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The Dominance of Place and the Fragmentation of the Self in Ibrahim al-Koni's *The Bleeding of the Stone*: A Psycho-Existential Approach to Dismantling the Hero's Centrality

Bekri Hicham,
Assistant Lecturer –A–
University of Naama: Salehi Ahmed, Algeria
bekri.hicham@cuniv-naama.dz

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Abstract:
This study traces the arc of the protagonist Oukheid in Ibrahim al-Koni's *The Bleeding of the Stone*, adopting a psycho-existential lens to examine how the self unravels in its confrontation with the desert—a space that operates not as mere backdrop but as an active, even aggressive, force. The desert does not simply contain events; it forges them, pressing upon the psyche and steadily eroding the hero's centrality until what remains is a self stripped of its former agency. Within this harsh geography, the inquiry delves into the Oedipal undercurrents shaping Oukheid's inner world, while also drawing out the symbolic echoes between al-Koni's narrative and Cervantes' *Don Quixote*. What emerges is a reading attuned to the blurred boundary between illusion and reality—a threshold where both characters wander, and where the architecture of fiction reveals itself as a space of existential reckoning.
Keywords: Fragmentation of the Self, Desert Space, Existential Anxiety, Psychological Alienation, Oedipal Complex

1. Introduction

Ibrahim al-Koni's *The Bleeding of the Stone* transcends the limits of traditional storytelling that centers on human action and the dominance of the ego over events. It presents an existential experience that reorganizes the human relationship with its geographic environment, where the desert emerges as an active force consuming human centrality and confronting it with its existential exposure. While it is important to distinguish between the authority of the self and the power of place, one must not overlook the threads connecting them—at least from the perspective of existential interdependence, where the fracture of one signals the collapse of the other. This inevitably leads to the erosion of the archetypal heroic image, dissolving it within the forces of nature, thus undermining its continuity in the narrative. Based on this premise, which establishes the supremacy of place over the individual, it becomes necessary to examine this fragmentation as manifested in the text, clearly embodied in the story of its protagonist, Oukheid.

It should be noted that Oukheid's weakness lies in the imbalance between matter and spirit, not in his artistic presence, which dominates the events but is marked by successive fractures. Whenever Oukheid attempts to exercise human authority and make decisions, he encounters the unyielding wall of the desert, which refuses to submit to individual will. This occurs in the

interplay between man and his lower counterpart (the animal), as reflected in the protagonist's relationship with the al-blak mare, which serves as one of the main levers the author relies upon to drive the events to their utmost extent. Yet, as strong as this relationship is, it is equally fractured by the fissure between them. Thus, the novel becomes a laboratory of loss, where humans retreat to the margins while space advances to occupy the narrative center as the true driver of destiny, transforming heroism from an act of control into a state of surrender to absolute existence.

From this existential premise, the necessity emerges to interrogate the text through a series of questions exploring this fragmentation:

- To what extent does the desert space in *The Bleeding of the Stone* undermine the traditional centrality of the hero, transforming him from a controlling narrative agent into a fragile being bound by geographical determinism?
- How do environmental, social, and psychological pressures shape the formation and fracture of the self in the protagonist?
- How does the intertextual reference to *Don Quixote* redefine the notion of defeated heroism in the novel, and can Oukheid's final fragmentation be seen as a moral triumph of the spirit over a material world?
- Finally, does death at the story's end signify mere physical demise, or does it represent the ultimate form of existential freedom, attainable only through relinquishment and liberation from appearances?

Based on these questions, the study proceeds to analyze the textual structures reflecting this human retreat, examining how the individual is displaced from his existential throne in favor of place, confronting us directly with the following truth:

2. The Desert as an Existential Factor and the Al-Blak as a Psychic Substitute

In this narrative, the desert refuses to allow the self any dominance, becoming an active force that dismantles illusions of power and strips them of their claims. The desert manifests as a living entity, absorbing Oukheid's energy and transforming him from an agent of his own destiny into a subject of strict, primordial laws. When we speak of space, we refer to two interlinked dimensions affecting the protagonist: first, the influence of its physical laws, including the violence of the wind, the advance of sand, and the harsh climate, which directly press upon events; second, the reflection of this harshness in its inhabitants, whose behavior embodies the rigidity of the place, thereby influencing Oukheid's trajectory. The inhabitants are shaped by nature itself and carry its traits, evident across all stages and events, erasing attempts to assert human supremacy. This is especially clear in the collapse of Oukheid's relationship with the al-blak, representing the violent connection between man and environment.

