

On Allegory and its implications in the sonnets of Saeb Tabrizi

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Abstract

One of the features of Saeb's poetry (1086 H) is his use of compound similes - particularly making abundant use of allegory. Allegory is a gate to novice themes and this is the case that Saeb participated in the theme-seeking game commonly held in Iran and India at the Safavids era. The kind of endeavor to explore and integrate new themes in the Safavid's style of poetry increased the poets' inclination to the use of metaphorical and laconic contexts (spaces). Their great tendency to compact a world of themes in a single verse made the influence of metaphor, figurative speech and simile possible in their poems.

Using a wide range of rhetorical skills such as simile, metaphor, personification, irony, imagery, synesthesia, and other figures of speech, Saeb Tabrizi has created an extended network of images and complex fictional clusters which had been rarely used in the previous poetic styles and periods. Yet his poetry has always enjoyed specific use of allegory and allegorical imagery as compared with that of the others in a way that he is known as the poet of 'allegory' (ref. Anvari, 1369, vol. 1: 117). Allegorical similes have been frequently used in Saeb's poetry. A great number of these allegories are in balanced allegory format and others in the traditional format. Variation in allegory in the Divan of Saeb has brought up a wide range of varieties of skills of using it, therefore, Saeb's major approach in using allegory could be seen within the formats of semi-compact allegory and balanced allegory. In a general classification and based on what we have seen in the issues discussed by the Old Persian rhetoricians, allegory can be seen in three types. The first type would be the extended allegory i.e. allegory which can be seen abundantly in mystical Mathnavies. This type of allegory has not a remarkable place in Saeb's poetry since the very base of these allegories is rooted in fictional narratives as frequently seen in mystical Mathnavies such as Sanaee's Hadigheh, Mantiq al-tair Attar and Maulana's Mathnavi. Semi-compact allegory is the second type as far as length and the number of propositions in each category is concerned. Meaning density and distinctiveness are the two most dominant principles of this type of allegory and are often represented in a verse or two. The main feature of this type of allegory resides in the syntactic and rhetorical relationships of the propositions in both sides of the simile. The third type of allegory, compact allegory or what many may call balanced allegory is the most remarkable rhetorical and artistic product of Saeb Tabrizi.

Semi-compact allegories are those similes in which we can find a kind of syntactic relationship between the two half-verses while the poet disregards the syntactic independency of them. This kind of allegory would be represented in a wider context than that of a half-verse. Our criterion in this discussion, however, is the syntactic independency or dependency of verses. In many of Saeb's allegories, verses are not independent and a syntactic relationship between the first and the second half-verses would create samples of this kind of allegory.

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In this study specifically allegory and the way(s) of its application in the poems of Saeb Tabrizi was carefully examined. The following is a list of the results gained:

- 1- Allegory is one of the most remarkable features of eloquence in Saeb's poetry.
- 2- Two general structures can be found in Saeb's allegories: a) Semi-compact allegory, and b) compact allegory, i.e. balanced allegory.
- 3- Extended simile which is called allegory in literary criticism might not be found in Saeb's poetry since the very creative essence of this kind of simile is the fictional narratives. Since Saeb's poetry tends to single-verse units, allegory or extended simile would not be expected to form.
- 4- As far as the frequency of allegory with semi-compact and compact structure is concerned it should be said that Saeb has tended to construct compact allegory. In such cases there exists a stable logical relationship between two half-verses while no syntactic relation could be observed.
- 5- From the grammatical and rhetorical viewpoints, allegories are more frequently used in statements and compositional sentences respectively. Most parts of compositional sentences in the allegories of Saeb's sonnets relate to denial questioning.
- 6- The most eloquent samples of allegory in the poems of Saeb are the verses in which both 'claimant' and 'parable' are interrogative.
- 7- Rhyming in poetry directly relates to the structure of allegory, especially to that of compact allegory. Wherever rhyming takes imperative or negative imperative verbs, allegory is not likely to be formed but when linking verbs and action verbs are used in rhyming positions and rhetorically function as statements, allegory can be more easily created.
- 8- Wise sayings written in the claims are often general sayings. Axioms and certainties of life and social issues are the focal points for poets.
- 9- Repetitive themes can be seen in the allegories of Saeb and it shows that he initiated his poems with particular themes in mind and then tried to turn them into words. Hence, his poetry should be seen as poetry of struggle and structure not poetry of enthusiasm and essence.
- 10- Verifying images are the final product of allegory in Saeb's poetry. He makes use of these images in his rationalism and satisfying his audience.
- 11- Some of Saeb's similes have got their fame due to the fictional, mythological and legendary characters and elements and therefore have been called allusive allegory.

keywords: Allegorical simile 'Saeb Tabrizi 'Declarative Sentences 'Interogative Sentences ' Rethorical Sentences

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