

Comparison of Manifestation and Mysteries of Black and White in Moshiri's Poems with Some Religions

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Abstract: Color is an important element in Moshiri's poems that could uncover most of the mysteries by recognition of the characteristics, properties and effects in order to visualize the poet inner thoughts and feelings in artistic way. Moshiri emphasizes on color and symbolizes it in his works; since symbol is one of the outstanding types of imagery forms that has diverse and broad manifestation in the culture and civilization of human being. By application of color and symbol it can be found the close relationship between colors and mysteries of the phenomena in his poems. This paper tries to study black and white and their reflection and effects from psychological, symbolic and also aesthetic aspects to scrutinize on the symbolic meaning of black and white in these poems to familiarize the reader with the secrets of this poet.

Key words: symbol, color, black, white, Feriedun Moshiri

Introduction

Colors have significant effect on human mind and emotions and they denote symbolic meanings. Symbol is representation or image that has similarity with other image in a textual relationship and so it has dual relationship and also a symbol is one of the artistic expressions tools that have been gained attention by the great Persian poets. Symbol has been referred as inspiration of discoveries and progresses and also the symbols uncover the unconscious mysteries and shape our behaviors. "In Komar Osoami the Indian philosopher symbol is art of thinking in images" (Jafarzadeh, 2012).

Humans live in world of symbols and these symbols empower us to imagine about supernatural phenomena such as paradise and heaven. Color has been gained attention of the poets like Firdausi, Molavi, SohrabSepheri and Akhavan Sales and many books have been written on the color and many articles have been submitted on aesthetics of colors such as poems of Khojandi, stories of seven thrones of Nizami, function of black and white in Shahnameh but there is no paper on the place of color in the poems of Feriedun Moshiri.

Color has specific place in the Moshiri works and has offered them particular aspect. He could combine color in his works so that makes his poetry natural and intimate that attracts the reader. Simplicity and transparency of his speech is so that any social class could establish relationship with his poems.

Literary aesthetics

Human being considers the things beautiful in his mind that excites him and this excitement and beauty lead to many questions for human and he tries to evaluate beauty of a work to respond these questions.

"Although aesthetics is related to art concepts and it is a branch of philosophy but it should be considered as a combination of psychology and sociology philosophy" (Husseini, 2013).

In psychology and sociology philosophy the question of what is beauty is arisen? What things are considered beautiful and what things are introduced ugly? These questions require rational reasoning.

The root of aesthetics refers to Art for Art sake school. This movement cannot be considered as offspring of a particular period but late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century can be introduced as culmination of this school. The followers of this school tried to release art from chains except creation of beauties and for this reason, the aim of art is creation of beauty and it does not accept any color and shape” (Jafarzadeh,1998).

Aesthetics follows the scopes of colors by literary and new visions in four branches:

- 1- psychology
- 2- symbols
- 3- religion
- 4- the place of black and white

1-Psychology of colors

The existence is surrounded by colors and art employs this feature to offer tangible and compatible environment for living. Color has specific place in Persian literature and depicts the taste of the poet. Due to particular properties and mysteriousness of expression and perception color has engaged the mind of human being so that he considers its magical power.

Generally speaking, it can be said that color has influenced Moshiri emotions and feelings so that he has particular vision on each color in his mind.

“Colors are reflection of the emotions and they are as authentic as symbols and establish tangible relationship with life” (Brand Fulmar, 1997).

It can be referred to the subject that the colors are not only used for distinguishing the objects or decoration of flags but also, they have psychological and treatment effects. Colors are seen everywhere among every nations. The individual’s mental states are identified by colors. Most of the diseases are treated by colors. The effect of colors is natural and it is function of time and place and sometimes is rooted in the culture and religion of people. Symbols and symbolic colors are affected by cultural phenomena” (Ayatollahi, 2011). Color has significant effect in the poems of Moshiri so that the reader could percept this effect in his poems easily.

2-Color in the symbols realm

The direct effect of colors on our emotions has symbolic characteristics. Symbolism of color is different from one nation to other nation and from one person to other person and it is one of the oldest expression ways that discloses the concepts that cannot be expressed in other form. The symbols have been reminded during centuries in the mind of human being.

