

Symbolism in Al-Maqaleh's Poem Ashshams Tatanawal Alqahwah fi Sana'a Alqadimah

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Abstract

This research paper studies the concept of symbolism in Al-Maqaleh's Ashshams Tatanawal Alqahwah fi Sana'a Alqadimah translated in English as "The Sun Drinks Coffee in Old Sana'a". The poem highlights the grand literary technique of the Yemeni poet to turn simple daily acts into cultural, historical, and literary symbols. The techniques of close reading, thematic analytical method are both used to explore the symbolic language embedded in the poem. The used symbols in the poem represent the collective Yemeni identity, memory, and resilience. Symbols such as coffee, the cup, the sun, children, women, and the bitter-sweet taste of coffee operate as multi-layered objects. These used symbols in this translated poem connect local Yemeni heritage with global human experience. A simple coffee ritual turns into an act of cultural preservation and resistance against time, exile, and cultural loss. The study also investigates the ecocritical element in the poem. Al-Maqaleh's symbolic language is tied to landscape, environment. Unanimated city turns into a living symbolic narrative while establishing coffee as a medium for collective memory. Al-Maqaleh has a unique ability to relate Yemeni traditions and modernity together.

Keywords: Yemeni poetry, symbolism, modernism, eco-criticism, translation studies

الرمزية في قصيدة المقالح الشمس تتناول القهوة في صنعاء القديمة

الملخص

تتناول هذه الورقة البحثية مفهوم الرمزية في قصيدة المقالح "الشمس تتناول القهوة في صنعاء القديمة". القصيدة تسلط الضوء على الأسلوب الأدبي المتميز للشاعر في استحضار الأفعال اليومية البسيطة وتحويلها إلى رموز ثقافية وتاريخية وأدبية غنية. حيث تعكس هذه الرموز الهوية اليمنية وذاكرات الماضي والقدرة على البقاء. استخدام رموز مثل القهوة، الفنجان، الشمس، الأطفال والنساء، والطعم المر الحلو للقهوة لديها تفسيرات متعددة. تربط هذه الرموز السياق التراثي اليمني بالتجارب الإنسانية المشتركة. تعمل هذه الدراسة على تحويل طقوس القهوة العادية إلى فعل للحفاظ على الثقافة ومواجهة الزمن. كما تستكشف الدراسة أيضاً الجانب النقدي البيئي في القصيدة. ترتبط رمزية المقالح بشكل عميق بالمشهد الطبيعي والذاكرة البيئية. من خلال إعادة تمثيل صنعاء كرمزية حية، وتقديم القهوة كوسيلة للذاكرة الجماعية، ينجح المقالح في الربط بين التراث والحداثة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الشعر اليمني، الرمزية، الحداثة، النقد البيئي، دراسات الترجمة

1. Introduction

The name, *Al-Maqaleh*, relates to a small village called *Maqaleh* in Yemen. Abdulaziz Al-Maqaleh was born in 1937. His higher education took place in Egypt. He was awarded a Master's and a PhD at Ain Shams University. Al-Maqaleh's career took turns into the field of education, and later he became a cultural advisor to the Yemeni government. In his life, he authored more than 15 poetry collections. These collections are *Sana'a by all Means Necessary*, *Letter to Saif Bin Dhi Yazan*, *The Return of Wadhah Al-Yemen*, *Papers of a Body Returning from Death*, *The Alphabet of the Soul*, *Sana'a*, and *The Sun Drinks Coffee in Old Sana'a*. He also wrote a number of literary studies, one of them is *A Reading of Yemeni Literature* and *The Crisis of the Arabic Poem*. Al-Maqaleh passed away in 2021.

He is one of the most significant contemporary poets in Yemen and in the Arabic world as well. He along with other Yemeni poets have introduced Yemeni culture to the larger Arab audience. In addition to touching on fundamental human themes, his writings frequently discuss Yemen's history, identity, and conflicts. Al-Maqaleh dedicated many of his literary works to *Sana'a* which was a constant symbol in his poetry. He is attributed to modernism or modern poetry.

The poet is sometimes described as a cultural icon whose work represents Yemeni identity. Damaj (2021) explains that Al-Maqaleh is not only able to express the nation's beauty, sorrow, and struggles. But, his ability to write on themes such as social justice, freedom, and human dignity is outstanding. Al-Maqaleh's immense cultural influence is evident in his role as a teacher, critic, and representative for Yemeni literature. *Ashshams Tatanawal Alqahwah fi Sana'a Alqadimah*, translated as *The Sun Drinks Coffee in Old Sana'a*, is one of his poems that fuses a simple space with

something incredible. The simple practice of drinking coffee brings deeper emotions that tell unheard stories of Yemeni history, memory, and the city's soul.

Symbolism is a literary characteristic of the modernist school. One of the greatest poets in the 20th century who employed symbolism as a central element in his poems is T.S. Eliot. Al-Maqaleh poem's uses symbolism to create multi-layered interpretations. The symbol of coffee is more than just a beverage or drink. The sun drinking coffee with the people of *Sana'a*, becomes a close witness to the life of city. Even the coffee cup has significance because it serves as a repository for old memories.

