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## EDUCATING POEMS USING NOSTALGIA BY GHOLAM REZA BARUSAN

### EDUCAR POEMAS CON NOSTALGIA POR GHOLAM REZA BARUSAN

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#### RESUMEN

This article attempts to make benefit from the concepts of nostalgia to educate the concepts of poem and also will study the Nostalgias in the Persian poems. The term of Nostalgia has been interpreted in Persian language as the sorrow of loneliness, feeling longing, sweet sadness and remorse for the bygone. Although this term has recently entered literature, its examples are seen in Persian literature from distant past. Gholam Reza Barusan is amongst the poets whose poems are replete with nostalgia and its various examples. The poems of him are tough grasp by themselves, however using the concept of Nostalgia they can be educated. Meanwhile introducing the poems by Gholam Reza Barusan, the present article investigated the various manifestations of nostalgia in his poems, including thinking about death, loneliness, loss of dears, sorrow of loneliness and paling of the human values. The current study has been carried out based on a library research and sought identifying the factors influencing the poet's thought and mind and investigating the method by which nostalgia cases have been reflected in his poems.

#### Keywords:

Sorrow of loneliness, nostalgia, Gholam Reza Barusan, human beings, nature.

#### RESUMEN

Este artículo intenta sacar provecho de los conceptos de nostalgia para educar los conceptos del poema y también estudiará las nostalgias en los poemas persas. El término de Nostalgia ha sido interpretado en lengua persa como la tristeza de la soledad, el anhelo, la dulce tristeza y el remordimiento por el pasado. Aunque este término ha entrado recientemente en la literatura, sus ejemplos se ven en la literatura persa del pasado lejano. Gholam Reza Barusan es uno de los poetas cuyos poemas están repletos de nostalgia y sus diversos ejemplos. Los poemas de él son difíciles de entender por sí mismos, sin embargo, utilizando el concepto de Nostalgia pueden ser educados. Mientras presentaba los poemas de Gholam Reza Barusan, el presente artículo investigó las diversas manifestaciones de nostalgia en sus poemas, incluyendo pensar en la muerte, la soledad, la pérdida de los seres queridos, la tristeza de la soledad y la palidez de los valores humanos. El estudio actual se llevó a cabo en base a una investigación de la biblioteca y buscó identificar los factores que influyen en el pensamiento y la mente del poeta e investigar el método por el cual los casos de nostalgia se han reflejado en sus poemas.

#### Palabras clave:

Dolor de soledad, nostalgia, Gholam Reza Barusan, seres humanos, naturaleza.

## INTRODUCTION

Since nostalgia is a term that has found its way from psychology into literature, it is necessary to present some points in brief regarding its root and history before anything else.

Nostalgia is a French word composed of two Greek constructs, namely *Nostos* meaning return and *algos* meaning pain and suffering. Of course, the first part of this word, i.e. *Nostos*, has been inserted with the meaning of the mother land and reminding of homesickness or the very sorrow of being away from the homeland in Blackwell Dictionary as *“the term nostalgia was first used by a Swiss physician named Johannes Hoffer in an article to describe the psychological states of two patients”*. (Ebrahimi Takamjani, 2012)

A century before the publication of the article by Hoffer (1789-1815), the conditions were in such a way that the Austrian physicians acquired more clinical experience regarding this disease that had come about due to the increase in the number of the migrants and soldiers who were away from their homelands. They experimentally found out a way for diagnosing and treating this disorder.

Nowadays, nostalgia is described as an adaptation disorder in clinical psychology. *“Adaptation disorder occurs when an individual cannot adapt oneself to a stressing incident like the termination of a romantic relationship, change of living place and change in the life conditions hence experiences anxiety, frustration and worriedness”* (Ganji, 2015)

In the current literary investigations, nostalgia is approached from two perspectives, i.e. social and individual. In individual nostalgia, poets usually deal with the descriptions of moments of life and their own memories and feel regret for them. In social nostalgia that is the product of the social and political and even natural changes, the poet narrates a general grief and sorrow and somehow worries about the destiny of the humans and the world. Both kinds of the foresaid nostalgia are seen in the poems by nearly all the poets and it is used as a special artistic instrument for expressing the psychological and mental pains of the poet.

