



Women Poets Iranica  
A Research Compendium

# Poetic Elements in the Works of Badrī Tundarī

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December 23, 2025

<https://poets.iranicaonline.org/scholar/maryam-seyedani/>

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## Introduction

Classical Persian literature, up until the Constitutional era, is predominantly patriarchal, with women primarily objectified as beloved figures or symbols of beauty, while their roles as intellectuals or pioneers of literary styles and movements are largely overlooked. Throughout this period, women who composed poetry were constrained by the prevailing patriarchal tradition, often lacking a distinctively feminine insight or voice. During the Constitutional era, as progressive ideas and the pursuit of freedom and justice advanced, the status of women in Iranian society gradually changed. For the first time, Iranian women sought to assert their identity and secure a place in a society that had long favored men's tastes and preferences, thereby challenging traditional relationships, outdated beliefs, and societal standards. Constitutional literature evolved in response to these changing circumstances, incorporating novel ideas expressed in plain language and adopting a popular tone.

During this period, several pioneering women, despite facing opposition, endeavored to align themselves with new literary and social trends. By composing poems and writing critical and protest pieces on liberty, patriotism, gender equality, and women's education, they sought to influence social issues and promote enlightened discourse. Some of these women, such as Mihr'tāj Rakhshān (ca. 1260–1353/1881–1974), 'Ālam'tāj Qā'im Maqāmī (1262–1325/1883–1946), Shams Kasmā'ī

(1262–1340/1884–1961), and Fasl Bahār Khānum (ca. 1256–1318/1877–1939), who wrote under the pen name Jannat, spent a significant portion of their literary careers during the Constitutional period. Another group, including Fakhr Uzmā Arghūn (ca. 1277–1344 /1898–1965), Parvīn I‘tisāmī (1285–1320/1907–1941), and Nīm’tāj Salmāsī (ca. 1285–1368/1906–1989), came of age during the Constitutional era, and their poetic art flourished in the late Constitutional period or early Pahlavi era. Badrī Tundarī (ca. 1290–1369/1911–1990) belongs to the second group.

Born during the Constitutional Revolution, Badrī Tundarī began composing poetry in the 1300s/1920s and was among the women whose works integrated social and political themes along with modernist ideas. Throughout her life, however, Badrī did not attain significant fame. Despite introducing innovative concepts, she did not achieve a prominent status among her contemporary female poets. This may have been because her poetry was rarely published in major journals, limiting its exposure to broader audiences. That lack of visibility was likely compounded by certain linguistic and literary weaknesses in her poetry, which lacked the cohesion and stylistic strength necessary to leave to a lasting impact. A significant portion of Badrī’s poetic career unfolded during a period when the modernization movement in Iranian literary tradition was gaining momentum, opening a new chapter in Persian poetry. During this time, Nīmā Yūshīj (1276/1895-1338/1960) introduced influential models of semi-traditional poetry and, later, free verse, thereby transforming the literary tastes of Iranian readers. Nevertheless, Badrī continued to compose poetry in the traditional style. While her age and historical context place her in the Pahlavi era, her poetic sensibilities remained more aligned with the aesthetics of the Constitutional period.

Given these factors, Badrī is not regarded as one of the leading women poets in Persian literary history. However, her poetry cannot be dismissed, nor can her name be omitted from the re-

<sup>1</sup>Alī Akbar Mushīr Salīmī, *Zanān-i sukhavar* (Tehran: ‘Ilmī, 1335/1956), 2:25–30.

<sup>2</sup>Mushīr Salīmī, *Zanān-i sukhavar*, 2:26.

<sup>3</sup>See Fakhri Qavīmī (Khashāyār Vazīrī), *Kāmāmah-i zanān-i mashhūr-i Irān* [The accomplishments of renowned Iranian women] (Tehran: Vizārat-i Āmūzish va Parvarish, 1352/1973), 125–26; Majīd Shafaq, *Shā’irān-i Tihārān az āghāz tā imrūz* [The poets of Tehran from the beginning to the present] (Tehran: Sanā’ī, 1377/1998), 227; Pūrān Farrukh’zād, *Dānish’nāmāh-i zanān-i farhangsāz-i Irān va jahān* [Encyclopedia of culture-making women of Iran and the world] (Tehran: Zaryāb, 1378/1999), 1:647; Nājaf ‘Alī Muhājjar, *Farhang’nāmāh-i zanān-i pārsī’gū* [Cultural encyclopedia of Persian-speaking women] (Tehran: Awhadī, 1384/2005), 206–7; Banafshah Hijāzī, *Zanān-i mu’addab: Tārīkh-i shi’r va adab-i zanān-i Irān/zamīn az āghāz tā 1320 shamsī* [Eloquent women: The history of women’s poetry and literature in Iran from the earliest times to 1320 Shamsī (1941)] (Tehran: Qasīdah’sarā, 1394/2015), 556–58.

<sup>4</sup>Pūrān Farrukh’zād, *Nīmāh’hā-yi nātāmām: Sayrī dar shi’r-i zanān az Rābi’ah tā Furūgh* [Unfinished halves: A journey through women’s poetry from Rābi’ah to Forough] (Tehran: Kitāb’sarā-yi Tandīs, 1380/2001), 182–87.

<sup>5</sup>It is important to note that Badrī was a contemporary of

cord of women poets active in the early to mid 1300s/1900s. A significant number of her poems engage with the political, social, and cultural issues of her time, and, in terms of classification, fall within the category of critical or protest poetry by women. Without acknowledging her contribution, our understanding of a crucial chapter in the history of women’s poetry in Iran would remain incomplete.

‘Alī Akbar Mushīr Salīmī was the first to offer a brief introduction to Badrī in his book *Zanān-i sukhavar* (Eloquent women), where he also presented several of her poems.<sup>1</sup> He regarded Badrī’s poetry as realistic and as a continuation of the Iraqi style.<sup>2</sup> Some tazkirahs (biographical anthologies) also devote brief sections to introducing this poet.<sup>3</sup> In her book *Nīmāh’hā-yi nātāmām* (Unfinished halves), Pūrān Farrukh’zād describes several characteristics of Badrī’s poetry and emphasizes her significance in the context of women’s verse.<sup>4</sup> Farrukh’zād identifies Badrī as one of the poets who, prior to Parvīn I’tisāmī, challenged prevailing literary conventions and misogynistic attitudes.<sup>5</sup> She highlights that Badrī’s poetry, centered on themes such as humanity, homeland, global unity, and, notably, women’s issues and education, occupies an important place in the tradition. Farrukh’zād also acknowledges that Badrī’s poetry lacks “fluency and eloquence,” but asserts that her “wide-ranging intellect and far-reaching vision” compensate for these shortcomings.<sup>6</sup>

‘Alī Bābāchāhī, in his book *Shi’r-i imrūz, zan-i imrūz* (Today’s poetry, Today’s woman), also discusses Badrī and her work. He argues that in Badrī’s poetry, and more broadly in revolutionary verse of the Constitutional period, the focus is not on fluency and eloquence, but rather on the “poetic essence.”<sup>7</sup> The revolutionary context of the Constitutional period demanded a specific form of poetry: ideologically charged and socially mobilizing. In such a context, the primary function of poetry was to provoke thought and incite collective action. As a result, it is unsurprising that much of the revolutionary poetry from this



period sacrificed poetic eloquence in favor of urgent expression and the dissemination of ideas.<sup>8</sup> Badrī Tundarī is also discussed in works dedicated to women’s poetry during the Constitutional period, where a section is devoted to introducing her life and contributions.<sup>9</sup> Additionally, an scholarly article examining the stylistics of her poetry analyzes her work on three levels: linguistic, rhetorical, and intellectual.<sup>10</sup>

This article seeks to examine the poetic elements—emotion, imagination, language, form, and rhythm— of Badrī Tundarī’s poetry to offer a more accurate evaluation of her poetic art and to establish her place among her contemporary poets. It is divided into two parts. The first presents a biography of Badrī based on available documentation; the second part and central section analyzes and assesses the poetic elements of her work.

### Personal Life and Artistic Career

Badr al-Mulūk Kāshifī, famously known as Badrī or Badrī Tundarī, and writing under the pen name Fānī, was born in Tehran during the late Qajar period. There is no consensus regarding the exact year of her birth. Some sources indicate 1285/1906, while others suggest 1290/1911; however, her tombstone bears the inscription 1284/1905.<sup>11</sup> Based on her reference to a childhood marriage in one of her poems, the birth year 1290/1911 seems most plausible, as her marriage is known to have taken place in 1303/1924.<sup>12</sup>

Badrī was born into a family of advocates of freedom and pioneers in both social and national struggles. Her mother, Maryam, was the daughter of Sayyid Isma‘īl Bilādī or Bihbahānī and the sister of Ayatollah Sayyid ‘Abd Allāh Bihbahānī (1219–1289/1840–1910), one of the prominent leaders of the Constitutional Revolution. Her father, Husayn ‘Alī Kāshifī, was an advocate of the movement and a follower of Ayatollah Bihbahānī. Both of her parents were well-versed in Persian and Arabic. The supportive family environment enabled Badrī to

Parvīn I’ tīsāmī, and there is no evidence to indicate that she preceded her. On the contrary, certain poems by Badrī suggest familiarity with Parvīn’s work and imply that she may have been influenced by it (see below for further discussion).

<sup>6</sup>Farrukh’zād, Nīmah’hā-yi nātamām, 187.

<sup>7</sup>‘Alī Bābāchāhī, Shī’r-i imrūz, zan-i imrūz (Tehran: Vīstār, 1386/2007), 63.

<sup>8</sup>Bābāchāhī, Shī’r-i imrūz, zan-i imrūz, 62–64.

<sup>9</sup>See Izzat Mullā Ibrāhīmī and Mahmūd Rizā Tavakulī Muḥammadī, “Barraši-i tahlīlī-naqdī-i dārūn’māyah’hā-yi shī’r-i zanānah dar ‘asr-i mashrūtah” [An analytical and critical study of the themes of women’s poetry in the Constitutional era], Zan dar farhang va hunar [Woman in culture and art] 7, no. 1 (1394/2015): 81–84.

