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Бундори и перевод «Шахнаме» Фирдоуси

Аннотация: В статье подвергнут анализу старейший перевод «Шахнаме» Фирдоуси на арабский язык. На примере перевода шедевра Фирдоуси автор излагает свои соображения об особенностях перевода персидских сочинений на арабский язык. Перевод был осуществлен Фатх ибн Али Бундори Исфахани с древнейшего списка «Шахнаме» Фирдоуси и сохранился до наших дней. Переводчик избрал стиль свободного перевода, и, сократив на треть поэму Фирдоуси, перевел на арабский язык оставшиеся две трети. Перевод «Шахнаме» на арабский язык осуществлен простым, безыскусным и плавным стилем. Бундори в основном сокращает хутбы и панегирические отрывки из произведения Фирдоуси и в более упрощенной форме предлагает читателям основной сюжет поэмы. Арабские переводы «Шахнаме» и, в частности, перевод Бундори свидетельствуют об интересе арабов и арабоязычных читателей к национальному персидско-таджикскому эпосу. Утверждается, что творение Бундори полностью удовлетворяло желание арабоязычных читателей познакомиться с поэмой Фирдоуси.

Ключевые слова: «Шахнаме» Фирдоуси, перевод Бундори, смысловой перевод, Аззам, Рустам и Исфандияр

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Bundori and the Translation of Shahnameh by Firdawsi

Abstract: The article examines the earliest translation of Shahnameh by Firdawsi into Arabic. Using the translation of Firdawsi's masterpiece as an example, the author discusses the specific features of translating Persian compositions into Arabic. The translation was produced by Fath ibn Ali Bundori Isfahani from an ancient manuscript of Firdawsi's Shahnameh and has survived to the present day. The translator adopted the method of free translation and abridged approximately one-third of Firdawsi's verses, while translating the remaining two-thirds into Arabic. The work was rendered into Arabic in a simple, straightforward, fluent, and accessible style. Bundori mainly abridged the introductory, rhetorical, and panegyric passages of Firdawsi's work and presented the basic plot of the poems to readers in a more simplified form. The Arabic translations of Shahnameh, particularly Bundori's translation, testify to the interest of Arabs and Arabic-speaking readers in the Persian-Tajik national epic. The author argues that Bun-

dori's work fully satisfied the needs of Arabic-speaking readers who wished to become acquainted with Firdawsi's epic poem.

Key words: Firdawsi's Shahnameh, Bundori's translation, free translation, meaningful translation, Azzam, Rustam and Isfandiyar

INTRODUCTION

It is well known that Firdawsi's Shahnameh has occupied a worthy position among other peoples and nations. The fact that it has continuously been narrated, quoted, and translated by poets and writers of different nations confirms this point. At the beginning of the seventh century AH, more precisely in 620/1223, the famous Arab writer and jurist Fath ibn Ali Bundori Isfahani (1190–1245), at the command of the ruler of Syria, Abul-Fath Isa ibn Abu Bakr ibn Abu Ayyub, translated Firdawsi's immortal Shahnameh from Persian into Arabic in a highly elegant, attractive, and fluent prose style.

According to Bundori himself, he was born in Isfahan and raised there. In 1220, Bundori entered the service of Abu Bakr ibn Abu Ayyub. When he was admitted to the ruler's court, he presented Firdawsi's Shahnameh to the sultan as a gift. The sultan, however, asked him to translate Shahnameh for him [7: 98].

Historical sources [9] and scholarly studies [8] indicate that during the first stage of the movement to translate Iranian works into Arabic, Jabala ibn Salim was the first person to translate the story of "Rustam and Sohrab", that is, a part of Shahnameh or the ancient Khwaday-Namag, into Arabic. During the second stage of the translation movement, the first translation of Firdawsi's Shahnameh into Arabic was completed in the sixth century AH by Asir al-Mulk Nishapuri. However, since neither the complete text nor fragments of these translations have survived to the present day [6: 93], it is impossible to rely upon them or to discuss the language of those translations and their influence on subsequent literary works. Consequently, Bundori's translation, whose text has survived, is considered the most valuable source for scholarly research into Firdawsi's Shahnameh.

