

# Emotional and ideological construction in Husseini Elegies: A critical discourse analysis

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## Abstract

This paper explores how exaggerated discourse is used to construct emotional intensity and ideological meaning in Hussaini elegies. Five extracts of elegies are analyzed in the paper based on the Critical Discourse Analysis, in particular the models of Norman Fairclough and Teun A. van Dijk, along with the theory of Appraisal. The results indicate that emotional expression is realised in a systematic way via somatic imagery, hyperbole, and cosmological metaphors, in which grief is embodied and universal instead of individual. The writings produce a polarized discursive level of morals, which implicitly sacrifice martyrdom and declaim wrongdoing. The strategies of these languages work on the social practice level of ritual mourning to develop a sense of collective identity and recreate communal memory. The paper argues that exaggerated discourse is an ideological process which transforms previous trauma into intergenerational emotional heritage and it is by this process that cultural and religious meaning of Karbala is perpetuated.

## 1. Introduction

One of the most efficient genres of Islamic culture of the Shiite is the Hussaini elegies, a genre of religious poetic discourse. Sung during commemoration ceremonies of the Battle of Karbala these elegies are much more than a narrative of a historical tragedy. They are affective discursive practices whereby collective memory is re-enacted, communal identity preserved, and moral world positions are re-enacted. The lyrical soliloquy of the martyrdom of Imam Hussein does not just serve the role of a memory, but as an ideological statement.

Unlike the traditional lyric poetry, Hussaini elegies are ritualized, performative and socialized. They are also performed in gatherings where the audience is involved, repeats, cries, sings together and responds together, enhancing the affective involvement. This performative feature renders language mobilization of feelings. Words are not descriptive, but constitutive. They create sadness, togetherness, anger, loyalty and righteousness.

In the discourse-analytic approach, the emotion in such texts cannot be viewed as spontaneous or devotional. Rather, it is discursively constructed. The use of lexical, hyperbolic, metaphorical imagery, repetition in a rhythm, vocatives, polarized representations, and much more collaboratively frame reality in specific ways. The repetitive formation of binaries like oppression and justice, tyranny and martyrdom, loyalty and betrayal helps to create schemata of ideologies which dictate interpretation and identification.

Although there is a large number of theological and literary works on the aesthetic and spiritual aspects of Hussaini poetry, not much research has been conducted on the way these elegies can be regarded as ideological discourse. The Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) provides an appropriate set of concepts to consider the interaction between linguistic structure, social practice and ideological reproduction. Through the examination of the textual, discursive and socio-cognitive aspects of these elegies, one can delve into the mechanism of emotional intensification as a means of persuasion and not as an aesthetic characteristic.

This paper thus examines the emotional and ideological construction in Hussaini elegies with particular reference to how exaggerated discourse is a form of persuasion and alignment. It assumes that hyperbolic statement and emotional hyperbolicism are not decorative rhetorical devices, but are strategies that establish a shared sense, strengthen moral polarization and maintain a community identity across generations.

Placing Hussaini elegies into the analytical framework of Critical Discourse Analysis, the research will be able to add to the accumulating literature on the bridging of the gap between the religious discourse and the socio-ideological investigation. In such a way it advances the knowledge of how the lamentation of poetry is a successful origo discursive place where emotion is ideology, and memory is an act of social positioning.

Despite the abundance of scholarship on Hussaini elegies in theological, historical and literary contexts, there has been little effort made to concentrate the systematic analysis of how the emotional intensification is used as an ideological process in these texts. The literature is inclined to concentrate on the devotional sincerity, the aesthetic features, or the historical narration, but rarely considers the linguistic practices through which affect is being strategically developed and directed towards the greater socio-religious world views. The overlap of exaggerated discourse and shared emotion and ideological reproduction is therefore under-studied particularly using a Critical Discourse Analytical process.

To fill this gap, the current work attempts to explore how emotional discourse functions as a persuasive and ideological force in Hussaini elegies. In particular, it examines how emotions are linguistically constructed in Hussaini elegies, what discursive strategies are employed to intensify collective identification and moral alignment, how exaggerated discourse functions as a mechanism of ideological construction, and to what extent these elegies contribute to the reproduction or transformation of socio-religious ideologies. Through these guiding questions, the study moves beyond devotional interpretation and frames Hussaini elegies as powerful sites of discursive production in which affect and ideology intersect.

The study of Hussaini elegies and the Hussaini mourning discourse has slowly changed its course toward theological and historical explanation to discursive and linguistic investigation. The initial critical discourse analytical works determined that Hussaini-related genres were ideologically organized discourse, but not a devotional expression. As an illustration, Rizwan (2011) analysed the speech of the Majlis-e-Hussain in terms of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and revealed that religious sermons can shape communal identity and strengthen sectarian ideology by means of narrative organization, evaluative language, and moral polarization .

Rizwan (2013) later applied this analytical orientation to Marsiya-e-Hussain, saying that an ideological positioning is encoded in the elegiac poetry in terms of symbolic representations and binary oppositions, i.e. justice vs. oppression, martyrdom vs. tyranny, etc. These pioneering works of CDA played an important role in defining that Hussaini discourse is never neutral; it is involved in the reproduction of collective belief systems. They however, were only able to determine the ideological content but they failed to systematically operationalize linguistic construction of emotion as a persuasive mechanism.

