

**Poetry in Translation: A Comparative Analysis of Selected  
Works of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman**



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A

**Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Complete  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of the Degree of**

**MASTER OF ARTS**

**IN**

**ENGLISH**

**LOVELY PROFESSIONAL UNIVERSITY**

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**PUNJAB, INDIA**

**2017**

*This Dissertation is Dedicated to My Dear Parents for Their Endless Caring,  
Love, Guidance, Inspiration, Support, Teaching and Encouragement in My  
Entire Life.*

*“Mina Qarizada”*

## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the dissertation entitled, “*Poetry in Translation: A Comparative Analysis of Selected Works of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman*”; submitted for the award of Masters of Arts in (English) and to the institution is the original and authentic study of my own that I carried out during allotted time from 15<sup>th</sup> January to 28<sup>th</sup> November 2017 under the supervision of Mr. Sandeep Kumar Sharma, Assistant Professor of Department of Verbal, Ability. This piece of work does not contain any unauthorized works of other research scholars except the ones which are used by giving the authentic citations and references. The referred sources are properly cited in both in-text citation and in bibliography of this paper.

**Place: Punjab, India**

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**Date: 11/ 27/2017**

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## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled, *“Poetry in Translation: A Comparative Analysis of Selected Works of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman”*; by Miss. Mina Qarizada bearing the registration number 11613704 has been completed under my guidance and supervision. The present dissertation is the result of her original work, investigation and study. No part of the dissertation has ever been submitted in any university. This dissertation is fit for the submission of partial fulfillment for the award of the degree of M.A in English to the School of Business and Applied Arts, Department of English, Lovely Professional University, Punjab, India.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Sometimes words are not enough to express the true feelings and gratitude pouring out from the core of the heart. Availing this opportunity for getting an interesting and informative dissertation, I would like to express my deep gratitude and appreciation to my advisor Mr. Sandeep Kumar Sharma, Assistant Professor of Department of Verbal, Ability, Lovely Professional University. I am thankful of his exemplary guidance; support, inspiration, and encouragement that made me to successfully complete this piece of work. His immense knowledge and his sense of monitoring my work by providing constructive feedback made me to go through this paper.

I would like to thank from my all professors who have been the main source of knowledge and guidance to me. I especially thank the HOD and the entire faculty of the Department of English especially those who have taught me various subjects during my study in Lovely Professional University. They have been the constant sources of all those necessary help that was required till the end of M.A program. I was inspired by their guidance and encouragement and I will be willing to keep them in mind later in life because their instruction added to my skills and knowledge in working such scholarly tasks that may lead me to my professional career as a teacher back in my university.

I would like to thank my wonderful and supportive parents who have always been there for me and encouraged and motivated to my personal and professional careers. They never doubted my ability to pursue my Higher Education in the level of post-graduation and they always provided me with unwavering moral, emotional and financial support. Despite the distance, I always felt their love and caring being in India for two years.

Finally, I express my gratitude to the Ministry of Higher Education of Afghanistan and The World Bank for sponsoring the scholarship program and providing me the opportunity to finish my MA degree in LPU, where I got the chance to develop my personal and professional skills. I really owe my gratitude to all of you beyond my words.

**Date: 11/ 27 /2017**

**(Mina Qarizada)**

## ABSTRACT

Among the artistic and literary forms, poetry holds a greater place in the consciousness of Afghans. Studying Afghan women's writing especially poetry is very significant because it is considered to be used as a means of communicating important ideas, passing on stories and heritage, and making statements. The purpose of this dissertation is to comparatively study the poetic features of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman's poetry – two Afghan poetesses. The works of these poetesses had been studied separately before, but no attempt has been made to comparatively analyze their poetry particularly in the light of Feminism and Romanticism theories. This paper studies the poetic feature of the selected poems of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman from the perspective of Feminism and Romanticism theories. The study focuses on Feminism and Romanticism in different periods of poetry development in Afghanistan. It also comparatively analyzes the feminist and romantic elements in the selected poems of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman based on poetic diction, form and style of. Moreover, it explores the social and psychological perspectives of the poetesses about women and womanhood in different eras in Afghanistan. The findings of the paper showed that Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman's poetry poems were different in form, style and diction while similar in themes, content, and way of expressing their true feelings and emotions.

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# **Introduction**

# **Poetry in Translation: A Comparative Analysis of Selected Works of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman**

## **Introduction**

Poetry provides some remarkable historical, cultural, and geographical facts of a particular country like Afghanistan. It also represents the literary works, poetic themes, styles, and visions of the poets in general. It is through poetry that one can have full access to understand the contemporary literature. It is the poets' poems and works which are the basic sources to know about the literature of an age. Among the artistic and literary forms, poetry holds a greater place in the consciousness of the people of Afghanistan. Persian Poetry has different forms and styles and it differs from its richly diverse population. The important credit would be given to the classical poets such as Mawlana Jallaudin Rumi and Saadi Shirazi who are the greatest poets of all ages in the history of Afghanistan. However, there are other female poets who have their great influences in the mind of the people from time to time. Afghanistan has its rich history in the field of poetry with regards to the famous poetesses such as Rabia Balkhi and other female poets after her.

One of the important facts about women's writing in Afghanistan is to study women's writing in order to understand them. It is because of the monumental challenges that remain for those who choose to compose and publish certain work and for those whose works have been influenced with personal struggle of socio-political issues. A study of the poets and their poetry of a particular region, Afghanistan, is a clear vital step toward understanding the poetry of Afghanistan as a whole. As Marie states in her book *"LOUD POEMS LIKE GUNS"* regarding the history of female poetess as: "The history of female poets in the land

now known as Afghanistan is a rich one, with famous examples going as far back given as Rabia Balkhi of the 10th century." (1)

Among the artistic and literary forms, poetry holds a greater place in the consciousness of Afghans. Studying Afghan women's writing is very significant because it is considered to be used as a means of communicating important ideas, passing on stories and heritage, and making statements. The purpose of this dissertation is to comparatively study the poetic features of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman's poetry – two Afghan poetesses. The works of these poetesses had been studied separately before, but no attempt has been made to comparatively analyze their poetry particularly in the light of Feminism and Romanticism theories. This paper studies the poetic feature of the selected poems of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman from the perspective of Feminism and Romanticism theories. The study focuses on Feminism and Romanticism in different periods of poetry development in Afghanistan. It also comparatively analyzes the feminist and romantic elements in the selected poems of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman based on poetic diction, form and style of. Moreover, it explores the social and psychological perspectives of the poetesses about women and womanhood in different eras in Afghanistan. The findings of the paper showed that Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman's poems were different in form, style and diction while similar in themes, content, and way of expressing their true feelings and emotions.

Due to the presence of a mutual relationship between the literature and social conditions, two factors can be involved in the emergence and direction of poetry. The poetic flow factors can be seen either out of the text or intertextual. These factors cannot be ignored by a scholar or an artist in the field of literature. Generally, this paper analyses the selected poems of Rabia Balkhi as a medieval poetess and Nadia Anjuman as a contemporary poetess

from the perspective of Feminism and Romanticism in the history of Literature of Afghanistan. Both of these Poetesses speak frankly about love that is earthly and divine. Love either in medieval time or now is place disagreement about expressing women's interest in the literary contexts.

### **Biography of RabiaBalkhi**

Rabia Balkhi is a famous poetess of Afghanistan from Medieval time. She was a princess. She was living in Balkh city which is located in the North of Afghanistan during the reign of Samanids in 9th century A.D. She belongs to a semi-legendary figure in Persian literature. She is known as the first woman writer as well as the first poetess of Medieval Era. Rudaki and Attar are the poets who wrote about Rabia Balkhi's sketch of life. Her life references and records can be found Attar and Rudaki poetry. There is no specific data to specify her exact date of birth and death. She was the contemporary poet along with Rudaki. She belongs to a royal family of Balkh. Her father was a chieftain at the court of Samanid. Her father was reported to be from descended of Arab an immigrant who during the reign of Abu Muslim has settled to Balkh.

She was born in a bilingual family and she was able to write her poetry in both Arabic and Persian. She was very famous not only due to her physical beauty, but she was also loved because of her writing poetry verses. She is the first generation of the Persian poetess in the history of Persian Language. She was talented in poetry writing and the themes of her poems were about love, purity, self-expression, beauty of life and imagination and so on. She started writing poetry at the earlier age. During her life time, her poetry was not famous and it was not recited to the public like other poets. It was after her tragic death that she got fame and placed herself in the golden history of Persian Literature. In the contemporary literature of

Afghanistan, her name is kept alive. The good example of it is the schools, educational centers, and hospitals which are given her name. (Smith)

It has been recorded that when her father died, her brother named Hares inherited the position of his father. Rabia met Baktash who was the servant of her brother Hares. Both of them were close to each other until they fell in love and their communication was based on poetry and writing verses. By the time Hares heard about the love affair of his sister, he not only suspect his sister, but also he ordered his men to kill Baktash and threw him out of the city. There is no clear source of the death of Rabia because some believed she was killed by her brother and others believed that she suicide due to depression and pain of love for Baktash.

Rabia Balkhi's last poem that she wrote on the wall of the bathhouse is a Ruba'i. It is a short poem which expresses a deeper understanding of her emotions and love. Whether she was killed by her brother's order or by her natural death, she wrote her last poem on the wall while dying and through that poem; she got the record of being fame and gaining prosperity. Even though she was a princess, her poetry is a great source of her inner feelings and emotions that show her womanhood and sufferings of her time. At the same time, some references mentioned that Balkhash killed her brother in war and he himself has suicide. On the other hand, some records point that after Rabia died, her brother Hares asked to Baktash fought with Baktash and killed him in the battle. (Metcalf)

Both Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman poetry are selected from the translation the famous writer's books. Generally, it is poetry in translation, but the main sources which are the poet's original works will be kept in mind alongside with the translated verses. This may provide more clues to compare and analyze the poems more carefully and with respect to the

ideas they represent. The Selected Poems of Rabia Balkhi are taken from the great masterpiece of Paul Smith “*Princesses, Sufis, Derwishes, Martyrs & Feminists: Nine Great Women Poets of the East*”. The five common poems that are selected in this thesis are:

- a) Rubai (Two Couplets)
- b) Ghazal (Sonnets)
- c) Qitas (Elegy)
- d) Masnavi (Lengthy Sonnet)

### **Nadia Anjuman: A Sketch of Her Life**

The community of intellectuals and highly educated was held by a group of people as a clan literary center of Afghanistan literature which is one of the strongest core of a society and literature to be rich. On the Post- 2001 era, the majority of Herat people were forced to show their disrespect to art, literature, poems, and learning. The female was far beyond the formal and informal education. Nadia Anjuman was one of those girls who loved to be educated and to write poetry, but due to the bad conditions of the country, she was forced to start writing short stories and poetry at home. Her literary and professional career had its greater impact on the contemporary literary culture and the psyche of those other female poets after her. (Marrie)

Understanding Nadia Anjuman's life sketch is the fundamental analysis for realizing the other female writers and poets' writings based on their written contexts. Nadia Anjuman was a contemporary poet and journalist from Afghanistan. She was born on December 21<sup>st</sup>, 1980 in Herat province, Afghanistan. She was born as the sixth child in her family. Her childhood covers the recent periods of insecurity in Afghanistan. She was a talented student

at school, but at the same time, she was hapless for not being able to continue her education due to shutting up the schooling for girls by Taliban regime in the country.

