



*Paradox (or Oxymoron) in Hafez-e- Shiraz, 's Poetry / Ramin Moharrami*

## **Paradox (or Oxymoron) in Hafez-e-Shirazi's Poetry**

### **Hafız-ı Şirazi'nin Şiirlerinde Paradoks (veya Oksimoron)**

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Paradox is one of the spiritual exquisites, and it is one of the most important tricks in deviation. Paradox causes defamiliarization, foregrounding, and, at last, the text's literariness. In Hafez's poetry, Paradox begins at the word level (equivocal) and spreads to the thought level, manifesting in three levels: word-level equivocation, contradictory components, and contradictory thought. The meaning contradiction, in Hafez's poetry and thought, in addition to the literary areas, can be seen in theological, mystical, and religious areas as well. Hafez's poetry is a mirror that reflects the contradictions of the universe, of human thought, his intermediate place, and the contradictory behavior of the governors of his age, as well as their hypocrisy. Hafez has illustrated the non-addictive aspects through the art device of Paradox, creating disorderly orders that make his poetry eminent, prominent, dogmatic, and roaming.

**Keywords:** Contradiction, Poetry, Hafez, Mysticism.

#### **ÖZET**

Paradoks, manevi inceliklerden biri olup sapma (deviation) estetiğinin en önemli araçlarından biridir. Paradoks, yabancılaştırma (defamiliarization) ve ön plana çıkarma (foregrounding) etkisi yaratarak metnin edebiliğini güçlendirir. Hafez'in şiirinde paradoks, kelime düzeyinde (tevriye/çokanlamlılık) başlar ve düşünce düzeyine kadar yayılır. Bu yapı üç seviyede kendini gösterir: çelişik anlamlar taşıyan kelimeler; birbirine zıt unsurların bir arada kullanımı; ve çelişkili düşünce yapıları.

Hafız'ın şiir ve düşünce dünyasında anlam karşıtlığı yalnızca edebî alanda değil; aynı zamanda teolojik, tasavvufî ve dinî alanlarda da belirgin biçimde görülmektedir. Onun şiiri, evrenin çelişkilerini, insan düşüncesinin ikircikli yapısını, insanın ara konumunu ve yaşadığı çağın yöneticilerinin tutarsız ve riyakâr davranışlarını yansıtan bir ayna niteliğindedir.

Hafız, paradoks sanatını kullanarak bağımlılık yaratmayan, kalıplara sığmayan yönleri ortaya koymuş; düzensiz düzenler kurarak şiirini seçkin, dikkat çekici, öğretici ve sınır tanımaz bir nitelikle donatmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Çelişki, Şiir, Hafız, Tasavvuf

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Paradox is one of the spiritual exquisites, and it is one of the most important tricks in deviation. According to the formalist point of view, common and automatic language can be transformed into literary language in two ways: deviation and a synergistic rule (Safavi, 1380). Paradox, which is also a case of meaning deviation, ultimately causes defamiliarization, foregrounding, and the text's literariness. In the literary device of contradiction, the poet composes a contradictory component using two words

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*Paradox (or Oxymoron) in Hafez-e- Shiraz, 's Poetry / Ramin Moharami*

that have opposite meanings. Although the contradictory component is not correct rationally, it is possible in imagination world, and it causes the speech to become beautiful and imaginative." Paradox is a kind of speech that is contradictory and trashy seemingly. Still, there is a truth hidden in this contradictory that reconciles the two contradictory affairs" (Vahidiyan-Kumyar, 137).

The value of Paradox is that it causes the addresser to hesitate, because he encounters an affair that is opposite to habitual affairs; thus, it defamiliarizes the familiar ones. In the formalist school, this paradoxical expression and the article picture are called "defamiliarization" (Shammisa, 1383). a trick in which the poet makes a common topic, defamiliar and ambiguous. "The more a poet's success in alnagzyzn community (oxymoron), the more powerful system will be gained that, at the same time of defamiliarization in its meaning, it will imbue the poet's view more better" (Shafiee- Kadkani, 1376).

