



## KHANLARI, PARVIZ

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**KHANLARI, PARVIZ** (Parviz Nâtel-Ķānlari; b. Tehran, Esfand 1292 Š./March 1914; d. Tehran, 1 Šahrivar 1369 Š./23 August 1990), prominent scholar of Persian language and literature, poet, essayist, translator, literary critic, university professor, and founding editor of the periodical *SoĶan* (FIGURE 1).

### LIFE

Khanlari was the son of Mirza Abu'l-Ķasan Khan E'tešām-al-Mamālek (1871-1930) of [Bābol](#), Māzandarān, and Salima Kārdār Māzandarāni (d. 1992). E'tešām-al-Mamālek was first employed in the Ministry of Justice and then at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1903 he went to Russia, where he spent ten years, first in the Persian Consulate in Tbilisi and then in the Persian Embassy in Saint Petersburg, serving as the second person in rank in the embassy. Upon returning to Iran in 1913, he was appointed Director of Protocol (*tašrifāt*) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He knew Russian well and was also familiar with English and French and was appreciative of Persian poetry (Rastegār Fasā'i, pp. 15-18). Khanlari's grandfather Mirza AĶmad Māzandarāni known as Ķānlār Khan E'tešām-al-Molk, part of whose name was adopted by Khanlari, was an accountant (*mostawfi*) at Nāšer-al-Din Shah's court and author of a travelogue, entitled *Safar-nāma-ye Mirza Ķānlār khan E'tešām-al-Molk* (ed. Manučehr MaĶmudi, Tehran, 1370 Š./1991).

Khanlari's family came from Nâtel, a township in Māzandarān, and Khanlari appended Nâtel to his name following a suggestion by Nimā Yušij, the modernist poet (Khanlari, 1990, p. 431). Khanlari's father insisted on tutoring



his son at home and instilled in him a passion for Persian literature. Upon his father's departure for Europe, however, Khanlari's mother enrolled him at St. Louis (see [FRANCE xv. FRENCH SCHOOLS IN PERSIA](#)), a French school run by the Jesuits in Tehran, where he was introduced to French literature (Khanlari, 1990, p. 430). He continued his education in the [Alborz College](#), founded by American missionaries in 1873, and later at the [Dār-al-fonun](#), where he came under the intellectual sway of such luminaries of Persian literature as [Badi'-al-Zamān Foruzānfar](#), [Aḥmad Bahmanyār](#), 'Ali Akbar Siāsi (1896-1997), 'Abbās [Eqbāl Āštiāni](#), Sa'id Nafisi (1896-1966), and 'Abd-al-Raḥmān [Farāmarzi](#). He was also, since childhood, a close friend of Ruḥ-Allāh [Kāleqi](#), the prominent musician, and wrote lyrics for some of [Kāleqi](#)'s compositions and played the violin for a time (Mallāḥ, p. 398; Afšār, 1997a, p. 7). Although he soon became more interested in poetry and literature and abandoned his musical training, his awareness of the auditory aspects of language was well reflected in the mellifluous style of his own writing.

In 1921, while still at high school, Khanlari was encouraged by [Farāmarzi](#) to present one of his school assignments as an essay for [Eqdām](#), a daily newspaper published by 'Abbās [Kalili](#). It marked the beginning of Khanlari's literary career. Soon his poems were published in well-known literary journals of the period (Khanlari, 1990, pp. 431-33; Matini, 1968, p. 243). It was [Nimā Yušij](#) who drew Khanlari's attention to the aesthetics and imagery of French poetry. In Khanlari's estimation, however, [Nimā](#)'s influence on his literary imagination was short-lived. That they later differed sharply in their political proclivities may be a partial explanation for their gradual estrangement (Khanlari, 1991a, pp. 447-59; Zarrinkub, 1992, p. 406).

Khanlari's first published work of translation was from the French translation of *Kapitanskaya Dochka* (The captain's daughter, 1836) by Alexander Pushkin (1799-1837), which he published in 1931 as *Doḳtar-e soltān*. The revised edition of the novel was published as *Doḳtar-e sarvān* in 1959 (see below for Khanlari's translations).

In 1932 Khanlari enrolled at the Tehran [Teachers' Training College](#), and to earn his living, he taught Persian literature at several high schools, including [Tamaddon](#) and [Firuz Bahrām](#), one of Tehran's oldest high schools, which was founded by the Parsi philanthropist [Bahramji Bikaji](#) in 1932 (Khanlari, 1990, p. 434; [Rastegār Fasā'i](#), p. 19). He graduated at the top of his class with a bachelor's degree in Persian literature in 1935 and began his military service in that same year, part of which he spent on a teaching assignment in [Rasht](#).



At the Teachers' Training College he was introduced to Professor Jan Rypka (1886-1968), the Czech scholar of Iranian studies, who was pursuing research in Iran. Khanlari helped Rypka to improve his modern Persian, and Rypka introduced him to a group of young intellectuals, including [Sadeq Hedayat](#), [Bozorg 'Alavi](#), [Mojtabā Minovi](#) (1903-1977), and [Mas'ud Farzād](#), who were in a tug of war with the traditionalist practitioners of Persian literature. The members of this intellectual circle had all spent some years in Europe and were advocates of literary modernism. They gathered most evenings at the Café Ferdowsi or Café Nāderi in central Tehran, with trenchant criticism of the traditional literary establishment as the staple diet of their conversation (Khanlari, 1990, p. 437; Minovi, pp. 357-60). By his own admission, Khanlari was caught in the crossfire of this debate and tried to maintain a position somewhere in between the two warring camps.

