

The Artistic Features of Ferdowsi

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Abstract

Ferdowsi, who has regenerated Persian Literature by his great initiative, did not born in a day. He had his own special predecessors and the then-existent cultural climatic and other background conditions which fostered his artistic thought. So that he could be resulted in presenting his particular unique magnificent literary piece. The work of the poet Ferdowsi was associated with the customs, old beliefs, and religious, historical-political ideas. For they were not only considered as a resource of profound spiritual material but they also implied the effectiveness of that most familiar environment of people of different levels of Iranian society. Local books and ancient cultural injected substance which rooted in the souls of people and affected people's taste to a great extent in every respect, especially in the verse-epic field. (Parvin et al.2023)(Lewis, 2020)

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1. Historical Background

Ferdowsi, who has regenerated Persian Literature by his great initiative, did not born in a day. He had his own special predecessors and the then-existent cultural climatic and other background conditions which fostered his artistic thought. So that he could be resulted in presenting his particular unique magnificent literary piece. The work of the poet Ferdowsi was associated with the customs, old beliefs, and religious, historical-political ideas. For they were not only considered as a resource of profound spiritual material but they also implied the effectiveness of that most familiar environment of people of different levels of Iranian society. Local books and ancient cultural injected substance which rooted in the souls of people and affected people's taste to a great extent in every respect, especially in the verse-epic field. (Parvin et al.2023)(Lewis, 2020)

This is the poet who has not only gained a unique and unexampled position in the history of Persian literature but has also performed the most important and highly influential work of one of the richest and most ancient members of human heritage, namely Persian culture. It is him who has made the fablery-epic events more handsome by his basic and effective initiative and has also decorated the events with the most sweet and melodious wording and expressions. All of which are in the frame of pure and high-status Persian language dating back to Pahlavi or even Avesta ages.

Because of the cultural, social, political, and religious significance of "Ferdowsi's Shahnameh" for Iranian people as well as others, the epic is much interesting from different viewpoints. For it presents the mythological and historical background of Iranian people from the beginning of living on this land to the fall of the last known Iranian royal dynasty. As a result, it is important to address the development of this poet in a very brief manner. Otherwise, we may not fully recognize the piece of art done in Ferdowsi's masterpiece.

1.1. Ancient Persian Literature

Satisfaction had to wait for three centuries, till with the Shahnameh and antrine the Samanid revival, the country's national spirit was rekindled, feeling the need of a literature to which it could turn and of an art better adapted to its nature, the Shahnameh brought this into life. It is written in one of the earliest of its Persian poems composed in Khorasan, then become the place of lost national independence. The book of Shahnameh with 60,000 couplets and 7 Pishlawehs (prologues) divided into about 200 parts or stories all started with the letter A. It is a national epic, not only that, it is "an inseparable part of the national culture. Besides treating all important events, around which Iranian legend had crystallized, it relates the lives and deeds of almost all the heroes from the beginning of creation and myth, down to the crushing Arab, whose heroes were pulled down on the banks of the Oxus mountain. As the poet himself wrote, "I have composed a work in which I have collected the history of Iran's kings, its lost story and event long forgotten". Poetic ability of glorifying and preserving the national heritage led him to write on so many matters and on heroes.

Summarizing the Persian literature, we shall say, at first it was entirely a religious literature as it consisted of the holy book of the Iranian, Zoroastrian, religion, the Avestan, in turn, being a scripture particularly for the Magians (Persian Priests). It subsequently, however, took a turn and became epic also. The period of intermediate stages in this process is represented by a group of epics or heroic tales, in which the religion and the cult play the main part. But with Ferdowsi's Shahnameh or Book of Kings, Iranian literature became secular, purely literary, and national. The Shahnameh is, in fact, more than mere literary heritage. It is the symbol of a great nation's "recurrence to consciousness", that is, the affirmation of its unity, its independence, and its religion. After the Arab conquest and the battle of Nihavand, "the Iranians were depressed and oppressed on account of the loss of their country and religion. The principal accounts of the epic, excepting the Shahnameh, were actually planned for the purpose of strengthening their spirits and consoling them by feeding the vanishing picture of the country they had lost and for which, however, they had still, indeed, for a little time, to wage the war of revenge.

