

Sadness and grief in the lyrics of some contemporary poets of Iran

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Abstract

Lyric literature is one kind of literature, which has been widely emerged in poetry of poets and writer a long time ago; it is a necessary emotion for human life. Sadness, grief, fear, anger, hate and love and affection are essential for compromising with environment and protecting human nature. Regarding this, the author in this paper has focused on examining aspects of sadness and grief in some poetry of contemporary poets, it is assumed that sadness and grief are prominent characteristics in most poetry of Iranian contemporary poets. First author has focused on content review of lyrics in some contemporary poets and extracted lyrics with motifs of sadness then analyzed the causes of developing sorrow and how much poets used it. The study aimed to inform readers of how poets approaching toward sadness and sorrow. The research methodology is library reviewing and analyzing. The results reflect a wide sorrow and sadness in poetry of contemporary poets and linkage of sadness with love and the reasons of poets for using sorrow and grief are poets' loneliness and social concerns.

Keywords: lyric literature, sadness, grief, contemporary poetry, human

Introduction:

The literature of a nation is the life of a nation and poetry of a society is strong ancient roots and national, cultural, religious and ideological strength of that society (Mohammadi, 1994:2). Jean-Paul Sartre says: "it is the duty of a writer to do something that no one be unaware of the world and No one can exempt themselves from its effects" (Sartre, 1984:44). This is why there is no exception for poets and they indicate the beauties and ugliness of their life including sadness, happiness, fear and hope in their poetry. Some of them complain about adversity and hardships of life and their poems show political and social situation and individual poems of their life and state their sadness and sorrow. Most of poets are leaders of thought in society, but "individual appearance and even realizing his inherent features (poet) requires suitable social environment" (Aryianpoor, 2001:106). We can conclude that poetry of a poet is nothing than his emotional appearances (Moradi Kuchi, 2001:207)*

By reviewing sociological analysis of Iranian contemporary poets such as Foruq Farrokhzad, Simin Behbahani, Sohrab Sepehri and Shamlou, we find out that poetry of these poets reflects people problems and difficulties in which they have lived.*

The paper has reviewed the concept sadness and sorrow and statements in conformity with it such as despair, mourning, separation, pain and suffer in poetry of contemporary poets.*

The aim of Research

The study aimed to make readers find out how contemporary poets approach toward sadness and grief by thinking about samples of poems of some contemporary poems and make readers able to analyze this approach from other poets' view.

Main Questions of Research

Main questions of research are: how are the images and manifestations of sadness and sorrow components in poetry of Iranian contemporary poets? What are the common and different aspects in poetry of discussed poets?

The need for research

Since emotions such as sorrow, grief, fear, hate, love and affection are essential for consistency with environment and protecting human nature and regarding the reflect of these emotions specially sadness and sorrow in poetry of contemporary poets and common points in contemporary poets' views because of sociological problems, examining concept of sorrow and grief and reasons of approaching poets to sorrow and sadness are necessary.

Literature Review

A great deal of research has been done about contemporary poets. A plurality of articles and research related to contemporary poets show such as Foruq Farrokhzad, Simin Behbahani, Sohrab Sepehri and Shamlou are considered as prominent poets in contemporary literature.

There are several published books and articles about above poets that because of multiplicity of books and articles, we just focus on some of them. Feminism trend in Simin Behbahani's poetry by Mokhtar Ibrahimi (2013), reviewing women poetry in contemporary literature by Shahrbanoo Hosseinzadeh Boolaqui (2008), "freedom from oneself" in Foruq Farrokhzad poetry by Dr. Khodabakhsh Asaddollahi (2009), love and hope in poetry of some Iranian contemporary poets by Dr. Ahmad Reza Keikha Farzaneh (2011). But there is no research about sadness and sorrow in poetry of Iranian contemporary poets.

Innovation of this research is that exploring in poetry of contemporary poets and examining content of grief and sorrow and all of its subsets indicate an eternal link of Persian poetry with history of poet and poetry and there are less poets that have not focused on sorrow and grief. It is notable that sorrow is inextricably linked with love in Persian poetry.

Understanding ups and downs of life of every poet is necessary, particularly modern poet that moments of his personal life are so clear in his poetry. Modern poet is an honest narrator of his own life and society in which he lives. Modern poetry is a mirror of spirits of poet and humans of its own age (Foruq Farrokhzad, 2000:10).

