

Critical Discourse Analysis of the Political Novel, “Unsecured Existence”

Mostafa Gorji*¹, Hassan Abniki²

¹Payam-e Nour University & Institute of Humanities and Social Studies of
Acecr

²Islamic Azad University (IAU), South Tehran Branch

Received: 17 Aug 2011 ; Accepted: 13 Mar 2012

Abstract: Political novel is one of the kinds of Persian Literature with special factors, which are different from other contemporary story writing styles. These types of stories are more accommodated with critical discourse analysis (CDA) among other methods of novel analyses compared to other types, because of their specificity and unique quality of and their close relations with society and political events. One of the approaches used in surveying these types of stories is the use of the framework of text and met text with the best and the most effective approach, i.e. that of Norman Fairclough who surveys a text in three levels of description, interpretation, and exploration. It has to be mentioned that the novel of “Unsecured Existence” written by Afshin-e Khorram is one of the political novels written after the Islamic Revolution. The writer tries to survey, interpret, and criticize the main and influential political events of Iran with emphasis on the psychological issues of the characters on the basis of CDA and to present the projected elements like semiotics of the elements like, Subject, Pictures and Descriptions of the characters of the story, the Narration procedure, Plot, and the Theme of the story.

Keywords: Political Novel, Critical Discourse Analysis, Unsecured Existence.

Introduction

One of the most effective approaches for surveying and criticizing novels, in addition to structure analysis and analysis of the elements of the story, is the Discourse Analysis, which is actually the best approach regarding the intended novel. From among different approaches used in Critical Discourse Analysis the one proposed by Norman Fairclough, which surveys texts in three levels of description, interpretation, and exploration is used in this study. The researcher intends to interpret the criteria and elements of political novels regarding

their background and conditions in which the novel was created, and the politics as an institution, on the one hand, and on the other hand the totality effect and the functionality of the whole text, following Fairclough's approach. By this view, it has to be stated that surveying the condition and interaction between the novels and politics, discovering and receiving the political behaviors as a byproduct of the social major developments derived from this type of literature helps enriching the literary criticism in the area of politics-influenced literature. The theoretical framework of this research is Critical Discourse Analysis in the area of Criti-

*Corresponding Author: gorjim111@yahoo.com

cal Content Analysis, and survey of the element of character and the theme, structurally, using the mentioned approach. Through Critical Discourse Analysis, the researcher chooses sections from the story horizontally and vertically, both on the surface and in depth, separates the textual elements and surveys the major and minor constructs, with regard to the texture and constructive elements in an interactive relation in three levels of description, interpretation, and exploration. The levels of Critical Discourse Analysis by Fairclough, also, include three stages of discourse of the text (Linguistic Analysis), discourse as an interaction between the process of production and interpretation of the text (Production and use of the text), and discourse as background. These three stages (i.e. text, interaction between production, interpretation, and social background) at the three levels of description, interpretation, and exploration are surveyed. About the preliminaries of the research, it should be stated that no research has yet been conducted using Furlough's Critical Discourse Analysis approach on the mentioned novel, although the application of this approach in other novels are available.

Regarding the topic under investigation, it has to be stated that according to the majority of thinkers in the field of sociology, literature, and its relation, and closeness to politics it is in approached in a way where the boundary between the literary, political, and philosophical texts seems difficult (Horton, 2003: 5). As some novelists like Orwell believed that no text can be free from political presuppositions, this idea that art should be kept away from politics is, also, considered a political inclination (Orwell, cited in Zarshenas, 2009; 340). Here, it should be stated that the most important element of the political literature and political novels(1) is aggressive and critical language and dialect used in it, and because of the closeness and limitations of some societies, and difficulty in expressing the political issues, the writer confines him/herself in just expressing the problems, and leaves the inter-

pretation of data to the readers, and using the artistic approaches, presents the political and critical strategies in the lower layers of the work (Parsinejad, 2008;136). Following this view, it can be stated that a political novel is reconstruction and recreation of a specific political process or the expression of a political idea or the criticism of politicians (generally in past times) in the body of a story. The writer of this type of literature tries to equate human beings with politics by including the political problems and by giving political identity to the story characters, and in this way tries to share in the power. Therefore, since a large number of literary works of the last decade were novels, a large section of the developments of the country could be identified in this literary kind, regarding the political criticism, a type of criticism which is one of the less mentioned ones in Iran, can be identified.

One of the writers in this field is Afshin Khorram who has registered himself among the novel writers after the Islamic Revolution, with the creation of the novel "Unsecured Existence". Although the story seems nonpolitical in its first reading, recovering the infrastructures of the events and interaction between and among oppressive characters and, of course, critical ones with themselves and against the world, shows that the writer, because of specific reasons which will be stated later, tries to discolor the infrastructure of the story. This novel is composed of five chapters and 362 pages about a political event that developed after the Revolution; Students' uprising in the form of students' grouping was the main incentive for making an eighteen mm. film and preparation of Amir Mokhtar Karimpour's memorandum by this group, specially the main character of the story, was the theme of this novel.

Points about the Type of Novel Criticism Regarding the Element of Time and Its Perspective

A general look toward the contemporary criticisms in the area of literature shows that psychological, linguistic, narrative, and structural criticism, concerning the elements of the story, was among the most cited ones by reference to the articles published in scientific journals. The reason for this could be that this type of criticism focuses on story elements, specifically its theme and plot, and has the capability of applying linguistic, psychological, sociological, and ..., considering the fact before analyzing the dominant discourse of the text, it is important to pay attention to factors of structural criticism that deals with the important elements like characters and characterization on the one side and the plot of the story, on the other.