1.2. Ferdowsi and the "Shahnameh"

This is, in fact, the main reason why he spent a lot of time and made heroic efforts on the "Shahnameh". The "Shahnameh" actually inspired the idea of national space, longing for the past. The "Shahnameh" founded afresh old Iranian and new cultural space surrounded by new epic features. It reached new dignity for the national growth of Iranian people and saved them from the influence

of Arab and semi-Arab people once again in the Islamic age. The "Shahnameh" renewed the national and natural environmental beliefs, pure librets, and the moral story of Iranian. In the Islamic age, it inspired a number of literary men with new and completed thoughts and helped to revive Iranian ancient cultural and elevated thoughts. We should keep in mind that it is hard to find a person who achieved a long-life result in Persian Literature, in particular with the same power that the "Shahnameh" had. Other books have been forgotten soon, even by Iranians. It is said that none of the contemporary people or even poets wrote the legend of Feraydun after Ferdowsi. The "Shahnameh" and its different heroic stories present the intellectual world of Islamic thinking.

Ferdowsi was born in 329 or the start of the third decade of the 4th century in an educated family with Arabian descent. His father was a poet who had some knowledge of Zoroaster's religion and old Iranian cultural traditions. Especially his mother helped him and inspired his enthusiastic love for Iran's old cultures. Ferdowsi is known as a person with a good character who loved the oppressed and advised the rich to be ashamed. He rejected the invitations from the king (Mahmud Ghaznavi) and showed that he is an independent person. Ferdowsi was writing ghazals and describing nature when he was young. His popularity convinced him to get money and provide a life for his family because he was a rich person and he got young Ferdowsi involved in that career with good education at that time. However, I think that this pragmatic attitude could not be only for Ferdowsi's family force because he expressed the country's people low state and worried about it. He wanted to do something for Iran's fortune. He made a mental decision in his youth to write a nationalistic epic for Iran, who loved Iran and saw Iran in people.

2. Narrative Structure

It is significant that the adjective "Persian" is not relegated to its general meaning in this platitude. Persianness is used for Iranian monumental artistic products as an artistic category different from its literary aspect. Form is something to be desired in the literary product in order to transform into an epic. The biggest ease provided by form for the reader or audience of an epic is that snoozing off is prevented. Writing a series of stories is feasible without any form. But this non-form writing would turn into a compendium to stop short of the synthesis a "Shahnameh" has. Every episode is there intact in a piece of compendium, each and every one of them is told but without waiting for this telling by the producers different episodes of different stories and episodes belonging to the same story and episode would be welded each other and the reader would be made part of an enormous adventure. (Amini, 2020)(Canepa2021)

The narrative structure of "Shahnameh" can be discussed under three headings: content, form, and detail. The first means the subjects the stories deal with and the events unfolding within their frameworks. Form, on the other hand, signifies the way in which these subjects are ordered, that is, the plot. Detail is a kind of general title covering different quadrants of the "Shahnameh's" narrative structure such as characterization, macro-timing, micro-timing, staging, and summary. In "Shahnameh's" narrative structure, the key concept is form. Although the work is composed of numerous stories having different plots, the way in which these stories are welded into one another is so impeccable that the story subjects, which are different episodes of a culture accumulated for centuries, remain confined in the shades of the form. Accordingly, the best definition of the "Shahnameh" is the "epic of Persian heroism".

