

Investigating the components of the philosophical concept of existential nihilism in the novel “Sherrir” by Seyyed Ali Hejazi Yazdi

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

Philosophy is one of the important fields of knowledge that provide various possibilities to novel authors. It seems that until the time when Aristotle presented his reflections in the form of dry philosophical propositions and sentences, the tool of narration was one of the most important means of presenting philosophical thoughts and ideas. But after Aristotle, the connection between narration and philosophizing suffered a serious damage, until in the last century, with the emergence of philosophers such as Albert Camus, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Kierkegaard, this link was revived again.

The novel Sherrir by Seyyed Ali Hejazi Yazdi is one of the few narrative works of Persian literature in which the author has used the format of the novel to describe and interpret the philosophical concept of nihilism. It is an important phenomenon that a philosopher or expert and researcher of philosophy prefers to use the literary type of novel over writing formal researches. A phenomenon that, although it has a history among non-Iranian philosophers, is not very common among domestic philosophy students. This issue made an attempt in this article to analyze Sherrir’s novel as one of the few examples of philosophical novels from the point of view of how the concept of nihilism is addressed.

Aim

Considering the fact that the author of the Sherrir novel sought to write a philosophical work in the sense of systematic philosophy with the subject of nihilism, in this article an attempt has been made to analyze the details of this concept in the form of a narrative and to answer these questions that Which type of nihilism did the author mean? And in describing this type, what conceptual details has he paid attention to?

Methodology

This research has been done by analytical-descriptive method. A research that has been carried out under the interdisciplinary studies of literature and philosophy and during which an effort has been made to read the content of the novel Sherrir by

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Seyyed Ali Hejazi Yazdi according to the existing views on the philosophical concept of nihilism, especially in the opinions of Friedrich Nietzsche.

Theoretical Framework

The root of nihilism is derived from the word Nihil in the meaning of nothing, and in the term it is called a philosophical theory that denies any kind of value and considers doubt and negation of everything as permissible. In other words, it can be said that the basis of nihilistic thought is the rejection and nothingness of accepted positions in different fields of thought and belief. Therefore, the effect of this rejection and denial can be seen in the types and branches of nihilism, including moral, epistemological, political, etc.

Meanwhile, in existential nihilism, we are faced with the rejection and denial of accepted ideas and beliefs on issues such as the meaning of life, values, death, loneliness and boredom. It means that every effort that has been made in the path of making life meaningful and every meaning, be it divine or human, that has been proposed for life is denied. All previously accepted values are challenged. Common judgments about the immorality of a phenomenon such as suicide are questioned, and committing suicide or not becomes the only real issue of philosophy. Death is no longer a category equivalent to annihilation and destruction; rather, it becomes a force to break away from the absurdity and meaninglessness of life.

Discussion

Sherrir's novel is one of the few attempts in the field of Persian novels in which the author has tried to explain the concept of "nihilism" in the form of narrative. Seyyed Ali Hejazi Yazdi, who is himself educated in the field of philosophy, narrates the story of a bored, heartbroken, lonely and isolated narrator who is facing a crisis of meaning in his life in order to explain the concept of existential nothingness. The origin of this crisis is the contradiction between the desire to live on the one hand and the certainty of death on the other hand; a situation that in existential nihilism is referred to as "the situation of futility". Apart from the mentioned contradiction, the lack of belief in God, religion and the other world is another factor that adds to the meaninglessness of this character's life. The natural result of this situation is the dominance of nihilistic thinking on all parts of his life, which ultimately makes him suffer from complications such as boredom, futility, idleness, and submission to the evil called sherrir.

Finding and Conclusion

The design of details such as the position of futility, death-mindedness and death-phobia, crisis of meaning, futility, vanity, lack of belief in the cosmic meaning and God, loneliness and boredom have made a suitable ground for discussing the philosophical concept of existential nihilism in Sharir's novel. In such a way that it can be claimed that the reader of this novel, even if he has no knowledge of philosophy, can gain knowledge of the details of the concept of nihilism after reading the work.

Key words: Narrative, philosophical novel, nihilism, absurdity, boredom, “Sherrir” novel

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