

Voice of Arabs Taabbata-Sharran: A Bandit by Name a Poet of Pride

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Abstract: *The magnitude of the Arabic language holds back from its being one of the unblemished languages in its brilliance and its reiterated capability to adapt to countless different sciences and knowledge. The Arabic language has reached creativity and ingenuity in diverse fields and genre of literature in which the supreme is poetry. This article attempts to present the inner landscapes of Taabbata-Sharran and his profession placing him in the context of both his social milieu and his age. The paper aims at studying the figurative, allegorical and appealing images in Al-Gafiah of Taabbata-Sharran in which it follows the inferential inductive critical methodology concentrating analytically on his Al-Gafiah poem. The study attempts to divulge in the analysis the appealing qualities and poetic matters as well as the rhetorical images in it with particular reference to the first ten verse lines. The article begins with an introduction to Arabia and the Arabic Poetic Language then shifts to shed light on the poet Taabbata-Sharran as a great poet of Arabia, the center of the Arabic language. It is concluded with a brief examination and comments on the poem Al-Gafiah trying to catch on the original Arab ideals, morals, integrity and beliefs in pre-Islamic Epoch it contains.*

Keywords: Arabic language, brigand, nobility, pre-Islampoeury, Thabit Al Fahmi

1. Introduction

1.1. Arabia and its Great Language

It was from Arabia that Arabic poetry was to come; for the lands were too much occupied with commercial matters and kinds of stuff to give literature any opportunity of evolution. Tribes of Arabs in Arabia used to hold a means of dominance, reinforced in the significant land of Arabia chiefly in Tihamah, Al Hejaz, the mountains of As-Sarat to which our poet Taabbata-Sharran belongs, and the region of Mecca and Medina. Mecca was a substantial center in Arabia, and tribal life was and still the most typical feature of the period preceding Islamic. Those who inspire Arab customs and make the prevailing practice of the Arabic tongue are in several cases such as poets, philosophers, thinkers, historians, storytellers. They made the Arabic tongue one of the most productive and creative in literature around the globe. They boast the blood of Arabia.

The Arabic tongue has been exposed to the alternatives, like all other prevailing tongues, and fluctuated and swung on a number of situations, so its vocabularies and verses varied via sculpture, swap and subtraction, and many imported expressions became part of it in different times before being codified and formed in times not comprehended by antiquity. However, critics, scholars as well as poets learn and get evidence from realizing and appreciating expressions enunciation and connotation. In Arabia, the Arabic language is characterized by accuracy, precision and accurateness regarding expressions and its arrangements.

Nowadays, the Islamic historians are and were predominantly "interested in the Koran, poetry and genealogy, they have described two main features in pre-Islamic history: the first, the city of Mecca and its sacred shrine, the Ka'bah; the second, the life of the nomads" (Faris, 1946: 43) through the setting of the barren but imaginative land as its landscape and with the varied reiteration "of minor raids and fights for the possession of a well or the

revenge of a murdered kinsman. Undoubtedly, Mecca was an important center in Arabia, and Bedouin life was the most characteristic feature of the pre-Islamic age" (Faris, 1946: 43). Life during pre-Islamic Arabia depended to a large degree on generosity, hospitality cordiality that the camps would support travelers to carry on their way. Thus, generosity was a body of great prominence, and the fact that the host responds in an appropriate manner was a great honor to his tribe, but the fact that the host attacked his guest was almost unimaginable. However, those who promote Arab traditions, customs, conduct and make the extreme practice of the Arabic tongue are in various instances. They are "no longer Arabs themselves; few of the legalists, philosophers, historians, poets, storytellers who adorned the Court of Baghdad and made the Arabic language one of the most prolific in literature in the world could boast the blood of Arabia" (Coke, 1929: 77). According to Browne, "The Arab mind ... is clear and positive, and the Arabic language nervous, virile, and rich both actually and potentially. The old Arabs were acute and observant people" (Thorndike, 1927: 285).

Tribes of Arabs accustomed to holding a manner of ascendancy, proven in Tihamah and Al Hejaz, the area of Mecca and Medina, and similarly in Najd or what is called "the high land of central Arabia, at the time when the earliest extant Arabic literature was produced. There can be no doubt that these spoke with all the grammatical inflections. The poetry of the period is a sufficient proof" (Chenery, 1869: 12; Dahami, 2018a). Likewise, "so far as we can tell, Mecca made a nearer approach to the contemporary standard of civilized life than any other settlement in peninsular Arabia" (Hogarth, 1922: 17).

