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#### Author Details:

1. PhD of Persian Language and Literature, Lecturer in Islamic Azad University, Saqez, Iran.  
[chiman\\_fathi@yahoo.com](mailto:chiman_fathi@yahoo.com)

2. Assistant Professor of Persian Language and Literature, University of Kurdistan, Sanandaj, Iran. (Corresponding Author)  
[njabari@uok.ac.ir](mailto:njabari@uok.ac.ir)



## Nietzschean “Transformations of the Soul” and “Typology of Women” in Forough Farrokhzad's Poetic Vision

Chiman Fathi<sup>1</sup>; Najmeddin Jabbari<sup>\*2</sup>

**Abstract:** Forough Farrokhzad (1934-1966) emerged as a distinguished intellectual contemporary Iranian poet whose poetry, while embracing the notion of “tragic culture,” rejects every dualistic structure and gender essentialism. Instead, it posits the potential for human empathy, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of gender dynamics within the broader context of human experience. According to “Typology of Women” in Nietzsche's writings, the tragic vision is determined in the theory of the “Dionysian Woman” after passing through the stages of “desire for illusion” and “desire for truth.” On the other hand, this potentiality within Farrokhzad's poetic corpus exhibits a gradual and evolutionary character. In accordance with her aesthetic approach, it serves as a manifestation of the “transformations of the soul” delineated by Nietzsche. His conceptual framework posits a “transformative journey of the soul,” progressing from the stage of submission (camel) through rebellion and destruction (lion) to ultimately attain the stage of innocent creation (child). Employing an analytical-descriptive methodology, this study elucidates the manifestation of the transformative paradigm in Farrokhzad's poetry, primarily evident in her dual modes of “erotic” and “rebellious” poetic expressions, which reflect her engagement with metaphysical themes. Furthermore, an exploration of the imprint of the “love of fate” concept in Farrokhzad's verse is presented as a derivative outcome.

**Keywords:** Forough Farrokhzad; Friedrich Nietzsche; Transformations of the Soul; Typology of Women; Tragic Vision.

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## 1. Introduction

Forough Farrokhzad (1934-1966) emerged as a notable contemporary Iranian intellectual poet whose entry into the artistic domain was driven by a central vision of “struggling against patriarchal cultural tradition.” She progressively diverges from the pronounced gender dogmatism inherent in her initial expressions. The discernible dogma within Farrokhzad's poetic oeuvre signifies a feminist evolution, representing a shift from negative, vindictive, and passive feminism towards a more proactive and constructive feminist stance. In elucidating and characterizing Farrokhzad's feminist evolution within the context of her aesthetic vision, an exploration of Nietzsche's “tragic vision and culture” theory, particularly encapsulated in the doctrine of the “transformation of the soul” and the paradigm of the “Dionysian woman,” emerges as a pertinent nexus or confluence. In a comprehensive examination of Farrokhzad's nuanced approach to the facets of womanhood and femininity, her poetic expressions and overarching vision prominently reflect a dual yet integrative perspective. As Jalali notes, Farrokhzad assumes a pivotal role in establishing Persian female poetry by articulating her sentiments of love and extolling the beloved man, thereby challenging the entrenched masculine ethos pervasive in Persian poetry, traditional love paradigms, and the doctrinal confines of conventional patriarchal culture (Jalali 485). This deliberate deviation from established norms serves to dismantle the exclusive attribution of the title “good poet” to male practitioners, establishing a symbiotic connection between female language, intellect, corporeality, and soul within the realm of Persian literature—a transformative reconfiguration characterized by enduring impact (Milani)<sup>1</sup>.

Farrokhzad's commendation of the role of “perfect simple women<sup>2</sup>” and her advocacy for a return to primal human traditions, particularly in maternal capacities, imply a dissenting stance towards political impositions that advocate abrupt and comprehensive modernization within a traditional societal framework. This dissent emerges from the concern that the precipitous ascendancy of modernity might inadvertently propel women towards a trajectory of radical extremist feminisms, thus diverting them from their intrinsic existential authenticity and the natural course of life. Hence, Farrokhzad's poetry, notwithstanding the transformative impact it has exerted on poetic paradigms, represents a conscientious endeavor to instigate societal and cultural metamorphosis through a principled opposition to historical, political, social, and cultural dogmatism. This endeavor, evident across various junctures in her brief yet impactful life, underscores Farrokhzad's conviction that entrapment within any form of dogma or unwavering certainty obstructs the pathways to creativity and liberative creation.

Consequently, she consistently rebelled against such constraints in her distinctive manner. Even during periods when Farrokhzad and her like-minded contemporaries became enmeshed in a form of national and modern idealism, the disillusionment following the failure of the national movement on August 28, 1943<sup>3</sup>, liberated intellectually idealistic poets from the confines of idealistic sentiments or convictions. This watershed event marked their realization that prospects for a definitive endpoint or a conclusive moment were elusive, thereby dispelling the notion of a clear and specific culmination.

The principal inquiry guiding this study is as follows: In what manner do Farrokhzad's poetic works articulate the concepts of "tragic culture and vision" throughout their evolution, aligning with Nietzsche's framework of the "metamorphosis of the soul"? This transformation unfolds across the stages of subjugation (camel), rebellion (lion), culminating in the attainment of the innocent creation (child) stage. The overarching aim is to elucidate how Farrokhzad's poetry, in its evolutionary trajectory, defines itself in deliberate disengagement from dualistic dogmas. This analysis extends beyond a gender-centric perspective, encompassing a transcendence of dichotomies and a departure from moral binaries, echoing Nietzsche's philosophical stance "beyond good and evil."

