



## NADERPOUR, NADER

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**NADERPOUR, NADER** (Nāder Nāderpur, b. Tehran, 16 Kordād 1308 Š./6 June 1929; d. Los Angeles, 29 Bahman 1378 Š./18 February 2000; [Figure 1](#)), noted poet and literary critic.

### LIFE

The eldest of six children, Nader Naderpour was born into a well-educated and cultured family. His father, Taqi Mirza, was a descendant of Rezā Qoli Mirza, the eldest son of Nāder Shah Afšār (r.1736-47), whence Naderpour's surname. Taqi Mirza, a skillful painter who was familiar with French and Persian literature, introduced Nader to Persian poetry and the French language at an early age. He died when Nader was fourteen. His mother was an accomplished performer on the *tar* and kindled in him an appreciation for music (Mafie, p. 9).

Naderpour received his primary education in Tehran and in 1942 was enrolled at Irānšahr high school. As was the case with a good number of his peers, he developed an interest in politics, and joined the nationalist Pan-Iranist Party for a short period of time (A. Milani, p. 27-28; Hillmann, 1986, p. 3). Drawn to egalitarian Marxist doctrine, he later joined the Youth Organization of the recently established Tudeh Party (see [COMMUNISM](#) ii, iii). His first articles and poems appeared in *Rahbar* and *Mardom*, both affiliated with the Tudeh Party, while still in high school. His involvement with the Tudeh Party came to an end amid tensions and conflicts within the Party's leadership following the Soviet occupation of [Azarbaijan](#) in 1941 (Abrahimian, p. 311; see [COMMUNISM](#)



iii, iv). Naderpour, following Kāḡil Maleki (1903-1969), and along with Jalāl Āl-e Aḡmad, Rasuḡ Parvizi (1919-1977), Fereyduḡ Tavallali, and several other intellectuals and literati, resigned from the Tudeh Party in 1948 (Nabavy, pp. 311-12). He graduated from high school in 1948 and became involved with the movement to nationalize petroleum resources that was gaining steam.

In February 1950 Naderpour traveled to Paris and enrolled at the Sorbonne to study French language and literature. His return to Iran coincided with the fall of the government of Moḡammad Moḡsaddeq in 1953 (see [COUP D'ETAT: 1332 Š./1953](#)). Disappointed by the failure of democratic overtures in Iran, Naderpour refrained from political activity and immersed himself in poetry.

His poems and translations of French fin de siècle poets associated with the symbolist movement, such as Paul Valéry (1871-1945), Arthur Rimbaud (1854-1891), and Paul Verlaine (1844-1896), among others, were either published in *Soḡan* (Langerudi, p. 522), a monthly journal of Iranian studies founded in 1943 by Parviz Natel Khanlari (Parviz Nātel Kānlari, 1914-1991), or *Ēlm o zendagi*, a periodical founded by Kāḡil Maleki in January 1952, which served as the ideological mouthpiece of Niru-ye sevvom (The Third Force), a non-aligned political movement. With Jalāl Āl-e Aḡmad and Simin Dānešvar (b. 1921) on its editorial board, works of modernist writers and poets were never absent from the pages of *Ēlm o zendagi* (Nabavi, p. 23; Langerudi, p. 466).

*Čašmhā o dasthā* (Eyes and hands), Naderpour's first collection of poetry with 37 poems, was published in 1954. It was followed in 1955 by the publication of *Doḡtar-e jām* (Daughter of the cup), a collection of 17 poems, which won him more prominence. Although death and loneliness lurk in the background of most of the poems in these collections, many poems, nevertheless, glitter in the light of wine, love, and pleasure (Zarqāni, pp. 300-1). Naderpour married Šahlā Malekzādeh Hirbod in 1957, and his only daughter, Pupak, was born in August 1959. The couple separated in 1961.

Naderpour's third collection of poetry, entitled *Šē'r-e angur* (The grape poem; 1984), was published in March 1958. Khanlari, then a towering presence in the literary scene, praised Naderpour as a leading poet of the modernist school (Khanlari, 1956, p. 1147). Before joining the newly established periodical *Honor o mardom* by the end of 1959, Naderpour worked for a brief period of time with *Namāyeš* magazine, which was published by the Office of Dramatic Arts at the Ministry of Arts and Culture, as well as *Majalla-ye Musiqi*, a literary



and cultural journal edited by [Ġolām-Ĥosayn Minbāšīān](#). His cooperation with *Honar o mardom* lasted until 1964.

