



The Significance Of White Color In Muhammad Imran's Poetry

Yara Suleiman Alhor^{1*},
Under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Rawaa Al-Faqs²

^{1*}²Faculty of Arts and humanities, Al-Baath University, Homs, Syria.

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ABSTRACT

Color constitutes a significant feature in the poetic lexicon of Muhammad Imran, as he accords it considerable attention; it is rare to find a poem of his in which he has not employed a set of colors. The presence of colors in his poetry is not arbitrary, for color possesses a distinctive linguistic code that plays its role in generating the game of meaning. Therefore, this study aims to examine the aesthetics of chromatic phenomena in Imran's poetic creativity through the color white, following a statistical analysis that recorded the instances in which he explicitly used the term (white) amounting to 113 occurrences. The study adopts the aesthetic artistic approach and draws upon the tools of semiotic methodology, particularly in tracing significations and attempting to relate them to the general context of the text. The research arrives at several findings, the most significant of which is that the white color in his poetry is employed in two principal modes: the first is its negative connotation, including the meanings of annihilation and death; the second is its positive connotation, including the meanings of immortality, freedom and dignity, peace, and mystical (Sufi) significance. Imran employs the techniques of binary oppositions and synesthesia in his use of white. The study finds that the connotations of this color in his work bear an overarching aesthetic dimension infused with political meanings, serving the thematic function of this color as emblematic of defeat and weakness. In addition, the white color is imbued with mystical connotations dictated by the years of his final illness, particularly in his later poetic phases, where white became more complex, tending toward obscurity, symbolism, and displacement.

Keywords: significance, color, white, Muhammad Imran, antithetical binaries, synesthesia.

Introduction:

Color formation in ancient and modern Arabic poetry is perhaps one of the means of expression through which the poet's perspective and vision of things can be discerned. It is an important manifestation of realism in the poetic image, given the great creative potential that color vocabulary carries in shaping the poetic text. Poets vary in their degree of interest in colors; the artistic employment of colors differs from one poet to another according to their creative abilities. Some poets limit color to mere decoration and tinting, which makes studying this stereotypical portrayal according to methodological or aesthetic standards difficult. However, some poets have approached colors with a psychological and artistic stance that reveals the depth of hidden psychological worlds, transcending mere external decoration to uncover hidden areas within the creator's soul.

Among the most prominent of these poets is Muhammad Imran, who endowed the poetic text with new connotations through his use of colors. It is rare to find a poem by him that does not employ a group of colors that interweave and blend within the fabric of the poetic tableau, enhancing its aesthetic and suggestive qualities and reflecting rich political, social, and psychological connotations found in his poetic texts.

He is a son of the lush nature in the countryside of Tartous Governorate in Syria, having grown up surrounded by nature and fascinated by its beauty. It is unsurprising that its vibrant colors are reflected in his poetic creativity.

Significance of the Study:

Several reasons underpin the choice of this research, among them:

Muhammad Imran's poetic experience as one of the most prominent modern Syrian poets who paid great attention to color and skillfully employed it within the fabric of the poetic tableau.

The emergence of the phenomenon of using the color white and its employment in Muhammad Imran's poetry in a manner worthy of close examination, due to its hidden depths that require deep exploration to uncover its secrets and clarify its aesthetic role in the urban text.

The study tackles a new topic differing from the many descriptive studies about modern poets; this research investigates the connotations of the color white and the techniques of its use that illuminate the chromatic space of the text and contribute to its aesthetic formation.

The scarcity of studies dealing with the use and aesthetics of the color white in contemporary Syrian poetry.

Problem of the Study:

Color is a means of expression, not merely a verbal ornament. Muhammad Imran extensively employed the color white. Therefore, the central problem of the study revolves around the following question: Was Imran's use of white in his texts arbitrary, or was it a visionary artistic sign that enriched the architecture of the poem?

From this problem branch a set of questions, including:

Why did Muhammad Imran extensively employ the color white in his poetic?

What connotations does the use of white evoke in Imran's text?

Was Imran innovative in his use of white, or did he maintain its familiar connotations?

What artistic techniques did Imran use in his employment of the color white?

Objectives of the Study:

The study aims to:

Define the color white linguistically and semantically.

Introduce the poet Muhammad Imran.

Examine the aesthetics of the color white, interpreting the connotations and implications that illuminate the chromatic space of Imran's text and participate in its aesthetic formation.

