



PURDĀWUD, EBRĀHIM

PURDĀWUD, EBRĀHIM (Ebrahim Poure Davoud; b. Rašt, b. 4 or 5 March 1886; d. Tehran, 17 November 1968; [Figure 1](#)), Iranologist, philologist, academician, poet, writer, and translator, professor of ancient Iranian culture and languages.

Life. Ebrāhim Purdāwud was born in the Sabza Meydān district of Rašt. His father, Hāji Dāwud b. Bāqer b. Moḥammad-Ḥosayn Rašti, was a reputable landowner and trader in Gilān. His mother, Qamar, was the daughter of Mollā Ḥasan Komāmi, a *mojtahed* (religious scholar) of the period (Purdāwud, 1960, p. 765; Moʿin, pp. 1-2). He was the family's fourth male child. His brothers took "Dāwudi" or "Dāwudzāda" as the family name, but Ebrāhim, while studying in Beirut, chose the name Purdāwud (based on the orthography used in his correspondence and on his personal seal ([Figure 2](#)), he preferred Pur-e-Dāwud, with a *kasra* under the "r" and Dāwud written with a single *vav*, and the Latin script form Pour-e-Davoud; his books and articles in India generally use the spelling Poure Davoud). He had no male offspring, so others using the family name "Purdāwud" are not related to Ebrāhim (Dāwudi, p. 19).

Purdāwud began his studies in a *maktab-kāna* (see [EDUCATION iii](#)) in Rašt that had been founded by his father and where Aḵund Mirzā Moḥammad-ʿAli had been appointed as teacher (Purdāwud, 1960, p. 765). Purdāwud continued his education at the Ḥāji Ḥasan school in the Šāleḥābād mosque in Rašt, donning the robe of a student of the religious sciences. Among his fellow students of this period, one may mention Mirzā Kuček-e Jangali (Nikuya, 1999, p. 103; see [JANGALI MOVEMENT](#)). One of the fruits of studying in this school



was Purdāwud's perfect knowledge of the Arabic language, both its grammar and syntax. On the other hand, Purdāwud often expressed dissatisfaction at having wasted years of his life at that school ("Dargodašt-e Purdāwud," pp. 194-97). He acknowledged that studying at that school drew him towards poetry (Purdāwud, 1927a, p. 10). During this period, without his father's knowledge, he learned the rudiments of French from Sa'd-Allāh Khan Darviš (Mehrdād, pp. 106-7).

At the age of twenty (April 1905), accompanied by his brother Solaymān Dāwudzāda and his teacher Sayyed 'Abd al-Raḥim Kaḵkāli (d. 1942, director of the Ḥāji Ḥasan school), Purdāwud went to Tehran (Purdāwud, 1927a, p. 110). For three years, he attended the courses of Mirzā Moḥammad-Ḥosayn Khan Solṭān-al-Falāsefa, who taught traditional medicine, and began to acquire a knowledge of classical Iranian medicine. He studied Ebn Sinā's *Qānun*, the *Šarḥ-e asbāb*, and the *Šarḥ-e Nafisi* (Purdāwud, 1964a, p. 20). During this time, he began studying French at the Alliance Française in Tehran (Mo'in, p. 12; see [FRANCE xv. FRENCH SCHOOLS IN PERSIA](#)). This period was contemporary with the Constitutionalist movement (see [CONSTITUTIONAL REVOLUTION](#)). Purdāwud joined a group called the Aḥrār (noble ones), to which Sayyed Ḥasan Modarres and [Moḥammad-Taqi Khan Pesyān](#) (q.v.) also belonged (Dāwudi, p. 16). In 1908, despite his father's opposition and without his family's permission, he went to Beirut (Purdāwud, 1964a, p. 20). There he began studying French language and literature at a non-religious school. He became acquainted with Moḥammad-'Ali Jamālzāda (see [JAMALZADEH](#)) and Mahdi Malekzāda (1882-1956), the son of the pro-Constitutionalist preacher Malek-al-Motakallemin (1860-1908; see [CONSTITUTIONAL REVOLUTION i](#)). This acquaintance led to friendship and to collaborative social and political efforts. Purdāwud's famous *qasida* with the *radif* (refrain) *afsus! afsus! Alas! alas!*) was composed as an elegy for Malek-al-Motakallemin after he was hanged in Tehran following the anti-Constitutionalist coup of 1908 (Purdāwud, 1927a, p. 23).

After two and a half years living and studying in Beirut, Purdāwud returned to Iran for a brief family visit and then traveled to France. There, in 1910, he met Jamālzāda again. Jamālzāda went on to Lausanne, but Purdāwud decided to study international law and began his studies in France, first at the Beauvais high school, and then at the University of Paris. Among his professors were Charles Gide (1847-1932) and Marcel Planiol (1853-1931).

During this period, Purdāwud published a gelatin-print newspaper, *Dohul* (The

Drum) (Purdāwud, 1927a, introd., p. 24), of which little or nothing survives; he himself had no desire to preserve it, and later tried to collect and destroy all the copies (Mostafawi, p. 102). Perhaps his lack of attachment to their preservation was because of its use of Dasātiri words (a fabricated language from a forged “prophetic” book; see [DASĀTĪR](#)) in presenting its topics (Purdāwud, 1947, pp. 17-18). Reportedly, some copies of two numbers of *Dohul* have been found among the papers and documents of Waqār-al-Salṭana Gilāni (Dehqān, pp. 17-18; Nikuya, 1999, p. 105), and another copy was owned by Moḥammad-‘Ali Tarbiat (Purdāwud, 1947, p. 18).

