

Representation of gender in place in Zoya Pirzad's short story "The Acrid taste of Persimmon"

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Abstract

The present article seeks to examine the relationship between the gender of fictional characters and place in Zoya Pirzad's *The Acrid taste of Persimmon* Short Story, based on the theory of place semiotics. In this story, the life of a traditional woman is narrated who does not leave the shell of gender stereotypes until the end of the story. The house (place), which plays a pivotal role in *The Acrid taste of Persimmon*, is a realm full of signs that become part of the identity of the female character. In fact, the house and the activities inside it find a feminine identity and outside and everything that belongs to it, they find a masculine identity. The results show that *The Acrid taste of Persimmon* has been successful in representing gender (female / inside and male / outside) by relying on symptoms.

Keywords: *Short story and representation of gender, Story, The Acrid taste of Persimmon, Analysis of Zoya Pirzad's stories, Place in the contemporary short story.*

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Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

In the form of fictional characters and confronting them with small and large, simple and complex, every day and original events, the authors show a corner of what is happening in the real world. In the meantime, female writers have also tried to have a share in expressing the issues and concerns of the women's world. One of the topics discussed in contemporary stories is the category of gender and its relationship with people's identity. Gender is one of the subsets of identity and one of its main components. In most human societies, male and female identity is established and defined based on gender. The superiority of men over women is one of the debates that are raised in the category of gender influenced by social and cultural beliefs. In fact, the beliefs and way of thinking of a society are a set of contractual codes that have been created according to the requirements of the time. The distinction between men and women in cultural topics is based on signs and cultural under the code, including place. The semiotic system of place is a sub-cultural code and is related to other cultural codes such as gender. In this way, some places take on a feminine color and others take on a masculine color. In other words, one of the effects of gender can be seen under the codes of place: inside/woman and outside/man.

The continuous location of the characters in a certain place and the occurrence of incidents in that place gradually creates an invisible and unbreakable link between the character and the specific place. This link is in such a way that the specific place takes on the gender of the fictional character. Such a link is affected by social, cultural relations and gender stereotypes, which causes places and spaces to take on a male or female color and generally a gender color. In some stories, the place becomes a signifying semiotic system. Some authors use place as a sign that is related to social and cultural values. In fact, the place sometimes takes on a symbolic, metaphorical and ironic meaning. The spatial relationships and separations that exist in most Persian stories show how the outside has been transformed into a masculine space and how the female characters are not only pushed inside, but most of them take refuge in the mind, imagination and memories of the past, which are the innermost layers of the place.

2. Literature Review

The present article aims to explore and investigate the relationship between the gender of the fictional characters and the functions of the

place in the short story of Tome Gas Persimmon, relying on the semiotic theory of place. The research wants to show how the place (home) is marked and reproduced in relation to gender. In fact, the research seeks to answer the question whether the place in this story is affected by gender stereotypes? The research hypothesis is based on the fact that the inner space is associated with femininity and the outer space with masculinity and there is a significant connection between place and gender. In this article, the place (house) is investigated as a cultural under the code that plays a role in the production of meaning.

3. Methodology

The current research is based on studying and checking the content and extracting examples. In this way, the place has been investigated as a meaningful sign in relation to the fictional characters and their identity.

Results

In some stories, the place becomes meaningful due to the connection and interaction with humans. Pirzad expresses the deep connection of the female character with the house in this story. By strengthening the physical and objective dimension of the place (house), the author increases its cognitive dimension and uses the place to convey the purpose and meaning. In this story, place and human are related to presence and existence. In the story of the taste of Gus Persimmon, the place is removed from the geographical concept and turns into a territory that includes signs. There is a significant relationship between location and gender in the taste of persimmon gas. The connection and companionship of the female character (lady) and the male character (prince) with the inside and outside is consistent with the hypothesis of the research. In this story, the place finds the ability to act as a cultural element and be involved in the representation of gender under the influence of social beliefs. Believing in the bond between a woman and a home is a contract concluded in traditional societies and one of the things that both men and women are taught from childhood. In this story, the place is assigned to certain people based on gender. In fact, it can be claimed that the introversion of a woman's character is an example of a woman's belonging to the home, and on the other hand, a man's extroversion is an example of a man's belonging to the outside of the home. Works such as the taste of persimmon gas fuel the cultural reproduction of female roles.

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