Nadia Anjuman was in eleventh grade at school when the Taliban captured Herat in 1995, and she had already been writing and reciting poems at home and school for years. She joined the Golden Needle School along with other women for seeking knowledge and education. This underground educational circle was organized by young women of her city which was directed by a university teacher in 1996. The aim of this center was not only to teach practical works for women but also to educate them. It is said that women gathered to this center for the purpose of sewing three times a week, but at the same time, they were meeting in order to learn and attend the lectures of the professors. They had sewing baskets along with a hidden notebook and a pen in when they came to the sewing academy. They were secretly getting informal education being hidden from the rulers of that time. (Marie)

Nadia Anjuman was born in an open-minded family. Her family was her greater supporter even in the time when women were not allowed to go to schools by the local government in Post-2001. She was a lady of the risk taker in her life time. She had the ambition to be educated and to be wised among others. She joined with other ladies who were studying literature in secret. The women initiated the daily meeting in a secret place and later on several university instructors joined the academy to guide and assist them. Literature was a joy to those ladies who came for sewing lessons and studied other things like writing poetry and reading literary works in secret. Later the number of them increased in the sewing lessons class.

Nadia Anjuman was a said to be hard-working, courageous, modest and enthusiasm in poetry. Anjuman's poems and works are the representation of her voice and feelings. Her

style of writing shows that she was a real female poet even though she was not able to gain all knowledge of poetry. She started learning in a secret place in "The Golden Needle" with other ladies. They had the pleasure of studying Persian literature. Their activities were based on discussion and reading. They not only read the Persian literature but also liked foreign classics like Shakespeare and Tolstoy. Anjuman liked to follow the classical Persian poets such as Hafiz, Mowlana Rumi, and some others. She also loved the poetics of Nima Yushij, Latif Nazemi, and Wasif Bakhtari. She also had her interest in Sohrab Sepehri, Farrukh Farrukhzad and Simin Behbahani poetry. Anjuman's poetry was based on both classical and new style which became very common in the literary community. She was very sensitive to injustice whole her life about the situation of women in Afghanistan.

In 2005, while Anjuman was a student in Herat University, her first book of poetry was published this is called "Gul-e-Dodi" (Dark Red Flower). The book was proved to be popular not only in Afghanistan, but also in Iran and Pakistan. In 2006 she was able to publish the second volume of her poetry collection which is "Yekn sàbad délhoreh" which means (An Abundance of Worry"). The poems of this volume were all about her true feelings and expressions of her isolation and sadness concerning her marital life. (Marie)

One of her most famous poems is known as "Makes No Sense" which was written in 1999. The other poems are "Afghan Woman" which was composed of a song by one of Afghan Musicians Mrs. Shahla Zaland who has composed Anjuman's poem to music and gave a voice to all Afghan women. This song attracted the attention of thousands of fans. The lines, "Makes No Sense" of that poem is as: "Music makes no sense anymore, why should I compose, / I am abandoned by time whether I sing or am still / when words are poison for the tongue, why taste?" [Marrie.38.1-3] This poem was written by Anjuman as being very



hopeless from the condition of women's lives. She composes it by asking questions about why sing, why taste and why live. Anjuman was one of the contemporary poets of Afghanistan whose personal artistic life flourished even in oppressive external realistic of post-2001. It was the main secret behind her success in poetry.

Anjuman's husband was Farid Ahmad Majid Neia who was also graduated from Herat University and he became the head of the library of the university. Anjuman's husband and his family were not in favor of her writing and her law's family thought that her writing poetry is only a disgrace to the reputation and fame of the family. Though they didn't support Anjuman with her work, Anjuman was able to continue writing. On November of 2015, Anjuman's dead body was found from her house in Herat. The cause of her death was as a result of injuries in her head. Her death was due to her husband beating her that not only she was suffered from, but died as a result. In the history of Afghanistan, Anjuman's death remained as a tragic and it is considered to be a great loss to the country.

Anjuman wrote many of her poems in traditional Persian form which is known as Ghazal. She was considered as one of the most skilled poets of her generation with regard to classical forms by Herat's Literary Community. Her best-known works are:

- ❖ Mountain, Sea
- ❖ My Garden
- ❖ Divine Beauty
- ❖ Smoke-Bloom
- ❖ Makes No Sense

## Literature Review

According to Nasibeh Loni who states in her work, "*Love Breeze in Poem of Female Poets from Rabae Qzdary to Simin Behbehani*" about the development of literary texts by women in the history of Persian Literature centuries ago. By analyzing her words one can find out that throughout the geography of Persian speakers during the past centuries in the history of Afghanistan like many other countries, it can be seen and felt that only great men were trained in the fields of art and literature compared to women. The richness of Afghanistan literary culture shows the capacity of its trained elite from different aspects.

If it is seen from the cultural and sociological perspective, women's situations in the history were much different from that of men. This difference arises from discrimination of inadmissibility and lack of motivation of women. But despite this sexual discriminatory approach one can notice shining of some the famous women among them both in the distant past and in modern times. In the field of Persian literature and the literary history of Afghanistan, women did not have the greater place, but the influences can be undertake as a clue of women as poets or writers. One of such great writer about whom people remembered is Rabia Balkhi, but there is not a clear registered biography of her. The contemporary critics called Rabia Balkhi as being the first female who has fought for the rights of women in the history. As Marrie quotes in her book about Rabia Balkhi as:

Although Rabia Balkhi is known as a poet for lovers, she is more than that. She symbolizes the struggle of Afghan women and girls to pursue lives of their choosing, free from the dictates of oppressive traditional cultural practices. (16)

Perhaps the reason is that composing poem and doing literary work for women has been considered a form of fornication and most of the time it was not considered being worthy. Nowadays efforts have been made for women's rights by different organizations and institutions, they understand the laws governing the society and they were aimed for giving awareness to people from their rights especially women rights to think, to create, to write and to act in the society. On the other hand, Nasibeh Loni states that Rabia Balkhi was one of those women who expressed her love for Baktash through composing poetry. She states that during Rabia's era, love was forbidden for women and it was exclusively for men. Rabia was the first and the greatest poetess of that time who wrote poetry and expressed her voice and feelings.

Afghanistan Persian literature has experienced a dramatic change during the last centuries which has the themes of wars and peace. It was in the early years of the twentieth century that Afghanistan faced with a dramatic change in terms of social, political and economic. It was one of the main reasons for development in the field of modern approaches and methods in literature and art. In the field of Journalism and literature, Saraj'ul Akhbar was the first such literary publication. This publication was first founded by Mahmood Tarzi after his return to Afghanistan from Turkey. This was the main reason for modernization in the period. It was the way for poetry which was the best tool for expressing the ideas, thoughts, and ideology of the people. In 1930 Kabul and Heart Literary Circles were founded both in the capital and Western of the country within two years. Both were for the purpose of publishing magazines relating to the cultural and literal aspects of Persian literature. It was the time for the development of modern literature and it was the age of representing the social and cultural life of the people through literature.

Nasibeh Loni further reminds that the greatest poets of the ancient time were the ones who did their contribution in the field of literature especially poetry. It is the representation of their feminine ideas and personal experiences. She gave examples of Rabia Balkhi and other female poets and writers who composed poems and spoke in their feminine poetry by their personal life experiences. In the contemporary literature of Afghanistan, Nadia Anjuman is best known for her poetry.

As Julie Billaud writes in her book *“Kabul Carnival: gender politics in postwar Afghanistan”* about Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman by stating:

Among the rare Afghan female poets ... two names were consistently cited with great enthusiasm: tenth-century poet Rabia Balkhi from the northern city of Balkh and contemporary poet Nadia Anjuman from the western city of Heart. These two poets, in spite of the distance that separated them in time, had each reached the status of national legends because of their tragic fate" (188).

Farzana Marie in her masterpiece known as *“LOUD POEMS LIKE GUNS: Women's Poetry from Heart, Afghanistan”* provides information about the rise of Nadia Anjuman as the new start in the city of heart. Nadia became the source of inspiration for other female poets and writers during her time. Her poetry has the power to show women's battle against the discrimination and violence. Nadia poetry represents the voices of hope and encouragement to the women. It can be noted that Afghan women followed the pathways of the medieval female poets, but they dealt to have their own themes, styles, and form of poetry based on the contemporary issues of women's lives.

According to Zhwak Mohammad Saeed who mentioned in his book *“Women in Afghanistan History”* about the condition of women in medieval time as:

During the medieval time, Islamic principles, especially concerning women were put on the shelf of oblivion; vanity replaced modesty; prejudice replaced rationality; superstition replaced knowledge; and injustice relating to either individuals or the whole society and slavery again reared its head.(7)

The role of women in the country like Afghanistan is one of the controversial issues in every aspect such as tribal, social, cultural and national levels. The in the past decades, women have been suffered more than men and this was a great challenge to their claiming to equality, justice, education, and so on. It is not only a fall of the vulnerable status of women, but a loss of right of choice of the nation as a whole. On the other hand, women especially the enlightened ones no longer tolerate ignoring their rights and they tries to challenge inequality and injustice within the society. Women are not only oppressed by the male oppressors who enjoyed ruling status, but also tradition hit and oppressed them as well. (Saeed)

### **Research Methodology**

In this paper, the methodology was based on the use of different methods and techniques that seemed to be helpful in the process of collecting data. The process of the data collection were included, but not limited to reading and using the related books, articles, libraries, online journals, magazines and other sources in order to find out the gist of the poets lives and their poetry. In addition, the use of proper methods enabled to analyze the poems in terms of the title, poet's attitudes, and the shifts in order to facilitate the process of analyzing the data. Through different processes, the critical analyzing of the concepts, ideas, themes, titles, and other features of the poems were done to determine what the poems represent to the readers.

Furthermore, examining the denotative and connotative meanings of the words and expressions that are used in the poems helped with the poetic themes and meanings. It has helped to consider the purposes and attitudes involve understanding of the tones, feelings, and emotions of the poets' personal associations with the poems. It also provided the hints to examine the poems that what kinds of shifts are represented and how those shifts change the direction and meaning of the selected poems. Since all the poems are translated into English by other poets and writers, this paper also considered that aspect as well. There was a concentration in realizing if there are any new insights about the title of each poem or not. However, the last step was in determining the themes in order to find out about the messages that the poets want to convey to the readers. In this method, one of the advantages is providing a clear-cut framework in order to process the poems by analyzing them in terms the background of the writers' era, subject matter, themes, styles, forms, and audience or readers.

