






## ARTICLE

# Arabic Philosophy of Pleasure in Confronting Death: An Intertextuality Study of Pre-Islamic Poetry

Ahmad Talafha<sup>1</sup> , Tariq Mohammed Farghal<sup>2\*</sup> , Amer Al-Dourou<sup>1</sup> , Reem Maaitah<sup>1</sup> , Emran Rababa<sup>3</sup> 

<sup>1</sup>Department of Arabic Language and Literature, Al-Balqa Applied University, Amman 11134, Jordan

<sup>2</sup>Department of English Language and Translation, Amman Arab University, Amman 11134, Jordan

<sup>3</sup>Language Center, Yarmouk University, Irbid, Jordan

## ABSTRACT

The study examines the philosophical extrapolations of the perception of the pre-Islamic poets in resisting the nihilism of death as an existentialist crisis through a philosophy of pleasure despite the inevitability of immortality. The philosophy of pleasure is manifested in the poet's romanticist language, which expresses the depth of life's pleasures as an ultra-philosophical concept resonating with Epicurism. This study selects a sample of pre-Islamic poets who have adopted this form of philosophy as a lifestyle and attitude toward nothingness including Tarafa bin Al-Abd, Umru' Al-Qais, and Al-A'sha, among other prominent figures. By analyzing the poems qualitatively, the study categorizes thematic, symbolic, and stylistic features that show 'intuitive' philosophical depth including the imagery of wine, the romanticist image of women, and the life-affirming thrill for honor and risk-taking as essential to understanding life. These behaviors go beyond pleasure-based nihilism, but they rather reflect resisting life-affirming Epicurus's position toward death as an existential end as it was perceived in that era. The study highlights that the philosophical mind of the pre-Islamic poet is fundamentally existential as it intersects through recurring themes, consistency of usage of expressions, and patterning in discourse that these poets delve into notions of great significance to intertextuality studies addressing literary-philosophies of pleasure, intoxication, immortality, and the dichotomy of life and death.

**Keywords:** Philosophical; Pre-Islamic; Existential; Immortality; Tarafa; Epicurus; Death; Pleasure

### \*CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:

Tariq Mohammed Farghal, Department of English Language and Translation, Amman Arab University, Amman 11134, Jordan; Email: [t.farghal@aau.edu.jo](mailto:t.farghal@aau.edu.jo)

### ARTICLE INFO

Received: 30 November 2024 | Revised: 22 January 2025 | Accepted: 27 January 2025 | Published Online: 18 February 2025  
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v7i2.8241>

### CITATION

Talafha, A., Farghal, T.M., Al-Dourou, A., et al., 2025. Arabic Philosophy of Pleasure in Confronting Death: An Intertextuality Study of Pre-Islamic Poetry. *Forum for Linguistic Studies*. 7(2): 603–626. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v7i2.8241>

### COPYRIGHT

Copyright © 2025 by the author(s). Published by Bilingual Publishing Group. This is an open access article under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>).

# 1. Introduction

The Humans constantly pondering their immortal end is undoubtedly an inherent instinct created against the horrifying idea of nothingness. Despite Man loves life and the firing desire to preserve life turns necessary, death remains revolving around their existence causing fear within consciousness; fear of the unknown. This fear itself is an experience that chains the poet from overcoming themselves. The poet resists this existential feeling that constitutes their extinction through celebrating pleasure affirming the value of life as if stating Nietzsche's resisting expression "Happiness above everything". This fear of the unknown; of the nothingness sprouts this existential worry in the human psyche as it constantly reminds them of the nihilistic inevitable end of their own lives. The finitude of one's time is inescapable, forcing overwhelming tyrannical authority upon one's aspirations and hopes<sup>[1]</sup>.

The human mind since ancient times has reflected on the search for eternal life aiming helplessly to escape its demise. This search has been artistically structured in mythological tales through various forms and notions including resurrection, reincarnation, or eternal return as cultural and emotional nuances resisting the physical vanishing experience of death. This is mythologically intelligible in the quest of Gilgamesh for immortality as the demise of his rival companion Enkidu triggers in him the fear of the bitterness of loss and the horrifying unknown. This discourse in its literary-mythological make-up represents in totality a symbolic semiotic language that transcends human reactions to death as an oppressing entity<sup>[2]</sup>.

There has been much emphasis in literature, particularly poetry on the calamities of mortality causing desperation within the psychology of Man as it transitions from being a biological inevitability to a source of existential contemplation socially, spiritually, and even cosmically, highlighting the dichotomy of life and death. In Arabic pre-Islamic literature, death occupies a significant thematic role in addressing its nihilistic consequences on the human psyche such as Arabic poetic lamentations for loved ones, the power of time passing, and the agony of aging. This Arabic perception of death in poetry has even extended to mirroring the imagery of animals as reflective of Man's mortal inevitability and as a source of primitive conflicts, being in danger constantly, and their lives being as if a set of flashes and successions

within a limited time<sup>[3]</sup>.

In the beginning, the pre-Islamic poets were not philosophers in the strict sense as they did not craft a consistent theoretical framework in their poetry as it occurs in later stages in Arabic poetry. Their reflections seem 'intuitive' and related to the concept of wisdom based on their geo-political and social surroundings. However, this philosophical intuition was not void of depth and consistency, yet, it was not guided by theoretical extrapolation, as instead, it is more of a socio-existential framework. This depth is manifested in their reflections on conflicted emotions, artistic representations, and intense contemplations. Poetry reveals the essence of what is at stake in terms of morality, immortality, and existence as it crosses appearances to transcend the underlying thematic structure. It unfolds the hidden anxieties and implicit emotions within the human psyche reflecting on the complexity of existential thoughts, dream-like ideas and desires. From this perspective, the *Jahiliyya* poem stands as an artistic piece that delves into metaphysical-moral worlds experiencing the existential contradictions dominant at that time. The pre-Islamic poet insisted on pondering through their quest about the meaning of existence and the plurality of life and death through different beliefs and moralities<sup>[4]</sup>.

Overall, the literary experience in interpreting death is a creative endeavor that maintains its aesthetic existence across time as long as literature is adopted as a human experience. It might even be said that there is no literary figure who has not pondered on the fears of death as an unknown future experience during one's life. Thus, the study problem consists of understanding the existential anxieties lived within the pre-Islamic poet in relation to death, the nihilistic nature of existence, and the fear of being forgotten into oblivion. Although there has been much literary criticism around pre-Islamic poetry in terms of linguistic analysis, poetic interpretational discourse, and historical theories, there remains a scarcity in navigating the philosophical dimensions of this ancient unique Arab poetry and revealing whether philosophical foundations may exist in their artistic expressions. The limitation of studies of intertextuality on ancient Arabic literature narrows the perception of pre-Islamic poetry to the boundaries of its culture and language, while neglecting the fact that this type of Arabic genre may intertextualize in depth in terms of expressionist consistency and imagery forms with profound philosophical notions that go beyond its surface

poetic structure.

Even though literary works may belong to different contexts, the convergence is intelligible in certain lexicons, interpretations, and attitudes. By emphasizing this universal consciousness, the study also delves into the approach of parallelism and connects with it, justifying differences and similarities via modern literary philosophies such as the American School of Comparative Literature.

## 2. Literature Review

A number Although many studies<sup>[5, 6]</sup> examined pre-Islamic *Mu'allaqat* (i.e., the name means the *Hanging Poems*), Ghoneim<sup>[7]</sup> emphasizes modern Arabic literary criticism has subjectively highlighted the linguistic-literary superstructure of these 'eternal' poems. This incorporates examining the chronology of poetic representation within the poem, analysis of the linguistic style, and revealing the connection between vivid descriptions beginning with the image of a woman or a desert animal and ending with wisdom and attitude toward life or a real-life situation that the poet is addressing such as a tribal war, lamenting a friend or a cousin, or emphasizing pride and rivalry against a political issue. Differently, this study addresses a psychological-existential poetic model that employs literary coherent creativity within a single *Mu'allaqat* totalizing an exceptional positioning toward life and death that reveals intertextual philosophical concepts and universal multi-culturalism<sup>[8]</sup>.

Ancient critics<sup>[9-11]</sup>, especially during the Abbasid medieval era have vividly elaborated on these poems as they stand as a historical poetic reference and remain as an idol model in Arab culture. Their writings analyzed the linguistic make-up of a poem on the one hand in terms of language use, irregularities, Quranic-linguistic assimilation, and other features while also providing poetic verse-by-verse interpretations of each of these poems in detail including animalistic representations and introductory descriptions that may be obscuring or challenging to interpret to the Arab reader hundred years later. This style is attributed to the language use of Bedouin cultural, auditory, and psychological elements that constitute the register of the ancient Arabic discourse and the modes of the poet's imaginations and reflections. Therefore, it is not only the poems that remain idolized in literary work, but also the Arab medieval literary approach in

interpreting these poems stands as an esteemed direction of literary criticism for modern critics in the Arab world.

Differently, Braune<sup>[12]</sup> is one of the pioneer orientalist who stands as an unorthodox example as he explicitly expressed his astonishment at the profound philosophical endowments of Abid bin Abras's pre-Islamic poetry as in his Hanging Poem. He further questions with admiration how a poet living in the desert in the Arab peninsula acquires a philosophical compass that is comparable with 19th-century existentialist notions and ideas. Braune's approach is somehow distinct from the normative literary criticism among discourse of Arab critics back then in the 60s as it elevates the literary criticism of ancient literature from a localized linguistic and descriptive arena to a mode of philosophical intertextuality. This idolized adaptation is certainly beneficial and enriching linguistically, representationally, and at the level of interpretations; however, it also entraps critics into this historical direction without delving into existential intertextuality of this significant iconic work leading to limitations in interdisciplinary studies including comparative studies, psychology, and philosophy. Although there are several significant studies published in the Western world addressing the underlying structure of these poems intertextually and philosophically, there remain scarce studies in the Arab world that unveil the philosophical intertextual structure of the poet from an existential absurdist or nihilist/philosophical perspective.

It could be that the literary status quo is more oriented on analytical linguistic-literary thought over existential-literary interpretations or intertextuality or it is not a literary norm to presuppose that pre-Islamic poets cannot be intertextualized to philosophical interpretations such as found in philosophical fictions such as Kafka's *Metamorphosis*<sup>[13]</sup> or Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*<sup>[14]</sup>, or themes addressing suffering from the absurdity of existence as in the writings of Kierkegaard and Camus<sup>[15]</sup>. Traditionally, the pre-Islamic poet is collectively perceived as a symbol of ancient Arab heritage denoting personal experience through what is culturally and historically known as the "Arab wisdom" or reflecting concerns toward conflicts pertaining to status quo, tribalism, and political wars.

