مدبینایی
high tide of the eyes

بیژن الهی
bijan elahi

translated by

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Bijan Elahi, the poet whose works are translated here in book form for the first time, was born in 1945 to a wealthy family in Tehran. Elahi studied painting under the guidance of the Iranian painter Javad Hamidi, with two of his paintings accepted for the Paris biennale, before devoting himself exclusively to poetry. For much of his life, Elahi was the leading figure in a circle of young poets who developed the movement known as Other Poetry (she'r-e digar), which was to transform Iranian literary modernism during the 1960s and 1970s. Other Poetry was itself the inheritor of the New Wave poetry movement that marked the highlight of avant-garde poetics in pre-revolutionary Iran.

Although one of the most erudite poets of his lifetime, Elahi never completed a formal education. He took leave of public life early in his career, spending his final three decades immersed in Sufism and poetic creation and translation in his home in northern Tehran. During the last three decades of his life, Elahi neither published his poems nor appeared in public. His work entered the public spotlight after his death from a heart attack in 2010. The young generation of contemporary Iranian poets have turned to Elahi’s verse as a vehicle for new modes of expression and experimentation.

Elahi’s poems were posthumously published in two volumes, from which our translations have been drawn: Vision (2014) and Youths (2015). Youths brings together what the poet calls his “young poems,” many of which had been published in serial form prior to the 1979 revolution. Vision is a collection of four poem cycles that indicate the fullness of Elahi’s contribution to Persian literature.

As a perfectionist unwilling to publish his work in the intellectual climate of Pahlavi Iran and indifferent to fame, Elahi cancelled the distribution of nearly all the two hundred copies of the poem cycle The Dross of The Days, which had been scheduled for publication in 1972. The publisher for this cycle, Fifty-One Publishing House, was an avant-garde publisher managed by the film and literary critic Shamim Bahar, who later became Elahi’s literary executor. The press was best known for its volumes on noted directors such as Pier Paolo Pasolini, Federico Fellini, and Stanley Kubrick. Elahi later also made preparations for the publication of a full collection of poems, entitled Vision and including The Dross of The Days, by this same publisher. Yet he changed his
mind and the collection never appeared. Fifty-One Publishing House was soon thereafter banned, allegedly by the Shah.

Elegant, meditative, and experimental, Elahi’s poetry offers an unprecedented synthesis of the Persian classical poetic styles with the modernism he inherited from Nima Yushij (1895-1960), widely regarded as the founder of modernist Persian poetry, and best known for his formal innovations. Simultaneously, he absorbed world poetry through his renowned translations of Federico Garcia Lorca, T. S. Eliot, Hallaj, Henri Michaux, Pablo Neruda, Arthur Rimbaud, Constantine Cavafy, and Friedrich Hölderlin, among many other major writers. Apart from his innovations that broke new ground in modernist Persian literature, Elahi’s poems are notable for their heterogeneity of forms and themes. His poetry synthesizes old and new, oriental and occidental, religious and secular, and formal and informal, offering a taste of the modernizing mysticism that informed both his personal life and his writing. Elahi crafts into a sophisticated and estranged language a modernist take on the multifaceted legacy of classical Persian poetry: Saëb’s farfetched flights of imagination, Rumi’s passionate lyricism, Khaqani’s enigmatic and erudite compositions, Hafez’s fragmented subject. He also effects a modernist compromise between the lucid naturalism of Nima Yushij and Shamlu’s elegant archaism.

The poetic ambitions of the New Wave poetry of the 1960s generation in Iran were soon drowned out by voices of the revolution that dominated the political and social fervor of 1979, such as Khosro Golsorkhi (executed in 1974) and Saeed Soltanpour (executed in 1981). The 1979 revolution was followed by a decade long war between Iran and Iraq that left no room for or interest in the detached aesthetics of Other Poetry, and which witnessed a turn away from poetry that treated art as a value in itself. Buried, in accordance with his will, in New Bijdeh, a small village perched on the isolated heights of Alborz Mountains in northern Iran, Elahi’s specter haunts Persian poetry today even more visibly than it did during his lifetime. The distinguished Iranian literary critic Qassem Hasheminejad attests that with Elahi’s death, “the Persian language lost a considerable portion of its capabilities...[Elahi] was the most important, the most talented and the most wide-ranging literary figure of the last three decades.”

This bilingual edition gathers together twenty poems from Elahi’s two posthumously published collections, Vision (2014) and Youths (2015). Our translations are based mostly on the Bidgol Publication’s editions, although in some cases we have reverted to the first version of Elahi’s poem.
We have also included our translation of Elahi's scattered writings on the theory and practice of translation. Not included here are Elahi’s numerous and highly innovative translations from the major poets of world literature (see Further Reading for a list of his translations). Each of these translations deserves to be studied on its own terms, by scholars versed in the source and target languages, and it is hoped that future generations will bring to light the uniqueness of Elahi’s legacy as a poet and translator who reconceptualized the boundaries between writing and translation. All footnotes in the poems below, as well as in our translation of Elahi’s prose, have been added by us.

Figure 1: Tomb of Elahi at New Bijdeh. Photograph by Kayvan Tahmasebian.
باور کردم

بش از صدای خروسان
باور کردم
که بلکه‌ای تو
کتاب صحیح را کشود.

از آفتابی که نیامده بود
از اشک که به دیوانه ریخت
دهانت برای من خنده‌های گرمتر داشت.
و خروسان بش از صدای خود دوبازه به خواب شدند
از این که بیدرفتند روزها دیگر با ماست
و این که تا روز مرگ بخشیده شدند
تا پایانی که ما نیز با آن خواهیم بود

باور کردم
سو گند به خواب‌های جوان باور کردم
بی گناهی بلکه‌ای تو را
بی گناهی بر گست
که در نور سپید شدند
سو گند به هر چه سپیدی ست

تنها سرو خیانت کرد
که پزیرفتی همه فصل‌ها بود
Before cocks crowed
I believed
your eyelids
opened dawn's book.

Your mouth held for me
laughter warmer than the unrisen sun,
than the tear, again to be shed.
The cocks fell asleep before they crowed.
They understood they would have other days to crow.
They knew they would be forgiven
when the end comes for us all.

I believed.
I swear by young dreams that I believed
the innocence of your eyelids,
the innocence of leaves,
whitened in light.
I swear by all that is white.

Only the cypress betrayed.
It was courted by every season.
این همه راه به سبیل‌هایی می‌رسید
اگر به تو پا‌سخ می‌دادند.

تو شهری را زاده‌گان خود دانستی
که از دلت بزر گذر بود
و تو را به پا‌سخ گذاشت.

لبهای زنی به گل‌شیند
 در شهری گوچشکر از دلها.
لبهای زنی به سبیل‌های می‌رسد
با کونه‌های سرد شهدای سال
با کونه‌های سرد من
که خورشید بی پا‌سخ روز بود.
All these roads would end in white
if they replied to you.

Your birthplace, you knew, was a town
bigger than your heart
that left you without an answer.

A woman's lips blossoms
in a town smaller than hearts.
A woman's lips end in white,
to the cold cheeks of the year's martyrs,
my cold cheek was a sun
that did not reply.
فال قهوه‌ا

یک موش کوچک
نک موش زیبا
با چشمانی روشن
در دست تو
به سوی قرمزی‌های شیرین

(اندکی بعد
قلب نداری.)
A small mouse
in your hand,
a pretty mouse
with bright eyes
heads toward sweet crimson.

(A bit later
you will be heartless.)

---

2- Tasseography (*fal girt*) is to the practice of predicting the future on the basis of coffee grounds (or related materials), a widespread practice in Iran. The collected poetry (*diwan*) of Hafez was also consulted in this manner. Each episode in this poem involves a specific method through which the future was read from material remnants.
درخت بید در زنگ گی
ورگه‌های سفید به چوبی سرخ
(و این سرخ، خون نیست)
سفر با کشتی
مردی که طلوع می‌بیند
زئی که غروب
از پشت به هم تکه دادن
یک جهره آشان دریاست
سفر با کشتی
A willow tree in life,  
with white veins in red streams  
(and not bloody crimson),  
is a ship's journey.  
A man faces sunrise.  
A woman faces sunset,  
leaning back to back.  
The sea intersects their faces  
on this ship's journey.
زمانتی
پیش از آن که فنیانها را
وارون کنند
این‌هم‌ها گشوده بود
و شنود کی در قالی‌مایارای خود
شکل خی کرده.
TASSEOGRAPHY III

There was a time when
before the cups were
turned upside down
when futures were wide open
and life moved
in forms beyond itself.

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During tasseography, cups are turned upside down in extract coffee grains from the bottom and to predict the future on that basis.
برای تومیخندهم

اتفاقیاً فرشته قرار
شیرت عمرانه خنکش را
برایم دهیاً می‌سازد.

بر تو خم می‌شوم:
رفتن نسمه و جانوران آب
در پوست توست.
و هوا جام جان شایر کیست
که در میان هزار خورشید و هزار سایه‌ی تو
می‌سوزد و شاهد است.

تو خوش‌هاهای سپید خرددالی‌ی منی
که دوباره می‌چینم.
تو انگشتان نخستین منی.
کنار جالی‌های سیر خیار
قرنا می‌خندند:

می‌بینی چگونه برهنه‌اند؟
ختا تأف مرا هنوز نیریده‌اند:
عشت نیز تولیدی تازه
هنوز لازی و خونی ست.
برای تو می‌خندم.

در خانه‌های نزدیک
چراگ‌ها را زودتر افروده‌اند.
هوا میان هزاران چراگ و هزاران سایه‌ی تو
از دوردست تا نزدیک
خاکستر است.
The black locust,\(^4\) angel of the poor
is preparing for us
her cool evening drink.
I bend towards you:
your skin
moves like breeze and water beasts.
The air is a cup of the spirit
of a burning and witnessing moth
between a thousand suns and a thousand shadows of you.

You are the white corn husks of my childhood
that I glean again.
You are my first fingers.
The poor laugh
beside green cucumber bushes.
Do you see how naked I am?
My umbilical cord is uncut.
Like a new birth, my love is
slime and blood.
I laugh for you.

The houses nearby
are lit earlier.
The air between thousands of lamps
and thousands of your shadows near and far
rises in ash.

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\(^4\) - Technically known as *Robinia pseudoacacia* (Persian *aqaqiya*), this tree, found on many streets in Tehran, is also called the false acacia and the black locust. Its flowers are used to make a drink for those who cannot afford cold drinks.
مرا کاشته‌بودند
کاشته‌بودند تا با خورشیدهای عجل
احاطه‌ام کند.
تو آمدی و چنان نرم مرا چیدی
که رفتار نمی‌ردم در دست تو حس کردم.
تو شاهد خورشید و هوا شدی
نسم در گسوان سرخ سوزان.
جای‌ران آرام به خواب شدند
و رفتار خون صافی تو
در خواب یک‌پیک‌شان
حس شد.
تو مانند چه‌رهی شدی
که من بر او نگریستم
و
می‌نگرم.
عشق چون تولد و تازه
هنوز لرچ و خوپیست.
بیا
حب‌های کوچک را
حشرات و نور من پوشانند.
برای تو می‌خندم.
برای تو می‌خندم
افاقا
امروز برامان
شب‌یک عصر آنها می‌آرد.
They grew me,
grew me to surround me
by hasty suns.
You passed and picked me so smoothly
that I touched the breeze
in your hands.
You witnessed the sun and the air,
with breeze in your burning red hair.
The water beasts
went to sleep quietly
and each one of them touched
your clear blood
In their dreams.
You became a face
I gazed at
and
gaze at.
Like a new birth, my love is
still slime and blood.

