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Elements of Confessional novel in the "Dr. Noon loves his wife more than Mossadegh" by Shahram Rahimian

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Abstract

This project tried in analytical- descriptive method to recognize and deal with elements of confessional literature in the novel "Dr. Noon loves his wife more than Mossadegh" by Shahram Rahimian. The results show that this modernist novel with focusing on 5 fundamental elements of confessional literature i.e. inner return, change, inner pain, emphasis on sexual issues and thinking about death repeats life of a generation who have been looking inner and gradual death of the reformer elite and as a result death of the own self (Malektaj) and ruin of social ideals and hopes because of political retreat and humiliation feeling due to defeat confessing ethical obliquity, isolation and individual and social indifferences. Therefore, they have no choice at the end of their own life except to confess to this backward movement and to accept their own negative and destructive role.

Keywords: *novel flow, confessional literature, Dr. Noon loves his wife more than Mossadegh, Shahram Rahimian.*

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Extended Abstract

1- Introduction

A confessional novel is a novel in which the author, through his direct or indirect presence through the narrator-character or other different narrators of the story, reveals the essence of his real character or hidden layers of his personal and group thoughts and with critical speeches and sometimes self-accusation and other accusation, he restates his behavioural mistakes or hidden intentions to purify his soul and relieve psychic pains and get rid of the pricks of conscience, or sometimes to transfer experiences to next generations and etc. As Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the French writer and thinker (1712-78) and creator of the first outstanding work in confessional literature, has already stated this tendency in his book "Confessions".

In Persian, perhaps the background of confessional literature goes back to Khayyam's poems; But this type of writing can be widely observed in Sufi and Malamatian (the blamed) literature. Although, sometimes in classical Persian literature, works such as "Al-Monqiz min Al-Dhalal" by Ghazali are placed in the same order as the confessions of St. Augustine and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (cf. Razmjoo, 1993: 208) or in the romantic revelations of Indian style poets and school of occurrence, this particular kind of theme is manifested, confessional literature - a term in new period - must be considered a feature of contemporary Iran, which, following Western culture through Western fiction and its intellectual-artistic schools, entered Iran after Constitutional period and from the beginning of the present century. What directed this critical and confessional approach of the authors were historical and socio-political events, including the coup d'état of 19 August. Getting rid of the pricks of conscience caused by failure, creation of a movement of intellectual return for preventing past mistakes, transferring experiences to future generations, nostalgic feeling of frustration, innovation in the process of contemporary storytelling and view evolution related to the society and politics, etc. are among the most important reasons for novelists' tendency to confessional literature after the coup. Of course, it should not be assumed that such confessions necessarily have a self-evident and autobiographical form of writing, but sometimes this confession is expressed in a narrator-character form and indirectly as seen in the novel "Dr. Noon ...".

Five important features or components can be considered for a confessional novel:

1. Inner return method of the narrative;
2. Delay in growth and change in the main character;
3. Fear of suffering and attempt to get rid of it;
4. Emphasis on Mental and Sexual Disorders (Radstone, 1989: 43);
5. Subject or category of death (see: Biniaz, 2007: 24).

What is important in the nature of confessional literature is the events that took place within the individual. The real subject of these confessions is war of personal self with the socio-moral self. For deconstructive approach of the character, it does not matter what others will judge, he intends to travel within himself by denying self-censorship and breaking all barriers and problems of revealing secrets and to express his thoughts and actions without paying attention to judgment of others and to confess unconsciously or consciously while suffering from the failure of his party ideals so that he represents lack of his peers' ideology in conflict between individual loves and collective ideals in the form of challenging himself.

Another feature of the present novel is the author's iconoclastic attention to urban issues; A modern and civilized social context in which deconstruction is one of the most fundamental signs. The truth is that the confession novel, especially the new political confession novels in Iran, is the product of urban society and imitative consequences of western urbanization. Dr. Noon's thoughts and moods come from the new urban context in Iran and represent identity crisis caused by living in this new ecosystem.

