ETHIOPE JOURNAL

OF ENGLISH, LITERARY AND CULTURAL STUDIES

I

EDITORIAL NOTE

The Ethiope Journal of English, Literary, and Cultural Studies (ISSN: 0795-5413) is an interdisciplinary journal that explores topical and generative issues in English linguistics and literary and cultural studies. We recognise that African humanities research is both problem-based and knowledge oriented, and we aim to provide a platform for scholars to analyse and theorise Africa in a way that is generative, conversational, and decolonial. Specifically, the journal focuses on both the analytical and theoretical approaches to knowledge production in the context of Africa and the Global South. We want to curate papers that are hinged on African indigenous paradigms and approaches or that seek to extend, reimagine, or contextualise current theoretical or analytical approaches in English language studies and literary and cultural studies.

We invite papers that dwell on all aspects of English language studies, including phonetics/phonology, semantics, syntax, discourse analysis, pragmatics, stylistics, ESL, ESP, etc. We also welcome papers that theorise literary and cultural texts, including film, still and moving images, music and dance, photographs, cultural objects, spaces and places, society and social formations, and other relevant corpora. While we accept purely analytical essays, we encourage authors to focus on theorising the texts or data they engage with. In particular, we welcome theoretical conversations that implicate postcolonial subjecthood, ecocritical approaches (especially postcolonial ecocriticism), feminism and gender studies, new trends in linguistics, object-oriented criticism and approaches, and other generative approaches to knowledge production. Authors are encouraged to do original theorisation rather than adopt extant theoretical frameworks. They may also extend the scope of extant theories and approaches based on the material they present and discuss.

Furthermore, papers with interdisciplinary approaches are also welcomed. We recognise that knowledge production is an elastic phenomenon, and that bright ideas might implicate various fields. Interesting multi-modal, eclectic, or collaborative research is encouraged in this journal.

JOURNAL POLICY

The Ethiope Journal of English, Literary and Cultural Studies is published biennially by the Department of English and Literary Studies, Delta State University Abraka, Delta State, Nigeria. All papers submitted to this journal will undergo double-blind peer review before publication. Published papers are well-researched, original, and data-driven.

Contributors are to submit an e-copy of their manuscript for assessment and publication to ethiopejournal@delsu.edu.ng or ethiopejournal@gmail.com. Such manuscripts should be original and not under consideration for publication elsewhere and should not have been published in any other journal.

The submitted manuscript which should not exceed 7000 words should be typeset in MS Word Times New Roman Font 12, with double line spacing. The first page should include the title of the manuscript, name(s), and institutional affiliation/address, abstract (not more than 250 words and with not more than six keywords). Manuscripts should conform to the current APA or MLA style sheet. Author(s) of published papers will derive the benefits from peer-review of contributions by seasoned scholars, global visibility, and receipt of hard copies as well as soft copies of their papers.

The papers in this edition of the journal cut across disciplines in cultural, and media studies and sub-disciplines in English and literary studies. The contributors include seasoned and renowned scholars of international repute and young astute scholars with a burning desire to excel in academics. It is pertinent to note that the journal accepts contributions from scholars and researchers across the globe. We believe that articles in this volume will be of immense interest to researchers and students.

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STYLISTIC DEVICES IN UMAR ABUBAKAR SIDI'S *THE POET OF DUST*

Abdullahi Umar Evuti   &   Ebenezer Oluseun Ogungbe

Abstract

This paper analyses the stylistic devices used in Umar Abubakar Sidi's collection of poetry, *The Poet of Dust*, to understand its complex layers of meaning and its impact on contemporary Nigerian poetry. The objectives of this study are to investigate the lexico-semantic, syntactic, and rhetorical stylistic devices utilised in the collection. Our data consists of excerpts from selected poems from the collection and Leech and Short's (2007) approach to stylistics is adopted as our theoretical framework. The analytical methodology employed in this study is qualitative research design which enhances close reading and textual analysis. Furthermore, the study explores the poet's manipulation of lexico-semantic, and syntactic choices to gain insights into the artistic and literary effects created in the selected poems. By unravelling the intricate layers of meaning in this collection, the study sheds light on the author's unique contribution to contemporary Nigerian poetry and enhances our understanding of the wider literary landscape of the poet.

