

Exploring Al-Mutanabbi's Poetic Duality: Ego Exaltation and Model Defiance in "My Heart Is a Flame"

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Abstract—This study conducts a thorough analysis of Abi Al-Tayyib Al-Mutanabbi's poem 'My Heart Is a Flame' through the philosophical lens of German thinker Friedrich Nietzsche. It emphasizes Nietzsche's concept that superior humans are distinguished by their might. The research seeks to challenge the prevailing belief, supported by writers like Taha Husein, Blachere, and Abdulla Al-Ghuthami, that Al-Mutanabbi was a hypocritical, exploitative, and excessively arrogant poet who degraded others while asserting his individuality. The study explores two pivotal axes: the first focuses on Saif al – Dawla, emphasizing the elevation of the model and spaces of undermining; the second centers on Al-Mutanabbi, highlighting themes of superior ego and the fallacy of equity. In conclusion, the study presents the researcher's findings, offering justifications that underscore Al-Mutanabbi's egoism. By delving into Al-Mutanabbi's individuality, including poetic prowess, the pursuit of supremacy, engagement in war, courage, and boldness, the study contends that such characteristics fueled his distinct egoism. Furthermore, the research addresses Al-Mutanabbi's rejection of humiliation and arrogance, as elucidated through his disassociation from Saif al – Dawla, the Emir, and his court, following a dramatic ideological shift and an attempted assault on the poet's capabilities. This emancipation from flattery and avarice for Saif al – Dawla 's gifts is posited as a significant aspect of Al-Mutanabbi's resilience and selfhood.

Index Terms—Al- Mutanabbi, ego exaltation, adversary, Nietzsche

I. INTRODUCTION

Al-Mutanabbi is widely regarded as one of the most important Arab poets, if not the foremost, with a name known in all literary circles (Maqdisi, 1989). His poetry received great ovation and respect from the public, earning him the title of the "Emir poet" (Shalabi, n.d, p. 5). Badei (1975, p. 20) noted his favorable associations with kings and dignitaries. Numerous readings and critiques have been written about Al-Mutanabbi's anthology, a clear indication of his stature and role in poetry across various literary ages (Ismael, 1974, p. 95).

Al-Mutanabbi's poetry serves as an excellent example of the national life of his era, providing a vivid portrayal of intellectual and literary life (Mobarakeh, 2020). It depicts the struggle between ideals and reality, pain and discontent, contentment and hatred. Additionally, it reflects a pessimistic revolution and a social call for might and ambition (Khafaji, 2004, p. 238).

Upon Saif al – Dawla 's arrival at Antioch, his governor, Abu Al-Ashaer, praised Al-Mutanabbi and introduced him to Saif al – Dawla, highlighting his status in poetry and literature. The poet set a condition for Saif al – Dawla not to praise him except when the latter was sitting and not to be compelled to kiss the ground at his orders. Although accused of lunacy, Saif al – Dawla accepted this condition in 337 A.H (Badei, 1975, p. 71). Such a condition distinguishes Al-Mutanabbi from other poets, reflecting an ambitious soul rejecting humiliation. He would choose friends and companions among those he praised. Saif al – Dawla, being generous and tolerable, easily accepted Al-Mutanabbi as a friend (Barquqi, 1986, p. 38). Fatik Al-Asadi, the uncle of Dabba bin Yazid, whom Mutanabbi satirized, attacked him with 30 knights, resulting in the death of Al-Mutanabbi and his son in 354 A.H (Barquqi, 1986, p. 46).

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The study aims to provide an in-depth analysis of Al-Mutanabbi's poem "My Heart Is a Flame", wherein he criticizes Saif al – Dawla, the prince of Aleppo, despite having previously praised him in poems collectively known as "Al-Sayfiyat", named after Saif al – Dawla, where he lauded the prince's heroism and victories. Additionally, Al-Mutanabbi praised several personalities, a subject explored by various orientalists, including Taha Husein, Abdulla Al-Guthami, and the orientalist Blachere, whose studies inspired the hypotheses of this research.

Taha Husein, in his study "With Al-Mutanabbi", emphasized that Al-Mutanabbi excelled in flattery, describing him as boastful, conceited, and proud (Husein, 2012, p. 174). Husein suggested that Al-Mutanabbi used his poetry as a means for material gains rather than pursuing art or beauty, a perspective shared by Blachere, who described Al-Mutanabbi as unable to maintain real dignity due to excessive pride (Blachere, 1980, pp. 83-84). Abdulla Al-Guthami also labeled Al-Mutanabbi as an egoist, criticizing his inflated individualistic egoism that ignores others (Guthami, 2012, p. 168).

In response, this study seeks to challenge these perspectives that diminish the poet's widespread acclaim. Al-Mutanabbi's success at the court of Saif al – Dawla led to intrigue and criticism from others (Badei, 1975, p. 87). This research focuses on the themes of flattery, cringe, and a perceived lack of dignity in Al-Mutanabbi's praise for Saif al – Dawla, exploring the influence of Nietzsche's principles related to power, superhumanity, or excellence. It seeks to address two primary research questions: Was Al-Mutanabbi a follower and subservient to Saif al – Dawla? Was Al-Mutanabbi justified in his inflated ego?"

