

University of Al-Qadisiya  
College of Education  
Dept. of English

**“Ash Wednesday “: A Structuralist Analysis  
with Reference to Translation**

**By  
Maha Tahir Eesa**

**Abstract**

T.S.Eliot's “Ash Wednesday” is a penitential poem about the spiritual progress of the soul. Along the path of repentance ,the soul goes in progress and regress. It is in conflict between progressing forward to the spiritual world of God or retreating to the world of materialism. To analyze this poem, a structuralist approach- drawn from Culler’s model 1975\_ is adopted. The model is based on conventions of reading poetry. It consists of different types of oppositions that reflect different states of the soul and provides unity to the sections of the poem. Analyzing the poem in terms of this model of oppositions reflects the deep themes of the poem thoroughly and depicts the opposition within the repenting soul and the conflict between progress and regress. Consequently, a translation which is based on this structuralist analysis would be an accurate one which comes closer to the source text and renders meanings in a way that suits the themes of the poem and preserves the literary effect and the aesthetic value of the poem.

**1. Structuralism**

As the word denotes, structuralism is concerned with structures and examining the laws by which these structures work and the relations between them. The work of structuralism is built on the structure of relations between units. Therefore, the form is very important and the content is subsidiary and can be reached only through this form. The structuralist method of approaching texts is “ analytical and not evaluative” (Eagleton,1983:96) because it is about the literary work and not ourselves. Hence, every unit is important and is part of a law and objective system .

Structuralism, for Culler (1975:4), is based on realizing the underlying system of distinction or conventions that make meaning

possible. There are specific conventions for reading any genre. He believes that the reader should start from the fact that he should read the text as literature, and then inquire what operations are involved in each genre, as such operations are different for different genres. The reader should look at a literary text as a product of institution of literature animated by a special set of conventions to produce meaning peculiar for each mode or genre of discourse.

The structuralists' conventions of reading poetry require from the reader of poetry to consider first the convention of **Impersonality** and see the poet as distant from the poem. Other conventions are those of **Significance** to presuppose richness and importance in any poem (Culler, 1988:191); **Coherence**: to base the interpretation of a sentence on that of another one; and **Unity**: to find relations between elements. Unity can be achieved through different models. These models are expressed in terms of the following:

the binary oppositions, the dialectical resolutions of a binary opposition, the displacement of an unresolved opposition by a third term, the four-term homology, the series united by a common denominator, and the series with a transcendent or summarizing final term.

(Culler, 1975:174)

The simplest of these models of unity is the binary opposition which is given a temporal dimension (not x but y); another is the unresolved opposition (neither X nor Y but both simultaneously); next there is the dialectical resolution of a binary opposition. And finally the four-term homology (X is to Y as A is to B) or the series crossed and summed up by a transcendent final term (Daiches, 1981:378). These types of oppositions can be arranged in the following diagram in which items 1 and 2 refer to binary opposition which is resolved in each, while item 3 and 4 refer to unresolved opposition that is either replaced by a third term z (in item 3) or the presence of both x and y together at the same time (as in item 4). The opposition could be dialectical (as in item 5), or come in the form of a four-term homology (item 6) or could be summarized by a final term (item 7).

	X <sub>1</sub> ,X <sub>2</sub> ,X <sub>3</sub>	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Resolved opposition							X	Y
						y		Y
Unresolved opposition					z			Y
				xy				Y
Dialectical opposition			x y					Y
Homology		a b						Y
Final term	F							Y <sub>1</sub> ,Y <sub>2</sub> ,Y <sub>3</sub>

**2. ‘Ash Wednesday’ in Structuralist conventions**

The title of the poem is associated with the day of commination and humility and the poem itself suggests the "Mass" at many points(Williamson,1971:168). This is associated with the biblical reference to man as being created from dust and shall be returned into dust. Then ,man is in need of a turning away from the material world to the divine and pure world of God and this is the basic opposition on which the poem is built. Therefore, to understand it the reader should be alert to things between which the speaker turns.

To start with the interpretive convention of **Impersonality**, ‘Ash Wednesday’ is an impersonal and objective poem in a sense that the ‘I’ who speaks is not so much a personality as a will. In keeping with this impersonality, at its peaks and climaxes, the poet passes into the anonymous language of the church:’pray for us now and at the hour of

our death'; 'speak the word only'; 'After this our exile'; 'suffer me not to be separated'; 'And let my cry come unto Thee'(Jones ,1947:37). The pronoun 'I' which recurs 31 times does not indicate the poet personally but the soul that suffers in different stages of feelings and spiritual life.

As for the **significance** of the poem, it lies in the title that refers to the first day of Lent in the Christian calendar which is a period of forty days' penance and fasting to commemorate the forty days Christ spent fasting in the wilderness, where he was tempted by Satan and triumphed over him. Christians repent for their past sins and turn away from the world toward God(Southam,1968:129). This idea of turning to God is present from the first line and goes a long the poem. The soul ,here, is in conflict between turning to God or to the world. The title that covers the six parts carries the theme of the poem, the theme of penitential side of the spiritual life. The poem deals with the processes of self exploration and self examination ,and this goes till the end.

