



Reza AmirKhani's *Man-e Ou*: Narrative Codes in an Ideological Circle

Hossein Rezaei Laksar^{1*} 

Yousef Aram² 

Maziar Mohaymeni³ 

Abstract

Reza Amirkhani's bestseller novel, *Man-e Ou*, has never been semiotically studied. This study aims to investigate this novel in light of Roland Barthes' narrative codes theory. This article employs an excerpt reading method to ideologically analyse the narrative codes and draws upon Pierre Macherey's and Terry Eagleton's theories. The critical analyses of this study turn around concepts such as 'absolutism,' 'anti-scientism,' 'fatalism,' and 'originalism.' Amirkhani highlights and reproduces these concepts to cover up class and social conflicts throughout the novel. In other words, his 'absolutism' ignores the opposition, his 'anti-scientism' and 'fatalism' manipulate the objective reality, and his 'originalism' fabricates a value for Tehran-dwellers to pave the way for his hero's ideology. His attempt to correct and justify a number of social predicaments renders his work self-contradictory and problematic.

Keywords: Reza Amirkhani, *Man-e Ou*, Barthes' Narrative Codes, Ideology

Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

Reza Amirkhani's bestseller novel, *Man-e Ou*, has never been semiotically studied. This study aims to investigate this novel in light of Roland Barthes' narrative codes theory. This article employs an excerpt reading method to ideologically analyse the narrative codes and draws upon Pierre Macherey's and Terry Eagleton's theories.

2. Methodology

The present study employs a number of carefully selected narrative codes to analyse *Man-e Ou*. Among the five narrative codes, only three (semantic, symbolic, and cultural) reflect infinite mechanisms and move beyond the boundaries of

*1. Ph. D. in Linguistics, Bu-ali Sina University, Hamedan, Iran. (**Corresponding Author: hosseinrezaeilaksar@yahoo.com**)

2. Assistant Professor in Linguistics, Bu-ali Sina University, Hamedan, Iran. (youssefaram@gmail.com)

3. Assistant Professor French Language and Literature, Bu-ali Sina University, Hamedan, Iran. (m.mohaymeni@basu.ac.ir)

implications. As a result, considering the limits of hermeneutic and proairetic codes in a hypertextual and cultural analysis, we employed the semantic, symbolic, and cultural codes in our analysis. It should be noted that the other two codes are also implemented in the course of discussion. Lastly, this study employs narrative codes to make a hypertextual analysis and investigate the ideological implications of *Man-e-Ou*.

3. Theoretical Framework

Introducing the five narrative codes in his *S/Z*, Barthes formulates an unprecedented textual analysis through which the implied meanings of the text are exposed. Some of these interpretations might even go beyond the text. He divides Honoré de Balzac's *Sarrasine* into 561 units of reading and conceptualises five narrative codes including hermeneutic code, proairetic code, cultural code, connotative code, and symbolic code. The hermeneutic code refers to any element in a story that is not explained, perplexes the reader, and raises questions that demand explication. The proairetic code refers to the other major structuring principles that create interest or suspense in the reader or the viewer. It applies to any action that implies a further narrative action. The semantic code points to any element in a text that suggests a particular, often additional, meaning by way of connotation. The symbolic code is a deeper structural principle that organises semantic meanings, usually through antitheses or mediation between antithetical terms. The cultural code designates any element in a narrative that refers to a scientific fact or a body of knowledge. In other words, the cultural codes tend to point to our shared knowledge about the world, including properties that we can designate as physical, physiological, medical, psychological, literary, historical, etc. This theory analyses the text on the micro-scale and paves the way for a hypertextual reading of the text that utilises Terry Eagleton's and Pierre Macherey's relevant theories.

4. Discussion and Analysis

The results of this study show that by employing the semantic, symbolic, and cultural codes, the author glorifies concepts such as 'absolutism,' 'anti-scientism,' 'fatalism,' and 'originalism.' He highlights and reproduces these concepts to cover up class and social conflicts throughout the novel. In other words, his 'absolutism' ignores the opposition, his 'anti-scientism' and 'fatalism' manipulate the objective reality, and his 'originalism' fabricates a value for Tehran-dwellers to pave the way for his hero's ideology.

5. Conclusion

By employing the semantic, symbolic, and cultural narrative codes, the author both legitimates Haji Fath's affluence and denies the significant role it plays in his

hero's journeys. In any case, it is obvious that the protagonist of the story is a wealthy person and as a consequence he can lead an expensive and comfortable life in Tehran and Paris. His residence in Tehran and his nationality justify his wealth, good-nature, and martyrdom. Although the author tries to offer a logical rationale for this ideological contradiction, his attempt to correct a number of social predicaments renders his work paradoxical and problematic.

Select Bibliography

- Amirkhani, R. 1399 [2020]. *Man-e Ou*. 50th ed. Tehran: Ofoq. [In Persian].
- Barthes, R. 1974. *S/Z*. Richard, M (trans.). New York: Hill & Wang.
- Culler, J. 1388 [2009]. *Boutiqa-e Sa'kht-gara: Sa'kh-garaei, Zaban Shenasi, va Motale'eh-e Adabiyat*. Kouroush, S (trans.). Tehran: Minooye Kherad. (*Structuralist Poetics*) [In Persian].
- Eagleton, T. 1397 [2018]. *Dar-Amadi bar Ideology*. Akbar, M (trans.). Tehran: B'am. (*Ideology: An Introduction*) [In Persian].
- Jameson, F. 1400 [2021]. *Na'khod-Agah-e Siyasi; Ravayat-e Hamchon-konesh-e Nema'din-e Ejtetaei*. Hossein, S (trans.). Tehran: Nimazh. (*The Political Unconscious*) [In Persian].
- Lorusso, A. M. 1400 [2021]. *Neshaneh-shenasi-e Farhangi*. Raheleh, Q (trans.). Tehran: Siyahrood. (*Cultural Semiotics*) [In Persian].
- Macherey, P. et al. 1399 [2020]. *Adabiyat be Masabeh Shekli Ideologic*. Shahriyar, V (trans.). Tehran: Morvarid. [In Persian].
- Moriarty, M. 1399 [2020]. *Roland Barthes*. Sajjad, Q (trans.). Tehran: Avand-e Danesh. [In Persian].
- Nealon, J. et al. 1396 [2017]. *Ja'beh-Abzar-e Nazariyeh*. Abbas, L .et al (trans.). Tehran: Qoqnoos. (*The Theory Toolbox*) [In Persian].
- Saafi-e Pirloojeh, H. 1398 [2019]. "Pa'yeh ha-e Gozideh-khani az Dasta'n." *Naqd-o Nazariyeh-e Adabi*. Vol 8. Issue 1. 71-94. [In Persian].

How to cite:

Rezaei Laksar, H., Aram, Y., & Mohaymeni, M. 2023. "Reza AmirKhani's *Man-e Ou*: Narrative Codes in an Ideological Circle", *Naqd va Nazaryeh Adabi*, 15(1): 127-153. DOI:10.22124/naqd.2023.25260.2500

Copyright:

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to *Naqd va Nazaryeh Adabi (Literary Theory and Criticism)*.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided that the original work is properly cited.