<sup>10</sup>For the article see, Hānīyah Rūhānī’ nīzhād et al., “Sabk’shināsi-i ash‘ār-i Badrī Tundarī” [A stylistic analysis of the poems of Badrī Tundarī], Sabk’shināsi-i nazm va nasr-i Fārsī [Stylistics of Persian poetry and prose] 17, no. 8 (1403/2024): 111–39. The article does not provide a comprehensive overview of Badrī’s poems, and the examples are selected randomly, with some statistics lacking the necessary accuracy. In this article, there are occasional alterations made to Badrī’s poems. For instance, in the poem “Nijāt-i Āzarbāy-jān” (The salvation of Azerbaijan), the name “Pīshah’varī” is changed to “bīshak valī,” and “Khiyānat’pīshah” is changed to “Khiyānat-i bīshar,” completely altering the meaning of the poem, providing an

incorrect interpretation of it.

<sup>11</sup>Mushīr Salīmī, Zanān-i sukhavar, 25; Majīd Shafaq, Shā'irān-i Tīhrān az āghāz tā imrūz, 125; Muhammad Janāb zādah, "Muqaddamah" [Introduction], in Ravān-i khastah: Majmū'ah-'i ash'ār-i Bānū Badrī Tundārī [The weary soul: A collection of poems by Badrī Tundārī] (Tehran: Bīnā, 1336/1957), 3.

<sup>12</sup>Badrī Tundārī, Naqsh-i ayyām: Dīvān-i Bānū Badrī Tundārī [The imprint of days: The collection of poems by Badrī Tundārī] (Tehran: Kānūn-i Adabī-i Hā'irī, 1359/1980), 129.

<sup>13</sup>Mushīr Salīmī, Zanān-i sukhavar, 25.

<sup>14</sup>Tundārī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 129.

<sup>15</sup>Tundārī, Ravān-i khastah, 70.

<sup>16</sup>Muhammad Bāqir Burqā'ī, Sukhanvarān-i nāmī-i mu'āsir-i Īrān [Renowned contemporary poets of Iran] (Qom: Nashr-i Khurram, 1373/1994), 3:1518, 2153; Parvīz Tundārī, "Pīsh'guftār" [Foreword] in Qasāyid va ghazaliyāt-i Mahmūd Tundārī [Qasādahs and ghazals of Mahmūd Tundārī] (Tehran: Bīnā, 1337).

<sup>17</sup>Tundārī, Ravān-i khastah, 21, 34–35.

learn to read and write at an early age and to actively engage with contemporary social and political issues.

In 1303/1924, Badrī married Mahmūd Tundārī (1264–1321/1885–1942), titled Simsām al-Sultān, a prominent figure in the city of Qom. Tundārī was raised in a family of scholars and intellectuals. A poet and influential literary figure of his time, he used the pen name "Shīvā" and was also known as "Shīvā-yi Qumī." He joined the freedom fighters during the Constitutional Revolution and composed poems reflecting the spirit of the time and the national struggle, which gained him widespread recognition. Their marriage resulted in two children, Parvīz and Parvīn, and marked the beginning of Badrī's literary flourishing.

After her marriage, Badrī, supported by her scholarly and free-thinking husband, pursued her studies, ultimately earning a bachelor's degree in Persian language and literature. She also learned English, French, and some Arabic, and became acquainted with the arts, including graphite drawing and music, becoming proficient in playing the tār.<sup>13</sup> Skilled in literary and poetic techniques she learned from her poet husband, she began composing poetry in her youth. In one of her poems, Badrī laments her early marriage but acknowledges that her husband, Tundārī, played a key role in nurturing her poetic sensibility: "In my childhood, my father married me to an elderly man / thanks to the guidance of my husband, I became eloquent."<sup>14</sup> In another poem, written after Tundārī's death, she refers to him as her "master of rhetoric."<sup>15</sup> For many years, Mahmūd Tundārī's home served as a gathering place for literary figures and enthusiasts of Persian poetry and literature.<sup>16</sup> Badrī likely attended these gatherings and recited poetry, as the content of some of her poems indicates her active participation in such literary circles.<sup>17</sup>

According to Mushīr Salīmī, after Tundārī's death, Badrī remarried, and some of her poems that describe a "harsh hus-



band” may refer to this second marriage.<sup>18</sup> In another poem, she laments that, despite her devotion to her husband and relatives, none of them expressed gratitude toward her.<sup>19</sup>

Although limited information exists about other aspects of Badrī’s life, it is known that she traveled to various countries, particularly Europe, both for personal visits and medical treatment.<sup>20</sup> Her poetry reflects her views on freedom and the advancement of women in Iran, as well as her broader engagement with social causes.<sup>21</sup> She was a member of several women’s associations and political parties.<sup>22</sup> Mushīr Salīmī attributes to her a book titled *Maqām-i zan dar jahān* (The status of women in the world), although no further information about this work is available.<sup>23</sup> Badrī passed away on Mihr 30, 1369/October 22, 1990, and was buried in the Bihisht-i Zahrā cemetery in Tehran.<sup>24</sup> The epitaph on her tombstone features verses from her poem “Barāyi sang-i qabram sākhtah’am” (I have written for my tombstone).

Badrī’s first poems were published in the early 1320s/1940s in the magazine *Gul’hā-yi rangārang* (Colorful flowers), edited by Mushīr Salīmī. This was followed by the publication of poetry collection titled *Ravān-i khistah* (1336/1957), and later by a more comprehensive volume titled *Naqsh-i ayyām* (1359/1980), which, in addition to her poetry, also includes selections from her letters and prose writings. Together, these two collections contain a total of 128 poems, including 103 ghazals (lyric poems), 11 qasīdahs (from the root qasada, meaning “to aim at”—a formal, elaborate and often polythematic poem usually translated as “ode”), 6 masnavīs (literally “doubled,” a poem in rhyming couplets), 1 qit‘ah (literally “piece” or “segment,” a short, monothematic poem in which the second hemistiches of the verses rhyme), 1 tarjī‘band (literally, “return-tie,” a series of stanzas held together by a repeated refrain), 1 chahār’pārah (A poem consisting of several stanzas, each containing four hemistiches. Typically, in each stanza, the second and the fourth lines rhyme), and 5 single-line verses called mufradāt. In one of

<sup>18</sup>Mushīr Salīmī, *Zanān-i sukhavar*, 25; Tundarī, *Ravān-i khistah*, 74.

<sup>19</sup>Tundarī, *Naqsh-i ayyām*, 99.

<sup>20</sup>Mushīr Salīmī, *Zanān-i sukhavar*, 26; Tundarī, *Ravān-i khistah*, 17, 66–67.

<sup>21</sup>Tundarī, *Naqsh-i ayyām*, 102.

<sup>22</sup>Mangol Bayat-Philipp, “Women and Revolution in Iran, 1905-1911,” in *Women in the Muslim World*, ed. Lois Beck and Nikki Keddie (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), 307.

<sup>23</sup>Mushīr Salīmī, *Zanān-i sukhavar*, 26.

<sup>24</sup>Tundarī, *Naqsh-i ayyām*, 12–125.

<sup>25</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 21. In Arabic, the word *fānī* means fleeting, impermanent, or destined to perish.

<sup>26</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 63–64.

<sup>27</sup>Muhammad Rizā Shafī'ī Kadkanī, *Advār-i shi'r-i Fārsī: Az Mashrūfiyat tā suqūt-i saltanat* [Periods of Persian poetry: from the Constitutional Revolution to the fall of the monarchy] (5th repr. ed., Tehran: Sukhan, 1387/2008), 86.

her ghazals, she mentions her pen name *Fānī*, saying:

O *Fānī*! We will perish and there is no lasting in this world,

It would be fitting if you choose the pen name *Fānī*.<sup>25</sup>

The choice of the penname *Fānī* (literally, “fleeting,” “transitory,” “ephemeral”) reflects the poet’s broader philosophical outlook, which is rooted in a form of asceticism. Throughout the history of Persian poetry, other poets have also adopted the pen name *Fānī*, including *Fānī Kashmīrī* (c. AH 1023–1082/1615–1671) and *Fānī Khuyī* (AH 1172–1225/1758–1810), though *Badrī*’s poetry is unrelated to theirs. Among Persian women poets, *Badrī* held a particular admiration for *Parvīn I’tisāmī* and *Zhālah Qā’im Maqāmī*. She regarded *Parvīn* as “the master of eloquence and wisdom” and “the genius and pride of Eastern women.”<sup>26</sup> The influence of *Parvīn*’s poetry is evident in *Badrī*’s didactic verses and her moral engagement with various themes, while *Zhālah*’s impact is reflected in *Badrī*’s sensitivity to women’s issues and her advocacy for women’s rights. Among classical Persian poets, the influence of *Sa’dī* (d. AH 691/1292) is apparent in some of her ghazals, while the impact of *Farukhī Yazdī* (1268–1318/1889–1939), *Muhammad Taqī Bahār* (1265–1330/1886–1951), and other poets of the Constitutional period is apparent in her social and patriotic poems.

### Poetic Elements

An in-depth analysis of the poetic elements in *Badrī Tundarī*’s work is essential to fully appreciate her artistry. Among the many definitions of poetry, this study adopts the one proposed by *Muhammad Rizā Shafī’ī Kadkanī*, who asserts that “poetry is the harmonious interplay of emotion and imagination, expressed through a rhythmic language.”<sup>27</sup> According to this definition, a poet’s success and the impact of their poetry depend on the skillful and balanced integration of five essential elements—emotion, imagination, language, rhythm, and form—in



a harmonious and refined manner. These elements will serve as basis for analyzing Badrī's poetry. The criteria employed are drawn from well-established principles in rhetoric and literary studies and are informed by authoritative works in the field.

## Emotion

In poetry, the term "emotion" refers to a deep, affective and spiritual experience expressed by the poet, as well as the message or purpose they intend to convey.<sup>28</sup> Although difficult to categorize, poetic emotions are generally classified into three main types: personal emotions, social emotions, and human emotions.<sup>29</sup> Emotion is the most fundamental component of poetry; all other elements are ultimately subordinate to it.<sup>30</sup> In Badrī's works, "emotion" encompasses a range of personal, social, and universal themes, including romance, politics, ethics, everyday experiences, friendships, praise, lamentation, and depictions of nature. The following discussion explores these emotional dimensions in Badrī's poetry.