Introduction

The study of literary texts, with their unique language properties, has long been a focus of scholarly attention, leading to an ongoing exploration of their artistic and linguistic precepts. Situated within the broader Formalism theory, Stylistics serves as a critical juncture where scholars delve into the interaction between language and meaning, drawing from the foundational contributions of renowned figures like Charles Bally, Ferdinand de Saussure, Roman Jakobson, and Geoffrey Leech. Wales (2001, p.372) has emphasised stylistics' enduring dedication to analysing the language and structure of texts, thereby providing a thorough understanding and appreciation of

various texts, whether literary or non-literary, across extensive periods. The essence of stylistics lies in its scrutiny of the language elements within a text, enhancing its interpretation and critical examination. This research delves into the intricate realm of stylistics, emphasising its evolution from ancient rhetorical traditions to contemporary literary analysis. Scholars like Wales and Toolan (2013) have established stylistics as a comprehensive study of linguistic and textual characteristics, aiming to interpret and appreciate both literary and non-literary texts over extended periods. Toolan (2013) underscores the importance of understanding the anatomy and functions of language, positing that stylistics encompasses the examination of language within texts, emphasizing excellence in craft across various fields beyond literature, such as advertising and political discourse.

Burke (2014, p. 1) provides a historical context, revealing that stylistics, or 'literary linguistics,' involves analysing and interpreting texts, particularly literary ones, with origins dating back to ancient Greek and Roman rhetorical traditions. Crystal (2008) views stylistics as a subfield of linguistics dedicated to investigating language use in various situations and developing theories to explain specific language preferences of individuals and social groups. The diverse linguistic choices influenced by factors such as formality, social setting, and audience underscore the significance of stylistics in unveiling the underlying principles that govern language use in different contexts.

Amidst the historical origins rooted in ancient rhetoric, Stylistics also referred to as 'literary linguistics,' has evolved into a specialised field, examining the characteristics of language use across various contexts. Crystal (2008, p. 460) emphasises Stylistics' exploration of language variations influenced by factors such as formality, social setting, the purpose of communication, and audience, leading to the identification and analysis of distinct linguistic features. This meticulous analysis engages the underlying principles shaping individuals' and social groups' linguistic preferences and choices, providing a valuable lens for understanding the intricacies of communicative situations and their linguistic underpinnings.

Furthermore, the enduring academic interest and critical acclaim garnered by Umar Abubakar Sidi's collection, *The Poet of Dust* published in 2017, highlight the need for an in-depth stylistic analysis, thereby contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of the complexities embedded within the poet's unique language style. The study seeks to fill the existing gap in critical appraisal by unravelling the stylistic intricacies that underpin the thematic preoccupations of Sidi's work. The absence of comprehensive stylistic analyses within the existing academic discourse emphasises the timeliness and significance of this study, which aims to offer fresh perspectives and enrich the existing body of knowledge.

Building on this foundation, this paper undertakes a stylistic analysis of Umar Abubakar Sidi's *The Poet of Dust*, to explore its unique language style and aesthetic ingenuity. Despite existing analyses focusing on thematic exploration, there has not been much comprehensive stylistic appraisal of Sidi's work. This research intends to bridge this gap by shedding light on some stylistic features, for instance, emphasising the intriguing motif found right from the title *The Poet of Dust,* suggestive of spiritual essence and cultural context. The study explores Sidi's poetic influences rooted in Sufism and Surrealism, proposing to use Leech and Short's (2007) approach to stylistics as its framework which provides a structured method to dissect and analyse various stylistic elements within a text. In the context of this study, the framework serves as a guiding tool to systematically explore the stylistic devices employed by Sidi. It enables the identification and examination of some stylistic elements, such as figures of speech, rhetorical devices, lexico-semantic choices, syntactic stylistic structures, and other elements contributing to the poetic style. By applying this framework, the paper evaluates and interprets the specific stylistic choices made by Sidi in *The Poet of Dust*, illustrating how these elements shape the general effect and aesthetic of the text. The study aims to unravel the lexico-semantic stylistic features that define Sidi's poetic style, thereby providing an understanding of the interplay between his thematic expressions and the underlying lexical devices at play.

