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An Investigation into the Components of Literary Realism in the Voqu' school (A Case Study of Mohtasham Kashani's Romantic Poems in the Jalaliyyah and Noql-e Oshshaq Treatises)

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Abstract

Mohtasham Kashani, a 10th-century poet, although primarily renowned for his famous twelve-stanza elegy for Imam Hussein (PBUH), also composed panegyrics and love poems. His most significant love poems are found in the two treatises, Jalaliyeh and Naql-e Oshshaq, written regarding his devotion to two individuals. This research aims to examine the components of the literary school of Realism in the love poems of these treatises, utilizing a descriptive-analytical method and library-based data collection. The findings indicate that the primary components of literary Realism in Mohtasham's love poems include detailing, the discovery and expression of reality, distancing from ambiguity as an imaginative factor, avoiding fantasy, and maintaining a spectator-like perspective toward events. This study, by moving beyond traditional perspectives that identify Mohtasham solely as a religious poet,

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proves that by linking the text with the objective realities of his era, Mohtasham achieved a realistic reproduction of human emotions.

Keywords**:** *The Intersection of the Literary School of Realism and the Vuqu Schoolm, The Poetry of Mohtasham Kashani, Mohtasham's Jalaliyeh Treatise, Mohtasham's Noql-e Oshshaq Treatise , Persian Poetry of the Tenth Century.*

1. Introduction

Literary Realism emerged in 19th-century Europe as an artistic and literary movement reacting against Romanticism, which was heavily reliant on imagination and idealism. Realism is defined as a collection of writings from the mid-19th century that prioritize objective reality and distance themselves from purely imaginative constructs. A realist writer strives to depict life and social, political, and economic relations in a neutral, objective manner, often aiming for social reform. The key components of this school include the discovery and expression of reality, detailed description, social analysis, and the portrayal of ordinary, common heroes.On the other hand, the history of Persian literature in the 10th century AH witnessed the emergence of the "School of Voqu'". In this school, the poet endeavors to describe the actual details of romantic events and the tangible states of the lover and the beloved. Voqu' is characterized by a "simple and direct expression of honest emotions and individual experiences," avoiding the poetic exaggerations and fantasies typical of earlier styles. Mohtasham Kashani, a prominent poet of this period, moved beyond traditional lyrical clichés in his romantic treatises, Jalaliyeh and Naql-e Oshshaq. By employing techniques such as meticulous detailing, social analysis, and a spectator-like perspective, he aligned his poetry with the core tenets of Realism. Therefore, the primary objective of this research is to demonstrate how Mohtasham's romantic poems provide a tangible and realistic reproduction of human emotions and the objective realities of his era.

Research Question(s):

What characteristics of literary Realism are reflected in the expression of personal states, particularly within the context of romantic actions, in Voqu' poetry?

What are the primary components of literary Realism manifested in Mohtasham Kashani's romantic treatises?
Which component of Realism is most prominently manifested in Mohtasham's romantic treatises?

2. Literature Review

Independent studies have been conducted on Mohtasham Kashani's lyrical works and their connection to the School of Voqu', each approaching the subject from a different perspective. Salehiniya (2011), in an article titled "Mohtasham Kashani's Treatises: An Unknown Genre," examined the literary structure of the two treatises, Jalaliyeh and Naql-e Oshshaq; the author introduced these treatises as a nascent and distinct genre in lyrical literature that had previously received little critical attention. Furthermore, Koochaki et al. (2023), in a study titled "Investigating Folk Culture in Mohtasham Kashani's Jalaliyeh Treatise," analyzed environmental elements and folk beliefs in this work, arguing that it effectively reflects the daily life details of the Safavid era. However, while research on the components of literary Realism has been conducted in the Persian language, the focus has predominantly remained on contemporary literature. A crucial point overlooked in previous studies is the fundamental difference between modern Realism and traditional realism within the context of the School of Voqu'. Therefore, the present study is necessary to explore deeper layers of objective realism in Mohtasham's poetry. This research seeks to move beyond superficial descriptions and determine the relationship between the poet's lived experiences and the realistic representation of emotions—a subject that has not been addressed in Mohtasham Kashani studies until now.

3. Methodology

This research is conducted using a descriptive-analytical method. The required data and information have been gathered through library and documentary research.

4. Results

The analytical investigation of Mohtasham Kashani's romantic treatises, Jalaliyeh and Naql-e Oshshaq, reveals a significant structural and thematic alignment with the fundamental components of literary Realism. Among various Persian poetic movements, the School of Voqu' (Occurrence) demonstrates the closest resemblance to Realism due to its unwavering focus on objective reality and the tangible experiences of the poet. The findings indicate that meticulous detailing

(Tashrih-e Joz'iyat) is the most prominent realistic component in Mohtasham's love poems, as he moves away from general poetic clichés to provide minute descriptions of the beloved's traits and the dynamics of their encounters. Furthermore, there is a deliberate distancing from imaginative ambiguity and complex metaphors, which ensures that the emotional content remains tethered to actual romantic occurrences. The study also identifies a spectator-like perspective in Mohtasham's narration, where he acts as an objective observer of his own emotions—such as the pain of separation or the presence of rivals—reporting them with honesty and external reality. Ultimately, by linking the text with the objective realities of the 10th century AH, Mohtasham achieved a realistic reproduction of human feelings, proving that the roots of objective realism in Persian literature are deeply embedded in the School of Voqu'

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