

RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Structure and Content of Similes in The Divan of Parvin E'tesami

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Abstract

This article examines the role and typology of similes (tashbih) in the poetry of Parvin E'tesami. Similes function as a significant stylistic device in shaping the poet's individual artistic expression and are employed in both concise and extended forms. The study is conducted using descriptive and content analysis methods, and the findings are presented in tabular form. The results demonstrate that Parvin Etesami's similes are characterized by simplicity, expressiveness, and frequent usage, which contribute to the clarity and aesthetic appeal of her poetry.

KEYWORDS

Parvin E'tesami, simile, rhetorical device, poetic style, concise simile, extended simile, content analysis, artistic device, figurative expression, literary analysis.

INTRODUCTION

A simile (tashbih) is a stylistic device used to express one concept by comparing it to another, and it is regarded in linguistic studies as an important means of figurative language. Through simile, individuals convey their thoughts and emotions by relating them to another object or phenomenon. The primary function of a simile is to enhance meaning and make ideas clearer and more comprehensible. From a linguistic perspective, simile is interpreted as a comparison between two entities, highlighting their similarities or differences. This method is widely used not only in literary texts but also in everyday speech. It allows for the characterization of one object in relation to another and reflects the figurative thinking and aesthetic worldview of a people.

Simile is one of the most effective and expressive literary devices, enabling authors to intensify meaning and present ideas in a vivid, visual, and emotional manner. In Persian literature, this device is distinguished by its deep roots and rich traditions. One of the prominent poets of the twentieth

century, Parvin E'tesami, skillfully employs simile in her works, using it as a means of philosophical expression to address themes such as society, knowledge, morality, and social justice.

This article analyzes similes in the Divan of Parvin E'tesami from several perspectives, including grammatical structure, artistic form, and semantic content. Through this analysis, a deeper understanding of the poet's creative style, ideological views, and social position is achieved.

Parvin E'tesami (1907-1941) was a renowned Iranian Persian poet who holds a distinctive place in Persian literature due to the high moral and social content of her poetry. Her works primarily focus on themes of humanity, ethics, women's rights, and social injustice, demonstrating both artistic refinement and philosophical depth.

Her poetry is written in a simple and accessible language, yet enriched with literary devices such as simile, metaphor, and aphoristic expressions. This enables her to convey her artistic

ideas clearly and effectively.

The poet's *творчество* (creative work) plays an important role in highlighting women's position and rights in society, as well as addressing spiritual and educational issues. Through her poetry, Parvin E'tesami seeks to promote human values, knowledge, and justice among a wide audience. Her work has received recognition not only in Iran but also across Eastern literary traditions, where she is regarded as one of the most influential and prominent poets of Persian literature.

The Divan of Parvin E'tesami represents the most significant collection of her poetic works. It includes poems on a wide range of themes, reflecting national traditions, human values, and vivid imagery. The Divan primarily consists of poems with moral, social, and philosophical content, addressing issues such as the role of women in society, spiritual development, the pursuit of knowledge, and justice.

The poet's distinctive and rich linguistic style makes her works emotionally powerful and engaging for readers. The poetic structure of the Divan is characterized by the effective use of simile, metaphor, and other stylistic devices, which further strengthen its artistic uniqueness. Therefore, the Divan of Parvin E'tesami is valued not only as a literary monument but also as an important work within Persian literary heritage.

Main Sections of the Divan: Ghazals

The ghazals of Parvin E'tesami constitute one of the most prominent and frequently occurring genres in her Divan. These ghazals typically encompass themes of love, philosophy, humanity, and ethics.

Qasidas, Qit'as, Masnavi Poems, and Translations

In the qasidas and qit'as of Parvin E'tesami, greater emphasis is placed on social, ethical, and educational themes. Her poems in these genres are distinguished by the expression of moral teachings and reflections addressed to society.

In her masnavi compositions, the poet frequently presents philosophical reflections on life and contemplations on the nature of human existence. These poems demonstrate her tendency to explore existential and ethical issues in a reflective manner.

In addition, Parvin E'tesami also engaged in poetic adaptation and translation, drawing inspiration from classical Persian and Arabic poets. In some cases, she reinterpreted their themes within her own poetic style, preserving the essence while adapting the expression to her individual voice.

Overall, the Divan is rich in thematic and semantic diversity, with each section dedicated to specific subject matters that reflect the poet's philosophical, ethical, and social views. Although stylistically diverse, her poems are unified by a combination of simplicity of expression and philosophical depth, creating a distinctive aesthetic effect.

The Divan makes extensive use of rhetorical devices, particularly simile (*tashbih*), metaphor, emphasis, and other literary techniques, which significantly contribute to its artistic value. This collection has been widely studied by literary scholars and poetry enthusiasts and serves as an important source in literary discourse.

The poetry of Parvin E'tesami is generally characterized by simple language combined with profound moral content, reflecting a strong appreciation of human values.

Types and Structural Features of Literary Similes

Literary similes (*tashbih*) are generally classified into several main types. Some of these include:

Simple similes - based on direct comparison, expressed through words such as "like," "as," "similar to," or equivalent markers in Persian such as "-deh," "misli," and "monandi."

Extended (elaborated) similes - in which the basis of comparison, the act of comparison, and its resulting meaning are presented together in a more detailed structure.

Semantic or philosophical similes - which reveal an abstract or intellectual relationship between two concepts, emphasizing their conceptual or moral connection.

Figurative and imagistic similes - which deepen the emotional and visual representation of reality, making it more vivid and expressive.

Parvin E'tesami successfully employs nearly all of these types in her poetic works, using them to add new layers of meaning and expressive depth to the realities she describes.

