



HAŽĀR

HAŽĀR, the pen name of ‘ABD-AL-RAḤMĀN ŠARAFKANDI (b. Mahābād, 1921; d. Tehran, 1 Esfand 1369 Š./21 February 1991; [Figure 1](#)), Kurdish poet, philologist, and translator.

His father, Mollā Moḥammad Šarafkandi, a man of learning, was the founder of the first Kurdish school of Islamic studies in Šarafkand, where all instruction was in Kurdish. Hažār began his education in a Koranic school in Mahābād and continued it at Shaikh Borhān’s *kānaqāh* in Šarafkand, near Bokān, where he met the author Šayḵ-al-Eslām Moḥammad-Amin Mokri, better known by his pen name Hemin, and ‘Abd-al-Raḥmān Ḍabiḥi, the leader of Komalay Ji-yānaway Kord (the Kurdish Resurrection Party). Hažār was attracted to politics at an early age. In 1942, he joined Komalay Jiyānaway Kord, the forerunner of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan, which helped to establish the Republic of Kurdistan in Mahābād in January 1946. Hažār “the poor man” became the republic’s poet laureate. After the collapse of the short-lived Kurdish Republic (December 1947), he settled in Iraq, where in the 1960s he joined the Kurdish independence movement led by Mollā Moṣṭafā Bārzāni (see [BĀRZĀNĪ](#)). During Bārzāni’s insurrection (1961-75) he was in charge of the radio of the Kurdish insurgents, The Voice of Iraqī Kurdistan, and *Kabāt* (the Fight), the official newspaper of the Democratic Party of Iraqī Kurdistan. During the four-year truce that followed the agreement of 11 March 1970 between the government of Iraq and the insurgent Kurds, Hažār resided in Baghdad, where he served as the president of the Union of Kurdish Writers and an active member of the Kurdish Academy of Science. In 1975, after the



long Kurdish insurrection had collapsed, Hažār returned to Persia and settled down in Karaj, near Tehran, devoting all his time to the study of the Kurdish language and to translations from Arabic into Persian. During this part of his life he published *Hanbāna borina*, a Kurdish-Persian dictionary (Tehran, 1990), and translated Avicenna's *Qānun* into Persian (*Qānun dar ṭebb*, 5 vols., Tehran, 1979-86), the first complete Persian translation of this major work.

Hažār's creativity was inextricably linked to the cause of the Kurdish independence movement. He published the first collection of his poetry, *Alakok*, in Tabriz in 1945 (tr. into Russian, Armenian, and Azeri Turkish). Both in this and his later collections, notably in *Beiti seremer u lasayi seg u mānga shaw* "The poem of the tough fowl and the dog howling to the moon" (Damascus, 1957), he advocated the right of the oppressed to rise against their masters. Yet he also recognized that the Kurds themselves had to bear some responsibility for their plight. In numerous poems he urged the Kurds to put aside their feuds and to overcome the "calamity" of ignorance, which had barred their progress. Another work by him is *Bo Kurdistan* "For Kurdistan" (Beirut, 1973, 3rd ed. Tehran, 1979).

Hažār was a master of traditional Kurdish poetry, but he infused the content of his poems with a new, uncompromising militancy. His language is simple and direct, close to the spoken form, because he passionately believed in the social mission of art and wanted his works to be read and understood by all. He wrote in the Mokri dialect of Kurdish but used terms and expressions from many Kurdish dialects, thereby seeking to bring Kurds together culturally as he had tried to do politically in the Mahābād Republic.

His translations, besides that of Avicenna's *Qānun*, include *Mam u Zini*, the well-known poem of the 17th-century Kurdish poet Aḥmad Kānif from Kormānji into the Sorāni dialect (1st ed. Baghdad, 1958); from Arabic: the Qur'ān, Zakariyā' b. Moḥammad Qazvini's *Āṭār al-belād wa aḳbār al-'ebād* (Tehran, 1998), and Moṣṭafā Jawād's article "al-Qabila al-Jāwāniya" as *Hozī labir-krāwi Gāwān* "The forgotten tribe of Gāwān" (Baghdad, 1973); from Persian: Bedlisi's *Šaraf-nāma* (Baghdad, 1973), 'Omar Ḳayyām's *Robā'iyāt* (Beirut, 1968), and Ḥasan 'Amid's *Farhang-e 'Amid* (2 vols.). Hažār also edited the *divān* of the 16th-century Kurdish poet Shaikh Aḥmad Jaziri (Tehran, 1982) and left an autobiography called *Češti miyewar* (ed. Kāni Šarafkandi, Paris, 1997). Hažār is buried in the Bodāq cemetery in Mahābād.



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