In 1941, he enrolled in Tehran University's doctoral program in Persian literature, from which he graduated in 1943. His adviser was Badi'-al-Zamān Foruzānfar, who along with [Moḥammad Taqi Bahār](#) and Sayyed Moḥammad Tadayyon, formed the examining committee for Khanlari's defense of his dissertation, entitled *Tahqiq-e enteqādi dar 'aruz-e fārsi va egunegi-e taḥavvol-e awzān-e ḡazal* (A critical study of Persian prosody and the development of the Persian ghazal). Khanlari's critical and innovative approach to the study of the prosody of Persian poetry (see below), although considered by Foruzānfar as interestingly novel, was not much appreciated by the other examiners who regarded it, according to Khanlari's spouse, Zahrā Kiā, as literary "heresy" (Z. Khanlari, p. 340-45). The dissertation was published in 1948 to high critical acclaim. Khanlari continued his reading and research into modern linguistics and published further works on aspects of rhyme and rhythm in later years (see below).

In 1941 Khanlari married Zahrā Kiā, a fellow student in Tehran University's doctoral program. She later gained a faculty position in the same university and emerged as a literary scholar in her own right. She was the granddaughter of Sheikh Fażl-Allāh Nuri, a noted cleric who fought against the [Constitutional Movement](#) and was executed in 1909. They had two children: a daughter Tarāneh (b. 1946), and a son, Ārmān (1951-1959), who died of leukemia when he was eight years old. The loss had a devastating effect on the family. Khanlari dedicated some of his poems to his memory. He had some years before published a moving essay in the format of a manual of advice to his son, when he was still an infant, entitled *Nāma-i be pesaram* (*Soḡan* 6/1, 1333



Š./1954, pp. 1-5; *Haftād Soḵan* II, pp. 389-93). It instructed him on the necessity to fight the demon of corruption in Iran and encouraged him to equip himself with a profound knowledge of Persian culture. The letter is an eloquent summation of his ideals concerning Iran and the road the country should take to regain international respect and dignity.

In 1943 he was appointed Assistant Professor (*dānešyār*) of Persian literature at the University of Tehran Faculty of Literature (Afšār, 1997b, p. 36). Although by then Khanlari had already published several poems and had earned substantial recognition in the academic and literary circles, it was not until the publication in 1942 in the journal *Mehr* of his most famous poem, “Oqāb” (The eagle)—arguably the most celebrated Persian poem of the twentieth century—that he achieved high acclaim in the literary circles of the time (Elāhi, 2007, p. 54; see below).

In 1942 the Association of Graduates of the Teachers’ Training College (see [EDUCATION xix. TEACHERS’-TRAINING COLLEGES](#)) decided to publish a journal of its own and designated Khanlari for the task. However, since he had not yet reached the legal age for this appointment, Dabiḥ-Allāh Ṣafā (1911-1999) was asked to apply for the permit in his own name, and this was issued in March 1942. The first issue, entitled *Māh-nāma-ye Soḵan: Nāma-ye jāme‘a-ye lisānsiye-hā-ye Dāneš-sarā-ye ‘āli* (Bulletin of the Association of Graduates of the Teachers’ Training College) was published in June 1943 (Salāmi and Rustā’i, *Asnād-e maṭbu‘āt-e Irān* III, p. 585). Subsequently, when Khanlari’s age was no longer an issue, *Soḵan* began to be published as an independent journal (Afšār, 2013, p. 207; Khanlari, 1990, p. 436; idem, *Haftād soḵan* I, p. 10).

Khanlari’s editorship of *Soḵan* lasted, with some interruptions, for 35 years. *Soḵan*, to which many major figures of Persian culture and literature of the time contributed, was also instrumental in acquainting its readership with international literature, in particular with French poetry. Khanlari’s innovative approach towards Persian literature, particularly modern poetry, provided many young poets with a hitherto denied opportunity to have their work published (Matini, 1991, p. 234; Elāhi, 1990, pp. 14-17; see below, Poetry).

In 1946, Khanlari was appointed by ‘Ali-Akbar Siāsi, the then president of the University of Tehran, as the director of the university’s newly established Tehran University Press, entitled Bureau of Publication and Cultural Relations (Edāra-ye entešārāt va ravābeṭ-e farhangi), a position he held until 1951.



During this period Khanlari also joined Ḍabiḥ-Allāh Ṣafā in publishing a series of masterpieces of Persian literature (*Šāhkārhā-ye adabiyāt-e fārsi*). These contained abridged versions or selections of Persian classics in paperback booklets accompanied by explanatory glossaries of difficult words or phrases (see below). Following his proposal, a committee named *Anjoman-e taʿlif o tarjoma* was also established to select original works or translations, to be published by Tehran University Press.

In 1946 the first Iranian Writers' Congress, sponsored by the Irano-Soviet Society of Cultural Relations (*Anjoman-e ravābeṭ-e farhangi-e Irān va Eteḥād-e Jamāhir-e Šowravi: VOX*), was convened. Khanlari read a paper on contemporary developments in Persian prose, giving a historical account of various prose styles and genres, including travel books, journalism, translations, novels, drama, and literary criticism. He criticized government censorship and pointed out that contemporary writers must try to adapt their writing to the modern world (Gheisari, p.72; Ghanoonparvar, p. 153; 'Alavi, 1984, p. 25). The gathering, with its noticeably leftist sympathies, provided a forum for airing various opposing views and contributed to the development of *engagé* literature in Iran.

In the turbulent years that preceded the Soviet-supported secessionist rebellion in [Azarbaijan](#) in 1945, many intellectuals of the time, including Khanlari, found themselves in sympathy in various degrees with the leftist movement represented by the Tudeh Party (see [COMMUNISM iii-iv](#)), but the fall of the Soviet-backed separatist movement in Azarbaijan and the liberation of the province by Iranian military forces during the premiership of Qavām-al-Saltāna in 1946 put an end to such sympathy for the great majority of the people. Khanlari, reflecting the mood of the time in a detailed article in *Soḳan* entitled "Lahjahhā va zabān" (Local dialects and language, *Soḳan* 3/2, 1946, pp. 81-87), argued that a country could not experience social progress and educational growth unless it had national unity, a common culture, and a common language (Abrahamian, pp. 407-8).

