ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

An Analysis of Gender Performativity in Iraj Mirza's "*Zohreh and Manouchehr*" in the Light of Judith Butler's Theories

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The present study investigated the gender roles in Iraj Mirza's famous poem, "*Zohreh and Manouchehr*", which is an adaptation of William Shakespeare's Venus and Adonis. The theoretical framework of the study is Judith Butler's theory of performativity. The researchers chose Iraj Mirza's "*Zohreh and Manouchehr*" poem as the corpus of the study. To analyze the gender roles in this poem, the researchers first selected the lines which were pregnant with constructed male and female ideologies and then investigated the performativity theory in the lines. The current research is qualitative, which is considered a descriptive-analytical study. The findings revealed that gender roles between *Zohreh and Manouchehr* are not determined by their biological traits; male and female roles have been constantly changed, leading to sexual ambiguity. The analysis of the behaviors of these two characters showed that gender is not stable, and it is their performance that determines their genders, which is in line with Butler's opinion. Additionally, the characters, particularly Zohreh, were not concerned with the norms of society; gender and sexuality were not explicit.

Keywords: Gender Performativity, Gender Roles, Iraj Mirza, Judith Butler, *Zohreh and Manouchehr*.

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Introduction

Gender roles refer to a set of behaviors and attitudes that men and women exhibit in their daily activities, and these roles are generally considered acceptable, appropriate, or desirable only in terms of a person's sex, values and beliefs of society. Although there are some exceptions and variations in perceiving social roles, gender roles are based on a binary system of male and female. Gendered expectations may differ among cultures, whereas other characteristics may be common throughout a range of cultures. It is the interactions between individuals and their environments that produce gender roles guiding people on how to behave appropriately by their sex. To comprehend the term 'gender roles', first, the concepts of sex and gender should be specified. Sex is a biological notion, determined based on individuals' primary sex features. Gender, on the other hand, refers to the meanings, values, and characteristics that people assign to different sexes (Oakley, 1972).

The purpose of the current study is to investigate gender roles between *Zohreh and Manouchehr* based on Butler's performativity theory to find out whether these two characters perform according to their genders obtained at birth and societal norms and values or whether their gender roles are specified by their performance. Moreover, the present research aims to reveal whether gender is fluid or unchangeable in the characters. The present research attempts to answer the following questions:

1. Do *Zohreh and Manouchehr* in Iraj Mirza's poem act according to their bodily material traits and social norms or their performance regarding Butler's theory of performativity?

2. Is *Zohreh and Manouchehr*'s gender in Iraj Mirza's poem fluid or stable with regard to Butler's theories?

Methodology

The present research is qualitative, which is considered a descriptive-analytical study trying to examine gender roles between *Zohreh and Manouchehr* based on Butler's theory of performativity. The corpus of the study is Iraj Mirza's "*Zohreh and Manouchehr*" poem, and the data were collected from the Persian book titled *Research on The Status, Works, Thoughts and Poems of Iraj Mirza and His Ancestors*, written by Iraj Mirza (1974). In the first step, the researchers selected the lines in which feminine and masculine gender roles were observed. Then, the mentioned lines were translated into the English language, followed by the analysis of gender roles based on Butler's theories, which is a theoretical framework of the study. The poem has not been translated into the English language, which is the limitation of the study. Butler's performativity theory was applied since it provides a comprehensive understanding of gender, gender roles, and sex.

Butler's Performativity Theory

Butler claimed that gender is unnatural, so that there may be no necessary relationship between one's body and one's gender (Butler, 1990a). Moreover, gender roles are considered fixed and stable behaviors which cannot be changeable between men and women, while Butler believes that gender is not tied to our biological traits and does not exist as an objective natural thing. In fact, gender

reality is performative, which means that it is only real to the extent that it is performed (Butler, 1990b).

