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A summary of sleep reporting and prediction ceremony in ferdowsi's shahname

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ABSTRACT

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In Shahname of wise of the Tus, a range of ceremonial issues, such as food, clothing, partying, eating, sleeping and dreaming to monarchy rituals with many possible patterns are written, and these are the signs of the perfection of the Shahname, and undoubtedly all of these issues are happened in our lives that their existential philosophy should be studied. One of the things that were most interesting for the ancestors was the prediction of dreams and that part of the astronomy which extracted laws and their effects on human beings' fate. This paper is about dreaming and prediction ceremony and to explore how events are appeared in our dreams before they have been occurred. And who knows these issues. Was it just the dreams of kings and heroes predicted? Or is it possible for common people's dreams to be predicted? What is the relation between dream, the unseen worlds and witness?

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1. Introduction

Shahname is a masterpiece in which more unknowns are added by further explorations. Be aware of the future has been a concern and demand of human beings which engages their minds. Dreaming and prediction are kinds of issues which encourage people to discover the secrets of the future. One of the

aspects of dreaming in Shahname Ferdowsi is prediction and knowing about the future. Prediction means telling about the events in near of far future, regardless of whether it would be happened or not. Prediction is one of the prominent elements of epic which has many aspects in Shahname. The inspirations were explained clearly by priests and astronomers and people's fate were determined. The mystery of the inside of the human with the world would reveal the secrets. Undoubtedly, there are some inspirations while someone is dreaming and reveal the events of the future. Some of these dreams would come true, such as dreams of old men of Viseh and Zahhak and Zal and just wisers know these issues. This wisdom is a kind of Divine light which lied inside the mighty and just kings. Some examples of these predictions are explained in the dream of Kei Khosro, Anushiravan, Babak, Goshtasp the king and etc. When it leads to death and because there is no way to escape from death, the only choice was to live happily and establish justice and purity.

2. Sleep reporting and prediction ceremony

"The other ancient ritual that we face in all of the Shanname is dreaming ceremony which has the close connection with fate authority. Believing in fate is the basic ceremony and generally fate is a great symbol in epics and is its basis. One of its aspects in Shahname is predicting the future events by dreaming through priests. The other aspect of fate authority is to predict the future by stars' status. As doctor Bahar said, it shows how important the absolute fate is in Shahname and there is no sense of freedom. In Zoroastrian religion, dream is not a simple phenomenon, but the theme of that should be understood, because dream is such a thing that shows some events in the future, in both normal sleep and visible reality. At first it was thought that sleeping is equal to death and darkness and in contrary, awakening is equal to life and light. But of course, it is not true. Awakening attributes to God, but in contrast, sleep belongs to god of day, Ahuramazda. The last Zoroastrians had prayed a god called Khavamne (sleep) which always associated with a trait named Mazddate, which means creator of Mazda. If myths are social sources of truth, dreaming is a gate through which humans can perceive the truth"(Vaheddust, 2000, 460).

"In Shahname, dreaming is much more mythological ritual with esoteric signs and symbols. Dreams are the mirrors of a hero's fortune and he should unquestionably accept whatever he saw in the dream and his attempt to disobey and escape from its fulfilment like running away from the fate is in vain. Good heroes, such as Siavosh and Kai Khosro who were aware of their dreams' mystery and never escaped from their fates, but Zahhak, was searching for Fereydoon to kill him due to his terrible dream"(Vaheddust, 2000, 461).

"In Shahname, dream is a night secret that should be hidden from strangers and just sleep reporters are allowed to hear that and the dream should only be said to a confidant. A hero often dreams not only one night, but also several consecutive nights and the message sends him gradually not abruptly. The examples are Sam's dream, two dreams of Bbak, the Ardeshir's grandfather and 10 dreams of Kayde Hendi"(ibid, 462).

3. Anushiravan's dream

Anushiravan dreamed that a tree grows beside his bed. He invited sleep reporters and priests to predict his dream but there were few to do this.

