



Persian Heritage

www.persian-heritage.com

Persian Heritage, Inc.

110 Passaic Avenue
Passaic, NJ 07055

E-mail: Mirassiran@aol.com

Telephone: (973) 471-4283

Fax: 973 471 8534

EDITOR

SHAHROKH AHKAMI

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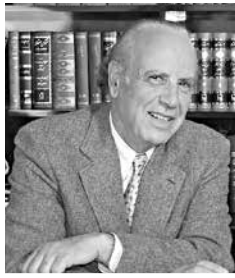
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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

On behalf of myself and all the staff at Persian Heritage we wish all the Christians around the world and the people of Iran, all who have endured the worst hardships in this past year, a Merry Christmas and hopefully a better New Year. The year of 2020 was one in which many suffered; students were not able to go to school, workers lost their livelihood and now struggle to put food on the table for their families. The closing of businesses added to the number of unemployed. In cities which were once alive with people we find the streets empty and businesses closed and boarded. So many people have been displaced by this virus and have been forced to move for employment reasons or a hopeful escape from encountering the virus. While there is hope in the launching of the vaccines it is likely that they will not come fast enough to separate families from the holiday season. So many families lost loved ones. So many families were only able to visit one another through a glass window. So many were not able to attend the funerals of those who passed, leaving them empty and void of closure.

Even our privacy has been encroached by the authorities; hidden cameras have been placed all over in the name of controlling the virus and yet the numbers of new cases skyrocket each day, with no end in sight. The virus has taken a toll on individuals mentally fearing financial disasters. This has negatively impacted, family life and in some cases has led to an increase in domestic violence.

In the middle of all of this we had political elections that, as of the time of this writing, December 3, 2020, continues to be a controversy. The political climate for this election has been escalated and has caused a historical division between Americans. We in the United States are used to an election ending on election day. We are used to one side conceding and the country coming together to move on. But this division, that began near the end of President Obama's second term and continued over President Trump's term is not likely to end.

Normally, even though family members differed in political views during the course of the political campaigns, after the election the results were accepted. Unfortunately, this election has caused permanent damage to family and friend relationships down to parent and children; each are so cemented in their own beliefs and their veracity that they cannot and will not listen or consider another's view point.

This behavior is also seen among Iranian-Americans. During the last elections, a good percentage of the Iranian

American community supported the Republican party.

They believed that President Trump was going to fight for the rights of the Iranian people and that a regime change was in the works. They supported the crippling sanctions proposed by the Trump administration that destroyed the middle class in Iran, turning them into poor and homeless. They believed the sanctions would cripple the regime and Mullahs. In actuality, as can be seen, it devastated and crippled the Iranian people and has brought them to their knees. Iranians have always been blind to the US policy on Cuba since the 1960's. The crippling sanctions that were placed on the small country empowered, NOT DESTROYED, the Castro regime. Even after his death the regime was taken over by his brother Raul and then his successor. All the sanctions did in Cuba was to devastate the people of the country. Cubans mass migrated to the US and have been politically and financially successful, reaching the highest political positions in the US, and second-generation Cubans have sought out a presidential nomination.

Unfortunately the Iranian Diaspora seems to think that if you do not support the sanctions and that political policy that you support the Mullahs (a truly ignorant thought process that has caused much destruction, animosity and division in Iranian-American groups, families and friends). This type of behavior and thinking, in this political climate, has led to individuals who stand on opposite sides of the political spectrum to bicker and verbally fight on all the social media venues. This behavior and divisiveness have led to the demise of many friendships and relationships, by their labeling the other with all sorts of political propaganda of dishonesty. Have we all gone mad? Do we not all have the same goal for our family and friends here and in Iran? Is not our goal to have them be free, successful, and respected?

It breaks my heart to see highly educated and intellectual Iranians judge and harshly treat other Iranian Americans just because they support opposing political candidates or party; and labeling some as "slaves to the Mullahs." It astonished me that they could think this way! How does one dare label a group of college professors and doctors "slaves to Mullahs!" What does this even mean and/or entail? Why can't we use our common sense and just be respectful of each other's political views? Even more astonishing how can we think that these Mullahs are so capable of influencing and hiring individuals in these capacities as spies. They cannot even take care of their own scientists and their people let alone have this

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

kind of influence over a large portion of the Diaspora. These Mullah's greatest success is throwing innocent people into prison and at times executing those who speak against their powers! We are giving too much credit to them through the accusations we make towards each other.

Why can't we after over forty years of living in a new home country, let go of our ego's and learn to be more open minded and respect each other's opinions? Isn't it time for all of us to unify after having lived here, raised our families, our children and grandchildren to learn to put away our superficial pride and come together and hopefully influence a better change for Iran? It is DEFINITELY time to respect each other's opinions and agree to disagree on political issues! We can no longer allow this behavior to continue the division among the Diasporas. It is specifically this division that Mullahs thrive on. We are feeding their motives, and this will continue if we keep pointing the finger at each other with useless and non sensical accusations. We must stop continuing the empowerment of a regime that has been in power for over 40 years.

One of my student interns at my office insisted that I start a "WhatsApp" group. As soon as the chat went up a few of the group asked me to remove them from the group because they were afraid. They were visiting Iran and did not want to have any issues with the government. Of course, my response to them was "as you wish" anyone who wants or chooses to leave please do so and do not feel pressured by any means to

stay on. Of course, some who labeled and accused the others who do not think like them, as supporters of the regime were among the deserters of the chat group, hoping that this will keep their identity from the regime.

In closing I know that my words are heart wrenching but necessary. We all need to wake up, identify the true enemies and fight them with every available weapon. Whether this enemy be the virus or regime, neither knows who is poor or rich; it knows only the power of its ability to control and destroy. Do not allow this virus, a political view, a political leader, or a political party destroy or divide family and friendship. Respect one another's views enjoy the differences and allow them to develop into compatible seeds of true change.

While my words might have been harsh on a lighter ending note, as I said in the beginning of my editorial, I wish all a healthy and happy new year and may all of you wherever you are enjoy the holidays. You are all beautiful people!

Shahrokh Alavi

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www.persian-heritage.com

e-mail: mirassiran@gmail.com

ADDRESS:

Persian Heritage Inc.

110 Passaic Ave. Passaic, NJ 07055

MANY THANKS

Dear Editor:

Many thanks for sharing such an academic, social and cultural journal. Congrats for preparing it. Look forward for more such initiatives. Warm salaams, sham bathija.

Thanks for forwarding copies of the Fall Issue. I am honored and will find it interesting and informative regarding Persian Heritage.

Mohammad Shafi, Assistant Professor,
Area Study Centre University of Peshawar, Pakistan

CONGRATS PERSIAN HERITAGE MAGAZINE

Dear Editor

Congratulations on the 25th anniversary of the well acclaimed *Persian Heritage Magazine*!

I write to submit my appreciative words of gratitude for your crisp vision of conceiving *Persian Heritage Magazine*, the bilingual Persian Treasure Trove. PHM has since its first inaugural print issue 25 years followed by its internet appearance worldwide, has become one of the few desirable destination for news, history, culture and directions for the future.

Notwithstanding the rather peculiar cynicism by those few envious expatriates on the fringes as well as the self-centered organizations or institutions within and beyond our community in diaspora, your persistent foresight persevered and in fact only flourished throughout.

No one even with a modest level of gratis contributions to advancing humanity and community and the toll paid could claim immunity from myriad financial and in candor, defamatory remarks by a few Disgruntled on the sidelines. And yet it is gratifying to recognize how you tactfully led the development and navigation of *Persian Heritage Magazine* amid moments of uncertainty and turbulence forward.

Epitomizing, I dare speaking for many avid writers, contributors and readers of PHM, to state it has and continues touching the hearts of great many of our Iranian Americans and their children and spouses not born in Iran, as well as their extended circle of colleagues and friends.

For all that and for your lifelong unwavering commitment to humanity in upholding health, community and culture, we salute and wish you a very long healthy and happy life.

Davood and Fariba Rahni, Somers, NY

APPRECIATION

Dear Editor:

Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity. The compliments are greatly appreciated, and the well written words explains what I could not adequately verbalize.

I need to tell you that I have received congratulatory phone calls and emails from friends and family members since this publication. Elaheh Khanom called from Mashhad to thank me mentioning my uncle on driving lessons.

شما به راستی بزرگ خاندان و مایه افتخار همه ما هستید.

قربانتان، حسین

DEEPLY TOUCHED

Dear Editor:

I was deeply touched when reading your recent editorial in *Persian Heritage*. I found myself full of empathy for your feelings of trepidation and guilt when sneaking in to the hospital to care for your patient, and then when those feelings were replaced

by love and joyful happiness at bringing a tiny innocent soul into the world, it was such an affirmation that you had done the right thing. Then the reaction of your family at what you had done, and their pride in your decision, well, no surprises there. I also shed a few tears.

Mike and Sheila Whitworth

SALAM

Dear Editor:

Thank you so much for sending us the Fall Issue. Each time we are amazed at the quality and breadth of content and the consistency with which you produce *Persian Heritage*, and in 2 languages no less!!!

Touraj and Shabnam

MEMORIES

Dear Editor:

Thank you so much. This is wonderful. It brings back memories. Just as I had expected back then, you will never be without energy, interest, and follow-through. And, you got even handsomer.

Michael Altschuler

BUSY AND PRODUCTIVE

Dear Editor:

You are the Iron man always busy and productive. Keep the good work.

Mohamad Pourfar

YET ANOTHER ISSUE

Hello Mr Ahkami,

Thank you for sharing and congratulations on yet another issue.

Arsi Nami

AWESOME

Dear Editor:

Awesome!!! What accomplished brothers! Congratulations on a great issue as usual!!

Kamshad Raiszadeh

PERSIAN CULTURE

First, let us applaud you and your cadre of by and large great writers and commentators on the 25th commemoration of the aptly named *Persian Heritage Magazine*.

While I should not as a novice, dare singing to the avid readers of PHM or choir conductors of enhancing, conserving and showcasing our heritage, nonetheless, allow me to take the liberty to share herein my perspectives on our culture:

Any cultural phenomenon along the trajectory of time and place and as typified by our very own, many millennia in the making, is a function of a dynamic paradigm of its interactions of its key indicators, not only from within, but also far more importantly, in relations to its adjoining cultures from without.

Simply put, a culture in utter isolation is doomed to become extinct, since it has no "out of the box" manner by which to introspective and when meritorious, to refine and adjust accordingly.

A small and isolated static pond water, is not ecologically sustainable and thus prone to evaporations, infestations, and destructions. Also in a chemical synthesis, a product as innocuous as aspirin is only optimally effective after it is recrystallized and

LETTERS TO EDITOR

re-purified from several sequential solvents. A culture especially one as historic as Persian/Iranian culture [should] follow the same paradigm to ensure it could self refine itself from the undesirable attributes it has generated from within or without. The subset indicators needing review, refinement, and reformations include among others language, faith, religion, rituals, values, norms, and moral and ethical codes of individual and communal conducts. In so doing, a resilient culture could only gain more strengths and acceptance in the diverse family of Nations and cultures.

Davood N Rahni

سلام -

من عاشق مجله شما هستم - من ایرانی یا
مقالف ایرانی دیگری نیستم، اما به فارسی
می آموزم و زبان، فرهنگ و مردمها خیلی
دوست دارم... برای همه چیز خیلی ممنون

- مرسی -

Best Regards,
William Patena, age 40, Los Angeles, CA

Salam,

I am not Iranian or descanded of Iranians -
but I love the Iranian culture, heritage, and especially
the Persian-Farsi language and Iranian people.

I have many Persian friends. I really enjoy
your magazine - it helps me read, learn more

Persian language - especially! Merci! - Thank you!

سلام

من عاشق مجله شما هستم. من ایرانی یا مقالف ایرانی دیگری
نیستم. اما فارسی می آموزم و زبان، فرهنگ و مردمها را خیلی، خیلی
دوست دارم... برای همه چیز خیلی ممنون.

مرسی

Best Regards

Salam

I am not Iranian. But I love Iranian culture heritage, and
especially the Persian (Farsi) language and Iranian people.

I have many Persian friends. I usually enjoy your maga-
zine. It helps me read, learn more Persian language especially!

Merci! - Thank you!

William

DESIGNS BY IRANIAN ARCHITECTS WIN AT WA AWARDS

Tehran Times, 07/22/20



Several Iranian architects and interior designers have been honored at the 35th edition of the WA Awards, which is organized by the World Architecture Community. The awards are presented in the two categories of architecture and interior design. “Home”, a project by Mohammad-Hossein Mohammadpur Parchebafi won the honor in the student architecture projects.

The project based on the childlike imagination of home form is an attempt to provide shelters and temporary housing for vulnerable groups, especially children, during floods, earthquakes and other natural disasters. Two designs by Iranian architects were also honored in the student interior design projects.

A design by Sajjad Navidi for the Shanbeh-Ghazan Metro Station in the northwestern Iranian city of Tabriz is one of the winners. The station is located in the historic district of Shanbeh-Ghazan. Due to the historic site, the design of the station is of great importance.

Seyyed Mohammad-Hossein Rahmati’s design of the lobby of Tehrans’ Dafineh Museum, a showcase for coins and banknotes, was also honored.

The WA Awards highlights and recognizes remarkable projects that have the potential to inspire exciting questions about contemporary architectural discourse, the organizers have said.

Participants from around the globe, and in particular from regions less covered by general or specialized media, get a chance to share and promote their projects.

