

Chilean Poetry: Its Issues and Artistic Characteristics in Abdullah Hammadi's Work: "Pablo Neruda" as a Model

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Abstract:

Critical experiences are numerous, and critics' approaches vary from one period and country to another. Yet they share one central aim: to illuminate obscure areas and search for the sources of beauty within the literary text. Every critical experience is a distinct case that calls for study, scrutiny, and close examination from within. Such inquiry seeks to identify what distinguishes it and what it has contributed to modern and contemporary criticism. Whoever commits words to writing both sets a target and becomes a target of scrutiny. This paper therefore sheds light on Abdullah Hammadi's experience, which extends across poetry, criticism, and history. He is regarded in the Arab world as a specialist in Hispano-American studies, as demonstrated by his various works.

Abdullah Hammadi read contemporary poetry and approached the Chilean poet Pablo Neruda in an attempt to answer several questions. The most important concern the components of Neruda's poetic discourse and the sources and influences that made his poetry at times marked by strangeness and Surrealism, and at other times by Realism. The study also considers the literary current to which Neruda actually belonged. As for Abdullah Hammadi, he was both poet and scholar. He established a complete realm in the world of writing that gained broad recognition, a realm in which civilizations interacted, cultures coexisted, genres diversified, and literary forms harmonized. His early contact with Spanish and Latin American literature enabled this breadth.

Keywords: Chilean poetry; Pablo Neruda; Abdullah Hammadi; concept of contemporary poetry; Algerian criticism; characteristics of Chilean poetry.

Introduction:

Most scholars agree that the twentieth century marked a major expansion in critical activity. Rene Wellek was among those who drew attention to this development. He argued that the true age of criticism is usually associated with the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Yet, in his view, the twentieth century deserved this designation even more. It produced not only an abundance of critical writing but also a new level of critical self-awareness¹. Its final decades also brought new critical methods.

Literature is the common object of these methodological approaches. Despite their differences, they all address literature, or the literary work in general. Poetry has occupied a particularly central place because criticism grew and flourished within it more than in other fields. Over time, criticism expanded to include prose and other arts.

The true literary critic now questions the text under study. The critic moves through it like an explorer following traces with a clear method². There is a major difference between writing merely for

pleasure and seeking to persuade an audience. The central point is that the speaker is also a receiver and is therefore exposed to judgment. Creative writing, especially poetry, differs greatly from critical practice^{*1}. Criticism is both an intellectual and an aesthetic activity. Its proper aim is construction rather than destruction, and refinement rather than trivialization^{*2}. It operates through analysis, interpretation, and evaluation³. These functions reveal the highest purpose of criticism: to explore the deeper layers of the literary work.

The figure of the writer-poet-critic is old in both Arabic and Western literatures. In Arabic literature, it appeared among several pre-Islamic poets^{*3}, including Zuhayr ibn Abi Sulma and al-Hutay'a. Such poets revised their poems for an entire year. This revision can be regarded as a form of self-criticism applied to their own poetic production in order to refine and improve it⁴. It also helped them face the judges at the Ukaz market and gave their poems a wider reach.

These poets made great efforts to refine their poems at the levels of language, imagination, and music. Students of Arabic literary history also know that many early critical practices were associated with poets such as al-Khansa, al-Nabigha al-Dhubyani, Jarir, and al-Farazdaq. The Abbasid period may have been the era in which poets began to author critical books, as in the case of Ibn al-Mu'tazz^(3*). This phenomenon continued in later periods^{*4}. In the modern era, it appeared among the leading figures of the Diwan School^{*5}, as well as in the work of Taha Hussein, Mikhail Naimy, and others.

To trace this phenomenon in Western literature, one must return to Greek literature and Aristotle's critical writing^{*6}. In Arabic literature, the writer-poet-critic also continued into the Renaissance period^{*7}. Rene Wellek related its modern spread to writers' reactions against pure art and against the pure criticism that emerged in the early twentieth century. Their implicit position^{*8} was that sensory life and intellectual life should be reconciled in order to produce distinctive artistic criticism. Such criticism can move smoothly and evenly between the language of emotion and the language of reason⁵. Similar combinations of poetry and criticism appeared in Arabic literature, where several prominent names^{*9} successfully joined the two practices.

The question, then, is how far these writers succeeded in combining the two domains. Another question concerns the inner conflict that may arise in every creative writer who is also a critic. Can this conflict elevate poetic creation when the writer submits it to critical judgment? The study addresses these questions by approaching the world of the poet-critic Youssef Oughlissi. Genuine poetic creation can generate effective criticism, and effective criticism can intensify and develop the creative process according to precise standards.

In some contexts, criticism may justify its absence or its change of direction by pointing to the scarcity of poetic creativity. Poetry may also experience an urgent need to move beyond familiar forms and to follow an old-new mechanism that, according to critics, can reveal what other critical perspectives fail to show. When poetry weakens in a certain environment, criticism is quickly blamed and asked to assume full responsibility. This contains a measure of truth⁶, according to some views. Others, however, place the greater responsibility on poetic creativity itself. Poetry must preserve its priority within the dynamic conditions that govern criticism and poetic creation. Alongside Youssef Oughlissi, several leading Algerian writers also combined critical practice with creative writing, including Abu al-Qasim Saadallah and Mohamed Nasser.

The paths of literary activity changed, and critical taste had to rise above the arbitrary, spontaneous, and fragmentary judgments that marked its early stages. Criticism developed into a craft and then into an independent specialization. It became more scientific and objective. It acquired schools, theories, methods, and trends, as well as a wide range of sources and approaches.

