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Gazelle Descriptions in Arabic Poetry: A Comparative Analysis of Ibn Zaydun and Ahmed Shawqi's Artistic Brilliance

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the comparative representation of the gazelle in the poetry of Ibn Zaydun and Ahmed Shawqi, two iconic figures in Arabic literature. The primary objective of this research was to uncover how each poet utilizes gazelle imagery to convey themes of beauty, love, and longing, and how their unique cultural and historical contexts influence their poetic interpretations. Employing a descriptive analytical methodology, the research involved a detailed textual analysis of selected poems by both poets, focusing on metaphor, metonymy, and analogy as key literary devices. The comparative analysis further highlighted the distinct poetic sensibilities of Ibn Zaydun and Shawqi, tracing their thematic and stylistic differences. Data was analyzed through a close reading technique, supported by existing scholarly literature, which provided a critical framework for understanding the evolution of gazelle symbolism in Arabic poetry. The study's key findings revealed that while Ibn Zaydun's gazelle is emblematic of romantic longing and refined emotion rooted in Andalusian courtly tradition, Shawqi's gazelle embodies a more dynamic and nationalistic spirit, reflecting Egypt's Nahda (renaissance). These insights contribute to the broader understanding of Arabic literary symbolism, emphasizing the gazelle as a versatile poetic motif that transcends historical and cultural boundaries. The findings have significant implications for the study of Arabic literary tradition, offering a nuanced perspective on how classical symbols are adapted and reimagined across different periods.

Keywords: Arabic Poetry; Literature; Gazelle; Ibn Zaydun; Ahmed Shawqi

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1. Introduction

In the rich and storied world of Arabic poetry, few symbols have captivated the imagination quite like the gazelle ^[1]. Graceful, untamed, and endlessly enchanting, the gazelle has long stood as a timeless emblem of beauty and spirit, dancing through the verses of poets from different eras and lands ^[2].

Among the towering figures of Arabic literature, two names echo with particular resonance: Ibn Zaydun and Ahmed Shawqi ^[3]. Both were masters of their craft, and both found in the gazelle a muse worth chasing across time and terrain. This study adopts a comparative approach, exploring how the gazelle is represented in the works of these two iconic poets, each rooted in distinct cultural and historical contexts.

Imagine a quiet evening in Al-Andalus, bathed in silver moonlight, with the sweet scent of jasmine and orange blossoms drifting through the air. Ibn Zaydun, heart heavy with longing for his beloved Wallada, watches a gazelle leap effortlessly through a garden, its elegance stirring something deep within him ^[4]. He captures that moment— the beauty, the ache, the unspoken emotion and lets it pour into his poetry like the flow of the Guadalquivir River.

Centuries later, in the shifting sands of Egypt, Ahmed Shawqi, the “Prince of Poets”, finds his own inspiration in the same creature. To Shawqi, the gazelle carries echoes of an ancient heritage. Its eyes, wide and glistening, seem to whisper stories of courage and love. Its every movement feels like a memory etched into the desert itself.

This study draws a bridge between these two poetic worlds, bringing together the gazelle imagery of Ibn Zaydun and Shawqi in a comparative exploration. More than a side-by-side analysis, it’s a journey through the emotions, metaphors, and cultural textures that each poet infused into their verse ^[3]. Through their distinct perspectives, the gazelle becomes more than a symbol. It becomes a prism, refracting the complexities of human experience and the depth of Arabic poetic expression.

By tracing the lyrical threads from Andalusia to Egypt, this research not only highlights the stylistic beauty of each poet’s work but also reveals how a single image, the graceful gazelle, can carry the weight of love, longing, and identity. In the hands of these two literary giants, the gazelle is transformed: from a fleeting animal to a lasting emblem of the human connection with nature, emotion, and the poetic soul of a culture ^[3,5].

1.1. Existing Studies and Literary Criticism

Over time, the poetic works of Ibn Zaydun and Ahmad Shawqi, particularly their evocative gazelle imagery, have attracted significant attention from scholars and literary critics alike ^[6]. Their verses, celebrated for their beauty and depth, continue to captivate researchers, writers, and readers

who are drawn to the richness of classical Arabic literature ^[7,8].

Many academics have explored the recurring presence of the gazelle in Arabic poetry, examining its deep symbolic weight and cultural resonance ^[9,10]. Traditionally, the gazelle has embodied femininity, grace, and mystery, making it a natural figure through which poets express themes of beauty, longing, and the splendor of the natural world.

Take Ibn Zaydun, for example. His poetry, steeped in the romantic spirit of Al-Andalus, showcases a remarkable gift for conjuring vivid, emotionally layered images of the gazelle ^[11]. For him, the creature was more than a metaphor; it became a symbol of courtly love and refined desire. His ability to strike a delicate balance between yearning and restraint mirrors the gazelle’s own elusive elegance, always close, yet just out of reach.

Similarly, Ahmad Shawqi’s poetry has earned acclaim for its passionate energy and lyrical charm ^[12]. As a key figure of Egypt’s Nahda (renaissance), Shawqi brought the gazelle to life in new and stirring ways. His verses radiate admiration and enthusiasm, portraying the gazelle not just as a motif, but as a living embodiment of love, nature, and longing ^[12]. Critics have praised how seamlessly Shawqi weaves these themes together, creating poetry that feels both timeless and deeply personal.

In the broader landscape of literary analysis, comparisons between Ibn Zaydun and Shawqi’s gazelle poems have shed light on the unique voices and artistic choices each poet brought to the page ^[13]. Scholars have explored how their imagery, symbolism, and metaphors reveal distinct poetic sensibilities, shaped by the cultural and historical moments they inhabited ^[14]. Where Ibn Zaydun speaks from within the romantic ethos of Al-Andalus, Shawqi echoes with the confidence of a modernizing Egypt—yet both elevate the gazelle into something transcendent.

Some critics have also highlighted the thread of influence running from Ibn Zaydun’s Andalusian verse to Shawqi’s revivalist work ^[15]. Though Shawqi was clearly shaped by the tradition that came before him, he didn’t merely imitate; it’s in his innovation, in the way he reimagines the gazelle within a new poetic landscape, that we see a true dialogue between past and present ^[16].