## 2. Review of Literature

In the majority of critical and analytical articles appraising Farrokhzad's poetry, the prevailing tendency among authors is to categorize Farrokhzad solely within the framework of her gender, construing her poetry as inherently feminine. These assessments predominantly confine the evaluation of femininity to the linguistic dimension of Farrokhzad's poetic compositions, often neglecting a more comprehensive exploration of the underlying ideological constructs. Exemplifying this trend, Honary and Esmaili (2017), drawing upon the perspectives of various feminists and sociologists specializing in gender linguistics, delineate Farrokhzad's linguistic distinctiveness in her poetry collections through the lenses of deficiency, mastery, and difference. Despite their acknowledgment of a sense of empathy and linguistic engagement with the audience in Farrokhzad's final poetry collection, their analysis tends to be illustrative rather than rooted in cultural-cognitive justifications. Their ultimate conclusion posits that, notwithstanding the acceptance of her gender, Farrokhzad finds herself in a state of isolation and disillusionment, ostensibly attributed to the enduring oppression and dominance of patriarchal systems. This perspective, however, seems to overlook

Farrokhzad's nuanced position as an enlightened contemporary Iranian poet, particularly in her later poetic phases, where she appears less driven by the pursuit of a predetermined and ideal outcome indicative of dogma and radical idealism. Contrary to the static and negative portrayal presented in these analyses, Farrokhzad's exploration, consistent with a differential approach, involves a transformative trajectory. Concurrent with embracing her gender and its associated power dynamics, she manifests a more sincere and affectionate acceptance of gender and its reciprocal dynamics. This newfound perspective rejects the notion of a dichotomy between man and woman, affirming an integrated understanding that sees both genders and feminine culture as interdependent components of a broader societal fabric.

Zarghani (2014), in the context of contemporary Iranian poetry, posits that throughout the entirety of Farrokhzad's poetic corpus, a discernible "center" or "focus" emerges, denoted as the "center of struggle against the patriarchal cultural tradition." Consequently, Zarghani attributes the expression of pivotal themes, such as those of an erotic and rebellious nature, exclusively to this identified center. While acknowledging Farrokhzad's stature as one of the most enlightened contemporary poets in Iran, it is imperative to underscore that intellectualism fundamentally embodies a tendency to transcend centralization, evade fixed meanings, and often challenge established norms. Consequently, the singular definition, recognition, and confinement of Farrokhzad's poetic vision to a specific focal point risk relegating her from an intellectual standing, presenting her not as a human intellect but rather as a vulnerable and protesting woman distanced from intellectual prowess.

In the comparative analysis undertaken by Asadollahi and Fathi (2019) concerning Farrokhzad's poetry and Nietzsche's nihilism, the authors, after elucidating the various forms of Nietzschean nihilism, undertake an examination and explication of the transitions within nihilism, progressing from passive to active states, evident in Farrokhzad's poetry. Notably, the authors refrain from emphasizing the poet's gender in their exploration of the nihilistic transition in Farrokhzad's works, opting instead for a broader examination. This departure from a singular focus on gender is also mirrored in the present article, which approaches the gender-related aspects of Farrokhzad's poetry from a distinctive perspective. The authors contend that Farrokhzad, despite initially entering the realm of poetry with a central vision aimed at contesting the patriarchal cultural tradition, progressively deviated not only from the rigidity of extreme feminism but also from any form of deleterious dogmatism, guided by her non-theoretical and tragic insight.

### 3. Theoretical Framework

#### 3.1. Typology of Women in Nietzsche's Writings

Jacques Derrida (1957-2004), the eminent French interpreter of Nietzsche's works, posits that Nietzsche employs the concept of woman as a metaphor to signify the untruth inherent in truth. Derrida delineates various typologies of women in Nietzsche's writings, offering insightful classifications: 1. The woman as a lie, a castrated figure who adheres to the will of truth, embodying dogmatic, metaphysical, scientific, and "feminist" attributes; 2. The woman who engages with truth, functioning as a castrator and following the desire for illusion, metaphor, deception, and masks, is characterized as an "Apollonian" woman; 3. The self-affirming Dionysian woman, a Confirmer woman (Derrida 62). Kelly Oliver, an American philosopher, critically engages with Derrida's interpretation while acknowledging and adopting his typology of women in Nietzsche's writings. However, Oliver reformulates Derrida's categories as "the desire for truth," the "desire for illusion," and the "desire for power," respectively. Oliver contends that the affirmative woman aligns with the will of power, viewing truth merely as a perspective, and embodies a "Dionysian" essence (Derrida 67). This nuanced perspective contributes to a deeper understanding of Nietzsche's complex portrayal of women and truth, demonstrating the evolving discourse surrounding Derrida's interpretation within contemporary philosophical scholarship.

#### 3.2. Transformations of the Soul

Nietzsche, through the words of Zoroaster, elucidates a transformative journey of the soul involving distinct stages, metaphorically depicted as the "camel," "lion," and ultimately, the "baby." This progression unfolds as a deliberate process of overturning antiquated values through the forceful violence of the "lion", followed by the creation of new values characterized by the dynamism of childhood, an innocent soul, and the assertion of the will to power. Nietzsche articulates this intricate metamorphosis, stating, "I will name three transformations of the soul for you: how the soul becomes a camel and a camel becomes a lion, and finally, a lion becomes a baby." The patient soul, resembling a camel, contemplates the cost of transformation, kneeling and willingly bearing the weight of valuable burdens. Laden like a camel, it ventures into the metaphorical desert, representing a space for self-discovery. In this serene desert, the second metamorphosis unfolds, where the soul assumes the form of a lion, aspiring to grasp freedom and become the sovereign of its own domain. However, Nietzsche cautions that the lion, despite its prowess, cannot solely usher in the creation of new values. True

creative freedom, marked by the sacred affirmation of “No” to duty, necessitates a subsequent transformation, wherein the lion evolves into a child. This transition raises a poignant question: What can a child achieve that a lion cannot? Nietzsche posits that the child embodies innocence, forgetfulness, a new beginning, a playful spirit, and the capacity for utterance—qualities that are crucial for recreating the sacred affirmation of “yes.” The soul, in this phase, earnestly seeks its own will. Nietzsche's profound narrative underscores the intricate process of self-discovery, transformation, and the cyclical nature of personal evolution, offering philosophical insights into the human psyche (*Zarathustra* 39-37).

