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BETWEEN INDIA AND DHALEA: A JOURNEY OF SALEM ABDULQAWI

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Abstract

These are six poems written by Salem Abdulqawi Saleh Al-Amiri, a Yemeni poet, musician, and academic researcher whose work bridges Arabic and English literary traditions. Born in 1970 in Thi Hiran, Al Dhalea', Yemen, Al-Amiri's narrative traces his transition from his culturally rich homeland to his academic pursuits in India between 2018 and 2024. This paper of his autobiography that, explores his educational path at Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, where he pursued M.Phil and Ph.D. degrees in English and American literature while developing his artistic voice through poetry and music. The work presents a collection of Al-Amiri's bilingual poems composed during his time in India, including "Indian Fingers," "Feminism," "Killing Humanity," "The Day Will Come," "The Ink Blood," and "Good Morning India." These compositions reflect his profound engagement with themes of cultural identity, human connection, emotional expression, and the intersection of academic scholarship with creative artistry. Through his poetry, Al-Amiri articulates his experience of transitioning from war-torn Yemen to the culturally diverse landscape of India, where he found new inspiration and perspective. This research paper in historical contextual method, serves as both a personal testament and a crosscultural exploration, demonstrating how literary expression can transcend borders and foster dialogue between different worlds. Al-Amiri's journey illuminates the transformative power of education and creative practice in navigating complex questions of belonging, heritage, and human experience across linguistic and cultural boundaries.

Keywords

Bilingual Poetry, Cross-Cultural Identity, Yemeni Literature, Academic Journey, Cultural Transition, etc.

Full Article

1. Introduction:

This research paper presents the life journey of Salem Abdulqawi Saleh AlAmiri, a Yemeni poet, musician, and academic whose work bridges the realms of Arabic and English literature. Through these literary works, Al-Amiri articulates the contrast between the instability of Yemen and the intellectual freedom he discovered in India, while demonstrating how creative expression can transcend borders and foster dialogue between different worlds. This autobiography stands as both personal testimony and cultural bridge, illustrating the power of literature and education to navigate complex questions of heritage and human experience across linguistic and cultural boundaries

- **Early Life and Education:**

Growing up in Yemen, he was immersed in the richness of my heritage, which continues to inspire my art and writing. His academic path began at the College of Education in Dhalea, affiliated with Aden University as lecturer. He was awarded an M.Phil degree in English

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Literature at Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University in India, where he developed his love for English literature. He is now pursuing a Ph.D. in American literature at Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University in India, expanding his understanding of global literary traditions.

- **Artistic Journey:**
  As an artist, he expresses himself through poetry, music, and translation. Writing in both Arabic and English, he explores themes of identity, love, and the complexities of the human experience. Playing the Arabic out allows me to connect with the musical traditions of the Middle East, adding depth to his creative pursuits.

- **Philosophy of Writing:**
  For him, poetry is an organic process. He often feels that the poem writes me as much as he writes it. Every piece he creates is tied to an event in my life, reflecting my experiences and emotions. This dynamic process allows me to discover myself and my place in the world.

- **Reflections and Aspirations:**
  Sharing his story with the public for the first time, he approaches this task with honesty and openness, welcoming critique and engagement. Writing has always been an exploration of self and society, a journey that continues to shape who he is. Through his poetry, music, and academic work, he strives to bridge cultures and foster dialogue. He invites you to join me in exploring the richness of Yemeni heritage and the universal truths that connect us all.

2. Literary Creations from his Journey in India (2018–2024)

The years 2018 to 2024 constitute a pivotal and transformative period in his life intellectual and creative development. During this time, he undertook an enriching academic journey in India, where immersion in the country's dynamic cultural and scholarly milieu profoundly shaped my literary and poetic sensibilities. India became a space of encounter-a site where my Yemeni heritage intersected with new cultural, linguistic, and intellectual experiences, enabling a deeper exploration of selfhood and artistic expression.

Throughout these years, my poetic and prose writings embodied a nuanced synthesis of identity, affect, and cross-cultural engagement. Composing in both Arabic and English, he engaged with themes such as belonging, resilience, memory, and the complex interrelation between thought and emotion. Each piece of writing stands as evidence of an evolving creative consciousness, reflecting both personal growth and broader humanistic insights that emerged from my academic and cultural immersion.

This collection is therefore more than a compilation of creative works; it constitutes a narrative of a journey-one that underscores the capacity of literature and poetry to transcend geographical and cultural boundaries, foster connection, and articulate shared human experiences, akin to the intellectual spirit reflected in the works of A. P. J. Abdul Kalam (2014). The poems composed and published during my academic tenure in India are as follows:

2.1. Indian Fingers (14/03/2019):

The first poem his composed in India, Indian Fingers, emerges from the profound contrasts between the realities he left behind in Yemen and the conditions that greeted me upon my arrival. Departing from a homeland marked by war, fear, displacement, and enduring instability-circumstances that continue at the time of writing this biography-he encountered in India an environment characterized by safety, stability, and an atmosphere deeply supportive of learning. This shift mirrored the kind of transformative educational spaces described by Jones (2019).

