

Humorous Manifestations in Book Two of the *Masnavi*

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Article Info (۱۹۷-۲۱۴) ABSTRACT

Article type:
Research Article

Article history:

Received:
۲۵ April 202۲

Accepted:
23 July 202۲

Keywords:

Satire
Ridicule
Allegory
Masnavi
Rumi
second book

Satire is a kind of beautiful literary trick that expresses human ugliness and shortcomings in a sarcastic way with a hidden chuckle for social reform. It is very difficult to discuss and review satire and satirical works of Persian language due to the lack of sources and information, because this important literary style is less studied independently and is more mixed with humor and especially ridicule. Satire is a special way of expressing poetry and prose, which is very effective and attractive by means of which the most important topics are expressed with the most delicate and at the same time the sharpest views and the most winning words. Satire plays an important role in the awareness and awakening of the public because it often expresses the obvious and bitter truths in a simple language that is close to people's understanding and replaces an opinion exactly in their minds. This research, which was carried out with a descriptive analytical method and using library sources, dealt with the role of satire in the Masnavi and the description of its humorous anecdotes, and it is clear that satire is used abundantly in Masnavi and Rumi used these anecdotes to express moral, philosophical, mystical, religious, etc. views and points.

Citation: Fallah Sara (2023) Humorous Manifestations in Book Two of the Masnavi. Modern Literary Researches, 2(1) 197-214-

Publisher: Association for the Promotion of Persian Language and Literature



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DOI: [20.1001.1.28211413.1402.2.1.10.4](https://doi.org/10.28211413.1402.2.1.10.4)

Introduction

Humor serves as a sophisticated literary device designed to critique human shortcomings and social flaws through irony and subtle mockery, aiming for social reform. In Persian literature, the study of humor is often overshadowed by genres like satire (*hajv*) or mere jesting (*hazl*), making independent academic inquiry into its structural and philosophical roles challenging. Rumi (*Molavi*), in his magnum opus the *Masnavi*, utilizes humor not as a tool for mere entertainment, but as a profound pedagogical instrument. This research explores the strategic deployment of humor in the second book of the *Masnavi*, investigating how Rumi weaves comedic narratives into his mystical and philosophical discourse to facilitate the transmission of complex truths to his audience.

Method

This study employs a descriptive-analytical methodology, relying on extensive library-based research and textual analysis of the *Masnavi*. The researcher extracted specific humorous anecdotes and parables from Book Two and categorized them based on their thematic content. By analyzing these narratives, the study examines the interplay between comedic elements and the underlying ethical, philosophical, and mystical messages intended by the author.

Results

The analysis reveals that humor in the *Masnavi* is deeply integrated into Rumi's didactic framework. The study identified several distinct thematic applications of humor:

- **Social and Ethical Critique:** Through stories such as the "Sufi and the Servant," Rumi critiques social irresponsibility and hypocrisy, illustrating how superficiality can lead to practical failure.
- **Critique of Ignorance and Imitation:** Anecdotes involving the "Falcon and the Old Woman" or the "Villager and the Lion" highlight the dangers of misplaced trust and the necessity of acting in accordance with one's true nature and wisdom. Furthermore, the

story of the “Sufis selling the traveler’s donkey” serves as a sharp critique of blind imitation (*taqlid*), which strips individuals of their identity and awareness.

- **Mystical and Philosophical Insights:** Humor is used to dismantle ego and intellectual pride. The story of the “Philosopher-wannabe and the Desert Dweller” critiques knowledge that fails to lead to spiritual salvation, while the “Shepherd’s Prayer” illustrates that divine recognition transcends formalistic or linguistic boundaries.
- **Human Nature and Paradox:** Rumi utilizes humor to address the complexities of human behavior, such as the “Madman and Galen” regarding social compatibility, and the “Doctor and the Old Man” to discuss the inevitable decline of physical and mental faculties.

The findings demonstrate that Rumi’s humor is “wise humor” (*hikmat-amiz*), designed to break mental frameworks and guide the soul toward truth by making profound concepts more accessible and engaging.

Conclusion

The research concludes that humor in the *Masnavi* is not an end in itself, but a vital instrument for spiritual education. By bypassing the reader’s rational defenses through laughter, Rumi invites them to reflect deeply on their own flaws and the nature of their existence. The presence of these humorous anecdotes is essential to the *Masnavi*; without them, the heavy philosophical and mystical discourse would be far less accessible. Rumi’s humor acts as a bridge, grounding ethereal wisdom in the raw reality of human experience. Thus, the *Masnavi* remains a testament to Rumi’s genius in unifying the “profane” with the “sacred,” effectively using the laughter of the world to awaken the soul to the Divine.