In fact, Qadri & Esa<sup>[16]</sup> pre-Islamic poets had engaged in depth far beyond instinctual feelings or the expression of populist wisdom void of philosophical inquiry, resulting

in perceiving the collective poetic intellect of this era as less complex compared to other ancient civilizations such as Greek tradition in Homeric epics or the Roman poetry of Virgil and Sophocles in which literature intersects with philosophical pillars. However, this study emphasizes that there are philosophical and psychological foundations of *Jahilliya* poetry. For instance, one of the most famous poets of Al-Mu'allaqat is Zuhair bin Abu Salma and he is known for his moral and existential reflections in his *Hanging* poem as shown in (1).

- The following versa is a sample showing how this poet transcends the nihilistic nature of death:

(1) *I've seen the Fates stomp like a camel blind:  
whoever they strike dies, who they miss grows  
old.*<sup>[17]</sup>

This perception of death can be interpreted as part of the populist Arabic wisdom back then; however, there are other instances from other poets that show a form of philosophical patterning. Here is Umru' Al-Qays, who is known for his romanticism and iconic risk-taking style, expressing nihilistic pessimism toward life as follows in (2):

(2) *O long night, will you not dispel to reveal  
the dawn?  
Though the dawning day will be no better for  
me!*

This feeling of nihilism or absurdity is intensified especially at the finalizing part of the poem as if the poet intends to conclude by affirming that existence is understood in totality by the form of absurdity and inevitability of death. Al-Asha as well, who is similar to Ibn Zuhair's style in wise pessimism and characterized by creative complex use of language, emphasizes the nihilism of all human life as expressed in (3):

(3) *That life, which I witnessed, has gone, And  
every life ends in oblivion.*

Alammar<sup>[18]</sup> further points out that it is unlikely that these recurring themes with their philosophical reflections are merely incidental or only belong to cultural collective wisdom shared by the ancient Arab society. Masarwah<sup>[19]</sup> emphasizes that these poets seem to appear more of an elite

intellectual minority who reflected based on available readings back then whether mythologically or semi-religiously or through contemplative ultra-experience residing in a linguistic-poetic higher intellectual class. Boutaren<sup>[20]</sup> indicates that these reflections comprise philosophical and metaphysical consensus that life is an existential puzzle manifesting death's absurdity and the unknown's nihilism. The recurring pattern of philosophical foundations may not indicate the adoption of some theoretical framework; however, the study argues that indicates the existence of unique philosophical understanding that is of great significance to the extent of philosophical intertextuality with a theoretical framework in logic, philosophy, and psychology providing explicit perception of death, resurrection, and origin.

This study specifically examines the existential implications of literary telepathy in the *Hanging Poem* of Tarafa bin Al-Abd. The study hypothesizes that Tarafa embodies the characteristics of an individual living an existential crisis—not merely of his conflict with his cousin or his exile from his tribe as explicated in the poem, but also from his failure to understand the mysterious totality of his own suffering and his struggle against the calamities of existence and the nihilism of human nature. Therefore, the study's significance relies on revealing the existential spectrum of the pre-Islamic poet's mind in terms of their attitude toward nihilism, pleasure, mortality, and immortality, consisting of a comprehensive understanding of their literary mirroring existentially and morally. The study also encourages to open more academic room to expand on intertextuality studies on ancient Arabic literature and motivate researchers to navigate its dimensions philosophically, existentially, and psychologically carrying the direction of Arabic literary criticism beyond the boundaries of analytical studies on culture and language. Therefore, the study expands on understanding the metaphysical and underlying horizons of the pre-Islamic poetry reflecting on what is meant rather than what is said following evidence of discursive consistency and specific respiratory of expressions and imageries. Based on this direction, the study addresses the following questions:

- (1) How do the poetic descriptions of death among pre-Islamic poets manifest their shared existential inner anxieties and their philosophical attitude toward mortality?
- (2) What is the nature of the impact of the imagery of

wine, sensuality, and chivalry in pre-Islamic poetry in reflecting both their dilemma and resistance against the status quo?

- (3) How does the interplay between pleasure as an Epicurus-like concept and their constant inquiry for immortality mold their thematic consistency in utilizing certain poetic expressions?

### 3. Methodology

This study examines a qualitative and analytical methodology underscoring the themes of mortality, pleasure, and immortality in pre-Islamic poetry. The methodology is formalized as follows:

#### (1) Textual Approach

- By selecting extracts from poems of pre-Islamic poetry called *Al-Mu'allaqat* with an additional focus on Tarafa's poetry, examining existential themes, philosophical mirroring on mortality, and the poet's interaction with the dichotomy of life and death.
- Close reading techniques are used to identify recurring imagery, metaphors, and thematic patterns related to death, pleasure, and immortality.
- Adopting reading techniques utilized to recognize recurring imageries, metaphors, and thematic patterns addressing death, pleasure, and immortality

#### (2) Contextual Examination

- The study examines the socio-cultural and historical context of the selected poems in the pre-Islamic Arabian Peninsula, revealing the impact of conflicts with societal norms, collective beliefs, and individual struggles on poets' perceptions.
- Applying philosophical frameworks and existential theories as interpretational tools analyzing poets' perceptions of immortality and existential suffering.

#### (3) Comparative Approach

- The study draws comparisons between Tarafa ibn al-'Abd and al-A'shā, focusing on their use of wine and sensual imagery as expressions of existential anxiety and their differing ap-

proaches to the interplay of pleasure and immortality.

- The study delves into comparisons among the poets of the *Hanging Poems* targeting the imagery's implementation of wine, sensuality, and chivalry as expressions of existential anxiety and the interplay between pleasure and immortality.

#### (4) Interdisciplinary Analysis

- Integrating insights from existential philosophy, ancient philosophy, Freudian psychology, and literary criticism based on an underlying understanding of existential navigation of the poets' creative works.

#### (5) Translation Approach

The study adopts various traditional and modern available references that contain human translations of some of the extracts selected in the paper. However, when there are no existing human-translated references to some of the other extracts, the study utilizes ChatGPT machine translation of poetic extracts as an effective form of rendering of a few selected in English in a conditioned fashion. By way of illustration, the study combines the AI output with post-editing expert translation of three certified translator academicians from the English Department at Amman Arab University that have ensured the accuracy of delivering the thematic message of the poem. As poetic translation is a highly-specialized form of rendering and requires literary expert effort, AI translation stands as a way out for researchers when especially edited intellectually and linguistically by human intervention. This rendering process of machine translation and post-editing is executed according to the following criteria:

Due to some limitation resources of human translations of ancient pre-Islamic poetry, the study opts for blended translation adoption of both existing human translation sources when available while utilizing ChatGPT machine when human-translated texts are not tenable. To ensure that the machine translation is faithful when rendering some of the poems' extracts, the study subjects its AI renderings to expert Jordanian translation scholars (who are affiliated with the English Department at Amman Arab University or translation figures the researchers are connected with in the academic community) by which the machine-translated poem is further

detected by post-machine editing. ChatGPT has proved to be an effective tool in supporting translators around the world in rendering special items including poetry as the platform is known for its interactive behavior and attentiveness to details, particularly incorporating for example outputs integrating style, literary vocabulary, or rhythm to poetry<sup>[21]</sup>. Since poetic translation is a specialized form of translation, the translation route is faithfully tracked linguistically and intellectually as follows:

- I. **Linguistic Accuracy:** Human translators opt to guarantee the faithfulness of the intended meaning excluding any linguistic distortion.
- II. **Literary Equivalence:** The researchers have provided ChatGPT with specific commands reinforcing the machine to provide the best output in terms of preserving stylistic, musical, and lexical aspects of the poem such as “*Please provide me with a literary translation of the following verses and make sure to pay attention to preserving the style, literary vocabulary, and rhythm of the poem. Please make sure the rendering is at best faithful based on the principles of literary translation of poetry*”.
- III. **Post-machine Editing:** This process is essential as the human expert translator post-checks any irregularities in the machine poetic renderings.

Through adopting a multi-faceted methodology, the study explores how pre-Islamic poetry functions as a medium for existential contemplation and artistic attitude toward pleasure and morality.

## 4. Discussion

### 4.1. The Mythological Perception of Mortality in Pre-Islamic Poetry

Religion has undoubtedly provided existential resolutions regarding what lies beyond death by asserting that death is not an end in itself, but rather a transitional stage for a form of eternal life governed by a higher power. This eternal life assures that Man is immortal; however, this immortality is contingent upon human morality determined by their deeds in earthly life. This ‘rewarding’ belief system before Islam is strongly held by previously monotheistic Jew and Christian Arab communities as well as by ancient followers of Abrahamic monotheism<sup>[22]</sup>.

Nonetheless, this belief was not fully ingrained or dominantly believed by the majority in the Arab peninsula as paganism was a widespread belief system. Yet, there remain instances of poetry expressing monotheism in that region. For instance, a well-known pre-Islamic poet Umayya bin Salt<sup>[23]</sup>.

He expressed aspects of his Abrahamic monotheism in extract (4):

(4) *All people will stand for judgment;  
The wretched will be tormented, and the righteous will be blessed.*

This perception asserts that there is accountability; however, human destiny is uncertain as he recites that one does not know if one can be happy or miserable. Umayya further emphasizes the concept of ‘Abrahamic’ immortality determined by the judgment of the Creator who is all-justice and good, as follows in (5):

(5) *The criminals, naked,  
Will be driven to chains and scourges,  
And they will cry, ‘Woe to us!’ in endless misery.  
They will not die to find relief,  
And they will all be scorched by the heat of the fire.  
But the pious will dwell in a home of truth,  
In a pleasant life beneath the shade,  
Where they will have all they desire,  
Of joys and perfection.*<sup>[23]</sup>

The poet links this mortal life to eternal immortality via divine justice emphasizing the concept of punishment and reward. Each individual is rewarded with an eternal blessing or an eternal torment.

Another example is Al-‘Alaf bin Shihab Al-Taymi who emphasizes his faith in the divine justice in which rewarding humanity is goodly evaluated. This notion conceptualizes the mythological philosophy of immortality affirming that every good or evil act eternally imprints fate on one’s life. In his perspective, immortality is not only a procession of existence, but rather an affirmation of divine justice in which every deed is fairly paid back. This perception is expressed in extract (6):

(6) *I witnessed the dispute on the day of  
Rafi'ah,  
And I took up the battle plan,  
Knowing that God will reward His servant  
On the Day of Judgment for the best of  
deeds*<sup>[24]</sup>.

Not only 'Abrahamic' monotheistic' poet asserted their belief in the divine ruling and eternal life, but also *Jahilliya* Jewish poets such as Al-Samaw'al who expresses his belief in the afterlife; yet he sheds doubts on the notion of divine rewarding, whether it is directed by divine grace or the accumulation of sins, he says the following verses in (7):

(7) *Will I be granted grace, or will I be held  
accountable  
For all my deeds when I am judged?  
Certainty came to me,  
That when I die and my bones decay, I will be  
resurrected.  
Will I then say, when my sin is forgiven,  
That I have been forbidden from doing wrong?  
Will it be by the grace of the Almighty,  
Or by the sin I have committed that I will be  
repaid?  
A little good is better than much bad,  
And only lawful earnings will benefit me.  
So may my sustenance be from lawful gains,  
And may my conscience be pure as long as I  
live*<sup>[25]</sup>.

