

“Disturbed Order”: Revalorization of an Idiom in the Scope of Classical Poetry and Prose and its Contemporary Interpretations

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Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

Meaning of notions and idioms changes over time. Hence, we necessarily ought not to compare the novel understandings of the meaning of such concepts with that of the predecessors. If the aim is to interpret an idiom, one must employ an evolutionary look, trying to grasp the processes through which the idiom transforms over time. If the purpose is to paraphrase a text, there is no urge to study its past. Among the terms associated explicitly with poetry and prose, and generally with literacy, are the “disturbed order” and its related equivalents such as “disordered literacy” and “disturbed figures.” These concepts have had special meanings to the people of the past, which included poetry and prose that were either unconsidered or were of low quality. Some of the researchers and interpreters, nonetheless, have a different understanding of this term. Drawing upon the use of this term in the poetry of Hafiz, they argue that “disturbed order” implies that Hafiz’s poetry, although disturbed in appearance, has a firm order in its core. In this vein, the old interpretations, when compared to today’s scholars, give a completely different implication. This paper endeavors first to introduce the background and history of this term in ancient poetry and prose and then evaluate the contemporary understandings of it. The goal of this study is to demonstrate the significance of the evolution of notions and shed light on an idiom and its equivalents that had a specific meaning in the past poetry and prose.

2. Theoretical framework

This research is based on several theoretical concepts. One of the more beneficial methods in theoretical research is the use of ‘concepts’ and their evolutionary process. Concepts play an imperative role in people’s

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epistemological views. Literary historians rely on these concepts in order to grasp the ways in which classical poetry and literary criticism were construed. Two additional concepts that are utilized in this paper are “interpretation” and “paraphrasing.” In the tradition of Muslims, these two notions are considered separate from one another; for instance, in his book entitled “Almasal-o-Assaer,” Ibn Athir has elucidated the difference between the two notions. Moreover, the research employs the concept of “interpretation” in a fashion through which the reader would be able to draw upon vocabulary, grammar, and historical context to construe a text in ways that are close to what the original author intended to imply. On the other hand, “paraphrase” means that the interpreter uses their subjective understanding of a text without necessarily having to refer to the historical context of the transcript. It seems essential to mention that in “interpretation,” the subjective understanding of the reader is not neglected; it is only limited due to factors such as history and context. Nevertheless, the point is that the readers ought to identify their approach towards the text, and then if they realized a difference between the two concepts, they should recognize whether they are aiming at interpreting the text or paraphrasing it.

3. Method

In this research, the abovementioned idea is explicated in two different stages. In the first stage, the idiom “disturbed order” and its equivalents such as “disordered literacy” and “disturbed figures” are construed, and their meaning in the past is interpreted. In the second stage, it is demonstrated how some of the contemporary scholars have understood this idiom differently. If this novel understating is an “interpretation,” it should be considered a misunderstanding, and if it is a “paraphrase” not only it is not a misunderstanding, but it will open up new doors in comprehending this idiom and the poetry of Hafiz.

4. Findings

The findings of the present research are as follows:

1. In the old literacy, “disturbed order” and its synonyms such as “disturbed figures” and “disturbed literacy” on some occasions imply a unique meaning and, on some other cases, have a negative value and meaning.
2. If we take an interpretive stance when comprehending Hafez’s famous poem:

حافظ آن ساعت که این نظم پریشان می‌نوشت طایر فکرش به دام اشتیاق افتاده بود

We ought to understand “disturbed order” as a futile poem.

3. Apparently, after Pournamdarian and Khorramshahi, authors who tried to understand “disturbed order,” paid no attention to the historical meaning of the notion and gave it a novel value and implication; they should consider the fact that this implication would be correct when “paraphrasing” and not “interpreting.”
4. If we take the “paraphrase” stance, we can give the notion of “disturbed order” a new meaning, comprehending it as a positive term and opening a new door towards the poem of Hafiz—as did Pournamdarian, Khorramshahi, and other similar authors.

5. Conclusion

This paper, relying on various evidence, unveils that despite the opinions of contemporary scholars, Hafiz did not imply “disturbed order” as a poem that has a disturbed appearance while having a firm core. Conversely, processors and Hafiz thought of the idiom in a way that implicated a low-quality poem. The article, moreover, puts forward that the main reason that the present-day researchers misunderstand this idiom in the Divan-e-Hafiz is the modern poetry and its related theories that affect the subjective construes of scholars from the poem. To support their deduction, scholars with this viewpoint argue that the idiom “disturbed order” uses a paradoxical figure of speech. While this point of view has the potential for being further explored, it is not necessarily true, since the evidence put forward by its proponents is not compelling enough; not only that but the historical evidence and reasons are against such perspectives. Therefore, if the researchers intend to “interpret” the idiom, their comprehension of this word would be erroneous. Nevertheless, if their purpose is to “paraphrase” this idiom, not only their point of view is not wrong, but it also provides a new perspective for exploring Hafiz’s poems through a modern viewpoint.

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