



## Translation and Poetic Recreation: Examining the European Roots of Iraj Mirza's 'Qalb-e Mâdar'

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### Abstract

During the first decades of the 20th century, Iran underwent a transformative phase spurred by the emergence of local periodicals. Intellectuals and modernists in the country, drawing inspiration from the social and cultural developments in Europe, actively engaged in defining and supervising cultural and artistic modernism in Iran. One such influential journal was *Irânšahr*, which, much like its foreign counterparts, sought to mirror the progress and advances in the European world. *Irânšahr* set itself apart by initiating a literary competition to deepen its engagement with European literature. This competition invited Iranian authors to create new literary works based on extracts from Western literary pieces. This article specifically analyzes a publication resulting from this initiative, namely "Qalb-e Mâdar", a poem by Iraj Mirza, recognized as one of his best creations. Our analysis commences with a detailed examination of Iraj's poem and the foreign sources that inspired it. Subsequently, we conduct a comparative study between the two texts. The objective is to uncover how the Iranian poet, Iraj Mirza, not only drew inspiration from Western literature but also managed to recreate the text in a way that seamlessly aligned with the poetic and cultural conventions of the Iranian language. This exploration aims to shed light on the processes through which the Iranian poet skillfully adapted the text to cater to the preferences of his Iranian readers. However, it is essential to approach this assessment with caution. While acknowledging the prowess of the Iranian poet in adapting foreign influences, deeming his work a universal model for literary modernization may pose challenges.

Keywords: Translation, Literary Modernism, Poetry, Foreign Literature

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## Introduction

In the wake of concerted efforts by the Iranian state in the 19th century to embrace Western knowledge, the nation embarked on a transformative journey, welcoming European sciences and literatures. The establishment of *Dar ul-Funun* (Polytechnic College) and the introduction of the printing press, emblematic of this newfound openness, laid the foundation for the pivotal practice of translation – an immediate conduit to foreign intellectual reservoirs.

The advent of French literature, distinguished by its originality and novelty, found a warm reception among Iranians. Promptly, the integration of novel genres, such as novels and theater, began to shape the contours of Iranian literature. Influenced by this cultural exchange, certain modernists took the initiative to scrutinize both the poetic and societal values embedded in the works of Iranian authors. This introspection prompted an invitation to the nation's writers to reevaluate and recalibrate their literary endeavors in light of these evolving influences.

Henceforth, we witness the inception of literary modernization in Iran through influential figures such as Akhondzadeh, Agha Khan Kermani, and Malkom Khan. Inspired by French literature, they advocate for infusing Persian poetry with French influences. This movement starts by highlighting the integrity of French literature and urges Iranian writers to find common ground between the two. This involves making straightforward comparisons between Persian and French literature, praising the universal aspects of the latter, and offering critiques of Persian poetry, especially contemporary works. The movement is a twofold effort: appreciating French literature's integrity while encouraging Iranian writers to transform their own literary expressions.

Certainly, achieving a meaningful synthesis between two literatures with distinct historical, poetic, and social characteristics necessitated thorough studies of poetic models and relevant theories. However, in this initial phase, Iranian intellectuals overlooked the essential measures and steps required for such a synthesis. They limited themselves to social criticisms, neglecting to address the differences that might evoke resistance to establishing a meaningful connection between these two literary traditions.

This initial attempt had an impact on other voices, and soon we witness its influence in the emergence of the first Iranian journals in the early 20th century. Influential Iranian writers of that era, inspired by 20th-century literature, set a goal to modernize literature in Iran. Among the early advocates for literary change, translation was deemed the best source of inspiration from the "new" (Western) literary movements and seen as the quickest route to embrace literary modernity. For these reformists, translation represented an effective means to reconsider "Persian poetic art and the style of *qodamâs*" (~the classic predecessors). Their hope was that by adopting this approach, they could infuse the spirit of 20th-century European literature into Persian literature (Dâneškadeh, 1918, pp. 2-3).

*Bahâr* magazine, a product of the initial group aiming to rejuvenate Persian literature, made its debut in 1910. Following its lead, *Dâneškadeh* magazine assumed the role in 1918, taking on the task of organizing the efforts of the modernists and charting the appropriate path to achieve their goals. The members of the first literary association in Iran, the *Jarg-e Adabi Dâneškadeh* (*Dâneškadeh*

Association), used their eponymous journal to present models for future publications, offering guidance in the process of modernizing Persian literature. Consequently, numerous journals, including *Irânšahr*, *Âyandeh*, and *Armaqân*, actively engaged in this initiative, each striving to contribute to the cause.