Khanlari left for France in 1947 and spent two years studying linguistics and phonetics at l'Institut de Phonetique de la Sorbonne (cf. Duchesne-Guilleman, p. 46). The treatise that he planned to submit as his doctoral dissertation to the Institute was entitled "On the Phonetics of Persian language." Dissuaded, however, by acolytes who argued that a formal degree contributed little to Khanlari's standing in the field and to his reputation in general, he refrained from submitting it (Khanlari, 1990, p. 447; Mallāḥ, p. 398-99; see also,



Pārsinežād, 2013, pp. 299-302). In 1950 the chair of History of the Persian Language was established at the University of Tehran, and he was appointed as its first holder. In 1953 he was invited to teach some courses in Saint Joseph University in Beirut and spent a few months in Lebanon.

Khanlari was a close friend of Asad-Allah ‘Alam (1919-1978), a key political figure during the reign of Mohammad-Reza Shah Pahlavi, serving as prime minister from 1962 to 1964. Their friendship, based on mutual admiration and family connections, continued until ‘Alam’s death in 1978 (Behzādi, pp. 145-46). ‘Alam’s grandfather, Amir Šowkat-al-Molk ‘Alam, an influential landowner of the late Qajar and early Pahlavi period, and the governor of Qā’enāt and of Sistān Province, had close ties with Mirza Kānlar Khan E’tešām-al-Molk, Khanlari’s grandfather. In his memoirs, ‘Alam frequently refers to Khanlari as a highly respected colleague and scholar (‘Alam, *Yāddāsthā*, passim; see also Šāhedī).

Less than two years after the downfall of Moḥammad Mosaddeq and the [coup d’état of 1953](#), a perennial source of grief and resentment among a large section of the public ever since, Khanlari was appointed by ‘Alam as his undersecretary at the Ministry of Interior. News of the appointment came as a shock to many of his friends and students who pointed to a lamentable contrast between Khanlari, as the poet of “Oqāb,” advocating rectitude and unflinching courage, and his own succumbing to the lure of high office and worldly promotion (Elāhi, 2007, 37-41, Afšār, 1997b, p. 39). Khanlari’s response to his students and friends appeared as a letter, entitled “Be dustān-e javānam,” (To my young friends), in *Soḡan* (6/4, 1955, pp. 273-76). The letter, in which he talks of ‘Alam as a trustworthy friend and an able statesman, reflects his dilemma of being eager to serve his country in a constructive manner and at the same time being conscious of the endemic corruption of the government and the regrettable absence of freedom (Afšār, 1997b, p. 39). In the words of a critic of the next generation, the letter was “the narrative of a scholar, trying to ‘explain’ his political foray to what was clearly a critical audience” (Milani, p. 975). *Māh dar mordāb*, Khanlari’s only poetry collection, was published in 1955 (see below).

In April 1957 ‘Alam founded the People’s Party (Hezb-e Mardom), in which, according to some sources, Khanlari was a key figure (Safari, I, p. 271). In the months leading to the announcement, ‘Alam held weekly meetings in his house or in Darband Hotel with a close group of friends, including Khanlari, Jahāngir Tafāzzoli, Rasul Parvizi, Ehsan Yarshater, and Ja’far Behbahāniān,



seeking their advice on the pros and cons of his plans (J. Tafazzoli, pp. 100 ff.).

Khanlari spent 1957 traveling in America and visited several major universities there. In his absence, and on 'Alam's advice, the shah appointed him to the Senate as an appointee senator (*enteṣābi*) by royal decree for Māzandarān—a royal assignment that in those days, in his own words, he could hardly refuse (Khanlari, 1990, p. 440). He was the youngest member of the Senate and served for two terms. Not being a particularly active senator, he spent a good deal of his Senate days in the Senate Library, conducting literary discussions with scholarly fellow senators such as Sayyed Ḥasan Taqizāda, 'Ali Dašti, and Isā Ṣadiq (Khanlari, 1990, p. 438).

On 19 July 1962 'Alam was appointed prime minister. Among the new members of the cabinet was Khanlari as minister of education. During his years in office, Khanlari championed some important changes. His novel idea of giving male high school graduates the option of serving as de facto teachers in villages and townships, in lieu of their two-year military service (Afšār, 1997b, p. 39; Matini, 1991, p. 235), for which he received little credit (Milani, p. 975), led to the formation of the [Literacy Corps](#). This was an educational program implemented within the framework of the White Revolution (1963-79, the name given to a program of reforms, including distribution of agricultural land and women suffrage). The program covered over 2.2 million children between the ages of six and twelve who had not yet attended school, as well as a million adults (Menashri, 1992, p. 180). In an interview after the Islamic Revolution of 1978-79, Khanlari recalled that neither the American embassy nor the SAVAK were in favor of the idea, both arguing that the Literacy Corps could inadvertently promote communism in rural areas (Khanlari, 1990, p. 438; Pārsinežād, 1991, p. 241).

The publication and distribution of school textbooks (see [EDUCATION xvi. SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS](#)), in collaboration with the Mo'assesā-ye entešārāt-e Franklin (see [FRANKLIN BOOK PROGRAM](#)), was among Khanlari's most effective schemes to enact educational reform on a national scale. The implementation of the project was assigned to [Moḥammad Amin Riāḥi](#), a highly regarded scholar. The measure was not only a major step in improving the pedagogic content of primary and secondary school textbooks, but also brought a drastic 80 percent cut in the market price of the books, leading to widespread opposition from commercial publishers. It took some time and finally the intervention of the shah himself before the matter was settled (Riāḥi, pp. 60-80; for further details see 'Abd-al-Raḥim Ja'fari, *Dar jostojuy-e*



ṣobḥ II, p. 763-842).