Literary life passes through stages and roles that change according to new circumstances. Positions on the stage of literary creation also shift. Some arts move into the light, while others retreat into the shadows. Creative writing, especially poetry, has come to present itself with greater boldness. Every poem has its own artistic features, and these features reflect the poet's personality. To identify them, the reader turns to criticism, which has been defined as 'the proper assessment of the literary text and the determination of its literary value and rank'⁷. This gives the critic an almost self-evident task: deepening the reader's response to poetry, or, more precisely, broadening and clarifying that response. This is achieved through 'artistic communication between the poem and the recipient, that is, between the poet and the reader'. The intended reader sees in the whispered poetic word an aesthetic world that deepens the perception of surrounding nature. At that point, abstract ideas imposed by the critic on the poem lose their value⁸. Criticism must also answer several fundamental questions. What gives value to our experience of reading a poem? What makes one poem better than another? Why do we consider one judgment about an artistic work stronger than other judgments? These are central questions that criticism must address.

Those concerned with critical reading distinguish between two forms of criticism. 'No literary attempt undertaken by a critic falls outside one of them.' The first is interpretive criticism. It draws on cultural knowledge insofar as that knowledge clarifies the work. The second is evaluative criticism. It rests on artistic criteria that earlier critics explored extensively, especially in works of rhetoric. Great writers had already identified prominent artistic qualities, and these became the basis of rules that critics broadly accepted⁹. Such criteria provide relatively stable standards for reading literature, although they vary according to the form and content of the work. The rise of one literary phenomenon and the decline of another therefore require close examination. The aim is to reach a sound interpretive reading that enhances the literary work without diminishing it.

To perform its interpretive and evaluative functions, criticism needs a method. A method is 'the path or way followed step by step in order to reach a specific objective'¹⁰. It may also be defined as 'a set of coordinated instrumental steps or procedures that are internally consistent and applied to a particular field of knowledge'¹¹. The integration of these procedures gives critical reading a comprehensive perspective. It also keeps criticism away from superficiality and brings the reader closer to the deeper meaning of the literary work.

Critical experiences are numerous, and critical voices differ across periods and countries. Yet they share one aim: to illuminate obscure areas and search for the sources of beauty within the literary text. Each critical experience is a distinct case that deserves study, scrutiny, and internal exploration. The purpose is to identify what distinguishes it and what it has added to Arab criticism. Anyone who writes criticism both targets a text and becomes a target of criticism¹². For this reason, this paper focuses on Abdullah Hammadi's experience, which extends across poetry, criticism, and history. He is considered one of the Arab specialists in Hispano-American studies, as shown by works such as:

Gabriel Garcia Marquez: A Pioneer of Magical Realism; An Introduction to Contemporary Spanish Poetry; The Moriscos and the Inquisition in al-Andalus; Poetry in the Kingdom of Granada (1232-1492), originally a doctoral dissertation; The Symbol of al-Andalus in Contemporary Spanish Poetry and Contemporary Arabic Poetry: A Comparative Study; al-Andalus Between Dream and Reality; The Kidnapping Incident of the Novelist Gabriel Garcia Marquez; and his work on the Chilean poet Pablo Neruda, which forms the basis of this discussion of the poet and his concept of poetry.

• **Abdullah Hammadi Between Poetry and Criticism:**

In his book *Pablo Neruda, Poet of Chile: A Critical Study*, Abdullah Hammadi attempts to answer several questions. What are the components of Pablo Neruda's poetic discourse? What sources and influences shaped a poetic vision that gave Neruda's poetry its strangeness and Surrealism at certain moments, and a Realism deeply engaged with the suffering of others at other moments? To which literary movement did Pablo Neruda truly belong? What were the origins and starting points of the avant-garde of which Neruda's poetry formed one part?

Those who ask whether Abdullah Hammadi was primarily a scholar or primarily a poet receive an answer from Youssef Oughlissi¹³. What matters, he states, is that Hammadi was both poet and scholar. He established a complete 'state' in the world of writing. This state received broad recognition in the literary world over nearly fifty years¹⁴. Oughlissi therefore describes a space he calls the 'State of Abdullah Hammadi'. In it, civilizations interact, cultures coexist, genres diversify, and literary forms harmonize. It is a broad space in which Hammadi appears as both poet and multicultural scholar.

Readers of Abdullah Hammadi's poetic and critical works will find a new perspective on Arabic poetry, and perhaps on contemporary poetry more broadly. His work shows that he was not isolated from cultural influence. Many scholars attribute his standing to his early contact with Spanish and Latin American literature through reading, study, and intellectual influence. He was an academic researcher deeply immersed in modern and contemporary literature. With the aim of giving Abdullah Hammadi his due, Ahmed Baqqar selected four poetry collections for a stylistic study: *Migration to the Cities of the South*, *Love Takes Sides*, *O Layla*, *Gypsy Poems*, and *The Isthmus and the Knife*. He used this corpus to examine Hammadi's linguistic reality, his distinctive use of language, and his important contribution to free verse¹⁵ in Arabic poetry in general and Algerian poetry in particular. Hammadi belonged to the first generation that wrote in this form after an earlier experience with classical vertical poetry. His work therefore combines renewal with balanced musical rhythm.

• **The Life of the Poet Pablo Neruda:**

Before examining Abdullah Hammadi's critical views on Pablo Neruda's work, this paper notes an observation made by Youssef Oughlissi in *Contemporary Algerian Criticism*. Oughlissi discusses the method used in Hammadi's studies, which Hammadi does not explicitly identify in his book. He argues that Hammadi's study moves some distance away from literary criticism and comes closer to historical writing and literary history. This point cannot be ignored, but it is not necessarily a weakness. The nature of the material or the subject often determines the appropriate method. This is apparent from the beginning of the book. Hammadi does not name his method in the study of Neruda's life. Instead, he states: 'I do not want to explain how I approached this subject. Its presence imposed itself on me, and its story has its own story. Thus, throughout these pages, you will find me carried along by compliance and surrender'¹⁶. Even so, the method remains close to that established by Sainte-Beuve. His critical method

studied the poet through several dimensions, including family background, social and historical situation, culture, opinions, and philosophy.

