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FERDOWSI AND SCHEME OF IDEAL POLICY IN SHAHNAMEH FROM ANCIENT HISTORY TO THE ERA COINCIDED TO HIS LIFE

Shahnameh is one of the world's best works, which on the one hand as a comprehensive view, it covers the history of Iran from ancient times till poet era and on the other hand, by reporting the actions of the ancient kings, it reveals the heart of the previous predecessors and with a symbolic language within myths and legends, to offer its sublime message to improve human life. Ferdowsi presents the scheme of ideal policy in Shahnameh, which its main goal is to achieve the best kind of political system for the public welfare in the society and the world. It is based on popular support, political legitimacy and religious knowledge, which reflects both the relationship between the government and the people and addresses the factors for the separation between them in a rational way. Ferdowsi considers justice as the most fundamental categories of the political system in Shahnameh and he measures the performance of just or oppressive kings with it. He considers rebellious power and its density as a cause of destruction and corruption of the society. He praises the just behavior based on his Islamic beliefs and past divine (Ahurai) norms. Ferdowsi's goal of an ideal policy is the proper management of society based on the methods of democracy, justice, meritocracy and law, which shows the political wisdom of Iranians in the past and also reflects the association between religion and politics in the administration of the country.

Key words: Shahnameh, Ferdowsi, Ideal Politics, Epic, Myth.

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Фирдоуси және Шахнамадағы ежелгі тарихтан оның өмірімен сәйкес келетін дәуірге дейінгі мінсіз саясат схемасы

Шахнаме – әлемдегі үздік туындылардың бірі, ол бір жағынан, жан-жақты көрініс ретінде Иранның ежелгі дәуірден бастап ақындар дәуіріне дейінгі тарихын қамтиды, ал екінші жағынан, ежелгі патшалардың әрекеттері туралы баяндайды. Ол алдыңғы негізін қалаушылардың жүректерін ашып, мифтер мен аңыздардың символдық тілдің көмегімен адам өмірін жақсарту үшін өзінің керемет хабарын ұсынады. Фердоуси Шахнамадағы мінсіз саясаттың схемасын ұсынады, оның басты мақсаты қоғамдағы және әлемдегі әлеуметтік әлауқат үшін саяси жүйенің ең ұтымды түріне қол жеткізу болып табылады. Ол халық қолдауына, саяси заңдылыққа және Үкімет пен халық арасындағы қарым-қатынасты көрсететін діни білімге негізделген және олардың арасындағы бөліну факторларын ұтымды жағынан қарастырады. Фирдоуси әділеттілікті Шахнамадағы саяси жүйенің ең іргелі категориясы деп санайды және оның көмегімен әділ немесе озбыр жауыз патшалардың әрекеттерін өлшейді. Ол бүлікшіл билік пен оның тығыздығын қоғамның күйреуі мен ыдырауының себебі ретінде қарастырады. Ол өзінің Исламдық сенімдері мен өткен құдайлық (Ахурай) нормаларына негізделген әділ тәртіпті мадақтайды. Фердоусидің мінсіз саясатының мақсаты – демократияға, әділеттілікке, меритократияға және заңдарға негізделген қоғамды дұрыс басқару, бұл Ирандықтардың бұрынғы саяси даналығын көрсетеді, сонымен қатар ел басқарудағы дін мен саясат арасындағы байланысты көрсетеді.

Түйін сөздер: Шахнаме, Фирдоуси, мінсіз саясат, эпос, миф.

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Фирдоуси и его схема из идеальной политики в Шахнаме от древней истории до эпохи, совпадающей с его жизнью

Шахнаме – одно из лучших произведений в мире, которое, с одной стороны, как всеобъемлющее представление охватывает историю Ирана с древних времен до эпохи поэтов, а с другой стороны, рассказывает о действиях древних королей. Оно раскрывает сердца предыдущих предшественников и с помощью символического языка мифов и легенд, предлагает свое возвышенное послание для улучшения человеческой жизни. Фердоуси представляет схему идеальной политики в Шахнаме, главной целью которой является достижение наилучшего вида политической системы для общественного благосостояния в обществе и мире. Она основана на народной поддержке, политической легитимности и религиозном знании, которое отражает как отношения между правительством и народом, так и рационально рассматривает факторы разделения между ними. Фердоуси считает справедливость наиболее фундаментальной категорией политической системы в Шахнаме, и с ее помощью он измеряет действия справедливых или деспотичных королей. Он рассматривает мятежную власть и ее плотность как причину разрушения и разложения общества. Он восхваляет справедливое поведение, основанное на его Исламских верованиях и прошлых божественных (Ахурайских) нормах. Целью идеальной политики Фердоуси является правильное управление обществом, основанное на методах демократии, справедливости, меритократии и законов, что показывает политическую мудрость Иранцев в прошлом, а также отражает связь между религией и политикой в управлении страной.

Ключевые слова: Шахнаме, Фердоуси, идеальная политика, эпос, миф.

