



RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Romantic Lyricism in the Poetry of William Shakespeare and the Arab Shakespeare Ahmed Shawqi: A Stylistic and Comparative Study

Dr. Ghulam Ahmad¹, Dr. Muhammad Sarwar², Dr. Iftikhar Ahmad Khan³, Dr. Makkiah Nabi Bakhsh⁴, Dr Khuda Bakhas⁵

¹Assistant Professor, GC University Faisalabad

²Associate Professor Department of ArabicBahauddin Zakariya University Multan Pakistan,

³Assistant Professor, GC University Faisalabad

⁴Assistant Professor, Department of Arabic, The Women University University Multan

⁵Associate Professor, Department of Education, GC University Faisalabad

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: Apr 20, 2025	This study explores the rich romantic lyricism in the poetry of William Shakespeare and Ahmed Shawqi, two literary giants separated by geography, language, and era yet united by their profound emotional expression and artistic mastery. By conducting a stylistic and comparative analysis, the research highlights how both poets articulate themes of love, passion, and human vulnerability through distinctive yet resonant poetic devices. Shakespeare's use of the sonnet form, iambic pentameter, and metaphorical imagery is contrasted with Shawqi's employment of classical Arabic meters, monorhyme structures, and elaborate symbolic language rooted in Arabic prosody. Despite their cultural differences, both poets evoke universal experiences of love and longing, merging personal sentiment with philosophical depth. This comparative study reveals how Shakespeare's Renaissance humanism and Shawqi's Arab nationalist fervour shape their lyrical voices, demonstrating the timeless and cross-cultural nature of romantic poetry. Ultimately, this review and research affirms the enduring relevance of their poetic expressions and contributes to a deeper understanding of cross-cultural literary connections.
Accepted: Jun 29, 2025	
Keywords Romantic Lyricism, William Shakespeare, Ahmed Shawqi, Comparative Poetry, Stylistic and Comparative Analysis ,	
*Corresponding Author: r.alshnaiber@psau.edu.sa	

INTRODUCTION

William Shakespeare and Ahmed Shawqi, though separated by time, geography, and language, share a profound capacity for romantic lyricism in their poetry. Shakespeare, renowned for his English sonnets, masterfully blends emotion, philosophy, and structure to explore themes of love, beauty, and transience. Similarly, Shawqi, often hailed as the "Prince of Poets" in the Arab world, revitalized classical Arabic poetry by infusing it with romantic sentiment and national consciousness. This comparative stylistic study examines how both poets employ imagery, metaphor, and rhythm to express universal emotions. Despite differing traditions, their lyrical expressions reflect a shared human longing for love, beauty, and meaning.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study explores the romantic lyricism in the poetry of William Shakespeare and Ahmed Shawqi, often called the "Arab Shakespeare." Previous research has examined their literary styles, cultural contexts, and adaptations, such as:

Shakespeare's and Shawqi's Cleopatra by Dawla Saeed Alamri

Arabic Adaptations of Shakespeare by Mahmoud F. Al-Shetawi

Shakespeare's Othello and Hamlet in the Arab World by Khalid Amine

Kamil Kilani's Adaptation of Shakespeare by Lamis Ismail Omar

Ahmed Shawqi and W.B. Yeats: Poetic Responses to Colonization by Faisal Saad Al Harthi

While these works offer valuable insights, a focused comparative analysis of their romantic poetry—especially in terms of themes and lyrical style—remains largely unaddressed.

Research Gap:

Up to now, there has been no thorough comparative study dedicated to exploring the romantic lyricism present in the works of William Shakespeare and Ahmed Shawqi. This study intends to address this gap by identifying both commonalities and unique qualities within their romantic poetry, analysing it through both stylistic and thematic lenses, and thus contributing original perspectives to this under-researched topic.

METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH:

This research adopts a hybrid methodology that combines both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The qualitative method involves close textual analysis of selected romantic poems by William Shakespeare and Ahmed Shawqi, focusing on stylistic devices such as imagery, metaphor, and rhythm. The quantitative aspect applies thematic coding to identify and measure recurring romantic themes like love, longing, beauty, and nature. A purposive sample of 05 poems from each poet will be analyzed. Data will be interpreted using descriptive commentary and thematic frequency charts. The combined methods aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of romantic lyricism in both poetic traditions, ensuring depth through interpretation and breadth through thematic quantification.

Research Objectives:

Here are four main objectives for this research:

1. To examine the stylistic features of romantic lyricism in the poetry of William Shakespeare and Ahmed Shawqi, highlighting their use of imagery, diction, and rhythm.
2. To analyze and compare key romantic themes—such as love, beauty, longing, and nature—across selected poetic works of both poets.
3. To explore cultural and historical influences that shaped the romantic expressions in their poetry, considering both Western and Arab literary traditions.
4. To identify similarities and differences in the poetic techniques and emotional tone employed by Shakespeare and Shawqi in expressing romantic ideals.

