

ORIGINAL ARTICLES

Laughs of Rostam as His Identified Action in Shahnameh (a Persian literature)

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ABSTRACT

Laughs of Rostam in different situations like feast, war, haunting and different mental states like anger, indignation, happiness and drunkenness are identified actions of this superhero in Shahnameh. By survey on Rostam's laughs in Shahnameh, the question of being natural and normal reflection of this super hero laughs is arisen? Does he want to denote special purpose in different situations by laughing? By investigation on this subject matter, it can be found that sometimes his laughing is rooted in his natural behavior and it is converted into a symbol; so that in some scenes of Shahnameh these laughs could be meaningful as watch word for watchdogs. In some cases, his laughing is his inner statements that uncover his restless inner world. Monologue represented by laughing could indicate individual personality and subjectivity better than other dialogues. In cinema investigation of different states of face is called mise en scene and these laughs gain attention when they are used as specified action of Rostam's face in drawing of his face in miniature, sculpture, painting, theater, cinema and etc. In this article, all Shahnameh couplets including Rostam's laugh were extracted by descriptive and analytical method. It was concluded that these laughs could be considered as cultural symbol for identification of this hero inner personality in Firdausi Shahnameh.

Key words: slogans, Rostam's laughs, Shahnameh, mise en scene, cultural symbol.

Introduction (review of literature):

William Gekens believes that movie and literature are different expression tools and different experiences. The motivating power in literature is language and pleasure and it is indirect. While in movie, the motivating power is image and it is direct. In spite of difference, there are significant similarities (Gekens,1988). Shafiei Kadkani defines an image as set of shapes, color, movement and meaning (Shafiei Kadkani,1987). Since image is used in visual arts like cinema and painting ;so it is necessary to point to differences of images in these fields. The image of painting and cinema is objective and it is made of combination of light and color. In these arts, the artist transfers an imaginary or objective subject on special surface like canvas or emulsion or a layer sensitive to light or negative as fresco or on the wall or pot and paper. An artist needs to material space in order to express a subject matter. The result of the artist creativity can be comprehended visually. But in poetry, literature and speech, word is communication tool or carrier of a message. Power and type of the selected words by the poet and writer ,observation of fitness in combination of power and concepts(in the poetry) direct the reader toward predefined visual route by the writer but this visualization has imaginative and subjective nature and it depends mostly on the talent and subjective power of the reader. Of course culture, perception capabilities and visual literacy and talent play an important role in this relation. This is a wonderful aspect of literary, subjective and poetical images that it is considered a privilege compared to cinema, photography and painting images. Since the reader or hearer could visualize and enjoy the scene as he wants (Zabet Jahromi,2006). In comparison between movie and written or spoken language Ralph Stephenson writes:“although this comparison is valuable but it should be remember that cinema is completely in contrary to written or spoken speech; since abstract words are not used in cinema; but the purpose is transferred by images with identified real criteria. Cinema as a pictorial language is material and objective and in other words it is irrational that in contrary to speech its addresses is not completely learned and wise; and like painting, sculpture and music, it deals with innate and natural sensitivity” (Stephenson, 2009). Concerning to difference between cinema and poetical images, Hashemi writes: “in cinema, an image denotes conceptual meaning but in literature speech denotes an image. The image offered in cinema directly is materialized concept of emotion and thought; while in image offered in literature needs to imagination and capability of the addresses in construction and deconstruction of the words. In cinema pictorial characteristics are narrated while in literature pictorial characteristics of visual elements are understood by inference. For example, in cinema the close up is received

in objective way, but in literature the relationship between subject is comprehended by description of the character by the narrator and since compared to cinema the close up is understood" (Hashemi, 2011).

