The power in the tragedy of Rostam and Sohrab

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ABSTRACT

Background: Humans have long been seeking power. It can be said that the strongest human desire is for power and pride. However, power is not totally negative. Objective: The power will be noble and praiseworthy only if it will be used purely for the sake of God. It has two forms in the tragedy of Rostam and Sohrab: the power has dominated Rustam to defend his homeland and the power has motivated Sohrab to change the regime in Iran and Turan. But, this conflict and the duality of power brings disaster – father kills his child. Results: A father whose love to his son is beyond the imagination; he is full of love to power and his country and the son who suffers from self-delusion and dies because of his despotic thoughts. In this story, Rustam is the symbol of oldness wisdom and Sohrab is the symbol of youth passion. Conclusion: If the passion of youth will not be along with the wisdom of oldness, depravation will be the result.

INTRODUCTION

The society’s movement law is wealth and power from the perspective of Marx and Bertrand Russell, respectively. In Iran, only have three books been written and translated about power. While in England, scholars dedicate their whole life to read books about power. The power is defined as imposing the will to other people. Humans have long been seeking power. It can be deduced from Quran that the reason of Adam’s disobedience were seizing power. Because God had promised him if he did not go near the forbidden tree in paradise, he would never go hungry, naked, thirsty, and overheated. However, he went near the forbidden tree to reach the immortality power.

Power superiority to wealth:
   The power is more attractive than wealth. Because a powerful man will be the owner of wealth, but the opposite is not true. Even those who are looking for wealth want to use the power of wealth.

Power superiority to love:
   The strongest human desire is for power and pride. In the story of Khosrow and Shirin, when Khusrau is in the Armenia and looks for his mistress Shirin hears the news of the Hormuz King death. He promptly comes to Iran to seize the throne.

Divine splendor:
   The love of power violates some ethical standards. The power holders have continuously justified this. The oldest justification is resorting to the shadow of God. The powerful man claims he has divine splendor and the governance is his right. So, he must follow the divine law. Therefore, when Jamshid claims he is god, the splendor separates from him.

Power is not totally negative:
   Power should not be seen as entirely negative. The power will be noble and praiseworthy only if it will be used purely for the sake of God. For example, Fereydoun could not defeat Zhak without resorting to power. Kay Khosrow could not take the right of the oppressed from the oppressor without having power. But sometimes, power destroys the good soul of man and makes him an entirely demonic creature. Goshtasb is such a man.
Power in the tragedy of Rostam and Sohrab:

This tragedy is examined from two Rostam and Sohrab perspectives. According to Camus, the story of Rostam and Sohrab is a tragedy, because the sides that oppose each other are equally legitimate. In other words, tragedy is two-sided. In the tragedy, both sides are good as well as bad. In fact, all are right and no one has right. This is why the chorus group of old tragedies generally advises cautiously. This group knows that everyone is partly right. If someone thinks he is totally right, he will be go towards disaster.

The first view:

Rustam has many reasons in his heart that the young fighter is his son, but he wants to take it on the chin. Some psychologists believe that every unconscious act has a self-awareness core. Therefore, Rustam who did not drink wine drinks it for four days to sooth his internal conflict. In all other wars, the strong Rostam is right. In this war, Rostam does not believe in his victory and he thinks he will fail. However, deceive and accident rescues him from failure. He speaks with Esfandiar and explicitly declares that he killed his son to keep the throne.

Ferdowsi consider this as the disaster of ambition and greed:

And then immediately after tearing Sohrab’s abdominal, he says:

But why Rustam does not accept the truth of Sohrab? He himself promise Tahmine before the birth that his son will look like Sam. Gadhahom speaks about the similarity of Sam with Sohrab. Kavoos writes a letter to Rostam about the similarity of Sohrab with Sam. Also, Rustam himself says:

Rustam fights with drunken elephant when he is eight years old. But why he deceives himself in front of his twelve years old son and says:

It is worthy to mention that Rustam were look like Sam in childhood, then his own son is look like him.

Sohrab wants to revolution everything. He wants to disturb regime in Iran and Turan. But Rostam is a national hero and wants to keep regime. When the innocent Siavash is killed or when Esfandiar wants to capture Rostam, Rustam does not accept regime’s crush and rises. The thought and plan of new government belongs to Son and not the Father. If son will win, this will prove his superiority and this is not acceptable in power regime. On the other hand, if someone forgives, he is generous and this gives him superiority. But Sohrab wants to invert this law. In the family system, son is under the dominance of father, but Sohrab wants to be equal with the Father and has not obedience and subservience. Now, there are three ways for Rustam. The first way is unreliable and infamous. It is unreliable, because it may lead to Sohrab’s victory. On the other hand, it is infamous, because in the case of Rustam’s victory, he will kill his twelve years old son. The second way is to forget the power. This way is not suitable, because nobody has forgot power satisfactorily. Rustam is not exempt from other heroes and has this weakness. The third way is to deny the reality through self-deception. Rustam tries to convince himself that this teenager is not his son and he is an alien wants to fight. The victory is not certain, but fighting is the only way. In this tragedy, Sohrab is the hero. He has universal ideals. He wants to bring two separate worlds together. Since the first catastrophe is originated from the separation of boundaries, he wants to remove the borders that have been defined by human. Sohrab is an anti-power hero; because he aims to share the power with another great man, give him the throne, and eradicate the power disaster. Therefore, Sohrab is similar to Rustam and has many other noble characteristics.

