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The Psychological Dimensions of Poetic Imagery in Al-Khansaa's Elegy: The Eye Motif as an Expression of Grief and Subconscious Emotions

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Abstract

Objectives: This study examines the psychological dimensions of poetic imagery in Al-Khansaa's poetry and their influence on the composition of her imagery. It specifically focuses on the motif of the eye as an example, exploring its emotional connotations and connection to the subconscious.

Methods: The study employs a descriptive-analytical approach to provide a comprehensive analysis of the linguistic and stylistic characteristics of Al-Khansaa's poetic collection.

Results: The findings reveal that Al-Khansaa's poetry bears a psychological imprint that reflects her deep inner impulses. Her poetic collection predominantly focuses on elegy, particularly lamentations for her brothers Sakhr and Mu'awiya. She replaces traditional preludes with ocular motifs at the openings of her poems, driven by psychological depth. The eye in her poetry serves as an objective correlative for her brother Sakhr. Poetic imagery in her work functions both internally, as a reflection of her personal grief, and externally, as a means of engaging her audience. The study also indicates that through the cascade of poetic images, Al-Khansaa attempts to reconstruct her internally defeated self and maintain her coherence.

Conclusions: The study reveals that Al-Khansaa dedicated her abundant poetic talent almost entirely to elegy. The strong connection between elegy, the poet's psychological state, and emotional responses vividly mirrors her sorrowful and longing soul overwhelmed by loss. Thus, elegy serves as a fertile ground for psychoanalytical literary studies.

Keywords: Al-Khansaa's poetry, eye motif, elegy, emotional connotations, psychoanalytical literary studies.

الأبعاد النفسية للصور الشعرية في رثاء الخنساء: دلالة العين كتعبير عن الحزن والانفعالات اللاواعية

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ملخّص

الأهدافُ: بحثت هذه الدراسة في الأبعاد النفسية للصورِ الشعريةِ في شعرِ الخنساءِ وتأثيرها على تكوينِ صورِها الشعريةِ وتركزُ بشكلٍ خاصٍ على دلالةِ العينِ كأحدِ الرموزِ وتستكشفُ معانيها العاطفيةَ وارتباطَها بالمستوى اللاوعي.

المنهجية: اعتمدت الدراسةُ على المنهجِ الوصفيّ التحليليّ لتقديمِ تحليلٍ شاملٍ للخصائصِ اللغويةِ والأسلوبيةِ في شعرِ الخنساءِ.

النتائج: أظهرت النتائجُ أن شعرَ الخنساءِ يحملُ بصمةً نفسيةً تعكسُ دوافعَها الداخليةَ العميقةَ. يركزُ مجموعُ شعرِها بشكلٍ رئيسيّ على الرثاءِ، خاصةً في مراثي أخويها صخرٍ ومعاوية. استبدلتِ المقدماتِ التقليديةَ بالرموزِ العينيةِ في افتتاحياتِ قصائدِها، مدفوعةً بالعمقِ النفسيّ. العينُ في شعرِها تُعدُّ بمثابةِ معادلٍ موضوعيّ لأخيها صخر. تعملُ الصورُ الشعريةُ في عملِها على تحقيقِ هدفين: أحدُهما داخليٌّ يتعلقُ بالشاعرةِ نفسها، وآخرُ خارجيٌّ يتعلقُ بالجمهورِ. كما أظهرت النتائجُ أن الخنساءَ من خلالِ تدفقِ الصورِ الشعريةِ، حاولتْ إعادةَ بناءِ ذاتِها المنهزمةِ داخليًا والحفاظِ على تماسكِها.

الخلاصة: كشفتْ الدراسةُ أن الخنساءَ خصصتْ معظمَ موهبتِها الشعريةِ للرثاءِ، مع بعضِ الاستثناءاتِ. كما كشفتْ الدراسةُ عن العلاقةِ القويةِ بين الرثاءِ والحالةِ النفسيةِ للشاعرةِ، وارتباطِه بالاستجاباتِ العاطفيةِ، مما يعكسُ بوضوحٍ روحَ الشاعرةِ الحزينةِ والمشتاقةِ المغمورةِ بالفقدِ. وبالتالي، يعدُّ الرثاءُ أرضًا خصبةً للدراساتِ الأدبيةِ النفسيةِ.

الكلماتُ الدالة: شِعرُ الخنساء، رمز العين، الرثاء، الدلالات العاطفية، الدراسات الأدبية النفسية.

