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Esmail Zare-Behtash
Chabahar Maritime University, Iran

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Images of 'Love' and 'Death' in the Poetry of Jaláluddin Rumi and John Donne

Esmail Zare-Behtash

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to compare the lives and literary careers of two great poets from the East and the West to find common grounds in their lives and writings. In comparing the poetic works of these two great poets, the study will focus on *love* and *death* as two major images in the poetry of these two great poets. Jaláluddin Moláná Rumi as he is called in the West, was a Persian poet-philosopher, and John Donne was a metaphysical poet-preacher from England. These two poets wrote much about their ideas with lucidity and wit. Love and death were both of supreme concern for these poets and a preoccupation of their hearts. Nothing is possible in "love" without "death". Life for Donne is love, the love of women in his early life, then of his wife and finally the love of God. Love for Rumi is sweet madness, healing all infirmities and the physician of pride and self-conceit. Death for Donne is nothing but a transitory passage from here to the hereafter and union with God. Death for Rumi is also a wedding; it is a change from one stage to another as a seed planted in the earth dies in one form in order to be born in another. Both believe that we are from Him, and to Him we shall return.

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