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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

The winter issue of *Persian Heritage* magazine gives me the opportunity to wish all our readers and the world Happy Holidays and most importantly a Healthy New Year. In the last few months because of the severe financial crisis that caused extreme drops in monetary value, and increases in bankruptcies, closure of banks, financial and insurance companies and major drops in real estate values around the world including Europe, Asia and even Third World countries are living in turbulence. So many innocent people whose homes are in foreclosure are living in tents or their cars. The unemployment rate is on the rise and everyday more workers are laid off. Many families fear their future. Men and women who were hoping to soon reach retirement have lost their jobs or have been forced to accept lower salaries. The pressure for salaried people is so high that they have no choice but to accept unjust conditions from lower salaries or the elimination of their professional privileges. Those individuals, living only on the interest of their monthly savings, are also feeling the pressure. They are unable to afford medical insurance, medical prescriptions or treatment. But even with this financial tsunami, we have witnessed one of the most historical and admirable events of our lifetime, the election of Barak Hussein Obama, as the 44th President of the United States.

The day after the election I was on a weekly outing with my grandson Ryan, age six. I asked him if he knew who was elected president. "Yes, poppop, Barak Obama! Mommy and I voted for him." I asked him why he voted for him, to which he replied, "Because he is the first president with dark skin." I asked if there were other reasons for his choice, "Yes because he has good characteristics." I was amazed at the fact that I was having a political conversation with a six year old. I continued the conversation by asking him why he didn't vote for John McCain. "Poppop he is too old!" To that statement I could only respond by telling him that I was also old. I asked him if he would vote for me if I ran for president. "Yes poppop, I would vote for you because I love you and trust you!" Even at the age of six, trust is important characteristic in leadership.

The surprising part about this election was that this movement and the excitement to elect Obama had even influenced children like my grandson Ryan, age six and granddaughter Sophie age seven. The importance of this national movement and the victory of Obama is that it happened in a country where only forty years ago denied primitive freedoms to the black citizen. It was only forty years ago that the United States enforced laws that prevented the black citizen from using the same public bathrooms as the whites, from voting, forced them to sit in the back of the bus and denied them access to a good education. Yes, it was only forty years ago that these injustices existed. Now the direction of this country has changed overnight. One

can only imagine the pride President Lyndon Johnson would have felt. The fruits of his Civil Rights legislation finally have ripened. What would Martin Luther King and Malcolm X have said to the media on election night? Without these great leaders, along with positive role models such as Mohammed Ali, Bill Cosby and Jesse Jackson, this reality may still be a dream. It was these individuals who encouraged the African American youth to realize a brilliant future. They inspired and encouraged their community to become involved in the arts, sciences, education, business, politics and sports all for the betterment of their lives and community. Barak Obama is a brilliant young man born to an African father and white American mother. He was raised in a lower middle class white family by his mother, and maternal grandparents. With their encouragement and the inspiration of his role models he was able to graduate from the prestigious schools of Columbia and Harvard Law. He has now been elected to the highest office in the United States and may be looked upon as the new world leader.

The seed for change that president elect Obama and his colleagues have placed in the minds of the young and old Americans is not confined to the geographical borders of the United States, it has expanded and penetrated to people all over the world from Europe to Asia, to Africa and to New Zealand. This is the reason why this victory, the election of this young black man evoked worldwide celebration. His win clearly demonstrates that if a leader is able to obtain the trust of the people, direct them towards a positive change and eliminate inequality and irregularities, the people will accept and follow him. The amount of financial support people gave to his campaign from their weekly salaries shocked the political experts.

Strangely this campaign reminded me of an incident with a patient. She came to my office, with her husband and young child to get a vaccination. She put on such a fuss about getting the needle that she frightened her child and made me reluctant to give her the shot. After it was done her husband walked over to her and lifted her shirt to show me the tattoos on her back. I wasn't sure why, but then he explained that when she got the tattoos, she received hundreds of needles and never showed pain or nervousness. Well, I guess she is a perfect example of what one is willing to endure for something they really want and will protest vehemently when it is not part of their goal. The American people, likewise, in electing Barak Obama showed their intolerance to unfair conditions that exist in their country; it simply did not match their democratic values. Finally, on November 4, 2008 they spoke out in unison, by voice and vote. They told their present leadership that they were dissatisfied. They showed the world that they controlled their destiny and in spite of the history of discrimination in their country

on religious, ethnic, social and financial levels, inequality has no place in the United States of America. They were tired of blind hatred and injustices and had the guts to make it change. They are the same people, who until the election were citizens of a country who were hated by most of the world because of its government and leadership. The world has now changed its view as they stand together with pride and honor. This achievement became a reality because of their sense of nationalism, hatred for injustice and love for equality and freedom. Through this election they have become the true winners.

Unity, and the power that it holds, has been the subject of many of my editorials. I have tried to motivate our Persian American community to understand that unity is their weapon for equality and success. Because of Iran's present government people look negatively at Iranians. Persian Heritage has tried to explain and educate the public that the people of Iran should be separated from their government, just as the people of the world on November 4, 2008 realized that the American government was not its citizens. Iranians, like Americans are only citizens of a country and its leadership. As Americans showed they are separate from their government on November 4, 2008, so must Iranian citizens, Persian Americans and all Iranian Diaspora show the world Iranians are only citizens of its unpopular regime. This is such an important mission, because the heart of a nation, along with its culture and ethnicity will pass from generation to generation, but the leadership will be in constant flux. The good leader, one who will fight for the rights of his citizens and seek ways to make their lives better, one who strives to improve their living conditions on every level will be memorialized. The leader, however, who rules by force and power with no empathy for his citizens, will be forever hated. It is these leaders who will eventually be overthrown by their constituents by force or vote.

Persians by nature love to live in the past. We mourn the end of the year rather than look forward to the future. This is dangerous and unproductive. You cannot turn a clock back. Water that has passed in the stream will not pass again. We therefore must look ahead and plan for our future and build a strong foundation for future generations. The past should be an only a lesson for the future. Perhaps someday Iran, its citizens and Diaspora will again show its greatness, as America showed its greatness on November 4, 2008. Yes, Iranians like Americans have suffered from the pain of discrimination, but they have been able to ease it with this triumph. I hope that this election is an example to the world. The winners of this election did not seek to have their opposition jailed or executed. Instead they reached across the table of differences to share in the building of America. The Republican Party will not wallow in their loss. They have already begun to regroup, learn from their mistakes and begin to build a campaign that may bring them victory in 2012.

At the end of every day of every year, I hope and pray that the people of the world will someday live together as equals, regardless of race, ethnicity religious or political beliefs. As this election has brought a new harmony to the citizens of this great nation I pray harmony is only an election away for the citizens of the world. My best to all of you,

Shahrokh Ahkami

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APPRECIATION

Mahmood Karimi-Hakak and I would like to thank you for publishing such a stunning layout of the review entitled, When War Defeats All Its Survivors: Mahmood Karimi-Hakak Directs "The Persians" at Siena College in the Fall issue of Persian Heritage Magazine. It was much appreciated.

Bill Wolak

THE BEST POEM

Thanks for printing my poem entitled *About Poetry*. It was chosen twice by the International Library of Poetry as the best poem of the year and was printed in two anthologies in America.

Majid Khafai

"REGIME CHANGE IN IRAN" BY SAMANEH MADDAH

Anytime we think about the 1953 coup d'etat it creates the painful reminder of how the British orchestrated that horrible event that was executed by the American CIA. Of course, everyone thinks it was exclusively the CIA's job but, as I have indicated before, the coup d'etat was orchestrated by Winston Churchill during Harry Truman's government. The Dulles's brothers were plotting and encouraging Truman to go ahead with it, however Truman was sympathetic to Dr. Mossadegh and did not agree and naturally Churchill was disappointed. What happened next, was that they waited until Eisenhower was elected in 1952. At this time the Dulles's brothers began to spread misinformation in the press that Mossadegh's government was pro-communist. This was the farthest thing from the truth.

Eventually, Eisenhower went along with it and the rest of course, is history.

I remember very vividly, on the 28th of Mordad we were having the SAT's or entering the exam to Tehran University and of course, it was a long exam. When we came out we found out about the demonstration against Mossadegh. Thousands of students began to shout "Pirooze Baud Mossadegh," throughout the Shahreza Street. Of course, that did not work out and the coup d'etat eventually led to the fall, in my opinion, of the most honest and most popular and most nationalistic leader we had. This was the only man who managed to kick the British out of our country. By putting the Shah in there, the next 30 plus years speak for itself, with all the money that went to that country we should have had Paradise, instead, the separation between the rich and the poor got worse. The Shah did not bother once in those 30 years to go down town Tehran to see what was going on. They made sure that he stayed separate from the people. Eventually, that led to his demise.

David A. Yazdan

CULTURE LIVES

What a pleasure to see the article about Mahmood Karimi Hakak. Iranians have a long history in the arts and it is wonderful to see it continue with the Diaspora. Keep up the good work!

K.I

WAS THERE AN ELECTION?

Dear Editor.

I was a bit surprised why this magazine men-

tioned nothing about the upcoming election. I guess in a way it is good that politics, for the most part, is kept out of its pages, but presenting non biased issues may be beneficial. Heaven knows most of the news we read is slanted. I admire your fairness so please going forward feed us the facts.

A.A

A CONVERSATION WITH

Dear Editor:

I can't say that this was the best interview in *Persian Heritage*, but will say this, I enjoy how you are proud of all of us, young or old and respect our achievements. I don't know your family but I would bet they are successful because of the support they received at home.

R.S

A VIVID INSPIRATION

I do admire your perseverance in what you have committed yourself to. That by itself should be a vivid inspiration for many others who claim they are just "too busy" to look beyond their own immediate needs, toys and pleasures.

Best wishes
Shahriar Saleh

GREAT CONTRIBUTION

I salute Dr. Ahkami's contributions to our community and wish him all the best. He is an extraordinary man, whom despite so many issues and problems, never gave up and continues his effort to educate young men and women, the second generations of Iranian-Americans, to understand their heritage. Thank you and job well done.

Saeed Manii

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HELPING GAINS WHAT?

After 9/11 Iran confiscated the passports of 300 Arabs who crossed into Iran from Afghanistan. The passports were forwarded to Kofi Annan, at the time, and then onto the U.S. where interrogators were allowed to investigate these individuals. This according to Hillary Mann Everett, who negotiated with Iran for Bush during the 2001-2003 administration. Suspected al-Qaida was not given sanctuary in Iran. While Iran expected boarder relations with the US because of this, the US took the position that Iran had not acknowledged all likely al-Qaida members or access to them and therefore offered no extended relationship to Iran. The expelled Arabs were then deported to Saudi Arabia and other Arab and Muslim countries.

According to James F. Dobbin, Bush administrative chief negotiator on Afghanistan in 2001, Iran in fact was “comprehensively helpful” after 9/11 and in helping to overthrow the Taliban and securing Karzai’s position in Kabul. But Iran was labeled as part of “the axis of evil.” Leverett and her husband, Flynt Leverett, a former career CIA analyst and former National Security Council official are now proposing that the next US president engage in meaningful talks, “grand bargaining,” with Iran to settle differences. This is especially important since Iran considers most of its neighbors as enemies. With a better relationship with Iran, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia may be less provocative.

FRENCH ARCHEOLOGIST ASKS IRANIAN OFFICIALS TO RESPECT SUSA

TEHRAN, Oct. 28 (Mehr News Agency) – French archaeologist Rémy Boucharlat has called for Iranian cultural officials to respect the perimeter of the ancient city of Susa.

Iran’s decision for construction of two hotels at the perimeter of the city was described as bizarre and unbelievable by Boucharlat, who is the director of the French Institute of Iranian Studies, the Persian service of CHN reported on Tuesday. The construction of Laleh and Amir Zargar hotels began following authorization of the project by the Khuzestan Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department (KCHTHD) in 2007.

However, the projects were halted after cultural heritage enthusiasts caused a media frenzy and in early September 2008, Shush Cultural Heritage Center (SCHC) director Mohammadreza Chitsaz said that the project had been banned following a series of expert investigations.

Meanwhile, a deputy director of the Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization (CHTHO) said in mid October that there are no obstacles to the construction of the hotels.

A team led by Mohammad-Taqi Ataii made 61 excavations at Susa and determined a 1200-hectare perimeter for the city as 32 of the digs have resulted in identification of ancient strata.

The previous demarcation, which had been carried out decades before, determined a 400-hectare perimeter for Susa.

Susa consists of many satellite suburbs, villages, and workshops said Boucharlat, adding that the city is not limited to the 400-hectare perimeter. It most likely that there are many ancient sites and artifacts in the area, which should be safeguarded by Iranian cultural officials, Boucharlat said.

Susa was an ancient city in the Elamite, Persian, and Parthian empires of Iran, located about 150 miles east of the Tigris River in Khuzestan Province of Iran. Susa is one of the oldest known settlements in the region, probably founded around 4000 BC, although the first traces of an inhabited settlement date back to 7000 BC.

A SIX YEAR OLD, NEW WORLD GENIUS

Mahsa Abbasi is only six, but has already been declared the world’s youngest genius. She has never attended school and recently won a gold medal at the 2008 Taipei International Invention Show and Technomart for her prototype, electronic dice. The electronic dice are considered to be a huge safety advance and will prevent children from choking on small dice found in children’s games.

STATUE OF GODDESS FOUND IN WESTERN IRAN



TEHRAN (Fars News Agency)- The first phase of archeological excavations at Sheikhi Abad mound in Iran’s Kermanshah Province has yielded the statue of a goddess. The statute, which resembles a figurine previously found in Kermanshah’s Sarab-Mort, is believed by experts to be a valuable source of information.

Iranian and British archeologists, who studied the site for the first time in the past fifty years, also discovered nearly 50 botanical samples that can shed light on some of the mysteries of the Neolithic Age.

Skeletal remains of red deer, goat, ram and fish were also found at the site, which archeologists hope will elucidate how animals were domesticated in those days. Previous studies had dated Sheikhi Abad mound to nine to ten thousand years ago. Archeologists believe the site was home to the earliest human settlers

PETER AVERY DIES

Peter Avery was a distinguished orientalist. He died at the age of 85, on October 6, 2008.

His education was cut short by the war. He volunteered in the Royal Indian Navy where he was commissioned. It was there that he began to study the Persian language, with a formal education received at London University’s School of Oriental and African Studies. While his work on Persian history is well known most believe his understanding and translation of classical Persian poetry will remain his greatest contribution.

He began his first poetry translation at SOAS working with John Heath-Stubbs, who was blind. Their Hafiz of Shiraz: Thirty Poems (1952) enjoyed years of life, while their other popular success, The Ruba’iyat of Omar Khayyam (1979), is still in print as a paperback. This is especially important since Iran considers most of its neighbors as enemies. With a better relationship with Iran, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia may be less provocative.



IN THE MEMORY OF ARDESHIR MOHASSESS

"I do not believe in an ideal society. I do not need an ideal society either, as there is no need for me in such a society"

Ardeshir Mohassess passed away on October 9, 2008 at the age of 70, in New York. He will be remembered as the artist who pushed the art of the cartoon to almost Surrealist satire of Iran. His works, which included dead and mutilated shahs as well as ordinary citizens were shocking for most, but depicted what he felt from the heart. Though an artist he considered himself first and foremost a reporter.

He was born on September 9, 1935 in Rasht, northwest Iran. His mother was a poet and headmistress of the first school for women in Iran and his father a judge. His love for art began at a very early age when he would accompany stories his mother read to him with personal sketches.

