



# Freydoon Farokhzad: Another Season

A Bilingual Edition with Critical Introduction,  
Annotations and Archival Material



Edited and Translated by

**Nima Mina**

## Freydoun Farokhzad: Another Season

*Andere Jahreszeit*

نشر مهري برای گذر از سانسور و خوانش آسان و  
بی‌دردسر، با اجازه نویسنده، پی‌دی‌اف کتاب‌ها  
را برای دانش‌پژوگان در دسترس خوانندگان  
داخل ایران قرار می‌دهد.

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Poetry \* 1

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**From the Marbach Literary Archive**

*The Autumn / Der Herbst*

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to Johannes Bobrowski*

## Another Season: Freydoun Farokhzad's early poetry

Nima Mina, SOAS, University of London

Those of us who remember the 1970s in Iran know Freydoun Farokhzad<sup>1</sup> as a singer, songwriter and host of the popular *Mikhak-e Noqreyi* television

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1. Freydoun Farokhzad was born on 7 October 1936 in Tehran and murdered on 6 August 1992 in Bonn. His father, Army Colonel Mohammad Farokhzad Araqi, was from Tafresh in Iran's Central Province / Ostan-e markazi, and his mother, Turan Vaziri Tabar, was from the city of Kashan in the province of Isfahan. His older siblings were the writer and publisher Pouran, the physician Amir Masoud and the iconic modern poet Forough, and his younger ones were the designer Gloria and the engineers Mehran and Mehrdad, all of whom passed away before the publication of this book. The spelling adopted in this paper is the one Freydoun Farokhzad himself used in the Latin transliteration of his first and last name in his German publications during the 1960s, including the book *Andere Jahreszeit (Another Season)*, Neuwied and Berlin 1964: Hermann Luchterhand Verlag GmbH.

show,<sup>2</sup> which was broadcast for several years and made Freydoun one of the most successful personalities in the history of Iranian television. Less well known than his work as a songwriter, composer, recording artist and show host are Freydoun's contributions to literature, including his own poetry written in Persian, translations of poetry mainly from English, French and German and his work as the organizer of the Forough Farokhzad literary award. Freydoun founded this award shortly after his return to Iran in the late 1960s, and during the 1970s it evolved into a landmark event which was taken especially seriously by politicized Iranian writers. Recipients of the prize included such prominent, socially and politically engaged writers and dissidents of the

2. According to the London-based Iranian poet, playwright, stage director and songwriter Iraj Jannati Atayi, other singers and musicians who later became prominent in the Iranian popular music scene – including Ebi, Sattar, Daryoush, Shahram Solati, Shohreh, Leyla Forouhar, Nushafarin, et al. – might never have chosen a musical career path without Freydoun Farokhzad as a role model. In most cases, their careers in Iranian popular culture were launched on Freydoun's show *Mikhak-e Nogreyi* (interview with Iraj Jannati Atayi, 22 March 2010). In 1971, Freydoun also played a role in the feature film *Delha-ye biaram* (*Restless Hearts*) directed by Esmail Riahi, along with the actors Iraj Qaderi and Shahla Riahi. In addition to *Mikhak-e Nogreyi*, Freydoun Farokhzad also hosted other shows, including *The National Show*, *Salam Hamsayeha* and *Bozorgtarin Namayesh-e Hafte*, and appeared frequently as a guest on the radio programme *Jom'-e Bazar* (written communication from Freydoun's assistant and friend Mohammad Sadr in Tehran via the Munich based filmmaker Claus Strigel, 25 August 2014).

pre-revolution era as Ahmad Shamlou, Esmail Khoi and Sohrab Sepehri, as well as younger talents like Hossein Monzavi, Mohammad Zokayi and Seyyed Ai Salehi, who became better known after winning the award. Towards the end of the 1970s and with the rise of the revolutionary movement, the award ceremony lost its popularity and was eventually discontinued by Freydoun himself.

Initially, Freydoun observed the birth of the revolutionary movement in the autumn of 1977 with some degree of sympathy, and even participated in aid initiatives such as collections of money and drugs for the wounded victims of street demonstrations. After the change of power in February 1979, however, he was shocked at the outbreak of indiscriminate violence against those who were accused of being agents of the overthrown regime. Like many other actors, singers and dancers who were celebrities in the pre-revolution era, he was summoned before the revolutionary tribunal and forced to sign a statement of commitment obligating him to refrain from any form of public performance. The revolutionary tribunal also ruled that portions of his property were to be confiscated by the Islamic Republic. He distanced himself from the revolution, but stayed in Iran until 1982, when he eventually left the country by crossing the border

into Turkey with his companion Said Mohammadi.<sup>3</sup> From Turkey they were granted permission to enter France and move to Paris, the international centre of organized opposition in the 1980s. A wide spectrum of Iranian oppositional groups and organizations were active in Paris during those years, including royalist activists who fought for the overthrow of the post-revolution regime and the reinstatement of the monarchy. After 1981, political organizations and associations that had participated in the revolution of 1979 but had been ousted by Ayatollah Khomeini and his followers gradually found their way to Paris. Freydoun fraternized with activists from the conservative side of the opposition spectrum; after two years, he broke his silence and began working again as a singer and television show host, this time with a distinctly counter-revolutionary agenda. During his years in exile he lived in Paris, Los Angeles, Hamburg and Bonn. He helped underage Iranian POWs, travelled to Iraq three times on behalf of UNICEF, and each time brought between 25 and 30 of these children back to Europe with him. In the 1980s he also acted in Houshang Allahyari's feature film *I Love Vienna*.<sup>4</sup> In subsequent years

he actively supported the organization *Derafsh-e Kaviani*, founded by Manouchehr Ganji in Paris, and moderated a show on the organization's shortwave radio programme.<sup>5</sup> Finally, at the end of his life, he became one of the most prominent victims of the Islamic Republic's state terrorism, which reached a historical peak during the presidency of Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani in the 1990s under Intelligence Ministers Ali Fallahian and Qorban Ali Dorri Najafabadi.<sup>6</sup> On 6 August 1992, Freydoun was stabbed to death and beheaded by three assassins in his apartment on the outskirts of Bonn.

In Europe and North America, Freydoun used his popularity to draw large audiences to his shows, which always had anti-regime content. It is conceivable that his relentless and radical criticism of the Islamic Republic, of its

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the Austrian entry for Best Foreign Language Film at the 64th Academy Awards. Freydoun played the role of "Ali Mohamed".

5. Dr Manouchehr Ganji, a US-, Swiss- and British-educated academic and politician, was the Dean of the Faculty of Law at the University of Tehran and Minister of Education. After the 1979 revolution, he relocated to Paris and founded the royalist exile organization *Derafsh-e Kaviani*.

6. Beginning in the Spring of 1979, systematic assassinations of exiled Iranian dissidents were carried out by post-revolution Iranian security and intelligence organizations, in particular the Ministry of Intelligence (VEVAK) and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), or by non-Iranian operatives working outside the country on their behalf.

3. Interview with Freydoun's sister Pouran Farokhzad, 26 March 2010.

4. *I Love Vienna*, an Austrian comedy film written and directed by Houshang Allahyari and released in 1991, was selected as

ideological and political foundations, and of its leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, were the real reason for his assassination.<sup>7</sup>

The German Federal Office of Criminal Investigation (Bundeskriminalamt) and the

7. The London-based, exiled Iranian journalist Esmail Pourvali claims that Freydoun's name was added to the hit list of the Islamic Republic's death squads because of his alleged involvement as a mediator in a plot to kidnap the speaker of the Iranian parliament and commander of the Iranian war effort, Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, and bring him to Baghdad in a hijacked plane during the Iran-Iraq war. In the course of a trip from Germany to Iraq to visit underage Iranian POWs, Freydoun was approached by members of the Iraqi Mokhaberat, who asked him to use his friendship with young Iranian singer Said Mohammadi, whose brother Ali Akbar was a pilot in Iran. Iraqi intelligence asked Freydoun to convey the request to Ali Akbar Mohammadi through his brother Said to hijack a plane with Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani on board. Ali Akbar Mohammadi hijacked an Iranian Falcon-2 jet during a training flight out of a military airbase in the northern Iranian city of Rasht and flew through Turkish airspace to Baghdad, but he did not kidnap Rafsanjani. One month later, he relocated from Baghdad to Hamburg. On 13 January 1987, he was assassinated in Hamburg by two unidentified terrorists. Freydoun's death sentence was issued by Mohammad Mohammadi Nik, alias Reyshahri, alias Mohammad Daroonparvar, a judge in the revolutionary tribunal system and in the judicial organization of the armed forces, the Islamic Republic's first Minister of Intelligence, prosecutor general, etc. The sentence was carried out by a hit squad operating under the supervision of Ali Fallahian, who later became Reyshahri's successor as Minister of Intelligence. A year before Freydoun Farokhzad's assassination, former Iranian Prime Minister Shapour Bakhtiar and one of his close political friends, Abdolrahman Boroumand, had been assassinated in Paris. In November 1990, Dr Cyrus Elahi, a member of *Derafsh-e Kaviani*, had been killed as well. It is likely that Freydoun's murder was part of the same series of assassinations. The precise details of his murder are still unknown to the general public; Pourvali's account has not been confirmed by a second independent source, and the German Bundeskriminalamt will not comment on the case.

Interpol appeared at the crime scene only three days after the murder and carried out extensive investigations which – according to members of the Farokhzad family, who flew in from Iran and other parts of Germany – must have led to a clear identification of the assassins. However, no one was charged on the basis of these investigations, and the case never resulted in a judicial process such as the Mykonos trial in Berlin.<sup>8</sup> It appears that Freydoun was also the victim of the “critical dialogue” that dominated German foreign policy toward the Islamic Republic of Iran in the early 1990s. Under the pretext of “critical dialogue” and in the interest of lucrative business relations which had reached unprecedented levels in the early 1990s, German authorities tolerated and overlooked certain “misdemeanours” on the part

8. The so-called Mykonos trial took place after the assassination in the Greek restaurant “Mykonos” in Berlin of four Iranian-Kurdish dissidents – Sadeq Sharafkandi, Homayoun Ardalan, Fattah Abdoli and Nouri Dehkordi – during the world congress of the Socialist International on 17 September 1992. The trial against four Iranian and Lebanese individuals involved in the conspiracy began on 28 October 1994 and lasted approximately five years. It was the most expensive and laborious trial in post-WWII Germany. The court recognized the assassination as an instance of state-sponsored terrorism and named the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati, Minister of Intelligence Ali Fallahian and other high ranking members of the Islamic Republic's political leadership as responsible for the murders. The Mykonos incident had a long-term negative effect on the Islamic Republic's relations with European countries.



of the Islamic Republic, as long as the personal security of German-born citizens was not directly affected. The last years of Freydoun's life, his political engagement in exile and the nature of his possible interaction with his assassins are among the enigmatic parts of his legacy. The truth about his murder will only be reconstructed when the Islamic Republic ceases to exist, when open access to the archives of its intelligence ministry is granted – and, of course, when the German and international authorities disclose their findings.

During the eleven years of his life in exile, Freydoun published two volumes of his poetry in Persian, but seemingly never tried to write in a foreign language. As a student in Germany more than 25 years earlier, however, he had written poetry in German. These poems were highly acclaimed in the German-speaking countries of Europe (West and East Germany, Austria and Switzerland). News of his success even travelled to Iran and was noted primarily by people who knew his family name through his sister. In 1964 Freydoun published a book of poetry entitled *Andere Jahreszeit* (*Another Season*). With this book, he became the third Iranian in the history of German literature to write in German and publish widely.