Concerning the magazine *Irânšahr*, which is the focus of this research, we will first contextualize it within its contemporary landscape below. Subsequently, we will provide a succinct overview of its publications. Then, we will delve into the renowned translation by Iraj Mirza's, the poem "Qalb-e Mâdar", an exemplary publication celebrated for its successful adaptation of foreign text to Persian literary conventions, while acknowledging the potential foreign sources. Our objective is to identify both the similarities and dissimilarities between the source and target texts. In conclusion, a comparative analysis of the texts is pursued to highlight the structural nuances of Iraj's poem and the alterations he introduces to align it with the expectations and preferences of his Iranian readers. This comparative examination is intended to yield objective insights into the theories and practices of the early Iranian literati, who, through the translation of foreign works, sought to reinvigorate Persian literature.

Regarding the emergence of literary journals in Iran and their pivotal role in shaping contemporary Persian literature, it's crucial to acknowledge the contributions of literary historians who meticulously document the literary activities driving the evolution of Persian literature. Notable works in this regard include Yahya Aryanpour's *Az sabâ tâ Nimâ* [From Saba to Nima] and Shafiei Kadkani's *Bâ cerâq-o âyine: Dar jostojû-ye rišehâ-ye tahavvol-e še'r-e moâser-e Irân* [With lamp and mirror: In search of the origins of revolution in Iranian contemporary poetry]. These works, as their titles suggest, adopt a historical perspective, focusing on events rather than analyzing their literary implications. In contrast, Issaiyan's (2017) article, "Le rôle de la revue *Irânšahr* dans l'avènement de la révolution littéraire en Iran" [The role of *Irânšahr* magazine in the advent of literary revolution in Iran], delves into the significance of Iranian journals in the modernization of Persian poetry. While Issaiyan touches upon Iraj's poetry, our commitment here lies in a comprehensive examination—reviewing all relevant texts to gain a nuanced understanding of the outcomes of this poetic inspiration and its contributions to Persian poetry. Despite the pivotal role played by literary journals on the cusp of literary reforms in Iran, influencing the spirit and literary conception in the country, this domain remains insufficiently explored.

### **Irânšahr as a Mirror of Modern Thought**

Four years following the establishment of *Dâneškadeh*, on June 26, 1922, the inaugural issue of *Irânšahr* magazine hit the stands. Printed in Berlin, Germany, and distributed across forty cities in Iran, the periodical, introduced as a bimonthly by its publisher and editor-in-chief, Hossein Kazemzadeh, was, in practice, released monthly (Aryanpour, 1993, p. 234). *Irânšahr* spanned four volumes, covering the years 1922-1923, 1923-1924, 1924-1925, and 1926-1927. Notably, the journal's European publication bestowed upon it a significant role in establishing and expanding the cultural, particularly literary, interface between the Iranian and European realms. Given that the majority of its editors and contributors resided in Europe, they perceived themselves as intermediaries between European knowledge and art and the cultural roots of their homeland. This positioning underscored *Irânšahr*'s unique role in facilitating a bridge between Iranian and European intellectual and artistic spheres.

The cover of the journal read, "*Irânšahr*, The Literary and Scientific Journal," and what set it apart from its Iranian counterparts was how it positioned itself as a simultaneous bridge between Iranian and Western knowledge and literature. This distinctive feature is evident in its diverse publications,

encompassing literature, linguistics, philosophy, sociology, biographies, and the qualifications of notable figures. The journal also delved into original and even surprising themes, such as *Jahân-e zanân* [World of Women]. What distinguished *Irânšahr* further was its consistent effort to maintain a well-balanced representation of articles related to both the Western and Iranian worlds. To a considerable extent, the journal aspired to reflect the artistic, literary, and scientific contributions of both the Iranian and Western spheres, thereby positioning itself as a mirror that captured the cultural and intellectual output of these two worlds.

Assessing the European content of *Irânšahr* in terms of author names, themes covered, and the translation of published extracts poses a challenge. However, the significance attributed to this content by the editor is evident in articles such as the one titled “Vaz-e hâzer-e Iran va asbâb-e enqelâb” [The current situation in Iran and the conditions of the revolution] (*Irânšahr*, 1984, pp. 283-296). In this piece, Kazemzadeh portrays France as a model nation for modernist Iranians. To substantiate this comparison, the author draws attention to historical similarities between the two countries. He goes as far as asserting the presence of social, cultural, and political conditions in Iran akin to those that led to the Great French Revolution. Moreover, the author anticipates the imminent realization of a revolution in Iran following the French model (*Irânšahr*, 1984, p. 286).