He is a pacifist at the war with Rustam. He tries all ways to know Rustam. He is deceived, but does not deceive. Therefore, his defeat does not matter, his legitimacy is important. In this story, Ferdowsi shatters the hero of heroes, Rustam, to:

Smite the hero :

Prove Rustam – despite his spacious status- behaves like any other powerful people about the power.

Another view:

Sohrab invades Iran and Rostam is a defender of Iran, homeland, and Kavoos throne.

Ferdowsi says:

Ferdowsi states that Sohrab indulges in marching such as:

- Invasion to Iran border and border’s fortress
- Capturing Hajir

Having conquered the fortress, he get ready to do any evil things that he was able to do:

He thinks like Turanian commanders. After death of Zhenderzm, his first thought is:

And in front of the king of Persia, he says:

Sohrab has no passion to his countrymen. After the first encountering and failing of heroes, Rostam attacks to Afrasiab army and disperses them. But Sohrab attacks to Iranians:

- When Sohrab goes to the heart of the corps, he says with pride that:
- And after returning, he says to Hooman:
Now, it can be asked that whose sound this is for? The great grandson of brave Sam or Turanian commander?

Judgment again about Rostam:

In every war the Iranian border encounters with risk or injustice occurs -such as the killing of Siavash, Rostam well accepts to go to fight. But this time, he reluctantly goes. He hesitate four days. When Toos calls him to the war of Sohrab, he speaks of the suffering of combat:

So, this war is forced to Rostam. His resistance against Sohrab is not for himself but for defense of Iran. Rostam supports Kavus, because he wants him for Iran and Iranians. He is a supporter of the monarchy for the country not for personal profit. If any hero invade to country’s system, a country like Iran, where many heroes such as Tus, Goodarz, Giv, and etc. live, will analyze. Rostam kills his ambition because he wants Kavus, Kai-Khosro, and Fereydoon spread justice among the people. On the other hand, the heroes support Fereiduni regime. Maybe, they will not support the Rostami regime. Moreover, the people believe in the kings’ divine splendor and Rostam must be satisfied in his status.

Rostam and his family do not support regime at any cost. They follow the righteous Fereidun and Keikhosroo. Therefore, when the capricious wants to conquer Mazandaran, Zal goes precipitously to prevent him from doing so.

After the death of Siavash, Rostam enters arbitrarily to the tent of Kavus and kills Sodabe- his beloved.

It is as if Rostam and his family are assigned to remove filth and evil from Kings and led them to the path of God.

When Rostam curve in front of a King, he has a noble ideal; it is like Ferdowsi which named the Shahnameh as Mahmoud's name.

Rostam obeys Kavus to establish God's Laws in Iran. As Amir Kabir who did not think about gaining the reign to educate King to serve the country.

Rostam’s anxiety is not due to hegemonism, but it is because of the opposition of patriotism duty and his love to his son. In the story of Rostam and Esfandiar, the individual freedom is at risk and Rostam has individual task. But in this tragedy, the freedom of country is in danger and Rostam has social responsibility. In this story, Sohrab demands the power. He wants to give the throne to Rostam. Is he the guardian of Rostam? Why Rostam himself did not think about conquering throne? Sohrab has forgot the character and identity of Rostam and decides for him. Sohrab is similar to Marx and wants to dominate the world.

On the other hand, hegemonism is associated with self-deception. Sohrab sees his power more than what has. He says the Houman:

Sohrab forgets that maybe Rostam is also participated in this gathering.

On the other hand, if Rostam become king by the hands of Sohrab, the real King will be Sohrab.

This is the shortcoming of Sohrab in front of Rostam. Rostam considers the power as a means to preserve Iran and celebrate the justice. But it is a goal for Sohrab. Sohrab states that:

Hat is the symbol of power. However, Sohrab does not aims to change the regime, he wants his father to sit on the throne. So the question is: who governs? And not how governs?

The idea of Sohrab is arbitrary. He does not even want to know the view of Rostam and consult with him. In all the old states, the signs of consultation can be seen. In the Sumerian culture, debate has been one of the important principles.

However, there is no reason Sohrab to be killed:

It can be said that other one is the main killer. Maybe the killer is Kavus who hesitate to give the panacea.

On the other hand, there is a common fault. While Rostam -unlike previous wars- puts away bragging and hides his name, why Sohrab does not introduce himself? This tragedy goes forward like the Misunderstanding drama of Albert Camus

It can be said that Rostam and Sohrab should not fight together. Rustam is the symbol of oldness wisdom and Sohrab is the symbol of youth passion. If the passion of youth will not be along with the wisdom of oldness, depravation will be the result.

Sohrab and Rostam are two valve of a scale. The loss of any of them brings tragedy. The world needs Rostam and Sohrab together and not in opposition of each other. The removal of each of them will lead to disaster. This is where Naser Khosrow says:

The rightness of Rostam’s way and Sohrab’s behavior proves alternately. None of them negate each other.

Conclusion:

Our lives are constantly faced with contradictory such as determinism and free will; generosity and contentment, fear and impetuosity, forgiveness and forbearance, patriotism and altruism. One cannot deny all but over centuries, people have tried to reduce conflict. In the story of Rostam and Sohrab, the passion of youth is in conflict with the wisdom of oldness. When we bring together the opposite things, it might easily conclude
that Rostam and Sohrab are not guilty. Here, everyone who has the panacea—the symbol of power, is powerful. The power appears next to the anti-power.

REFERENCES