



KHANLARI, ZAHRA

KHANLARI, ZAHRA (خانلاری زهرا, Zahrā Kānlari, b. Tehran 1291 Š./1913; d. Tehran, 1369 Š./1990), author, translator, literary scholar, university professor (Figure 1).

Zahra Khanlari (née Zahrā Kiā) was born in the Sanglaj neighborhood of Tehran. Her ancestors were from Nur, Māzandarān (T. Khanlari, p. 148). Her mother was ‘Ešmat-al- Ḥājia Borujerdi (Figure 2), and her father, Mirzā Hādi Nuri (Figure 3), son of Shaikh Fażl-Allāh Nuri, the prominent jurist, was a delegate to the first parliament and an outspoken opponent of the [Constitutional Revolution](#); he was executed in 1909 by the constitutionalist forces (Abrahimian, p. 100; Anšāri, p. 147). Graduating from Nāmus Primary School in 1924, she continued her education at Dār-al-Mo‘alemāt-e Markazi (see [EDUCATION xviii. Teachers’ Training Schools](#)).

In 1935 she entered the [Dāneš-sarā-ye ‘Āli](#) to study Persian literature, and in 1939 she was among the first women in Iran to receive a Bachelor of Arts degree (Figure 4). She entered Tehran University’s doctoral program in Persian literature in 1941, graduating in 1943. Her adviser was [Moḥammad Taqi Bahār](#). Her dissertation “Sabk-e adabi-e tavāriḡ tā qarn-e nohom-e hejri” (Afšār, p. 660), was approved with special mention. She married [Parviz Natel Khanlari](#) in 1941 (Figure 5, Figure 6) and had two children: a daughter Tarāneh (b. 1946), and a son, Ārmān (1951-1959), whom they lost to leukemia when he was eight years old (Rastegār-e Fasā’i, pp. 39-41).

Following an almost two-year-long collaboration with the [Pasteur Institute](#) as



a librarian, Zahra Khanlari began in 1939 teaching in Parvin High School and then in Dāneš-sarā-ye Moqadamāti-e Doḡtarān). She was also involved with the Women's Party of Iran (Ḥezb-e zanān-e Iran), founded in 1942 by Šafiya Firuz with Fāṭema Sayyāḥ, and served as the secretary to the party's board of directors. The goal of the party, which was transformed in 1946 into the Iranian Women's Council (Šowrā-ye zanān-e Irān; Paidar, pp. 126-27), was to promote women's education, social status, and awareness.

In 1946 she was appointed the principal of Nurbakš High School, renamed later to Rezā Shah Kabir. She joined the faculty of the University of Tehran in 1957 as an associate professor, teaching the history of Persian language. To study and promote uniformity in textbooks, Khanlari and a group of scholars visited major schools and publishing houses in France and Britain. Back home in 1963, she *joined* Sāzmān-e Ketābhā-ye Darsi (see [EDUCATION xvi. SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS](#)), an independent entity affiliated to the Ministry of Culture, and had an instrumental role in the standardization of school textbooks throughout the 1960s.

Zahra Khanlari contributed to the *Šāhkārḥā-ye adabiyāt-e fārsi*, a series of selected sections of the classics of Persian texts, with annotations and glossaries, which were published by Tehran University's Bureau of Publication and Cultural Affairs, included *Dāstānhā-ye del-angiz-e adabiyāt-e Fārsi* (Tehran, 1942), which won the UNESCO award in Iran and was translated to several languages including Arabic, Chinese, and Urdu. *Afsāna-ye Simorḡ* (The legend of Simorḡ, Tehran, 1959) of this collection, illustrated by Nur-al-Din Zarrin Kelk, was awarded by the Council of Children's Book as the best book of the year ([Figure 7](#)).

Zahra Khanlari's frequent contributions to *Soḡan*, a monthly journal of literature and culture founded by Parviz Khanlari in 1942, continued during its entire production run. She contributed approximately 40 articles to *Soḡan's* 26 volumes, including short stories, translated poems and short stories, and articles on Western literature.

Retired from the University of Tehran in 1965, she continued writing and translating until her very last days. Zahra Khanlari's *Farhang-e adabiyāt-e jahān*, was posthumously published in 1999. Her four completed works (Jang-e Rostam bā Aškbus; Esfandiyār o jang-e u bā Rostam; Maziār; and Garšāsp-e pahlavān), which were supposed to be published in the series of *Šāhkārḥā-ye adabiyāt-e fārsi*, have not yet seen the light of the day.



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