The significance and value of this translation lie primarily in the fact that Bundori used an ancient manuscript of Firdawsi's Shahnameh as the basis for his translation. Therefore, this translation makes a valuable contribution to identifying an authentic version of the epic and resolving certain uncertainties concerning the textual history and manuscript tradition of Firdawsi's Shahnameh.

MAIN RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Evidence supporting this statement should first of all be sought in the history of the rewriting of Shahnameh and its surviving manuscripts. Most scholars of Shahnameh date the final completion of Firdawsi's work to 402/1011 [12; 13; 14]. Bundori began his translation in 1220 and completed it two years later [7: 99]. Thus, Bundori translated Firdawsi's immortal literary monument into Arabic 216 years after Firdawsi's death. It should be emphasized here that since the translation of Shahnameh was undertaken at the command of Sultan Abu Bakr ibn Abu Ayyub, Bundori must have presented the ruler with a manuscript that was at least fifty or sixty years old. Consequently, the oldest surviving manuscript of Firdawsi's Shahnameh, compiled in 614/1217, is considered the oldest manuscript of Shahnameh after the manuscript used by Bundori. The manuscript used by Bundori has not survived to the present day; however, the translation

itself provides evidence that it was based on an ancient manuscript distinct from other surviving copies.

This can be observed in the following couplet:

Чу аз хоб бедор шуд ними шаб, // Яке ҷоми май ҷусту букшод лаб [2, 8: 321].

The expression “middle of the night” appears in some manuscripts as tirashab and in others as nimishab. If we turn to the oldest surviving testimony concerning Shahnameh, namely Bundori’s translation of Shahnameh — (“فلمّا انتصف الليلُ” [7: 351] – the translation demonstrates that the correct form is nimishab (“middle of the night”). Similar discrepancies and correspondences can be observed throughout the translation.

Bundori himself recorded the date of completion of the manuscript available to him as 384/994: (“في مدة ثلاثين سنة اخرها سنة اربع و ثمانين و ثلثمئه....” (“over a period of thirty years, the last of which was 384/994”) [7: 276]. Zabihollah Safa, in The History of Literature in Iran, also considers Bundori’s translation to have been based on this manuscript, completed in 384/994, and regards much of the information contained in Bundori’s translation as reliable. Regarding the disagreement over Firdawsi’s father’s name, Z. Safa states:

«“His name (Firdawsi – N. Hamroboev) and the name of his father are given in al-Bundori’s translation, which was made from Shahnameh into Arabic around 620/1223, as Mansur ibn Hasan. In other sources, such as Tarikh-i Guzida, Tazkirat al-Shu‘ara, Atashkada, Majma‘ al-Fusaha… the name appears differently; therefore, among these accounts, greater reliance can be placed on the account of al-Bundori, which is earlier.” [14, 2: 458].

There is disagreement among scholars concerning the final manuscript of Firdawsi’s Shahnameh, its date, and the manuscript upon which Bundori based his translation. Since the date 384/994 is explicitly recorded in the introduction to Bundori’s translation and, moreover, numerous scholars of Shahnameh have conducted valuable research in this field, it is unnecessary here to enter into a detailed investigation of the antiquity of the manuscripts and the discrepancies among the surviving copies of Shahnameh.

The manuscript of the translation examined in the present study is preserved in the Central Library of Kuwait University under the name of Said Fath and was published in 1932 through the efforts, research, and textual editing of the Persianist and famous Egyptian poet Abd al-Wahhab Azzam (1894–1959).

Abd al-Wahhab Azzam, a professor at the University of Egypt, had been fascinated from his youth by the Persian language and culture, and particularly by the language of Shahnameh. He had long wished to read it. When he learned that an Arabic translation of Shahnameh was preserved in the Cambridge Library, he decided to edit and publish it. In 1927, he travelled to London in search of the manuscript. During this journey, with the assistance of the renowned scholar of Rumi, Reynold Nicholson, he obtained the manuscript he was seeking. He subsequently used the assistance of Muhammad Qazvini in Paris and obtained another manuscript, namely the Berlin manuscript. On the basis of a comparison of the London and Paris manuscripts, he prepared and published the text of the Arabic translation of Shahnameh. He then compared the manuscripts he had discovered with the Persian original of Shahnameh and, through textual criticism and analysis, presented a number of interesting observations. The results of this work were included in the introduction to the translation he prepared. These services led to Azzam’s recognition as one of the outstanding scholars of the Persian language and literature in the Arab world [6: 95].

