

Shades of the Metonymy's Image A Stylistic Approach in Samples of Jarir's Poetry

Mohamed Krakria*

University of Badji Mokhtar-Annaba
Bp. 12 - Annaba
Algeria

krakria.moh@gmail.com

Abdessalam Chagrouche

University of Badji Mokhtar-Annaba
Bp. 12 - Annaba
Algeria

abdessalam.chegrouche@univ-annaba.dz

Received: 23/04/2026

Accepted: 20/05/2026

Published: 09/06/ 2026

Abstract :

I aim in this study to treat the metonymy figure with deeply new-patrimony reading, I said a patrimony reading because it was based on the old rethorical conceptions, and also new reading because of the approach where i used an interpretive mechanisms out of dry logic which stopped on classification and devision, that logic applied on rethorical studies ignore the esthetical side of metonymy" that represented the best creative side of arab's imagination", so we want reactivate it's linguistic beauty and soul by revealing the litterary poetical meanings not the logical one.

Key Words: Metonymy; Stylistics; Approach; Poetry; Jarir.

*- Corresponding author: Mohamed Krakria

1. Introduction:

There is no doubt that literature -both its poetry and prose- is a shared human heritage among all nations, despite the variations in the characteristics of each nation, shaped by its thought, culture, material and immaterial legacy, and the social norms upon which it is founded. Although literature, with its aesthetic qualities, constitutes a common ground among these nations, the features of beauty within it are likewise, to a large extent, commonly shared.

Since the dawn of humanity, with the emergence of this refined linguistic expression, philosophers, critics, and scholars have sought to investigate the characteristics of beauty in literature, to define its types, interpret its secrets, unveil its veils, and attempt to penetrate the layers that conceal these expressive energies which transform ordinary linguistic patterns into a system radiating beauty and poeticity, captivating the minds of listeners. They have also endeavored to explore the nature and essence of poetry, engaging with foundational questions related to creativity -its nature, means, elements, and tools- as extensively discussed in their works.

The literary message constitutes a link between the creator and the recipient, “wherein the same shared linguistic code is employed, requiring that both possess knowledge of the set of patterns and phonetic and semantic relations that form the system of the common language” (Saad Maslouh, 1992, p. 37). What distinguishes the literary message from ordinary discourse is its enduring impact.

Because the question of beauty -its limits and essence- is inherently complex and elusive, scholars of creativity in general, and of literature in particular, have not reached a unified interpretation of it. Their views have diverged in accordance with the philosophical schools that influenced them. They have striven to uncover the secret of beauty without agreeing upon a unified definition encompassing its characteristics. This may be attributed to the nature of philosophical thought surrounding the concept of beauty -a concept that philosophers have continued to explore from the time of Aristotle in his *Poetics* to the present day. This inevitably leads us to acknowledge that no one can formulate a purely theoretical framework for beauty independent of the recipient’s aesthetic appreciation. Nevertheless, Immanuel Kant identified four principles that define beauty (Al-Sa'afin Ibrahim & Al-Sheikh Khalil, 1997, p. 201):

- Taste is a faculty of judgment, and when we judge something to be beautiful, we express a clear sense of satisfaction free from bias.
- That which is truly beautiful and consistently admired does not require narrow logical proof.
- The beautiful has no purpose and requires neither justification nor utility to be recognized as such.
- The beautiful is that which consistently gains people’s satisfaction and admiration.

Attempts to interpret beauty in its various forms -perhaps most prominently in literature- have led scholars to seek appropriate methodologies to unveil its essence. They have divided into two main groups: one that studies literature externally, employing historical, psychological, and sociological approaches; and another that seeks to uncover its internal secrets, as seen in aesthetic and linguistic approaches such as structuralism, stylistics, semiotics, deconstruction, hermeneutics, and reception theory.

While post-structuralist and deconstructive trends have aimed to interpret literary works through language, they have ultimately shifted authority away from the text and transferred it to the reader, who is no longer viewed as a passive recipient subject to the authority of the text through its linguistic conventions, but rather as its creator.

From this, we understand that the reader has acquired the authority to direct the semantic and rhetorical dimensions of literary discourse, drawing upon intellectual, literary, and linguistic references shared with the author. This is not far from the statement attributed to al-Farazdaq when he responded to ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ishāq al-Ḥaḍramī upon his objection to some of his poetry.