Shed light on the importance of the color white as a fundamental tool for revealing the axes of artistic beauty in Imran's text, as it is among the most important elements forming the artistic image due to its political, psychological, social, and religious connotations.

Scope of the Study:

This study is framed within the complete poetic works of Muhammad Imran, which span from 1967 until the poet's death in 1996. Attention is given to selected texts that serve the study's purpose

Previous Studies:

We reviewed a number of studies and researches, notably those focusing on Muhammad Imran's poetry:

- Al-Miqdad (2001), titled *The Poetic Image in Muhammad Imran's Poetry*, examined in its first chapter the concept of the poetic image in classical and modern criticism; the second chapter studied the sources of Imran's poetic image—natural, literary, and religious; the third chapter dealt with symbols in Imran's poetic imagery such as mythological, mystical, and historical heritage symbols; the fourth chapter analyzed stylistic techniques and artistic means in Imran's poetic imagery; the fifth chapter explored types of poetic images in Imran's work (rhetorical imagery).

- Al-Mousa (2003), titled *The World of Muhammad Imran's Poetry*, addressed in the first section the thematic features in Imran's poetry through chapters on the dialectics of life and death, countryside and city, reality and imagination, the ideal world; the second section covered artistic features such as the use of myth, folklore, the mask technique, intertextuality, and symbolism.

- Al-Ahmad (2008), titled *Figurative Forms in Contemporary Arabic Poetry: Muhammad Imran as a Model*, categorized figurative forms in Imran's poetry into traditional and modern types such as symbol, myth, and mask; studied stylistic personification, functions of figurative forms, sources of metaphor, shifts in poetic vision, aesthetic experience, urban vision, and lexical imaginary features in Imran's poetry.

- Ali (2011), titled *Manifestations of Modernity in Muhammad Imran's Poetry*, analyzed modernity of content focusing on heritage, human, and intellectual modernity; vision sources and issues; modernity of form focusing on poetic language, imagery, symbolism, and musicality (internal and external).

- Shaqouf (2020), titled *The Employment of Myth in Muhammad Imran's Poetry*, discussed the emergence of myth and its relation to poetry, motives for using myth, mythological manifestations in Imran's poetry (Greek, Babylonian, Canaanite), and mythologizing place and characters.

- Saleh (undated), titled Symbolism in Muhammad Imran's Poetry, addressed mystical symbols, mythological symbols, and aesthetic-symbolic beauty.

As for studies about color:

- Qarout (2008), titled Manifestations of Color in Modern Arabic Poetry, studied color manifestations in Romanticism and Modernism, the relationship between color and psychological emotions, and connotations of color in modern poetry.

- Al-Sahnawi (2009), titled Color Spaces in Arabic Poetry, introduced color in Arab heritage; then explored color through chapters on science, thought, literary genres, and discussed color connotations in Syrian poetry through direct, suggestive, and symbolic meanings.

Critique of Previous Studies:

It is noticeable that previous studies on color did not mention Muhammad Imran's poems despite the richness of his poetic lexicon with colors. Studies that dealt with Imran's poetry mostly focused on one aspect—imagery—except for studies on modernity and the poetic world of Imran. Our research addresses an important element of poetic imagery formation—color—through the use of white with its political, social, psychological, and religious meanings in Imran's poetry.

Methodology:

The methodology appropriate to this research is the aesthetic artistic approach based on the study and deep exploration of texts, highlighting their artistic and aesthetic values. This approach investigates "our perception of beauty, its standards, our judgments about it, and the causes that evoke our feelings of admiration in any of the works that inspire us" (Ibrahim, 2008, p. 292). The study also benefits from semiotic methodology tools, especially when tracking connotations and attempting to link them to the overall context of the text.

Terminology of the Study:

Color (Linguistically): Language dictionaries define color as "the color of everything that distinguishes it from other things; the plural is 'colors'. 'It became colored, and I colored it'" (Ibn Sidah, 1996, vol. 1, p. 201). A similar meaning appears in Lisan al-Arab: "Color is a form such as blackness and redness... and the color of everything is what distinguishes it from others, plural 'colors'" (Ibn Manzur, undated, p. 4106). Arabic lexicons and linguistic works contain numerous detailed color definitions. The contributions of Arab lexicographers and linguists show that their knowledge of color is deep and ancient. This is beyond the scope here, but interested readers may consult numerous linguistic works dedicated to color terms and types (Al-Thaalabi, 2009, p. 80; Al-Namri, 1976, p. 1)..