Recent scholarship has treated Hussaini lamentation as a discursive practice that is socially situated. The article by Marei and Shannon (2021) examined the topic of Hussein's liturgy in the settings of diasporic communities and presented lamentation as a discursive space, where the communal identity, dissent, and political memory are discussed. Their practice focuses on performance, involvement, and transnational circulation, and the idea that lamentation is not a fixed poetic object but is a dynamic process of discursivity. Although this composition is successful in situating lamentation in broader sociopolitical context, it does not feature the closer linguistic emphasis on how the augmentation of emotions is organizationally defined by the text itself of the poem.

In parallel to these discourse-based works, modern Arabic linguistic research has looked at the stylistic and semantic characteristics of Hussaini lamentation poetry. Alruby and Mohammed

(2023) studied the tendencies of spatial representation of the contemporary Hussaini elegiac poetry and discovered a system of semantic organization and overlay of symbols of the genre.

In the same way, a stylistic analysis done by Abyat and Hardani Muhammad (2023) showed the concentration of the expressive imagery, the lexical strengthening, and the rhetorical enhancing of lamentation texts. Such research add to the rich understanding of the textual texture and aesthetic arrangement of Hussaini elegies. However, they mostly stick to descriptive stylistics and fail to explicitly relate linguistic intensification to general ideological construction processes.

Simultaneously, recent advances in discourse linguistics have offered methodological resources to the analysis of emotion in language. As formulated by Martin and White (2005) and deployed more and more in the study of religious discourse today, Appraisal Theory provides a systematic context to consider affect, judgment and graduation as manifestations of stance and alignment. Recent analyses of religious sermons using appraisal-based methods show the roles of intensification and evaluative language in building audience alignment and moral positioning (e.g., Zulfikar, 2025). This body of study offers a very specific way of operationalizing emotional construction but it has not so far been implemented to Hussaini elegies as a part of a Critical Discourse Analytical approach.

Collectively, the chronological evolution of the literature demonstrates three principal threads: (1) CDA researchers who concentrate on ideology and polarization in Hussaini discourse; (2) sociological-discursive researchers who pay attention to the ritual performance and identity; (3) stylistic researchers who emphasize expressive and symbolic aspects of lamentation poetry. Regardless of these valuable contributions, there is still a big gap. Systematic incorporation of emotional intensification, exaggerated discourse, as well as ideological construction of Hussaini elegies integrating a combined CDA and affective-linguistic approach have not been undertaken. Specifically, the hyperbole, repetition, vocative invocation and lexical graduation, which are characteristic of the Hussaini lamentation, have not been theorized as graded persuasive resources that convert affect into ideological conformity.

The current study fills this gap by looking at Hussaini elegies as the discursive locations where emotion is not only manifested but also strategically built. This study, combining Critical Discourse Analysis with evaluative and intensified language analysis tools, seeks to establish how exaggerated discourse functions as an ideological technology to influence the way people perceive and think, as well as strengthen moral polarization and perpetuate communal identity.

In this research, the author will use a combined theoretical approach that incorporates Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and a few aspects of the Appraisal Theory to understand how the process of emotional intensification in Hussaini elegies could serve as a means of ideological construction.

### **1.1. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)**

The main analytical orientation of the research is based on Critical Discourse Analysis as introduced by Norman Fairclough (1995) and Teun A. van Dijk (2006). CDA considers discourse a kind of social action whereby power relations and ideological formations are created and re-created.

Fairclough (1992) argues that discourse operates through three interrelated dimensions: text, which includes words, sentences, and figures of speech; discursive practice, which refers to the production, distribution, and consumption of texts; and social practice, which involves the wider ideological and institutional framework within which discourse is situated.

This three-dimensional model enables Hussaini elegies to be viewed not only as poetic productions, but as socially engrained performance that is part of the reproduction of group identity and belief systems.

In addition to this view, the socio-cognitive model of van Dijk (2006) highlights the importance of shared mental models and ideological schemata in the formation of interpretation. The key feature of this approach is the ideological polarization in the form of the us versus them depictions. Such polarization is often represented in Hussaini elegies as binary constructions: martyr/tyrant,

justice/oppression, loyalty/betrayal, etc. CDA, thus, offers the macro-analytical prism where one can study the ideological construction and group alignment.

## 1.2. Appraisal Theory and Emotional Construction

Although CDA explains how ideology is woven into discourse, it does not necessarily provide finely grained tools for understanding the linguistic encoding of emotions. For this reason, this study also considers selected elements of Appraisal Theory, as proposed by Martin and White (2005). Appraisal Theory consists of three major systems: Attitude, which concerns affect, evaluation, and value; Engagement, which deals with positioning in relation to other voices; and Graduation, which refers to intensification and quantification. In line with the scope of this term paper, particular attention is given to Affect, which concerns the linguistic realization of emotions such as grief, sorrow, and anger; Judgment, which refers to the moral evaluation of actors as righteous, cruel, or oppressive; and Graduation, which involves the amplification and multiplication of meaning, such as the representation of absolute suffering and endless injustice.

The notion of graduation is particularly pertinent to the current research, since hyperbolic amplification, repetition and absolute lexical selections are often at work in exaggerated discourse in Hussaini elegies. These escalating tactics reinforce emotional appeal and promote group identification.

The application of the categories of appraisal can change the analysis towards general statements that use emotional language to the identification of linguistic resources that construct affect and moral positioning.

