

## **Rereading Nosrat Rahmani's Poetry Based on the Style of Gothic Literature**

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### **Introduction**

Gothic and Gothicism were terms used in relation to architecture in the past centuries whose elements found their way into art and literature with the advent of Romanticism in the west. The usual framework of Gothic which belonged to the Middle Ages was made obsolete by the romantics and its characteristics find their way in modified forms into art and literature in general, and into the field of fiction and novel in particular. Writers of the time welcomed characteristics of Gothic and created new grounds for the redefinition, improvement and promotion of Gothic elements. This led to the expansion of its conceptual and semantic meanings, and to the development of more expanded definitions and characteristics for Gothic works. Hence, characteristics of Gothic literature found their way into other literary genres such as poetry, and eventually into contemporary Persian poetry.

### **Review of Literature**

Nosrat Rahmani is a contemporary Persian poet whose poetry can be reread from the perspective of Gothic literature. This is generally the

result of Rahmani's tendency toward daring expression of his ideas and showing his aversions and his pessimistic worldview, as well as his unusual and unprecedented attitude in writing poetry. This attitude has created similarities between the content and some dimensions of Rahmani's poetry and the themes, principles and characteristics of Gothic works.

### **Discussion**

One can find poems with narrative structures among Rahmani's works. These poems, while reflecting the characteristics of Rahmani's style, exhibit a narrative norm and can be categorized as narrative poetry. These poems which are written by the use of affordances and functions of the narrative, exhibit similar elements to Gothic literature since they narrate incidents that are concomitant with Gothic elements such as death, darkness, blood, terrifying incidents, strange places, mysterious atmosphere, nightmare, etc. In these poems, Rahmani generally narrates a bitter and shocking story from first person or third person point of view. These narratives are usually accompanied by descriptions, reports, establishing the setting and the atmosphere and also poetic imagery. Nevertheless, sometimes they go toward narrative poetry, or a poem with remarkable narrative structure. Most of these narratives have disturbing and terrifying signs more or less, and can signify the nightmarish world of Gothic novels. They not only show the aversion and the displeasure of the narrator, but also lead to the displeasure of the audience and the reader; to the point that one may think Rahmani has written them in order to create apprehension and fear, which are fundamental elements in Gothic art and literature, in his

audience. These narratives can be categorized into subtypes based on their narrative structures as well as the nature of incidents that are narrated and reported in them: “Gothic / incident narrative”, “Gothic / surreal narrative”, “Gothic narrative / description”, “Gothic narrative / description and establishing the atmosphere”, “Gothic setting and place”, “Gothic setting and objects”. These are the subtypes used for categorizing these narratives in this study. These narratives, much like fictional narratives, lead to astonishing and disgusting representations in the mind of the audience which can have undesirable mental effects on them.

In the category of “Gothic / incident narrative”, the core of the narrative, that is, the main incident which is narrated by the narrator, is astonishing and disgusting. In other words, the incident itself has the potential to be disgusting and shocking without relying on other elements of the narrative such as character, place, setting, etc. These types of narrative are concomitant with Rahmani’s general style. It is most likely that if another poet experimented with narrating these types of incidents in the genre of poetry and tried to write poems with similar contents, the result would have been curious and perhaps unacceptable.

“Gothic / surreal narrative” is applied to some of Rahmani’s poetic narratives which not only exhibit Gothic atmosphere and terrifying and mysterious atmosphere, but also are associated with surreal images and scenes. In these narratives, much like surreal narratives, the narrator’s mind distances itself from known domains; therefore, it is enabled to create atmospheres and incidents which are the result of the combination of reality and dream and are shocking and unexpected, too. It seems that Rahmani, who has always been interested

in making narratives with ample descriptions and creating fantastical, ambiguous and even disgusting atmospheres, has been successful in experimenting with the integration of the two worlds of reality and dream much like the surrealist artists; consequently, he has managed to create a combination of consciousness and the unconscious.

“Gothic narrative / description” designates those narratives which are replete with description. In these narratives, the interrelationship between description and narration creates peculiar atmospheres with dark and terrifying characteristics, whether concrete or abstract.

“Gothic narrative / description and creating atmosphere” is used for the narratives in which Rahmani has undertaken unconventional description by the use of powerful imaginative images combined with every-day realities and affairs as well as astonishing and unexpected incidents. By employing elements which usually incite terror and fear and sometimes disgust in the reader, these descriptions create an unfavorable feeling in the reader similar to the feeling and reaction created by Gothic works.

“Gothic atmosphere / place” refers to instances in which Rahmani, while giving descriptions, provides a description of a particular and familiar and at the same time, terrifying and disturbing place. In “Gothic description and objects”, Rahmani’s descriptions are not only based on a place, but also on concrete signs such as objects and particular tools which are unpleasant, too.

### **Conclusion**

Nosrat Rahmani is one of the poets whose poems show affinities to Gothicism in their narratives and poetic orientation. These similarities are traceable, on the one hand, in Rahmani's personal disposition, for example his recklessness, rebelliousness, death-mindedness, despair and innate disgust; and on the other hand, in his romantic sensibility and attitude; since there has always been a close relationship between the elements of Gothic and Romantic literature, especially Dark Romanticism.

**Keywords:** Nosrat Rahmani, Gothicism, narrative, description, atmosphere

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