



# International Liberty Association Newsletter

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## BRAVE WOMEN OF IRAN FOR THE OCCASION OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

For the occasion of **International Women's Day**, which is on **8 March**, we decided to dedicate the front page of this Newsletter to the brave women of Iran who have been courageously challenging the misogynist dictates and acts of the mullahs ruling Iran for over four decades.

The recent history of Iranian women's struggles for equality and basic rights goes back around 160 years to the 1860s from when the women of Iran participated with men in the struggle for freedom against despotic rule and also formed women's societies and associations, actively taking part in social movements for equal rights.

For decades before Ayatollah Khomeini hijacked the democratic aspirations of the people, the women of Iran were always in the front lines of demonstrations and took a very active role in the movement that had high hopes for freedom and equality. However, Khomeini betrayed the people and particularly the women of Iran and soon after returning from exile to Tehran in February 1979, declared a Shia Islamist State, later to be the godfather of ISIS which became the Sunni version.

Hassan Rouhani, the so called 'moderate' current president of the regime in his memoir has taken pride for being the first in forcing women in the army and then other sectors of the government into hijab.

The enforced hijab which was the first practical step into forcing women out of the jobs market altogether and into their kitchens at home, was put into practice only a few weeks after Khomeini's take over. Mass demonstrations on 8 March 1979 were a clear indication that the women of Iran were not going to put up with this indignity and the past 42 years have proved that the mullahs could not succeed in driving the women of Iran into the corners of their homes as a commodity owned by men.

Khomeini, who knew well it would not be easy to force these women out of public life, created ... *continued on p.2*



Women in front line of anti Shah demonstrations in 1979



Women took an active role in demonstrations against the new Islamist State that Ayatollah Khomeini was planning to impose on the people of Iran



**Brave Women of Iran**

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**'We complain about poverty and despise inequality'**

the IRGC, the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps, out of thugs and club wielders. He gave these trouble makers uniform and free rein to attack, rape and torture women into submission. But the past 42 years proved him wrong.

He even tried to ban women from higher education, but today there are more women in universities across Iran than there are men.

Iranian women's struggle for freedom, justice and equality is best expressed in the symbols of these women, the mothers who have lost their loved ones and remain steadfast in their quest for justice and all those brave women who are in prisons across Iran.

Gohar Eshghi is the mother of Satar Beheshti, the blogger who was killed under torture in 2013. Gohar has never stopped demanding justice. She has become a symbol for those seeking justice appearing in anti regime protests with a photo of her slain son close to her heart.

Shahnaz Akmal, the mother of slain Mostafa Karimbeigi, has been mourning for her beloved son since he was killed during public protests in December 2009.

Mrs Shirpisheh, mother of Poya who was killed during protests in 2019 has said that only by following Poya's goals for a free and just Iran can she feel alive.

Mrs Fatemeh Sepehri, who spent time in prison for writing to the Supreme Leader asking him to resign, said: "41 years of dictatorship is enough. As a woman I want to echo the voice of Iranian women to the people of the world and tell them that in prisons and courts of the Islamic Republic they are acting worse than Stalin and any horrible ruler that has come before them. There is no respect for the life and property of citizens. They neither understand humanity nor the religion of Islam."

Atena Daemi, who has spent long years of her youth in prisons for



**'Students give their lives but won't submit to indignity'**



**Women leading protest against embezzlement**

defending children's rights, said: "On the occasion of International Women's Day what comes to my mind is the unfortunate condition of women in Gharchak Prison, a prison not only along the road to Varamin, but a prison in the hearts and minds of most women of Iran. While I congratulate 8 March to the women of Iran whose rights have been denied, I hope that we could learn from our predecessors and do more to achieve what we must."



**'Justice, Humanity, Equality: our determined struggle will push back reactionaries'**

Women have been in the forefront of all demonstrations that have been taking place against the misogynist and despotic regime since 1979.