Come
for indeed the small yards
will be covered by insects and light.
I laugh for you.

I laugh for you.
The black locust
receives us today
with cool evening drink.
زمان به کبوتری می‌گردد
دیگر با اکتشافت شاریتی نیست
اکتشافت که نردبامی بود
تا کبوتران پر گنده
به بام برآیند.

زمان به کبوتر می‌گردد
و در گه‌های دید.
زمانی دیگر می‌زیست
که قلبی را بر شیشه‌ها می‌کویست
و نوزاد ساعت را
تکه تکه می‌کرد.

نگاهان در گه‌های پدر
همنی‌ی به سختی نفس نفس زد
همنی‌ی که سال‌ها
خواب مادری می‌شد.
و مادر
در رگ‌های یک درخت
به دنال پرنه‌های می‌گشت
و جای خالی پرنه‌ها را
بر شاخ
از یاد برده بود.
1.
Time
turned blue.
Your fingers brought no more good news.
Your fingers used to be a ladder
on which plucked doves
would climb to the roof.

2.
Time
turned blue.
And in its veins
there lived another time
that struck his heart at the glass
and tore the newborn hour
in pieces.

3.
Suddenly
in the father's veins,
I was out of breath,
a sperm who dreamed of a mother
for years.\(^5\)
The mother
was searching for a bird
in the tree's veins.
She had forgotten
the bird's empty perch
on the branch.

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\(^5\) The same Persian word—mani—here denotes both the first-person pronoun “I” and sperm.
و اینک
آن پرنده در آن‌هایتا.
آن‌ها را بشکنیم!
پرنده خواهد مرد
نیا زاده خواهد شد؟
تولد تصویر
شکست آن‌هایتا
مرگ آن‌ها
شکست تصویرهایتا.

۵
قصه
پرنده‌ای
در آن‌های می‌زیست
آن‌ها
شکست.
پرندش را زاد.
پرندی
آن‌ها را آب کرد،
آب را نوشید:
آن‌های شد.

۶
و من
پرندی این آن‌های شد.
4.
Here
is that bird in mirrors.
Let us break the mirrors!
Shall the bird die
or shall it be born?
An image born
is a mirror broken
A mirror dead
is an image broken.

5.
Fable

A bird
lived in a mirror.
The mirror
broke.
The mirror birthed a bird.
The bird
melted the mirror,
drank the water,
and became a mirror.

6.
Here I am, having become
the bird in the mirror.
پنج مجلس از ایگار

عدالت

هر کلمه
فداش شمشیری ست
که در او رخشان است.
باران می‌بارد.
در هر کلمه تقعی سفید،
جانی ست تا به باران
تسلیم شود.
هر کلمه فرشته‌ی ست
که از عریانی می‌لرزد.

شمشیر را به دست گرفتام
تقلب با‌ر
درمی آرم از کلمه
به رخشار می‌زنم،
جان به باران
تسلیم می‌کنم،
و هنوز عطر عمر برنخاسته،
با دو بال فرشته
پر می‌کردم.

باران بند آمدهست،
خورشید زبان
چه نزدیک است.

خواب های مه

جراحی مه گرفته
از من آسانی می‌خاست
که سفع کالسکه پر از شبنم شد.
در کالسکه، تو را خواب در ریود.
از تاکستان، از میان مه،
خواب را با شراب، پیش آوردند.
در مه,
بسلامتی!

و ایکار
افتاد.
I. Justice

Each word
is sacrificed to a sword
that beams forth its light.
It rains.
Each word wears a white mask
and a self to be
submitted to the rain.
Each word is an angel
trembling from nakedness.

I have lifted the sword.
I rip the mask
off the word
and place it on my face.
I submit myself
to the rain
and before the scent of life ascends,
I take flight
with the angel's two wings.

The rain has stopped.
The sun of language
draws near!

II. Misty Dreams

The sky wanted
a misty sip from me
when the hood of the stroller filled with dew.
In the stroller, sleep seized you.

Through the vineyard, through the mist,
slumber and wine were distributed.
Cheers
in the mist!

Icarus
fell.
ایکارها

کلمه با حرکت خود - کلمه، به پرواز-
فضا را از عطر گوشت آنگردیدند.
پس به جر حرکت یک کلمه، شعر چیست؟

زنان در اتاق
از ایکار سخن میگویند،
لیک، شعر ایکار
ساخته
نیست شود.
فقط یک کلمه:
خورشید!

وز آن زیارت سوزان
روزی اگر بار آید،
دریا را، کاسه کاسه، در مشعلها میریلم
تا بدانند شعله‌اش
آبی ترین و سردر ترین شعله‌است.

بالعكس

۱

آن که رفت، بازنی گردید،
می‌افتد.
نگ‌کن، به ابر خیر است، به ابر.
بازان می‌بارند، لیک نمی‌بارند.
زیر شنل مرطوب
پس کی وحی می‌رسد که هیزمی بردارم؟
III. Icaruses

The word with its movement—the word in flight—has filled the space with the scent of flesh. What is a poem but the movement of a word?

In the room the women are talking of Icarus while Icarus' poem is not composed.

Just one word: the sun!

And if you return someday from that burning pilgrimage, I will fill the torches cup by cup with the sea and you will know that its flame is the bluest and coldest of flames.

IV. In Reverse

to Mohsen Sabā

1.

The one who left will never return will collapse. At the cloud the narcissus stares at the cloud. It rains. It does not rain. Beneath the wet cloak, when will I be moved to bring the firewood?
آه، ای بار! ای بار!
دوبار تکرار، بس است.
که سومین، هوای بهاری است.
آن دم گه از آسان سبز
ایکار، سقوط می‌کند.
جام نمگس پر پران است
و در آن بینی ایکاری کوچکتر
عروج میکند.

از ایکار و ضامن آهو

چنین که رگبار، در قوس فرح
رنگ در رنگ‌های آمیزد،
کاهش که شیر، میتوانست دو افسانه را به هم آمیزد:
تا که ما در طول عصر، به هم نظره کنیم
تا گاهان، در طول عصر آب را به جای آردند
(آب که اثر پزشک ماست، و به آنان
راز زندگی، و به ما راز مرگ را گفت‌هستند).
و خورشید در دانه‌ای انکور بگنجد;
(انکور که شام آخر قدمی ست).
اما انکور که سیل خورشید، بالا را بردهست
از آهوان هیچ ساخته نیست.
او می‌افتد
و آهوان سخی هیچ نمی‌بخشند
جز نظره، نظره، نظره.
و انکور که اقتاف، ارام آرام،
به غرب می‌رود.
دو تش، بر تنه سرخ شده‌ند,
و در سر وژ تنو، افق شناخته می‌شود
افر رضا: ضامن آب به‌هانه هیزم تر
که به آتش گذشت‌تند.
2.

Oh, my friend! My friend!
Twice is enough.
The third is spring air.
When Icarus falls
from the green sky
The narcissus' corolla fills with rainwater.
Look inside: a small Icarus
ascends.

V.

From Icarus and the Bondsman of the Deer

Just as the thunderstorm in the rainbow
mixes colors with colors
I wish that poetry could mix the two legends together
so that we could stare at each other in the poison sunrise,
and the plants would recognise water in the poison sunrise.
(Water is our majestic sacrifice and has taught them
the secret of life and us the secret of death.)
And the sun would fit into the grape.
(The grape is the Holy Last Supper.)
Now that the flood of sun has taken the wing away,
the deer is helpless.
He falls.
Generous deer bestow nothing.
They watch and watch and watch.
Now that the sun slowly
moves west
on the hill, two fires have turned red.
The horizon is recognised in your compromise.
This horizon of bliss: the bondsman of water
concealed in wet firewood

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7. “Deer Bondsman” is a title for the eighth Shia Imam, Reza (766-819). Reza's name, meaning 'bliss', referenced in the second to last line. According to legend, Imam Reza protected a deer from being killed by a hunter. He died after being poisoned by grapes. The two legends to which the poet refers are those of Imam Reza and Icarus.
From Vision
چیزی به دست نمی‌آری،
چیزی نمی‌دهی از دست؟
تنها خطی خون،
تنها راهی برای اجتناب
از واقع،
سرخ، آما
از اشتباه عاشقان.
حتا به دست نمی‌آری،
حتا نمی‌دهی از دست،
بس که آهسته غرق می‌شود
پروانه سفید
در شراب سن تو
Nothing will you gain.
Nothing will you lose.
Only a streak of blood,
only a way
to avoid experience.
Red but
from the lovers’ mistakes.
You don’t even gain.
You don’t even lose.
The white butterfly
slowly sinks
into the wine of your age.
اما که دید سال
با چند بنشه به دنیا آمد؟
گی که تشگی
شیرین بود.

دورم از یاد نمی‌داری:
به هدر رفته جوانم -
پوستی شگرف - آما
چسبیده به تو، جوانی دیگر!

این چا که بسنده بود
چند بنشه به پوشنده دهانه چاه.
And WHO?

And who saw the year
was born with so many violets?
when thirst
was sweet.

You won't keep me away from your memory.
I wasted my youth – lovely skin!
Meanwhile, another youth
is grafted onto you.

In this place, several violets were enough
to cover the well's mouth.
تشریح پیاز

پی می‌مانز، در عوض تو در تو.
منز، اما، چیست
چج روابط توی‌ها؟

گشودن دوازده بی‌مرکز
آشفتی رابط‌های‌است....

و مدیرینایی.
Without core, instead labyrinthine.
What is a core, if not the relation of the layers?

Centerless circles spiraling out cut their relationships.

It is high tide of the eyes.
من غلام تو بوهم،
و میان سی گذشته و ده آینده،
یک نیمهی من سایه شد;
سایه که بی‌کوهی بو
ته دره می‌گرایاند.
جا که نور کستاخ
از حرمی تو زخم خورد، هفت مرهم آهسته، هفت مرهم سایه

writes

و دعاً زیر لکه
من بوهم و آه، من خودم.
من غلام تو، اما،
تنها ناف تو را دیدم، و هنِ حتاً
ناف تو را.
اما دراز و رو به در گام تو می‌کشم،
میان ده گذشته و سی آینده،
و ماه گنار صورتم
بی‌بی دارد.
۹۹ دیگر سردم نیست،
یک ملااقم کافیست.
I.
I was your slave
between thirty pasts and ten futures
One half of me became a shadow,
a shadow spread by laurels
at the bottom of the valley.
Where the shameless light is wounded by your sanctum,
seven quiet balsams, seven balsams of shadow
And the prayer beneath the lip—
was I and—alas—myself.
I, your servant,
saw only your navel and not even your navel.
I lie, facing your threshold
Between ten pasts and thirty futures.
The moon beside my face
is the light's dying gasp.
I'm not cold anymore.
A blanket is enough for me.
آن یکی خال به پیشانی داشت،
تشنه هم دقیق بود؛ حفره‌ای در سقف -
و ماه در خسوف -
هر دو تو آمده بودند وی با فضای سفید بود،
خیر گی شده بود از درون
یا بیرون،
هم تدوین و گرنه ساده‌تر می‌بود :
شاید برق چلی از بیرون
از حد تصور بود، یا شاید
صاحبخانه غفلتاً کلید چراغ را زده بود.
هر دوزن به جا، ثابت شد،
صاحبخانه به جا و ثبوت این همه، باری، ثبوت نور شد
این جا، در این اتاق - با این اثاث ساده: یک میز
و روی قدسه
یک مجسمه شیوا -
در عکس،
نظم شروع دریابی ما، سفید، واقعا سفید سفید -
و حتی نداریم گه آز نوردرد گست،
که دورین بی ساحب را
چای تارتکخانه در فضای نورانی
با یکدیگر بودن، با از اصل
عکسی نگرفته بودند.
The other one had a spot on his forehead,
The plan was perfect: a hole through the ceiling …
and the moon in eclipse …
Both had broken in.
Then everywhere flashed white.
Dazzling, from without and within.
We are in doubt. Otherwise it would be simpler.
Perhaps the gem’s dazzling
was beyond depicting, or perhaps
the landlord had turned on the light without warning.
Each thief’s position was fixed.
The landlord was in place. All was fixed, fixed by light
here, in this room, so simply furnished: a table
and on the shelf,
a statue of Shiva.
In a picture,
at the beginning of our detection, white, absolutely white
...
We are in doubt. Was it over-exposed?
Did they open
the damn camera up
in a lighted place instead of a darkroom,
or was no photo taken at all?