1. Introduction

The reader of Al-Khansaa's poetic anthology feels as though they are in a real mourning gathering, standing amidst elegies saturated with expressions of weeping, wailing, lamentation, self-inflicted grief, and prayers for death and destruction. These poems express wishes for the ruin of civilization and the end of the world due to the loss of loved ones. Al-Khansaa distinguished herself from other poets of her time by creating elegies that are nearly unparalleled. She poured her rich poetic talent into the single purpose of lamentation, dedicating all her literature to this theme, with rare exceptions. Elegy is closely tied to the poet's psychological state and emotional reaction, serving as a vivid and natural reflection of the sorrowful and grieving poet, tormented by loss, longing, and pain. As such, elegy provides fertile ground for the psychoanalytic study of literature (Ahmed & Mahdi, 2015; Al-Mansouri, 2024; Bahri, 2022; Bani-Khair et al., 2024; Essa et al., 2023).

A reader of Al-Khansaa's work cannot help but marvel at her reaction to the deaths of her brothers, particularly Sakhr, asking such questions: Who was Sakhr? What made him unique? Were his qualities and virtues unmatched? Or was Al-Khansaa exaggerating her grief and mourning for him? These questions naturally occupy the mind of the audience as they explore Al-Khansaa's poetry. The death of her brothers profoundly influenced her literary output, painting her poems in the red of blood and the black of grief. Her artistic imagery is steeped in tears and cries, crowded with artistic elements as her emotions overflow. Her imagery carries profound psychological dimensions and striking aspects (Al-Gayam et al., 2024; Essa et al., 2023; et al., 2024; Shehabat et al., 2025; Rababah et al., 2024; Rabab'a et al., 2023).

2. The Nature and Psychological Impact of Imagery

Al-Khansaa is among the pre-Islamic poets who witnessed the advent of Islam and embraced it. The pre-Islamic era has distinctive features on an artistic level, as every era is shaped by its social, cultural, and intellectual environment. In this period, Arab life was simple, revolving around pastoralism and nomadism across vast, barren deserts. Surrounding them were sands, tents, rocks, snakes, scorpions, and at night, the moon, stars, and solitude (Aldowkat et al., 2024; Al-Jezawi et al., 2024; Amaireh, 2022).

Poets drew their imagination from this vast sensory world. Their reliance on sensory perception led to detailed and precise descriptions in their poetry, as if the poet were a sculptor crafting a statue rather than a poem (Aliwi, 2021; Dayf, 1975, p. 221).

The dominant characteristic of this era is pure sensory expression. This sensory focus often limited the expansion of meanings in poetry but did not render their artistic imagery stagnant or dull. Instead, poets infused their imagery with movement and vitality, reflecting their dynamic and unsettled way of life (Dayf, 1975, p. 223).

In mourning her brother, Al-Khansaa says:

يا عيني ابكي فارساً حَسَنَ الطِّعان على الفرسْ

كاللَّيثِ خفَّ لغيلِهِ يحمي فريسَتَهُ شَكِسْ

"O my eye, weep for a knight, skilled in combat on horseback,

Like a lion, swift to its prey, guarding its catch with ferocity."

(Diwan of Al-Khansaa, p. 69.)

Here, she compares her brother to a swift and protective lion. This vivid and dynamic sensory image stems from the subconscious and the unconscious. Al-Khansaa's surroundings heavily influenced her, and her meanings and imagery naturally emerged from this environment. She aligned with the poetic norms of her era, grounding her imagery in sensory perception. In their artistic depictions, poets of the time personified meanings by linking them to tangible realities (Fidouh, 1992, p. 320; Al-Rawashdeh et al., 2023), as sensory perception is the primary path to self-awareness and understanding.

She says:

أرعى النُجوم وما كُلِّفْتُ رِعْيَتَها وتارةً أَتغشَّى فضل أطماري

"I watch the stars, though I was not tasked to guard them,

At times, I cover myself with the remnants of my cloak." (Diwan of Al-Khansaa, p. 51.)

Examining the near and distant psychological motivations behind this and similar imagery reveals that sensory

expression does not equate to superficiality or narrow-mindedness. On the contrary, it emerges from the depths of the soul.