In June 1963 the state and the country's clerical establishment became embroiled in a major conflict. The confrontation led to an uprising, generally considered as the genesis of the revolution of 1979. Personally taking temporary command of the military forces stationed in Tehran, 'Alam forcefully suppressed the movement. Khanlari's position, recorded in the minutes of the cabinet sessions, was not too dissimilar to 'Alam's hard-line stance (see *Matn-e kāmel-e moḏākerāt-e dowlat-e tāgūt dar pānzdahom-e Kordād 1342*, Tehran, n.d., p. 26; see also Manṣuri, I, p. 53; Milani, p. 997-98). 'Alam's resignation in March 1964 marked the end of Khanlari's active political career, but his acquiescence in the quelling of the demonstrations later led to his prison sentence in the aftermath of the 1979 revolution.

In September 1964 the [Bonyād-e farhang-e Iran](#) (Iranian Culture Foundation), with Queen Farah Pahlavi as its honorary president, was set up with a mission to preserve Iran's cultural heritage and to present its achievements to other nations (A. Tafazzoli, 1990, p. 358). Khanlari was appointed as the Foundation's secretary general in November 1964. The Foundation consisted of four main departments, each directed by one or two scholars, with a number of researchers in Iranian studies working under their supervision (Afšār, 1991, p. 656-57). The publications of the Bonyād under the direction of 'Ali-Akbar Sa'idi Sirjāni (about 300 titles) were not confined to those of its staff but also included works by other scholars. The Bonyād supported the work of Iranian cultural centers abroad and in 1972 instituted a program to promote the study of Persian language in the neighboring countries by providing traveling fellowships for students from India, Pakistan, Turkey, and Egypt to enable them to attend summer courses in Iran. Moreover, it held seminars on Persian language and literature in the Indian Subcontinent. It also established a research institute in 1972, the Pažuheškada, and accepted students for post-graduate studies. The Pažuheškada was suspended after the Islamic revolution and its students transferred to other faculties or institutes. The Bonyād and several other cultural institutions merged after the revolution to form Mo'assasa-ye Moṭāle'āt va Taḥqīqāt-e Farhangi (Institute of Cultural Studies and Research) under the Ministry of Culture and Higher Education.

Khanlari supported and actively participated in the annual sessions of the Congress of Iranian Studies (Kongra-ye taḥqīqāt-e Irāni), organized from 1970 onwards by Iraj Afšār, director of Tehran University's Central Library and Documentation Center. Many international scholars attended the sessions of



the Congress, and it provided a venue for students and young scholars to become acquainted with ongoing research in different fields and countries (Afšār, 1997b, p. 41, Bagley, pp. 90-94).

In 1967 Khanlari was appointed as the secretary-general of the National Committee on Illiteracy Campaign (Comita-ye melli-e peykār bā bisavādi). Dismayed by unwarranted intervention and interference from different quarters, he resigned from the position in 1970 (Khanlari, 1991b, pp. 468-76). Throughout the 1970s, Khanlari was increasingly engaged in administrative assignments and spent much time in advisory capacities, ceremonial meetings, and formal visits.

Khanlari's explicit remarks after his release from jail on his conflicts with the SAVAK bespeak, once again, of the high price he had paid to stay true to his intellectual ideals on the one hand, and to serve a country and a culture he so dearly loved, on the other. In an article entitled "Dām-e bad-nāmi" (The snare of disgrace) he recalled with bitterness memories of an intricately woven plot, masterminded by Mehrdād Pahlbod, the then Minister of Culture and Art, to have him embroiled in state censorship; and described how frantically he had fought against it (Khanlari, 1991b, pp. 469-77; see also 'Alavi, 1997, p. 27).

On April 1979, soon after the advent of the Islamic Revolution, Khanlari was arrested and spent three months in the notorious Evin Prison, tormented by an ever-present threat of execution. There are several conflicting, and so far unsubstantiated, accounts on the confluence of events that might have contributed to his release. According to one account Fath-Allāh Mojtabā'i, a friend and colleague of Khanlari's at *Sokan*, had asked the highly influential cleric Mortazā Moṭahhari (1920-1979), professor at the University of Tehran's Faculty of Theology, and head of the newly-created Revolutionary Council, to secure Khanlari's release (Ja'fari, II, p. 799). It is also said that Sa'idi Sirjāni, Khanlari's associate at the Iran Culture Foundation, had asked Moṭaffar Baqā'i Kermāni to exert influence through his influential disciple Ḥasan Āyat who held a high position in the Islamic Republican Party (Ḥezb-e jomhuri-e eslāmi), to secure Khanlari's release (quoted from a number of Khanlari's close friends). According to some sources, Khanlari had written on this chapter of his life, reflecting on his miraculous survival (Taqizāda, p. 14).

Following his release from prison, Khanlari, in fragile health and at odds with the new establishment, went through difficult years. However, despite repeated offers by royalist groups in exile to arrange for his safe journey to



Europe, he refused to leave his homeland (Matini, 1991, p. 236; Milani, p. 977). As he had written in the already mentioned letter addressed to his son, before his untimely death at a tender age, he was not the kind of plant that could easily flourish in another soil (Khanlari, *Haftād soḵan*, II, p. 396-400; Matini, 1991, p. 237).

Tormented by progressive Parkinson's disease, he spent the evening of his life in seclusion, reading and writing, and occasionally receiving old friends and colleagues. "The humiliation of prison, hand in hand with his worsening physical condition worked to break his resolute spirit. Hip surgery, followed by the continued deterioration of his fractured bones, made his last months full of anguish, agony and pain." (Milani, p. 977). He died on 23 August 1989, and his wife passed away six months later.

The news of his passing away instigated appraisals of his life and work. The journal *Iranshenasi*, published in the United States, devoted a special issue to him, with articles by several prominent scholars of Iranian history and literature. Two memorial volumes were published in his honor: *Qāfela-sālār-e soḵan: majmu'a-ye maqālāt darbāra-ye Kānlari*, ed. 'Ali-Akbar Sa'idi Sirjāni, Tehran, 1991 (FIGURE 2), and *Soḵanvāra*, ed. Iraj Afšār and Hans Robert Roemer, Tehran, 1997 (FIGURE 3).