In this article the story of "Unsecured Existence" will be analyzed with regard to the discourse analysis of the text and its projective elements, i.e. its title semiotics, pictures, explanations, the story characters, and its narration. With these considerations the present story is similar to the story "Chah be Chah" (Well to Well) by Reza Barahani, and "Roze-e Ghasem" (Mourning for Ghasem), and the complex of stories "Cheezi be Farda Naman-deh Ast" (Nothing is left to Future) and the long story of "Tehran Shahr-e Bie Aseman" (Tehran, the Skyless City) by Amir Hassan-e Cheheltan and a review on the "Contemporary Political History". The dominant plot of similar stories, and specifically the present one, is the events happening to the intellectual character, Keyavan, who is an oppressive student in exile, who gets involved in political events. The focus of this group of stories is on the power and the effect that the power exerts on the life of people. The narrator of these types of stories is a he- narrator (the General knower) outside the story. From the view point of story writing, this novel contrary to those like "Roze-e Ghasem" by Amir Hassan Cheheltan, and "Cellul-e 18" (Cell No. 18) by Darvishian, that deal with the political events related to the time before the Revolution and consequently have not paid attention to narrative techniques, this one has used the techniques of

narrating the stream of consciousness and the steam of narration between dreaming and awareness, to picture the political atmosphere after the Revolution and the political events happening in the recent decades. This story, contrary to the mentioned works, whose writing and publication date goes back to the first decade of the Islamic Revolution, was published during the third decade and, in depth and implicitly, is a political story which is an example of the first group in kind from among the three categories of the political novels(2).

The Story in one Glance, With Emphasis on Its Theme

The novel "unsecured Existence" was the candidate for the "Golshiri Institute Festival" in 2006. This story is composed in five sections. It is the story of a character named Keyvan Zare who used to be pursued (kept under surveillance because of publishing and distributing the papers and memorandum about the death of Amir Mokhtar Karim Pour Shirazi)(3). Although the whole story is not a narration of events of Keyvan's life, the centrality of the story is the dissection and representation of Keyvan's life and his relations with women like "Bita", "Dila", "Anata", "Hasti" and the like on one side, and with men like "Farhad", "Afshin", And others, on the other. He is put to jail because of his political- revolutionary activities- and the distribution of Amir Mokhtar's memorandum, although it was not made clear, even to the end of the novel, that what is narrated is either the mentality of the narrator or they have really been happened. Amir Mokhtar is a character in Fars District and in Shiraz Province, who opposes the government, after the coup de tat of Mosaddegh, and then he is killed. The second part of novel pictures events similar to those political happenings after the second of Khordad (1997), like the meeting of the members of the Islamic Association at the university and opposing it, the arrest of Keyvan by Civilians and taking him to the prison of the bar-rack in Marvdasht and his being investigated be-

cause of espionage and film taking, student uprisings ruled by Bita Yeganeh and students' encouragement to participate in the Revolution, students' involvements in the body of Islamic Associations and in Basij, the arrest of Farzad with the accusation of activities against the National Security, through making the 18 mm. movie of Virus, and the like. The third and the fourth sections (chapters) of the novel deal with the psychological analysis of the character of Keyvan and its instability. It mostly focuses on the personal relations between the characters. These chapters, implicitly, deal with the attempts of "Hasti", "Bita", and "Farhad" in stealing the contents of Dr. Peyman's handbag, in the bank, and their efforts to move to Canada by selling the movie, and with the murder of Dr. Peyman. The end of the novel has a dark, cloudy, doom, and rainy atmosphere, and refers to the events like radical and revolutionary students' uprisings like those of "Ansar-e Hezbollah", the role of Dr. Payman as the late deputy of the Ministry of State in the provisional State, and at last to the murder of Keyvan because of taking a film.

A thorough glance at the novel shows that from among the different chapters of the story, the second and the fifth chapters, in comparison with other chapters, focus more on the analysis of political relations and problems related to the discourse of the dominant power and criticism of the political movements dominated in Iran. All in all, it can be stated that this novel is a complex of political events like involvement of the groups of Ansar-e Hezbollah, and Students' Basij with the members of the Islamic Association; students' uprising under the leadership of a lady named "Bita" who gets involved with the government and, of course, incentive for this involvement is the production of an 18 mm. film and the distribution of the memorandum of Amir Mokhtar, while the other chapters (sections), at the same time narrate what happens to Keyvan; events like his investigations, escape, torture in prison, national security, and activities against it, hiding, it's similarity to the atmosphere

of the 2nd of Khordad (according to the Persian calendar), Civilians, students' uprisings, espionage, exile, and others are among the elements that put the political events at the central focus of the story. Alongside the theme, there are sub themes like the love of Keyvan for Bita, Anata, Dila, and Hasti; the love of Hasti for Atmen; that of Farhad for Hasti, and etc., which mitigate the political scent of the story. The reason for choosing such a theme alongside the main theme of the story is that love is the only refuge for escaping from the serious atmosphere to which a man, who has lost everything and is forgotten in the derogatory of political involvement and fights, can cling. In general, this story is a political literary text through which the problems of the Government and politics (criticism of the political events) specifically in its very deep layers are manifested.

Narration, Time, and the Atmosphere of the Story

In addition to the abundant synchronies in the text, on the basis of time and atmosphere of the narration, some direct quotations by the I-narrator shows that the language and/or dialect of the characters is Shirazi, belonging to Fars province. Since the main character of the story, keyvan constantly takes different pills because he suffers from pains and from social abnormalities, and thus lives in a state of sub consciousness; the type of narration is also harmonized with this atmosphere and uses modern techniques of story making. Although the story seems to be real, the vague and unclear atmosphere, which is the outcome of Keyvan's imagination, adds to the dark and gloomy atmosphere of the story. In other words, because of its suspension in the state of reality and dreaming, two interwoven events are presented by two types of narration in the present and the past tense and in two distinctive fonts. Because of this, sometimes the traces of post modern stories can be found in the novel. There are, also, other characteristics which are the representatives of modern and tech-

nical-oriented novels, observed in this story, too. These characteristics include the use of suspension techniques and contemporariness, attempts to evade from the conventional conceptions of time, and time instability, constant change in the point of view, and the use of narrative technique which makes reading difficult, time break up which is the sign of split in the personality of the characters, and psychological bases of abnormalities in their behaviors (Payandeh, 2010; 29-60). In this story, like most of the modern novels, the narrator is the main character who does not have enough knowledge of his environment. Similar to the modern novels, here too, the point of view changes from the he-narrator, specific to realistic novels, to the I-narrator, who feels constant skepticism and is not even aware of his ideas and wishes(4).