In 1911, in Paris, Purdāwud became an active member of the Iranian Students Literary Society (Anjoman-e adabi-ye dānešjuyān-e Irāni), where he became acquainted with [Moḥammad Qazvini](#) (q.v.). This acquaintance resulted in a long-lasting friendship (Purdāwud, 1984, p. *noh*). At the same time, in Lausanne, a society called the Society of Promoters of Knowledge (Anjoman-e dānešparvarān) was formed. Jamālzāda and Ḥabib Allāh Khan Šaybāni (1885-1949) were appointed to go to Paris and invite young Iranians there to join this society. Purdāwud immediately accepted the invitation (Jamālzāda, III, pp. 196-97). In 1914, with the help of Moḥammad Qazvini and Ašrafzāda Tabrizi, Purdāwud published the monthly *Irānšahr* (q.v.) in four pages (three in Persian and one in French). Three numbers were published in that year; the fourth was suspended due to the outbreak of World War I (Mo‘in, p. 29).

At the invitation of the Committee of Iranian Nationalists (Komita-ye melliun-e Irāni) in 1915, Purdāwud went to Berlin to support movements in opposition to the Russians and British (Mo‘in, p. 12), and he was next dispatched, along with Jamālzāda and others, on a mission to Baghdad (Purdāwud, 1927a, p. 11) on behalf of the activities of the Committee of Iranian Nationalists to urge Iranians to support Germany and the Ottoman Empire against Russia and the British (Bayāt, p. 294). In order to advance these nationalist beliefs, Purdāwud published the newspaper *Rastakiz*, from 10 August 1915 until 3 April 1916, in twenty-five issues; in publishing it, he did so under the pseudonym “Gol” (Rose) (Purdāwud, 1927a, p. 13). In this newspaper, in addition to political issues, Purdāwud also introduced discussions of cultural issues, which were not supported by some of his contemporaries. He knowingly chose the newspaper’s name, which means “resurrection,” so that his compatriots might come to their senses and awaken from the sleep of death (Mo‘in, p. 31; Bayāt, pp. 294-95). Meanwhile, the nationalist and pro-German forces in Tehran were defeated and became dispersed throughout the



western regions of Iran, with the central nucleus of the opponents of Russia and Britain being established in [Kermanshah](#) (q.v.). Purdāwud and his associates also went to Kermanshah, and the publication of *Rastakiz* continued there. Later, Purdāwud returned to Baghdad and resumed publication of the paper there. The paper's renewed publication was met with severe censorship from Ottoman officials, who no longer gave him permission to publish because he did not wish to support their proposal for an Islamic union, which Purdāwud considered to be a pretense and a trap (Purdāwud, 1927a, p.12; the allusion there is to a verse by Hafez criticizing religious hypocrisy). From another quarter, according to the report of Esmā'il Amirḳizi to Sayyed Ḥasan Taqizāda, the ulama of Najaf rose up in opposition to *Rastakiz*, claiming that the paper's director wanted to spread "fire-worship" throughout Iran. Amirḳizi explained that this claim was incorrect, because responsibility for the paper lay with an editorial board. In this regard, Jamālzāda also said in a report that, in dress and appearance, Purdāwud was not in harmony with the society of the day, but that the people of Baghdad were not upset by this and thought that he was an Armenian (Bayāt, pp. 300-301).

Following several months' residence in Baghdad, Purdāwud went to Istanbul, intending to travel to Berlin. There, because of the hostility of the Iranian ambassador and his stirring up trouble, the Ottomans became suspicious of Purdāwud and prevented him from leaving, so that his residence stretched on for several months (Purdāwud, 1927a, p. 12). The continuation of this purposeless stay in Istanbul made Purdāwud desperate. In a letter to Taqizāda, while expressing his respect, Purdāwud thanked him since his support had made it possible for him to publish *Rastakiz* in Baghdad. He declared his regret that, despite his strong attachment to it, he could not continue to publish the paper as it was under German control and no longer independent, and he appealed to Taqizāda to provide the means for him to return to Europe (Purdāwud, 1987, pp. 278-81).

After Germany's defeat, a limited number of eminent Iranian scholars engaged in self-criticism of their wartime activities; Purdāwud was one of them (Bayāt, pp. 302-3). He realized that he had been duped by the Germans and had become their tool (Purdāwud, 1927a, p. 12). After the war ended, he composed a short poem called "al-Tawba, al-tawba" (Repentance, repentance!), considered this whole experience to have been an error in judgment, and reproached himself, believing he should have maintained neutrality (Purdāwud, 1927a, p. 57).

Finally, preparations for his journey were completed, and Purdāwud left for Germany. He intended to go to Switzerland but was not given permission and was forced to remain in Germany, so he continued his studies in law, first in Berlin University and then in the University of Erlangen (Purdāwud, 1927a, p. 12).

