

Dr. Walaa Ahmed Abdellatif – DTAA21 – December 2020

## MONADS IN CONTEMPORARY EGYPTIAN PAINTING

### المونادات في التصوير المصري المعاصر

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### ABSTRACT

*The world according to Leibniz is a group of monads or spiritual atoms present in nature, whose images appear in living organisms, and we feel them, forming artistic ideas, carrying the elements of the universe that contain spiritual atoms that inspire the artist, where he can form those ideas, and be primary elements and plastic symbols in a painting artistic, and understanding the monads achieved in them by the descriptive analytical approach of some contemporary artworks by Egyptian artists, which are considered to have a role in the artistic expression of the creative process, especially in the art of painting.*

*The research came to explain how to achieve it in a painting, and to clarify its appearance in some examples, by shedding light on the role of imagination, and clarifying the inspirations that help the artist in achieving it.*

### KEYWORDS

Monads; Painting; Contemporary Egyptian Art

### الملخص

العالم عند ليبنتز مجموعة مونادات أو ذرات روحية موجودة في الطبيعة، تظهر صورها في الكائنات الحية، ونشعرها مكونة لأفكار فنية، تحمل عناصر الكون التي تحتوي على الذرات الروحية الملهمة للفنان، حيث يستطيع يكون تلك الأفكار، ويكون عناصر أولية ورموز تشكيلية في لوحة فنية، وفهم المونادات المتحققة فيها بالمنهج الوصفي التحليلي لبعض الأعمال الفنية المعاصرة للفنانين المصريين، والتي تعتبر لها دور في التعبير الفني للعملية الإبداعية خاصة في فن التصوير، جاء البحث يوضح كيفية تحقيقه في لوحة فنية، وتوضيح ظهوره في بعض الأمثلة، من خلال إلقاء الضوء على دور الخيال، وتوضيح الإلهامات المساعدة للفنان في تحقيقها. وكذلك علاقة الإدراك والإحساس الجمالي بالمونادات في الفن، والتي يمكن من خلالها فهم المضمون والتأثير به.

### الكلمات المفتاحية

المونادات؛ التصوير المصري؛ المعاصر

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The world according to Leibniz is a group of monads or spiritual atoms found in nature, whose images appear in living organisms, and we feel them with self-awareness, senses, awareness, sub consciousness and memory. Simple ideas of the world, and reveal it through art, where the artist can be those ideas, and be primary elements and plastic symbols in a painting. They appear in the form of images, shapes and colors that express the human soul and its identity

The Egyptian artists were able to be the formal formulations of symbols that carry spiritual atoms of their images and entities, as the relationship between the symbol and the artist and expression is a spiritual relationship, which appears in signs of forms of nature or symbols, whether ancient or modern, derived from the world and its information, through them. Formative values, which appear in a subject whose spiritual meaning can be understood, as a result of the participation of thought affected by various sciences, including technological science, as well as being influenced by the existence and spirit of living organisms in artistic expressions within the artwork, expressing forms that differ from what we see with our eyes in reality, including its reality And his idea and style , because it is mixed with the psychological state and the spiritual reality of the artist and his experiences and influences around him that are full of technological progress that has a role in changing the imagination of the Egyptian artist, which is the component of the artistic monad element, as the monad element in the creative act includes the vision, the view and the idea, and the monad element in watching The artistic work includes understanding the content, the plastic relations and the internal structure, and being influenced by it to appear in another creative artistic way

### 1.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research follows the descriptive and analytical approach of some contemporary artworks by Egyptian artists and to clarify and understand the monads realized in them

### 1.2 SEARCH PROBLEM

The monads, since they are spiritual atoms of elements and ideas as the German philosopher Lipntz sees it, consider it a role in achieving the plastic elements and in the creative artistic expression of the art of painting, the research tries to prove that the element called in the creative process includes vision, view and idea, and includes in the vision and watching creativity understanding the content and plastic relations and internal structure through

### QUESTIONS:

- Does imagination have an automatic role in the formation of supplies in the art of painting?
- Was the Egyptian painter able to give technical solutions and treatments commensurate with the modern intellectual dimensions?
- Are the monads considered to be formative spiritual values that can be recognized in contemporary painting?