It is true that al-Farazdaq’s intention in this statement was to interpret the grammatical aspects of his poetry by allowing grammarians to provide acceptable syntactic analyses in accordance with established usages in Arabic, so long as they did not amount to clear linguistic error. However, this does not negate the fact that the issue of reading and interpretation may extend to syntactic structures just as it applies to rhetorical expressions. Understanding thus remains a relative matter that varies from one reader to another, with the caveat that the term “*interpret*” (*ta’awwalu*) in al-Farazdaq’s statement does not correspond to its modern usage among proponents of hermeneutics.

In the same vein, Al-Mutanabbi, boasting of his poetic prowess and his elevated status in capturing meanings that may elude even masters of eloquence, says:

“I sleep with my eyes full, unconcerned with its strays,

While people stay awake because of it, disputing among themselves.”

Al-Barqūqī offers an interpretation of this verse, suggesting that al-Mutanabbi means: “I sleep soundly, unconcerned with the elusive meanings of poetry, for I can attain them easily whenever I wish, whereas other poets remain awake striving for them and disputing over them” (Al-Mutanabbi, 1986, p. 84).

Yet, the meaning may extend beyond this if we consider that commentators such as Ibn Jinni, al-Ma‘arri, al-Yāzījī, and al-Barqūqī may have unduly restricted its scope when they unanimously interpreted the word “*people*” (*al-khalq*) as referring exclusively to poets. If we instead take the term in its broader sense, it could encompass others engaged in linguistic crafts -such as grammarians, rhetoricians, and scholars of meaning- as well as readers, who in fact constitute the largest group

among those referred to by al-Mutanabbi. The commentators' restriction of the term to poets alone may be attributed to the closest contextual clue, namely the preceding verse.

Nothing better demonstrates this authority -by which we mean the authority of the reader- than the vast intellectual heritage accumulated over more than fourteen centuries in the fields of Qur'anic exegesis and linguistic studies related to the Qur'an.

The reader's contribution to the text, by virtue of the authority of reading, transforms it into a living entity from which the reader extracts meanings -whether implicit or explicit- according to their cultural background, intellectual horizon, and familiarity with the text's contexts. This is further supported by their reservoir of linguistic heritage, which serves as a tool for probing the depths of the text, assembling its scattered elements, unifying its perspectives, and filling the gaps inherent between its components- especially in cases of ellipsis, a common feature of literary discourse. Here emerges the role of the skilled reader.

It is therefore not surprising to find this conception rooted in our grammatical and rhetorical tradition, as grammarians constructed the edifice of grammar with the recipient in mind rather than the speaker. From this perspective, the function of the reader is no longer merely "to discover the text, but to write it" (Hammouda Abdel Aziz, 1998, p. 327). This perhaps explains why some have described the text as "a promenade in which the author places the words, and the readers bring the meaning" (Umberto Eco, 2004, p. 22).

However, no matter how extensive the reader's knowledge of the language of the text, its conventions, and its rhetorical subtleties, they cannot fully grasp it in a definitive manner. Their reading remains relative and does not attain absolute truth. Readers differ in their inclinations, knowledge, and academic background, and accordingly, interpretations inevitably diverge. This issue is not only linked to differences among readers and their perspectives -given the intellectual and psychological diversity among individuals- but also to the very structure of the language of the discourse, which renders it open to multiple readings and interpretations. It is also connected to the historical moment in which the text emerged. As one scholar notes, "this problem will remain inevitably influenced by ideology so long as language is human and people are social beings; nevertheless, it is possible -to a large extent- to address this issue by delimiting interpretation within the bounds of history, geography, humanity, and language..." (Abdelhadi Abdelrahman, 1998, p. 343).

Since language inherently contains the seeds of interpretation, and since a single text may allow for multiple analytical possibilities, hermeneutics, in my view at least, is better suited to understanding the nature of discourse, exploring its depths, and approaching its truth in a relative manner. It also enables liberation from preconceived judgments grounded in dogmatic principles, thereby achieving its

autonomy, for it does not attain independence “unless it ceases to serve any dogmatic purpose” (Hans-Georg Gadamer, 2007, p. 262).

2. Research Topic:

In this study, I have selected a number of metonymic images from the *Dīwān of Jarīr* and from the *Naqā'id*, after attempting -within the limits of my effort and knowledge- to identify them comprehensively. They amounted to six hundred and twenty-eight instances, including repetitions. These were distributed among metonymies referring to a quality, a referent, and an attribution, although the last category -metonymy of attribution- is, in itself, a form of metonymy of quality.

I chose to focus on a sample of metonymies referring to a quality in particular, due to the dynamism inherent in them and the extent to which they allow the reader's imagination to expand in multiple directions, opening broad horizons for interpretation at times and for semantic suggestion at others.