The Poet of Dust, authored by Umar Abubakar Sidi, ventures into the uncharted territories of meta-poetry and iconoclasm, seeking to dismantle the constraints of imaginative canonisation. Sidi's work is deeply influenced by Sufism and Surrealism, two ideological underpinnings that advocate for unrestricted creative expression, challenging the shackles of censorship and literary dictatorship. Despite its bold linguistic trajectory and profound thematic exploration, the scholarly attention given to *The Poet of Dust* has not been much, with a dearth of comprehensive academic engagement analysing its linguistic intricacies. The current research endeavours to fill this void by undertaking a stylistic analysis of the text, aiming to unearth the subtle nuances embedded within Sidi's poetic language. This study aspires not only to shed light on the linguistic dimensions of the collection but also to ascertain how these linguistic properties contribute to the structure and thematic fabric of the text. Furthermore, by carrying out a stylistic study of *The Poet of Dust,* this study aims to provide a new understanding of Sidi's innovative poetic expression, by evaluating the syntactic stylistic devices deployed by the poet which situates his work within the broader context of contemporary literary discourse. It seeks to explore how Sidi's fusion of Sufi and Surrealist influences fosters a dynamic interplay between conscious and subconscious realms, facilitating a deeper contemplation of the essence of existence, poetry, and life itself. The study also seeks to highlight the significance of unbounded creative expression, particularly in the context of contemporary sociocultural dynamics, where the exploration of diverse perspectives and voices is crucial for the enrichment of literary dialogue. Through stylistic analysis, this research also aims to establish a solid foundation for engagement with *The Poet of Dust* by analysing the use of rhetorical stylistic elements employed by the Sidi to unlock its potential as a pivotal contribution to the evolving landscape of poetic innovation and creative expression.

Theoretical Underpinning

This paper uses Leech and Short's (2007) framework which provides four major checklists of categories that are further subcategorised for

textual analysis as its theoretical base. The theory works by providing a structured approach to dissecting the language within a text, focusing on the four levels which are vocabulary (lexical choices), sentence structures (syntactic features), cohesion, and rhetorical devices. At the lexical level, it focuses on the specific words chosen by the poet and their effects on meaning. The grammatical level looks into the construction of sentences and the patterns used. The analysis of rhetorical devices explores metaphors, similes, and other literary devices employed. Additionally, it considers how the different parts of a poem connect to form a coherent whole. By systematically exploring these elements, the framework helps this study uncover the underlying nuances, patterns, and stylistic choices made by the poet, contributing to a better understanding of the text's meaning and impact.

Methodology

This study utilises a qualitative content analysis design, which is recognised for its objectivity in capturing events and processes in their natural contexts to conduct a stylistic analysis of Umar Abubakar Sidi's The Poet of Dust. The primary data are obtained from selected poems in the text under study. However, the research makes use of other secondary sources of data collection.

Review of Related Literature

Several researchers, through their diverse experiences and research requirements, have conducted studies that intersect various domains of applied linguistics, particularly stylistics in the realm of poetry. Ibraheem (2014) analyzed Segun Adekoya's poems using M.A.K Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics, with particular reference to his concepts of form, substance, and context, on which Leech and Shorts (1981) have based their four levels of language description. Also, Maledo (2020) examines the stylistic features of syntactic parallelism in Tanure Ojaide's poetry, adopting the clause structural pattern of the Systemic Functional Grammar. These studies, like the present one, examine stylistic elements in literature. However, they missed exploring all stylistic aspects because they considered only

grammar and function, overlooking rhetorical or literary devices - something the current research aims to cover more extensively.