Introduction

At the beginning, this question arises that in presenting the ancient narrations that are accompanied by legends, myths and epics, has *Ferdowsi* raised an issue under the title of ideal politics in *Shahnameh* or not? The answer to this question can be both negative and positive. Negative, because in all stories that he has presented the actions of fifty kings, he has not mentioned any specific theory on the issues such as the election of the king, justice, meritocracy, popular satisfaction with the government and political legitimacy, nor has he spoken directly about the freedom and role of a tyrannical king in the separation of government and people. Positive, because beside narrating the stories, *Ferdowsi* presents issues that on the one hand reflect the structure of pre-Islamic Iranian and non-Iranian governments, and on the other hand, in the midst of stories and developments of the political system that has been formed in the age of ancient societies, like an informed judge with certain criteria, he judges the performance of kings based on the best and the worst. He somehow explains how elections are formed, on what basis the eminent king should be elected and by what principles and intermediaries the king should gain his political legitimacy. Based on our findings, *Ferdowsi's* ideal policy in *Shahnameh* is neither a “*Platonic Utopia*” nor a “*Machiavellian*”

policy to make the basis of politics dependent on the maintenance and survival of power or to create more power; Rather, *Ferdowsi's* ideal policy in *Shahnameh* is determined only by the axis of justice, which is based on the proper management of the society with the rule of law and equal treatment of the law to all.

Ferdowsi with his idea in the stories of *Shahnameh* is influenced by Islamic thought and he depicts the thought of the ancient Iranians for the reader. Therefore, regarding all these issues, he lays out the general plan in *Shahnameh* as the superior political system for future generations based on justice, merit, satisfaction and people's choice.

In addition to these issues, in this research, an attempt will be made to provide the necessary answers to the questions raised above, and also it will be analyzed that how *Ferdowsi's* political thought and repressed aspirations of the Iranian people, are reflected in the model of government and politics in the form of myths and legends.

Materials and methods

Statement problem

In *Shahnameh*, *Ferdowsi* has explained the function of the kings of Iran in various ways. On the one hand, he has tried to show the function of the kings through the art aspect, and on the other

hand, with important political assessments and criteria, including law, justice, merit, popular support, commitment, religious knowledge, 'Farr-e Shahi' and 'Farr-e Izadi' (divinity of the kings), he has revealed the political legitimacy of the kings, and also through people's satisfaction and disgust criteria, he has assayed under what conditions the king survives with the support of the people, and under what circumstances people can pave the way for the king's removal and dismissal. In general, the power of dismissal and appointment is one of the most important processes of an ideal politics in *Shahnameh* which *Ferdowsi* has designed and has founded from the heart of Iranian myths and legends with his wise knowledge and wisdom.

literature review

There are some articles and books that have been written about the political aspects of *Shahnameh*, which analyze and explain the politics in *Shahnameh* from different views; For example, articles such as: "*Political Wisdom in Ferdowsi's Shahnameh, Principles and Structures*" by Hamid Ahmadi and Mehdi Hassani Bagheri Sharifabad; "*The Link between Myth and Politics in Shahnameh: An Attempt to Reproduce the National Identity of Iranians*" by Morteza Manshadi and "*The Legitimacy of Government from Ferdowsi's Perspective*" by Nosratullah Rastegar. In the first article, the efficiency of political wisdom in *Shahnameh* and its principles and structures are mentioned, which ultimately considers political wisdom in the sense of the feature and manner of governing the whole country. In the second article, on the one hand the author discusses the connection between politics and myth, and on the other hand he considers the political and social structures of ancient Iran, which *Ferdowsi* has dealt with its political structures, as the most important window for the reproduction of the national identity of Iranians, that is effective both for the individual identity of Iranians and for their collective identity. In the third book, Mr. Rastegar only deals with the legitimacy of the government from *Ferdowsi's* point of view which considers legitimacy in relation to the race, the lineage, the kingship and the merit of the king and apart from the foundations of government legitimacy, it has not paid much attention to other issues. Although these articles are important and the present study has used them in some way, but it is by no means enough.

Therefore, the present study, which deals with the subject "*Ferdowsi and the design of an ideal policy in Shahnameh*" can have a particular importance because it is a relatively new subject. On the

one hand, it reflects *Ferdowsi's* wisdom and thought in connection with political issues and influenced by the ancestors of the past, and on the other hand, with an ideal approach, it addresses issues that in fact reconstruct and modernize the political system of the past in accordance with the ideals of the Iranians, which ultimately leads to the patronage (selection and removal) of kings by the people.

Significance of the study

Inducing *Ferdowsi's* ideas in *Shahnameh* is debatable not only as one of the purely literary researches; Rather, it is more debatable with its political, social and cultural connotation. On the one hand, to deal carefully and acutely with the poet's political ideas, and on the other hand, to evaluate the function of the kings of ancient Iran in relation to the people for considering what were the consequences of the people's confrontation, and coordination with the government? And to what extent is the position of the imagination and subconscious mind of the people, which is mostly reflected in the form of myths and legends, effective and efficient?