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The poem draws inspiration from the cultural diversity and admirable simplicity embodied by Indian students and educators. Indian Fingers thus captures the immediacy of my early impressions in India, articulating both the relief of newfound security and the resonance of cross-cultural encounters that shaped the beginnings of my creative journey in this new academic setting.

Indian fingers:

The sun is caught by lips and hand
In Indian fingers is gold of sand the earth is
dancing, the sky is band.
The hand of the sun shakes me in land

* * * *

The mind of the book is in Aurangabad
Kiss (N) from the land to grow its lad
Kiss (N) from the sand if it is sad In (N) Indian
hand, the dream you had.

* * * *

Where ever you go, your mother, your dad
Your sister, your brother in class you add
This is a simple ring, in finger of fad The Love to be
crazy, the Love to be mad.

* * * *

The truth of Love, is Love, Love and The Love of
truth is Indian hand.

2.2. Feminism Poem (Aurangabad, India, 27 October 2019):

During his master's program, he had the privilege of studying research methodologies under the guidance of the distinguished scholar Mr. Ubali, whose intellectual rigor and pedagogical clarity left a lasting impact on his academic formation. His lectures introduced a range of scientific and theoretical perspectives on feminism, prompting me to engage with the topic not only analytically but also through a more personal and reflective lens. Inspired by these discussions-echoing the kind of critical inquiry outlined by Greenberg (2013) - He sought to articulate my own understanding of the subject in poetic form. This process of synthesizing scholarly insight with creative expression culminated in the composition of the following poem:

Feminism:

You came from the light of my finger.
You came from the sound of my singer.
They saw you swimming in my blinker.
They heard you singing in my whisper.

* * * *

You are the land Man ere the center,
To plant your son, daughter, and sister.
No Ubale' if no mam nor father,
Nor Michael nor paper nor inker.

* * * *

You are my sin my guilt, my thinker,

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When God unhoused as we are stinker. From rib you
came, from soul you splinter, Don't make god
grumpy again hinder.

* * * *

From land to land we came we linker.
I love your sin, I love your danger

Dr. Anand (Ubale): An ingenious Indian lecturer:

1. **Michael:** A great feminist writer

2.3. Poem on the Tragedy of Killing Humanity (29 March 2019):

A significant and deeply affecting coincidence marked the date of a conference organized by the English Department at Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University. The event fell on 15 March 2019—a day overshadowed by the painful memory of a horrific tragedy in which more than fifty Muslims were killed in a brutal attack while performing Friday prayers at two mosques in New Zealand. The gravity of this event, and its global resonance, profoundly moved me. In response, and in a manner aligned with the reflective engagements discussed by Deffenbaugh (2024), He chose to contribute to the conference with a poem that contemplates the violence of that day and its emotional, social, and moral repercussions. The poem is as follows:

Killing Humanity:

Kill not humanity, kill man
You kill not light by your wrong say.
Fight fan hate as possible as can
That run very fast murder the pray.

* * * *

The pray still live, still live Friday
Still live martyr in heaven with God,
What dead is your own hate and day and blood of
hate and hate of blood.

* * * *

You stand against god, who create age
How can you answer? How can you act?
Foolish drama you have in fact
But hell only hell is your stage.

* * * *

Black heart, black blood, black gun, black night
Cannot kill light cannot kill light

* * * *

2.4. The Intersection of Academia and Emotion: A Reflection in *The Day Will Come:*

The poem The Day Will Come, which he composed at Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University on 18 October 2020, emerged from a profound engagement with his academic surroundings and the intellectual activities that marked that period of his life. While immersed in a demanding scholarly environment, He became increasingly aware of an inner yearning for emotional vitality—a longing for the fullness of lived experience beyond the confines of academic rigor. This tension between intellectual pursuit and affective need prompted the creation of the poem, which he chose to write in both Arabic and English.

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The bilingual form functions as a deliberate bridge between the cognitive and emotional dimensions of human experience, allowing me to articulate thought and feeling in a manner that is both inclusive and expressive. In doing so, the poem foregrounds the delicate interplay between scholarly aspiration and the essential human desire for emotional resonance, echoing the insights articulated by Chasar (2012). It underscores the necessity of balancing academic achievement with an appreciation for the richness and complexity of embodied, emotional life.