One night Shah Nushiravan lay asleep, but his soul was alert, wise and clairvoyant.

He beheld in his sleep how in front of his throne there sprang up a majestic tree, which rejoiced the king's heart so greatly that he called for wine and music and minstrels.

But stead with him on that couch of ease and luxury was a sharp tusked boar.

There it sat and indulged in wine bibbing, demanding to drink from Nushiravan's own cup.

And when Sol put up his heart in the sign of Taurus there was heard om all sides the melodious lament of the lark.

The king sat upon the throne moodily, his heart full of presentiment because of the dream.

An interpreter of dreams was summoned and the warriors were given places at an audience, at which the Shah told counsellor and guides what he had seen in his vision.

The interpreter of dreams made no response, for he had no recollection of any similar story.

The Shah sent about the land for other interpreters, offering rich rewards for anyone who could explain the significance of the vision (Distich 970-983, p 1062).

"One night Nushin Ravan (Anushiravan) dreamed that a majestic tree was grown beside his bed and the king became happy of seeing that and sent for the bard and wine. Again he dreamed that a hog was sat beside his bed and stared at him stunningly and took his goblet of wine. When he woke up in the morning, he was sad due to the dream that he saw. He sent for a sleep reporter, but he was not able to predict king's dream. The king sent for another sleep reporter. Eventually, a man named Azad Sarv came to the palace and interpreted the dream that "a young man with woman's dress and jewelry is entered into the seraglio". By hearing this, the king became upset and ordered to interrogate the seraglio. A young man came out of a veil and everybody were wondered of the true report" (Abadi Babil, 1971, 48-147).

The boy in reply said: 'in your house, among the women of your seraglio, there is a young man who goes about garbed as a woman' (Distich 25-1025, p 1064).

Bouzarjomehr is a wise sage who interprets Anushiravan's dream and believes that this dream is a secret that nobody should know about it.

When Bozorgmehr heard what the envoy was saying he listened and raised his face.

To the master he said: 'this is game for me, Interpreting dreams is my subject'.

The man of the Avesta shouted out to him, 'have you corrected your copybook? You beast wildly Have you ever interpreted a dream?'

At that the envoy said, 'my learned man perhaps he knows something. Do not attempt to subdue him.

It may be that destiny has illuminated this boy and that he has learned from fortune rather than from you.'

Angry at Bozorgmehr, the master told him to tell the envoy what he had in mind.

He answered that he would speak to nobody save the Shah and only then if he gave him a place before the throne (Distich 996-1002, p 1063).

Bouzarjomehr interprets Anushiravan's dream and says that, there is a man among the women in seraglio that wears woman's dress and this stranger should be out of there as soon as possible.

'Clear the place of all the strangers so that no one may give a hint of what I am about to advise.'

The king's eunuchs were commanded to parade the occupants of the seraglio naked before him and a youth was discovered who was claimed by one of them to be her brother (Distich 1026-1028, p 1064).

4. Kaykhosro and awareness of death

They continued with him

He soon arrived at the promised fountain in which he bathed. He then said to his followers:

"Now it is time for our separation, you must go," but they still remained.

Again he said:

"You must go quickly, for presently heavy showers of snow will fall and a tempestuous wind will arise, and you will perish in the storm.

The followers became sad and slept with sorrow.

The next day, when the sun rose, the king was disappeared.

(Distich 21-3029, p 19-618).

"After sixty years of being king, Kaykhosro commanded that no one should be allowed to enter into the palace. Then he prayed and asked God of his death. The elders were amazed of his will and thought that he was captivated by beast. Hence, they went to see Zal and Rostam to help the king. Again, Khosro want to his isolation and wanted his death while he was praying. Eventually, he dreamed an oracle who invited him to the God, and then due to the frequent praises his dream came true" (Sarami, 2004, 572).