Throughout these years Naderpour's standing in Iranian literary circles soared. He used his prominence to advance and promote modernist poetry. He was influential in the publication of *Havā-ye tāza* (Fresh air), by Aḥmad Šāmlu (1925-2000) in 1957, and of Aḥmad Reżā Aḥmadi's (b. 1940) first poem in *Keyhān-e hafta*. Aḥmadi was later recognized among the forerunners of New Wave poetry (*mowj-e now*) in Iran (Hillmann, 1986, pp. 20-21). Naderpour was also instrumental in launching a poetry reading series at the Iran-America Society in 1960, featuring among others, [Foruġ Farroqzād](#), Manučehr Ātaši (1931-2005), Simin Behbehāni (b. 1927), as well as Naderpour himself.

*Sorma-ye koršid* (The healing kohl of the sun; [Figure 2](#)), his fourth collection of 41 poems, was published in 1960. The collection was recognized as the best book of the year by [Anjoman-e ketāb](#), founded in 1957 by Ehsan Yarshater in collaboration with Iraj Afšār (1925-2011), 'Abd-al-Ĥosayn Zarrinkub (1923-1999), and several other scholars. A selection of Naderpour's poems, entitled *Bargozida-ye aš'ār-e Nāder Nāderpur: 1326-1341*, was published in 1963, with a painting by [Sohrab Sepehri](#) on its cover; it was reprinted several times.

In July 1964, Naderpour went to Italy for eighteen months and studied Italian language and literature at Perugia and Rome on a grant from the Italian Cultural Center in Tehran. He next stayed in France for approximately one year before returning to Iran in 1967. Naderpour enjoyed celebrity status by the late sixties, and participated frequently along with Šāmlu and several other poets in evenings of poetry reading organized either by the [Goethe Institute](#), or the literary journal *Kuša*, edited by Shamlu, and Rowzan, a publishing enterprise founded by Ebrāhim Golestān (b. 1921) and managed by Yadollāh Ro'ya'i. Mention should also be made of his participation in the monthly gatherings of Anjoman-e dustdārān-e *Soḵan* (Association of the friends of *Soḵan*), an association founded by Parviz Natel Khanlari and managed by Ehsan Yarshter to provide an opportunity for those interested in the journal to get together in monthly gatherings to hear lectures, debates, and other cultural activities. Anjoman-e dustdārān-e *Soḵan* gradually developed into a literary-artistic circle and held its meetings usually in an auditorium in the campus of Tehran University (Afšār, p. 41; Ḥeydari, p. 13). The events, in which many noted poets and writers, including Simin Behbehāni, and Forouġ Farroqzād, participated, usually attracted sizeable audiences and promoted



modern poetry as a cultural force.

Naderpour was an influential figure in the formation of The Writers Association of Iran (Kānun-e nevisandegān-e Iran) in 1968, and was elected, along with Simin Dānešvar, Maḥmud E'temādzāda (*Behazin*), Hušang Ebtehāj (Sāyeh, b. 1928), *Siyāvaš Kasrā'i*, and Dāriuš Āšuri (b. 1938), to the Association's first executive board (Karimi Hakkak, 1985, p. 195).

In 1971 Naderpour was invited to run Goruh-e adab-e emruz (Literature Today Circle) for the National Iranian Radio and Television network. During his seven years with the Circle, he directed numerous programs on the life and work of accomplished contemporary poets, writers and artists (Mafie, p. 15; Šarifi, p. 1391).

In the late 1970s, the Writers Association campaigned to gain legal recognition from the Iranian state as a guild association, an effort that Naderpour did not espouse. Neither was he involved with the 'Ten Nights' lectures and poetry readings held at the Goethe Institute in October 1977, during Jamšid Āmuzegār's premiership, in which criticism of the Pahlavi regime was rampant (Hillmann, 1986, p. 25; Karimi-Hakkak, 1985, pp. 209-11; for a detailed description of the 'Ten Nights,' see, Nāšer Mo'adden, *Dah šab*, Tehran, 1978).

Naderpour's poems from 1960 through 1976, the majority of which had already been published in *Soḡan* and other literary journals, were reprinted in chronological order in three individual collections in 1978: *Giāh o sang na, ātaš* (Not plant and stone, but fire, 55 poems composed from 1960 through 1965), *Az āsmān tā rismān* (From the sublime to the ridiculous, 34 poems composed from 1966 through 1970), and *Šām-e bāzpasin* (The last supper, 50 poems composed from 1971 through 1976).

