

The impact of the French literature on the modern Persian literature

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Abstract

The social and cultural interactions between Persia and France had been established since accession of the Safavids in Iran. The influx of foreigners into Iran and Iranians into West caused a new sort of trend in European literatures and Persian literature. Travelers played a leading role in bringing them closer academically and culturally. Iran's interaction with the West in general and with the France in particular resulted in the form of a revolution on political, social and literary levels. The establishment of *Dar-ul-Funun* necessitated the translations of books from the western world. Persian literature, which had deteriorated since Mongol times in Iran, had started its revival in the early nineteenth century. The primary reform in prose literature took place 'in the official correspondence, led by two of the greatest prime ministers Persian has ever produced: the Qa'im Maqam Farahani and the Amir Kabir. Later innovations came from two political and literary figures: Mirza Malkom Khan and Abdul Rahim Talibuff'. After that Jamalzade, Hedayat and many more writers who visited France or any other western country and became familiar with their literatures wrote some remarkable and path-breaking books that also revolutionized the whole corpus of Persian prose literature. As a matter of fact Persian literature has adopted many new forms and modernity and is inspired by European literatures in general and French literature in particular.

Keywords: french literature, persian literature

Introduction

Any literature of the any given nationality cannot be kept aloof and immune from the influences of other national literatures. Comparative literature is one such way to discern and evaluate such commonalities and dissimilarities between them. Persian literature is no exception in this respect as far as literary influences and intellectual gives and takes are concerned.

It is a difficult thing to exactly mark a time period to bifurcate modern Persian literature. Modernism is a relative term. The literature of today's world might be considered as classic after a couple of centuries. Thus it is very hard to discern precisely when classical turned into modern literature. We come to the fact that any social or/and political and any literary movement can be some sort of the trigger point of any literary innovativeness. When we talk of modern Persian literature it can be considered as the literature produced from last decade of nineteenth century when Iran got defeated from Tsarist Russia and Iran's interaction with the Western world.

Although efforts for the modernization and introducing the Iranians to the west can be traced back to an earlier time period in the reign of Safavids but the results and outcomes were meager on the ground. Nineteenth century was actually the start of the process of the modernization of Iran. The dynasties that were able to reap the benefits of painstaking endeavors initiated by the Safavids particularly by Shah Abbas the great were the following.

The Qajars were the first to make Iranians aware about westerners and their language, literature and cultures as well. The most triggering point in that was the Russo-Iran wars (1804-13) and (1826-28) which resulted in the defeat of the Iran at the hands of Russia. And these wars ended with two very infamous agreements *Treaty of Golestan* and *Treaty of*

Turkmenchay in 1813 and 1828 respectively. In the period of Fat'h Ali Shah, at the Azerbaijan was his heir Abbas Mirza. Abbas Mirza saw all this and reached to this conclusion that the Iran's backwardness and lack of modernization in terms of technology, weaponry and modern war tactics. After the war he sent two tiny groups of students to Europe for the attainment of modern education.

From the start of the nineteenth century, with the arrival of Sir John Malcolm from East India Company and General Gardanne, the envoy of Napoleon in Persia, in the court of Fat'h Ali Shah for the Franco-Persian Alliance among them for a short span of time against Russia and Great Britain between 1807 and 1809, Persia became closer to the westerners. These interactions resulted into a literary revolution in both prose and poetry in the modern Iran.

Modern Persian literature emerged during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a result of Iran's interactions with other national literatures. Literature produced in Iran in the early Qajar period was no different from the millennium old traditions. Literary elites during the Qajar period advocated for traditionalist Islam and they opposed modernity. Kamran Talatoff has also expressed the same views in the following words:

During the last decades under the Qajars, poets such as Qa'ani Shirazi (d. 1853) wrote socially and aesthetically irrelevant panegyrics or religious elegies while remaining faithful to the restrictive rules of classical prosody and rhyme pattern (The Politics of Writing in Iran 2000: 19)^[22]

Fat'h Ali Shah Qajar sent many students to European countries to attain modern education. They brought back some valuable memories which over the period of time

helped Iran in bringing an inclination and curiosity for the modernization both at social level and literary level. Munibur Rahman notes that:

The recent revival in Persian poetry may be said to begin with the present century when Persia went through a political change which resulted in limiting the despotic authority of the Shah and in creating a new concept of political rights. Literature reflected this development by two diverging tendencies. On the one hand, it renounced the tradition of court poetry which was replaced by patriotic verse; on the other hand, there continued a large output of traditional poetry in which the surviving hold of religion was represented by mystic and didactic influences (Post Revolution Persian Verse 1955: 5).

