



Interview with Goli Ameri – p. 50



Persian Gardens – p. 30



Iranian Poet, Saadi - p. 44



Interview with Abbas Milani - p. 47

<b>FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK</b>	6
<b>LETTERS TO THE EDITOR</b>	8
<b>NEWS BRIEFS</b>	10
<b>COMMENTARY</b>	13
<b>An Iranian Ikon</b>	14
<i>(David A. Yazdan)</i>	
<b>Cartoons as Political Weapons of Mass Destruction</b>	15
<i>(Reza Saberi)</i>	
<b>What Are We Thinking?</b>	16
<i>(K. Navi)</i>	
<b>Looking Middle Eastern?</b>	17
<i>(Pirouz Azadi)</i>	
<b>History of Terrorism — Part XI</b>	19
<i>(David A. Yazdan)</i>	
<b>Google &amp; Noerooz</b>	22
<i>(Ariane)</i>	
<b>Zoroaster's Objection to Cruelty to Animals</b>	24
<i>(Hushang Payan)</i>	
<b>Sir Percy Sykes</b>	27
<i>(Antony Wynn)</i>	
<b>Persian Gardens &amp; Hispano-Muslim Gardens</b>	30
<i>(Michael McClain)</i>	
<b>What Really Happened to the Shah of Iran</b>	33
<i>(William Engdahl)</i>	
<b>THE ARTS &amp; CULTURE</b>	
<b>Book Reviews</b>	36
<b>Prime Time and Exhibit Curated</b>	37
<i>(Amy Smith-Stewart)</i>	
<b>YOUR PERSIAN HERITAGE</b>	
<b>First Iranian Males &amp; Females Pilots</b>	40
<i>(Manouchehr Noury)</i>	
<b>Iranian Poet, Saadi</b> <i>(Sima Sayyah)</i>	44
<b>Interview with Abbas Milani</b> <i>(Shahrokh Ahkami)</i>	47
<b>So Much to Be Proud of</b>	52
<b>The Art of Wine</b> <i>(Touraj Daryaei)</i>	54
<b>Interview with Goli Ameri</b> <i>(Shahrokh Ahkami)</i>	56

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

For the first time in eleven years of *Persian Heritage* magazine I wrote my editorial one week after publishing the Spring issue. I was relieved with the prospect that this portion of the next issue was completed. Not so! Two weeks ago during a trip to North Carolina for a family wedding, an incident occurred that caused me to rethink what I had previously written.

While at the party I met an American who was also a guest. I noticed that she was intently reading the spring issue of *Persian Heritage*. When I questioned her interest she replied by telling me that she has read the magazine for many years. She continued to say that she has noticed over the years that my editorials and other articles characterize Iranians as kind, affectionate and hospitable but also give the reader the impression that Iranians as a community seem to be in a constant feud with each other and divided. She continued by informing me that my writings are full of disappointments which demonstrate a social gap within our community.

This conversation took place in the presence of others who looked on and listened in deafening silence. Hearing her words caused a chill down my spine. I became speechless. For me it was sad that a person, not a member of the Persian community, one eager to learn about our culture and an avid reader of the magazine to have such a negative perception of us as a community. It was disconcerting to me for her to see our society as divided and broken. What was worse was that her perception was the result of my editorials and a few visits with her Iranian friends.

The next day on our drive back to New Jersey my wife brought up this incident. Like me she was also upset with this women's perception of Iranians being antagonistic against one another. She however, did not believe all were of this nature and thought that I should write about our positive attributes in future editorial pieces and not dwell on the negative. I listened to her but at that time could not formulate an appropriate response.

This entire event recalled an event in my childhood. One day one of my classmates came crying to me. He had an argument with his father during breakfast. When I asked him the reason for the argument he told me that his father insisted he speak with less of a *Ghochani* accent. "How did you respond?" I asked. He told his father that this would be impossible to do since he speaks like his friends, relatives and teachers and therefore had no idea how to change his accent. How did his father respond to this statement? SILENCE. He then asked me how I would answer my father. Again he was met with SILENCE.

Remembering these two events convinced me to change my earlier editorial. I felt that I needed to write something that would give my readers great joy even though I knew in doing so that I was covering up a disturbing reality. Would my ignoring the illness of division in our community be more detrimental to our community in the future than one woman's perception today?

I sat down to write but struggled until I saw *Time* magazine which contained an article about the top one hundred people whose opinion influenced the world. Included in the list was President Ahmadinejad along with President Bush on the list of leaders. Well this is not too positive considering their present opinions are creating unnecessary turmoil. I read on and found another familiar Persian name Omid Kordestani a top CEO of *Google*. Now that was positive! I then found another article which included a list of names of people who impacted the world in politics, literature, business, arts and science. The list which contained a number of Iranian names including Christiane Amanpour. This made me proud, but my



## Persian Heritage

**Persian Heritage, Inc.**

110 Passaic Avenue

Passaic, NJ 07055

E-mail: mirassiran@aol.com

Telephone: (973) 471-4283

Fax: (973) 471-8534

or: (973) 574-8995

**EDITOR:**

**SHAHROKH AHKAMI**

**EDITORIAL BOARD:** Dr. Mehdi Abu-Saidi, Shirin Ahkami-Raiszadeh, Dr. Mahvash Alavi Naini, Mohammad Bagher Alavi, Dr. Talat Bassari, Mohammad Ali Dowlatshahi, Mohammad H. Hakami, Ardeshir Lotfalian, K. B. Navi, Dr. Kamshad Raiszadeh, Farhang A. Sadeghpour, Mohammad K. Sadigh, Ghahremon Suleymonpour, Dr. David Yeagley.

**MANAGING EDITORS:**

ABBAS HABIBIAN & LAURA HOLT

**ADVERTISING:**

LAURA HOLT, TERRY FAZIO AND HALLEH NIA

The contents of the articles and advertisements in this journal, with the exception of the editorial, are the sole works of each individual writers and contributors. This magazine does not have any confirmed knowledge as to the truth and veracity of these articles. All contributors agree to hold harmless and indemnify *Persian Heritage* (*Mirass-e Iran*), *Persian Heritage* Inc., its editors, staff, board of directors, and all those individuals directly associated with the publishing of this magazine. The opinions expressed in these articles are the sole opinions of the writers and not the journal. No article or picture submitted will be returned to the writer or contributor. All articles submitted in English must be typed.