Sorrow and grief in contemporary poetry

Sorrow and grief are important aspects that exist in individual and social life of everybody. Heart-rending words and compounds, fat, heavy, joy and nature are features of sadness. And it is used with verbs as to fall, come, go, sit, have, split, clear, set, eat, draw and say". (Dehkhoda, below the term "sadness")

When we talk about poetry and poet, art roving and resentment of the poet must be remembered that:" if you explore around the world, you can't find a wise happy". (Siahpoosh, 1999:59)

In life of all of us, there are days that everything is black and there is no hope of success and loneliness and hopelessness dominate us. (Dadsetan, 1997:269)

Death of a dear one, losing job or being unable to continue a professional activity or divorce can cause sadness and grief. None of the psychologists knew sorrow and sadness as a harmful emotion; there is no such thing as a bad emotion. Happiness is not necessarily a good emotion and anger, fear and sorrow are not necessarily bad emotions. Emotions are useful, because they draw our attention and lead behavior to a required place regarding situations that a person faced. Thus fear, anger, grief are all good emotions. (Rio, 2001:366) they are essential for achieving spiritual and moral excellence.

Every great poet has happiness and grief together. Since Rumi says: "I was crying but became happy, I was dead but became alive". There is no border between cry and laugh. Since Hafiz "laughs in the middle of crying" and found "his sadness among happiness". (Mojabi, 2001:151). Finally it is reflection of sad mind of poet which is clear in poetry of poets from far past till now.*

If we evaluate themes dominated on Persian contemporary poetry, sadness writing in poetry of each decade is clear. As if linking human emotions with the universe is just possible through stating loneliness and grief. Shafi'ee Kadkani considered the poems with above content as poems with frustration themes and said: "one of themes dominated on this era (After the Constitutional Revolution) is the contest of hope and despair". (Shafi'ee Kadkani 2004:63)

The current paper has reviewed sadness and sorrow in poetry of some contemporary poets (Foruq Farrokhzad, Simin Behbahani, Sohrab Sepehri, Ahmad Shamloo) and examined reasons of approaching poets toward painful themes.

Foruq Farrokhzad

By reviewing Foruq Farrokhzad Poetry, we find out that sorrow and grief i Foruq poetry is mostly due to social and family reasons. Defeats and bitterness in her personal life have provided her sorrow and disappointment more than everything else. We smell despair and grief in Foruq poetry. Happiness finished in past and there is no hope for them to be repeated in future. Future is expecting blackness and falling:

Listen! / can you hear the blow of darkness?/ I lonely look at this happiness/ I'm addicted to my despair/Listen! / can you hear the blow of darkness? (Farrokhzad, 2000:307)

And all ways lead to cold sucker mouth of grave:*

Which mountain, which peak?/ don't all these winding ways/lead to that cold sucker mouth/ to that end point? (the same: 380)*

Writer of " A Guide for Contemporary Literature" knows Foruq as the most suffered poet and believes that all lyrics that she wrote for her son, her death, her family life and etc originated from and reflected her tortured and wounded soul.(Shamisa, 2004:263)*

First, main theme of life and poetry for her is love. However this love, that embraced all of her real and artistic life, had nothing but failure and frustration. Frustration in love developed despair, distrust, disbelief and incredulity towards everything in her. Foruq talks about pain, separation, loneliness, wandering and anxiety. As if her soul is tired and she is always waiting a hand to save her from tight, dark and sorrowful mire (Siahpoosh, 1997:108)

After separation, Foruq was forbidden to see her child and this doubled her loneliness and she is sad of this lonely world: "she shakes like a frail sapling/ my spirit from loneliness coldness/ is crawling in darkness of my heart/ of horror of lonely world" (Farrokhzad,2000: 210)

The other reason that Foruq approached toward grief and sorrow is that Foruq had different status and mood. She got mental crisis for several times in a month that made her flee from everybody and everything. In one of her isolations, she has written: "My heart is heavy.... Heavy....heavy...heavy Here I'm so alone. All of you had gone. My mother is always sad. To my father we just can say hello. Sometimes I still sit and cry. (the same:41)

In Foruq poetry, life, love, pain and suffer are interconnected and inseparable: in my cottage there is life/ with black line of love/ passer-by people/ the shooting heart/ the reversed candle (the same:304). And also she denied conflicting with pain and suffer and believed: for writing new poem, smelling bloom of sorrow is necessary: "you feel that is unfortunate/ if you conflict with your pain/ you smell that sorrowful bloom/ to write a new poem". In Foruq grief-oriented and adoring sorrow poetry, this is enough that she wishes she had all sorrowful features of autumn: "in front of me:/ bitter young face of winter/ behind me:/ chaos of sudden love of summer/ my breast: house of grief, sorrow and suspicious /" (the same:187-186)

From social view, when Foruq observes that there is no place for an open-minded woman in her society and says: I cried all day in the mirror/ spring of my window/ I have left it to green eerie of trees/ My body did not fit to cocoon of loneliness/ and smell of my paper crown/ polluted/ the space of that sunless territory/" her poetry not only smells despair and grief but also shows the height of disaster.

