

The Totemic Signs of Simorgh and Dragon in Shahnameh

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ABSTRACT

Totemism is one of the main forms of the preliminary religions and is one of the steps of the evolution trend of human beliefs. The early man had the language to that of the nature and the world. If the world talked to him via stars, plants, animals, seasons, and nights, the man responded by his dreams, ancestors, or totems. The pre-historic man knew that he is a human being and also knew that he is beyond that. For instance, his ancestor was an animal or he can die and then return back to the life. In the Iranian culture and mythology, the evidence of totemism is present. Thus, such signs could be found in the epics of the nation. On the basis of this, in the current study it was attempted to evaluate the signs remained from totemic riots in Shahnameh.

KEY WORDS: Totem; Shahnameh; Simorgh; Dragon.

INTRODUCTION

It is not still obvious what the primitive man thought about the creation and the creator. Archaeology has helped in some points and discovered some unknowns. However, the human being has typically the same sensation about the origin of the universe and the issue is a heritable psychological ability. Although its presentation was different due to the specific continental, environmental, and other factors, the common religious feeling indicate that through the history man has bound to particular ideas. Various sciences including anthropology, archeology, history of religions, mythology, religious sociology, and religious psychology have addressed the issue. Many scientists of these areas have talked about the most primitive forms of religion as well as ideas and beliefs of man. Among these, two types of religions have been introduced as the origin of other religions: totemism and animism. Confidently, Durkheim considered totemism as the most ancient form of religion among the nations (Torabi 1341: 21). These religions undoubtedly played an essential role in the history and culture of each nation and directed their attitude toward the universe or anything related to it. The reflections of these religions can be found even in the manuscripts remained from these nations or the nations after them. These reflections may be so evident or be so ambiguous or disorganized or show itself under another name or reflection. It can be concluded that today we cannot find the reflections of ancient religions such as totemism in the manuscripts in a pure form. It should be considered that we can only find the signs just gleams like a distant star.

The word totem in the form of “totam” was used by the English writer J. Long in 1971. He adopted the term from the North American Indians (Freud 1355: 8). Many scientists have investigated in this field, including Scholl Craft, Fergusson Mc Lenan, Freud, Golden Wiser, Rivers, Malinowski, Elkin, Radcliff Brown, and Luis Straus.

Mehrangiz Samadi defined Totem as follows: “totemism is the particular respect or belief that all members of the tribe express toward some animals or plants, and consider the spirit of the animal as their particular guard”. Totem is the respected material. Indians called the animal that they were frightened of because of their strengths, totem. In this respect, anthropologists named the worship of materials as totemism. In the primitive tribes, totem was considered as the ancestor of the tribe. They sometimes tattooed the symbol of the totem on their body and believed that the characteristics of the totem transferred to them. Thus, the members of the tribe considered themselves as human being as well as the totem worshiped by the tribe. Sometimes, they changed their appearance to be similar to the totem. For instance, the tribe with buffalo as the totem, made their hairs as horn (Samadi 1367: 13-14). Moreover, primitive man thought that totem ward off their enemy, tells the future, heals the patients, and beyond all, is the carrier of the spirit of each person. Totem is the man’s guard and the man respects totem in different ways (Azadegan 1372: 31-32). Filicin Shale believed that in most communities, the child inherits the name of totem from his/her mother (Shale 1355: 21), but Freud considered that in the maternal and also paternal pedigree totem is inherited (Freud 1355: 7).

In the early 20th century, Freud proposed a new theory about the origin of totemism. He discussed totemism from the psychology and psychoanalysis point of view. In his book “Totem and taboo”, he was influenced by the Darwin’s evolution theory, and with some inspirations from other scholars such as Robertson Smith, he proposed a consistent theory. In brief, the theory states that:

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A jealous and harsh father kept all women for himself and as his sons grew older, he drove them away. One day the brothers gathered and killed the father and ate him. By eating him, they fulfilled their unification with him and each inherited a part of his power. However, after a short while, they had guilty feeling. Thus, to compensate for the sin, they respected the plant or animal mingled with their father and made it as the totem. Therefore, they do not kill the totem and withhold themselves from intercourse with the tribe's women, who are in the position of the father's women. That is why exogamy and totemism are concomitant (Azadegan 1372: 99-100).

