



The Analysis of the Holy Defense Novels According to Bakhtin Considering "Noah Homiletic Sermon" and "Once Upon a War"

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Abstract

Polyphony theory was proposed by Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1978), a critic, philosopher, and Russian theorist in the 20th century. He borrowed this theory from music field and used it for the analysis of Dostoyevsky and Rabelais's stories. According to him, polyphony means equal distribution of phones in a text. He believes that polyphony lets the story characters leave the author's viewpoint and creates conversation and on the basis of mixture of different phones, presents a new theory. In this study, it is tried to analyze speech systems of "Noah homiletic sermon" by Mahmoodi and "Once upon a war" by Gheysari using polyphony and monophony approaches of Bakhtin and the significance of this study is answering to this question that to what extent these books were able to benefit speech systems and Bakhtin theory. This research shows that polyphony in "Noah homiletic sermon" by Mahmoodi is used on the basis of Bakhtin theory and each personality has a special language and ideology which is common in face but actually they are different. This novel possess a particular position because of happening in a place with special geography which is Diyar-e- noon and the sensitivity of that period when the story is being narrated. But "Once upon a war" couldn't benefit from polyphony so actions of the story have been finished by monophony.

Keywords: *Bakhtin; Polyphony; Monophony; Noah Homiletic Sermon; Once Upon a War*

1. Introduction

Tzvetan Todorov has called Mikhail Bakhtin the most significant Russian thinker in humanities and the most eminent literary theorist of 20th century. He established the foundation of "the logic of conversation"; 50 years of his mental activity, an enormous plan that changed linguistics, literary criticism, and epistemology (Ahmadi, 1905: 93). In his period the researches were done in the domain of literature or by Formalists or philologists or stylists; however, there were some weak events considering tendency toward philosophy or sociology; but Bakhtin suddenly changed this atmosphere and proposed

the discussion of conversation. Of course, from his view point there are two types of conversational relations one of them is inter textual conversation and the other is out of text that is between text and the society (Namvarmotlaq, 1914).

1.1 Purpose of the study and Research Questions

The main purpose of this study is the analysis of the two novels "Noah homiletic sermon" and "Once upon a war" according to Bakhtin theory. This research is going to answer the question of "how Bakhtin theory is shown in those two novels?"

1.2 Significance of the study

We are mostly looking for being read and seen by the kind of literature that is called resistance literature; saying realities and untold about holy defense years, recognizing capabilities of holy defense literature, making people ready to be active and take part by reading the writings in the holy defense domain, introducing and suitable reflexing of pure and deep holy defense literature and the others are the goals that can be expected for this literary field. Selecting literary and artistic formats can make holy defense literature and art richer and surely future generations can use these writings in the best way. One of the positive points about investigating writings especially war writings, is making them on the basis of literary and world theories to be read and seen because they can be as a treasure of unwritten history about the people who are unwillingly involved in the war.

1.3 Methodology

In this research, Noah homiletic sermon and Once upon a war, have been analyzed using descriptive and attributive method. Considering the proposed questions and the goals of research, they are matched and surveyed according to Bakhtin theoretical basis and the proposed questions were answered.

1.4 Review of the Related Literature

Kahnooe Zhale (2004) has investigated the polyphony of narration in the stories according to Bakhtin and Docrow in an article called: "polyphony in the stories" in the Foreign Language Research journal, no. 16, pp. 5-16. Namvar Motlaq Bahman (2008) has studied and investigated Bakhtin theory in an article called: "Bakhtin, conversation and polyphony of Bakhtin study" presented in Institute for Humanities journal, no.57, pp. 397-414.

Bahramian Akram and co. (2011) has criticized the mentioned story considering Bakhtin polyphony discourse in an article called: "comparing Bakhtin polyphony displays in "far and long", ... "king the son of the king", " to abroad as said by suspicious man", "authors' travels by Aboutorab Khosravi" ." presented in Fine Arts and Performing arts, no.44, pp.13-73.

In an article called: "conversational imagination of queries about novels", Poor Azar Roya (2008) has summarized the major part of Bakhtin conversation imagination book in Literary Criticism journal, no. 1, first year, pp. 189-194.