### 1.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH

Clarifying the relationship of the monad to the art composition, and how it is achieved in a painting through artistic expression, and its appearance in some examples of the works of contemporary Egyptian artists

### 1.4 ASSUMPTION

- The essence of the elements of works of art called artistic monologues
- The harmony of the artist's expression with his artistic idea makes him feel in harmony with the whole world
- Influenced by primitive and modern arts and modern technology have a role in the formation of the thought of the contemporary Egyptian artist

### 1.5 SEARCH GOALS

- Introducing the monads and their concept philosophically, understanding their relationship to the artistic idea, and showing their symbolic expression spontaneously through the contemporary Egyptian artist
- Highlighting the role of imagination in achieving the titles in contemporary Egyptian art and clarifying the inspirations that help the artist achieve them. As well as the relationship of perception and aesthetic sense to the calls in art

### 1.6 SEARCH LIMITS

- Time Limits: Opinions on Monads in Modern Philosophy and their Connection to Contemporary Art
- Spatial boundaries, the art movement in Egypt

### 1.7 SEARCH CONTENT

- definition of monads
- Monads in contemporary Egyptian art
- Achieving monads in art by being inspired by the artistic idea
- The relationship of perception and aesthetic feeling to the monads in art

## 2. DEFINITION OF MONADS

Monads are the spiritual atoms, and they are considered a philosophical term that the German philosopher Leibniz famous for, describing them as simple gems that do not accept expansion or division, because they are not material and infinite, do not accept fragmentation and do not perish, but everything consists of them, it is energy that is the basis The natural world, the world or material existence is a collection of monads and elemental units or elements of which it consists

(The elemental units are called monads, and they are simple units that express the world and anything in it, whether it is an idea, a point of view, or anything else, whether inanimate or a living being. Mysterious units are more distinct. The racial units are self-sufficient and express their inclinations through motivation, and the conscious racial units are called souls because they are instinct and desire governed by feeling, and the conscious and rational ones are called rational souls because they are an expression of conscious and unconscious desire, and the difference between them is not It is essential, but differs according to the degree of clarity and distinction of ideas, and it is possible for those units to combine and form complex units

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(Leibniz's philosophy is a continuous attempt that moves from one idea to another and from one being to another, all natural beings are linked to each other, and it is difficult for the imagination to determine their beginning and end (c. NS . Leibniz p, 1983)

But we find that many artists were able with their imagination to link some objects to each other through their art, and to mix different images of more than one element in one form, and we will see this achieved in some of the works of contemporary Egyptian artists.

Leibniz sees these spiritual atoms as the unity of power and effectiveness (if one of the elemental units is connected to another, one of them becomes active and the other passive, and an eternal harmony is achieved between all that allows each elemental unit to represent or change the entire universe (c. NS . Leibniz, 1983), and the values of their ranks are determined according to the degree of spiritual or mental activity and the clarity of self-knowledge. (, Leibniz's Monadology). Different points of view, and the idea of harmony leads to solving the problem of the relationship between the soul and the body in a way that suits Leibniz's own intellectual direction, and the harmony between the body and the soul within the human being is a partial expression of the greater harmony that prevails in the entire universe

The psychological life is spread in all the systems of nature, and takes forms in the lower beings, but it does not rise to a spiritual rank, and it is content with perception alone, and it is considered as purely spiritual atoms, and others have self- awareness or awareness, memory and senses, and if The psychological life, strength and tendency were spread throughout nature, for every atom represents the entire universe and feels everything that happens in it, and every spiritual atom carries within itself all its developments like the seed of a plant that bears the image of a living being, and the artist takes from every atom The universe, whether about living organisms or about psychological life, is a source of automatic subconscious expression in art