The Canon of totemism:

According to the outline of Renak in 1900, it is developed in 12 main canons. Freud has considered these canons in the book "Totem and taboo". The canons can be summarized as follows:

- 1- Killing and eating of some animals is forbidden. Men breed such animals and keep and treat them.
- 2- They mourn for an animal that dies incidentally, and bury it with the respect observed for a member of the tribe.
- 3- In some cases, only eating some parts of the animal is forbidden.
- 4- When they have to kill an animal, which its killing is forbidden, they apologize to the animal and with different actions and rituals; they try to decrease the adverse effects of the killing.
- 5- When they kill an animal according to the rituals, they formally mourn.
- 6- In some formal occasions during the religious rites, they wear the skin of some animals. In the tribes with totemism system, the skin of the totem is used.
- 7- The tribes and individuals put the name of the totem on themselves.
- 8- Many tribes use the figures of animals as their specific symbol and decorate their weapons with it. The men draw the figures of animals on their body and by tattooing fix it on their body.
- 9- If the totem is a dangerous or fearful animal, they believe that the totem would not harm those tribe members who have the name of the totem.
- 10- The Totem animal support and preserve the tribe members.
- 11- The totem foretells its followers and guides them.
- 12- In most cases, the members of a totemic tribe believe that they are relatives and have the same parentage (Freud, 1355: 137-139).

Many issues including believe in the holy matter, believe in fetish, shamanism, animism, worshipping the nature's phenomenon, sacrificing, worship of ancestors, and magic and wizardry are related with the beliefs of totemism.

Among these, magic and wizardry has a close relationship with totemism. It should be noted that the primitive man performed magic rites, because he believed in it and carried out his primitive medical ideas on its basis. Wherever professional magic emerged, the art of healing was limited to them. The mixing of spirituality, medicine, magic, and the related jobs, as well as achievement of superior power by men and even women who dealt with such issues took place among the primary tribes in such way (Mokhtari 1368: 177). It was common that in magic rites of primitive man, a mixture of the magic ruler with the tribe's totem was believed (Ibid: 178).

Totemism in Iran:

As some manuscripts show, totemism or at least its signs existed in ancient Iran. According to Iranian stories, a bitch fed Keikhosrow and a goat fed Ardeshir. Also, an eagle nurtured Hakhamanesh (Azadegan 1372: 71). There are also some signs of plant totemism in the Iranian mythology, including origination of some ancestry from a particular plant, i.e., the plant is considered as the mythological ancestor. A good example of this belief can be found in the mythical plant of "*Mehr giah*" or rhubarb. According to Mehrdad Bahar, the relationship of man and rhubarb has a historical root and returns back to the neo-paleolithic era. It seems that a group of primary Iranian tribes believed that they originated from rhubarb and the plant was their totem. Later, the ancient myth became common among the Iranians in middle Asia and became their general concept (Bahar 1372: 99). There are also many other beliefs including the growing of a tree on the blood such as the case of growing a tree on the blood of *Siavash* in the Iranian culture or the *Yekta afarid* cow in Mithraism. Thus, the signs of totemism can be traced in the Iranian culture. Now, it should be evaluated how much of the totemism life and the thinking form and beliefs of Iranian about totemism can be found in Shahnameh.

By evaluating Shahnameh, three main totems can be found in it, which can surely be proved to be totems by the signs: Roc (*Simorgh*), cow, and dragon. Herein, we have studied the two totems, Simorgh and dragon, which are related to each other.