I do not deny that I relied on two criteria in making my selection. The first is the richness of the metonymic image in terms of movement and expansive meanings, and the second is my personal taste, which may not necessarily coincide with that of many readers of Jarīr.

In this approach, I have sought to delve into the roots of literary discourse within the metonymic image through an interpretive reading, with the aim of uncovering the aesthetic foundations of the rhetorical structure on the one hand, and of exploring what the text leaves unsaid -trusting in the reader's ability to discern implicit meanings, suggestions, and interpretations, which may multiply within a single text according to the multiplicity of its readers.

3. Methodology:

This study adopts the hermeneutic approach, given its openness to interpretation and multiplicity of readings. The problem of understanding is closely linked to the problem of interpretive plurality on the one hand, and to the fact that our classical heritage is replete with interpretations shaped by conceptions different from our own and rooted in historical contexts other than ours.

The claim that the problem of understanding a text can be resolved by arriving at a single, objective, and final interpretation is fundamentally flawed. Evidence for this lies in the abundance of diverse readings and commentaries in the Arabic intellectual tradition across all fields of discourse. Perhaps the most striking example is the extensive body of Qur'anic exegesis, where one may find in a given interpretation what is absent in another. This, however, does not imply that all interpretations are equal in their relativity, nor that truth resides in none of them. The notion of relativity among interpretations -understood as their equality in value- is not absolute in hermeneutics, which rejects such a simplistic view. Rather, there are always reasons or justifications -whether contextual or methodological- that lead us to favor one interpretation over another. Hermeneutics, therefore, is not relativistic

in the naive sense of absolute relativism, but rather in a deeper sense: the denial of an absolute truth that transcends temporality.

Since the process of interpretation encounters a sensitive procedural issue - namely, the limits of interpretation (i.e., the levels at which it operates)- this study adopts a framework proposed by one contemporary Arab scholar, who identifies five levels of interpretive practice:

- a. Returning to the original meaning
- b. Moving beyond the apparent meaning
- c. Entering the inner (latent) meaning
- d. Expanding the text through semantic proliferation
- e. Engaging in interpretive practice that transcends what the text can explicitly say to what it cannot say (moving from interpretation to over-interpretation)

4. Approach:

Before proceeding with the interpretive reading in accordance with the methodology outlined above, it is necessary to briefly recall the concept of metonymy in its simplest definition: it is “an expression intended to convey a meaning associated with it, while still allowing for the literal meaning to remain possible” (al-Qazwīnī, 2002, p. 241). The scope here does not permit a detailed discussion of its types and subdivisions, which are treated extensively in their proper contexts.

4.1. First Metonymic Image (Jarīr, n.d., p. 467):

“You returned in disgrace, and al-khazīr was your hospitality,

While the ṣadā bird spent the night calling for ‘Iqāl and Ḍamḍam.”

This verse is from a poem in which Jarīr responds to al-Ba‘īth, and it belongs to the *Naqā’id* tradition (Abū ‘Ubayda, 1998, p. 65). As for ‘Iqāl, he is the son of Muḥammad ibn Sufyān ibn Mujāshi‘, while Ḍamḍam is the son of Murra ibn Sidān. The *ṣadā*, as described in *Lisān al-‘Arab*, is “a bird that cries out from the skull of the slain if vengeance has not been taken for him; it was believed in pre-Islamic times to emerge from the head after decay and was called the *hāmah*.” Al-khazīr is a kind of food made from flour, resembling porridge.

The metonymic image in this verse lies in the expression:

“and the ṣadā spent the night calling for ‘Iqāl and Ḍamḍam.”

4.1.1. Return to the Original Meaning:

At its most literal level, the meaning suggests that the two slain men -as believed in Arab tradition- will have their vengeance demanded by the *hāmah* (the mythical bird), which calls for retribution. However, given that the poet is engaged in satire and invective, it is unlikely that his purpose is merely to report this belief.

Such an interpretation would strip the expression of its rhetorical function and reduce it to a simple declarative statement devoid of deeper significance. Otherwise, we would have to assume that the poet is merely stating a commonly known belief among the Arabs concerning one of their myths. Therefore, we must move beyond this superficial meaning -which is not intended in itself- toward a deeper level of interpretation.