Beyond explicit affirmations reflecting the journal's reformist stance, there were texts that revealed the authors' intent to introduce European knowledge achievements to Iran. In the realm of literature, *Irânšahr* pursued its objectives through two sections: *adabiyât* (Literature) and *qesmat-e lesâni* (Language section), where Persian poetry, both classical and contemporary, was selectively published. These poetic verses often came with brief comments that assessed and highlighted the poetic values embedded in each poem. It is worth noting that alongside the classical poetry selections, there were *aš'âr-e mansur* (prose poems) that likely resulted from the free translation of foreign poetry. This assumption arises from the absence of any mention of Iranian authors, similar to what was observed in the magazine *Bahâr* (*Irânšahr*, 1984, pp. 253-255). Notably, unlike ‘poetic prose’ found in the Persian literary tradition, which was practiced by classic authors, ‘prose poetry’ was not seen in classical Persian literature.

Regarding foreign literature and the editorial policy aimed at expanding literary interaction between Iran and Europe, *Irânšahr* embraced unique programs to foster the reform of Persian literature. Various headings were dedicated to this purpose, including *mosâbeqe-ye adabi* [literary competition], *naqd-e adabi* [literary criticism] and *nomune-i az adabiyât-e qarb* [An example from the literature of the West].

According to the magazine, *naqd-e adabi* [literary criticism] aimed to introduce readers to the so-called “Western” methodology. In this context, the journal presented and analyzed works published in Iran that, in their view, drew inspiration from European sources. The authors' residence in Europe facilitated easy and quick access to these sources, enabling them to make meaningful comparisons. For instance, in the 8th issue of the 3rd volume, Mohammad Ghazvini, a contributor living in Paris, authored an extensive review under the title “naqd-e adabi” [literary criticism]. He scrutinized two recently published works in Iran: Zoka-ol-Molk's *Târix-e Irân* (history of Iran) and Abbas Eghbal Ashtiani's *Târix-e adabi* [literary history], previously featured in the magazine *Dâneškadeh*. Ghazvini, in his review, criticized Zoka-ol-Molk's work for its perceived lack of methodology, while praising Ashtiani's research for its originality and the application of what Ghazvini considered a modern methodology (*Irânšahr*, 1984, pp. 462-478).

*Irânšahr* also featured translations contributed by readers, particularly those inspired by or borrowed from Western works. In the preface to *nomune-i az adabiyât-e qarb* [An example from the literature of the West], the editor references the pivotal phrase from Mohammad Taghi Bahar's manifesto

'Marâm-e mâ' [Our Principle] in the magazine *Dâneškadeh*. This underscores the theoretical and practical connection between these two journals.

In the literary revolution, the actualization of ideas and visions matters more than the renewal of expression and form. It is proper for Iranian scholars and poets to resort to translation and borrowing ideas from Western poets; discovering the true value of the text and giving importance to ideas and meaning rather than form is essential if *a new soul is to be breathed into the body of Persian literature*. We await other examples from Western literature (*Irânšhar*, 1984, pp. 462-478, author's translation, emphasis added).

Interestingly enough, the bolded sentence reiterates the principle articulated in the editorial of the inaugural issue of *Dâneškadeh* (1918, pp. 1-5). Regarding the section '*mosâbeqe-ye adabi* [literary competition], it served as a literary program in which the magazine proposed a topic or a free translation of a foreign poem, inviting readers to compose a poem in Persian verse. In this competition, the poet who crafted the best poem was awarded by the magazine, and the winning poem would be published in the journal. Among the translations accepted by the review was Iraj Mirza's poem "Qalb-e Mâdar" [Mother's Heart]. This poem received acclaim not only from the journal but also from Iranian critics for its originality and success in adapting foreign poetry into Persian. However, the question arises: What was the original text of this poem, and how can we assess Iraj's efforts to recreate it in Persian?

#### Iranization of Foreign Poetry or Modernization of Persian Poetry?

To participate in this competition, Iraj Mirza (1873-1924) composed one of the most renowned poems of his career, "Qalb-e Mâdar" [Mother's Heart]. In the 4th issue of the 2nd volume of the magazine, three poems, including "Qalb-e Mâdar," were presented in free translation. Readers were encouraged to rewrite these free translations in verse if they wished to enter the poetic art contest (*Irânšahr*, 1984, pp. 226-228). Here is one of these inspirational texts, attributed to a certain Shabnam, which inspired Iraj's translation, along with its English translation by us.

