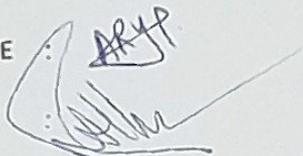
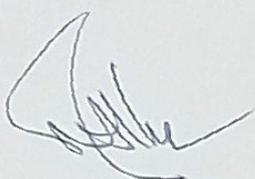


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TITLE OF THE THESIS : A CRITICAL STUDY OF NIMA YUSHU AND THE SOCIO- POLITICAL
FACTORS INFLUENCING HIS POETRY
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Introduction

While studying the MA course , I found the life and works of the various literary personalities interesting. On further studies and comparison of these people , I was drawn to the fact that Nima Yushij had a different style of poetry , which was inspired from the various factors including his childhood, the surroundings he lived in, and later the social and cultural factors in Iran. Particularly the style of his poetry had revolutionarized the Persian poetry and did not follow the strict norms.

This made me study further the social , cultural and the political factors that were influencing the lives of the people during that period. It was for the first time that Iranian lives and culture had being exposed to the western influences, and for many this was not acceptable. The end of Qajar period and the beginning of the Pahlavi dynasty marked a very crucial period in the Iranian history. At the same time there were many restriction on freedom of expression and perhaps this was one of the factors that let to the literary personalities express their concern and the prevailing situation in the form of poetry. It was the best way of expressing their own views as well as the general view. Also an expression of hope for the better times to come. Nima indeed expressed all that in his poetry and this made his poetry free from all the restrictions that were formerly strictly followed in Persian poetry. He used the elements of nature and symbolism for the first time in the Persian poetry. Truly it was a new style of poetry which was named after him as Nimaee or the modern Persian poetry and so he is rightly considered to be the Father of Modern Persian Poetry.

On consulting my respected guide Professor , I concluded that the Nima`s poetry provided a ripe opportunity to explore not only the Nima`s poetry but also the social and the cultural factors that influenced his poetry and from which he was inspired. Nima was a gifted poet .

I have attempted to evaluate the various social , cultural factors prevailing during the later Qajar and early Pahlavi period and their influences on art and literature, the life of Nima and its various stages, analysis of his poetry and his contributions to the field in detail , the

opinion of various other literary personalities on Nima as a person and his work , approach and vision to the Iranian life style and society.

I feel even though Nima has a unique place in Persian Poetry , and has conquered the heart of the Iranian people through his poetry, however much more needs to be said and written about Nima.

I hope this study will ignite more and more interest in Modern Persian Poetry.

The subject matter of this research spans across five chapters excluding introduction and conclusion. At the end of dissertation , bibliography and necessary appendices are included. The description of the contents is as follows:

Chapter 1 - Social , cultural, political and economic condition of Iran during the Qajar and early Pahlavi era

Chapter 2 - The life and works of Nima Yushij

Chapter 3 - Nima Yushij - The father of Modern Persian Poetry

Chapter 4 - Contemporaries of Nima Yushij and their views about Nima`s poetry.

Chapter 5 - Socio-political factors influencing the poetry of Nima .

Conclusion

Bibliography

Chapter 1

Social, cultural, political and economic condition of Iran during the Qajar and early Pahlavi era

The Qajar dynasty ruled Iran from 1789 to 1925. It was a royal of Turkic origin. It was followed by Pahlavi era. Reza Khan over threw the last Qajar ruler and established the Pahlavi era. Poetry in Qajar era and early Pahlavi era was an important aspect of the Persian poetry and was used to describe the various social and political events and circumstances during this period. So strong is the Persian inclination to versifying everyday expressions that one can find poetry almost in all the classical works.

The chapter deals the development and transformation of poetry in the Qajar era and the links between the art and politics throughout the period and its consequences.

The emphasis is made on

Politics in support of arts

Arts in contrast of politics.

Emphasis is made on the poetry as there was greater advancement of poetry during this era.

Qajar era was a significant era in the history of Iran. When Agha Mohammad Khan Qajar defeated numerous rivals and brought the whole of Iran under his rule, established the Qajar dynasty. By 1794 he eliminated all his rivals including Lotf Ali Khan , the last of Zand dynasty and had re asserted the Iranian sovereignty over the former Iranian territories in Georgia and the Caucasus. Agha Mohammad established his capital at Tehran. At that time Iran was

in a poor economic condition and lacked the required resources and infrastructure. The people were not happy.

It was during the Qajar dynasty that lot of efforts were made by the various Qajjar rulers to improve the socio economic and the political atmosphere prevailing in the country.

During Fath Ali Shah 1797 to 1834 Iran went to war against Russia to prevent the Russian expansion into Iran and lost the territories of Azerbaijan and Armenia which went to Russia.

During the period 1848 to 1896 western science and technology and education were introduced in Iran.

Amir Kabir built the Dar ol Foonoon the first modern university in Iran.

The constitutional revolution took place in 1896.

Later many of the social and political movements had their rotor in the Qajar period.

