

A Look at the Absence of the Myth of Arash in Ferdowsi's Shahnameh from the Perspective of Paradigm Analysis

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Abstract

Although Ferdowsi's Shahnameh contains many narrations of Iranian myths, there are myths, that Ferdowsi did not address for some reason. One of the most controversial myths that are not present in the Shahnameh is the myth of Arash Kamangir. Some scholars believe that Ferdowsi did not intentionally refer to this myth, and others believe that this myth was not in Ferdowsi's sources. However, this research tries to look at this issue from the perspective of "paradigm analysis" And show that in the Shahnameh paradigm, the natural and obvious act is choosing life over death and the act of consciously and intentionally choosing death has never occurred by the heroes. In other words, the choice of deliberate death or martyrdom is an issue that is outside the Shahnameh paradigm. And Arash's myth could not have a place in Ferdowsi's Shahnameh because it is a story in praise of martyrdom. This is the result of comparing the paradigms that govern the Shahnameh and the myth of Arash, while the deliberate choice of death is absent in the paradigm of the Shahnameh, it is emphasized and praised in the paradigm of the myth of Arash. Hence, the paradigmatic contradiction between the two texts has prevented the presence of such a myth in the Shahnameh.

Keywords: *The Shahnameh and the story of Arash, the paradigm of death and life in the Shahnameh, the paradigmatic analysis of Ferdowsi's Shahnameh..*

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Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

Ferdowsi's Shahnameh has been considered as the national epic of Iranians and contains Iranian myths, but nevertheless, there are important myths that have not been included in the Shahnameh for some reasons. One of the important and challenging questions about Ferdowsi's Shahnameh is that this text does not address some important Iranian stories and myths. And in the meantime, the absence of the myth of Arash Kamangir, who was one of the most brilliant Iranian myths both in terms of dramatic power and in terms of content, has been the most questionable.

Research Question

Why did Ferdowsi not include this story in his Shahnameh, despite the fact that Arash's story was most likely in Ferdowsi's sources?

2. Literature Review

There are generally two views about why Ferdowsi did not include the story of Arash Kamangir in the Shahnameh: a group of researchers such as Jalal Khaleghi Motlaq (Khaleghi Motlaq, 2011: 348), Abolfazl Khatibi (Khatibi, 2016: 159), Kurt Heinrich Hansen (Hansen, 2014: 87) and Saaghi Gazorani (Gazorani, 2014: 61) believe that this story was not available in Ferdowsi's sources. And the second group includes researchers such as Mojtaba Minavi (Minavi, 1372: 79), Mehrdad Bahar (Bahar, 1376: 89) and Sajjad Aydinlou (Aydinlou, 1376: 118) believe that this story was present in Ferdowsi's sources, but Ferdowsi deliberately removed it and did not include it in his Shahnameh.

According to the reference to the story of Arash in the introduction of Abu Mansoori's Shahnameh and also the presence of this story in Ghorar al-Seyar Saalabi, whose source is also Abu Mansoori's Shahnameh, it seems that the story of Arash was in Abu Mansoori's Shahnameh, but Ferdowsi for reasons that are probably intentional does not mention this story in his Shahnameh; This research has tried to explain the reasons for the probably deliberate removal of Arash's story from the Shahnameh based on paradigmatic analysis.

3. Methodology

The research method of this article is descriptive-analytical, and the data were collected in a library method by using the theoretical

framework of paradigm analysis. This research has tried to examine the paradigm components of Shahnameh on the one hand and the story of Arash on the other hand, and then by comparing the paradigm components of these two texts regarding life and death, show their contradictions and explain why such a story could not be present in such a text.

4. Results

Each text emerges in the intellectual sphere of a specific paradigm. One of the components of the ruling paradigm in the Shahnameh is the priority of life over death. In this paradigm, death is never the choice of heroes. In the Shahnameh, what is assumed and taken for granted in the actions of each character is the effort to survive and avoid death, and the dominant thought is the thought of "how to survive" and what is absent is "choosing self-willed death"; In this text, death is considered a phenomenon that, although there is no escape from it, it should not be preferred over life, but one should wait until its time comes, and one should only "inevitably" surrender to it, that is, when there is no way to live. Deliberately choosing death and, in a sense, the thought of martyrdom, is a theme that is paradigmatically outside the intellectual world of the Shahnameh. But the story of Arash Kamangir is a completely different myth. In this myth, we are faced with a hero who deliberately goes to death and voluntarily prefers death over life. Because he despises life in such conditions, and in his estimation, the life of Iranians is more important than his own life, and therefore, even though he has the possibility of surviving, he submits himself to death. From this point of view, Arash's myth is a story in a completely opposite paradigm to that of Shahnameh; It is a story about "how to die" and its soul is a glorification of self-willed death. Arash's choice is a deliberate choice and preference for death, and therefore it cannot have a place in the Shahnameh. In other words, if Arash's story was in the Shahnameh, it would be surprising because the presence of such a story, in addition to challenging one of the important components of the Shahnameh's paradigm, which is the absolute value of life, seriously undermined the intellectual coherence of the text. Therefore, the absence of Arash's story from the Shahnameh can be assumed to be a completely intelligent absence, the purpose of which was to stabilize the dominance of the paradigm and maintain the coherence and intellectual consistency of the text.

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