlative, though he did not study the poetic form of his examples. In this case, the way in which each of those poets studied in Razzūq’s book uses myth seems artistically identical, which it is not. For example, al-Khāl’s employment of myths was superficial as he relied on the names of the myths rather than on their atmospheres or meanings, and they did not appear as a natural part of his poetry. Al-Khāl wrote in *al-Biʿr al-mahjūra*, which is the same collection of poems studied in Razzūq’s book:

Before intending to travel, we slaughter the sheep	وقبّلما نهّم بالرحيل نذبح الخراف
One for Astarte, one for Adonis	واحدا لعشّروت، واحدا لأدونيس
One for Baʿal	واحدا لبعل ⁸⁶⁰

⁸⁵⁶ Khālida Saʿīd, “*al-ʿAwda min al-nabʿ al-ḥālim* li Salmā al-Jayyūsī”, p. 97.

⁸⁵⁷ Khuzāmā Sabrī, “Adūnīs fī *al-Baʿth wa al-ramād*”, pp. 97-99.

⁸⁵⁸ Saʿīd, “al-Uṣṭūra fī al-shiʿr al-muʿāṣir”, pp. 117-118.

⁸⁵⁹ See Razzūq, *al-Shuʿarā’ al-tammūziyyūn*, p. 111.

⁸⁶⁰ Al-Khāl, *al-ʿAmāl al-shiʿriyya al-kāmila* (Beirut: al-Taʿāwuniyya al-lubnāniyya li al-taʿlīf wa al-nashr, 1973), p. 234.

The poet in these examples uses the names of myths as direct symbols without fusing them within the structure of the poem. On the contrary, al-Sayyāb, in *Unshūdat al-maṭar*, used the mythical atmosphere and the suggestions of myths to inspire some thoughts indirectly. However, both al-Khāl and al-Sayyāb appear to have the same poetic importance in Razzūq's study.

Another issue related to Razzūq's book is that he deemed Eliot's *Waste Land* as an ideal example of the use of myth in modern poetry.⁸⁶¹ While ignoring techniques and poetic form, Razzūq explained Eliot's attitudes toward modern civilization and his theological and political viewpoints in *The Waste Land*⁸⁶² and ascribed similar problems to the Arab poets. He argued that they expressed in their poetry the problem of waste (*al-yabāb*) in the psychology of individuals and groups and their search for new values.⁸⁶³ This does not take into account any cultural differences between Eliot and modern Arab poets. While Eliot struggled due to the predominance of scientism and secularism in modern Western civilization, *Shiʿr*'s group was calling to modernise Arab culture and to use secular methodology. In my view, Razzūq should have studied this poetic phenomenon within the context of the last century when many Arab countries won independence and many liberating movements existed. This is consistent with the implications of the main myth used by the poets studied in Razzūq's book, which is Tammuz the Babylonian God of fertility according to which Razzūq labelled his book *al-Shuʿarāʾ al-tammūziyyūn* (the poets of Tammuz). On the other hand, he did not study the influence of the new poetic form of *shiʿr al-tafʿīla* on the poetic use of myth. I think this was of importance as *shiʿr al-tafʿīla* allows the use of dramatic features of myth more than the classical poetic prosody because of the flexibility of its rhythmic feet and rhymes. I believe that Razzūq's study is an example of the fascination of Arab literary writers in the 1950s and 1960s with Eliot, wherein Razzūq based his study on Eliot without explaining the artistic influence of Eliot over those poets.

⁸⁶¹ Ibid., p. 9.

⁸⁶² Ibid., pp. 10-71.

⁸⁶³ Ibid., p. 26.

Importantly, Jabrā played a major role in spreading awareness of the importance of myth in modern poetry along with his practical analysis of myths in modern literature. For Jabrā, the importance of myths for all cultures is that myths throughout history became symbols of the experiences of the human being in confronting the problems of life. He added that these symbols are used in literature, cinema or art in general to remind us of the history of human problems and therefore help us understand the nature of life.⁸⁶⁴ Jabrā illustrated that some literary works employ features of myths as an indirect way of expressing the attempt of the human being to understand life without using an entire myth. This mode of using myths, he added, evokes mythical characters or circumstances which are available in the mentality of all human beings.⁸⁶⁵ In his practical criticism, Jabrā pursued the mythical aspects of many literary works focusing on how normal things acquire mythical forms in literature and become archetypes.⁸⁶⁶ He explained that the Iraqi village Jīkūr appeared in al-Sayyāb's poetry as an eternal symbol of every village in the world whose people longed for their return to a fertile refuge from the dryness of life in cities.⁸⁶⁷ Similarly, the place in Abd al-Raḥmān Munīf's novel *al-Nihāyāt* (1977) is an archetype beyond its historical origin and is applicable to every village in the Arab world.⁸⁶⁸ Jabrā analysed water, smoke and light in Tīrīz 'Awād's poetry as symbols of the unity of the world similar to the ancient Babylonian poets who depicted the sky and the earth as a dichotomy of one God and the air separating the sky and earth.⁸⁶⁹

Importantly, Jabrā translated the section on the Adonis myth from James Frazer's *The Golden Bough* in 1957 which has been an important source of myths in Arabic. Additionally, he translated many pieces of research about myths as literary symbols and published them in a book titled *al-Uṣṭūra wa al-ramz* (myth and symbol). Jabrā also

⁸⁶⁴ Jabrā, *al-Ḥurriyya wa al-tūfān*, p. 133.

⁸⁶⁵ Jabrā, *al-Riḥla al-thāmina*, p. 76.

⁸⁶⁶ Jabrā, *Yanābī' al-ru'yā*, p. 36. The idea that some writers create mythical features or characters in their works had been expressed by other *Shi'ar* critics such as As'ad Razzūq (*al-Shu'arā' al-tammūziyyūn*, p. 7) and Unsī al-Ḥāj. "Ghābat al-abanūs li Ṣalāḥ Ibrāhīm", *Shi'ar* (num. 15, Summer 1960), p. 125.

⁸⁶⁷ Jabrā, *Yanābī' al-ru'yā*, p. 36.

⁸⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 36-37.

⁸⁶⁹ Jabrā, *al-Nār wa al-jawhar*, pp. 170. Similarly, Jabrā characterised the relationship between man and woman in Nizār Qabbānī's poetry as an archetype of the love relations in modern Arabic cities. *Ibid.*, pp. 124-127.

translated *Before Philosophy - the Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man* by Henri Frankfort and others. The latter was defined by *Shi'ar*'s editorial board as a study of myths and beliefs of ancient Egypt and Iraq, which were sources of human religions and philosophies. They added that this book contains amazing poetry that reflects the thought of ancient human beings and they quoted examples of that poetry.⁸⁷⁰

VII. 1. Literary Traditions

As previously discussed, the issue of tradition for the New Critics is related to their conservative religious and social viewpoints.⁸⁷¹ However, tradition represented, for the New Critics, Eliot in particular, the opposite of the Romantic personality, wherein traditions in literature mean discipline and norms. Eliot found in literary traditions the “refuge” from his “terror of personality, including his own.”⁸⁷² In his well-known essay of which mention has already been made ‘Tradition and the Individual Talent’,⁸⁷³ Eliot strongly emphasised the importance of tradition for literature, viewing writing poetry as “a continual surrender” of the poets’ personalities for something more valuable than themselves and “a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality.”⁸⁷⁴ Eliot argued that poetry requires the historical sense which is

indispensable to anyone who would continue to be a poet beyond his twenty-fifth year...; the historical sense compels a man to write not merely with his own generation in his bones, but with a feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe

⁸⁷⁰ The Editorial Board, “Akhbār wa Qadāyā”, *Shi'ar* (num. 15, Summer 1960), pp. 147-148.

⁸⁷¹ Hyman, *The Armed Vision*, pp. 80, 90-91.

⁸⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 82.

⁸⁷³ Hyman described this essay as the basis of his later essays which are “a kind of vast appendix of applications and examples.” *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁸⁷⁴ Eliot, *Selected Essays*, p. 17.

from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order.⁸⁷⁵

Eliot's account of tradition in particular, and that of the New Critics' in general, was very influential among *Shi'ar*'s writers. In his review of Rosenthal's *The Modern Poet*, al-Khāl completely espoused the author's traditional view, arguing that tradition is always latent in new poetry and the value of modern poetry is not only its originality, but also its use of tradition.⁸⁷⁶ Al-Khāl re-stressed this idea with respect to modern Arabic poetry and quoted from Eliot's "Tradition and the Individual Talent" that "the most individual part of his (the poet's) work may be those in which the dead poets, his ancestors, assert their immortality most vigorously."⁸⁷⁷ As'ad Razzūq adopted Eliot's concept of tradition as the main source to build the poetic individual talent. Tradition for him is "the spring from which all poets drink and the common land on which they grow their individual talents."⁸⁷⁸ Razzūq quoted from Eliot's "Tradition and the Individual Talent" concerning the idea that no poet can invent new poetic form or meaning⁸⁷⁹ from his/her personality and the importance of comparing new poets with the dead ones. Afterwards, Razzūq defined the scope of tradition in the literary heritage of the East and the West and gave full credit to tradition, stating that modern poetry exists "by virtue of tradition, and only tradition."⁸⁸⁰

However, this attitude caused many contradictions in *Shi'ar*'s critical discourse. The most obvious was the contradiction with the attitude of *Shi'ar*'s writers, which rejected tradition, particularly Arab tradition.⁸⁸¹ While the New Critics based their traditional

⁸⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 14. Because of this argument, Ransom deemed Eliot a historical critic (*The New Criticism*, p. 138) and characterised the historical sense as "a degree of feeling that is luxurious, and cannot be translated practically into criticism." *The New Criticism*, p. 146.

⁸⁷⁶ Al-Khāl, "Muḥāwalāt fī tafhīm al-shi'ar al-ḥadīth", p.104.

⁸⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 105, and see Eliot, *Selected Essays*, p. 14.

⁸⁷⁸ As'ad Razzūq, "*Eliot, Mukhtārāt shi'riyya*", p. 88.

⁸⁷⁹ Al-Khāl used the same account, arguing that the poet cannot invent a completely new poetic form or language. Instead, the poet shows his/her creativity by adapting the already-existing poetic language and forms. Al-Khāl, "Mafhūm al-qaṣīda", p. 81.

⁸⁸⁰ As'ad Razzūq, "*Eliot, Mukhtārāt shi'riyya*", p. 88.

⁸⁸¹ See chapter one of this dissertation.

theory on many studies and reviews of literary heritage,⁸⁸² *Shi'ar*'s members introduced modern poetry as a separate poetic project from and rejection of tradition. While Khuzāmā Ṣabrī contended that al-Khāl completely rejected heritage,⁸⁸³ ʿIṣām Maḥfūz stated that modern poetry does not only overtake classical Arabic poetry but it countermands it.⁸⁸⁴ He condemned al-Shahhāl's comparison of classical Arabic criticism of poetic form and modern artistic theories because Maḥfūz deemed classical Arabic literature poor, direct and undeveloped.⁸⁸⁵ Modern poetry, for Unsī al-Ḥāj, should be cut off from traditional Arabic poetry from the pre-Islamic and various Islamic ages until modern poetry.⁸⁸⁶ Al-Ḥāj labeled tradition as *wizr* (sin) arguing that there is no possible way to have modern Arabic poetry without eliminating this history.⁸⁸⁷

Furthermore, the adaptation of Eliot's traditional theory by *Shi'ar*'s members was also contradictory to their view that human beings create their values according to their own personalities and they are the source of values, including literary ones. *Shi'ar*'s writers, especially al-Khāl, stressed that the people of an era are responsible for its artistic values and therefore traditional values should be evaluated according to current perspectives and by current people who, he believed, should exercise judgement according to their standards, not those of tradition or religion.⁸⁸⁸ Accordingly, poetry has no previously-existing criteria. Shawqī Abū Shaqrā argued that modern poetry creates its values according to itself regardless of anything else. Poetry for him is "an individual entity, not already-created norms;" regardless of whether these norms are historical or traditional.⁸⁸⁹ Al-Khāl argued that poetry should be released from any previous conditions or norms and every poet should create for his/herself norms and boundaries freely.⁸⁹⁰ The modern stage of poetry, al-Khāl added later, begins when the poet leaves off the poetic

⁸⁸² See for example Tate's *Collected Essays* and Eliot's *Selected Essays*.

⁸⁸³ Khuzāmā Ṣabrī, "*al-Bi'r al-mahjūra* li Yūsuf al-Khāl", p. 141.

⁸⁸⁴ The Editorial Board, "Qaḍāyā wa akhbār", *Shi'ar* (num. 27, Summer 1963), p. 119.

⁸⁸⁵ ʿIṣām Maḥfūz, "Jamāliyyāt al-shi'ar al-ḥadīth", *Shi'ar* (num. 36, Autumn 1967), pp. 109-110.

⁸⁸⁶ Unsī al-Ḥāj, "*Min aghānī al-ḥurriyya* li Kāẓim Jihād", *Shi'ar* (num. 14, Spring 1960), p. 89.

⁸⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 90.

⁸⁸⁸ Al-Sālisī, *Yūsuf al-Khāl*, p. 145.

⁸⁸⁹ The Editorial Board, "Akhbār wa qaḍāyā", *Shi'ar* (num. 27, Summer 1963), pp. 117-118.

⁸⁹⁰ Al-Khāl, "Min ra'īs al-taḥrīr", *Shi'ar* (num. 10, Spring 1959), p. 3.

meanings and forms of the ancient poets, and creates new poetic paths which should stem from the poet's experiences and be inspired by the problems of the current era.⁸⁹¹

VII.2. The Parental Paradigm

In comparison to their extreme attitude to Arab tradition, *Shi'ar*'s writers espoused the New Critics', particularly Eliot's, conservative theory of tradition and warmly welcomed Western poetry as the tradition on which modern poetry should be based. I would depict *Shi'ar*'s members', especially al-Khāl's, reliance on, or rather fascination with, the Western literary tradition as a parental relationship. In other words, *Shi'ar*'s writers viewed both the Western literary tradition and the New Critics' account of poetic tradition as ideal examples, or parents, to follow. I base this on several observations, in which Western poetry and tradition is idealised. My first observation stems from *Shi'ar*'s members' attitude towards Western poetry, which was viewed as the source of literary renaissance and the universal literature that should be imitated.⁸⁹² *Shi'ar*'s editorial board deemed the reliance on Western literature a mark of civilization; "Otherwise, how can we claim that we belong to civilization?"⁸⁹³ What is more, al-Khāl called for the use of Western literary paradigm without referring to any kind of questioning.⁸⁹⁴ Hence the meaning of tradition in *Shi'ar* is Western poetry rather than Arabic, from which *Shi'ar*'s critics called to separate modern poetry.

In a poem dedicated to Ezra Pound, al-Khāl talked to Pound as a god of poetry to whom poetic prayer is addressed:

We asked you for a figleaf

سألناك ورقة تين

For we are unclothed

فإننا عراة

⁸⁹¹ The Editorial Board, "Akhār wa qaḍāyā", *Shi'ar* (num. 9, Winter 1959), p. 135; al-Khāl used the same argument many times i.e. he wondered why poets do not have full freedom to compose their poetry without already-existing criteria. Al-Khāl, "Qaḍāyā al-shi'ar al-mu'āṣir li Nāzik al-Malā'ka", p. 144.

⁸⁹² See p. 48, 55-56.

⁸⁹³ The Editorial Board, "Akhār wa qaḍāyā", *Shi'ar* (num. 21, Winter 1962), p. 129.

⁸⁹⁴ See the first chapter pp. 48-49.

Forgive us; we have sinned against poetry

أثمننا إلى الشعر، فاغفر لنا

And return life to us

وردّ إلينا الحياة⁸⁹⁵

Evidently, this poem depicts Pound as a god or an ideal figure who can rescue poetry or Arabic poetry, as the pronoun “we” refers to Arab poets. In addition, al-Khāl here is not only idealising Pound, but also imitating Eliot who dedicated his well-known poem *The Waste Land* to Pound, labelling him as the better craftsman “for Ezra Pound il miglior fabbro.”⁸⁹⁶ Similarly, al-Khāl, on the one hand, titled this poem “to Ezra Pound” and, on the other hand, pictured Pound in the body of the poem as the better poet, which is Eliot’s dedication to Pound; “the better craftsman.”

Furthermore, many *Shiʿr* critics relied on Eliot as an ideal example of various phenomena of modern Arabic poetry. A clear instance is Asʿad Razzūq’s study of the use of myth by modern Arab poets. Razzūq based this study on Eliot’s *The Waste Land* as previously noted.⁸⁹⁷ There are several other examples, highlighting the level of reliance on, and thus fascination of, *Shiʿr*’s members with Eliot.⁸⁹⁸ This contradicts the desire to be original and creative, which *Shiʿr*’s writers used to justify their rejection of Arab tradition. This contradiction reflects, on the one hand, that *Shiʿr*’s members deemed any relationships to Arab heritage imitative and thus this heritage cannot be the base for creativity. Rather, it, on the other hand, reflects that what *Shiʿr*’s members did to avoid this hypothetical imitation was that they replaced this source of imitation with another; the Western poetic account. This leads me to argue that there were two traditions in *Shiʿr*; one should be disregarded, which is the Arab tradition, and another which should be

⁸⁹⁵ Al-Khāl, *al-Aʿmāl al-kāmila*, p. 197.

⁸⁹⁶ T. S. Eliot, *Collected Poems 1909-1962* (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1963), p. 61.