Thus, a basic requirement of doing research is selecting an appropriate research methodology and its proper theory to apply it. In this particular work, quantitative Research Methodology was chosen to critically compare the work of the poets. It includes the technique of data collection and technique of data analysis. All the selected poems in terms of content, form, theme, style, diction, and other poetic devices have been analyzed and represented from Feminist and Romantic perspectives as the application of the selected theories.

## Research Objectives

The aims and objectives of this paper dealing with the ideas to make a general comparison between the writings of the selected poets. First of all, the study focuses on Feminism and Romanticism in different periods of Poetry development in Afghanistan with reference to the poetry of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman. Secondly, it makes a comparative analysis of the romantic and feminist elements on the selected poems based on the concepts and ideas that represent the social, cultural, and psychological aspects of the poets. Thus, there was enough to find out about the unexplained words within the pomes from the point of view of female poets. The general objectives of the paper are as follows:

- To develop analytical skills through the study of the selected poems in terms of forms, themes, contents, and the techniques that are implied
- To analyze critically the cultural, social and political situations of women conditions in both medieval and contemporary ages in Afghanistan within the poetry of two poetesses
- To understand the condition of women as writers and poets in the country history
- To demonstrate an awareness the role of women in literature especially in poetry

## Social Values of the Research

This paper in regards to many aspects would help the readers especially those who are fond of poetry and like to know more about Afghan women through their poetry. Some may have respective ideas and values for the great poets like Rabia Balkhi as a medieval poet and

Nadia Anjuman as a contemporary poetess to read their poetry. It also can help future critics and researchers to have the sample of a collection of the poems to write and analyze about the poets in the future. It is because that "Poetry" is the best way to change the minds and the lives of all for the better. This piece of work would be beneficial for those who have the same feelings as the poets as represented through imageries, symbols, metaphors and other poetic devices in the poems.

### **Proposed Theories to Apply**

In the selected poems of both Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman, the comparative analysis has been made on Feminism and Romanticism elements within the poetry. All the poems have the reference to either of the theories to apply. These theories focus was to make a clear comparison between the two poet's works. It is clear-cut to find both the elements of Feminism and Romanticism in each of the selected poems of them.

### **Feminism as a Movement in Literature**

Feminism has been considered as a general term related to the political, social and economic quality of both sexes which came to rise in the favor of women's rights in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. According to the dictionary of Cambridge, feminism is called for a belief through which women are considered to have the equal rights in power, economic, personal, cultural, social, educational, and professional opportunities the same as men are allowed to have. They should be treated the same as men and there has to be set of activities by which they can gain their states and power. This movement is called a movement which is interconnected to the political, social and ideological aspects that came into existence by the British intellects in



the 1960s. It deals not only with gender equality and identity, but it also deals with universal liberty.

Mary Wollstonecraft is one of the leading figures in this movement. She is a well-known critic of feminism and she was the one who argued for the liberty and social equality of men and women in all aspects of their lives. Her focus was not laid in marriage, law, economic, but also in education, occupation, and public equality. Wollstonecraft and her contemporary critics tried to emphasize on the issues which relate to women in order to bring change in the existing laws and regulations. According to them, access to education was easily provided to women during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but that access to education was based on the idea of womanhood. The most common fundamental figures of feminism are Simone de Beauvoir, Mary Wollstonecraft, Oliver Scheiner, Virginia Woolf, John Stuart Mill, Fredrick Eagles and others. Their works are the sources of studies of women's problems in terms of social, cultural, economic and language. (Krishnaswamy)

Abraham and Harpham stated in their book, "*A Glossary of Literary terms*", about the movement of feminism that took two centuries to its inauguration until late in the 1960s. The struggle was based on the true recognition of cultural rules of women and their political and social life to be achieved. According to some critics who date the feminism criticism by the introduction of the famous writers such as Mary Wollstonecraft, John Stuart Mills, Margaret Fuller books. The famous books of that period were, "*A Vindication of the Rights of Women*" by Showalter"; "*The Subjection of Women*" and "*Women in the 19th Century*". These books were published to give social, political, legal and cultural freedom to women.

Virginia Woolf one of the feminist activist who has written the book, "*A Room of One's Own*"; and many other essays about women and their life struggles. Her essays and

themes are based on the economic, educational, and cultural aspects of women in society. She called such society as being patriarchal which a male-dominated society. The society is the place where women are prevented to realize themselves as being creative and productive. At the same time, there are some other writers who wrote about women and women's life in general. Their works have big subjective and objective presentations that occur in women's life. Kate Miller a well-known critic writes in her book, "*Sexual Politics*"; which was published in 1969, about the relationship of power in the society which is not regarded as gender-based power.

Basically, the aims of feminist critics were to underline feminism, to share assumptions and beliefs of those who represent the diverse ways of the individual critics for exploring the sexual differences. They tried to privilege in the production of women's literary forms in order to understand the perceptions and ideas of them so that they can critically analyze and evaluate the literature. Abrams and Harpham examine:

The society is male - centered and it is ruled by them. In such a society, women are subordinate to men in all cultural dimensions of life such as family, religion, politics, and economy, legal and even artistic matters (125).

In earlier times, females are always been defined by negative reference to the male as the natural norm of human life. It was because of the idea that women lack the identifiable organs and powers that men have naturally. They also emphasized that women need to be given the opportunities to cooperate in their own roles. As Semon de Beauvoir says that no one is born as a woman, but she rather becomes a woman and as a result, she needs to have her identity, freedom, and authority to think, write, and to gain power in all aspects of her life.

The essay, "*The Vindication of the Rights of Women*"; by Wollstonecraft in 1792 is one of the well-known references to the feminist literary text. It is a feminist criticism of the concepts of literary criticism that deals with the aims, goals, reasons, and problems of women's lives. The main focal point of feminist critics is not to analyze, but also to respond to the male creative theory. They want to change the male-centered to women-centered in which they would be able to achieve their roles both intellectually and independently. According to them, women are as creative as men are and their creativity can be seen and understand through the study of their history, style, themes, genres, language, and writings. The point is to be able to study all the various aspects of female's creativity and traditional literary works of men.

The term 'gynocritic' was coined by Showalter for the purpose of providing a clear-cut discourse for specializing critical analysis of women's writings as being the core of their study and subject matter. There are four basic models used most commonly in feminism are known as biological, linguistic, psychoanalytic and cultural. According to the issue of gender differences, critics came to identify four basic domains in which women's writings are said to be inferior comparing to men's writings. These four features are highlighted in Gynocriticism by Elaine Showalter as:

- ❖ Women's Writings and women's' Body
- ❖ Women's Writings and women's' Psyche
- ❖ Women's Writings and women's' Language
- ❖ Women's Writings and women's' Culture

Critics pointed out about the superiority of men and women in this regard seeing that women are able to use less than 20% of their brain energy for any creative and psychological

functions such as writing as a creative work of art. For the view of anti-feminist, men are more creative than women because they are able to create great literary works either in prose or poetry while this is not logical and acceptable to the feminist critics. The other concept is about women's language comparing to men's language. In writing, both men and women use different languages according to the feminist critics and even they believe that a formal language is like a foreign language to women when they use either written or spoken forms. They said that there are the biological, social preferences, or some cultural beliefs that can affect the language of any particular gender or group. They call the language of men as oppressors' language and they emphasized on the development of a pure and separate language for female. The connection between women's writings and women's psyche is also one of the differences in the concepts of feminist critics to differentiate gender identities. This feature deals with the correlation of biological and psychological of the authors in general. There are proves by the feminist critics that women are stronger in terms of psychological principles than men and they are not weak in that sense.

One of the most important theories that have its more influences on women's writing is called the theory of culture. It is the culture that includes all other theories such as biological differences, language differences, and psychological aspects in general. Women's cultural situation is one of the main causes of those factors that guide her life. Since females are considered to be outside the culture, their experiences and stories are not included in the history of that culture, nation or country. Critics say that women are not part of the sub-culture of the male-dominated culture. They are part of general culture itself because women share the same culture as men. They have their own feelings, emotions, activities, perceptions, ideas, thoughts, values of their own and such representations are unknown to

men. That area of their life is called the "Wild Zone" where men are not allowed to enter or know about.

Thus, it is part of the efforts of the feminist critics to have their focus on women's writings to be standardized. This can be possible only when the effect of gender and female literary tradition are considered among the various factors that affect the meaning of the text. In addition, she states in her essay the fact that like feminist creative writers, feminist critics also face certain obstacles which have to be highlighted after the rise of feminism. Showalter has tried to analyze in detail the belief that feminist criticism is in the wilderness, which means, feminist critics are not capable enough to produce coherent speculations. Showalter points out that feminist criticism is being dependent on male creative theory due to taking its basic sources from male writers. Since feminist critics try to analyze and respond to male creative theory, this needs to be changed to achieve feminist criticism that is 'women-centered, independent and intellectually coherent'.

### **Romanticism as a Movement in Literature**

Romanticism as a literary age was started in the first half of the nineteenth century in literature. It is a movement that includes the style, genre, and themes of its own in literature, art, and music. The introduction of "*The Lyrical Ballads*" marks the beginning of the age as a new era in poetry. Both William Wordsworth and S.T. Coleridge are the Romantic Poets who brought a new vision of aims, and conditions of living through the themes of their poetries. It was in the preface of, "*The Lyrical Ballads*"; that William Wordsworth states his point of view about how the poet's mind operates in poetry. Wordsworth defines poetry as "The spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings; it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility." It is the age of self-desires, and identities.

This historical movement includes the period between 1785 to 1837 in literature and art. The literary characteristics of this age clearly state the changes in the political aspect as well as the shifts to the other aspects of the literature of that age. The spirit of the literary age and its literature can be seen in Romantic poets such as William Wordsworth, S.T Coleridge, Lord Byron, Shelley, P.B. Shelley, Keats, Jane Austen, and Scott and other creative writers of that time. According to Long, this age is the period of glorification of literature and art.

The main subject of Romantic literature is based on the idea of common man and the value of the individual. It is called by Long as the true age for revolution and glorification. This age is also called the age of individuality, freedom of thought and ideology, subjectivity, democracy, and simplicity of life. It was the time that the romantics changed the view of life and tried to believe in the enjoyment of rustic life, use of the simple and pure language of common men, expression of inner feelings and emotions of the writer and the poet, gothic and the sublime narration, interest in past tradition and personification.

