




Ideological and Aesthetic Features of Contemporary Iranian Short Stories

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Abstract: This article is devoted to the analysis of the genesis, development and trends of modern Iranian short stories. Persian literature with a great and powerful past has given great figures to world civilization, and it possesses a modern history of more than a century, and even in the new era, it occupies a worthy place in the world literary process. Iranian short stories have come a long way in almost a hundred years. Invaluable works had been created that enriched the history and theory of Eastern short stories. The Islamic Revolution of 1979 put an end to the rule of the Shah, which lasted two centuries, therefore significant changes took place in the socio-political, spiritual and cultural life of the country, which impacted Iranian literature. On the one hand, these changes manifested themselves when, in the first years after the Revolution, the principle of Islamization of cultural and spiritual life intensified, then in recent decades it has been recognized that the principles of striving for new themes, formal and stylistic research, and the desire to describe reality in a new way have strengthened in the works of writers. During this period, Iranian prose changed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Short stories of this period have their own characteristics and principles and arouse great scientific and human interest.

1 INTRODUCTION

Literature is an artistic creation that uses words to express ideas, and literature is valued globally for its ability to illuminate people's spiritual lives.


Iranian literature has a centuries-old new history and continues to have a respectable position in the global literary process. Iranian literature has given the human civilization tremendous creative individuals. Throughout its origin and growth, contemporary Iranian literature—particularly short stories—has undergone several artistic phases and has retained many of its unique features.


Research in this area, however, focuses on Iranian short stories from the 1920s and 1930s. This literary genre is neither well known throughout the aforementioned time period, nor has it been the subject of a thorough monographic plan of study.


Moreover, no generalizing scientific works on the dynamics of its growth have been produced.

Iranian literature was inevitably influenced by the significant socio-political, spiritual, and cultural shifts that were taking place in the nation at this time. Oriental studies science has not yet examined the substance of these modifications in the short narrative or the manner in which they manifest. Iranian literary criticism is currently focusing on this significant historical epoch.

The author has outlined the primary research objectives of the article by providing an overview of the short story's origins and developmental stages in Iranian literature. Additionally, the author has highlighted the distinctive characteristics of the short story during the first half of the 20th century and provided a list of the genre's most influential writers. It was vital to analyze the causes for the genre's development as well as to compare short tales from

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the 1960s and 1970s of the 20th century to the short story of the new socio-political and cultural realities following the 1979 Revolution. The next necessary step was to ascertain the modern short story's thematic range, choose both its traditional and innovative hand; additionally, to observe contemporary writers' approaches to short stories in diverse fields and currents and uncover the fundamentals of writers' artistic perception of reality. Emphasizing creative uniqueness, the artistic representation and expression techniques of modern short story authors demonstrate the growth of female writers' creativity in Iranian literature and establish their role in the genre's evolution. The researcher dispels the notion of short story visuals with a focus on kids and young people on the brink of the twenty-first century.

1.1 The Main Results and Findings

Principal Patterns in the Growth of Iranian Short Stories in the First Decade of the 1900s.

Releasing of the collection "Facts and Lies" (« یکی نبود و یکی بود ») a significant development in Iranian literature, was published in 1922 by Muhammad Ali Djemalzade. One of the pioneers of contemporary literature in Iranian literature is Muhammad Ali Djemalzade.

The fiction of the 20th-30s of the twentieth century was a tightly regulated literary age, and the development of Iranian short tales might be considered passive. The short stories were dominated by the heroes' sense of humility and exasperation with life's challenges.

Significant changes were seen in Iranian writing throughout the 1930s and 1940s, and a prodigious number of gifted authors emerged, including well-known figures like Buzurg Allawi, Ole Jalal Ahmed, Mohammed Masood Dehfti, Mohammed Hijazi, Sadiq Chubak, Beh a zin, and Sadiq Hida. According to the article, the short tale genre rose to prominence in the twentieth century during the 50th year, and it was distinguished by its capacity to capture the diversity of reality in all of its facets. The genre of short stories has established a rightful position for itself in Iranian literature nowadays. This genre, which piqued the interest of numerous readers, evolved and broadened, gaining fresh perspectives on the world and reality. Examining the creative aspects of the short tale revealed it to be the newest and most pertinent literary form that addresses the most important social concerns.

