



A Critical Discourse Analysis Study of Woman Image in Nizar Al-Kabbani's Poetry

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ABSTRACT

Discourse means to highlight the hidden motives that are wrapped in words and flowery language just to intensify and enhance the effect of the words. In the same way poets write poetry in order to have some motive behind it. The purpose of this paper is to spotlight the hidden meaning of the poem "Balqees" in front of the readers to make it expressible. We all speak something having a motive behind our talk. Discourse is research methodology to find out the truths or purposes behind the spoken or written words. I have chosen this poem because it expresses the cruel reality of life and this world. This paper analyzes the language of the poem "Balqees". The study is grounded in critical discourse analysis that 'text within contexts'. The poem is open to diverse interpretations.

I shall use the term discourse to refer to the whole process of social interaction of which a text is just a part'(Fairclough,1989:24)

Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical Discourse Analysis is obviously not a fixed rule nor a principle, but most a shared perspective on doing linguistics, semiotic or discourse analysis. (Van Dij, 1993:131) The objective is to perceive language use as social practice. The users of language do not function in isolation, but in asset of cultural, social and psychological frameworks.CDA accepts this social context and studies the connections between textual structures and takes this social context into account and explores the links between textual structures and their function in interaction within the society. Such an analysis is a complex, multi-level one, given the obvious lack of direct , one to one correspondence between text structures and social and literary functions. The relatedness of the complex mechanism of discursive practice and their literary function is frequently willingly opaque, especially when the need occurs to create a framework for decreasing this opacity. Fairclough (1993:135) in his definition perceives CDA as discourse analysis which aims to systematically explores often opaque relationships of causality and determination between a-discursive practice, events and texts, and b- wider literary and critical structures, relations and process; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are literary shaped by relations between discourse and text in itself a factor.

It should be noted that the relationship is bi-directional .Not only is the language use affected by its groundedness within certain frame of cultural or social practice, but also the use of language influences and shapes the literary and stylistic context it finds itself in.IT can be concluded that discursive practices are constitutive of literary structures, the same way as literary structures determine discursive practices.CDA recognizes both directions, and in particular

it 'explore the tension between these two sides of language use, the literary shaped and textual and textual constitutive. Language is a constituent of the society on various levels. A division proposed by Fairclough(Ibid. 134-136) is that of social identity, social relations and systems of knowledge and belief. All of these levels are affected, only with a variation as far as the strength is concerned.

The issue of interpretation of these levels I the context of the context of discourse models and literary cognition will be addressed in the latter part of this work. The one element of CDA by which it is differentiated from other forms of discourse analysis lies in its attribute of 'critical' .critical' implies showing connections and causes which are hidden; it also implies intervention, for example providing resources for those who may be disadvantaged through change ' (Fairclough,1992:9).It is important to expose the hidden things, since they are not evident for the individuals involved, and, because of this they can not be fought against.

One of the theoreticians of discourse linguistics, who, in the words of Van Dijk contributed 'many articles and books that establish CDA as a direction of research, and that focus on dimensions of power', is the work of Norman Fairclough (1989,1992).It is for him that CDA is perceived as a research tactics rather than a direction of thought or a model of analysis. What the followers of CDA try to achieve has been summarized by Batstone (1995).Critical Discourse Analysts seek to reveal how texts are constructed so that particular (and potentially in doctrinnating)perspectives can be expressed delicately and covertly; because they are covert, they are elusive of direct challenge, facilitating what Kress calls the 'retreat into mystification and impersonality'(Batstone,1995:198-199).