The importance of this Romanticism lies in the fact that the spontaneous and unaffected issues are reflected in the literature as being natural. This can be realized by the independent expressions of Coleridge's, "*Kubla Khan*" and "*The Rhyne of the Ancient Mariner*"; and in words of William Wordsworth, "Common life of nature and the souls of common men and women with glorious significance." (qt. in Long 373)

The second characteristic of this age is the glorification of poetry. It is called the age of poetry in English literature. Women as a unique gender assumed for the first time to take part in literature. One of the most common phenomena that this age represents is the position of women in terms of getting the chance for education and intellectual as writers and poets. This age is also known the age of emotions. As it is mentioned that women are considered to

be more emotional than men, they were influenced by the emotional aspect of the age so that they entered in the field of literature. So women's attraction was due to the spirit of this age's emotional concept which provided the opportunity for men to express themselves. Thus, the most common aspects of Romanticism in literature can be highlighted as subjectivity of self love, beauty and world of imagination of the writers or the poets, love for the spiritual world and love for nature, religion, childhood, natural and rural life, identity and self-realization of both men and women, interest in mythological, supernatural and mysteries, having interest in the past and medieval time, love of reason and logic as well as experimental use of language.

**Chapter One- Forms and Themes of Rabia Balkhi  
and Nadia Anjuman's Selected Poems**



## **Chapter One- Forms and Themes of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman's Selected Poems**

Studying and understanding women's writing of Afghanistan is considered to be very important due to the fundamental challenges that the women poets of the time gained and suffered from especially those who choose to compose and publish their creative works. Their poetry represents their way of life that includes their personal struggles in the contradiction of cultural, social and political conditions. After all, the political and economic transactions in the life of people characterized the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup>-century literature in Afghanistan. These changes were by the impact of international supports, funding development, presidential election, and access to formal education for men and women, expansion of trade and cultural exchange programs and the rise of social media. These all opportunities made it possible for women to change their situations in different aspects in all over Afghan societies.

As it is clear for all that poetry has a greater impact in the minds of the people and so to Afghanistan. The poetry provides them the opportunities to communicate important ideas, opinions, thoughts, passing short stories and heritage, and making political statements. Poetry as an art form is an oral way of communication even though being so many conflicts in the history of Afghanistan. The landscape of contemporary literature especially poetry in Afghanistan is a very rich one which is getting much richer by the recovery of the country in general. These changes can be seen not only in large cities like Kabul, Herat, Balkh, but even in small cities like Faizabad and others. There is no doubt about the historical influences of

cultural, social and political, educational and literary production in different regions of Afghanistan.

This particular thesis deals with poetry in translation. There are two different reference books from which the sample of the poems are taken for analysis. The first reference book is by Paul Smith who is a poet, writer, and translator of Persian, Arabic, Turkish, Urdu and other languages of the world. He has translated more than 80 books and one of his recent books is called, *"Princesses, Sufis, Dervishes, Martyrs & Feminists: Nine Great Women Poets of the East"*; which includes a selection of the poetry of the Eastern Poets such as Rabia Balkhi, Rabia of Basra, and others female who are well-known poets of the history. From this selected book, five poems of Rabia Balkhi are chosen for analysis. As Marrie wrote; "The vast majority of Afghans, even those who are illiterate, have a deep appreciation for poetry and most have a colorful variety of poems stored in their memories" (5). The people with an elementary education are familiar with the classical poets of the country such as Rabia Balkhi, Mawlana Jalaluddin Mohammed Balkhi, Saadi Shirazi and others.

The second reference books that have been used is by Farzana Marie. The name of her book is, *"Load Poems Like Guns: Women's Poetry from Herat, Afghanistan"*; The name suggests the importance of its contents that are the poems of women. The five common poems of Nadia Anjuman are taken from the translation of this Herati Women's poetry of Marrie. The book is contemporary Afghan women's poetry in English which was published in 2013 about the post-2001 era women poets. At the same time, the first part of the book includes Nadia Anjuman's poetry. This book is dedicated to Mrs. Nadia Anjuman from Herat of Afghanistan. In the title of the book, the word "Load" expresses the idea of the voice of

the poets. The voice is represented in the form of "Poems" and these poems are like "Guns". The word "Gun" here suggests the idea that how it can attach the target group to whom the poems are written by women to raise their voice and ask for their rights and freedom. On the cover page of the book, there are three bullets of the gun. There is a bullet which includes a pencil in its head that is settled in the middle of the other two bullets. The book explains a lot about Afghanistan women through poetry. The poems are both in the native language as well as in English.

One of the challenges for the contemporary women of Afghanistan was during the restrictions on activities such as reading and writing as well as joining schools in post-2001. On that time women could compose poetry, but they were not able to publish their works. The restrictions were not only in women read in blend writing, but also in gaining the formal education. In other words, Farzana Marrie puts that it is the historical foundation that can help us to access the story of the contemporary poets of all the times such as Nadia Anjuman whose poems, personal life, and death had a profound impact on many other poets and writers from the city of Herat. Later on, her impact was extended to other cities the collection of Marie poetry in translation can also present Herat Literary Society as an artistic community. This association is one of the oldest in Afghanistan which was established in the 1930s.

The themes of the selected poems of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman are based on the concepts of freedom, love, womanhood, suffering, and condition of women, search for identity, cultural imposed roles and acceptance, education, oppression, and also about women's rights. They both wrote poetry in order to protest the conditions of women either in medieval time or in the present moment. There has been very little change to the condition of

women comparing to the past. The major themes in their writings are based on love, family, women's situations, sufferings, problems, relationships, friendship, peace, freedom of thought, freedom of idea and speech, caring, women as housewives, daughters, sisters, and mothers, individuality, struggles, challenges of one's' own, vice of women for identity, quality and respect within the society and community.

Understanding the poetic forms is important in order to understand the themes and the styles of the poetry of these two poetesses. These most common forms that are in use in the selected poems in this thesis are in classical form of poetry. There are several classical poetic forms in Persian Literature and the most common ones are known as Ruba'i, Ghazal, Qasida, Masnavi, and Qita. There are different usage and writing style for each of these forms which are either developed or decreased due to the cultural, social, political and historical changed in the country as well as literature. Each of these poetic forms is used in the poetry of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman.

Both the poets started writing poetry from an earlier age. Rabia Balkhi got her poetry inspiration by listening to the poems of the great poets of all the time. By the time she started writing poetry, she had no listeners during her life time because her poems were not recited to the public. Her poems were both spiritual and personal. Rabia Balkhi's poems are based on themes of love, women, purity, self-expression, nature, society, domination, freedom, and beauty. The most common poetry of Rabia Balkhi which are selected in this piece of work is included, but not limited to Rubai (Two Couplets), Ghazals (Sonnets), Qitas (Elegy), and Masnawi Lengthy Sonnet). In contrast, Nadia Anjuman got her inspiration from her school master who scored her due to being bias to Nadia and another student. This was the first cause of her writing poetry to express her feelings towards the corruption system of school. She wrote many of her poems in traditional Persian form which is known as Ghazal. She was considered one of the most skilled poets of her generation with regard to

classical forms by Herat's Literary Community. Her best-known works are: "Make No Sense", "My Garden", "Divine Beauty", "Smoke-Bloom", "Mountain, Sea", and others.

**Rubai (Two Couplets):** One of the selected poems of Rabia Balkhi is the in the form of a Ruba'i which is the most ancient forms of Persian poetry. It is said to be one of the classical forms along with other forms such as Ghazal and Masnavi which were contributed to Persian Literature. Ruba'i is a kind of Persian poetry which is the most specialized and individualized form of poetic expression in literature. There are several points of views of scholars about the form and definition of Ruba'i. Paul Smith defines Ruba'i as: "The Ruba'i is a poem of four lines in which usually the first, second and the fourth lines rhyme and sometimes with the radif (refrain) after the rhyme words...sometimes all four rhyme" (9).

However, Ruba'i became common among all the levels of the society and it is in its value till now. It was enjoyed by those who were the member of noble and royal families and even those who were the point of praising by poets of their time. Ruba'i represents the themes of religion, love, wisdom, spiritual values, beauty, and amusing satire. In Persian literature, every major and minor poet has written poems in Ruba'i forms. The greatest female poets of the times are Mahsati and Jahan Khatun. The word Ruba'i means "two couplets" which has four lines in length and different meter.

Ruba'i was invented in Persian poetry for the first time by a poet named Rudaki in 941 A.D. Rudaki is one of the famous poets of the Persian literature who tiered to organized the line's meter in a new form and came up with Ruba'i form which has the repetition of the rhymes four times in two couplets. He is called the "The Father of Persian Poetry". It was two centuries later that Sham-e- Qias, wrote about the moments of poetic history and the effect of the new form on the people in different ages of poetry. The key features of Ruba'i

are to be eloquent, spontaneous and ingenious. In a Ruba'i the first part is the introduction which is the first three lines that is sublime for the fourth line of the poem. It represents the idea of sublet, pithy and clever. All the Persian poets in some points of the time composed in the Ruba'i form including Rabia Balkhi.

**Ghazal (Sonnet):** This poetic form is one of the common forms of Persian poetry that both Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman used in their poetry. There is one of Rabia Balkhi called "*Ghazals*" in this paper. The theme of her Ghazal is based on love, beauty, nature and the inner feelings of a woman. All the selected poems of Nadia Anjuman are written in this poetic form. Basically, Ghazal is a form of poetry in Persian which has no equivalent in English, but some literary critics call sonnet as having the closest meaning to Ghazal. The origin of this particular poetic form goes back two centuries ago as being a unique form of poetry. Some believe that before Islam Ghazal was originated for the first time in songs that were composed and sang in the Persian language. Other sources illustrate that Ghazal were songs of life which were in Persia history and later on this passed to poetry by ages.

The word Ghazal means "a conversation between lovers". Mostly, the Ghazal poems are put into music and became songs in Persia and India till now. The word Ghazal came from Arabic poetry meaning spinning, spun, thread and twist and it is the prelude to the longer poems. The form of Ghazal is spiral. Ghazal became a very mature form of poetry in the 14th century. The most common Ghazal writers of Persian literature of the past are Nizami, Attar, Rumi, Sadi, Hafiz, and others. Ghazal has both complex and simple qualities regarding its form and content. It is between (5–15) lines or even more than that. Each couplet has a fixed rhyming scheme which usually comes at the end of the second line.

Ghazal has the strict rhyming scheme structure of the same rhyme which comes at the end of each second line of each couplet. The rhyming also creates the feeling that needs to be spontaneous coming up from the depth of poet's heart. The rhyme is the way to have the expression and contraction, feeling and thinking, heart and mind, which are combined to produce great tension and power to the poem. There are three basic parts of a Ghazal poem. The first part is the introduction which expresses the subject matter of the poem. It is always in the first couplet which is called the "Orient". It has the function of setting the stage, represent the subject and feeling so the poet. It also includes the opening section of the poem by mentioning the poet's last name itself. The second part of Ghazal is the following couplets which complete the main action. And the last part of Ghazal form is the conclusion of the objective of the poem.

