

THE POETICS OF TEXTUAL THRESHOLDS IN AHCENE EL-KHARRAT'S COLLECTIONS OF POETRY

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Abstract: The aim of this study is to analyze the poetics of textual thresholds in the poetry of Ahcene El-Kharrat (1989-2019), to query their various dimensions, connotations and artistic features, based on the assumption that contemporary poetic text is no longer just a set of poems nicely written and collected in a book, but rather a mosaic of written texts, para (meta) texts, and thresholds related to their hypertext. The thresholds' role is vital. Its importance cannot be ignored while formulating the general poetic context of the poem. The latter cannot reach completeness without its textual thresholds that opens up new poetic and artistic perspectives. We will shed light, in this analytical and intertextual research, on the thresholds of the poems in the collections of the Algerian poet Ahcene El-Kharrat entitled: *Nabdh-al-faji'a (Pulse of Bereavement)*, *Basar Al-Turab (Sight of the earth)* and *Shatah Al-darawishes (the Dervishes' imagination)*.

Keywords: Textual Thresholds; Paratext; Connotation; Author; Poetics

POÉTIQUE DES SEUILS TEXTUELS DANS LES RECUEILS DE POÉSIE D'AHCENE EL-KHARRAT

Résumé: L'objectif de cette recherche est d'étudier la poétique des seuils textuels dans la poésie d'Ahcene El-Kharrat (1989-2019), afin d'y mesurer différentes dimensions, connotations et manifestations artistiques en se basant sur l'hypothèse que la poésie contemporaine n'est pas un simple assemblage de poèmes dont la versification est embellie puis assemblée dans un seul ouvrage, mais plutôt une mosaïque de textes, de para (méta) textes antérieurs, de seuils interactifs, versifiés qui interagissent avec leur hypertexte. Le rôle des seuils textuels est vital. Son importance ne peut être ignorée lors de la contextualisation poétique globale des poèmes qui ne peuvent atteindre leur degré de complétude sans leurs seuils textuels qui leur ouvrent de nouvelles perspectives poétiques et artistiques. Nous nous focaliserons dans le cadre de cette étude analytique et intertextuelle sur les seuils des recueils de poésie appartenant au poète algérien Ahcene El-Kharrat, intitulés respectivement : *Nabdh-al-faji'a (Pulse du deuil)*, *Basar Al-Turab (Vision de la terre)* et *Shatah Al-darawishes (Imaginaire des derviches)*.

Mots-clés : Seuils textuels ; Paratexte ; Connotation ; Auteur ; Poétique.

Introduction

The contemporary Algerian poets realized the importance of the textual thresholds that accompany poetry, because of the artistic and aesthetic values they may add to the poetic text. They also involve the reader in the creative process and enable him to become an active participant in constructing its meaning and deciphering it as well. Therefore, textual thresholds are another facet of the text stemming from the interpretations of the reader who tries to get the bottom of the texts and interpret their significance trying to know what the poet hides between the implicit lines and in their various footnotes. Therefore, the contemporary poetic text is no longer just a collection of poems printed in a book, but rather it is a mosaic of written texts and paratexts that are explicit at times and whose significance is implicit at other times. The paratext is a set of textual appendices and thresholds directly related to the text including all that surrounds the book (or the collection), such as its cover, author, title, dedication, forewords, introductions, and footnotes. In this study, we will analyze how textual thresholds are represented in the poetry of the contemporary Algerian poet Ahcene El-Kharrat through three collections of poetry entitled, *Nabdh-al-faji'a ie Pulse of Bereavement* (1989), *Basar Al-Turab ie Sight of the earth* (2019), *Shatah Al-darawishes ie Dervishes' imagination* (2019), trying to answer various questions, the most important of which is: Is the poet Ahcene El-Kharrat's thresholds a conscious discourse in view of the chaos of publication, reception and even interpretation? Does the Thresholds discourse contribute to the text comprehension and its meaning orientation for the recipient, or does it lead to a widening of the gap between them? Textual thresholds would convey meanings around which gravitates the stratum of the collection of poetry. The choice of colours, illustration, writing characters may create a variety of interpretations related to their symbolism, the reception of the paratext by the reader and the poet's own choices that may be closely related to his own personal, social or spiritual experience. The answer to these questions requires an analytical and intertextual study of the thresholds of poetry collections, through which we will move from the poetics of what is read to the poetics of textual interaction, based on the fact that poetics does not only exist in literary texts, but rather includes what surrounds these texts and becomes inevitably part of understanding and interpretation of the text. Although the situation does not enable us to study all the textual thresholds in the poetry, we will therefore devote the research to analyze two important thresholds: *the cover* and *the title* in the selected collections. Other studies will be devoted to examining the rest of the thresholds due to their importance in the process of reading, understanding and interpreting the poetic text, but above all, it is necessary to provide a brief theoretical explanation of the concept of textual thresholds.

1. The concept of thresholds

Western and Arab critics differed in naming the term textual thresholds, or what can be referred to as *paratext*. It is called *paratext* in English, *paratexte* (with e) in French, and there are many equivalents in Arabic. It was translated in Arabic by Muhammad Bennis *al-nass al-muwazi* (*parallel text*); Mukhtar Hosni translated it *at-tawazi-an-nasi* (*textual parallelism*), Muhammad Al-Hadi Al-Mutwi opted for *muwazi-al-nass* (*the parallel of the text*), and Abdel Aziz Shibl chose *al-nass-al-muhadi* (*text aligned*), Saeed Yaqtin translated it *al-munas* (*para-text*), in addition to many other translations: such as the

framing text, the accompanying text, the thresholds in Arabic translations. These options in Arabic are mainly due to the multiplicity of equivalents to the prefix *para* we can find in Greek and Latin as a characteristic carrying various meanings: such as similarity, analogy, and equality (ie equal to, equivalent to), in relation with the quantitative dimensions, and values, so that we find the Latin word parallel to the Greek word. It denotes similarity, homogeneity, and suitability, as well as appearance, clarity, and convergence (ie convenient, companion, similar to). The paratext represents thresholds, which are signs that perform different functions. It creates, in the recipient's mind, desires and emotions that enable him to get to the depth of the text with a prior vision in most cases: "To make it present, ensure its presence in the world, its reception and consumption, in today's form as a book".