William Shakespeare: Life and Background

Shakespeare was born on 23 April, which coincides with Saint George's Day.⁽¹⁾ Although no school records from his early life have survived, a free grammar school⁽²⁾ – established by royal charter in 1553 and known for its classical curriculum – was likely where he received his education.⁽³⁾ At 18, he married with Anne.⁽⁴⁾ Their marriage licence was issued on 27 November 1582 by the consistory court of Worcester. The following day, two of Anne's acquaintances provided financial guarantees to ensure there were no legal obstacles to the marriage.⁽⁵⁾

After the birth of his children, Shakespeare fades from historical documentation until 1592, when he emerges as a prominent figure in London's theatrical scene. Later accounts by early biographers, including Nicholas Rowe and Samuel Johnson, indicate that he returned to Stratford several years prior to his passing.⁽⁶⁾

¹ Schoenbaum 1987, William Shakespeare: A Compact Documentary Life, Oxford Univ. Press, pp. 24–26.

² Ackroyd 2006. Shakespeare: The Biography. London: Vintage. ISBN 978-0-7493-8655-9. OCLC 1036948826, p. 53.

³ Baldwin, T.W. (1944). William Shakspeare's Small Latine & Lesse Greek. Vol. 1. Urbana: University of Illinois Press. OCLC 359037. Archived from the original on 5 May 2023. Retrieved 5 May 2023, p. 464.

⁴ Schoenbaum, S. 1987, pp. 77–78.

⁵ Schoenbaum, S. 1987, p. 94

⁶ Wood, Manley, ed. (1806). The Plays of William Shakespeare with Notes of Various Commentators. London: George Kearsley. OCLC 38442678, Vol. I. pp. ix–x, lxxii.

Evidence suggests he remained active in the London theatre scene at least until 1608 and continued to visit the city between 1611 and 1614. He passed away at the age of 52.⁽⁷⁾

Literary Contributions:

William Shakespeare's literary contributions includes thirty eight plays, one hundred fifty four sonnets, and several story poems, along with other minor poetic compositions. Interestingly, no original manuscripts of his plays have survived. A significant portion of his dramatic works—nearly half—was preserved thanks to the dedication of his fellow actors. After Shakespeare's death, they compiled and published many of his plays in what is known as the First Folio, thereby safeguarding his literary heritage for future generations.

Love and Romance:

His sonnets are widely regarded as some of the most profound expressions of romantic lyricism in English literature. His collection of 154 sonnets played a pivotal role in shaping the trajectory of modern love poetry. Many of these sonnets continue to resonate deeply with audiences and are frequently recited during romantic occasions such as Valentine's Day and wedding ceremonies.

Within this collection, certain sonnets have achieved iconic status due to their enduring emotional appeal and literary brilliance. These select poems remain particularly popular, even among those who may not typically engage with poetry. Their timeless quality has captivated readers and listeners for centuries, reaffirming Shakespeare's influence on the poetic expression of love.

This study explores five of the most celebrated Shakespearean love sonnets, examining their thematic depth, lyrical beauty, and continued relevance in contemporary romantic discourse.

Ahmed Shawqi:

Ahmed Shawqi ibn Ali, known as the "Prince of Egyptian Poets,"⁽⁸⁾ was born on October 16, 1870, in Cairo, Egypt. However, some biographers suggest that he may have been born in 1868.⁽⁹⁾ Shawqi was Egyptian by nationality; he was born and raised in Egypt.⁽¹⁰⁾ He began his education at the age of four in Cairo and completed his initial studies there.⁽¹¹⁾ Later, he travelled to France and England, where he pursued further studies in law.⁽¹²⁾ He returned to his beloved homeland in 1891.⁽¹³⁾ Shawqi had a deep passion for poetry, and he quickly emerged as a literary genius.⁽¹⁴⁾ He left behind a significant legacy in both prose and poetry.⁽¹⁵⁾ Ahmed Shawqi passed away on October 13, 1932, and was buried in the Sayyida Nafisa Cemetery in Cairo.⁽¹⁶⁾

Ahmed Shawqi as the "Arab Shakespeare":

The epithet "Arab Shakespeare" attributed to Ahmed Shawqi highlights his exceptional talent in both lyrical and dramatic poetry, as well as his lasting impact on Arabic literature—much like the influential role William Shakespeare plays in English literature. Abbas Mahmoud al-Aqqad (1943) remarked that if Shawqi had been born in England, he would have been hailed as a second

⁷ Ackroyd (2006). P. 476.