Color (Terminologically): In modern encyclopedias, color is "an optical property dependent on wavelength; the apparent color of an object depends on the wavelength of light it reflects" (Gharbal et al., 1987, p. 1581).

Study Plan:

The study is organized into two main sections:

Section One: Definition of the color white and the poet Muhammad Imran.

First Topic: Definition of the color white.

Second Topic: Introduction to the poet Muhammad Imran.

Section Two: Applied models of the color white from Muhammad Imran's poetry.

First Topic: Negative connotations.

Second Topic: Positive connotations.

Conclusion: Summarizing the most prominent results and recommendations.

Section One: Defining the Color white and the Poet Mohammad Imran:

First Topic: Definition of the Color white:

White is the first of the simple colors, for it represents light, without which no color could be perceived, as Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) affirms (Omar, 1982, p. 111). From a scientific perspective, Newton (1643–1727) holds that "all colors are contained within white light" (Omar, 1982, p. 111), which is composed of a bundle of rays that can be decomposed through a glass prism into the following sequence of colors: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet.

White ranks second among color distinctions in the anthropological lists of various peoples and, along with black and gray, is considered one of the neutral colors (Omar, 1982, p. 107).

In contrast, in the color lists compiled by Arab linguists, white invariably occupies the first position, and the Arabic language has coined dozens of terms to describe its qualities and shades. The Arabs called pure,

intense white: yaqaq, lahq, ħurr, layah, liyah, and şarah; for dazzling white: wabiş, wabbaş, dulamiş, barraq, and naş; for radiant white: ablag; for bright white tinged with red: azhar, considered the finest whiteness; for ugly white: amqaq, amhaq, and abraş; for white tinged with green or gray: abghat; for white mixed with black: ahab and amlah; for white with a hint of blondness: a yas; and for white with a reddish-gray tinge: aqhab (al-Namri, 1976, p. 9–59; al-Thaalibi, 2009, p. 80–81; Ibrahim, 1989, various passages).

The author of *Lisan al-Arab* notes that the Arabs did not say “a man is white” to mean the color of his skin; rather, white for them meant pure and free from defects. If they wished to refer to white skin, they would say “red” (Ibn Manẓur, n.d., p. 990). If they said “so-and-so has a white face,” they meant a complexion free from blemishes and disfiguring darkness (Ibn Manẓur, n.d., p. 398).

Thus, whiteness for the Arabs was primarily a moral, not a sensory, quality. In the Qur’an, white occupies the first place in the frequency of color mentions, occurring twelve times, eight of which are associated with human body parts—five with the hand, twice with the face, and once with the eye (Qiraniya, 1998, p. 91). The Qur’anic connotations of this color are predominantly positive, suggesting faith, purity, and cleanliness. It describes the faces of the believers, the drink of the people of Paradise, and even marks a temporal point indicating the start of a ritual act of worship.

White also carries negative connotations, symbolizing grief and sorrow, as in: “And his eyes turned white with grief, so he became one who suppresses [his sorrow]” (surah yusuf:84), where whiteness clouds the black of the eyes, causing temporary blindness—a whiteness brought on by grief and lifted by joy. White can also signify illness or affliction, as in the miracle of Moses when “he drew out his hand, and behold, it was white without harm” (surah taha:22), where whiteness denotes light, not disease, the latter being leprosy implied by “harm” (for Moses—peace be upon him—was dark skinned).

In the Prophetic ḥadīth, white is the most frequently mentioned color, carrying numerous social connotations. Some are linked to purity, innocence, and cleanliness, while others note that the Prophet Muhammad chose white for his banner upon the conquest of Mecca and favored white clothing and garments (Omar, 1982, p. 222–223).

Among the Sufis, white is “the principal color of wisdom, indicating clarity and manifestation” (Şidqah, 2002, p. 51), as well as appearance, brilliance, and radiance.

In Christianity, white symbolizes “innocence, joy, immortality, and bliss” (Daco, 1992, p. 211). Jesus Christ—peace be upon him—is often depicted in white garments, as in the Gospel of Luke: “About eight days after Jesus said this, he took Peter, John, and James with him and went up onto a mountain to pray. As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning” (Luke 9:28–29). White is thus the attribute of prophets without exception, and since ancient times it has been the symbol of the Divine Essence, representing detachment from falsehood and materiality. It is “the color of angels and of the ħur al-in as well” (al-Şahṇawī, 2009, p. 14), evoking purity, honesty, chastity, and virginity, and is frequently associated with radiance, life, exaltation, and positive moral values.