Before Freydoun, two other Iranians had already written and published poetry and prose in

German: the poet Cyrus Atabay,<sup>9</sup> who had been raised and educated in Nazi Germany in the 1930s, and Bozorg Alavi,<sup>10</sup> who published a collection

9. Atabay (born 6 September 1929 in Tehran, died 26 January 1996 in Munich) was the son of the German-educated physician Hadi Atabay and Fatemeh "Hamdam-al-Saltane" Pahlavi, Reza Shah Pahlavi's eldest daughter. In 1937 he and his brother Amir Reza Atabay were sent to Berlin, where their father had previously studied. After the end of WWII, Cyrus relocated briefly to Iran but returned to Germany to finish high school. His German literary writings were first published in 1950 in the feuilleton section of the Zurich-based periodical *Die Tat*, edited by Max Rychner. He began studying German literature at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität (LMU) in Munich, but dropped out and devoted himself to his own reading and writing. Later in life he became close friends with Erich Fried and Elias Canetti. He spent the 1960s in Munich, London and Tehran; in Tehran he joined the literary circle *Torfe*. Bijan Elahi and Mehrdad Samadi translated selections of his poems from the German and he became known in Iran. He himself translated works by contemporary Iranian poets, including Forough Farokhzad, from Persian into German. Following the 1979 revolution, Atabay moved to London and from there to Munich in 1983. He was awarded the Hugo Jacobi and Adelbert von Chamisso prizes. Atabay and Freydoun Farokhzad knew each other as residents of the city of Munich and public figures in the Iranian community of that city during the first half of the 1960s.

10. Bozorg Alavi (Seyyed Mojtaba Aqa Bozorg Alavi, born 3 February 1904 in Tehran, died 16 February 1997 in Berlin) was an Iranian prose writer, scholar of contemporary Persian literature, lexicographer, translator and professor of Iranian Studies at the Humboldt-Universität in (East) Berlin between 1952 and his retirement in 1978. Alavi was also a founding member of the communist Tudeh Party in 1941. After studying in Breslau and Aachen and completing his PhD in pedagogy in Munich in the 1920s, he returned to Iran, worked as a teacher in a German vocational school, published short stories and translations from German and became a member of an innovative literary circle that included Sadeq Hedayat, Masoud Farzad et al. In 1936 he was incarcerated due to his alleged communist affiliation. In 1960 and during exile in East Germany, his collection of short stories entitled *Die weiße Mauer* (*The White Wall*), originally written in German

of short stories entitled *Die weiße Mauer* in East Germany in the late 1950s. Freydzoun established contact with Atabay in Munich and with Alavi in East Berlin while he was a student in Munich.

Portions of Freydzoun's book of poetry in German were translated into Persian more than 40 years later by his older sister Forough's adoptive son Hossain Mansouri and by the poet Mirza Aqa Asgari (Mani)<sup>11</sup> in collaboration with Daryoush Marzban. Apart from these translations, the content of this book was unknown to the Iranian public, although Freydzoun himself occasionally mentioned its existence.

Before discussing the book in detail, it is

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or translated into German by his students, was published by Verlag Rütten und Loening. His other original German publications were a literary history of 20th-century Persian literature from the Constitutional Revolution of 1906 until the early 1960s and several historical monographs, published by the East German Academy of Sciences. His original Persian writings during the years of exile remained unpublished until he visited Iran after the revolution of 1979. In the early 1960s he met Freydzoun Farokhzad, who looked him up at the Humboldt-Universität. They maintained contact and a cordial friendship through correspondence and occasional visits by Freydzoun to East Berlin.

11. Farokhzad, Freydzoun: *Andere Jahreszeit. Gedichte. Aus dem Deutschen übersetzt von Hossein Mansouri. Nachwort von Johannes Bobrowski. Collagen von Monica Schefold*. Bremen 2015 (Sujet-Verlag). See also Asgari, Mirza Aqa (Mani), ed.: *Khonyagar dar khun. Dar shenakht va bozorgdasht-e Freydzoun Farokhzad*. Bochum 2005 (Human-Verlag). See also Mirza Aqa Asgari's novel *Terror dar Bonn*, published in Munich in 2016 by Sturnus-Verlag, a documentary novel about Freydzoun Farokhzad's life in exile and the events leading to his assassination in Bonn.

helpful to gain an overview of Freydzoun's life in Germany and his involvement with German language and literature.

After finishing school in Tehran (first *Razi*, later *Pirnia* and *Sharaf*), Freydzoun went to Germany in 1958 at the age of 22 in order to pursue university studies. His elder brother Amir Masoud had been in Germany since 1952 and had studied medicine at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität (LMU) in Munich; he was married and established in that city. Following Amir, Freydzoun – and later the other brothers and one sister – moved to Munich. Two years earlier, Forough had also spent the winter of 1956 with Amir in Munich, learning German and translating a book of poetry into Persian. Freydzoun attended a language school during the week and worked at a farm in the village of Versmold, near Bielefeld, on weekends, commuting every week between the Bavarian capital in the south and rural Lower Saxony in the north. His musical talent contributed to the speed and thoroughness with which he learned German. Already as a high school student, he had developed an interest in music and performed as a singer in school functions.

Having met the language entry requirements, he was accepted to study Social Sciences at the LMU in Munich. Ever since his first encounter with the German language, he had been reading 19th and

20th-century poetry, and while studying political science at the Geschwister Scholl Institute he began establishing contacts with artists and writers in Munich. In 1962, while visiting a Munich-based American author, he met the writer and actress Anja Buczkowski. They married in 1962 and remained together for 12 years. Anja, who was a few years older than Freydoun, had studied German literature and recited poetry for a literary programme on Bavarian radio. The couple moved into a large apartment on Hohenzollernstraße in Munich, and Anja helped Freydoun cultivate his interest in German poetry. Freydoun began publishing samples of his work in the literary supplement of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and the German section of the Persian cultural magazine *Kaveh*.<sup>12</sup> In 1963, German author and literary critic Martin Walser selected 11 poems by Freydoun for the literary yearbook *Vorzeichen 2*, where major voices in contemporary German literature were presented.

In 1963, Freydoun compiled a selection of his poems into a book-length manuscript and began searching for a German publisher. He only approached established and prestigious companies such as *Suhrkamp*, which had already published

his poems in the *Vorzeichen 2* yearbook.<sup>13</sup> He finally reached an agreement with Hermann-Luchterhand-Verlag in Neuwied and Berlin; the afterword of this edition was written by Johannes Bobrowski,<sup>14</sup> one of the most significant writers of poetry and prose in post-WWII German literature.

While he was a student at the LMU in Munich, Freydoun travelled often and attended lectures at the University of Vienna and the Free University of Berlin.

The political situation in divided Germany fascinated him, and he travelled repeatedly from Munich to West Berlin, visiting East Berlin frequently and contrasting his experience of the

13. *Vorzeichen 2. Neun, neue deutsche Autoren. Eingeführt von Martin Walser. Hans Frick. Hans Christoph Buch. Michael Wulff. Henning Harms. Bernd Peschken. Chris Bezzel. Henning Boetius. Peter Hamm. Freydoun Farokhzad.* Frankfurt 1963: Suhrkamp.

14. Johannes Bobrowski, born in 1917 in Tilsit (East Prussia), was a member of the Protestant Bekennende Kirche (Confessing Church) and was in contact with the clandestine resistance movement against the Nazis during the 1930s. He spent all 6 years of the war fighting on the western front in France and on the eastern front in Poland and Russia, where he was captured in 1945. In October 1949, Germany was officially divided into two states, one based in the Soviet-occupied eastern zone and the other in the British, French and American zones of the west. Bobrowski was released from a Soviet labour camp in 1949 and chose to settle in East Berlin, the capital of the GDR, although he was not a communist. In East Berlin he worked as an editor for publishing houses that belonged to the East German Christian Democratic Union, one of the five non-communist "bloc parties". He published his books in both West and East Germany, travelled freely between the two parts of the divided nation, and always insisted that the separation of the two states would not bring about two different German literatures.

12. *Kaveh* was founded by Mohammad Assemi in Munich in 1961. A selection of Freydoun's poems was published in issues 4 and 5 of *Kaveh* in 1963.

two contradictory socio-economic orders in the two parts of the city. His preoccupation with the "German-German question" was reflected in his book of poetry *Andere Jahreszeit*, one of whose chapters was dedicated to this theme. In East Berlin he visited Johannes Bobrowski, who read his work with interest. Bobrowski's socialist views had a strong impact on Freydoun, who himself had radical Marxist affinities.

At the time of the American and British coup against the government of Dr Mohammad Mosaddeq on 19 August 1953, Freydoun was a member of the clandestine youth organisation of the Tudeh Party, which had been banned as early as February 1949. Without the knowledge of his father, who was a colonel in the Imperial Armed Forces of Iran, he had hidden several comrades from the Tudeh youth organisation at the family home. Later, in Munich, exiled student activists such as Mehdi Khanbaba Tehrani,<sup>15</sup> who were

15. Mehdi Khanbaba Tehrani, born in May 1934 in Tehran, joined the Tudeh youth organization in the late 1940s, was arrested and imprisoned twice after the coup of 19 August 1953 and subsequently left Iran to study law at the LMU in Munich. A founding member of the Confederation of Iranian Students and a communist activist, Mehdi Khanbaba Tehrani was arrested by the West German police on 2 November 1962 on suspicion of membership in a secret society ("Geheimbündelei") and spent four months in Munich's Stadelheim prison. He later joined the Maoist split-off from the Tudeh Party and spent some years during the Chinese Cultural Revolution as a journalist in Beijing. After the 1979 revolution he returned to Iran

linked with the Tudeh Party's leadership in Leipzig, and founding members of the Confederation of Iranian Students such as Mohsen Rezvani<sup>16</sup> and Kurosh Lashai<sup>17</sup> were among his close friends.<sup>18</sup>

and was part of the independent leftist movement. In 1981 he was forced into exile again, and has been living in Frankfurt ever since. Khanbaba Tehrani was a close friend of all the Farokhzad siblings in Munich and maintained personal contact with Freydoun, despite the very different paths their lives took.

16. Mohsen Rezvani was born on 7 August 1937 in Kermanshah and was a graduate of the Alborz School in Tehran. A former member of the Tudeh youth organization and later a student at the LMU in Munich, he became a founding member of the Confederation of Iranian Students and a leader of the Maoist split-off from the Tudeh Party in the 1960s. Rezvani became the first secretary of the Revolutionary Tudeh Organization, and after the 1979 revolution, of the Maoist Ranjbaran Party. Following the crackdown of the Islamic Republic against the Ranjbaran Party in 1981, Rezvani went into hiding and lived in Kurdistan, Iran and Iraq. He subsequently emigrated to western Europe and Canada (Toronto).

17. Kurosh Lashai, born in 1936 in Langarud (Gilan province), relocated to Munich to study medicine in 1955, slightly later than the eldest Farokhzad sibling Amir Masoud, who was a student in the same department of the LMU. Lashai was a member of the Tudeh Youth Organization and a founding member of the Confederation of Iranian Students and the Maoist Revolutionary Tudeh Organization together with Parviz Nikkhah, Mehdi Khanbaba Tehrani and Mohsen Rezvani. In 1969, he secretly travelled to Iran through Iraqi Kurdistan and participated in the armed uprising of Sharifzadeh, Molla Avare and Moini in Iranian Kurdistan. Upon his return to Iran in 1971 as a member of the Revolutionary Organization's clandestine network, he was identified by SAVAK and arrested. In 1972 he appeared before journalists and renounced Marxism and his past with the Revolutionary Organization. He was later pardoned by the Shah, and after being released from prison took over the leadership of the League of Human Rights (Servants). During the revolution of 1979 he went into hiding, left Iran and moved to southern California where he died in 2002.

18. Interview with Mehdi Khanbaba Tehrani in Frankfurt am Main on 15 March 2010.

Most likely under the influence of his dialogue with Bobrowski, Freydoun chose to write his master's thesis in political science on the relation between the state and the Protestant church in the GDR. After finishing his master's degree *cum laude*, he immediately started working on a PhD thesis entitled "Marx, Engels, Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg and the Polish Question". After Forough's death in February 1967, he decided to return to Iran together with Anja and their son Rostam (born in 1966), and never finished the PhD thesis.

Years later, when Anja and Rostam had returned to Germany and Freydoun was living alone in his home in the Amir Abad district of Tehran, a large picture of Rosa Luxemburg hung in his living room, as most people recall who visited him during that time.

Five months after the publication of his book of poetry, Freydoun received the literary award of the city of Berlin. On this occasion Johannes Bobrowski came from East Berlin and gave a speech in his honour during the ceremony in the western part of the city.