**Coherence** within the six parts of the poem is achieved by recurrent phrases and visions as 'because I do not hope to turn' 'because I do not hope', 'Although I do not hope', 'silent sister', 'veiled sister' that recur in the last three parts. Repetition of "because" 3 times in stanza 1 ,four times in stanza 3, once in stanza 4,once in stanza 5 gives coherence within section 1 and the repetition of because 3 times in section 2 gives coherence within this section and other sections. The word "turn" is the pivot on which the whole work is to hang. The repetition of the pronoun 'I' :31 times; and "my":9 times ; and "us":8 times , and "we":3 times gives coherence along the sections of the poem.

**Unity** in the poem is achieved through different models of opposition that can be seen between God and the world,power and weakness, traditional images and modern ones. The poem is about states of feelings and the conflict one feels toward the physical and the metaphysical worlds. It is a conflict between what is present and what is absent. This opposition is present from the first lines. The soul is torn between turning from unrighteousness to righteousness, from the world to God ,or from past to present . It represents sometimes one and other times another, therefore, it is sometimes resolved opposition and other times unresolved opposition .

This kind of opposition covers items 1 , 2,4 and 5 in the structuralist model presented before. Alternating between X and Y which is ambiguous shows instability of the soul. The 'turn' here is a turn to both worlds and both should be present in our minds. The idea of turning is connected with the sermon of Lancelot Andrews on Repentance as being a kind of circling. The circle consists of two turnings; a turn in which we look forward to God and with our whole hearts resolve to turn to Him; and a turn against when we look backward to our sins wherein

we have turned from God. Desperation of the sinful soul makes it turn away from God.

These turnings may overtake us if we do not turn to either of them because the wheels turn apace (Jones,1947:40). In repentance the soul circles forward, backward, forward and backward, and forward then backward. The movement forward and the movement backward follow the form X(item 1) and the form Y(item 2) respectively in the model of opposition while the movement forward and backward takes the form XY(item 4 in the diagram) and the movement forward then backward takes the form( X Y) which represents item5 of the diagram .

The detailed analysis of the poem is presented below according to its sections.

### **Section one**

The struggle of the soul is present from the first lines which show no hope to turn neither to God(1.1) nor to the world (1.3). These lines present the turning theme that combines all the sections of the poem. The self in stanza 1 no longer hopes to turn to the earthly world. It does not care about earthly matters any more. The actual world is rejected in favor of Heaven because the self can not be adjusted to it. The earthly loss is felt; therefore, the soul turns to God. It is no longer interested in the vanishing world. Religious acts are so important and much better than the worldly ones. The vanished power of trivial reign means nothing to it ,or things that are not worth mourning. It is a sense of belief in God and despair toward this world.

Desperation goes along the second stanza. The self does not know the positive hour and it can not drink in its source(the power) to be able to get what it wants. The power remains ambiguous but the source is nature. The soul perceives Heaven and Hell , therefore ,it rejects the present world. Human life is transitory and the flowers and delights of youth have vanished. Thus,it decided to turn from the sensual to the spiritual life in stanza 2. The self is failure and lacks hope because these earthly things are limited by time and place. It is satisfied with the present state. It feels joy in accepting things as they are in stanza 3. The will is defeated and the soul can not turn again. Therefore, the self renounces the blessed face and voice that are associated with religion. The only source of rejoice for it is to construct something upon which to rejoice.

In stanza 4 the self turns to pray to God. It prays that it may forget the matters that it discusses and explains a lot. It does not hope to turn to earthly matters; therefore, it prays to God to help it forget them. The self prays that its words atone to what is done resolving not to do it again. It prays that God's mercy overcomes His wrath. The self asks for a compassionate judgment though of it's sins. It pleads forgiveness for

what is done that the divine justice may not be heavy upon it's deeds. Then, this resolution is met with frustration in stanza 5 when it realizes its weakness and passiveness symbolized in the allegory of the aged Eagle. The self is in need of a peace of mind. It needs a power to guide it and teach it what to care about and what to neglect; to teach it stillness. This section ends with a plea to the Blessed Virgin Mary "to intercede and give spiritual aid on the behalf of sinful mankind"(Southam,1968:130).The five stanzas of section one show ascending and descending from the shore of belief. The soul turns to God when it becomes desperate as in stanza 1 and 2 but it recedes to desires and renounce belief when it finds pleasure in constructing something as in stanza 3 .

That will defeat is followed by a flash of hope in trusting the mercy of God (stanza 4) and this hope takes the form of prayer in stanzas 5 and 6. Baptism enhances that because it saves and guides though it is not enough without a will. There should be a power that teaches steadfastness and guides to the right way and this power is represented by the Virgin Mary as a flash of belief. This alternating state between two poles (God and world) goes along this section and all the other sections to show opposition. The unresolved opposition represents the struggle in the soul. The opposition among the stanzas is the opposition of the states of the soul . Sometimes it is not X(God) but Y (the world) and other times it is not Y but X. This model of opposition gives unity to the poem in section one and combines its stanzas. It represents items 1 and 2 of the structuralist model of opposition presented here. The last lines (40-1) in section one (that are taken from the close of the Roman Catholic prayer) are so significant for the theme of the poem. This reflects the need for repentance in the form of a prayer for mercy. The theme of turning is revolving among the stanzas of section one.