The opening chapter of Pablo Neruda: The Greatest Poet of Chile is primarily historical. It deals with the poet's life and upbringing in a creative and poetic language that differs somewhat from the language of criticism. It is elegant prose that draws its spirit from Neruda's own collection *The Captain's Verses*. Hammadi writes that Neruda 'pledged himself to enter the field of war while arrows came at him from every side; to offer his body as a feast to the poor so that it might support their collapsing strength; to ride the horse of the sea from sunrise to sunset; to gather the fruits of immortality; to pray in the temple of forgiveness; to kiss the blazing twilight; to fall into the endless blue of the sky; and to drink deeply from the wind, bearer of anxieties'¹⁷. The passage uses poetic language full of life and force. Hammadi also writes: '...this sailor beneath the sail of immortality, and this farmer who draws bread from the heart of fruit, pledged to his melodious voice and to the lyre of wandering that his melodies would endure even if the grave shattered its strings'¹⁸. Across nearly twenty-eight pages, Hammadi follows Neruda's life from birth to childhood, youth, and decline. Each stage includes poetic passages translated into Arabic and linked to the period in question. The account also records events in Chile and, at times, Spain, including the copper miners' uprising and the movements of students and artists¹⁹. It further mentions many important figures known to Neruda, including Federico Garcia Lorca, Gabriela Mistral, winner of the 1945 Nobel Prize, Miguel Hernandez, Antonio Machado, Manuel Machado, Juan Ramon Jimenez, Leon Felipe, Jorge Guillen, Damaso Alonso, and Luis Cernuda. These figures are presented as part of what was known as the golden generation associated with 1898.

• Pablo Neruda's Poetic Works:

Under the title 'Leaves of Immortality', Hammadi presents Pablo Neruda's poetry chronologically. The sequence consistently reflects a historical and bibliographic approach to the poet's works²⁰. He begins with *Crepusculario* (1923), then *The Enthusiastic Slingshooter*, *Twenty Love Poems and a Song of Despair*, *The Attempt of the Infinite Man* (1926), and *Residence on Earth*, and continues in the same manner. Along the way, he compares Neruda's poetry with that of Walt Whitman, Verlaine, Shelley, Keats, and Tagore. He also traces the literary movements Neruda embraced: Impressionism, Romanticism, Surrealism, and finally Realism after 1954. Hammadi quotes him as saying: 'What he introduced as new were subjects taken from the streets and presented in a new poetic form that had scarcely been attempted before'²¹. Neruda therefore drew subjects from ordinary lived experience and marked them with his own artistic touch. This is where renewal lies.

Hammadi also traces Neruda's collections and plays. He records the year of publication of each work and connects it with the sources that inspired it. For example, the play *Splendor and Death of Joaquin Murieta* grew from 'the idea of a poem, which then expanded until it took the form of a play... and he drew it from a drama by the Japanese writer Noh'²². Hammadi also points to the influence of the German playwright Bertolt Brecht on Neruda's writing.

Hammadi notes that Pablo Neruda sought to give poetry greater expressive power by creating new words such as 'Estravagario' and 'Nixonicidio'²³. These are presented as unfamiliar words in Spanish, although they carry strong semantic suggestions and semiotic signals, whether they appear in collection titles or within poems.

This section suggests that the historical method was appropriate for studying Neruda's poetic corpus. Linking the poet to the historical conditions surrounding his poetic experience helped clarify the element of strangeness that marked his work. That quality can be viewed as a natural extension of the Surrealist movement that reached him from France at the time.

• **The Concept of Poetry in Pablo Neruda:**

When Neruda was asked²⁴ what could be found in his poetry and what characterized it, he replied: 'How can I answer your question? In my books I always deal with the same problem. I always write the same writing'²⁵. He continued: 'Let my loved ones forgive me for this new time in this new year filled with new days, when I find myself with nothing to offer them except my verses, my familiar new verses...'²⁶. He therefore saw his creative work as both new and old at the same time. Hammadi locates part of Neruda's poetic strangeness in this tension. When Neruda was asked about his poetry, he also said: 'I can write about the rose, the beetle, or love. But if a serious event occurs in my country or the dignity of my people is threatened, I use my poetry as a weapon'²⁷. Hammadi sees the field within which Neruda could write as relatively narrow. He even argues that Neruda restricted his poetic horizon. This view is close to that of the critic Jaime Giordano, who saw Neruda's poetry as organized around three elements: the poet's love of the universe, his love of woman, and his love of society. This helps explain Neruda's repeated return to the same theme. Hammadi regards this repetition positively. Each return can carry the subject beyond its earlier form and present it in a way it had not previously assumed²⁸. Repetition and sincerity can generate new meanings and images and gradually drive them deeper. Renewal can therefore arise within the familiar.

Poetry is a noble craft, and for Neruda this craft is rooted in a sincere personal experience. His concept of poetry carries the warmth of an honest revolutionary word. In one section of the prose sequence he wrote about himself, he includes a chapter entitled 'Poetry Is a Craft'. There he explains his view of poetry and insists that it is a craft like other precise crafts. He recalls the publication of his first collection, *Crepusculario*, and the joy he felt when he saw it circulate among readers. The study later returns to this position. Neruda states that 'the thing most similar to poetry is a piece of bread or a ceramic dish'. Neither is easy to produce. In Hammadi's reading, the comparison emphasizes effort and suffering. What matters is that the crafted object emerges from the hands carrying visible traces of labor. Hammadi adds that this remains true whether the work comes from original self-creation or from artificial imitation. Here he distinguishes between spontaneous poetic creation and deliberately manufactured poetry. Poetry also resembles a piece of bread because of its profound importance to human life²⁹. Its value is shared by all people. The difference lies between graceful spontaneity and strained artificiality.

Poetry is produced as an extremely delicate and sensitive material. It therefore deserves close attention to its beauty despite the stains left on the fingers and the strain borne by the body. Neruda thus uses material elements to explain the idea of poetry as a craft. At the same time, he does not neglect its immaterial dimension. This becomes clear in an episode from the memorial for his friend Garcia Lorca, where Neruda recited a long poem³⁰. It included a line that Hammadi considers strange from the reader's perspective: '...because for you the hospitals were painted blue...'