Purdāwud's residence in Germany; his profound immersion in the study of the German language; his association with Taqizāda and Qazvini; his association with famous German Orientalists, many of whom frequented the Iranian Center (Kānun-e Irāniān), as well as with the group of writers of the newspaper *Kāva* (q.v.); and especially his acquaintance with [Josef Markwart](#) (q.v.), who was greatly respected, changed the course of Purdāwud's life. He turned to the study of the languages and civilization of ancient Iran; these studies became the constant goal and attachment of his life (Afšār, p. 19; Mo'in, p. 12). He put aside his law studies and became the first Iranian student to take up the study of Avestan and Middle Persian language and literatures.

In 1920, Purdāwud married the daughter of a German dentist from Stettin; his witnesses were Taqizāda and 'Abd-al-Šokur Tabrizi (see the marriage certificate, Mir Ansāri, pp. 379-80 and 454; Mostafawi, p. 40). In 1922, his daughter Purāndoḡt was born (d. 2016); she later married Faṭḥ-Allāh Nafisi, the younger brother of Sa'id Nafisi (q.v.), and bore him four children: Hormozd, Anāhitā, Āraš, and Parvin (Mostafawi, p. 41). Purdāwud dedicated a number of his works to his daughter and her children.

Purdāwud returned to Iran in 1924 with his family for a stay of a year and a half (Purdāwud, 1927a, p. 12). Then, in 1925, he went to India at the invitation of the Parsis, and stayed there for two and a half years. This stay was an opportunity to meet Indian Parsis, including [Jjibhoy Dinshah Irani](#) (q.v.), and to take part in special Zoroastrian ceremonies (*Yazišn*) in which non-Zoroastrians were not usually allowed (Purdāwud, 1926a, pp. 15-17), and to present lectures to learned and Parsi societies in India. During this time, he began to translate the *Avesta* (q.v.) into Persian. The publication of some of his scholarly works, a collection of lectures, and another of poetry were completed during his stay in India.

Purdāwud returned to Germany in 1928 and continued to study the Avesta and ancient Iranian civilization. During this period, he completed his translations of the second volume of the *Yašts*, the *Khordeh Avesta* (q.v.), and



the first part of the *Yasna*.

In 1932, at the request of Rabindranath Tagore, Purdāwud was appointed by the Iranian government to go from Berlin to India to teach ancient Iranian civilization at Visva-Bharati University in the Bengali city of Santiniketan. On Tagore's order, he was honored with an official welcome (Purdāwud, 1964a, pp. 22-23; Mo'in, pp. 72-73). Purdāwud taught there in 1932 and 1933. Purdāwud collaborated with M. Žiā'-al-Din, professor of Persian at the university, on a translation into Persian of a hundred of Rabindranath Tagore's lyric poems, selected by Tagore himself; the volume was published as *Šad band-e Tāgur* (Mo'in, p. 96).

At the Seventh Eastern Indian Congress in 1933, in addition to membership in the Avestan Group which had been set up under the presidency of the Parsi scholar I.J.S. Taraporewala, Purdāwud delivered a lecture entitled "Some References About Buddhism in Iranian Literature and History," and was also in charge of the Persian and Arabic sections of the congress (Mo'in, p. 75).

After teaching in India for two years, in March 1934 Purdāwud went from Bombay to Germany. After residing in Germany for three years, and continuing his Avestan research, in 1937, following an invitation by the Iranian government, he returned to Iran (Mo'in, p. 7). The University of Tehran hired him, at the highest salary and as professor, to teach the courses "Avesta," "Ancient Iranian Civilization," and "Ancient Iranian Inscriptions" in the Faculty of Law and Political Science (q.v.; Nikuya, 1999, p. 115; Šadiq, pp. 145-50).

In 1938, Purdāwud became a "permanent member" of the *Farhangestān* (q.v.; Mir Ansāri, p. 398, doc. no. 8). In 1943, when 'Isā Šadiq (q.v.) was Minister of Culture, Purdāwud traveled to India at the invitation of the Indian government to renew Iranian-Indian cultural relations and visit cultural centers (Mo'in, p. 8). In 1945, Purdāwud established the Iranology Society (Anjoman-e Irānšenāsi), the only non-governmental academic society at that time, in Tehran. The Society's activities included research on ancient civilization and languages, establishing classes in this field at the *Firuz Bahrām* (q.v.) high school, and publication of the *Našriya-ye Irānšenāsi* and of books on ancient Iranian civilization (Afšār, 1975, p. 20; Nikuya 1999, pp. 115-16).

In 1945, the Society for Soviet-Iranian Cultural Relations (Anjoman-e rawābet-

e farhangi-e Iran wa Šuravi) celebrated Purdāwud's sixtieth birthday in Anzali (Mir Ansāri, p. 406, doc. no. 15). In 1946, Tehran University celebrated his sixtieth birthday with special honors; on this occasion a Festschrift, *Yād-nāma-ye Purdāwud* (ed. M. Mo'in), was published in two volumes, in Persian and European languages, which was the first Festschrift published in Iran. 'Ali-Akbar Siāsi (1896-1990), then the president of the University of Tehran, presented Purdāwud with a certificate on behalf of the University Council in recognition of his services in reviving ancient Iranian civilization and the Avesta in the Ferdowsi Hall of the Faculty of Letters and Humanities on 11 November 1946; he was also awarded the Medal of Knowledge first class by 'Ali Šāyḡān (q.v.), the Minister of Culture at the time, on behalf of the Supreme Council of the Ministry of Culture (Šurā-ye 'āli-ye Vezārat-e farhang) (Mir Ansari, pp. 408-12, docs. no. 17 and 18).

