

Unnatural Narrative in Persian Plays of the 1380s

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Abstract

Unnatural narrative entered the field of narratological studies since the early years of the current century, being theorized and classified by narratologists like Jan Alber and Brian Richardson. Unnatural narratology, unlike natural narratology, focuses on non-realistic and anti-mimetic narrative elements and attempts to provide a more comprehensive pattern for the study of those narratives that do not obey the arbitrary patterns of representation. In other words, they do not recreate the world as it is perceived on the basis of common sense experience.

Since the 1380s, Persian playwrights have indicated a growing interest in the reflection of unnatural elements in their works. They represent elements such as time, space, character, and narrator differently from real-world experience and in the structure of their narrative they present what is physically and/or logically impossible. The present study is a descriptive-analytical exploration of the strategies used by Persian well known playwrights like Samini, Charmshir, and Amjad in the 1380s to transgress the realistic borders and to represent mental territories. These strategies challenge the readers' expectations of the familiarized structure of the world and provide them with different ways of experiencing it by applying fundamental changes to the narrative elements of the work. Referring to Alber's theories, the paper provides recommendations for reading these texts to indicate how readers attempt to understand such scenarios and expand their mental architecture to naturalize them.

Key Words: Unnatural Narrative, Persian Drama of the 1380s, Narratology, Natural Narratology, Jan Alber, Persian Play