Some of those present asked: Why should hospitals be painted blue because Lorca died? Neruda answered: 'Listen, my friend. Asking a poet such a question is like asking him the age of women.' Poetry is not static matter. It is a flowing current that, in many cases, cannot be fully controlled by its creator

and may escape from his hands. This is because its primary material is made of elements that are at once definite and indefinite, and of things that exist and things that do not³¹. From this, Hammadi derives Neruda's concept of poetry as both thing and non-thing, submission and refusal. Neruda sensed that the questioner remained unconvinced and added that poetry has an affinity with the color blue. At the very least, blue represents infinite openness and symbolizes liberation. In this way, poetry gives voice to feeling. Neruda was questioned repeatedly in a manner similar to the questioning of Abu Tammam³². His answer had the same spirit: Why does the listener not understand what is being said?

A fine thread connects the traditional and contemporary concepts of poetry at the level of meaning. The more poetry becomes obscure and difficult, the more it opens a space for interpretation. Hammadi sees poetry as the expression of what cannot be expressed. It is the language of the impossible. Poetry is a kind of trance within a state of astonished wakefulness. From that atmosphere emerge faint murmurs that deserve patient and careful attention as one follows their web-like paths. Poetic density moves the poem from simple local reality toward a deeper human reality. Hammadi stresses that this is possible only when the reader abandons the ready-made language of dictionaries, with its fixed and familiar dimensions³³. Poetic language exceeds ordinary usage. When the poet truly inhabits what is said, the poem reaches a reader who understands and follows it into the depth of the colors, angles, and moments touched by the poem.

'Interpret the painting of hospitals in blue as you wish.' This is how Pablo responded. The decisive link between the poet's words and the recipient is feeling. It is the emotional response generated during the reception of the poem. A single word cannot fully convey the intense emotions that move within the poet or the vitality of sincere, flowing feeling. Hammadi attributes this to emotional engagement and interaction, and to their positive role in activating suggestive communication. No reader reaches this level without sustained practice in reception³⁴. Reception itself becomes a creative practice that follows the poem. Through it, the reader can attain a level of interpretive maturity formed through repeated reading of the same poet.

The reader of poetry needs a broad understanding of what poetry can be. Such understanding requires the ability to give an objective explanation of the phenomenon. A poem constructed in Neruda's manner cannot be understood unless the recipient is familiar with Impressionist or affective ways of seeing poetry. Such poetry belongs to the instant. Hammadi explains Neruda's image of the hospital by referring to a particular moment. As the poet looked at the hospital, a dark cloud may have passed above it and cast a bluish shadow. The poet's vision captured the image almost like a camera and transmitted it. The resulting reflections may leave the reader uncertain, doubtful, or astonished.

Scholars of poetry and attentive readers of its flashes often argue that only the poet, or poetic language itself, governs the logic of poetic expression. Such language can overturn every expectation. A poem may receive several interpretations, none of which may ever have occurred to the poet. Yet meter, inner feeling, and the meanings of colors all play a role. The poet may have imagined permanence and stability in a color and linked it to the idea that the absent person remains among us and will not leave. The street itself may also contain other justifications that critics may one day explain.

Understanding this kind of poetry requires sustained immersion in it and in comparable works from different poetic schools. The researcher considers these schools close to one another in their sources and trajectories. He also sees Neruda as a poet who brought together features of several schools, from

Romanticism to modern Realism³⁵. At this stage, he finds in Neruda another concept of poetry. It recalls writers who turned to nature and saw meaning in its beauty, unity, and stillness, a stillness that nevertheless speaks with unknown voices. It also evokes a world woven from intertwined branches. Hammadi brings the image closer through scenes loved by the English poet Lord Byron in Childe Harold, where he says:

Sitting on the rock, dreaming beside the waves or at the edge of the abyss; moving slowly through the shadows of trees in the forests; seeking places far from human power, where mortal feet have barely, if ever, passed; climbing mountains without paths and without watching eyes, where wild herds roam freely and need no enclosure; and remaining alone, leaning into the air beside foaming waterfalls - all this is not loneliness. It is a sweet conversation about the charms of nature and an admiration for its formidable treasures³⁶. Poetry, then, is distinction. It is also an enchanting nature that the poet's spirit makes uniquely its own beyond the familiar.

Here we encounter a different poetic spirit and another concept of poetry in Neruda. It is a concept formed through serious effort in pursuit of personal pleasure. This is another view of Romantic poetry. Romantic poets did not all relate to nature in the same way, even though they agreed in giving it a privileged place³⁷. For Neruda, woman is hope and a source of poetic inspiration. Hope can generate poetic meanings and expand the imagination. Poetry thus becomes poetry, life, and inspiration at once.

• **Intellectual Currents and Their Influence on Pablo Neruda:**

Neruda is presented as a poet capable of recognizing and correcting his own deviations. He did not remain imprisoned in lost hope. This awakening coincided with the spread of a movement of renewal that later became known as the 'modern school', the aesthetic school, or the artistic school. It divided into two directions. Neruda did not gain from it as much as he did from his return, with a group of poets, to a Romanticism colored by poverty and barrenness. Neruda supported this movement and followed its path. He writes³⁸: 'The bare land, without a single blade of grass and without a drop of water... is a great mystery and a source of estrangement. Beneath the climbing forests and beside the roaring rivers, everything seems to speak to the human being. The desert, by contrast, is mute... I did not understand its language, I mean its silence.' This is one way of viewing nature at a particular stage. Only a poet sensitive to its barrenness and silence can fully understand it.

Neruda was influenced by the new vision of modern Romantic poets, who found fear and terror in the wilderness. This was a vision of life marked by challenge and the ability to confront hardship. Through such influences, his poetic faculty began to develop and become distinct. He eventually reached the certainty expressed by the poet Carlos Bossonio, from whom he learned a modern conception of poetry as creating something from nothing, or as creation rather than adoption. It requires descending into hidden depths to catch the largest fish³⁹. This deeper understanding of poetry led Abdullah Hammadi to place Neruda among the major poets and even to call him the greatest poet of Chile. Hammadi also distinguishes between superficial and deep Romantic views. He contrasts those who despair at the first setback with those who continue despite shocks, obstacles, and criticism. The latter may eventually establish a perspective that becomes a reference point and a genuine representation of a concept emerging in modern literature. Neruda's life and its turning points also deserve reflection. According to Hammadi, they contributed in one way or another to the formation of this gifted personality and to the

attention given to his poetry. His poetic identity also appears at the threshold of his memoirs, which carry the subtitle *I Confess That I Have Lived*.