The appearance of advertising in this magazine does not constitute a guarantee or endorsement of the products by *Persian Heritage*. In addition, articles and letters published do not reflect the views of this publication.

Letters to the Editor should be mailed, faxed or e-mailed to the above addresses and numbers. The journal reserves the right to edit same for space and clarity or as deemed appropriate.

All requests for permissions and reprints must be made in writing to the managing editor.

**PUBLISHED BY:**

**PERSIAN HERITAGE, INC.**

A corporation organized for cultural and literary purposes

Cover Price: \$5.00

Subscriptions: \$20.00/year (domestic);

\$30.00 & 50.00/year (other countries)

Typesetting & Layout: FARABI PUBLISHERS

pride was short lived as once again another negative thought entered my mind.

Why and how, I thought did Iran allow such talent leave their country? Why did they create such turmoil and drive these valuable resources away from their roots? Had Iran provided them with the same opportunity they found here the future of Iran would be much brighter. They could have been the ways and means to take Iran to another economic and cultural level. It is unfortunate that the government over the last thirty years deprived these young vibrant Iranians of basic freedoms and economic security. Why is there a government in existence in Iran today that deprives men, women and children of basic primitive freedoms? Who in the government thinks up ridiculous notions, that the naked legs of a man in a football uniform will sexually stimulate a woman and therefore banned women from the sports stadium. Why should the beautiful Iranian woman, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century be forced to be covered from head to toe in public?

Instead of thinking ways to thwart the development of these young people and promote programs to rehabilitate Iran and regain its prestige in the world, the present government is spending money and time on taking freedom and creativeness away. Instead of acknowledging mistakes they try to convince their citizens that Iran's survival depends on the extinction of another country and denying the holocaust and horrible crimes of WW II. Instead of getting inspiration from their young, talented and vibrant youth the present regime looks for inspiration from the last Imam or wastes time in writing a letter to a government who will look for any opportunity to ridicule. Have they lost their chance to sit with the west and truly negotiate a peaceful outcome for themselves, for Iran, for its citizens and for world peace?

For those who are denying the imminent possibility of a military attack on Iran it is time for a reality check. The possibility is strong and grows stronger each day. The events happening today are not fictional they are real and at the helm of this are political analysts who until yesterday were third rate artists. They believe the only way to end the present regime is for the U.S. to drop a bomb on Iran. I guess the thousands of innocent Iranian lives that are likely to be lost in the process is of no significance.

If these individuals were true political analysts who have researched similar past events, rather than act on emotion, they would quickly realize that the flames of war has only a negative lingering effect. Did the eight year war and loss of lives break down the regime? No, instead it gave the regime an opportunity to rid themselves of opposition, by sending those who oppose it into exile, prison or death. Another war will fuel the power of the rulers and again result in more loss of lives, limbs and economic demise for the Iranian people. And, they will do this under the excuse of protecting the integrity of the country! At what cost?... Hunger, poverty, disease and division?

How is it that they have such a stronghold? How in good conscience can they have been elected and allowed to control? Read the history books. Totalitarian forms of government do not result in prosperity for its citizens. Look at Nazi Germany, one man's ego caused millions to die or suffer. One man's ego has allowed a vibrant country and citizens to remain occupied sixty years later. Is this the legacy a true leader wants for their country and people? Look at Iraq. Again what did the ego of one man and his entourage leave for his people and country? He left a country that will live in the shadow of occupation for decades to come. Soon he like those before him will be placed in the historical garbage can while the country he wished to destroy, Kuwait, has secured itself a significant place on the world map.

In hearing my voice as I am writing this new editorial I do not believe I have kept my promise to write something cheerful and light. I did want to show the glory of Iranians but unless we recognize our illnesses and differences I believe the glory of Iranians will continue to be on foreign soil. While I am proud to be an American citizen and grateful for the opportunity I have derived from living here I want my children and their children to read about the accomplishments that remain on Iranian soil. I want America to know that there are deserving Iranian citizens who should have the opportunity to develop in their own land. I therefore cannot sweeten the bitter tea of reality and the real dangers that exist for Iran, Iranians and the world.

My dear readers and friends we must remain honest and straight forward with each other. During these sensitive and historical days we must remind our leaders of our society to wake up and to think wisely for the future of themselves and their children. None of us will be immune from the pain of a military attack on Iran. I wish and pray we all have a better tomorrow.

*Shahrokh Alavi*

## Interesting Quotes

**Sir Winston Churchill:** The statesman who yields to war fever...is no longer the master of policy but the slave of unforeseeable and uncontrollable events.

**Thomas Jefferson:** Governments constantly choose between telling lies and fighting wars, with the end result always being the same. One will always lead to the other.

**Abraham Lincoln:** America will never be destroyed from the outside. If we falter, and lose our freedoms, it will be because we destroyed ourselves.

*from the internet*

## LOOKING MIDDLE EASTERN? YOU ARE A PRIME SUSPECT!

Pirouz Azadi

As we approach the fifth anniversary of September 11, when the US mainland was attacked by an act of terrorism and suffered the loss of nearly 3,000 innocent lives, the tens of millions of European and American citizens of Middle Eastern ancestry have been devastatingly caught between "a rock and a hard place." In quest for a better life and democracy, these immigrants left their homelands for the West seeking freedom and equal opportunity for themselves and their children. These immigrants, as exemplified, for instance, by the prominent presence of nearly one million Americans of Iranian heritage in the US, are among the most law-abiding, most educated, and most affluent citizens, contributing immensely toward the US economy (in education, research and development, business and manufacturing, arts and civic service) and the advancement of the quality of life for the nation as a whole.