White is one half of the binary opposition that governs existence—it represents “Yes” as opposed to the “No” inherent in black; it is the beginning as opposed to the end (Omar, 1982, pp. 185–186). When associated with gray hair, it denotes “wisdom, knowledge, and understanding” (al-Misawī, 1995, p. 254), yet it can also be “a symbol of melancholy and sorrow as one of the cold colors” (Abd al-Wahhab, 1985, p. 125), especially when the human soul dwells in grief, pain, weakness, helplessness, and death—most notably as the color of the shroud.

In short, white predominantly symbolizes purity, chastity, cleanliness, innocence, and clarity, and it is often a literary symbol of beauty and grace.

Second Topic: Introduction to the Poet Mohammad Imran:

Biographical Note on Mohammad Imran (1934–1996):

The poet Mohammad Imran was born in the village of Al-Mallaja, in Tartous Governorate, Syria, in 1934. He completed his secondary education in Tartous and later moved to Damascus, where he earned a Bachelor’s degree in Arabic Language from Damascus University, followed by a Postgraduate Diploma in Educational Qualification.

He began his professional life as a teacher, moving across various Syrian provinces before settling in Damascus, where his literary career flourished.

Imran published his first poem in *Al-Naqqad* magazine, and his first modern poem appeared in *Al-Adab* magazine in 1956. He continued his poetic journey until he was struck by an illness that he battled for twelve years, enduring it with poetry, love, and belief in life, until his passing on October 22, 1996. His death marked the end of a unique voice—one of the most prominent poets of literary modernism in the Arab world (Imran, 1997, 2000).

Imran published thirteen poetry collections and three prose works: *Ashes Papers*, *The Book of Things*, and *War Also Has Its Time*. Below is a table of his published poetry collections (Imran, 2000, p. 29; Al-Mousa, 2003, p. 10–11):

Title of Poetry Collection Year:

1 Songs on an Icy Wall 1967

| | | |
|----|------------------------------|------|
| 2 | Hunger and the Guest | 1969 |
| 3 | Entering the Valley of Buwan | 1972 |
| 4 | Port of New Memory | 1974 |
| 5 | I Am the One Who Saw | 1978 |
| 6 | Al-Mallaja | 1980 |
| 7 | The Clay Poem | 1982 |
| 8 | Mohammad the Arab | 1984 |
| 9 | The Blue and the Red | 1984 |
| 10 | The Name of Water and Air | 1986 |
| 11 | The Anthem of the Violet | 1992 |
| 12 | The Book of the Table | 1995 |
| 13 | Praise for the One I Love | 1998 |

Section Two: Applied Examples of the Color white in the Poetry of Mohammad Imran:

White ranks third among the basic colors employed in 'Imrān's poetic lexicon, appearing 113 times. The semantic patterns of this color indicate that positive connotations predominate over negative ones, with only a single negative meaning, namely:

First Topic: Negative Connotations:

1. The Significance of Annihilation and Death:

Imran employed the color white with the connotation of annihilation in his fourth collection Harbor of the New Memory, specifically in the poem Harbor of the New Memory, which consists of four sections he called (movements) influenced by music and its terminology. The poem takes on a symphonic structure, as he says in the third movement:

**"We folded
our white tents
to depart.
This is the homeland of fear,
of loitering,
of sorrow,
of drowsiness.
The homeland of defeat,
the flags are white.
The homeland of the carpet.
We said: travel is salvation,
this land has become barren.
We folded
our white tents." (Imran, 2000, vol. 1, p. 319–320)**

The above excerpt relies on the color term as a tool for producing meaning. It represents a poetic surge charged with meanings of despair, frustration, and alienation in a homeland no longer fit for life. Here, the color white runs counter to the nature of the meaning, for white is conventionally associated with joy, optimism, and hope, due to its traditional connection with truth, goodness, and beauty—so much so that the ancient Arabs linked it to peace.

Tents symbolize exile, wandering, and instability; here, they refer to the lost homeland. Notably, the color white, when coupled with tents and flags, departs from its known positive connotation—linked to life, optimism, and joy—generating instead a negative meaning denoting annihilation and death. More precisely, it suggests surrender, which in turn implies defeat; defeat points to weakness, and weakness to death—collective death. The folding of the white tents is the result of causes that the poet enumerates in the text: “drowsiness” and “barrenness” are figurative elements, employed through explicit metaphor, to signify their real-life counterparts: drowsiness indicating stagnation, surrender, and backwardness; barrenness signifying the failure of projects and the collapse of revolutionary promises of progress, freedom, and dignity (Al-Ahmad, 2008, p. 274). All these reasons compel him to leave without return; hence, he repeats the phrase “we folded our white tents to depart” twice. Describing the tent as white reinforces its negative connotation by alluding to the shroud—as if the white tent is a collective shroud being folded after the land has declared its barrenness and the flags have become symbols of surrender.