The artist's simple ideas perform the same role that the spiritual atoms play on existence, and reflect his world of knowledge, his fantasies and his perceptions, through which he discovers and elicits initial plastic solutions. Each of them can be symbolized by a sign that he can achieve an artistic image of, thus creating a holistic knowledge of the most accurate secrets of the universe through his own vision

### 3. MONADS IN CONTEMPORARY EGYPTIAN ART

Monads in art are associated with the artist's spirit, vision, point of view, and fantasies in formations, bearing values stemming from how he perceives existence, things, nature and the world around him. Because it is a process of emptying the inner soul, which exists in the depths of his soul, and thus color and shapes are an internal equation and an emotional process for the human soul. A human or subjective content, and through this it becomes clear that color and shape are nothing but symbols of the soul, which are by nature spiritual atoms, expressed by his emotions and his subjective feeling located in the inner soul.

### 4. ACHIEVING MONADS IN ART BY BEING INSPIRED BY THE ARTISTIC IDEA

Thinking is a mental process that can be obtained through perceptions or experiences. Gestalt theory considered that thinking is a rebuilding of relationships between the elements of the problem in a new image. The nature of human thinking is determined by the nature of his intelligence and instinct. There are many types of thinking, and the most important of them in the creative process is intuitive thinking filled with inspirations and fantasies that make up the elements of the artwork and its symbols (Walaa Ahmed Abdel Latif,. 2013 )

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The relationship between the symbol and the artist and expression is a spiritual relationship, due to his artistic emotional actions and the internal images of thought, so a projection of the inner world is filled with all kinds of perception in forms, revealing expressive behavior and psychological forces interacting internally, reflecting the receiving spirit of the auxiliary inspirations in creating a creative art, carrying Symbols, whether for forms of nature, mathematical or engineering formulations, or different writings, whether ancient or representing modern technology forms. Through them, new spiritual and plastic values are achieved, resulting from the personal or subjective values of the artist, appearing as elements that do not resemble external nature, but rather linear and color emotions with rhythm , It achieves the artistic construction and the in-depth idea that appeared in a picture or subject, its spiritual meaning and self-expression can be understood, and artistic symbols with childish qualities can be realized in the artwork, and is characterized by wisdom and balance of the idea, and art is thus a spiritual mediator of nature and Its laws, appear in linear and chromatic signs and harmony that have the importance of wisdom in the artist's internal construction, as it appears in the painting **Song of Life in 1993 by the artist Assem Abdel Fattah Hussein (figure 1 )**



(figure 1) *Song of Life in 1993 by the artist Assem Abdel Fattah Hussein*

The artist sought to express the vision by clarifying the spiritual side in the painting, which appears in the form of spaces, shapes and colors without commitment to its known form, as a result of the overlapping of a group of forms in one form through memory and imagination, whether they were animal or human shapes, appeared In an abstract and distorted form, as a reflection of the spontaneous expressive emotion in the work, but it includes a kind of awareness of his artistic idea, with spiritual meanings, which depicted emotional states in harmony and balance with an aesthetic significance that appeared through his expression with brush strokes in the artwork.



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Monads include a realization of the essence of the universe, from which it is possible to form a preliminary idea of a work of art, which appears in the plastic relations, content, symbols and emotions, which are all psychological and moral factors, clarifying the initial idea of the concept and meaning of the artwork, controlled by the inner will of the essence of a vision The artist, and an example of this is the painting of **the feast in 2000 by the artist Ahmed Khalil Muhammad (figure 2)**, And in which he achieved a preliminary image of shapes and elements without paying attention to details and perspective, but it is flat and abstract with chromatic techniques and treatments in its initial image that helped clarify the idea for him. , a circle appeared in the middle of the top of the painting with two fish, and he treated the rest of the space with some colored rectangular areas and some geometric symbols.