When Al-Khansaa says:

تروي سنان الرمح طعنتُهُ والخيلُ قد خاضت دماً يجري

بمقوَّمٍ لَدْنِ الكعوبِ سِنانُه ذَرْبِ الشَّباةِ كقادمِ النَّسْرِ

"The spear's tip quenches its thirst,

As the horses wade through flowing blood,

On a slender shaft with sharp edges,

Like the talons of an eagle." (Diwan of Al-Khansaa, p. 50.)

She constructs her imagery using pure sensory elements. She likens the spear's tip to a thirsty person quenching their thirst and compares the spearhead to the talons of an eagle. This sensory imagery rests on a deep psychological foundation: Al-Khansaa's desire to emphasize her intended meaning to impact the listener. Overwhelmed by grief and anger at her brother's death, her imagery serves as a psychological outlet, calming her inner turmoil and relieving her intense emotional pain.

In this, there is an emphasis on the intended meaning and its influence on the recipient through evoking the appropriate emotional response within them (Majid Abdul Hamid Al-Naji, *The Psychological Foundations of Arabic Rhetorical Styles*, University Foundation, Lebanon, 1984, p. 180-181). The sensory images in Al-Khansaa's poetry were not devoid of psychological functions, as they reflected her deep instincts in equal length and direction. This confirms what some critics have argued, that the personifications in ancient Arabic poetry were stronger than the mental images, a notion we can perceive in many of our poetic heritage, particularly pre-Islamic poetry (Al-Banna, 2022; Fidouh, 1992, p. 323).

When Al-Khansaa resorts to imagery, she tends to compare one tangible thing to another, as she likened the horse, a purely tangible entity, to the quail, another tangible entity, saying:

وابكِي أَخاكِ لخيلٍ كالقطا عُصَبَاً فقدْنَ لَمَّا ثوى سَيباً وأنهابا

"And mourn for your brother with horses like quails, a flock,

Lost when he lay in a grave, gone and captured" (Diwan of Al-Khansaa, p. 19).

Here, the horse is the subject, the quail is the object, the tool is "like," and the shared characteristic is the flock. This comparison is fully realized; it is not an end in itself, but rather a means to achieve a psychological goal: to satisfy the self by listing the virtues of the deceased, offering a sense of psychological relief by providing him his rightful share of mourning and lamentation. This image thus fulfills a clear psychological function.

Thus, sensory imagery predominates in Al-Khansaa's poetry, as it does with other poets of her era, with her images serving multiple psychological functions, conveying her feelings and carrying the burdens of a sorrowful, pained, and tortured soul, thereby captivating and influencing the listener, and owning their heart. This is another psychological dimension in Al-Khansaa's literature at the level of artistic imagery; an image has no artistic value unless it is linked to a psychological or symbolic function. The standard for comparing images is more psychological and symbolic than artistic and formal.

In the view of Muslim philosophers, the reality of imagination is based on evoking a psychological state in the recipient and addressing them in a way that creates the required emotional response. However, this can only be achieved through an imaginative image that stirs the soul and is accepted by it (*Fidouh*, 1992, p. 339). Therefore, the psychological function of the image is not limited to Al-Khansaa alone, as the function of the image is divided into two parts:

1. A subjective function related to the creator's (Al-Khansaa's) psyche, relieving pressures of sadness, pain, and oppression.
2. An external function related to the recipient, affecting their psyche, swaying their emotions, and persuading them.

When Al-Khansaa says:

مثلَ السنانِ تضيْء الليلَ صورتُهُ جلدُ المريرةِ حرٌّ وابنُ أَحرارِ

أبكي فتى الحيّ نالتهُ منيَّتهُ وكلُّ نفسٍ إلى وقتٍ ومقدارِ

"Like the spear, his image lights the night,

The skin of the enduring, noble and free.

I mourn the youth of the tribe, whose fate has claimed him,

For every soul has its time and measure." (Diwan of Al-Khansaa, p. 52)

She portrays the deceased to justify her excessive mourning, and the image here serves another purpose: to explain the reason for her intense weeping, thus persuading the listener to understand the cause of her sorrow. There is no need for people to wonder at her loud wailing and painful cries once they understand the image of the deceased, who appears like the gleaming spear tips that shine through the darkness of the night, lighting the gloom, and dispelling the shadows of the night. She says elsewhere:

عينيَّ جودا بدمعٍ غيرِ منزور واعولا إنَّ صخراً خيرُ مقبور

لا تخذلاني فإنّي غيرُ ناسيةٍ لذكرِ صخرٍ حليفِ المجد والخيرِ

يا صخرُ من لطرادِ الخيلِ إذْ وُزِعَتْ وللمطايا إذْ يُشْدَدْنَ بالكورِ

ولليتامى وللأَضيافِ إنْ طرقوا أبياتنا لفعالٍ منكَ مخبورِ

"My eyes, give your tears freely,

And cry that "Sakhr" is the best of the buried.