This Jewish poet emphasizes truth in resurrection after death affirming belief in soul revival after annihilation of death. In his perception, the nature of immortality stays uncertain as to whether it is reliant upon the soul or the deed. Additionally, he pinpoints the significance of true morality as it is the true key to immortality. Therefore, his philosophy conceives eternal life form as strongly intricate with ethical values.

In addition to Abrahamic monotheists and Jews, there are also 'ancient Christians' known as 'Nasrani' in the pre-Islamic Syriac discourse who express similar belief systems in the afterlife and divine power. This includes Zuhair Bin Abi Salama who is historically speculated as Christian for his strong emphasis on life inevitabilities and extraordinary ni-

hilistic wisdom as mentioned previously. To Ibn Abi Salama, immortality is captured by the procession and successions of one's actions in life resulting in a set of consequences across time, as he recites in his *Hanging Poem* as in (8):

(8) *Don't keep from God what lies within your  
souls thinking you'll hide—  
God knows what's hidden low. Either it's de-  
layed, written down and stored for Judgment  
Day, or  
brought out and chastised*<sup>[17]</sup>.

Such verses clearly state that one's actions have moral consequences, intertextualizing with religious karma on the one hand while emphasizing the inevitability of the consequences of one's deed beyond the physical realm.

Furthermore, many other pre-Islamic Arabs believed in the immortality of the soul; however, they show no intelligible consistency of how this belief of immortality is shaped as they insistently lament the nihilism of the body compared to ancient monotheists. This includes Labid ibn Rabi'ah who asserts that nihilism of the body is like a shooting star that burns brightly for a while and then fades into ashes as seen in (9):

(9) *Man is like a shooting star, That turns to  
ashes after its bright blaze*<sup>[26]</sup>.

This section confirms that monotheism or semi-religious tendencies to believe in the divine power, afterlife, immortality of the soul, or the annihilation of the body are elements of belief systems that represent a class of poets belonging to pre-Islamic sub-communities that are distinct from other more dominant ones such as paganism which will be discussed in the following sections.

Other beliefs and stories exist about resurrection, the afterlife, and time. For instance, in some traditions, when a man dies, his mount (usually a horse or a camel) is left without water or food until it dies, believing that the deceased owner of the mount will need it in the afterlife on the Day of Resurrection. The poet Jareeb Ibn Ashim Al-Fuqasabi asks his son to leave him a mount to ride when he dies, as he says in extract (10):

(10) *Saad, if I perish, then I bequeath you, for*

*I am the closest of bequeathers: Do not leave your father stumbling behind them, exhausted, collapsing on his hands and knees. Tell me, what have you prepared for me of a mount that I may ride when they ride?*<sup>[24]</sup>

Here, the grave becomes a gateway for the soul toward eternity, in other words, this mount asserts the constant human desire for immortality as if the riding animal transcends the temporal and physical limitations to go beyond death.

It seems that these beliefs played a role to some extent in fulfilling community members of the pre-Islamic life with meaning and purpose, providing some metaphysical approach to understanding existence and the dichotomy of life and death. By giving hope that there is some form of compensation in the afterlife according to the moral condition of one's deeds in their lives.

Notwithstanding these various religious or semi-religious beliefs. Arabs back then were not committed to a unified doctrine that constituted a collective perception of eternity in the afterlife. In fact, the Jews, Christians, and Abrahamic believers did not amount to the majority; while paganism in its multiplicity was the dominant belief system within the pre-Islamic society. This indicates that there was an existential split in pre-Islamic thought between adopting a religious Abrahamic doctrine and adopting a nihilistic perception of existence. However, paganism was persistent in the ancient Arab though to the extent that the individual, especially the intellectual elite of poets, pondered intensively into the mysterious reality after death while emphasizing existential suffering through nihilistic expressions about the spiritual emptiness of Man's ending<sup>[27]</sup>.

The poet solely faces the notion of death without religious 'filtration', resulting in surrendering to the interpretation of life as an absurdity. This existential sentiment is intelligible in the *Hanging Poems* creating dilemma philosophically and existentially. Awkwardly, this dilemma might extend to the religious communities as if the whole Arab society at that time experienced a collective existential crisis with understanding and visualizing the concept of resurrection and the afterlife.

It has been agreed in the literature that the belief in the resurrection and afterlife is a shared principle across various cultures, embodying their innate strive to transcend the limitations of morality. However, there are other forms of

sub-beliefs of paganist perceptions that emphasize the nihilism of existence challenging ancient spiritual generalizations. Tomparlism is one of such dominant nihilist beliefs that denies the existence of a higher power, focusing on the materialist aspects of existence stating that the universe is governed by time. These are sometimes called 'followers of time' subjecting the notion of actions in the conceptualization of eternity as being 'timelessness' without holding into believing resurrection or the immortality of the soul or any spiritual explanations<sup>[24]</sup>.

This type of paganism belief is referenced in the Quran as follows: "And they say, *"There is not but our worldly life; we die and live, and nothing destroys us except time."* And they have of that no knowledge; they are only assuming"<sup>[23]</sup>.

Time in their perspective is neither crafted nor finite as they believe in the immortal sustainability of the materialistic world. Time is perceived as the movement of celestial bodies considering it as a governing force for the dynamics of the world. One of their sayings is Nothing destroys us except time, stating it as the ultimate cause of existence<sup>[28]</sup>.

➤ Hatim Al-Ta'i clearly states this concept as in (11):

(11) *Is time but today, or yesterday, or tomorrow?*

*Thus does time among us circulate, Returning to us a night after its day,*

*For we do not endure, nor does time exhaust*<sup>[29]</sup>.

The poet expresses time as an everlasting temporal movement transcending today, yesterday, and tomorrow in an eternal cycle, regardless of the concept of death, as everything perishes except time, which goes without an end.

Therefore, time is a significant element among Temporalists standing as a force determining their fates. Time was only abstractedly addressed among those poets, but it was also personified as if it were a celestial creature manipulating the destinies and calamities of Man. For them, time has this autonomous control passing, transitioning, and operating beyond human desire and will. For instance, Al-Salique visualizes the drastic changes in life between joys and misfortunes as the capriciousness of time as it behaves as a subjective entity governing the courses of people's lives as stated in (12):



(12) *Did you not see that time is like a changing entity,  
And that it is a fickle being that passes by,  
Bringing forth from us what is honorable after honor?*<sup>[30]</sup>

In the poet's perception, time acts like an autonomous active being moving beyond the authority of logic resulting in subjecting humans to prompt transitions between happiness and agony. This philosophy hints at the nihilistic determinism that Man endures against the inevitability of temporal non-neutral authority.

Amr Ibn Qami'a emphasizes the power of the illusion that time appears to be constantly available to humans; while the fact is time cannot be trusted for its manipulations and fluctuations, and can never adhere to our expectations of fulfilling desires and ambitions, as he recited the following verses in (13):

(13) *Think not that time will grant you perpetuity,  
Or that it will always remain for you, for it has not lasted for them*<sup>[31]</sup>.

➤ He further states as well in (14):

(14) *I have grown old, and all my near kin have left me and gone, and my soul has learnt truly the lesson that there is no abiding;  
Those I loved have departed and vanished from sight, and Time has left me not one of them from whom to seek support.  
O Time, enough hast thou done! be gentle with us: we are not rocks, we are not iron!*<sup>[31]</sup>

Furthermore, other iconic pre-Islamic poets such as Imru' Al-Qais warned his daughter against the capricious nature of time describing it as a cunning 'shapeshifting ghoul', disturbing people's lives and governing their fates. This metaphor is highly significant as it reflects the philosophical imagery of time as an unstable shapeshifting entity emphasizing its temporal transformations against the powerlessness and helplessness of human's anticipating and expectations, and beyond their idealistic control, as he says the following verses in (15):

(15) *Has it not saddened you that time is a ghoul...  
Deceitful in its covenant, devouring men?*

Here, the poet uses a rhetorical question intensifying the sentiments of grief in the reader/listener's mind as he says "Has it not saddened you?" yielding a philosophical invitation to ponder into the nihilistic nature of time. To the poet's imagination, time is exactly like a ghoul with mysterious and ambiguous power capable of destabilizing people's existence. The questions aim at emphasizing the feeling of powerlessness against time as previously emphasized by other contemporary poets and the belief that their fates cannot be escaped. Therefore, human life in essence is pre-determined in this temporalist pre-Islamic belief.

Also, addressing his 'existential awakening' from idealistic youth reality, in other words, his recognition of the deception of the 'temporal ghoul'. Uhayha Ibn Jalah joins his fellow poet Imru' Al-Qais in warning against the ghoul of time that feeds on its victims suddenly and unexpectedly, as he states in (16):

(16) *I awoke from youth, and time is a ghoul,  
And the soul of a person is a safe target.*

The so-called experience of 'awakening from youth' is intelligibly addressed as a vivid representation of the agonizing realization of the passing of time. As humans often live without temporal consciousness, they are shattered by the inevitability of time's authority as it leads toward nihilistic extinction manifested as death.

There is crucial usage of metaphorical expressions in pre-Islamic poetry that emphasize the harshness of time and condemn its sudden fluctuations utilizing various lexicons including time, the hand of fate, nights, ghoul, etc.). Even if some poets seem to believe in the creator and reward in the afterlife, they are found using similar metaphors indicating their influence by the philosophical belief in Temporalism (i.e., named as *Al-Dahriya* in Arabic). This does not necessarily mean they are strict believers of Temporalism; however, it asserts that they are immersed culturally in this common notion at that time.

Notably, this temporal-materialistic understanding is grounded on the denial of the afterlife; however, this understanding severely clashed with the rise of Islam in the

concept of eternity conditioned by one's moral deeds. Holy Quran severely mentioned this denial of the afterlife asserting its existence as a dominant belief among the pre-Islamic society.

Therefore, Islam amidst its rise faced the antagonism of this philosophical trend as it aimed to elevate the awareness about the cosmic truth of resurrection and that life cannot be all-materialistic in essence.

Shaddad bin Al-Asward clearly shows this nature of skeptic antagonism against this new Islamic truth of eternity, stating in (17):

(17) *The Messenger tells us that we will live, But what kind of life is that of echoes and phantoms?*<sup>[32]</sup>

This verse above raises a rhetorical question shedding doubts on the reality of this Islamic afterlife and questioning the nature of this existence after resurrection as being nothing more than 'echoes' and 'phantoms'. Certainly, this questioning by the poet indicates not total denial, but also more of a contemplative curiosity about the possibility of such a form of immortality, as this new belief triggered an existential shock to the community back then including Al-Asward.