(figure 2) the feast in 2000 by the artist Ahmed Khalil Muhammad

Leibniz saw that cosmic harmony is the mirror of inner harmony, through which it can be expressed in artistic work easily, as cosmic harmony extends to us to things and from them to us. Because it is one of the many monads or harmonies that protect the universe. He sees everything material that emits radiation, spread throughout the place called neutral chaotic, of which things and the mind are composed. It is an abstract thought and not a pure substance. It is a neutral substance that the British philosopher Bertrand Russell considers the origin of existence and facts, so it is a subject when it meets and a thought when we analyze it.

The harmony of the monads is the source of the artist's spiritual and intellectual energy. We find the artist **Amal Nasr** whose works came in a **primitive biography in 2019 (figure 3, 4)**, which are symbols of drawings and primitive forms, whether for humans, animals or nature in general in a modern innovative way, because she was influenced by and learned from various primitive arts, to elicit facts and intellectual fantasy visions with an automatic sense, to gather the memory that includes visual images of these arts, achieved by color harmony, combining hot and cold colors in harmony between the symbolic lines of the elements in their initial image, clarifying the reality of their inner spiritual harmony.

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(figure 3,) the artist Amal Nasr primitive biography in 2019



(figure, 4) the artist Amal Nasr primitive biography in 2019

Art is an imitation of the idea as Plotinus the philosopher saw, and the idea is the origin of everything that exists, and by approaching the essence of the idea during artistic expression, artistic beauty is achieved. It is realized in the artistic work that the happiness of the artist is realized as in the theory of (Catharsis) meaning purification according to Aristotle the philosopher, which sees that the role of beauty in art It performs a process of purification of emotions and feelings, which accumulate in us under pressure, so art transforms these emotions into an aesthetic goal and the purification process is completed. The idea from which the painting was formed

## 5. THE RELATIONSHIP OF PERCEPTION AND AESTHETIC FEELING TO MONADS IN ART

(The artwork is the liberation of the personality and the pressured feelings. When we contemplate a work of art, we feel a kind of venting of feelings through sympathy, elevation and sublimation. Here lies the main difference between art and emotional feeling. Relaxation of the conscience, and art also vents the feelings, but it is a stimulating and exciting vent (Herbert Reid, 1998)

(The sense of beauty is linked to intellectual activity, which transforms the elements of consciousness into subjects of external existence from sight, imagination and memory that turn into artistic themes. The beauty of the elements that it consists of, and it appears through the sincere expression of everything that is in the mind of the artist, and the aesthetic influences in it are transformed into intuitive judgments (George Santiana, 2002)

, in order to be aware of the distinction between a sense of form and a sense of content, as we see in the works of **the artist Attia Mohamed Hussein in the painting Song of the Cat 1991 ( figure 5 )**, which joyful imagination played an important role in the painting, which included imaginary symbols of living creatures, combining the form of the bird or the bird and what Between the shape of the cat or animal in one element, I achieved it in a plastic way rich in cheerful colors, and also introduced some inanimate elements affected by development, technology and industrial tools and represented them in an innovative aesthetic artistic image, as if they were living creatures with metallic qualities, but they enjoy the soul, as they She expressed her imagination and spirit in her artistic elements



(figure 5) the artist Attia Mohamed Hussein -the painting Song of the Cat 1991

The idea then appeared in the elements representing the internal movement of living organisms, the elements were drawn with some electrical and industrial tools, and other living creatures such as birds and animals were painted as if they were wearing metal masks due to the influence of those tools, but they showed the spirit of living beings through the act of the inner will to express in colors,



