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# Poetry and Philosophy: Points of Similarity and Difference, A Study in the Nature of the Relationship

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### Abstract:

Talking about the relationship or intersection between thought and poetry, or between art and philosophy, as two great sources of human consciousness or thought, is a broad and complex discussion. It raises objections from many people who are accustomed to sharply separating the two. This article, trying to delve deeply into the subject and its intricacies, seeks to explore the points of convergence and divergence between philosophy and poetry. It clarifies the tense relationship that connects the philosophical/intellectual side with the artistic/poetic side and poses the legitimate question: Can philosophy be poetic and poetry philosophical without philosophy losing its unique character and distinctive function, and without poetry losing its soaring artistic spirit, turning instead into dry ideas or cold instructional compositions?

**Keywords:** Philosophy, Poetry, Thought, Art, Reason, Emotion

### Introduction:

In intellectual and philosophical history, and in the literature of critics, thinkers, and

philosophers, the idea of a conflict between the rational, logical knowledge system and the system of poetic and imaginative pleasure has been well established. This has given rise to a thick theoretical wall of opposition between the philosophical method and the poetic method in approaching the world and things, and in the exchange of ideas and meanings.

This perception of conflict has been further reinforced by the prevalent view among many critics that sees poetry as merely a formal verbal craft rather than intellectual or visionary content. Their attention focused on analyzing artistic formulation and aesthetic form, considering meaning and thought as secondary, "laid out in the marketplace," rather than the poet's original product. According to them, the poet "does not create meanings but sees them laid out in the marketplace." Some go further, claiming that poetry is the opposite of thought, based on the premise that poetic expression is what thought cannot achieve, and that which does not require interpretation.<sup>(1)</sup>

This is what has made the discussion about a connection or meeting between thought and poetry, or between art and

philosophy, as two great sources of awareness or human thought, a vague and exaggerated topic that provokes the objection of many people who are accustomed to drawing a sharp distinction between them. They see that »philosophy, in their view, represents the most complete expression of organized mental effort that deals only with facts, concerns itself solely with certainty, and uses only proofs, whereas poetry, in their view, represents nothing more than the wanderings of imagination and obscure feelings<sup>(2)</sup>«

From this point, it becomes necessary, consequently, to briefly clarify the points of convergence and divergence between philosophy and poetry, to elucidate the tense relationship that has existed between the philosophical/intellectual aspect and the artistic/poetic aspect, and to question: Can philosophy be poetic and poetry philosophical without philosophy losing its distinct character and unique function, and without poetry losing its fluttering artistic spirit, turning into a dry idea or a cold educational verse?

### **1- The Nature of the Relationship Between Poetry and Philosophy:**

Since the beginnings of philosophical inquiry, there has been a very tense relationship between philosophy and art, and between truth and poetry, reaching the point of conflict and divergence, accusations, and scathing criticism. This relationship evolved with Platonism to become one of negation, exclusion, and withdrawal—a relationship charged with tension and struggle between two

parties, one claiming to possess and monopolize the truth, and the other claiming to live it and immerse in it, although dominance remains, and continues to be, with reason and philosophy at the expense of poetic awareness and artistic experience. Since the emergence of Platonism, "reason has been considered the basis of all construction, the construction of the individual and the design of the city, for the model city is the one governed by the philosopher... Hence, the pursuit of truth is entrusted to the realm of reason: that is, philosophy.<sup>(3)</sup>"

From this rational standpoint, the philosopher, in his long-standing struggle with poets, attempts to build the edifice of his ideal city on a foundation of rationality and logic, excluding any poetic discourse based on illusion, and any artistic experience inspired by the irrational. This is because the poet or artist 'speaks the language of hysteria or the tongue of the irrational; the language of art is the language of pleasure and immediacy, and what the artist says is merely superficial, with its truth being unestablished and non-argumentative.'<sup>(4)</sup>

There is no doubt that this clash and sparring between poetry and philosophy, when examining their foundations and motivations, reflect the transcendent philosophical perspective that assumes it monopolizes truth and controls the world and existence through its conceptual apparatus, in contrast to an incomplete artistic vision that relies on linguistic expression and the human condition,

and views the universe and things from behind a veil.

These are the means of poetry that the philosopher neither recognizes nor accepts as evidence of truth or a tool for knowledge: the introspection of the human being, questioning emotions, diving into the inner depths, escaping from existence, drawing inspiration from language, and playing with words, in addition to a mixed haze of imagination, illusion, falsehood, ambiguity, and confusion...