The manuscript preserved in the library of Kuwait University contains 18,500 lines. If, on average, each line of prose translation is regarded as representing two poetic couplets, Bundori's translation covers approximately 37,000 couplets of Shahnameh. If the total number of Firdawsi's couplets is estimated at approximately 60,000, with some variation, then Bundori omitted and abridged one-third of Firdawsi's poetry and translated approximately two-thirds of it [1: 118].

Regarding the language, method, and type of translation, it may be stated that Bundori adopted the method of free translation in translating Shahnameh. Abridgement, paraphrase, omission, and addition are frequently encountered in his work. In our view, Bundori's choice of free translation rather than an exact translation corresponding to the scientific principles of translation had objective reasons, which can be demonstrated through the following points.

First, Bundori primarily wanted the translation of Shahnameh into Arabic to be presented in a simple, fluent, accessible, and attractive style. Therefore, he attempted to avoid, as far as possible, the elaborate rhymed prose (saj‘) and rhetorical ornamentation that were common in his period.

Second, the text of the translation demonstrates that, in addition to abridging and omitting introductory and panegyric passages and adopting a semantic translation, Bundori intended to present the central plot of Shahnameh to readers in a simpler manner.

Third, Bundori possessed considerable skill in abridging books. It is sufficient to refer to the works he abridged, including History of Baghdad, al-Barq al-Shami, and History of the Seljuks. Along with choosing free translation, Bundori also abridged Firdawsi's Shahnameh.

One of the renowned Iranian scholars, textual critics, and specialists in translation studies, Azartash Azarnush, highly praised Bundori's translation and identified its principal shortcoming as its abridgement:

"From the perspective of translation, Bundori's work is truly worthy of praise. In selecting equivalents for the words of Shahnameh and rendering expressions corresponding to Persian couplets, he demonstrates particular mastery in most places and has, to some extent, made the task of establishing the Persian text of Shahnameh easier. His greatest shortcoming, however, is that he abridged the book and omitted almost everywhere Firdawsi's personal and emotional statements, which constitute the manifestation of his poetic artistry…" [11].

Azarnush's statement demonstrates that Bundori translated Shahnameh "in the best possible manner" [11]; nevertheless, he did not preserve textual fidelity, which constitutes one of the important principles of translation.

It should be noted that when Abd al-Wahhab Azzam edited the translation, he placed the abridged sections of the work in parentheses and identified the material that had been omitted. On this basis, Bundori's omissions can be divided into several categories:

1. OMISSION OF SHORT CHAPTERS

Bundori omitted several short chapters, such as "Faridun's Testing of His Sons" [2, 1: 144], "The Enchantress's Testing of Sarv's Sons, the Sons of Faridun" [2, 1: 144], "Rustam's Killing of the White Elephant" [2, 1: 382], "Rustam's Journey to Mount Sipand" [2, 1: 388], and "The Beginning of the Story of Sohrab" [2, 2: 208]. First, these sections are relatively short, and second, much of their content consists only of praise and panegyric.

2. OMISSION OF PARTICULAR EVENTS

Bundori also omitted certain events and episodes within chapters, such as the events that occurred between Rustam and the Turkmen when Kay Qubad was being brought to Mount Alborz [2, 2: 5].

3. OMISSION OF INTRODUCTORY AND DIDACTIC PASSAGES

In many cases, the translator omitted the openings and introductions to chapters in which the poet speaks in his own voice and offers moral advice. For example, he omitted the beginning of the "Story of Sohrab" [2, 2: 208], in which the poet speaks about the death of young people, as well as the beginning of the "Story of Siyavush" [2, 2: 343], in which Firdawsi discusses poetry and eloquent speech.