‘Progressive ideas and secular social activities’, as Talattof writes, ‘proliferated towards the end of this (Qajar) dynasty and were further encouraged throughout the reign of Mozaffar ad-Din Shah (1896-1907), especially during the Constitutional Revolution of 1906’ (The Politics of Writing in Iran 2000: 19) [22].

The defeat of Persia at the hands of Russia was the turning point for the Iranian intelligentsia. They were forced to ponder over the reasons for their backwardness and it also forced them to self-realization. The idea of modernization and progress and advancement in modern technology compelled them to send some students to England on scholarships. Two names: Prince Abbas Mirza and Mirza Taqi Khan popularly known as Amir Kabir were the main pillars and promoters of modernized Persia.

Alexander Sergeevich Griboyedov’s (Russian ambassador to the Qajar court) murder by angry mob on 11th of February 1829 in Tehran, as a result of rampant anti-Russia sentiments that existed in aftermath the Gulistan (1813) and Turkmenchay (1828) treaties, was a crucial and turning point for Qajar Persia. A team of Persian diplomats went to Moscow for tendering their apologies. Amir Kabir was one of them. He observed everything there very minutely and patiently. He conceptualized many ideas of modernizing Persia. The establishment of first technical university “*Dar-ul-Funun*” was his brainchild. He brainstormed every possible way of Persian advancements in the modern sciences and technologies.

In *Dar-ul-Funun* they required many teachers from European countries for teaching there. A translation movement was started to translate books to be taught there in the new established university in Tehran.

The process of newness and innovativeness in literary forms and other literary themes started creeping in Persian literature around the period of the Constitutional movement of 1905-11 AD, as Homa Katouzian noted that ‘During the Constitutional Revolution attempts had been made to innovate new poetical forms (as well as poems in colloquial and folksy language), notably in the works of Seyyed Ashraf al-Din, Dekkhoda and Lahuti’ (Iran: Politics, History and Literature 2013: 189) [14]. Introduction of printing press in the Nasir-ud-Din Shah’s reign was a big achievement and a paving-stone for the modernization in its truest sense.

Printing Press and Newspapers

The date of introduction of printing press in Iran dates back the Qajar period. It was introduced during the reign of Fat’h

Ali Shah Qajar and under the patronage of Crown Prince Mirza Abbas. Browne in his book has mentioned the establishment of printing press in Iran in the following word:

The date of the introduction of the printing press into Persia nearly a century ago, during the reign of Fat’h Ali Shah Qajar and when Abbas Mirza *Naibu’s Saltana* was Crown Prince, was about A.H. 1232 (A.D. 1816-17). It was introduced into Tabriz by the efforts of above-mentioned *Naibu’s Saltana*, while about the same time another printing-press was established at Tihran (Tehran) under the supervision of Mirza Abdul Wahhab Mu’tamadu’d Dawla (The Press and Poetry of Modern Persia 1914: 7) [5].

It was introduced by the Zayn-al-Abidin at Tabriz at the behest of Abbas Mirza. Abbas Mirza sent Abedin to St. Petersburg, Russia to learn how to run printing press and how to use ink. As Ali Boozari puts it:

After Iran signed the Gulistan Agreement with Russia in 1812, Abbas Mirza wanted to acquire printing presses from Russia. He sent a man by the name of Zayn-al-Abidin Tabrizi to St. Petersburg to learn how to run a printing press and how to make inks. Zayn-al-Abidin returned to Iran four years later in 1817 with a printing press. Upon his arrival, he established the Tabriz printing house (*chapkhana*). After some time, the printer moved to Tehran at the behest of Fath Ali Shah and set up the Tehran printing house. This establishment belonged to one of the most important politicians of the time, Manuchihr Khan-I gurji Mu’tamid al-Dawla. In addition to the Tehran printing house, he also owned another in Isfahan (Persian Illustrated Lithographed Books on the Mi’ra’j 2010: 254) [4].

This was the period of movable printing press in Iran. The first book to be published from the Tabriz printing house was the *Fat’hnama* (Az Saba ta Nima 1372: 230). The first lithographic printing press was also established in Tabriz in the years 1832-3. Lithographic press was brought in Iran by Mohammad Saleh Shirazi, who was sent to London by Abbas Mirza himself. After that in a short span of time, many printing houses were established in major cities of Iran, including Tehran.

Printing press revolutionized the literary world. It impacted society very positively. Common man became aware and knowledgeable round the year about the policies and new happenings in and outside of Iran. There were many newspapers and journal which dedicated one whole page or a column for the western ideas and introduced their culture, tradition and especially literature. This helped in generation of a new kind of ground for modernity in Persian literature.