شب مهتاب بود. عاشق و معشوق در کنار جوئی نشسته مشغول راز و نیاز بودند. دختر از غرور حسن مست و جوان از آتش عشق در سوز و گداز بود. جوان گفت: ای محبوب من آیا هنوز در صافی محبت و خلوص عشق من شبهه‌ای داری؟ من که همه چیز خود حتی گرانبهاترین دارائی خویش یعنی قلب خود را نثار راه عشق تو کرده‌ام. دختر جواب داد: دل در راه عشق باختن نخستین قدم است. تو دارای یک گوهر قیمته‌داری هستی که گرانبهاتر از قلب تست و تنها آن گوهر، نشان صدق عشق تو می‌تواند بشود. من آن گوهر را از تو می‌خواهم و آن، دل مادر تست. اگر دل مادرت را کنده بمن آوردی من بصدق عشق تو یقین حاصل خواهم کرد و خود را پایبند مهر تو خواهم ساخت. این حرف در ته روح و قلب جوان دل‌باخته، طوفانی بر پا کرد ولی قوت عشق بر مهر مادر غالب آمده، از جا برخاست و در آنحال جنون، رفته قلب مادر خود را کنده راه معشوق پیش گرفت. با آن شتاب که راه می‌پیمود ناگاه پیش لغزیده بزمین افتاد دل مادر از دستش رها شده روی خاک غلطید و در آنحال صدائی از آن دل برخاست که می‌گفت: پسر جان! آیا صدمه‌ای برایت رسید.  
(*Irânšahr*, 1984, pp. 226-227)

[Literal Translation: It was a moonlit night. The lover and the beloved were sitting by a water stream and were busy exchanging secrets and needs. The girl was drunk with the pride of beauty, and the young man was burning with the fire of love. The young man said, 'My beloved, do you still have doubts about the purity of my love? I have sacrificed everything, even my most precious possession, that is, my heart, for your love'. The girl answered, 'The heart is the first step on the way to falling in love. You have a precious gem that is more precious than your heart and only that gem can show the truth of your love. I want that gem from you and that is your mother's heart. If you tear out your mother's heart and bring it to me, I will be sure of the truth of your love and I will make myself loyal to you'. These words created a storm in the



depths of the soul and the heart of the young man in love, but the strength of love prevailed over the mother's love, so he got up, and in that state of madness, tore out his mother's heart, and left toward his beloved. With the speed he was walking, he suddenly slipped and fell to the ground. The mother's heart was dropped from her hand and fell on the ground, when a voice came from that heart saying: "My dear son! Did you get hurt?"]

### "Qalb-e Mâdar" by Iraj Mirza

Iraj Mirza, also known as Jalâl-al-Mamâlek [Glory of the Kingdoms], was a scion of the Qajar family and received his education at *Dar ul-Funun* in Tabriz. Encouraged and supported by the future Prime Minister Amir Nezam Garusi, he embarked on the study of French under the guidance of Lampre, a French teacher at the Court. Iraj initiated his poetic career at a young age alongside the diplomat Hassan Garusi. His fame primarily stems from his satirical poetry, a mischievous tool he wielded to critique the societal norms of his time. Iraj's body of work encompasses *qasidas* (odes), *qit'as* (literary fragments), *ghazals*, and *mathnavis*, always crafted with meticulous adherence to Persian metrics and versification. Themes such as patriotism, public education, and the liberation of women recurrently find expression in Mirza's poetic endeavors.

Choosing the *qit'a* form for "Qalb-e Mâdar," Iraj Mirza reinterprets Shabnam's free translation. The *qit'a* is a form within the Persian metric system, derived from *qasida*. "Qalb-e Mâdar" is thus crafted with a systematic metric organization, featuring the following the rhyme scheme: ---X ---A // ---X ---A, with the second hemistiches rhyming. The translation consists of a total of 18 verses or 36 hemistiches.

While Shabnam's translation opens with a lovers' conversation set in a romantic scene, Iraj Mirza, in contrast, chooses to commence his text with the beloved's message to her lover. Here is Iraj Mirza's rendition, followed by our English translation.

(Iraj Mirza, 1963, p. 193) قلب مادر

۱	داد معشوقه به عاشق پیغام	که کند مادر تو با من جنگ
۲	هر کجا بیندم از دور کند	چهره پر چین و جبین پر آرنج
۳	با نگاه غضب آلود زند	بر دل نازک من تیر خدنگ
۴	از در خانه مرا طرد کند	همچو سنگ از دهن قلماسنگ
۵	مادر سنگدلت تا زنده ست	شهد در کام من و تست شرنگ
۶	نشوم یکدل و یک رنگ تو را	تا نسازی دل او از خون رنگ
۷	گر تو خواهی به وصالم برسی	باید این ساعت بی خوف و درنگ
۸	روی و سینه تنگش پدری	دل برون آری از آن سینه تنگ
۹	گرم و خونین به منش باز آری	تا برد زاینه قلیم رنگ
۱۰	عاشق بی خرد ناهنجار	نه بل آن فاسق بی عصمت و ننگ
۱۱	حرمت مادری از یاد ببرد	خیره از باده و دیوانه ز بنگ
۱۲	رفت و مادر را افکند به خاک	سینه بدرید و دل آورد به چنگ
۱۳	قصد سر منزل معشوق نمود	دل مادر به کفش چون نارنگ
۱۴	از قضا خورد دم در به زمین	واندکی سوده شد او را آرنج
۱۵	وان دل گرم که جان داشت هنوز	اوفتاد از کف آن بی فرهنگ
۱۶	از زمین باز چو برخاست نمود	پی برداشتن آن آهنگ
۱۷	دید کز آن دل آغشته به خون	آید آهسته برون این آهنگ:
۱۸	آه دست پسرم یافت خراش!	آخ پای پسرم خورد به سنگ!