Furthermore, Al-Aswad in this verse uses pre-Islamic mythical imagery of an ancient bird known as 'the phantom and the echo', which was believed to emerge from the head of a murdered person. This imagery signifies that the spirit of the slain cannot be in peace until it satisfies its desire for vengeance. This bird is a symbol of this Arab tribal desire to execute vengeance upon the executioner, searching helplessly for this retribution. However, it cannot determine the fate of the murderer nor seek justice in a life after death as the bird cannot transcend beyond this instinctual desire, or it stays in a state of agony crying 'Give me to drink from the blood of my killer'. Therefore, to the poet, it is a dilemma between believing in this recent Islamic belief of afterlife punishment as part of divine justice and committing to the normative ancient Arab belief that justice cannot be achieved unless the desire for 'an eye for an eye' is satisfied as an earthly punishment solacing the soul of the slain. This belief in tribal punishment instead of divine punishment is also mythologically represented via 'the phantom' that would constantly demand vengeance as in the case of the Dhu Al-Asbah Al-Adwani who warns his cousin Amr that no one

may take revenge on his behalf emphasizing that the 'blood demand' on his will and only his will emphasizing the poet's resilience and belief in the tribal ritual of punishment, as he states the following in (18):

(18) *O Amr, if you do not abandon my traits and my shortcomings, You will suffer when you say, "Spirit, give me to drink."*

This tribal punishment belief is in itself a characteristic of the temporalist belief that existence is guided by materialism since punishment cannot be perceived as metaphysical in their blood payback behavior. Spirit was also perceived as subjected to sensory experiences and cannot extend beyond the physical limitations of blood and air. Al-Mas'udi documented that Arabs in the *Jahilliya* believed that the self is blood and the spirit is the air a person breathes<sup>[33]</sup>, which constitutes an empirical attempt to narrow the concept of spirit to the materialistic reality through tangible senses. This empirical simplification waived the burden of inquiry about the mysteries of self and spirit by adopting naturalist sensory perceptions, simplifying some of the individual's existential concerns.

The supernatural-metaphysical aspects of resurrection and afterlife could not be conceived in the pre-Islamic individual's mind. For instance, the pre-Islamic mind could not grasp the spirit except through an empirical understanding of blood and air. By contrast in Islam, these aspects are essential to the process of converting and believing including the concept of spirit as it is considered a highly complex metaphysical divine mystery as mentioned in the Quran: "And they ask you, [O Muhammad], about the soul. Say, "The soul is of the affair of my Lord. And mankind have not been given of knowledge except a little."" [Quran, Surah Al-Isra: 85].<sup>[34]</sup>

When the divine revelation in Islam proclaimed belief in the existence of life after death, where people are resurrected in their bodies for reckoning and recompense, the stance of Abdullah ibn al-Zubair contradicts this vision. While Islam enhances the value of the afterlife and adds a metaphysical dimension to existence that transcends worldly life, ibn al-Zubair views the idea of resurrection as nothing more than a myth contradicting the material and finite reality of life and death, leading him to deny that eternal spiritual vision presented by Islam, as he states:

Other poets such as Abdullah ibn al-Zab'ari completely contradict this metaphysical dimension of reality as he states that it can be nothing more than a myth as it is paradoxical with the finite nature of the dichotomy of life and death, versing the following in (19):

(19) *Life, then death, then resurrection,  
Is but a tale of myths, O Um Amr.*<sup>[35]</sup>

This denial is further advocated by Abu Jahl's well-known statement to the Prophet Muhammad when he said: *"If what you say is true, then raise your grandfather, meaning Qusay ibn Kilab, so we may ask him about what happened and what happens after death."*<sup>[36]</sup> Similarly, the words of al-Hairth ibn Qays al-Sahmi emphasize this denial: *"Muhammad has deluded himself and his companions by promising them that they will live after death!... What destroys us is nothing but time and the passing of days and events."*<sup>[37]</sup>

Similar to the personification of a ghoul and the 'phantom' bird elaborated previously, Al-Afu Al-Audi personifies time as a fickle and changeable force destabilizing between decline and incline as night and day fluctuations. Therefore, each moment should be valued as nights can be sharp knives that constantly relinquish human strength and extinguish his fire, as he recites the following in (20):

(19) *The vicissitudes of time in their plates  
Are garments that rise and fall.  
While people are atop their heights,  
They fall into a pit from which they cannot escape.  
Indeed, the blessing of a people is a fleeting joy,  
And the life of a person is a borrowed garment.  
And the nights are sharp knives to strength,  
From their persistence, they take what is theirs,  
And just as they come upon him, they do not relent.  
Time has decreed upon us that it is  
A vanishing essence that does not attain us, but  
is tyrannical.  
The nights sever strength from him,  
And just as they come upon him, they do not relent.*<sup>[38]</sup>

Therefore, in temporalist terms, time is an inevitable

force that shows no mercy and no exception to human lives as the treachery of its grip is imposing and governing for all materialist eternity.

## 4.2. Moral Immortality in Confrontation with Mortality

Faith in the afterlife may control the pre-Islamic poet's anxiety toward death; however, it cannot eliminate the element of passion for life and material, not to mention the inner suffering from being non-existent at some certain time in their lives. Despite religious or semi-religious direction in believing in the afterlife, the existential confusion surrounding the poet's anxiety about death is pressing on their souls through moralizing immortality beyond the nihilism of the body as it is the path to be remembered for all times. Therefore, this form of 'metaphorical' immortality was achieved by having a strict faith in the noble acts of Man such as bravery, kindness to the poor, and risk-taking that admits their existence regardless of time.

Metaphorical-moral immortality is recognized by praise and remembrance post-death as their names remain in the tongues of others for their significant values and actions in their lifetime such as sacrifice, generosity, and helping the oppressed class which are commonly thematic issues of pre-Islamic poets. These acts turned into an intentional attitude for the poet to record their deeds and solve the nihilistic dilemma of reality by advocating immortal morality<sup>[39]</sup>.

An example of this metaphorical embodiment is the poet Hatim al-Tai who has been represented till this very day in the Arab culture as the ultimate symbol of generosity who made sure in his lifetime to invite people of different classes to his feasts and to the extent of ridiculous generosity. His acts are a testament to Arabs' keen interest in being 'remembered'; in other words, in being immortal morally in the hearts of people for thousands of years as a folkloric symbol. This is evident in the following verses in (21):

(21) *An accuser stood upon a hill to blame me,  
as if by giving my wealth I wrong her. Oh,  
accuser, generosity does not lead to my ruin,  
nor does the reproach of the stingy soul*<sup>[40]</sup>.

Al-Tai above emphasizes that immortality resides in the person's noble generosity as he counter-argues that generos-

ity does not lead to self-destruction, but rather asserts one's soul cheapness. He further affirms that the transcending link between mortality and immortality is one's moral actions and nothing else matters. Al-Tai confirms the Arab attitude toward moral remembrance of others; however, Al-Tai lived during the Islamic Abbasid Era though. Extending this moral obsession to pre-Islamic poetry, here is a verse documented belonging to that era in which the poet believes that true immortality is what moral reputation a person leaves behind transcending over time without the necessity for physical immortality defying oblivion as shown in (22):

(22) *So praise us, for the sake of your father,  
For our benevolence; indeed, praise is immor-  
tality.*

Another instance is Urwah bin al-Ward emphasizes a philosophical form of consciousness of temporal sovereignty urging Man to leave a footprint; a story to be remembered before it is too late, as he says in (23):

(23) *Leave me and my soul, Umm Hassan,  
for before long I may no longer possess my  
own decisions.  
Stories remain, yet the young man is not im-  
mortal,  
If he becomes a mere shadow upon the stones  
of his grave.*

Al-Barrak, another well-known pre-Islamic poet, also emphasizes the significance of one's glory as an immortal signifier in his tribal community as recited in (24):

(24) *And whoever dies dies excused, and for  
them  
Is the enduring praise if they lie beneath it.*

Tarfa, in his quest to transcend death, seeks to ensure his name is remembered posthumously through his ideals and high morals, which the hand of oblivion cannot reach. He expresses a deep existential vision that seeks to surpass corporeal mortality through moral immortality. He does not simply acknowledge the inevitability of death; he attempts to conquer it through the high ideals and ethics he perceives as the sole strength that transcends the hand of demise. He calls upon his niece to mourn him as he deserves, urging

remembrance of his values and principles, affirming that moral legacy is the only means to leave an enduring mark after departure, as he states:

While the revolutionist poet Tarafa who sought the immortality of his name transcended death through the nobility of his ideal, individualism, and exceptional atypical bravery. He visualizes an existential reality that aims to surpass social normative submission by transcending his individualistic morality into ultra-immortality. Instead of submitting to the fate of death, the poet conquers the inevitability of non-existence through a self-affirming ideal and a 'Higher Man'<sup>[41]</sup> self-visualization in risk-taking and individualistic courage as shown in (25):

(25) *So if I die, mourn me as I deserve,  
And tear your garment, O daughter of  
Ma'abed.  
Do not make me like a person whose concerns  
are not my concerns,  
Nor can my song or my spectacle suffice.*

Tarfa perceives human existence as a philosophical-moral reflection rather than a physical one. His main orientation is directed toward distinctive individuality that pursues the highest ordeals and ideals. This existential direction of this exceptional poet aligns with the pre-Islamic thought that death is not an end, but can be a continuation of the immortality of moral reputation. Through deeply understanding humanity's relation with time, Tarafa marks morality as a different existence that goes beyond the physical realm.

From different dimensions, such values as generosity, courage, aiding the oppressed, etc., embody a purposeful existential positioning for aesthetic survival, elevating the essence of the self<sup>[42]</sup>.

Honor is considered one of the major iconic values occupying pre-Islamic cultural morality reflecting the totality of the morale of bravery, pride, and generosity. The notion of honor was represented as a prerequisite characteristic of the individual's identity rather than a mere normative behavior. Many pre-Islamic poets recognized the significance of honor in contemplating literary-aesthetic morality. This is evident in the Hanging Poem of Amr ibn Kulthum who is well-known for chivalry and rebellion as expressed in (26):

(26) *She began to reproach me amidst the lawful,*

*Foolishly, the daughter of Thuwair ibn Hilal.  
She began to scold me when she saw  
My camels preyed upon for drink and fodder.  
Do not blame me, for I am a spender,  
All that my right and left hands hold.  
I am not, when I lavish wealth, joyful,  
And when I waste it, I do not care.  
Wealth depletes, so do not despair;  
When I charge my mare against the lawful  
tribe.  
And when I risk my life in battle day,  
And I strive upon my steed in conflict.  
And I rush with my sword against my enemies,  
In my array and equipment.*

Ibn Kulthum vividly describes this value of honoring, emphasizing pride in bravery and generosity. This is reflected in honoring the guest, helping the oppressed, and Arabian knighthood, which signifies the concept of honor in social relationships. To Ibn Kalthum, He transitions in these verses from the value of money and the loss of wealth to the state of nihilistic value only filled by the status perceived in the eye of others socially and morally.

Similarly, Al-Tai signifies honor in his poetry as being a moral attitude to life transcending beyond the transient societal system, stating in his verse the following in (27):

*(27) Oh accuser, generosity does not lead to  
my ruin,  
Nor does the reproach of the stingy soul.*

Al-Tai emphasizes generosity in these verses as a form of dignity, affirming that immortality is achieved by giving rather than by holding and hesitating, leading to oblivion. By intertwining honor with immortality, a generous person is always remembered for their deeds in their societies.

