

An Investigation into the Extent of Shahriyar's Influence from Iraj Mirza's Poetry Based on Julia Kristeva's Intertextuality Theory

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With an artistic audacity, Iraj Mirza has transformed the principles of poetry at various linguistic and content levels and created a special atmosphere in poetry, whose influence is observed in subsequent poets' poetry, including Mohammad Taghi Behjat (Shahriar). Given the importance of Shahriar, as one of the prominent contemporary poets, and Iraj Mirza, as one of the renowned poets of the Constitutional era, examining the poetry collections of these two great poets to discover common linguistic and content features is of utmost importance. This research aims to investigate the extent of Iraj Mirza's influence on Shahriar's poetry based on Julia Kristeva's intertextuality theory, focusing on linguistic and content commonalities using an analytical-descriptive method. The findings indicate that Shahriar's poetry predominantly contains religious content, and considering this aspect, there is no significant commonality in the content of the two poets' works. However, commonalities are evident in terms of vocabulary, colloquial expressions, and, in some instances, style.

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Introduction

Literary texts do not exist in hermetic isolation; rather, they are produced within a dynamic web of cultural, historical, and textual intersections. In modern Persian literary history, the transition from classical aesthetics to modernist expressions was significantly shaped by prominent figures who balanced traditional formal structures with innovative linguistic and thematic modalities. Mohammad Hossein Behjat Tabrizi (Shahriyar) stands as one of the most celebrated contemporary Persian poets, renowned for his mastery over traditional forms such as the *ghazal*, as well as his contributions to blank and modern verse. Simultaneously, Iraj Mirza (Jalal al-Mamalek), a pioneer of the Constitutional (*Mashruteh*) era, revolutionized Persian poetic diction by introducing colloquial expressions, conversational fluency, and direct socio-political critique. Literary historians, including M. R. Shafiei Kadkani, have emphasized that Shahriyar held two primary ideals among poets: Hafez among classical masters and Iraj Mirza among contemporaries. Despite this acknowledged admiration, the exact mechanism, nature, and depth of textual relations between these two figures require rigorous critical investigation. This research aims to systematically examine the extent of Shahriyar's reception and influence from Iraj Mirza's poetry through the lens of Julia Kristeva's theory of intertextuality, focusing on comparative linguistic and thematic dimensions.

Method

This study employs a descriptive-analytical methodology rooted in qualitative comparative textual analysis. The theoretical framework relies on Julia Kristeva's intertextuality theory, which conceptualizes every text as an intersection of textual surfaces—a mosaic of quotations and absorption/transformation of pre-existing texts (*the latent text into the manifest text*). The corpus under investigation comprises the complete published poetic divans of both Iraj Mirza and Shahriyar. The analytical procedure operates on two distinct structural axes:

1. **Thematic and Content Analysis:** Evaluating ideological orientations, thematic paradigms (religious devotion, social

criticism, romanticism, moral-didactic themes, and satirical elements), and worldviews.

۲. **Linguistic and Stylistic Analysis:** Examining lexical choices, syntactic norms, conversational phrasing, colloquial idioms, vulgarisms/slang, and rhetorical ease (*sahl-o-momtane*).

Results

The comparative textual analysis reveals marked divergences in content juxtaposed with nuanced convergences in linguistic praxis:

۱. **Thematic Divergence and Ideological Disconnect:**
 - *Iraj Mirza's Poetry:* Characterized predominantly by secular, anti-superstition, social-reformist, satirical, and educational themes. Iraj critically questioned institutionalized traditions, displayed skeptical (sometimes anti-religious and anti-nationalist) attitudes, avoided courtly flattery in his mature phase, and explicitly tackled social taboos, educational reform for children, and women's societal emancipation.
 - *Shahriyar's Poetry:* Deeply anchored in romanticism, religious piety, mystical states, Shia theology, and elegiac devotion (such as his famous praises of Imam Ali). Shahriyar's thematic horizon reflects emotional vulnerability, nostalgic retrospection, and traditional spiritual values, completely devoid of Iraj Mirza's biting satire, obscenity, or irreverent lampoons. Consequently, thematic intertextuality between the two poets is virtually non-existent.
۲. **Linguistic Affinities and Stylistic Intertextuality:**
 - *Colloquialism and Conversational Tone:* Shahriyar's non-formal and emotional registers openly embrace the conversational, accessible, and natural speech championed by Iraj Mirza. Shahriyar recognized Iraj as the originator of the modern "simple style" (*sabk-e sadeh*) that aligned poetic diction with everyday vernacular.
 - *Lexical and Idiomatic Convergence:* Both poets integrated colloquial street idioms, proverbs, and everyday terms

seamlessly into classical meters without disrupting metric flow. Shahriyar consciously incorporated conversational phrases into his lyrics, demonstrating stylistic assimilation of Iraj's communicative spontaneity.

- *Formal Elegance vs. Raw Modernity:* While Iraj Mirza boldly broke syntactic rules, introduced foreign loanwords (predominantly French), and used raw vernacular, Shahriyar maintained a higher level of literary refinement, blending Hafezian elevated lyricism with Iraj's colloquial freshness.

Conclusion

Applying Julia Kristeva's intertextuality framework demonstrates that the textual relationship between Shahriyar and Iraj Mirza is primarily restricted to the linguistic-stylistic plane rather than the thematic-ideological domain. While Shahriyar's worldview and thematic universe remain steeped in profound Islamic piety, Shia devotion, and romantic lyricism—sharply contrasting with Iraj Mirza's skeptical, secular, and satirical social critique—his poetic language significantly absorbed Iraj's revolutionary simplicity, fluid phrasing, and use of everyday idioms. Thus, rather than a direct conceptual imitation, the intertextual link represents a shared linguistic modernization and stylistic resonance within twentieth-century Persian poetry.