Freydoun Farokhzad and Johannes Bobrowski maintained their friendship through the exchange of postcards and letters between East Berlin and Munich until Bobrowski's sudden death on 2 September 1965. A three-page letter, a postcard

and an unpublished poem entitled *Herbst (Autumn)* were found in the German Literary Archive (Deutsches Literaturarchiv) in the special collection of Johannes Bobrowski's unpublished works and correspondence. The text of the poem is included in this book, as are reproductions of the handwritten letter, of the postcard and of the typed manuscript of the poem. The letter and postcard indicate that there must have been a two-way communication between Freydoun Farokhzad and Johannes Bobrowski; however, Bobrowski's response to Freydoun could not be found by Freydoun's sister Pouran among his personal effects in Iran. In the note on the postcard dated 24 April 1964, Freydoun expresses his love for the city of Berlin, stating that he had been able to meet like-minded people there. At the time the postcard was written, the Wall had already been erected and Berlin was a divided city; Bobrowski's address, Ahornallee 26, was on the outskirts of the Soviet sector in the eastern borough of Friedrichshagen. In a three-page letter dated 26 April 1964, Freydoun uses the polite form of address "Sie" for Bobrowski, although he states that he would rather use the informal "du", since from the very beginning of their encounter he had felt as if they had known each other for a long time. He seems to have received books of Bobrowski's poems, and says he is going to read them again, now

that he knows the person behind them. The two men must have become personally acquainted in early 1964. It appears that just before the postcard was written, Freydoun had met Johannes Bobrowski somewhere outside of East Germany, possibly in West Berlin. In the letter he asks whether Bobrowski had already written the “afterword”, referring to the text included in this book. Freydoun seems to have sent Bobrowski a bundle of poems as a manuscript. He asks Bobrowski to discard a poem with the title *Zwecklos* (*Pointless*), because he is unhappy with it and it is an early work. The letter contains references to Freydoun’s communication with the publisher Suhrkamp-Verlag (Frankfurt), with a copy editor and literary critic only identified by her first name, Elisabeth, and with the editorial board of the East German magazine *Sinn und Form*.<sup>19</sup>

In his afterword to the book, Bobrowski describes Freydoun as “a man with clear-cut, confident movements”, who “comes from a land of great poetic traditions”. When he writes in

19. *Sinn und Form* was a bimonthly magazine founded in 1949 by Johannes R. Becher and Paul Wiegler in East Berlin, published by the Academy of Fine Arts (Akademie der Künste) and endorsed by prominent figures including Bertolt Brecht, who was a resident of East Berlin. The editorial policy of *Sinn und Form* was considered rather liberal during all the historical periods of the German Democratic Republic. *Sinn und Form* was distributed in both parts of Germany while the country was divided and, in exceptional cases, also published works by philosophical and political essayists and poets based in West Germany.

German, that is, “in a language he has learned and which he wields as such”, he does not feel the burden of the history and literary traditions of this language. “... [T]he naturalness we notice in the language extends all the way to the metaphors, the imagery; they immediately gain life and energy from the initial situation so that they evolve into actions and are able to grow, to walk, to fly”. He believes in Freydoun as a German poet and invites his readers to “greet him warmly”.

...

The book *Andere Jahreszeit* is only 63 pages long, including Bobrowski’s three-page afterword. It begins with a dedication to Anja, curiously written in the present perfect tense: *Für Anja – ich habe sie sehr geliebt* (*For Anja – I have loved her very much*).

Following the dedication is a tanka by Sasaki Nobutsuna<sup>20</sup>:

*Whether or not  
a trace remains  
on the road –  
cautiously  
will I go my way*

20. Nobutsuna (8 July 1872 – 2 December 1963) was a tanka poet and a scholar of Nara- and Heian-period Japanese literature. He was active during the Showa period of Japanese history.

The book is divided into four chapters. The first chapter, *Persisch gedacht - deutsch gesagt* (*Persian thought - German spoken*), consists of 18 texts; the second chapter, *Porträt eines Landes* (*Portrait of a country*), contains nine; the third one, *Erfahrung* (*Experience*), has 13, and the last chapter, *Was ich noch sagen wollte* (*Something else I wanted to say*), includes only one. The texts vary in length, from the five lines of *Bekennntnis* (*Avowal*) in Chapter 2 to the 29 lines of *Diesseits und jenseits* (*This side and that side*) in Chapter 3.

The first and second chapters primarily consist of imagistic texts, while the texts in the third and fourth chapters are more abstract and convey ideas and views on political and historical events.

The texts in the first chapter have no specific, named local references. They express the sensory perceptions of a detached, lyrical "I" who is confronted with a new environment. The lyrical I does not perceive this new environment as foreign or intimidating; it tries to get closer to it and to develop a homelike feeling, enjoying the gradual approximation and familiarity. It senses that in this environment, light, darkness, natural colour combinations, the air's consistency, scents and tastes are all different. These new sensations are translated into minimalistic and intimate images. The lyrical I seeks refuge in nature and

does not relate to the social realities of the new world; Germany is not mentioned by name at all. The naturalistic character of the whole chapter is apparent in the titles of the texts.

**Night** is the predominant motif in at least six texts in the first and second chapters.<sup>21</sup> The colour **black** is mentioned 13 times throughout the book, more than any other colour. **Red** occurs eight times in the third chapter with a symbolic political meaning, **blue** is mentioned six times and **green** and **yellow/gold** five times, while white, brown, pink and purple do not appear anywhere in the book. The detached attitude of the lyrical I is reflected in the motif of **sleep**<sup>22</sup> in combination with the colour **black**, with **night** and other related motifs such as the **cicada**.<sup>23</sup> This distant, observant attitude is reflected in the frequent use of motifs such as **silence**<sup>24</sup>

21. **Nacht** occurs as a motif in *Erwartung*, *Die Nacht*, *Nachtbeginn*, *Land im Schatten*, *Die Perserinnen*, *Tag in Persien*.

22. **Schlaf** in *Erwartung* ("flattert der Schlaf / wie eine schwarze Taube"), in *Nacht* ("Während ich schlafe / preßt sie ihr Gesicht"), *Wahrnehmung* ("Nun aber kann man / ruhig schlafen gehen"), *Ungehört* ("die ausgeschlafenen Uniformen").

23. **Zikade** in *Die Nacht* ("Im Gesang der Zikaden"), *Nachtbeginn* ("wie eine Zikade vom Baum fällt und zu singen beginnt").

24. **Schweigen** in *Erwartung* ("In der Stadt meines Schweigens / flattert der Schlaf"), **Schweigen** in *Der Wind* ("Sie – die Taubfahnen – verschweigen ihre Quellen"), *Die Stimme* ("zwischen schweisamen Wimpern"), *Herbst in Persien* ("die schweisamen Kornarben"), *Die Perserinnen* ("flüchtige Vögel / von Schweigen gestreichelt"), *Krieg* ("Zeit der zerstampften / Finger / die zwischen dem alten Pflaster / sterben"), *Ungehört* ("Ich will nicht / daß die schönen schweigenden Tiere / aus der Welt verschwinden"). See also *die Stille*.

(7x) and the eyes<sup>25</sup> (11x). **Flying**<sup>26</sup> (5x), **sky**<sup>27</sup> (5x), **clouds**<sup>28</sup> (3x), **wind**<sup>29</sup> (3x), **air**<sup>30</sup> (5x), **scent**<sup>31</sup> (6x) and

25. **Auge(n)(-blick)** in *Erwartung* ("Ob sie den Weg finden wird, der zu meinen Augen führt"), *Kindermarkt* ("Die sehnsüchtigen Augen", "leuchtende Augenblicke"), *Sonnenuntergang* ("Wenn das Licht / in den Augen der Frauen / schwer wird"), *Nachtbeginn* ("der Unglückskater / in den persischen Augen"), *Sommer* ("als er sich / einen Augenblick vergaß"), *Die Stimme* ("Alter Schatten der in den Augenschatten liegt"), *Brise* ("Sonne und Licht spiegeln in ihren Augen"), *Stele für A.* ("Kühl war das Grün / in geschlossenen Augen"), *Die Welt* ("Denn der Augenblick kommt / in dem die Schwermut ihre Farben zählt"), *Land im Schatten* ("und erleuchten die Augen / von tausendundeiner Nacht"), *Die Perserinnen* ("zeigen uns / ihre Kohleaugen / in der lyrischen Landschaft").

26. **Fliegen** in *Der Wind* ("mit fliegenden Haaren"), *Frühling* ("Ehe die Träume zu fliegen beginnen"), *Illusion* ("Vögel / sind schwer / zu halten / sie fliegen gern"), *Illusion* ("ist ein toter Vogel / er kann nicht fliegen"), *Nachtbeginn* ("mit so viel Erinnerung / an fliegenden Staubfahnen").

27. **Himmel** in *Friede* ("Ich liebe diesen Himmel dessen blaues Glas"), *Sommer* ("Immer zärtlicher / waren die Namen / die er an den Himmel malte"), *Herbst in Persien* ("die die blauen Emailen des Himmel / weiß färben"), *Land im Schatten* ("getötete Tauben / zerrissener Himmel"), *Orientalische Tage* ("Der Himmel eine Weise").

28. **Wolke** in *Herbst in Persien* ("Die Wolken / die die blauen Emailen"), *Aquarell* ("Wolken aus Trübsinn"), *Orientalische Tage* ("Die Wolken gewobene Lieder").

29. **Wind** in *Der Wind* ("Der Wind / mit fliegenden Haaren"), *Die Stimme* ("Eine Windrose in deinem Gesicht"), *Hinterlassenschaft* ("Der Wind / seine Wiege").

30. **Luft** in *Die Liebe* ("Anfangsbuchtaben fielen durch die Luft"), *Nachtbeginn* ("in zerbrechlicher Luft"), *Andere Jahreszeit* ("die an den Luftspiegelungen starb"), *Die Stille* ("Sie strauchelt ohne Lärm / in der Luft"), *Meine Landschaft* ("Überall Luft / mit Himbeergeschmack").

31. **Duft** in *Friede* ("deren grüner Duft / nach oben rudert"), *Brise* ("kühler Duft"), *Herbst in Persien* ("duften nach Regen"), *Die Perserinnen* ("und Silberduft im Laub"), *Berlin* ("teilt man die Akazie / so teilt man nicht ihren Duft"), *Hinterlassenschaft* ("die Rosen / ihren Duft").

**birds**<sup>32</sup> are related motifs that evoke the sensation of height, width, overview and volatility.

Other conceptual networks revolve around the words **time/season**<sup>33</sup> and **tenderness**<sup>34</sup> (Zärtlichkeit), to mention a few.

The second chapter is a yearning reflection on the home country which the lyrical I has left behind. In this chapter, Iran – or rather *Persien/Persia* – is mentioned by name several times. Naturalist-lyrical elements are complemented by subtle political allusions. Visually and acoustically, Persia is associated with vastness, rain showers, the scent of raspberries, garlands of light, clouds of dust, wheat fields, the sound of crickets, the blue enamel of the sky, turquoise minarets, larks flying and swinging in the wind.

32. **Taube** in *Erwartung* ("landet die Nacht / wie eine schwarze Taube"); *Land im Schatten* ("Verwirrt von sichtbarer / Gewalt / begleiten mich / getötete Tauben / zerrissener Himmel"); similarly, **Sperling** in *Die Welt* ("Die Welt ist ein Sperling / der sich widerstandslos / töten läßt"). In *Rassentrennung* the white dove is a symbol for peace and the black dove a symbol for uncertainty, pessimism and annihilation.

33. **Zeit** in *Kindermarkt* ("Zeit der Papierdrachen"), *Die Stille* ("die tote Jahreszeit"), *Stele für A.* ("zu den anderen Jahreszeiten führten"), *Herbst in Persien* ("der kühlen Jahreszeit entgegen"), *Das Vierte Reich* ("Hier geht man mit der Zeit / Zeit der Unbehüteten") as well as the entire text *Andere Jahreszeit*. The word "Frühling" (spring) occurs throughout the book.

34. **Zärtlich** in *Erwartung* ("Ich höre sie gurren / zärtlich wie sie ist"), *Die Nacht* ("Am Tag versteckt sie sich / in der Zärtlichkeit der Wiesen"), *Sommer* ("Immer zärtlicher waren / die Namen"), *Die Perserinnen* ("Und wiederholen ihre Zärtlichkeit in den Hausfluren").



