

A study of the two symbols of water and fire in the poems of Fyodor Tyutchev and Sohrab Sepehri

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Abstract

The comparison between the selected verses and poems of Sohrab Sepehri, Iran's contemporary poet, and Fyodor Tyutchev, the Russian poet, diplomat, and journalist that researchers refer to as "the poet of nature", belongs to the field of comparative literature. One of the commonalities between these two poets is diligence in and attention to nature and naturalism in their poems. Each has utilized nature according to their living environment, and social and political conditions. The four elements of nature (water, wind, fire, and Earth) hold a special place in the eyes of Iranians and other nations and these elements are frequently used in the poems of these two poets. This article has attempted to briefly introduce Fyodor Tyutchev, the eminent Russian poet, to the literary and cultural society of Iran and draw a comparison of the two elements of water and fire in these two poets' approaches. This article compares the two elements of water and fire in the selected poems of the two poets with a descriptive-analytical method. The results indicate that the use of these two elements in the poems of Sepehr and Tyutchev have a lot in common.

Keywords: nature, Sepehri, Tyutchev

Introduction

Russian poets Fyodor Tyutchev and Sohrab Sepehri are both poets who lived far apart in two different climates and cultures. Both have a special interest in nature and often used elements of nature in their poems. Nature has long inspired many poets. In modern Persian poetry, nature is the focus of

many poets. According to Elizabeth Drew, «a poem that talks about nature is desired by poets in all ages, although its type is different according to the taste and sensibility of poets» (Shafiei Kodkani, 2000:318).

In Sohrab Sepehri's poem, all the manifestations of nature, such as flowers and plants, rain, morning, dew, etc., are about life. But today's poet is not the same person who lived a thousand years ago. His relationship with the outer and inner world has changed, he can reflect this relationship if he starts his poetic organization with a new experience (Dasghib, 36, 37:1991).

Background research

Many articles have been written about Sohrab Sepehri's poems; But we only mention some of these comparative studies that main subject is related to nature.

(Khadmi, 2008) analyzes the attitude of poets such as Manochehri, Hafez, Nima and Sohrab. In this analysis, Sohrab's poetry is mystical to reach knowledge.

(Kyani Fakher , 2016) addressed the subject of naturalism in the poetry of Sohrab Sepehri and Forough Farrokhzad.

It is true that Forough and Sepehri have talked about similar topics such as grief, death and life, nature and love at the intellectual and content level.

But each of them has looked at these common issues with their own perspective and mentality, and in each of these issues and perspectives, there are intellectual, fundamental and structural differences.

Both use elements of nature in their comparisons and metaphors. From Sepehr's point of view, all parts of nature have spirit and movement. Therefore, the personification of the elements of nature is one of the main features of the poetry of Sohrab Sepehr.

(Maryam Majidi, 2022) in a comparative comparison, shows the similarities and differences of the attitudes of Sohrab Sepehri and Nima Yoshij towards nature.

In this article, for topics such as creativity to see nature and its elements, the transformation of nature, nature as a living, living and spiritual being, looking at the elements of nature as similar phenomena and the mystical view of nature, all are differences between a theoretical view, a detailed view and a phenomenological view of nature.

(Maryam Sarfaraz Esbagh and Nasser Matalzadeh, 2016) in a comparative research, they examine nature in the poems of Robert Frost and Sohrab Sepehri.

This research shows how Robert Frost from America and Sohrab Sepehri from Iran have used common symbols of nature with different meanings in their poems. Their poetry is related to nature, but their view of nature and their philosophy are different.

(Ezzat Molla Ebrahimi et al., 2011) have studied the comparative comparison of naturalism in the thoughts of Sohrab Sepehri and Gibran Khalil Gibran.

In the works of these two artists, naturalism is placed as a utopia. In the meantime, Sepehri is closer to nature and constantly speaks about the good and bad phenomena of nature and does not have a conflicting view of nature in his thought.

And he reaches peace of mind in his utopia, despite this, he does not reach the secrets of the elements of nature.

(Zarkani and Fouliadi, 2008) have examined the use of nature elements in a comparative article in the poems of poets such as Nima, Shafiei Kadkani and Sohrab.

In this article, the attitude of these poets towards nature from the political, social, cultural, human and mystical aspects is mentioned as a tool to express thought.