Literal English Translation:

### Mother's Heart

- |    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | The beloved gave a message to her lover,        | Saying, your mother is at war with me;                        |
| 2  | Wherever she sees me from afar,                 | She frowns and her face wrinkles in anger.                    |
| 3  | With her furious gaze, she strikes              | My delicate heart with arrows                                 |
| 4  | She pushes me away from her doorstep            | Like a stone shot from a sling                                |
| 5  | As long as your stone-hearted mother is alive,  | The sweet nectar of life will taste like poison in our mouths |
| 6  | My heart will not unite with yours              | Until you smear her heart with blood                          |
| 7  | If you want to unite with me                    | You must, at this hour, without fear and hesitation           |
| 8  | Go and tear her tight chest open                | Rip the heart out from that tight chest                       |
| 9  | And bring it back to me while warm and bleeding | So that it will remove the rust from the mirror of my heart   |
| 10 | The witless, reprehensible lover                | No, rather, that shameless, disgraceful rascal                |
| 11 | Forgot the respect due to the mother            | Out of his senses, intoxicated by drinks and opium            |
| 12 | Went there and threw the mother on the floor    | Ripped open her chest and took out her heart                  |
| 13 | Headed to his lover's house                     | With his mother's heart in his hand like an orange            |
| 14 | Ironically, he fell on the way out              | And scratched his elbow a little                              |
| 15 | And the warm heart which was still beating      | Fell out of the hands of that uncultured man                  |
| 16 | As he stood back up, again                      | He reached out to grab it                                     |
| 17 | When he heard that from the bloodied heart      | Came this soft melody:  |
| 18 | Oh my! My son scratched his hand!               | Ouch! My son tripped on a stone!                              |

Gholam-Hossein Youssefi, a critic and Persian poetry expert, underscores the significance of "Qalb-e Mâdar" in the following manner: "It is difficult to find a middle school or high school student [in Iran] who has not heard this poem several times. [...] In cultural ceremonies, 'Qalb-e Mâdar' is one of the poems always recited" (Youssefi, 2009, p. 364; author's translation). Considering the numerous analyses conducted on this poem, it is not far-fetched to acknowledge "Qalb-e Mâdar" as a successful exemplar of contemporary poetry.

### The Sources of "Qalb-e Mâdar"

Mohammad-Jafar Mahjub, in the first edition of Iraj Mirza's works, suggests a German origin (Iraj Mirza, 1963, p. 272). In a subsequent edition (Iraj Mirza, 1989), he associates the source of this poem with a French folk song. The reference to the German origin is connected to Shabnam's translation, as quoted above. Regarding the folk song mentioned by the said researcher, it is a song found at the end of the novel *La Glu* by Jean Richepin (1849-1926):

Y avait un'fois un pauv'gas,  
Et lon lan laire'  
Et lon lan la,  
Y avait un'fois un pauv'gas  
Qu'aimait cell' qui n'laimait pas.

El' lui dit: Apport' moi d'main,  
Et lon lan laire,  
Et lon lan la,  
El' lui dit: Apport' moi d'main

L'cœur de ta mère pour mon chien.

Va chez sa mère et la tue,  
Et lon lan laire,  
Et lon lan la,  
Va chez sa mère et la tue,  
Lui prit l'cœur et s'en courut.

Comme il courait, il tomba,  
Et lon lan laire,  
Et lon lan la,  
Comme il courait, il tomba,  
Et par terre l'cœur roula.

Et pendant que l'cœur roulait,  
Et lon lan laire,  
Et lon lan la,  
Et pendant que l'cœur roulait,  
Entendit l'cœur qui parlait.

Et l'cœur disait en pleurant,  
Et lon lan laire,  
Et lon lan la,  
Et l'cœur disait en pleurant:  
T'es-tu fait mal, mon enfant ?  
(Richepin, 1881, p. 124)

Indeed, three Iranian researchers have delved into the origin of "Qalb-e Mâdar" and assessed Iraj Mirza's work as a translator. Mahjub, the editor of Iraj's works, draws a comparison between this poem and Richepin's song, concluding that Richepin's song lacks in qualities compared to Iraj's version (Iraj Mirza, 1989, p. 17).