It seems that what encourages the writer, in comparison to that in the modern and post modern stories to use this technique of narration, is the political nature of the novel that makes the real and dated political events, the main theme of his/her story. Similar to the modern novels, contrary to pure realistic ones, the writer refers to the internals and thoughts of the characters, their fears and hallucinations which are not evident, instead of emphasizing and explaining their present specifications, the writer of this novel too suspends narrating between the vague and cloudy life of the defeated and depressed character, keyvan, in which similar to modern novels like "ehtemalan Gom Shodeham" (I Might Have been Lost) by Sara Salar and "Negaran Nabash" (Don't Worry) by Mahsa Mohebali, the narrator gets exposed to and bombarded with unpredictable events which disturb his own life. Thus, the story is narrated from different points of view, to show the psychological instability and psychological break down of the main character, Keyvan, alongside other characters in the story. The character of Keyvan, like that in similar political novels is an example of individual's defeat and failure, which deprives him from achieving his ideals. The story narrates how Key-

van and his friends constantly escape and are pursued, and finally they are arrested and put to jail, superficially because of escaping from the army services, but actually because of making a film against the system. The considerable point about the story is that contrary to the conventional political novels that criticize their historical expanse and adhere to artistic techniques and vague presentation of events to escape the censorship, this novel, in a very simple and clear language criticizes the political events of its time by projecting the romantic aspects and without getting benefits from special linguistic techniques, and renders the message to the reader. This could, of course, be an indication of the open political atmosphere of the 80's and this period's subjection to criticism. The locations of the events, mostly, are Tehran, Bushehr, Shiraz, and Marvdasht in the north of Iran. Specific words used like "Komite"(P 13) (Revolutionary security Guards) and "Shahrbany" (Police Department) shows that the time of the narration goes back to the 60's.

Personification and its Analysis with Reference to the Interaction of Characters with Politics

The novel of "Unsecured Existence" is the story of education, training, and personality effect of the young and the university students' characters that are constantly developing. This novel in a thorough glance emphasizes on the element of character and by characterizing retells about the life of Keyvan. Considering the dominant political situation and its effect on the life of the characters demonstrates different groups of people:

A: The First Group

The first group is those who are in conflict with themselves and others. The prominent figure of this group is Keyvan. He has committed suicide three times, and is constantly living in the border of consciousness and sub consciousness. Because of individual and social submissiveness, he uses

drugs. His character can be best analyzed by reference to the other characters in the story:

"I am afraid of those who are always in a disparate condition, and talk about death, hatred, darkness, and jungle and ... "(P,179.) "Keyvan himself, although is silent in literary and poetry gatherings, when participating in political discussions is very talkative" (P, 183).

The four girls in the story, who are the sources of competition among other characters, i.e. Dila, Bitā, Anata, and Hasti are those who add to the romantic aspect of the story. Anata Karimpour is the grandchild of Amir Mokhtar and the niece of Farzad Veisi. Keyvan loves her to the extent that he is willing to forget about the love Dila Zare has toward him. Bitā is the only student who is loved by Keyvan, as well, and she is warned to keep away from others, especially Farhad. Hasti is also Keyvan's friend and loves Atmen who looks at Keyvan instrumentally to attract Atmen toward herself. And finally, Dial Zare who is a relative of Keyvan and Keyvan's mother (Mashoon Zare) who urges him to forget about Anata who is from a rich family to marry her. The last type of characters in this group is the members of the Islamic Association who are the students of the major of cinema, like Shapour, Afshin, and Farzad, who are in one way or another against the previous group. The other characters in this group include Amir Mokhtar Karim Pour Shirazi who revolts against Mohammad Reza Shah and participates in coup de tat against Mossadegh, and is killed. Dr. Peyman, the head of the university, who is according to Basij students, against the Revolution, and later it is made clear that he was the deputy of the Provisional State, Farhad Keshtkar, who is Bitā's cousin in law and has love affairs with her. Others are Mashoon Zare, Keyvan's mother, Zia Karimpour, and Afshin,

Keyvan's friend, and Farzad Raeesi- Anata's nephew and the lover of Bitā.

B: The Second Group

The second group comprise of the Prison security members, those related to the Government, Ansar-e Hezbollah, Basij members who are against those in the first group, who are supposed to preserve the present condition stable and are in conflict with those who try to disturb the tranquility of the university with activities like film production and

Discursive Analysis of Proposition/Propositions of the Story in Three Levels

Description Level

One of the Discourse Analysis approaches used in analyzing any literary text, such as political stories at this level is to analyze it independent from other texts or other social conditions and backgrounds. The superficial peculiarities like the choice of title falls into this level, because in text analysis, the focus of attention is in constant move of back and forth between the title and the discourses in the story. By using this type of analysis, the semantic relationship between and among words can be identified, whether the words are formal or colloquial, the types of idioms used, the sentences which are of active construction, positive or negative, type of sentences, statements, questions, or imperatives, and the reasons, the way the sentences are connected to each other, and ... (Fairclough, 2000; 167-171). When analyzing the use of verbs, it has to be indicated how they are used considering the unit of sentences, types of sentences, especially those used in literary texts and by considering social, familial, economics, politics, educational, rights, ethics, and religion. Researchers like Searle and Austin believe that individuals use three different levels of verbs when speaking (Searle, 2006; 25):

- ✓ Locutionary act whose purpose is to produce sentences using vocal apparatus and those existing in pharynges, mouth, velum, and the vowels in morphemes and phonemes;
- ✓ Illocutionary act, which is of five types, using physical activities, and with the help of linguistic rules of which both the speaker and listener are aware, information is rendered, questions are asked or orders are given;
- ✓ Perlocutionary act which is performed by the verbs derived from speaking, in other words it is the combination of physical and physiological acts (Locutionary) and those related to language, specifically (Illocutionary), and with emphasis on natural, cause and effect processes that affect the behavior or psychology of the interlocutor (Malekian, 2010: 325).