4.1.2. Moving Beyond the Apparent Meaning:

If we move beyond the surface level of the image -its literal dimension- to its deeper, figurative dimension, we may say that the relationship of implication linking the apparent meaning of the text to its inner meaning suggests that “‘Iqāl and Ḍamḍam” are among the slain rather than merely the dead, as indicated by the cry of the *hāmāh* (the mythical bird). This deeper meaning arises in the mind according to the principle of association and is well attested in Arabic poetry. Dhū al-Uṣbu‘ al-‘Adwānī says:

*“O ‘Amr, if you do not cease reviling and disparaging me,
I shall strike you until the skull cries out: ‘Give me to drink!’”*

However, this level of interpretation- though more subtle than the literal surface meaning -does not fully satisfy the poet’s intent in satire. For “‘Iqāl and Ḍamḍam” are not the first to be slain among the Arabs, and the intended meaning goes beyond that. We must therefore pursue a deeper level of analysis.

4.1.3. Entering the Inner Meaning:

Since the context here is one of satire, it is necessary to uncover the features through which the poet employs this metonymic image to mock his rival, al-Ba‘īth, and undermine his honor. Undoubtedly, the meaning is far deeper than what has preceded -namely, the second level of concealment, which is based on a subtler indicator than that of the first hidden level, namely the implied meaning associated with the apparent expression.

The inner meaning -what we have termed the second hidden level- compels us to identify the rhetorical intent of this metonymy within the satirical context. In our view, it consists in reproaching the poet’s rival, al-Ba‘īth, by suggesting that his tribe endures humiliation and fails to avenge its slain -a trait deemed reprehensible in Arab character and ethics. Arabs would not fail to avenge their dead except out of cowardice, weakness, or fear of confronting the enemy. Thus, the reproach of fear, cowardice, and passive submission to humiliation constitutes the deeper implication of the apparent meaning at a level more profound than the first.

4.1.4. Expanding the Text through Semantic Proliferation:

If we move from this implied meaning to an even deeper level—the third level—we may uncover a range of meanings that the text does not explicitly state but subtly suggests. These meanings consist of relationships linking the inner dimension of the text to the external reality in which it was produced.

We may identify a number of such meanings, which can also be considered implied meanings serving the rhetorical purpose by reinforcing it through a set of values that lie outside the text itself. Yet, by virtue of the historical context, they assist us in discerning the rhetorical intentions behind the metonymic images. Among these are:

- The metonymic image in the verse is introduced by the line: “*You returned in disgrace, and al-khazīr was your hospitality.*” The people of al-Ba‘īth returned from the battle -during which two of their leaders were killed- covered in shame and marked by disgrace, showing no concern for the loss of their chiefs. Had they possessed any sense of honor, they would not have returned home before avenging their slain.
- The ugliness of the tribe’s attitude toward their dead is cunningly depicted by the context, which portrays them as preoccupied with food rather than preserving their honor among the tribes. For this reason, the verse deliberately mentions food before referring to the cry of the *hāmah*, intensifying the satirical attack against the tribe.
- Their food was *al-khazīr*, a coarse dish made of meat cut into small pieces, cooked in abundant water with salt, and then mixed with flour until it thickens into a porridge-like substance - or, alternatively, a strained bran mixture that is cooked. It is most likely that the text intends the latter meaning in order to belittle their way of life and sustenance. The context necessitates such an interpretation; otherwise, there would be little force in mocking them with food that contains meat. Thus, the text not only reproaches them for being preoccupied with eating instead of preserving their honor, but also portrays their food as among the most inferior of what people consume -repellent in both appearance and taste.
- In their food *-al-khazīr-* there is also an implicit accusation of both miserliness and baseness, as they present it as a sign of their generosity. The text subtly suggests this by describing *al-khazīr* as *qirā* (hospitality), which in Arabic custom refers to the food offered to a guest. Those who offer their guests the most inferior types of food, without fearing reproach, are certainly not concerned with being accused of cowardice. Indeed, generosity is often valued even above bravery; while an Arab might tolerate being accused of cowardice, they would not accept being accused of stinginess or failing in the duty of hospitality. A well-known verse by ‘Urwa ibn al-Ward illustrates this, as he defends himself against the charge of miserliness when he has nothing to offer a guest, claiming that he entertains him with conversation until he falls asleep:

*“I converse with him -for conversation is a form of hospitality-
While my soul knows that he will soon fall asleep.”*

- The practice of avenging the slain was deeply rooted in the environment of the text. Had it not held such significance -particularly in what was most likely a Bedouin context- the poet would not have employed it as a reproach against his rival's tribe. This may be explained by the harshness and severity characteristic of Bedouin life and temperament. Historical accounts indicate that the Bedouins were among the first to apostasize after the death of the Prophet, in contrast to the settled populations.
- As for the belief in the *hāmāh* (the mythical bird), as previously explained, it may have been employed here merely as a linguistic device rather than an actual belief. Poets of the early Islamic and Umayyad periods often drew upon pre-Islamic poetic conventions as a matter of stylistic usage rather than conviction.