## METODOLOGY

The goal of this study was the identification and extraction of nostalgia examples in poems by Barusan. It seems that Gholam Reza Barusan is a grief-stricken poet due to the special conditions of his life, especially loss of his father during adolescence and sorrow is shown off in his poetry more than any other subject. By composing poetry, he sought healing of the pain and sorrow that has overshadowed his life. Meanwhile introducing Gholam Reza

Barusan as a newly emerging poet, the current article tried finding answers to the questions of the following kinds:

1. How much has nostalgia been used in Barusan's poems?
2. Which examples of nostalgia have been manifested in Barusan's poems?
3. Why Barusan's poems are considered as sadness-oriented?

The present study has used the set of the blank works by Gholam Reza Barusan as its reference basis. Numerous studies and researches have been undertaken regarding nostalgia. The followings are but some of them: Anousheh (1997); Aryanpour (2001); Barusan (2005); Sharifian & Taymuri (2010).

But, no research was found having dealt with nostalgia in the poems by Gholam Reza Barusan. The novelty of this issue made the researcher write the current article.

## DEVELOPMENT

Gholam Reza Barusan, son of Martyr Ismail Barusan, was born in 1973 in Mashhad and he found himself interested in poetry since 18. He has left behind a brilliant work paper during the 38 years of his short life. He is a well-known poet in the area of the new poetry generation and the post-1980s poetry. The main reason for his fame is his inclination towards short and simple writings in the area of blank verse.

*“Barusan realized plain writing as a difficult form and task and believed that the authors using plain language, unlike those employing obfuscated language, give realism a share of their poems. He knew plain writing as a locus wherein the readers can see themselves in the mirror of poetry and believed that idealism in poetry has reached its end and that the reality has to be narrated and this can be actualized in a plain language”*. (Abazari, 2013)

His first poetical collection was published in 1999 under the title of “probability confuses the bird”.

This means that the poet formally and seriously started composing poetry at the age of 26 and he could present himself within less than 12 years as a poet with his own poetry style but with a different language in the area of the contemporary poetry (Marandi & Homayonna, 2019).

In 2005, he published the anthology named “a packet of cigarette in exile”. This recent book was announced as the best book of the first round of journalists' poetry in 2006. This same book was published in 2013 by Morwarid Publication Institute along with the translation of the poems into English and German. The most successful

poetry collection by Barusan has been published under the title of *“mourning for the tree that has fallen on its side” in 2009; one year later, it won the title of the best book in “the second round of Nima Poetry Award”*.

The poetry collection named “the third infarction” that was published after Barusan's death included 53 sonnets and 340 couplets and a number of lyrics and was admired in the tenth international Fajr Poetry Festival. One of the other most successful of his works in the area of blank verse is the book “a door was opened in the waters” that was published after his death in 2012. The book called “the love quotes of a soldier”, as well, has been published from him in 2008.

Besides publishing poetry, Barusan has also performed works in the area of translation, criticism and research, including the followings:

1. Publishing an eclectic selection of Mashhad poetry under the name “towards Stock River”, 2006
2. An eclectic selection from Rig Vida, the oldest existing holy book of Hindus, under the title of “Suma Extract”, 2008
3. An eclectic selection of Khorasan Poetry under the title of “horses do not wear scarves” that includes poems by 50 poets from Khorasan as selected by Barusan himself.
4. An eclectic selection of the poems by Shams Langarudi under the title of “forgive me, my long street”

In utmost poetical blooming and perfection while still having many things to say, Barusan lost his life in a car accidents on 5<sup>th</sup> of December, 2011, along with his poet wife, Elham Eslami, and his three-year-old daughter, Leila.

Barusan directed blank verse towards a new path. Besides changing the language of blank verse and navigating it towards simplicity, he dragged poetry towards shortness and succinctness in such a way that he is presently viewed as one of the vanguards of the short poetry (Baraei & Mirzaei, 2018).

“The taste of freshness, feeling of loneliness, unification with the nature and relationship with water and soil and stone are amongst the properties of Barusan's poetry. In his poems, there are many human concerns incorporating issues from peace and splendor and war to cultural matters like magnanimity, friendship and kindness”.

The highly repeated theme of Barusan's poetry is sadness and grief that is shown off in his poetry in various forms and images. His poetry is painful and this is why his poetry is envisioned realistic; it has been able to beautifully delineate pains and concerns of the today's human

beings. Here, some nostalgia manifestations in his poems have been presented:

One of the examples of nostalgia is thanatopsis and consideration of death which has always been a subject for the human beings to think about. This phenomenon is considered as the most important and, in the meanwhile, the most ambiguous incident in every human being's life in such a way that it can be stated that the most important event in every person's life is death not birth.

“Death is the integral part of the mankind's life. In the course of history, human beings have always approached death differently and such different attitudes towards death have also been manifested in the works by poets” (Barusan, 2005).