Following the 1979 revolution, although not in danger, Naderpour opted for self-imposed exile in Paris in 1980 (Naderpour, *Zamin o zamān*, 1996, p. 7). The eighth collection of his poetry, entitled *Šobḥ-e doruḡin* (False dawn; [Figure 3](#)) was published in 1982 by the National Resistance Movement, led at the time by Šāpur Bakhtiār (1914-1991), Iran's last prime minister before the revolution of 1979 (Mafie, p. 15).

After a visit to the United States at the invitation of several American universities in 1984, Naderpour finally settled in Los Angeles in 1986 with his



second wife, Žāleh Baširi. He published another collection of his poems *Kun o kākēstar* (Blood and ashes, 1989; Figure 4) in Los Angeles and dedicated it to her. It was followed by the publication of *Zamin o zamān* (Earth and time; Figure 5) in 1996. Simin Behbehāni has praised *Zamin o zamān* as a masterpiece, in which the account of a private destiny is integrated with the collective destiny of a nation (Behbehāni, pp. 533-44). Throughout his years in Los Angeles, he published a large number of articles on Iranian culture, history, and literature (see below); held well-attended classes at the rooms provided by the University of California at Los Angeles and University of California at Irvine for fourteen years; participated in numerous radio and television programs and commented on Persian literature, as well as sociopolitical issues, in interviews organized by newspapers and magazines abroad. Of special note is a series of interviews, conducted by the noted journalist and author Šadreddin Elāhi, in which Naderpour traces the trajectory of Persian poetry in the 20th century, discusses the works of a wide array of literary figures, including Moḥammad-Taqī Baḥār, Nimā Yušij (1896-1960), and Tavallali, and comments, with his signature straightforwardness and energetic tone, on the stylistic and aesthetic merits of his contemporaneous poets. The interviews appeared as “Ṭefl-e šad sāla-i be nām-e še’r-e now” (Modern Persian poetry: a centennial child) in 16 consecutive issues of *Ruzegār-e now* (Ḳordād 1371 Š./June 1992-Ābān 1372 Š./November 1993), a monthly journal founded by Esmā’il Purvāli in Paris.

Naderpour was nominated for the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1993. He was also the recipient in 1993 of the Lillian Hellman and Dashiell Hammett Prize, awarded to writers whose works are banned in their homeland (Bahar et al., n. 144), and the Ehsan Yarshater Award, conferred by the Roudaki Cultural Foundation, in 1998, which was presented to him in a ceremony held in the Foundation’s headquarter in Vancouver, Canada. Naderpour’s career as a poet and a literary critic was celebrated at a conference held on the occasion of his sixtieth birthday at the University of California in Los Angeles in 1989 (Yarshater, 1990, pp. 11-15). In appreciation of his lifetime achievements as a poet, a ceremony was also held in 1996 in Washington, D.C., in which scholars and literary critics participated (Figure 6).

In the morning of Friday, 18 February 2000, Naderpour died of a heart attack in his home in Los Angeles; he was buried at Westwood Village Memorial Park and Mortuary, while his melodic voice rang out over loudspeakers. His death received wide coverage outside Iran, and several commemorative celebrations



were held in different countries. Shortly after his death, his wife established the Naderpour Foundation, dedicated to the preservation and propagation of his work and legacy.

#### POETRY: IN IRAN

Naderpour and his generation of poets and intellectuals lived in an age of passionate debates on the nature of modern poetry and the arc of its trajectory (Boroujerdi, pp. 42-45). Traces of a conflicted encounter between the followers of the traditional rules of rhythms and rhymes in Persian poetry (see 'ARUZ), on the one hand, and the radical modernists who undertook the task of not only freeing poetry from the straining rules governing the classical Persian poetry, but also locating it on a plane more socio-politically committed, on the other, are widely discernible in the literary production of the period (Yarshater, 1988, pp. 31-32; Šafi'i Kadkani, pp. 126-29; Karimi-Hakkak, 1995, pp. 104-35).