They empower him by grasping the basic lines that help the recipient read and interpret the text, being open to its structures, semantic dimensions, enabling him to identify the elements framing its construction (*its architextuality*) and some of the methods of its organization and imaginative realization. It carries within it an auctorial function that attempts to reveal the writing strategy. (حماد، 1979)

Genette (1987:7)

2. The poetics of the explicit/ implicit significance in the covers' thresholds of the three collections of poetry

The text of the back cover is considered as one of the most important textual thresholds that shape the peritext. It is "the first of its threshold. Its signs allow us to discover the text's relationships to other texts." (حماد، 1979، صفحة 56) It helps to understand the literary genre of the text, and to sink into its depths in order to understand its content, its semantic, artistic, ideological and aesthetic dimensions. In this case, the cover space transforms from a mere formal ornament into a significant informational space that offers itself to the reader and exert its power of seduction and temptation, so that he can then either disturbing the text or being "an indicator of the suggestive dimensions of the text." (مبروك، 2002، صفحة 124) The front cover of a literary work performs two basic functions: an advertising function related to the publisher, which ends once the book is purchase; an interpretive function related to the recipient, who may reveal the similarity between the cover image and the content of the poetry collections. It mostly consists of several units and elements: such as *the name of the author, the main title, the genre of the creation, the publisher, and the pictures or artistic paintings* included in it. It aims to direct the reader to these sometimes explicit and sometimes implicit contents, which all refer to the general theme of the creative work. As they work in an integrated manner to crystallize the aesthetics and suggestiveness of the cover, they are significant signals and supports. The poetry collections of Ahcene El-Kharrat - selected for study - include various and diverse elements, from which we will choose units with semantic loads: *genres, images, author's name, and title.*

2.1 The genre of creation

The genre of creation is one of the graphic units, and its function is to determine the nature of the literary work, whether it is poetry, novel, play, or a tale. It is one of the indicators that seek to create communicative relationships with the recipient and helps him "conjure the horizon of expectation, and also prepares him to accept the text." (حماد، 1979، صفحة 75) It is useful in the process of reception by identifying strategies for reception

mechanisms and linking this text genre to other texts of the same genre in the recipient's textual memory, because he receives it through a specific genre, and concludes a reading pact with it, as explained:

The reception of any literary genre -fiction or non-fiction- consists of an pact between the author and the reader, which is specifically related to the essence of this genre. The generic indication - therefore - is a system attached to the title, so it is considered an official system that expresses the intentionality of both the writer and the publisher for what they want to attribute to the text. In this case, the reader cannot ignore or neglect this attribution, and if he cannot believe or approve it, it remains as a wave of these readers to this work.

Genette (1987:97)

Anyone who reads the poetic collections of the poet Ahcene El-Kharrat *Nabdh-al-faji'a ie Pulse of Bereavement, Basar Al-Turab ie Sight of the earth, Shatah Al-darawishes ie the Dervishes' imagination*, notices that the genre of creation's threshold is mentioned. The poet did not neglect to link his poetic texts to the genre of poetry. This threshold was written in different colours on the pages of the covers of the collections, so the expression *a collection of poetry* was written in black on the cover page of the work *Nabdh-al-faji'a ie the Pulse of Bereavement*. The black is symbol of sadness, pain, and sorrow, which are the same feelings expressed in the collection's poems through their various titles: *Al-madinal-muadaba ie The Tormented City, nihayat-hulum ie The End of a Dream, yawmiat-al-ahlam-al-mafjua'a ie The Diary of Heartbroken Dreams, Watan-al-fukara' ie The Homeland of the Poor, Ramad-al-jism ie The Ashes of the Body, Dilal-al-ghubn ie Shadows of Injustice.....and many others* in which we feel the poet's heartbreak and his suffering caused by the unjust French colonialism that annihilated the country and its population. The poet Ahcene El-Kharrat has mentioned his collection's genre *Nabd-al-faji'a ie Pulse of Bereavement* twice, the first on the cover page directly under the title, and the second on the page next to the cover page. Meanwhile, in his two collections *Basar-al-turab ie Sight of the Earth and Shath-al-darawishes ie the derviches' imagination*), the poetry genre was mentioned three times on the cover page, on the first page after the cover and on the introduction of the Egyptian poet and critic Ibrahim Moussa Annahas when he stated on the introduction of the collection *Basar-al-turab ie Sight of the Earth: «The Poet Ahcene El-Kharrat presents a poetry that reflects his pure soul and shows us the image of a poet who always seeks light, dawn and spiritual values. That is the reason why the genre was written in white because of its connotation of purity, clarity, serenity, openness and inspiration. He also stated in the introduction to the collection: «The poet Ahcene El-Kharrat, in his new collection (Shath al-Darawishes ie The Dervishes' imagination), deals with titles with a special philosophy that reflects his artistic awareness and his ability to deal with it with symbolism and philosophical depth that goes beyond what is traditional and familiar.»* (الخرائط، شطح الدراويش، 2019، صفحة 5)

The word *poetry* indicating the literary genre was written in this collection in red, which is the colour of fire denoting strength of soul and personality radiation. It represents the vast spiritual light. The poetry genre represents a testimony from one of the greatest critics in Egypt stating that this young poet stems from the depths of the human soul, its sublime and noble values in his poetic writings to create poems and collections that reflect

his pure spirit and patriotic sense on the one hand, and also reflect the conditions of his beloved homeland, Algeria, on the other hand.