Jaafar (2017) is a corpus stylistic study of Thomas Harris' The Silence of the Lambs. The study discovers that certain lexical items like "body," "murder," "Starling," and "victim," in the text were important because they show major events in the story. Also, the study finds out that such words that appear frequently could help to trigger specific information. This study's discoveries show how corpus stylistics can help in the textual study of themes and how certain words can co-occur to realise specific meanings. In a similar vein, Maledo (2018) is a stylistic study of Ojaide's poetry. Particularly, it is a lexical study to uncover the hyponymic relation of devastation and degradation of the Niger Delta environment. These studies are related to the current study as they all focus on stylistic devices and how lexical features are connected in texts to reveal deeper meanings.

Nweze (2012) examines Ngugi Wa Thiong'o's Wizard of the Crow and Ben Okri's The Famished Road to reveal their unique writing styles and intended messages. The paper compares their styles and how they depict their different societies in postcolonial contexts and concludes that their styles contribute to interpreting the texts' literary effects from linguistic causes. Nzeakor (2020) is a "Stylistic-Accommodationist" analysis of Adichie's language use in Half of a Yellow Sun, aiming to examine how Adichie's stylistic choices convey the nuances of the Nigerian civil war. Nzeakor concludes that Adichie's use of simple language accommodated a wide readership, contributing to her status as a prominent literary figure. Emphasising accessibility, Nzeakor recommends the use of simple language for effective communication. However, the study's focus on accommodation overlooked other crucial aspects of language use, lacking a comprehensive stylistic analytic framework.

Oseni and Odebiyi (2021) adopt a critical stylistic study to explore the language of budget speeches in Nigeria. The study reveals that budget speeches were titled with phrases like "budget of restoration," "budget of transformation," or "budget of rescue," using positive naming to foster a favourable view of the country's situation.

It concludes that semantic devices were used by governors to convey political ideologies through slogans in their financial statements. This research aligns with the ongoing study in the analysis of written texts, although differing in genres, aiming to uncover deeper meanings. However, it has limitations due to its narrow focus on specific governors' speeches in Nigeria. Oyedeji and Idoko (2021) focus on identifying and classifying the various stylistic devices in Jide Baogun's The Desert in the River. The study affirms that the writer employs a range of stylistic devices, such as parallelism, alliteration, metaphor, and personification to enhance the literary quality of the novel. It concludes that these stylistic devices contribute to the overall artistic appeal of the text. The findings of this study provide valuable insights for understanding and interpreting the role of stylistic devices in The Poet of Dust which is the subject of this study

Data Analysis and Discussion

This part of the paper focuses on examining selected data from the collection. This approach is in line with Sarfaz's (2022) argument, referencing Leech and Short's (2007) acknowledgment that analysing stylistic elements in a text involves choosing specific aspects while disregarding others. The following stylistic elements have been analysed.

Lexico-semantic Stylistic Features in *The Poet of Dust*

The poet makes use of various lexico-semantic stylistic features to convey deeper meanings, evoke spiritual experiences, and explore the mystical dimensions of human existence. These devices have profound implications in the text as they shape the reader's understanding and create a transformative and immersive experience. Below are some of the lexico-semantic devices employed by the poet:

Synonymy

Synonymy is a lexico-semantic stylistic device that involves the use of different words or expressions with closely related meanings to

convey a particular concept or idea. It allows for variation, nuance, and emphasis in language, enabling speakers and writers to choose the most appropriate synonym that aligns with their intended message or rhetorical effect. Examples from the text:

Bad poets see poetry as the giant fork
Which rakes through the flesh of hearts
Bad poets perceive poetry as the blackness of the black
The invisible tube, the darkened cave of enlightened ghosts
Bad poets define poetry as the aesthetic amalgamation of words to evoke a waterfall of bliss (things poets do, stanza 1-3)