What emerges from this analysis of the metonymy is its remarkable ability - despite its implicit and "silent" meanings, if we may so call them- to generate vivid and dynamic imagery, rich in imagination. It draws the reader from one level of meaning to another, each deeper and more suggestive than the last. Moreover, this metonymy possesses a rhetorical power and expressive capacity that allow it to achieve its intended effect more expansively than if the text had employed more direct devices such as simile or metaphor. The interplay between explicit expression and subtle suggestion -bound together by contextual clues, whether simple or complex- is what grants metonymy its evocative power and its rich layers of interpretation, surpassing other forms of figurative imagery.

4.2. Second Metonymic Image (Jarīr, n.d., p. 131):

*"Indeed, I am chaste in poverty, sharing my wealth,
Swift—if I am not pleased with my dwelling—to depart."*

This verse belongs to a poem in which Jarīr responds to al-Farazdaq, and it is part of the *Naqā'id* tradition.

There is nothing in the language of the verse that calls for lexical explanation, as it contains no obscurity. The focus of this analysis lies in the expressions "*sharing my wealth*" (*mushtarik al-ghinā*) and "*swift, if I am not pleased with my dwelling, to depart*" (*sarī', idhā lam arḍa dārī ihtimāliyyā*). The verse radiates an internal dynamism that transcends the apparent structure of the expression. Let us examine these two metonymic images across the four interpretive levels:

4.2.1. Return to the Original Meaning:

As for the phrase "*sharing my wealth*," its apparent meaning -what we have termed the neutral level- is that the poet is a man whose wealth is shared with others. This is a reading upon which most readers would agree. Stripping the expression of any deeper aesthetic background reduces it to a simple declarative structure serving only communicative or utilitarian purposes. Such a reading removes from the expression any sense of wonder or artistic effect, for poetry fundamentally revolves

around “the imaginative representation of things through discourse and the formation of their images in the mind through effective imitation” (Hāzim al-Qartājannī, 1981, p. 62).

As for the phrase “*swift, if I am not pleased with my dwelling, to depart,*” its surface meaning requires no interpretation, as the words are taken in their literal sense. It simply suggests that the poet is a man who may leave a residence in which he finds no satisfaction and move to another.

4.2.2. Moving Beyond the Apparent Meaning:

If we move beyond the neutral meaning, we may say that the intent of the first expression is to emphasize the poet’s generosity and his willingness to share his wealth with those in need, particularly among his kin. This implies that he does not withhold his wealth from anyone driven by necessity.

Similarly, if we go beyond the surface meaning of the second expression, we find that the poet is portraying himself as a man of dignity and pride, one who refuses to remain in a place where he does not receive due respect. Leaving such a place requires only that he gather his belongings and move to another dwelling where he is welcomed, honored, and held in esteem.

4.2.3. Entering the Inner Meaning:

However, if we delve deeper into the reading, we find that this surface meaning conceals another layer that invites further exploration. While the first level of implication in “*sharing my wealth*” leads us to interpret the hidden meaning as generosity and the poet’s inclusion of the poor in his wealth, a deeper contextual clue suggests an even more distant meaning. The further removed the clues, the more the metonymic image acquires multiple layers of implication.

What appears to us is that the poet subtly alludes to another meaning: an implicit accusation directed at his rival, al-Farazdaq, of miserliness. The context of poetic rivalry supports and guides this interpretation. Without the satirical and invective nature of the discourse, such a depth of meaning would not be discernible. This interpretation relies heavily on the contextual clue of the genre itself -namely, the *Naqā'id*.

As for the phrase “*swift, if I am not pleased with my dwelling, to depart,*” its deeper meaning extends beyond the initial implication of pride and dignity. It suggests a more refined semantic level: that the poet is welcomed wherever he goes -if we interpret “dwelling” metaphorically as “status” or “standing.” He is unconcerned with those he leaves behind or those he joins, for he is a man received with honor wherever he resides. He is the poet of his tribe, its voice, its champion, and its defender. Within this lies a subtle jab at al-Farazdaq, whom Jarīr accuses elsewhere in his poetry of having been expelled from Medina due to irreligious conduct and moral transgressions.