The inspiration for this research stems from Abbas Mohmoud Aqqad's 1927 article "The Philosophy of Mutanabbi and Nietzsche". Aqqad suggested a correlation between Al-Mutanabbi and Nietzsche, an idea also indirectly referenced by Blachere, encouraging further examination. Blachere described Al-Mutanabbi's disposition at the age of 17, noting two dominating characteristics; pessimism and what Nietzsche called the "Lust for power" (Blachere, 1980, p. 81).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Al-Mutanabbi's poetry has been a subject of profound interest among both historical and contemporary researchers, prompting numerous studies that delve into various aspects of his literary contributions. Ibn Rashiq expressed this fascination, stating, "Al-Mutanabbi surprised the whole world" (Qayrawani, 1981, p. 193).

Omyemeh Khalil conducted a study titled "Discourse ambiguity in the poem of Al-Mutanabbi: 'My Heart Is a Flame'", aiming to approach the poem through the lens of fallacy theory, an essential aspect of contemporary rhetoric. Khalil's study explored strategies such as appealing, emotional polarization, and the use of connotative words. The researcher concluded that these strategies were a result of Al-Mutanabbi's awareness of the receptor's mental, psychological, and cultural competencies, tailored for different addressees (Saif al – Dawla), adversaries, and embedded in inflated diction.

In another analysis of the poem "My Heart Is a Flame", Battat (2023) delved into emotional individualization or negligence complex, revealing psychological contradictions within Al-Mutanabbi's portrayal. Battat identified a fluctuation between leniency and weakness on one hand and power on the other, reflecting psychological conflicts in the poet's psychological system (Battat, 2023).

Qarazah and Majali (2021) in their study on syntactic methods and their role in "My Heart Is a Flame," investigated the bonds of argument and persuasion in the receptor. They found that Al-Mutanabbi strategically used declarative syntactic methods when addressing Saif al – Dawla, emphasizing the significance of such methods in argument and persuasion (Qarazah & Majali, 2021).

In a study titled "Al-Mutanabbi between ego exaltation and self-awareness in light of consciousness and poetic competence in the poem 'My Heart Is a Flame' as an example," Al Qasim (2023) focused on the controversy surrounding Al-Mutanabbi's poetic self-assuredness. The study revealed that Al-Mutanabbi demonstrated a high awareness of versification and creativity, refuting claims of self-exaltation from a defective personality.

Taher's (2004) study, "Philosophy of Power between Al-Mutanabbi and Nietzsche," compared the philosophies of power between Al-Mutanabbi and Nietzsche, affirming the rebel spirit and the will to power evident in both. Unlike previous studies, Taher's work highlighted Nietzschean ideas adopted by Al-Mutanabbi, refuting accusations of flattery and subservience to Saif al – Dawla (Taher, 2004).

The current study distinguishes itself from prior research by focusing on a specific aspect of Nietzsche's discourse. Nietzsche addressed two pivotal issues – human ideas, the supreme human, and power – forming the core hypothesis of this study. By adopting Nietzschean themes, Al-Mutanabbi's work challenges the prevailing belief that the poet was a flatterer, humiliated, and a mere follower of the Aleppo Emir, Saif al – Dawla. The study establishes the contrary, demonstrating that accusations of subservience do not diminish the poetic brilliance of Al-Mutanabbi. This is evident in his critique of Saif al – Dawla and his condemnation of envious individuals, as expressed in the poem My Heart Is a Flame.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Will to power and supreme human: The Nietzsche's concept

The poet embraces Nietzsche's philosophical principles, particularly concerning the concept of the will to power. The first reference to that was seen in Nietzsche's notes written in 1870 and more apparent in his book "Thus Spoke Zarathustra" where Nietzsche posits power as essential for explaining various manners.

Nietzsche (2014) believes that the will to power contradicts the will to live, a notion introduced by Schopenhauer. While Schopenhauer struggled to transcend the confines of the will to live, succumbing to pessimism and nihilism, Nietzsche transforms this pessimism from negativity to positivism. In Nietzsche's words:

Whoever believes in the will to live will never reach the truth, as this will does not exist and Nihilism has no will what I call for is the will to power, not the will to live. The living human sees many things that are more sublime than life itself. He would have never seen anything better than life had he not possessed the will to power. (p. 145)

The will to power for Nietzsche contrasts with Schopenhauer's will to live. The more robust life is, the more fertile the world will be (Jaafer, 1999, p. 11). He also asserts that the will to power is found in every living creature, and those who are subjected to power aspire for dominance; will for the subjected incorporates the principle of the strong dominating the weak. Nietzsche captures this sentiment by stating that life itself is a struggle for a person who does not wish to live (Nietzsche, 2014, p. 145). Nietzsche further emphasizes that every human should aim at the will to power to maintain identity. He struggles to live through defeating his identity (Jaafer, 1999, p. 280). In this regard, Jaafer (1999, p. 279) states: "Nature of internal life is the will to power and nothing else".

The annihilation of any life is not a passive event; rather, it involves a continuous struggle between the dominator and the dominated, characterized as a constant strife, not mere resistance (Nietzsche, 2003, pp. 217-218). As life becomes more valuable, the intensity of resistance and enmity proportionally increases (Badawi, 1975, p. 221).

It can be inferred from the foregoing discussion that the will to power is not merely an aspect of life but its essence and identity. Nietzsche staunchly believes that it is the will to power that undergoes perpetual development, constituting the absolute core of life (Ben Dokha, 2012).