We observe that the color term has moved from its familiar frame to unfamiliar ones: white has departed from its cheerful meaning linked to life and become associated with manifestations of frustration, estrangement, grief, despair, and death. The homeland that has become “the homeland of fear, loitering, drowsiness, and defeat” is no longer alive but dead within; here, white is the color of collective death and of the lost national dream.

Focusing on the color white carries a psychological significance that expresses the poet's alienation and sorrow, for white is associated with the color of the shroud. The poet exploits the manifestations of this color to intensify connotations of grief, frustration, and death. Yet a deeper reading of the text reveals that the poet offers an indirect approach to color in the poem's deep structure, grounded in what is called semantic opposition. Death, in the collective consciousness, is usually associated with black, while white is tied to joy, beginnings, and glad tidings. Here, the poet achieves semantic opposition in the text's deep structure by inverting the fixed meaning of white—linking it to the end rather than the beginning. This reflects the poet's skill in achieving aesthetic effect through his ability to simulate color and highlight its deep semantic and psychological dimensions. The repetition of white does not evoke the expected positive meanings but instead conjures its opposite, according to a binary opposition that opens the whole scene to gloom and collapse, as inferred from the text's context. The excerpt begins with "we folded our white tents to depart" and ends with the same phrase, as if to conclude his feelings—suggesting that the poet is besieged by the color white: the whole homeland appears white to him, but in truth it is black and dark. It is a suffocating despair intermingled with feelings of sorrow, collapse, defeat, and the death of dreams. Thus, white implicitly summons its opposite—black—and points to it.

With every repetition, the poet alerts the reader to the life–death duality that haunts him, leading to the overall meaning associated with the repeated word white—and, by implication, with black. It is the poet's grief and defeat scattered throughout the earlier structural arrangement; hence, Imran sees no solution to his tragedy and alienation but emigration—leaving that swamp: "We said: travel is salvation." The homeland is no longer his, and its land has become a barren woman; thus, departure is the only viable solution.

Second Topic: Positive Connotations:

1. The Connotation of Immortality:

Imran employed white with the meaning of immortality in his first collection *Songs on an Icy Wall*, in the poem *Shaheen*, which is composed of an introduction and five panels: *The Wolf*, *Sigata*, *The Encounter*, *The Past*, and *The Absence*. In the panel *The Absence*, he says:

**"In the shyness of defeated victory,
in the shame of lowered death,
at the gate of dusk,
coal hung on a rope,
and a white song,
a virgin song,
a song,
fluttered at dawn,
settled into wounds,
upon the agony of Sigata,
in its yearning,
it wiped the village's wound,
it poured forth as dawn from forgotten joy
and fragrance..." (Imran, 2000, vol. 1, pp. 65–66)**

It should be noted that the poem *Shaheen* was written between 1966 and 1967, i.e., before the Naksa. It is considered the first major work of Muhammad Imran and is a long poetic narrative recounting the story of a folk hero from the village of Sigata—Abu Ali Shaheen—who rebelled against injustice and feudalism to change the exploitative and alienating social reality left by colonialism and politically allied with the authorities. Yet Sigata remained under oppression and submission, incapable of aiding him despite his need for its support—making it a model for all Arab villages at the time.

The poet depicts, in the above lines, a tragic ending in which Shaheen, the revolutionary fighter and the first martyr of the anti-feudal uprising, falls (coal hung on a rope), as if the revolutionary sparks (symbolized by the gate of dusk) were quickly extinguished with Shaheen's death—turning into extinguished embers, suspended in the space of silence and repression. Shaheen disappeared in body to become an immortal revolutionary symbol in the collective memory (a white song), perhaps awaiting someone from among those submissive villages to rekindle the flame of revolution after him.

What matters here is the color composition in the phrase "white song." The aesthetic of this color use lies in the poet's employment of synesthesia—"the exchange between the faculties of perception, and the interweaving of their energies, grants the poet or writer a doubled power in painting the desired image, and also helps him provide an emotional impact on the recipient" (Slimani, 2014, p. 71). Imran blends hearing and sight, granting the song—a sensory object of hearing—a white color, a sensory object of sight, thus transforming it into a visible entity. By doing so, he departs from the usual image, creating a meaning different from that typically understood by the recipient, enriching the visual burst and endowing it with diverse energies that enhance its beauty and clarity through the interaction of multiple senses.