## Romantic and Lyrical Themes

Among these, romantic themes are the most prominent in Badrī's *Dīvān*. The love portrayed in her poems is primarily earthly in nature. Her depiction of the beloved draws heavily on the conventional imagery of classical Persian poetry, presenting the beloved as an object of beauty and desire. The beloved is often described as unfaithful, treacherous, cruel, and surrounded by admirers.<sup>31</sup> Physical descriptions align with traditional motifs: a moon-like face, bow-shaped eyebrows, dagger-like eyelashes, an arrow-like gaze, eyes with of enchantment or delicacy, and a stature resembling a cypress or pine tree.<sup>32</sup> Badrī largely adheres to these established conventions, rarely introducing new imagery into her romantic verse. In doing so, she follows the thousand-year-old masculine tradition that has shaped Persian love poetry. Her romantic poems seldom explore the figure of the beloved or the dynamics between lover and beloved from

<sup>28</sup>Shafī'ī Kadkanī, *Advār-i shi' r-i Fārsī*, 87–88.

<sup>29</sup>Muhammad Rizā Shafī'ī Kadkanī, *Suvar-i kھیāl dar shi' r-i Fārsī* [Imagery in Persian poetry] (3rd ed., 12th repr. ed., Tehran: Āgāh, 1375/1996), 25.

<sup>30</sup>Shafī'ī Kadkanī, *Advār-i shi' r-i Fārsī*, 88–89.

<sup>31</sup>Tundarī, *Naqsh-i ayyām*, 115.

<sup>32</sup>Tundarī, *Naqsh-i ayyām*, 113–14; Tundarī, *Ravān-i khastah*, 33, 35–36.

<sup>33</sup>Tundarī, *Ravān-i khastah*, 24, 32–33, 46, 55.

<sup>34</sup>Tundarī, *Naqsh-i ayyām*, 95.

<sup>35</sup>Tundarī, *Naqsh-i ayyām*, 108, 113.

<sup>36</sup>Tundarī, *Naqsh-i ayyām*, 86.

a feminine perspective or in light of the social realities of her time. Thus, the beloved is portrayed through traditionally feminine attributes: long, disheveled hair, curved locks, a veiled face, and other similar features.<sup>33</sup>

An analysis of feminine insight in Badrī's romantic poetry reveals instances where her poetic voice takes on a more refined and impactful tone. This is evident, for example, in the ghazal "Intizār-i yār" (Waiting for the beloved), where the beloved assumes a protective, sheltering role, even embodying a masculine persona: "You are like a cypress, and I, like a plant, in your shelter."<sup>34</sup> In her poetry, the lover exhibits traits familiar from classical Persian literature: eternal devotion, submission, and longing. In "Sawgand-i 'ishq" (The oath of love), for example, the lover declares enduring affection despite betrayal: "I still love you after all those betrayals."<sup>35</sup> Nevertheless, in several ghazals, Badrī's poetic voice becomes more distinctive, and her portrayal of the beloved challenges traditional hierarchies. For example, in the ghazal "Izhār-i bī'niyāzī" (Proclaiming needlessness), the lover critiques the beloved not from a submissive stance, but from a position of equality. Here, the lover rejects the beloved's selfishness and warns him that he will someday regret his behavior. This ghazal is one of the few in which Badrī explicitly breaks from classical tropes, expressing frustration with an unkind beloved unfamiliar with the meaning of friendship:

I am no longer fond of you

No longer captive to your tresses, my beloved

No longer passing by your street

No longer seeking your gaze<sup>36</sup>

The closing lines further underscore this rejection:



Since there is no lasting friendship in you

<sup>37</sup>Tundārī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 87.

I am no longer eager to see you<sup>37</sup>

<sup>38</sup>Tundārī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 98.

This ghazal stands out for its emotional honesty, feminist voice, and a clear departure from tradition, making it one of Badrī's strongest romantic compositions.

<sup>39</sup>Tundārī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 98.

In the opening verses of the ghazal “Ham sham ‘ va ham parvānah” (Both the candle and the butterfly), a similar sentiment is expressed, although the tone is more reflective and measured. The speaker appears to be older; passion has been replaced by reason:

I no longer desire the enchanting lover

My heart is no longer captivated by youth, wine, and the cup

I am no longer that foolish youth, madly in love

The wise person of today is no longer the passionate lover of yesterday<sup>38</sup>

As the poem continues, Badrī adopts an advisory tone, cautioning young people against pursuing unproductive and destructive passions—what she refers to as “enchantments. “Instead, she encourages them to seek marriage and to choose a “wise and virtuous spouse.”<sup>39</sup>

Themes of departure, betrayal, indifference, sorrow, separation, and unrequited longing—in other words, the lover's failure in love—are recurring motifs in Badrī's romantic poetry. Such themes are present in ghazals like “Parandah-'i giriftār” (The captive bird), “Tīr-i qazā” (The arrow of fate), “Shikvāyah-'i ‘āshiq” (The lover's complaint), “‘Ahd-i shikastah” (The broken oath), “Jawr-i dust” (The beloved's cruelty), “Sharh-i ishtiyāq” (The narrative of longing), “Nigāh-i āshnā” (The familiar gaze),

<sup>40</sup>Tundarī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 85; Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 54, 73.

<sup>41</sup>Tundarī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 93–94, 100.

<sup>42</sup>Tundarī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 93–94.

<sup>43</sup>Muslih al-Dīn Sa' dī Shīrāzī, *Kulliyāt-i Sa' dī*, ed. Muhammad 'Alī Furūghī (5th repr. ed., Tehran: Hirmis, 1385/2006), 784.

<sup>44</sup>Tundarī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 87–88.

<sup>45</sup>Tundarī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 90.

among many others. In contrast, a smaller group of ghazals, including “Muzhdah-’i vasl” (The tidings of reunion), “Daryāft-i muzhdah” (The reception of good news) and “Naqsh-i ayyām” (The imprint of days), introduce the possibility of reunion.<sup>40</sup> Only two ghazals—“Tāli-’i mas’ūd” (The blessed destiny) and “Junūn va ‘aql” (Madness and reason offer a clear portrayal of the lover’s union with the beloved.<sup>41</sup> In both cases, the poet recounts a fleeting encounter, perhaps at a social gathering, that is interpreted as a moment of emotional “union”:

I know not whether I am drunk, asleep, or awake and aware,

For tonight, the union with that radiant moon has graced me<sup>42</sup>

In the tradition of 13th- and 14th-century Persian love poetry rooted in themes of separation and the cruelty of the beloved, such moments of union are rare, even implausible. Thus, the speaker’s astonishment underscores the intensity and rarity of the encounter. She treasures this union, aware that it is destined to last no more than a single night.

The ghazal “Bih yād-i guzashtah’hā” (In memory of the past), which opens with the couplet “Shall I endure the sorrow of time, or the pain of separation from my love? / With the strength I lack, which burden should I bear?”<sup>43</sup> and is written in response to a ghazal by Sa’ dī, centers on a different theme: the expression of regret and sorrow over lost love and vanished youth.<sup>44</sup> The poet, once fortunate and graced with eloquence, now suffers from “the pain of the heart” and finds herself ensnared in “the trap of hardship.” In one section, the poet once again laments the beloved’s unfaithfulness and pleads for compassion. She also warns that if the beloved fails to change course, fate will ultimately reveal its harsh nature and punish their injustice.<sup>45</sup>

The dichotomy of reason and love is another recurring motif in Badrī’s poetry, exemplified in the ghazal “Pand nayāmūkhtan-i dil” (The heart that failed to learn), where the heart defies rea-



son, and ultimately surrenders to love.<sup>46</sup> In contrast to many classical Persian lyric poems, Badrī's poetry rarely features a love rival. One notable exception is the ghazal "Khvāb-i mas-tī" (Drunken sleep), in which the rival appears beside the lover in the poet's presence.<sup>47</sup> Additionally, several ghazals, such as "Afsar-i khūbān" (Captain of the beautiful ones), focus solely on descriptions of the beloved's physical beauty, offering praise and expressing the lover's infatuation.

<sup>46</sup>Tundārī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 120.

<sup>47</sup>Tundārī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 119–120.

### **Social and Political Concepts**

Another prominent theme in Badrī's poetry is the exploration of social and political issues, encompassing broad concepts such as freedom, war and peace, modernization, homeland, and the condition of women. Having lived through a turbulent period in Iranian history, Badrī often incorporates historical references to events both within Iran and beyond its borders. Her birth coincided with the Constitutional Revolution in 1906, a time when Iran—and indeed much of the world—was undergoing transformations in the global order. The repercussions of civil unrest, global conflicts, foreign occupation, famine, and disease also affected the Iranian people during this period. Major political events, including the fall of the Qajar dynasty in 1304/1925, the transfer of power to the Pahlavi family, Reza Shah's reforms and modernization campaigns, the rise of communism and the activities of leftist parties in Iran, the ascension of Muhammad Reza Shah, and the impact of World War II, shaped the poet's worldview and are reflected in her poetry.

World War II and its related events served as a significant source of inspiration for some of Badrī's most impactful poems, including "Sulh va jang" (Peace and war), "Rahbar-i kishvar" (Leader of the country) and "Tamaddun yā tavahhush" (Civilization or barbarism). The celebration of peace, opposition to war, and a critical stance against imperialism and genocide on the international stage constitute the central themes of this collection of her works. Badrī composed the ghazal "Sulh va jang"

<sup>48</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 24.

<sup>49</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 23.

<sup>50</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 24.

<sup>51</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 36.