Results and Discussion

In *Shahnameh*, *Ferdowsi* has raised issues that on the one hand have designed the infrastructure of an ideal government, and on the other hand, it has enumerated the features accurately and systematically, each of which is now addressed.

The image of the establishment of a democrat government and the change of the system by people in *Shahnameh*

The specific picture that *Ferdowsi* has presented of the overthrow and establishment of the system by people, can be discussed in two cases; First, the overthrow of *Jamshid* and the establishment of *Zahak* are discussed; And second, the overthrow of *Zahak* and the establishment of *Fereydown*, which in both events, the role of the people is dramatically evident and illustrious. As can be deduced from *Shahnameh*, in these events, on the one hand, justice and merit are contrasted with pride and tyranny, and on the other hand, pride and tyranny are considered to be the main factors in the destruction of a king. Justice and merit are the most important factors in supporting the people in electing and maintaining a government, when *Jamshid* comes to power, he paves the way for the public welfare and world development, fulfills all the needs of the people from different dimensions, as far as there is no news of pain, suffering and even death among the people, there is nothing but exuberance and freshness (cf.

Ferdowsi, 1388: 13-14). He becomes proud and considers himself the cause of the cheerful world and names himself God:

I adorn the world well
That's how I wanted the universe
Your nutrition, rest and peace are from me
That is your aspiration are from me
Greatness, glory and kingship is mine
Who says anyone but me is the king?
(Ibid: 14)

When *Jamshid* is uplifted in pride, '*Farr-e Izadi*' (divinity) withdraws him and Iranians rise up against him, which it leads to the fall of him and the establishment of *Zahak*. *Zahak* is supported by the Iranian and *Thasis*' army and takes the throne and places the crown upon his head.

Zahak who governs Iran for a thousand years, perpetrates such an oppression and tyranny on Iranians that no one is safe from his oppression and destruction. So that, the brains of two young men slaughter daily and falls prey to his snakes to satisfy their desire and countless young people have to be killed in this way. Until it turns to kill *Kawah*'s children, that it causes a great resurrection of the people against the tyrannical system of *Zahak*. *Kawah*, a blacksmith, by mobilizing the people against *Zahak*, paves the way for his downfall and overthrow. *Kawah*, on the one hand, incites the people against *Zahak* and incites the people against him, and on the other hand, by waving the *Derafsh Kaviani*, which is a symbol of suffering, toil and resistance of the people against tyranny, he is looking for a just king who is a noble descent and possesses '*Farr-e Izadi*'. This is where *Kawah* with a large number of Iranians trap *Zahak*, and imprison him at the hillside. He traces *Fereydun Farrokht*, who was raised on the slopes of *Alborz* Mountain, and he enthrone him and hoists *Derafsh Kaviani* as the national monarchy flag which is a sign of suffering, toil and resistance against oppression and injustice. In the destruction of *Zahak*, although the role of the unseen powers and God plays the first role; But the role of the people in overthrowing it, is of special and fundamental importance. These are the people who stand against him and replace him with *Fereydun*. Therefore, if care is taken in such events in *Shahnameh*, the conclusion is that neither the change and transformation of a system happens by chance and overnight, nor do the people become indifferent to it.

This is a serious issue, that in addition to election, people also have the authority to dismiss and remove the kings. It is what practically obvious

based on the logic of *Shahnameh* and mythological stories of Iran, that the people had been both enthroning or deposing and, in the election, and removal of the kings.

The neutral role of the king' oppression in the separation of the government and the people

The worldview of *Shahnameh* is based on the confrontation of good and evil forces or justice and tyranny, which despite they play an important role in the separation of government and people, with a political, justice and philanthropy approach, they are also assumed as the most important factors of people's support for the government. These concepts are lied in the story of *Fereydoun* more than other parts of the book, who divides the world between his three sons, *Iraj*, *Tur* and *Salm*. *Iraj*, who *Fereydoun* pays special attention to him more than his other brothers, provides the ground for jealousy and anger of *Tur* and *Salm*, and the two disgruntled brothers campaign against him. But *Iraj* by suggesting peace and amity is supported by the opposing armies more than ever, and *Tur* and *Salm* by inciting them to evil and tyranny provide the ground for separation between the government and the people in the land of *Turan* (Khatibi, 1390: 224); according to these events, in *Ferdowsi's Shahnameh*, there are two types of authoritarian government that show the grounds for separation between the government and the people:

A) Authoritarian dictatorship regime (Autocrat)

As kings in this kind of government do not hold themselves accountable to God or to their subordinates, they usually face with serious uprisings of the people, and because of the deep gap they create between the government and the people, they eventually fall by the people. Prominent examples of this can be seen in two mythological and semi-historical eras in Iran and *Turan*, the overthrow of tyrannical kings such as: *Zahak* and *Afrasiab* in the mythical era and the fall of the authoritarian rule of *Arjasb* (*Afrasiab's* grandson) in the semi-historical era.