**Masnavi (Epic):** One of the selected poems of Rabia Balkhi is named as "Masnavi". This is written in a long epic poem. The theme of it is about a fought between the poet's lover and his enemy. The setting is illustrated to be on the battle field where the battle would take place. Due to the narration of the long epic poem, the poetess chooses Masnavi form to write the poem. In Persian literature Masnavi is one of the common poetic form which is very particular form and it is used by the poet to write epic ballads or romance. It is a Persian invention in poetry by which all the great and long narrations are written. It is a much longer description of narratives, so it has a different rhyme. Each couplet has its own rhyming scheme, but each line of the couplet rhymes the same. This is one of the main reasons for the poets to be able to compose the longer description of the subject matter. The most common Masnavi writers are Shahnama "*Book of the King*" by Firdausi. "*Enclosed Greater of the Truth*" by Sana, "*Five Treasures*" by Nizami, "*The Conference of the Birds*", and "*The Book*

*of God*" by Attar, *Seven Thrones*" by Jami, and ten Masnavi of Amir Khusraw and "*Masnavi*" of Rumi.

**Qasida (Purpose):** Qasida is similar to Ghazal, but has little difference in length. It is longer than Ghazal and most of the time it includes a hundred couplets. The rhyme of the first couple goes on until the end of the poem. The rhyming words are always at the end of the second line of each couplet. The word 'Qasida' means 'purpose'. It is composed by poets for praising of someone and it is often recited or read when the person is present. The poet tries to keep it neither long nor short in order to get the interest of the listeners. It has four parts which are the begging, the introduction, the purpose of praising to whom it is written, and finally the end part. It is one of the common types of poetry in literature.



**Chapter Two- Feminism and Romanticism in the Selected  
Works of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman**

## **Chapter Two- Feminism and Romanticism in the Selected**

### **Works of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman**

Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman, two famous poetesses of Afghanistan belonging to the same race, culture, and language, are the literary figures. One is known as being the first female poetess, the first female scholar and the first lady who spoke about women's rights, while the other is a contemporary poetess. Their poetry have refined sensibility, feeling, music, and originality in the use of language, choice of words, and achieving contradictive power of words. They both talked and wrote about their contemporary issues in critical mode. The selected poems of them have the poetic comments and arguments about the indifferences, emotional and aesthetic downfall of women status, social alienation, hypocrisy of the human and evil of society and world of immorality for women. Their poems exhibit a clear sense of hopelessness of women's life and rights.

Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman have built a bridge between the historical changes of women poetesses from medieval to present time through their poetry. In spite of the distance of time, place and condition of living as women, they have a lot in common and their commonality is based on the fact that they both are women poets in the history of the country. There is a clear resemblance of their voices and sensibility in their poetry. They expressed the lyrical mode for spacing out the myth of womanhood through their poetic language. This chapter examines the feminists and Romantic thematic in the works of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman regarding the feature of the two mentioned theories in the structure of cultures and sub-culture out of which the poems are written.

A comparative analysis as a discourse has a clear-cut theoretical basis that makes it possible to understand a comparative assessment of any two literatures of both medieval and contemporary ages. The selected poems of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman are not taken in to account as isolation, but they are under the influence of other works either from male or female writers or poets. Poems of Rabia Balkhi can be considered as a part of a long tradition of medieval age. Her poems generally

express the Romantic lyricism which is significant to the expression of love for nature, God, beauty and other related subjects. Similarly, Nadia Anjuman's poems cannot be appreciated if the readers do not have knowledge of the great writers of her tradition. Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman's poetry are not only about the development of history of literature, but also the areas of knowledge, wisdom, and the belief in arts, philosophy, history, social science, religion, and politics of human experiences. These all can be understood through reading their poetry that they intertwined the elements of Feminism and Romanticism in their poetic language to express their thoughts and deep understanding of women nature.

Feminism and poetry was a landmark for its unique and critical view on the relation between Feminism and the writing movement. It has its impact not only in the categorization of women, but also on women's experiences, language and poetic tradition of women's writing. It is the way to understand and differentiate the new approaches to women's literary works based on similarities and differences with men's literature. It can help to evaluate both the academic and cultural aspects of women's writings with regards of gender roles either in literary domain or other aspects. The feminist aspects exist within the lines of poems of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman.

Comparing Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman's poems with the British Romantics, one can understand that her poems are inspired with the ideologies of oriental culture and literature what is called now as exoticism and mysticism. It is the representation of the cultural, social and political aspects of that time. At the same time, the Romantics were fascinated by the oriental mysticism especially with Persian Sufism. The main concept of the Romantics was searching for a perfect self or subjectivity and that is what deals with spiritual unity of the self. These issues are represented in the poems of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman with clear-cut thinking of self-identity and self understanding. The Romantic's inspiration from Persian literature has not developed the idea of Persian Sufism and its probable impact on the work of the Romantics.

Rabia Balkhi was not only the poetess of the Medieval Era in the history of Afghanistan, but also she is the first female poetess in the country. She is considered to be a feminist poet in new Persian poetry. She was a princess whose father was the ruler of Balkh in Northern part of Afghanistan. She lived in 9th A.D during the Samanids court. There is very less record of her biography which can be found in the writing of Rudaki and Atta who were her contemporaries. She composed poetry in Arabic as well as in Persian. She is the first generation of the Persian poetesses in the History of Persian Language. In the contemporary literature of Afghanistan, her name is kept alive till now. She is also in the minds of the people all the time and there are schools, educational centers, and hospital which are given her name.

On the other hand, Nadia Anjuman, as a poetess and journalist of the contemporary Afghanistan, is well-known for her dramatic life and poetry too. Anjuman was one of those girls who loved to be educated and to write poetry, but due to the bad conditions of the country, she was forced to start writing short stories and poetry at home. Her life study had its greater impact on her contemporary literary culture especially to the psyche of other female poets after her tragic life.

The tragic life of Rabia Balkhi was due to her love to Baktash, her lover, but in case of Nadia's tragic life, the main reason of her death was due to her love for poetry writing and giving voices to women's inner feelings and emotions. Both Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman shared the same life stories and tragic deaths. The only reference to the life of Rabia is mentioned in Attar's poetry. Attar has written about the great poetess of all the time in his famous poem "Ellahi Nama" which has 428 lines. In this poem, Attar has narrated about Rabia Balkhi and her brother named Hares, who became the king of Balkh after his father's death. The love story of Rabia was narrated that she was in love with the slave of his brother. Rabia Balkhi has written love poems for Baktash and they both exchanged poems hidden from others. When her brother got to know about his sister's love affair with a slave, he ordered to punish her by locking in the bathhouse.

Rabia Balkhi wrote her final poem on the wall of the bathhouse with her blood and that poem is one of the most common love poems that express her true love to Baktash. However, the tragic death of Anjuman was reported to be due to the injuries in her head. She was beaten by her husband in the second year of her marriage due to family matters and her poetry writing. Her poetry was a reflection of her marital life and sufferings. This caused her to put an end to her life. Though the two Afghan women poetesses belonged to two different family status, two different period of time and different reputations in the society, they both shared some life events such as in poetry writing, suffering, love, raised voice to speak for women and finally they had the same tragic life; one loved a slave and the other loved poetry writing.

Both Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman poems are famous among the people due to their tragic lives. The themes of the poems express the voices and struggle of women. Generally, women are supposed to be considered as equal as men in society, but in some cultures and male-dominated countries like Afghanistan, women are considered only house-wives. In such a country, poetesses like Balkhi and Anjuman came to stand for their rights in literary field. They were able to express their feelings and thoughts through poetry. In their poetries, the features of Feminism movement can be seen either with similar themes, tones, language, imagery, and poetic forms or it is viewed differently. Their poems are full of challenges of the society with themes of "Love", "Honor", "Courage" "self-sacrifice" and "Death" which are associated with "Blood" in the concepts of their poetry. At the same time, their poems are full of arresting style and fearless example of one's self and society. The poems represent their sentiments and interpersonal relationships. As Julie Billaud writes in her book "*Kabul Carnival: gender politics in postwar Afghanistan*" about Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman by stating:

Among the rare Afghan female poets ... two names were consistently cited with great enthusiasm: tenth-century poet Rabia Balkhi from the northern city of Balkh and contemporary poet Nadia Anjuman from the western city of Herat. (188)

## Nadia Anjuman's "The Divine Beauty" and Rabia Balkhi's "Ghazals"

The poem "The Divine Beauty" is one of the selected poems from Anjuman's poetry collection which not only represents a feminist point of view, but also it has some of the features related to the description of Romanticism. The poem is written in 2002 a year later in the post-2001. It is one of the poems that the poet tries to show her faith and beliefs on the divine beauty of God. The poet's intention is based on the fact that God really exists everywhere and he sees every single up and down of life as she says:

At every run I saw your features etched in the dawn,  
 Heard tales of you from Shahrazad's tongue.  
 You wrote the rune to every poem I composed  
 Which every word I pondered took your shape.  
 I sense no sorrow in breaking away from society-  
 I took the lonely path to follow you. [Marrie 44, 1-6]

She expresses her deep feelings for writing the poem in the first couplet by stating that God is the tune of her every single poem that gives her the strength and hopefulness. Here she presents the image of God as the source of her inspirations in writing poems. On the second couplet, she brings the idea of breaking the society's restricted rules and she emphasizes about the roles of women in society from her own perspectives. She wants the women to be free of being abundant in the walls of the house. This is how a feministic point of view can be explore to show the poetess hope for breaking the cage of being abandoned within the society and this can be understood in the line, "I sense no sorrow in breaking away from society-" [Marrie 44, 5] while the expression of love for divine is a reference to the element of Romantic in search of God.

Rabia Balkhi in her poem, "Ghazals" also brings the theme of love and beauty which are the true representation of her inner feelings and emotions towards God. Different critics have a different interpretation of her poem with ideas of her true love to God or to her lover Baktash. As a female

poetess, Rabia has been considered to be the greatest woman of 9th A.D because she raised her voice to express her internal feelings through poetry. Her Ghazal poem is one of those poems that one can easily find the aspects of Feminism. As Balkhi starts the poem by saying:

Of love, one is deceitfully, dishonestly... accusing me:

What prove one will one show before God (Glorified He be)

Your love is something I cannot be going against ... even

If I am that which is my religion transgressing, violently. (Smith 62, 1-4)

The poetess starts the poem by telling that she was accused of love with “deceitfully” and “dishonestly” while no one can prove it in front of God whether she is right or wrong. She further states that her love is a pure one that she cannot go against it in any condition, but she is violently transgressing by the name of religion. For her love is a blessing rather a curse of the religion. She questions that why not somebody chooses to bless over the curse. She says her unconditional love is like an affection going beyond any limitation. It is a love which has no boundaries and will not be changed. She blames people for being blind in their perception of love and hatred because their eyes are closed and they hardly hear with their ears otherwise they could see and hear and understand her love by heart.