<sup>52</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 37.

near the end of World War II. In one verse, she alludes to U.S. President Harry Truman's public address following the atomic bombing of Hiroshima:

The radio broadcast Truman's speech for interpretation,

This statement caused an uproar across the entire globe.<sup>48</sup>

In Badrī's view, "the foundation of world peace is international unity," a principle she finds lacking in the conduct of political leaders.<sup>49</sup> Therefore, she regards the calls for peace emanating from various parts of the world as false and hypocritical. The poet attributes the causes of the devastating war to human greed and selfishness, compounded by a misguided and flawed conception of civilization. She articulates her critique in verse:

Like a beast, mankind sheds the blood of mankind,

Woe to this kind of civilization, which is nothing but suffering and calamity.<sup>50</sup>

In "Tamaddun yā tavahhush," she presents the use of newly built and destructive weapons as a symbol of barbarity rather than progress and civilization.<sup>51</sup> The scale of violence and human cruelty had reached such a peak that she ultimately saw no recourse but divine intervention:

O Lord, bring an end to this world war soon,

And free and relieve humanity from its evil and turmoil.<sup>52</sup>

Another of Badrī's poems, "Rahbar-i kishvar," reflects conditions in Iran at the conclusion of World War II. The poem opens with an expression of joy at the appointment of a capable and "virtuous leader" at the head of the government—an allusion to Ahmad Qavām (1252–1334/1873–1955). The sorrowful poet hopes, "for the sake of the homeland," that, on the eve of Naw-



rūz, Qavām's policies might improve the nation's dire circumstances. The Iranians had suffered tremendous losses during the war, and now, the poet turns to the Soviet Union and its leader, Joseph Stalin (1878–1953), urging them to fulfill their promises to the Iranians:

<sup>53</sup>Tundārī, *Ravān-i khastah*, 27–28.

O breeze, deliver a message to Stalin from his friends:

Among great men, none has been known for broken promises or betrayal.

Our suffering as Iranians became the price of your victory.

We endured hardship so that this war might come to an end.<sup>53</sup>

It appears that the poem was written a few months after the end of World War II, in the early months of 1325/1946, and during a time when the Soviet Army had not yet fully withdrawn from Iran. The poet's primary concerns are the complete evacuation of foreign forces from Iranian soil, the end of the suffering endured by the Iranian people, and the restoration of peace in the homeland. One of Badrī's *qasīdahs*, titled "Nijāt-i Āzarbāyjān" (The liberation of Azerbaijan), also composed during this period, stands out for its expression of fervent patriotism and is considered one of her finest works. In this poem, she recounts the events of Āzar 1325/December 1946, including the Iranian government's military operation against the separatist Democratic Army of Azerbaijan, the subsequent flight of its leader, Ja'far Pīshah'varī (1272–1326/1893–1947), to Baku, and the eventual withdrawal of Soviet forces from the province. Badrī uses forceful language to describe Pīshah'varī, calling him "wicked," "wolf," "demon," and "vile mercenary scoundrel." She refers to his supporters as "fake democrats" and "wicked devils," asserting that Azerbaijan has been liberated from their treachery and deceit. In this poem, Qavām is portrayed as a "wise and prudent man," and his appointment as Prime Minister by the Shāh is presented in a favorable light. It is evident that Badrī's patrio-

<sup>54</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 15–16.

<sup>55</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 18.

<sup>56</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 66–67.

tism is neither ideological nor aligned with the socialism popular at the time, nor is it driven by chauvinism; rather, it reflects a genuine and emotional attachment to her homeland. This form of patriotic sentiment appears elsewhere in her poetry, including in “Kāvah-’i Īrān” (Kāvah of Iran), “Surūd-i mīhan” (The hymn of the homeland), and “Islāh-i mulk” (Reforming the nation) where she combines patriotism with realism, reason, and sincere counsel directed at government officials and the ruling elite to encourage national progress and prosperity.<sup>54</sup>

Despite her traditional and religious convictions, evident in some of her poems, Badrī does not display a narrow or insular worldview. Her familiarity with Western civilization, along with her support for modernity and freedom, is clearly expressed in her poetry. This is particularly evident in her poem “Vahdat-i millī” (National unity), written in the style of Constitutional-era verse, in which she proclaims:

Enough of degradation, antiquarianism, and laziness,

We must follow the example of the modern era.

And:

Let us leave old thoughts behind like a mirage,

And joyfully swim in the sea of modernity.<sup>55</sup>

In her poem “Zindiganī dar Urūpā” (Life in Europe), Badrī nostalgically reflects on various aspects of Western civilization and European life, such as gender equality, the freedom to choose one’s attire, women rights in society, the magnificence of architectural landmarks, the leisure activities of citizens, and the policies and governance of prominent leaders. She expresses admiration and longing for these features, while hoping that similar advancements might one day be realized in Iran.<sup>56</sup> Two other social poems in Badrī’s collection, “Jahl-i millat” (The



ignorance of the nation) and “Awzā’-i kishvar” (The state of the country), offer broad critiques of systemic oppression and the silence of self-proclaimed patriots, without referencing any specific events.<sup>57</sup> In another poem, which recalls the style and tone of Farrukhī Yazdī’s poetry, she reflects on the tragic fate of patriots and sincere advocates of freedom throughout Iran’s long history:

The reward for the service of kind-hearted men of this land,  
Has always been chains, imprisonment, and death.<sup>58</sup>

The status of women is one of the central themes in Badrī’s poetry. She continues to address women’s issues as a matter of social urgency, building upon the concerns voiced by poets of the Constitutional era, such as Bahār, Īraj Mīrzā (1253–1304/1874–1926), and Zhālah Qā’im Maqāmī. This facet of her poetry can be approached from two perspectives. On the one hand, it suggests that the condition of Iranian women in the 1320s/1940s—when Badrī’s poetry flourished—had not significantly improved since the Constitutional era. On the other, it indicates that Badrī was a cautious and moderate figure who largely conformed to traditional societal norms, rather than emerging as a radical or confrontational voice. She asserts the equality of men and women in terms of “instinct and intelligence,” and frequently denounces gender-based inequality, particularly in the realm of education.<sup>59</sup> However, when she discusses women’s right to education and equal learning opportunities, she also emphasizes their role as mothers and their critical responsibility in raising the next generation. In response to traditionalists who questioned, “Why should a woman be educated?”, Badrī replies: “How can an uneducated and ignorant mother raise a talented child? [...] A mother nurtures children, and the future of humanity depends on mothers.”<sup>60</sup> This concept is pivotal in Badrī’s poetry, as she believes that the reform of Iranian society could be realized only through the proper education of women—an education that would, in turn, capable and

<sup>57</sup>Tundarī, *Ravān-i khastah*, 82–83.

<sup>58</sup>Tundarī, *Ravān-i khastah*, 80.

<sup>59</sup>Tundarī, *Ravān-i khastah*, 17, 50; Tundarī, *Naqsh-i ayyām*, 102.

<sup>60</sup>Tundarī, *Ravān-i khastah*, 18, 50–51.

<sup>61</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 18.

<sup>62</sup>Tundarī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 104.

<sup>63</sup>Tundarī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 102–3.

<sup>64</sup>Tundarī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 92.

<sup>65</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 18.

enlightened men. As she writes:

O Fānī! If Iranian women are properly educated,

Soon, without a doubt, all matters will be set right.<sup>61</sup>

According to Badrī, a woman’s duty is not only to raise virtuous children but also to be a devoted and supportive wife.<sup>62</sup> In her view, women’s freedom entails the right to acquire knowledge, cultivate awareness, and live with integrity—empowering them to educate honest children and contribute meaningfully to their families.<sup>63</sup> While Badrī at times expresses discontent with men’s dominance over women’s lives and destinies, she, like other female poets such as Parvīn I’tisāmī, continues to view women largely through the lens of male-centered traditions and does not articulate a fully independent feminine voice.<sup>64</sup> Nonetheless, several of Badrī’s poems depart from this conventional stance and call on women to assume active roles, alongside men, in the political affairs of the country. For instance, in “Barābarī-i zan va mard” (Equality of women and men), she critiques the exclusion of women from the Parliament, lamenting that unqualified men gain entry while capable women remain marginalized:

A woman has no path into the parliament’s halls,

Yet thieves and burglars find their way with ease.<sup>65</sup>

In “Bīdārī-i zanān” (The awakening of women), the poet contrasts the condition of women in Iran with that of their European counterparts, encouraging Iranian women to become more conscious of their rights and calling on men to reevaluate their traditional, male-centered attitudes toward women:

Women have always cared for their men,

But if men truly cared for women in return, wouldn’t that be better?<sup>66</sup>



Badrī, who appears to have been neglected by her husband during a period of illness, challenges men’s disregard for women’s emotional and human rights:

In your code, a sick woman is cast aside,

Her past services hold no value in your creed.<sup>67</sup>

Another prominent theme addressed in Badrī’s poetry is the question of women’s dress. In “Rastākhīz-i zanān” (The resurrection of women), she directly criticizes the hijab, portraying the chador as a symbol of ignorance and backwardness, which brings shame to Iranian women in comparison with their counterparts worldwide. In this poem, Badrī argues that chastity is not contingent on covering the body and that claims to the contrary are mere ideological slogans:

Remove your chador, ignorant woman,

Chastity cannot be hidden behind it!<sup>68</sup>

This perspective, grounded in Badrī’s modernist outlook, mirrors a famous verse by Parvīn I’tisāmī, though Badrī’s tone is notably more direct:

The eye and heart need a veil—but a veil of virtue,

A worn-out chador was never a principle of faith.<sup>69</sup>

Elsewhere, the poet urges women to focus less on their physical beauty and more on liberating themselves from male domination.<sup>70</sup> In these verses, a more distinct and assertive feminine voice emerges—though such poems are relatively scarce in her collected works. Her progressive views on women and their broader social roles are overshadowed by traditional conceptions emphasizing motherhood and the duties of a wife.

<sup>67</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khashah, 49.

<sup>68</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khashah, 52.

<sup>69</sup>Parvīn I’tisāmī, *Dīvān-i qasāyid va masnaviyāt va tamsīlāt va muqata’āt-i khānum Parvīn I’tisāmī* [Collection of odes, rhymed couplets, allegories, and lyrical fragments by Parvīn I’tisāmī], ed. Abū al-Fath I’tisāmī (Tehran: Bīnā, 1355/1976), 154.

<sup>70</sup>Tundarī, *Naqsh-i ayyām*, 104.

<sup>71</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khashah, 19–23.

<sup>72</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khashah, 19–20.

<sup>73</sup>Tundarī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 101.