1- Roc

The story of this wonderful bird has a close relationship with some personalities such as *Zal* and Rostam. Kuyaji considered these two personalities as the two main representative of the Scythian. According to him, this

tribe is the bride between the Iranian and Chinese stories and legends. However, it is possible from the geographical viewpoint, since Sistan was a border region between Iran and China in that time. He even considered many items described in *Bahram yisht* to be completely compatible with the history, religious beliefs, and social regulations of the nomadic tribe of Scythian. He also believed that by studying *Shahnameh*, one can find interpretations or even clear indications for some parts of *Bahram yisht* (Kuyaji 1353: 52-53).

In *Shahnameh*, the Sistan (or Sakestan) and some adjectives such as *Sagzi* (*Sistani*) have been used frequently. Moreover, in the Asian religious, Mehrdad Bahar considered the part of *Zal* and Rostam to be influenced by the Scythian stories (Bahar 1375: 20). Whether Rostam and his ancestor be Scythian or Parthian, it is obvious that the two tribes knew the Sun god as their support and worshiped him (Razi 1379: 51, Hamidian 1372: 36 and 239). Even the Seke tribe, which was a group of Scythian, only worshiped the sun (Moein 1375: 775). On the other hand, in myths it can be observed that there was a relationship between the sun and some birds, and to be more precise, solarists considered birds as the graces of the sun and originated from the sun (Dubocor 1373: 85). Thus, in the *Shahnameh*, *Zal* is left in the *Alborz kuh*, which is close to the sun. The relationship between mountain on the one hand and eagle, hawk, آله, and دال on the other hand, as well as the relationship between mountain on the one hand and hawk and splendor on the other hand is present in Indo-European cultures. Even in the Indian subcontinent, just like eagle, mountains can fly (Ghoreshi 1380: 169).

Bahar also highlighted the continuity of Iranian and Scythian legends about birds (Bahar 1381: 461). In *Bahram yisht*, it is talked about a bird called *Varghan*, and in the 35th *band* of the book, the bird is described as its feather can dispel the magic of wizards and heal the patients (Pourdavud 2536: 127). Besides *Varghan*, in Avesta another bird called *Simorgh* (Roc) was considered, but as *Sean* (*Morghu sean*). *Simorgh* (*Angha sirang*) is the Pahlavi *Sen-murv*, which means the *Sean bird*. In *Shahnameh* and Avesta, as well as the Pahlavi stories, *Simorgh* is a wonderful bird (Yahaghi 1375: 267).

The sun, mountain, and splendor are related with the bird. The bird relates with a tree, called *Harvisp tokhmak*. Just like the roc, the tree is wonderful. According to the meaning obtained from the mythical culture, the literal word means the thing which entails all plants. The tree is the home of *Simorgh* and is located in the middle of the *Ferakhhkot* Sea. When *Simorgh* sat on the tree, one thousand branches broke down and when *Simorgh* flew away, one thousand new branches grew. It is a healing tree that contains the seed of all plants and as the seeds spread, various plants grow up (Yahaghi 1375: 267). Another name mentioned for *Simorgh* in Avesta is *Sene*, which is the name of sage hakim. According to Dinkert, *Sene* born one hundred years and died two hundred years after Zoroaster. Among the followers of *Mazdisna*, he was the first one to live one hundred years. Once he was introduced as one of the Zoroaster's pupils and in the *Farvadin yisht* (band 97) of *Farvahar*, he was also worshiped (Yahaghi 1375, 257). We can observe that the characteristics of wisdom, sage, and healing was passed to *Simorgh*, since *Simorgh* is wise and also healing.

In *Shahnameh*, we can observe two *Simorghs*; the one with close contact with the family of *Zal* and the other one which comes in the seven quests (*khan*) *Esfandiar*. *Simorgh* clearly played role in four events, three of which is done by the *Simorgh* related to *Zal* family.