One of the poems of Rabia Balkhi is “Qita” which was dedicated to her lover Baktash. The theme of the poem is based on their separation by her brother Hares. It is in classic form which has ten lines length and has the theme of love. It has different rhyming scheme compared to her other poems. The rhyming scheme of this poem is based on ABCBABAADB. "The waiting's of a bird was kindling my love, / Increasing my pain and stirring my memory. / It was late last night...that this bird from a / Bough in deep lamentation cried, incessantly. [Smith 68. 1-4]. It is written in the conversational form by exchanging questions and answers between the poetess and a bird which is an image of her own spirit and inner feelings of her love. The poem begins by narrating a story that

happened between the bird and the poetess. She says that it was the waiting of the little bird that lighted her love. It was so kindling of her heart that increased her pains more and her memory started to stir more than the past. As she hears the cry of the bird in the garden, she asks the reason. The bird replies that it is crying due to its being separated from its lover. It was midnight and the stars were shining in the sky, but they both were crying for their lost lovers. At the end of the poem, the poetess concluded her words by asking a question that why to cry when there are no bleeding tears at night. When there are tears of blood when she shed, then it is not fair to complain about. As is it said about love that love is a cultural backdrop which can create a more powerful sense of what is called to be normal in love. It is the way to help one where to place one's emotions and feelings. It is through love that one can understand the value of life, things, and people as well as using it as guidance to approaches conflicts, excitements, tolerance, and self-confidence.

However, Nadia Anjuman brought the idea of her "dark life" in her poem and she states that she is hopeful for her future because God is around. She says in her dreams and hopes that God shows her the bright future and she uses the metaphor of "Golden chandelier" for describing it. She further adds that thinking of divine beauty was what she made hundreds of dreams and hopes. She feels the divine beauty within herself as well as in her muses to her dim pages of her life. She ends her poem by reminding that there is no such as ineffable and divine as God's beauty in the whole world only if one looks at. Generally, the main theme of the poem is based on the beauty and divine source which is a symbol of the romantic moment.

The issues of love for nature and subjectivity are discussed in the poem of RabiaBalkhi. In her poem called "Ghazals", the poetess changes the scope of her words and tries to explore new ideas to question oneself about the existence of nature and the sources that are providing beauty to it. She states that "back to nature" and it's going fluently with the natural order of the universe because it is the pure and spiritual course of renewal. Nature provides the "Sublime" and "Delight" for the mind and the heart as emphasized by the Romantics like Wordsworth, Shelley and Keats. Rabia Balkhi also



represents such ideas in her poem by questioning that why should not use the opportunity to get the offer of the natural resources. Using her deeper thoughts and ideas she says that she is afraid of the flowers with smiling faces to grow shy with morning breeze offers. The breeze is like the unveiled brides of the garden of wisdom which they consider to be unworthy. What the poets try to tell is based on one's senses. It is the act of sensory information to receive, to order and to make sense of it. It is all about being worthy of the things, the trust and the truth that have to be perceived. It is through nature that one can gain the truth, intuitions and personal perception in regard to accepting the facts.

### **“Smoke – Bloom” and “Music Makes No Sense” - by Nadia Anjuman**

Anjuman's poetry involves both the Romantic and Feminist aspects. Her poetry is written from the point of view of a female poetess. She expresses her voice and tone to the chosen words and the selected symbols used in the poems. Her poems are the true representation of the ambitions and struggles of the women in general. She was one of the victims of such hierarchical society which is under the role of male where the value and norms of the society matter more than anything else in women's live even if how intelligent and smart they would be. Women are supposed to be abundant around the house walls and act as a wife, a mother, and a daughter in law the same issue as the feminist critic says about the condition of women in 18th century England.

Nadia Anjuman has written the poem "Smoke - Bloom" in 2002. It was the year of independence, end of the war, hopefulness, freedom of thoughts, education, employment, happiness and end of every dark page in Afghanistan. In her poem, the lines explore the idea of hopelessness and abundant feminine as she adds, “I’m full of the feeling of emptiness, full. / An abundant feminine boils me in my soul’s fevered fields,” [Marrie 46, 1-3]. It was the time of the new regime with new roles for liberty, unity, and freedom. It was the same year when the current government in Afghanistan come into existence and broke all the restrictions and announced the democratic society for both male and female. Anjuman composed this poem by representing her feeling as being full of emptiness which is like an abundant famine boiling her feelings that cause her to write about. She

uses "soul's fevered fields" to emphasize on her internal feelings which are "waterless boiling", but still it startled the image in her verses of the poem to life. She then goes back to say that even though there is the new living picture like a "peerless rose", it is like the blushes that come down to the page to write. In the last lines, she ended up the poem by remarking that the streaks of smoke obscure her face and fumes in order to consume the skin as smoggy.

In her famous poem "Music Makes No sense", Anjuman represents the real image of an Afghan woman who is suppressed by the other's oppressors to do what is required without any complaint or saying any word. The line "Music makes no sense anymore" is a reference to the internal pain and suffering of women who are not able to speak due to the oppressor's dominations. In the lines, "No one anywhere notices or cares whether / I cry, whether I laugh, whether I die or am still" [Marrie 38, 5-6]. She further adds that even if the women speak or raise their voices, still there would be no sense to it because no one hears and no one cares about. She prefers silence due to being abundant by all and time which is the fact of life.

The poetess adds, "Words are poison to the tongue" (Marrie 38. 3) as the poem continues. This is the metaphorical words which stand for the reaction of the family, society, and community towards women who have the courage to get against them to open their mouths and speak for her freedom and right. The word "Poison" is a symbol of the pain, suffering, and beating, mistreating, oppressing both mentally and physically and killing. She goes on and says that the strongest skills of the males are to suppress and shuffle the women's songs and words, so why should one sing the song of freedom for life while this gives the opportunity to such men to use their skills to stop the speech by any way possible. According to her, the women are related to a society where no one cares how is the life of women, their roles, their rights, their needs, and their feelings of being loved and have all the opportunities that the men have. There will be no one to care about the spoken words, tears, sufferings, laughs, emotions, feelings, views and opinions and even deaths. This is a clear-cut fact which is accepted by all as the opposed norm of the society.

She gave the image of the women as being the property of the men that no one else has the right to interfere and support the women in any regards. The women have to suffer all the pains and problems given by their husbands, brothers, fathers, and other guardians. The poetess states that she hears full of grief and pain, but she does not prefer to open up her mouth to speak. She questions the life and the ways women try to live. On the second part of the poem, she starts the poem by a hopeful verse of sweetness as "Slow down, the heart that leaps to great spring"[Marrie 38. 9] here she reverses the situation and she believes in the beauty of life and for a nice and beautiful future that will come like the spring season that brings joy and sweetness to life. She says that the time will come that she will break the cage of oppression and will fly to the other world that she deserved to be. "My broken wings will temper this temporary thrill" [Marrie 38.10] this verse is also a metaphorical expression for playing the sweet melody of peaceful life.

The poetess further states that the day will come that she would be able to sing the song of heart, pain and mind's memories. This is the representation of her going back to the past time and will write the flashback of her life stories. There will be no reason and control hand to make the women's voice to be silent. Everything will be disclosed by raising the tone to the voice and singing the songs of the heart pains and lips silence. She shows the power of women as being strong enough to rise up and struggle against all the challenges and oppressions by the songs that their souls whisper. The women will get the chance to break the cage of abundant and get out of it. They will sing as much as they can like a drunken person who is compared in the poem as the "Carefree drunk" who can't stop speaking.

She uses the word "They" as the reference to those people who are closed minded and who are opposite of equal rights of men and women in terms of their rights related to social, economical, cultural educational, political, and other aspects. It is a reference to those who don't consider women as equal to men. One day, according to the poetess, they will realize that women are not weak, not powerless and not subordinate comparing to men. Women are strong enough to live their life the way

they want. They will break the oppressor's domains and will not be willing to live the same as before generations in the history of the world. She compares the women power as the willow tree saying "No wind-trembled willow tree". She points to the Afghan women to have their wails and songs to wail and sing for peace, freedom, rights, and equality the same as men.

There are some words within the lines of the poem which are used to show the stylistic features of the Romantic Movement as well. The word "Music" is the symbol of voice and spoken words of women. "Poison, cry, die, laugh" are used to show the pains, crying, dying, and suffering of women for independency, freedom, and identity searching. This poem shows how the poem wants her subjectivity, identity to be given and her narrating being loneliness abundant to the walls of the house. She gave a clear-cut feature of the Romantic aspects in the form of words to show the reality of life the same as the romantics did. These images can be seen in the poem as she states "Greif and remorse", "Tongue is sealed", "Great sweet spring", "broken wings", " Temporary thrills", "Soul-Whispers", "Croon and carefree drunk", "Wind-trembled willow", and "Waits and sings". This is how she brought the idea of the real world that she uses the images and metaphors in her poem to state her peace of mind in the form of poetry.

### **Nadia Anjuman's "Mountain and Sea" and Rabia Balkhi's "Rubai"**

"Mountain and Sea" is one of the famous poems of Nadia Anjuman. It is one of her poetry collection that has a great message of getting out of darkness which is expressed to her particular target group which is the women of her society. The title of the poem pointing the "Mountain: and "Sea" is the metaphorical words which are related to the powers and strength of women as well as their patience and tolerance. The poem starts with the impression of pointing and objecting the nameless people especially women who are very strong and best beneath, but they are quite. The verse "the mute swam plants" evokes the idea of being opposed to forgetting their memories which are beautiful and pleasant. The poem questions the brainwaves of women that are cleared by the oppressors is the main

reason why women are not able to speak up. It talks about the stolen dreams which are "Golden-sculpted", but they are in vain due to any plunderer.

In this particular poem, both words "Mountain and Sea" are used with either same or different connotation. The associative meanings of the word "Mountain" according to the dictionary are the things that the mountain can symbolize such as obstacles, climbing up a mountain, passing through a range of indicates, making proper progress, overcoming the obstacles, spiritual and mental rising, and improvement in life, permanence and also immovability. At the same time, the word "mountain" also represents the isolated or hard to reach the place which is a symbolic representation of loneliness, difficulties, and mental, spiritual and emotional states of the mind.

The poetess uses the word, "Mountain" to show how women can see things with higher perspective and they are able to see the things related to life from a loftier point of view. The term can be used to show stillness, firmness, eternity and constancy. In the historical events and stories, the word "Mountain" is associated with the sky, rain, sun, and thunders. As it is stated in some traditional beliefs that mountains can be used as the symbol of the earth and femininity the same as the poetess uses it to show the mental and emotional aspects of the women. It is the state of their conscious awareness and the sign of spiritual aspirations and desires. On the other hand, it is used to show love, righteousness, peace, and charity of women in terms of family life and social life that they accept whatever is posed to them to do or not to do.