The purpose of poetry has always been to evoke artistic or aesthetic pleasure rather than to touch on existential and cosmic truth. Thus, it is as far removed from the truth sought by the philosopher as possible, and there is a significant difference between poetic ecstasy and cognitive revelation, between rhetorical discourse and argumentative discourse, and between artistic imagination and scientific truth. From the perspective of rationalist philosophers, poetic discourse lacks what would support its propositions, imaginations, and illusions in expressing existential and cosmic truth. It 'lacks something akin to the philosopher's language, such as argumentation, reasoning, and evidence, and the absence of these conditions and rules leads toward a semblance of truth.'<sup>(5)</sup> Or 'the incomplete truth, half veiled by a curtain'<sup>(6)</sup>

This is where the ancient philosophical call to resist poetry came from, with its grand claims, its linguistic playfulness, and its imaginative realms, which lie on the margins of transcendent truth, in the imaginary that

distorts reality and often misrepresents it. The world of poetry is the world of imagery, sensation, and the body, a world of imagination, emotion, and play. For this reason, it is far from abstract rational truth. It is a 'world of the margins of truth or its marginalized remnants,' as Muhammad Tuwai says, 'which can only be aided by the veil of imagination and its images. Imagination is not considered in relation to establishing the foundations of living in the city, because the city cannot be organized as a structured and strict space except on the basis of the language of mathematical calculation.'<sup>(7)</sup> Logic, rational thinking, and military organization—philosophy is serious and effective, whereas poetry is play, imagination, dream, and fantasy, meaning it is purely non-effective.

And this is the essence of the tense relationship and the ongoing struggle between philosophy and poetry; poetry is an irrational word, it is the word in the service of ecstasy, and through ecstasy, a person becomes something other than human, their mind intoxicated and their tongue set free.

When we examine philosophical and critical history, we hardly find—except in rare cases—philosophers and rationalists who view poetry as providing a special kind of knowledge, or who see imagination as a tool for reaching truth. Imagination has "received a considerable share of attention in linking it to the lower psychological faculties of man... as imagination has been connected to secondary knowledge that does not rise to the level of

high philosophical knowledge sought by the universal mind, and is confined to the partial and the sensual."<sup>(8)</sup>

In addition, it aims only at 'a mere illusion of a set of pre-existing things; it is an evocation of memory through the presented images, and what they call up from the prior knowledge the reader has acquired.'<sup>(9)</sup>

Most of the criticisms directed at poetry and poetic discourse in general pointed an accusatory finger at this flaw or epistemic deficiency, which is that poetry is merely an illusion of truth and a fanciful deception that misleads the (base) soul with beautifully adorned images and 'pretends in falsehood and indulges in hiding behind imagination, portraying truth as falsehood and falsehood as truth.'<sup>(10)</sup>

And the most that poets and writers in general have bestowed upon us is this lofty tone of empty show, hollow pride, and false claims of possessing the truth and expressing the essence of man and the secret of existence, of contemplating things and drawing inspiration from the beyond...

And when these claims are scrutinized and compared with philosophical truths, we find that poetic discourse has no distinctive form of deep knowledge, hidden truth, or penetrating science.

Most poetry, as the philosopher Walter Stace asserts<sup>(\*)</sup> It consisted of the simplest and clearest human truths along with the emotions arising from the inevitability of death and its melancholy, the beauty of natural landscapes,

the capacity for love and friendship, the love of parents and children, the tragic events in life, and also the little amusements it contains...<sup>(11)</sup>

All of this and more is presented in an aesthetic form of vivid imagery, instead of mental abstraction, a musical tone of melody and rhythm, and an emotional nuance for psychological impact, and nothing else. We may find in many modern poetic texts, in particular, a kind of ambiguity, estrangement, tension, and obscurity, and a kind of intellectual or mental intentionality that is emotive (if the expression is correct), yet in the final analysis, it is "an effort seeking hidden and unusual intellectual ideas, but it does not seek truth of any kind."<sup>(12)</sup>

They are just ordinary thoughts, 'accompanied by an appropriate tone of feeling, embodied in skillful words and images.'<sup>(13)</sup>

Apart from the skillful artistic imagery, the measured sound rhythm, the profound emotional impact, and the imagination leaping here and there, we hardly find anything but 'some bare bones of a purely realistic truth, as Walter Stace expresses it.'<sup>(14)</sup>

It seems that, in the final analysis, poetry is nothing more than a skillful aesthetic expression of a reality already known to people, or of an existential truth experienced that has only been able to don the ornate garb of poetry through the poet's hands. This is the idea hinted at by the German chemist Ernst Fischer in his book: 'A tool for discovering a truth that remains unknown until that moment, and undoubtedly, there is a connected process of

discovery, but it is a discovery of reality, not of truth.'<sup>(15)</sup>

And if we start searching for the first historical appearance of ancient poets, we find that the hypothesis most likely to be true is that there were people who were prevented from engaging in practical activities and making useful tools like their peers in the tribe or sect, so they resorted consequently to other mechanisms and means to express or bring forth the talent of creativity and creation, and poetic words became their optimal medium.<sup>(16)</sup>

It is as if the deprivation of poets from active practical engagements, and their social and productive passivity, led them to create another parallel world founded on words, imagery, and melody. This passivity, which characterizes the poetic stance toward the world or reality, is what Al-Ghadhami referred to as 'non-effectiveness' in his book Cultural Criticism. He believes that this non-effectiveness is the most prominent trait of poets because they 'say what they do not do,' and it is one of the flaws of poetic discourse, as it 'deprives language of its practical value by separating speech from action, and it also relieves the self of responsibility for what it says.'<sup>(17)</sup>

And whenever the practical value disappears from language and the effectiveness that influences existence vanishes, and the emotional poetic value that responds to the impulses of sentiment rather than the impulses of thought prevails, the self becomes 'a poetic being that dwells for poetry and moves only

according to the poetic meaning that delights it, indifferent to truth, for truth was never a poetic value,'<sup>(18)</sup> according to Dr. Al-Ghadhami.