The most important feature of Foruq poetry is being feminism. She is a woman who her life got the color of her lyrics and her poetry found the color of her life, perhaps this is why his poetry is devoid of Naïve and she states in a very simple language what is going on with her (Siahpoosh, 1997:110). Foruq poetry is the special voice of women in Persian literature because prior to her, male history has been dominant to the culture of our community (Moradi Kouchi, 2000:201)

Foruq in lyrics "Captive" talked so much about night, sorrow, grief, bitterness, cage, bar, jail, prison, warder, Moment of neglect, desertion, escape, pain, disorientation, anxiety, bloody hear, confusing, staying away from mother and etc (the same:199)

"Rebirth" by Foruq consists of some painful outstanding lyrics. Some of them have specific aspects such as obsolete Friday and other narrations of pain of time, they include" tuned doll", "cold night's streets", "eternal evening", "ground verses" and "meeting at night" are some prominent examples of contemporary poetry (Langroudi, 1998:115). The character of Foruq in *rebirth* inclines toward deep and real pain and does not have good effects of "simple happiness excuses" (Siahpoosh, 1997:168). In most of Foruq poetry the sorrowful and sad space is so dominant that makes reader sad too: the god of dark grief slowly/ steps to my view temple/ writes on each wall / verses all black black (Farokhzad, 2000:306)

We should believe that they are horrible images of silent life. There is no freedom from rough roads of life. There is a prison of suffering and hatred. The poet tells us all of these with grief, pain and fear (Abedi, 2001:61)

Poetry of Foruq has a prominent and worthy place in contemporary Persian literature with all of its ups and downs and it is indication of silent generations that she spoke their minds (Usefi, 1990:508)

Simin Behbahani

Simin Behbahani is one of the poets owning a style and thought in Persian literature who is known as "Nima of lyrics" (Haq shenas, 1991:163). Simin poetry is" realistic from the beginning, she is interested in bitter, sad and even loathsome reality of society"(Hossein por Chafi, 2005:103) Simin the contemporary poet has shown her capability in lyrics and writing lyrics. In her poetry with publication of "resurrection", "a line of speed and fire" "Arjan Plain" notebooks in different climate from "chandelier" and "marble", in her poetry sadness and happiness of others are so clear and her feelings are clear in the middle of her poetry along with people's heart beats (Usefi, 1990,754) Simin lyrics are full of affection, they have mostly questioning and aggression expression, they speak about absurd man and her helpless world, she complains about aging, she sees strong values of human and environment as something

changed and humble, she talks about what happened in historical chaos on people in her country land (Dehbashi, 2004:65)

Simin knows freedom in love and steps in this dangerous way and explores it. She speaks of her heart so friendly. Simin believed that all of artists are influenced by their situations, time and space states and some of them indicate this influences that are influential in community (Behbahani, 1991:12)

A period in which its poetry is talked about suffering and sad life of Iranian woman. He describes painful world of women in "prostitute song", "a dancer woman", "in gold prison", "in sickness bed" and in many other lyrics.

Simin says: "patriarchy is an old tradition in my country. Look at women in Shah nameh. Wherever there is a word about women, it is narration full of pain; Tahmineh, Manijeh, Farngis and Katayun narrations, where she flees from shame when her face shines" (Dehbashi, 2004:197)

Simin knows grief and sorrow as something endless in herself and says: "whatever I look at past/ I can't see anything except suffer and pain/ when I look at future/ nothing is in front of me except darkness/" (Behbahani, 2003:72)

Simin know human sorrow as her own sorrow and she always reflects widely pain and sadness of others in her own poetry. (the same:472)

Simin complains about aging and says: "tic...toc, tic...toc / moment -oh- passes/ inevitable it is walking/ my age stays, stays! / a chance... oh god!/" (the same:625)

The other poetry of Simin with grief and sadness theme is "thought blister" which speaks of emptiness and meaninglessness is the fruit of routine: if I open a window for viewing/ Alas! I opened toward wall of my breast. She says in continuance: all nights and days the body is decaying/ I opened my view it toward the absurdity of repeat. (the same:454)

Simin states her grief of lack of humanity: "calm down, my child/ Agitated and restless and miss heart / crazy and confusing and opaque and wandering/ in mourning of my monotonous friends (the same:67)