Persian short stories have been influenced by the writings of well-known Western European and

Russian classics, including Voltaire, Goethe, Tolstoy, Chekhov, Dostoyevsky, Gorky, Aragon, Rolland, Camus, Sartre, Hemingway, U. Folkner, and others.

The short tale from the 1970s of the 20th century addresses the lighted-sidedness of mass culture, informational pressure, Westernization, and the quickly advancing Western art and culture in Iran. The Iranian government launched the socio-cultural movement known as the "White Revolution" in opposition to Western influence. Islamist writers understood this movement as a means of eradicating the country's cultural heritage and values. Based on sources, all of these facts are disclosed in the dissertation. Since the tenets of capitalism conflicted with those of Islamic civilization, the collision of traditional beliefs and economic structures in Iran resulted in a spiritual and moral crisis. The "White Revolution," which the Shah spearheaded in the 1960s, was therefore put down because it sought to compile the contradictory rules and laws that contradict one another.

The "White Revolution" program's objective was to lessen the effects of Iran's society's shift to modern technologies, without considering the opportunities and desires of society's members to bring all segments of the populace together around shared heritage and customs, and to combine and popularize the elements of "mass culture" that was shaped by Western influence. Nevertheless, the objective assigned to such a revolution could not be achieved by its program. It revealed social inconsistencies that existed in society and sparked turmoil.

Through their writings, a number of well-known Iranian authors, like Ole Jalal Ahmed, Dj. Mirsadiki, F. Tunukebuni, N. Ebrahimi, and others, forewarned Iran of the moral and psychological aggression of the West. Colonial policy was evaluated as the harm. In addition to economic harm, there was cultural harm as well. It had been acknowledged that this policy was disastrous. There have been calls in society to advance human values generally and heritage values specifically.

1.2 The Evolution of the Short Story During the Final Quarter of the 20th Century

Iran's social and cultural life underwent an Islamization process following the Islamic revolution of 1979, particularly in the country's literature. The spirit of Islamic religious beliefs was encouraged in new works, and fiction was strictly regulated. In one such instance, writers like to use conventional clichés and ideals passed down from the past to convey their

perspective toward reality. Furthermore, authors started using allegories, trails, and other literary creative devices in a metaphorical meaning.

These novel elements in the short stories started to resemble responses to inquiries concerning the age-old conflict between good and evil. Using well-known tales and imagery that people could relate to, authors interpreted the issue of struggle and transgender identity, missing it from the most crucial subjects and concepts (fight between a spring and a puddle in the short story "Travel of the spring" («سفرچشمه کوچک») by Amuzade Halili, a dialogue between birds and a tree in the short story "Alien" («مسافر»), the short story's depiction of a floating carpet, the birds' dialogue with the girl sleeping on it, and the sky "The journey to the city of Suleiman" («سفریه شهر سلیمان»), combining modern discourse with a somewhat modified version of an old dispute genre, "She was from heaven" («او سماوی بود») by Zahro Zavariyan, "Birthday Party" («روز تولد») by Mustafa Herman and others.

The article also demonstrates attempts to incorporate literary traditions such as legends, fairy tales, and moral lessons into contemporary short stories. The authors' portrayal of reality influences these traditions through the characters they create in classic literature. A paragraph from Halima's short novel "The trip to the city of Suleiman" corroborates this:

قالیچه پرنده ها آرام آرام از بالای کارگاه قالیبافی حشمت خان گذشت. از بالای همه بامهای آبادی گنست. به بالای خانه ننه حلیمه رسید...کمکم به ابرها رسیدند. دخترک فکر کرد از پنبه ابرها برای خودش بالش سفیدی درست خواهد کرد و به ستاره ها که رسیدند چهار ستاره پد نور آسمانرا خواهد چید و آنها را در چهار گوشه قالیچه اش خواهد آویخت. این ستاره ها می توانند چراغهای قالیچه اش باشند...

Translation: "A flock of birds, forming the shape of the carpet, flew slowly above the roofs of the village houses, a workshop of Hetmethana, and flew up to the roof of Aunt Halima... They flew up to the clouds. The girl thought she would make a white pillow from fluffy clouds, and when she came to the stars she would gather their four stars and hang them in the 4 corners of her carpet as four light bulbs."