## Ethical and Didactic Concepts

Badrī's ethical poetry promotes values such as honesty, sincerity, loyalty, education, contentment, and the pursuit of opportunity, while condemning arrogance, gossip, hypocrisy, oppression, and egocentrism.<sup>71</sup> Notably, in classical Persian poetry—such as the works of Sanā'ī, 'Attār, and Rūmī—these moral themes are often embedded in mystical, philosophical, or social contexts, carrying a deep sense of reflection. However, in Badrī's poetry, these themes come across as clichéd and superficial, ultimately lacking depth and impact. Most of her moralistic poems are neither intellectually nor artistically significant, often resembling exercises in poetic composition rather than meaningful contributions. Some of her moral advice, as seen in her poem “Nikūhish-i may” (Condemning wine), echo the didactic tone of Parvīn I'tisāmī's poetry.<sup>72</sup> However, Badrī appears more as a follower than an innovator, with little originality in her moral insights. Overall, in many poetic genres—including love poetry and social commentary—Badrī tends to focus on preaching, moralizing, and providing ethical guidance. Her admonitions are directed at lovers, children, women, men, politicians, and even herself, constantly prescribing what should and should not be done. This characteristic, likely rooted in Badrī's view on women's social and maternal duties, sometimes becomes exaggerated, resulting in poetry that feels repetitive and monotonous.

In addition to these themes, many of Badrī's works convey ascetic ideals, a desire for solitude and contentment. Her ghazal “Istighnā az jahān” (Independence from the world) clearly illustrates this sentiment in the opening lines:

We have washed all deceit and hypocrisy from our hearts

And cleansed the dust of worldly love from our very being.<sup>73</sup>

Although the language of this poem is stylistically polished,



its voice strongly echoes that of another poet—this time, Sā'ib Tabrīzī. It should also be noted that Badrī composed poems in praise of God and monotheism, revealing the spiritual dimension of her worldview.<sup>74</sup> The religious sensibility in her poetry is palpable, as seen in a verse where she expresses a longing to kiss the threshold of the Najaf shrine:

After these sorrows, O God, grant me the fate

To kiss the threshold of the shrine of the King of Najaf.<sup>75</sup>

### Self-reflection and the Description of Everyday Events

This category of Badrī's poetry comprises inner monologues and personal reflections on daily and private experiences. In these works, the feminine dimension of her voice is more pronounced, particularly through themes such as loneliness, sorrow, lost opportunities, and the emotional pain caused by her husband's neglect. For instance, in the poem "Pashīmān" (Regretful), the poet laments aging and the loss of beauty, while also offering glimpses into her past, marriage, and children.<sup>76</sup>

The poems "Bīmārī va Urūpā" (Illness and Europe) and "Ravān-i khastah" (The weary soul) deal with Badrī's illness and her trip to Europe for medical treatment.<sup>77</sup> These poems are notable for their plainspoken, grounded tone and the poet's candid expression of fatigue and sorrow in the face of physical suffering. Her poem "Vīrānī-i Kirmān" (Destruction of Kerman) and other poems reveal that Badrī lived for a time in Kerman and developed a deep attachment to the city.<sup>78</sup> Her attention to simple, everyday matters is so pronounced that in one poem, she expresses her joy merely at the arrival of a guest.<sup>79</sup>

A *qasīdah* titled "Shikvā'iyah" (Letter of complaint) stands out among Badrī's works for its clarity and emotional sincerity. It addresses a *sipāhī* (the poet's husband) who abandoned the narrator and their children during the poet's illness and traveled

<sup>74</sup>Tundarī, *Naqsh-i ayyām*, 110; Tundarī, *Ravān-i khastah*, 14–45.

<sup>75</sup>Tundarī, *Ravān-i khastah*, 73.

<sup>76</sup>Tundarī, *Naqsh-i ayyām*, 129.

<sup>77</sup>Tundarī, *Ravān-i khastah*, 17–81.

<sup>78</sup>Tundarī, *Ravān-i khastah*, 81.

<sup>79</sup>Tundarī, *Ravān-i khastah*, 66.

from Tehran to Shiraz. Some verses present original themes and distinctive expressions, such as:

You devised a plan to bring down an ailing soul,

Falling to the ground, O noble one.

And:

One by one, you carried out your schemes,

And I know well those battles were mere excuses, it seems.<sup>80</sup>

In these verses, the poet sheds the traditional persona of the typical, passive or idealized “lover” of classical Persian poetry. Instead, she speaks from a personal and emotionally grounded perspective, voicing her anguish as a woman abandoned by her spouse. Her intuition tells her that all the disputes initiated by her husband at home were pretexts to justify his departure. She describes his betrayal with sorrow but also with a poetic poignancy:

I pour, out of sorrow, the blood of my toil in my own cup,

While the rose’s blood spills into your cup, O beautiful one.

*Ikhvāniyāt* (Poetry of Brotherhood), Along with Praise and Eulogies of Individuals

This category includes poems written in praise of figures such as Sa’dī, Hāfiz, Zhālah Qā’im Maqāmī, Humāyūn Kirmānī, Sayyid Hādī Hā’irī, Muhammad ‘Alī Nāsīh—individuals who, at various points in her life, had a significant emotional or intellectual impact on the poet—as well as a friend named Sīmīn. It also comprises elegies composed for Parvīn I’tisāmī, Mahmūd Tundarī, and the poet’s sister. Most of these poems lack literary distinction, and their importance lies primarily in their



reflection of the poet's personal life. The most striking and intimate poem in this group is a ghazal titled "Az farang bih farzand nivishtam" (I wrote to my child from Europe), which takes the form of a poetic letter conveying the poet's longing for her child. In this piece, the enchantment with Western civilization and modernity gives way to feelings of estrangement and isolation in a foreign land.<sup>81</sup>

### Description of Nature and Spring

Nature, especially spring, features in Badrī's poetry in works such as "Vasf-i ābshār" (Description of the waterfall), "Vasf-i 'īd" (Description of New Year festival), "Vasf-i bahār" (Description of spring), "Jilvah-'i gul" (The beauty of the flower), and most notably "Nāsīm-i Nawrūzī" (The Nawruz breeze). In the latter, Badrī combines the description of Nawrūz with social themes, rejoicing in the release of Nāsir Arbabī from prison.<sup>82</sup> Her treatment of spring recalls the tradition of bahāriyyahs (spring poetry) in classical Persian literature, where the arrival of spring a backdrop for meditations on as the transience of life, the necessity of joy and celebration, and the urgency of living fully.<sup>83</sup>

### Imagination

In poetic discourse, imagination refers to mental images or sensory experiences evoked by the poet through language. Imagery emerges from the poet's own experiences and, expressed with emotion and passion, conveys those perceptions and feelings to the reader and creates a meaningful impact.<sup>84</sup> The imagery includes the use of rhetorical devices such as simile, metaphor, metonymy, allegory, and synesthesia.<sup>85</sup> It plays an important role in communicating the underlying concepts of a poem, without which the creative use of ideas would be impossible.<sup>86</sup> To examine imagination in a poet's work, one must examine the use, creativity, and effectiveness of figurative language in communicating these experiences to the reader.

<sup>81</sup>Tundarī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 117.

<sup>82</sup>Tundarī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 116–17.

<sup>83</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khashah, 26–27, 52–54.

<sup>84</sup>Maymanat Mīrsādiqī, Vāzhah'nāmah-'i hunar-i shā'irī [A glossary of poetic art] (Tehran: Kitāb-i Mahnāz, 1376/1997), 74. See also Shafī'ī Kadkanī, Suvar-i khiyāl dar shī'r-i Fārsī, 17.

<sup>85</sup>Mahmūd Futūhī, Balāghat-i tasvīr [The rhetoric of imagery] (Tehran: Sukhan, 1386/2007), 45.

<sup>86</sup>Shafī'ī Kadkanī, Suvar-i khiyāl dar shī'r-i Fārsī, 5.

<sup>87</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khashah, 35, 56, 59, 63, 70, 79; Tundarī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 93, 115, 118.

<sup>88</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khashah, 35, 63; Tundarī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 116.

<sup>89</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khashah, 53; Tundarī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 97, 100, 112.

<sup>90</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khashah, 22, 46, 48, 54, 55, 56, 73.

Badrī's imaginative style largely follows the conventions of classical Persian poetry, preserving established emotional tones while incorporating traditional rhetorical forms. Her verse contains numerous similes common to Persian poetic tradition, such as *tīr-i ghamzah* (arrow of glances), *tīr-i muzhgān* (arrow of eyelashes), *sīm'izār* (silver-cheeked), *āftāb-i rukh* (sun of the face), *arūs-i shi'r* (bride of poetry), *sham'-i rukhsār* (candle of the face), *gurg-i ajal* (wolf of death), *shahriyār-i sukhan* (king of speech), *shab-i hijr* (night of separation), *rūz-i visāl* (day of union), *chīn-i zulf* (the curl of the hair), and *murgh-i dil* (bird of the heart).<sup>87</sup>

Metaphors appear less frequently in Badrī's work, and those that do—such as *khvurshīd-i khāvar* (eastern sun), *gunbad-i khazrā* (emerald dome), and *andalīb-i naghmah'gar* (melodious nightingale)—lack originality.<sup>88</sup> Additional expressions, including *chāk būdan-i dāman-i gul* (the torn hem of the flower's skirt), *badal shudan-i alif-i qāmat-i shā'ir bih dāl* (the transformation of the poet's upright, slender figure, symbolized by the letter *alif* (ل), which is tall and straight, into the letter *dāl* (د), which has a bowed or bent shape), and *shakar'khā shudan-i tūtī-i tab'* (the parrot-like sweetness of the (poet's) temperament), echo the stylistic choices of earlier poets. Similarly, personified elements such as *naw'arūs-i gul* (the flower's bride), *zulf-i sunbul* (the curls of the hyacinth), and *lu'batān-i shākh-sār* (the playful branches of the tree) are conventional and derivative.<sup>89</sup>