And she also says: oh, I can't find a pure man/ to tell him my own story:/ where is a confidant, an intimate/ to tell him boring story/ (the same:72)

Sohrab Sepehri

A contemporary artist and poet from Kashan who is polite and isolated because of his family originality and nobility. He liked to live away from social controversies. He was drowned in himself and his spiritual state (Abedi, 1997:32).his first book called "death of color" was published in 1330 and his last poems were published in last part of his works collections called "eight books" in 1388 (Moradi Kuchi, 2001:200)

He worked with a deep wide talent, understanding and confident at light of effort and different types of plots and other social problems and patient till half of 1340s that his works "the sound of water leg", "passenger" and "green volume" were published and reached peak of New poetry (Langroudi, 1998:418) Despite of knowing him as a rich poet and without pain, he touched painful moments and poetic grief, a grief that makes internal of every artist fruitful. This grief is not an ordinary grief but it is a sign of higher world (Siahpoosh. 1999:59) One of the reasons that poets tend to write about grief and social and political conditions which are clear in Sohrab poetry, Sepehri lived in the most sensitive period of Iran history. Bitter realities of community and explosions of social life stimulate the "sleepless" poet. Therefore, poems of "life of dreams" on one hand were influenced by bitter social and political space and in the other hand reflect the situation of a poet who wants to separate from social space and goes inside of himself (Moradi Kuchi, 2001:26)

In his first poetry notebook "death of color", there are themes of grief and sadness with drawing heavy and black space:

Breath of humans/ is depressed all over/ it is a time which in this air faded corner/ every joy is dead (Sepehri, 2010:18)

Darkness comes/ plain calms down/ the colorful story of day/ goes away/ branches withered./ stones are depressed./ river complains/ owl sings/ grief mixed with sunset color/ cold story comes out of lips/ my heart is heavy in this sunset (the same:35)

Ashuri says: what dominant in the sitting of this book's poems and also the names of its poems is a romantic depression and sorrow; there is a vague sadness in youth doubtful years and it emerges like a complain in poetry of poets; however soul of poet enjoys this pain and the resentment causes to take refuge in his sadness and complain about it before it. Ashuri implies that even themes of some poems of "death of color" specially "dawn" and "light of night" are nothing but regret and sadness (Moradi Kuchi, 2001:23)

Sepehri links with nature from two points: one regarding his thoughts with spiritual colors, the other one is a hurt man of "Cement level of the Century" and "The Age of steel Ascension" and "geometric growth of cement, iron, stone" in cities and civilization devoid of love and spirituality (Usefi, 1990:559)

Sepehri states softness of his isolation and loneliness as: if you come to me/ come slowly, lest not crack / my loneliness porcelain. Sohrab resentment from environment can be understood when he says: there is no breach in this darkness/ connected wall and door/ if a shadow shakes on the ground/ it's a eerie image of ribbon/ human breath is depressed all over/ it is a time which in this air faded corner/ every joy is dead (the same:561)

All over the poetry of *Garden of Fellow Travelers*, an earthly beloved is addressed and the poet wants her to call hi, to come and fade away the darkness, fear and loneliness and fill the climate with affection with her voice:

At the beginning of his poetry, sadness emerged as a vague form but gradually the reason of grief became clear which is because of reaching world's secret or sadness resulted from spiritual loneliness or because of mankind away from simplicity and engaging in habits. This is why reader does not become sad and despair with hearing Sepehri poets, but a nostalgia feeling and harmonic sadness develop in him:" my heart is heavy... so heavy..../ and I think/ that this rhythmic sorrow will be heard/ forever" (Sepehri, 2010:311)

"call me/ your voice is good/ your voice is the sprout of that strange plant/ that grows at the end of intimacy of grief/" (Moradi Kuchi, 2001:221)

Poem "bitumen night" of Sepehri also indicates philosophical and social disappointment of the poet that he says" it is a long time that in this loneliness/ there is a color silence on lips/ a sound calls me from far away/ but my legs are in bitumen of night (Siahpoosh, 1999:105)

Sepehri is sad of passing time and says:"knock.....knock..../ moments are passing/ what passes never comes back/ it is a story that never/starts again"(Sepehri, 2010:51)

Sepehri is the poet of light, water, shine, hope and pure moments of life who can't go on in the dark world and finally releases himself from despair and pessimism and steps in light and commemorates human beings with all of his problems and bitterness (Moradi kuchi, 2001,164). "you heard my silence/ like a breeze I wake up from myself/ I will open the door/ and will blow in eternal night/" (the same:143)