In 1925 Reza Khan deposed the last Qajar ruler Ahmad Shah and ruled as Reza Shah Pahlavi from 1925 to 1941.

Thus 1925 marked the end of the Qajar dynasty in Iran and a new political era.

It was at this period that the social and political and economic condition of the country was distributed and in a turmoil.

Chapter 2

The life and works of Nima Yushij

Nimā Yushij (11 November 1897 - 4 January 1960), also called Nimā , born Alī Esfandiāri , was a contemporary Persian Poet. He is famous for his style of poetry which he popularized, called she'r-e now "new poetry", also known as she'r-e nimaa'i ("Nima poetry") in his honour after his death. He is considered as the father of the modern Persian poetry.

Nima's early education took place in a maktab. A truant student, the mullah had to seek him out in the streets, drag him to school, and punished him. At the age of twelve, Nima was taken to Tehran and registered at the St. Louis School. The atmosphere at the Roman Catholic school did not change Nima's ways, but the instruction of a thoughtful teacher did. Nizam Vafa, a major poet himself, took the budding poet under his wing and nurtured his poetic talent.

Nima observed the nature and the animals and tried to write his poetry in their language. He used symbols and personification and tried to reveal the socio political situation of his days through his poetry.

His works were instrumental in bringing the realities of life and the situation in Iran during those days and in fact became more popular during the later part of his life and after his death. Nima died of pneumonia in Tehran at the age of 63.

Many of the Nima's early poems were not published as on those days the press was controlled by the authorities , for this reason until 1930s many of his poems did not reach the public. After the fall of Reza shah , Nima became a member of the editorial board of the "Music" magazine and published many of his poems in that magazine. Only on two occasions he published his works at his own expense: "The Pale Story" and "The Soldier's Family". Some of his selected poems were "Afsaneh"-(Myth), "Ay Shab"- (O Night), "Mahbass"- (Prison).

Chapter 3

Nima Yushij – as a “Father of modern Persian Poetry”

Under the rule (1925-41) of Reza Shah Pahlavi, the freedom of expression previously won was cut short, although the modernizing policies of the regime were indirectly helpful in creating the conditions for the emergence of a new Persian literature. Nima Yushij was the first to propose a radical renewal of Persian poetry, not only of its contents but also of its prosody and imagery, but he found the opposing forces of tradition to be very strong. His earliest poems, influenced by French Romanticism and Symbolism, appeared in the 1920s. But it was not until the 1940s that his ideas were adopted by a young generation of poets who went on to create a “new poetry” (shi'r-i now) in Iran.

Nima began to replace the familiar devices that he felt were impeding the free flow of ideas with innovative, even though less familiar devices that enhanced a free flow of concepts. “Ay Shab” (O Night) and “Afsaneh” (Myth) belong to this transitional period in the poet's life.

Nima enhanced his images with personifications that were very different from the “frozen” imagery of the moon, the rose garden, and the tavern. His unconventional poetic diction took poetry out of the rituals of the court and placed it squarely among the masses. The natural speech of the masses necessarily added local color and flavor to his compositions. Lastly, and by far Nima's most dramatic element was the application of symbolism. His use of symbols was different from the masters in that he based the structural integrity of his creations on the steady development of the symbols incorporated.

Chapter 4

Contemporaries of Nima Yushij and their views about Nima's poetry

In this chapter the views of other literary personalities about Nima and his poetry some of which have been in the form of letters written to Nima and some include literary criticism and some other cover the social aspects prevailing at that time.

Chapter 5

Socio- Political factors influencing the poetry of Nima Yushij

In the early decades of the 19th century, contacts between Iran and Europe rapidly increased, while two wars with Russia (1804–13 and 1826–28) made apparent Iran's military weakness. Among enlightened members of the Qājār elite the necessity of reforms was deeply felt. This led to the first attempts at a modernization of Iranian society. These efforts were aimed primarily at strengthening the army through better training and equipment and through the assistance of foreign advisers. In general, these reforms sought to implement technical improvements.

Measures were also taken that concerned the areas of education and culture. One of them was the reintroduction and increasingly widespread use of the printing press in Iran, which had been without a press since the 17th century. In order to improve the efficiency of government and the spread of information, an attempt was made to simplify the written language as it was used by officials and historians. Young men were sent abroad to study at European universities. They came home not only with new scientific and technical skills but also with a knowledge of Western languages and literatures. However the condition of the people did not improve and there were lots of pain and suffering.

Nima went to the St. Louis school in Tehran and learnt French over there. This enabled him to read the war news in the French news paper. This greatly affected his thoughts which he expressed in his poetry. He got the depth of the suffering of the people and the basic theme in his poetry was the pain and the suffering of the people of his time. This is exactly what Nima himself said about his poetry. He was criticized by some but that did not deter him and he continued with his poetry. This continued into the Pahlavi era and his poetry got even more popular.

Conclusion

The summary of the research findings will be presented with a conclusive note .

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