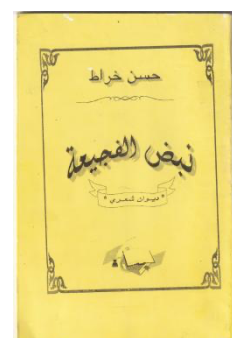
Thus, Ahcene El-Kharrat, by announcing the literary genre, spared the recipient the confusion and the opacity of reception, as he removed the ambiguity and reduced the distances between the reader and the texts, so that he could be ready to read the work according to the genre mindset that the critic set for the work, and interact with it on this basis as a first step to accessing a text of which he knows only the title». (حماد، 1979، صفحة 111)

2.2 The accompanying image as a textual threshold: from the simple to the complex

The front cover has many forms, according to the themes of the literary text and technological development (الخطيب، 2008، صفحة 52), which enabled poets and writers to try to approximate the idea of their works with different images, and what “*distinguishes the visual image from the rest of the signifying systems, including language in particular, is its analogical status or its iconography in the semiological reform (...) that is, its general sensory resemblance to the subject that it represents.*” (غرافي، 2002، صفحة 222) Image analysis intersects with discourse analysis, because it deals with words in all their shapes and forms: *noun, letter, verb*. As for the image, it deals with shapes, *drawings, colours, and forms*... If language includes a set of meanings such as sadness and happiness that stops at a certain limit of understanding, then the image has the ability to express those meanings in a more precise way that proceeds from vision to imagination.

If you present a man smiling to a certain degree or laughing, you would have been able to convey that idea to the recipient simply. Language needs a long phrase to convey it, but an image can bring together all the languages of the world so that all people can understand it, unlike language, which needs mastery. (سعدية، 2018)

The image accompanying the front cover may reflect many of the meanings perceived by the viewer, but what is certain is that this painting was not placed in vain, but rather to be an indicator that shows the contents of the text and thus emulates it. Therefore, the choice of the poet Ahcene El-Kharrat for the covers of the collections is not arbitrary, but rather this threshold element came as a tool to convey messages related to the content. Anyone who examines the cover plate of his collection *Nabdh-al-faji'a ie Pulse of Bereavement*, will find that the cover included a small picture of two books, one open and the other closed, and next to them was a black bottle of ink with a white pen inside for writing. This picture was placed at the bottom of the cover of the collection and was coloured black and white, mixed with the yellow colour that covered the entire cover page. Despite the simplicity of this image, it is full of symbolism and interpretations, the most prominent of which is: *pain, torment, and suffering with hope, emancipation, pride, and release*. The mixing of these colours with great harmony suggests the poet's soul mixing with his society, the problems of his country with love. The appearance of the white colour on the pages of the open book and the *quill* is an indication of his intellectual and emotional liberation, his pride in himself, his poetry, and his glory's perspective without any retreat. The book is the poet's collection i.e. his poetry in which he reveals many truths about his family and his beloved country, which was murdered by the



hands of the savage coloniser. He states in his poem “ *shadaya-al-watan ie Fragments of the Homeland*”: (الخرائط، نبض الفجيجة، 1989، صفحة 56)

بلادي	"Biladi	My country
أحبك حب اليقين	Uhibbuki hubb al-yaqeen Wa-hubb al-	I love you for sure
وحب الظنون	dhunoon	With a dubious love
يافاتنة الشعر	Ya fatinat al-shi'r	Oh! You who seduces poetry
والشعراء	Wa al-shu'ara	And poets!
يهيم بك الطير	Yuhimu biki al-tayr	The birds are crazy about you
والورود	Wa al-wurud	Even the roses
يعشقك البحر	Yu'ashiquki al-bahr	The sea,
والموج	Wa al-mawj	The waves,
والشجر	Wa al-shajr"	The trees,
		Are fond of you.
		(Our translation)

Until he states: (الخرائط، 1989، pp. 56-60)

أهرب من وطن	Ahrubu min watanin	I am fleeing from a homeland,
يصلب الرأي فيه	Yuslabu al-ra'iu feeh	That crucifies freedom of expression,
وتغتال أعمدة	Wa tughatal a'midatu	and murders the supports of
الوطن المنكسر	Al-watan al-munkasir.	The broken homeland.
فأحمل كل الشظايا	Fa ahmilu kulla al-shadhaya	I will gather all the pieces,
وأصنع منها وطن	Wa asna'u minha Watanan	And build a country of them
بحجم الأماني	Bihajmi al-amani	With the size of all wishes.
وأزرع فيه النخيل	Wa azra'u feehi al-nakhil	I will plant palm trees there,
وأمنية الشهداء	Wa umniyat al-shuhada'	The wish of the martyrs;
ودهشة الحب	Wa dahshat al-hubb	The amazement of love;
والالتئام.	Wa al-ilti'am.	And then the healing.
		(Our translation)

Since the image loaded with connotations cannot bear a single reading, the image of the collection of poems *Nabdh-al-faji'a ie Pulse of Bereavement* prompts another reading for the recipient. The image of the open book carries the glorification of science and knowledge that open the human mind and spirit, so that they reconcile and soar high toward pure spaces filled with serenity. If it's achieved, it will certainly immortalize the humans name and will attain great glory among the people. The poet is certainly aware of all these matters, since he is a professor and educator of generations. Despite the feelings of emancipation and liberation that emerged through the open book, we feel some repression and inability through the closed book, which reveals to us a repressed soul that hides many feelings struggling with the sick reality of the poet and with himself, oscillating between concealment and appearance, such as: the love of the homeland, glorification of martyrs, and feeling sorry for the poor and the oppressed. Therefore, we sense the poet's confusion and anxiety, expressed by the yellow colour that occupied the entire space of the front cover of the collection. The publisher deliberately chose it because of its various connotations that match the contents of the poems of the collection, such as sadness, regret,

anxiety, tension, withering, and all of these feelings emerged clearly in the following poems: *The tormented city*, *Homeland of the poor*, *Martyrs being tried*, *Fragments of the homeland*.