About the topic we are discussing in this article, which is the comparative study of the two symbols of water and ash in the poems of Sohrab Sepehri and Fyodor Tyutchev, and in general, no research has been done in relation to Fyodor Tyutchev. It is hoped that by

conducting this research, a new step will be taken in the field of getting to know this great Russian poet and introducing his views and thoughts.

Biography of Sohrab Sepehri

Sohrab, a famous Iranian poet, writer and painter, was born in 1929 in Kashan. His great-grandfather was the first head of Kashan telegraph house.

He graduated from Tehran Fine Arts Faculty in 1954. Sohrab was very interested in the cultures of other nations, so he traveled to countries such as Japan, India, China and France.

Sohrab's poems have been translated into different languages such as French, English, Italian and Spanish. The death of color, the life of dreams, eight books, the sound of water feet and the traveler are among the unique works of this great poet.

Biography of Fyodor Tyutchev

Tyutchev, a Russian poet, diplomat and journalist, was born on December 5, 1803 in the village of Ostog, Bryansk region, Russia. He was from an aristocratic but poor family. His father, Ivan Nikolayevich Tyutchev, served in the Kremlin Palace.

In 1816, he began to attend the lectures of Alexei Merzlyakov. Merzlyakov was a famous poet, writer and professor at Moscow University at that time.

At the age of 14, Tyutchev was able to enter the Society of Russian Literature Lovers by composing a nobleman's poem in imitation of Horace. In 1822, he was appointed as one of the diplomatic representatives of Russia in Germany and traveled to Munich with the diplomatic delegation.

There he met closely with Andreas Bader, Schelling and Heine. Among his most famous poems, we can mention Silence, Madness, Far from the Sun and Nature, The Great Day of Krill's Death, Spring Streams, and Day and Night.

Researchers refer to Tyutchev as the poet of nature and believe that it is only Tyutchev

who with his philosophical understanding of nature forms the basis of the world vision. Tyutchev's poems are full of questions about the search for the meaning of life, the great cycle of nature and the place of man in the universe.

A brief look at romanticism and naturalism

Romanticism is a literary school that emerged in England in the late 18th century and then went to Germany, and after a while, i.e. in 1830, it entered France, Spain, and Russia and dominated European literature until 1850 (Seyd Hosseini, 87:1997).

Naturalism is one of the characteristics of the school of romanticism. Romanticism is parallel to the criticism of civilization and the condemnation of its manifestations that are manifested in the artificial life of the city.

It represents a return to nature, a simple and uncontaminated rural and rural life, and a unique approach to nature, enriching romantic activities with beautiful images of nature and colorful, ancient and wild landscapes.

The way he depicted the environment in these works gave it a different color than previous works that focused on external aspects. In Romanticism, these scenes are associated with reflection on nature and love for it.

In addition, in the light of their attachment to nature, romantics show a greater tendency to use elements of nature in their words. Therefore, the contribution of these elements in the words and images of romantic poets has a high frequency. (Sadrinia, 143:2002).

In the eyes of poets, nature can be descriptive in such a way that the poet describes nature like a reporter or uses the elements of nature in similes and metaphors to express his ideas and thoughts. Topics such as seasons, night and day, four elements, animals and plants show the main axis of naturalism in Persian poetry. Water is one of the four main elements that is sacred to Iranians and is considered divine.

Since ancient times, Iranians have believed in the creative role of water in the world system, just like the ancient Sumerian worldview. Therefore, its importance and sanctity have been mentioned many times in the Avesta.

Water is mentioned in "Aban Yasht" and "Tir Yasht" and Anahita Nahid (meaning pure and unpolluted).

As the great goddess of water and fertility, she has been praised (Yahghi, 12:2006). As mentioned, water is a symbol of birth and fertility in most cultures; However, according to the words of Greek historians, this type of water was recorded by the Ionians.

These historians write: Iranians do not urinate in the middle of water, they do not spit in it, they do not wash their hands in it, which of course means running water, which should be kept away from any kind of pollution.

Iranians have also sacrificed for water. It is said in the traditions that a century before Christ, when sacrificing to the angel of water, Iranians dug a pit by the side of the river or the source and the shore of the sea and sacrificed next to the water, in such a way that the water was not contaminated with the blood of the victim.