Arab literature influenced and inspired world literature in many various areas of literature principally poetry. The utmost influence and creativeness "was in the tales of *The Arabian Nights* and it influenced different eras of the English literature. The Orientalists contributed to transfer the Arab

Culture to Europe via translation of the Arab literature to their languages" (Dahami, 2017).

If a reader, a critic or a scholar ponders over the history of each manifestation of Arabic, such as moral values, ethics, principles, culture or laws, as it spreads and outshines through its progress, he might realize the history of Arabic advances unfelt for a long epoch, and intersperses with slow but firm moving and resilient and pliable constancy originates by the passage of time to be named rebirth or revival or recovery. The reason for such rebirth repeatedly comes because of the variations of ideas by the mingling of nations and by immigrants which are claimed or necessitated sometimes by nature of the struggle, shortage, encounter, paucity, conflict, clash or fear.

Furthermore, it is also the value of political or social realizations, and the mingling of the typology, the variability of conventions, faiths and literature, in which the Arabic tongue is part of all that; it is the defending of the effects of that modifications. The Arabic tongue protected and secured all of that for periods after the disappearance of such customs or beliefs.

As for its words, critics and scholars find in it particular connotations for each expression. Examples of the accuracy of the word we find words can perform various connotations. "It was to a large extent to these fairs, and indirectly to religion, that the Arabs owed the possession of a common world outlook, common customs and obligatory notions of honor, as well as their poetic expression in the established forms of a language transcending all dialects" (Brockelmann, 1960: 9). Every nation has its own wonders in its tongue, in which many connotations can result from a few expressions. However, the Arabs are better gifted to do so than others since their tongue helps them and they are familiar to it. "From the start, therefore, what made Arabs recognizable to one another was not a geographic or an ethnic feature, but a language" (Cachia, 2002: 31). There are many instances in Arabic to make it grander such as its poetic tongue of many symbols, similes, signals, metaphors, images, and other methods of the invention.

As Zaidan delineates in the book of History of Arabic Language Literature (p. 50), poetry is one of the fine arts that Arabs call eminent or supreme arts. Some of the fine arts are music, painting, engraving and poetry. All such supreme arts denote to the beauty of nature, in which engravings depict nature as prominent, and painting portrays it with flat shapes, lines and colors. "The single notable art in an otherwise artless existence was poetry" (Bertram, 1937: 7). Nonetheless, poetry signifies nature with great thoughts and symbols. It articulates our appreciation of nature and satisfaction to it using poetry. Poetry, like music, is the tongue of the soul or is an indicator of unseen facts. It expresses the attractiveness of nature in terms and connotations and articulates it with tunes and melodies. The ancient Arabic literary writings, that obviously were inscribed by Arabs as yet unharmed by exterior influences, consist absolutely of poetry, the work of skilled rhymesters who chant of desert life and fighting, "lament over the deserted camping grounds, boast of their tribe, and abuse their enemies. It forms a distinct class of poetic composition,

which has developed its own literary standards, and attained a high standard of excellence in its way" (O'leary, 1922: 103).

In the midst of the first nations, as history specifies, there are little who have too pronounced an appreciation of stimulating poetry and so bounteous a stock of appreciated literature to boast of like the olden nation of Arabian Peninsula. "Arabs have always been remarkable for the great pride they have taken in the excellence of their language, the perfection of their literature, the sublimity of their poetry, the purity of their race, and the integrity of their moral character" (Johnson, 1917: 11). Moreover, the Arabic "tribes of the peninsula possessed a standard and common poetic language and technique, independent of tribal dialects, and uniting the Arab tribes in a single tradition and a single orally transmitted culture" (Lewis, 1960: 31).

Additionally, from the early commencement, poetry was associated to pupils' thoughts, attention and hearts in various arrangements, for instance, melodious reciting, humming, singing, and appreciating lyrical poems "with its gorgeous rhythm, beat, regularity, tune and cadence. It is involved with the whole knowledge and appreciation of the man. It is about the deep areas of practice of the relationship of the man about contentment, learning and talent" (Dahami, 2018b).

