

SIMILAR SYMBOLS AND CHARACTERS IN THE WORKS OF FERDOWSI AND ATTAR

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Abstract: "Shahnameh" is a great work of historical and mythological aspects, which looks simple at first glance, but covers labyrinths of complex ideas and deep meanings. Therefore, symbols are the only way of understanding the rich content of this work. In other words, it is possible to perceive the deep meaning of the work by use of the symbols. It is interesting that although the evil forces related to dualism are associated with Ahriman in Avesta, Ahriman acts as an ordinary character in Ferdowsi's work, and all the evil acts involving him are attributed to Satan. Satan initially affected human soul as greed for power in the figure of Zahhak. Young Zahhak murdered his father under Satan's influence. Later, Satan affected his soul in the form of delicacies. Satan firstly became ruler of kitchen and then ruler of Zahhak's soul. In Sufism, kitchen represents excessive affection for the material world and is explained as a means which takes people to the hell. According to Sufism, the delicacies of the material world are, in fact, poisons, i.e., they separate people from spiritual blessings and lead to destruction of soul. The story called "Hekayati-Rabia and Hasan Basri" from "Ilahinama" of Faridaddin Attar is about the damage caused by overeating to human soul, and here the kitchen is compared with hell. Of course, this comparison is derived from use of the conceptions of fire and burning in both kitchen and hell.

Keywords: Historical and mythological aspects, Human with mystical world, Spiritual development, Symbol.

1 Introduction

Although "Shahnameh" by Abulgasim Ferdowsi, one of the greatest Persian geniuses of the world literature, reflects mythical thinking and dualistic ideology based on "Avesta", this masterpiece is mainly about oneness of God, Islamic mysticism and knowledge. "Shahnameh" by Ferdowsi is a primary source of many metaphors and symbols used in Persian Sufi literature.

Symbols, particularly, poetical ones and allegorical characters serve as a connection between Creator and creatures. In fact, this world, itself, is a symbol of great universe. According to Jül la Bel, the fact that each creature embodies perfection of Creator can be deemed as a natural sign of supernatural reality. As well, the Western researchers call the symbolism as a path from visibility to invisibility ("per visibilia ad invisibilia"). Landrit claimed that symbolism is a science which learns the interaction between creatures and God, material world and afterlife, and the parts of the universe [3, p. 33]. Each work created by mankind is an allegorical expression of reality and symbol of Divinity. Actually, the symbols represent the association of human with mystical world.

2 Materials and Methods

This article deals with similar and distinctive features of the symbols used by Attar and Ferdowsi.

Despite the numerous works describing the specifics of Islamic mysticism in a social, cultural, and philosophical direction, the nature of mystical experiences, which is the main Sufi theory and practice, remains outside the study. Essence. Islamic mysticism, therefore, has not yet been sufficiently studied, as a result of which there are large gaps in the study of this multifaceted problem. These gaps can be eliminated with addressing to the Sufi literature.

In this study, the hermeneutical method is used as a methodological basis, which makes it possible to extract from the original and translated into other languages Sufi texts and mystical works of the past and present, the basis of the system of mystical personality transformation, leading to the generation of positive knowledge about the subject of research.

3 Results and Discussion

The story called "Hekayat-I Rabia and Hasan Basri" from "Ilahinama" of Faridaddin Attar is about the damage caused by overeating to human soul, and here the kitchen is compared with hell. After Satan's kiss snakes appeared on Zahhak's shoulder.

These snakes both reflect mythological thinking and refer to mystical symbols. The snakes, which cause very horrible and unimaginable disaster, destroy human brain. In the everlasting struggle between Satan and humankind, Satan has always been trying to destroy human brains and to influence ideas and thoughts. This terrible threat still causes troubles for mankind.

The character of Satan is widely studied in Sufi literature from various aspects. In the literary works of Faridaddin Attar, this character is different from others with originality and specific features. The poet brought Satan to the forefront in many stories of his works such as "Oshornama", "Ilahinama", "Tazkiratul-Ovliya", etc. and described this character from different aspects. Despite the fact that Satan is presented as vicious enemy of humankind and example of selfishness and arrogance, his devotion to God is praised.