Altogether, the body of scholarship surrounding the gazelle poetry of these two literary giants speaks volumes about the theme’s enduring place in Arabic literature. By examining their portrayals side by side, we gain not only a richer appreciation for their individual genius but also a deeper understanding of how Arabic poetry has evolved, carrying with it the gazelle, ever graceful, as a symbol of love, beauty, and the eternal dance between nature and the human heart.

1.2. Background on the Poets

Ibn Zaydun (1003–1071 CE) stands as one of the most celebrated voices of Andalusia’s golden age of Islamic

culture and poetry ^[17]. Born in the vibrant city of Cordoba, then a flourishing hub of intellectual and artistic life, he was immersed in a courtly world where poetry was more than entertainment; it was a refined art form and a mark of eloquence ^[17]. His remarkable command of language and poetic expression earned him the esteemed title of “Sultan of the Poets,” and his work quickly secured him a place among the literary greats of his era ^[18].

His verses often danced through themes of deep emotion, love, longing, and the beauty of the natural world ^[19]. But it was his delicate portrayals of the gazelle that truly stood out, recurring like a heartbeat throughout his work ^[20]. For Ibn Zaydun, the gazelle was not merely an animal. It was a symbol of grace, charm, and the fragile allure of love itself. His admiration for its elegance became a signature of his poetry, helping shape the romantic spirit that came to define Andalusian verse ^[21].

Centuries later, in the cultural awakening of Egypt’s Nahda, another poetic giant would rise: Ahmed Shawqi (1868–1932 CE), known affectionately as the “Prince of Poets.” Shawqi’s life unfolded during a time of renewed intellectual and artistic flourishing in Egypt, and he played a central role in shaping the voice of that renaissance ^[22]. His contributions to Arabic literature were immense, securing his place as one of its most influential modern figures ^[23].

Shawqi’s poetry, deeply rooted in classical tradition, expanded across an impressive range—from love and nature to history and national pride ^[23]. Like Ibn Zaydun, he, too, was entranced by the gazelle. In his verses, the creature took on layers of meaning, becoming both a metaphor and a muse, infused with awe and elegance ^[24]. His language painted the gazelle not just as a figure of beauty, but as a vessel of emotion and cultural memory.

Both poets, in their own times and ways, left an indelible mark on Arabic literary history ^[23]. Ibn Zaydun’s lyrical depictions of the gazelle helped establish him as a cornerstone of Andalusian poetry, his influence rippling through generations of poets to follow ^[25]. Meanwhile, Shawqi revolutionized poetic expression in the early 20th century, fusing classical elegance with modern insight. His vivid imagery and heartfelt themes resonated deeply with readers, turning him into both a cultural icon and a national figurehead ^[26,27].

Together, Ibn Zaydun and Ahmed Shawqi occupy revered spaces in the grand arc of Arabic literature ^[28]. Their enduring fascination with the gazelle and their unique portrayals of it have become more than just poetic motifs—they’re part of a living literary legacy that continues to shape Arabic poetics today ^[28].

In light of this, the present article offers a closer, comparative look at how these two masterful poets brought the gazelle to life in their verses. By examining their work side by side, we aim to reveal the distinctive voices, stylistic nuances, and poetic visions that make their portrayals of this elegant creature both timeless and unforgettable.

1.3. Significance of the Comparison

Drawing a comparison between the works of Ibn Zaydun and Ahmed Shawqi holds more than academic value. It opens a rare window into the poetic brilliance of two literary titans from very different eras in Arabic history. Ibn Zaydun, a luminary of the Andalusian golden age, and Ahmed Shawqi, a trailblazer of Egypt’s Nahda, stand as towering figures shaped by distinct cultural, historical, and personal landscapes. By placing their descriptions of the gazelle side by side, we begin to uncover the subtle layers and nuanced differences in how each poet gives voice to beauty and emotion.

The gazelle, long a cherished symbol of grace, love, and the natural world, lends itself beautifully to this kind of literary exploration. It’s more than a poetic motif. It’s a mirror through which each poet reveals their unique stylistic flair and artistic worldview. Through their use of rich metaphor, vivid imagery, and lyrical elegance, we can trace how each man shaped the legacy of Arabic poetry in his own time.

This comparison isn’t merely a literary exercise. It’s an invitation to embark on a journey through emotion, history, and artistic mastery. By engaging in a close reading of their verses, this study aims to deepen our appreciation for the richness of Arabic poetic tradition, and to celebrate the enduring relevance of themes that have captivated hearts for generations ^[29].

At its core, this research seeks to shine a light on the timeless appeal of the gazelle in Arabic poetry. By teasing out the distinct characteristics in Ibn Zaydun’s and Shawqi’s portrayals, we’re offered not just a clearer understanding of each poet’s voice, but also a deeper insight into the cultural legacies they’ve left behind.

2. Methodology

This study adopts a dual-method approach, namely, a descriptive analytical framework alongside a comparative analysis of selected poems by Ibn Zaydun and Ahmed Shawqi ^[30,31]. These particular poems were chosen for their evocative depictions of the gazelle, serving as a focal point for understanding the poets’ artistic sensibilities. The descriptive analytical method, widely respected in literary research, allows for a layered understanding of how poetic imagery, themes, and stylistic choices come together to shape meaning. In this context, it’s not just about describing how the gazelle appears in each poem, but about diving into the emotional, symbolic, and rhetorical richness that the poets draw upon.

Through close textual analysis, the study examines how both poets employ poetic devices—from metaphor and simile to symbolism and rhythm—to capture the gazelle as a symbol of beauty and emotional complexity. The comparative element then builds on this by highlighting where their interpretations converge and where they diverge,

ultimately revealing deeper truths about their individual styles and the broader literary movements they represent^[30,31].

