

**Systems of Imagination in Buick Maleki's Collection of
Poems, *Behind a Smile*, Based on Gilbert Durand's
Theory**

Omid Vahdanifar

Assistant Professor of Persian Language and Literature,
University of Bojnord

Introduction

Imagination is an essential element in children's and adolescents' literature. It is one of the components that motivate children and adolescents to read because by reading these works, they find themselves in a world beyond the world and logic dominated by adults and find a suitable place for psychological relief from the imposed pressures. Also, they come to an understanding of abstract concepts of the world around them with the power of imagination.

Gilbert Durand is one of the prominent theorists in the field of literary criticism, especially literary imagination. He analyzes the visual and imaginative functions of artists in his theory of "diurnal system of imagination" and "nocturnal system of imagination".

Buick Maleki, a writer of adolescent poetry, reflects his concerns about the passage of time and death in his collection of poems, *Behind a Smile*; therefore, it is fruitful to study the presence of such concepts in this collection by the use of Durand's theory in order to identify the poet's creative mentality in the making of imaginary

pictures and to examine his way of thinking about the world, the effect of time and death on creation, and the way he uses his imagination to express his fears.

Methodology, Review of Literature and Purpose

Due to the value and importance of imagery in Maleki's poetry, the researcher decided to investigate the structure of imaginary forms in the poetry collection *Behind a Smile*, relying on Gilbert Durand's theory of image clusters.

There are a number of researches on imagery in children's and adolescents' literature; for example, "Farmers in Children and Adolescents' Poetry" by Pourvahhab (2002); "Imagery in Rahmandoost's Poetry" by Armaghan (2006); "Content Analysis of Children's Poetry 1992-2002 (Age Groups A, B and C)" by Zarghani and Abbaspour-Noghani (2007); "Study of Imagery in Children's Poetry with a Focus on the Works of the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Adolescents" by Lavimi (2019).

A number of articles have been written on Maleki's adolescent poems also, including "This Sidewalk Is Stretched Around the Earth" by Rajabzadeh (2003); "The Impressive Sensation of These Poems" by Nazar-ahari (2003) and "A Study of Poetic Imagery in the Adolescent Poetry of Buick Maleki" by Najafian (2012). The researcher did not find any study related to the function of literary imagination based on Gilbert Durand's theory in the field of children's and adolescents' literature.

Discussion

Durand believes that time manifests itself through images; this means that images show a fear of time because according to his theory, behind every fear, there is “fear of death” and behind every death, “fear of time”. Human beings make a connection between fear and time and realize that with the passage of time, they are going toward death; so, they are frightened and as a result, a series of images appear in their imaginations in response to the passage of time. In *The Anthropological Structures of Imagination*, Durand divides images into two large categories, the Diurnal System of Imaginations and the Nocturnal System of Imagination. The diurnal system is a dialectical system with contrasting poles that includes scary (negatively valued) and non-terrifying (positively valued) images; but the nocturnal system has a hybrid state, which means that the two poles are placed inside each other instead of facing each other. In this group of images, fear of time is modified and toned down.

Negatively valued structures of the diurnal system are divided into three categories of descending, darkness and animalistic, all of which have one thing in common: creating fear. Positively valued structures of the diurnal system are also classified into three categories: ascending, spectacular, and separating, all of which are similar in overcoming the sense of fear with different structures. In fact, fear of time creates negative forms (descending, darkness, and animalistic), and overcoming fear of time creates positive forms (ascending, spectacular, and separating).

It seems that Durand’s proposed model of diurnal system of imagination can be applied to Maleki’s collection of poems, *Behind a*

Smile, because these poems exhibit binary (contrasting) images such as white and black, light and darkness, night and day, sadness and joy, cold and hot, full and empty.

Conclusion

Imagination is such an active and subtle element in the Maleki's *Behind a Smile* that can be felt and visualized while reading the poems. In the structure of imagination in this collection of poems, both the negatively valued structures of descending, darkness and animalist forms and the positively valued structures of ascending, spectacular and separating forms can be seen. However, in general, Maleki's real state of mind belongs more to the "diurnal System of positively valued imagination" (non-scary and pleasant).