How can a song be white? After his martyrdom, Shaheen became a song continuously sung by the villages. The poet describes this song as white to allude to Shaheen's continued life in the hearts of the villages that carry his dream—a dream for which he died—in the hope that they might one day realize it. Shaheen becomes a symbol of rebirth and renewal, an embodiment of the uprising against injustice, akin to the phoenix that burns and rises anew from the ashes. His martyrdom becomes a herald of a new birth and a fresh beginning that will heal wounds and erase suffering—an idea hinted at by the title of the panel (The Absence), for in absence there is a hidden presence awaiting the right moment to appear when collective revolutionary consciousness matures.

Here, white is not a neutral color but a symbol resisting defeat and death, summarizing a heroic stance: martyrdom. There is no doubt that the poet elevates the martyr Shaheen, raising him above the moments of pain and death into purity and immortality. Imran exhibits great skill in choosing his color terms, lifting them beyond their familiar range into broader and more open horizons to produce the intended meaning. This is evident in his choice of explicit white in the context of Shaheen's immortality, meaning that he masterfully employed the signifier of white by placing it in its proper context—that of eulogizing and glorifying the martyr—because “the elegy of the martyr must not be laden with signifiers of darkness and blackness, but rather with signifiers of whiteness, and the shades of transparency, purity, and radiance they entail” (Shartah, 2017, p. 343). Thus, Imran imbues the white in the above passage with shades affirming transparency, such as virginity, dawn, and joy.

It should also be noted that the color in his poetic line parallels the one that follows it, serving both rhythmic and semantic levels and achieving aesthetic harmony:

| | | |
|--------|--------|---|
| A song | a song | predicate of an omitted subject + described noun. |
| White | virgin | Adjectives. |

The poet repeats the word song, placing it at the center of the fifth and sixth poetic lines, creating grammatical and morphological parallelism: two nominal sentences consisting of the predicate of an omitted subject and an adjective. Semantically, these nominal sentences convey stability and constancy, as he speaks of the martyr of the revolution, Shaheen, affirming his enduring presence in the memory of the villages. We feel as if the poet hopes and awaits, with optimism, someone to rise from the ashes (coal) to ignite the revolution anew and achieve what Shaheen struggled for. Hence, this repetition in the fifth and sixth lines reflects his psychological state.

Rhythmically, the parallelism produces a musical cadence that strongly impacts the recipient, dispelling monotony; no matter how often the parallels are repeated, the listener does not feel bored (Faqs, 2018, p. 131).

Thus, we find that Imran employed color through the combined techniques of synesthesia and parallelism, both of which achieved aesthetic excellence in his use of color.

2. The Significance of Freedom and Dignity:

Imran employed white with the meaning of freedom and dignity in his first poetry collection *Songs on an Icy Wall*, in his poem *Poems for the Captive Sister*:

**"I saw them on your lips washing themselves with kisses,
your tears the wine of their night,
and your eyes
their goblets of drink. And I saw—alas—
I saw your white clothes captive,
I saw their fangs sinking into your breasts,
tearing at your naked flesh.
I heard you scream: Brother, brother...
and I was ashamed of my nakedness—
without fangs, without claws,
and in my heart nothing but a fragment of song,
a little blood, and some poems." (Imran, 2000, vol. 1, p. 95)**

Muhammad Imran takes his relationship with woman as a frame and theme to reveal his poetic vision, and wherever you turn in his poetry, you will find that woman is never absent from his verses. In this text, the woman appears in the form of a sister taken captive by strangers, whom the poet makes a symbol of the homeland or of occupied Palestine especially since the historical context of the poem confirms this reading. The 1967 war was almost unbelievable, as the Arab armies were defeated and the usurping Zionist entity occupied new Arab land in a war that lasted only hours. The poet records that bitter defeat through the color composition your white clothes in an oppositional dyad that recalls the binary clothing / nakedness. Clothing represents covering, here referring to the dignity and honor of Palestine before the defeat. Qualifying it with