The designs are selected by the votes of honorary members and winners in earlier editions, and winners are picked through the ratings of the community members.

THERE’S NO LIMIT TO WHAT IRANIAN WOMEN CAN DO: FOOTBALL PLAYER YASAMAN FARMANI

Tehran Times, 07/22/20

RCSC Charleroi player Yasaman Farmani says that there is no limit to what the Iranian women football players can accomplish. Farmani joined the Belgian top-flight football club from Iran’s Malavan in August. She is the wife of Iran international player Ali Gholizadeh. They are the first Iranian couple to play at a European based football team.



“I started football since I was 12 and joined Iran U14 football team one year later. Since then, I’ve played at all age levels for Iran,” Farmani said in an interview with Iran’s Football Federation’s website.

“In my opinion, there is no limit to what the Iranian women

football players can do and they must keep progressing. From the bottom of my heart, I wish the Iranian talented players all the best and I hope they shine at the world level,” she added.

Farmani is optimistic about her future in the Belgian football, saying “Joining a team from Belgium was a great opportunity for me. I hope I can earn more success in the future. Fortunately, Ali is always encouraging and advising me and it helps me keep moving forward,” Farmani concluded.

ARAT HOSSEINI, ONE TO WATCH

Only six plus years old and he is already attracting the attention of the public and perhaps the professional soccer world. Arat eats, sleeps and dreams of becoming a professional soccer player like his idol Messi. It is a breath of fresh air to see someone so young have such an athletic gift and passion. He is so strong that he effortlessly performed 3,000 kickups. Because of his talent he has become an internet and Instagram sensation.



Currently Arat weighs in at 44 pounds and stands 3 feet 10 inches tall. He is not shy to show the camera his six-pack abdomen. To keep his optimum condition, he follows a diet rich in protein prepared by his coach and dad. His family remains in Iran, but he and dad currently live in England.

IRAN'S STRATEGIC GOREH-JASK OIL PIPE-LINE PROJECT NEARING COMPLETION

Tehran Times, 07/22/20



Iran's new 1000-kilometer-long Goreh-Jask oil pipeline in the southern Hormozgan province, which will provide the country with an alternative route for crude oil exports that are currently transferred through the Strait of Hormuz, has registered over 60 percent of physical progress and is underway with full force. The project, which is aimed at expanding the oil transport capacity in the south of the country to one million barrels a day, was inaugurated in late June by President Hassan Rouhani.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony of the project, President Rouhani said this project was currently the country's most strategic project. Rouhani said a total of \$300 million has so far been invested in the project while another \$800 million to \$850 million is needed for its full operation.

"We hope that exports from Jask will begin as the government's most strategic project by the end of this [calendar] year (March 20, 2021)," the president noted.

According to the head of Iran's Petroleum Engineering and Development Company (PEDEC), considering the current rate of progress in the Goreh-Jask oil pipeline project, National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) will be able to export its first oil cargo from Jask terminal by the end of the current Iranian calendar year.

Touraj Dehqani, who visited the project, held several meetings with contractors and project managers and was briefed about the details of the project progress; during these meetings, the official emphasized the completion of the project on schedule.

Regarding the overall progress of the project, he said: "The project is being followed up with the aim of completing and launching it before the end of the year, and considering that the project progress has reached about 60 percent, so we focus more on the sectors in which the project operations are facing difficulties and need more attention."

According to the official, currently, about 650 kilometers (km) of pipes have been provided to the project site.

"It is necessary for pipe manufacturing companies to make extra efforts for timely delivery of the entire length of pipes required for the project within the next three months and send it to the workshop," he stressed. Regarding the pump houses No. 2 and 4, which are important parts in the first phase of the project

and have priority, more attention has been paid to the supply of required items and deficits. Delivery of the main pumps needed for the launching of this phase is also planned by domestic manufacturers for late November, Dehqani explained.

"Also, in the storage tanks section of Jask terminal, parts of sheets have been made and the welding operations of the tanks have started about one month ago", the official added.

The PEDEC head also referred to the consequences of the outbreak of the coronavirus and said: "In such circumstances, we have always tried to monitor the health and safety protocols to ensure the health of our colleagues."

Goreh-Jask pipeline will transfer one million barrels of heavy and light crude oils per day to Jask oil terminal in the southern Hormozgan province to be exported.

SAFFRON HARVEST IN GOLESTAN PROVINCE

Vamenan village in Golestan, the northeastern province of Iran is one of the hubs for producing the best saffron in Iran. Many farmers are busy with harvesting saffron flowers at this time of the year. (By: Mahsa Safari)



Mother of Iranian Astronomy: In Commemoration of Alenoush Terian



The 100th birth anniversary of the late professor Alenoush Terian, the mother of Iranian astronomy, was celebrated on October 29. Concurrent with *World Science Day for Peace and Development*, the ceremony took place in Tehran. Setting up the first solar physics observatory, launching the first solar telescope, offering solar physics and astrophysics courses for the first time in the country, and dedicating her house to students are some of the most notable contributions of Terian to the growth of astronomy in Iran.

According to the Iranian Physics Association, the book “New Iranian Theater and the Terian Family” will be unveiled at the ceremony. Born in a Christian family in 1920 in Tehran, Terian graduated from the University of Tehran in 1947. She began her career in the physics laboratories at the same university and was elected chief of laboratory operations in the same year.

She graduated in 1956 in atmospheric physics from Sorbonne University. She returned to Iran where she became an assistant professor in thermodynamics physics at the University of Tehran.

She studied at the solar physics observatory for 4 months through a scholarship from the German government and finally became the first female professor of physics in Iran in 1964. In 1966, she became a member of the geophysics committee of the University Tehran. In 1969, she was finally elected as the chief of the solar physics studies at the university. She began working in the solar observatory of which she was one of the founders. Terian retired in 1979. In 2003, a film was made about her life entitled “Towards the Sun”, in which the life of this first lady professor of stellar physics at the University of Tehran is portrayed.

She died on March 6, 2011, and her body was then laid to rest at the cemetery for Iranian Christians in Tehran.

(Tehran Times, 07/22/20)

IS PERSIAN A HOMOGENOUS GENETIC and THUS DISTINCT “SUPERIOR RACE”?!

DAVOOD N. RAHNI

THE SHORT AND SWEET “ROCK CANDY” ANSWER FROM THIS ORDINARY PERSIAN IS “ABSOLUTELY NOT”!

The Persian people are one of the many diverse ancient peoples from the extended Iranian (Irano-Indo-European) families, who as roamer-gatherer nomads spread out from central Asia to northern India, the Caucasus, Asia Minor and the Persian Plateau between the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf since at least the Neolithic Period (late Stone Age of 10,000 years ago). However, this should not preclude the strong possibility of earlier indigenous peoples in the above vast region, as evident by their stone tools, fossils, and early paintings or carvings amid the Paleolithic (35,000 BCE-10,000 BCE) and Mesolithic (10,000-8000 BCE) periods.

The Iranians *albeit* Persians, have exchanged genetic haplogroups, alleles and biomarkers with myriad other ethnically related peoples. Thus the broader Iranian genetic hereditary that prominently includes Persian, is heterogeneously complex and ethnically diverse today; nonetheless, Persian or Iranian must not be misconstrued as a superior race or egocentric ethnicity even by a long stretch of the wildest imagination. It is noteworthy to cite the Iranian genetic pool having borrowed from, and given back to many other pedigrees, is traceable with statistical significance ($\sim x > 1\%$) in more than half the human populations (currently up to four billions) worldwide today.

There has been much debate about the origin and “pure racial” identity of Persians *albeit* even more aptly Iranians as a whole. Iranians or their early ancestors have roamed or settled from as far back as 35,000 years ago on the current Iranian plateau and its surrounding region of central and west Asia, the Caucasus, Eastern Mesopotamia, and Asia Minor and along the Persian Gulf. Early Iranians as the direct descendants of Sakas and Scythians, have over an extended period moved south and west from today’s cen-

tral Asia in several rounds.

In fact, retro-genetic archeology places the origin of all today’s non-African peoples to the Mitochondrion Y-Haplogroup DNA of a single male residing in Uzbekistan (Samarghand and Bukhara) of 45,000 years ago. This area of south Siberian Urals is coincidentally the same region where the archaic Denisovan Hominins now extinct, resided as well. Denisovans were close cousins to extinct Neanderthals whose genetic remnants is still present for up to a few percent amongst Europeans. What is most perplexing is that the historical Sakas and Iranians (Persians) have no or extremely insignificant Neanderthal genetic traits?

The “Aryan” tribes of Sakas and Scythians including in particular the Iranian prehistoric indigenous tribes moved south and west from today’s Central Asia. Then in the third millennium BCE, the Medians, Persians and Parthians arrived on the Iranian plateau last.

There remains since a common Persian family of languages and as derived from an earlier *proto-Irano-Indo-European* language etymologically speaking, that has since at least 10,000 years ago laid the *lingual franca* foundation for a unique way of life anchored on Persian literati and ethos, gender and ethnic equality, chivalry and ethics, truth and genuineness, and tranquil harmony with and respect for Mother Earth.

In fact, the term *Aryans* does not refer to a single racial or ethnic identity let alone to bogus implication of an egotistical superiority and fascist ideological ulterior motives and as abused by the third Reich. Aryanism rather more aptly refers to Iranians and north Indian cultural “noble” characters, thoughts, words, deeds and traits, cited above.

According to life philosophy of Iranian Aryans, IRAN from AeR, from the early Pahlavi Avestan language, and as in Aerland=Irelnad in Old Gaelic, means

the land of Aryans/gate of civilizations. Iranians settled in the *Persiate world*, strengthening body and spirit through legends and mythologies, human-hood and empathy, javelin and arrow throwing, sportsmanship, horseback riding, reaching a balance between family and community, chess and backgammon playing, reasons, rationale and logic, truth on facts, and the development of crafts and skills toward the betterment of human civilizations as whole, has served as the impetus since early Neolithic era of over 10,000 years ago.

There are multiple archeological sites and ample artifacts in museums worldwide from western Zagros region, Lake Rezaieh zone, the Caspian Sea and the Caucasus regions and central Asia, Bactria/Arianna (today’s Afghanistan), Burnt City (Share Soukhteh), and Tepe Sialk Kashan from at least 15-20,000 years ago that support the existence of rich cultural and technological breakthroughs of Iranians/Persians and their indigenous brethren.

Thus, not only today’s territory of Iran in its smallest size but unchanged since 150 years ago, but more importantly the greater historical Iran that spanned from China and India to Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and north Africa, has served as the crossword of early humans and the fertile grounds for clashes and intermingling amongst tribes, families and civilizations. Accordingly, the culture and genetic make ups of Iranians in the *Persianate world*, is rather heterogeneously complex.

To reiterate, it is mythology, legends, ethos, music, paintings, stories, poetry and prose, psyche, foods, drinks, deserts, festivals, fruits and vegetables, etc. that binds the *Persiate world* together and not a single distinct homogeneous “non-existent” genetic superiority!

Professor Ilber Ortayli Highlights Links between Turkic and Iranian Civi-

lizations. He is among a large number of non-Iranians scholars-from Herodotus and Xenophon, and Harvard professors as Arthur Pope and Richard Frye who have credited Iranians with advancing human civilization.

It is established that Persian language has served toward the evolution of Altaic Turkish monotone language by its borrowing up to 40% Persian words and syntax.

Professor Ortayli further recognizes the bureaucratic and administrative roles (Divansalari) of Iranians in the Ottoman governance, while the army not only in Turkey but also in Russia and its vassals, India and Afghanistan or IRAN since the Seljuk was headed and trooped by the Turks, the Tatars or the Cossacks.

He traces the school of Athens to

Persians and Partians/Elamites of eastern Mesopotamia, as well crediting the Muslim Moors and Jews that also included many Iranian scholars in Andalusia for laying the Greek philosophy for Europe. By the same token, Iranians provided the societal and literati foundations for Turkey, as well as for the Islamic Caliphates of Baghdad, Damascus, Jerusalem, Cairo, Alhambra and Granada, and India.

Although amongst investigations to decode the genetic makeups of diverse peoples worldwide, Iranians and Persians have only found recent prominence, the vast genetic information discovered for Iranians is startlingly humbling.

Proliferation of scientific manuscripts support the fact while all people of the above regions in Iran and the neighboring countries may each possess a few

specific genetic biomarker alleles of their own, nonetheless, their overall genetic mapping is rather heterogeneously identical (mainly west Asian/Iran and Middle Eastern/ Mesopotamian). The Iranians have given to and taken from others bits and pieces of genetic hereditary information.

The Iranian genetic makeups are explained in reading just a couple of findings and its many linked citations therein. These new findings again demonstrate that while their original genomics go back to millennia, it has footprints from the Samis (Judaic/Arabs) of Mesopotamia and Asiatic/Mongolian/Turkics of Altaic mountains peoples among other neighbors or the passersby hunter-gatherer-forager who wandered and roamed through this historic region.

Coronavirus and the Chemistry of Life

NASSER TEJARATCHI, M.D.

In spite of tremendous progress made in Biochemistry, the entity of life remains as elusive as the universe. It has been said that life is a universe. It is known that the unit of life is DNA; a complex molecule composed of various organic substances and mineral elements. All living creatures, viruses, bacteria, protozoans, yeasts fungi, plants and animals (including human beings) are made of a complex DNA. Strands of attached DNA make the genes; specific bundles of genes make the chromosomes...