As for his collection entitled (*Basar-al-turab ie sight of the earth*), the publisher relied on an abstract painting, mixed with it many colours that are cohesive and harmonious at times, but contrasting and discordant at other times. These colours greatly reflect the contents of the poems of the collection. The dim blue colour mixed with white, which is the colour of the sky in its clarity and purity, occupied a large area of the cover page. They indicate honesty, optimism, and purity, which are the qualities that the poet carried within him, for he was “*the poet searching for light, dawn, and spiritual values*.” (الخراب، بصر التراب، (5 صفحة 2019) So he intended to convey something to his reader through this collection of comfort, tranquility and peace. His goal was “*to delve deeply into the human soul, to rise above its clay element and to draw him into a vast, spiritual, luminous space*.” (الخراب، بصر التراب، 2019, p. 5)



He says in the poem “*Nashid-al-nahar ie Anthem of the Day*”: (الخراب، بصر التراب، 2019, pp. 41-42):

<p>تبيّنني الماء في صورة الضوء أجري على تلة في نهارات أيني دواخل روحي الشدية حقول البهائم نوار وحي يسبح الفجر يسبح في الاستارة يعبق من مدد الروح يطفو على أسطح وجهي ينور في فلكي الزغفران ملائكة الأرض تسجد لي تتهدّد تطرق باب رضاي.</p>	<p>Tubayyinuni al-ma' fi surat al-daw' Ajri 'ala tallatin fi naharat ayni Dawakhil ruhi al-shadhiyya Huqul al-baha'at Nawwaru wahyi Yasbahu al-fajr Yasbah fi al-istinara Ya'buq min madad al-ruh Yatfu 'ala astuhi wajhi Yanawwir fi falaki al-zaghfaran Mala'ikatu al-ardi tasjudu Li Tatihajjad Tatruku baba ri'day"</p>	<p>Water reflects me in the face of light. I run. On a my own hill's daytime These enjoyable depth of my soul, Fields of splendor, Flowers of inspiration, Praise the dawn, Sail in enlightenment, Scents the soul's strength That floats on my face, Bloom the saffron in my cosmos. Earth angels bow down, Pray for me, Seeking my consent. (Our translation)</p>
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A set of different colours, mixed between black, orange, green, light blue and white, are crowded together at the end of the page of the collection's cover, collecting Arabic letters intertwined in an incredible way, which leads to confusion and opacity of the image. It indicates the interference of many ideas in the poet's mind mingled with many feelings of calm and reassurance at times, anxiety and sadness at other times, which lead to complexity, ambiguity, astonishment and confusion of the recipient considering the symbolism of these colours tinted with harmony and contradiction at the same time. It is noted that the upper section of the cover page was characterized by light, and the lower section was characterized by darkness, as it symbolizes sadness, pain and death. It also symbolizes the fear of the unknown.

On the journey of searching for light and dawn, the poet did not forget his beloved homeland, Algeria, the land of a million and a half martyrs. He had to involve and denounce the colonialism that ruined his childhood, his innocent dreams and deprived him of their pleasures.

He says in his poem *Nabii-al-dill ie the prophet of shadow*, which he dedicated to the warrior Ramadan Boudalaa: (بصر التراب، الخراط، 2019، pp. 33-34)

على صهوة الفجر جئت نبياً	Ala sahwati al-fajri ji'ta nabiyyan	At dawn, you came as a prophet,
صحائفه الماء والزنجبيل	Saha'ifuhu al-ma' wa al-zanajabeel	Bearing water and ginger leaflets.
أوزع في نسك الماء	Awazzi'u fi naski al-ma' Ad'iyyati	I am pouring water and my prays as
أدعيتي	Atnasalu fi raghbati al-haramayn	an offering,
أتناسل في رغبة الحرمين	Wa aalihatu al-ma' tusnidu sawti	I am reproducing in the longing of
وآلهة الماء تسند صوتي	Wa taskunu surata waqti al-shafeef	the two venerable sanctuaries.
وتسكن صورة وقتي الشفيف	Wa takatadhu fi rabwati al-ufuqi	The gods of water support my voice,
وتكتظ في ربوة الأفق	Taghsha al-huqula	And haunt the image of my
تغشى الحقول	Wa tushraqu fi kaswati al-ruhi	diaphanous time,
وتشرق في كسوة الرّوح	Khalfa al-zujaj al-tamahhi	Bunching up at the edge of the
خلف الزجاج التماهي	Murayati al-daw'	horizon,
مرائيتي الضوء	Shakli al-sabah	Spreading all over the fields,
شكلي الصباح	Yasbahu li al-za'taru al-jabaliu	Shining in the soul's garment
يسبح لي الزعتر الجبلي	Wa yadkhulu fi hijbi al-zahr	Behind the same glass,
ويدخل في حبي الزهر	Yaghsilu ruhahu al-mutma'inah	Reflecting light on me,
يغسل روحه المطمئنة	Yas'adu fi wahji nahwa sawti	My shape in the morning.
يصعد في وهجي نحو صوتي	Wa yajlisu fi hadrati al-daw'"	Mountain thyme is praising me;
ويجلس في حضرتي الضوء.		Flowers also are coming into me;
		Washing their peaceful souls,
		Rising towards my voice in my
		glow,
		And the light settles in my
		presence.
		(Our translation)

The accompanying image in the collection *Basaru al-turab ie Sight of the Earth* summarizes the creative experience of the poet Ahcene El-Kharrat to become a sequence that addresses

The threshold of concrete reality, and the penetration of the invisible dimension in it, where life is seen in the afterlife. It is the life of symbols, connotations, and suggestive signs that interpret the world, re-possess it, and realize the existence of man as a multiple phenomenon and as another that can be discovered and reinterpreted. Here is the secret of the Sufi in reading existence, that reconstructs opposites according to a supernatural unity. (بومسهولي، 1998، الصفحات 15-16)

The picture in the poetry collection *Shath al-Darawishes ie The Dervishes imagination* was complex compared to its two previous ones.

In the two previous collections, it seems that the poet's awareness of the importance of thresholds has become more mature. He chose gray as the primary colour for the cover page, in the center of which was a man wearing a white dress, pants, and an orange fez on his head. In the same colour, he turns back in a dance-like movement. It shows the colours used on the cover of the collection were not chosen randomly,



but were acquired by the poet. The consistency in colours is able to move the reader to satisfy his desire to decode colours, mix them, and intersect with each other. The white colour has connotations of purity, clarity, openness, and inspiration - as mentioned above -. It indicates that the poet Ahcene El-Kharrat was, through the poems of the collection, open to people's souls and inclinations, to glory and love of the homeland and the movement of the cosmos. Perhaps his choice of the white - also - suggests the infinity of feelings and thoughts, as we noticed through the poems of the collection, where the poet's feelings varied and were consistent with his vision of the quest within the human soul towards light, *goodness, spiritual beauty and purity*. We can notice this in most of the poems of this collection and in the poem *Qammariyat-al-rouh ie moons of the soul: (الخرائط)*