The poetry of the Pre-Islamic period remains an essential basis of Arab's culture and legacy. Such period explains Arabs' central standards of honor, dignity, gratification and brilliance and provides plenty of instances of bravery, sacrifice and romantic affection. "In the purity of his blood, his eloquence and poetry, his sword and horse, and above all his noble ancestry, the Arabian takes infinite pride" (Hitti, 1951: 28). Besides, the Arabs "were great versifiers" (Bertram, 1937: 8). In several poems of the age, poets celebrate and remember their love, superiority tribal relationships and articulate their unions or hostility. "The pre-Islamic period is known as 'Aljahelya' when Arabs were obsessed with good poetry. They would send their children to live with Bedouin tribes to learn the standard Arabic dialect (Alfoseha) and to recite oral poetry" (Alamrani, 2015). Likewise, taming and growing of horses, peaceful challenges in arms, or poetic contests in which each versifier "recited in public his compositions, formed their amusements. They were very sensible to the charms of music, poetry and oratory, and as a general rule the Arab chieftain was brave, generous, and munificent" (Wilson, 1900: 5).

The poetry of the bandit Arabic poet of pre-Islam, Taabbata-Sharran was known and esteemed in Europe before that of greatest Arab poets, similarly to his uncle of his mother and comrade of raids and a pre-Islamic Poet Taabbata-Sharran, the composer of the famous Al-Gafiah. This poem is the quintessence of Arabic tribal poetry, and there is hardly any manual on the pre-Islamic period that does not denote to it, so the conducts of the *as-sa'alik* (الصعاليك) brigands soon received noteworthy attention from European critics and orientalist, as can be perceived in the works of Al-Asfahani, Ibn Gutaiyah, Al-Asma'ai, Al-Baghdadi. However, this is not an isolated event when it comes to pre-Islam

poetry. Perhaps one of the reasons that have allowed the popularization of these figures in the West has been, specifically, the artistic dexterity of the masterpieces of pre-Islamic Arabic poetry.

2. Thabit ibn Jaber Al-Fahmi: The Poet of Pride

Thabit ibn Jaber Al-Fahmi is the real name for our poet known as Taabbata-Sharran. He is one of the bandit poets, was in the antipodes of some tyrannous leaders of the tribal values of the pre-Islamic period. However, it is difficult to avoid the attraction that Taabbata-Sharran exerts over anyone who has investigated the pre-Islamic period. "Pre-Islamic Arabia society consisted of various groups. One such group, know[n] as the vagrant-bandits (*saalik*, sing. *Sulul*), forms the subject of this entry. They were typically depicted as bandits with no fixed abode" (Fitzpatrick, 2014: 53). The themes in his poetry are almost all concentrated in one axis, namely pride, and the reason is clearly reflected by the nature of the life of this poet, Taabbata-Sharran, the man who is familiar with such life. A man struggling ghoul, pride must be the focus of his thinking and poetry, as he has a particular advantage made the linguists and poetry narrators as well as grammarians to be interested in his poetry, especially the single verses. There is almost no Arabic dictionary or book of grammar and verse without a representation of his poetry. The reason is evident that Taabbata-Sharran enjoyed the classical Arabic language. The language that is not marred by a heavy tone, in addition to his usage of phrases, expressions, and terminology as well as his usage of styles and methods that preserved for Arabic its witnesses, pieces of evidence and superiority.

His lineage, according to his Diwan (2003: 5), is Thabit ibn Jabir ibn Sufyan ibn 'Omaythal ibn 'Adi ibn Ka'b ibn Hazan but Al-Asfahani, in his book of Al-Aghani mentions the same and more; he says that Thabit is ibn Jabir ibn Sufyan ibn 'Omaythal ibn 'Adi ibn Ka'b ibn Hazan (it said ibn Harb) ibn Tamiym ibn Sa'd ibn Fam ibn 'Amru ibn Qaiys 'Aiyilan ibn Muthar ibn Nizar (2008: 94). Taabbata-Sharran belonged to the tribe of Fahm and lived during the period of the advent of Prophet Muhammad. His father, Jabir, died when he was very young. The second husband to his mother Abu Kabeer Al-Huthali, of the tribe of Huthaiyl, joined Islam in his old age.

It is necessary to bear in mind that the Arab lexicology of the pre-Islamic age was difficult in which the same person could receive several titles or names, as Taabbata-Sharran, who sometimes receives the real name of Thabit and as S'aluk as well as the unprecedented runner. Concerning the origin of the title of Taabbata-Sharran, there are three versions. One of the most frequently narrated stories about his nickname and how he is called *ta'abbatasharran*, his mother begins by scolding him for his lack of consideration to her. Once she had a dialogue with him resulted in this title. His mother said 'All your brothers, when they return, they bring me something useful, but you do not.' He answered: 'Tonight I will bring you something as you ask,' then left. I hunt many vipers, the largest ones he could, and when he came back, he arrived with them in apouch under his arm. He throws it in front of her, and when she opened it,

they scattered around the house, being afraid, she screamed and ran. The ladies of his tribe gathered to see the mother of Taabbata-Sharran; she and told them what had happened. The ladies scolded and asked him 'what did you bring in the sack?' Thabit's mother replied, 'it was under his arm,' and the women commented, He brought something wrong under his arm (*laqadta'abbatasharran*) "لقد تأبط شراً" (Al Bishtawi, 2015: 76; Ibn Gutaiyah, 2009: 179; Al-Asma' ai, 2012: 161; Al-Baghdadi, 2009: 335).