2. *Bakhtin Theoretical Basis*

Since each speech has been directed toward a social horizon, a horizon which is made of semantic and value elements. These ideological and lingual elements are various and limited. Each speech is in one or some speeches wherever it is necessary that is the result of a common horizon. (Todorov, 2012:95).

Among the most important Bakhtin key idioms are monophony and polyphony. Monophony is reducing voices and present knowledge in a text to one narration that is imposed to the text by the author. In monophony, other knowledge or ideologies are not equal to author's ideology and knowledge rather they are rejected or reduced to a common dominator (Makaric, 2006:99).

Polyphony is an idiom which is originally borrowed from music and makes the central meaning of Bakhtin conversation theory. According to Bakhtin, polyphony is the characteristic of a literary prose that because of it, various voices show different ideological positioning and can engage in conversation equally and far from judgement or author's limitations. The author meanwhile personalities' speeches is alongside them (the same:101). In his view. Each character in Dostoyevsky's novels is same as a melody and all of them together make final song. In the other words, they make each other complete. Each one's internal feature (as their mental feature) find its meaning only in the relationship with other characters and the main plan of the novel. Each reference to a character is part of the main plan of the story. In Dostoyevsky's story the narrator is a person (author). The narrator introduces and commits himself in different and sometimes opposite ways. In monophony novel, the narrated world in the world of characters which is told by the narrator. The story is an imitation of character's action. But in Dostoyevsky's polyphony novel, the narrated world, is the world of characters' different narrations which are told by changed viewpoint (and nonstable). Also the story is an imitation of characters' action, but they find meaning just in their internal relationship, and they are meaningless while they are alone. In monophony novel, just the words of the narrator (or the author), means a single and isolated phone is heard that is above all the other voices and harmonize them. Although characters' conversation is heard but finally what dominates everything and supervise them is mono speech of the narrator or author. But in polyphony novels, the relationship between characters is known through the relationship of the author with the characters. The author is in the center and face with the character tender-heartedness. In this mode, the author will be changed into some people. In the first step, conversation between the author and the characters; in the second step, conversation between characters; in one word, relationships between what the narrator and characters say is the main point in narration (Ahmadi, 2005:99-100).

In Bakhtin's viewpoint, novel is an intertextual visualization and makes the most action field prepare for diversity. But diversity and intertextuality are entries far from the time and can be used for explaining each historical section and matched them on each literary period. Time for Bakhtin is totally different from any other literary type because irreducibly each kind of novel has its special singularity (Todorov, 2013:135-136).

2.1 The Summary of "Noah Homiletic Sermon"

Noah an 18-year old hero is failed in the selection because of unknown reasons although he has gotten the first grade in the entrance exam of university and after receiving his dispatch paper is going to western front along with 32 fugitive soldiers. Noah has a complicated personality which is shown in ambiguity. His story in *Diyar-e-noon* remains as one of the dark and ambiguous points of final years of war. Although until the end of the novel there are some codes from some of the characters but likewise he will remain unknown.

2.2 The Analysis of "Noah Homiletic Sermon"

Like the other human phenomena, war has been existed from the beginning of human life up to now. According to Heraclius, an ancient Greek philosopher is, war is the root of all the events. War makes some people as gods and some others as slaves. This novel is in 21 parts and is narrated by the master mind. Master mind both knows and doesn't know everything about the story. The narrator makes suspension by going and coming in time, a suspension that brings other questions and suspensions with itself, questions that some of them remain unanswered until the end of the novel. Finding their answers are reader's duty since the master mind either knows or doesn't know their definite answers.

This novel along with war theme and a different look, creates characters that each one engages in special actions due to war. The relationships change according to war and each character shows a different reaction according to the request. By observing social life, it is possible to recognize other types of verbal communication except literary relationship. As multi lingually is one of the important methods to get to polyphony, as Bakhtin believes in novel a lot of verbal-ideological systems and languages are integrated such as the language of social group levels (investors and intellectuals), the language of jobs (farmers and

merchants), daily language and ... which are considered as a pre-requisite for novel. Each one of these languages in a text act as a spoken genre. This idiom is defined as: Each spoken genre is a written language and shows a group, job, literary genre, cultural tendency, and so on, so spoken genre can be discourses, accents, idioms, and slangs" (Bahramiyan et. al, 2011:17). The social life of the novel is mostly in daily relation consist of communications and meeting of the people and other various characters in the novel that is understood mostly in colloquial language of ideologic relationship in general meaning:

"From whom do you say, Haj Ezzat?"

