CHAPTER: II

DIVERSION OF VIEWS OF WRITERS AND POETS DURING THE PERIOD
Literary criticism refers to the literary works and other concerning issues which are actually taken into consideration. It applies, as a term, to any argumentation about literature, whether or not specific works are analyzed. Plato’s cautions against the risky consequence of poetic inspiration in general in his Republic are thus often taken as the earliest important example of literary criticism. Criticism in this narrow sense can be distinguished not only from aesthetics (the philosophy of artistic value) but also from other matters that may concern the student of literature: biographical questions, bibliography, historical knowledge, sources and influences, and problems of method.

After a brief general survey of Persian prose and poetry, the modern period has been opened with the study of the early Qajar and pre-constitutional period. At that time modernizing influences first began to manifest themselves in Persian life and letters. With the influences of the west was the advent of new political factors and an increased social consciousness, with a rising middle class of educated persons, all of which had a profound effect on the Persian attitude towards literature. On the other hand, increased social consciousness resulted in literature being used and this use of literature was not new in Iran, though the forms employed were as a weapon of social criticism. Further, a new type of reading public demanded a new type of literature which contained, among other things, reflections of foreign cultures and scientific progress.

The poetic literature of this period reflects certain marked tendencies and distinguishes it from the classical poetry. The modern development opened new fields of thoughts and enlarged the circle of poetry by introducing political, social and economic themes into it. Besides political and social themes, the modern poets have given expression to their personal moods and experiences. They sing of their own hopes and human loves and express their individual sorrows, frustrations isolation. Contrary to directness of thought and feeling we find subjectivity and self analysis which constitute the dominant feature of modern poetry. Nevertheless, this intellectual and thematic innovation could not destroy completely the spirit of traditionalism in literature because it was not easy to escape entirely from those conventions which had acquired a literary sanctity due to their constant use over many centuries. Although the court
poetry went out of fashion and it was replaced by topical and revolutionary Persian poetry, yet we occasionally come across traditional metres and rhyme patterns such as Masnavi, Rubai, Ghazal and Qita. Didactic subjects (which had their origin in classic verse) continued to recur frequently serving its time and topical problems and not the so called eternal problems of classical poetry.

For their various verse-forme and rhyme schemes, as for all else pertaining to the construction of their poetry, the Iranians are mostly indebted to the Arabs to whose system, however, they have added many new features representing either a survival of the ancient Iranian forms or those newly invented.

Ruckert following the author of the Haft Qulzum (The seven Seas), has enumerated the following eleven verse-forms in Persian poetry:-

Ghazal (Ode), Qasida (Panegyric), Tashbib (Exordium), Qita (Fragment), Rubai (Quatrain), Fard (Unit), Masnavi (Doublets), Tarji-band (Return-tie), Tarkib-band (Composite-tie), and Mustazad (Multiple-poem).

This traditional classification of verse-forms is not free from criticism. Like Shamsuddin Qays-ar-Razi Gladwin has classed the Tarji-band and the Tarkib-band together under Tarji. According to Browne, their classification should be limited to six kinds only, while prof. Nicholson considering the question formally, further reduces the number to five main types.

The traditional classification of verse-forms, however, is not without its justification. Let us, first of all, consider the case of the Tashbib in relation to the qasida. A qasida may or may not contain a Tashbib. Allowed to stand alone as a complete poem, the Tashbib may claim to have formed a class by itself.

The qita cannot form a separate class, if it is only extracted from a qasida. But when a poem is composed in monorhyme, dealing with a single topic in such a manner that it cannot be classed as a Rubai or Ghazal, it definitely forms a distinct class. The Tarkib-band and the Tarji-band may be
regarded as two distinct classes, the former having a variable and the latter an invariable refrain.

Dihkhuda’s production in verse is small as compared with his excellent contribution in prose. His elegy on Mirza Jahangir Khan of Shiraz is a masterpiece of imagery and delicate touches. He will ever be remembered for his humorous contributions to the Cnarand-Parand (charivari) column of the Sur-i-Israfil. His magnum opus, Kitab-i-Amsalwa Hikam, is a standing monument to his erudition. In Brown’s opinion, he deserves to occupy the first rank amongst contemporary Persian men of letters.

Iraz Mirza, a prince of the blood, is a great personality amongst modern poets. He has composed singularly simple, fluent and elegant poems in a homely diction. For his ribald and satirical poems his Divan was proscribed, as also for his free thoughts; he like Firdausi, was denied burial in a Muslim Cemetery.

Nadir is prolific but without any outstanding talent. His long Masnavi poem ‘Tarikh-i-Nadir Shah’ will perpetuate the glory of his great ancestor Nadir Shah. Of the blood royal as he is, he lives the simple life of an ascetic.

Arif, is the words of Iraj, is a more gifted composer of songs than of poems. His unruly independence of spirit is manifest through out his writings. He may aptly be described as a patriotic poet of the constitution. The democratic spirit of the age and the reawakened love for freedom have voiced in his poems. He could not tolerate cant and hypocrisy in any sphere.

Pur-i-dawood’s poem are mostly heroic and romantic stanzas, inspired undoubtedly by the national spirit of Firdausi. They are simple and eloquent, exhibiting profound pathos and Zoroastrian tendencies. He is a staunch supporter of the purist movement.

Bahar one time the most devoted constitutionalist and trusted leader of the ‘Nationalist party’ of Khorasan is the outstanding representative both
of the Technical perfection and of the Philosophic strength of modern poetry, and no less of its moderation and sanity. The contents of his poems show a nice balance between national sentiment, political thoughts and individual reflections. His association with the literary Journals, The Naw Bahar, Taza Bahar and Danishkada, edited by him in succession, deserves notice.

Hushang Moradi Kermani (b. 1944), usually intended for an adolescent audience, have earned the author international recognition and prestigious literary awards. Qessaha-ye majid (Majid's stories, 1979), successfully serialized on Persian television in the 1980s, is couched in a seemingly effortless diction with stark but evocative imagery. Komra (The jar, 1989) was the screen play for a film with the same title directed by Ebrahim Foruzesh, which was well-received in international film festival. His Bachcheha- ye qalibaf (Carpet-weaving children, 1980), stands in sharp contrast with his sunny and buoyant stories about the boy Majid. It depicts his first-hand experience of misery, hunger, and tragic abused life of rug-weaving children in a Kerman village. It and Mosht bar pust (punch on the skin, 1992) have been translated into different languages and praised by the critics for their aesthetic qualities. Post-revolutionary fiction, including the short story, is marked by dynamic experimentation with techniques of narration, choice of plot, imagery, and structure. In line with recent tendencies in most modern literatures, modern Persian fiction expresses doubts, uncertainty, anxiety, tension, paradox, and dilemmas; it talks of beginnings and not of ends. Modern Persian fiction being almost a century old, has remained receptive to external influences and follows trends and styles as they appear elsewhere, stream of consciousness techniques and magical realism being cases in point. From a fictionalized remembrance of the nations' idealized past, to a portrayal of imbalances and injustices, and to the depiction of hardships of war and revolution, Persian fiction has remained a vehicle for change as well as testament to its painful process.

Dr. Shafaq is rather a prose –writer than a poet. His poems ‘Bi Yad-i Pidaram’ [11] (In Memory of father) and ‘Bi Yadi-Bidaram’ [12] (In Memory of Brother) are full of pathos, while his ‘Zindagi’ [13] and ‘Tasawwuf’ [14] (Mysticism) are tinged with sufi thoughts.
Ishqi may be called the apostle of young Iran. His two poems ‘Idial-i-Ishqi’ \[15\] (The Ideal of Ishqi) and ‘Rastakhiz’\[16\] (Resurrection), raised him to eminence. Some occasional defects in diction and Metre are immaterial, where the theme is lofty and the strain high. He was not only a popular poet but also a composer of songs. He paid with his life for the sincerity of his extreme re-publican views. \[17\] But for his premature death, he would perhaps have been one of the best poets of modern Iran.