Holding a position between the two warring camps, best advocated by Khanlari in *Sokan*, many poets including [Golč'in Gilāni](#), Hušang Ebtehāj, Fereyduṅ Tavallai, and Naderpour, while acknowledging the significance of Nimā Yušij in the development of modern poetic discourse in Iran, argued that is imperative for modern poetry to maintain organic links with the vast and rich tradition of Persian poetry. (For an analytical account of the significant changes introduced by Nimā to the uniform style of classic prosody, see Taqi Purnāmdāriyān, *Kāna-am abrist*, Tehran, 2010.) Dubbed the 'neo-romantics' by some critics (Farzan, p. 342; see also Khanlari, 1956, pp. 1305-38), 'semi-traditionalists' (Zarqāni, p. 398), 'moderates' (Shafi'i, p. 130), and 'new-classicists,' by several others (Langerudi, p. 316; Nuri'alā, 1969, p. 147), they are now best remembered as the poets of the School of *Sokan*, a term coined by Naderpour himself (Nuri'alā, 1995, p. 337). Poetry of the *Sokan* School elicited mixed reactions in the then divided literary scene. It met with harsh criticism from some quarters as a reactionary trend (Barāheni, pp. 217-312; Hoquqi, 1972, p. 51). Others, however, appreciated it as a milestone in the history and development of modern Persian poetry (Dastgēyb, pp. 85-6).

Naderpour, as his introductions to his poetry collections indicate, grants essential characteristics of modern poetry in Nima's discourse, and agrees with him that phrases expressing single thoughts in a poem do not have to be of the same length; rhythm need not follow an established, monotonous pattern; and rhyme, rather than being forced on thought segments, could



appear at the end of each completed thought pattern (Naderpour, *Majmu'á-ye aš'ár*, pp. 27-40, Figure 7). Of special note is Naderpour's common introduction to the three collections that he published in 1978 (*Giyāh o sang na, ātaš; Az āsmān tā rismān; Šām-e bāz pasin*), in which he contends that a good poem, as an organic set of elements, must also benefit from the harmony of rhythms and rhymes with the poem's content, and not least, should stay in tune with the poet's imagination and affections, rather than his political predilections.

Naderpour's early poems are mostly composed in *čahārpāra* (foursome), a distinct type of quatrain sequence format in abcb rhyme, which remains within, but slightly loosens, the classical requirements of rhyme in Persian poetry. Although romantic and lyrical in imagery and tone, they often manifest leftist proclivities (Alishan, 1986, p. 87).

*Āhangarān-e pīr, hama, potkhā be dast  
bā čehrahā-ye sukta dar nur-e āftāb  
čon aktrān-e sorḡ be tāriki-e ḡorub  
češmān por az navid-e farah-bakš-e enqelāb*  
("Sorud-e kašm," 1952, *Majmu'á-ye aš'ár*, 2003, p. 167)

"Old smiths, all, hammer in hand,  
with burnt complexions under the sun  
like crimson stars in the gloom of dusk  
eyes brimming with the nascent joy of revolution"

After this early period, Naderpour's conception of commitment in literature was transformed (Yarshater, 1984, p. 51; F. Milāni, p. 120-21). Conveying a vision of existence above and beyond the immediate dynamics of the period, his poetry veered toward the philosophically sad and pessimistic end of the late nineteenth/early twentieth-century spectrum of Western literature. Loneliness, despair, and death lingered in growing intensity in the background of most of his poems throughout his life (Yarshater, 2001, p. 144; Zarqāni, p. 273), and loaded his voice with a quality and tone reminiscent of late nineteenth-century French symbolist poets, whose works he had introduced to Persian readers in *Soḡan* (Ro'yā'i, 2001, pp. 83-84).



*Zin maḥbasi ke zendagiyaš k̄ānand*

*Hargez marā tavān-e rahā'ī nist*

*Del bar omid-e marg če mibandam*

*Digar marā ze marg jodā'ī nist*

(“Nāla-i dar sokut,” Paris, 1950; *Majmu'a-ye aš'ār*, 2003, pp. 125-30)

“From this prison called life

I will never have the power to free myself

Why should I set my heart to the hope of death,

I am no longer separated from death”

(Yarshater, 2001, p. 143)

A distinct feature of Naderpour's poetry is his unique personification of nature, which neither resembles the idyllic pastorals depicted by writers and poets of the Constitutional period nor emulates the blend of regional imagery with social elements as in Nimā's poetry, or the translucent connection with nature by which Sepehri's poetry is best recognized. Sky, sun, moon, and stars, along with birds, trees, mountains, and other natural elements are often personified and called upon as the psychological landscape of Naderpour's poems and the organic repository of his sorrows and despair (Zarqāni, pp. 401-04; Salaḥšur, pp. 10-11). His sensibility to 'hear' the natural world's often muted voice and his ability to impart soul to natural objects has led critics to discern reverberations of Manučeḥri's (d. 1040) nature poems in Naderpour's poetry (Salaḥšur, pp. 10-11; Zarqāni, p. 401).