The definitions, as proposed above, are quite complete, but they would need further specification of how CDA is undertaken, Norman Fairclough, in his work Language and Power(1989), 'wishes to examine how the ways which we communicate are constrained by the structures and forces of those social institutions within which we

live and function' (Fairclough,1989:vi).In the same publication, the possible procedures for analyzing of the texts suggested. Fairclough (Ibid:24-26) gives his opinions on the actual nature of discourse and text analysis. In His view, there are three levels of discourse, firstly, social conditions of production and interpretation, i.e. the social factors, which contributed or lead to the organization of a text, and, at the same time, how the same factors effect interpretation. Secondly, the process of production and interpretation, i.e. in what way the text was produced and how this effects interpretation. Thirdly, the text, being the product of the first two stages, commented on above. Fairclough subsequently gives three stages of CDA, which are in accorded with the three abovementioned levels of discourse:

- A. Description is the stage which is concerned with the formal properties of the text.
- B. Interpretation is concerned with the relationship between text and interaction with seeing the text as a product of a process of production, and as a resource in the process of interpretation.
- C. Explanation is concerned with the relationship between interaction and social context-with the social determination of the process of production and interpretation, and their effects(Fairclough,1989:26).

About Nizar Tawfiq Al kabbani:

Nizar Al kabbani was a Syrian diplomat, poet, writer and publisher. His poetic style combines simplicity and elegance in exploring themes of love, eroticism, feminism, religion, and Arab nationalism. Kabbani is one of the most revered contemporary poets in the Arab world, and is considered to be Syria's National poet. He was born in the Syrian capital of Damascus to a middle class merchant family of mixed Turkish and Arab decent. Kabbani studied at the national scientific College School in Damascus between 1930 and 1941.He later studied law at the University .He graduated with a bachelor's degree in law in 1954. After the death of Balqees,,Kabbani

left Beirut .He was moving between Geneva and Paris, eventually settling in London, where he spent the last 15 years of his life. Kabbani continued to write poems and raise controversies and arguments. Notable controversial poems from this period in his life include. When they will announce the Death of Arabs? and Runners. In 1997, Nizar Kabbani suffered from poor health and briefly recovered from his sickness in late 1997.A few months later, at the age of 75,Nizar Kabbani died in London on 30 April 1998 of a heart attack .In his will, which he wrote that in his hospital bed in London, Nizar Kabbani wrote that he wished to be buried in Damascus, which he described in his will as "the womb that taught me poetry, taught me creativity and granted me the alphabet of Jasmine". Nizar was mourned by Arabs all over the world, with news broadcasts highlighting his illustrious literary career.

Analysis of the poem “ Balqis”:

بلقيس...كيف تركتنا في الريح،نرجف مثل اوراق الشجر

(وتركتنا-نحن الثالثه -ضائعين كريشه تحت المطر...68)

Balqis...how would you leave us twisting in the wind,

Trembling as leaves? you left the three of us lost

As feather under the rain.....

The poet uses simile in order to compare himself and his sons to fallen leaves in a windy day. He also compares himself and his sons to a feather in a rainy day. The poet uses the word 'as' in order to show the poetic device 'simile'. The poet is wondering how his wife has left them to twist in the wind and to tremble like leaves. Now, the poet and his sons have been lost.

قتلوك في بيروت مثل اي غزالة

(من بعدها قتلو الكالم...69)

هل تاتين باسمه...وناضره...ومشرقه كازهار الحقول؟ (... 70)

وتدخلين على الضيوف،كانك السيف اليماني..71)

Like any deer in Beirut, you are slaughtered
After speech had been muzzled
And enter to meet Guests like if you were a Yemeni sword

The poet mentions that his wife has been slaughtered in Beirut like any deer. After that, speech has been muzzled. The poet wishes and hopes that his wife may come smiling like flowers. He says that his wife has been killed by a hunter like any hind. He compares her to a deer in delicacy and innocence. He is mentioning that her hair like a palm tree. The poet also says his wife may come and appear to guest like a Yemeni sword. He says that his wife has a very strong character, and she is sharp just like a sword.

(اي امه عرييه تلك التي تغتال اصوات البابل)76

Which Arab nation those whom assassinate birds voices?

The poet uses metaphor when he complains about the murderers of his wife. He is asking and wandering about the assassination of his wife. He says that the voice of his wife is like the voice of birds.

والخنجر العربي ليس يقيم فرق

(بين اعناق الرجل...وبين اعناق النساء...)82

For an Arab dagger it is all the same

Killing a gentleman or a madam

The poet denies the Arab dagger which kills men and women alike. It is the same for the Arab dagger in killing a gentleman or a madam.