Purdāwud participated in the Twenty-Fifth Orientalist Congress in Moscow in 1961 and served as president of the Iranian Committee. On this trip, he also visited several northern European countries (Afšār, p. 18). In the same year, he also took part in the Third Congress on Jewish Civilization, established to commemorate the 2500th anniversary of the freeing of the Jews by Cyrus the Great in Jerusalem; he was welcomed by the then President of Israel Yitzhak Ben-Zvi and by David Ben-Gurion ("Dargodašt-e Purdāwud," p. 200).

In a letter dated 9 February 1962 to Moḡammad Rowšan, Purdāwud expressed his displeasure at the events of January 21 of that year, when military forces attacked students of the University of Tehran (Mir Ansāri, pp. 426-27, 465, doc. no. 24).

On 1 December 1962, by the order of Moḡammad Reżā Shah Pahlavi (1919-80), Purdāwud became a member of the Royal Cultural Council of Iran (Šurā-ye farhangi-ye salṭanati-ye Irān) (Mir Ansāri, pp. 428, 466, doc. no. 25).

In the academic year 1961-62, in recognition of Purdāwud's services, **Arbāb Rostam Giv** (q.v.) built an elementary school in Tehrānpārs and named it "Purdāwud"; it is considered one of the area's best schools (Mostafawi, pp. 323-25; Nikuya 1999, p. 21). There was also a street in Rašt named for him, but it was changed after the Islamic Revolution.

Purdāwud retired from the University of Tehran on 23 September 1963 (Mir Ansari, pp. 429, 467, doc. no. 26). After his retirement, he continued his cooperation with the university for a short while (Mir Ansāri, p. 444, doc. no.



33). In 1964, Purdawud participated in the Twenty-Sixth Orientalist Congress in New Delhi, taking on the duties of the Congress's Iranian Committee and Iranology Committee. On this trip, he received an honorary doctorate from Delhi University (Mir Ansāri, p. 471), and all the Parsi societies recognized his efforts in a shared session in Bombay (Nikuya, 1999, pp. 20-22). The same year, he received the title "distinguished professor" from the University of Tehran (Mir Ansāri, pp. 442-43, 469, doc. no. 32). On 26 January 1965, the representative of Pope Paul VI presented Purdāwud with the Order of Saint Sylvester (Mir Ansāri, p. 472; Afšār, p. 24). On 7 April 1966, he received the Tagore Medal, one of the highest official medals of India, presented by the Iranian-Indian Cultural Society (Anjoman-e farhangi-ye Iran va Hend; Nikuya 1999, pp. 213-14). In June 1965, Purdāwud was chosen for membership in the World Academy of Art and Science and was the first and only Iranian member ("Dargodašt-e Purdāwud," p. 202).

Purdāwud passed away from a heart attack on the morning of 17 November 1968 at his home in Tehran. On 19 November 1968, his body was taken, with special honors and in the presence of high-ranking political and military officials, from the Sepahsālār mosque and moved to Rašt. In Rašt too, with special ceremonies and in the presence of military, political, and local officials as well as an outpouring of ordinary people, his body was borne in a funeral procession to be buried next to his father and brother at the family mausoleum located in the *maktab-kāna* founded by his father Ḥāji Dāwud (Nikuya, 1999, p. 30). In Rašt, that day was declared a public holiday (Mostafawi, p. 280).

A mourning ceremony for Purdāwud was held on 23 November 1968 in the Sepahsālār School in Tehran, with Ġolām-Rezā Jamšidi Kāšmari as the eulogist (see *Eṭṭelā'āt* 20 and 21 December 1968, pp. 19 and 27; Mostafawi, p. 280; Nikuya, 1999, pp. 27-28). Numerous other sessions for mourning and honoring him were held in various cities by scholarly and cultural societies and organizations of the country and by Zoroastrian societies. A hall in the Pahlavi University of Shiraz (*Kayhān*, 27 November 1968) and a library in Rašt (*Eṭṭelā'āt*, 8 December 1968) were named after him. In 2017, the Pourdavoud Center for the Study of the Iranian World was established at the University of California-Los Angeles.

Purdāwud's personal library in the field of ancient Iranian civilization was rich and without peer; after his death it was donated by his family to the University of Tehran (Nikuya, 1999, p. 32). In April 1976, it was housed in the



Rašid-al-Din Fażl-Allāh Hamadāni Hall in the Central Library of the university, and a plaque commemorating Purdāwud was fixed above the door of the hall. A bronze statue, a gift from his family, stands in the hall of the University of Tehran's Central Library alongside statues of other Iranian scholars. In February 1976, the journal *Farhang-e Irān-zamin* published a special issue (no. 21) in honor of Purdāwud titled *Yād-gār-nāma-ye Purdāwud / Miscellanea in honorem Ibrāhīm Pūrdāvūd*, a collection of articles by Iranian and international scholars and Iranologists, edited by Iraj Afšār.

Purdāwud's religious and ethical views. Love for Iran and for its ancient civilization were chief among Purdāwud's beliefs, and all the efforts of his scholarly life were in this field of endeavor. In response to those who asked about his religion, he would answer with his famous verse: "If you ask about Purdāwud's faith / the Pārsi youth worships Iran" (see Mo'in, p. 38; Afšār, p. 16; Mostafawi, p. 63).