Satan refused to bow down before Adam on the day of creation of man by saying "I will not bow down before anyone except You" to God, and preferred being expelled from heaven to bowing down to anyone else except God. Attar used his behavior as an example against the people who have doubts about oneness of God and gave advice to them as follows:

ز ابليس لعین مردی بر آموز

(Learn courage from cursed Satan) [10, p.92].

According to Attar, besides being merciful, gracious, and fair, God also has anger, and Satan deliberately preferred His anger and curse to His mercy and grace, because everyone wants to gain God's mercy and grace, but nobody desires His curse. But Satan accepted this bad fate in a courageous manner. Attar explained this situation as follows, making an example of Ayaz who kisses Mahmud's feet: "There are a lot of people who admire your beautiful face, but nobody cares about your feet."

In his story called "Satan's teardrops", Attar described Satan's refusal to bow down before Adam not as rebelliousness, but as determination:

نمی خواهند طاعت کردن من

کنند آن که گناه بر گردن من

(Firstly I was forced to bow down, and then I was accused) [10, p.104].

According to Attar, Satan is the most courageous one among creatures. Satan stands guard on the road leading to God. When someone wants to approach this road, Satan tries to mislead him. Satan can deceive the ones whose faith is weak and who have strong material desires. But he can not mislead the people who have left material desires.

Satan reproaches the people who expect something in return from God for their prayers: "I worshiped God for thousands of years. But I was cursed just for disobedience of a moment. Now I wonder how you dare to reach the supreme stage by worshipping so little?"

In Attar's literary works, Satan is described as devoted lover. The story named "Satan's conversation with Moses on Mount Sinai" from the work is very interesting in this respect:

کلیمش گفت ای اوقتاده در بند

بود هرگز تورا یاد خداوند

لعینش گفت چون من مهربانی

فراموشش کند هرگز زمانی

همه چندان که اورا کینه بیش است

مرا مهرش درونه سینه بیش است

اگرچه کرد لعنت دلفروزش

از آن لعنت زیاده گشت سوزش

[10, p.111].

Moses asked Satan: "Do you remember God?" And Satan answered this question in this way: "God doesn't bear a grudge against me. Nor He hates me. How can I forget Him? His curse has increased my love."

As Satan is cursed by his lover, his pain and misery is endless. According to Attar, his efforts to deceive the people who want to approach the road leading to God are due to his character as *qeyrat-i ashīqi* ("qeyrat-i-ashīqi" (lover's pride) is a special Sufi term— note by N.M.). In the story called "A man's question to Majnun", Attar explained these mystic meanings very clearly. Although Majnun heard of Leyli's death, he didn't rebel at God and said "Alhamdulillah" ("all praise belongs to God"). When he was asked why he didn't become sad, he said:

چنین گفت او که من بهره از این ماه

نمی بینم طا نبیند هیچ بدخواه

"I couldn't come together with that beautiful woman,

That's why I don't want anyone else to live together with her"
[10, p.117].

In this story Attar allegorically described pride of God's lover. Satan's efforts to deceive the people who want to approach the road leading to God are due to his pride. He stands guard at the door of God day and night, saying "As I was expelled from heaven, I will not let anyone enter there".

While describing the character of Satan, Attar highlighted very essential mystical points. Although Satan, at first glance, was described as a character that disobeys God, it is not so, at all. According to Attar, the relation between Satan and God can lead to dualism. As Satan was a devoted Angel of God, he could not rebel at Him. All what happened and all what will happen are will of God, and Satan is just a shade of God's divine light. When the light is put on, darkness disappears. Light can shine in darkness, but darkness cannot exist in light. On the other hand, Satan serves for trial and spiritual advancement of humankind. In this trial the person struggles against his feelings of passion, jealousy and grudge. Only after winning this struggle, he can reach the supreme divine stage. All of the mentioned feelings are inherent in humankind. But the most dangerous one is selfishness and arrogance. Satan was punished for his selfishness, because he didn't want to bow down before Adam created from water and soil and was proud of his pure origin, saying "You created me from pure fire and him (Adam) from clay".