Similar to poetry, other forms of cultural representation, such as narratives and literature, carry significant risks for the audience, because they attempt to create the illusion of truth and persuade of its authenticity while presenting themselves as lies, and they delve deeply into seeking refuge in imagination by portraying truth in the guise of falsehood and falsehood in the guise of truth.<sup>(19)</sup>

But poetry is the most powerful of these representational and aesthetic things in terms of its impact, given the emotional and illusory strategies it employs to express its meanings and purposes. It is also the most dangerous linguistic means for conveying systems and concealing them, according to Al-Ghadhami. Accordingly, 'literature should abandon its claim to knowledge and objective truth, because it is not necessary to know what things truly are in order to express our feelings toward them.'<sup>(20)</sup>

The purpose of poetry, as is commonly understood, is to express feelings and emotions, respond to psychological impulses, attempt to convey emotional experiences, and achieve aesthetic pleasure, which contradicts the goals of knowledge and science. From this, we can say that the knowledge or truth provided to us by poetry is limited, at least from a logical positivist perspective, and the pleasure it gives us is merely a response to impulses, as 'Allan

Tate' observes in his treatment of the relationship between science and poetry.<sup>(21)</sup>

Poetry, ultimately, is accompanied by criteria of soundness, effectiveness, and objectivity. When a poet becomes immersed in their emotional state and imagination, giving free rein to their wandering thoughts and musings, they are far from truth and knowledge; knowledge as the totality of theories, information, concepts, and ideas that explain the universe, life, natural phenomena, and various human existential experiences. Hence, the relationship between poetry and knowledge in general is often one of opposition or conflict, because the realm of poetic engagement is the human soul in its weakness, bewilderment, wonder, questioning, dreaming, and its claim to revelation and insight. Poetry is an "announcement of the failure of the senses to comprehend the contours of existence and nothingness and the storms of life; it is a disclosure of the weakness of human knowledge despite all the achievements that humans consider themselves successful in taming and harnessing for their purposes and whims."<sup>(22)</sup>

In truth, the poet perceives through dreams, visions, and intuition, and 'often falters in understanding through mechanical wakefulness... He is akin to soothsayers who provide signs, not theories in the physics of nature and the chemistry of love.'<sup>(23)</sup>

Most of the poets' references, allusions, symbolic methods, expressive language, and unconscious intuitions, which strive to present

to us the existential or cosmic phenomenon as it appears in consciousness and as imagination shapes it, are far removed from the realm of philosophical knowledge based on mental or conceptual understanding, which reveals to us the intelligible truth as it exists in reality and in the ideal.<sup>(24)</sup>

And the aesthetic theories that are based on unifying art with everything—truth, goodness, reality, and the absolute... and that strive to make art and poetry a royal path to knowledge—are ultimately theories full of excess, exaggeration, and empty claims. Even if we concede the existence of intuitive artistic knowledge as opposed to scientific or philosophical knowledge, it is 'at a lower level than that which can be attained through philosophy.'<sup>(25)</sup>

It is necessary here to distinguish between the symbolic language of science and the emotional language of poetry, between the objectivity of science, which can issue judgments and is subject to scrutiny and verification, and the subjectivity of art, which is not subject to judgments and is not based on commonly accepted truths. As long as thought and poetry are differentiated in this regard, poetry will remain 'an individual expression that reflects a state unique to the self, without being reducible to a concept or intellectual knowledge'.<sup>(26)</sup>

It is not necessary for a poet to know what things are objectively or scientifically in order to express his feelings toward them. He is free to say whatever he wishes and however

he wishes according to his own perception, intuition, and emotion.

Therefore, a poet's claim to possess the truth in its entirety, to perceive existence at its core, or to know the self in its entirety is a very grand claim, yet almost empty upon closer examination. There is a vast difference between conscious, alert understanding distinguished by the knower, and the often dreamy, delusional understanding of the poet. It is as if the essence of knowledge for the poet lies in acknowledging his own incapacity and discovering his ignorance—his inability to reach the truth, and his ignorance even of himself, whom he believes he has crafted. The poet seems to turn upon himself, revolving around his emotions in a spiral that ultimately leads to nothing.