A DNA strand is made up of double strands of RNA. A few known viruses, like Coronavirus, are made up of RNA only, which we can call a form of "sub-life". Yet this form of "sub-Life" RNA shows all functions of life: they have a specific form, they are surrounded by a membrane, they absorb nutrients from their medium, they divide... Viruses are extremely small. To be visualized, they have to be magnified up to 300 to 400 times by using an ultramicroscopic. Yet this extremely small creature has caused havoc to well-developed creatures like humans. Some scientists consider life as a peculiar crystallization of matter of

unknown origin. A simple crystallization of lifeless matter can be exemplified in the formation of a snowflake, which is made of large numbers of small crystals from pure water in a sub-freezing temperature. How the original units of live RNA and DNA are formed, no one knows. In recent decades, know and then, some researchers have reported that they have produced living organisms. However, they have usually reattached DNA molecules which they have obtained from other viruses. These artificial genes have shown a limited function and soon die out. None have survived.

While in the infinite universe there must be innumerable living creatures, they are all out of contact with each other. Life on earth must have been developed here starting billions of years ago. The soul and intelligence are the outcome of the nervous system which have developed for protection and guidance of living organisms. Once a living creature dies, so do the soul and intelligence.

As the great Omar Khayyam has said "Beware! Don't tell anyone this horrible secret, the tulip that withered will not bloom again!"

*FROM
ALL OF US AT
PERSIAN
HERITAGE
We wish you a
Merry Christmas
Happy Holidays
and
a Healthy, Happy
New Year*



GLOBAL WARMING & CALIFORNIA WILDFIRES

YUSEF JALALI, PHD, PE



Climate change may be defined as the long-term metamorphosis in the earth's atmospheric weather patterns. Climate change scientists investigate the major factors affecting the weather patterns on earth.

Thus, the question is begged: In light of recent unprecedented wildfires and hurricanes, does climate change science see a connection with global warming? Herein, we'll try to shed some light on some aspects of this question.

This year in the largest wildfires in California history, no less than 31 persons, including several fire fighters lost their lives, 4% of California land (4 million acres) was burned to ashes, millions of wildlife and thousands of homes were destroyed.

The hottest August in 141 years of recordkeeping registered 130 F in Death Valley in California. Associated Press reported earth sweltered

to a record hot September with U.S. climate officials indicating there's nearly a two-to-one chance that 2020 will end up as the globe's hottest year on record.

In a recent CBS 60 Minutes program, Wade Crowfoot, head of California's Natural Resources Agency says "California emerged from a five-year drought in 2016. In that drought, which we called a mega-drought--hasn't happened at that level in a thousand years.

We experienced communities in California literally running out of water... So that's an existential challenge... We lost over 160 million trees in the Sierra Nevada mountain range as a result of that drought... And where California dried out is now the site of the largest single fire in state history, called the Creek Fire... The fire that burned the hottest and most dangerous, the Creek Fire, was

in the epicenter of that tree mortality. It ran so hot that it created a smoke cloud 50,000 feet in the sky... Fifty million Americans on the West Coast suffered through weeks of the worst air quality on the planet".

California State Fire Chief Thom Porter tells the 60 Minutes program "The largest fires were ignited by storms, but because the air is so dry the rain evaporated before it reached the ground... leaving the fire fighters fighting dry lightning".

The number of tropical storms or hurricanes hitting the United States from the Gulf of Mexico this year, has already reached 27, more than double the usual number. 'Zeta', the 27th storm of the Atlantic hurricane season made landfall in Louisiana as a Category 2 storm and killed at least 6 people.

The City of Houston has been hit by 500-year storms,

five times in the last five years. The biweekly New York Intelligencer writes in the age of global warming this phrase has been alienated from its meaning... There was a time when the phrase meant, based on historical meteorologic data, a storm of this magnitude could happen only once in a span of 500 years...

"Climate change will continue, and those records — high temperatures, historic rainfall, drought, and wind speed and all the rest — will continue to fall. From here, literally everything that follows, climate-wise, will be literally unprecedented".

The New York Intelligencer reports "On June 20, in the small Siberian town of Verkhoyansk, north of the Arctic Circle, a heat wave baking the region peaked at 38 degrees Celsius — just over 100 degrees Fahrenheit. It was the highest temperature

ever recorded in the Arctic. In a world without climate change, this anomaly, one Danish meteorologist calculated, would be a 1-in-100,000-year event. Thanks to climate change, that year is now". In June as a result of permafrost melting, an oil-storage facility collapsed, releasing 21,000 tons of oil, about 2/3 the scale of Exxon Valdez spill, into the local river.

However, a major threat of permafrost melting, which contains twice the amount of carbon that exists in the earth's atmosphere, is the commencement of microbial activity and photochemical reactions that would result in the release of carbon to the atmosphere.

This positive feedback will in turn expedite the ongoing global warming.

Today the Guardian of London reported on the release of methane gas to the atmosphere from the melting of frozen methane gas reserves within the permafrost on the eastern shores of Siberia within the Arctic circle under the seabed. The greenhouse effect of methane gas in the atmosphere is several times more intense than that of carbon dioxide.

The California Governor's website indicates that nearly one third of the state is covered by forests and natural lands (about 34 million acres). However, only 3% of these lands are owned by the state (1 million ac.). Some 57% (19 million ac.) is owned by the Federal government agencies (US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, & National Park Service).

The remaining 40% (14 million ac.) is owned by private families and individuals, the native American tribes, and lumber and wood companies. Therefore, from the legal standpoint, the financial responsibility for the upkeep

and maintenance of about 97% of the forest and natural lands falls on the shoulders of the Federal government and private owners. However, it's noteworthy that half of the state budget for fuel management in forests (thinning and cutting trees) is spent in the forests owned by the Federal government!

On August 29 the weekly Grest publication wrote, for more than a century, the policy of the US Forest Service has been limited to fire suppression. Jessica Morse, deputy secretary for forest management at the California Natural Resources Agency said "It had the motto of 'Fires out by 10 a.m.'."

It leaves us with the forests we have today: Overly dense, overly stocked and burning with high temperatures and destructiveness." The Native American tribes effectively prevented huge wildfires for centuries, by thinning the trees and setting up controlled fires in strategic locations to create safe zones.

In the 1980s, the Forest Service attempted to change course, and began to thin out the trees and other fuel to try to contain fires within the confines of the forest.

However, the neo-liberal policies of Ronald Reagan was eyeing another direction, as it viewed investment in the public and social programs as a deterrent to economic prosperity. LeRoy Westerling, who studies wildfire and climate change at the University of California, Merced, says "So for two generations we've been underinvesting in everything ... Everywhere you look you can see the effect: The roads are sh., the health system is in shambles, we are lagging in clean energy, and our forests are burning."

There is consensus among experts that for public safety and environmental protection in California, about

one million acres of forest and wildland need to be restored, annually. Reduction of forest wildfires will not only improve the air quality and public health, but will also improve public safety, the rural economy, job creation, quality of natural water resources, protection of wildlife and biodiversity, and will reduce the emission of global warming gases.

Finally, in August 2020 the USFS signed an agreement with the state of California whereby the former agency agreed to match the activities of California to clear and restore half a million acres annually, for 20 years. That restoration would take the form of thinning trees, chipping up downed wood, prescribed burns, and timber cutting where it makes both ecological and economic sense.

The agreement was wel-

comed by a wide spectrum of environmental organizations, however, few caveats were also noted by researchers and experts in the field.

In a news article on Sept. 15, 2020, BBC News quotes Professor Stefan Doerr, a wildfire expert at Swansea University (Wales, UK) saying "But the emphasis has been on putting out any fires - and with climate change this has now created a tinderbox of vegetation.

A combination of drier, hotter and windy conditions is the key factor in these recent fires".

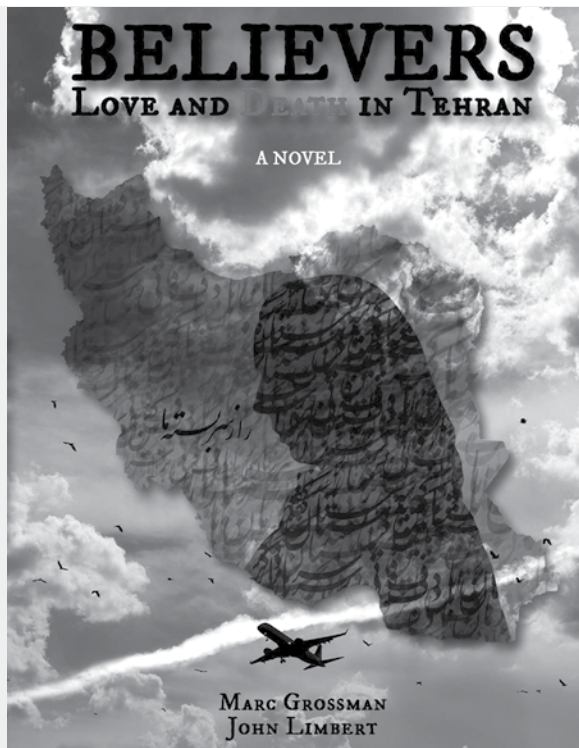
He adds that even in areas where there have been attempts to reduce flammable material in forests, it's not clear how much difference this would have made, "The bottom line remains that the extreme meteorological conditions are the main drivers for these extreme fires."

BELIEVERS

LOVE AND DEATH NOVEL

Marc Grossman and John Limbert
(Mazda Publishers 2020)

Reviewed by Shahrokh Ahkami



Both authors of this book have enjoyed careers servicing their country. John Limbert worked for thirty-four years in the United States Foreign Services. As Ambassador, he served mostly in the Middle East and Islamic Africa.

That position was followed with other distinguished assignments. Ambassador Limbert was among the last American diplomats to serve at the American Embassy in Tehran. As a fourteen-month hostage in 1981 he received the Award of Valor.

Like Ambassador Limbert, co-author Ambassador Marc Grossman enjoyed a distinguished career as Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs. This career was also followed by unique positions. With their years of personal experience in foreign affairs it is not a surprise that they have written a great novel.

A novel, that is thrilling, historical, intense, riveting and filled with factual detail. If one has only had superficial information regarding the relationship between the United States and Iran, with little interest to know more, I IMPLORE you to read this book. Too often, the media lures us into believing their version of a story to be the “truth”, while the real truth

lies within facts not disclosed.

This story circles around a woman, a pregnant woman, Nilufar Hartman.

In 1979, she went to Tehran to work at the United States Embassy. What she thought would be the opportunity of a life time, turned out to be a life changing experience with countless, twists and turns and personal decision making. A woman who is to be praised.

It would be hard to believe that Nilufar and other fictional characters, depicted in the book, were not reflective of personalities both the authors met during their years of service. Their in-depth description of each of these characters and surroundings allows the reader to quickly visualize their physical appearance and emotional process.

Each life decision Nilufar makes pushes you to find the answer on the next page. (I would, however, slow down when they described a Persian meal so deliciously you could taste the sour cherry jam and smell the fresh bread.)

Most certainly by the time you reach the Epilogue you will have more knowledge of Iran with all its beauty, history, politics, achievement, good decisions, harmful mistakes and the warmth of the Iranian people.

You will also be left to wonder if the relationship, once shared by Iran, the United States and the world, will return. Will this beautiful broken puzzle ever be put back together? A PERFECT READ!

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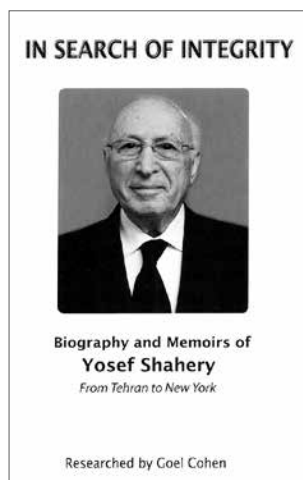
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IN SEARCH OF INTEGRITY

Biography and Memories of Yosef Shahery
From Tehran to New York

Researched by Goel Cohen
(Sina Research: 2020)

REVIEWED BY SHAHROKH AHKAMI



Let us first discuss the author. Mr. Shahery emigrated to the U.S. from Iran shortly after the Islamic revolution. As an immigrant, he has had a distinctive history in assisting the immigration of others from Iran to the U.S. and was influential in the formation of social, cultural and religious institutions for the Iranian Jewish community. One of his greatest

achievements is the publication known as Shofar, of which he is Editor in Chief.

This book includes the research of Goel Cohen, professor at the University of Tennessee. It is an in-depth biography of the author but more importantly a biography that keeps the plight the immigrant in the conversational arena. People immigrate for a variety of reasons: persecution, civil rights, a better education and a more secure financial future. Regardless of their reasons for leaving the place of their birth country, biographies of these immigrants are important for future immigrants and the citizens of their new country to understand legal rights and the importance of assimilation.

This biography is particularly interesting as the author discusses his life both in Iran and the U.S. and where he sees the differences. He emphasizes the importance of trustworthiness and loyalty to his life, his business and his faith. Starting from the first chapter you become aware of the deep love and commitment he has on all of these topics. Biographies can have a tendency to be so personal that the story is lost. Mr. Shahery does not do this, instead he tells the reader a story in which his personal events enhance the facts of his life.

CHOPBOOK

written and illustrated

by Michael Jonah Altschuler

REVIEWED BY SHAHROKH AHKAMI

When I first received this book I wasn't sure what I was receiving. On the cover is a boy of seven, whose name is Finn Altschuler and that picture made me realize I was reading something very special from a very old and dear friend, Michael Altschuler.