The Day Will Come:

The day will come when I eat the honey words of your lips.
The day will come when you eat the smile by your teeth.
Love is drinking of crazy magic word meaning not chest not hips.
The day will come when i write my flag in your island without
soldiers or ships.
I am traveling now by your eyes to the sky of your ribs.
I am coming; you have to wait the day that i sing with my guitar on
the stage of your sweet mix.
Remember that I am coming one day and that day will come when
there is only love without any family or tribes

2.5. *The Blood of Ink*: A Poetic Reflection on *Truth and Expression*:

In his poem The Ink Blood (Aurangabad, India, 11 July 2019), he meditate on the notion that creative production can sometimes privilege quantity over the intrinsic worth of its content. Within the context of poetic expression, he contend that even a single, concise fragment—a semi-sentence—may carry an intensity of meaning and sincerity capable of equaling, or even surpassing, the substance of an entire volume. This work illustrates the idea that genuine poetic expression transcends the physical marks of ink on a page.

For the poet, authentic writing emerges from the core of the self: it is the metaphoric scattering of one's own blood between the lines, signifying the profound emotional and personal investment embedded in each word. In this sense, the poem aligns with the perspective articulated by Miller Jr. (2008), underscoring the intimate bond between poet and craft. Through this metaphor, he emphasize that the act of writing becomes not merely a literary exercise but a manifestation of the poet's inner life—a reflection of the soul inscribed upon the page.

The Ink Blood:

Blue blood on papers, not ink to tell.
Not ten kgs sentences bill.
Not net pdf, not Facebook sell.
It is heaven, why you see it hell?
* * * *
Who will drink well the ink of will?
The endless beach of word until
You reach you need a Bill of Bill
The more you breathe, the more get shell.
* * * *
No price, no prize, nothing can fill, Silent with taste,
silent with smell.
Blue blood honey on page mell, mell.

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No prize not mean my word is nil.
* * * *
As man can walk as earth can still,
As more my word can speak and tell.

2.6 Good Morning India: Embracing a New Dawn (16 September 2022):

In early 2019, he moved to India to pursue a degree in English Literature at Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University in Aurangabad, where he encountered a new and transformative reality. Immersed in a society marked by linguistic and religious plurality, he found himself in an environment that nurtured freedom of thought, creativity, and intellectual inquiry. This atmosphere of cultural openness expanded my creative sensibilities and offered a sense of fulfillment, as though long-held aspirations were gradually taking shape.

India's rich cultural heritage and characteristic simplicity cultivate a renewed sense of awareness in those who arrive at its shores. During my initial months, he experienced a deep realization that a new chapter of life was unfolding—one defined by possibility, growth, and intellectual awakening. It felt like entering a new morning, a symbolic rebirth that resonates with the kind of reflective transition described by Harryman (2022).

At the same time, India appeared to be emerging from a period of historical dormancy, moving confidently into a dynamic and progressive era aligned with global developments. Reflecting on this transformation, he felt compelled to recognize the nation's vitality and promise with the phrase, "Good morning, wonderful India." It was within this spirit of admiration, gratitude, and renewal that he composed the following poem, which encapsulates his experiences and emotional connection to this remarkable country.

Good Morning India:

Time passes through the eyes of the Indian land.
The light of the day shines from the fingers of the Indian land....
The simplicity of the world lives in the heart of the Indian land....
The letters of knowledge travel in the book of the Indian land...
The sea, the river and the trees talk about rain in the land of India ...the eyes of the sky pour their laughter to all the inhabitants of the earth through the Indian eye land.
..All the love and respect for the Indian breezes..
.Morning and evening compete for Indian hearts...
Good morning, mind of sand, Mind of hand, hand of mind good morning Indian Land...

Conclusion:

In conclusion, his trajectory as a poet, scholar, and artist has been profoundly shaped by the interplay between his Yemeni heritage and the diverse cultural encounters that defined his years in India. Throughout his academic and creative endeavors, he has sought to articulate not only universal themes—identity, love, humanity—but also the intimate emotional resonances that transcend geopolitical and cultural boundaries. The poetry and literary works he has produced during this period reflect both an evolving sense of self and a sustained commitment to engaging with a world that is at once intellectually stimulating and deeply affective. The years 2018 to 2024 stand as a formative epoch in his life, providing a fertile ground for integrating his passions for literature, music, and cross-cultural dialogue. Each poem—whether crafted in Arabic or English—serves as a testament to this journey, capturing the ongoing conversation between his inner

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landscape and the external realities that shaped it. Works such as Indian Fingers and The Ink Blood encapsulate the emotional, cultural, and intellectual experiences that informed his creative consciousness, demonstrating his belief in the transformative capacities of artistic expression.

Ultimately, his journey has illuminated the insight that literature, music, and art function not merely as mediums of personal expression but as powerful conduits for human connection. By weaving together his academic pursuits and artistic practices, he continue to navigate the complexities of cultural identity, intellectual discovery, and emotional truth. The poems he has written operate as bridges—linking disparate worlds and perspectives—and as reminders that through shared artistic expression; we may cultivate common ground, deepen mutual understanding, and inspire meaningful change.

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