Ecocriticism plays a role in the poetry of Al-Maqaleh. For example, Mohsen et al. (2022) examines Al-Maqaleh's poetry focusing on environmental consciousness in which Yemeni landscape turns into emotions of belonging and cultural continuity. This eco-critical examination entitles Al-Maqaleh to the name (poet of land) whose vision transforms geography into a cultural memory. Similarly, Ali (2024) indicates the challenges of translating culture-specific items in Al-Maqaleh's poetry, stressing that symbolic expressions rooted in Yemeni culture require preservation in English translation to maintain the emotional and cultural beauty.

Translation must preserve metaphors and symbols, not only the literal sense (Bassnett, 2002). While Venuti (2021) discusses that translating poetry must be a careful process to both text and context so the poem can simply maintain its aesthetic aspect when read in another language. Ali (2024) also adds that translating Al-Maqaleh's poetry has required investigating cultural multi meanings. To preserve symbols in Al-Maqaleh's poem translation one must understand cultural and emotional elements that shape how readers in

other cultures understand the poem. This means that any further research on the concept of symbolism in a translated work must consider both the symbols and the strategies of translation.

Translating Al-Maqaleh's poetry offers significant insight into symbolic interpretations. Ali (2024) observes the translation of culture-specific items in *The Book of Sana'a* and discusses that poetry translation requires preserving both aesthetic and cultural meanings. His study indicates that some Yemeni linguistic expressions, ecological references or symbolic language may lose much of their aesthetic effect if literally translated without a careful attention to cultural context. He further notes that translating Al-Maqaleh's poetry help preserve the original text but it has to follow translation strategy.

The approach which was used in investigating the concept of symbolism in Al-Maqaleh's poem Al-Maqaleh's *Ashshams Tatanawal Alqahwah fi Sana'a Alqadimah* is qualitative. The techniques of close reading, thematic analytical method are both used to explore the symbolic language embedded in the poem. In addition. The poem was originally written in Arabic. That is why the researcher took it upon himself to translate and transliterate the poem using some AI-assisted tools. The main objective of translating the poem is to make it accessible to non-Arabic readers. Since the researcher's first language is Arabic, this helped maintain the linguistic flow and symbolic structure of the Arabic original text. This approach of investigating Arabic poetry will internationally help preserve the poetic and symbolic depth. Transliteration helps maintain the original phonological resonance.

2. Literature Review

Frye (2020, p.367) defines symbols as "any unit of a work of literature which can be isolated for critical attention" displaying their

power to connect the personal to the archetypal. Symbols function as vessels of collective memory. These Theoretical grounds set a foundation for investigating the symbolic language in Al-Maqaleh's poetry (Jung,1969). Al-Maqaleh's symbols are not only decorative; they are essential for creating the poem's deep connotations related to national identity, struggle against occupation, and the psychological state of exile and hope. The poet's use of historical and cultural symbols demands an *in-depth reading* to unveil the hidden gems within the text (Farhangnia, 2019).

Previous studies on Yemeni translated poetry have shown that translating any Yemeni-Arabic poet's work into English while employing English literary devices help uncover new unarticulated social and cultural perspectives. Hejash (2021) examines Al-Baradouni's poetry in which he finds that literary devices such as an auditory imagery can reveal hidden emotional struggles that Yemeni women endured particularly in contexts of war, forced marriage, and bereavement.

Olds (2006) presents that literary symbolism must have a three-phase evolution which is considered important to literary modernism in *A Companion to Modernist Literature and Culture*. First, as an artistic movement in France and Belgium in the late nineteenth century; second, its origins in French poetry starting in the 1850s; and third, its influence on European and American literatures into the twentieth century. The Concept of symbolism comprises of both a trait of poetic structure and an attitude toward literary language's figurative function. On the other hand, the Romantic symbol which depicts an isolated object as the embodiment of a single greater truth. The symbol must indicate that everything in the physical universe is a form of language that can be comprehended, revealing a superior pattern

of connections that exist rather than one fixed message.

In the Arab literary movement, the concept of symbolism is a key characteristic of modernist poetry since the mid-twentieth century. Adonis (2014) discusses that contemporary Arab poets position themselves as essential conflict with the culture of political systems.

Al-Maqaleh's poetry is looked at beyond nationalism and symbolism, expanding into the field of eco-criticism. Mohsen et al (2022) again investigate environmental aspects and argue that the Yemeni landscape functions as both a physical and emotional symbol of belonging. Their study demonstrates that Al-Maqaleh is repeatedly portraying Sana'a as an ecological and cultural environment that linked memory, exile, and identity. To them, Al-Maqaleh's poetic attachment to the land establishes what it may be described as "eco-nostalgia" where land and memory become inseparable.

In another eco-critical study, Mohsen (2025) further compares landscapes in the poetry of another Yemeni poet named *Muhammad Haji Salleh* and *Al-Maqaleh*. He looks at how *Al-Maqaleh* transforms landscape into a symbolic ecological bind that transcends geographical boundaries. The study discusses how the imagery of environment in Al-Maqaleh's poetry empowers emotional bindings between the human and his/her homeland, particularly through using symbols of nature, light, and the city of Sana'a.