God gifted humankind with mind; with the help of mind a person perceives bad features of his personality, feels shame for them and tries to quit them. But if a person is selfish and arrogant, he will not see any negative feature in his personality, and, therefore, he will not be able to eliminate his faults; on the contrary, he will make many mistakes and commit sins. An arrogant person closes the doors of all ways which lead to God and obeys Satan with his whole soul. However, Satan was created for material and spiritual development of humankind. Without Satan everything in the society would be monotonous, without passion the human species would become extinct, without the desire of gaining money and profit the craft and industry, even science and education would not develop, trade would not exist, and life of society would become dull and static. Humankind should always be on alert, disobey Satan, and should gain a victory over him. The story "Adam, Eve and Satan's child" written by Attar by referring to Hekim Tirmizi's works is very protreptical in this respect. Satan asked Eve to care his child Khannas, and Eve agreed. When Adam came home and saw the child, he got angry, chopped the child into pieces and threw the pieces out. Satan brought his child's pieces together, revived him and asked Eve to keep him with her. This time Adam burnt the

child and threw his dash out. But Satan called all particles of his child, united them and brought the child again to Eve. For getting rid of the child forever, Adam roasted his flesh and ate it with Eve. When Satan called his child, the child responded inside of Eve. At last, Satan could realize his dream. He began to live in human soul and forced him to leave God and to commit evil acts and sins. According to Attar, Satan lives in human soul, and humankind should become stronger in the struggle against Satan living inside them, they should not obey him and, on the quite contrary, they should force him to bow down before humankind. God is the only ruler of human kind. The doors of the ways leading to God have already been closed for the ones whose souls are ruled by Satan.

It is clear that the character of Satan in Attar's literary activity differs from the one in Ferdowsi's works with his uniqueness and various mystical features. But aims of both poets were to advice people not to believe Satan's lies and to be on alert and to behave carefully. Besides Satan, in "Shahnameh" snake and dragon also represent evil forces. In many cases, dragon embodies the concepts of time and world. Like dragon, time also swallows up and destroys everything.

Let us provide an example from "Ummal-khitab", one of the medieval philosophical treatises: "The seven-headed dragon is human nafs (desire for material things). The first head is greediness, the second is envy, the third is lust, the fourth is fury, the fifth is jealousy, the sixth is arrogance, and the seventh is dissension" [1, p. 283].

All of these evil features can cause a person to be a dragon. It is useless to struggle against the faults in the character without killing nafs. In the fairytales, when a head of dragon was cut, the new one replaced it. Evil features of human character are like the replaced heads of the dragon. When you try to remove one of them, the new one replaces it.

This conception is symbolically reflected in "Shahnameh": Satan confronted with Zahhak in various figures such as hunter, cooker, and doctor. Even the wise men and doctors of the time could not find any cure for Zahhak's terrible disease. Pure, strong, and good persons like Gava were needed to kill nafs and to gain victory over snakes.

One of the symbols widely used in Ferdowsi's works is number seven. According to Anri Masse, famous scientist of Iranian studies, repeated use of number seven in some stories of "Shahnameh", including confrontation of Esfandiar and Bahram with seven obstacles in seven palaces, is a defect of the work [13, p. 102]. However, use of number seven for two times in the work is not due to lack of story or isn't occasional. Although number seven reflects negative aspects of human character in the figure of seven-headed dragon, it is considered a holy and lucky number in the history of philosophical thinking in Eastern countries and in the whole world. This number describes the stages of spiritual development and represents connection of each day with a star and the role of this connection in human destiny.