- Differently, Ibn Abi Sulma links the Arabic notion of honor with wisdom and guidance, versing the following in (28):

*(28) If you are to rebuke your friend in all mat-  
ters,  
You will not find the one who is beyond re-  
proach.*

This verse portrays the role of honor in human relationships as it is a social means to strengthen human empathy among people. In his philosophical wisdom, this concept is vital in instilling a special form of moral immortality that is ingrained in people's hearts across time.

By analyzing these examples, it is intelligible that pre-Islamic poets conceived this moral notion intrinsically in relevance to immortality. By elevating the morale of risk-taking and Arabian bravery, a person accomplishes aesthetic influence that is everlasting in the memories of future generations. In this sense, honor as an ultra-moral concept in ancient Arab culture stands as a bridge between the present and the future signifying the self-awareness of others' perceptions symbolically and socially. Therefore, honor transcending time and place marks a moral solution to encounter the surrounding materialistic nihilistic interpretation of the poets' reality back then.

#### 4.3. The Philosophy of Pleasure in Confronting Nihilism

This universal experience of pleasure in connection with the notions of death and suffering is thematically integrated within the literary discourse, highlighting its stem from existential struggles. Epicurus notes that pleasure should be moderated by discipline, transforming the concept of pleasure as a medium of consciousness that surpasses temporary self-satisfying behaviors. Meanwhile, poetry in Jaihilya is integrated with a mode of pessimism toward pain contextualized by the fear of the unknown and the absence of pain and love. By mirroring experiences from different cultures, these two perceptions carry dualisms, contradictions, and commonalities that constitute a part of the collective human awareness in history.

Like other members of their society, the pre-Islamic poet perceived life as a non-repeated experience leading to the invariable end of non-existence. Subject to temporal limitation, the poet seeks to resist this inevitability by emphasizing the immorality of the intellectual or aesthetic values left behind. By adopting a behavioral consistency following this philosophical spectrum, the poet faces death by elevating the purpose of life making their lives worth living and aesthetically connected to life. However, this aesthetic valuation is featured by a pleasure-oriented lifestyle that seeks romanticist enjoyment of life delights as a way

toward self-affirmation, bravery, and individuality. From this perspective, they were obsessed with both pleasure and death as the former constitutes one's indulgence in what is perceived as a creative intoxication that affirms the value of life while the latter is rendered by reflecting on death, its features, its inevitability, and confrontation with psychological pressure on one's existence. This nihilistic obsession incorporates vivid descriptions of the human decaying features including the image of gray hair and fatigued physique characterizing the nearby approach of death and the collision with the mortal end.

Being at crosswords as time passes colliding with their desires matches Freud's analysis of the human psyche that instincts toward life and death are intertwined and operating within human psychology<sup>[43]</sup>.

Freud has emphasized that instincts are correlated with Man's internal awareness destabilizing their tranquility and tension. From a different angle as well, the principle of pleasure according to Freud has a nihilistic form of tendency that can be constituted as one of the death instincts governing the tension interplay with the psychological operations of the human psyche. This principle is relevant to the concept of human suffering as it is formulated as a method of release of pain via the function of pleasure<sup>[44]</sup>.

Moreover, intertextuality incorporates understanding human psychology. By way of illustration, the literary-philosophical intertextuality between the Epicurean philosophy of pleasure and pre-Islamic poetry constitutes a telepathic form of existentialism within the scope of human experience. This study has coined this shared intellectual endeavor as intertextuality in the collective unconscious of human commonality. This notion mirrors the cross-culturalism of philosophical perceptions across various scholars. This 'commonality' indicates the universality of philosophy and literature transcending beyond time and place. These two extrapositions are perceived as parallel in responding to existential questioning regarding time, death, and the seek for glory or happiness. This collective unconscious of literary-philosophical knowledge of scholars across cultures may intersect with Carl Jung's concept of 'the collective mind' of societies.

This Freudian understanding is compatible with Bentham's utilitarianism in centralizing the role of pleasure in human nature saying: "Human nature has been placed under

the dominion of two masters" pain and pleasure".

Similarly, to the ancient Arab poet, the dichotomy of life and death is always in activation in which realization of this duality cannot be a mere determination, but can be surpassed aesthetically. Death is not just an end, but also stands as a source of activation for life even though death seems to claim a victory and life confronts a defeat. Poets back then emphasized that instead of drowning in mortal inevitability, human life should be guided by a principle of pleasure that recognizes hope, love, and the principle that happiness is embraced above everything. This feeling can be sensed in 'Amr ibn Kulthum in his Hanging Poem as expresses this dualistic feeling of the enthusiasm of pride and victorious individuality on the one hand, while asserting mortality as an escape-less reality of existence, as versed in the following extract in (29):

(29) *Get on up with your bowl, girl! Bring  
a drink and don't spare us from Andarīnā's  
wines,  
sparkling wines, as if dyed with saffron pale  
when they're mixed, our largesse can't be con-  
fined!*  
*It turns the lovestruck man from his lust after  
he's drunk, then back to calm constraint  
See the pinchfist? When the cup passes by he  
quickly holds his riches in disdain.*  
*The Fates will surely take us by surprise—  
they've been foretold for us, and we for  
them*<sup>[17]</sup>.

The poet here shows awareness of two extremes in which at the beginning, he celebrates the intoxicating extreme of wine and love, and then, ends by reflecting on the nihilism of the nature of death. This is evident in the awareness of this interplay between pleasure and suffering, thus, between life and death as coexisting for eternity.

This conception of pleasure was not a mere poetic expression, but rather a conscious reflection carrying systematic patterns across the Hanging Poems asserting the ancient need for psychological alternative reality that compensates the determinism of mortality. This philosophy resembles the insights of Epicureanism advocating the principle of pleasure as an escaping method from the conflicted pains of existence.

Furthermore, time is centralized as a nihilistic-

existentialist thought. Time, for example, according to Epicureanism is perceived as a natural course of the temporal cycle that requires philosophical accommodation and balancing. Time in pre-Islamic poetry, on the other side, is a trigger for existential questioning as it reminds the self of deprivation from its youth and future. This understanding is guided by sentimental awareness of the gravity of the loss of youth, especially moments associated with love and pleasure. These mirroring manifestations entice psychological suffering with the concept of time. This Epicurean intertextuality is utilized as a qualitative methodological aspect in analyzing pre-Islamic poetic extracts.

Epicureanism seeks psychological transcending by centralizing pleasure as a relief intellectually and emotionally from conflicts and sorrows. Therefore, pleasure stands in this philosophical extraposition as a response to human anxiety and as a surpassing approach to the notion of suffering. The study emphasizes that the pre-Islamic poet mirrors this Epicurean seek of pleasure recognizing the significance of physical pleasures including love, wine, and chivalry while facing the horror of existential nihilism. Ibn Kulthum further says in (30):

(30) *Enjoy life, for you are fleeting,  
From pleasures and beautiful women,  
From women with fair skin like porcelain, and  
bodies like statues,  
Their beauty is alluring, with radiant, charming eyes.*

The poet in the above verses does not only embody mere materialistic obsession of sensual pleasure, but rather advocates pleasure as a philosophical resolution to life suffering in the sense that pleasure in itself is an Epicurus-like concept that transcends beyond mortality and finitude of the nature of moment in life. The representations of wine, women, and beauty carry a deeper connotation relevant to resisting nihilism. This connotation revolves around oblivion when death conquers the characteristics of one's life psychologically or physically. However, this principle of pleasure is not strictly identical among the poets as each holds some level of biased understanding, there remain intertextual elements within the Hanging Poems that craft a pattern model reflecting on the philosophical attitude of pleasure drawing the poets close to each other. For instance, the representation

of wine is shared by Al-A'sha, Imru' Al-Qais, Tarafa, and Antara; yet, they differ in their utilization of poetic imagination and expression.

There are also sometimes common 'temporal' perspectives used by the poets reflecting on their conflicted pains. This temporal understanding is formulated by perceiving the future (which is the time of death) as the mysterious unknown, the past as a stored celestial moment in memory, and the present as the active engagement of the moment. This temporal divisional understanding remains echoing even in the modern mind<sup>[45, 46]</sup>; yet, their intake upon the present is obsessively affirming their resisting of death through a true life of pleasure as emphasized by Amr ibn Qays Al-Muradi in the following verses in (31):

(31) *Whenever my day comes, it will find me  
Sated with pleasure and fully satisfied.*

Qays ibn al-Khattim as well her using personification transcends similar sentiment by reciting the following in (32):

(32) *When death arrives, there will be no need  
for me,  
For I have already fulfilled my life's purpose.*

Therefore, ancient Arab poetry crafted its poetic language of this pleasure philosophy as each poet connotes their own suffering with an attitude toward the dichotomy of life and death.

There has been much emphasis in the literature on Tarafa's stance against death, especially as he is still representing a sample of the oldest period of early Arabic poetry. In his Mu'allafa, he imagines death as the separation from joy characterizing his own existential anxiety of death in his soul and maximizing emotional sensitivity on this nihilistic end. To him, the only remedy is pleasure to reach happiness in the present moment. By transitioning from worrying about the horrifying unknown of the future to creating a pleasure-based present, the study underscores the existential motives behind Taraf's pursuit of pleasure emphasizing his confrontation with the nihilism of Man through adopting an intoxicated form of lifestyle characterized by individuality, atypicality, and bravery.

Undoubtedly, Tarafa is a profound exemplification of

a pre-Islamic poet who was enriched with philosophical overshadowing and extrapolation through his endeavors and struggle against traditions and customs. It was passionately challenging for such a rebellious heart to be a conformist. Notwithstanding his young age, the sentiments he showed in his Hanging Poem remain to this very day exceptionally illuminating, reflecting the essence of life through his personal experience. His line of questioning throughout the poem is in itself a semiotic marker that requires keen judgment and deep conceptualization. By exploring the meaning of pleasure throughout this poet, the philosophical-cultural context of his verses reflects on his vision of grasping his individualistic fate, his escape from his society, and his pleasure activities in transcending the existential pain of life, as he explicitly states in the following in (33):

(33) *Thus, I persisted in pleasure, drink after drink, squandering all that I owned, acquired and inherited. Until the entire tribe shunned me and cast me out, like a tar-smeared manged camel*

*The dust-covered poor took me in when the dwellers of high tents turned their backs  
O you who blame me for diving into battle and pleasure, pray do tell, can you make me immortal?*

*If you cannot ward off my death then let me face it with all that I have.*

*If it weren't for three that make life worth living, on my life, I wouldn't have cared if I were to die now*

*One is my beating the nay-sayers to a drink of deep red that froths when mixed with water  
And one is my rushing to the aid of a distressed call like a wolf startled on its way to a water-hole*

*And one is my shortening a long rainy day, under the flaps of a high tent with my soft plump lover.*

*Her bracelets and anklets are as if strung on smooth and thick tree-stems*

*I am a generous man and I drink life to the fullest. You'll know when we die which of us dies thirsty.*<sup>[17]</sup>

Here, Tarafa carried a life free of restrictions. The question remains whether the pleasure exercised by Tarafa was a mere physical intoxication fulfilling his desires or was it philosophically oriented embodying thus Arabian *ubermensch* combining knighthood, non-conformist attitude in a heavily conformist-tribal society, and passion for the pleasures of life as a metaphysical *Dionysiac* behavior?

