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Nāser al-Din Shah's Translation Bureau and Office of Censorship

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Abstract

The perceived need to facilitate contact with foreign countries and gain access to Western intellectual and cultural capacities once again draw the attention of the Qajar dynasty and the Iranian intellectuals of the time to the significance of translation. Therefore, a new entity called *Dār al-Tarjomeh* (Translation Bureau) was established to address the government's need to translate contracts and political and economic texts and to provide the Iranian readership and those interested in Western intellectual and cultural works with government-approved translated literature. Its personnel were selected deliberately so that people with anti-government views would not gain entrance to the Translation Bureau. Having failed to bar the entrance of modern progressive thoughts into the country, the government sought to establish the Office of Censorship as a major obstacle to the dissemination of freedom-seeking thoughts.

This article provides the readers with a brief history of the Translation Bureau, its personnel and activities, Office of Censorship, and its monitoring strategies.

Keywords: *Dār al-Tarjomeh* (Translation Bureau), Ministry of *Entebā'āt* (Ministry of Printing and Publishing Affairs), E'temād al-Saltaneh, the press, Office of Censorship, law

Recognition of Mythological Narratives in Iranian Fiction:**Typology of Four Persian Folktales****Mahmood Modabberi, PhD**

Professor, University of Kerman &

Najmeh Hosseini**Abstract**

One should recognize the type of texts he/she is reading and classify them into specific literary genres in order to acquire a thorough understanding of them. Since a literary genre is recognized according to its special characteristics and principles, it is impossible to study a text unless its type and genre are determined.

This paper is an attempt to determine the types of four Persian folktales, including *Sandbād Nāmeh*, *Bakhtiār Nāmeh*, *Hossein Kurd*, and *Malek Jamshid*, *the Spell of Āsef*, and *the Spell of Crystal Bathroom*. The theories developed by structuralist narratologists and particularly Todorov's narratology and his views on the "mythological narratives" constitute the theoretical framework of the study.

According to Todorov's narratology, immediate causality, emphasis on characters' actions, absence of time, and lack of psychology are the major characteristics of mythological narratives. Citing some examples from the said folktales and comparing their characteristics with those enumerated by Todorov, the authors of this paper show that they can all be categorized into mythological narratives despite differences in theme, overall structure, linguistic characteristics and the fact that they belong to different eras. It goes without saying that the findings could encourage further studies on text typology and classification.

Keywords: Typology, narratology, mythological narrative, immediate causality, lack of psychology

An Archaic Approach to M. Sereshk's Poetry

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Abstract

From the formalistic point of view, attention to archaic structure of language is one of the techniques used to enhance the (poetic) language. Employing this technique, the poet deviates from the common norm of language and resorts to archaic words and syntactic structures to accomplish defamiliarization and foregrounding in his/her poetry. Proper use of this technique plays a fundamental role in securing the poeticality of poetry. Mohammad Reza Shafi'ei Kadkani (M. Sereshk) is among the second generation of Nimaic poets who have managed to employ archaism successfully. His preoccupation with the glorious past of his hometown Khorasan and excellent command of classical Persian literature have enabled him to promote his poetic language through the proper use of archaism. The authors of this study attempt to determine to what extent M. Sereshk's success in poetry collections like *A Mirror for the Voices* and *The Second Millennium of Mountain Deer* lies in his clever use of archaic structures of Persian language and stylistic characteristics.

Keywords: Archaism, defamiliarization, foregrounding, deviation from the norm, archaic syntactic structure, M. Sereshk's poetry

Fantasy: Its Nature and History in World and Persian Literature

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Abstract

Fantasy is the most imaginative genre of fiction. Fantasy author resorts to this genre to break the rules and bounds of the real world and create a new world with new rules. Fantasy world teems with surprising events, supernatural creatures, and dream-like settings. Fantasy authors seek to explore a world beyond the bounds of experience in which the readers' improbable wishes become materialized through magic and surprise. The nineteenth century Britain introduced the first fantasies to the Western literature. Italy, France, Sweden, Germany, and the US followed suit as soon as the cultural and social grounds became prepared for the practice of this genre.