Stated in another style, at this level, the speaker expresses words with special meanings, at the second level, s/he uses those words to convey special meanings and purposes, and at the third level, the linguistic expressions are uttered to affect and make changes in the interlocutor. From among these, the second group of verbs used in illocutionary acts, are effective when analyzed at the description level. Austin categorizes the verbs to five groups: **Declarative verbs**, by the use of which, the speaker wants to make the listener believe his words; **Action verbs**, by the use of which the speaker makes the listener to take an action; **Subjunctive verbs**, by the use of which the speaker makes the listener to do something in future; **Behavioral verbs**, whose purpose and use is to express a specific psychological state toward a determined state in a part of speech; **Existential verbs**, by the use of which the speaker makes something to happen by speaking about that object (Ibid: 326). Regarding this classification, the critical reader should consider in which sentence and by which proposition s/he considers reality, from

the view point of the writer when reading a literary text, and in which sentence s/he is exposed to pure reality. The present novel uses special words and the condition of dual and interactive discourse, at the level of text description. As an example, in the two sided discourse against and with the Government, two different dictions are presented using Illocutionary verbs in special forms. In this novel, although the five types of verbs, i.e. declarative, action, subjunctive, behavioral, and existential verbs are used, when using the characters in different positions, differences are observed. In other words, in this novel, languages from two channels are used: Dictatorship language is used for the students Basij group and civilians, and a passive language is used by the students of Cinema and those in the Islamic Association. In the narration using the language of the first group because of their special position, the following verbs are used: action verbs for questioning and ordering, existential verbs for announcing, firing, assigning, and ..., while in the language of the second group mostly the declarative verbs are used for informing, confirming, confessing, and reporting; subjunctive verbs are used for promising; and behavioral verbs are used for thanking, apologizing, sympathizing, and regretting.

Different sections of the narration during the time of inquiry, arresting, murdering, life sentencing, street demonstrations, and different party operations, a type of closeness of words is used, by which the writer tries to show his view points about the critical atmosphere, violence, and turbulences, or when Keyvan's talks to himself according to Farhad, the two sided interaction is shown through which the speaker manifests the condition for a logical life by using declarative illocutionary verbs.

"Weren't it you who used to say that a wise person either kills himself or makes others to kill him?"(P34)

The other point that has to be mentioned at the level of description is that this novel (67-155) has included a large number of issues, because of considering the political events like the meeting of the members of the Islamic Association at the university, the opposition of extremists with it, the arrest of Keyvan, students' uprising with the leadership of Bita, the conflict between the students of the Islamic Association and those of Basij, Keyvan's being questioned and his exile to Khash island, and most importantly, his accusation because of espionage, and making an 18 mm. film and taking the camera to the barrack and his being questioned. On the basis of this, the temptation of Keyvan and other characters of the story are personal and revolve around the love relations rather than the social issues, and this is to mitigate the issues related to political issues, deeply rooted in the novel. The other point which should be surveyed at the level of description is the way the story starts and the characters interact with each other, and the role their behaviors have in the culture, and the reason why the author has chosen and shown these scenes from among others. This novel starts with a dominant theme of excusing for the expressions which are the main problems or the causes of characters' problems. In other words, the narrator associates the oppression of the dictatorship discourse with a cloudy and foggy sky and the coldness of the winter.

"He feels very cold, he has locked his teeth. He attempts to zipper his jacket, but he cannot find it, tries to cover his neck with the color of his pullover, but there is no pullover, there is no trousers, no shorts, he is left naked on the cold iron bench." (P9)

Then, it will be clear, in the same paragraph that it was a part of the dream of the narrator (Keyvan) and is, also, symbolically an association to the poem "Zemestan" (Winter) by Akhavan Sales, to

the coldness of the cultural atmosphere of the country, to the inability of the characters in taking an action and lack of access to the very primary things needed in Winter and in cold weather. Thirteen sentences are used here, in all of which, according to the Discourse Verb Theory of Searle, Illocutionary verbs of the declarative type are used to indicate prediction, reporting, and The use and objective of these verbs are to make the reader believe that everything stated is the right one. In addition, the sentences are short and presented with intervals, which is the sign of fright, anxiety, and worries about tragic events which are to happen in near future.

The other issue that should be surveyed at the level of description is that whether the pronouns used in the narration of the novel are in the first singular person, showing informal colloquial language, or the polite plural ones, which is the language of intellectuals. Actually, words, verbs, pronouns, and expressions are presented in the local accent of Fars province and that of Marvdasht in Shiraz in a way to show the semantic aspects of the interactive discourse and are expressed in a way to show the ideology of the story hidden in its layers. Sentences are in active voice because the process of the story follows a normal direct speech style, and the main factor of the plot of the story is its direct talk. Every character's talk is planned according to his/her social, political, and personality characteristics, and the speaker, while present, says everything beyond his thought. The strategy of using verbs in short sentences is to picture the anxiety of the character and the atmosphere. The other point is using the first person pronouns when narrating, which is an exact and right technique to show the condition, feelings, emotions, and excitements along with the monologues. This type of processing is accommodated with the actions and reactions in the story. This story in a best way uses the words and expressions in a social context. The author, also, uses proverbs and idiomatic expressions to picture and interpret the ideology domi-

nant in the story talks during the social protests. The use of proverbs is very common among the ordinary people more than other groups in society, and since the Revolution was materialized among this group of people, their talking style was dominant in the story.