#### **4. “Transformations of the Soul” and “Typology of Women”**

Nietzsche, in contrast to rationalist, Socratic, and Christian metaphysical perspectives that uphold a dualistic moral system centered on “good” and “bad,” advocates for a “tragic insight.” This perspective diverges by asserting that true comprehension of life's entirety, inclusive of pain, suffering, and failure, enables individuals to transcend dualistic absolute values. Nietzsche proposes moving beyond subjugation and servitude by engaging in the “creation of new earthly values” rooted in a non-metaphysical framework and the “will to power.” Tragic insight, as Nietzsche argues, addresses the inherent quandary of the “meaning of life” and facilitates the potential transition from contemporary nihilism (*Power* 256; *Zarathustra* 39-37). Simultaneously, a gender unilateral viewpoint, where one gender subjects the other to cruelty, injustice, and violence, manifests as a form of gender dogmatism. This phenomenon emerges from the dominance of patriarchal traditional culture or certain radical feminist movements. Regardless of its origin, unifications feminist perspectives tend to foster a vindictive, negative, or passive feminism. This tendency appears to strip feminist women of the foundational elements of power and human originality. The ensuing discourse underscores the need for a nuanced understanding of gender dynamics that transcends unilateral views and cultivates a more empowering and equitable framework for both genders.

The notion of grudge initially surfaces in Nietzsche's ethical philosophy within the framework of dualistic ethical perspectives. Nietzsche bifurcates morality into “slave morality” and “master morality,” identifying grudge as a characteristic of the former, characterized by passivity. In Nietzschean terms, grudge encompasses sterility, aversion, and jealousy, fostering a desire for revenge and hindering independent and creative action. Addressing these oppressive dominations necessitates a balanced, anti-dogmatic

vision that rejects hierarchy and alienation while endorsing boundary-breaking and unity. Such a perspective, instead of unilaterally favoring either male or female cultures, advocates for non-theoretical evolution or their synthesis into a unified identity within the tragic cultural cycle. Nietzsche's tragic culture mandates the abandonment of old values and metaphysical principles of dualistic ethics by artists, fostering the creation of new values, ultimately reaching the pinnacle of the superman.

To elucidate the philosophical equivalence of the feminist transition from negative and passive feminism to positive and active, Nietzsche's theory of the "Dionysian woman" aligned with the concept of "transformations of the soul" stands out as a comprehensive and fitting framework. For an apt illustration of this philosophical alignment, Farrokhzad's poetry proves to be instrumental, characterized by two fundamental traits: a novel non-theoretical approach to metaphysics and an affirmation of destiny, a resounding "yes-saying" to life in its entirety. Implicit in Farrokhzad's poetry is a distinct embodiment of Dionysus<sup>4</sup>, the goddess of passion and mania, recognized as a paramount factor in artistic creativity. This interpretation resonates with the notion of creative madness<sup>5</sup>, as observed by both external observers and Farrokhzad himself.

#### **4.1. Metaphysics in Tragic Insight**

One of the defining characteristics of the modern era is the shift in human perspective from the metaphysical and transcendent to the physical and earthly dimensions (Zarghani 47). In other words, contemporary society tends to view existential and life-related matters from a human-centric standpoint, rather than through a metaphysical or transcendent lens. In the poetry of contemporary poets, new themes have emerged, leading to a shift from the heavenly and trans-human focus of classical poetry to a more human-centered nature in contemporary poetry. If we categorize metaphysical topics as those concerning the nature of God and existence, such as the existence or non-existence of God; the nature of humanity, such as determinism and free will; and the nature of the world, such as stability and change (Hallingdale 62-61), then it is evident that contemporary Iranian poetry grapples with these issues, with each poet offering a unique and innovative approach. These approaches reflect contemporary "tragic insights and cultures" in contrast to ancient theoretical and metaphysical cultures. Notably, among contemporary Iranian poets, Farrokhzad's poetry stands out for its unstable expression, which opposes dogma and absolute truth; its erotic and bodily expression, emphasizing the importance of earthly and physical life; and its rebellious expression, which desacralizes and emphasizes the importance of human freedom, will, and authority.

#### 4.1.1. Erotic Expression

In contemporary society, the goddess of love, Eros, is not merely associated with Platonic or spiritual love, nor is it limited to bodily love or beauty alone. Rather, Eros is seen as a force that imbues physical beauty and desire with spirituality, creating a unique blend of love that includes both physical intimacy and aesthetics. This concept, which can be referred to as "Eroticism", is characterized by the artistic expression of sexual pleasure. However, for such expression to emerge in literature and art, it is necessary to establish a society that values tolerance, adaptation, and ethical values, which in turn requires relative freedom for women and the cultivation of free relationships between men and women (Khaleghi Motlagh 16).

Firstly, the mode of “erotic expression” in Farrokhzad's poetry serves as a means to challenge and disrupt the traditional masculine love and male poetic culture, thereby confronting the entrenched “patriarchal cultural tradition” and transcending its limitations (Zarghani 418-415). The poetic dogmatic approaches, which previously attributed poetic culture and the art of lovemaking solely to male romantic culture and tradition, prompted Farrokhzad, as an intellectual woman artist, to adopt a novel tone and expression to counter gender dogmatism. This led her to explore themes that were considered taboo for women within the traditional culture of her time. Thus, in this context, Farrokhzad's erotic expression serves as a tool to overcome "transient vulgarity and traditional gender discrimination" (Haghdar 38). For instance, in her poem, she writes: “What should I wear until he arrives / his thirst should be excessive and increased / what should I say until, because of the magic of my words, he falls in love with me and becomes enchanted” (Farrokhzad 82).