"Shahnameh has been composed by thirty years effort of the great poet in sensitive period to defense of language and culture and it is valuable from literary and artistic viewpoints and it contains deep moral, humanistic and spiritual characteristics. This great work is unique from dramatic literary aspects especially tragedy and fiction. This work is great and eternal and it is not only confined to power of Firdausi in poetry and epic but it is valuable from general artistic aspect like drama ,fiction, characterization, dialogue, events and atmosphere, setting, imagination, application of color and sound and skill in description and visualization and other artistic aspects. This work contains hints for painters, directors, fiction writers and other artists. This diversity of artistic capabilities and facilities has been caused to representation of the creator influence on narration and description with powerful dramatic methods in visual and drastic spaces. So, we percept a dynamic flow of scenes of an attractive movie" (Zabet Jahromi,1999).

In this article, descriptive and analytical method was employed for reaching the research goals. At first the necessary subject matters have been addressed and then discussions required for these goals have been proposed.

Different articles and books have been written concerning to the subject matter. It can be referred to followings: Visualization in Firdausi Shahnameh (Rastegar Fasaei, 1974), Cinema and Poetical image structure in Shahnameh (Zabeti Jahromi,1999),Firdausi and Shahnameh in cinema works (Beigh Ageai, 2006), Dramatic capabilities of Shahnameh (Mohammad Hanif, 2005), Iran cinema history (Omid, 1998),Literature from cinema perspective (Karimi:2002), Literary excerption in Iran cinema (Moradi, 1989),Cinema and literature (Mansuri, 1998), Cinema and Literature (Ahmed Amini, 1989), Literature of movie (William Gekins,1985), Firdausi and art of cinema (Hashemi, 2011), Poetry and cinema (Hiva Masih, 2003), Expressive application of mise en scene and production (Robert Kalger, 2001), Beihagi and mise en scene (Talebi Nejad, 2000),Relationship between cinema and poem in poetry (Behnam, 2005), Cinema from art perspective (Ralph Stephenson, 1986), The art of cinema (Stephenson: 2009),Key concepts in cinema studies (Hayward :2002),Excerption for scenario (Kheiri:1989), Principles of movie (Andrew Dadli, 1986), Time and place in cinema (Burch Noel :1986), The art of cinema (David Burdel and Christian Thompson: 1998), Narrative structure in fiction literature and movie (Abolfazal Hurri:2005), Imaginary world images :articles on cinema (Ahmedi:2006), Cinema symbolism (Christian Metz :1998), Cinema image and literary image (Baharlu:2010), Glossary of cinema (Hilda Dadfar:2010), Glossary of cinema (Ahmedzadeh, 2009), Meaning and speech in literature and cinema (Hussein, 2004), Dramatic values of classic literature for scenario (Haddadi:2009).

Discussion:

We confront with behaviors and states in cinema movies that the director has could provide appropriate symbol and the observer gets familiar with character inner by help of this symbol. Susan Hayward believes that: "symbols and signs are meaningful in special scope according to historical and geographical view points and a narrative is a combination of symbols; a unit in a narrative could be meaningful according to one or several codes (harmonistic, referential, semantics and symbolic)"(Heyward: 2002:455).Rolan Barthes defines cultural codes as codes that identified cultural information influences on production of narratives (Hashemi, 2011:96). According to symbolism thoughts every language contains codes that the message is transferred in text based on special structure, so, human utterance language is similar to cinema. Metz investigates cinema common and special symbolism and concludes that cinema history is route for changes of these codes (Metz,1998).In Shahnameh the laugh of Rostam is converted into cultural code as his overt characteristics and we see that Firdausi introduces his actions in difficult situations by his laughs.

In order to achieve his goal and codification of his laughs and highlighting these scenes, Firdausi employs cinema techniques. It can be referred to close up and extreme close up in face. According to glossary of cinema close up is defined as perspective that the actor face fills the scene and extreme close up is defined as perspective that the subject is photographed .If the actor is photographed from this look only some part of his face for example his eyes or mouth is shown (Dadfar, 2010).In these perspectives an object is usually magnified; the aim is to promote accuracy and importance. Usually in these scenes the observer tends to be unified by the character .When the character is far from the observer, he is indifferent on the character .while his movement is seen in tangible way.

