

A view of meritocracy in Ferdowsi the book of kingsTaghi Amini Mofrad¹, Kobra Nodehi¹, Zohreh Arab¹¹. Department of Persian Literature, Gorgan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Gorgan, IranE-mail: t_amin44@gorganiau.ac.ir

Abstract: The book of kings of Tus is not only the history of storytelling of old Iran but it is a treasure of valuable source of wisdom and knowledge and sociology and social issues were valuable things of this rich source. Meritocracy is considered a social item in this work with good position. Some examples are referred in this paper. [Taghi Amini Mofrad, Kobra Nodehi, Zohreh Arab. **A view of meritocracy in Ferdowsi the book of kings.** *Life Sci J* 2012;9(4):4763-4767] (ISSN:1097-8135). <http://www.lifesciencesite.com>. 715

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1. Introduction

Ferdowsi book is neither the dull history, nor legend or story, it is full of human world view of Ferdowsi. Ferdowsi was higher than a great poet, Hakim and great teacher of Iran and depiction of a great Ideal Iranian. Any story of this book has a deep knowledge and from the beginning and end of the story, the valuable wise thoughts are expressed effectively (Riahi, 1994:17). The book of kings is important as it is valuable full of knowledge and wisdom, living method in this world and guides us to salvation (Alavi Moqadam, 1995:178). The entire book of kings is admiring the virtues and hating the wrong doing. Reading this book is the document of qualification of Persian language and the treasury of Iran culture to Ferdowsi era. Any Iranian person should read the book of kings and model it (Dabir Siaqi, 1991: 7).

The manifestation of some issues as justice, good doing, charity, loving the country, meritocracy, dealing with welfare affairs of people, considering defensive issues of the country, behavior methods in internal and international relations, behavior and thinking of the enemy in this book showed the best generality of Ferdowsi in social and sociology aspect. Based on the importance of qualification and meritocracy on all the affairs, we briefly discuss about this important issue in Ferdoosi book.

Meritocracy in Islam religion teaching

Indeed, giving the responsibilities to qualified people is not a valid issue but it is considered as main and real affairs. As the Holy Quran said: إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا (Al-Nisa, 58). Ignoring the qualification of people in selecting and delegating the affairs to them is a problem endangering the foundation and health of the society and implicit unavoidable damages on the society.

As human being reached Khalifato Allah, after taking the tests and based on meritocracy, Nezami said:

The knowledge of a person is his good nature and his dignity (Nezami, 1993, 288)

Appointing Ebrahim (pbuh) as the leader of people was done after achieving qualification, in verse 124 Baqareh, it is said:

وَ إِذَا بَلَغَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رُبَّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ، قَالَ إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ «لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا».

The importance of qualification is considerable in other religious learning. Imam Ali (pbuh) presented some recommendations in considering meritocracy and qualification of the agents, he said in letter 53 of Nahjolbalaqeh: consider your agents and appoint them by testing and don't give any responsibility to them without the consultation of others! This work is a set of cruelty and treason and selects them among the experienced people from the pioneer family in Islam! They are more respectable for their behavior and correct dignity and they are less greedy and more thoughtful about their works.

Imam Ali (pbuh) in another part of the letter said: "Consider the people you appoint and select the best one and give the letter in which your secrets are written to a person who is more virtuous (Khatami, 2002:1315).

Considering the important characteristic of meritocracy in other valuable texts of this book has special position. Saadi Shirazi believed that:

A poor person no fear of the king

Appoint a good person for people

Nothing more than cry is heard

As ashamed as a poor person

Fearing you, don't trust him

Be a god fearing person

Not the punishment

Trust person should fear God

(Saadi, 2002:44)

In Kelileh and Demneh of Nasrollah Monshi, considering meritocracy is reflected. He wrote: the right of people on the king is such that each of them should be reached based on dignity and don't delay in it and we should prefer the artists and wise people to ignorant and artless people. Two things are not expected of kings: decoration of head, putting the decoration of foot on the head and putting ruby and pearl in lead and tin is not insulting to the gold, the wisdom is for the people of wisdom is blamed and the works are done easily with wise people (Nasrollah Monshi, 1991: 68).

2. Meritocracy in the book of kings

The book of kings has special position in art and qualification and meritocracy.

Ferdowsi tried to put ideals and human basics in the body and soul of positive personalities in his book and tried that these personalities have valuable human history and they should be more thoughtful in their personal and social affairs to have a good result. In this stage, one of the conditions that is important in achieving satisfactory result in planning is considering qualification and respecting the concept of meritocracy in all fields. This valuable thing in all letter of this wise man is considered and we will have a brief report.