The poet or writer should become a fisherman. He should not be the ordinary fisherman who boards a boat, casts his nets, and waits for the generosity of the sea. Nor should he simply enjoy waiting for a hook to trick a fish. Such situations involve little suffering and little confrontation with difficulty. Neruda's fisherman, by contrast, struggles with death. He stands below zero and seeks to assert his existence while returning to humanity with experience and benefit. He does not fear ice or imminent failure⁴⁰. Nor does he retreat before other difficulties. He believes that patience is necessary and that the line must be cast into the depths. The image suggests struggle and challenge, but also creation and usefulness. The pleasure of life lies in confronting its difficulties. Challenge creates a self capable of producing art at the height of hardship and suffering.

For Neruda, poetry is life in its hardship. This view reflects depth and insight. A new birth comes only after great difficulty, and the most enjoyable and profound poetry comes after labor. Hammadi nevertheless responds to Neruda by arguing that the fisherman also needs a container in which to preserve his precious catch and protect it from decay. The catch must retain its value when it is displayed in the fishermen's market. Hammadi uses this image to point to the role of language. Language carries the inner aims of spirit and self. Neruda's position also reflects features of modern literature and the form it must take to gain a high standing among its audience. This highlights the importance of language and style in contemporary literature. Such literature seeks a language of emotion and influence that affects the recipient through what is heard or read. T. S. Eliot expressed a related idea in his essay 'The Social Function of Poetry', where poetry gives pleasure despite deprivation and suffering⁴¹. The most compelling art is that which emerges from sincere, lived suffering.

The effect of poetry on the recipient and reader is a fundamental basis for judging a poet's work. It does not matter whether the writer uses a Surrealist, Impressionist, suggestive, Cubist, or Realist mode. Even when there is no objective link, as in the image of hospital walls painted blue, an affective or emotional link may still exist. Hammadi therefore finds Buffon's statement that 'style is the man' insufficient. In his view, 'style is not only the man; it is also what surrounds him. If the atmosphere of the lived environment does not enter the poem, the poem becomes dead because it cannot breathe'⁴². A poem takes its real breath from the setting in which it was born and for which it took shape. That setting helps determine both its formal and thematic structure.

The theory that 'style is the man' no longer occupies the first place. It has been replaced by the general atmosphere of the poem, together with the accumulated traces and creative energy it contains. True poetic style, in this view, is the ability to affect the recipient. Poetry expresses what cannot otherwise be expressed. This is a major source of difference and distinction between one poem and another. The contemporary poet has also taken on the task of translating light. Hammadi sees this as the highest form of translating the reality behind reality. It is the same process represented by the fisherman who persists through suffering and hardship until he finally obtains something greater than fish. It also resembles the poet standing in astonishment before the desert and trying to translate its silence⁴³ - a vast, beautiful, frightening, and silent space that speaks at the same time.

A poet who is not Realist may perish, but a poet who is only Realist may also perish. The better path is to recognize the value of each direction and select what is most appropriate. Objectivity may lie at the

heart of literary work, yet in poetry it can also become a limitation, at least for those who understand poetry as the expression of the unconscious through conscious feeling⁴⁴. This creates a set of contradictions. Who is the poet for Neruda, and in what direction should the poet move? Neruda does not fully accept Realism, objectivity, authenticity, or commitment, which he regards as modern inventions. Instead, he values poetic personality, regardless of language, method, or the feeling from which it is created. Otherwise, poetry becomes a farce. Hammadi is therefore led to ask Neruda a basic question: What is poetry, for someone who believes that poetry is a craft? He concludes that a major part of poetry's task is flight. 'The poet should be like a bird that flies far away and watches events rather than merely taking part in their turmoil. In this respect, Neruda has fallen short of poetry's noble mission'⁴⁵. Poetry worthy of the name 'creation' must involve awareness of others and of the lived world. It must portray the world's changes and shortcomings and aspire toward a world that can be reached, or at least invite people to aspire to it.

Hammadi closes this part by affirming a principle reinforced by stages in Neruda's experience. One of poetry's noble tasks is the expression of affective feeling. For this reason, poetry remains difficult and resistant when it moves from one language to another. Translation gives the poem a personality different from its original one, which is marked by locality and closely tied to cultural and national identity.

Neruda tried to answer a group of questions that, in his view, sought to define poetry through the concept of the poet himself and through the poet's confessions before 'going back and forth and moving patiently through his abundant production'⁴⁶. He insists that poetry is a craft because it is shaped through effort and suffering, just as a ceramic vessel or a piece of bread is shaped⁴⁷. This view is not entirely new if criticism returns to the Arabic heritage, especially Abu Hilal al-Askari's Book of the Two Crafts.

• **Artistic Characteristics and Stylistic Issues in Pablo Neruda's Poetry:**

One issue that deserves attention in this part of the study is poetic ambiguity. Abdullah Hammadi addresses it in another chapter entitled 'Arabic Poetics Between Imitation and Innovation'. He considers ambiguity one of the most important artistic features of the contemporary poem because it keeps the poem open to multiple readings and interpretations. More precisely, it creates a parallel world in which the reader builds meaning in response to the shadows cast by poetic words and poeticity. The study discusses this issue at length, as if seeking to justify the poet's use of ambiguity.

