

## Poeticity and Its Functions in Fiction: A Cultural Reading of “Shargh-e Banafsheh”

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### Abstract

In his critical reading of Roman Jakobson’s “poeticity”, Yuri Lotman, interpreted the term as the outcome of a semiological dialog between linguistic and extra-linguistic elements which are not reduced to the surface-structural elements. It is in fact a deep-structure component that is potent enough to establish unconventional functions for poetry and reject the traditional distinctions between poetry and prose. This reading of poeticity offers a venue for fictional prose to reflect new horizons. The present article, through differentiating between poeticity and poeticalness in Mandanipour’s “Shargh-e Banafsheh,” looks into a number of salient socio-historical characteristics of Iranian culture as depicted in the short story.

**Keywords:** Poeticity, Poeticalness, Cultural Reading, “Shargh-e Banafsheh”

### Extended Abstract

#### 1. Introduction

The article intends, through differentiating between “Poeticity” and “Poeticalness” as put forward by Roman Jakobson, developed and modified by Roland Barthes, and finalized by Yuri Lotman, to investigate the socio-cultural effects of poeticity in Shahryâr Mandanipour's short story “The Orient of Violet” (“Shargh-e Banafsheh”).

#### 2. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of the research is based on the author's elaboration and speculation on the differences between the two concepts of poeticity and poeticalness. As such, there is no preformulated or previously postulated theory to be followed in the article.

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### 3. Methodology

The research is a case study that employs a speculative analytical method. Such a methodology is not based on mere information and citations but concentrates on a methodical contemplation and systematic development of the data provided by the corpora.

### 4. Discussion and Analysis

The article first discusses the development of the concept of poeticity in a way to serve the methodology for analyzing the short story. Second, by concentrating on the fictional elements and the socio-cultural norms and values related to the story, it tries to discover the embedded meanings of the short story and come to deep structures that provide the reader with the historico-cultural functions of the text. The focal concept to be discussed and analyzed is "love", which is one of the pivotal motifs in Persian literature, especially in mystical poetry. The textual progression of the short story takes place through various literary intertexts, the central of which one is the sonnets (*ghazal*) of Hâfiz. In fact, the story is a contemporary reading of "love" as conceived by Hâfiz. The final goal of the analysis is, therefore, to find out the semantic, historical, and cultural relations that might exist between the traditional and modern interpretations of "love" in Persian literature.

### 5. Conclusion

From the very beginning, "The Orient of Violet" adopts a contradictory mode of narration as on the one hand it intends to conduct a historical analysis, and on the other, the primary intertext, i.e. the sonnets' world-view is essentially anti-historical. That is why the two characters' experiences of mystical love, turn out to be parodic, if not absurd. This proves that not only Persian fiction but Iranian culture in general is directed toward a path that is essentially different from that previously marched.

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