⁸⁹⁷ See p. 141.

⁸⁹⁸ Fuʿād Rifqa discussed the idea that the use of narration in poetry reduces tension and intensification according to Eliot’s poetry (*Shiʿr*, num. 17, Winter 1961, p. 165); Unsī al-Ḥāj based his discussion of al-Khāl’s religious view on Eliot without mentioning this clearly (*Shiʿr*, num. 20, Autumn 1961, p. 93); Nabīh Ghaṭṭās studied Ṣalāḥ ʿAbd al-Ṣabūr’s poetry according to Eliot’s poetry (*Shiʿr*, num. 25, Winter 1963, pp. 122-133); the editorial board of *Shiʿr* mentioned that Eliot announced his view that modern poetry should not be taught at schools; what is proper to schools is only classical poetry which is important to develop literary taste and to provide the important knowledge and ability to appreciate modern poetry. The Editorial Board. “Akḥbār wa qaḍāyā”, *Shiʿr* (num. 17, Winter 1961), pp. 173-175.

followed, the Western tradition. The latter included theorisation of tradition, which appeared in *Shiʿr* relied on Eliot's works.

Al-Khāl repeatedly used similar, at times identical, statements to that of Eliot about tradition. The most extreme example is al-Khāl's article "Mafhūm al-shiʿr" (concept of poetry), in which he copies many ideas of the New Critics, especially those of Eliot. As obvious from the title of this article, it sets out al-Khāl's concept of poetry and his ideas about modern poetry that his magazine had been theorising from its founding. However, this article confirmed that al-Khāl was for the most part imitating Eliot's ideas, particularly those in "Tradition and the Individual Talent," to the extent that I do not find in this article one original idea. Al-Khāl began arguing that poets, while composing poetry, face on the one hand the principles of language, which cannot be ignored, in order to make their works meaningful and insert them within the literary heritage. They face, on the other hand, the poetic styles of expression that are followed in the literary heritage, and that are latent in the mind of the reader. Al-Khāl added that if those styles were broken unskilfully, the poem would lose its value for readers.⁸⁹⁹ Significantly, al-Khāl, exactly like Eliot, deemed both the language norms and traditional poetic styles the bedrock of the poets' traditionalism and their creative talent. This means, he explained, that poets should consider the traditional forms of literature and language inherited from literary history and simultaneously have enough freedom to modify this tradition and to create room for their individual talents.⁹⁰⁰ The individuality in this account is inferior with respect to tradition and this contradicts al-Khāl's emphasis on the individuality that was discussed early in this chapter. Additionally, al-Khāl followed Eliot's connection between tradition and impersonality, arguing that the poem has its independent life, that poets discover their motivation of creating poetry within the process of writing, and that their poems at the end are different from what they wanted to write at the beginning.⁹⁰¹ Al-Khāl went on to say that the individuality of poets and the uniqueness of their poems

⁸⁹⁹ Al-Khāl, "Mafhūm al-qaṣīda", p. 81.

⁹⁰⁰ Ibid., pp. 81-82.

⁹⁰¹ Ibid., pp. 82-83.

exist, although they follow the tradition. He concluded that “every successful poem is not only an addition to the poetic heritage; rather it changes this heritage linguistically and poetically.”⁹⁰² This is the exact argument of Eliot; when the poet is aware of the tradition, the new poem alters the poetic heritage or order even if it does so lightly. “The necessity” Eliot illustrated, “that he (the poet) shall conform, that he shall cohere, is not onesided; what happens when a new work of art is created is something that happens simultaneously to all the works of art which preceded it.”⁹⁰³

After this discussion of the tradition, al-Khāl continued using many other concepts of the New Critics in the same article. He gathered six critical concepts in two pages⁹⁰⁴ which seemed to be as if he was identifying the critical principles of the New Critics, not providing his own concept of poetry. Al-Khāl’s other works, as they have appeared throughout the current chapter, represented the New Critics’ literary concepts without much change. One here should remember Adūnīs’s article “Muḥāwala fī taʿrīf al-shiʿr al-ḥadīth” which was his main poetic theoretical contribution in *Shiʿr*. Adūnīs in this article, as Kāzīm Jihād pointed out, presented ideas from French critics, rather than developing new concepts according to modern Arabic poetry.⁹⁰⁵ In addition, *Shiʿr*’s theorisation of the prose poem, particularly by Adūnīs and Unsī al-Ḥājī, was based closely and extensively on Suzanne Bernard’s study of the French prose poem.⁹⁰⁶

I reemphasise this to say that the simile of the parental paradigm, which I use here to characterise the level of reliance of *Shiʿr*’s members on the New Critics, is applicable to all poetic concepts that are used in *Shiʿr*. However, the New Critics’ theoretical

⁹⁰² Ibid., p. 83.

⁹⁰³ Eliot, *Selected Essays*, p. 15.

⁹⁰⁴ In the same article, al-Khāl added a subtitle *Kaynūnat al-qaṣīda* (entity of the poem) in which he emphasised many ideas of the New Critics. These ideas included the objectivity of the literary work and the organic concept of literature. Regarding the latter, al-Khāl illustrated that the poem is an organic creature and therefore its value is based on its form which is the poem including its meaning. (Al-Khāl, “*Mafhūm al-qaṣīda*”, pp. 83-84.) He added to this what seems an explanation of the affective fallacy that the process of reading a poem is not part of its value. This was followed by the concept of non-paraphraseability without using the term itself along with the capability of poetry to combine contradictions, poetic ambiguity, and the importance of poetry to renew language and the difference between poetry and prose. Ibid., pp. 84-85.

⁹⁰⁵ See p. 51.

⁹⁰⁶ See p. 207.

concepts of poetry were more influential on *Shi'ar*, as appeared throughout this chapter, due to the predominance of al-Khāl who imitated many of the New Critics' concepts. Significantly, *Shi'ar*'s critics especially al-Khāl were influenced by, or rather fascinated with, Eliot more than others. This was partially because al-Khāl had similar theological beliefs to that of Eliot and because al-Khāl, among many other members of *Shi'ar*, was fascinated with Eliot. On the contrary, other New Critics' works had less influence on *Shi'ar*'s critics. This might be because of the fact that most of the New Critics' works were based on textual analysis and had linguistic and psychological analytical approaches, which barely existed in *Shi'ar*. Among those less influential works of the New Critics are those by Richards, Empson, Ransom, Cleanth Brooks, Kenneth Burke and W. K. Wimsatt. This means that *Shi'ar*'s members were not comprehensively or evenly influenced by the New Critics, particularly with regard to the New Critical works that came out during the 1940s onwards, which include the works of the aforementioned critics with the exception of Richards and Empson.

Chapter Four

The Importance of Literature in *Shi'ar* and New Criticism

This chapter is a continuation of the previous chapter; it focusses on the impact of the New Critics on *Shi'ar*'s conception of the function of literature. While this chapter discusses some *Shi'ar* critics whose application of the New Critics' concepts was successful, such as Jabrā and Khālida Sa'īd, it focuses on al-Khāl's writings, as his critical thoughts dominated and represented the magazine. This chapter is divided into four sections as follows:

The first section discusses the issue of commitment in literature. It starts by comparing the New Critics' understanding of the matter at hand with Marxism. It then highlights the influence of the New Critics' conception of the function of literature on *Shi'ar* critics. The Section illustrates that the New Critics' and *Shi'ar*'s rejection of ideologically-directed literature does not mean that they completely wall off literature from life, but rather argue that literature indirectly reflects the sense of life.

The second section examines the use of the New Critics' idea that the meaning and value of literature are aspects of literary structure, an idea upheld by *Shi'ar* critics. It discusses al-Khāl's statements on this, the critical notions implied in them, and to what extent he relied on the New Critics. Additionally, the section discusses the use of these ideas by other *Shi'ar* critics compared to al-Khāl.

The third section highlights the New Critics' and *Shi'ar* critics' rejection of the issue of formalism. It points out that this attitude is based on the idea that literature expresses human knowledge and feelings without promoting specific ideologies or thoughts. The section also emphasises that this attitude is consistent with some of al-Khāl's cultural concepts such as his religious thought about the human being and the unity of humanity. Finally, it examines the use of human knowledge by other *Shi'ar* critics.

The fourth section discusses the influence of the New Critics on *Shi'ar* critics' differentiation between literary and scientific knowledge. The section begins by highlighting the New Critics' ideas in al-Khāl's writing, and then in other *Shi'ar* critics' writings. The

discussion includes features of literary knowledge that make it different from science such as unity of literary form and meaning, the unimportance of author's intention, and duplicity of literary meaning.

The fifth section focusses on literary language and knowledge along with the difference between literary language and prose. It demonstrates the similarities and differences between *Shi'ar* critics', particularly al-Khāl's, conception of this matter and that of the New Critics. It also discusses al-Khāl's justification of his call for the use of Arabic colloquial instead of the standard.

I. Commitment in Literature

The meaning of commitment in literature is based on the Marxist conception that literature should express political and social attitudes and enlighten the people about them. Importantly, the New Critics and Marxists had similar attitudes against capitalism and industrial society.⁹⁰⁷ However, Marxists and the New Critics completely disagreed about the role of politics and ideology in literature. For Marxists, literature and art hold political and ideological roles in society, and stimulate “revolutionary programs.”⁹⁰⁸ On the contrary, the New Critics condemned all kinds of literature and art which serve a political or ideological purpose. Allen Tate stated that “for a political poetry, or a poetical politics, of whatever denomination is a society of two members living on each other’s washing. They devour each other in the end. It is the heresy of spiritual cannibalism.”⁹⁰⁹ Tate deemed the political responsibilities of literature not only boring, but irritating for him. This is because the poet has a different responsibility, “it is the responsibility to be a poet, to write poems.”⁹¹⁰ Cleanth Brooks sternly criticised Marxists and deemed their literary theory based on what he called “the didactic heresy.”⁹¹¹ He added that beliefs and truths in poetry cannot “make the poem good.”⁹¹² Interestingly, Brooks contended that ideologically-directed literature oversimplifies life experience and does not represent all elements of the experience. This is due to the fact that this type of literature excludes what is “not favourable to the matter in hand.”⁹¹³ This idea of exclusion contradicts the New Critics’ view that literature is comprehensive and includes all elements of an experience. In conclusion, Brooks stated that “however revolutionary their economics, the aesthetic theory of such critics is not revolutionary at all.”⁹¹⁴

⁹⁰⁷ Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, p. 18.

⁹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁹⁰⁹ Tate, *Essays of Four Decades*, p. 612.

⁹¹⁰ Tate, *Collected Essays*, pp. 403-404.

⁹¹¹ Brooks, *Modern Poetry and the Tradition*, p. 47.

⁹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁹¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 49-50.

⁹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

The Marxists accused the New Critics of being formalists, an accusation which was strongly rejected by Rene Wellek.⁹¹⁵ While accepting the New Critics' cultural attitudes against capitalism and industry in northern America and in favour of agriculture in the south, the Marxists' best-known spokesman Granville Hicks⁹¹⁶ described the New Critics' attitude as "peculiarly futile." This is because, according to Hicks, they do not face the economic forces of industrialism and "they ignore the political forces they would have to contend with in order to bring about the kind of agrarian section they believe in."⁹¹⁷ Hence, the Marxists and the New Critics disagreed about the use of ideology in literature despite their agreement about "the evils of industrial capitalism."⁹¹⁸

Regarding *Shi'cr* critics, they shared with the New Critics' ideas that literature is not ideologically-directed and simultaneously is essential for life; it is responsible for well-being. Literature is superior to all other human discourses. Some New Critics expressed this very strongly, dedicating significant duties to literature. Allen Tate argued that the poet is responsible for various things in life, and particularly for things to which nobody pays attention.⁹¹⁹ If poets, Tate added, behaved differently, the political and social orders would have been different and "we should not have the Second World War, perhaps not even the first."⁹²⁰ For *Shi'cr* critics, they unanimously agreed about the superiority of literature, without arguing that it would prevent wars and specific events. Like the New Critics, *Shi'cr*'s members emphasised that a literary work is meaningful and every element of it is based on and directed by its content.⁹²¹ Meanwhile, the New Critics and *Shi'cr* critics insisted that while literature is significant for life and a supreme "knowledge", it does not promote ideology and does not provide historical, political, or any kind of scientific or practical information. Literature, for

⁹¹⁵ Wellek, "The New Criticism: Pro and Contra", p. 611.

⁹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 612.

⁹¹⁷ Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, p. 19.

⁹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁹¹⁹ Tate, *Collected Essays*, p. 394.

⁹²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 354-395.

⁹²¹ See for example Rifqa. "*Unshūdat al-maṭar*", p. 164.

both New Criticism and *Shi'ar*, enlightens people and provides a unique textual knowledge without which “men can live, but without which they cannot live well, or live as men.”⁹²²

Significantly, the New Critics’ argument that they used against Marxists resembles that of *Shi'ar* critics against its competitors, particularly *Majallat al-Ādāb*. They firmly rejected all uses of literature for ideological or political purposes. After emphasising the idea that the value of poetry is based on human knowledge, Rineh Ḥabashī argued that the poet should be committed to his/her poetic awareness, without promoting or adopting any philosophical or political attitudes.⁹²³ Additionally, Ḥabashī repeatedly stressed in the magazine the idea of *al-majjāniyya fī al-shi'ar* (purposelessness of poetry), which is the only message poetry can hold.⁹²⁴ He argued that poetry has only an inner aim, which is to exist; “artistic craft is a sufficient message in and for itself.”⁹²⁵ Obviously, this argument is the same as that of Tate mentioned above. Al-Khāl espoused the same idea, arguing that “talking about the poet’s message in society is nonsense; the real poet has no aim apart from the process of composition.”⁹²⁶ Al-Khāl stressed the purposelessness of literature, stating that it is a sign of decadence that art should participate in building society and serve some utopian-abstract ideas.⁹²⁷ Ideas and beliefs, he added, might be essential for philosophers and scientists, but not for artists.⁹²⁸

Similarly, Nadhīr al-ʿAzma mocked patriotic poetry and all kinds of commitment in literature, describing it as emotional and decadent literature.⁹²⁹ Moreover, *Shi'ar* critics criticised didactic literature, saying it was not real literature. Asʿad Razzūq argued that myth, as a poetic mean, might be used to educate people, to preach to them, to make them convert their beliefs and doctrines, but this is not the use of literature.⁹³⁰ However, some of the didactic aims, Razzūq added, might be attained in literature indirectly by enlightening people

⁹²² Tate, *Collected Essays*, p. 380.

⁹²³ Rineh Ḥabashī, “al-Shiʿr fī maʿrakat al-wujūd”, *Shiʿr* (num. 1, Winter 1957), p. 89.

⁹²⁴ Ḥabashī, “Nazarāt fī al-shiʿr”, p. 92.

⁹²⁵ Rineh Ḥabashī, “Hal al-ḥamāsa burhān?”, *Adab* (vol. 1, num. 4, Winter 1962), p. 97.

⁹²⁶ Al-Khāl, *al-Ḥadātha fī al-shiʿr*, pp. 93-94.

⁹²⁷ Al-Khāl, “Bayna al-mithāl wa al-wāqiʿ”, p. 6.

⁹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 7, and see *al-Ḥadātha fī al-shiʿr*, p. 14.

⁹²⁹ Nadhīr al-ʿAzma, “Aghānī al-madīna li Buland al-Ḥaydarī”, *Shiʿr* (num. 4, Autumn 1957), p. 97.

⁹³⁰ Razzūq, *al-Shuʿarāʾ al-tammūziyyūn*, p. 112.

about life and alleviating pressure, and Razzūq quoted the Aristotelian catharsis as an explanation of this.⁹³¹

On occasion, al-Khāl exaggerated his assertion that literature does not at all reflect events of its time. To justify this, al-Khāl stated that great Western poets were not occupied with or interested in the political events of their time. His examples included Shakespeare, whose plays, according to al-Khāl, did not reflect England's situation, and Rimbaud and Baudelaire among others.⁹³² Obviously, this is an exaggeration and his opinion of the aforementioned literati does not fit their literary works. How could he not find strong ties between Baudelaire and the French bourgeois class, or Shakespeare and the political events of his time? It might be convincing to say that it is not important to ask about the correctness of what is mentioned in literary works politically or historically, but it is an overstatement to say that these works are walled off from their eras. Fāḍil Thāmir criticised al-Khāl for reducing the function of modern Arabic poetry to pure aesthetic and to a metaphysical thing that is not relevant to human life.⁹³³ Of equal importance, al-Khāl's argument above contradicts his adaptation of the New Critics' view that while literature does not directly stimulate ideologies or reflect historical events, it expresses indirectly the sense of life at that time, which will be discussed shortly.

Significantly, this matter was repeatedly emphasised in *Shi'ir* to avoid political or ideological confrontations with the magazine's opponents. Al-Khāl stressed that not only he, as a poet, had no message whatsoever to deliver, but the entire magazine had no message apart from poetry. "If our works and expressing ourselves," he added, "have messages for some people, that is their own problem."⁹³⁴ Al-Khāl explained this as due to the nature of the literary and artistic field, where there is no room for messages or commitment; "art has no message apart from itself." He added that "the poem as an artistic work does not seek to do anything more than to exist and its only message, if it is right to call it a message, is to widen

⁹³¹ Ibid., pp. 112-113.

⁹³² Al-Khāl, *Daḡātir al-ayyām*, p. 23.

