

Metamorphism in the Persian Epics of the Ramayana

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Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

Ramayana is the oldest Indian epic which goes back to 3-5 B.C. This epic is in the description of Ram's heroism who is considered to as one of the manifestations of Vishnu, the God of Protection. During the Akbar Shah period, a group of translators brought back the important works of Indian religious and philosophical literature to Persian, such as Mahabharata, Ramayana, Bhagavat Gita (Azhar Dehlavi, 1972). During the kingdom of Akbar Shah's successors, poets followed this valuable tradition. People such as Mullah Sadol-Dawlah, Masih Pani Pati, Gerdherdas and Chandar man kayteh, Bidel translated the Ramayana's epics to the Persian poetry, and also Amarsing turned it into the prose (Kahdoui & Nargesestan's introduction, 2014).

2. Review of Literature

There has been a number of scattered studies conducted on the story of Ramayana: In the book, "From Legend to History", Bahar (2004) compares the stories of Raam and Siavash and concludes that similar to Siavash's character, Raam is a vegetative entity. In a paper titled, "Ramayana: the Most Ancient Epic Tale of India", Vaheddoost (1994) also compares Raam and Siavash and concludes that both these characters are Ahura humans who would destroy evil creatures such as Ravna and Afrasiab. In another paper titled, "Comparative examination of drought evils in Ferdowsi's Shahnameh and Ramayana epic", Adham (2013) conducts a comparative examination between Zahhak and Afrasiab, two villains in Shahnameh and Ravna, the

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villain in Ramayana epic; results suggested the presence of drought evils in both epics.

In a book titled, *Metamorphosis in Mythology*, Rastgar Fasaei (2003) examined this mythological aspect along with its types and manifestations in Iranian mythology as well as other civilizations such as India, Egypt, and Greece. In her paper titled, "The metamorphosis of human tree and tree human in Hormozgan folk tales", Zarei (2014) concludes that the mythological belief regarding the Tree Human as Tree Man and Tree Woman involve motivations such as love and pity, innocent death, anger and deception more than others.

A reflection on the contents of these studies show that none of the authors had paid attention to the subject of metamorphosis in particular; subsequently, the concepts have remained hidden from their views. As a result, it is attempted in this study to present the concept of metamorphosis for the first time in Persian epic works of Ramayana.

3. Method

The central structure of this research is based on the study of mythological origins in the Persian epic poems of Ramayana from the Chandarman kayteh, Mullah Sadol Dawlah, Masih Pani Pati and Gerdherdas Heroddas, and the examples of these works are compared with the prominent Ramayen by Amarsing. Proving this claim depends on answering the following questions:

1. How have the poets or translators of the Persian epic poems of Ramayana been able to reflect the manifestations of metamorphism based on the prose epics in their reincarnation?
2. Which of the metamorphism species has the most influence on the above mentioned epics?

In this research, which is carried out based on the librarian method, the introduction of the metamorphism is proposed, and then the effects of this mythological species are extracted from these works.

4. Discussion

The metamorphism is the apparent deformation using the supernatural force that appears unusual. In this case, the person or object changes in a different form, and turns to a new body that may be apparent and tangible, or hidden which undergoes fundamental changes and gain new powers which did not have previously (Rastegar Fasai, 2005).

4.1. Metamorphism of Gods to Humans

4.1.1. Ram

In the prose Ramayana, the manifestation of Vishnu in the form of Ram is more tangible and concrete. When Brahma and the other Devata¹ begin their chants to Vishnu because of Ravan's rage, "Beshn (Vishnu) drives up the Gruda and says:" Do not be sad, I will take your face (human face) for your sake and I will save you from Ravan's heavy rage (Azhar Dehlavi, 1972). Ram, at birth, first appears in his original form on the mother: "The creator of the both worlds, was given birth from her mother from Kushlia's womb in the form of Chaturbhuj². Kushlia said: I surely believe that you are the Lord of the World. I want to put this face to your face and become human and consider me as a mother. He was suddenly changed to a baby and started crying "(Azhar Dehlavi,1972).

4.1.2. Metamorphism of the Universe into Human and Animal

The most important example is the metamorphism of the universe into the monkey and the bear to destroy Ravan (Gerdherdas, 2010; Pani Pati, 2009; Kayteh, 2014; Azhar Dehlavi, 1972). When Ram was sitting pure for three days beside the sea, it reveals the path to him in order to pass the sea and go to Lanka and when the path is not revealed, he gets angry. The Bahr Sagar is revealed as Senyas and Zahed, and comes to him for seeking safety (Pani Papti, 2009; Azhar Dehlavi, 1972; Kayteh, 2014; Gerdherdas, 2010).

