

The Efficacy of the Self in Adonis's Autobiography "Here You Are, O Time"

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Abstract

Adonis wrote his autobiography entitled "Here You Are, O Time" after the concept of modernity had matured in his mind and his critical project had become clear. He aimed to re-evaluate the past from the perspective of the present to demonstrate what he had accomplished for the revival of poetry and to affirm the correctness of his critical vision despite the multitude of his adversaries and enemies. As one of the poets and thinkers who took upon themselves the task of renewing Arabic poetry, he depicted in his autobiography an image of his self about itself, valuing the actions and stances it had taken, with an overwhelming sense of the self's distinction, uniqueness, and superiority over others. This study examines the efficacy of this self in Adonis's autobiography, which appears prominently with an unparalleled status, undertaking significant tasks and overcoming all the obstacles it faced. This granted it an awareness of the value of its achievements, becoming a voice that overshadowed other voices, remaining unique in undertaking the mission of rescuing poetry from decline. Therefore, all elements of the autobiography revolved around it, and other topics branched from it, extending beyond the scope of depicting the self to portraying its relationship with the other.

Keywords: *Self, Uniqueness, Superiority, Modernity, Autobiography.*

Introduction

Literary genres strive to understand the self and its role in life through the act of writing that reveals thoughts and feelings. Autobiography is the literary genre that achieves this connection with the self, around which the components of the autobiography revolve. From it branch out topics that go beyond portraying the self to depicting the self's relationship with existence.

In its general definition, an autobiography is a study in which the writer reviews his life as a celebrity, highlighting the achievements accomplished in his life journey or the life of the person being discussed (Abdel-Nour, 1984, p.143). It has also been defined as "a retrospective prose narrative produced by a real person concerning his own existence, focusing on his individual life and the history of his personality in particular" (Lejeune, 1994, p.22), and as "the life of a person narrated by himself" (Starobinski, 1970, p.80). The autobiography may go further than touching upon personal life to encompass self-awareness and its sense of role and value. Based on these definitions, the autobiography is considered a document on the life of its author, in which he formulates his experience and his vision of himself and the world.

The autobiography is linked to reality and to the writer's indication that he is narrating his own life—what is termed the autobiographical pact or contract. Its creation requires the principle of identity or congruence among the author's "I," the narrator's "I," and the character's "I" (Lejeune, 1994, p.24). That is, he is the one who analyzes and interprets, making the self the pivot around which the autobiography revolves in its emotional and cognitive formation.

Adonis's autobiography falls within these concepts presented by scholars of autobiography, as his life story is connected to what he represents as a unique literary, intellectual, and cultural phenomenon, and to his controversial personality around which severe disputes have revolved. He attributed the reasons for these disputes to the other's lack of understanding of his proposals on one hand, and his view of the other as incapable of transformation and change.

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Adonis's autobiography is the story of his creative journey, not a narrative of his personal life, which he touched upon only lightly. This leads to the assertion that his motives for writing his autobiography were rational—what Georges May termed motives of justification and testimony (May, 2017, p.69). That is, a person may need "to write in order to publicly justify the actions he has taken or the opinions he has expressed. This need feels more painful and urgent, especially if he believes that people have slandered him" (May, 2017, p.70). Although Adonis did not explicitly state this reason, his entire autobiography was written with the aim of bearing witness to readers that he was not complicit in the Arab cultural decline, but rather was attempting to elevate Arab culture by presenting a different concept of poetry. He was therefore in need of exonerating himself and restoring the truth, so he corrected and rectified, refuting the allegations made against him. This need "may be tinged with a tendency toward boasting" (May, 2017, p.71).

Perhaps this tendency toward boasting is what motivated his act of writing, determined his stance toward the other, and presented himself as the one who alone envisions the truth, which stamped his autobiography with his general intellectual stance. This often characterizes autobiographies, as they "are not written randomly or by chance, but are crafted carrying in their nuances the author's strategy in his relationship with the reader, his goals, and his intentions" (Al-Yousfi, 2002, Vol. 3, p.16). Perhaps this is what made Adonis's autobiography an intellectual autobiography, bearing witness to the emergence of modernity in his intellectual propositions and others' stances toward them.

