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An Examination of Irony in the Narrative of *Tuti-nama* of Nakhshabi

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Abstract

This study examines irony as a narrative mechanism in Tuti-nama and analyzes its pivotal role in creating ambiguous and polysemous meanings. Employing a descriptive-analytical method, the present research seeks to answer the following questions: Which types of irony are predominant in this work, and how are the parrot's sub-narratives positioned ironically in relation to the main story? The findings indicate that situational irony is the most recurrent type in the book. This irony emerges from the meaningful contrast between the main story_which itself is framed within dramatic irony_and the parrot's embedded tales. Although the sub-narratives ostensibly serve to advise and admonish Khojasteh, they inherently function as deception, mockery, or warning. The parrot employs two key techniques_ironic character equivalences and ironic endings_to place the sub-stories in an ironic position relative to the main narrative. Furthermore, other types of irony, such as verbal, moral, radical, fate, and socratic irony, appear in the text with lesser frequency. The parrot character, with its dual role of well-wisher and deceiver, serves as the primary agent of semantic multiplicity, elevating Tuti-nama beyond a merely didactic and moralistic work. Given the fundamental importance of irony in the structure of this text, the present study offers a novel reading of its narrative capacities and hidden layers of meaning.

Keywords: *Types of irony in Tuti-nama, narrative technique in Tuti-nama, analysis of classical prose texts.*

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1. Introduction

Irony, as one of the most complex narrative techniques, has always played a pivotal role in creating multilayered meaning in literary texts. Irony has been artistically employed in fictional works such as *Tuti-nama*. The story concerns a merchant who intends to travel. Before leaving, he tells his wife, Khojasteh, not to do anything without consulting the two eloquent birds kept in the house: A Parrot and a Shark. During the merchant's absence, Khojasteh falls in love with a young man. She goes to the Shark for advice and says she wants to visit her lover's house at night. Out of goodwill, the Shark advises her against it, but Khojasteh, unable to restrain herself, kills the Shark. The Parrot, who witnesses these events, is opposed to Khojasteh's going (being). However, to save his own life, he ostensibly agrees to her departure (appearance). Instead of letting her leave, he delays the meeting by telling Khojasteh stories for fifty-two consecutive nights. These stories are ostensibly meant to instruct and admonish Khojasteh (appearance), but each conveys different messages, and some of them hold an ironic position (being) in relation to the main story. This research aims to analyze irony by addressing the following questions:

1 .Which type of irony (Situational, Verbal, Dramatic, Radical, etc.) is dominant in *Tuti-nama*?

2 .How do the stories of the parrot assume an ironic position relative to the main story?

The research was conducted using a descriptive-analytical method, and the data were collected through library-based research. The main story of *Tuti-nama* is situated within dramatic irony, while the relationship between the subordinate stories and the main narrative gives rise to situational irony. Although *Tuti-nama* appears superficially to be an entertaining and didactic work, the intelligent use of irony within it reveals hidden critical and moral layers. The analysis of this work deepens our understanding of the narrative techniques of classical Persian literature. Given the significance of irony in *Tuti-nama*, this study helps researchers and scholars gain a deeper comprehension of the narrative capabilities of this work and better understand its layers of meaning.

2. Literature Review

Despite the numerous studies conducted on Nakhshabi's Tuti-nama, no research has yet analyzed irony in this work. Among previous studies,

the following articles have examined it from a narratological perspective:

2.1. Nabiloo and Akbari (2007), "Analysis of Fictional Elements in Tuti-nama". This study analyzes plot, character, time, place, narrator, and other fictional elements.

2.2. Haji Aghababaei (2017), "A Narratological Study of Tuti-nama". Drawing on Gérard Genette's narrative theory, this article examines the narrator, time, and place in Tuti-nama.

2.3. Ghanbari and others. (2024), "An Analysis of Time and Place in Tuti-nama, Samak-e 'Ayyar, Darab-nama, and Amir Arsalan". This study concludes that the aforementioned books lack historical and geographical identity; their time is linear, and the settings of the stories are diverse.

3. Methodology

Researchers have classified irony in various ways, which can generally be divided into two levels: verbal and structural. This article, focusing on the views of Douglas Colin Moke, analyzes the types of irony in *Tuti-nama*.

4. Results

The result of analyzing *Tuti-nama* from the perspective of irony reveals that the parrot character and the narrator employ irony for three purposes: to criticize indirectly, to address the sensitivity of the subject matter (the parrot's potential loss of life), and to expose contradictions. Situational irony has a higher frequency due to the ironic relationship between the parrot's stories and the main story. Through two techniques—ironic equivalencing of characters and ironic endings of the stories in relation to the main story—the parrot places the subordinate stories in an ironic position relative to the main narrative. The subordinate stories are ostensibly narrated to advise and teach Khojasteh a lesson (appearance), but their primary purpose is to deceive, mock, taunt, and sometimes warn the character of Khojasteh (being). Furthermore, the deep structure of certain subordinate stories also mocks the parrot character implicitly.

Ethical, verbal, radical, fate, Socratic and dramatic irony have been used with lower frequency. Verbal irony appears in the stories in the form of taunting and reversed epithets. Radical irony is demonstrated through the unreliability of the parrot character. Ethical irony _ which may be regarded as a new category in the classification of irony_ suggests that moral values in the story can produce reversed outcomes

and that deception serves as a means of achieving success. This type of irony is generated by the parrot, who distances the book from moral absolutism. Although he pretends to offer advice and admonition, he is, in fact, a deceptive character. For this reason, *Tuti-nama* is not merely a didactic or moralistic work. Rather, through the contradictions embodied by the ironic character of the parrot and other characters, it is demonstrated that the situations within the stories determine behavior_not moral or ideological presuppositions.

Table 1: Types of Irony in *Tuti-nama*

Type of Irony		Night Number	Number of Ironies	Manner of Occurrence in the Narrative
Irony at the Structural Level	1. structural Irony	1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10-15-16-17-19-20-21-26-27-29-33-36-37-38-41-42-43-45-46-47	Verbal Contradiction: 7	Ironic Equivalencing of Characters in Relation to the Main Story Ironic Endings of the Stories in Relation to the Main Story
			Verbal-Behavioral Contradiction: 28_	
			Behavioral Contradiction: 18	
	2. ethical Irony	1-2-3-8-29-41-51-33-52-	10	Inversion of Ethical Values
	3. radical Irony	1-19-23	3	Self-Discrediting of the Character
	4. fate Irony	23-27		Antagonism between Destiny and the Protagonist's Will
	5. Socratic Irony	5-8	2	Feigned Ignorance
	6. dramatic Irony	1	1	The Gap in Awareness between Khojasteh and the Audience

Irony at the Level of Vocabulary	**7.** Verbal Irony	1-6-13-17-26-29	7	Reversed Epithet, False Oath, Taunt

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