In the excerpt above, the poet uses synonymy to convey a negative and distorted perception of poetry held by "bad poets." By employing various synonyms, the speaker emphasizes the misguided understanding of poetry by these individuals. In the first line, the persona exerts that "Bad poets see poetry as the giant fork." Here, poetry is replaced by the synonym "giant fork." This substitution creates a vivid and provocative image, suggesting that these poets view poetry as a tool that aggressively pierces and wounds the hearts of people. The choice of synonym implies the harsh and painful nature of their perception of poetry. In the statement "Which rakes through the flesh of hearts," he emphasises the negative connotation of their perception by using the synonym "rakes" to describe the destructive action of poetry. The use of this synonym intensifies the image of poetry inflicting harm or causing distress to the emotional well-being of individuals, according to bad poets. "Bad poets perceive poetry as the blackness of black." The use of synonymy here serves to evoke a sense of darkness and obscurity. By employing the phrase "blackness of black," the poet emphasises the extreme nature of their perception. The synonym "blackness" highlights the negative and despairing associations commonly linked to darkness and the absence of light. In The Invisible Tube, the Darkened Cave of Enlightened Ghosts, the poet replaces "poetry" with the synonymous phrases "invisible tube" and "darkened cave of enlightened ghosts." These synonyms evoke a sense of mystery and spiritual significance. The phrase "invisible tube" suggests a conduit or pathway through which enlightenment is sought, while "darkened cave of enlightened

ghosts" implies a realm where ethereal beings reside. These synonyms portray the distorted perception of poetry as an esoteric and unearthly concept in the eyes of "bad poets." Furthermore, "Bad poets define poetry as the aesthetic amalgamation of words to evoke a waterfall of bliss," this line, employs the synonymous phrase "aesthetic amalgamation of words" to describe how these poets perceive poetry. By using this synonym, the speaker implies that these poets define poetry solely in terms of its surface-level beauty and the pleasing arrangement of words. The phrase "waterfall of bliss" reinforces the idea that their perception focuses primarily on the pleasurable emotions evoked by poetry, disregarding its deeper meaning or substance.

Polysemy

Polysemy refers to the phenomenon where a word or phrase has multiple, related meanings or interpretations. Following are some instances of the use of polysemy in the text:

A poet is broken porcelain splintered

Upon the mountains of the sky

A poet is a disgusting worm

   Lying around the spaghetti of life (The Peninsula of Poets (II), stanzas 8 and, 10)

In the given lines from the poem "The Peninsula of Poets (II)," the use of polysemy adds depth and richness to the poetic imagery, allowing for multiple interpretations and layers of meaning. The poet employs polysemy to convey different aspects of the poet's existence and nature. The phrase "broken porcelain splintered" utilizes polysemy to evoke multiple images and ideas. On the one hand, "broken" implies that the poet is fractured, damaged, or fragmented, suggesting a sense of vulnerability or brokenness in their emotional or creative state. On the other hand, "porcelain" conjures images of fragility, delicacy, and artistry, emphasizing the poet's sensitivity and the beauty that can arise from their brokenness. Thus, polysemy allows for both a metaphorical interpretation of the poet's state of being and a literal visual description. Similarly, the phrase "mountains of the sky" exhibits polysemy by combining concepts of height, grandeur, and

elevation. This phrase can be interpreted both metaphorically and literally. Metaphorically, it presents the poet as someone who reaches extraordinary heights in their artistic pursuits and aspirations. It evokes the image of mountains reaching into the sky, emphasizing the poet's connection to the vastness and majesty of the universe. Polysemy allows for the simultaneous existence of these different interpretations, enriching the symbolism and impact of the description. Moving on, the phrase "disgusting worm" also demonstrates polysemy. At one level, it suggests a negative or degrading view of the poet as something repulsive or unappealing. This interpretation may stem from societal perceptions of artists as unconventional or outside the norm. At the same time, the word "worm" can also symbolize the poet's humility and their rootedness in the earth, implying a deeper connection to nature and the cycles of life. By utilizing polysemy, the poet invites multiple perspectives on the poet's identity and role. The phrase "spaghetti of life" further exemplifies polysemy. At another level, it metaphorically represents the chaotic and tangled aspects of human existence, suggesting a sense of disorder or complexity. However, it also implies a sense of interconnectedness and the potential for creative exploration within the twists and turns of life's experiences. Polysemy allows for both interpretations to coexist and contribute to the overall meaning of the line.