Shahriyar has the keen insight of a poet. His poetic compositions are characterized by flowing rhyme, well-chosen diction and the choicest expressions. His poem ‘Ruh-i-Parvana’ \[18\] (The Soul of Parvana), ‘Ay Zan’ \[19\] (O Women) and ‘Dukht-i Daryush’ \[20\] (the daughters of Darius) are full of feeling and pathos.

Historically, the modern Persian story has undergone three stages of development: a formative period, a period of consolidation and growth, and a period of diversity. The formative period was ushered in by Mohammad Ali Jamalzadeh’s collection Yak-i Bud Yak-i Nabud and gained momentum with the early short stories of Sadeq Hedayat (1903–51). Jamalzadeh (1895–1997) is usually considered as the first writer of modern short stories in Persian. His stories focus on plot and action rather than on mood or character development and in that respect are reminiscent of the works of Guy de Maupassant and O. Henry. In contrast, Sadeq Hedayat, the writer who introduced modernism to Persian literature, brought about a fundamental change in Persian fiction. In addition to his longer stories, "Boof-e kur" (his masterpiece) and "Haji Aqa" (1945), he wrote collections of short stories including She Ghatra Khun (Three Drops of Blood, 1932; tr. into French by G. Lazard as Trois gouuttes de sang, Paris 1996) and Zende be Gur (Buried Alive, 1930). His stories were written in a simple and lucid language, but he employed a variety of approaches, from realism and naturalism to surrealistic fantasy, breaking new ground and introducing a whole range of literary models and presenting new possibilities for the further development of the genre. He experimented with disrupted chronology and non-linear or circular plots, applying these techniques to both his realistic and surrealist writings. Unlike Hedayat, who focused on the psychological complexity and hidden vulnerabilities of the individual, Bozorg Alavi depicts ideologically motivated personages defying oppression.
and social injustice. Such characters, seldom portrayed before in Persian fiction, are Alavi's main contribution to the thematic range of the modern Persian short story. This commitment to social issues is emulated by Fereydun Tonokaboni (b. 1937), Mahmud Dawlatabadi (b. 1940), Samad Behrangi (q.v.; 1939–68), and other writers of the left in the next generation.

Sadeq Chubak was one of the first authors to break the taboo. Following the example of William Faulkner, John Steinbeck, Erskine Caldwell, and Ernest Hemingway, his blunt approach appears in the early short story collections Khayma Shab-bazi (The Puppet Show, 1945) and Antar-i ke Luti-ash Morda Bud (1949; tr. P. Avery as "The Baboon Whose Buffoon was Dead", New World Writing 11, 1957), Later stories like "Zir-e Cheragh-e Ghermez", "Pirahan-e Zereski", and "Chera Darya Tufani Shoda Bud" describe the naked bestiality and moral degradation of the personages with no trace of squeamishness. His short stories mirror rotting society, populated by the crushed and the defeated. Chubak picks marginal characters—vagrants, pigeon-racers, corpse-washers, prostitutes, and opium addicts—who rarely appear in the fiction of his predecessors, and whom he portrays with brightness and force. His readers come face to face with grim realities and incidents that they have often witnessed for themselves in everyday life but have shunned out of their mind through satisfaction.

The second period in the development of the modern Persian short story began with the coup of 19 August 1953, and ended with the revolution of 1979. Jalal Al-e Ahmad is among the proponents of new political and cultural ideas whose influence and impact straddle the first and the second periods in the history of modern Persian fiction. His writings show an awareness of the works of Franz Fanon and the new generation of third-world writers concerned with the problems of cultural domination by colonial powers. Al-e Ahmad, Behazin, Tonekaboni, and Behrangi can all be described as engaged writers because most of their stories are built around a central ideological principle or thesis and illustrate the authors' political views and leanings. Among poets of this period, Forough Farrokhzad (1935–1967) has a special place as the first female poet of the Persian language acclaimed by her contemporaries and who left a lasting legacy despite her
short life. Her legacy and influence is not primarily (or uniquely) political; however, she was among the first women able to set a personal and original mark. In this sense she is eminent to iconic status.

Another notable author from this period is Simin Daneshvar (b. 1921), the first woman writer of note in contemporary Persian literature. Her reputation rests largely on her popular novel Savusun ("The Mourners of Siyāvosh," 1969). Simin Daneshvar's short stories deserve mention because they focus on the difficulty and social exclusion of women in Persian society and address topical issues from a woman's point of view.

Gholam Hossein Saedi's (1935–85) short stories, which he called ghessa, often rise above the boundaries of realism and attain a symbolic significance. His allegorical stories, which occasionally resemble folkloric tales and fables, are inhabited by displaced persons, trapped in dead ends. They emphasize the anxieties and the psychological perturbations of his deeply anxious characters. Sadeghi (1936–84) was yet another author who focused on the anxieties and secret mental agonies of his characters.

Hooshang Golshiri (1937-2000) and Asghar Elahi (b. 1944) created memorable psychological portraits through temporary monologue and stream of consciousness techniques. Golshiri, the author of the long story "Shazda Ehtejab" (Prince Ehtejab, 1968), is particularly noted for his successful experiments with extended interior monologues. A bold, innovative writer eager to explore modern methods and styles, Golshiri uses stream of consciousness narrative to reassess familiar theories and events. In this period, the influence of the western literature on the Iranian writers and authors is obvious. The new and modern approaches to writing is introduced and several genres have developed particularly in the field of contemporary Persian poets (classical and modern), notable figures include Mehdi Akhavan-Sales, Simin Behbahani, Forough Farrokhzad, Mohammad Zohari, Bijan Jalali, Siavash Kasraie, Fereydoon Moshiri, Nader Naderpour, Sohrab Sepehri, Mohammad-Reza Shafiei-Kadkani, Ahmad Shamlou, Nima Yushij, Manouchehr Atashi, Houshang Ebtehaj, Mirzadeh Eshghi (classical), Mohammad Taghi Bahar (classical), Aref (classical), Parvin Etesami (classical), and Shahriar (classical).
A few notable classical poets have arisen since the nineteenth century, among whom Mohammad Taghi Bahar and Parvin Etesami have been most celebrated. Mohammad Taghi Bahar had the title "king of poets" and had a significant role in the emergence and development of Persian literature as a distinct institution in the early part of the twentieth century. The theme of his poems was the social and political situation of Iran.

Parvin Etesami may be called the greatest Persian poetess writing in the classical style. One of her remarkable series, called 'Mast va Hoshyar' (The Drunk and the Sober), won admiration from many of those involved in romantic poetry. [21]

With the emergence of newspapers in Iran, which opened the way for political and literary magazines, the written, and consequently the literary language, was one of the essential elements of any movement towards the modernisation of literature in general. The effects of this inevitable change are reflected in the works of such poets as Iraj Mirza (1874-1925), Arif Qazvini (1882-1933) and Mirzadeh Eshqi (1893-1923). However, all their efforts in changing the language, form and subject matter were the beginning of a real movement towards exploration and experimentation in Persian poetry.

This movement was established through the revolutionary measures taken by Nima Youshij (Ali Esfandiyari, 1896-1959) to establish a new perspective in Persian poetry. Prior to him, form was, directly or indirectly, the key to the composition of a poem.

Nima Yushij is considered the father of modern Persian poetry, introducing many techniques and forms to differentiate the modern from the old. Nevertheless, the credit for popularizing this new literary form within a country and culture solidly based on a thousand years of classical poetry goes to his few disciples such as Ahmad Shamlou, who adopted Nima's methods and tried new techniques of modern poetry.