While poetry, for broad groups of romantics and symbolists, is considered an aesthetic form of knowledge, superior to other forms of scientific and philosophical knowledge, taking the path of imagination, feeling, intuition, and vision, pure aesthetic theories and the theory of art for art's sake reject the idea that poetry is 'a means of knowing the world,' because poetry's subject is not truth, and it has no subject other than itself. Methods of proving truth are different and have another domain; truth has no connection to songs.<sup>(27)</sup> As the poet Baudelaire says.

And if the poet does not submit to the search for truth as it is from the perspective of a scientist or philosopher, it is because he believes he carries a truth more beautiful and

noble from his own poetic perspective, and because he sees the function of art as 'creating, starting from the raw material of real existence, a world more wondrous, enduring, and truthful than the world that common human eyes see.'<sup>(28)</sup> Therefore, the true aim of poetry is not to imitate nature or to understand the world, but to create beauty, independent of any intellectual dimension of the artistic work.

## **2- The Commonality and Similarity**

### **Between the Poet and the Philosopher:**

There are many names of philosopher-poets and poet-philosophers in our Arabic literature or in other ancient and modern literatures. Modern poets, in particular, have woven philosophical reflections, wisdom, and musings into their poetry, donning the cloak of the sage and leaning on the staff of the philosopher (such as Jamil Sidqi al-Zahawi, Gibran, Mikha'il Naima, al-Bayati, Salah Abdel Sabour, Khalil Hawi, Adonis... and others). As for the philosopher-poets or those close to the spirit of poetry, they are difficult to enumerate, starting from the philosophers who preceded Socrates and ending with existential philosophers such as Heidegger, Sartre, Nietzsche, and others.<sup>(29)</sup>

A poem can be philosophical in one of two senses: it may be a tool used to convey a philosophical wisdom or teaching independent of the poem itself... most instructional poems fall into this category. On the other hand, and in a deeper sense, a poem can rely on linguistic, artistic, and rhythmic tools to deepen our insight into values, relationships, and possible

meanings regarding the major issues in our lives, such as love, death, and destiny.<sup>(30)</sup>

These meanings, connotations, values, and relationships are impossible to process and express deeply and comprehensively if the poem is phrased in flat prose terms that obscure its beauty and conceal its resonance. Thus, for the sake of profound existential meaning, poetry relies on subtle philosophical foundations, and for the sake of beautiful expression, philosophy dons a strikingly poetic and artistic cloak. Many philosophers, as Abdul Karim Al-Khatib says, "they involved the heart along with the mind in the battle of knowledge, assigning the mind to uncover nature, explain its phenomena, and interpret its mysteries, while entrusting the heart with perceiving what lies beyond nature on the wings of the soul's longings and the glow of conscience."<sup>(31)</sup>

Without involving the heart or emotions, philosophy becomes mere intellectual sophistry and cold theorizing. Philosophy and poetry are 'an outpouring of emotion and bringing it from potential to action. When it takes a rational form, it is philosophy; when it takes a form that unites intellect and spirit, it is poetry. The transition of emotion from potential to action, as manifested in philosophy and poetry, occurs through revelation.'<sup>(32)</sup>

Only a few exceptional individuals reach this level. At times, we call them philosophers when they engage our minds, and at times we call them poets when they touch

our emotions. Poetry, as an expression of the soul, is more difficult and more mysterious than philosophy. It is easy to understand the language of the mind, but difficult to understand the language of the soul – as Shukri Aziz Madi says. In poetry, we face two things: a profound and hidden philosophy, and a captivating poetic language of dazzling beauty.<sup>(33)</sup>

The relationship of sharing or proximity between the poet and the philosopher does not imply similarity or identification so much as it assumes that poetry has its beautiful language and mysterious space, which makes the poet distance his poem from dry philosophy or mere thought, without this meaning the absence of conscious thought or deep reflection. Poetic awareness "remains present even in the most intense states of the poet's distraction and immersion in the depths of the self or reality, with all it contains of imaginations, illusions, myths, and desires hidden behind the patterns that govern it."<sup>(34)</sup>

This diving or immersion undertaken by the poet may be approached by the philosopher or thinker when they possess clarity of feeling and sensitivity of emotion. From this, we can say that philosophy shares with poetry the fact that both originate from humans, reaching the pinnacle of contemplation. Moreover, they "share a common interest in interpretive experience, aiming to satisfy both cognitive and emotional thirst, as well as to interpret, explain, and evaluate the phenomena observed by the artist

or philosopher, recognizing their diversity and multiplicity..."<sup>(35)</sup>

Besides the cognitive and interpretive purpose that brings the philosopher and the poet together on the same level, the principle from which philosophy originates and from which poetry springs is the same: wonder. The wonder that Plato and Aristotle spoke of in ancient times, which makes us look at everything around us with a different perspective full of contemplation and imagination, 'so that we see the familiar as if it were strange and the strange as if it were familiar, and wonder is a kind of alertness, and alertness is the most important characteristic of a thinking human being, whoever they may be.'<sup>(36)</sup>

