

Philosophical Satire in Iranian Women's Amusing Plays

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ABSTRACT:

Since philosophy and theater deal with the nature and existence of human beings and have a long-standing relationship with each other, this research seeks to find an answer to the question of whether "women's joyous plays" have a similarity with philosophy and philosophical satire. What is our possible perspective about it according to the theories of philosophical satire? Therefore, the research deals with satire, comedy, philosophy, and philosophical theories of satire including: "superiority theory", "inconsistency", "consolation", "Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas's minimal view", and the "comforting theory of Robert Letta". We encounter many similarities and functions in this dramatic form, which have been explained in detail. It is noteworthy that the research was descriptive-analytical.

Keywords: *philosophy, theater, satire, women's joyous plays, philosophy of satire*

INTRODUCTION:

Theater and philosophy have many similarities. Aldo Tassi in his article "Philosophy and Theater" points out that the two are always connected through "revealing", and states that "Philosophy is an activity that tries to take us to a place where borders and boundaries are established and thus we "see" how things come into being. The theatrical stage works similarly. The theater of the mind is also a place to see and the philosophy sheds light on what is hidden and dark, when we are dealing with the perception of things, and enables us to see it. Thus, both philosophy and theater have emerged as activities that take us beyond the usual experimental level and involve us in a search for truth as a manifestation process (Kranser, Saltz, 2020: 11-12).

What brings theater and philosophy together is observation. Observing the events, actions, reactions, gestures, and behaviors that bring us closer to the perception of the realities behind the world's appearances.

Women's plays also invite us to observe, one that criticizes with satiric language and exaggeratedly. Because satire is bitter and poisonous from the inside and sweet and pleasant from the outside. Satire and satiric poetry as a way of expression to communicate critical aspects and various inadequacies of society, and women's plays use these elements well. Philosophers presented opinions on this issue from the time of Aristotle until now. This research has attempted to find the functions and signs of these theories in critical satiric dramas. Therefore, it has

discussed first the meaning of satire, it has mentioned the philosophy and theories of philosophical satire briefly, and then the comedy and women's joyous plays. Finally, it has considered the philosophical signs and philosophical satire in such dramas.

Satire

"The word satire was mainly used in literary works to refer to those who intended to show the flaws and injustices of a society with sarcasm" (Dad, 1996: satire). Arianpour says: "The literary genre that is called satire in the Western languages is a special method in writing that while giving a satirical picture of the ugly, negative, and awkward aspects of life, depicts the flaws and corruptions of society and bitter truths exaggeratedly, that is, as uglier and worse than what it is. Their characteristics become clearer and the deep contrast between the existing situation with the idea of a noble and ordinary life is revealed (Arianpour, 36, 1996).

"Tanz" in the approved words of Farhangestan is considered a translation of the word satire: it is a kind of expression in dramatic literature that tries to show the moral wickedness of people and their humiliation by using sarcastic speech for modifying human behavior.

Satirical experts and writers have also provided definitions of it, as Dr. Shafiei Kadkani writes that "satire is an artistic depiction of a contradiction". He explains that "at the center of all the real satires of the world literature, from Chekhov's stories to Obeid's story and aphorisms of the literary writers and artists,

are satirical. This artistic image of the contradiction is visible (Kadkani, 2015: 39).

Satire makes you think. Although its essence relies on laughter, it sees laughter only as a means to achieve a higher goal (informing people). It can be said that there is a reality of thinking inside this laughter. Therefore, satire is supposedly criticism or point-seeking in literature (Behzadi, 1999: 5).

Philosophy and philosophical satire

Philosophy is a result of rational reflection on fundamental questions in any subject. The term *philosophy* means "love of wisdom" or "lover of knowledge". Philosophy is an activity that individuals do when they seek to understand basic truths about themselves, the world they live in, and the relationships between humans and the world.