Do not forsake me, for I shall not forget

The memory of Sakhr, companion of glory and goodness.

Oh Sakhr, of the horse's swift charge,

And of the camels as they raced along the paths.

For orphans and guests who knocked on our doors,

His deeds are renowned."

She depicts her brother Sakhr, then justifies the reason for her exaggerated weeping and mourning. He was the brave knight, the generous, noble man who fed the hungry orphans and honored the wandering guests, the avenger of his people. Thus, we feel that Al-Khansaa, deep within, is almost confessing: after all these virtues, qualities, and values, could I not cry excessively for him?

3. The Creation of the Image and Its Psychological Aftermath

The process of creating the artistic image is based on unified principles that are well-known to all poets, but each poet retains a distinctiveness in the crafting of the image. This distinctiveness is a stylistic fingerprint that sets them apart from others. Its value and significance vary according to the poet's genius and their ability to produce impressive imagery. The mental processes that give rise to imagination and the artistic image begin with sensory perception, which is based on the five senses, followed by visualization, where the mind recalls absent sensory concepts, just as it conjures an image of a scene previously witnessed. The final mental process is imagination, which arises from visualization and differs from it in that it creates new, unfamiliar compositions within familiar contexts (Sharad, 1998, p. 34-35.)

Thus, the poet's role comes into play, highlighting their genius and showing their uniqueness through the artistic abilities demonstrated in the creation of these images. If we review Al-Khansaa's poetry and the poetic images it contains, we find that they rely on a method of construction and composition characterized by uniqueness, skill, and a harmonious blend. Al-Khansaa says:

يا عينُ جودي بدمعٍ منكِ مسكوبِ كلؤلؤٍ جال في الأَسماط مثقوبِ

"O eyes, shed your tears freely,

Like pearls that roll in the fabric, pierced." (Diwan of Al-Khansaa, p. 23)

The image in this line is constructed in coherent and harmonious stages, starting with a call to the eyes (personification), followed by a command (personification), then the comparison of tears to pearls (simile), and finally describing the pearls (pierced pearls rolling in fabric). Returning to the previous line, Al-Khansaa says:

وابكِي أخاكِ لخيلٍ كالقطا عُصُبَاً فقدْنَ لَمَّا ثوى سيباً وأنهابا

"Mourn for your brother with horses like quails,

Lost when he lay in a grave, gone and captured."

Here, the image is a composite: it begins with a close image (comparing the horses to quails) and a slightly distant one

(comparing the horses to humans with the phrase:

فقدنَ لَمَّا ثوى سَيباً وأَنهابا .....

"Lost when he lay in a grave, gone and captured").

This carries a psychological implication, which is the intensity of the emotional moment and the richness of the psychological state Al-Khansaa is experiencing. The meanings are dense with images, and one verse is filled with numerous images. This serves to stir the recipient's emotions, sway their heart, and speak to their soul with emotional depth and sincerity.

For Muslim philosophers, imagination is linked to the psychological impact of poetic expressions. Thus, the poetic image, in their view, imitates emotions (Fidouh, 1992, p. 340).

Al-Khansaa describes her brother Sakhr as:

قد كان حصناً شديدَ الرُّكنِ ممتنعا ليثاً إذا نزلَ الفتيان أو ركبوا

أغرُّ أَزهرُ مثل البدرِ صورتُهُ صافٍ عتيقٌ فما في وجهه كذبُ

"He was a fortress with a strong foundation,

A lion when young men descended or mounted.

Bright, radiant, like the full moon his appearance,

Clear and ancient, no deceit in his face." (Diwan of Al-Khansaa, p. 22)

Sakhr is depicted as one of the exceptional men—he is a stronghold protecting his family from oppression, a lion who stands against injustice and aggression. His face is described as pure and flushed with redness, like the shining, clear full moon, the river untainted by any impurity. The image here is based on emphasis; Al-Khansaa does not settle for describing him with one element but continues by enumerating aspects of his image. She compares him to the full moon, and then proceeds to describe the moon's image as a fortress with a strong foundation, untouchable. This image serves an important psychological function: it reinforces the meaning and clarifies emotions.