While the first Iranian fantasies were penned in the early 1920s, they appeared to be nothing but poor imitations due to lack of social grounds. Iranian readership later found access to some of the world's greatest fantasy works thanks to the efforts of translators. However, lack of necessary equipment and training put a halt to the mass production of fantasy works in Iran until the end of the 1980s. With the end of the Iran-Iraq war in the early 1990s, Iranian authors found the opportunity to write fantasy works and continue this undertaking until now.

This paper is divided into two parts. The first defines fantasy and investigates its nature. The second sheds some light on its condition, after studying its history and evolution in Persian literature.

Keywords: Fantasy, children's and youth Literature, Persian fantasy

An Investigation of Romance Genre Characteristics in *Haft Peykar*

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Abstract

As a literary genre, romance reflects the social and ideological aspirations of the ruling class in different eras. Unlike the mythological god-hero, a romance hero is a mortal who is superior in rank to the ordinary mankind and environment. The same is true of the protagonist/hero of *Haft Peykar*, Bahram Goor. This article is an attempt to study the structural principles dominating the romance genre and trace them in the story of Bahram Goor in *Haft Peykar* and its discursive stories. It is concluded that *Haft Peykar* can be classified into romance genre.

Keywords: *Haft Peykar*, romance, fiction, myth, protagonist/hero

Emancipation from the Self and Unity with God in Indian

Mysticism and *Masnavi Ma'navi*:

A Comparative Study

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Abstract

This study addresses the history of Godlikeness in Greek, Ancient Indian, and Islamic mysticisms in order to provide the readers with some insight into self-cognition and thus God-cognition. Then, the emancipation of individual's soul (the small world) from the self and unity with the general existence (the large world) in the Indian mysticism and *Masnavi Ma'navi* are compared. Moreover, the key stages of the said process, i.e. dismissal of the five senses and emancipation from morally wicked traits, including lust, anger, greed, and the like are conformed in the Indian mysticism and *Masnavi Ma'navi*.

Keywords: Godlikeness, Indian mysticism, *Masnavi Ma'navi*, self-cognition, five senses

A New Reading of *Gulistān of Sa'di* Based on the Theory of Binaries

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Abstract

In structuralism, a binary opposition is seen as a fundamental organizer of human philosophy and existence. The theory of binaries later finds way from linguistics into cultural studies and eventually becomes challenged in post-modernist era. The objective of this research is to analyze the *Gulistān* of Sa'di on the basis of this theory.

Binary oppositions perform an aesthetic-philosophical function in Sa'di's works, and particularly the *Gulistān*. In other words, phonological, semantic, and syntactic structure of his works and above all his general discourse all form a binary opposition. Studying some instances of binary oppositions found in the *Gulistān*, the researcher explains the reasons for their employment and then moves to investigate the relation between discourse structure, its motif, and eventually the true nature of life.

Keywords: Binary oppositions, contrast, structure, content, the *Gulistān*, Sa'di

A Study of Resistance Literature Elements in Contemporary Afghan Poetry

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Abstract

Assuming that the political and social conditions of countries and their art and literature are mutually related, this study first recounts a brief history of Afghanistan and its historical and political conditions from the past to the present and reviews the ways in which the political and historical considerations have influenced Afghan art, culture, and particularly literature. Significance of the study, purpose of the study, research questions and hypotheses, statistical community, and the selection criteria are presented in the second part of the research. The key elements of resistance literature, i.e. war, resistance, and compromise as well as some examples found in the works of fourteen contemporary Afghan poets are studied in the next section, after elaborating on the research method which is content analysis. The findings of the study are also summarized in two tables. It was concluded that while "war" and "resistance" are central motifs in contemporary Afghan poetry, the motif of "compromise" occupies a marginal position in contemporary Afghan literature.

Keywords: Resistance literature, contemporary poetry, Afghan literature