The combination of CDA and Appraisal Theory enables this research to operate on two interrelated levels. At the micro level, the analysis focuses on lexical intensification, evaluative language, and rhetorical amplification. At the macro level, it examines how these linguistic choices contribute to ideological alignment and the formation of collective identity. Within this framework, exaggerated speech is not regarded as excessive or wasteful language. Rather, it is theorized as a systematic act of persuasion through which emotional identification becomes ideological positioning. Thus, Hussaini elegies are analyzed as discursive performances in which emotional intensification, through Affect and Graduation, facilitates moral evaluation through Judgment, reinforces ideological polarization through CDA, and ultimately sustains communal identity.

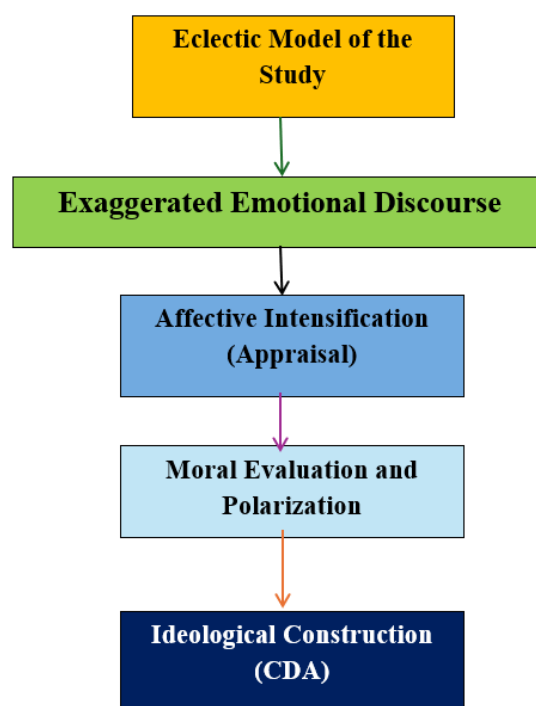


Figure 1. The Eclectic Model of the Study

## **2. Method**

### **2.1. Research Design**

This research is based on qualitative discourse-analytical design. It is an interpretive research work and aims to investigate the role of emotional intensification and exaggerated discourse in the process of an ideological construction of Hussaini elegies. The research does not seek to engage in statistical generalization but instead it targets analytical profundity and theoretical understanding.

The theoretical framework directs the analysis based on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (Fairclough, 1992; van Dijk, 1998) and some of the elements of the Appraisal Theory as identified by Martin and White (2005).

### **2.2. Data Selection**

The data used in this term paper consist of five Hussaini elegies recited on the occasion of Ashura. The elegies were selected based on several criteria: they provide clear accounts of, or make explicit reference to, the events of Karbala; they display noticeable emotional exaggeration through features such as repetition, invocation, and hyperbole; and they are widely circulated and publicly available, particularly in the form of recorded performances.

The elegies were typed in written form to be analysed and translated under the guidance of experts to be comprehended by the English readers. As the subject of the research is the linguistic construction, attention is paid to the textual content instead of the characteristics of performance like melody or rhythm. In this term paper, the data is limited and purposive, which guarantees in-depth analysis and not the breadth.

### **2.3. Analytical Procedures**

The analysis was performed in three key steps. Stage 1 was the recognition of emotional language. The texts were analyzed using Appraisal Theory (Martin and White, 2005) to determine affect, judgment, and graduation. Affect refers to lexical expressions of grief, sorrow, anger, and suffering. Judgment refers to the historical judgment of participants, while graduation refers to intensifiers, repetition, hyperbolic expressions, and absolutist language. Special attention was given to linguistic signs of exaggeration, such as extreme adjectives like eternal, endless, and ultimate; repeated vocatives such as Ya Hussein; metaphorical amplification; and absolute quantifiers such as all, every, and forever.

Stage 2 focused on discursive and ideological structuring. At this stage, the study shifted toward a Critical Discourse Analysis approach based on Fairclough (1992) and van Dijk (1998). The focus was on binary oppositions, such as oppression versus justice, us/them constructions, the symbolism of victimhood and tyranny, collective pronoun usage, and moral polarization. The purpose was to examine the role of emotional intensification in ideological framing and group alignment.

Stage 3 involved social practice interpretation. Finally, the results were analyzed in relation to broader socio-religious practices according to the three-dimensional model suggested by Fairclough (1992). The research examined the relationship between textual features and ritual performance, collective identity, and the reproduction of shared memory. This step enabled the analysis to move beyond linguistic description toward ideological interpretation.

### **2.4. Trustworthiness and Limitations**

Being a qualitative term paper, the study focuses more on analytical transparency than generalizability. Meanings are based on observable linguistic characteristics and not on subjective impressions.

Nevertheless, it is important to note a number of limitations: The dataset consists of five elegies. Performance elements (tone, interaction with audience) are not analysed in a systematic way. The work does not purport to be a sample of all Hussaini elegies in situations. The study offers a narrow linguistic analysis of emotional and ideological construction of a specific corpus despite these constraints.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1. Elegy 1: Extract from Jabir Al-Kadhimi's Poem

"The road of al-Sham tormented me; my eyelid did not close in sleep.

My eyelids withered from the abundance of tears of my weeping.

Blood poured from the friction of the palms of my hands".

"The embers of anguish lie within the heart—my regrets.

Grayness afflicted the head from worry before its time".

