

Analysis of a folk and love story in Qajar period

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Abstract

Folk literature that is also called folk verbal art is part of the folklore that possesses emotions, imageries, wishes and ideas of a nation transferred from one generation to next one. This literary type has different forms such as tale, story, short story, romance and novel. Fictional literature in the prose form contains imageries and innovative stories and its creative aspect is superior to other aspects. One of these folk stories is the story of Noshafarin. In this story, prince Ibrahim, son of Jahangir falls in love with Noshafairn Gohartaj, the daughter of the Damascus king. The themes and elements of this story are similar to love and folk stories in Persian literature. This paper tries to analyze the story of Noshafarin and its theme and elements in addition to narrate it in prose form.

Key words: folk literature, love stories, prose, the story of Noshafarin, handwriting manuscript

Introduction

Folk literature is the spiritual and cultural heritage of a nation that has been preserved verbally in different forms. Due to attention of the peasants to preservation of their traditions and customs and also because of their life styles related to the nature their emotions and imagination are more powerful and folk literature is more common among them that are originated from their beliefs and desires.

“The most important works are fictions, historical and semi historical legends, heroic and love, moral, allegorical, and symbolic and science fictions and satire that they are found in prose and sometimes in verse form. Nonfictional works such as folk ballad, proverb, anecdote and prayers are in prose and verse forms. The folk poetry was written in couplets, ballad, and song

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and couplet poem. The language of folk literature is simple and eloquent and there is no difficult, old and strange words and terms in it due to narration among generations. The expressions, ironies, similes and terms are for narrating the real and imaginative events”(Anusheh, 2002:57.2).

One of these stories is Noshafarin by unknown writer. It is one of the poems of Qajar period that narrates falling love of prince Ibrahim, son of Jahangir the king of China with Noshafairn Gohartaj, daughter of the Damascus king. The style of this story is in prose of Qajar period that possesses semi literary style and the folk terms and compounds are more frequent.

There are several manuscripts from this story: 1-the version in the private library of Taheri Shahab in Sari in serial number of 230 written in Nastalique in date of 1079 AH and it contains 243 pages, 2-The version in the Meftah library in serial number of 1454 written in Nastalique in eleventh hegira century, 3-Two versions of this story in serial numbers of 3595 and 18712 held in Islamic parliament library that the first one was written by Asadullah Abdulrahim Shervani in 1199 in 218 pages in Nastalique, 4- Three versions in serial numbers of 4360, 3945 and 3936 held in Qom Golpaygani library the first one was written in Shekaste Nastalique in 85 pages in thirteen hegira century and the second one was written in 1239 AH and the third one was written in Nastalique in 1261 AH in 108 pages, 5- Other versions with serial numbers of 6901 held in Iran national Library and a version with serial number of 478 held in Fazel Khansar library and Meftah library in serial number of 1163.

The Story of Noshafarin

A wise and famous king was lived in Damascus. One day when he saw himself in the mirror said: I attacked on many countries and possessed seven countries and now I am an old man and I do not have a child to succeed my throne. He sighed and took up his clothes and kept silent and said prayer of God. When the ministers and officer saw him asked him the reason. Jahangir said: I am old man and I have no child. They told him that there was a mystic outside the city and he can help you. The king went to him by his ministers and gave him two ears of wheat and said the king to eat one of them and give other to the queen. The king returned to the palace. They ate the wheat and the queen became pregnant. She delivered a girl and when the king heard he freed the prisoners and never demanded taxes for seven years and the people decorated the city. They took the girl to the mystic and he called him Noshafairn Gohartaj and he told the king that she will encounter with many events and she will disappear and if you want to protect her you have to wash her in the spring once

a week. The king gave the girl to the maid. After two years when she began to speak she attracted everybody. When she was twelve years old her father ordered the servants to build a palace for her and she lived there happily. When she was fourteen the kings fell in love with her and came to Damascus. The people were so worried about the city and they prayed for protection of the city.

The king of China, Adel, had a boy called Ibrahim. He was handsome and when he was eighteen his father announced him the king and he left the throne. One day a merchant came and described Noshafarin. The prince fell in love with her and ordered to bring her image to him. When he saw her image fell down. Khan Mohammad, his minister, got worried when he saw the prince. He asked the minister to prepare the army to go Damascus. The minister said him that they will leave the city for hunting and then they wrote a letter to the king and got on the ship and traveled to Damascus. The king became aware and he was worried.