⁹³³ Fāḍil Thāmir, "Jadal al-ḡadātha fī al-shi'ir" in *al-Shi'ir wa mutaghayyirāt al-marḡala* (Baghdad: Dār al-shu'ūn al-thaqāfiyya al-āmma, 1986), p. 90.

⁹³⁴ The Editorial Board, "Qaḡyā wa akhbār", *Shi'ir* (num. 25, Winter 1963), p. 141.

our knowledge of ourselves and the world.”⁹³⁵ Al-Khāl here described the magazine and its members as if it were a poem, without considering issues that seemed to be ideologically based such as the issue of colloquial language and the attitude towards Arab tradition. Al-Khāl repeatedly stated that “*Majallat Shiʿr* is intended to be above politics, parties and the conflicts of beliefs and doctrines, it is intended to be only for poetry.”⁹³⁶ On these grounds, al-Khāl condemned all political or ideological accusations that were directed against the magazine.⁹³⁷ However, this could not shield the magazine from conflicts on ideological and political grounds. The issue of colloquial and Arab tradition was crucial as it led many members of the magazine to accuse al-Khāl of being ideologically-biased and to resign, as discussed in the first chapter.

Despite their rejection of ideologies and historical events in literature, the New Critics and *Shiʿr* critics believed that literature indirectly reflects the sense of its age. The New Critics viewed the poet to be the one who is able to digest and indirectly express the sense of life which is hidden for normal people. Leavis argued that “the potentialities of human experience” can be realised by few people and poets belong to this minority. He stated that the poet “is more alive than other people, more alive in his own age. He is, as it were, at the most conscious point of the race in his time.”⁹³⁸ The poet’s power, Leavis added, to enable words to express his feelings is “indistinguishable from his awareness of what he feels” and if poetry does not hold “the intelligence of the age... poetry will cease to matter much, and the age will be lacking in finer awareness.”⁹³⁹ Eliot argued that modern civilisation has considerable complexity and variety that necessarily impacts upon the “refined sensibility” of the poet which “must become more and more comprehensive, more allusive, more indirect, in order to force, to dislocate if necessary, language into his meaning.”⁹⁴⁰ Importantly, Leavis stressed that the sense of time does not mean that the poet should talk about modern topics or

⁹³⁵ Ibid., pp. 141-143.

⁹³⁶ Al-Khāl, “Min raʾīs al-tahrīr”, p. 3.

⁹³⁷ The Editorial Board, “Akhbār wa qaḍāyā”, *Shiʿr* (num. 9, Winter 1959), pp. 135-136.

⁹³⁸ F. R. Leavis, *New Bearings in English Poetry: A Study of the Contemporary Situation* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1938), p. 13.

⁹³⁹ Ibid., pp. 13-14.

⁹⁴⁰ Eliot, *Selected Essays*, p. 289.

subjects, but, as Eliot illustrated, that poetic rhythm, for example, might be “affected by the internal combustion engine.” Leavis stated that this requires the poet to be alive to his time and the evidence of that should appear “in the very texture of his poetry.”⁹⁴¹ The clear example that Leavis gave was Eliot’s *The Waste Land* whose “disorganisation” and “disjointedness” of form “reflect the present state of civilisation.” He argued that the incorporation of cultures and traditions with great variety of materials resulted in “a breakdown of forms and the irrevocable loss of that sense of absoluteness which seems necessary to a robust culture.”⁹⁴²

A similar thought appeared in *Shi‘r* whose critics emphasised the independence of literature from any ideologies and from reflecting specific events. Simultaneously, they believed that literature reflects the general sense of life. This is clear in *Shi‘r*’s critics’ argument about the importance of the renewal of Arabic literature in order to fit the development of modern life. Al-Khāl connected literary forms, particularly rhymes and rhythms, and the general sense of life. He stated that old forms of literature need to be renewed not because modern poets decided so, but because life itself has changed. “We renew due to the renewal of life in us, rather we should say that we ourselves have changed.”⁹⁴³ Al-Khāl illustrated that classical rhymes and rhythms do not fit the complexity and variety of modern life.⁹⁴⁴ Similar to Leavis’s discussion of the disjointedness of Eliot’s *The Waste Land*, the Editorial Board argued that the disconnectedness of modern poetic form reflects the complexity of modern life.⁹⁴⁵ They stressed that the language of modern poetry, its rhythm, images and atmospheres determinately resulted from the modern historical era.⁹⁴⁶ Similarly, Khālida Sa‘īd argued that modern poetry is not merely new poetic patterns; it is part of a larger phenomenon that rejects all traditional and classical forms of life and social tradition.

⁹⁴¹ Leavis, *New Bearings in English Poetry*, p. 24.

⁹⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 90-91.

⁹⁴³ The Editorial Board, “Akhbār wa Qaḍāyā”, *Shi‘r* (num. 3, Summer 1957), p. 114.

⁹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 114-115.

⁹⁴⁵ The Editorial Board, “Akhbār wa qaḍāyā”, *Shi‘r* (num. 10, Spring 1959), p. 123.

⁹⁴⁶ The Editorial Board, “Akhbār wa qaḍāyā”, *Shi‘r* (num. 1, Winter 1957), p. 108.

She illustrated that these literary changes parallel changes in family, social relationships and the position of women who had to revolt against tradition.⁹⁴⁷

Significantly, Jabrā explained the appearance of modern Arabic poetry, and the modern poetic patterns which, “revolt against roles and go beyond norms,” as a reflection of the new awareness and hopes of Arabs for a better and richer life. “It is not accidental that these modern patterns have appeared in the time of political and social changes and revolts in the Arab world.”⁹⁴⁸ Jabrā contended that the change of life styles from pastoral to urbanised and the appearance of cities in the Arab world led to major changes in artistic values and thus forms.⁹⁴⁹ Jabrā viewed the forms of classical Arabic poetry as an indirect reflection of the forms of tribal life which led to specific themes such as the anxiety of death and the unknown, chivalric poetry and of epic elements.⁹⁵⁰

Additionally, Adūnīs widely employed this idea both in *Shiʿr* and in his later works. As with the ideas mentioned before, Adūnīs justified new poetic changes by saying that life itself has changed. He argued that the importance of the prose poem is that it is consistent with new styles of life which are dominated by continuous changes and potentialities without determinism. Hence, Adūnīs added, the poet expresses this through changeable forms that are different from the permanently fixed patterns.⁹⁵¹ Adūnīs stated that in contrast to rhythmic poetry, prose by nature does not accept determined formalistic roles. It allows a variety of styles which of course have roles, but they are changeable, unrestricted ones. Therefore the prose poem fits the form of changeable life and its variety and complexity.⁹⁵² In his later works, Adūnīs viewed the change in literary forms as cultural visions and as conflicts about their developments throughout history.⁹⁵³ While Adūnīs’s view is very similar to Leavis’s argument concerning *The Waste Land*, he employed this view creatively in his later studies about classical Arabic poetry. For example he illustrated that the nature of life, the

⁹⁴⁷ Saʿīd, *al-Baḥṭh ʿan al-judhūr*, 1960), p. 7.

⁹⁴⁸ Jabrā, “Al-Shiʿr wa al-naqd al-jāhil”, p. 74.

⁹⁴⁹ Ibid., pp. 74-75.

⁹⁵⁰ Jabrā, *Taʿammulāt fī bunyān marmarī*, p. 16.

⁹⁵¹ Adūnīs, “Fī qaṣīdat al-nathr”, p. 78.

⁹⁵² Ibid., pp. 78-79.

⁹⁵³ Adūnīs, *Zaman al-shiʿr*, p. 145. And see Zarāqī, *al-Ḥadātha fī al-naqd*, p. 249.

environment and people's sense of time in the pre-Islamic era influenced the structure and themes of pre-Islamic poetry.⁹⁵⁴ Adūnīs argued that the pre-Islamic people's view of place and time resulted from their life in the desert, where everything disappeared quickly and people felt unable to control the place or to own it.⁹⁵⁵ This resulted in chivalric poetry to fulfil an existentialist need to resist the harshness of nature.⁹⁵⁶ Additionally, Adūnīs discussed the image of women in the pre-Islamic love poetry as a symbol which provided some tranquillity away from the harsh environment; that is why women appeared as gods and talking to them was like worship.⁹⁵⁷ Adūnīs explained the important theme of time in pre-Islamic poetry as a parallel of desert materials which disappeared and were easily erased.⁹⁵⁸ In conclusion, Adūnīs stated that the existential concerns of pre-Islamic life were reflected in the theme and structure of pre-Islamic poetry. He added that as a result of the confusing emotions, anxiety, and disjointed nature of the desert, the structure of the pre-Islamic poem was disunited and "it drew in words the image of the place – the mystery."⁹⁵⁹ Similarly, Adūnīs continued to discuss other stages and themes of classical Arabic poetry within their historical context and milieu.

II. Structure and meaning

The New Critics argued that the value of a poem comes from its structure, not from its content, which is "an aspect of structure."⁹⁶⁰ The poetic meaning is not, for the New Critics, a statement or something that can be abstracted, it is something dissolved within the structure of the poem and it cannot be studied apart from that structure. O'Connor described the poetic meaning as "involved with structure or form down to the slightest connotation or suggestion."⁹⁶¹ Cleanth Brooks depicted the poetic structure as that of "architecture or

⁹⁵⁴ Adūnīs, *Muqaddima li al-shi'r al-ʿarabī*, pp. 13-35.

⁹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

⁹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 16-18.

⁹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 19-23.

⁹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 26-29.

⁹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁹⁶⁰ Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, p. 27.

⁹⁶¹ O'Connor, *An Age of Criticism*, p. 169.

painting,” and as that of “a ballet or musical composition,” differentiating it from “the rational or logical structure of the statement.”⁹⁶² This suggests that the meaning of a poem is its structure, just as the meaning of “a ballet or musical composition” is a structure or rhythm that cannot be isolated from the musical body. While deeming beauty a truth in poetry, Brooks viewed any scientific, philosophical or historical truth as “dramatic propriety” not as referential elements.⁹⁶³ A poem, Brooks pointed out, resembles the structure of a drama, in that it is something “acted out,” it is an “action” not “a formula for action or as a statement about action.”⁹⁶⁴

Literature for the New Critics is, in the first place, a matter of existence; its value stems from its body and it is identified by referring to itself. Wimsatt argued that “A poem should not mean but be.”⁹⁶⁵ However, the existence of the poem, he added, cannot be attained without its meaning since it consists of words, but no one can decide what is meant: the words or the meaning.⁹⁶⁶ This stresses Brooks’s argument above that the meaning of a poem is latent in the poem’s body, in its structure and cannot be extracted or taken away from it. Wimsatt stated that “Poetry is a feat of style by which a complex of meaning is handled all at once.”⁹⁶⁷

The New Critics’ account of meaning and structure was the base on which *Shi‘r* critics built their argument regarding this issue. Ḥalīm Barakāt relied heavily on Wimsatt’s aforementioned argument. He defined the poem by saying that “it is an unconscious thing, its aim is to be, to exist. Rather it is more correct to say that its aim is not out of its being.”⁹⁶⁸ Al-Khāl emphasised the same idea stating that “the poem - as an artistic entity – does not exist apart from its structure. It is neither a mere structure nor a mere meaning, rather it is structure and meaning together.”⁹⁶⁹ He added that if the poet could have identified his meaning, what

⁹⁶² Brooks, *The Well Wrought Urn*, p. 166.

⁹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 167. Similarly, O’Connor argued that “statements about the moral or philosophical elements in a literary work are made inside an aesthetic framework, in terms of the structure that makes these elements available for discussion.” *An Age of Criticism*, p. 172.

⁹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 166.

⁹⁶⁵ Wimsatt, *The Verbal Icon*, p. 4.

⁹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁹⁶⁸ The Editorial Board, “Akhbār wa qaḍāyā”, *Shi‘r* (num. 20, Autumn 1961), pp. 133-135.

⁹⁶⁹ Al-Khāl, “Maḥmūd al-qaṣīda”, p. 81.

he wanted to say, he would have written something different from a poem. Thus what was in his mind was only the poem.⁹⁷⁰ There are a few points in al-Khāl's statement which are wholly based on the New Critics' concepts.

First is that the main facet of the poem is its artistic value, "as an artistic entity," or as al-Khāl stated in another place "the end of poetry is its beauty" (*fī al-jamāl takmun ghāyat al-shiʿr*).⁹⁷¹ This artistic or aesthetic value is latent in, or rather it is the structure of the poem. While this seems similar to the formalist argument of the Art for Art's Sake school which *Shiʿr* critics rejected, it is different from it in that it stresses the importance of meaning as an essential element of the poem. The question now is what is meant by the structure of a poem? It is the fusion of meaning and of words and styles. Thus the term "the structure of a poem" refers to the meaning as much as to the style and points to the idea of poetic unity, which will be discussed shortly. However, it is not clear in al-Khāl's statement how the poetic structure and meaning should be studied and identified, as his argument was merely theoretical and was not supported by any poetic example. Al-Khāl's statement was based on the New Critics' views regarding structure and meaning which was for the purposes of analysis. Before discussing these points, it is important to refer not only to Wimsatt, but also to other the New Critical sources of al-Khāl's statement. By comparing al-Khāl's statement and Brooks's "The Heresy of Paraphrase," the last chapter of his *The Well Wrought Urn*, we find al-Khāl's statement is not only based on Brooks's account, but is a translation of part of Brooks's account. After asking would it be possible to summarise "what the poem 'says' as a poem," Brooks argued that "the poet himself obviously did not [know his meaning before writing the poem] – else he would not have had to write his poem."⁹⁷² Brooks reached this result after analysing the structure and meaning of ten poems in his book along with the impact of their paradoxes, metaphors, ambiguous language, dramatic symbols and crucially how these poetic

⁹⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 81.

⁹⁷¹ Al-Khāl, "Fī māhiyyat al-shiʿr", p. 4.

⁹⁷² Brooks, *The Well Wrought Urn*, p. 168.

features change the meaning and value of statements in poetry.⁹⁷³ Significantly, al-Khāl came to the same conclusion, however he did not state how he came up with these ideas or what were their practical implications for the analysis of poetry.

Brooks argued that “the common goodness which the poems share will have to be stated, not in terms of ‘content’ or ‘subject matter’ in the usual sense in which we use these terms, but rather in terms of structure.”⁹⁷⁴ This view required the New Critics to focus their literary studies on analysing and evaluating structure and its “complex textual elements – linguistic, rhetorical, semantic, philosophical, and psychological.”⁹⁷⁵ In their analysis of poetry, the New Critics focussed on the “paradox”, “irony,”⁹⁷⁶ “tension,”⁹⁷⁷ “diction, metaphor and methods of organising the poem,” which are not mere “ornaments but parts of the total meaning.”⁹⁷⁸ Hence the structure is made up of all textual elements including textual meanings, styles and the relationship between meanings and styles, as well as conflicts between various textual components which should be, through textual analysis and close reading, balanced and harmonised with each other.⁹⁷⁹ Brooks stressed that structure should include all textual components, saying that “the structure meant is a structure of meanings, evaluations, and interpretations; and the principle of unity which informs it seems to be one of balancing and harmonising connotations, attitudes, and meanings.”⁹⁸⁰ In this way, one should know al-Khāl’s sources and refer to them to clarify his literary theorisation.

Second is that the meaning of a poem is different in nature from practical meaning; it does not refer to practical life. Al-Khāl argued that because of the fusion of the meaning and the structure in poetry, “the value of a poem does not rely on anything but its formal system,

⁹⁷³ Ibid., pp. 146-147.

⁹⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 158.

⁹⁷⁵ Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, p. 27.

⁹⁷⁶ Brooks, *The Well Wrought Urn*, p. 171; and see O’Connor, *An Age of Criticism*, p. 170. Brooks used the concepts of irony and paradox “very broadly. It is not the opposite of an overt statement “but a general term for the kind of qualification which the various elements in a context receive from the context.” Wellek, “The New Critics: Pro and Contra”, p. 618.

⁹⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 169.

⁹⁷⁸ O’Connor, *An Age of Criticism*, p. 168.

⁹⁷⁹ Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, p. 27.

⁹⁸⁰ Brooks, *The Well Wrought Urn*, p. 159.

which is the poem.”⁹⁸¹ This, al-Khāl added, makes the poem “an independent entity with aesthetic value and unique existence.”⁹⁸² Hence poetry cannot be composed and understood according to specific references or any values whatsoever. Al-Khāl stated that the meaning of values and goodness *al-khayr* in poetry is not identified according to human behaviour or any concepts of value, rather it should be identified and dealt with as poetry. Good values in poetry, al-Khāl argued, are so because of their position in the poetic context, in the body of the poem which is “everything in poetry. The sole law of the poet *sharīʿat al-shāʿir al-wahīda* is the quality of the artistic work.”⁹⁸³ This is the exact view of the New Critics who refused to deal with poetry, either in composition or criticism, according to practical or moral references. Allen Tate strongly criticised poetry which is based on morals, stating that he was not attacking morals or “social justice”, rather he was “attacking the fallacy of communication in poetry.”⁹⁸⁴ It is a “fallacy”, he argued, both in literary writing and literary theory if poetry aims at achieving such things.⁹⁸⁵

Interestingly, al-Khāl used the same logic as Tate in his discussion of the idea that *Shiʿr*, as it was a poetic magazine, was devoted to poetry and did not have any political or ideological aims. He argued that when *Shiʿr*’s writers reject patriotic poetry, they do not necessarily reject this kind of thought.⁹⁸⁶ Al-Khāl added that poetry can participate in the battle of awakening and revival *fī maʿrakat al-yaqaʿa wa al-nuhūd* without promoting any political ideas; it can do so if looking at it as “a path of knowledge and vision.”⁹⁸⁷ The latter sentence poses the question of how poetry can be a path of knowledge, while it is not promoting specific ideas or referring to practical references. The explanation of this stems from *Shiʿr*’s concept of knowledge in poetry, which Rineh Ḥabashī labelled as “the poetic meaning” *al-dalāla al-shiʿriyya*,⁹⁸⁸ differentiating it from practical meaning. The poetic

⁹⁸¹ Al-Khāl, “Mafhūm al-qaṣīda”, p. 84.