Given Nietzsche's perspective that life is the will to power manifested in struggle, he asserts that those who derive the utmost enjoyment from it are the supreme humans. For example, distinguished humans in history incorporate the will to power, but the supreme human excels because his will to power is at its best (Copleston, p. 82).

Zarathustra conveyed a message of optimism to humanity, declaring, "I tell you that the supreme human is coming." (in Nietzsche, 2014, p. 246). In another instance, he emphasized humanity's need to prepare for attaining the status of the supreme human, stating:

I prepare myself to be mature enough for the great emergence to meet it strongly like the molded fire and the lightning producing cloud. I want to mold my identity and will to become like the bow that twists, longing to embrace its arrow and like the dart, longing to fly towards its star... I want to be a glimmering planet saturated with joy in this life. I want to be an unshakeable sun ready to disappear after victory. (p. 246)

Given the pivotal role of the supreme man in Nietzsche's philosophy, aligned with the concept of the will to power, the question arises: What qualities does such a man embody? Nietzsche raises this inquiry in his book "Thus Spoke Zarathustra". The supreme man, for Nietzsche, is the human living on earth, not a metaphysical one. He adds, "The supreme man stands for meaning and spirit of this Earth" (Nietzsche, 2014, p. 43). Thus, he encourages humans to rise to the level of the supreme man with his qualities:

Move forward gentlemen, its high time for the future human of great life to be born... we love that only the distinguished human to live... My fellows, what I love in the human is passing through stages of this life; I found many qualities in you that endear you to me and stimulate hope in my heart... trespass trivial issues and care for essentials. (Nietzsche, 2003, p. 322)

Nietzsche wants the supreme man to be different by creating the values that fit his will and power and avoid nihilistic old ones. He asserts that he wants humans to embrace life and beautify it with strength and determination, to set meaningful goals, to hold courage for innovation, and to evaluate existence through fresh perspectives. He adds: humans should strive to redefine and enhance their lives and shape it with precision and completeness (in Kaufman, 1992, p. 267).

The supreme man is a creative person "who looks for companions known for being industrious. People might call them destroyers, mockers of good and evil, but they are reapers who will celebrate the results. Zarathustra asks people who are creative, like him, to share the outcome". He adds, "I do not need the mob and the dead... I want to join the innovators who gain and feel at ease. I will show them the rainbow and the ranks which supreme men attain... I will sing my song to those who feel duality through individuality. I track my way, disregarding the hesitant and the belated" (Nietzsche, 2014, pp. 50-51).

These qualities outlined by Nietzsche necessitate that the supreme man be free, rejecting conventional values and perpetually hovering above morals, laws, and traditional evaluation methods. Instincts of manhood, the spirit of struggle, and a love for victory are distinctive features of the supreme human, who despises peace and tranquility. For him, war is the holiest thing; his sole objective is to win and dominate. He rejects sympathy, viewing violence as the greatest force empowering humans to face dangers and undertake significant risks (Saleh, 2020, pp. 22-55).

IV. METHODOLOGY

To unravel the multifaceted nature of Al-Mutanabbi's poetry and answer the study's research questions, we examined Al-Mutanabbi's poem "My Heart Is a Flame" by employing close reading techniques to dissect linguistic nuances, metaphors, and thematic elements. Also, we conducted a comparative analysis with other poems in the 'Al-Sayfiyat' collection and additional works praising Saif al – Dawla to identify any shifts in tone and intent. We adopted Nietzschean principles, as proposed by Aqqad and indirectly referenced by Blachere, to guide the analysis of Al-Mutanabbi's disposition, particularly exploring elements of pessimism and the "Lust for power." Nietzsche's philosophy was used as a lens for understanding Al-Mutanabbi's poetic motivations and the perceived egoistic elements in his work.

Moreover, we provided a detailed examination of Abbas Mohmoud Aqqad's 1927 article on the correlation between Al-Mutanabbi and Nietzsche, considering how Nietzschean concepts might elucidate aspects of the poet's mindset and creative expression.

This multi-dimensional methodology aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of Al-Mutanabbi's poetry, addressing the intricacies of his relationship with Saif al – Dawla, the influence of Nietzschean philosophy, and the philosophical underpinnings of his artistic choices.

V. ANALYSIS OF THE POEM

The relationship between Al-Mutanabbi and Saif al – Dawla is extraordinary. Whenever Al-Mutanabbi's name is mentioned, Saif al – Dawla's name invariably accompanies it. Saif al – Dawla, the Emir, received lavish praise from the poet, and Al-Mutanabbi is credited with immortalizing his political and military career in the history of Arabic literature. The collection of poems known as "Sayfiyyat" stands out as a testament to Al-Mutanabbi's admiration for the Emir's virtues of bravery, generosity, and more, widely regarded as the pinnacle of Al-Mutanabbi's poetic prowess. The question arises: Why did Saif al – Dawla command such exceptional interest from Al-Mutanabbi?

Al-Mutanabbi lived in a tumultuous period marked by political and military instability. This instability had a profound impact on ruling families, elevating poetry to a significant role in politics. Poets, including Al-Mutanabbi, played a unique role in navigating the ever-changing landscape of political and military alliances. The traditional authority held by Emirs, ruling family princes, and the caliphate eroded, as real authority became synonymous with prowess in war. Consequently, poets shifted their focus to praising strong emirs, particularly those who achieved notable military feats, exemplified by Saif al – Dawla (Stetkeyvych, 2010, pp. 241-242).

