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# A Comparative Analysis of Educational Teaching in Shahnameh and Iliad

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## Abstract

Ferdowsi's Shahnameh and Homer's Iliad are among the first literary masterpieces of Iran and Greece. These teachings include the educational teachings of Zal and Roudabeh, and Paris and Helen. This paper presents a comparative look at the immortal effect of this Iranian poet with Homer's poem-- the Greek blind poet. In this comparison, using a content analysis method, the effects of the educational teachings of these two stories are extracted and expressed, The results of this study show that the human and universal educational teachings of Shahnameh are far more than that of Homer's Iliad.

**Keywords:** teachings, education, analysis, Shahname, Iliad.

## Introduction

The literature of every nation is a mirror of the entirety of thought, culture and customs of that nation, which can be expressed in elegance and artistic delicacy in many different ways. Shahnameh and Iliad both represent the literature of the two peoples of Iran and Greece, which contain moral values for the happiness of the individual and society. "The most obvious points of Shahnameh are its advice and many examples and moral commands. To do this, Ferdowsi has taken every opportunity and has made every event an excuse. Even kings and warriors are used for this purpose. "Comparative literature is also an important foundation for the exodus of indigenous literature from isolation, and it will be a part of the entire literary heritage of the world, exposed to thoughts and ideas, and is also capable of helping to identify contemplation legacies in the understanding and friendship of the various nations."(Ghanimi, 44: 1994) Epic literature includes poems that have a spiritual aspect, not an individual one. Therefore, the poet expresses less of his personal emotions. In this type, "the artist never speaks of "me" himself and because of this the epic domain is very broad."(Shafiei Kadkani, 1372: 81).

The topic of education and nurture in Shahnameh and Homer's Iliad has always been obvious in two in different sections, especially in the stories of Zal and Roudabe, and Paris and Helen. It is said that "If we look for the special Iranian

ethic, we must find it beyond and more than anywhere, in Shahnameh."If we suppose that the only piece in which the moral commands are presented to us is "Shahnameh", it can be considered a response to the moral and spiritual needs of humanity today "(Maskob, 1381: 103). Shahnameh contains various types of heroism and love stories, and there are warriors of men who have done extraordinary things. It also contains subtle affairs and love stories that have been portrayed in the most magnificent way. In Shahnameh, the heart beats are blended with the sound of swords and kindred songs along with the scream of anger and revenge (referto: Kafafi, 2003: 249). The story of Zal and Roudabeh with 1407 couplets is one of the most beautiful mythical vocal stories. In this paper, the researcher is to study and compare the differences and similarities between educational teachings in these two stories -- "Zal and Roudabeh", and "Paris and Helen".

### **Zal**

The influence of Zal in Shahnameh was not due to the fact that he was a warrior, for he had not actually participated in any major wars. However, he was one of the great advisers of the Persian kings, and was respected by all the warriors. The Iranians went to Zal whenever they got into trouble. When Kavos plans to attack Mazandaran, with the insistence of the elders, he warns Kavos, saying:

The army should not be pulled over,

No one has heard such an idea from kings.

If these famous men are inferior to you,

But they are God's true .After Sam, the greatest and most famous warrior of this family, his son Zal became the great warrior of Iran. Zal and Zar both have the same meaning, as it has come in the epic poems. For many years, Sam wished to have a son and then God bestowed him a son. Since his hair was white, his father placed him on the mountain of Alborz to get rid of him, but with the help of God, Simorgh raised the baby.

### **Paris**

Paris, who is also called Alexander, was the youngest son of Priam, the king of Trojan. When he was born, his mother, Hakob, dreamed that she had delivered a torch that would burn all the Trojan towers. The dream specialist interpreted

her dream. They interpreted that she bears a child who will ruin the city of Trojan. Hakob hides her child Paris on Mount Aida, where he is raised under the supervision of a shepherd, and was named Alexander, which means the sponsored man. Everyone thought he is dead and the held Memorial days in his name. It took years when he once participated in a race that was celebrated on his Memorial Day(Paris, the son of Priyam). (no one was aware of his survival) but his sister, Cassander, recognized him. "(Beh manesh, 1356: 63-682) The battle circuit in the Iliad was the love of the woman. "Paris" – The prince of Trojan–goes to Greece and deceives "Helen" – Man Laos's wife – and brings her with him. The Ten-year Trojan War is for this woman ... But in Shahnameh, the war's motive is often a sense of pride, love of freedom, or the sense of revenge (Zarrin Kub, 2002: 128-127). During Paris's trip to Sparta, he seduces the wife of Man Laos, and takes her to Trojan. Of course he like Zal wasn't given much of an important role in the war. In the early years of the Paris-Man Laos war they made an agreement and fought against each other with the condition that anyone who wins will get Helen. In this war Paris will be defeated, but with the support of the goddess of Aphrodite, he will be released from the battlefield. Ferdowsi only sees good human qualities in his heroes and while expressing pleasurable stories step by step he teaches moralities.