The story of Fereidoon is one of the meritocracy issues in the book of king. By the brief view of this story, we can find that in testing the capabilities, qualification is the main criterion. In this story, after the sons of Fereidoon arrived, Fereidoon appointed Jandal to help him in important plan of selecting spouse for the sons and attempted with wide attempt in selecting qualified brides:

One of the most respectful

Fereidoon invited of the brave people

Being kind with the king

Jandal full of art

Appoint three girls of noble family

All over the world

Beautiful, noble

Three sisters of one mother and one father

Suitable for marriage

Suitable for my children

(Ferdowsi, 1994:96).

The result of this study is the daughters of Shah Yemen, Sarv Sayefekan as fiancée. The king of Yemen loved the girls more and tried to accept the request of Jandal on condition and asked the agent of Fereidoon to see the princess and evaluate them. The

request of Yemen king showed respecting qualification and virtues and the people of wisdom should take it as an example:

Obeying is necessary

As the order of the king

Go out of my house

With the order of the king, the three daughters

The valuable things

How can I see their kings

To lit the dark city

They should come to me

To see their conscious mind

To be happy of their visit

To take their hands

To see their justice

To give may tradition

Then, three kings

(Ferdoosi, 2001:153).

In the continuance of this story, after the sons were married, Fereidoon tried to divide the wide kingdom scope among the sons. He decided to test the sons for just division and for the qualification of any person, gave some of them. Thus, when the sons reached Iran after returning Yemen, the father appeared as a dragon and attacked them and three sons were tested:

Came to see

Being informed of returning the three kings

To reduce the suspects

To know about them

As brave as lion

One of the bravest came

(Ferdoosi, 1994:104)

At first attacked the older son, the son said that fighting with the dragon is not for the people of wisdom and escapes from the dragon:

As precious

Went to the older son

Not out of wisdom

To fight with the dragon

Father came to the brother

To escape

(ibid)

Fereidoon attacked the second son; he decided to fight with the dragon:

Put the arrow in the bow

As the middle son saw

A lion should fight

In the battle field

(ibid)

The younger son attacked dragon and from wisdom tried to approach the dragon and expressed his abilities and his brothers to create disorder:

Shouted when seen the dragon

As the older son came to them

Don't go to the way of lions

Go out of here

Don't do it

Being heard of the name of Afaridon king

All fighting

Three sons of the king

I call you a bad person

If you go from this way

(ibid)

Fereidoon in this test and evaluating the arts and qualifications of each of the sons were achieved, younger son, Iraj was more qualified for mild nature and after consultation with experts, divided the wide country based on the qualifications of each of the sons, He gave Rome and Khavar to Selm, China and Turan to Tur and Iran and Nizevaran plain to the best son, Iraj.

In the story of Manuchehr, the reflection of meritocracy is revealed. In this story, Sam with the order of Manuchehr is prepared to attack Mazandaran. Zal was a gift in Kabul and gave the kingdom of the land to him and selecting and appointing the elites in kingdom are the orders of brave Sam to the son:

to be calm

Zal went to Sam

The men of knowledge and brave people

Gather the army

You get a lot of any knowledge

Hear of any knowledge

Gather all for justice and knowledge

Don't be get rid of forgiving

(ferdoosi, 2000:153)

Poursam after seeing off the father- moving to Mazandaran applied the constructive guides of the

father and by using the attitudes of elites and scientists and experts and cultural and military experts were invited and by consultation, the constructive knowledge of the people of wisdom were applied:

Good name should be for ever

Sam was thoughtful

Searched and did everything

Sitting on the throne

The army

Astrologists and religion people

Consulting with each other

Nights and days they were together

Like a star

Zal learnt a lot

Not seen any one stronger than him

Of decision and knowledge, reached a position

(ibid, 154)

Other important examples were the fact that Manuchehr asked Sam that the corps attacks India and Kabul:

Go with the selected people

The king of the world said to Sam

Set on fire the place of Mehrab and Kabul

Set India on fire

(ibid, 197)

In the first reaction, Sam accepted the order of Shahriar:

I make the king happy

I will do it

(ibid, 198)

As Zal Sam heard this, he fell in love with Rudabeh- daughter of Mehrab Kaboli by going to father tried to prevent Shah and Sam and by recalling the memories of childhood with a magnificent tone tries to prevent them. Sam invited the writer and wrote a letter for his braveries and services and request of Zal to Manuchehr. Zal took the letter and went to the king, after PorSam reached; the court accepted him and was guided to the king. Manuchehr took the letter from him and after knowing the content said:

If your destiny is such

I will to as you like

(ibid)

The king heard about the braveries of Zal and after the letter of Sam found about the

constructive role of the young Pahlevan and took the opportunity and Zal was the potential qualified person who can take power after the father.

Based on the important mission, multi-dimensional evaluation, an exact result is achieved and it is useful in selecting and appointing qualifier agents and propagating the culture of meritocracy in all levels as a valuable model and experience.