3. Astuteness of Taabbata-Sharran

Cunning was one of the qualities most dominant in the nature of Taabbata-Sharran, contrary to what is perceived in other conducts such as the frank extravaganza, in which virtues consider the hero. "As types of the ideal Arab hero, we may take Shanfara of Azd and his comrade in the foray, Taabbata-Sharran. Both were brigands, outlaws, swift runners, and excellent poets" (Nicholson, 2004: 79). Although Ta'abbata never grasped the position of lord or noble or chief of his tribe, the virtue defined him and the sources insist on his physical weakness and the advantages he acquired thanks to that cunning.

From the multilateral division of the *gasidah*, it deduces a ritual connotation in which man leaves society, confronts the wild nature, and then returns to the world of men, after passing the initiatory rite and leaving behind that of wild animals. The *as-sa'alik* would be the individuals who had not managed to return to society, thus being characterized as protagonists of a "rite de passage manqué" (McKinney, 2004: 341; Stetkevych, 2010: xiii; Leder, 2002: 337-346). However, the relationships between *as-sa'alik* and their tribes of origin do not allow to maintain such a sharp separation with other warriors of their time, and once removed from their groups of origin it does not seem impossible to return to them, alternating moments of solitude or rampages with other marginal people.

One of the most remarkable poetic pieces of pre-Islamic Arabia was the poem that Thabit's niece sang to celebrate revenge on the Banu Huthaiyl. The presence of courage, the desire for revenge and the tribal values that this poem transmits make it one of the complete examples of the poetry of the pre-Islamic period. The fact that his tribe avenged the death of Taabbata-Sharran shows to what extent the relations of the bandit poets with their groups of origin were complex.

Once in an unbelievable event happened, as stated in The Story of Literature in Hijaz in the Ignorance Age by Abdul Jabar and Khafaji (1980), Ash-Shanfara, Taabbata-Sharran and Amru ibn Barraka found that the people of his clan had ambushed several strong men around a well. Moreover, one day when they became at midnight to get water, Taabbata-Sharran told his colleagues that there are indeed some people in ensnarement, for he hears their hearts pounding. However, the other two said 'we hear nothing'; it might be throbbing of your heart. As soon as he took his hands, he put them on his heart; they said to him at the same time, it does not beat, and he is not able of such weakness. No matter, said his friends, we must unconditionally go to this well and get a drink. Ash-Shanfara came first; the people posted in ensnarement, having

identified him, let him get some water to drink. He went to meet his mates and ensured them that the place is empty and there is no one there, and he peacefully drunk from the well.

Taabbata-Sharran declares 'It is not yours that they want they want me alone.' Amru ibn Barraka went to drink also after Ash-Shanfara; the matter goes the same with him as of the first. Then and there Taabbata-Sharran said to Ash-Shanfara, he will not lean forward to drink, that the hidden people will come over him and take him. He said 'once you see that, be off as if you were escaping, and hiding at the bottom of this bank; and when you hear *take, take*, come to me, and liberate me. He similarly addressed Amru ibn Barraka: "For you, I will propose to take you a captive of these people voluntarily: do not go far-off from them but do not grieve that they let you masters of your person. After finishing the prepared proposal, Taabbata-Sharran went down to the ambushed well to drink: but the moment he came near water, the concealed people who were in ensnarement jumped over him and tangled him with a steady string.