According to Butler (1999), gender and sex are not different and gender is not determined by sex. Butler specified that gender and sex would be the same if sex, just as gender, is socially constructed. For Butler and de Beauvoir, gender is a process which has neither origin nor end, so it is something that we do rather than are. In the article 'Sex and Gender in Simone de Beauvoir's Second Sex', Butler stated that all gender is, by meaning, unnatural before she continued to unpry sex and gender from what many would accept to be their unavoidable connection to each other (Butler, 1986, as cited in Salih, 2002). Butler proceeds from this common assumption that sex, gender and sexuality are in relation to each other, so that, for instance, if one is biologically female, one is expected to show feminine behaviors and to fulfill men's needs. Instead, Butler claims that gender is unnatural, so that there is no essential relationship between one's body and one's gender. (Butler, 1990a, as cited in Salih, 2002).

Butler, in her book *Gender Trouble* (1990a, as cited in Salih, 2002) introduced the notion of performativity. She stated that gender is not just a process, but it is a specific type of process; in fact, gender is a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame. Butler states that "gender proves to be performative – that is, constituting the identity it is purported to be. In this sense, gender is always a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to pre-exist the deed" (p.25). Butler's theory of performativity outlines how she believes gender is constructed. According to the theory of gender performativity, gender is not a stable category or identity, only the illusion of a stable identity is created. Butler stated that this illusion is shaped and created through acts, physical gestures, movements, and enactments of numerous sorts that constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self. These acts do not only establish the meaning of someone's gender; they also form the performance or enactment of someone's gender identity. In other words, all acts that are performed by someone do not add new meaning to their gender identity and the illusion of a stable gender identity is created by doing these repetitive performed acts. This is the experience wherein gender is performative. The acts performed by a certain person make up the meaning of that individual's gender identity (Butler, 1988, as cited in Broek, 2019).

The Concept of Deconstruction

The word "deconstruction" was introduced by the French philosopher Jacques Derrida (1930–2004) in the late 1960s. Derrida coined the term in response to the idea of "destructive analysis" solidified by the German word **Destruktion** of Martin Heidegger (1889–1976), which literally means "destruction" or "de-building." Thus, the word "deconstruction" is genealogically linked to Heidegger. Deconstruction questions the fundamental conceptual binary oppositions in Western philosophy through a close examination of the language and logic of philosophical and literary texts (Johnson, 1987). Deconstruction of an opposition means exploring the contradictions and tensions between the hierarchical ordering supposed in a text and other aspects of the text's meaning, specifically those that are implicit or rely on

figurative or performative uses of language. By this analysis, the opposition is shown to be a product, or construction, of a text, rather than something independent.

Based on Derrida, people express their thoughts in terms of a binary opposition in which one term has a superior position than the other and always affects another term. This idea originates in the theory of language that the meaning of a term is determined by its position within the linguistic system, and not by any stable trait of meaning that is linked to it. In a language system, the interrelatedness among terms produces a meaning which has no independent identity of its opposite (Derrida, 1988). In fact, in a binary opposition, a definition of a term is defined by mentioning the other term, and vice versa, because each term comprises what Derrida calls the trace of its opposite, for instance, black and not white, feminine and not masculine, noisy and not silent, and so on. Deconstruction attempts to dismantle the hierarchical oppositions governing our thoughts and perceptions. Dismantling does not mean destroying the oppositions, but showing that by acknowledging their mutual dependence one can create something new (Derrida, 1995).

Iraj Mirza's *"Zohreh and Manouchehr"*

Iraj Mirza was a famous and modern Iranian poet who was competent in French and Arabic languages. His poems are well-known for their simplicity and colloquialism. One of his famous poetic works is the Persian romantic story of *"Zohreh and Manouchehr,"* in 527 verses, but he could not finish the poem. In this *masnavi*, Zohreh is considered as a goddess of love and chastity, but in this poem, Zohreh is indicated as a goddess of love and lust (Mozafari, 2011). This *masnavi* is an adaptation of William Shakespeare's *Venus* and *Adonis*. The Persian equivalent of Venus is Zohreh coming to the Earth in the shape of a woman, and she is overcome by the pleasing charm of Manouchehr in his armor. Manouchehr was a soldier and a real patriot whose priority was defending his country and being loyal to his king. Zohreh tried to seduce him and explained the beauty of lovemaking, but Manouchehr rejected her and did not pay attention to her seduction. At the end of the story, Zohreh convinces him to make love and after that, she leaves Manouchehr in the pain of love (Mirza, 1977, as cited in Tabibzadeh, 2022).