Hundreds of women activists have been arrested this past year and long prison sentences given to women protesting forced veiling, embezzlement, and other social ills. Many women activists have been detained for their activism accused of propaganda against the regime.

During the protests in December 2017 the photo of a young girl raising her fist in the middle of tear gas smoke became an iconic symbol of the nationwide protests.

The clerical regime's Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, has specifically called for banning women from certain jobs saying that "some western idealists are trying to bring jobs that are physically, and psychologically fit for man towards women." This has lowered women's participation in the economy of Iran to less than 20%, lowest of all countries in the Persian Gulf area. Nevertheless the participation of girls in universities across Iran has been more than boys and this struggle of the women of Iran has upset many clerics in the regime.

The women of Iran are determined to change the history of their country in the 21st century and they deserve all our support from freedom loving people around the world. Let's echo their cries for justice, humanity, equality and a better future for them and their children.



**Brave woman in the middle of protests in 2018**



## A NETWORK OF 27 STATE AGENCIES SUPPRESSES IRANIAN WOMEN BY ENFORCING THE MANDATORY HIJAB

Repression at home and export of terrorism and fundamentalism abroad are the two prongs of the strategy adopted by the misogynist and medieval regime ruling Iran to preserve its rule. Iranian women have always been the first victims of domestic repression under the pretext of enforcing the mandatory Hijab.

Contrary to the mullahs' expectations, Iranian women have refused to accept this imposition and defied the regime's intention to deprive them of the right to choose their own clothing, a systematic and prevalent trend which has turned into a political and security issue for the regime.

That is why the first task of various government bodies is to suppress women over the form of clothing.

This was first revealed in December 2015 by Hossein Ashtari, the commander-in-chief of the State Security Force, that "26 government agencies are responsible for the issue of Hijab and Chastity."

The issue of the compulsory veil has taken on political and national security significance over the past 40 years, and turned into one of the regime's top priorities. The misogynist regime in Iran has developed various mechanisms to enforce the mandatory Hijab, and the organization set up for this task has widely expanded through the years.

In September 2019, the supreme cultural council approved a document entitled "Supplementary Collection." Under the new plan, 27 state agencies are responsible for enforcing the mandatory Hijab, which includes 10 ministries.



All the above said agencies and the bodies not mentioned involved in the suppression of women work in accordance with the policies of the Supreme Council for Cultural Revolution, which is chaired by the mullahs' President, Hassan Rouhani.

## CONCERN OVER FATE OF ZEYNAB JALALIAN



Since 29 April 2020, as prisons across Iran experienced outbreaks of COVID-19, ministry of intelligence agents have transferred Iranian Kurdish woman **Zeynab Jalalian** to four different prisons across the country and, in violation of the absolute prohibition against torture and other ill-treatment, held her in prolonged solitary confinement and deliberately denied her access to adequate health care. The ministry of intelligence is conditioning access to adequate health care, transfer to a prison closer to her family home in West Azerbaijan province and an end of reprisals against Zeynab Jalalian and her family on her "confessing" to wrongdoing and expressing remorse for her past political activities on camera and agreeing to work with the ministry of intelligence.

Zeynab Jalalian has been intentionally denied transfer to outside facilities for medical treatment unavailable in prison for over six years. Only once in 2020, she was briefly provided

health care outside of prison in June after testing positive for COVID-19. She has had no further adequate access to health care, including for a post COVID-19 respiratory condition which she said is so acute that it prevents her from sleeping, and for a serious eye condition.

On 29 November 2020, Ali Jalalian, Zeynab Jalalian's father, was arrested by ministry of intelligence officials and interrogated about speaking about his daughter with human rights organizations and media outside of Iran;

he was released on bail a day later.