⁽⁸⁾ Shawqi D. (2002). *Shaa'ir al-'Asr al-Hadith*, Dar al-Ma'arif, al-Qahirah, Egypt, p. 9, al-Zarkali (1989), *Al-A'laam*, Dar al-'Ilm lil-Malayin, vol.1, p. 136, Kahhalah (1957), *Mu'jam al-Mu'allifin*, Matba'at al-Taraqqi, Damascus, 1376 AH / 1957 CE, vol. 1, p. 236.

⁽⁹⁾ Taha I. W. (1369) *Shi'r Shawqi al-Ghina'i wa al-Masrahi*, Matba'at Mustafa al-Bani wa Awladuhu, Egypt, p. 53, al-Zarkali (1989), *Al-A'laam*, vol. 1, p. 136, Shawqi Dayf (2002). *Shaa'ir al-'Asr al-Hadith*, p. 9.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Al-Zayyat (1968), *Tarikh al-Adab al-'Arabi*, Dar Nahjat, Egypt, 23rd edition, p. 369.

⁽¹¹⁾ Shawqi D. (2002), *Fusul fi al-Shi'r wa Naqdih*, Dar al-Ma'arif, Cairo, Egypt, p. 331.

⁽¹²⁾ Shawqi D. (2002), *Al-Adab al-'Arabi al-Mu'asir fi Misr*, Dar al-Ma'arif, Cairo, Egypt, 1961, p. 110.

⁽¹³⁾ Shawqi Dayf (d. 2002), *Fusul fi al-Shi'r wa Naqdih*, p. 331, Shawqi D. (2002), *Al-Adab al-'Arabi al-Mu'asir fi Misr*, p. 110.

⁽¹⁴⁾ Shawqi D. (2002), *Fusul fi al-Shi'r wa Naqdih*, p. 333.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Shawqi D. (2002), *Tarikh al-Adab al-'Arabi: al-'Asr al-Islami*, Dar al-Ma'arif, Cairo, Egypt, 1950, vol. 2, p. 440.

⁽¹⁶⁾ Hanna al-Fakhuri (1965) *Al-Mujaz fi al-Adab al-'Arabi wa Tarikhih*, Dar al-Jil, Beirut, Lebanon, 1411 AH / 1965 CE, vol. 4, p. 488.

Shakespeare, due to his equal mastery of lyrical and dramatic forms.⁽¹⁷⁾ Taha Hussein (1954) similarly affirmed Shawqi's unique position, stating that he is unquestionably the Shakespeare of the Arab world, having elevated historical narratives into poetic drama much like Shakespeare himself.⁽¹⁸⁾ Muhammad Mandur (1960) praised Shawqi's play *The Death of Cleopatra*, claiming it rivals Shakespearean tragedies in its dramatic composition.⁽¹⁹⁾ H.A.R. Gibb (1963) observed that Shawqi's dramatic writings represent the closest counterpart in Arabic literature to Shakespeare, especially in their emotional intensity and eloquent expression.⁽²⁰⁾ These critical appraisals together affirm that Shawqi's contribution to Arabic poetry and drama earned him a stature parallel to Shakespeare, not only in technical brilliance but also in cultural influence.

Literary works: *Al-Shawqiyyat*, *Diwanul Atfal*, *Masra Kalyubatra*, *Majnun Al-Layla*, *Qambiz*, *Antara* and *Al-Sittu al-Huda*

Love and Romance:

Ahmed Shawqi's poetry often delves into the themes of love and romance. His poetic works vividly portray the splendor of nature, the intoxication that accompanies love, and the subtle complexities of human emotions. Through these elements, Shawqi reveals a multidimensional poetic voice that resonates with both personal sentiments and shared human experiences. During his time in Paris, the capital of France, he composed several romantic poems. In one such account, he speaks of falling in love with a beautiful young woman. Due to her beauty, many sought her affection, attempting to win her over with superficial flattery. However, she remained indifferent to their advances, sensing the insincerity behind their words. Shawqi, on the other hand, considered himself a genuine admirer—one whose praise stemmed from heartfelt devotion. In a moment of emotional reflection, he questioned himself: "Has my beloved forgotten my name?" This deep sense of love and longing is powerfully expressed in his poem "*Khada'uha bi-qawlihim ḥasnā*" ("*They Deceived Her by Calling Her Beautiful*").⁽²¹⁾

The Stylistic and Comparative Analysis:

The research focuses on the following key themes found in the romantic poetry of William Shakespeare and Ahmed Shawqi:

The Unique Beauty of the Beloved

The Natural Allure and Expression of Love

Sacrifice and Humility as Acts of Love

Fidelity and Devotion in Romantic Relationships

Endurance and Patience Amidst Love's Challenges

Hope and Perseverance in the Face of Separation

The Pain of Parting and Longing for Reunion

The Profound Depth of Love and Desire for Closeness

Self-Love and the Dangers of Vanity

Unwavering Loyalty within Love

Unique Beauty of the Beloved:

"Shall I compare thee to a summer's day"? "Thou art more lovely and more temperate".