Al-Maqaleh's *Ashshams Tatanawal Alqahwah fi Sana'a Alqadimah* incorporates many symbolic dimensions. Most current studies analyse Al-Maqaleh's poetry thematically, emphasizing on concepts such as nationalism or cultural aspects. Not many studies offer detailed analytical investigation on how symbolism can operate in one of his poems. This research which was presented in the 6th

international conference at Albaydha University fills a gap by examining the function of some selected symbols such as coffee, the sun, the cup, and the Sana'a.

3. Symbolism in *Ashshams Tatanawal Alqahwah fi Sana'a Alqadimah*

Al-Maqaleh's poem *Ashshams Tatanawal Alqahwah fi Sana'a Alqadimah* is first published in Lebanon in 2017. The poem follows modern Arabic free verse (*shi'r hurr*) and lacks a unified metrical foot (*wazn*). It is composed of 7 unequal length stanzas (*Maqata*) which creates asymmetrical flow.

The first stanza describes the freedom to drink coffee in places like Rome and Paris with special spices such as cinnamon, cardamom, milk, and honey. The poet compares this experience of having coffee anywhere in the world to the one he is having in Sana'a. In the second stanza, Al-Maqaleh again describes the sweeter experience of sipping a cup on a Yemeni balcony to the distant cafes floating on the Nile or wooden ones in Timbuktu. In the third stanza, Al-Maqaleh calls everyone to rise up and bring with them Yemen's history from past ages. He also wants them to remember the ancient myths while fire under the coffee pots. Then, he describes the town where children coming from the light of Yemeni legends to serve their guests with coffee and cake in the fourth stanza. After that the poet describes his personal choice of drinking coffee bitter or sweetened affected by the beautiful surroundings and he also describes the climate in Sana'a and how he likes to have the sun as a companion in stanza five, six and seven.

This modern Arabic literary masterpiece incorporates many symbolic objects which carry multi-layered meanings. These symbols are presented in the poem as follows:

3.1 The Symbol of Coffee: Table 1: Lines 16- 17 & 75-78

English Translation	Transliteration	Original Arabic
Upon a mountain covered in the nudity of its stones And the coffee trees	Ala Jabal Taksu Urya Hijaratihi Ashjar Albunn	على جبل تكسو عري حجارته ...أشجار البن
And your face will be immersed in the scent of "Matri" coffee. Have you known the mountain coffee fields? Have you listened to the coffee trees When they sing or speak?!	Wa Taghmur Wajhak Raihat Albunn Almatari Aaraft Huqul Albunn Aljabaliyyah? Hal Asghayt Ila Ashjar Alqahwah Hin Tughanni Aw Tatakallam?!	وتغمر وجهك رائحة البن المطري أعرفت حقول البن الجبلية؟ هل أصغيت إلى أشجار القهوة ! حين تغني أو تتكلم؟

Coffee trees are mentioned in the lines 16–17, stanza 1 and 75-78 stanza 5. The coffee tree is the central symbol of the whole poem. It rises above its role as a common tree known to the world but becomes a cultural sign of the Yemeni identity. According to Hattox (1985), coffee is planted in the mountains of Yemen. This tree represents many centuries of trade, generosity, and reputation. The persona in the poem describes the scenery that coffee trees give bare mountains. The scenery effect of coffee trees and how solitude is dissolved in the moment we hold the cup. The scent of Matri coffee is overwhelming. He asks direct questions while looking at the mountain coffee fields if the reader has ever heard the coffee trees singing or speaking.

From an eco-critical perspective, coffee carries significance in this poem because it has deep

connections to Yemen's mountainous agricultural environment. As Ali (2024) notes that Al-Maqaleh's poetic style constitutes a prominent trait when describing plants, mountains, and any natural landscape. In this context, coffee tree is more than just a mere crop. It represents Yemen's environmental heritage.

The birth of coffee trees on mountainous areas gives them an eco-systematic dimension. The Sanaani or Matri coffee trees are not only for consumption but are landscapes and containers of reminiscence. Then, Coffee is transformed into a weather-like shape. The *cloud-steam* that moistens the *eyelid of morning*. Al-Maqaleh uncovers a journey of those Yemeni coffee beans from beginning till they are severed in a cup. He successfully intermingles another symbol.