Repetition of "because"(11) times makes the stanzas in section one cohere and shows the justification to take one side or another. This coherence reveals the never changing state of despair. The repetition of 'I' 19 times and 'us' 5 times shows the continuity of struggle that is common to all and not confined to one person. It is the same soul that struggles,whether alone or in company; therefore, it prays at the end for all.

## **Section two**

The image of Mary with which stanza 5 of section1 ends goes on in section2. This section is rich of other Biblical references as: The leopards, juniper tree ,bones, grasshopper and Rose. These words carry religious suggestions that might have a special effect on the reader. The *Significance* of these suggestions is that they proceed hand in hand in producing atmospheres that have the reflexions of Ash Wednesday.

This section starts with the image of a lady and three leopards. These leopards are not agents of destruction but, on the contrary, they are salutary. They fed to satiety on legs, heart, liver and what had been contained in the skull. What had been contained in the bones (which recurs in lines 47,48,59 and 64) said Chirping “we shine with brightness”(1.52) because the lady honors the Virgin in meditation. Therefore, the white agent caused this “dissembled” being to proffer its deeds to oblivion and offer love to the posterity of the desert. This act of self-abnegation “recovers” the portions that the agents reject (Williamson,1971:173) because they are the organs to which the lusts of life relate. This represents an advance over the previous state of frustration of self in section one.

*Coherence* in this section comes from the repetition of “lady” in lines 42,49,57 and 66; and the repetition of “because” in lines :49 and 50 that cohere with the recurrence of “because” (11 times) in section I and which makes section one and two cohere in turn. The repetition of “bones” in lines:47,48,59 and 64 brings coherence to show that the brightness of these bones reminds us of the brightness of the lady; they imitate her devotion. The image of the lady recurs in the form of a single Rose. This Rose refers to the Virgin in devotion. The lady of paradoxes is the Garden that reconciles many of these paradoxes. The image of earthly paradise leads to the Garden; it is the incarnation of love that leads to God. Thus, the term “garden” is a transcendent final term that sums up the series of juniper-tree, ground, rose, tree, and this represents a model of **Unity** in this section that takes item 7 in the diagram of the structuralist model of unity. Binary opposition between “memory” and “forgetfulness”(1.69,70), “exhausted” and “life giving” (1.71); “worried” and “reposeful”(1.72), “love unsatisfied”(1.77) and “love satisfied” (1,79) represent the conflict one feels in death. These are the words sung by the bones. In death the bones rejoice in the division of parts which torment the human being(ibid:174). Death brings hope and despair. Hope to those repentant and despair to those who failed to repent. Death is the end of torment to believers who take the right way to God and the beginning of torment to those who deny Him. Death for them brings torture, a journey to no end. The bones sing happily that they are glad to be scattered for they did little to each other. Parts of the body were not honest to each other. They were scattered in life and never be unified against evil. Hence, it would be better to be scattered after death. Death, for this reason, is not a threat to the self and its lusts, but a release from them(ibid:175). This love to death shows that both the cause and form of a triumph over self is found (ibid). One is ready to relinquish the human form (body) if one can reach a greater sense of permanence. This represents passing the first step toward

the summit of the stairway of ascent which represents the higher love in "Ash Wednesday".

### **Section Three**

In this section the soul tries to escape the flesh in trying to ascend three staircases. It had passed the first stair in section two and later, on the first turning of the second stair, it started struggling with the devil of the stair. The imageries of youth and spring in the third stair bring hope with their suggestions of carnal love and deceptive appearance of the Garden. The appeal to senses, here, is enticing not repulsive as in the image of despair (ibid:176). In this state the soul abandons sensual perceptions. This section represents a trail of despair and hope and "the imagery of hope and despair, which emphasizes sensuous appeal or its opposite, points to the loss which constitutes the trail" (ibid). The loss is represented in the figure of Pan not God and suggests a pastoral scene and not the Garden (as in section two). The stops and steps of the mind over the third stair brings strength beyond the conflict between hope and despair.

The self, here, has the will to utter the petition. This supreme faith is a reference to the Centurion whose trust in Christ's power healed his servant at a distance without need to visit him (Southam, 1968:132). The conflict between hope and despair goes along this section. Sometimes it represents stops and steps other times, till hope prevails to give the soul a strength to climb the third stair. The unresolved opposition between hope and despair (1.101) represents item four of the diagram of opposition. It takes the form (XY), because they are "twisting, turning below" (1.103). The soul is desperate but trust in God helps it to ascend. Though the self, here, feels unworthy, trust in God's compassion gives it hope to restore peace and give up desperation. This section returns to the labour of the will. The struggle is resumed: the 'I' who did not hope to turn, turns again and again in mounting the stairs. The struggle is now with the evil whose presence is felt in the 'fetid air' (1.99) and the 'devil of the stairs' (1.100).