Although the fall of *Afrasiab* and *Arjasb* has not happen by the people of *Turan*, it has been overthrown by the Iranians with a different logic; However, in such governments, any kind of opposition or benevolent criticism against the tyrant king is punishable by death and execution. There is no surprise that in this type of government, there is no uprising on the part of the people or the ousting of the rulers by the people or the elders of the country. These tyrannical kings must be ousted by a foreign power, the Iranians, which it has been done by the logic of *Shahnameh*.

B) Semi-authoritarian regimes

Although, in *Shahnameh* these kinds of rules and kings try to behave fairly, but occasionally due to some obstinacies, they take the path of dictatorship and act coercively. But sometimes the kings can be reformed; We find a clear example of this type of king in the first step in the existence of *Jamshid* and then in the existence of *Key Kavus*, *Nozar* and *Goshtasb*, regarding *Jamshid* and *Kay Kavus*, the former deviate from the right path with the domination of pride and the latter due to the domination of *Ahriman* and devil; But the former is dismissed by the people, and the second repents through the mediation of *Goodarz*, the brave commander of Iran, and returns to the right path (Rastegar, 1390: 254). In addition, we observe other examples of temporary tyranny both in *Bahman* period and in the reign of criminal *Yazdgerd*, *Ghobad*, *Hormozd Anoshirvan* and *Shirvi*.

By studying *Shahnameh* carefully, we conclude that *Ferdowsi* considers the greatest factor of decline in the functions of the king, the concentration of power and the tendencies of kings to authoritarianism and absolute self-esteem. This phenomenon originates from the same story of *Kavus*, and it reaches to its peak in the story of *Goshtasb*, who considers himself the evangelist of pure religion and absolute truth (cf. Muskub, 1389: 142); so that it puts two famous Iranian heroes in a confrontation, and it provides a conditions that *Rostam* is forced to kill *Esfandiar*, while he knows by doing that a curse will be put on him, and the good name of his heroic era and even his life will come to an end.

The image of a noble king based on his generosity (Justice)

Shahnameh is the epic of justice and law, the epic of unwavering resistance to anything demonic and its aim is confronting tyranny. Confronting the world that wants to dominate lies and deception; That is why it is against *Afrasiab*, who sets out on the other side of *Amu* for sabotage and deception, and is against the *White Demon*, on the other side of *Alborz* who closes the way to everything divine, and also against *Zahak*, *Kamos* and *Khaqan* of China, farther away from the deserts, who equips all anti-justice forces. The enemy, whose goal is destroying security, justice and peace, and is rising everywhere, from Hamavaran, Rome, India, China and even Mazandaran. However, what threatens them is one thing: justice and nobility (see: Zarrinkoob, 1378: 110-112). Hence, *Ferdowsi's Shahnameh* expresses the aspirations and ideals of peace, friendship and humanity, and that is why some researchers have called it the "justice" epic; In this regard, equity

has a high status in coordination with justice. The issues about the description of *Fereydoun's* justice-oriented government are characteristics of anyone who deserves to be the king with possessing the attributes of *Fereydoun*.

Auspicious (Farrokh) Fereydoun was not an angel
He was not superior made of musk and amber
He found this goodness by generosity and justice
Thee be generous, thee be Fereydoun
Fereydoun fulfilled divinity
First by purifying the world from evil
(Ferdowsi quoted from Masseh, 1375: 273)

Ferdowsi considers all the works of *Fereydoun* and *Fereyduni* as justice and *Fereydoun* in *Shahnameh* is a king who does not hesitate to sacrifice even his children in order to establish justice (Islami Nodoshan, 1390: 41). In the logic of *Shahnameh*, justice finds meaning when at the same time it is accompanied by wisdom and goes in parallel; As *Ferdowsi* says about *Kay Khosrow*:

It was not a prosperous land;
was ruined by tyranny
He settled there with his treasure;
Was not upset about his generosity
(Ferdowsi, 1388: 306)

Ferdowsi also considers justice and freedom mutually and reciprocally related, and believes that justice will not find a way until freedom is established and strengthened; Hence, he says the following in *Bahram Gour Sassanid's* words:

I will hang the living of the oppression
Since it oppresses the free man
(Ibid: 977)

In addition, the spirit of justice and avoidance of oppression finds its place in the framework of *Shahnameh*, when we look for and emphasis on the behavior of justice and avoidance of oppression in the battlefields. As in military conflicts around the world, we rarely find cases where justice has been observed in the case of victory over an enemy; But in *Shahnameh* and *Ferdowsi's* ideal message, this issue has been strongly emphasized, that the cultivation of justice and the spirit of respect for the status of humanity on the battlefield are so manifested, that the false civilizations of today have been ridiculed. In the logic of *Shahnameh*, reconciliation can be confirmed only when in the long run right will out, and sometimes if after reconciliation, shame and

zeal necessitate war, the king must sacrifice and reward the merits:

O brother, know that from the king
The wise man asks for anything
One thing that he is seeking the victory
Not turning away from the enemy in the campaign
The other is campaigning for justice
Knows everything, numbers and races of his man
(Ferdowsi quoted by Davidson, 1999: 145)

The interaction of religion and politics in Shahnameh

Ferdowsi is one of the rare figures in the Islamic world. His ideology and worldview in posing ideal issues on the basis of good and better policy-making, are completely inspired by his Islamic thought and wisdom; Therefore, he has formulated all cases and issues according to the Islamic standards. In his logic, policy-making, conquest, war and governance, democracy, justice and freedom all seem reasonable whenever they are compatible with religion. Religion and politics run parallel and one support each other and in contrast.

Neither religion is independent of king
Nor king is admirable without religion
So, they protect each other
It seems they are under one cover (they are one)
(Ferdowsi, 1382: 1228)

According to *Ferdowsi*, religion and politics are not only inseparable; Rather, in parallel and supporting each other. It can bring the royal affairs and the national system to its destination. *Shahnameh* expresses *Ferdowsi's* thoughts, according to *Ferdowsi*, the king should rule base on religious principles. *Ardehsir* talks about religion and monarchy with the following words:

Religion and imperialism are so interdependent
It seems they are under one cover (they are one)
(Ferdowsi, 1382: 1228)

These verses indicate that the king of Iran had religious privileges until the end of the *Sassanid* dynasty. Historical and literary texts also confirm this statement.

Political legitimacy and imperial authority according to Shahnameh narrations

Although, at the present time, on the one hand, political legitimacy and authority are based on elections in order to gain the consent of the people and on the other, to observe meritocracy and justice, but

Ferdowsi mentions two main criteria for the legitimacy of the government and the monarchy: one is to belong to the community of elders and the other is to have more authority among them. In this regard, he does not consider the kingdom to be a coincidence and without any planned procedures:

... It is as if the son is the same as his father
He tells you what he knows of him point by point
his origin and his honor
Is from which superior generation
(Ferdowsi, 1388: 7)

It must be acknowledged that, on the one hand, this issue has shown the wisdom of Iranian people from immemorial time, and on the other hand, he has paid serious attention to the political legitimacy of the government system with an irreplaceable plan; Thus, political legitimacy in *Shahnameh* is formed by the following:

A: Popular support and people's satisfaction with the King

Since gaining popular consent and support for the king is of particular importance in the logic of the *Shahnameh*, in the narrations of *Shahnameh* when people show support and satisfaction for the king, nobles and latitudinarians attend the enthronement and coronation of the king and on the other hand, he is recognized by them:

The elders praised him
They led him to the throne
(Ferdowsi, 1388: 131)

This is why in *Shahnameh*, its people and latitudinarians, following their creed, on the one hand, strive for loyalty and support of the legitimate government, and on the other hand, strive to preserve the independence and territorial integrity of Iran, and supporting the multinational community of Iran is considered as one of their main duties, and they consider themselves obliged to defend the attacks of foreign enemies and hostile countries (Rastegar, 1390: 251).

The duties and rights of elders and latitudinarians in "*Shahnameh*" can be considered as a "controlling" organization in the country in the framework of the ideology of Iranian government in general, which evaluates the rule of the king from the standpoint of justice and, if necessary, either confirms his legitimacy or reprimands or removes him from the power. Evidence of such a performance is abundant in *Shahnameh*, and can be found in the full support of the people for *Fereydoun* based on

knowledge and ability, despite the people's disgust with *Jamshid* and *Zahak* based on lack of merit on the one hand, and *Kay Kavus* being reprimanded by *Goodarz*, the liberal leader of Iran and *Jahan Pahlavan Rostam* (the strongman of the world) in the case of *Sohrab*, who is punished and reprimanded on the other hand:

Never hand out your position to the enemy
Do not tell your opinion to anyone in vain
Three times thee suffer pain and discomfort
Did not learn the lesson from this experiment
Tahmtan slandered the king
Do not pick up so much flight
Your deeds are worse than each other
You are not worthy as a king
(Ferdowsi, 1388: 161-183)

All of this shows the extent to which the Iranian people and latitudinarians support the king or reprimand him clearly.