Poetry only aligns with conscious thoughts, passionate about the unknown, and essentially open to becoming. There is no poetry except where there is absolute creation and creativity. Among the similarities between poetry and philosophy is that quality history has shown us from both, namely the strangeness of their essence, which means their ability to defy all definitions.<sup>(37)</sup>

And the poet, as is well known, is a vigilant, perceptive person, endowed with keen sensitivity, open with all his senses to life, looking at existence with a wide, staring eye full of wonder and driven by curiosity. In his poetry, he employs metaphors, similes, and imagination to draw comparisons and connections, creating analogies and similarities between things that may seem at

first glance to be entirely different. 'Comparing imaginary things with purely material things in order to impose the most abstract idea and to attribute everything to images, as well as inventing the most novel and powerful images—these are the talents possessed by a great poet.'<sup>(38)</sup>

These are the same talents possessed by the great philosopher, which can be summarized as follows: 'the ability to discover connections and understand them, and the ability to link details together and generalize.'<sup>(39)</sup>

From this perspective, the common activity carried out by the poet and the philosopher is the connection between the perceptible and the conceptual, both intellectually and expressively, continuously linking the ages through mechanisms that connect our ideas with our senses. Philosophy and poetry are twins in this regard, and they are "two sides of the same coin" – as the poet Lamartine tells us – considering that "the former represents the ideal model suitable on the level of thought, while the latter serves as the ideal model suitable on the level of expression, and both sublime philosophy and dignified poetry are nothing but fleeting instances of revelation."<sup>(40)</sup>

Philosophy and poetry divide human destiny, and they secretly point to his fate as he lives poetically on this earth; therefore, he is compelled throughout his life to care for it and listen to the call of emotion and name things... Philosophy and poetry are opposing forces

drawn by the same obsession, or perhaps they are one spirit in two forms, united by conflict, the conflict of lovers.<sup>(41)</sup>

Poetry, like other arts, has an amazing ability to express insights, revelations, and intuitions about the nature of life and things. Very often, the minds of poets seem to possess the ability or capacity to grasp the truth instantly and directly, like an intuitive flash, without the laborious mediation of rational logic or deductive reasoning.

This exceptional ability is also present in scientists, mathematicians, and philosophers, albeit to varying degrees.<sup>(42)</sup> But in poets, it forms an expansive focal point, and when the logic of philosophers fails, the intuition of poets emerges, and the poetic text comes filled with existential and metaphysical questions, expressing what philosophy cannot.

And let us not forget that philosophy "originated at the beginning of science from poetry and was nourished by it, along with all the sciences that owe their perfection to poetry, and will return after their completion as if they were a collection of isolated currents moving towards the common ocean from which they emerged."<sup>(43)</sup>

Dr. Muhammad Shafiq Shia sees in his book 'On Philosophical Literature' that there is common ground between the philosopher and the writer, which expresses itself sometimes through literature and other times through philosophy. He says: 'And if we looked with the eye of truth, we would not find that alleged contradiction between literature and

philosophy; rather, you would find literature closer to one philosophy than another philosophy.'<sup>(44)</sup>

He believes that if we move beyond the rigid classification frameworks that have imprisoned both the writer and the philosopher in a cocoon of false ideas, dubious standards, and hasty partial theories, we would find that every art and literature has a philosophical aspect and content, fully or partially, consciously or unconsciously, but it mostly remains outside the spotlight and research.<sup>(45)</sup>

Behind the heavily felt emotional experience, high tension, and intense passion, there are perceptions, thoughts, real experiences, and broad culture. Perhaps the poet's emphasis on the emotional elements is what has overshadowed the ideas, concepts, and insights in his poetry.

### **3-The distinctive differences between philosophy and poetry:**

In principle, philosophical activity is a comprehensive system concerning the issues of the universe, life, and existence, whereas other literary and intellectual activities are specific partial fields in which writers and thinkers express their opinions. Poetry is one of the most important and greatest of these fields, as it is a delicate blend of artistic beauty and intellectual science.

The difference between philosophy and poetry, and literature in general, is that 'philosophy is a coherent intellectual structure in which the philosopher gathers the results of experiences regarding various issues

confronting their thought and derives from them solutions based on a general perspective, upon which the sturdy structure of their philosophy is built.<sup>(46)</sup> This structure is based on what is conceptual and holistic, as it serves the purpose of striving towards formulating general and comprehensive laws. As for poetry and literature in general, being a form of thought and understanding of the psychological and social world, similar to the humanities, they are based on individual experience, which implies representing the richness of life.

As for poetry and literature in general, since they are forms of thought and knowledge about the psychological and social world, similar to the humanities, they are based on individual experience, which entails representing the richness of life. We can distinguish between philosophy and poetry in light of cognitive revelation and acknowledgment of truth: philosophy – as Todorov observes – imposes and presents clear issues, whereas poetry presents without imposing, and it allows for interpretation, due to the density and ambiguity it contains.<sup>(47)</sup>

Poetry represents the linguistic/artististic space open to the mysterious and the undefined, and the aesthetic nebula through which meaning becomes possible, and the idea becomes in its most beautiful forms. Only a few poets and philosophers, who are good at listening to poets, are capable of separating this hidden connection between meaning and non-meaning.