His formal education included degrees in political science and law from the University of Tehran. After leaving his job as librarian at the university he took a job with Keyhan, a daily newspaper. The increased popularity of his cartoons sparked the interest of the Savak. His cartoons were looked upon as leaking secret messages. The Shah was displeased with his work and ordered the paper to deal with him. Eventually work was scarce which prompted him to move to the US. His work has been seen in American publications such as the New Yorker, Playboy, and the Nation and has been on display at prestigious galleries.



SAIDEH GHODS IN TOP FIFTY

The Wall Street Journal has announced their top fifty women to watch for 2008. In 45th place is Iran's Saideh Ghods. After her child was diagnosed with cancer, she realized the children of the poor were watching their children die due to no access to medicine. In response she started a charity called the **Mahak** in 1991, that raises money and support for these stricken children. She is also co-founder of the International Society for Children with Cancer, based in Los Angeles.



AN NCAA FIRST

When Arsalan Kazemi suits up for his first college basketball game it will be with Rice University in Houston, Tex. Arsalan will graduate from Patterson School (N.C.) after emigrating to the US from Isfahan in the early part of 2008. The Big East schools had their eyes on him but he turned down the likes of Seton Hall for Rice University.

THE "BEST HISTORY BOOK OF 2008" AWARD

This year's winner for "Best History Book of 2008" The World Academy of Arts, Literature and Media (WAALM's) the category of Literature, is Kaveh Farrokh's "Shadows in the Desert: Ancient Persia at War".

COMPUTER GAME "THE AGE OF HEROES" BASED ON SHAHNAMEH

Tehran Times – Iran will soon release the computer game "The Age of Heroes" with the central theme of stories from Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*. The Ferdowsi Foundation proposed the initial concept and Iran's Modern Industry Center produced the game. The game has been produced in the action genre by Iranian experts, and revives the Iranian culture and traditions of championship with the help of good deeds and decency. The locations and the environment of the game are based on Iran's culture, geography and climate, featuring its epic music and Persian characters in traditional costumes situated in Persian historical monuments.

IRANIAN SINGER KHATEREH PARVANEH DIES

Mehr News Agency - Iranian traditional singer Khatereh Parvaneh died at 78 at her home in Tehran. She had been bedridden for almost a year after she broke her leg.

Parvaneh stated in her interview with Mehr News Agency in spring that she wished to give a concert along with other female singers this year to echo the message of Iran's desires for peace and friendship but she did not live long enough to fulfill her dream.

Khatereh began her career with master musician Saba in 1957, and continued on to give concerts with masters Hassan Radmard, Hossein Dehlavi, Faramarz Payvar, and Ofelia Parto.

"I learned music as I grew with my mom's songs, so I internalized learning music. I spent all my childhood and adult life with music, and after I was married, my husband sensed my interest in music and encouraged me even more.

"I was teaching at Bani-Ahmad School in those years and used to sing the morning anthem for the children at school. I was later invited to record a song at a studio and that is where I met master Saba," she had said once.



In the previous issue very briefly, you read the first rebuttal to Bill Frist about our invasion, attack and removing of Saddam Hussein from his power. Let's go back in history and you shall see how our memory is short lived. We will look first at the atrocities that Saddam Hussein had committed from 1968 to 2001. In July of 1968 the Baathist take over the Iraq government, July 1979 - Saddam Hussein becomes the president, purge of Baath leadership, September 1980 - Iraq invades Iran beginning the Iraq, Iran war, which went over 7-8 years and it was this war that he used chemical weapons, Feb-Sept. 1988 - Anfal campaign to the Iraq Kurds, March- was the gassing of Halabchah, August of 1988 - was the end of the Iraq, Iran war, August of 1990 - Iraq invades Kuwait, January-March 1991 - operation of Dessert Storm, March-massacre of the Shiites in southern Iraq, April 1991 - UN resolution 687 and 688 where the sanction was applied, April 1993 - An assassination attempt on former President (Herbert) George Bush, October 1994- Iraq forces mobilize again to invade Kuwait, August 1995 - eviction of Hussein Camille son-in-law of Saddam, December 1996 - oil for food program begins, August 1998 - Saddam announces suspension of UN inspection, October 1998 - Iraq immigration act becomes a US law, December of 1998 UN Security Council monitoring withdraws its staff from Iraq

December 1998- in this same month operation Desert Fox starts with US bombing the no fly zones in Iraq, December 1999- The UN creates the Arab Nation monitoring verification and inspection commission is created but unable to stop inspection or monitoring because of Saddam, 1999 to 2002 - Iraq fires on UK's and US patrol aircrafts almost on a daily basis

The congressional hearing started before September 11th, which discussed the dangers of the biological weapons; there was no mention of the nuclear weapons. This group of high-level officials of US government was called the "dark winter group" who in June of 2001 approved the following message: 1) a biological weapon attack with a contagious pathogene could potentially cripple the country. Non-contagious pathogen similarly crippling. 2) A local biological attack quickly becomes a national a global crisis. 3) Government responses will pose enormous challenges to civil liberties. The less prepared we are the more threats there will be to civil liberty. 4) America lacks the resource stockpiles required for appropriate response. This includes vaccines, antibiotics and the means of effective distribution. 5) Forcible constraints on citizens may likely be the only tools available even when vaccines stocks are depleted. Today we are unequipped to prevent the dire consequences of a biological weapons attack. So began the concern and fear of those administrations about Saddam's danger and it was not simply guess work. While they knew he had used these weapons before, the other excuses for removing him from power became secondary.

The media and democrats in the congress accused the US President of lying about the war. Sometimes, the lie was referred to him and sometimes to the lower level officials and the defense department. They will accuse us to have willfully misrepresented

Iraqis and WMD's program or support of terrorism to get the President and his National Security Counsel to make the war against Saddam. Critics sometimes assert both, that President Bush lied to the public and that he was lied too by his subordinates, those propositions contradict each other. The assertion that the officials lied about the wars rational is false. In the many thousands of official comments on the matter there were some sloppy formulations, ill chosen phrases, and outright errors. Officials also sited that an intelligence report about an Iraqi WMD that later proved faulty. But, misstatements and other mistakes are not lies. As documents quoted throughout the period, US officials believed that Iraq had chemical and biological weapons in stockpiles as republican and democrat voices in the government had generally agreed since the 1990's. The second explanation questioning no ones honesty has been that the wars rational hinged on as intelligence about in WMD that turned out to be false. Although inaccurate intelligence was indeed a factor in the administrations thinking, the reasoning that drove the administration to overthrow Saddam had a broader base than a bad WMD intelligence. This brings us to the third explanation of why we went to war against Saddam: The president had an honest, well grounded rational, one that was not undermined by our failure to find WMD's stockpiles in Iraq.

As the year of 2002 began, Bush and his Administration's concerns about Saddam's danger increased exponentially. He feared that Saddam may give these weapons to the terrorists, thus he decided to remove Saddam. That decision came in December of 2002 when the Iraqi regime made its unsatisfactory WMD declaration to the United Nations. From that point forward it seems to everyone in the defense department that the only way that Saddam Hussein could have prevented the war was by recognizing an inevitability of defeat and relinquishing his power and leaves the country.

The economic sanction had done nothing to discourage Saddam and hurt the people. The concern about the biological weapons terrorism was an important part of the rational for overthrowing Saddam, once it became clear that we had exhausted all other means of disarming him. But, wasn't that rational undermined by Iraq's survey group failure to find the expected WMD stockpiles in Iraq? The answer is no, because as we found out later the rational did not depend solely on the concern of weapons of mass destruction, much less if Saddam Hussein had the WMD stockpile on hand. Yet, many people belief then and now that it did hinge on the existence of the stockpiles and this became a disastrous credibility problem for the Bush Administration.

The report that the Bush Administration had from the US intelligence official on Iraqi WMD painted the same picture that those officials have presented to the Clinton Administration, The CIA declared that Saddam had chemical and biological weapons stockpiles and that he was only a year away from creating a nuclear weapon, if he could get his hands on the plutonium or enriched uranium. The Administration officials didn't feel comfortable guessing whether the production of WMD or transfer of WMD to

History of Terrorism

PART XVI

REBUTTAL #2

DAVID YAZDAN

"This is no time for ease and comfort, it is a time to dare and endure. Criticism in the body of politics is like pain in the human body. It's not pleasant, but where would the body be without it? No health or sensibility would be possible without continued corrective and warning of pain."

Winston Churchill, Manchester January 27, 1940.

the terrorists was imminent. We knew our intelligence wasn't very reliable, precise or timely enough to allow us to count on seeing such activity before it occurred or even promptly after. In 2008 we realize that the CIA was wrong when it said we would find substantial chemical and biological weapons in stockpiles in Iraq so the question is how might President Bush and his Administration have changed his thinking if they had believed there were no stockpiles? History is not a controlled experiment, so we can only guess how events would have changed with the US government knowing then what they know now about Iraq's weapons program.

During the Clinton's Administration Congress felt Saddam was a menace to the entire the Middle East. He had acquired chemical and biological weapons and attempted to acquire nuclear with the means to deliver those weapons using ballistic missiles. Saddam was ignoring the will of the United Nations and ignored the agreement he made during the Gulf War. Saddam was, according to Senator Charles Shummer, (D) of New York, a "dangerous force in the world. Hillary Clinton (D) also saw Saddam as evil man, "a dictator who oppresses his people and flaunts the mandate of the international community. While this behavior is reprehensible, it is Hussein's vigorous pursuit of biological, chemical and also nuclear weapons, and his present and potential future support for terrorists act and organizations that makes him a terrible danger to the people of the United States."

The CIA Report of Iraq for Terrorism, stated, "Iraq continues to be a safe haven, transit point or operational note for groups and individuals who direct violence against the United States, Israel and other Allies. Iraq has a long history of supporting terrorism. During the last four decades it has altered its target to reflect priorities and

goals. It continues to harbor and sustain a number of anti-Israel terrorist groups and to activate and encourage violence against Israel, Regarding the Iraq and Al Qaeda relationship, reporting from sources of Vetting. It points to the number of contact incidence of training, the discussion of Iraqi's safe haven for Osama Bin laden and his organization during his emergence dating from early 1990."

President Bush's strategy of preempting sanction as it might be called anticipatory self-defense has important implications for the way we view international relations. It is true that all the nations are bound by the united Nations but if one Nation is threatened either directly or indirectly then she has got the right to defend itself by anyway she can and this was one of the main basis that the United States had to remove Saddam from power. There are a lot of friends, colleagues and compatriots who say well Iran has been more dangerous to the United States than Iraq. How come nothing has been done about that? Although, on the surface this seems to be correct, but when you look very deeply Iran never possessed chemical or biological weapons therefore, she was not an immediate danger to the United States. The CIA then decided to declare to have credible information under the relationship, which had been developing for years between Saddam Hussein's regime and the terrorist group including Al Qaeda.

"Our understanding of the relationship between Iraq and Al Qaeda is evolving and is based on sources of vetting reliabilities. Some of the information we have received comes from detainees, including some of the high ranks. We have a solid reporting of senior levels of contact between Iraq and Al Qaeda going back decade credible information has indicated that Iraq and Al Qaeda have discussed safe haven and reciprocal non-aggression. Since

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C O M M E N T A R Y

the operation enduring freedom we have solid evidence of the presences in Iraq of Al Qaeda including some that have been in Baghdad. We have a creditable reporting that Al Qaeda sought contact in Iraq who could help them accord WMD capabilities. The reporting also stated that Iraq had provided training to Al Qaeda members in the area of the poisons and gas and of making conventional bombs. Iraqi increasing support to extremist Palestinians, coupled with growing indications of relationships with Al Qaeda suggests that Baghdad's links to terrorists will increase, with absent US military action.

Going back to the Clinton era during which he had called attention to the less intense era before 9-11. Imagine now the future, if Saddam failed to comply with the US Security Council and we failed to act, or we took an ambiguous safe route which gave him more opportunity to develop his program of weapons of mass destruction, continued to press for the release of sanctions and continued to ignore his commitment? It would probably have been concluded that the international Community had lost its will. Saddam then would have concluded that he had the right to rebuild an arsenal of devastating destruction. President Clinton said that, "he will use this arsenal. I think everyone of you who really works on this believes that to be true. "Senator Bidden reasoned the following, "that he is in material breach of the latest UN resolution, with little option but to remove him." Senator Rockefeller a then a ranking democrat on the senate intelligence committee declared, "we must eliminate what threat that we have now before it's too late?" He went on to analyze the problem of imminence.

"...There has been some debate of how "imminent" the threat Iraq posed. I do believe that it is an imminent threat and that since September 11, that question is outdated. It is the nature of these weapons and the way they are targeted against civilian populations that documented capability and demonstrated intent may be the only warning we get. To insist on further evidence could put some of our fellow Americans at risk. Could we afford to take this chance, no. Saddam Hussein represents a great threat to the United States and I have concluded that we must use force to deal with him if all other means fail."

President Clinton was confronted in the summer of 2004 while he had supported the removal of Saddam and later his wife supported going to war. He came up with the following answer) After 9/11, let's be fair here, if you had been the President during September 11th, you would think well, this fellow Bin laden just turned these three airplanes full of fuel into weapons of mass destruction, right? Well my first responsibility now would be to try everything possible to make sure that this terrorist network and other terrorist networks cannot reach or gain chemical or biological weapons or small amounts of fissile material. I have got to take care of that. That is why I supported the Iraq war. There was a lot of stuff unaccounted for so I thought that the President had an absolute responsibility to go to the UN and say, look guys, after 9/11 you have got to demand that Saddam Hussein lets us finish the inspection process? You couldn't reasonably finish the possibility that Saddam had these stocks. I never really thought he would use them but he has done it before. What I was far more worried about was that he would sell these weapons or give it away to the terrorist. When you are the president and your country has just been through what we had we want everything to be accounted for.

We can summarize this rebuttal with the following summaries of 15 Items, which is quite obvious to the reader.

1) Clinton awards Halliburton no-bid contract in Yugoslavia - good. , Bush awards Halliburton no-bid contract in Iraq - bad, 2)

Clinton spends 77 billion on war in Serbia - good. . . Bush spends 67 billion in Iraq-bad, 3) Clinton imposes regime change in Serbia - good. . . Bush imposes regime change in Iraq - bad, 4) Clinton bombs Christian Serbs on behalf of Muslim Albanian terrorists good, Bush liberates 25 million form genocidal dictator. . . bad, 5) Clinton bombs Chinese embassy - good. . . Bush bombs terrorist camps bad, 6) Clinton commits felonies while in office - good . . . Bush lands on aircraft carrier in jumpsuit - bad, 7) Clinton says mass graves in Serbia - good. . . Entire world says WMD in Iraq - bad, 8) Stock market crashes in 2000 under Clinton - good. . . Recession under Bush - bad, 9) Clinton refuses to take custody of Bin Laden - good. . . World Trade Centers fall under Bush - bad, 10) No mass graves found in Serbia -good. . . No WMD found Iraq -bad, 11) Terrorist training in Afghanistan under Clinton - good. . . Bush destroys training camps in Afghanistan - bad, 12) Milosevic not yet convicted - good. . . Saddam in custody and dead - bad, 13) Clinton did not do anything to stop the terrorist from harming the US - good. . . Bush kicked their butt, bad, and 14) Democrats approved removal of Saddam, signed by Clinton - good. . Bush implemented it - bad In my opinion there was really no choice than to remove Saddam and what happened afterward was of course, partly a bad situation on the part of the defense department and also the fact that both Syria and Iran contributed to the insurgency from all directions.

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THE AXED PERSIAN IDENTITY

PART TWO

TAJIKISTANWEB.COM

Linguistic Internationalization the process of the differentiation between Persian and ‘Tajiki’ in Soviet Central Asia lasted longer than thought. In spite of renaming the language and changing its script, its obvious oneness with Persian of other lands remained vivid.