Secondly, Gholam Hossein Youssefi, commending the poet for his translation and highlighting the stylistic and moral values of his text, characterizes Iraj as a "poet venerating the mother." Youssefi asserts that "Qalb-e Mâdar" surpasses the German text in strength and beauty. In his view, within Iraj's poetic oeuvre, this poem stands out as the most precious and memorable. Youssefi believes the poem possesses a force that "remains imperishable and which will be read and recited by Iranians as long as the mother and maternal love exist" (Youssefi, 2009, p. 369; author's translation).

A third analysis of "Qalb-e Mâdar" is presented in "Recasting Persian Poetry" by Karimi-Hakkak. Through an examination of the intertextual relationships among the three versions, the researcher identifies specific stylistic and linguistic processes employed by the translator. Karimi-Hakkak concludes that the Iranian poet successfully adapted the source text to the moral and religious conventions of the target society. In his analysis, he aptly contextualizes the mentality and general discourse of Iranian society at the beginning of the 20th century, noting that literary reform, among other aspects, was characterized by a literary conception that viewed borrowing from foreign literature as a means of enriching, under certain circumstances, the tradition and richness of Persian poetic art (Karimi-Hakkak, 2005/1995, p. 299).



While acknowledging the valuable analyses of the mentioned researchers, we hold the opinion that the origin of this borrowing is neither the anonymous German text nor Richepin's song, as the two cited sources bear little affinity with Iraj Mirza's poem. As previously noted, *Irânšahr* does not furnish the reference of the source text or an explanation for their selection. Therefore, we are still confronted with a borrowing for which we lack any concrete reference.

### "Un Coeur de Mere": A Poem in the Lorraine Dialect

In our quest to identify a source text more aligned with "Qalb-e Mâdar" than the previously mentioned ones, we stumbled upon a poem in the dialect of Lorraine, a region in France, titled "Un coeur de mère" [A Mother's Heart], which bears a closer resemblance to Iraj Mirza's work. This French poem was published in the bi-weekly newspaper *Le Pays lorrain* under the heading "Conte de la montagne" [Mountain Tale], six years prior to the publication of Iraj's translation in *Irânšahr*; i.e., in 1914. Below, we provide the original version and author's translation:

	C'irre in' peur' boube, enne mahhe béïesse, Po vouer li suès, a virau lan ;	C'étaient un pauvre garçon, une méchante fille Pour voir les pareils, on irait loin
5	Il irre setio, lo paure effant, Mais lé, elle iré mahhe comme enne vouèse. «Viné dchî no, te s'rais me femme	Il était niais, le pauvre enfant Mais, elle était mauvaise comme une [guêpe]. «Viens chez nous, tu seras ma femme,
	Te m'quenas, te sais que j' t'aime bîn' Dje s'rai pu to vaula que t'n homme	Tu me connais, tu sais que je t'aime bien Je serais plus ton valet que ton mari
10	Et jamais dje n'te r'fuserai rin' — Dje vouraille lo vouer po lo craire; Ball's premasses ne cota rin';	Et jamais je ne te refuserai rien. — Je voudrais le voir pour le croire; Belles promesses ne coûtent rien;
	Epout' me lo coeur de té mère Po lo botè queure è mo dchin'».	Apporte-moi le cœur de ta mère Je le ferai cuire pour mon chien».
15	Po pière è le béïesse maudite I toueu sè mère, lo malheureux. I li pouteu lo coeur bin' vite.	Pour plaire à la fille maudite Il tua sa mère, le malheureux Il lui porta le cœur bien vite.
	Mais o corant, v'ia qu'i dchéheu. Et comme il irre en train de s'piande,	Mais en courant, voilà qu'il tomba. Et comme il était en train de se plaindre,
20	Vala qu'il oïe o se r'levant Lo coeur de sè mère que li d'mande: «Ousque t'es mau, dis, m'n effant?»	Voilà qu'il entend en se relevant Le cœur de sa mère qui lui demande: Où as-tu mal, dis, mon enfant?»

J. Valentine (*Le Pays lorrain*, 1914, p. 51)

They were a poor boy, a bad girl  
To see the like, we would go far  
He was silly, the poor child  
But she was bad as a wasp.  
"Come to us, you will be my wife,  
You know me, you know that I like you  
I would be more your valet than your husband  
And I will never deny you anything.

"I would like to see it to believe it;  
Beautiful promises cost nothing;  
Bring me your mother's heart  
I will cook it for my dog".  
To please the cursed girl  
He killed his mother, the unfortunate  
He took her heart very quickly.  
But while running, he fell.  
And as he was complaining,  
That's what he hears when he gets up  
The heart of his mother who asks him:  
Where does it hurt, say, my child? (Author's Translation)

While the four versions, including *Irânšahr's*, Richepin's, Valentin's (dialectal version), and Iraj's, exhibit similarities in certain features, they also differ in others. To scrutinize the potential origin of Iraj Mirza's translation of "Qalb-e Mâdar," we conduct a comparative analysis of the four cited versions.