3.2 The Symbol of Cup: Table 2: Lines 11-13 & 18- 26

English Translation	Transliteration	Original Arabic
But you won't taste a cup More delicious than a Sanaani Shaped like a cloud's vapor	Lakinnaka Lan Tatadhawwaq Finjanan Ashha Min Finjan Sanaani Yakhudh Shakl Bukhar Alghaym	لكنك لن تتذوق فنجانا أشهى من فنجان صنعاني ... يأخذ شكل بخار الغيمة
You can read what the cup says There in a café floating Above the waters of the Nile. Or if you wish, in a wooden café in Timbuktu. But you won't read a cup sweeter Than a cup sipped On the balcony of a luxurious house	Laka An Taqra Ma Qal Alfinjan Hunaka Ala Maqhan Yasbah Fawq Miyah Annil Wa In Shita Ala Maqhan Khashabi Fi Tombokto Lakinnaka Lan Taqra Finjanan Ahla Min Finjan Tarshufuhu	لك أن تقرأ ما قال الفنجان هناك على مقهى يسبح فوق مياه النيل وإن شئت على مقهى خشبي في تومبكتو لكنك لن تقرأ فنجاناً أحلى من فنجان ترشفه في شرفة دار باذخة الأفياء

Facing a cloud Painting in white and blue a café	Fi Shurfat Dar Badhikhat Alafya Qubalat Ghaym Yarsum Bilabyad Walazraq Maqhan	قبالة غيم يرسم بالأبيض والأزرق مقهى
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Another great symbol in the poem is the cup. The cup is mentioned in lines 11-13 & 18-26, stanza 1 and 2. In the context of the poem, first, the cup indicates multi notions. For example, the sweet taste of having a Sanaani cup where cardamom gets mixed, is an image of cultural harmony. The cup symbol here functions as a collective memory for all Yemenis living outside the country. This small container reminds Yemenis with the especial scent of homeland. In every sip from the cup, the persona recollects unforgettable stories.

Second, the cup can be a reference to the notion of fragility. Every cup is fragile. It seems that the persona symbolically refers to the fragility

of tradition. These traditions might be breakable yet they are so precious. Al-Maqaleh uses the filled and fragile cup to highlight how Yemeni traditions must be handled with care. Varisco (2017) confirms that the shared coffee cup represents hospitality and social cohesion. Third, the cup can refer to time. The filled cup helps the drinker to move between different points in time, either forward to the future or backward to the past. The cup can be *floating above the waters of the Nile* or *in a wooden café in Timbuktu*. However, the persona prefers the sweetest cup that brings him to a balcony of house in Sana'a.

3.3 The Symbol of Sun: Table 3: Lines 27-32, 83-84, & 97-102

English Translation	Transliteration	Original Arabic
Where the sun stops To drink its coffee every morning And caresses the balconies of sleeping houses And streets waking up From a night That clings to the earth's ceiling...	Tatawaqqaf Fih Ashshams Litashrab Qahwataha Kulla Sabah Wa Tudaib Shurufat Buyut Naimah Wa Shawari Tas.Hu Min Layl Yataallaq Fi Saqf Alard	تتوقف فيه الشمس لتشرب قهوتها كل صباح وتداعب شرفات بيوت نائمة وشوارع تصحو من ليل ... يتعلق في سقف الأرض
Only visit comes from the sun Drinks coffee with it...	Tazuruha Ashshams Wa Tashrab Maaha Alqahwah	تزاروها الشمس ... وتشرب معها القهوة
But the captivating sun Has spread the lights of its strands In the Sanaani horizon Washed in a transparent light Desiring to sit between your hands And have its coffee from your palms.	Lakinn Ashshams Alfatinah Alishraq Wa Qad Nasharat Adwa Jadailiha Fi Alufuq Assanaani Almaghsul Bidaw Shaffaf Targhab Fi An Tajlis Bayna Yadayk Wa An Tashrab Qahwataha Min Kaffayk,	لكن الشمس الفاتنة الإشراق وقد نشرت أضواء جدائلها في الأفق الصنعاني المغسول بضوء شفاف ترغب في أن تجلس بين يديك . وأن تشرب قهوتها من كفك

The sun is another symbol in the poem. Al-Maqaleh mentions it in multiple places in lines 27-32, 83-84, and 97-102 in stanza 2, 6, and 7. The sun is personified to be having human qualities. The sun likes the habit of drinking coffee every morning. This surrealist

description of linking cosmic with the earthly and transformation of natural elements performing human rituals is a literary trait in the poem. The persona thinks that the sun stopped from a celestial journey. The sun

rewards herself by drinking coffee. The presence of sun caresses the city gently.

Badawi (1976) explains that Arabic poetry often uses the sun to symbolize renewal and vitality. By personifying the sun as a coffee drinker, Yemen must be having much of its

rays compared to the rest of the world. The symbols, coffee, cup and sun keep interrelating from one stanza to another.

3.4 Symbols of Children and Woman: Table 4: lines 59-60

English Translation	Transliteration	Original Arabic
You will see children emerging from the light of their city's legends to prepare coffee for their guests and pastries	Sawfa Tara Atfalan Kharaju Min Daw'i Asatiri Madinatihim Liyu'iddu Li-Duyufihimu Al-Qahwata Wal-Ka'k	سوف ترى أطفالا خرجوا من ضوء أساطير مدينتهم ليعدوا لضيوفهم القهوة والكعك
And you will see "Ghaiman" hungry for bread dipped in mint oil holding a coffee flower he places in the clasp of a woman who wipes the morning's face	Wa Sawfa Tara "Ghayman" Wa Qad Ja'a Ila Al-Khubzi Al-Maghmusi Bi-Zayti Al-Na'na' Wa Fi Yadihi Zahratu Binn Yuraqqiquha Fi 'Urwati Sayyidatin Tamshahu Wajha Al-Subhsabahin.	وسوف ترى "غيمان" وقد جاع إلى الخبز المغموس بزيت النعناع وفي يده زهرة بن يرقها في عروة سيدة تمسح وجه الصبح