Mostly from the middle and upper classes, many have left their country of origin for fear of religious, ethnic, social, or political persecutions; it is so painfully ironic that they now experience similar mistreatment in their new homeland. While they cannot return to their old countries of origin, they also feel looked down upon and with suspicion by neighbors and colleagues, but particularly by government agents in the US. In one word, their "wine has turned to sour vinegar again." The "Patriot Act" and its extensions and extrapolations, and the government programs such as wiretapping of communications as implemented by the National Security Agency, interrogations and imprisonments, etc., have further exacerbated their predicaments. Their US-born European counterparts, whose ancestors arrived just a few generations earlier, feel justified as they look down at their more recent compatriots with suspicion, discriminatory practices, intimidation, and even threats.

As painful as it is, it must be put on record that US-born children of Middle Eastern ancestry are bullied by, not only by their peers, but also by their teachers in schools, while their admissions into col-

leges and professional schools and professional opportunities are increasingly jeopardized. It is painful to privately hear the stories in these immigrant communities of a systematic pattern of discrimination for jobs or promotions, simply because some in position of power feel these applicants are "different" and so guilty by association, at least. The federal leadership of all three branches of government, with heads in the sands whispers, "see no evil, and hear no evil." Even though none of the millions of US citizens of Middle Eastern origin directly or indirectly have been implicated in terrorist activities against our nation, the collective punishment by ethno-religious stereotyping has been sufficient to try such populations in the court of public opinion.

The nearly three million Iranians in Diaspora, particularly those in the US have had to face the unpleasant day-to-day feeling of being watched, interrogated, and discriminated. *Deja vue* all over again. Many Iranian, albeit Middle Eastern Americans now feel they have a much deeper, more sympathetic empathy with the Japanese American interments, and the persecutions of the German Jews leading to the holocaust in the forty's.

The dilemma is practically the same, if not worse, among Americans with Arab, North African, and Indo-Pakistani heritage. This has in turn led to a self-imposed conscious decision of lowering one's aspirations, and retreating from a social environment in the society at large in despair. Ironically, the fear and apprehension from both the old and the new countries of origin lingers on. Notwithstanding the repressive system of government in Iran, for instance, there has not been a single terrorist activity against the West by an Iranian national in Europe or in the US although it is said opponents to the regime in exile have been on occasion assassinated by mercenary culprits overseas.

Immigrants, due perhaps to their cultural values and inherent fear of authorities, unless it involves serious hate crimes such as homicides or suicides, would not

voluntarily report discrimination, harassment, and outright face to face insults. So, such ordeals are only discussed among their innermost circles. Job related discriminations especially in middle to upper level positions, from industry to government, are prevalent. Given the high level of educational achievements of Iranian-Americans, there are a large number of applicants who have been manifestly qualified for GS-15 and SES executive government positions. Nonetheless, presumably because they could not receive top security clearances due to unspecified reasons beyond their control or knowledge, or due to their country of origin and perceived ethno-religious associations, they have been denied the honor of serving their new country. This is evident from a rather disproportionate number of university professors in the nation who have hardly gone beyond the faculty rank; they are almost non-existent in government ranks. In many other instances, such citizens would simply shy away from submitting applications for such "sensitive positions, as they can predict the disproportionate rejections rate. Business owners in these communities are also adversely impacted.

The US administration, along with its ideological allies such as the UK government, justifies the erosion of domestic civil and human rights at home on the basis that this is an essential element of battling terrorism. However, every indication leads one to reluctantly accept the fact that the new so-called, "the war on terrorism" under the banner "spreading US democracy", has now been institutionalized to replace the fifty years of cold war era confrontation with the former Soviet Union. This has in turn overcome the temporary strategy of the early 90's, when the military industrial complex found itself in a precarious state of survival. Besides, it is incumbent upon an open society to be capable of securing itself, while safeguarding the constitutional and civil rights of its citizens.

The rapidly growing US military budget and that of homeland security fast approaching 600 billion dollars, the estimated cost of the military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan tallied thus far at nearly 500 billions and estimated to exceed two trillion dollars, has, in essence, mortgaged every Americans life for the next few generations. It necessarily dictates a dramatic decrease in budget allocations for health, social services and education, which we have started to experience this

fiscal year. This is just some of the factual data to remain gravely concerned about. The line between the citizens, prime interests and those of the Anglo-American oil conglomerate is increasingly convoluted, but the public continues to pick up the invoice with no choice.

Above all, the US and the global community are increasingly alarmed by the high cost of human lives in the Middle East that has so far led to the loss of life of 2400 young American soldiers and over 17000 injured, not to mention that over tens of thousands of Iraqi civilians have perished. Despite the quagmire of Iraq, the US administration and its allies have already begun beating the drum for yet another unilateral war against Iran, once again, under the pretext of [nuclear] weapons of mass destruction. This has again been perpetrated without having ever presented an iota of documented fact and evidence for such a nuclear weapon production scheme exists in Iran. In the true spirit of the American ideals, the commitment to Non-Proliferation Treaty and nuclear demilitarization by all countries of South and Southwest Asia, and North Africa, is the first step toward a truly sustainable geo-political stability, but that seems to be dodged at every turn.

One can not argue with the fact that the current Islamic government in Iran that has been in place since 1979, when the Shah's monarchy was overthrown by the revolutionary forces, is indeed a repressive regime against its own population of 70 million. Violation of human rights (torture, imprisonment and executions), sham democracy, vote rigging, corruption and lack of transparency, cronyism, nepotism, and waste of material and human resources leading to brain and capital drain from Iran, have increased steadily since 1979. In view of these ironies, the Iranian people have searched for subdued innovative ways to confront the reactionary establishment. Paradoxically, the current US administrations misguided confrontational military and "smart" economic sanction threats against the Iranian regime will only be counter-productive in that it radicalizes the regime further resorting to desperate extreme means necessary for its own survival. By the same token, the aspiration of the Iranian people for justice and freedom, that has continued since 1906, when the first modern constitutional monarchy war installed, will once again be stopped. Those who do not learn from history repeat the same mistake. Back in 1953, a US coup

led to the overthrow of the only elected Prime Minister, Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh, and the reinstatement of the escaped Shah as the absolute monarch, thereby violating the ratified 1906 constitution. Iranians did not remember this fact when they overthrew the Shah which led to the establishment of current regime, otherwise they would have better safeguarded the incipient democracy dearly.