Badrī's romantic poetry incorporates familiar classical motifs such as *sham' va parvānah* (candle and moth), *Yūsuf va Ya'qūb* (Joseph and Jacob), *gul va bulbul* (flower and nightingale), *murgh va qafas* (bird and cage), and *gawhar va khazaf* (gem and pottery).<sup>90</sup> These motifs are used with the same motivations and semantic contexts as in classical poetry, lacking any attempt to forge new themes. Nevertheless, there are instances of innovative figurative expressions in Badrī's poetry, such as comparing *bāzī-i 'ishq* (the game of love) to *bāzī bā dum-i shīr* (playing with a lion's tail) or *fikr-i 'āshiqān* (the thoughts of lovers) to



shitāb va sur‘at-i bī‘intihā-yi ābshār (the endless speed and rush of a waterfall).<sup>91</sup>

Occasionally, Badrī’s refined sensibility becomes apparent, as in the ghazal, “Daryāft-i muzhdah”:

Say to my shining moon that from night till morning

Badrī prays for you with tears in both eyes.<sup>92</sup>

Here, the association between badr-i dirakhshān (shining moon), a metaphor for the beloved, and the poet’s own name, Badrī, adds a subtle layer of personal resonance. Such fresh associations are more commonly found in Badrī’s social and political poems. For instance, in “Āzādī-i nisvān” (The freedom of women), there are combinations such as khvurshīd-i tamaddun (sun of civilization) and zulmat-i tavahhush (darkness of barbarism).<sup>93</sup> In “Tamaddun yā tavahush” (Civilization or barbarism), bombings are likened to hail, and the ensuing fires to the flames of a furnace. Airplanes are likened to birds in flight, while warships resemble leaping whales.<sup>94</sup>

In “Rahbar-i kishvar” (Leader of the country), Badrī employs an intriguing technique of “defamiliarization.” The bād-i sabā (morning breeze), traditionally a messenger between separated lovers in classical Persian verse, assumes a new role as a political envoy in this poem. The poet charges it with delivering a message from Iranian patriots to the leader of the Soviet Union.<sup>95</sup> Other relatively fresh expressions, including bād-i pīrūzī (wind of victory), tūfān-i isārat (storm of captivity), bād-i āzādī (wind of freedom), and parcham-i āzādī (flag of freedom), though sparse and simple, reflect the spirit of the times and introduce new layers of political and emotional meaning.<sup>96</sup>

## Language

In analyzing the language of poetry, one must consider clar-

<sup>91</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 16, 55.

<sup>92</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 73.

<sup>93</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 58.

<sup>94</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 36–37.

<sup>95</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 28.

<sup>96</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 27, 30; Tundarī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 106.

<sup>97</sup>Muhammad Rizā Shafī'ī Kadkanī, *Mūsīqī-i shī'r* [Musicality of poetry] (13th repr. ed., Tehran: Āgāh, 1391/2012), 28–36; Shafī'ī Kadkanī, *Advār-i shī'r-i Fārsī*, 91–94.

<sup>98</sup>Tundarī, *Ravān-i khashah*, 73; Tundarī, *Naqsh-i ayyām*, 85, 94, 113, 120.

ity, vocabulary, syntactical structures, rhetorical techniques, and the arrangement of linguistic elements.<sup>97</sup> Badrī's poetic language mirrors classical Persian style, drawing on the traditional elements of the Iraqī school. However, it lacks the fluency, vigor, and eloquence that characterize the works of the great Persian poets. When a poet relies exclusively on inherited conventions—perceiving the beloved, the universe, and moral concepts solely through a traditional lens—the resulting vocabulary tends to be stative, derivative, and devoid of vitality.

Among Badrī's most effective imitative works in the classical style are the ghazals “Daryāft-i muzhdah,” “Naqsh-i ayyām,” “Jalvah-'i gul,” “Dil-i dīvānah,” and “Khvāb-i mastī.” These poems are written in simple and pleasant language and are largely free of awkward constructions or errors. Their diction comprises conventional literary terms found in classical Persian poetry, including muzhdah (good news), nigār (beloved), visāl (union), nasīm-i sabā (morning breeze), nasīm-i rūh'navāz (soul-soothing breeze), Yūsuf (Joseph), Ya'qūb (Jacob), parvānah (moth), sham' (candle), sirishk (tears), nāzanīn (lovely), khvāmūsh (silent), safar (journey), safar'kardah (traveler or deceased), dildār (beloved), gulistān (rose garden), gulshan (flower garden), gul'andām (slender-bodied), zhālah (dew), barg-i lālah (tulip petal), sahn-i chaman (garden courtyard), sawsan-i āzād (wild lily), taraf-i jūy/taf-i chaman (streamside or garden edge), may-i gulgūn (rose-colored wine), jām bar kaf nahādan (to raise the cup), 'ishrat (pleasure), sāqī-i farrukh'rukḥ (cheerful-faced cupbearer), hāl-i parīshān (state of disarray), khāl va zulf-i yār (the beloved's mole and hair), khurramī-i būstān (garden's joy), rafīq-i mahram-i rāz (confidant of secrets), bulbulān-i navā'khvān (singing nightingales), 'ālam-i zar (world of gold), 'ālam-i bālā (supernal world), darzī-i azal (God), jāmah-'i 'ishq (garment of love), saf zadan khanjar-i muzhgān (brandishing the dagger of eyelashes), safhah-'i rukhsār (the cheek's surface), bih yaghmā raftan-i 'aql va khirad va dīn va dil (the plundering of intellect, reason, faith, and), and sāghar-i sahbā (goblet of wine).<sup>98</sup>



Among Badrī's poems on various subjects, some of her patriotic, social, and political works stand out for their introduction of new concepts related to contemporary developments. It appears that the poet understood the need for a new language to express new experiences. In these poems, she does not hesitate to employ modern vocabulary and terminology commonly used in the political and social discourse of her time, seamlessly incorporating names of contemporary places, figures, as well as modern technologies and weaponry into her verse. Consequently, her poetic language reflects the spirit of 20th-century literature. For example, in poems such as "Sulh va jang," "Zindigānī dar Urūpā," "Bīdārī-i zanān," "Nijāt-i Āzarbāyjān," and "Huqūq-i zanān," we come across terms, names, and expressions such as: Farang (the West), Europe, radio, international unity, patriot, democrat, motherland, civilization, council, women's rights, bomb, tank, anti-tank, battleship, torpedo-boat, submarine, airplane, chic and elegant, Eiffel Tower, Versailles Palace, Louvre, Paris, Russians, Stalin, Truman, and Pīshah'varī.<sup>99</sup> This tendency aligns Badrī with other twentieth-century Persian poets who similarly embraced modern themes and diction. Figures such as Muhammad Taqī Bahār in qasīdahs like "Jughd-i jang" (The owl of war) and "Yak safhah az tārikh" (A page from history), Farrukhī Yazdī in several ghazals, and Mīr'zādah 'Ishqī (d. 1303/1924) in the mustazād<sup>100</sup> "Majlis-i chahārum" (The fourth assembly) and other poems, had previously ventured into similar territory. In this regard, Badrī can be seen as extending and developing their poetic project.<sup>101</sup>

It is important to note that the use of such terms in Badrī's poetry is both natural and appropriate. They integrate seamlessly into the poems mentioned above, which, syntactically, differ from most of her other works. These poems depart from the highly stylized language of the 13th- and 14th-century poets and instead align more closely with the everyday language of the poet's time. Consider, for example, the following expressions drawn from her poetry:

<sup>99</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 23–24, 26, 29–30, 66–67; Tundarī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 104.

<sup>100</sup>Mustazād is a poetic form characterized by the addition of extra, shorter lines (called "ziyādah") to the end of each verse in a traditional Arabic or Persian poem. These ziyādah lines act as a kind of refrain or echo, extending the main verse and often commenting on or elaborating on its content.

<sup>101</sup>Muhammad Taqī Bahār, *Dīvān-i ash'ār-i Malik al-Shu'arā-yi Bahār* [The book of poems of Malik al-Shu'arā Bahār], ed. Chih'r'zād Bahār (3rd repr. ed., Tehran: Tūs, 1394/2015), 1: 671–72, 675–76; Muhammad Farrukhī Yazdī, *Dīvān-i Farrukhī Yazdī* [The book of poems of Farrukhī Yazdī], ed. Husayn Makkī (Tehran: Bīnā, 1357/1979), 134, 139–41, 173; Muhammad Rizā Mīr'zādah 'Ishqī, *Kulliyāt-i musavvar-i Mīr'zādah 'Ishqī* [The complete works of Mīr'zādah 'Ishqī] comp. and ed. 'Alī Akbar Mushīr Salīmī (8th. repr. ed., Tehran: Mu'assasah-'i Amīr Kabīr, 1357/1979), 441–46.

<sup>102</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah,  
28.

<sup>103</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah,  
28.

<sup>104</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah,  
29.

<sup>105</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah,  
29.

<sup>106</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah,  
24.

Shāhid giriftan az chīzī (to call upon something as a witness)  
and jubrān shudan-i khisārat (to make amends for the damage):

Our witness is our friendship and our vows,

When will the damages endured by the Iranians be compensated?<sup>102</sup>

Chashm-i dil rawshan (The eye of the heart is bright):

Good news, O Iranians, the darkness of the night has turned to dawn.

The eye of the heart is bright, for the true morning has risen.<sup>103</sup>

Mānand-i zālū khūn-i kasī rā makīdan (To suck someone's blood like a leech):

Woe to that vile, despicable, and wicked mercenary,

Who sucked the blood of the Azerbaijānīs like a leech.<sup>104</sup>

Rang az rū-yi kasī parīdan (color has fled from one's face due to fear, anxiety, one's face becoming pale due to fear):

A rebellion broke out in that army in Azerbaijan,

And the color drained from the faces of the fake democrats.<sup>105</sup>

Tafsīr kardan-i nutq-i kasī (to interpret someone's speech):

The radio interprets Truman's speech,

And this speech causes an uproar across the entire world.<sup>106</sup>

Adā kardan-i qarz (to repay a debt):



We must sacrifice our lives for the country,

<sup>107</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khashah, 18.

Perhaps in this way, we will repay our debt.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>108</sup>روز فعال اند و جدی، رهبران راه نیک/ شب به تفویح و تفریح، خیل خیل و رنگ رنگ. See Tundarī, Ravān-i khashah, 67.