Building on this discussion, Hammadi opens a number of further critical questions, especially those related to language and style. This leads him to speak briefly about the two phenomena of language and style in contemporary literature⁴⁸. The poet no longer searches for loud words or for decorative rhetorical ornament. Instead, the aim is to create the emotion or pleasure that poetry arouses in the recipient, in the terms of T. S. Eliot. Likewise, the statement 'style is the man' no longer holds the same place in modern criticism. It has been replaced by the overall atmosphere of the poem, with all the creative residues it contains⁴⁹. Whether expression is Impressionist, Romantic, Surrealist, or Realist, the absence of an objective connection does not eliminate the affective or emotional connection. That connection is what matters.

As for the poet's position on authenticity and commitment, Neruda rejects both and regards them as inventions of modern writers. In fact, this position combines Surrealism with the doctrine of art for art's sake. At the time, such attitudes could be read as reflecting the influence of Surrealism, represented by Baudelaire, Mallarme, Rimbaud, and Lotman.

In an effort to clarify the issue, the researcher returns to the problem of ambiguity in modern poetry. He uses examples from French and Spanish poetry, much as Izz al-Din Ismail did when discussing ambiguity in modern Arabic poetry. He draws boundaries between the logical and the illogical, and between the reasonable and the unreasonable. He then centers the issue on the mode of reception and on the patience needed for understanding. Artistic phenomena, he argues, express realities seen by the poet or painter. They are not simply random play with words or colors⁵⁰. What some readers perceive as ambiguity that reduces the value of the literary work may be seen by others as an aesthetic artistic quality. It can raise the work above superficiality and banality to a level suited to a contemporary reader whose view of the world has developed. In this sense, the work's value lies in symbolic and visual configurations that add a further dimension of creativity.

For Hammadi, the problem of poetic imagery emerges from comparing the two sides of a simile, (A) and (B). In the traditional concept of poetry, $A = B$. The two sides of the equation change once both undergo development. This transformation appears in modern poetry in general and in Surrealist poetry in particular. It was reflected in much of the work of Spanish poets in the 1920s, including Lorca, Ramon Jimenez, Neruda, and Dario, as well as others known as the poets of the 'new fashion' or the 'avant-garde'. They adopted the slogan 'Create, do not reproduce'⁵¹. Through this slogan, they sought to free poetry and its readers from inherited conventions that had become burdens and constraints on both poets and poetry.

The critical approach concludes with a set of poems translated into Arabic from two collections: *Crepusculario* and *Twenty Love Poems and a Song of Despair*. Abdullah Hammadi's selection of these two collections indicates a particular critical position toward them in relation to Neruda's other collections.

The characteristics of modernist poetry identified by Abdullah Hammadi clearly show Neruda's understanding of modern poetry. They also reveal a strong convergence between the Chilean poet and Hammadi. One shared conviction is that poetry cannot be understood through individual words alone. In modernist poetry, words move beyond dictionary limits and carry other concepts within them. Poetic meaning also often works through suggestion rather than explicit statement in order to avoid excessive clarity. Neruda himself expresses this position. Hammadi likewise considers effect and emotional response the central element that the poet seeks to bring forward in poetry.

Everything Abdullah Hammadi presents about the concept of poetry, the poet's task, and the ways poetry influences recipients and listeners suggests that his view moves in the same general direction as Neruda's. Their secondary positions may agree or differ, but their ultimate aims remain close. One of the critic's most valuable roles is to stand between poet and reader like a faithful mediator. The critic creates bonds of familiarity and understanding and brings together positions that were previously distant. More than that, the critic must sometimes act both as opponent and judge.

If criticism does not follow a sound path, and if the critic does not perform the task fully, the elements of the creative work cannot be revealed in a satisfactory and effective way. Critical statements then remain far from their intended goal⁵². If Neruda provides the primary material and transforms it into an influential work capable of conveying beauty and highlighting human values, Hammadi has a different role. His task is to interpret that beauty and explain how the writer seeks goodness or criticizes life and its falsehood, injustice, and evil⁵³. A critic cannot do this without understanding the components,

references, and circumstances of the poetic work, and sometimes even the conditions surrounding its production.

The relationship between form and content has long been, and remains, one of the major questions of criticism. The issue becomes particularly clear when discussing the critic's view of the poem. Modern and contemporary theories have moved beyond the idea that form is merely a container into which content is poured. Ferdinand de Saussure was right to describe the two as two sides of the same coin. The important question, however, is how their unity affects a particular poet.

Form and content are not fully separate in a poetic work. Rather, a poem has both a form and a content. Poetic sensibility is a flow that does not give the poet time to choose a suitable poetic form through deliberate planning. If it did, poetry would not arise from feeling and emotion. The study notes that Neruda asked the fisherman to find a suitable container for his fish. This may refer to form. It may also refer to the need for a form appropriate to an appropriate content.

Scholars have given language a central place in literary work because it is the first element in every art that uses words as its medium. Izz al-Din Ismail considers language the first thing we encounter and therefore the first thing that requires attention when we discuss literature, especially poetry. Even criticism cannot meaningfully engage with the emotional experience of a literary work until that experience takes verbal form⁵⁴. Language is thus our first point of contact with the literary work, alongside the possibilities of contemporary visual reading. Through language, the critic can explore the depth of the literary work and the artistry of its creator.

Critics therefore see poetry as a continuous exploration of the world of words and a continuous exploration of existence through words. The poet engages with the self and with existence through language. The poet's way of using language shows the extent of his creative capacity, especially his ability to derive new dimensions from words and structures. Poetry that does not achieve this vital aim cannot properly be called poetry⁵⁵. This view is consistent with Neruda's strong emphasis on language, which forms the basis of communication between a poet who feels deeply about an issue and another person whom that issue has not yet moved.

Modern and contemporary criticism has assigned language an important place in the study of poetry. Abdullah Hammadi considers it important enough to rank among the first procedures of literary criticism. However, the order in which such procedures are applied to contemporary poetry depends, according to the researcher, on the critic's angle of vision. Because critics view the text differently, their judgments may also differ.

It is difficult to understand poetry as a flat world that the reader can master without effort. Yet the reader can take pleasure in the beauty of this magical world, full of movement and color. It is a distinctive world that recognizes neither ordinary sensory limits nor fixed boundaries, not even strictly logical dimensions. It is a world of crossing, exceeding, and pursuing the absolute in an attempt to grasp it⁵⁶. This is a feature shared by modernist and contemporary poets. Poetry is made from human language, but it differs from ordinary speech and rises above it through a range of components and elements.