Syntactic Stylistic Devices in *The Poet of Dust*

Syntactic stylistic devices such as parallelism and enjambment are deployed by the poet to arrange and organise words, phrases, and sentences to consolidate the mystic atmosphere, and to also protrude meaning, and impact of the poems.

Parallelism

One syntactic feature that stands out in *The Poet of Dust* is the use of parallelism. It is the repetition of similar grammatical structures, phrases, or patterns in a text. It helps create balance and rhythm in sentences and paragraphs, making the text more effective. It improves clarity, emphasises key points, and adds harmony and flow

to the writing. By using consistent and balanced language structures, parallelism makes ideas more memorable and engaging for the reader. See the following instances where parallelism is deployed by the poet:

> *Laikhur offers me a river of wine*
> *I drink. I stagger. I stutter. (The Peninsula of Poets II)*

The parallel or similar grammatical structure used for each action is the subject-verb-object pattern: "I [subject] drink [verb]. I [subject] stagger [verb]. I [subject] stutter [verb]." Each phrase begins with the subject "I," followed by a verb and then an object or additional description. This consistent structure across the three actions creates parallelism.

In the "Peninsula of Poets", parallelism is used to emphasise certain ideas or to create a rhythmic effect. For instance, the repetition of the phrase *Holy Holy Holy Holy Holy* and the repetition of the phrase *Hukku yyakku huhhu huk* both employ parallelism, creating a sense of pattern and emphasis. Also in "Peninsula of Poets", the following parallel structure is found:

What is P?

When is P seen as P?

Who made P P?

Why is P considered to be P? (Stanza 8 line 4 - 7)

The repeated structure or parallelism occurs in the questions: "What is P? When is P seen as P? Who made P P? Why is P considered to be P?" These questions follow a similar pattern, with each starting with an interrogative word ("What," "When," "Who," "Why") followed by the verb "is" or "made," the variable "P," and additional information. This pattern creates a consistent structure inquiring about different aspects of the variable "P" in a sequence. The use of parallel structure helps in organising information and presenting a series of questions about the nature, occurrence, creator, and significance of "P."

Enjambment

Through enjambment, the poet can suspend thoughts or sentences over multiple lines, with the line break occurring in the middle of a phrase or clause to create a sense of flow, continuity, and fluidity. See

some instances below:

MARTIN Espada welcomed me with a slap

On my left cheek, he pulled my ear

& tossed me into the 'Academy of Poetry' where Gogol

An ancient ape, the Peninsula's poet laureate

Sat me up and taught me:

Hukku yyakku huhhu huk

The "ABC of Poetry" and "the 7 Articles of a Poet's Faith"

("Peninsula of Poets", stanza 1)

In the given excerpt, enjambment is used to create a sense of movement and continuity in the description of the speaker's experience. The lines "MARTIN Espada welcomed me with a slap" and "On my left cheek, he pulled my ear / & tossed me into the 'Academy of Poetry'" flow seamlessly without a pause or punctuation at the end of each line. This enjambment allows the actions of Martin Espada to unfold rapidly and forcefully, conveying the abruptness and intensity of the encounter.

Similarly, the line "where Gogol An ancient ape, the Peninsula's poet laureate" continues the description of the location without a pause, emphasizing the significance and authority of Gogol as a revered poetic figure. The enjambment here creates a sense of anticipation and curiosity, urging the reader to keep reading to discover more about Gogol and his role in the speaker's poetic education.