4. The Psychological Dimensions of the Image and Its Aftermath

The psychological dimensions of the image include convincing the recipient, swaying their heart, and affecting their soul. Another psychological aspect is the depth of emotion in Al-Khansaa's poetry and its artistic authenticity. She elaborates in the creation of the image in a spontaneous, cascading manner. The image here is connected to the sufficient psychological atmosphere within the poet herself. Here, imagination plays a role in conveying the emotional experience accompanying the event. Al-Yafi (1982) argues that poetry is a conceptual construction in emotional language (Al-Yafi, 1982, p. 40.)

In any case, the poetic image, in its internal connotation, is formed from a collection of prior intuitions and feelings that the creator has acquired from the collective memory. Accordingly, the context of emotional and subconscious memory governs the artistic creation process, which relies on focus and condensation. As a result, the poetic image remains an artistic work indicating the greatness of the imaginative creativity that the memory produces and nurtures (Fidouh, 1992, p. 368.)

The image also points to the prevailing emotion, colored by the hidden inner capacity, in order to reveal the essence of the image, which expresses its existence through artistic creation.

(Fidouh, 1992, p. 368, and Abdul Hamid Jida, *New Trends in Contemporary Arabic Poetry*, Naufal Publishing House, Beirut, 1980, p. 364.) This is evident in Al-Khansaa's work, where she relied on images acquired from collective memory, either consciously or unconsciously, as in her lines:

ألا ليتَ أُمّي لم تلدْني سويَّةً وكنْتُ تراباً بين أَيدي القوابل

"Oh, if only my mother had not given birth to me,

And I were dust between the hands of midwives."

(i.e., I wish my mother had not given birth to me in healthy way) (Diwan of Al-Khansaa, p. 86)

She says:

بكتْ عيني وحُقَّ لها العويلُ وهاض جناحيَ الحدثُ الجليلُ

"My eyes have wept, and rightfully so,

And my wings are disturbed by the great event." (Diwan of Al-Khansaa, p. 86)

This image is familiar in collective memory and is commonplace in the psychology of the recipient. She also says:

وإنَّ صخراً لتأتمُّ الهداةُ بهِ كأنَّهُ علمٌ في رأسهِ نارُ

"Indeed, Sakhr is followed by those who seek guidance,

As though he is a standard with a fire burning atop his head." (Diwan of Al-Khansaa, p. 45)

The Image of the Eye in Al-Khansaa's Poetry

The eye occupies a significant space in Al-Khansaa's poetry, among the various poetic images she used to express her feelings and psychology. The image of the eye appears in two main forms: One is addressing the eye, which constitutes the larger portion of the eye imagery. The other is describing the eye, which occurs less frequently than the former.

Most of Al-Khansaa's poems begin with addressing the eye. The beginnings of nearly all of her poems start with mentioning the eye and addressing it in a dialogue. Al-Khansaa frequently used this device, which is a personification of the eye by assigning it the qualities of a rational being through direct address. Al-Khansaa says:

يا عينُ مالكِ لا تبكينَ تسكابا إذْ رابَ دهرٌ وكان الدَّهرُ ريَّابا

" O eye, why do you not shed tears

When time has been harsh, and the world has been deceitful?" (*Diwan of Al-Khansaa*, p. 19)

She says:

أَعينِ ألا فابكي لصخرٍ بدَرَّةٍ إذا الخيلُ من طولِ الوجيفِ اقشعرَّت

"O eyes, mourn for Sakhr with a precious tear,

When the horses shudder from the long gallop." (Diwan of Al-Khansaa, p. 25)

She says:

يا عينُ جودي بدمعٍ منكِ مسكوبِ كلؤلؤٍ جال في الأَسماطِ مثقوبِ

"O eye, shed your tears freely,

Like pearls that roll in fabric, pierced." (Diwan of Al-Khansaa, p. 23)

In general, we find that Al-Khansaa follows this consistent pattern throughout all her poems in which she addresses the eye. As we observe, the address comes in the form of a call, which is a personification of the eye, assigning it the qualities of rational beings when she calls out to it. This personification is supported and accompanied by another personification in the form of a request (command), where Al-Khansaa calls to the eye and then commands it to weep (an evocative pattern). She does not stop at this form of personification but incorporates it into accompanying images. She compares the eye's tears to pierced pearls woven into fabrics. At times, she addresses the eye in the dual form:

عينيَّ جودا بدمعٍ منكما جودا جودا ولا تعدا في اليوم موعودا

هل تدريان على من ذا سبلتُكما على ابن أمِّي أبيتُ الليلَ معمودا

"O my eyes, give your tears,

Give them, and do not hold back on the promised day."