Al-Maqaleh refers to children and woman in his poem especially in lines 59-60 stanza 4, to extend the concept of symbolism beyond heritage by connecting it to the future. Children connote regeneration and hope for cultural and social continuity, while the concept of woman or women represent fostering variables that constitute social structures. The persona in the poem describes children preparing coffee and cakes for guests as an act of hospitality. Children can represent the future because they are the ones who will continue the tradition. These children are in touch with the lady who sings the song of hope. Without the seeing

children and woman, coffee remains a mere drink. They both make it a gift.

In the Arabic literary tradition, the concept of woman can mean land. Egyptians for example Kotb (2014) explains why Egyptians call their country *Um al-Dunya* translated *the mother of the world*. This aligns with Harlow (1987) who claims that woman figure in the Arabic environment often embodies the homeland itself. By using of these symbols, Al-Maqaleh points toward revival, ensuring that Yemeni identity persists and resists despite any social challenges.

3.5 Symbol of The Bitter-Sweetness Coffee: Table 5: lines 64-68

English Translation	Transliteration	Original Arabic
You may drink your coffee bitter, or the waiter may choose another for you, its sweetness warmed by the light of the moon or by the song of the neighbourhood birds	Laka An Tashraba Qahwataka Al-Murrah Aw Yakhtara Laka Al-Nadilu Ukhra Hullaha Daw'u "Al-Qamariyyati" Al-Dafi' Aw Sawtu 'Asafiri Al-Harrah	لك أن تشرب قهوتك المرة أو يختار لك النادل أخرى حلاها ضوء القمرات الدافئ أو صوت عصافير الحارة

Al-Maqaleh in the above lines describes the freedom the coffee consumer has. If he/she doesn't like bitter taste, he or she has the choice to order the waiter to bring a sweeter one. Al-Maqaleh connects the sweet taste with local objects he daily observes. This sweetness comes out every time he sees the beautiful lights reflecting on semi-windows or the sweet voice of neighbourhood little birds. Bitterness and sweetness of coffee here connote the dual condition of harsh and lovely natures of Yemenis. Bachelard (1964) explains that such reflections on materialistic imagination, where daily objects present existential truths.

4. Discussion

The symbolism in Al-Maqaleh's poetry indicates the grand ability of a literary text to preserve traditions. Such grandeur has been shown through using regular objects such as Coffee, Cup, the Sun, Children and Women, and the Bitter and Sweet taste. These objects transformed into metaphors of national, cultural, social, and eco-critical identity. So, there are serious questions to be asked, what is the role of symbolism at the level of literary, cultural, historical and theoretical in the poem? How symbolic interpretations elevated Al-Maqaleh's poem? The study comes out with a number of results, the most important of them are:

First, a historical symbolism which works as a bridge between tradition and modernity. Arabic poets *recode the familiar into the symbolic*, making simple objects carry grand meanings (Allen, 2000). Al-Maqaleh is an expert when it comes to such craft. One of the most important findings of Al-Maqaleh's poem is the poet's ability to connect Yemen's ancient tradition with modern lived ritual of drinking coffee. The coffee embodies centuries of historical stability.

Secondly, a cultural and national Symbolism is reflected in the concept of collective identity.

The poem's use of children and women indicates a generational continuity. The symbolic language plays a role beyond feminist representation. Hobsbawm & Ranger (1983) argue that cultural practices and images must be employed to strengthen social bonds and carry the shared identity across generations.

The concept of bitterness and sweetness has multi-layered symbolic meanings in the poem. Al-Maqaleh is factually stating that Yemen's history can be seen paradoxical. Sometimes hardship gets mixed with beauty. This resembles with what Said (1994) culturally reflects that sometimes art works as a mediation to ease up the tension between suffering and resilience. By making coffee possesses a dual taste of bitterness and sweetness, Al-Maqaleh universally transforms the Yemeni culture giving it both a national trait and an international recognition.

Then, an ideological symbolism contrasted with the notion of resistance according to the poet. People were always cautious when approaching political discourses due to ideological banning. So, poets depended on bringing multi-layered imagery to voice up dissatisfaction and despair (Cooke, 2001). Al-Maqaleh's symbolism definitely becomes an act of ideological defiance. It is a reminder to whomever that Yemeni people's voice cannot be easily silenced or under hegemony. A semiotic study by Fathi et al. (2021) demonstrate how Al-Maqaleh employed symbolism as a strategic ideological mechanism in his poetry, helping him to voice thoughts of freedom while as a well-known poet he evaded hegemonic censorship.

Finally, a literary symbolism Al-Maqaleh's poetic genius lies in his ability to create a new mythology where the sun traditionally a symbol of divine power is granted permission to come down to earth and receive her reward of coffee, and harm nobody.