Rhetorical Stylistic Devices in *The Poet of Dust*

Rhetorical stylistic devices were deployed in the text as techniques used to enhance the impact and persuasiveness of the personas. Specifically, allusion is deployed by the poet to give reference to a person, event, or work of art from literature, history, mythology, or culture, in such a way that it draws upon the reader's existing knowledge.

Literary Allusion

Literary allusion is the intentional reference to a specific work of literature, author, or character within a new text, allowing the reader

to make connections and associations with the source material. Following are instances of the use of literary allusion by the poet:
I forget Borges & the half-written Borgesian story titled:
A Treatise on the Permissibility of Marriage Between
Mankind & Djinn (The Veiled Secret of the Kama Sutra or the Way *a Certain Poet interprets the Surrealist Manifesto at Night, Stanza 3)*

    In this excerpt, allusion is made to the Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges and his hypothetical half-written story titled *A Treatise on the Permissibility of Marriage Between Mankind & Djinn*. By alluding to Borges and his literary work, the poet employs an allusion to add depth and richness to the poem. Borges is widely regarded as a master of magical realism and is known for his intricate and imaginative stories that often blur the line between reality and fiction. In this context, the allusion to Borges and his hypothetical story serves to evoke a sense of mystical and fantastical possibilities. The concept of marriage between mankind and Djinn, supernatural beings from Arabian mythology, presents a union between different realms or dimensions. It symbolizes the merging or union of the human and divine, the tangible and the ethereal. The use of allusion also suggests that the poet is drawing inspiration from Borges' literary style and sensibilities, utilizing his evocative language and the interplay of reality and imagination. It adds a layer of intellectual and literary reference to the poem, inviting readers familiar with Borges' work to delve deeper into the themes of mysticism and the exploration of otherworldly possibilities.

Mystical Allusion
 A mystical allusion is the deliberate referencing of religious texts, sacred symbols, or mystical traditions in poetry or literature, imbuing the work with spiritual depth and inviting readers to access deeper levels of meaning and transcendence. This is illustrated in the stanza below:

ADONIS handed me the key to The Peninsula's treasury.
He spoke through many voices:
The voice of Mihyar of Damascus

The voice of sand and salt
The voice of the blood of Adonis
The voice of the interrupting sky (The Peninsula of Poets, stanza II)

The allusion to "ADONIS" refers to a figure from ancient Greek mythology, known for his beauty and connection to nature. Adonis is often associated with love, passion, and the cycles of life and death. By mentioning Adonis, the poet taps into the rich symbolism and archetypal significance associated with this mythical figure. The act of Adonis handing the poet "the key to The Peninsula's treasury" is a metaphorical gesture. The "treasury" symbolizes a hidden or sacred knowledge, perhaps representing spiritual wisdom or enlightenment. The poet being given the key implies access to this deeper understanding. The reference to "many voices" underscores the mystical nature of the experience. By evoking different voices, such as "The voice of Mihyar of Damascus," the poet suggests a connection to various ancient cultures, wisdom, and traditions. Mihyar of Damascus, a famous poet from the 5th century, is known for his romantic and mystical poetry, further emphasizing the mystical nature of the experience.

The mention of "the voice of sand and salt" alludes to the harsh and elemental nature of the desert. "Sand and salt" symbolise the arid and harsh conditions of the environment, suggesting a connection to the land and the raw, primal forces of nature. The voice of the blood of Adonis" is a reference to the myth of Adonis, where his blood is said to have fertilized the earth, giving rise to life and new growth. This allusion reinforces the cycle of life and death and underscores the transformative power of Adonis. Also, the mention of "the voice of the interrupting sky" further adds to the mysterious and transcendental quality of the experience. The sky, representing the vast and infinite, interrupts the earthly realm, suggesting a sacred or divine intervention, and further emphasizing the mystical nature of the encounter.