Philosophy itself, from the point of view of every philosopher, is the center of his philosophical activity and philosophers have studied over time various subjects. The subjects like the philosophy of being, the philosophy of knowledge, the ethics, the philosophy of art, the philosophy of religion, the philosophy of history, etc., the philosophy of a thing studies its quiddity and its place in human life. Philosophers investigate the universal truths. It is one of the fundamental sciences in human knowledge, and philosophers have written about laughter and satire since Plato. But humor in the sense of being funny was not used until the end of the 17th century AD, and it was only in the 18th century that amusing, funny, and comic were used to mean "humorous". Here, too, we discuss briefly the theories that some philosophers have presented about humor.

Superiority theory: humor as anti-social

Laughter and humor require a lack of self-control and violation of social rules in many situations. Plato saw humor as an emotion that conflicts with rational thinking" (Murrill; 2014: 35). Thomas Hobbes in the 7th century understood Plato's expectation of laughter as rejoicing in the weaknesses of others. People for him are susceptible to such pleasure because they are inherently individualistic and seek competition. Therefore, the idea of Plato and Hobbes that laughter is a manifestation of superior emotions was after the Age of Enlightenment the only common understanding of laughter. This view is called "superiority theory" today. Putting it simply, our laughter makes us feel superior to other people.

Roger Scruton is a modern follower of this theory, who interprets laughing at another as "destroying of a person or something about him by attention". "Defenders of superiority theory believed that when something causes laughter, it actually means that it is inferior to the laughing person" (ibid: 40).

If the superiority theory is true, laughter will have no place in a desirable society, because it threatens tolerance and self-control. Hence when Plato depicted his Utopia, he tried to severely limit the performance

of comedy. However, two groups wanted to release humor from such a limitation, one group defending the claim of the superiority of the feeling of laughter, by the fact that there is something valuable in this feeling. Ben Jonson and Sir Philip Sidney believed that "evils are ridiculed in comedy, not exemplified. The moral strength of comedy is in correcting wrongs and defects, not in cultivating them (Ibid: 41).

We also read in Aristotle's poetics: "Comedy is an imitation of ugly manners and morals, not that it is an imitation of the worst human traits, but only an imitation of shameful manners that causes laughter and mockery." What causes laughter and mockery is something that has flaws and ugliness, but that flaw and ugliness does not hurt anyone, just as the masks the actors put on their faces for fun and humor are ugly and awkward, but they do not hurt anyone" (Zarinkoob, 1990: 120).

Incongruity theory

This theory, which is a dominant theory for humor in philosophy and psychology, is the view of James Beattie, Immanuel Kant, Soren Kierkegaard, Arthur Schopenhauer, and many recent philosophers and psychologists. "Superiority theory says that the cause of laughter is the feeling of superiority over others, while the incongruity theory says: an incongruent feeling is the cause of laughter" (Gerald Levinson, 1998: 564).

Of course, it has been stated that the use of the words "incongruent" or "incongruity" has been carelessly based on dictionary definitions, whose explanation is not included in this article. However, what is considerable is "the main meaning of incongruity in classical theories" that the phenomenon or event we understand or think about disrupts our usual mental pattern and natural expectations. Of course, when we experience an incongruity, we no longer expect it to conform to our normal mental patterns. Nevertheless, it still violates our usual mental patterns and highest expectations. Thus we laugh again with the same thing" (Murrill, 2014: 45).

Aristotle in his *rhetoric*, without using the word incongruity, mentions the relationship between humor and this kind of violation of mental patterns: "One way for the speaker to make the listeners laugh is to create an expectation in them and then violate it" (ibid).

Schopenhauer also states that the reason for amusingness is the difference between abstract concepts and our perceptions of things as concrete examples of these concepts (Ibid: 46).

Relief theory: humor as a reassurance valve

The third traditional theory about laughter is the relief theory, which was proposed in the 18th century in competition with the superiority theory and incongruity theory. It focuses on the physical characteristics of the phenomenon of laughter, especially on the nervous system, which remains

unexplained by the theories of superiority and incongruity.