### A Comparative Analysis of the Four Texts

The four texts share a common subject, yet certain dissimilarities set them apart. Let us begin with Shabnam's translation published in *Irânšahr*. In that version, the description of the opening scene and the dialogue between the two characters comprises seven verses out of the thirteen that make up the entire translation. This beginning, which intensifies the romantic and sentimental aspect of the story, is absent in all other versions. Moreover, this version is distinguished not only by its prose form but also by the lack of information about the characters, unlike the other versions where we find direct judgments of the poets on the characters. In the two French versions, the judgment is evident right at the beginning of the text, while in the dialectal version, it is conveyed through the adjectives '*niais*' (stupid / inane) for the boy and '*méchante*' (wicked / bad) for the girl. In Richepin's version, the boy is called '*pauv'gars*' (poor guy), and the girl is not described in any way. In contrast, in Iraj's version, this judgment is positioned in the middle of the text, expressed in the verse, "*The witless, reprehensible lover // No, rather, that shameless, disgraceful rascal.*"

Regarding the attitude of the characters, the Iranian translator and poet aim to provide justifications for the young man, thus softening the severity of the lover's actions in their versions. According to Shabnam, it is the creation of "*a storm in the depths of the soul and the heart*" that puts the young man in a "*state of madness.*" However, in Iraj Mirza's version, the lover is "*out of his senses, intoxicated by drinks and opium,*" causing him to "*forget the respect due to the mother.*" On the other hand, in the dialectal version, the poet, without seeking pretexts, attributes the lover's actions to his fatal destiny, qualified as unhappy (*malheureux*). Richepin remains silent on this subject.

The notable difference between Richepin's song and the other versions lies in the introductory phase of the story. This crucial part, where the lover's action is presented as the necessary condition for love to be realized between the lovers, is entirely omitted in Richepin's song, while it constitutes a significant and essential part in the other versions. In the dialectal version, this sequence comprises 8 verses out of twenty (5-13); in Iraj's poem, it is presented in 9 of eighteen verses (1-9), and in Shabnam's version, it is integrated into the descriptive beginning of the story. As evident in the texts, this sequence constitutes the essential element governing the morality and message of the story. Its

absence in Richepin's version leads us to exclude Richepin's version as the possible origin of Iraj Mirza's poem.

Certain disparities between Shabnam's version and those of Iraj Mirza and Valentin suggest that Iraj Mirza did not solely rely on *Irânšahr*'s version for his translation. In the version "Un cœur de mère" as well as in "Qalb-e Mâdar," the story is initiated by one of the two (the couple) sending a message to the other: "Come to our house, you will be my wife" in "Un cœur de mère" and "The beloved gave a message to her lover" in "Qalb-e Mâdar". This message, from which the motif of the text unfolds, involving the rivalry and jealousy between the love of the beloved and the love of the mother, is absent in the *Irânšahr* version.

In the poems mentioned, it becomes evident that it is in connection with this motif that the poets craft the atmosphere of the story, leading to the man losing his reason and eventually committing a crime. Otherwise, the direct declaration of such a wish, as seen in Richepin's version, could appear as a matricidal desire. In Iraj's and the dialectal version, the story commences with the girl attempting to manipulate the desires and emotions of the young man. The similarity between the foundation and the opening of "Un cœur de mère" and "Qalb-e Mâdar" by Iraj Mirza reaffirms that Iraj likely had access, in addition to the prose version, to the French poem, especially given the poet's impeccable command of the language of Molière. Iraj Mirza's linguistic proficiency in French and his familiarity with French literature are evident through his other translations and borrowings from the French language throughout his works.

Considering the differences between "Un cœur de mère" and "Qalb-e Mâdar" in terms of the translation strategies employed by Iraj Mirza to tailor the source text to the culture and literary conventions of the target language, the structural adaptation of the original text is evident. The Iranian poet faithfully adheres to the rules of Persian versification in his poetic creation and does not seek to introduce new changes in his composition. Indeed, the metric and rhythmic characteristics of "Qalb-e Mâdar" align seamlessly with the Persian *aruz* (poetic meter) system.

