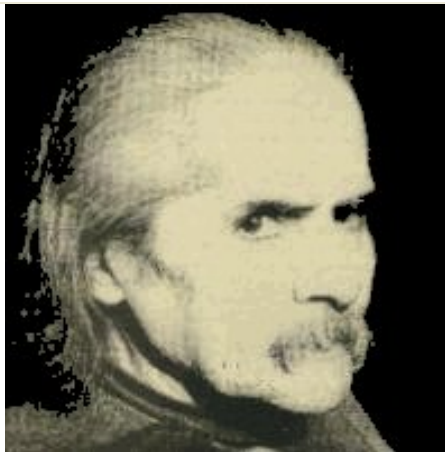


An Annotated Contemporary Persian Poetry

Nima, Shamlou, Akhevan and Forough



Ahad Ghorbani

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To the memory of

**Marziye Ahmadi Oskouei,
Khosrou Gool-e-sourhki
and
Saeid Soultan-pour
whose poetry buds have not got time to bloom**



Marziye Ahmadi Oskouei



Khosrou Gool-e-sourhki



Saeid Soultan-pour

Table of Contents

Modern Persian Poetry	11
Reference	19
Nima Youshij	20
Ahoy Human Beings (Ahoy There People)	24
Moonlight	26
Notes to the poem	27
Makhoula	28
On the Riverbank	29
My Heart of Steel	30
Notes to the poem	31
The Bat of the Nearby Shore	32
Blotted Morning	33
Ahmad Shamlou	34
Bright Horizon	35
In This Dead End	1
The Garden of Mirror	1
Reference	2
Mehdi Akhavan- Sales	1
My Garden	3
The Moment of Meeting	1
Winter	1
The Return of Crows	1
The Endings of Shah-nameh	1
The Prayer	1
The Lament	1
The Inscription	1
The Ghazal	1
Up There	1

"I won't come down,"	1
You I Love, the Old Native Land.....	1
Reference	5
Forough Farrokh-zad	1
The Sun Will Shine	1
I Am Heavy-hearted	1
Another Birth.....	1
Red Rose.....	1
My Lover	1
Border Walls.....	1
I Will Greet the Sun Again.....	1
The Earth Vers.....	1
Reference	1
To Read More about Modern Persian Poems.....	1
Index	1

Preface

This book tries to familiarize the non-Iranian people with modern Persian poetry by means of describing Iran's social and cultural situation and annotating the poems. The historical and cultural background will be explained.

I plan to write a series of books to present the Persian poetry. In each book, four poets will be presented. The first one of this series will begin with an overview of contemporary Iranian poetry. In four chapters four most prominent poets will be presented. This first book of this series assigns to Nima Youshidge, Ahmad Shamlou, Mehdi Akhavan-Sales, and Forough Farrokh-zad.

The ambition is to give some background and clues to facilitate the understanding the poems. The background and clues can be very varying, from the poet's biography to cultural explanation, from historical events to the social and economical situation of the people in today's Iran.

In the translation, the focus is on the contents and messages of the poems, not reflecting versification, rhythm and rhyme; therefore sometime the translation of the rhetorical techniques is ignored.

The send revised edition of this book will be published soon. Should the reader discover any parts of the book needing correction, improvement or clarification, please send me the suggested changes to Ahad.Ghorbani@gmail.com . Thank you for your cooperation!

A. Gh.

May 2000, Gothenburg

Acknowledgments

To write this book, I get help of my family and lots of my friends. My first thank to my family who read the entire draft and gave me both encouragement and discerning criticism and supply me many books from Iran. I am thankful to many friends, who helped me in various ways in different stages of development of this book.

A Gh
Gothenburg, May 2000

Modern Persian Poetry



Iranian classical poetry, with great poets such as Ferdosi (940-1020), Naser-khosro (died 1088), Khyyam (1022-1122), Sadi (died 1291), Mulawi (1207-1273), Hafez (died 1389) and supplied immortal works to world literature. The main theme of Iranian classical poetry was love, separation, human's nature, life's meaning, determinism, death, beauty, spring, garden, flower, human and nature. This poetry basically was philanthropist, it contains exhortations and maxims and lots of lofty thoughts and tenderness and mild emotion are versified in these works.

The great part of poetry was courtier and dependent to imperial courts. A poet was supported by kings and rulers. They were forced to praise them. An Independent poet has always problem: both politically and economically.

Poetry was always very popular among all classes of Iranians. Although its language was not near daily speaking and during a long time had become a staid and rigid system and it was not about major people life and feelings.

Classical poetry's staid and rigid system manifests itself throughout the *arus*, classical prosody. The classical prosody obtained a prestige demanding total obedience. Generally, poetic diction also solidified at the expense of ideas.

Modern Persian poetry, in one side is the heir of this huge cultural heritage, other side, because of facilitation in communication with international literature is affected by it and other side, it is often colored by daily social and political events of Iran. Not only the poetry was limited by rigid prosody and always meaning was sacrificed for form, but language of poems had a tendency to keep distance with ordinary people's language too.

In Persian literature history, many times the language of poems kept distance from the daily language of people and the need of a presumptuously return became necessary, Hindi School is an example. Some great classical poets, like Nezami of Ganja (died 1209), Sadi, Naser-Khosro and Hafez tried to bring poetry's language to daily language. Some movements tried to do poems more understandable for people as well; the Baz-Gashte Adabi is an example.

Iran's contact with Europe in the nineteenth century, the First World War (1914-18) and its huge social and politic consequences, the Iranian Constitutional Revolution (1906-1911) and, the emergence of newspapers and magazines had great effect on evolution of Persian art, especially poetry in modern Iran.

With emergence of printed books, newspapers and magazines in Iran, the modernization of literature and simplification of the literary language and create a more communicative art became an essential elements of reform in literature.

Classic literature, especially poetry, with its obtrusive and uncompromising rules could not reflect the complex and conflicting social life of Iran. A great part of Iranian intellectuals tried to recast the old and obstructive tradition in a modern and near to ordinary people literature. Some of the first great masters who affect of political changes in Iran and started the deviation from the conventions of traditional literature and tried to bring poetry into the people access and have a more understandable theme, form, and language were **Aliakbar DehKhoda** (1880-1955), **Mohammad Taghi Bahar** (1886-1951), **Iraj Mirza** (1874-1925), **MirZade Eshghi** (1893-1923), **Parvin Etesami** (1906-1941), **Abul-Ghasem Lahuti** (1887-1957) and **Aaref Ghazvini** (1882-1933). They tried to bring poetry's language to daily language and issue.

They did not try to separate radically themselves from the style that had been widespread for centuries but, instead of putting the stress on perfection of form, emphasized content and language simplicity. They wrote about politics and society, their own life and families, their works, their comrades, and about war, and about city life, with its hut-living, with its streets, public bath-houses, bazaars, mosques, squares, all corner of country, its beauty and ugliness, especially its people. They introduced a simplified vocabulary and common expressions into poetry.

Separation from classical theme and form was a laborious process. The modern Persian poetry was not born and launched suddenly. It was result of a long term social, political and literature evolution. A very hard disputation was between traditionalists and modernists. Both sides were often fanatical instead of rational.

Difference of Opinion between Traditionalists and Modernists

Most important areas of disagreements were: Length of hemistiches, observance of convention, emphases on eloquence, ambiguity, and structure.

In classical Persian poem, every verse consists of two hemistiches, which have the same length. It was one of basic credibility of classical poem and poet is forced to fill the hemistich with unnecessary words or split the sentence in two or more hemistiches to achieve same length of hemistiches. Modern poetry breaks this rule and poet is free to express her/his idea in unequal verses.

There is a predetermined convention for vocabulary, similes, etc in Persian classical poetry. The lover's ringlet always was likened to night, chain, saga, mad etc. It often was a brake for free imagination.

In classical poetry eloquence was central and the theme was in shadow. Poets maneuvered with words. Modern poetry came with this idea that eloquence is not the only credibility of poem.

Ambiguity is an added value to poem. In classical poem, the poet tries to do the poem ambiguous and unclear by using difficult words, prosody, the scientific terms, grammar, exaggeration, etc. The pleasant ambiguity is the case where the poet tries to penetrate ambiguous phenomena and clarifies it. It is an inherent to complicated idea. In modern poetry, a poet tries to attack to ambiguous phenomena, but classical poem tries to complicate the poem by techniques and show his power.

Every verse of classical poem has often a complete message and is independent from other verses. Stated differently, the unit of classical poem is a verse. But

modern Persian poem is an integrated idea and all parts/lines are related to each other.

When in the 1940s the Persian poetry tries to break free from the powerful bonds of tradition, it entered a new era. Then, it arose a discussion in history of modern Persian poetry, the distinguish between verse and poetry. One group consider poetry must be versified. Another consider the poetry (*she'r*) and versification (*Zazm*) are two independent literary forms and the poetry playing the soul and the verse acting as the body. The classical poets emphasize on versification and says if a literary work is not versified, it is not poetry. The modernist poets try to rid Persian poetry of the heavy burden of versification and emphasize the content of a literary work shows is a poetry or not the its versified form.

The modernisation of Persian poetry, started with Iran's contact with European literature and got large imaginary ideas from European poetry modernisation, especially from France, England, Russia and USA and started in different ways and various fronts by different poets in Iran. But, there is a strong tendency in Persian poetry historian to gives this hounor to recognize this event as an Nima's invention and emphasize the Nima's talent as absolut only diriven force of this ternd in Persian literature.

Modernists' deviations from well-worn path and their abandonment of the classical Persian prosody shocked the defenders of tradition. They thrown overboard the traditional meters and rhyme patterns, medieval imagery, metaphors, symbols and theme. To traditionalist, poetry without the formal and structural conventions was inconceivable.

Here is a very brief survey of individual characteristics of the poets and poetesses of modern Iran. They are all the children of the same soil and belong to a changing epoch. Their acceptance of new principle of life, progress and art is obvious.

Iraj Mirza (1874-1925) was a price of the blood. He had composed singularly simple, fluent and elegant poems in a homely diction. For his ribald and satirical poems his complete poetical works (*divan*) was proscribed, as also for his free thoughts. He was denied burial in a Muslim cemetery.

Ali Akbar Dehkhuda (1880-1955) was one of the first ranks amongst his time of Persian men of letters and had great influence to simplify the language of both poetry and prose.