This chapter examined how, in the new socio-political and cultural milieu following the Shah's overthrow, new literary works acquired characteristics that set them apart from older works. It also examined the emergence of a new literary theme that is closely associated with developments in public policy and societal culture. Among the subjects covered are the collapse of the Shah's regime and the Islamic Revolution, critiques of Shah-era social life, and the way of life of Iran's nomadic

peoples. The Iran-Iraq war issue was explored from two angles:

- the theme of the people's valor throughout the conflict and the specifics of military operations;
- the war's effects on the Iranian people's daily lives.

The majority of the social short tales published in Iran during the Islamic Revolution have as their central topic exposing the despicable actions of the Shah administration, according to an examination of these stories. The brief narratives "Farewell, brother!" («خداحافظ برادر») by Muhammad Rizo Sarshora, "Pigeon's Nest" («لانه کبوتر») by Manijhe Jhankula, "Shotgun" («تفنگ») by Muhammad-Rizo Bajrami, "Autumn in the desert" («پاییز صحرا») talk about the people's busy social lives during the Shah's rule and how the Shah's regime fell. However, because literature was strictly regulated by the government at the time, authors started to give up on the Islamic criticism of reality in the 1980s.

The Iraq-Iran war broke out shortly after the Revolution was victorious. This incident swiftly altered and enveloped every facet of country life. Literature focus and themes led to the appearance of the "Literature of the sacred homeland Defense" («ادبیات داستانی دفاع مقدس»), and during the war and after its end it took a special place in homeland literature. Patriotism emerged as the most significant subject throughout this time. Being a Shahid during a battle was seen as the ultimate honor, and the works celebrated the soldiers' devotion and bravery. The surface-level storylines of the short tales were identical to one another and lacked much creative merit. Their primary objective was to demonstrate that Iran had fought a fair war, and this literature was propaganda in nature. Works produced during the war years were referred to as "written by order" by scholar D. Dorri. During those years, short stories were devoted to heroic exploits, devotion, and becoming a Shahid in battle. It was propagandistic in nature.

Raziya Tujjar, an outstanding writer, and representative of modern Iranian literature, first years of her work devoted to the image of the war and the consequences of it. In her short stories "Seven Prisoners" («هفتبند»), and "The Rise and Carnage" («دران هنگامه آتش و خون») the author through the mysteries of the analysis in the minds and psyche of the characters describes the heavy consequences of war, misery and suffering of the families and relatives of the war dead. Also, the short stories by Ahmed Gulyami, written in the style of "text in the text" as "Ghosts of fear" («سایه های ترس»), "Brown colour and computers" («خرمایی و کمپیوترها») by Mohammad

Reza Aslani, “Football” («فوتبال») by Mohamed Naciri tell about patriotism, war and its dire consequences.

Iranian short story authors of the 1990s included a new topic in their works: the destiny of the country's nomadic tribes. The short stories “Two not ripe persimmons” («دوخرمای نارس») and “People without evidence” («بی شناسنامه ها») the lives of the people who reside in the provinces of Seyistan and Baludjistan are described by Faridun Amuzade Khalili. Readers paid close attention to the short stories' themes and contents. A. Halili described the lives of this nation's representatives in a depressing manner and brought up the important topic of their social protection, drawing on the harsh socioeconomic conditions of the Balujs. The author calls Iranian society's attention to these people's uninformed manner of living and helpless state of existence. Khalili's short fiction “Two Not Ripe Persimmons” tackled the problem of “child trafficking.” kid trafficking was accepted as a common occurrence, which involves selling a kid into servitude to an unknown, wealthy buyer. But in a nation like Iran, it takes a lot of bravery and audacity for writers to discuss it in their works. The purchasers inspected the youngster who was brought to the market to be sold as an animal; they looked at his body, hair, and teeth. Even Europeans were among the overseas customers.

The first customer grabs the youngster by the jaw and lifts his head high:

دهانت را باز کن... آه... آه... این که همه اش کرم خورده!
است؟! این باب دندانم نیست. می خواهم برم پسته خندان کند. این
دندانها که من دیدم قوتش را ندارد. دو روزه می پکد می ریزد تو
دهانتش.