##### 3.1.1. Appraisal Analysis

**Table 1. Affect (Emotion)**

Line	Example	Emotional Feature	Function
1	"The road of al-Sham tormented me"	Suffering/distress	Personifies space as agent of grief.
1	"my eyelid did not close in sleep"	Anxiety/insomnia	Signals continuous emotional disturbance.
2	"My eyelids withered from the abundance of tears"	Grief saturation	Converts emotion into bodily deterioration.
3	"Blood poured from the friction of the palms"	Extreme anguish	Escalates sorrow into somatic rupture.
4	"The embers of anguish lie within the heart"	Internalized suffering	Represents grief as continuous burning,
5	"Grayness afflicted the head from worry before its time"	Chronic worry	Indicates prolonged emotional burden.

These linguistic choices cipherize radical personal suffering- not a condition of anti-affection, but an experience of pains experienced and carried.

**Table 2. Graduation (Intensification/Hyperbole)**

Linguistic Signal	Feature	Discursive Function
"withered eyelids-from the abundance of tears"	Hyperbole	Amplifies suffering
"my eyelid did not close in sleep"	Absolute phrasing	Total deprivation
"Blood poured from... palms"	Metaphorical violence	Intensifies physical agony
"The embers of anguish lie within the heart"	Figurative permanence	Suggests emotional burning that persists

These machines signify exaggeration, rather than littera physical description. Such exaggeration is an invitation to feel, rather than understand, in a literary-discursive context, like that of the exaggeration.

The speakers are not directly judged in the abstract above (e.g. oppressor/oppressed), although the construction of the speaker as suffering, emotionally burdened, and faithful and faithful in lament is created. This is a direct indication of moral steadfastness- an important ideological conformity in mourning discourse.

**Table 3. Judgment (Moral Orientation)**

Linguistic Forms	Type of Judgment	Ideological Effect
"tormented me"	Positive endurance	Positions speaker as faithful sufferer.
"abundance of tears"	Legitimate grief	Constructs mourning as appropriate response.
"blood poured from my palms"	Surficial suffering	Aligns bodily pain with devotional loyalty.
"embers of anguish lie within the heart"	Emotional steadfastness	Reinforces sincerity of mourning.
"Grayness afflicted the head from worry before its time"	Lifelong devotion	Suggests grief as enduring commitment.

### 3.1.2. Discursive and Ideological Structuring

Three discursive moves can be observed with the help of CDA principles (Fairclough, 1992; van Dijk, 1998).

### 3.1.3. Construction of a Suffering Subject

The speaker identifies himself or herself as a subject of feeling, whose physique is characterized by suffering. This beckons sympathy and unity. Such language escalation warms the audience in the context of rituals (Ashura gatherings) to feel and not to think, to establish emotional resonance.

### 3.1.4. Polarization by Extremity

Hyperbolic language (blood, withered eyelids, embers) provides a semantic scale of extremes, including a lack of sleep, physical suffering, and inferno of emotions. In mourning discourse, extremes are ideological signals: they indicate that the events that are being recalled were not run-of-the-mill but were absolute in their unfairness and suffering.

### 3.1.5. Implicit Moral Alignment

Without mentioning such names as Imam Hussein (P) or Yazid, this passage puts suffering in context as existential and endless. Such framing in Hussein elegies serves ideologically by: Indicating devotion and loyalty, strengthening the belief that grieving is a moral obligation, and placing the listener in a collective emotional identity.

Therefore, the construction of linguistic emotion is not a whim of personalities - a discursive technology that readies the audiences to ideological positioning.

**Table 4. CDA Analytical Table**

Example	CDA Category	Discursive Function	Ideological Effect
"child's blood" vs. "arrow"	Binary opposition	Contrasts mourning with normal life	Positions mourning as moral obligation.
"cry of orphans"	Victimhood representation	Constructs suffering subject	Signals legitimacy of grief.
Repetition of "arrow" imagery	Somatic embodiment	Physicalizes sorrow	Aligns body with sacred suffering.
"the arrow that pierced Hussein's ribs...may pierce your ribs"	Temporal disruption	Shows grief altering natural time	Suggests permanence of mourning.
References to Imam Hussein (p) and Abdullah	Moral polarization (implicit)	Frames suffering as justified	Reinforces ideological loyalty.
"Child's blood", "pierced ribs"	Collective alignment (implicit)	Models expected response to Karbala memory	Encourages shared identification.

In this way, ideological structuring is accomplished through embodied mourning as opposed to an explicit historical narration.

### 3.1.6. Interpretation within Social Practice

The extract, when viewed in the social practice scale, is ritualized sense of correct mourning in the Shiite commemoration settings. The culturally recognizable signs of devotion include sleeplessness, tears and early aging somatic imagery which are used to recite in majlis. The picture serves to transform sorrow into an act or an emotion and not a deep emotion. It is in the body that communal allegiance is manifested.

Further, the metaphor "- embers of anguish lie within the heart" - shows how personal emotional experience is built as a continuum and heritage as opposed to a temporary one. In ritual settings, this helps to uphold the anticipation that the memory of Karbala will continue to exist over time.

Lastly, the violation of natural temporality- the head before its time- is an indication of the ethical duty in mourning in the long-term. Grief is revealed not in episodic form but as a lasting commitment thus strengthening collective identity that is organized around remembrance and devotion to al-Hussein.