Zeynab Jalalian is serving a life sentence in Yazd prison, 1,400 km away from her family home, following a grossly unfair trial in December 2008 that lasted a few minutes without her lawyer present. Following her arbitrary arrest, Zeynab Jalalian was held in prolonged solitary confinement for eight months without access to a lawyer, and has said that, during this period, intelligence officials tortured her including through flogging the soles of her feet, punching her in the stomach, hitting her head against a wall and threatening her with rape.

In her message about International Women's Day Zeynab said: I am Zeynab, a Kurdish woman who has witnessed hundreds of crimes of this regime, insults, torture and worst of all execution of dozens of my cellmates. Now the torturers want me to repent but the more they torture me the stronger and more resolute I become.



## SHE DIDN'T THINK OF THE BARS; SHE WAS FILLED WITH HOPE OF FREEDOM

A married 47-year-old mother of four spent a decade (three years during the Shah's reign plus seven under the clerical regime) as a political prisoner in Iran's notorious prisons.

**Ashraf Ahmadi's** activism was in part influenced by the time she spent attending the court hearings of her elder brother. "From the moment I found myself by Ashraf's side in fighting against the Shah's dictatorial regime, I saw how she could handle the most difficult and complicated situations with a high spirit of hope and confidence. In her view, life was nothing but a struggle for freedom and she was willing to pay any price for it," a close friend of Ashraf said.

"Her determination and initiative in accepting responsibility was very prominent. She was in charge of holding rallies in Tehran, Qom and other cities, providing information to various media outlets and organising weekly meetings

for the family members of political prisoners."

Ashraf's political activities ultimately led to her arrest by the Shah's secret police, known as SAVAK.

While pregnant and suffering from severe heart disease, she was arrested in the summer of 1975. Her pregnancy and her vulnerable health condition didn't prevent SAVAK from putting her under severe pressure and torture.



Ashraf was sentenced to 15 years in prison and was released a few months before the fall of the Shah by the heroic people of Iran.

After Khomeini came into power in 1979, Ashraf was again arrested and imprisoned for her activism. Her cellmate recounts: "In the beginning of her arrest we were in different cells and we had no direct contact, but eight months later we found ourselves together in Room 4 in Ward 240."

Having experienced interrogation

during the Shah's era, Ashraf Ahmadi helped many female prisoners with advice to not let the interrogators extract information from them. Lajevardi (famously known as the butcher of Evin) was aware of this and assigned a spy to report to him on whoever was in close contact with Ashraf. Anybody who was caught would face grave consequences.

Ashraf Ahmadi refused to reply to questions during the interrogations. She did not even appear in court and had no convictions.

In Evin Prison, Lajevardi occasionally held meetings in a prison hall and forced the prisoners to attend, but Ashraf did not participate even in a single meeting. When this was reported to Lajevardi, he replied: "Leave her alone; she is crazy."

In those years of captivity, courage and resistance were something that all women, who knew Ashraf, learned from her. She didn't think of the prison bars; the hope of freedom was the only thing that occupied her soul.

Ashraf was hanged on 31 July 1988 in Evin prison, one of the more than 30,000 prisoners executed in that massacre of 1988.

## HOPELESS BILL FOR PROTECTING WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE



In Iran violence against women is encouraged by the 'law'!

Failure to define and criminalise "violence against women", is the hallmark of the misogynist regime of Iran. For years the so called law makers are trying to pass a bill in that regard, a bill that is lacking the necessary transparency and precision in various paragraphs, fails to ban child marriage and fails to address the sexual exploitation of women which has become a systemic phenomenon under the rule of the mullahs.

For example, it is stated in this bill that the Judiciary and State Security Force agencies are obliged to immediately act and open a case for women victims of violence who complain to them. But if the woman was complaining about her husband or father, then "the case must initially be referred to the Council for Resolving Differences to achieve peace and reconciliation" and "if reconciliation was not achieved, then it must be referred to a court to be processed through legal stages".

Clearly, such lengthy processes deprive women from receiving any support or protection against violence.

