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A Comparative Analysis of Imagism in the Poetry of Thomas Ernest Hulme and Bijan Elahi

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p>Article type: Research Article</p> <p>Article history: Received: 18 March 2022 Received in revised form: 10 June 2022 Accepted: 16 June 2022 Published online: 01 August 2023</p> <p>Keywords: Bijan Elahi, comparative study, Imagism, modern poetry, T.E.Hulme.</p>	<p>Introduction Imagism is a poetry movement from the early twentieth century. It was one of the first Modernist literary movements in the English language. Imagist poetry is characterized by sharp, clear language. It rejects sentimental verse more typical of Romantic and Victorian poetry. Instead, it focuses on the economy of language; saying the most with the least. Often, a simple image is expressed in the crispest way possible so as to get at its essence.</p> <p>Methodology In this article, we try to follow the mental and literary characteristics of Thomas Ernest Hulme and Bijan Elahi by discussing imagery and how this school was formed in Europe and Iran and showing how each of them used the idea of imagery to develop poetry and present imagery in their own unique style.</p> <p>Findings It is known that one of the first samples of imagist poetry is Thomas Ernest Hulme's poem "Autumn". By analyzing this poem, it is possible to find out the main distinctive qualities of imagism as a literary movement. Though Ezra Pound is noted as the founder of imagism, the movement was rooted in ideas first developed by English philosopher and poet T. E. Hulme, who, as early as 1908, spoke of poetry based on an absolutely accurate presentation of its subject. In his essay "Romanticism and Classicism," Hulme wrote that the language of poetry is a "visual concrete one.... Images in verse are not mere decoration, but the very essence". That November, Pound himself used the term "Imagists" in print for the first time when he published Hulme's Complete Poetical Works. Hulme is considered the pioneer of the Imagists because he laid the foundations of this new poetry. Hulme's poems do not express feelings, but are almost clinical observations, giving detailed descriptions of things that can be seen. Hulme was, in all areas, a self-taught person: he was not a professional philosopher or art historian, nor did he hold a university degree in literature, His theories are fragmentary and derivative, mostly published in some articles. In his thinking, philosophy, religion, politics, and aesthetics are closely interwoven. Consequently, a treatment of his philosophical ideas must necessarily take into consideration several different branches of his intellectual activity as well. He also wrote a few poems, and although they amount to less than 300 lines altogether, they are clear indications of what he thought poetry should be. Hulme explains about what is obtained through metaphor or analogy as follows: If a description is given by analogy that cannot cover the whole picture, that analogy is not correct; but if this comparison is deep and real in such a way that it covers the contact surface of the two images, we are facing the best type of image and comparison.</p>



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Bijan Elahi surprises the reader with another range of poetic images, like a director who allows the camera to move as he wants. He was a poet of eye-catching compositions and sent beautiful interpretations in his poetry to the literature market. Elahi had both Arthur Rimbaud's poems in mind and the ability to accept and translate the poems of Eliot and other poets who were the founders of New Poetry and Imagism in Europe.

Hindsight and archaism are not seen in Hulme's poems. His analytical mind was more attuned to the knowledge of philosophy and mathematics that deals with laws and functions. Non-sensual and non-romantic lines surrounded his poems more and he looked at the world of art through the lens of scientific laws. In Bijan Elahi's poetry, however, dominates a tendency towards the art of painting and of sensual lines. Humanity in its most diluted form exists in his poems and he did not even refrain from expressing his heart's feelings. Due to his lifelong interest in the mystics, he has a similar view of earthly phenomena as Sohrab, and in this aspect he is completely opposite to Hulme. Although Elahi was able to translate and was very familiar with western ideas, it is not possible to see a complete poem of western thought in his works.

Hulme believed that he should present the feeling in a visual form and present everything that flows subjectively in the mind in the form of a physical and tangible object because in this way it can be captured in the fence of time and with this Objectivity locked in the mind. For example, when he talks about a moon that has landed on a hedge, he creates a metaphor that brings to mind a more tangible visual meaning, but the imagist point of his poems is so close to the initial version of Imagism that it is only a representation of a landscape and nothing is going on beyond the visions of the poem.

Conclusion

Hulme's imagery is more imagistic, and metaphor can be conveyed to the viewer with a short montage, while Elahi's metaphors need more time to be displayed and are more complex; nevertheless, it is easy to reach the cinema and its metaphors. Both have a personal view, but Hulme's visual sequence is more imagistic. If imagism is a two-part image, in Elahi's works one side is subjective and the other side is filled with objects, while Hulme juxtaposes two images like Pound's famous subway train poem. Both poets take help from sensual and feminine world when simulating. Hulme advances this allegory due to physical participation, and Elahi uses female symbols to soften the bones of his poem. Mythology, within the framework of imagism, is seen more in the compositions of Bijan-e Elahi, while Hulme more current images. Nevertheless, both poets were successful in presenting the image and sending the imagistic meaning, although in two completely opposite cultures. If they have a difference in the image map, it is related to their cultural background.

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