⁽¹⁷⁾ Abbas M. Al-Aqqad (1943), *Shawqi: Sha'ir al-'Asr*, Dar al-Hilal (Cairo), p. 91.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Taha H. (1954), *Hadith al-Arbi'aa*, Dar al-Ma'arif (Cairo), vol. 2, p. 154:

⁽¹⁹⁾ Mandur M. (1960), *Al-Masrahiyyat al-Shi'riyya li Shawqi*, Dar Nahdat Misr (Cairo), p. 210

⁽²⁰⁾ H.A.R. Gibb (1963), *Arabic Literature: An Introduction*, Western Scholarship, Oxford University Press, p. 134

²¹ Imran Hossain T. (2024), *Exploring the Themes in the Poetry of Ahmad Shawqi: A Brief Study*, IJCRT | Volume 12, (2), February 2024 | ISSN: 2320-2882, P. 347

"But thy eternal summer shall not fade"

(22)

Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest"

الخُسنُ حلفتُ بيوسُفِهِ

والسُّورَةُ إِنَّكَ مُفَرَّدُهُ

قد ودَّ جِمالُكَ أو قَبَساً

حوراءِ الخلدِ وأمرُهُ

وتمنَّتْ كُلُّ مُقْطِعةٍ

بِذَها لو تُبْعِثُ تشبهُهُ (23)

The poetic works of William Shakespeare and Ahmed Shawqi, though shaped by vastly different cultural and historical contexts, converge in their artistic exaltation of beauty, love, and the timeless nature of poetic expression. In his renowned sonnet, the poet seeks to eternalize the beloved's beauty, asserting that their "eternal summer shall not fade." Likewise, Ahmed Shawqi employs vivid and opulent imagery to elevate the beloved's appearance, drawing comparisons that surpass even the famed beauty of Prophet Yusuf (عليه السلام) and the celestial houris of Paradise.

Both poets make extensive use of metaphor and hyperbole to idealize their subjects—Shakespeare by likening transient natural beauty to the enduring charm of the beloved, and Shawqi by invoking religious and mythological references that heighten spiritual and emotional resonance.

Stylistically, Shakespeare conforms to the English sonnet structure, utilizing iambic pentameter and methodical reasoning, while Shawqi follows the classical Arabic qasida tradition, marked by strict meter, end rhyme, and spiritually rich imagery. Despite these stylistic contrasts, both poets pursue a shared literary goal: to render beauty eternal through the medium of verse. Their poetry implies that while physical charm is subject to decay, its essence may be preserved forever through poetic artistry.

In this way, Shakespeare and Shawqi exemplify how love, when captured in poetry, transcends time and culture, forging a bridge between East and West through the universal language of aesthetic admiration.

Natural Charm and Love:

"Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May", "And summer's lease hath all too short a date"
"Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines" "And often is his gold complexion dimm'd" (24)

تأتي الدلالَ سَجِيَّةً وتَصْنَعُ

وأراك في حالي دلالَكَ مُبدِعا

تَهْ كَيْفَ شِئْتَ فما الجمالُ بحاكم

(25) حتَّى يُطاعَ على الدلالِ ويُسمَعَا

William Shakespeare and Ahmed Shawqi stand as monumental figures in English and Arabic literary traditions, respectively. Their poetic expressions reveal a profound contemplation of beauty, nature, and human sentiment. In Sonnet 18, Shakespeare reflects on the impermanence of physical beauty and the inevitable passage of time, portraying nature with romantic elegance. Similarly, Shawqi explores the themes of جمال (beauty) and دلال (coquetry), emphasizing how charm can emerge both spontaneously and through deliberate grace. For both poets, beauty holds immense power, yet it remains ephemeral.

Shakespeare's line parallels Shawqi's notion that beauty defies strict conventions, hinting that it resists fixed judgment or control. Metaphor plays a vital role in both their works—Shakespeare imagines the sun as the "eye of heaven," attributing celestial qualities to nature, while Shawqi infuses beauty and flirtation with emotional and artistic depth. Philosophically, Shakespeare uses the transient summer season as an allegory for life's fragility, while Shawqi meditates on the unpredictable and rebellious nature of beauty.