⁹⁸² Ibid., p. 84.

⁹⁸³ Al-Khāl, “Fī māhiyyat al-shiʿr”, p. 3.

⁹⁸⁴ Tate, *Collected Essays*, p. 77.

⁹⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 77.

⁹⁸⁶ Al-Khāl, “Min raʾīs al-taḥrīr”, pp. 3-4.

⁹⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 4; and see the Editorial Board, “Ilā al-qāriʿ”, *Shiʿr* (num. 16, Autumn 1960), pp. 7-8.

⁹⁸⁸ Ḥabashī, “al-Shiʿr fī maʿrakat al-wujūd”, p. 92.

knowledge is neither a reflective one that mirrors social or historical events, including the author's life, nor is it scientific knowledge that can be proved and examined. In her discussion of the book *al-Shiʿr fī maʿrakat al-wujūd* (poetry in the battle of existence) which was a collection of essays published in *Shiʿr* by many *Shiʿr* critics,⁹⁸⁹ Khālida Saʿīd summed up the general view of those *Shiʿr* writers and labelled this as the modern approach to poetry.⁹⁹⁰ She argued that while poetry holds knowledge, it cannot reach to “lucid cognition” *idrāk nayyir* that can be proved. Rather poetry, she added, produces “rich and ambiguous cognition.”⁹⁹¹ This individualises the poetic knowledge as a kind of mysterious and superior knowledge, a view which dominated *Shiʿr*'s critical discourse. Rineh Ḥabashī likened the poetic knowledge to a mythical one that goes beyond concrete phenomena and is able to deal with metaphysical sources, and at the end it provides things that are semi-comprehensible *qarīb min al-idrāk* without being verifiable.⁹⁹² Throughout his career, Adūnīs espoused the same idea, arguing that communication in poetry is neither political nor ideological; it is poetic or aesthetic communication. The poetic influences, he added, stem from inspiration, not from ideas as is the case with ideology and didactic methods.⁹⁹³ Rineh Ḥabashī labelled the influence of knowledge in poetry as “pleasure of contemplation” *imtāʿ al-taʿammul*,⁹⁹⁴ which suggests that it holds no practical meaning. Similarly, Mājīd Fakhrī characterised poets as “genius or mad” since they see what normal people cannot,⁹⁹⁵ suggesting that poetry cannot be proved by usual methods of practice. Khālida Saʿīd described the use of life elements in poetry as a dream.⁹⁹⁶ She illustrated that poetic images would be meaningless if we tried to identify the points of resemblance between their components. Although some poetic images, she added, seem not capable of being analysed, they are suggestive by means of inspiration.⁹⁹⁷ While Saʿīd

⁹⁸⁹ Many writers, *al-Shiʿr fī maʿrakat al-wujūd* (Beirut: Dār Majallat Shiʿr, 1960).

⁹⁹⁰ Saʿīd, “al-Shiʿr fī maʿrakat al-wujūd”, p. 93. This book is named after Rineh Ḥabashī's article which has the same title and from which I have quoted many times throughout this dissertation.

⁹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 93-94.

⁹⁹² Ḥabashī, “al-Shiʿr fī maʿrakat al-wujūd”, pp. 88-89.

⁹⁹³ Adūnīs, *Zaman al-shiʿr*, pp. 100-102; *Fatiḥa li nihāyāt al-qarn*, p. 246.

⁹⁹⁴ Rineh Ḥabashī, “Hal al-ḥamāsa burhān?”, *Adab* (vol. 1, num. 4, Autumn 1962), p. 97.

⁹⁹⁵ Fakhrī, “*Awrāq fī al-rīḥ* li adūnīs”, p. 72.

⁹⁹⁶ Ṣabrī, “Adūnīs fī *al-Baʿth wa al-ramād*”, p. 102.

⁹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

emphasised the non-referential nature of poetic knowledge, she explained some poetic symbols by referring to the poets' biographies and personal beliefs. As mentioned previously, she based her discussion of the use of fire in Adūnīs's *al-Ba'ṯh wa al-ramād* on his Sufi ancestry, Alawī sect and more importantly on the death of his father by burning.⁹⁹⁸

The third point is related to the organic unity of literature. As aforementioned, al-Khāl stressed that poetry is neither mere meaning nor mere form; it is the fusion of both. Evidently, this refers to the concept of literary unity that was essential for the New Critics, which needs to be discussed before proceeding with *Shi'r*'s account. The New Critics' account of the unity of literature was related to their conception of the old united being that the Fugitives labelled as "the old organic way of life", which was destroyed by industrialism.⁹⁹⁹ A similar conception of the same idea was described by Eliot as the "perfectly ordered word", which was replaced with "the dissociation of sensibility." The latter means that thought became isolated from the experience of feeling as it appeared in the old society which Eliot named as the united sensibility.¹⁰⁰⁰ As a result of the absence of this united sensibility, "man became increasingly divided, alienated..."¹⁰⁰¹ The poet is, for Eliot, the one who can return "to this original immediate experience, to a unified sensibility by objectifying his feeling."¹⁰⁰² Eliot used this argument in his defence of "the metaphysical poets who combined heterogeneous ideas," remarking that "a degree of heterogeneity of material compelled into unity by the operation of the poet's mind is omnipresent in poetry."¹⁰⁰³ Eliot deemed the incongruity of the components as unavoidable and thus the role of the poet was "to unite what resists unification."¹⁰⁰⁴

⁹⁹⁸ Ibid., pp. 98-100. Another example is Sa'īd's discussion of Fadwā Ṭūqān's use of destiny symbols. See p. 148 of this thesis.

⁹⁹⁹ Wellek, "The New Criticism: Pro and Contra", pp. 618-619.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Eliot, *Collected Essays*, pp. 285-287.

¹⁰⁰¹ Wellek, "The New Criticism: Pro and Contra", p. 616.

¹⁰⁰² Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism*, vol. 5, p. 186. Obviously, this was also the basis of Eliot's concept of the objective correlative, as it aimed at objectifying feelings in the literary experience.

¹⁰⁰³ Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism*, pp. 665-666.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 666. Eliot explained the process of the unity of different elements by rhetorical figures such as wit, whose function was "to provide an internal equilibrium for the poem." Ibid., p. 621. The unity of literature, for Blackmur, results from what he labelled as "symbolic imagination" which is "the most exact possible meaning" of poetry. Hyman, *The Armed Vision*, pp. 267-268. Richards stressed the same idea as Eliot that all meanings in a poem should be harmonised with each other. This happens by

The experiences of ordinary people are, Eliot illustrated, “chaotic, irregular, fragmentary” as they cannot connect different experiences (like falling in love, reading Spinoza, the noise of the typewriter...) with each other. Per contra, “in the mind of the poet these experiences are always forming new wholes.”¹⁰⁰⁵

Regarding unity as a literary concept, the New Critics refused to look at literary form as separate from content. They are both one thing to the point that one cannot think of the form of a literary work without thinking of the content at the same time as it is not “a kind of envelope which contains the content.”¹⁰⁰⁶ On the other hand, a literary work is “a whole in which the parts collaborate and modify one another.”¹⁰⁰⁷ Rene Wellek illustrated that as a result of this unity it is “impossible to change a word or the position of a word without impairing its total effect.”¹⁰⁰⁸ This suggests that the meaning of a poem is its very structure and thus its meaning is “almost tautologically exact.” The components of a poem such as its symbols stand “for nothing previously known, but for what is here made known.”¹⁰⁰⁹ In addition, what a poem says cannot be restated as it is said by the entire poem, its components and their organic relationships. Brooks characterised the attempt to restate or summarise the meaning of a poem as “the Heresy of Paraphrase.”¹⁰¹⁰ He illustrated that “form and content, or content and medium, are inseparable.”¹⁰¹¹ Brooks argued that the content of an artistic work is not previously identified and then the artist finds a suitable form; rather they both are created together. He stated that “the artist does not first intuit his object and then find the

the influence of the context in which various words, their previous contexts and connotations come together. Richards labelled this as “the context theory of meaning.” Ibid., 643. Richards illustrated that the tool by which different meanings can be combined in a context was metaphor, which “is seen to be a typical instance of the merging of contexts.” Ibid., p. 644. Importantly, Ransom criticised both Eliot’s and Richards’s arguments about reconciling “opposites” which, for Ransom, cannot be reconciled only because they came together in the same poem or “got into the same complex of affective experience to create there a kind of ‘tension’... when there is no resolution at all we have a poem without a structural unity; and this is precisely the intention of irony, which therefore is something very special, and ought to be occasional.” Ransom, *The New Criticism*, p. 95 and Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism*, pp. 621-622.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism*, p. p. 666.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Brooks, *The Well Wrought Urn*, p. 159.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Wellek, “The New Criticism: Pro and Contra”, p. 617.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Wellek and Austin, *Theory of Literature*, pp. 13-14.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Hyman, *The Armed Vision*, p. 268.

¹⁰¹⁰ Brooks, *The Well Wrought Urn*, pp. 157-175.

¹⁰¹¹ Ibid., p. 163.

appropriate medium. It is rather in and through his medium that he intuits the object.”¹⁰¹²
According to this argument, Tate called the poem “a real creation” as it is

A kind of knowledge that we did not know before... We know the particular poem, not what it says that we can restate... the poem is its own knower, neither poet nor reader knowing anything that the poem says apart from the words of the poem.¹⁰¹³

This account of organic unity is very similar to that of the *Shi'ar* critics who stressed that the content and form of a literary work are created together and thus cannot be separated. This idea in *Shi'ar* is compatible with the thought of *Shi'ar* critics, particularly that of al-Khāl, about the unity of humanity¹⁰¹⁴ and of “the unity of human heritage.”¹⁰¹⁵ Regarding the literary use of literary unity, *Shi'ar* critics argued that poetry shows the relationships between the elements and experiences of being that might seem irrelevant to each other. Rineh Ḥabashī pointed out that the poet has the ability to discover the relationships between various phenomena of the world. The poet, he stated, discovers that elements of the world can be united and “they show their unity within diversity.”¹⁰¹⁶ He added that poetry unites the most different components of the universe, which become parts of a poem. This is an achievement of the poet, “the prospector of the unity, the one who combines continents...”¹⁰¹⁷ This argument is very similar to that of the New Critics, particularly Eliot, as the poet is seen as one who can discover the unity of various elements and embody this unity in a poem.

While arguing that literary unity is an essential feature of *Shi'ar's* conception of poetry, al-Khāl used almost the exact argument of Brooks. He illustrated that the poem in *Shi'ar* is viewed as “an organic creature and the magazine rejects the duplicity of meaning and

¹⁰¹² Ibid., p. 163.

¹⁰¹³ Tate, *Essays of Four Decades*, p. 595.

¹⁰¹⁴ The Editorial Board, “Akhhār wa qaḍāyā”, *Shi'ar*, num. 15, Summer 1960, p. 131; al-Khāl, “*Qaḍāyā al-shi'ar al-mu'āsir li Nāzik al-Malā'ika*”, p. 152.

¹⁰¹⁵ The Editorial Board, “Ilā al-qāri’”, *Shi'ar* (num. 15, Summer 1960), p. 6.

¹⁰¹⁶ Ḥabashī, “al-Shi'ar fī ma'rakat al-wujūd”, pp. 90-91.

¹⁰¹⁷ Ibid., p. 91.

structure. The poem: its structure and meaning, grows together in composition.”¹⁰¹⁸ Al-Khāl said in another place that “in poetry, we do not study the means of expression in isolation from what is expressed. For what is said itself should find its medium... the new poetic vision exists in the mind of the poet simultaneously with its new genuine expression... Thus expression and meaning, or form and content, in art are one thing, inseparable.”¹⁰¹⁹ Similarly, many other *Shiʿr* critics stressed the idea of unity in the magazine. What is notable is that they all agreed about the idea that the poetic subject is the thing from which the poetic form stems. This was to emphasise that classical prosody cannot be assumed *a priori* as a set of rhythmic forms for modern poetry. This was at times obvious as in the argument of Fuʿād Rifqā who pointed out that the poetic subject identifies the form of the poem which is not directed by any rhythmic or formative norms.¹⁰²⁰ Hence, Rifqā argued, prose can be poetry.¹⁰²¹ While attacking classical Arabic poetry and its rhythmic patterns and the use of Aḥmad Shawqī and Ḥāfīz Ibrāhīm among others to them, Ibrāhīm Shukrallah described these uses as “pouring new wine into an old carafe.”¹⁰²² While he was commenting on classical rhythms and rhymes, he mentioned the issue of “duality of form and content,” which seemed to be a result of his attitude to classical prosody.¹⁰²³ Oddly, Abū Shawqī Abū Shaqrā in his discussion of ʿUmar al-Naṣ’s *al-Layl fī al-durūb* limited the poetic form to rhythm and rhyme. Under a subtitle labelled as form *al-shakl*, Shaqrā only attacked the use of classical rhythmic patterns without pointing to any other elements of the poetic form.¹⁰²⁴

Most importantly, the idea of unity of literature in *Shiʿr* was mainly a theoretical concept and was rarely used practically, with exception of Jabrā’s and Khālida Saʿīd’s works. Al-Khāl never explained literary unity practically nor did he show how various elements become unified in a literary work. Per contra, while stressing that a literary work is one unity,

¹⁰¹⁸ The Editorial Board, “Akḥbār wa qaḍāyā”, *Shiʿr* (num. 27, Summer, 1963), p. 117.

¹⁰¹⁹ Al-Khāl, “Min raʾīs al-taḥrīr”, p. 3. Al-Khāl repeatedly stressed the same idea throughout his career. For instance see: “*Dūlāb* li Miṣhāl Ṭrād”, p. 109; “Fī māhiyyat al-Shiʿr”, p. 5; “al-Sana al-ʿāshira”, *Shiʿr* (nom. 37, Winter 1968), p. 7; *al-Ḥadatha fī al-shiʿr*, pp. 14, 80, 96.

¹⁰²⁰ Rifqā, “*Al-Baḥth ʿan al-judhūr*”, pp. 86-87.

¹⁰²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

¹⁰²² Shukrallah, “Risāla min al-Qāhira”, p. 93.

¹⁰²³ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

¹⁰²⁴ Abū Shaqrā, “*al-Layl fī al-durūb* li ʿUmar al-Naṣ”, pp. 68-69.

al-Khāl judged works according to a small part of them. He, for example, criticised al-Mutanabbī for being direct, referring to the first line of a long poem that I discussed in the first chapter.¹⁰²⁵ Interestingly, the New Critics, on whom al-Khāl relied heavily, clearly rejected the practice of evaluating a poem by quoting a part of it. Wimsatt stated that the critic is not allowed “to quote a line or a sentence from a poem to show it is simple and good at the same time, because it is more complex in its context.”¹⁰²⁶

Regarding Khalida Sa‘īd’s works, she repeatedly stressed the idea that literary form and meaning are one unity and they cannot be separated.¹⁰²⁷ In her practical criticism, she analysed many literary works in *Shi‘r* without separation between form and meaning. Although she at times divided her essays into two sections, meaning and form, she did not separate between form and content de facto. In her article on Adūnīs’s *Qaṣā’id Ulā*, she divided her discussion into two parts: meaning,¹⁰²⁸ and form.¹⁰²⁹ However, she emphasised in the section on form that form is not independent from meaning as it is not “clothes of meaning” which can be removed from the body.¹⁰³⁰ Similarly, in her discussion of Nāzik al-Malā’ika’s *Qarārat al-mawja*, she discussed the book in general¹⁰³¹ and then she mentioned a few notes on the poetic form exploring al-Malā’ika’s way of embodying meanings in symbols.¹⁰³² This was notable throughout Sa‘īd’s career in the magazine.¹⁰³³

More importantly, Jabrā espoused the idea of unity of literature more clearly, both theoretically and practically. First of all, he showed a clear conception of literary unity which included the unity of form and meaning on the one hand, and the unity of all components of a literary work with each other on the other hand.¹⁰³⁴ He stressed that all components of a literary work, including the various meanings that might be extracted from the work, should

¹⁰²⁵ See p. 63 of this thesis.

¹⁰²⁶ Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism*, p. 650.

¹⁰²⁷ Sa‘īd, “Al-Uṣṭūra fī al-shi‘r al-mu‘āṣir”, p. 116; “*al-Awda min al-nab‘ al-hālim* li Salmā al-Jayyūsī”, p. 99.

¹⁰²⁸ Khuzāmā Ṣabrī, “*Qaṣā’id ulā* li Adūnīs”, pp. 75-79.

¹⁰²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 79-80.

¹⁰³⁰ *Ibid.*, 79.

¹⁰³¹ Ṣabrī, “*Qarārat al-mawja* li Nāzik al-Malā’ika”, pp. 91-95.

¹⁰³² *Ibid.*, pp. 95-97.