Scientists at that time knew that nerves connect the brain with body organs and muscles, but they thought that nerves carry the animal soul. For example, John Locke described the spirits of animals as fluid and gentle matters that pass through the nervous channels. However, thinkers such as Herbert Spencer and Sigmund Freud, during the last two centuries and with a better understanding of the nervous system, revised the relief theory, but they maintained the idea that laughter relaxes the stopped nervous energy (ibid: 52).

Humor as a pleasant relief: the minimal view of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas

In contrast to the negative opinions and evaluations of other philosophers, we have the opinions of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas (one of the medieval philosophers) who considered humor to be a moral virtue under appropriate conditions. Aristotle's views about humor were ignored until the middle centuries when Thomas Aquinas described them. He examines, in question 168 of the introduction to *summa theologiae*, humor as entertainment: human beings need to stop serious activities sometimes and humor and other forms of entertainment provide this leisure (Murrill, 2013: 63).

Aquinas also condemned the reluctance to participate in laughter, and to Aristotle's opinion, which described a person devoid of humor as immature, added that "the action of such a person is irrational."

Relaxation theory of Robert Latta

Robert Latta is a recent philosopher who placed relaxation at the center of his theory of humor. His theory stated: "A person becomes restless... so he creates a quick cognitive transfer in response to a stimulating event, for example, in interpretation, tendency, expectation or object of attention... It makes the initial restlessness devoid of subject, reason, background, or function. He then quickly calms down through laughter and the joy and humorous laugh experience this fundamental pleasure of humor" (Murrill, 2014: 65).

The relaxation theory about "primal restlessness" is reminiscent of Spencer and Freud's idea of the accumulation of emotional energy. Robert Latta says, "Although restlessness may involve emotion, it is not necessary. Low levels of "attention, preparation, or struggle" also cause restlessness, and he adds, that every healthy person is restless during most of his waking hours, and individuals in this state of restlessness experience a cognitive transfer that makes their attention, preparation, or efforts irrelevant and they immediately find relaxation by laughing" (ibid).

Comedy

Historically, comedy is the second main form of drama after tragedy. Simplicity, happy end, and dealing with everyday affairs are the characteristics of this form of drama that separate it from tragedy.

Comedy was the last dramatic form recognized by the Greek government. However, it was not accepted in Dionysia until 486-487. Therefore, its history before this date is partly speculative. Aristotle says that comedy came out of the performance of improvisers singing phallic ritual songs (Bracket; 1984: 72).

Researchers who write about comedy have often divided it into different types. Some have treated it as high and low comedy, related to the upper or lower classes of society, and some have divided it into comedies of manners, personality, situation, etc. As for the comedy of manners, "its humor is a consequence of tampering with the customs and social conventions of a particular social group, and it shows them so exaggerated that they look ridiculous and farcical" (Holton, 1997: 172).

We read in the lexicon of theater terms under the title of comedy "... comedy is more concerned with thought than with humor and ridicule. It is more realistic structurally. In other words, a comedy is a drama with entertaining characters, in which humor and witticisms prevail and usually with a happy end (Noor Ahmar; 2002: 40).

Comedies have personal, social, political, cultural, and family themes, and they deal in each era with the situation of people of that time, considering the bottlenecks and limitations they are in, and use humorous speech and body movements to express their purpose.

The comedy has been created in different geographical areas in different ways. Likewise, comedies in Iran express the situation of people in different times and some of them are still alive. Dr. Nazerzadeh Kermani defines comedy under "traditional comedy (imitation)" as follows: "23 entertaining quasi-theatrical activities have appeared since long ago in Iran by singers, jesters, clowns, and street performers on the occasion of feasts and celebrations. Funny and humorous plays have been formed from such activities for ages. They were "farce" because sometimes these plays were created on the ponds (between the courtyards of the houses) which were covered with boards and furnished to perform the play. "Imitation" or "comedy" are called because of the name of "central character type": kachalak-bazi, baqqal-bazi, and syah-bazi" (Nazerzadeh Kermani, 2015: 49).

Women's amusing plays are also a kind of comic play, which we will discuss further.