Al-Mutanabbi was the foremost poet of his age. He was an ambitious, brave knight with strong Arab nationalistic feelings. His poetry reflected the pain and harm inflicted by non-Arabs who usurped power from the caliphate. As a result, he, ideologically and politically, sided with the Arab emir, Saif al – Dawla, who satisfied the poet's ambition by his outstanding military achievements against the Romans and other nations. According to Stetkeyvych (2010), the emir was Al-Mutanabbi's mirror that reflected the excellent merits and the will to power that the poet admired and evoked his poetic talent.

The relationship between the poet and the lauded emir was an unprecedented and ideal one. However, this ideal connection was misconstrued in the perception of the educated Arab, who deemed Al-Mutanabbi a flatterer, subjected, and a blind follower of Saif al – Dawla. Immoral traits were unfairly attributed to both the poet and his poetic talent.

From the vantage point of this study, Al-Mutanabbi's persona is unveiled through the poem titled 'My Heart Is a Flame.' This poem showcases the will to power in direct contradiction to the defamation and slander he faced. It unravels the dignity of the supreme human who, in a rebellious act against Hamdan's authority, defied expectations and surprised onlookers. Al-Mutanabbi devoted a significant portion of his thoughts and creative energy to forging the ideal amid the decline of the Abbasid State, weakened under the control of non-Arabs.

In the end, Al-Mutanabbi came to the realization that the political and military ideology adopted by Saif al – Dawla was merely an illusion, leading him to dismantle the model that once elevated him. The machinations of whistleblowers and the envious ultimately succeeded in tarnishing this relationship, prompting Al-Mutanabbi to make an irrevocable decision to part ways with the Hamdan court (Badei, 1975, pp. 87-88).

In the analysis of the poem, the researchers delved into two pivotal axes, focusing on the philosophical and intellectual perspectives that ignited the poet's creative prowess. These axes included the elevation of the model and the spectrum of undermining, as well as Al-Mutanabbi's heightened egoism and the fallacy of equity.

A. *Saif al – Dawla: Exalting the Model and Fallacy of Equity*

The relationship between Al-Mutanabbi and Saif al – Dawla is encapsulated in the "Sayfiyyat", which glorifies Saif al – Dawla and immortalizes his name in the annals of history through accounts of war epics against the Romans. The poem commences with a reproach, shedding light on this relationship by nostalgically revisiting the splendid days of Saif al – Dawla history. It is worth noting that the translation of Al-Mutanabbi's poem used throughout the study is taken from the translator Masoud (2023).

My heart is aflame, burning with love for you
 While your heart is frigid-cold toward me
 You think so lightly of me, treating me with such indifference
 My soul is sickened, my body debilitated
 Why should I conceal a love that has consumed my body
 When pretenders fake the love of Saif-Al-Dawlah
 If what brings us together is our common love for you
 I wish we would meritoriously share your bounties
 Each according to the love he harbors for you
 I have been in your presence while rapiers sheathed
 And gazed at you when swords blood-stained
 And found you to be the handsomest of God's creation
 Superb in manners, incomparable in character
 When you charge an enemy and he escapes
 You are the winner just the same
 Albeit disappointing, such escape is yet a blessing
 You have stricken great fear in the enemy's heart
 A fear representing you, even in your absence
 You have made your presence awe-inspiring
 Far more than the combined power and prowess
 Of your valorous knights
 You make it a point to run after your enemies in hot pursuit
 Depriving them of shelter; they run, but cannot hide
 Whenever you target an army, before you it flees
 You make after it with relentless chase
 It is incumbent upon you to defeat the opponents in every battle
 Nor should you feel ashamed if they run away
 Rendering you incapable of subduing them
 Victory is made sweet to you
 Only when claymores and heads join in greeting

The poem begins with a lamentation call (My Heart Is a Flame), which reflects the size of pain that Al-Mutanabbi suffered from Saif al – Dawla. He mourned that relationship, which was cracked, threatening the poet's life and the beautiful days he spent in the court of Saif al – Dawla.

The depth of sorrow is portrayed through two contrasting elements: the poet's heart a flame with love for the emir, depicted as 'My heart is a flame,' and the emir's indifferent and cold heart described as 'frigid cold.' The poet's emotional cry is expressed through a lament style, reflecting anger and a sense of departure after the once-glamorous life fades away due to changes that befall the praised figure. This life is symbolized by 'the heart,' representing the source of life and perpetuity, which transforms into inertia and apathy ('frigid cold'). This transformation mirrors the extent of love the poet harbors for Saif al – Dawla, a love that has weakened his body.

The lamentation of the ailing poet reveals the reasons behind his love for Saif al – Dawla. He states, 'Why should I conceal a love that has consumed my body?' This line serves as a diagnostic expression, unraveling the causes of the tension and collapse of the relationship. The poet employs an antithetical style, such as "conceal" and "pretend," to disclose the discrepancy between the genuine love the poet conceals and the fake one the hypocrites in the court demonstrate. "The pretenders fake the love of Saif al – Dawla." Despite that, the Emir favors the love of the pretenders, and that makes the poet discover the illusion of his loyalty and belonging.

