



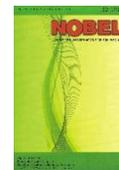
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LOVE OF NATURE AND WOMEN IN JOHN MASEFIELD'S "BEAUTY" AND GORAN'S "WOMEN AND BEAUTY": A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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This research is a comparative study entitled Love of Nature and Women in John Masefield's "Beauty" and Goran's "Women and Beauty." Textual and analytical approaches are used to analyze the poems to highlight the differences and similarities between the two poems. The analysis compares and contrasts both poems by each topic of discussion, including the theme and the rhyme pattern. This paper finds that although both Masefield and Goran come from different cultures and periods, the earlier from the romantic era while the latter is a modern poet, their poems agree in expressing the beauty of nature. However, the poems then state that the beauty of nature is nothing compared to the beauty of their beloved ones. The analysis also explores the different portrayals of nature that the poets depict and the rhyme pattern they prefer. This study then shows that the same issue can always come from works from a very different time and culture.

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INTRODUCTION

This article aims to portray the love of nature and women in two poems coming from different times and places. John Masefield's "Beauty" was firstly published in 1903 in a collection of poems: *Ballads*. Meanwhile, Goran's "Women and Beauty" was written in the Kurdish language in 1950 in the Kurdistan region, yet owing to the existing influence of the English writers in general and the special influence of Masefield (Awareness, 2021).

This study is unlike the existing studies since no scholar in Kurdistan or outside Kurdistan, either in Kurdish or other languages, touched upon this comparative study. Although Goran has been compared to some English poets like Wordsworth (Karim, 2021), Lovelace, Byshe Shelley, and Wilde (Murad, 2019), John Masefield and his influence have never been mentioned in any studies yet. It is an initiation in which the researchers shed light on the role of Masefield as a famous poet whose influence is reflected in Goran's poem "Women and Beauty." A thematic similarity is touched upon in this study. The difference is not quite substantial that the researchers did not take it into deep consideration. The two poems will be compared thematically, which is allowed according to the French school of comparative literature, in which one influences the other. In this case, Goran Abdullah is influenced by John Masefield, so conducting such a comparative study is possible.

Goran's role as a Kurdish romantic poet has been touched upon by some scholars (Ahmed, 2008; Mahmud, 2007; Muhiadeen, 1997; Saed, 2003). Moreover, the influence of Oscar Wilde and some romantic poets such as Shelley has been talked about by some Kurdish researchers (Karim, 2021; Murad, 2019). Still, the influence of John Masefield on Goran in general and more particularly on him in writing "Women and Beauty" has not been tackled so far. So, this study will be a source for world scholars who will research into comparative study and Kurdish literature as well.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

English Romantic Poetry

Romanticism is an artistic, literary, and intellectual movement that originated in Europe toward the eighteenth century; it was at its top from 1800 to 1850. The meaning of romanticism changed through time. "Romantic" meant visionary or imagination in the seventeenth century because of the birth of a new genre, "novel," which was mentioned as texts of imagination written

in a romantic language. In the eighteenth century, by the age of enlightenment, romanticism eclipsed. In the nineteenth century, romantic meant the expression of personal feeling or desire, emotions, and feelings, which were the main idea of romanticism.

Romanticism started in England in the early fourteenth century. The first generation of English romanticism was William Blake, William Wordsworth, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. However, it was Wordsworth and Coleridge's *Lyrical Ballads* that became the birth signal of romanticism. In *Lyrical Ballads*, Wordsworth defines poetry as "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin in emotion recollected in tranquility: the emotion is contemplated till, by a species of reaction, the tranquility gradually disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced and does itself actually exist in the mind" (Weber, 2020).

One of the characteristics of English romantic poetry is imagination. John Keats said, "I am certain of nothing but of the holiness of the heart's affections and the truth of imagination" (Rutherford, 2013). So imagination is really powerful in poetry, especially in romantic poetry, because it uses strong words to show the poet's power. Another important characteristic of English poetry is love for nature (Weber, 2020). Nature inspires poets; there is a union between nature and man because nature gives joy and pleasure. Another important feature is the sublime in romantic poetry. In literature, sublime is the use of language and description. Another feature is the expression of personal feelings for a woman, or the poet's beloved or the poet describing the beauty of his beloved, or it is an expression of power and passion.