In the spirit of ‘internationalism’ a massive stream of Russian and other foreign borrowings flowed into the language replacing their Persian equivalents, and specific Russian characters were introduced in the newly modified Cyrillic alphabet. The upshot was tremendous. Even the name of the state changed from “Jumhuri-i Shuravi-i Sosialisti-i Tajikistan” to “Republikai Sovetii Sotsialistii Tajikistan”.

The Linguistic Conference of 22 August 1930 in Stalinabad (Dushanbe) chaired by the Russian Orientalist Aleksandr Semenov came to the following conclusions:

- the new Tajik language should emerge from the existing language of Tajik newspapers, journals and books and not be completely re-invented; - this language should be comprehensible for all Tajik speakers in the Soviet Union. The necessary simplification of the language could be achieved by approaching the language spoken by Soviet Tajiks; - the language would have to abandon certain forms which until then had been common characteristics of the Persian/Tajik written language both inside and outside the Soviet Union (Paul Bergne, *The Birth of Tajikistan: National Identity and the Origins of the Republic*). Those ‘certain Persian forms’ were abandoned indeed, but survived in the masses’ spoken language. For instance, the Persian subjunctive prefix ‘be-’ (‘bi-’) excluded from the ‘modern literary Tajik’ survived the Soviet linguistic hurricane among ordinary Tajik people and it is still in use. Numerous Turkic elements such as “-mi” question particle and broken sentence structures penetrated the ‘new language’ to alienate it from the language of Persians abroad.

Persophobia Andreas Kappeler and Edward Allworth, the authors of the *Muslim*

Communities Re-emerge, believe that all those measures (to establish a ‘normative Tajik language’) were aimed at neutralizing “Pan-Iranism” among Tajik intellectuals, that is, “the consciousness of deep commonality of the cultural and linguistic heritage of the Central Asian Persian-speakers with the people of Iran and Afghanistan.” Sadridin Ayni’s self-designation as “Farsi” (*ma Farsiyan*) in one of his articles heightened the new authorities’ concern. Ayni’s compendium of Tajik literature (*Namunai Adabiyate Tajik*) gave rise to intense debate and some Russian ‘scholars’ rejected Tajiks’ claim for any kind of literature prior to their Soviet history. The compendium contained poems by Rudaki, Ferdowsi, Hafez, Sa’adi, Nezami, Kamal Khojandi, Sayf Isfaragi and many others.

“By 1930 the *Namuna* had been banned and in many cases destroyed,” says Paul Bergne in his book. Sadridin Ayni was labeled as a “reactionary monarchist” by authorities. To prove his loyalty to the Soviets Ayni had to publish unassailably pro-Soviet novels *Odina* and *Dokhunda* in 1930. In return, all poets mentioned in Ayni’s *Namuna* were recognized as Perso-Tajik classic literary figures. But their heirs in Central Asia were to be kept in minority.

“DID ALL THE TAJIKS DIE?”

Soviet census is a painful issue that would absorb hundreds of pages, if we choose to write about it. But it should be mentioned here that Tajiks, who had no allies in the new Slavo-Turkic union, were among the main victims of the Soviet population counts and their number decreased drastically between 1917 and 1926 censuses. The chief secretary of the Tajik Committee of the Uzbek Communist Party at the time believed that the ‘biased and unfair’ 1926 census was a tool of Uzbekization. As a result, millions of Tajiks in Samarkand, Bukhara, Surkhan-Darya and other Persian-populated areas of Uzbekistan turned into Uzbeks overnight.

“According to Shotemur, soon after the delimitation of 1924, Uzbek newspa-

pers claimed that Tajiks could be found only in the Pamir (in the Tajik ASSR), and that “people who believe there are Tajiks in the rest of Central Asia are insane.” Shotemur described how Uzbeks engaged in the systematic “persecution of Tajiks and the Tajik language.” The situation became so bad, he argued, that at the time of 1926 census “it was impossible to step forward and say that Tajiks existed in Uzbekistan,” let alone tell a census taker that you were one. Other Tajik leaders agreed that such circumstances had led to false census totals. Bukhara and Samarkand were famous throughout the east as Tajik cities, but the 1926 census showed them to be Uzbek. “Did all the Tajiks die?” asked Abdurahim Hajibayev (another Tajik Communist leader –twc). “If so, it must be as a result of un-Soviet policies.” (Francine Hirsch, *Empire of Nations: Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of the Soviet Union*).

AWAKENING INTERRUPTED

Nevertheless, prevailing anti-Persian sentiments of the Soviets failed hamper Tajiks’ affinity towards their Persophone brethren on the other side of the border. Later, in 1970s, academician Babajan Ghafurov (Bobojon Ghafurov), the former First Secretary of the Communist Party of Tajikistan, contended that, in fact, Central Asia was the cradle of the medieval Persian language and culture. According to him, “Tajik had already acquired its main characteristics and was spoken in Central Asia, north-eastern Iran, and northern Afghanistan before the Arab conquest began in the seventh century, although the language was called “Persian” rather than “Tajik”. In the centuries following the Arab conquest, Persian displaced a number of other Iranian languages spoken in Central Asia. These displaced languages had a lasting influence on the vocabulary and pronunciation of the Persian dialects spoken there, making them markedly different from dialects spoken further west. It was only these eastern dialects, which first bore the name “Persian”. (Jo-Ann Gross, *Muslims of Central Asia: Expressions of Identity and Change*). Ghafurov succeeded to prove Tajiks’ pivotal role in the creation of Persian civilization in his great work *Tojikon*.

Tajik academics went further while defining their new identity or rather tracing back their real ethnic designation. The author of *Muslims of Central Asia* describes the Persophile upsurge in the

post-perestroika Tajikistan:

“A Tajik professor, writing in a large-circulation newspaper, has defined “Iran” as not only the name of a particular twentieth-century state but also the much larger area, from the Indus and Syr Darya to the borders of what are now Turkey, Iran, and Syria, that formed the original homeland of all the Iranian peoples, including the Tajiks (Dodkhudoev, 1986). A related argument is that the Tajiks were a large and powerful people in the past, inhabiting northeastern Iran, Afghanistan, Xinjiang, and other areas, in addition to Central Asia (Siddiqov, 1984)... The head of Tajikistan’s Academy of Sciences until recently, Muhammad Osimi (Russian spelling: Asimov) has stated that Persian, Dari (Kabul Persian, a lingua franca in Afghanistan) and Tajik are essentially a single language despite numerous differences in specialized vocabularies and spoken dialects, adding that, “our classical literature, which was written in Dari Persian language is the common property of the Iranians, Afghans and Tajiks alike” (Rajabi, 1987:4)” (Jo-Ann Gross, *Muslims of Central Asia: Expressions of Identity and Change*, 1992).

This sentiment reached its culmination in 1989, when Tajikistan became the first Central Asian republic to formulate a language law. It was the fourth such law in the entire Soviet Union preceded only by those in the three Baltic States. The law passed on July 22, 1989 under the pressure of massive demonstrations that demanded the main language of the republic to replace Russian as the official language. The law granted the language its original name ‘Persian’ in brackets – *Tajiki (Farsi)*. According to the law, *the Foundation for Tajik Persian* was established in the same year. The Cyrillic was also supposed to be replaced by the Perso-Arabic script by 1996. Even now Tajik intellectuals recall that day as a golden moment of their cultural euphoria in the 20th century. Indeed, it was just a moment not meant to last forever.

A five-year bloody civil war (1992-1997) interrupted Tajik cultural upsurge. Provincial neo-Communist forces came to power not without the Russian and Uzbek support and the process went backwards. An anti-Persian mood became prevalent and all Persian writings were wiped off the streets. In 1994 the Tajik parliament amended the 1989 Language Law, stating that the name of the state language was now called only Tajik (*Tojiki*). And the plan to return to the Perso-Arabic script was abandoned indefinitely.

AN INTERESTING HOUR IN QAZVIN

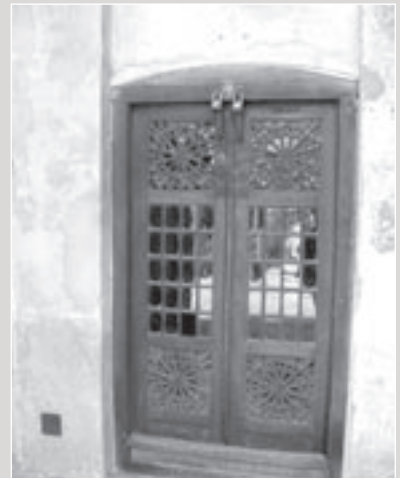
BY: SYMA SAYYAH, TEHRAN

Many things have come across my way most unexpectedly. Recently during a business trip with the CEO of PKCF to and around Qazvin, we arrived early for our meeting with Mohandess Haydari, who is the head of Nousazi Madaress (new schools building) in Qazvin province and Mohandess Ghiyassvand. Since everything was ready, we finished our meeting early and so we had about an hour before heading to our next meeting in Jaffarabad to visit an extension to a school PKCF has built there. Mohandess Haydari kindly lent us his car and his driver for a quick tour around Qazvin, which incidentally none of us had seen before.

Qazvin, which is about 90km to the west of Tehran and in the past has been quite famous. It was chosen as the capital during the Safavid era and it was also an important and significant city during the time of the Ghajars. Qazvin is a city of about a million inhabitants. The main sights include the not yet opened traditional tea house and museum of anthropology and the restored Ghajar bath complex.

When I was doing research for this piece, I realized that Ali Akbar Dehkhoda (linguist and compiler of the first Persian dictionary), Obeid Zakani (poet and satirist) and Hamdollah Mostowfi (historian) all came from Qazvin.

There are many mosques from different periods which are worth seeing as well as many tombs and water springs and reservoirs as well as *caravansarais* (an ancient type motel for passengers and cattle). I am sure you all would guess that there one finds many old and new bazaars and last but not least, what we found very pleasant was the garden of the museum of the *Kolah Farangi* building.



EXPANSION OF GLOBAL POWER THROUGH THE TECHNOLOGICAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMICAL DOMINATION

PART ONE

BY: M. K. SADIGH

Globalization

Globalism refers to a unified international geopolitical system of gathered nations, which creates the possibility of a common market, free from regulations, limitations, and the impositions of their governments. The phenomenon of globalism came to existence when the expansion of the market to a larger measure became crucial means of sustenance and development for trade as a vital phase for industrial revolution. In essence the Globalism was the manifestation of the liberation of economical, social and political activities, within the new world order based on certain ethical paradigms. Generally the concept of universality which in the standpoint of trades formed in to the Globalism was freedom from the supervision of religion and politics. Basically as part of enlighten movement it was the manifestations of a general historical significance as a fundamental motivation for fulfillment of human struggles toward modern movements which resulted the historical changes of democratic advancement of today. Since then the social and political evolution passed through tremendous reorientation. It took decades of human sacrifices to configure the whole new social order.

Historically the atmosphere of pre-modernism was to a great extent suppressive to the majority of human rights, in the expenses of maintaining only the interests of the more powerful social rank. In deed modernism reduced that suppression and expanded the scope of human consciousness to be free, receptive and aware of the facts of living environment and capable of self-judgment about them, rather than being confined to condemnation to the absolute conformity. The modern Globalism changed into a wholly different form or appearance of the old concept, which maintaining suppression and domination under deceptive appealing covers and in far more

sophisticated manners. The new condition of modern time brought up drastic social and intellectual changes and positioned the world in a fast phase of progress toward post modernism and followed by the new world order.

This new order also instigated the complexity, alienation, injustice, and confusion as well as hegemonic suppression of ethical and intellectual freedom. In this new world order no longer the individualism mattered or accounted for, instead universality and holistic consideration became a determinant power, which phased out what ever did not fit in its organizational territory. Beside the political and economical domination, the individual identity was replaced with the global identity, and nationalism eventually sucked in to a larger and far more powerful global system. In a way it was the revival of imperial power of the past, but far more advanced and sophisticated and in a more elusive and pretentious presentation.

The expansion of International relation and the composition of a global constitution.

The expansion of International relation and the composition of a global constitution capable of dictating the laws beyond the jurisdiction of individual sovereignty laid down the first ground for materialization of global domination. This new global system created the appropriate atmosphere for world trade relation which resonates the new trends of changes in the mechanism of international trades.

The paradoxical outcome of this new world order from one hand was the enhancement of cultural and political maturity associated with the technological advancement. In the other hand Global alliance of the participants of this new system was the prerequisite for their pacts, military alliances, and political unity for wars and invasive activities. In a way Globalism created the security and appropriation for

international trades in a world-wide scale which the out come of it only guaranteed the interest of the participants. The International Monetary Funds and the World Bank as international institutions of finance and trades along with their vast organizational and administrative institutions which originally were created to serve the economical means, and provide aids to those nations of needs to develop and achieve certain economical goals. On the contrary these institutions became the vehicles of marketing and commerce for big corporations which their functions overshadowed the interests of the people.

IMF as an international monetary fund established at the Bretton Woods Conference in 1944 its task was to regulate, distribute, and provide economical aides to those nations that need monetary assistances. In fact, its original goal was the provision of the necessary funds to the poorest nations, which they could not possibly stand on their feet without outside assistance. This in itself was a highly valuable project that attracted more colonies and newly liberated nations from colonialism to its membership. The head quarter of IMF is located in Washington DC and its members have the full responsibility to comply with all the rules and regulations proposed by the institution. Its basic responsibility is regulation of gold market, and reconstruction of the economy of the poor nations.

The increasing members of IMF and expansion of the international relations required more administrative power and more management, but at the same time the institution became a capable body for more accurate researches, and political and economical studies about the needs, expenses, annual incomes, the economical credentials and the quantity and quality of the trades between different nations. This new statues put IMF in an authoritarian position. Any member could barrow

money from the bank and pays it back with its own currency by installment. They were responsible to maintain their credit in a good credible level, in order to conduct their international transaction. The bank acted as a financial institution to help them in their transaction. In 1952 a new facility was added to the IMF program for the method assistance and prerequisite of participation of the members and attaining the credit and loans. By 1961 between ten countries an agreement was established to provide credits for their international transactions, whenever they need it. In 1962 they even provided assistance to those nations who were affected by the world monetary fluctuation.

All these expansion needed more fund and more efficient mechanism to run in order to produce a world balance of trades and economy. This issue was considered in the general assembly of IMF in 1969. They also decided to give credits to their members without the collateral support and the right of cotta, which was added in 1968. Finally IMF and International bank with a joint investment of several billion dollars balance expanded their operation far more extensive than before all over the world, lending, programming, planning, and designing projects to reconstruct the economies of different nations. Such powerful joined institutions undoubtedly became an open shelter for power manipulation of the most dominant economical and technological powers to expand their influences for manipulations and exploitation of the unfortunate nations.

OTHER ASPECTS OF GLOBALISM

Globalism is not only identified by the hegemonic characteristic such as international domination, economical power, and of course political influences, which determines the destiny of the people of the world. Globalism also refers to trans-cultural collaboration, peace movements and the development of cultural relations, international health programs, and defense of human rights. Many aspects of human life, which cover the problems beyond the scope of local and regional needs, are considered international and global problems. As matter of fact, all these programs and activities originally were created under the banner of humanitarian consideration and later on developed to the powerful institutions of today.

THE BROAD INFLUENCES OF THE GLOBALISM AND THE OPPOSITION

OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS

The broad influences of the Globalism as an international power also faced opposition from national governments, because their authorities have been challenged and in some cases to a great deal threaten by global power. Their oppositions sometimes are raised to a level of hostility and unpleasant contradictions. These encountering are in direct opposition with the interests of their governing forces. Their fear is generated by the unavoidable intellectual maturity of their people through the technological advancements of international communications which ironically could facilitate their advancement toward the formation of a civil societies and world peace.