"See him there. Just a child he is. See him?"

"So it was a lie that he was number 1 for university?"

"Can't get by my imperfect mind where I saw him. Where I saw him, Ms. Zohre? "

"Why do you forbode, boulder? Eat dried berry?"

Paying attention to the central theme of the novel and far from usual people voices and etc. other voices for example soldiers and officers' voices are scattered in the text with army and front's words and idioms: "don't lose the number. Bitches are a lot here. Be careful not to make problem for you. "

"Yes, Sir."

"They escape easily. Be careful not to be added to your days. You're in final days of your military service."

Contrapuntal has happened whenever in a conversation people have different and especially independent ideas. According to Bakhtin, voices are not due to their quantity but their quality. Multiplicity of people don't add the voices, what makes it more is multiplicity of thoughts. Contrapuntal means existing pious, knowledgeable, wise, brave people who can talk about their beliefs (Ahmadi, 2005:103). In this novel, present voices are recognizable very well, sometimes Leila's mother voice is the same as other women but it is never like the same as Javaher's voice, the evacuee who is waiting for her lost husband. The author uses secondary stories coming from folklore from mayor to usual people who have roles, from Leila, Javaher, and Noah who are active actors of this novel to Havva, Parvin, Shahin, and even Mohammad who shows himself as a mad man because of his fiance's death. Everybody says something. Everybody has his own idea and the author handsomely lets them to play their own roles. Let Leila as a mother to be complainant from the beginning of the story to the end because her child goes. Let Reza Golestan to go and be martyred although he had child and wife. Or Noah was looking for going to front from when he was 14 and in 18 after coming and going to Javaher Abadani's home he was not accepted in university. In this symphony, everybody is playing his own music and this is the art of novel.

Sometimes the narrator directly says novel characters' speeches and put their voices in quotation mark. In this case, a word is understood and used as a foreign element. This word can be used without quotation mark and the difference in the amount of externality between words can have endless degrees and the degree of the words distances with the speaker can be very different. Words are in various levels and distances with the author's words, indirect and free speech, different forms of strange speech as hidden and half hidden speech, scattered and etc... "(Todorov, 2012:120). So the reader deals with different people destiny with different worlds who are engaged in war however sometimes war makes people similar to each other but sometimes invasion of various events and stories and sometimes opposite to other people, makes stories complicated and consolidate the novel. Secondary characters and various and numerous names are in the story with each own stories that are different although their similarities. Addressee has to hear their voice without the feeling of considering him in their shoes. It causes some parts of the story to be ambiguous and perhaps the reader will lose the main story in the middle of the novel or even an impatient reader forget about continuing the story, but this is whereas a novel first starts with an uncommon sentence from the deceased Salman Harati "Today again they brought someone who

didn't have a head." And in the same first page in describing western front and a bus that is setting off to war and caused reader to be worried:

"Impious cut the heads alive" (ibid: 8)

An author or interpretively a narrator, draw addressee to the atmosphere of the story by Leila's son Noah shock, doing that persuasive analysis is started. In the first four pages, suddenly the reader faced with 8 men and 9 women (Leila, Javaher, Narges, Zohre, ..., Noah, Yoones, Hosein, Sajjad, ...) that each one has his voice. In the middle of the story, when the suspension is extreme, again characters are more. Tone almost in the whole novel is reporting, such as each one of the characters have come to represent a voice in the society, do their mission and go. It should be known that even the voices of two women are not the same and each one has his own special look. Perhaps there are some readers who are unaccustomed to reading these kinds of novels is disappointed from reading the novel. So in this novel, everybody is himself. He is not playing his role even some ambiguities remain dissolved until the end of the story it shows that, the subject which is selected to be combined with the subject of war is intellectual and the narration will be finished by suspension. The addressee knows Noah's end of the story but Noah homiletic sermon is not just Noah story. This narration will not be trapped in usual stereotypes. In this story, we face with characters and voices that are believable. Their feet are on the earth and live same as others without interference of other voices. Each one of the characters is an element that makes the whole of the work together and with association and they are creators of the novel (Bakhtin and Hoebmass, 2005:270). A reader understands that "The writer freely is in the middle of the characters' words or along with them" (Macaric, 2006:101). In this novel, the writer creates characters in various situations, each character determines its own position. It is interesting that martyr's father can easily show his jealousy and discomfort toward Noah being alive who is as old as his son through his wife, Haji Zahra.