The Efficacy of the Self

The "self" in the autobiographical text is classified as follows:

The Real Author: The actual writer explicitly declared according to the autobiographical pact or contract.

The Narrator's "I": Positioned within the autobiography, being a self-narrative.

The Autobiographical Subject: Defined by specific dimensions relative to actions, descriptions, and narrative determinants within the work itself (Al-Sakr, 2004, p.211).

The efficacy of the self in Adonis's autobiography is defined by its self-awareness, which manifested through:

Confronting and Overcoming Difficulties: Facing the challenges that pursued it, overcoming them, and recording victories that would immortalize that self.

Self-Pride and Superiority: Exhibiting confidence and a sense of elevation over others, undertaking the role of the intellectual destined to rescue the nation from ruin.

Leadership and Creativity: Emphasizing pioneering efforts and innovation while disregarding lesser pursuits.

Adonis built his autobiography around his self, which appeared active and was surrounded by commendable qualities branching from the mentioned stances. The writer is keen to establish these attributes in the reader's mind.

The study raises the issue of the self in the autobiography in terms of its efficacy, its manifestation in the mirror of its creator, and its stance toward the other—especially regarding the opposition he encountered and the severe criticism due to his intellectual propositions. He portrayed himself as the intellectual professor who suffers from others not understanding his ideas.

Research Questions

This study attempts to answer the following two questions:

How did the self manifest in Adonis's autobiography?

What is the relationship between the self and the opposing other?

The Importance of the Research

The significance of this study is determined by the nature of Adonis's autobiography, as it constitutes an intellectual biography far removed from the details of daily life. It delves into contentious intellectual issues related to the course of modernity, reminding us that those positions have not changed between yesterday and today. Its importance is also manifested in the fact that it has not yet been studied.

"Here You Are, O Time"

Adonis wrote his autobiography titled *"Here You Are, O Time: A Poetic Cultural Biography"*, a phrase he repeated multiple times throughout the pages of his published book. By doing so, he created an introductory text, an autobiographical preface, and an autobiographical pact, declaring that he would speak about himself, drawing from his reality as a poet and intellectual. His life is intertwined with poetry and culture, and it becomes apparent in his autobiography that he is captivated by them, dedicating himself entirely to their pursuit.

The main concern in this biography is the issue of modernity, of which he was one of the pillars. He "writes, in his language filled with grace and associations, his poetic and cultural biography, revealing to us many things related to his creative project and intellectual choice, which he accepted as a destiny he cannot escape. Since his childhood, he has been possessed by the spark of rebellion and confrontation... Adonis, in his confrontations, was neither violent nor rude; on the contrary, he was calm and at the heart of civilized literary debate. He always tried to elevate politics to poetry, life to a dream, and the personal to the universal" (Al-Alaq, 2002, p. 36).

Adonis was driven to write his autobiography by his awareness of the importance and uniqueness of what he had achieved, and he is justified in writing about it himself. Therefore, his autobiography differs from those that focus on the stages and twists of the self's life over time, from childhood to the moment of writing. His autobiography grew through contemplation and awareness; he reflected on what he had offered to poetry and culture within the framework of the modernity project, of which he was a central figure, and on the criticism and attacks this project received, which went beyond objective critique to opposition that nearly reached enmity.

He recalled the events of his life within the framework of his intellectual project, retrieving them from his consciousness at the moment of writing. Through this awareness, he looked at his past and self, rereading it, and his self transformed into a subject of study.

It is evident that the speaker in this biography is Adonis himself; he is the main character, the narrator, and the writer. These elements usually unite and interact in the moments of the past and the present to define the efficacy of the "I" in the autobiography—the self with its active presence in the autobiographical text. Everything narrated is manifested through its connection to this self. This is because the speaker "in the autobiography embodies his presence as a writer, as he performs the act of speaking and formulating, and simultaneously evokes his other presence, his multi-dimensional and multi-level self, which rises as a sign of existence, development, and action through the developments, events, and narrated contexts" (Al-Shawi, 2008, p. 88).