Khanlari was a disciplined scholar. He usually worked until late at night, sometimes until dawn. His life was devoted to Persian language, literature, and culture (Z. Khanlari, p. 339 ff.). He participated in many international academic conferences and seminars, visited many cultural centers and universities, and received an honorary doctorate from Lenin State University of Kazan in 1971 (Khanlari, 1990, p. 446; Afšār, 1997a, p. 8).

## WORKS

*Studies on prosody*. The study of the meters of Persian verse has been dominated, for more than a thousand years, by the theories and principles devised by the analysts of Arabic poetry and applied without discrimination to Persian poems. This domination, along with the use of traditional Arabic terminology, has led many scholars to assume an intimate relationship between the two systems (Elwell-Sutton, p. vii; Moqarrabi, p. 266).

Basing his analysis on the phonetic rather than the written form of words, upon which the traditional prosody has rested, and pointing to the distorting



effect on the nature of Persian meters when they are forced into the mold of the Arabic 'aruż, Khanlari contested the application of Arabic 'aruż to Persian meters, for which, as he argued, it was neither intended nor suited (Zarrinkub, 1992, p. 112; Fażāyeli, p. 376). His critical approach to the scansion and classification of Persian meters, based on a thorough examination of the way scansion was actually used by Persian poets throughout centuries, marks a turning point in the history and development of literary studies in Iran (Yarshater, 1990, p. 424). He broached the topic first in his dissertation, *Taḥqiq-e enteḡādi dar 'aruż-e fārsi va čegunegi-e taḡavvol-e awzān-e ḡazal*, and later in several books and articles. The revised version of the two chapters of the book, which prefigured Khanlari's later studies on modern linguistics, was published as *Vazn-e šer-e fārsi* (The metrics of Persian poetry, 1958; reprinted in 1975 with revisions).

Also ignored in traditional prosody was the significance of accent (*tekyā*), or the relative emphasis that may be given to certain syllables of a word and, more importantly, the place where the accent falls in Persian words (Elwell-Sutton, p. 221-22; Sepantā, p. 127). The subject was first treated by Carl Salemann and Valentin Zhukovskii, co-authors of *Persische Grammatik mit Literatur, Chrestomathie und Glossar* (Porta Linguarum Orientalium 12, Berlin, 1889), a remarkable piece of research on the language of the earliest representatives of Persian literature; it also contains a list of various Persian poetical meters. The question of accent in the Persian language later caught the attention of such linguists as Antoine Meillet, in *Grammaire de vieux-Perse* (Paris, 1900), and Robert Gauthiot (1876-1916), in *La fin de mot en indo-européen* (Paris, 1913; Sepantā, p. 123-24; Pārsinežād, 2008, pp. 76-78). Mention should also be made of *Ta'limāt-e musiqi* (Berlin, 1922), by 'Alinaqi Vaziri, a noted composer and musical theorist, in which he approached Persian prosody from a critical perspective (Fešāraki, pp. 151-64). It was with Khanlari, however, that the topic became contentious and attracted scholarly debates in Iran and abroad.

Basing his argument on quantitative studies of Persian poetry, as well as systematic application of modern linguistic techniques, Khanlari argued that more than three-quarters of Persian words are of one, two, or three syllables, and the accent, if heavy, falls on the penultimate syllable, otherwise recedes to the antepenultimate one. He extended the same pattern to the rhythm of Persian poetry and settled on *pāya* (foot), as the term for the metric unit, which he defined as the combination of two or three syllables joined by one



accent. Applying statistics to substantiate his argument, and considering the possible appearance of short and long syllables in each foot, Khanlari discarded the long list of meters provided by traditional writers on prosody and offered ten *pāyas* upon which, as he argued, Persian metrics has traditionally rested (Fešāraki, pp. 152-56). His suggested terms for modern Persian metrics—*tak-pāya* (single-foot), *čand-pāya* (multi-feet), *šeddat-e šawt* (intensity), and *erteḡa'* (hauteur, melodic pitch)—are well informed by his further studies on suprasegmental phonemic characteristics of the Persian language.

His innovative outlook on Persian prosody initially met with some skepticism, but soon attracted approval (Fešāraki, p. 152), and later scholars of prosody and music, such as Sāsān Sepantā, Ma'šuma Qarib, and Taqī Vaḡidiyān-e Kām-kār continued research following in his path (Sepantā, p. 127).

In Khanlari's view, phonetically based metrics would offer poets a wider latitude and would liberate their poetry from the repetitive and monotonous meters of traditional 'aruz, enhancing the originality of their work, in both content and form (Khanlari, *Haftād soḡan* I, pp. 206 ff). Furthermore, he argued, elementary school children could be encouraged to become lifelong lovers of poetry if they were introduced to verse rhythm and melody at an early age and encouraged to memorize poetry. Khanlari's last work, a compact treatise entitled *Oṡul-e še'r-šenāsi va naḡva-ye āmuzeš-e awzān-e še'r-e fārsi* (Principles of poetics and teaching Persian meters), has yet to be published (Taqizāda, p. 14).

*The Persian language and its history.* Khanlari's systematic investigation in Persian lexicography and the historical development of the Persian language, conducted in the department of grammatical studies of the Bonyād-e Farhang-e Irān, culminated in the publication of his seminal work in four volumes, entitled *Tāriḡ-e zabān-e fārsi* (Tehran, 1969-79; translated into English by N. H. Ansari, as *A History of the Persian Language*, New Delhi, 1979). The book, following the path the Persian language has taken from the beginning to the present time, consists of various writings culled from a period of more than twenty-five years. It displays both scientific rigor and a lucid style accessible to the layman. A concise edition of Khanlari's teachings on the Persian language and its historical grammar was posthumously published by 'Effat Mostašārnīyā, as *Dastur-e tāriḡi-e zabān-e fārsi* in 1993.