The Level of Interpretation

At this stage the superficial specificities of the text which were presented at the description level are clues to activate the background knowledge of the interpreter. Four questions come to mind at this level. They include questions about the real events behind the story, individuals involved in the story, their relationships, and the role of their language in processing the story. Also, what type of discourse, from among many is used and as a result, what constructs, systems and principles of phonology, grammar, cohesion of sentences, and semantic system are applied in the story. The novel of "Unsecured Existence", at the level of interpretation, by reference to the events presented in the story, is from among the stories that narrate the social, historical events of the 1360's (according to the Persian calendar), although the text is produced in the 1380's (according to the Persian Calendar). In this context the life of a group of intellectuals in the shape of a large Iranian political family, who act against the dominant events, is narrated, and this insight produces two types of talks, i.e. those of the oppressor and the oppressed. The dominant atmosphere of the story in the 60's (according to the Persian calendar) in Iran is presented and narrated in a way characters are spoiled in the context of political discourse, either they are in harmony with the dominant discourse of power in the society, like that used by groups like Student Basij, Ansar-e Hezbollah, or that of characters like Keyvan, that were used in student uprisings, by political intellectuals or feminists. Following discourse analysis at the level of interpretation, when interpreting it intertextually, and the application of narration as the current discourse of the text and events expla-

nations, it has to be stated that the novel is shaped in interaction with the social developments. An example of this discourse in the story can be presented as follows:

"I believe that, whether we go to the paradise or to the hell in comparison to being ourselves and not letting others to decide for us, are not important" (P 300).

If we are to analyze the propositions and sentences in the story on the basis of discourse analysis, at the level of interpretation, it should be mentioned that this type of narration (a Vague, unclear, and imaginary atmosphere, on the one side, and showing evidently the romantic relations, on the other side) can indicate, in one way or another, the impossibility of expressing the events (Political challenges) in the real world and showing that the writer is going to escape the censorship and filtering. The reader, of course gets hallucinated because of overdosing, and what is narrated from the cells in prison and out of tortures by prison inquirers, shows that everything is happening in the writer's imagination. On the other hand, the narrator's description of the chaotic atmosphere and oppression is achieved through the description of nature, environment, and the natural conditions. Even when the activities of the political characters are not apparently manifested in the Power's discourse, the sentences are positive and understandable, while when the story gets the political taint in depth, the writer used two strategies to escape censorship. The first approach is adding to the romantic aspect and the multi sided love of the characters, and the second approach is that by frequent reference to different strategies, he puts the narration by the main character of the story in a condition of both reality and imagination, and the reader cannot figure out whether the events are happening in the mind of Keyvan or they are happening in the real world.

"It was a strange condition. What I saw or heard did not have anything to do with my eyes or ears. I was in a suspension state. I couldn't understand if I was in a dreaming state without awareness or in a state of awareness without dreaming" (P 57).

In this novel, like in other modern novels, the narration moves from that by the he-narrator which happens in realistic novels, to that by the I- narrator, who is skeptic constantly and is not even aware of his intentions and wishes (27). What has encouraged, more, the writer to use this technique than other techniques used in modern and post modern novels, is its political nature in which the real political events with specific dates are main theme of the story. As it was mentioned before, most of the political novels written after the revolution, narrate the political events of the previous time, in a very clear manner, which are easily applicable to any historical period. This novel, however, has references to historical and political events, and the specified social-political developments after the Islamic Revolution. This has been added to the artistic use of the story writing techniques on the one side, and the use of other themes like romantic ones and avoiding sole manifestation of events, using creativity, virtual collage of the pieces of story, and looking at the character from a different perspective. The emphasis the writer has on the romantic relation of Keyvan with Anata, on one side, and with Dila, on the other, in the shape of pictures and sometimes erotic ones indicate this issue.

"He holds Dila's hand and pulls her with himself to the room. Dila Yells... then Keyvan circles his hand around her neck and tries to kiss her, and then..." (P160) or (PP123-124 - 63 - 128)

The writer tries to include another narration in to the scene of Anata's lack of attention to Keyvan's love and that is a scene in which two donkeys are pictured in a way to pull the reader's mind to the erotic love of the characters:

"The smell of the she donkey has made him drunken so much that he does not listen to anything." (P 133)

Thus, it could be understood that the author, very artistically, starts the story in a way to emphasize the unrealistic nature of events and that they are the outcomes of the insanity of Keyvan(5), to be able to narrate the political events happening later(P54) The writer, by using the technique of he-narrator and the knower, refers to the talk of Keyvan with Bita which is the outcome of the character's politics driven nature, which is the outcome of Keyvan's suppression or his thought metamorphoses and his thought development and adhering to love as a result of his involvement and imprisonment.

"You rise happily and shake hands with Bita. You don't need to agree beforehand. Both prefer walking ... because of those days, now their talks revolve more around personal affairs than the important political and social issues." (P160)

The Level of Explanation

It has to be stated that along explanation and interpretation of texts, the purpose of this level is surveying the discourse as a part of a social process. Exploration surveys the discourse as a social interaction and shows how social structures direct the discourse. Social constructions of the students' uprisings in the recent three decades, considering the novel, is plotted in a way the two discourse types, i.e. Basij students' discourse (the oppressor discourse of power) and that of the Islamic Association and the youth organizations (the

oppressed) are placed against one another. At the stage of exploration, it is also shown that how discourses affect on reconstruction of those constructs. The background knowledge is an instrument for social prosperity of these effects, meaning that the social constructs shapes the discourses, and discourses preserve the background knowledge or changes it (Fairclough, 2000: 245). One of the most important issues at the level of exploration of this novel is that the writer or the narrator of the text in an interactive discourse with the discourse of the power, refers to the issue of crisis, instability, bewilderment, arresting, and prison, on one side, and the stability and tranquility which is the necessity for the social life of family institution, education, rights, ethics, religion, and more importantly, the institution of politics, on the other. This means that exploration is observing the discourse as a part of the process of social combat in the domain of power relations. Considering the story and the questions that are presented at the level of exploration, it should be made clear what type of power relations have been effective in shaping this discourse at different levels of institutional, social, and conditional, at the stage of social conflicts. Which factors of background knowledge, that has been used, are idialogic? Where is the place of this discourse in proportion of the struggles at different institutional and social levels? Are these struggles hidden or evident? Is the dominant discourse at the service of present power relations or for destroying it? To explore these institutional struggles, the characters are chosen from among intellectuals, technocrats, politicians, specialists, and university students and teachers by profession. Inside the story context, the get-togetherness and conformity of concepts are used. This factor is magnified when surveying the gender of characters (magnifying the role of Keyvan compared with other characters). At this stage, also, the degree of the presence of politics is investigated, and whether the novel deals with the political issues, evidently.