The key colour is grey (as in the “coal eyes” of Persian women and in “curtains of dust”).

Expressions of homesickness and longing are connected with sounds and images of sobbing, tears, the feeling of thirst and the mood of dejection, desolation and abandonment. The image of the old home country is not idyllic. In *Bekanntnis (Avowal)*, the old country is “the land of shrivelled roses and mute nightingales”.

Interestingly, the poem *Die Perserinnen*<sup>35</sup> is dedicated to Bozorg Alavi. Unlike most other leaders of the Tudeh Party, Alavi lived in the GDR under his own name. During his visits to West Berlin, Freydown established regular contact with Bozorg Alavi in East Berlin, visited him, and exchanged letters with him. Throughout the 25 years between August 1953 and February 1979, Alavi was *persona non grata* in Iran; hence dedicating a poem to him was a meaningful

35. *Persian Women (Die Perserinnen)* is the only text Freydown translated himself, some twenty years ago during his exile after the revolution:

زنان سرزمین من / وقتی که شب می‌آید / و آواز زنجرها / میان گیسوان دخترکان /  
شعله‌ور می‌شود / با ذغال چشم‌هایشان / تصویر کشتزارهای از یاد رفته را / روی  
زمین پهناور کشورم نقاشی می‌کنند / زنان ایرانی / پرندگانی که عطر نقره‌ای صبح / و  
لطافت گل‌های اطلسی را به یاد می‌آورند / پرندگانی که رنگ سکوت دارند / و پیش  
از حرکت چشم / در مسیر دیگری اوج می‌گیرند / و همواره مهربانی یک‌دست / میان  
پرهاشان خواب می‌بیند / زنان ایرانی / پرندگانی که گل‌دسته‌ها از ظرافت تصویرشان /  
فرو می‌ریزند / و گنبدها از تصور تصویرشان / دو برابر می‌شوند.

gesture on Freydown's part.

The third chapter deals with the realities of post-WWII Germany. Here Freydown addresses historically and politically charged topics such as denazification after 1945, the division of Germany, the Cold War and the position of the two German republics within it, the arms race, the rearmament of Germany, the Berlin Wall and the ways in which both German republics came to terms with their Nazi past. In the decades that followed, all these themes would become canonical and repetitive in German literature until the reunification of Germany in the 1990s; however, when Freydown wrote about them they still had novelty value.

The poem *Wahrnehmung (Perception)* is an ironic and cryptic commentary, published three years after the facts, on the erection of border installations and the deployment of East German border guards along the demarcation line between the two German republics. Although the factual references are not immediately obvious, the historical background is as follows: in the early morning of 13 August 1961, members of the *Betriebskampfgruppen* (paramilitary groups of East Berlin factory workers), the National People's Army and the People's Police “secured” the demarcation line between the

Soviet-occupied socialist sector of Berlin and the capitalist British, American and French sectors. While some troops stood guard, others brought in construction materials and within a few hours had built what became known as the Berlin Wall – or in East German jargon, the “antifaschistischer Schutzwall” (“the anti-fascist protection wall”). From the East German ruling party’s point of view, its function was to protect the GDR against the revival of Fascism in the West.

In the imagery of the poem, the “red sentinels” are the East German border guards. The German original uses the compound noun “Schildwache”, which is etymologically related to the Middle High German *Schiltwache* or *Schiltwaht* (Fr. *sentinelle*, *factionnaire*). A *Schildwache* is a guard positioned in front of a checkpoint and empowered to fire on anyone refusing to abide by the state’s order and authority. A *Schildwache* does not have permission to let go of his weapon, leave his post, speak, eat or drink unless ordered to do so. In the eponymous poem, the *Schildwachen* “grow out of the vertices”, i.e. appear out of nowhere along the demarcation line. Their intimidating image is sarcastically contrasted with the affectionate ways of the West. The poem seems to characterize the building of the Berlin Wall as a necessary measure to contain the escalating East-West conflict.

Essentially, the Wall prevents the outbreak of war, even though it upsets some “neighbours”. The poem debunks Western religious values like “brotherly love” and declares them hypocrisy. The references to “shop windows” and “blue jeans merchants” allude to West Berlin, the colourful shop window of Western capitalism, where American-style consumer goods inundated the market. The latent anti-consumerist discourse in this poem became prominent only a few years later in the 1968 student movement in Germany. Radical groups set fire to the KaDeWe department store (“Kaufhaus des Westens”). Some activists on the extreme fringes of this movement (such as Andreas Baader and Ulrike Meinhof) took the same political agenda even further and formed terrorist organizations.

By 1968, Freydoun’s leftist sympathies had weakened. In June 1967, when the Shah of Iran visited Berlin, a large number of Iranian and German students were mobilized by the Confederation of Iranian Students and the Socialist Student Association of Germany (SDS) to demonstrate against him. In clashes with members of Iranian security forces, who had arrived in a separate airplane, and the West Berlin police, one German student, Benno Ohnesorg, was shot and killed. While the majority of Iranian

students were sympathetic to the demonstrators, Freydoun was one of the very few who actually went to the airport and welcomed the Shah and Farah Diba with a bouquet of flowers. In other words, his political views had changed drastically between 1964 and 1967.

There are some indications, however, that he returned to his old leftist views in the mid-1970s and maintained them throughout the revolution. Iranian journalist and literary critic Faraj Sarkoohi claims that following the death of Hamid Ashraf<sup>36</sup> in June 1976, Freydoun visited Ashraf's mother with a bouquet of flowers. Since the Ashraf family was under surveillance, this visit did not escape the notice of the security establishment. Freydoun was subsequently fired from Iranian state television, although his later comeback with other shows until 1978 indicates that he must have been reinstated. Sarkoohi also claims that in the days after the transition of power on 11 February 1979, Freydoun walked into the headquarters of a leftist urban guerrilla organization in Tehran and offered to work in the organization's music ensemble,

36. See Faraj Sarkoohi's article for the BBC Persian Service at [http://www.bbc.com/persian/arts/2012/10/121007\\_144\\_farokhzad\\_fereidun.shtml](http://www.bbc.com/persian/arts/2012/10/121007_144_farokhzad_fereidun.shtml) (accessed 1 August 2018). Hamid Ashraf (born 31 December 1946) was a leader of a Marxist underground urban guerrilla group. He was killed on 29 June 1976 in a clash with members of the pre-revolution security and intelligence service SAVAK and the police force in Tehran.

known as Iran Art Workshop (*Kargah-e Honar-e Iran*). Instead of speaking to him, a member of the organization asked the security guards to throw the “decadent bastard” out of the building. In addition to Freydoun's public image as a pop singer and TV show host in the pre-revolution era, there were also rumours about his “deviant sexual orientation”. In the eyes of the leftist revolutionaries, Freydoun was the embodiment of pre-revolution decadence and corruption: any involvement with him would have damaged the revolutionary profile of the organization.

In the poem *Diesseits und Jenseits* (*On this side and beyond*), the phrase “Republic made to the old measure” refers to both successor states of the German Reich, who were using “whips and caresses” to come to terms with their common past. The GDR “caressed” the “antifascist heritage” of the communist and social democrat movement, but also claimed the humanistic tradition of German history all the way back to the 15th century. It treated the militaristic, racist and chauvinist tradition in Germany's history with a “whip”. The West German republic saw itself as the continuation of the liberal tradition of the Weimar Republic, which was being destroyed by extremists from both the left and right. The poem mentions only the East German flag emblem

(hammer and sickle); the “federal eagle” of the West (the Bundesadler) is absent. However, to the very end of the text the implied narrator refuses to take sides. An implied “du” (you) is addressed: “Do not believe / your republic is better / than his / believe only / every other word.” The reference to “the old hairstyle” on this side and beyond implies that both emerging states – despite their present differences – share the burden of a common inglorious past.

The poet himself is part of the Western political texture. Texts like *Atombombe* (*Atom Bomb*) in the third chapter reflect the pacifist discourse of the Western peace movement from the 1950s until the end of the Cold War.

In the last stanza of the last poem in the book, *Ungehört* (*Unheard*), Freydoun Farokhzad evokes an image of his own death, which was to occur 28 years later. He speaks of “songs coming out of the headless bodies of birds”. Freydoun himself was a singing bird who was beheaded by his assassins. Incidentally, the very last poem written by Forough Farokhzad, only two days before her death in February 1967, was *Tanha sedast ke mimanad*. In the last two lines Forough, too, uses the motif of the mortal bird (*parvaz ra be khater bespar, parande mordanist*).

poetic technique is imagism. All the poems are unrhymed, with irregular rhythms. Perhaps the most important stylistic feature of the book is the simplicity of images and words, the clarity of the syntax and the resulting fluidity of the texts. Freydoun’s ability to contain deep thoughts and complex, intimate life experiences within sober, unostentatious words and images is indicative of a certain degree of maturity which he attained at an early stage in his creative life. This development occurred in him within a few years of his arrival in Germany and surprised even his sister Forough, with whom he always remained in close contact.

Freydoun regularly sent Forough samples of his writings in German and in draft translations into Persian. Very early on, he discovered the aesthetics of simplicity that Forough sought in her later works after *Tavallodi digar* (*Rebirth*) and strived to attain it through writing in German. In her letters to Freydoun, Forough suggested that he apply the same aesthetic concept and write Persian poems without worrying about the formalities of rhyme and metre. The main issue was the originality of his conception of the world:

“14 March 1959 – ... Your letter with the new poems arrived a few days ago and made me very happy. My dear Ferry, I read your poems. You

were always talented. I am not surprised at all. With regard to their themes, the feel and the intricacy of sensations, your poems are totally delightful and very good. But I don't know what place they might have in the German language and how their structure is in respect to language and rhythm, although these problems are of secondary importance. The most important issue is the perception and worldview of the poet. I enjoyed your last poem very much because behind the images and their outer layer there is an ancient and frightened human sensation, a mystical form of capitulation. One has to mature in his sensual and intellectual experiences and reach a certain shape in order to be capable of expressing problems in this manner. You must continue, and I am certain that you will be excellent.... Send me your poems and try to publish them. More importantly, try to think more. I don't know whether you can think at all, or have you changed entirely, as your poems show."<sup>37</sup>

۲۶ اسفند ۱۳۳۷ - «... چند روز پیش نامه‌ات رسید با شعرهای تازه‌ات که کلی خوشحال شدم... فری‌جان، شعرهایت را خواندم، تو از اول استعداد داشتی و من هیچ تعجب نمی‌کنم. شعرهایت از نظر موضوع و حس و ظرافت حس‌ها کاملاً بی‌دل می‌نشیند و خیلی خوب هستند. اما نمی‌دانم در زبان آلمانی چه حالتی ممکن است داشته باشند و فرم ساختمان آن‌ها از نظر زبان و ریتم چگونه است. هرچند این مسائل در درجه دوم اهمیت قرار دارند. اصل موضوع نوع برداشت و جهان بینی شاعر است. از آخرین شعرت خیلی لذت بردم چون در پشت تصاویر و سطح خارجی آن‌ها یک حس قدیمی و وحشت‌زده انسان وجود داشت و یک حالت میستیک و تسلیم‌آمیز داشت که آدم تا در تجربیات حسی و فکریش پخته نشود و شکل نگیرد نمی‌تواند این مسائل را

She also spoke of the necessity to sacrifice oneself to the cause of poetry:

"21 April 1959 - ... Your poems, especially these last ones, were excellent, really outstanding. I am astonished and ask myself from where you have got this vigilance, apprehension and perception. It does not fit you, my silly Ferry. You were just a kid. I don't know, maybe you have grown up, understood how rotten and at the same time sensational life is. In any case, you are achieving the first rank in the Farokhzad family. I suggest you should also write poems in Persian. It is not necessary to observe the rules of prosody and rhyme. Try to create a generic movement with the rhythm of words that are agreeable and listenable, so that they turn into a sort of rhythm in one's ears. By all means you are a poet and this is important. If you can improve this quality in yourself you have won the game.... If you want to be a poet you have to sacrifice yourself for the cause of poetry. Forget about a lot of things and calculations. Throw away easy satisfaction and happiness. Build a wall around yourself and in the space within the wall, start from scratch. Be born

به این صورت ابراز کند. تو باید ادامه بدهی و من مطمئن هستم که تو عالی و خوب خواهی شد... شعرهایت را برایم بفرست و سعی کن آن‌ها را چاپ کنی و مهم‌تر از تمام این‌ها سعی کن بیشتر فکر کنی. نمی‌دانم اصلاً می‌توانی فکر کنی و یا اینکه آن‌طور که شعرهایت نشان می‌دهد کاملاً عوض شده‌ای.»

again, take shape, think, discover new meanings and concepts.”<sup>38</sup>

She reminded him how lucky he was to be living in the healthy intellectual and artistic environment of Munich and warned him against returning to Iran.