Women's amusing plays

The dramas of any nation, especially the indigenous and traditional dramas, are a mirror of the customs and moods of those people. Performance art is a folk art that includes a part of the culture of every society. The women's plays in the interior during the Qajar period were parts of their real life and their dreams and problems, which were not allowed to be present in circles and society because of customary and social restrictions. As "Jafar Shahri" writes in his *Old Tehran* regarding the reason for the absence of women players:

"At that time, not only the appearance of a woman with her open face and body in public was an unforgivable crime, which even was condemned to killing and dismembering her, and even stoning her, but also exposing a part of a woman's face was no less than this crime; even the appearance of the back of a nail of a woman's body to a non-mahram is supposedly adultery (Shahri; 1986: 62).

Therefore, the women did not sit idly in the plays they performed in their assemblies, they narrated their issues and everything that had overshadowed their lives exaggeratedly and with the accompaniment of all the women present in the assembly. Shahriari also mentions these plays as "female imitations" in the "Book of Play".

When the women gathered in a place for a party or a celebration, some of them, who were more skilled than others in imitation and sweet language, played folk stories that had made partly themselves and had learned partly from the story-telling dances of the singers. All the actors and spectators of these plays were women and children, and so the theme of the plays was women-related. If sometimes there was a male character in the play, his role was played by a woman. Although there was no staging in these plays, make-up and costumes were used. Men's characters were approximately real, and make-up and face painting were used exaggeratedly for women. A few women played the tambourine and drum, etc., and the audience of the parliament accompanied the plays. Apart from the extreme free play, mocking the men was among the elements in these plays. These imitations were not written and the actors acted according to their appointments. Examples of these imitations are: sis Golbahar, sis Nesa, O you went to the garden, Sir why you got married? Snap fingers! Aunt Roro, Aunt Setareh, Uncle Vegetable Seller, Who Knocks on the Door? A few Sanam, It has ant! I have a co-wife! Qanbar Sima, etc. (Shahriari, 1986: 83-85).

Here, we mention some stories of some amusing women's plays:

Aunt Roro

One of the most famous plays that were popular in most cities was "Aunt Roro" or Aunt "Momo". "The subject of this imitation was a woman who went somewhere every hour and came from somewhere every moment and was constantly moving like a scooter. When she got pregnant, she didn't know exactly how many months she was so... The actors in this imitation were Aunt Roro, the Aunt who was a general name of white and veiled women, a midwife, and someone who played something and accompanied the words, and the attendees joined her in the conversations, clapping, and snapping (Shahriari, 1986: 104).

Sis Nesa

The subject of this imitation was the coercion of the family to marry their marriageable daughter. The main actors of this imitation were three people. Sis Nesa, the

mother, and Sakineh of the marriageable and stubborn girl (Shahriari, 1986: 11).

Lazy woman

This play has two actors, one playing the role of a lazy woman and the other playing the role of her husband who complains about her.

A few Sanam said

"The subject of this imitation was a few of Sanam's opinions about her future husband and his career. One of the attendees in this imitation played the role of A Few Sanam and the other guest played the role of the questioner. A few Sanam dances while answering and imitates various professions that she did not want to have her future husband (Ibid: 272).

A few Hasan Back

This is a one-person play and its story is as follows: "A woman who has a lustful husband and becomes frustrated from his philandering and immorality, pours out her heart to others. The audience participates in the play and sings along (Ashuri, Ensafi; 2009: 95).

Who knocks on the door?

It is a female imitation with two female actors, one of whom becomes a daughter and the other becomes a mother. One person plays drum and tambourine. The subject of "play" was the girl's playfulness with her friends and acquaintances, and the mother instead of forbidding her, every time one of them comes to the girl, asks in an encouraging tone who is knocking on the door, and the girl mentions the name of the fellow and the mother ignores this disgusting behavior and says that there is nothing wrong with it, and again another and another (Anjawi Shirazi; 1973: 93).

Sir, why did you get married?