4. OMISSION OF LONG LETTERS, SERMONS, AND TESTAMENTS

Bundori also omitted lengthy letters, numerous sermons, and testamentary passages.

5. MODIFICATION OR OMISSION OF RELIGIOUSLY PROBLEMATIC VOCABULARY

He also altered or omitted words that were incompatible with Islamic religious concepts. For example, he replaced the word Ahriman with "Satan" or "the accursed one". He also omitted a passage describing Christ in the story of "The War of Rum ibn Barzin and Nushzad" [2, 8: 426], because the passage was inconsistent with Islamic doctrine.

6. ABRIDGEMENT OF DESCRIPTIONS OF BATTLES, JOURNEYS, HORSES, AND ANIMALS

Bundori abridged most descriptions of battles, journeys, horses, and wild animals, and sometimes indicated the omitted material in parentheses. For example, after the description of a wolf killed by Goshtasp in the land of Rum, he states:

> "There are many descriptions concerning this matter which the author of the book (Firdawsi – Hamroboev N.A.) has provided" [7: 322].

Elsewhere, concerning the battle between Arjasp and Goshtasp, he says:

> "Daqiqi has related it, and the matter was as Jamasp the sage described in detail … therefore, we shall not prolong the discussion by repeating it" [7: 325].

In addition to abridging and omitting material, Bundori also added certain passages to his translation from the works of authoritative historians such as al-Tabari, Hamza al-Isfahani, and al-Mas'udi. Among these additions are the sections concerning "The Attribution of King Bahman to Benjamin" and the story of "Malik al-Khidr in the Time of Shapur ibn Ardashir," which he narrated from al-Tabari [11].

An analysis of Bundori's translation from the perspective of the principles of translation and translation theory demonstrates that the translator's alterations and additions, omissions and abridgements, paraphrasing, and, ultimately, his failure to maintain textual fidelity and his departure from literal or accurate translation constitute the principal characteristics of this translation.

Bundori's omissions, abridgements, alterations, and additions, which indicate his choice of free translation, can be observed through a comparison of his translation with Firdawsi's Shahnameh. For this purpose, we compared portions of Bundori's translation with the text of Firdawsi's Shahnameh published in the Akhtaran-i Adab series by the Adib publishing house, which was prepared using several reliable manuscripts and the latest established textual versions. The results of this comparison and analysis are particularly interesting from the perspective of practical translation and are highly

significant for understanding the translation of a classical literary text from Persian into Arabic through the method of free translation.

An example of Bundori's abridgement can be observed in the story "The Story of Sudaba Falling in Love with Siyavush" in the following couplets:

Баромад ба ин низ як рӯзгор,
Бад-ӯ шодмон шуд дили шаҳрёр.
Яке рӯз Ковуси кай бо писар,
Нишаста, ки Судоба омад зи дар [2, 2: 354].

The translator omitted this introduction, that is, the four lines above, and began directly with the story of Sudaba's encounter with Siyavush and her falling in love with him:

"قال: و لما رأت سوذابه محاسن سیاوخش،....." [7: 155].

Later in the story, he completely omitted the following beautiful couplet:

Чунон шуд, ки гуфтӣ тарози нах аст, // Ва ё пеши оташ ниҳода ях аст [2, 4: 355].

Apparently, the reason for omitting, or leaving outside the scope of the translation, those verses in which Firdawsi employed literary devices and demonstrated a high degree of poetic artistry was simply his intention to abridge and simplify the text. A comparison of certain sections of Firdawsi's Shahnameh with Bundori's translation confirms this observation.

At times, the translator passes over a couplet whose meaning contains extensive explanation and is embellished with simile and hyperbole, and instead provides material that appears to be distant from the original text. Conversely, Bundori sometimes provides a relatively lengthy explanation for the translation of a single hemistich. This can be observed in his translation of the following line:

Чу Судоба рӯи Сиёвуш бидид, // Пурандеша гашту дилаш бардамид [2, 4: 356].