### **Section Four**

The reference in the first stanza in part four is ambiguous and the image of Mary appears to disambiguate it and be united with the vision of the silent sister. The lady in Mary's colour is paradoxical, both ignorant and aware of the eternal sorrow, talking of trivial things and at the same time making fountains and springs stronger. Her actions are like those of Mary; therefore, the speaker asks her to be mindful of him. This lady is saluted as the Garden in section two and now she is petitioned. What



makes her mindful of him is his utterance of the theme of redemption. The state of the soul in hope and despair (XY) in section three is conquered by a state of growing faith(z), i.e., item 3 in the structuralist model of opposition; and now it is led to a vision of regeneration which is conditioned by the fruit of Mary (Williamson, 1971:180). This section is more mystical than the previous ones. The soul is led from earthly life after dismissing the flesh to know what is spiritual and become a believer. The image of Mary in section four overwhelms the speaker's thought and gives the soul that faith. This makes it yield to redemption which, in turn, reflects the vision one feels himself surrounded with in Ash Wednesday.

The significance of this occasion (of Ash Wednesday) requires the appearance of these images. At the same time the recurrence of Mary's vision in lines 123 and 129 and the reference to her (in 1.134) and to the silent sister (line 141) give coherence to this section. This section in turn, coheres with section two which is built on reference to flute (11.132 and 143) that corresponds to the flute in section three (11.111 and 142), which remind us of the pasture scene in section three where Pan represents a loss. The flute now is breathless because garden god is not as good as God represented by the vision of Mary (the silent sister which makes the sign of the cross). Her presence makes the fountains spring up and the birds sing down redemption. The opposition between garden god and God is resolved and faith leads the soul to God. Hence, this opposition represents item two of the structuralist model in which X (God) prevails. In spite of that, the idea here is not complete. The phrase which is taken from a catholic prayer is not ended with a full stop as if fearful to complete itself (ibid). The hesitation shows that the soul is still in conflict; afraid that it might be shackled again to have another side. These apprehensions become true in the following section.

## Section Five

This section is built on the development of opposing ideas of reality: the word of God from which all others derive, and the word of man unredeemed who has to seek the spiritual truth again after denying truth and God (Anderson & Buckler, 1967:1240-1).

The conflict here is between the **Word** as a manifestation of God and the word as a revelation of Him. With the **Word** which is a manifestation of God light shines in darkness. The world goes around the **Word**. This **Word** is the centre of the whirling world. The **Word** is for the world but the world is against the **Word** (ibid.). The opposition is now intensified by a repetition of the question of the **Word** (ibid:181). Then comes the vision of the veiled sister to settle the struggle. Man chose God but opposes Him, if not apparently, hiddenly by committing sins. Prayer of the veiled sister could save human beings; but will she pray for

them? Will she pray for those who ignore the right route in life; who chose it but oppose it.? They are like children at the gate of church, can not pray but do not go away. They are so passive .Are they worth prayer? Will she pray for those who offend her; who affirm in public and deny in private between the rocks of Mary? The mention of veiled sister thrice (11.168,177 and 171) makes this section cohere with other sections(one, two ,three and four) that have the vision of Mary. People affirm and deny at the same time because their will is too weak to realize faith . The **Word** and world are in an unresolved opposition (XY)

Man realizes the urgent need for grace and highest love but it is extremely difficult to turn to God. Therefore, this section ends with the Reproaches said by Christ to the people who prepared a cross for their Saviour. The turning to God is so difficult; hence, the poem returns to its initial theme of turning.

### **Section six**

In this section the poem returns to its initial theme of turning (in section one) but with a different relation to its turning. This section summons up the first one but the conflict here is sharper .The tone now is different with the use of “although” instead of “because” . Although the speaker does not wish to turn to the world, the appeal of the world returns to him. This is the time between death for the world or birth to God. There are different oppositions between profit and loss ,birth and dying, window and shore. Though slightly different ,this section repeats the theme of the first one. In section one the emphasis was on not hoping and not striving. Here, in spite of the assertions that life is a ‘brief transit’, a ‘dream crossed twilight’(11.189 and 190 respectively), “there are aspirations after natural vigor and unfettered movement”(Jones,1947:55).