“Human has discovered the secrets of the colors by experimentations and has offered them symbolic meaning. These symbols are sometimes different and sometimes similar in cultures and civilizations dependent on climatic and geographic conditions” (AllamehFalsafi, 2012). For this reason the psychotherapists believe that symbol tries to uncover some concepts in acceptable form and without this element they could not disclose themselves. Some scholars particularly Jung consider symbols as only way to express personal ideas and they believe that by this way it can be clarified a complex emotional reality. Here we offer some examples of viewpoints on black and white in symbolic realm:

Black and white in Chevalier and Allen Gerbran opinion

“Black is considered as a cold, negative color that is opposite of all colors and related to darkness and primary undistinguished world” (Chevalier, 2003).

“Black is color of lamenting not as much as white. White has something eternal and spiritual in it and it is sign of absenteeism a temporary absenteeism. White is color of lamenting for the kings and gods that they will rebirth but lamenting with black is hopeless. Black is color of sentence and futility of the world” (Chevalier, 2003).

Black and white in Molana opinion

“The origin and advent of colors in Molana works refers to the period that he calls it colorlessness. In some couplets the root of the colors is day. Colorlessness can be white or black” (Tajeddini, 2009). In Molana poems black is color of hypocrisy, doubt, proud and sin.

It is color of doubt, hypocrisy and ingratitude
Its darkness remains forever

As Pharaoh remains its fame forever (Tajeddini, 2009).

Also, white is symbol of purity, happiness and blessing in his poems.

Colorlessness is the foundation of all colors

Peace is principle of the wars (Tajeddini, 2009).

The white garment of Sufism depicts the person is free from envious and revenge” (Tajeddini, 2009).

3-Black and white in religions

Religion is a set of beliefs that offers description of existence and the place of human in it that advises specific style of life to its followers and substantiates it in symbolic affairs. Color symbols have been stipulated in the religions in different forms and generally, colors have specific concepts and meanings in religions:

Islam

“Islam is the last divine religion that its precedence dates back 1400 years ago. Islam was established in 610 BC by commission of Mohammad (peace be upon him) and covered broad scopes of cultural and racial groups” (Kamijani, 2009).

“Symbolism of black in Islam involves different scopes. The black animals are considered evil. Black is color of evil and it also has political meaning. It is color of lamenting in Islam.

Also, white is color of light and luminosity and sign of happiness. White was sign of advocates of Omayyad and protests and the religion of rebels is called white religion” (Chevalier, 2003).

“In Islamic Sufism black is color of Satan and misery and it is in lower rank but some considers black as superior color. It means that black symbolizes passing from materiality and for this reason it is exalted color.

Symbolism of black is rich and it is color of night and pupil of the eye and color of the people who preserve the secrets of others and never disclose secrets” (KashefiSabzevari, 1971).

White

VehezKashefi writes: “the prophet (peace be upon him) said: wear white clothes since they are clean and offer luminosity as day” (ibid: 155).

Quran has miracles on white clothes and describes Moses with white and luminous miracle (Gesas: 32). Also, it is referred to whitening of Job eyes because of crying (Yusuf: 84). And sometimes describes lightness of day in contrary to darkness of night and introduces whiteness of the face as symbol of salvation (Al-Imran: 106).

Christianity

Christianity is one of the great religions with precedence of 2000 years and it is religion of cultural and social shifts.

Black

In Christianity black is symbol of darkness prince, hell, death, pain, lamenting, inferiority, darkness, disappointment, destruction, evil affairs and color is used in funeral” (Cooper, 2000).

“In the churches the ceremony of dead is held by black color” (Vardi, 2007).

White

“White is symbol of pure soul, happiness, virgin, innocence, holy life, light and honesty. People wear white clothes in all religious rituals. It is symbol of holy relationship, Christmas, life and death. It is like Feriya (the beloved) the goddess of death and white flag is symbol of give up and end of war and establishing peace and mutual understanding” (Cooper, 2000).

4-Black and white in the poems of Feriedun Moshiri

Black and white has significant manifestation in the poems of Feriedun Moshiri. For this reason before examining the status of black and white in the poems of Feriedun Moshiri these colors are investigated and then we offer examples:

Black

Black is symbol of night, darkness, sorrow, anxiety and agony and death. It is color of evils and Satan, coverage, confidentiality, crime and robbery. The compounds with black denote the negative effect of black. According to mystical terms: Black Death is bearing the people harassment and mortality” (Kashani, 1997).

“Black is color of night and sign of confidentiality and a wayfarer who wears black garment should hide the secrets of his quest” (KashefiSabzevari, 1969).