Ancient Sumerian and Babylonian people considered seven to be a holy number. Seven was also sacred number of Apollo, who was Greek god of medicine, poetry, and art. Indians had seven gods called Aditya. In Zoroastrianism, there were seven angels standing before Ahura Mazda. Resembling ancient Babylonian people, Jews associated seven planets with seven angels and called seven days of week with the angels' names (Rafail-Khurshid, Jabrayil-Moon, Shamail-Bahram (Marrikh), Mikail-Utarid, Zadkail-Mushtari, Anail-Nahid (Zohra), Sabtail or Kafzail – Keyvan (Zuhal). In the Islamic world, these Angels are called as follows: Rifail, Jabrail, Samsail, Mikail, Sarfail, Annail, and Kasfiyail.

Number seven was also sacred for ancient Sabeen people, and their epos "Simurg and Hormuzshah" was written on the basis of group of seven [12, p. 57].

Symbolic use of number seven in Abulgasim Ferdowsi's work is not occasional. In the work, Rustam overcame seven obstacles in order to reach his goal. In seven palaces, he, respectively, gained victory over lion, thirsty, dragon, magician woman, troop, monster, and at last giant white Monster (Divi-sapid). There is no doubt that each of these obstacles is a symbolic character. Lion represents human desire for power, thirsty and spring embody spiritual needs and divine light, dragon personifies nafsi ammara (desire for material things), magician woman symbolizes the material world, troop represents the obstacles on the way to God, and monsters embody evil forces.

The same words are also valid for the seven obstacles Esfandiar confronted in seven palaces. Esfandiar's victory over mythical creatures and forces of nature are explained as his victory over his own nafs. This group of seven is completed by Rustam's reign of seven years.

After "Shahnameh", number seven and group of seven began to be widely used in Persian literature. "Haft peykar" ("Seven Beauties") by Great Nizami and a lot of naziras (poems written to resemble another poem in form and subject) written for this work can be given as examples.

Afterwards, number seven was widely used in Faridaddin Attar's works. His works "Mantiqu-teyr" and "Oshornama" were written on the basis of group of seven. As well, salik (follower of Sufism) passed seven spiritual stages. Birds flew through seven valleys called talab (wish), ashk (love), marifat (decency), istighna (self-sufficiency), tovhid (oneness), heyrat (wonder), and fagru-fena (mortality). Naturally, these valleys reflect the stages of spiritual development of salik. Attar generally characterized these valleys as follows:

هست وادی طلب آغاز کار

وادی عشق از آن پس پی کنار

برسیم وادی است آن از معرفت

هست چهارم وادی استغنا صنت

هست پنجم وادی تو هدیایک

بیششم وادی حیرت صعبتایک

هفتمین وادی فقر است و فنا

بعد از آن راه و روسن بود ترا

(Valley of talab is the beginning stage of the travel. After it, endless valley of ashk comes. The third valley is marifat. The fourth is istighna, the fifth is pure tovhid, the sixth is wonder and the last one is the valley of fagru-fena. After that, there is no way for you) [10, p. 228].

Travel begins from the valley of talab. At the second stage, the salik should pass through the valley of ashk. At this stage, salik is burnt so much among the fires of love that he forgets himself. The third stage is the valley of marifat. This valley is endless. At the fourth stage, the salik passes through the valley of istighna. The fifth stage is the valley of tovhid. The sixth valley is hayret. At this stage, salik forgets himself and leaves his own being forever. The seventh valley is the stage of fagru-fena which cannot be described with words. At last, salik finds peace and comfort here.

Attar described these seven stages which salik passed through so detailed and widely that afterwards the part of this work dedicated to the description of the stages was separated from the main text of the work and entered into the list of Attar's works as a separate work under the name of "Haft vadi" ("Seven valleys"). The readers should be informed that this short masnavi called "Haft vadi" which is given in many sources as a separate work, reflects, in fact, the stages of suluk (spiritual development) and seven valleys the birds flew through. This work was changed by secretaries of the subsequent period, some additions were made to the work, and it was turned into a separate work.

The common feature of "Shahnameh" and "Mantiqu-teyr" is that number seven, and character of Simurg (Phoenix) were used as main conceptions of both works.

In Persian literature, Simurg is presented as a mythical image. Name of this bird is shown in Avesta as "Mereghu Saena". Here Simurg is depicted as a bird which has giant wings, lives at the peak of mountains, and has mythological signs. In classical poetry of Azerbaijan, Simurg acts as a mythopoetic character besides other birds such as "falcon", "hawk", "eagle", etc. [12, p.19].