B: The king's religious knowledge, 'Farr-e Izadi' (divinity) and well-born race

As ancient Iranians in the kingship rites had respect for divinity, *Ferdowsi* also mentions 'Farr-e Izadi' in *Shahnameh* and in some cases, he uses kingship as a synonym for 'Farr-e Izadi', and the essence of this divine basis is nothing, but believing in the unique power of one God and practicing the popular law, truth and justice in the world; In this regard, if someone abuses 'Farr-e Izadi' or commit an offense, 'Farr-e Izadi' turns away from him for sure and he will be struck by the tragedy and the fate of *Jamshid* and *Zahak* and *Kavous's* contempt; So *Afrasiab* is the first person who tries to get 'Farr-e' in this way, and this king of *Turanian* as an evil-natured represent enters the Lake *Chechest* three times to obtain 'Farr-e'; But every time he fails and he cannot obtain 'Farr-e', because it is born with *Ariyan* people and belongs to the just *Zoroaster*. *Afrasiab's* role in this part is very important in *Shahnameh*. Because he is considered as a major threat against the kings' 'Farr-e Kiyani'. The main defender of 'Farr-e', here is *Rostam*, who is the perfect representative of the Iranian nation (Davidson, 1999: 143). In the logic of *Ferdowsi* and *Shahnameh*, this 'Farr-e', which is in fact considered the supporter of the kings of Iran in the realm of power, has two aspects: one is 'Farr-e Shahi' (the king's *Farr-e*) which is related to the same noble race and the merit of the king, and the other is 'Farr-e Izadi' (God's *Farr-e*), which expresses the support of God and the hidden hands of the king and the religious beliefs. Each of them will be discussed in the following.

a. 'Farr-e Shahi' (King's divinity)

'Farr-e Shahi' in the sense of heredity, includes all kings and princes, in fact as a group of elders and latitudinarians and it can separately be a sufficient condition for the acceptance of the royal claim; But the degree of the efficiency and competence of a king who provides justice, has priority. As an example, on the one hand, the disqualification of *Tus* and *Gostham*, the children of *Nozar*, even though they inherit 'Farr-e Shahi' but due to the lack of adequacy and tact they lose their legitimacy. On the other hand, the story of *Zuthamasb* who traces his lineage to *Fereydoun* and is chosen as a meritorious and wise king is noticeable. Among the community of the elders, *Zal* for the reasons related to the rejection of the claim of *Tus* and *Gostham* mentions the rules and principals for selecting the new king as follows:

A king comes from Khosrow's race
He remembers many quotas from the past
If *Tus* and *Gostham* inherit *Farr-e*
I have many troops and huge legion
a famous person without the elders' acceptance
Does not deserve the throne
The crown is not appropriate for them
The king needs to be meritorious
Looking for from *Fereydoun's* generation
A worthy king for the kingdom
(Ferdowsi, 1388: 116)

b. 'Farr-e Izadi' and 'Farr-e Mobadi' (Divinity)

In ancient Iran, one of the components for the legitimacy of the government is the divine nature of the religion which it can be observed in the mythological part of *Shahnameh* in the form of 'Farr-e Izadi' in the story of *Houshang* and some other kings: "By the command of merciful God / buckle down to establish justice" and we see a few other kings, which has been a proof of the legitimacy of their government; Therefore, the conditions for receiving 'Farr-e Izadi' in *Shahnameh* are shaped by the issues such as: religiosity, struggle against tyranny and adherence to the principles of goodness and justice. Thus, the kings who enjoy 'Farr-e Izadi' and 'Farr-e Mobadi' in *Shahnameh* are in three groups, the first group are the kings such as: *Kiomars*, *Houshang* and *Jamshid*, who enjoy the royal power and 'Farr-e Shahi' – 'Farr-e Izadi' at the same time (see: *Ferdowsi.*, 1389: 13); The second group includes *Tahmourth* and *Fereydoun* who have 'Farr-e Shahi'; But they obtain 'Farr-e Izadi' and 'Farr-e Mobadi' during their rule after passing a period of asceticism and pure self-cultivation:

“So, the king was purified from evil
Which it was shone from him
(Ferdowsi, 1388: 11)

The third category includes kings such as *Manouchehr*, who has all three at the same time: ‘*Farr-e Shahi*’, ‘*Farr-e Izadi*’ and ‘*Farr-e Mobadi*’

I have both piety and ‘*Farr-e Izadi*’
I have both right and wisdom
(Ibid: 56)

Considering such issues, it can be deduced that ‘*Farr-e Shahi*’, ‘*Farr-e Izadi*’ and ‘*Farr-e Mobadi*’ always accompany each other in parallel and cannot be needless and separate from each other, hence *Jamshid* when he ascends to his throne, he considers himself not only a king, but also a *Mobad*:

The kingship was buckled down with ‘*Farr-e Shahi*’
All universe accompanies for this
I said with the bless of ‘*Farr-e Izadi*’
I am both King and Mobad
(Ferdowsi, 1389: 12)

j. Competence and experience in administering the country

As merit and meritocracy is considered as the most fundamental category in the imperial system of *Shahnameh*, so is the admiration and support of merit in its stories. The prominent examples of this can be observed both in the selection of the king on the basis of merit, and other national heroes and *Jahān Pahlevāns* (The World heroes) who must prove their position in front of the people and the king on the basis of tact and merit. Now We analyze both categories:

a. The merit of the kings

Although, according to the beliefs of the past, enjoying the royal privileges and getting the throne of power, most of all due to the blood relations of the previous kings; according to the narrations of *Shahnameh*, in addition to *Kiomars* and *Manouchehr*, who have proved their position in confrontation of the foreigners, we have *Fereydoun* as the supreme example of such kings, whose kingship depends more on his own art than his offspring and imperial blood. He is the only king with merit that has the full support of the people (Maskoob, 1389: 126).