In a chapter, narrator is Noah's sister. The novel continues from her viewpoint and as well as general information, says some points from the puzzle of Noah's failure in the entrance exam of university and going to military service and his dispatch with fugitive soldiers:

"When Mommy Leila can't find a true answer for the reason of Noah's lack of qualification, comes on to the neighbors. First suspect Javaher. She is afraid of what the neighbors hear from Arabic radio. Most of the time his reason for gathering neighbors is incoming news. Her true and false information is from that radio. She understands Arabic better than Persian" (Mahmoodi: 99).

Although the painful atmosphere of the story is readable and the author shows it by simple but full of bitter real words, when people follow war news from their homes, out of their imaginations what bitter events happened, what crimes, and dedications done

Considered concept in Noah homiletic sermon is the expression of challenging characters' situation in war phenomena and the unquiet environment of those days. To induce part of this unquiet environment, the author illustrates contrast relationship of Leila and her neighbor Javaher. These two characters are in contradiction involvement of each other in a way that even their involvement is in physical form:

"In the evening of 14th of Shahrivar, two events happened simultaneously. First it is Leila and Javaher's hair pulling. Ms. Eshrat is watching through closet window... (Leila) "I wish your leg was broken early in the morning till couldn't go out!" Javaher shows that she doesn't hear. It seems she doesn't play a role in Leila's calamity. She tries to show she doesn't know anything and says: "wow! Leila what happened?"

Leila: "what else do you mean? Hang him or whip him in the intersection? Then you will feel better?" (Mahmoodi :28).

Leila: "I swear I didn't know anything about what you said."

Far from involvement and contradiction of these two characters, the author put other characters in contrast with each other, in a way that is one of the promoter elements of the narration of this novel. The other feature of this novel is having various characters in a way that in its first reading we will lose the characters but the author has involved all the characters in an event. "This literature fights with characters, learn something from them, while it is tried to change characters' votes into the format of completed systems. Characters are considered independent, authoritative, and needless because of their ideology; in this view, a character is an author of his ideology and powerful thought and not an object of ending artistic thought which is for Dostoyevsky (Bakhtin, 2017:73).

None of the characters of Noah homiletic sermon aren't almost similar to other characters of novels about war. One of the various characters of this novel is Leila, Noah's mother, who tries a lot not to let his son go to the front. May be this is wanted by all the mothers at that time, although many of them overcome maternal feeling and persuade herself to send her children there; all of them do not do so and Leila tries not to send her son Noah first to military service and then to the front.

"When he reaches near post office building door, it is very late. The dark guarding door is closed." (Mahmoodi: 81)

Both Shahram Taleb and majid Kafi Moosavi are the 2 characters who have escaped from war:

" You look blue bro. Majid? Something bad happened to you?" ;"Forget about it dear Shahram! Leave me. I'm not in a good mood."; "Your face shows your feeling very bro. Majid."; "if you have a problem, I'm ready to help you."

"Sometimes the author's trace as a narrator is seen in the novel, but it seems the narrator himself is a character who is living with other characters in Diyar-e-noon, but his voice isn't irritating. It is one of those that should be; "his speech is independent very good in the structure of the story and along with the author's words and mix in a special way both with author and characters' voice that are equally valid." (Bakhtin, 2017:76) "In polyphony novels, the relationship between the characters are known through the author's relationship with characters. The author is in the middle and faces in sympathy with the characters. In this state, the author changed to some people. In the first step, the conversation between the author and the characters and in the next step the conversations between the characters, in one word relationships between narrator's words and the characters' words is the main point in the narration" (Ahmadi, 2005:99-100). So many times a reader hears the narrator and the author's voice during the story which is giving information about the story characters such as Havva, Mr. Moein, photographer, Leila, Javaher, Ms. Eshrat, Reza Golestan, etc.:

Shah Beigom Aga ia a tall woman with beautiful eyes. She is living her life. Nonny will be forgotten early (Mahmoodi: 18).