شطح الدراويش، 2019، الصفحات 51-52)

أفد من الضوء روى	"Aqiddu min al-daw' ru'a	I pull off the light
النبوة	Al-nubuwwah	A prophetic vision
أنفخ في طين أنيتي	Anfukh fi teeni aaniyati	I blow on the clay of my vase:
الماء	Al-ma'	Water.
أقرأ من سورة الروح	Aqra'u min surat al-ruh	I read rays of the soul's surah.
أي الشعاع	Aya al-shu'a'	Which ray?
أخيط من البتلات الشفيفة	Akheetu min al-butulat al-	I sew from transparent petals:
ثوبي	shafeefah	My dress
أميط لثام التقية	Thawbi	I lift the veil of piety.
يخرج من تحت وجهي	Amithu litham al-taqiyyah	The morning
الصباح	Yakhruju min taht wajhi	Comes out of my face.
يقبل أقمار أخيلاتي	Al-sabah	Kisses the figments of my
يتدنر أشجار صوتي	Yaqabbil uqmar akhilati	imagination.
وينسل في ألقى الوتني	Yatadathar ashjar sawti	Draping my voice's trees, And
على أفق الروح مرتديا	Wa yansall fi alqi al-wathni	slips into my pagan glow,
صلوات الشدى، سجدات الندى	'ala ufqi al-ruh murtadiyan	On the horizon of the soul
سترة الشمس، هسهسة الأفحوان.	Salawat al-shadha, sujdat al-	Draping
	nada	The prayers' scent, the dew's
	Sitrat al-shams, hushsat al-	prostrations
	aqqaan".	The sun's coat, the mums' hissing.
		(Our translation)

It should be noted that the poetic glossary of this poem expresses the poet's vision, which aspires to search for the spiritual beauty hidden in the depths of the human soul, and the words that indicate this include light, soul, petals, morning, rays, etc. The poet gave the cover of his poetry collection *Shath al-Darawishes ie the Dervishes' imagination* gray color, as a result of a color conflict between black and white. Black reinforces the "feeling of relaxation and calmness, happiness and comfort, peace and hope with a low number of negative responses, including sadness and depression." (Idder, 2019, pp. 31-32) It carries

integration into what is unknown, loaded with a mysterious vision "Grey was a union of black and white, and so partook the symbolism of each" (Ellen Conroy, 1921, p. 52) As for the sequence of white color - *the color of purity* - it embodies the purity of the Dervish's soul that seeks the ideal world that radiates light, in which the pure and ideal human lives. It is the remaining human being like the ashes remaining from a fire. The gray color symbolizes interference and the blurring of the thing. (ثاني، 2008)

It also denotes "what is hard and unfeeling" (Ellen Conroy, 1921, p. 56) It also symbolizes worry, misery and indicates the overwhelming desire for victory over others. (ويس، 2014، الصفحات 129-130)

As a wise poet and philosopher, Ahcene El-Kharrat has a Sufi spirit. He knows life and the pure, ideal human soul, then weaves it into his Sufi world. He states in the poem *A Prophet who lost his Shadow*: (شطح الدراويش، الخراط، 2019)

<p>أقمط في شطحة الماء أدعيتي أتبتل في فلك الفجر أروى يسحبني الشجر الملكي وينسج لي الماء كئان ظلي وتلتفت حولي الملائكة الأبجدية تشرب من نبع رؤيا أناي وتغسل في فلكي الاستخارة تنتبذ الروح عاكفة تنقل في دفء ظلي بييض بعشي الصباح.</p>	<p>"Aqmatu fi shathati al-ma' Ad'iyati Atabattalu fi falaki al-fajriUrwa Yashabuni al-shajaru al-malakiu Wa yansaju li al-ma' kattan Dhili Wa taltaffu hawli al-mala'ikatu Al- abjadiyah Tashrabu min nub'i ru'ya Anaay Wa taghsilu fi falqi al-istikhara Tantabithu al-ruhu 'akifatan Tanfalu fi daf'e'i dhilli Bayyid ba'ashshi al-sabah".</p>	<p>I raise, in the water, My prayer. I recline in the sphere of dawn; Relieved. The royal tree pulls me, While water weaves my shadow. The primer Angels surround me, Drink from the fountain of My own sight, And wipe in the sunrise My invocation. Ascetic, The soul retreats. Offers in the warmth of my shadow. Seeds on my morning soil. (Our Translation)</p>
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Through his poems, Ahcene El-Kharrat seeks to inspire hope in the human soul. This significance is highlighted through the colour orange, which symbolizes energy, attractiveness and warmth. He colored Darwish's fez and trousers with them. He is represented dancing with open arms, indicating harmony with the cosmos. The spiritual world inspires hope and reassurance that the real world lacks. This reading is possible among many readings that may be completely different from it, so the context in which Ahcene El-Kharrat presents his poetry collection *Shath al-Darawishes (Dervishes' imagination)* focuses on the different human facets. The *other* obsesses the poet, he dialogues, maneuvers, struggles with him, separates and then connects with him. Sometimes he unites with him and is alienated from him. The poet seems obsessed by multiple voices that dialogue in his poems and seep into the dream and the text. His poems bear a psyche through which the poet tries to express different points of view, the way he sees the world. It is about the self, the other, you, and we, *an opening onto otherness and alterity*. The poet feels his society and composes verses. The poetic text is not a single voice, but rather voices created by the relationship and cultivated by multiplicity and difference. The poet carries different oppositions and counterparts. The essence of his verses itself is divided and multiplied at the same time. Everything reproduces endlessly in

his texts. It is an innate dialogism, as a person dialogues with himself or duplicate from himself someone to address him.