### **Social-Ethical Education**

Basically, in a complete epic, in addition to describing the warriors and fields of war, the ethical beliefs, customs, the civilization of a nation is also reflected , which manifests the social education of that nation.

"Social education is the cultivation and guidance of the individual. So he, with an emotional desire for social life, plays his divine and human responsibility and, while adhering to mutual rights, takes advantage of favorable conditions and social teachings for his development and interaction and so on. And moral development to a great deal depends on social development "(Shoari Nezhad, 1985: 353). "Nietzsche, the great thinker and philosopher of Germany, and the creator of "What Zarathustra said" has stated in his book " The arising of Tragedy or Hellenism and Pessimism ", that people's imagination always aspires for heroism, and this hero is a diagram of a human society that, even with hostility and wars, and their communities, come close to the source of divinity, and each hero finds two faces (heavenly and terrestrial), or (God's and

mankind's)"(Fatemi, 7: 2008). The belief in the mysterious sacredness of the mountain and the role of the relationship with the supernal world have also infiltrated in the great religions of the world. Most prophets have learned their ordinances on the mountains and have conveyed them to humans.

There was a religious man on that mountain  
Who had no grief on gothic work.

(Shahname,1996:21 volume 1)

The place of religious educators in the Shahnameh was in the mountains, which means a group of religious leaders called Katouzians (educators) separated from people and settled worshipping in the mountains (Mehrabadi, 1: 740). The ancient Iranians were accustomed to "climbing on the highest peaks of the mountains and make sacrifices to Zeus [Ahura Mazda]. They call the whole dome of the sky Zeus, and they make sacrifices for the sun, the moon, the earth, fire, wind, and water. "Their alters are not in the temples, but on the mountain peaks. (Amozgar, 1395: 32).

The group that you call them Katouzians (educators)  
Who you know them as worshippers,  
Separated them from the group  
And placed the worshippers on the mountain.

(Shahname,1996:40/1)

Among the examples of socio-ethical education attention to hospitality, loyalty to the covenant, and ... will be analyzed:

### **A. Hospitality**

In the affair of Zal and Roudabe, when Mehrab is afraid of Manouchehr, he tells his wife "Sindokht": "The only way to soften the king of Iran and save Kabul and the people of Kabul from the hostility of Manouchehr and Sam's mace is to kill you and your daughter in front of the people." But Sindokht, like any compassionate woman and mother, tells her husband that he will not get anywhere by killing her and her daughter. But he must act with diplomacy, and go to Sam, Zal's father, with a lot of gifts. With his wise words he changed Sam's mind keeping him from attacking to Kabul.

I am all needy in front of you

If you want to kill us, kill us

And if you want to capture us, capture us.

As the warrior listened to her,  
He found his wife wise.

(Shahname,1996: volume1:162)

When Mehrab, the ruler of Kabul, and one of the descendants of Zahak, and, the deceased and the tributary of Sam's father, welcomed Zal with many gifts, Mehrab requested Zal to be his guest, and that this was his only wish.

Zal was welcomed warmly  
And respected their rites.  
They came to the turquoise throne  
Singing happily and joyfully.

(Shahname,1996: volume 1:155-158)

The love story of Zal and Roudabe, is the most romantic poem in Shahnameh. Zal and Roudabe's love is different from erotic excitements.

I don't want neither Caesar nor Chinese emperor  
Not even Persian merchants.  
I only want Sam's son Zal,  
with lion arms and mane  
I love him not because of his face and hair  
I love him because of art.

(Shahname,1996: volume 1:126-127)

When the night falls, the love and affection of Roudabe for Zal can be considered as a hospitality in this epic. "When the night falls, from this side Roudabe has decorated the palace and has made herself ready waiting for her lover. On the other side, Zal comes to the palace with his servant. Roudabeh goes on the roof of the palace and welcomes Zal and sings."(Dabir Siaghi, 2001: 46)

I asked from the universe's God

To show me your face in secret

(Shahname,1996: volume 1:171)

When that beautiful lady sat on the roof,

He saw her and fell for her.