Mr. Moein (physics teacher) doesn't tell a lie to defend himself. He tells the truth. Not something less not something more (ibid; 19).

Diyar-e-noon photographer's voice: "suddenly my photography was damned."

In this way, the narrator retells all of the story characters and their voices. Even in this story we face with an inactive woman character, Ms. Eshrat, although she is in deep mourning for her son but it seems that she has accepted it and as all mothers do every day she is patiently waiting for her son on her house stone bench.

"While coming back, Ms. Eshrat is yet sitting on her house stone bench. She is praising. Above her there is Mostafa's photo. Same as always he is smiling.

And says: "It's impossible to fight with fate Leila!"

And Leila doesn't agree: "Calamity is not fate Ms. Eshrat. This is not my child fate." (ibid: 37)

The subject selected by the author to be combined with war is so thoughtful. The narration continues to the end with suspension. The story starts with the things you don't know and up to the end neither addressee nor the narrator knows anything from this painful life; this is understood by choosing the first title in the novel: "there are things you don't know" also in the title of the second to the end: "there are the things just I know". Even this chapter is exactly finishes with this sentence (ibid: 213). It causes the reader waits in a special ambiguity up to the end.

Events related to war and front are tightly tied to people's life of that region. Making effective pictures out of dispatching soldiers and war, waiting and mourning, persisting and refusals make the narration more tangible. Describing special scenes from story characters as Reza's sacrificing because of his fellow fighter that caused him to be exposed to chemical weapons is one of the effective scenes of the story. But sometimes it is vice versa; it means descriptions are more than that, enemy's violence, involves man in a shocking and tragic feeling. The scenes that show militants amputation and being peeled. But considering that, this novel has a unique ability to show various and manifold voices. Each one of the characters in the novel can represent other separate voice due to its special look toward the world or in other words, because of his determined ideology. Variety of voices in the novel is not limited to the number of characters, but another voice that has to be heard is narrator and also the author. Among this, as Bakhtin believes, this is the author's voice that should have had the least significance otherwise we will face with a novel that is meaningless and impassive whose author has used characters such as puppets to reach its own goals and spreading his personal discourse. These kinds of novels called monophony by Bakhtin and its examples can be found in Tolstoy writings, they have pre-determined plan and their authors try to convince reader believe that the author's view has such a wisdom that the reader has forgotten it and now by reading the novel can understand it." (Bakhtin, 2012:21) each one of these parts are attracted to the complete view of a character view. Each one has meaning in a special awareness level (Bakhtin, 2017:97).

2.3 The Summary of "Once Upon A War"

The narrator one of the active forces in war, at the beginning of an operation following a call invites one of his friends Esmail: "If ye like coming, now is the best." Although his family opposed him but he caught a train to the front. The narrator doesn't know anything about Esmail and at the end of the operation they are allowed to leave. In the middle of the way, the bus went flat. People of squadron go to a mosque and see a martyr with an old man sitting above his coffin. They rest in a coffee shop at night. Finally they start laughing and joking as if there was never a war.

2.4 The Analysis of "Once Upon A War"

This story is near to the memories. The narrator not only has homogenous tone during the narration but also the conversation, those little conversations, all are like narrator's tone and if the speaker doesn't determine each dialogue, there will not be any difference in the meaning of the story that who said what and speaker's determination will not be clear and they speak like each other. According to Bakhtin, "novel is a genre that has an inherent capacity to encourage pluralistic voices. Each character in novel can be a representative of a discourse. Dissonance of the characters' voices and also dissonance of the author's voice with the characters' is consistent with democratic spirit of novel"

(Payande, 2015:339). The story is made of combining forty separate motifs but with one voice. The narrator chooses the story from simple events of the war. There is no deep relationship between its characters, if there is a relationship, it will remain in the surface level of the story that the author can pass it easily.