After the book publications, the second most important outcome of the introduction of printing houses in Iran was the publication of newspapers. The first Persian newspaper namely *Mirat-ul-Akhbar* was published by a non-Iranian, Raja Ram Mohan Roy from Bengal in 1822 AD. It was a weekly paper published on Friday. The first one in Iran was *Kaghaz-I Akhbar* that was actually sponsored and published by the government. It contained issues related to the court of Shah and governmental matters. The paper was published two years after the death of Fat’h Ali Shah and in the reign of Mohammad Shah in 1837 AD (Aryanpur 1372: 226).

Then another paper *E'la'mnameh* by the government came out. Mirza Taqi Khan, popularly known as Amir Kabir, started a newspaper with the name *Rozna'maye Vaghaye Etefagh-yeh* in 1851 AD from Tehran. This paper is said to be the successor of *Ka'ghaz-I Akhba'r*. *Rozna'maye Vaghaye Etefagh-yeh*, after ten years of its publication, was rechristened as *Roznamye Dolat Olliahe Iran* and images were also published. There followed a large number of newspapers to be published both in and out of Iran. Censorship in Iran forced many intellectuals to migrate from Iran to other countries, where they continued their efforts to highlight the pros and cons of the governmental policies and agreements with other nations and concessions given to them. Papers which were published from Iran were subjected to strict censorship, violators were to be punished and fate of publications was imminent closure. The papers that were published from the out of Iran and wrote independently, impartially and critically about the prevalent situations of Iran, could reach to Iranian masses with difficulty and very secretly. These were brought into Iran by travelers and visitors illegally.

Some prominent newspapers published from outside of Iran are mentioned here. *Akhtar* was published from Istanbul, by the efforts of Mirza Najafquli Khan Tabrizi, edited by Mohammad Tahir Tabrizi, in the year 1876 AD. This paper had excellent coverage on Tobacco Revolution of Iran. *Qanun* was published from London, in 1895 AD, with the patronage of Mirza Malkom Khan. *Hekmat* was published from Cairo, it was a weekly paper edited by Mirza Mehdi Khan Tabrizi who had earlier edited *Akhtar* as well. *Sorayya* was another weekly under publication from Cairo in 1898. Initially it was edited by Mohammad Khan Kashani and later on by Syed Farjullah Khan, when Mohammad Khan Kashani started his new paper *Parvarish*. The *Parvarish* was started in 1900 AD and it was a replacement to *Sorayya*. Another weekly paper started its publication from Calcutta, India with the title *Hablul Mati'n* by Syed Jalaluddin Kashani in 1893 AD (Az Saba ta Nima 1372: 250-52). These papers played a critical role in awakening of Iranian society and exposed them to a new unexplored world, which over the time helped in making them readily receptive to the modernity in literature and political and social level as well.

Translation movement

Translation as a phenomenon, variously defined as an "art", or "craft", or as "science", dates back to the third millennium BC:

The Babylon of Hammurabi's day (2100 B.C.) was a polyglot city, and much of the official business of the empire was made possible by corps of scribes who translated edicts into various languages (Eugene Nida, *Toward a Science of Translating*, 1964, p.11) ^[7].

The establishment of *Dar-ul-Funun* necessitated the translations of books from the western world. *Dar-ul-Funun* the first polytechnic university of Iran, founded in 1851 with the efforts of Mirza Taqi Khan Amir Kabir, started its academic session with the import of seven Austrian teachers in Iran. Apart from them, some other European fellows who were already there in Iran were also employed in the university. They needed books to be taught which were not available in Iran. Thus a translation movement ushered in by

these teaching staff and others experts of that field. Those books were translated from European languages into Persian. Besides the course books, many historical books were translated. Voltaire's book *Peter the Great, History of Charles XII* and *Alexander of Macedon* were translated into Persian. Sir John Malcolm's *The History of Persia*, was also translated into Persian from its French translation (Az Saba ta Nima 1372: 260).

Iraj Parsinejad is of the opinion that the translation of '*Alexander of Macedon*' can be considered the beginning of Persian translations from the Europeans languages into Persian (Tarjomeh az Zab'anhaye Oropayi be Farsi 1393).

This movement of translation continued unabated and many historical and educational novels were translated as well. *The Three musketeers, Louis XIV and His Century, La Reine Margot* and *The Count of Monte Cristo* by Alexander Dumas, a prominent French writer and whose works are translated into more than hundred languages, were translated into Persian too. *The Adventures of Telemachus* by François Fénelon, *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe, *Gil Blas* by Alain-René Lesage, *Gulliver's Travels* by Arthur Rackham and Jonathan Swift and *The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Ispahan* by James Justinian Morier (Az Saba ta Nima 1372: 260) were some of the other books which were translated.