8. The title occurs in English in Elahi’s Persian text. C. Auguste Dupin is a fictional character created by Edgar Allan Poe, and a prototype for the detective story genre.
DOMICILE D'APRES DOYLE
They are ringing all the time: Sir, a thing has happened that must not have happened. Then they make an appointment. But no one can find the cursed door. No one knows it opens onto the yard, to a walnut tree and crows hidden in no one knows where in this damned world. Here, where you always sit, stir the tea, and watch the clouds that grow perpetually and shrink and so minute by minute it seems they are dancing with time. Sometimes by accident in the evenings it seems that you have missed something, then you realise that it was due to the lack of light when that old friend turns on the lamp: Hello, Holmes, why do you sit in darkness?
یکی دو هفته می‌شود که توی این قصرم و هیچ اتفاق نیافتد...

تاق‌های ضریه ی بنداد و تاق‌های ضریه دجله ... قصه اگر ناتمام می‌ماند
یحتمل که شعر من و شعر در تمامی خود قصه من شود. به همین دلیل، شاعران هم‌شه، چگونه که تقطیع من کنند و من می‌خواهم از آن کشته‌هایی بی‌حوصله در بنداد تقطیع کنم روی خانه‌ی در بارمان.
که در الف لیل، زمینش را گونه گونه رخ‌خام کُستره‌داند و ستاق‌های غرفه‌ها به لاجورد و آب زر نتش کرداند:

اُجریش ماهی ده‌دنار!

و اگر راسته‌ی با مخصره‌ام می‌کنید؟ دریان گفت:
و اگر راسته‌ی آتا هر که توی خانه باید
بکه دو هفته بی‌نشستنی گشاد می‌ریزد و شود می‌میرد.

بکه دو هفته می شود گه توی قصرم و هیچ اتفاق نیافتده است؟

فقط گروه‌ها طلا به‌ست. می‌شود شنفت!
وااعاده چه غفلتهایی پسرم! مگر هنوز
به پام قصر نرفته‌ای؟ زن دریان گفت.

مگر از پام قصر چیست

جز همین تاق‌های ضریه ی بنداد و تاق‌های ضریه ی دجله...
Baghdad's arches and the arches of the Tigris—
The story left unfinished
may turn into a poem and a poem
finished can make a story. That's why poets
always break the lines of their poems. And I want
from among those pointless walks around Baghdad
to break the line on a house in the bazaar
carpeted with many marbled stones in *The Thousand and one Nights*,
where the ceilings
are painted turquoise and gold.
*Ten dinars a month for rent!*
*Are you kidding?*
*I'm not kidding*, the doorkeeper said, *but whoever enters the house gets sick and within two weeks dies.*
For two weeks
I've been in this palace and nothing has happened.
I've only seen sunsets of gold.
You can hear them:
*Hey, boy, you haven't seen the palace belvedere? the doorkeeper's wife said.*
But what is on the roof
other than Baghdad's arches and the arches of the Tigris—

9. This poem offers a poetic retelling of a story in the Arabic *A Thousand and One Nights*, "The House and the Belvedere" (night 599). Elahi's poem reproduces the phrasing of the Persian translation of *A Thousand and One Nights* by ʿAbd al-Latif Tasuji Tabrizi (1858)...
I said: I have received a letter. It ordered me, at such and such a date and such and such a place, to join another group and move to city B. The letter's author was unknown. I checked an atlas, and could not find city B. Two days later, my friend, Raha passed away tragically. He had received the same letter just before he died he had said the night before he had dreamed of a bird, resembling a hoopoe. The next day this bird entered my dream. I therefore had to join the same group at the stated place. I said: We were roughly thirty people. We began our journey. Along the way an old man named Allahyar joined us. We will see what a major role he has. So a few days later, another group who said passed that valley. They assumed we were their group but were supposed to join a different group. Were we were nearing the city B which was nowhere on the map? We have reached here. Anxious of the gradual increase, Allahyar says: Something must be done, and quickly. What can be done with this crowd of Laylis and this herd of men? And here the story begins ...
عقاب

آن پرنده که بالای کوه
خانه ساخته،
از برف همیشهی
نمشود شناخته.
میگردید یا، یا,
چرا نیایی اینجا؟
میدانند نمشود به یا آمد، میدانند.
میدانند میان راه میافتم،
او هم این را میخواهد
تا بیاید مرا بلند کند،
ببرد آن بالا، یا برف کند.
That bird on top of the mountain
who has built a house
cannot be distinguished
from the perpetual snow.

*Come! Come!* He says,
*Why don't you come here?*

He knows that no one can ascend. He knows.
He knows that I will collapse on the way.
He wants exactly this
to come lift me up
and color me white as snow.

---

**EAGLE**
پیام

زندانی این تشبیه!
پرخ پسر، بدرو!

میله‌ها، نازنین، ایانته،
میرند اگر پری،

یک آن که سفید ممشوی، هشیار،
در هوای کاغذوار.
You, imprisoned by this simile!
Leap! Boy! Rip!

Bars, my dear, are verses.
They soar when you flee.

For an instant, you turn pale
and sober, in papery air.
غزل کلاه

البته زه مه ز عجب میزبانم
مولوی

عجیب نیست
مسخره نیست
در که میزبانند
بیبنید کلاگست، بگوید
امان از این فراموشی
چی بکن قانومن، هی بگرد بیدا کنی یکی
آن هم این گرمخورده، چه، امان
امان از این فراموشی

امان از این فراموشی
که این حقیقت مضحک، که این تنین بیروح
یاد من نیما یاد
به هیچ وجه من وجوه.
Thank God! We got rid of the battle.
—Rumi

It is neither strange
nor fun
when they knock on the door.
You see it’s a crow that says:
*Damn this forgetfulness.*
*Always dig and hide, always search and find one.*
The worm-eaten one, shit, damn—
damn this forgetfulness.

Damn this forgetfulness.
This ridiculous truth, this spiritless song
will not touch me
in any way at all.
و دشت‌ها که سپره می‌رویند
تا فراموش شوند،
اما از سپره دشت یاد می‌آید
ای قنُت، دشت‌های بی‌سپره!

از چه این سوزش را
همیشه بنداری؟ - ای ماه دمشق!
و نورست آخر
که می‌نشاند آتش را در
حریق جنگل‌ها. - عشق.

ستاره‌ی سحری
می‌دانند کجا می‌انجامی.
می‌دانند، و نمی‌دانند.

۸
برخ پیرون می‌گذاری از هر نیزار
کرچه ماه نیستی. -

و می‌شناسم حشراتی سیاه
که مهتاب می‌شوند،
بس که می‌ترسد
از مهتاب.
The fields grow grass
destined for oblivion.
And grass reminds you of the fields.
How generous are the grassless fields!

How do you assume your burning
will last forever, o Damascus moon?
At last, light
quenches the flames in
the wildfire. Love.

The morning star
knows where you end.
It knows and is ignorant.

You peep through each reed-bed.
Yet you are not the moon.

I am acquainted with black insects
that become the moonlight
for fear of
the moonlight.

---

10. The title for this poem puns on the meaning of mu'allagu, which carries the sense of hanging Mu'allagat, a series of Arabic poems that hung in the Ka’ba in pre-Islamic Mecca, before the city became a site within Islam. In modern Farsi, mu'allagu also means “upside-down”; hence the poem is “upside-
و سحر، قللهای تو را سرخت‌ت
کند ترس
که از هر چه داری و
از ترس خود تمدیار -

که هوای هواسنت - که دم
درو نمی‌زنه و
در تو می‌زنه -
آبی دوستداشتی.

یفتی
بلند شوی
و بهتت که می‌زنه
دامنه‌هایی باشی.

6

از نفیس
که حسی می‌کنم، نه که غیبت تو
بدرخشد ..

چنین می‌میرم
از زندگی،
چنین که بی آئناب
روشی،

فیروزهی رضا!
At dawn, your summit will turn scarlet
from your fear
from anything you have but
you don't have for fear ...

Desire for air—that you don't breathe
in yet it breathes
in you—
is lovely blue.

You would fall.
You would rise.
And when amazed,
you would be my foothills.

Your absence does not shine
from the breath
that I hold.

I die like this—
alive.
Like this. Sunless,
you are bright,

O Reza's turquoise!^{11}

---

^{11}. Reza's turquoise has multiple significations in Persian. Most directly, it refers to the turquoise tiles in the shrine (haram) of Imam Reza in Mashhad (where this section of the poem was composed in 1349/1970). The entire poem can be seen as a rendering of the death of the speaker who holds their breath while the holy turquoise is illuminated even in the absence of the sun (and while pointing to the tiles before the sun's brilliance of the gold dome of Imam Reza). At the same time, reza is also an adjective meaning "happy" or "satisfied," in the absence of a proper name as referent. Hence this line can also be translated as "Happy turquoise!"
Il orra le chant du
Patre tout la vie.
— Apollinaire
After all, you are sleepless. 
You are a long night and sleepless. 
You are a day without a sunrise ... 

You were 
fLOURISHING. 
Light of my eyes! 
In the sun ... 

After all, once you must 
have known 
a deep thirst, once. 
You must have made a mirage, 
in the middle of the sea. 

All of a sudden, I was shocked with the fear of 
you tumbling from the high wall. 
I bent to catch you, but saw 
you hanging on the bushes. 

The old spring 
burst up dry, 
in blossoms 
wrapped in older curtains and 
somewhat shabby.
3
*To That One*

Sparks, sparks:
this one is that one—
that one cannot be this.
At night, when each moment shimmers so
much that it shimmers not at all.
Your youth
went to grasses
that rustled and dreamed not …

Now dreams
make me age.

2
*Il orra le chant du
Patre tout la vie.*
--Apollinaire

Here,
the hand you stretch—
is it a shepherd’s hand
or the grass of days?

Over there,
the weathercock
lies in the sun.

Light years
go grazing and never arrive.
They have no piper
following them.

---

12. This quotation, which translates as “All through life they’ll herd the herdsman’s song” is from Apollinaire’s poem “Le Brasier” (1913), and is given in French in the original. The poem was originally part of a longer work entitled “Le Pyrée,” which references, among other things, the ancient Zoroastrian fire temple. (Thanks to Emma Tyler, University of Birmingham, for this information).
آن وقت از بلاتکلیفی
در حفره چپ قلب به چپت میافته
تا تو را طبیعتی
سر راهی
بردارد.