Considering confessional novels following the intellectual and ideological atmosphere of western civilization and importance of restating Persian novel writing and scientific flow study in contemporary fiction, an attempt is made to reread confessional characteristics or components in one of the novels influenced by the events of the coup d'etat of 19 August focusing on the novel "Dr. Noon loves his wife more than Mossadegh." Written by Shahram Rahimian.

2. Literature Review

Although research in socio-political novels has been considered by writing several articles with a critical discourse analysis approach such as "Critical Discourse Analysis of Dr. Noon Loves His Wife More Than Mossadegh" by Seyed Ali Ghasemzadeh and Mostafa Gorjy; "The First Political Story after the Islamic Revolution: A Discourse Study and Analysis of the Story of Cell 18 by Ali Ashraf Darvishian" written by

Mostafa Gorjy; "Mossadegh and the coup d'etat of 19 August in Bozorg Alavi's narrative" by Abolfazl Asgari, re-reading the confessional components in the novels affected by the coup d'etat of 19 August, during the period after the Islamic Revolution, has no precedent and no research has been made in analysis and reinterpretation of such novels and the flow study of this type of novel writing in Iran and this article is the first attempt to represent this trend by relying on re-reading the novel "Dr. Noon loves his wife more than Mossadegh" written by Shahram Rahimian in the form of scientific articles.

3. Methodology

In a descriptive-analytical method based on theoretical framework of confessional literature and its five components, this article tried to re-read and announce presence of this approach in Iranian novel writing in addition to following this pseudo flow of Persian novel writing based on the novel "Dr. Noon loved his wife more than Mossadegh" and recognized its characteristics. In fact, analysis of this type of Persian novels can represent intellectual and ideological developments of Iranian intellectual writers after the Islamic Revolution, inspired by the coup d'état of 19 August to the present day.

4. Results

History of confessional novel is not long in Iran, even the forms of confessionism in Persian novel writing seem different and numerous. Although type of confession in west is often emotional and includes confession of sexual perversions and moral and religious violations, sometimes political factors lead to writing of novels with a confessional approach in Iran. The coup d'état of 19 August is one of the political milestones in contemporary history of Iran that has always led the intellectual movement to re-read and rethink about the reasons for its creation, including internal (national) and external reasons. The novel "Dr. Noon loves his wife more than Mossadegh" which was written in the eighties -about fifty years after the coup – is one of these novels influenced by this flow and has been presented with a kind of self-accusation and confession of negative role of intellectuals and their betrayal in defeat of the Iranian demotic movement. Rahimian's migration from Iran and re-reading and inter-group criticism of intellectuals - except religious intellectuals - in the form of the novel "Dr. Noon ...", is a new sign for formation of a political flow with a confessional nature in Persian novel writing; A novel that seems to be a review of lives of enlightened writers who seek refuge in relieving the

pricks of conscience of their attributed class through expatriation or returning to the nostalgic world inside the country. Hence, the novel "Dr. Noon ..." belongs to the category of political stories with confessional theme including all components of the confessional novel such as inner return, change, fear of betrayal suffering and guilt feeling, mental disorder and sexual perversions and reprehended death thinking. Examining confessional components in the novel, it is understood that central character of the novel i.e Dr. Noon confesses tyranny of the time and also his betrayal of Dr. Mossadegh and his democratic government in the form of a biography-like narrative, hoping that he has a way to escape and give reason before the court of public opinion and his conscience; But preference of personal interests and peaceful life (Malektaj) on the opposite side - which is the same commitment to mission of the intellectualism i.e telling the truth and reducing suffering in socio-political life and loyalty to ideals of people and their beloved government - his confessions are accompanied by public hatred, the pricks of conscience and loss of all worldly and national prestige; In such a way he tries to forget the pain and weight of this miserable life after betrayal by taking refuge in narcotics, intoxicants and delusions; In practice, however, he succumbs to his gradual death due to Malektaj's death which symbolizes death of dreams and hope in life. This symbolic fate is the predominant fate of the Iranian intellectual class, which Rahimian predicts while warning.

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