The outcome of these translations had impacted Persian literature tremendously. For instance, drama and theatre, an unprecedented phenomenon in Iran, emerged as a new form of art both in writing and performance. After the translation of *The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Ispahan*, Iranian writers followed and imitated Morier's style in their drama writings. The work of Mirza Fat'h Ali Akhundzadeh namely *Tamsil-at* was a path-breaking and pioneering literary piece in Persian drama-writing. Other dramatists in Iran also followed them in stride. Akhundzadeh influenced his generation and generation to come. Some of the most prominent who were influenced by him can be named as Mirza Agha Khan Kermani, Mirza Malkom Khan, Abd-al-Rahim Talebuf, Mirza Agha Tabrizi and many more. It is a fact that maximum numbers of books were translated from French language into Persian in comparison to any other European languages.

At the turn of nineteenth century, after the successful translations of books from European languages in general and French language in particular, many Iranian writers came out with their own books in the imitation of western literatures. The Iranian readership was also ready to accept that, they were now used to such newness and experiments in literature (Sad Sal-I Da'sta'n Navisiye Iran 1377: 30). Mirza Agha Khan Kermani wrote *Ayena'ye Sikandari* about ancient Iran, following which many Iranian novelists tried their best to write historical novels. This inclination was purely and directly under the influence of French literature in modern Persian literature. In the twentieth century taking inspiration from French historical novels, novel writings in Iran became vogue.

Translation movement also helped in introducing many French writes amongst the Iranian academia, which otherwise, would not have been known to them. After the 1920, many intellectuals in Iran who either through living in west or through the newspapers were exposed to the European literature and particularly novels, and sought to write in that pattern. Jamalzadeh and his contemporaries like Sadiq Hedayat, Hosain Quli Musta'an, Ali Dashti, Hijazi,

Nafisi, Mushfiq Kazemi, Abbas Khalili, Masu'd and Jahangir Jali'li were extremely under the influence of French culture and literature. Jamalzadeh, influenced by Gobineau and Anatole, wrote short stories with the title *Yeki Bud Yeki Nabud* in 1921 AD.

New Trends in Persian Poetry and Prose

The most decisive direct result of a political revolution, as Victor Hugo writes, is the literary revolution (as quoted by Ruzbeh in *Adabiyat-I Moe'sir: She'r* 1392: 56). This quote of Victor Hugo holds best in Iranian situation as well. The introduction of printing-press and publication of newspapers and then the translation of western literature in Persian language resulted into a series of changes in Persian literary styles of writing and poetical compositions. Nima Yushij (1897-1960), who can be termed as the Father of Modern Persian Poetry, his works formed a watershed in the history of Persian literature. His long poem *Afsaneh*, first published in 1922 AD, marked the beginning of a new form of Persian poetry and it is considered to be delineating boundaries between old and new in Persian poetry.

After the Constitutional Revolution of Iran (1906-11) there was an inclination for and deeply-felt need for a renewal approach in literature as well. Literature cannot remain uninfluenced and unhinged by social and political changes. Taqi Rafa't (1887-1920) in the journal *Tajaddud* wrote in strong words for a change in literary forms. On the other side, traditionalists like Poet Laureate Bahar (1886-1951) also counterattacked him in *Danishkadeh* magazine. These literary conflicts slowly but steadily were making grounds for modernity in literature, which in the form of *Afsaneh*, in poetry, in 1922 and *Yeki Bud Yeki Nabud*, in prose, in 1921 revolutionized the Persian literature.

Nima made some modifications in millennium-old tradition of Persian poetry. He opined that Persian poetry needed a multidimensional innovation. Nima thinks of *meter* and *rhyme* in composition a requisite and necessary thing. He says poetry without *rhyme* is nothing but a 'human without bones'. According to him, equalization of the length of lines may not be observed but the each line of the poem must be in meter. In the first Writers Congress he said:

Meter and rhyme, in my free verse, are taken differently. Short and long lines in it are not according to whim and fantasy. I, even, believe in a order for disorder too. Every word of mine adheres with each other with a precise regulation. As the saying a free verse is difficult for me than other one. Motif in my poetry is my pain. According to me, a real poet must have that motif. I write poetry for my pain and affliction. The form, words, meter and rhyme had always been an objective for me that I wanted to change, so, it can suit for my pain and of the others (Sutu'nhaye She'r-I Now 1996: 39) [9].

Nima intended to break the tradition of Persian poetry to make it more suitable to express one's feeling appropriately and freely. According to him, the observance of strict and stringent rules and forms may not be compatible and fully accommodative to the feelings of a poet that he wanted to express. Over the course of time, many of his contemporaries followed his tradition of modification in the established tradition of Persian poetry as far as form, meter and rhyme is concerned.

Nima himself was influenced by symbolism in European literature. In his poetry it can be found as an inseparable element. Soon after Nima's demise, his Nimaic style became popular and was accepted by many despite some opposition by traditionalists. Nimaic poetry helped in cropping up new form of poetry in Iran like *She'r-I Now*, *She'r-I Moj-I Now*, *She'r-I Moqavemat* and *Haiku* in Persian poetry.

