

Your Dissertation Title

Your Name

2024

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# Chapter One

When readers' gaze fell on the first issue of *Khorus Jangi* (The Fighting Rooster) in 1949, they would be immediately arrested by the cover image (1.1) designed by Iranian modernist artist Jalil Ziapour (1920–1999). A lone, majestic rooster stood within a frame, devoid of any accompanying title or context, leaving the viewer in eager anticipation of what lies ahead. The rooster's self-confident posture would strike the most—beak agape, chest thrust forward, one foot planted firmly behind, wings outstretched, while its angular lines and geometric composition convey that it belongs to an era of machines. Its posture, anchored by a sturdy triangular base, and its piercing gaze, locked on an invisible point beyond the frame, radiate a sense of unyielding alertness and resolve rather than impulsively charging forward. The rooster appears to be addressing an invisible audience beyond the frame as if heralding a pivotal moment in history. This visual rhetoric evokes the modernist imperative for collective action, urging the masses to seize agency in shaping their own destiny and, by extension, to inscribe themselves into the broader historical schema.

Upon turning the page, readers would encounter “From the City of Morning” (*Az shahr-e Sobh*) by modernist poet Nima Yushij (commonly known under his pen name

Nima), confirming the initial impression conveyed by the cover image.<sup>1</sup> In its strategic positioning following the image, Nima's verse functions as a literary corollary to the pictorial proclamation, amplifying the periodical's avant-garde imperative to precipitate societal metamorphosis through aesthetic awakening. The poem emerges as a declaration of cultural renaissance, while its deliberate juxtaposition with Ziapour's gallinaceous figure intimates a calculated coalition between poets and visual artists in their concurrent pursuit of modernist ideals.<sup>2</sup> Ziapour explains:

In our ancient literature, the rooster, as a messenger of the angel Bahman, would crow at dawn from atop the fences, awakening people and calling them to work and endeavor. For this reason, since it crowed and sounded the wake-up call, we chose the rooster as our symbol, both for what we were doing and for its beauty.

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<sup>1</sup>Please refer to the appendix for the English transcript of the poem.

<sup>2</sup>This alliance is unsurprising given the poet's long-standing role as the vanguard of cultural awakening and poetry's far stronger tradition of modernism compared to the fine arts. As Shiva Balaghi observes, "increasingly the role of artist was fused with that of the poet, the long-standing conscience of Iranian society" Balaghi, "Iranian Visual Arts in 'the Century of Machinery, Speed, and the Atom,'" 31.

# Chapter Two

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Figure 1.1: Khorus Jangi magazine cover by Jalil Ziapour (1949)