With these word choices, the extract leads to the reproduction of communal memory by converting emotional suffering into a cultural communal expression of devotion.

### 3.2. Elegy 2

"Jaber, do not implore her, lest Karbala strike you with arrows,  
 and the candle of your existence be extinguished, as the wedding candle of Jassim was extinguished.  
 I fear that you may be stunned and cry out with the cry of orphans.  
 The ember of Abdullah's thirst ignites and is extinguished within my entrails.  
 O Jaber, I saw an arrow coated with a child's blood,  
 and the arrow of al-'Alqami strikes you, and blood explodes—your tears becoming blood.  
 The arrow that pierced Hussein's ribs—I fear it may pierce your ribs.  
 The soul departs from my body, and to my body the soul returns".  
 "Look at my ribs—how they are bent"

#### 3.2.1. Appraisal Analysis

**Table 5. Affect (Emotion)**

Line	Example	Emotional Feature	Function
1	"Karbala strike you with arrows"	Fear/threat anticipation	Transfers historical violence into present emotional experience.
2	"the candle of your existence be extinguished"	Anxiety about death/loss	Represents fragility of life through symbolic imagery.
3	"cry out with the cry of orphans"	Collective grief	Activates cultural memory of vulnerability and injustice.
4	"The ember of Abdullah's thirst ignites...within my entrails"	Internalized suffering	Converts remembered historical pain into bodily experience.
8	"The soul departs from my body"	Psychological rupture	Signals extreme emotional instability.
9	"Look at my ribs—how they are bent"	Physicalized grief	Embodies sorrow as bodily transformation.

These phrases prove that affect is not an abstract expression but rather somatically encoded, which supports emotional immediacy and identification of the listener.

**Table 6. Graduation (Intensification/Hyperbole)**

Linguistic Signal	Type of Graduation	Discursive Function
"the candle of your existence be extinguished"	Metaphorical amplification	Represents life as fragile illumination.
"blood explodes"	Force maximization	Intensifies violence imagery.
"your tears becoming blood"	Extreme hyperbole	Collapses emotional suffering into physical rupture.
Repetition of "arrow"	Lexical intensification	Reinforces symbolic aggression.
Repetition of "O' Jabir"	Vocative emphasis	Strengthens emotional immediacy.
The soul departs from my body, and..returns"	Existential exaggeration	Signals emotional instability beyond normal grief.

Graduation operates here as the dominant evaluative mechanism through which suffering is amplified beyond ordinary human experience.

**Table 7. Judgment (Moral Evaluation)**

Linguistic Signal	Type of Judgment	Ideological Effect
"an arrow coated with a child's blood"	Negative moral judgment (implicit condemnation)	Constructs innocence violated.
"cry of orphans"	Positive evaluation of victims	Reinforces moral legitimacy of suffering figures.
"arrow that pierced Hussein's ribs"	Sanctification of martyrdom	Positions Hussein as righteous victim.
"The ember of Abdullah's thirst ignites"	Moral intensification of injustice	Reinforces symbolic suffering of Karbala.

Although explicit evaluative adjectives are absent, moral positioning is achieved through symbolic references that activate shared cultural knowledge of martyrdom and oppression.

**Table 8. Discursive and Ideological Structuring**

Example	CDA Category	Discursive Function	Ideological Effect
"child's blood" vs. "arrow"	Binary opposition	Contrasts innocence with violence	Constructs moral asymmetry.
"cry of orphans"	Victimhood representation	Signals vulnerability and loss	Reinforces legitimacy of suffering.
Repetition of "arrow" imagery	Tyranny representation	Symbolizes aggression without naming agents	Suggests unjust violence.
"the arrow that pierced Hussein's ribs...may pierce your ribs"	Temporal collapse	Connects past martyrdom with present experience	Activates shared historical memory.
References to Imam Hussein (p) and Abdullah	US	Activates in-group identity	Reinforces communal alignment.
"Child's blood", "pierced ribs"	Moral polarization	Frames suffering as scared injustice	Strengthens ideological positioning.

### 3.2.2. Interpretation within Social Practice

The text is a performative reconstructions of the Karbala memory as opposed to a descriptive narrative account of the historical events to depict an image of the mourning ritual to the recipient. The frequent vocative use of O Jaber is indicative of oral recitation used in majlis performance. This kind of direct address increases the involvement of the listeners and heightens emotional involvement. The hyperbolic bodily imagery makes the past suffering turn into the current emotional experience so that the audiences can internalize the martyrdom narratives as a constituent of the communal identity.

The metaphor-the ember of the thirst of Abdullah that burns in my entrails- shows the way to how individual bodily imagery recreates the collective memory by the means of linguistic embodiment. Mourning is thus built not as an individual feeling but as a cultural duty.

The elegy helps to reproduce the socio-religious ideology of loyalty to al-Hussein and the timeless relevance of Karbala to Shiite communal memory through repeated symbolic allusions to martyrdom, innocence and suffering.

### 3.3. Elegy 3

"The clouds of grief have veiled my sun,  
 and the face of morning has grown darker.  
 I lie awake, my regret lodged in my chest—  
 so heavy that even mountains would collapse beneath it.  
 A cloud gathers in my eyes; upon my cheeks  
 it pours down tears mixed with blood.  
 They counsel me to be patient,  
 yet I search for patience and cannot find it.  
 The barrier of my eyelids has crumbled,  
 and my tears spill freely across my face.  
 His body was torn apart, scattered  
 between the blade and the severed throat.