²² William J. ROLFE (1905), *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, New York, Cincinnati, Chicago, Sonnet No XVIII, P 59

²³ Ahmad M. Al-Hūfī, *Dīwān Shauqī*, Nahdat Misr for Printing, Publishing, and Distribution, (Cairo), v. 2, p. 112

²⁴ William J. ROLFE (1905), *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, Sonnet No XVIII, P 59

²⁵ Ahmad M. Al-Hūfī, *Dīwān Shauqī*, v. 2, p. 132

Though separated by language and culture, both poets use lyrical sophistication to elevate their themes. Their works transcend boundaries, uniting East and West through shared reflections on love, aesthetics, and the fleeting nature of time.

Sacrifice and Humility in Sweetheart:

"Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade" "When in eternal lines to time thou growest"
(26)

وأجي أعتابك، ما تهونش عليا⁽²⁷⁾ وأذلّ، والحق معايا

Although William Shakespeare and Ahmed Shawqi belonged to different eras, cultures, and linguistic traditions, their poetry reveals notable similarities that underscore the universal nature of literary artistry. Both poets demonstrate exceptional command over imagery and emotionally charged language, engaging deeply with timeless themes such as love, human dignity, and the desire for immortality. Shakespeare's famous verse, "Nor ... growest," asserts that poetry has the power to defy death and preserve beauty forever. In parallel, Shawqi's line, "وأجي أعتابك، ما تهونش عليا," embodies heartfelt sincerity and unwavering emotional commitment—hallmarks of romantic expression.

From a stylistic perspective, Shakespeare structures his thoughts within the framework of the English sonnet, marked by iambic pentameter and methodical argumentation. In contrast, Shawqi utilizes classical Arabic poetic meters (بحور الشعر) to craft harmonious rhythms and rich rhyme schemes, often expressed in emotionally potent odes and monologues. Both poets employ metaphor and personification to amplify their messages—Shakespeare gives human traits to Death, while Shawqi breathes life into emotional turmoil through vivid imagery. Their poetry also functions as philosophical commentary: Shakespeare touches on existential concerns, whereas Shawqi often embeds ethical, social, and political reflections in his verse.

Ultimately, the poetic contributions of Shakespeare and Shawqi illustrate how literature can cross cultural and linguistic divides, transforming personal sentiment into universally resonant art. Their depth, eloquence, and artistic legacy establish them as literary giants within their respective traditions of English and Arabic literature.

Loyalty in Love:

Let me not to the marriage of true minds Admit impediments. Love is not love

Which alters when it alteration finds, Or bends with the remover to remove. (28)

سلوى بالقلب تُبرّدُه⁽²⁹⁾ ما خُنتُ هواك، ولا خطرث

Despite being distanced by era, region, and language, William Shakespeare and Ahmed Shawqi display notable parallels in their poetic representations, especially concerning love and the emotional experience. In his celebrated sonnet "Let ... minds...," William Shakespeare portrays love as a constant and eternal force, unmoved by challenges or changes in circumstance. Similarly, Shawqi, in his line "ما خُنتُ هواك، ولا خطرث سلوى بالقلب تُبرّدُه," conveys a powerful sense of loyalty and emotional consistency, affirming the enduring strength of heartfelt affection.

In terms of poetic style, Shakespeare adheres to the iambic pentameter within the sonnet structure, while Shawqi, grounded in classical Arabic poetics, employs monorhyme and intricate rhythm based on 'Ilm al-'Arood. Both utilize elevated metaphorical language and rhetorical elegance to enhance the portrayal of love. Though shaped by distinct literary traditions—Elizabethan English and Arabic neoclassicism—their shared idealization of love as sincere, spiritual, and morally elevated underlines the universal nature of romantic expression. Ultimately, both poets transcend cultural boundaries, demonstrating how the theme of love resonates timelessly through diverse poetic forms.

Suffering and Patience in Love:

²⁶ William J. ROLFE (1905), *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, Sonnet No. XVIII, p. 59

²⁷ <https://www.aldiwan.net/poem6805.html>

²⁸ William J. ROLFE (1905), *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, Sonnet No. CXVI, p. 115

²⁹ Ahmad M. Al-Hūfī, *Dīwān Shauqī*, v. 2, p. 113

That looks on tempests and is never shaken;

It is the star to every wandering bark. ⁽³⁰⁾

وَبَكَاهُ وَرَحَّمَ عُنُودَهُ
مُضْنَاكَ جَفَاهُ مَرَقْدَهُ
مَقْرُوحُ الْجَفْنِ مَسْنَدُهُ ⁽³¹⁾
حَبِيرَانُ الْقَلْبِ مُعَدَّبُهُ

Although William Shakespeare and Ahmed Shawqi lived in vastly different eras and cultural contexts, both demonstrated exceptional mastery in poetic craft, evoking vivid imagery and deep emotional resonance. Shakespeare, celebrated as the foremost figure in English literature, frequently addressed themes such as love, destiny, time, and the human condition through the structured sonnet form. His iconic line, "It ... bark," characterizes love as a steady and dependable force. In a parallel manner, Ahmed Shawqi, honored as the Prince of Poets in the Arabic literary canon, utilized classical meters and ornate language to express powerful feelings and philosophical reflections. His renowned verse "...مُضْنَاكَ جَفَاهُ مَرَقْدَهُ" poignantly captures the suffering born of passionate love.