At the same time, the first spark of egoism appeared when the poet unhesitatingly drew a comparison between himself and the authority (the praised), Saif al – Dawla, within the context of their shared affection. The poet, in expressing love, places himself on equal footing with Saif al – Dawla.

In the poem that follows, the poet conveys a message to the praised, reminiscing about the joyful days they spent together in times of peace: 'I have been in your presence while rapiers sheathed' and in times of war, 'And gazed at you when swords were bloodstained.' The poet, in this instance, could not deviate from his customary praise of Saif Al-Dawleh, thus reinforcing the pillars of the military ideology embraced by the praised. The poet, having accompanied the emir in his wars, extends congratulations for past victories and entices him to replicate them, saying:

When you charge an enemy and he escapes
 You are the winner just the same
 Albeit disappointing, such escape is yet a blessing
 You have stricken great fear in the enemy's heart
 A fear representing you, even in your absence
 You have made your presence awe-inspiring
 Far more than the combined power and prowess
 Of your valorous knights
 You make it a point to run after your enemies in hot pursuit
 Depriving them of shelter; they run, but cannot hide
 Whenever you target an army, before you it flees
 You make after it with relentless chase
 It is incumbent upon you to defeat the opponents in every battle
 Nor should you feel ashamed if they run away
 Rendering you incapable of subduing them
 Victory is made sweet to you
 Only when claymores and heads join in greeting

In the preceding lines, the poet referred to the military qualities that the Emir had. He highlighted the reverence the praised had and the “fear” his adversaries had, dispersing them on the battlefield. He did not feel satisfied with their escape but chased them to be slaughtered by his swords. This reveals the courage and the ambition with which he can achieve his objectives. He cannot enjoy real victory without confronting the adversary and inflicting wounds on him through beating and stabbing.

The poet glorifies the supreme model, Saif al – Dawla, to whose authority he aligns himself. In the praised, the poet discerns not only merits and the will to power but also the ambition that has been a constant companion throughout the emir's life. This sentiment is palpable to any reader of the poet's verses.

Upon reflection on the preceding lines of poetry in which Al-Mutanabbi portrays Saif al – Dawla 's courage in facing adversaries, a subtle warning is conveyed — the admonition that the Emir's authority is not eternal. He mentioned three basic pillars to consolidate that authority: chasing the adversary, fear, and ruler reverence. Whenever these are lost, the Emir will lose his authority. Such a thing is an insinuation of his lousy selection of the men of his court, characterized by deception and hypocrisy. Humans with these qualities will never be loyal to the ruler. This kind of indirect warning to Saif al – Dawla not to abandon the essentials on which his rule rests. According to the poet, scammers and hypocrites will never achieve any victory or create sublime morals. Nietzsche's idea, as stated by Zarathustra, might be helpful. “Zarathustra asks the innovators, like him, to share the crop and rest; there is no need for the mob or semi-dead” (Nietzsche, 2003, p. 50).

You are the fairest of all people, except in my case
 You are the controversy, the opponent, and the judge combined
 Your intuitive perception is accurate, you correctly read
 So differentiate well between well-built bodies and those swelling with dropsy
 If a seeing person cannot tell the difference
 Between light and darkness
 What use is his eyesight

In the preceding lines, Balme is depicted through an appealing style: “You are the fairest of all except in my case.” Through this line, Al-Mutanabbi reveals that the Emir has transformed by neglecting him, thereby forfeiting one of the ruler's paramount qualities — justice. In Al-Mutanabbi's view, Saif al – Dawla extends fairness to this deceptive group, though they are undeserving, while he, despite his loyalty and love, is cast aside.

Addressing this matter, Ibn Jenni critiques, “This is an excessive complaint... If Saif al – Dawla was fair with everybody except Al-Mutanabbi, that was the worst type of oppression” (Barquqi, 1986, p. 83). Al-Mutanabbi persists in harmful blame against the emir, accusing him of having a blurred vision that prevents him from discerning the poet's position, characterized by individuality and excellence, in contrast to his adversaries. The poet uses antithesis, such as 'light' and 'darkness,' to underscore the disparity between himself as a poet and others who flatter Saif al – Dawla in the court. How could one benefit from eyesight if both 'light and darkness' appear the same? This, according to the poet, is akin to the perspective of a blind person or someone lacking insight — a blatant insult confirming the emir's blurred vision.

Al-Mutanabbi comes to the realization that the gentle reproach typical among friends and lovers is no longer effective. He discerns that an authoritative regime lacking justice and insight leads to frustration. The once-noble authority that fueled Al-Mutanabbi's ambition loses its potency amid changing values and concepts within the emir's realm.

B. Al-Mutanabbi: Supreme Ego and the Fallacy of Equity

After Al-Mutanabbi altered his stance toward the authoritative model, Saif al – Dawla, understanding that the conciliatory situation would never be restored, he firmly rejected oppression and humiliation. His spirit, now unyielding to authority after the rupture in their relationship, served as a reminder to Saif al – Dawla of the ambitious soul he had dismissed, a grave mistake on the emir's part. The subsequent portion of the poem emphasizes the poet's excellence, bravery, and valor.