An Iranian feminine imitation that was played in celebrations such as weddings, etc., sometimes by singers and sometimes by women themselves. The subject of this imitation is the marriage of a married but lustful man with a young woman and the story of the young woman's relatives going to the sorcerer and prayer writer and the first wife's complaints about her husband. The attendees sat in a circle and repeated the verses with snapping fingers (Shahriari; 1986: 14).

Bride and mother-in-law

"A feminine imitation that has a relatively polished tone and manner and includes a small criticism towards brides and mothers-in-law, that they drive up to the wall the man of the house" (Bayzai; 2000: 202).

It has ant!

Women gather together at weddings and parties and perform this play in a completely feminine, rhythmic, and coquettishly. "The play is partly similar to what the Europeans call "striptease"... The actor takes off his clothes one by one throughout the play, pretending to be bitten by an ant, dances excitedly, and the play is over" (Ashuri, Ensafi; 2009: 99)

I have a co-wife!

"The subject of this imitation was co-wife and the condition of the woman who has co-wife and has become ugly and bent since the day she had co-wife. Here, one of the participants sings the poems and

dances, and one person plays drum and the participants sing together in the same line. The main character showed the name of each member he took with his hand and facial movements and finally, it ended with a fast dance (Shahriari; 1986: 39).

Qanbar Sima

"An Iranian female imitation that was played at weddings and parties. The subject of this imitation was a woman who found out that her husband wanted to take a co-wife. So the lady would ask Qanbar, who was the man's servant or steward and dance to the accompaniment of a tambourine or drum (Bayzai; 2000: 203).

Uncle Vegetable Seller!

"A feminine imitation that is a conversation with dancing and singing between a female shopper and an old vegetable seller" (Ibid; 202).

Philosophy and philosophical humor in women's amusing plays

In the beginning, we should note that referring to each of these theories in women's plays does not reject other theories or opinions of other philosophers, but the objective manifestations of all or some of these opinions together as executive function are visible in many cases. "Examining the opinions of a philosopher under the superiority theory does not prevent the point of view of the incongruity theory or the relaxation theory. As Victor Ruskin points out, these three theories that describe the complexities of the phenomenon of humor from different angles do not violate each other but seem to complement each other well (Murrill; 2014: 39).

If we want to examine women's amusing plays from the point of view of the mentioned theories, we should not forget that theater and philosophy have a fundamental and close relationship, and both deal with the nature and existence of human beings: "Theater, like philosophy, shines light on the reality that external effects have made it dark. Theater, like philosophy, manifests reality by representing and analyzing human actions and showing cause-and-effect relationships. As Bruce Wilshire writes, we can see in the theater our theatrical conditions more prominently, so prominently that we could not see easily otherwise. Theater and philosophy shed light on thoughts, behavior, actions, and human existence and simultaneously strengthen our perception of the world and ourselves (Krasner, Salter; 2020: 11).

Looking at the comedy reveals our frustration towards the issues as they are, that we laugh at the most unbearable situation of our existence. Women, in their amusing plays, playfully describe a situation whose tragic manifestation is truly unbearable, but they create a sense of superiority in themselves by mocking the existing situation and recovering humor; it was superiority as critical self-expression towards the patriarchal society of the Qajar era, which locked time inside and treated them as they liked. Although expressing this criticism to the intern was staged since

it represented the tragic life of women in society, humor also increased their tolerance, and perhaps, as the "relief" theory argues, it was a safety valve to endure the excruciating conditions. For example, the play "Sir why did you get married? Qanbar Sima, Aunt Setareh, and Aunt Fatemeh I have co-wife! are some examples that express the condition of women whose men are inclined to have a second wife. Interestingly, the tragic reality of their daily life was performed with poetic and sarcastic language by the women themselves along with the slapping of the attendees in a completely humorous way; that is, apart from the anthropological and sociological aspects that show the current state of women, it created a space to endure difficult situations as one of the functions of humor. As we read in the philosophy of humor: "Comedy focused attention on what was wrong and arranged the things to deal with it. Its second function was its unification. Humor gave a sense of solidarity to those who laughed at their oppressors, and its third function was to cope with hardships: it helped the oppressed through their suffering to pass without losing their senses" (Murrill, 2013: 198).