Her use of simile is not only grammatically well-structured but also contributes significantly to the overall artistic composition of her poetry. In many cases, her similes are so vivid and expressive that they encourage the reader to reflect more deeply and engage in analytical interpretation.

بی علم مباش وگرنه روزت سیاه است
چون شب تاریک، بی چراغ و بی ماه است

In this example, an uneducated life is compared to a dark

night. Despite the simplicity of the simile, the poetic structure conveys a highly powerful meaning. Parvin E'tesami typically transforms a simple idea into a profound philosophical conclusion through the use of simile.

Similes in the poetic heritage of Parvin E'tesami serve as a key expressive device in addressing various social issues. She employs figurative imagery to reflect themes such as the status of women, the importance of knowledge, the concepts of oppression and justice, and human virtues.

زن گِل نبود که پایمال شود
زن آینه است، تابناک شود

In this example, woman is presented as a symbol of human dignity and value. Parvin E'tesami likens woman to a mirror, thereby highlighting and glorifying her positive influence within society. Such similes clearly express the poet's social views, particularly her active defense of women's rights and dignity.

Beyond enhancing the imagery and semantic depth of the poem, the similes used by Parvin E'tesami perform several important functions. They contribute to the philosophical interpretation of thematic issues, promote moral education and spirituality, and provide figurative representation of social problems. Moreover, they evoke emotional response and reflection in the reader. Her similes are characterized by concise, vivid, and precise expression, carrying significant intellectual and moral weight.

The following poem reflects the poet's delicate and profound feelings toward life, love, and nature. In this poem, the arrival of spring is associated with the blossoming of flowers in the garden and is presented as a symbol of renewed hope and spiritual rebirth in love. The poet's depictions of nature play an important role in creating a more vivid and emotionally expressive poetic atmosphere.

بهار آمد و گل به باغزار رویید
دل به هوای وصال تو در تب و تابی
غنچه‌ها به زبان خموش سبز به سبز گفتند
قصه عشق تو را با صدای ناپید
چون نسیم سحرگاهی عطر تو پیچید
جان زنده شد و باغ دل از نو شکفتید
در نگاهت نوری بود چون خورشید تابان

که سایه غم و درد را ز دل می‌ریود
هر روز با صدای بلبل نغمه‌ای شنیدم
که راز عشق تو را از دور می‌فهمیدم
ای دل به هوای او آرام و قرار ندار
تا زنده‌ای به بادش باش و از یاد مبر

In the poem, literary devices such as "light," "fragrance," and "the voice of the nightingale" are used to represent the beauty of the human soul and love, as well as liberation from emotional and existential burdens. Parvin E'tesami views love not merely as a romantic relationship, but also as a means of spiritual and intellectual elevation.

The concluding appeal of the poem encourages the reader to remember love throughout life and to live in accordance with it, highlighting the central importance of the themes of love and loyalty in her poetry. Overall, this poem is a clear example of Parvin E'tesami's inspired and imagistic style, as well as her sensitive and thoughtful approach to nature and humanity.

Similes from the Poem and Their Analysis

In this section, selected similes from the poem of Parvin E'tesami are examined in terms of their figurative meaning and stylistic function.

1. "There was a light in your gaze like a joyful sun."

Type of simile: Comparative simile (a direct comparison between two entities).

Analysis:

In this example, the notion of "gaze" is compared to sunlight. The sun is traditionally understood as a source of light, life, warmth, and hope. By using this comparison, the poet emphasizes that the gaze is bright, sincere, and full of hope. This simile effectively conveys the pure and luminous qualities of love, enriching the emotional and expressive dimension of the verse.

2. "Your fragrance spread like the light of dawn."

Type of simile: Comparative simile (close to metaphorical comparison).

Analysis:

In this example, fragrance is compared to the light of dawn, suggesting its wide and gentle diffusion. This comparison implies that the influence of love spreads everywhere, even into subtle and invisible spaces. Fragrance is presented as a

force that affects the human soul and symbolizes the emotional wave of love. The simile thus emphasizes the pervasive, delicate, and spiritually uplifting nature of love.

3. "The green buds whispered the story of love."

Type of simile: Personified simile combined with comparative imagery.

Analysis:

In this example, the act of whispering attributed to flower buds reflects the gentle and tranquil atmosphere inherent in nature. Through personification, nature is endowed with human-like qualities, suggesting that even natural elements participate in the narration of love. This imagery highlights the interconnectedness between nature and love, where flowers symbolically communicate the hidden and mysterious essence of emotional experience.

4. "Every day I heard a song in the voice of the nightingale."

Type of simile: Metaphorical and comparative imagery.

Analysis:

The nightingale's voice is presented as a symbol of love. In Persian literary tradition, the nightingale is frequently used as an emblem of love and affection. In this context, its voice conveys hidden truths about love to the reader while also emphasizing the continuity and permanence of love as an emotional experience.

The similes used in the poem reveal Parvin E'tesami's detailed and powerful perception of nature, love, and the human spirit. Through these figurative devices, the poetic images become vivid and dynamic, evoking strong emotional responses in the reader. Natural elements such as the sun, fragrance, flowers, and the nightingale particularly highlight the bright and beautiful dimensions of love.

The similes in Parvin E'tesami's poetry are not only aesthetically expressive but also carry moral and philosophical significance, further strengthening the uniqueness of her poetic style.

Her literary production is enriched through the effective use of simile as a broad and powerful artistic device. Her similes are grammatically precise, artistically vivid, and philosophically meaningful. They function not only as tools of poetic imagery but also as instruments of social reflection, intellectual engagement, and moral education. Thus, her similes

represent not merely a literary technique but also an expression of worldview, social consciousness, and intellectual enlightenment.

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