As understood from the poems by Barusan, he has offered several different attitudes towards death:

One of the worries of the poet was how to die:

*“I have lived simply/but, my death will seem dubious/ you will find me/by my hair/by my nails/and, by my pelvis bone/that has illuminated a dark hole”* (Barusan, 2012). *“It seems that the poet has forecasted his heart-rending death in such types of poems: I sometimes think about my last shirt/in which death occurs/my shirt without you, alas/my head without you, alas/my hand without you, alas”* (Barusan, 2005)

In this type of his poems about death, a sort of grief is seen that is rooted in amazement and is the product of failure in perceiving the nature of death. *“They died/with a puzzle on palm/on moon, confirmation on their teeth/fine and gross”*. (Barusan, 2015)

Empty and closed fists when in death rattle is the image showing that the human beings has been unable in solving the riddle of death and that they have figured out nothing about death but its quality. *“Death comes/and, the shadow of its horse leaves a hole on the ground/and, wherever it goes/the soil opens its mouth”* (Barusan, 2012)

#### Fighting with Death and Belief in Immortality after Death

Such a type of attitude that is indeed a theosophical can be seen in the elegies he has composed in the mourning for his father for overcoming the fear of death and nothingness:

*“You do not die/like a flag that at which/many soldiers have shot/every night, when wind blows/you allow the moon to pass through you”* (Barusan, 2015). Barusan believes in the hereafter and does not know death as the end of the road:

*"After death, I will talk to the God/ for I have been killed for no reason/if I was not/find me in things/I loved/in the moon/ in the shape of pomegranate".* (Barusan, 2012). Some of his compositions indicate a sort of will; for instance, the following:

*"If I died, cry incessantly for me/bring curing drugs/set them on the shelf/on the other side of the room/my sisters should cry with loud voice in the afternoon/and, my wife/ turn my face away from the wind and towards the side that took away my heart".* (Barusan, 2005)

It can be stated in sum that besides optimism or pessimism thoughts towards death, Barusan had a deep sorrow for this contingent phenomenon and this grief was sometimes expressed with bitterness and occasionally with a sweet flavor.

### Loneliness

It is another type of nostalgia, also called strangeness of thought, making the poet feel grief and guiding him towards psychological isolation and feeling of loneliness. *"Loneliness is one of the subjects falling in the set of psychological factors and it is by confrontation with it that the poet is inflicted with a psychological crisis. Loneliness can perish a human being but it makes a poet more skillful".* (Ja'afari & Ghadimi, 2017)

In general, the thought and sense of loneliness means that the human beings feel they are not understood by the others around them, by the society and/or by the other poets and this makes the poet find oneself superior to the others and/or somehow feel difference and not being perceived by the others.

Both of loneliness aspects have been manifested in Barusan's poetry. *"Exactly like a train/like a truck/like a thing that was just big/and, I lived sorrowfully/and, nobody asked why like a train/why like a truck".* (Barusan, 2015)

In this poem, the poet has compared his loneliness with a train and truck to display its hugeness and has ended the poem by asking a question to mean that nobody asks me why I am alone.

He even felt more loneliness in the presence of others:

*"Loneliness on the bus is forty four persons/loneliness in train/a thousand persons"* (Barusan, 2005). Feeling of nostalgia in the area of thought and sensing loneliness never takes its shadow off the poet's head in such a way that such a grief and nostalgia can be considered as the second most frequently repeated theme (after the father's death) in Barusan's poetry.

*"I sometimes feel nostalgia to the size of the symbol the human beings of which/have migrated to another place/ and, loneliness/walks on my hand like an ant/my heart sometimes becomes a flower/wherein a bee has died".* (Shamlou, 1996)

Such a feeling of loneliness sometimes causes the poet to think he is superior to the others and express it with beautiful illustrations in the poems:

*"How is that the loneliness/makes the full moon/bigger/loneliness/loneliness/this is understood by the highest good branch".* (Barusan, 2015).

Elsewhere, he states:

*"I am the cherry branch full of buds/in loneliness/I have lived this way/and, I am going to go away in this way".* (Barusan, 2012)

Or, in the following short poetry:

*"The water that pours into a hole/has preferred loneliness".* (Barusan, 2005)

### Loss of Dears

One of the other factors making a person feel nostalgia is the loss of a family member, friend and/or a dear person loved very much by the poet.