The transformation brought about by Nima Youshij, who freed Persian poetry from the fetters of prosodic measures, was a turning point
in a long literary tradition. It broadened the perception and thinking of the poets that came after him. Nima offered a different understanding of the principles of classical poetry. His artistry was not confined to removing the need for a fixed-length hemistich and dispensing with the tradition of rhyming but focused on a broader structure and function based on a contemporary understanding of human and social existence. His aim in renovating poetry was to commit it to a "natural identity" and to achieve a modern discipline in the mind and linguistic performance of the poet. [22]

Nima held that the formal technique dominating classical poetry interfered with its vitality, vigor and progress. Although he accepted some of its aesthetic properties and extended them in his poetry, he never ceased to widen his poetic experience by emphasizing the "natural order" of this art. What Nima Youshij founded in contemporary poetry, his successor Ahmad Shamlou continued.

The Sepid poem (which translates to white poem), which draws its sources from this poet, avoided the compulsory rules which had entered the Nimai' school of poetry and adopted a freer structure. This allowed a more direct relationship between the poet and his or her emotional roots. In previous poetry, the qualities of the poet’s vision as well as the span of the subject could only be expressed in general terms and were subsumed by the formal limitations imposed on poetic expression.

Nima’s poetry transgressed these limitations. It relied on the natural function inherent within poetry itself to portray the poet’s solidarity with life and the wide world surrounding him or her in specific and unambiguous details and scenes. Sepid poetry continues the poetic vision as Nima expressed it and avoids the contrived rules imposed on its creation. However, it’s most distinct difference with Nimai’ poetry is to move away from the rhythms it employed. Nima Yioussij paid attention to an overall harmonious rhyming and created many experimental examples to achieve this end.

Ahmad Shamlu discovered the inner characteristics of poetry and its manifestation in the literary creations of classical masters as well as the Nimai’ experience. He offered an individual approach. By distancing himself
from the obligations imposed by older poetry and some of the limitations that had entered the Nimai’ poem, he recognized the role of prose and music hidden in the language. In the structure of Sepid poetry, in contrast to the prosodic and Nimai’ rules, the poem is written in more "natural" words and incorporates a prose-like process without losing its poetic distinction. Sepid poetry is a developing branch of Nimai’ poetry built upon Nima Youshij’s innovations. Nima thought that any change in the construction and the tools of a poet’s expression is conditional on his/her knowledge of the world and a revolutionized outlook. Sepid poetry could not take root outside this teaching and its application.

Soon Shamloo completely forsaken rhythm and rhyme and gave to his work the natural music of the Persian language, using soft and tuneful words to make his poems different from ordinary prose. "The Fresh Air" and "The Garden of Mirror" are two collections of his poems from this experimental period. Being in search of a poetical identity, he began to employ some of the characteristics of classical Persian prose of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. He also created some compound words as well as new images. These attempts gave his poetry a relatively independent character, but failed to make it more expressive and powerful. It was more his earlier simple poems, with their politico-lyrical images, that justified his reputation among his admirers.

In the 1960s a new generation of poets appeared who, like Ahmad Shamloo, wrote prose poems, but tried hard to be modern by experimenting with Dadaism, automatism, formalism, futurism, surrealism and other known and unknown trends. They called themselves the New Wave Poets. One of them, Ahmad-Reza Ahmadi, was not even twenty when his poems, because of their unusual, sometimes amazing, tough and wild imagery, caused controversy. Ahmadi’s poetry could not give him a place among the established poets, but it did encourage many poets to break the boundaries of familiar and hackneyed imagery, pointing to a new poetical horizon.

According to Simin Behbahani, Sepid poetry did not received general acceptance before Bijan Jalali’s works. He is considered the founder of Sepid poetry according to Behbahani. Behbahani herself used the "Char
Pareh" style of Nima, and subsequently turned to ghazal, a free-flowing poetry style similar to the Western sonnet. Simin Behbahani contributed to a historic development in the form of the ghazal, as she added theatrical subjects, and daily events and conversations into her poetry. She has expanded the range of traditional Persian verse forms and produced some of the most significant works of Persian literature in the twentieth century.

A reluctant follower of Nima Yushij, Mehdi Akhavan-Sales published his Organ (1951) to support contentions against Nima Yushij's groundbreaking endeavors. But before long he realized that Nima and the modernists emulating him had more to offer than a just a change in rhythm, rhyme, and the general application of the classical Arabic meters. In Persian poetry, Mehdi Akhavan Sales has established a bridge between the Khorassani and Nima Schools. The critics consider Mehdi Akhavan Sales as one of the best contemporary Persian poets. He is one of the pioneers of free verse (new style poetry) in Persian literature, particularly of modern style epics. It was his ambition, for a long time, to introduce a fresh style to Persian poetry. [23]

Before coming to Tehran from his native city, Mashhad, in the province of Khorassan, he wrote ghazals and qasidas in the classical style with quite remarkable skill. Soon he adopted Nima Youshij's views on form and his outlook changed considerably. He could never alter the antique tone of the classics, though he occasionally used colloquial and local words, giving an interesting, sometimes humorous, tone to his poems. His poetry has a pronounced musical quality with its many puns, rhymes and inter-rhymes. In his poetry this music" with a mixture of colloquial and literary language, sounds like a deliberate accompaniment of the lyre of lyricism with the drum of epic. His excessive interest in rhyme produces many lines, which, though beautiful in them, are superfluous. Many of Akhavan Saless's poems are outstanding in all aspects and will survive as the best poems of our time.

Ahmad Shamloo began his poetic career by writing sentimental, lyrical and patriotic prose poems. Having some knowledge of the French language and literature, he abandoned the Persian classics and searched for inspiration in the world of modern French poetry, as well as in the
works of some other European poets in French translation. He is deeply influenced by Paul Eluard, Garcia Lorca, Luis Aragon and the great Turkish poet, Nazim Hekmat. This influence produced a new point of view and created a new poetical culture in which Shamloos poetry was appreciated and understood by many who were keen to read modern poetry but could not understand and enjoy the poems of Nima Youshij and of many others.

Later generation of writers like Jamal Mir Sadeqi (b. 1933) and Hoshang Gulsheri were influenced by his treatment of gender issues in Deraznae Shab (Length of the night, 1970), Kristin o Kid respectively. The abdication of Reza Shah in 1941 resulted in a short spell of relative freedom which opened new horizons for the modern Persian short stories. The first congress of Persian writers in 1946 marks the ascendancy of the left and radical views in general and the influence of the Tudeh party in particular. This event had a powerful and lasting effect on the majority of writers. The grip of censorship on the press loosened as a result of the changing political scenario in the country. Before the Shah's abdication the government censored not only subversive political ideas, but also functioned as moral guide, banning swearwords or openly erotic scenes. As a result of which writers were forced to resort to oblique hints and stilted dialogues free of obscenities. These strict moral regulations affected not only the subject matter, but also the language of literature.

Forough Farrokhzad is important in the literary history of Iran for three reasons. First, she was among the first generation to embrace the new style of poetry, pioneered by Nima Yushij during the 1920s, which demanded that poets experiment with rhyme, imagery, and the individual voice. Second, she was the first modern Iranian woman to graphically articulate private landscapes from a woman's perspective. Finally, she transcended her own literary role and experimented with acting, painting, and documentary film-making. [24]

Forough Farrokhzad, a poetess who published three books of poems, influenced by Tavallali and his followers, especially Nosrat Rahmani, soon became famous. She was the first woman to be bold, even brave enough to write about the hidden feelings of Iranian women. Her early poetry was weak in form and without any originality in imagery. Later, however, her
friendship with writers and poets like Ebrahim Golestan, Yadollah Roya'i Parviz Dariyoush, Ahmad Shamloo and especially Ahmad-Reza Ahmadi, encouraged her to enter quite a different territory of poetical vision. She also began to use broken metres, which are lines of unequal syllables in a poem. She would sometimes let a line fall off the metre in one or two syllables and then return to it. It may or may not have been deliberate, but it gave a fresh tone to the music of her poems.

A poet of Shamloos generation, who was also regarded as a modern artist, was Sohrab Sepehri. He began writing prose poems using rather abstract symbolism. His experience with the colours and lines of stylised paintings gave a visual dimension to some of his poems, making them musical pictures. The most notable feature in his poetry is mysticism, a blend of Sufism, Zen-Buddhism and Zoroastrianism, through which the poet invites man to turn away from his evil ways, regaining the innocence of a child in nature.