2.3 The author's name:

The author's name is one of the important signs that form the threshold of the outer cover at the level of moral and visual formation, as no creative work is valid without the name of its author, in addition to being an important reading threshold that paves the way for the reader to deal with the text. We cannot deny some literary works whose fame goes back to their authors mainly not to its quality, literature and artistry. (درمش، 2007، صفحة 74)

The place where the names of works is written on the cover page takes on a connotative and aesthetic dimension, whether in terms of colour or in terms of space. "Author's name is a mandatory component of the title complex; therefore it has a strong position." (Moreva, 2014, p. 418) However, it is always difficult to control the possible interpretations and reactions of readers, as well as the type of hidden influences that the distribution of locations can have exerted on the external form of the text, unless the researcher conducts a field study." (حماد، 1979، صفحة 64) The place where the name of the poet is written collection alternates between the highest and the middle. In his first collection of poems, *Nabdh-al-faji'a iePulse of Bereavement*, published in 1998, the poet's name was written at the top of the cover page, as if the creative self of Ahcene El-Kharrat had not given up his position. It can be seen as the declaration of his prominent presence and the confirmation of his authority over the poetic text/collection. The publisher intention is probably to embed his name in the mind of the recipient. The title of the collection is written in black indicating dignity, and conveying the national and social concerns of the poet. These connotations are expressed in the various poems of the collection, including the poem *Homeland of the Poor: (نبض الفجيعة، الخراط)*, 1989, pp. 32-33)

وفي أعين الثكلاء يكفن في أدمع الفقراء ويدفن في صوت أودية الليل تزرع في رحم الجرح والعتمات ووحدهم الفقراء يموتون في وطني تحت أقبية الجوع والخوف والجرح والظلمات وحبك بين الضلوع حدائق.	"Wa fi a'yun al-thakalai' Yukfanu fi admu' i Al-fuqara' Wa yudfanu fi sawti Awadiyati al- layli Tazra'u fi rahimi Al-jurha wa al-'atamat Wa wahdahum al-fuqara' Yamootuna fi watanii Tahta aqabiyati al-ju'i Wa al-khawfi Wa al-jurhi wa al-zhulumat Wa hubukun bayna al-dhulou' Hada'iq".	And in the eyes of the bereaved, He is shrouded in the tears the poor, And buried in sound Of night valleys, Implanted inside The wound and the darkness And only the poor Die in my country Under the dungeons of hunger, Fear Hurt and the darkness. Your love is deep in my heart Is A garden. (Our translation)
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In his two poetry collections *Basar al-Turab (Sight of the Earth)* and *Shath al-Darawishes (Dervishes' imagination)*, published in 2019, the poet's name was centered on the cover page and written in bold, prominent font. It indicates that the poet did not aim to extend his authority over the text or to condescend to its details, although some scholars believe that the poet, by virtue of his name being elevated above the other details of the

cover, is the source of these texts and the sender of his poetic signals. (العلاق، 2002، صفحة 59)

The title (*Sight of the Earth*) was written in yellow, and it carries the connotation of creativity, self-pride, optimism and confidence. As for *Shath Al-Darawishes*, it was written in green, which is a symbol of life, goodness, joy, hope, and beauty. The colour is often used to express the beauty of nature and of the country. It inspires fertility, reassurance and comfort in the soul. It is also the only color agreed on its comforting significance for the human soul (الزاهره، 2008، الصفار، 2010، صفحة 71). In addition, it is the color of Sufism. (صفحة 30) It was expressed in the collection's poems, most of which contained Sufi dimensions and revelations, as in his poems entitled: *At the Gate of the Soul; the Shadow of a Prophet; the Moons of the Soul; A Prophet who lost his Shadow; The Shadow of God.*

2.4 The title's threshold

The title is one of the most important textual thresholds in a literary work, as it is "a linguistic incident located on the borders of the text, or more precisely at the gate of the text, to frame its linguistic and semantic entity." (شقرن، 2000، صفحة 270) It means that the title is not a formal ornament placed in vain. It is the main guide to the text. It cannot be ignored or bypassed "the sum of linguistic signs (...) that can be studied at the head of the text to define it, indicate its general content, and entice the intended audience." (Genette, 1987, p. 73) The title directs the whole text's reception. It is directly linked to the content. It hints at text's detours. It is not always informative or denotative. It shapes the reading and the recipient choices and hypotheses. "Titles are certainly intended to identify and individuate a work of art, but their purpose goes beyond its mere designation: the function of titles is to guide the interpretation of a text, to indicate how the literary work should be read and perceived". (Pes, Spring 2015, p. 92) The titles of Ahcene El-Kharrat's poetry collections are complex: (*Pulse of Bereavement–Sight of the Earth and Dervishes' imagination*). Likewise, the titles of the poems in the three collections, except for one poem in the collection which is *Pulse of Bereavement*, came as a single title *Ida'a ie illumination*. What draws the reader's attention to the poetic title *The Pulse of Bereavement* is the questions it raises: Does bereavement have a pulse? How is this pulse? What is its source? Answers to these questions need to be attentive to the meanings of the grammatical, linguistic and semantic units. The title in Arabic is a nominal sentence with a deleted subject being denoted by (this) in situation of annexing. The word *Al-faji'a'* (bereavement) in Arabic means:

A distressing and painful bereavement due to something that hurts him, so he is bereaved, distressed, and sad, which lead to bereavement, so (mafju') bereft by the calamity is being hurt and bereavements are: painful calamities that make a person sad because of what he holds dear in terms of money or beloved ones. (منظور، 2007، صفحة 444)

As for the word *Nabdh* (pulse), it is explained in *Lisan al-Arab* as "The pulse of the vein that beats, which means the movement and beating. The pulse is also the nerve, it is a dominant characteristic. The pulse is the heartbeat". (منظور، 2007، p. 323) The reader of the collection will find a clear correspondence between the title and its meaning: *pulse/bereavement*. Despite the ease of the two words, they are laden with connotations, most of which were reflected in the poems of the collection. The poet's soul seemed

obsessed with pain and bereavement. His heart was not beating with joy, but rather with sadness, grief, and pain. He was saddened by his family being wiped out by French colonialism. He lived a miserable and tiring childhood, deprived of pleasures of life, on the one hand. He was also saddened by his homeland, which was destroyed by colonialism and subjected to all forms of exploitation. We sense these feelings in his poems *Nihayat hulum ie the End of a Dream*, which connotes despair, *Al-madina-al-muadhaba ie the Tormented City*, which connotes suffering; *Ya'umiat al-ahlam-al-mafjua' ie the Diary of Heartbroken Dreams*, which subject is desolation; *Watan-al-fukara' ie the Homeland of the Poor*, which theme is misery; *Al-shuhada' yuhakamun ie the Martyrs are sued* which connotes sacrifice for freedom; *Shadhaya-al-watan ie the Fragments of the Homeland* which theme is the mutilated homeland. The poet opens his poem *Nihayat-hulum ie the End of a Dream* with a dedication to those who share his sense of grief when smile and innocent dreams were stolen from them. He dedicates it “*To all those who were deprived of dream and the smile was stolen from their lips.*” (الخرائط, 1989, p. 14) He expressed this suffering in his poem: (الخرائط, 1989, p. 14)

