



MORĠ-E SAḤAR

MORĠ-E SAḤAR (Dawn bird), a *taşnif* (song) in māhur mode with the verse in two stanzas written by Moḥammad-Taḡi Bahār (q.v.) to correspond with *piş-darāmads* (overture) by the renowned musician [Morteżā Ney-Dāwud](#).

This song has had a long and troubled history. It has been sung as a comment on dictatorial regimes in Iran and the hope that one day a dawn bird would arise from the darkness of the night. As a result, during the whole of Reza Shah's rule (1925-41), its second stanza was banned. Soon after his coronation Reza Shah had heard the whole of the song at a gathering at the house of his powerful minister, Taymur-tas. The music was played by the two brothers Musā and Morteżā Ney-Dāwud and the words sung by [Qamar-al-Moluk Vaziri](#) (Ḳatibi, pp. 19-22). Since its composition famous singers such as Qamar-al-Moluk, Moluk Żarrābi, Irān-al-Dawla Helen, Jamāl Şafavi, Moḥammad-Reżā Şajariān, Nāder Golċin, and Hengāma Aḳawān have sung it with skill and passion.

There are several conjectures as to why these verses were written, but it is more than likely that Bahār wrote them for this music around 1921, when the first signs of dictatorship were appearing. According to Nādera Badi'i (pp. 110-12), after Şeydā, the first composer of songs in modern Iranian tradition, and 'Āref, the first creator of nationalistic songs, Bahār is the most notable of songwriters in Iran, and *Morġ-e saḥar* is the most famous of his works.

This song, like many songs of the awakening period in Iran, has two stanzas. The first is lyrical, and the second deals more with social and political issues.



In public gatherings only the first stanza was sung, and occasionally the second stanza was also sung at private parties, where the atmosphere was suitable for political debates. The words of Bahār have retained their effectiveness even without the music. Among the numerous performances of this song those by Moluk Žarrābi, Iran-al-Dowla Helen, and Jamal Šafavi were recorded, but there is no evidence of a recording of Qamar-al-Moluk’s performances. Šajariān in a concert called *Sarv-e čaman* at Berkley University in 1990 performed this song, and Nāder Golčīn, and Hengāma Aķawān performed it in the radio programs *Golhā* nos. 150, arranged by Farāmarz Pāyvar, and *Golhā-ye tāza*, no. 210, arranged by Moĥammad-Rezā Loṭfi.

A few years before the Islamic Revolution in Iran, those responsible for the arts produced a different set of words for the same tune which were sung by Purān and ‘Abd-al-Wahhāb Šahidi in two voices. It was not received very well by the general public. Finally, a noteworthy point is that Bahār’s verse became so popular that it was sung and adopted by the ordinary people in the streets. Bahār himself is quoted as saying that one night he heard a passerby singing a line of the poem, but instead of *šām-e man-rā, šām-e man-rā saĥar kon* “turn my night into dawn,” he was singing *šām-e tārik-e mā-rā saĥar kon* “turn our dark night into dawn.” On hearing this Bahār changed the line to the passerby’s version (Yazdānbakš, apud Nawwāb-šafā, p. 177). *Morġ-e saĥar* has remained one of the most popular of patriotic songs.

First stanza

Morġ-e saĥar, nāla sar kon!
dāġ-e marā tāzatar kon
z-āh-e šararbār in qafas-rā
baršekan o zir o zabar kon
bolbol-e par-basta ze konj-e qafas dar-ā
naġma-ye āzādi-e naw’-e bašar sarā
w-az nafas-i ‘arša-ye in kāk-e tuda-rā
por šarar kon, por šarar kon
zolm-e zālem, jawr-e šayyād
āšiān-am dāda bar bād
ey kodā, ey falak, ey ṭabi’at
šām-e tārik-e mā-rā saĥar kon
nowbahār ast, gol ba bār ast
abr-e časm-am žala-bār ast
in qafas čun del-am tang o tār ast



*šo'la fekan dar qafas ey āh-e ātašin
dast-e tabi'at, gol-e 'omr-e marā mačīn
jāneb-e 'āšeḡ negar ey tāza gol—az in
bištar kon, bištar kon, bištar kon
morg-e bidel, šarḡ-e hejrān
moḡtašar, moḡtašar, moḡtašar kon*

Dawn bird, lament!
Make my brand burn even more.
With the sparks from your sigh, break
And turn this cage upside down.
Wing-tied nightingale come out of the corner of your cage, and
Sing the song of freedom for human kind.
With your fiery breath ignite,
The breath of this peopled land.
The cruelty of the cruel and the tyranny of the hunter
Have blown away my nest.
O God, O Heavens, O Nature,
Turn our dark night to dawn.
It's a new spring, roses are in bloom
Dew drops are falling from my cloudy eyes
This cage, like my heart, is narrow and dark.
O fiery sigh set alight this cage
O fate, do not pick the flower of my life.
O rose, look towards this lover ,
Look again, again, again.

O heart-lost bird, shorten, shorten, shorten,
The tale of separation.

Second stanza

*'omr-e ḡaḡiqat ba-sar šod
'aḡd o wafā pey-separ šod
nala-ye 'āšeḡ, nāz-e ma'šūḡ
har do doruḡ o bi-aṡar šod
rāsti o mehr o moḡabbat fasāna šod
qawl o šarāfat hamagi az miāna šod*



*az pey-e dozdi, wařan o din bahāna řod, dida tar řod
zolm-e malek, jawr-e arbāb
zāre‘ az ġam gařta bitāb
sāġar-e aġniā por mey-e nāb
jam‘-e mā por ze kun-e jegar řod
ey del-e tang nāla sar kon
az qawi-dastān ĥazar kon
az mosāwāt řarf-e-nařar kon
sāqi-e gol-čehra, bedeh āb-e ātařin
parda-ye delkař bezan, ey yār-e delneřin
nāla bar-ār az qafas ey bolbol-e ĥazin
k-az ġam-e to sina-ye man
por řarar, por řarar, por řarar řod.*

Truth’s life has come to an end
Faith and fidelity have been replaced by the shield of war.
Lover’s lament and beloved’s coyness,
Are but lies and have no power.
Truth, love and affection are but myths
Oath and honour are but vanished.
For thieving, country and religion are pretexts, eyes are wet
Landlord’s cruelty, master’s tyranny,
The farmer’s restless from sorrow.
The cup of the rich is full of pure wine,
Our cup is filled with our heart’s blood.
O anxious heart, cry out aloud
And avoid those who have powerful hands,

Count not on justice.
O rosy-cheeked cup-bearer, give the fiery water,
Play a joyful tune, O charming friend.
O sad nightingale lament from your cage.
Because of your grief my heart is
Full of sparks, sparks, sparks.



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