[Farhang-e tariḡi-e zabān-e fārsi](#), of which only one volume has been published



(P. N. Kānlari, ed., *Farhang-e tāriki-e zabān-e fārsi I: Ā-B*, Tehran, 1978), is a comprehensive dictionary of the Persian language based on historical lines, that began in the department of lexicography of the Bonyād-e Farhang-e Irān. It was intended to establish the chronology of a word's usage, its first occurrence, and, in some cases, its last recorded usage. It was also to indicate which words were borrowed from other languages, when they were borrowed, and under what circumstances they were replaced by other words (Kānlari, *Farhang-e tāriki-e zabān-e fārsi*, p. viii). It was commended as a scholarly work on a language with a long written history (Šādeqi, p. 787) and as the first Persian dictionary created with a particular aim, based on a specific textual corpus, and using proper lexicographical methods (A. Tafazzoli, 1999, p. 272).

*Zabān-šenāsi va zabān-e fārsi* (Tehran, 1961; repr., 1964) is a collection of articles on linguistic theories and their application in Persian language which were published from 1943 to 1961 in *Soḵan* and *Majalla-ye Dāneškada-ye Adabiyāt*. Khanlari's *Dastur-e zabān-e fārsi* (2 vols, Tehran, 1964), of which a concise version is also available, was primarily written as a high school textbook. It underwent repeated revisions to suit the taste and interest of the general readership. Khanlari's critical approach to the essentials of Persian grammar was not favorably received at first (Khanlari, 1990, pp. 444 ff.), but it was later acclaimed by scholars abroad as well as the younger generation of Iranian scholars, and it became a standard school text book (Matini, 1991, p. 234).

*Critical edition of classical texts.* Apart from his many articles on the poetry of Hafez (see *Haftād soḵan I*, Tehran, 1988), Khanlari also edited an anthology of Hafez's *gāzals*, based on the collection gathered under the patronage by *Eskandar Solṭān*, the Timurid prince and governor of *Fārs*, and three other manuscripts. It was published in 1958 as *Ġazalhā-ye K̄vāja Ḥāfeẓ Šīrāzi*. His *Čand nokta dar tašhiḥ-e divān-e Ḥāfeẓ* appeared in 1959. *Moḥammad Farzān*, an erudite scholar of Arabic and Persian literature, wrote an extensive commentary on the book and disputed several of Khanlari's emendations. (For the text of the article see Farzan, 1959. For Khanlari's robust response, see "Čand nokta darbāra-ye enteḡād bar tašhiḥ-e Divān-e Ḥāfeẓ," 1960; see also *Ḳorramšāhi*, 2013, pp. 185-91).

In 1980, using twelve early manuscripts, Khanlari published *Ġazaliyāt-e K̄vāja Šams-al-Din Moḥammad Ḥāfeẓ Šīrāzi*, which was later revised and reprinted as *Divān-e Ḥāfeẓ* in two volumes (Tehran, 1980; reprinted several times). It was



extensively reviewed and has been cited as a major scholarly edition of the *Divān*, next to the Qazvini-Ġani edition (Heravi, pp. 9-15; Mojtabā'i, 1990, p. 19; Najafi, p. 30; these reviews were reprinted in *Dar bāra-ye Hāfez*, as vol. II in a series of selected articles from *Našr-e dāneš*, ed. Našr-Allāh Purjavādi, Tehran, 1986). Not all the reviews were favorable. It was, for example, dismissed by the noted poet Aḥmad Šāmlu as a “time-consuming and fruitless” work of editing (Šāmlu, pp. 40 ff.). A more balanced discussion is that of Moḥammad-Rezā Šafi'i Kadkani (1989, pp. 424-55), who praises Khanlari's meticulous research but also notes some of his questionable emendations (see also Nodušan, pp. 165-94, and Mojtabā'i, 1991).

His other critical editions of classic texts include *Samak-e 'ayyār* (5 volumes with introduction and notes, Tehran, 1968-74; [FIGURE 4](#)). Khanlari's engagement with the grammatical and orthographic conventions of the text, and the wealth of rare and archaic Persian words it provides, led to the publication in 1985 of a short monograph, *Šahr-e Samak*, in which Persian society and culture before the 13th century, and the distinct customs of the 'ayyārs in particular, are discussed.

Khanlari's edition of *Dāstānhā-ye Bidpāy*, a recently discovered Persian version of *Kalila wa Demna* by Moḥammad b. 'Abd-Allāh Boḳāri (12th century), was published in 1982, in collaboration with Moḥammad Rowšan. The book is generally regarded as an outstanding edition of a classic text.

*Translations.* Khanlari's first translation from French, *The Captain's Daughter* by Alexander Pushkin, was published in 1931 (see above, *Life*). His other translations from French include *Čand nāma be šā'eri javān* (1941), from Rainer Maria Rilke's (1875-1926) *Letters to a Young Poet*, and *Tristān o Isot* (1955), the medieval French romance as rendered by Joseph Bedier (1864-1938). These two books, which have undergone several reprints, are generally regarded as Khanlari's finest translations. He also translated several short stories from French. They were mostly published in *Afsāna*, a literary journal founded by Moḥammad Ramažāni, which exclusively published works of fiction either by contemporary foreign writers in Persian translation, or by Persian writers themselves (for Khanlari's translations see Afšār and Roemer, eds., p. 32).

Khanlari also translated Avicenna's *Maḳārej al-ḥoruf* (see [Avicenna ix. Music](#)) from Arabic (Tehran, 1954). His translation from English of the *Masterpieces of Persian Art* (New York, 1945) by [Arthur Upham Pope](#), the American



archeologist and historian of Persian art, with contributions by [Phyllis Ackerman](#) and Eric Schroeder, was published as *Šāhkārhā-ye honar-e Iran* in 1959.