Simorgh, the myth of *Zal*:

1- When *Simorgh* carried *Zal* to the Alborz mountain to nurture (Ferdowsi 1379, Vol. 1, Manuchehr, verses 12 and 13), the bird is the foster and the nurturer of *Zal* and also his supporter. While they farewell, *Simorgh* highlighted the issue.

که در زیر پرت بپرورده ام ابا بچگانگت بر آورده ام (همان/ بیت 139)
فرامش مکن مهر دایه ز دل که در دل مرا مهر تو دلگسل (همان/ بیت 141)

2- At the time of Rostam birth, *Simorgh* played the role of a physician and helped Rudabeh in child bearing, because Rudabeh had some problems in bearing such a large baby. Moreover, we can see that *Simorgh* foretells and spoke about the birth of supporter and guard of Iranian against Turks:

چنین گفت با زال کین غم چراست بچشم هژبر اندرون نم چراست...
کزین سرو سیمین بر ماه روی یکی نرّه شیر آید و نامجوی

Besides, in the orders made to *Zal*, *Simorgh* showed its wisdom. Also, the spiritual power of its miraculous feather led to its veneration.

3- In the fight of Rostam against *Esfandiar*, the invulnerable prince, one of the creatures that is killed by *Esfandiar* is *Simorgh* –as was mentioned, it is different from the *Simorgh* related with the *Zal* family. Here, the spiritual and virtual powers of the former *Simorgh* was not considered (Ibid, Haft *khan*, verses 243, 244, 260, 261, and 270). The *Shahnameh* describes is only its fighting abilities and the capabilities.

4- The fourth and the last emergence of Simorgh is to save *Rostam* and *Rakhsh* in their fight against the invulnerable *Esfandiar*, where both are severely hurt and no one hoped they would survive. In this case, the feather of Simorgh, which is a symbol of its spirituality or magic power, is again required.

نگه کرد مرغ اندران خستگی بدید اندرو راه پیوستگی
ازو چار پیکان به بیرون کشید بمنقار از آن خستگی خون کشید
بران خستگی ها بمالید پر هم اندر زمان گشت با زیب و فر

However, the healing power of the Simorgh feather in *Shahnameh* is assigned to *Varghan* in *Avesta*. In *Avesta*, the healing feather of Simorgh was not considered but in *Shahnameh* it is mentioned. Moreover, Simorgh solves the secret of *Esfandiar's* invulnerability and noted that the fate of the one who kills *Esfandiar* is unhappiness and the pain and difficulty in this world:

بدو گفت مرغ ای گو پیلتن توی نامبردار هر انجمن
چرا رزم جستی ز اسفندیار که او هست رویین تن و نامدار (همان/ بیت 1272 و 1273).
چنین گفت سیمرخ کز راه مهر بگویم کنون با تو راز سپهر
که هرکس که او خون اسفندیار بریزد ورا بشکرد روزگار
همان نیز تا زنده باشد ز رنج رهایی نیابد نماندش گنج
بدین گیتیش شوربختی بود وگر بگذرد رنج و سختی بود

One of the interesting issues about Simorgh is its talking; in spite of have the characteristics of a bird, it has the human characteristics also.

چنین گفت سیمرخ با پور سام که ای دیده رنج نشیم و کنام

Zal also speaks with Simorgh:

به سیمرخ بنگر که دستان چه گفت که سیر آمدستی همانا ز جفت
نشیم تو رخشنده گاه منست دو پر تو فر کلاه منست

According to Mehrdad Bahar, nurturing of *Zal* by a bird is related to the era of mixing of Indians and Iranians and is a remainder of the totemic riots in these tribes (Bahar 1352: 38). *Koyaji* explicitly considered the bird as the guard angel and the totem of the Scythian (*Koyaji* 1353: 56). *Yahaghi* also pointed out these ideas (*Yahaghi* 1375: 266).

Now, taking all the evidence in *Shahnameh* into consideration, it can be definitely stated that Simorgh was the totem of the *Zal's* tribe.