The bill's efficacy had been earlier questioned by Parvaneh Salahshouri, a former member of the mullahs' parliament. "Even if the bill is adopted, the conditions would only get worse for women. The present bill has removed the phrase 'violence against women', factoring out or somehow changing the parts on security of women. As a result, the bill has lost its goal... The bill has only played with words."

At least a decade of foot-dragging in the adoption of any bill to protect women against violence has placed Iran on the top of the list of countries with the highest records of domestic violence against women.

Experts on Iran say at least 66 percent of Iranian women experience domestic violence in their life time.

The corona virus pandemic has further aggravated the situation.

During an interview with a state run daily, Mohammad Reza Mahboubfar, a social-ills expert under the clerical regime, has revealed that the statistics on domestic violence in Iran surpassed the average total of the previous years in just the first three months of the Iranian calendar (April – June 2020). He said it is expected that the average annual rate of 450 honour killings in the country would rise to 2,736 this year.

In explaining the reason for this upward trend of violence against women, the regime's experts acknowledge that men are encouraged by the 'law'!



## “WE HAVE TO STAND UP TO IT; FOR THE SAKE OF HUMANITY AND FOR HUMAN RIGHTS” – ILA ZOOM MEETING



In ‘An Hour with ILA’ Zoom event on January 30th, the **Rt. Hon. David Jones MP** was the keynote speaker. His remarks reflecting the history of Islamist revolution in Iran were received enthusiastically by participants and we have therefore decided to print it in full here:

As we approach the 42nd anniversary of the Ayatollahs’ takeover in Iran, I would like to give you a brief account of my early involvement in the cause of securing democracy in Iran.

When Ayatollah Khomeini took control in 1979, I was a young lawyer. I was hopeful at that time that a democratic Iran would be of huge benefit to the entire world, and particularly the Middle East.

But very soon I realised that, far from creating democracy in Iran - which was also the aspiration of young Iranians - the people of a great country had been taken hostage by a medieval, theocratic regime that wanted, in effect, to take Iran back several centuries.

News of the first executions on the rooftop of Khomeini’s residence in Tehran in the early days of the revolution was an immediate cause of alarm.

As a lawyer, I was particularly concerned to see people’s lives being taken without anything that resembled due process of law.

Then we heard about the plight of women in Iran. When Khomeini was in Paris - before his return to Tehran - he was asked by journalists – particularly female ones - about the use of the hijab. He assured them that there would be no forced hijab in the Iran after the Shah left. It quickly became apparent that that statement was untrue.

Since Khomeini’s return, many tens of thousands of brave Iranians have lost their lives trying to take back what they were aiming to achieve with their



sacrifices in 1979. We know that in the summer of 1988 alone, over 30,000 prisoners were executed.

But the question is: how could such a regime come to power?

We all remember that the revolution in Iran in 1979 was so massive, so popular that it was unprecedented in history.

No one thought it would turn so sour so soon.

So what happened?

The reality is that the young inspirational leaders who had emerged from Dr Mossadegh’s National Movement, were all in the Shah’s prisons. Some were executed, and the rest stayed here until the last days of the Shah.

When the people opened the doors of the prisons and let the prisoners free, Khomeini had already hijacked the revolution and, with the help of foreign media, had installed himself as the leader of the revolutionary movement.

He understood very well that he could not gain the support of the young Iranians who were risking their lives in pursuit of freedom if they knew what his true aims were.

So, when he was in Paris, he made promises that were, frankly, deceitful.

He portrayed himself as a man of religion, uninterested in politics, who intended to go to Qom, the “Vatican” of Iran, to practise his religion, and would leave the government to competent people.

But he showed his true colours after arriving in Tehran. He reneged on his promise that women would be free to choose their clothes. He excluded them from their jobs and banned them

altogether from certain roles, including the judiciary and political leadership.

Khomeini knew that he could not declare a Caliphate right there and then. So he called for a referendum; but the question was loaded:

“Do you want the Shah and a monarchy or an Islamic republic?”