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Where the elements moved from one image to another plastic image, and a union occurred between the idea and the elements of living nature, and the participation of thought in existence in deep emotional movements. They express chaos forms • far from the familiar visual factors, bearing traces of the artist's conscience and not resembling the external life of the subject. Some artists were able to realize the importance of the spiritual and moral strength of colors, as a result of the artist's being meeting with the entity of things, and thus exploring the spirit behind the material in spiritual aesthetic values, resulting from the mixing of the mind with the soul. To reveal the reality of existence and the spiritual dimension of it in simplified spaces that suggest the things of nature, and the expressive power that motivates the feelings is the spiritual aspects of meditation, thinking, focus, conscience and emotion. The monad element in the creative act includes the vision, the view and the idea, while the monad element in the view of creativity includes understanding the content, the plastic relations and the internal structure.

creative art (Leibniz) considered every monad to be a very simple unit that has no parts. Every monad is a closed world, and denotes the movement of parts, the addition of parts to parts, or the subtraction of parts, and despite that, one affects the other, and it appears in the process of realizing that each monad You do not perceive only some of the other monads, but all of them. The bodies of animals and humans are composed of lower monads and a soul, and it is a ruling monad linked to a group of lower monads, and there is a relationship between the work of the constituent monads of the body and the work of the main monads (Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, 2015 )

Leibniz says that our perception of the external world is a coherent and based dream, because it is a set of personal images that he perceives that exist only in himself as dreams, but the images of ordinary dreams lack coherence and are disjointed. And our perception of the world is made up of feelings and images of beliefs It is real, and our perception represents a material world that has many characteristics such as color, temperature, and others. Between the two worlds, the material world as it appears to us and the world of monads, the world we perceive symbolizes the real world without being similar to it. (Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, 2015). (The monad is a perception within us that reflects existence, and reflects itself. It is not possible to perceive a part without perceiving a whole. It is a miniature world that reflects the larger world. It passes us from awareness to awareness through the will that is illuminated by the mind. Water and sea waves, since in every soul we find clear perceptions, feelings, remembrances, and a mind that is an unconscious tendency to think (Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, 2015). Thus, it confirms the inner vision of things and his awareness of them and their realization in the artwork differs from one artist to another and from one person to another.

We see that the plastic artist Malak Abu Al-Nasr resorted to time and existence as an artistic idea that has a learning essence that is its clarity, as she combined the meaning of the mathematical time, the absolute, emotional and internal time, and all the scientific and philosophical times, and thus time is then permanence or eternity that She realized it with her mind, so the essence of the substance of the thing appears as an image that expresses the activity of the compound thing from matter and form, power and action.

There are some artworks consisting of strong and contiguous multiple lines that overlap and build the image of the artwork, where the circular, oval, fan, zigzag, flatness and stereotype overlap with them, and the shapes overlap each other, an example of this is the painting of the birth of the symbol by **the artist Malik Abu Al-Nasr in 1990 ( figure 6 )** , came as an esoteric expression with color values that combine cold and hot colors, tracing the world of her subconscious and her inner time.

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(figure 6) *The birth of the symbol by the artist Malik Abu Al-Nasr in 1990*

She says in her book (Time is a mental perception, it is perceived within thinking, and therefore we cannot overcome it unless we can stop thinking (Malak Abu Al-Nasr, 1978), Thus, time then is linked to thinking. She expressed her in symbols consisting of complex or simple forms with total ideas that she achieved with a will, she was able to reach the beauty that makes her feel happy in the artwork, and thus her painting is made up of simple and complex elemental units of things Abstract in form, because it is an expression of her inner spirit and her unique artistic personality, which has high intuition and insight

She was able to combine the conscious and unconscious will in her artistic works, which bear events, images and feelings, achieved with an automatic, intuitive, emotional flash that carries an aesthetic expression. One of the forms of nature, which she employed in the artistic work in a form that gives many emotional meanings and subjective feelings to her. She was interested in intensifying the forms, emptiness, colors and lights, which came expressing the spiritual flash and her perception of linear rhythms and various textures.