Whether Paradox shows distinct and opposite affairs, by assembling these opposite affairs, the poetic cohesion reveals; thus, the formalists believe that the good poem is one that the distinct affairs form its cohesion; and two art devices of " paradox and irony" are two of its important examples (Payandeh, 1385).

Contradiction is necessary for poetry because poetry ties the world of reality to the world of imagination, and things and affairs that are impossible in the world of reality can be illustrated in the world of imagination. A poet, by having the faculty of imagination, enjoys (uses) the contradictions of the universe and of the interior of the human to make possible the impossible affairs in the world of poetry. Dr. ShafieeKadkani believes that: "everyartman has contradiction in the center of his being and when it becomes lost, the artman will be finished" (Kukhi, 1370).

## DISCUSSION

In Hafez's Divan, some words, components, and thoughts are contradictory and cannot be retracted. But this Paradox has happened in poetry and his poetic imagination." Aesthetic value of Hafez's poetry is based on Paradox " (Shafiee-Kadkani, 1385).

Contradiction in Hafez's thought begins at the word level and spreads to the thought level. In his poetry, contradictions can be mostly seen in four areas:

- A. religious subjects
- B. theological subjects
- C. mystical subjects
- D. literary subjects

These contrary words, components, and thoughts seem disorderly, but when they have been interpreted according to religious, philosophical, mystical, theological, and literary points of view, the contradiction becomes lost. "All examples of paradox enjoy some mystical, philosophical, faith, and ideological interpretation" (Fesharaki, 1379).

In the context of mystical poetry, the manifestation of "unity at the same diversity and diversity in unity" is one of the most important bases, and contradiction plays an important role in imbuing mystical concepts. Different and numerous mystical conditions, such as contraction and expansion, fear and hope, absence and presence, and determinism and free will, lead the poet to propound contradictory thoughts that cannot be assembled.

In Hafez's poetry, contradiction is used extensively to the point that creating contradictory elements and expressing contradictory thoughts can be considered a distinctive literary style for Hafez." Hafez's all art is his method, and there is a kind of paradoxical expression in the center of his method"( Shafiee-Kadkani, 1386). These contradictions can be divided into four sections and studied at four levels:

### A. Words and phrases with contrary meanings



*Paradox (or Oxymoron) in Hafez-e- Shiraz, 's Poetry / Ramin Moharami*

Equivocation and satire are two topics in which Hafez uses the words in opposite senses. The territory he assembles in his art, to show the will to freedom in the human being, begins in the thought and emotion areas and compacts into his paradoxical pictures, then culminates in his satirical tone (Shafiee – Kadkani, 1385).

The animus and derisive tone of Hafez cause him to use a word with a provoking and demonstrative and acceptable meaning in its negative and minus one sense, and to enjoy sarcasm. In this non-addictive way and style, Hafez uses a non-explicit meaning that is opposite to the explicit meaning. "Hafez, by verbal irony, reacts to specific social, cultural, and religious circumstances of his own age, and in essential situations or for special reasons, he changes the meaning of some specific words to their opposite meaning" (Rastegar-Fassaee, 1385).

In the under beyt, he uses the adjective "pure-nature" for pious, "sinless" for beloved ones of the city, and "wise" for pious in its contrary meaning that it is "impure and villain".

O Zahid, pure of nature! Censure not the profligates

For, against thee, they will not record another's crime (Hafez,1389).

In Hafez's poetry, contradiction sometimes appears through equivocation: a word has two contradictory meanings, one of which relates to one of the words in the beyt, and the other to another word.

One of the two meanings is demonstrative, and the other is negative. For example: Through the fortune of Love for thee, Hafiz became a Sulaiman (in grandeur):

That is of union with thee, he hath naught in hand save wind (Hafez,1389).

"In hand save wind" is equivocal or has two meanings.