Do you know upon whom I have shed them?

Upon my brother, with whom I spent many nights unhealthy ."

If Imru' al-Qais addressed his companions in his famous elegy opening by saying:

قفا نبكِ من ذكرى حبيبٍ ومنزلِ بسقط اللوى بين الدخولِ فحوملِ

"Let us stop and weep for the memory of a beloved and a home,

At the fall of Al-Lawa between the entry and Humeil."

Al-Khansaa, on the other hand, replaced this pause and the address to companions with an address to her own eyes. The psychological dimension of this image reflects Al-Khansaa's deep engagement in exploring her inner drives. In her view, a single eye cannot release the pressure of pain, sorrow, and oppression. It is not capable of expelling the emotional charge that is trapped deep within her. Therefore, she turns to expand her self-expression and finds other outlets to release the

pressures, pain, and grief that boil inside her.

The thinker, Jamil Saliba, is accurate in his statement: "Near this tangible world, there exists a second world that cannot be touched by hand, seen by the eye, or heard by the ear. It is perceived through imagination. There is nothing between it and the human being except the blink of an eye and the flash of a thought. We turn to it in times of sorrow and days of misery, seeing in it everything beautiful and noble" (Saliba, p. 56.).

This insight is what led Al-Khansaa to this imaginary world, composed of images, personifications, and similes. In this case, she adds the imperative "Jooda" (give generously) three times, and this verb carries undeniable psychological significance. It reflects the poet's admiration for her brother Sakhr, who was known for his generosity. Al-Khansaa unconsciously borrowed this term from her brother's lexicon, which indicates that the unconscious mind (the subconscious) significantly contributed to the construction of images in her poetry. The repetition of "Jooda" three times serves an important psychological function, emphasizing the intended meaning, influencing the listener, and convincing them of the truth in what is seen and said.

In her address to her eyes, I also perceive a deeper, absent, and distant conversation—her address to her deceased brother Sakhr, whom death has hidden in its secrets and depths. The repetition of "Jooda" three times is an objective counterpart to Sakhr, the deceased brother, who is eulogized and commemorated. In truth, Al-Khansaa is addressing her brother Sakhr, and only metaphorically addressing her eyes. Her eyes, therefore, serve as a poetic device to compensate for her emotional loss and to fill the emotional void caused by her grief.

It is worth noting that the depiction of the eye—constructed through the address, request, description, and repetition—appears in the beginnings of Al-Khansaa's poems, as if the eye itself has replaced the traditional motif of standing by the ruins. She replaced this opening with the address to her eyes. Furthermore, the image of the eye, in the context of its depiction and conversation, conveys meanings of generosity and nobility, as seen in her previous lines, such as "Jooda" (give generously) and in her phrases like:

أعينيَّ هلَّا تبكيان على صخرٍ بدمعٍ حثيثٍ لا بكيْءٍ ولا نزْر

وتستفرغان الدَّمع وتذريانه على ذي الندى والجود والسيّد الغمْر

"O my eyes, why not weep over Sakhr,

With persistent tears, no withholding, no scarcity." (Diwan of Al-Khansaa, p. 46)

And she says:

يا عينُ فيضي بدمعٍ منكِ مغزار وابكي لصخرٍ بدمعٍ منكِ مدرار

"O eyes, pour forth abundant tears,

Weep for Sakhr with tears that flow endlessly." (Diwan of Al-Khansaa, p. 51)

And she says:

يا عينُ جودي بالدموعِ السِّجالِ وابكي على صخرٍ بدمعٍ هَمُول

"O eyes, give your tears in abundance,

Weep for Sakhr with endless, deep sorrow." (Diwan of Al-Khansaa, p. 87)

She consistently asks her eyes to be generous with tears, never withholding. In her address to her eyes, we find words such as: "Jooda" (give generously), "Hathith" (persistent), "Al-Nada" (generosity), "Fidhi" (flowing), "Mudarar" (continuous), "Hamul" (unceasing), and "Tuskaba" (overflowing). These words reflect her psychological state. The psychological significance of these words and meanings points to Al-Khansaa's attempt to compensate for her loss of Sakhr and to search for an objective counterpart that matches his generosity. Sakhr was a noble and generous man, so her eyes must be equally generous with their tears. Since he never withheld generosity from anyone, how could her eyes withhold tears for him? The artistic image, therefore, is an emotional composition that fundamentally belongs to the world of sentiment more than the world of reality (Ismail, 1967, p. 127.)