Many, including the main opposition force, the PMOI, questioned the validity of that referendum. Nobody had any idea of what was meant by an Islamic Republic.

The PMOI asked for that to be clarified but it wasn’t to be.

So 98% of participants said no to the Shah and monarchy – which was, of course, to be expected- but the outcome could not in any sense be said to be support for a system that nobody understood and was utterly undefined.

So the fever of the revolution was used to cement Khomeini’s position, and for the past 41 years the regime has used that referendum as justification for remaining in power, even after mass popular uprisings that have been taking place every few years since the first on June 20th, 1981.

The regime turned out not to be Islamic (so I am assured by my many Muslim friends who are familiar with teachings of Mohammad, who is called the Mercy of Both Worlds, and in whose Holy Book every chapter begins with In the name of God the Most Passionate the Most Merciful.)

Neither passion nor mercy is in the DNA of this brutal regime.

Nor is it a republic, in which elected officials run the government.

It is a medieval theocracy, with all the power in the hands of *continued on p.6*



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the Supreme Leader or the Caliph.

In fact, Khomeini later disclosed his real intention, which was to create an Islamic Caliphate in the Middle East and beyond.

It was this fundamentalist view that made him create the Revolutionary Guards, the Quds Force and all the other oppressive forces that are there to protect this backward ideology and help it to expand beyond the borders of Iran.

That is why the Iran-Iraq war started and lasted for eight years.

We all know that Saddam started the war.

But what we also know now is that it was Khomeini who called for the war, called for the overthrow of the government of Iraq in 1979 and financed and trained Iraqi Shi'ites to attempt to overthrow the Iraqi government.

Less than two years after the war started, Iraq removed all its forces from Iran and called for a ceasefire.

Many peace initiatives by world leaders and the UN were rejected by Khomeini. Only after it was clear in 1988 that he was losing the war, did Khomeini accept the ceasefire resolution of the United Nations – the famous Resolution 598.

So the roots of Islamist fundamentalism can be traced back to Khomeini's 1979 takeover of the resources of the rich country of Iran.

Recent news has shown the increasing coordination between Al Qaeda and the mullahs' regime.

For long the regime was taking advantage of an inherent naiveté in the West about the difference between Shia and Sunni branches of Islam.

Many Westerners thought that the two branches had been at war for centuries and that there was no way they collaborate.

It is only recently that the US government has recognised the organic link between al-Qaeda and Iran.

The events subsequent to the 2003 Iraq war provided an easy ride for the mullahs' regime to gain territories that Khomeini could not himself secure by eight years of war with Iraq.

It is clear that the only winner of the coalition's war with Iraq was Iran.

Of course, the regime had extended its reach to the Middle East countries by proxy forces, most notably Hezbollah, which was established in Lebanon in 1982 with Iranian financial backing and training.

Through Hezbollah the Iranian

regime was, and is, controlling a network of gangsters and drug traffickers across the world via Hezbollah, and another similar Houthi group in Yemen (actually another division of Iran's Revolutionary Guards).

We know very well that when the uprising in Syria began in 2011 it was Iran and Hezbollah that went there and turned it to a war, with millions of refugees, many of whom eventually came to Europe and changed the political landscape here.

The root of Islamic fundamentalism lies in Iran.

Many of the various groups that have sprung up in recent years are either directly and organically linked to Tehran, or indirectly have been created as a response to Tehran's suppression of Muslim populations in Sunni majority areas of the Middle East.

One interesting case is that of DAESH or ISIS. We all know that Qassem Soleimani, who was killed by US forces last year in Baghdad, was effectively in control of Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Yemen via proxy forces.

In 2011, Al Baghdadi, who later became the leader of ISIS, was in prison in Iraq.

On the orders of Soleimani, Nuri al-Maleki, who was then Prime Minister of Iraq and a client of Iran, released al-Baghdadi, who went to Syria.