This ritual was also performed until the fifth and sixth centuries AD (Ibid.: 3).

In the poem "History" by Sohrab Sepehari, water is a symbol of life and vitality, and the boat can be a symbol of the poet himself, who needs water for dynamism and freshness, and without the presence of water, he is dead and has no life, and also water is a symbol of knowledge and awareness. (Majid Khosravi, 220:2014).

Remaining on the shore,
 A boat cast upon by the night,
 Its body, untouched by any path,
 Carried away in the bitterness of perception.
 No one exists to guide him
 Thrown into the water!
 And at this time, while every water
 mountain,
 Whispers secrets to attentive ears,

A tumultuous wave approaches, saying,
 “Join us
 The tale of a stormy night.” (Sohrab Sepehri,2009)
 In the long poem, the footsteps of water says
 :
 “And the god near us,
 Amidst these night scents, by the foot of that
 tall pine,
 On the awareness of water, on the law of
 plants.” (Same:258).

In Fyodor Tyutchev's poem "Spring Streams", water symbolizes the eternal cycle of life, renewal and restoration of life and rebirth.

Еще в полях белеет снег,
 А воды уж весной шумят –
 Бегут и будят сонный брег,
 Бегут, и блещут, и гласят...
 Они гласят во все концы:
 “Весна идет, весна идет,
 Мы молодой весны гонцы,
 Она нас выслала вперед!
 Весна идет, весна идет,
 И тихих, теплых майских дней
 Румяный, светлый хоровод
 Толпится весело за ней!..”

(Тютчев,1830)

The sacredness of fire has ancient roots and goes back to the Indo-European era. This element has been cherished by different ethnic groups and has been of special importance in Aryan and Semitic religions. According to the Bundahishn, the seventh and last material creation is fire, that brilliance is the place of Ahura Mazda. Fire is the god who is considered Ahura Mazda, and its light is a visible sign of Ahura Mazda's presence. (Qolizadeh, 27:2007).

I've placed my feet on this path,
 Broken away from the caravan's door.
 Though I burn with this fire to my soul,
 Yet, I am bound to this burning heart.”
 (Sohrab Sepehri, 10:2009)

In the poem above, fire is a symbol of love. As it is found in the belief of many cultures, in the poem under the fire, it is a manifestation and symbol of purification (Majid Khosravi, 223, 224: 2014).

We are the hidden nucleus, a spectacle,
 Illuminate us with the manifestation of a
 cloud, to rain upon us cold.
 May it be that with saltiness, we cleave,
 May it be that we soar and unite with your
 sun.

We are a vast and transformative forest,
 Even from fire, we take a hundred hues:
 vibrant, intertwined.
 Whip us, lash upon us,
 So that from our ashes, a monochromatic
 forest may emerge.” (Sohrab Sepehri,
 246:2009)

In Russian culture, fire is the mediator between God and man. Fire and its derivatives are often a symbol of purification and victory of light over darkness. In the poem “Snowy Mountains”, the word fiery is a symbol of purity and divinity.

Уже полдневная пора
 Палит отвесными лучами,—
 И задымилась гора
 С своими черными лесами.
 Внизу, как зеркало стальное,
 Синюют озера струи,
 И с камней, блещущих на зное,
 В родную глубь спешат ручьи.
 И между тем как полусонный
 Наш дольний мир, лишенный сил,
 Проникнут негой благовонной,
 Во мгле полуденной почил,—
 Горе, как божества родные,
 Над издыхающей землей
 Играют выси ледяные
 С лазурью неба огневой.

(Тютчев,1830)

In Tyutchev's view, fire is also a symbol of love. In the poem "Miss, don't believe the poet, don't believe" he used fire as a symbol of love.

Его ты сердца не усвоишь
Своей младенческой душой;
Огня палящего не скроешь
Под легкой девственной фатой
(Тютчев, 1839)

Conclusion

Finally, by combining the works of these two great artists, it can be said that Sepehri

is a poet who often used natural elements in his poems. The element fire was used to symbolize love and purification, while the element water was used to symbolize life, vitality, knowledge and understanding.

Tyutchev, the great Russian naturalistic poet who is known as the poet of nature, used fire as a symbol of love in his poems. It has also used fire and its derivatives as a symbol of purity and water as a continuous cycle of life, regeneration and rebirth.

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