Oukheid's bond with the al-blak is defined from the perspective of psychic and emotional fascination, forming a relationship that compensates for human connections bound by conditional interest and personal gain. Despite differences in organic composition and mental formation, the relationship manifests in intimacy and genuine attachment. The protagonist seeks psychological equilibrium outside human networks (tribe, marriage, social exchange), finding it in a being not subject to negotiation or symbolic coercion imposed by the community.

Within this framework, the al-blak emerges as a repository for deep psychological projections such as safety and stability, filling a gap that human relationships cannot satisfy. When the tribe seizes the al-blak from Oukheid, the loss surpasses that of a domestic animal, becoming an attempt to repair an existential rupture with humans.

The opening description of the al-blak is not a mere ornamental choice; it reflects its existential centrality in Oukheid's life as a substitute for unfulfilled human bonds: *"Has anyone seen a stallion in its grace, lightness, and balanced physique… Has anyone seen a stallion rival it in pride, courage, and loyalty…?"*

Oukheid's devotion even leads him to seek a poet to compose a praise poem for the al-blak, celebrating its virtues. Through this vision, the hierarchy dissolves, and the spiritual value of this bond becomes evident—it transcends a human-animal link, representing a path of travel, utility, and spiritual purity. The events and shared actions between them establish a concrete counterpart to Oukheid's spirit, a bond beyond separation, merging into mystical unity. Oukheid invokes God and sacred shrines, reflecting his profound mystical connection:

"He did not stop praying and imploring. The tomb of the old saint will not forsake him. He must not lose hope… Signs. Attention to the signs. As in dreams. As in visions. Signs are God's language. He who neglects them will be cursed in this world…"

This mystical union renders the protagonist hostage to a sacred bond exceeding social norms. When Oukheid fails to protect it under tribal pressure and the lure of gold, the mask of assumed heroism falls, revealing a fragmented self, subject only to the power of the symbol. Al-Koni's perspective shows that attachment to materiality is a nail in the coffin of individual freedom, affirming that heroism in absolute spaces lies in renunciation, not possession. This artistic vision, presenting an ideological issue throughout the narrative, is evident from the outset, where the story functions as a threshold and prelude to ensuing events:

"Here the story is summarized or part of it told through another story, a technique we may call observation, since the story is known in its main lines before pen touches paper, why not inject it into a point of its flow as a summary?"

3. Between Matter and Spirit: The Tragedy of Alienation

In this story, the material of the gold directs events toward a preordained trajectory. The narrative is conditioned by meanings defined by two contrasting values: one purely material, the other purely spiritual. Between these, meanings permeate a middle zone where debate precedes divergence and conflict precedes dialogue, fracturing vision and unbalancing the interplay between matter and spirit—or, more precisely, between material authority and the spirit's longing for salvation. This pivotal point reveals the radical and tragic dialectic of the narrative.

As the narrative intensifies, it becomes clear that assimilation in the desert space is a severe test:

"A hard trial, only the resolute and tough man can pass. He who is lax in defending his rights will be encroached upon, robbed by force; such a person is called lazy, and the lazy one is a sweet sugar cube that requires no effort to chew."

This dissolution provides the novel's deep tragic dimension, portraying humans submissive to matter, defeated by the power of nature, which grants immortality only to those achieving

ontological integration.
"The novel seeks to convey this as a dominant social structure manifested in discourse, serving as a focal point for cultural studies revealing the domination of the victor over the vanquished."
While this tragic dimension is embodied in the existential struggle between man and place, its artistic-psychological realization completes in the reader's awareness, shaped by the narrative's deliberate textual mechanisms. The reader becomes engaged in the protagonist's experience of fragmentation, participating emotionally and cognitively in the narrative, converting reading into a three-dimensional experience. In al-Koni's conception, the novel thus functions as a symbolic exercise of discursive dominance, reproducing the logic of dominance and submission within the narrative structure itself, opening the way to study:

4. From Guiding Reception to Sharing Defeat: The Dynamics of Psychological Impact

The strategy of restricting the horizon of reception in *The Bleeding of the Stone* represents a systematic mechanism that goes beyond merely narrating events, reaching a practice of directive dominance over the reader's consciousness, where the author weaves a narrative network that controls the dynamics of expectation in the reader and directs it toward specific semantic goals. Here, the economy of the narrative emerges as a central tool for limiting interpretation, technically rather than linguistically, as spaces and time are reduced to narrow circles that impose a certain mode of engagement on the reader, preventing their mind from drifting away from the existential centrality of the tragedy. The structure of the text closes off paths to any possibility of survival or victory, cementing in the reader's mind the inevitability of downfall as an inescapable fate.