Al-Maqaleh's myth in the poem resembles the Greek myth of Phaethon, a mortal young man dared by his friends who doubted his divinity to approach the solar chariot that gives earth the sun light. He asked his father to drive the chariot. However, his mortal hands could not control the flying horses. Thus, he flew it too close to the earth which scorched it. Thus, he was struck down by Zeus's thunder.

Al-Maqaleh rewrites another myth in his poem. The sun is not a chariot to be conquered but a friendly guest who comes willingly. She does not need to be controlled. She simply stops her solar journey and visits Sana'a to drink coffee from human palms. There is no destruction, only joy. The sun's coming down is not an act of power but an act of humility and vulnerability. She desires hospitality of Yemenis. She also depends on human hands and places herself in the palms of mortals. The poet thus reshapes the divine-human relationship. Phaethon's tragedy was his attempt to rise to the sun, but Al-Maqaleh's sun chooses to descend to humanity.

The poet's myth-making is therefore an act of theological reinvention. He transforms the sun from a dangerous force into a good friend. Sana'a becomes the sacred space where this divine is not only possible but welcomed. Unlike Phaethon's scorched earth, Sana'a is protected, and joyful because the sun's visit is not an imposition but a reward hospitably offered and kindly received.

5. Conclusion

To sum up Al-Maqaleh's poem *Ashshams Tatanawal Alqahwah fi Sana'a Alqadimah* manifests the power of symbolism of modern Arabic poetry. The poet's ability to transform a simple daily practice of drinking coffee taken in the street into a deep meditation, representing Yemeni cultural and national identity. The central symbol of coffee enabled Al-Maqaleh to evoke the country's historical

heritage and authenticity and rootedness in the face of modernity. The cup refers to ideas of memory and tradition and also works as a vessel that links a personal experience to collective history. The sun also personified ideas of vitality, and divine blessing. The bitter-sweet duality of coffee shows paradoxical aspects of life and history in the country. Hardship, joy and beauty are coexisted in a mere taste of coffee.

Thus, this study demonstrates the importance of paying attention when reading Yemeni- Arabic poetry not only for its literary qualities but also for its cultural and historical significance. This research might help other studies to explore further linguistic implications across Arabic region. Definitely, the poem of Al-Maqaleh *Ashshams Tatanawal Alqahwah fi Sana'a Alqadimah* offers a blueprint of how literary language is able to connect ordinary acts into humanely profound dimensions.

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Appendix

Ashshams Tatanawal Alqahwah fi Sana'a Alqadimah is translated by the author of this paper. It translates into “*The Sun Drinks Coffee in Old Sana'a*”. The researcher has used AI-tool to transliterate it with careful attention to how words are pronounced. The author of this paper has also translated other Yemeni poems such as Al-Baradouni's. Most of his translated and

creative works are blog posted in his online <https://mohammedaishblog.blogspot.com/>.

Translating Yemeni-Arabic poems allows new perspectives on a global level to the works of the great Yemeni poets. This translation can help further studies on Al-Maqaleh's poetry. The poem is translated as follows:

Line No	English Translation	Transliteration	Original Arabic
1	You can drink your evening coffee	Laka An Tashrab Qahwatak Allayliyyah	لك أن تشرب قهوتك الليلية
2	Anywhere you like,	Fi Ayyi Makan,	في أي مكان،
3	In Rome or Paris,	Fi Roma Aw Paris,	في روما أو باريس،
4	And you can have it with cinnamon	Wa An Tashrabaha Bilqirfah	وأن تشربها بالقرفة
5	Or cardamom	Aw Bilhal	أو بالهال
6	And with fresh milk	Wa Billaban Attazij	وباللبن الطازج
7	Or mountain honey.	Aw Bilasal Aljabali	أو بالعسل الجبلي
8	You can choose your spot	Laka An Takhtar Makanak	لك أن تختار مكانك
9	In a dimly lit café	Fi Maqhan Maghmur Biddaw Albadikh	في مقهى مغموّر بالضوء الباذخ
10	Or one bathed in radiant light.	Aw Matliyy Bilatmah	أو مطليّ بالعتمة
11	But you won't taste a cup	Lakinnaka Lan Tatadhawwaq Finjanan	لكنك لن تتذوق فنجاناً
12	More delicious than a Sanaani	Ashha Min Finjan Sanaani	أشهى من فنجان صنعاني
13	Shaped like a cloud's vapor	Yakhudh Shaki Bukhar Alghaymah	يأخذ شكل بخار الغيمة
14	As it moistens the eyelid of a morning	Wa Hiya Tuballil Jafn Sabah	وهي تبلل جفن صباح
15	Opening its green eyes	Yafth Aynayhi Alkhadrawayn	يفتح عينيه الخضراوين
16	Upon a mountain covered in the nudity of its stones	Ala Jabal Taksu Urya Hijaratih	على جبل تكسو عري حجارته
17	And the coffee trees.	Ashjar Albunn.	أشجار البن
	Stanza 2	Maqtae 2	المقطع 2
18	You can read what the cup says	Laka An Taqra Ma Qal Alfinjan	لك أن تقرأ ما قال الفنجان
19	There in a café floating	Hunaka Ala Maqhan Yasbah	هناك على مقهى يسبح
20	Above the waters of the Nile.	Fawq Miyah Annil	فوق مياه النيل
21	Or if you wish, in a wooden café in Timbuktu.	Wa In Shita Ala Maqhan Khashabi Fi Tombokto	تومبكتو وإن شئت على مقهى خشبي في
22	But you won't read a cup sweeter	Lakinnaka Lan Taqra Finjanan Ahla	لكنك لن تقرأ فنجاناً أحلى
23	Than a cup sipped	Min Finjan Tarshufuhu	من فنجان ترشفه
24	On the balcony of a luxurious house	Fi Shurfat Dar Badhikhat Alafya	في شرفة دار بادخة الأفياء
25	Facing a cloud Painting	Qubalat Ghaym Yarsum	قبالة غيم يرسم
26	in white and blue a café	Bilabyad Walazraq Maqhan	بالأبيض والأزرق مقهى
27	Where the sun stops	Tatawaqqaf Fih Ashshams	تتوقف فيه الشمس
28	To drink its coffee every morning	Litashrab Qahwataha Kulla Sabah	لتشرب قهوتها كل صباح
29	And caresses the balconies of sleeping houses	Wa Tudaib Shurfat Buyut Naimah	وتداعب شرفات بيوت نائمة
30	And streets waking up	Wa Shawari Tas.Hu	وشوارع تصحو
31	From a night	Min Layl	من ليل
32	That clings to the earth's ceiling.	Yataallaq Fi Saqf Alard	. يتعلق في سقف الأرض
	Stanza 3	Maqtae 3	المقطع 3
33	It's as if with you	Lakaanni Bik	لكاني بك
34	The earth folds itself on a carpet	Tatwi Alard Ala Matn Bisat	تطوي الأرض على متن بساط
35	Of your longing	Min Shawqik	من شوقك
36	And I see you knocking on the wall of joy	Wa Araka Taduqq Jidar Albahjah	وأراك تدق جدار البهجة
37	To enter the square of a day	Kay Tadhul Sahat Yawm	كي تدخل ساحة يوم
38	You've never drenched	Lam Yasbiq Laka An Ballalta	لم يسبق لك أن بللت
39	Your hands' letters	Huruf Yadayk Bibahjat Qahwatih	حروف يديك ببهجة قهوته
40	In the joy of its coffee	Aw Radiat Shafatak Alyabisatan	أو رضى شفتاك اليابساتان