<p>ووجدك تمشي وراء جنازة حلمك تشيع نفسك، يبكي على بعضك البعض ينأى لأنك وحدك تحلم لأنك وحدك تتعب تكفن حلمك بالكبرياء وتغتال أنفاسك الهاربة نبض أوجاعك المزمنة.</p>	<p>Wa wahdaka tamshi Wara'a janazati hulumiq Tushay'iu nafsaq, yabqi Ala badika al-ba'd Yan'a Li'anaqa wahdaqa tahlum Li'anaqa wahdaqa taa'ab Taqfunu hulumaqa bil qibriya' Wa taghtalu anfsuka al-hariba Naba awja'iq al-muzmina.</p>	<p>And you walk alone, Beyond your dream's funeral. You're mourning yourself Some cry for you; Then walk away Because you alone are dreaming; You alone get tired, Shroud your dream with pride, And your leaking breath smashes The pulse of your chronic pain. (Our translation)</p>
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His poem *Al-shuhada' yuhakamun (the Martyrs are sued)* is dedicated to all those who share in orphanhood and have lost their families at the hands of brutal colonialism. He also dedicated it to “*the noble son of the generous Ahmed Qalil, who inherited love of the homeland from his father and was in revolt against corruption and backwardness.*” (الخرائط, 1989, p. 41), as it is mentioned in the poem below: (الخرائط, 1989, pp. 41-42)

هو الحلم ينبض ملء جراحي	Hua Al-hulumu ianbidu mil'a Jirahi	It is a dream that beats fully, Along my wounds,
ويمشي على وهج الروح والقلب والخطوات	Wa yamchi ala-wahaji Al-ruhi wa al-qalbi wa al- khutuwat	And walks on the glow of My Soul, my heart and my steps.
ويبحث ذاكرة الكلمات ويقرأ نبض الحروف	Wa yabhatu dhaqirata al-qalimat Wa iarqra'u nabdha al-hurufi	It fades in the memory of words, And reads the pulse of letters,
ويفضي بأوجاعها للمكان	Wa yufdi bi-awja'iha Lil-maqan	It recounts suffering to the Place. It empties the memory of time,
ويفرغ ذاكرة الزمن القادم الآن من دهشة الغيب	Wa iufrighu dakirat al-zaman Al qadim al-ana min dahchati al- ga'ib	Coming now from unseen amazement And depression.
والاكتئاب يسافر نحو النهار	Wa al-iqti'ab Yusafiru nahwa Al-nahar	Travels towards the day. The path of the day is mirrors,
ودرب النهار مرايا تتوارى بها سوءة الليل	Wa darbu al-nayari maraya Tatawara biha saw'atu al-le'ili	That hide the evil of the night, Injustice and heartbreak.
والغبين والانكسار	Wa al-ghubni wa al-inqisar.	(Our Translation)

As for his collection *Basar-al-turab (the Sight of the Earth)*, the titles of Ahcene Al-Kharrat's poems flow with the main title as if they were part of it, carrying the reader and placing him at the edge of the text. The Title opens-up the meaning and its implications to the recipient. If the title is one of the most important elements surrounding the text: "The title can be a very short, concise word, such as a word and its qualifier, a personal name with connotations, a phrase etc. The choice of title is very judicious and sometimes even confusing. Roland Barthes reminds us that the title is a fragment of ideology". (Rachida, 2012:106) In this collection, which contained nineteen poems, the poet presented his immaculate and pure soul characterized by morality, removed from the whims of the soul and the pleasures of the world. The word *Basar* in Arabic (sight) means "the one who sees all things, whether apparent or hidden, without being disturbed." (منظور, 2007, p. 288) *Sight* is an expression denoting the quality by which the perfection of the attributes of visible things is revealed. As for the word *Turab* (earth), it means dust, homeland, nation and affiliation. It expresses the quest of identity and belonging. The form of the title, consisting of a nominal sentence which subject is deleted, expresses these connotations. Perhaps the poet's choice of the title takes the form of a linguistic shift represented by metaphor, which draws the recipient's attention to the hidden connotations in it. He compared the soil to the human being by alluding to human vision. The title plays on truth and metaphor, transforming a linguistic structure into a metaphoric one by stimulating the reader's interpretation according to his culture and thought. Thus, the title *Basar al-turab* is an incomplete nominal sentence. The poet's choice of this deletion has a clear intention, so that the title responds to the content of the collection. In his association of *sight* with *earth*, the reader feels he wanted to link the purity of the human soul with the purity and clarity of the earth (the homeland). Therefore, through the collection's poems, we feel that poet's soul is always searching for light, illumination and ascension. They are sublime qualities of human soul that the poet seeks and wants to soar in a luminous spiritual space. He says In his poem *Amhiratu daw'* (Daylight) (الخراب, بصر التراب, 2019, p. 83).