Simurg makes its nest on a tree at the peak of mountain. But this tree differs from others. The tree is a cure for diseases, and it contains seeds of all plants. In classical poetry of Azerbaijan, Simurg symbolizes Ruhi-küll (world of spirits) [7, p.15].

In the work, Sam left his son Zal at the foot of Mountain Alborz. Name of the mountain is shown as "Kaf" in some sources. According to ancient Jewish mythology, name of the treasure of spirits is Kaf, too. Settlement of Simurg in Mount Kaf can be interpreted as Simurg to be ruler of world of spirits. In many sources, name of Simurg is given as Anga.

In this respect, "Risalatut-teyr" by Ahmad Gazali (XI-XII) can be given as an example. In this work, the birds decided to elect a ruler. To find Anga, they began a journey for a long distance. They thought that Anga should be their ruler. Most of the birds couldn't withstand the difficulties of this hard journey and were afraid of dying in endless deserts. The conclusion of the work is that anyone who withstands the hardships of the journey and isn't afraid of the difficulties can achieve to meet with Anga and to be in the same place with Anga. Here the character of Anga personifies God and is used as synonym of Simurg. Simurg is a mythical bird. In "Shahnameh" by Ferdowsi, Simurg is described as a bird of extraordinary abilities. (Saena in "Avesta" is Simurg, too) [13, p. 15-16].

Abubakr ibn Khosrov, who wrote "Munisname", the master piece of the medieval times in the 12th century, narrated "Risalatut-teyr" in short form. He summed up the story as follows: "It should be said to the people who don't understand the meaning of these subtle figurative expressions that they should change their appearance, appear in the figure of bird, live in the bird nest, perceive the features of the world of spirits or Suleyman and learn to speak in the language of birds, because only birds can understand the language of birds" [6, p. 25].

The common feature between Attar's work and Ferdowsi's work is that Simurg is ruler of birds in both works and that the birds fly through seven stages on the way to Simurg. In Sufi literature, Simurg is presented as a symbol of God. Zal's unnatural abilities in "Shahnameh", abandonment of him by his father due to his white hair and adoption of him back after the age of majority, are symbolic.

In this respect, not incidentally, wife of Indian ruler worried about her daughter's love for Zal and said to her: "His aim is to seize the power. Or does he desire the bird nest?" Here the comparison of the symbols "bird nest" and "power" means that spiritual development, praying to God and worshipping contradict the wish for power. "Wish bird nest" and "live there" are Sufi terms. Zal was always protected by Simurg, and when he fired Simurg's feather, the bird appeared. All of these are associated with mythological ideas. In Ferdowsi's work, Simurg is not only a mystical character, but also it is related to dualistic ideas. For example, there are two characters of Simurg in the work. One of them raised Zal and always helped him. The other one encountered Esfandiar in the fifth palace and is presented as a negative character. The poet described this bird as a fearful and powerful creature which had giant wings.

But in Attar's work Simurg personifies only God:

At last, birds began a journey under the leadership of Hudhud. Hardships of the journey tired them out. They began to doubt and complaint. But Hudhud tirelessly answered their questions

and explained that they were on the right way. Tired birds gathered themselves up and continued the journey. Some of the birds became exhausted and left the journey. Some lost their way while seeking for food, and some died from lack of water and food. Only thirty birds among hundreds of birds endured the difficulties and hardships of this burdensome journey. At that moment, a messenger brought letter of Simurg. When the birds read the letter, they saw that all of their life was written in this letter. Then Simurg appeared. Simurg's divine light spread around. When the birds looked at Simurg in the mirror, they saw themselves. And meaning of Simurg became clear; it meant "Se morg" ("thirty birds"). As the result of troubles and hardships of the journey, the birds got rid of their physical appearance and their material being and reached the true meaning and essence. Only after removing the physical features, it is possible to see the internal beauty. When the birds were confused, the Simurg began to speak: "You came here and looked as thirty birds. If your number would be more or less, it wouldn't matter. The look would be the same. Here is a mirror" [10, p. 292]. The birds disappeared in the divine light of Simurg and were reflected in its being. In this stage, there is no way, no traveler and no guide".

