

The Poetry of Shia

Composed by: **Mohammad Reza Aghasi**

Compied by: **Gholam Reza Aghasi**

Translated by: **Dr. Mohammad Hadi Jahandideh**



سرشناسه : آقاسی، محمدرضا، ۱۳۳۸ - ۱۳۸۴.

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ON THE RELEASE OF THIS BOOK

Shia-Nameh, in brief, is the written statement containing the terms and conditions of being a true Shi'a Muslim. It aims at tackling the challenging issues of "lesser" and "greater" Jihads and tries to answer the universal questions of "what to be and how to be" as well as the meanings that surround them. An honest Shi'a must follow the straight path of devotion to Allah by obeying the revealed legislations of Islam. What will be remained except the pure religion of Islam established by our holy prophet? Nothing!!

Although *Shia-Nameh* is Mohammad Reza Aghasi's most famous "Masnavi", the exact number of its lines remains unknown to us. It should be noted that we have still been receiving various poems, pamphlets and video clips from different parts of Iran that after eight years of Aghasi's departure to his credit. Among such newly found literary sources are the poetries composed by the late skillful and committed poet that we have not heard of them before.

In this book, there are nearly seven hundred rhyming couplets chosen for the art lovers that, in our estimation, worth much reading and re-reading. The selection criteria for the poems as well as the precedence or subservience imposed on them are based on the dispersed nature of Aghasi's compositions and his scattered artistic performances. This literary text has been compiled by some of Aghasi's friends and companions and nothing has been interpolated into his original work. Finally, we have been powerless to achieve anything. Our success is largely due to God's mercy, Ahlulbayt's generosity and national support.

Center for Publication and Compilation of Aghasi's Works

THE CONDOLENCE MESSAGE



With deepest regret and grief, I received the sad news of the demise of Mohammad Reza Aghasi, the free-hearted and Basiji poet. The tragic event of his departure is a big loss to the committed art and literature of our country in general and to the religious poetry and our Islamic revolution in particular. The fluent, well-made and well-themed poems of Aghasi reflect his pure heart, honest feelings and spontaneous skills which hold a special place within contemporary literature. I extend my sincere condolences to the fans and respected family of our dearly departed Basiji poet. May God give him eternal rest and have mercy on his soul.

Great Ayatollah Imam Sayyed Ali Khamenehi

(Leader of the Islamic Revolution)

2005

THE LATE POET'S PREFACE



ONE

My name is Mohammad Reza Aghasi, the sixth child of a religious family that can be traced with three degree of relationship to the village named as Arangeh and Charan located in the suburbs of Karaj, Alborz province, Iran.



Karaj is located near Tehran

I was born in our paternal house situated behind the shrine of Sayyed Nasroldin, Kahayam Avenue, Tehran.



Shrine of Sayyed Nasroldin



District of Sayyed Nasroldin, second from the left

I guess my early childhood upbringing and the environment in which I used to live were the main factors responsible for my later personality. First and foremost, the enabling atmosphere which dominated our home had a great effect on me.



Poet's home before the Islamic Revolution

Although my late father did not have enough education, he was the reciter of holy Quran.



Haj Ghasem Aghasi, Poet's father

He was the follower of the deceased Ayatollah Haj Sayyed Ahmad Taleghani Ale Ahmad, the father of Jalal Ale Ahmad, the famous graceful writer.



Jalal Ale Ahmad

Ayatollah Ahmad Taleghani

As far as I can remember, the sweet voice of Quran recited by my father after prayer in the morning filled the air of our home. Moreover, my mother had the honor to be the panegyrist of Qamar Bani Hashim(A.S) for forty years.



Shrine of Hazrat Abulfazl

TWO

I used to weave the words together since my childhood. Especially, when I was thirteen years old.



Aghasi in elementary school, third from the left

By ۱۹۷۶, I started to snoop on some of the active literary associations of Tehran while I was only seventeen or eighteen years old. The Islamic revolution of Iran gained victory when I had become twenty years old. Before revolution, I was the student of Fine Art University of Tehran for two years.



Azadi Square, Tehran



University of Tehran

However, I started to clash with the chancellor, principle and faculty members of the university over their harsh disciplines and teaching methods which were devoid of delicacies needed for artistic training. Based on my objections and arguments, they rejected and failed me in the exams for two consecutive academic years and I was dismissed from university at last. After the event, I was appointed in the armament unit of the army. By the summer of ۱۹۷۸, the unrest and turmoil over the revolutionary issues were intensified and I quitted the army accordingly.