John Kerry, the then US Secretary of State, revealed in 2015 that Assad (again under orders from Tehran) released thousands of prisoners who formed the basis of ISIS and went on to capture vast areas of land in Syria.

In 2014, when the Sunni population were rising up against the corrupt and oppressive Iraqi government of al-Maleki, 1,800 or fewer ISIS operatives invaded the Iraqi city of Mosul, in the Sunni part of Iraq, and diverted attention from al-Maleki.



Robert Gibbs played violin for the event

They started attacking the Sunni population in Iraq and went north to Kurdistan instead of south to oust the Shia government of Iraq.

Maleki ordered the Iraqi troops to abandon their weapons and leave the area. Some 50,000 Iraqi soldiers left nearly 4 billion dollars worth of American weaponry in the hands of ISIS and overnight enriched them.

Then the regime in Tehran used the presence of ISIS as an excuse to establish a replica of the IRGC in Iraq called the Popular Mobilisation Force; another terrorist entity that killed Sunnis by the thousands in the most barbaric of ways.

A lot can be said about the interaction of the Iranian regime with all these terrorist groups.

One thing is clear: they are either directly linked to Iran or have been created as a result of Iran's barbaric treatment of Sunnis in the Middle East.

Either way, at the centre of the spider's web is Tehran.

The Tehran regime is intent on pursuing a global Islamic state, which is why it seeks to acquire the nuclear weapons and continues its proxy wars in Yemen and Syria.

We have to stand up to it; for the sake of humanity and for human rights.

I congratulate you for standing firm in your resolve to do so.

And I support the ILA's drive to bring respect for human rights to Iran.





## NEWS IN BRIEF

### 36 RIGHTS GROUPS CALLED FOR URGENT RELEASE OF KURD ACTIVISTS



36 civil society and human rights organisations have called for urgent attention by the international community to an ongoing wave of arbitrary arrests, incommunicado detention, and enforced disappearances by the Iranian authorities, targeting scores of people from Iran's disadvantaged Kurdish minority in the provinces of Alborz, Kermanshah, Kurdistan, Tehran, and West Azerbaijan.

According to information gathered from informed sources, since 6 January 2021, at least 96 individuals (88 men and 8 women) from Iran's Kurdish minority, including civil society activists, labour rights activists, environmentalists, writers, university students and formerly imprisoned political activists as well as individuals with no known history of activism, have been arrested by the intelligence unit of Iran's Revolutionary Guards or ministry of intelligence agents, at times in a violent manner.

### POLITICAL PRISONER DEPRIVED OF URGENT MEDICAL TREATMENT



**Fatemeh Mosanna**, 53, has been suffering from intestinal bleeding since mid-August. Evin Prison authorities have not granted her medical leave. Doctors say she is not physically fit to serve her prison sentence. She suffers from intestinal colitis and severe migraine headaches.

Fatemeh Mosanna and husband, Hassan Sadeqi, and her two children were arrested on 28 January 2013 as they were holding a memorial ceremony for Mr Sadeqi's father who had died in Camp Ashraf in Iraq. Their daughter

was detained for three days and her underage son was detained and interrogated for about 1.5 months. The couple were later sentenced to 15 years in prison each.

### IRANIAN CHRISTIANS ORDERED NOT TO MEET – IN PERSON OR ONLINE



According to article 18 website eleven Christian couples from a city just outside Tehran have been ordered by agents of Iran's Ministry of Intelligence to sign commitments to refrain from meeting together – either in person or online.

After refusing, the Christians were threatened with long prison sentences and told it would be better for them if they left the country.

The demands were made during interrogations in Fardis over two weeks at the end of January.

### IRANIANS CONTINUE PROTESTS



Nurses of Milad Hospital protesting unpaid wages and harsh work



Retirees in Tehran protest their lost income due to hyperinflation

Protest rallies are held in cities across Iran on a daily basis in spite of threats and intimidations by authorities.