The potential US military intervention in Iran spreads more hatred against the United States nation in the Middle East, would lead to additional thousands of Americans and allied forces losing their lives, and expenditures amounting to yet another few trillion dollars to be covered by US tax payers, not to mention the possible loss of hundreds of thousands of Iranian civilians and the loss of the ideals of justice, freedom, and democracy, here and abroad. A self-sustaining democracy has as its prerequisite socio-economic independence. Otherwise, it will be more destructive to all parties concerned. Let us bear in mind that despite their modest slow progress, religious reformation and societal modernization adapted to indigenous cultures have been in the works in the Middle East, especially in Iran, for at least one hundred years. Western interventions are only impeding such natural processes in the region.

President Bush uttered it so eloquently in his State of the Union address recently, when he said, "We are a nation addicted to oil." And yet, his rhetoric on envisaging the promotion of alternative renewable energy resources came short of substantiating his "addiction" diagnosis, with an optimal prescription to remedy the disease. In retrospect, he was most probably leading the nation to capitulate to an all out exploitation of fossil fuels in our ecologically sensitive lands, leading to an environmental and human catastrophe of "biblical" magnitude. The US alone with 5% of the world population uses 30% of the annual energy and natural resources production. A comprehensive, nationally driven commitment to the development and expeditious substitution of fossil fuels with sustainable energy resources (solar, wind, hydrogen, geothermal, fuel cells) to relieve ourselves of suicidal dependence on foreign oil is, therefore, more urgent than ever in order to avoid the unprecedented global annihilation of humanity.

*Pirouz Azadi, a life-long American of Persian heritage, is a professor in New York, USA.*

# Advertise Your Business or Services in

## Persian Heritage

CALL

(973)

471-4283

Fax:

(973) 471-8534

[www.persian-heritage.com](http://www.persian-heritage.com)

## ZOROASTER'S OBJECTION TO CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

HUSHANG M. PAYAN

Since the beginning of time, violence among people and against animals has been common. When Abraham, probably the best-known perpetrator of such activity was prepared to sacrifice his son Isaac for God, a ram miraculously appeared on the scene ready to be sacrificed.<sup>2</sup> Such violence can spread like wild fire. On the other hand, it can be mitigated by substituting animals for people!<sup>8</sup> Having provided sufficient thrills, animal sacrifices soon replaced human massacres.<sup>5</sup> As human lives may have been spared to a certain degree, cruelty to animals persisted. Nowadays bull fighting, bull running, bull baiting, dog fighting, and cock fighting provide such thrills and generate the macho in men.<sup>12</sup> Today such sports seem less common, and in many countries, even illegal.<sup>14</sup> Throughout history, cruelty to unsuspecting animals disturbed many people, but the first man to voice his objection was Zoroaster (Zarathushtra) about 3,500 years ago.<sup>13,6</sup>

Cave paintings dated as early as 30,000 BCE illustrate animal worship. Because of their large, powerful stature, bear, bull, and bison were revered as gods.<sup>7,11</sup> Prehistoric civilizations sacrificed human beings as well. Such practices continued until a few centuries ago.<sup>5</sup> Men justified their brutality by believing that it enabled the souls of their victims to join the gods. Their esprit de corps developed into religious rituals of group hunting and further sacrificing!<sup>15</sup>

In *Gilgamesh* book on Middle Eastern mythology, the sky god sends the "bull of heaven" to destroy the city of Uruk.<sup>20</sup> According to pre-Zoroastrian Iranian mythology (4,000-5,000 years ago), the sun god Mithra killed the "uniquely created" white bull, the first animal to live on earth. In Zoroaster's version, it was the Evil Spirit that killed the bull. The bull's seed purified by the moon, returned to earth, planted itself, then grew into all useful plants and animals. Therefore, the sacrificial killing of the bull became a creative act resulting in common good. Many bulls (probably the old ones) were sacrificed for Mithra. This Mithraic

ritual continued among Zoroastrians till the nineteenth century.<sup>3,4</sup> In Greek mythology Zeus, Poseidon, and Dionysus are called three Mycenaean bull gods. Zeus in the shape of a magnificent bull attracted Europa. Consequently, they produced three sons.<sup>11,19</sup>

Remnants of written tablets and art of the Minoan (Crete) civilization (2000-3000 BCE) substantiate a belief that rituals and sacrifices were associated with renewal and growth of life.<sup>11,16</sup> Significant events of a woman's life-menstruation, conception, pregnancy, childbirth- justified the goddesses' demands for the sacrifice of animals. Such activity in turn assured the fertility of the fields, animals, and women. As evidence of human domination the goddesses introduced bull fighting, acrobatic stunts on bulls, and bull vaulting along with rituals which climaxed with the sacrificing of the bull. After blocking the nostrils of the exhausted animal about to be sacrificed, the priest plunged a knife through its side and into its heart. Since it was women who took care of captive young animals, domesticated them, and eventually started cattle breeding, bull fighting is associated with goddesses and priestesses. The priestesses who sponsored bull games worshiped the goddesses in Crete. Often dressed in female clothing, an ephebe provided the entertainment and/or accompanied the priestess.<sup>7,11,16,19</sup> An ephebe was a man aged between 18 and 20 who had just reached manhood or full citizenship and was undergoing military training.<sup>17</sup>

These rituals based on magical fertility of powerful bulls took place in Crete, Greece, Persia (Mithraism), Rome (gladiatorial contests) and Spain (bullfights). In the beginning of civilization when men were still hunters and herders, cattle was not only a source of livelihood and wealth, but also an object of religion.<sup>4</sup> According to ancient beliefs Mithra captured the bull and imprisoned it in a cave, but it escaped. Then Mithra forced the bull back into the cave, only to sacrifice it. From its spinal cord came wheat and from its blood, sacred wine. Mithra became the creator

of useful plants and animals. For his heroic act and prowess, Mithra became the god of the young, strong, obedient male soldiers. In early centuries of Christianity Mithraism became the preferred religion of the Roman Empire. By the end of the third century, however, it lost its fervor to Christianity in Europe.<sup>4</sup>