Kurdistan in Twentieth Century

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Ottoman Empire became weak in Kurdistan. At that time, the family of Sheikh of Barzinja was famous. The Ottomans always tried to be close to them, and they invited them to Mosul. Unfortunately, Sheikh Said, father of Sheikh Mahmud, passed away because of an accident. From that time, Sheikh Mahmud became the leader of the Kurdish people. He was in all government meetings from the fall of the Ottoman empire to control the English people. In Kurdistan, he was the founder of the movement of people liberation. Sheikh Mahmud fought for Kurdistan's freedom all the time. He became the symbol of arm potent and holy amongst the Kurdish people, especially by the poets and intellectuals of the time, because he symbolized hope (Saed, 2003, p. 140). Hartshorne (1980, p.199) states, "I was reading some of the works of Shelley and Byron translated into the Turkish language. But after the downfall of the

Ottoman Empire and after I had some mastery over the English language, I was able to read their works directly” (qtd. in Karim, 2021, p. 51).

The researchers chose the two poems by the two poets is due to the similarities the two poems share despite the cultural differences. The influence of the English writers such as Oscar Wilde, Percy Bysshe Shelly, Robert Herrick, and some more has been discussed by some Kurdish or English scholars. Still, John Masefield’s influence on Goran has not been talked about yet. Masefield’s “Beauty” and Goran’s “Women and Beauty” seemed like two similar poems written in different languages; the former was in English while the latter was Kurdish. Both poems also share the same structure and the subjects they talk.

Regarding the power of the Kurdish language, one can say that it was not a strong language because the Kurds were divided and sent to four countries, Turkey, Syria, Iran, and Iraq. The Kurdish language was spoken by people, but it was not the language of education. None of those countries were allowed to teach the Kurdish language or teach Kurdish in the areas where their population was Kurdish. Furthermore, there were some movements in fighting against the government as the Kurds were asking for freedom. The Kurdish writers during this time endeavored to use their native language in their writings.

Kurdish nationalists soon realized the fear of occupation of their land by Ottomans and Qajar King. So, for the success of their case, they realized that outside help was needed to internationalize it. They were not successful in their effort to gain the support of the European forces except for some support from Russia. The purpose of this was to keep the Kurds away from agreements with the Turks or with Christians. The period of Kurdish Romantic poetry is different from the Victorian one; the romantic poetry of the Kurdish people started in the late nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century. The pioneer of this period is Goran Abdullah.

DISCUSSION OF THE MAIN THEMES

About the Poets

John Edward Masefield, a 20th-century poet and writer, was born on June 1, 1878, in Ledbury, Herefordshire, England, and died on May 12, 1967, in Abingdon, Berkshire. When he was six years old, his mother died. He lived with his father and his aunt. Later his father died because of a mental breakdown. He has been educated at King’s School in Warwick. He was the poet laureate

of the United Kingdom from 1930 until his death. He wrote many kinds of poems, and the one we studied was “Beauty.”

John Masefield’s poem “Beauty” is quite possibly the most romantic poem that can blend a universe of feelings. Mainly, the poem revolves around two types of beauty. The first one is the beauty of nature, and the second one is the beauty of women. He has used many different literary devices, for example, simile, personification, metaphors, and onomatopoeia. The poem contains eight lines. In the first six lines, the poet speaks about the difference between nature around him and the world. Masefield seems best when it comes to acquiring pictures from nature. However, “Beauty,” being one of his odd, has extraordinary importance. At the point when it comes to using pictures in the sonnets, Masefield is intentionally accelerating the use of some images he has commended in different sonnets.

Goran Abdullah was the most influential Kurdish poet of the romantic period and the leader of the new Kurdish poetry. It is said that he was not merely a poet but rather a translator and a “member of Iraqi communist party” (*Abdulla Goran (1904 – 1962)*, n.d.). Besides, he was acquainted with the poetry composed in Arabic, Turkish, and Persian.

Goran lived in Halabja, a mountainous area in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. His interest in nature started from his childhood, and he wrote poetry to criticize those who underestimate the role of nature. He also spent some time in Kirkuk as a student. During his time in Kirkuk, he became familiar with Arabic language and literature, and from the Arabic, he became aware of Turkish literature. He was so eager to know more about the culture of the English-speaking countries.

For this reason, he educated himself and learned the English language. One of the most important resources that influenced Goran was western literature, especially English literature. From the beginning, he got familiar with English literature, from translated masterpieces to the Turkish language. Goran says himself, “I have read some of the Shelley and Lord Byron’s works in Turkish, but after the Ottoman Empire destroyed, and getting some expert in the English language, I could read all their works in English” (Muhiadeen, 1997).

Khaznadar points out that “during the second world war, [Goran] worked from September 1943 till the end of 1944 along with Ramzi Qzzaz and Rafeeq Chalak in the East Radio near the city of Jafa in Palestine. Being a radio broadcaster (qtd. in Murad, 2019, p. 998) made him familiar with English and literature. This has significantly influenced him and made him borrow

from English literature and poetry and compose his masterpieces (poems) in a pure Kurdish language, empty of foreign words.