With this approach, the level of meritocracy in *Shahnameh* is so high that even some people, when they do not consider themselves worthy to work, they withdraw from accepting work. It is clear in the example of “*Sam’s*” story, when *Nozar* cruelly

incites the people to demand the throne from *Sam*;
But *Sam* shrugs and says:

Because *Nozar* is from *Kiyan* race
He is the king and have the throne
Should I have the crown?
It is impossible and no one hears it
(Ferdowsi, 1389: 136)

In addition, we see other examples of these cases in the story of *Kay Khosrow* and *Bahram Gore*, that *Kay Khosrow* faces a great opponent such as *Fariborz* to ascend the throne after *Kay Kavus*, with the opinion of the elders including *Tus* and *Goodarz*, it is decided that each of *Kay Khosrow* and *Fariborz* who conquers *Bahman’s* Fortress will inherit the throne and the crown. With the defeat of *Fariborz* and the conquest of the gate of *Bahman’s* Fortress, *Kay Khosrow* builds the fire temple of *Azargashsab* there and when he returns to Persia, he obtains the throne (Molaei, 1390: 611). On the other hand, during the *Sassanid* era, there is a dispute between *Bahram Goor* and *Kay Khosrow* over the possession of the crown, and *Bahram* postpones the final vote to the art and work of experience, and based on merit and eligibility, then he removes the crown from the two lions and puts it on his head (Nodooshan, 1390: 39).

b. The merit of national heroes and heroines

As mentioned earlier, the national heroes and *Jahān Pahlevāns* (The World heroes) of ancient Iran must also show valuable work and activities to prove their wisdom and competence in front of the people and the kings in order to gain their political-military legitimacy as guardians of the system and national values; In this regard, there are many heroes and heroines in *Shahnameh*, but this study discusses this issue only in the deeds of *Rostam* and *Esfandiar* as two national heroes and two *Jahān Pahlevāns* (world famous heroes) of *Shahnameh*.

Rostam with all his extraordinary and God-given talents from killing a white and drunk elephant to *Nariman’s* revenge in *Sepand* Mountain, and successful achievements in his great adventures such as *Haft Khan* and the battle with *Sohrab*, and his unique heroic tactics in the event of “*Bijan* and *Manijeh*” that face down *Afrasiab’s*, to the meaningful and arrogant boasting that defeats *Ashkibus*, all and all can be nothing but gaining legitimacy and proving *Jahān Pahlevāni* (world heroism), *Esfandiar* also, as the most prominent world champion and national hero, if he saves Iran from the attack of *Arjasp Turani* for the second time, and kills *Bidrafsh Jadu* in revenge for *Zarir’s* blood, and if with the request of *Goshtasb*, by taking *Lohrasb* and his brother *Farshid-*

vard's revenge, he kicks the land of *Turan* under the hoof of his horses, and by crushing the *Arjasb* Corps imprisons *Gargsar Turani* warlord (Aidenloo, 1390: 668), all will be nothing but a prominent example of gaining political legitimacy and proving merit, to achieve the ultimate goal which is the throne.

Rostam and *Esfandiar* are two unique and powerful heroes who in all struggles of life as two great military powers along with the imperial monarchy have been protecting honor, dignity, authority, territorial integrity, in defense of foreigners (Motlagh, 1390: 846 – 892), The philosophy of all the activities and heroic performances of these two heroes, one as the true representative of the people (*Rostam*) who sincerely strives to defend the greatness and glory of the kingdom and the country and crowns, and the other as a hero and a king who is attempting to sit on the throne of power (*Esfandiar*), cannot be anything other than gaining the legitimacy of power and displaying their merits.

Withdrawal from rebellious power and attention to the public welfare

Since *Ferdowsi* considers greed as the only way to misery from various dimensions and highlights the desire for power with greed and corruption, he measures the ideal imperial plans with the help of mythological forms and historical narratives to reduce the corruption of power and its tendency to spontaneity. In such cases, he emphasizes more on the wisdom and moral strength of the king and his encouragement not to be deceived by wealth and the magic of power, which we see as a clear example more than anyone else in the presence of *Kay Khosrow*.