"Kaykhosro, in his third solitary night and praising the God and asking for his death, dreamed an oracle who gave him good news that if he hastened, he would be accompanied by the Lord and then the oracle advised him to choose a successor and share everything he had among people and run to God" (Sarami, 2004, 557).

"The last night that Kaykhosro and his followers spent around the spring, he told them: "We will be together this night, but tomorrow we won't see each other. After my disappearance a storm will blow and there will be a heavy snow and you will go down in the snow"(Sarami, 2004, 547).

"According to kaykhosro's prediction, next day, the king became disappear, the heavy snow started to fall and all the warriors buried in snow"(ibid, 562).

5. Amazement of kaykhosro's death

The warriors and followers said that: 'No one had seen how the King was vanished even rebels did not see him'(Distich 3040, p 619).

"The climax of the story is death of Kaykhosro. In Shahname, Kaykhosro is the one who is pious and in the end he is lost mysteriously in God by help of an oracle and joins the sun as a particle and unites the sea like a drop. The secret of his victory is having a sense of being guilty because of killing his grandfather, Afrasiab, in revenge for his father, Siavosh, and hence, he prefers to die instead of being like Zahhak and Jamshid and eventually he goes to meet God. This story requires more psychoanalysis than other stories in Shahname and Ferdowsi analyzed the conscience of story's main hero. Ferdowsi, step by step introduces Kaykhosro to the readers through his frequent praise and unmasks the face of his soul masterly and finally sends this naked soul to the God in the myth of snow land. By looking at one of these cries, we find Kaykhosro an impressive hero in boosting the story and making the story's atmosphere so sensational. It should be mentioned that the fascinating theme of our contemporary analytic novel is born out of utilizing this kind of procedure"(Sarami, 2004, 93-292).

6. Alexander's dream

One night, Alexander dreamed that there was a huge elephant in his palace. The elephant was hardly passed through the door's orifice. Another night he dreamed that his throne is emptied and etc.

One night wise Alexander had been sleeping calmly and with no fear. He dreamed that a huge elephant in a big house.

The door of the house was more visible than the house. There was a huge elephant entering the palace.

The elephant passed through the door's orifice, and its body did not injure.

It passed the orifice but its proboscis stuck in the orifice.

Another night, he dreamed that the throne is emptied.

Another one was sat on the throne and put his crown on his head.

Three later nights, he again dreamed that there was a canvas which was being pulled by four men with difficulty(Shahname, 802, Distich 124-132).

Mehran, the sleep reporet, interpreted his dream: the house is the symbol of world and the elephant is the symbol of ungrateful king and etc.

If you wish me to provide fruitful advice about what you are to do, I will give you an answer to your dreams.

'First you saw a house with a narrow entrance from which an elephant suddenly emerged

You must recognize that house as the world and the house as an impious king who acts with injustice, utters falsehoods and has nothing of majesty but the name.

'Second the crown and throne which you saw vacated by one and then by destiny's will occupied by another

That is the perverse vengeance taken by the world, which carries one man away and quickly brings another in.

He may be mean at heart and feeble of body, eager in lust and dark in spirit

When his subjects are glad that sort of king has his heart full of rancor and his lips emit signs.

Then the finely woven linen you saw which was being pulled by four men of sharp wit, yet without the fabric's being torn or the men pulling being overcome by weariness must understand with regard to that the linen is the religion of God and the four who pulled are its adherents (Shahname,803-804, Distich 170-179).

7. Babak's dream

Babak, son of Rudyab, lay sleeping one night when his illumined spirit beheld in a dream how. Sasan rode astride a wild elephant his hand holding an Indian scimitar.

Men who came towards him saluted him and called down blessing on him.

By his benefactions he caused the earth to flourish and he swept away the unhappiness tore every gloomy heart.

The next night also as Babak lay asleep his mind was occupied by thought .

In the dream he saw a fire-worshipper bearing there blazing fires in his hand.

Like the fire altars of Azargoshtasb Karrad and Mehr, all flamed before Sasan, sandalwood burning in each.