The most important side of Goran's poems is nature. The beautiful nature of Kurdistan directly influenced Goran to write his poems. He benefited from Kurdish poets before him, such as Xani, Mawlawi, Nail, Salim, and Kurdi. Goran knew five different languages, so he also benefited from all poems written in foreign languages, especially English literature, Persian literature, and Arabic literature (Mahmud, 2007). Goran's love for Kurdistan is clearly expressed in his poem "Kurdistan." It becomes evident that the beauty of Kurdistan's mountains, valleys, hills, snow, and water made him the poet of nature.

I have been nurtured by these valleys, summits and hummocks, / My breath is full of the fragrant breeze of your highlands, / My lips are satiated by your snow waters, / My gaze is used to the sight of your silvery twilights / Reflecting on evening snows, / My ears are habituated to the music of your waterfalls / Pouring down from high quarters above snow to green landscapes. //
My tongue bloomed with your beautiful speech, / With words of your mountain songs, / The words of folk tales told around fireplaces, / The words of your children's lullabies. / When blood stirs in my veins, it does so under the power of your love, / I know. (*Abdulla Goran (Kurdistan) lyrics + English translation, n.d.*)

In "Women and Beauty," Goran completely points out all beauties, especially the beauty of nature and women.

Love of Nature in both Poems

Masefield's "Beauty" (Masefield, 1903, p. 36) contains eight lines. In the first four lines, the narrator speaks about several views of nature around him and the world. Line 1: "I have seen dawn and sunset on moors and windy hills" talks about the poet who watched the dawn (sunrise or morning) and sunset, or he has seen the beauty of sunrise and sunset on moors. Here moors can be considered as "plants" and on windy hills. In line 2: "Coming in solemn beauty like slow old tunes of Spain," the narrator here used simile, comparing two different objects. The coming of dawn and sunset (line 1) was compared to the old tunes of Spain in the sense that old tunes of Spain are considered very pleasant, and they were considered euphonic. So, by the comparison, the narrator expects the reader to feel great happiness and satisfaction when his beloved arrives compared to such a piece of wonderful music. "I have seen the lady April bringing the daffodils / Bringing the springing grass and the soft warm April rain" (lines 3-4). Here April is considered as a lady. The narrator personifies April as a lady because a lady gives birth to children. In April, many flowers

bloom like daffodils, and the grass grows they make people feel comfortable. Moreover, the soft showers of April rain are very pleasant, and it appeals to his senses.

In line 5: “I have heard the song of the blossoms and chant of the sea,” the technique of personification has been used. The blossoms have been personified because only humans can sing a song; blossoms and flowers cannot sing. The phrase “chants of the sea” means song of the sea. The sea has been personified because waves of the sea produce music that appeals to his ears, and the sound of the blossoms and sea are euphonic. Furthermore, in line 6: “And seen strange lands from under arched white sails of ship,” the narrator points out that he has visited many places by crossing the seas under the curved white sails of the ship. He has seen the beauty of the sea, and he has heard the music of the sea waves. From here, the narrator makes a shift from the sea to the land. Up until the sixth line, the narrator explains all the beautiful things he has seen in nature.

Goran’s poem “Women and Beauty,” from the first until the seventh line, describes the beauty of Kurdistan’s nature, including mountains, falls, sky, valley, and fruits:

I have seen stars in the sky
I have gathered flowers in spring’s garden
Dews from trees have wet my face
I have observed dusk on many horizons
The rainbow after torrential rain
Is arched opposite to the sun
The New Roz’s sun, May’s and June’s moon (Goran’s “Women and Beauty”)

He described the most beautiful views of nature a person can imagine realistically. Goran shows the influence of the seasons: spring and autumn, but spring is the most beautiful season among all seasons. Besides that, he has used four gestures of feeling, and the reader feels a special kind of pleasure because it’s in a way that gives us all those beautiful nature views in a simple way. In other words, he uses a simple, pure Kurdish language, and special joyful music is felt (Mahmud, 2007).

Love of Women in both Poems

In Masfield’s “Beauty,” the narrator shifts the idea of nature’s beauty to the woman’s beauty. Up until the sixth line, he expresses the beauty of “dawn and sunset” (line 1), “daffodils” (line 2), “the springing grass and the soft warm April rain (line 4). The narrator also enjoys “the song of blossoms and the chant of the sea” (line 5) as well as “the strange lands” (line 6). However, in the next two lines, the narrator states that all those beautiful things in nature cannot compare to the beauty of his lover, “But the loveliest things of beauty God ever has showed to me, / are her voice,

and her hair, and eyes, and the dear red curve of her lips” (lines 7-8). Those lines contrast the physical beauty of nature to the physical beauty of his beloved. The main point is that the narrator has seen so many beautiful things in nature, he has crossed the sea, and he has seen the beauty of the sea and heard the sound of music of the waves, and he has seen many different lands, but the loveliest of them all are his beloved’s eye, hair, voice, and lips.