Pre-Islamic poetry unquestionably mirrors multi- intersectional aspects of human intellectual experience in resonance with other experiences lived by members of different cultures within the same contextualization of a similar notion such as pleasure. This perceptual resonance or 'existential telepathy' embodies the human universal quest to respond to existential questioning and emphasize their value of presence in this world, as there is a constant thing or creature that is immortal against temporal changes.

The ancient Arabic poets paradoxically indulge themselves in the momentary satisfaction of pleasure as the intoxication of wine and love while they persistently pursue a path to immortality symbolically, metaphorically, or even spiritually. As they struggle against physical annihilation, their poem constitutes a profound sample of philosophical discussions about the dichotomy of life and death as well as chivalry and honor, carrying various socio-psychological aspects of a culture resisting life calamities and obstacles.

These literary poetic reflections have aesthetic universalism that goes beyond the dominions of time and place as they fall within the human struggle between the spectrums of good and evil in an immortal philosophical battle. The existential weight of pre-Islamic poetry is triggered for being a mediative discourse that transcends intellectual relevance to world literature and is a literary significant source for familiarization with the human experience historically. These poems carry a series of consistent questions about the paradox of life and death, and the constant search for immortality, converging their reflections across various cultures. Therefore, this form of poetry stands as an inseparable component of the world's literary stage, showing the universalism of the literary-philosophical human experience in its aspects of intertextuality and parallelism.

This question is addressed by Taha Hussein in his literary reading of Tarafa saying: "Do not think that our fellow with his youth and freedom is idly wasting time drinking and entertaining women as a response to his feelings and being



subjugated by natural sensual inclination. If you think this of him, you are totally at a loss for what a person he is. He is not the kind of individual who looks for pleasure satisfaction, but rather a delicate pleasure that is triggered by thoughtfulness, philosophy, life query, and cautious judgment of surrounding events, crises, and consequences. His people might have perceived him in such indulgent status and waste, but he did not care nonetheless asserting his impersonal character to the collective mind of his society. Therefore, Tarafa's spirit approximates three forms of pleasure: wine, women, and manliness, which constitute his spiritual immortality through the aesthetic crystallization of pleasure."

#### 4.3.1. First: Wine

Poets frequently mirror their experiences through wine as pleasure-oriented imagery that sustains delight for them in the present moment nihilistically without future anxieties. In their perspective, wine is a path to happiness as it intensifies the delight of existence overcoming life disturbances. By transitioning drinkers to ultra-dimensional realms, the poet reaches the level of 'nihilistic' distraction that ends in relaxation and sufficiency from world challenges.

This intoxication to the poet is more than nihilistic behavior, but rather a formation of power and sublimation that supersedes the faculty of reason. One example of this 'Dionysiac' understanding of intoxication is Al-Munakhil al-Yashkari. He visualizes himself as magnificent as Al-Nu'man ibn Al-Mundhir, who is known as a sublime ruler in pre-Islamic Iraq and the founder of the Khawarnaq and Sudair<sup>[47]</sup> palaces. However, in his imagination, sobriety leads him back to inferiority embodied as a shepherd of camels and sheep. In this duality between psychological superiority and inferiority with respect to intoxication, he articulates the following in (34):

(34) *When drunk, I am the lord of Khawarnaq and Sudair;*

*When sober, I am the lord of a ewe and a camel.*<sup>[47]</sup>

Hassan ibn Thabit also captures the uplifting effect of wine, proclaiming:

Hassan bin Thabit also emphasizes a similar feeling of sublimation in the consumption of wine as in (35):

(35) *We drink it, and it makes us kings,  
Lions unfazed by confrontation.*<sup>[48]</sup>

By emphasizing the power of wine and the universal majestic feeling of drinkers, he positions himself in his intoxication as a figure of valor and a brave lion. To these ancient poets, wine transcends them to a reality that defies the mortality and limitations of the material world. The paradoxical sensation between the illusion and the strength in the consumption of wine also reveals the existential crisis endowed with the poet's mind toward the insoluble end of death and nothingness.

The intoxication philosophy was held by Tarafa as a source of creativity. Before his unfortunate execution, he perceives wine as the final straw of indulgence in a troubled sea with its oppressive surroundings<sup>[49]</sup>.

The wine thus turns as a metaphor for his anxieties embodying a shelter protecting him from class and tribal forms of oppression. From his majestic cup, a taste of both sorrow and delight flows as he describes characterizing his artistic genius in self-expression amidst hardships. The internalized relationship with wine constitutes his resistance to his exile from his tribe and both political and societal oppression. Tarafa as a consequence denounces publicly the surrounding injustice conceiving cruelty guided by the 'collective mind', as Jung iconized the term in his writings, similar to a sword piercing his heart as stated in (36):

(36) *The cruelty of kin is more biting and strikes deeper than a sharp Indian sword.*<sup>[17]</sup>

These surrounding tensions trigger his existential questioning by articulating his masterpiece; his hanging poem standing as his immortal hallmark. His Mu'allaha reveals a profound existence between the pleasures of intoxication and the struggle against the inevitability of solitude and mortality, as he verses the following in (37):

(37) *Thus, I persisted in pleasure, drink after drink, squandering all that I owned, acquired and inherited*

*Until the entire tribe shunned me and cast me out, like a tar-smeared manged camel.*<sup>[17]</sup>

These verses depict Man's pursuit of joys as in wine

and lavishing escaping in a nihilistic mindset the finiteness of life. This paradoxical behavior duplicates in isolation. The poet describes his alienation as that of a marked camel exiled from the herd, characterizing the existential aspect of his poetry. He addresses the clash between the quest for romanticist immortality felt through the pleasures of the wine and the determinism of psychological and societal mortality.

#### 4.3.2. Second: Women

As love is an essential human instinct, it emerged as a prevalent theme in pre-Islamic poetry through the adoption of the image of ghazal in the genre of amatory poetry as well as *nasib* through amatory preludes. Ancient poets understood women through two distinctive perspectives. One is as a symbolic figure highlighting the poet's reaction to reality. Through employing creative strategies to conceal their social or spiritual commentary, they utilized amorous imagery as a literary device. In another perspective, the poet is genuinely attracted by the woman's beauty expressing his true romanticism whether idealistically or physically.

As they celebrated their passion toward women with a combination of full-detailed imagery and imagination impacted by their cultural and environmental factors. Tarafa blends his reflections on women with his pathos as being in the standing-by-ruins trope. Women mentioned like Khawla, Har, Layla, Hind, Salma, and Rabab are symbolized as vibrant modes of energy, security, and solace in a challenging world. Moreover, the contemplation of ruined abodes, which stands as the iconic hallmark of what is called *atalal* poetry. By turning the image of these ruins as a meditative act, the poet emphasizes the psychological contrast between the bliss of the past with the surroundings of a desolate depressing present. This introspection goes beyond the image as an image in itself as it extends to resonate the poet's reflections on self and society.

Tarafa's focus on the representation of women emphasizes their significance in conveying beauty and stability as opposed to the nature of suffering in existence. His verses portray their physical aura and emotional support. He further mentions Har and Maawi by blending for their names with longing-emphasized themes, versing the following in (38):

(38) *Are you sober today, or do Har's memories ignite you?  
For love has a madness that consumes the*

*heart.*

*Do not let love for Maawi destroy you,  
For such passion is not free.*

These verses address his troubled emotions conflicting between intoxicating love and liberation from its addictive grip. However, his yearning stays inevitable overpowering the crashing conflicts. Even in the absence of women, the representation of the beloved insists reaching over mountains and valleys as mirrored in his gratitude to Salma:

(39) *From Salma, a vision rose, despite the  
barrier  
Of the black hill and its sprawling slopes.*

Women in Tarafa's imagination represent an exalted place adopting figures of lovers, singers, and idols of beauty. His verses dwell on emotional details as in depicting the lover's shining face to visualizing her body to the rolling sands of the desert, as expressed in the following in (40):

(40) *As if the sun has let down its robes upon  
her face, unblemished and washed in light.<sup>[17]</sup>*

Tarafa as well contemplates Salma's body similar to the vastness of the desert, her laughter to flowers' blooming, and her saliva to a beautiful spring. These descriptions address the essence of her beauty and the poet's extreme passion for her. He creates in his verses an interplay of sensory imagery sensually integrating emotions with thematic universalism of both love and desire. He further says in (41):

(41) *When she rises, a fierce storm stirs,  
Swaying from the summit of an eroded dune.*

He speaks of his beloved's mouth and her clear saliva—when she smiles, her dazzling white teeth are revealed, and her pure, sweet nectar never runs dry.

Speaking of his lover's mouth and her beautiful saliva in smiling along with her astonishing teeth in their revealing, the poet goes into tiny details of this form of beauty emphasizing the purity and sweetness of nectar that never runs dry in her beautiful mouth as described in (42):

(42) *She laughs, revealing petals of daisies,  
Glistening as if watered by a heavy, generous*

sky.

*Her saliva, a pure essence,*

*Blended with crystal-clear water.*

He keeps being mesmerized by this sweetness as a nectar to musk blended with refreshing sacred water as in (43):

(43) *When she laughs, she reveals droplets,*

*Like musk blended with delicate water.*

He further expands on describing the teeth as hail in their whiteness and beauty, as he says in (44):

(44) *The sun replaced their origin,*

*With polished, white ice—gleaming and bright.*

What triggers his captivating longing is her glance, as he perceives her eyes like a young camel's being big and dark with extreme whiteness, and for her cheeks, he sees the embodiment of a tender gazelle shining her youth and aura as in (45):

(45) *She steals a glance with eyes like a calf's,*

*And cheeks soft as a young gazelle's.*

He searches for transcending the maximum sensation of pleasure as in entering a state of frenzy ecstasy. In the transcendentalist perception of the physical details of her beauty, every feature is a form of pleasure as highlighted numerous by Frued. Tarafa goes in building this interplay the pleasure of both wine and woman elevating ecstasy of happiness and frenzy-like drowning in her love as he describes fine wine blended with water's coolness as in (46):

(46) *From her, he savors at times,*

*The pure essence of wine mixed with refreshing  
delight.*

To him, the perfection in women is embodied in fullness and feeling of grandeur marking her body beauty as he says in (47):

(47) *She approaches, grand and imposing,*

*With a stature commanding, resplendent in  
might.*

His intense descriptions magnify her beauty as if they are similar to white clouds as in (48):

(48) *Like cloud-daughters swaying gently,*

*As summer nurtures tender green shoots.*

Tarafa confronts his challenging reality by having a passion for music and poetry, revealing its forms of pleasure. By describing the female singer, he emphasizes the joy in her voice and brilliant performance. Her song resonates with the agonizing cries of camels lamenting a lost calf as described in (49):

(49) *When she echoes in her voice, you imagine*

*The reply of a mother camel grieving on desolate plains.*

Tarafa perceives the woman as a source of comfort and pleasure as one finds happiness in her presence while suffering in her absence. He continues mirroring his heartache upon the departure of his beloved one while this absence resembles the absence of reason as if going into insanity as emphasized in (50):

(50) *He perished, longing for her, Merqash did,*

*And I, entangled by Salma, evade the turmoil.*

(51) *Who visits me tonight, or who shares my  
grief?*

*Sleepless, my heart wounded, aching deep.*

*She left, and his heart wandered,*

*Consumed by love's unrest—no relief.*

(52) *In a reckless rush of longing,*

*The first caravan departing like swift gazelles.*

(53) *Proudly adorned with brilliant hues,*

*From exotic tapestries, like a sacrificial dye.*

This rich depiction of women has contemplative aspects revealing the poet's consciousness of the perfection of her beauty. He looks to capture the poetic sense that extends to capture the splendid of her beauty delving into the romanticist imagery as a compensatory path of the horrors of the nihilism of the inevitability of death. This perception aspires to reach an idealist romanticist balance between pleasure

and pain in which a purpose is elevated toward sensing genuine love for life and existence despite the nature of nihilism imposed upon Man.