Modern Persian prose literature, as put by Arnold T. Wilson, received more attention in comparison with poetry. In the prose writing Talebuf, Zayn-al Abedin, Mirza Malkom Khan and Akhundzade started changing the modern prose writing style. They deviated from artificial to a very simple language. The spoken and common man's language was used in writing. Slangs and regional dialects, slowly, crept into modern prose literature. Translation movement also helped in an elaborate modernization of contemporary Persian prose. Memoir-writings, travelogues, establishment of modern press and telegraph and publication of newspaper equally influenced the contemporary prose literature as well.

Initially prose writing began as a combination of both artificial and simple language. Detailed and long titles even in official letters were abandoned. Gradually, spoken language was used in their writings in Iran. Difficult and abandoned old words were not used and an orientation towards simple and short words was encouraged. Instead of an excessive usage of Arabic words, common, simple and prevalent words came in vogue, and this middle path was appreciated. The prose usually was in a dialogic form and rhetoric was considered faulty. Meaning was more important than the words. Only that much words were acceptable that could convey the meaning clearly and appropriately. Social vices and problems and political issues were the major themes in it. Jamalzadeh's collection of six short stories came in 1921 that jolted the prevalent established pattern of prose writing in Iran. The decade of 1920's was the watershed for Persian literature, in terms of forms, themes and stylistics. Short story writing and novel writing, of different genres was introduced in Iran by these writers.

Western literary movements and their influence on Persian literature

Gradually many literary and critical theories were also being applied by Iranian writers while writing their literary pieces. As France has been the cradle of many modern literary movements and theories.

The western literary movements have general and specific definitions. The latter mostly applies to the Persian literature. Some examples can be quoted here. The novel *Buf-I Kur* or 'The Blind Owl' of Sadiq Hedayat does have a supernatural world and reminds the readers of surrealism. Likewise fiction writing of Chubak reminds us of naturalism to some extent. It does not seem that he has emphasized on observation and the scientific method in the fictional portrayal of reality as much as s Emile Zola or Thomas Hardy did (Maktabhaye Adabi 1390:21) [21].

The trends only in modern Persian literature can be studied and evaluated according to the western literary movements, the same cannot be said about works of classical Persian literature. Only Jarya'n-I Ba'zgasht and Khorasani style can be compared with classic and neoclassic movements to a great extent.

Classicism and Neoclassicism

Classicism was the first theory of art defined by Greeks and was emulated by Roman. Its period is fifth and fourth centuries BC. In ancient Greece and Rome, the writers associated with this literary movement were Aristotle and Sophocles in Greece and Cicero and Vergil in Rome. This literary movement in France can be seen in the late seventeenth century drama and in the eighteenth century, during the Enlightenment period especially in the writings of Voltaire and Condorcet. Neoclassicism originated in England about 1660 and focuses on modeling literary work on classical texts and following the aesthetic values established in ancient Greece and Rome. The classical writes mainly focused on tragedy and epic writing.

Poets of the *Jaryaan-i-Baazgasht* period tried to revive and explore the classical Persian literature. It is to the credit of this literary period that stylistics came into existence in Persian literature. The difference in classicism of France and Iran is that the authors and poets of the former look at works of the ancient Greece and Rome while those of the latter focus on the works of the medieval period as not much is known to them about the works of the corresponding period of the ancient Persian or Iran. Persian works of Rumi, Sa'di and Hafez fall into classical category while those of Qa'ani, Mushtaq and Atif Isfahani neoclassical (Maktabhaye Adabi 1390:22) ^[21].

Romanticism

In the later period of eighteenth and in the beginning of nineteenth centuries romanticism was prevalent in Europe. This focuses on the It emphasized the dream, or inner world of the individual and visionary, fantastic or drug-induced imagery. The Romantic poetry of France was translated during the Pahlavi dynasty (1925-79) of Persia.

Most of Persian poets and authors were influenced by this trend. Works of Faridun Tavalloli, Museri, Nadirpur and Hasan Hunarmandi to name a few have qualities and features of this movement.

Realism

Realism appeared, for the first time, in France in the mid-nineteenth century. Realist literature is best represented by novels. Realist writers seek:

To narrate their novels from an objective, unbiased perspective that simply and clearly represented the factual elements of the story. They became masters at psychological characterization, detailed descriptions of everyday life, and dialogue that captures the idioms of natural speech. The realists endeavored to accurately represent contemporary culture and people from all walks of life. Thus, realist writers often addressed themes of socioeconomic conflict by contrasting the living conditions of the poor with those of the upper classes in urban as well as rural societies (Literary Movements 2009: 654) ^[11].

In France, Honore´de Balzac started this movement and Gustave Flaubert, E´mile Zola and Guy de Maupassant were the major realist writers of the time.