کو؟ فقط یک دانه اش سیاه شده ارباب! بقیه اش سالم است -
-سی و یکی اش سالم سالم است
چند سالتش است؟
-سیزده سال. اگر نه دوازده را حتماً دارد -
-سواد هم دارد؟
-نخیر واجه -
-چه قدر می دهی آخرش؟ -
-پسر خودم است. مادرش با نداری بزرگش کرده. من میدانم -
چه به خوردش دادم و چه به خوردش ندادم. چهار ستون بدنش سالم
...است. انصاف و مروت خودتان واجه

Translation: “Well, come on, open your mouth... Oh! Your teeth are all rotten?! This will not work. You have to crack pistachios with your teeth. And these teeth are not able to do so. The teeth absolutely will fall out in two days.

- Where do you see the rotten teeth? Only one tooth was turned black, Sir, the rest are fine. Only one of 32 got rotten.
- How old is he?
- Thirteen, maybe twelve.

- Can he read and write?
- No, Sir.
- Tell me the final price.
- This is my son. His mother brought him up in poverty. I could not feed him. He is absolutely healthy. Sir, the rest is up to you, to your conscience.”

As the narrator, the author of this short story communicates via the teenage character Sohrab and does not obstruct the characters' conversation. The author does not provide a sophisticated narrative or emotional expression; instead, the short story is presented in a straightforward and cohesive manner. In any case, the reader isn't left feeling cold about anything that occurs.

1.3 Short Stories of Women Writers

It has been examined the works of talented women authors who began producing their own short tales in the late 1980s, such Manidje Jhankuli, Samir Aslanpur, Zehra Zavariyan, Vadjihe Ali Akbari Samani, Razia Tujhor, and others. Each of these authors uses fresh forms, substance, and stylistic elements to paint a picture of a lady. But throughout this time, there was a shift in how the feminine pictures were approached. Despite the fact that most of their heroines wear the khidjab, these ladies are intelligent, modern Iranian women with strong wills—not unhappy, destitute, or victims of short-term marriages.

Of course, contemporary Iranian women face significant challenges, but these are distinct issues related to personal autonomy. In contrast to earlier heroines, the female characters in the short stories by Roziya Tujjar, Vadjihe Ali Akbari Samani, Samir Aslanpur, and Zehra Zavariyan endeavor to establish their personal identities in society, particularly within the family and in their relationships with men. They also work to solve problems that go beyond the scope of the typical family. Through her exploration of the world of the senses, her nuanced awareness of the many manifestations of her surroundings, and her descriptions of occurrences, the varied world of women is portrayed.

Iranian literature in exile grows as a vital component of contemporary Iranian literature outside of Iran, in the several nations that make up the Iranian diaspora. Iranian short stories created under the influence of the resident countries' literatures include those by writers like Guli Taraki, Shahrnush Porsipur, Mahshid Amirshohy, Mahrnush Mazor, Rizo Doneshvar, Maroofi Abbas, Mahmoud Masudi, Sasan Kahramon, Reza Qasemi, and Zuiyo Pirzod,

which are said to be based on national and universal values and reside in the United States, France, Germany, Sweden, Canada, England, and the Netherlands.

1.4 Iranian Fiction and Children's Literature

The number of children's Iranian short tales rose in the final decade of the 20th century. The literature for children is now a vital component of the literature of the country. Children's stories such as poetry, parables, fairy tales and fables, playing songs, rhymes, and legends and myths were also meant for adults. They were then included into a kids' cycle.

The study noted that children's literature serves the public interest in the spiritual education of the younger generation. The works classified as "morals" and "books of morals" in Iranian written literature are considered to be the first examples of children's literature. Although there were ancient epic and poetry works in Iranian literature, as well as various books aimed at moralizing children, children's literature did not develop steadily until the Enlightenment period, which spanned the second half of the nineteenth and the first part of the twentieth century. The second age of children's literature was made possible by Iranian authors for young readers from the 1950s and 60s, including Jemal Mirsadikov, Tunukebuni, Simin Daneshvar, Caribbean, Parviz Bobo Muqaddam, Ole Jalal Ahmad, and Ibrahim Gulistan.