According to the canon of totemism, a totem guards its tribe members. This totemic characteristic is specifically true for Simorgh. The totem animal foretells its followers and guides them, as it expressed the birth of *Rostam*, invulnerability of *Esfandiar*, and the unlucky fate of fighting with *Esfandiar*. Meanwhile, it solved the problem of invulnerability of *Esfandiar* and guided *Rostam* to make use of *Gaz* wood. One of the canons of totemism indicates that the totem animal and the individual owning the totem are of the same ancestor and in fact having the same characteristics. In *Shahnameh*, once *Rostam* met *Keikhosrow*, the king adored him and called him as the support and guard of Iran. Whenever he is needed, he promptly would reach and solve any problem. The king considers him the same as Simorgh, and solves one of the secret of the myth, which is the survival of *Rostam* and his guard.

به رستم چنین گفت پس شهریار که ای نیک پیوند و به روزگار
ز هر بد تویی پیش ایران سپر همیشه چو سیمرخ گسترده پر

Another issue is the manner of emergence of Simorgh in *Shahnameh*. For emergence of Simorgh, a particular riot should be carried out, which was done by *Zal* anytime he asked for its help and by carrying out the riot, Simorgh emerged. In this riot, some principles are performed in a particular sequence. *Zal* goes to the peak of the mountain, fires three censers, and prepares for the emergence of the bird and worship it.

از ایوان سه مجمر پر آتش ببر برفتند با او سه هشیار و گرد
فسونگر چو بر تیغ بالا رسید ز دیبا یکی پر بیرون کشید
زمجمر یکی آتشی برفروخت ببالای آن پر لختی بسوخت
... همانگه چو سیمرخ از هوا بنگرید درخشیدن آتش نیز دید

Shahnameh calls *Zal* as the magician, which relates to the magic riots that are the religious pre-requisites of totemism. However, such magical power can be seen for *Zal* and also Simorgh. Moreover, *Zal* always carried the feather of Simorgh and kept it as a sacred material, where it says:

ز دیبا یکی پر بیرون کشید.

The sacredness of the material belonging to the totem is one of the properties of the totemic riots. Besides the presence of metaphysical powers, its virtue is also considered:

ابا خوشتن بر یکی پر من خجسته بود سایه فر من

2- Dragon:

According to Monic Dubocor, snake is one of the main representative features, which is the origin of life and dream and is usually drawn as it coiled around a tree ... it was the source of reverence and adoration as well as dread and disgust. Its mysterious emergence on the earth and the sudden disappearance in the unknown under earth world invokes the dreams and is a motivation for development of stories and legends. Thus, snake was believed to be a creature beyond human being and the nature, which is assisted by the spirit of the ancestors. Moreover, the ability of snakes in shedding skin and its emergence in an absolutely young and revived form after shedding skin reinforced the idea that snakes constantly revive and thus they are claimed to be eternal. ... and Garzah metamorphosed the snake into a sacred dragon and great serpent, the strange marine creature, and even god (Dubocor 1373: 41). In some cultures, snake is the symbol of healing. Medicine still has the symbol of two snakes coiling around a stick or cup (Yahaghi 1375: 381-382). It seems that the fear of large pre-historic animals and then large reptiles and snakes in the people's thought have caused the frightening image of dragons (Dalasho 1366: 235). Jung considered dragon as the symbol of devil powers in the thoughts of primitive men (Jung 1381: 175). Considering the ignorance of primitive man who was still uncivilized and instincts guided him similar to animal, it is not unexpected.

Besides the description of dragon in different cultures, we frequently encounter the issue of killing dragon. This outstanding mythical feature is also reflected considerably in Shahnameh. This wonderful creature has found various specific presentations in Shahnameh and even some of them are of human type.

