

Reflections on the Evolution of the Debate: From Drakht-i Asurig¹ to Nima Poems

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Abstract

Debate is a poetry or prose in which two things or two people are opposite and discuss the issue with each other until finally one of them overcomes the other. In this genre, the purpose of the writer or poet from this mutuality is proofing a philosophical or moral conclusion or showing his or her art of poetry.

In this genre, the main character is human being, animals, other objects or abstract concepts. To compose debate usually the template of odes, sonnets and couplets are used.

The base of this kind of literary goes to the time of Plato and Aristotle and the history of it can be divided into before and after Islam. The reasons behind its evolutions and regressions can be studied over the historical periods.

Debate before Islam: This method was common in Iranian culture and literature.

It seems that the Iranians have adapted this genre which has the characteristics of oral literature from Mesopotamia in ancient periods. One example can be seen in Akkadian, Sumerian texts.

The oldest debate in Iranian culture is the one of Drakht-i Asurig² in Parthian Pahlavi language in which tree and goat arise to debate and controversy in order to count their advantages and conquered the other side. Finally, this struggle leads to the victory of goat against the tree.

Debate after Islam: In Islamic era, debate was more widespread among poets of Azerbaijan and Iraq. Although Hakim Ferdowsi for composing his unique stories has used different species such as dialogue, monologue, praying, brag, lamentation and the debate. But the Unsuri has used this way of expression, to allegory for expressing and proving his theory. Among available Conversations, the debate between "Raven and the Hawk" can be pointed. After the advent of Islam poets such as Ferdowsi, Unsury, Asadi Tusi, Nizami Ganjavi, Dehlavī, Sanai and Attar, Saadi, Rumi, Hafiz, Jami, etc. have paid attention to this genre.

After the time of Asadi, many debates of self-description have grown up. In this type of debate each side tries to show his merits to another. At the end of the debate none of the parties are able to defeat each other, so both sides go to the judge and referee ruled that both of them have benefits and peace is better for them.

Most of royal poets and writers have taken advantage of this way to entertain the King and Prince. That's why in many of these debates, the king or minister is the judge of debate which is written for him.

Also In contemporary literature many examples of debates are detectable as a means to promote education and moral ideas. Among them, Bahar and Parvin can be noted as able poets in this field.

1- meaning "The Assyrian Tree" or "The Babylonian Tree"

2- The Assyrian Tree

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Bahar's Specific initiatives in finding the examples of the debate, demonstrates his power, talent and ability in this way. Parvin's attention is directed to methods of Bahar- like other forms of her poetry.

His beautiful and informative debates from language of objects, birds and elements of nature, are so strong that most parts of them are used in her Masnavis.

Following the old pattern of debate continued by poets in modern poetry.

Mohammad Reza Shafiee Kadkani is one of those poets who has pictured inside and outside of the society of Iranian by debate genre.

As a founder of the new era in modern Persian poetry, Nima has paid attention to this method in poems such as the Morgh-e -Amen and Rang-parideh.

Debate has also considered in prose. A large part of our prose debates has been made with regard to social conditions. Obviously the social conditions of dialogue are directly linked with the political system. Saadi's conflict with the pretender represents the pinnacle of the intellectual system.

Among Persian debates which are written in prose, parts of the book Hamidi's Maghamat or debate of "SHatranj va Nard¹" by Sarrafe Khwarizmi, which are written in musical prose can be pointed.

The debate in "Anasur²" from Khand mir that was written in simple prose and easy is another example.

Debates in either poetry or prose including diverse subjects, among them the main issues are: philosophical debates, mystical debates, debates with religious topic, the debates with critical issues, the philosophical and ethical debates, and finally scientific debates.

But the debates also have different types of personalities and parties. There are usually two opposing elements and characters in debates. These characters must be typical, so they can be classified into the following types: Debate between persons, debate between animals and birds, debate between inanimate objects, debate between concepts and topics.

In general, debate is the manner that the world's great literary figures were not oblivious about it and each of them has done something about this format.

The reason is that in pattern of dialogue, words logic and perception of audiences grows up.

Keyword : Debate, Persian literature, Tree Svryk language, the poetry

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¹ Chess and Backgammon

² Elements

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