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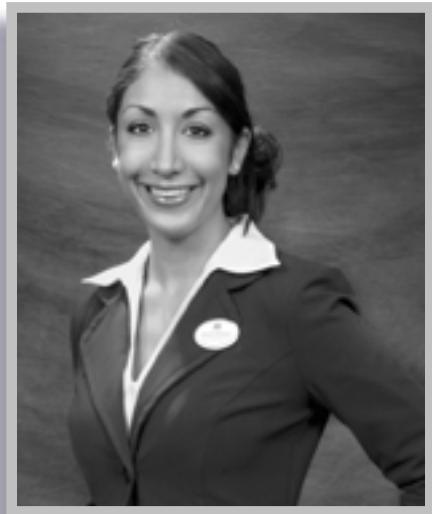


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## IMPORTANT NOTICE

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



## ***FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK***

With the arrival of Noerouz the Persian New Year I wish all of the devoted readers of Persian Heritage magazine, the monthly and internet viewers a happy and healthy new year. I also wish for those, whose love for their country have led them to follow its traditions and customs, regardless of where they now reside, that their hopes and dreams of peaceful coexistence.

The New Year and the bloom of spring flowers coincide with the 14th anniversary of Persian Heritage magazine. We have faced many obstacles, financial and work load, yet we have managed to keep the blood of this magazine flowing. This in turn keeps the Persian culture and its thousands of years of richness in wisdom, beauty and history alive in our children and host countries. We hope that we can continue on this journey for many more years despite many difficulties.

Many years have passed since I immigrated, with my wife, to the United States from our homeland, Iran. During that time we have been blessed with wonderful opportunities and achievements for ourselves and our children. We have also witnessed the birth of our grandchildren and watch as their roots become anchored in their homeland. These events have given us great joy, pleasure and fulfillment. Our love, however, for our birth country and our commitment to our fellow countrymen never diminished. In fact it grows stronger with each year. These days we find ourselves working harder than ever to show the true face of Iran, its beauty, traditions and customs to our future generations and host country.

Last year brought many changes and controversies to the world. The tsunami in the financial markets has been a catalyst for disaster in worldwide households. Like a deadly virus, it has stricken people and destroyed lives. The closing of financial institutions has resulted in the loss of thousands of jobs, causing people to lose their homes, leaving them homeless. When this will end remains an unknown.

Besides the changes in the financial sector, there has been a tremendous change in the political spectrum, with the presidential election of Barack Hussein Obama. This was in a sense a revolution for its citizens. Though an African American, a minority, second generation American he was never discouraged in his pursuit to succeed to become the first African-American president of the United States. This outcome has given other ethnicities the courage to pursue their dreams.

The past election and the presidency of Barack Hussein Obama has stirred emotion in mothers and fathers of Iranian descent. During a social gathering following the election I was

chatting with a group of friends. The conversations and discussions revolved around the election. Both supporters and opponents of President Obama were arguing about different aspects of this election. One mother stood up, with eyes filled with tears and cheeks reddened with emotion in a quivering voice she stated, "since the election of President Obama there is new hope! I am inspired and believe that now second and third generation Iranians have a chance to succeed in the political, financial and social arenas of the United States!" She acknowledged that there is no better time than the present for parents to encourage their children to pursue their dreams, because they can come true. She continued by saying that she hopes to see the day when an Iranian American will enter the steps of the White House. If she had made these statements a year earlier chances are she would have been ridiculed by this same group of company. But, on that evening no one dared to challenge her, for regardless of what side of the political spectrum one was on, we all knew that what she was saying could one day become a reality.

Our youth, because of sacrifices made by their parents, have received the best educations. Many have already succeeded in science, finance, social and cultural arenas. There are also young Iranians who have pursued political campaigns in several states in the US, but have yet to hold a political seat. Their loss may be attributed to their reluctance to acknowledge their Iranian heritage. For instance, two Iranians running, for political seats, with the opportunity to secure tremendous financial support from the Iranian-American community, lost that support because of their avoiding to answer the question on how they would deal with issues concerning Iran and Iranians. As a result supporters became discouraged and withdrew support.

I hope that our youth begins to follow in Barack's footsteps and show no hesitation in acknowledging their identity and ethnicity. They must do this in order to pursue political seats that will equate to a political voice and allow them to defend the rights of all Iranians. This behavior will set a trend for other ethnic politicians to defend the rights of their people and give them a voice. This would be a great lesson. Our youth must understand that they can concurrently defend the autonomy of America and still protect their ethnicity.

This mother's cry is admirable and beautiful. Perhaps it is time for all of us to break the walls around us and enter the broader spectrum of society. We must all begin to participate in the social and political spheres. It is our duty as Iranians to become politically active and participate, without hesitation,

financially, physically or in any way possible. It is time to shed our selfish behaviors and self centeredness and concentrate on actions that will result in the betterment of society as a whole. Many Iranians made very large contributions to the presidential candidates. Wouldn't it have been great if we had lobbied these candidates to support Iranians, by placing them in important positions, where they could make a difference for the struggling Iranian image? Other ethnicities have succeeded in representation in Washington, why not us?

I hope this New Year will inspire all of us to become more active in social and political issues. There will come a day, of this I am certain, when the dream of the young, to become the president of the United States, regardless of race, creed or color will become the norm rather than the novelty. Only the struggle of the youth today will yield this dream.

Again on behalf of myself and the employees of Persian Heritage, we wish you all, wherever you may be, a wonderful, prosperous and healthy new year, filled with peace and joy.

In closing I thank all our devoted readers and ask that they continue to lend us a helping hand. The preservation of Persian culture and being a voice for Iranians has always been our goal. Often the path has been difficult. Its existence depends on your generosity. It is hard to believe that this endeavor, the dream of one couple, began fourteen years ago. The financial burden has taken a toll on our personal lives and loss of subscriptions and advertisers has added to this financial burden. Regardless, we will try to continue to make the sacrifices needed to sustain this effort as long as possible. This financial burden can be eased with the continued and future support of the Iranian community.

Thank you all for not leaving us alone.

Happy New year

*Shahrokh Ahkami*

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## A COMMENT ON "THE IRAN'S QUESTION"

In *Persian Heritage*, #52, Winter 2008

BY: DAVID YAZDAN

I was quite surprised by the article written by Mr. Kam Zarrabi on page 22 regarding "The Iran Questions." I could not believe what I was reading, has Mr. Zarrabi been sleeping all these years or has he totally closed his eyes to what happened in 1979 forward. The first mistake he makes in his article is the middle of the third paragraph where it says, "The Islamic revolution, a truly grassroots uprising in Iran." That is far from the truth. Yes, the people were angry with the shah and the slogan of *marg bar shah* was very loud. But, there was no mention or thought of some Ayatollah in exile coming to take over the country. In fact, from the beginning Khomeini lied and his successors have done the same. The first president put in charge was Mr. Barzagan, who was not only qualified but, was also a very religious man. He was so frustrated by the Mullah's that he quit. After him the others, who followed were also qualified until the clerics took over the country. This has nothing to do with what the United States thinks or does, what the people on the street of this country, think or what the top echelon is planning. Just look what has happened to the dollar. It was 7.5 to 8 toomans and is now over 1000 toomans. Unemployment is 35 percent, prostitution is up and all around there is stoning and killing. It seems the country has returned back to the middle ages.

Mr. Zarrabi, I have family and relatives in Iran who know what is going on so please don't tell me how nice

things are over there.

During the shah, there was some dictatorship but you could dress the way you liked. You could go anywhere you liked. You could have parties, listen to music and as long as you did not participate in anti-regime campaigns you would be okay. The Shah did not kill thousands of people in the first several months of his regime.

The second mistake he makes is to try and say that Islam is compatible with democracy. Islam by nature is incompatible with democracy or democratic reform. This is the quotation that he makes in the fifth paragraph of the first page. Is he serious? Right from the beginning, religion in general and Islam in particular was in favor of a Khalifate ruling, which is going on right now in Iran. Of course, he is not calling himself a Khalifate he is calling himself Faughi and there is no more illegitimate government than this. Right from the beginning there has been absolutely no freedom and no election. Is the Mullahs picking two or three names who the people must vote for, a democracy?

There is absolutely no compatibility between democracy and religion in general, and Islam in particular. It does not mix.

Yes, America was guilty of the Coupdetah of 1953 but, it was really the British who orchestrated that Coupdetah and America was dumb enough to implement it.

The next mistake he makes is about the hostages and the take over of the American Embassy in 1979.

He writes this is if these hoodlums who called themselves students did that spontaneously and on their own. I refer him to my article about the Muslim Brotherhood in Iran, which was called Fadayoone Islam. These groups were under his control and he ordered it to solidify the Islamic Republic and Khomeini's power. It happened because they were afraid of a military Coupdetah, and it could not have happened as long as they had hostages in the Embassy. In one way their plan worked. Of course, they did not dare harm anyone for the fear of retaliation. It was not just a crack down of the leftist militant, which resumed after the release of the hostages. Practically every group and organization who were not 100 percent behind the Islamic Republic were suppressed, killed or eliminated year after year after year. Maybe Mr. Zarrabi can explain why Ahmadinejad was the head of the assassination squad of Khomeini who pursued all the anti-regime people all over the world. This is not terroristic? The money of the oil, which was supposed to be spent for people has gone to terroristic organizations like Hezbollah and Hamas, and for what? We are neither Israeli nor Palestinians, they have their own problems. Our interests should be exclusively in, Iran, not in those areas. I don't see how he can justify wasting our money and manpower for people on the other side of the Middle East. It is true that America is supporting Israel and why not, it is the only democratic country in that place and yet they don't leave it alone. Israel did not start the 2006 war, Hezbollah started it, by going over the boarder and killing Israeli soldiers and starting that war. When it comes to Hamas, the same thing is true. For weeks they were throwing rockets, at

the Israeli's while more than two thirds of the Gaza strip people are hungry.

How does he explain that and what did you expect Israel would do? If someone keeps throwing rockets in your backyard would you sit there and have your family die? Another statement he makes is "America is being blackmailed or better yet, held hostage by Israeli demands." This is not true. Yes America supports Israel but, every time Israel wants to go further the United States puts on the brakes. Israel was going to bomb the nuclear facilities in Iran, but the U.S. stopped it. So it is not true that America is being kept hostage. No, the United States has got no intention to bomb Iran. That terroristic and illegitimate regime is going to self-destruct. In his entire article he has one thing right, at the end of the article when he says, "The people in Tehran are too concerned about the runaway joblessness, corruption and the general state of the nations economy. I am neither Israeli nor Palestinian neither Jewish nor Moslem, I am as Einstein said, "a member of human race."