This phrase regarding Sir Solomon (AS) means "enormity and royal power", but regarding Hafez means "deprived of joiner (Vessaal) of beloved."

Or in under beyt, two meanings of to dash down the Path of piety are contradictory.

I, who nights, with the drum and the harp have dashed down (acted contrarywise to) the Path of piety,

I, suddenly, bring my head to the Path (of piety)! What a tale this is! (Hafez, 1389).

The aesthetic base of this beyt is in the to dash down the Path of piety, whether in the meaning of to forage in the night of piety or to play the drum and the harp in the taqva device and position. In both cases, the poets' paradoxical tone is fully illustrated (Shafiee-Kadkani, 1376).

## **B. Contradictory components**

A part of the contradictions in Hafez's poetry lies in the oratorical domain and is connected to the aesthetic subject. Hafez, by a paradoxical trick, fastens his own poem to his addressee's mind and accentuates addictive, repetitive thought by using contradictory components. For example, speaking on poverty, which had a perennial mystical history, had become repetitious concept for the people of Hafez's age. In this age, the mystical troubles were relatively abating. In Hafez, the paradoxical "wealth of poverty" reveals the addresser's indecision and hesitation, as he asks himself, "Is there wealth in poverty?" Of course, this contradiction is in the appearance of speech, and in fact, it is empty of contradiction, because poverty in mysticism means needlessness in people and neediness toward God; thus, one who has such poverty has the wealth that makes him needless to people.

O God! Keep for me the lot of poverty



*Paradox (or Oxymoron) in Hafez-e- Shiraz, 's Poetry / Ramin Moharami*

For this blessing, the cause of pomp and of power of mine is (Hafez,1389).

Or in the beyt:

That moment when Hafez wrote this verse,

Into the snare of longing desire, the bird of his thought had fallen (Hafez, 1389).

Disorder order (agitated verse) is a contradictory component, and it is rationally incorrect, because what is disorder has no order. Still, this component expresses the main feature of Hafez's poetry: a disorderly exterior but an ordered, coherent inner. According to formalists, what causes to create order and cohesion in his poetry is the same opposite and contradictory cases, so although his verse, at first and outward sight, seems disorder and agitated, the addressers, by hesitating and pondering, discover its inner order.

### **C. Contradiction in beyt- level**

Sometimes at the beyt level, a claim is propounded that is contradictory to the convention, acceptable theological subjects, and people's beliefs. For example:

Contrary to usage, seek desire. As,

From that disheveled tress (of Thine), the acquisition of tranquility (which is contrary to usage) I made (Hafez,1389).

Hafez claims and impossible event. For example, he gains tranquility from disheveled tresses, while disorderly things don't cause order or tranquility.

Or in this beyt:

O dainty one, sorcery-player! What doll art thou thyself?

Neither in front of the eye art thou, nor hidden from vision art thou (Hafez,1389).

In mysticism, the beloved is present everywhere, yet He isn't in any specific place; He is before the eye while hidden from vision. Thus, the beloved is called "there is facing".

Some of the contradictions at the beyt level are derived from Hafez's animus and derisive tone. For example, repenting means regretting sin and deciding to leave it; in Hafez's poetry, however, repenting is itself another sin. If he repents, in fact, he repents not repenting the offence, or it is an excuse worse than wrongdoing. For example, in under beyt, he repents of wine-drinking, but his repentance differs from the repentance acceptable to religion and custom. In fact, he repents not drinking wine when his beautiful beloved is not beside him.

By the hand of an idol, wine-selling, repentance has made,

That again, wine I drink not without the face of a banquet- adorer (Hafez,1389).

Repentance by the hand of an idol, wine-selling, and not drinking without the face of a banquet-adorer, is contradictory conventionally and religiously. Still, this contradiction disappears through a mystical interpretation.