As it was mentioned before, the story concerns the political issues, and the reason for the events in it is the involvement of characters with the dominant discourse and the critics of the present condition. Although most of the political stories relate to the past, or to the no place, no time, or any time and any place condition, the language of the story is symbolic and metaphorical; this novel is also the critic of the dominant discourse and of political relations and social restlessness. Of course, the dominant discourse of the Islamic Revolution in the 80's (according to the Persian calendar) was in a type to welcome the critical discourses. Thus, the possibility of writing a novel to criticize the political discourse of the Power, at the level of exploration, shows that it belonged to the later stages of reformation which possessed a special type of discourse. According to the three layered model of Fairclough for discourse analysis, it has to be stated that in the layers of the text, discourse behavior (the one used in the novel) and social behavior (background for text production) are interactive with each other and has made the type, language, and the world of the text. Although the role of women in this story is very pale, they are effective in picturing the role and efficiency of political characters. To consider this view toward the text at the level of exploration, it should be stated that the role of women in the political domain, on the one side, and the role of students in Islamic Associations, on the other, are effective and tangible. Analysis of the "Unsecured Existence" shows that the dominant discourse of the Power moves the characters to a direction in which the process of struggle at different institutional, social, and conditional level is hidden. The characters are, also, chosen from different social groups. The role of students, among intellectuals, in the struggles of people during the process of the Revolution is shaped by making films, and arresting the students, which are the prominent points of the story. Studying the title of the novel shows that it has been chosen for this story to manifest the lack of security in the

mind and the interior of the characters of the story, while the name of one of the characters, who reaches bewilderment and astonishment, is "Hasti" (Being).

Another important point, while analyzing the novel at the exploration level, is that of the ideological discourse in this novel that tries not only to block the thinking, but also considers, even the imagination, dangerous. Because of this trend, the writer points to and emphasizes on the domination of characters by the imaginations and hallucinations, constantly, in their psychological analysis. This is the same hallucination in which Keyvan is placed and because of which is always accused of. It could be considered as the combat the characters have for achieving liberty in speech, thought, imagination, and even to existence or existential. Keyvan's seeking refuge to the basement and to the hallucination which is constantly emphasized in the story, can be considered a struggle against the domination of one single voice in the society. With all these points, it should be stated that the story of "Unsecured Existence" is a political, and tragic one, in which the biggest problem or the only one, or the cause of all involvements of the characters, is the Power relation and the absence of freedom. Following this definition, the characters try to prepare everything for freedom, by change in the present conditions of the society, like the power structures, relations, and the like. The most important and central part of the novel which can be surveyed in the discourse analysis at the level of exploration, is the dialog between Keyvan and Anata about their own conditions(6), the dialog between the president of the university, i.e. Dr. Peyman and Farzad Raeesi about the film taken in the streets, parks, and the university crisis (P 107), Keyvan's narration from the mosque check(7) point, and the one between Anata and Farzad who was arrested by the intelligence office for some time.

"You can go toward those who have intrigued you to take ben-

efit from you. I am not the person to misuse anything, and I have mentioned, several times, that you have to choose between us, i.e. politics or me. Our dad's case was enough for us, even after forty years, we are still paying for it (P 110).

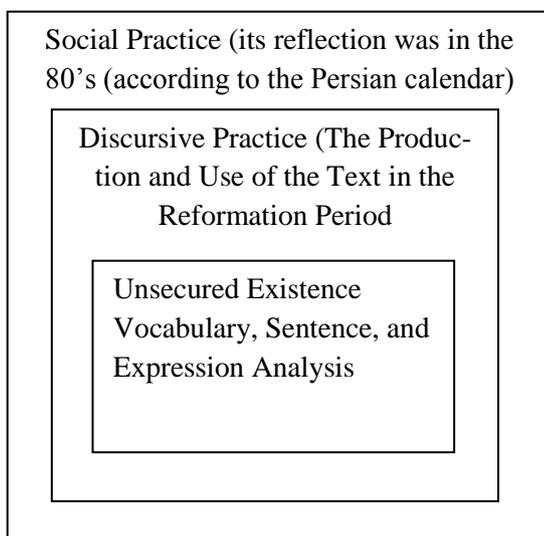
The psychological analysis of Anata's character shows that hers contrary to that of Keyvan was an extrovert, thoughtful, and judging(8), while the character of Keyvan is introvert, sensitive, and revolutionary (P 77). The relation Keyvan has, simultaneously, with the two girls (Anata and Dila) shows that he is psychotic and less stable or unstable, psychologically. Psychological analysis of Mashoon, Keyvan's mother, shows that hers, contrary to Keyvan's, is very stable, strong, and brave. She has even, taken hold of the expenses of the production of the film. Possibly one of the most effective political scenes manifested in the pages of 94 and 343(9) is the dialog happening among Bita, Farzad, Afshin, and Farhad in the prison, in which for the first time, the students' uprisings are referred to as "revolution" by Veissi. This indicates what the reasons for their personality and psychological problems are.

"You were the leader of the revolution. Bita has put her finger over his lips and shakes her head, REVOLUTION! "I don't know how much conscious you have been when uttering this word, but let me take benefit from it. For me, a revolution can happen only when the system or the government is controlled by a minority rather than the majority... we can shout to the end of the world that all miseries are caused by the government, but it is not true. The real problems of the

society are not caused by the system and the government, but it is rooted in the beliefs of people, sometimes I think that we have to save the country from the people rather than the government” (P 94).