Meanwhile, in “Women and Beauty,” until the seventh line, the poet describes the beauty of nature, then his description shifts to the description of the beauty of women and his beloved. It is crystal clear in the following lines after line 7:

But nature without the smile of my darling
Is all void of light
Is without tune when the wind
Brings not her voice to please me;
What star, what wild rose is as red
As her cheeks, her nipples and lips;
What blackness stills as in her eyes
Black as her lashes, brows or her loose hair?
What height is as beautiful as her height
What glow as light as in her eyes?
What longing, desire, and staying
Is as magical as that of love. (Goran’s “Women and Beauty”) ¹

Goran keeps describing nature like he is addicted to its gorgeous view. Still, eventually, he brings his ideas into the poem that every beauty in nature is nothing without his beloved one, who completes nature. So, Goran says that nature without lovers equals zero. In other words, Goran says that nature is never completed without the smile of his beloved one, like “void of light” and “without tune” (lines 9-10). Nature without lovers means no lovers (Mahmud, 2007). By this poem, Goran expresses that the beauty of a woman is the source of every other beauty.

Similarities and Differences between the Two Poems

The similarities can be seen in the titles of the two poems and their contents, as the two poems describe the beauty of nature and women. Masefield’s poem is romantic, but Goran’s poem is modern, yet the subjects of these two poems are the same. Their languages are different in two ways: the language of Masefield’s poem is romantic as it contains descriptions of nature and

¹ This poem has been translated from Kurdish language into English language by Mariwan Hasan available at: <https://lyricstranslate.com>

women's innocence. Meanwhile, Goran's poem is pure Kurdish and is empty of Arabic, Turkish, or Persian words, although he knew these languages besides English.

The main similarity between John Masefield's "Beauty" and Goran's "Women and Beauty" is the theme of the poems, which is the beauty of nature. From the first line, Masefield describes the most beautiful views in nature that he has seen in his life. He describes the beauty of sunrise and sunset. Masefield also describes the musical sounds of nature, like the sound of waves and all the beautiful places he has visited in his life. Meanwhile, Goran described the most beautiful views of Kurdistan's nature that influenced him. He also describes the music of nature, like the sound of grasses and the singing of the birds. Both poets describe nature from the first line until they get to the point that they contrast and point out their real feelings. This is the next thing on which both poets seem to agree. They both have the same view that all the beautiful things in nature are nothing without the beauty of a woman or their beloved one.

Another similarity between both poems is the way the poets use the language. Both Masefield and Goran started their first line with the same subject and verb. Masefield wrote, "I have seen dawn and sunset on moors and windy hills," while Goran wrote, "I have seen stars in the sky." They also used the same object for the verb, which is the sky. Masefield portrayed the beauty of the sky when the sun rises and sets, while Goran depicted the sky at night with the stars. By this point, one might argue that Masefield's influence was evident in Goran's poem.

Regarding the difference between both poems, Masefield and Goran portray nature differently. While Masefield describes oceans, sunset, and the places he traveled, Goran describes Kurdistan's valleys and mountain falls. Yet, at one point, they represent the same thing, which is the beauty of spring. The geography of the areas Goran describes in his poem is narrower than the geography of the poem by Masefield, which was due to the political situation in the Kurdistan region as the Iraqi government during Goran's time-limited traveling for people in general and the Kurds in particular.

The following different thing about the poems is the rhyme pattern. In "Beauty," Masefield used ABAB CDCD and trochaic metrical pattern, a metrical foot composed of two syllables; a stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable. Meanwhile, Goran's "Women and Beauty" is written in AABB. Goran used this rhyme pattern because he wanted to point out what was in his mind freely, which expresses the talent of the poet (Ahmed, 2008, p. 101).

CONCLUSIONS

This article compares and contrasts two poems written by two different poets coming from two different cultures. “Beauty” is written by John Masefield, a British poet who lived in the romantic era. Meanwhile, “Women and Beauty” is written by Goran Abdullah, a Kurdistan poet coming from the modern era. Since both poems come from a different culture, the language used is also different. “Beauty” is written in English, while “Women in Beauty” is written in Kurdistan. Despite the different language that the poems use, both express the same theme: the beauty of nature. Masefield and Goran also seem to agree that the beauty of nature is nothing without the beauty of their loved ones. Concerning the differences, both poems portray nature differently since Masefield prefers the sea and lands while Goran chooses the valley and mountains. The two poems also have different rhyme patterns, “Beauty” employs ABAB CDCD, while “Women and Beauty” uses ABAB. All in all, the comparison between the poems implies that the cultural difference of the author might not hinder them from expressing the same universal issue, which is about the love of nature and women.

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