From a mystical point of view, as the lover can obtain the beloved's joy (Vessel) of unlike beauty, he will gain the mirth and pleasure; but until the lover does not gain Vessel, every pleasure and happiness is the same sorrow and sadness to him. Thus, the lover's happiness derives from the beloved's sadness, and he, unlike the others, doesn't express impatience or groan but accepts it with pleasure.



*Paradox (or Oxymoron) in Hafez-e- Shiraz, 's Poetry / Ramin Moharami*

Since, save in the joyous heart, one cannot gain grief for thee,

In hope of grief for thee, a joyous heart, we seek (Hafez, 1389)

#### **D. Contradiction in thought-level**

Throughout Hafez's Divan, we encounter habits unlike those of others. His thought is contradictory to the customs, politics, and mysticism of the age, such that the manifestations of religion and mysticism, and holy and sacred symbols acceptable to the public, such as vaez and mohtasab, are scorned in Hafez's Divan. This deny and scorn is because Hafez knows them as the hypocrite, a great liar, proud, arrogant, unaware of the truth and the meaning, and not interested in the Love and purity of people. (Mortazavi, 1370) On the contrary, the discards and negative affairs such as peer-e-moqhan, rend, suqhi, moqh-bacheh, etc., are symbols of rightness and sanctity. These phrases are usually more elevated, excellent thoughts, and deeper concepts than common and lexical ones; for example, in Hafez's lexicon, peer-e-moqhan does not mean "boss of Zoroastrian priest," but rather a character who possesses all human accomplishments and strategic benefits (Mortazavi, 1370).

Hafez illustrates the contradiction in human life, behavior, and thought: knowing it will change human worldview, behavior, and lifestyle, and save him from the circle of habit. "The contradiction in thought-level has two forms: the first is one that humans judge in two ways, a phenomenon whose essence is not contradictory; for example, he says: "this moment is both night and day." This not only lacks artistic value but is also an absurd act. The second is that the human can discover the contradiction in the essence of a phenomenon that is seemingly contradictory but, in reality, is not. Such as human nature (Zarghani, 1384).

Contradictions in the thought level in Hafez's Divan can be mostly seen in these subjects:

##### **a. Determinism and Free Will**

Hafez repeatedly points to the belief in determinism in the Divan. This belief is proportional to the number of people of Hafez's age who were verbally Ashari. In Hafez's Divan, the beyts that point to determinism are numerous.

In the street of good name, they gave us no admission

If thou approve not. Change our fate (Hafez, 1389).

Give contentment to that God-given; unloose the frown from their forehead:

For the door of choice is not open to me and to them (Hafez, 1389).

Hafez doesn't support determinism, but he excuses his trickery and non-addictive affairs by appealing to the determinism of his age. "Determinism and fate, help Hafez to know the pious's and faghih's objection to his deeds, the fruit of over-man will and to continue the semblance to debauchery fearlessly" (Rastegar-Fassaee, 1385).

But in another ghazal, he addresses the topic of free will and accepts the belief in free will for humans, and he doesn't accept humans as condemned, convicted beings.

The sphere, I will dash together (and destroy), unless to my desire it come

Not that one is I, to endure contempt from the sky's sphere (Hafez, 1389).

Hafez knows that the human's attempt to determine his own fate is effective. When he attends to the human's intermediate state, he will see that the human's attempt plays an important role in determining his fate.



*Paradox (or Oxymoron) in Hafez-e- Shiraz, 's Poetry / Ramin Moharami*

Come so that the rose, we may scatter, and into the cup, the wine cast.

The roof of the sky we rend and a new way, cast (Hafez, 1389).

If it seems that Hafez believes in determinism, it is also because of mystical subjects such as doom, submission, and pleasure that appear in the guise of determinism. In contrast, these concepts and mystical determinism are more evident than theological determinism and free will. According to Molavi:

And there he was defeated, thanks to our Enduro/ black is not autonomous in distress, Vlast

He is the utmost discretion/ that is provided here (Molavi, 1375).