Ahmad Shamloo

Shamloo reflected his individual and emotional thoughts in his writings and his poetry is history of hope and despair, loneliness, love and hatred, sorrow and happiness, pain and specially death and life. Shamloo believed that poetry in its nature is a cry from depth of loneliness.(Hariri, 1986:144)

All of his poetry subjects are influenced by two main aspects: ideology and affection. His affection: subjects such as love, hope and despair, complaining of inhumanity, criticizing duplicity dominated on society (Salajegeh, 2005:113)

Shamloo writes about his own works: "my works are complete autobiography. I believe in the fact that poetry is not concepts of life but it is the own life" and writes about the main theme of poetry: "from long time ago all my life has been summarized in apprehension and fear. Observing poverty and injustice in all

life was a nightmare which passed on me in awakening.” (Hariri, 1986:37). Shamloo poetry focused on sustainable human concerns regardless of time and place.

Human feeling toward his suffers resulted in experiencing sorrow in poetry of this period. In shamloo view, contemporary human pains are too much to state them: “Ales of my shoeless foot!/ too many pain but my silent lips/ cold and dark night, missing dawn/ winding road, and the only passer-by./” (Shamloo, 2001:104)

Sad tragic streaks in Shamloo poetry indicate domination of grief and sorrow. Deteriorating situation which is full of indifference and despair and happiness and sadness are the same for people:

“it came hopefully- went despair/ spring- oh yes! No one opens a door to it/ no one laughs in this ruins/ no one put a crown if flower on his head/ spring came, but no life is here/ in this sorrowful ruins/ spring came, but no joy is here/ no one lights a candle and opens a door for it!” (the same:88-89)

Shamloo feels sad among unfaithful world and fulfilling his promise and also his suffers because of fulfilling his promise (Salejegheh, 2005:555-556) and states this bitter sadness:

“look at the world/ in its paralysis ruined cloth/ aliens from itself/ and look at us/ awake/ mournful of my own sorrow/ angry and aggressive/ I protect my own bitter sorrow/ moody guardian of my own suffer/...” (Shamloo, 2001:814)

Oldness feeling makes the sad poet more depressed and calls him for writing about snowing of his eyebrow and hair:

No,/ this snow / does not stop snowing on my eyebrow and hair/ to see myself/ in the mirror (The same:665)

From Shamloo view, one of the reasons of sadness of contemporary human is “being there and not living in moment”. The origin of mankind’s pain is thought and anxiety about future that influence on all modern human actions. Yesterday suffer and tomorrow sorrow are destroyers of joy in life.

“a ruined home in which regret of death/ cries on life body/ the ruined house in which all things/ are Yesterday suffer and tomorrow sorrow

Attachment to past and fear of vague future has caused sadness and grief. Shamloo in poem “insistence” a collection of “garden of mirror” says: “I sit in silence/ I’m tired/ broken/ I’ve attached” (the same:355)

In most of Shamloo poetry is full of time passing and discontenting of current conditions with sad and regret feeling: “ales! The depressed lamp! Of you!/ we had passion and hope/ this dark cottage/ should be lighted with its existence/ nothing can be remembered except a memory/

Death is also a sad experience in Shamloo view. I saw death/ in a sad meeting, I powdered the death with my hand/ I live the death/ with a sad sing/sad sing/ a life so hard and long and so boring and grueling..../(Shamloo, 2001:534)

In Shamloo view, it is inevitable to stand sorrow and grief for reaching eternity.

“this is eternity/ that comes to your broken eyes/ to makes your name/ eternal credit of earth with Magic prescriptions on termination/ there is no way except this:/ with an eternal pain, bear it oh the small moment!/ yes, we must/ pass from the doubtful moment/ and step in eternal territory/” (the same:919-922)

Conclusion:

In a pervasive look to subject of sorrow and grief, we can conclude from collection of works of Foruq Farrokhzad, Simin Behbahani, Sohrab Sepehri and Ahmad Shamloo that besides of wide reflection of sadness in the poetry of above poets, there is reflection of sorrow in Foruq poetry which is more personal and have social and family reasons. Simin Behbahani poetry has more personal and social aspect and has been a partner in the grief of the people of her period. In Sepehri poetry, the reason of his sadness emerged in a vague form at the beginning of his poetry, but gradually the reason becomes clear which is an effort for reaching world secret. In shamloo poetry, it has more social aspect. Shamloo knows nature of human as the origin of pain since human being starts with the first pain. The most important reasons and

sorrows resulted from contemporary poets' views in common are: sadness, loneliness, imposed rule of society, Social harsh criticism, Autocratic, incompetent rulers, colonialism, class distance, inattention to women and regret and sorrow to the society and weeping for aging.

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