"A young man with gray clothes put his hand in his pocket and ate roasted seeds and told beads offered us some but I was thinking and didn't like eating." (Gheysari: 11)

"That night we slept tightly. To one side. Each one's boot is on his chest and for the one behind him id on his waist. No argument. That was for everybody. A practice for the first night after death. The difference is that inspiration would be done by antiaircraft guns and there wasn't a person hide you under the ground to make you free from those who inspire. So it was a war." (ibid: 51)

As it can be seen in the following samples, at the end of this chapter, the author faces with these sentences: "it was a war, a war then, after that bang (11);" and "night had no end" (18) that in literature night is a symbol of throbbing, inexistency, and the clause of "had no end" indicate approval on the time span and the catastrophe of war. And decided instead of addressee and informs him "it is a war then". There is no difference in the sample dialogues that have been told by which character"

"Rail, there I understood there is a war." (Gheysari: 9); "We were getting used to it." (ibid); "it wasn't interesting to see a street under fire."; "by looking at Bahram, I could feel city and life." (11); "it seemed there was no war."

Alone? -Yeah. Said: you see there is nobody and I'm alone too. It lasts a little. No problem (ibid: 22).

"Its author has used characters as puppets in order to advance its own goals and distribute personal discourse. These kinds of novels called monophony by Bakhtin, have determined plans and perhaps their authors do their best to convince readers that the author's view has such a wisdom that the reader hasn't paid attention to it up to now and now by reading novel can understand that." (Bakhtin, 2012:21). Paying attention to the above mentioned samples, present voices in this story, do not help readers at thinking because it leaves the reader in a direct way without any reaction due to monophony. These voices are simple ones without any stress that everybody can express, there is no special massage in it that a reader can face and think or search for a philosophical reason.

" Farzin laughed and said: I'm careful about you."

The only present tone and voice in the story, is narrator or author's voice which is heard. "In monophony novel, the narrated world is character's world that the narrator is talking about it. The story is an imitation of characters' actions" (Ahmadi, 2005:99-100). The author used narrator that is himself in this story to impose his own thoughts to the addressee. Characters of the story are different and present from each group in the society; young, soldier, volunteer, old man, etc. all like each other, in other words they think as the narrator. Where the father disagrees going to the front against the narrator quickly repressed because the narrator doesn't let him enter the story. As Bakhtin believes "these kinds of novels have anti-democratic nature, because reader's role is deprived of hearing various voices and deciding about truth or falseness of showed ideologies (Bakhtin, 2016:24).

"It was drizzling when the driver came. He was about 30 and not like the drivers I know them. Tidy and martial."

"The old man with his short neck was waiting in the small room. Haji entered and they kissed on the cheek. Haji started talking to the old man." (ibid: 25)

In a monophony novel, the author goes forth on the basis of the method of classical story. He writes to tell his words. From his viewpoint, except his voice and thought nothing is in this story. He himself is the creator of heroes and character. So she thinks and talks as them. This is totally different in a modern novel. Sometimes the author doesn't know what the mission of the character is in the story. The character speaks himself although it is against narrator's idea and continues the story. The goods are in their own place and the bads too. Everybody has the chance for speaking. The type of view and belief are not equal. Everybody has his own idea and belief. In a monophony novel, what is heard is just the narrator's (author's) words, means a single and alone voice that is above all other voices and coordinate them. Although we hear characters' conversations but what finally dominates and supervises others is monophony of the narrator or the author (Ahmadi, 2005:99-100).

Conclusion

Noah homiletic sermon can be a considerable example for a novel among other novel about war. A novel in which there is polyphony and a character doesn't speak neither in his style nor in its own place without author and narrator's limitations. Each of them tries to play narrator's role with their special features and their voices are different from other characters of the novel both culturally and morally and each one has a different look toward life, love, death, war, and any other thing that add the activeness of the story. Each character has a different voice from others. In this novel, author tries to know all voices so he has to make a picture out of character's mind.

Noah homiletic sermon obviously doesn't have linear narrative coherence. In a careful look, we can see various parts of small narrations that shape the body of narration next to each other and in syntagmatic axis. Intentional jumps, camera rotation of the third person narrator, being far and near to the characters, description of the condition and intellectual walks of the people in the novel in some cases lead the reader toward a kind of stream of consciousness, a disordered flow that is similar to the movement of waves toward the beach and is a unique ordered function.

But in "Once upon a war" we face a mono phony that is narrator's voice that speaks instead of the author and advertises his ideology.

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