Deconstruction of Gender in *"Zohreh and Manouchehr"*

"Zohreh and Manouchehr" was composed during the Iranian Constitutional Revolution, the Qajar period. In this period, the system that ruled society was totally a patriarchal system, and women, making up half of society, were completely ignored. Women had to stay at home; be veiled when going out; neither their faces could be seen nor their words and pain could be heard. Mentioning their names, seeing their faces, and talking to them were dangerous taboos and unforgivable sins. If men saw them on the street, they should stay away from them because they were considered as the second sex and were inferior to men. Although they were apparently free, they were fenced in by gender domination (Sharifi Saie & Azad Armaki, 2021). Also, they were not allowed to walk in the street next to their husbands, let alone talk to men before marriage (D'Allemagne, 1999; Rice, 2004, as cited in Sharifi Saie & Azad Armaki, 2021). In the Qajar period, gender segregation was based on the basic principle that men and women never had the right to communicate with each other, and all possible places in which communication with

the opposite sex might occur were closed. In those days, men only had the right to be with men and women with women, and in urban society, females had to wear a veil and cover their faces (Olivier, 1992, as cited in Sharifi Saie & Azad Armaki, 2021).

A particularly interesting fact highlighted in Mirza's poem is the deconstruction of gender roles done by the poet himself. Although this poem was composed in the Qajar era, feminine and masculine social and cultural norms were neglected by the poet. Zohreh was introduced as a free woman expressing her love, passion, and lust to Manouchehr freely without paying attention to the norms of her society; she did not have any veil; described her body and beauty in detail to seduce Manouchehr; convinced him to have an affair with her. All these behaviors were taboo, which were considered as cardinal sins, particularly from women. However, it seems that Iraj Mirza wanted to break the gender norms and challenge the pre-set societal beliefs of feminine and masculine dualism. Butler states that there is no difference between gender; men and women are the same, and genders is something that is created in society and culture (Butler, 1999).

The Analysis of Gender Roles in *"Zohreh and Manouchehr"*

To investigate and analyze gender roles in the aforementioned corpus, the researchers have chosen the verses in which gender roles have been shifted between these two characters, *Zohreh and Manouchehr*, and gender ambiguity has taken place.

گیری سی بوسه زمن پشتِ هم   گاه به ده ثانیه بی‌بیش و کم

For ten seconds no more or less
You will get thirty kisses consecutively

مدّتش از مدّت سی بوسه بیش   گاه یکی بوسه ببخشی ز خویش

Sometimes give yourself a kiss
A kiss which lasts more than thirty kisses

Based on male and female sexual stereotypes, women show their passion and love easier than men, and here Zohreh is acting according to this belief and her gender, feminine behavior. Women tend to be more expressive in their relationships, and females are expected by others to be more expressive (Rubin, 1970; Hess, Adams, & Kleck, 2007), chiefly in instances of romantic love (Durik, Hyde, Marks, Roy, Anaya, & Schultz, 2006). In the above verses, Zohreh is offering kisses and a sexual relationship to Manouchehr, which indicates that she is behaving against her gender and common female stereotypes because she is a woman, and asking for sex is not acceptable. In fact, she performs male roles in requesting sex. Zohreh has both male and female desires in having sex.

در بغلِ خود به زمینش کشید   خواه نخواه از سر زینش کشید

Whether he wanted to or not, she pulled him from his saddle
Pulled him to the ground in her arms

When Zohreh receives no reply from Manouchehr she pulls him down from the horse and puts him on the ground by her arms. It is clear that she is stronger than him and physically is much larger than him. In this story, Manouchehr is a member of an army who should be well-built and powerful enough. But in front of Zohreh,

he is really weak in terms of body features, and Zohreh sees him as a woman rather than a man. Butler stated that there does not need to be a relationship between body and gender; the body can be male but it does not have to display masculine traits the way the man or woman binary pushes. You can choose your gender to some extent, even if it is just how gender presents itself. Gender is performative and certain roles and repeated activities determine our gender. For Butler, gender is not a stable identity or an actor, but it constitutes the identity as a compelling illusion or an object of belief (Butler, 1999).