It is clear from all of the above and through the analysis of some artistic models of contemporary artists, that the contemporary artist was able to achieve art with a new and innovative expressive artistic concept and vision, as a result of his vision of the society around him that is prevalent in industry and technology, and the ease of exchanging different cultures between The country, so the artist resorted to spontaneous creative thinking, moving away from the traditional artistic schools known by mixing various and different forms, clarifying the multiplicity of his vision and cultures. Different through the ages contemporary Egyptian artists combined art characterized by subjectivity affected by the present and its progress and technology, and the inspiration of Egyptian civilization and primitive arts. A new art of different thought, where the photographer was able to give solutions and treatments, which resulted in aesthetic and plastic variables, commensurate with the new intellectual dimensions, with an innate emotion and an inspired spirit in harmony with thought.

## RESULTS

- The essence of the elements of artistic works can be called artistic monads because of their artistic spiritual atoms
- The artistic idea is considered monads that make up the elements of the subject of the artwork for Egyptian artists
- Imagination resulting from being influenced by different sciences and modern technology has a role in the formation of monads with expressive artistic symbols that are spontaneously realized.
- Monads are spiritual plastic values that can be realized in contemporary Egyptian painting
- Monads are perceptions within each artist through which he was able to create a self-experiential and individual art, characterized by innovative aesthetic and plastic solutions and treatments
- The works of contemporary Egyptian artists with an abstract nature of innovative elements appeared, as a result of being influenced by primitive and modern arts and modern technology
- The harmony between the artist's expression and the idea realized in the artwork makes him feel in harmony with the whole world
- The aesthetic goal of contemporary Egyptian art lies in the inner essence of the idea
- The Egyptian painter was able to give solutions and treatments in the artistic work that resulted in aesthetic and plastic variables commensurate with the modern intellectual dimensions

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Enriching the imagination with a lot of knowledge of modern science and technology, as well as being affected by the ancient and primitive arts, so that they produce forms, monads, artistic elements and new innovative ideas, facilitating the achievement of the artistic creative process, and then the flourishing of the arts.

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## TERMINOLOGY

- 1- **Existence:** the world or the universe, including its actions, thoughts, and energy
- 2- **Monads:** spiritual atoms that make up the elements of things and from them everything is indestructible and indivisible
- 3- **Exaltation:** Transforming energy into a higher moral and cultural
- 4- **Sublimation:** A psychological trick that a person performs to express his desires in an acceptable manner by returning energy to achieve calmness and goals that help creativity
- 5- **Chaotic:** Definition of chaos, citing the Encyclopedia of Islamic Terms TerminologyEnc.com: The body is a self-existing body, and it is everything that accepts the form and does not have an actual existence by itself without a form. Rather, its existence occurs by accepting the physical form that has a known form, and everything outside we see is called the form of the body. Chaotic, according to the ancient philosophers, is divided into four sections: The first Chaotic, which is a substance that has neither a specific shape nor a specific image
  - . The second Chaotic is a body made by an image
  - . The third Chaotic, which is the bodies with the specific image that have become the subject of other forms, as any raw material for the image from which they are made.
  - . The fourth Chaotic is that the body, along with the two images, is the subject of the image, as the organs are to the image of the body
- 6- **Alcathersis theory:** emotional purification
- 7- **Modern technology:** means the science of application, it is a set of techniques, skills and modern technical methods that help in production and achieve goals

## CELEBRITY TERMS

- 1- **Philosopher Leibniz:** Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716) German philosopher, naturalist, mathematician, diplomat, librarian, and lawyer
- 2- **Philosopher Bertrand Russell:** Bertrand Arthur William Russell (1872 - 1970) British philosopher, logician, mathematician, historian and social critic
- 3- **Plotinus:** (205-270 AD) Greek philosopher, considered the most prominent representative of Neoplatonism
- 4- **Philosopher Aristotle:** Aristotle (384-322 BC) was a Greek philosopher who influenced all forms of knowledge in the West, a student of Plato and a teacher of Alexander the Great, and the founder of the Lyceum, the Peripatetic school, and the Aristotelian tradition