The two poets are unified by their refined use of literary devices, particularly metaphor and personification—Shakespeare employing cosmic and abstract symbolism, while Shawqi paints more sensual and rhythmic portrayals of emotional states. Despite their stylistic and linguistic differences—Shakespeare's sonnets being concise and contemplative, and Shawqi's odes being more melodic and expressive—both create poetic worlds where love emerges as a guiding force, an emotional trial, and a transcendent ideal. Their work not only embodies the elegance of their respective linguistic traditions but also highlights the universality of human emotion, establishing both as enduring voices in world literature.

Patience and Hope:

For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings That then I scorn to change my state with kings. ⁽³²⁾

يَا مَا نَسْمَعُ بُكْرَهُ وَبَعْدَهُ نَشُوف ⁽³³⁾
وَأَنَا بِالصَّبْرِ أَبْلُغُ أَمَلِي

Despite the differences in their historical periods and cultural backgrounds, William Shakespeare and Ahmed Shawqi exhibit striking parallels in their poetic expression and thematic concerns. Both literary giants are renowned for their expressive power, emotional richness, and linguistic mastery. Shakespeare, with his sonnets, frequently delves into the themes of love, the passage of time, and the inevitability of death, using vivid imagery and deep philosophical insights. Similarly, Ahmed Shawqi—revered as the "Amir al-Shu'ara" (Prince of Poets) in the Arab literary tradition—relies on classical Arabic structure and expressive metaphor to address themes like love, national pride, and human perseverance.

One notable parallel in their works is the expression of universal human emotions. Shakespeare's line reflects the same spirit as Shawqi's saying, "وَأَنَا بِالصَّبْرِ أَبْلُغُ أَمَلِي" (Through patience I reach my goal), where both poets praise emotional resilience and the uplifting nature of love and hope. Though Shakespeare employed the strict iambic pentameter and sonnet form, and Shawqi used the traditional Arabic qasida with its structured meters, both achieved a melodic and harmonious poetic flow.

Their stylistic differences stem from their unique cultural milieus—Shakespeare wrote during England's Renaissance, a period marked by individualism and philosophical inquiry, whereas Shawqi composed his poetry under the influence of the Ottoman and Arab awakening, often merging personal emotion with collective identity. Yet, both poets created enduring works that transcend time and geography. Their ability to blend personal emotion with universal meaning underscores poetry's role in connecting diverse human experiences across civilizations.

Love and Separation:

³⁰ William J. ROLFE (1905), *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, Sonnet No. CXVI, p. 115

³¹ Ahmad M. Al-Hūfī, *Dīwān Shauqī*, v. 2, p. 112

³² William J. ROLFE (1905), *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, Sonnet No. XXIX, p. 66

³³ <https://www.aldiwan.net/poem6806.html>

This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong,
To love that well which thou must leave ere long.⁽³⁴⁾

وَيُضَوِّنِي الظَّلَامُ أَسَى وَكَرْبَى⁽³⁵⁾ وَأَهْجُرُكُمْ فَيَهْجُرُنِي رُقَادِي

William Shakespeare and Ahmed Shawqi, despite being separated by different historical periods and cultures, exhibit notable parallels in their poetic styles, especially in their treatment of themes like love, mortality, and human emotions. Shakespeare's sonnets frequently explore the transient nature of beauty alongside the endurance of true love, as exemplified in Sonnet 73, where the certainty of death intensifies the experience of affection: "To ... long." Similarly, Ahmed Shawqi, hailed as the "Prince of Poets" in Arabic literature, masterfully combines traditional Arabic poetic structures with deep emotional expression. His verse "وأهجرُكم فيَهجرُنِي رُقادي" ("If I abandon you, sleep abandons me") reflects a similar tension between love and loss, employing vivid imagery to express sorrow and yearning.