زهرهٔ طناز به انواعِ ناز   کرد بر او دستِ تمتّع دراز

Zohreh flirts in all kinds of coquetry
Begins to touch him

In these verses, Zohreh touched Manouchehr in coquettish ways. It is evident that Zohreh plays a masculine role and breaks the gender boundaries determined by social and cultural roles. Based on stereotypes, the female gender is supposed to be submissive in sexual situations (Abbey, Jacques-Tiura, & LeBreton, 2011). When a gender stereotype is internalized in a person, he or she is more likely to act in accordance with that stereotype in a certain situation (Wallston, Wallston, & DeVellis, 1978, as cited in Maas, Shearer, Gillen, & Lefkowitz, 2015). In fact, sexual male stereotypes are internalized in Zohreh, and she performs the active role of a male lover.

رفت که بوسد ز رخِ فرّخَش   رنگِ منوچهر پرید از رُخَش

Zohreh went to kiss his cheek
The color of his face faded

دید که آن بوسه تمامش کند   منصرِف از شغلِ نظامش کند

Manouchehr knew her kiss will destroy him
He should resign from his army job

بر تنِ او چندشی آمد پدید   پسر عَرَقی گرم به چانش دوید

An unpleasant feeling overcame him
A warm sweat ran down his chin

بُرد کمی صورتِ خود را عقب   طرفی دلی داشته یا للعجب!

Turned his face back a little
What a brave woman

Zohreh started to kiss Manouchehr, whose face got pale and his body trembled, and he realized that this kiss would destroy him and he would lose his military career. The gender role of Manouchehr is against his biological traits. His acting is related to feminine behavior. Manouchehr is a passive feminine boy, who performs in opposition to his sex, while Zohreh is an active masculine woman, who is really brave in expressing her passions regardless of the gender stereotypes of her society (Sadeghzadeh, Heidarinia, & Yaghmaie, 2021). Men are supposed to be more active in asking for and having sexual relationships than women, but here it is totally different. According to gender stereotypes, men are expected to be dominant and assertive sexual partners, whereas women are expected to be submissive and communal sexual partners who cater to their male partner (Bernard, 1966).

این سر و سیمايِ فرح زايِ من   این فرح افزا سر و سیمايِ من

Look at my beautiful face and body

این لب و این گونه و این بینیم   بینيِ همچون قلمِ چینیم

Look at my lips and cheeks

My nose is like a Chinese pen

Zohreh starts to seduce Manouchehr by describing the beauty of her body. Here, due to the explanations of Zohreh about her beauty, we can point to narcissism which can be seen in Zohreh. After being neglected by Manouchehr, she described her beauty to seduce him intensifying her enchantment and witchcraft (Ghaffari, 2014). This behavior belongs to men and is not acceptable from women, particularly in ancient Iran. Narcissism is a personality trait that exists in both males and females, but according to stereotypes, narcissism is more common in men than women, exclusively in patriarchal societies. Kluger stated that our society, still largely patriarchal, is more likely to stand male narcissism and aggressiveness than that of females (Kluger, 2014). Grandiose narcissism has been related to the stereotypical masculine expression since the very inception of the personality concept as depicted in the ancient myth of Narcissus (Onofrei, 2009).

سیر ندیده نظری در رُخَم   شاد نگشته دلی از پاسُخَم

I have never showed my desire to anyone

I have never made someone happy due to love

هیچ پریشان نشده خواب من   ابر ندیده شبِ مهتابِ من

No one has disturbed my sleep

The cloud has never seen my moonlight night

Manouchehr was not keen on Zohreh and did not pay attention to her. Instead he stated that no one has ever kissed and touched him; he has never fallen in love with someone or no one has distracted him. Here, it is clear that he behaves as if he is a virgins girl. In fact, women prefer to remain virgin and do not have sex with men. Female virginity is valued based on gender asymmetrical relations of power and supported by kinship systems and family values. Virginity may be a vital cultural ideal through which adolescents anchor sexuality, though, in reality, these ideals are challenged, opposed, contested, and critiqued. Girls are expected to remain or present the ideal of respectability and purity grounded in virginity status while the same is unexpected for young adolescent men (Groes-Green, 2013; Masvawure, 2010). Control of sexuality has social consequences on the lives of both males and females. Social values that highlight virginity till marriage for girls, while not employing the same demands on boys, contribute to the maintenance of unequal gender relations and sexual double standards (Bhana, 2018).