The "I" affirms his insistence on his intellectual project and its correctness, despite the continued opposing stances against him, as if time repeats itself. Adonis remained haunted by the obsession with change, uniqueness, and distinction, paying no heed to his adversaries except to belittle their opinions. The opponents continued to heap accusations against him that went beyond criticism to defamation.

At the moment of recollection, the autobiographer's self interacts with time and the reader to establish the meaning of his existence. Therefore, Adonis's autobiography cannot be understood except within the framework of the relationship between the self and the reader. Hence, he endowed the title of his autobiography with a temporal dimension to discover the distance he traversed between what was and what has become, as if he longs for his ideas, reviving them in their temporal progression, finding that time repeats itself. The difference for him between the past and the present is one of degree, not kind. Perhaps this conceals some of the personal motives for writing the autobiography, defined by reshaping the past to reread his experience anew, defending the modernity project and justifying his views, paying no heed to his critics, confident that his critic cannot match him in stature.

Manifestations of the Efficacy of the Self in Adonis's Autobiography

Before delving into the exploration of the formations and development of the active "I" as it appeared in Adonis's autobiography, we must define the individual "I" as "the point of reliance that eliminates every center other than the sole center, which is the self; considering it prior to cultural heritage, traditions and collective conventions, and precepts and tribal rules, to be directing all of that" (Al-Salmi, 2011, p. 87).

In this sense, this "I" appeared in Adonis's autobiography as distinguished, elevated, and responsible, superior to all others—opponents, critics, and poets. This made it feel its central entity with its ability to reconstitute by opening a breach in a solid wall of dependency and traditionalism, attempting to reshape the surrounding world through artistic sensitivity. From here, Adonis's superiority was not so much a negation of the other as it was an attempt to reconstitute him; he feels himself authorized to enact change with the capabilities he possesses.

This "I" also appeared through the image Adonis established about himself in the autobiographical discourse, which he wanted to imprint in the reader's mind as an identity and existence. The reader is to accept it, believe in its message, and appreciate its actions based on the image the self has drawn for itself. This central image manifested in multiple stances, perhaps the most important of which is his awareness of his own talents and his divergence from his environment, overshadowed by cultural barrenness. Therefore, he absolves himself from this bleak scene of Arab culture, saying: "We found ourselves facing a massive confusion in concepts, terminology, and meanings. The political-ideological was the dominant driving force, meaning that true cognitive research, true questioning, and poetic issues—in their precise meaning and specificity—were almost absent, or rather, were made absent" (Adonis, 1993, p. 55).

Adonis's "I" also emerged in his early awareness of the obsession to change his destiny, as he was haunted by the horizon that allows him to measure himself and change. This horizon was the "other," who granted him this possibility and allowed him to achieve this desire. The other is the one who provides the possibility of change, and he was involved with it since childhood. He believed that if each person remained within himself and turned his back on the world, each would stay in his house and that would be enough.

Being haunted by the other made Adonis view the French language as the "other." He learned this language, and it became part of his destiny. In this sense, from the beginning, he thought that the other is not merely an element of dialogue or interaction; it is a component of the self, allowing him to discover himself as well (Abu Fakhr, 2000, pp. 23–24).

The "I" manifested since his childhood through his education at the hands of his father, who was a reader of poetry and insightful in the Arabic language and its secrets. Through him, he read Al-Mutanabbi, Abu Tammam, Al-Sharif Al-Radhi, Al-Buhturi, Al-Ma'arri, and dozens of others. He also taught him the Qur'an and its recitation (Adonis, 1993, pp. 26–27). At this stage, the active "I" began to be founded on a conscious understanding of heritage, a stage that influenced his poetic sensitivity and his view of things and people (Adonis, 1993, p. 24).