2.1. Epic Poem Format

A major part of the book is the struggles of Iranian kings against Arab rulers after Islam. Shahnameh constitutes an unprecedented example of this style, which demonstrates the relationship of the rulers with the people, and the free and obedient people living under the state laws. Therefore, it can be said that Shahnameh was unique in the Islamic world, although it bears a universal aspect. During the writing of these terrific and historical events, the use of production of allegories, riddles, and similes, or works presented according to the criteria of literary aesthetics; and he used fictitious stories that are taught to be in line with heaven. The reason for the discrepancy is described; each piece is individually discussed and considered as its unique value.

The Shahnameh has been composed in epic poem format. An epic poem is generally a long poem that narrates legends and heroic deeds relating to the past. The difference in an epic poem is shown by touching upon superior themes: a great historical event, a national or universal theme, or a character representing a particular group of people. The Shahnameh has fulfilled these requirements fluently. It covers a long period of time since the creation of the world until the fall of the Iranian kingdom. The creator of this work has described the important events of history and identified interesting people. All episodes from the birth of Jamshid, an ancient king, to the Islamic conquest in Iran, have seen the opportunity in The Book of the Kings. Jamshid's capture and showing himself to people, Kaveh rising against Zuhhak, Fereydoun's dividing the world between his three descendants, Iraj, Tur, and Salm, hosts of heroes including Siamak, the grandson of Garhasp, the companion of Fereydoun, Zakhak, the snake-shouldered tyrant king, setting Zaal and Rudaab, the mutual lover, by disowning Siamak, are examples of these historical events.

2.2. Heroic Tales and Mythology

In the antique, non-Islamic Iranian fairy tale, heroes fighting dragons, demons, and dark forces. This battle symbolizes the idea that represents Persia, which was formed in confrontation with the vast power of elemental forces and zombie-making magicians. There are other similarities between the Persian and antique Greek and primitive Indian hero echoes. Therefore, it can be said about Amir that the writer is an epic. The epic means not only the writing, but also the replacement of the unique soul of verse by an expression that is not connected with the verse. However, "Shahnameh" has been written in a poetic language, which is not difficult for the recipients, by simplifying the ancient materials as much as possible.

The "Shahnameh" was written in a time when writing had occupied the dominant position, hence its verses are not verses that we meet in actual life at every moment, but are verses distanced from each other on a meandering journey of about 50,000 kilometers. Memory is important in these places and memories can live in the same way as books of that time. The epic materials of the "Shahnameh," written by Ferdowsi and ancient poets, are oral memories that have passed through the ears and mouths of thousands of people. They have reached us as written by very skillful poets. The "Shahnameh" is a book with a length of about 50,000 verses and a work that has a major place in the history and culture of Persians with its subject and place. As a matter of fact, Persia's history in the epic calculation was written by Ferdowsi in a separate work of art. Ferdowsi has taken his main hero, Rustem, from the already well-established Iranian castle.

2.3. Character Development

In the "Shahnameh", figures appear that embody the values of the time, such as kings, heroes, and wise old men; they symbolize the mission of the world and try to provide amenity in society in peace and war. The initial part of Ferdowsi's epic description has explained that the world is created and

ruled by the beliefs of the epic age; those beliefs had made that wish, keeping the tribunes of the world on the earth, come true. At last, the world will be converted to the fixed concept of those beliefs, which is the pays of goodness and purity of heart. Sperber considers people's interest in the "Shahnameh" as a search for reality. The man seeks his real face and symmetry in his epic destiny and is interested in the auspicious world created by the darkness of his own instinct, wants to shape his world with the light of his thoughts. Some of the characters that are formed based on the epic language, such as Feraydun, Zohak, and Tahmineh, have global features within their factual identity; the gods and goddesses show their fondness for the image of their creation. In Ferdowsi's book, there is a collection of characters that have obtained the global pattern in their local identity.