Most works of Iranian fiction belonged to socialist realism while most works of Sadiq Hedayat and some of Ale Ahmad belonged to non-socialist realism.

Naturalism

This movement also started in mid-nineteenth century in France. In this movement focus was on the application of scientific ideas and principles, such as instinct and Darwin's theory of evolution. Authors in this movement wrote stories in which the characters behave in accordance with the impulses and drives of animals in nature. Stories in naturalism are character driven rather than plot driven, such as the focus in the naturalism is human nature.

This movement represents those literary works written by authors in the third world countries where human conditions and circumstances are poor and ugly. Works of Iranian authors like Chubak highlight such conditions of people as characters in his novels and thus displays and emphasizes features or attributes of naturalism. His novels *Khaimaye Shab Bazi*, *Antari ke Lu'tiyash Mordeh Bud* and *Sang-I Sabur* are best examples of naturalism in Persian literature.

Symbolism

The symbolist movement also originated in the French literature in later period of nineteenth century. It was, in fact, a transition between Realism and Modernism. 'The symbolists', as Ira Mark Milne wrote, 'sought to convey very personal, irrational, and dream-like states of consciousness, relying heavily on metaphorical language to approximate or symbolize, an eternal essence of being that, they believed, was abstracted from the scope of the five senses. These literary ideals developed as a reaction against the dominance of positivism, which emphasized rational thought, objectivity, and scientific method' (Literary Movements 2009: 802) ^[11]. Vers Libre (Free Verse), an open form of poetry that abandons and does not observe the consistent meter patterns, rhyme or other forms of musical pattern, is the result of symbolist movement.

In Persian literature, the poetry of Nima Yushij, regarded as the 'father of modern Persian poetry' and of his followers like Akhawa'n and Shamlu, show characteristics of social symbolism where they mention and discuss socio-political problems by using symbols and allegory (Maktabhaye Adabi 1390: 23) ^[21] and it is certainly different from French symbolism (Tala der Mis 1371: 673).

Dadaism

Dadaism was a precursor to the Surrealism and Absurdism, founded by Tristan Tzara (1896-1963) in 1916 AD. It was soon replaced by Surrealism after the First World War. The proponents of the Dadaism include Andre Breton, Louis Aragon, Philippe Soupault and Paul Eluard.

The works representing this movement were written under themes like *She'r -I Moj-I Now*, *She'r-I Hajm* and Postmodern poetry and the likes (Maktabhaye Adabi 1390: 23) ^[21].

Surrealism

Surrealism another artistic movement was founded in 1919 by Andre´ Breton. *The Magnetic Fields* written by Breton and Philippe Soupault in 1919 is considered by many to be the first truly surrealist text. The surrealists largely base their works on the idea of the subconscious mind and try to expand the mind's potential by reconciling the apparently contradictory states of dream and reality. Dadaists and Surrealists were also fascinated with suicide and idealized this

act, argues critic Leonid Livak—some in theory, some in fact (Literary Movements 2009: 777) ^[11].

Buf-I Kur (The Blind Owl) written by Hedayat has been described by most scholars as a surrealist work. This work talks about a supernatural world and gives significance to dreams. The psychological fiction written in Iran is close to surrealism.

Likewise, some verses of Sapehri show Impressionism, while *Shazdeh Ehtjab* of Houshang Golshiri also highlights the *Stream of consciousness*. Some works of Simin Daneshvar relate to Post-Modernism and some works of Moniru Ravanipor the characteristic of Magic Realism can be seen (Maktabhaye Adabi 1390: 23) ^[21].

Iranian intelligentsia in France

Intellectuals are the back bone of any revolution, be it political, social or literary. Iranian intellectuals in the twentieth century also played a pivotal role in politicizing the literature of the time. They freed themselves from the thousands of year's old tradition of Ode and Panegyric compositions and adopting new genres and forms of compositions suitable and apt to express their feelings accurately and appropriately. About the role of intellectuals in any revolution, Edward Said has rightly said:

There has been no major revolution in modern history without intellectuals; conversely there has been no major counter-revolutionary movement without intellectuals. Intellectuals have been the fathers and the mothers movements, and of course sons and daughters, even nephews and nieces (Representations of the Intellectual 1994: 10-11) ^[20].

In the nineteenth century Iranian people also felt an urgent need to emulate the developed countries of Europe in their technology and modern education. Ali Gheissari has noted this in the following word:

Encounters with the West during the first half of the nineteenth century ended a period of relative isolation and made many Iranian reformers, notably those who were associated with the royal court, realize the need to introduce modern technology and administration, but their efforts in this regard were unsuccessful and, in the minds of ordinary people, modernization and reformism from above soon became associated with failure. The major obstacle to reform has generally been identified as the arbitrary and autocratic structure of the state, which, benefiting from occasional sanctions by traditionalist ulama, was resistant to change. Western influence in Iran continued to grow, however, and with it public awareness of the importance of the West and the status of Iran in regional politics (Iranian Intellectuals in the Twentieth Century 1998: 3) ^[8].