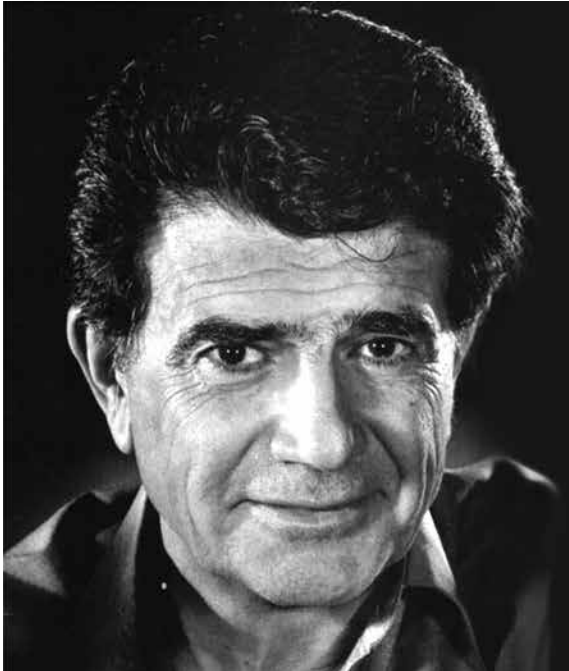
The prologue of the book describes the authors outlook on life, one I think we should all consider. "The Light and Dark in our lives is subjective. The middle ground accepts the reality that life is both good and bad, exhilarating and debilitating. This chapbook expresses my acceptance of this duality."

As you make your way through the chapters of poems and artful illustrations his words become clearer. It is a tribute to love that grows and changes with time. It shows that if we hold onto the qualities of love, that brought us initially together, that love will always remain. It is the author's perception how we as people change with age. What was important becomes less important only to be of the utmost importance in the end; our friends, our neighbors, our families and our memories. They are what we call on when the puzzle of our life falls to pieces because they are what puts the puzzle together again.

The book is the author's feeling on how we are never sure of who we are, because we are always searching to better ourselves. At some point, however, we realize we knew who and what we were all along the journey. And when we recognize and accept this it brings us great relief.

And, the author reflects that as we reach the end chapters of our life we will always wonder, REGARDLESS OF OUR CONTENTMENT AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS, WHY WE ARE HERE.

I remain truly touched by the author's words and illustrations, by his credit to Persian Heritage magazine and by his friendship.



Republishing of the Interview with

Mohammad Reza Shajarian

The Late Iranian Music Maestro

As A Tribute to His Unforgettable Memory

By Shahrokh Ahkami,
the Editor of Persian Heritage

Fall 2001

Mohammed Reza Shajarian, a great Iranian treasure, was the master of Persian music and is considered as important as Mr. Pavarotti. Persian Heritage wanted to interview him for a long time and finally was given the opportunity.

The Night I interviewed him I will always remember- the night I had dinner with a great Iranian treasure Mr. Mohammad Reza Shajarian and his talented son, and Kyhan Kalhor and Alizadeh. During dinner, I witnessed his love for his son, how he cared and nourished his son who was not feeling well. Though the two are consummate professional partners, what I saw was a father and son relationship and not a Master and his student.

Because of the birth of my first grandchild, I was not able to attend his concert. Regretfully a few weeks later I found out that he was ill and has since returned to Iran. As you read this interview, you will find a man who is more than a master of music, he is a man who has a deep love and respect for all things and one who is filled with love, affection, pride and patriotism.

Mr. Shajarian, your concerts in San Diego was well received by our audience and the press. American newspapers such as the New York Times and Wall Street Journal have written lengthy articles about you. Please introduce yourself to us, especially to our young readers born out of Iran and our Non-Iranian readers who are not familiar with your voice and music.

I was five or six years old when I started to sing. By the time I was twelve everybody in my hometown of Mashad, Iran knew me. My father was a Master of song and singing and gradually I started to learn more and more about Persian music. When I finished high school I was eighteen. I left home to teach. It was at this time that I started to seriously learn

music and began to occasionally sing on Mashad Radio. So it was forty to forty three years ago that I had my first radio program (at that time we had to perform live on radio). I arrived in Tehran at the age of twenty-five and started to sing on Radio Tehran. There I attended singing and music classes taught by masters of classical music and song. I worked with this group of master musicians, even after the Revolution.

What is the difference between now and then?

The participation of master musician Mr. Alizadeh. He had a special style of influence in my music and singing that you can hear in my new song "Winter". It is a new work with a special message. I mean to say that even if an entire collection of music lacks a message at least part of it will have a message. I carry that message. This kind of music, however,

is very different from the typical classical music. Audiences are not accustomed to it and it may create a question for them, but within a few times of listening you get used to it and enjoy it.

Prior to coming to see you, some of my colleagues were asking who is this Persian musician that you want to interview? I told them I wanted to interview the Iranian Pavarotti or Placido Domingo. You are not only a great singer with a beautiful voice, you have a great role in the revival of Persian classical music. Was this your destiny?

Perhaps. My father forbid music and was against me becoming a musician because of the improprieties found in the music world. I am not saying all musicians at that time were bad and "unclean

“., but for the most part the music world was corrupt. For this reason many Iranian families, including my father, forbid their children to become musicians and would angrily tell them that they could not become the fiddler of a dancer!! Despite the fact that dance and music are great arts and professions, they had been suppressed in Iran for 1400 years because of the way music was interpreted. Young music lovers like myself were afraid to be blamed, so quietly without my father’s knowledge, I learned the music. I had great respect for him and didn’t want to hurt his feelings.

Since the age of eighteen I knew that this was a sacred profession and that I could make a living in it and be respected. So, despite my fears of being accused a bad person I pursued this career. I did so with love and inner spirituality. In the beginning my father was very unhappy that I left Mashad. All the blame for my departure to Tehran fell on him. Later, when he saw how serious I was and how hard I worked and studied, he calmed down.

What was your goal?!

Unlike many artists, I did not desire or expect to reach fame and money overnight. I was poor and there were times when I wasn’t able to pay the rent on my house. I did receive many invitations to play at house parties, bars and nightclubs. In fact one invitation would have paid an amount equal to five years of my salary that I was receiving from the radio. But these invitations were not what I wanted and often considered shameful. But, for those who accepted such invitations, fortune and fame came quickly. Mine took longer, not one night stands but one to two years. I knew I had to avoid immoral situations to reach my goal. I knew I had to remain uncorrupt. Perhaps the fact that I avoided the dark side of the profession has encouraged families in Iran to persuade their children to play some sort of musical instrument and know some kind of art. As an artist I have always tried to bring prestige to the profession.

Even today people dressed in religious robes, when they meet me, tell me they want their children to learn to play a musical instrument. Today in the streets of Iran you will see young girls carrying their musical instruments to music classes. In the University music students eagerly learn music and their parents are

proud to listen to their children playing the piano, violin, etc. It is so wonderful to compare these times to those when I was a young man. A time when music was a sin and musicians were sinners.

Anyway, I hope I was a small element in this change of atmosphere for the arts. I continue to follow these principles so when you see my programs and hear my music you will see humanitarian love and mysticism, not dance or finger snapping. Of course there is music for dance. All kinds of music should be available. My music is not the only kind of music that should exist. There must be joyful music, music for mourning, music for youth, music for all generations and all kinds of taste and style.

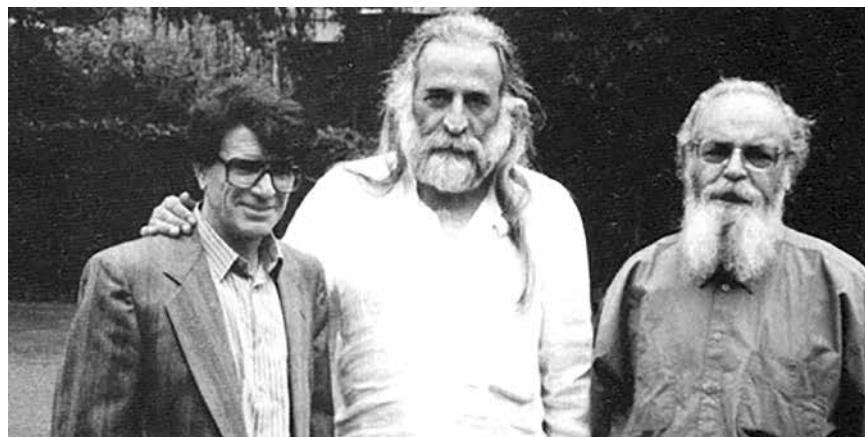
If I’m not mistaken in your recent work you connected the rustic (peasant) music to classical music, how can you connect these together?

First of all I am from the State of Khorasan. I taught for five years in the villages of Ghouchan and Mashad (Khorasan). Every day I listened to Kurdish songs and from them I have a lot of memories. There were children in classrooms singing songs and I would encourage them. My father was from the same region where his father was a farmer. They knew a lot of Kurdish peasants and used to sing songs in their dialect. Because he was a skilled singer, he could mimic them perfectly. Unfortunately, because of his strong religious beliefs he later stopped singing, but when I was growing up my father would sometimes sing them on his own. I would listen to him and learn his

gestures and style of singing. Because my ear was used to this Kurdish style of singing and music I decided to follow it. When these people would gather for music festivals I would go to see them perform. That period of my youth, the land, the people and the compassion for those lives, so deprived were images that repeated in my mind like a film. So in short this was the history of my acquaintance and knowledge with this kind of music.

I always believed that a person need not start a job, but when one does start a job he or she should do it well and strive for perfection. Often I have found that many of my favorite musicians have spoiled this rustic music because they did not strive for perfection. Their interpretations mock these songs and destroyed them. Their interpretations made me uncomfortable and unhappy and caused me to wonder why they would have done such a poor job. This rustic music belongs to its creators. Their style of music should be respected and kept as pure as possible. Therefore, instruments used in its reproduction must be genuine, from the area. And, the music itself must maintain the same quality and character of the original music. I am very critical of famous artists when they change and spoil the natural beauty of this music. Thankfully I am not the only artist who feels this way.

In the case of Kyhan Kalhor, I recognized the great job he has done in his music. He has kept the message of the music true. For that reason, I accepted to collaborate with him. It was about five years ago that we went to a studio together to record a song. At first it sounded good, but when I listened to it later, I found that



From left: M.R. Shajarian - M.R. Lotfi, the late great Persian musician - Hooshang Ebtehaj (Sayeh), the great contemporary Persian poet

it lacked the message I wanted. It lacked the atmosphere found in the original music of this region. For over two years I thought about this. I knew that in order to make this a great piece of music I had to maintain its original atmosphere. So, I tried a lot to get the dialect of those villagers. I needed to have their same tone of voice. In order to obtain my perfection in this project I knew it was time that I revive all the memories of my childhood and youth. I practiced and finally I felt comfortable. I sang over the music we previously recorded in Iran.

We went back to the studio and fortunately the emotional atmosphere I sought appeared in my mind. I was taken back to the village where I spent some of my youth. Though it took time we finally accomplished our goal. The value of the original music was not spoiled. I must state that Mr. Kalhor's efforts were valuable and admirable both in this project and in his efforts in America. He has assembled a group of musicians and musical instruments that give the same message heard in the villages of Khorasan (near Ghouchan and Mashad). His use of local instruments allows his music to duplicate its perfume and atmosphere.

It is admirable that after reaching such a high level of success as a master in music, you are still ready to take chances and risks. This is shown in this new style of work. Can you address this?

Anything one does in life has risks. If you don't have the guts to take the risk you will never reach the next level. I am

Unlike many artists, I did not desire or expect to reach fame and money overnight. I was poor and there were times when I wasn't able to pay the rent on my house. I did receive many invitations to play at house parties, bars and nightclubs. In fact one invitation would have paid an amount equal to five years of my salary that I was receiving from the radio. But these invitations were not what I wanted and often considered shameful.

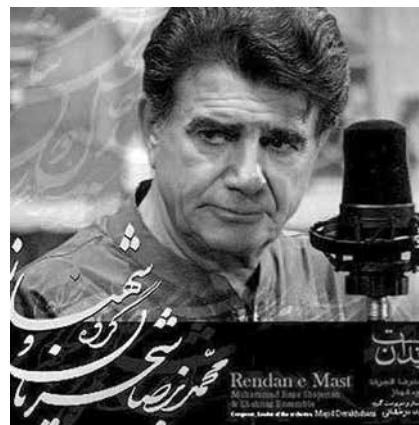
not saying that you should suddenly jump from one step to another step without preparation. What I am saying is that you should take the risk fully aware of its consequences. You should never do anything haphazardly. For example, before I took on this project, or risk, I had thought about it for years. When the time was right to take the risk, I took it. All of the conditions were met. Fortunately, all the projects and situations that I have approached in this manner have been successful and have reached a successful conclusion.

It is interesting that despite all the time I spend with the masters I still desire to work with young people. They work hard when they are encouraged and have more sense of responsibility. In working with them, after awhile I can see the rate of their progress. For the most part its good. I will work with any young person who I feel has done a good job and is bright and dedicated. Young people have new ideas, which allows me the chance to create new work and use their creative minds.

After the Revolution, you traveled to the U.S. and Europe. I have seen you in three concerts. I feel that you have opened a different door for many artistes living in Iran and those abroad, who have no hope to return back to Iran. How does this affect you?