Aref Ghazvini (1882-1933) was a more gifted composer of songs than of poems. His unruly independence of spirit is manifest throughout his writings. He may aptly be described as a patriotic poet of the Constitution. The democratic spirit of the age and the reawakened love for freedom has been voiced in his poems. He could not tolerate cant and hypocrisy in any sphere. He secluded himself in one of the valleys near Hamedan.

Mohammad Taghi Bahar (1886-1951) was one of the first great masters who tried to bring Persian poetry into synchronization with the 20th century. He did not try to divorce himself from classical prosody but instead of putting the emphasis upon perfection of form, stressed content and simplicity of language. He was one of the first Persian poets to write about politics, social and city life and people. He was also one of the first to introduce a simplified vocabulary and common expression into poetry. He was the most devoted Constitutionalist. The contents of his poems show a nice balance between national sentiment, political thoughts and individual reflections.

Lahouti (1887–1957) was one of the first poets who have successfully attempted new forms and simplicity of language of Persian Poetry. He was modern in his ideas, rebellious in creed and fiery in expression. He escaped from Iran and sought refuge in the Soviet Union.

Farrokhi Yazdi

MirZade Eshghi (1893-1923) was not only a popular poet but also a composer of songs. He paid with his life for the sincerity of extreme republican views. He has attempted new forms and simplicity of language of Persian Poetry.

Parvin Etesami (1906-1941)

Nima Youshidge (1895-1959) In contest of bringing Persian poetry into synchronization with Iran's society, there were some poets, the most persistent among them **Nima Youshidge** (Ali Esfandiari, 1895-1959), cut from the centuries-old domination and despotic rule of classical prosody ('*aruz*') over Persian poetry. They took aim the strongest and longest-surviving elements of classical poetry, namely, its meter and rhyme, and using hemistiches of different lengths. The supporters of classical poetry were dominant. It took a long time and many literary battles until the free-verse poets achieved recognition.

Fereidoun Tavalluli (b. 1919) attract a lot of supporter of classical poetry towards romantic and sentimental free verse through his mastery of poetic image. He is

influenced by the classical lyric poets. Some of his poems are descriptive and narrative.

Nader Naderpour (1929 - 2000) who created both classical and modern poetry. He is very skillful in imaginary poems.

Manuchehr Sheybani (b. 1923) was one of the early followers of Nima Youshidge. With his clarity of expression presents the pre-Islamic, Zoroastrian world of light and darkness, truth and falsehood. He applies a dramatic language in his poems. He goes towards freer poems from prosodic rhythms.

Esmail Shahrudi (b. 1925) was one of the early followers of Nima Youshidge. He applies collective idea social critics in his poems. He pays attention the form of his poem, how it seems. In using words, he is creative and brave.

Ahmad Shamlou (A. Bamdad, 1925 - 2000) begun with classical poetry then joins to modernist poetry of Nima Youshedge School. He creates continuously fresh and extraordinary metrical and verbal resources. His innovative lyrics tie modern Persian poetry to that of the rest of the world. He abstained from rhythm and rhyme and successfully experimented with natural music of Persian language, and harmony and internal rhymes of words. In modern Persian poetry, his distinguish poem, present an advanced school of poetry. The social and political life of people is his favorite subject. His rebellious war cry in his poems is the repressed indignation of Iranian people.

Siaavosh Kasraeey (1926-1996) combines lyricism with an epic, social-politic with a challenging breath.

Hoshang Abtehaj (H. A. Sayeh, 19bb-19xx), combines lyricism with a social-politic breath.

Mehdi Akhavan-Sales (M. Omid, 1928-1990) had a dialectic negation: discarding certain values of the past that were hindering political, social, cultural, and literary development, and striving at the same time to preserve some of the old value, and if possible adapt them to the new situation of a rapidly changing society. He has his own school in Persian poetry. He uses Iranian cultural heritage in his poems. He use colloquial, local, harmonious, and new combined words and pay deeply attention to music of poem and uses puns, rhymes and internal rhymes and creates wonderful lyrical and epical works. His poetic innovation in different fronts is a basic element in development of modern Persian poetry.

Fereidoun Moshiri (19bb) had a frank, soft and lyrical language. He takes often distance from socio-political matters in his poems and dedicates himself to beauty and love.

Simin Behbahani (1928) was born in Tehran.

Sohrab Sepehri (1928-1979) strove for a Sufi-like integration of man and transcendent unity of being. His poetry, like his painting, is a contemplation and meditation about nature. He is a powerful imagist. He is influenced of Buddhism and in his mystical poems he emphasizes on ultra-class humanism.

Manuchehr Aatashi (b. 1931) reflects in his poetry the rugged landscape of the desert near the Persian Gulf and the toughness of nomadic tribes.

Forugh Farrokhzad (1933-1967) broke the norms of classical form and expresses herself by freely stating her feelings unencumbered by symbolic representation and metaphor. She broke the Nima's prosody and used a lot of "unpoetic" words in her poems. Love and death is very common theme in her poems. She influenced many of modern Persian poets.

Mohammad-Ali Sepanlu (b. 1938) tries to weave into his poetry the spoken language and everyday situation.

M. Azad (19bb)

Tahere Safarzade (19bb) tried to close her poetic language to obvious reality and in this way achieves some flexibility in rhythm.

Nosrat Rahmani (1929-2000) is a bit pessimism in his poems. He uses colloquial language and dialog. He describes the real life of the common people. His point of view is sometime rebellious.

Yadolla Royaei (199bb) erotic poem

Manuchehre Aatashi (199x) in his poems reflects social life and nature of South Iran.

Kiyoumars Monshizade (199bb) uses mathematical formula in his poem.

Esmail Noriala (199bb) belong to a tend which called "new wave" and ignore the achievement of both classical and modern poems. They ignore rhythm.

Ahmadreza Ahmadi (19bb)

Mohamad Rez'a Shafia'y Kad Kany (M. Sereshk)

The struggle to near the people to people language is not finished. The tendency to versify un-understandable is strong in today's Iran. Although the modernist Persian poetry achieved a language near "usual" people, but grad of abstraction in some

poetry is increasing. It depends the lack of democracy and presence of censorship in one hand and lack of artistic, social and moral obligation in other hand. This is a great hinder to spread and penetrate poem in people. Pomes limits almost solely to intellectuals.

Different Schools in Modern Persian Poetry

Existing mentality in dictatorship society can not accept a Varity of poem form. Poets and critics, both modernist and traditionalist tried to prove the legitimacy of one form: either classical or modernist. When modern poetry established, modernists were intolerant and experimenting in new way was not welcome. But Niman modernist established. Shamlou's poems are a school. Classical poem show capacity to express and reflect modern society. You do not a literature pluralism to produce massive works and present to people to be developed. Every trend/school fanatically tries to show his legitimacy and "dishonor" others. The following trends/school are distinguishable in contemporary Persian poetry: Niman, Shamlouan, Multi-rhythmic, Acust-rhythmic, and New classical.

Nima break the traditional methods and practices. But he applies one prosodic rhythm in the poem to achieve unity and harmony in the poem.

Shamlou tried to release poem from prosodic rhythm and applies language rhythm in poem. Shamlou with his broad and deep knowledge of Persian language handle it uniquely and creatively. His language is distinguished, unique and pleasant.

A trend experiments multi-rhythmic poems. They apply different rhythm in one poem and some time they even combine un-rythmic language with rhythmic. Farrokhzad, Aazad, Nistani, Rahmani, Brahani, Royaei, Hoghoghi, Sepanlu, Khouei, Baba-Chahi, Mokhtari versified in this trend.

Some poets apply achievement of modernism in classical school and create a new classical poem. Bahar, Lahoti, Khanlari, Akhavan, Simin Behbehani are some example.

The majority of today's poets, despite all the innovation and experiments, do not forget that poetry is a point of reference, a mirror of Iran's people's feelings, life, history and myths and an expression of national identity. Most of their works were influenced by the events of the time. Most of them acted as artistic conscience of people and grieved for the masses during modern Iran history and showed an empathy to people under despotic rule. They write that part of history which historians will not or can not write down.

There is a continued stress on love of freedom in Persian modern poetry. Often you hear directly or indirectly poets criticizes the despotic atmosphere of social system and backwardness of contemporary Iran sociaty. Generally, it is an anti-despotic literature which exhorted a new way of life and civilization and long deeply for love and freedom. Often in Iranian contemporary poetry you find an anxious on the country's condition and the physical and spiritual poverty of the land and lack of

freedom and rule of law. They feel the social and political strangulation, crimes, oppression and despotism and pressures and versify these feelings. Stated differently, social comment and criticism preoccupies some poets, while in the main artistic consideration remained their guiding principle.

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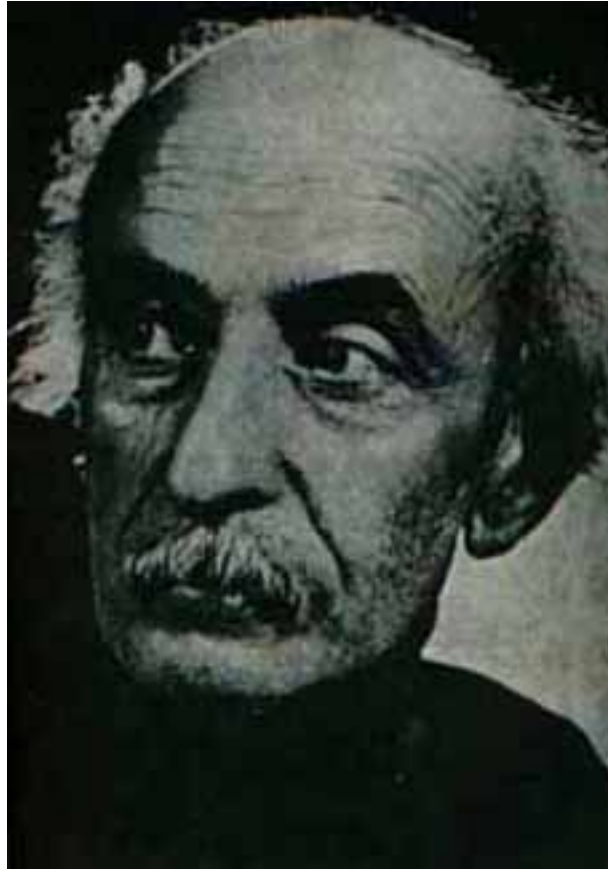
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Nima Youshij



Nima Youshij (1895 - 1959) is one of most important founders of modern poetry in Iran. Classical poetry in Iran was ultimately formalistic and was imprisoned by rhyme and rhythm. By breaking free from classical prosody rules and forms, using hemistiches of different lengths and rhymes to match to the contents of poems, he opened a new era in Iranian poetry. He intended that the form ought not to control the content.

