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Ferdowsi's Voice Echo in the Poetry of Behzad Kermanshahi Reflecting on His Patriotic Poems

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ABSTRACT

Iranian contemporary poet, Behzad Kermanshahi is a poet devoted himself to Persian culture and literature and has had a special devotion to ancient Khorasani style, especially the peak of the epic poem, Ferdowsi Hakim. His works - which in Khorasani style are intermingled with modern language - contains profound human themes and meanings, which has given a beautiful tone to his poems. The most important of these themes can be summarized in patriotism, oppression, political commitment, loving Ahle- al-Bayt (AS), religious commitment, human-orientation, social and emotional commitment, hope and panic. Patriotism and love for the homeland has a special place in Kermanshahi's poems. The poet's use of long and epic themes of the Shahnameh and its strong style and lofty language structure have led to the issue that in some poems, especially when writing a poem about patriotism and love for the homeland, Ferdowsi voice echo to be heard more than other issues.

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Introduction

Literature, as a comprehensive charter with multiple and different effects, behaves as a mirror reflecting all thoughts, ideals, emotional attitudes, wisdoms, and foresights of the people of a land. The thoughts and ideas in the areas of literature are so intertwined that, with the study of the poet's works in any period, it can be concluded that he was the guardian or in other word, reflective of legacy of the previous periods. Political and social development has been one of the main themes of poetry in each period and has had an important role in reprocessing, enriching, and prosperity of any country's literature. Patriotism and love for the ancestral homeland has had a special place in the Persian literature. "Patriotism and national identity is the cornerstone to achieve human dignity. National identity and in other word, a set of language, culture, customs, religious rituals, myths and folk tales has had a special value and holiness in any land and has also been a place for showing gallantry, chivalry, and courage in the field of hard and ruinous events" (Hejazi, 2011, 75).

Most poets, in any period are enthralled with homeland, awaken conscience of their nation, and are pioneer to defend it with lyric weapons. "Patriotism or love for the homeland is one of the most themes of dedicated and patriotic poets. People who benefit from the art of poetry as a means to improve the political and social conditions of the homeland have made all their efforts in this area and to achieve this holy goal" (Tavakoli Mohammadi, 2011, 3). Clearly, no poet as Ferdowsi has examined the issue of homeland. "Ferdowsi is the veteran and leader of the poets depended on the preservation of national identity and ethnic pride. The most important reason for nationalism of Ferdowsi is love for the culture and revival of the Persian language, which enables him to make poem a palace safe from wind and rain" (Hejazi, 2006, 14). In the contemporary poetry, Mehdi Akhavan Saleth revives the poetry of nationalism and love for homeland and using the ancient Iranian myths such as poetic language, mythic concepts and characters of the

Shahnameh as archetypes of ancient epic poetry have been always helpful for the contemporary poets to deal with national and epic issues.

Behzad Kermanshahi is one of the inheritors of the old poetry, especially Khorasani style in the field of contemporary literature, which it is interwoven with modern language. He was more tended towards Ferdowsi among the great poets of the Persian literature, as far as he says:

The verses mean that the great girl of Iran, who worships knowledge and fair, the poem is dedicated to her since it is replete with advices. This will guide you towards groom and teach the way of erudition. (Goli Birang "Colorless Flower," 2012, 197).

His poetic language when dealing with the topics of patriotism and love for the motherland recalls somewhat the poetic thoughts and structure of Hakim-e-Tous. According to the poet's saying, he imitated Ferdowsi and benefited from the architect of the safe palace of the Persian literature. He says:

It means thanks to the old-aged of Tous who gave me many times in the lofty palace. (Reminder of Mehr "Yadgar-e-Mehr", 2008, 142).

Research Background

Following researches have been conducted about Behzad Kermanshahi:

Salimi and Ahmadi in an article entitled "human concerns in Kermanshahi's poems" have studied human themes existing in Behzad's poetry (Regional conference of Kermanshah's literature and poetry, Islamic Azad University, Kermanshah Branch, Nov. 2012).

Sharifian in "psychology of Behzad's poetry" has reviewed nostalgic topics in Behzad's poetry (Regional conference of Kermanshah's literature and poetry, Islamic Azad University, Kermanshah Branch, Nov. 2012).

Mousavi Garmaroodi in "the Poem Adhering to Awakening" has investigated deep structures and surface

structures of Behzad's poetry (Specialized Journal of Goharan, No. 17th, Tehran, Jun. 2008).

Mousavi Gilani in "Great Man from the Offspring of the Iranian Famous Poets" introduces the poet and depicts an image of his characteristic poetry (Specialized Journal of Goharan, No. 17th, Tehran, Jun. 2008).

The article goes on to investigate Ferdowsi's voice echo in these poems by exploring the themes and structures of Kermanshahi's patriotic poems.