Ferdowsi has created more than four hundred characters in the "Shahnameh". Some of them are historical characters, and some are imaginary. Ferdowsi, by selecting his characters from the treasury of Iranian culture, introduces them beyond their boundaries to the great arena he has chosen. We may group the characters into three categories: religious figures, folk and historical characters, and human-embodying values. He observes the spirit of the literary language in the talks and manners of the characters. The characters in his stories are not similar to each other in terms of their behavior, speeches, and moods, and we can discern the characters even from their styles. In the "Shahnameh", the traits of speech have created the profile of each character. Ferdowsi superimposes rhetorical forms on behavioral forms; he shows the plot, and he makes the poem a medium that connects the animate and inanimate world.

3. Literary Devices

The only fault of attribution in the poet's couplet is that in the phrase "tajas-e ruhâ" (enchantment of spirits), Ferdowsi's own family name, Ruhini, is revealed. The selection of the opening letter in a verse in accordance with its contents is an important principle observed by Ferdowsi. He must have borrowed this principle from the Arab critics because although the old Persians followed their Zoroastrian religion doggedly, they did not observe this rule in their poetry.

By "a number of words of different meanings or forms starting with the same letter," he means simply alliteration. The specific type of alliteration meant here is found in the line: "A bar abbâs az bar ân barânam chûn mê bâshad," and in a great many other lines. But it generally occurs at the beginnings with syllables rather than words, and as such, and in conjunction with the other two types of alliteration, it is regarded in Persian rhetoric by the name of *tajas-rumâ*.

His literary devices and figures of speech (1424 in all) include, in alphabetical order, the following: allegory, alliteration, anapest, anastrophe, and antithesis, aphorism, assonance. A literary term, assonance is used to refer to the repetition of a particular vowel sound in close proximity to each other. In Ferdowsi's verse, we find a kind of assonance known as "sexusion," which consists of the repetition of the same vowels in the middle of two words.

As a poet, Ferdowsi shines in his use of literary devices and figures of speech through which alone a poet can communicate his thoughts and his emotions and evoke a response in the heart of the reader. The unique thing about him is that he has not borrowed such literary devices from any other writer, whether contemporary or preceding, as was common among Persian poets. He appears to have either independently framed or borrowed freely and boldly without any inhibitory self-consciousness to restrain him, and has thus almost invariably transformed these devices into original ones. Here we have the independent mind of a true artist.

3.1. Metaphors and Symbolism

The lion does not mean the government which is in Afrasiab's own hands, but the whole government of Turan, and the "lions like wolf" gain a more general meaning. Therefore, the Avesta symbols become a shadow that overlooks the universe and its significances. In Afrasiab's kingdom, the cothornus, pourray, and tiara, which are symbols of kings, and the wolves and lions, which are natural objects, are also used as metaphors and symbols in other parts of the "Shahnameh." It is a brother of Zohak, but the same thing with a different angle is meaningless. In this way, the information, feelings, and subjects are not meaningful because they remain in a simple experiment, and it reminds a coffin that covers an aimless soul. The poetic truth and life-giving matter go towards depth when these figures and features reflect an axis and start the eternity depth which speaks.

Metaphors and symbolism in the "Shahnameh" are literal and abstract in both content and form, using characters or events as symbols or moralizing allusions. Other types of metaphors or symbols can be found in the depictions. In the "Shahnameh," these metaphors indicate ideas that stem from the subjects and content. It is just like the technique used by Ferdowsi in the creation of symbols. For example, the term "lion" is not used only to depreciate Afrasiab's character. This animal becomes an allusion to Afrasiab's government, and its nature goes beyond its personal expression.

