

A Comparative Study of Nostalgic Treatment (Parting Pain) in the Poems of Nazek Al-Malaike and Sohrab Sepehri

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Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

Nazek Al-Malaike (1923-2007) is among the contemporary poets in whose works the themes of romanticism such as loneliness, grief, despair, traveling to a fantasy world, and love can be seen. She is an emotional poet with breadth of imagination who under the influence of romanticism, at times through digressing toward the past and remembering memories and at others riding on the wings of fantasy steps into a world of which she is the creator, and expresses nostalgia. In fact, this imaginative world is a haven under whose shelter she achieves solace, whenever the world and its ado takes her to the end of her rope.

Similarly, Sohrab Sepehri (1928-1980) is another contemporary poet influenced by romanticism and some of its themes such as love, nature, fantasy, dream, escaping and traveling, grief, etc. are present in his poems. Remembering memories and digressing toward the past and the future have made nostalgia along with recollection of memories salient and conspicuous in his poems.

Commonalities in content and theme together with Nazek Al-Malaike's and Sohrab Sepehri's ways of looking at psychological issues environing them have made their poems, from various aspects, have similar perspectives on various issues. Romanticism is among the literary schools presenting viable solutions for realizing desirable sentimental, emotional matters. It seems that these two poets, directly or under the influence of this school, have embraced similar methods in dealing with emotional and sentimental matters. Through searching the themes utilized by Nazek Al-Malaike and Sohrab Sepehri, the present study aims to unravel their similar, or probably disparate, viewpoints, hidden in their layers of thinking, but manifested in their poetic imagery.

2. Research Questions

The present research aims to find the answers to the following questions:

1. What are the methods employed by the aforementioned poets to deal with parting pain?

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2. What are the shared and disparate themes of parting pain from these poet's viewpoints?

3. Research hypotheses

1. Both poets' overcoming of the emotional influence lies in their desirable, real pasts.
2. Paying attention to nature and metaphysical matters along with introversion constitutes the major intellectual characteristic of these two poets.

3.1. Research Background and Methodology

Several books and papers have been written about Nazek Al-Malaike and Sohrab Sepehri. We point out some of them here:

- 1-Sharifian (2007) published a paper titled "Examining the procedure of nostalgia in the poems of Sohrab Sepehri" in the fifth volume, eighth issue of winter, 2007 in Journal of Lyrical Literature Researches of University of Sistan and Baluchestan.
- 2- With regards to Nazek Al-Malaike, "alienation in contemporary Iraqi poetry in pioneering era" authored by Jafar Mohammad Razi and published by the Arab Writers Union in 1999 can be named; however, no independent study concerning the treatment of parting pain in the poems of these two poets has been undertaken. The present study, using a descriptive methodology and through analyzing the works of these poets, in accordance with the American school of comparative literature which deemphasizes language commonalities and the necessity of historical relations in comparative studies, comparatively investigates the ways of alleviating and soothing parting pain in the works of these poets.

4. Collation of Ideas and Research Findings

The main types of pain for which these poets try to find an answer are despair and grief, past memories, lamenting childhood, and thinking about death. Since Nazek Al-Malaike and Sohrab Sepehri are emotional and humane poets, the terms despair and grief are quite salient in their intellectual lexicon. Humans' reaction in the face of homesickness and loneliness is also of paramount importance. These poets, in the face of homesickness and loneliness have presented their own solutions. Remembering the bitter sweet memories of the past, which are unrepeatable, induces a kind of grief that envenoms the reader. Going back to childhood and remembering its memories together with the truth of death and the apprehension caused by it are among the nostalgic concerns of these two poets.

The findings of the study reveal that both Nazek Al-Malaike and Sohrab Sepehri, in order to escape from the mentioned nostalgias, have utilized similar solutions in their poems such as seizing and living in the moment, resorting to nature, accepting the fate, crawling in the shadows, and faith in and remembering God.

In Nazek Al-Malike's point of view, the treatment of nostalgic despair and grief lies in faith in God, dreaming, reappearance of the savior, and utopia. She mentions the silence within, adoring the night and the sun as the cures of homesickness and loneliness. In order to stop lamenting the childhood she propounds realism, dreaming and fantasy and to stop remembering past memories, she suggests cremating the diary and puts forward humor, fantasy, accepting the fate, and fantasy as ways for soothing the aging pain and thinking about death.

Sohrab Sepehri, in the face of despair and grief, suggests remembering God, being optimistic, changing one's viewpoint, seizing the moment and emancipating oneself from the material world. To cure homesickness, he prescribes paying attention to the nature, peace, calmness, and being buoyed by joys of life. For treating the remembrance of past memories, he is not seeking the "whys" of events, and considers submission to divine destiny as the treatment for thinking about death.

Collation of the thoughts of the two poets reveals that cures proposed by Sohrab are more psychological, mystical, and wise whereas Nazek Al-Malike cures are more imaginary, temporary, and at times accompanied by rage.

Keywords: Curing the parting pain, Nazek Al-Malike, Nostalgia, Sohrab Sepehri.

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