Freydoun did not follow Forough's advice: in his later Persian poems, published after the revolution and in exile, he returned to more rigid classical forms and wrote mathnawies and ghazals. His interest in classical Persian literature and particularly in Mowlana (Rumi) may be explained in light of his view, often expressed, that these aspects of the culture and soul of Iran were timeless and bound to survive what he regarded as the disgraceful chapter of the Islamic Republic in Iran's history. He regarded Hafez and Mowlana as allies in his personal cultural war against theocracy.

۳۸. ۳۱ فروردین ۱۳۳۸ - «... شعرهایت، به خصوص این آخری‌ها، عالی بودند، جداً عالی. من تعجب می‌کنم و از خود می‌پرسم تو این هوشیاری، و ادراک و حس را از کجا آورده‌ای. به تو نمی‌آید، فری‌خر من، تو خیلی بچه بودی، نمی‌دانم، شاید حالا بزرگ شده‌ای و زندگی را فهمیده‌ای که چه چیز کند و در عین حال معرکه‌ای است. به هر حال تو داری مقام اول را در خانواده فرخزاد به دست می‌آوری. من به تو پیشنهاد می‌کنم به فارسی هم شعر بگو. لازم نیست وزن و قافیه را رعایت کنی. سعی کن با ریت کلمات یک حرکت کلی به وجود بیاوری که شنیدنی باشد، یعنی در گوش تبدیل به یک نوع وزن شود. به هر حال تو شاعر هستی، و این مهم است، و تو اگر بتوانی این را در خودت پرورش بدهی بازی را برده‌ای.» (...) «... اگر بخواهی شاعر باشی خودت را قربانی شعر کن. از خیلی حرف‌ها و حساب‌ها بگذر، خوشبختی‌های ساده و راضی‌کننده را کنار بگذار. دور خودت را دیواری بساز و در داخل محیط این دیوار از نو شروع کن به دنیا آمدن و شکل گرفتن و فکر کردن و کشف کردن معانی مختلف مفاهیم مختلف.»

In the years after the publication of *Andere Jahreszeit*, Freydoun explored his other talents: disregarding his sister's advice, he did not sacrifice himself to the cause of poetry. From 1965 onwards, he spent more and more time writing songs and composing music, even receiving first prize in the music festival of Innsbruck in Austria, the country of Mozart and Schubert. Under the name Ferry Harun, he recorded at least one LP and pursued a career as a stage artist, performing in live events and on German radio and television. Two of his German songs, recorded in the mid-1960s, were released in Iran in the 1970s on an album entitled *Freydoun Farokhzad va Khatereha*. While he was still a student at the LMU in Munich, he produced a documentary film series for Bavarian television on the mountain roads of the Alps. By the end of the 1960s, he had become such a colourful and glamorous personality that Hollywood filmmaker Tracy Albon made a documentary film about him, showing his life in Germany and in Iran. From today's perspective, the poetry book *Andere Jahreszeit* seems to have completed a certain episode in Freydoun's life. Writing poetry in German was his way of grasping the new world he had entered and of searching for his place in that world.

For Anja  
I have loved her very much

*Für Anja  
Ich habe sie sehr geliebt*

Whether or not  
a trace remains  
on the road -  
cautiously  
I will go my way

Sasaki Nobutsuna

*Ob auf dem Weg  
eine Spur bleiben wird  
oder nicht –  
bedachtsam  
will meinen Weg ich gehn*

*Sasaki Nobutsuna*



# I

Thought in Persian, spoken in German

*Persisch gedacht, deutsch gesagt*

## Expectation

On the hot tin roof  
night lands  
like a black dove  
I hear her coo  
tender as she is

in the city of my silence  
sleep flutters  
like a black dove –  
will it find the way  
to my eyes.

## Erwartung

*Auf dem heißen Blechdach  
landet die Nacht  
wie eine schwarze Taube  
ich höre sie gurren  
zärtlich wie sie ist*

*in der Stadt meines Schweigens  
flattert der Schlaf  
wie eine schwarze Taube –  
ob sie den Weg finden wird  
der zu meinen Augen führt.*

## Children's market

Noise of the balloons.

The yearning eyes  
letting themselves get caught  
in it.

Drummers and flute players  
show off their brilliant  
moments.

Wishes rise slowly  
from the ground  
and set sail  
above the hearts.

It is time for the paper kites  
growing smaller  
on their trip to the zenith.

The world is a picture book  
without clouds or prohibition signs.

## *Kindermarkt*

*Lärm der Luftballons.*

*Die sehnsüchtigen Augen  
lassen sich in ihm  
fangen.*

*Trommler und Flötenspieler  
zeigen ihre leuchtenden  
Augenblicke.*

*Langsam steigen die Wünsche  
aus dem Boden  
und setzen ihre Segel  
über den Herzen.*

*Zeit der Papierdrachen,  
die auf ihrer Reise zum Zenit  
immer kleiner werden.*

*Die Welt ist ein Bilderbuch  
ohne Wolken und Verbotstafeln.*

## The wind

The wind  
with flying hair  
has neither estuary  
nor age.

It rides without the company  
of feet.

Those searching for its horses  
discover them as smoke  
or clouds of dust

They keep their source  
hidden.

## *Der Wind*

*Der Wind  
mit fliegenden Haaren  
der weder Mündung  
noch Alter hat*

*der ohne Gesellschaft  
von Füßen reitet.*

*Wer nach seinen Pferden sucht  
entdeckt sie als Rauch  
oder Staubfahnen*

*sie verschweigen  
ihren Quell.*

## Sunset

There is no point in  
climbing on a chair  
to run into the rainbow  
The day with its blue fingers  
is borne away.

In the distance the landscape hides its smile  
in its hands  
when the light  
in women's eyes  
grows heavy.

Unnoticed  
we endow the horizon  
with oblivion  
to devote  
attention  
to the red on its forehead.

## Sonnenuntergang

*Es hat keinen Zweck  
einen Stuhl zu besteigen  
um in den Regenbogen  
zu laufen  
Der Tag mit den blauen Fingern  
wird weggetragen.*

*In der Ferne die Landschaft  
birgt ihr Lächeln  
in den Händen  
wenn das Licht  
in den Augen der Frauen  
schwer wird.*

*Unbemerkt  
beschenkt man den Horizont  
mit Vergessenheit  
um dem Rot auf seiner Stirn  
die Aufmerksamkeit  
zu widmen.*

## Night

During the day  
it hides  
in the caress  
of the meadows  
in the song  
of the cicadas.

As I lie asleep  
it presses its face  
against the windowpane  
and watches  
my sleep.

## *Die Nacht*

*Am Tag  
versteckt sie sich  
in der Zärtlichkeit  
der Wiesen  
im Gesang der Zikaden.*

*Während ich schlafe  
preßt sie ihr Gesicht  
an die Fensterscheibe  
und beobachtet  
meinen Schlaf.*

## Love

It started at that time:  
when children's kites  
first got to know one another.

Sunday roses  
and letters written  
in secret:  
a breath of emotion.

Hearts  
carved with knives  
shone on the trees.  
Initials  
tumbled through the air.

But gradually  
the songs of breath  
are extinguished  
and the diaries  
erased.

No more keys  
are given away  
because strangers are welcome  
at every door.

## Die Liebe

*Damals begann es:  
als die Kinderdrachen  
sich kennenlernten.*

*Sonntagsrosen  
und heimlich geschriebene  
Briefe:  
ein Hauch von Gefühl.*

*Die mit dem Messer  
geritzten Herzen  
leuchteten an den Bäumen.  
Anfangsbuchstaben  
fielen durch die Luft.*

*Allmählich aber  
sind die Atemlieder  
erloschen  
die Tagebücher  
verwischt.*

*Man schenkt  
keine Schlüssel mehr  
da jede Tür  
den Fremden offen steht.*

## Spring

Spring  
is a green beetle  
all its feet  
hanging in dreams

It tiptoes  
along  
with the bitter scent  
of the grass.

One can bend down  
and keep the butterfly net  
ready  
before the dreams  
start  
to fly.

## Frühling

*Der Frühling  
ist ein grüner Käfer  
der mit allen Füßen  
in den Träumen hängt*

*Er läuft  
auf Zehenspitzen  
und begleitet  
den bitteren Geruch  
des Grases*

*Man kann sich neigen  
und das Schmetterlingsnetz  
bereit halten  
ehe die Träume  
zu fliegen  
beginnen.*



## Peace

I love this sky  
its blue glass  
breaking  
under the sun's weight.

I love this earth  
its green fragrance  
rowing upwards  
without reflection.

I love these rivers  
that fearfully  
wrap themselves  
in the scent of  
water plants

these fish  
that carry grey silver coins  
in their pupils.

## Friede

*Ich liebe diesen Himmel  
dessen blaues Glas  
unter dem Gewicht der Sonne  
zusammenbricht*

*ich liebe diese Erde  
deren grüner Duft  
ohne Überlegung  
nach oben rudert*

*ich liebe diese Flüsse  
die sich furchtsam  
in den Geruch  
der Wasserpflanzen  
einhüllen*

*diese Fische  
die graue Silbermünzen  
in den Pupillen tragen.*

## Illusion

A feather  
in your hand  
is a bird

Birds  
are hard  
to hold  
they like  
flying

The feather  
in your hand  
is a dead bird  
it doesn't fly.

## *Illusion*

*Eine Feder  
in deiner Hand  
ist ein Vogel*

*Vögel  
sind schwer  
zu halten  
sie fliegen  
gern*

*Die Feder  
in deiner Hand  
ist ein toter Vogel  
er kann nicht  
fliegen.*

## Nightfall

The death  
of these sashes of blue light  
so reminiscent of  
flying clouds of dust  
in fragile air  
is dark

like:  
oil slithering on the ground,  
the unfortunate tomcat,  
the Persian eyes.

You can overlook it  
and laugh

but not  
when night falls  
from the tree  
like a cicada  
and starts  
to sing.

## Nachtbeginn

*Der Tod  
der blauen Lichtschärpen  
mit so viel Erinnerung  
an fliegenden Staubfahnen  
in zerbrechlicher Luft  
ist dunkel*

*wie:  
das Öl auf dem Boden,  
der Unglückskater,  
die persischen Augen.*

*Man kann ihn übersehen  
und darüber lachen*

*aber nicht  
wenn die Nacht  
wie eine Zikade  
vom Baum fällt  
und zu singen  
beginnt.*

## Summer

*For Heide Luft*

The names  
he wrote across the sky  
grew ever more tender  
and the shadows ever smaller  
as he carried the sun  
on his shoulders.

June, July, August.  
And he fled.

There were tears and handkerchiefs  
for the minutes  
that had to bid  
farewell to him  
there were whispers, there was pain.

When he forgot himself  
for an instant  
the dead anchors came  
and forced their way  
into his heart.

For a while he remained alive  
in every memory.

## Sommer

*Für Heide Luft*

Immer zärtlicher waren  
die Namen  
die er an den Himmel malte  
immer winziger die Schatten  
da er die Sonne  
auf den Schultern trug.

Juni, Juli, August.  
Und er flog.

Es gab Tränen und Taschentücher  
für Minuten  
die sich von ihm  
verabschieden mußten  
es gab Flüstern und Schmerzen.

Als er sich  
einen Augenblick vergaß  
kamen die toten Anker  
und drangen ihm ins Herz.

Er blieb eine Weile lebend  
in jeder Erinnerung.

## The back yards

The poor back yards  
lingering to look at us  
for a long time

when we  
pass  
them by  
without  
greeting.