These mechanisms converge to create a constrained emotional participation, where the reader finds themselves immersed in tracing the threads of the crisis, yet remains confined within the preordained path shaped by the interplay of the narrative structure and the author's philosophical vision. In this way, the act of reading itself becomes an experience of enduring the siege that the protagonist lives, turning the inevitability of defeat into an intellectual and aesthetic conviction shared by the reader.

Based on this closed structure, where conflicts are managed within a governed semantic horizon so that the narrative does not open up to possibilities of resolution, the reader follows details without anticipating any decisive semantic reversal. From this perspective, the novel intersects with the logic of contemporary narrative in general: "The contemporary novelist is devoid of hope in reconciling with this new inhuman reality, and when addressing social reality, the contemporary novelist usually starts from this principle, which confirms from the first moment the gap between him and his social reality... and makes us face the tragedy in social reality directly, relying on protagonists in crisis who carry preexisting enmity and aversion toward the social reality that surrounds them."

On this basis, the reader gradually becomes part of the game of fragmentation and defeat proposed by the novel, which constructs a meticulously crafted narrative stage so precise that it draws every reader as a participant within this artistic structure. The events operate through psychological techniques—through depiction or exaggeration in depiction—to pull the reader from outside the text into its interior, where they unconsciously merge with the setting and become part of a system in which they act as though performing the actions and receiving the

shocks. As the bleak manifestations accumulate, they travel through narrative, psychological, mental, and even artistic pathways into the reader's consciousness and unconscious. With successive narratives saturated with such images, reception becomes a consecutive experience loaded with psychological pressure, drawn from charged language and concentrated artistic channels that intensify feelings of suffocation and tension.

In this framework, the reader merges with the protagonist, following the course of the story as if they were the hero themselves, feeling his pain, stumbling with his missteps. Emotional impact peaks as events reach their extreme through a language designed to extend its threads toward this effect, so that each reader becomes, in this perspective, "Oukheid the failed," during the act of reading due to the influence of the narrative sequences, which continuously project one bleak image after another, delivering them first psychologically, then artistically. Consequently, reading becomes an act of emotional participation through which failure is redistributed between the two parties rather than confined to one.

Accordingly, this mechanism serves as a lever on which the author relies to guide the reception toward the experience of defeat, making the reader and the text jointly witness this experience. Failure becomes the shared middle ground, and the purpose of language is to unite the two where they cannot naturally be united, considering that the protagonist is imaginary and the reader is real, constituting a new production designed to document this meaning with precise psychological intent.

If the previous analysis demonstrated that the narrative structure tends to narrow the reception horizon and direct it toward the inevitability of defeat, examining the distribution of perspectives reveals another level of textual work that does not contradict this restriction but reorganizes it in a more complex form. Here, restriction does not imply the elimination of multiplicity but its organization within a defined semantic horizon: perspectives multiply, yet all intersect at the center of the tragedy. This multiplicity thus becomes guiding threads that serve the overall purpose of the story. Therefore, focalization may lean toward plurality rather than confinement to a single viewpoint, reflecting the oscillation of consciousness. The levels of focalization provide means to control and withhold meaning, serving the aesthetic objectives of the text. The novel, through multiple voices, allows overlapping visions and competing references, which converge to reinforce the structure of fragmentation within the work, turning multiplicity from mere expressive variation into an active tool that consolidates the novel's purpose.

"Narrative is not only storytelling; it is closely linked to human consciousness and experience. Our entire life is narrative: we narrate what happened in our moment or our day, our past or the past of our parents and ancestors, the history of our societies, and we will narrate our future as well. Narrative almost constitutes the linguistic, visual, or auditory image of human life." However, when narrative confronts a crisis-ridden reality, it transforms from merely structuring observations into a tool for confronting and revealing conflict with the other.

From this existential fracture that marks Oukheid's journey, the narrative deepens the examination of the character's internal structure through what consciousness conceals and the unconscious stores as repressed tension. At this point, the hidden psychological conflict emerges, where desire forms under the pressure of prohibition and the self's choices are determined within a complex network of guilt, obedience, and yearning for liberation. This is

evident in the articulation of desire with prohibition within a structure governed by symbolic, paternal authority, which justifies invoking the Oedipal dimension in this study as an interpretive tool revealing the logic of this conflict and rereading it in light of representations of authority, identification, and resistance in *The Bleeding of the Stone*.