After graduating from university, the drive for change and renewal began to grow within Adonis, which university education did not allow him. Therefore, he relied on forming himself away from the ruins of books piled in university corridors (Adonis, 1993, p. 27). He read poetry collections of French poets,

including René Char, Henri Michaux, and Max Jacob (Adonis, 1993, p. 29). These readings created a chasm between him and the culture prevailing in Arab life, as he did not settle for receiving culture in the way it was. He persisted in searching in literature for what shakes the body to awaken and renew.

Adonis chose to go to Beirut, that space which allows him to embark on the stage of self-formation for two reasons: the first is openness to discussing everything, and the second is its neutrality towards values associated with the past and heritage (Adonis, 1993, p. 32). There, he read the book "*The Intellectual Conflict in Syrian Literature*" by Antoun Saadeh, which had a decisive impact on his poetic vision, in addition to its influence on the output of an entire generation of poets in vision and creativity (Adonis, 1993, p. 129).

Then his meeting with Yusuf Al-Khal established a turning point in his life; both were haunted by the same obsession for one cause: the establishment of a new Arabic poetic writing (Adonis, 1993, p. 37). He felt strong in his friendship with him, even though they possessed nothing but poetry, friendship, and freedom. Yet, "they both felt at the same time that they were the strong ones whom no force could overcome" (Adonis, 1993, p. 38).

Adonis's issuance of the magazine Shi'r (Poetry) in 1957 deepened the efficacy of this self, which absorbed the accompanying attacks from pseudo-poets, partisans, and ideologues loitering around balconies, whose entire ambition was limited to being said to have hurled insults in its direction. The language of the attack was filled with words that came out of their mouths like pieces of mud (Adonis, 1993, p. 41). Thus, the self elevated itself above the attack that debased the level of culture and ethics, expressing disdain for how these individuals intruded upon cultural life. This intrusion made their opposition foolish, aiming not to evaluate the experience but to enact moral assassination.

Perhaps the tragedy that troubled Adonis was the level of his opponents and critics; they were profoundly ignorant of poetic matters, understood nothing, did not think, and lacked the ability to write. These individuals had no relationship with poetry in terms of taste and knowledge; for them, poetry was nothing but praise or satire, and they expected the poet to be either a servant or a jailer—distributing praises or chains (Adonis, 1993, p. 42). Therefore, his self rose above adversaries and opponents. This elevated self did not grieve for itself due to this attack but was saddened by a general issue represented in the shallow cultural level and the level of thinking and ethics among the opponents. All his self wished for was an opposition at the level of poetry that critiques opinions, points out errors, and suggests what it sees as better and deeper.

His adversaries were ignorant with no connection to poetry, so whenever cultural issues were raised, the opponents revolted and instigated a comprehensive poetic, artistic, and cultural conflict (Adonis, 1993, p. 51). This hostility and animosity intensified as his confidence deepened; the trust granted to him by Yusuf Al-Khal, for example, when he entrusted him with publishing decisions in Shi'r magazine, delegating this task in the following manner: "Adonis's opinion on the text is what determines its publication or non-publication." This generated fierce hostilities towards him, as he became the focal point of disagreement, criticism, and enmity (Adonis, 1993, p. 139).

This trust was earlier deepened by Al-Sayyab when he presented his poetic output to Shi'r magazine, giving Adonis the freedom to publish what he deemed suitable and discard what he considered unfit. This was an acknowledgment of his absolute confidence in Adonis's poetic taste. He says: "Thus, I selected for him, among this output, the collection of poems that were published under the name '*Anashid Al-Matar*' (*Rain Song*), and I recommended disregarding the rest. He agreed with what I suggested without any discussion or question" (Adonis, 1993, p. 137).

The adversaries exaggerated their enmity to a dangerous extent, going beyond artistic rivalry to a hostility that mixed poetic contention with politics and religion. Worse still, they were influential and could ban his books and poems in various countries. He says: "Most of my animosities with poets and others began in **Shi'r** magazine, and I am still reaping their results today, which are not trivial at all. Some of those who opposed me are influential, and they mixed their enmity—ostensibly poetic—with many other things, including politics and religion. But what consoles me is that my opinions on the output of these individuals

were correct. Today, this abundant and diverse output, without exception, appears outside poetry—in its true sense and strict meaning" (Adonis, 1993, p. 139).

