



KIAN RAVAEI

**MORGHE
SAHAR**

(BIRD OF DAWN)

Iranian Folksong
Arrangement
for Mezzo-Soprano
and Piano

ÆI edition

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*Commissioned by the National Association of Teachers of Singing
and Cincinnati Song Initiative, with major support from Lori Laitman.*

PROGRAM NOTE

One of the most celebrated Iranian ballads, *Morghe Sahar* (*Bird of Dawn*) is widely regarded as the unofficial anthem for Iranian freedom. Its lyrics were conceived in response to the Iranian Constitutional Revolution of the early 20th-century, but present-day Iranians sing it as a rallying cry against Iran's tyrannical government—hoping that one day a bird of dawn will arise from the darkness of the night.

My arrangement is a tribute to the “Woman, Life, Freedom” movement, and dedicated to the memory of Jina Mahsa Amini. By adding harmony to a traditionally monophonic song, I sought to shroud the melody in a mournful veil, reflecting the sorrow of an oppressed people.

—Kian Ravaei

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

Vowels	Consonants
a = mat	g = game
ā = fall	gh = like a guttural "g" (voiceless uvular plosive)
e = net	j = joy
ey = prey	kh = “ch” in the German word <i>dach</i> (voiceless uvular fricative)
i = ring	y = year
o = role	zh = “s” in <i>vision</i> (voiced postalveolar fricative)
oo = boot	(All remaining consonants are the same as in English.)

To aid with pronunciation, a spoken recording of the text may be accessed at:
kianravaei.com/downloads/morghe-sahar.mp3

duration ca. 6'

TEXT & TRANSLATION

Morghe Sahar

by Mohammad-Taqi Bahar

Morghe sahar nāle sar kon
Dāghe marā tāze tar kon
Zāhe sharar bār in ghafas rā bar shekan o
zir o zebar kon

Bolbole par baste ze konje ghafas darā
Naghme ye āzādiye noe bashar sarā
Vaz nafasi arseye in khāke toode rā por
sharar kon

Zolme zālem, jore sayād
Āshiyānam dāde bar bād
Ey khodā ey falak ey tabiat
Shāme tārike mā rā sahar kon

No bahār ast, gol be bār ast
Abre chashmam zhāle bār ast
In ghafas chon delam tang o tār ast

Shole fekan dar ghafas ey āhe ātashin
Daste tabiat gole omre marā machin
Jānebe āshegh negah ey tāze gol az in

Bishtar kon, bishtar kon, bishtar kon
Morghe bidel
Sharhe hejrān
Mokhtasar kon

Bird of Dawn

(translation by the composer)

Bird of dawn, sing your lament.
Renew my pain,
With a sigh that rains fire, break and overturn this
cage.

Flightless nightingale, escape from the cage,
Sing the song of human freedom,
From the breath of the masses, fill the open earth with
fire.

The cruelty of the cruel and the tyranny of the hunter
Have left my nest dwindling in the wind,
O God, O Universe, O Nature,
Turn our dark evening into dawn.

It is a new spring, the flowers have bloomed,
The clouds in my eyes are filled with dew,
This cage, like my heart, is suffocating and dark.

O fiery sigh, set this cage alight,
O hand of nature, do not trim the flower of my life,
O flower, give this lover a glance.

Make it longer! Make it longer! Make it longer!
You heartless bird,
The story of suffering and longing,
Make it brief!

IPA TRANSCRIPTION

Morghe sahar nāle sar kon
[mor.ge sæ.hær nɒ.le sær kon]
Bird of dawn, sing your lament.

Dāghe marā tāze tar kon
[dɒ.ge mæ.rɒ tɒ.ze tær kon]
Renew my pain,

Zāhe sharar bār in ghafas rā
[zɒ.he ʃæ.rær bɒr in ɡæ.fæs rɒ]
With a sigh that rains fire,

bar shekan o zir o zebar kon
[bær ʃe.kæn o zir o ze.bær kon]
break and overturn this cage.

Bolbole par baste ze konje ghafas darā
[bol.bo.le pær bæ.s.te ze kon.dʒe ɡæ.fæs dæ.rɒ]
Flightless nightingale, escape from the cage,

Naghme ye āzādiye noe bashar sarā
[næɡ.me.ɣe ɒ.zɒ.di.ɣe no.e bæ.ʃær sæ.rɒ]
Sing the song of human freedom,

Vaz nafasi arseye in khāke too de rā
[væz næ.fæ.si ær.se.ɣe in xɒ.ke tu.de rɒ]
From the breath of the masses, fill the open earth

por sharar kon
[pɒr ʃæ.rær kon]
with fire.

Zolme zālem, jore sayād
[zɒl.me zɒ.lem dʒo.re sæ.jɒd]
The cruelty of the cruel and the tyranny of the hunter

Āshiyānam dāde bar bād
[ɒ.ʃi.jɒ.næm dɒ.de bær bɒd]
Have left my nest dwindling in the wind,

Ey khodā ey falak ey tabiat
[ej xo.dɒ ej fælæk ej tæ.bi.æt]
O God, O Universe, O Nature,

Shāme tārike mā rā sahar kon
[ʃɒ.me tɒ.ri.ke mɒ rɒ sæ.hær kon]
Turn our dark evening into dawn.

No bahār ast, gol be bār ast
[no bæ.hɒr æst ɡol be bɒr æst]
It is a new spring, the flowers have bloomed,

Abre chashmam zhāle bār ast
[æb.re tʃæʃ.mæm ʒɒ.le bɒr æst]
The clouds in my eyes are filled with dew,

In ghafas chon delam tang o tār ast
[in ɡæ.fæs tʃɒn de.læm tæŋ ɒ tɒr æst]
This cage, like my heart, is suffocating and dark.