In the Gathas of Zoroaster around 1500 BCE there is no mention of Mithra.<sup>6,10</sup> Zoroaster objected to bull fighting and ritual sacrifices.<sup>1,3</sup> Such activities related to pre-Zoroastrian times, probably filtered through Indo-European-Aryan people and became common among Iranians.<sup>1,3</sup> About the same time, 1500 BCE, some Indo-Iranians were still nomads. Zoroaster descended from a tribe who were already settled in northeast Iran.<sup>3</sup> Even though these people depended on cattle for their livelihood, ritualistic bullfighting and sacrificing signified religious and social prestige. Zoroaster, on the other hand, decried such activities that instigated drinking, shouting and tormenting the bull before sacrificing it.<sup>3,20</sup>

In the words of Zoroaster, Gathas<sup>(32:12)</sup>

When they destroy the lives of cattle (ox)  
 With exulting shrieks  
 For the sake of pleasure  
 The rich Karapans (priests)  
 Work with tyrants (princes)  
 Rather than Asha (righteousness)

Gathas (44:20)

Oh, Wise Lord  
 Could good rulers be  
 Daeva (devil) worshipers?  
 The oppressing Karapans and Usigs (priests)  
 Delivered Gausha Urva (ox>s soul)  
 To the wrath of Cavies (princes)  
 They never tried working  
 With Asha (Righteousness)  
 To improve life for others.<sup>6,10,15,18</sup>

Long after the time of Zoroaster around 420 BCE, priests, also known as Magi, took great pleasure in killing with their own hands animals of all kinds except dogs and men.<sup>9</sup> Centuries later at the time of the Sassanian Empire (224-234 CE) in Iran sacrificing a bull and/or other animals highlighted the harvest celebration of Mithrakana. As the socially elite cheered the ritualistic tormenting and sacrificing during this thanksgiving celebration, they imbibed haoma (a divinized plant yielding an intoxicating juice.)<sup>3</sup>

A sketch by the cleric Arda Virof who witnessed such an event shows a bull with a rope rigidly holding his neck and hind legs tied to a peg in the ground. Standing a safe distance away from this bull, three bearded men attack the animal with a barrage of arrows.<sup>15</sup> Many centuries later historical accounts in England portray the same cruelty. While a 15-foot cord tied to the bull and fastened to the ground limited the animal's movement, spectators sicked bulldogs to rip the bull's testicles before the butcher killed it.<sup>12</sup>

Such episodes of animal abuse also took place in other parts of Europe. As early as 800 BCE in the province of Soria, Spain in a Celt-Iberian temple bullfighting was a popular religious ritual.<sup>13,14</sup> The religious aspect of such torment gradually diminished as the Christian influence increased. Nevertheless, the same cruel pastimes continued. By the time of the Roman Empire, their success was attributed to athletic prowess when gladiatorial celebrations hailed them as entertainment. The popularity of these bull games extended into England and France until 1850 CE when they became illegal. But these so-called sports still thrill audiences in Spain and other Spanish speaking

countries like Mexico.<sup>12,13,14</sup>

To add excitement to some of the fiestas in various cities in Spain, like Toro (Zamora) a lemonade flavored wine called "bull broth" is served without charge. While this free wine flowed to the throngs of spectators gathered in an enclosed ring, a huge bull is set loose among them. In Zaragoza and Basque the highlight of the celebration is a bull with torches attached to his horns running through darkened streets, creating a spectacle almost like fireworks. When these bulls become exhausted, men grab the tails and ears and thrust knives, lances and darts at them. The daring young man who pulls the animal to the ground is awarded the bull's testicles.<sup>13,14</sup> There have been many objections to such cruelty to animals. Around 1570 Pope Pius V forbade bullfighting, calling it "unconscionable carnage."<sup>17</sup> Since its beginning in 1866, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) has curbed the mistreatment of animals by encouraging the enforcement of anti-cruelty laws to all animals across the United States. But the first person in history to voice strong disapproval of the cruelty to animals was Zoroaster, 3,500 years ago.<sup>3,5</sup> Historians who write about Zoroaster fail to mention

bullfighting, and those who write about bullfighting fail to mention Zoroaster.

1. Bailey, H. (Chief Editor) *The Cambridge History of Iran*, Vol III, 1993
2. Bible Genesis (22:1-13) King James Version (English translation: T. McCormack), 1956
3. Boyce, M. *A History of Zoroastrianism*, Vol I, 1996
4. Cumont, F. *The Mysteries of Mithra* (1903) (English translation: T. McCormack), 1956
5. Davis, N. *Human Sacrifice*, 1988
6. Doostkhab, J. *Avesta* (Persian), 1992
7. Frazer, J. *The Golden Bough*, 1981
8. Girard, R. *Violence and the Sacred*, 1979
9. Herodotus, *The Histories* (Translation: G. Rawlinson), 1997
10. Insler, S. *The Gathas of Zarathustra*, 1975
11. Leeming, D. *God*, 1996
12. Malcolmson, R. *Popular Recreations in English Society 1700-1850*, 1973
13. Marvin, G. *Bullfight*, 1994
14. Mitchell, T. *Blood Sports*, 1991
15. Nanavutty, P. *The Gathas of Zarathustra*, 1999
16. Newman, E. *The Great Mother*, 1963
17. *Oxford Encyclopedia of World History*- 1998
18. Payan, H. *Zartosht* (Persian), 1996
19. Smith, H. *Man and his Gods*, 1956
20. Young, D. *Origin of the Sacred*, 1992