Since Qajar's period a number of students were enrolled on government scholarships in French universities, particularly from the time when Farrok Khan Ğaffārī, Amīn-al-Dawla was sent in 1855-6 to France as the envoy of Shah of Persia. Vida Nassehi-Behnam in her article published online on Encyclopedia Iranica puts it:

The emergence of a Persian community in France can perhaps be traced back to 1272/1855-6, when Farrok

Khan Ğaffārī, Amīn-al-Molk, later Amīn-al-Dawla (q.v.) was sent to Paris as the shah's envoy (īlcī-e kabīr). During his embassy, a group of forty-two Persian students, who became known as les enfants de Perse (Thieury, p. 39) and who were chosen mostly from the graduates of the recently founded Dar al-fonūn (q.v.), were sent to France. Meanwhile, in the course of the latter part of the 19th century, the Persian upper classes gradually began to send their sons to Europe and especially to France to pursue higher studies (Maḥbūbi, Mo'assasāt I, pp. 320-39) (Persian Community in France 2000) ^[16].

Then in the latter half of the nineteenth century politicians and intellectuals migrated to France who were opposed to the Nasir-ud-Din Shah and then a large number of intelligentsia emigrated to France around the period of 1909 when Mohammad Ali Shah's coup d'état against the constitutional revolution. They were very active in writing political (in nature) stuff there and in between 1912-14 AD a newspaper *Iran Shar* was published there (Vida Nassehi-Behnam 2000). In first half of the twentieth century, when middle class got their share in the social, political and monetary terms and got uplifted, they also sent their children for higher studies in French universities. There is a long list of Persian scholars who studied in France and did their theses and dissertations on the Persian literary aspects. Nayereh Samsami is the first one who did wrote her PhD thesis on *L'Iran dans la littérature Française* (Iran in French literature and also published her doctoral thesis from Paris in 1936. Javad Hadidi, Shafaaddin Shafa and many other men of letters are to be credited for doing work in the field of literary impact of Persian on French and vice versa. Apart from them many other scholars and poets who did not visit any French university, but they were also influenced by French literature. Shafī'I Kadkani in his book *Ba Chiragh va A'ayeneh: Der Justujuye risheha'ye Tahavul-I She'r-I Moasir-I Iran*, referencing from an article published in *Les Nouvelles Litterature* from Paris about the impact of French on Persian literature writes:

Whatever it has reached to Iran from France is very significant. What could be said is that whatever Iranians know about the West is learnt either from France or through the medium of French language. This language is our political language since long, it is the first foreign language after the Arabic, being taught in our educational institutions..... In the newspapers so many French words are used.....French literary impact can be found more in theatre and novel and in other words Iranian theatre is product of French theatre itself. Novel writings in Iran, its style and form, are directly influenced by French novels (1390: 254; 255; 256).

French language is widely taught and learnt in Iranian universities more than any other language. How French literature and French vocabulary gained popularity in Iran, is a much written about topic. The impact of French literature began from the early decades of twentieth century, almost simultaneously with Constitutional Movement in Iran. Many journal and various other publications allocated and reserved special columns for the introductions of French literature, and many French literary masterpieces were translated, directly or indirectly, into Persian. *Yusuf E'tsam-ul-Mulk*, the father of

the poetess *Parvin E'tesami*, who was editor of the journal *Bah'ar*, published in his magazine the translation by Gholamreza Rashi'd Yasemi of the novel *Disciple* of Paul Bourget, a French novelist (Az Saba ta Nima 1374: 115) ^[1]. Another monthly magazine published from Tehran in 1312 SH, also published many short stories by French writers like Guy De Maupassant, Hugo, Lamartine and Anatole France. (Az Nima ta Rozga'rema 1374: 69) ^[2]. St. Louis School and Jeanne d'Arc established by Lazarist missionaries in Tehran and other major cities of Iran and Alliance Française played a tremendous role in introducing the French language and literature in Iran. St. Louis School was founded in 1862 with the encouragement of Joseph-Arthur Comte de Gobineau, the French minister to the Persian court. Javad Hadidi has given a detailed account of the opening of foreign educational institutions in Iran and he writes:

French schools, along with their American, British, German, and Russian counterparts, were the main channels through which modern elementary and secondary education were brought to ethnic minorities and middle class Persians for almost a century extending from the 1830s to 1920s (Table 1). They had more varied roots than other foreign schools, originating from three distinct sources: Catholic, Jewish, and secular. Catholic schools were established by Lazarist missionaries, Jewish schools by the Alliance Israélite Universelle (q.v.), and lay schools by Alliance Française. A considerable number of Persian political and cultural elite of the 20th century studied at French schools in Tehran, including St. Louis, Alliance Française, Jeanne d'Arc, Franco-Persane and Razi (usually referred to as Lycée Razi), and Alliance Israélite schools (French Schools in Persia, 2000).

