The Mythical Approach and Pre-Islamic Poetry: Dr. Nusrat Abdul-Rahman's Experience

Abstract

The present research focuses on the experience of a critic and university instructor, the late Nusrat Abdul-Rahman, in the area of reading and analyzing pre-Islamic poetry in the light of mythical approach. In this endeavor, the paper places the experience of the late critic in its cultural and critical context, with a view to shedding new light on reading our heritage in general, and pre-Islamic poetry in particular. The research especially underlines the reasons behind the special attention directed during the late sixties and early seventies of the last century to handling the mythical approach; and it emphasizes the principles and sources Nusrat Abdul-Rahman referred to in establishing his method and laying down its principles and tools. The research elaborates about those aesthetic and cultural tools by tracing the relation between poetry and religion on the one hand, and with myth on the other; and the roles of the image, metaphor, language and the symbol in mythical criticism. From all the above, the research comes to a consideration of the nature of the cultural equipment of the mythical critic Abdul-Rahman, as this equipment represents a basic element among his research tools. The research refers to Nusrat Abdul-Rahman's outstanding books and researches, and especially to his two books: *The Artistic Image in Pre-Islamic Poetry* and *Fact and Myth in the Poetry of the Pre-Islamic Poet Abu Dhu'aib al-Hudhali*, since the researcher takes these last two to be Abdul-Rahman's best expression of his mythical method.