



## Classifying the Cinematic Images in the Heroic Age of Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*: A Deleuzian Reading

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### Abstract

Informed by Gilles Deleuze's "cinematographical theory" and Mohammad-Reza Shafiei Kadkani's literary opinions on imagery, the present article endeavours to read and classify the images in the heroic age of Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*. The common ground between Deleuze and Kadkani is movement and time. This study categorises the images into two groups, namely, movement and time, and five categories: 1) rhetoric-based, 2) narrative-based, 3) language-based, 4) action-based, and 5) dialogue-based. This comparative-descriptive research locates itself at the crossroads of interdisciplinary studies.

**Keywords:** Gilles Deleuze, Image, Literary Criticism, Shafiei Kadkani, *Shahnameh*

### Extended Abstract

#### 1. Introduction

Gilles Deleuze, by analysing the contemporary and classical cinema of Europe and America, and Mohammad-Reza Shafiei Kadkani, by exploring the fourth-century Persian poetry, investigated the creation of movement and time. By pinpointing the creation of movement and time in Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*, this study aims to answer the following questions: What are the effective criteria in the cinematic-literary structure of the images in Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*, in the light of Deleuzian "cinematography" and Kadkani's literary opinions? And how can a new categorisation of images be in accordance with movement and time? The present study employs Deleuzian theories and Kadkani's opinions to identify, extract, and categorise the cinematic images in Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*.

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## **2. Methodology**

Informed by interdisciplinary studies, this comparative-descriptive research explores movement and time in three steps: first, it identifies the literary techniques employed in the creation of movement and time in the heroic age of Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh* in accordance with Shafiei Kadkani's literary opinions; second, it comparatively analyses and correlates the data in the light of Deleuzian "time-image" and "movement-image" theories; and third, it categorises the images in accordance with movement and time.

## **3. Theoretical Framework**

This study is informed by Deleuzian theories and Kadkani's opinions on movement and time in images. Image, according to Kadkani, is a combination of colours, shapes, meaning, movement, and time. In the same line, for Deleuze, an image has movement and time. A montage is the bridge between movement-image and time-image. In this respect, the present study categorises the images of the heroic age of *Shahnameh* in two steps: first, it categorises the images into five categories: 1) rhetoric-based, 2) narrative-based, 3) language-based, 4) action-based, and 5) dialogue-based; and second, it places the images into two groups: movement-image which includes rhetoric-based, language-based, and action-based images, and time-image, which includes narrative-based and dialogue-based images.

## **4. Discussion and Analysis**

One can trace the history of movement and image in Persian literature to Unsuri, the tenth-century poet who explicitly mentions movement and image. In his analysis of images in Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*, Kadkani mentions multiple factors which contribute to the creation of movement in images, such as similies and short metaphors, image-content correlation, poetic hyperbole, horizontal/vertical image moderation, epithets, colours, brevity, image compression, verbiage, and time. In movement-image, a significant factor in the passage of time, according to Deleuze, is the hero's ability to act; the image is in no case bound to the present time and has a certain temporal density. In time-image, the image has a mixed sense of the past and the future, which has no correlation with actuality. In addition, the present time moves between the past and the future.

## **5. Conclusion**

Time is the centre of movement-image and time-image. According to Deleuze, time-image is a trip to the past, as a mission to regain the destroyed identity after WWII. Contrary to Deleuze, Ferdowsi constantly interacts with the smooth movement of the world amid incidents. This temporal perspective

locates itself at the crossroads between the forward momentum of time and the “immortal time.” At this crossroad, in an attempt to regress to the past, humans criticise the socio-historical ideology of the previous social structure and their understanding of the present. In *Shahnameh*, the time-image is not passive, and the humans of the heroic age believe in themselves and the world.

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