5. Oedipal Dynamics and Representations of Paternal Authority:

The Oedipal dimension in *The Bleeding of the Stone* follows a gradual psychological path, moving away from the ready-made conception of the complex to become an internal structure organizing desire and redirecting it at explicit and visible levels. This desire grows within the depth of the psychological experience, intersecting with the effect of early-rooted prohibitions, continuing to guide behavior through psychological mechanisms manifested in repeated patterns of impulse and tension. These patterns consistently frame the body as a site for discharging intense psychic energy, which extends toward deeper significations linked to the structure of desire itself.

The complex develops progressively from childhood and intensifies when confronted with restriction and repression. The Oedipal complex represents "the first stage perceptible in a boy… because the child clings to the same goal that dominated him in the stages of nursing and infancy." It manifests in sexual relationships that intensify in a desert space where fulfillment is difficult. This complex reflects an inner urgency that deepens as the field of realization narrows.

Accordingly, the novel opens from the outset onto these forbidden sexual relationships, paralleling the emergence of the Oedipal complex in humans during early biological development, establishing a narrative framework that anticipates psychological tensions even before events deepen, resembling the birth of awareness of the complex prior to the crystallization of its outcomes. Mentioning the complex from the beginning stems from the opening of these relationships in the narrative, mirroring experiences in early human development. Therefore, beginning with these relationships is significant in sketching the contours and direction of the story, consistent with Freud's observations: "Sexual excitations in very early childhood, whose delayed effects pave the way for the start of sexual development as a whole."

Thus, Oukheid's psychological trajectory unfolds through bodily impulses that reach the point of eruption, leading him into unrestrained sexual encounters whose contours form from the earliest narrative segments. "He had accustomed himself to nightly emotional raids on nearby settlements on the back of the ablaq… proceeding to the abodes of his beloved after midnight." This act of transgression acquires deeper dimensions in light of psychoanalytic analysis. The narrative's reference to Oukheid's sexual activity, concurrent with his camel performing the same act, signals the defilement inherent in such relationships: "The raids repeated until he discovered that his agile ablaq had fallen for a beautiful she-camel owned by a tribe spending spring in the Maghragr Valley, and he habitually visited a beauty from that tribe." The human and animal impulses unite in a dual extension of instinct, translating human drive into a mirrored act enacted by the animal. The camel's obscene act with a stray she-camel, performed simultaneously by its owner, exemplifies animalized corruption, where the gravity of the transgression intensifies through its mirroring. The narrative, before revealing the human

atrocity, first situates it at the purely animal level, using this parallel to prepare for its exposure. This anticipates the tribe's condemnation: "The sun poured down, and Oukheid felt exposed. The youth of the tribe arrived at the site; in their eyes he saw disapproval. Their eyes said they knew everything."

The Oedipal nature of this complex is evident in the clash of desire with social and religious norms, where the protagonist is continuously confronted by his impulses and societal constraints. This is illustrated by the tribal elder's comment to Oukheid: "But what harm would it do if we acted according to the Sharia of the Muslims and entered houses through their doors?" Though apparently advice, the statement implicitly condemns immorality and explicitly urges adherence to norms, constraining desire within social and religious law. Thus, the phrase reveals a dual conflict: desire toward the forbidden versus norms seeking to regulate it via the elder's moral authority, linking the Oedipal understanding to this confrontation of opposites.

In this way, the relationship between the ablaq and the she-camel transcends a fleeting sexual act, narratively leading to a punitive outcome, with the camel contracting mange. The text frames this relationship within a symbolic penal horizon, amplifying its deviant significance as an indicator of sin. The camel's disease functions as a sensory metaphor, intensifying the deviance of the act and presenting it as defiled and socially rejected.

If the camel's affliction represents a corporeal realization of defilement, the ablaq's owner suffers symbolically and morally, as the act contaminates his value system, affecting his psychological and social structure. The disease serves to position the protagonist against the constraints of the narrative. Even when he marries the woman "Ayur" whom he loved instinctively, she is abducted by his rival, the merchant "Dodo," lured by the gold, as if Oukheid's fate in this space is always obstructed whenever he approaches his object of desire. The Oedipal dynamic manifests in Oukheid's transgressive desire and extends to his wish to marry the beautiful Ayur against his father's opposition, reflecting an urgent assertion of self that challenges the logic of prohibition and desire. This act of marriage surpasses its social meaning, revealing a psyche eager to assert itself by breaching paternal barriers.