In his article published in the international affair in the spring of 1999, Richard Falk introduces the obstacles and barriers in the realization of world's peace. He believes the most important obstacle is the ideological differences that create diversity among the international body. The nature of such diversity predominantly is the national and ethnical differences, which every nation strives to sustain its identity, in spite of this, also, there have been a great deal of development achieved and brought positive results for peace to content the sympathizers of the world peace.

One of the most concealed barriers is the emphasis on the superiority and distinction of one's ethnicity over the others. This will definitely isolates and divides the nations, to a level that limits the function of the rationality and comprehension. The result of such distinction is the preference of political and economical values being the only criteria for judgment rather than ethical values. The most optimistic result of global civil society would be the amalgamation and collaboration of ethical forces from all over the world under one unified banner.

This unified or at least recognized global force would be able to counter balance the forces, which dismissed the ethical human values for the benefits of economical and technological preferences. The selective administrative authorities of the members, the heads of states, and the political delegations which apparently forwarding the global understanding led to global peace, conduct most of the general United Nation's discussions. In the contrary, this selectivity creates more confusion because most of the representatives in reality do not represent the interests of the majority

ANALOGICAL REFERENCE TO COMPREHEND THE STRUCTURE OF GLOBAL POWER

In relation to the world peace and global justice, Falk in his article resorts to crucial elements, which create obstacles for peace. One of these obstacles he believes is the hegemonic influence of the powerful nations over the powerless nations, in the United Nations. This influence, some times exceeds to a level that paralyzes the freedom and judgements of those members.

The existence of such intimidating imbalance diminishes the security of free and fair judgments, as a result, the global peace. In such unethical conditions then, the opportunity for fair judgments, and the guarantees for rightful determination become non-existence reality.

At the present time, what ever we recognize as manifestations of the world peace is occasional meetings, discussions, and mediations. All we can see is, the collaborations and unifications, which are materialized under the title of the world peace, but truly had not yet, achieved the global identity by any measure. These activities generally cover a lesser parameter than the global significance and it is unrealistic to even define then in the realm of global scope, even tough, always labeled internationally. This became a known reality, that United Nations, as suspiciously and painfully revealed, became a pragmatic ground for power struggle, in deed, an appropriate ground for bargaining and piecemeal, where the big powers accessibly orchestrate a global policy directed to individual achievement rather than international or global interests. In spite of such unfair political practice, there are also powerful members, who are in the contradictory positions, siding with the globally recognized and respected human values denounce the individualistic domination in the favors of global justice. As matter of fact, it is the significance and sincerity of this body that produces hopes for the future of the world peace and human rights.

All the international interactions whether it is positive or negative will facilitate the exposures of variety of facts. Eventually the result is enhancement of the global consciousness and hopefully preparation for better understanding. Even though, most of the preoccupations of discussions, negotiations, and mediations related with provision of individual interests and occasional matters.

to be continued

Before getting on with this essay, I feel compelled to clear up a few misperceptions. Commentators and analysts, whether Iranian, Iranian American or, in many cases even of foreign origin, who rise in defense of Iran's position with regard to practically any issue of international concern, are not necessarily Iran apologists or, as often insinuated, paid agents of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Just as clearly, criticizing policies of the American or Israeli administrations does not make the critic an anti-American, unpatriotic or anti-Semitic. Unfortunately, being unjustly accused or slandered goes with the territory. As the saying goes, those of us who cannot tolerate the heat should stay out of the kitchen.

I, as many others who speak or write about the Iranian issues, am not in any position to gain anything materially by supporting the mandates of the Islamic Republic regime in Tehran. I do, however sympathize with the Iranian nation and the hopes and expectations of a people that have been subjected to underserved hardships, with an awareness of the forces at work that have prevented the aspirations of the Iranian people from materializing in due time.

It is a historical fact, however, that what is righteous or fair doesn't always, or even often, rise to the top by some natural or supernatural buoyancy. In today's interconnected world, any rapid change in the balance of powers, especially in a strategically important region of the shrinking planet, will have wide-range ramifications that affect and redirect the dynamics of that change. The Islamic revolution, a truly grassroots uprising in Iran, was no exception. For many, it is almost an empirical truth that social freedom, civil liberty, political independence and democratic aspirations are purely Western concepts that are particularly alien to Islamic societies. This kind of self-delusional myth goes hand-in-hand with a general lack of appreciation of the fact that all freedoms and liberties are bound within, and limited by, cultural and legal constraints even among the most liberal secular democracies of the West. In other words, there is no such thing as absolute or unlimited freedoms or liberties, or even a universally accepted definition of these terms.

If communism failed to deliver its promises of the liberation of the masses from totalitarian rule, this failure, whatever its causes, does not negate the potential that there could be a workable communist or socialist "democracy." We have observed communist dictatorships head for their demise as in the former Soviet Union, or toward remodeling and reform as is the case in today's China, all the result of economic pressures that invariably eclipse ideological factors. We are also observing capitalist democracies that, unless harnessed by "socialist-style" restraints, easily morph into dictatorships of the capitalist monopolies, a precursor to regional, and then global, imperialism.

Similarly, Islam or Islamic government is not by nature incompatible with democracy or democratic reform unless, of course, we chose, as we have, to define democracy in such narrow terms that would exclude from that definition any form of a participatory universal suffrage that does not fit our specific criteria.

Iran's own social uprising in defense of democratic reforms dates back to the first decade of the 20th century. A recent publication, *The Quest for Democracy in Iran; A Century of Struggle Against Authoritarian Rule* authored by Professor Fakhreddin Azimi, is recommended reading for those interested in this subject. Interestingly, that "Constitutional Revolution", which limited the powers of the monarchy by establishing a parliamentary system, was also led by the religious hierarchy. That was no surprise. In a traditional society characterized by disparate ethnic and linguistic blocks and a weak central government totally oblivious to the



social condition of the nation, the only ideologically meaningful common denominator is religion. Shi'a Islam, which distinguishes the Iranian nation from the mainstream Sunni world, served as the rallying banner of a popular front against the inept rule of the late Ghajar period, and again, some 70 years later, against the unpopular Pahlavi dictatorial monarchy.

After the success of the earlier Constitutional Revolution, the clerical leaders retreated, by force and by choice, back to their traditional seats of spiritual authority in the Shi'a Iran's equivalents of the Vatican: Ghom and Mashhad. In contrast, after Iran's second uprising, the Islamic Revolution of 1978-79, the clerical authority has not relinquished its control and power, and the revolutionary spirit has remained undiminished after a generation to this day. Why has it been different this time?

As is always the case, the struggle for liberation from corrupt authoritarian rule does not begin by a spontaneous mass uprising among the oppressed proletariat, in other words, the downtrodden and disenfranchised population that is too preoccupied with rudiments of survival to be concerned about such concepts as liberty or democracy. The seeds that germinate into such revolutions are planted by the intelligentsia or the better educated elite, academics, clerics and the always influential merchant classes. But no matter how potent the seeds of reform might be, without rallying the support of the populous, the vehicle of revolutionary change cannot gain sufficient momentum to overcome the powers of the establishment. Against the modern, sophisticated and well regimented internal security and military power of the Iranian regime of the late 70's, it would be hard to imagine any banner or common denominator other than religious ideology that could have unified the masses with any hope of success.

The revolution of 1978-79 thus became the Islamic Revolution under the leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini, who had spent years in exile, returning only after the Shah, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, abdicated the throne for the last time.

Many intellectual Iranians, mostly in self-exile in Europe or the United States, decided to join their counterparts in the homeland to celebrate this historic opportunity and to channel the flood of revolution in the direction of a modern secular democracy even if, at least temporarily, within the framework of Shi'a Islam.

Much to the surprise and dismay of the rejuvenated Left-

leaning intelligentsia, the United States was not only unfazed by the success of the Islamic Revolution, it had even encouraged the remaining Iranian military top brass to surrender to the Islamic authorities to prevent a bloody coup and to pave the way toward a smoother transition. "Mission to Tehran", a book by General Robert Huyser, Jimmy Carter's emissary to Tehran during early 1979, is a helpful reference.

The fact that the United States did not encourage a military coup, as it did under the much less critical conditions in 1953 to abort the nationalist movement of Prime Minister Mosaddegh, was a clear sign that a rapprochement with the new Islamic regime was in the making. This did not sit well with the leftist revolutionaries who could smell the potential reestablishment of yet another, and perhaps stronger, pro-imperialist regime, this time in Islamic colors. Their suspicions were further confirmed when the Islamic Revolutionary command began a severe crackdown on leftist socialist groups, which pushed them underground and treated them more brutally than what they had suffered under the previous regime. Viewed as counter revolutionaries opposed to the tenets of an Islamic Republic, many escaped this crackdown by remaining dormant, and others were sent to exile, imprisoned or banished.

The perception persists to this day among the more "liberal" secularists and many former royalists that the Islamic Revolution owed its success to encouragement and support by the United States and Great Britain; in other words, the imperialist global powers, without whose endorsement no major political sea change, they firmly believe, would be allowed to take place.

The November 1979 taking of the American embassy and holding the staff as hostages was clearly an attempt by the leftist activists to gain the upper hand. This gave them the ultimate bargaining chips to escape total elimination by the new Islamic regime. This was indeed a brilliant master stroke. The battle cry of the revolutionary forces moving against the monarchy included phrases such as, "Neither East nor West", or "Freedom and Independence", implying objections to the subservience of the monarchy to the mandates of the imperial West, particularly the United States. The leftist militants had no difficulty in receiving great popular support for their action. The Embassy became known as the "Nest of Spies", notwithstanding the fact that all embassies everywhere in the world are engaged in espionage and influence peddling, and the American embassy in Tehran was no exception.

The Khomeinists were clearly taken by surprise, facing a potentially catastrophic dilemma. Had this hostage taking been sanctioned or planned by the Islamic regime, it would have been the greatest strategic blunder committed by the burgeoning Islamic Republic. Yet, with popular support for this takeover and against the backdrop of anti-American sloganeering and anti-West propaganda, the regime had no option but to try to appear as accepting, even condoning, this action.

The plan by the hostage takers was quite clear. They knew that although the United States had initially been favorable to the establishment of the Islamic Republic and a reopening of normal relations with Iran, the death of American hostages in any numbers in the hands of the militants would leave the American administration with no option but to take immediate and decisive military action against Iran. Submitting to the American demands for the Khomeini regime to condemn and disavow the hostage taking and force the release of the captives would have meant political suicide for the fledgling revolution that was facing some rather stiff internal struggles. Furthermore, any attempt to force the surrender of the militants could have easily resulted in the death of several

hostages, anyway.

The only remaining alternative for the regime was to negotiate with the leftist "student" militants, promise them safety and broader political liberties, in order to gain some control over the destiny of the hostages. The subsequent developments snowballed in both the United States and in Iran to a point that emotionally charged, exaggerated and sensationalized tabloid versions of the events totally eclipsed the realities on the ground.

There could be little doubt that the death of any number of those American hostages would have brought about an abrupt end to the militarily defenseless embryonic Islamic government, followed by the return of the Shah and his generals. This was something that the Khomeini regime could not afford. Not just America, but also Khomeini's regime were thus held hostage by the leftist militants. That episode changed forever the direction of Middle East's turbulent history.

It is not a coincidence that a total crackdown on the leftist militants was resumed in full force almost immediately after the release of the hostages upon Ronald Reagan's inauguration as the new President. The *raison d'être* for the very legitimacy of Iran's Islamic Revolution, i.e., breaking the shackles of imperialism, and the public angst and grievance in the United States against the hostage taking, have helped perpetuate the prevailing narratives. Unchallenged to this day, these narratives have gained an undeserved and counterproductive historicity, which continues to mar the image of the Islamic Republic of Iran as the enemy of the United States, and America's image in Iran as the Great Satan. Meanwhile, there are forces and special interests that have found the muddled relationship between the United States and Iran quite ripe for exploitation. It is against this background that we must view and analyze the current events in the Middle East, particularly as they relate to what has been often termed by the American administration as the Iran Question.

The President called Iran a member of the global axis of evil during his State of the Union address in January 2002, accusing the Islamic Republic of perpetrating and supporting international terrorism, human rights violations and, above all, attempts to develop nuclear weapons. Ever since then, many experts in the field of nuclear science and weaponry, academics with knowledge of the Middle East, Iran experts, and even the official arm of the UN that deals with non-proliferation issues, have repeatedly cleared Iran of any wrong doing in violation of the nuclear non proliferation agreement.

Iran's support for the alleged international terrorist organizations hangs on the assumptions that said organizations are, in fact, terrorist groups, a view that puts the United States and Israel in disagreement with the rest of the global community. With regard to human rights violations, although that accusation is quite justified, Iran's situation pales in comparison with what is going on in other societies throughout the world, some of the most egregious violators of human rights being among America's best friends in the Middle East!

The current dilemma or standoff between the United States and Iran can be addressed at two levels. At the street level, the American public, although as surveys show are against another military confrontation in the Middle East and favor a diplomatic approach with Iran by at least a two-to-one margin, show no skepticism or reason to question the prevailing media portrayal of Iran and the Iranians as a threat to America's security and best interests. Peoples' representatives and lawmakers in the Congress are similarly inclined. They vote along party lines and in step with

cliques that are submissive to special interest lobbies. Only the few top Administration officials and ranking members of the Senate and the House committees are privies to the kind of information that would be instrumental in the decision making processes.

It is, therefore, an exercise in futility to lobby your representative in Washington to vote against approving the budget to expand and intensify covert operations inside Iran, which recently passed unanimously by both the Republicans and Democrats who serve in special committees. That would be like writing to your child's middle school principal that the students need better teachers or larger classrooms. He or she already knows that; it ain't going to get done that way! At the higher level, above the pedestrian crowds, however, the situation is quite different. It would be foolish to think that the White House cabal (perhaps, sadly, excluding the President himself!) and senior State Department people, or our civilian and military intelligence experts, need my advice or those of other experts in various foreign policy fields in order to make better decisions. We will not be telling them anything they don't already know.

What we all know, and what they also know, is the following: Iran is not in the process of procuring a nuclear bomb at this time. So, what's the fuss? Even if Iran did acquire the technology to make the bomb, it would never serve Iran's interest to initiate any attack, which would mean mass suicide for Iran. So, what's there to fear?

Iran's aid or support of groups such as the Lebanese Hezbollah and the Palestinian Hamas is a hedge against Israel's habitual offensive posturing and threats against its perceived antagonists, and its insistence to remain the region's unchallenged superpower. Is this really hard to understand? Open threats of attack, official policy of the United States for a regime change in Iran, and economic sanctions and diplomatic pressures imposed on the Islamic Republic, have all served to strengthen the Islamic government by providing it with greater legitimacy and rationale to impose stricter measures against the dissidents and reformists. If the aim of the American administration was a regime change and democratic reforms, these policies have clearly accomplished just the opposite.

Similarly, if the American policy is to discourage Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, threats against its security and territorial integrity would compel the Islamic Republic to gain access to at least the technology for some meaningful retaliatory response. Why not quit the threats and then expect Iran to abandon any plans to access the weapon? According to most military and economic experts, an attack on Iran by the United States or its regional surrogate Israel would not only fail to accomplish the advertised objectives, it would create a regional quagmire whose blowback can devastate the economies of the globe and cost the United States much more than it could possibly gain as the result. Then, why are "all the options" still on the table?