Overall, pre-Islamic poetry turns into a valuable literary discourse that underscores the poet's search in their existential inquiries about the dichotomy of life and death as well as love and loss. The intricacies between the aesthetic micro and macro levels of this poetry are a sample of human's concern about the meaning of existence.

### 4.3.3. Third: Chivalry

Tarafa reflects on death aspiring to achieve immortality of his remembrance and actions emphasizing lofty morals that transcend beyond the nihilistic power of oblivion in existence as represented in (54):

(54) *If I die, eulogize me as I deserve,  
And tear your garment for me, O daughter of  
Ma'bad!  
Do not liken me to a man whose concerns  
Are unlike mine, nor whose deeds or presence  
equal mine.*

He calls his niece to be supportive and asks him to mourn his death with a reverent funeral and profound respectful grief. He further expresses his pride in this antagonism with his relative that he should not be perceived as the same as someone who does not adhere to lofty values and ideals. The poet thus underscores his commitment to his moral philosophical principles that constitutes his non-physical immortality. By delving into his own existential consciousness, he exemplifies the duality of life and death constituting the individualistic philosophy of pre-Islamic intellectual reality.

From a different perspective, this attitude embodies the sensation of the poet's pride and feeling of grandeur of the self against accusations that appear to trigger his ego, intensifying the significance of the notion of value within the poet's mind.

Tarafa's consciousness constitutes the sacredness of individuality in facilitating a path that is unprecedented and creative possibilities that challenge the status quo of society and potential dangers. However, the power of the self proceeds to reach the full sensation of self-worth and confidence in the poet's psyche, placing himself as a leader distinguished by shaping the characteristics of the 'Higher

Man', as iconized by Ibn Arabi in his writings<sup>[50]</sup>, who follow pursuits despite dangers and endeavors as shown in (55):

(55) *And steeds, whose reins the jinn did sound,  
From time eternal, before this generation;  
I have seated myself in a mighty steed,  
Untamed, unflinching, free of defect or strain;  
Leading ahead of a noble tribe, predecessors  
Unbroken, unfaltering, of generous aid;  
Aristocrats of endeavor, from noble lineage,  
Forsaking this world, striving for the beyond.*

Here as well is another instance in which Tarafa expresses the elevating sensation of being granted an immortal legacy in his struggle and through chivalrous bravery to achieve greatness across all times.

Epicureanism addresses the search for pleasure as a mediative path to find inner peace and happiness. Pleasure in this philosophy is not perceived as a form of extravagance and degradation, but rather as a life formula to liberate the self from the struggles of pain and mind, reaching stoic tranquility so-called *ataraxia* as the ultimate state of pleasure-based peace. Similarly, pre-Islamic poetry (Jahili) emphasizes the poet's desire for a liberating life freed from existential concern. Their way of facing struggles is by exercising the notion of pleasure with nobility and creativity rather than with inferiority. This sublime notion of pleasure is shared in the same fashion consistently in its philosophical or literary extraposition. Yet, the Epicurean practice of pleasure is always balanced by moderation and a balanced attitude. Pre-Islamic poetry interestingly advocates pleasure as a form of power; however, they also have this metaphysical belief of the creative power of intoxication as an essential element of the liberated individual as in the case with Tarafa, or as a rebellious person antagonizing political oppression such as Umr bin Kalthum. Therefore, the concept of pleasure among ancient Arabs has the shape of dualism in terms of being motivating power for bravery and nobility, but it can also be mitigated as a form of exercising intoxicated creativity similar to the ancient Greek philosophy of Bacchus embodied in the Dionysiac's frenzy mind. This ancient philosophy of frenzy mind intersects with Arab's tendency for individuality, rebellion, and poetic creativity.

Epicureanism perceives death as a life's obligation, emphasizing that death should not be a source of anxiety as it is

an inevitability. Mortality should be accepted with peace and sublimation. This is integrated into the philosophy of a “four-part cure” known as tetrapharmakos as in “Don’t fear the gods. Don’t worry about death. What is good is easy to get, and what is terrible is easy to endure”. This understanding; however, may contradict ancient Arabic poetry as the poet in various extracts shows signs of existential anxiety toward death, the afterlife, and the fear of the unknown despite some of their chivalrous resisting practices.

When delving into Greek Epicureanism and Arabic pre-Islamic poetry, the study further emphasizes a universal relevance to contemporary post-modern life as in the case of Tarafa’s poetry discussed earlier. For example, the persistent tension between life’s joys and death’s horrors as well as the extravagances of pleasure vs. the pursuit of moderation and behavioral balancing is crucial to the human experience and life conditions. The integration of two paths in which pleasure is either balanced or intoxicated resonates with the concept of pleasure with the modern Man today.

By way of illustration, modern individuals confront similar obstacles with even an additional level of sophistication as in the case of modern and post-modern schools including existentialism spreading around the world, highlighting human liberty, and individualism as a medium to grant happiness. On the other hand, modernism introduces the socialist reality of collective happiness through social questioning and social contributions, introducing systems of utilitarianism as a path to meaning and pleasure.

The resonations between Epicureanism and ancient Arabic poetry are not granted direct forms of intertextuality in some limited sense. However, profoundly, they both originate from a state of aesthetic-literary commonality in confronting existence in its struggles and changes. The existential parallelism between the two discourses sheds light on the colossal axes of human life such as life and death duality as well as issues of the pursuit of happiness and meaning. As a result, they provide valuable insights for a more profound aesthetic understanding of human experiences reflecting on philosophical or literary extrapolations that transcend the limitations of their culture, history, time, and place.

## 5. Study Findings

The existential anxiety due to the inevitability of death reveals itself as a major theme in Tarafa’s and al-A’sha’s

poetry mirroring a deep consciousness of the detachment from life’s pleasures and joys. This form of anxiety determines their poetic expressions constituting a rich resource of existential thought and psychological reflection. Therefore, pre-Islamic poetry is perceived as a mirror of human suffering with mortality, constituting a vivid respiratory of creativity and noble morality.

The following points make the main findings of the study elaborated in detail in the discussion:

- The study has revealed the pre-Islamic poet’s death as a horrifying deprivation of life’s pleasures emphasizing an underlying existential anxiety ingrained in their minds and constituted their contemplation.
- The study also has delved into understanding the imagery of wine as a meditative expression of underlying conflict as well as a means of resisting social limitation while mirroring paradoxically the collective mind of the poet’s surrounding era.
- Moreover, the study has shown how Tarafa’s intoxicating philosophy can be mirrored similarly in Al-A’sha poetry from the angle of sensuality emphasizing indulgence in passion for love under the umbrella of the duality of pleasure and pain highlighting existential struggle.
- The study further underscores the interplay philosophy between pleasure and aspiration for immortality consistently in their thematic extrapolation as the poet attempts to extend his self beyond the limits of time and death artistically.
- The study concludes that pre-Islamic poetry serves as a philosophical foundation for contemplating the meanings of emotion and art in Arab culture, standing as a form of existential collision with the dualities of existence including life and death, pleasure and pain, permanence and impermanence.

## 6. Conclusions

This study has revealed that the existential dilemma of the nihilistic nature of death is endowed deeply as a fundamental theme in pre-Islamic poetry religiously, mythologically, and socially. The works of prominent pre-Islamic poets including Tarafa and Al-A’sha mirror a profound consciousness of mortality and death that extends beyond spontaneous

folkloric wisdom constituting a medium for philosophical contemplation. The study highlights the philosophical compass of the interplay between pleasure and the existential drive for immortality as a recurring theme attempting to transcend the inevitability of death through art. This philosophical behavior is signified through meditative poetic vivid representations including wine's intoxication, the woman's beauty, and the act of chivalry as shown in Tarafa's poetry chosen as a major psychological sample of pre-Islamic imagery. The study has found that these representations are channeling metaphoric images for signaling resistance and internal spiritual struggle to the collective mind of their societies touching the hedonistic pleasures hidden within people's hearts. By analyzing the poetic extracts qualitatively and categorizing them thematically, the study provides insights into philosophical intertextuality that include Epicurus's pleasure-based philosophy, intoxication Dionysiac-like philosophy, and existential 19th century philosophies manifested in the cultural and intellectual repository of the artistic human experience of pre-Islamic Arab poets.

## Author Contributions

Conceptualization, T.M.F., R.M. and A.T.; methodology, T.M.F., R.M., A.A.-D. and A.T.; validation, R.M., T.M.F., A.A.-D. and A.T.; writing—original draft preparation, T.M.F.; writing—review and editing, R.M., E.R., A.A.-D. and A.T.; supervision A.T.; funding acquisition, T.M.F., R.M., E.R., A.A.-D. and A.T. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

## Funding

This work received no external funding.

## Institutional Review Board Statement

Not applicable.

## Informed Consent Statement

All translator participants of the study were informed about the research purpose and reserve their right to withdraw at any time as their participation is voluntary. Verbal consent was granted as the contexts of translation evaluation

was conducted through informal academic discussion and post-machine editing notes were taken from them manually.

## Data Availability Statement

We agree to share research data.