Among the images in this collection, there are 36 samples of spectacular forms (39.13 percent), 23 samples of ascending forms (25 percent), 18 samples of darkness forms (19.56 percent), 7 samples of descending forms (7.60 percent) 5 samples of separating forms (5.43 percent) and 3 samples of animalistic forms (3.26 percent). This shows that Maleki has been able to save himself from the anxiety caused by the passage of time that he has shown in the diurnal system of negatively valued imagination. Therefore, Maleki can be considered a poet with an ascending spirit. Examined from Durand's point of view, Maleki proves to be a person who does not accept the idea of destruction. Hence, he has been successful in softening the horrifying aspects of death for teenagers and making them more hopeful in life by creating calm and controlled images in contrast to the fast pace of time.

Keywords: Buick Maleki, *Behind a Smile*, Gilbert Durand, adolescent poetry, imagery

References:

- Abbasi, A. (2001). Gilbert Durand; nocturnal system, diurnal system. *Book of the Month of Children and Adolescents*, pp. 45-55.
- Abbasi, A. (2006). Classification of literary imagination based on New Criticism. *Nafeh*, 1 (11 & 12).
- Abbasi, A. & Shakeri, A. (2008). Fear of time in characters of Mahmoud Doulat-Abadi's narratives. *Research Journal of Human Sciences*, No 57, pp. 217-234.
- Armaghan, A. (2006). Imagery in Rahmandoust's poetry. *Research Journal of Children's and Adolescents' Literature*, No. 45 and 46, pp. 222-238.
- Bachelard, G. (1943). *Water and dreams: An essay on the imagination of matter*. Pari.
- Balkhari, H. (2006). Artistic imagination from the perspective of Sheikh Ishraq. *Journal of the Academy of Arts*, 5 (43), pp. 59-58.
- Durand, G. (1992). *Les Structures anthropologiques de l'imaginaire: Introduction à l'archétypologie générale*. Dunod.
- Eliade, M. (2005). *The myth of eternal return* (B. Sarkarati, Trans.). Tahoori.
- Fotouhi, M. (2007). *The rhetoric of illustration*. Sokhan.
- Ibn Manzoor, J. M. M. (1405). *Arabic language*. Adab-e Houzeh.
- Jung, C. G. (1981). *Man and his symbols* (A. Saremi, Trans.). Amir Kabir.

- Kazemi, M. K. (1997). *Aperture*. Zarihe Aftab.
- Lavimi, S. (2019). Study of Imagery in Children's Poetry with a Focus on the Works of the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Adolescents. *Baharestan-e Sokhan*, 16 (44), 219-240.
- Maleki, B. (2012). *Behind a Smile*. Qadyani.
- Mir, M. & Shamshiri, V. (2014). Analysis of imagery in Nazari Qahestani's Adabnameh based on Gilbert Durand's theory. *National Conference on the Criticism and the Analysis of Life, Works and Philosophy of Hakim Nazari Qahestani*, Birjand University, pp. 927-938.
- Najafian, A. (2012). A study of poetic images in Buick Maleki's adolescent poetry. *Journal of Children's Literature Studies*, No. 6, pp. 115-139.
- Nazar-Ahari, E. (2003). The impressive sensation of these poems: A short look at Buick Maleki's poems. *Research Journal of Children's and Adolescents' Literature*, No. 32, pp. 196-205.
- Partovi, A. (1997). Research on the symbolic manifestation of dark water and its semantic approaches. *Journal of the Faculty of Literature and Humanities*, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, 30 (1 & 2), pp. 5-38.
- Purvahhab, M. (2002). Farmer in children's and adolescents' poetry. *Research Journal of Children's and Adolescents' Literature*, No. 31, pp. 188-200.
- Rajabzadeh, S. (2003). This sidewalk stretches across the earth (a critique of the collection of poems *On the Sidewalk* by Buick

Maleki). *Journal of Children's and Adolescents' Literature*,
No. 32, pp. 171-190.

Salajeqeh, P. (2008). *From this eastern garden*. Institute for the
Intellectual Development of Children and Adolescents.

Shafiei-Kadkani, M. R. (1992). *Imagery in Persian poetry*. Agah.

Shariati, S. (2006). Sociology of imagination. *Critic Quarterly*, 2 (4),
165-198.

Sharifi-Valedani, G. & Shamei, M. (2011). The analysis of imagery in
the resistance poetry based on New Criticism. *Resistance
Literature*, 2 (3 &4), 299-321.

Tajbakhsh, I. & Faraji Qarqani, A. (2010). The crow in Persian
literature. *Journal of Literary History*, 3 (62), pp. 29-46.