With his fascination with such abstract images, Sepehri, like Forough Farrokhzad, was, to a great extent, influenced by Ahmad-Reza Ahmadi, and also by Yadollah Roya'i, the leader of an avant-garde group which called its style "Volume", meaning image with more than one dimension.

Fereydoon Moshiri is best known as conciliator of classical Persian poetry with the New Poetry initiated by Nima Yooshij. One of the major contributions of Moshiri's poetry, according to some observers, is the broadening of the social and geographical scope of modern Persian literature.  

A poet of the last generation before the Islamic Revolution worthy of mention is Mohammad-Reza Shafiei-Kadkani (M. Sereshk). Though he is from Khorassan and sways between allegiance to Nima Youshij and Akhavan Saless, in his poetry he shows the influences of Hafez and Mowlavi. He uses simple, lyrical language and is mostly inspired by the political atmosphere. He is the most successful of those poets who in the past four decades have tried hard to find a synthesis between the two models of Ahmad Shamloo and Nima Youshij.
Saeed Nafisi analyzed and edited several critical works. He is well known for his works on Rudaki and Sufi literature. Parviz Natel-Khanlari and Gholamhossein Yousefi, who belong to Nafisi's generation, were also involved in modern literature and critical writings. Natel-Khanlari is distinguished by the simplicity of his style. He did not follow the traditionalists, nor did he advocate the new. Instead, his approach accommodated the entire spectrum of creativity and expression in Persian literature. Another critic, Ahmad Kasravi, an experienced authority on literature, attacked the writers and poets whose works served despotism.

Contemporary Persian literary criticism reached its maturity after Sadeq Hedayat, Ebrahim Golestan, Houshang Golshiri, Abdolhossein Zarrinkoub and Shahrokh Meskoob. Among these figures, Zarrinkoub held academic positions and had a reputation not only among the intelligentsia but also in academia. Besides his significant contribution to the maturity of Persian language and literature, Zarrinkoub boosted comparative literature and Persian literary criticism. Zarrinkoub's Serr e Ney is a critical and comparative analysis of Rumi’s Masnavi. In turn, Shahrokh Meskoob worked on Ferdowsi’s Shahnameh, using the principles of modern literary criticism.

Mohammad Taghi Bahar's main contribution to this field is his book called Sabk Shenasi (Stylistics). It is a pioneering work on the practice of Persian literary historiography and the emergence and development of Persian literature as a distinct institution in the early part of the 20th century. It contends that the exemplary status of Sabk-shinasi rests on the recognition of its disciplinary or institutional achievements. It further contends that, rather than a text on Persian 'stylistics', Sabk-shinasi is a vast history of Persian literary prose, and, as such, is a significant intervention in Persian literary historiography. Jalal Homaei, Badiozzaman Forouzanfar and his student, Mohammad Reza Shafiei-Kadkani, are other notable figures who have edited a number of prominent literary works. Critical analysis of Jami’s works has been carried out by Ala Khan Afsahzad. His classic book won the prestigious award of Iran's Year Best book in the year 2000.

A distinctive trait of post-war Persian fiction in all the three stages of development is the attention devoted to narrative styles and techniques.
In matters of style two main trends prevail. Some authors, like Chubak and Al-e Ahmad, follow colloquial speech patterns; others, such as Ebrahim Golestan and Mahmoud Etemadzadeh "Behazin", have adopted a more literary and lyrical tone. Although the work of all four writers stretch into later periods, some brief remarks about their differing techniques, which delineated future paths, need mentioning at the outset. Golestan experimented with different narrative styles, and it was only in two late collections of stories, *Juy o Divar o Teshna* (The Stream and the Wall and the Parched, 1967) and *Madd o Meh* (The Tide and the Mist, 1969) that he managed to find a style and voice of his own. His poetic language draws inspiration both from syntactical forms of classical Persian prose and the experiments of modernist writers, most notably Gertrude Stein. The influence of modernism is evident also in the structure of Golestan's short stories, in which the traditional linear plot line is abandoned in favor of disrupted chronology and free association of ideas. Contrary to most other modern Persian authors, Golestan pays little heed to the state of the poor and the dispossessed. Instead, his short stories are devoted to the world of Persian intellectuals, their concerns, anxieties and private obsessions. Golestan's brand of modernism has influenced the later generation of writers like Bahman Forsi and Houshang Golshiri (b. 1937). Although the stories of Behazin show similar indebtedness to classical Persian models, he does not follow Golestan's modernist experiments with syntax. Behazin is an author whose stories, delivered in a lucid literary style, express his leftist social beliefs. In some of his later works like the short story collection *Mohra-ye Mar* (The Snake Charm, 1955), he turns to literary allegory, imbuing ancient tales with a new message, a technique, which allows him to express his critical views obliquely. Behazin's predecessors in the sub-genre of the allegorical tale were Hedayat (in *Ab-e Zendegi*, 1931) and Chubak ("Esa'a-ye Adab" in the collection *Khayma-Shab-Bazi*).

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transformation brought about by Nima Youshij, who freed Persian poetry from the fetters of prosodic measures, was a turning point in a long literary tradition. It broadened the perception and thinking of the poets that came after him. Nima offered a different understanding of the principles of classical poetry. His artistry was not confined to removing the need for a fixed-length hemistich and dispensing with the tradition of rhyming but focused on a broader structure and function based on a contemporary understanding of human and social existence. His aim in renovating poetry was to commit it to a "natural identity" and to achieve a modern discipline in the mind and linguistic performance of the poet. Nima held that the formal technique dominating classical poetry interfered with its vitality, vigor and progress. Although he accepted some of its aesthetic properties and extended them in his poetry, he never ceased to widen his poetic experience by emphasizing the "natural order" of this art. What Nima Youshij founded in contemporary poetry, his successor Ahmad Shamlou continued.

Malkom khan was a prolific essayist, mostly on topical issues of political or social importance. His style was influenced more by European authors than by the classical prose stylists of Persia; argumentation was its essential Trait and this appealed to the younger generation as a new literary phenomenon. There are occasional grammatical mistakes and ideological inconsistencies, yet the ease and simplicity of style, coupled with the novelty of the contents, stirred the readers of his time. His writings were effective not only in arousing the constitutional movement but in setting the fashion for the younger writers who followed. After the victory of the constitutionalist, a host of young, progressive authors, especially journalists, regarded his style as the model of effective writing.

Talibuff’s writings were condemned of some of the religious leaders in Tabriz, who accused the author of atheism and forbade the reading of his works. Nevertheless, they had earned him so much respect and popularity in Iran that after the publicity of the constitution, the people of Tabriz elected him, in absentia, as their deputy to the first Majlis. He accepted the honour, but because of old age and his past dissatisfactions he never went to Tehran.
The Charand Parand pieces of Dehkhuda not only introduced a new style into Persian literature, but also established a new genre of writing, which was enthusiastically adopted by future writers and is still an important influence. Sample of the satirical vein can be found in the works of Persian classics, but these normally contain personal motives; tinged with gross maledictions, they are in fact a kind of poetic invective. Dihkuda’s satire was really modern in that it was not merely destructive mockery of established institutions, but also set forth a canon of social realism— and not in verse but in prose. Employing this new weapon courageously and parodied all the elements that seemed to his contemporaries foremost in inhibiting social progress: the shah, Muhammad Ali who was drawing to overthrow the constitution his father had so recently signed; corrupt courtiers and the minister who paid lip-service to the National Assembly while endeavouring to countermine its decisions; and responsive divines whose pompous arabicized language particularly incited Dihkhuda’s skill as a parodist. In attacking these, he ready response of intellect and temperament in his people.