In summary, I am extremely disappointed in this article. How can someone be so blind about what is going on in our motherland?

### GREAT MEMORIES

Some of the articles that I always read and love them are those from Mr. Hushang Bafekr from Iran. His writings also are sensational, sincere and some are memorable from childhood. He writes those things that come out of his heart so dwell in my heart too.

*Hormoz Mohtashemi*

## World Largest Artificial Beach to Be Built in Central Iran

Kerman, Feb 18, IRNA – The world’s largest artificial beach is to be built in this provincial capital city in central Iran on a 60,000-square-meter piece of land, a local recreation official said on Wednesday.



Director of Kerman’s Ashkan water park Arash Salehi, told IRNA that the project is to be constructed with a rls 160 billion credit and it would be larger than Japan’s artificial beach, which is made on a 56,000-square-meter land.

Japan’s artificial beach, called the Ocean Dome, is located in Myazaki. Salehi encouraged the private sector to invest in the project, which according to the official would return its original investment within two years after becoming operational. He did not name the contractors of the project. The official added that a water park is also to be built in the city of Kerman within seven months.

He added that Iran has talked to some Indian and Chinese experts for carrying out the water park project.

Kerman lies on a large and flat plain, some 1,076 km (669 mile) south of the capital Tehran.

The city has hot summers as it is located close to the *Kavir-e lut* (Lut Desert). Kerman is one of the popular tourist hubs in Iran for both domestic and foreign visitors.

## Funny in Farsi Possible TV Series

Firoozeh Dumas’s book *Funny in Farsi* is on ABC’s list for shootings for a possible television series. The first production is called the pilot and if it gets network and public, approval it will be made into a full television series. Firoozeh Dumas moved with her family, at age seven, to the US from Iran in 1972. The book is based on her and her family’s experiences along the way. It was originally written for her grandchildren and is now a bestseller.



## FUNERAL OF IRANIAN ACTRESS MEHRI MEHRNIA



Photo by Amir Pourmand ISNA

A funeral ceremony for Iranian veteran actress Mehri Mehrnia was held on February 21st in Tehran. Mehrnia died in a Tehran hospital at the age of 93. The ceremony started in the House of Cinema and ended at the Behesht Zahra cemetery where Mehrnia’s body was laid to rest at the artists’ section. The funeral was attended by many actors and actresses.

## GREEN NEIGHBORHOOD SUPPORTERS

Tehran Municipality: An advisor to Tehran’s mayor announced that 375 council assistants have been trained to work as supporters of green neighborhoods. *Shahr.ir* quoted Mohammad Hadi Heidarzadeh as saying that the training of council assistants had begun since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year.

He added, “The plan starts with a conference in which members of council assistants are sorted by age, occupation and education and training programs are devised for them.”

“Environmental training for council assistants is based on visual, writing, and audio methods and focuses on garbage, green spaces, and air pollution,” he said.

The official added that a green rapporteur is then determined for every neighborhood of Tehran and they are mediators between Tehran Municipality and other citizens conveying neighborhood problems to city managers and educating citizens on the

## PASSING

The epitaph on, the Tomb of Hooshang Booloki will read as follows: “Here lies a great man and a spectacular surgeon.”

The state of Florida lost a great surgeon and the Persian community lost a great man. However, as our great poet Saadi has said so eloquently, “You Saadi the great man will never die. The dead is the one who is not mentioned at all.” His family lost a great father and I lost a great friend. He leaves behind his wife and three sons. God Bless them all. I do not believe anyone has helped so many people for as long as he did. God bless you.

– David A. Yazdan, M.D

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# History of Terrorism

PART XVII

## THE HEART OF DARKNESS .1. EMOD MOGHNIYEH

DAVID YAZDAN

**If we like them, they're Freedom Fighters, one thought. If we don't like them, they are terrorists. In the unlikely case we can't make up our minds, they're temporarily only Guerrillas**

*Carl Sagan*

Now we enter the new chapter of some of the most evil men in the history of mankind. We start with the heart of the darkness No. 1. There is a least half a dozen of them but we will start with Emod Mughniyeh. He was a Lebanese shi'ite who grew up in the shi'ite neighborhood of south Beirut and was recruited into Yasir Arafat's Al Fatah. Prior to Osama Bin Laden, Mughniyeh was America's Most Wanted Man with a 5 million dollar price tag on his head. He organized the Beirut massacres, master minded the kidnapping of the CIA's Beirut station chief, William Buckley in 1984, participated in 15-months of torture that killed the American spymaster. In 1985 he personally murdered an American Navy Diver, Robert Stethem, a passenger on a TWA flight from Athens to Beirut that was hijacked by two Hezbollah terrorists and tossed Stethem's body onto the tarmac at the Beirut airport. In 1983 he masterminded a truck bombing in Beirut, which struck the Marine Barracks killing 241 Marines and bombed the U.S. embassy, where 63 civilians, including 17 Americans died. Then came the 29 people who died in the 1992 bombing of the Israeli Embassy Buenos Aires and 55 more killed in 1994 at a Jewish center in Buenos Aires. We will get to these one by one.

Mughniyeh transitioned himself from a foot soldier in the PLO, a largely secular terrorist organization that had grown out of the Sunni Muslim Brotherhood-to the Iranian top killers. An example where Sunni and Shi'ite's have cooperated to kill their common western enemies is the slaughter of the Americans in Beirut in 1983. This involved both Iranian Shi'ite and PLO Sunni resources, which by then was an old story. Iran's assault continued in the winter of 1983.

The target ranged from the American French Embassies to main oil refineries, the airport control tower, and a residential neighborhood heavily populated by employees of the Raytheon, the American Corporation involved in military support for the kingdom. Six people died and more than 80 were injured. The attacks were organized by an Iranian supported group by the name of Al Dawa.

### “THE CALL”

Seventeen terrorists including the relative of Mughniyeh, were arrested and condemned to death or given extended jail sentences. They subsequently became known as “Dawa 17”. The close connection between Iran and Hezbollah was repeat-

edly demonstrated when, throughout the '80's Hezbollah took out western hostages and offered to trade them for 17 terrorists on death row in Kuwait. They tried hard indeed, as the world learned in December 1984 when a Kuwait passenger airliner was hijacked and flown to Tehran.

Most of the shades were tightly drawn and there were few signs of life within the plane when Kuwaiti's monitoring air to ground radio broadcasts picked up blood curdling sounds from the jet. The shrieks and hysterical crying were from a man being tortured and maimed. Those on board only got a glimpse of the hijacker who was dressed with a checkered Arab head cloth drawn over his face. The victim, though stripped of all identifying papers was American. His body, after landing, was dumped on the snow dusted tarmac. The hijacker demanded the release of the Dawa terrorists in Kuwait, but the Kuwaiti's refused to discuss the matter. Two of the American hostages, employees of USAID, were also killed by the terrorists. Iranian security forces stormed the plane and arrested the terrorist. The Iranian's promised to prosecute the hijackers but no trial took place.

Three months prior to this incident, on September 20, 1984 Hezbollah carried out the suicide bombing of the US embassy annex on the outskirts of Beirut killing 24 people two of whom were Americans.

By the early 90's Hezbollah and the Iranian terror masters had developed a global network. In 1992 they bombed Israeli embassy Buenos Aires, Argentina, two years later in 1994 they bombed the cities biggest Jewish community center killing 95 and wounded at least 151. The evidence against Iran and Hezbollah, in 1994 bombing took years to assemble, but the formal accusations and arrest warrants weren't issued until fall of 2006. The first 10 years were spent on a failed prosecution by the Argentine's who were said to have been involved in handling the payoffs by Iranians to then-president Carlos Menem. When the case leading up to the impeachment of the investigative magistrate a year later fell apart, two federal prosecutors revived the investigation. Given access to security intelligence file they developed a theory that Iran had ordered the attack because Argentina suspended and then terminated its support for the Iranian nuclear program, (the Argentine's had provided low grade uranium and technical advice) and arms sales to the Islamic Republic.

This theory came from someone who was in a position to know, a former Iranian Intelligence Officer named Abdolghasem Mesbahi. Within a year, the investigation produced the identity of the bomber, a Hezbollah terrorist from Lebanon. A memorial plaque was dedicated to him in southern Lebanon with the date of his “martyrdom” July 18, 1994, the same date as the bombing in the Buenos Aires. The FBI, with whom the Argentinean prosecutors were working, came to the same conclusion. The formal accusation came in late October 2006 and identified the government of Iran--through Hezbollah, which the report described as ‘torn all points of view, a sub organization of the regime in Tehran’ – as the guilty party. Among the former Iranian officials cited in the report were: President Hashemi Rafsanjani, Intelligence Minister Ali Fallahian, Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati, Moshen Rezai commander of the IRGC, Moshen Rabbani cultural attaché to the Iranian Embassy in Argentina (1994-98), Ahmad Reza Ashgari, third secretary of the Iranian Embassy Ahmad Vahidi commander of the Quds Force 1989-98 and Hezbollah “Security Chief” Emod Mughniyeh

The accusations were upheld by a federal magistrate, who issued arrest warrants and asked Interpol and the Iranian government to extradite them for judgment. When there was no response from Iran, Argentina demanded that the former Iranian officials be declared fugitives from justice and be placed on Interpol's list of wanted criminals. One of the prosecutors went to France to convince Interpol to issue international arrest warrants, only to be threatened by Iranian representatives with such vehemence that he feared for his own security and life. In the end, Interpol agreed to list all but Rafsanjani and Velayati on their "watch list," while the Iranian regime blamed the whole thing on one of their favorite targets in the words of a government spokesman, "The indictments stem from Zionist political objectives."

At the same time that the Iranians were unleashing Hezbollah on Jewish targets in Argentina, they were also establishing a working relationship with Al Qaeda. In 1993, Emod Mughniyeh met with Osama bin Laden in Sudan. Bin Laden had been impressed with the suicide bombing of the American embassy in Beirut ten years earlier and wanted help in planning similar operations. The two agreed they would work together. Subsequently, Hezbollah trained Al Qaeda terrorists in Lebanon, Iran, and Sudan.

It is fair to say that a great deal of Al Qaeda's methods, technology, and worldview came from the Islamic Republic, primarily from Mughniyeh.

The presence of Sudan may come as a surprise to many readers, but it is a recurring theme in the history of Iran's early efforts to export the Islamic Revolution. As early as 1991 the two countries established a strategic alliance to wage war against their common enemies in the West, to overthrow pro-Western regimes in the Middle East, and to drive the Americans out of the region. Notice that the alliance bound Shi'ite Iran and Sunni Sudan, once again demonstrated the flimsiness of the Sunni/Shi'ite divide.