When Babak's head was roused from deep his spirit and mind were full of cares.

Men who were understanding in dreams or had ability in like sciences came flocking to Babak's palace, together with nobles, sages and counsellors.

He disclosed his problem and told them of his dreams from beginning to end.

While the men who were to provide him with reply gave ear.

(Distich 93-81, p 855).

8. Afrasiab's dream

Knowing and experienced men reported king Kavus that the Afrasiab was coming to Iran with hundred thousands of Turkish riders. Kaykavus provided Iranian army in order to go and dedicate some presents and gifts to Afrasiab and dissuade him from war. The priest told him that "you, yourself go and meet Afrasiab, instead of sending your army".

Why should the request go with the wind, what would you do with treasure? (Shahname, 217, Distich 581).

'Choose a warrior and send him to Afrasiab'. Kaykavus replied: 'I have not found someone who is Afrasiab's counterpart'.

Then Siyawush considered in his heart, made of his soul a very wood of thought, and said: 'I will conduct this war myself, I will entreat the Shah and ask this boon'(Shahname, p 217, Distich 588-587).

Siyawush went to his father and said that he could deal with Afrasiab. The father agreed. Gave the treasury's key to Siyawush. Siyawush provided a 12,000-army. On the other hand, Kaykavus and his army camped in the dessert that he was given news:

There is a great army coming from Iran, field marshal Siyawush and the leaders(Shahname, p 219, Distich 650).

Siyawush led his army to the city of Balkh. As soon as Garsivaz saw the army, he did not hesitate and there was a 3-day battle began in front of Balkh's gate. Siyawush reported Kaykawus about the battle and said that, 'now Afrasiab is coming to fight with you but you do not hurry to fight against him. Afrasiab heard about the massive army of Iran, ordered Garsivaz to provide a huge army with complete war equipment.

'Prepare an army in scale of a dessert and arrange the military in strategic positions' (Shahname, p 220, Distich 709).

Then Afrasiab slept.

As night advanced Afrasiab cried out, and shook upon his bed like one with ague (shahname, p 221, Distich 13-712).

He dreamed that he was in a forest abounding with serpents, and that the air was darkened by the appearance of countless eagles.

The ground was parched up with heat and a whirlwind hurled down his tent and overthrew his flags.

On every side flowed a river of blood and the whole of his army had been defeated and butchered in his sight.

He was afterward taken prisoner and ignominiously conducted to Kavus in whose company he beheld a gallant youth (Shahname, p 221, Distich 723-736).

9. Piran visse's dream

One night Piran Visse dreamed of Siyavush that told him: "get up and move up". Piran waked up at that moment and asked his wife, Golshahr, to go and explain his dream to Farangis. When Golshahr arrived at Farangis's bed, she saw that her son, Afrasiab, was born. She returned to Piran and said that: "come and see the greatness of the Lord."

One dark night, when the moon was obscured and all creatures birds and beasts, wild and tame, were deep in slumber, the commander Piran saw in a dream that a candle was lit by the sun. Siyawush seated sword in hand on his throne, kept calling out, 'it is not fitting to be idle.

Free your head from this sweet sleep and give a thought to the fate of the world.

For this is a day of new dispensation and new festivity, and tonight is the night when the Shah Khosro is to be born'.

In the midst of his sweet slumber Piran trembled and Golshahr, her face bright as the sun, was awakened.

He told her to go quickly to Farangis and tell her that he had that moment in a dream beheld siyawush more resplendent than moon and sun (Shahname, 267, Distich31-2424).

10. Prediction

"In Shahname, the prediction of astronomers is one of the most accurate predictions and usually includes the details of events"(Halbi, 1999, 12).

If a person has the power of knowing, he will think nicely about every issue (Distich 374, p 722).

Elsewhere, Jamasb invites his father's fortunetellers and asks them about the future of Isfandiar: 'Will Isfandiar coronate? And will leaders bow before him?

At that time, the king sent for Jamasb, Lohrasb's fortuneteller.