Azhidehak (Zahak):

In Islamic texts and Shahnameh, *Azhidehak* has changed into *Zahak*. He is the best known dragon-type man, whose name is linked with dragon; such that in many mythical manuscripts he is considered the dragon itself (Rastegar Fasaei 1379: 147). In Avesta, he is described as a dragon with three muzzles, six eyes, and three heads. Also, again quoted from the myths encyclopedia of Darmster, *Zahak* is the thunder dragon that fights with the light godhead (Yahaghi 1375: 290-291). Moreover, George de Mesil considered legend of the three-headed *Azhidehak* in relation with a type of veil dance (Rastegar Fasaei 1379: 147). To explain it, it should be noted that the primitive tribes carried out specific riots which were in fact symbolic riots. In the book "*man and his symbols*", it is stated that in such ceremonies, men and in most cases the head of the tribe wore the skin of an animal and in that moment became that animal. Then, he is the ancestor of the tribe; i.e., the spirit of the tribe's totem is incarnated. In other words, he himself is the god. Gradually, instead of the complete form and skin of the animal, masks were made, which played the afore-mentioned role. Since the figures of the totemic animal are more sacred than the animal itself, these masks which are the representative of the spirit of the totemic animal are sacred and revered. In fact, they are god or the devil (Jung 1381: 358-359). The shape of the mask perhaps led to introduction of *Zahak* as the three-headed. According to Kazazi, heads of the two snakes on the shoulders of *Zahak* and his own head led to call him the three-headed in Iranian stories (Kazazi 1379: 274-275).

In Shahnameh, on the one hand, *Zahak* has a human personality, and on the other hand has an animalistic behavior and manner. If we consider this issue as the trace of the totemic riots, then *Zahak* is the representative of his totemic animal, dragon. This personality is half-human and half-animal. In many cases, using the name of dragon in Shahnameh, the *Zahak* is metaphorically considered. Beside his negative and devil characteristics, *Zahak* had magical power.

دگر پاکدامن ارنواز	زیوشیده رویان یکی شهرناز
بران اژدهافش سپردندشان	بایوان ضحاک بردندشان
بیاموختشان کژی و بدخویی	بپروردشان از ره جادویی
جز از کشتن و غارت و سوختن	ندانست جز کژی آموختن

This characteristic has been attributed also to good men in Shahnameh, including *Fereydun*. This shows the bi-dimensionality of magic; i.e., positive and negative magic or good and bad magic, in ancient beliefs (Shaleh 1355: 30).

Dragon and Rostam:

It was mentioned that the totem of Zal's family including Rostam was Simorgh. But the symbol of Rostam's banner is a flying dragon, not Simorgh.

بران نیزه بر شیر شیر زرین سرست	درفشی بدید اژدها پیکرست
نه آرام دارد تو گفتی نه جای	یکی اژدهافش درفشی بیای

Also, the symbol of *Faramarz*' banner, who was the son of Rostam, was also dragon:

که کس را ز رستم نبودی گذر	درفشی کجا چون دلاور پدر
تو گفتی زبند آمدستی رها	سرش هفت همچون سر اژدها

This symbol belongs to the family of *Mehrab-e Kabuli*, and as we know Rudabeh, mother of Rostam, was the daughter of *Mehrab-e Kabuli*, who were of the *Zahak* ancestry.

یکی پادشاه بود مهرا ب نام
زبردست با گنج و گسترده کام
... ز ضحاک تازی گهر داشتی
به کابل همه بوم و بر داشتی

In fact, dragon was the totem of their family. According to another canon of the totemism, the child inherits the totem of her maternal family, thus dragon is the Rostam's totem, rather than Simorgh. Another explanation for this issue can be as follows: since in the totemic canon, one person may have more than one totem coincidentally, then Rostam has both Simorgh and dragon as his totems, one from the paternal family and the other from the maternal family. Also, many tribes used animal figures as their particular symbols and decorated their weapons. This custom is another sign of believing in tribal totems, in which each family discriminated himself from other families by his totem.