white reinforces this meaning and deepens the sense of catastrophe—especially when white confronts the word captive. Here, white carries symbolic weight that transcends its descriptive function, evoking dignity and freedom. It is not mere decoration, but “a symbolic language that transcends superficial usage to deeper meanings through the context that dictates the poet’s technique of selection and expression” (Ibrahim, 2023, p. 325). The aesthetic quality of the color composition lies in the fact that the poet relied on the connotative, suggestive meaning of the color, not its surface literal sense. The white clothes are not mere garments—they represent a history of dignity and resistance, yet they are subjected to the oppressive act of stripping inherent in the word captive, pointing to the shame inflicted on the Arab nation after that war: the shame of defeat and collapse, the exposure of its nakedness, and the violation of its honor. Palestine becomes a sister raped before the eyes of her brother—the poetic self—and the Arab conscience, powerless to defend her. What deepens the sense of disgrace is his being without fangs or claws, possessing only “a fragment of song, a little blood, and some poems.” Thus, the white color manages to reproduce the catastrophe of defeat and express its bitterness, enriching the poetic image and becoming part of its structure. Had the poet omitted white and written “I saw your clothes captive,” the image would have lost much of its expressive force, becoming more prosaic and less poetic. Captive clothes as such lack emotive charge, whereas the white is what infuses them with an aesthetic charge that conveys the painful reality and turns captivity into a violation of a history of dignity and freedom.

3. The Significance of Peace:

Imran used white with the meaning of peace in his fourth poetry collection *The Harbor of New Memory*, in his poem *The Harbor of New Memory*, in the second movement:

**"In my blind,
deaf time,
the time of the hunt,
prayer is a rifle
feeding on flowers,
on doves,
on the white bird,
on poems,
on olives,
on children,
on cities—
feeding on civilization." (Imran, 2000, vol. 1, p. 313)**

The general atmosphere of the text indicates an abnormal condition inflicted on a human community representing the homeland. The text reveals that the reality the poet lives in is ugly and deformed, devoid of human values, filled with violence and killing. The poet describes his era as “blind and deaf,” an allusion to silence in the face of suffering and the inability to empathize with the innocent. The shocking paradox lies in his use of prayer—a symbol of spirituality, faith, and communion with God—in a context that expresses killing. Prayer / rifle points to the violence practiced by political religious extremism that kills the innocent and devours everything pure and beautiful (flowers, doves, the bird, poems, olives, children).

The crucial focal point here is the phrase the white bird, which appears among a list of beings turned into prey in a murderous age. The bird is a small, fragile creature symbolizing freedom and beauty, and coupling it with the color white envelops that freedom in peace. Yet this bird becomes a victim of deadly political religious extremism. The aesthetic quality of the color’s use lies in the poet’s reliance on the deep, suggestive connotations of white, making it a structural element in shaping the image. In poetic language, color only holds aesthetic value if it plays a role in an artistic or psychological dimension that resonates through the whole poem. In truth, there is no literal white bird feeding—rather, it is a symbolic allusion to peace under threat in that blind, hunting age when issues became entangled and politics, nationalism, and religion merged, and killing prevailed in the name of religion. The white color thus helps establish and deepen the poet’s vision; its artistic use reflects his ability to transform color into a visionary, symbolic sign expressing a bitter human tragedy. White stands as witness to the cruelty that afflicts innocence and peace in a blind, deaf era of hunting and hunters acting in the name of intelligence agencies and religion.

4. Mystical Significance:

Imran employed white with a mystical meaning in his eleventh poetry collection *Hymn of the Violet*, in his poem *A Time for the Lady of Contentment*:

**"I said: I paint in my blood
a time for a lady...
whiteness...
[a planet of silver running over things,
a flood of whiteness]...
I said: I paint in the whiteness the orbit of a face—
a balcony in the wheat,
then... a space of grass..." (Imran, 2000, vol. 4, pp. 17–18)**

The mother forms the central axis of this excerpt, and Imran explicitly indicates this in his dedication "To my mother." He summons her image as a lady elevated to a higher rank after her death, crowning her with white, saturated with a stream of meanings that transcend the familiar association with loss and grief. Here, it merges with mystical features, appearing in the text not as a decorative visual element but as a mystical sign carrying meanings of spiritual purity, sanctity, detachment from impurity, and a return to the primal innocence—conjuring the mother's image as a luminous apparition condensed in the color white. The word whiteness is the spiritual counterpart to the divine essence, for "whiteness is associated with purity, transparency, and light—qualities of angels and the *houri*s" (Shartah, 2017, p. 347). Thus, whiteness becomes the highest spiritual level the mother attained, reflecting beauty, transcendence, and dissolution into the Absolute.