Thus, Manuchehr at first asked the people of wisdom, experts and magicians to research about the future and result of marriage of Zal and Rudabeh because the future planning and strategic long-term thinking required that the result of this marriage followed the improvement of the foundation of the country:

Astrologists and men of wisdom
Order the Mubadan

Search about the sky
Gather them

(ibid, 217)

The researchers after searching the first part of the test, reported the result to the king, Manuchehr:

The clear water is flowing
It was clear

A good natured child is born
The daughter of Mehrab and son of Sam

Strong, polite, noble
With a good life

Strong for fighting
Wing, branches

Obeys the kings
The shelter of the army in Iran

(ibid,218)

In another part of the test, the wisdom and intelligence of Pour Sam are evaluated. The king asked the experts to have an interview with Zal and raise some questions in various fields and evaluate his knowledge and qualification. Each of them asked a question, then they asked him to think about the questions well and present the answer clearly and Pour Sam answered them clearly. The king found about the qualification, wisdom and intelligence of Zal after this difficult test, was happy with him and admitted him and they set up a celebration. Then, Zal went to Manuchehr to let him return, the king asked him to stay one more day. Then, "the test for selecting a qualified person), practical test and evaluating the physical force is prepared and the final approval of

the qualification of Zal depends upon the positive and successful result in this stage. Zal took the test and started the work symbolically:

Very old

A bad tree

Prepared the horse

Sam rubbing the bow

The arrow of kingdom

Released it

(ibid,224)

The test continues until the brave people all confess about the qualification of Pour Sam in physical and mental aspect:

His mother will cry more

Any one fighting with you

He is whale

Such person is not born of the lions

(ibid, 225)

After the final stage of the big test for important selection, Manuchehr and other experts admired Zal Zar and prepared some valuable gifts for the famous Pahlevan. At the end, the king appointed the famous Zal and delegated the affairs to him:

All on that time

Everything was given to Zal

(ibid, 226)

The importance of qualification and meritocracy to achieve the responsibilities obliged the people of wisdom to evaluate all the agents. In the kingdom of Keikavus story, when he was informed of the characteristics of the daughter of Hamavaran king, Sudabeh, fell in love with her. He tries to take her hand for marriage, Kavus decides to appoint a good messenger:

A man of knowledge

Selected among the group

Ordered to go to Hamavaran

Brave, intelligent

(ibid, 131)

The messenger of Kavus did his mission as qualified:

To the king of Hamavaran

The intelligent man went

With sweet words

Spoke calmly

Then the messenger Gave hello of Kavus

(ibid, 132)

The valuable characteristics of Keikavus messenger are well as the king of Hamavaran in discussion with his daughter said:

The letter as Zand and skillful in his hand

The kind messenger came
(ibid, 133)

This accuracy in appointing the shrewd messenger is considered in this story (the fight of Kavus with the king of Hamavaran). After the king of Hamavaran invites Kavus with deceiving, and imprisons him, Rostam hears about it and invited the army to be prepared for attack and then Pour Dastan sent an intelligent messenger to the court of Hamavaran and this decision showed considering meritocracy in this cultural work:

Was sent to Kavus Shah

An intelligent person

Became famous

Beside the king of Hamavaran

(ibid, 129)

In the kingdom story of Kavus, selecting Rostam as the messenger to go to the court of the king of Mazandaran is another manifestation of meritocracy in the book of kings. In this selection, Rostam tried to use this mission and find about the army of the enemy and ups and downs of the court:

Receiving the letter took the way

Took down the heavy club approaching Mazandaran

King was informed of the letter sent by Kavus

Salar Mazandaran heard selected among the brave men

As Tahamtan saw them saw a branch of the tree

Took it in his hand all the army surprised

Ordered them to bring Put it down approaching

One of them took the hand and pressed to upset him

Rostam laughed all were watching

Cut his vein and fell as laughing pressed his hands

Came down from the horse he was unconscious

(Reza, 1991:148)

In the story of the kingdom of Khosroparviz, when the letter of China Khaghan in response to the letter of the King of Iran is reached to Khosroparviz. After being informed of the content of the letter, invites the counselors. They recall the necessity of selecting an intelligent and wise messenger to Khaqan and sending an experienced, wise and brave person show observing meritocracy and observing qualification in delegating the works to the agents:

From magnificence and kingdom

The response from Iranians

Wise, brave and intelligent

Select among Iranians one of them

Speak and hear his manner

As going to Khaqan from this door

(ibid, 153)

3. Conclusion

Considering meritocracy is an important issue in determining the constructive elements of human communities. The suitable approach to this culture and its establishment in planning and activities caused the permanent growth of the society.

The importance of meritocracy caused that Ferdowski in his book consider this issue and is reflected in the thought, speech and method of the people of wisdom and Ahura and some of the examples were presented in the current study.

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