Another notable point is that adherence to custom and tradition has always had a special place in societies, although with different sensitivities in different societies, it is clear that some beliefs regarding the relationship between men and women, feminine shame and modesty, expressing a girl's opinion on choosing a spouse, uttering certain words or sentences, and other dos and don'ts for an Iranian woman, especially in the society of the Qajar period, had very specific and determined limits and deviating from them was supposedly an unforgivable sin. Expectedly, this thought appeared in internal plays, but contrary to expectations, not only those limits were ignored but also they were performed with enthusiasm and ended with joyfulness. Plays such as Aunt Roro, Hamomak Has Ant, Uncle Vegetable Seller, Smart Soquette, My Dear Aunt Fell, etc. give women the opportunity to go in their role against what is expected and contrary to customs and beliefs and dos and don'ts. Here, we are witnessing a textual inconsistency because events occur that are far from expected and indicate going against the path and mocking the social rules. In other words, "when critical thinking is about politics or religion, comedians and philosophers do not value tradition and power" (Ibid: 211).

If we want to examine the aforementioned plays from the perspective of humor as a funny relaxation – also the minimal theory of Aristotle and Aquinas - we can also refer to the theory of "catharsis", which was first proposed by Aristotle. Catharsis has been translated as "cultivation and refinement". We know that comedy comforts us just like tragedy. Because we take the hero's pain and suffering seriously and sympathize with him in a tragedy, but we mock the hero's pain and suffering and laugh at him in a comedy. "Gilbert Murray thinks that we can apply catharsis more easily to comedy than to tragedy because we more readily

agree to it. Now there is a consensus that one can get rid of some mental violence - what our ancestors called an excessive animal spirit - by laughing. It is generally accepted that a good laugh makes us feel good and laughter is useful for us as a kind of emotional "exercise" (Bentley; 1997: 143). Since Aristotle considered a special place for humor and the actors perform in their amusing plays those things that are supposedly taboo in society, such as the life of a girl who got pregnant before marriage in the play "Aunt Roro", or the mother who instead of admonishing her daughter's frivolous behavior in the play "Who Knocks on the Door?" gives a positive response. If such people are present in circles in real life, they will probably be rejected, but they will be welcomed in these performances because when people see their fears, emotions, and preoccupations as theatrical characters, they achieve spiritual refinement based on the principle of Aristotle's catharsis. They reach a new understanding of their problems by assimilating with the dramatic characters. These plays provide also the best way to spend free time.

"The feature of these shows was the unrestricted freedom of women in expressing issues. Those who were under the pressure of morals in society were freed from the burden of moral principles in these gatherings and used to carelessly join the crowd. The plays did not have a written text and the events occurred in the context of stories, folk poems, and women's issues. The plays targeted the ruling laws and men's actions, the chaotic conditions of women and their deprivations, and ridiculed frankly in poems the reasons for the backwardness and suppression of women in society (Farokhi; 2009: 63).

Humor is based on jokes and laughter but painful laughter that comes from social life. "This laugh is not joyful, it is a bitter and serious and more or less nasty and biting laugh with blame and reprimand. The purpose of humor is to reform and cultivate, not disparagement and sadism. The humorist's pen is a surgical knife, not a murder knife (Arianpour, 1977: 36).

Noting that laughter has a calming and liberating effect, we should not ignore that "laughter is a collective phenomenon. When a person's laughter is accompanied by the laughter of others, it has more sincerity, intensity, and freedom (Tushar; 1987: 131).

A play, whether it is a tragedy or a comedy, creates an atmosphere where one feels the pleasure of being with others, and the entire group in women's amusing plays, whether performers or those present, who help the performers actively, make them experience the pleasure of "escape from loneliness" with strength and know that the same limitations, comfort, and joyfulness they have now, are their legitimate and indisputable right. They should overcome the prohibitions and recognize themselves. We should not forget that "comedy relieves us because we feel ourselves in a higher position than our fellows" (Ibid: 144).