From this, the 'philosophical task is only clarified in its originality in the light of artistic practice... And if the artist disturbs or provokes the philosopher, who can only grasp being through his theoretical apparatus, it is because he produces densities and imposes on their sensibility a necessity arising from absolute chance.'<sup>(48)</sup>

These densities and deep contemplations that define poetic creativity, alongside its emotional foundations and the experiential consciousness of its author, transfer it from the realm of emotion and imagination to the realm of experience and reflection. They make it akin to aesthetic philosophy, which ensures its continued connection with human truth. Poetry is not merely a blunt product of superficial imagination, but a human truth operating in an imaginative aesthetic manner, and with an artistic and philosophical depth: 'Aesthetic experience is indeed the integrated experience, or experience in its entirety.'<sup>(49)</sup> As Abdullah Al-Tatawi says.

The poet, unlike the philosopher, does not directly seek to explain the world or to transform it theoretically or conceptually. He "writes in the sovereignty of his detachment from the world's engagement with him, that is, the multiplicity of presences, and an openness to things without concepts and without utilitarian purpose, experiencing every trace in this fundamental detachment in its own becoming."<sup>(50)</sup>

The true poet draws his uniqueness and his audacity to produce new philosophical meaning and beautiful artistic value from his ability to detach and distance himself, to embrace wandering and nebulosity, and to break away from the rigid traditional forms of thought and expression. Consequently, this challenges fixed ideas and ordinary perception. The dangerous, bold, and lively poetic adventure is what "enables one to take a distance or space, and thus escape the institutionalization of perception, utilitarianism, the fixed forms of knowledge, and the symbolic and referential weight of things.". <sup>(51)</sup>

Moreover, we say: Considering poetry as an art of language is only one aspect of the poetic phenomenon, because poetry, even if it is distilled to art and aesthetic expression, remains imbued with a certain philosophy, with a set of ideas embodied in a poet's stance toward existence, in a reaction and emotional response to life, in a human or moral value related to society. This adds to the complexity of the relationship between poetry and philosophy. So, what is the difference between the philosopher's text and the poet's text? ...It is the free exercise of imagination. The philosopher does not let his imagination operate freely with images, nor does he create a poetic world; he deals with the things themselves and... In this case, the philosopher cannot abandon reason, and reason thus prevents imagination from acting freely...

The work of the philosopher comes late, after contexts and general perceptions have cast their veils over things and the world. Here, the philosopher is like Minerva's owl, the wise one whom Hegel said: 'It begins its flight only as night falls.' This means that what the philosopher does is analyze reality and try to understand it after it has been constructed.

The work of the philosopher is a kind of task, and it is not like that of the poet, who does not bear such a burden. The poet can sing alone and live alone, but the philosopher cannot; he is a servant and employee of humanity. His work or function is conditioned by the existence of cultural contexts, civilization, and sciences, and it is conditioned by the existence of falsehoods and illusions themselves.

When poetry produces images, forms, and expressive and descriptive patterns, it simultaneously generates indirect ideas and conveys hidden messages. However, these are not abstract ideas like philosophical propositions, nor are they directed messages, as in moral instructions or educational principles. Being neither of these diminishes neither their value as intellectual experiences nor their significance; rather, it gives them another dimension. They are akin to woven fabric within a network of branching, multicolored threads, which shape the literary nature of the poetic text on one hand and suggest intellectual and philosophical depth on the other. Pierre Macherey says in his book

\*What Literature Thinks\*: "Literature does not think as philosophy does, nor can it accommodate ready-made philosophical ideas that can be added to it or taken from it, as they would be like dead cells in a living body. Literature is not mere linguistic artistry, nor a form devoid of content."<sup>(52)</sup>

Literature, without ceasing to be literary, and poetry, without shedding its poetic nature, even when deeply rooted in literary and aesthetic qualities, can convey messages to philosophy that it needs more than literature or poetry need philosophical ideas.

Thus, the literary poetic text is not a closed structure, nor merely an artistic form; rather, it is a network of cognitive forms, but they are not given directly, rather they must be extracted from the text. The text itself does not have a fixed or final existence; it is realized only in its relationships with other texts and in its continuous generation through multiple readings.<sup>(53)</sup>

When modern philosophy finally began to recognize the importance of the literary and poetic in understanding existence, in uncovering truth, and in acknowledging the philosophical dimension in literary texts, it became aware of its true limits, accepted the relativity of knowledge, and that there is no absolute truth, but rather relative truths. 'Whereas philosophy has long been accustomed to thinking based on its own premises and methods, and to speaking its own language, literature opens new avenues for it,

provides it with materials it is not used to, and compels it to consider issues from different angles and with a fresh perspective. It also alleviates its complacency, frees it from many of its illusions, and softens its dryness and sternness.'<sup>(54)</sup>

Or in a poetic expression, it suggests to philosophical practice a bit of play with imagination and images, and it injects new blood into its veins, and movement and life into its stiffened limbs. And into its cold skin, warmth and shivers.