When you are acquainted with people you are naturally influenced. It becomes a part of you. Artists who were influenced or touched by society can easily move forward and take these influences with them. When an artist is in touch with his/her society, they move with it, because they know they are part of it. These artists in this circumstance, if they know their job well, can be a leader of that society in music, cinema, painting, poetry or literature or other professions. But, if they do not stay in touch with their people and their roots they will have turmoil. We have tried not to be separated from our people. This will prevent us from falling behind. We need to feel their pain and be ready to what we can to ease that pain.

When I interview talents like you I like to get their opinion



on a subject that continues to puzzle me. In Iran there is limited opportunity to excel. In contrast, the U.S and Europe provides us with great freedom and choice. But it has been twenty years since the Revolution and we still have not been able to have artists like you, Alizadeh, Kalhor as a household name in music or the cinema, in USA, why?

I believe that creativity for the most part comes from one's roots and the soil that nurtures it. If you do not physically have your roots in that soil you cannot get proper nutrition. I feel that some of my songs are like mourning songs. They present the pain and miseries of a society. Some people, when they listen to my music, cry others do not. When I stay more than five or six months away from Iran, I find myself losing my connection. For example, twelve years ago I was out of Iran for ten months on tour. One month before my return to Iran, the mayor of Barcelona (Spain) invited me for a concert and festival in Barcelona. Twenty days before the festival. I suddenly felt that I could not sing. I was not the same Shajarian that created those masterpieces. I suddenly felt empty. After ten months away from my problems. I felt I had nothing from that soil. I couldn't feel my environment any longer. I couldn't feel the pain and I couldn't touch them anymore. I had called my wife and told her I was coming home. She reminded me that I had a concert in twenty days and thought I was crazy. She told me not to come, not to go through unnecessary expenses. For me the price of a round trip ticket is a lot of money, but I really felt I would not be

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able to perform. I told her I had to return.

When I returned to Iran, I once again came in touch with my problems. My pain and suffering became visible again: I was able to touch them. I was able to return to Spain and give the concert.

Some of our good artists, who have lived for many years abroad, cannot influence an Iranian audience, because they cannot transfer their feeling and create that atmosphere of the natural soil. Those who can identify with this problem and return to Iran will better transfer this atmosphere to their audience. It is as if we get slapped back to reality. Our roots get nutrients from that soil. We are then able to offer our Iranian art and get back in touch with the people. This is true, it is not in our imagination.

As I stated that trip of twelve years ago left me empty. I thought I couldn't sing. It wasn't that I forgot how to sing or that my voice was harmed, I had just lost the stimulus and atmosphere to sing.

This explains the deficiency of Iranians in music and the cinema. The battery of these artists who have lived abroad is empty. They must come back home and allow their roots to be watered and charged with events that are going on in Iran today. Without seeing it first hand, they cannot understand this. I am not saying that they do not experience pain living abroad, but it is a different pain, it is the pain from being away from home, not the same pain felt by the people living in Iran.

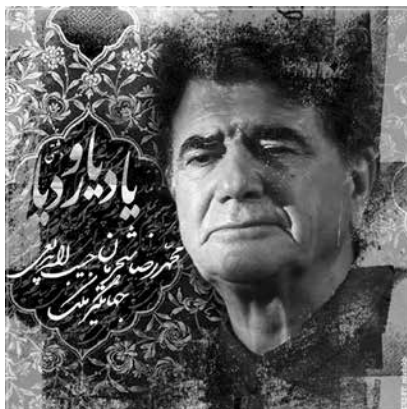
In concluding this interview, can you tell us about your most and least favorite memories?

I have many memories. One of my worse, however, deals with the confrontations I have had with Iranians abroad.

Too often they believe that anyone who comes from Iran is connected to the Islamic Republic, and is their agent. They treat them unfairly. They become victims and are punished for something they never did or said. All they have done was to try and protect the arts. I believe this labeling is unfair and I don't know why these people think this way, this is very sad. This automatic labeling is not right. To attach us to one political party or another, when all we desire is to preserve our art, is very unfair. As for a favorite memory, it comes from inside Iran. It is related to the pressures that were put on me, and the efforts that I had to make to eliminate them.

When did this occur?

I think it was seven years ago. We



had a concert, and my brother was the manager of the program. One hour before the concert my brother came with a tape of the Islamic Republic National Anthem. He told me that we must play it before the concert. I told him I would not allow it. An officer heard my response and came in to the rehearsal room. He told me that this was an order and that he was in charge to carry out the order. He threatened my arrest if I did not do this. I was angered by his words and I told him he was in charge of himself, but not in charge of my concert. I told him that I was the musician and I would indicate what was played at this concert and if he wanted to arrest me to do it then and not wait until after the concert. He told me "No I would not arrest you NOW!" this time another agent came. I told him there would be no national anthem at this concert. He allowed us to start the concert

without the national anthem

The national anthem has a great respect and value and is not suitable for concerts and movie theaters. They play the anthem at international games, when they want to give a gold medal to a champion.

After my explanation, he told me that he was sorry and that I was right. After this incident we became good friends. This was both a good and bad memory for me. Bad, because he made us nervous, but good because I convinced him that you cannot play the National Anthem at a concert.

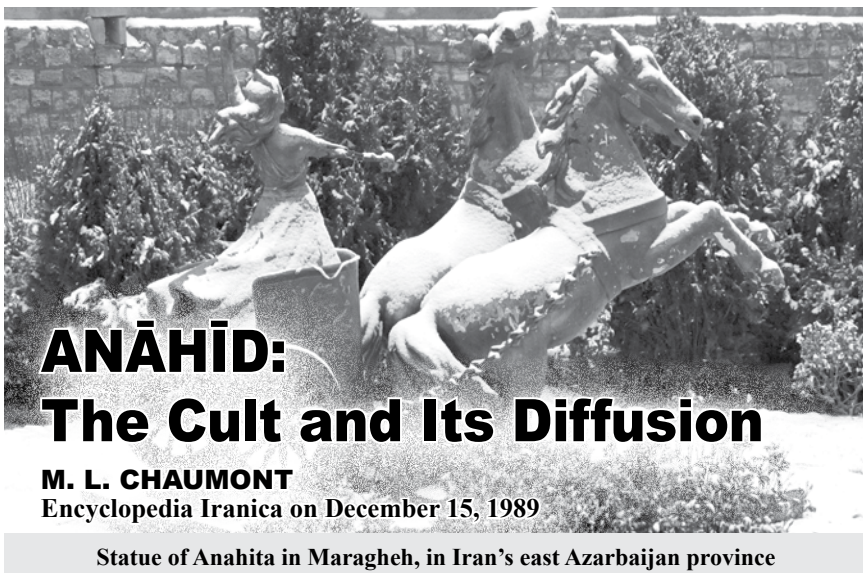
My last questions about the future of Iranian music?

The Iranian people never should be worried about their music. You cannot stop a weed from growing on a farm. And in that sense you cannot stop music. Who can stop a nation's music? You can cut the flowers, but these flowers are cultivated inside the soil. Whatever is inside a nation, you cannot cut and eliminate. Music and art are inside of Iranians and the country. Every day it gets stronger. It is spreading and bringing new artists. The quality of their work is also improving. In the next ten to fifteen years you will see many young artists emerge.

Now I ask if you have a closing comment?

No, I wish the best for all the people in the world. I hope that Iranian hearts continue to beat for Iran and for all humanity. They must know that the gifts of our heritage cannot be taken away.

The Iranian people never should be worried about their music. You cannot stop a weed from growing on a farm. And in that sense you cannot stop music. Who can stop a nation's music? You can cut the flowers, but these flowers are cultivated inside the soil. Whatever is inside a nation, you cannot cut and eliminate. Music and art are inside of Iranians and the country. Every day it gets stronger.



ANĀHĪD: The Cult and Its Diffusion

M. L. CHAUMONT

Encyclopedia Iranica on December 15, 1989

Statue of Anahita in Maragheh, in Iran's east Azarbaijan province

Although the Greeks sometimes assimilated Anāhitā to Aphrodite or Athena, they most often viewed her as the Persian Artemis. She is not named in the Elamite texts found at Persepolis and dating from the reigns of Darius I and Xerxes. In 405 B.C., the year of the accession of Artaxerxes II Mnemon, there was a temple at Pasargadae in Persis dedicated to a warrior goddess who, according to Plutarch, could be compared with Athena; no doubt it was a temple of Anāhitā in one of her most important aspects. The fact that Artaxerxes II Mnemon (404-359 B.C.) received consecration in the kingship at this temple after he had donned the robe of Cyrus (Plutarch, *loc. cit.*), suggests that the Achaemenid monarchy had close links with Anāhitā, especially in her war-goddess aspect. Moreover, Mnemon was the first Achaemenid to insert the names of Anāhitā and Mithra, after that of Ahura Mazdā, in official documents. According to a passage from the Chaldaica of Berosus conserved by Clement of Alexandria, the same king caused statues of “Aphrodite Anaitis” to be erected in major cities of his empire such as Babylon, Susa, Ecbatana, Persepolis, Bactra, Damascus, and Sardis. Plutarch also states that Artaxerxes Mnemon piously made his concubine Aspasia become a priestess of “Artemis whom they call Anaitis.” It was probably in his reign that the Anāhitā cult began to gain ground in Asia Minor and Syria before spreading to Armenia.

The cult long flourished in Lydia, which had temples of the Persian Artemis at Sardis, Philadelphia, Hierocaesarea,

Hypaipa, Maeonia, and elsewhere; the temple at Hierocaesarea had reputedly been founded by Cyrus. From the 2nd century A.D. there is an account of the ceremonies performed in accordance with ancient Mazdaean ritual at Hypaipa and Hierocaesarea, as personally witnessed by the geographer Pausanias. At Zela in Pontus the goddess was venerated together with two associate gods, Omanos and Anadates; in Cappadocia, likewise she and Omanos had common altars. At Castabala she was named Artemis Perasia. In connection with the cult of Artemis/Anaitis, Hellenic-style games were held at places such as the Anaeiteia at Philadelphia, the Artemisia at Hypaipa, and the Sakaia at Zela. The fact that bulls were the animals sacrificed to Anaitis probably explains why in Lydia, Cappadocia, and Armenia she was assimilated to Artemis Tauropola or Taurica. It was through this channel that the taurobolium (bull-sacrifice ritual) spread to Europe.

The Armenians, according to Strabo, shared in the religion of the Persians and the Medes and particularly honored Anaitis. From the 1st century A.D. onward, a temple of this goddess at Eriza (Erez) in Acilisene enjoyed great fame; an unverifiable tradition ascribed its foundation to Tigranes the Great. This holy place, “the wealthiest and most venerable in Armenia”, was staffed with priests and priestesses; daughters of the most eminent families were required to serve as prostitutes in it before marrying, an element likely borrowed from the Semitic religious practices. Anaitis was worshipped at Eriza in the guise of a huge gold image. In 34 B.C. (rather than 36 B.C.) this idol

was taken away by Mark Antony's soldiers who smashed it and shared the fragments among themselves. Acilisene, being the cult's main center in Armenia, came to be known as Anaetica, i.e., the land of Anaitis. Another region lying on the Cyrus river, near the borders of Iberia and Albania, was also called “the land of Anaitis”, like Acilisene, it was doubtless the territory of a temple dedicated to Anāhitā but otherwise unknown. The kings of Armenia were steadfast supporters of the cult at Eriza, which seems to have been closely associated with the national monarchy. Tiridates III, before his conversion to Christianity, prayed officially to the triad Aramazd-Anahit-Vahagn but is said to have shown a special devotion to “the great lady Anahit . . . the benefactress of the whole human race, mother of all knowledge, daughter of the great Aramazd”. According to Greek version of the Book of Agathangelos, tradition required the kings to travel annually to Eriza on the occasion of the goddess's festival.

Tiridates accordingly made this pilgrimage and offered sacrifices as well as wreaths and bougths to Anāhīd (Anahit) in the first year of his reign. Anāhīd was also worshiped at the capital, Artashat (Artaxata), at Astishat, in Taron (south of Armenia) and at many other places. At Artashat, her temple was close to that of Tiur (Tūr), the oracular god assimilated to Apollo. At Ashtishat, one of the main centers of Armenian paganism associated with the god Vahagn (Verethragna) and the goddess Astlik, she was worshiped in the guise of a golden idol apparently known as oskimayr “the golden mother”. Another center of Anāhitā's worship was the city of Tomisa on the Euphrates in Sophene (south-west Armenia) on the Cappadocian frontier. In 69 B.C., the soldiers of Lucullus could see in the territory of Tomisa plenty of sacrificial cows roaming around freely, which were consecrated to Persia Artemis and bore on the head the brand of her in the shape of a torch (Plutarch Lucullus 24.6). After the conversion of Tiridates, the images of Anahit throughout Armenia were smashed.

Regarding the Caucasian countries adjacent to Armenia, Strabo states that there was a temple dedicated to Leucothea, obviously, an analogue of the Iranian goddess in the land of the Moschi in Colchis. The legendary and late-dated *Life of the Apostle St. Andrew* mentions a cult of Apollo and Artemis, that is, Mithra and Anāhitā, in the same region. On the other hand, there is

no evidence of Anāhitā worship in Iberia, a country that had close ties with Armenia and Iran. In Albania, the moon stood highest among three popular deities and was worshiped in a famous temple with a large staff of priests at a place near the Iberian frontier; some have tried to identify her with Anāhitā, but this is questionable.