Secondly, in the unique cultural-philosophical context of the contemporary era, one of the prominent themes during the years 1953-1961 was the poets' struggle against and enmity towards the traditional moral principles that governed society, whether religious or customary, often manifesting in acts of blasphemy and feigned immorality (*Persian Poetry Periods* 62). This cultural climate frequently gave rise to expressions of eroticism, as exemplified in Farrokhzad's poem: “I committed a sin full of pleasure / In an embrace that was warm and fiery / I committed a sin between the arms / which was hot and vindictive and iron” (Farrokhzad 101).

Thirdly, following the defeat of the National Movement on August 19, 1953, contemporary Iranian poets, often regarded as intellectual activists, experienced social frustration and a sense of defeat. This disillusionment led to diverse responses among

them: while some sought solace in taverns within their imaginary and real realms, others turned to erotic poetry, incorporating themes of sin. This shift in their poetic landscape can be interpreted as an expression of their disillusionment with politics and war (Zarghani 370). Hence, in this context, erotic expression emerged as a manifestation of bidding farewell to the ideals of certainty and dogma, and seeking refuge in the transient moments of intoxication and sexual desires.

Fourthly, Farrokhzad's assertive tone in confessing "sin" serves as an ironic element within her poetic erotic expression, signaling a departure from metaphysical value systems and a reevaluation of values (Haghdar, 43). This shift underscores the significance of the body and earthly existence over the spiritual and celestial realm within her poetic vision. Notably, Farrokhzad's poetry reflects a quest for freedom and a rejection of traditional norms and customs, as she openly articulates and portrays earthly loves and their physical aspects, an area often shrouded in silence within Persian literature. Indeed, one of the functions of Farrokhzad's poetry was to "break this silence" (Shamisa 221). This approach to erotic expression aligns with the emphasis on human natural instincts and emotions, mirroring Nietzsche's perspective on the power of natural values. Nietzsche extols happiness and physical pleasure as inherent natural values, advocating a descent to earthly roots and the celebration of life, rather than a Platonic sublimation. He posits that the "self" of the body craves annihilation and death, unable to transcend self-creation (*Zarathustra* 47). Similarly, in Farrokhzad's poetic vision, the reverence for the body evolves into a trans-physical outlook, delving into Dionysian life, unity, and creativity, as evidenced in her verse: "Tell me one word / One that gives you the kindness of a living body / What does it want other than understanding the feeling of being alive?" (Farrokhzad 367).

Through this physical connection, she becomes cognizant of the vitality and magnanimity of her love, anticipating her beloved to share in this sense of aliveness; a vitality that propels them towards the creation of the superman. Indeed, in Farrokhzad's poetry, the discourse on the body aligns with an understanding of the body as the locus of procreation, and this understanding of the body transcends into the realm of the mind through the fervor for life and survival, which in itself represents the spiritual manifestation of the body (Mokhtari 572). It is within this yearning for procreation, life, and the preservation of human essence and nature that Farrokhzad reverts to the primordial traditions of life, as exemplified in her verse: "Take refuge in me, O simple perfect women... / Which summit, which peak? / Take refuge in me, O fiery stoves - O horseshoes of happiness - / O song of the copper utensils in the blackness of the kitchen

/ And O... / And O... / Take refuge in me, O all the greedy loves that have a painful desire The painful desire for survival adorns the bed of your possession / with magic water / and fresh blood drops" (Farrokhzad 307 & 306).

The body-praise in the tragic vision and postmodern erotic expression can serve as an indication or precursor to the reverence for the tangible or earthly world, surpassing the unseen or celestial realm, in the context of the creation of the superman. Nietzsche posits that the superman represents the earth, as he declares: "Superman means the earth. May your will say: Superman means the earth!" (*Zarathustra* 22). Similarly, Farrokhzad expresses her perspective on this subject, stating: "I have never dreamed / of being a star in the mirage of the sky / or as the soul of the elect / of being the silent companion of angels / I have never been separated from the earth / I have never known a star / I have stood on the ground / with my body which like a plant stem / Sucks wind, sun, and water / To tries to live" (Farrokhzad 237).

#### 4.1.2. Rebellious Expression

In Nietzsche's tragic culture, the second metamorphosis of the soul, the "lion," represents a rebellion devoid of belief in chains; the lion desires freedom, consistently responding to the imperative "you must" with the assertion "I want" (*Zarathustra* 37-39). This phase of rebellion, embodied by the "lion," serves as a prelude to the realization of untainted creative power. Typically following stages of surrender and enslavement, this moment of metamorphosis initially advocates for independence, demarcation, domination, hierarchy, separation, and truth. However, this inclination is primarily a defense mechanism rooted in fear, weakness, and despair. Consequently, this stage is characterized as a "negative and passive rebellion" until it transforms into a philosophical disposition and attains the status of "aesthetic justification of life" as outlined by Nietzsche. The concept of "philosophical rebellion," with its inherent potential for creativity, takes on the characteristics of a "positive rebellion." In the artistic expression of a woman artist, negative rebellion aligns with gender rebellion, reminiscent of the theory of negative and passive feminism. Conversely, positive rebellion in her expression initially manifests in a transgender manner, reflecting positive and active feminism by emphasizing "Dionysian unity." Subsequently, it evolves into a philosophical stance involving the desacralization of art and humanism, which, in turn, reflects the metaphorical truth and serves as the aesthetic justification of life.