In conducting this comparison, each line and verse has been carefully categorized according to its thematic and poetic function. To support this, the researcher consulted a wide range of sources, including classical poetry collections, biographical texts, encyclopedias, and a broad selection of scholarly articles and dissertations. These resources provide essential historical and critical context, grounding the analysis in a solid academic foundation. By blending both methodologies, the study brings into focus the quiet brilliance embedded in these gazelle poems, offering readers a fresh lens through which to appreciate not just the verses themselves, but the broader evolution of Arabic poetic tradition.

Indeed, scholars have long engaged with the gazelle-themed poetry of Ibn Zaydun and Ahmed Shawqi, recognizing its exceptional contribution to both classical and modern Arabic literary criticism. The poems continue to resonate because they address not only timeless themes of beauty, love, and longing, but also the deeper currents of cultural and rhetorical expression that define Arabic literary excellence. The meticulous efforts in literary critique, both past and present, have made these poetic works a touchstone for scholars and admirers alike, showcasing the lasting power of well-crafted verse and the enduring elegance of the gazelle as a poetic muse.

3. Findings and Discussion

3.1. A Comparative Study of Ibn Zaydun and Ahmed Shawqi's Gazelle Poetry

This comparative study examines the poetic imagery utilized to describe gazelles in the works of two prominent poets, namely; Ibn Zaydun and Ahmad Shawqi. Gazelles occupy a distinct position and are frequently used in Arabic poetry as representations of elegance, beauty, and love. Through the use of metaphors, metonymy, and analogies, both poets expertly capture the essence of these majestic creatures, infusing their rhymes with vivid imagery and contemplative feelings.

Ibn Zaydun's Gazelle Descriptions

(a) Metaphor

It was stated in the memories of the poet Ibn Zaydun about Cordoba (Hanna Al-Fakhoury, 1990; p.476):

فَكَمْ لِي فِيهَا مِنْ مَسَاءٍ وَإِصْبَاحٍ
بِكُلِّ غَزَالٍ مُشْرِقِ الْوَجْهِ وَضَاحٍ
(How many evenings and mornings I have spent there, With
every gazelle-like beauty, radiant and bright-faced)

In a nostalgic rhyme, Ibn Zaydun contrasts Cordoba with a gleaming gazelle, expressing his longing for the place and his desire to bask in its beauty both in the morning and

evening. The metaphor highlights his profound link with the city and its allure (Hanna Al-Fakhoury, 1990; p. 476).

Ibn Zaydun utilizes the metaphor of the gazelle to describe his beloved Wallada, highlighting her beauty and elegance. He uses vivid imagery, depicting her as being held by the hand of suffering, implying the pain he endures due to her absence. The lyric also expresses his desire for the pleasure of being with her again^[32].

In the given lyric, the poet uses a compelling declarative metaphor to liken his beloved to a gazelle in her beauty. Looking deeper into the meaning and interpretation of this lyric:

يَا غَزَالاً أَصَارَنِي
إِنِّي مُذْ هَجَرْتَنِي
مُوثِقاً فِي يَدِ الْمَحْنِ
لَمْ أَذُقْ لَذَّةَ الْوَسْنِ
(O gazelle, you have left me bound in the grip of trials.)
(Since the moment you left me, I have not tasted the sweetness of sleep)

The poet addresses his beloved, using the term "غزالاً" (gazelle) as a term of loving word and admiration. He expresses how he feels "أصارني" (tied or bound) to her, indicating a profound emotional connection and attachment. The metaphor of the gazelle here implies that just as a gazelle is captivating and mesmerizing in its beauty, so is the poet's beloved.

The phrase "مُوثِقاً فِي يَدِ الْمَحْنِ" (bound in the hand of affliction) vividly conveys the poet's emotional state. It suggests that he is enduring pain and hardship, much like being held tightly in the grasp of affliction. This could indicate that his love for the beloved has caused him emotional suffering and instability.

The second part of the verse, "إِنِّي مُذْ هَجَرْتَنِي لَمْ أَذُقْ لَذَّةَ الْوَسْنِ" (Since you left me, I have not tasted the pleasure of life), further emphasizes the depth of his emotions. The poet reveals that after his beloved's departure, he has been unable to experience joy or pleasure. The imagery of tasting pleasure ("لَذَّةَ الْوَسْنِ") evokes the senses and demonstrates the profound impact of her absence on his emotional well-being.

Hence, this verse showcases the poet's mastery of metaphor and emotion as he compares his beloved to a gazelle and portrays his emotional struggles and longing after her departure. The verse beautifully encapsulates the theme of love, loss, and the reflective impact of separation on one's emotional state.

(b) Metonymy

Ibn Zaydun beautifully employs metonymy to convey the attributes of beauty and goodness to his beloved. He emphasizes that she embodies all aspects of beauty and goodness, regardless of her proximity, as she eternally resides in his heart. This symbolic illustration of love immortalizes his feelings^[31].

In the given verse, the poet skillfully uses metonymy to express his admiration and affection for his beloved. Let's analyze the metonymy used in the poem:

يا غزالاً جُمِعَتْ فِيهِ
هَرَمِنْ الْحُسْنِ فُنُونُ
أَنْتَ فِي الشُّرْبِ وَفِي الْبُعْدِ
دَمِنْ النَّفْسِ مَكِينُ
بَهْوَاكَ الدَّهْرُ أَهْوُو
وَبَحْبُوكَ أَدِينُ
(O gazelle, in whom all the arts of beauty have been gathered)
(Whether near or far, you are firmly rooted in my soul)
(With your love, I delight through all time, and in your affection, I
find my faith)

In this lyric, the poet addresses his beloved using the term "غزالاً" (gazelle), which serves as a metonymy. Here, the gazelle represents and symbolizes the beauty, elegance, and grace of the poet's beloved. The poet attributes the qualities of "goodness and beauty" to the gazelle, indicating that his beloved holds these admirable traits.

The phrase "جُمِعَتْ فِيهِ هَرَمِنْ الْحُسْنِ فُنُونُ" (gathered in her all goodness's colors) underscores that the beloved embodies all the desirable and enchanting qualities of beauty, as if she holds a diverse spectrum of captivating colors that represent her attraction.