In Parthian territory, Ecbatana, the greatest metropolis of Media, retained a temple of Anāhitā where sacrifices were regularly offered in Lower Media a temple of “Artemis,” built about 200 B.C., was standing when Isidore of Charax (*ibid.*) wrote, and some vestiges of this Greek-style edifice survive today. Isidore mentions two more temples of this goddess, both on the right bank of the Euphrates in Mesopotamia, one at Basileia reputedly founded by Darius, the other at Beonan.

Susa likewise had a place of worship that, in the words of Pliny was *Dianae templum augustissimum*. Not far away was a temple in Elymais called Ta Azara, which was sacred to both Athena and Artemis tame lions were to be seen in it. In Persia, the cult was centered in Eṣṭaḵr (Persepolis), where Anāhitā was worshiped in her aspect of war-goddess, as she had been at Pasargadae in the Achaemenid period (see above). Around the end of the 2nd century A.D., the temple of Anāhitā at Eṣṭaḵr was in the custodianship of Sāsān, who was also a hunter and an intrepid warrior. His son Pāpak killed the king of Eṣṭaḵr and seized the throne. It seems probable that Pāpak continued to be the high priest after he made himself king, because a rock carving shows him making an officiant’s obeisance before a fire altar while wearing a crown and holding a sort of scepter in his left hand, with his son Šāpūr on horseback close by him.

Pāpak’s son Ardašīr rebelled against his Arsacid suzerain and gradually conquered all the Parthian territories. He may perhaps have inherited the high priesthood of Anāhīd and have derived his spiritual authority mainly from it; in any case, he showed great devotion to the goddess, to whom he sent heads of his slain enemies. As for Ardašīr’s son and successor, Šāpūr I, the fact that he named his daughter Ādur-Anāhīd (Anāhīd of the fire) is certainly significant. In the reign of Bahrām II, the ambitious Magian Kirdēr, who had been steadily rising in the religious hierarchy and tightening his political grip, reached the zenith of his power when the monarch appointed him chief mōbad and judge of the empire and at the same time “ēwēnbad

(master of ceremonies) and supreme head of the fire of Anāhīd, [that] of Anāhīd-Ardašīr, and the lady Anāhīd” (inscription of Kirdēr, Ka’ba-ye Zardošt, line 8). Kirdēr’s promotion is to be seen as an overt encroachment on the spiritual authority of the descendants of Ardašīr. In the inscription at Paikuli carved for Narseh in 283, the king of the kings invokes Ōhrmazd, “the lady Anāhīd,” and all the gods. On a rock carving at Naqš-e Rostam, Narseh is shown receiving investiture from the hands of Anāhīd, who wears a serrated crown and a sleeveless cloak.

Šāpūr II, according to a Christian hagiographic text, caused the heads of twelve Christian martyrs to be exposed, in conformity with ancient custom, in the temple at Eṣṭaḵr. It has been suggested that a passage in the Pahlavi Dēnkard refers to the construction of a temple of Anāhīd by Šāpūr II, but the text has *ābān-kāna* (house of the waters), and the interpretation is questionable. No further evidence on the Sasanian monarchy’s association with Anāhīd comes until the reign of Kōsrow II Parvēz. In an investiture scene carved in high relief in the grotto of Tāq-e Bostān, Kōsrow II receives crowns from Ōhrmazd and Anāhīd; the goddess wears a crown similar to Ōhrmazd’s and holds a pitcher of flowing water in her left hand.

She also appears, holding a garland of flowers in one hand and a lotus in the other, on one of the capitals of the two columns that once stood in front of the grotto. The statement of Ṭabarī that the last Sasanian king, Yazdgerd III, was crowned in the “temple of Ardašīr” at Eṣṭaḵr is interesting because of the similarity of this name to that of the “temple of Anāhīd-Ardašīr” at Eṣṭaḵr mentioned in the inscription of Kirdēr.

Because the temples of Anāhīd were built beside springs or watercourses, it has been suggested that they were quite different from ordinary fire temples and had a distinct style of architecture characterized by columns and arcades. But there is no reason why, at least in Iran, Anāhīd worship should not have been performed in fire temples. The designation of the temple at Eṣṭaḵr by the term *ādur* (fire), which was applied to all Zoroastrian places of worship, seems significant in this respect. Equally rash are suggestions that particular temples, for example the one at Taḵt-e Solaymān, belonged to Anāhīd.

Aside from the rock carvings of Naqš-e Rostam and Tāq-e Bostān, few figures unquestionably representing the goddess are known (see below). She is

thought to appear on an Achaemenid cylinder seal, on some reliefs from the Parthian period, and on two ossuaries, one found near Bīšāpūr, the other Sogdian (Anāhīd may be represented by figures to be seen on Sasanian silver utensils, which depict a nude or scantily clad woman standing in front of an arcade holding a flower or some fruit or sometimes a bird or a child; the identification seems convincing. It has been suggested that the colonnaded or serrated crowns on Sasanian coins belong to Anāhīd.

It is difficult to tell whether Anāhitā had any connection with Nanā or Nanai, a goddess of Mesopotamian origin frequently mentioned in Babylonian and Assyrian texts. In Armenia, Nana was assimilated to Athena and worshiped in a temple at the small town of Thil, but in some countries, she was identified with Artemis. At Dura-Europos she was worshiped as Artemis Nanaia. It is known from Kushan coins with effigies of Nana that her cult spread as far as the Kushan territories. In the Sasanian period, she is said to have been worshiped in Mesene, Susiana, Babylonia, and Arbayestan. Nana, who is one with Ishtar in ancient texts, seems to have been both a war-goddess and a nature-goddess. There are grounds to suppose that at an early stage the Iranian Anāhitā acquired some of Nana’s attributes, in particular her warlike character. It would be rash, however, to see Anāhīd in Nanai, “the great goddess of the whole earth,” who, according to the Acts of Mār Mo’ayn, was one of the principal deities worshiped by Šāpūr II. Also dubious is Hoffmann’s statement that the Nana on the Kushan coins denotes Anāhitā.



Vase dancers, Reshy, Louvre

Persian Heritage Magazine in McGill Library



Resources for Islamic Studies

مدرسة مكتبة الدراسات الإسلامية في جامعة مكغيل

Posted on March 6, 2020 by Ghazaleh Ghanavizchian

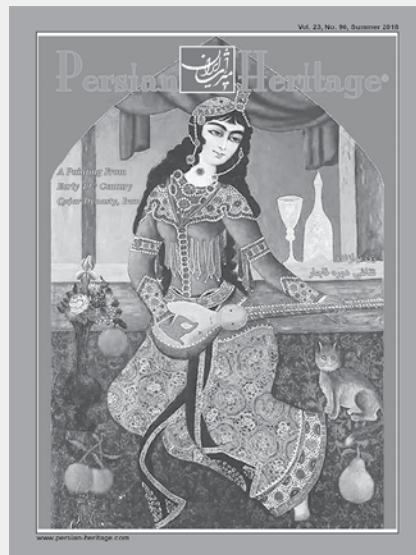
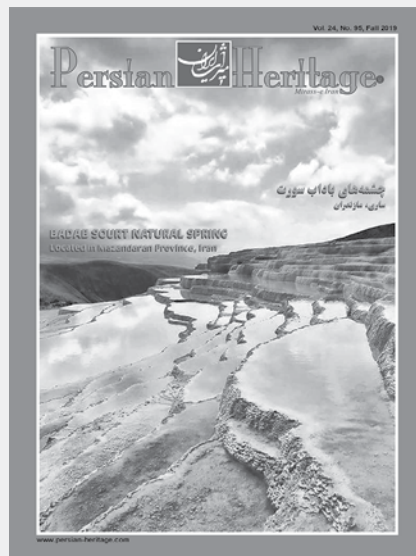
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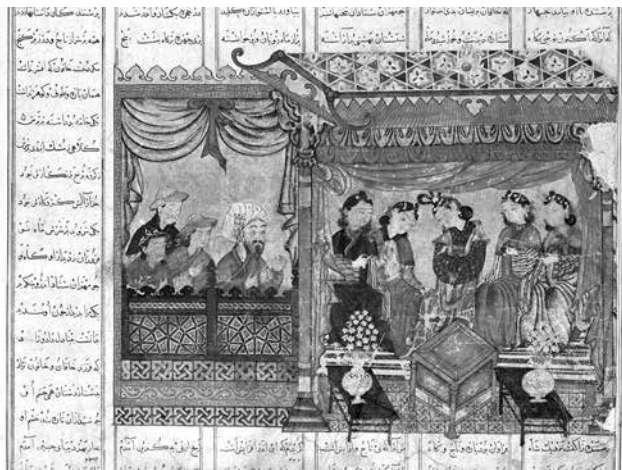
Persian Heritage Magazine is an independent, non-political, non-governmental publication first published in 1996 by Shahrokh Ahkami, the Editor. *Persian heritage* is a quarterly publishing magazine about culture and history of Iran. It is trying to respond to its readers' need -Iranian outside of Iran- by keeping them informed with update information on the richness and diversity of Iranian culture and heritage, as well as to facilitate inter-cultural interaction by reaching to those non-Persians yet interested in Persian heritage.

Therefore every issue of the magazine is being published in Farsi and English and covers various topics from Arts and culture (miniature, poetry, etc.) to prehistoric findings in Iran as well as reviewing recent exhibition in or about Iran's history and culture.



IRANIANS IN CHINA

From Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia



Mihran Sitad selects bride for the Persian king

Iranian people such as Persians and Sogdians have lived in China throughout various periods in Chinese history.

The Parthian Iranians, An Shigao and An Xuan, introduced Buddhism to China. A village dating back 600 years in Yangzhou in Jiangsu province, China, has inhabitants descended from Iranians. It has 27,000 people and contains Iranian place names like Fars and Parsian.

Sassanian royals like Peroz III and his son Narsieh fled the Arab Islamic invasion of Sassanid Persia for safety in Tang dynasty China where they were granted asylum.

The Chinese pirate Feng Ruofang stored Persian slaves on Hainan whom he captured when raiding ships in the 8th century. Hainan was filled with Persian slaves by Feng from his raids on their shipping. Persians sought a hardwood grown in Guangdong province. In 758 there was a raid on Canton by Persians and Arabs and then there was an attack in 760 in Yangzhou upon Persians and Arabs. On Hainan 100 katis of incense were burned in a single go by Feng.

FIVE DYNASTIES AND TEN KINGDOMS PERIOD

During the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period (Wudai) (907–960), there are examples of Chinese emperors marrying Persian women. “In the times of Wudai (907–960) the emperors preferred to marry Persian women, and the Song dynasty official families liked to marry women from Dashi [Arabia]” was written by Chen Yuan.

FORMER SHU

Many Iranians took the Chinese name Li to use as their last name when they moved to China. One prominent family included Li Xian (pharmacologist) and Li Xun. Sources say that either one of them was responsible for writing the “Hai Yao Ben Cao” (Hai Yao Ben Cao), translating to “Pharmacopoeia of foreign drugs”. Li Xun was interested in foreign drugs and his book, *The Haiyao Bencao*, was all about foreign drugs. His family sold drugs for a living.

Li Xian had an older sister Li Shunxian, who was known for being beautiful and

was a concubine of the Former Shu Chinese Emperor Wang Zongyan, and a brother older than both of them named Li Xun. They lived at the court of the royal family of Former Shu in Chengdu (modern day Sichuan). Li Shunxian also was a poet. Their family had come to China in 880 and were a wealthy merchant family. Li Xian dealt with Daoist alchemy, perfumes and drugs.

The Huang Chao rebellion had earlier made their family flee. Li Su-sha, an Iranian who dealt in the incense trade, is speculated to be the grandfather of the three siblings.

Lo Hsiang-Lin wrote a biography of the three siblings. The family were Nestorian Christians. The two brothers then became Daoist. Li Xun was also a poet who wrote in the manner of Chinese Song poetry. Li Xian used urine to concoct “steroid sex hormones”.

Iranians dominated the drug trade in China. In 824 Li Susha presented to Emperor Jingzong, the *Chen xiang ting zi*, a type of drug.

Li Xun wrote poems in the *tz'u* style and was one of its masters. He and his brother Li Xian traded in the drug business. The family lived in Sichuan.

Li Xun was known for his poetry. He was the author of *Hai Yao Ben Cao*. He and his brother Li Xian were well known perfume merchants who lived in the 900s AD. They lived at the state of Shu’s court.

Li Xun and Li Xian were two brothers from an Iranian family who lived in Shu in Sichuan. The author of the *Hai Yao Ben Cao* was Li Xun while the “alchemist” “naturalist” and “chess master” Li Xian wrote poetry like his brother.

SOUTHERN HAN

From the tenth to twelfth century, Persian women were to be found in Guang-

zhou (Canton), some of them in the tenth century like Mei Zhu in the harem of the Emperor Liu Chang, and in the twelfth century large numbers of Persian women lived there, noted for wearing multiple earrings and “quarrelsome dispositions”. It was recorded that “The Po-ssu-fu at Kuang-chou make holes all round their ears. There are some who wear more than twenty ear-rings.” Descriptions of the sexual activities between Liu Chang and the Persian woman in the Song dynasty book the “*Ch’ing-i-lu*” by T’ao Ku were so graphic that the “Memoirs of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko (the Oriental Library), Issue 2” refused to provide any quotes from it while discussing the subject. Liu had free time with the Persian women by delegating the task of governing to others. Multiple women originating from the Persian Gulf lived in Guangzhou’s foreign quarter, they were all called “Persian women” (Po-ssu-fu or Bosifu).