Another thing we should consider in the performance of women's amusing plays is "dialogue". Dialogue in these plays has been used basically, both between the actors and between the actors and the audience.

The dialogues are designed in such a way that the audience is ready to sing together as a group at any moment and answer the actor. This participation gives him a feeling of liberation, pleasure, and strength. Dialogue has been conventional in philosophy since Plato. Theater and philosophy both show humans actively living in the world, and they both use the same main method for this, which is "dialogue". "Dialogue is one of the most important tools of the famous Socrates, and it remained as the main format for expressing philosophical discussions in the Enlightenment" (Krasner, Salter; 2020: 12).

Women themselves in their amusing plays are not safe from the stinging language of comedy, and some plays such as *Lazy Woman*, *Bride and Mother-in-law*, *Sis Sanam*, etc. refer to women who are lazy, sloppy, or vain. Therefore, these women's plays not only have a critical view of men and the conditions of society, but they also use the unpleasant characteristics of some women and severely criticize them. "Both comedians and philosophers think critically. They encourage people to be truthful with themselves" (Murrill; 2013: 210).

CONCLUSION

Theater and philosophy have had a close connection with each other since the beginning. Although humor and comedy did not have a high position for philosophers like Plato, they have paid attention to comedy and its function over time due to the theories of Aristotle and Aquinas. Philosophy deals with the essence and existence of beings, and theater explores this essence and makes it visible, and both are similar in objectifying the basic issues of life. Another thing is that philosophy has always used dialogue as a Socratic-Platonic method and "dialogue" as a dramatic element has a strong presence in the play. Another common point is the critical feature of philosophy, which is prominent in the drama, especially in many comic plays. Humor is liberating because it always protests and ridicules the disorders and injustices of society, and its language is simple in a way that delights the audience.

Therefore, philosophers have presented theories on humor, and this research, relying on the philosophical theories of humor, points out that women's amusing plays have opened criticism by looking at the condition of women of their time and using the language of humor and comedy in a completely authoritative way and numerous signs indicating the presence of these theories in the plays can be investigated. First, these plays, like other types of play, are formed with the audience. But the audience here is not just a mere spectator. Therefore, it expands its functional circle to the number of present people by letting the audience participate in the performance in the form of the

chorus - answering the actors' questions - and by cooperating in the performance as auxiliary agents. For example, we can mention "laughter", although laughter and humor are not the same, they are very closely related. "Laughter" sends the message that even though we are protesting, we are safe, which means the joy of liberation and distance from the anxiety of insecurity. We know that laughter is a collective thing that needs an echo and this echo spreads in such gatherings and a sense of superiority is formed in the performers and participants as mentioned in the superiority theory. Of course, the statement of one theory does not mean the violation of other theories, such as the incongruity theory, relief theory, or the relaxation theory of Robert Latta. Rather, sometimes all or some of these theories can be present in these performances and complement each other. Because, as mentioned in the text, the performance of these plays is the presentation of the things that are proposedly prohibited under normal conditions. Maybe it is the voice of protest of people who had little right to express themselves in the patriarchal society of their time. Another notable thing is the relief of the individuals present in the place, which acts as a "safety valve" according to the theory of humor. When individuals cannot realistically change the existing conditions, they start performing these plays to somehow reduce the existing pressure, because the laughter arising from the understanding of humor not only releases the dense inner energy but also makes difficult conditions more bearable and thus provides a way to relieve oneself and cope with contradictory and painful situations. Here, we come across the relaxation theory of Robert Latta, who thinks that the restlessness and accumulated emotional energy of a person can be quickly calmed down through humor and laughter. Such plays are an opportunity to provide leisure, leisure that every human being needs, or as Aristotle says, this kind of play as humor as an exhilarating relaxation. What is at stake, in general, is that the amusing female plays protested the patriarchal oppression of their time. A protest that is expressible only through the language of humor and its function as a painful and artistic expression to make the future generation hear the calendar of their life and a salve to soothe, to prevent explosion, to live together, to laugh, and ultimately to have a little life experience.

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