درد
پیگمان تدریجیست.
یک روز
گه در قبر کوچک بغلی
چبانته میزنند

و یک سال
طول میکشد
At that moment from idleness
you rest in the left chamber of my heart
until a creature passes
and picks you up,
as if you were an orphan.

The pain
is certainly gradual.
One day
it will squat
in the small neighboring grave

and remain
all year long.
علف دیمی
علف دیمی
علف دیمی
علف دیمی

به یاد سبزیست
که سبزیست
نگو سبزیست.

سبز مشوش که بگوید
سبز مشوش،
نگو سبز مشوش،
نگو در خرابه، نگو در باغ.

نه بگو بندی، نه بگو آزاد
بر همین بام هم یکی
باد میخورد آخر.

علف دیمی
علف دیمی
علف دیمی
نه به اسمی دیگر.
WILD GRASS

In memory of green
it is green.
Never say it is green.

The grass greens to say
it can green.
Never say it greens.
Never in the ruins. Never in the garden.

Never say it's trapped, never say it's free.
Even on this roof, the grass trembles
in the wind.

Wild grass
is wild grass.
Otherwise, it's nameless.
در این گنجنامه استعارة من باش؛
بوی من که نمی آید،
نظره من به علف، که استعارة می‌شود.

آنجا
تو بر سر شیری سنگی نشسته ای،
و شیر که باین نگاه می‌کند
به تیه ای آرام.
Be my metaphor in this inscription,¹³
my scent that doesn't pass,
my gaze at the grass, that makes a metaphor.

There you sit
atop a stone lion.
The lion gazes calmly,
at the hill below.¹⁴

Figure 2: Stone Lion from Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province

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¹³. The word used here for “inscription”ganjnameh (letter for the treasury), literally indicates a
that specifies the location of a hidden treasure. Taken as a proper noun, Ganjnama also refers to
Iranian inscription praising the Zoroastrian God Ahura Mazda. The Ganjnama inscription is loc
famous stone lion that is also referenced in this poem.
¹⁴. Stone lions that in ancient Iranian culture signified tombstones, particularly among the Bakht
In 2011, the poet and distinguished translator of Italian literature Mohsen Taher Nokandeh gathered together the writings on translation by the great avant-garde Iranian poet Bijan Elahi (1945-2010) under the heading ‘On Translation’. These writings are translated here for the first time, in part for the light they shed on Elahi’s original poetic creations. The first two selections were published as prefaces to Elahi’s translations. The third selection comprises Elahi’s notes towards an unpublished monograph on translation, initiated and abandoned in 1985, which he planned to call Translation in Every Words (Tarjumeh beh zabān-i ‘ālam va ādām). Taken together, these texts reveal a great poet and critic, as well as an original theorist of translation at work dissecting literary texts and probing their philosophical implications. Their style bears the heavy imprint of Elahi’s two lodestars: Hölderlin and Rimbaud, whom he translated into Persian in 1973 and 1983, respectively. They also reveal an affinity with the American poet Ezra Pound, whose translation method Elahi discusses in the third selection. Although Pound is primarily known as a pioneering literary theorist and poet who effectively linked literary modernism to the practice of translation, his writing also bears the imprint of antisemitism and others racisms, as well as an attraction to Mussolini’s fascism. Elahi however does not touch on any of these dimensions of Pound’s politics; his interest is with Pound as a translator of Chinese poetry.

To an even greater degree than Hölderlin and Rimbaud, Elahi’s writing is marked by various forms of interrupted speech, including ellipses and quotations. Like poetry, this feature of Elahi’s prose creates a jarring effect in Persian, which we have endeavoured to reproduce in our translation. Elahi’s ideas about translation jar even more than his prose. He considers translation as “a re-creation (bāz-āfarinish) even more difficult than the original” and adds that “if creation (āfarinish) is viewed as a dance, translation is a dance in chains.” Elahi’s striking metaphor of translation as a dance in chains is also reflected in his description of translation as a creative process.
“even more difficult than the original.” Elahi’s conceptualisation of creation as a form of possession by an external force reveals the close kindship he perceives between translation and creation. These details are explored more fully in our article, “Translation as Alienation: Sufi Hermeneutics and Literary Modernism in Bijan Elahi’s Translations” (see the Bibliography).

Given the gender neutrality of the Persian third-person pronoun, we have generally rendered the singular third-person pronoun by they/them whenever possible, and have only indicated a gender when grammatically unavoidable. Ellipses in the translated text reflect the punctuation of the original; the text has been translated in full.
دریاب ترجمه

[درباره، (واشراقلهایی، رمبی)]

[پایان این جا متوجه فرق مترجمی بود که [۹] [عامل، خواننده ایمبا مترجمی
هیه امکانات بیشمار که در هر زمینه هستند بر تعیین محترف فعلا، اما این دو، هن
روی اختیار، که به مقتضی متن کار، سواد هم می افتد. مترجم ناقل که
اراده عامل باشند - و کلیک بالعكس - بسته به متنی که برای ترجمه بر می دارد
پیشگیری می‌نیامد، اما این که به ترجمه‌ها، هنزه از هم شناخته نیستند، چرا که میان
و متن فرق نگذاشتند. این تصمیم‌ها از ترجمه‌ها محدود به «نقل» بوده بدبختانه، لذا
از آن ده‌سوزی پیروی ندادند ایم در ترجمه شعر فیلم. البته نمی‌توان
[تعریف (و حاوی و هیچ تفصیلی) این که ناقل در حد «ختیب» کار می
بند. عامل در حد «مجری» - رابطه ای با متن رابطه ی کار گردان با نمایشگاه,
بله با فیلم‌نامه، و آواز خوان با آواز، آواز که دیگری به نهبه در آورده است,
او به "صدای آورد؟" یا "چنان که تئاتر سنگی" گاهی، دو تنه روي یک پرده کار
ی کردنی که در "آورد"، یکی "عمل" می‌آورند. [۹] [قل خوب عین واقع‌ها را "نقل" می‌کند در سطح "ظاهر" و "باطن" و "کاه اگر" به
نتیجه فرهنگ و زبان خود، حرف تبادلی که از سطح می‌داند هر دو سطح، پس از اگر کاه
چار شود و اگر از "ظاهر" به "نبع" "باطن" یا بالعكس، یک ناقدان بسنجد که
 تن، گوه مرن، در این ذایش تازه، در کدام یک از دو سطح یکتار "حضور" می
ابد. این جا، به‌خوبی، صحت از شعر می‌کنیم و هر آنچه حضوری شاعری‌های دارد در
هم تدوین، و می‌افزاییم: چرا که شعر اگر "حضور" نداشته باشد، معنا نداشته، یکتار
ابی گمان نخواهند داشت، که "معنا" خود جز لوازم این "حضور" نیست. [۹] [جریه‌های حقرر در این زمینه (از روزی دو الگو، دو "رقه": رمبی، و میسو) چالش
اکوششت به هر صورت: از یاد نمی‌برم آنچه می‌خوانیم، ضریف یا قوی،
شهرفاری، ست.
از تذکره، (و نیت خیر، گلدرلین)

هلدرلین من، از نظری، نقطه‌ی مقابل حلال منست. ذکر این که از چه نظر، اشاره‌ی
می‌کنند به تصویر همه‌ی گیپر، در ترتیب‌های عوامل، فائت و مرتعج، درباره‌ی ترجیمه‌ی زیبایی نیست؛ و اگر دقیق
از ناطقی متصور؛ ترجیمه‌ی با دقیق یا درباسی؛ اگر زیبایی دقیق نیست؛ و اگر دقیق
دارند؛ چون کر گفتنی، با گفتنی که نیست کرده، که همین پیدا روى را می‌بینند، و عاري
از "گاهی گردان"؟ گفتنی از این که دقیق هم نیستند: اگر ترجیمه‌ی های فارسی، کم و
بیش، نیم چندان اضافه بر اصل است از لحاظ حجم، و آن چا که بناء متن دیگر باشد - ک
یمن سخت، و بی دلیل، دور از اصل - زیبایی از حقیقت اصل نمی‌آید، و از هیچ حقیقت
نیست آید. چیزی تحلیلی ست، از سوی مترجم، که بسا که آدمی کم می‌بیند، کم می‌بیند
از شخص نویسنده به حتم؟ بسا که آدمی ست و آسانی از سرودن شهر، و آسانی از نوشتن
قسم، و آسانی از انداشته و جستجو، که به این عرصه "پناه" آورده، ترجیمه‌ی این گویه، در
این محیط، به چی با عنده ی سرویکوه ی آفرینندگیست. ماما، اما، همدانی با بخشی، آن را
با آفرینی مش اشیرم، به اعتبار البتله، دشوارت از آفرینند اصلی، به این اعتبار که
آفرینی اگر حقیقی ست، ترجیمه‌ی حقیقی در زنگین: در ترجیمه شکیور، باید بکوش
همال شکیوری قیام، اما اما بپرست؛ بکدریم از این که ترجیمه‌ی هم، چون تألیف، به شما و
راه‌های که داریم کوتاه رفت. این یکی از راه‌های، که در ضمن، جنبه‌ی پایه دارد و
شالوده، که در ستی، به تصویر مکتوبی در کتابی، که کوشاش داشتم به اثبات این که هر
چه دقیق تر، زیبایی اگر، البته، دریافت زیبایی مان گوندزایی شود از کاتافت و استیای،
و لطف، دقت را، مع منوی حاکم، و آوازها نامه‌ها تمیمی من کندن. از آن صنف کتاب، یکی
به استرایه‌ی رمبوست، یکی تصویر فلوبیک، یکی جنین همکنونی، گرفته‌ی سه صنف
دیر به فارسی می‌آید، یا دید انتشار داشت زیبایی های ناشناخته‌ی یا کم شناخته‌ی یا زبان ما
بیاورند، طعم دعازه‌های همچنان که در ربان خود نیز زیبایی یک کم شناخته‌ی آورده، یا د
ناشناخته‌ی - صفه‌که با زبان و جز گلدرلین سازگار می‌نماید. [~]

[~] سنن از دو قطبی، عالی ترجیمه‌ی رفت، این بار بیکار، اولی نویسنده‌ست (به مناء
[~] ۱۳۶۳ [۱۱۷۳]  از یک ترجیم از ربان عالم و آدم)
ام: شاعر و داستان نویس و عالم و عارف و که و که، دویم بازنویسندگی، اگر تبیری از مرحله پاشید، اگر بگو ترجمه کالاً و دولغونه می‌شود و مثبت و د مخته. اولی با قواعد ادبی است، دومی با قواعد اختياری هر دو ترجمه هم، اگر که شایسته‌اند و وفادارند؛ اگر یکی که خود وفادار و قواعدیست که نویسنده‌ام، نویسنده‌ام، که قواعد اختياری بازنویسندگی کالاً یا بفنا ناطور به ادبیات اصلی نویسته‌است به هر اعتباری از اعتبارها.

درجه ترجیح مختاری یکی که دومی، خود دو مقوله یک کامل جداست. بینی، به نام‌گذاری یا،همراهی، ست که خود، گذشته از دمای، رسانای اشتراک در سر و لرن و ساخت توانست بنا است (ناظر به این اثر و ظاهر و ضریبی آن دو). قصد این ترجمه آفرینندگی است (خلاق)، در سطوح مختلف به مقادير مختلف.