This paper has attempted to observe one poet through the reading of another poet who is also a critic. It has examined Pablo Neruda's work through the reading of Abdullah Hammadi. It stands between two views of poetry. One, not so distant in time, understands poetry as metered and rhymed speech even when it lacks eloquent meaning and an attractive spirit. The other sees poetry as arising from feeling

without being identical to feeling itself. Even if verse were sweeter than clear water and more fragrant than hill flowers, such qualities alone would not make it poetry. Neruda adds, using an expression attributed to Chaplin, that poetry is the utterance of truth: the deep truth felt by the heart, and that the sincere poet comes close to revelation⁵⁷. The essence is therefore a truth present in all human beings, but only those who genuinely feel it poetically can give it poetic voice. Otherwise, the work falls into triviality.

Poetry contains something of everything: feeling, thought, imagination, and emotion. It does not simply transmit direct meanings and significations. Nor does it merely reflect the outward appearance of material things. It tries instead to reach the essence that lies within them through intuitive disclosure rather than through conceptual explanation. The poet gives these meanings many artistic features and characteristics^{*10}. In doing so, poetry moves away from literal reality toward psychological reality⁵⁸, the reality suggested by the poet's inner movements after a powerful stimulus. This can lead the poet to uncover hidden aspects of reality through familiar words arranged in forms and compositions that remain unfamiliar to many readers.

Pablo Neruda's view of poetry shifted away from an earlier Romantic orientation toward nature. He could take what seemed faded, withered, or dead in nature and breathe life into it. Poetry thus became a form of reality growing within an unfamiliar environment. The historical method appears to have been suitable for studying Neruda's poetic corpus. It connected his poetry with the historical conditions surrounding the poetic experience and helped explain the element of strangeness that marked his work. That quality is presented as a natural extension of the Surrealist movement that reached Chile from France during that period. Abdullah Hammadi stands among the Algerian writers who approached contemporary poetry in both Arabic and foreign contexts through direct engagement with external literatures, especially Spanish and Chilean literature.

Research Notes:

¹ See: Rene Wellek, *Critical Concepts*, trans. Muhammad Asfour, Alam al-Ma'rifa Series, Kuwait, 1987, p. 389.

² See: *An Introduction to the Methods of Literary Criticism*, by a group of authors, trans. Radwan Zaza, Alam al-Ma'rifa Series, p. 5.

*¹ Does combining criticism and poetic creation prepare the way for a new form called 'critical creativity'?

*² This is achieved through the use of scientific-method procedures in critical practice, which means commitment to objectivity and distance from subjectivity when dealing with the literary text.

³ See: Abdullah Bouqassa, 'The Problem of Combining Critical Writing with Creative Writing,' *Aswat al-Shamal*, Wednesday, 5 December 2012, p. 1.

*³ They were known as 'slaves of poetry' or poets of the annuals.

⁴ See: Shawqi Dayf, *The Pre-Islamic Age*, Dar al-Ma'arif, Cairo, p. 327.

*⁴ This occurred in the period of Ibn Rashiq, al-Qartajanni, Ibn Hazm, and Ibn Khafaja.

*⁵ Through its leading figures: Abd al-Rahman Shukri, Abbas Mahmoud al-Aqqad, and Abd al-Qadir al-Mazini.

*⁶ This was in the criticism of Aeschylus.

*⁷ Along with Baudelaire, Zola, Coleridge, and others.

*⁸ What matters is not that we be specialists so much as that we be speaking human beings. If you speak and make mistakes, practice will eventually help you become correct. What matters is that you speak.

⁵ See: Rene Wellek, *Critical Concepts*, trans. Jaber Asfour, Alam al-Ma'rifa Series, no. 110, Kuwait, 1987, p. 425.

*⁹ Examples include Abbas Mahmoud al-Aqqad, Nazik al-Malaika, Adonis, and the Algerian poet-critic Abd al-Malik Murtad.

⁶ See: Abdullah Bouqassa, 'The Problem of Combining Critical Writing with Creative Writing,' p. 1.

⁷ Inad Ghazwan, *Echoes: Critical Literary Studies*, Arab Writers Union, Damascus, 2000, p. 90.

⁸ Inad Ghazwan, *Echoes: Critical Literary Studies*, Arab Writers Union, p. 90.

⁹ Ahmad Kamal Zaki, *Modern Literary Criticism: Its Foundations and Trends*, Egyptian International Publishing Company, 1st ed., 1997, p. 19.

¹⁰ Salah Fadl, *Methods of Contemporary Criticism*, Merit for Publishing and Distribution, Cairo, 1st ed., 2002, p. 8.

¹¹ Bushra Musa, Salih, *Reception Theory: Origins and Applications*, Arab Cultural Center, 1st ed., 2001, p. 12.

¹² See: Sa'id Boula'sal, 'Abdullah Hammadi: The Critical Experience,' *Oud al-Nad*, quarterly cultural magazine, November 2012, p. 1.

¹³ This appeared in the opening of an article in *Mihrab al-Tashkil Forum*, a space for contemporary Arab visual artists, under the title 'The Multicultural Intellectual.'

¹⁴ See: Youssef Oughlissi, *The Language of Contemporary Algerian Poetry (1970-1990)*, Jusur for Publishing and Distribution, 2017, p. 81.

¹⁵ See: Ahmed Baqqar, *Abdullah Hammadi's Poetry: Structure and Meaning*, Durub Thaqafiyya for Publishing and Distribution, 1st ed., Amman, Jordan, 2015, p. 33.

¹⁶ Hammadi, Abdullah, *Pablo Neruda: Poet of Chile, A Critical Approach*, Dar al-Alma'iyya for Publishing and Distribution, 3rd ed., 2011, p. 8.

¹⁷ Hammadi, Abdullah, *Pablo Neruda: Poet of Chile*, p. 8.