## *Die Hinterhöfe*

*Die armen Hinterhöfe  
blicken uns  
lange nach*

*wenn wir  
an ihnen  
vorbeigehen  
ohne sie  
zu grüßen.*

## The voice

*For Bele Bachem*

Old hangover  
nesting like a cat in the dark shadows under the eyes  
illuminating thoughts

Coloured lanterns  
between silent eyelashes

The voice.

You follow it without meaning to.  
Searching for its footsteps  
on your moist tongue,  
you lay fishing lines  
for its gleaming trout  
until its last sound  
fades.

And suddenly it is there again:  
a windrose in your face.

## Die Stimme

*Für Bele Bachem*

*Alter Kater*  
*der in den Augenschatten liegt*  
*und die Gedanken erleuchtet*

*Bunte Lampions*  
*zwischen schweigenden Wimpern*

*Die Stimme.*

*Ungewollt gehst du ihr nach.*  
*Suchst du ihre Fußspuren*  
*auf deiner feuchten Zunge,*  
*streust du Angeln*  
*für ihre leuchtenden Forellen*  
*bis ihr letzter Klang verstummt.*

*Und plötzlich ist sie wieder da:*  
*Eine Windrose in deinem Gesicht.*

## Another season

Summer was  
a thirsty swallow  
that died  
of mirages

autumn  
a melancholy chapter  
that I read to the end

shall we now  
walk  
through the dead landscape  
and ask about  
the idle scythes  
or put on  
black gloves  
to carry  
a little warmth  
towards winter.

## Andere Jahreszeit

*Der Sommer war  
eine durstige Schwalbe  
die an den Luftspiegelungen  
starb*

*der Herbst  
ein melancholisches Kapitel  
das ich zu Ende las*

*wollen wir nun  
durch die tote Landschaft  
gehen  
und nach den müßigen  
Sensen fragen  
oder schwarze Handschuhe  
anziehen  
um dem Winter  
ein bißchen Wärme entgegen  
zu tragen.*

## Silence

The minute  
that rests on  
the shadow of the eyelashes  
is silence

invisible shape  
passing through all doors  
reminiscent  
of the dead season  
or  
of the frozen fresh water.

Not a sound  
when it enters.

A small movement  
to left or right  
suffices  
to kill it.

Silently it stumbles  
in the air  
leaving behind  
dreams and wellsprings.

## Die Stille

*Die Minute  
die sich  
an die Schattenwimpern  
lehnt  
ist die Stille*

*unsichtbare Gestalt  
die durch alle Türen geht  
und an die tote Jahreszeit  
oder  
an das gefrorene Süßwasser  
erinnert.*

*Kein Ton mehr  
bei ihrem Eintritt.*

*Eine kleine Bewegung  
zwischen Links und Rechts  
genügt  
um sie zu töten.*

*Sie strauchelt ohne Lärm  
in der Luft  
und hinterläßt  
Träume und Quellen.*



## Breeze

The breeze  
that carries to you  
the day's blue haze  
is a woman  
sun and light  
are mirrored  
in her eyes  
or  
a girl  
adorned with the flowers  
of Persian carpets.

The cool aura  
of September  
leaves its traces  
on her breast  
while she  
trembles  
between your eyelashes.

## Brise

*Die Brise  
die dir den blauen  
Dunst des Tages  
entgegenbringt  
ist eine Frau  
Sonne und Licht  
spiegeln  
in ihren Augen  
oder  
ein Mädchen  
geschmückt mit den Blumen  
der Perserteppiche*

*Kühler Duft  
des Septembers  
legt seine Spuren  
auf ihre Brust  
während sie  
zwischen deinen Wimpern  
zittert.*

Stele for A.

While the hour of spring  
perched in their hair

like a bird  
she listened for the call of horns  
leading  
to other seasons.

The green was cool  
in closed eyes.  
She kept it  
behind her lids  
and drew all colours  
in chalk:  
green, red, yellow.  
Winter.

She wanted to give flowers  
the wrong names  
confuse June with December.

Once she'd succeeded,  
she missed  
the bird  
in her hair.

*Stele für A.*

*Während die Frühling-Stunde  
wie ein Vogel  
in ihrem Haar saß  
suchte sie Hornrufe  
die zu anderen Jahreszeiten  
führten.*

*Kühl war das Grün  
in geschlossenen Augen.  
Sie behielt es  
hinter ihren Lidern  
und malte mit Kreiden  
in allen Farben:  
Grün, rot, gelb.  
Winter.*

*Sie wollte den Blumen  
unrechte Namen geben  
Juni mit Dezember verwechseln.*

*Am Ziel ihrer Wünsche  
vermißte sie  
den Vogel  
in ihrem Haar.*

## The world

The world  
is a sparrow  
that lets itself be killed  
without resistance

Clothed  
in serene letters  
of levity.

Whoever captures it  
ends his stroll  
in darkness

For the moment will come  
when sorrow  
counts its colours.

## Die Welt

*Die Welt  
ist ein Sperling  
der sich widerstandslos  
töten läßt*

*Bekleidet  
mit heiteren Buchstaben  
des Leichtsinns.*

*Wer ihn gefangen nimmt  
endet seinen Spaziergang  
im Dunkel*

*Denn der Augenblick kommt  
in dem die Schwermut  
ihre Farben zählt.*

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Portrait of a country

*Porträt eines Landes*

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## My landscape

Persian landscape  
and its irresistible  
expanse

Coloured paper  
on which the smell  
of brief rain  
settles

Air tasting of raspberries  
everywhere

Abundance  
of scarecrows  
and garlands of light

A landscape  
like beautiful weather,  
green veils of haze,  
on which to paint  
wheat and crickets.

## *Meine Landschaft*

*Persische Landschaft  
und ihre unwiderstehliche  
Weite*

*Buntes Papier  
auf dem sich der Geruch  
des kurzen Regens  
niederläßt*

*Überall Luft  
mit Himbeergeschmack*

*Überfluß  
an Vogelscheuchen  
und Lichtgirlanden*

*Landschaft  
wie schönes Wetter;  
grüne Gasschleier,  
darauf zu malen  
Weizen und Grillen.*

## Avowal

My fatherland  
the land of roses  
and nightingales

wilted roses  
mute nightingales

## *Bekenntnis*

*Mein Vaterland  
das Land der Rosen  
und der Nachtigallen*

*Verwelkte Rosen  
stumme Nachtigallen.*

## Autumn in Persia

The clouds  
and the blue enamel  
of the sky  
coloured in white  
smell of rain

Evaporated rivers  
heading  
towards  
the cooler season.

Carrying  
silent sheaves of grain  
on one's head  
waving  
to October.

Turquoise minarets  
grow  
out of dust bowls  
and beg  
for alms.

## Herbst in Persien

*Die Wolken  
die die blauen Emailen  
des Himmels  
weiß färben  
duften nach Regen*

*Verdunstete Flüsse  
fahren  
der kühlen Jahreszeit  
entgegen*

*man trägt  
die schweigenden Korngarben  
auf dem Kopf  
und winkt  
dem Oktober zu*

*die Türkisminarette  
wachsen  
aus den Staubwannen  
und bitten  
um Almosen.*

## Persian carpet

### Colours

interweaving  
and expanding  
the better  
to overwhelm  
the dark shadows below the eyes  
of the day.

## *Perserteppich*

### *Farben*

*die sich ineinander  
ausbreiten  
um die Augenringe  
des Tages  
besser überwältigen  
zu können*



## Land in shade

Confused by visible  
violence

I am accompanied  
by slain pigeons,  
ruptured sky

thus I leave that I'll no longer  
have to enchain  
my words

waterfalls of light  
all around  
illuminating the eyes  
of a thousand and one nights

only in my country  
do grapes turn  
into raisins  
and soldiers  
into judges.

## *Land im Schatten*

*Verwirrt von sichtbarer  
Gewalt*

*begleiten mich  
getötete Tauben  
zerrissener Himmel*

*so gehe ich fort  
um meine Worte  
nicht mehr  
fesseln zu müssen*

*überall blühen  
Wasserfälle aus Licht  
und erleuchten die Augen  
von tausendundeiner Nacht*

*nur in meinem Land  
werden die Trauben  
zu Rosinen  
die Soldaten  
zu Richtern.*

## Persian women

*For Bozorg Alavi*

When night comes  
and the calls of the cicadas  
catch fire  
in their hair  
the women show  
their coal eyes  
in the lyrical landscape.

Women with snares  
and the silver scent in the leaves  
fleeing birds,  
caressed by silence.

Minarets shatter  
from the brightness of their sight.

Turning for no reason  
into larks  
or wind swings.

They bewitch the ear  
repeating their caress  
in the hallways.

## Die Perserinnen

*Für Bozorg Alavi*

*Wenn die Nacht kommt  
und die Zikadenrufe  
sich in Frauenhaar  
entzünden  
zeigen sie  
ihre Kohlenaugen  
in der lyrischen Landschaft.*

*Frauen, mit Fallen  
und Silberduft im Laub,  
flüchtige Vögel,  
von Schweigen gestreichelt.*

*Die Minarette zerbrechen  
vom Licht ihres Anblicks.*

*Ohne Grund  
werden sie zu Lerchen  
oder Windschaukeln.*

*Sie verhexen das Ohr  
und wiederholen ihre Zärtlichkeit  
In den Hausfluren.*

## Aquarelle

I paint  
a house  
out of desire  
a garden  
out of homesickness  
birds  
out of sobbing sounds  
rivers  
out of dew  
seas  
out of tears  
narrow alleys  
out of sorrow  
broad squares  
out of fog  
rains  
out of thirst  
clouds  
out of gloom  
corn fields  
out of sun dust  
pastures  
out of solitude

I paint  
with all the colours  
of my soul  
I paint  
my fatherland.

## Aquarell

*Ich male  
ein Haus  
aus Sehnsucht  
einen Garten  
aus Heimweh  
Vögel  
aus schluchzenden Lauten  
Flüsse  
aus Tau  
Meere  
aus Tränen  
enge Gassen  
aus Schwermut  
weite Plätze  
aus Nebel  
Regen  
aus Durst  
Wolken  
aus Trübsinn  
Kornfelder  
aus Sonnenstaub  
Weiden  
aus Verlassenheit*

*Ich male  
mit allen Farben  
meiner Seele  
ich male  
mein Vaterland.*

## Oriental days

The sky  
a blue pasture

The clouds  
woven songs

The algae of light  
in the eyes  
the echo of feelings

The beaks of birds  
are red buds  
bursting  
into song.

## *Orientalische Tage*

*Der Himmel  
eine blaue Weide*

*Die Wolken  
gewobene Lieder*

*Die Lichtalgen  
in den Augen  
das Echo der Empfindungen*

*Rote Knospen  
sind die Vögelschnäbel  
die in Gesängen  
aufblühen.*

## Persian Day

On country roads  
it carries its leaves of light  
towards  
the sheaves of nights

In the guise of a bird  
the song of the muezzin follows  
speaking to many roofs

Day, with a thousand and one doors  
through which you are  
eased  
by banknotes  
without slaughter.

## Tag in Persien

*Auf den ländlichen Straßen  
trägt er den Nachtgarben  
seine Lichtblätter  
entgegen*

*Der Muezzinengesang folgt,  
der in Gestalt eines Vogels  
mit vielen Dächern  
spricht.*

*Tag, mit tausendundeiner Tür  
durch die man sich  
ohne Gemetzel  
von Banknoten  
gleiten läßt.*

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Experience

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On this side and beyond

*For Hans Mayer*

1  
Republic made to the old measure.

It cherishes  
its past  
with whips and caresses.

2  
Black  
Red  
Gold  
without hammer or compasses  
entirely black.

One can wear  
black shirts again.

3  
Black  
Red  
Gold  
with hammer and compasses  
entirely red.

4.  
Your republic  
his republic.

5.  
Don't believe  
that your republic is better  
than his,  
believe only  
every other word.

6.  
Everywhere  
the republic  
wears the old haircut:

On this side  
and that side  
of its parting.