Vulgaris

The poet also uses vulgar, offensive, or derogatory language to express certain ideas or concepts, more like poetic alchemy, to

transform base and profane elements into something transcendent and meaningful. An instance of the use of vulgarism is shown below:

I love you like I love the goddess, secret heroine of this poem & the stupid bard who sat down in the 'Republic of Poets' to spit out a drunken poem about goddamn things & similes vomited by a motherfucking goddamn bard (Poetry in the Republic of Love or A Goddamn Poem about Goddamn things & Similes Vomited by a Motherfucking Goddamn Bard, Stanza 22)

The line "to spit out a drunken poem about goddamn things & similes vomited by a motherfucking goddamn bard" contains explicit vulgar words. The use of words like "goddamn," "spit," and "motherfucking" serves to convey a sense of frustration, intensity, and perhaps even disillusionment with traditional poetic conventions or the limitations of language itself. By incorporating vulgar language, the poet may be aiming to rupture the confines of polite language and engage with a more visceral and authentic expression of emotion or experience. This can, in turn, provide a stark contrast to the lofty and elevated language often associated with mystic poetry and challenge readers to confront the messy and less refined aspects of existence. The inclusion of vulgar language in this context also serves to break down barriers and create a sense of immediacy and intimacy. By using language that can be considered profane or taboo, the poet may seek to bridge the gap between the divine and the mundane, highlighting the inherent connections and shared experiences between the sacred and the profane.

Discussion of Findings

The Poet of Dust employs a variety of stylistic devices to convey its message, evoke spiritual experiences, and explore the mystical dimensions of human existence. The use of synonymy is notable in the text, as the poet utilises various synonyms to depict the distorted perception of poetry held by "bad poets." These synonyms create vivid and provocative images, emphasizing the negative and despairing associations commonly linked to their understanding of poetry. Moreover, the use of polysemy adds depth and richness to the poetic imagery, allowing for multiple interpretations and layers of

meaning. By employing polysemy, the poet highlights the poet's state of being, their connection to nature, and their role in the chaotic aspects of human existence, inviting multiple perspectives on their identity and role. Syntactic stylistic devices such as parallelism and enjambment contribute to the creation of a rhythmic and immersive experience. Through parallelism, the poet emphasizes certain ideas and creates a sense of pattern and emphasis, while enjambment helps to create a sense of flow, continuity, and fluidity, thereby contributing to the immersive and transformative nature of the poems. Rhetorical stylistic devices, like allusion, serve to amplify the persona's influence and convincing power. Incorporating literary references to personalities such as Borges and mystical references to figures like Adonis contributes to establishing a profound and intricate atmosphere. These allusions tap into the reader's existing understanding, encouraging them to explore profound layers of significance and transcendence within the text. Finally, the use of vulgarism serves as a form of poetic alchemy, transforming base and profane elements into something transcendent and meaningful. By incorporating explicit and vulgar language, the poet challenges traditional poetic conventions, aiming to create a sense of immediacy and intimacy, as well as bridge the gap between the divine and the mundane.

Conclusion

Through the skillful deployment of various stylistic techniques, Sidi crafts a rich tapestry of imagery and meaning, inviting readers to delve into the complexities of human existence and the enigmatic realm of poetic expression. The vivid and provocative images created through synonymy and polysemy serve to highlight the poet's exploration of the mystical dimensions of life, inviting readers to contemplate the profound implications of their existence and perception of the world. Furthermore, the strategic use of syntactic stylistic devices, including parallelism and enjambment, contributes to the immersive and transformative nature of the poems, creating a rhythmic and fluid experience for readers. These devices help to accentuate the thematic depth and emotional resonance embedded

within the text, reinforcing the interconnectedness between language, perception, and spiritual experiences. Lastly, the deployment of rhetorical stylistic devices, such as allusion and vulgarism, serves to expand the thematic and emotional scope of the poems, challenging traditional norms and inviting readers to confront the intersection between the divine and the profane. Overall, *The Poet of Dust* stands as a testament to the profound impact of stylistic devices in conveying deeper meanings, evoking spiritual experiences, and exploring the enigmatic dimensions of human existence through the medium of poetry.

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