

Hermeneutics: From Theory to Literary Criticism?

Dr. Farzad Baloo^{1*}

Received: 12/04/2019

Accepted: 31/05/2020

Abstract

There is no doubt that different hermeneutical approaches have become accepted as a general theory, But can hermeneutics be a step beyond the theory and enter the critique? In author-centered hermeneutics, Schleiermacher is theoretically believed, as it is realized, hermeneutics is preceded by critique, and criticism comes after hermeneutics. Schleiermacher's commitment to grammatical interpretation and psychological interpretation, establishes between the author-centered hermeneutics and the critique. Hirsch, by distinguishing between two types of criticisms, believes there is a link between the authoritative hermeneutics and the inner critique. In addition, Hirsch's quadruple criteria for proving the probability of an interpretation result in the valuation of valid interpretations of the invalid. But from the point of view of the critics, philosophical hermeneutics is in come and go between theory and critique. The author believes the two criteria Gadamer specifies for correct interpretation that is "fore-conception of completeness and distance, Philosophical hermeneutics is pulled to the point of critique. In the meantime, literary hermeneutics, with emphasis on the method of reading the text, enter the realm of criticism.

Keywords: Author-centered Hermeneutics, Philosophical Hermeneutics, Literary Hermeneutics, Literary Criticism

Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

One of the important issues literary theorists and critics have mostly failed to address is whether different hermeneutic approaches can

1. Associate Professor of Persian Language and Literature, University of Mazandaran

*E-mail: f.baloo@umz.ac.ir

merely be adopted as theories or they can be drawn upon in literary criticism. The present study has been conducted with the aim of addressing this question.

2. Theoretical Framework

Hermeneutics has been divided into different kinds based on the type of factors, such as historical periods, domains and approaches, which have been considered in such groupings. In the present study, based on the approaches adopted, attempt has been made to analyze the relationship between hermeneutics and literary criticism.

3. Methodology

In the present study the descriptive-analytical approach has been used to examine the relationship between hermeneutics and literary criticism.

4. Findings

Sehleiermacher believes that hermeneutics precedes criticism. His commitment to grammatical and psychological interpretation establishes a relationship between the author-centered hermeneutics and criticism. Hirsch believes that the author-centered hermeneutics and criticism are strongly connected. Hirsch offers four criteria for assessing an interpretation. Here we have drawn upon Gadamer's two conditions for interpretation, i.e. temporal distance and fore-conception of completeness, to provide a critique of philosophical hermeneutics.

5. Conclusion

It can be concluded that author-centered hermeneutics, philosophical hermeneutics and also literary hermeneutics are closely related to literary criticism. As pointed out by Sehleiermacher and Hirsch and other scholars of literary hermeneutics, author-centered hermeneutics and literary hermeneutics, which offer methods for interpretation or validation of interpretation, are explicitly connected with literary criticism. But since in philosophical hermeneutics the focus of attention is on explaining and describing understanding, it has apparently nothing to do with criticism. However, as we have already discussed, although

philosophical hermeneutics does not offer a method for reading texts, Gadamer skillfully explains and describes the process of understanding step by step. The substructure of understanding indicates that the process of understanding is affected by rules, regulations and dos and don'ts. Also, the fore-conception of the completeness of the text and the temporal distance are important factors for judging whether an interpretation is valid or not.

Select Bibliography

- Gadamer, H. G. 1976. *Philosophical Hermeneutics*. D. E. Linge (trans.). California: Berkeley University Press.
- Gadamer, H. G. 2004. *Truth and Method*. J. Weinsheimer, G. Donald and G. Marshall (trans.). New York.
- Gadamer, H. G. 1388 [2009]. *Adabyat va Falsafeh dar Goftegu*. Z. Zavarian (trans.). Tehran: Naqsh va Negar.
- Grondin, J. 1391 [2012]. *Hermenotik*. M. Abolqasemi (trans.). Tehran: Mahi.
- Grondin, J. 1395 [2016]. *Daramdi beh Elm-e Hermenotik-e Falsafi*. M. S. Hanayi Kashani (trans.). Tehran: MinuyeKherad.
- Lamarque, P. 1382 [2013]. *Falsafeh-ye Adabyat*. M. Mohammad Amini. Tehran: Nashr-e No.
- Mueller-Vollmer, K. 2006. *The Hermeneutics Reader: Texts of the German Tradition from the Enlightenment to the Present*. New York: Continuum.
- Palmer, R. A. 1384 [2015]. *Elm-e Hermenotik*. M. S. Hanayi Kashani (trans.). Tehran: Hermes.
- Ricœur, P. 1386 [2007]. *Zendegi dar Donya-yeMatn*. B. Ahmadi (trans.). Tehran: Markaz.
- Sehleiermacher, F. 1998. *Hermeneutics and Criticism and Other Writings*. A. Bowie (trans.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wellek, R. 1373 [1994]. *Tarikh-e Naqd-e Jadid*. S. Arbab Shirani (trans.). Tehran: Nilufar.