Muhammad Baqir Khusravi, belonged to an aristocratic family which through poverty had gradually merged into the Middle class. The author’s attitude towards religion is not one of complete antagonism, yet he does not hesitate to criticize the outmoded customs sanctioned by Islam. In describing the religious laws permitting polygamy and what really amounts to the enslavement of women, he uses a good deal of satire and even sarcasm. His constitutional tendencies are clearly reflected in his pointing to the political and social conditions of the thirteenth century, and in his bitter condemnation of the oppressive government and the practices of its representatives, the foreign and indigenous feudal chiefs. In his care for his historical accuracy, khysravi made a completely new departure from older Persian literature: he brought to his work what may be described as a western approach, attractive in extensive researches before committing pen to paper. In brief, ‘Shams u Tughra’ stands at the crossroads of ancient and modern Persian literature and must be judged as a forerunner of the modern novel in Iran.

Hasan Badi shows great skill in the description of places. His pictures of ancient palaces, historical monuments (particularly Sculpture), and
Paintings in Babylon are all extremely realistic. There are a few minor technical and linguistic anachronisms in ‘Dastan-i-Bastan’, but the accurate chronology and conception of the plot hold the reader’s attention and place the story high as a work of art. In particular, the language of Badi represents a step towards greater maturity in handling the novel in Persian, for at least this writer begins to make his characters speak, and speak in a tongue be suited their positions in society. As has been noticed, failure to do this was a feature of the other historical novels of this time.

Santizada Kirmani cannot be ranked among the notable creative of modern Persia; yet the openness and freshness of his earlier works have made his name famous. His language is simple, clear, and devoid of the superfluity and ornament formerly characteristic of Persian prose. The two attractive features in Santizada’s writings are his idealism and patriotism, which have usually led him astray on historical facts. The rigid language of his characters is another handicap; and finally, the excessive use of European words, especially where Persian expressions could be found, is damaging to his style.

Most of Mahshid Amirshahi (b. 1940) works are literary sketches rather than true short stories. She prefers experimental writing to conventional plots, though some, like the title story of the collection B’ ad az ruz-e akhir (After the last day, 1969), do have well-defined plot-lines. The particular short story is a first-person narrative, recounted by a woman who finds new meaning in life after an attempted suicide. Amirshahi’s stories and sketches are written in an informal conversational style. Her prose is clear-cut and unadorned, delivered in laconic sentences and evocative languages. Although, Ahmad Mahmud (Ahmad Ata; b. 1930) and Mahmud Dawlatabadi (b. 1940) have written a number of short stories, but their fame rests largely on their panoramic novels. They are considered among the most prominent writers on rural and regional themes in modern Persian literature. Their stories are faithful portrayals of Khorasan, the northeastern region of Persia, and of Ahwaz in the south-west, respectively, recounting the customs and reveal the traditions of the local inhabitants. Their short stories reveal the tragic lives of the poor who are ready to sell their own flesh and blood in order to survive, when they are gripped by dire need. They portray sharecroppers who are crushed by the tyranny of
landlords and brow beaten by village lawenforcers, or peasants forced off their land by drought and famine, ultimately flocking to the cities to swell the ranks of the jobless. Pictures of poverty and despair are juxtaposed with the trivial pursuits of wanton landlords, greedy village elders and police agents, against a backdrop of cheerless village life.

Mirza Habib –i-Isfahani was critical of Iran’s religious and political establishment, the two most deep-rooted and powerful institutions of the time, greatly influenced his rendering of Morier’s works into Persian. The original Hajji Baba, despite all its fame and genius, is a one-sided, prejudiced, and exaggerated picture of only certain aspects of Persian life; and the Persian version, because of the Translation’s religious and political bias, is even more so.

Sheikh Musa Nathri’s study of history is more thorough; the Persian names, especially in the last volume, are written in a form closer to their original, and story is more compact and readable. Though sometimes coarse and dry, the language of sheikh Musa is on the whole appealing and straight-forward. The characters rarely speak, and when they do, no matter what social class they belong to, their language and expressions are exactly the same.

Mushfiq Kazimi makes frequent signal to a number of other social evils of his time: the corruption of ruling circles, Police autocracy and social corruptness in general. He condemns reactionary elements and tries, by a kind reportage, to open his reader’s eyes to the realistic of the modern age. Certain fragmentary episodes, such as scenes in a brothel, are skillfully sketched. But the picture as a whole remains unconvincing, partly because the author’s language is far from the real speech of people, and partly because he does not distinguish between what is essential and inessential. There is too much superfluous and subsidiary details, so that the main thread of the narrative is sometimes lost. Moreover, the plot- building is primitive: situations are often clumsily contrived; the characters seldom appear true to life. Farruks is supposed to personify the virtues and ideals of the younger generation. Yet the man we encounter is an idler who considers it humiliating to join the civil service and thus, as though there were no other openings for a young man, does nothing. His time is devoted
entirely to his love affair. A good deal of the book is taken up by the question of young girls, especially from respectable families, becoming prostitutes, and in describing the miseries of these victims of society the author is at his best. But when it comes to reasoning, he fails. His analysis of prostitution and other social problems shows little understanding of basic economic and social factors: his approach is descriptive rather than deductive. There is a constant appeal to the emotions with plenty of platitudinous moralizing. Abbas Khalili published a number of works containing a hotchpotch of odd topics, stories, and ideas translated directly or taken indirectly, from foreign writers and journals. The style used by Khalili in these writings - the prime example is to be found in his ' Rashat-e-Qalam (The Influence of pen, 1932) - is, as one critic has said, “an unhappy blend which has emerged out of the prose Translation of European poetry and Persian romantic classical element.”[27]

Although Golestan experimented with different narrative styles, but he managed to find a style and voice of his own only in his two late collections of stories, Juy o Divar o Teshna (The stream and the wall and the parched, 1967) and Madel o meh (The tide and the mist, 1969). His poetic language draws inspiration both from syntactical forms of classical Persian prose, and the experiment of modernist writers, most notably Gertrude Stein. The influence of modernism is also clearly visible in the structure of Golestan's short stories, where the customary linear plot-line is discarded in favor of disrupted chronology and free union of ideas. Golestan, contrary to most other modern Persian authors, pays little attention to the condition of the poor and the dispossessed. Instead, his short stories are devoted to the world of Persian intellectuals, their concerns, worries and private obsessions. His short stories please perhaps to the cognoscenti but leave the majority of readers unmoved and in this aspect resemble a well-made decorative objects d'art. The later generations of writers like Bahman Farsi (b. 1933) and Hoshang Golshiri (b. 1937) has been influenced by Golestan's brand of modernism.

Rabi Ansari was another writer who gained some success with his first book, “finayat-i-Bashar” (Mans's Crime), published in 1930 A.D. The theme is the familiar problem: prostitutions. Two girls from respectable families are kidnapped by a gang of white-slave Traffickers and sold to
brothel in Kermanshah. The brutal manner in which they are entrapped, the abominable treatment they and other victims receive, and finally their tragic end are described with the compassionate and fastidious pen of an emotional chronicler.

Jahangir Jalali’s first book, “Man-ham Girya Karda-am” is the work of a young man. The theme is the familiar one of prostitution, but seriousness coupled with deep insight make the book less coarse and more sincere subject. He was basically an idealist, but passages of sheer realism appear in his work. His passionate sympathies, especially for the social grievances of women, resulted in a vigorous exposure of many of the worst facets of a changing society that was not yet furnished with new, stabilizing traditions to replace those that modernity had deprived it off.

Muhammad Masud is a rebel without a cause, a pessimist with no faith in human nature. In his view, people are fundamentally vicious, debased and wretched, deserving whatever misery befalls them. Altruistic concepts such as love, friendship, humanity, public spiritedness, etc., are no more than a mirage. Not surprisingly, therefore, his trilogy contains more invective and destructive criticism than sober and rational analysis. His particular hatred is reserved for the wealthy and prosperous, and with an almost frantic anguish he attacks the power of money and those who enjoy it. But his enmity for the latter bears the mark of a personal grudge rather than a studied social conviction.