After his final return to Iran and the beginning of his university career, Purdāwud dedicated his life to knowledge. He accepted no political employment. As far as possible, he avoided participating in celebratory gatherings and sessions. His company was pleasant. He had his own particular sense of sarcastic humor, which was never biting. He accepted everyone with ease, and was a true lover of knowledge (Afšār, pp. 17-19).

Purdāwud and Iranology. During his life and his studies in Europe (especially in Germany) and in India, Purdāwud was in friendly contact and communication with notable Iranologists. Perhaps the first spark of his attachment to the study of the languages of ancient Iran was lit by [Antoine Meillet](#) (q.v.; Farahvaši, interview with *Eṭṭelā'āt*, 20 November 1968, p. 7). After that, meeting Josef Markwart in Germany had a great influence on him. Purdāwud had scholarly dealings with Oskar Mann (1867-1917), Martin Hartmann (1851-1918), [Hans Heinrich Schaeder](#) (q.v.), Eugen Mittwoch (1876-1942), [E. G. Browne](#) (q.v.) and others. His relationship with the French scholar [G. J. Edgard Blochet](#) (q.v.) was even closer, and Blochet had Purdāwud's name inscribed in Pahlavi script on his ring (Mo'in, pp. 15-17; Mostafawi, pp. 111-12).

Among the Indian Parsis, Dinshah Jijibhoy Irani had the closest relationship with Purdāwud, and during his stay in India made things easier for him in all sorts of ways (on Irani's work with Purdāwud, see Marashi, pp. 195-202). In addition to him, [Jivanji Jamshedji Modi](#), [B. N. Dhabhar](#), [Behramgor T.](#)



Anklesaria, Sohrab J. Bulsara, Maneckji N. Dhalla, Darab Peshotan Sanjana (qq.v), I. J. S. Taraporewala, and Šams-al-‘Olamā Kayqobād known as Sardār Puna were other Indian Parsis with whom Purdāwud had scholarly and friendly relations during his stay in India (Purdāwud, 1928, p. 56, ii, p. 12). Among non-Parsi Indians may be mentioned Moḥammad Eshāq. Purdāwud was also respected and admired by Iranian scholars of the time such as Ḥasan Taqizāda (see [TAQIZADEH](#)), Moḥammad Qazvini, [Kāẓemzāda H. Irānšahr](#) (q.v.), and others. Many of Iran’s scholars and Iranologists were trained by Purdāwud: Moḥammad Mo‘in, the first to complete a doctorate in Persian literature at the University of Tehran, finished his doctoral thesis (“Mazdayasnā va adab-e Fārsi”) under Purdāwud’s supervision. Among other students may be mentioned Ehsan Yarshater, Yahyā Māhyār Navvābi (1913-2001), [Bahrām Farahvaši](#) (q.v.), Iraj Afšār (1925-2011), and Manučehr Sotuda (1913-2016).

PURDĀWUD’S POETRY AND LITERARY WORKS

Purdāwud began his poetic career by composing elegies under the pen-name “Lesān” (Tongue). Following his return to Tehran, he composed love poems; and later, after the beginning of World War I and his political struggles, the content of his poems became “epic” (Purdāwud, 1927a, pp. 10). These “epic” poems were published in *Rastakiz* under the pen-name “Gol” (Purdāwud, 1927a, p. 13). He also used the pen-name “Pur” (Son) (see Mo‘in, p. 35). He never considered himself a great poet, and he became known as a poet more among Orientalists and Indian Parsis than among Iranians (Mo‘in, p. 32). For E. G. Browne, “He is especially skillful in the employment [in his poems] of old Persian words” (Browne, p. xviii). Moḥammad Eshāq considered his patriotic poetry first class (Mo‘in, p. 32). In Iran, too, Qazvini considered Purdāwud “one of the capable poets of the present age, with an elegant manner and a strange style which approaches pure Persian.” Concerning the poem “say *Yaθā ahu*, recite *Ašām vohu*,” he expresses this opinion: “It is in a rare meter, one which is not mentioned at all in Šams-e Qays’s *al-Mo‘jam*; but the *Ġiaṭ al-logāt* mentions this very meter and considers it a branch of *motadārek*” (Purdāwud, 1931, p. 42, n. 2). [Ġolām-Ḥosayn Minbāšīān](#) (q.v.) set this poem to music as a song (Purdāwud, 1931, pp. 42-44) that later became an anthem for Zoroastrian schools. The subjects of Purdāwud’s poems were mainly patriotism and ancient Iranian civilization (Mo‘in, pp. 36-39). During World War I, his “epic” poetry especially had an unprecedented popular reception, and in Baghdad and Kermanshah the poor and young people sang his poems



with enthusiasm (Jamālzāda, 1969, 6/2-3, pp. 199-200).

Purāndoḳt-nāma is a collection of selected poems published with Dinshah Irani's English translation in Bombay in 1927 and dedicated to Purdāwud's daughter, Purāndoḳt. In the introduction, he presented a short history of his life up to that time; before moving to the poetry, he included an essay on *dēn-dibīrī* (q.v.) and Achaemenid dating. The poems in the collection included *qasidas*, *ḡazals*, *moqaṭa'āt* (short occasional poems), *mosammaṭāt* (strophic poems), and *tarji 'bands* (poems with refrains). Some of his "epic" poems composed during World War I were also included.