The research includes a variety of short tales with children's themes that were initially meant to be instructional. These are short stories of famous Iranian writers for children like "Journey of the spring" («سفر چشمه کوچک») by Faridun Amuzade Khalili, "Further from the pine trees" («آنسو یسنویرها»), "Dirty deeds of my father" («حقه های سینمای بابا بام»), "Top of the mountain" («قله کوه») by Muhsin Parviz, "Wonderful bird" («مرغ حیرت انگیز») by Jafar Ebrahimi Nasr, "Christopher Columbus" («خریستافور کالومب») and "Marco Polo" («مرکوپولا») by Ahmad Arablu, "Lizard" («سوسمار») by Shaxrama Shafi. Characteristics unique to the authors of children's short stories from this era included their focus on children's themes and topics; these included children and nature, challenging childhoods, friendship, education, school issues, village children and the environment, humorous stories, and short stories on other subjects.

2 CONCLUSION

In the scientific aspect of the article dynamics of the short story genre, ideological and aesthetic features and updated trends have been studied, in addition to the traditional realistic new methods of artistic assimilation of reality. Based on historical and functional, as well as comparative-typological analysis of the short stories of the most well-known writers of modern Iran, the following conclusions have been drawn:

The birth of a new genre of modern Iranian literature was influenced by the rich literary legacy of the Iranian people, which includes epic genres that date back millennia, Middle Ages plots, pictures, and literary techniques, as well as American, European, and Russian literature. The critical and analytical components that first appeared in Enlightenment realism and progressively transitioned into the critical Realism in the short story, along with the educational significance of Iranian short tales, defined the early twentieth century.

Following the Islamic revolution in the 1980s, there was a greater push to mainstream religious and ideological ideas in literature and culture, with the goal of instilling the principles of Islam in the minds of the populace. Following the Islamic Revolution of 1979, there were several trends seen in Iranian literature, including a return to Islamic principles, the restoration of historical traditions, the use of classical and ancient writers' works, allegorical and symbolic imagery, humor, controversy, and other teaching methods.

New topics dominated the short story in the 1980s. These themes center around the Islamic Revolution and the fall of the Shah's regime; they also include patriotic and scathing critiques of Shah-era social life. During that time, Iranian literature also introduced a novel theme: the lives of nomadic peoples.

A wide range of topics from our time, such as the post-revolutionary short stories, are reflected in the topics of deep philosophical meaning and social subjects found in Iranian short stories from the previous period. These topics include the fate of women's image, family relationships, the spiritual world of children and teenagers, love and faith, and personal problems. But soon, they adopted the spirit and characteristics of Islam and went in a different direction. A plethora of new authors who were recognized as "writers of the revolutionary period" (M. Sarshor, M. Parviz, M. Hiromon, H. Babahani, Guliyev, M. Bayrami, etc.) were included in the literature.

A galaxy of gifted new writers emerged in the literature in the 1990s, carrying on the best traditions of the pre-revolutionary generation of writers and making a significant contribution to the short story's development. These writers included Manidzhe Djankuli, Samir Aslanpur, Zehra Zavariyan, Vadjihe Ali Akbari Samani, Rosia Tudjzhar, and others. The women's inventiveness was what gave rise to a profound understanding of the characters' souls, a reflection of their inner experiences, and the introduction of a vast array of creative and visual style tools. Although this rise of female creativity was somewhat contrary to the representation of women in Muslim society, based on the results of the study it should be stated as a new literary phenomenon that occurs in other neighbouring countries in the region.

Persian-language literature, which is seen to be an essential component of Iranian literature, originates outside of Iran. While some authors' works lack a national color image and are therefore not reflective of the nation, other writers' works can evoke a strong sense of homecoming and showcase the nation's character in all its splendor.

The post-Islamic Revolution short stories contributed to the quick rise of children's and youth literature. This growth was caused by the tight condition of control over social life through literary criticism in the 1980s of the 20th century, which led authors to focus on the teaching of the younger generation. Children's authors were greatly impacted by the resurgence of moral and spiritual principles, as well as cultural and national legacy. Islamic ideals were prominent in children's literature soon after the Islamic Revolution, and as the twenty-first century approached, these ideals blended with global ones. Iranian short tales have reached a new level of growth today, depending on human values and actively participating in the global literary scene to demonstrate their capacity to convey innovation in literature—the art of words.

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