

Love in classical Iranian literature: the case of Shahnameh

Autor: Samaneh Milani Tabrizi

In the post-Islamic era, in the literatures generated around the fourth and fifth centuries of the Muslim lunar calendar (equivalent to the thirteenth century of the Gregorian calendar), the word love is identified with virtual and real concepts. In that era, mystics and Sufis like Ghazali believed that love could only be related to the world of the divine. Ghazali believed that from the moment God created the human spirit, the semi-wave of love was planted in the hearts of people, who thus tasted the flavor of affection and could access love. In reality, the love of human beings is a reflection of their charm. Enjoying the power of love, people began to engage in romantic behavior to find eternal love and knowledge of God in themselves.

Another mystic poet of the same era was Abu Said Abu al Khair, who considered love as an element that attracts and fuses the lover with the beloved, so love is the ultimate surrender and passion. Fiery love is a love that is located in the heart and makes the lover burn. The relationship between love and Sama is so intense in the mystical thinking of Abu Said Abu al Khair that he considers it as the basis of the relationship between the Creator and the creature, and kindness and affection as the basis of loving other people and a bridge that unites the creation with the Creator. In the ceremonies of Sama in the 5th century of the Muslim calendar, there were conditions for being allowed to write or recite love poems. Poems that offended the religious authorities, especially the companions of the main prophet of Islam, were forbidden, but love poems were not forbidden when they referred to God.

Lyricism and romantic imagination can be found in almost all Iranian classical literary works of the sixth century of the Muslim calendar. Poems expressing emotions and personal feelings of the writer are a frequent expression of lyric literature in Persian language. Since lyric literature is directly related to human emotions such as joy, sadness, love and hatred, it is common that an epic text such as Ferdowsi's Shahnameh also contains lyrical features amenable to analysis. Perhaps lyrical passages seem strange in a text of the epic genre, but in this case it is possible to find stories and images that could be classified as lyrical literature. The aim of this paper is to analyze Ferdowsi's Shahnameh as one of the greatest references for lyricism and description of love in classical Iranian literature. In general, the lyrical stories of the Shahnameh can be divided

into two groups. When we study the poetry of Shahnameh from the perspective of imaginary forms and types of images, we observe that Ferdowsi knew mysteries and literary details that not all people were aware of, which differentiates him from other poets. This paper will analyze these particular characteristics about love that distinguish the Shahnameh as a unique epic work.