Ash-Shanfara fled as was arranged, and remained at the place which Taabbata-Sharran had indicated. For Amru ibn Barraka, he positioned himself in a place in which they can realize him. At that point, Taabbata-Sharran told those who were seizing him, 'People of Bajilah, we let you release us on fair terms! In this case, Amru ibn Barraka will surrender to you as a prisoner. They replied with an agreement. Woe to you, Amru ibn Barraka, said Taabbata-Sharran. You knew that Ash-Shanfara has fled, and he suffered the fire of Banou Folan (folan refers to any tribe not mentioning its name). You knew what has happened between your clan and us. Will you surrender then after capturing us they accept ransom? Amru ibn Barraka, as it was arranged, ran towards the highland and back. As soon as the others thought he is tired, they took the chance to use it, and they began to pursue him. Simultaneously, Taabbata-Sharran shouted, *take, take*. Then Ash-Shanfara ran to the agreed signal where Taabbata-Sharran was arrested and cut the strong string that bound the prisoner. Amru ibn Barraka seeing him unbound came to meet him, and Taabbata-Sharran began to scream 'people of Bajilah! You have appreciated the race of Amru ibn Barraka, I run even better and faster, and in a manner to make you stop thinking about his race. So they escaped and disappeared. Ash-Shanfara and his friend were free (p. 294). See also Al-Mufathaliat by Al-Mufaddal Al-Thabiy (1998: 15) as well as Al-Asfahani, (2008: 97-98). After his comrades release him, Taabbata-Sharran composed his famous poem called *Al-Gafiah* that starts with:

يا عيدُ مالك من شوقٍ وإيراقٍ ومَرَّ طَيْفٍ عَلَى الْأَهْوَالِ طَرَّاقٍ

4. The Masterpiece of Taabbata-Sharran: An example of Arabic Exquisiteness

In this article I find myself attracted to one of Taabbata-Sharran's great poems; the *gafiah* poem (القافية) that rhymes in *ga* sound. The range of various readings which the commentary mentions appears clearly to point to someone written originally for the poem that is, an original written down by some collector who gathered it from oral recitation, probably without some of the diacritical marks; this

is particularly evident from the first expression of the first verse.

(1) يا عيدُ مالك من شوقٍ وإيراقٍ ومَرَّ طَيْفٍ عَلَى الْأَهْوَالِ طَرَّاقٍ¹

(1) O return of remembrance! How with thee come longing and wakefulness, and the passing of a phantom darkling, spite of terrors by the way!²

The poet in this first line is addressing those gangs of Bejailah who ambushed him arrested him but shrewdly he could evade their capturing. The expression *eidu* (عيد) does not denote to its direct connotation without contemplation, but it tells about being accustomed to making great efforts. Here, the poet connotes a sort of praise, but this praise is for himself. Another connotation about the same expression is that it tells about the time of mentioning the event again or remembering a painful event as well as longing for a dear one. This last connotation is the direct connotation for the Arabic expression 'Eid (العِيد) which indicate a celebration or festival because Eid returns annually at the same time.

Furthermore, the expression (العِيد) as a noun became a habit for people expressing different sorts in life such as happiness, longing, illness and also sadness. The new happy day is also called 'Eid if it bears happiness, contentment, pleasure, gladness, cheerfulness, exhilaration, or ecstasy of a happening matter such as the evading of the ensnarement for Taabbata-Sharran. For him, it is 'Eid because he is saved from death. The expression *mallaka* (مالك) is an exclamation that refers to interrogation. The connotation of this line might have several aspects, but the famous one can be that the poet wants to denote to a person accustomed to doing some event.

The poet asks this person what do you have in your mind of thoughts – good or bad – that those thoughts are mixed of yearning and annoyance as well as being worry of sleepless in addition to what comes to the mind of catastrophes calamities misfortunes and disasters fall on the person as planets fall from the sky. Another brief connotation for this line can be that the poet addresses someone saying: 'You, the one disturbing me, what happened for? Why you do such disturbance'. In the light of linguistic substance, feelings of noble grief, infinite longing and anxious insomnia appears from among the Arabic idioms and its letters. An enunciation has such qualities, elements, ingredients and components are equivalent dream revolves in the poet's imagination.

(2) بَسْرِي عَلَى الْأَيْنِ وَالْحَيَّاتِ مُحْتَقِيًا نَفْسِي فِدَاؤُكَ مِنْ سَارٍ عَلَى سَاقٍ (p. 376)

(2) Barefooted by night it comes, making nought of fatigue and snakes my soul be thy sacrifice what a traveller by night afoot! (p. 3)

The poet longs and looks forward to accomplishing a dream or making it real. He applies an amazing style of call that is touch in the line saying: 'My soul is your redemption,' which makes the flow of nostalgia more intense through expressive power of the Arabic language. The frequent yell, with its equivalent forms, suggests that the speaker implores that all the calamities which would then fall on the person addressed may be focused on himself. The first expression of this line *yasri* (بَسْرِي) is meant by the poet to articulate walking at

night and focusing on walking not riding because he is accustomed on walking and running on feet.

