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### Transactional analysis of Jamshid in Ferdowsi's Shahnameh

#### Based on the theory of Eric Burn

Hojjat Allah Omidali<sup>\*1</sup>

*I\**- Assistant Professor, Department of Persian Language and Literature, Arak University

#### Expanded Abstract

##### Introduction

Transactional Analysis (TA) theory, introduced in the 1950s by Eric Berne, offers a strong psychological framework for analysing and understanding human relational dynamics and social interactions. According to TA, each individual's personality contains three essential ego states: Parent, Adult, and Child. These states coexist and interact within each person, shaping their personal patterns and social interactions. Berne's TA model serves as a valuable tool for deepening human relational understanding and fostering healthier, more effective communication, thereby enhancing psychological well-being for both oneself and others. By distilling the complexities of human interactions, TA equips individuals with the insights necessary to refine their relationships with both themselves and others.

In Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*, Jamshid emerges as a dynamic and multifaceted figure whose life follows a complex trajectory, marked by a gradual regression. His thoughts, actions, words, and emotions provide a rich case for an in-depth TA-based analysis. This study addresses two central questions: Which ego states, according to TA, most dominantly influence Jamshid's behavior? Furthermore, what maladaptive traits or "contaminations" are observable in his psychological profile?

##### Methodology

The research employs a descriptive-analytical approach, utilizing library-based sources.

##### Main Discussion

In *Shahnameh*, Jamshid's personality is a complex blend of virtuous and flawed traits, illustrating the intricate relationship between human nature, power, and rulership. His character arc reveals that these qualities significantly influence the trajectory of his life and decisions. Initially, Jamshid is depicted as a wise and charismatic monarch, relying on intellect and knowledge to make decisions aligned with the public good. Among his most prominent virtues are his innovative and constructive abilities, which position him as a transformative figure in advancing civilization and establishing foundational social and economic structures. However, a notable flaw surfaces in his pride and self-aggrandizement, ultimately leading to his downfall.

The intricate dimensions of Jamshid's personality and his social interactions align with the various TA ego states, each contributing to his constructive decisions or behavioral conflicts and failures.

In the Parent ego state, an individual typically demonstrates concern for others' welfare but may also exhibit a propensity to control or dominate. Jamshid's behavioral patterns—particularly in his interactions—are influenced by his father Tahmuras's paternal authority, which he internalizes and later amplifies upon ascending to kingship. Consequently, Jamshid's early reign reflects a refined Parent state, extending and expanding the foundational structures introduced by his father. At the zenith of his rule, Jamshid's governance combines power with an ethos of service. In this role, he embodies the nurturing side of the Parent state, directing his efforts toward social reform, public welfare, and developmental initiatives. His Parent state is also evident in his innovations and contributions to societal well-being, which include the invention of tools and resources that facilitate daily life and improve human conditions.

The Adult ego state represents the rational and analytical dimension of personality, driving logical decisions grounded in objective truth. Often described as the "internal computer" of the psyche, the Adult ego state processes information, solves problems, and responds to reality pragmatically. This Adult state is evident in Jamshid's social reforms, as he organizes skilled craftsmen, establishes professional roles, and creates social hierarchies. These actions showcase his Adult ego's inclination toward order and systematic organization.

Jamshid's psychological "contaminations" emerge in the negative aspects of his Parent ego, where his behaviors disrupt the sacred social fabric, create societal distress, and tarnish his public image. His initial positive contributions and advancements, although reflective of his strong leadership, eventually lead him into a state of self-deification that erodes his character. Berne's concept of "games" in TA theory addresses repetitive social interactions and the toxic undercurrents they can produce. Often used to seek validation or emotional affirmation, these "games"

can damage relational dynamics. A close analysis of *Shahnameh* reveals that Jamshid orchestrates such a “game,” designed to garner emotional approval and attention from the populace. Berne’s theory also introduces the concept of a “recognition hunger,” signifying an individual’s desire for emotional validation from others. Jamshid’s numerous innovations can be viewed as expressions of this need for validation. Moreover, the passive, submissive nature of Jamshid’s society—characterized by a lack of resistance—further facilitates his egocentric inclinations and contaminations.

### **Conclusion**

Jamshid’s transactional dynamics are primarily observable within his Parent and Adult ego states. The positive side of his Parent state is evident in the early years of his reign, manifesting in nurturing, care, reform, generosity, and the provision of comfort to his subjects, whom he regards as his “children”. However, the negative aspect of his Parent state emerges through behaviors that instill humiliation, destruction, fear, and reprimand, destabilizing his society. The Adult ego drives his structural organization, establishing a social hierarchy where each profession is assigned a role within social norms established. Wherein religious leaders and attendants occupy the highest tier, symbolizing the elevated societal value placed on spiritual and ceremonial roles. The critical features contributing to Jamshid’s psychological decline lie in his grand accomplishments and transformative actions, which foster self-absorption and ultimately lead him to claim divine status. Additionally, Jamshid’s society, characterized by a passive and acquiescent stance, reinforces his egocentric tendencies and further exacerbates his psychological degradation.

**Keywords:** *Shahnameh*, Jamshid, Eric Berne, Transactional Analysis