The Image and Emotional Association

Al-Khansaa constructs her inner self through an external construction, which is the poetic image. The association of the elements of the image and the infiltration of its components is, in fact, the mental layers and the hidden emotional states

within her. The internal world, preserved in the poetic image, unites the brilliance of the soul with the structure of the imagined reality to explore the world of feeling, based on a new perception of the senses (Fidouh, 1992, p. 375). Al-Khansaa constructs an image of her deceased brother through emotional association:

المجدُ خُلَّتهُ والجودُ عِلَّتهُ والصدقُ حوزتُهُ إنْ قِرْنُهُ هابا
خطَّابُ محفِلَةٍ فرَّاجُ مظلَمَةٍ إنْ هابَ معضلة سنَّى لها بابا
حمَّالُ أَلويةٍ قطَّاعُ أوديةٍ شهَّادُ أَنجيةٍ للوترِ طلَّابا

"Glory was his attire, generosity his ailment,
Truth was his possession, if his lineage was honored.
A speaker of assemblies, a resolver of injustice,
If faced with a dilemma, he opened a door to it.
A bearer of standards, a wayfarer of valleys,
A witness of assemblies, a seeker of the bow."

(Diwan of Al-Khansaa, p. 20. 'خُلَّتهُ' *hultuhu* means that he is never ill but rather generous; 'حوزتُهُ' *hawzatu* means his possession; 'سنَّى' *Sannā* means to ease or open; 'أَنجيةٍ' *anjiya* refers to gatherings, and *najī* refers to people whispering to one another.)

The image of the eulogized is constructed through a series of free associations that occurred spontaneously, without any effort. This spontaneity and freedom in the association are reflected in the smooth flow of meanings, which progress gently and easily, without any forced construction. The image is layered, with each part building upon the other in an elegant, geometric fashion, indicating a well-organized structure. Al-Khansaa seems to aim, through this structure and elegance, to preserve her emotional integrity and demonstrate her composure. As such, the overarching image is filled with smaller, detailed images, creating beauty and high artistic value. Compound beauty, made from many images, as Saliba suggests, is more impactful than simple beauty, which only contains a single image (Saliba, p. 105).

The emotional and psychological association in Al-Khansaa's poetry results in layered images and crowded scenes filled with a rush of details and parts. The poetic image in Al-Khansaa's work is a collection of overlapping images, some built on top of the other, forming multiple layers. These are not isolated, singular images. The components of the image come together with others to build and portray it through the veil of free associations.

She says:

يا صخرُ قد كنتَ بدراً يُستضاءُ به فقد ثوى يومَ مُتَّ المجدُ والكرمُ

"O Sakhr, you were a moon to be lit by,
But now, with your passing, glory and generosity have ceased."

This, in turn, forms the external association that embodies the internal psychological and emotional association. The explanation of this is that the poet does not depict reality; rather, the poet depicts the idea embedded in the depths of their feelings, as perceived and felt emotionally. When the poet looks at parts of the surrounding reality and nature, and expresses them through thought and emotion, the artistic image formed by their imagination belongs to the poet's personal reality, represented in their thoughts, perceptions, and emotional experiences (Talat Abu al-Azm, *The Romantic Vision of Human Destiny in Contemporary Arab Poetry*, p. 341).

The Connection Between the Image and the Unconscious

The emotional aspect of the image is driven by the emotional situation, and the unconscious is the primary motivator and controller of the image. The relationship between the image and the unconscious is a strong, tight one. The ancients said about the imagination: "The speech to which the soul submits, causing it to open to some things and close to others, without contemplation or thought, is an emotional, non-rational reaction, whether what is spoken is believed or not" (Ibn Sina, p. 161).