Among the host modern Persian writers Hijazi is interesting because he is so representative of what can happen to the sensitive, educated Iranian who comes into contact with the west. Almost all the authors of this period show some symptoms of this sudden exposure to western political and cultural ideas- and in the artist the symptoms accentuated are those of a whole society. There is, for instance, a tension in their writings that is typical of the age, during which deep-rooted political, social, and religious traditions were either being obliterated or else sustained the shock of impact with modern western institutions and theories. Sometimes this tension disoriented the writers, and this is particularly noticeable in Hijazi. Both as a stylist and thinker Hijazi is weak because he fails to evince any definite principles or to take up a position. He shows an inclination to
describe the hard life of his countrymen, but his official affiliations suppress him. When he takes the risk, at best he confines himself to the description of how, not why, things happen.

Speaking of Hijazi’s short stories and occasional pieces, Dr. Khanlari states:

Hijazi style in these works is what is known as “literary”. He exaggerates in the use of metaphors and tropes. His descriptions are full of ordinary well-known allusions, mostly borrowed from classical literature. In this manner Hijazi displays a certain amount of restraint and stiffness in his phraseology. He does not insist on recording the natural idioms and expression of the people; he makes them speak in his own turn of phrase.

Hijazi has been acclaimed by Henry D.G. Law as the Steele or Addison of Persia today. There is perhaps some slight justification in such an analogy, because these two English authors held important public offices and expressed sentiments that were pleasing to the Whig politicians, i.e. the ruling clique of their day. The middle class was their hero; and comment on civilized life, including guidance on public conduct, was essential to their writings. More or less the same kind of pattern applies to Hijazi. But steel and Addison sought their public in the coffee-house assemblies of the time, among ordinary people “who did not talk like a book.” They were successful because they reflected the spirit of the times and spoke for a new and civilized urban life. The case of the Persian writer is quite different. In the words of Mr. Law himself, “Hejazi writes for the cultured classes; and if he describes the life of the humble folks he does so rather as an observer albeit a sympathetic wise and kindly observer”. Between the lines of this sentence may be read the purport of another, about William: “He writes of the poor for the rich.”[28]

Similarly, there recurs in Jamalzadeh’s writings the dilemma of western-educated Persians who return to their country. Numerous characters of this type appear in his work, all in different situations and with different potentialities, but non of them is able to tolerate the prevailing conditions, accommodate himself to the requirements of his
milieu, or even to feel at home once he returns to his own country. Not only in their social environment but often in their own family circle they seem like outsiders. All of them, even if endowed with exceptional learning and capabilities, fail in whatever they take up and generally end as morbid and useless members of society. For example, there is the strange creature in “Farsi shikar Ast,” the Frenchified youth, a type, “whose conduct and manners will tickle to death audience in Persian Theatres for a hundred years to come.” Then the hero of Raab-Nama, who wants to be civil and helpful to his neighbours but is easily deceive by them. Or Rahmatullah, in “Atassh-i-zir-i khakistar” (The Fire under Ashes): trained as a skilled carpenter in Germany, he opens a factory in Tehran after his return home. As he is a master-craftsman, his trade flourishes rapidly. But rival firms cannot tolerate the success of their young colleague and their plotting loses Rahmatullah both the factory and his profession. Later he becomes an interpreter to a Persian military mission in Germany, but once again his honesty brings him to grief. Upon the instigation of the officers, of whose embezzlement he disapproves, Rahmatullah is forced to return to Persia, where he is immediately put under arrest and charged with communist activities. In the end he and the other members of his family are reduced to misery and complete destitution.

Buzurg Alavi was strongly influenced by Freudianism during his early years as a student in Germany. Later on, after adopting Marxist philosophy, he tried to bring to his writings what may be called socialist realism; but, as we shall see, Freud and his psychoanalysis remained a predominant part of Alavi’s work. Chamadan is a collection of six stories. All are subtle psychological studies, and actions of characters are, as a rule, conditioned by their extreme sensibility and by various kinds of psychological abnormality. It is the only book of the author in which his leftist political views are not reflected. Alavi’s flair for scene-painting, the breadth of his imaginative vision, and his tender treatment of whatever material is at his disposal are all best exhibited in the last story of this collection, ‘Raqs-i Marg’ (Dance of the Dead). The plot is a commonplace one: a love story and a murder at the end, interwoven with a piece of music, the “Dance macabre”, which the girl plays on her piano.
“A different kind of naturalism is to be found, for instance in Buzurg Alavi’s creations. At times the author without striving for artistic completeness, merely copies from life, is giving individual portraits instead of depicting types. It is probably for this reason that in the novel ‘Chashmhayash’ (Her Eyes) the figure of Farangis is too eccentric while the noble progressive painter Makan is depicted as unjustifiably timid and even to some extent flaccid. By cluttering up the portrayal of the hero’s character with inessential, unnecessary details, the author has rendered it vague, because an excess of realistic details often only leads to a distortion of the image.” [29] In the early short stories of Bozorg ‘Alavi (q.v., 1904-97), and especially in his collection Chamadan (Suitcase, 1934), the reader encounters the same melancholic and confused characters as in Hedayat’s fiction. However, ‘Alavi’s arrest and imprisonment due to his leftist activities brought a fundamental change to his work. He started writing from prison and brought a new sense of realism to a thematic sub-genre-prison literature—which in later on found a steady following among Persian authors. His collection of five short stories, Waraqparaha- ye Zendan (1941) and especially the short stories "Entezar" (The wait) and "Afw-e ‘omumi" (General Amnesty), reveal the plight of political and nonpolitical prisoners in detestable prison conditions, and the unkind treatment handed out by government agents and prison wardens. ‘Alawi’s latter works, such as the short stories "Gila Mard" and "Nameha" in the collection Nameha (Letters, 1951), give vent to an angry, belligerent spirit with a strong sense of moral responsibility. Most of his mature works which where written when he was a member of the Tudeh (communist party), can be categorized as political short stories which assess the subject of social commitment. Unlike Hedayat, who focused on the psychological intricacies and latent vulnerabilities of the individual, ‘Alavi depicts ideologically motivated personages who challenges oppression and social injustice. Characters like these have been rarely portrayed before in Persian fiction. But herein lays ‘Alavi’s main contribution in enhancing the thematic range of the modern Persian short story. This commitment to social issue is emulated by Fereydun Tonokaboni (b. 1937), Mahmud Daulatabadi (b. 1940), Samad Behrangi (q.v. 1939-68), and other leftist writers of the next generation.
Another distinctive feature of ‘Alawi’s writings, which sets his fiction apart from the works of Hedayat and from the writers of the next generation such as Jalal Al-e Ahmad (1923-69, q.v.) and Golam-Hosayn Sa'edi (1935-85) is his interest in lyrical and erotic themes. In these 'Alawi displays an outstanding ability in creating vivid female characters. The women in his stories are neither sanctified nor hated, as often happens in the works of other Persian writers. For example, sentimental and romantic authors like Muhammad Hejazi (1899-77) and 'Ali Dasti (1896-1981) often present their heroines as an onedimensional persona as indecisive and unfaithful coquettes. Hedayat and Sadeq Chubak (1916-98), considered as moderms on the other hand, paint erotic scenes in a dreamy or naturalistic manner, often influenced by the tenets of psychoanalysis.