Bundori's translation is [7: 155]:

".و كمال جماله عشقته حتي خرج من يدها زمام اختيارها، و فجعت و بنومها و قرارها.. "

The same phenomenon can be observed in the translation of the title of the story "The Seven Labours and King Mahmud's Praise," which was translated and modified as follows [7: 341]:"ذكر وقائع هفتخوان و ما يتعلق بها من فتح روئين دز، و قتل ارجاسب".

The beginning of this story, namely the section "King Mahmud's Praise", together with the first four couplets of the "First Labour", amounting to a total of 29 couplets from the beginning of the story [2, 8: 245–247], was completely omitted. The translation begins instead with the section "Isfandiyar's Journey from Balkh toward Turan" [7: 341]:

قال: فسار إسفنديار من بلخ قاصداً قصد توران... .

He then translated three couplets of the story and omitted the following verses: *Бирафтанд гурдони лашкар ҳама, // Нишастанд бар хони шоҳи рама*. The second hemistich of the following couplet was also not translated:

Зи ман нашнавад шоҳ чуз гуфти рост, // Ту он кун, ки аз подшоҳон сазост [2, 8: 249].

Instead, an entirely different statement was given [7: 341]:

...بسانتشك مس ايلع هبرشف بارلشا نم امإج عفرف

When Isfandiyar asks Gurgsar about Kuhandizh, the safe road, and its inhabitants, Gurgsar begins his answer with praise:

Чунин дод посух варо Гургсор, // Ки «Эй некдил, фаррух Исфандёр [2, 8: 249].

The translation of this couplet, like many other passages of praise, was omitted by the translator.

A similar kind of abridgement and omission can be observed in the section of the story of "Rustam and Isfandiyar". For example, in the story "Isfandiyar's Request for the Kingship from His Father", a passage beginning with the couplet:

Пас Исфандёр он гави пилтан,// Баровард аз дард он гаҳ сухан [2, 8: 327];

and ending with:

Супорам туро афсару тахти оҷ,//Ки ҳастӣ ба мардӣ сазовори тоҷ [2, 8: 330] –

that is, more than 34 couplets of the story – was abridged by the translator into three lines [7, 3: 353]:

و أخذ يعدّدُ مقاماته و قائعه و ما سبق له من الحروب و ما ناله من جلايل الخطوب و ما ابتلي به من الحسب علي تلك الهيئه الفظيعة و الصّورة الشّنيعة".

Bundori's translation also occasionally involves the omission of individual words and phrases within particular couplets. The translator generally attempted to render a couplet relatively accurately; nevertheless, omissions occur. This can be observed in the following couplet:

Ки чун маст боз омад Исфандёр,//Дижам гашта аз хонаи шаҳрёр… [2, 8: 321].

The translation is:

و انصرف اسفديار من مجلس ابيه ذالك الي ايوانه و هو واجم مهموم".

It is evident that the word "drunk" (mast) was not translated [7, 3: 351].

In the same story, the following couplets:

Бад-ӯ гуфт, к-«Эй ранҷдида писар,
Зи гетӣ чӣ ҷӯяд дили тоҷвар?
Ҳама ганҷу фармону рои сипоҳ
Ту дорӣ, бар ин – бар фузунӣ махоҳ [2, 8: 322] –

were translated as [7, 3: 352]:

أنّ جميع الممالك تحت حكمك و جميع الخزائن في قبضتك...".

Thus, in the first hemistich, the expression "suffering son" (ranjida-pisar) was not translated, while the remainder was rendered through paraphrase.

Elsewhere, in the couplet:

Ки ӯрост то ҳаст Зобулситон, // Ҳамон Бусту Ғазнину Кобулситон… [2, 8: 331].

The translator omitted the word "Kabulistan" and translated the passage as [7: 353]:

استبدّ ببلاد زابل و غزنة و بُست...".

The following couplet:

Ба гетӣ туро нест кас ҳамнабард,
Зи румиву туриву озодмард [2, 8: 331] –

was translated by Bundori as [7, 3: 353]:

و لا أجدُ في توران و لا إيران من يساجلني و يقاومني".

As can be seen, the translator rendered the above couplet relatively accurately and even interpreted the word “azadmard” precisely as “Iranian” [15: 67]. At the same time, however, he omitted the word “Rumi” from the translation.