41	Or nursed your parched lips	Hadaya Qublatih...	...هدايا قبلته
42	With gifts it offered...	Ya Hadha Isaad	يا هذا اصعد
43	O, rise up	Wastahdir Maak Attarikh Almutadalli	واستحضر معك التاريخ المتدلي
44	And bring with you the dangling history	Min Dhurwat Azminah Ghabirah	من ذروة أزمنة غابرة
45	From the peak of past ages And the myths of lips and bosoms	Wa Asatir Shifah Wa Nuhud	وأساطير شفاء ونهود
46	Ignited by the scorching flame	Ayqazaha Allahab Alhariq	أيقظها اللهب الحارق
47	Under the coffee pots.	Taht Abariq Alqahwah.	تحت أباريق القهوة
	Stanza 4	Maqtae 4	المقطع 4
48	In the square	Fi Assahah	في الساحة
49	Near houses corroded by age	Inda Buyut Mutakilat Alajurr,	عند بيوت متأكلة الأجر،
50	And remnants of faded huts,	Wa Baqaya Akwakh Bahitah	وبقايا أكواخ باهتة
51	You will see children emerge	Sawfa Tara Atfalan Kharaju	سوف ترى أطفالاً خرجوا
52	From the light of their city's myths	Min Daw Asatir Madinatihim	من ضوء أساطير مدينتهم
53	To serve their guests coffee	Liyuiddu Liduyufihim Alqahwah	ليُعدوا لضيوفهم القهوة
54	And cakes.	Walkak	والكعك
55	And you'll see "Ghayman"	Wa Sawfa Tara Ghayman	وسوف ترى غيمان
56	Hungry for bread soaked	Wa Qad Jaa Ilalkhubz Almaghmus	وقد جاع إلى الخبز المغموس
57	In the essence of mint oil	Bizayt Annaana	بزييت النعناع
58	With a coffee flower in his hand	Wa Fi Yadih Zahrat Bunn	وفي يده زهرة بِن
59	Hoisting it on the bracelet of a lady	Yartuqaha Fi Urwat Sayyidah	يرتقها في غروة سيدة
60	Wiping the morning's face	Tamsah Wajh Assubh	تمسح وجه الصباح
61	With the innocence of her handkerchief	Bimandil Baraatiha	بمנדيل براءتها
62	As she sings to a boy of dreams	Wa Hiya Tughanni Lifata Ahlam	وهي تغني لفتى أحلام
63	Approaching.	Qadim.	. قادم
	Stanza 5	Maqtae 5	المقطع 5
64	You can drink your coffee	Laka An Tashrab Qahwatak	لك أن تشرب قهوَتك
65	Bitter	Almurrah	المرّة
66	Or let the waiter choose another for you,	Aw Yakhtar Laka Annadl Ukhra	أو يختار لك النادل أخرى
67	Sweetened by the warm "Qamariyat" light	Hallaha Daw Alqamariyyat Addafi	حلاها ضوء القمريات الدافئ
68	Or the chirping of neighborhood birds	Aw Sawt Asafir Alharah	أو صوْت عصافير الحارة
69	Or the laughter of a lady that makes the street shiver	Aw Dihkhat Sayyidah Yartaaish Ashshari	أو ضحكة سيدة يرتعش الشارع
70	If she sings or laughs	In Ghannat Aw Dahikat	إن غنّت أو ضحكت
71	And she floats if she walks	Wa Yatir Idha Hiya Sarat	ويطير إذا هي سارت
72	Barefoot.	Hafiyat Alqadamayn.	حافية القدمين
73	And your inherited solitude will leave you	Wa Sawfa Tughadir Wahshatak Almawruthah	وسوف تغادر وحشتك الموروثة
74	The moment you grasp the cup	Lahzat Tumsik Bilfinjan	لحظة تمسك بالفنجان
75	And your face will be immersed in the scent of "Matri" coffee.	Wa Taghmur Wajhak Raihat Albunn Almatari	وتغمر وجهك رائحة البن المطري
76	Have you known the mountain coffee fields?	Aaraft Huqul Albunn Aljabaliyyah?	أعرفت حقول البن الجبلية؟
77	Have you listened to the coffee trees	Hal Asghayt Ila Ashjar Alqahwah	هل أصغيت إلى أشجار القهوة
78	When they sing or speak?!	Hin Tughanni Aw Tatakallam?!	! حين تغني أو تتكلم؟
	Stanza 6	Maqtae 6	المقطع 6
79	Snow doesn't come to Sana'a...	La Yati Aththalj Ila Sanaa...	...لا يأتي الثلج إلى صنعاء
80	Hail doesn't fall in its courtyards	La Yahtul Fi Sahatiha Albarad	لا يهطل في ساحتها البرد
81	And neither winter rains	Wa La Alamar Ashshitawiyyah	ولا الأمطار الشتوية
83	Only visit comes from the sun	Tazuruha Ashshams	تزاورها الشمس
84	Drinks coffee with it	Wa Tashrab Maaha Alqahwah	وتشرب معها القهوة
85	Even at midnight!	Hatta Muntasaf Allayl!	!حتى منتصف الليل
86	What are you hiding	Ilama Tukhabbi Ahzanak	إلام تخبّي أحرانك
87	In the depths of your soul?	Fi Khaljan Arruh?	في خلجان الروح؟
88	This is a key to joy that doesn't rust	Hadha Miftah Surur La Yasda	هذا مفتاح سرور لا يصدأ
89	This is a man wearing a golden-colored night	Hadha Rajul Yatalabbasuh Layl Dhahabi Alalwan	هذا رجل يتلبسه ليل ذهبي الألوان
90	And this is a woman filled with a morning	Wa Hadhihi Imraah Mufamah Bisabah	وهذه امرأة مفعمة بصباح
91	Unshadowed by sorrow.	La Yaghshah Alhuzn	. لا يغشاها الحزن

	Stanza 7	Maqtae 7	المقطع 7
92	In Sana'a...	Fi Sanaa...	...في صنعاء
93	You can choose the coffee and the café	Laka An Takhtar Alqahwah Walmaqha	لك أن تختار القهوة والمقهى
94	You can choose your companions	An Takhtar Rufaqaak	أن تختار رفاقك
95	From humans	Min Bashar	من بشر
96	Or stones	Aw Hajar	أو حجر
97	But the captivating sun	Lakinn Ashshams Alfatinah Alishraq	لكن الشمس الفاتنة الإشراف
98	Has spread the lights of its strands	Wa Qad Nasharat Adwa Jadailiha	وقد نشرت أضواء جدائلها
99	In the Sanaani horizon	Fi Alufuq Assanaani	في الأفق الصنعائي
100	Washed in a transparent light	Almaghsul Bidaw Shaffaf	المغسول بضوء شفاف
101	Desiring to sit between your hands	Targhab Fi An Tajlis Bayna Yadayk	ترغب في أن تجلس بين يديك
102	And have its coffee from your palms.	Wa An Tashrab Qahwataha Min Kaffayk,	وأن تشرب قهوتها من كفئك،
103	And when night falls	Wa Hin Yajii Allayl	وحين يجيء الليل
104	Stars will watch over you, never knowing sleep	Satarak Nujum La Tarif Nawman	ستراك نجوم لا تعرف نوماً
105	Or leave you at a joyful gathering	Aw Tatrak Hafat Uns	أو تترك حفلة أنس
106	Uninterrupted.	La Taghshaha.	لا تغشها