¹⁰³³ See Ṣabrī, “*Wajadtuhā* li Fadwā Ṭūqān”, pp. 102-106; “*al-Bi’r al-mahjūra* li Yūsuf al-Khāl”, pp. 136-145.

¹⁰³⁴ Jabrā, *al-Riḥla al-thāmina*, p. 14.

be part of the main meaning of that work.¹⁰³⁵ The meaning is, Jabrā argued, the comprehensive tool that is served by every element of the work to the point of being organic.¹⁰³⁶ Additionally, Jabrā emphasised that as a result of the organic relationship between the constituents of a literary work along with its form and content together, the meaning of that work cannot be summed up.¹⁰³⁷ Obviously Jabrā was using the New Critics' concept of unity, but the difference between his use and other *Shi'ar* critics' use of the same thought was that Jabrā theorised it comprehensively, and more importantly also applied it meaningfully. While the concept of literary unity was a mere theoretical notion for the majority of *Shi'ar* critics, Jabrā analysed many literary works according to the concept of organic unity. He discussed Tīrīz ʿAwwād's *al-Tajruba fī biyūt al-ʿankabūt* looking for its main united meaning or vision. Jabrā discussed the relationship between the images and meanings with each other in order to find out the core of ʿAwwād's book. He illustrated that all meanings and love images serve a wider view that is the feeling of harmony with the universe.¹⁰³⁸ He stated that images of love and the beloved character are the embodiment of the meaning and its instrument and thus they are the tool and the end at the same time.¹⁰³⁹ Then, Jabrā pointed to some scattered images in the book, stressing that poetry should be united through its images.¹⁰⁴⁰ He added that this is what makes the poem independent from anything apart from itself and thus can appear as one long periphrastic expression *kināya ṭawīla*.¹⁰⁴¹ Obviously, this analogy is based on Wimsatt's argument that a literary work is a Verbal Icon, the title of his book.

Similarly, Jabrā analysed Tawfīq Ṣā'igh's *Fī jubb al-usūd* illustrating that “deportation is the first and ultimate subject of the book and everything else is variation on a theme.”¹⁰⁴² Jabrā traced many forms of the deportation such as deportation from God, homeland, the

¹⁰³⁵ Jabrā, “al-Shi'ar wa al-naqd al-jāhil”, pp. 80-81.

¹⁰³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 80-81.

¹⁰³⁷ Jabrā, *al-Fann wa al-ḥulm wa al-fī'l*, pp. 265-267.

¹⁰³⁸ Jabrā, “al-Tajruba fī biyūt al-ʿankabūt”, p. 87.

¹⁰³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

¹⁰⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 88-89.

¹⁰⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

¹⁰⁴² Jabrā, “Fī jubb al-usūd”, p. 106.

human psyche and body along with all the scenes and images creating the features of this deportation. In the confrontation with God, Ṣā'igh says:

You are the one who sentenced me to exile	أنت الذي حكمت عليّ بالنفي
and you placed my house in banishment	وعيّنت في المنفى منازلني
and stigmatised me	وصمت جبيني
and cast me out in limbo	وفررتني في اللامكان
I look for atonement	أفتش عن كفارة
which carries me on the path of redemption	تحمل لي صكّ الفداء
and I carry songs along this path	وأحمل لها التغني

Jabrā argued that this scene indicates the most difficult confrontation that the human being has, in which God is thought of as the source of loss. However, the search for redemption still appears to indicate the sense of committing a sin, even if this sin is not identified. Jabrā added that in placing God on trial the human being gets confused and tries to be everyone at once, the sinner, the advocate and the judge, in order to demonstrate his innocence.

I named myself as the sinner and the advocate	نصبت ذاتي المذنب والمحامي
and I see you dress me in your clothes, as the judge	
	أراك خلعت عليّ رداءك، قاضي
and you turned me into the adversary that I thought you were	
	وقلبتني الخصم الذي ظننته فيك ¹⁰⁴³

Additionally, Jabrā illustrated the emotions, conflicts between various elements and contradictions, which are meaningful in the context of Ṣā'igh's poetry.¹⁰⁴⁴ Jabrā showed in this article not only the meaning of literary unity in general, but also the unity of Ṣā'igh's

¹⁰⁴³ Ibid., pp. 106-107.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 106-117.

poetic work; its unity of form and content and the unity of its meanings. Jabrā practically illustrated that every word and image is meaningful and related to the primary poetic *Kināya* (periphrastic expression). Regarding the New Critics' origins of the unity of meanings, Tate pointed out that the unity of good poetry includes all poetic meanings, which can be recognised as a human experience embodied in the text. If the poetic text had "irresponsible denotations of words", they would result in "the fallacy of communication."¹⁰⁴⁵ He illustrated that synthesis of various meanings in poetry creates "tension," which is an essential part of poetic meaning. Tate stated that "the meaning of poetry is its "tension," the full organised body of all the extension and intension that we can find in it."¹⁰⁴⁶ Importantly, Jabrā also applied the concept of tension, without using the term itself, as the result of combining contradictory elements in the poetic context. He discussed the contradictions in Ṣā'igh's poetic periphrastic expressions and symbols that signify uneven confrontations such as that between the people and God, the evictor and evicted. Ṣā'igh says:

Oh just one, you are the most merciful	أيها العادل، أنت الراحم
my evictor, stigmatiser, torturer	مبعدي واصمي معذبي
you are the one who perplexes me	أنت المحيري
you are the lover	أنت المحب

In this conflict the beloved becomes the torturer and redeemer and represents life and death simultaneously. Jabrā added that the tension is multiplied when the victim prays for the killer, "it is a horrific image of the acceptance of God's anger. The essence of tragedy is latent in this inevitable contradiction."¹⁰⁴⁷

I writhed for you slaughtered me	وجزرتني قتلويت
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¹⁰⁴⁵ Tate, *Collected Essays*, p. 82.

¹⁰⁴⁶ Jabrā, "Fī jubba al-usūd", p. 83.

¹⁰⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 107-108.

I chant my groans

أزغرد الأهات

I am thankful to you oh obstructor

سلمت بذاك يا معرقلبي¹⁰⁴⁸

The tension here comes from the combination of happiness and sadness, fear and longing, strength and weakness in the same symbols or expressions. This conflict (tension) is essential in Jabrā's analysis of Šā'igh's poetry, to the point that one finds nothing left without it.

Of equal importance is Jabrā's analysis of Adūnīs's *al-Masrah wa al-marayā*, which was grounded on the unity of meaning. Jabrā illustrated the manner in which Adūnīs synthesised in his book many intensified expressions, voices, symbols and consequent Sufi attitudes that go far beyond conscious thought and cannot be interpreted logically.¹⁰⁴⁹ Therefore, Jabrā added, there are direct and explicit meanings, without being coherent, imposed over these expressions and symbols.¹⁰⁵⁰ Jabrā discussed many of these expressions and symbols and the way they are repeated in Adūnīs's book, concluding that there are many incoherent attitudes which lose their ability to indicate a united sense or vision.¹⁰⁵¹ Jabrā argued that Adūnīs tried to create a poetic character from many figures such as Hamlet, Zoroaster, Faust and Sisyphus. He added that these characters vary in certain ways and each has different connotations from the others. Thus, Jabrā pointed out, they cannot be united in one entity or character without losing their meanings and values. "This made Adūnīs's synthesised poetic character appear fabricated and unable to hold coherent values and features."¹⁰⁵² Jabrā categorised Adūnīs's book as "a deliberate intellectual attempt cruelly imposed by the poet over his poetic sense" and remarked that "the poet's culture is forced into his poetry."¹⁰⁵³ This analysis brings in Tate's above argument that "irresponsible denotations of words" caused "the fallacy of communication." Similarly Jabrā found that the irresponsible meanings of Adūnīs's symbols

¹⁰⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 108.

¹⁰⁴⁹ Jabrā, "al-Tanāquḍāt fī *al-Masrah wa al-marayā*", pp. 113-114.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 114.

¹⁰⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 115-116.

¹⁰⁵² Ibid., p. 123.

¹⁰⁵³ Ibid., p. 123.

and expressions result in reference to the poet's culture rather than to a coherent poetic attitude. What is more, Jabrā specified many words and phrases, particularly the repeated ones, which he suggested should have been deleted, stating that "the poet should have removed every element that has no important function in the body of the poem."¹⁰⁵⁴ While this calls to mind many statements of the New Critics,¹⁰⁵⁵ it is compatible with Jabrā's argument that the poem is a long unified periphrastic expression as mentioned above. As is obvious, Jabrā did not develop new theoretical concepts of literature, but at least his applications fitted well the theoretical concepts he espoused. He applied the New Critics' account comprehensively and productively. Importantly, he closely analysed, or rather scrutinised, many new literary works such as those that appear in the above examples. This was a very important task required by the new poetic movements in the Arab world at that time.

III. Formalism

Rene Wellek among many others stressed that the New Critics deemed the focus of poetry to be human knowledge and life. He stated that "none of the New Critics could have believed in the prison-house of language."¹⁰⁵⁶ Therefore, Wellek strictly rejected the accusation against the New Critics of being formalists, considering this valid against Russian Formalism.¹⁰⁵⁷ This idea of human knowledge in poetry dominated *Shi'r*'s discourse. *Shi'r* critics stressed that poetry is not a formalist entity cut off from life; it is a meaningful activity and its meaning stems from human life. They argued that the human being is the core of poetry and everything in poetry is relevant to human meanings and feelings. Nadhīr 'Aẓma

¹⁰⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 116-117.

¹⁰⁵⁵ Examples of this include Wimsatt's book's title the Verbal Icon, Wimsatt's argument that a literary work is like "a pudding or a machine" and "Poetry succeeds because all or most of what is said or implied is relevant; what is irrelevant has been excluded." Wimsatt, *The Verbal Icon*, p. 5. Another example is Brooks' deeming a poem as like a 'Well Wrought Urn', which is the title of his book.

¹⁰⁵⁶ Wellek, "The New Criticism: Pro and Contra," p. 617.

¹⁰⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 618. Wellek added that the New Critics were formalist "in the sense that they insist on the organisation of a work of art which prevents its becoming a simple communication." P. 618.

labelled this as “the humanistic tendency” *al-nazʿa al-insāniyya*,¹⁰⁵⁸ as an opposite to ornamental poetic language.¹⁰⁵⁹ While arguing that poetry holds no practical ideas, Khālida Saʿīd stressed that poetic knowledge is human.¹⁰⁶⁰ She deemed this knowledge part of the literary structure as “if the ideas get away from the form, they turn to philosophy, and if feelings and emotions are removed from the form, they turn to autobiography.”¹⁰⁶¹ For Rineh Ḥabashī poetry is the sign of humanity for all cultures; it is the way of enhancing human feelings and values as it is involved in discovering human awareness.¹⁰⁶²

Keeping in mind the influence of the New Critics, al-Khāl’s argument that poetry holds human knowledge was implicitly related to his religious belief in the human being as the image of God and that everything should be based on that sacred image. This account informed his description of communist views as godless. When he was in America, al-Khāl stated that the source of American strength was not anything related to materialism *māddiyya*, rather it was “the belief in God and the human being who is His creature and image.”¹⁰⁶³ When talking about Communism, al-Khāl illustrated that “the conflict between us [believers] and the Communists is not about economic theories or methods of governing..., rather it is about the true nature of the human being. Is it a creature as described by Psalms, crowned with glory and honour..., or is it a machine enslaved by the state...?”¹⁰⁶⁴ Additionally, al-Khāl, throughout his career, centred his concept of the human being and human knowledge in the discourse of literature. This thought was applicable to al-Khāl’s rejection of political and propaganda literature as it is driven by previously determined ideologies, not by the liberty of the human being and human feelings. However, al-Khāl justified his rejection of ideological and propaganda based literature artistically and did not explicitly say it was because of the lack of human existence. This was also the reason why he rejected formalism, Art for Art’s

¹⁰⁵⁸ Al-Azma, “*Aghānī al-madīna* li Buland al-Ḥaydarī”, p. 98.

¹⁰⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 97-98.

¹⁰⁶⁰ Saʿīd, “al-Shiʿr fī maʿrakat al-wujūd”, *Shiʿr* (num. 14, Spring 1960), pp. 93-94. About the same idea see Ḥabashī, “Hal al-ḥamāsa burhān?”, p. 98, 103; al-Khāl, “Fī māhiyyat al-shiʿr”, pp. 3-4.

¹⁰⁶¹ Saʿīd, “al-Shiʿr fī maʿrakat al-wujūd”, p. 93.

¹⁰⁶² Ḥabashī, “Nazarāt fī al-shiʿr”, pp. 91-92.

¹⁰⁶³ Al-Sālisī, *Yūsuf al-Khāl*, p. 55.

¹⁰⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

sake in particular. This thought dominated *Shiʿr* critics' writings, most clearly al-Khāl's, viewing formalist literary discourse as dehumanised.¹⁰⁶⁵ Al-Khāl stated that "the human being, in his pain and happiness, sin and repentance, freedom and slavery, life and death, is the first and final subject of poetry. Every experience whose focus is not the human being is naïve and artificial, thus it is ignored by great poetry."¹⁰⁶⁶ He illustrated in another place that one of the main issues to enhance human development is to look at poetry as "a path of knowledge and vision" and to believe entirely in the "sacredness, freedom and honour of the human being."¹⁰⁶⁷ Al-Khāl added that modern poets do not look for empty poetic forms or frameworks; rather they express indirectly human and civilizational contents.¹⁰⁶⁸

Interestingly, al-Khāl's religious concept of the human being was similar to Murray Krieger's later defence of New Criticism against many formalist schools, particularly Reader-Response Critics, Structuralists and Deconstructors. He presented his thought as a believer in poetry as a religious value in order to stress his humanistic trend.¹⁰⁶⁹ As a humanist, Krieger declared his belief in Matthew Arnold who viewed "poetry as a human triumph made out of darkness, as the creation of verbal meaning in a blank universe to serve as a visionary substitute for a defunct religion."¹⁰⁷⁰ Krieger deemed this theory "stubbornly humanistic and affirmative." It was a rejection of thought in which "the universe was blank, religion was defunct... and every belief underwent demythologisation."¹⁰⁷¹

Relevantly, Mājid Fakhrī rejected classical Arabic poetry because it was classified as eulogy, satire, lamentation and flirtation, deeming this not based on permanent human experiences and thus a mere use of ornamentations and clichés.¹⁰⁷² Mājid Fakhrī added that real or great poetry contemplates the real being, which consists of nature, the human being

¹⁰⁶⁵ I would not argue that other *Shiʿr* critics held the anti-formalist view for the same reason; the concept of the human being was not part of their religious view. There were other reasons to reject formalism such as being influenced by French Symbolism like Adūnīs, al-Khāl or the New Critics directly as the case with Mājid Fakhrī and Rineh Ḥabashī.

¹⁰⁶⁶ The Editorial Board, "Akhbār wa qaḍāyā", *Shiʿr* (num. 2, Spring 1957), p. 99.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Al-Khāl, "Min raʾīs al-tahrīr", p. 4.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 4-5.

¹⁰⁶⁹ Leitch, *American Literary Criticism*, pp. 39-40.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 40.

¹⁰⁷¹ Ibid., p. 40.

¹⁰⁷² Fakhrī, "Māddat al-shiʿr", p. 87.

and God. Fakhrī illustrated that the greatest poetry concentrates on the human being and God, and looks at nature in relation to the human being. He pointed out that since Romantic poetry viewed nature as nature and an ornamental element, not as a human value, it is inferior and degenerate.¹⁰⁷³ Notably, Fakhrī judged all classical poetry as ornamental because of the theoretical description of that poetry, not because of the poetic body per se. If this classification of classical poetry as eulogy, satire, lamentation and flirtation was ornamental, it does not mean necessarily that classical poetry itself was ornamental. Thus he should have explained why he deemed classical poetry ornamental in relation to the poetic body itself, or should have pointed out that this kind of classification is not precise. Additionally, Fakhrī went further, viewing classical Arabic poetry as empty of the fundamental human feelings including astonishment, confusion, anxiety, pain and longing.¹⁰⁷⁴ He labelled these feelings as “the human drama” *al-drāmā al-insāniyya* and mentioned many Western poets who expressed some features of this drama.¹⁰⁷⁵ He added that “the absence of this human drama from classical Arabic poetry is our main criticism of it...”¹⁰⁷⁶ I do not find any explanation for Fakhrī’s argument that since Arabic poetry was classified as mentioned above, it did not express the major human feelings. How could he not find in pre-Islamic poetry, for example, human feelings like yearning, love, fear of death and anxiety of the unknown? How could he read a phenomenon in classical Arabic poetry like the eulogising of cities and ruins without finding in it a human anxiety about death and evanescence? Additionally, Fakhrī’s argument does not discuss any of the formal issues of classical Arabic poetry; his statement is based on abstract ideas not on artistic analysis.¹⁰⁷⁷

¹⁰⁷³ Ibid., p. 88.

¹⁰⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 89.

¹⁰⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 89.

¹⁰⁷⁶ Ibid., pp. 89-90.

¹⁰⁷⁷ I think that Allen Tate’s criticism of Matthew Arnold for focussing on ideas without literary form is to some extent valid as a basis of criticising Fakhrī. While deeming Arnold as “a great critic”, Tate stressed his criticism of Arnold’s ideas-based theory, which made his theory of poetry “of secondary importance.” Tate, *Collected Essays*, pp. 17-18. While keeping in mind my disagreement with Fakhrī’s ideas, I can use Tate’s logic in saying that Fakhrī considered the poetic value “of secondary importance.”