Turning in this section has concessive relation to will-since it comes with “although”-while in section 1 turning has a causal relation to will since it comes with “because”. The soul is aware of the loss in turning to earthly matters but it can not help it. Though of that it is attached to faith in the image of rocks(11.206,213 and 215) and tree(1.207) and the blessed sister (11.209 and 216) and holy mother (11.209 and 216). Therefore, the turn to the world now is done in the shadow of God and not without Him. The opposition between God and the world takes the form of XY which represents item four of the structuralist model. The repetition of rocks thrice(11.206,213 and 215) in this section with the image of “blessed sister”(1.209) and “sister mother”(1.216) makes the vision of God present so that the soul may not be separated from Him. The vision of the garden also in line 209 achieves the same aim. It is opposed to the wide window (1.192) which reveals beauty of the world which is enticing and draws back the soul from the

garden of the blessed sister and holy mother. These visions make this section cohere with other sections that carry the same images. The “unbroken wings”(1.194) oppose “vans” (1.35) in section 1 .While the “lost heart” (1.195) rejoices again in its lost delight and the “weak spirit”(1.197) rebels for the lusts of the senses,the” blind eye”(1.201) creates its visions. There is no place to sensuousness here because sensuous perception is already overcome in section four. This section represents the highest rank for the soul in which conflict comes on the spiritual level. The soul is not blinded totally. It has insight into the sacred entity of God. It is in conflict between the spiritual dying and the birth (1.204), between death to the world and birth to God. The dreams of lady, virgin and Christ cross between the rocks to save the soul and make it spiritually reborn in achieving the grace of God and being forgiven. The turn to the initial theme is a different one. The states that the soul passed along the sections have not gone in vain. The soul abandoned sensuality and is on the ascent of spirituality, but this spirituality is not void of remains. It is not a pure one and because of that turning is still present. The turning theme goes along the poem as implied in the title. Being the first day of lent, Ash Wednesday represents a turn from the world (past sins) to God through repentance. The significance of the title lies in giving an insight to interpret the sections of the poem and the poem as a whole as a conflict inside a soul moving toward the grace of God; and the states that this soul passes through. The sections of the poem cohere with each other. The first section ends with a reference to the close of the Roman Catholic prayer in which the Blessed Virgin Mary is asked to give spiritual aid to sinful people while the second section starts with the same image of the Lady. It ends also with a reference to God while section three precedes in that to end with a reference to Christ. This coheres with section four which starts with the vision of the Lady and ends with a phrase from a Roman Catholic prayer in which the Blessed Virgin Mary is addressed again. Section five starts with a reference to the **Word** of God and ends with words that are said by Christ on the cross. Then comes section six to repeat what the poem starts with (i.e.) the theme of turning. The structuralist analysis presented so far about the poem has its bearing on the translation of the poem into Arabic.

## The Translation of the Poem

### اربعاء الرماد

لاني لا أمل الا ياب مرة اخرى

لاني لا أمل

لاني لا أمل أن أعود

راغباً بهبه هذا وحدود فهمي لذاك

ما عدت اجهد سعياً وراء هذه الاشياء

لماذا يخفى النسر المسن جناحيه

ولماذا اندب

السلطان الزائل للعهد المعتاد

لاني لا أمل ان اعرف مرة اخرى

المجد المتأرجح لساعة اليقين

لاني لا افكر

لاني اعرف ان لن اعلم

السلطة الزائلة الحقيقية المتفردة

لاني لا استطيع ان اشرب

هناك ، حيث تزهو الاشجار وتجري العيون

فمرة اخرى ، ليس ثمة شيء

لاني اعرف ان الزمان دوماً زمان

والمكان دوماً ليس الا مكان

وما هو حقيقي حقيقي لزمان واحد فحسب

ومكان واحد

ابتهج ان الاشياء كما هي

وانكر الوجه المقدس

وانكر الصوت

لاني لا استطيع ان أمل بالاياب مرة اخرى

لذا أسر لاني اقممت شيئاً

يسرني

وانتصرع الى الله ان يرحمنا

وانتصرع عليّ انسى

هذه الامور التي كثيراً ما طرحتها

وكثيراً ما ناقشتها

لاني لا أمل بالاياب

فلترد هذه الكلمات  
كي لا يحصل ما حصل ثانيه  
عسى ان لا يكون حسابنا عسيراً

لان هذه الا جفحة لم تعد اجنحة طيران  
بل مراوحا تضرب الهواء  
الهواء الذي اصبح ضئيلا وجافا تماما  
اصغر وايبس من الارادة  
علمينا ان نكثرث وان لا نكثرث  
علمينا ان نستقر  
صلي من اجلنا خاطئون الان وفي ساعة موتنا  
صلي من اجلنا الان وساعة موتنا

٢. السيدة ، ثلاثه نمور بيضاء جلسن تحت شجرة العرعر  
في برد النهار ، شيعن الى حد التخمة  
من قلمي ، فوادي ، كبدي وما احتوته  
الدائرة المجوفة من جمجمتي . وقال الله  
أَوْ تحيا هذه العظام ؟ أَوْ تحيا هذه العظام؟  
وقال ما تحتويه هذه العظام (الجافة) مبتهجا:  
لفضيله هذه السيدة  
ولودها ولانها  
تَجَل العذراء بتأملها  
فاننا نشع القا . وانا من  
يرائي هنا  
اترك اعمالى للنسيان ، وحيي  
لذريه الصحراء وثمار اليقطين  
ان هذا ما يشفي  
احشائي وعيني  
والاجزاء عسيرة الهضم  
التي تلفظها النمور . توارت السيدة  
بجلباب ابيض . تتأمل بجلباب ابيض  
ليكفر بياض العظام عن النسيان  
عظام لا حياة فيها . وما دمت منسياً  
وسأبقى منسياً ، فأنتي سأسلو  
متفانياً ومركزا في غاييتي . وقال الرب  
النبوة للريح ، للريح وحدها لان  
الريح وحدها ستصغي . وشدَّت العظام مسرورة  
مرددة أغنية القبوط:

سيدة السكينة  
هادئة حزينة  
ممزقة تماماً  
زهرة الذاكرة  
زهرة النسيان  
مضناة وواهبة للحياة  
مطمئنة قلقة  
تلك الزهرة الفريدة  
أصبحت جنة  
إليها ينتهي الحب كله  
ويُنهي عذاب  
الحب الضاميء  
والعذاب الأكبر  
للحب الريان  
نهاية ما لا ينتهي  
رحلة سرمدية  
ختام كل ذاك  
الذي لا يُختتم  
كلام من دون كلمة  
وكلمة بلا كلام  
تباركت الام  
في تلك الجنة  
حيث ينتهي الحب كله

شدت العظام تحت شجرة العرعر  
متناثرة ومشعة  
نحن فرحون لتفرقنا قليلا ما أحسنا  
لبعضنا البعض،  
تحت شجرة في برد النهار ،  
ونعمة الرمال  
ناسين أنفسهم وبعضهم بعضا ، متحدين  
في سكون البراري . هذه الأرض التي  
سنقسمها مقترعا . فلا التقسيم ولا الوحدة  
يهمان . هذه الأرض . لنا ميراثنا

٣. في المنعطف الأول من المرقاه الثانية  
التفت فرأيت اسفل  
الشكل نفسه ملتقاً حول العمود

في الضباب في الهواء كريحه الرائحة  
متصارعاً مع شيطان المرقى الذي يضع  
الوجه المخادع للرجاء والقنوط

وفي المنعطف الثاني من المرقاه الثانية  
تركتهما ملتفان يدوران إلى الأسفل  
لم يكن ثمة وجوه وكان المرقى مظلماً ،  
رطباً ، متلثماً ، مثل فم شيخ  
سائلٌ لعابه ، لا سبيل لاصلاحه ،  
أو مثل الحلقوم المسنن لقرش مسن

كان في المنعطف الأول للمرقاه الثالثة  
شباك ضيق منتفخ كثمرة التين  
ووراء أزهار الزعرور والمشهد الرعوي  
هناك شخص عريض المنكبين مرتدياً الأزرق والأخضر  
يُنشد لشهر النوار بناية العتيق  
جميل هو الشعر المتناثر ، الشعر البني المتطاير على الشفاه  
السوسن والشعر البني ،  
الحيرة ، موسيقى الناي ، وقفات وخطوات  
العقل في المرقاه الثالثة  
تتلاشى ، تتلاشى ، القوة مع الرجاء والقنوط  
متسلقا المرقاه الثالثة  
رباه ، أنا لا استحق  
رباه أنا لا استحق  
لكن انطق الكلمة فحسب  
٤ . من مشى بين البنفسجة والبنفسجة  
من مشى بين  
الطبقات المختلفة للأخضر المتباين  
ماشياً بالابيض والازرق ، بالوان العذراء ،  
متحدثاً عن اشياء تافهة  
في جهلٍ ومعرفة ، في اسىٍ سرمدى  
من تحرك بين الاخرين كلما مشوا ،  
من قوى الينابيع  
وحلى العيون  
ويرد الصخرة الجافة وثبت الرمال  
في زرقة العائق ، زرقة لون العذراء  
ارعينا

هذه هي السنين التي تمر بين ، حمل  
الكمان والناي ، مسترجعة  
ذلك الذي يتحرك في الوقت بين النوم  
واليقظة ، مرتدية  
النور الابيض ملتفة به ، كاسياً ايها ، يلفها  
تمر السنين الجديدة ، مسترجعة  
في غيمة مشرقة من الدموع، السنين ، مسترجعة  
بقصيد جديد للحن القديم . افتدوا  
الوقت . افتدوا  
الرؤيا غير المقروءة في الحلم الاعلى  
حين يجر وحيد القرن المرصع النعش المذهب

احتجبت الاخت الصامته بالابيض والازرق  
بين اشجار الصنوبر ، وراء رب الحديقة  
دنا به منقطع الانفاس ، حنث رأسها و  
اومات لكن لم تقل كلمة

وتفجرت العين وغنى الطير  
افتدوا الوقت ، افتدوا الحلم  
دليل الكلمة غير المسموعة ، غير المنطوقة  
حتى تهز الريح الفا همسة من الصنوبر  
وبعد هذا منفانا

٥. اذا ضاعت الكلمة النائية ، وقضت الكلمة النافذة  
واذا لم تُلَقَّ ولم تُسمع  
الكلمة غير الملقاة وغير المسموعة  
تبقى الكلمة غير الملقاة ، الكلمة غير المسموعة  
الكلمة من دون كلمة ، الكلمة في  
العالم وللعالم ؛  
وأضاء النور في الظلمات  
ونحو الكلمة دار العالم المتحرك  
حول مركز الكلمة الصامته  
آه يا قومي ، ماذا فعلت لكم.