¹⁸ Hammadi, Abdullah, *Pablo Neruda: Poet of Chile*, p. 12.

¹⁹ Hammadi, Abdullah, *Pablo Neruda: Poet of Chile*, p. 20.

²⁰ Hammadi, Abdullah, *Pablo Neruda: Poet of Chile*, pp. 42, 44.

²¹ Hammadi, Abdullah, *Pablo Neruda: Poet of Chile*, p. 46.

²² Hammadi, Abdullah, *Pablo Neruda: Poet of Chile*, p. 47.

²³ Hammadi, Abdullah, *Pablo Neruda: Poet of Chile*, p. 48.

²⁴ This statement was made to a correspondent from *Litoral* magazine when Neruda was asked about his poetry.

²⁵ Hammadi, Abdullah, *Pablo Neruda: Poet of Chile*, p. 75.

²⁶ Hammadi, Abdullah, *Pablo Neruda: Poet of Chile*, p. 76.

²⁷ Hammadi, Abdullah, Pablo Neruda: Poet of Chile, p. 77.

²⁸ Hammadi cites the Arab poet Abu al-Tayyib al-Mutanabbi: 'It is carried by listeners when it passes, and its beauty doubles when it is repeated.' See: al-Mutanabbi, Abu al-Tayyib, Diwan al-Mutanabbi, commentary and notes by Mustafa Sbeiti, Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyya, 1971, p. 289. At this point, several questions arose around Hammadi: how would he classify this talent and locate its creative reference? To what type of creator should it be assigned, and within which literary school should it be placed?

²⁹ Hammadi, Abdullah, Pablo Neruda: Poet of Chile, pp. 77-78.

³⁰ See: Neruda, Pablo, Memoirs: I Confess That I Have Lived, trans. and notes by Mahmoud Sobh, Arab Institute for Studies and Publishing, Beirut, Lebanon, 3rd ed., 2015, p. 170.

³¹ See: Neruda, Pablo, Memoirs: I Confess That I Have Lived, p. 172.

³² It is narrated that a man said to al-Ta'i at a gathering, intending to embarrass him after he recited: 'Abu Tammam, why do you not write poetry that can be understood?' He replied: 'And why do you not understand the poetry that is written?' The man was silenced. It is also narrated that the incident involved Abu al-Amaythal and two companions who addressed him and received this reply.

³³ Hammadi uses this phrase to mean the conventional language of consumption, with repeated meanings, structures, and images.

³⁴ Hammadi, Abdullah, Pablo Neruda: Poet of Chile, p. 78.

³⁵ Abdullah Hammadi believes that Pablo's early tendency was clearly Romantic, like that of young people whose imagination drives them toward an active life. Neruda describes his early poetry as filled with 'everything around me: the noise of the sea, the harmony of wild birds, and burning love.' See: Memoirs: I Confess That I Have Lived, p. 175.

³⁶ Hammadi, Abdullah, Pablo Neruda: Poet of Chile, pp. 78-79.

³⁷ The poet Gustavo Adolfo Becquer, born in Seville, is presented as one of the final major figures of Romanticism and one of the Spanish poets most deeply immersed in its imaginative world. Because of his intense sensitivity and his inability to endure the bitterness of hopeless love, he died while still young. His influence nevertheless remained visible in later generations, especially in figures such as Pablo Neruda, Machado, and Lorca.

³⁸ See: Neruda, Pablo, Memoirs: I Confess That I Have Lived, p. 177.

³⁹ Hammadi, Abdullah, Pablo Neruda: Poet of Chile, p. 80.

- ⁴⁰ Hammadi, Abdullah, Pablo Neruda: Poet of Chile, p. 81.
- ⁴¹ Hammadi, Abdullah, Pablo Neruda: Poet of Chile, p. 85.
- ⁴² Hammadi, Abdullah, Pablo Neruda: Poet of Chile, p. 90.
- ⁴³ Hammadi, Abdullah, Pablo Neruda: Poet of Chile, p. 92.
- ⁴⁴ Hammadi, Abdullah, Pablo Neruda: Poet of Chile, p. 92.
- ⁴⁵ Hammadi, Abdullah, Pablo Neruda: Poet of Chile, p. 93.
- ⁴⁶ Hammadi, Abdullah, Pablo Neruda: Poet of Chile, p. 52.
- ⁴⁷ Hammadi, Abdullah, Pablo Neruda: Poet of Chile, p. 53.
- ⁴⁸ Hammadi, Abdullah, Pablo Neruda: Poet of Chile, p. 62.
- ⁴⁹ Hammadi, Abdullah, Pablo Neruda: Poet of Chile, p. 62.
- ⁵⁰ Hammadi, Abdullah, Pablo Neruda: Poet of Chile, p. 77.
- ⁵¹ Neruda, Pablo, Memoirs: I Confess That I Have Lived, p. 137.
- ⁵² See: Ammar Ben Zayed, Modern Algerian Literary Criticism, p. 32.
- ⁵³ See: Ammar Ben Zayed, Modern Algerian Literary Criticism, p. 33.
- ⁵⁴ See: Izz al-Din Ismail, Literature and Its Arts: Study and Criticism, Dar al-Fikr al-Arabi, Cairo, n.ed., n.d., p. 31.
- ⁵⁵ See: Izz al-Din Ismail, Contemporary Arabic Poetry: Its Issues and Artistic and Semantic Phenomena, Dar al-Fikr al-Arabi, Cairo, 3rd ed., n.d., p. 174.
- ⁵⁶ Abdelhamid Hima, The Artistic Image in Algerian Poetic Discourse, Dar Houma for Printing, Publishing and Distribution, Algeria, 2005, p. 55.
- ⁵⁷ See: Ramadan Hammoud, Seeds of Life, al-Istiqama Press, Tunis, n.ed., 1928, p. 103.
- ^{*10} Among the most important are poetic language, poetic imagery, rhythm, and artistic sincerity.
- ⁵⁸ See: Ramadan Hammoud, Seeds of Life, p. 103.

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