Another characteristic of the translator’s method is that, in order to clarify the meaning, he sometimes added expressions of his own that were not present in the original. In practice, these additions can help readers form a clearer understanding of the events and circumstances of the story.

For example, in translating the following verses, in which Isfandiyar complains to his mother about his father’s behaviour, he employs this method:

…Чунин гуфт бо модар Исфандёр,
Ки “Бо ман ҳаме бад кунад шаҳрёр…”
...Бигӯям бад-ӯ он суханҳо, ки гуфт,
“Зи ман ростиҳо набояд нуҳуфт…” [2, 8: 321].

In translating these verses, the translator adds the following statement in Isfandiyar’s voice:

– “لا أرضي منه بدون ذالك و إن أعطاني جميع الممالك”

that is, “I will not be satisfied with anything less than the crown and throne from him (my father), even if he gives me all the kingdoms”.

Clearly, this sentence is an addition by Bundori and does not appear in the text of Shahnameh [7: 352].

Similarly, the translator renders the following couplet:

Чӣ некӯтар аз наррашери жаён // Ба пеши падар-бар камар бар миён? [2, 8: 322],

as [7: 352]:

“و ايّ شيء أحسن من أن يكون الولد ماثلاً كالأسد بين يدي والده يحمي حريمه و يصون عرينه”.

The phrase “من يرعى نوصي و مه يرى حريمي”, meaning “protecting and guarding his family and territory”, does not occur in Shahnameh and is an addition by Bundori.

Elsewhere, in translating the following verses, in which Goshtasp asks astrologers about Isfandiyar’s destiny:

Ки «Ӯро бувад зиндагонӣ дароз?
Нишинад ба хубиву орому ноз?
Ба сар барниҳад тоҷи шоҳаншаҳӣ?
Бар ӯ пой дорад беҳиву меҳӣ»? [2, 8: 324].

Bundori adds the phrase [7: 352]:

– “...و عن حسن سيرته”

to the translation of these verses.

Likewise, Bundori translated the following couplet:

Ту бо шоҳи Чин ҷӯй ҷангу набард // Аз он номдорон барангез гард [2, 8: 332],

as [7: 352]:

“و اللاّئق بك أن منازع أصحاب الاقاليم و تطلب مُلك صاحب الروم أو صاحب الصّين...”.

In other words, Isfandiyar tells his father that “It is better for you to fight the enemies of your territory and hasten to battle the kings of Rum and China”. The expressions “مي لاق الا باحص أ” and “مو رلا ب احاص كلُم” are additions by the translator.

Although in the commentary to the edition of Shahnameh used in our study the phrase “from China and Khalukh” (Zi Chin-u zi Khallukh), that is, a variant reading of

the passage, is provided, and it is known that Khalukh was one of the cities of ancient Turkestan and belonged to the territory of King Goshtasp himself, the above expressions remain additions by the translator and do not occur in the variant readings of the Shahnameh text.

As noted above, Bundori essentially chose the method of paraphrastic or semantic translation, and this approach has certain advantages in translation. Moreover, semantic translation is sometimes accompanied by omission, abridgement, and modification, which gives the translation a distinctive character and occasionally results in an inaccurate rendering of the original text.

This can be observed in the translation of the following couplet:

Чунин гуфт бо модар Исфандёр // Ки “Бо ман ҳаме бад кунад шаҳриёр” [2, 8: 321].

Bundori translated this couplet through semantic paraphrase and abridgement as [7: 351]:

“شكا اليها أباه...”,

that is, “He complained to his mother about his father,” while omitting the expression “he treats me badly.”

In translating the following couplet:

Ду рӯзу ду шаб бода аз ҷом х(в)ард // Бари моҳрӯёнаш (дил) ором кард. [2, 8: 323],

the translator again employed paraphrase [7: 352]:

“ثمّ انّه لازم أباه علي المعاقرة و المنادمة”.