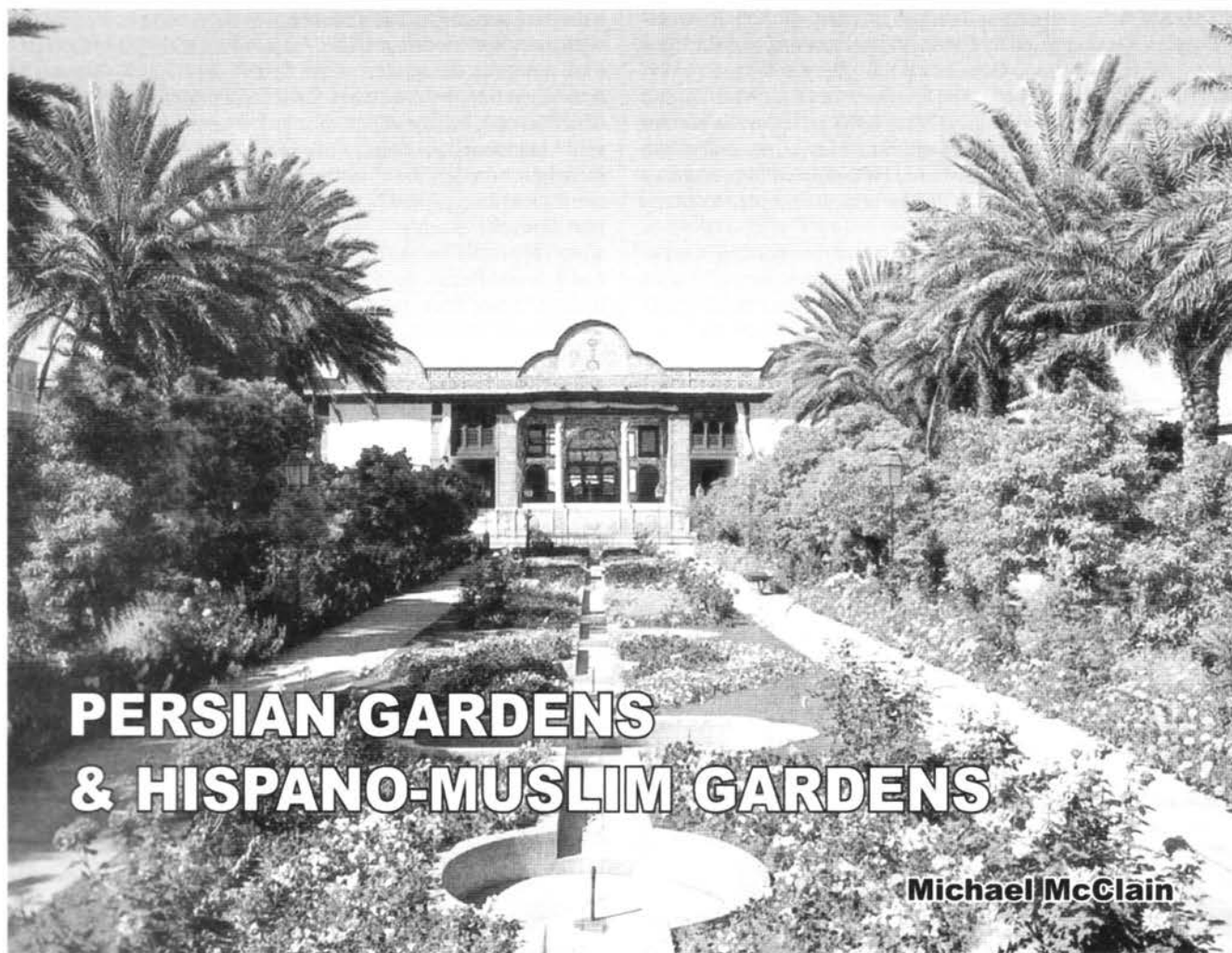
## Best Wishes to Persian Heritage

### Vitafol®-OB Prenatal Caplets

*The Smallest Complete Prenatal Vitamin  
Ensuring the Health of Mother and Baby*

Prescription Vitamins, Nutritional and  
Ethical Pharmaceuticals

Everett Laboratories, Inc.  
West Orange, NJ 07052



## PERSIAN GARDENS & HISPANO-MUSLIM GARDENS

Michael McClain

Narenjestan Ghavam (Orange-Garden), Shiraz

The following article is actually Chapter 6 "*Persian Gardens and Hispano-Muslim Gardens*" of a book in progress **Persian Traditions In Spain**, by Michael McClain. Over the next issues of *Persian Heritage* we will be bringing you excerpts from the book to present another perspective on the influence of Persia on the world.

### Preface

When one speaks of relations between Spain and Persia or of Persian influences in Spain, most people immediately think of elements which entered the Iberian Peninsula during the long period of Muslim dominance. This theme has been subject of many studies, by Hussein Munis and E. Levi-Provencal among others. For the above reasons, in the present study I am devoting much space to relations or influences which either predate the Muslim Conquest of Spain, which entered independently of said conquest, or, though they may have first entered with the Crescent of Islam, remained long after

said Crescent had waned and set. To do a really complete and thorough study of this topic would require a great deal more time and money than I at present have at my disposal. In particular, it would require a long journey through Portugal, Aragon, Catalunya and Valencia, not to mention Iran. I have chosen to devote much time to Toledo, which was the capital of Spain in Visigothic times and which is really a synthesis of all cultures, religions and artistic styles which form the threads of the multicolored fabric, part Celtic tartan, part Oriental carpet, which is the history of Spain. I have also concentrated on Asturias and Galicia. These regions were

perhaps the least affected of all by the Muslim Conquest. Indeed, were it not for historical records there would be nothing to indicate that said conquest even took place in this Northwest corner of Spain. Yet, in the fields of art and architecture Sassanian influences were very strong indeed.

### Persian Gardens & Hispano-Muslim Gardens

As we said earlier, I do not agree with the division between "major" and "minor" arts. I also believe that gardens are indeed an art form.

Not much is available in English on Persian gardens, hence I believe it wise to include a brief chapter on Persian gardens and their relation to Hispano-Muslim gardens. Certainly gardens are not peculiar to Persia, but are well known in much of Europe. There is a journal called "The English Garden" and another called



"Garden Design". Though obviously there are similarities, in fact the typical Persian garden is in some ways quite distinct from any sort of typical European garden.

The English word "paradise" comes from Old Persian and Avestan *pairi daeza*, (Modern Persian *ferdous*), meaning "a walled space, in this case a garden."<sup>1</sup>

The above indicates the antiquity of the garden in Persia, and also hints at a basic difference in concept between Persian and European gardens.