Home Category

Love for homeland with all its implications and meanings is one of the most important themes of Kermanshahi's poems. "Kermanshahi's patriotic poems unlike his other poems that are frustrating are full of hope and exhilaration. Here, there is not a trace of defeatism and pessimism, while stability and steadfastness is the dominant element over this poetry. Love to Iran and stand against invasion to the land at any price is a feature of his national and patriotic poems. He in some epic poems entitled "I am with you," "With Son of Iran," "Homeland", "Home," "Iran Is Also Involved", "Qadisi Commander" and "Our Territory" has expressed his feelings. An epic passion and love towards the motherland and defending the old-aged homeland is clear in all of these poems" (Salimi, et al. 2012, 12).

Although intellect, wise, and science has the greatest importance in the Shahnameh- in the name of God of soul and wise- he respects knowledge and fair penalty. In addition to telling stories and myths, he respects the Iranian national identity from the perspective of human and moral virtues to show that achievements are merely depended on ethnic prides and are far from virtuosity. Therefore, national strength and sovereignty must be combined with philanthropy.

It means come to do not leave the world bad and we all should do good efforts. (The Shahnameh, Vol. 1st, p 470-475)

However, this openness with patriotism and national sovereignty and strength is categories emerged due to the time's need, in a way that the tendency towards epic poem and dealing with national pride is accelerated when defending the territorial integrity and in the moment of fight (Hejazi, 2006, 11).

It means that I will not live without Iran and nobody will live without this homeland. (The Shahnameh, Vol. 1st, p 470-475)

Behzad Kermanshahi is a poet who kept pace with people during the Revolution and especially the war and used his poetry as a weapon in defense of this land. He made his poetry epic using old archetypes, especially Ferdowsi's epic storytelling. Homeland has a special place in Kermanshahi's poetry. He has devoted many poems to this issue. In these poems, the poet reminds love for the homeland and altruism to achieve its goals in a way that in the poem "I am with you" he expresses peak of his feelings about the country and states:

It refers to Iran that in the midst of fire and blood, I am with you. If you need my soul and body, I am going to devote it. If you are happy or unhappy, I will not leave you. Lover have benefits in any act, I will not leave you in this moment of loss. (Goli Birang, 2012, 111)

Words "I am with you" in the above verses contain psychological and emotional burden that the poet has perfectly used. He not only specifies certainly his position from the beginning by naming these poems with such title- and informs about the content and text of his poetry-, but also has given these poems an epic and fast rhythm by repeating it at the end of each line. This shows the poet's peak excitement and deep inside

thrilling in a way that like the Shahnameh it arouses the reader's sense of patriotism and makes him to be shared in such feeling.

Behzad's poetic style and language in some poems dealing with country, love for homeland and the need to patrol it is a mirror for the firm poetic language and structure of the Shahnameh, to the extent that some of his poems can be mingled with the Shahnameh's poems. Without making the reader understood, Behzad in the long ode "Takhti's mourning" written to commemorate the death of Takhti, in addition to marking his poetic text and mingling these words with today poetic language has artfully depicted this tragic accident by borrowing from the Shahnameh's words. He puts the reader in a situation similar to the Shahnameh's stories. Term such Tahmineh and Sohrab, Tahmtan and Rakhsh, Shoghad and Poor, etc. indicates the issue.

Alas, the world-shined man passed away. The man is compared with a green tree, but it is died because of drought. When he became a bad-natured man, his kind heart died. Tahmineh generated Sohrab again, but he died again. (Goli Birang, 2012, 71).

Sometimes the poet borrows both meaning and word from the Shahnameh, and then states it in a firm and lofty style and in a mood suitable to the Shahnameh's condition. The poem "Poem Ancient," which the poet wrote in dignity of Shahnameh tells this reality as if the poet has obliged himself to compose in praise of the Shahnameh like Shahnameh's style:

These verses mean that if you increase your knowledge, you will know any secret. If you read these poems, you will learn the sagacious principles. You should know that Iran is far from badness. The Iranian ancestors are heaven-natured. They have colored the world with fair and have removed cruelty from the world. They are recognized as free people and worship freedom. (Goli Birang, 2012, 197)

How beautifully Ferdowsi depicts peak of interest and fascination to homeland, when Esfandiar is ordered by Goshtasb to destroy Sistan. Esfandiar from the start knows that his confrontation with Rostam is confrontation of an Iranian with another Iranian, which there will have no result but killing the Iranian and destroy their lives. He knows that Goshtasb's command will inevitably result in such destruction. It is due to the awareness that, in the message sent to Esfandiar by Bahman, he subtly attempts to remind the most critical psychological point of Rostam that is his interest in the prosperity and honor of the country to imprison him. Thus, he wants Bahman to say Esfandiar : (Parham, 1994, 138).