Ali Esfandiary, who later adopted the pen name of Nima Youshij, was born in the village of Yoush in the northern province of Mazandaran on the Caspian coast in 1895 to a family of landed farmers. His father was a strong, bold, irascible man who taught his son riding, shooting. His mother was an educated woman who put her little son to sleep by telling him verse stories from various medieval Persian romances. He received his early schooling from the only clergyman in his village, Yoush.

The magnificent, green panorama of Yoush and its prominent, foggy mountains covered with colorful maple forests provided deep inspiration to Nima's poetry.

As a boy of twelve, his family brought him to Tehran. There, he entered in a French school (Saint-Louis School) and became familiar with French poetry as a boy.

Towards the end of his secondary education, encouraged by one of his teachers, Nezam Vafaa, he began to write poetry. As a young poet, his poems were written in the classical style and he followed the Khorassany style of poetry, but his acquaintance with the French literature opened new horizons in front of his searching eyes. Later, he introduced the new free verse in Persian poetry. Nima published his first collection of poetry, entitled *A pale Story* (*قصه ی رنگ پریده*), in 1921. In this collection, he narrate the story of his life, and does not depart from tradition.

Nima's long narrative poem the Tale (Afsaneh) which has published November 1922 is considered as the first modern poem in the Persian Literature. This heralded the oncoming wave of the literary revolution in Iran. The modern Persian poem began a break from the monotonous classical rhymed verse.

Nima was extremely consistent in his effort to find newer, more eloquent poetic form to give his work a more mellifluous and artistic taste.

Due to his poems, extreme delicacy and simplicity of structure, they are easily comprehended, appreciated, interpreted.

In most of his poetic work, he has human-centered view. Whatever we have in the art market from our time's custom-breaks poet was gathered by his friends or his son- Sheragin Yushij. Nima himself published his works with his own expense only twice, once in 1920 a versified story called "The pale story (for broken hearts)" and the other time, the little book of "The soldiers family". Ahmad Zia Hashtroudy was the first person who published some parts of Nima's "legend" (*Afsaneh*), "night" (*Shab*), "prison" (*Mahbass*) and four short stories of his in a selection of contemporary writers' and poets' works among the literary men of the Day's works in 1923.

He married in 1926, and later he got a job as a teacher.

The rest of Nima's story is not living in Tehran, writing a lot and publishing a little. He worked continually searching for a missing dear that can not been found easily. He passed through long ways and did not show any inclination to gather and publish his poems.

He loved Mazandaran, especially his home village Yoush and he kept the habit of summer visits to his beloved hometown throughout his life.

According to Nima rhymes and various traditional poetic meters, do not necessarily reflect esthetic of a poetic work.

Doctor AboolGhasem Janaty Atayi was another person who made efforts to gather **Neema's** works. He published a collection called: "*Neema's life and works*" in 1954.

Neema has a long way to go. He believed in himself and the result of his work. He thought to himself: "everyone who does a new work has a new fate, too". He did what people needed and it was not clear whether he could succeed or not. All the literary men of that time said the old respectable literature had gone stray. But these objections didn't reach the poet and some of his poems affected the taste and attitude of some people. They admired and welcomed them and the shot went home. The poet aimed at the young warm hearts. He focused on the eyes that shine and look fast. His poems had been composed for them.

The "father" of modernist Persian poetry, who influenced the Persian literature in a broad senesce, dies February 1959. Sirus Tahbaz (xxxx- yyyy) published Nima Youshidge's complete poems in Teheran 1985.

Autobiography

Nima's biography and his artistic movement that were explained at the first congress of Iranian writers and poets in June, 1945 by **Nima** himself, is very interesting. Some parts of it are as follows:

In 1896 Abraham Noori, a brave angry man, was known as a member of north of Iran's old families. I am his oldest son. My father took care of the farm and cattle in that region. I was born in the fall of that year (Nov.) when he was living in Yush.

My childhood was spent among shepherds and tribal men who migrate to the remote summering and wintering resorts in search of new pastures, spending their evenings around the campfires. My earliest recollections are images of rustic life, savage fights, simple pleasure, and a monotonous, blind, oblivious tranquility.

I went to school in the village where I was born. My teacher, the village preacher, would chase me through garden alleys beating me mercilessly. He used to fasten my feet to rough, rugged tree-trunks and beat on them with long twigs. In this way, he would force me to memorize letters that various peasants had written to each others and that he had stuck together into a long scroll.

My close relatives sent me to a catholic school with my younger brother the next year when I came to the city. That school was known as "Saint Louis" college.

The first few school years of mine passed in fighting with other boys. I didn't study well. Only my art mark saved me! I got motivations to compose poems later on with the attention and encouragement of a well-behaved teacher named Nezam Vapha who is a famous poet today.

Getting familiar with a foreign language helped me find a new way. What I got from searching this way after leaving the school and spending some time in love is in "*Afsaneh*" poem collection. I saw another example of my style called "Thou Night" in Nowbahar weekly magazine in the fall of 1921.

The style in each piece was like a poisoned arrow aimed at the old style followers. That time coincided with the period of hardship and pressure in my country that made me find a better style, which was not in my country's literature. I paved the way for the new generation by working hard under the burden of words and classic style.

Rhythm and rhyme are treated differently in my poems. The length of the lines is not out of some liking or fantasy. I believe in regularity even in irregularities. Every word of mine is put next to another word according to the regular rules. In fact it is more difficult for me to compose new style poems than other forms. The main content of my poem is "suffering". I compose poems for my suffering and others' words, rhythm and rhyme have always been instruments for me to express my pain and others' pain too. I share others' suffering. I am not only a housewife but also a mother and a capable shepherd too, so I don't have enough time to make a fair copy. My poems have scattered among people or are read by the linguists out of the country.

I have published my poems regularly with the support of my friends only after 1937, when I was a member of music magazine's editorial board.

Many people disagree with me, I know it myself. I have gradually found it out. This quality is gradual and the work's result. Especially some of my poems, which are more specific for me, are ambiguous for those who are so considerate in the world of poetry. But I have many kinds of poems. I can say, I am like a river from which can quietly take some water every where you want.

It is not good to introduce my versified stories with different styles, which have not yet been available to the people.

The rest of my story is: I live in Tehran, I write a lot but publish a little and this makes me look lazy from far away.

June of 1945

Nima Youshij

Ahoy Human Beings (Ahoy There People)

Ahoy human beings! (Ahoy there people!) Who are sitting on the seashore and are happy and laughing!

Someone is dying in the water.

Someone is always writhing (frantically)

In this turbulent, dark and heavy sea that you know.

When you are inebriated with your dream (thoughts) of gaining control over (getting your hands on) your enemy,

When you uselessly think that you have helped a disabled one

To create a better ability,

When you tightly tighten

Your belts on your waists.

- Oh when have I ever spoken it?

That some one in the water is unuselessly isarificing his life.

Ahoy human beings! (Ahoy you over there) who have pleasant tablecloth on the shore!

Bread on the tablecloths, clothes on your bodies;

Someone in water is calling you.

He pounds (beats) on heavy waves with tired hands,

Opens his mouth with eyes ripped by fear,

Has seen your shadow from afar

Has swallowed water in the blue deep and his restlessness is increasing.

He sticks out (raises) from the water

Sometimes (at times) his head, sometimes (at times) his foot.

Ahoy human beings!

He, from afar, is still watching this old world,

Is yelling and hopes for help

Ahoy human beings! Who are enjoying yourselves of calmly watching at the shore!

Waves pound on the silent seashore,

Scatter (Spread) themselves like very unconscious fallen drunken men

They go roaringly. This outcry is heard:

- "Ahoy human beings . . . !"

And the sound of wind is becoming more raucous (heart-rending),

In the sound of wind, his cry becomes freer. (It means, it is heard farther and spreads more)

In the water from afar and near

Still echoes this call:

-”Ahoy! human beings . . . “

18-th December 1941

Notes to the poem

“Ahoy Human Beings” (“ Ahoy There, People”) is an outcry of a sensitive poet in a society where majority of his fellow creatures suffer. This depicts a lone individual struggle. In a class society the unfairness oppresses the poet and this is his feeling when the burden oppresses him. The poem was written in a very difficult time of Iranian intellectual history. A time of desperation and pessimism. He calls out to the people who have a very good life, who are too busy enjoying themselves and who are preoccupied with self-enhancing endeavors. He calls out to the (rich and clam) people on the shore, who do not hear the (poor and desperate) people, in the sea. This outcry is not new in Persian poetry. Hafiz (c. 1326-1390) in a poem said: The dark night, the terror of turbulent, and such a horrible whirlpool. From where (How) do you know about us (have any news of us) the light-minded on the shore.

Moonlight

Moonlight's flowing
A worm is glowing,
Not a breath to break slumber in the eyes and yet
The thought of this sleeping bunch
Breaks sleep in my watery eyes.

All-seeing, stands with me the dawn
Asking of me
To proclaim to his fallen lot the happy tiding of its life-giving breath
Alas, in my heart a thorn
Breaks the hardship of this journey.

Tender-bodied blossom of the plant that
With love I planted, and
With love I watered
Alas, breaks in my bosom.

My hands I chafe
And knock at the gate
In vain I linger
That one may answer
The gate and the walls, frail and flaccid,
Crumble on my head.

Moonlight's flowing
A worm is glowing
Weary of a long journey
Stands a lonely man at the village gate
Knapsack on his back
One hand on the knocker, he says to himself:
"the thought of this sleeping bunch
breaks sleep in my watery eyes."

Notes to the poem

Makhoula

Makhoula, the figure of the long river
Goes heedlessly
Roars ceaselessly
Thrusts its body, from rock to rock,
As a refugee
(shunning the beaten path)
rushes to the depths
rises to the heights
flows restlessly;
together with the dark, one lunatic is accompanying another.