In general, European gardens are meant to be part of the landscape, of the woods and meadows. Indeed, there is a style of European garden called "informal", "natural" or "woodland" which stresses precisely the appearance of being a part of the natural environment, blending into it. With the exception of the Caspian coast and a few other areas, Persia is mainly arid or semi-arid and barren. Ergo, in Persia the garden is meant to stand in stark contrast to the surrounding landscape, an oasis or island of verdure in a sea of aridity. The etymology of our word "paradise" indicates this; the Persian garden is, almost by definition, walled in order to keep out the desert or steppe.

Gardens certainly existed in Spain in pre-Islamic times. Due to their love of color and expertise in agriculture and herbal medicine, we may assume that the pre-Roman Celts were great gardeners. Gardens certainly existed in Spain during the Roman, Byzantine and Visigothic periods, though we know virtually nothing about them. So, in Spain the Muslim conquerors found a tradition of gardens and gardening already in existence.

Though there is much semi-arid land in Andalusia, Extremadura, La Mancha, Murcia and Aragon, Spain as a whole cannot compare in aridity with the Iranian Plateau. Hence, the Spanish garden of whatever period will far less often have the sense of being an "oasis" or "island of verdure in an arid vastness".

By far the best preserved Hispano-Muslim gardens are those of the Alhambra of Granada and its environs, notably the Generalife. Granada is located where the last foothills of the Sierra Nevada give way to the flat Vega of Granada, an ancient lake bed. The Alhambra itself is situated on one of the last spurs of the Sierra Nevada, between the Rio Dauro and the Rios Genil. The Dauro joins the Genil a very short distance downstream from the Alhambra.

The spur on which the Alhambra sits

is wooded. Therefore, the gardens of the Alhambra and the Generalife blend in with the landscape in European fashion, and this was even more true in Muslim times, when the woods of the Alhambra were more extensive than they are today.

Medina az-Zahara sits where the Sierra Morena gives way to the broad valley of the Guadalquivir, a beautiful and verdant setting. Certainly the gardens of Medina az-Zahara blended with the landscape in European fashion rather than standing in stark contrast to it in the Persian manner. The same would have been true of Hispano-Muslim gardens around Seville, in the Valley of the Ebro and in the *huertas* of Valencia and Murcia. In much of Western Andalusia, for much of the year – not only a few weeks in Spring – the wild flowers form an exquisite, multicolored "Persian carpet" or natural garden.

Though it is likely that there were cases of Hispano-Muslim gardens forming an "oasis" or island of verdure in an arid landscape, this was no doubt the exception rather than the rule. In this important respect, most Hispano-Muslim gardens followed a European tradition probably indigenous to Spain, perhaps dating back to the pre-Roman Celts.

Pools of water are frequently used in European gardens, indeed, "water gardens", consisting of a pool of water containing lotus or water lilies and other aquatic plants as well as fish, are becoming fashionable. Ponds as reflecting pools or water gardens are an element in the overall design or visual effect.

In most parts of Persia, not only is the landscape arid or semi-arid, but summers are extremely hot and dry. In the typical Persian garden as in many European gardens, water is used in the form of reflecting pools or as water gardens, which form part of the overall design or visual effect. However, in Persian gardens water is almost always an element, and used in a way in which it is rarely used in Europe outside Spain. In the typical Persian garden, the rushing and tinkling of flowing water; Persian gardens delight the ear as well as the eye.<sup>2</sup>

Muslim Spain contained much less arid or semi-arid land, and water was far more abundant than in the Iranian Plateau. However, in Andalusia, La Mancha, Murcia, Valencia and the Valley of the Ebro (at the Battle of the Ebro in the Spanish Civil War of 1936-39, even a Muslim soldier from the Spanish Sahara died of heat stroke), summers are torrid and in most places extremely dry.

I remember how, during my years in Granada, in the summer I loved to go to the gardens of the Alhambra and simply listen to the tinkling, gurgling and rushing of flowing water. In the hot, dry conditions, this sound was extremely soothing. In a later period at least, Hispano-Muslim gardens, like the typical Persian gardens, delighted the ear as well as the eye with a sound which is extremely soothing in torrid, dry weather. To this day, many private gardens and patios in Andalusia make use of the sound of running water to soothe a brain fevered by heat. In Andalusia, this tinkling, rushing and gurgling sound of running water is often called *Musica Mora*, meaning "Moorish Music".

The above recalls what the 19<sup>th</sup> century Swedish traveler Sven Hedin said of the Beh-i-Golshan gardens at Tabas in Khorasan: "Tabas is a paradisaical village ... the murmur of the (water) channels in this garden, in this dry land, is the most wonderful melody possible."<sup>3</sup>

It is well to note that Khorasan is not the driest region of Persia, and certainly not the hottest, but the idea is clear, and I understand it perfectly.

Another characteristic of the Persian garden is the typical plan called *chahar bagh*, literally "four gardens".<sup>4</sup> Archaeological evidence shows that this plan was used in Persian gardens in Achaemenian<sup>5</sup> and Sassanian<sup>6</sup> times. Evidently, not only is the garden very ancient in Persia, but in some respects at least there is a great deal of continuity and respect for tradition in the layout of the Persian garden.

The *chahar bagh* garden is sometimes square, usually rectangular. Water flows in open channels all around the perimeter. In the centre is a pool or pond, with four channels leading to the midpoints of the sides, dividing the garden into four equal parts, hence the name *chahar bagh*. The pool or pond in the middle may or may not contain a fountain, and very often is a water garden in its right, containing fish and water lilies. In the case of very large central ponds, these may even contain ducks or swans. Rarely, the central pond may be covered with a pavilion, kiosk or gazebo. It is obvious that the *chahar bagh* plan facilitates irrigation as well as the use of the sound of flowing water to add to the charms of the garden. A very large garden complex may contain a number of *chahar baghs*. The *chahar bagh* plan is repeated over and over in the Alhambra and the Generalife of Granada<sup>7</sup>, as well as in countless private gardens and patios throughout Andalusia. Though

the Alhambra mainly dates from the 14<sup>th</sup> century, I personally have seen evidence that the *chahar bagh* plan was introduced to Spain long before. Not far outside the city of Murcia are the ruins of the 12<sup>th</sup> century Muslim Palace of Castillejo. Said ruins are now somewhat difficult of access, though one may take a bus to within about a half mile of it. Some high school boys were doing a term paper on this stronghold, and together we climbed the hill on which it sits. The stronghold was remarkably well preserved, and the remains of a large garden which followed the *chahar bagh* pattern were clearly visible.

