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Self-annotation

A reflection on the self-annotations of the Mahdi Akhavan Sales

Mohammad Hakimazar¹

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Abstract

Text annotation has been one of the scientific and literary traditions of Muslims. Annotation has long been a common method in the development of scientific and literary thought in the field of Iranian culture, both by the author himself and by the author's students or critics. Text annotation accelerated from the eighth century AH and in the Qajar era, annotation on jurisprudential texts became common in seminaries. Annotation on contemporary poetry is a strange and uncommon practice that has little history in contemporary Persian literature. Mehdi Akhavan Sales is a prolific and rare poet in this field due to his talent, vast studies, upbringing in the cultural sphere (domain) of Khorasan and familiarity with Persian and Arabic literary texts. He has written various, humorous, informative and delicate Annotations on his poetry. According to this research, the main reason for this is to demystify. This research has been done by an analytical-descriptive method and seeks to find the reasons for the excessive tendency of Mehdi Akhavan Sales to the tradition of self-annotation.

Note: Separate the keywords with a comma, and initials should not be capital. Keywords can be listed in any order. Write the label “Keywords:” (in italic) one line below the abstract, indented

¹ Corresponding author, Associate Professor, Department of Persian Language and Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Shahrekord Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shahrekord, Iran; ORCID ID; 0000-0002-2910-6875 Email: hakimazar@gmail.com

0.5 inch like a regular paragraph, followed by the keywords in lowercase (but capitalize proper nouns), separated by commas. Do not use a period or other punctuation after the last keyword. If the keywords run onto a second line, the second line is not indented.

Keywords: *Mehdi Akhavan Sales, self-annotation, text annotation, humor, contemporary poetry*

Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

Annotation has a long history in the field of Islamic literature and culture. Writing Annotations on jurisprudential, theological and philosophical texts has been common in ancient times. Annotation has been a common method of teaching Muslims in schools. There is no precise and clear date for the beginning of annotations on Persian texts, especially literary texts. There are many manuscripts with information written in the Annotations. These versions can be seen more from the eighth century AH. Annotation in a period of Iranian history reached a point where Annotation was also drawn on the previously annotated texts, i.e., annotation on annotation. The authors annotated the texts to describe the problems of the text or to prove their knowledge. In some cases the Annotations extended more than the text itself and sometimes received higher scientific values. Text annotation has been common since about the eighth century (AH) and many scholars have tried to do so. Due to the literary and scientific stagnation caused by the Mongol invasion and the weakness that arose in the domain of culture for at least two centuries, literary creativity declined. Translation, text annotation, and text summarising have been common methods of reviewing the past works. Sa'ad al-Din Taftazani (d. 769 AH), a great scientist of the eighth century AH, is famous in this field. He wrote many works in the field of Islamic culture and annotated many of them. As it was said, descriptions, translations, summaries and Annotations on literary texts also flourished from the Mongol period and then from the Timurid era and reached their peak in the Qajar period. During the age of Qajar, some Annotations have been written so unintelligibly that the original

text was forgotten. In our time, Mahdi Akhavan Sales is a famous poet who has paid serious attention to annotations. Mehdi Akhavan Sales has written annotations not only on other people's books but also on his own books and poems. We have called the Akhavan annotations on its own poems Self-annotations.

Research Question(s)

- 1- What is annotation and how did they annotate scientific or literary texts in the past?
- 2- What is the difference between annotations of contemporary writers and poets?
- 3- What were the Akhavan's methods for annotating his own poems?

2. Literature Review

Annotations to literary texts are desirable and perhaps necessary to simplify the text. Mehdi Akhavan Sales's Annotations on his own poetry in his ten books of poetry are the product of a special look at literature in which the principle of informativity prevails over the principle of pleasure. Although we do not intend to judge this here, it can be said that Mehdi Akhavan Sales has annotated his poem because he was worried about misinterpretations or misunderstandings by others. Mehdi Akhavan Sales's annotations are valuable and full of new points in terms of informing and teaching literary-historical points. He sometimes paid more attention to the annotations he made on his own poetry than to his own poetry. Much information such as the meanings of the words, familiarity with many anonymous poets in the field of Persian literature, Arabic literature, Turkish literature and some obscure literary terms can be learned from the annotations of Mehdi Akhavan Sales. Many of these words can only be found in ancient rhetorical texts. Recognition of some unknown but influential people in the history and literature of different regions of the country is the result of studying the Annotations of Mehdi Akhavan Sales.

2. Methodology

This research is written in a descriptive-analytical method. In this research, ten books of poetry by Akhavan Sales were carefully studied

and the Annotations that he has written on his own poetry were recorded. In these Annotations there are sometimes the meaning of a word, the introduction of a character, the description of a poem and sometimes the commentary on political and social issues. After writing down the words, we have analyzed and examined them.

3. Results

This research has been done on ten books of poetry by Akhavan. In the Annotations of the Akhavan's poems, there are articles written by the poet himself. The Annotations that he has written on his poetry are more to show the correct interpretation of his poetry than to show its knowledge. Due to Akhavan's mastery of ancient texts and his familiarity with the Khorasani language, his poetry has certain ambiguities. Akhavan has self-annotated to clear up these ambiguities. By annotating his poetry, while showing his instructive personality in poetry, he has prevented any misunderstanding in his poems. Some of the annotations of Akhavan are humorous. What Akhavan has done in annotating his poetry is a kind of teaching of poetic rules. He teaches younger poets that survival in the world of poetry depends on mastery of speech and knowledge of poetic rules. He does not consider taste alone to be sufficient and cultivates the fields of apprenticeship and learning in poetry. Among Akhavan's literary, social, and political information, we occasionally come across some kind of his special education that has been strange and rare. He sometimes advises to divorce. Akhavan sometimes considers drug addiction something good. These are the recommendations of Akhavan which are norm-evasive. Akhavan Sales is the only poet of contemporary Persian literature who has self-annotated. It is necessary to read the Annotations of his poetry. Anyone who sees the annotations of Akhavan will get a lot of information on lexicography, literature history, and Iranians' literary interests, personality and history.

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