

A Political and Structuralist Reading of Qasida, Nimaic, and Blank Verse Forms

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Article Inf (215-234)

ABSTRACT

Article type:
Research
Article

**Article
history:**

Received:
۲۴ December
۲۰۲۲

Accepted:
۲۳ April ۲۰۲۳

Keywords:
Ideology
Nimaie ode
White

Constructivist sociology is one of the basic approaches in contemporary literary criticism. Structuralists such as Lukács, Goldman, Mascheri, Althusser, and Eagleton believe that as the structure of literature is affected by the social structure, it also affects the social structure in the same proportion or more or less. According to them, every literary theory had a political character and was controlled by ideology. Structuralism examined the reflection of ideology and structures in the literary work and then showed the literary work's influence on social development. In this article, the ode, Nimaie, and Sepid poetic forms structure were examined based on the opinions of structuralism sociologists. This article's purpose, compiled with the descriptive-analytical method and using library sources, was to explain how the structure of the ode, Nimaie, and Sepid formats was related to the structure of the society and the ideology that governs it. Finally, it was concluded that these forms' structures were influenced by the structure of the society and its ruling ideology. Considering the position of the rhyme, it can be said that the ode structure was compatible with the structure of the autocratic society. The structure of Nimaie and Sepid formats is also compatible with liberalism.

Citation: Fallah Sara (2023) A Political and Structuralist Reading of Qasida, Nimaic, and Blank Verse Forms. Modern Literary Researches, 2(1) 215-234

Publisher: Association for the Promotion of Persian Language and Literature

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DOI: [20.1001.1.28211413.1402.2.1.11.5](https://doi.org/10.28211/413.1402.2.1.11.5)

Introduction

Structural sociology serves as a fundamental approach in contemporary literary criticism, positing that just as the structure of literature is influenced by the structure of society, it also, to varying degrees, impacts societal structures. Theoretical frameworks provided by structuralists such as Lukács, Goldmann, Macherey, Althusser, and Eagleton argue that every literary theory possesses a political dimension and exists under the hegemony of ideology. This research explores the reflection of ideology and social structures within literary works, specifically focusing on the formal structures of three major Persian poetic forms: the *Qasida*, *Nimaic* verse, and *Blank Verse (Sepid)*. The study aims to elucidate the relationship between these poetic structures and the prevailing socio-political ideologies of their respective eras.

Method

This study employs a descriptive-analytical methodology based on a qualitative review of scholarly literature and structuralist theories. The research focuses exclusively on the “form” and “structure” of the poems—specifically the roles and positions of meter (*vazn*) and rhyme (*ghafiyeh*)—rather than their thematic content. By applying the tenets of structuralist sociology, the author analyzes how the constraints of poetic form mirror the power dynamics and ideological structures of the societies in which they emerged.

Results

This study employs a descriptive-analytical methodology based on a qualitative review of scholarly literature and structuralist theories. The research focuses exclusively on the “form” and “structure” of the poems—specifically the roles and positions of meter (*vazn*) and rhyme (*ghafiyeh*)—rather than their thematic content. By applying the tenets of structuralist sociology, the author analyzes how the constraints of poetic form mirror the power dynamics and ideological structures of the societies in which they emerged.

Results

The analysis reveals a direct correlation between the structural rigidity of poetic forms and the political landscapes of their historical contexts:

- **The Qasida and Autocracy:** The *Qasida* is characterized by a strict, monolithic structure where the poet must adhere to a single meter and a predetermined rhyme scheme throughout the poem. This structural “tyranny” of rhyme and meter mirrors the structure of an autocratic, individual-centric society. In such a system, power is centralized in a single figure (the Shah), much like how the rhyme (the “sovereign”) dictates the behavior of every verse (the “subjects”). The *Qasida* serves as a formal reproduction of the absolute obedience required in a monarchical state.
- **Nimaic Verse and Constitutionalism:** The transition from the Qajar era to the Constitutional Revolution marked a shift in social power, where the absolute authority of the monarch became limited and conditional. This societal shift is reflected in the emergence of Nimaic verse. Nima Yushij did not reject the existence of meter and rhyme entirely; rather, he revolted against their “absolute sovereignty.” In Nimaic verse, meter and rhyme are no longer dictatorial; they are utilized flexibly, mirroring a constitutional society where power is distributed and subject to rules rather than the whim of a single entity.
- **Blank Verse and Anarchism:** The research identifies a more radical shift in the “Blank Verse” (*Sepid*) championed by poets like Ahmad Shamlou. While Nimaic verse seeks to reform the “monarchy” of rhyme, Blank verse rejects the very concept of poetic “authority” (meter and rhyme) altogether. This structural move aligns with anarchist ideology—the negation of all forms of centralized power and hierarchy. By stripping the poem of traditional constraints, the poet expresses a profound political yearning for absolute freedom and the dissolution of all coercive structures.

Conclusion

The relationship between literature and society is reciprocal. This study concludes that the formal evolution of Persian poetry is not merely an aesthetic progression but a structural manifestation of political shifts. The *Qasida* reproduces the structure of an autocratic society; Nimaic verse reflects the nuances of a constitutional/liberalist transition; and Blank verse embodies an anarchist rebellion against all forms of structural hegemony. Ultimately, the way a poet interacts with meter and rhyme serves as a profound linguistic expression of their relationship with social and political power.