#### 4.1.2.1. *Negative (Gender) Rebellion in Farrokhzad's Poetry*

Rebellious expression in Farrokhzad's poetry often manifests as gender or initial rebellion. This form of expression resonates with the first and second types among the three Nietzschean archetypes of women. A careful examination of Farrokhzad's poetry reveals that, while grappling with the betrayal and persecution by her beloved, her poems articulate a futile rebellion that either negates the male presence or serves as a defensive shield, adopting deceptive and delusional facades. In essence, Farrokhzad's rebellion, evident in her poetic style from the outset on her journey toward the creation of the Superman, does not necessarily lead her to become a transgender figure embracing life comprehensively. At times, she assumes the role of the adversary of passion due to experiences like the infidelity of her male beloved. In such instances, she embodies the “castrated woman” of feminism. Embracing the “will to truth,” she emerges as the antagonist of passion, yearning, and hope, expressing regret for investing her pure romantic feelings in a futile love. She questions why she hoped for such love, why she slept in his arms, and why she confided the secrets of her passionate heart to a foreign lover (Farrokhzad 46).

Farrokhzad occasionally even demands the absolute (objective or mental) absence of a man, contemplating, “Is it not time for this door to be opened, open, open, open, for the sky to fall, and for a man to pray over his dead body suppliantly?” (Farrokhzad 302-303). In another poem, she, in alignment with the masculine cultural trait of “rationality,” reveals her struggle in finding a way to live. Her sole solution is to “become rational,” leading to weariness, desolation, and futility. It seems as though she has not yet attained existential independence, and the love of her beloved has transformed her to the extent that she attributes her silence and invalidity solely to the potential death of her beloved or his love within her: “After those madnesses, alas! I do not believe that I have become wise. As if 'he' has died in me, and thus, I have become tired, silent, and void” (129).

At times, adopting the role of a “castrator woman” and endorsing the “will to illusion,” she strategically employs illusion to cunningly navigate the desire to reenter the passionate realm of love and intoxication. Much like an actress, she knowingly embraces a role recognized as mere illusion (Shahandeh 80-81). In her pursuit of the beloved and the aspiration to return to the emotive and aesthetically pleasing domain of love, she seeks refuge in feminine stratagems. Farrokhzad explicitly acknowledges this, stating, “With a heart that has not smelled of fidelity/ Infinite oppression and excuses are more pleasurable/ Along with these selfish companions/ Cute and clever flirtations are more pleasurable” (Farrokhzad 97).

Within Farrokhzad's poetry, these stratagems at times present themselves as an assertion of triumph over passion for the lover (man) and, alternatively, as an indifference toward love or the lover. It becomes evident that such manifestations are intricately woven threads of feminine artifice (Kamarkhani and Kazazi 123): "What is sweet! / On your grave, needy love / dancing / What is sweet! / you, O deadly burning kiss/ ignore / What is sweet! / Breaking from you and joining with the other" (Farrokhzad 158-159).

It appears that Farrokhzad, from the outset, has perpetually navigated the realms of "truth-seeking" and the "illusory." In the context of gender ethics, this positioning aligns with a masculine dominance and rebellion. Generally, this form of rebellion, while reflective of her resistance to the traditions and culture of patriarchy, does not yet mark the genesis of creation. Therefore, it could be characterized as a "passive" and "self-oriented" rebellion. The poet, expressing discontent and disturbance caused by the constraints imposed by the man – the lock on her lips and the straps on her feet – simultaneously implores for her release and liberation from him. It is as though she has not yet attained a level of self-sufficiency conducive to her emancipation and creative endeavors. In her own words: "Do not place the lock of silence on my lips/ So that within my heart, an untold story may reside/ Unshackle my feet/ For I bear a troubled heart/ Come forth, O selfish creature/ Open wide the doors of the cage/ If you have confined my life in imprisonment/ Release me, if only for a moment" (Farrokhzad 53).

#### 4.1.2.2. *Positive Rebellion in Farrokhzad's Poetry*

In her second period of poetry, which culminates in her final two works, "Another Birth" and "Let's Believe in the Beginning of the Cold Season," Farrokhzad achieves dynamism and maturity, evolving into a thoughtful and creative poet who corresponds to the third Nietzschean archetype of woman, the "Dionysian woman." In her own words: "In *Captive*, *Wall*, and *Rebellion*, I was merely a simple conduit for the external world. During that period, poetry had not yet dissolved within me but coexisted with me, akin to a husband, lover, or companions who have been present for a while. Subsequently, poetry took root within me, leading to a shift in its thematic focus. No longer did I perceive poetry as an expression of singular feelings about myself. Rather, as poetry penetrated me more deeply, I became more scattered, and I discovered a new world" (Shamisa 242). This dispersion and novelty, as mentioned by Farrokhzad herself, manifest at this stage in the form of "trans-gender rebellion in Dionysian unity" and "philosophical rebellion in desacralizing and humanism." The result is the exploration of the vast and endless realm of "innocent creation" within the Nietzschean "Dionysian woman" framework.

About “trans-gender rebellion in Dionysian unity,” it is worth mentioning that in Nietzsche's tragic vision, unity emerges as a consequence of collapsing walls and dissolving borders. These boundaries may encompass rational or logical constraints, as well as human-nature distinctions, all of which can be eradicated by the overwhelming power of Dionysus. The abandonment of rational rules and liberation from the shackles of rationalistic limitations, the unity with oneself, the dissolution of hostile boundaries between individuals, reconciliation with neighbors and strangers, and the reunion of humanity with nature are the outcomes of this conspicuous manifestation of the “destruction” wrought by the Dionysian force or the sublime (*Birth of Tragedy* 56-57). Thus, when the boundaries between individuals (and even between individuals and objects) blur, it gives rise to a sense of unity with the entire world. In such instances, the entire world itself appears as a “singular” entity (McDaniel 18).