***Kerm-e haftvad*, another representation of the dragon:**

Sometimes, in *Shahnameh* a small and weak animal is changed into a huge animal; such as *Kerm-e haftvad* which was mentioned as a type of dragon. According to *Shahnameh*, at first *Haftvad* was a poor man. He has seven sons and thus was called *Haftvad*. He had also a daughter, who every day went out of the city with other girls and spun cotton. Once during their meal time, an apple fell down a tree. The girl picked up the apple and nibbled it. He saw a worm (*Kerm*) in the apple, picked it and placed it in her spindle (Ibid, Vol. 7, Parthian: 500 and on). Since the girl considered the worm as a good event and began her word in god's name, since that day she could spin two folds more.

چو برداشت زان دوکدان پنبه گفت
بنام خداوند بی یار و جفت
من امروز بر اختر کرم سیب
برشتم نمایم شمارا نهیب

Since then, whatever cotton was added, the girl spun it, as if she became a magician. Finally her parents understood the matter. They also considered the worm as a good thing:

مرین کرم را خوار نگذاشتند
بخوردنش نیکو همی داشتند
تن آورش آن کرم و نیرو گرفت
سر و پشت او رنگ نیکو گرفت
همی تنگ شد دوکدان برتنش
چو مشک سیه گشت پیراهنش
به مشک اندرون پیکر زعفران
بر و پشت او از کران تا کران
یکی پاک صندوق کردش سیاه
بدو اندرون ساخته جایگاه
چنان شد که در شهر بی هفتواد
نگفتی سخن کس به بیداد و داد

Gradually, the worm grew up and its color changed into black. Even the box for its rest is black. The worm is lucky for all other members of the *Haftvad* family and the family earned a lot of power and money. The worm got so large that the box is small for it. Thus, they made a stone pool for it and place the worm, which is now a large dragon, in it. Later because of the reputation of the worm, the city of *Haftvad* is called *Kerman*:

چو یک چند بگذشت بر هفتواد
بر آواز آن کرم کرمان نهاد

Due to the luck of the worm, the wealth of the city increased and the city became eligible to have a king, such that a war took place between *Haftvad* and *Ardeshir*, founder of the Sassanid dynasty. In the first time the *Ardeshir's* sword broke down. At the second time and by an oracular arrow which lied on the lame in his meal cloth, he understood that the worm is the reason for success of *Haftvad* and his family and he should kill it to gain victory. Once the worm is killed, the splendor of *Haftvad* would vanish. The Indian scientist, Kuyaji relates this story to Chinese mythology. He believed that worshipping the tree's golden worm is an area of Chinese beliefs in the magic, and probably the legend of sudden rise and rebel of *Haftvad* indicate such beliefs as well as the moral superiority of *Ardeshir* over his counterpart (Kuyaji 1353: 29). The totemic sign of this story is nurturing of the worm by the girl and later a group responsible for that.

پرستنده کرم بود شست مرد
نپرداختندی کس از کارکرد

This is one of the totemic canons. The worm supports the *Haftvad* family and since it exists, *Haftvad* family had a prosperous life. Believing in the auspiciousness of the worm for the family, they can even fight against a charismatic king such as *Ardeshir* and as the worm was killed, their fate was lost.

Conclusion:

As it was mentioned, there are evidence and remainders of totemism in the Iranian culture and myths. The case is definite. Even now, we still encounter such beliefs in the Iranian culture. We can find that Iranian consider many events as sacred. However, the current sacred view toward creatures, materials and so on does not have a totemic manner. But our objective is to explain that totemism and believing in totems was definitely present in this culture.

On the other hand, we should accept that epical texts reflect the history, culture and mythology of a nation. Thus, without evaluating the epical texts and just by relying on such a reasoning, it can be stated that if there are totemism signs in the Iranian culture, the issue is with no doubt reflected in a great text such as Shahnameh.

After evaluating the issue of totem in Shahnameh and conformation of the totemic canons to some creatures such as Simorgh and dragon in Shahnameh, it can be said that as they were conformed to the totemism principles, they are definitely totems.

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