4.1.3. Metamorphism of Gods and Clergies

Gods such as Berahma, Indra and clergies come to Earth on many occasions, or the pious like Narada³ goes to the clergy festivity or is connected with Berahma. Sita is impatience for being away from Ram, Brahma goes to Indra⁴, and she wants to take the spiritual food to Sita and comfort her. The prose epic says that the spiritual food was milk and rice soup but Gerdherdas said, it was an apple (Azhar Dehlavi, 1972; Gerdherdas, 2010). During the fire test, Berahma, Indra, Jam and others testify the purity of Sita (Pani Papti, 2009; Kayteh, 2014; Gerdherdas, 2010; Azhar Dehlavi, 1972).

1. Angle

2. Four-handed, nicknamed Vishnu

3. The name of one of the great clergymen and mystics, the name of one of the wise men who was mediated between people and gods.

4. God of the sky and aerosphere, God of rain.

4.2. Changing the Appearance

Changing the appearance is the most important part of the metamorphism.

4.2.1. Ram Metamorphism

Ram leaves his human face and appears in the original form (Azhar Dehlavi, 1972).

4.2.2. Metamorphosis to Animal's Shape

Ravan goes to Maricha "monster" and wants him to reshape to deer in order to deceive Sita (Pani Pati, 2009; kayteh, 2014; Gerdherdas, 2010; Azhar Dehlavi, 1972). Henon reshapes to mosquitoes in order to enter the castle (Kayteh, 2014; Azhar Dehlavi, 1972).

4.2.3. Metamorphosis to Barahman's Shape

Ravan reshapes to Brahman when he steals Sita (Pani Pati, 2009).

4.2.4. Metamorphosis

In Ramayana, the pious curses and transforms the fairy or Gandharp and turns it into a more wretched person (Pani Pati, 2009; Kayteh, 2014; Gerdherdas, 2010; Azhar Dehlavi, 1972).

4.2.5. Mythological Animals

Ram gets familiar with Jetayu Karkas at Panchvati and Jetayu introduces himself as a friend of Dashartha (Azhar Dehlavi, 1972). The most memorable role of Jetayu in Ramayana's epic is the fight with Ravan when stealing Sita and being killed by the monster (Pani Pati, 2009; Gerdherdas, 2010).

4.3. Changing the Size

Hanoman change its size at different places and situations (Pani Pati, 2009; Azhar Dehlavi, 1972).

4.4. Imortality

In Ramayana, there are some people who are looking for eternity. Ravan and his brothers worshiped Shiva. They stayed for a thousand years on one leg and did not eat anything but fed with wind. Mahadeva says ask whatever you want. Ravan said, " human and monkeys are my food and not anyone else, and Jam who is a spirit taker cannot kill me (Azhar Dehlavi, 1972; Gerdherdas, 2010). Immortality is embodied as the mythological symbol of living water. Kala, the angel of death from the high world, comes to Ram

and gives him the message that he deserves to go back to the great world. The Ram's brothers and Odeh residents baptize in Sarayu. Ramchandra stood in the water. The body of all three brothers became one and got very bright and went up to the world. And thus, they found eternal life, which is one of the myths of living water.

4.5. Youth

Mandoodari, the wife of Ravan, is always young (Gerdherdas, 2010). Sarbehang is a pious who burns himself in the fire after worship and rejuvenates (Pani Pati, 2009).

4.6. Invulnerability (Heroism)

Hanoman has an invulnerable and steel body that is not hurt at all (Gerdherdas, 2010). Ravan has life water in his navel and is alive with this. Ram throws the arrow to his navel and kills him (Gerdherdas, 2010; Azhar Dehlavi, 1972; Kayteh, 2014).

5. Conclusion

The Persian epics of Ramayana were used as the basis of this research referring to Ramayana by Amarsing, the translation of Sadol-Dawlah, Masih Pani Pati, Gerdherdas, and Chandarman Kayteh and the metamorphism effects, which were all studied. Moreover, it was discovered that the themes of the metamorphism in their translations had a special effect and had a better effect on the translation of the prose Ramayana. The Chandarman Kayteh, and then Gerdherdas, followed the translation of prose in recreating the metamorphisms.

Keywords: Ramayana Persian epics, Metamorphism, Myth

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