زن نکند در دل جنگی مقام   عشقِ زنان است به جنگی حرام

No woman can enter the heart of a soldier

Women's love is forbidden for a soldier

عاشقی و مردِ سپاهی کجا   دادنِ دل دست مناهی کجا؟

An army man has never fallen in love

Love is banned for an army man

قلبِ زنان را نکنم جایگاه   جایگه من شده قلبِ سپاه

My place is in the heart of the army

There is no place for women in my heart

Manouchehr says, women have no place in the heart of a soldier, who never falls in love with women, and he highlighted and emphasized his roles and responsibilities in the army. In fact, he is a patriot; his job and duties are his priorities and paramount concern. He prefers his own career, being a soldier, rather than engaging in a sexual activity with Zohreh. Here one can notice that Manouchehr is influenced by male stereotypes, being a soldier and defending the homeland, and performs according to his masculine roles, which reveals that he has returned to his masculine gender roles and believes that a person who works in the army should only think about his job and avoid women. According to gender stereotypes, jobs in the army are appropriate for men and they are considered to be better than women in military performance because men are believed to be more independent, self-confident, and competitive (Diekman & Eagly, 2000).

صاحبِ شمشیر و نشان را ببین!   گفت چه ترسوست، جوان را ببین!

What a coward young boy!

See the owner of the sword and badge!

در صف مردان چه کند جَست و خیز   آن که ز یک زن بود اندر گریز

A boy escaping from women

What has to do in the army?

بچّه به این جاهلی و کاهلی!   مردِ سپاهی و به این کم دلی!

What a heartless army man

What a fool boy

بینِ جوانان چو تو خونمرد نیست   گرچه به خوبّی رُخَت وَرد نیست

No flower is like your beautiful face

No one is bloodthirsty like you among the youths

حُجب ز اندازه فزون‌تر بد است   این همه محبوب شدن بیخود است

All this popularity is pointless

Excessive chastity is disgusting

دخترِ بکر از پیِ کابین بود   دُرِ ثمین از پیِ تزیین بُوَد

A pearl is beautiful due to decoration

A girl's virginity is due to dowry

Having heard Manouchehr's words, Zohreh became furious and started to humiliate Manouchehr and called him a coward boy who has feminine characteristics. Instead of using emotional words, Zohreh uses the derogatory word "coward" to provoke Manouchehr's emotions (Kamarposhti & Soleymanpour, 2021). She also told him to ignore his shame, modesty, and politeness because, in her view, these personality traits cause deception and retardation. Her purpose in using these words is to seduce and influence Manouchehr (Sadeghzadeh, Heidarinia, & Yaghmaie, 2021). Moreover, she compared Manouchehr's face to the beauty of a flower, an analogy that is used for women. Conversely, in the next verses, she told him that a man should not be humble and must be bold and powerful in order to

enjoy sexually. And again, Zohreh likened him to the pearl and the virgin girl. In these lines, female metaphors and symbols, such as flower, pearl, and virgin girl, have been used to describe Manouchehr, and even the purpose of the poet was to show Manouchehr as a woman. Flowers and pearls in literature refer to girls, their beauty, and their vulnerability to males who wish to pluck them—these features and others have made flowers, in many cultures, symbolic of maidens, at least to the males who have set those cultural terms (Ferber, 2007). The noteworthy fact is that by using feminine and masculine adjectives in these verses, sexual ambiguity has been created for both genders. When Zohreh considered Manouchehr to be a woman, she actually performed the role of a man, and gender roles are not stable.

