



GOLSORKI, ƘOSROW

GOLSORKI (GOLESORKI), **ƘOSROW** (b. Rašt 1322 Š./1943; d. Tehran, 1953 Š./1974; COMMUNISM ii). He lost his father in early childhood and was raised in the household of his maternal grandfather, a cleric in the city of Qom. After the death of his grandfather in 1962, he moved with his mother to Tehran where he had to earn a living while studying for his high school diploma. In the early 1960s he began contributing to Tehran's daily papers including *Āyandagān*, *Eṭṭelā'āt*, and *Keyhān*, but most of his mature writings and poems were published towards the end of this decade in influential literary and cultural journals such as *Negin* and in the leftist periodicals *Sahand*, *Arg* and *Čāpār*. In 1969 he married Āṭefa Gorgin, a poet and journalist. Golsorki named their son Dāmūn, a Gilaki word meaning "forest sanctuary," in memory of the Jangali movement of 1917-1921. His collected prose and poetry were published posthumously after the 1979 Revolution (Gowharin, pp. 7-8, 199; Samākār, pp. 260-62.)

In the latter half of the 1960s, opposition to the government and the ruling establishment intensified, instigated partly by an increasing malaise among the intellectuals and partly by the concurrent prevalence and attraction of revolutionary stances in the international arena. The Algerian, Cuban, and Vietnamese struggles as well as radical student movements in Europe and in both North and South America had a great impact on the intelligentsia of the third world, including Persia. The closure of channels for voicing critical views, culminating in the suppression of the Association of Writers (*Kānun-e nevisandagān-e Irān*) in 1349 Š./1970, drove the young activist elements of the



intelligentsia further towards the two major radical guerrilla groups, the Marxist-Leninist Fedā'īān-e Kālq and the Moslem-Socialist Mojāhedīn-e Kālq (Behrooz, pp. 51-54; Abrahamian, pp. 81-145). Golsorki's poetry and theoretical writings on literature and art, deeply immersed in this highly charged atmosphere, was read by the young radicals, broadcast on the radio stations of the revolutionary groups, and beamed to Persia from the Socialist Camp. This brand of literature was later called "guerrilla poetry" (*še'r-e čeriki*) (q.v.) and "poetry of the forest" (*še'r-e jangal*), with the latter having a direct reference to the first guerilla uprising of Fedā'īān-e Kālq in the Siāhkal forests near Rašt in February 1349 Š./1970 (see [COMMUNISM iii](#); Talattof, pp. 66-134; Samākār, pp. 260-62). The exact degree and details of Golsorki's own involvement in underground political activities remain unclear.

Golsorki was arrested in the early days of 1352 Š./1973. Some months later, while he was in prison, the government announced the arrest of a group of eleven individuals for allegedly plotting to kidnap a member of the royal family. The group was composed of writers, poets, and filmmakers, including Karāmat-Allāh Dānešiān, Moḥammad-Rezā 'Allāmazāda, Ṭayfur Bathā'i, 'Abbās-'Ali Samākār, Manučehr Moqaddam Salimi, Iraj Jamšidi, Mortazā Siāhpuš, Farhād Qayšari, Maryam Etteḥādiya, Ebrāhim Farhang-Rāzi and Šokuh Farhang-Rāzi (Mirzādagi). The government announced that Golsorki also belonged to the group (*Keyhān havā'i*, 6 October 1973, p. 1).

It appears that the alleged plot and the arrests were stage-managed by SAVAK to conceal its failure to detain the popular Fedā'i's leadership, whose hit and run subversive activities in the early 1970s were perceived as a major threat to the regime. Later it became apparent that those arrested did not belong to a single cohesive group and that some of them were not even personally acquainted with each other. The appeal trial of the group took place in a military court in late 1973 and early 1974, and the proceedings were broadcast on national television. The SAVAK attempted to use the court hearings to demonstrate its success against the guerilla movement, having already used torture to prepare the defendants to confess to their alleged crimes and seek pardon. Some of the defendants "confessed" to charges for which little evidence had been produced and sought a royal pardon. But the first five refused to confess, even though they had apparently undergone extensive torture (Behrooz, 1999, p. 70; Samākār, pp. 172-73; *Keyhān-ehavā'i*, 19 January 1974, p. 1; *Eṭṭelā'āt* 23, 23, 24 January and 17 February 1974, p. 1).

In their defense speeches, Golsorki and Dānešiān went even further and used



the televised session to criticize the regime and to call for radical and revolutionary changes on Marxist-Leninist lines. While Dānešiān's defense was more subtle, Golsorkī's was fervently revolutionary in its tone and delivery. He defended his Marxist stance by recalling that he had learnt the first lessons of revolution by following the example of the first Shi'ite Imam, 'Ali b. Abi Ṭāleb, and his son, the Lord of Martyrs, Imam Ḥosayn. The unexpected tirade by both defendants was finally stopped by the military judge. They were executed in January 1974, having signed their last will as "People's *fedā'i*" which literary meant "a devotee of the people" but could also be taken as an allusion to their sympathy for the Fadā'iān-e Kālq guerrillas. However, there is no clear evidence that the two, or any other member of the group, had any direct connections with the highly secretive organization.

As far as the quality of his poetry and his theoretical writings about literature and art are concerned, Moḥammad Šams Langarudi, the writer of a detailed analytical history of modern Persian poetry (IV, p. 3760), sums up Golsorkī's contribution in these words: "The most influential incident in the arena of guerrilla poetry was the execution in 1974 of Kōsrow Golsorkī, the famous poet and writer. He was neither a great poet, nor an acute journalist, and not even a knowledgeable literary critic and researcher. But he was a consistent, sincere, and emotional revolutionary who, by delivering his impeccable defense of the deprived masses at the shah's military court, sacrificed his life for his beliefs."

Golsorkī's unmarked grave in the Behešt-e Zahrā cemetery near Tehran, discovered by the leftist revolutionaries in 1978, became an immediate rallying point for their political gatherings. He remains a martyr for the leftist popular fronts to this day.

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