3.2. Imagery and Descriptive Language

The Indian Rascal sends Dane Badar to a large cloud of art and creativity to create a visual language to describe it. On the one hand, the Indian policeman uses metaphysical expressions. He explains the events using descriptive languages and the impact of emotions and intentions, and uses the words of motivation, "Shall I say this?" - This is quick. "What should I say about this cloud to its grace?" On the other hand, emotionally, the pain comes from scandal, mental pain, or that misfortune and illness is the result of the worst. Molavi's love laments pour groans and knees with the widest range of desires and wincing imagination to display the phenomena that has been whirling in soul film who experienced significant and positive Eblissed. The legendary language of Ferdowsi omnipresent, especially in intense fight scenes, intoxicates thoughts and emotions, creating the image of seemingly silent but ever-living images; the extraordinary eloquence of this lingua franca enlightens electrified hearts.

Imagery and descriptive language are witnessed from being dependent on the imagination, emotions, and talents of the artist. They are often difficult for the audience and the auditor to make judgments about each at the same time. Descriptive language and imagery are two key elements that are closely linked to the constructivist space of stories, especially epics. Imagery emerges from descriptive language, and description creates and recreates everything that constitutes an epic for the humanistic eye and fills the souls of the ears. If descriptive language is like an artist's outline, then the eyes are drawn to the language.

3.3. Rhythmic Verses and Rhyme

On the other hand, the development of the rhythm of verse, which is one of the most important aspects of euphony, is an art. Its presence in the book of Shahnameh is indicative of terseness. It is the fast withdrawal of force that brings charm and beauty to the language and the spirit of vibrancy, which is the soul of the art of poetry. The effect of rhyme is largely due to the equilibrium change in the Arabic verse. Its presence is evidence of the full resonance and resonance of the word system. It appropriately regulates the order of the poetic words in a way that prevents all negative arguments from entering it. In other words, it prevents confusion and chaos in poetry by maintaining the proper order and preserving their experiences.

Rhythmic verses and rhyme have always been a feature of Ferdowsi's poetry that gives his poem soul, novelty, and life. Ferdowsi's tone and resonance, which he has achieved through his efforts, have made his poem extremely pleasant to create an epic narration. This has caused the poem to be sung or recited in different gatherings and ceremonies. The existence of rhyme in a 50-Shah title leads to beauty and elegance in the word, especially in pronunciation. This indicates the importance and advantage of rhyme and harmony in the word. Beauty and harmony in the structure of the word and writing the word in its sound system are necessary conditions of poetry.

4. Influence and Legacy

The European scholars who assisted the Indian and Pakistani scholars in producing a recent forty-five-volume translation of the Shahnameh into English have been candid in admitting that even with the numerous original manuscripts of the Shahnameh and its more recent copies, the Iranian world has not given the Shahnameh its due. The Shahnameh, once honored for both its artistic and moral implications, is now left largely unadorned and unappreciated but for a few selfless writers writing in small foreign academic journals. Melville thus points out that the significance of the Shahnameh is underscored by the fact that it remains the most central and crucial work in Iranian civilization. (Mohammadi)(Mousavi, 2021)(Sazonov)(Mohammadnezhad et al.2022)(Alavi & Fazeli, 2021)

The legacy of Ferdowsi's Shahnameh has been as imposing as the work itself, with many later myths and legends in the Persian-speaking world being traced back to this masterpiece. To date, few attempts have been made to adapt the Shahnameh for modern-day English-speaking audiences. Charles Melville, who has authored a biography of Shah Abbas Ismail I and has translated a number of Persian sources into English—including stories from the Shahnameh—has described the Shahnameh as a "work of universal significance" and has opined that this masterpiece has yet to receive the attention it truly deserves. Although more attention has been paid to the Shahnameh over the past century than in the entire thousand years that have gone by since the death of Ferdowsi, Melville rightfully argues that this masterpiece still remains largely unexplored and unknown to contemporary readers.