Importantly, the rejection of formalism in *Shi'ar* was also relevant to the critics' attitude toward the role of rhythm and rhyme, particularly the classical ones, in poetry. The view which dominated *Shi'ar* was that rhythm and rhyme are formal issues and thus not essential for poetry. Al-Khāl illustrated that it is not acceptable to impose any kinds of rhythm on the poet, who should have full liberty to choose or create his/her appropriate rhythm.¹⁰⁷⁸ Al-Khāl added that he at times employed classical prosody, but the point is that it is only one of the options available for the modern poet, who must not be under the censorship of classical prosody.¹⁰⁷⁹ Poetic rhythm and rhyme are, for al-Khāl, part of the poetic form that should be chosen according to the poetic subject. Al-Khāl illustrated that “the subject is what imposes the form, not the opposite.”¹⁰⁸⁰ However, while this logic is agreeable, al-Khāl did not clarify the role of rhythm and rhyme in the poetic form and meaning, when it is important or not and what is the alternative to it. He asserted the idea that poetry which is rhythm-and-rhyme-free fits the liberty of modern life, thus it is the poetic style of future.¹⁰⁸¹ However, a few years later al-Khāl contended that after the content of modern life has imposed changes over the old poetic forms, he found that the changes included only the rhythmic patterns without the poetic music. Thus these changes were not able to deliver the poetic experience spontaneously.¹⁰⁸² Al-Khāl illustrated that the element lacking was to use colloquial in addition to the changes regarding the rhythmic patterns. As a result, “the magazine clashed with the wall of language.”¹⁰⁸³ Zarāqīṭ rightly suspected al-Khāl's statement. How could the content of life impose changes over poetic rhythm to deliver life experiences, he argued, if these changes later turned out to be unable to deliver the poetic experience? How and why did life impose them in the first place?¹⁰⁸⁴

¹⁰⁷⁸ The Editorial Board, “Akhbār wa qaḍāyā”, *Shi'ar* (num. 20, Autumn 1961), p. 129.

¹⁰⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

¹⁰⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 129-131.

¹⁰⁸¹ The Editorial Board, “akhbār wa qaḍāyā”, *Shi'ar* (num. 10, Spring 1959), p. 124.

¹⁰⁸² Al-Khāl, “Bayān”, p. 7.

¹⁰⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Zarāqīṭ, *al-Ḥadātha fī al-naqd*, p. 180.

Relevant to the issue of rhythm and rhyme, *Shiʿr*'s theorising of the prose poem was mainly stated by Adūnīs in his article 'Fī qaṣīdat al-nathr'¹⁰⁸⁵ and Unsī al-Ḥājj in the introduction to his collection of prose poems *Lan*.¹⁰⁸⁶ Both Adūnīs and al-Ḥājj relied heavily on Suzanne Bernard's book *Poème en prose de Baudelaire jusqu'à nos jours* (The Prose poem from Baudelaire to the present).¹⁰⁸⁷ However, Bernard's book is a study of the history of the French prose poem and not a theory of prose poems in general. This showed the gap between *Shiʿr*'s theorisation and the reality of prose poems in the magazine.¹⁰⁸⁸

IV. Literary and Scientific Knowledge

As with the concept of poetry, *Shiʿr* critics used similar arguments in differentiating between scientific and literary knowledge. Some *Shiʿr* critics expressed clear opinions about this matter while discussing poetic issues and others came across similar opinions implicitly. The latter appears when discussing aspects of literature, such as the importance of the absence of a basis in practical knowledge that refers to historical events, including the author's biography, nor does it promote identified ideologies. Rather, literary knowledge is aesthetically and organically united with the form, meaning that form and content are inseparable, as quoted above. This argument per se points to a central difference from science whose importance stems from the content separated from the form. The form and language of scientific texts are not part of the essence of science, as their duty is to express the meaning, they are tools. Hence, the content of a scientific text is paraphrasable and can be summed up or expressed by other tools without losing its essential value. The unity of literature suggests

¹⁰⁸⁵ Adūnīs, "Fī qaṣīdat al-nathr", pp. 75-83.

¹⁰⁸⁶ Al-Ḥājj, *Lan*, pp. 9-21.

¹⁰⁸⁷ Kamāl Nashʿat, *Shiʿr al-ḥadātha fī Miṣr* (Cairo: al-Hayʿa al-miṣriyya al-ʿamma li al-kitāb, 1998), p. 203. Although Muḥammad Dīb, an Arab critic at the University of Alberta, stated that both Adūnīs and al-Ḥājj admitted that they relied on Bernard's book, he illustrated that al-Ḥājj was translating paragraphs from Bernard's book without documenting that clearly. This, Dīb added, gave the impression that the ideas and conclusions of al-Ḥājj's introduction were made by al-Ḥājj himself. Dīb compared many of al-Ḥājj's ideas in his introduction with Bernard's conclusions, finding that al-Ḥājj was translating from the French whilst neither documenting nor questioning. Muḥammad Dīb, "Qaṣīdat al-nathr bayna al-mawhiba al-fardiyya wa al-rāfid al-gharbī: Jamāʿat *Shiʿr* wa al-taʿthīr al-faransī", *Majallat al-Ādāb* (vol. 49, September-October 2001), pp. 70-72.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Maḥmūd Ibrāhīm al-Ḍabʿ, *Qaṣīdat al-nathr wa taḥawwulāt al-shiʿriyya al-ʿarabiyya* (Cairo: al-Hayʿa al-miṣriyya li quṣūr al-thaqāfa, 2003), p. 307.

the opposite, regarding both the concept of meaning and the role of form or language in that meaning. In addition to the above discussion of literary unity, this clearly appeared in Nabīh Ghaṭṭās's argument that if thought in poetry is translated into abstract phrases, it becomes something different than its literary origin, something less important, less valuable.¹⁰⁸⁹ Ghaṭṭās added that poetry is not an intellectual theory or thought identified out of the poetic language, rather it is the fusion of both of them. Poetic form, Ghaṭṭās explained, is "the real body of poetry, without which poetic ideas die and poetic thought becomes a different thing."¹⁰⁹⁰ Needless to say, this argument fits many of the New Critics' concepts, in addition to literary unity, including Brooks's concept of the Heresy of Paraphrase and Wimsatt's and Beardsley's the Intentional Fallacy.

With regard to direct comparison with science, *Shi'ar* critics emphasised, in a few places, that literature is not merely knowledge, but rather a more important kind of knowledge than the scientific learning. Al-Khāl's view on this was the clearest and expressed the scope of *Shi'ar* critics' thought generally. Hence, al-Khāl's statement is ideal to represent the magazine's attitude toward this matter. In al-Khāl's essay "Mafhūm al-qaṣīda" which was completely based on the New Critics,¹⁰⁹¹ he compared poetry on one side and science and philosophy on the other side. Poetry, al-Khāl stated, is superior to all kinds of knowledge, including science and philosophy. Al-Khāl illustrated that he meant by knowledge that which cannot be summed up or abstracted. Thus "poetry gives us a sort of knowledge that science and philosophy cannot."¹⁰⁹² He explained that poetic knowledge is embodied in an experience; it is not abstraction or generalisation. Al-Khāl added that while poetry embodies experience, science and philosophy abstract theories out of experience according to the logic of reason. Language both in science and philosophy is a tool. Per contra, al-Khāl added,

¹⁰⁸⁹ This is similar to Brooks's statement that "to substitute a paraphrase, a simplified meaning, is to destroy a part of the structure and therefore a part of the meaning." Brooks, *The Well Wrought Urn*, p. 170.

¹⁰⁹⁰ Nabīh Ghaṭṭās, "Min khārij al-wāqīc ilā bāṭinih, *A'shāb al-ṣayf*", *Shi'ar* (nom. 25, Winter 1963), p. 127.

¹⁰⁹¹ See pp. 175-177.

¹⁰⁹² Al-Khāl, "Mafhūm al-qaṣīda", p. 85.

poetry composes the experience according, not to reason, but “to spontaneity of vital language that has multiple meanings. This language promotes poetry to the level of vision.”¹⁰⁹³

This statement expresses the main elements related to the kind of knowledge that literature offers in *Shiʿr*. As with most literary issues raised in *Shiʿr*, it was based on the New Critics. Obviously, al-Khāl’s statement is based on the New Critics’ general concepts as is that on which Ghattās’s above statement relied. However, it is important to say that al-Khāl’s statement as well as Ghattās’s seem to be a summary of the New Critics’ concepts as they, particularly al-Khāl, explain such complex issues in no more than two pages, or a few lines at times. There are many books by the New Critics practically explaining their attitude toward literary meaning. For example, Brooks announced his concept of the Heresy of Paraphrase after analysing ten poems, as previously mentioned.

The first aspect of literary knowledge that explains its superiority is that literature, in al-Khāl’s statement, is the embodiment of experience, meaning that it is a specific concrete image of meaning. He illustrated that universal and general meanings *al-maʿnā al-kullī wa al-shāmil* are the work of science and philosophy.¹⁰⁹⁴ This suggests that if the importance of literature stems from this universal meaning, it can be replaced with philosophy or science. Therefore, literature cannot be seen as unique in expressing this universal meaning. Hence, al-Khāl rejected the Platonic view of literature as it confined the function of poetry to discovering truths philosophically and expressing them. Additionally, Plato denied poetry’s ability to reach universal truths *ḥaqāʾiq kulliyya* and thus poets were exiled from *The Republic*.¹⁰⁹⁵ Importantly, al-Khāl at times described poetry as able to express the essence of humanity which is applicable to all people and times. This essence of humanity differs from universal truths of philosophy in that philosophical truths stand on abstraction while literature embodies them in an experience. However, it resembles philosophy in that it can refer to all human experiences everywhere and in all times. This stems in literature from its non-referentiality, meaning that it does not refer to historically identified events.

¹⁰⁹³ Ibid., pp. 85-86.

¹⁰⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 85.

¹⁰⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 86.

Similarly, al-Khāl discussed Aristotle's attitude toward literary value. He pointed out that Aristotle agreed with Plato that the essence of poetry was truth or knowledge, however Aristotle saw poetry as able to produce it.¹⁰⁹⁶ This means that Aristotle did not consider literature as the fusion of knowledge and form. Although al-Khāl did not express his opinion on the Aristotelian view, he seemed implicitly to reject it as Aristotle did not call explicitly for literary unity. Additionally, al-Khāl stated at the end of his article that there should be a new attitude to this issue based on Romanticism,¹⁰⁹⁷ which means that he saw other theories as insufficient. However, the Aristotelian view seemed similar to some ideas that al-Khāl espoused. Aristotle viewed poetry as superior to philosophy and history, as history describes only details without comprehensive truths and without identifying the correct way of life. Regarding philosophy, it can give comprehensive truths and it teaches us how to live but it is about generalisations and abstraction to the point that it cannot be applicable to a specific case.¹⁰⁹⁸ Contrary to both, al-Khāl illustrated, poetry in Aristotle's view implies general truths and embodied examples; "it is both private and general, partial and comprehensive. Poetry embodies its argument and does not abstract it."¹⁰⁹⁹ Furthermore, in his discussion of Aristotle, al-Khāl did not point to Aristotelian catharsis and to its role in Aristotle's literary theory. This term means that tragedy has a therapeutic influence on the audience through raising emotions of pity and fear, leading to a release from tension.¹¹⁰⁰ This concept was influential on Richards who argued that literature balances our emotions and feelings, which was rejected by many New Critics.¹¹⁰¹ Obviously, this is the opposite of Wimsatt's and Beardsley's view that a literary work should be evaluated apart from its audience's reception and feeling. They labelled that literary evaluation based on audience as "the affective fallacy."¹¹⁰²

¹⁰⁹⁶ Ibid., pp. 86-87.

¹⁰⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 89.

¹⁰⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 86.

¹⁰⁹⁹ Ibid., pp. 86-87.

¹¹⁰⁰ Cuddon, *A Dictionary of Literary Terms*, P. 106.

¹¹⁰¹ Wellek, *A History of Modern Criticism*, vol. 5, pp. 222-223.

¹¹⁰² Wimsatt and Beardsley, *The Verbal Icon*, pp. 21-39.

Relevantly, al-Khāl rejected Art for Art's Sake for it limited the work of literature to pleasure and beauty of form, and denied its ability to produce knowledge, which was restricted to science.¹¹⁰³ Furthermore, while being admired with the Romantic view that literary knowledge is based on imagination and intuition, al-Khāl denied its attempt to focus on personal emotions and meanings without considering the role of language in this poetic knowledge.¹¹⁰⁴

In conclusion, al-Khāl stated that there should be a fifth attitude emanating from the Romantic view, adding to it the important role of language in creating literature. "Thus," he added, "the poem becomes a production of imagination that does not function outside of language."¹¹⁰⁵ As is obvious, the poetic meaning in al-Khāl's discussion cannot be identified outside of the poetic structure; it exists in the poem and cannot be repeated. It is an experience seen with its objective features inside the poem. Therefore, the meaning of a poem is non-paraphraseable. Al-Khāl argued that "the claim that the poem is translatable to another language without losing a major part of its existence is incorrect, as to the claim that the poem's content can be analysed or rephrased in prose without losing a considerable part of its value."¹¹⁰⁶ Likewise, al-Khāl's argument about the consistency of literature outside of language and imagination calls to mind Tate's argument that "the poet's advantage" stems from two sources: imagination which enables him/her to reach the "inner field of experience" and another "resource which was his peculiar and heredity right-figurative language and the power of rhetoric."¹¹⁰⁷

The same idea of the superiority of literary knowledge appeared in a few other essays in *Shi'r*. Rineh Ḥabashī's emphasis on the superiority of literary knowledge over that of science is an important instance because he was expressing the point of view of Symbolism towards the matter. However, his essay is consistent with the New Critics' ideas. He stressed the superiority of literature as a genre of speech, the ability of poetry to discover the

¹¹⁰³ Al-Khāl, "Mafhūm al-qaṣīda", pp. 88-89.

¹¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 89.

¹¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 89.

¹¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 84.

¹¹⁰⁷ Tate, *Collection of Four Decades*, p. 17.

relationships between different things, the indirect way of expression in literature, literary unity and non-paraphraseability of a literary text.¹¹⁰⁸ Another important example is Mājīd Fakhrī's essay "Māddat al-shi'r" (the material of poetry), in which he compared poetry on the one side and philosophy and science on the other side. Fakhrī's ideas also are identical to those of al-Khāl and the New Critics. He argued that work on poetic material is more difficult than on that of science and philosophy because the latter have clearly identified logic and method, while poetry cannot be restricted or clearly identified. He added that poetry does not use abstraction like science and philosophy and this enables it to create visions and penetrate beyond superficial phenomena into the depth of human insights. Thus poetic knowledge is superior to science and philosophy.¹¹⁰⁹ Furthermore, other *Shi'r* critics, such as Khālida Sa'īd, occasionally mentioned the idea of the superiority of literary knowledge to scientific and philosophic knowledge.¹¹¹⁰

The second feature of literary knowledge as it appears in al-Khāl's statement is that it relies not on practical or scientific logic, rather on the "spontaneity of vital language" and on "vision."¹¹¹¹ This calls to mind the Romantic view of literature whose sources of literary knowledge are spontaneous language, emotions, dreams and the imagination. Al-Khāl explicitly stressed "imagination" and "intuition" as the source of literary knowledge.¹¹¹² He consistently described literary knowledge as "a discovery by intuition and imagination, not by aware reason."¹¹¹³ Elsewhere al-Khāl stated "art can be known by intuition and genuine imagination, not by reason and contemplation."¹¹¹⁴ Importantly, al-Khāl's usage of imagination, intuition or the spontaneity of language is too general as he did not discuss their meanings or features (apart from the issue of colloquial and standard language which he deemed part of spontaneity). However, keeping in mind al-Khāl's stress on the role of consciousness in composing poetry, the stress on imagination and intuition in al-Khāl's above

¹¹⁰⁸ Ḥabashī, "Nazarāt fī al-shi'r", pp. 90-92.

¹¹⁰⁹ Fakhrī, "Mādat al-shi'r", pp. 86-87.

¹¹¹⁰ Sa'īd, "al-Shi'r fī ma'rakat al-wujūd", pp. 93-94.

¹¹¹¹ Al-Khāl, "Mafhūm al-qaṣīda", p. 86.

¹¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 87.

¹¹¹³ The Editorial Board, "Akhhār wa qaḍāyā", *Shi'r* (num. 27, Summer 1963), p. 117.