*Diesseits and jenseits*

*Für Hans Mayer*

1

*Republik nach dem alten Maß.*

*Sie pfelgt  
ihre Vergangenheit  
mit Peitschen und Liebkosen.*

2

*Schwarz  
Rot  
Gold  
ohne Hammer und Zirkel  
ganz schwarz.*

*Man kann wieder  
schwarze Hemden tragen.*

3

*Schwarz  
Rot  
Gold  
mit Hammer und Zirkel  
ganz rot.*

4

*Deine Republik  
seine Republik.*

5

*Glaube nicht  
deine Republik sei besser  
als seine,  
glaube nur  
jedem zweiten Wort.*

6

*Die Republik  
trägt überall  
den alten Haarschnitt:*

*Diesseits  
und jenseits  
ihres Scheitels.*



## Racial segregation

The white dove  
is no dove  
it is much more

it is hailed  
as a prophet  
cheered  
as a saviour  
painted  
as peace

it is a dove  
and equally  
Peace  
Paix  
Pace

The black dove  
is no dove  
she is also no more  
than a dove  
she is just  
black.

## Rassentrennung

*Die weiße Taube  
ist keine Taube  
sie ist viel mehr*

*Sie wird gefeiert  
als Prophet  
bejubelt  
als Retter  
gemalt  
als Friede*

*sie ist eine Taube  
und gleich  
Peace  
Paix  
Pace*

*Die schwarze Taube  
ist keine Taube  
sie ist auch nicht mehr  
als eine Taube  
sie ist nur  
schwarz.*

## The Fourth Reich

Here one moves  
with the times:  
time of the untended  
and of poverty,  
time of resurrection  
and of the tall hats of cardinals.  
And when it is  
time again  
everyone will wear  
a helmet.

## *Das Vierte Reich*

*Hier geht man  
mit der Zeit:  
Zeit der Unbehüteten  
und der Armut,  
Zeit der Wiederbelebung  
und der großen Kardinalshüte.  
Und wenn es wieder  
so weit ist  
trägt jeder  
einen Helm.*

## War

The watch sits  
like a glow worm  
on a hand  
and does not know  
it belongs  
to no one.

Time of crushed  
fingers  
dying like silence  
between old cobbles.

The survivors  
rub their eyes  
and mumble quietly:  
never again.

## Krieg

*Die Uhr sitzt  
wie ein Glühwurm  
an einer Hand  
und weiß nicht  
daß sie niemandem  
gehört.*

*Zeit der zerstampften  
Finger  
die als Schweigen  
zwischen dem alten Pflaster  
sterben.*

*Die Überlebenden  
reiben sich die Augen  
und murmeln leise:  
nie mehr wieder.*

## Resignation

It is so good to be a worm.  
To see nothing  
but the dead. To feel nothing but  
the grave. To hear nothing  
but naked sickles  
flat over the ground.

## *Resignation*

*Es ist so gut, Wurm zu sein.  
Nichts sehen  
als Tote. Nichts fühlen als  
Grab. Nichts hören  
als nackte Sicheln  
flach über der Erde.*

## Atom Bomb

They want to convince us  
that it's just  
a white mushroom  
whispering  
with the poplars  
or a peacock about to  
spread its tail

but the white mushroom  
has black shadows  
and the young peacock  
carries poisonous arrows

you can hold a book  
above your head  
and believe in miracles

you can also  
creep under a table  
like a sick dog  
and wish for a better death.

## Atombombe

*Sie wollen uns überzeugen  
daß es bloß  
ein weißer Pilz ist  
der mit den Pappeln  
flüstert  
oder ein Pfau der gerade  
sein Rad schlägt*

*aber der weiße Pilz  
hat schwarze Schatten  
und der junge Pfau  
trägt giftige Pfeile*

*man kann ein Buch  
über den Kopf halten  
und an Wunder glauben*

*man kann auch  
wie ein kranker Hund  
unter den Tisch kriechen  
und sich einen besseren Tod  
wünschen.*

Berlin

Splitting  
the waters  
does not eliminate  
the pike

Splitting  
an acacia  
does not split  
its scent

but when something  
breaks in two  
everything breaks in two

me on this side  
you on that.

*Berlin*

*Teilt man  
die Gewässer  
so trennt man nicht  
die Hechte*

*teilt man die Akazie  
so teilt man nicht  
ihren Duft*

*geht aber  
etwas in zwei  
so geht alles  
entzwei*

*ich diese Seite  
du jene*

What For?

The grey tin soldiers  
mute and proud  
baptized in blood  
and iron

Endless history  
of this country

People  
filled with  
the devil's hatred  
to win  
long lost  
games.

*Wozu?*

*Die grauen Zinnsoldaten  
stumm und stolz  
getauft in Blut  
und Eisen*

*Endlose Geschichte  
dieses Landes*

*Menschen  
mit dem Haß  
des Teufels  
um längst verlorene  
Spiele  
zu gewinnen.*

## Legacy

Landscapes  
leave behind  
their postcards  
roses  
their scent  
the wind  
its cradle  
the river  
its mirror  
waterfalls  
their roaring  
voices  
their slaughter  
fortune  
its forgetfulness  
soldiers  
their graves  
war  
its hatred  
peace  
its boredom.

## *Hinterlassenschaft*

*Die Landschaften  
hinterlassen  
ihre Postkarten  
die Rosen  
ihren Duft  
der Wind  
seine Wiege  
der Fluß  
seinen Spiegel  
die Wasserfälle  
ihr Tosen  
die Stimmen  
ihr Gemetzel  
das Glück  
seine Vergeßlichkeit  
die Soldaten  
ihre Gräber  
der Krieg  
seinen Haß  
der Friede  
seine Langeweile.*



Not all are blind

There are people  
with white pupils  
the better to read  
the black writing  
of a breeze

perhaps they think  
black on black  
is illegible  
or  
white on white  
incomprehensible

but I  
write in red  
on red  
legibly  
and comprehensibly.

*Nicht alle sind blind*

*Es gibt Leute  
mit weißen Pupillen  
um die schwarzen Schriftzüge  
einer Brise  
besser lesen zu können*

*sie meinen vielleicht  
schwarz auf schwarz  
wäre unlesbar  
oder  
weiß auf weiß  
unbegreiflich*

*ich aber  
schreibe rot  
auf rot  
lesbar  
und begreiflich.*

## Soldiers

Without land  
without peace  
breaking  
and freezing  
in the hands of God  
who is rushing  
from bell  
to bell  
to give his  
blessing  
to the war.

## *Soldaten*

*Ohne Land  
ohne Frieden  
zerbrechen  
und erfrieren  
in Gottes Hand  
der von Glocke  
zu Glocke eilt  
um dem Krieg  
seinen Segen  
zu geben.*

## Dictatorship

Grey reaching down under the hearts  
under the tongues  
that unlearn their self-deception.

Each sound leaves lips  
lined up against the wall.

There is always a shortage  
of boots.

Those who do not change their colour  
in time  
are lost.

## *Diktatur*

*Grau bis unter die Herzen  
unter die Zungen  
die sich zu wiegen  
verlernen.*

*Jeder Laut läßt Lippen  
an die Wand stellen.*

*der Vorrat an Stiefeln  
reicht nie aus.*

*Wer nicht rechtzeitig  
seine Farbe wechselt  
ist verloren.*

Recently, I was in Berlin and unintentionally  
came into contact with the wall:  
it also separated me from a person.  
And yet I believe that even a wall  
can be of use. Useless are those  
whose policies have brought things this far.

*Vor kurzem war ich in Berlin und kam ungewollt  
mit der Mauer in Berührung:  
Sie hat auch mich von einem Menschen getrennt.  
Trotzdem bin ich der Meinung, daß auch eine Mauer  
von Nutzen sein kann. Nutzlos sind diejenigen,  
die es durch ihre Politik so weit gebracht haben.*

## Perception

*For Reinhard Ramshorn*

Before red sentinels  
grew out of vertices  
everything was different.

shop-window dealers  
blue jeans dealers

Tenderness came  
from the west.

Some carried it  
like fresh placards  
and courted the feet  
some sold it  
as brotherly love.

But now one can  
go to sleep quietly  
even if the whispering  
of the bricks  
troubles  
some neighbours.

## Wahrnehmung

*Für Reinhard Ramshorn*

*Bevor aus den Scheiteln  
rote Schildwachen wuchsen  
ist alles anders gewesen.*

*Schaufensterhändler,  
Bluejeanshändler:*

*Die Zärtlichkeit kam  
aus dem Westen.*

*Manche trugen sie  
wie frische Plakate  
und umwarben die Füße  
manche verkauften sie  
als Nächstenliebe.*

*Nun aber kann man  
ruhig schlafen gehn  
wenn auch das Flüstern  
der Ziegelsteine  
einige Nachbarn  
beunruhigt.*

IV

What I have left to say

*Was ich noch sagen wollte*

## Unheard

I do not want priests  
to bless airplanes, consecrate cannons,  
the blood of the defenceless  
to drench the Bible  
to flood the crucifix.

I do not want ruins  
to spread on our chest  
well-rested uniforms  
to stamp on our future

I do not want flowers  
to seek refuge in the salt desert  
beautiful, silent animals  
to vanish from the face of the earth

I do not want a sun that is a thousand suns  
a white mushroom that flourishes in hell

I do not want any salvation  
through awful calamity  
or any song  
from the bodies of headless birds.

## Ungehört

*Ich will nicht, daß die Priester  
Flugzeuge segnen, Kanonen einweihen  
daß das Blut der Wehrlosen  
die Bibel durchtränkt  
das Kreuz überschwemmt*

*ich will nicht, daß die Ruinen  
sich auf unserer Brust ausbreiten  
daß die ausgeschlafenen Uniformen  
über unsere Zukunft stampfen*

*will nicht, daß die Blumen  
in der Salzwüste Zuflucht suchen  
daß die schönen, schweigenden Tiere  
aus der Welt verschwinden*

*will keine Sonne, die tausend Sonnen ist  
Keinen weißen Pilz, der in der Hölle blüht*

*will kein Heil  
durch das schreckliche Unheil  
will kein Gesang  
aus kopflosen Vogelleibern.*

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V

About these poems

*Zu diesen Gedichten*

*By Johannes Bobrowski*

www.mehripublication.com



## About these poems

Johannes Bobrowski

Freydoun Farokhzad, born in 1936, a man with clear-cut, confident movements, comes from a land of great poetic traditions, a land of which we have in the meantime heard quite different and seldom good things – things that present themselves as very oriental, in a very European way: as if the days of roses and nightingales were over.

He has been living in Germany for six years now and is not the only Persian here, as we know. He writes in German, that is, in a language he has learned and which he wields as such. But that is one's first impression of him. He has confidence in this language, he uses the vocabulary, the terms, without much doubt or worry about their suitability, without the paralyzing indecision that wants to present our own language to us as

a museum of developmental series, influences, changes of meaning, etc., which moreover is still replenishing itself with new inventory from not fully comprehensible arsenals. And so he takes what he can get, and that's not meagre, as we can see. An approach, I think, whose advantage – for us, at least – is obvious. For him too, but that is open to discussion.

Language as a medium of thought – an all too simple formula. One that is not much use, not much more than experience of the distinctions between language and thought: old Hamann spoke about this, turning against his Herder.

But language seized by desires – here, it approaches poetry.

*Wishes rise slowly  
from the ground  
and set sail  
above the hearts.*

writes Farokhzad in his *Children's Market*. We see confidence in the work: ground, sails and heart are set, their power of evocation is not questioned; consequently, at the end of the poem the world is called a picture book. While certainly not a child who mistrusts his picture book, Freydoun adds as his last line:

*without clouds or prohibition signs*

This is beautiful, and leads us to the desires from which his poem has arisen, and thus to the constellations that could define his relationship with his country of origin – which by no means justifies his host country in commending itself as an alternative. Here the chapter entitled *Experience* says enough: situations we have become accustomed to, seen by someone who steps into them and nonetheless does not forget the view they offered from a distance.