Both poets skilfully use rich metaphorical language and maintain rhythmic harmony in their work. Shakespeare's tightly organized sonnet form contrasts with Shawqi's adherence to the classical Arabic meters developed by al-Khalil, yet both succeed in creating lyrical and emotionally resonant poetry. Their writings also echo their respective cultural milieus — Shakespeare's Renaissance humanism compared to Shawqi's neo-classical revival of Arabic poetry — while touching on universal motifs that transcend these contexts. Shakespeare's philosophical musings on existence find a parallel in Shawqi's often sombre and reflective lyricism, demonstrating how each poet surpasses the constraints of their time to explore the fragility of love and the inevitable passage of time. This shared skill in combining form and profound feeling ensures their lasting reputations as poetic masters.

Depth of Love and Desire for Intimacy:

And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare As any she belied with false compare!⁽³⁶⁾

أَنَا مَنْ يُحِبُّكَ فِي نَفَارِكَ مُؤْنِسًا وَيُحِبُّ تِيهَكَ فِي نَفَارِكَ مَطْمَعًا⁽³⁷⁾

William Shakespeare and Ahmed Shawqi, despite being separated by time periods and cultural backgrounds, exhibit striking parallels in their poetic techniques, especially in their treatment of love, emotional depth, and expressive language. Both poets skillfully utilize vivid imagery and metaphorical expressions to reveal profound emotional realities. Shakespeare's sonnets often present an idealized vision of love, while also challenging exaggerated comparisons, as exemplified in Sonnet 130, where he dismisses extravagant flattery in favor of sincere appreciation. Similarly, Shawqi, known as the "Prince of Poets" in the Arab literary tradition, combines classical Arabic poetic forms with romantic elements, evident in his verses that praise the beloved's pride and charm through elevated language and complex metaphors.

In terms of form, Shakespeare's sonnets follow a strict pattern of iambic pentameter and rhyme, whereas Shawqi's compositions are rooted in classical Arabic poetic structures such as the qasida and ghazal, emphasizing meter (bahir) and single rhyme (monorhyme). Despite these formal distinctions, both poets successfully merge tradition with creative innovation. Their themes frequently engage with the paradoxes of love — Shakespeare's depiction of "rare" love resonates with Shawqi's acknowledgment of the beloved's contradictions, as when he says, "I am the one who loves your aloofness." Both poets also infuse their poetry with rich cultural and philosophical dimensions, with Shakespeare embodying Renaissance humanism and Shawqi reflecting Arab heritage.

Ultimately, their poetry crosses linguistic and cultural boundaries, uniting shared themes of love and authenticity. While Shakespeare's style is marked by wit and irony, and Shawqi's by ornate lyrical

³⁴ William J. ROLFE (1905), *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, Sonnet No. LXXIII, p. 91

³⁵ Ahmad M. Al-Hūfī, *Dīwān Shauqī*, v. 2, p. 97

³⁶ William J. ROLFE (1905), *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, Sonnet No. cxxx, p. 123

³⁷ Ahmad M. Al-Hūfī, *Dīwān Shauqī*, v. 2, p. 132

beauty, both achieve enduring impact through their linguistic mastery and deep emotional expression.

Self-love and Vanity:

But as the ripper should by time decease, His tender heir might bear his memory. ⁽³⁸⁾

Within thine own bud buriest thy content And, tender churl, mak'st waste in niggarding. ⁽³⁹⁾

ولغير مُنصفٍ ذلكَ ودَّيتَ تنوي الهجرانَ ولقاكَ حنَّيتَ ⁽⁴⁰⁾

William Shakespeare and Ahmed Shawqi, despite being separated by different eras and cultural backgrounds, share notable parallels in their poetic techniques and subject matter. Both poets are renowned for their exceptional command over language, profound emotional insight, and their portrayal of universal human experiences. Shakespeare's sonnets frequently explore themes of love, mortality, and the inevitable flow of time—like in Sonnet 1, where he cautions against selfishness and encourages procreation to sustain beauty and legacy. In a similar vein, Shawqi, often called the "Prince of Poets" in Arabic literature, combines classical Arabic poetic structures with deeply personal as well as patriotic sentiments. His poetry sometimes captures the emotional complexity of love turning into bitterness, reflecting the emotional tension found in Shakespeare's works.

In terms of style, both poets make extensive use of vivid imagery and metaphorical language. Shakespeare's expressions such as "tender heir" and "bud" symbolize heritage and lost potential, while Shawqi's phrases like "وَدَّيتَ" (I gave you my love) and "تنوي الهجران" (you intend to abandon) highlight emotional conflict. Both demonstrate mastery in formal poetic structures—Shakespeare through his precise use of iambic pentameter, and Shawqi by adhering to classical Arabic meters such as those formulated by al-Khalil. Yet, their contexts differ: Shawqi's poetry often embodies Arab identity and political realities, whereas Shakespeare's sonnets focus more on personal reflection and individual experience. Despite these differences, their works transcend time and culture, connecting people through eloquent expressions of love, loss, and the human desire to leave a lasting legacy. Their enduring influence illustrates poetry's power to cross cultural divides and historical periods.