چون سخنِ زُهره به این جا رسید   کارِ منوچهر به سختی کشید

By Zohreh's seduction
Manouchehr could not control himself

دید به گِل رفته فرو پای او   شورشی افتاده بر اعضای او

He became astonished
His body started shaking

After hearing Zohreh's descriptions of sexual pleasure with him, Manouchehr's mood changed, and he was about to lose his sexual self-control. Zohreh was successful in evoking Manouchehr as she was flirting. Here, the gender roles are in accordance with their sex. It is believed that flirting is a feminine trait, and when women want to attract men, they start flirting. So, Zohreh played a female role in flirting, and Manouchehr performed a male role due to his arousal. Some studies indicate that women are the initiators in flirtation as they must signal their interest in order for men to approach (Moore, 1985). In a binary system of men and women, flirting is expected from women, and traditional masculinity or femininity endorsement also predicted flirting behaviors for women, though less strongly than did gender role beliefs (Browne, 2002). Manouchehr pulled himself together and tried to control himself, but he was embarrassed by the flirtations and temptations of Zohreh and became whey-faced. Manouchehr again returned to his feminine role when he became shy. He resisted Zohreh's temptations, which is not in accordance with masculine behavior. Unlike men, women are reluctant to make love and set a romantic date. Based on stereotypes, cultural, and social norms, girls have more control over sexual desire and temptation than boys. Women are better able to resist sexual temptation than men (Garos, Kluck, Beggan, Martindale, Easton Wheeler, & Lowery Zacchilli, 2008, as cited in McAdams, 2015). Manouchehr wants to escape from making love and postpone the romantic date, which is a womanish behavior.

تا به کی آرم به تو عجز و نیاز   وای که یک بوسه و این قدر نازا؟!

For how long I should beg you
Hesitation only for one kiss!?

باز جوان عذر تراشی گرفت   راهِ تبّری و فحاشی گرفت

Again, the young man made an excuse
Started to use foul language

با چه زبان از تو تقاضا کنم   شرِ ترا از سرِ خود وا کنم

In what language should I ask you to leave me alone

گر به یکی بوسه تمام است کار   این لبِ منِ آن لبِ تو هان بیار!

If you only want a kiss
Come closer and kiss me!

گر بکَشَد مِهرِ تو دست از سرم   من سرِ تسلیم به پیش آورم

If you behave kindly with me
I will leave you alone

جَست و گرفت از عقب او را به بر   کرد دو پا حلقه بر او چون کمر

She jumped and grabbed him from behind
Wrapped her legs around his waist

گفت برو! کارِ تو را ساختم   در رهِ لاقیدیت انداختم

She said go I am done with you
I made you nonchalant

بارِ مَحَبَّت نکشیدی، بکش!   زحمتِ هجران نچشیدی، بچش!

Now, you will experience the thirst of love!
The hardship of separation

عشقِ شکار از دلِ او سلب شد   رفت و شکارِ تپشِ قلب شد

The love of hunting was taken away from his heart,
He fell in love with Zohreh and became the prey of love

When Zohreh saw that he does not care about her, she started warning and scolding Manouchehr to achieve her goals, a behavior that is seen from men (Kamarposhti & Soleymanpour, 2021). But Manouchehr became angry when he saw her insistence; he made excuses and started cursing, but finally let her kiss him. Lastly, she succeeded in having an affair with Manouchehr. It is clear that Zohreh acted exactly like a man, especially when she lost her control and jumped to hug Manouchehr. This attack for hugging seems a form of rape to some extent, which is an overly masculine performance; sexual offers are typically seen from men. With regards to gender stereotyping, women are submissive, domestic, and pure. Purity means women should be perceived as uninterested in sex. They should be sexually passive and show no seduction to men (Brannon, 2015, as cited in Ayuningtyas, 2015).

After making love, Zohreh told Manouchehr that he would fall in love with her and suffer from it, then she left him. Manouchehr was not eager to hunt anymore; he had fallen in love. Zohreh abused him sexually, and when she fulfilled her desire, she left him. Sexual abuse or misuse is a masculine demeanor. Zohreh behaves like a man, and Manouchehr is the victim of his abuse, which again conveys that he acts like a girl in being misused sexually.