*Šab čon zani ke panjarahā rā yekān yekān*

*mibandad o čerāg-e otāqaš rā*

*kaṃuš mikonad*

*yek yek setārahā rā k̄āmuš kard o koft*

(“Koršid-e vāžgun,” 1971; *Majmu'a-ye aš'ār*, pp. 961-62)

“Night, like a woman who,

closes the windows one by one,

and turns off the lights of her room

Turned off all the stars and went to bed”



*Bā māhi-e sorḡ-rang-e labhāyaš*  
*Dar āb-e parida-rang-e simāyaš*  
*Āhesta o bišedā šenā kardam*  
 (“Dar pāyān,” 1959; *Majmu‘a-ye aš‘ār*, pp. 503-04)

“With the red fish of her lips  
 in the pallid water of her face  
 serenely and silently I swam”

Among his most celebrated poems is the title poem in his fourth poetry collection *Sorma-ye ḡoršid*, in which he portrays himself as a ‘blind bird’ who simmers ‘like a wet log’, in the ‘forest of night,’ until he is touched by the warm hand of the sun of love, whose ‘healing kohl restores his sight.’ By repeating the first line of the poem, *Man morḡ-e kur-e jangal-e šab budam* (I was a blind bird in the forest of night), at the beginning of several stanzas that follow, Naderpour not only creates a harmony in the poem, but also unites the thoughts and sentiments that have inspired it. (For a detailed analysis of the poem, see Ehsan Yarshater, “A Star Ceases to Shine,” *Persica* 17, 2001, pp.137-53; and Ġolām-Ḥosayn Yusofi, “Dar jangal-e šab,” in *Češma-ye rowšan: didār bā šā‘erān*, Tehran, 2005, pp. 766-71.) However, Naderpour’s poetry exhibits an urban sensibility, often colored by a cynical and ironic overtone. He depicts the city of Qom as a lifeless, morbid, dirty habitat of mourners and beggars (“Qom,” 1953, pp. 187-88; see also “Tehran o man,” 1959, pp. 543-44, and “Rome” 1964, pp. 741-42; in *Majmu‘a-ye aš‘ār*, 2003).

Mirror imagery appears in high frequency and plays a crucial role in the poetry of Naderpour. More than refracting that which is before them, the mirrors shed light on the unseen, affording the onlooker insight into both his own psychic set-up as well as the community in which he partakes (Yavari, pp. 40-43; Zāhedī, 160-61). The image of woman, real or imagined, has undergone radical transformations in Naderpour’s poetic repertoire. From an object of desire and a source of transitory respite in the explicit language of his early poems, which on occasions border on the erotic (“Tešnagi,” 1955; “Sofra,” 1959, p. 525; “Ḳun-e āftāb,” pp. 363-65; *Majmu‘a-ye aš‘ār*, 2003), it has moved toward a magnitude of representations in the implicative power of imageries in his later poems (Mirzādegi, pp. 40-43).

To the stock of Naderpour’s images also belongs that of Eblis/Satan, which



appears as a recurrent motif in his poetry to better showcase his desperate need to be heard by God in ‘this well of night’ (Alishan, 1986, pp. 91-92; Ro’yā’i, 2009, pp. 205-6). In one of his most celebrated poems, in which he addresses Eblis as the creator of woman, love, music, wine, and pleasure, he sympathetically portrays God as a poet, whose only poem as well as masterpiece, “sorrow,” he celebrates (“Še’r-e kodā,” 1955; *Majmu’a-ye aš’ār*, pp. 351-53).

Not all commentators, however, concurred with what they defined as Naderpour’s exaggerated engagement with imagery at the expense of the poem’s content, a quality that they held central to the effectiveness of any poem (Farro k̄zād, p. 145; Barāheni, p. 372; Fotuḥi, p. 102). “The kind of popular modern poetry that Naderpour’s work represents,” as held by a critic, “... lulls the heart, pleases the senses, or elicits some stock emotional responses. Otherwise, its pains and passions are skin-deep, as are its joys and pleasures. (Farzan, p. 343).