Loyalty in Love:

If this be error and upon me prov'd, I never writ, nor no man ever lov'd. ⁽⁴¹⁾

سَلَوِي بِالْقَلْبِ ثُبْرُدُهُ ⁽⁴²⁾ مَا خُنْتُ هَوَاكَ، وَلَا خَطَرْتُ

William Shakespeare and Ahmed Shawqi, despite the gulf of time and differing cultural backgrounds, both demonstrate exceptional poetic skill, combining deep emotion, refined language, and enduring themes. Shakespeare's sonnets, such as Sonnet 116, examine the unwavering nature of love with profound metaphysical insight, crafted in iambic pentameter and rich in metaphorical language. On the other hand, Shawqi, celebrated as the "Prince of Poets" in Arabic literature, uses classical Arabic poetic forms like the qasida, blending traditional imagery with expressions of personal and national passion, as exemplified in his line "مَا خُنْتُ هَوَاكَ," which conveys loyalty and heartfelt devotion.

In terms of style, Shakespeare's meticulous command of the English sonnet form contrasts with Shawqi's elaborate use of Arabic prosody, yet both poets emphasize rhythmical beauty and emotional depth. Shakespeare often employs universal and abstract concepts, while Shawqi uses vivid, sensory images such as "سَلَوِي بِالْقَلْبِ ثُبْرُدُهُ" to portray love's soothing purity. Both poets engage deeply with their respective literary heritages—Shakespeare reinterprets Renaissance humanism, whereas Shawqi plays a key role in the revival of classical Arabic poetry during the Nahda.

Their thematic concerns overlap notably around love's idealized permanence and existential steadiness. Shakespeare's sonnet rejects any obstacles to true love, just as Shawqi's verse affirms faithfulness despite challenges. However, Shawqi's work carries additional political undertones reflecting the colonial context of Egypt, while Shakespeare's poetry remains more introspective and

³⁸ William J. ROLFE (1905), *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, Sonnet No. I, p. 49

³⁹ William J. ROLFE (1905), *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, Sonnet No. I, p. 49

⁴⁰ <https://poetsgate.com/poem.php?pm=174634>

⁴¹ William J. ROLFE (1905), *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, Sonnet No. CXVI, p. 115

⁴² Ahmad M. Al-Hūfī, *Dīwān Shauqī*, v. 2, p. 113

personal. Collectively, their works transcend their historical and cultural divides, illustrating how distinct linguistic and cultural traditions can express the universal and timeless power of human emotion.

CONCLUSION:

This study highlights the unique and shared dimensions of romantic lyricism in the poetic works of William Shakespeare and Ahmed Shawqi. Both poets employ deep emotional expression, vivid imagery, and symbolic language to portray love, longing, beauty, and emotional conflict. While Shakespeare reflects Renaissance ideals with dramatic tension and philosophical undertones, Shawqi brings an Arab classical and lyrical richness influenced by cultural and historical experiences. The comparative analysis reveals that, despite linguistic and cultural differences, both poets articulate universal romantic emotions in stylistically refined ways. This research establishes a meaningful literary bridge between East and West, demonstrating that romantic lyricism transcends time and tradition, making their poetry enduring and relevant in global literary discourse.

Results & Findings:

Thematic Commonality: Both poets share core romantic themes such as idealized love, emotional pain, beauty, and spiritual connection.

Stylistic Variation: Shakespeare tends to use metaphor, sonnet structure, and dramatic monologue, while Shawqi often applies traditional Arabic meters and lyrical softness.

Cultural Influence: Shawqi's poetry integrates Arab-Islamic cultural values, whereas Shakespeare's work reflects Elizabethan and Renaissance philosophies.

Language and Tone: Shawqi's tone is elegant and melodious; Shakespeare's is intense and introspective, often philosophical.

Emotional Expression: Both express romantic feelings with depth, but through differing linguistic and poetic traditions, offering a rich comparative perspective.

Suggestions and Recommendations:

Future researchers are encouraged to explore the romantic lyricism of other Eastern and Western poets for broader cross-cultural comparisons. Translating and critically analyzing Ahmed Shawqi's romantic poetry into English with scholarly commentary would enhance global access to his work. It is also recommended that academic institutions include comparative literature modules involving Arabic and English romantic poetry to promote intercultural literary appreciation. Scholars could further investigate how historical, political, and cultural environments shaped romantic expressions in different literary traditions. Additionally, incorporating digital tools for stylistic analysis may offer new dimensions in identifying poetic patterns and linguistic features in both authors' works. This study opens new doors for enriching East-West literary dialogue through poetic exploration.