It's long it treads its way,
Joining many a stream
No one – it's long – has heeded it
And there it goes obscurely chanting
Fallen from all eyes
In this desert's lap.

In the obscurely versifying of its water
Makhoula carries a familiar message
And the word of a manifest destination
But, it goes
Over what lies in its way
As stranger trampling another.

Goes heedlessly
Roars ceaselessly
To where destiny
As homeless vagrant tramping on its way.

1949

Notes to the poem

On the Riverbank

On the riverbank loiters the old turtle.

The day is a sunny day.

The arena of the paddy is warm. (The paddy arena is warm.)

The old turtle relaxes in the warm lap of sun, serenely sleeps

On the riverbank.

On the riverbank, there's only me

Crushed with the pain of desire

Waiting for my sun

But my eyes

Don't see her

My sun

Has hidden her face in distant waters.

Sunshine everywhere, sunlit everything

But for my delay

Or else for my haste

My sun is absent from this sunshine

On the riverbank.

1952

Notes to the poem

My Heart of Steel

Set free my horse,
My journey provision and my saddle felt
And me, the prattler,
that an unruly thought
Has drawn me to home.

I have returned from a far land, where no joy is found.
The far lands
The base of rebels
Their business to kill and massacres where in every corners
Its spring planted the flower with the wounds of people's corpse.

On my way, I thought in so vein
That through this desert of death
Any wayfarer could pass
If s/he had a heart of steel
And could nonchalantly observe
in good and evil that exist,
Taking problems easily,
Suppose the world
As the place of hatred and murder,
The place of destruction and wretchedness.

But, now to the to the same desert of death
I have to return, with all the smartness I put to use,
The horrible nightmares which have been my souvenir from my journey and still
Is alive before my alert eyes,
Burning my existence in their established fire.

For me, whom ruined of travel, there is not a moment to stay;
Now, I am more plundered than anyone else;
I have lost everything,
My heart of steel is no longer with me;
I my heart was all my existence, and now I see

That my heart of steel is left behind on the way.
No doubt, that my heart of steel has been thrown
By those malicious people into the arms of a spring whose flowers, as I said, are of
blood and wounds.

And now I am thinking that in the blood of my brothers
- Who unfair twisting in blood
guiltless rolling round in blood -
My heart of steel would change by rusting.

1953

Notes to the poem

The poem is composed in 1953, the year of American coup d'état in Iran. A period of expanded participating of people in social and political struggle ended by a bloody suppression. The poem is reflection of a deathful impact.

The Bat of the Nearby Shore

Chouck o chouck! . . . has lost its way in the dark night
The bat of the nearby shore
Taps incessantly on my window pane.

The bat of the nearby shore!
What end is there in your struggle?
What do you want in my room?

The bat of the nearby shore speaks to me (in a mute speech):
“What an immense light you have in your room!
Open your door to me
I am sick of night.”

The bat of the nearby shore imagines
Everybody can be lead to every way
A way to prosperity
And every light leads to a way out.

Chouck o chouck! . . . in the heart of this night which gives birth this pain
Why then does nobody come along my way . . . ?

1954?

Notes to the poem

Blotted Morning

I was watching the departing illuminated dawn,
and I sang with the merry of this early warbler of dawn;
and in secret somewhere in the desert
I gazed all the time
at the flying colors of this star,
and thus I uttered with an expressive tongue:
the golden harbinger of hope will come;
and these evil fated folk's grief
will come to an end..."at the end of separation....

Notes to the poem

After publishing of Nima Youshij's first poem called "*The Pale Story*" in March 1922 rapidly echoed the social conditions of the time and criticized the oppression. For example in his *Oh Night, Ah Dreadful and Horrible Night, Till When You Must Burn My Body, Pull Out My Eyes, Unveil Your Face and Let Me Die For I'm Sick of This Life*, he skillfully portrays the society's grief, sorrow and pessimism.

In his second series of poems such as *Qoqnoos* or *Ah People Nima* so bitterly laments for the oppressed community and lashes out at the Reza Khani dark and suffocating atmosphere that his night is lengthened into an eternal night which is connected with all the nights in our history.

In a commentary about Nima's poems Anvar Khameie says Nima's spirit of struggle with the ruling regime and his link with the suffering masses is clearly visible. According to Khameie "The subject of the majority of Nima's poems is the suffering and poverty of the laboring people and their numerous calamities such as hunger, unemployment, deprivation of their natural rights. He criticizes oppression, crime and exploitation of the masses and in none of these poems one can see a praise of royal system, nobility, khans, employers and wealthy aristocrats." (Anvar Khameie, 1989)

With Reza Shah's departure from Iran in September 1941 during the short dawn of limited freedom Nima's works grew into a poetry of hope and victory. His poems became a platform for liberty. Such feelings are well expressed in his poem called *The Blotted Morning* which says:

Reference

Nima Youshij, *Maj'mue Kamel-e Ash'ar- Nima Youshidge*, [Complete Collected Poems], edited by Sirus Tahbaz, Teheran, Entesharat Negah, 1991.

Proceedings of the First Congress of Iranian Authors. Tehran: Iran-USSR Society, 1947.

Ahmad Shamlou



Ahmad Shamlou (b. 1925)

Ahmad Shamlou with pen name of A. Bamdad (Persian word that means morning) was born the 12-th December 1925 in Tehran.

He stands at the forefront of today's Iranian poetry. He is one of the most influential poets in modern Persian poetry too. He is one of the most important founders of prose poem in Iran as well. He has had a dominant position in Persian modern poetry since three decades and is a well-known and most popular poet in Iran. There are many (several) reasons for Shamlou's extraordinary reputation in Iranian literature:

His great technical skill as a poet.

His enormous range of subjects: He is a versatile man. He is poet, writer, journalist, translator, researcher and social critic.

The exceptional number of works that he written and their consistently high quality. He is a very hard workers creator. He published more than 12 volumes poetry books and 40 other volumes including translation. He researched and collected an encyclopedia of Persian folklore in 100 volumes that only 5 volumes are published.

His deep insight into people's experience in Iran society. He has a deep understanding of human experience in Iran and his poets deal with many aspects of emotion and feelings in emotion in two dictatorial regimes. His poet contains some of the most moving and beautiful poetry in Persian.

His unrivalled mastery of Persian language.

He uses powerful emotional language.

The themes dominant his poetry is: Love, human and freedom.

Bright Horizon

One day (1), we will find our pigeons again
And kindness will give a helping hand to beauty
One day, when the least song is a kiss
And every human being (2)
Is brother to other human being.
One day, when they do not close their doors
The lock is a saga
And the heart
Is enough for living (life).
One day, when the meaning of every speech is to love
So that, in order to find the last speech, you do not search for words.
One day, when the melody of every talk, is life
So that, in order to compose my last poem, I do not toil to find rhyme.
One day, when every lip is a ballad
So that, the least song would be kiss.
One day, when you will come forever
And kindness will be equal to beauty.
One day, when we give seeds to our pigeons...
And I am ever expectant to that day
Even a day
When I will not be yet. (3)

(1) It is a day in future. The poet is sure this day will come. I don't know it calls "one day" or "a day" in English.

(2) If "man" means both women and men, I can use man. But I don't know.

Anyhow he means a man or woman. I don't like long word human being. But I don't know a shorter one.

(3) He means when he is not alive.

Notes to the Poem

In This Dead End

They smell your mouth (breath),
didn't you ever say that I love you.

They smell your heart

It is (This is) a strange time, darling

And they whip

the love

beside the roadblock's beam.

Love have be hidden in the closet

In this crooked dead end and turn of chill (chill turn),

they keep fire flaming

with song and poem as fuel.

Don't endanger you to think.

It is (This is) a strange time, darling

He who knocks on the door at night,

comes to put out the light.

Light have to be hidden in the closet

Now, the butchers

stationed at crossroads

with bloody logs and cleavers.

It is (This is) a strange time, darling

And they operate smiles away from lips

and songs from mouths.

Emotions have to be hidden in the closet

The kebab of canary,

lily and jasmine in fire.

It is (This is) a strange time, darling

Satan intoxicated by success

celebrates our mourning.

God has to be hidden in the closet.

The 22-ed July 1979

Notes to the Poem

Shamlou's poems are a descriptive history of Iranian people emotion under the time. You can feel great grief, pain and happiness of people in Iran. Have you lived in a city where the strictest governmental armed security is always in full operation against the people, especially young people. Armed guard and militia with revolvers and automatic gun, every few meters, no matter which way you turn. You are stopped, searched and frisked every where and every time. You can not be sure for your next minute any time. You live under Damocles'' sword of terror. If you have not been in such situation, you can try to think and to feel yourself into those people skin. Then you understand this poem more deeply.

The Garden of Mirror

With a lamp in my hand,
and a lamp shining ahead,
I am on my way
to fight against darkness.
The cradles of weariness
have stopped swaying,
And in the depths a sun
lightens the burnt-out galaxies.
The riotous cries of lightning,
When the hailstones take form
in the restless wombs of clouds;
And the silent pain of the vine
When the baby grapes appear
at the top of long, winding branches:
My cry was all an escape from pain,
Because, in the most horrible nights,
I have been seeking the sun
with a hopeless prayer.
You have come from the suns,
from the dawns.
In a void where there was neither a God,
nor fire,
I have been seeking your glances
and your trust
with a hopeless prayer.
A vital current
Between two deaths
In the emptiness between two solitude:
Your trust is something like this!
Your joy is ruthless and noble,
Your breaths in my empty hands
are songs and grass.
I rise !
A lamp in my hand, a lamp in my heart.

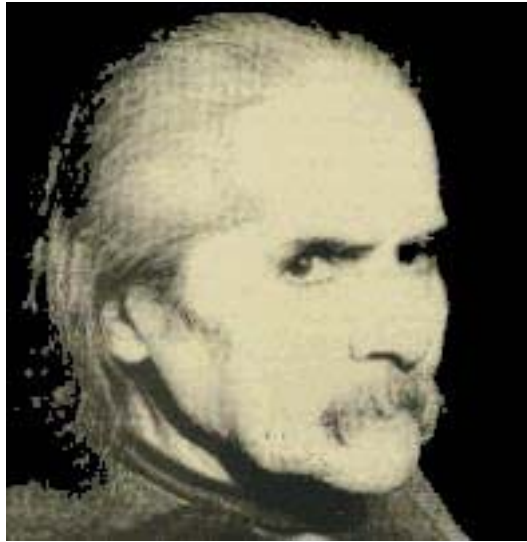
I polish my rusty soul.
I set a mirror opposite yours
To make your image infinite.