Shole fekan dar ghafas ey āhe ātashin
[ʃo.le fe.kæn dær ɡæ.fæs ej ɒ.he ɒ.tæ.ʃin]
O fiery sigh, set this cage alight,

Daste tabiat gole omre marā machin
[dæs.te tæ.bi.æt ɡo.le ɒm.re mæ.rɒ mæ.tʃin]
O hand of nature, do not trim the flower of my life,

Jānebe āshegh negah ey tāze gol az in
[dʒɒ.ne.be ɒ.ʃeg ne.ɡɒh ej tɒ.ze ɡol æz in]
O flower, give this lover a glance.

Bishtar kon, bishtar kon, bishtar kon
[bɪʃ.tær kon bɪʃ.tær kon bɪʃ.tær kon]
Make it longer! Make it longer! Make it longer!

Morghe bidel
[mor.ge bi.del]
You heartless bird,

Sharhe hejrān
[ʃær.he hedʒ.rɒn]
The story of suffering and longing,

Mokhtasar kon
[mox.tæ.sær kon]
Make it brief!

ANALYSIS

The melody of *Morghe Sahar* is written in the *dastgah Mahur*. It begins in the *gushe Daramad*, which shares its notes with the Western diatonic scale. In m. 74, the melody modulates to the *gushe Shekaste* (literally translated as “broken”). This *gushe* contains a *koron*, an Iranian microtone which is approximately a quarter-tone flat in relation to 12-tone equal temperament. The *koron* is approximated using a quarter-tone accidental.

Measure 85 includes an example of *tahrir*, a vocal embellishment used to heighten the expression of the melody. We return, or *foorood*, to the *gushe Daramad* in m. 91 before returning to *Shekaste* in m. 110. Measure 127 modulates to another *gushe* known as *Delkash*, which also contains a *koron*. The piece ends by returning to *Daramad*. (The tonal modulations in the melody are my own addition.)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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to the memory of Jina Mahsa Amini

MORGHE SAHAR

(Bird of Dawn)

Words by Mohammad-Taqi Bahar
Melody by Morteza Neidavoud

Arranged by
Kian Ravaei (2023)

Gentle, broadly
♩. = 44 (♩ = 132)

***p* mournful**

Mezzo-Soprano

Piano

inner voice pp
outer voices p

Red.

7

kon _____

Dā - ghe ma - rā tā - ze tar

(l.v. sempre)

(Red.)

14

kon _____

ten. Zā - he sha - rar

(Red.)

20

bār in gha - fas rā ten.

(Led.)

27

bar she - kan o zir o ze - bar kon

(Led.)

34

hold back a tempo

p espr. *mf*

(Led.)

40 *p* mournful

Bol - bo - le par bas - te ze kon - je_ gha - fas_ da -

46 *mf*

-rā_ Nagh - me - ye ā - zā - di -

(Reo.)

52 *p*

-ye no - e_ ba - shar_ sar - ā_ Vaz_ na -

(Reo.)

59 *f*

-fas - i ar - se - ye in_ khā - ke too - de rā_

(Red.)

66 *rit. p sub.* *a tempo*

por_ sha - rar kon

p espr. *f*

(Red.)

73 *hold back* *a tempo* *mf angry*

Zol - me zā - lem_ jo - re sa -

mf

(Red.) *as needed*

*) # = Quarter-tone sharp

80 *espr., freely*

- yād _____ Ā - shi - yā - nam ⁷ _____

87 *p sorrowful, hopeless*

dā - de bar _____ bād _____ Ey kho - dā _____ ey fa -

Red.

94 *hold back, a tempo*

- lak _____ ey ta - bi - at _____ Shā - me

(Red.)

*poco rit.**a tempo**pp*

101

tā - ri - ke mā - rā - sa - har kon

(Led.)

107

f hopeful

No ba - hār

(Led.)

112

ast, gol be bār ast

(Led.)

119 *mf* *espr., freely* **hold back** *a tempo* *p*

Ab - re chash - mam 7 zhā - le bār ast

(*And.*)

126 *mf* *anguished (not quite full voice)* *espr., freely*

In gha - fas chon de - lam tang o tār

(*And.*) *And. as needed*

133 *f* *desperate (full voice)*

ast Sho - le fe - kan dar gha - fas ey ā - he

f *pesante*

*) ♭ = Quarter-tone flat

140

ā - ta - shin _____ Das - te ta - bi - at _____ gol -

Red.

sf

146

- e om - re _____ ma - rā _____ ma - chin _____

ff

poco rall.

Red.

a tempo

151

Jā - ne - be ā - shegh ne - gah ey _____ tā - ze gol _____ az in _____

f

(f pesante)

Red.

sf

158 *p* *p* hopeless

Bish - tar kon,

ten.

cant.

Red.

165

Bish - tar kon,

ten.

ten.

Red.

172 hold back a tempo

Bish - tar kon. Mor - ghe

ten.

Red.

hold back a tempo

179

bi - del _____ *ten.* Shar - he hej -

(Led.)

hold back a tempo

186

pp a piacere

- ran _____ Mokh - ta - sar, mokh-ta - sar _____

(Led.)

rit.

(molto)

193

ff

kon _____

ff martellato

8va

p

Slower, freely ♩ = 40 (♩ = 120)

197 *pp* mournful

Mor - ghe bi - del _____ Shar - he hej - ran _____

205

rit.

a tempo

Mokh - ta - sar, mokh - ta - sar kon _____

pp *p* rumbling, ominous *(pp)*

Red.

212

rit. al fine

p *morendo* *ppp*

(Red.)