Again, those at the level of decision making in the American administration must also know these facts. So, what factors are preventing these logical steps to lead us to a better solution to the problem? Isn't the answer quite clear? The objective is simply not a resolution of adversities and the creation of a peaceful atmosphere in the region. It doesn't take a supercomputer to figure out what steps would lead us away from the flashpoint in that combustible atmosphere. On the other hand, knowing from experience if not from logical deduction what policies are most likely to lead us and the region to assured disaster, why are we deliberately heading the wrong way? Is it because the wrong way is actually our prescribed way?! If that is the case, perhaps we should try to understand who

or what forces have dictated this prescription.

The beneficiaries of a catastrophic long-term military involvement in the Middle East, particularly involving the United States and Iran, do not include the United States, Iran, or the Middle East region - interestingly barring only Israel! Other potential beneficiaries include the powerful military industrial complex in the United States and, of course, oil interests.

Starting from the bottom, most observers who have not bought into the embarrassingly adolescent Administration's line about the promotion of democracy and freedom in the Middle East believe that the main reason for the invasion of Iraq was to ensure control over the region's oil. While the United States does not import much of its oil from the Middle East, there are indeed reasons to be concerned about the quantity, continuity and the direction of the flow of that oil. There are ever hungrier markets for oil particularly in the rapidly growing economies of China and India. Control over this largest and most strategically vital international commodity means controlling the world economy.

The question, however, is whether the strategy of creating and perpetuating mayhem in the oil rich Middle East would be the best way to achieve this objective. Since for practically all oil producing states in that region oil is the most significant and in some cases the only source of revenue, it is ludicrous to think that Iraq or Iran would benefit in any way to use the oil weapon for any conceivable gain or for any length of time. On the other hand, China, India or any other developing country thirsty for energy could easily tap into the open oil markets in the high seas,



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regardless of where that oil was produced.

Oil is definitely an important concern, but at least in my opinion, not enough of a concern to have warranted going to war and getting stuck in the mess we are in.

The next beneficiary of an ongoing international instability, regional strife and war is thought by many analysts to be the gigantic military industrial complex, a multi trillion dollar enterprise that feeds, and feeds on, the America's economy. As the world's biggest arms supplier, America sell more arms to the world market than all other arms producers combined. From another angle, as long as instability and potential danger to America's strategic interests exist in the world, there will always be a need for a dominant military power to defend these interests. The industries that support the military need, from factories, research centers and shipyards, to aerospace industries, constitute the bulk of America's economic infrastructure. Again, it is debatable whether the so-called war on terror and the invasion of Iraq, and the threats against Iran, were critical factors in ensuring the longevity of this giant conglomerate. Unlike other industries, the military-related industries do not have to show a profit to remain solvent.

That leaves us with the final option, Israel's interests. There aren't many observers and analysts, even among the anti-war activist or voices of dissent, who dare express their beliefs that the invasion of Iraq and now the threat of war against Iran and possibly Syria, as well as attempts to change Lebanon's political makeup, all have been, and continue to be, serving Israel's agendas. Yet it can hardly be questioned that serendipitously, but more likely not by accident, the sole beneficiary of these actions has been the Israeli regime. As I have said before, I do not believe that another war is in the making, this time against Iran. Again, at the street level, the reason America should resort to diplomacy and avoid war is not because in the minds of the American people Iran is clear of all charges leveled against it. In the public mind Iran continues to remain a threat to regional and global peace and security. The conventional wisdom, however, has it that America is now stretched too thin militarily, the economy is suffering and people are just tired of this seemingly endless war.

At a higher level, behind the phony façade of the "Iranian threat", there is real concern that, unless the Israeli regime is sufficiently appeased and its appetite satiated, some act of aggression or sabotage against Iran might open the flood gates that would inevitably carry the United States with it and inundate the entire region with catastrophic results for Iran, as well for the American military and global economic interests. I believe that the Israelis are getting what they have been demanding; they simply intend to make sure with sufficient guarantees that the next American administration, Republican or Democrat, will continue along the same path.

In short, America is being blackmailed or, better put, held hostage by Israeli demands. Unfortunately, writing or lecturing about the unfair treatment Iran has been receiving from the United States, or demonstrating that the Islamic Republic is not really guilty of all the charges constantly brought against it, appeals only to a similar minded minority, while triggering the knee-jerk accusations of pandering to the Islamic Republic regime. The powers at the helm of American foreign policy apparatus are not fazed by our criticisms of their policies. And, sadly, our appeals for a deeper understanding of the issues have little chance of shifting the public opinion away from the long established mindsets. With gasoline prices hovering between four and five dollars a gallon, wildfires devastating vacation spots in the West and flood waters inundating

the Midwest, housing crisis, joblessness, and giant corporations laying off thousands more employees, the public has little patience deciphering, let alone accepting, complex geopolitical realities.

Meanwhile, the war drum will continue to beat - the hollower the louder. As Washington and Tel Aviv keep letting it be known that "all options are on the table", and the United States Navy embarks on yet another set of war exercises in the Persian Gulf, their Iranian counterparts thump their own chests and threaten to annihilate the enemy in case of any attack upon Iran. Somehow, the Iranians seem quite blasé about this charade. One doesn't have to be walking the streets of Tehran to see that people are too concerned about the runaway inflation, joblessness, corruption and the general state of the nation's economy to worry about American and Israeli bombs and missiles or nuclear fallout.

I can only conclude that the charade is only aimed at the American public and the lawmakers in Washington, those whose sympathies will ensure that the grand extortionist's demands are met.

CHILDHOOD 'TOY' REVEALED AS ANCIENT PERSIAN RELIC



LONDON (AFP) – An ancient gold cup mysteriously acquired by an English scrap metal dealer is expected to fetch close to a million dollars at auction after languishing for years in a shoe box under its current owner's bed. Owner John Webber says his grandfather gave him the 5.5-inch (14-centimetre) high mug to play with when he was a child, back in 1945. He assumed the golden cup, which is decorated with the heads of two women facing in opposite directions, their foreheads garlanded with two knotted snakes, was made from brass. But he decided to get it valued when he was moving house last year and was told it was actually a rare piece of ancient Persian treasure, beaten out of a single sheet of gold hundreds of years before the birth of Jesus Christ.

Experts said the method of manufacture and the composition of the gold was "consistent with Achaemenid gold and gold smithing" dating back to the third or fourth century BC. The Achaemenid empire, the first of the Persian empires to rule over significant portions of Greater Iran, was wiped out by Alexander the Great in 330 BC.

Webber, 70, told The Guardian newspaper that his grandfather had a "good eye" for antiques and picked up "all sorts" as he plied his trade in the town of Taunton in south-west England. "Heaven knows where he got this, he never said," he added, revealing that as a child, he used the cup for target practice with his air gun.

BOOK REVIEWS

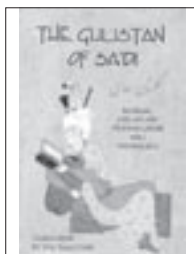
THE GULISTAN OF SA'DI
Translated by W.M. Thackston

(Ibex Publishers 2008)

The Gulistan is considered to be the most influential book in the Iranian world and is considered, by most the essence of elegant, but simple, Persian prose.

It was completed in 1258. It is the source of many quotations in modern prose and literature. Over the years it has been translated numerous times in English, but this book is the first English translation in centuries.

The translator is a Professor of Persian at Harvard University. What makes this translation better than most is that he has translated it into the same simple prose English that it was in Persian. In the hard cover edition it is certainly a book for the Sa'di collector.



Through a visually stimulating collection of over 260 high quality images of museum objects and accessible writing, young readers will gain insight into the life, beliefs and cultural practices of ancient Iranians and their contribution to the civilizations of antiquity.

The publisher believes this book comes at a key time - when today's youth are growing up in a world where Iran's cultural and political practices are continually questioned on the world stage. Understanding Iranian cultural history has become more valuable than ever before. This book will also be of particular interest to second- and third-generation Iranians in various continents who wish to educate their children about the cultural history of their ancestors.

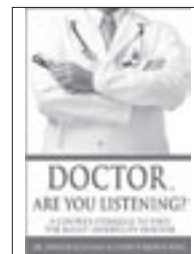
DOCTOR ARE YOU LISTENING
Dr. Masood Khatamee and Linda Perelman Pohl

(Fertility Research Foundation 2008)

For the couple or individual who is facing an infertility problem this book offers an extensive guide for they lay person to recognize the problem, understand why it happens, how, if possible to prevent it, how to diagnosis it and what to do once the diagnose is confirmed.

Because it discusses the history of infertility and the reasons the problem is increasing, makes this a book one that should be read when individuals are in their twenties. It is also one for physicians to read in order to understand the emotional situation these individuals are in because of their inability to create a child.

The book, though technical, is set in story form, chapter to chapter and discusses individual's real life stories on their quest to become parents. The end message to all readers is to make sure the doctor is listening to his patient and that the patient is understanding what the doctor is prescribing.



BELONGING, NEW POETRY BY IRANIANS AROUND THE WORLD

translated by Niloufar Talebi

(2008) North Atlantic Press and Scala House Press)

Persian and literature are somewhat synonymous. They have led the way in poetry throughout the centuries. Due to the political climate over the past few decades, Americans have not been privy to Iran's more modern group of writers. This collection of poetry is by the Iranian Diaspora and gives the reader insight, through the writer's words, on the emotions plaguing the Diaspora and those who remain in Iran.



The poems are gifts to the reader and sure to touch you emotionally. An example of its excellence is a poem titled Ghosts. Though only a few lines its impact is profound.

PHILOSOPHY OF EXISTENCE
Maziar Khoshima

Author House 2007

In the chapters of this book the reader will find that the actual understanding of "existence" is relative.

To him the idea of existence is an absolute totality that includes the mind, universe and the "beyond." How we find this as individuals seems to be determined on the openness of one's mind to the unknown.

He believes that if one uses present day understanding in order to set a philosophical system, that this will help one find an answer. In the end growth cannot happen without openness of the mind.

What is most interesting is his position of the term universe. This is discussed in the third chapter of the book. He sees "universe" as an hierarchy of minds.

While the book is interesting, it is a bit cumbersome for the reader whose philosophy is not deep.

On the other hand, for those who are in a constant state of flux and continue to search for reasons, the book provides them with additional options in their pursuit of reason.



ANCIENT IRAN, A PICTORIAL HISTORY FOR YOUNG READERS IN ENGLISH

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Massoume Price, Canadian based writer, author of Iran's Diverse Peoples has released a new book which aims to educate young readers about the cultural history of one of today's most contentious and mysterious world powers. Spanning a 5,500-year period, Ancient Iran is the first book to document the ancient civilizations of the Iranian plateau in a pictorial format for young readers.



Tehran

Today

BRIAN H. APPLETON

AKA RASOOL ARYADUST

I am an American who lived in Tehran for 5 years, 30 years ago. I had been told by so many Iranian expatriates about the air pollution, the traffic congestion, the urban sprawl, the city having grown from 1 million to 13 million inhabitants, the traditional homes having been replaced with apartment towers, the unemployment, the poverty, the prostitution, the corrupt priesthood, and the restrictions on women and so on. So many Iranian expatriates said not to go to dirty old, noisy old Tehran but to see Kashan, Kerman or Yazd. But two people, one American and one Iranian who come to Tehran often and share a deep love for it, told me otherwise. Jerry Dekker, who is a tour group leader for Americans who want to travel in Iran told me how beautiful Tehran is, with thousands of trees planted everywhere, broad boulevards, beautiful public sculpture and fountains in public parks and gardens... He told me that people in general were more polite than in the time of the Shah and that I would not have to haggle over cab fare or prices when I went to buy things. He told me the last person to ask about Iran was an Iranian American. First of all many of them have not been back since the revolution and know nothing about Iran today. Asking them would be roughly equivalent of asking a Cuban American what they think of Castro's Cuba. They can find nothing good in it, especially if their families lost everything including their lives in the revolution but we have to recognize that, that was 30 years ago and life goes on. It is not a frozen moment in time like memory...

The other gentleman, Dr. Nasser Heydarian, told me that the minute my airplane would approach Tehran, that I would see the beautiful, gleaming marble palaces and apartment towers in the north and all the

green. He told me to go to Farahzad for giant koobideh kebabs. I myself just wanted to see Mount Damavand once more rising up above the clouds...like a solitary gargantuan guardian with an ancient soul, watching over Tehran as the first thing one sees on one's approach and the last thing one sees on one's departure; the mountain bears witness... Well dear readers, guess what? Damavand is only visible like this from the old Mehrabad Airport, (originally built by the US Army Corps of Engineers in the 1960's) which has now been relegated to domestic flights only, in favor of a huge spanking brand new efficient and convenient Imam Khomeini Airport almost an hour south of the city. Once you are there, no hassles, no waiting, smooth, courteous and polite service...

So not seeing Damavand first thing



from the air was my only little disappointment. The rest was awesome... I was not disappointed by what I found; on the contrary I was so happy, so incredibly happy to be back...I kissed the ground. First of all, just like the very first time I flew by myself to Tehran at age 16, there was an entire committee waiting to greet me outside customs in the arrivals area which I wasn't expecting this time either. They even brought me bouquets of flowers.

I did not expect things to have remained frozen in time for the past 30 years. What I found was the same traffic jams I have encountered in every major metropolitan area in the world except the government has sensibly restricted certain areas south of the city center from traffic without a permit and in those areas around the bazaar, it seemed like the old days.

The other thing which had not changed at all was the kindness and generosity of the Iranian people. From the minute I sat on the plane, the magic started to happen again. The lady sitting next to me conversed with me in French for the entire flight from Paris. By the time we disembarked I had an open invitation to visit her in Paris and to come to her family mansion in Kerman. While in Tehran, I met with the family of a pen pal friend of mine in Los Angeles whom I have never met and her family gave a dinner for me that lasted from 7 PM to 1 AM and then the keys to their little villa in Babolsar on the Caspian Sea where I stayed for three days. The authorities only needed to know where I was staying each day and did not hassle me at all.

There was so much to do and see in Shomal. We saw the old hotel built by Reza Shah in Ramsar and the new one next to it. The word ram in Ramsar means tamed since before the hotel was built, it was wild forest. We went to the former Hyatt in Namak Abroud and used their beach and went to their tea room. We took one of the little individual family cable cars up the mountain, where we had more tea and walked on the nature trail in the heavy forest, much cooler than down at sea level. We toured the biggest cranberry farm in Iran and we ate at two restaurants famous for their local Gilan specialties like MirzaGhassemi and Kebab Torsh, Sir Torshi and the little thin green hot peppers that they grow there in abundance.

On the way back through the Alborz Mountains with their stunning scenery, on Chaloos Road, we stopped at one of the numerous road side outdoor barbeque





restaurants for grilled sheep's hearts and livers, Del and Gigar, which were absolutely delicious just as I remembered from 30 years ago and the best tangiest most delicious yoghurt in the world, sold along the roadside by shepards from cheese cloth bags dripping whey. Back in Tehran, a week was not enough to see it all but nonetheless, traffic and social obligations notwithstanding, we saw the Golestan Palace, built by the Zand Dynasty and taken over by the Qajar, the Sa'ad Abad Palaces, which had belonged to the Qajar and were taken over by the Pahlavis and Niavaran Palaces which Faradiba had built to get away from her in-laws. One small palace in the Niavaran complex was from the last Qajar Ahmed Shah and this became Shahzadeh's palace, Shah Reza's oldest son. You could see photos of him playing soccer as a high school boy and his childhood books like Babar.

There was a huge interest in Reza Shah at the Sa'ad Abad palaces with many of his memorabilia including his clothes, overcoat, hats, medals, his futon style bed because he liked to sleep on the floor/ground from his days as a soldier and so on. I got the sense that Iranians were proud of their contemporary history as well as their ancient history despite the revolution and the IRI's attempt to Arabize Iran and diminish pre Islamic Iran. (They have put up an Islamic Museum next to the Iran Bastan National Archeological Museum, equal in size but it wasn't open to the public yet.)