Furthermore, the poet highlights the idea that his beloved's influence on him is ever-present, regardless of their physical distance or proximity. The lines "أَنْتَ فِي الشُّرْبِ وَفِي الْبُعْدِ" (You are in nearness and in distance in the soul established) suggest that the beloved occupies a significant place in the poet's heart, whether she is physically close or far away.

The final two lines, "بَهْوَاكَ الدَّهْرُ أَهْوُو وَبَحْبُوكَ أَدِينُ" (Because of your love, eternity is love, and due to my love for you, religion is established), beautifully convey the everlasting nature of love. The poet implies that his love for the beloved is so deep that it encompasses eternity, and his affection for her is so intense that it becomes like a religion for him.

Hence, based on the use of metonymy, the poet elevates his beloved's status to that of a gazelle, symbolizing her beauty and goodness. The verse conveys a reflective sense of admiration and affection, portraying the beloved as the embodiment of alluring qualities and emphasizing the enduring power of love.

(c) Analogy

Ibn Zaydun's artistry shines through his effective use of analogies. In one verse, he likens his beloved to a gazelle in fear and unrest, describing her restlessness before their meeting. This analogy evokes the image of an antelope sleeping with anxiety and apprehension, establishing a captivating and emotionally charged poetic portrait [32].

In the given verses, the poet skilfully employs analogies to vividly describe his beloved's behavior and capture her allure through implicit comparisons. Let's explore the analogies used in the two passages:

وليلةً وافتنا الكتيب لموعِدِ
كما ريعَ وُسْنان العُشَيَاتِ خادِلُ
(And a night when she came to meet us at the sand dune,
like one startled from slumber in the quiet of dusk, hesitant and wavering)

In this analogy, the poet compares the behavior of his beloved to that of a gazelle (referred to as "ريعَ وُسْنان العُشَيَاتِ" -

restless and alert antelope) on the night they had arranged to meet on the gathered sand. The analogy here is indirect, as the poet doesn't precisely state that his beloved is like a gazelle. Instead, he describes her actions and emotions using the image of an antelope. The use of the gazelle analogy implies that his beloved is both graceful and cautious, much like a gazelle that remains alert and uneasy even while sleeping. This comparison adds depth and beauty to the description of the beloved's emotions and demeanour on that significant night.

مَا لِلْمَصَايِدِ لَمْ تَنْلُكَ بِحِيلَةٍ
إِنَّ الظُّبَاءَ لَتُذَرَّى، فَتَصَادُ
(Why have the traps failed to capture you with any trick,
when even gazelles can be known and caught?)

In this implicit analogy, the poet expresses the uniqueness and elusiveness of his beloved. He suggests that no tricks or traps (مصايد بحيلة - methods of capture) can succeed in catching her. By likening her to a gazelle, which is known for its swiftness and ability to evade capture, the poet conveys that his beloved is beyond ordinary pursuits. The phrase "إِنَّ الظُّبَاءَ لَتُذَرَّى، فَتَصَادُ" emphasizes that antelopes are often caught (ذرى - caught or captured), but the poet's beloved remains elusive and unachievable. This analogy elevates the beloved's charm, hinting at her enigmatic and uncapturable nature, making her an alluring and captivating figure in the eyes of the poet.

In both cases, the poet's use of analogies, whether explicit or implicit, adds depth and richness to his descriptions of his beloved. By associating her with the elegance, restlessness, and evasive nature of a gazelle, he elevates her status, portraying her as a captivating and unattainable figure in his poetic world. The use of these analogies contributes to the beauty and power of the poet's verses, showcasing his mastery of language and his ability to create captivating imagery through poetic comparisons.

Ahmed Shawqi:

(a) Metaphor

In the given verses from Ahmed Shawqi's poem "Nahj al-Bard," he utilizes metaphors, specifically related to gazelles, to eloquently describe the beauty and allure of his beloved [32]. Analysing the metaphors used in the two verses:

رَمَى عَلَى الْقَاعِ بَيْنَ الْبَانِ وَالْعَلَمِ
أَحَلَّ سَفَكَ دَمِي فِي الْأَشْهُرِ الْحَرَمِ
زَمَى الْقَضَاءُ بَغِيَّتِي جُودَرٍ أَسَدًا
يَا سَاكِنَ الْقَاعِ أَدْرِكْ سَاكِنَ الْأَجَمِ
(A gazelle on the plain, between the banyan and the landmark,
made the shedding of my blood lawful—even in the sacred onths)
(Fate struck a lion with the eyes of a young gazelle—O dweller of
the plain, come to the aid of the one in the thicket!)

In this metaphor, the poet likens his beloved to a gazelle standing between the dense jungle (البان) and the mountain (العلم). The imagery formed here is quite picturesque, as it portrays the gazelle in a captivating natural setting, caught between two majestic elements of nature. The use of "رَمَى" (a gazelle) to correspond to the beloved emphasizes her elegance and grace, much like the graceful movements of a gazelle. The poet advocates that his beloved's beauty

surpasses even the scenic views of both the lush forest and the grand mountain. This metaphor enhances the beloved's charm and elevates her to the status of an appealing creature of nature.

رِيمٌ عَلَى الْقَاعِ بَيْنَ الْبَانِ وَالْعَلَمِ: The declarative metaphor, where he likened his beloved to the beautiful gazelle, who stands in a land between the dense jungle and the mountain, and this antelope attracted his attention more than the view of the beautiful forest and the view of the mountain.

رَمَى الْقَضَاءُ بَعِيَّيَ جُودِرٍ أَسَدًا: Here, the poet uses another metaphor to describe the captivating beauty of his beloved's eyes. He compares her eyes to the eyes of a "جُودِرٍ أَسَدًا" (litter bison). This comparison suggests that her eyes possess an intense and fierce allure, much like the captivating and powerful gaze of a bison. The poet's choice of the word "أَسَدًا" (lion-like) intensifies the strength and attractiveness ascribed to her eyes. This metaphor beautifully captures the enchanting and captivating influence of the beloved's eyes on the poet.