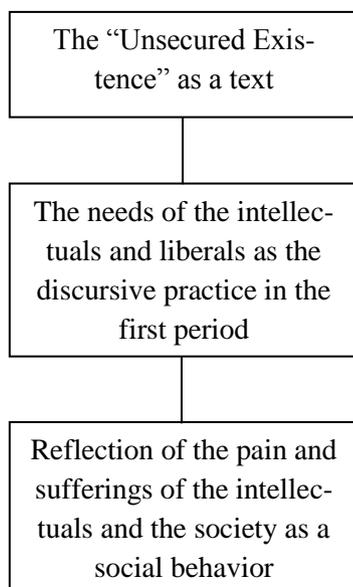
Conclusion

Since the Power and ideology are very effective in the discourse analysis of a political novel, it should be mentioned that the dominant discourse in the 80's (according to the Persian calendar) was effective in the creation of novels like “Unsecured Existence” during the eight year period of reformation. Using the three-layered model of Fairclough for Critical Discourse Analysis, it needs to be stated that the text underwent linguistic analysis in analyzing words like “Kommie” (security offices, “Shahrbany” (Police Department), “Agahi” (Security Department), “Mashin-e Gasht” (Patrolling Cars), “Bazjoe” (investigation), “Zendan” (Prison), “Eteraf girry ba shekanje” (Taking confession with torture, and ..., Discourse behavior including the production and use of the text, and social behavior. The general pattern of the analysis can be presented as follows:



Considering this issue and the interpretation and analysis of the story (Unsecured Existence) with reference to the two elements of character and theme, on one side, and with observation of the elements of discourse analysis in situational, historical, social levels, and the reflection of social and political problems at the three levels of explanation, interpretation, and exploration, on the other, it can be stated that this story which is written in 1384 (according to the Persian Calendar) is the byproduct of the pains and sufferings of the intellectuals (university students) in historical, geographical, and environmental, and sociological conditions to reflect the political and social problems, who have been waiting for the freedom for a long time. This is stated and pictured, explicitly by the characters of the story and especially by Keyvan as the first character(10). This belief and thought have been the dominant discourse of the decades of the 50's and 60's during the final years of reformation government, concerning the necessity of emphasis on the historical, social, and cultural effects it had in the production of a text, which is pictured by language of one of the story characters, in the proposition and texture of a critical text. By reference to the analysis procedure of the novel through discourse analysis, whose objective is exploration of the role of Power and ideology in production of an explainable, interpretable, and deplorable text, there are several problems expressed in the novel. The first problem is, by what was mentioned before, whether the discourse during the Islamic Revolution in the 80's was effective in creating stories like the present novel in the new atmosphere with emphasis on the principles of textual (language analysis), discourse behavior (production and use of the text), and social behavior. In other words, should this principle be justified in the story, in which the events happened because of especial social conditions and special discourse behaviors and could this text provide the needs of that period, considering the production and use of the text? The principle of the interaction

between literature and society, on the one side, and novels and politics, on the other, it can be hypothesized that any text is under the influence of special necessities produced, and if the writer P does not create it, the writer Q will create it. This point shows that writers and intellectuals reflect the events, pains, sufferings, and happiness of the society and the discourse prevalent in that society; Keyvan as a part of objective and oppressive discourse is, in one way, aware of the difference between his own life and that of the others and this has caused his imprisonment and exile. The second question dealt with here, is that whether the text of this story is under the influence of the discourse specified to such a text. This type of text met the special condition of the years before 1376 (according to the Persian Calendar) and the years after, which was accommodated to the behavior of the society, culture, economics and politics of the period that necessitated publication of such texts. The following chart shows the relation between production and distribution of the story as a literary text in accordance with discourse behavior and social behavior.



The story of "Unsecured Existence" like many political stories of this period and those of the past

has been plotted in a way to interpret and explore the problem that if in the social-political life and in the construct of the government, dead end dictatorship becomes dominant and the channels of criticism are closed, and the social problems were not solved, naturally, the dominant discourse of the people and social movements turn to a totally radical and revolutionary one. In other words, considering the necessity of the presence of parties in a government, on one side, and the sufficient and necessary conditions of a government is the inclusion of peoples' role in the body of parties and sects, any opposition of the states and governments to this issue, means deterioration of that government.

Footnotes

1. Considering this group of works it should be stated that political novels are the recreation of the political events, developments, and thoughts in the body of a story and a recast of a political process in a specific period of history in a country and in the area of politics, economics, law, and ... in which the subjects like torturing, imprisonment, bureaucratic corruption, justice and law, the political relations of social forces such as groups, organizations, pressure groups, armed forces, political thoughts and events are pictured as the original theme.

2. First) the greatest problem or actually the original problem in the mind of characters is the political system dominant over the society, type of the power relations, and the lack of freedom. Second) the criticism of political figures are evidently, manifested in the story, or the story itself is shaped along a specific political idea. Third) novels which are developed on the basis of a political happening.

3. Amir Mokhtar is a person who was hidden in a secured zone of Safar Khan (the grandfather of Keyvan) two months after the coup de tat against Mossadegh. He is arrested and killed by the dominant discourse. Safar Khan promises to take the revenge of his friend by observing the burned

corpse of him, but he is captured and expelled from the system.

4. "It seems that what came to me as hallucination was, actually happening in my life... I cannot prevent the free flight of my thought and imagination weren't whatever I saw in the basement, a dream (29)?"

5. It seems that whatever seemed to me as hallucination turned to a reality in my life. I cannot prevent myself from thinking freely. Weren't whatever I saw in the basement, a dream (29)? The stream of consciousness seems to open up evidently and bring to the surface of consciousness all pictures left behind in the hidden layers of unconsciousness (283).