Amid the surging waves of his enemies' horses,  
 Abu al-Akbar remains alone".

### 3.3.1. Appraisal Analysis

**Table 9. Affect**

Line	Example	Emotional Feature	Function
1	Clouds of grief have veiled my sun	Overwhelming sorrow	Cosmologizes emotional suffering
2	The face of morning has grown darker	Persistent mourning	Extends grief into natural environment
3	I lie awake	Anxiety/ insomnia	Signals continuous emotional disturbance.
3	Regret lodged in my chest	Internalized grief	Represents sorrow as physicals burden.
6	Tears mixed with blood	Extreme anguish	Intensifies somatic suffering
8	I search for patience and cannot find it	Emotional exhaustion	Signals collapse of endurance
9	The barrier of my eyelids has crumbled	Uncontrolled grief	Removes resistance to mourning
14	Abu al- Akbar remains alone	Isolation/tragic vulnerability	Activates collective sympathy

These words show that grief is expressed as a bodily, psychological and cosmological experience at the same time.

**Table 10. Graduation (Intensification/Hyperbole)**

Linguistic Signal	Type of Graduation	Discursive Function
"clouds of grief have veiled my sun"	Cosmological amplification	Universalizes mourning.
"morning has grown darker"	Environmental exaggeration	Extends grief beyond speakers.
"even mountains would collapse beneath it"	Extreme hyperbole	Signals unbearable emotional weight.
Tears mixed with blood"	Somatic intensification	Converts emotion into bodily rupture.
Barrier of my eyelids has crumbled"	Structural metaphor	Represents collapse of restraint.
Waves of his enemies horse"	Massification imagery	Amplifies scale of aggression.

Grief is thus converted into something beyond the normal emotional boundaries by the act of graduation.

**Table 11. Judgment (Moral Evaluation)**

Linguistic Signal	Type of Judgment	Ideological Effect
"his body was torn apart"	Positive evaluation of martyrdom victim	Constructs innocence violated.
"between the blade and severed throat"	Negative implicit judgment of aggressors	Signals brutality without naming perpetrators
"amid the waves of his enemies horses"	Negative judgment of opposing force	Represents tyranny symbolically .
"Abu al- Akbar remains alone"	Sanctification of isolation in martyrdom	Reinforces heroic sacrifice.
Tears mixed with blood	Moral legitimacy of grief	Constructs mourning as justified response

Here judgment is rather indirect, by implicit condemnation of violence and sanctification of martyrdom, than direct.

**Table 12. Discursive and Ideological Structuring**

Example	CDA Category	Discursive Function	Ideological Effect
Binary opposition	Abu al- Akbar vs. enemies horses	Contrasts innocence with aggression	Constructs moral asymmetry.
Victimhood Representation	His body was torn apart	Physicalizes martyrdom suffering	Reinforces legitimacy of grief.
Tyranny representation	Blade severed throat enemies horses	Symbolizes violent opposition	Signals injustice implicitly.
"cosmological mourning "	Clouds of grief veiled my sun	Universalizes sorrow	Expands ideological significance.
Emotional collapse	Cannot find patience	Models expected mourning response	Encourages audience identification.
Collective alignment	Reference to Abu al-Akbar	Activates shared Karbala memory	Strengthens communal identity.

These constructions show that emotional intensification is used as an ideological positioning mechanism instead of being an expression of pure lyricality.

### 3.3.2. Interpretation within Social Practice

In the level of social practice, the extract represents ritualized reconstruction of Karbala memory in terms of cosmological and somatic mourning imagery.

Cosmic metaphors such as:

The extract, "The clouds of grief have veiled my sun", expands grief into the collective symbolic space that can be identified within the context of majlis performance. This type of imagery is a way to engage in a collective activity by making grief a collective issue or universal.

Likewise, body metaphors such as: "blood and tears" construct mourning as a form of enshrined devotion, to enforce demands of overt emotional participation in commemorative recitation.

The allusion to "Amid the surging waves of his enemies' horses,

Abu al-Akbar remains alone", makes the listener repositioned in the history of sacred by bridging the temporal gap between the past martyrdom and present recollection. This is a strategy of maintaining collective identity within the discourse of rituals that maintains the emotional congruence to Karbala discourses.

In this way, the extract in itself is a part of the reproduction of communal memory as it alters personal sorrow into ideological dedication based on loyalty, sacrifice, and the intergenerational memory of the cause of al-Hussein.

### 3.4. Elegy 4

"The son of the Prophet performed his ablution with the blood of a gushing vein;

His body floated upon the spilled blood,

Just as the Ark of Noah once floated and sailed.

The higher world lamented over him.

Upon the spear, I behold a hoary head stained crimson,

While on the area of al-Ṭaff his limbs lie dust-covered and scattered.

Within me, I sense a blaze, the fire of burning tent-ropes.

Did the face of al-Ḥusayn truly vanish beneath waves of blood?

A blood-soaked body fell,

As the eagles of the sky swoop and descend".