دوهم، اما، قصد آزادی است (مقوله ثانی از همان ترجمه مختاری). «تصرف» به هین ترجمه گفتگوی آن که «بزرگ و تصرف» از این دو مقوله کامل جدا دید در مقام روآوردی (یپسی هرگاه که در پال، یا که به نام‌ها هم، یاد شود)، بده به «بزرگ» و خلاق اعیان کره ام. [ ]

(Wu Ching)، (Ching Shu)، (Shih Ching)، (Li Chi)، (Chun Chiu)، (Bernhard Karlgren)، (Ezra Pound)، (Arthur Waley)، (索末士. کار پاوند)، (Arthur Waley)، (Bernhard Karlgren)، (Ezra Pound)، (索末士. کار پاوند)، (Bernhard Karlgren).
کار کارلگن، روی دسرو دنامه، جسته جسته چراغ می شود نخست، از ۱۴۶۱ تا ۱۵۰۰
در بیلگهای تحول‌های معنوی خار دو، استکلهم سوته، این دسرو دنامه، به مدت
کتاب در ۱۴۵۰ در میانه، باز در استکلهم، نهاده هم، در شهرور ۱۵۰۳ (۱۲۵۴ ابتدای این قلم، نهایی دوازدهم در لندن و کم مانده بود از دوک که دوباره هم، چه دسرو دنامه، کار کارلگن، کار شدست، از آراین آثار مرد را پیش از اینها، مشاهده می‌فرماید. در کار کارلگن، در
چهار بهشت مشاشانده شده، نخست اصل چنین ست. سپس ترجمه، یا اصل هر روزی روی (latin) ست، با نامی از نظام قافیه‌ها، سپس ترجمه، یا اصل به لغت به تهران، انتکیسی، سپس باشدایش‌هایی ست (بابی است اگر می‌توسد) در لنوایات و مستندات و غیره، یعنی که روی هم "رویا" - رؤیای غنی، شاعر/ترجمه، چنان پاوند که از چنین به همان مایه، حالتی او می شود که حالتی من و تو، اینا، شخصی، عظیم، خدماتی که تنباکو با من و تو، اولاً
نابندهست، که من و تو نیستیم. ثانیاً زیاد خوانده در زمینه چنین‌های، ثالاتاً چند زبانه و
ایین که به شم قوی شاعری علاوه می‌گردد، شاید بتوان به "طلبه" ی شاعری - از ورای موانع
فته‌الفویه - چنگ اندماخت در "بطن" شاعری ییگانه، وانگهی مقایسه، اینا، و ارای این
حرف‌هایش که مایه از آنها می‌ماند، بر گزار تنوین شد، چون که از مقوله
"همراهی "، سپس دسرو دنامه، ی پاوند در ۱۵۰۳ در می‌آید، طبقاً از روزی کارلگن، ولی
پی که هیچ نیازی حتی به ذکر مأذکری از چنین ست که او "ترجمه" می‌گردد، نه که از انگلیسی: دسرو دنامه، ی وی لی، به دیوان شعر، خود پیش از این، دو در آمده، در ۱۵۳۷، با
این همه، در ویرایش‌هایی که با تصحیحات جزئی پس از دسرو دنامه، کارلگن، چاپ شد،
می‌شود، مورد با خود فرضه ی دادن که اشکال که هم کل کار - در این ویرایش، با کار
کارلگن، سنجیده، اگرچه دیده در پای جاها همدستانه، ار نیست بیش و کم یا به هیچ روز،
این اتفاق در این کوشش عدالت نبوده، چه می‌گفتیم؟ اضافه‌ها را چه می‌گفتیم؟
بله کارلگرنی می‌گفتیم فاضل مقابل، دارم افکارتی عالی‌الحالا به وی لی می‌گفتیم،
که امین. اگر از کارش هم دست بر قضا خوشمان می‌آمد، می‌گفتیم مترمی با ذوق، که
از فرش خازنی دادتری به او پاوند که می‌رسیدیم، اگر به چشم مان گذشتی، می‌گفتم,
تصاب سکوت کردیم، یا که حاصل می‌خریدن؛ اگر به چشم مان گذشتی‌هی، نمی‌آمد،
وندیدی بر گزار می‌کردیم، که آقای یکی آمده، زمخت کشیده، ترجهم، کردیم، این
پرداخته درشت را دست کردیم و می‌گفتیم "گناوری، می‌گفتیم "دقت"، یا می-
"ترجمه و گناوری"، می‌گفتیم "ترجمه و اقتباس"، دو لفظ آخرین، مهم. دو لفظ
نی نی دهند.

بطیعتاً توان مثال زد و قصه گفت، می‌تواند پنداشته و هدایت داده در تحقیق نمی‌توان
که که سنجیدنی ست با "الشمس" (مؤنوت)، با چماق تشییع می‌دهد. در سروندنامه،
گفتیم، زن به شما محرم نیست، از پس پرده با شما حرف می‌زنی، زارت جمال او بر شما
رفع، در سروندنامه، وی لی، زن به شما نامحرم نیست، می‌توانند پیشیند، چه شکست،
شرایع ادی به شما اجازه نمی‌دهد که او نزدیک شود، چون که خود از محرام
ست، وی، در سروندنامه، پاوند، زن نامحرم شمیست، نه از محرام‌تان، چون به
شما در آمده؛ می‌توانند به او نزدیک شود، می‌توانند پرایشی جبه بی‌بیکردود (د خلق).

است که پاوند دومی را که از ۱۹۲۷ می‌نشانند،
توانست به‌عدهٔ فرهنگ خود در آورد، که از محرام‌بولد پس اولی را که بعده‌ها شناخت,
آن مانند داشتی، محرم فرهنگ کرد و "آویزی فرهنگ"، به اصلاح این پنده، چون
زن‌‌ی از آن پیش نانوشیده - که دیگر آویزی به کوش آوری. آمیز، از وی لی اگر می
تفه، "اقتباس"، می‌بود، که در این مقام چندان دور از زنا محرام نیست؛ ویل، اما خود
ظرنشته که از راه‌های قانونی به‌عده درآید. پس اگر نكنند، یا این‌شکست، نه اگر
کنند حاضری که مجاز نمی‌دانند، اگر از نامردی نبوده باشند، سابقاً، از یه اطلاعی از
یاب ادی است، که بی‌بطیقه‌ی ترجهم را باز تکرده‌اند، چه رسد که خوانند! [~]

خاطرات یا نقل می‌کنم، همین پارسال بود اینگاری. روز گاردی پیکی از دوستان
[نامش "الف" ترجهم ی در دنیه کرده بود، به کارزار خام شته، از رمانی نامشن
دین و چنان، نوشته‌های ولی‌رد، داستان‌نویس کتاب‌های آمريكایی، با نویسن
درستی می‌شد و چاپ، که نشط از قبیل روزگار و ماند و ماند و ماند تا بکی از
دوستان ما — نامش «ب» — که عاشق داستان شده بود، سرانجام، تصمیم به ترجیحات
گرفت و پارسال بود انگار. پس یکی از دوستان ما — نامش «د» — به «ب» خیر داد که
دالف، ترجیح کرده سالها پیش و پیش فاصله‌ست که یعنی بنده، بخش یکی و یکی
و جد، از جمله منتقد بود پس «ب» از دست به بی‌دید، داشت و لطفاً نیز به من، که این میان
عملیه ترجیحه، من به پیوست و به پیشنهاد داده که «ب» جای پازگردانی از
اسل، به ویرانی گزارش دافل پرشیدکه، نظر به «دبان» اصل، پس دقیق بود. فصل اول از
کار درآمد و من و جد، به خانه ی «ب»، رفته و دافل بود، در غربت بود.
کار ویرانی گزارش فارسی بود، باز گردانی بود از اصل آمریکایی، و از همین با
بود که من اکثربه مخلوطه می‌نامیم. ثر آن نویسنده آمریکایی، اکر پشتاسی،
عادیت، که آفاده ی آقاسیمی، به قول کسی، و بی مناقشه در مثل، گیر خیزی از
قبله بهرام صادقی که صناعت سوی را تشیع اساسی نیست در ارزشمندی ی کار. یعنی
گزارش صنیوی نوcie، دارد، مثل چون تالستوی، مثل چون کافکا، که هر دو دکتر
صنیوی نوcie، دارد. گرچه هر کدام به نویسی دیگر، و چون جویس، چون پروست،
چون بک، چون ناپولی، یا فلور، یا فاکور، یا دارل، یا ویرجینیا ویلق، یا گریتود
استاین، یا که هنری جرم و موزیل و کنور، که «گزارش صنیوی شهری» دارند. و از یاد
درهام کسانی چون دشیل هم و همینهگی و نیز سخت تراشیده کار می‌کند که عادی نمایی
کندن به نحایی، یعنی به «نحو محو» می‌خواهند کار کندن؛ حال آن که، در مثل، در
فلور، یا جویس، صصح نحوه‌ی دیده می‌شود، یعنی می‌کوشند اثر شکر و داغ یای «فن»
در زمینه ی کار عيان باشد، مثل چون رامبراند که عادمانی می‌خواهد گردد و زخم قلم در
نگاره، بیدا باشد، برعکس انگر که محو می‌کند تا «طبعی» جلوه می‌نماید کار
کار واپسین خبر از «نحو محو» هم نمی‌دهد، چه رسد به «صصح محو»، ارزمندی یا به
به چیز دیگری بانش. با این همه، «ب» چگونه ی نویسندگانی نیز سخت رفتند بود
به گزارش صنیوی شخصی، به «نحو محو» کار کرده بود از چشم من و سخت پسندیده.
چج ؛ وی، نویسنده، یعنی «درست» ندانست چنین کردن: واپسین این میان چه می‌شود؟»،
دلسرد شد، کنار گذاشت. پایان کار. نق۱ ~ [ ]