كان البنفسج بين عينيها ينام...وال ينام

ماذا يقول الشعر، يابلقيس، في هذا الزمان؟

(ماذا يقول الشعر في العصر الشعبي المجوسي، الجبان؟...)86

The color of violet in her eyes

Twinkles all times

What does poetry say in this era, Balqis

What does poetry say in the cowardly era...?

There are two images in the above lines. They show and refer to a deep sadness that the poet feels. They also show how the poet is hopeless and desperate because his wife has passed away. So, the poet is looking for the most powerful images that reflect his sorrow. He says that the era in which they are living now is coward.

ساقول في التحقيق

كيف غزالتني ماتت بسيف ابي لهب

كل الصوص من الخليج الي المحيط

يدمرون.... ويحرقون... وينهبون... ويرتثون

ويعتدون على النساء كما يريد ابولهب

كل الكالب موظفون... وياكلون... ويسكرون

(على حساب ابي لهب...90)

When under investigation, I will say:
How my deer was slain by Abi lahab's sword...
All thieves from the Gulf to the Ocean:
Ransack and get bribe Destroy and burn
And rape women, as Abu Lahab likes

The poet repeats the terms 'Abi lahab' and 'dogs' to draw the attention of the readers. The terms 'Abi lahab', refers to the head of state, while the term 'dogs' refers to his followers. The term 'Abi lahab' represents evilness, wickedness, and maliciousness. It also represents anything that causes pain and sufferings to man. It shows and represents the power of a tyrant against the weak people. He draws an image of tyrant-led communities where all people at the beck and call their leaders their entourage:

No wheat grows If Abu Lahab disapproves.
No child is born

Until his mother goes to bed
With Abi Lahab.
No Prison is open
Without Abi Lahab's opinion.
None is beheaded
Without Abi Lahab's command

This long standing image of humiliated people is strikingly put in juxtaposition with the image of their coward leaders. Political impotence goes hand in hand with the desire for self-destruction. The aim of the leaders-created tyrannical atmosphere is both to compensate for the failure of their external politics and to curb any trial for revolt in its bud. In "Balqis" Qabbani raises the conflict between language and politics in an age darker than the pre-Islamic one concerning the demagogic and bloody acts done by Arab leaders. The excruciating ordeal the poet underwent along with the disappointing political atmosphere almost rendered his ability to write crippled:

Sadness ,Balqis, makes my heart bleed
As if is were an orange squeezed
Now;I know the distress of words,
The plight of impossible language.
I, who have coined letters,
Don't know how to start this one.
The sword penetrates into my waist
And into that of the sentence.

The suffering of the poet makes him tongue-tied. He is at a loss due to his wife's assassination as well as the deteriorating political situation of the whole nation. The inability of expression occurs due to Arab's wrong political practices. Leaders deem it convenient to silence thinkers and men of letters either by assassination or banishment. Qabbani makes it clear that those political regimes aim at keeping their people in cains, preventing any shred of hope of their being

enlightened. 'Balqis' is Qabbani's lament for and the dirge wept over his wife. A feminist writer and a supporter of woman's emancipation, Qabbani's poem is but a manifesto. The very title of the poem, which bears the name of his wife, crystallizes the role Qabbani assigns to women. "Balqis" is a symbol of a feminist militant spirit, who, through death, still stands in the face of corruption. In fact, the assassination of Balqis uncovers the darker side of the Arab politics as the poet clearly depicts.

Conclusion

This paper analyzes the text of the poem Balqees and an attempt to describe the world within the text through discourse analysis. It is observed that the text has a world of its own and things are created within the text according to the mind style of the author. It is attempted another concept of Fairclough, namely that 'meanings are produced through interpretations' and to decipher the possible interpretations of various references of the text. The results of the analysis of the text have shown Nizar's choice of discursive was to strengthen the notion of love and respect for the woman he loved among the various members of the diverse society of his period. The overall, underlying theme of the poem is the need to be inspired towards discourse analysis as a tool for interpreting the text.

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