هل ستصلي الاخت المحتجة بين اشجار  
الصنوبر الهيفاء لاولئك الذين اسأوا لها  
الفرعين الى لا يستطيعون التسليم  
ويشهدون امام العالم وينكرون بين



الصخور

في الصحراء الاخيرة بين الصخور الاخيرة الزرقاء  
الصحراء في الجنينة والجنينة في الصحراء  
لافظا من الفم بذور التفاح الذابلة  
آه يا قومي

٦. رغم اني لا أمل العودة مرة اخرى

رغم اني لا أمل

رغم اني لا أمل ان اعود

متأرجحاً بين الفوز والخسران

في هذا المعبر القصير حيث تعبر الاحلام

الغسق بين الميلاد والموت

(ارحمني يارب) رغم اني لا اتمنى ان اتمنى هذه

الاشياء

من الشباك العريض صوب الساحل الصخري

لاتزال الاشرعة البيضاء تطير تجاه البحر مرفرفة تجاه البحر

اجنحة غير مكسرة

ويتصلب القلب التائه ويبتهج

في السوسن المفقود وأصوات البحر الضائعة

وتسرع الروح الضعيفة لتثور

للسولجان الذهبي المحني ورائحة البحر الضائعة

تسرع لتشفى

صرخة السماني والزقزاق الحائم

وتخلق العين العمياء

الهيكل الفارغة بين البوابات العاجية

وتجدد الرائحة طعم الملح للارض الرملية

هذا وقت التوتر بين الموت والميلاد

مكان الخلوة حيث تعبر ثلاثة اطياف

بين الصخور الزرقاء

لكن عندما تهتز الاصوات من انجراف شجرة صنوبر

بعيداً

تهتز شجرة صنوبر اخرى وتجيب

الاخت المباركة ، الام المقدسة ، روح النبيوع ، روح

الجنائن

عذينا كي لا نخدع انفسنا بالزيف

علمينا ان نكثرث ولا نكثرث

علمينا ان نسكن  
حتى بين هذه الصخور  
سلامنا في ارادة الله  
وحتى بين هذه الصخور  
ايتها الام الاخوت  
وروح النهر ، روح البحر  
عذبيني كي لا نفترق  
ولتصل اليك صرختي

This translation of “Ash Wednesday” is not the first ,but it has been preceded by many : a translation by Muneer Bashoor in Shi’r No2 Spring 1957,and another one by Fai’q Matta in 1966 and one also by Yousuf Al-Yousuf in 1986. What is new in this translation is its being based on a structuralist interpretation of the poem. Structuralist conventions of impersonality ,significance ,coherence and unity (with its different models of opposition) lead to an interpretation that comes closer to the theme of the poem. The quest of meaning ,in terms of a structuralist analysis, is the base of this translation and not other related notions about translating poetry. The interpretation of meaning of each word in the poem should be related to the central theme of the poem which is the theme of turning. The soul is in conflict between turning to the metaphysical world represented by God or to the physical world. The turn to God is translated as الاياب to be differentiated from the ordinary turn العودة to the world. The word الاياب is used because of its religious connotations.The soul turns to God in repentance. It is not an ordinary turn but one with a feeling of guilt and a hope for forgiveness.It is a turn to spiritual values with an intention to avoid guilt, while the ordinary turn to the world is the turn to secular values.

The opposition between God(X) and the word(Y) makes one discern that there are two different turnings along the poem and should be translated differently. Religious meanings and connotations are presented also through the translation of lines 6 as لماذا يخفى النسر المسن جناحيه .The soul,here,suffers from humility (Tate ,1962:133) and such translation shows humility and makes this lines cohere with other lines that show passivity and humility of the soul. It also instigates Muslim readers to recall the verse averse that reflects humility of the person to whom this verse is directed.

The opposition between images of Garden(11.74,78) and desert (11.54,93) is reflected in the translation of the word Garden into جنة where the reference is made to Heaven and to be differentiated from the reference to the ordinary garden.Wherever garden is mentioned in

religious contexts and associated with Mary ,it is translated as جنة or جَنِينَة to render the religious atmospheres to the Arabic reader. Garden god(1.142) is translated into رب الحديقة to differentiate it from the Garden of God, since this god is weak unlike God and hence his garden is not like the Garden. Progress of soul toward God is reflected also in the translation .The word “stair” (11.96,102,104,107,114,116) in section three which is translated into مرقاه and “stairs” (1.100) which is translated into مرقى to reflect the spiritual progress.