* *

[ و چیزی حولا ی کارده ساله بود که در روزنامه‌ها برخورد به شری از مردی به نام
نیما یوشیج: خواب در چشم ترم می‌شکند... ندانستم یعنی چه، ولی جدید کرد و، هر چه
بیشتر می‌خوانید، بیشتر گزینت متهم. بدیها بود که نیمشانیا شد: چیزها یاد گرفتم از
شر و همه هنوز هم ندیده‌ام در سخن کسی.]
در طرح‌ها، اما شاره‌هایی از آن «چیزها» در نامه‌های خودش دیدم: چه نامه‌های متینی، به‌ه
پس آنها به خودم گستن و اینک به تو می‌گویم که در ایران نوین هیچ "کبیر" ی نیامده در
چه زمانی فرهنگ‌ها نیما و من از سه که دوستش داشتم آن نیایم، شایسته به خوابش دیدم.
به‌ه‌مان این بزر و چای داد. اما سیمین بود و پکر. خدا بیامرزد.
آن زمان خیلی ها به ریش ما خندیدند، لذ خیلی بالا آمد، که طاق تا یاد برود سواد
پادگان، بجد فلان و بهمان بکند! فردون وقته، و لی، به طاق پناهی داد. خدا بیامرزد.
که فلک مرده‌اند؛ انتار پیشه مهورزی راه شناسایی ست! دیرتره، به دانش‌های الیوت
برخورده در مقدمه او به که اقامت. می‌نویسند از دیوانه شر فرانسوی بودوم، دیری
از آن پیش که قادر به ترجمه صحیح دو مصروه باشی، از نگاهی که چرخم می‌زند
نیما چه با خشن و سقطه اختیار می‌کنند از کلام تا رام کنن. یپس به «فوایل نامبود»
شوقی ثلث که نارهمد، هر دو [دریافت] به هم خورد و جرته دی. که کیک به فکر اقامت
بیان نامه‌های اداری، با زبان ورزش‌گراها و نژادی نامه‌ها و آنچه باسیعی می‌نیومد، کار
تأویزی بکنن که دیرتره، از راهی پنزن دانستن خشه روزیکرد به چپری از قبیل دش شر
یامان به استیلای.
پس به زبان [–] پاراز و کوچه هم جلب شد. به پیه‌برخورده. گرفته، سخت. استادی کهن
بودن که اول فاعل، بهد مفعم و فل همیشه در ته جمله‌ها که می‌افتد و این یعنی نحو
درست!
می دیدم پیه‌بر این نمی رود چه بسا. شعر هم نگفت از ضرورت شری، باشد به استیلای
مشتی پر. چندی که کذشت، دانستن این، چه در نظم و چه در تاریک، اگر که ولای باشند، از
ضرورت حقیقی است، یعنی به مقتضی ساختنار، نه که از تقلبی قاچی در الیوت خواندم
بودم از آن پیش که فرهنگ‌ها به هم تنکه می‌زنند که اگنت خود کندن و ضروریت چنین
کندن؛ اینک در مک مشرای بهار می‌خوانند که یینقی تحت تأثیر، لسان العرب چنین
کردند و میدیم که راست کنته و پرت فهمیده که نابیند دانسته، روانش شاگرد هم، اما
نوشتی که ترس از تأثیر، جز ترس از قنادن شختی نیست. حال آن که در فنگول، کنته
هر کس به نجات خوشی بکوشند محروم می‌شود. ولی هر که خوشیت [فنا] کند نجات
خوشیت داده، که یعنی زندگی راستین بدوس (به خوشیت) بخشدیه، پس بزرگ، از
تأثیر غیر تترسیده‌اند.
حس می‌کردم که می‌پیچی نیز، چنان نیم‌ها از کوچه و از کتاب گرفته و در هم زده‌ت‌ا رام،
کند. یعنی گرگ و خشی گرفته و جفت اندادن‌های یا سگ‌ها اهلی تا به نسل سومی برسد: «سگ
کرگ»، که پاسبانیست قدر قدرت، بعدها که دادارب نامه‌ی طرسوی و داستان‌های
عامیانه‌ی دیگری خواندن از آن روز کار دور، دیدم آری، خیلی از واقع‌گان پری‌رفتن - که
ادبایی می‌نوازه امروزه - از کوچه بوده، نه از کتاب. ولی چنین نکرده که مردم‌پند و
عوام فهم یک‌دانه‌‌اند. شاهد صادق این که شاهکار او رفت‌های دست می‌رود، که دخوار
بوده که یمنی در خور گنجایش روز کار نمی‌بوده و دخوار بوده چون «سناعت» بوده که
همزمان به ممکیهن و به ممکیهن کیمیاگری‌ست که خود «فلفله» نبرد نامیده‌شده و
تاریخ پیچی دنیا فلسفه‌ست به این معنا.
I. From *Ishāra* (Indication), the preface to Elahi translation of Arthur Rimbaud’s *Illuminations* (Ishrāqhā, Tehran, 1984)

... we should distinguish between ... a translator who is called ‘performer [āmil]’ and the one who can be called ‘teller [nāqil]’. ‘Freedom’ of translation is conceptually different with regard to these two terms. Everywhere, everything can be defined in innumerable ways depending on the innumerable possibilities available in each situation. In this brief definition, however, these two are separated not by choice but by what the text at hand requires. A translator as teller can often work as a performer, and vice versa, depending on the text they choose to translate. It is a general problem that we have not distinguished between the two types of translation because we do not distinguish between performative texts and stories. Our perception of translation has unfortunately been restricted to ‘telling [naqil]’. As a result, there are few good translations of performative texts, including much poetry translation.

Without wishing to enter into details, I can briefly state that the teller (nāqil) works within the limits of a reporter while the performer (āmil) works within the limits of an executor. The translator’s relation to the text is that of a director to the play, of a filmmaker to the script, and of a singer to the song. The song is already composed by someone else to be sung by her. Or as with traditional painters who co-drafted a single canvas: one sketched and the other finished.

A good teller narrates precisely the outer (zāhir) level of an event. The translator as performer, however, must precisely act out the event simultaneously on both the outer and inner (bātin) levels.


16 The pair can also be translated as ‘outside/inside’ and ‘appearance/heart’.
On occasions when the teller cannot keep both levels in balance as their language and culture requires, that is, when the teller is obliged to transition from apparent to hidden and vice versa, they should critically decide which level of the text, i.e. the essence of the text, has more presence in its new life. Particularly at stake here is poetry and whatever has a poetic presence in the realm of poiesis (ālam-i tadvini). Without presence, a poem would be undoubtedly deprived of its necessary meaning because ‘meaning’ is only one of the necessary conditions of such a presence …

Our poets have not paid enough attention to prose poems. My experiments in this field (after two models, two signatures [raqam], namely Rimbaud and Michaux) are a challenge or trial anyway. Let’s not forget what we read, whether a success or a failure, is a poem in Persian.

II. From Tadhakkur, the 1975 note appended to Elahi’s translation of Friedrich Hölderlin’s selected poems (published as Niyat-i khayr (Good Faith), Tehran, 2015)

From a certain point of view, my Hölderlin is the opposite of my Hallaj.17 In order to elucidate the point of view, one needs to elicit a common, therefore popular, lukewarm and reactionary (murtaji’) perception of translation typical of an impotent perceiver: ‘Translation is either accurate or beautiful; If beautiful then not accurate, if accurate then not beautiful.’ With a few exceptions, our literary translators have a static idea of beauty. Like rhinos with stiff necks, they can see only what lies ahead and are deprived of a tuning eye (nigah-i gardân). Furthermore, they are not even accurate. Most translations into Persian end up one and a half times the length of the original text. Where the translated text is difficult and at an unreasonable distance from the original, beauty does not truly come from the original and from any truth whatsoever.

It is imposed by the translator who is often a person of minimal ability, undoubtedly less capable than the original writer. The translator may often be someone unable to write poetry, unable to write fiction, unable to think and investigate, who has only taken refuge (panâh) in this field. In this way and in this atmosphere, translation is often the repressed complex of creation. However, we agree with those who consider translation as a re-creation (bāz-āfarinish) even more difficult than the original. If creation (āfarinish) is viewed as a dance, translation is a dance in chains [raqs dar zanjîr]. When translating Shakespeare, you should fly as high as him though with tied wings. Translation, like authorship, can be accomplished in different ways and fashions. This is only one of those ways which serves meanwhile as a foundation for all others. Opposed to the above notion, I attempted in several books to prove the dictum 'the more accurate, the more beautiful' as long as our perception of beauty is purified from the static. Accuracy, it can be argued, is guaranteed by dictionaries as well. Those books are Rimbaud's prose poems, Flaubert's tale and this Hölderlin. Although all three enter late into Persian, as expected they bring to our language unknown or lesser known beauty and fresh taste, just as they introduced into their own language less known beauty or unknown beauty. The latter better describes Hölderlin's language and mood ...

III. From Elahi, Translation in Every Words (1985)

... The question is the 'polarity' of the world of translation. This time, take one side as the writer (generally speaking, the poet, story writer, philosopher, mystic and so on), the other side as the rewriter where the term signifies the translator. Then say that translation generally consists of two types, bound (muqayyad) and free (mukhtâr). The former is done according to imposed rules, the latter according to chosen rules. If appropriately done, both types of translation are faithful, except that the former is faithful to the rules the writer...
imposes, and the latter faithful to the rules the rewriter chooses to the extent that the rewriter’s chosen rules entirely or partly correspond to the writer’s imposed rules in one way or another.

The second type, namely ‘free’ translation, is itself divided into two completely different categories. One, as we call it, is confidant (ham-rāzi) translation that goes beyond intimacy (damsāzi) and may suggest a shared secret (sirr), form (lawn) and structure (sākht) respectively corresponding to the hidden meaning (bātin), the apparent meaning (zāhir), and what brings them together. The purpose of this type of translation is creativity (khalq) on different levels and for different purposes.

The second subdivision of free translation, however, tends toward aimless wandering (āzād-ravi). Appropriation (tasarruf) is another name for this type of translation or rather ‘appropriation and alteration [dakhil va tasarruf]’. I have denominated these two completely separate categories by two opposite terms, two antithetical correlatives: alteration (dakhil) and creation (khalq) …

... Let me give an example. Wu Ching, or The Five Classics of the Confucian canon, is familiar to scholars. It consists of Shu Ching (Classic of History), Li Chi (Collection of Rituals), Shih Ching (Classic of Poetry), Ch’ün Ch’iu (Spring and Autumn Annals) and finally I Ching (Classic of Changes), the Chinese book of divination. Only three translations of Classic of Poetry are considered here. For weeks, I have learned a lot from frequent comparisons I made between three translations into English by Bernhard Karlgren, Arthur Waley and Ezra Pound.

More than scholarly research, Waley’s work is a translation of Chinese and Japanese principles and often poetry. No one can deny that Waley is a perfect poet for the hundreds of Chinese poems he translated into English. The inclusion of these translations, or ‘influences’

19. Lawn originally means ‘color’.
(taṣīrha), within the canon of English poetry seems unquestionable today. However, Pound is not only a poet but also the grand master of poetics and one of the greatest pioneers of modern culture.

His translations do not originate from a translational (dīlmāj) principle; they not only give lessons in poetry but also add an entry to the universal glossary of ‘knowledge [‘ilm]’ in its broadest sense. It has been claimed that after Pound, translating and rereading the ancient poets is like observing art after Picasso! When it comes to Karlgren, we are no longer talking about poetry and the poet—we are faced with a great Sinologist, someone analogous to Norberg and Henning vis-à-vis our culture.20

Karlgren's work on Classic of Poetry first appears successively from 1942 to 1946 in Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities in Stockholm, Sweden. The Classic of Poetry appeared in a volume in Stockholm in 1950.21 In September 1975, I accidentally picked up the volume in London.22 It made me extremely happy because I had read Pound's Classic of Poetry in 1971 and I knew that it was based on Karlgren's work. I had seen some of his other works before. Each poem in Karlgren's Classic of Poetry is presented in four sections. First, the original Chinese, then its transliteration into Roman letters with a presentation of the rhyme schemes, then a word by word translation into English prose and finally notes (where needed) on lexicon, syntax and so on. Altogether this amounts to a 'dream' for a lover, a poet-translator, for Pound who understood as much Chinese as you and I do except that he is vastly different from you and I. Firstly, Pound is a genius and we are not. Secondly, he has read extensively in Sinology. Thirdly, given his polyglotism and profound poetic talent, it was possible to reach, through philological veils, the seed (nutfa) at the heart (batn) of the foreign poet. Nevertheless, Pound's purposes lie basically beyond these words and I am afraid they cannot be

20. Matthias Norberg, (1747-1826) was a Swedish professor of Greek and Oriental languages at Lund University. Walter Bruno Henning (1908-1967) was a German scholar of Middle Iranian languages and literature.
exposed briefly here because they belong to the category of confidant translation (ham-rāzī). Pound's *Classic of Poetry* appears in 1954.\(^{23}\) Naturally, it is based on Karlgren's work without needing to reference it. It is from Chinese that he 'translates', not from English! Waley's *Classic of Poetry* appeared in poetic language before these two in 1937.\(^{24}\) However, in a second edition with minor revisions published after Karlgren's work, he deemed it necessary to acknowledge that, in that edition, he had compared the whole work to Karlgren's though he admitted that in some occasions he could not agree with Karlgren in part or in whole.