During Farrokhzad's poetic evolution, the initial expression of novelty arises when she embraces the principle of “human totality” by recognizing the necessity for a logical balance between men and women, aspiring to love and live a new life. Even in the early stages of her poetry, where she views man as the primary cause of women's captivity, she now perceives man with such firmness and pride that he can lead her back to the vibrant flow of life, becoming her vision of holiness: “Your shoulders, Iron towers, The wondrous display of blood and life, Its color akin to the copper firebox... Your shoulders, The qibla of my needy eyes, The stone seal of my prayer” (Farrokhzad 211-212). In this period, she comes to believe that man, like herself, is alone, and the need for unity is mutual. Both man and woman require each other, and any ingratitude between them emanates from both, not solely from man. In the poem “Swamp”, she sings: “Mountain to mountain in search of his mate, Runs, addicted to the smell of her mate, looks for her occasionally and disbelieving in him, But her mate harder, lonelier than him, Both in fear of each other, Bitter and ungrateful to each other” (287).

Farrokhzad adeptly balances the judgment and evaluation of male and female works of art. She asserts, “If my poetry is somewhat feminine, then it is entirely natural because I am a woman.” However, when it comes to measuring artistic values, she contends that gender should no longer be a relevant factor. In her own words, “It is not correct to raise this issue at all. [...] I believe those who assign a certain gender to their artwork will perpetually remain at that level, and this is fundamentally incorrect. [...] What truly matters is cultivating the positive aspects of one's existence to reach a level of human values. “Men and women are not important” (Jalali 33). In the poem “My empty and silent solitude,” Farrokhzad openly addresses the dependence and entanglement of her

being as a woman with the beloved as a man. She declares that the power of her poetry, described as her "flame of feeling," is contingent on her love for the man. Farrokhzad, in her struggle against empty and meaningless habits or traditions, offers a profound interpretation of marriage in the poem "Conquest of the Garden". She refrains from characterizing it as a "weak link between two names" recorded in the "old papers of an office". Instead, she terms it as a "birth, evolution, and pride", emphasizing mutual affection, self-sacrifice, and the pursuit of unity (Farrokhzad 310-311). Having found a sense of physical and objective oneness with the beloved, Farrokhzad sees physical unity as a prelude to achieving mental and emotional unity—a new evolution. "Now Farrokhzad has transitioned from 'myself' to 'ourselves'" (Zarrinkoob 687). In a moment of oneness, the poet exposes the darkness of her existence and attains the clarity of physical and mental unity in love. This unity, characterized by improvisation, originality, and the essence of life, is so profound that neither the body nor the mind alone can elucidate the romantic connection with the beloved. Even the poet's body dissolves after the expansion of love to achieve unity: "I saw that in the blowing of his hands / the body of my being / decays / I saw that the skin of my body cracks from the expansion of love / ... We cried together / In each other, we lived the entire invalid moment of unity / We went crazily" (Farrokhzad 259-260).

For Nietzsche and Farrokhzad, unity extends beyond human relations to harmonize with the essence of existence, encompassing the universe itself. Nietzsche, in defining Dionysus's art, identifies one of its most prominent features as a "reunion with the inner being of nature" (Spinks 39). Similarly, in one of her most Dionysian poems, Farrokhzad seeks oneness with her beloved and life, expressing, "Oh, let me get lost in you / no one will find another sign of me..." (Farrokhzad 42). Furthermore, she desires to integrate with the particles and essence of nature and existence: "Enough to fill you I want / To go among the deserts / To climb the mountain rock / To knock my body on the waves of the sea" (44). In the poem "Sun" from "Another Birth", natural elements such as the sun, stream, cloud, poplar, crow, and earth become components through which the poet expresses her unity with the essence and core of nature by "greeting them again": "I will greet the sun again / To the stream that flowed in me / To the clouds that were my long thoughts / ... / And to the earth where my lust for repetition filled its inflamed interior / From green seeds - I will greet again Gave" (334).

About "Philosophical Rebellion in Desacralizing" as a path to metaphorical truth and aesthetic justification of life, it is worth mentioning that beyond gender rebellion, Farrokhzad's poetry encompasses a form of rebellion labeled "philosophical rebellion",

often a precursor to achieving an aesthetic and non-absolute perspective on life. In her poem "Slavery", Farrokhzad grins at religious prejudices against the determinism of nature and the wrath of God, viewing creation through the lens of absolute determinism from the moment of birth (Zarrinkoob 683): "What am I? The born of a pleasant night / An anonym leads me in this way... / I was born without my own will" (Farrokhzad 132). This deterministic perspective, according to Farrokhzad, has deprived humanity of freedom everywhere: "When have you left me so that with two open eyes / I choose a mold, myself, for myself...? / I would walk on my own feet freely" (132). In the poem "God-being", Farrokhzad desires God-being and envisions constructing a world according to her desires (168-165). In essence, her life mirrors the stage of the "lion," rejecting chains and challenging old values that, in her perspective, are not values but anti-values. She aspires to become a "superman," fighting against certain ancient values of her time to achieve the creation or, at the very least, the hope of creating new values, aligning with Nietzsche's concept of the superman (*With Lights and Mirrors* 567).