4.2.4. Expanding the Text through Semantic Proliferation:

As previously noted, this stage represents the most advanced and most challenging level of interpretation, as it does not rely on direct contextual clues, signals, or indicators. Instead, it depends on linking the metonymic image not to its linguistic or rhetorical background -which has already been addressed- but to its secondary implications that lie on the margins of the rhetorical message.

In the verse under study, we may identify several such meanings:

- The poet presents himself as altruistic, self-restrained, and generous. He does not ask others for help in times of need, nor does he share in their wealth; rather, he insists on sharing his own wealth with those in need. These are qualities associated with nobility and leadership, suggesting that he belongs to the elite of his tribe—or at least aspires to emulate them.
- A strong sense of self-respect and refusal to remain in a place where one's dignity is not preserved, coupled with readiness to leave such a place without hesitation.
- A spirit of pride and self-assertion characteristic of both the poet and the Arab ethos more generally: truth is what one perceives as truth, and falsehood is what one perceives as falsehood. The poet attributes his dissatisfaction with a place solely to himself, regardless of others' views.

We observe that the verse remarkably condenses all these psychological meanings into two simple expressions. Indeed, one of the most difficult aspects of description is the portrayal of inner states -of the soul, emotion, and feeling. While simile is often more directly associated with descriptive clarity, metonymy in this instance surpasses it, competing with and even exceeding its expressive power.

4. 3. The third metonymic image (Jarir, n.d., p. 172):

A people in whom you see the rust of iron upon them, and the white Qubṭurī garments turned black from the Yalāmiq.

This verse is also from a poem in which he satirizes “al-Farazdaq” and boasts about his own tribe. *al-Qubṭurī*: white garments, said to be made of linen; *al-Yalāmiq*: singular *yalmāqī*, a padded Persian garment.

In the verse there are two metonymic images. The first: (you see the rust of iron upon them). The verb “*you see*” is a visual verb, its object is “*the rust of iron*”, and the prepositional phrase (*upon them*) functions as a circumstantial qualifier of *rust*.

The second image is: (and the Qubṭurī garments from the Yalāmiq are black). *al-Qubṭurī* is coordinated with *rust of iron*, and *black* is a second object complement. According to grammatical analysis, the verse can be paraphrased as: you see upon them the rust of iron, just as you see the white Yalāmiq garments upon them turned black. The original form should have used (*aswad* – black in singular) to agree with *al-Qubṭurī*, but the poet used (*sudan* – plural) for the sake of adjacency (syntactic proximity).

Through this approach, we attempt to identify the sources of vitality in both metonymic images, starting from the surface or utilitarian meaning -as some call it- towards the level of deeper significations.

4. 3. 1. Returning to the original meaning:

(You see the rust of iron upon them) is a descriptive clause for *a people*. The poet describes them as having the rust of iron visible on their clothing. Iron here is metaphorically understood as weaponry, by considering what it represents (metonymy). This is a common usage in classical poetry, to the extent that metaphor nearly becomes literal usage.

At this level, nothing can be added beyond the apparent meaning, which is the explicit sense carried by the structure as originally intended. It may be interpreted literally, since the metonymic image may allow the intended meaning to overlap with the literal one in one of its two aspects. But does this literal aspect achieve the rhetorical purpose- as rhetoricians say -or the aesthetic value -as proponents of aesthetics argue?

The clause (you see the Qubṭurī garments from the Yalāmiq turned black) is also descriptive. In its apparent sense, it indicates that their garments have become dark after having been bright white. We should not indulge in overinterpretation beyond this surface meaning, which is the direct literal signification of the structure. Yet these two meanings are certainly not the intended ones in themselves, due to the absence of imagination, strangeness, and wonder.

4. 3. 2. Going beyond the apparent meaning:

In (you see the rust of iron upon them), contextual association inevitably leads us to understand that these people frequently carry weapons, and that due to constant use, the weapons have mixed with their sweat and left traces of rust on their clothing. But we may ask: is this really the poet's intended meaning? Is it not possible that these people carry weapons merely for adornment rather than for combat? Could it not be that Jarir's people are among those referred to by al-Mutanabbi (al-Mutanabbi, 1986, p. 343):

Weapons are carried by all people,

But not every clawed creature is a beast of prey.

What is certain is that describing them as frequent bearers of weapons does not necessarily add anything to their praise. Perhaps the meaning is deeper than that, as will be seen in the second level.