*"In this type of Nostalgia, the poet or author has been departed from the friends and beloveds due to such reasons as death and martyrdom. Reviewing the past memories and the days spent beside the friends, the poet feels regret and composes poems signifying the poet's severe tendency for returning to that period".* (Muhammad and Khoshzamid, 2014)

Barusan portrays the sorrow of his father's martyrdom in every corner of his poems. In the last collection of poems by Barusan (a door was opened in the waters) that was published after his death, there is a long poem under the title of "a dove sank in silent to the waist" that can be realized as a long elegy in grieving the loss of his father.

*"How can I believe that only a bullet took you from me/the river was about to be the shawl on your waist/and, the rain was coming so/that it was right on your right hand/spring was coming to ask the address of the village/from your right hand/you have been killed/and, you were compelled to give up your dreams".* (Barusan, 2012)

Sorrow and grief of Barusan in this poem is to the extent that he scorns war for this incident. *"War leaves coarse stains/war is real/because sorrow exists/the negotiation table can be only round or square/war is real".* (Shamlou, 1996)

Within this long poem, he, meanwhile remembering his childhood, repeatedly reminds dissatisfaction of the father's death and realizes the absence of father as an eternal grief. *"What has death done to your face/to your chest that was my playground?/my cry sometimes rides on a back of a horse/that does not know the road"*. (Shamlou, 1996)

Barusan began the book "mourning for the tree that has fallen on its side" with several elegies that seem to have been composed for his father. *"You do not die/like a flag at which many soldiers/have shot/it appears to me that the wind/lets the moon to pass through it every night!.../how can death fill a hole/of you"*. (Barusan, 2015)

The sorrow for the loss of close friends has also irritated his mind; however, in comparison to the grief for the loss of father, it is less emotional. As an example, in a poem titled "elegy" that has been dedicated to the live memory of Hadi Taghizadeh, he composed the following words:

*"We cried/and, we broke the branch near our hand/and, we cried/we just cried/we did not die"*. (Barusan, 2005)

#### Feeling Sorrow for being Departed and Away from the Beloved

Another form of nostalgia and feeling lonely is the impatience due to being departed from or having lost the beloved.

*"In this type of nostalgia, the poet or author feels regret and sickness for being away from the beloved and remembering the good days he has spent with him and he still keeps on remembering those memories even after the elapse of many years and craves for the return to those days"*. (Muhammad and Khoshzamid, 2014)

In a poem called "strangeness" from the anthology "a packet of cigarette in exile", Barusan described restlessness and loneliness stemming from the absence of beloved in the following words:

*"Without you/I feel myself as a strange and lonely desert/that frightens the wind/a thin ditch/that has only seen one fifth of the moon"*. The turning point of Barusan's poem when speaking about the sadness of loneliness was the creation of novel and unprecedented images that have illustrated less frequently before him (at least in the area of blank verse).

*"Oh, loneliness does the same thing to me/that termites do to the roof/that moon does to cotton/that heart infarction does to the organizer of the metaphysics"*.

"Remembering of the lost beloved's beauties and his kindness and love does not leave the poet alone and shows off in every corner of his poetry:

*"Your eyes were big/with beautiful eyelashes/and your face was round/like the moon's pit/and, your legs that were coming to find me in a corner/like a washer/like the ragged edge of the carpet"*. (Barusan, 2012)

Barusan expressed his mental emotions honestly and in an innovative and simple way and this type of his poems is predominantly accompanied by a great remorse. *"Your eyes were kind/your mouth was kind/and, sparrows really came/and drank water from the corner of your lips"*. (Shamlou, 1996)

The pain of departure shouted by the poet seems to have become eternal in his soul in such a way that it can be stated that his trace can be found in his poems as an unsatisfied lover.

*"Tell me what to do?/With the pepper that tastes like departure/with the pain that does not know season/with the blood that does not stop/tell me what to do?/when happiness is tied to the blow of a balloon/and, sorrow like a stone/chases me towards down the slope of a valley"*. (Barusan, 2015)

Considering the abovementioned materials, he is a poet worshipping sadness and such a sorrow has been reflected in the form of a sweet feeling in both his romantic poems and social poems.

#### Paling of the Human Values

Negligence of the human values and ignoring of ethics is one of the primary and important factors of nostalgia that accounts for a relatively vast subset of his poems. The followings are some factors that have been put forth in Barusan's poems as the human concerns:

#### Cruel Treating of the Nature

In Barusan's poetry, nature has been manifested differently and he is found always concerned about the nature. The reason for negligence of the nature can be the products of modernism to some extent for it has made human beings numb in the era of iron and cement. The regret for the nature's destruction has persuaded Barusan to name one of his works "mourning for the tree that has fallen on its side" and this is per se expressive of the responsibility he has felt for the nature.