Yazdegerd šahriār is a *maṭnawi* (poem in couplets) about the life and murder of the Sasanian ruler Yazdegerd III (624-51 CE). It was written as a souvenir pamphlet for the Ferdowsi millenary celebration (see [FERDOWSI iv. MILLENNARY CELEBRATION](#)). Part of it was composed in Berlin and part in Visva-Bharati, and it was published in Bombay in 1933.

Although Purdāwud did not consider himself a literary figure and accomplished writer (Purdāwud, 1964a, pp. 18-19), he is viewed as one of Iran's great contemporary prose authors (Yarshater, 1975, p. 12). His style is flowing and lucid; in his writings, he avoids padding and superfluities (Qazvini, 1931, pp. 11-12). Purdāwud opted for Persian words in his writing, but he judiciously and with no prejudice used Arabic words when required, since meaning was never sacrificed to vocabulary. "In his translations of the Avesta he had managed without going against the normal Persian grammatical rules and manufacturing words and etymologies well beyond an ordinary reader's understanding and reach, to use many ancient words and pleasing expressions, thereby adding to the wealth of Persian vocabulary and technical terms" (Yarshater, 1960, p. 34). His Avestan translations are considered among the best works published from the beginning of the Constitution up to his own time and are counted among the most important sources for Iranian history. Some of his writings contain satire (*ṭanz*), but his quips and jokes, even when critical, hold no bitterness (Yarshater, 1975, pp. 12-13).

Pinpricks and sweetness, roughness and gentleness are also mixed together in his writings (Afšār, p. 17), although he generally avoided extreme opinions (see Yarshater, 1952). Some considered his pen to be insolent. One of his critics in this respect was [Mojtaba Minovi](#) (q.v.), who, in the course of introducing some of Purdāwud's scholarly research, criticized his methods (Minovi, 1927,



p. 557; 1956). Moḥit Ṭabāṭābaʿi was also one of his harshest opponents and critics, but later praised his Avesta translations as well as his exceptional moral character (Moḥit Ṭabāṭābaʿi, *Rastakiz* 774, 1977).

In his first translation from the *Gathas* (q.v.) Purdāwud indicated his inclination to change from Persian script to Avestan; later, however, he rejected this view (see Minovi, 1927, p. 557; Moʿin, p. 51, text and note). At the beginning of his scholarly work, he fell for a while under the influence of Dasātiri language. Later, with the guidance of Qazvini and others, he realized its uselessness and exposed the artificiality of these words by writing forged articles (see Purdāwud, 1947, pp. 17-51). He wrote beautiful Persian and was fluent in German, French, English, Arabic, and Turkish.

TRANSLATIONS FROM THE AVESTA AND OTHER TEXTS

The research methods used in Purdāwud's writings had little precedent in Iran at that time. Education in centers of Iranology in the West, proximity to and benefit from gatherings of Orientalists, knowledge of the world's living languages, and his ability to use non-Persian sources raised the level of his work to that of first-rate European Orientalists; thus he was considered a scholar on the international level who was recognized and supported by the great Iranologists (see Moʿin, Latin script section, pp. 37-44). Detailed bibliographies in the first pages of his books indicate the breadth of the field of his researches. In his use of sources, he had a special cautiousness and precision. The useful indexes at the end of his books were without precedent in Iran at the time. In his writings, he gave names in both Persian and Latin forms. Because of their useful annotations, Purdāwud's translations from the Avesta went beyond the form of simple translation to become transformed into an encyclopedia (Yarshater, 1975, pp. 12-13).

The Gathas. Purdāwud's translation of the *Gathas*, the first into Persian, with the collaboration of Dinshah Irani, was published by the Iranian Zoroastrian Society of Bombay (Anjoman-e Zartoštīān-e Irāni-e Bomba'y) and the [Iran League](#) (q.v.) in June 1926 in Bombay and was dedicated to Dinshah Faridunji Molla. In this work, details concerning the *Gathas* were given first; then came the Avestan text of five *Gathas*, along with the Persian translation. Dinshah Irani translated part of Purdāwud's Persian translation into English, and J.J. Modi and J.K. Nariman wrote comments on the book in English. This book, with additional new notes, was reprinted in Bombay in 1950.



While in Germany, Purdāwud compiled his notes to the *Gathas* and sent them from Berlin to Bombay in 1937, where they remained for several years. In 1945, when the Bombay publishing house burned down, the printed copies of the book also perished. Later, Purdāwud undertook completion of the notes from the sole surviving copy, belonging to the Parsi scholar S. J. Bulsara; its first edition was published in Tehran in 1957 with an introduction by Farahvaši, as *Yāddāsthā-ye Gāthā*.

The Yašts. Purdāwud's first volume of the *Yašts* was published in Bombay in 1928. Its introduction was translated into English with the help of Dinshah Irani. It contained the translation of the first eleven *Yašts*, with an introduction, explanations, and detailed notes. Volume II of the *Yašts* was published in Bombay in 1931. The ten remaining *Yašts* were studied in this volume, whose initial ten pages are a critical account of Purdāwud's work by Qazvini. Both volumes contain the Avestan text as well as the Persian translation of the *Yašts*, with an introduction, essays, explanations, and detailed notes about each *Yašt* and the cultural and historical issues related to them. The second edition of the collected *Yašts* was published in 1968, one month before Purdāwud's death, and the one following that, edited by Farahvaši, in 1969. An Avestan glossary and an index of personal and place names in both volumes appeared at the end of volume II.