Taabbata-Sharran never rode a horse or any mount since he is faster than any mount. The expression *yasri* (يَسْرِي) indicates that the poet walks for a long while of the night, perhaps the whole night is not afraid of encountering elves or snakes that sneaks since his feet are bare. Consequently, the poet proudly praises himself (نَفْسِي فِدَاؤُكَ مِنْ سَارٍ عَلَى سَاقٍ).

Despite the poet's awareness of the difficulties of achieving the dream, his great desire remained in realizing it and making it real. It is a call of compassion. The diagnosis the poet made when he enlivened the spectrum and making it part of life for the purpose of showing him some manifestations of glamor in the midst of the depravity of darkness. However, there is no way to do so. It is, in short, the eternal state of conflict that prevails in the heart of a human being in a tendency towards rebellion, rejection, and to escape to the dream worlds, away from the complicated reality of life and away from the devastating flame of life.

(3) إني إذا خَلْتُ صَنَنْتُ بِنَائِلِهَا وَأَمْسَكْتُ بِضَعِيفِ الْوَصْلِ أَحْدَاقٍ (p. 378)

(3) Nay but I, when a mistress grudges to grant me the boon I seek and holds to me but by a bond already weak and frayed, (p. 3).

The above third verse line is associated with the next fourth one. The initial word *enna* (أَنَّ) is the subject of the Arabic sentence but its object is in the next line *najawtu* (نَجَوْتُ). Taabbata-Sharran in this line refers to a habit he is used to; it is the intention. He has the ability to find a solution for securing himself from troubles and confirms his commitment even if the promise is weak and unpromising. The poet, from his rebellious position, rejects the friendship that is bound by its obligations, customs and traditions. He declines that sort of friends who are not an indeed friend in good or bad. He seeks close and firm bonds of friendship and refuses friendship that is associated with temporary benefits. The poet derives his opinion not only from the experiences and inferences of life but also from the nature of his own life, as well as from the life of his fellow *s'aaleek*, that requires unity with their community to the limits of identification, in response to the requirements of the dangers against their lives. The supreme lover of old Arabian poetry is constantly prepared to fling off a love that begins to grow emotionless. The poet continues to expand the horizons of escape and rejection, and the intensification of suggestive signs, and in poetry narrates one of the most important incidents in his life. It is when he managed, in collaboration with his fellow *as-sa'alik* to release himself from the knights of the tribe of Bajilah. Taabbata-Sharran tells what happened that night. He reveals the events in the next verse line

(4) نَجَوْتُ مِنْهَا نَجَانِي مِنْ بَجِيلَةَ إِذْ أَلْقَيْتُ لَيْلَةَ خَبْتِ الرَّهْطِ أُرَاقِي (p. 381)

(4) I fly from her straight, as I fled from Bajilah, when I put forth my utmost speed, on the night of the soft plain of ar-Raht (p. 3)

Taabbata-Sharran, in this verse line, confirms that he cleverly planned to release himself even if the enemy too much careful and cautious such as the tribe of Bajilah. The poet says that he tossed all his efforts in his try of being released. Our poet mixes an inner thought with a dear lover

saying that if my beloved is bored of me and showing her detest against me and cutting the bondage of love between us, then I release my soul from such bondage and liberate myself from her as I did when I evaded the ensnarement of my enemies Banu Bajilah the night they ambushed him on a well of water seeking his death he and his two companies. The rejection in the poet's own language and his unique individual creativity is exceptional. He did not say that 'I insist on a weak friendship or cut it,' but he borrowed a bright, wide-ranging picture derived from the nature of his life using the confirmed verb *najawtu* (نَجَوْتُ). The hemistich (أَلْقَيْتُ لَيْلَةَ خَبْتِ الرَّهْطِ أُرَاقِي) is a sentence reveals the vile on the concentrated effort brought by the poet in which he did not let any enemies, but came to him attacking and achieving the dimension of the equivalent of rejection against an indirect perspective of his enemy. Such manner of saying leads to clarify the connotation rhetorically to emphasize the issue of aversion and rejection in their areas of conflict.