Hafez doesn't reject the attempt to acquire perfection, so in his Divan, he invites to acquire knowledge and Love, and points to the belief in free will, which is not less than that of determinism. "In Hafez's poetry, thebeys which point to determinism are equivalent to ones to free will" (Khorramshahi, 1375).

Not less than an atom, art thou; low, be not; Love, practice, so that to the sun's chamber of privacy; whirlingthoumayst reach (Hafez,1389).

Khwajah! Strive; potriouless of Love be not; for none buyeth the enslaved person with the defect of being void of skill (Hafez,1389).

Although not by effort, union with him, they give,

O heart! That much that thou canst, strive (Hafez,1389).

Hafez's thought is in vacillation between determinism and

having free will, so in this case, his speech seems contradictory."Hafez, such as Molavi and Sadi, undulates between determinism and free will; because they deadlock because of assembling determination of human responsibility and denying his will and power" (Zarrin-koob,1374). This contradiction is in human existence and in his life: he is free at the same time as being obliged, and vice versa. "Nothing in human life is more valuable than freedom, and this freedom is revealed when you think in two sides of contradictories. If you are interested in determinism or in freedom and free will only, your freedom has disappeared"(Shafiee-Kadkani,1385).

In the topic of "Seeing God", also, there is contradictory thoughts in Hafez's Divan. Likely, Hafez in relative to religion(theological) bases (religion verbal) is Ashari."Hafez has a developed theological mind. He belongs to the formal theological school, ie, Asharites" (Khorram\_Shahi,1387). According to Asharite's point of view, the faithful people will see God on the Day of Judgment with their eyes of the head. In Hafez's Divan, the problem of both the possibility and the impossibility of seeing God is evident. This beyt points to the possibility of seeing God:

This borrowed life that Hafez, the friend, entrusted

His face, one day, I shall see and (to Him) its surrender will make (Hafez,1389).

But he denies the possibility of seeing God with the eyes of the head and approaches the Mutazilite and Shia's point of view:

For beholding the ruby(lip), the SoulSeeing eye is necessary:

Where this rank for the worldseeing eye, of mine is (Hafez,1389).



*Paradox (or Oxymoron) in Hafez-e- Shiraz, 's Poetry / Ramin Moharami*

In underbeyt, Hafez's double-barreled and equivocal speech, don't let understand whether he believes in seeing in the Judgment Day or not; Because in this beyt "thy stature" (your face) means face and according to the words of "Tumult", "Stature", and "lovers", it springs the meaning of "Seeing" to the mind as well.

O beloved! What is the Tumult that to lovers thou displayedest Thy race like the gleaming moon, thy stature like the heart-ravishing cypress? (Hafez, 1389).

**b. The political condition of the age**

Sometimes, the age condition and tyranny and choke cause Hafez to express different and contradictory speech; such that he recommends secrecy, because he knows that revealing the mystical secrets cause to repeat the event of hanging Mansur- Hallaj:

He said: "That friend, by whom lofty became the head of the gibbet,

His crime was this that clear the mysteries of the sky, he made" (Hafez, 1389).

Hafez often recommends secrecy to protect mystics from the suffering and blight of the unawareness of Love and mysticism in the world.

For God's Sake. O pious ones! Forth from the hand, goeth my heart. For God's sake:

O the pain that the hidden mystery should be discovered (Hafez: 1389).

But when the political and social space becomes suitable and free from tyranny, Hafez expresses the love secrets and leaves the secrecy.

Openly, I speak; and of my own utterance, hear happy and I:

Lover's slave, I am; and of both worlds, free am I (Hafez, 1389).

**c. Intermediate (Barzakhi) place of humans**

In Hafez's poetry, the human is neither angel nor animal but an association of the two. In his poetry, not the situation of a perfect human being, but his intermediate place is illustrated. The intermediate human's nature and navigation are contradictory because angels and animals are not in harmony with each other, and their features differ significantly. So, the contradictory behavior, thought, and act will be apparent from such existence, and ignoring either of the two aspects keeps the two-dimensional state unknown.