The Niavaran and Sa'ad Abad complexes were lush with green trees and water features and a respite for the eyes and an escape from the heat and dust further south. As always Tehran still had much old world charm, turn of the century style houses and buildings with modern ones intertwined. There were brand new mosques and centuries old mosques, new shopping malls and old department stores, the bowling alley/movie theatre complex on Shemiran Road was still there where I once

studied karate. The same hidden worlds within worlds within worlds which I had loved before were still to be found. My friends knew clubs where men and women could smoke Ghelyoons or water pipes together or hidden restaurants among the trees up in the foothills like Choominey. I didn't know exactly what to expect about the restrictions against women so popularly featured in media propaganda in the West. What I found was the majority of the women at least in Tehran and Shomal did not wear shapeless chadors but gave them waist lines so one could see their curves and in bright colors not just black. Their head scarves came in many bright colors, yellow, red, orange, peach, pink or white or patterned expensive silk ones from Europe, designer brands like Christian Dior and Valentino and often the veils were like Indian or ethnic tunics with embroidered cuffs and trims and colorful prints.

There was something angelic looking about them like so many Virgin Marys.



And everywhere women unaccompanied by men were enjoying themselves and participating in picnics and strolls and conversations and purchasing in stores and market places and from florists. Women worked, women drove taxis and buses and there were women policeman and soldiers. I am not sure what the average American pictures in their mind of Iranian women since the media in the West has done such a good job with propaganda but what I found were women everywhere willing to speak to me. I mean it helps that I know enough Persian to carry on conversations but for example a docent in Shahzadeh's little palace told me her father once taught English in the same Air Force Language school where I had taught on Damavand Avenue.

Yesterday I sat drinking tea in a donut shop with an old, old friend of mine whom I have known since I was 16 and not seen in 30 years. Suddenly in his inimitable mysterious way, he told me to

get up and go around the corner where I would find an antique store in which I would find a lady named Nahid, who was trying to decide what to buy a friend for her wedding present and that I should help her decide and then bring her back to the coffee shop to have tea with us. I did as I was told and sure enough there she was, a very charming, funny lady who tricked me by paying for the jewelry which I tried to purchase, in advance of my knowledge, despite my numerous protests after I found out. I had never met this woman before in my life and the next thing you know not only has she bought me jewelry but she is telling me that her Swedish husband is the 13th best bridge player in the world and that I have a standing invitation to come to Stockholm to play bridge with them. Tehran is not only an amazing city but it is full of amazing people. The only time I felt the pinch of Islamic restrictions was when I had to stop myself from kissing women on the cheeks in greeting or departure in public, which is my habit from having grown up in Italy and France. I didn't miss alcohol at all although I am not a big drinker anyway and I was offered wine and vodka repeatedly in many private homes. I jokingly told my hosts that I didn't drink because I am a Moslem and they responded with: "Who told you Moslems don't drink." I actually enjoyed the taste of the non alcoholic beer they served in restaurants by the brand name "Bavaria." It's the first one I have ever liked.

I love the spirit of the Iranian people. No one can conquer it. From the lowliest street urchin to the mightiest merchant or hereditary land owner or princess, their spirit is indomitable. Everyone from the taxi driver and bellman in the hotel to the high society dame had the same earnest question for me: "Do you like Iran better now or during the time of the Shah?"

And here is my honest answer. There are things which I like about both eras. One of the things I like about Iran today



is how few foreigners there are. The Iranians are a proud nation with a long and proud heritage. They have been overrun and conquered repeatedly all through their history after the end of their own Achaemenid Empire, but they have never lost their own character. When I lived in Iran it was definitely a puppet of the USA and the Americans acted like arrogant overlords. The former Hilton Hotel is now named Esteghal which means Freedom and Sovereignty, and that weighs heavily on everyone's minds. I personally feel that the US military industrial complex and administration bears so much hostility towards Iran because they were kicked out by the revolution of 1979 and are still mourning their major strategic and economic losses.

Not one person I met had any hostility towards the American people and they prayed for peace and hung on every word in the papers about the progress of the peace conferences. The concierge asked me to translate an article in the English language paper about the progress towards normalizing relations with the US in the meetings with the five sustaining members of the UN as sponsored by Javier Solana.

Although they were too polite to initiate any negative comments about the Bush administration, I sensed that the Iranians whom I spoke to appreciated my comments characterizing that administration as war mongering imperialists. You have to appreciate the fact that I had returned to the very hotel in which I had been taken hostage in 1979. My captors at that time had said that they had nothing against the American people but that they did not like what our government was doing in Iran and I told them I shared their sentiment.

What most Americans cannot realize is the depth of love that the Iranian people have for all things American. Nor do Americans or even the young generation of Iranians know the history of positive relations between Iran and America as

portrayed by such great American lovers of Iran starting with our first Ambassador to Iran in 1878, S.G. W. Benjamin, Joseph Cochran, Howard Baskerville, Samuel Jordan, Morgan Shuster, Millsbaugh and Grossclose, Arthur Upham Pope and finally Richard Nelson Frye, who is still alive and kicking although in his 90's and has gotten permission from President Ahmadinejad to be buried on the banks of the Zayandeh River in Esfahan next to Arthur Upham Pope and his wife. In fact the revolutionaries changed the name of Jordan Avenue to Afriqa (Africa) Avenue in an attempt to erase the memory of this American irandoost who founded what became Alborz High School. They didn't want to admit to any historic dependence upon any American benefactors but you can't erase history any more than the Iranian culture and character...just as it is futile for government propaganda to try to erase the goodwill that exists between the people of our two countries.



Everywhere I went friends of friends wanted a piece of my time. Three months would not have been enough let alone ten days. I revisited the three houses where I had lived in Tehran and felt the pulling of my heart strings as I relived my lost youth; my mind flooding with memories of past friends, lovers, visiting foreign house guests and events. There in that alley below my third floor kitchen window, Kuche Khaghani, named after the great 12th century poet, there was where a truck with a machine gun mounted on a tripod accompanied by three soldiers of the Shah's army, had opened up on the crowd of people attending a political rally at the teacher's college across the street. Now there was only peace. Nor could I see any evidence of the building which the revolutionaries had taken down brick by brick after the revolution on what was then called Roosevelt Avenue not two blocks from the former US Embassy. I had asked them at the time why they were taking it down and they told me it had been a torture house and they didn't want to look at it anymore.

The US Presidential seal remained on the wall of the former US Embassy along with 30 year old revolutionary graffiti about how the USA would one day pay retribution for its sins. But the people on the streets gave no mind to those relics nor to the building sized murals of famous clerics and war heroes. They just went about their business. Other differences I noticed between the Shah's regime and this one is that despite all the complaints we read about in the foreign media about the mullahs robbing the wealth of the country and all the unemployment and prostitution, which I know exists, what I saw was everybody working, no beggars or homeless people living in the street like we see in the West and there seemed to be more respect and equality between the different economic classes than before. In the old days often the upper classes treated the lower classes



One day I went to Kasra Hospital and presented DVD copies of the film Bam 6.6 to the doctor and nurses who were featured in that film, who took care of the American Jewish young lady, Adele Freedman who lost her American fiancée, Tobb Del'Oro, another great Iran lover, in the earthquake in Bam in 2003, as well as getting her own feet crushed. Doctor Massoud Noroozi, did reconstructive surgery on her feet for five hours because it was the right thing to do for her and for a foreign guest of Iran although thousands of Iranians were waiting for medical attention and then he refused to take a penny. Ask yourself if such a thing would happen in the United States? I had a nice conversation with him on the phone and we attempted to meet for coffee but my busy social schedule and his busy schedule of surgery and teaching prevented it but the nurses were very happy for the gift and to talk to me and they were very modest about their contribution to the film and to humanity.



badly and with contempt and hostility, which of course is one of the causes of the revolution.

And Jerry Dekker was right. This time I didn't haggle over a single price of anything, not even cab fare and in fact when I started speaking Persian to the cab drivers, they didn't want to accept my fare. I didn't see graffiti anywhere except those famous anti American ones left there from the time of the revolution that the Western media are so fond of showing repeatedly when in reality hating America is not on the minds of the vast majority. In fact everywhere I went people tried to practice their English with me. Instead of graffiti what I saw written on walls and overpasses were lines from the Quran such as "Love Thy Neighbor" or "Give to the poor" and everywhere as common as parking meters or mail boxes in the USA were state provided tithing collection boxes to help the needy.

In just ten days in Tehran I saw more museums than in the entire five years that I had lived there. This is partly because when you live and work in a place you are too busy to see the sites unless a friend or relative comes to visit from out of town and you make time for it. The other reason is that this time I was more educated than when I lived there. Some of the museums I would highly recommend are the Reza Abassi Museum for the best collection of gold rhytons in existence, among other things, the National Carpet Museum for its unique collections especially from regions like even Tehran itself where carpets are no longer being made, the Ghavvam Soltaneh Museum for the best collection of glassware and ceramics in Iran, the Iran Bastan Museum full of Achaemenid, Sassanian, Parthian and Lur treasures, the Time Museum (Time pieces and clocks), The Malek Library for its fine collection of coins all the way back to the first one minted in Lydia with Cyrus's head on it and last but not least especially if you have small children, the Museum of Iranian Natural History in Darabad which unlike the other museums stays open until 9 pm.

This time around I also made it a point to learn about regional cuisine and found that in Tehran one can find restaurants from every region in Iran. For Azerbaijan style Kebab Benobi, I went to Kebab-e-Benobi Shiraz at Mehdun-e-Shiraz. For Kebab Bakhtiari, I went to Koopayeh Restaurant in Darband. For Shishlik, I went to SPU restaurant in Evin which has streams running right through it like in Darband.

For Gilac food like Kebab Torsh, Sir Torshi, MirzaGhassemi and those little thin green hot peppers they like in Shomal, I went to Gilac Restaurant at Parc o Prince Street in Vanak and so on.

I spent a lot of time just visiting and drinking tea with the younger brother of my best friend, who is like a brother to me as well and is only 9 days older than me. I hadn't seen him in 30 years although I talk to him every couple months on the phone from the USA. His house is like a museum filled with Persian miniatures framed on the walls and memorabilia and old black and white photos of his illustrious ancestors and of his late father giving speeches for charity fund raisers at the city hall. Old mutual friends and new ones kept dropping by to say hello to me. In fact up until ½ hour before I had to leave for the airport people were stopping by just like when I left 30 years ago. One friend I hadn't seen in 40 years showed up at last minute with his two little daughters who I had never met before. It was very touching that so many friends remembered me and took the trouble to come and see me after all these years. Iranians know the value of friendship.

At the end of my trip after realizing that humanity was still in good shape in the hands of the people of Iran, I came to understand something which I have been wanting to put to words for some time which is a lesson that most Americans need to learn:

Freedoms written in law books and on paper no matter how beneficent and just, do not have as much influence as social pressures, which have far more influence on our day to day experience of reality than laws. The laws may be restrictive in Iran but Iranian society is polite, kind, generous and relatively safe and crime free. There is still extended family and community and long term friendship. Our media take a relatively isolated incident like the imprisoned female activist mother in Iran being raped by the state prosecutor in her prison cell daily while awaiting trial, who came to the US for political asylum and use it to brainwash the American public into thinking Iran is a horrible place where this is a daily reality and yet women are not being raped there, one every five minutes in every major city, every day, like in the USA. Iran does not have the per capita prison population of the USA which has the biggest prison population per capita of anywhere on earth except China with its political prisoners, while ours are violent lawless criminals and sex offenders and

certainly not intellectuals. Our children are not safe to play in our front yards, streets or neighborhoods, while they are in Iran. So the way that laws define our political freedoms and rights versus the reality we experience in our society are not the same thing. I once sold high mast area lighting for the court house parking lot in my hometown of San Jose, California because female police were afraid to walk from their parked cars across the lot to the court house to get to the trials where they were to testify...

I will tell you that the five years I lived in Iran and on this visit, no one stole anything from me or harmed me in anyway and even when I was taken hostage during the revolution and was used to make a political statement, no one harmed a hair on my head and nor were any of the hostages at the former US Embassy harmed in anyway during their captivity. The hostage taking was a form of protest against crimes which in fact the US military industrial complex had committed against the people of Iran for many decades starting but not ending with the ouster of Mossadeg and the restoration of the puppet Pahlavi. What American citizen would be content under a puppet dictator? We had a revolution in 1776 to throw off the tyranny of the British Crown and every time I see a little Yuppie girl wearing that "I'm a princess" T-shirt, I remind her of that...

I am not content to sit idly by and say nothing while the media and the war hawks make up charge after charge against Iran in order to render the American public too mind numbed to protest another war of conquest for the benefit of a few American corporations at a huge expense to us both materially and spiritually; bankrupting us on both accounts. I love Iran and I will continue to protest such an invasion in the only way I can which is by writing. With half the US Navy parked off Iran's shore now is not the time to be silent...

ABOUT THE PICTURES:

1. Brian Appleton at Koohpaye Darband
2. One of poet Rahi Mo'ayeri's tomb at Zahir Ol Dowleh cemetery in Darband
3. Bakhtiari style Kebab at Koohpaye
4. Del Kebabs with noon
5. Tea Garden on mountain top Namak Abroud Telecabin
6. Lion incense burner Ghavvam Soltaneh Museum
7. Ghavam Soltaneh Museum
8. Detail of carpet at Nat'l Carpet Museum

You are well known in the Persian Community, but could you be so kind to introduce yourself to those who will meet you for the first time through this interview?

Thank you for this opportunity and I would like to extend my greetings to all your readers. I was born in Isfahan , in 1944 in an environment filled with art and music. My father's love of music, poetry and art transpired to his family especially to his sons. The Omoumi family was famous for their love of music. My father was also a religious man. Every year he held religious ceremonies in our home for ten days. During those times he played the tar along with the prayers. Interestingly after we left Isfahan, one of our friends threw the tar into a burning fire. While my father was religious, music and the arts had a special place in his heart.

When I was around the age of six we moved to Tehran where I started school. We lived on Farvardin Street which was across from Tehran University. The house and the memories I have from there have certainly had an impact on what I am today. It was during those early years that a person is developed and sculpted into who he or she will be as an adult. One of those life shaping incidents was while Sir Shahnaz was visiting our home.

I was mesmerized by his music and remembered all I wanted to do was to touch his tar, but dared not to ask. For some reason when he left that evening he left his instrument. My father sternly told us that we were not to touch it.