(5) لَيْلَةَ صَاحُوا وَأَغْرَوْا بِي سِرَاعَهُمْ بِالْعَيْكَتَيْنِ لَدَى مَعْدَى ابْنِ بَرَّاقٍ (p. 383)

(5) The night that they shouted and stirred up their swiftest to run me down, in al-'Aikatani, there where raced the ibn Barraq. (p. 3)

The fifth above line is linked to the previous ones. It sheds light on the story of Bajilah trying to catch him. He says that my friends and I save and secure from them after they ambushed us with their shouts and also the barking of their dogs and running after us in the place called *Al-'Aikateen* where Amru ibn Barraka used to run fast. The initial impression of the first reading of the verses reveals that Taabbata-Sharran made the most of his mission to provide an adventure from the adventures of the raiding and robbery. Despite the fact that such reading conceals of the details and the clarification of a facet of the lives of the bandits and their impact as an important social document. Besides, the profound reading of the poem reveals two key points. The first is the niche that the poet opened by mentioning Amru ibn Barraka, and secondly: the connotative survey he conducted about his power and the speed of his running. Was Amru ibn Barraka a promising example in the running? Were the power of the poet and his speed two conditions necessary for the alternative man whom he wishes? It might be the case since Al-Asfahani goes on to amply recount the events of that night in details. It was a dangerous adventure by all measures approaching its adventurers from the brink of mass destruction in which Amru ibn Barraka and Ash-Shanfara were comrades of the poet. They have made strenuous efforts in releasing Taabbata-Sharran facing the same risk.

(6) كَأَنَّمَا حُحِّتُوا حُصًّا قَوْضَادِمُهُ أَوْ أُمَّ جَشْفٍ بِدَشْتٍ وَطَبَّاقٍ (p. 385)

(6) 'Twas as though they were hounding an ostrich, scanty of fore-wing plumes, or a mothergazelle in the mountains where shathth and tubbaq grow (p. 3).

Taabbata-Sharran carried on his show of pride when he was arrested by the ambushers of Bajilah and his intellectuality to escape their catching. Allegorically, the poet illustrates that the plan of arresting urged in himself a challenging motivation to trick his enemy finding a chance to despise over them. He uses birds such as an ostrich for the purpose of speed and comparing the feet with the wings. The ostrich is signified as having lost some of its fore-wing feathers to

indicate that it isof fullage, and able to go at top speed, unimpeded by a bush of plumage. Shathth and tubbaq areplants fed upon by gazelles and antelopes growing in the mountainsof As-Sarat, and their mention indicates that the beast is well fed and able to run at its best.

(7) لا شيء أسرع مني إذا عُدِرَ
وذا جناججئب الرئيد خفاق (p. 387)

(7) Nothing is swifter than I not the horse with bushy mane,nor the eagle that flaps its wings aloft by the mountain peak (p. 3).

Confirming his talent and pride the poet indicates that there is nothing whatever is faster than him even birds of swift and quick wings are slower than him in the race. He portrays a state of his emotion and feeling in that time beautifully picturing what happened to him and the result is his liberty and safety (حتى نجوت) in the next line. It can be realized that he has run a different way of running than before. His speed would not be compared to any creature such as the horse and the bird. Critics take *laisa* (ليس) as equivalentoilia (لا) which means except, and render 'Nothing is swifter than me, except the horse.' It appears that thetranslation given is more poetical and therefore more probable, while it is equally admissible froma grammatical point of view. Moreover, according to the stories told of him no horse could overtakeTaabbata at his bestpace.

(8) حتى نجوت ولما يئزغوا سلبى
بواله من قبض الشد عذاق (p. 390)

(8) So was I quit of them, and they stripped of me no spoil:I ran as one possessed, light of limb, full of resource (p. 3).

The poet still deals with his adventure with the group of Bajilah after they caught him in an ensnarement. He confirms his superiority over them by releasing himself after he was nearer to death. In a beautiful manner of saying, Taabbata-Sharran tells that he achieved his target with tricky persuasion until he is free, sound without any harm in body or weapon. It is a fantastic picture to illustrate that Taabbata-Sharran was snared, strongly caught and tied with bondage. With all that the poet concisely narrates his way to evade from them with no damage or injury. A series of images that expressed the abilities of the poet evoked the smell of self-assertion in the face of tribal disintegration. This self gradually swells until it reached the limits of the bulge; thus it is the same as the strength of the tribal bravery, but a secret strand still nourished the swollen self and supplied it with reasons of development. Taabbata-Sharran depends on the speed that enables the owner of *as'saleek* and escape several rattles and the basis of his life. We can recognize with some certainty that the same proud poet is the alternative image of the aspiring person, who is an active member of a new society, with its values, knowledge and physical and moral requirements.

(9) ولا أقول إذا ما خللة صرمت
يا ويخ نفسي من شوق وإشفاق (p. 391)

(9) Nay, I say not, when a Friend cuts short the bond and departs,'Alas, my soul!'out of longing and soft self-pitying tears (p. 3).