After hardships and difficulties, the birds got the supreme form of their material being and reached the stage of oneness. The poet wrote on behalf of Simurg:

بی‌زبان آید از آن حضرت خطاب

کاینه است این حضرت چون آفتاب

هر که آید خویشش بیند در او

تن و جان هم جان و تن بیند در او

چون شما سیمرخ اینجا آمدید

سی‌در این آئینه پیدا آمدید

گر چهل پنجم رخ آید نیاز

پرده از خویش بگشایند نیاز

گر چه بسیار ی‌بسیر گردیده‌اید

خویش را می‌بیند خود را دیده‌اید

محو ما گردید در صد عز و ناز

تا بمادر خویشش یابد باز

(It was said that here is a mirror like the sun. When you look at it, you will see your body and soul. As you came here as thirty birds, you were looking as thirty birds. If you would come here as forty or fifty birds, you would get rid of your physical features. If you would be more patient, you would see your own divine light. You can't reach the supreme stage, unless you don't get rid of your physical features) [10, p. 95].

It is clear that in this work the birds symbolize the saliks, Hudhud represents murshid (guide), and Simurg personifies God. This work is completely based on the ideas of Vahdati-vujud (unity of being) and reflects that God is one and only, all creatures are a particle of God, material world is a manifestation of divine meaning and that all particles will unite with God. This work also describes Kull and juz, Alemi-Kabir and Alemi-saghir relations. There is no doubt that both characters of Simurg were described in the work as the symbol of Ahura Mazda and Ahriman, respectively. However, in Faridaddin Attar's work Simurg personifies one and only God. In Ferdowsi's work, the nest of Simurg is Mountain Alborz. And most sources describe this mountain as a synonym of legendary Mount Kaf which surrounds the Earth. Interestingly, immortality and eternity of first Simurg which raised and brought up Zal was stressed for many times by Ferdowsi. However Ferdowsi mentioned other Simurg only in one story, this bird was killed by Esfandiar despite its monstrosity and extraordinary power, and the poet no more mentioned it. But first Simurg was mentioned till the end

of the work, it cured Zal's son Tahamtan, and this shows its ability of healing.

Description of two characters of Simurg in Ferdowsi's work is certainly related to Avesta, but not to the poet's own ideas. The poet always promoted the idea of oneness of God, and his views were based on tovhid. According to Ferdowsi, everything in this world has a counterpart, but only Great God is matchless. Although "Shahnameh" brings to forefront the dualist views, struggle of good and evil, and strife between Hormuz and Ahriman by referring to Avesta, the poet was a person that perceived and believed oneness of God:

سخن هیچ بهتر ز تو هید نیست

به ناگفتن و گفتن خدا یکست

(There is no better and more meaningful word than tovhid; it doesn't matter whether it is expressed or not, God is one) [2, p. 505].

The character of Alexander the Great described broadly in "Shahnameh" is depicted by Ferdowsi as a ruler that promotes oneness of God. Referring to Ferdowsi's works, Great Nizami Ganjavi described the character of Alexander more broadly and more mystically in his work "Iskandarnama". Alexander's name, his struggle against Yakjuj and Makjuj and the wall constructed by him are mentioned in Holy Koran, and many sources claim that he was a prophet. Therefore, this great person drew Attar's attention, and the poet described him in many stories of his work "Ilahinama". Let us see the story of "Hekayati-Iskandar ve hekim" ("Story of Aleksandr and doctor"):

Iskandar came to a land. As always, he wanted to meet with the wisest man of the country in order to be his student. He was spoken about a clever and knowledgeable man. Iskandar ordered to bring the wise man before him. That wise man refused to appear before the ruler, called him "slave of his slaves" and said that to appear before the ruler was not for him. His words made Iskandar very angry. Iskandar went to the wise man and asked the meaning of his words. The wise man said to him: "You have been the slave of your nafs and desire for life. You have conquered seven countries and began the journey to find water of life. Unlike you, I have made my nafs and desire obey me. That's why I call you "slave of my slaves". After these words, Iskandar moved to tears, his anger went away, and his soul felt relieved:

سکندر گفت از او دیوانه نیست

که عاقلتر از او فرزانه نیست

بسی راحت از او آمد بروم

طمام است از سفر این یک فتوم

(He was not crazy. There was no wiser man than him. He brought relief to my soul. This finding was enough for my journey) [9, p. 177].