The Khordeh Avesta. Purdāwud's *Ḳorda Avestā* (see [KHORDEH AVESTA](#)) was published in Bombay in September 1931. In addition to the Persian translation of the text, it contained a preface introducing the *Khordeh Avesta* and essays on [Ādurbād ī Mahraspandān](#) (q.v.) benedictions (*niyāyiš*), [Āfrīnagān](#) (q.v.), and Purdāwud's hymn of "*ašəm vohu*" (q.v.), with notes by Minbāšiān, and other materials.

Yasna. Volume I of Purdāwud's translation of the *Yasna* was published in Bombay in 1934 in the series of publications of the Iranian Zoroastrian Society of Bombay and the Iran League. The volume contained the Avestan text and Persian translations of twenty-seven chapters (*hā*) of the *Yasna*. In the introduction, the terms *yasnā* and *hā* are discussed. At the beginning of the book, there were essays in Persian on "[Ērān-Wēj](#)" (q.v.), "Turān," and "The Age of Zoroaster"; at the end was an index of Avestan and Middle Persian words in the volume as well as an index of the references to personal and place names and books. Purdāwud sent the manuscript of Volume II from Berlin to Bombay in 1935. Thirteen years later he retrieved it; the book was published in March 1958 as part of the publications of the Anjoman-e Irānšenāsi, with the



assistance of Bahrām Farahvaši. Following the introduction, it included the essays on “*Dēn dabīrī*,” the “*Pišvāyān*,” and the “*Yasna Haptaṅhāiti*”; then came the Avestan text and the translation of sections 35 to 42, and 54 to 72, along with detailed notes relating to each section. At the end was an appendix containing essays on “*Ātaš*,” “*Čečast*,” “*Sulān*” (=Sabalān), “*Ādaraḵš-naft* (Farnbaḡ-Borzīn Mehr – Ādar Gošast – Taḡt-e Solaymān),” and other topics.

The Visperad. Purdāwud’s Persian translation of 24 chapters of the *Visperad*, along with the Avestan text, essays on the “seven regions” (see [HAFT KEŠVAR](#)), oaths, etc., was edited by Farahvaši and published in 1964.

The Vend īdād. There are many rumors concerning a translation by Purdāwud of the *Vendīdād*. It is said that he had completed this translation but refrained from publishing it because of conflicts in Bombay; others say that it was published but the Zoroastrians confiscated it. Part of Purdāwud’s translation of the *Vendīdād* can be seen in his entry “*Ḳorus*” (rooster) in the *Farhang-e Irān bāstān* (Purdāwud, 1947, pp. 317-20).

LECTURES, ESSAYS, AND OTHER SCHOLARLY WORKS

Purdāwud’s book *Iranšāh* is a short history of the migration of the Zoroastrians to India, published in Bombay in 1926 and dedicated to Dinshah Irani. After the introductory essay is the text Purdāwud’s poem, “*Pedrud Irāniān-e Ābḡust-e moḡestān* (jazira-ye Hormoz)” and its English translation (“*Farewell of the Zoroastrians from the Island of Hormuzd*”), followed by miscellaneous photographs, illustrations related to the book’s text, and a picture of the Middle Persian inscriptions of the Kanheri Caves commemorating the Zoroastrians of India. The basic source for the text was the versified *Story of Sanjān*, composed by Bahman Kayqobād, son of the *dastur* Hormozdyār Sanjana (see [PARSI COMMUNITIES i. EARLY HISTORY](#)).

A collection of Purdāwud’s lectures in India on the religion, history, and language of ancient Iran was published in Bombay in 1927 by the Iranian Zoroastrian Society of Bombay under the title *Ḳorramšāh*. All of these lectures were translated into Gujarati at the time and their text published in weekly and daily Bombay newspapers such as *Qaysar-e Hend* and *Jām-e Jamšid*; some were also published separately (Purdāwud, 1926, p. 20).

Sōšyāns (The Zoroastrian “Savior”), the text of a lecture given by Purdāwud in



India on 9 July 1927, was published the same year, with an introduction by Irani. At the end of the book, there is a brief discussion on Dasātir.

The textbook *Goft va šonud-e Pārsi*, which Purdāwud wrote for Indian high schools, was published in Bombay in 1934. It teaches Persian conversation to Indian students in the framework of the daily conversations in Persian of two persons named Kay Kōsrow and Farroḡ (after the names of Dinshah Irani's sons).

The lectures delivered by Purdāwud as a "Government Research Fellow" at the University of Santiniketan were collected and published in 1935 as *The K. R. Cama Oriental Institute Government Research Fellowship Lectures on Old Iranian History and Culture*. The topics included "Airyana Vaêja," "Turan and the Turanians," "The Age of Zoroaster," "Raghā or Rai," "References to Buddhism in Iranian Literature and History," and "A Brief Review of Iranian History" (reviewed by Otto Spies in *ZDMG* 90, 1936, pp. 719-23).

Farhang-e Irān bāstān, a dictionary of ancient Iran, was published in Tehran in 1947, and contained the results of some of Purdāwud research in the form of a collection of articles. These included his essays "Miḥan," "Dasātir," "Names of the 12 Months," "Farhangestān," and the names and brief history of various animals such as *Xrafstar* (q.v.; "evil animals"), the *dog* (q.v.) horse, falcon, rooster, and so on. It also had appendices on *Aspastes* (q.v.) and subjects Purdāwud later addressed in the *Hormozd-nāma*.