Indeed, the necessity of overcoming the mutual suspicion and hatred that divided some members of the two communities was a central theme of the Sudanese regime's "consigliere," Hassan al Turabi, an urbane, well-educated intellectual, who for a while became a global celebrity. He met with the Pope, spoke to a congressional subcommittee, was welcome by a prestigious Washington think tank, and rose to star status in the European press, which nicknamed him "The Islamic Pope." Turabi was unique, a radical jihadist who also spoke the language of the Western intelligentsia.

He publicly endorsed all manner of social reforms, including freeing women from the requirement of covering their hair and sounded far more modern than any of his more infamous allies, from bin Laden to the leaders of Hezbollah. "Modern Islamic movements don't believe in schools of jurisprudence." He proclaimed in a lecture in Madrid in 1994, "they don't define themselves as Shia, or Sunni, or of this Sufi order or that Sufi order. They recognize this as quite a heritage and they can learn a lot from such history. They don't want to break with history altogether, but they want to go forward and develop."

The smooth tones of moderation were terms of art, designed to deceive the West about his real intentions. In his own Sudan, all traditional political parties, along with anyone who dissented from the rigid Sharia code imposed on the nation, were brutally suppressed. As his celebrity increased, Turabi's

dreams became ever more ambitious, but he was a big man on a tiny playing field and needed help to move into the global arena. Mere deception of gullible Westerners was not enough; he needed an army, and to that end he found willing partners in the megalomaniacal rulers of the Islamic Republic. As the right arm of the Sudanese dictator, General Bashir, Turabi was able to make Sudan a central piece in the Iranian-led terror mosaic. The Iranians arrived in force, some to manage the decaying petroleum infrastructure, others to supervise training for anew military, still others – these from the feared and omnipresent Revolutionary Guards – to run numerous terrorist training camps.

In 1993, a few hundred RG troops were working in Sudan; two years later, there were thousands of Iranian-trained terrorist trainers, some from the Revolutionary Guards and its Quds Force, many others from Hezbollah. The seriousness of the undertaking was proven by the presence of Hezbollah's operational chief, Emod Mughniyeh, along with a new ally: Osama bin Laden. As the U.S. indictment of bin Laden stated in 1998, "Al Qaeda.... forged alliances with the National Islamic Front in the Sudan and with the government of Iran and its associated terrorist group Hezbollah for the purpose of working together against their perceived common enemies in the West, particularly the United States

*to be continued*

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The Iranian Time Bomb, By Michael A. Leaden

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

PART TWO

BY: M. K. SADIGH

## Globalization

### UNDERSTANDING THE GLOBAL POWER

Understanding the global power, as it is known historically, requires the cognition of the recognized definition and philosophy of "power" which is defined as a core energy capable of changing, relocating, reconstructing and converting other thing apart from its own existing entity. Such definition became a philosophical issue when the political and social powers as "empires and imperialism" became the determinant forces in human's reality of life. This organized and institutionalized power became a manifestation of life and death. The empire power essentially defined as a domination of a dominant force, striving to manipulate, suppress, and exploit all the subordinated forces only for its own subsistence. The cognition of such structure raises the issue of the puissance, which is the genesis of power, and takes us to the structure of other universes, beside the most identified and exposed one.

Every one of these worlds posses elaborated and complex organizational structures as complex as any other ones. Such as the galaxies, the astrological worlds from the most magnificent ones beyond our imagination to the microscopic worlds of organisms and to the world of biological and chemical worlds, practically every one of these organized and structured worlds in its own right is like an empire, which has the same natural and logical constructed integrity. The worlds of the R.N.A. and D.N.A. for instance, are those concealed empires that the scope of their central power affects farther than their territories. Each one of these concealed empires has its own defense mechanism, their own system of reproductions. In a general interpretation all these organizations, political fluctuations, contradictions, and negotiations could be considered symbolically as international interactions, which they will deliver a global encountering, and eventually global relations, whether they are positive or

negative, they are the manifestation of life.

These are the contradictions of life, which are the genesis of the social and political energy that had mobilized the history of humanity and all his social and political dynamics. Such description demonstrate the fact, that there are many sources of energy that evolved from varieties of means such as chemical energies which are not necessarily conscious energies and they all are stimulated some unconscious elements but they all are defined energies. When we are talking about the "powers", or powers, which affects and changes in the course of history, we are talking about the conscious energy. For example, the person who uses the gun is the conscious energy, but the power of the gun is an unconscious energy or power.

The powers of the empires, and all the political powers are the conscious powers, which in order to sustain their own hegemony over other powers, they have to absorb, destroy, alter, and degenerate the subordinated powers, in order to establish its absolute hegemony to be able to remain in power. This rule applies practically too every living creature, willing to live, using any means of defensive or offensive mechanism to sustain its life. As life goes on, every living creature must have the, will, to go on maintaining his will, and the moment that, for some reason he loses that natural will, he is getting ready to die. Schopenhauer 1788-1860 German philosopher, who believed that will to live is the fundamental reality and that will, being a constant striving, is insatiable, Impossible to satiate or satisfy, and ultimately yields only suffering. (Will) is not the spirit or soul that most of the judo- christens, or Semitic religions attribute it to the supreme power and divine, but in the contrary is attributed to the individual power which become a determinant puissance suppressing other powers and dominate them to a level of subordination or extinction.

### INDIVIDUAL POWER WHICH

### BECOME A DETERMINANT PUISSANCE SUPPRESSING OTHER POWERS AND DOMINATE THEM TO A LEVEL OF SUBORDINATION OR EXTINCTION.

Based on this principal then all powers, which are capable of having determinant rule over others, whether it is an individual in a small measure or an empire will systematically determine the life and death of their subordinates. Such determinant powers in the human history, in the past were the empires, the religious powers, and to day, they are the internationalism and Globalism, operating in variety of ways, such as IMF international monetary funds and World Bank, and world trade organization and many other organized institutions, which as a united powers control the world.

The concept of establishing power also is establishing a distinct and superior identity, far above and beyond any other identity during its existence and centuries to come. Without stabilizing such status, this superior power cannot possibly claim its hegemony over the other forces and determine their identity and political status, or banish them from their historical position. It is only achieving such superior status that bring them to a level that Greek call it "Kudos" and that is a position of established hegemony either in the individual or social levels, which, generally applies to superior powers of empires. When the subordinates and followers of an empire glorify the superiority of an empire, or supreme political power, they are not glorifying a person but rather, for the impact that these powers imbed in the history, which they want to be part of it. In another words they considered them as instruments of achievement and this concept had been with us for a long time and from Hegel to Marx widely discussed about it. Magus, or Magian, the Zoroastrian Meds and Persians believed, no power can

determines the good and evil for a man, but the dual powers, existing inside the person, and only the supremacy of the power of good which achieved and strengthens by the will and consciousness of the person could be able to defeat the evil inside him. We can see this view dismisses the divine power and positions the man himself in the center of responsibility. Strive to achieve the highest level of perfection is widely and deeply emphasized in ‘Avesta’ as an inner dualism which constantly is receptive and rejective.

**VIEWS AND OPINIONS ABOUT DEFINING THE GLOBALISM**

In his book title False Dawn published in March 26, 1998 John Gray who is the professor at Oxford University considered the Globalism as a dictatorship of capitals, and free market, which eventually will end up with world wars, and the vast poverty of world’s people. John Gray believes the democracy and world free market or globalize markets contradict each other and they can never be together but rather always against each other. He emphasized that democratic capitalism under its new identity ‘Globalism’ trying to create delusion, introducing to us what ever is evils as merits, and what ever is wrong as truth. These deceptive pretensions are so widely practiced that the corrosive and subversive effects of them already created a vast destitution and miseries worldwide. Those segments of the people of different nations, which coupled globalism as an instrument and aids to their patriotism and their national alliance and prides, in deed are similar to those who advocate the terrorists and create more terrors, he believes. The sympathizers of globalism try hard to mystify the outcomes and merits of world’s market, to an unrealistic exaggeration.

He refers to the free markets, and free trades of the middle of Nineteen century England, when, the severe competitions of 1840 to 1870 eventually ended up with the world wars. The basic idea of free market was influenced by the doctrine of ‘lesser fair’ a doctrine advocating the absolute freedom of corporations, and capitalist market activities. The realization of ‘lesser fair’ brought a vast prosperity to many British wealthy capitalists and at the same time economical developments to British economy. That development did not stop by 1870 and the continuation of severe international competitions of 1914 resulted in the occurrence of the big world wars later. John Gray predicts that to days’ Globalism which trying to materialize the doctrine of ‘lesser fair’ all over again, in deed making the same painful mistake, but this time the damages are far more extensive, dangerous, and deadly. The

designers of today’s Globalism are the brain figures of Wall Street and the most affluent corporations which repeating the old mistakes and certainly they are not capable of learning from old mistakes, because, they do not considered themselves as the designers of the globalism, and furthermore, they cannot see, or perhaps overlook the impact of the free world market in the social level and its manifestation in the lives of ordinary people all over the world. They have the same passions and greed’s for attaining tremendous wealth without understanding its social result as the British capitalists’ bankers of the Victorian period had, and were not conscious of it. When the only motivation and drive is greed, there will not be any room left for ethical or logical considerations, and definitely they would not be capable to learn from the mistakes being made in the history. They never believe the historical mistakes even could have any relevance to the problems of today; as a result they never draw any conclusion from history. John Gray elaborate by saying that, we are living in a period of time that a new utopia with a new structure shaping our levies, dragging us towards new contradictions and complexities, ends up with expansion of world poverty, ethical decadence, and the absolute dictatorship of capitalism.

Gray believes the philosophy of Anglo-American’s globalism eventually will create a disastrous destitution and misery for the world’s poor people, just the way that, defeated Soviet communist regime, created for Russian people. The world trade and globalism, which prepare the ground for, a severe global competition ultimately will end up with wars. The implication of globalism would not and could not satisfy the needs of the people of the world, and everywhere equally, and every nation’s condition is different and therefore, requires a different needs. Anglo-American world’s trade as a leading sail ship in the ocean of the global relationship will drag the other nations to the same social and ethical crisis that American people have been facing for a long time, and are facing now. Gray predicts that, if this sail ship in the storm of the international crisis loses its balance and sink, the middle class American will severely be hit, and that middle class is the majority of American people. Already the negative effects of the globalism and world market is felt everywhere in the world. The most appropriate example is the confusing economical and social condition in Russia, which after the fall of communist empire was trapped in the chaotic influences of the world trade. All these live examples are the indicative of the fact that what ever happened in Russia could happen anywhere else as long as, it is directed,

manipulated, and strongly influenced by the same political and economical motivation. Only those who were brain washed by the philosophy of New World Order could believe that such development will not occurred.