¹¹¹⁴ Al-Khāl, "Bayn al-mithāl wa al-wāqi'", p. 7.

statements highlighted the role of unconsciousness in literary composition as discussed in the last chapter. This is the exact view of the New Critics, particularly Eliot, about the source of literary conception and knowledge. Eliot's usage of the Romantic imagination appeared in an article by Stephen Spender titled "Imagination and individuality", which was translated into Arabic in *Majallat Adab* without identifying the translator.¹¹¹⁵ Spender suggested that while Eliot rejected Romantic subjectivity and spontaneous emotion, he espoused the Romantic view of imagination. Eliot combined, in his view of literary composition, consciousness and subjective awareness of the use of dreams and ambiguous inspiration.¹¹¹⁶ Spender added that by doing this, Eliot could combine consciousness in writing, which is an essential aspect of modern style, and the beauty and richness of language.¹¹¹⁷ The same idea appeared in the work of many other New Critics, including those who emphasised the role of consciousness and precise structure of a literary work. While Wimsatt and Beardsley characterised poetic works as verbal icons, they argued that the source of poetry is "a sort of genius and inspiration."¹¹¹⁸ Tate viewed "the poet's advantage" over the scientist as the ability to approach the "inner field of experience denied by the scientist" along with the use of figurative language and rhetoric.¹¹¹⁹

Importantly, imagination and intuition became more important in al-Khāl's argument when viewing them as the mysterious way that enables poetry to discover the balance in the being. This balance, al-Khāl contended, stems from "the mysterious secret" *al-sirr al-majhūl* "which poetry uses as incomprehensible power."¹¹²⁰ In *al-Ḥadātha fī al-shiʿr*, al-Khāl illustrated that "the unique spontaneous function of poetry is to go beyond contradictory, confusing and ambiguous phenomena, and to discover, by using intuition and vision, the real being that is full of balance, harmony and meaning."¹¹²¹ But al-Khāl did not discuss the impact of this intuition on the process of reading poetry and on the kind of influences poetry

¹¹¹⁵ Sīfīn Sbindar, "al-Mukhayila wa al-fard", *Adab* (vol. 1, num. 3, Summer 1962).

¹¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

¹¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

¹¹¹⁸ Wimsatt and Beardsley, *The Verbal Icon*, p. 7.

¹¹¹⁹ Tate, *Collections of Four Decades*, p. 17.

¹¹²⁰ Al-Khāl, "Fī māhiyyat al-shiʿr", p. 4.

¹¹²¹ Al-Khāl, *al-Ḥadātha.*, p. 14.

imposes on the reader. This conception dominated *Shiʿr* critics’ argument, viewing the source of poetic power as a mysterious or mythical one by which poetry finds out the harmonious relationships of the elements of being. Also, *Shiʿr* critics used the idea of mysterious power to justify their view of the superiority of poetry over science. Rineh Ḥabashī characterised poetry as having mythical power through which it points to phenomena that science cannot figure out. Poetry, he illustrated, deals with “what is visible and invisible” including feelings, emotions and human impulses which are not of interest to science.¹¹²² In another place, Ḥabashī pointed out that poetry can discover the unity of being and of human awareness.¹¹²³ He added that science cannot attain this and it does not go beyond the surface of the world as it has to deal with concrete provable things.¹¹²⁴ Jabrā labelled the logic of poetry as “the complex logic of intuition” *manṭiq al-ḥads al-muʿaqqad* “which cannot be justified, it is not the rational logic.”¹¹²⁵ Similarly, Mājīd Fakhrī argued that poetry goes from the concrete being to the world of inspiration *ʿālam al-ghayb* and thus can clarify the hidden features, beauty and meanings of the being, which “we cannot see because of our weak eyes, insight and awareness... thus poetry is a kind of penetrating vision.”¹¹²⁶ In his discussion of Adūnīs’s *Awraq fi al-rīḥ*, Mājīd Fakhrī emphasised the same ideas, depicting poetic knowledge as that of “madness and genius.” Poetry, for Fakhrī, completes the insufficiency of the material world through imagination and insight *al-baṣīra*.¹¹²⁷

The third difference between literary and scientific knowledge in al-Khāl’s statement is the duplicity of literary meaning. Al-Khāl pointed out that literary language suggests “multiple meanings.” This multiplicity or variety was viewed by *Shiʿr* critics as richness of literary meaning. While describing literary knowledge as ambiguous and multiple, Khālida Saʿīd stated that this variety of meaning is a sign of literary richness. She argued that this

¹¹²² Ḥabashī, “al-Shiʿr fī maʿrakat al-wujūd”, pp. 88-90.

¹¹²³ Ḥabashī, “Nazarāt fī al-shiʿr”, pp. 90-91.

¹¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 90-91.

¹¹²⁵ Jabrā, “al-Tajruba fī biyūt al-ʿankabūt”, pp. 86.

¹¹²⁶ Fakhrī, “Māddat al-shiʿr”, pp. 87-89.

¹¹²⁷ Fakhrī, “*Awraq fi al-rīḥ* li Adūnīs”, p. 72.

makes the poetic meaning resist being melted away with repetition of reading.¹¹²⁸ Ḥabashī stated that poets themselves cannot determine the meaning of their works and they do not precisely know the meaning of their words and images. This is due to the nature of literary meaning which is ambiguous and undetermined.¹¹²⁹

This is the exact conception of the New Critics who stressed the variety of literary meaning. Eliot pointed out that a poem might mean various things to different readers and “all of these meanings may be different from what the author thought he meant.”¹¹³⁰ Similarly, Tate argued that literary meaning is not a definite or a determined idea, rather it is a number of potential meanings that might be suggested through the interaction of the poetic elements.¹¹³¹ On the contrary, Tate added, science “demands an exact one-to-one relevance of language to the objects and the events to which it refers. In this relevance lies the meaning of all terms and propositions in so far as they are used for the purpose of giving us valid knowledge...”¹¹³² As it is able to produce multiple meanings, literary knowledge is richer than science as it has “several levels of significance.”¹¹³³ After referring to the variety of literary meaning, Brooks argued that the question “what does the poem communicate? is badly asked.”¹¹³⁴ He illustrated that it is incorrect to say that the poem does not communicate. It is “precisely the contrary. The poem communicates so much and communicates it so richly and with such delicate qualifications that the thing communicated is mauled and distorted if we attempt to convey it by any vehicle less subtle than that of the poem itself.”¹¹³⁵

Finally, the role of language in determining the nature of literary knowledge is discussed in the following section.

¹¹²⁸ Saʿīd, “al-Shiʿr fī maʿrakat al-wujūd”, pp. 93-94.

¹¹²⁹ Ḥabashī, “Nazarāt fī al-shiʿr”, p. 91.

¹¹³⁰ Eliot, *On Poetry and Poets*, p. 30.

¹¹³¹ Tate, *Collected Essays*, p. 21.

¹¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 21.

¹¹³³ Wellek, *A History Modern Criticism*, vol. 5, p. 181.

¹¹³⁴ Brooks, *The Well Wrought Urn*, p. 58.

¹¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

V. Literary Language

The issue of language in al-Khāl's statement seemed to be essential for determining the nature of literary knowledge. This literary knowledge was based on "spontaneity of vital language" which "promoted poetry to the level of vision." Language plays an essential part in the concept of literary unity as this unity consists of form or language as well as content. Additionally, the lack of concern toward the role of language was the basis on which al-Khāl disapproved of Romanticism. He argued that there should be a new attitude toward literature, simultaneously adding to the Romantic concerns about literature both the role of imagination and language. In this view, "the poem becomes a production of imagination that does not function outside of language." As previously mentioned, literary language is what qualifies a literary work to hold various and non-paraphraseable meanings.

Despite the importance of language for these many issues in al-Khāl's critical writing, he mostly confined his concerns about it to the colloquial issue and briefly pointed to a few matters which were based on New Criticism. One of the main issues to which al-Khāl pointed was the differentiation between the function of language in poetry and in prose. He argued that poetry consists of words which have their uses in everyday life. But poetry widens these uses and creates new dimensions and meanings to them. Hence, al-Khāl added, poetry renews and enriches language; otherwise it "withers and dies. Therefore, poetry is language's water of life (الشعر ماء حياة اللغة). The issue of language concerns not only the poetic structure, but also the poetic meaning."¹¹³⁶ He pointed out that poetic language does not suggest directly and clearly like prose language, rather it indicates its meaning implicitly. Thus "it is intensive and complex, it evades expressing abstract ideas."¹¹³⁷

Clearly, al-Khāl's differentiation between prose and poetic language was insufficient and incomprehensive. Its main idea, which is that literary language functions differently from everyday language as it suggests its meaning indirectly and creates new dimensions to it, was too general. Many questions related to literary and everyday language were left unanswered.

¹¹³⁶ Al-Khāl, "Mafhūm al-qaṣīda", p. 84.

¹¹³⁷ Ibid., p. 84.

Those included: how do everyday and literary language-signs function as signs? What is the role of context? How should literary and everyday signs be comprehended? What is the impact of the usual usages of a word on its work in poetry? What is the influence of previous usages of a word by other poets on its new poetic context? Additionally, al-Khāl's above argument is consistent with the works of the New Critics who paid a great deal of attention to the matter of language and to the difference between everyday and literary language in particular. Brooks argued that language in its usual usage has words and meaning with constant relationships. "But the word, as the poet uses it," Brooks added, "has to be conceived of, not as a discrete article of meaning, but as a potential of meaning, a nexus or cluster of meanings."¹¹³⁸

Additionally, al-Khāl's differentiation between literary and scientific language is consistent with I. A. Richards whose influence on the other New Critics was significant.¹¹³⁹ He was occupied with the issue of literary meaning and the psychological influence of poetry, and founded his language theory on aesthetic grounds in his, C.K. Ogden's and James Wood's *The Foundation of Aesthetics*¹¹⁴⁰ and on a linguistic ground in his and C. K. Ogden's *The Meaning of Meaning*.¹¹⁴¹ Richards argued that there are two usages of language:

A statement may be used for the sake of the *reference*, true or false, which it causes. This is the *scientific* use of language. But it may also be used for the sake of the effects in emotion and attitude produced by the reference it occasions. This is the *emotive* use of language.¹¹⁴²

Richards argued that while scientific language aims at producing statements, the poetic influence is emotional use of language, labelling it as "pseudo-statement." The poetic

¹¹³⁸ Brooks, *The Well Wrought Urn*, pp. 171-172.

¹¹³⁹ Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism*, p. 613.

¹¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 613-614.

¹¹⁴¹ Richards referred to many issues in *The Meaning of Meaning* such as truth and beauty pp. 139-159, and words as symbols pp. 209-242.

¹¹⁴² Richards, *Principles of Literary Criticism*, p. 267.

“referential value is nil.”¹¹⁴³ This “pseudo-statement,” Richards illustrated, does not need to be certificated or understood “in the laboratory” as what it needs is “primarily acceptability by some attitude” and this makes mathematicians unable to read poetry.¹¹⁴⁴ The “pseudo-statement” works in a “supposed universe of discourse, a world of make-believe, of imagination, of recognised fictions common to the poet and his reader.”¹¹⁴⁵ A pseudo-statement which is appropriate to the “system of assumptions” in the context is deemed as “poetically true” and one which is not as “poetically false.”¹¹⁴⁶ Richards added that language in poetry orders our impulses without any need for beliefs, stating that “we need not beliefs, and indeed we must have none, if we read *King Lear*.”¹¹⁴⁷ In this way, Richards dissolved the conflict between science and poetry as they possess no common ground and “there were held to utilise radically different aspects of language.”¹¹⁴⁸

While many New Critics like Tate and Ransom criticised Richards’s denial of all truths in poetry and at the same time his description of it as able to save humanity, this differentiation between scientific and literary language dominated New Criticism. Tate, for instance, characterised the usage of everyday language as a method of “mere communication” which aims to transform meanings mechanically and to control human behaviour. Per contra, Tate added, the literary usage of language does not aim at controlling others, but it enlightens us about our humanity; it offers us “self-knowledge” without which modern life is “dehumanised.”¹¹⁴⁹

Additionally, the idea which appears in al-Khāl’s statement that poetry is crucial to the improvement of language fits the New Critics’ thought. While discussing many literary and language issues, Allen Tate stated that the poet “has an immediate responsibility... for the vitality of language... He must discriminate and defend the difference between mass

¹¹⁴³ Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism*, p. 613.

¹¹⁴⁴ Richards, *Science and Poetry*, p. 56.

¹¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

¹¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 57. Richards explained this idea in his *Principles*; if there is a mistake in the reference of the scientific language, it is a major failure, but the correctness of references of literary language is irrelevant. P. 268.

¹¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 60-61.

¹¹⁴⁸ Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism*, p. 626.

¹¹⁴⁹ Tate, *Collected Essays*, pp. 379-381.

communication... and knowledge of man which literature offers us for human participation.”¹¹⁵⁰ Brooks argued that poetry developed aspects of language as poets create, “within limits,” their language while composing their poetry.¹¹⁵¹ Brooks quoted Eliot’s argument that words are “perpetually juxtaposed in new and sudden combination, which occurs in poetry.”¹¹⁵² Eliot and Brooks believed that while science stabilises terms and their meanings’ strict denotations, poetry violates the dictionary meanings of words and they modify each other.¹¹⁵³

Additionally, these two points – the difference between poetic and prose language and the importance of poetry to develop everyday language – were occasionally mentioned by some *Shi‘r* critics without adding new arguments. ‘Iṣām Maḥfūz stated that poets are pioneers of developing language; new phrases appear first in poetry and then usually people choose what they like.¹¹⁵⁴ However, Maḥfūz added, the usages of language by poets are much more complex than those of normal people as they stabilise language usages and turn them to mere frozen terms. This is what the poet resists by creating new dimensions to the language.¹¹⁵⁵ Nādiā Tuwīnī stressed the role of poetry in developing everyday language as poetry widens the uses of language and “defrosts it and cleans its rust. Poetry returns novelty to language and enables it to hold meanings of imagination as well as that of the modern era.”¹¹⁵⁶

Additionally, Rineh Ḥabashī stated that the poet is the one who knows the value of words and language and how to enrich them with new meanings to the point of making them hold a world of experiences.¹¹⁵⁷ Ḥabashī here is pointing to the idea that poets can make everyday words symbols in poetry which widens their normal usages. Khālida Sa‘īd mentioned the same idea arguing that Adūnīs charged usual words with meanings in order to make them symbols and images. She argued that this rich way of using words makes them the

¹¹⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 379-380.

¹¹⁵¹ *The Well Wrought Urn*, pp. 5-6.

¹¹⁵² Ibid., p. 6.

¹¹⁵³ Ibid., pp. 6-7. See the same idea in Wimsatt and Brooks, *Literary Criticism*, p. 641-642.

¹¹⁵⁴ ‘Iṣām Maḥfūz, “Khaṭarāt ḥawla al-tajriba al-ḥadītha”, *Shi‘r* (num. 31-32, Summer-Winter 1964), p. 118.

¹¹⁵⁵ Ibid., pp. 118-119.

¹¹⁵⁶ The Editorial Board, “Qaḍāyā wa akhbār”, *Shi‘r* (num. 42, Spring 1969), pp. 110-111.

¹¹⁵⁷ Ḥabashī, “al-Shi‘r fī ma‘racat al-wujūd”, pp. 92-93.

keys through which the poem can be understood and without grasping them the poem cannot be comprehensible.¹¹⁵⁸ However, she mentioned this very briefly and all she did in this regard was to provide a list of words which she argued became symbols and images. She stated that the words: “mess, sands, night, combustion, darkness, gleam, plant, soil, ash, spring, path, step and song” in Adūnīs’s volume are symbols, carrying images and various implications.¹¹⁵⁹ She did not explain how these words work as symbols and images and how they suggest meaning. Importantly, after he left *Shiʿr* Adūnīs reached the same conclusion and discussed it thoroughly. He illustrated in many books and articles that poetry creates through its context new meanings to usual words and this enables the poet to put their common and direct meanings aside. Importantly, Adūnīs employed in his later works many linguistic sources, such as Ferdinand de Saussure and classical Arabic accounts of linguistics, and discussed various issues related to poetic language matters¹¹⁶⁰ which go beyond the scope of this study.¹¹⁶¹

Another important issue al-Khāl repeatedly mentioned was that modern poetry tends to use simplified language instead of ornamental flourishes, as discussed in the third chapter. Al-Khāl deemed Eliot and Ezra Pound examples of modern poets whose poetic language was simplified and thus close to everyday language. Al-Khāl stated that there should not be any difference between poetic language and everyday language as Eliot and Pound demanded.¹¹⁶² Furthermore, in his review of Muḥammad al-Nuwayhī’s *Qaḍiyyat al-shiʿr al-jadīd*,¹¹⁶³ al-Khāl called for the use of colloquial on the grounds that it is the simplified and thus the modern way of composing poetry as Eliot and Pound did.¹¹⁶⁴ Interestingly, al-Khāl was mixing two issues: the rejection of the use of ornaments in poetry, called for by Eliot among other New Critics, and his own call for using colloquial in poetry and other types of writing.

¹¹⁵⁸ Ṣabrī, "Adūnīs fī *al-Baʿth wa al-ramād*", p. 108.

¹¹⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 108.

¹¹⁶⁰ Zarāqīt, *al-Ḥadātha fī al-naqd al-ʿarabī al-muʿāṣir*, pp. 258-259.

¹¹⁶¹ There are important notes about this in Zarāqīt’s *al-Ḥadātha fī al-naqd al-ʿarabī al-muʿāṣir*, pp. 257-263.

¹¹⁶² Al-Khāl, *al-Ḥadātha fī al-shiʿr*, pp. 90-91.

¹¹⁶³ About this book see pp. 97-98 of this thesis.

¹¹⁶⁴ Al-Khāl, "Naḥwa shakl jadīd li shiʿr ʿarabī jadīd", pp. 124-125.