Conclusion

Investigating the gender roles between the two main characters of Iraj Mirza's famous poem *"Zohreh and Manouchehr"*, indicated that gender roles between *Zohreh and Manouchehr* are not determined by their biological traits; male and female roles have been constantly changed leading to sexual ambiguity. In fact, the analysis of the behavior of these two characters showed that gender is not stable in nature and it is their performance that determines their genders, which is in

accordance with Butler's opinion. Butler believes that one's performance defines his or her gender not our biological features and in her book *Gender Trouble* she emphasizes that gender is always a doing (Butler, 1999).

The characters, particularly Zohreh, were not concerned with the norms of society. Additionally, gender deconstruction was observed in this famous poem, which was done by the poet himself. Though this poem was written in the Qajar era, social and cultural norms determining men and women's gender roles were taken for granted by the poet. The poet depicted Zohreh as an overly free and dominant woman, who is not bound by the gender restrictions of society and shows her love, passion, and lust freely regardless of the norms of her society; these demeanors were not acceptable at that time from women. Another significant point was gender fluidity. In the mentioned lines, Zohreh mostly performed men's roles in making love with Manouchehr and seducing him; she experienced masculine gender identity, and her gender identity changed over the story. On the other hand, Manouchehr was introduced as a timid, coward, and subordinate boy, who was trying to escape from Zohreh's love and seduction, a behavior that is typically seen from women. Manouchehr experienced feminine gender identity, and his gender identity changed over the story. In gender fluidity, men and women experience one or more changes in their gender identity or gender expression (Katz-Wise, 2020). These performances strongly rejected gender essentialism and the binary system of male and female. The results of the current study were in accordance with Butler's theory of performativity, which illustrated that gender is not something stable, fixed, and unchangeable.

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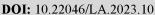
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تحلیل اجراگری جنسیت در شعر «زهره و منوچهر» ایرج میرزا بر اساس نظریه‌های جودیت باتلر

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پژوهش حاضر به بررسی نقش‌های جنسیتی در شعر معروف ایرج میرزا، «زهره و منوچهر»، که اقتباسی از شعر *ونوس و آدونیس* ویلیام شکسپیر است، پرداخته است. در این تحقیق، نظریه‌ی اجراگری جنسیت جودیت باتلر به عنوان چارچوب نظری برای بررسی نقش‌های جنسیتی مورد استفاده قرار گرفته است. پژوهشگران شعر «زهره و منوچهر» ایرج میرزا را به‌عنوان نمونه‌ی تحقیق انتخاب کرده‌اند و برای تحلیل نقش‌های جنسیتی در شعر ایرج میرزا، ابتدا ابیاتی را انتخاب کرده‌اند که آبستن ایدئولوژی‌های ساخته شده‌ی مردانه و زنانه است و سپس به بررسی نظریه‌ی اجراگری جنسیت در این ابیات پرداخته‌اند. پژوهش حاضر یک تحقیق کیفی از نوع توصیفی– تحلیلی است. یافته‌های تحقیق نشان داده است که نقش‌های جنسیتی بین زهره و منوچهر با ویژگی‌های زیستی آن‌ها مشخص نمی‌شود؛ نقش‌های زن و مرد دائماً دستخوش تغییر و منجر به ابهام جنسی می‌شود. در واقع، تحلیل رفتارهای این دو شخصیت نشان داده است که جنسیت ماهیت ثابتی ندارد و این اجراگری است که جنسیت آن‌ها را تعیین می‌کند. یافته‌های پژوهش حاضر کاملاً مطابق با نظریه‌های باتلر است. همچنین شخصیت‌ها، به ویژه زهره، دغدغه‌ی هنجارهای جامعه‌ی خود را ندارد؛ جنسیت و تمایلات جنسی صریح و واضح نیستند.

واژه‌های کلیدی: اجراگری جنسیت، نقش‌های جنسیتی، ایرج میرزا، جودیت باتلر، زهره و منوچهر.

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