Additionally, in the second excerpt, the poet employs a simile rather than a metaphor to emphasize the impact of the beloved's beauty:

لَمَّا زَنَا حَدَّثْتَنِي النَّفْسُ قَائِلَةً يَا وَيْحَ جَنْبِكَ بِالسَّهْمِ الْمَصِيبِ رُمِي
جَحَدْتُهَا وَكَتَمْتُ السَّهْمَ فِي كَبِدِي جُرْحُ الْأَحَبَّةِ عِنْدِي غَيْرُ ذِي أَلَمٍ
(When he glanced, my soul spoke to me, saying:
"Alas for your side—it has been struck by a piercing arrow!")
(I denied it and concealed the arrow in my liver;
the wound from loved ones, to me, bears no pain)

In this simile, the poet compares the influence of seeing his beloved to the sensation of being struck by an arrow ("بِالسَّهْمِ الْمَصِيبِ رُمِي"). He vividly conveys that just as an arrow leaves a deep wound, the sight of his beloved's beauty has left a profound and continuing impression on his heart. By using the analogy of an arrow wound in the "كَبِدِي" (liver), the poet further emphasizes the intensity of his emotions and the enduring nature of his love for her.

In recap, Ahmed Shawqi's masterful use of metaphors and similes, particularly those related to gazelles, enables him to beautifully capture the essence of his beloved's charm, elegance, and impact on his heart. His poetic expressions resonate with readers, evoking emotions and painting vivid imagery through these artistic literary devices.

(b) Metonymy

Metonymy is a literary device in which a word or phrase is used to represent or refer to something else that is closely related to it. In the presented excerpts from Ahmad Shawqi's poems, he skillfully uses metonymy to symbolize and evoke the presence and impact of his beloved without directly naming her. Let's examine the two instances of metonymy in his poetry:

قَلْبٌ بُوَادِي الْحَيَى خَلْفَتِهِ رَمْعًا مَاذَا صَنَعْتَ بِهِ يَا ظَبِيَّةَ الْبَانِ
(A heart in the valley of sanctuary you left
barely alive—what have you done to it, O gazelle of the banyan
trees?)

In this verse, the poet uses metonymy by referring to his beloved as "ظَبِيَّةَ الْبَانِ" (the gazelle of the jungle). Instead of stating her name directly, he uses the image of a gazelle to represent her beauty, grace, and elegance. The term "الْبَانِ" (the jungle) signifies the wild and enchanting nature of his beloved, while "قَلْبٌ بُوَادِي الْحَيَى خَلْفَتِهِ رَمْعًا" portrays the poet's heart as a desert scorched by her captivating gaze. The use of "ظَبِيَّةَ الْبَانِ" as a metonymy showcases the poet's admiration and deep affection for his beloved without explicitly stating her name.

يَا قَلْبَ أَحْمَدَ وَالسِّهَامَ شَدِيدَةً مَاذَا لَقِيتَ مِنَ الْغَزَالِ الرَّامِي
(O heart of Ahmad, while the arrows are fierce,
What have you suffered from the gazelle who shoots?)

In this verse, Ahmad Shawqi again employs metonymy by using "الْغَزَالِ الرَّامِي" (the gazelle of the archer) to refer to his beloved. Here, he emphasizes the impact of his love and emotions by comparing them to the striking power of arrows from an archer. The use of "الْغَزَالِ الرَّامِي" symbolizes the enchanting and captivating qualities of his beloved, while "يَا قَلْبَ أَحْمَدَ وَالسِّهَامَ شَدِيدَةً" portrays the poet's own heart as the target of this alluring and powerful love. The metonymy beautifully conveys the idea that the poet has fallen deeply in love with his beloved and is now under the overwhelming spell of her charm.

In both instances, Ahmad Shawqi's use of metonymy adds depth and richness to his poetry, allowing him to express his emotions and portray his beloved in a more imaginative and evocative manner. The metonymic references serve as poetic devices that contribute to the overall beauty and elegance of his verses, making them memorable and resonant with readers.

(c) Analogy

In "The Gazelle, the Sheep, and the Wolf," Shawqi employs an analogy to caution against being deceived by appearances and choosing the right person for the right situation. The gazelle and sheep represent naive individuals, while the wolf symbolizes those who manipulate and exploit. This analogy serves as a reflection on societal dynamics and the consequences of misplaced trust [32].

In the provided excerpts from Ahmed Shawqi's poetry, we can observe the use of analogy to convey deeper meanings and insights about human behavior and societal phenomena. Let's explore the analogies in the two poems:

"The gazelle, the sheep, and the wolf" [31].

وَقَادَهُ لِلْمَوْضِعِ الْمَعْرُوفِ فَقَامَ بَيْنَ الظَّبْيِ وَالْخُرُوفِ
وَقَالَ لَا أَحْكُمُ حَسَبَ الظَّاهِرِ فَمَزَّقَ الظَّبْيَيْنِ بِالْأَطَافِرِ
وَقَالَ لِلتَّيْسِ انْطَلِقْ لَشَأْنِكَ مَا قَتَلَ الْخَصْمَيْنِ غَيْرُ ذَقْنِكَ

(He led him to the well-known place,
And stood between the gazelle and the lamb.

He said, 'I do not judge by appearances,'

Then tore the two gazelles apart with his claws.

And to the goat he said, 'Go about your business—

It was nothing but your beard that killed the two)

The provided verses are from the poem "The gazelle, the sheep, and the wolf" by Ahmed Shawqi. Let's delve into the meaning and interpretation of these lines:

وقاده للموضع المعروف فقَامَ بَيْنَ الظَّيِّ والخروفِ

Translation: "He led him to a familiar place, then stood between the gazelle and the sheep."

In these lines, the poet describes how the wolf takes a central position between the gazelle and the sheep. The use of "familiar place" implies that the wolf has orchestrated this situation or chosen the setting where he can carry out his plan.

وقَالَ لَا أَحْكُمُ حَسَبَ الظَّاهِرِ فَمَزَّقَ الطَّبِيبِينَ بِالْأَطْفَارِ

Translation: "He said, 'I will not judge based on appearances,' then he tore the gazelle apart with his claws."

In these lines, the wolf pretends to be fair and unbiased in his judgment by claiming that he won't be swayed by appearances. However, he deceives the gazelle and, in a treacherous act, tears it apart with his claws. The wolf's actions contrast with his deceptive words, emphasizing the theme of manipulation and cunning.

