

The Carnavalesque in *Doktor Noon Zanash ra Bishtar az Mosaddeq Doost Darad*

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Abstract

Through the genealogy of novelistic prose, which is a ground for polyphony, an objection to idealism and cultural monophony in every society, Mikhail Bakhtin examines the phenomenon and notion of “carnival”. According to Bakhtin, a novel, just like carnivals of old times, as the domain of togetherness of all dominant and submissive voices, is the presence of all rejected forms of human beings and languages and ideas, and is a domain where democracy is manifested along with freedom from every constructed hierarchical subjugations. In his theory of the carnivalesque, the novel’s capacity to oppose any dominion along with a capacity for critical thinking, lies the ability to construct a network of polyphonic items, grotesque realism, vulgar language, alienation, crowning and eviction. Through developing indeterminate subject, threshold chronotope and contrastive plot, Shahram Rahimian, in his novel *Doktor Noon Zanash ra Bishtar az Mosaddeq Doost Darad* (*Dr. N. Loves His Wife More than Mosaddeq*) manages to create a carnivalesque universe which challenges many ruling discourses and constructed norms. This article starts with a brief introduction to Bakhtin’s carnivalesque theory and offers a re-reading of the abovementioned novel through this theory. The findings of this critical view on the novel confirm the dominance of the discourse of “commitment” in Iranian contemporary history, the development of self-consciousness in the reader towards the possibility of subjectivity and his/her ability to leave behind the boundaries of dominion, and the interaction between society’s political sphere and critical thinking.

Keywords: Carnavalesque, Bakhtin, Critical Thinking, *Doktor Noon Zanash ra Bishtar az Mosaddeq Doost Darad*

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Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

According to Bakhtin, the carnivalesque challenges the discourses and constructed norms of totalitarian states. In the novel, as in carnivals of the ancient times or the Middle Ages, all forms of human being, language, and ideas find a way to emerge. Carnavalesque novels challenge the discourses of power and dominant social and political culture through critical discourses. In his novel *Doktor Noon Zanash ra Bishtar az Mosaddeq Doost Darad*, Shahram Rahimian creates a carnivalesque universe to represent the problematic human in a polyphonic, modern world. The present article analyzes Rahimian's novel based on Bakhtin's theory and concludes that by creating unconventional possibilities in the ideas and actions of individuals, this novel questions many of the official, dominant norms and helps the reader achieve self-consciousness toward subjectivity, indeterminism and critical capacity.

2. Theoretical Framework

Bakhtin's idea of carnival and how it has found its way into novels provided the present study with a tool to study different elements of the carnivalesque in a Persian novel.

3. Methodology

The descriptive-analytical method has been employed in this study to delve into elements of the carnivalesque in the novel in question.

4. Discussion and Analysis

In *Doktor Noon Zanash ra Bishtar az Mosaddeq Doost Darad*, the dominant discourse of power is in contrast with culture and discourse of the common people, which promises a carnivalesque world. Our analysis of characters, chronotope and plot in this novel revealed a network of carnivalesque elements. In this novel rules and principles are unstable and devoid of significance and various forms of polyphony can be identified.

5. Conclusion

Some elements of the carnivalesque novel and critical thinking could be identified in our study of the characters, plot, narration, and language of the novel *Doktor Noon Zanash ra Bishtar az Mosaddeq Doost Darad*. In this novel, the discourse of “commitment”, which has been reproduced in different periods in the contemporary politics in Iran, is criticized. This discourse turns the individuals into an object destined to serve collective values and objectives. By relying on the potentials of the carnivalesque narration, the author tries to make the readers aware of the capacities of their bodies, language and everyday life to participate in political action to achieve freedom.

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