It means that this house should not be destroyed and should not become a jungle. (The Shahnameh, Vol. 1st, p 470-75)

Echoes of such interest and fascination is heard in Behzad Kermanshahi's ode entitled "Son of Iran", in which the poet repeat "Iran and Iran" over and over and has given an epic tone to the ode.

These poems mean that people who are fed by Iran should know that they must listen to the Iranian message. It also says that Iran is always exposed of danger because of its enemies. Some of these enemies want to destroy Iran. If we were friend with Iran, those enemies will be defeated. So, the Iranian flag will be raised, if these enemies are defeated.

Undoubtedly, his love towards Mehdi Akhavan Saleth is raised from patriotism and love towards this ancient/great homeland, even if an implacable enemy of the Iranian. he loves the Iranian regardless to his religion. Behzad, in a poem composed for Akhavan Saleth, says:

The verses imply that anyone who loves Iran, even if he is bad-tempered, I love him. If a disaster shocks the country, I love

to be endangered. You are free man and I will love anybody with any religion. Heaven people with any religion and faith I love them regardless to religion. (Goli Birang, 2012, 153)

The Shahnameh reflects the values and achievements of the Iranian nation, which, in addition to the endogenous human instinct of self-egotistical, arises from fixing interest and love for the ancient principle for your own right. Ferdowsi is proud of being as an Iranian and with honor deals with praising his ancestors and heroic values in the country. Kermanshahi in a poem entitled "Our Territory" deals with the issue and sacrifices their ancestors in the defense of the homeland and like Ferdowsi says:

Which mean that if our soil/homeland is watered by blood, we will protect our soil from enemies and flower will be grown redder in this land. Any place is a chivalrous grave in this land, since defended the land from cruelty. (Goli Birang, 2012, 184)

Then, the poet's feeling of patriotism is raised and after mentioning the courage of this land, he reminds the services that the Iranian has devoted to other nations including the Arabs and the Turks, while, these people have left nothing but destruction and looting.

These verses imply that the Turkish and the Arabs have been teased many times. The Turkish people are proud of their culture and art. The Bedouin Arabs have been moved to cities, since they were deceived by sciences magic.

Therefore, this sound is the same sound of Tofu Bar Charkhe Gordon Tofu that Ferdowsi resonated centuries ago with a stronger and firmer tone and moaned the globe about the Arabs' cruelty in Iran. It seems that passing time and advancement of civilization have made this implacable position more flexible.

Conclusions

Ferdowsi is the peak of the Iranian epic poem. Undoubtedly, any poet who defends his homeland in any period is influenced by national thoughts and beliefs. Thus, Behzad Kermanshahi is not an exception. Although claiming any similarity between characters, thoughts, poetic structure, and reputation of both the poets is somehow impossible, because it is impossible to contrast a drop to sea. However, Ferdowsi's poetic voice echo is heard when Behzad Kermanshahi wrote a poem about the homeland. In addition to the use of Khorasani style, this issue is arisen from the poet's direct use of words and phrases and firm language structure as well as borrowing from long and deep meanings of Hakim-e Tous in homeland category and mingling with modern language.

Footnote

In the introduction to one of the sets of poems called "Colorless Flower" (Goli Birang) - collected by Shafi'i kadkani's choice, Yadu'llah Behzad Kermanshahi says about himself: "The author of these words, Yadu'llah Behzad son of Hassan Ivani was born in the mid February 1925 in Kermanshah. After days of childhood, he went to school and then high school and two or three years of the life was ruined in the Faculty of Literature of Tehran University. Then, he loved to

be a teacher and spent 27 years in the job. Finally, he retired in 1979 to his request." After his retirement and aging, he got used to isolation. Finally, after a lifetime of trying to serve the culture and literature of this land passed away in April 2007 and was buried in Ferdows Garden in Kermanshah.

Two poetic collections entitled "Colorless Flower" (2012) and "Reminder of Mehr" (Yadgar-e-Mehr) (2008) is the most important work of the poet, which the first series was collected in his lifetime and the second was compiled by professor Shafi'i kadkani's choice and was published after his lifetime. His poems are varied and have romantic, spiritual, moral, social themes and harsh critical poems belong to the time of the monarchy regime. Akhavan Saleth describes Behzad's high position in poetry and literature as following: "Behzad is one of the extremely strenuous, eloquent, tasteful, long-natured, gentle, and talented poets and orators of our time. If exists any fair, he will stand at the forefront and leading row of reputation, popularity, acceptance, dignity, respect and acceptance. To be honest, he deserved so much more than the much discussed and passed. His poems through the perspective of form, meaning, and style are excellence and venerable and his poetry is great" (Goharan, 2008, p 12).

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