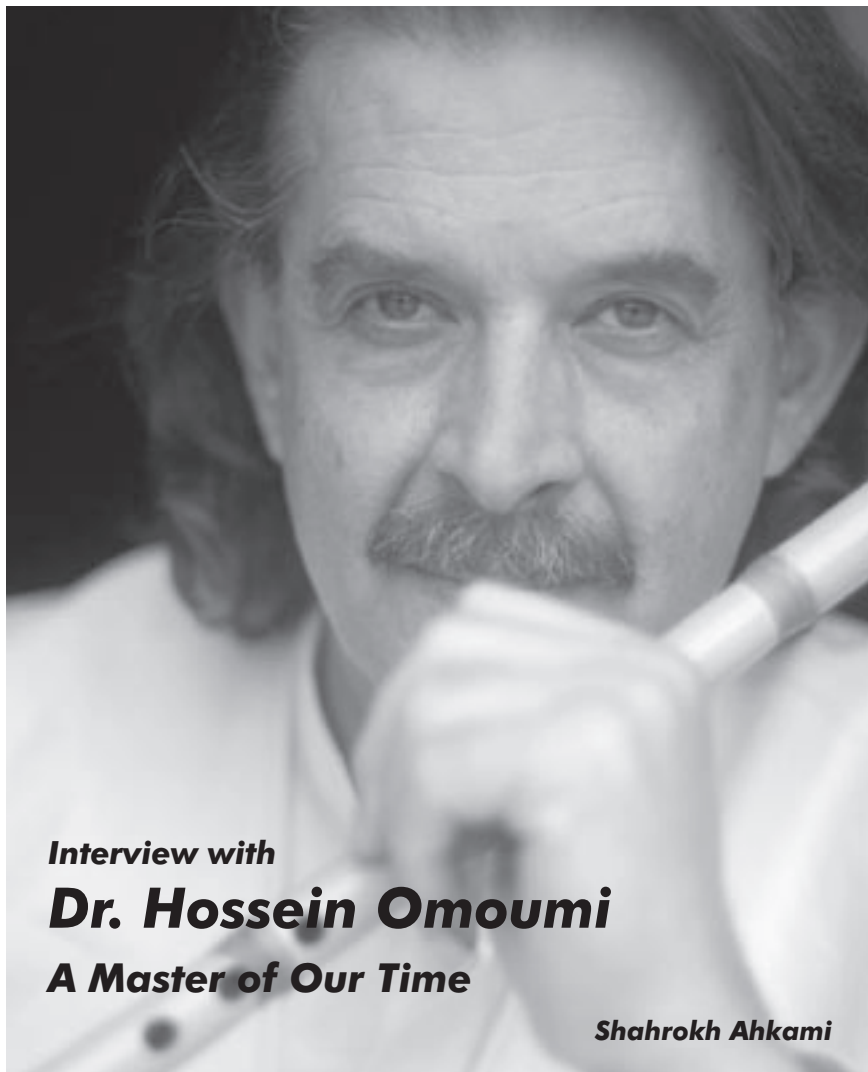
Disappointed I, along with the rest of the family, went to bed, but I could not sleep! While everyone was sleeping I sneaked out of my bedroom and sat next to the box of the instrument. Carefully and quietly I opened the case and touched the strings. To this day I will never forget the sound it made. To me it sounded like an entire orchestra. I knew I had fallen in love!

Oh, so many memories I have of my father's friends and his musician friends gathering at our house, which I can still hear today.

When did your father pass away?

I was only seventeen.

Tell us about your education.



Interview with
Dr. Hossein Omoumi
A Master of Our Time

Shahrokh Ahkami

At the end of high school I took the college entrance exam. I passed and received a full scholarship to the The National University, school of architecture. I completed the program in seven years because simultaneously I attended The National Music Institute for a degree in music, not to mention working at the same time. My thesis was based on the architectural plans for housing in Isfahan for workers. It was a success. After graduating I had plans to go into the military but received a full scholarship for my doctorate in Italy. At the time The National University in Iran and the University of Florence were affiliated. Some of the professors traveled between the two institutions, so I was familiar with both of their programs as well as the language.

Once I received my doctorate I moved to London, where I worked for six months.

In 1972 I moved back to Iran and started an architectural firm with Ms. Mirfendereski. There were six partners. Our main projects were based on industrial architecture. The group stayed together until the Revolution. I remained in Iran until 1982 and taught at The National University.

What did you teach?

I assisted them in building up their curriculum. In 1984 I took a sabbatical and moved to France. I love to teach and share my knowledge with the youth who yearn to learn. I never look at my students as students; I treat them as friends and value them dearly. I hope it is this reason that my students excel in what they do. One of the examples of this is Jessika Kenney. She began studying with me in 2004. What makes her unique is the fact

that she speaks virtually no Persian, but is considered to be one of the most beautiful of Persian singers.

Tell us about France.

I was invited to teach at the CEOM Institute which was affiliated with the University of Suren. There I taught Persian music but, my income was not enough to take care of my wife and two children, so I decided to apply for a work permit. Once I received it I applied to an architectural firm that was in charge of the Disney project and was immediately hired. It was a huge firm with three floors. On each floor there were more than 60 architects who worked on the same project.

After the project was completed I left the firm but continued working with an Italian firm that worked on site. I changed firms a couple of times until I moved to Seattle in 1992 and worked there until 2003.

What brought you to the USA?

I had numerous concerts in Seattle and I came to know a gentleman, who had an important position at the Seattle College. He invited me to teach there. After my visa expired, UCI invited me to teach at their new school of music. I started with eight students and ended up having forty-three by the end of my two year contract. We put a wonderful concert together.

What made you decide to play the Ney (flute), was it hereditary?

When I was around twelve years old I listened to a music program on the radio called the Javidan Flowers and fell in love with the sound of the *ney*. One day my father came home with an object that was wrapped around a piece of cloth. He told me if I were to play an instrument that I should start off with this. It was a gift from Sir Emami a very famous musician. Within a short time I taught myself how to play it. I frequently returned to Isfahan for vacation. While there one of the workers at our warehouse played the *ney* and began to teach me how to play it. I also listened to it being played on the radio and would play along with the music.

During my second year of college I signed up with a music camp where I started practicing even more. Eventually I was accepted at the Music Institute in

Tehran. Even though I was a architectural student, my mind was filled the art of music.

I am not sure you are aware of this but I have designed and patented three designs for three instruments, the *daf*, *tonbak* and the *ney*. Every opportunity that allowed me to play music I took with excitement. I played in all of the school gatherings and concerts. One of my great masters was Mahmoud Karimi. We eventually became the greatest of friends. When I was in France I heard the news of his death, that night was one of the worst nights of my life.

Did you ever get to meet Master Kassai?

Yes, on one of my trips to Isfahan, before my departure for Italy, I was invited to the home of one of Isfahan's religious leaders to play the *ney*. When I finished he asked me if I had ever played or met Master Kassai. My response was filled with fear and anxiety! I replied by saying that I would never allow myself to think that I would be capable of playing in front of Master Kassai.

Since I would be leaving for Italy in a short time, I thought meeting Master Kassai wouldn't much matter. But, I soon turned around and went back to Isfahan and had our friend take me to meet Master Kassai. We played together and for months afterwards I was mesmerized by his music and did not touch the *ney* again for months.

When I finally returned to Tehran I was invited to teach at Tehran University. There I met Payvar, Tehrani, Badii, and Farhadpour, all very famous musicians. I had the great privilege of playing along with all of them on television programs and at the Roudaki concert Hall in Tehran.

You are in love with the ney, is there a particular way to play it to get the most sound from the instrument?

The *ney* is an expressive instrument.

It provides a "whooshing airy sound that is eerie at the low register and distinguished clarity at the higher end. The sound it produces will depend on the player. For instance Iranians reach the lower registry by placing the end of the flute directly to their mouth. You are thus able to control the amount of air in and out with your tongue. While this may look easy it is very difficult to achieve and provides a challenge to the greatest of musicians.

Can you explain Persian classical music to our readers?

Persian classical music is unique in that it is arranged or organized into seven individual systems. Together the seven systems are called the *dastgah*. Within the *dastgah* you will find 150 melodic patterns which contain their own "atmospheres." The performers of the instruments will normally improvise on the melodies that they memorize, thereby creating the uniqueness.

Is it the instruments or voice that make Persian music distinct?

That is an interesting question and I am sure it has a variety of answers depending on who you ask. For me it is not the *ney* or any instrument, it is the voice that reigns supreme in Persian music.

I think we can conclude this interview with the feeling that you are very content with your life and the paths it has taken you. Is there a closing statement you would like to make to our readers?

Again thank you for this opportunity to speak to you.

As for life I have been blessed but also believe that life is so much more rewarding when you find a passion, something that can be an escape from our often, difficult and challenging world, so find your passion.

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All written submissions to Persian Heritage with the expectation of publication in the magazine must include the writer's name, address and telephone number.

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continuing from previous issue

Alboin then married Rosemund, daughter of Cunimund. At a banquet in Verona, Italy, Alboin, apparently a bit tipsy, ordered the cup made from the skull of Cunimund to be given to Rosemund, and invited her to drink merrily with her father. Paul the Deacon, though not of course present at said banquet, testifies that the cup made from Cunimund's skull was shown to him by the Lombard king Ratchis. In any case, Rosemund became so anguished at this that she vowed to kill Alboin, and plotted with Helmechis, Alboin's armor-bearer (*scilpor* in Lombard) and a man named Peredeo, with whom she committed adultery, disguising herself as a serving wench with whom Peredeo was sleeping. Peredeo devised a plan. While Alboin was asleep, Rosemund bound his sword to the bed so that it could not be drawn nor unsheathed, and let in Helmechis the murderer. Unable to draw his sword, Alboin was easily murdered.

There appears to be a reference to Alboin in the so-called "Traveler's Song" or Widsith, probably composed about the middle of the 6th century, in other words, roughly contemporary with the event.

It is interesting to note that the names *Peredeo* and *Alboin* both have a strongly Celtic flavor, "Peredeo" closely resembling the Welsh *Peredur*, while "Alboin" closely resembles the Gaelic *Alba*, originally, meaning "sunrise", or, by extension, "East". "Alba" was originally the Gaelic name for all Great Britain, it being east of Ireland, and to this day is the Gaelic name for Scotland. We have noted the survival of "alba" in Old Provençal, with its original meaning of "sunrise".

Did the Lombards acquire these Celtic names in the course of their migrations, or did they acquire them in North Italy, either from the Ostrogoths or from the Celtic substratum there?

In fact, it may be considered certain that Paul the Deacon did NOT take his belief in the Scandinavian origin of the Lombards from Jordanes; it is far more likely that he took said idea from an anonymous Latin work called **Origin of the Nation of the Langobards**, contained in three ancient manuscripts and partially contained in another.

This work, called *Origo* for short, states that the Lombards or Langobards originally came from Scandinavia, and were first called *Winniles*. The date of this work is unknown, but it is certainly older than the time of Paul the Deacon, as he obviously uses it as a source in several places. Unless one is to implacably insist that the theory of Scandinavian origin must proceed from Jordanes, there is nothing in the **Origo** which seems to proceed from the Italo-Ostrogothic historian. It has been rather convincingly demonstrated that up until it describes events which occurred around the year 500 AD, the **Origo** is derived from a Germanic epic. Incidentally, Paul the Deacon's account of the

death of Alboin differs somewhat from that of the **Origo**. Now, the death of Alboin falls well within that part of the **Origo** which is considered to be of purely historical or non-epic origin. Paul the Deacon's account of the death of Alboin has far more of an epic flavor than does that of the **Origo**. One may assume that the Lombard epic tradition continued in Italy, and that Paul the Deacon used a saga or chanson de geste as the source of his account of the death of Alboin.

It is therefore demonstrated that the Lombards had a very ancient epic tradition, far older than any which survive in the original Germanic language (the **Origo** is redacted in Latin), and that this Lombard epic tradition continued among the Lombards in Italy. Though not very closely kin to the Goths, the Lombards were also of Scandinavian precedence. In summary, to affirm on chronological grounds that the Goths could not have had an epic tradition is demonstrably false, another example of the torpid, idiotized positivism or blind, closed-minded, irrational skepticism of many of those who consider themselves to be "realistic", "rigorous" and "scientific".

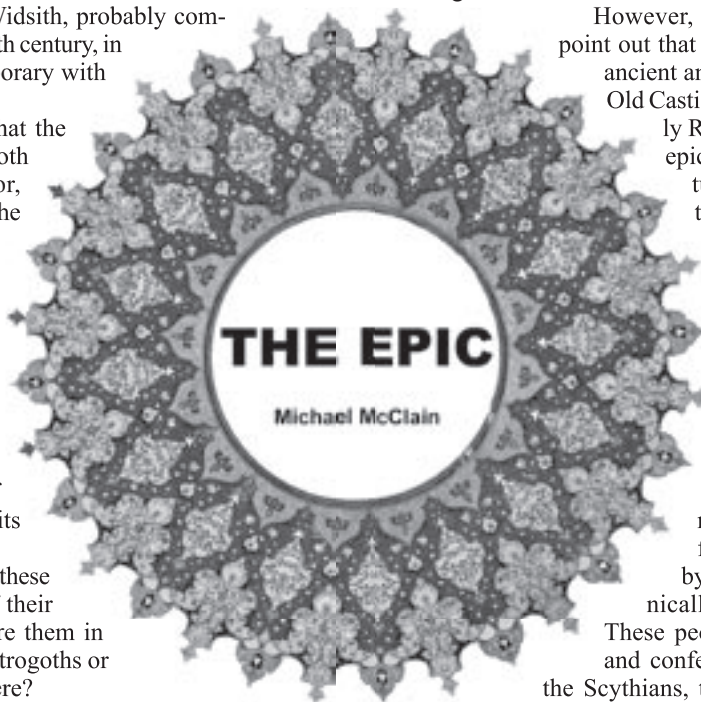
However, I also believe it necessary to point out that the Celtic peoples have a very ancient and extensive epic tradition, that Old Castile was Celtic territory very thinly Romanized, so that the Castilian epic must contain a Celtic substratum. I also wish to point out that the logical and indeed inevitable sequel to the Visigothic theory is that the Castilian epic must inevitably contain a very strong Iranian element. It is, of course, this second point which interests us at the moment.

Before the expansion first of the Huns and later the Turks and Mongols, an immense area from Hungary to the frontiers of China was occupied by nomad peoples who were ethnically and linguistically Iranians.

These peoples were divided into tribes and confederations, among which were the Scythians, the Sarmatians, the Alans and many others. The word "Scythian" comes from the Iranian *skuth*, which means "archer". The Persians called all these nomadic Iranian peoples of the great Eurasian steppe by the generic name **Saka**, although they also had names for the various divisions of the Sakas. The word "Saka" has a variant, *Sai*. The word "Saka" is related to the Avestan *saxta* (sakhta), i.e., "strong, tough" and to the Vedic *s'ak* (shak), i.e., "to be able, strong." "S'ak" appears in the **Rig Veda** in the form *s'akniti*, used as an epithet for "men."

In Classical Sanskrit *s'ak* means "to be able, strong". For convenience we will use the name "Saka" to refer to said Iranian nomads, except when referring to a particular division of them. The Sakas had a very extensive and varied epic tradition. The Ossetians, a people of the North Caucasus who speak an Iranian language and appear to be descendants of the Sakas, have an epic cycle called **Nart**, and no doubt had other cycles now lost.

to be continued



The first masculinity researchers were heterosexual, middle-class, Caucasian academics who narrowly conceptualized “the masculinity construct” according to the variables with which they personally identified. There was little-to-no interest in creating an inclusive definition of masculinity that took into account men’s differences in racial diversity, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. As an illustration, the majority of early empirical investigations used samples composed of heterosexual, Caucasian, middle-class American men (Good, Borst, & Wallace, 1994). Examples of such studies are quite common (Balswick & Peek, 1971; Bergman, 1995; Brooks, 1998; Caldwell & Peplau, 1982; Fasteau, 1974; Khorrami, 2000; Khorrami & Franklin, 2002; Lewis, 1978; Monroe, Baker, & Roll, 1997; Nardi, 1992; Seidler, 1992; Tognoli, 1980). Consequently, a large portion of the men’s studies literature may only generalize to this population of men.

Within the past few years, however, a broader, more inclusive definition of masculinity has been proposed. Several writers suggested that the study of masculinity can occur from culture to culture, among different religious groups, historical eras, life-stages, and social classes (Kimmel & Messner, 1992; Levant, 1996). Some researchers have begun examining masculinity formation among ethnic minority men. Trends in this literature suggest that two different research methods exist.

The first method examines between-group differences among ethnic minority men and European-American men (Levant, Majors, & Kelley, 1998; Reid & Comaz-Diaz, 1990; Tucker, James, & Turner, 1985). While the second investigates the interaction between ethnicity and masculinity within minority groups (Brave-

heart-Jordan, 1993; Majors, 1988, 1990; Sue & Sue, 1993). This second research method utilizes a social constructionist perspective.