In addition to the social poems, some of Badrī's lyrical and everyday-themed compositions use a simple, natural language that reflects a distinctive voice, rather than imitating the ornate style of 13th- and 14th-century Persian poetry:

<sup>109</sup>جرت آغاز هیچ کار ندارم/ بس که ز انجام کار خود نگرانم. See Tundarī, Ravān-i khashah, 81.

Rūz fa'āland va jaddī, rahvarān-i rāh-i nīk

<sup>110</sup>اوضاع بسی بد شد، یک بود خطر صد شد/ ظلم و ستم از حد شد، آن سان که بیان نتوان. See Tundarī, Ravān-i khashah, 82.

shab bih tafrih-u tafarruh, khayl-khayl-u rang-rang

By day, they are active and serious, travelers on the righteous path.

By night, they seek recreation and amusement, in crowds with vibrant colors.<sup>108</sup>

Jur'at-i āghāz-i hīch kār nadāram

bas kih z-anjām-i kār-i khvud nigarānam

I lack the courage to begin any task,

So preoccupied am I with the completion of my own affairs.<sup>109</sup>

Awzā' basī bad shud, yak būd khatar sad shud

zulm-u sitam az hadd shud, ānsān kih bayān natavān

The situation grew dire; what was once a danger became a hundredfold.

Oppression and injustice reached such an extent it defied description.<sup>110</sup>

دیگر علاقه مند به تو بسیار نیستم / دیگر<sup>111</sup>  
اسیر زلف تو دلدار نیستم. See Tundarī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 86.

خوش دادی امتحان چو بدیدی که<sup>112</sup>  
بی زرم / گر بی زرم خوشم که بدهکار  
نیستم. See Tundarī, Naqsh-i  
ayyām, 86.

جز خلاف وعده وصلت پری رو<sup>113</sup>  
دیشب نبود / باز در کار وفا امروز و فردا  
می کنی. See Tundarī, Naqsh-i  
ayyām, 91.

دیده گریان ما می بینی و خندی چو<sup>114</sup>  
گل ایستاده بر کناری سیر دریا می کنی.  
See Tundarī, Naqsh-i ayyām,  
91.

Dīgar alāqah'mand bih tu bisyār nīstam

ḍīgar asīr-i zulf-i tu dildār nīstam

I am no longer fond of you,

No longer captive to your tresses, my beloved.<sup>111</sup>

Kvush dādī imtihān chu bidīdī kih bī'zarram

gar bī'zarram khvusham kih bidah'kār nīstam

You tested me the moment you saw that I was penniless,

Yet in my poverty, I find peace, for I am not in debt.<sup>112</sup>

Juz khalāf-i va 'dah-'i vaslat-i parī'rūy dīshab nabūd

bāz dar kār-i vafā imrūz-u fardā mī'kunī

Apart from the broken promise of our union, my beloved was absent last night.

Once again, when it comes to loyalty, you keep delaying things, deferring them from today to tomorrow.<sup>113</sup>

Dīdah-'i giryān-i mā mī'bīnī va khandī chu gul

īstādah bar kinārī sayr-i daryā mī'kunī

You see our tearful eyes and smile like a blossom,

Standing on the shore, you stroll through the sea.<sup>114</sup>

It should be noted that, in some instances, Badrī's poetry lacks linguistic precision and stylistic eloquence, as demonstrated by the examples below. In such cases, her verse appears somewhat



deficient in richness, depth, and idiomatic clarity. For example, the incorrect use of *īshān* (a formal or respectful third-person plural pronoun, often used for “they” or “those”) in place of the possessive suffix *-shān* (a standard Persian third-person plural possessive meaning “their”) is evident in the following line:

Banī Ādam bih ma‘nī gar buvad a‘zā-yi yak paykar

Chirā mardān bih khvud bāland az tahqūr-i zan-i īshān?

If the children of Adam are, in essence, limbs of a single body

Why, then, do men take pride in degrading their own women?<sup>115</sup>

The incorrect use of the preposition *bih* (typically means “to,” “toward,” “into,” “for,” or “in regard to”) is evident in the following couplet:

Zan rā vazīfah-ī ast bih kishvar

Ān tarbiyat bih nasl-i javān ast

A woman has a duty to the country

That is the upbringing of the young generation<sup>116</sup>

Another example is the use of the unfamiliar phrase *az īn ba‘d* in the following couplet:

Kunīd chārah kih awzā‘-yi mihīn ast vakhīm

Kih shāyad āyad az īn ba‘d āb-i raftah bih jū

Act, for the situation of the homeland is dire

Perhaps, from now on, the water that has flowed will return to the stream.<sup>117</sup>

<sup>115</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 50. بنی آدم به معنی گر بود اعضای یک / پیکر / چرا مردان به خود بالند از تحقیر / زن ایشان

<sup>116</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 51. زن را وظیفه‌ای است به کشور / آن تربیت / به نسل جوان است

<sup>117</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 47. کنید چاره که اوضاع میهن است وخیم / که / شاید آید از این بعد آب رفته به جو

<sup>118</sup>Tundarī, Naqsh-i ayyām,  
119. سیه خالی که داری زیر چشمت  
حالتی دارد/ که مفتون کرده دل را نقطه  
مشکین خال تو

<sup>119</sup>Tundarī, Naqsh-i ayyām,  
118. ز رنجوری نداری فانی صبر و  
شکبایی/ ز بس آشفته ام با خویش و با  
بیگانه بدینم

Redundancy appears in the repetition of a subject in the following couplet:

Siyah‘khālī kih dārī zīr-i chashmat hālatī dārad

Kih maftūn kardah dil-rā nuqtah-‘i mushkīn-khāl-i tu

The dark mole under your eye has an effect

It has captivated the heart —the black dot of your dark mole.<sup>118</sup>

Incorrect syntax is also apparent in the use of *bā kasī bad‘bīn būdan* instead of the idiomatically correct *bih kasī bad‘bīn būdan* in the following couplets:

Zi ranjūrī nadārī Fāniyā sabr-u shikībāyī

Zi bas āshuftah‘am bā khvīsh va bā bīgānah badbīnam

O Fānī, you lack patience and endurance because of your sickness

I am so distraught that I am ill at east both with myself and with strangers.<sup>119</sup>

The use of *gardīdan* (instead of *gashtan* or *shudan*) as a copulative verb, though common in spoken Persian, results in awkward poetic constructions:

Khastah gardīdam zi jawrat ākhar ay mazlūm‘kash

Bas buvad ranj-ū mashaqqat, ‘umr-i man dīgar sar ār

At last, I grew weary (*khastah gardīdam*) of your cruelty, O slayer of the oppressed



Enough of pain and hardship, let my life now find its end.<sup>120</sup>

Or:

Tā kih dar band-i kham-i zulf-i tu darband shudam

Bandah-'i 'ishq-i tu gardādam-ū khursand shudam

As soon as I became ensnared in the tangle of your curling locks,

I became a servant of your love and found contentment.<sup>121</sup>

In addition, several expressions reflect a lack of semantic clarity and poetic economy:

Come see how my body lies buried in this dark soil

Yielding to my fate, I rest in my own place (furū giriftah marā dahr jā-yi khvīshstanam)<sup>122</sup>

If we become vigilant and awaken from sleep

There is hope in being awakened (bīdar umīd ast) that we will make fewer mistakes<sup>123</sup>

Good mothers should be taken care of (mādarān-i khūb mī'bāyad nigah'dārīnimūd).<sup>124</sup>

It is evident that many of these redundancies and syntactic imperfections were deliberately employed to preserve the poem's musicality, or to fill metrical requirements and avoid rhythmic breaks. Nevertheless, such usage reveals limitations in the poet's technical mastery and poetic craftsmanship.

<sup>120</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 38. خسته گردیدم ز جورت آخر ای / مظلوم کش/ بس بود زنج و مشقت عمر من / دیگر سر آر

<sup>121</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 31. تا که در بند خم زلف تو در بند شدم / بنده / عشق تو گردیدم و خرسند شدم

<sup>122</sup>Tundarī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 124. بیابین که در این خاک تیره خفته / تنم / فروگرفته مرا دهر جای خویشتم

<sup>123</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 18. هشیارگر شویم و برآریم سر ز خواب / بیدار / امید هست که کمتر خطا کنیم

<sup>124</sup>Tundarī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 110. مادران خوب می باید نگهداری نمود.

<sup>125</sup>Shaffī Kadkanī, *Mūsīqī-i Shi'r*, 9–10, 51–53; Shaffī Kadkanī, *Advār-i shi'r-i Fārsī*, 94–97.

<sup>126</sup>Arūz is the technical discipline that deals with the meter of classical Persian poetry. The meter in classical Persian poetry is quantitative (or prosodic), meaning that all hemistichs (half-lines) of a given poem are equal in terms of syllabic quantity. A syllable consists of a vowel along with one or more consonants, pronounced in a single breath. Syllables are divided into three types: short (U), long (–), and overlong (– U). For example, the word *tavānā* (توانا) consists of one short syllable and two long syllables: ta / vā / nā (U – –). A sequence of syllables forms a foot (*rukn*), which is named using the letters fa, 'a, la, and sometimes other combinations (e.g., fā'ilātun with the prosodic notation – U – –, mafā'īlun with the notation U – – –). From the combination of these feet, prosodic patterns (like fā'ilātun fā'ilātun fā'ilun, notated as – U – – / – U – – / – U –) and various poetic meters such as *ramal*, *hazaj*, and their subtypes are formed. The naming of these meters is rooted in traditional Arabic prosody and is tied to its terminology and conceptual framework.

<sup>127</sup>The *ramal* meter is characterized by the repetition of the foot fā'ilātun and its variations.

## Melody

Music in Persian poetry manifests in several forms. The first is external music, or metrical rhythm, which is based on the arrangement of long and short syllables. The second is internal music, which refers to the harmony and resonance created by the interaction of sounds and letters. The third is adjacent music, which encompasses rhyme and refrain. The fourth is inner (semantic) music, consisting of semantic relationships between verses, which collectively produce a distinct and meaningful melody.<sup>125</sup> In analyzing a poem's musicality, it is crucial to consider the poet's adherence to the rules of external and adjacent music, the alignment of both rhythm and sound with emotion and content, and the avoidance of artificiality in internal and inner (semantic) music.