Some scholars did not differentiate between Persian and Arab, and some say that the Chinese called all women coming from the Persian Gulf “Persian Women”.

The young Chinese Emperor Liu Chang of the Southern Han dynasty had a harem, including one Persian girl he nicknamed Mei Zhu, which means “Beautiful Pearl”. Liu liked the Persian girl (Mei Zhu) because of her tan skin color, described in French as “peau mate” (olive or light brown skinned). He and the Persian girl also liked to be naked and played with them in the palace. He favored her by “doting” on her. During the first year of his reign, he was not over sixteen years old when he had a taste for intercourse with Persian girls. The Persian girl was called a “princess”.

Descriptions of the sexual activities between Liu Chang

and the Persian woman in the Song dynasty book the “Ch’ing-i-lu” by T’ao Ku were so graphic that the “Memoirs of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko (the Oriental Library), Issue 2” refused to provide any quotes from it while discussing the subject. Liu had free time with the Persian women by delegating the task of governing to others.

The Wu Tai Shi says that ‘Liu Ch’ang, Emperor of the Southern Han dynasty reigning at Canton, about A.D. 970. “was dallying with his palace girls and Persian women in the inner apartments, and left the government of his state to the ministers.” The History of the Five Dynasties (Wu Tai Shih) stated that- “Liu Chang then with his court- ladies and Possu woman, indulged in amorous affairs in the harem”.

SONG DYNASTY

Guangzhou (Canton) had a community which included Persian women in the 10th-12th centuries, found in Liu Chang’s harem in the 10th century and in Song dynasty era Guangzhou in the 12th century the Persian women there were observed wearing many earrings.

The Muslim women in Guangzhou were called either Persian women or Pusaman according to Zhu Yu (author)’s book “Pingzhou ke tan” which may be from “Mussulman” or “Bussulman” which means Muslim in Persian. Pusaman was also the name of a tune about female dancers sent as tribute to China.

MING DYNASTY

Of the Han Chinese Li family in Quanzhou, Lin Nu, the son of Li Lu, visited Hormuz in Persia in 1376, married a Persian or an Arab girl, and brought her back to Quanzhou. Li Nu was the ancestor of the Ming Dynasty reformer Li Chih. Lin Nu and his descendants were erased

from the family genealogy by his relatives who were angry at him for converting to Islam and marrying a Persian girl because xenophobic feeling against foreigners was strong at that time due to Persian Semu atrocities in the Ispah Rebellion in which the Yuan defeated the Ispah and the Semu were massacred. The branch of the family who held to their Chinese customs felt ashamed so they changed their surname from Lin to Li to avoid associating with their relatives, Lin Nu’s descendants with his Persian wife who practiced Islam.

TANG DYNASTY

Sogdians in China used 9 Chinese surnames after the Chinese name of the states they came from.

Xizhou had a Han and Sogdian population. A record from the Astana Cemetery dating to 639 preserves the transaction where a Sogdian slave girl was being sold in Xizhou. The Han Zhang family also owned Chunxiang, a Turk slave woman in Xizhou. He Deli, a Sogdian who knew how to speak Turkic and Chinese and translated.

120 coins of silver were paid for the slave girl from Samarkand. The contract was written in Sogdian. Translated by Yoshida Yutaka. The slave girl was from the Chuyakk family and born in Central Asia. Upach was her name and the buyer’s name was written as Yansyan in Sogdian from the Chan family. The seller of the slave was from Samarkand called Wakhshuvirt and his father was Tudhakk. The contract said they could they anything they wanted to Upach, give her away, sell her, abuse her, beat her and she belonged to Yansyan’s family forever. Zhang Yanxiang, whose name is found in Chinese language documents in Turfan, is believed to be Chan Yansyan.

Discovery of 3000-Years Old Board-Games

CAIS (Circle of Ancient Iranian Studies) venue hosted by Shapour Suren-Pahlavi



An ancient four-pointed compass-rose showing directions of ‘four cardinal points’ and a number of board-games carved on rocks discovered in the Iranian island of Kharg in the Persian Gulf, reported Persian service of CHN on Saturday. The discovery was

made by Shahram Eslami, a local and a member of Kharg’s Friends of Cultural Heritage. The relics were studied and their ancient origins identified by Reza Moradi Ghiasabadi, who made the following observations:

“The engravings are between 2000 and 3000 years old. The first discovered carving is located beside an ancient road which is a four-pointed compass-rose showing directions of four cardinal points within a square-shape with rounded angles setting, 50x50cm in diameters. Some sections of the compass-rose have been damaged, apparently as the result of a cracks in the rock... the compass-rose’s lines have been placed in a position to determine the cardinal points, which have only two degrees of error based on the Global Positioning System (GPS)... This is a unique discovery and a great deal of efforts and resources should be made available to safeguard the relic. Also we must not remove it from its original place...”

The remaining carvings which are board-games were discovered in the northwest of the island. The board-games are in a mixture of circular and oblong shape settings, in various diameters, some 4cm and some in 10cm in circumference (see the picture). All these carvings engraved over the rocky-ground’s flat surfaces. These are located on the hinterland at the top of the cliff overlooking the waters of the Persian Gulf. These game-boards have been carved on the rocks in various settings, which Ghiasabadi have managed to identify seven of them. Some of them could be a proto-type for backgammon.

The Persian Gulf’s Iranian island of Kharg is situated at about 30 km northwest of Bandar-e Rig and 52 km northwest of Bushehr. It is the larger and more southerly of two islands (the other being Khargu). Kharg (also Khark) is about 8 km long and, at its widest point, 4 km across. The interior is hilly, terminating in cliffs at the northern and southern ends of the island.

Archaeologists have always believed the oldest settlement on the island dates back to Parthian dynastic era (248 BCE-224 CE), but as the result of a discovery in November 2007 history of the island was re-written, as the archaeologists have discovered an inscription executed in Old-Persian cuneiform, dated to the Achaemenid dynasty (550-330 BCE). Since its discovery, the rock-inscription has been left unprotected in its original place at the mercy of looters, vandals, and harsh weather.



1. DESCRIPTION OF THE IRANIAN BIRD FAUNA

Despite the fact that large portions of the country are arid to semi-arid, Iran possesses a very rich and diverse bird fauna; over 490 species are known to have occurred. Two main factors are responsible for this; the great range of habitats—from permanent snows to deep deserts and from lush deciduous forest in the north to palm groves and mangroves in the south—and Iran's position at a crossroads between three major faunal regions. The bulk of the country lies within the Palearctic faunal region, which stretches from Europe and North Africa across north and central Asia to the Soviet Far East and Japan. Lying along the southern edge of this region, Iran's bird fauna includes a large Western Palearctic faunal element, reaching its eastern extremity in the central Alborz and Zagros mountains, and a smaller, but still marked, Eastern Palearctic element, which extends into northeastern Iran in the highlands of Khorasan. In a number of cases, western and eastern forms—either closely related species or well differentiated subspecies of a single species—come together with a narrow zone of hybridization in the central Alborz; e.g., the wheatears *Oenanthe hispanica* and *O. pleschanka*, the buntings *Emberiza melanocephala* and *E. bruniceps*, and the green-backed and gray-backed forms of the great tit *Parus major* (Haffer). In southern Iran, two other faunal regions have a pronounced influence on the avifauna: The Oriental region in the southeast, and the Afrotropical (Ethiopian) in the southwest.

Of 324 breeding species, 131 occur widely in the Palearctic region, 81 are Western Palearctic species, reaching the easternmost extremities of their ranges in

BIRDS IN IRAN

part One

(Encyclopedia Iranica)

Iran, while 19 are typically Eastern Palearctic species, reaching the westernmost tip of their ranges in Iran. A further 25 species are characteristic of the great Sahara-Sindian desert belt which stretches along the southern edge of the Palearctic region from North Africa through the Middle East to Mongolia, while another 24 are Palearctic species with restricted ranges in the Middle East. The bird fauna of southern Persian Baluchistan and the southern Persian Gulf coast is predominantly Oriental, with some 29 breeding species of Oriental origin reaching the northwestern extremities of their ranges in Iran, while in southwestern Iran there is a small Afrotropical influence with six



breeding species of African origin. Finally, there are nine species of sea-bird and shorebird of the Indian Ocean, which breed on islands in the Persian Gulf and the Straits of Hormoz.

Eight major habitat types may be identified, each with its own characteristic bird fauna:

True desert and semidesert. The desert environment occurs throughout the central desert basin from the region of Tehran through the great Dašt-e Kavīr and Dašt-e Lūt deserts to the Jāz Mūrīān basin in central Baluchistan and locally along the southern coastal lowlands from northwestern Kūzestān to Baluchistan. Rather few species occur in true desert, and densities are very low, but most of those species which have become adapted to this hostile environment have large ranges both in Iran and in the southern Palearctic as a whole. Examples include: Houbara

bustard *Chlamydotis undulata*, cream-colored courser *Cursorius cursor*, spotted and coronated sandgrouse *Pterocles senegallus* and *P. coronatus*, desert and bartailed desert lark *Ammomanes deserti* and *A. cincturus*, hoopoe lark *Alaemon alaudipes*, desert warbler *Sylvia nana*, desert wheatear *Oenanthe deserti*, hooded wheatear *O. monacha*, and trumpeter finch *Rhodopechys githaginea*. Although Iran possesses no true endemic species, one species, Pleske's ground jay *Podoces pleskei*, which occurs widely in the deserts of central and eastern Iran, is almost confined to the country, and is known elsewhere only from extreme western Pakistan.

Semiarid steppe of the desert rim and foothills. Much of Iran's land surface, lying between 1,500 and 2,000 m in elevation and with an annual rainfall of between 100 and 300 mm, supports a steppe vegetation dominated by the low shrub *Artemisia herba-alba*. Large tracts have been modified by man, either through the grazing of domestic animals or irrigation and cultivation, particularly for cereals. The resulting patchwork is now the home of many of Iran's commonest and most widespread birds. Characteristic species include: long-legged buzzard *Buteo rufinus*, Eurasian kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*, black-bellied sandgrouse *Pterocles orientalis*, roller *Coracias garrulus*, bee-eater *Merops apiaster*, several species of lark *alauididae*, including the ubiquitous crested lark *Galerida cristata*, isabelline wheatear *Oenanthe isabellina*, and black-headed bunting.

High mountains. The alpine zones of the Alborz and Zagros mountains and the higher peaks of mountain ranges in Azerbaijan, Khorasan, Kermān, and Baluchistan provinces support a montane fauna—the so-called Paleomontane fauna—typical of all high mountain ranges from the Pyrenees and Alps in western Europe





to the Himalayas. Characteristic species include: golden eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*, bearded vulture *Gypaetus barbatus*, alpine swift *Apus melba*, crag martin *Hirundo rupestris*, horned lark *Eremophila alpestris*, alpine chough *Pyrrhocorax graculus*, alpine accentor *Prunella collaris*, rock thrush *Monticola saxatilis*, black redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*, wall creeper *Tichodroma muraria*, and snow finch *Montifringilla nivalis*. The Caspian snowcock *Tetraogallus caspius*, which is confined to high mountain ranges in Turkey and Iran, is still locally common on the highest peaks in the Alborz and Zagros.

Forests and woodland. Although of rather limited extent, Iran's forested regions possess a very rich bird fauna, which is largely Western Palearctic in affinities. The luxuriant forests of northern Azerbaijan and the south Caspian region have a bird fauna scarcely different from that of a central European woodland, with common species including: wood pigeon *Columba palumbus*, green woodpecker *Picus viridis*, great spotted woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*, tree pipit *Anthus trivialis*, red-backed shrike *Lanius collurio*, jay *Garrulus glandarius*, wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*, duncock *Prunella modularis*, blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*, icterine warbler *Hippolais icterina*, robin *Erithacus rubecula*, nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos*, several species of thrush *Turdus* sp., several species of tit *Parus* sp. and chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*. The drier and more open oak woodlands of the western Zagros lack some of the true forest species and have a Mediterranean element which includes species such as Syrian woodpecker *Dendrocopos syriacus*, masked shrike *Lanius nubicus*, black-eared wheatear, somber tit *Parus lugubris*, and cinereous bunting *Emberiza cineracea*. In the even drier mixed pistachio, sycamore, and

almond woodlands of the eastern Zagros, the Kermān highlands, and isolated mountains in northern Baluchistan, only a handful of Western Palearctic species occur. Characteristic birds here include a mixture of Middle Eastern specialties e.g., white-throated robin *Irania gutturalis* and plain leaf warbler *Phylloscopus neglectus*, Eastern Palearctic species, e.g., isabelline shrike *Lanius isabellinus* and Hume's lesser whitethroat *Sylvia (curruca) althaea*, Oriental species, e.g., bay-backed shrike *Lanius vittatus*, and Western Palearctic species at the extreme edge of their ranges, e.g., wood pigeon, nightingale, and blackbird *Turdus merula*. Finally, throughout the remoter mountain ranges of Iran there still exist good stands of juniper forest with specialties such as gold-fronted serin *Serinus pusillus* and, in the northeast, white-winged grosbeak *Mycerobas carripes*.