The philosopher is usually an isolated, contemplative, cold person who seeks refuge in silence and withdraws into his intellectual hermitage. As for the poet, he is 'an enthusiastic, impulsive speaker, because his artistic existence is linked to verbal expression and speech, that is, to reciting poetry and the warmth of communication with others, with individual things, and with scenes of nature.'<sup>(55)</sup> And while the philosopher relies on abstract concepts and general statements and constructs a comprehensive, universal language, the poet unleashes a spring of words, making images clear as light and water, to rescue thought from the dryness of reasoning and logic.

And if the philosopher takes his distant place, isolated from life as much as his nature allows, observing it from above, recording its movements, and tallying its phenomena as he sees and imagines them, the poet, on the other hand, 'immerses himself in life, feels its sensations, senses its emotions, interacts with

it, and then speaks of what he feels, or of what life itself wants to express about itself.<sup>(56)</sup>

So, in short, the one who feels is more truthful and closer to reality than the one who looks and imagines, but differs from the philosopher who rationalizes things in the realm of perception and manner of expression.

### Conclusion:

From an ontological perspective, the poet is a rebellious and mischievous person who carries within him a curious child eager to touch things, embrace beings, and delve into details as envisioned by his alert conscience and innocent intuition. He humbly descends to walk upon the earth's silt without precautions, apprehensions, or preconceived assumptions. He does not fear issues of error, illusion, doubt, or contradiction, because these paradoxes constitute his primary material from which he

draws, and indeed, they represent a condition for his poetic existence.

The philosopher, on the other hand, is a cautious and wary individual who refrains from delving into the silt of the earth, yearning—like Plato—for an ideal world far from the deceptive sensory world, a world untouched by the density of matter and the hardness of things. But alas, this is hardly attainable.

From this perspective, the poet's superiority and uniqueness emerge, as he is—in many cases and situations—closer to direct truth than the philosopher.

He is, so to speak, the most sincere, realistic, and humble philosopher across thousands of years.

### footnotes

<sup>1</sup>. Wael Ghali: Poetry and Thought, Adonis as a Model, General Egyptian Book Organization, Cairo, 2001, p. 73.

<sup>2</sup> Nizar Barik Hanidi: Poetry and Philosophy, website: <http://www.maaber.org>

<sup>3</sup> Hamad Tawa: Heideggerian Poetics, An Ontological Approach to the Concept of Poetry, Publications of the Science of Education, Morocco, 1st edition, 2010, p. 37.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p 38.

<sup>5</sup> Mohammed Tawa: Heideggerian Poetics, An Ontological Approach to the Concept of Poetry, p. 38.

<sup>6</sup> Maria Thambrano: Philosophy and Poetry, p. 49.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p 52.

<sup>8</sup> Ibrahim Rumani: Modern Arabic Poetry, The Issue of Reading, Fasoul Journal, Vol. 15, No. 02, 1996, Part 1, Egyptian General Book Organization, pp. 132-133.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p132.

<sup>10</sup> Idris Al-Khadrawi: Literature as a Subject for Cultural Studies, Juthoor Publishing, Rabat, Morocco, 1st edition, 2007, p. 101.

<sup>(\*)</sup>Walter T. Stace: An English philosopher, university professor, and teacher known for his in-depth studies in mysticism and philosophy.

<sup>11</sup>. Walter Stace: Mysticism and Philosophy, translated by Imam Abdel Fattah, Madbouly Library, Cairo, 1999, p. 235

<sup>12</sup>. Ibid, p 235.

<sup>13</sup>. Ibid, p 235.

<sup>14</sup>. See: Walter Stace, Mysticism and Philosophy, p. 239

<sup>15</sup>. Ernst Fischer: The Necessity of Art, translated by: Asaad Halim, Hala Publishing and Distribution, Egypt, 1st edition/2002, p. 37.

<sup>16</sup> See: Yves Peres et Day Levis : Clefs pour la poesie ,editions Seghers, Paris, 1973, p 41.

<sup>17</sup> . Abdullah Al-Ghadhami: Cultural Criticism, A Reading in Arab Cultural Systems, Arab Cultural Center, Morocco, 3rd edition/2005, p. 99

<sup>18</sup>. Ibid, p105.

<sup>19</sup>. Idris Al-Khdawri: Literature as a Subject of Cultural Studies, Juthoor for Publishing, Rabat, Morocco, 1st edition, 2007, p. 101

<sup>20</sup> . Maher Abdel Mohsen Hassan: Jadamer, The Concept of Aesthetic Consciousness in Philosophical Hermeneutics, Dar Al-Tanweer, Beirut, Lebanon, 2009, p. 119

<sup>21</sup> . Gaber Asfour: Imagination, Style, Modernity, Supreme Council of Culture, Cairo, 1st edition, 2005, p. 145

<sup>22</sup>. Nawara Lahach: Guardians of Meaning, Dar Mim Publishing, Algeria, 1st edition/2019, p. 12

<sup>23</sup>. Ibid, p12.