A glance at Eliot's poetry is enough to see that Eliot's poetry was not written in colloquial. However, al-Khāl seemed to have in his mind the example of English literature which began as a colloquial with the English poet Geoffrey Chaucer (1343-1400). Al-Khāl stated that English literature began with Chaucer and his colloquial poetry, which became the Quran of English literature. He added that as long as "the Arabs do not have a parallel to Chaucer, as long as we do not write in everyday language, we do not have literature."¹¹⁶⁵ In this comparison of Arabic with English, al-Khāl did not take into account any differences between the two languages and their historical developments. Later, Adūnīs argued that it would not be completely right to judge the Arabic language according to English, and that even if a great English poet like Eliot used some aspects of his language that does not necessarily mean they are applicable to Arabic. Adūnīs added that every language has its own history, texts and poetic features which play a vital role in forming its poetic apporportion.¹¹⁶⁶ Additionally, al-Khāl disregarded Eliot's statement in al-Nuwayhī's book that poets are not restricted to literal imitation of ways of speech used by the people surrounding them, but what poets find in their social atmosphere is the rough and raw material of which poetry should be made.¹¹⁶⁷ This statement does not mean the use of colloquial, but rather the people's speech with its meanings and suggestions is the material of poetry which needs to be developed. Additionally, al-Khāl argued that al-Nuwayhī was about to call for the use of colloquial in his book, but something prevented him; he "stopped in front of the wall of language."¹¹⁶⁸ The real reason why al-Nuwayhī did not call for the use of colloquial was that his study's scope and aim was simply different; it was to highlight the similarities between poetic rhythmic patterns and the rhythm of speech in Arabic in order to show that poetic rhythms reflect tones used in language and life.

Al-Khāl was, in fact, obsessed with the idea of colloquial and justified every matter related to Arabic poetry in terms of the use of colloquial instead of standard Arabic in

¹¹⁶⁵ Al-Khāl, "Naḥwa adab ʿarabī Ḥadīth", p. 8.

¹¹⁶⁶ Adūnīs, *Siyāsāt al-shiʿr* (Beirut: Dār al-Ādāb, 1985), p. 131.

¹¹⁶⁷ Al-Nuwayhī, *Qaḍīyyat al-shiʿr al-ḥadīth.*, p. 22.

¹¹⁶⁸ Al-Khāl, "Naḥwa shakl jadīd li shiʿr ʿarabī jadīd", pp. 124.

poetry.¹¹⁶⁹ Otared Haidar labels al-Khāl's stress on the issue of language as an attempt to modernise it.¹¹⁷⁰ However, she does not discuss the nature of this modernisation or any of its implications, nor why this modernisation caused strong reactions not only from outsiders of the magazine but also from many of its members whom Haidar deems the pioneers of modernity and the prose poem, such as Adūnīs and Muḥammad al-Māghūt. Yet, it was a controversial issue, for al-Khāl's thoughts pertaining to colloquial Arabic dominated *Shi'r* in general and those who disagreed with it had to leave the magazine as discussed in the first chapter. Oddly, this was in a time when al-Khāl himself was writing his own poetry in standard Arabic.¹¹⁷¹ Of equal importance, al-Khāl at that time translated into standard Arabic many poems written in English, including a few by Eliot,¹¹⁷² and other prose books.¹¹⁷³ There appears to be no poetic justification given for al-Khāl's insistence on replacing standard Arabic with the colloquial. Al-Khāl did not show any great poetic example composed in the colloquial to justify his attitude poetically. Even Mīshāl Ṭrād's colloquial poem 'Kisba' did not represent what al-Khāl was describing. Meaningfully, al-Khāl's article on that poem criticised it for being merely descriptive and filled with abstract feelings and meanings.¹¹⁷⁴

Relevantly, al-Khāl repeatedly tried to differentiate his call for the use of colloquial language from that of the Lebanese poet Sa'īd 'Aql. He deemed 'Aql's attempt to use the colloquial as unsuccessful since "it was built on a misunderstanding of the essence of colloquial language."¹¹⁷⁵ In an interview with Munīr al-'Ikīsh many years after the

¹¹⁶⁹ Even non-poetic issues were explained as a result of the use of standard Arabic. The Editorial Board quoted the Lebanese Edwārd Ṣa'b's statement that the reason behind the military defeat of the Arabs in the war of 1967 was the use of standard Arabic. The solution to the weakness of the Arabs was, according to Ṣa'b, to adopt a simplified direct language that is able to express modern thought rationally and scientifically. The Editorial Board, "Qaḍāyā wa akhbār", *Shi'r* (num. 35, Summer 1967), p. 145.

¹¹⁷⁰ Otared, *The Prose Poem*, p. 85.

¹¹⁷¹ Later, al-Khāl published two poetry books in colloquial which were described by Jihād Fāḍil as the worst kind of poetry al-Khāl ever wrote. Jihād Fāḍil, *al-Adab al-ḥadīth fī Lubnān* (Beirut: Dār al-rayyis li al-kutub wa al-nashr, 1996), pp. 318-319.

¹¹⁷² See Dīwān al-shi'r al-amarīkī, (Beirut: Dār Majallat *Shi'r*, 19558); Rūbart Frūst, *Qaṣā'id mukhtāra*, (Beirut: Dār Majallat *Shi'r*, 1962).

¹¹⁷³ For example his translation of Abraham Lincoln biography: *Ibrāhīm Lankin – Min al-kūkh ilā al-bayt al-abayd*, (Beirut: Dār Majallat *Shi'r*, 1959); *al-Ṭariq nahwa al-gharb – Qissa fī al-buṭūla wa al-ḥub wa al-shajā'a* (Beirut: Dār al-thaqāfa, 1960); Jubrān's *al-Nabī*, (Beirut: Dār al-nahār, 1968).

¹¹⁷⁴ Al-Khāl, "Dūlāb li Mīshāl Ṭrād", pp. 109-110.

¹¹⁷⁵ Al-Khāl, "Naḥwa adab 'arabī ḥadīth", p. 12.

disappearance of *Shiʿr*, al-Khāl explained the difference between his and ʿAql’s understandings of the colloquial. He stated that ʿAql’s call for using colloquial required using phonetic writing in a way that the *tā’ marbūʿa* in a word like *muʿallimah* should be written as *yā’ muʿallimī.* Al-Khāl added that in contrast to ʿAql, he proposed to get rid of grammatical vowels *ḥarakāt al-iʿrāb*, a number of pronouns, feminine *nūn nūn al-niswa* and dual pronouns, to replace all relative pronouns *al-asmā’ al-mawṣūla* with the spoken one ‘illī’, to replace all demonstrative pronouns *asmā’ al-ishāra* with only one *hā*, “...etc.”¹¹⁷⁶ Additionally, al-Khāl added that there are various territories in the Arab world with different spoken Arabic dialects and, if every colloquial dialect is used in writing and developed, each would have its own characters and unique features.¹¹⁷⁷ Al-Khāl’s statement shows that he supported a strong form of colloquial, not very different than ʿAql’s ideas. The points that he mentions do not simplify (al-Khāl kept calling the replacement of standard language with the colloquial as simplification)¹¹⁷⁸ standard Arabic but change a great deal of its features. Moreover, al-Khāl suggested changes would cause problems in communication. For example the particle *hā* cannot clearly show the various meanings of all demonstrative pronouns in Arabic, even for those who used colloquial Arabic. These pronouns point to the close, far, singular, plural, feminine and masculine referred person or thing. There are many of these pronouns because of the various meanings they hold and even if al-Khāl had suggested the use of many colloquial alternatives, this development would not make Arabic any easier. Additionally, while al-Khāl stated that the various colloquial Arabic dialects would grow and have their own characteristics, he did not provide solutions to problems that would occur after having developed colloquial to different languages. For instance, in which language would the Arabs communicate? How would the Arabs read the Arab heritage of literature, language, philosophy...etc?

¹¹⁷⁶ Munīr al-ʿIkīsh, *Asʿilat al-shiʿr* (Beirut: al-Muʿassasa al-ʿarabiyya li al-dirāsāt wa al-nashr, 1979), p. 149.

¹¹⁷⁷ Ibid., pp. 149-150.

¹¹⁷⁸ Al-Khāl, “Naḥwa adab ʿarabī ḥadīth”, p. 9.

In conclusion, this chapter confirms the contention of the third chapter that *Shi'ar* critics' project relied heavily on New Criticism. However, some ideas related to function of literature in *Shi'ar* were consistent with al-Khāl's cultural background such as his religious concept of human being and his rejection of both commitment in literature and formalism, along with his understanding of human unity and the unity of literature. Furthermore, it is clear that al-Khāl's literary opinions dominated *Shi'ar*'s discourse to the point that one can take the ideas mentioned in his writing as representative of the entire magazine. However, al-Khāl's and other *Shi'ar* critics', apart from Jabrā's and to less extent Khālida Sa'īd's, arguments about the function of literature were telegraphic and incomprehensive. There are many questions left unanswered which made *Shi'ar*'s arguments appear to be a simplified version of the New Critics' ideas. Contrary to the New Critics who paid a great deal of attention on reading poetry through "close reading," *Shi'ar* critics did not clearly explain the processes of reading poetry and there was a lack of textual analysis of poetry, with the exception of Jabrā and Sa'īd. Similarly, there was a lack of linguistic explanation with regard to *Shi'ar*'s differentiation between poetic and scientific language. Regarding the issue of the colloquial, al-Khāl's approach to this matter shows signs of confusion and a gap between his critical theory and its application that dominated the magazine. Neither al-Khāl nor others provided a poetic explanation for the stress on the issue of colloquial, particularly since al-Khāl himself, among many others, was writing his own poetry, and translating others' poetry from English, in *Shi'ar*, into standard Arabic. The notion that the lack of the ability to write standard Arabic hurt the pace of modern poetic development was not justified by poetic concrete examples.

Conclusion

This thesis has analysed the usage of the New Critics' concepts in the writings of a wide range of Arab critics from across the Arab world, including all critics of *Majallat Shi^cr* and its second branch *Adab*. The first chapter explored the history of *Majallat Shi^cr* and discussed many literary and cultural issues that influenced the discourse of the magazine. The second chapter discussed the New Critical school in the West, distinguishing it from other formalist schools, and examining its appearance and uses in modern Arabic criticism. The third chapter analysed the uses of the New Critical ideas related to the concept of poetry in *Majallat Shi^cr* and *Adab*. The fourth chapter examined the use by *Shi^cr*'s writers of the New Critics' view regarding the importance of literature.

The use of Western literary and critical schools in modern Arabic criticism has highlighted the predominance of Western culture during and since the colonial era, a phenomenon that goes beyond the literary field to a wider historical context. There has been a lack of reliance both on classical Arabic critical accounts and on Arabic literature to promote new literary theories. Many critics undermined classical Arabic accounts, including Qusṭākī al-Ḥimṣī and, later, many critics of *Shi^cr*. Even Adūnīs, who admitted the importance of classical Arabic literary thought, never employed that thought practically. Other critics, like Muḥammad Zakī al-^cAshmāwī, tried to show that modern critical accounts of the West are similar to the classical critical accounts of Arabic. This led several critics to judge classical accounts according to Western theories, such as al-^cAshmāwī's criticism of al-Jurjānī for not using linguistic methods as completely as modern critics and linguists do. This method of approaching classical thought implies the centralisation of Western accounts as those critics looked for parallel notions to those of the West, instead of promoting the use and development of classical accounts or developing new literary concepts.

The reasons behind the use of New Criticism by Arab critics since 1950s are varied. Some critics aimed at exploring the modern poetic movement of *Shi^cr al-taf^cīla* and its new poetic features which required innovative critical methods. Others were motivated by their

familiarity with Western literary and critical thought, such as Rashād Rushdī and his students. The latter group confined themselves exclusively to New Criticism and rarely applied it to Arabic literature. Inversely, the first group of critics partially applied New Criticism, employing it in different forms. While Ihsān °Abbās espoused Imagism and some concepts of the New Critics in his study on al-Bayyātī, he went beyond the principles of the Imagists and the New Critics, focussing on the historical in his study on al-Sayyāb, and concentrating only on subjects of poetry in his later book *Ittijāhāt al-shiʿr al-ʿarabī al-muʿāṣir*. However he at times maintained in the last two books some of the New Critics’ analytical features, such as a reliance solely on the poetic text as with his analysis of al-Sayyāb’s poem *Unshūdat al-maṭar*. Illyās Khūrī provided a more convincing example of using the New Critics’ concepts as he only employed textual analytical techniques similar to the New Critics’ ‘close reading’. Simultaneously, he maintained his Marxist views, deeming literature part of the ideology of a society, without using a literary work as direct propaganda.

Although a few of the New Critics’ works had been translated into Arabic since the early 1960s, the translations did not introduce New Criticism to the Arab audience as a cohesive critical school. This is because those translations relied on the efforts of individual translators and targeted specific works by a few New Critics, primarily those by or about T. S. Eliot. There has been a lack of translation of the educational and analytical books that were of the greatest interest for the New Critics. Additionally, there were a few problems in translations resulting from the lack of effort of some translators. The most common problems pertain to the use of imprecise literary terms and the omission of parts of the translated texts.

Since its inception, *Majallat Shiʿr* announced itself to be open to Western literary thought and not to be driven by politics or ideology. However, the magazine raised many problematic issues that seemed to be ideologically directed. These included the call for the use of colloquial Arabic instead of the standardised form, the disregard of Arab heritage and the welcoming of all Western heritages. While this thesis takes into account the ideologically-based arguments about *Shiʿr*, it analyses the magazine’s discourse, highlighting that it could not provide literary justifications for such issues. The magazine based many of its attitudes on

generalisations and contradictions. While many of *Shi^cr*'s critics, primarily al-Khāl, encouraged the use of colloquial Arabic in order to save Arabic literature from recession, at the same time they were writing their own poetry and translating many literary and non-literary works into standardised Arabic, and they never provided a study to show the features of literature written in colloquial Arabic. Furthermore, Arab heritage was viewed as restrictive for modern poets yet at the same time *Shi^cr* critics, particularly al-Khāl, espoused a conservative view based on the New Critics, and particularly Eliot, that modern literary movements should be developments based on tradition. Hence there appear to be two conceptions of tradition in *Shi^cr*: Western tradition which should be taken into account and Arab tradition which should be disregarded. It is important to note that many *Shi^cr* critics, and primarily al-Khāl whose cultural and literary opinions dominated the magazine, held liberal concepts such as freedom as a basic human condition and the rejection of all kinds of previous norms including traditions. This was different from the conservative values of the New Critics, particularly Eliot, which formed the grounds of their attitude towards tradition. However, *Shi^cr* critics espoused the New Critics' view of tradition which was inconsistent with the magazine's liberal standpoints.

New Criticism was one of the key Western literary schools which shaped the literary project of *Shi^cr*. The two reasons mentioned above are valid for *Shi^cr*'s employment of New Criticism. A critic like Jabrā Ibrāhīm Jabrā was familiar both with Western literary thought, particularly that of New Criticism, and simultaneously he was interested in studying modern Arabic literature. He believed in the theoretical concepts of the New Critics and used them practically in exploring Arabic literature. While he did not develop new theoretical concepts, his practical studies were significant as he was able to show, through the New Critics' method of 'close reading', positive and negative features of many modern poetic works. While Khālida Sa^cīd partially employed New Criticism in a practical manner, she moved on to other Western schools after she left *Shi^cr*, particularly Deconstructive theory and Reader-Response criticism. Another reason that explains the use of New Criticism by *Shi^cr*'s critics was the

influence of, or the fascination with, the New Critic T. S. Eliot as a poet and a critic, a phenomenon which was wider than *Shi^cr* in the Arab world in 1950s and 1960s.

Shi^cr critics relied heavily on the New Critics in the majority of their theoretical writings about modern poetry. This includes many of the New Critics' concepts of poetry and the importance of literature. Most of these concepts were on the level of theory and unsupported by examples from Arabic poetry, with the exception of Jabrā's and Khālida Sa^cīd's works. For instance, although al-Khāl argued that the modern poem is unified, he never gave a concrete poetic example to show this unity. Per contra, he judged many poems by describing parts of them. This made *Shi^cr* critics' discussion of modern poetic phenomena such as language issues and poetic ambiguity appear to be quoted from the New Critics' accounts and not based on Arabic poetry. This resulted in a gap between literary theory and application. For instance, *Shi^cr* critics adopted Eliot's account of poetic ambiguity on the theoretical level, stressing that it is an essential feature of modern poetry. When it comes to the practical level, they did not discuss ambiguous examples from Arabic poetry and how to comprehend them, again except for in the works of Jabrā and Khālida Sa^cīd. Even a study like As^cad Razzūq's *al-Shu^carā' al-tammūziyyūn*, which examined the use of myths in modern poetry, did not discuss the role of myth in poetic ambiguity. This simplified both the issue of poetic ambiguity and the role of myth in modern poetry.

In general, the critical discourse of *Majallat Shi^cr* appeared to be an Arabised version of New Criticism among other Western critical accounts. It was, particularly on the theoretical level, an imitation to such an extent that one cannot find any new critical ideas in al-Khāl's works. For these reasons, I have depicted the relationship of *Shi^cr* critics to the New Critics as not only concerned with the imitation of literary tools and theoretical ideas, but also as a parental paradigm similar to a father-child relationship. *Shi^cr* critics viewed the Western schools as universal concepts and as an ideal example to follow. This method of adaptation prevented these critics from challenging the Western accounts and producing innovative literary and critical concepts based on classical criticism and modern Arabic literature, in

addition to the benefit to be obtained from Western literary schools. In this way, the belief of *Shi'ar* critics' that modern Arabic literary thought should revolve around creativity, while at the same time avoiding the imitation of classical literary critical accounts, was misleading in light of their apparent imitation of New Critical ideas.

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