The prince and his officers were on the ship for ten years and in the eleventh day it was stormy and the ship was drowned. The prince and his minister and two other officers could release and they reached an island. They went to the palace and they had feast in the palace and they saw only a young man called Hamid. He told them I was captured by Nahid the singer of the Alexander the king of Gamrieh. The king ordered to execute me and Nahid was imprisoned. They closed my hands to execute me next morning. At night a woman came and released me. She was Jahansuz, the daughter of Alexander. She sent to Damascus. After three years I came to her palace. I knew that the spies sought me. She asked me to wait her in this island until the king dies. Then we will meet each other. I live here. The prince and his officers and Hamid went to Damascus.

They came to the palace of Noshafarin. There were many princes there. When Ibrahim saw them he became sad. Hamid helped him to go to the palace. He gave her ring to her and came out. In the morning when she woke up she saw the ring and she fell in love with him. At night Ibrahim came to her bedroom and wrote poems and gave them to her. At third night he came to her bedroom again and read poems for her. When the princess got up she ordered to hold a ceremony. They met each other forty nights.

Mohammad who was three years in Damascus and waiting for meeting Noshafarin came to her palace secretly. At that moment she was giving a custom to Ibrahim. They went to the palace. Mohammad was disappointed and he returned. His minister said: you have to take Ibrahim to the king palace and say the king he betrayed me. Mohammad was waiting. He attacked on Ibrahim

and Ibrahim could kill him. The other princes attacked on him but he killed them. Noshafarin was worried.

If thousands enemies attack on me
I never fear since I have a friend like you

Prince Elyas said: we should be headed him. The minister of Mohammad was commissioned to capture Ibrahim but Noshafarin rescued him. At that moment Afrasyab came and Noshafarin killed him. Jahangir requested the mystic to help him but he said him that his daughter never marries with them.

One day when she was swimming in the spring she was captured by an invisible force. A demon called Algameh took her to the palace of Solomon. When he wanted to attack her Noshafarin ran away. The king said the princes that who could rescue Noshafarin he will be her husband and Sultan Mohammad was commissioned and after three months he came to an island and rested under a tree. At that moment two birds came and talked about the fruit, skin and leaves of the tree. Ibrahim took the fruit, leaves and branches of that tree with himself. They confronted with many problems on the way. In fourth day, they left the island and went toward the east and they reached a desert. Demons lived there. Then they came to the Arabs Island and they were captured and they saw a bird, "Rokh". It had lost its way. They helped the bird and finally, the bird rescued them. It took them to the Solomon palace. When they came to the palace suddenly the demons attacked on Ibrahim and he was rescued by the help of the bird. The other demons took Noshafarin to a meadow. Ibrahim found her but once again the demons captured her and they threw her inside a well. Noshafarin found Meymoneh, the daughter of Abdullrahman, the fairy king. She had captured by demons. The bird found them and gave its feather to the prince and said him if you need me fire my feather I will come. He heard the sound of lions and tigers. The prince rescued the princesses but Noshafarin was captured again.

The fairy king was waiting for the prince. His daughter went to the Mount Qaf to rescue Noshafarin. Abdullrahman came and met the prince and took him to the garden and he saw Noshafarin there. Abdullrahman said Ibrahim that I had promised that everybody who rescues my daughter he will be my bridegroom. But Ibrahim told him he cannot accept and they traveled to China. They came to Serandip and one of the officers, Amir Salim that loved Noshafarin poisoned her and stole her but she was rescued and returned to Ibrahim and they went to Aleppo. Bahman attacked on Ibrahim with his army and finally they rescued by help of Abdullrahman. In this war Mohammad was wounded and he fell down in front of a garden. Zarafshan the daughter of Antakya king found him and took him in the garden. They fell in love with each

other. He prepared an army and attacked on Bahman. The demons brought Ibrahim and Noshafarin to Mohammad and the prince rescued him and Zarafshan went with Mohammad to China. On the way Elyas and Masoud attacked on them and they lost and Hamid joined the prince. But once again the princes was stolen by the demons and he was imprisoned. Ibrahim was reduced by eating the fruit of the tree and killed the witch. Then he rescued Noshafarin, Mohammad and Hamid. Then they went to Farang. Two armies were fighting there and in this war Gyna was wounded and the prince and his officers helped him and they went to his palace. His daughter, Khorshid fell in love with him and they stayed ten days there. In eleventh day the king died and Khorshid was appointed as the queen. Ibrahim and his officer went to China.