The greats of modern Persian literature like Nima Yushij (1896-1960) and Sadiq Hedyat (1903-1951), were the product of these schools that brought revolution in modern poetry and prose.

There are many scholars who went to France and lived there and wrote under the influence of French literature, thus incorporating many new genres of literary themes and novella and short stories. 'Prose in general', as observed by Sir Arnold T. Wilson, 'received more attention in Persia since 1906 than poetry and modern prose aims at developing simple almost colloquial forms suited to the experiences of contemporary ideas' (as quoted by Taiyab Hussain 'Western Influence on Modern Persian Prose from the beginning of Constitutional Movement till the Islamic Revolution' 1999: 205). Modernist tried to bring prose writing closer to the language of masses and tried to depict their pitiable condition in a more simple and easy language, so that their ideas could reach their target readers of lower strata in the social hierarchy. They criticized the social and political systems of the time in their write-ups. Abd-ul-Rahim Talebuf's (1855-1910) *Kitab-I Ahmad* (also known as *Safi'naye Talebi*) in three volumes, is the first book in a dialogic form and in between the dialogues there is a discussion on the progress of western nations and the backwardness of Iran. His other book namely *Masa'lekus Saleki'n* is a fictional travelogue making a jibe on Iranian society of the time. This was the time when Iranian writers were divided into two groups. One school was promoters of modernity in literature and other one who followed the old Schools of Sa'di and Hafiz and were

opposed to the modernity. Zainul Abedin Maraghi'I (1840-1910), the writer of *Siyahatnamaye Ibrahim Beg*, a remarkable innovation in the field of modern prose writing as far as the language is concerned, uses very simple and heralded the modernity of Persian prose literature. Then a large number of writers followed their foot-steps.

Mohammad Ali Jamalzadeh (1892-2007), an earlier compiler of slangs in Persian writing, published a collection of six short stories in 1921 titled as "*Yeki Bud Yeki Nabud*" which contains features of colloquial Persian. Sadiq Hedayat's (1903-1951) 1930's writings contain Persian colloquial vocabulary and spelling. His *Buf-I Kur* is a fine example of surrealist writings in Persian literature. After that the name of Sadiq Chubak (1916-1998) can be mentioned here who used many regional and colloquial vocabularies in his novel *Sang-I Sabu'r. Savushun* of Simin Daneshvar (1921-2012). The novel is also replete with the use of slang vocabulary.

Certainly, in the field of prose, individuals like Jamalzadeh, Mirza Malkom Khan, Talebuf and Hijazi made efforts to modernize bring innovations and news forms of writings in Persian literature.

As far as poetry is concerned, the pioneering attempts to break prosodic norms and regulations were done by Lahuti, Taqi Rafat, Shams Kasmai Ja'far Khamnae and Eshqi. Though, it was Nima who succeeded in it.

To conclude, although, the accession of Safavids opened a new chapter of modernization in Iran and political relations were established with the western world but it was during the Qajar period that proper modernity in every dimension was brought to Iran by the statesmen and intellectuals. Iran's interaction with the West in general and with the France in particular resulted in the form of a revolution on political, social and literary levels.

The establishment of *Dar-ul-Funun* necessitated the translations of books from the western world. Persian literature, which had deteriorated since Mongol times in Iran, as also noted by Hassan Kamshad, had started its revival in the early nineteenth century. The primary reform in prose literature took place 'in the official correspondence, led by two of the greatest prime ministers Persian has ever produced: the Qa'im Maqam Farahani and the Amir Kabir. Later innovations came from two political and literary figures: Mirza Malkom Khan and Abdul Rahim Talibuff' (Modern Persian Prose Literature 1996: 13) ^[13]. After that Jamalzade, Hedayat and many more writers who visited France or any other western country and became familiar with their literatures wrote some remarkable and path-breaking books that also revolutionized the whole corpus of Persian prose literature.

In modern poetic literature many individuals tried to bring modernity into it, but it was Nima Yushij who could actually succeeded in that. He molded and modifies the meters and rhymes in his poetical compositions so that it could suit him to express his heartfelt matters. Nimaic poetry was adopted by his contemporaries, though, many were to oppose him in his effort to break into the meter and rhyme.

It can be said that undoubtedly it was the western literature in general and French literature in particular, under whose influence the whole modern Persian literature came up. Modern literary movements that were mostly originated in France have a tremendous impact on modern Persian literature.

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