### 3.4.1. Appraisal Analysis

**Table 13. Affect**

Line	Example	Emotional Feature	Function
1	“ablution with the blood of a gushing vein”	Sacred suffering	Converts martyrdom into ritual purification
2	“his body floated upon spilled blood”	Tragic vulnerability	Intensifies battlefield suffering imagery
3	“the higher world lamented over him”	Cosmic mourning	Universalizes grief beyond humanity
4	“head stained crimson upon the spear”	Shock / sorrow	Visualizes humiliation and violence
8	“limbs lie dust-covered and scattered”	Fragmentation grief	Emphasizes brutality of martyrdom
9	within me, I sense a blaze”	Internalized anguish	Transfers battlefield destruction into speaker’s body
	“face vanished beneath waves of blood”	Extreme loss imagery	Signals overwhelming tragedy
	“blood-soaked body fell”	Terminal suffering	Reinforces martyrdom finality

Such phrases indicate that grief is expressed both as bodily, sacred and cosmological experience.

**Table 14. Graduation (Intensification/Hyperbole)**

Linguistic Signal	Type of Graduation	Discursive Function
“ablution with blood”	Ritual metaphor amplification	Elevates suffering to sacred act
“floated like the Ark of Noah”	Intertextual hyperbole	Universalizes martyrdom significance
“higher world lamented”	Cosmic exaggeration	Extends mourning beyond earth
“waves of blood”	Massification imagery	Amplifies scale of violence
“limbs scattered”	Fragmentation intensification	Visualizes brutality vividly
“fire of burning tent-ropes within me”	Internalized battlefield imagery	Transfers historical trauma into present body
“eagles of the sky swoop and descend”	Predatory environmental imagery	Intensifies battlefield devastation

This extract functions mostly by prophetic analogy and cosmic extrapolation of sorrow, which creates an optimum of emotional impact.

**Table 15. Judgment (Moral Evaluation)**

Linguistic Signal	Type of Judgment	Ideological Effect
“son of the Prophet”	Positive sanctification	Elevates moral authority of martyr
“ablution with blood”	Sacred devotion	Frames suffering as spiritually meaningful
“head upon the spear”	Negative implicit judgment of aggressors	Signals humiliation imposed by tyranny
“limbs scattered”	Condemnation of violence	Reinforces brutality of battlefield
“burning tent-ropes”	Representation of injustice	Activates memory of attacks on family tents
“face vanished beneath waves of blood”	Innocence violated	Intensifies legitimacy of mourning

The element of judgment is therefore formed by symbolic moral positioning, instead of direct accusation, which makes it more persuasive to align with the martyrdom discourse.

**Table 16. Discursive and Ideological Structuring**

Example	CDA Category	Discursive Function	Ideological Effect
son of the Prophet vs. battlefield violence	Binary opposition	Contrasts innocence with violence	Constructs moral asymmetry.
“limbs scattered,” “head upon the spear”	Victimhood representation	Signals vulnerability and loss	Reinforces legitimacy of suffering.
“burning tent-ropes”	Tyranny representation	Symbolizes aggression without naming agents	Signals injustice implicitly
Ark of Noah comparison	Prophetic intertextuality	Links Karbala to sacred history	Universalizes martyrdom
“higher world lamented”	Cosmic mourning	Extends grief beyond humanity	Reinforces sacred legitimacy
battlefield imagery of al-Taff	Collective alignment	Activates shared Karbala memory	Strengthens communal identity.

These constructions indicate that exaggeration is an ideological reinforcement instead of the decorative poetic language.

### **3.4.2. Interpretation within Social Practice**

On the social practice level, the extract is ritualized reconstruction of the Karbala memory in the form of prophetic comparison, battlefield images and metaphors of internalized destruction.

The martyrdom was turned into ritual cleansing: took his ablution in the blood of a running vein frames with their martyrdom A holy preparation, not defeat. In the context of majlis recitation, this reinforces the concept of martyrdom as a purpose of god.

Likewise, the analogy of the Ark of Noah places Karbala in a larger prophetic story known to the audience. This intertextual tactic widens the ideological range of lamentation beyond historical memory to a universal religious symbolism.

### **3.4.3. Internalization of Tent-Burning Images**

The extract, "I feel a fire in me, I feel a fire", shows how violence on the battlefield is replicated as current emotional sensation. Such metaphors in a ritual situation turn remembrance into embodied action. Lastly, allusions to the battlefield of al-Ṭaff support spatial anchoring of collective memory, enabling the audience to place themselves in the geography of martyrdom symbolically.

In these rhetorical means, the extract plays its part in reproducing communal identity organized around allegiance to al-Hussein and the ongoing re-enactment of Karbala as a form of living and ethical event and not as a historical event that has already happened.

## **3.5. Elegy 5**

"It was not Hussein alone who was slain;  
the world itself shattered alongside him.  
The sky tore open its own cloak,  
and the sun was transformed into a house of mourning  
when it beheld his chest devoid of breath.  
Karbala could not contain the magnitude of the calamity;  
the pain overflowed and spilled into distant cities".  
"Even stone learned how to weep,  
and night no longer knew the meaning of sleep.  
His blood was not merely blood,  
but a river of grief,  
and even tears became an inheritance,  
passed down from one generation to another".