According to this text, the image is built upon an emotional stimulus. This stimulus is a psychological element that creates an emotional state in the recipient. This does not mean that every image will evoke such an emotional state in the recipient; rather, it depends on the poet's talent and genius, and their ability to construct images that soothe the soul, bring

tranquility, and provide stability. This is a function related to the emotional response to the image. When Al-Khansaa says:

لقدْ صوَّتَ النَّاعي بفقدِ أخي النَّدى نداءً لعمري لا أبالكَ يُسمعُ
فقمْتُ وقد كادتْ لروعةِ هُلْكِهِ وفزعَتِهِ نفسي من الحزنِ تتبعُ

"The herald cried the loss of my generous brother,
A call that, by my life, you cannot hear."
I rose, for the horror of his passing,
And my soul, in panic, followed in sorrow." (*Diwan of Al-Khansaa*, p. 72)

This is death. It is the tragedy that steals companions and loved ones from our midst, leaving us stunned and bewildered, though we are not drunk.

She also says:

أعينيَ فيضيْ ولا تبخلي فإنَّكِ للدَّمعِ لم تبذلِ
وجودي بدمعكِ واستعبري كسحِّ الخليجِ على الجدولِ

"O my eyes, flow forth, and do not withhold,
For you have not yet offered your tears.
Be generous with your tears, and wail
Like the Gulf's rushing tides over streams." (Diwan of Al-Khansaa, p. 72)

She sees that her eyes have not yet fully wept for the one she mourns. She wants her eyes to become rivers and floods, though this is beyond human capacity. Yet, it is the soul, kindled by sorrow, grief, and tragedy. On this basis, the poetic image as the main material for internal expression of psychological fertility. Contemporary studies have considered that the relationship of this tension in the center of the self with the external world lies in the collective unconscious (Fidouh, 1992, p. 388). The poet carries within themselves the psychological material that drives and urges the production of literature, with the self-organizing the poetic production in stylistic forms. However, the essence of this artistic creation lies in the soul, for longing is the ultimate goal that psychoanalysis seeks (Al-Bustan, 1983, p. 99).

Any subject, like the subject of lamentation, is rich with psychological fertility. The calamity of death is a profound event that shakes the depths of the human soul, shedding the heart's leaves one by one, and leaving joy as a lifeless corpse, with the smoke of decay rising above it. Al-Khansaa says:

ألا ما لعينيكِ لا تُفجعُ تُبكّي لو أَنَّ البُكا ينفعُ
كأنَّ جماناً هوى مرسلاً دموعَها أو هما أَسرعُ
تحدَّرَ وانبَثَّ منه النظا مُ فانسلَّ من سلكِهِ أَجمعُ

"Why, O your eyes, do you not mourn,
You weep as if weeping were of any use.
As though pearls fell, sending down her tears,
Or perhaps they were swifter."
(*Diwan of Al-Khansaa*, pp. 72-73)

Then she says of Sakhr:

مضى وسنمضي على إثرِهِ كذاك لكلِّ فتىً مصرعُ

"He has gone, and we will follow him,
As it is for every youth, death is inevitable."

The poetic image, in this way, is an evocative language that originates from the hidden world within the self, as it delves into the depths of the unconscious to discover the hidden components of the creative process in poetry, in its interactive structure with the creative self, unified with the external existence, whose dimensions are perceived through intuitive imagery (Fidouh, 1992, p. 391).

On this basis, the poetic image, according to the critic Dr. Kamal Abu Deeb in his work *The Activity of Poetry* (Abu Deeb, 1987, pp. 20-133). Asfour (1980) suggests that Al-Jahiz, for the first time in Arab criticism, introduces the sensory aspect of poetry and its ability to evoke visual images in the mind of the recipient. This idea marks the first entry point to

the relationship between imagery and the sensory presentation of meaning (Asfour, 1980, p. 286). In summary, Al-Khansaa belongs to those whose work cannot be contained within a few pages or books, and we are still discovering much in her poetry that has not yet been revealed.

Conclusions

The study on the psychological dimensions of the poetic image in Al-Khansaa's poetry revealed that Al-Khansaa's *Diwan* is primarily dedicated to lamentation, particularly the mourning of her brothers Sakhr and Mu'awiya, and it is a sincere lamentation, not tied to personal gain. Al-Khansaa's poetry, in its entirety, bears a psychological imprint that reveals her deep internal inclinations. Al-Khansaa replaced traditional introductions with specific, concrete beginnings for her poems, driven by a psychological dimension: the search for a replacement for her lost brothers. The eye in Al-Khansaa's poetry serves as a symbolic equivalent for her brother Sakhr. The poetic image in Al-Khansaa's poetry serves two functions: a subjective one related to the creator, and an external one related to the recipient. Through the flow of poetic images, Al-Khansaa attempts to rebuild her internally defeated self while maintaining her integrity.

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