

An Inquiry into the “Compensation” Mechanism and its Processes in the Literature of Adunis and Shamlou

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Extended abstract

1 Introduction

Aside from style and imagination, literature constitutes two other important elements, i.e. thought and sense; the former relates to philosophy while the latter is relevant to psychology. It means that the nature of literature is philosophical and the gist of its influence is a psychological matter. Accordingly, psychological examination of literature is based on psychological theories, particularly that of Adler's approach; and Adler deems the sense of humiliation as effective in the formation of arts and literature which is relatively overlooked by analysts and it is of substantial importance. To this aim, the present study has selected two well-known contemporary poets, Adunis and Shamlou, in order to explore common psychological themes in their poetry.

2 Review of Literature and Theoretical Framework

Psychologists such as Adler, Jung, Freud, Eric Fromm, Lacan, etc. carried out psychological analyses on arts and literature. However, Adler's psychological approach to both subjects has been more comprehensive by referring to the significance regarding the effect of “sense of flaw” in the formation of the literary works of a poet. Adler based his intellectual approach on sense of humiliation. In other words, the creation of many artistic and literary components somehow originates from a suppressed sense of flaw, manifested by relying on the compensation mechanism. The present study is an attempt to conduct a psychological examination of two poets as individuals through comparative criticism, text dialogism, and the descriptive-analytical method. Subsequently, the themes obtained from the sense of humiliation present within their literature are investigated in the form of processes such as “movement”, “perfectionism”, and “denial”.

Adunis and Shamlou are well-known contemporary poets, the literature of whom are placed under criticism by numerous researchers from various dimensions. Analyses and inquires on this area have been majorly focused on theme identification; therefore, psychological and philosophical examination and approach to literature is a significant subject that has either been

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overlooked by scholars or otherwise, has mostly lacked a theoretical framework with no attention paid to psychological functions of texts.

3 Method

Using the descriptive-analytical method based upon Adler's psychological approach, this inquiry initially addresses the relation between literature and psychology. Next, in addition to the examination of Adunis and Shamlou's poetic text, the common psychological subjects are identified and explored. On the other hand, the shared psychological themes in both poets' literature are discovered and clarified. Ultimately, the relation between "sense of humiliation" and "the compensation mechanism" of Adler in a work of art is explained based on the American School and originality of similarity.

4 Results and Discussion

Similar to other artists, Adunis and Shamlou were under the influence of certain individual and social circumstances as well; they also experienced a type of rupture and shrinkage inside themselves which paved the way for their gravitation towards compensation. During his childhood, Adunis experienced many negative events that clearly impacted his poetic language. Similarly, Shamlou also experienced a difficult life; his childhood was spent during the Pahlavi era when the Iranian society was under the worst socioeconomic conditions. Nevertheless, it should also be noted that Shamlou had a sensitive personality and the smallest of issues, whether social or individual, would affect his mentality. His repeated marriages suggest the fact that he had a sensitive personality and was unable to adapt to every situation.

5 Conclusion

All in all, it can be stated that there are relatively similar artistic outcomes in the works Shamlou and Adunis; this holds not only through the psychological dimension, but also philosophical and cognitive aspects where they have followed similar paths within their poetic environments. This has been reflected in the existentialist tendencies of both poets that relates to the European philosophy, esp. the views of Nietzsche, Sartre, Camus, etc. Another common aspect in the psychological aspects of Adunis and Shamlou relates to their intellectual and cognitive layers which are present in processes of movement, perfectionism, and denial. This is also reflected in the existentialist orientation of both poets which is borne out of the European philosophy and the ideas of Nietzsche, Sartre, Camus, etc. As a result of suppression and undesirable political conditions, both poets have placed metaphors, symbols, disguise, and myths as the basis for compensation so as to battle their own mental taboos. In his use of myths, etc. as compensation mechanism, Adunis has attempted deconstruction similar to his counterpart. The only difference is that he has always shown reality in reverse and broken semantic norms as opposed to Shamlou who has mostly adhered to structures. Accordingly, gaining access to Adunis's mental reality is quite challenging which may also stem from his childhood and social circumstances at the time. All in all, the compensation mechanisms of both poets involve common foundations yet with differences in terms of function.

Keywords: Literature Psychology, Compensation Mechanism, Adunis, Shamlou

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