Regarding the variations in the transfer of the text from the source language to the target language, in contrast to the French version, the Persian version has the woman sending the message to her lover. This change can be attributed to both cultural differences and the Iranian poet's intention to redefine the role of women in triggering the conflict. This, in turn, affects the legitimacy of the woman's gesture toward her lover. In the French version, the lover wishes to test the sincerity of his beloved, expressed through phrases like "I would like to see it to believe it // Beautiful promises do not cost anything." In Iraj's version, the man is implicitly presented as the fiancé whom the fiancée wishes to visit. It is no longer the lover addressing his beloved; instead, she laments to her lover about her mother-in-law's behavior: "She pushes me away from her doorstep." Thus, the roles of the female characters undergo a shift in the two versions. One seeks to ensure the goodwill of her lover, while the other strives to secure her love life. The latter comments on her plea as follows: "As long as your stone-hearted mother is alive // The sweet nectar of life will taste like poison in our mouths." This shift may be linked to disparities in cultural norms between the two societies. For an Iranian reader of that era, the visit of a fiancé by a fiancée might be more acceptable, especially when extramarital relationships between lovers were not culturally justified. Additionally, the condition set by the beloved might seem indecent to an Iranian reader, whereas the rivalry between a mother-in-law and a daughter-in-law is more familiar and believable. Therefore, Iraj Mirza attempts to subtly modify the narrative to align it with the expectations of his readership.

In fact, to refine the original text by incorporating cultural elements that might be deemed offensive in the target culture, the Iranian poet introduces adaptations that impact both the thematic and narrative dimensions of the story. In one such adaptation, Iraj replaces the notion of the "wicked girl"

intending to “cook” her mother-in-law’s heart “for her dog” with a more plausible motif: “So that it will remove the rust from the mirror of my heart.” This substitution involves exchanging a crude idea for a metaphorical expression drawn from the mystical realm of the Persian language, effectively altering the semantic scope of the text. Consequently, with this new motif, the beloved’s motivation is to purify the heart from *zengars* (rust / impurities), symbolically signifying her desire “to cleanse the heart from the coarseness and misdeeds, typically caused by worldly concerns, through the rays of love, especially those of God” (Anvari, 2003, p. 69).

Iraj Mirza employs the techniques of omission and addition in his translation. Given the cultural sensitivity surrounding the depiction of a dog, considered *najis* (ritually unclean) in the Muslim religion, and its association with the revered image of the mother, the translator likely found this imagery crude and inappropriate. Consequently, he opts to entirely omit this passage from his translation. Additionally, he removes the disparaging descriptions such as “une méchante fille” (a wicked girl) or “mauvaise comme une guêpe” (bad/immoral as a wasp).

To compensate for the deletions, Iraj Mirza extends the original text with additional verses, elaborating on the odious nature of the woman. For instance, in the description of the young man, the translator adds, “The witless, reprehensible lover // No, rather, that shameless, disgraceful rascal [...] Out of his senses, intoxicated by drinks and opium.” Similarly, in the poignant depiction of the final scene, the translator seeks to enhance the emotional impact by introducing interjections such as *âh* (oh my) and *âx* (ouch).

Furthermore, such changes are executed using a language replete with words and expressions characteristic of the Persian lyrical register: *’âšeq* (in love / lover), *ma’šûq* (the beloved), *del-e nâzok* (delicate heart), *sang-del* (stone-hearted), *yek-del* (unanimous / wholehearted), *yek-rang* (frank, honest), *vesâl* (union), creating a brilliant adaptation where all traces of the original text have practically vanished.

Through these ennobling processes, while respecting social and literary conventions, Iraj Mirza crafted a more respectable motif for the story by making significant modifications to the source text, aligning it with the expectations of the target society. By completely altering the original structure and details of the story, Iraj Mirza succeeded in ‘Persianizing’ the foreign text. In essence, he reimagines the original text, transforming it into a nearly entirely new poem that aligns seamlessly with the poetic tradition of his country.

## Conclusion

The magazine *Irânšahr* aimed at the modernization of Persian poetry. In pursuit of this objective, it sought to infuse the spirit of so-called “modern” literature into Persian poetry through the presentation and translation of European literary works. However, considering the strategies employed by the translator in the recreation of “Qalb-e Mâdar”, despite its poetic merits, one cannot deem this text as a successful example of poetic modernization for several reasons. Firstly, because the source texts, being folk literature, do not represent modern French literature. Secondly, the original texts lack significant poetic and stylistic values, preventing an assessment of Iraj Mirza’s skill in translating foreign texts of considerable poetic worth.

Nevertheless, we must commend the translator for the undeniable quality of his translation, showcasing poetic values that undoubtedly align with the literary and cultural conventions of the host society. To compensate for the qualities lacking in the original texts, Iraj Mirza employs various adaptation techniques, including deletion, addition, and substitution. Furthermore, while respecting Persian metrics (*aruz*), he effectively adapts the source text to meet the expectations of the Iranian

reader. Consequently, Iraj Mirza manages to elevate a text of relatively modest poetic value, transforming it into a brilliant piece. It might be more apt to view the outcome of this translation as a complete Iranianization of the foreign text rather than a mere attempt at poetic modernization.

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