In the above line, the poet as it is his habit presents a brilliant depiction of his manner and conduct. He presents a portrait of a quiet pride but, so to speak, the importance is not only in the poet himself and his plots and body powers as well as his abilities and potentials but also the importance

is presented in his amazing Arabic poetry which penetrates in the innate mind and heart before touching the tongue. He speaks about his proud self, indicating that he is the owner and possessor of himself. He has the ability to understand the originality of those who accompany and live with him. Taabbata-Sharran describes his great patience against the difficulties and troubles he faces. He is an expert trainee in friendship and passion in which a strong power does not break him. His pride elevates him from humiliating those who badly despise him. The poet retorts appropriately as the situation deserves in a reasonable manner. His passionate monologues are delivered to those who are only passionately response to him.

(10) لكئما عولي إن كنت ذا عول
على بصير يكسب الحمى (p. 392)

(10) No! Weeping, were I one to weep for him that has gone his way,should be for one keen of praise, a striver outstripping all (p. 3).

The first two expressions in the above verse line (لكئما عولي) mean 'that what depends on.' The poet delineates the situation declaring that in case a friend relies on him, this friend depends on a man (means himself) precedent to moral doings, a gainer of glory, collecting of benevolence, seeking praise and bestowing appreciations; these are some of his qualities and characteristics that he finds in himself to rely on.

Taabbata-Sharran never shows sadness or worry about kin leaving him or departing from him mainly if this kin shows any sort of respect or immorality. On the contrary, he is grieved when he shocked by the loss of a friend bears dignity, hospitality, benevolence and virtue. As for the poet, Taabbata-Sharran revealed some of his views on the elements of the friend on the night of the clash with the knights of Bajilah; he soon continues the issue of putting himself distant and far away that has deepened in his depths since the decision he made departing and deserting his weak and unhelpful clan. In case his leaving of his tribe compelled him to deal with immoral friends who hold the requirements that he does not aspire, then he does not regret their separation, and does not blame himself for the deserting them.

In contrast, he weeps warmly for another friend who has a set of values, which come in the forefront, the one who has a vision of gaining praise and satisfaction of the group. The comparing adjective *baseer* (بصير) moves over its concrete connotation to reach an abstract delineation from just visual 'sight' to 'insight.' The poet shifts us to the connotative connotation that deals with incentive praise, tribute, honor and glory that is linked and associated with its goals, dimensions and components.

We can recognize the poet's enthusiasm for the alternative man and his overwhelming desire to explore that person and to bring him back, to be exemplified and incarnated on the real ground, living with him, not a mere imaginative dream. The poet, in order to deny any effect derived from the source of the trust that carries weeping and burning, he presents his sentence using a linguistic technique in selecting expressions that do not affect the whole connotation and does not

underestimate the ultimate goal he aspires. The poet has identified his vision of the human being to the extent of his ability to harvest praise and precedence to it. However, the praise is only a general purpose and a great title; the poet found that the recipient has the right to know the comprehensive details of the piece of poetry with extended horizons; Taabbata-Sharran has decided the criteria that determine the sort of praise he seeks.

5. Afterword

The Arabic language is exhibited as the implementation and preeminence of phraseology and far-reaching with flickers of intelligence and pageantry. Frequently, the poetry of Taabbata-Sharran might be appraised as one of the heroic magnitudes of the literature of Arabic practice and institution, for it encompasses Arabic birthright and philosophy. The study intended at examining and inspecting the rhetorical, metaphorical and aesthetic portraits in *al-gafiah* of Taabbata-Sharran. It tracked the deductive method addressed the most substantial sources – traditional and modern – and the historical-analytical technique for authenticating and developing the study make an effort to reach authenticity. *Al-gafiah* of Taabbata-Sharran describes and displays original values and ideals in the pre-Islamic period. I might say that it attained certain vital consequences; the most considerable of which is the influence and effect of Arabic poetic tongue.

Furthermore, it is found that the poet through his poem has made great efforts to seek liberty. The poem shows the literary permanence of Arabic tongue and poetry. *Al-gafiah* of Taabbata-Sharran is prosperous with aphorisms and dictums as an epitome of the greatness of the Arabic language. Consequently, this article, in my opinion, is not enough and it needs to be completed. Also, it is recommended to continue the examination of Taabbata-Sharran and his poems to probe the depth of the poetic issues and artistic qualities, values as well as the figurative imaginings.

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²Al-Mufaddal, ibn Muhammad. (1918). *The Mufaddaliyat: An Anthology of Ancient Arabian Odes*, (ed.) Lyall, Charles James. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, p. 3. [All English verses about Taabbata-Sharranin this study are from this edition of the book, pages 3-4].