وقَالَ لِلتَّيْسِ انْطَلِقْ لَشَانِكَ مَا قَتَلَ الْخَصْمِينَ غَيْرُ ذَنْكَنَا

Translation: "He said to the goat, 'Go on, do as you please; no one has killed both adversaries except your chin.'"

In these lines, the wolf addresses the goat, encouraging it to take action, suggesting that the goat's chin is the only thing that has killed both adversaries (the gazelle and the sheep). This can be interpreted as a metaphorical way of saying that the goat's cunning or deceptive actions have led to the downfall of both the gazelle and the sheep.

Hence, these verses continue the analogy between animals to represent human behavior and social dynamics. The wolf symbolizes deceitful and manipulative individuals, while the gazelle and the sheep represent innocent and naive individuals who fall victim to the cunning tactics of the wolf and the goat. The poem serves as a cautionary tale about the importance of discernment and not being deceived by false appearances or the seemingly impartial words of those with hidden agendas.

In this poem, Ahmed Shawqi employs the analogy of animals to depict the behavior of different social groups. The gazelle and the sheep represent the naive and simple society that follows traditional customs and rituals. They dispute over who is smarter, and the sheep, in their innocence, seek help from the wolf to act as a judge. The wolf, symbolizing cunning and manipulative individuals, takes advantage of the situation and ends up tearing apart both the gazelle and the sheep.

The analogy of the gazelle and the sheep reflects how naive and gullible people can be when they trust cunning individuals who manipulate them for their own benefit. The wolf's role as an arbiter in the dispute highlights how some unscrupulous characters can exploit the innocence and trust of others to their advantage. Shawqi uses this analogy to caution against being deceived by false appearances and

warns about the consequences of aligning with the wrong people.

غَزَالَةٌ مَرَّتْ عَلَى أَتَانٍ تُقَبِّلُ الْفَطِيمَ فِي الْأَسْنَانِ

(A gazelle passed by a she-donkey,
Kissing her weaned child on the teeth)

In this verse, Shawqi uses an analogy involving animals to portray a social phenomenon. The scene depicts a gazelle passing by a pair of donkeys. The young donkey, seeking affection and tenderness, kisses its mother in the teeth. The gazelle, witnessing this act, is amused by the young donkey's behavior.

The analogy here represents the younger generation's tendency to seek novelty and reject established norms and traditions. The young donkey's actions symbolize the pursuit of new experiences and ideas, even if they might seem strange or unconventional to others. The gazelle's amusement reflects the reactions of older generations observing the changing behavior and interests of the youth.

Through these analogies, Ahmed Shawqi provides insightful commentary on human behavior, societal dynamics, and the complexities of human interactions. He effectively uses poetic imagery to shed light on various aspects of life, making his poetry both engaging and thought-provoking.

According to Al-Hofy ^[32], the story presented in the text can be seen as an allegory to reflect a social phenomenon and people's attitudes towards life. The tale involves a comparison between the sheep seeking help and the wolf empowering its community, highlighting the difference between those who actively seek assistance and those who assert dominance over others.

تنازع الغزال والخروف	وقال كلُّ إِنَّهُ الظَّرِيفُ
فَرَأَى التَّيْسَ فظنًا أَنَّهُ	أعطاه عقلاً من أطال ذقنه
فكلفاه أن يُفتش الغلا	عن حكم له اعتبار في الملا
يَنْظُرُ فِي دَعْوَاهُمَا بالذقة	عَسَاءَ يُعْطِي الْحَقَّ مُسْتَجِدَّةً
فَسَارَ لِلْبَحْثِ بلا تَوَانِي	مُتَّخِرًا بِنَقَةِ الْإِخْوَانِ
يَتَوَلَّى عِنْدِي نَظْرَةً كَبِيرَةً	تَرْفَعُ شَأْنَ التَّيْسِ فِي الْعَشِيرَةِ
وَذَكَ أَنْ أَجْدَرَ التَّنَاءِ	بالصدق ما جاء من الأعداء
وَأَنِّي إِذَا دَعَوْتُ الذِّبَا	لا يستطيعان له تكديبا
لَكَوْنِهِ لَا يَعْرِفُ الْغَزَالَا	وَلَيْسَ يُلْقِي لِلْخُرُوفِ بِالَا
تَمَّ أَتَى الذِّبَّ فَقَالَ طَلِبْتِي	أَنْتَ فَسِرْ مَعِي مَعِي وَخُذْ بِلَحْيَتِ

(The gazelle and the lamb quarreled,
Each claiming to be the most charming.
They saw the goat and assumed that
His long beard meant he was wise.
So they assigned him to search the land,
For a judgment respected among the people,
To carefully examine both their claims,
And, hopefully, to grant the right to its rightful owner.
He set off in search without delay,

Proud of the trust his brothers had in him.
Saying, 'I have a great insight
That elevates the goat's rank among the tribe.'
And that the worthiest of praise,
Is honest speech—even if it comes from enemies.
And when I call the wolf,
Neither the gazelle nor the lamb can deny his truth.
For he knows neither the gazelle,
Nor does he care for the lamb.
Then he went to the wolf and said, 'You are my request—
Come with me, and bring your beard with you)

And he said (Ahmed Muhammad Al-Hofy, 1980: 323):

غَزَالَةٌ مَرَّتْ عَلَى أَتَانٍ تُقَبِّلُ الْفَطِيمَ فِي الْأَسْنَانِ
وَكَانَ خَلْفَ الظَّيْبَةِ ابْنُهَا الرِّشَا يُوَدِّعُهَا لَوْ حَمَلَتْهُ فِي الْحَشَا
فَقَعَلَتْ بِسَيِّدِ الصَّغَارِ فَعَلَّ الْأَتَانُ بِابْنِهَا الْحِمَارِ
فَأَسْرَعَ الْحِمَارُ نَحْوَ أُمِّهِ وَجَاءَهَا وَالضُّحَى مِلءُ قِمِهِ
يَصِيحُ يَا أُمَّاهُ مَاذَا قَدْ دَهَا حَتَّى الْغَزَالَةُ اسْتَحَقَّتْ ابْنَهَا
(A gazelle passed by a she-donkey,
Kissing the weaned foal on the teeth.
Behind the gazelle was her fawn, her child—
She wished she could carry him in her womb once more.
But she acted toward the prince of the young,
As the donkey did with her little colt.
So the young donkey rushed to his mother,
His mouth wide open with laughter.
Shouting, "Oh mother, what has happened?
Even the gazelle has mocked her own son!)