The second technique used by Firdausi for progress of his story action and convert Rostam laugh into symbol is interior monologue.

In Shahnameh stories, Firdausi employs interior monologue. In story of "Rostam and Sohrab", when he awoke from his slumbers was downcast and sore grieved when he saw not his steed, and he said unto himself

How can I stand against the Turks, and how can I traverse the desert alone?

Surely Rakhsh cannot be hid.

"Who art thou, and what is thy name and thy desire, and what sleekest thou from me in the dark night?"

(Firdausi, Shahnameh, v.1, book1:29)

In glossary of cinema, Dadfar defines inner monologue as: "interior thoughts of a character that indicated as his inner monologue" (Dadfar, 2010:32). Since interior monologue is expression of thoughts in mind before speech; so it can cause to association and meaning in laughs of Rostam before his speech and aids in determination of his inner personality. In other hands this inner monologue that is seen as laugh can be considered as unconsciousness speech habit. "In psychoanalysis the slogans are consider lingual habits that betrays unconsciousness. The psychoanalysts could understand individual's inner world by referring to these slogans. Meanwhile these slogans are converted into sign for identification of them. If slogans posses required dramatic and speech capabilities, they lack visual identify and they go beyond utterance. This element can be investigated from symbolism and analysis of drama view points. In case of appropriate application, the slogans go beyond text and speech and aid in establishment of artist work in mind of the addressees (Saemi, 202:3).

Mise en scene or setting is the third element used by Firdausi for converting Rostma laughs into cultural symbol. Since field influences on creating atmosphere and tone, happiness or sorrow, fear and poetical state in the story so it is important in mise en scene (Mirsadegi, 1997). In fiction panorama and scene is used. Panorama is a scene that the writer expresses materials of the story completely and explains location and characters briefly. The writer tries to close story structure to the cinema and theater in scene that dialogues and actions of characters are imagined as they are happened. Most of the writers use combination of panorama and scene. Panorama offers broad perspectives and scene offers close perspectives. In literary scope, panorama means all things and actions are seen, in other words the imaged is holistic perspective. The stories with panorama mostly are accompanied by description and arguments. Panorama helps atmosphere and tone. Scene is usually accompanied by details and dialogue that time of events are brief" (Mir sadegi, 1998).

Mise en scene is science of organized application of semantic elements so that it leads to production of emotion and thought. Mise en scene employs scene elements to offer meaning in integrated totality. This totality is used for form and content. Mise en scene provides context that different elements move toward semantics scope from realistic scope. Employment of elements and tools in their proportionate form consistent to scene and correct application of color, light, rhythm and movement and etc offer scenes in Shahnameh that indicate accompaniment of cinema and literature in this relation (Hashemi, 2011). Dadfar defines mise en scene as: "arrangement of elements in front of camera like arrangement of the actors. Movement of the camera, actors positions relative to each other, camera relative to scene and actor are considered by skilled and creative director and he arrange them so that he obtains the mentioned meaning (Dadfar, 2010).

The couplets involving Rostam laughs as his face miss en scene:

1. When Rostam wants to take a horse among horses, he sees a colt like a lion with short leg and the shepherd prohibits him and Rostam asks that colt called Rakhsh and by praise of shepherd, he laughs before saying any words:

I pray thee; tell unto me what the price of this dragon is?"

"If thou be Rostam, mount him, and retrieve the sorrows of Iran. For his price is the land of Iran, and seated upon him thou wilt save the world."