It is read in a poem from this same set that:

*"Muhammad Bagher/they cut the trees/they did not plant anything instead/every afternoon/shades gather around/*

*and cry for their trees // I feel like a tree/which is on its way to the wood-cutting factory”*. (Barusan, 2015)

His grief for the cutting of the trees reached the extent in this poem that he sympathized with the tree which was going to be cut at any instant. His interest in nature is seen in all of his illustrations and he does not forget the nature and its elements even when he composes in the elegy of his martyred father:

*“How can I believe that only a bullet took you from me/the river was just about to be the shawl on your waist/and, the rain came so that/it was right on your right hand/the spring was coming to ask the address of village from your right hand/you were killed/and, you were compelled to give up your dreams/they brought the news of your death like a cherry branch full of buds/and, put it in the middle of the yard”*. (Barusan, 2012)

Barusan’s regret of the urban life and distantness from the village and the memories he has had with his father in there about the cherry gardens, rivers, birds and wheat farms can be evidently sensed in his poems. He is so dependent on the nature that he introduced himself in a poem as the offspring of the nature and called the elements of the nature his relatives:

*“Let mountain be my brother/jungle, my wife/sea, my father/and, river, my mother/my sisters, water and fire and wind”*. (Shamlou, 1996)

**War:** One of the other subjects accounting for a large part of Barusan’s poems is war and its outcomes. He realized his killed father as his only share of the war and reproached this ominous phenomenon and made the sigh and outcry and grief he has had for the loss of his father collapse on the war.

War and its outcomes have so much annoyed the poet’s soul and this same war-irritated spirit is manifested in the entirety of his poetry and, despite the high frequency of the word “war” in his poem, he is a poet feeling sadness for the absence of peace and tranquility.

*“War is real/and, because there is sadness/the negotiation table can be only round or square/war is real/death comes and leaves the mouth of drums open”* (Barusan, 2012). Although he is in a world “that shouting/cannot change the path of the bullets”, he is still living with the dream about peace and recounts it as his utopia.

**Freedom:** One of the other grieves in the compositions by Gholam Reza Barusan is the absence of freedom and human beings’ captivity whether be it inside their own selves or be it in the jails outside. He wants human beings to be free. Due to the same reason, he has most often used

its antonym, i.e. captivity, in his poems in such a way that the concept he has had in his mind can be figured out thereby.

*“Human beings change from generation to generation/and, chain/has preserved its old form”*(Barusan, 2015). As it is seen, freedom in its vast and human sense is a concern obsessing the poet’s mind. *“The sea is sage in my land/it understands borders/it puts handcuffs on/it throws to the jail/every wave that goes rogue/it puts its head under the water/in my land/everything remains quiet”*. (Shamlou, 1996)

It is this sarcasm to the social limitations imposed on the human beings that is shown off in the backstage of his poetical illustration. Such a projection of the internal emotions by the means of the nature’s element is one of the techniques in Barusan’s poetry and he always did his best to choose an indirect method of expressing things for social nostalgia.

## CONCLUSIONS

In the investigation of the blank verses by Gholam Reza Barusan, five types of nostalgia examples are found with the highest frequency of manifestation in his poems. Although examples like distantness from the homeland and regretting about the lost youth are seen in his poetry to a lesser extent for such a reason as the poet’s lack of experiencing them, there are other examples like the loss of dears, thanatopsis, departure from the beloved and paling of human values that have been most frequently manifested in his poems.

Barusan is a poet who has recalled death in many occasions and presented various embodiments of death in his poems. The sorrow of losing father during adolescence made the poet repeatedly remember death. In the course of remembering the sorrowful death of father, he reprimanded war and its outcomes because he found death as the primary culprit for his father’s absence. This same issue made the death have the highest frequency in his poems. After death, the second highly repeated theme of his poems was sorrow and grief followed by the feeling of loneliness and discouraged amorous experiences, all of which have caused him to become a sad poet.

Frustration of the human beings and staying away from the society guided the poet towards the nature in such a way that it can be stated that part of the poet’s naturalism was rooted in this same sorrow of loneliness. His motivation for reflecting nature’s elements can be nothing but disappointment of the senseless human beings of the industry era.

He wanted human beings to be free and he demanded a world devoid of war and violence and such a dream was remorsefully presented so that he appeared as a frustrated poet; his happiness was this same endless sorrow. Thus, in order to cool down his internal restlessness, he resorted to poetry and kept on this mission until death filled a hole of him.

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