## Acknowledgments

The authors declare that generative AI or AI-assisted technologies were not used in any way to prepare, write, or complete this manuscript.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

## References

- [1] Ibrāhīm, Z., 1967. *Mushkilat al-insān*. Maktabat Miṣr: Cairo, Egypt, pp. 1-220
- [2] Villiers, G.D., 2020. Suffering in the epic of Gilgamesh. *Old Testament Essays*. 33(3), 690-705. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17159/2312-3621/2020/v33n3a19>
- [3] Kaaelkef, S., 2024. The dialectic of life and death in animal stories in ancient Arabic poetry: The semantic dimensions and the forms of presence in the image of the Wild Bull. *Emir Abdelkader University for Islamic Sciences - Faculty of Fundamentals of Religion*. 28(1), 706-721.
- [4] Al-Hazaimah, F., Al Zou'bi, B., 2020. Dualism of death and life in pre-Islamic poetry: Applied study. *International Journal of Literature, Language and Linguistics*. 3(1), 1-11.
- [5] Hussein, Z.K., 2021. The plastic structure in the lyrical introduction to pre-Islamic poetry "The hanging Tarfa bin Al-Abd as a model". *Al-Academy*. 101, 85-98. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.35560/jcofarts101/85-98>
- [6] Stetkevych, S.P., 1983. Structuralist interpretations of pre-Islamic poetry: Critique and new directions. *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*. 42(2), 85-107. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1086/373000>
- [7] Ghoneim, H., 2020. Crisis Poetry and the Crisis of Arabic Criticism. *The International Journal of Critical Cultural Studies*. 18(1), p.57. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18848/2327-0055/CGP/v18i01/57-69>
- [8] Abu-Deeb, K., 1975. Towards a Structural Analysis of Pre-Islamic Poetry. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. 6(2), 148-184. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020743800024491>

- [9] Qutayba, I., 1902. Aqsaam Al-Shi'r [Categories of Poetry]. In: de Goeje, M. J. (ed.). *Kitab al-shi'r wa-'l-shu'ara'* [The Book of Poetry and Poets], 2nd ed. Dar Sader: Amsterdam, Netherlands, pp. 1-591.
- [10] Al-Zyod, R., 2024. A contemporary analysis of Al-jahiz's communication theory and philosophy of language. *Information Sciences Letters: An International Journal*. 13(2), 395-414. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.18576/isl/130217>
- [11] Schoeler, G., 2010. The Genres of Classical Arabic Poetry Classifications of Poetic Themes and Poems by Pre-Modern Critics and Redactors of Dīwāns. *Quaderni di Studi Arabi. Nuova Serie*, 5/6, 1-48.
- [12] Braune, W., 1963. Existentialism in pre-Islamic poetry. *Al-Ma'rifah Magazine (Syria)*. 4, 157-161.
- [13] Uddin, M.J., 2023. Exploring the depths of modern life as reflected in Franz Kafka's the metamorphosis. *IUBAT Review*. 6(2),131-157. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3329/iubatr.v6i2.71313>
- [14] Lena, O.I.I., Udeh, B.J., 2017. Blending philosophy and literature: A study of nihilism and utilitarianism in Fyodor Dostoevsky's crime and punishment. *Ansu Journal of Language and Literary Studies*. 1(3).
- [15] Berthold, D., 2013. Kierkegaard and Camus: either/or? *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion*. 73, 137-150. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11153-013-9400-y>
- [16] Qadri, M. B., Esa, A. K. 2024. Political systemic awareness: A reading in the Mu'allaaqat of Zuhair bin Abi Salma and Tarfa bin Al-Abd. *Ansaq*. 8(1), 89-114. <https://doi.org/10.29117/Ansaq.2024.0199>
- [17] King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture (Ithra). (2020). *Al-Mu'allaaqat for the Millennial Generation* (1st ed.). King Fahad National Library: Gharb Al Dharan, Saudi Arabia, pp. 1-267. ISBN: 978-603-03-6392-6.
- [18] Alammar, F.M., 2020. The concept of wisdom in the Arab-Islamic traditions. In: Intezari, A., Spiller, C., Yang, S.Y. (eds.). *Practical Wisdom, Leadership and Culture*. Routledge: England, UK. pp. 178-188.
- [19] Masarwah, N., 2013. Religious Beliefs in PreIslamic Poetry. *Sociology Study*. 3(7), 531-542.
- [20] Boutaren, K., 2024. The first Stages of development of pre-Islamic poetry and its main focus. *El-Wahat Journal for Research and Studies*. 17(1), 877-889.
- [21] Wang, S., Wong, D.F., Yao, J., et al., 2024. What is the Best Way for ChatGPT to Translate Poetry? Available from: <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2406.03450> (cited 5 June 2024).
- [22] van Bladel, K., 2009. *The Arabic Hermes: From Pagan Sage to Prophet of Science*. Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK. pp. 190-191.
- [23] Al-Jubayli, S., 1998. *Diwan of Umayya ibn Abi al-Salt*, 1st ed. Dar Sader: Beirut, Lebanon. p. 11.
- [24] Shahrastani, A.M., ibn A.A.K., 2023. *Al-Milal wa al-Nihal* [Book of Religious and Philosophical Sects]. A. Fahmi Mohammed. Dar Al-Kotob Al-Ilmiyah. 3, pp. 89-651.
- [25] As-Samad, W., 1996. *Diwan of Al-Samawal*. Dar al-Jabal for Publishing and Distribution: Beirut, Lebanon. pp. 84-86.
- [26] Abbās, I., 1962. Ruyy al-'Ayn [The Eye's Tear]. In: Sharh Dīwān Labīd ibn Rabī'a al-'Āmirī [Commentary on the Poetry of Labīd ibn Rabī'a al-'Āmirī], Ihsān Abbās (ed.), 1st ed. Kuwait: Ministry of Guidance and News, p. 168.
- [27] Ali, J., 1968. Al-Zandaqa [Heresy]. In: *Al-Mufasssal fi Tarikh al-Arab Qabla al-Islam* [The Detailed History of the Arabs Before Islam], Dar al-Ilm lil-Malayin: Beirut, Lebanon, pp. 6, 148.
- [28] Taqqūsh, M. S., 2009. *Tārīkh al-'Arab qabla al-Islām*, 1st ed. Dar An-Nafaes: Beirut, Lebanon. p. 260.
- [29] Al-Ta'yi. H., 2002. *Diwan Haatm Al-Ta'y*, 3rd ed. Dar al kotob al ilmiyah: Beirut, Lebanon. p. 13.
- [30] Thuwaini, H. A., Odeh, K. S., 1984. *Diwan Al-Salik ibn Al-Salika*, 1st ed. Al-Ani Press: Baghdad, Iraq. p. 45
- [31] Amr, son of Qamt'ah. 1919. The poems of 'Amr son of Qamtah of the clan of Qais son of Tha'labah, a branch of the tribe of Bakr son of Wa'il. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, England. p. 64
- [32] Ibn Hisham, 1995. Ritha' man usiba min Quraysh yawma Badr [Eulogy for Those Who Were Lost from Quraysh on the Day of Badr]. In: M. Fathi Al-Sayed (ed.). *Sirat Ibn Hisham* [The Biography of Ibn Hisham], Tanta Dar Al-Sahaba Lil-Turath: Egypt, pp. 434-436.
- [33] Al-Mas'udi, A.H., 1958. Al-Hawā' wa-'Atharohu fi al-Insān wa-al-Nabāt [The Air and Its Effect on Humans and Plants]. In: Muhi al-Din Abd al-Hamid (ed.). *Murūj al-Dhahab wa-Ma'ādin al-Jawhar* [The Meadows of Gold and Mines of Jewels], Maktabat al-Tijāriyah al-Kubrā: Cairo, Egypt, pp. 2, 132.
- [34] The Qur'an. Surah Al-Isra: 85. Available from: <https://quran.com/17?startingVerse=85> (cited 28 Oct 2024).
- [35] Al-Tha'alibi, A.M.A., 1985. Al-Bab al-Sabi' fi ma yudaf wa yunsab ila al-qaba'il [Chapter Seven: On What is Added and Attributed to Tribes]. In: M. Abu al-Fadl Ibrahim (ed.). *Thimar al-qulub fi al-mudaf wa al-mansub* [The Fruits of the Hearts on the Added and Attributed], Dar al-Ma'arif: Cairo, Egypt, p. 130.
- [36] Mawardi, A.A., 2012. Surah al-Isra' [The Night Journey]. In: S. Abdul Maqsood bin Abdul Raheem (ed.). *Al-Nukat wa al-'Uyun* [The Points and the Eyes], 3rd ed. Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah: Beirut, Lebanon, p. 255.
- [37] Al-Baladhuri, A.Y., 1996. Min Bani Tha'labah bin Sa'd bin Qays [From the Descendants of Tha'labah bin Sa'd bin Qays]. In: Zakkar, S., Zurkali, R. (eds.). *Jumal min Ansab al-Ashraf* [Selections from the Genealogy of the Nobles], 1st ed. Dar al-Fikr: Beirut, Lebanon, pp. 13,

- 150.
- [38] Al-Tunji, M., 1998. *Diwan al-Afwa al-Audi*, 1st ed. Dar Sader: Beirut, Lebanon. pp. 73-73.
- [39] Al-Dulaimi, A.R.K., 2001. *Hajis al-khulud fi al-shi'r al-arabi hatta nihayat al-asr al-Umawi*, 1st ed. Dar Al-Shu'un Al-Thaqafiyya Al-Amma: Baghdad, Iraq. p. 127.
- [40] Dhannawi, S., 1996. *Diwan of 'Urwah ibn al-Ward*, 1st ed. Dar al-Jabal: Beirut, Lebanon. p. 144.
- [41] Hassan, P., 2017. Nietzsche on human greatness. *The Journal of Value Inquiry*. 51(2), 293-310.
- [42] Nasif, M., 1983. *Dirasat al-Adab al-'Arabi*, 3rd ed. Dar al-Andalus li-Tiba'ah wa-al-Nashr: Beirut, Lebanon. p. 292.
- [43] Freud, S., 2003. *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. Penguin: London, UK. pp. 1-301.
- [44] Freud, S., 1982. *Civilization and Its Discontents*, 3rd ed. Dar al-Tali'ah li-Tiba'ah wa-al-Nashr: Beirut, Lebanon. p. 23.
- [45] Safadi, M., 1963. *Philosophy of Anxiety*, 1st ed. Dar al-Tali'ah Publications: Beirut, Lebanon. p. 49.
- [46] Badawi, A.R., 1955. *Existential Time*. Egyptian Renaissance Library: Cairo, Egypt. p. 174.
- [47] Ali, J., 1968. *Bab al-Hamasah [The Chapter of Valor]*. In: *Al-Mufasssal fi Tarikh al-Arab Qabla al-Islam [The Detailed History of the Arabs Before Islam]*, Dar al-Ilm lil-Malayin: Beirut, Lebanon, pp. 6, 148.
- [48] Mahna, A., 1994. *Diwan of Hassan ibn Thabit*, 2nd ed. Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah: Beirut, Lebanon. p. 19.
- [49] Az-Zuzani, A., al-Hasan ibn Ahmad, A., 1992. *Sharh al-Mu'allaqat as-Sab'*. Al-Dar Al-Alamiyyah: Beirut, Lebanon. pp. 42-45
- [50] Gachpazian, S., 2015. *The concept of perfect man in Manichaeism and Ibn'Arabi's Doctrine*. San Francisco State University. Available from: <http://hdl.handle.net/10211.3/141636> (cited 14 May 2015).