

A discussion on the Irony Concept of Literature

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Irony is a poetic device which occurs on the basis of a contradictory nature of a poetic experience. A comprehensive exposition of the concept 'Irony' is found in the Western tradition of literary criticism. According to Oxford English Dictionary irony is a figure of speech in which the intended meaning is the opposite of that expressed by the words used: usually taking the form of sarcasm or ridicule in which laudatory expressions are used to imply condemnation or contempt and a condition of affairs of events of a character opposite to what was, or might naturally be, expected: a contradictory outcome of events as if in mockery of the promise and fitness of things. There are many kinds and usages of irony, Verbal irony, Structural irony, Stable irony, Unstable irony, Socratic irony, Dramatic irony, Tragic irony, Cosmic irony, Romantic irony, Classical irony, Situational irony etc. Even though the Sanskrit equivalent *utpra:sə* is found in Oriental literature, no attempt has been made by Sanskrit critiques to recognise it as a poetic device. Still, among the theories of Sanskrit Rhetoric and Dhvani, features of irony could be seen. Ironical expressions, dating back to the early ages of Sigiri Graffiti, are found in Sinhalese literature as well. The objective of this research is discussed about the irony concept of Literature in a broader context. This research is based on primary and secondary sources. English, Sanskrit and Sinhala classical discursive books study the primary sources and modern discursive books study the secondary sources. Accordingly, this research paper intends to present a critical study of the concept 'Irony', discussing its role as a poetic device in Literature.

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