Naderpour also experimented, more in the depiction of love and the remembrance of bygone days, both in Iran and abroad, with the traditional mono-rhyme poetry and the genre of *ghazal* (“Tarḥ,” Tehran, 1959, pp. 513-14; “Az behešt tā duzak,” Tehran, 1962, pp. 715-19; Bar āstān-e bahārān,” Los Angeles, 1986, pp. 1371-72; *Majmu’a-ye aš’ār*, 2003). Unlike classical ghazals, however, whose lines and statements are often independent of each other, Naderpour’s ghazals have unified themes. His rendition of his ghazals as narratives has inspired critics to trace an epic disposition in his poetry (Yarshater, 2001, p. 148; Nuri’alā’, 1969, p. 158).

Verses from classical poets often appear in Naderpour’s ghazals either as an epigram, or within the poem, and broaden the poem’s strata of signification (“Ghazal 3,” Los Angeles, 1987, pp. 1327-28; *Majmu’a-ye aš’ār*, 2003). He skillfully employs internal rhyme and alliteration in his poetry. The repetition of ‘ā’ in various arrangements in “Kohan diārā,” a vastly popular mono-rhymed poem, composed on the eve of the revolution of 1979 and addressed to Iran, works to heighten the nostalgic mood of the poem:

*Kohan diārā, diār-e yārā, del az to kandam, vali nadānam  
ke gar gorizam, kojā gorizam, vagar bemānam, kojā bemānam*  
(“Kohan diārā,” 1978; *Majmu’a-ye aš’ār*, 2003, pp. 1149-50)



“O, my old land! Land of the beloved! My severance from you is done, but I know not / if I flee, to where shall I flee, and if I stay, where shall I stay”

“Kohan diārā” is also the title of Queen Farah Pahlavi’s memoir (in Persian, 2003), and also that of a collection of articles on Naderpour’s poetry, compiled and edited by Vaḥid ‘Eydgāh-e Ṭorqaba’i (*Kohan diārā: naqd o taḥlil-e aš‘ār-e Nāder Nāderpur*, Tehran 2009; (For the poem in Naderpour’s declamation, see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bSsM85nnDHQ>.)

#### POETRY: IN EXILE

The theme of exile appears in multivalent guises in Naderpour’s poetry (F. Milāni, pp. 117-24). He introduces the theme in many of his poems, including “Neqāb o namāz” (Mask and prayer, Tehran, 1962), long before his voluntary departure from Iran, by providing an epigram from Hafez, in which he laments being far from Shiraz. Naderpour’s exile, however, is more about alienation than separation. The poem’s tripartite structure conforms to prayer times in Iran, and the three symbols of *namāz* (prayer), *neqāb* (mask), and *ā’ina* (mirror) move it forward.

Emigration enshrines images of homeland in Naderpour’s imagination, and “witnessing the rise of the night sun / in another land and other horizons” (“Sunrise from the West,” 1981, Paris; *False Dawn*, pp. 69-71) leaves an indelible mark on almost all of his compositions outside of Iran. His exilic poetry also betrays his negative estimation of the 1979 revolution as a blow dealt to the country and its culture. Unlike many exiled poets and novelists, however, Naderpour shied away from bilingual poems, and foreign words rarely made their way into his poetry.

While in Iran, Naderpour was criticized by his engagé contemporaries for showing no interest in political issues after his initial, and perhaps lukewarm, forays into the political arena. Away from Iran, however, when many of his critics preferred to remain silent (Matini, pp. 404-5; Kōsnām, pp. 842-45), he turned into a critic of the revolutionary theocracy, and a melancholy voice for the Iranian diaspora (A. Milani, p. 57; Yarshater, 2001, p. 152).

*Ān zelzela-i ke k̄āna rā larzānd*  
*yekšab hama ċiz rā degargun kard*  
*Ĉon šo’la jahān-e k̄ofta rā suzānd*



ḵākestar-e šobḥ rā por az ḵun kard

(“Ḵun o ḵākestar,” Nice, 1982; *Majmuʿa*, pp. 1275-76)

“That earthquake which shook the home

One night turned everything upside down

Flame-like it burned the sleeping world

And brimmed the ash gray of the morning dawn with blood”

(“Blood and Ashes,” *False Dawn*, 1986, p. 74; for an analysis of the significance of ‘blood’ and ‘ash’ in the poetry of Naderpour, see Rāmin Aḥmadi, pp. 30-34).