The hot southern lowlands. The arid tropical climate of the southern coastal lowlands supports a flora and fauna quite unlike that of the rest of Iran. From northwestern Kūzestān to eastern Persian Baluchistan, open park-like stands of *Acacia*, *Prosopis*, and *Tamarix* and extensive date-palm groves provide suitable habitat for a variety of Oriental/Afrotropical species, such as palm dove *Streptopelia senegalensis*, indian roller *Coracias benghalensis*, little green bee-eater *Merops orientalis*, white-eared bulbul *Pycnonotus leucotis*, graceful prinia *Prinia gracilis*, common babbler *Turdoides caudatus*, purple sunbird *Nectarinia asiatica* and yellow-throated sparrow *Petronia xanthocollis*. A number of species of Oriental origin, such as Indian sand lark *Calandrella raytal*, common mynah *Acridotheres tristis*, and Sind jungle sparrow *Passer pyrrhonotus*, are confined to extreme southeast Persian Baluchistan, while several others extend only as far west as the Bandar-e 'Abbās region, e.g., white-eyed buzzard-eagle *Butastur teesa*, Indian gray partridge *Francolinus pondicerianus*, and Sind pied woodpecker *Dendrocopos assimilis*. In the west, the riverine poplar thickets and marsh edge habitat of Kūzestān hold several specialties, such as gray hypocolius *Hypocolius ampelinus*, Iraq babbler *Turdoides altiostriis*, and Dead Sea sparrow *Passer moabiticus*.

The wetlands. Although much of Iran is extremely dry, there are several very extensive wetland systems of great importance for a wide variety of waterfowl species. The south Caspian Sea,

its 700 km of sandy shoreline, and the fresh-water lakes, marshes, and brackish lagoons in central Gīlān, the Gorgān Bay area, and the Turkoman steppes provide a complex of breeding and wintering areas for waterfowl almost unequaled in the Western Palearctic. The region is best known for its wintering waterfowl and the traditional commercial duck-harvesting which this has supported (Savage, pp. 30-46). Regular censuses in recent years have estimated the mid-winter population of ducks, geese, swans, and coots at well over a million birds, with perhaps as many birds again occurring on passage in spring and autumn. In addition, there are large wintering populations of Dalmatian pelicans *Pelecanus crispus*, greater flamingos *Phoenicopterus ruber*, grebes Podicipedidae, herons and egrets Ardeidae, shorebirds Charadriidae and Scolopacidae, and gulls Laridae. During the spring and autumn migration seasons, large numbers of shorebirds pass through the south Caspian on their way between breeding grounds in the Arctic and wintering grounds in the Persian Gulf and East and South Africa, and in summer the marshes teem with breeding cormorants *Phalacrocorax carbo*, herons, egrets, gallinules including purple gallinule *Porphyrio porphyrio*, and whiskered terns *Chlidonias hybrida*.

The other major wetland areas in Iran are hardly any less spectacular. The wetlands of the Režā'īya (Urmia) basin in Azerbaijan, centered on the very large and highly saline Lake Urmia, support large breeding colonies of waterfowl, notably greater flamingo (20,000 to 25,000 pairs), white pelican *Pelecanus onocrotalus* (1,000 to 1,600 pairs), spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*, glossy ibis *Plegadis falcinellus*, white stork *Ciconia ciconia*, shelduck and ruddy shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* and *T. ferruginea*, avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*, black-winged stilt *Himantopus himantopus*, and herring



and slender-billed gulls *Larus argentatus* and *L. genei*. The wetlands are extremely important for passage shorebirds and in mild winters can hold over 50,000 wintering ducks and geese.

The flood plains of the Dez, Kārūn, and Karḳa rivers in Kūzestān, the complex of fresh, brackish, and saline lakes at the inland delta of the Helmand river in Sīstān, on the Afghan border, and the network of fresh and saline lakes in central Fārs, particularly Lake Baḳtagān, Lake Tašk, Lake Mahārlū, Lake Parīšān, and the Dašt-e Arjan marshes all provide habitat for many hundreds of thousands of wintering waterfowl. In addition to a wide range of ducks, geese, and shorebirds, these wetlands are particularly important for wintering white pelican (Fārs and Sīstān), sacred ibis *Threskiornis aethiopicus* (Kūzestān), white stork (Kūzestān and Fārs), greater flamingo (Fārs), and common crane *Grus grus* (all three areas). In years of good rainfall, wetlands in all three regions can be of great importance for breeding waterfowl, particularly herons, egrets, spoonbill, glossy ibis, red-wattled lapwing *Vanellus indicus*, white-tailed plover *Vanellus leucurus*, and collared pratincole *Glareola pratincola*.

Coastal habitats of the Persian Gulf and Makrān coast. The tidal mud-flats, mangrove swamps, sandy beaches, rocky shores, and sea-cliffs of Iran's south coast support a variety of breeding and wintering waterfowl and sea-birds. Breeding species include crab plover *Dromas ardeola*, great stone plover *Esacus recurvirostris* (only in the east), several species of herons and egrets such as Indian pond heron *Ardeola grayii*, western reef heron *Egretta gularis* and goliath her-

on *Ardea goliath* (in mangroves), and several species of terns *Sterna* sp. Wintering species include Dalmatian pelican, cormorant, spoonbill, osprey *Pandion haliaetus*, white-tailed eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla*, many shorebirds notably oyster-catcher *Haematopus ostralegus*, bar-tailed godwit *Limosa lapponica*, curlew *Numenius arquata* and plovers of the genus *Charadrius*, and a variety of skuas *Stercorarius* sp., gulls *Larus* sp., and terns *Sterna* sp.

Offshore islands. The many small and uninhabited islands in the Persian Gulf and straits of Hormoz provide ideal breeding grounds for large colonies of seabirds. The main species are great crested tern *Sterna bergii*, lesser crested tern *S. bengalensis*, white-checked tern *S. repressa*, and bridled tern *S. anaethetus*, but small colonies of red-billed tropicbird *Phaethon aethereus*, socotra cormorant *Phalacrocorax nigrogularis*, and saunders' little tern *Sterna saundersi* have been found, and the Persian shearwater *Puffinus lherminieri persicus* probably breeds.

Table 6 and Table 6 (continued) gives a breakdown of the Iranian avifauna according to family and status. Of the 491 species which are known to have occurred in Iran at least 324 breed regularly. 103 are almost if not entirely sedentary, remaining on or near their breeding grounds throughout the year. A few undertake short altitudinal migrations, moving down from the highest mountain ranges during periods of hard weather. 123 species can be classed as "partial migrants." In some cases the individuals breeding in Iran are largely sedentary, but numbers are swelled in autumn with the arrival of individuals from breeding grounds to the north of Iran. In other cases, individuals breeding in north or central Iran tend to be migratory, while many or all of the individuals breeding in the south are sedentary. In a third group of species, mainly those breeding in the highlands of north and west Iran, there is some movement of individuals, particularly young birds, out of the breeding grounds into the central desert basin and southern lowlands in the autumn. 98 species are breeding summer visitors, with the great bulk of the Iranian breeding population migrating in autumn either southwest to winter in the Arabian peninsula and Africa or southeast to winter in the Indian subcontinent. Among a few species there seems to be a "migratory divide," with



birds breeding in western Iran migrating southwest in autumn and those breeding in eastern Iran migrating southeast, e.g., swallow *Hirundo rustica* and sand martin *Riparia riparia*. In many species, a small number of individuals occasionally overwinter in the extreme southwest or southeast of Iran.

Of the non-breeding visitors to Iran 86 species are winter visitors from breeding grounds in the Soviet Union. Two-thirds of these are waterfowl (particularly ducks, geese, swans, and shorebirds) and birds of prey. Banding studies have shown that the bulk of ducks wintering in Iran originate from breeding grounds in the basin of the Ob and Irtysh rivers in Western Siberia. In many cases the number of birds overwintering represents only a small proportion of the total present during the migration seasons, indicating that a large through passage is taking place. 24 species occur in Iran only as passage migrants in spring and autumn, breeding to the north of Iran and wintering to the southwest or southeast. The remaining 57 non-breeding species include vagrants and rare stragglers, chiefly from central and eastern Asia, and a small number of species which were formerly reported as breeding in Iran but which have not been recorded for many years, e.g., pied crested cuckoo *Clamator jacobinus*, brown fish owl *Ketupa zeylonensis*, scaly-bellied green woodpecker *Picus squamatus*, black-headed shrike *Lanius schach*, black drongo *Dicrurus macrocereus*, jungle crow *Corvus macrorhynchos*, and desert sparrow *Passer simplex*.

To be continued

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Iranian-American Sculptor and Architect

SIAH ARMAJANI

JULY 10, 1939 - AUGUST 27, 2020

(taken from Wikipedia)



FAMILY AND EDUCATION

Siavash Armajani an Iranian-American sculptor and architect was born on July 10, 1939 and passed away on August 27, 2020. He was born into a wealthy, educated family of textile merchants in 1939 in Tehran, Iran. He attended a Presbyterian missionary school. He thought that his grandmother was the influence that started his political activism. He began his art career making small collages in the late 1950s, visually mirroring Persian miniatures and political posters, to spread his vision of democracy and secularism and to publicize his party the National Front.

After the monarch Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi came to power, in order to protect him, his family ordered him overseas in 1960. Armajani immigrated to the United States, where his uncle, Yahya Armajani, was chair of the history department at Macalester College. There he studied art and philosophy, making Saint Paul, Minnesota, his permanent home. He met his wife at Macalester and he and Barbara Bauer married in

1966. He became an American citizen in 1967.

EARLY CAREER

The Walker Art Center was the first to acquire Armajani's work, after he entered two works into their biennial in 1962. They purchased *Prayer*, an intricately lettered 70-inch (180 cm) canvas covered in Farsi poetry.

Always interested in computing and engineering, during the late 1960s he took classes at Control Data Institute in Minneapolis, where he learned Fortran. Armajani taught at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design from 1968 until 1974, where he met Barry Le Va, who introduced him to Conceptual art then practiced in New York City. He participated in *Art by Telephone* at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago in 1969. In 1970, Armajani contributed two works to the Museum of Modern Art exhibition *Information*: first, *A Number Between Zero and One*, a 9-foot (2.7 m) high column filled with computer printouts of individual decimal numbers; and second, *North Dakota Tower*, a proposed spire 18 miles (29 km) high and 2 miles (3.2 km) wide calculated to cast a narrow shadow over the entire length of North Dakota from east to west.

In 1968, he built *First Bridge* in White Bear Lake, Minnesota as 10 feet (3.0 m) narrowing to 4 feet (1.2 m), illustrating our perspective vision. He built *Fibonacci Discovery Bridge* (1968–1988) to follow the mathematical Fibonacci sequence and, for the Walker's outdoor show *9 Artists/9 Spaces*, he built *Bridge Over Tree* (1970), a 91-foot (28 m) long walkway with stairs that rise and fall over an evergreen tree.

In 1974–75 he built more than 1,000 cardboard and balsa wood models of components of American vernacular architecture titled *Dictionary for Building*.

In 1988, he designed the Irene Hixon Whitney Bridge in Minneapolis, uniting two neighborhoods previously sepa-



rated by 16 lanes of streets and highway. Armajani expresses three basic types of bridge construction: beam (the walkway), arch (eastern side), and suspension (western side). He commissioned a poem by John Ashbery that is stamped into the bridge's upper beams. And in 1993, he built on one side in Loring Park, the pavilion *Gazebo for Four Anarchists: Mary Nardini, Irma Sanchini, William James Sidis, Carlo Valdinoci*.

Siah Armajani designed the Olympic Torch presiding over the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, Georgia, United States, but later disowned the project because the Olympic Committee failed to uphold their contract.

He worked on other projects such as the *Round Gazebo* in Nice, France, the *Sacco and Vanzetti Reading Room* at the Museum für Moderne Kunst in Frankfurt, and projects in Münster, Germany; Battery Park City, New York; at Storm King Art Center in Mountainville, New York; and at the North Shore Esplanade at the St. George's Staten Island Ferry Terminal in Staten Island, New York.

LATER CAREER

In his later years, Armajani returned to his politically active roots. His 2005 work, *Fallujah*, is a modern take on Picasso's *Guernica* but was censored in the U.S. due to its criti-



cal view of the war in Iraq. It was recently on view at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota. *Seven Rooms of Hospitality* is based on a conversation between Jacques Derrida and Anne Dufourmantelle. *Room for Deportees* (2017) speaks out to the hard line, anti-immigrant policies that took over in the US and Europe.

An exhibition at Muelenstein Gallery in 2011 presented a dozen of Armajani's early pieces made between 1957 and 1962, created in the years leading up to his arrival in America. Many employ ink or watercolor on cloth or paper, and incorporate text. In his *Shirt* (1958), Armajani uses pencil and ink to completely cover his father's shirt in Persian script.

The Minneapolis Institute of Art holds several works: *Skyway No.2* (1980), a 5-foot (1.5 m) mahogany and brass portal; *Mississippi Delta* (2005-2006), a colored pencil on Mylar triptych picturing the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina; and *An Exile Dreaming of Saint Adorno* (2009), a cage-like inhabited tiny house or stage named for Theodor W. Adorno.

Armajani was the subject of more than 50 solo exhibitions, and his works featured in dozens of major exhibitions in the US and Europe. *Siah Armajani: Follow This Line*, the first comprehensive US retrospective dedicated to the artist, was on view at the Walker Art Center September 9 through December 30, 2018, and at the Met Breuer February 20 through June 2, 2019.

Armajani died of heart failure in Minneapolis on August 27, 2020, at age 81.

AWARDS AND HONORS

In 2010, he won a Knight Fellow award granted by United States Artists. In 2011, he was awarded Chevalier of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French government and received a distinguished artist award from the McKnight Foundation.