The whole theory of modernization and world market economy is rooted from the idea of Scottish philosopher, and political economist, Adams Smith 1723 to 1790 who wrote his book ‘The Wealth of the Nation’ elaborating his views. In some aspects, his followers, have a tendency to compare the world market economy and Globalism, as the complimentary continuation of the Marxism, because if we accept the fact that the Marxism is a scientific approach to economical problems, then many of its principals already being adapted, and absorb by the common world market. Perhaps we can say the ‘yesterday’s red sheep, is dressing itself in wolf’s clothing’. In the ideology of communism, the dictatorship of proletariat is the guarantor of the existence of socialist regime, and in globalism, the dictatorship of big corporations, is the guarantor of the existence of capitalism. Both are dictatorship regardless of their different definitions.

John Gray believes the dictatorship of proletariat was an excuse to precede a bloody attack to diminish the Tsar Government. Trans National Corporations, also using their own versions of dictatorship, in order to impose their paradigms and regulations on other nations. Of course the practitioners of globalism are far more armed and equipped with right instruments and weapons.

Russia was the best example of experimenting two utopias, the dictatorship of proletariat and socialist regime, and now the influence of world market economy, which dragged the whole Russian economy under the ‘Mafia, Anarcho-Capitalism’. This happened when some element such as (Jeffrey) Sachs assumes, with a peripheral minor reform, they could push an old Asiatic nation, which identified itself as such, since Pitter The Great, could change over night to an extension of the Anglo- American dominated world market. He believes, that the Russian orthodox in 1917 helped Lenin to over trough the Tsar regime, the same people, today helping the Jeffery Sacks to banish the influence of the communist party. But why the World Bank and corporations allow some thing like this to happen? The answer is, the historical evidences show that, at the end of nineteen century, Russia was in a severe competition with nineteen century’s British competitor, and at the same time, American and Chinese economy were entering in to the world competition ground.

*to be continued*

# Is The U.S. Ready for Individualism?

BY: IMANOEL KOHANIM

The protection of the United States citizen's fundamental individual rights has been the heart of the establishment of this country over 200 years ago when the Bill of Rights was amended to the Constitution. The Declaration of Independence made it clear that the government has one primary purpose, that of protecting the inherent rights of its citizens. Despite this purpose, the government also has one other primary purpose, that of promoting the common good. These two equally highly significant purposes, protecting individual rights while promoting the common good, leaves the interpretation of the rights and freedom given to United States citizens through the Constitution and Bill of Rights open for discussion. This article will address the concept of individuality in the U.S., elaborates on the necessary pre-requisites to transform the society into an absolute free society and concludes by stating the most rational approach of providing the aforementioned objective.

Let me begin by stating that first and foremost how grateful we (the U.S. citizens) should be to live in a country where we are free to choose our own destiny, free to do what we think is right as citizens. We are free to think and to choose for ourselves. Have fair and free elections with the rights of minorities protected. We should also be grateful to live in a country where every one is treated equally under the law, no matter what our beliefs, no matter what our race and no matter where we came from. No one is above or below the law. We are also blessed to live in a country where the right of the individual is even more important than the good of the society and every citizen is given equal rights, with the right to say, write and think whatever we like and to associate with whom we want to associate with.

The U.S. Constitution of 1789, defines the fundamental laws of the Federal government, it sets forth the three branches of the government and holds government confined to the rule of law. The Constitution thereby requires the government to respect the individual citizen's basic rights. The most significant guarantees for individual rights were provided by the Bill of Rights (The first ten amendments to the Constitu-

tion), adopted in 1791. These amendments guarantees – among others – freedom of speech, religion, the Press, peaceful assembly and fair treatment of those accused of crimes. Balancing these rights against the common good of the society, makes the implementation of the Bill of Rights extremely difficult.

There are two different schools of thought surrounding this issue at hand. On one hand, there are scholars who rightly believe in people's individuality. These scholars believe that in free societies, protecting the rights of the individuals has a higher purpose and priority over the protection of the common good such as government policies. An argument can be made that when governments view the common good as being more important than individual rights, as does any totalitarian state, then both the basic rights and the common good will suffer. It is also true that in a free society like in the U.S. one has the right to do and say whatever he or she wants, and if the government becomes destructive to these unalienable rights, then it's the right of its people to alter it and institute a new government.

On the other hand, there are scholars who believe that the aforementioned was not the intention of the creators of the bill of rights. These scholars are of the opinion that the term "I can do what I want, it's a free country" is only a misinterpretation of the laws set forth by the founding fathers. In their view, in democratic societies like in the U.S., although people have freedom of speech, action and likewise, but such freedom stops when it encourages others to engage – for example – in illegal activities or when the intention is to slander others. These group of scholars also believe that there are restrictions and responsibilities associated with that right. They believe that societies in which every one is allowed to do what they please, whenever they feel like it without any consequences, where there are no rules of laws, would result in state of chaos. To avoid that, order has to be maintained and laws be enforced. Under this school of thought, Individuals have to be held accountable for their actions and must come to understand that there are consequences for their actions and therefore, how they use their rights. Indi-

viduals could exercise their rights as long as it doesn't affect other individual's rights and do not interfere in freedom of other individuals, Which is in fact in practice now in democratic systems. Which political concept would I advocate? Undoubtedly, the concept of individualism. We have to realize that when the government's primary responsibility is protection of its people's right to life and liberty (pursuit of happiness), the results would be that the common good is inevitably advanced significantly.

The question remains, could individuality be harmful or have negative effects? Absolutely, because individual rights is given (rightly) to all individuals, including those who lack education and or moral & those individuals therefore have the right to use their given rights for right or wrong and good or bad. Can we limit anybody's individual rights based on lack of ethics, moral and the potential harm that they may inflict to other individuals in particular and or the society in general. Absolutely not, because in individuality, the right of individual is even more important than the good of the society. Therefore, the inflicted harm is the price we have to pay to reach a true free society. So how can we reduce this price tag? The answer comes in three words, education, education and education. Only then, the concept of individuality will bring about a free society where individuals make the right choices. Individuality in the absence of morality (set of ethics and principles) could become destructive. It is the morality that gives the free individual a correct path to a dignified life. Furthermore, it is the morality which makes us capable of choosing right from wrong. Let me make it clear that I am not advocating any Biblical based morality where individuals have to conform with God's standards, rather, the morality that individuals conform to set of standard, which comes about by substance, logic and wisdom.

## SO, IS THE US READY FOR INDIVIDUALISM?

We hear, scholars, human right activists and liberal politicians reminding the population in regard to the freedom of individuality, but what we don't hear (enough) are the essential pre-requisites to a free

society. The following are a few examples of why the United States is not ready yet for individualism: On the *Economist.com* Democracy Ranking, the U.S. is ranked no. 17 among the 167 countries, with Sweden being ranked no. 1 and North Korea being no. 167. This index is based on the following categories, electoral process, civil liberties, the functioning of government, political participation and political culture.

According to *Wikipedia*, crime in the U.S. is characterized by relatively high levels of gun violence and homicides, compared to other developing countries. The rate of violent crime has risen steadily from 161 per 100,000 in 1960 to a peak of 758 per 100,000 in 1991 and then declined steadily to 469 per 100,000 in 2005. Still a high number compared to other industrialized nations. The homicide rate also follows the same path, and has risen steadily from 5.1 per 100,000 in 1960 to a peak of 9.8 per 100,000 in 1981, and then declined steadily to 5.6 per 100,000 in 2005. Again this is a high no. compared to other industrialized nations. Of course one has to admit that, some of the problems that this great country is facing today in regard to crime in general, is to some extent due to multi-cultural nature of the country.

On education, unfortunately, the quality of public education in the U.S. is still lower than that of Europe and is in fact lower than even some developing countries in Asia like Japan. The U.S. students are less aware of the world history and politics and on average have lower reasoning and judgmental capabilities than the same age students in number of other European and non-European countries. As far as family values, the country is still greatly career oriented and need to place more value on family life. After all, the moral and social values are traditionally maintained by a family. According to Nation Master.com, murders with firearms shows, for example, .0010 per 1000 people in the United Kingdom compared to .0279 per 1000 people in the United States, which is more than double. This is even before the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision to lift the ban on gun ownership.

So the U.S. still has work to do to reach a level to transform itself to individualism, and is yet to become a viable candidate. Until then, let us safeguard and embrace our great democracy and let it evolve into individualism. Rushing to individualism before going through the pre-requisites does not fulfill our desired intent, which is an absolute free society.

## THE FACTS ABOUT THE BATTLE OF SALAMIS

BY: NASSER M. TEJARATCHI

In a recent issue of *Persian Heritage* (No. 51), I read an article titled “When War Defeats All Its Survivors” in reference to a play, by an Iranian-American producer, that was recently performed at a college. This play was about the Greeks’ account of the Battle of Salamis (480 BC). The title of the article is fine, but I think there is some comments about the story that need mentioning.

A few years ago, a Hollywood movie was made about the same subject, which was nothing but a farce. In it, Xerxes was portrayed as a creep and an adventurer. According to critics, the making of this movie - which was financed by a foreign producer in Hollywood - was politically motivated for the purpose of smearing the Persian culture and its present government (while actually, ones not related to the other). Incidentally, the actor who played the role of Xerxes, in said college production (whose picture was depicted in *Persian Heritage*) does not bear any possible resemblance to Xerxes!

Before we go over the facts about the Battle of Salamis, we should remember the idea of “Eurocentrism,” according to which, everything originating in Europe is good, and everything written by Europeans is correct. When it comes to history, even most westernized Iranians trust more the history as written by Europeans.

The epic-poem book of *Shahnameh* was based on the Persian Royal archives, which were rearranged in the later period of Sassanid rule. It is believed that the sequence of the names of certain kings may have been misplaced (in the chapters pertaining to the history before Alexander’s invasion). Also, since at the time of arrangement of the origin of *Shahnameh* all the Greek lands had been taken over by the Eastern Roman Empire (Byzantine) the Greek in that book has been referred to as Roman”. On the other hand, the Greek writings also were not flawless. It has been written that when Alexander was attacking Persia, some of the Greek soldiers believed that they were attacking Media. Also, in the Greek writings, names (such as Xerxes) have lost their resemblance with original Persian names.