According to the narration of *Shahnameh*, *Kay Khosrow* has both political wisdom and good human morality. He has both *Farr-e Izadi* (divinity) and superior goals, and his ultimate goal is to remove injustices and vices from the earth. On the one hand, he tries not to face the actions of tyrannical and daring kings such as *Jamshid*, *Zahak* and *Kay Kavous*, and on the other hand, he tries to prosper his ideal goal simultaneously with the regulation of political affairs. He seeks to eradicate oppression from the world and to retake the right of the oppressed from the oppressor, and everyone have the equal status of justice in the law; This is where his war against *Afrasiab* (his maternal ancestor) begins, so that with the institutionalization of the law of justice, the revenge of the innocent people's blood like *Siavash* will be taken and the oppressor will be punished for his disgrace and justice will be provided on the earth. Because of this, the *Turanians* fail with all their might. Neither *Afrasiab's* sob nor the *Iranians'* request for reconciliation have any effect. That is

why the forts of *Turanians* collapse one after another and *Kay Khosrow* pursues *Afrasiab* who was escaping; until *Goodars* gives the news of *Afrasiab's* detention by a devout man named "*Hum*" to the king of Iran through (Molaei, 1390, 612); Thus, *Kay Khosrow* approaches his main goal, which is to eliminate corrupt and killer figures, and *Afrasiab* receives his disgraceful punishment; In this way, the long and endless war ends. Shortly afterwards, *Kay Khosrow* is disgusted with the kingdom and the affairs of the world, and he cries out to God and asks him to take his life and take him to another world before succumbing to the temptations of tyranny and the tendency to absolute and unlimited power:

Neither I should skip this honesty
Nor be proud like the previous kings
I have found everything I was looking for
I turn away from the throne
(Ferdowsi, 1388: 621)

After withdrawing power, *Kay Khosrow* by replacing *Lohrasb* gives his country to the *Iranians* and his heroes and by choosing a mysterious journey accompanied by heroes such as: *Toos*, *Fariborz*, *Gio*, *Bijan* and *Gostham* with *Soroush's* guidance, he reaches a spring. He mysteriously hides from being seen by washing his soul and body, and in the evenings a cold wind blows from the mountain, snow covers everywhere and the heroes are buried under the snow:

When the snow pulled the sail off the ground
There was no trace of the spear of the legendary heroes
They were buried under the snow
A well was dug anywhere deep
None of them had any power
It was turned to the sweet destiny
(Ibid: 618-619)

Kay Khosrow's abhorrence of power when the whole world is under his control is a sign of a justice-developer mind of a king, which is hidden in his ideal figure, and on the other hand is a lesson and example for the princes and kings to prevent doing evil deeds; In order not to provide corruption and grounds for disintegration, misery and social frustration in the society.

From *Ferdowsi's* point of view, *Kay Khosrow* is not only a perfect king; He is also a perfect human being; Thus, the more God-like man is, the closer he is to perfection. He is not only the most powerful enemy of the devil; Rather, he is the most successful king who voluntarily accepts death from the peak of power, popularity and piety, and rushes to God and

finally to death from the fear of corruption, white and bright death, at the peak of mountains and snow, which it is a clear symbol of his sunset at the peak of purity.

Conclusion

Shahnameh is one of the world's best masterpieces that with its sublime message emphasizes important topics such as justice, equality, eradication of the foundations of oppression and tyranny and with the help of myths and legends provides a clear picture of an ideal political system. so that future generations can look at these issues and learn its lessons and emulate morality.

Since *Ferdowsi* is a sage and a peasant, with a correct understanding of the process of destroying the past pride and gaining the political legitimacy of *Ghaznavids*, which in his time it is still taken from *Baghdad* on the one hand, and the new approach of the authoritarian *Turks* rule that the Iranians have been fighting against them for the years on the other hand; all make *Ferdowsi* to revive the ruined national pride and with presenting an ideal policy plan he calls the society to reform the political system and public welfare.

Ferdowsi, by reporting the actions of the fifty kings of Iran, shows that political participation and public unity between the people and the government in the affairs of the country is an undeniable principle; In this regard, in the Iranian political system,

principles and rules such as: tact and merit, good lineage, religious knowledge, '*Farr-e Shahi*' (divinity) and '*Farr-e Izadi*' and other mechanisms have been considered so that the people, in addition to electing a King, have the authority to dismiss him as well. A clear example of this can be seen in the people's competence in the dismissal of *Jamshid* and *Zahak* and the election of *Fereydoun*. Such a popular authority and competence in the world of politics is an ideal issue up to now, the authority to oust a king for the people has not really been experienced in any part of the world yet.

In addition, the mechanisms of the power in *Shahnameh* are being modernized in such a way that freedom replaces tyranny and justice and law replace chaos. Great kings such as: *Kay Khosrow* with their wisdom and merit, rule the great world empire with power and supremacy, and by institutionalizing justice in Iran, they tear down the palaces of oppression and enchain tyrants like *Afrasiab* and other rivals and destroy them all; But he gives up power to show everyone that the ultimate of power is nothing but corruption. He shows that the concentration of power, while unrestrained, leads to catastrophes which we see prominent examples in the kings before him; In this regard, he pursues a spiritual journey by turning away from power and politics in order to show the rulers that politicians and policymakers can have spirituality and religiosity as well as power.

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