Here, “*Ду рӯзу ду шаб бода аз ҷом х(в)ард”,* -ро бо *“мулозими падар дар шаробхӯрӣ ва мунодимат шуд*”. However, in translating the second hemistich, he made an interpretive error, because Firdawsi’s intended meaning is completely different, as can be seen in the complete passage:

Нашуд пеши Гуштосп Исфандёр,
Ҳаме буд бо ромишу майгусор.
Ду рӯзу ду шаб бода аз ҷом х(в)ард,
Бари моҳрӯёнаш ором кард [2, 8: 323].

In some manuscripts, including the Moscow edition, the word “nashud” (“did not go”) in the first hemistich has been corrupted or replaced by “beshud” (“went”). Similarly, in the fourth hemistich, the word “mohruyonash” (“his moon-faced companions”) has been changed to “mohruyash” (“his moon-faced one”), and this error may to some extent have contributed to the translator’s misunderstanding.

Firdawsi’s intended meaning here is: “Isfandiyar did not go to his father and spent two days and two nights drinking wine and keeping company with his moon-faced companions” [16, 2: 412]. Furthermore, a father would never be described as “moon-faced” in this context. Bundori apparently read “nashud” as “beshud” and understood “the moon-faced one” to refer to the father, thereby making an error in the translation.

Similarly, the following couplet:

Севум рӯз Гуштосп огоҳ шуд, // Ки фарзанд ҷӯяндаи гоҳ шуд… [2, 8: 323]

was translated by Bundori as [7: 352]:

“فأحسنَ كشتاسب بما في نفسه”,

that is, “Goshtasp understood what was in Isfandiyar’s heart”. Clearly, this specific idea is not present in the couplet. Nevertheless, Bundori again employed semantic paraphrase, which reflects the general meaning of the verse.

Abridgement and semantic translation can also be observed in the stories “The Birth of Siyavush” and “The Story of Rustam Raising Siyavush”. For example, the following couplet:

Савориву тиру камону каманд, // Инону рикебу чиву чуну чанд. [2, 2: 348]

was translated by Bundori as [7: 153]:

“و علمه الفروسية و الرماية، و جميع اداب الملوك في الحرب”,

that is, “He taught him horsemanship and archery, as well as all the martial skills appropriate to kings” [16, vol. 2, p. 417].

The translator rendered the first hemistich relatively accurately, while translating the second hemistich through semantic paraphrase, which is clearly evident.

Similarly, Firdawsi’s following couplet:

Зи доду зи бедоду тахту кулоҳ // Сухан гуфану разму рондан сипоҳ... [2, 2: 349]

was translated as [7: 153]:

“و التكلم علي الناس في المحافل”.

It is evident that here too the semantic translation incorporates the general meaning or intention of the poet.

Furthermore, by choosing free translation, Bundori expanded the scope of paraphrase and sometimes expressed his own doubts and reservations concerning certain stories and episodes. For example, in the story “Zal and Rudaba, the Daughter of Mehrab of Kabul”, he states:

“The author of Shahnameh has assumed and related that Rudaba lowered her hair so that Zal could grasp it and climb up to the palace…” [7: 62].

At the end, he expresses his own doubt with the phrase:

“العهدة عليه”,

that is, “the responsibility for this rests with Firdawsi himself” [7: 63].

From another perspective, Bundori’s abridgement increases the value of his work to a certain extent. Although Shahnameh has been translated into many languages, Bundori’s translation is unique in that it provides readers with an abridged version, making the events of the book relatively easier to understand. In other words, for an Arabic-speaking reader who wishes to obtain an overview of all the stories of Shahnameh, this translation is sufficient to become acquainted with this great Persian-Tajik epic.

CONCLUSION

Thus, it can be stated that the Arabic translations of Shahnameh, particularly Bundori’s translation, testify to the interest of Arabs and Arabic-speaking peoples in the national Persian-Tajik epic. In this respect, Bundori’s contribution to creating a foundation for Arabs and Arabic-speaking readers to become acquainted with this enduring monument of Iranian cultural and literary heritage deserves praise and recognition. The work of Bundori and other translators of Shahnameh into Arabic ultimately resulted in the epic becoming recognized today as a major masterpiece of Persian-Tajik literature

and an important source within the literary and cultural world of Arabic-speaking societies.

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