From this psychological standpoint, action and counteraction evoke a broader conflict between repressed impulse and imposed obstacles. The Oedipal complex here represents a psychological struggle between instinct and restriction, between the id, as Freud describes, represented by Oukheid's desire for freedom of action, and the superego, embodied by the constraints, whether justified or not.

In contrast, the Oedipal dimension in the merchant Dodo takes a more blatant course, through the emergence of desire as it separates from its moral dimension, expressing an instinctive impulse devoid of any disciplinary horizon. Here, Freud's observation in his analysis of the relationship between instinct and civilization can also be invoked: "Sexual instincts are difficult to tame, and any individual contributing to cultural construction is exposed to the rebellion of sexual instincts against this repression. Society perceives no threat to its civilization greater than the liberation of sexual instincts returning to their original aims." According to this view, the weaker the power of civilizational values, the more instinct returns to its original demand as a direct, animalistic satisfaction. Based on this principle, the merchant seizes the wife (Ouheid's wife) and extends his action to the seizure of the albino animal, which serves a highly

symbolic function in the novel. The animal evokes raw instinctual energy and irrationality unbound by any restraint. Thus, the combination of possessing the woman and seizing the animal symbolically reveals a correspondence between sexual possession and instinctual release, where lust manifests in its primitive form, detached from mechanisms of control or guidance, and free from the internal conflict characterizing the hero's Oedipal experience.

However, this trajectory does not complete, because nature, representing purity and order prior to human desire, rejects this violation. The animal, despite its instinctual significance, does not remain with the merchant but flees back to Ouheid, in a movement that rearranges symbolic values within the text. Ouheid recovers the animal without initially reclaiming the woman, before ultimately killing the one who had taken his wife on his wedding night.

Returning to the beginning, the hero's decision to exchange his wife at a critical moment for a handful of gold establishes a decisive semantic shift, turning the woman into a psychological knot within Ouheid's psyche, where his feelings are conflicted between desire for his wife Ayor and relinquishing her for a handful of gold, fearing poverty and destitution, like one who in pre-Islamic times avoided need by burying a son. This makes approaching her an act fraught with hesitation and division. Thus, the outcomes of Oedipal dynamics are distributed between fragile compensation in the hero and destructive lust in the merchant. On this basis, the woman's presence becomes a signifier of the Oedipal desire, which ends with the death of the merchant who tried to share the wife, just as Hamlet in Shakespeare's play wished his father dead to remove him from sharing the throne with his mother, as if the fate of the Oedipal is death. Hamlet died in his own right, and Ouheid dies at the end of the story.

At this threshold, the symbolic significance of gold emerges as a sign of power and temptation that tests the hero's resilience and drives him toward downfall. In this sense, "falling is fleeing from anxiety, because anxiety threatens our entire existence and isolates us before ourselves, making us acutely aware of this isolation in a way that erases everything we could rely on in our existence, as solitude presses upon us and a deep sense of alienation seizes us, along with a feeling of instability, forcing us to choose our self, and the time has come to bear the responsibility placed upon us."

If insistence on survival signals clinging to life in this story, through abandoning all things, including the albino animal, it is inseparable from its opposites derived from life itself. Ouheid's survival throughout the narrative does not establish the meaning of life per se but redefines it; evidence of this is his death at the end. Continuation of life becomes merely a physical presence devoid of meaning, a spiritual alienation surpassing clinical death. "Contempt in the law of the desert is worse than erasure, worse than annihilation. Contempt is death every day, every hour, every moment. Thus, a man dies hundreds and thousands of times in his life instead of a single final death." Thus, "the battlefield symbolizes the mind of life, where every being lives by the death of another. Awareness of life's inevitable sin may sicken the heart, as happened with Hamlet and Arjuna, and one may refuse to continue life. Yet, as most of us do, some resort to inventing an image of themselves, a false image easily refutable, being in reality an exceptional phenomenon in this world."