He asked about Isfandiar,

'Does he have a long life? Does he have a happy life?

Will he coronate? Will leaders bow before him?'

When wise man heard this, he looked his old horoscope, and started to cry (Distich 30-35, p 713).

"Form ancient times up to now, mass of people were used to know about their good or bad futures and although it is not compatible with science, it cannot be ignored without negotiation and this ritual is crystal clear when Isfandiar goes to battle with Rostam. Noble prince with his army arrives at the crossroads and prevents the army. The camel of convoy's vanguard sits and the warrior considers this event as a bad presage and commands to remove the camel's head in order to return the bad fortune to itself. Meanwhile, aggressive warriors immediately kill the camel, but Isfandiar becomes so sad and worries about future unpleasant events" (Abadi Bavil 1971, 148).

A son is born for Yazdgerd whose name is Bahram. Then, he invites priests and fortunetellers to know about his son, Bahram. The priests look at their horoscopes and instruments and predict that Bahram will be a king of seven countries.

With their astrolabes they observed the stars and with Rumi tables they investigated the true courses.

One seeker observed that the secret of the stars was that the child would one day be a monarch in the world and would be king of over the seven climes.

Moreover he would be of cheerful heart and pious disposition (Distich 38-40, p 925).

Ardavan invites priests and fortunetellers and wants them to tell him about his future.

During the following days Shah Ardavan brought a number of men learned in the stars and of perspicuous mind to the palace and questioned them about his star and his future career.

He then sent them to consult with Golnar, that she too might study the stars.

For three days, until three watches of night had passed, the girl remained without ceasing in the company of the astrologers.

She was agitated and disturbed yet she retained her memory of their conversation.

On the fourth day those men of clear mind went to reveal the secret to Ardavan(Distich 221-231, p858-859).

11. The priest and fortunetelling

The master Mehran was searching for a suitable girl for Kasra. The Khaghan's girl was so simple, with no make-up and crown and just wore a ragged dress. Mehran suited her from Khaghan, and consulted with wise men about this issue and looked at horoscopes and saw that they will have a happy life.

Mehran invited the counsellors and talked to them about marriage of Kasra and Khaghan's girl.

The fortunetellers and astronomers gathered together and looked upon their horoscopes and Rumi tables to see their futures.

After a while they told the master that he should not be worried, because this marriage would be going well (Distich 2181-2187, p1095).

12. The prediction of bahram's lifetime

After sixty three years old, the priest told the king (Bahram): 'The treasure is finished and you are going to die, what is your command?'

So he consumed sixty three years and no one was his equal.

At the beginning of the New Year his minister came to him namely that wise priest who was his scribe to tell him that the royal treasure was empty and that he had come to ask for his commands.

He commanded that there was no need to do something (Distich 77-2572, p 1014).

13. Conclusion

Sleeping is a fascinating spiritual phenomenon in which many events are reflected. Many dreams are based on individuals' characteristics and performances and dreams of people who are aware of the truth, purity and wisdom would be come true. Some dreams are happened more than once and it shows the importance and reality of that dreams. This paper is presented in order to explain the values and functions of dream and dream reporting mythology in Ferdowsi's Shahname and the significant dream and its interpretation is explained in this book. For example, Anushiravan's dream that a tree is grown beside his bed and then a hog is sat beside him and wanted to get his glass of wine; and the dream of Piran who saw Siyawush in his dream and told him to get up and throw a party and then he realized that Kaykkhosro is born; or the dream of Kaykkhosro in which he knew about his death; and Alexander that dreamed:

He dreamed that a huge elephant in a big house.

The door of the house was more visible than the house. There was a huge elephant entering the palace.

The elephant passed through the door's orifice, and its body did not injure.

The sleep reporter, Mehran interpreted Alexander's dream: the house is the symbol of world and the elephant is the symbol of ungrateful king and so many other topics like this which teach us to scrutinize and think deeply about the problems and issues around us.

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