<sup>24</sup>. See: Maher Abdel Mohsen Hassan: Jadamer, The Concept of Aesthetic Awareness in Philosophical Hermeneutics, p. 118

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<sup>25</sup> . Maher Abdul Mohsen Hassan: Gadamer, the Concept of Aesthetic Consciousness in Philosophical Hermeneutics, p. 118

<sup>26</sup>. Ibid, p 118..

<sup>27</sup>. Tzvetan Todorov: Literature in Danger, translated by Abdelkebir Cherkaoui, Tubqal Publishing House, Casablanca, Morocco, 1st edition/2007, p. 36

<sup>28</sup>. Ibid, p38.

<sup>29</sup>. See: Abdel Ghafar Makawi: Poetry and Thought, Studies in Literature and Philosophy, The Egyptian General Book Organization, Egypt, 1995, pp. 59-60

<sup>30</sup> . Ibid, p64.

<sup>31</sup> . Abdel Karim Al-Khatib: The Rise of Sufism, Technical Publishing Office, Cairo, 1960, p. 53.

<sup>32</sup>. Shukri Aziz Madi: From the Problems of New Arab Criticism, Arab Institute for Studies and Publishing, Beirut, Lebanon, 2nd ed., 1997, p. 59.

<sup>33</sup> .Ibid, p59.

<sup>34</sup> . Abdel Karim Kasid: The Poet Outside the Text, Dialogue of Thought and Poetry with Life, Al-Saree Printing Press, Kenitra, Morocco, 1st edition, 2007, p. 116

<sup>35</sup> . Mohammed Mohammed Qasim: Introduction to Philosophy, Al-Nahda Al-Arabiya Publishing, Beirut, Lebanon, 1st edition, 2001, p. 71

<sup>36</sup> .See: Hussein Ali, What is Philosophy, Dar Al-Tanweer, Beirut, Lebanon, 2011, p. 22

<sup>37</sup> . See: Walter Stace: Mysticism and Philosophy, translated by Imam Abdel Fattah, Madbouly Library, Cairo, 1996, p. 231.

<sup>38</sup>. Christian Domié: The Drift of Poetic Philosophers, translated by Rita Khater, p. 218.

<sup>39</sup> . Ibid, p 218.

<sup>40</sup>. Ibid, p 220.

<sup>41</sup>. Aziz Al-Haddadi, Philosophy and Poetry, The Taste of Torn Time or Collapsed Existence, Nazwa Magazine, Oman Press and Publishing House, Sultanate of Oman, Issue 60, October 2009, p. 41

<sup>42</sup> . See: Walter Stace: Mysticism and Philosophy, translated by Imam Abdel Fattah, Madbouly Library, Cairo, 1996, p. 231.

<sup>43</sup>. Christian Doumike: The Poetic Drift of Philosophers, translated by: Rita Awad, Arab Organization for Translation, Beirut, Lebanon, 1st edition, p. 221

<sup>44</sup>. Mohammed Shafik Shia: Philosophical Literature, Nour Publishing, Beirut, Lebanon, 2nd edition, 1986, p. 86

<sup>45</sup>. Ibid, p 86.

<sup>46</sup>. Michel Assi: Art and Literature, Nour Publishing, Beirut, Lebanon, 3rd edition, 1980, p. 86

<sup>47</sup>. See: Abdul Rahim Jubran: The Condemnation of Literature, Al-Najah Al-Jadida, Casablanca, Morocco, 1st edition, 2008, p. 57.

<sup>48</sup>. Rachida Al-Turki: Aesthetics and the Question of Meaning, Dar Al-Mutawassita for Publishing, Beirut, Tunisia, 1st edition, 2009, p. 16

<sup>49</sup>. Abdullah Al-Tattawi: The Poet as a Thinker, Dar Gharib, Cairo, 1996, p. 60

<sup>50</sup>. Rachida Al-Turki: Aesthetics and the Question of Meaning, p. 17.

<sup>51</sup>. Rachida Al-Turki: Aesthetics and the Question of Meaning, p. 20.

<sup>52</sup> . Pierre Macherey: What Does Literature Think? Applications in Literary Philosophy, p. 14

<sup>53</sup>. Ibid, p15.

<sup>54</sup> . Pierre Macherey: What Does Literature Think? Applications in Literary Philosophy, p. 15..

<sup>55</sup> .Abdel Hamid Shawqi: Poetry and Philosophy—What is the Relationship?, Website: <https://anfasse.org>

<sup>56</sup>. Sayyid Qutb: The Role of the Poet in Life, Al-Jamal Publications, Cologne, Germany, 1st edition, 1996, p. 13.