*Other works.* As already mentioned (above, Life), Khanlari in cooperation with Dabiḥ-Allāh Šafā published selected sections from classics of Persian literature, with annotations and glossaries. The series, entitled *Šāhkārhā-ye adabiyāt-e fārsi*, to which many eminent scholars contributed, played an important role in familiarizing youth in general, and students in particular, with the Persian classics (Afšār, 1997b, p. 37; Ja‘fari, II, p. 472). Khanlari’s contribution to the series included, *Yusof o Zoleykā*, taken from the *Tafsir-e fārsi-e Torbat-e Jām*; *Dāstān-e Rostam o Sohrāb*, from the *Šāh-nāma*; and *Dāstān-e safarhā-ye Nāšer Kōsrow*, from the *Safar-nāma-ye Nāšer Kōsrow*. Among Khanlari’s other publications are, *Ravānšenāsi va taṭbiq-e ān bā oṣul-e parvareš* (Tehran, 1937) and a celebrated textbook for the final years of primary education in two volumes entitled, *Tariḳ-e Irān az āgāz tā Eslām*, and *tariḳ-e Irān-e dowra-ye Eslāmi*, (Tehran, 1959-60).

A number of one-act plays have also been attributed to him; including *Safar-e haštom-e Sandbād* (Sinbad’s eighth voyage), a short dramatic sketch depicting Sinbad’s final hours (Khanlari, *Haftād soḳan*, III, pp. 405-12). The short piece proved influential in the subsequent history of Persian [drama](#), and inspired the composition of a full-length play entitled *Haštomin Safar-e Sandbād* by Bahrām Beyzā’i in 1964. (For further information on Khanlari’s works, see “Sālšomār- e zendagi-e Doktor Parviz Nātel Kānlari,” in Afšār and Roemer, eds., and Rastegār Fasā’i, *passim*).

*Poetry.* Khanlari, whose initial engagement with literature coincided with a tumultuous period in the country’s literary history, tried to adopt, as he always did, a moderate position between the traditionalists who opposed structural innovation and the modernists who “not only dispensed with the necessity of rhyme and consistent meter, but also rejected the imagery of traditional poetry and departed noticeably from its mode of expression” (Yarshater, 1988, p. 31; see also Šafi’i Kadkani, 2004, p. 128). Khanlari’s position proved influential. What brought him and such poets as [Golčīn Gilāni](#), and later Hušang Ebtehāj (also known as Sāya), [Fereydun Tavallali](#), and [Nader Naderpur](#) together was their shared conviction in the capacity of modern Persian poetry to maintain imperative and perceptible connections with the classical tradition, and at the same time, to broaden its horizons to incorporate images perceived as belonging to the modern world. Their affiliation with



*Sokan*, inspired Nader Naderpur to call them poets of the *Sokan* School, although they also came to be known as the “neo-romantics,” (Farzan, p. 342) and even “new-classicists” (Langerudi, p. 316; Nuri’alā, p. 147). Their literary output met with mixed and, occasionally, politically motivated reactions. Some found it a reactionary movement that stalled the growth of modern Persian poetry (Barāhani, pp. 217-312; Hoquqi, p. 51). Others saw it as a watershed in the history of modern Persian poetry (Dastgheyb, pp. 85-6).

A long, absorbing, and thought-provoking narrative poem in the *matnawi* genre, Khanlari’s “Oqāb,” draws upon the contrast between the eagle and the raven, which appears as a recurrent motif in Persian literature (Yusofi, pp. 677-78) and makes use of internal rhyme as well as alliteration throughout. With freshness and wisdom, it tells the story of an aging eagle’s visit, eager to discover the secret of long life, to a raven, whose life span is believed to be above three hundred years, only to learn at the end that “Death, immediate, in the firmament today / Is worth a hundred lives enmeshed in decay.” Dedicated to [Sadeq Hedayat](#), the poem ends with the eagle soaring high and disappearing in the sky:

*Šahpar-e šāh-e havā owj gereft*  
*Zāg rā dida bar u mānda šegeft*  
*Su-ye bālā šod o bālā-tar šod*  
*Rāst bā mehr-e falak hamsar šod*  
*Lahza’i čand bar in lawḥ-e kabud*  
*noqta’i bud o degar hič nabud.*  
(*Māh dar mordāb*, pp. 105-16)

The arch-wings of the ethereal king spread and soared upwards  
In wonder the raven looked on.  
The eagle flew out and soared up, high and yet higher still  
Up and up until on a par with the Sun  
Hovering a moment or two, on the azure tablet:  
He was a dot, and thereafter, no more.

The poem was an immediate success, lauded by readers and critics alike (Rastegār Fasā’i, p. 119; Elāhi, 2007, p. 54). Ġolām Ḥosayn Yusofi, commenting on the theme, structure, and language of the poem, praised it as a modern masterpiece in celebration of human dignity and honor, of which the legend of [Siāvoš](#) offers a classic example (Yusofi, p. 676). As contended by Šafi’i Kadkani, ‘Oqāb may be one single poem, but as a literary achievement, it equals the



merits of a multitude (Šafi'i Kadkani, 1989, p. 217). “Oqāb,” and some poems, including “Yağmā-ye šab” (1922) were translated by [Arthur John Arberry](#), and published in his *Persian Poems: An Anthology of Verse Translations* (London, 1954).

An anthology of Khanlari's previously published poems entitled *Māh dar mordāb*, appeared in 1964. The chronological order of the poems, mostly romantic depictions of nature and human desires (Šafi'i Kadkani, 2004, p. 127), reveals Khanlari's studied and progressive break with traditional conventions (Elāhi, 2007, p. 50). In line with what Khanlari considered to be ‘good modern poetry’ (Khanlari, 1955, pp. 11-18), the poems are marked by a harmony of rhythms and rhymes with the content and spirit of each, a precise description of emotions, innovative use of similes and metaphors, and above all, musicality of the words (Kaṭibi, p. 350; Šafi'i Kadkani, 2001, p. 470; Hoquqi, p. 51).