The second metonymic image (and the Qubṭurī garments from the Yalāmiq are black) initially suggests, upon first reading at the boundary between literal and figurative meaning, that their white garments have become soiled and turned black. The poet has selected the *Qubṭurī* garment, a white linen cloth, for this depiction.

White garments quickly become dirty, especially for those living in the hot environment typical of the poet's setting. However, we are certain that this is not the poet's intended meaning. The staining of their garments with sweat and the like indicates frequent exposure to the dust of battles and military engagements.

4. 3. 3. Entering the deeper meaning:

The relationship between (the traces of rust) and (frequent carrying of weapons) leads us to another relationship: (frequent wars). And frequent wars, in turn, necessarily imply that the poet's people are of great strength and courage, constantly moving from one battle to another without pause, always bearing their weapons. The effect of iron mixed with their sweat becomes visible on their clothing, so much so that an observer cannot fail to notice it.

This is a well-known metonymy, previously used by al-Nābigha when he said (al-Dhubyani al-Nābigha, 2005, p. 56):

Covered in the rust of iron, as if they were

Under a fortress, a swarm of cattle-guards.

It is noteworthy that Jarir himself used a similar image in another context, but with a different rhetorical purpose, when he said (Jarir, n.d., p. 202):

When she saw the rust of iron on his skin,

His complexion became dull and his fingers short.

In (when she saw the rust of iron on his skin), there is a subtle insinuation against al-Farazdaq that his grandfather was a blacksmith, spending his life among iron and forges, hence the trace of rust on his skin.

Although both images come from the same source, the first aims at exaggerating the praise of his people's strength, while the second aims at subtly insulting al-Farazdaq's lineage. The determining factor here is context, because the metonymic image, however independent it may appear, cannot be interpreted without its guiding context.

Likewise, the relationship between (the blackening of white garments) and (their exposure to battle dust) leads us to another meaning: (frequent charge and retreat), which again signifies their renowned strength in warfare.

4. 3. 4. Unleashing the text's meanings:

If we attempt to delve into the final level of interpretive reading of the first image, we may note:

- The excessive exaggeration in his claim that his people's frequent carrying of weapons left traces of rust on their clothes. This exaggeration is not logically impossible -as rhetoricians say- which makes it appealing to the soul. No image, no matter how rich in meanings of valor, can replace this metonymy with all its force and dynamism.

- It is a composite image made of inanimate, sensory elements (iron, rust, blackness, al-Qubṭurī garments, al-Yalāmiq). Yet the “alchemy” of metonymy has transformed them into a vivid scene filled with life and expressive power.
- The poet’s environment is one that venerates war, since it is a central aspect of their daily life.
- The poet’s skill appears in portraying the boldness of his people in confronting their enemies while being unarmored. Had he added another sensory element -such as shields- to the materials forming his metonymic image, he would not have achieved the same level of exaggeration in describing their courage. By saying “you see upon them,” and not “you see upon their shields,” he intensifies the sense of their exposure and bravery.
- The image also shows that his people were somewhat luxurious, as they wear linen while others wear wool or coarse hair garments.
- War, which frightens the cowardly, is approached by his people in their finest clothes. They treat battle as an occasion that pleases them, dressing for it as one would dress in one’s most elegant attire when attending a joyful event.

In this section, we observe the abundance of sensory elements that the poet’s skill transforms into rhetorical magic, carrying us through the space of the creative work, transporting us from one time to another and from one environment to another. The poet’s ability to construct metonymic composition reveals the layers of poetic artistry and the pulse of emotion behind it.

4. 4. The fourth metonymic image (Jarir, n.d., p. 588):

O you man who lets his turban hang loosely
This is your time; my time has already passed.

This verse is the opening of a short passage of three lines addressed to “‘Awn ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh.” The commentator of the dīwān does not clarify who this ‘Awn ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh was, nor his position in relation to the caliphate or his status under Caliph ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān. However, this is not essential, since we can interpret the metonymic image without such details; context alone is sufficient to guide interpretation.

4. 4. 1. Returning to the literal basis:

The verse contains two closely linked metonymic images: (the one who lets his turban hang loosely) and (this is your time; my time has passed). This connection is syntactic, and separating them would disrupt the rhetorical coherence of their meaning, since the second phrase functions as the response to the vocative expression in the first.

A reader may not immediately recognize this type of metonymy, which is closer to insinuation and suggestion, because its indicators are indirect. Thus, understanding it requires mental effort. Both expressions, despite their simplicity, are full of hints and implications. We will not enter into the rigid classifications of

classical rhetoricians, such as those reported by al-Qazwīnī from al-Sakkākī, who divided metonymy into allusion, suggestion, hint, and indication. What matters here is not classification, but the metonymic process itself: any structure that contains a valid metonymy is open to interpretation. Therefore, we will focus only on the first image.