4.1 Theatre, Cinema and Opera Adaptations

4.1. Cultural Significance

This fact has been questionable: why did the Iranians, being led by Iranian seer Jayhoosh to Sanazd, not just embrace the Iranian divinity after victory? There were spiritual reasons. Although the Iranians have been living in the Iranian plateau in the midst of intelligent nations of horse-cattle owners, they were monotheists of broad scale with strong philosophical evidence in Avesta, and the Holy Book of Zartosht, which contains deeper words of Ahura-Mazdah and not Ahura-Mazdah. However, those who were under the sway of Huruk-e Mohemi or mankind considered the need to have some faith in spirits possessing different personal characters, and his assistants reducing human moral and communal obligations with the multifaceted charm of his belief to the rite of fire, dodging them from daily life's demands and shortcomings.

Ferdowsi is the founder of Persian epic poetry. By creating the Shahnameh, he breathed life into what, in the first place, existed as a mass of memories and as spoken tradition. The book, produced through ten centuries of national annals of Iranshahs and mubahasts, and lay hidden in oral traditions, appeals to everyone's imagination. Its normal world remained out of reach of the written script but was ever so much alive that Ferdowsi found his own creation simple in comparison. Ferdowsi explains that Persians embraced Martian worship because the star Mars, in Persian language, is called Tamcheh-

ye Farrokh, bearing the night-portent for Farrokhzad, and Tamcheh also being used to indicate magic and unusual and unpleasant events also became Tamcheh-ye Huruk-e Mohemi.

4.2. Inspiration for Other Works

Hence, many of the potentates have had their palaces decorated with scenes from some of the Iranian minstrels' poems. The both upon of Tamanouskis in Asia Minor is circumferenced Dun-Soleiman scenes, which illustrate the main events of the Shahnameh. A school and a laboratory were sacked there, and a factory was saved when the spectators saw the most horrified from being destroyed. Some historical figures say how much it was indifferent to people of any race, faith, or language. In fact, the possession of a mastery arose lamentation or complaint by a minstrel over the poor lot of heroes, profoundly interested in people who were not strangers to tragedies, passions, or events narrated in the monstelic poems and prose.

Imagination has gone so far with minstrels that the works of any of them have not been inferior to Ferdowsi's Shahnameh after so many years in many lands. The Shahnameh has been an inspiration for many prose and poetical works: some of them borrowed the names of the heroes of the Shahnameh, if not the deeds or adventures. The inspiration has run from the written poetry to the works of plastic arts, such as sculpture, pot-fruits, or frescoes, which usually adorn the buildings. It should be remembered that there has been an admiration for the Shahnameh works of art, where people were fully enchanted by the heroes such as Rostam and Sohrab, Sohrab and Gordief, and Siavosh. Likewise, the ministers of the most powerful rulers, who were themselves half-histrionic or minstrels, also incarnated the heroes in reality.

4.3. Preservation and Translation Efforts

The Shahnameh and Hezar Afsaneh, inspired by the epics, are the two identical sources which rekindle, amongst certain amateurs, the interest for tales influenced by the ancient Iranian and Arabian cultures. The poets found the first treasure (melodic and poetic versions but above all secularised) and the latter paginated these songs to respond to the demand of the rich Iraqi patrons of the X and XI centuries. Speaking of the object of the Shahnameh, R. Scharfer noted in his edition of the Nizami paraphrase of stories from the end of the Persian vulgate: "one is struck by the mass of confusion, errors and anachronisms which surrounds this opus extending countless different epochs, different lands and even different men".

The waste of time and transcendence of the myth of Rostam in the pre-eminence of the body were the opposite extreme to that revealed in the Persian vulgate Shahnameh - the disembowelment which bled and condemned the infant Esfandiyyar who had been awakened, cut off by an alien lineage (Arab) from those who had been the forerunners of Zoroaster, the Sapentas of the Magi. As I went massaging such haste at the expense of the legends of prehistory which have made a people and territory in particular a symbol - of return and resurrection - in recent decades the land of Iran and its inhabitants, a number of poets even recent ones like Iraj Mirza or the Persian Anatole, have devoted their efforts to the preservation and spread of Firdawsi's work, sometimes suffering great privations to fight against ignorance and indifference.

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