In literature, the word "Sea" is used to show different associations relating to it. The most common usage of "Sea" is the representation of life and its hardships. The word "Sea" stands for life itself including its daunting width and depth. It can be shown as calm and quiet, but it can be dangerous and deadly. The waves of the sea are the representation of the obstacles in one's life that happens expectedly or unexpectedly. It has the unpredictable meaning related to life either to find solutions or go back a few steps to get out of the struggles of life. The word "Sea" also represents a cultural role like having a symbolic meaning of denoting a hostile environment populated by fantastic

creatures. It is the personal and collective consciousness relating to the dream interpretations. According to the religions perspectives, the sea denotes the memory and collective knowledge which comes out of the truth like the facts that water, spring, and rivers come out of the sea waves. It is the knowledge that can destroy the truth of the faith and hopes of one's inner dreams and desires towards something.

Rabia Balkhi in one of her poems called "Ruba'i" expresses her deep feelings to Baktash with who she was in love. In this particular poem, she begins the poem by stating that it was her love to him that she is put to the prison where she is going to die due to being separated from her love. The lines of the poem are very emotional, but it expresses the real condition of the poet who says: "The love of you is the reason that now I'm in prison: / I tried to keep it secret, but who can one rely on? / Love is a sea with shore that's always further on: / One wise in such a sea won't swim, or will drown." [Smith 61. 1- 4]. In this poem, Rabia expresses her deep feelings to Baktash. The poet says that she as a female tried her best to keep her love secret because it was not allowed to her and she had not right to love anyone, but she could not rely on anyone to tell about her feelings and emotions so that she could feel released of the pains.

In this poem, the poet compared the greatness of "Love" with the "Sea" with a shore that has no limit and it only keeps going on further. She compares the love like a sea where no wise swims or drowns in it and she tries to say that she was wise enough who decides to go on loving her beloved the same as a shore less sea. Regarding the Love Poems of Rabia Balkhi, some critics believe that all that she has written about love is based on the spiritual love of God. They say that the word love depends on her true feelings of love for God. For them, love is not a materialistic one for something or somebody, but it is pure one which is only for God. The romantic aspects of the poem also state such mannerism that one can conclude that she was in love with spiritual beliefs.

## Rabia Balkhi's "Masnavi" and "Qita"

I've a hope, this ... God will make you fall in love

With someone just like yourself, cruel, uncaring...

That finally you'll begin to value me as you writhe

From a similar agony, like I've been experiencing.

It is said, that over Job's head from heaven

Rained locusts, all with golden heads to see:

if golden locusts he got for all his patience,

It fits that one brass fly should drop on me! (Smith 66)

This "Qita", which is a separated form of short poem of RabiaBalkhi, has a continuity of thoughts within eight lines. It is a short poem with the rhyming scheme of ABABAAA. The main theme of this poem is the internal intention of the poem about her words and poems which are not considered to be represented through her heart by others. The poet says that she is writing these things using the faculties of her senses feelings of her mind and heart, but there are some who do not believe that she is in "Love" either spiritually or by wisdom. She began the poem by hoping that one day "You" which may directly target those who did not believe in her true love, will fall in love. If God makes it possible to fall in love with somebody who is as cruel and uncaring as oneself, then he or she will understand the value of her writings. When one falls in love will start to have the same feeling that she has for her beloved Baktash.

Rabia Balkhi has written one of her Masnavis to her lover Baktash. Some critics argue that this poem was sent to Baktash through which Rabia's brother Hares got to know about Rabia and Baktash love story. The poem is much longer and it has the rhyming scheme of AABBCDDEFCCCGHHHHIIIAAJAAAAAA and it goes on. The poem is in the form of epic

poetry narrated by the poetess as the first singular narrator of the story. It is all about the fight that Baktash was about to start with Hares who was Rabia's brother. The poem opens with introduction of the mute speaker who is quite due to any reason, but still, she speaks. She speaks for her beloved who is a head worthy of the royal crown of the time and has an arrow in its stick. She prays for her lover to win the battle with her brother by mentioning that the head of the enemy of him come to disaster and never left again to rise up. She encourages him to beat the enemy so that his head would be idle and noble rather than being doomed to shame and lowered while he is alive, but not in a noble position as the hero of the battle. She further goes on and swears that her head and soul would be worthless if that head of his brother doesn't lie in the dust of his door. She expresses her hatred to his brother and her love to Baktash.

In the second part of the poem, the poetess states to her lover to cut off the head of a man, that is jealous of you and stands against you, like the head of a snake. Her emotions are so expressive for her lover that she tries to give direction to her lover what to do and how to do. She tells her verses to cut off the head of a brave enemy in his own place to be a good lesson to others who don't wish your well. She says her headache is the same as her lovers and it is better to cut her head off too so that his headache find a cure. She further tells that before his enemy cut off his head in the battle field, she will die and her head would be laid under the earth. His head is worthy of her even if it would be the result of scarifying a hundred heads including her own head. This is how she proves her true love and its unconditional manner without him.

On the third part of the poem, the poetess brings the habits of her lover to the context and states that whoever who is not thinking of him after drinking wine or tasting the pleasure tree's fruit, he is drinking life's blood not the wine of something else. "Whoever tastes fruit from pleasure's tree...if he's drinking? / Wine and not thinking of you, he'll life's blood be drinking. [Smith 70. 27-28]. If anyone who is ignorance of his bravery and wisdom, then he is in a disastrous way if he does not strike golf in her lover's name. If anyone who plans to go on pilgrimage and not take her lover's



permission, then he is committing a sin. In all these verses Rabia showed how saint and innocent her lover is with extraordinary talents and bravery.

She compares herself with the burning candles at nights and says that when the night is finished and the candles are turns, then the day is like the day of death to her. She tells that her eyes dam up for love and makes her smile the same like a candle which smiles in the fire to give lighten. But her condition is the same as a candle which can't see the day light which can give it the comfort to burn less, and she is hopeless of seeing the day that is why she burns in love fire day and night. She questions that there is a fire in her heart that causes her soul to burn and has a rainstorm in her eyelashes. It is so strange to see that the fire of love heals all over ones' thoughts and heart, but still, there are splashes of the flood in it. She says that she is burning day and night and what people may call her love while there is no moment of peace in her heart.

In the last part of the epic poem, the poetess shows her impatient life for her lover and points to her lover to not give her more pain. She doesn't want to be in dust and blood anymore, she does not want to be in spin, she does not want him to make her fall while she is drunk of her love wine; she is dizzy and can fall too lower for her lover. She says that she is dirking blood, but why should not spilling it and why should stay fit though she is wallowing in blood. She says that she stands for her love and she is not going to go back and give it up. She is full of depression and sorrow due to the pains that she has in her heart. She questions her lover that how long will this cruelty of him will hurt her, how long his separation will burn her like the re-seeds on a fire. But still, she is fine because she hopes to a reunion with her lover one day and that day will be the only desire that she has in her life. For her being separate from her lover is impossible and she cannot endure the heavy word of "separation" anymore. She cannot endure the joy of unification as well. She says that her love is like the hundred pieces of pains that she is coping with because she likes others who lose their peace of mind for their lovers. Lastly, she closes the poems with the idea that if there will be any other way to

express her feelings and pains of loving her beloved, she will try and if there will be no other way, then she has to keep it secret from all in her soul the same as she is doing for him.

## **Symbols, Metaphors and Allusions in Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman's**

### **Selected Poems**

The usage of symbols, metaphors and allusions in poetry is one of the common ways to express the poetic feelings and emotions. There are many poetics devices such as allusions, metaphors, imaginaries, symbols and references are used in the poems. Each of these poetic elements has its function and representation of the internal and external intentions of the poets. Through these poetic devices, it is possible to find out the features of feminism and romanticism within the poems. Such kind of rhetorical references help to modify the originality and sources of their poems.

Nadia Anjuman uses such kind's of symbols and metaphors to compare her feelings with the external world and objects. In her poem, "Divine Beauty", Anjuman uses the words and expressions such as: "features etched", "the tune", "your shape", "the golden Chandelier", "The dream of hundred-hued blooms", "forest's fragment draw", "spring waking breath", "dim page", "the Champions of grace and charm", "amid beauty", and "The first of your kind" (Marrie 44, 1-12) as the symbols of divine beauty within herself and in the universe. These are the words that represent a world of thoughts and feelings towards nature for the search of God and beauty. Everything in the universe has been the representation of the image of God in the romantic era and Anjuman considers her poem to have the romantic aspects. Since the poem was written after the post-2001, it is the sincerity of the poet to show her hope for getting the opportunity of the time to indulge in society and play her role as a woman and as a human without any restricted roles and regulations.

On the other hand, Rabia Balkhi is using so many allusions and metaphors to express her thoughts and ideas in an imaginative way. This is how the Romantics do while creating their imaginative world. For Romantics, imagination is an important part of their life because it helps to see the world that has started to disappear by the age of Enlightenment. The same is true with the ideas of Rabia Balkhi who asks questions in her poems to express her belief that there are many truths to be found in the order of the natural world. In the line of the poem, "Ghazals"; she gave a resemblance of nature and says:

Breeze scattered roses, lilies, resembling gold and silver:

Indeed it was an excellent breeze, blessings upon it forever!

Water showed hundreds of designs like Azar's sculptures;

Breeze, many of Mani's charming pattern was displayer. [Smith 64, 22-24]

This is how imagination adds to the effectiveness of her writing poetry. As S.T Coleridge uses his own imagination in order to personify frost in his poem to provide a clear-cut moving and descriptive images of nature, Rabia also relies on the description of the beauty of nature and using metaphorical expressions. This is how her poetry has come to be alive to the reader even after centuries.

Rabia Balkhi in her well-known poem, "Ghazals", brings the issue of symbols of heaven and hell. The lines starts with the personal intention of the poetess towards the expressions of her feelings as: "I want no Paradise without you..... Hell with you I'd like: / Sugar is poison without you ... with you poison is honey! / One should not be relying on one's pretty face for Satum / Is for some time hidden in Virgo..... that is God's decree!" [Smith 62. 4-8]. In these verses, the poetess provides an example of "heaven and hell", "poison and honey", and "Pride". She just tries to state that she loves him the most and she accepts to be put in the hell because she doesn't want paradise without him. On the other verse, she says that her love is sweet. Even if she tastes poison, it would be like honey to her

She uses the words "Saturn and Virgo" in order to explain the needs for a pretty face and virtue of life. It is based on God's laws and directions. She brings the quotes of wise men who say that "Pride will have its fall...eventually" [Smith 62.10]. She believes that what is said is not untrue. It is all truth of life and living condition with the Love of God.