“Black is a color that denies itself. Black means rejection and white is its opposite in the meaning of acceptance. White looks like a blank sheet that a story can be written on it but black is the color of end that depicts denial of soul, give up and dispensing”(Lutcher,2010:93).

Moshiri writes:

O, snow, in your white sheet

I should write

A poem on the warmth of fire instead of word” (Moshiri, 2012)

Also, this color represents chaos, secret, death, unconsciousness, evil, melancholy and humiliation” (Ismailpoor, 1998).

In psychologists’ opinion, black causes to feeling of proud and spiritual indignation. Black is color of sorrow and used in lamenting that preserves sorrow in human mind” (Vardi, 2007).

Black in Moshiri poems is symbol of lamenting that represents Iranian culture that the Iranians wear black in lamenting.

He has worn black costume for lamenting on the old love

His cold look is without caress and light

His cold look is blind

Of dust of proud

Thousands deserts are far from familiar city (Moshiri, 2012).

“Black has unfamiliar and mysterious feeling that it is considered as sign of darkness and death” (Husseini, 2013).

According to the poems of Moshiri, black depicts human bewilderment that is trapped in darkness and could not move from darkness:

These bewilderment black lines

Are my heart, my soul and my body

Of the love end there remains only

The essence of my powerless body

My sigh is ineffective

Why I blacken a sheet

Be candle of my death table

Look at decline of my body

Stop blackening

Though hecries that it is not sufficient (Moshiri, 2012)

In Moshiri poems black represents silence, darkness, misery, dust, and lamenting, blackness and dark nights.

Usually, night is dark and black is used for denoting darkness, pain and sorrow, longevity and wandering. Moshiri refers to night as symbol of agony and sorrow and relates darkness with lamenting. In mourning the people put on black customs.

The sorrowful nights

The nights that the group of innocents

Fall on the ground like leaves

The bitter nights of patience

The heavy and dark nights of lamenting (Moshiri, 2012)

Moshiri suggests black as symbol of misery and aimlessness. “Naturally, if the poet was man of quarrel and dispute never sought the solutions of human misery in crying and by imagery of dark aspects of misery composed tragic poems. In the tragic stories there is no dark end and everything leads to truth (Dehbashi, 1999).

All over the night
In the far borders
Among the jungle of fire
In the spring of blood
Under the wing of monster of death
I have cried on the dark fate of the mankind until morning

Black is symbol of dark night, sorrow and dread. For eliminating darkness Moshiri believes that it is necessary to turn on a candle to recognize blackness as color for concealing of secret behind the clouds of dread and darkness. In other poem he writes on the darkness of night and eliminating of darkness:

In the sky two charming eyes
Are witnesses of wakefulness like the eye of Venus?
Of its eyes that my night is dark
Of its eternal luminosity that day is light (Dehbashi, 1999).

Fereidun Moshiri describes destruction of the garden of oysters by black. Here blackness is symbol of destruction and ruined places.

There was no longer oyster, a gem hit the stone
My paradise converted into black and darkness
There is no flower, green land, nightingale and pleasure
The trees are homeless people of war (Dehbashi, 1999).

Moshiri introduces black as symbol of misery and points to the situations of the cotton fields' workers that work in unbearable hot conditions. He visualizes their misery that shows that they have no hope.

The dark days of the people on the earth
When their shoulders under the whips of the sun
Their cheeks under the slap of the tyrants
And their eyes due to hidden cries
Were bloody in the darkest season of the year
They not see a hole in the horizon
In that green hell

Not flower but picked Black Death (Dehbashi, 1999).

It should be pointed that in ups and downs of life the man encounters with difficulties, sorrow and pain and the necessity of passing of darkness and pain is being hopeful. Moshiri seeks a hole to leave darkness that gives glad tidings by eliminating of the sorrow and pain.

From far the sun shined
It was early morning
The sky was luminous by sun rays
It was sea of gold and silver
The black sorrow was passing (Dehbashi, 1999).

Also, SohrabSepheri writes:

There is no color to say me
Be patient, the morning is coming
Every moment I try to shout
O, how this night is dark (Sephrei, 2010)

Moshiri writes on the sorrowfulness of darkness:

Like a mountain the night was firm
There was a pile of sorrow and darkness
We were waiting for coming of morning (Moshiri, 2012)

In Moshiri opinion, black is symbol of disappointment and sorrow and it denotes being bored and sorrowful. "The oscillation between hope and disappointment is significant and depicts that the poet has no particular ideology and he imagines himself as a boat on the waves that happiness and sorrow is accompanied each other so he writes his poems in realistic way" (Dehbashi, 1999).