*Prose.* Khanlari, although praised by many for his poetry, was at his best writing graceful, elegant prose (Yarshater, 1990, p. 468). His writings can be regarded as a milestone in the long road that modern Persian prose has traversed toward clarity, simplicity, and precision, of which the celebrated official correspondence of Qā'em Maqām Farāhāni (1779-1835) provides a pioneering example (Nāderpur, 1991, pp. 247-55). Khanlari's simple and unadorned writings reflect his command of both Persian and Western literatures. His sentences—short, simple and correct in grammar and syntax, sincere and appealing in tone—are very effective in getting the author's point across, as demonstrated in his essays on history, socio-political, and cultural studies, as well as literary criticism. His prose enjoys a lively, intimate, refined, and powerful language, making him almost peerless in modern Persian literature (Yarshater, 1990, p. 468). His sensitivity to the melody of words and arrangement of sentences often supplies his writings with a musical overtone, as if a piano is being played softly in the background (Nāderpur, 1991, p. 253).

Three volumes of Khanlari's editorials in *Soḵan*, book reviews, essays on linguistics and grammar, and socio-cultural critiques, were published in 1990 as *Haftād soḵan*, subtitled respectively, *Še'r o šā'eri* (Figure 5), *Farhang o ejtema'*, and *Az guša o kenār-e adabiyāt-e fārsi*. The fourth volume of the collection, entitled *Haftād soḵan: šivahā-ye now dar adabiyāt-e jahān*, was published posthumously in 1991. Included in this collection are several interviews, which were conducted after Khanlari's release from prison and published in [Āyanda](#), *Ādina*, and, *Donyā-e soḵan*. Selections of his writings



have been printed in various collections (e.g., in *Nemunahā'i az natr-e faṣiḥ-e Fārsi-e mo'āṣer*, ed. Jalāl Matini, Tehran, 1959, pp. 243-323; repr., 1967). A comprehensive collection of his personal letters is yet to be published (for a selection, see Sa'idi Sirjāni, ed., 1991, pp. 477-97).

Khanlari is also regarded as a pioneering figure in the history and development of modern literary criticism in Iran. His works on literary criticism cover a wide spectrum, ranging from academic literary history to the interpretation and appreciation of the text, offering an insight on literature and figurative language as having characteristics that are unique and not reducible to a simple moral or political message (Pārsinežād, 2008, pp. 17-42). In the course of forging these concepts, Khanlari has also produced some fascinating analyses of the oeuvres of a whole series of contemporary authors and poets, which are mostly published in *Soḵan*. His approach, far removed from unwarranted favoritism or implicit hostility, is characterized by a sensitive attention to form, meaning, and the language of the text at hand.

Khanlari's pioneering role in the development of modern literary criticism in Iran is extensively reviewed in three books, recently published in America and Iran. In *Naqd-e bi-qaš: majmu'a-ye goft-o-guhā-ye Doktor Parviz Nātel Kānlari bā Šadr-al-Din Elāhi* (Elāhi, California, 2007), Khanlari discusses a wide array of literary figures including Hedāyat, 'Alavi, Bahār, Nimā, and Chubak, and highlights the stylistic characteristics and literary merits of their work, with his signature frankness and vigorous tone. *Khanlari va naqd-e adabi* (Khanlari and literary criticism, Tehran, 2008) by Iraj Pārsinejād, and *Dar tarāzu-ye naqd: kārnāma-ye zendegi va naqd o taḥlil-e aš'ār-e Parviz Nātel Kānlari* (ed. Milād 'azīmi, Tehran, 2009), are two other studies of Khanlari's significance and impact as a literary critic. The books offer a wealth of information on the sources Khanlari consulted in formulating his concepts and the criteria he took into consideration while commenting on literary texts. Mention should also be made of *Aḥvāl o ātār-e Doktor Parviz Nātel Kānlari* (Life and works of Dr. Parviz Natel Khanlari, ed. Manšur Rastegār Fasā'i), published in Tehran in 2000. *Boḵārā*, a bi-monthly journal edited by 'Ali Dehbāši, dedicated an issue to Khanlari (vol. 15, no. 94, Mordād-Šahrivar 1392 Š./August-September 2013).

As evidenced by the ever-growing bibliography on his life and work, admiration for Khanlari has only increased with time (Parhām, p. 319). It is above all a unique combination of highly impressive scholarly contributions, dedicated study of the classical texts, life-long service to the country's culture and literature, concern about the outmoded practices in education and the



societal ills, heartfelt sense of duty to justify his actions to friends as well as detractors, and confessional asides in his memoirs and letters, marked as they are by an attempt at reconciling ideal with praxis, that have endeared him to his ever-growing audience.

The legacy of Khanlari, perhaps like that of most significant literary figures, is mixed and controversial, and not reducible to a simple verdict. While his literary output as well as his political activities will spur conflicting judgements, his lasting literary influence is irrefutable (‘Alavi, 1997, p. 30; Nāderpur, 1990, p. 647). In this regard, he belongs to an impressive constellation of different officials, secretaries, and counselors throughout the long course of Iranian history who devoted their considerable acumen and skill to the betterment of their country and service to its rulers, only to be rewarded with defamation, removal from office, and censure by their peers (Yarshater, 1990, p. 471; Maḥjub, p. 656-64; Elāhi, 2007, pp. 37-38; Fażāyeli, pp. 377-78). Although Khanlari’s path was fraught with diversions, and his involvement in at least one major contested political decision inexcusable, his stature appears to be secure as a scholar of great integrity, an earnest student of Persian literature and language (Yarshater, 1990, pp.467-71; Matini, 1991, 233-37), and a devoted and disciplined teacher (Pārsinežād, 1991, pp. 239-43, Tāhā, pp. 244-46; Sarvar Mowlā’i, pp. 402-03; Elāhi, 1990, pp. 14-17).

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