What if this happened in our part of the world? What would we say, to be fair? We would call Waley the great scholar, may God increase his prodigious knowledge! We would call Waley the faithful translator. If by chance we liked his work, we would call him a talented translator—this is worse than the worst curses. But when it came to Pound, if we considered him 'great', then we would either initiate a silent strike or call him a traitor. If we did not regard him as 'great', then we would comment indifferently that someone had tried to translate and this man had come to 'revise its prose'. We would call it 'rewriting [nigarish]' or 'adaptation [iqtibās]'. Or, we would call it 'translation and rewriting [tarjuma va nigārish]' or 'translation and adaptation [tarjuma va iqtibās]'. While the two last terms are nonsense, the first two are imprecise.

In a sermon, you can use proverbs (mithāl) and tell stories, you can give advice and warn. Not so in a scholarly work. The comparability of 'al-shīr [poetry]' and 'al-shams [the sun]’\(^{25}\) does permit a comparison. In Karlgren's *Classic of Poetry*, the woman is not your intimate (mahram). She talks to you through the veil (pardeh) since you are forbidden to observe her beauty. In Waley's *Classic of Poetry*, the woman is not forbidden (nā-mahram).

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25. Elahi uses here the Arabic rather than Persian forms for 'poetry' and 'sun' (both are feminine nouns in Arabic).
You can see what she looks like although literary norms (sharāye-'i adabi) do not permit you to approach her because she is one of your intimates (mahārīm). However, in Pound’s Classic of Poetry, the woman is neither forbidden nor your intimate as she has been married to you. You can be near her, she can give birth to your child—creation (khalq). Obviously, Pound could not facilitate the marriage of the second one [Waley’s version], having known it since 1937, with his culture, since Waley’s version was already an intimate to his culture. So, as there was nothing against it, he made the first one he came to know later an intimate to his culture and as I call it, pendant to culture [āvizeh-yi farhang], like a yet-unheard-of word that has been inscribed on memory. If he drew upon Waley, it would be called adaptation (iqtibās) which was not far from incest (zenā-yi bā mahārīm). The first [book], however, is waiting to enter into marriage through lawful means. It is unfair if it does not happen, not if it happens. Those who do not permit it: if it is not due to cowardice, it is due to ignorance of literary norms. Such readers have not opened the book of ‘poetics [butīqa]’ of translation, let alone read it! ...

... I remember—those were the days—when one of our friends—named A—made an accurate draft translation of such and such a novel by the esteemed American story writer Thornton Wilder.26 It should have been edited and published. Unfortunately, this did not happen. It remained unedited until one of our friends—named B—who loved the novel finally decided to translate it. Then one of our friends—named C—reported to B that A had translated it years before and now D—namely, myself—had it. B was a writer and editor and C was a critic among other things. B was fond of C and kind to me. I was merely a transmitter of the translation. Finally, C suggested that B edit A’s drafts instead of retranslating the original. The drafts were linguistically accurate. When the first chapter was complete, C and I went to B’s place in the absence of A, who was in exile.

It was not an edited version of the Persian translation (guzārish). Rather, it was a retranslation from the original American English.

26. Thornton Wilder (1897–1975) was a renowned American playwright and novelist, whose work won two major American literary prizes: the Pulitzer (three times) and the National Book Award.
Now I tend to call it a ‘transforming work’ (‘amal-i mutahavvil). For those who have read it, the American writer’s prose is ordinary. Someone has described it as ‘ordinarily pedantic’. Without quibbling over the example, he can be compared to Bahram Sadeqi²⁷ whose work cannot be evaluated adequately in terms of its formal technique (sanādat-i sūrī). In other words, Wilder’s is an impersonal artificial language (guftār-i sani’i naw’i) as in Tolstoy, as in Kafka, both of whom write in an impersonal artificial language, each in his own way. Unlike Joyce, Beckett, Nabokov, Flaubert, Faulkner, Durrell, Woolf, Stein, James, Musil and Queneau, all of whom write in a personally artificial language (guftār-i sani’i shakhṣi). Let’s not forget that writers such as Dashiell Hammett and Hemingway try hard to appear ordinary in one way or another. That is, they work according to effaced mannerism (nahv-i mahv) while Joyce and Flaubert, for example, chose deliberate mannerism (sahv-i nahv), that is, they try to lay bare the traces of their device (shigird) and artfulness (fann) in the work. Like Rembrandt, who deliberately revealed the turns and strokes of the brush on canvas, and in contrast to Ingres, who effaces in order to appear natural. In Wilder’s work, there is nothing of effaced mannerism, let alone deliberate mannerism. He should be evaluated according to totally different criteria. Nonetheless, B who rendered the author’s artificial language in his own distinctively artificial style, had worked out an effaced mannerism in my view and I liked it very much. However, the translation did not please C, who asked: ‘What about Wilder himself’? B became disappointed and abandoned the work. Finished ...

... I was around 14 when I came across a poem by a man named Nima Yushij²⁸ in a newspaper. Although I did not understand the meaning of “breaking the dream in my wet eyes” (khāb dar chashm-i taram mishikanad), I loved it. The more I read, the more I was drawn to it. It was later that I understood Nima. I learned many things from

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²⁷ Bahram Sadeqi (1937-1985) was an Iranian short story writer. His only collection of short stories, Trench and Empty Canteens (Sangar va qumqumehā-yi khālī) are considered forerunners of modernist experimental fiction depicting the disappointed Iranian society after the 1953 Coup.

²⁸ Nima Yushij (1897-1960) was an Iranian poet who is considered the founder of modernist Persian poetry.
his poems that I have not found in anyone else. Later, I saw sparks (sharārahā) of those things in his letters; What dignified letters, we have done! Then I told myself and now I tell you that in modern Iran no great (kabīr) figure has emerged in the cultural field except Nima. In those days, I loved him so much that I saw him in my dream one night. He took me to a café and treated me to tea. But he was upset. May he rest in peace.

In those days, we were derided by many. They turned against us, complaining that a child has to learn first and then begin such and such. Fereidun Rahnema29 gave shelter to the child. May he rest in peace. He said that they were wrong, that Éluard30 had said that love is the path to knowledge. Later, I encountered Eliot’s Dante. I cried when I read in its preface that he had been in love with French poetry long before he was able to translate two lines accurately. I noticed that Nima often chose rough and foul (khashin va saqat) words in order to tame them. When I encountered Schoenberg’s non-consecutive intervals (favāsel-i nāmatbū’), the two ideas sparked the thought in me that I could do something new with the language of official letters, with the language of newspapers, pulp magazines and whatever seemed clichéd. With Ponge,31 I realized later that I had accidentally become interested in something like the so-called ‘anti-poetry’.

Then I was drawn to street talk too ... I encountered Bayhaqi32 and he fascinated me. Teachers had taught us that the subject comes first, then comes the object and finally the verb that always stands in the end of the sentence according to correct syntax. However, I observed that Bayhaqi does not always follow this rule. He is not a poet to be pardoned by ‘poetic exigency’, as some ignorant people [say to justify

29. Fereidun Rahnema (1930–1975) was an Iranian poet who mentored many key figures in the movement called Other Poetry (shi’r-i digar), including Elahi.
30. Paul Éluard (1895-1952) was a French surrealist poet who was influential on modernist Persian poets as Bijan Elahi and Ahmad Shamlu.
31. Francis Ponge (1899-1988) was a French poet famous for his prose poems on everyday objects, devoid of emotions and symbolism.
32. Abu’l Fazl Bayhaqi (995-1077), author of the Tārikh-i Bayhaqi (History of Bayhaqi), the most important source on Ghaznavids. The major part of this voluminous work is lost. It is notable for its prose narra
transgressions in a poem in the name of poetic license]. Meanwhile I came to realize that, in sublime prose and verse, [such rule-breaking occurs] according to a ‘natural exigency’, that is, according to what the structure requires, and not because of rhyme limitations. I had already read in Eliot that cultures rely on each other to enrich themselves and they must do so. And now I read in Bahar,\textsuperscript{33} the poet laureate, that Bayhaqi had done this under Arabic influence. I saw Bahar is right in this regard but not when he deems it inadmissible.\textsuperscript{34} May he rest in peace! Similarly, Gide wrote that the fear of influence comes from the fear of a lack of personality. It is written in the Gospel that the person who attempts to save their self will be deprived of it while the person who sacrifices their self will save it, that is, they will be given eternal life. Then, great men have not feared influence …

I felt that Bayhaqi, like Nima, had drawn from the street and the book and had mixed them in order to tame them. In other words, he had coupled a wild wolf with a domestic dog to reproduce a third species, namely ‘wolfdog’, the strong guard. Later when I read \textit{Dārāb-nāma} by Tarsūsi\textsuperscript{35} and other folk tales from old days, I confirmed that most of Abu’l Fazl [Bayhaqi]’s words that appear archaic today were drawn from the street rather than from books although his use of everyday language hardly seeks to please the common people by facilitating their understanding. The most certain evidence for this is that [many manuscripts of] his magnum opus has been lost over time. [Bayhaqi] was unable to adapt to the language of his day. Writing was for him fundamentally a craft \textit{sanaat}, both in the sense of art and of alchemy, which is also a branch of philosophy. In this sense, Bayhaqi’s history is philosophical prose.

\textsuperscript{33} Muhammad Taqi Bahar, also known as Malik al-Shuara Bahar (1886-1951) was an Iranian poet, literary critic, journalist and politician. His work \textit{Sabk-shināsī} (Stylistics) is the most important history of the evolution of Persian prose to this day.
\textsuperscript{35} \textit{Dārāb-nāma} (The Book of Darāb), a 12th century Persian prose romance written by Abū Tāhir Muhammad ibn Mūsā Tartūsī, recounting the story of legendary King Dārāb. The prose is close to the spoken language of its time.
Bibliography of Elahi's Work and Translation

Editions of Elahi’s Poems in Persian


Translations by Elahi


Collections of previously published translations


Scholarship about Elahi’s Poetry and Translations

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"For two weeks I have been in this palace," Tin House (Open Bar) (2017).

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Readers interested in learning more about Elahi may be interested in consulting our website: bijanelahi.hcommons.org. In Persian, news related to Elahi's literary legacy is regularly reported on the Instagram page dedicated to his work (@bijanelahie) and on the Telegram channel: bijan_elahi.
Greetings! Thank you for talking to us about your process today! Can you introduce yourselves, in a way that you would choose? Why do you work in translation?

In addition or instead of “translator,” what other titles or affiliations do you prefer/feel are more accurate?

Given that our translations have also inspired to produce scholarship together, we have also come to consider ourselves trancreators. An essay about our creative process and its relationship to translation called “Inspired and Multiple: Poetry, Co-Translation, Creation” appeared in 2019 in the Australian literary journal Overland.

What other work are you doing in the world these days?

We are now working on a book-length translation of the poetry of Hasan Alizadeh, tentatively entitled House Arrest. Some of these poems appeared in West Branch, Tentacular, Cordite, and Waxwing.

Talk about the process or instinct to move this project into book form. How and why did this happen? Have you had this intention for a while?

We first discussed the project at a bookstore in Isfahan, the city where we met for the first time. The translation of Elahi posed a challenge for us both. We discussed the project for a year, and then produced our first drafts. We then exchanged these drafts after we returned to our respective countries. For the next stages, we traded many drafts using track changes, and then discussed our final versions in person.

What practices or structures (if any) do you use in the creation of your work, beyond this project?