Who was Xerxes? This name has appeared in old Persian writings as “Khashayar” or “Khashayarsha,” and corresponds to the Persian name “Khosroes” (or “Khosrow” or “Khosro” in the present Persian version). A good intermediary record is that of the Hebrew account of the story of “Esther and Ordeal” in which the name of the king appears as Akhasuerus (closer to the actual Persian name of “Khosroes” than the Greek version). If we review *Shahnameh*, the name of this king appears as “Kay Khosrow”, in which “Kay” means “king”.

The Battle of Salamis is one of the most celebrated Greek epics. The Olympic tradition of carrying a torch is also related to the same story in which a Greek man carries the news of victory over Persians. So is the story of “300 Spartans”. The number of Greek ships (310) bears some resemblance to the number 300, which raises questions as to the accuracy of these numbers. Also, the 1,200 ships in the Persian Armada appears to be an unrealistic number, and according to the Greeks themselves, it was the big storm that broke down the Persian ships, and Xerxes was described as watching the situation on the shores, and that out of anger he actually whips the waves ordering them to stop.

In the chapters of *Shahnameh*, covering the reign of Kay Khosrow, the epic-making wars described are related to the North-Eastern frontiers of Persia, about the wars with “Turan” the Turks, and even a battle with the Emperor of China. There is little mentioning of problems on the Western fronts, meaning that the Greco-Persian wars were not considered as important as described by the Greek writers; and, that the Battle of Salamis did not bring “The end of Empires” as noted in the article. The Great Akamaenian Empire lasted more than another century, until it was finally destroyed by Alexander.

**THE ACCULTURATION OF IRANIAN MEN TO THE UNITED STATES**

In order to more fully understand how acculturation pressures impact the social construction of masculinity among Iranian men, the acculturation literature is reviewed below. In this paper, acculturation is defined as a complex process whereby an individual from a non-indigenous group attempts to adapt both psychologically and behaviorally to a novel culture where he or she was not initially born and raised within. Melikian & De Karapetian (1977) illustrated that such a process often results in assimilation into the host culture.

These researchers assumed that acculturation leads to assimilation for many immigrant groups. However, it seems that an immigrant may have an easier time assimilating into a host culture, if the latter culture was politically and culturally similar to the immigrant's culture of origin, while, an immigrant who came from a radically different culture would experience significant acculturation difficulties. Brown and Landreth (1983) argued that Iran and the United States are dissimilar cultures due to political, religious, historical, and family differences:

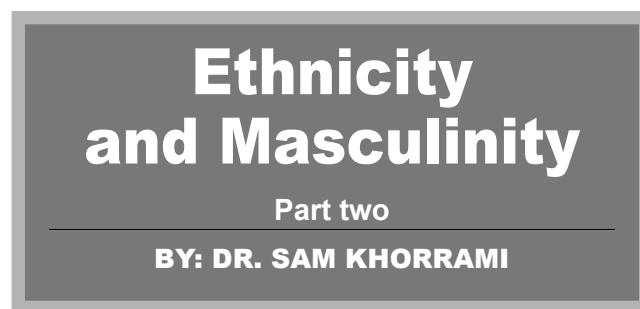
Iran has a history of monarchy; America is a democracy. Iran has a Zoroastrian-Moslem heritage; America has a Judeo-Christian heritage. Iran is old, America is young. Iran, for the most part, is a pre-industrial nation; America is an industrial nation... The majority of Iranians are members of extended families; the majority of Americans are members of nuclear families (p. 238).

Therefore, it is possible that Iranian immigrants may experience psychological and emotional distress solely due to the qualitative differences between the Iranian and American cultures. There are two prominent theories that explain acculturation difficulties among immigrant groups. The first is the Melting Pot hypothesis, which suggests that an immigrant's assimilation into a host culture is a function of relinquishing his or her original culture. For those immigrants who retain their original culture, the consequences are a prolong period of time to assimilate or a failure to assimilate altogether (Griffith, 1983; Szapocznik, Kurtinez, & Fernandez,

1976). Similarly, some studies have examined the assimilation rates of Iranian men and women immigrants (Famili, 1997; Ghaffarian, 1987, 1998; Hojat, Shapurian, Foroughi, Nayerahmadi, Farzaneh, Shafieyan & Parsi, 2000). Therefore, these studies will be briefly critiqued.

Ghaffarian (1987) suggested that Iranian men acculturate quicker than Iranian women because the former were exposed to western ideas while living in Iran. For instance, men in Ghaffarian's sample held traditional western values (e.g., importance of being the "breadwinner"), while women held more modern values (e.g., importance of working outside the home). Ghaffarian concluded that Iranian men's transition to the United States was relatively easy as they did not need to significantly change their roles.

Unfortunately, Ghaffarian's explanation for the differential acculturation rates for Iranian men and women was based on assumptions coupled with questionable experimental procedures (which had methodological flaws). For instance, Ghaffarian assumed that Iranian men had western exposure while living in Iran, and that American men valued these qualities resulting in a relatively fast acculturation process. Furthermore, the author did not provide any psychometric data to establish the reliability and validity of the measures that were used which lead to the aforementioned conclusions. Also, Ghaffarian found no sex differences in the sample's scores on a measure of traditional values. Yet, the author stated that men held more traditional values than women. Although the Iranian men and women did not have



1980). The second theory, called the Bicultural Hypothesis, states that the healthiest adjustment occurs when both the original and host cultures are adopted and equally valued (Lang, Munoz, Bernal, & Sorensen, 1982; Szapocznik, et al., 1980).

Each wave of Iranian immigrants had unique acculturation problems. Jalali (1996) described the dilemmas each wave experienced. Many of the first wave Iranians (who married American spouses) experienced communication problems with their significant other. Disagreement often occurred regarding the importance of extended family members' opinions and val-

ues. While Iranians from the second wave eventually began to feel homesick, missing their family and close friends. For those Iranian immigrants who were from traditional families, intergenerational conflict between their traditional values and the Western ideas (which their Iranian-American children espoused) were noted. The third wave Iranians experienced the most psychological trauma, than those in the other waves, due to the aforementioned political reasons. Indeed, being forced to flee one's homeland in the midst of revolution and political upheaval, leaving one's friends behind, and being separated from one's extended family are traumatic events for people, regardless of ethnic-

ity. Attempting to acculturate to a new society which is qualitatively different than their original culture, these Iranians experienced significant adjustment difficulties. Keshishian (2000) suggested that Iranians who immigrated to the United States after the 1979 revolution experienced a hostile environment where media characterizations and stereotyping of Iranians were not only common, but were traumatic.

Researchers have examined the differential rates of assimilation between men and women immigrants from various cultural groups (Kranau, Green, & Valencia-Weber, 1982; Soto, 1983; Torrez-Matullo,

statistically significant differences on their respective traditionalism scores, Ghaffarian went on to arbitrarily select five items from the original 12-item measure of traditional values. The author did not explain why these particular five items were selected and failed to report the internal consistency of the five items' total score. Unfortunately, Ghaffarian based her conclusions on the statistical results of these five items.

Ghaffarian's second study had a significantly improved methodology compared to her first investigation. A large sample size and the use of psychometrically-sound instruments were obvious strengths of the design. Ghaffarian (1998) had several conclusions. First, younger Iranian immigrants had assimilated faster than older Iranian immigrants. An association between gender differences in acculturation was the second finding. Iranian men acculturated into the United States faster than Iranian women. However, Ghaffarian explained this finding based on the findings in her previous study (i.e., Iranian men did not have to significantly shift their gender roles while acculturating to the United States). The problem with this conclusion is that it assumes that gender roles for Iranian men are equivalent in both cultures. Third, Iranian immigrants who acculturated into the United States had less depression and anxiety than those who took longer to acculturate. Finally, there was a positive correlation between acculturation scores and level of education, and length of residence in the United States, respectively.

A study conducted by Hojat, Shapurian, Foroughi, Nayerahmadi, Farzaneh, Shafieyan &

Parsi (2000) suggested that Iranian male immigrants scored higher on a traditional attitude scale (which assessed attitudes on marriage, pre-marital sex, and one's family) than Iranian women immigrants. Even when age was statistically controlled, the men still scored higher than the women. However, Famili (1997) suggested that Iranian male immigrants do not acculturate faster than Iranian female immigrants. This finding contradicts previous literature.

In sum, the research of differential acculturation rates for Iranian men and women has been inconsistent. Although some studies have suggested that Iranian men hold more traditional values than Iranian women Ghaffarian, 1987, 1998; Hojat, et al., 2000), thereby explaining why Iranian men acculturate quicker than Iranian women, other research suggests the opposite trend-Iranian women acculturate faster than Iranian men (Famili, 1997).

These studies failed to demarcate when the Iranians immigrated to the United States; thereby, representing a possible confound. Indeed, Jalali (1996) illustrated that Iranian immigration to the United States occurred within distinct waves, where each wave had unique acculturation difficulties. Perhaps these inconsistent findings are partly attributable to differences in the samples' time of immigration and the unique difficulties that each wave experienced. Perhaps, future researchers could take into account sample composition including the date of immigration. Clearly, future research needs to be conducted to help clarify these inconsistent findings.

*to be continued*

## Establishment of the Pahlavi Foundation In New York

by: Cyrus Assadi

In the beginning of 1970 the Pahlavi Foundation of Iran decided to establish a non-profit educational foundation in the United States. It was to assist the Iranian students, attending United States higher education establishments, as well as those attending colleges and universities in Europe. At the time, the assistance was for Iranian students with excellent achievement and standing in the United States and Europe, which numbered around 3,500. The Pahlavi Foundation would assist these students by paying their tuition and books, plus a stipend of \$300.00 per month. The scholarships and financial help was distributed by Bank Melli branches in London and New York. There were only two pre conditions for the students to meet to qualify for this, they had to maintain a 3.8-4.0 GPA and their families had to prove that they were not able to provide for the expenses abroad.

In order to stop the flow of foreign exchange from Iran, the Pahlavi Foundation under the late Shah's order, decided to establish an educational charitable foundation in New York. The Pahlavi Foundation of New York, was established with an initial capital of 2.5 million dollars. This was an independent non-profit foundation, formed under the laws of the State of New York with a board of directors consisting of Iranian nationals Dr. Taher Ziai, Nasser Sayyah and Majid Montackhabo and two Americans William Rogers and William Murphy. The initial capital of 2.5 million was a gift from the Pahlavi Foundation of Iran, as seed money. A committee was appointed by the Board of Directors to evaluate and certify the eligibility of the applicants to receive financial assistance. This included the chancellors of SUNY Stony Brook, University of Maryland Executive Vice President of Merrill Lynch and the president of Boarden Corp. All Board members as well as committee members, were providing their services free and did not receive any financial or other benefits.