Al-Mutanabbi, a name echoing worldwide, reveals an identity fully cognizant of his unique poetic prowess, which triumphs over all adversaries. Thus, he underscores his creative abilities on one hand and martial prowess on the other. By exalting himself and diminishing others, he aims to prove to the Emir, through a compelling argument, that he should not be equated with others; he is distinct. He articulates:

Even the blind man was able to see my verses
 Even the deaf man was able to hear my words
 I enjoy my sweet repose, not concerning myself with poetry
 Whereas others burn the midnight oil, in endless literary disputes
 Behold an ignorant man, deceived by my jovial manner
 Unaware of my intentions
 Until I unexpectedly pounce, hand and word, incapacitating him
 When you see a lion bearing his canines
 Never fancy him to be smiling
 When a knight contrives to snuff out my life
 I take away his own instead
 Mounting a noble steed, its back inviolable
 He runs with a rapid ambling gait
 His hind legs moving as one leg, so do his front legs
 He works in harmony with his rider's wishes
 In a manner best suited for hand and foot
 How often I strutted between two mighty armies
 Smiting with a thin blade claymore
 While the billows of death surged in full brawling roar
 Swift steeds, dreary nights, and the desolate wasteland, all know me full well
 As do the sword, the spear, the writing paper and the pen
 I kept lonely company with beasts of the wilderness
 Amazing thereby mounts and mounds

The preceding lines of verse unveil the supreme ego, starkly contrasting with the egos of poets within the court and others, including the emir himself, who contributed to the erosion of the court's noble values. The noble ego belongs to the noble self, a self that can be reinstated when atrocity and coercion dissipate. In such a scenario, it is accepted by others as something grounded in the law of nature. At that point, it becomes, in itself, 'justice' (Nietzsche, 2003, p. 265). The following lines unveil the poet's excessive ego:

Even the blind man was able to see my verses
 Even the deaf man was able to hear my words
 I enjoy my sweet repose, not concerning myself with poetry
 Whereas others burn the midnight oil, in endless literary disputes

In the preceding lines, the "I" discloses the unmatched poetic ability by which the poet tries to commemorate his glory in front of the governing changeable "I" to prove his supreme ego. If the governing "I" had been weakened by the loss of insight and did not see anything as before, the poet revolted against that authority of sick insight. He states, "Even the blind man was able to see my verses, "Even the deaf man was able to hear my words." His poetry spread worldwide so that blind people and people who were deaf or hard of hearing saw and heard them (Barquqi, 1986, p. 83). This talented, creative poet was distinguished for overriding the stereotypical method of writing poetry by being individualistic, original, educated, and with a broad, innovative imagination. The poet's skill lies in his ability to harness words that surprise the receptor: "I enjoy my sweet repose, Not concerning myself with poetry." Unlike him, other poets stay up for nights to achieve poetic diction, while Al-Mutanabbi differs from them as aberrated words are malleable and achievable for him.

Al-Mutanabbi dissected the heritage of Arabic poetry, seeking a leeway to single himself out from other poets. He used virgin words that were never used before; thus, he broke the conventional model of poetry. This is where his creativity lies. The creativity was seen by blind people and heard by people who are deaf or hard of hearing (Al Qasim, 2023, p. 313).

The "I" in the poem individualizes Al-Mutanabbi, who is filled with poetic feelings and challenges the authority of Saif al – Dawla, who has been struck by blindness and moral deafness due to negligence that made him not distinguish

between the natural talent and the fake one. The declared “I” in his poetry was a method of breaking the authoritative model and, at the same time, a way of exalting his ego by which he challenged the weakened authority of the emir, which would be defeated through this infiltration by knowledge, “Even the deaf man was able to hear my words”.

Al-Mutanabbi’s ego persists in encountering the emir’s and courtiers’ authority to create the exalted supreme ego as manifested in the military aspect of his life reflected in the bravery and knighthood the emir relinquished. Thus, the supreme ego integrates into his personality. He says:

Unaware of my intentions
Until I unexpectedly pounce, hand and word, incapacitating him
When you see a lion bearing his canines
Never fancy him to be smiling

The poetic scene extends to criticize the authority of the court, along with his adversaries among poets and writers, whom he accuses of ignorance, aligning with the blurred vision of the emir. ‘Behold an ignorant man, deceived by my jovial manner.’ This reflects a rebellion against the emir and the court, who are deemed ignorant and incapable of distinguishing between reality and falsehood.

The absence of justice and the disregard for Al-Mutanabbi’s potential resulted in the erosion of his free Arab identity. In response, he issues a threatening remark: ‘Never fancy the lion to be smiling.’ This serves both to assert his military valor and to highlight his dissatisfaction with the prevailing circumstances. He further expresses this by stating:

When a knight contrives to snuff out my life
I take away his own instead
Mounting a noble steed, its back inviolable
He runs with a rapid ambling gait
His hind legs moving as one leg, so do his front legs
He works in harmony with his rider’s wishes
In a manner best suited for hand and foot
How often I strutted between two mighty armies
Smiting with a thin blade claym ore
While the billows of death surged in full brawling roar
Swift steeds, dreary nights, and the desolate wasteland, all know me full well
As do the sword, the spear, the writing paper and the pen
I kept lonely company with beasts of the wilderness
Amazing thereby mounts and mounds

In the preceding military portrait, Al-Mutanabbi employs his legendary steed, the steed of the “Superman,” to describe how fast and skillful it is. Like its owner, it is different from others; its rider never scares anybody, and “its back is inviolable.” Like his super steed, he confronts the authority and courtiers to dispense with them and to open up new horizons that satisfy his ambition after failures the current authority achieved.