تنهابَ إرثي البنفسج والقمران وعتق في نفس الماء حاسته الملكية ينهل- من بيض أخيلتي- الفجر الملاذات يعبرني نحو ذاتي العلية يحجز لي بقعة في أعالي القيامة فأخلق في فطرة الضوء أبعث في آخر الأملين نبيًا على مهرة الضوء أمضي.	Tanhaba irthi al-banafsaj Wa al-qamaran Wa attaq fi nafsi al-ma' Hasatahu al-malaqia Yanhalu min bydhi akh'ilati- al-fajru Al-maladhat Ya'buruni Nahwa dhathi al-alya Yahjuzu li buq(atan fi a'ali Al-qi'ama Fa akhluqu fi fatrati al-aw' Ab'atu fi akhiri al-amal'in Nab'ian Ala muhrati al(daw'i amdhi.	Violet plunder my legacy And the two moons Aging, in the water's breath, Its sense of ownership. Drawing, from the source of my imagination, dawn Havens It runs through me Towards my up-lifted soul Reserving a spot for higher up Afterlife. So I am naturally resurrected in light. I send to the last hope A prophet And through the path of light I go. (Our translation)
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The text bears deep Sufi overtones, indicating the poet's knowledge of life and the pure, ideal human being whom he wanted to elevate to prophecy, purity and serenity. It is highlighted through his use of words such as: *water, dawn, light*. Although the Sufi tendency dominated the poet's visions in his search for light and dawn, he could not renounce his nationalist sense, we notice in his poems *The Prophet of the Shadow, The Shade of the Shadows, the Road of Intercession*. The title of the poetry collection *The Dervishes' imagination* was a state of confusion for us as readers, because we did not find a poetic text in the collection bearing this title, so we should relate it to the main title in our analysis. The title of the collection is a nominal sentence in which the subject is annexed to the dervishes, as a statement far from the usual speech, and *shataha* in Arabic means the Sufi's statements and connotative rambblings, words they speak that apparently contradict Sharia law. Among the meanings of the word *Dervish* are: the person becomes dervish, to do as dervishes do and the dervish as ascetic and worshipper. (صفحة 449، 1989) *A darwisha (dervish) "is a person who goes from house to house seeking charity, and in modern Arabic, the word darwisha has come to denote a simple, poor, but well-off person."* (صفحة 449، 1989) It is known about the dervishes that they are one of the Sufi sects based on asceticism and austerity, not out of miserliness or need, but rather because they believe that these qualities are the characteristics of a true Muslim. The Sufi dervishes are known for their circular dance through which they tend to circling the soul, contemplating and thinking that these movements will lead them to perfection. The poet in this collection worked a lot on the poetics of the title, whether with regard to the main title or the internal titles of the collection. He dealt with *"the titles with a special philosophy that reflects his artistic awareness and his ability to deal with it with symbolism and philosophical depth that goes beyond what is traditional and familiar."* (شطح الدراويش، الخراط) (2019, p. 5) The titles of the collection's poems, which number is eighteen poems, reflect diversity and semantic richness as a basic feature in the *"philosophy of the poet's dealings with the title."* In the poem *Sahad al-ma'a* (heat of water) the title employs the language of opposition. It consists

of two words belonging to two opposing semantic fields: “*Sahad ie heat*” and “*Ma’aie water*” to stimulate the reader ‘s mind.” (شطح الدراويش, الخراط) (2019, p. 7) It is stated in this poem (شطح الدراويش, الخراط) (2019, p. 9)

<p>تقدّس في بصر الماء سري يوحي الخمائيل يفتأ في حكمة الماء شطح رؤى ترصدني في مكانن إشراقتي يرتدي غايتي جانبا من صباحات صوفيّتي.</p>	<p>Taqadasa fi basai al-ma’a Siri Yuhi al-ma’ila I’afta’u fi hiqmati al-ma’a Shathu al-ru’a Tarsuduni fi maqa’ini ishrqati Yartadi ghai’ati ja’i’an Min sabahati suf’iati.</p>	<p>My secret Sanctified in the sight of water, Inspiring subtleties, Vanishing in sacred water Imaginary visions. Observing me in my shining parts; Wrapped in my purposes. Coming from my Sufi mornings. (Our translation)</p>
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The poet has departed from the norm in poetic writing, as his Sufi self-reveals a strong feeling that he could not conceal. It is a revelation and expression of what the soul feels in the presence of divinity, fear, anxiety, longing and regret. The use of monologue brought him to the point of ecstasy, made his soul and heart happy. The poetic image is based on deep philosophical dimensions, carrying Sufi connotations at the level of concepts and imagination, such as the image that emerges in the poem *The Moons of the Soul*. (شطح الدراويش, الخراط) (2019, pp. 53-54)

<p>في فسحة الروح نشوى وبشرب من مدد الوحي ينأى وبوابة الروح مشرعة مغزل الشمس يسرق خيطي وعرس النهارات صورة ضوئي قيوميّتي وتد الوقت مئذنة الفجر، باب القيامة شباك ألّهي لوح رؤيا تمر الملائك، تنسل في عقدي تنبين من وهجي الأفق تجلس في رغبتني تطلع السطح من سلمى</p>	<p>Fi fushati al-ruhi Nashu’a Wa yashrabu min madadi al-wahi(i Yan’a Wa bau’abatu al-ruhi musha ra’atun Maghzalu al-shamsi yasriq kha’iti Wa usu al-naharati surata daw’i Qai’unmiati watau al-waqti Mi’danatu al-fajri babu al-qi’iama Shubaqu alihati la’uhu ru’ia Tamuru al-mala’iqa, tansalu Fui uqadi Tatabai’anu min wahaj’i al-ufuq Tajlisu fi raghbati Tatla’u satha min sulami</p>	<p>Euphoria takes over The folds of the soul And indulges from the blessings of revelation; Then walks away.... The gateway to the soul is wide open. The sun’s weaving steals my thread. The daytime’s feast steals the image of my light. My value is the time’s support, The Fajr’s Minaret, Gate of Afterlife. My gods hall is a vision board, Angels pass by, slip away Of my knots, Recognizing, from my own glow, the horizon Sitting in presence of my desire. Climbing the stairs of my terrace. (Our translation)</p>
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Conclusion

The paratexts in their various forms (cover, genre, author's name, title), in Ahcene Al-Kharrat's collections, revealed a versifying strategy through which we were able to reach the depths of the text and uncover its various connotations. The topography of the cover page created text thresholds, in which characters, images and colors were mixed, combining significance and aesthetics. The poet chose the titles of his collections with a touch of modernity, by questioning several readings that reveal themselves to the contemporary reader, so he can delve into their hidden connotations, through his ideas, beliefs and visions. The title threshold in the three collections was the focus of the study, as a combination of aesthetics, poetry, seduction, and description, expressing the content, the connotations of the poems and their spiritual dimensions. The poems ensure an ascent beyond words and purely material realities. They embrace the abyss of the soul, follow the movement of the world and rise from the sensible to the intelligible.

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