The Pahlavi Foundation, NY purchased a six-story office building on Fifth Ave. and planned to renovate and rent it to create a source of income. In the process they found out that the office building included a commercial building space, with the capacity of over 400,000 square feet. The newly formed foundation immediately secured financing from the Central Bank of Iran and set out to build the new building. It was completed in three years in 1978 and by the time the Iranian Revolution came about, one-third of the building was already occupied. Approximately four months after the revolution, Mr. Jafar Sharif Emami the President of Board of Directors reached an agreement with the Mostazefan Foundation of Iran and resigned from his post. Before doing so, he dissolved the Board of Directors, according to the By Laws and surrendered the independent New York based and registered foundation (off course with the help of William Rogers – ex Secretary of State) to the Alavi Foundation. It later changed its name to the Mostazefan Foundation and again changed it back to the Alavi Foundation. The result was the destruction of a beautifully set up establishment to help Iranian scholars and students abroad.

## BOOK REVIEWS

## TALES FROM THE ZIRZAMEEN

Brian Hanson Appleton (Rasool Aryadust)

Dorrance Publishing Company copyright 2007

Tales from the Zirzameen reflects on Iranian culture and people as well as the American expatriate society there in the 1970s. The short stories relate how the author became assimilated there, including his acting in Iranian films, his conversion to Islam, and he shares his experiences leading up to and during the revolution and four months into its aftermath.

Despite the circumstances under which he left the country-including being taken hostage for a time-the author celebrates the hospitality and rich culture of the Iranian people. He was welcomed warmly into their society and came to appreciate the sincerity and kindness that characterized the people he met. It also celebrates the exceptional individuals who comprise the Iranian family which adopted him as one of their own and the depths of friendship and heroism of certain individuals during the revolution who put themselves at great risk in order to rescue him. It is hoped that placing the people of Iran in greater historical context might familiarize the American people with this ancient culture, showing the human faces that lie behind the current political propaganda. The objective is peace and recognition of our common humanity.



## EMINENT PERSIANS

The men and Women Who Made Modern Iran, 1941-1979

Abbas Milani

2009 Syracuse University Press

Often in a book review one tends to swiftly turn the pages of the introduction to get to the meat of the volume. In this case it would be a loss not to read the brilliant introduction of Mr. Akbar Lari. His words and thoughts about Iran and its history easily lure you into the web of the pages that follow. His introduction sets the stage for the wealth of information contained within. He is well informed and this is reflected in his words and beautiful calendar he created in 2009.



This book, in its two volumes contains an in depth look of those individuals who molded Iran's history from 1941-1979. There are approximately 150 people discussed, some very well known while others a surprise. The author looks at their individual biographies and discusses how each contributed to Iran's development. While there are those who will dispute the facts and individuals selected, one cannot minimize the wealth of information contained in the volumes.

Each volume is divided into separate sections covering politics, culture and the economics of Iran throughout the period making it easy to read, as well as an excellent resource for research. The information used in the book is a result of undeniable extensive research of archives, books, publications, interviews and private correspondence. The author, Mr. Milani tries to deliver an unbiased opinion of the individuals, but every now and then one can feel a statement to lead you into a specific way of thinking.

## Nicky Nodjoui at Priska C. Juschka Fine Art

February 19 - March 28, 2009

Nicky Nodjoui, Oil on canvas, 2008

Priska C. Juschka Fine Art is pleased to present The Formulaic Nature of Appearances, new paintings by Iranian born artist Nicky Nodjoui. By speaking literally and figuratively of two worlds simultaneously, the Western Hemisphere and the Middle East, Nodjoui evokes individual dialogues against a continuous backdrop of ambiguity, allegory and irony.

Nodjoui creates large scale oil paintings using a visual narrative that combines Persian metaphors and Iranian iconography with references of Western and foremost American culture and politics. The inherent symbolism of Mullahs and Ayatollahs juxtaposed with that of suit clad Western bureaucrats suggests an extremely delicate balance between and beyond all cultural and sociopolitical boundaries. On his canvases, the struggle against tyranny and domination, both personal and universal, unfolds seemingly in front of the viewer's eye. Nodjoui directs a staged scenario, full with connotations, revealing the hypocrisy within our societies - whether in form of ideological or physical exploitation, male supremacy or sexual repression.

In his most recent paintings, Nodjoui expands into an even more complex landscape - where his characters become synonyms for the conflicts within the constructed equilibrium of power. Invoking the ideas of the Flat Earth Theory that formerly preceded the occidental idea of Enlightenment, Nodjoui leads the viewer into a world of separations by visually dissecting the composition with dividing lines. The result is a new formation onto the picture plane - Nodjoui placing his subjects either above ground, suggesting the existing world, or below into a nondescript, subterranean space equivalent to the underworld. Analogous to the legendary figure of Orpheus in Greek mythology alluring his audience with his songs and poems - Nodjoui's narrative leads through a world full of creatures, hovering above and below ground and similarly leaving an overall sensation of displacement behind. Furthermore, by unveiling the precarious relationship between oppressed and oppressor akin to the Social Pyramids of the ancient pharaohs, Nodjoui leaves us with a distinct notion of unsettlement - as if nothing has changed ever since societies' first formation.

Nicky Nodjoui was born in 1942 in Kermanshah, Iran and currently lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. He earned his B.A. from Tehran University of Fine Arts in Tehran, Iran and his M.F.A. from the City College of New York in 1974. Nodjoui's work has been the subject of several national and international solo exhibitions including Seyhon Gallery, Aria Gallery and a 1980 Retrospective at The Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art in Tehran, Iran. Most recently, Nodjoui co-curated Ardeshir Mohassess: Art and Satire in Iran with Shirin Neshat at the Asia Society and Museum, New York, NY.

This exhibition is accompanied by a catalog with an essay written by Shirin Neshat.

## Ocean of Tears

<i>We came to this place together</i>	<i>When will this end</i>	<i>For a soul so lost and confused</i>
<i>Strong, brave,</i>	<i>Music comes in the form of</i>	<i>A life long gone.</i>
<i>active men and women.</i>	<i>a bomb, a grenade.</i>	<i>We came out here.</i>
<i>One by one we fall.</i>	<i>Fireworks of bright, orange flames.</i>	<i>Strong brave,</i>
<i>Fighting over a cause,</i>	<i>The air is filled with a black,</i>	<i>active men and women.</i>
<i>with no end in sight at all.</i>	<i>mask of smoke.</i>	<i>Eager to serve our country.</i>
<i>I cry an ocean of tears.</i>	<i>We feel the fear,</i>	<i>For the just, for the living.</i>
<i>Looking at the flag</i>	<i>we feel as if we would choke.</i>	<i>Yet one by one, we fade away.</i>
<i>draped wooden boxes.</i>	<i>And I cry my ocean of tears.</i>	<i>My ocean of tears fall and I cry.</i>
<i>Another warrior; another soldier;</i>	<i>Loved ones send reminders of home.</i>	<i>For the missing years, gone by.</i>
<i>a brother, a sister</i>	<i>A place which seems</i>	<i>We feel this mission hopeless,</i>
<i>We keep our emotions close.</i>	<i>so foreign and far now.</i>	<i>yet we still try.</i>
<i>And yes we are filled with remorse,</i>	<i>We have been here,</i>	<i>How much longer,</i>
<i>Barren desert land, metal cargo</i>	<i>well over one year</i>	<i>must I cry these salty tears.</i>
<i>is all we see.</i>	<i>Children growing, not knowing.</i>	<i>Wow much longer must I waste,</i>
<i>Beauty a thing of the past</i>	<i>Family members fade away,</i>	<i>These precious years.</i>
<i>My ocean of tears,</i>	<i>we could not even say our goodbyes.</i>	
<i>the only thing that seems to last</i>	<i>My ocean of tears fall and I cry.</i>	

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**An Interview with  
Poet and Painter  
DR. NASRIN KHAZAIE**

**Shahrokh Ahkami**

***Would you introduce yourself to our readers?***

I was born in Tehran. I was the youngest child to my beloved father Colonel Hossein Mohtasham Nezam and talented and artistic mother Badie-ol-molok Rezvan. Our home was more like an art and cultural institute. Everyday was an education. If we weren't learning about the arts we were being taught love, etiquette and respect. My parents were deeply in love and committed to one another. I am certain they influenced me to feel the same way about my life. My childhood brings back only happy memories. It was filled with joy, happiness and love. But, there was also great sadness for me when my father and idol passed away, I was only 16 and in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

***Were you all talented?***

Yes all my sisters were talented each in a different style. They all influenced me greatly and since I was the youngest, I was the center of attention. My maternal grandmother Mrs. Nezhat Rezvan, was from Kashan and was a cousin to Kamalel-molk, the great Iranian painter. She was very poetic and would recite Hafez. I would enjoy listening to her.

***So, your parents prepared you for life.***

Yes, my father thought it was very important to have his daughters be fruitful and productive. He put a pen in my hand and told me "learn," and so became the pen the teller of all the stories. Definitely the foundation of my being was established in my home life. He passed away when I was in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

***When did you realize your gift of verse?***

Very early and at about 9. I was reciting poetry. At 14, however, I became interested in painting and music. My parents sent me for lessons to the great artist, Mohammad Tajvidi.

One year after the passing of my father, I got married to my wonderful husband, Colonel Khazaie. He brought so much joy to my life and helped me recover from the loss of my father. We have two children Leila and Kamran, that sweetened our life even more.

Despite all that I had, a happy home with a wonderful husband and children, I felt as if something was missing from my life. I wanted to finish my education. After my second child left for school I pursued my own education. I obtained my degree in English Literature from

Damavand College and my Masters at Tehran University. Midway through I decided to change my major to Persian Literature. With direction from professors, who I will never forget, I walked through the beautiful paths of Persian literature. My only difficulty was that I still believed my main responsibility was being a wife and mother. Those aspects of my life were and remain very important. Therefore I would only study late in the evening.

***What was the subject of your thesis and how did you decide on this subject?***

My thesis was about the critical edition of Fakhredin Ebrahim Araghi, Since I was so fond of mysticism in Persian literature, I suggested research on Molana's lyric poem, Divan Shams and Araghi's poetry. The latter was decided, as it needed critical edition. Of course it needed to be the complete edition of all the work of this great mystic. For this task I used 18 scripts for comparison, edited and researched all the aspects of the subject in great detail. I did a complete search of Araghi's life and his literary product. In fact I found his grandchild, who was in Pakistan, symbolically representing Araghi.

