

Abstract

This thesis is a close textual study of Bulleh Shah, a Punjabi Sufi poet of the eighteenth century, in the context of Romanticism, a Western literary movement of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. This study is based on the concept of romantic ideal which is 'the primacy of aesthetics' and which also serves as the unifying factor in all the variations of Romanticism. The idea of the romantic ideal is not just limited to the literary realm as it influences the social, religious and economic aspects of human life as well. The romantic ideal is directed towards a social transformation and this research analyzes the selected poetry of Bulleh Shah, translated in English by Taufiq Rafat, in the similar context by tracing the romantic ideal in his work. The objective of this research is to find transnational similarities in Romanticism and Sufism, which is the Islamic derivation of mysticism, with a particular focus on Bulleh Shah. The research is based in the theoretical framework of transnational poetics by Jahan Ramazani. Through the identification of transnational similarities across vast geographical, historical, cultural and linguistic differences between Sufism and Romanticism, this research argues that Bulleh Shah is relevant beyond his region as a transnational poet. The transnational link between Sufism and Romanticism as movements directed towards social transformation constitutes a hybrid as exemplified in the mystical vision of William Blake through the combination of Christian symbols and romantic elements.

Key words: Mysticism, Sufism, romantic ideal, social transformation.