Jalal Ali Ahmad’s literary fame began in 1945, with the publication of a short story called 'Ziyarat' (pilgrimage) in the journal Sukan. This interesting piece and eleven others were collected under the title of 'Did u Bazdid' (The Exchange of visit) and published later that year. The themes of these stories revolve round a Criticism of superstition and of hypocritical clergy; denunciation of the unpleasant aspects of urban life, and an unremitting sympathy for the masses who suffer social and political disabilities. Except for a number of social and critical essays written for the press, Ali Ahmad’s attention during the early years of his career was chiefly devoted to short story writing. Jamalzadeh (1895-1997) is usually considered as the first writer of modern short stories in Persian. His stories focus on plot and action rather than on mood or character development and in these respects is reminiscent of the works of Guy de Maupassant and O. Henry. A typical Jamalzadeh short story revolves around some entertaining episode and often has a surprise ending. It has the charm of traditional Persian folk tales (qessa), which are also plot centered. The stories from Yak-I Bud yak-I Nabud, which served as a blueprint for his subsequent works, can be defined as anecdotal fiction. Pleasant, entertaining, and glowing with colorful expressions, though lacking in depth and universal significance, these narratives are in essence witty satires about the disorder prevailing in the Persian society of the period, exposing to mock its backwardness, prejudice, and superstitions, and usually carrying an implied reformist or didactic message. His characters are often simple,
illiterate people the common folk. The prose is full, sometimes to excess, with colloquialism and proverbial expressions, for he was among the first writers to abandon the ornate artificial style of traditional writing and emulate the speech-patterns of ordinary conversations and the language of the folk tale. This style had a deep influence on younger writers of the period, making simple colloquial language the norm in modern Persian literature. However, the light-hearted meaning of his anecdotal fiction and the manner in which he developed his plots found no following among upcoming writers and had little impact on the development of modern Persian short story.

Sadiq Chubak has a firm sense of what the short story should be. Indeed, if he writes more, he has it in him to become one of the best short story writers in modern Persia. His feelings for this form are illustrated by his economy of incident, and by the fact that each of his stories has a single theme devoted on a small scale with a minimum of descriptive apparatus. His treatments of detail suggest the intricacy, combined with boldness of conception, of the Persian miniature painting. Chubak keeps his picture balance and spare; and yet a whole pattern of emotion and situations is revealed within it. The result is generally convincing and shows a moving insight into human nature.

Among the authors the first to break the taboo was Sadeq Chubak. His blunt approach emulating William Faulkner, John Steinbeck, Erskine Caldwell, and Ernest Hemingway appears in the early short story collections Khaima Shab-bazi (The puppet show, 1945) and Antar-1 ke lut-ash mordabu (1949). His later stories like Zir-e Cheragh-e qirmiz, Pirahan-e zereshki, Chera darya tufani shuda bud describe the naked bestiality and moral degradation of the personages with no hint of squeamishness. His short stories reflect a decaying society, populated by the crushed and the defeated. Chubak picks characters that rarely appear in the fiction of predecessors. He portrays the marginal characters of the society like vagrants, pigeon-racers, and corpse-washer, prostitutes, and opium addicts with vividness and force. His readers come across the grim realities and incidents which they themselves have often witnessed in everyday life but shunned out of their minds through complacency. This encounter is not to everyone's liking and explains the strong resentment that Chubak
sometimes stir up. His dark portrayal of immorality leaves little room for the potentially beautiful or joyous aspects of life. His language is rough and direct, with a plenty of proverbs, slang expressions, and street language. The spelling is mostly colloquialized. Some of his stories use the syntactic structure of southern dialects from the Bushehr region of Iran. A distinctive feature in all the three stages of development of post-war Persian fiction is the attention devoted to narrative styles and techniques. Two main trends prevail in matters of style: authors, like Chubak and Al-e Ahmad, follow colloquial speech patterns; others, such as Ebrahim Golestan (b. 1922) and Mohammad E'temaadzada "Behadin" (b. 1915), have adopted a more literary and lyrical tone. Although the work of all four writers extends into later periods, some brief remarks about their differing techniques, which delineated future paths, need mentioning at the onset.

Chubak’s Zeal for true craftsmanship and his conscientiousness are rare among modern Persian writers, whose approach is often more akin to that of the journalist than of the painstaking artist. He was the artist’s readiness to observe and come to proper understanding of his subject, as well as his capacity to identify himself in emotion and thought with his subject. It is this that gives chubak’s stories such a fine quality.

Bih-Azin is also renowned as one of the most skilful and meticulous translators of modern Iran. The author shows considerable ability to introduced original themes and probe deep into sociological studies, but the treatment and development of his stories are somewhat perfunctory; his care and attention appear to be centered more on their form and style than on their purport. As a result, his prose works have an exemplary poetical lyricism.

Ali- Muhammad Afghani whose colossal novel ‘Shuhar-i-Ahu Khanum’ (Mrs. Ahu’s Husband) made an unusual concussion among the intellectual and literary circles of Iran when it first appeared in 1961. The work took not only the reading public but also the critics by complete surprise. The theme of ‘Shuhar-i-Ahu Khanum’ revolves around the lives and destinies of a generation of Iranians now gradually passing away. One of the outstanding features of ‘Shuhar-i-Ahu Khanum’ is the wealth and variety of its characterization. The multitudes of people appearing in the
book are so real and true to that hardly any Iranian reader could fail to recognize them among his family and friends. The significance of the book, apart from its literary and artistic value, lies in the fact that it is a social history, belonging to a certain time and place, and containing a message. Whatever our criticism of Afghani as a writer, there is no doubt that his novel is one of the very few contributions to modern Iranian fiction that clearly pioneer a promising future for Persian letters—a future compatible with a great literary heritage.

Sadiq Hedayat was three when the constitutional revolution broke out, and he lived his childhood through the disturbed years following the revolution. His literary activity began during Reza Shah’s time, when the liberal outbursts of the early years of the century were being checked by a drastic dictatorship, and when freedom of appreciate Hidayat’s life and work, and especially to understand his acute depressions and the possible cause of his suicide, these two factors must be borne in mind: first, the aristocratic surroundings he was born and bred in and, secondly, the disturbed state of his country.

Of Hidayat as an individual’s little is known. He was modest, solitary and retiring, therefore few had the privilege of intimacy with him. Even for those who knew him, it seems that the real man remained obscure. In his works, however, certain aspects of his characters can be detected. First, his love for Persia and his consuming interest in its people, its traditions, cultures, and past glories can be seen in almost everything he wrote; at times it even drove him to a kind of fanatical chauvinism.

On the contrary, Sadeq Hedayat, the writer who introduced modernism to Persian literature, brought about a fundamental change in Persian fiction. In addition to his longer stories, Buf-e Kur (his masterpiece;) and Haji Aqa (1945), he wrote collections of short stories including Seqatra Khun (Three drops of blood) and Zinda ba Gur (Buried alive). His stories were written in simple and lucid language, but he used a variety of approaches, from realism and naturalism to surrealistic fantasy, breaking new ground and pioneered a whole range of literary models and presenting new possibilities for the further development of the genre. He experimented with disrupted chronology and non-linear or circular plots,
using these techniques to both his realistic and surrealistic writings. According to Hedayat he lived at a time of repression. The limiting social climate cast a long shadow over his work. This intensified his pessimism and insecurity. So it is not surprising that almost all of his short stories finish either with the death or the suicide of the main character and few express emotions other than despair, philosophical perplexity, and psychological anxiety. His mode of thinking and techniques of narrating left a lasting impression on other Persian writers.

Hidayat himself was so involved in this fatalistic attitude that his power to describe the involvement comes almost unexpectedly. The objectivity of the artist is powerful juxtaposed to a subjective situation that eventually dominated it. His personal pessimism is expressed in the following, though he rarely spoke this directly of his own feelings: “If it is true that everybody has a star in the sky, mine must be very remote, dark and obscure. Perhaps I have no star at all!”

Shab of Kirmanshah-a rider, archer and editor-is an expert in the use of choice words and in the employment of rhetoric, often displaying great ingenuity. His poems in the ‘Shakaristan’ show that though old in age, he was young in thought and spirit.

Adib of Nishapur, although handicapped by blindness, is a good bilingual poet. At first he followed Qaani, but afterwards adopted the Turkistan style. As a blind man, he is naturally inclined to be introspective.

Yahya is more an imitators an imitator than an original composer. He will be remembered for his attempts to revive the syllabic system in Persian metres, as also for his verse-translation of many a French poem into Persian.