### 3.5.1. Appraisal Analysis

**Table 17. Affect**

Example	Emotional Feature	Function
the world itself shattered alongside him.	Catastrophic grief	Universalizes mourning beyond individual loss.
The sky tore open its own cloak the sun was transformed into a house of mourning.	Cosmic sorrow Ritualized cosmic mourning	Extends grief into natural order Converts environment into participant in grief
the pain overflowed and spilled into distant cities.	Expanding collective sorrow	Signals geographical spread of tragedy
stone learned how to weep night no longer knew the meaning of sleep.	Extreme mourning Continuous sorrow	Animates nature as grieving subject. Signals permanence of mourning.
river of grief, tears became an inheritance,	Masefield sorrow Intergenerational grief	Amplifies emotional scale Constructs mourning as transmitted identity

These discoveries show that the state of grief is projected as cosmic, spatially stretching and historically uninterrupted.

**Table 18. Graduation (Intensification/Hyperbole)**

Linguistic Signal	Type of Graduation	Discursive Function
the world itself shattered alongside him.	Cosmic exaggeration	Universalizes martyrdom significance
The sky tore open its own cloak, and the sun was transformed into a house of mourning	Environmental hyperbole Cosmological transformation	Extends grief into celestial domain Ritualizes environmental grief
"the pain overflowed and spilled into distant cities"	Spatial expansion	Signals geographical spread of sorrow
Even stone learned how to weep, and night no longer knew the meaning of sleep.	Animistic exaggeration Temporal exaggeration	Maximizes emotional universality Signals emotional instability beyond normal grief
but a river of grief, and even tears became an inheritance,	Massification imagery Temporal continuity amplification	Amplifies scale of suffering Constructs grief as historical legacy

Martyrdom here is made of historical tragedy into cosmic and transgenerational reality by graduation.

**Table 19. Judgment (Moral Evaluation)**

Linguistic Signal	Type of Judgment	Ideological Effect
"It was not Hussein alone who was slain;	Sanctification of martyrdom	Elevates event beyond ordinary death
the world itself shattered alongside him	Moral centrality of martyrdom	Position tragedy as universal injustice
and the sun was transformed into a house of mourning	Sacred recognition of loss	Reinforces legitimacy of grief
Even stone learned how to weep, but a river of grief, and even tears became an inheritance,	Natural world solidarity with martyr Collective legitimacy of mourning Moral continuity across generations	Strengthens symbolic moral authority Frames sorrow as justified response Constructs loyalty as transmitted obligation

Judgment is thus operating within cosmic congruence with martyrdom, a strengthening of the validity of community grieving.

**Table 20. Discursive and Ideological Structuring**

Example	CDA Category	Discursive Function	Ideological Effect
Hussein vs. shattered world	Binary opposition	Contrasts innocence with injustice	Constructs moral asymmetry.
"It was not Hussein alone who was slain"	Victimhood representation	Centralizes martyrdom	Reinforces legitimacy of mourning.
Cosmic rupture imagery	Tyranny representation	Signals magnitude of injustice	Strengthens symbolic condemnation.
"The sky tore open its own cloak"	Spatial expansion	Extends tragedy geographically	Builds collective identification.
"the pain overflowed and spilled into distant cities"	Cosmological mourning	Universalizes grief	Elevates martyrdom significance.
"and even tears became an inheritance"	Temporal continuity	Transmits mourning across generations	Stabilizes ideological loyalty.

These structures demonstrate that exaggerated discourse functions as a mechanism for transforming historical martyrdom into enduring collective identity.

### 3.5.2. Interpretation within Social Practice

On the social practice level, this extract enacts one of the key ideological tasks of the Hussaini elegiac discourse: the conversion of mourning into transmitted collective identity. Cosmological metaphors like: the sky tore open its cloak are a continuation of grief through single experience into divine involvement in the environment. In majlis recitation, this imagery justified expression of emotion as universal as opposed to personal choices. Equally, the metamorphosis of heavenly bodies into grieving actors: the sun became a house of mourning re-creates the natural world in accordance with the Karbala memory, which strengthens the vision of martyrdom as the cosmic moral phenomenon.

Most importantly, the quote: tears were an heir passed on through generations to another generation clearly codifies grief as an intergenerational duty other than a personal feeling. In the context of rituals, this type of linguistic strategy provides the perpetuation of collective identity that is organized in terms of loyalty to Al-Hussein.

These strategies make the extract part of the continuation of communal memory as it introduces grief as a passed-down ethical obligation that connects martyrdom of the past to the devotion of the present and memory of the future.

## 4. Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper demonstrates that exaggerated rhetoric in Hussaini elegies functions not merely as a stylistic device, but as a powerful ideological and emotional mechanism. Through the use of hyperbole, somatic imagery, intertextual references, and cosmological metaphors, the elegies transform grief into a cosmic and existential experience while presenting martyrdom as morally sacred and violence as fundamentally unjust. By combining Critical Discourse Analysis and Appraisal Theory, the study shows how these linguistic features construct a polarized moral world, strengthen in-group identification, preserve the memory of Karbala, and reinforce intergenerational communal identity within ritual contexts. Although limited to a small number of extracts, the analysis offers a useful model for examining the relationship between affect, discourse, and ideology in religious poetry, and it opens possibilities for future research on multimodal performance, audience responses, and comparative elegiac traditions.

### Data Availability

The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

### Conflicts of Interest

All authors in this publication declare no conflict of interest regarding the title, data, location, and results of the research.

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## Supplementary Materials

This study does not include any supplementary materials.

## Declaration on AI Use

The authors declare that no artificial intelligence (AI) or AI-assisted tools were used in the preparation of this manuscript. AI were used only to improve readability and language under strict human oversight; no content, ideas, analyses, or conclusions were generated by AI.

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