***What is the importance of Araghi?***

Araghi was a poet and mystic from the 13th century and a contemporary of Molana. Together they enjoyed participating in Sufi dance (Sama) ceremonies. However the importance of Araghi is the link between ideas of Ibn-e-Arabi and Persian mystical literature. After he left his homeland, he visited all the other Sufi centers. Finally in Khaneghah Zakaria Moltani he passed his Sufi period and received his Sufi outfit. With the death of Zakaria, he left for Ghoonieh, which at that time was a center of cultural education. In the presence of Sadroldineh Ghoonyavi, the step son of Ibn-e-Arabi, he interpreted the book of Fos-oo ol Hekam and then wrote

a poetic prose called Lamaat. It is truly magnificent. It is all about love.

Araghi was so in love that there is no description for it. Anna Marie Schimel, in her book "Mystical Dimension of Islam" has heard from Turkish Sufi's that Araghi changed a popular sentence between Moslems. Instead of saying, "there is no God but Allah," Araghi says, "there is no God but love." I believe this profound statement is what he passed on to his followers.

I was fascinated with his work and published selections titled All is He, "Hameh oust"

***Did you do other activities in the same area?***

During my studies, I was invited by Damavand University to teach Persian literature and the history of literature. I became the head of the Association of Graduates which initiated cultural and art programs. I edited books titled *Farsnameh* and *Sharabnameh*, the projects during my masters was to be preserve in the archives of the university. When

the university reopened, I found these books were published under other people's name.

I did other translations were, The Open Boat of Stephen Crain and Morvaridi as Bahreh Erfan and summarized the essence in poetry from Molana's Dastaneh Pireh Changi. Perhaps the most interesting yet was my direct correlation and comparison of Moliere's, Dr.Stranger with Molavi's,King and Kaniz.

***What was the purpose of this work?***

To demonstrate how Persian literature influenced the world, Dr. Lofland, our Shakespearian Professor decided to create a play at the university and a few of us were to perform. During the reading I discovered that Molier had copied the core idea from Molana. The subject of Ibn-e-Sina's cure of the princes draws the correlation. I extracted from Masnavi, the appropriate parts for the play.

My professor was overjoyed, enthused with this realization and the structure of the play was transformed. On the opening day of the play, in presence of all the students and faculty, Dr. Laufler announced that after 700 years, Molier has borrowed this story from Molana. My role in that play was converted to reciting the poems on the stage, which was interesting for the audience.

My other activities consisted of participating in various Iranian and American cultural and artistic associations and lectured at Stanford University, participated in seminars and poetry recitals at Columbia and Farleigh Dickenson universities. In Iran I gave a lecture about Parvin Eetesami in an event "Exhibition of Books" under the title Ten Professors, Ten contemporary faces of literature and also at the 80th anniversary of Parvin Eetesami, titled Parvin's Place in the History of Persian Literature.

Another great honor was to participate in the 1000 anniversary of Shahnameh, my national pride and duty as it



is our certificate of literary pride, I recited a poem but was unsatisfied with only words, so, I did a painting which is of *Simorgh* climbing with open wings towards the sky and *Shahnameh*. One of its feathers reaches down into a hand that writes one line, "It is a shame that Iran would be destroyed (*Darigh ast Iran keh Viran Shavad*)."

The next day, when I called the university and introduced myself, they invited me and my husband to attend the presentation of the poem and the painting.

***When and how did this gathering take place and who participated?***

This took place in the winter of 1990 at the gathering for the 1000 year revival of *Shahnameh* in Tehran University's Ferdowsi Conference Hall. Artists, painters, writers and talents from all over the country and the world participated. A designated area was filled with my pieces. The replicas of Iranian soldiers and Touran's soldiers were positioned on both side of the conference hall, *Simorgh* in the center.

Decorations were all around Ferdowsi's statue. A representative from Italy mentioned that Ferdowsi's statue was placed in his country. The Japanese representative said Ferdowsi's poems are translated into Japanese. This event was truly an expression of literary pride and honor.

***Art brings you great joy!***

I must confess that poetry and painting are the comfort of my soul. When your inner being is not calm, you reach out to the world of imagination and it is the only source of energy that one cannot penetrate, something that is not possible in reality. The expansion of this imaginary flight and detachment from all, allows one the freedom within the soul to be inspired for a new creation.

In some articles my work has been described as such: In painting one sees poetry and in poems they see design which portray my way of interpreting and the need for both painting and poetry for

complete fulfillment of expression. My tendency from childhood onward was driven towards poetry and music. I enjoy recitals. I created my own poems, and I became saturated in it as I continue my studies of the great Persian poets and literary figures. The more I read about them the more I gain courage of expression. And finally, with the encouragement of so many admirers, I published the collection of my poems in a book called "*Naghsh bar Abb*," published by Zavar.

I love poetry and find it to be the height of elevation of human creation. I enjoy true rhyme and rhythm. Nima's style fulfills me as it also has the musical rhythm in poetry which I enjoy.

***What about painting?***

From the very beginning of my childhood, I was drawn to the beauty of nature, color and design. I was fortunate to have had the opportunity to study miniature style painting with the artist Mr. Tajvidi.

I was able to apply the most detail beauty of nature with the finest brush to canvas. As time progressed I applied other, more modern styles to my paintings.

What I produced is consistent with my mood and general spirit at the moment. Unless I am terribly excited and passionate on a certain subject I am not driven to paint. The connection between color, paint and canvas is the same as words and rhyme, with poetry based on the subject I am passionate about.

As for my style of painting it is mostly classical and impressionist. In one of my paintings called "Iranian Woman Amis Duration of History" "I paint a woman like a mountain, where her shoulders are the peak of the mountain, She receives warmth from the sun penetrating her face. With her hands she reflects kindness and with her hair a waterfall pours into a running river that flows life.

I truly believe that Iranian women are self sacrificial, loyal, and productive, creators of home life, great mothers, lion hearted, with essence and stamina to sustain all pressures spiritual, emotional, social and whatever it takes to protect their children. They have shined always in my mind and my painting symbolizing an Iranian woman has received honorary acknowledgement by the United Nation's IHAN, an associate organization and have portrayed it in their publications.

Finally, the most important accomplishment and source of my pride is the time and effort I spent with my children to prepare them for society with qualities and values embodied with kindness, humanity and respect.

My message to all young Iranian generation is to aim for success in life, to achieve the highest potential available to them and to value their life with honesty and integrity and serve humanity in whatever capacity they can, with all their heart and soul serve their country Iran, in whatever manner they choose.

My journey is to continue learning and expanding from within. It will be my life's endless task and joy, as well as to love my family, friends and country. My best to all.



# NEGAR AHKAMI

## PRIDE AND FALL

On March 4, 2009 The Leila Taghinia-Milani Heller Gallery presented the opening of the solo exhibition of painter Negar Ahkami. It will run through March 28. Once again the curators and organizers of this exhibit have shown their talents in artistic selection. The exhibit is eloquently described as follows:

The immigrant home rests precariously in that space in between memories of a mythical past and the chimeric dreams of possible futures. Raised by immigrant Iranian parents in America, the artist Negar Ahkami's sensibilities have been colored by this vivid, cacophonous space in between. Her artistic response is at once embracing and angry, celebratory and sardonically derisive, humorous and touchingly painful. Perhaps she has painted herself as that small, beleaguered woman on *Bridge to Nowhere* that links a melting Arabesque landscape across the road from a ghostlike reflective structure that stands in for the fallen World Trade Center.

Over the past decade, Ahkami has been carefully honing a style that is her own. In the late 1990s, she did a series of lipstick paintings and went on to work with coffee stains, glitter, and found objects. The years of experimentation have evolved into a style now seen in a series of paintings on view at the Leila Taghinia-Milani Heller Gallery in New York City. Drawing on colors and patterns from Islamic and Orientalist art, Ahkami layers gesso and acrylic to achieve thick, almost three dimensional surfaces for her narrative paintings. "I always thought Matisse had a way of rendering his Middle Eastern

or North African subjects invisible," she explains, "and a lot of my work responds to that invisibility – either subverting or replicating it."

Ahkami was born in Baltimore and grew up in New Jersey. As a child, she regularly attended art exhibits in New York City; an autograph by Keith Haring is a treasured memento of her teenage infatuation with the New York art scene. She spent summer vacations in Iran with extended family. Those leisurely family visits came to an end with the Iranian Revolution of 1979, but it was November of that year that proved to be a major turning point in her life. "Growing up," Ahkami recalls, "it felt like Iran and the US were seamlessly connected. The hostage crisis severed that. The television kept showing degrading images." The joyous place of childhood visits had now become the fixation of American news broadcasts covering the hostage crisis. Rather than turning away from the spectacle, Ahkami determined to understand it – and ultimately to explain and subvert it through her art.

The Fall, the centerpiece of the show at the Leila Taghinia-Milani Heller Gallery, is a 5 x 4 ft quixotic landscape. Drawing on techniques and imagery from Persian manuscript art, the painting demonstrates Ahkami's gift for graphic storytelling that finds inspiration and troubling fodder in both East and West. Specifically, the painting explores the inherent tension between the pride Iranians feel towards their culture and the demonized image of them that is pervasive in the media. On the panel, streams of immigrants make the treacherous journey from a fabled Iran. "The oval in the center of the painting," Ahkami explains, "is a distant, glittery, colorful



Bridge to Nowhere, 2009

fantastical world of upheaval, meltdown, and exodus." Along the way, the immigrants pass through the landscapes of illuminated manuscripts – whose infamous hunting scenes now feature naked women rather than gazelles. Perched on their exilic baggage, they watch contemporary American society whose consumerism is embedded with an Eastern topos. The figures that populate Ahkami's satirical view of American pop culture picnic on a Persian carpet, nibble Iranian caviar and sip Shiraz wine as they read 300 and newsmagazines portraying Iranians as "the other." Ahkami subverts that unspoken but pervasive narrative that Eastern immigrants leave behind places of dark repression for an always embracing and free West. In the vivid artistic vision of Negar Ahkami, nothing is ever so black and white.

– Shiva Balaghi, Ph.D.