As some critics have observed, Naderpour’s departure from Iran crafted a lyrical persona more at ease with departing from rules of classical versification (Nuriʿalā, 1969, p. 249; Alishan, 1984, p. 170). He modified the length of his verses, changed the number of lines in each stanza more often, and even abandoned rhyme in some poems. His long and noted elegy for Sepehri, among many others, consists of nine stanzas with differing numbers of lines ranging from 5 to 22, without following a regular pattern in each stanza (“Šoḥrāb o Simorḡ,” Paris, 1983; *Majmuʿa*, pp. 1295-1301)

Naderpour’s refined language (Yusofi, p. 489; Zarrinkub, p. 242), and the rich poetical imagery of his well-crafted poems, imbued with a new and modern system of signification (ʿĀbedi, p. 406), has transformed him into a central figure in popularizing modern poetry and familiarizing the growing Persian audiences with central tenets of Nimā’s poetic discourse (Nuriʿalā, 1969, pp. 407-9; Aminpur, p. 467). Many of his contemporary poets have commended his style for clarity and musicality (Aḵavān-e Tāleṭ, p. 52), thematic and organizational coherence (Pežmān-e Baḵtiyāri, p. 221), and innovative use of imagery (Zohari, p. 282; Tavallali, p. 135; Moširi, pp. 141-42). They have praised him as a poet whose poems are his signature (Ḥoquqi, 1998, p. 537) and as a clairvoyant poet with a penetrating lucidity that permits him to see the reality of things beyond formalism, and foresee the course of future events (Roʿyāʿi, 1985, pp. 436-40). He is regarded as “the most emulated poet, particularly among Persian speakers of Afghanistan and Central Asia (Karimi-Hakkak, 2005, p. 395) and as a poet whose poetry has already been recognized as a modern classic of Persian literature (Yarshater, 2001, p. 153).

PROSE



Although Naderpour is primarily recognized as a poet, he has also earned the appreciation of many for the eloquent, melodious, and well-sculptured prose of his essays (Yarshater, 2001, p. 140). He authored many articles on Iranian culture and history (see below). Appended to his poetry collections, be it published in Iran or abroad, there is always an extensive critical introduction on themes and currents in modern Persian poetry, which also map [his] internal journey step by step and show the continuity of [his] style (Mafie, p. 87).

Naderpour's nostalgic treatment of pre-Islamic motifs and imageries in his exilic poems ("Az panjāh tā haftād," Los Angeles, 1999, pp. 1535-39; "Dar ān laḥza-ye taḵ-e tāriḵ," Los Angeles, 1998, pp. 1545-48; "Ey pir, ey zamān," Los Angeles, 1996, pp. 1513-14; "Koṭba-ye zemestāni," Los Angeles, 1993, pp. 1440-42), as well as in articles published in *Iran-Nameh*, *Merhregān*, *Iranshenasi*, and *Rahavard* (see below), has led critics to trace echoes of Sadeq Hedayat's worldview, one that creates a sharp binary division between Persians and Arabs and is derisory of the latter (Saad, pp. 129-30). Of special note is an article entitled "Poli bar farāz-e rudḵana-ye Suren" (*Iran Nameh* 11/4, Fall 1993, pp. 585-98), on the significance of the Suren River in Hedayat's most noted novella, *Buf-e kur*, in which Naderpour considers Suren not only as a river that runs through the two halves of the novella, but also as a line that demarcates Iran's glorified and harmonious past from its decrepit and fragmented present (Naderpour, 1993, pp. 585-98).

Naderpour's introductions, along with the several interviews that he gave over the years, provide a wealth of information on his preferences and evaluations of his peers. Noteworthy is his derision of Farroḵzād's poetic influence, which he found to be short-lived and insignificant (Naderpour, 1992, pp. 63-67). In this, Naderpour remains solitary, for not only is his assessment not shared by the consensus of the field of modern Persian literary criticism (Hillmann, 1986, p. 11), but it has also been contradicted by the ever-increasing popularity enjoyed by Farroḵzād's poetry, both in Iran and globally.