Reference

Ahmad Shamlou, *Maj'mue Ash'aar*, [Collection of Poems, Volume 1, 1949- 1964], Germany, Bamdad Publisher, 1988.

Ahmad Shamlou, *Maj'mue Ash'aar*, [Collection of Poems, Volume 2, 19ab- 19cd], Germany, Bamdad Publisher, 1989.

Mehdi Akhavan- Sales



Mehdi Akhavan Sales (1928-1990)

Mehdi Akhavan Sales (1928-90) is one of the most notable modernist poets of present-day Iran. He has deeply influenced the youngest generation of modern Iranian poets. He was born in Toos near Mashhad 1928 and attended primary and secondary school in his native town. He moved to Tehran in 1948.

He began his career as a teacher in Waramin near Tehran. He participated in the political activities of the early 1950s and was imprisoned after the coup d'état of 1953. After his release, he was recruited by different institutes, among them the National Radio, the National Radio and Television Organization and the Ministry of Education.

He had a simple and upright life without luxuries. His life was full of occupational vagabondage, lack of job security and poverty because of his liberalism, frankness, broad-mindedness and tolerance.

He died the August 26, 1990, in Tehran.

His style is that of both classic and modern poetry. He produced, among others, long poems of social criticism, epics and love poems. He was one of the earliest modern poets in Iran. In his literary criticism he showed the potential and legitimacy of modernist Persian poetry. In his lifetime empathic engagement with both classic and modernist poetry, he published his views about Persian poetry and the basic distinction between Persian modernist and classical poetry.

He studied Persian classic literature very deeply and widely and attempted to claim the mantle of past Iranian thinkers and poets. His preoccupation with Ferdowsi's

Shahnameh (The Book of Kings), Zoroaster, Mazdak and Mani (Manichaeus) are among the most obvious of such efforts.

He mastered the Persian language extraordinary deeply. Inspired by Nima Youshidge's language and using Khorasanian dialect and Persian archaic words, he has created his own distinct language. He minted many of his own words, combinations, images and interpretations. He utilizes all these feathers pleasantly and in a highly harmonious manner intertwining images, contents and language.

The poetry of Ahkavan-e-Sales is governed by an attitude, which can be named *dialectical negation* of artistic values: On the one hand, it disposes of certain values of the past, which were hindering political, social, cultural, artistically and literary developments. On the other hand, he it strives to maintain some of the old values and adapt them to new society.

Ahkavan-e-Sales made his debut as a poet in the classical style. He became a great contemporary classic poet. Then he began to produce mostly modernist poems. In the last years of his life he returned to the classic and wrote mostly classic poems.

He has published several collections, including *The Organ* (1951), *The Ending of the Shahnameh* (1959), *From This Avesta* (1966), *The Life Says But ...* (1967), *The Hell But Cold* (19xx) and *You, the Old Land, I Love You* (19xx).

His poetry's distinctive characteristics are wit and irony. He uses wit in his poems very pleasantly and in its best modern sense, thus producing a haunting quality. In some of his poems he combines the classic love poetry, called *ghazal*, with modern cadences, his original imagery and his mode of extraordinary clear diction.

He is a great narrator and mood- and atmosphere-builder, transporting the reader into the scene he describes.

He is a social and political poet. His poems always describe the major events in Iran and the people's mood and affection. He narrated people's excitement and fidgeting before the uprisings, and their amazement, waiting and disappointment after the defeats. Stated differently, he documented a great part of Iran's history, especially those parts which historians are not able to document. In his poems he cries, but not only for his own pains and aching, but those of the people's. He is no philosophical pessimist, although he is fed up with empty and destructive moments, he knows historical wickedness very well.

The stormy Iran was and is full of turbulence. In accordance with this agitated country, the coin of his poems has two sides: One side is a description of grief, crying, desperation, destruction and defeat; it attacks deception, fraudulence and lying. The other side defense cleanliness, honesty, uprightness and truth.

My Garden

To: Yaddolla Gharai in remembrance of a good past

A cloud with its cold damp sheepskin coat,
embrace tightly its sky.

A leafless garden,
day and night is alone,
with its clean silence.

Its music is rain, its song wind.

Its robe is the mantle of nakedness.

If it needs a robe more else, (? check!)

many are woven with golden flame wrapping and winding the woof.

If it grows or not, wherever it will or not,
there is no gardener and passer-by.

The garden of disappear,
expecting no spring.

Though no warm beam ever shines from its eyes,

though no leaf of smile grows on its face,

who says the leafless garden is not beautiful?

It narrates the story of the lofty fruits, which now sleep in the coffin of low dust.

The leafless garden,

its smile is tearful blood.

Forever, the king of seasons - Autumn-

rides on his horse with its yellow disheveled mane.

Tehran, June 1956

Notes to the Poem

The garden refers to today's Iran. Regarding the past and today, he always expresses ambivalence. He hates some aspects, loves others.

The Moment of Meeting

The moment of meeting is close.
Again, I am crazy and drunk.
Again my heart and hands quake.
Again, it seems I am in another world.

Ahoy razor! Don't neglectfully scratch my cheek.
Ahoy my hands! Don't dishevel the pleasantness of my hair.
And my heart! Don't discredit me.
- You! Drunk without drinking -
the moment of meeting is close.
Tehran, October 1955

Notes to the Poem

Who does not fall in love and does not recognize the moment described here?
The anxious worry at the threshold of meeting seems to have been experienced
many times by everyone. You?

Winter

To: Ahmad Shamlou

They do not want to answer your greeting, their heads are in collars.

Nobody is going to raise his head to answer and see friends.

The eyes cannot see one step ahead

because the road is dark and slippery.

And if you extend a hand of love towards anybody,

s/he will reluctantly brings her/his hand out of her/his pocket;

because it is burning cold.

The breath that comes out from the chest's warm space becomes a dark cloud.

And stands like a wall in front of your eyes.

When your own breath is this, what do you expect from your distant or close friends?

My noble Messiah! O old Christian in dirty clothes! (1)

The weather is so ignobly cold ... Hey ...

Be of good health and good cheer!

Answer my greeting, open the door!

It is me, your nightly guest, and the sad gypsy-like one.

It is me, the sick kicked stone. (??)

It is me, creation's abject curse, the discordant melody.

I am neither European nor African, I am just plain colorless.

Come on, open the door, open up, I am cheerless.

O my partner! O my host! Your regular guest is shivering like a wave behind the door.

There is no hail, no death.

If you hear a sound, it is the conversation of cold and teeth.

I have come tonight to pay back the loan.

To put your due beside the cup.

What do you mean, it's too late, it's dawn, morning has come?

It's playing a trick on you, it isn't the redness of after dawn in the sky.

O my partner! This is an ear frostbitten by cold, it's a moment of winter's slap.
And the lantern of the narrow sky, dead or alive,
is hidden in the thick nine-folded death-covered coffin of darkness.
O my partner! Come, get wine ready, day and night are the same here.

They do not want to answer your greeting.
The weather is gloomy, doors closed, heads in collars, hands hidden;
the breaths are cold, hearts tired and sad,
the trees crystalline skeletons,
the earth lifeless, the roof of the sky low,
dusty the sun and moon,
it is winter.

Tehran, January 1955

(1)Almost all pub, bar and wine seller owners were Christian. In today's Iran, they continue wine production, but underground and illegally. They have their own confident customers. (Translators notes)

Notes to the Poems

The "winter" of the Iranian people seems so long. One despotic tyrant after another. Permanent rising, permanent defeat. Continuously, out of the frying pan and into the fire. But we know surely that spring follows winter.

The Return of Crows

On the threshold of sunset,
on the graying sea-like,
a thousand black and ominous skiffs pass by.

Neither sun nor moon
over the white pool,
a thousand black and ominous singing skiffs.

See how they have reversed colors,
the dark-hearted sky and bright stars.
Crystalline islands and tarry sea,
seem alike,
like patches on a white dress.

A thousand fellow travelers of one daylong tour.
A thousand beaks and claws off after work.
A thousand grumbling and morose fellow travelers.
A thousand stomachs filled with carrion and corpse.

On the graying sea-like,
at the moment when
we call the day past and night coming,
at the moment of no sun and no moon on sky,
at that moment, I saw
on the white sky
dark stars.

Black noisy flying stars
on the white, crammed, low sky.
Tehran, February 1956

Notes to the Poem

this depicts the return of the businessmen from his daily job. In a society like Iran, where man does not generally product anything, man earns money by every

possible means. To earn money in this manner and come back home every day, isn't this similar to crows' daily stomach filling?

The Trapdoors

Like two trapdoors,
just in front each other,
we were aware of every secret of the other.
Everyday greetings, inquiries and laughing,
every day an appointment for the coming day.
Life was like paradise, but . . . sigh,
it was shorter than December's day and July's night.
Now, I am heart-broken and tired,
because one of the trapdoors is closed.
Neither Sun has conjured, nor Moon has enchanted,
curse to the voyage, it is finished done, what happened.

Tehran, January 1956

Notes to the Poem

The Endings of Shah-nameh

This broken harp out of tune,
tame in the pale old harpist's claws,
sometimes seems to dream.

It seems itself in the Sun's luminous court,
in the rare happy outlook, beloved of Zoroaster
or a strutting intoxicated fairy
in the pure, bright meadows of moonlight.

False lights

-the caravan of dead flames in the swamp-
on the adytum's holy brow, it sees.

In memory of the days of glory and pride and innocence
it sings joyfully,
the sad tale of exile:

“ O, where is
the capital of this mad century of false faith
with its nights bright like day,
its hard and dark days like nights in the depths of a saga?
With its strong, dreadful, impenetrable fortresses,
with the mean smiles of its gates, cold and alien?

“O, where is
the capital of this turbulent fort-like century,
the scowling century?
It has surpassed the moon's orbit,
but so far from the pivot of the kindness. (1)
the bloodthirsty century,
the century of the most frightening message,
in which, with the visionary excrement of a far-flying bird,
the four pillars of God's seven climes are instantly rocked
and whatever there is of existence, depth, and height
is struck down.
is swept clean.