Ahkami received a BA in Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures from Columbia University in 1992, and an MFA in 2006 from the School of Visual Arts, NY. Exhibitions include a solo show at LMAK Projects in 2007, a two-person show with Kyung Jeon at Miki Wick Kim Gallery, Zurich in 2008, and group shows at the Queens Museum of Art, Bronx Museum of Art, Longwood Gallery, Leila Taghinia-Milani Heller Gallery, Marvelli Gallery, Kravets-Wehby Gallery and Stefan Stux Gallery. She received a Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture fellowship in 2004, and a Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Workspace Residency in 2006-2007.

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The Fall, 2009



"Flute Player, Nasser Ovissi, 1957

# A MAN WITH A COLORFUL DREAM

**NADER NADERPOUR**

**Los Angeles, June 1, 1993**

ized by the density of lines and increasingly strong colors. In other words, Ovissi barrows the simplest and the most desirable lines to pick a horse or a woman from reality and put them on a canvas. But, when it comes to coloring, he uses hues one has never seen on a horse or on a woman's dress. A cylinder with a circle on the top and two halves of a circle on the bottom embodies a woman sitting cross-legged. The woman wears a dress with a variety of motives and generosity of colors as if the painter's main purpose is to show what the woman is wearing than to portray the contours of her body.

This striking contrast between the simplicity and frankness of Ovissi's painting on one hand, and the exaggeration and variety of colors on the other, have convinced people to see his works as decorative art. Without any intention, whatsoever, to disagree parsimony in realistic painting and his generosity in imaginative coloring, perhaps knowingly or not, reveals to us a secret: the difficulty that a man has in taking refuge from reality into imagination, and from wakefulness into dream, in order to change the bitterness of life into the sweetness of art, and putting enough of that sweetness into his art to please the viewer.

As I had mentioned in the introduction to my book, Ovissi brings back from a journey in the realm of imagination a dream for adults and a tale for children. The creation of such an effect is within the scope of the possibilities of one who is older in mind than in heart.

But, what I can add today to what I said before is that Ovissi is the founder of the Persian school of surrealism in painting. The difference between Persian and European surrealism is, for example, the same that exists between Ovissi's and Dali's paintings. In other words, if that great Spanish painter has recreated natural elements and phenomena with a photographic accuracy in an unreal and

dreamlike atmosphere, Ovissi uses the same elements and phenomena, with the simplicity and geometric forms, without attention to detail and makes them float in an atmosphere of color and imagination. What is amazing is that his plain paintings and luxurious colors are used with such a mastery that its equal can only be seen in Dali's skillful designs and unusual compositions. In better words, both Dali and Ovissi are at once imaginative and realistic painters, with this difference that Dali's eye – more patient than the lens of a camera – and Ovissi's mind – less the exterior realities. Thus, the first one uses his imagination to surrender to dreams, creating an image beyond reality, while the second bathes his perceptions in a halo of colors and creates a picture more beautiful than reality.

The difference between the style of these two painters lies in the fact that Dali's method is based on the science of perspective that has always been present in classic European paintings but nonexistent in Persian miniatures which are the main sources of inspiration for Ovissi's drawings. Perhaps, it is exactly this absence of the perspective that gives Ovissi a free hand in his exaggerated colors, and makes his paintings more unrealistic, and at the same time more joyful than Dali's.

It is possible to say that Salvador Dali's European surrealism and Nasser Ovissi's Persian surrealism are both heading toward the same destination; one through composition and the other through an abundance of colors. They transform the real world into an imaginative one. And if in the miscellanies of human knowledge, artistic creativity has no other description than this, in the refuge of adults from the world of reality and awareness into the realm of dream and imagination. The particularity characterizes artists such as Dali and Ovissi who want to create a better world.

**N**asser Ovissi is an artist who has found his own style from the very beginning of his work and developed it through a quiet evolution. A few years ago, in an introduction to a book which included some of his paintings, I wrote "His honest and simple paintings are sometimes as plain as geometrical forms, which have something of a child drawing with them. But his warm and fiery colors are cries of a man who finds his dreams in the magic of his art, thus alleviating his sorrows at not seeing them upon awakening. Ovissi's mastery in colors has its roots in the art of ancient Persia. His characters rise from old Persian miniatures or from Qajar paintings. His lines and hues are inspired by ancient Persian gilding and calligraphy. The importance of his work lies in his ability to rejuvenate the style of past paintings and to give a new life to old paintings."

Today, after twenty five years, I still find Ovissi continuing the same style, while at times he makes some inroads into certain new domains such as sticking half-burnt book covers on his canvas or inserting in his work the lines and arabesques of ceramics from old mosques. But he always ends up coming back to his pleasant and colorful world, crowded with women, horses, horsemen, and drums and harps playing music.

Although his paintings and colors have preserved their old characteristics, they reveal a discreet evolution character-

# Iraj Mirza



**Mahmood Karimi-Hakak  
and Bill Wolak**

If you associate Persian poetry with exalted, mystical works of Hafez, Rumi, and Attar, you might be surprised by Iraj Mirza. Iraj Mirza's Divan has been banned in Iran since the 1979 Revolution. The controversial subject matter of Iraj's poems has caused them to be avoided at all costs, disparaged out of hand, and dismissed as an insult to the nation, even by sophisticated, well-read Iranians. Make no mistake about it, Iraj Mirza is dangerous, especially to the current regime. Iraj Mirza is a trickster, a magician, a philanthropist; he's a character out of Melville's *The Confidence Man*.

However, unlike most magicians and perhaps most characteristic of his voice, Iraj enjoys explaining his own tricks, illusions, slight of hand, dodges, seductions, lies, and sweet-talking. Iraj will show you how he cupped the cards that you chose from the deck, or he'll explain precisely how he managed to seduce his latest conquest. His writing is like a breath of fresh mountain air in the Qajar period.

*Mahmood Karimi-Hakak, Artistic Director of Mahak International Inc., is a poet, theater director, and film maker.*

*Bill Wolak is a poet whose work has appeared in many literary magazines and has published one collection of poetry, *Pale As An Explosion*.*

The uniqueness of Iraj derives from how he juxtaposes the traditional use of form, rhythm, and rhyme while surprising the reader with such jarring colloquial language and unconventional subject matter. He is an hilarious satirist, an engagé secularist, a witness, a profligate manipulator, a tender, sentimentalist, and a poignantly lyric poet. The key to Iraj's success, as with Alexander Pope, is the urbanity of his wit, his self-deprecating humor, and sometimes the outlandishness of his arguments. Iraj composes some poems that are so controversial and challenging that they remain difficult for every kind of reader to accept – devout and secular, women and men, gay and straight. In fact, anyone who reads his poetry will feel confounded, disoriented, or uncomfortable somewhere in the Divan. The religiously devout are offended because Iraj attacks the veil; he employs language that is considered obscene, mocks mullahs and sheiks, and praises drinking. In fact, his anti-clerical satires, as well as his other controversial subjects, put his life in danger because he was considered such a secular free-thinker.

Iraj Mirza Jalalu'l-Mamalek was born in 1874 in Tabriz. He had an excellent education at the House of Sciences and Techniques in Tabriz and became fluent in several languages including French, Russian, Arabic, and Turkish. He married at the age of fifteen, and by nineteen he had lost both his wife and his father.

Subsequently, he was offered the position of court poet that his father had held. Later, he abandoned the court and worked for the government. Iraj's fluency in French and Russian and his trip to Europe deepened two of his unshakable beliefs: that Iran needed to modernize and that a crucial part of that modernization process included the emancipation of women.

During the aftermath of the First World War, Iraj was an advisor to the American financial mission, which he accompanied on several inspection tours throughout the country. Near the end of his life, Iraj moved back to Tehran, where he died at the age of fifty-two on March 14, 1926. Iraj was buried in the Zahir-Dowleh Cemetery located between Darband and Tajrish in Shemiran, north Tehran.

## *The Story of Two Mice*

**IRAJ MIRZA**

Translated by Mahmood Karimi-Hakak  
and Bill Wolak

*Listen for a minute  
to the story of the two mice.  
One was old and wise  
the other young and naive.  
Both lived in a nest  
beneath the roof's drain spout.  
A cat also lived nearby who was  
full of deceit and devoid of honesty.  
The cat's eyes spied the young mouse  
and began complimenting him seductively.  
The cat said,  
"Little mouse, how good-looking you are;  
why don't you come outside with me,  
whatever your heart desires, I own;  
come to me so I can give it to you."  
The old mouse heard the invitation  
and admonished the young mouse,  
"My dear boy,  
Don't go; the cat's tricking you!  
Stay away! Stay far away,  
or he'll skin you alive."  
The uninformed  
and unthinking young mouse  
didn't believe  
the older mouse's warnings.  
He replied,  
"Why forbid me from seeing the cat?  
He's my friend, not my enemy.  
Cats descended from the tribe of mice;  
they have ears and tails just like us.  
Look how lovingly his eyes gaze at me;  
listen to how mellifluously  
he speaks such wise words."  
Once again the wise old mouse  
alerted the deluded young mouse,  
"I'm telling you, run away right now;  
don't listen to the words of this trickster."  
The young mouse answered,  
"I won't run away;  
I'll never turn  
my back on such a friend."  
As the cat listened to this exchange,  
he blossomed like a bud;  
once again, cunningly  
and beguilingly he resumed,  
"I'm your friend; don't fear, come;  
Why such an unjustified fear  
of a friend?"*

Shocked by the cat's deceitful words,  
the old mouse exclaimed,  
"How convincing his arguments can be!  
What an insidious liar!"  
Foolish and ignorant,  
the young mouse announced,  
"I'm going; I'm not afraid."  
The old mouse retorted,  
"Listen idiot,  
don't say such stupid words.  
Look at yourself  
and then look at the cat, you ass;  
if you leave, you're dead.  
Cats and mice don't become friends;  
just as wolves and lambs  
don't graze together."  
The crafty cat, that master of deceit,  
once again  
offered some convincing enticements,  
"Don't listen to such despicable advice;  
Don't pay attention to the mumbling  
of that doddering mouse.  
The old are senile idiots  
who get lost on the wrong path.  
I have rock candy, walnuts,

and almonds  
that I'll give you for him."  
The unsuspecting mouse,  
naive and heedless,  
was ready to believe any story.  
He mistook the lies of the cat  
for the truth;  
he ran over to the cat  
but immediately began shrieking,  
"Help me, I'm dying; save me!  
I was utterly deceived by the cat.  
He's gnawed off my tail  
and devoured my paw;  
he's slit my stomach open  
and chewed off my ears.  
His claws slashed as deep as my liver;  
I don't want a friend like this!"  
The old mouse responded,  
"Too late, you should've listened  
to my advice!  
Whoever doesn't listen  
to the words of wise elders  
will suffer exactly  
as this young mouse."

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