(Shahname,1996: volume 1:172)

Roudabe is an objective case of the power of Iranian women. While she knows that Zal is of a different origin from hers, and that the origin of Zal is in conflict with Garshasb the Dragon killer; their marriage is like a mixture of water and fire, Roudabeh opens this way with her wisdom. Roudabe lives throughout the seven hundred-year-old epics. She is proud to have her son Rostam, the world warrior of Iran. And at the end of her life is accompanied by the tragedy of the death of his son Rostam and the destruction of Zabul; But in Homer's epic the Trojan prince, Paris, the shepherd on the Mount Aida is judging among three goddesses: Hera, Athena, Aphrodite. These three, each of whom consider themselves the most beautiful one, will ask Paris to choose the most beautiful among them. Each of them also promises him a great gift in order to seduce and incite him. Among them, Aphrodite's gift, the lady of beauty and desire, was the most beautiful woman in the world, Helen, Menelaos's wife. Paris, drawn to Aphrodite and her gift, chooses her, and brought the hatred and anger of the other two ladies. Paris enjoys the help of the beloved goddess, and as a guest goes to Menelaos's mansion and seduces Helen and takes her to Trojan (refer to: Kazazi, 2000: 6). In the story of Helen and Alexander (Paris), hospitality is a matter to think about from two aspects. At first, Paris goes to Menelaos and Helen's mansion with the help of Aphrodite (the goddess of beauty). In spite of the hospitality of Menelaos, in his absence, Paris, regardless of the ethical principles, and Helen disrespectful to ethics and marital commitments scape to the Trojan together. The second case, although Hector - the devoted hero and commander of the Trojan troops - and Paris's brother knew that the cause of the civil war of "Greece and Trojan" was the behavior of this unfaithful woman, throughout this twenty years (ten years to fight with the army of Trojan, and another ten years to intake), did not blame or disrespect their guest Helen. As in Hector's funeral, she says with such sorrow and cry: "Hector! In my heart, you were dearer than the other brothers of my

husband. Alexander {Paris}, who is as beautiful as a god, is my husband who brought me to the Trojan land. I wish I had died before that! Now this year is the 20th year I have come here and have left my homeland, but I have never heard a cold word from you. "(Iliad, 2008: 556-557). The way of teaching in the past of Iranian and Greek culture, were each different in various ways.

### **A. Commitment and loyalty**

Other educational teachings of Ferdowsi's Shahnameh, which are directly mentioned in the story of Zal and Roudabe, emphasize the loyalty of the Iranian people towards the secrets and the unity of love, which is another aspect of Iranian moral education. One of the characteristics of Shahnameh's women is that they themselves choose their future spouse, and this is the most important reason for their loyalty to their husbands.

That beautiful black-eyed lady came to the roof

Like a cedar with a full moon on her head.

Zal says:

Find a way to meet,

What do you ask when you're on the roof and I'm down here.

The beautiful lady said and the young warrior listened,

She answered quickly

Take my black hair from this side,

All my hair is for you

But Zal doesn't accept:

I'll rather shoot my heart with an arrow

And die than to do this harm to you.

And at last:

They met and held hands

And fell in love.

He came down from the high wall,

With his lariat in his hand.

I accepted from the holy God

To never break my vows and ...

Women like Helen are fanciful and have been defamed because of abandoning shame and chastity, and despite having a husband and daughter look for a young boy named Paris and become a traitor. "Helen is one of the most adulterous characters of Iliad, whom Aphrodite restrains her."(Seydir, 1375: 276). Unfortunately, in Homer's epic literature, women are deprived of such a right as being free to choose her husband. She would not have suffered all this, and would not disregard her husband and child, if she had that choice.

## **2. Emotional education:**

The emotion comes from affection which means the sense of the tendency and flexibility that is created by one's connection with the person existing outside himself. Emotional education means guiding, controlling emotions and feelings and using them in the right time in the direction for the human goal. The education based on affection in Ferdowsi's Shahnameh, especially in Roudabe and Zal's Story, means the emotional guidance of human forces in order to strengthen the pure feelings and to create a connection and coherence between them in order to benefit from the natural talents of individuals for each other and the community effectively. The affection in Shahnameh is based on morality and the discipline ruling this, should be emotional-based ethics (Toghyani, 1393: 42).The description of Mehrab from Zal in the presence of Roudabe brings up the flames of love in her, so she falls in love with him even though she hasn't seen him:

In the whole universe

Zal is peerless among the knights

No one could bare stay near Zal-Zar (white-haired)

She felt in love with Zal

And walked away with a sweet melancholy filled heart



(Shahname,1996: volume 1:160)

Roudabe's soul became fascinated and full of love.

I'm in love with him like a crying

(Shahname,1996: volume 1:161)

As Roudabeh heard their opinions

...

