

Viewpoint

Carnival; Social Development, Tourism Development

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Abstract Carnivals are public-critical events that mock the seriousness of official culture and ruling norms and display equality and freedom together. In the carnival, freedom and temporary release from the grip of the ruling order are formed along with authentic connections between different classes of society, regardless of hierarchies and permanent prohibitions. By ridiculing baseless and superstitious thoughts and beliefs, carnival shakes minds and raises the level of society's awareness. Laughter in the carnival destroys the fear of power and taboos that have formed in the individual and society over the years and brings the suppressed and silenced voices to the ears. Such an event is both a tourist attraction that brings economic benefits to the host community and a show whose actors are citizens and whose performance is their presence. A presence that shows individual and collective maturity. This critical writing reviews the concept and components of a carnival and the clear message of each line is why we don't have a carnival. In fact, this is a negative question or a rhetorical question that the author is not looking for an answer to, but his goal is to draw the audience's attention and make him think. Understanding the concept of carnival is intertwined with understanding the concept of pluralism, and naturally, societies that have lived under the rule of despotic sultans for many years should pay more attention to this openness.

Keywords Carnival, Merrymaking, Grotesque, Pluralism, Urban tourism.

Introduction and Problem Statement In most cities of the world and on various occasions, the carnival is held in the meaning of "caravan of joy" or "joy procession". But in Iran, holding carnivals is so rare and inconspicuous that if we say that it is not, we are not exaggerating. At first glance, it may seem that those who have carnival are aimless, pleasure-seeking, and frivolous people, but it seems that the time has come to put aside this superficiality and simple-mindedness. To have a better appreciation of this issue, we need to know what the carnival is, what its components are, and what its function can be in human societies. Are those who participate in the carnival just a crowd and a congestion or those who have stopped their individuality and are behind traditional clothes or masks, are they a crowd

that stands out against the official system and the language of power?

Structure of Criticism

Carnivals are celebrations and street shows that express the public culture of the people. In carnival celebrations and rituals, the line of distinction between social classes temporarily disappears, social hierarchies collapse, and everyone comes together under alike and equal conditions and creates events that everyone shares in it and laugh at it. This equality is the reason that there is no dominant discourse and sometimes even some social classes are reversed. Vassals become Lord, clowns become kings; Idiots, elits, and saints are mocked. In other words, the language of humor challenges the official and dominant language and creates an atmosphere where the voices of the lower classes

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and the oppressed masses reach the ears of society. This inversion is even sometimes shown in people's clothing. Wearing on the back and on the clothes or pulling pants over the head. Humor and laughter in the carnival are not similar to witty laughter, but rather a tool that addresses the dominant and official culture and ridicules monologue. The sound of laughter and joy in the carnival is actually the sound of breaking social taboos. It is the cheering sound of the victory of sub-cultures that do not find space to breathe with official social contracts in everyday life. In this way, the carnival is a platform for the cultural revival of a nation. Carnival is not performed, it does not have a scenario or actors, but it is lived by the people and activists who attend it. In other words, they experience a carnival life, a derailed life.

Mikhail Bakhtin, the great critic of the 20th century, is the first person to propose the theory of carnivalesque under popular culture and humor. Although others had raised the issue of carnival before him, Bakhtin gave it a systematic form. A system whose main axis is "pluralism". According to Bakhtin, carnival shows disobedience, relativity, and transformation.

For a better understanding of the carnival, its components can be listed (Oskoui, 2017; Mansoori, Ghavami, Borzoi & Adhami, 2022):

Pluralism discourse: pluralism emphasizes the presence of another and the carnival calls for this presence.

Street and market slang: In the carnival, informal and plural language stands out. Street ballads and folk tales that are deliberately opposed to formal and elegant language.

Madness: Carnival characters hide behind the mask of clowns to mock conventional social, political, and cultural norms and challenge official rationality.

Disobeying the authority of the ruler: Carnival defies the authority and order of the ruler.

Death: The theme of death in the carnival is an inseparable part of life and a part of the life cycle and has nothing to do with the world after death.

Laughter: Laughter in the carnival is the way to overcome monologue. Laughter in the carnival does not negate the seriousness but increases it.

Relativity and contrast: Carnival is an arrangement of contrasts. From intergenerational differences to cultural and social differences, and in this way it depicts relativity.

Philosophical and non-religious content: Carnivals usually have meaningful and philosophical content, while they are far from religious dogmas.

Urban utopian scope: In carnivals, people step into the utopian world, a free, equal, and abundant world.

Grotesque: Grotesque is the main feature of the carnival. Grotesque is an artistic style that presents ugliness with beauty. Grotesque is bitter humor; When faced with the grotesque, a person is stunned and helpless, and his reaction begins with laughter and ends with fear. Grotesque creates something strange, scary, funny, and unreal (Qafelebashi & Hosseini, 2021); It makes the viewer laugh, but its purpose is to create disgust. Grotesque is an explicit truth and that is what makes it powerful.

Grotesque is a philosophical mockery of society's anomalies and forces us to overcome the mysterious with the help of the ridiculous and challenges any final version of the truth. Grotesque seeks to explore the mixed, contradictory, and mysterious nature of life.

Carnival is also an opportunity to see the cities. The arenas and public spaces of the city become a place to show and express the existence of citizens. Most of the time, the movement path of carnivals is the cause of shaping and directing the development of urban spaces. The route of the carnival gets its identity from the accumulation of collective memories of the citizens, and for this reason, important buildings and important nodes of the city are gradually formed along the route of the carnivals, and this route becomes the backbone and center of the city.

The history of holding carnivals in Iran and Europe goes back to the distant past. The carnival welcoming Nowruz with the symbol of Haji Firouz and his performances with red clothing and black face is one of the carnivals that are still observed, although very rarely. This symbol of defiance, intelligence, and frankness of the accent presents itself in the guise of stupidity and with the resulting freedom, it reveals the Lord's misdeeds and tricks.

Despite this historical advance, the holding of carnivals in our country is still unprosperous and underdeveloped (Fig. 1). By exploiting the art of the grotesque, which means disrupting the order of time and history, distorting characters and mixing human faces with animal faces, and bringing objects and images to life, the carnival overturns the conventional world and the language of power.

The sound of laughter and joy in the carnival is the sound of breaking the gaps and it is a blow to the absolute dogmas and concepts in the mind. In the carnival, everyone hears another's voice and inevitably forms another's character, even if temporarily. Undoubtedly, carnivals are one of the important attractions of urban tourism and, like many events, they can host thousands of tourists from all over the world. Tourists, even if they are observers of the carnival, get

the same benefit because the carnival is a call to attend and listen to others. It is on this basis that it causes the individual and social development of communities, and due to the income from tourism, also brings

economic development and social welfare; This cultural symbol deserves to be recreated. There is no need for government headquarters and planning, it is enough to open the way for the youth's creativity.



Fig. 1. French Nice Carnival - Yazd Nowruz Carnival. Source: <https://dorezamin.com>, <https://sedayiran.com>.

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