Attar came to the following conclusion:

وجود تو تورا صد است در پیش

تو پیوسته در آن صد مانده با خویش

توی در صد خود بچوچ و موج

که طوق گردنت بند نیست چون اوج

اگر آذاد کردی گردن خویش

برستی زین همه خون خواردن خویش

(Your body is Great Wall (of China) constructed before you. Your soul has been arrested in your body behind that wall. As well, Yakjuj and Makjuj standing in the other side of the wall are you. There you have been tied to your own neck like a loop. If

you remove this loop from your neck, you will stop destroying your own soul) [9, p. 180].

In the other story of "Ilahinama", one philosopher came before the grave of Alexander and began to think deeply. The last journey of the great ruler who conquered the whole world wasn't like the previous ones. His dead body in the grave was unaware of everything. Subject of the story "Goftar der merge-Iskandari-Rumi" in "Ilahinama" is almost same. According to Attar, as people bring nothing to this material world and lose nothing here, their efforts to seek and achieve something in this world are meaningless. In the story "Hekayat-i Iskandar ve merg-e u", the poet described Iskandar and his journeys to find water of life, and came to the following conclusion:

اگر تو راه علم و عین دانی

نورا شرم است زه آب جاویدانی

(If you would be on the road of science and knowledge, you would be ashamed of finding water of life) [9, p. 192].

Although the plot of the story "Keykhosrow and Jame-Jam" refers to "Shahnameh", this story describes mystical meanings. The glass which reflected the secrets of seven climates and movement of seven stars did not show itself. Keykhosrow could not understand meaning of this mystery. At last, a note appeared in the glass: "How can you see us in our own shape? You can see everything with us, but it is impossible to see us". This story hints at impossibility of seeing God. Everything in this world that we see is an evidence of existence of God. We see everything with Him and with the help of Him. Jamshid's bowl is interpreted only from mystical point of view in this story based on the theory of the unity of being (wahdat al-wujud).

In the story called "Priest and Sheikh Abulgasim Hamadani", most of the characters of Ferdowsi's "Sahnameh" are described in terms of Sufi symbolism. We are providing the story in short form in order the readers to understand it better:

One priest built a beautiful church. He closed the church and worshipped inside. He had been isolated himself from the world around. While passing by the church, Abulgasim Hamadani called the priest. The priest came out and asked him what he wanted. Abulgasim asked him what he did there. The priest answered: "Oh old man, I saw a dog walking around the city. And I arrested it in this church. I left my family, closed the door and began to bring up that dog. You should chain your own dog, too, and shouldn't let it walk around others. Afrasiyab of Nafs can suddenly push you into a deep well like Bijan. But a devil called Evgan struggles against you, and it has put a stone on the entry of this well. This stone is so heavy that even the most powerful men of the world can't raise it. You need Rustam on this way, because only he can take that stone from the entry of the well. And with his help you can escape from the well. He will set you free from the dark well and take your soul to a secret place. So, he will separate you from the dangerous nature of Turan and direct to Iran's Sharia. When Keykhosrow of your soul becomes free, you will take jami-Jam and see all particles under the light of this bowl". Then, the priest reproached Abulgasim Hamadani: "You should behave in this manner while being friend with God. If you can't behave so, be friend with cowards. If he is faithful to the idol in his worship, you should be faithful, too, in your worship and prayers to God!"