Khorshid was upset so that the ministers decided to appoint Kynus, her cousin as the king. The queen was captured. Ibrahim attacked on Kynus and killed him and then returned. Mohammad was killed when he was fighting with Malek Mohammad. Ibrahim fought with Malek Mohammad and killed him and then appointed Saied and Masoud as the rulers.

They went to Damascus and the king met his daughter. Hamid was selected as minister of Jahangir. They met the mystic and Ibrahim and Noshafarin got married. In their wedding party the daughter of Abdullrahman was invited and she got married with her lover. Ibrahim wrote a letter to Alexander and requested Jahansuz for Hamid. But the king did not accept. His minister attacked on Mohammad but he killed him. Then the king agreed and sent his daughter. Her daughter went to China.

On the way they came to a garden. Suddenly, the demons, Zarfam and Golfam arrived. The prince woke up and killed Zarfam and Noshafarin killed Golfam. When they arrived China the prince asked the daughter of Abdulrahman and Khorshid to come to the palace of Adel. One night a snake stung Khorshid and the prince and they were killed. Then they found that they did not die for sting of snake. So they went to the mystic and he said that the snake was daughter of demon and they are slept and they found the talisman and broke it and the prince and Khorshid were awaked and the prince constructed palaces for his wives and they lived happily.

Analysis of the story

1. The story is begun with praying of God and the prophet and his family.
2. The theme of the story is love of two lovers who meet their beloveds.
3. The story has happy ending.
4. The story is begun by image of Noshafarin.

5. The feast and war are seen accompanied by difficulties.
6. The lovers are from higher classes.
7. The style of the story in the story is highlighted.
8. There are many obstinate rivals in this story.
9. The love is bilateral.
10. The geography scope of the story is broad (China, Damascus, West, Solomon palace, garden and etc).
11. This story reminds us the story of Zal and Rodabeh in Firdausi Shahnameh when Zal came to the palace of Rodabeh.
12. Language plays an important role in this story and then men employ elegant language in decision making and fighting.
13. We remember the seven adventures of Rostam in Shahnameh(war with demons, lions and tigers).
14. Familiarity with Rokh and burning its feather is similar to the story of Rostam and Esfandiyar and familiarity of Rostam and Simurgh and burning of its feather.
15. Reading this story reminds us the story of logic of birds and going to the Mount Gaf.
16. The palanquin of Abdullrahman that the demons moved it is similar to the story of Solomon that the demons served him and his rug was moved by wind.
17. The praises of the story are beautiful and sometimes frequent. The day and night and the feasts are described beautifully. The gifts offered to the kings and princes and the women are wonderful.
18. The reader encounters with sudden contacts that lead to love (contact of Hamid with Jahansuz, Ibrahim with daughter of Abdullrahman and Khorshid, Mohammad with Zarafshan).
19. There are poems that add on the beauty of the story.
20. Although, the lover confronts with difficulties to meet the beloved but he falls in love with other.
21. The story of Noshafarin reminds us the story of the Shaded paradise.
22. Where the princes were thrown on the fire they were rescued is similar to the story of Ibrahim the prophet.
23. The beloved tries to meet her lover.
24. Being captive is similar to the story of Bizhan and Manijeh in Firdausi's Shahnameh.

Conclusion

The story of Noshafarin is one of the Iranian folk tales. The writer of this story is unknown. The story was written in simple language for ordinary people and it contains the poems of Firdausi, Saadi, Hafez and others. The story describes the prince Ibrahim and princess Noshafarin. Most of the elements and themes of the love stories like places, objects, magical creatures, letters and secret meeting of the lovers and beloveds, mythical elements, confronting with difficulties, marginal love, the concepts such as childlessness, illness, religious and racial barriers, war and love rivalry, royal relationship and other elements of folk and love stories are seen in this story.

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