Badrī uses the common metrical patterns of Persian poetry in composing her verses. In her *Dīvān*, the *bahr-i ramal* appears 64 times, *bahr-i hazaj* 20 times, *bahr-i mujtas* 17 times, *bahr-i muzāra* 13 times, *bahr-i mutaḡārib* 7 times, *bahr-i munsarih* 4 times, *bahr-i khafif* 2 times, and *bahr-i rajaz* once.<sup>126</sup> Therefore, *bahr-i ramal* is the most frequently used in her *Dīvān*.<sup>127</sup> Among the poems composed in this meter, the rhythm fā'alātun fā'ilātun fā'ilātun fā'ilātun fā'ilātun occurs most often. This meter, which, due to its numerous long syllables and the way they are arranged, creates a kind of slow, extended, and resonant musicality, accompanied by pause, reflection, and depth of thought, aligns well with the content of Badrī's poetry, including many of her socio-political poems such as "Barābarī-i zan va mard," "Nijāt-i Āzarbāyjān," "Rahbar-i kishvar," "Surūd-i mīhan," "Zindigānī dar Urūpā," and "Tamaddun yā tavahush."

Other meters commonly used in Badrī's *Dīvān* include mafā'īlun mafā'īlun mafā'īlun mafā'īlun (*bahr-i hazaj*), mafā'ilun fā'alātun mafā'ilun fā'alan (*bahr-i mujtas*), and maf'ūl fā'ilātun mafā'il fā'ilātun (*bahr-i muzāra*). Most of the meters Badrī uses for her poems are slow-paced and well-suited for convey-



ing deep thoughts and sorrowful themes. Since her poetry often centers on pain and grief rather than joy and exuberance, it may be concluded that she successfully selected appropriate rhythmic structures for many of her poems. In “Sulh va jang” and several of her love poems, such as “Bandah-’i ‘ishq” and “Dil-i dīvānah,” which require greater rhythmic dynamism, Badrī appropriately chose the meter *bahr-i ramal*.

<sup>128</sup>Tundarī, *Naqsh-i ayyām*, 91; Sa’ dī, *Kulliyāt*, 496–97.

<sup>129</sup>For example, see, Tundarī, *Ravān-i khastah*, 41.

<sup>130</sup>Tundarī, *Ravān-i khastah*, 82–83.

In the *chahār’pārah* “Zanān-i kārdān” (Skillful women) and the *ghazal* “Niḡāh va gunāh” (Gaze and sin), where the poet’s objective is to persuade and engage the audience with the poem’s theme, a different meter, namely *bahr-i khafīf*, is employed to provide agility and movement. However, all six of Badrī’s *masnavīs* in her *Dīvān*, regardless of their subject matter, are composed in *bahr-i mutaqārib*. This meter is typically suitable for epic poetry; however, in Badrī’s case, it is used for poems on themes such as the death of a spouse, moral instruction, advice, and praise of God, among others. These poems appear to draw more from Sa’ dī’s *Būstān* than from classical epic poetic traditions. For example, the poem “Arzish-i zanān” (The value of women) clearly echoes the story of “one who is pure in character and devoted to God” from the *Būstān*.<sup>128</sup> Apart from a few rare instances, possibly attributable to typographical errors, Badrī’s *masnavīs* contain no significant metrical flaws, and she demonstrates solid command of meter.<sup>129</sup>

Setting aside external music, Badrī does not generally seek to enhance musicality through phonetic or semantic harmony in the verses. Internal music appears only sporadically in her *Dīvān*, as in “Awzā’-i kishvar,” but even there, it adds little depth. Moreover, the poem’s added melody contrasts with its sorrowful content.<sup>130</sup>

Badrī’s *Dīvān* contains fifty-one rhymed poems (excluding *masnavīs*). In most of these, common Persian copulative and auxiliary verbs such as *ast* (is), *nīst* (is not), and *shud* (became) serve as refrains, along with simple verbs like *kardan* (to do) in

<sup>131</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 66–67.

<sup>132</sup>Tundarī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 117.

<sup>133</sup>Tundarī, Ravān-i khastah, 17, 20, 34, 40, 56, 66-67; Tundarī, Naqsh-i ayyām, 88, 93–94, 111, 120.

combinations such as faryād kunam (I cry out), yād kunam (I remember), taghyīr nakardī (you did not change), shabgīr nakardī (you did not set out at dawn), sayr-i daryā kun (delve into the sea), and tamannā kun (yearn). Simple verbs such as āmad (came), mī'āyad (comes), and buvad (is/would be), as well as pronouns like man (I) and tū (you), also appear as refrains. In some poems, refrains like zindigī (life), guzashtah (past), and yak taraf (one side), along with longer ones such as ay vatan (O homeland), chih sāzam (what shall I do?), mī'shud bad nimī'shud (if it happened, it wouldn't be bad), and ast imrūz (... is today), bring greater dynamism and movement to the language, sometimes contributing to the creation of fresh meanings and achieving a natural, speech-like tone.

Badrī also draws inspiration from classical Persian poets in her use of rhyme (qāfiyah). In many of her poems, the rhyming words are drawn from classical works, rendering them old and unoriginal. However, in poems on modern themes, she avoids imitation and introduces more inventive rhymes. For instance, in one poem, the word farang (the West) is rhymed with the word qashang (beautiful), shūkh va shang (playful and lively), rangārang (colorful), zibr va zirang (dexterous and nimble), ja-fang (nonsense), mang (dazed), and hang-hang (alluding to a crowd or a specific sound).<sup>131</sup> In another poem, following the same style, the word farang is rhymed with dirang (delay), hizār'rang (variegated), nang (disgrace), sharang (a bitter liquid or poison), and jang (war).<sup>132</sup>

Nevertheless, the poet's occasional unfamiliarity with the principles of rhyme and its role in poetry results in forced or weak rhyming choices, including repetitions or technically incorrect pairings such as: parī'rū (fair-faced) with rū (face), jabīn (forehead) with mah'jabīn (Having a forehead bright as the moon), dil'hā (hearts) with barpā (erect) and paydā (manifest or found), rawshan'tar (brighter) with shikar (sugar), khvandān (smiling) with pīsarān (boys).<sup>133</sup> Badrī also frequently employs the rhetorical device radd al-qāfiyah (the repetition of the rhyme in the



first and fourth hemistiches) in her poetry, without attending to its aesthetic or expressive potential.<sup>134</sup>

<sup>134</sup>See, Tundarī, *Ravān-i khashah*, 31, 45, 79; Tundarī, *Naqsh-i ayyām*, 88.

## Form

<sup>135</sup>Tundarī, *Naqsh-i ayyām*, 102–3.

Badrī adheres to the established forms of classical Persian poetry, including the ghazal, qasīdah, masnavī, tarjī‘band, and qit‘ah, with no discernible attempt to modify or innovate upon the style of the classical masters. *Dīvān* includes a single instance of the chahār‘pārah, a modern poetic form with no precedent in classical Persian literature.<sup>135</sup> However, due to its uniform line lengths and consistent rhyme placement, it still conforms to the structural rules of classical verse. Despite living through the era of modern poetry and the Iranian literary revolution, Badrī remains committed to the conventions of classical poetry rules and resists formal and stylistic innovation. The ghazal is her primary poetic form, although the distinction between ghazal and qasīdah is occasionally ambiguous in her poetry. For instance, the poems “Hāsil-i ‘umr” (The fruit of life), “Islāh-i mulk,” “Tamaddun yā tavahhush,” “Kāvah-‘i Īrān,” and “Nijāt-i Āzarbāyjān,” which contain between fourteen and twenty-five couplets, are categorized as qasīdahs due to their length, but thematically and stylistically they do not differ significantly from poems like “Huqūq-i zanān,” “Rāz va niyāz bā Yazdān” (Secrets and prayers to God) (eleven couplets), and “Chirāgh-i hidāyat” (The lamp of guidance), which comprise eleven or twelve couplets and are categorized as ghazals. Thus, it is often difficult to definitively classify such poems as either ghazals or qasīdahs.

## Conclusion

Badrī is a poet who centers her work on the essence of poetry, prioritizing its emotional and human dimensions over its technical or artistic intricacies. In many of her poems, she draws heavily on elements such as imagination, language, music, and form from classical Persian poetry, resulting in compositions

that generally lack innovation. Due to her limited engagement with artistic techniques and the absence of a consistent stylistic identity, her poetry has not achieved widespread popularity among the public, nor has it sustained attention from literary historians and critics. Among the various types of her poetry, her social and political pieces, along with some autobiographical works, stand out for their fresh themes, straightforward expression, and use of relatively new language and imagery, avoiding repetition and imitation of the classical canon. In her two poetry collections, no dates are provided indicating when individual poems were composed. However, it is possible to estimate the approximate dates of certain social and political poems based on their thematic content and references to historical events. It is also known that the poems published in *Ravān-i khastah* were composed prior to 1336/1957, while those included in *Naqsh-i Ayyām*, or at least most of them, were written between 1336/1957 and 1359/1980. Most of Badrī's social and political poems published in *Ravān-i khastah* reflect the Iran of the 1320s/1940s, addressing themes such as nationalism, modernity, opposition to imperialism, praise for peace, and anti-war sentiments. However, after 1336/1957, the issue of women, their social status and rights in Iranian society emerged as the poet's central concern. In these later works, Badrī often compares the situation of Iranian women with that of women around the world. Interestingly, major political events, such as the rise of socialist ideas in Iran during the 1330s/1950s, the events leading up to the 1332/1953 coup and the subsequent atmosphere of political repression, are notably absent from her poetry.

Unlike many prominent poets of her time, Badrī is neither anti-regime nor anti-authoritarian. Instead, she appears as a social reformer and a patriotic advocate for cultural development, industrial progress, the advancement of women's rights in Iran, and international peace. Compared to prominent female poets of her era, such as Zhālah Qā'im Maqāmī and Parvīn I'tisāmī, Badrī's language and imaginative power may be relatively weaker. Nevertheless, her poetry encompasses a broader range



of emotional and thematic content. In her political and social poems, Badrī articulates views with clarity, particularly regarding women's role in society, adopting a moderate tone rather than an overtly radical or feminist stance.