In these particular verses, the poetess states her condition of being in love. She narrates that once again she is intertwined with love that is the caring need of one's life. She tries to get a release of its pains and sweetness, but all her efforts were in vain and useless. She didn't understand that it was like an unbroken horse which was tightened the noose while the jerking head makes it less. She asks others who are in conscious mind to tell her that who can swim in the sea of love which is shoeless. She adds that the main goal of love is to be accepted by all, but among all one may reject the true love and considers it worthless. They do not see the beauty of love in the ugly face and they do not eat the poison with full of sweetness.

The poem "Ghazals" of Rabia Balkhi has so many allusions such as "Azar's Sculpture", Mani's Charming patterns", "Jesus' Breath", "Tibetan Musk-bag", "Majnun's eyes", "Layla's cheeks", "Crown of Khosrau", "Christian Monks", and "Christian faith" (Smith 64-65, 21-30). Each of the allusion has a powerful meaning to her words and expressions. The poetess compares the beauty of the roses as looking like the silver and gold which creates freshness to nature. In the lines of her poem, "Ghazals", the poetess says, "Breeze scattered roses, lilies, resembling gold and silver: / Indeed it was an excellent breeze, blessings upon it forever! / Water showed hundreds of designs like Azar's sculptures; / Breeze, many of Mani's charming pattern was displayer" [Smith 64. 11-14]. She says that it was all due to the breeze that raises the glorification of nature, so it has to be blessed all the time.

Later on, she mentions the allusion of "Azar's Sculptures" in the poem. The allusion "Azar" refers to the name of the father of prophet Ibrahim and the word "Sculpture" refers to the Gods that Azar father was the follower. The poetess expresses the idea that it is the water which showed

hundreds of design for the beauty of nature the same as Azar's Sculptures that look different. At the same time, she uses other allusions and metaphors which each of them have a wide range of explanation and ideas to interpret. She creates the picture of nature by using such comparison so beautifully that one can go on to imagine such heavenly earth in his own mind while reading her poems. She compares the "Clouds" with "Eyes of Adam", "Breeze with Jesus' breath", "Clouds with showering pearls to the garden" and "Breeze with life-giver to the trees.

Thus, the allusion of "Azar" refers to Abraham's father who was a sculptor of idols. The Allusion "Mani", refers to the magical painter of 276 A.D who was the founder of Manichaeism, who is also said to be a prophet. The metaphor of "Adam's eyes" represents Adam's worshiping for forgiveness by God. There is also a belief among the Muslim that after being expelled from Eden, Adam wept for so long that his tears gave rise to rivers. "The breath of Jesus" is a reference to his miracle of reviving the death. Both Layla and Majnun are the reference to the most famous and tragic Arabian lovers whose love story is still alive in most cultures. Even there are their movies and dramas which are made based on their stories. Rabia Balkhi also brought the allusion of "Khosrau" who is the king of Persian and he invaded Jerusalem and carried off the true cross. All of these allusions are stated within the lines of the poem of Rabia Balkhi that shows how knowledgably and well understood she was. This creates a real image of the knowledge and wisdom of the poetess to the mind of the reader. This reminds us that Rabia Balkhi was living in medieval time, but she was a woman of well- thoughts and understanding. She had broad knowledge of history which can be seen in her illustrations of the events through allusions and metaphors within her poem.

Both Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman used the same perspectives as poets. They used either first person point of view or second person point of view. Analyzing their point of view, one can trace the usage of personal pronoun "I and You" are the prominent references which differ significantly. It represents the poets' self-referencing and their commitments to the words and expressions. They stress the dimension of authorship which are relevant to

their poems. Their poems are very personal and they prefer to use the first person point of view. The points of views of their poems are based on their own identities as being women. In all the selected poems of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman, the personal pronoun “I”, object pronoun “Me”, and possessive pronoun “My/Mine” are used. At the same time, they used second person as “You, your, your” for targeting either their readers or women.

Comparing the selected poems of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman, it can be shown that they both chose to write in the first person point of view because their poems are the true representations of their personal information and experiences. It is their own point of view based on the social, cultural and political issues of the times that they were living as women. Through the usage of “I”, they provided a colorful first-hand description of their being feminine and womanhood. At the same time, they used “You” as the second person to point out the reader either as male or female to relate their thoughts with one’s experiences. The references such as “I, you, me, my, your, yours” are used in poems of Rabia Balkhi. She used “I” to refer to herself in her poems, but she used “You” with different perspectives. This pronoun “You” stands for her love to God, love to Baktash, women as a whole and to point the readers. However, Nadia Anjuman used the word “I” by referring to “Herself” as well as the women of her time. She expressed the voice of women in her own tones and voice. Anjuman used the word “You and your” for the purpose of pointing to the male dominated society and also women for being silent. The word “They” has been used in poem of Anjuman that is a reference to the oppressors of the women’s rights and women’s identities.

# **Conclusion**

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the historical overview of the poetry and literature of Afghanistan can represent that it has great poets of all the time. It is the cultural, social, political, economic, and historical norms that brought the differences among the two genders men and women especially in poetry writing. Studying women's writing in Afghanistan is considered to be very significant. It is because of the monumental challenges that remain for those who choose to compose and publish certain works that are influenced by personal struggle of socio-political issues. Among the artistic and literary forms, poetry holds a greater place in the consciousness of the people of Afghanistan. Poetry from its broad sense of appeal is considered to be used as a means of communicating important ideas, passing on stories and heritage, and making political statements. A study of the poets and their poetry from a particular region, Afghanistan, is a clear vital step toward understanding the literature of it as a whole.

This dissertation was a study of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman's poetry through comparative analysis of their selected poems with regards of Feminism and Romanticism aspects. Rabia Balkhi is a famous poetess of Afghanistan from Medieval time. She was a princess whose father was the ruler of Balkh in North part of Afghanistan. She was living in 9th A.D during the Samanids court. She was not only the poetess of the Medieval Era in the history of Afghanistan, but also she is the first female poetess in the country. She composed poetry in Arabic as well as in Persian. In the contemporary literature of Afghanistan, her name is kept alive till now. There are schools, educational centers, and hospital which are given Rabia Balkhi's name in the present time. On the other hand, Nadia Anjuman, as a



poetess and journalist of the contemporary Afghanistan, is well-known for her dramatic life and poetry. Anjuman was one of those girls who loved to be educated and to write poetry, but due to the bad conditions of the country, she was forced to start writing short stories and poetry at home. Her life study had its greater impact on her contemporary literary culture especially to the psyche of other female poets after her tragic life. Though the two Afghan women poetesses belonged to two different family status, two different period of time and different reputations in the society, they both shared some life events such as in poetry writing, suffering, love, raised voice to speak for women and finally they had the same tragic life; one loved a slave and the other loved poetry writing.

Studying Afghan women's writing is very significant because it is considered to be used as a means of communicating important ideas, passing on stories and heritage, and making statements. The purpose of this dissertation was to comparatively study the poetic features of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman's poetry – two Afghan poetesses. The works of these poetesses had been studied separately before, but no attempt has been made to comparatively analyze their poetry particularly in the light of Feminism and Romanticism theories. This paper comparatively analyzed the poetic feature of the selected poems of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman from the perspective of Feminism and Romanticism theories. The study focused on Feminism and Romanticism in different periods of poetry development in Afghanistan. It also comparatively analyzes the feminist and romantic elements in the selected poems of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman based on poetic diction, form and style of. Moreover, it explores the social and psychological perspectives of the poetesses about women and womanhood in different eras in Afghanistan. In addition, there has been enough to find out about the unexplained words within the poems from the point of view female

poets. The main purpose of this dissertation was to compare their selected poems through the study of the poem's forms, themes, contents, and techniques employed. It analyzed critically the cultural and social norms in which the poetesses were living regarding Feminism and Romanticism aspects, and finally found how the conditions of women writers and poets have been from Medieval to Modern times in Afghanistan.

The findings of the paper showed that Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman's poetry poems were different in form, style and diction while similar in themes, content, and way of expressing their true feelings and emotions. In the selected poems of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman, the comparative analysis has been made on Feminism and Romanticism elements. These theories have been the main focus to make a clear comparison between the two poet's works. The usage of symbols, metaphors and allusions in the poems were one of the aspects to represent the poetesses' feelings and emotions. The use of several poetics devices helped to examine the features of Feminism and Romanticism. Such kind of rhetorical references helped to modify the originality and sources of the poems.

The themes of the selected poems of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman were based on the either same or different concepts. They both wrote poetry in order to protest the conditions of women. Keeping in mind the selected poems of both poetesses, it can be concluded that there has been very little change to the condition of women comparing to the past centuries. The themes of their poems represent the two sides of a coin including both positive and negative views such as: love, family, women's situations, sufferings, problems, relationships, friendship, peace, freedom of thought, freedom of idea and speech, caring, search for identity, cultural imposed roles and acceptance, education, oppression, and women's rights individuality, struggles of life, challenges of one's' own, vice of women for

identity, women as housewives, daughters, sisters, and mothers in terms of equality and respect within the society and community.

The selected poems of Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman are not taken in to account as isolation, but they are under the influence of other works either from male or female writers or poets. Poems of Rabia Balkhi can be considered as a part of a long tradition of medieval age. Her poems generally express the Romantic lyricism which is significant to the expression of love for nature, God, beauty and other related subjects. Similarly, Nadia Anjuman's poems cannot be appreciated if the readers do not have knowledge of the great writers of her tradition. Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman's poetry are not only about the development of history of literature, but also the areas of knowledge, wisdom, and the belief in arts, philosophy, history, social science, religion, and politics of human experiences. These all can be understood through reading their poetry that they intertwined the elements of Feminism and Romanticism in their poetic language to express their thoughts and deep understanding of women nature.

Thus, Rabia Balkhi and Nadia Anjuman, two famous poetesses of Afghanistan belonging to the same race, culture, and language, are the literary figures. One is known as being the first female poetess, the first female scholar and the first lady who spoke about women's rights, while the other is a contemporary poetess. Their poetry have refined sensibility, feeling, music, and originality in the use of language, choice of words, and achieving contradictive power of words. They both talked and wrote about their contemporary issues in critical mode. The selected poems of them have the poetic comments and arguments about the indifferences, emotional and aesthetic downfall of women status,

social alienation, hypocrisy of the human and evil of society and world of immorality for women. Their poems exhibit a clear sense of hopelessness of women's life and rights.

This paper in regards of many aspects helps the readers especially those who are fond of poetry and like to know more about Afghan women through their poetry. Some may have respective ideas and values for the great poetesses like Rabia Balkhi as a medieval poetess and Nadia Anjuman as a contemporary poetess to read their poetry. It also can help future critics and researchers to have the sample reference for the analysis of their poems to write and analyze about the poets in the future.

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