6. Wow, we should suffer for four more years? What might happen? I think being kept here means to let go your life. Just imagine! No entertainment, no good news, no freedom, wow (75). Makes no difference where I go, life is of no value here. What do you think is happening in Tehran? Tehran is like a dump, like here (87).

7. "The boy opens the car door and smells. There is no suspicious smell. Turns on the cassette player of the car, there is no tape, opens the case. There is no tape inside the box. He moves to the driver's side, makes him get off the car, bends and takes out the tapes from under the chair and ..." (316). The atmosphere around the river reminds him of all his friends. At least half of them have been captivated by the fate they hadn't dreamt of, including an early death in the war fronts to execution, imprisonment, addiction, and explosion waves (314).

8. 'She takes out her arm from Keyvan's hand; she threatens him by her fingers; don't touch me, I know what you want to say, but I am afraid of the infusion of love, friendliness, and the like. Do you understand (77)?"

9. "The Guards will pull you, hitting and kicking. Send them to the dog pit till Torab pour decides for them, and, of course the real meaning of

the statement was that to hang them, then they will be decided upon (343)."

10. You yourself will mix up everything if you are kept awake for three days and nights (16).

References

Abedini, Hassan (2007) *Sad Sal Dastan Nevisi dar Iran (One Hundred Years of Story Writing in Iran)*. Fourth, Tehran: Cheshme Publication.

Abrahamian, Yervand (2000) *Iran Bein-e do Enghelab (Iran, between Two Revolutions)*. Ahmad Gol Mohammadi and Mohammad Ibrahim Fattahi, Fourth, Tehran: Nay Publication.

AghaGolzadeh, Ferdows (2006) *Tahlil-e Gofte-man-e Enteghadi (Critical Discourse Analysis)*. First Edition, Tehran: Elmi va Farhangi Publishers.

Askari Hassankolo, Askar (2009) *Naghd-e Ejtemae-e Roman-e Moaser-e Farsi (Social Criticism of Farsi Contemporary Novel)*. Tehran: Pazhohesh-e Farzan Rooz Publication.

Bahrampour, Shaban ali (2000). "Daramadi bar Tahlile Gofteman" *Majmoeh Maghalat-e Gofteman va Tahlil-e goftemani (An Introduction to Discourse Analysis, An Anthology of Articles on Discourse and Discourse Analysis)*. ed. Tajik, Mohammad Reza, Tehran: Farhang-e Gofteman, pp 12-36.

Biman, William (2007). *Zaban, Manzelat, va Ghodrat dar Iran (Language, Pride, and Power in Iran)*. ed. By Reza Moghadam kia, 2nd. Tehran: Nay Publication.

Desp, Ali (2009) *Analysis of the Dominant Discourse in the Novels of Simin-e Danwshvar*. Unpublished Dissertation, Advisor: Ghobadi, Hooseinali, Instructor Training University.

Fairclough, Norman (2000) *Critical Discourse Analysis*. Translated by Shayesteh, Fateme, etal, First Edition, Tehran: Akhtaran and Zamaneh Publishers.

Goodarzi, Mohammad Reza (2007) *Baztab-e Siasat dar Adabiat-e Dastani-e Moaser (Reflection of Politics in the Contemporary Story Literature)*. First Edition, Tehran: Pazhoheshgah-e Farhang.

Horton, John and Baumeister, T. Andrea (1996) *Literature and the Political Imagination*. London and New York: Rutledge.

Khooram, Afshin (2005) *Hasti-e Naa Eimen* (Unsecured Existence). First Edition, Tehran: Akhtaran Publication.

Malekian, Mostafa (2010) *Hadis-e Arezomandi* (The Story of Wishing), First Edition, Tehran: Negah-e Moaser Publication.

Mir Abedini Hassan (1998) *Sad Sal Dastan Nevisi Dar Iran* (One Hundred Years of Story Writing in Iran). First Edition, Tehran: Cheshme Publication.

Mir Abedini Hassan (2007) *Farhang-e Dastan Nevisan-e Iran* (The Culture of Story Writers in Iran). First Edition, Tehran: Cheshme Publication.

Parsinejad, Kamran (2008) *Naghd-e Adabiat-e Montabegh ba Haghghat* (Criticizing the Literature based on Reality). First Edition, Tehran: Khaneh-e Ketab Publication.

Parsinejad, Kerman (2008) *Hoviat Shenasi-e Adabiat va nahle haye Adabi Moaser* (Nature Recognition of Literature and Genres of Contemporary Literature). First Edition, Kanoon-e Andish-e Javan.

Payande, Hossein (2010) *Shakhsiat Pardazi-e Kobisti dar yek Roman-e Moaser-e Irani* (Cubist Personification in a Contemporary Iranian Novel). *The Journal of the Faculty of Literature and Humanities, the University of Tehran*: No. 191. pp: 29-60

Pin, Mickle (2000) *Bart Foko Altoser*. Payam Yazdanjoo, first edition, Tehran: Markaz.

Shiri, Ghahreman (2008) *Maktabhay-e Dastan Nevisi dar Iran* (Story Writing Schools in Iran). Tehran: Cheshme Publication.

Soltani, Seid Ali Asghar (2008) *Ghodrat, Gofteman, va Zaban* (Power, Discourse, and Language). Second Edition, Tehran: Nay Publication.

Yarmohammadi, Lotfollah (2004) *Gofteman Shenasi-e Rayej va Enteghadi* (Common and Critical Discourse). Tehran: Hermes Publication.

Zarshenas, Shahriar (2009) *Jostarhaee dar Adabiat-e Dastani-e Moaser* (Investigations in the Contemporary Literature). First Edition, Tehran: Andish-e Javan Association.

Mostafa Gorji

Has PhD in literature from Tarbiat Modares University and is Associate Professor in Payam e noor University.



Hassan Abniki

Has received his PhD from Tarbiat Modarres University and is currently an assistant Professor of political science at Islamic Azad University, South Tehran Branch. He has published books and articles on Intellectual's sociology, Political theory, Politics: foundations, Institutionalism, literature and politics and hermeneutics.