As Hafez's poetry has illustrated, the human condition is an intermediate state, with contradictory pictures and subject on human. In fact, his poetry is a mirror that reflects human existence. The human whose state and place are sometimes more elevated and higher than the angels, and sometimes he is a sinner alive whose sin causes him to fall into the material world. "His humanity is because of this that he is placed in the alternating challenge field that leads to encounter him contradiction of responsibility and sin. The angels and animals don't sin because they have no responsibility" (Ashuri, 1379).

A part of the contradictions in Hafez's poetry stems from the contradiction between the human interior and life. His poetry shows two contradictory aspects of humanity, enabling it to express the truth of the human being. "Contradiction in his (Hafez) poetry derived from the contradiction of human's cosmos and its obligation: In the state of an existence between angel and animal, and Hafez's sensitivity and obsession to this great state which is both the motivation of pain and abjectness and the cause of glory and honor" (Purnamdariya, 1382).

A human who is association of angel and an animal is a set of contradictions. His animal-aspect tends to sensuality and Satan, and his angel-aspect tends to wisdom and angel, so his nature and navigation



*Paradox (or Oxymoron) in Hafez-e- Shiraz, 's Poetry / Ramin Moharami*

mingle with contradiction, and his speech, behavior, and acts from such an existence are not strange or unaccustomed. In the anthropology of the ancients, humans have been described as having a two-dimensional existence: angel and devil, body and soul. The poet who discovers these contradictions and he has some thought breath in its center, is an expressive of a contradiction that is like cosmos and that of human being" (Zarghani,1384).

It is the climax of Hafez's art to show the two-dimensional nature and thought of humans. "The tying contradictory aspects of human's being and maintaining them with each other, is his greatest succeeded" (Shafiee\_Kadkani,1385).

#### **d.Struggle with hypocrisy**

Some of the other contradictions Hafez's Divan delivered from the hypocritical behavior of the age's governors. In this case, his aim of expressing Paradox is to show contradictory speech and actions in the governors of the age: his appearance and his interior are not the same. In contrast, his behavior and appearance are nice, his thoughts and interior are devilish. Hafez also to show the truth of such people's nature, uses the paradoxical statement that is a communicative picture of the contrary two dimensions of their being."His character and mental and psychological structure is sensitive to hypocrisy, more than each another bad feature. Perhaps his contradictory but natural and real picture of his "ego" - that in fact is our "ego" - is derived from his sensitivity to hypocrisy which is the conclusion of hiding our negative aspect of our own being" (Purnamdariyan,1382).

In a religious assembly, Hafiz, I am; in a convivial assembly, dreg-drinker, I am:

This boldness (and expertness) beholds how, with (different) people, (different) professions, I make (Hafez,1389).

In the age when thieves and wine-drinker is Muhtasib and sheikhs and pious people are hypocrites. So, the best way to show this contradiction between their appearance and interior is to use contradictory pictures and thoughts.

Drink wine. For the Shaikh, and Hafiz, and the Mufti, and the Muhtasib,

All- when thou looked well fraud (openly abstaining from wine, secretly drinking wine) make (Hafez,1389).

#### **CONCLUSION**

Contradiction is one of the most common forms of meaning deviation in Hafez's poetry, which defamiliarizes and foregrounds his speech. Contradiction in Hafez's poetry doesn't limit itself to the level of components; it appears at the word level, the beyt, and the thought as well. The political conditions of the age, the intermediate place of humanity, and theological subjects such as determinism, free will, and God are topics that Hafez uses to explain and expand through contradictory images and ideas. From a formalist point of view, poetic cohesion can be achieved through the opposite affairs that irony and Paradox are eminent cases of. Hafez's poetry, from this point of view, has a very high place, and whereas it seems to have an explicit difference, it enjoys implicit cohesion at the same time, so it is suitable to call it "disorderly order".

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