“O, where is
the capital of this shameless, faithless century
in which, without the slightest respite,
every new-grown blossom is a plaything of the wind?
Just as respect for the fruit-given aged,
it is sacrificed to rejection, ridicule, treachery, and injustice.”

“The capital of such a century
is where?
On which nameless peak;
in which direction?
Warn the watchmen lest sleep deceive them,
alert and intent, atop their sentry,
lest the star’s spell or
the charm of city of silver moonlight deceive them.”

“On ships of rage with bloody sails,
we are coming toward the century’s capital conqueror.
To open wide, nine-folded nothingland of this insensitive dusty place
with the dreadful clashing of our sharp swords,
the frightening thunder of our dreaded drums,
the stone-splitting flight of our swift arrows.
To snatch
demon’s life bottles
from the spell of the hidden fortress, from the hands of their sorcerer guards.
To smash them on the ground.
And if the earth
- the decrepit cradle of the world’s horizons -
offers the soft hands of its greenness
to hide stones from us,
we shall gash its face.

“We
are the conquerors of fortresses of history’s glory,
witnesses of each century’s cities of splendor.

We
are mementos of the sad innocence of the ages.

We
are narrators of cheerful, sweet tales.

Tales of clear skies.

Flowing light of water.

Dark cold earth.

The tales of the most joyous message
about the limpid luminous streams of ages.

Tales of deep woods, behind it the mountain, the river at its foot.

Tales of friend's warm hands on cold city nights.

We

are the caravan of the cup and harp.

Our gypsy harp strumming our lives saga, our lives' poems and fables,
drunken intoxicated cupbearers.

“O, where is
the capital of the century?
We are coming to conquer,
to open up its nothingland . . .“

“This broken, heartsore and impossible dreamer harp,
the singer of imagination's empty sanctuary,
eternally cloaked with secrets,
what stories it tells itself day and night!

O helpless, delirious one! Change the tune.

Dastan's son cannot escape from his stepbrother's well.

He died, died, died.

Begin the story of Farrokhzad's son,

the one whose groan seems to come from a deep well's bottom.

He moans and weeps,

he weeps and says:

Oh, now, we resemble hunchbacked and old conquerors.

On ships of waves with sails of foam,

our hearts the memory of the lambs of splendor,
in the fields of empty days, bounded.
Our blades rusty, worn out, and weary,
our drums forever silent,
our arrows broken feathers.”

“We
are conquerors of cities gone with the wind.
In a voice too weak to come out of the chest,
narrators of forgotten tales.
Nobody pays us heed or spares a copper for our coins.
As if they were of a foreign king
Or of a prince whose dynasty has been overthrown.
Occasionally we hope to awaken from this spell of sleep
like from the Cave Companions’ sleep.
We will rub our eyes and say: There it is, the golden rare palace of charming
morning.
But, Decius is immortal.
Woe, woe, alas.”
Tehran, September 1957

(1) In Persian the word for Sun and kindness is the same word, mehr. It is actually untranslatable poetic technique.

Notes to the Poem

In this poem Mehdi Akhevan Sales utilizes a lots of historical images and symbols. Some explanation about these historical images and symbols is necessary to intensify understanding of the poem.

The poem describes an old harpist. He dreams about the glory of pre-Islamic ancient Iran. He tries to find the capital of our mad century. In the century, man has landed on the Moon, which shows the intelligence of human beings. In the century, man has also dropped atomic bombs on Nagasaki and Hiroshima.

The weight of the catastrophic defeat of Iran at the hands of the Arabs, whose disastrous consequences continue until today, lies heavy on the heart of many Iranians, including the poet.

Shah-nameh is the Iranian national epic, a loosely connected and chronologically ordered series of episodes. The Shah-nameh recounts the mythological origins and some of the history of the Persian Iranian people.

Zoroaster is the great Iranian prophet who established the Zoroastrian religion. He was inspired to reform the ancient Iranian religion with a fresh and strong moral direction. He lived between 1100 and 600 BC

Rostam the Son of Dastan is the legendary hero of the Shah-nameh. His stepbrother, Shaghad, digs a well on his road and Rostam and his horse, Rakhesh, fell in the well and died.

Rostam the Son of Farrokhzad is the Iranian general who led the Sasanid forces to a catastrophic defeat at the hands of the Arabs.

Decius, Gaius Messius Quintus Trajanus was Roman Emperor 249-251. He instituted the first organized persecution of Christians throughout the empire. Before Decius' reign, persecution of the Christians in the empire had been sporadic and local, but around the beginning of January 250 he issued an edict ordering all citizens to perform a religious sacrifice in the presence of commissioners. The Arabicized form of Decius is Daghyanus.

The Cave Companions' sleep and the **Seven Sleepers** refer to the legend of the persecution of Christians by the Roman emperor Decius in the third century. Seven Christians sought refuge in a cave where they slept for several centuries. When they awakened and returned to their native city, they discovered that they no longer understood life there, not even the language. Consequently, they begged God for death.

Ghebleh is the direction to which Mohammedans turn in praying. Here, the poet's point is in reference to the just cited legend and the parallel between the situation of Iranians today and those Christians who awakened after their long sleep, finding themselves living so much after their time.

The **adytum** is a translation for **mehrab**, which is an arch or niche shape in the mosque wall, which faces Mecca and, as such, shows Moslems the direction, which they should face in performing obligatory ritual prayers five times per day.

The Prayer

There was garden and valley-- moonlit scenery.
The objects were the same size as their shadows.
Stark raving in horizons and night's dear mysteries,
my eyes wide open-- while everyone else's eyes closed.

There was no sound, except the sound of the night's secrets,
and the sound of water, soft breezes, cricket,
the guard of the night asleep in the sanctuary,
and the sound of wakeful amazement (I was drunk, drunk).

I got up
went toward the brook;
What was flowing in the brook?
Water!?
Or perhaps it was as Hafiz said: "Your life."
With shame and self-abandon, I performed my ablution.
I was drunk, dead, blind drunk, but it was a dear and sincere moment.

I picked up a leaflet,
from closest walnut tree;
my gaze was gone, as far as it could.
My prayer rug the green dewed grass of the garden.
My ghebleh (1) could be any direction.

A love-mad drunk is talking to you.
-- I am drunk but I know I exist --
Hey, you who have brought all thing into being, do you yourself exist?
Zagon, September 1960

(1) Ghebleh is the direction to which Mohammedan turn in praying. (Translator's note)

Notes to the Poem

Akhavan is a devotee to Khayyam (1048-1122) the great broad-minded sceptic and atheist. It is absolutely forbidden to drink. But worse, he is drunk and performing prayer. And he sets into question God's existence.

Notes to the Poem

The Inscription

The stone lay there like a mountain
and we sat here a weary bunch,
women, men, young, old
all linked together
at the ankles, by a chain.

You could crawl to whoever your heart desired
as far as you could drag your chain.

We did not know, nor did we ask.
It was a voice in our nightmare of dread and weariness
or else a herald from an unknown corner.
It spoke:

“ The stone lying there holds a secret
inscribed on it by wise men of old. “
Thus spoke the voice over and again
and, as a wave recoiling on itself,
it retreated in the dark
and we said nothing,
and for some time we said nothing.

Afterwards, only in our looks
many doubts and queries spoke out;
then nothing but the ambush of weariness, oblivion
and silence, even our looks
and the stone lying there.

One night, moonlight pouring damnation on us
and our swollen feet itching,
one of us, whose chain was the heaviest
damned his ears and groaned. “I must go!”
and we said, fatigued: “Damn our ears,
damn our eyes, we must go.”

and crawled up to where the stone lay.
One of us, whose chain was looser
 climbed up and read:

“He shall know my secret
who turns me over!”

With a singular joy we repeated this dusty secret
under our breath as if it were a prayer
and the night was a glorious stream filled with moonlight.

One . . . two . . . three . . . heave-ho!
One . . . two . . . three . . . once more!
Sweating, sad, cursing, at times even crying,
again . . . One . . . two . . . three . . . thus many times
Hard was our task, sweet our victory
Tired but happy, we felt a familiar joy
soaring with delight and ecstasy.

One of us, whose chain was lighter,
saluted all, then climbed the stone,
wiped the dirt-caked inscription and mouthed the words
(we were impatient),
wetted his lips (and we did the same)
and remained silent,
cast a glance at us and remained silent;
read again, his eyes fixed, his tongue dead
his gaze drifting over a faraway unknown.

 We yelled to him:

“Read!” He was speechless
“Read it to us!” He stared at us in silence
After a time
he climbed down, his chain clanking.
We held him up, lifeless as he was.
We sat him down.
He cursed our hands, and his

“What did you read?”

He swallowed and said faintly:

“The same was written:

He shall know my secret

who turns me over!”

We sat

and

stared at the moon and the bright night

and the night was a sickly stream.

Tehran, June 1961

Notes to the Poem

The Inscription can personalize Iranian’s different efforts to change their situation. They participate in many revolutions and uprisings and mobilize all their power; they risk their lives for democracy and a better life. But the result is to fall out of the frying pan into the fire. To fall from one dictatorship to another one.

The Ghazal

Tell me, lady, why did I dream of you last night?

Where were we

where were we going so late at night

but not alone.

It seemed there was a child walking,

hand in your hand,

who sometimes eyed us: as if plaintive

that you nestled against me, half-drunk;

sometimes like two feathers, you and I

seated on the soft wind in flight,

sometimes like two autumn leaves

that started life in spring and went together

to the end.

And even now, far from others, upon a quiet lake

We give ourselves to a shallow wave, barely a ripple

in the soft wind,

flowing toward the far-off seclusion of

the lake

with no care for beginning or end.

And so, in that dream of night, or a

while,

free, bereft of any fear

we went on and on

and a while we were silent, except a word

or smile or glance.

What a dream it was!

Tell me, where were you going so late at night?

And where before had we met?

And when did our paths come together, tell!

And how did we first break the ice, how did we

warm and grow fond of each other?

What a dream it was!

Why did I dream of you, lady, tell me!

And we kept on going . . .
till we came to an orchard-lane, narrow and winding
and dark.