Neither do I want the emperor of china

Nor the Caesar or the Persian kings

(Shahname,1996: volume 1:162)

The emotional points in the stories of Shahnameh have been told in an innovative way that can be considered for human teachings anywhere and anytime. "One of the pillars of the permanence and immortality of a masterpiece in eastern world is always to emphasize the principles, the moral and ethical doctrines."(Yellme ha, 1390: 155)

### **In the story of Helen and Paris**

The Spartan Helen, Man Laos's wife was stolen by the Prince of Troy with the conspiracy of the Greek goddess Aphrodite, and went to Trojan. She was also called Helen of Troy, and was the daughter of Zeus and Leda. Aphrodite, the goddess of love and beauty, took the young shepherd Paris, directly to Helen and Man Laos. An interest was felt between the guest and the host, but Paris made a contract with Man Laos not to ever annoy one another. But Paris broke the contract he had made. And Man Laos traveled having confidence in Paris. Paris was not loyal to his promise and stole a woman. Here, Paris's love for Helen was tempted by one of the goddesses, and did something immoral as Hector, Paris's brother, blames him for it.

"O Paris! Oh, you're cursed and evil! O You boast beautifully! You are in a hurry to escape! O seducer! I wish you were not born and you would have been dead without marriage! Yes! I could wish this for you. You deserve to have that destiny more than being alive and make such a disgrace and despondency in the eyes of others. "(Iliad: 61)

Paris responds to Hector

"Hector! You curse me not out of cruelty but of righteousness. Your heart is always intolerant and hard-tempered, like an ax used by a skillful man ...."(Iliad: 61).

The above evidence shows that Paris respects and obeys God's guidance.

While Aphrodite, The Goddess of love is the mediator of love between Paris and Helen, she is the one who showed this the most beautiful woman in the world to Paris and captured her. Helen spoke to her husband with heart-rending words:

"... I fear that you will soon die with his [Man Laos] spear, but Paris will respond with the expression of love, desire and demand. O woman, don't defile my heart with heart-rending words ... We also have gods to bless us. But let go of these words! "(Iliad: 75)

## **2. Friendship and avoiding hostility**

Avoiding hostility and warfare are other educational messages of this story. The hostility of Turan and Iran is a major obstacle preventing the marriage of Zal and Roudabe, in this love story. Zal is saying romantic prayers, which in fact expresses the thoughts and desires of Ferdowsi. These two couplets show the teaching of friendship and humanity. It also states that life is valued with friendship and human virtues. Avoiding war and hostility is in Ferdowsi's thoughts.

I'll go to god and worship him

Like worshipers

So that the world's king Sam

Will abandon the war and hostility and rage.

(Shahname, 1996: volume 1:173)

Epic literature is closely linked to educational literature, especially in Shahnameh in which these two literary forms have combined.

"O woman ... indeed, today, Man Laos crushed me with Athena's help, but I will crush him again" (Iliad: 71).

### **Conclusion:**

- In both epics, Paris and Zal are abandoned by their parents over the mountains of Aida and the Alborz because of the superstitions of predictors. Both of them are blessed by the goddesses and the only God. They grew up, and after a few years they returned to their family and country.
- In the Shahnameh, Zal's family regretted their child abandonment, and with God's prayers and support, they had their child back. While Paris returned with the help of a goddess, but was led to the loss of his family.
- Commitment and loyalty are very evident in Roudabe's story, while in the story of Helen and Paris, such a beautiful character cannot be seen. Helen is relaxed in the arms of her husband's enemy and also slept with him. She also watches the fight between Paris and Man Laos, her legal husband over the tower, and when Paris escapes from the battlefield, she reveals her most charming affection to Paris the Prince of Troy in bed and embraces him and with her romantic temptations, gets rid of the battle's bitterness.
- In the story of Roudabe, the emotional education was stronger because she was extremely in love with Zal . While in the story of Helen and Paris, this affair was contrary to the custom and was secret and at last made a scandal.
- In the aspect of friendship, Roudabe with her own wisdom and advice of her mother who was a manager herself, was able to make peace between the two countries, Iran and Turan which had a lot of conflicts. But in the story of Helen whose guide was the Goddess of Aphrodite, this love (temptation) makes a disaster, and her evil beauty leads to many wars and kills a lot of men.
- Adherence to the marriage contract in Rudabe's story is evident, while according to the Greek legislator, Walter Durant, the situation of women in Greece was as follows: "We enjoy prostitution with our servants and illegitimate women during the day to provide health for our bodies and our women will bring us legitimate children "(Durant, 1337: 338)

- Ferdowsi's Shahnameh is a pleasant collection of valuable human learnings. The scope of these educations is so broad that this masterpiece has gone beyond the epic masterpieces and is turned it into an encyclopedia of morality, and its teachings is so much more evident than Iliad's epic Homer and ...
- In both epics, the two powerful transcendence powers help the heroes of these two stories. The voodoo, trick and power of transcendence in the story of Zal (Simorgh's help) and that of Aphrodite's (the goddess of love) help for Paris in his defeat, are the common points of these two stories that are not debatable in terms of teaching.

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