Sheikh Faridaddin Attar paid special attention to description of God as a most Supreme Being by Ferdowsi, as well as glorification of life and history of Iranian rulers and Iranian people's pre-Islamic religious-mythological views and Ferdowsi's belief in oneness of God; therefore, in story "Hekayati-Ferdowsi-Tusi" of "Asrarnama" which is one of the masterpieces of Attar's literary activity, he gave broad information about this great poet.

This story says that when Ferdowsi died, one of the famous sheikhs of that time, most probably, Abulgasim Hamadani, refused to perform the funeral prayer for the poet. The Sheikh

claimed that Ferdowsi had praised arrogant rulers all his life long and so, he had left his religion:

شنیدم من که فردوسی طوسی

که شد او در حکایت بی فصوصی

به بیست و پنج سال نوک خامه

بر می برد نقش شاه نامه

به آخر چون که عمرش شد به آخر

عبو اقسیم که بود شیخ الاکابر

چنین گفت او که فردوسی بسی گفت

همه در مدح کبر و ناکسی گفت

به مدح کبرگان عمر بسر برد

چو وقت رفتن آمد بی خیر مرد

(I have heard that Ferdowsi Tusi spent 25 years of his life by writing "Shahnameh". At last his life came to the end, and he died. Abulgasim, one of the renowned sheikhs of that time, didn't perform the funeral prayer for him. The sheikh said: "Ferdowsi praised shahs and glorified arrogant and dishonest persons. He spent his life for praisal of such persons and therefore, when the moment of death came, he died without knowledge of anything") [11, p. 79].

After funeral of the poet, that sheikh saw Ferdowsi in his dream; Ferdowsi had green heaven dress and emerald crown. Ferdowsi said crying:

نکردی آن نماز از بینبازی

که مرا ننگ آمد زین نا نمازی

خدای من جهان پر فرشته

همه از فیض روهای سرشته

فرستاد او ز لطف و کارسازی

که تا کردند بر خاکم نمازی

خطم دادند بفررسی علی

که فردوسی به فردوس اسد اولی

(When you refused to perform funeral prayer for me, non-performance of the prayer made me shamed. God sent His angels to perform prayer on my grave. I was sent to Ferdowsi-Ala and I was said that Ferdowsi's place is Ferdows (paradise)) [11, p. 80].

It was said to Ferdowsi by God: "although you have praised the rulers all your life long, you have glorified us in a few verses. That's why we have awarded you with paradise."

At the end of the story, the poet asks God to award him with paradise like Ferdowsi:

خداوندا تو می دانی که عطار

همه توهید می گوید در عشار

چو فردوسی به بخشیش رایگان تو

به فضل خود به فردوسم رسان تو

(Dear God, you know that your slave Attar always praises your tovhid (oneness), please, award him with paradise like Ferdowsi) [11, p. 81].

4 Conclusion

Detailed analysis of the research into the issues of our study, selection and systematization of comprehensive empirical data allowed us to draw a conclusion that nominations with negative

evaluative colouring prevail among evaluative lexical means. These names were analysed in relation to social-political, social-economic, and other extra-linguistic factors which we associate with the actualization of the existing lexical means and appearance of new ones, mainly of negative connotation to name specific persons, political groups, reflections of different events, phenomena, processes of reality, etc. Evaluative lexis organically enters mass-media space, gives dynamics, relevance, meaningfulness, emotional-expressive colouring to it, contributes to public resonance, increases degree of social tension and serves as a powerful means of manipulating the consciousness of the communication process addressee, forming perception, comprehension of certain phenomena, states, processes of reality, etc., required for the speaker. The prospects of further research may consist in the updated system analysis of actualized and new evaluative lexis on the case study of the wide range of mass-media material (newspaper and magazine periodicals, TV sites, advertising publications, etc.) with the further description of the analysed units' frequency.

Sheikh Faridaddin Attar had great respect and love for Ferdowsi's literary activity and used his symbols in his own works widely. Many stories of "Shahnameh" were used by Attar and other Sufis, and the characters and events presented by Ferdowsi from real and historical aspects were described by them rather mystically and in sufistic manner.

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Primary Paper Section: A

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