Another expression of philosophical rebellion in Farrokhzad's artistic endeavors can be found in her boastful tone while confessing sin in the renowned poem "Sin": "I committed a sin, a sin full of pleasure, Beside a trembling and intoxicated body. God! What do I know about what I did in that dark and silent solitude? I gazed into his eyes, full of secrets. My heart trembled in my chest impatiently, Aroused by the desires in his eyes, full of need. In that dark and silent solitude, I sat next to him in distress. His lips poured lust onto mine, Rescuing me from the sorrow of my frenzied heart" (Farrokhzad 101). Firstly, the burden of the religious connotation in the term "sin" signifies Farrokhzad's departure from value beliefs and religious convictions, aiming to "re-evaluate values" (Haghdar 43). Secondly, it seems as though Farrokhzad, by uttering the phrase "God, what do I know about what I did in that dark and silent solitude," is expressing her reluctance towards committing the sin, echoing Nietzsche's sentiments. Substituting the concept of the necessity of destiny with "sin" represents a tragic interpretation of the problem of "sin" and a fundamental approach to the "acknowledgment of the integrity of life." In the tragic vision, "sin" is introduced as an inevitable part of this wholeness. Nietzsche contends that we cannot choose between good and evil because we lack the freedom to do so. Moreover, he asserts that blaming human existence for its actions is unjust, as individuals are not free to control their actions (*Science* 246). In certain comprehensive works by Farrokhzad, it appears as if she is echoing Nietzsche's cycle of thought, and her rebellious expression ultimately attains the metaphorical and aesthetic essence of life.

Another manifestation of rebellious expression in Farrokhzad's poetic vision can be seen in her belief in metaphorical and artistic truth instead of absolute truth. For example, in the film of “The House is Black<sup>6</sup>,” a twenty-minute documentary produced by Farrokhzad in the fall of 1963, depicting the life and arduous conditions of the residents of the Tabriz leprosy-house, the poet skillfully illustrates the futility of a leper's efforts to adorn herself in a scene from the film, thereby symbolically conveying profound insights into the nature of futility. The metaphor of the “wayless desert” used to describe the leper sanctuary extends metaphorically to encompass the entire world: “And you, the forgotten of days/ that you dress yourself in red/ and you adorn yourself with gold ornaments/ and you polish your eyes with kohl/ remember that you have given yourself a beauty in vain/ because of a song in the lost desert.” Despite Farrokhzad's poetry not adhering to a definitive and purposeful vision, and occasionally revealing manifestations of despair, she steadfastly resists succumbing to stagnation and passivity: “and you, the overflowing stream, which flow by the breath of love/ come to us/ come to us.” In this way transitioning from passive nihilism to active nihilism, Farrokhzad, propelled by love and dynamism, consistently flows in the river of life. This means that life continues as a path, even though there is no end as an absolute truth.

She shares a dream in another poem, where someone will emerge to establish justice among human beings. Farrokhzad envisions this figure as surpassing all known individuals in virtue and justice, distributing everything that humanity requires equitably: “I dreamed that someone is coming / ... / Someone who is unlike anyone, not resembling a father, ... not resembling a mother / ... / His face / shines brighter than the face of Imam-e-Zaman /... / Someone descending from the celestial sky on the night of fireworks / spreads the tablecloth / breaks the bread / breaks open a Pepsi / ... / and splits the black cough syrup / ... / And provides us our rightful share / I have dreamed” (Farrokhzad 380-375). In Farrokhzad's poetic realm, the figure she describes transcends the virtues of the tangible and real “father” and “mother,” embodying qualities of superior bravery, kindness, and justice. His countenance, as delineated in her poem, surpasses the clarity of the “Imam of Time,” the awaited savior in Shiite eschatology who remains elusive and inaccessible. For Farrokhzad, this envisioned figure serves as a beacon of hope, existing neither as a tangible, physical reality nor as an absolute celestial truth. As expressed by Farrokhzad at the poem's outset and conclusion with the phrase “I have dreamed,” this image takes on the semblance of a dream or fantasy—a metaphorical truth that culminates in the aesthetic justification of life. This marks a nihilistic transition from passive to active nihilism, a thematic exploration that extends further in the

subsequent sentences. By asserting that the dream occurred "when she was not asleep", Farrokhzad intentionally renders her poetic images beyond the realm of scientific and non-artistic interpretation. This phrase strategically underscores that her imaginative creations are not to be perceived merely as interpretable dreams but as the product of her poetic imagination—an ironic avenue through which truth is apprehended. In essence, Farrokhzad, through this declaration, not only validates her poetic imagination but also posits artistic fantasy as the singular conduit to realizing an ideal or truth, thereby characterizing existing truth as inherently metaphorical.

#### **4.2. Love of Destiny**

The term "tragic" fundamentally denotes a distinctive manifestation of existence and life, wherein humanity valiantly contends with prevailing forces and factors that ultimately lead to its destruction or, at the very least, unveil its vulnerability and demise (Winnie 84). Consequently, maintaining a sovereign morality in the face of life's tragic nature constitutes a contradiction, a dichotomy resolved through another prominent theme in Nietzschean philosophy: the "love of destiny". This theme entails a comprehensive acceptance of all occurrences in human life and the world—a Dionysian embrace of the world in its entirety, devoid of deficiency, exception, or choice. An individual truly comprehending the essence of "love of destiny", with Dionysian ecstasy and a "will to power", embraces all aspects of life. Such a person is a Dionysian being, capable of accepting everything, including the terrifying and perilous aspects of life, which the weaker beings fear and lack the capacity to absorb and digest (Pirooz 94-96). Nietzsche characterizes these traits as integral to a positive and courageous "tragic vision" of life. The dialectic between tragic destiny's domination over human existence and sovereign morality, resolved through the "love of destiny," converges into Nietzsche's synthesis of "supermanity." Accordingly, the superman embodies the belief that life, encompassing both good and bad, should be lived—even if "on an upward slope" (Gellner 24). Despite enduring emotional and spiritual tribulations, losses, and fractures in her youth, Farrokhzad eventually grasps the notion that the dualities of life must be embraced. To embody this realization, she immerses herself in the realm of action, aesthetic practice, and artistic creation.