At the same time, the following lines present the military might of the poet, which the authority’s changed ideology has experienced:

How often I strutted between two mighty armies
Smiting with a thin blade claym ore
While the billows of death surged in full brawling roar

Al-Mutanabbi reviews his skill in mounting his steed in times of war. The previously quoted lines unveil the poet’s prowess in using his sword with which he moved between the two great armies surrounded by death from all sides “billows of death surged in full brawling roar.” In the previous lines of verse, Al-Mutanabbi showed his skill in mounting his steed in war and fighting his adversary engulfed by death “while the billows of death surged in a full brawling roar.” Lack of fear due to boldness is portrayed in the following line:

Swift steeds, dreary nights, and the desolate wasteland, all know me full well
As do the sword, the spear, the writing paper and the pen

Al-Mutanabbi, in these lines, draws features of his heroic personality by describing his prowess that reaches its apex through gaining elements of might (steed, sword, and spear), which constitute material elements of power for the knight. He also pleads with (paper and pen) associated with knowledge and culture to present an integrated picture of the hero, the supreme human. According to Nietzsche, the “majority of people represent parts of humans which should be assembled to have a complete human being at the end” (Barquqi, 1986, p. 470).

Al-Mutanabbi, thus, is the man of war and heroism, the creator of change on one hand and peace and knowledge on the other. His poetry was unique, as he averted the traditional way of versification. He made steeds, nights, and the desolate wasteland know him by exalting his ego filled with prowess, bravery, and venture. The following line of verse describes the daring acts with which he described himself earlier, saying:

I kept lonely company with beasts of the wilderness,
Amazing thereby mounts and mounds

No wonder the poet was accustomed to crossing large wildernesses in which he was the lonely beast, symbolizing his courage, boldness, and rare ventures. He was familiar with beasts of wilderness with their planes and valleys. All such things emphasize his individuality, which differentiates him from others. According to Nietzsche, "Men of truth only live in wastelands" (p. 130). This is a clear challenge to the opponents of the Emir's court who neglected Al-Mutanabbi, reminding them of his status and superiority.

From the preceding poetic scene, one can elicit that Al-Mutanabbi's adversaries plotted against him in the Hamdan court. Therefore, he reminded them of his heroic acts, which plots would never conceal. Therefore, he created a dynamic world for himself based on power and knowledge, contrary to the sloth that dominated the court of Saif al – Dawla. These aspects affirm the discordance in qualities and merit that the poet used to share with Saif al – Dawla before deception and estrangement. The last part of the poem renews blame, expressing regret for the coercive departure forced upon the poet by the court of Saif al – Dawla. The following lines elaborate on this issue:

Parting company with you is excruciatingly heartrending
My heart, soul, and all are nothing without you
O how I wish you have given me
The same affection and honor I accord you
Surely, I would have received that from you
Had I a place in your heart
If what my envious opponents said about me pleases you
With fortitude I will carry my pain
What matters a wound if you are pleased
There is a long-standing friendship between us
Wish you gave it what it deserves
Abiding loyalty is a sacred trust
For those who honor a pledge
How often you try to find fault with me, yet to no avail
Your attempts are unbecoming
In the eyes of both God and the noble-hearted
My character is far removed from blemishes and imperfections
Untouched by them
As the Pleiades is ever by old age untouched
I wish the storms breaking over my head change into benign clouds
I wish all barriers to your bountiful showers
Be permanently removed
My separation from you causes me to ceaselessly travel
Exhausting the most energetic camels, the swiftest steeds
Should I leave the Dhumair Mountain, to the right, and press on
You would surely regret my departure, once I am gone
Should you be forced to walk away from those
Capable of dissuading you from leaving them
They are the departed ones, not you
The worst of regions is where no true friends are found
The worst of gain is that which besmears one's honor
And the worst of birds my hand could ever catch
Is one not dissimilar from either falcon or vulture
How can ignorant and ignoble ones recite poetry in your presence
When they possess no articulate eloquence of the Arabs
This is my gentle rebuke to you, yet prompted by love,
Full of precious gems
In the form of soulful words conveyed

The concluding section of the quoted verses emphasizes the persistent blame on Saif al – Dawla. It elucidates that the poet, driven by the actions of the emir and envious individuals who infused a sense of nihilism, found himself compelled to depart, stating, 'My heart, soul, and everything are meaningless without you.' These circumstances heightened his anger and rebellion, as reflected in the subsequent two lines:

How often you try to find fault with me, yet to no avail
 Your attempts are unbecoming
 In the eyes of both God and the noble-hearted
 My character is far removed from blemishes and imperfections
 Untouched by them
 As the Pleiades is ever by old age untouched

In the preceding two lines, Al-Mutanabbi's vehement protests echo in response to adversaries who, as Nietzsche aptly noted, "try to find that fault reflects hatred for him because of his high reputation. People intensely hate those who soar above the clouds and unjustly ascribe shortcomings to them (2014, p. 85)." Al-Mutanabbi glorifies his ego, putting it side by side with the stars; it is flawless. His individualistic distinctive feeling singles him out to be unique and incomparable. Consequently, the imperfections that afflict ordinary humans, such as aging and graying hair, hold no sway over him, as they are earthly qualities from which he deliberately distances himself. It becomes apparent that the poet retains a sense of superiority, resilient against the attempts of his adversaries to diminish it through constant conspiracies, a trait inherent in treacherous plotters.