Based on the above narration and analysis by Ahmed Muhammad Al-Hofy ^[32], it appears that the story involving the sheep and the wolf is used as an analogy to reflect a social phenomenon and the approach people have towards life. The verses portray the sheep seeking help and the wolf empowering his community, highlighting the distinction between individuals who actively seek assistance and those who assert dominance over others.

Ahmed Shawqi's position in this narrative seems to criticize naive clerics who bring calamities to their societies. These clerics may pretend to be religious leaders, but their shortcomings in management and wrong policies serve their personal interests, allowing others to take control over their affairs.

The second set of verses presents an analogy where the people are likened to animals, representing a social phenomenon. The donkey kisses her weaned son in the teeth, symbolizing tenderness and habit formation. This act of tenderness contrasts with the behavior of the new generation, which is depicted as constantly seeking something different and attractive, unsatisfied with the existing gains of human civilization.

Hence, the narrative aims to shed light on the complexities of human behavior and societal dynamics, portraying how individuals and communities interact and

navigate their roles in the larger context of life.

3.2. Assessment of Similarities in the Characteristics Of Ibn Zaydun and Ahmad Shawqi Poetry

This discussion explores the striking similarities between the poetry of Ibn Zaydun and Ahmed Shawqi, two renowned poets from different eras who shared common themes and poetic expressions in their works. These similarities center around their usage of specific imagery, the symbolism of the gazelle as a lover, their descriptive focus, and the emotional turmoil experienced due to the gazelle's influence.

(1) Gazelle Imagery: Both poets extensively employed the imagery of the gazelle, using the word "الريم" (gazelle) in particular. Ibn Zaydun and Ahmed Shawqi each wove vivid depictions of this graceful creature into their verses, evoking its allure and symbolism in the context of love and beauty.

As Ibn Zaydun said:

فَمَا قَبَّلَ مَنْ أَهْوَى طَوَى الْبَدْرَ هُوْدُجٌ
وَلَا صَانَ رِيَمَ الْقَفْرِ خَدْرٌ مُسَجَّفٌ

(No litter veiled the moon when my beloved was kissed,
Nor was the desert gazelle protected by a curtained chamber)

Ahmed Shawqi said:

رِيَمٌ عَلَى الْقَاعِ بَيْنَ الْبَانِ وَالْعَلَمِ
أَخْلَ سَفَكَ دَمِي فِي الْأَشْهُرِ الْحُرُمِ

(A gazelle on the plain, between the banyan and the flag,
Has made my blood lawful—during the sacred months!)

(2) Symbolism of the Gazelle: The gazelle served as a powerful symbol of a beloved for both poets. Ibn Zaydun and Ahmed Shawqi utilized the gazelle to convey the essence of their love and longing, emphasizing the emotional impact of this imagery in their respective poems.

As Ibn Zaydun said:

يَا غَزَالاً أَصَارَنِي

مُوثَقاً فِي يَدِ الْمَحْنِ

(O gazelle, who has enslaved me,
Bound in the grip of trials and pain)

Ahmed Shawqi said:

سَلَوَا غَزَالاً غَزَا قَلْبِي بِحَاجِبِهِ

أَمَا كَفَى السَّيْفُ حَتَّى جَزَّ الْقَلَمَا

(Ask the gazelle who raided my heart with just a glance of his brow—
Wasn't the sword enough, that he also drew the pen)

(3) Descriptive Focus: Both poets focused their descriptions on the distinctive characteristics and beauty of the gazelle. Each poet highlighted specific details to create intricate and captivating portrayals, enhancing the sensory

experience for their readers.

As Ibn Zaydun said:

يَا غَزَالًا جُمِعَتْ فِيهِ
هَرَمٌ مِنَ الْحُسْنِ فَنُورٌ

(O gazelle, in whom all the arts of beauty are combined!)

Ahmed Shawqi said:

تَأْتِي الدَّلَالُ سَجِيَّةً وَتَصْنَعًا
وَأُرَاكَ فِي حَالِي دَلَالِكَ مُبْدِعًا

(You bring charm both by nature and by design,
And in both states of grace, I see you shine)

(4) Torment and Suffering: Ibn Zaydun and Ahmed Shawqi shared a profound sense of torment and suffering as a result of their encounters with the gazelle. In their verses, they expressed the pain and anguish experienced due to unrequited love or separation from their beloved.

As Ibn Zaydun said:

إِنِّي مُذْ هَجَرْتَنِي
لَمْ أَذُقْ لَذَّةَ الْوَسْنِ

(Since the day you left me,
I have not tasted the sweetness of sleep)

Ahmed Shawqi said:

جَحَدْتُهَا وَكَتَمْتُ السَّهْمَ فِي كَيْدِي
لَجُرْحِ الْأَجْبَةِ عِنْدِي غَيْرُ ذِي أَلَمٍ

(I denied my love and hid the arrow in my chest,
For wounds from loved ones, to me, bring no pain)

Hence, the similarities between the poetry of Ibn Zaydun and Ahmed Shawqi are evident in their masterful use of gazelle imagery, the symbolic representation of love, their descriptive prowess, and the expression of emotional turmoil. Their poetic works continue to captivate readers, offering timeless insights into the complexities of human emotions and the enduring power of love in the realm of literature.

3.3. Assessment of Differences Between Ibn Zaydun and Ahmed Shawqi in Their Poetry

I. Usage of the Word "Gazelle": Ibn Zaydun employed the term "gazelle" to symbolize Cordoba, describing it as a place of beauty and allure. He depicted it as a land filled with radiant gazelles, exemplified in his verse: "How many evenings and mornings have we witnessed, with each gazelle shining brightly on its face."