However, this hostility did not break his self nor push him to retreat. He continued to celebrate the essential and profound in poetry and thought because he was confident in his artistic vision, capable of distinguishing between the trivial and the valuable in poetry; today, his vision has been confirmed, and their output has vanished without impact.

Those who took a hostile stance against Shi'r magazine and its founders were a grim representation of enmity. Therefore, if one wanted to see "a true jailer or a real policeman, one should go to see them among these people, sitting among books not to prepare the future of humanity and freedom but to prepare chains and prisons" (Adonis, 1993, p. 146).

After the issuance of Shi'r magazine, Adonis's self entered a new phase of awareness—more radical and with a more comprehensive vision. This led it into a more complex cultural struggle. "From here, the magazine can be described as both a continuation and a beginning at the same time" (Adonis, 1993, p. 52).

The magazine established a new reading of Arab heritage and thought, opening a new horizon for Arab thought and, consequently, Arab life. While he was dreaming of this and working towards it, he became increasingly certain that new poetic writing itself necessitates, in turn, a new reading (Adonis, 1993, pp. 59–60).

Adonis became convinced that art reconstructs this world and makes it beautifully captivating. When a person lives the artistic vision in its splendor, brilliance, and ecstasy, he himself changes; and if he changes, he affects reality and erodes its ugliness. In this sense, art changes—but after long fermentations (Adonis, 1993, p. 112).

As a result of the awareness of the active self and its insightful vision, it perceived in most of the poetic output at that time a poverty in linguistic knowledge and a deficiency in the sense of language and mastery of its secrets. On the level of meaning, it saw much direct, ordinary prose that sometimes reached the point of banality (Adonis, 1993, p. 115). Therefore, the self felt a great responsibility towards the reader—how to save him from baseness and rescue poetry from decline (Al-Yousfi, 2002, Vol. 3, p. 172). Here, questions poured in about how to unsettle this accumulated stock and inoculate it with new elements that allow the reader to discover new dimensions. How can the Arab reader break away from what he is accustomed to and familiar with? How can he be convinced not always to expect from the poet a poem that tells him what is already in himself but, on the contrary, to await the poem that takes him out of himself to another horizon, forcing him to change his reading habits and to question poetry differently, raising different questions? (Adonis, 1993, p. 119).

This cognitive anxiety motivated Adonis to convince the reader "to emerge from the sterile siege between clear, realistic poetry and obscure, non-realistic poetry—and to view poetry in its true meaning: it is always realistic in that it possesses material and subject, and at the same time, it transcends reality in that it is inhabited by the possible, by the desire to reveal the unknown and to intuit what has not yet become reality" (Adonis, 1993, p. 116). But Adonis was able to break this closed atmosphere by creating the poem "Al-Faragh" ("*The Void*"), which formed a turning point in the method of poetic expression and in approaching things, heralding a different poeticism.

The self then undertook a significant project with Yusuf Al-Khal, related to reading heritage, engaging in dialogue with it, and opening up to the other. The work involved "bringing Arabism out of the prison of a perspective that confines it within the pride of self-enclosed self-esteem and the arrogance of self-sufficient affiliation, rejecting the other. He wanted to unsettle this quasi-racist vision that prevents Arabs from finding a living and creative place in the movement of history. In this horizon, they wanted to link Arabic poetry with the civilization of the land in which it arose, extended, and took root, so that the Arabic language, myths, and stories, with their origins starting from Sumerian, Babylonian, Canaanite, Aramaic, in addition to the Greek world, would merge. This is the heritage of Arab culture—the Arabic language

assimilated it, added to it, and diversified it. Therefore, when we spoke of Arab culture, they implied this heritage, considering it its roots and part of it. They also affirmed that the Arabic language played a decisive role, making Arabs a unique link in human history: they carried the heritage of the world before them and introduced it into the memory of a new civilization that brings together all peoples in a single human history" (Adonis, 1993, pp. 137–138).