The poet keeps refuting the humiliation of the emir and his followers, who try to devalue the ambitious identity that seeks high grandeur. "I am the star." Such a declaration is a contempt for the authority weakened by aging "As the Pleiades is ever by old age untouched." That authority is no longer fair, so it is disqualified to be the supreme model he used to admire.

Al-Mutanabbi perceives that the envy of his adversaries played a pivotal role in the adversities he faced, as he surpassed them all in excellence. In his aspirations and desires, the envied poet endeavored to eradicate injustice, akin to a fire that consumed him, expressing, "Wish the clouds whose detonator I have," indicating his desire to dispel the wrath of authority. Rather than rewarding the poet for his loyalty with gifts, Saif al – Dawla opted to permanently redirect them elsewhere. Consequently, the favors of Saif al – Dawla found themselves bestowed upon insincere praises.

The shifts in Saif al – Dawla's policies convinced Al-Mutanabbi that a return to normalcy was unlikely. Consequently, the poet, embracing his individualism, pronounced his departure: "My separation from you causes me to travel ceaselessly." The psychological impacts of that stage on his life were "exhausting the most energetic camels, the swiftest steeds".

This statement conveys a sense of threat. The impending departure is framed as a catalyst for regret on the part of the emir: "You would surely regret my departure once I am gone." As per Akbari (n.d., p. 372), Al-Mutanabbi's predictions materialized, as Saif al – Dawla did indeed regret his actions. The departure of the poet, coupled with his praises for the emir, symbolized the departure of Saif al - Dawla's grandeur, with the poet noting: "They are the departed ones, not you".

Al Qayrawani (1981, p. 156) referred to the danger of the poet's recitation when he brought up the idea of remorse. In the beginning, he mentioned remorse, which was considered an insult. Al-Mutanabbi was almost killed when he left the gathering. This incident, as discussed by Al Qayrawani (1981, p. 156), exemplifies a manifestation of sheer pride (p. 156).

The worst of regions is where no true friends are found
 The worst of gain is that which besmears one's honor
 And the worst of birds my hand could ever catch
 Is one not dissimilar from either falcon or vulture
 How can ignorant and ignoble ones recite poetry in your presence
 When they possess no articulate eloquence of the Arabs
 This is my gentle rebuke to you, yet prompted by love,
 Full of precious gems
 In the form of soulful words conveyed

These words evoke Nietzsche's cautionary statement, "Beware the tramps; they feel disparaged in front of you. Therefore, their feeling turns into vengeance" (Nietzsche, 2003, p. 77). This sentiment parallels the poet's experience, where adversaries' envy transformed into conspiracies, rendering his life intolerable. The emir's court, lacking justice, amiability, and social equity, equates the superior, symbolized by "the falcon," with "the vulture." This bold outcry openly rejects such inequality, an idea vehemently rejected by enlightened minds. Neutral distinctions between individuals and a strong sense of individuality, as argued by Badawi (1975, pp. 260-261), inevitably lead to class divisions, challenging the notion of universal equity.

Interestingly, Saif al – Dawla seemingly contradicts this narrative by endorsing equity between Al-Mutanabbi and his adversaries. Instead of objecting, he elevates them to higher ranks in the emir's court. This accusation extends beyond the individuals involved; it implicates the emir himself and his policies, allowing for libels and slander. Furthermore, it fails to distinguish between feigned adversaries and genuine admirers, as Al-Mutanabbi articulates, "This is my gentle rebuke to you, yet prompted by love full of precious gems in the form of soulful words conveyed".

VI. CONCLUSION

Analyzing the poem addressed to Saif al - Dawla, it becomes evident that the reproachful poetic speech emanates from a profound sense of individuality and exaltation. Al-Mutanabbi, in the poem, reveals his divergence from the norm and articulates justifications for this individuality through creative lines of poetry, granting him the right to elevate his supreme ego. As a rebellious soul, he resists the impositions of the court, particularly when it denies him prudence and wisdom.

When the once supreme model transforms into an ordinary human, Al-Mutanabbi insists that the individual is no longer qualified for higher ranks. This poem considered the finest among the "Al-Sayfiyats" named after Saif al - Dawla, vehemently rejects the attributed qualities of flattery, hypocrisy, and opportunism through poetry that his adversaries associate with him. The poem stands as a powerful assertion of Al-Mutanabbi's unique identity, and a repudiation of false attributions imposed by his detractors.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

After conducting a thorough analysis of the poem, the researchers propose the following recommendations:

A. Explore Other Esteemed Poets

Conduct further studies on poets of similar stature to Al-Mutanabbi to determine the extent to which their ego influenced their poetic talents. Comparing multiple poets with a focus on their individuality and its impact on their work could provide valuable insights into common themes or divergences in this regard.

B. Philosophical Approach to Poetry of Praise

Reconsider the study of praise poetry within the heritage of Arabic versification using a philosophical approach or alternative methodologies. This could involve reevaluating the genre and its significance, examining the philosophical underpinnings of ego in poetry, and challenging accusations against both the poetry and the revered Arab poets in the historical context of ancient Arabic literature.

These recommendations aim to broaden the understanding of the relationship between ego, individuality, and poetic expression, as well as to offer a fresh perspective on the genre of praise poetry within the broader context of Arabic literary heritage.

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