In the following poem, the poet refers to divorce the phenomenon between white and black and expresses his ideas and then he employs black for explaining personality. The sheet that is blackened or filled by incorrect words is ashamed" (Shafaei, 2001).

My sigh has no effect
Why I blacken sheet of paper
Become the candle in the my death bed

Look at the dying of my body
Why I blacken the sheet
Although it cries do not stop
The white sheet of my notebook:
There is no black as much as you (Moshiri, 2012)

White

In analysis of white it can be said that it is synonym of colorlessness and innocence and catharsis. White is symbol of peace and liberty and for this reason, the color of flag is white.

“White is positive and symbol of luminosity, holiness and innocence and it is symbol of death, dread and lamenting and supernatural elements in its negative aspect” (Ismailpoor, 1993)

“In psychology, white is symbol of purity, innocence and it brings more spaces and it represent coldness, cleanliness and peace” (Poorfakhariyan, 2011).

“White is symbol of light in creation myth and it is opposite of darkness as symbol of oppression, sorrow, dread and death. White and black against each other symbolizes rightness of Ormuzd and wrongness of evil and when white combines with lightness it offers spirituality so white has important place” (Husseini, 2012).

In Moshiri poems, white is represented with white morning, white garment, white cloud, white leaf, and white face and also in the meaning of cleanliness, hope and happiness. It is symbol of winter and beginning of hope.

“White is color of purity, lightness, honesty, guidance, happiness, liberty, justice and splendor. The ancient Arabs used different compounds of white for expressing their ideas that related to light. It can be referred to silver and sward, dry land, death and day.

Moshiri considers white as symbol of cleanliness and introduces it as a spiritual value.

The dews are like diamonds
The tulips are like ruby
Two birds as white as ivory
Have gone to the heaven
There is no sound except the whisper of the river
Everywhere is silent
In the blessing morning
They look at the spring (Moshiri, 2012)

In the morning
The city was filled with darkness of the sinners
Suddenly, came out like a bride
Among the feathers of the white garment (Moshiri, 2012)

In the following poem, the white cloud is symbol of purity and honesty and it is like figures that are interpreted differently in the sky and take human to climax of imagery and all natural elements used in this poem are like energetic essence poured in the blur cup (sky).

The smell of rain, plant and soil
The washed branches with rain
The blue sky and white cloud
The green leaves of willow
The smell of narcissus and the dance of wind
The songs of the happy swallows (Moshiri, 2012)

In the following poem the poet refers to the whiteness of cloud.

What is in the playing of that white cloud?
On the broad and calm sky
That moves you in depth of imagery (Moshiri, 2012)

Moshiri emphasizes that after darkness and disappointment the white morning comes and brings the tidings of hope. He uses whiteness as the symbol of lightness, cleanliness and hope.

I went and said: o, charming hope
We find the treasure after suffering those pains
I went and said: the dark night passed
I went and said: the white morning came (Moshiri, 2012)

White is symbol of happiness in Moshiri poems.
It is concordant of my silence

Behind the curtains of forgetting
Came out whiteness (Moshiri, 2012)

Conclusion

Color and symbol are products of human unconscious and they have accompanied mankind from early periods. In most of the schools, color and symbol are elements of idealism and perfection. Since color symbolic contexts depend on the geographical, social, religious, cultural and spiritual and mental factors so Fereidun Moshiri has offered color symbolism for expressing of his ideas. Thus it can be said that:

1. Since symbolism is one of the ways of de-familiarization Moshiri has employed the colors symbolism for identification and de-familiarization.
2. Due to influence of personal and social events on Moshiri emotions he encounters with hope in his heart and uses light colors and then refer to the demons of failure and disappointment and uses dark colors in the poems.
3. In his poems black is more represented than white as symbol of hope, lightness and honesty due to events of his life.
4. Black is symbol of sorrow, pain and lamenting and white is symbol of cleanliness.
5. The ideology of Moshiri was effective in application and expansion of the concepts and selection of the colors.
6. Colors have own representations in religions. Black in Islam is color of lamenting and white is symbol of purity and used in happy rituals and it is symbol of peace.

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