Naderpour's poetic legacy remains a vibrant subject of study, as evidenced by its ever-growing bibliography. Particularly noteworthy in this regard are *False Dawn: Persian Poems (1951-1984)* by Nader Naderpour (tr., with an extensive introduction, by Michael Craig Hillmann, Austin, Texas, 1986); *Dar āina: naqd o barresi-e še'r-e Nāder Nāderpur* (ed. Yazdān Salaḥšur, Tehran, 2001); *Nader Naderpour: Iranian Poet, Thinker, Patriot* (Farhad Mafie, New York, 2003); and *Kohan diārā: naqd o taḥlil-e aš'ār-e Nāder Nādepur* (ed. Vaḥid 'Eydgāh-e



Torqaba'i, Tehran, 2009). As held by a critic, “decades and centuries from now, when anthologists, critics, and readers look at twentieth century Persian poetry and decide on the enduring poets of that century, Nader Naderpour’s name will be on the list” (Hillmann, 2003, p. xiv).

A complete edition of Naderpour’s poetry collections is posthumously published as *Majmu‘a-ye aš‘ār-e Nāder Nāderpur* in two volumes (Los Angeles, 2003). The edition also includes Naderpour’s previously mentioned introductions. His poetry has been translated into many languages. In addition to English, selections of Naderpour’s poetry were translated into Dutch as *Een van was, kleiner dan God: Gedichten van Nader Naderpur* (tr. Hans de Bruijn and Asghar Seyed Gohrab, 2006) and several times into French, including by Alain Lance and Chahrachub Amirchahi (*Iran poésie et autres rubriques*, London, 1958), by Franciszek Machalski (*La littérature de l’Iran contemporain*, vol. III. *La poésie Persane après la seconde guerre mondiale*, Warsaw, 1980, pp. 93-103), and by Parviz Abolgassemi (*Fille de la Coupe*, Paris, 2001). Naderpour’s poetry has also been translated into several other languages, including by Jina Labrio Lakarozo into Italian.

In addition to his translations of French poets, Naderpour also published, with Bižan Oušidari et al., a collection of poems from Italian, entitled *Haft čehra az šā‘erān-e mo‘āšer-e Itāliā* (Tehran, 1974). Mention should also be made of *Yād-nāma-ye Hohanes Toumanian*, with Hušang Ebtehāj et al. (Tehran, 1969).

#### Poetry collections

*As āsemān tā rismān* (From the sublime to the ridiculous), Tehran, 1978

*Čašmhā o dasthā* (Eyes and hands), Tehran, 1954

*Dočtar-e jām* (Daughter of the cup), Tehran, 1955

*Giāh o sang, na, ātaš* (Not plant and stone, but fire), Tehran, 1978

*Kun o kākestar* (Blood and ashes), 1989

*Majmu‘a-ye aš‘ār-e Nāder Nāderpur* (Collected works), 2 vols., Los Angeles, 2003

*Šām-e bāzpasin* (The last supper), Tehran, 1978

*Šē‘r-e angur* (The grape poem), Tehran, 1958



*Şobh-e doruġin* (False dawn), Paris, 1982

*Sorma-ye koršid* (The healing kohl of the sun), Tehran, 1960

*Zamin o zamān* (Earth and time), Los Angeles, 1996

Selected articles

“Do kaffa-ye lafz o ma’nā dar tarāzu-ye še’r-e emruz” *Iran Nameh* 7/2, Winter 1989, pp. 230-38

“Irāniān: yekka-savārān-e do-gānagi,” *Iran Nameh* 12/3, Summer 1994

“Maktab-e Soġan va naṭr-e dabiri,” *Iranshenasi* 3/2, Summer 1991, pp. 247-55

“Mardi az bolandihā: be yād-e Doktor Parviz Nātel Kānlari,” *Āyanda* 16/9-12, Āḍar-Esfand 1369 Š./January-March 1990, pp. 643-47

“Mašreq dar ġorbat o ġorbat dar maġreb,” *Iran Nameh* 10/2, Spring 1992, pp. 251-64

“Poli bar farāz-e nahr-e Suren,” *Iran Nameh* 11/4, Fall 1993, pp. 585-98

“Šā’eri bā tasalloṭ bar bayān o ċira-dasti dar tašvir-sāzi,” in *Mo’arrefi va šenākt-e Sohrāb Sepehri*, ed., Šahnāz Morādi-Ku’i, Tehran, 2001, pp. 195-99

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Leonardo Alishan, “Šobḥ-e doruḡin,” *Iran Nameh* 3/1, Autumn 1984, pp. 162-75.

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