As Ibn Zaydun said:

فَكَمْ لِي فِيهَا مِنْ مَسَاءٍ وَإِصْبَاحٍ
بِكُلِّ غَزَالٍ مَشْرِقِ الْوَجْهِ وَضَّاحٍ

(How many evenings and mornings I've spent with her,
With every gazelle, radiant of face and bright of feature)

On the other hand, Ahmed Shawqi used the word "gazelle" to refer to his beloved or a woman. He used this imagery to express emotions related to flight and anger, as seen in his poem where he wrote: "They frightened her, and she departed in anger. Do you know how a gazelle trembles?"

II. Gazelle as a Symbol of Human Characteristics: Ahmed Shawqi was renowned for inventing poetic tales, skillfully utilizing gazelle imagery in similes to depict the complexities of human behavior and society's approach to life. He likened gazelles to human beings, as well as women, to reflect the image of society. This creative approach is evident in poems such as "The Gazelle, the Sheep, the Goat, and the Wolf" and "The Gazelle that Passed on a Donkey." Conversely, this use of gazelle imagery in metaphorical contexts was not found in Ibn Zaydun's poetry.

As Ibn Zaydun said:

وَلَيْلَةً وَافْتَنَّا الْكَثِيبَ لَمُوعِدٍ

كَمَا رِيحٌ وَشَنَّانِ الْعَشِيَّاتِ خَاذِلٌ

(And that night she met me at the sandy hill, as planned—
Like one startled from slumber by twilight's trembling hand)

Ahmed Shawqi said:

رُوعَهُ فَتَوَلَّى مَغْضِبًا

أَعْلَمْتُمْ كَيْفَ تَرْتَاعُ الظُّبَا؟

(They startled him, and he turned away in anger—
Do you know how gazelles are frightened?)

III. Unique Traits of the Gazelle: Ibn Zaydun's poetry showcased references to a stray gazelle that departed from its flock, symbolizing the uniqueness of this particular gazelle with its beauty, goodness, and exceptional qualities.

Ibn Zaydun says:

وَلَيْلَةً وَافْتَنَّا الْكَثِيبَ لَمُوعِدٍ

كَمَا رِيحٌ وَشَنَّانِ الْعَشِيَّاتِ خَاذِلٌ

(And on a night she came to the dune for our tryst,
Like one half-asleep, startled by twilight's mist)

Ahmed Shawqi, on the other hand, predominantly emphasized the strength of the gazelle in his poems, often referring to his beloved and her ability to overpower and captivate him. This aspect of the gazelle imagery in Ahmed Shawqi's poetry highlights his creativity in conveying the powerful impact of love.

Ahmed Shawky says in describing the gazelle that was able to invade his heart:

سَلَوَا غَزَالًا غَزَا قَلْبِي بِحَاجِبِهِ

أَمَا كَفَى السَّيْفُ حَتَّى جَرَّدَ الْقَلَمَ

(Ask the gazelle who conquered my heart with just his brow—
Was the sword not enough, that he also drew the pen now?)

Therefore, Ibn Zaydun and Ahmed Shawqi both utilized

gazelle imagery in their poetry, but their interpretations and symbolic representations of these images vary. Ibn Zaydun associated the gazelle with the beauty of Cordoba and uniqueness among gazelles, but Ahmed Shawqi used it to represent his beloved's emotions and as a metaphor for human conduct. Their contrasting poetic approaches provide more depth to their respective works, establishing them as distinctive and respected literary contributors to the world of literature.

4. Conclusions

This study explored the poetic elegance and emotional depth with which both Ibn Zaydun and Ahmed Shawqi portrayed the gazelle, each through the lens of their own time, culture, and inner world. While centuries apart, both poets found in the gazelle a powerful symbol through which they could express the nuances of love, beauty, and longing. Ibn Zaydun, writing from the golden age of Al-Andalus, brought to life the gazelle with refined sensitivity and courtly grace. His verses, often echoing with the name of his beloved Wallada, use the gazelle as a mirror of idealized love, a creature at once delicate and elusive, much like the emotions he sought to capture. His poetry is marked by a quiet intensity, where each line flows with restraint and yearning, and where the gazelle becomes not just a symbol of beauty, but a vessel of emotional truth shaped by personal longing and historical richness.

On the other hand, Ahmed Shawqi, the voice of Egypt's Nahda, embraced the gazelle with vivid color and impassioned force. His portrayal is deeply romantic and emotionally charged, transforming the gazelle into a living metaphor for desire, complexity, and the bittersweet rhythms of love. Shawqi's poetic language is lush and expressive, weaving a narrative where the gazelle takes on human qualities—graceful, strong, and deeply affecting. In his hands, the gazelle is both symbol and soul, embodying a beloved who captivates the heart and stirs the spirit. What connects both poets is their ability to use the gazelle not simply as a motif, but as a poetic conduit for emotion, imagination, and cultural identity. Yet, their approaches diverge in ways that highlight their individuality. Ibn Zaydun's introspective and refined tone contrasts with Shawqi's bold romanticism and lyrical fervor. This contrast allows us to see the remarkable flexibility of Arabic poetry across time: how one symbol can be stretched, shaped, and reimagined to reflect different hearts, different eras, and different poetic visions.

In the end, both Ibn Zaydun and Ahmed Shawqi leave behind more than just beautifully composed verses. They offer us windows into the timeless dance between nature, love, and the written word. Their gazelles leap not only through gardens and deserts, but through the corridors of literary memory, reminding us of the enduring allure of poetic expression and the emotional richness of Arabic literary tradition.

Author Contributions

Conceptualization, D.S.; methodology, G.K.S.S.; formal analysis, D.S.; resources, D.S.; data curation, G.K.S.S. and D.S.; writing—original draft preparation, D.S.; writing—review and editing, G.K.S.S. and R.K.P.G.S. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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The authors declare no conflict of interest. The funders had no role in the design of the study; in the collection, analyses, or interpretation of data; in the writing of the manuscript; or in the decision to publish the results.

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