I think that with these poems something new has happened, something we should not allow quickly identifiable influences to disguise: the naturalness we notice in the language extends all the way to the metaphors, the imagery; they immediately gain life and energy from the initial situation so that they evolve into actions and are able to grow, to walk, to fly: *The spring – a green beetle, hanging in dreams, tiptoes along with the scent of the grass*. The butterfly net is ready for the catch (*spring*). Which is not to say that what we called confidence or naturalness is simply blank and fresh, relaxed, or, historically speaking, in an early stage. Contemplating these poems, one recognizes a number of basic patterns that link the Persian Farokhzad inextricably with his country

of origin. Poems like *Nightfall* or *The Wind* should be viewed accordingly. Or lines like

*The clouds  
and the blue enamel  
of the sky  
coloured in white*

*in Autumn in Persia.*

Another strong point for the poems is the melancholy of one who by his own admission lives in two countries and between them, on a curving arch whose span betrays itself in a trembling beneath the feet.

Here I have paid less attention to the poems in the second chapter, beautiful as they are. They invite us to look back while their sensual abundance and vividness lives as narrated time: we do not leave the arch of the bridge, but only the point of highest tension – and only for a few steps.

Of course that is essential for the volume: it signifies its openly autobiographical character. Which we can accept – as the experience of a serious man, whom we believe and who approaches us with firm, clear-cut movements.

We greet him warmly.

### *Zu diesen Gedichten*

Johannes Bobrowski

Freydoun Farokhzad, 36 geboren, ein Mann mit klaren, sicheren Bewegungen, kommt aus einem Land großer dichterischer Traditionen, von dem wir indessen seit langem durchaus anderes und selten Gutes hören -, Dinge, die sich auf sehr europäische Weise sehr orientalisch gerieren: als sei es aus mit den Rosen und Nachtigallen.

Seit sechs Jahren lebt er in Deutschland, nicht der einzige Perser hier, wie man weiß. Er schreibt deutsch, in einer Sprache also, die er erlernt hat und als eine erlernte handhabt. Aber, das ist der erste Eindruck, den man bei ihm bekommt, er hat Vertrauen zu dieser Sprache, also setzt er die Vokabel, den Begriff ohne große Zweifel oder Bedenken an der Verfügbarkeit, ohne das lähmende Zaudern, das einem die eigne Sprache

als ein Museum von Entwicklungsreihen, Einflüssen, Bedeutungswandel etc. vorstellen will, das sich dazu nun eben noch aus nicht völlig übersichtlichen Arsenalen mit neuen Beständen anfüllt. Er nimmt also, was er in die Hand bekommen kann, es ist nicht wenig, wie wir sehen. Ein Vorgehen, denke ich, dessen Nutzen - für uns jedenfalls - auf der Hand liegt. Für ihn auch, doch darüber ist nun zu reden.

Sprache als Medium des Gedankens - eine allzu vereinfachte Formel. Die nicht viel einträgt, nicht viel mehr als Erfahrungen mit den Distinktionen zwischen Sprache und Denken; der alte Hamann hat darüber geredet, gegen seinen Herder gewandt.

Aber Sprache, derer sich die Wünsche bemächtigen: hier geht es auf das Gedicht zu.

*Langsam steigen die Wünsche  
aus dem Boden  
und setzen ihre Segel  
über dem Herzen*

heißt es in Farokhzads *Kindermarkt*. Wir sehen Zutrauen am Werk, Boden, Segel, Herz werden gesetzt, ihre Evokationskraft ist nicht angezweifelt, folgerichtig heißt die Welt am Schluß des Gedichts ein Bilderbuch. Nun gewiß:

kein Kind, das seinem Bilderbuch mißtraute, aber Farokhzad fügt, als letzte Zeile hinzu:

*ohne Wolken und Verbotstafeln,*

und das ist schön und führt uns auf die Wünsche, aus denen sein Gedicht aufgestiegen ist, und also auf die Konstellationen, die sein Verhältnis zu seinem Herkunftsland bestimmen könnten. Was gar keine Berechtigung für sein Gastland bedeuten kann, sich als eine Alternative zu empfehlen. Hier sagt die *Erfahrung* betitelte Abteilung genug: uns gewöhnlich gewordene Situationen, gesehen von einem, der in sie eintritt und gleichwohl den Anblick nicht vergißt, den sie aus der Entfernung boten.

Ich meine, es liegt mit diesen Gedichten etwas Neues vor, worüber schnell feststellbare Beeinflussungen nicht hinwegtäuschen sollten: Die Unbefangenheit, die wir an der Sprache konstatierten, erstreckt sich völlig auf die Metaphern, auf die Bildvorstellungen, sie gewinnen aus der Anfangssituation sofort Leben und Spannung, daß sie sich zu Handlungen fortzuentwickeln, daß sie zu wachsen, zu laufen, zu fliegen vermögen: *der Frühling, der - ein grüner Käfer - in den Träumen hängt, auf Zehenspitzen läuft, den Geruch des Grases zu begleiten*. Das

Schmetterlingsnetz ist schon bereit, für den Fang (*Der Frühling*). Das heißt nicht, daß das, was wir Zutrauen oder Unbefangenheit nannten, einfach blank und frisch, ausgeruht, historisch zu reden: in einer Anfangssituation wäre. Man wird bei der Betrachtung dieser Gedichte manches Grundmuster erkennen, das den Perser Farokhzad unlösbar seinem Herkunftland verbindet. Gedichte wie *Nachtbeginn* oder *Der Wind* wollen auch daraufhin angesehen werden. Oder Zeilen wie

*Die Wolken  
die die blauen Emailen  
des Himmels  
weiß färben*

*in Herbst in Persien.*

Auch das kommt diesen Gedichten zugute: die Melancholie dessen, der erklärtermaßen in zwei Ländern lebt und zwischen diesen zwei Ländern auf einem geschwungenen Bogen, dessen Spannweite sich in einem Zittern unter den Füßen verrät.

Ich habe hier weniger die Gedichte der zweiten Abteilung herangezogen, so schön sie sind. Sie verweisen zurück, ihre sinnliche Fülle und Anschaulichkeit lebt als erzählte Zeit, der Brückenbogen ist nicht verlassen, nur der Scheitelpunkt der äußersten Spannung - und nur

für ein paar Schritte.

Freilich, das ist für den Band unerlässlich, es bezeichnet seinen offen selbstbiographischen Zug. Den wir entgegennehmen können - als die Erfahrungen eines ernsten Mannes, dem wir glauben, der mit festen, klaren Bewegungen auf uns zu kommt. Den wir herzlich begrüßen.

## The Autumn

The autumn has its melancholy  
when we leave it.

Its monuments  
already changing  
under the sky  
that adorned us.

And the lines of its hands  
decomposing with ripeness.

Pale red, the birds drag  
over shadowy colours.

The memory  
of green love couples  
hides  
under the leaves.

Soon dust clouds rise  
and tear up the flags.

While an undefined scent  
Stirs memories.

■ Handwritten note on the typed manuscript by Freydoun Farokhzad to Johannes Bobrowski:

“Is this beautiful?  
Too bad you were not in Berlin!”

■ Poem with the reference number 91.2.212/6 at the Marbach Literary Archive

## Der Herbst

*Der Herbst hat seine Melancholie  
wenn wir ihn verlassen.*

*Schon wandeln sich  
seine Denkmäler  
unter einem Himmel  
mit dem wir geschmückt waren.*

*Und die Linien seiner Hände  
verfaulen an Reife.*

*Blassrot ziehen die Vögel  
über die Schattenfarben.*

*Die Erinnerung  
an grüne Liebespaare  
verbirgt sich  
unterm Laub.*

*Bald steigen die Staubwolken  
und zerfetzen die Fahnen.*

*Während ein ungewisser Geruch  
an die Gedächtnisse rührt.*

■ Notiz von Freydoun Farokhzad an Johannes Bobrowski:

“Ist das schön?”

Schade dass Du nicht in Berlin warst!”

■ Gedicht mit der Archiv-Signatur 91.2.212/6



Freydoun Farokhzad  
1. November 22

Königsberg, den 26. 11. 164

Ich möchte meinen Brief mit (meiner lieben Johannes) anfangen, falls es zu persönlich ist schreibe ich doch: Lieber Herr Bobrowski, oder etwas ähnliches! Ich weiß nicht, ob du schon wieder in Berlin bist oder nicht, diesen Brief werden wir irgendwann bekommen, und irgendwann werden wir auch wissen, daß ich so an dich gedacht habe. Manchmal begegnet man einem Menschen und glaubt man, ihn gut lange gekannt zu haben. Es ist sehr oft so, daß die Begegnung so denken - ich so glauben - ob du auch so gedacht hast? Ich habe in München drei Gedichte wieder gelesen, - ich werde ich sie wieder lesen, man liest alles ganz anders, wenn man weiß von wem sie geschrieben worden sind. Ich weiß, meine deutsche Sprache ist noch sehr schwach, besonders wenn ich einen Brief schreiben kann glänzt die Schwäche! umso mehr, aber sie sollen bloß meine Gedanken lazen, nicht meine Schriftfehler!!! Haben Sie mit dem Halswort begonnen? noch nicht! kann tun Sie es bald! sonst kann ich wieder nach Berlin, mit den Ditteln: ein Halswort!

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Ich habe von Berlin geschrieben, ich muß nachfragen wie sehr ich Berlin liebe, und wie sehr ich werden nach Berlin gekommen wäre, wenn ich Zeit und Geld hätte. Eigentlich Zeit habe ich immer, aber ja ja der Wohlstand! Von meinem Buch! Kommt das Gedicht zwecklos ganz heraus, das ist nicht ganz gut und gehört zu einem Anfangsgedicht.

Zwei neue Kommen herein, die schreibe ich 3. Kommen mit, das Gedicht was? ist schon geändert worden, es ist nun so, (man merkt und denkt was)

Endlose Geschichte  
dieser Landes

Das Gedicht Herbst in Posen,  
im letzten Vers ohne Ditteln  
und bitten  
im Altes

menschen  
+  
+ dem Hass  
des Teufels  
um Lärm und Lärm  
spiele  
zu gewinnen

Das Gedicht Ungehört +  
wird kein Heil, statt  
keine Heilung

Johnson, statt behalten, halten  
Die stille - + Die Minute, statt die zweite Minute  
Die Personennamen, Frauenhaar statt Frauenhaare

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Elisabeth findet das Gedicht <sup>?</sup> Rassen-trennung  
 nicht gut. Ich denke aber daß dieses Gedicht  
 ganz einfach - d. ganz gut ist. Was denken Sie  
 soll es in Buchkammern. Sagen Sie mir  
 - d. schreiben Sie auch an Elisabeth wenn Sie  
 dieses Gedicht gut finden. Sie hat auch  
 etwas gegen das Gedicht "Resignation",  
 • hier habe ich die Widmung weggenommen. Nun  
 das Gedicht (Republik nach dem alten Mann)  
 ist an Hans Mann gewidmet, aber nun zu  
 "Resignation", finden Sie es nicht gut? Ich finde  
 das es im Buch beliebt, - d. Suhrkamp Verlagsmenschen  
 finden dieses Gedicht sehr gut. Aber Elisabeth? ?  
 Aber nun mein lieber Johannes mag ich aufhören.  
 Ich will bloß wissen, ob Sie manche meine Gedichte  
 • Sinn und Form weiter gehen wollen, ich weiß  
 Sinn - d. Form ist nicht mehr Sinn - d. Form aber  
 hier ist doch Sinn - d. Form !!! tun Sie es für mich?  
 Schreiben Sie mir wenn Sie Zeit haben. Ich werde  
 mich darüber sehr freuen. Ich mag Sie  
 sehr und liebe Sie immer Ihr

Freydoun

P.S. Schade daß ich nicht in Berlin bin!

9-7-1972



urband



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In life, Freydoun Farokhzad met a violent tragic end. In death he has been fortunate to have found a translator as talented and erudite, as disciplined and dedicated as Nima Mina. He brings to this resurrecting project the acute aesthetic sensibilities of a literary critic and a concert guitarist, the eye for details of a scholar, the impressive linguistic acumen of a polyglot and a Sherlock Holmesian affinity for finding and tracing clues. Farokhzad's celebrity fame has long overshadowed his deserved reputation as a serious poet in the German language and it is his, and our, good fortune that an artist scholar, and a sleuth literary critic has undertaken the task of resurrecting Farokhzad's poetic personality from his entertainer persona.

Abbas Milani  
Hamid and Christina Moghadam  
Director of Iranian Studies  
Stanford University



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