Accordingly, the conclusion interprets the tragedy, valuing within it elements of absurdity and collision with a philosophical existential concept that reaches an extreme. It should be noted that this tragic fate, with its ideological, artistic, and psychological dimensions, extends to

global literary horizons, reconfiguring the concept of the defeated hero confronting a world that rejects his ideals. Emotional and intellectual intersections appear between Ouheid's character and immortal human models in world literature. This connection paves the way for an analytical reading that contemplates the roots of Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, which the novel resonates with both in theme and structure. It is important to note that pairing *The Bleeding of the Stone* with *Don Quixote* as intertextual counterparts is central to the study, as both intersect in many aspects.

6. The Problematic Hero and Intertextuality: *The Bleeding of the Stone* and *Don Quixote*

Ouheid's character in *The Bleeding of the Stone* intersects with the features of the problematic hero embodied by Don Quixote through the dialectic of conflict with reality and the attempt to impose a spiritual ideal on a world governed by matter. The connection between the two works goes beyond superficial imitation to delve into the essence of existential defeat that haunts the self seeking its innate purity amid the rubble of social falsity. Ouheid exemplifies the defeated hero bearing his anxiety in a barren desert, just as Don Quixote bore his noble illusions across the fields of Castile, both waging unequal wars against forces that recognize neither chivalry nor emotional loyalty. "The next day the battle began at dawn. The mule stood alert, moving its taut tail as if chasing an imaginary fly," much like Don Quixote chasing illusions in Cervantes' novel.

Intertextuality appears in the transformation of the albino mule into an objective equivalent of the ideal of freedom, forming a duo with its master reminiscent of the bond between Don Quixote and his supposed horse. In both cases, the companion or means becomes an integral element of individual identity. Thus, the narrative approach aligns in treating spaces in both works as theaters for deconstructing human illusions of control, turning the struggle with the Other into a reflection of impotence. "That was the end of the Manchian hero, whose historian Mr. Hamed refused to name his birthplace, so that all countries, all fields, and all villages might dispute it."

Ouheid's ultimate disappointment parallels Don Quixote's death after renouncing his illusions, confirming the similarity between the two deaths, combining their dramatic conclusions and embodying the aesthetic dimension of death from an artistic perspective that unites opposites. Despite this dialectical barrier, both novels succeed in merging death and beauty—the unavoidable death and the aesthetic manner of depicting it—so that death itself becomes the final piece of the story's puzzle, complete and harmonious with the general context, adding an aesthetic dimension that immortalizes the narrative experience. "Thus life kills me, and death returns me to life... But do you think Don Quixote will not be resurrected? Some believe he did not die, and that the truly dead is Cervantes, who wanted to kill him, not Don Quixote."

Don Quixote thus remains a symbol of idealized chivalry from a moral and symbolic perspective, where heroism manifests in endurance before illusion and defeat. Likewise, the problematic hero in *The Bleeding of the Stone* serves as a contemporary echo of that traditional chivalry, together affirming that the struggle for meaning remains the noblest battle, even if it ends with the knight's fall and the dissolution of the dream.

7. Conclusion

Ouheid's journey in *The Bleeding of the Stone* culminates in an inevitability making defeat an unavoidable existential fate, where the harsh desert landscape intersects with the absurdity of material struggle to shape the features of the broken hero. Analysis shows that the relationship between Ouheid and the albino exceeds the boundaries of a mere human-animal bond, amid troubled human relationships in which he finds no security or comfort, revealing a displacement of the human center toward alternative representations outside the familiar social order. In this same horizon, the study deepens the construction of the experience of defeat, uncovering how the novel psychologically engages the reader in testing defeat through meticulous narrative mechanisms that constrain their anticipatory horizon and make them partners in experiencing failure. Highlighting the psychological dimension becomes an interpretive necessity, especially concerning the Oedipal complex, which is organically connected to the hero's trajectory. The psycho-Oedipal approach reveals a hidden conflict between desire and prohibition, leading to a multidimensional depiction of the self's collapse. Through intertextuality with the *Don Quixote* model, the novel transcends local experience to reach a universal human horizon, as the two heroes intersect at the moment of material defeat, transforming loss into an existential cry resisting alienation, even if the journey ends with the knight's death and the dissolution of the dream. Thus, *The Bleeding of the Stone* remains a unique literary work redefining heroism by turning defeat into an aesthetic and existential value, establishing a universal vision in which renunciation is salvation and a moral triumph of the spirit against a world where matter has crushed values. Ibrahim al-Koni, through this novel, has crafted a desert epic that transcends the specificity of place to engage with humanity's major questions: freedom, alienation, the struggle with self and Other, and the search for meaning in a time when matter dominates values.

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