Danish of Tehran, who specializes in Qasidas of the classical style, treats both serious and humorous themes with equal skill. His Divan-i-Hakim-i-Suri, rich in culinary vocabulary, reminds us of the classical Bushaq-i-Atma.
Kamali, who was apprenticed by his father to a blacksmith, is a self-taught man. As a poet, he has been held in high esteem by his contemporaries. Though a follower of the school of Fars and Iraq, he does not disdain the Indian style (sabk-i-Hind).

The critic Abdul Azim Khan of Garakan is a learned but scanty writer in a patriotic strain. As a Veteran educationist, he has devoted his life to the cause of the revival of the Persian language and literature.

Lahuti is ultra-modern in his ideas, communistic in creed and fiery in expression. His communistic views have found strong expression in the poems, ‘kiriml’ [30] (The Kremlin) and ‘Inqilab-i-Surkh’ [31] (The Red Revolution). He has successfully attempted new forms of Persian poetry.

Masrur’s poetic fame is on the increase. He is equally able to deal with humorous and serious themes. His poem on the Tablets, found at Persepolis, gives a full measure of his talent.

Hadi writes excellent ghazals, rich in philosophical and mystical thoughts sentiments. His poem ‘Khizaniyya’ [32] (On Autumn), written in pure Persian and in the vigorous style of classical writers, shows his merit.

Dr. Mahmud Khan Afshar, the well-known editor of the Ayanda, has written some delightful poems of a sentimental nature. His views on the veiling of women are rather conservative. His Doctorate thesis, ‘La Politique Europeanne en Perse,’ affords a fair study of the European intrigues in Iran.

The poems of Danish of Khorasan express liberal and progressive ideas, bearing especially on the education and emancipation of women. That he is an advocate of the latter is evident from his poem entitled ‘Hadiyyat-i-danish bi Dukhtaran-i-Imruz WA Madaran-i-Farda.’ [33] (A gift from Danish to the Daughters of To-day and Mothers of To-morrow).

Rashid-i-Yasimi, whose love and appreciation of nature may have been stimulated by his Gurani blood, is noted for his successful versification of didactic stories and fables from European literature.
Ruhani is unsurpassed in his humor and wit. He has held up to ridicule the fashions and foibles of modern Iranian society. His topical humorous poems have a universal appeal.

Sarmad, a young poet of great promise, has led the revolt against the conservative and conventional poetry of Persia. He is the best interpreter of the new spirit of the age. He composes all kinds of poetry and sometimes vies in style with Iraj Mirza. ‘Banafsha’ (The Violet), ‘Aina-i-Falak’ (The Mirror of Firmament) and ‘Sukan’ (Poetry) are some of his remarkable pieces.

Adib of Pishwar, who comes first chronologically, is a bilingual poet. Muhammad Khan Qazvini has compared him with Abul-Ala al-Marri (973-1057 A.D). His verses are full of classical and obsolete expressions.

All we can say of Danish of Tabriz is that he imitates classical models. His two best known Masnawi poems are ‘Tul-I umro’ (secrets of Longevity) and ‘Avaza i- Bazm-i-Sulh-I la Haye’ (Echoes of the peace conference of The Hague). He died at the ripe old age of eighty seven.

Rabbani who like Adib is a bilingual poet of the classical school, has written verses that are dull, laboured and old-fashioned. Though an adherent of the classical, Shurida has a style excellent diction and ability to play on words. He could well claim to be a descendant of Ahli of Shiraz.

Muhtashimu’s-Saltana, many times President of the Majlis, is a scanty versifier of ghazals. He is better known for his political activities than his poetical productions. He deserves mention also for the fact he presided over the historic congress of orientalists, held on the occasion of Firdausi Millenary celebrations at Tehran in 1355 A.H/ 1934 A.D.

Ibrat, who is a staunch adherent of the classical school and well known for his mystic trend of mind, is flawless in his rhyme and metre. Ashraf is a prophetic and inspiring; his poems are noted for their genial flow and breathe the air of freedom and progress.

Ayati – a renegade Bahai-has no particular claim to eminence except for his introduction of the sulasi verse form and his capacity for writing in
pure Persian. His ‘Kawakibud-Durriya fi Maasirul- Bahaiyya’\textsuperscript{35} in favour of and ‘Kashful Hiyal’ \textsuperscript{36} against Bahaiism are his important works. His fame also rests on the monthly Namakdan, edited by him for about five years.

Vusuq, sometime premier and responsible for the abortive Anglo-Persian Agreement of 1919, is a follower of the old masters, conspicuous for the dexterity, and firmness of his verse. His poems deal with social and philosophical subjects.

Ata, who has held different portfolios in the cabinet, follows the style of Iraq poets. His poem, ‘Payam-i-kush’ \textsuperscript{37} (The Message of the Mountain) may be reckoned as a master-piece for its bold imagery, solemn diction and sublime ideas. Muhammad Kasmaï, younger brother of Husayn Kasmaï of the Jungle Movement fame, is noted for writing good poems in his native Gilaki. As a versifier in Persian, he is noted for his advocacy of the cause of women.

Vahid is to be praised for the variety of his poems. He is an admirer of Nizami of Ganja. His shorter poems are suggestive, didactic in their purpose and have a tone of melancholy. He is the editor of the Armaghan and founder of Anjuman-i-Adabi of Tehran (founder in A.H.1339/ A.D.1920-21). Yakta follows the old School but his poems are the handwork of an Artist, and his use of similies and metaphors is appropriate and generally flawless. Amiri has praised his poetic talents.

Mayil is a good versifier without much distinction. He successively edited the dailies, ‘Sitara-I Iran’ and ‘shafaq-i-Surkh,’ both now useless. Niyazi makes a greater poet in French than one in Persian. His verse-translation ‘Les Rubayat’ \textsuperscript{38} of Omar Khayyam drew the notice of French savants. Bamdad has tried his hand at all kinds of poetry without eminence in any. Nizam-i-Vafa is old-fashioned and yet one could wish that his art were equal to his ideas.

Farrukhi is, perhaps, the best improviser of his age. He is notorious in his country for his communistic learnings. Qulzum, who sings of new themes in the old style, is chiefly known for his ‘Haftad Mauj’ \textsuperscript{39} (seventy billows). It resembles externally the IstidlaliyyaoftheBahai poet, Mirza Naim
of Isfahan. Rayhan’s poems are thoughtful and appealing, but he forsook his communistic views after one night’s confinement in a lunatic shelter. He successfully edited the ‘Gul-i-Zard’ for four years.

The style of Nasih’s ghazals and qasidas is hackneyed, but his quatrains convey noble ideas. In their flowing smoothness, his poems bear comparison with those of ‘Ibrat’. The animated songs of Husam-zada are popular among the boy scouts of Iran. He is one of those few poets who have introduced alternate rhyming in Persian poetry.  

Badiuz-Zaman keeps to the Turkistan style, But the themes of such poems of his as ‘Guzarish-I Guzran’ (The passing show) describing the onslaught of the Greeks under Alexander the great on the Iranians, ‘Rah-i-Ahan’ (The Railway) and ‘Iran-I Diruz-Iran-I Farda’ (The Iran of yesterday and the Iran of Tomorrow) show that he is romantically-minded and not averse to new ideas and social reforms.

The emotional appeal of ‘Pizhman-i-Bakhti yari is at once deep and personal. His poem ‘Qabr-I Man’ (My Tomb) shows that he had a very unhappy Life. The fame of Bina rests more on prose than on his poetry. He has introduced into poetry a number of new themes such as ‘Parvana u chiragh-i Barg’ (The Moth and The Electric Light), and ‘Tayyare u uqab’ (The Aeroplane and the Eagle).

Habib-i Yaghmai has produced only a few poems, but they are of sterling worth and marked by his individuality. Ahmadi Bakhtiyari has used with success alternate rhyming which betrays a strong western influence. The poetess Jannat who writes her ghazals in imitation of old masters is a princess of the blood. In painting, she is a pupil of the famous Kamalul-Mulk. She has been put last in the list as the date of her birth is not known.
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