Lazur and Majors (1995), gave examples of the second research method by summarizing the research of Sue and Sue (1993), Majors (1990), and Braveheart-Jordan (1993). Sue and Sue (1993) discussed how Asian-American men forgo independence in order to meet family obligations. While, the masculinity of African-American men has been defined by behaviors called “cool pose” (Majors, 1988, 1990). Braveheart-Jordan (1993) discussed how American-Indian men are caught in the dilemma of adhering to cultural standards imposed by tribal elders, while

United States. This investigation captured the struggle that these men endured while they reconstructed their masculinity in the process of acculturating to the United States.

The subsections that follow review the literature from three distinct research areas that are relevant to the present investigation. These research areas include: Iranian immigration patterns, the acculturation of Iranian men to the United States, and cultural characteristics of Iranian men. These first two research areas are relevant because immigration and acculturation are important variables that could shape the social construction of Iranian-American masculinity. While, the final research area illustrates how certain cultural variables can

Individuals in this group were similar in some ways to their predecessors. That is, they were affluent, educated, and had cosmopolitan values. Jalali (1996) referred to some statistics that Askari, Cummings, and Izbudak (1977) stated. Namely, 30% of second wave immigrants had advanced degrees with one-third of this group holding medical degrees.

The second wave immigrant group were different than those of the first wave. For instance, many of the second wave individuals were from traditional families where adhering to traditional Iranian values were often in contrast to the Western ideals of independence and autonomy.

The third wave occurred between 1978 and 1980. The composition of this group was heterogeneous in terms of socioeconomic status, age, and education. A large percentage of these individuals immigrated due to the economic and political reasons affiliated with the Iranian revolution, the Iran Hostage Crisis, and the Iran-Iraq war. Many were forced to leave their country of origin in order to safeguard their families, or to transfer their finances abroad.

to be continued

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Ethnicity and Masculinity

Part one

BY: DR. SAM KHORRAMI

residing in an environment with limited educational, occupational, and financial resources.

Unfortunately, there has been little-to-no research on the masculinity of Middle-Eastern men. Even more rare are studies that examine how the masculinity of Iranian-American men is shaped by certain variables (e.g., social class, time of immigration, and acculturation difficulties). Indeed, there has been a need for such a study as acculturation pressures among Iranian-American men have challenged pre-existing social values and cultural norms which were acquired in Iran. It is possible that the masculinity which these men had socially constructed, while living in Iran, has limited utility in the

influence the social construction of masculinity.

IRANIAN IMMIGRATION PATTERNS

The Iranian immigration pattern to the United States occurred during three specific time periods. Jalali (1996) described these time periods as three distinct waves of immigration. The first wave, which occurred between 1950 to 1970, was largely composed of highly educated professionals who had prior exposure to Western thought, education, values, and norms. Physicians, engineers, dentists, scientists, and teachers accounted for a large percentage of these individuals.

Between 1970 to 1978, the second wave of immigration to the United States occurred.



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An Interview with

ARDESHIR LOTFALIAN

Dedicated to the Preservation of Persian Culture

PART ONE

Shahrokh Ahkami



Please let the readers of Persian Heritage get acquainted with your childhood, your youth and your studies.

I spent my childhood and adolescence in the west of Iran, more exactly in the cities of Malayer and Hamedan. My father and forefathers, generations after generations were living around Malayer. They were of middle-class origin and cherished books, poetry and of course literature. My life, as far as I can remember from very early days was always infused, let us say impregnated with poetry. Not a single day went on without hearing in the daily conversations of my father, mother, grandfather and grandmother wonderful passages

from prominent Persians of our literature: *“One exists only five days, the close of a black night is indeed light”*. *“Patience and victory are both old companions.”*

In our family, poetry was a refuge to help break away from fatigue and also a mean to communicate, divulge a message or express a thought. Poetry contest (مشاعره) was considered as one of the fondest and cherished pursuit of our family. One of the first persons who got me acquainted with the mysteries of poetry was our grandfather. He woke up each morning before the appearance of daybreak in order to pray and afterward went back to bed. Most of the time he could not go back to sleep and used to call me from the adjacent room. I was then no older three or four and he had

me lie down next to him and slowly, with a soft but warm voice, began to recite verses. At the outset and since I was only still half awake, all of this did not mean much to me. Little by little, with the repetition of this daybreak routine, I began to absorb with great eagerness all of his sayings, so much so that within a few months I had committed to my memory many dozens of my grandfather’s verses and poems.

Among the first one that I had memorized was a “ghazal” from Hafez with the following connotation: “The brightness rivals the moon/Flower in your presence is nothing more than a vulgar weed” This aptitude coming from the youngster that I was, became the object of utter surprise and astonishment of my family who wanted me to exhibit it on every occasion. I finished my primary and secondary schooling in Hamedan. While I was in fifth grade at my high school, one of my poems was published in an important Tehran literary magazine. Seeing my own poem in prints gave me much excitement and enthusiasm and to this day I can still remember the emotion it generated in me. Following my graduation in natural sciences, I went on to Tehran in order to participate to the entrance examinations at the Medical University. This first attempt was unsuccessful and I returned to Hamedan. I went on teaching for about a year at the Baba Taher primary school which had been built nearby his mausoleum and grabbed this opportunity to get an additional degree in literature. The following year I was accepted at the entrance examinations of the Tehran Law School and went on to terminate political sciences too. Later on, while on in diplomatic mission in Paris, I went on to take several complementary courses in political sciences at Sorbonne University.

At Law School you had some quite important classmates as Simin Behbahani and some other well-known persons too who still speak well of you and the friendship they had with you, can you please tell us something about it?

Yes indeed, at the University Law School my cotemporaries and I who had just graduated from high school found ourselves and all of a sudden, in the midst of some important personalities such as higher government members, military personnel and a number of prominent members of the world of literature and the press. One

of these figures was Ms. Simin Behbahani, the great Lady of Iran's poetry who was then already famous in the world of poetry and went on to become an icon of Iran's intelligentsia and literati. I recall quite well that at the time Simin had just written her legendary poem: ...

At the time, one of our many professors was Dr. Mohammad Hossein Ali Abadi who wrote the poems "Cinders" and "Mother" which went on to be engraved in to most people's mind. After lauding many of the outstanding verses (ghazals) of Simin, he went on to suggest some fine-tuning to the poem, and the young poetess gladly approved that.

My acquaintance and steadfast friendship with Simin Behbahani became a priceless fruit of my life and I cherish it dearly. During her trips to the United States and with her constant kindness, Simin always goes on to get in touch with her old classmates. In her latest visit to the vicinity of Washington, I had the pleasure to participate in two of her reunions and recited a poem that I written in for her. Following the 1979 Revolution, the poetry of Simin Behbahani changed sweepingly and surprisingly, it went into an evolution for she went on to use her artful pen as an outstanding tool in the fight for freedom of expression and liberty. It is no wonder that freedom-seeking compatriots call her the "Lioness of Iran". Maybe her poetry and rhymes became a bit intense at times but she has indeed the dazzling capacity to deliver her all-important message.

Other prominent classmates during the course of my doctorate in law were Mr. Valian a former Minister of Agriculture of Prime Minister Hoveyda cabinet, who later on became the supervisor of the Holy Shrine Ostan Ghods Razavi in Mashad. Another one was Hedayatollah Matine-Daftary whose uncle was the Famed Dr. Mossadegh. The two were in the course group of Dr. Djalal Abdoh who encouraged freedom of discussion and speech in his classroom. We took advantage of this welcome opportunity to discuss without restraint the pros and cons of our regime at the time.

Poetry and writing, then your admission at Law University - afterward your entrance at the service of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs? At the time one of the conditions to be accepted was to belong to so-called one thousand families,

did you meet this condition?

From my second year at the University I began to contribute articles to the press in Tehran. One day I wrote something about a current issue topic and brought it to the weekly magazine Ferdowsi which at the time was one of the best intellectual publication, on a much higher level than other publications. I presented my article to Dr. Mahmoud Enayat who was then the chief editor of the magazine. He told me that he would read it and that if see it worthwhile he would publish it. I waited impatiently for the next issue to be printed, and Lo and behold when it came out I saw my article. Indeed, this was all quite thrilling and encouraging for me. The next day, I rushed to the magazine's office and the editor asked me to write more articles. This was the beginning of a long and fruitful cooperation that lasted for years until my first mission as a diplomat to Paris. During that time in addition to translating numerous topics from British and American press and writing a regular column titled "Thoughts of the Greats" I also translated into Persian more than fifty short stories from leading authors of the West. I have kept and assembled these stories in order to publish them in a book one day soon.

After the completion of four years at Law School and without much hope of success in sight I participated to the entrance examinations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The cause of my apprehension as you pointed out in your question was that all my friends at the time considered it unfeasible for a person like me who had no roots in the ruling class. They thought that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs belonged strictly to the offspring of the *One Thousand Families*. The entrance examinations were quite difficult and the number of applicants many times more than the job vacancies available. Two weeks later I received a missive of acceptance from the ministry asking me now to further participate in an oral interview. Once over, my friends and acquaintances were of the advice that those who did not belong to the ruling class had little chance to be accepted. Nevertheless the interview took place with much anxiety on my part and to make a long story short, let me say that I was accepted, much to my astonishment, ranked second at the entrance exams. A number of other applicants who had similar backgrounds as I did were also accepted. It became obvious to all that the rumors circulating at the time were, I must stress, quite inflated and exaggerated. Of course I

do not want to say that external pressures or some sort of interference did not exist. The fact remains that only five or six percent of the applicants benefited from it. I must emphasize here that to the contrary of what prevailed in the general public's mind, the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as I experienced it and saw with my own eyes during almost 20 years at its service was one of the cleanest, tidy and best organized of all our government institutions.

During that time I had the pleasure to meet many colleagues who were dedicated patriots and worked without ostentation behind the scene for the greater benefit of our country while at the same mellowing some of the harmful policies of the government. I mention also a number of great writers and intellectuals who stemmed out from our ministry such as Fereydoun Hoveyda, Iradj Pezeshzad, Fereydoun Adamyat, Parviz Atabaki, Moshvehg Kazemi and Gholamali Sayyar.

One can project your life into several sections: the office work or professional one, the private one and the cultural life, by this I mean your writings and poetry. Can you portray each one?

As a public servant I was of course fond of diplomacy and despite unfortunate limitations at the time, I tried to be a worthwhile envoy for my country and for its rich and ancient culture. I served in countries such as France, Belgium, Tunisia and China as well as several states of Eastern Europe and derived much experience and learning from each of them. My private life self-explanatory and I wish it to remain so. As to my cultural life, let me say that that it was always associated with books, literature, poetry and music. I truly and sincerely found myself free in such an environment. In addition I had the feeling to be intimate with the famed of literature and arts.

You are exceedingly experienced with translations and I read several books that were translated by you.

Well, I am also sort of knowledgeable in that field and translated numerous works of literature, poetry and history from French and English into Persian. A number of them were printed too.

To be continued

INDIAN ORIGIN OF EGYPTIAN CIVILIZATION

BY BABU G. RANGANATHAN

Source: Pravda.Ru, 12.08.2008

The ancient Egyptians in their writings described that they had come “from the south, from a land across the Great Sea”, a land which they called “Punt”. Some have said “Punt” refers to ancient Somalia but this cannot be for several reasons. Somalia is not separated from Africa by a great sea and the description of the animals and plants given by the ancient Egyptians concerning the land of Punt match exactly with that of the southwestern coast of India (known as Malabar). There is, in fact, considerable archaeological and anthropological evidence that ancient India was the source of ancient Egyptian civilization. The ancient black Indians, known as “Dravidians”, (who in ancient times were also known by the Greeks and Egyptians as “Ethiopians”) built and laid out ancient Egyptian civilization and, no doubt, in the process also mixed with their black brethren in Africa. The ancient Egyptians, themselves, admitted in their writings that they received their civilization and culture from the Ethiopians, another black “race”. In ancient times there were known to be two types of Ethiopians, Western Ethiopians, in Africa, (who were black with wooly hair and fine features) and their brethren, the Eastern Ethiopians, of India, who also were black with fine features but possessed straight hair. Both Western and Eastern Ethiopians were descended from the biblical Cush, one of the sons of Ham. The Dravidians most likely emigrated from Africa to India and, later, many returned to Africa where they developed ancient Egyptian culture and civilization.

Before the Aryans (a Caucasian race who were barbaric and illiterate) invaded India, India was composed mainly of various black “races” (the Dravidians, the Veddoids, also known as Australoids, and the Negrito peoples) who built the ancient Indus Valley civilization, one of the world’s four earliest cradles of civilization. Today, the majority of India’s population is a mixture of both Indo-Aryan and Dravidian with pure Aryans mainly in the extreme North and pure Dravidians mainly in the extreme South. The Veddoids mainly live in the hill regions of India and the Negritos mainly live off coast in the Andaman and Nicobar islands. India contributed tremendously to Western civilization. Many don’t realize that Western mathematics originated in India. The so-called “Arabic” numerals were borrowed by the Arabs from the Indians. Because the Europeans borrowed their mathematics from the Arabs they became known as Arabic numerals, but they originated in India. Without the decimal system that India created and which was borrowed by the West, via the Arabs, Western science and technology would not have been possible. The ancient Roman numerals would not have sufficed. The Arabs borrowed much of their sciences and mathematics from India and transmitted them to the West. More and more textbooks on mathematics now



are mentioning India as the original source of Western mathematics.

Today Egypt is referred to as an Arab nation, but this is only because the Arabs conquered Egypt centuries ago and imposed upon the original people their Arab language, culture and Moslem religion. Many modern Egyptians of today are really the descendants of Arab, Persian, Greek, and other non-African peoples that entered into Egypt over the many centuries. The ancient or original Egyptians, however, were of African or Black (Negroid) descent, and this is still mostly true of the bulk of Egypt’s rural population, especially in the south. Long before the Arabs invaded and conquered Egypt the famous and ancient Greek historian Herodotus (who is known as the Father of History) visited Egypt and wrote concerning the Egyptians: “They have burnt skin, flat noses, thick lips, and wooly hair” (Herodotus, Book II, p. 100, translated

by George Rawlinson, New York: Tudor, 1928). The book, written by white author and professional speaker Joel F. Freeman, discusses the historical and archaeological evidences for ancient black Egyptian civilization.

It is often asked how all the varieties of humans could have descended Adam and Eve and, particularly, from Noah’s three sons Ham, Shem, and Japheth. Obviously, Noah and his three sons Ham, Shem, and Japheth each carried the genes for producing several races since ultimately all the races of mankind had descended from them. Genetically, it was possible for Noah and his three sons to carry the genes for producing different races just as it is genetically possible today, for example, for a person of European origin to carry genes for producing children with different color hair. The principle is the same. Although you and I today may not possess genes for producing different races of people, Noah and his three sons Ham, Shem, and Japheth did possess such genes.

Contrary to popular belief by some, black skin is not a curse. Ham (which means “black”) was given that name by his father Noah before there was any curse pronounced by Noah. Furthermore, Noah had never cursed Ham himself but, rather, Ham’s son Canaan. And even that curse wasn’t eternal or perpetual because the Bible tells us that a curse lasts for only a few generations.

Black skin protects from the harmful effects of ultraviolet light. In fact, all human skin color is brown. The skin pigment that gives color to all skin is melanin which is brown. Whites have the least amount of melanin in their skin and that’s why they appear “white”. Only albinos (those born with no melanin because of genetic defect and mutation) are purely white and in most danger from harmful effects of the Sun’s rays. Instead of black skin being a “curse” it is a healthful blessing for those living in year round hot climates.

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