(Firdausi, Shanameh, book1, v.1:165)

2. In part five Rostam fought with Aulad, he praised his army and threatened Rostam. But Rostam laughed and showed his inner feelings:

I am the thunder-cloud that send forth lightning, and none can stand before my strength. But if thou should hear my name, the blood would stand still within thy veins. Thou art come against me with a host; see therefore how I shall scatter them like the wind. (ibid:191)

3. In part seven, when Shah of Mazindaran took Rostam's hand, Rostam laughed and did not say any words; and he pressed the shah hand:

He took the hand in his own, and grasped it and crushed it till that the blood issued from its veins and the nails fell from off its fingers. Then turned him and went before the Shah and showed unto him his hand. And he counseled him to make peace with the land that could send forth such messengers whose might none be able to withstand. But the King was loath to sue for peace, and he commanded that the messenger be brought before him. (ibid:198)

4. In war between Kavous and Mazindaran king, when Rostam took the king hand to go to Kavous, he laughed and said inferior words about kings that shows Rostam laughs are destructive than his words:

Since he heard the words of the king

Rostam took his hand and laughed

Said I brought that powerful king

Then he put the crown once more upon his head,

And went out again before the army

(ibid:202)

5. In war of Haft Gordan, when Rostam army talked about Afrasyab in fearful way, he laughs and did not say anything and calmed down then talked about hope that indicates the effect of his laughs and these laughs influence more than speech (ibid:223)
6. When Kavous received a letter about Sohrab as the son of Rostam, he laughed because of happiness and wonder, since he was proud of having such son and he despised the Turk that they did not have such boy.(ibid:book2,v.1:238).
7. In story of killing Zhenderaz, Giv by hearing laughs of Rostam recognized him and welcomed him. In this scene laugh of Rostam is recognized action of his personality and it is like watch word for Giv.(ibid:244).
8. During fight between Rostam and Ashkbos, when Rostam Killed Ashkbos horse with ax, Ashkbos ridiculed Rostam and Rostam laughed without any speech and then he wanted him to sit down besides his horse and calm down.(ibid, book3,v.1:478).
9. When Bahman the son of Esfandiyar went to Rostam for announcing his father message, Rostam invited him and when Bahman ate food (colt),Rostam laughed contemptuously and talked with him(ibid, book 4,v.2:871).
10. When Bahman replied Rostam,Rostam laughed again due to his usual habit and then talked with him.(ibid:872)
11. In fight between Rostam and Esfandiyar during declamation, Esfandiyar took Rostam hand and pressed so that blood was flowing from Rostam nails. But Rostam laughed and did not say anything and did not move.(ibid:884).
12. In fight between Rostam and Esfandiyar when Esfandiayr tried to deceive Rostam by his words to got his help, Rostam laughed and replied him (ibid:885).

Conclusion:

As before said, we encounter with scenes that Firdausi uses the detail meaningful movement of Rostam face for transferring emotion and feeling. The correct application of elements is mise en scene. The best manifestation of this application is seen in characters face movement especially meaningful laughs of Rostam. In addition to valuation of scene elements and agents, mise en scene increase visual value. In other hand it provides appropriate symbol for progress of action and gradually the reader gets familiar with this symbol. The effective laughs of Rostam in different situation as his overt traits in Shahnameh could be consider as a key for identification of his inner personality and his visual slogan .By identification and acceptance of his meaningful laughs as recognized action it can be referred to application of this cultural symbol in different field s like miniature, painting, sculpture, make up, mise en scene, decoration, act, theater and cinema and address to new aspects of different interpretation of great literary works like Shahnameh.

By investigation on couplets involving Rostam's laughs it can be addressed to followings:

- a- Firdausi uses close up and extreme close up of Rostam face
- b- In every couplet ,before dialogue we encounter with interior monologue of the story "Tahamtan"
- c- Rostam laughs indicate different mental status during anger, happiness and etc. It can be interrelated as his inner feedback according to psychology that Freud refers to it as struggle between self and ego
- d- those laughs could converted into cultural code and aid the reader in identification of Rostam personality
- e- According to some critics these repeated laughs could be used as visual slogan.

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