This self, which was acutely aware of itself with much arrogance, pride, and boasting, magnified what it was doing and belittled others. It was not convinced by the ongoing discussions about meter, measured poetry, free verse, prose poetry, modernity, and antiquity because the flaw was evident in terms of shallow poetic knowledge on one hand and partisanship and fanaticism that necessarily lead to blind vision (Adonis, 1993, p. 166).

This self observed that the criticism stirred by newly introduced arts fell short of matching them because, from its perspective, it was based on reductionism, simplification, generalization, and even complete ignorance of poetry and criticism. This ignorance extended to become a written chaos lacking a sense of the beauty of the Arabic poetic language and its aesthetic history (Adonis, 1993, p. 171).

This self also appeared as one that dedicated itself to giving, renouncing worldly possessions, and whose concern was change. Adonis says, speaking about the modernist project he and Yusuf Al-Khal adopted: "We were truly in a dream—uniting the extremes, not knowing where the limits of our aspirations ended. The concern for material things or livelihood never overwhelmed us. Our primary concern was to write and to change the language of writing and the horizon of writing. We were entirely captivated by something else: establishing other rights—the rights of dream and love, desire and imagination. What does it mean to have the rights required by the city of writing? We were truly in a dream" (Adonis, 1993, p. 176).

Perhaps the dream of change and working towards it faced numerous difficulties, but they were not to deter them from achieving the dream. On the contrary, the intense struggle granted them mysterious, extraordinary strength and willpower that enabled them to break through barriers of prohibition. Adonis says: "It is true that the rejection our ideas faced gave them a special, mysterious power, even though it hindered, obscured, or distorted them. And here they are, having penetrated the barriers of political-ideological repression and entered the living fabric of our cultural existence. But why does exile still stretch before us? Politics fought us, and accompanying its war against us was a more painful war: that waged by the 'idle' of knowledge (do they not still fill the horizons?), writers and scribes who possess nothing of the ocean of poetry but some froth. And we would sigh in astonishment and pain: O God—will a smart, beautiful enemy finally be born?" (Adonis, 1993, pp. 178–179).

Adonis did not reject criticism or enmity based on a deep understanding of what he wrote in Shi'r magazine or his modernist propositions. Rather, he was exasperated by those who pretended to have knowledge and understanding. This is the dilemma that Adonis still suffers from—the self sees no equal to itself in an environment it wholly condemns.

Adonis was aware of his self's capabilities and the hefty price he might pay as a result of presenting his modernist project during a period of violent hegemony. Yet he continued, mocking the price he might pay—even if it were his life—in order to achieve his self. However, his suffering persists due to the other's lack of understanding of what he proposes and the absence of anyone who matches his creative stature in genuine criticism. The criticism that confronted what Shi'r magazine proposed was entirely outside the bounds of objectivity; it did not go beyond form, and thus, criticism turned into accusations and doubts. Their critical tools did not touch the experience of poetic creativity. Consequently, the Shi'r magazine experience was not read through a genuine critical lens. Adonis says: "We founded Shi'r magazine and practiced our poetic activity at a historical moment governed by violent hegemony. It was a moment of despotism in which it was impossible for an individual to walk the path he saw as enabling him to achieve himself, except by paying a price that sometimes amounted to death. We were aware of all this. When we pointed to it or proclaimed it in our poetry indirectly or in our prose directly, no one discussed objectively what we proposed. Instead, accusations of all kinds rained down on us, distorting matters and nullifying discussion. I believe, incidentally, that our experience in Shi'r magazine has not yet been read with the

necessary critical reading. It has been read, generally, accusatorily, and also formally—from the angle of breaking away from meter, rhyme, and inherited standards... and these are the least significant readings. This experience, as an experiment in poetic creativity—a cultural-civilizational experience in which the very concept of poetry and poetic writing changed—has not yet been read from this angle with the comprehensive reading required" (Adonis, 1993, pp. 186–189).