THREE

I held gun over my shoulder as the member of the Committee of Islamic Revolution a branch of which was based in our neighborhood, the shrine of Sayyed Nasroldin, Khayam Avenue, Tehran. So, I joined hundreds and thousands of the young members of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards since the very beginning of the Iranian Islamic Revolution in 12 February 1979.



Days of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, second holding gun

FOUR

“Now Iran, Tomorrow Palestine”, was the pivotal slogan chanted by the revolutionaries during those times.



Aghasi between his friends

On the basis of the ideology, I passed the preliminary training of guerrilla warfare in Tehran. Our troops were deployed to Syrian Arab Republic in December 1979. We were settled in one of the garrisons belonging to the military wing of Palestine Liberation Organization known as Brigade Alasifah.



Aghasi in Syria, first on the right

We were provided with special courses of guerrilla warfare by some of the skillful military trainers of Palestine. At the end of the course, we decided to return to the border. However, our road was blocked by the pro-Israel Christian-Lebanese forces also known as Phalangists.



Phalangists

These forces were positioned in the Lebanese–Syrian border and prevented our group from reaching the land of Lebanon. Some of us returned to Tehran in order to participate, at least, in Afghanistan’s fronts which were occupied by 140 thousand black boot soldiers of the 40th Army of the Soviet Union’s Red Army.



FIVE

In autumn 1985, one of my friends from Combat Engineering of Construction Jihad’s Support Office met me. He suggested that: “If you are ready, you can join the training course conducted for driving bulldozer and heavy machineries. The frond is in need of bulldozer driver”. So, I enrolled my name in Military Engineering division of Tehran’s Support Office of Construction Jihad.



Construction Jihad

I passed the training course for driving heavy machineries in southern Tehran, Kahrizak. I was deployed to the southern war front afterwards. For a few days, our group was settled in Shush, Khuzestan Province. Heading towards Majnun Islands we reached Shalamcheh finally.



SIX

By the end of war, 1989, I was wandering aimlessly around the neighborhood of poetry.



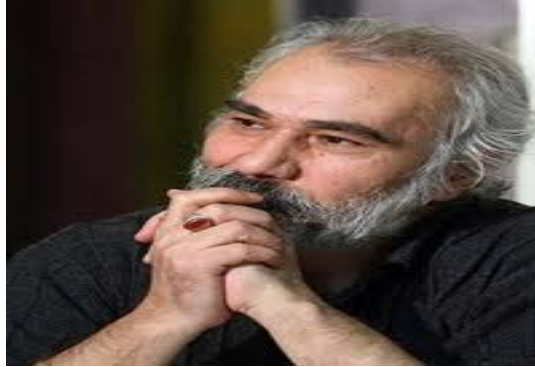
END OF WAR

- Ceasefire by the United Nations Security Council, hostilities continued until 20 Aug'1988.
- The war finally ended with a United Nations brokered ceasefire in the form of UNSC Resolution 598.
- It took several weeks for the Iranian armed forces to evacuate Iraqi territory to honor pre-war international borders between the 2 nations (1975 Algiers Agreement).



Iranian negotiating team

I took my serious step into the realm of poetry as soon as I got familiar with Yousuf Ali Mirshakak, one of the luminaries and prominent figures of Iranian Revolutionary Poetry.



Yousuf Ali Mirshakak



SEVEN

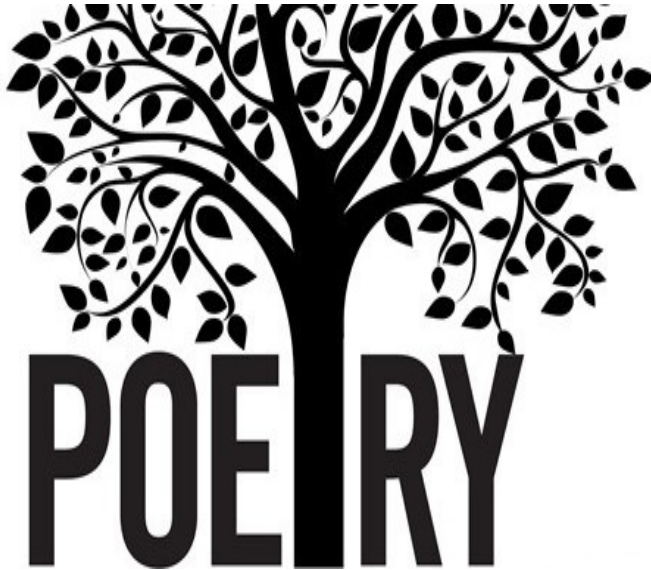
I have selected Mathnawi for the expression of my feelings and perceptions probably because such a poetic form provides a wider circle for the overflow of the poet's internal feelings than the others. Mathnawi is the sea. Mathnawi is the ocean. Let us discuss about "Ritual Poetry" or as it is known "Shia Poetry".