Kayvan: Translating French poetry has taught me a lot about translation in general, in particular Mallarmé, Saint-John Perse, Francis Ponge, and Beckett's late prose.
Rebecca: I first began as a translator from Russian, and then shifted to Georgian and Persian. The experience of memorizing poetry has shaped my practice as a translator of poetry, and served as a visceral reminder to attend to the sound of the poem.

What does this particular work represent to you both as indicative of your method/creative practice? as indicative of your history? as indicative of your mission/intentions/hopes/plans?

Kayvan: My method of writing poetry is diametrically opposed to Elahi. My way of writing is less erudite. Translating Elahi has taught me a great about English poetry, and also gave me the opportunity to read Elahi from a foreign point of view, and to discover many creative potentialities that I had not noticed before in the original.

What would be the best possible outcome for this book? What might it do in the world, and how might its presence as an object facilitate your creative role in your community and beyond? What are your hopes for this book, and for your practice?

It would be hard to overestimate Elahi’s importance as a translator of world poetry into Persian. We hope that readers will recognize in Elahi’s poetry the convergence of many styles gathered together from many parts of the world. It has been a great pleasure—and challenge—to first encounter this multifaceted style in Persian and then to render it into English, thereby continuing Elahi’s translational process.
was born in 1945. A Persian Modernist poet, Elahi was a leading figure in the she'r-e digar movement, also known as Other Poetry, and did not publish his poems in volumes during his lifetime. After his death in 2010, his work was posthumously published in two volumes: *Didan (Vision)* (Bidgol Publications, 2014) and *Javaniha (Youths)* (Bidgol Publications, 2015).
ABOUT THE TRANSLATORS

KAYVAN TAHMASEBIAN

is a poet, translator, literary critic, and the author of Isfahan's Mold (Sadeqia dar Bayat Esfahan, 2016). His poetry has appeared in Notre Dame Review, the Hawai'i Review, Salt Hill, and Lunch Ticket, where it was a finalist for The Gabo Prize for Literature in Translation & Multilingual Texts in 2017. He is co-editor of The Routledge Handbook of Translation and Activism.

REBECCA RUTH GOULD

is the author of the award-winning monograph Writers & Rebels (Yale University Press, 2016) and the poetry collection Cityscapes (Alien Buddha Press, 2019). She has translated many books from Persian and Georgian, including After Tomorrow the Days Disappear: Ghazals and Other Poems of Hasan Sijzi of Delhi (Northwestern University Press, 2016) and The Death of Bagrat Zakharych and other Stories by Vazha-Pshavela (Paper & Ink, 2019). She is currently director of the ERC-funded project, "Global Literary Theory"; and Professor, Islamic World & Comparative Literature, at the University of Birmingham.
The Operating System's GLOSSARIUM: UNSILENCED TEXTS series was established in early 2016 in an effort to recover silenced voices outside and beyond the canon, seeking out and publishing both contemporary translations and little or un-known out of print texts, in particular those under siege by restrictive regimes and silencing practices in their home (or adoptive) countries. We are committed to producing dual-language versions whenever possible.

Few, even avid readers, are aware of the startling statistic reporting that less than three percent of all books published in the United States, per UNESCO, are works in translation. Less than one percent of these (closer to 0.7%) are works of poetry and fiction. You can imagine that even less of these are experimental or radical works, in particular those from countries in conflict with the US or where funding is hard to come by.

Other countries are far, far ahead of us in reading and promoting international literature, a trend we should be both aware of and concerned about—how does it come to pass that our attentions become so myopic, and as a result, so under-informed? We see the publication of translations, especially in volume, to be a vital and necessary act for all publishers to require of themselves in the service of a more humane, globally aware, world. By publishing 7 titles in 2019, we stand to raise the number of translated books of literature published in the US this year by a full percent. We plan to continue this growth as much as possible.


The term 'Glossarium' derives from latin/greek and is defined as 'a collection of glosses or explanations of words, especially of words not in general use, as those of a dialect, locality or an art or science, or of particular words used by an old or a foreign author.' The series is curated by OS Founder and Managing Editor Elæ [Lynne DeSilva-Johnson,] with the help of global collaborators and friends.
WHY PRINT / DOCUMENT?

The Operating System uses the language “print document” to differentiate from the book-object as part of our mission to distinguish the act of documentation-in-book-FORM from the act of publishing as a backwards-facing replication of the book’s agentive *role* as it may have appeared the last several centuries of its history. Ultimately, I approach the book as TECHNOLOGY: one of a variety of printed documents (in this case, bound) that humans have invented and in turn used to archive and disseminate ideas, beliefs, stories, and other evidence of production.

Ownership and use of printing presses and access to (or restriction of printed materials) has long been a site of struggle, related in many ways to revolutionary activity and the fight for civil rights and free speech all over the world. While (in many countries) the contemporary quotidian landscape has indeed drastically shifted in its access to platforms for sharing information and in the widespread ability to “publish” digitally, even with extremely limited resources, the importance of publication on physical media has not diminished. In fact, this may be the most critical time in recent history for activist groups, artists, and others to insist upon learning, establishing, and encouraging personal and community documentation practices. Hear me out.

With The OS’s print endeavors I wanted to open up a conversation about this: the ultimately radical, transgressive act of creating PRINT / DOCUMENTATION in the digital age. It’s a question of the archive, and of history: who gets to tell the story, and what evidence of our life, our behaviors, our experiences are we leaving behind? We can know little to nothing about the future into which we’re leaving an unprecedentedly digital document trail — but we can be assured that publications, government agencies, museums, schools, and other institutional powers that be will continue to leave BOTH a digital and print version of their production for the official record. Will we?

As a (rogue) anthropologist and long time academic, I can easily pull up many accounts about how lives, behaviors, experiences — how THE STORY of a time or place — was pieced together using the deep study of correspondence, notebooks, and other physical documents which are no longer the norm in many lives and practices. As we move our creative behaviors towards digital note taking, and even audio and video, what can we predict about future technology that is in any way assuring that our stories will be accurately told — or told at all? How will we leave these things for the record?

In these documents we say:
WE WERE HERE, WE EXISTED, WE HAVE A DIFFERENT STORY

- Elæ [Lynne DeSilva-Johnson], Founder/Creative Director
THE OPERATING SYSTEM, Brooklyn NY 2018
2020

Institution is a Verb: A Panoply Performance Lab Compilation
Poetry Machines: Letters for a Near Future - Margaret Rhee
My Phone Lies to me: Fake News Poetry Workshops as Radical Digital Media Literacy - Alexandra Juhasz, Ed.
Goodbye Wolf - Nik DeDominic
Spite - Danielle Pafunda
Acid Western - Robert Balun
Cupping - Joseph Han

KIN(D)* TEXTS AND PROJECTS

Hoax - Joey De Jesus
#Survivor - Joanna C. Valente
Intergalactic Travels: Poems from a Fugutive Alien - Alan Pelaez Lopez
RoseSunWater - Angel Dominguez

GLOSSARIUM: UNSILENCED TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

Zugunruhe - Kelly Martinez Grandal (tr. Margaret Randall)
En el entre / In the between: Selected Antena Writings - Antena Aire (Jen Hofer & John Pluecker)
Black and Blue Partition (‘Mistry) - Monchoachi (tr. Patricia Hartland)
Si la musique do it mourir (If music were to die) - Tahar Bekri (tr. Amira Rammah)
Hikuri (Peyote) - José Vincente Anaya (tr. Joshua Pollock)
2019

Ark Hive–Marthe Reed

I Made for You a New Machine and All it Does is Hope - Richard Lucyszyn
Illusory Borders-Heidi Reszies
A Year of Misreading the Wildcats - Orchid Tierney

Of Color: Poets’ Ways of Making | An Anthology of Essays on Transformative Poetics - Amanda Galvan Huynh & Luisa A. Igloria, Editors

KIN(D)* TEXTS AND PROJECTS

A Bony Framework for the Tangible Universe-D. Allen
Opera on TV-James Brunton
Hall of Waters-Berry Grass
Transitional Object-Adrian Silbernageł

GLOSSARIUM: UNSILENCED TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS

Śnienie / Dreaming - Marta Zelwan/Krystyna Sakowicz, (Poland, trans. Victoria Miluch)
High Tide Of The Eyes - Bijan Elahi (Farsi-English/dual-language)
trans. Rebecca Ruth Gould and Kayvan Tahmasebian
In the Drying Shed of Souls: Poetry from Cuba’s Generation Zero
Katherine Hedeen and Víctor Rodríguez Núñez, translators/editors
Street Gloss - Brent Armendinger with translations of Alejandro Méndez, Mercedes Roffé, Fabián Casas, Diana Bellessi, and Néstor Perlongher (Argentina)
Operation on a Malignant Body - Sergio Loo (Mexico, trans. Will Stockton)
Are There Copper Pipes in Heaven - Katrin Ottarsdóttir (Faroe Islands, trans. Matthew Landrum)
An Absence So Great and Spontaneous It Is Evidence of Light - Anne Gorric
The Book of Everyday Instruction - Chloë Bass
Executive Orders Vol. II - a collaboration with the Organism for Poetic Research
One More Revolution - Andrea Mazzariello
Chlorosis - Michael Flatt and Derrick Mund
Sussuros a Mi Padre - Erick Sáenz
Abandoners - Lesley Ann Wheeler
Jazzercise is a Language - Gabriel Ojeda-Sague
Born Again - Ivy Johnson
Attendance - Rocio Carlos and Rachel McLeod Kaminer
Singing for Nothing - Wally Swist
Walking Away From Explosions in Slow Motion - Gregory Crosby
Field Guide to Autobiography - Melissa Eleftherion

KIN(D)* TEXTS AND PROJECTS
Sharing Plastic - Blake Nemec
The Ways of the Monster - Jay Besemer

GLOSSARIUM: UNSILENCED TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS
The Book of Sounds - Mehdi Navid (Farsi dual language, trans. Tina Rahimi
Kawsay: The Flame of the Jungle - María Vázquez Valdez
(Mexico, trans. Margaret Randall)
Return Trip / Viaje Al Regreso - Israel Domínguez;
(Cuba, trans. Margaret Randall)

for our full catalog please visit:
https://squareup.com/store/the-operating-system/
deply discounted Book of the Month and Chapbook Series subscriptions
are a great way to support the OS's projects and publications!
Sign up at: http://www.theoperatingsystem.org/subscribe-join/
First meant “instruction” or “evidence,” whether written or not.

noun - a piece of written, printed, or electronic matter that provides information or evidence or that serves as an official record
verb - record (something) in written, photographic, or other form
synonyms - paper - deed - record - writing - act - instrument

[ Middle English, precept, from Old French, from Latin documentum, example, proof, from docer, to teach; see dek- in Indo-European roots. ]

Who is responsible for the manufacture of value?

Based on what supercilious ontology have we landed in a space where we vie against other creative people in vain pursuit of the fleeting credibilities of the scarcity economy, rather than freely collaborating and sharing openly with each other in ecstatic celebration of MAKING?

While we understand and acknowledge the economic pressures and fear-mongering that threaten to dominate and crush the creative impulse, we also believe that now more than ever we have the tools to relinquish agency via cooperative means, fueled by the fires of the Open Source Movement.

Looking out across the invisible vistas of that rhizomatic parallel country we can begin to see our community beyond constraints, in the place where intention meets resilient, proactive, collaborative organization.

Here is a document born of that belief, sown purely of imagination and will. When we document we assert. We print to make real, to reify our being there. When we do so with mindful intention to address our process, to open our work to others, to create beauty in words in space, to respect and acknowledge the strength of the page we now hold physical, a thing in our hand, we remind ourselves that, like Dorothy: we had the power all along, my dears.