(The one who lets his turban hang loosely): letting the turban hang is a known way of wearing it. The turban has long been part of Arab dress since ancient times. The first impression is purely visual: a man standing at the caliph's gate wearing a turban with its end hanging between his shoulders. This is a superficial depiction, almost like a photographic image, limited to outward appearance and practical description.

4. 4. 2. Moving beyond the apparent meaning:

If we go beyond the surface meaning, the association in “the one who lets his turban hang loosely” becomes a metonymy for the man's dignity, refinement, and social standing, since wearing the turban in this manner was traditionally associated with honor and noble status. But what lies beyond this implication?

4. 4. 3. Entering the hidden meaning:

The description of the turban's position is clearly not meant to remain at this simple physical observation related to 'Awn ibn 'Ubayd Allāh's appearance. Arabs did not usually praise a man for his clothing or appearance alone, since their value system was grounded in collective ideals of manliness, virtue, and noble character.

We must therefore search for a deeper justification. The sign of honor suggested by the turban points subtly to a hidden implication: that the man addressed holds influence within the caliphal court, that he is someone through whom needs are fulfilled, possibly a gatekeeper or chamberlain who grants or withholds access. The poet is standing at the gate of the caliph hoping for his needs to be fulfilled.

From this deeper level, the poet is not merely describing clothing; he is activating in the listener the idea of status, authority, and control over access -far more than simple generosity. Yet he achieves all this through an indirect, concealed mode of expression rather than explicit statement.

It is noteworthy that the poet selects a sensory detail directly related to the addressee -the turban- rather than more abstract qualities like lineage or honor. If he had attempted to list all such qualities explicitly, it would not have achieved the same effect.

Jarir's choice is deliberate: the turban becomes a condensed sign capable of generating multiple meanings through implication. This is precisely the function of metonymy. It also protects the poet's dignity, allowing him to request indirectly rather than explicitly, relying on the listener's ability to infer meaning. The Arab audience, adept in interpretation, is expected to understand what is only hinted at rather than stated outright.

4. 4. 4. “Detonation of the text through meanings”:

The meanings of this image are as numerous as every minor detail concealed beneath this simple expression. A skilled reader could even develop an independent study from it if desired. Among these meanings, we mention:

- The distinction of nobles and power-holders in the poet’s era, particularly through the specific manner of wearing and arranging turbans.
- The situation suggests the seriousness of the office of *ḥijāba* (chamberlainship), since access to the caliph and the delivery of petitions are only possible through this position.
- This office is usually assigned only to Arab nobles, and sometimes to close relatives of the ruling authority.

5. Conclusion :

- Metonymy has a stronger power of imagery than metaphor and simile, because it is based on pure evocation, transferring meaning from an ordinary linguistic structure to a more refined and artistic one.
- Metonymy (especially that related to the expression of a quality) has an exceptional ability to set mental scenes in motion through a cognitive process that may be simple at times and complex at others, due to the multiplicity of clues it provides, without requiring structural elements as in extended simile.
- The movement of the metonymic image is free and unrestricted, unlike that of implicit simile or metaphor.
- The metonymic image depends on a deep understanding of the literary discourse context, namely the relationship between the metonymic structure and the surrounding social and cultural values.
- The claim that metonymy lacks expressive power and is incapable of creating imagery, as argued by some scholars (Joseph Michel Shrim, 1987, p. 76), is a false claim. Even if this judgment may apply to Western rhetorical tradition, it does not apply to our Arabic tradition. The analysis itself is the proof.
- Metonymy has a remarkable ability to express abstract meanings through concrete, sensory elements.
- It extends its influence over the entire literary discourse context, whereas simile and metaphor are often limited to partial aspects of it. Metonymy is therefore broader than a mere figurative device.
- It is based on breaking the mental links between the sign and its implied meaning without requiring structured components, whereas metaphor and simile depend on constructed relationships between elements of the image.

- Metonymy is more concise than other figures, as it relies on implication and suggestion: a single metonymic image may express what several metaphors together would express.
- Its eloquence lies in concealment, whereas metaphor relies on omission. And concealment is more powerful than mere omission.
- Metonymic imagery is more frequent in the poetry of the pre-Islamic era, the early Islamic period, and the Umayyad era: these are truly the ages of metonymy par excellence.

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