Beware my brother!

Venturing to step into such realms "the first condition is to be honest in love just like Majnun". You must believe that Allah is free of all wants while you are poor in nature. You must have faith in the holy family of Muhammad (P.B.U.H) as the main gate of Allah's mercy and grace. You must carry your alms bowl and knock at the door of Ahl al-Bayt(A.S) begging for favor and mercy. You must not create a needless, self-sufficient world for yourself. Under such conditions, you can rest assured that Ahl al-Bayt(A.S) will never let you go empty-handed. The more you beg them helplessly and tearfully, the more they will fill your alms bowl. As the most famous poem of mine, Shia-Nameh, is concerned, I can only say that: If it was not the grace and mercy of Ahl al-Bayt(A.S) on me, I would have no power to compose it. I'm just nothing {without God}.

EIGHT

If you want to verify the ratio between “Poetry” and “Perception” is proportional, you will realize that affliction is the connecting link chain. Any sort of affliction, however, is not a source of honor for its beholder. I know plenty of fake poets who keep nagging about stomach and lower limbs. Are such pains valuable?



If you do not suffer from having no access to the mercy of God and feel no commitment to the heavenly religions, it manifests that your suffering is for anything but love. It is said that: “There is no suffering better than suffering of love”.

Your achievements not only in the realm of “Poetry” but also in other artistic domains such as Painting, Calligraphy, Graphics, Drama and Cinema are valuable on the condition that being away from the almighty God has been the underlying impetus for creating them. If the artistic works are produced without heavenly motivations, they are absolutely worthless.

NINTH

Most of the budgetary for propagating the Revolutionary Poetry are now being allocated for conducting seminars, symposiums, congresses, conferences. The “Artistic-Cultural” meetings spend large amounts for publishing catalogues and luxury, four-colored, useless and disposable bulletins. Some of the organizations which were meant to perform artistic-advertising activities do not perform their original plan properly. They embarked on dealing with those issues which were more relevant to Ministries of Road & Urban Development as well as Commerce.

TEN

The role models for Basiji poets are Di’bil b. ‘Ali al-Khuza’i, Komeit b. Zeid Asadi, Al-Sayyid Isma’il al-Himyari {whose behaviors must be emulated by the contemporary pots}. They are the vocal cords echoing the ideals of Ahl al-Bayt(A.S). Basiji poets should mobilize their words for defending the oppressed nation of Khatam al-Anbiya(P.B.U.H) living in Bosnia, Lebanon and Palestine. This is the minimum philosophy of existence that needs to get acknowledged by Basiji poets.



Aghast’s funeral

بسمه تعالی



پیشگفتار مترجم

پایداری عشق به امام حسین (علیه السلام) با وجود زوال نسبی ارزش های الهی، اخلاقی و انسانی در جهان امروزی از عجائب روزگار است. خاندان عصمت و طهارت مرامی جهانی و سازگار با مبانی سایر ادیان الهی دارند. منش والای پیامبر اسلام (صلی الله علیه و آله و سلم) با تکیه بر دستورات خداوند متعال و بر اساس پندار نیک، گفتار نیک و رفتار نیک شکل گرفته اند. مرحوم محمد رضا آقاسی با قلب، قلم و حنجره خویش ثابت کرد که می توان در میان امواج پرتلاطم دریای آخرالزمان زیست ولی روح دردمند را به ساحل نجات رسانید. کشور مظلوم ایران که پس از سال ها سلطه پادشاهان بی کفایت توانست استقلال خود را مقارن با پیروزی انقلاب اسلامی بدست آورد بیش از هر چیز نیازمند مدرسان و مبلغانی متعهد به ارزش های الهی و انسانی است تا کشتی خود را به مقصد کشاند. آقاسی در اشعار خویش نه تنها به برخی از کاستی ها و مشکلات فرهنگی میهن خود اشاره می کند بلکه دلسوزانه به دنبال وحدت امت اسلامی است. این شاعر گرانمایه به واقعه عاشورا همچون ریسمان الهی و کشتی نجاتی می نگرد که می تواند مسلمانان را در کنار یکدیگر متحد و تفرقه ها را منهدم سازد. گلایه های آقاسی از شدت علاقه به وطن خود سرچشمه می گیرند و در اینجاست که وی قلم در دست می گیرد یا حنجره حسینی خود را در راه عزت و سربلندی ایران مرتعش می سازد. لایه های درونی اشعار مرحوم آقاسی فراخوانی برای یافتن حلقه گمشده امر به معروف و نهی از منکر در جامعه هستند.