Part time teachers in Tehran protesting discrimination and low wages



Nurses in Shiraz Central Hospital protesting unpaid wages and bad working conditions

### MEMBERS OF AN ALL-WOMEN MUSIC BAND ARRESTED AND SUMMONED



On Saturday, 16 January 2021, two members of **Glaris**, an all-women musical band were summoned to the Intelligence Police of the State Security Force of Kermanshah. **Nazanin Atabaki** and **Nasrin Yazdanipour**, solo singers of the musical band, were interrogated by the police. Subsequently, they were temporarily released on bail until their prosecution is finalised.

In announcing the news, Hassan Heydari, the head of the Intelligence Police of Kermanshah, said, "The police will deal decisively with all forms of abnormal and unconventional behaviour."

People close to the group have said that the two members of Glaris musical band had performed in a video advertisement for a furniture store. Women are not allowed to sing solo.



# GETTING TO KNOW IRAN'S CULTURAL HERITAGE



We intend to devote this space to introduce the rich cultural heritage of Persia, today's Iran. The mullahs ruling the country in the past four decades have done whatever they could to demolish and bury this rich heritage under piles of superstition and demagoguery. However the heritage turned out to be richer than they could ever imagine and the new generations of Iranians are becoming more interested in that heritage than the backward teachings of clerics who want to return Iran to the Arabia of 1400 years ago.

We start this page with a woman since we are approaching the International Women's Day and women artists are most despised by the mullahs and deserve more attention.

Her name is **Forugh Farrokhzad**, a poet who has had a profound impact on contemporary women of Iran even though her life was cut short by a car accident at the age of 32.

Forugh Farrokhzad was born in Tehran in 1935, to career military officer Colonel Mohammad Bagher Farrokhzad and his wife Touran Vaziri-Tabar. The third of seven children, she attended school until the ninth grade, then was taught painting and sewing at a girls' school for the manual arts. At the age of 16 she was married to satirist Parviz Shapour. Her only child, a son named Kamyar Shapour was born a year later.

After her divorce from Parviz in 1954, her son was taken away from her and brought up by Parviz and his family. Forugh was given very few visiting rights and that was a source of sorrow and lasting distress for her.

Forough started writing poems at a young age. She spent nine months in Europe during 1958 and after returning to Iran, she published two volumes, *Wall* and *Rebellion*. She then went to Tabriz to make a film about Iranians affected by leprosy. This 1962 documentary film, titled *The House is Black*, is considered to be an essential part of the Iranian New Wave movement. During the 12 days of shooting the documentary, she became attached to the child of two lepers. She adopted the boy and brought him to live at her mother's house.

Forugh Farrokhzad published *Reborn* in 1964. Her poetry at that time varied significantly from former Iranian poetic traditions. In a radio interview, when asked about feminine perspective in her poems, Forough replied: "If my poems, as you say, have an aspect of femininity, it is of course quite natural. After all, fortunately I am a woman. But if you

speak of artistic merits, I think gender cannot play a role. In fact to even voice such a suggestion is unethical. It is natural that a woman, because of her physical, emotional, and spiritual inclinations, may give certain issues greater attention, issues that men may not normally address. I believe that if those who choose art to express their inner self, feel they have to do so with their gender in mind, they would never progress in their art -- and that is not right."

Forough died in a car accident on 13 February 1967. Her poem *Let Us Believe in the Dawn of the Cold Season* was published posthumously, and is considered by some to be one of the best-structured modern poems in Persian.

### I Pity the Garden

*No one thinks of flowers  
No one thinks of fishes  
No one wishes  
To believe that the garden is dying  
That the garden's heart is swollen in the sun  
That the garden's mind is softly, slowly  
Emptying of green memories.*



Forough's painting



She missed her son greatly



Forough's grave

**Join us for 'An Hour with ILA'**  
**Online weekly Zoom meetings**  
**Every Saturday 5 to 6pm**

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