Suddenly around a bend you stopped.

I stood close by.

You faced a stone house
that stood as mountain citadel
and yet, soft and humble form its walls
blue lilacs and violet sweetbriars
leaned down to the middle of the lane
so low some branches lay their

face on the ground

and, at that moment, the door of the house
-the color of oak and its knocker

of ebony-

seemed to be waiting for raps, with brimming
pleasure,

its heart trembling, like mine, for
joy or naught.

You knocked upon the door
echoed in the hall behind;
in seclusion of blue lilacs
you answered my whistle, bent over

and laughed,

and your teeth were the white of fish-scales.
For a moment you stared silently in my eyes
and I saw in your eyes both devils and angels.

You leaned over,
a moment full of intrigue
and cleverly blended blossom-kisses with
scolding eyes

and I, fearing that the door might open, watched,
with chagrin, the little child
-- his plaintive look seemed to taunt us --

Up There

At the lunch table
I was positioning myself as usual
With one or two goblets
Of my stinging, deadly booze,
Taking as nibbles
The bitter, burning lip-biting
Of one who,
with all the world,
Still feels alone.
The little boy,
- my son -
Has gone up there,
In the nook above two rows of bookshelves,
With his hands stretched on both sides,
Leaning on his elbows,
His palms open,
His legs hanging down,
And his head lifted up,
Like a cross made of rough wood,
Or, if I must avoid a rough similitude,
Perhaps like a crucified man.
"Come down, Zardosht," said his sister, ⁽¹⁾
"Its time to go to bed;
"Come down, I'm sleepy!"
"I won't come down,"
said the Zardosht of the cross;
I told him, or I should have told him,
"You come down, son!
"Your father must sleep up there!"
Or perhaps,
"Up there your father is asleep!"

(1) *In the poem, Zardosht is the name of the poet's son but, as he is drunk and lonely, the poet sees the image of Zardosht (Zoroaster or Zarathustra), founder of*

the Zoroastrian religion, mixed with images of Jesus Christ on the cross. Though he never denied being a Moslem, Akhavan Saless was deeply interested in ancient Persian civilization and its religions.

You I Love, the Old Native Land

In the vain world, if I love anything,
you, the old native land, I love.
You, the ancient, eternal, young
you I love, if I love.
You, precious, ancient Iran,
you the dear jewel, I love.
You, the ancient homeland of the great,
the great-creator, I love.
Art-like your thought shines
and I love both your art and thought.
If the saying of saga, or the text of history
and if the critique and narration of behaviors, I love.
If the pen is chisel and writings inscribed in stone
on the sheet of mountain and rock, I love.
If recorded in book with black ink
by reed or feather pen, I love.
Your supposition I praise with certainty,
your obviousness, I love like news.
Both your Ormazd and your gods, I worship,
as well Farrah and Frwahar, I love.
Most heartily, your old innocent prophet
who is a clear-sighted preceptor, I love.
The precious Zoroaster, more than
any preceptor and prophet, I love.
Mankind did not and will not see better than him.
I love the best in the mankind.
His three goods (1) are best guide to the world
useful so short, I love.
The Iranian superman was leader.
I love the Iranian leader who
did not kill nor order any one to kill,
thus I love him so much.
That veracious preceptor, though he went
farther up than saga, I love.

Your vigilant son, Bamdad
the Nishaborian, sun-glory, I love.
Magnificence Mazdak, the immortal intellect of eras,
him I love, every look and aspect.
Bravely, he died in the in the war against injustice,
more as a result of this, I love him.
Praising your respected Mani
as a painter and a prophet, I love him.
Both portrator of superior souls
and Arzhang the painter, I love.
Your entire farmer day and irrigated farming
in the field and plain and by brook and stream, I love.
Your deserts like the sea and your mountain like the forest,
the whole country, wet and dry, I love.
Your devotee and sagacious martyrs
who was the honor of mankind, I love.
Like the pleasure of dawn breeze their souls
their mettlesome iron-liver, I love.
Both their exciting thoughts, which
turned upside down the eras,
And their works, either exhortation or message,
and if some rows new, I love.
I love the men of everlasting-memory, of whom
there were several in every century.
All your poets and their works,
like the purity of down's breeze, I love.
From **Ferdowsi**, the saga palace which was raised
in the horizons of glory and triumph, I love.
From **Khayyam**, the wrath and roar which
affects the heart and soul, I love.
From **Attar**, that agony and passion
which was set on fire in heat and soul, I love.
From the **Enamoured of Shams**, the boiling and spark
which flame the soul, I love.
From **Sadi**, from **Hafez** and from **Nezami**

all passion, poet and byword, I love.
How good your Rasht, Gorgan and Mazanderan
I love them, like the Caspian Sea.
How good the river basin of Karun and Ahvaz,
which I love more sweetly than sugar.
Happy your great Azerbaijan
I love that vanguard of danger.
Your Esfahan, the half of the world
I love more than the other half.
Good for the best-fosterer region, Khorasan,
with all my heart, I love that expanse.
Well done, your Shiraz the paradise-level,
the cradle of talent and art, I love.
Your Kurd's and Baluch's territory
the (?) dencency-fruit tree, I love.
Good for your Kerman and southern frontier
the dry and wet, sea and land, I love.
I love our co-origin Afghan, which is a garden
in the claws of these worse than Tattars, I love.
The old Indus and Khwarazm, with its desert
which the Qajar dynasty lost them, I love.
Your Irak and Gulf like the Varazd River
which is the gate of the Chinese Wall, I love.
Both our old Armenia and Caucasian,
like a son the father's house, I love.
Your yesterday, like saga, and tomorrow dream
most willingly the former and the latter, I love.
Both your saga which better than children
raises me on wing and plumage, I love.
And your dreamy horizons, that permanently
travel in dream's horizon, I love.
Like dream and saga, your yesterday and tomorrow
instead of myself, I love these two.
But between these two, o' thou alive, to present
still today, I love more.

You were in the apogee, both in meaning and form.

I love the apogee of glory and peril.

Once again raise to the apogee of meaning,

for you these new colors and faces, I love.

To become Eastern, Western or Arabic

for you, I do not like the native land.

So long as the world exists, may you be triumphant!

may you be growing, vigilant and prosperous!

(1) Zoroastrianism's summarized teachings: Good deed, good word, good thought.

Notes to the Poem

Sometimes, when you love, you feel it is not a silent love. You feel you have to yell that I LOVE and why I LOVE.

This touching poem is versified in a classic verse-form named *ghaside* (ghaside is similar to elegy but has many more variations in the theme).

Akhavan is proud of Iran, its old history, its great and civilizations. He names most of them. A brief explanation about them does the poem more touchable.

Ormazd is also spelled Ahura Mazda, the supreme god in the ancient Iranian religion who created the universe and cosmic order that he maintains. He created the twins Spenta Mainyu and Angra Mainyu, the former beneficent, choosing truth, light, and life, the later destructive, choosing the lie, darkness, and death. The struggles of the spirits against each other make up the history of the world.

Farrah and **Frwahar** are the names of angels in Zoroastrian.

Zoroaster is the Iranian religious reformer and founder of Zoroastrianism.

Mazdak Bamdad, 5th century AD, is a major Persian proponent. According to Mazdakism, there exist two original principles, Good (or Light) and Evil (or Darkness). Light acts by free will and design. Darkness acts blindly and by chance. By accident the two became mixed, producing the world.

By his actions, man should seek to release the Light in the world. This is accomplished through moral conduct and ascetic life. He may not kill or eat flesh. He is to be gentle, kind, hospitable, and clement to foes, to encourage brotherly helpfulness and reduce causes of greed and strife, Mazdak sought to make property common. He converted to his faith the Sasanid king Ghobad, who introduced social reforms. These appear to have involved measures concerning property. This action aroused the hostility of the nobles and orthodox Zoroastrian clergy and led to the bloody suppression of Mazdakism.

Mani is the Iranian founder of the Manichaean religion, 3rd AD Manichean has a dualistic doctrine that views the world as a fusion of spirit and matter. In the

Persian king, Shahpur I's time, Mani was permitted to preach his religion in the Persian Empire. Then under the reign of the Persian king Bahram I he was attacked by Zoroastrian priests and was imprisoned by the king at Gundishapur, where he died after undergoing a trial that lasted 26 days.

Arzhang is the illustrated book of Mani.

Ferdowsi (935-1026) is author of the Shah-nameh (Book of Kings), the Persian national epic.

Omar Khayyam (1048-1122) poet, mathematician, and astronomer, is famous for his scientific achievements. In English literature he became known for his rubaiyat (quatrains) in the version *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*, published in 1859 by Edward FitzGerald (1809-1883).

Attar (1142-1220), who was one of the greatest Iranian mystical poets and thinkers, writing at least 45000 distiches (couplets) and many brilliant prose works. From the point of view of ideas, literary themes, and style, Attar's influence was strongly felt not only in Persian literature but also in other Islamic literatures.

Enamoured of Shams refers to Jalall ad-Din-e Rumi, also called Mawlana (1207-1273), the greatest Sufi mystic and poet in the Persian language, famous for his lyrics and for his didactic epic *Masnavi-ye Manavi* (Spiritual Couplets), which widely influenced Muslim mystical thought and literature.

The decisive moment in Mawlana's life occurred on 1244, when he met the wandering darvish (holy man), Shams. Shams' overwhelming personality revealed to Jalall ad-Din the mysteries of divine majesty and beauty.

Sadi (1213-1291), Persian poet, is one of the greatest figures in classical literature. The peculiar blend of human kindness and cynicism, humor, and resignation displayed in Sadi's works, together with a tendency to avoid the hard dilemmas, make him the most typical and beloved writer in the world of Iranian culture.

Hafez (1325-1389), was one of the finest lyric poets of Persia. His extraordinary popularity stems from his simple and often colloquial though musical language, free from artificial virtuosity, and his unaffected use of homely images and proverbial expressions. Above all, his poetry is characterized by love of humanity, contempt for hypocrisy and mediocrity, and an ability to universalize everyday experience.

Nezami (1141-1209), the greatest romantic epic poet in Persian literature, brought a colloquial and realistic style to the Persian epic.