Hormozd-nāma is a collection of twenty-six of Purdāwud's lectures, published in 1952 and named after his grandson. Iraj Afšār edited the text, and Yaḥyā Dōkā compiled the indexes at the end. This work is partly about Purdāwud's research on the names and brief history of plants in ancient Iranian texts and dictionaries. In another section, Purdāwud introduces linguistic subjects and embarks on a discussion of words such as *Artēštār* (q.v.), *parčam* (banner), *afsar* (crown), etc.

Anāhitā, titled after the name of Purdāwud's granddaughter, is a collection of fifty of his articles that had been published in various journals or as introductions he wrote for books by other scholars on Iranian civilizations and languages. The anthology, edited by Mortazā Gorji, with a preface by Purdāwud himself, was published in Tehran in 1964 (with a more recent printing in 2007); it is also known as *Panjāh goftār* (Fifty lectures).



Zin abzār is a collection of articles on ancient Iranian armaments that Purdāwud wrote for the journal *Barrasihā-ye tāriki* (q.v.). After his death, it was edited by Jahāngir Qā'em-maqāmi and published in January 1969. In this collection, relying on the *Avesta* and the *Šāh-nāma*, Purdāwud discussed various kinds of antique military equipment.

Ḳuzestān-e mā is the text of a lecture given by Purdāwud for the Iranian Archaeologists Association (Kānun-e bāstān-šenāsān-e Irān) after Gamal Abdel Nasser (1918-1970), following the ideology of pan-Arabism, had claimed that Ḳuzestān should be called 'Arabestān. It was published by the Association in 1964 and discusses the history of the province and the land of Elam and the Ḳuz tribes, based on the writings of reliable ancient historians.

In the preface to *Anāhitā*, Purdāwud indicated that he intended to publish two other collections of essays and to title them *Āraš-nāma* and *Parvin-nāma* after his daughter's other two children (Purdāwud, 1964a, p. 15), but he was not able to do so. The *Āraš-nāma* was a treatise (about 180 hand-written pages) on the richness of the Persian language and its lack of need for foreign words (Mostafawi, p. 288). In a letter written in February 1968 to one of his friends in Rašt, Purdāwud stated that he had hoped to publish a talk that he was writing on the Persian language before the Persian New Year, but he did not succeed in doing so (Nikuya, p. 98). His writings on Sōšyāns and Sistān are among the works which were lost after his death (Purdāwud, 2007, p. 99).

Books edited, supervised, or introduced by Purdāwud. While in India, Purdāwud obtained permission from Moḥammad Qazvini to edit and publish a collection of the latter's literary and historical essays. The first volume, containing fourteen of Qazvini's articles, was published by the Iranian Zoroastrian Society in Bombay in 1928 with the title *Bist maqāla-ye Qazvini*. It included an English-language preface and description of the articles written by Dinshah Irani. This was the first attempt at publishing Qazvini's works prior to his death. In a letter written to Purdāwud, Qazvini expressed his pleasure at the opportunity for Purdāwud to undertake this task (3 October 1927; see Qazvini, 1956, pp. 216-21). The complete set of articles in two volumes, co-edited with 'Abbās Eqbāl [q.v.], was published in Tehran in 1953 and has been reprinted several times.

Purdāwud also wanted, with the help of the Iranian Society of Bombay, to publish a Festschrift honoring Dinshah Irani, and he had collected articles by Iranian, Parsi, and Orientalist scholars for that purpose. But for various

reasons its publication met with obstacles. After Dinshah's death, this work was finally published in Bombay 1943 as *Yād-nāma-ye Dinšāh Irāni / Dinshah Irani Memorial Volume* (Mo'in, p. 96). Purdāwud was on the editorial board for the volume, and it included his article "Baḡa."

Bižan va Maniža, drawn from Ferdowsi's *Šāh-nāma*, was printed elegantly and under Purdāwud's supervision in 1965. Its first part, a preface by Purdāwud, discussed Ferdowsi's biography and the story of *Bižan* and *Maniža*; the second part consisted of a selection of Ferdowsi's verses on the story.

Faridun, another selection of verses from the *Šāh-nāma*, was published in 1967 under the directorship of Maḥmud Puzeši. Its first part, written by Purdāwud, is titled "The Story of Faridun." The second part is selected verses about Faridun (see *FERĒDŪN*) by Ferdowsi. In several articles, *Jalāl Āl-e Aḥmad* (q.v.) and Ḥabib Yaḡmā'i addressed Purdāwud and leveled criticisms against these two books. But these criticisms were about the selection of verses, whereas Purdāwud had no role in their selection (see Yaḡmā'i, pp. 610-13; Āl-e Ahmad; Edarači Gilāni, pp. 97-104).

Purdāwud was also interested in the story of "modern Iranian" languages and dialect studies. His attention to this branch of Iranian studies can be seen from his introductions to four books on dialect studies: Manučehr Sotuda's *Farhang-e Gilaki* (1953); Aḥmad Eqtedāri's *Farhang-e Lārestāni* (1955); Jamšid Soruš Sorušīān's *Farhang-e Behdinān* (1956); and Moḥammad Mokri's *Nāmhā-ye parandagān dar Kurdi* (1957). These introductions were collected and published in *Anāhitā*.

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