The poet isolates the signifier whiteness in an independent line, relying on the visual space—or what is called the technique of white space—by leaving a gap after the word, thus expressing a temporary silence. Yet this is a silence laden with meanings the reader can infer by deciphering the code of this whiteness and understanding the poem's essence. For whiteness is "eloquent silence, and blackness is mute speech" (al-Dayyoub, 2023, p. 64). This visual composition on the page seeps into the semantic space of the poem, alluding to absence and embodying the elevated rank the mother has reached. The overall tone is not one of lamentation—"the reader senses no trace of grief, nor smells the scent of sorrow from the pain of parting; rather, he reads an angelic world in which this lady participates in creation" (al-Barad'i, 1995, p. 82).

By likening her to a planet (a planet of silver running over things), he invests her with meanings of loftiness and elevated status. Planets are closely tied to height and exaltation, and stars and planets once served as guides for Arabs in the vast desert (al-Durou, 2019, p. 69). This planet is clad in silver—a counterpart and shadow of white—deepening the mother's image with further connotations: guidance, beauty, and radiance. It is as if the mother has become a luminous being who pours light upon darkness and guides the poet in his reality. Imran then explicitly mentions white in "a flood of whiteness" to affirm the earlier meaning, as flood suggests her spirit's immersion into nature.

The mother thus takes on a heavenly, mystical quality through her association with white (the explicit white) and its counterpart silver, which symbolize purity, beauty, and brilliance. This allows us to say that the poet harnessed the value of color to convey the essence of the mother beyond its sensory limits into the spiritual realm, coupling it with radiant white at times and with the gleaming silver planet at others. In both, the mother's essence becomes a purely spiritual world wrapped in all the manifestations of purity and illumination.

It is worth noting that focusing on white and its counterpart in the text also has a psychological significance, expressing the poet's anxiety and his need for the mother's presence with all the tenderness and safety she embodies. His insistence on framing her image in white conceals his longing for that peace in his painful reality, even though the details of that reality are absent from the poem. What prompts this interpretation is that Imran wrote this poem toward the end of his life, as illness ravaged his body and death drew near. Thus, he ties his mother's figure to all that is beautiful and pure, seeking through her to overcome his existential anxiety, granting her attributes of goodness (wheat) and fertility (grass), and elevating her to a supra-human, angelic, mystical level.

From here, it becomes clear that Muhammad Imran adhered to the artistic traditions of the Sufis in their symbols and allusions, using the symbols (whiteness, silver, planet) to pierce the tangible and create new meanings as manifestations of a spiritual, angelic world shaped by the figure of the mother, approaching divine beauty.

Conclusion and Research Findings:

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that the use of color is a prominent stylistic and semantic feature in the poetry of Muhammad Imran. It is not a random element, but an aesthetic and artistic tool that serves the poetic idea, stimulates the reader's awareness, and plays a crucial role in poetic expression. Through it, Imran reveals his turbulent inner world and his deep understanding of reality. The employment of color in his poetry has both artistic and philosophical dimensions.

This research, by tracing the term (white) in Imran's poetic corpus and exploring its positive and negative meanings within various textual contexts, has arrived at the following findings:

From our study of the color white, we conclude the following: The formations of white in Muhammad Imran's poetry are dominated by positive connotations, with a single negative connotation drawn from social heritage, its association with death due to its link to the shroud. The color lexicon of Imran's poetry in his use of white indicates that he sometimes preserved the familiar meanings of white, especially in his early collections, which were dominated by a national revolutionary tone suited to that stage. At other times, he expanded the connotations of white into new expressive horizons, developing it from a simple, surface vision into a complex visionary language especially in his collection Hymn of the Violet, which belongs to his final phase, the phase of the mystical vision.

Research Recommendations:

In this study, we attempted to explore Muhammad Imran's use of the green color, and it is evident that his poetic legacy still holds much worthy of investigation. Therefore, we recommend that future scholars pursue the following:

- A study on Color Binaries in Muhammad Imran's Poetry, as his use of opposing color pairs sheds light on his symbolic world and deepens our understanding of his poetic universe.
- A study on Genre Intersections in Muhammad Imran's Poetry, considering how he diversified poetic structure, blending lyrical, narrative, epic, and dramatic elements.
- A study on The Role of Heritage in Muhammad Imran's Poetry, since he employed heritage—mythical, folkloric, poetic, historical, and religious—as a technique for expressing contemporary experiences.

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