The translation shows also the image of Mary as surrounded with religious atmospheres. Wherever it occurs this reference to the Virgin raises the human woman to a spiritual level so that her sexuality becomes blended with spirituality to become a symbol that represents more. Union with such a woman is a step to achieve union with the **Word** (God).The image of the lady is produced in section two to be associated with the Garden (الجنة) and in section three it is a vision that provides an incarnation of love and becomes associated with the **Word** in section four and five and with God in section six .The purity of the veiled sister is reflected in the translation as الاخْت المحْتَجِبَة to show that the lady herself puts veil willingly to protect herself against evil and to be sacred. There is no external factor that forces her to be veiled as the translation into الاخْت المحْتَجِبَة might suggest .Purity of this lady is shown also in the following words: تجل العذراء وفضيلة هذه السيدة وسيدة السكينة وتباركت الام واحتجبت والاخت المباركة: that go till the last line of the poem ,which is a quotation from a prayer to God(from the Psalms) . This line is addressed to God and not to the lady as is marked in the translation . ولتصل اليك صرختي . The pure lady(mixed with the image of Mary) leads to God .Love to her is an incarnation from the lower to the higher. The paradoxes of the soul are settled now in reconciling the view to the lady of paradoxes. Her love is the reason behind the progression of the soul. The need for such pure love and moral recovery is a need for faith and a result of faith at the same time. Such and other notions are reflected in the translation of the poem which is based on interpreting it structurally .The unresolved opposition that goes from section one to section six and which is finally resolved in section six in the behalf of faith helps a great deal in the translation of the poem. The use of different models of opposition, in addition to other structuralist conventions as presented in the analysis of the poem, helps in discerning the poem and choosing the accurate sense of the word that has an effect

on the Arabic reader and facilitates his understanding of the theme of the poem .

Richness of Arabic language with synonyms helps to produce such translation and adds to the aesthetic flavor as in the translation of "turn into الاياب one time and العودة another time or the translation of garden as جنة and حديقة وجنينة depending on the context. Also the translation of desert into various words as الجذب والبراري والصحراء adds to the aesthetic values of the translation and compensates for losses that might have been occurred elsewhere in the translation.

The difference between this translation and other translations produced before is that the structuralist analysis it is based on provides a deeper view of the theme of the poem and the meanings of words.

## **Conclusion**

Being a personal poem about the conflict along the path of soul in repentance, 'Ash Wednesday' is built on the opposition of the states of the soul. Analyzing the poem on the base of Culler's structuralist model of different types of oppositions helps to discern thoroughly the opposite states through which the soul passes along the poem and interpret the poem in a way that reflects its deep themes. Thus unity and coherence are achieved among the six sections of the poem to reflect the progress and regress of the soul in repentance. The structuralist analysis of the poem provides an interpretation that leads to an accurate translation of the poem in terms of the choice of words and conveying to target readers the true senses and effects of words and keeping the aesthetic value of the original poem.

## **Bibliography**

Anderson, G.K. and W.E. Buckler. 1967. *The Literature of England*. Illinois: Scott, Foresman and co.

Culler, J. 1975. *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism Linguistics, and the Study of Literature*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

-----, 1988. *Framing the Sign: Criticism and Its Institutions*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd.

Daiches, David. 1981. *Critical Approaches to Literature* London: Longman.

Eagleton, T. 1983. *Literary Theory: An Introduction*. Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press.

Jones,E.D. "Ash Wednesday "in *T.S.Eliot :A Study of His Writings by Several Hands*. Ed.B.Rrajan.London:Dennis Dobson LTD.

Southam,B.C.1968.*A Student's Guide to Selected Poem of T.S.Eliot*. London:Faber & Faber.

Tate,Allen.1962."On Ash Wednesday" in *T.S.Eliot* Ed.Hugh Kennen.New Jersey:Prentic-Hall,P.P.129-135.

Williamson,George.1971.*A Reader's Guide to T.S. Eliot :A Poem by Poem Analysis*. London:Thames & Thames.

## "اربعاء الرماد": تحليل بنيوي مع الاشارة المترجمتها

### الخلاصة

ان قصيدة اربعاء الرماد هي قصيدة عن التوبة والتقدم الروحي لتلك الروح التي تكون في صراع بين الانابة و الرجوع الى الرب والتوبه او التراجع الى الدنيا الدنية. تعتمد هذه الدراسة الطريقة البنيوية المستندة الى نموذج كلر ١٩٧٥ الذي يعتمد على قواعد لقراءة الشعر ويتألف من انماط مختلفة من المقابلات او المتضادات التي تعكس الحالات المختلفة للروح وتضفي وحدة على اجزاء القصيدة. يبين تحليل القصيدة باستخدام هذا النموذج من المتضادات استفاضة موضوعات القصيدة وعمقها ويرسم التعارض والتضاد في الروح التائبة وصراعها بين الارتقاء لله او الانتكاس والعودة للدنيا.و النتيجة ان الترجمة التي تعتمد هذا التحليل البنيوي تكون ترجمة دقيقة تقترب كثيرا من النص الاصل وتنقل المعاني بطريقة تناسب موضوعات القصيدة وتحفظ التأثير الادبي والقيمة الجمالية لها.