Thus, the experiences of poets fell short of keeping pace with modernity in its comprehensive concept based on demolition and reconstruction; their creativity remained captive to imitation and conformity. "Some of them wrote, especially in Lebanon, 'poetry in prose,' in ways and levels that bring them back to the climate of traditional conformity. They reproduce with the formality of prose the very formality of meter—which we tried in Shi'r magazine to demolish completely, poetically. It seems they took from the alphabet of the Shi'r experience only the letter. And here they are, with this literalism, almost covering up the original flame" (Adonis, 1993, p. 189).

Adonis wanted to clarify the concept of poetic modernity and its method of formulation that departs from the familiar and distances itself from tradition. Modernist poetry is not based on similarity and harmony but on difference, innovation, and unsettling vision.

Adonis's self rises above its critics, who exceeded all bounds in their criticism, even questioning his belonging to Arabism. It did not heed this, confident in the soundness of its approach in presenting a splendid image of its Arab existence, differing from what they employed in defense of Arabism. Due to the inadequacy of those means, Arabism died in their institutions, while the poetic glory of Arabism in this era shone in its most splendid form, artistically and creatively, in the horizon that Adonis and his companions opened. He says in his biography: "We often loved to shrug our shoulders in mockery of those who dared and dare to teach us how to move our fingers, see with our eyes, breathe, get angry, rejoice, and love... I like to repeat what reality confirms: the poetic glory of Arabism in this era does not shine in its most splendid form, artistically and creatively, except in the horizon we opened and established" (Adonis, 1993, pp. 189–190).

Thus, Adonis's stance towards his adversaries was characterized by superiority, to the extent that he did not pay them attention. Therefore, "he once wrote that he decided from the outset not to respond to his opponents and attackers, to reserve his time for what is more beautiful and lasting—meaning creativity—and he adds that he only deviated from this principle once when he responded to an article by Salah Abdul Sabour, and he still regrets that. Adonis's abstention from responding to his adversaries is not without great narcissism, believing that he deprives them of achieving their greatest dreams: that it be said about them, 'These are Adonis's enemies.' Despite the high self-charge in this phrase, Adonis made it a starting point for behavior he does not deviate from" (Al-Alaq, 2006, p. 36).

Conclusion

The "self" formed the core of Adonis's autobiography from beginning to end, embodying the journey of modernity and its outcome, along with all the crises that accompanied it.

The autobiography maintained a consistent portrayal in his recollection of the experiences he lived throughout his life—from his cultural formation to his migration to Beirut, his meeting with Yusuf Al-Khal, and their founding of the magazine Shi'r (*Poetry*).

Adonis sought to reread himself in the revisited experience after he had transitioned in modernity from foundation to maturity. He transformed autobiographical writing into a process of justifying all his works and proving their validity after the concept of modernity had been solidified, while the opponents of its project remained the same despite differences in individuals and their names.

He did not aim to recall childhood memories or mention events except insofar as they served his intellectual project. Thus, he appeared as one carrying a mission to rescue poetry and the reader from the depths of decline, heralding the poet-savior with a clear vision. He became that creative individual in the mirrors of

his self, who crafted poetic writing that believed only in its author's experience by elevating subjectivity. He launched Shi'r magazine with his companions—a magazine that created its own distinctive intellectual and creative atmosphere, manifested in publishing modernist critical studies, presenting poetic translations of foreign poems, and establishing the concepts of prose poetry inspired by French poetics.

Adonis elevated himself in the mirror of his self to the rank of seer, creator, and theorist simultaneously. Creativity for him became dual in output: generating and producing poetic imaginations on one hand, and observing, recording visions, stances, and ideas on the other. He turned his autobiography into a biography of modernity as he envisioned it and a critical review of its long journey and the obstacles it faced, represented by the opposing other in concept and practice.

For all these reasons, Adonis's autobiography gained special importance because it documented a significant era that witnessed intense struggles in the transformations of Arabic poetics at the hands of one of its pillars. It was truly an image of his diligent efforts for his modernist project and an expression of his self determined to triumph, which was realized at the moment of writing.

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