Farrokhzad's choice mirrors the escape from the abyss of despair and emptiness; life in the art world becomes a form of resistance against death, an "anti-destiny," as articulated by the French writer Andre Malraux (169). Although initially entangled in passive nihilism, with life steeped in the horror of darkness, loneliness, and the specter of destruction and decay, Farrokhzad's poetic journey reveals a transformative growth

and resilience. She not only refuses to accept decline but, empowered by the force of love, transforms it into a fervent existence (Hoghooghi 40 & 39): “When... / Out of anxious temples of my desire / Fountains of blood burst forth... / I realized, I must, I must, I must / I must love crazily” (Farrokhzad 366 & 365). Over time, Farrokhzad confronts and embraces even the ugliest and most painful moments of life with full consciousness and awareness (Zarrinkoob 691). In the poem “Life,” she laments her past resentment toward life: “What a pity for those days when I, with anger / Looked at you as an enemy / I thought your deception was absurd / I left you / I wasted you” (Farrokhzad 220). She joyfully acknowledges the entirety of life, its joys and sorrows, black and white, and even its futility, proclaiming to life: “Oh, my life, it is I who still / I am full of you in spite of emptiness / I do not think of tearing the strings / I do not intend to run away from you /.../ I am full of black songs / I am full of white songs / Thousands of sparks of need / From thousands of sparks of hope /.../ I love... / I love whatever your name is on it” (338).

## 5. Conclusion

Using a trans-gender perspective, Farrokhzad rejected every dualistic structure and gender essentialism, and reached Nietzsche's Dionysian female culture by a gradual and evolutionary character. According to "typology of women" in Nietzsche's writings, the tragic vision is determined in the theory of the “Dionysian woman” (desire for power) after passing through the stages of "desire for illusion” and "desire for truth". On the other hand, in accordance with Farrokhzad's aesthetic approach, this potentiality within her poetic corpus serves as a manifestation of the “transformations of the soul” delineated by Nietzsche, progressing from the stage of submission (camel) through rebellion and destruction (lion) to ultimately attain the stage of innocent creation (child). Using an analytical-descriptive method, this research follows the manifestation of this transformative paradigm, i.e., reaching Dionysian tragic vision and innocent creation in Farrokhzad's poetry in his non-theoretical and non-metaphysical vision manifested in two types of poetic expression: “erotic expression” and “rebellious expression.”

According to Farrokhzad's poetic vision, the basics and aspects of erotic expression in her poetry are: challenging and disrupting the traditional masculine love and male poetic culture; the poets' struggle against and enmity towards the traditional moral principles that governed society, whether religious or customary in the unique cultural-philosophical context of the contemporary era as one of the prominent themes during the years 1953-1961; overcoming the feeling of failure and social and political frustration that led to diverse responses among them: while some sought solace in taverns within their imaginary and real realms, others turned to erotic poetry as a manifestation of bidding farewell to the ideals of certainty and dogma, and seeking refuge in the transient

moments of intoxication and sexual desires; departing from metaphysical value systems and a reevaluation of values to underscore the significance of the body and earthly existence over the spiritual and celestial realm within her poetic vision. In addition, her tendency to rebellious expression is expressed in both positive and negative ways; According to Nietzsche's tragic culture the negative rebellion embodied by the "lion", is a defense mechanism rooted in fear, weakness, and despair. Consequently, this stage is characterized as a "negative and passive rebellion" until it transforms into a philosophical disposition and attains the status of "aesthetic justification of life."

In Farrokhzad's poetry rebellious expression often manifests as gender or initial rebellion in which she either negates the male presence or serves as a defensive shield, adopting deceptive and delusional facades, resonated with the first and second types among the three Nietzschean archetypes of women. In her second period of poetry, which culminates in her final two works, *Another Birth* and *Let's Believe in the Beginning of the Cold Season*, Farrokhzad achieves dynamism and maturity, evolving into a thoughtful and creative poet who corresponds to the third Nietzschean archetype of woman, the "Dionysian woman". At this stage, her rebellious expression appears in the form of "trans-gender rebellion in Dionysian unity" and "philosophical rebellion in desacralizing and humanism." In "trans-gender rebellion," Farrokhzad seeks oneness with her beloved and life and in "philosophical rebellion in desacralizing," she seeks a path to "metaphorical truth," and an "aesthetic justification of life." An exploration of the imprint of the "love of fate" concept in Farrokhzad's verse is therefore presented as a derivative outcome of this intellectual insight.

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## Notes

1. This is a part of professor Farzaneh Milani's speech about Forough Farrokhzad. (See: Milani F. *Forough Farrokhzad: Literary Biography with Unpublished Letters*, 2016, pp. 144, 206.)
2. This is a part of the poem "Green Illusion" from Farrokhzad's *Another Birth*.
3. The coup d'etat of 28 August (1332) is one of the most controversial events in the contemporary history of Iran during the Pahlavi dynasty, which took place against the National Front of Iran, whose main base was Mohammad Mossadegh. (See Gaziurovsky M. G. & Bern M. *Mossadegh and the Coup*, 2005; also see Maki, H. *The Coup d'etat of 28 August and its Subsequent Events*, 1999).
4. Nietzsche calls Dionysus ecstatic or drunklike confirmation of whole of life, even the most horrific sufferings; Feeling the need for destruction; And then the eternal will for fertility and creation through the vortex of instability and suffering (*Power* 775). In other words, "Dionysus, the goddess of the verve and intoxication and pleasure, represents a kind of turbulent and intoxicating energy that threatens the cohesion of any formal structure and seeks to eliminate the formed individuality and to reunite with the inner core of Nature" (Spinks 39).
5. See: Milani F. *Forough Farrokhzad: Literary Biography with Unpublished Letters*, 2016, pp. 144, 206.
6. The film takes an insinuating look at the leprosy-stuck colony of Tebriz in Iran, which has been completely neglected by the society. See Farrokhzad, F. "The House Is Black" (A Documentary Film), 1962, Tabriz, Iran.

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