Reference

Forough Farrokh-zad



Forough Farrokh-zad(1933-1967)

Forough Farrokh-zad (1935-67), is one of Iran's famous modern poets. She was born in Tehran on January 5, 1933. She went to formal school through the ninth grade then continued her education at a girls' school to study painting and sewing. She married at sixteen and began to write poetry at this age. She was a mother at seventeen. But divorced at twenty.

She died in a car accident, when she was only thirty two, on February 14, 1967, at the height of her creativity. Her poems have a very strong effect upon Persian poetry, especially on our modern female poets.

In her first works such as *The Captive* (1952), *The Wall* (1956) and *The Revolt* (1957), she expresses the feelings and emotions of a sensitive and romantic woman confined of intolerance and backward traditional falsities. She declares the necessity of outcry and revolt. Her poems are overflowing with emotions and are extremely frank and honest. In these poems, she sincerely examines her own thoughts, ideas and feelings.

In her collection of poems *Another Birth* (1964) and *Let Us Believe the Beginning of the Cold Season* (1965) she shows herself as a sincere, frank, original, kind, sensitive, romantic, aware and visionary poet with a beautiful, plain and intense language. This and other works after this show her personal feelings. In her poems

she pleads for more social awareness and responsibility. She expresses freely her own feelings and her people's feelings, who live in a very difficult society. The main themes of her poems are love, hate, falsities and decay. She fights against decay, hate and falsities by revealing and making them notorious.

In some poems, she has an anti-industrialism and past-loving trends. Iranian women have been oppressed a long time. They still suffer. They are oppressed and silent. Farrokh-zad is one of the spokespersons of this silent mass. Her poems are the manifestation of Iranian women's self-consciousness and self-awareness under a development period. In her earlier poems, she criticizes only society's expectation and attitude towards women. But, in her later poems she disgraces the whole exploiting society.

She is influenced by Shamloo, when she drinks the wine of Shamloo's poems, humanism and realism, become more distinguished in her mind.

She violates norms of form. Her poetic activity is coincidental with the frenzy and strife of intellectuals in Iran. You smell the fragrance of frenzy, movement, awareness, struggle and seeking in her poems. She is a poet of her own style, who affects deeply future generations by her language, vision, intuition, emotion, feelings and intelligence with the contents and structure of her poems.

The Sun Will Shine

Look! see the sorrow in my eyes

How it melts drop by drop

How my black shadow

Is captured by the Sun.

Look!

All my possessions deprived.

A spark draws me in its mouth.

Leads me to the apogee,

Traps me.

Look!

The whole of my sky

Becomes full of meteors.

You come from distances afar!

From the lands of lights and aromas.

Set me now in a boat,

Of ivory, of clouds, of crystals,

Take me, my heart-fonding hope,

To the city of verses and passions.

You lead me to the starry route.

You seat me higher than the stars.

Look!

I am burning from the stars.

I am full of star fever

Like simple-hearted red fishes

I became star-picker of the night's pond.

How far away was our Earth before,

From these blue booths of sky.

Now, I hear again

Your voice,

The voice of angels' snowy-white wings.

Look! where I have reached,

To the galaxy, to endlessness and everlasting.

Now, when we come to apogees

Wash me with waves of wine.

Wrap me up in the silk of your kiss.
Want me in the long-lasting nights.
Don't leave me another time.
Don't separate me from these stars.
Look! how the wax of night is in our way,
It's melting drop by drop.
The black decanters of my eyes
with your warm lullaby
become full of sleep
Look at the cradles of my poem
You appear and the Sun will shine.

Notes to the Poem

In a difficult situation, keeping hope alive is very important. Dictatorship and poverty break your heart every day. You need hope in your life. This hope gives you a reason for getting up each morning and continuing the fight. In considering this fact, this poem will become more tangible and more understanding.

I Am Heavy-hearted

I am heavy-hearted.

I am heavy-hearted.

I go to the veranda and

I stroke my finger on the night's pulled skin.

The light of communication is put out.

The light of communication is put out.

No one presents me to the Sun.

No one invites me to the sparrows' party.

Memorize the flight;

The bird is mortal.

Notes to the Poems

This poem pictures the utmost grief and loneliness of the poet. She tries to overcome loneliness and get out from the night, contact the day and set up relations. But it seems a vain attempt.

In this short poem, she talks about, life, death, love, hope and hopelessness.

Another Birth

All of my existence is in the verse of darkness
that will take you repeatedly
to the dawn of everlasting budding and growth.
In this verse, I sighed, ah!
In this verse,
I grafted you
on tree, on water and on fire.

Life is perhaps
a long street where a woman passes every day with a basket.
Life is perhaps
a rope with which hangs himself from a branch.
Life is perhaps, a child who is returning home from school.
Life is perhaps, lighting up a cigarette in the lassitude duration between two love-
makings.
Or the dizzy look of a passer-by
who tips his hat
and with a vacant smile, says to another passer-by:
“Good morning”.
Life is perhaps that enclosed moment
when my look destroys itself in the pupil of your eyes
and there is a feeling in this
which I shall mingle it with the perception of Moon and the understanding of
darkness.
In a room, as big as loneliness
my heart
which is as big as love
looks at its simple pretexts for leakiness
at the beautiful wilting of the flower's in the vases
or, at the sapling which you planted in the our garden
and at the song of the canaries
who sing to the size of a window.
Ah...
this is my lot

this is my lot
my lot
is a sky that is taken away from me
by hanging a curtain,
my lot is walking down a deserted staircase
and reaching something decayed and nostalgia.
My lot is a sorrowful touring in the garden of memories
and dying in the sadness of a voice that tells me:
“ I love your hands. “

I plant my hands in the garden
I will sprout, I know, I know, I know.
and the swallows will lay their eggs
in the hollow of my ink-stained hands.

I will hang earrings on my ears
of two red twin cherries
and paste the dahlia petals on my nails.

There is an alley
where the boys who were in love with me
still have the same shaggy hair,
thin necks and skinny legs.
They think of the innocent smiles of a little girl,
whom the wind blew away one night.

There is an alley, that my heart has stolen.
It is from my childhood quarter.
A massive journey through time
and with a massive knock up the barren time
a mass of a conscious image
which returns from a party in a mirror.
And it is in this manner
that someone dies
and someone survives.

No fisherman hunts a pearl
in a small brook which flows into a pit.

I know

a sad little fairy

who lives in an ocean

and plays calmly, calmly

her heart flows into a wooden pipe.

A sad little fairy

who, at night, dies with a kiss

and at dawn, is born with a kiss.

Notes to the Poem

In this love poem, the poet creates an evocative glimpse on her childhood memory and memory lane. She pictures her emotions about her childhood, puberty, loneliness, desperateness, life, society.... with a simple and limpid tongue.

Red Rose

Red rose,
Red rose,
Red rose:
He took me to the rose garden,
And in darkness, he threaded
a red rose in my ruffled hair,
And made love with me
On a red rose petal.
O paralysed pigeons,
O native, infertile trees,
O blind windows,
Below my heart and deep inside my loins
A red rose has begun to grow,
A red rose,
Red as the flags of revolution.
Ah! I am pregnant, pregnant,
I am pregnant.

Notes to the Poem

My Lover

wips the dust of street
off his shoes
with rags torn
from Majnoon's tent

Border Walls

Now, again in the silent night,
sequestrant walls, border walls
like plants entwine,
so they may be the guardians of my love.

Now, again the town's evil murmurs,
like agitated schools of fish,
flee the darkness of my extremities.

Now, again windows rediscover themselves
in the pleasure of contact with scattered perfumes,
and trees, in slumberous orchards, shed their bark,
and soil, with its thousand inlets
inhales the dizzy particles of the moon.

Now
come closer
and listen
to the anguished beats of my love,
that spread
like the tom-tom of African drums
along the tribe of my limbs.
I, feel.
I know
which moment
is the moment of prayer.
Now stars
are lovers.
In night's refuge,
from innermost breezes, I waft.
In night's refuge, I
tumble madly forth
with my ample tresses, in your palms,
and I offer you the equatorial flowers of this young tropic.
Come with me,
come to that star with me

that is centuries away
from earth's concretion and futile scales,
and no one there
is afraid of light.
On islands adrift upon the waters, I breathe.
I am in search of a share in the expansive sky,
void of the swell of vile thoughts.
Refer with me,
refer with me
to the source of all being,
to the sanctified center of a single origin,
to the moment I was created from you
refer with me,
I am not complete from you.
Now,
on the peaks of my breasts,
doves are flying.
Now,
within the cocoon of my lips,
butterfly kisses are immersed in thoughts of flight.
Now,
the altar of my body
is ready for love's worship.
Refer with me,
I'm powerless to speak
because I love you,
because "I love you" is a phrase
from the world of futilities
and antiquities and redundancies.
Refer with me,
I'm powerless to speak.
In night's refuge, let me make love to the moon,
let me be filled
with tiny raindrops,
with undeveloped hearts,

with the volume of the unborn,
let me be filled.
Maybe my love
will cradle the birth of another Christ.

Notes to the Poem

And he spreads the tablecloth
distributes the bread
and distributes the Pepsis
and distributes the parks
and distributes the medicine for whooping-cough

and distributes everything that has been hoarded
and will give us our share, too.

Notes to the Poem

I Will Greet the Sun Again

I will greet the sun again;
I will greet the streams which flowed in me;
I will greet the clouds which were
my lengthy thoughts;
I will greet the painful growth of poplars
Which pass through the dry seasons;
I will greet the flocks of crows
Which brought me, as presents,
The sweet smells of the fields at night;
I will greet my mother who lived in the mirror
And was the image of my old age;
And I will also greet the earth whose burning womb
Is filled with, green seeds by the passion she has
for reproducing me.
I will come, I will come,
I will come with my hair,
As the continuation of the smells of the soil;
With my eyes, as the dense experiences of darkness,
Carrying the bushes I have picked in the woodlands
beyond the wall.
I will come, I will come,
I will come and the entrance will be filled with love;
And at the entrance I will greet again
those who are in love,
And also the girl who is still standing
At the entrance in diffusion of love.

Notes to the Poem

The Earth Vers

Then
the sun grew cold
and the blessing ceased upon lands
Across the plains the grass turned to dust
and the fish dried up in the sea
and thenceforth the earth
did not accept its dead.

Reference

<http://www.ForughFarrokhzad.org>

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Index

Maaz Publiser, 2001
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