There is little evidence that Hispano-Muslim garden made much use of reflecting pools, as Persian gardens do. The Patio de los Arrayanes in the Alhambra does indeed make use of a reflecting pool; however, in this case we have not a garden but a large interior patio surrounded by buildings, low hedged being the only vegetation.<sup>8</sup>

Nevertheless, in the Alhambra they do have a case of a garden with a large pool and a pavilion at one end with a second story where one may sit and look out over the pool and the gardens. This complex is known as the Torre de las Damas.<sup>9</sup> This feature is common in larger Persian

gardens, though it is not possible to trace it before the Safavi period.<sup>10</sup>

This chapter is necessarily brief, because our knowledge of the plans and layouts of Hispano-Muslim gardens is very scanty. Though the on-going excavations at Medina az-Zahara may yet yield information on Hispano-Muslim gardens of the period of the Caliphate of Cordoba, at present we really have only the gardens of the Alhambra and the Generalife, a few archaeological remains, and what we may deduce from numerous private gardens and patios throughout Andalusia.

Also, we really know little of the plans and layouts of Persian gardens before the Safavi period, except that they made use of the *chahar bagh* plan and the sound of running water. It is risky to generalize about Persian influence on Hispano-Muslim gardens basing ourselves on Persian gardens of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, as even our knowledge of Persian gardens of the Safavi period is scanty.

In general we may say that, as one might expect, Hispano-Muslim gardens always had characteristics in common with the typical European garden. However, at a date which at present we are unable to determine, Hispano-Muslim

gardeners adopted very typically Persian elements, namely the use of the sound of running water, the *chahar bagh* plan, and the custom of having a large pool with a two story building or pavilion at one end from which one could contemplate the pool and the surrounding garden. Thus, we may confidently speak of Persian influence on Hispano-Muslim gardens.

## NOTES

1. *The Persian Garden Echoes of Paradise* by Mehdi Khansari, M. Reza Moghtader and Minouch Yavari, Washington, D.C., 1998, pp. 29-31.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 71. *Persian Gardens and Garden Pavilions*, Donald Nevin Wilber, Washington, D.C., 1979, p. 15.
3. Khansari, *The Persian garden* ..., p. 111.
4. Khansari, *The Persian garden*..., pp. 34-35., Wilber, *Persian Gardens* ..., p. 12.
5. Khansari, *The Persian Garden* ..., p. 38.
6. Khansari, *The Persian Garden* ..., pp. 49, 55.
7. *El Libro de la Alhambra Luis Seco de Lucena Paredes*, Leon, Spain, 1975, pp. 14-15.
8. Seco de Lucena Paredes, *El Libro de la Alhambra*, pp. 44-46.
9. Seco de Lucena Paredes, *El Libro de la Alhambra*, pp. 68-69.
10. Khansari, *The Persian Garden* ..., pp. 77, 81, 83-84, 93, 97, 101, 106, 117, 127, 132, Wilber, *Persian Gardens*, pp. 50-51, 96-99.



Bagh-e Fin (Fin Garden), Kashan



## Interview with **ABBAS MILANI**

Part I  
Shahrokh Ahkami

I have been familiar with Professor Abbas Milani's literary activities for many years. He is a master in Persian and English and writes with a distinguished fluent style. Like his written word his speech is penetrating and powerful which makes him one of the most successful Iranians within the United States.

*The Iranian Sphinx* (about the former Prime Minister of Iran, Amir Abbas Hoveyda) exemplifies his dedication to research. Because the *Persian Heritage* magazine has received a number of letters from our readers both in support and opposition to his writings and his books, I seized the opportunity to interview him during one of his visits to New Jersey. It is our hope that the following interview will provide a bit more insight to our readers on Mr. Milani's thoughts and views of Iran and world affairs.

*Please introduce yourself to our readers.*

Thank you for the opportunity of this interview. I want to tell you that I so enjoy your magazine and it is a job well done. It is a magazine that can reach beyond the Persian population and its contents shows the sincerity of your staff and their commitment to the Iranian culture and its preservation.

*Thank you for your kind words*

My pleasure. As to my background I was raised in Tehran, Iran and stayed there until 1987. Prior to my leaving I was a member of the faculty at the Teheran University in Law and Political Science Department. In 1986 a new dean was appointed for the school and, in my opinion he lacked the necessary experience and credentials for the position.

As a result of the problems he cre-

ated for me, and other faculty, I left the university. Before leaving, however, I translated a three volume history of Marxism. Many critics consider the book as one of the most important and informed accounts on Marxism. The English version of the book is published by Oxford University.

*Where did you teach before this?*

At the National University of Tehran

*Was it difficult leaving Iran?*

Yes of course it was hard. But I am a teacher and if I cannot teach and talk about what I believe to be the truth, then there was no reason for me to continue there.

*What was your next position?*

After leaving Iran I spent the next

14 years at Notre Dame De Namur University in California. In the year 2001, a group of Iranians decided to help the university set up a program in Iranian studies at Stanford University. I found it astonishing that one of the most prestigious universities in the world lacked such a department /course.

The most important individual in the formation of this department was Hamid Moghaddam. He is a graduate of Stanford and is also one of the most bright and successful people I have ever had the pleasure of meeting my life.

At the same time Dr. Esmail Amid-Hozour and a group of Iranians, decided to also set up a program at the Hoover Institute. A couple of years ago The Economist of London, described Hoover as one of the one of the most important institutes for research in the world.

*What research have they accomplished at the Hoover Institute?*

Initially they concentrated on Russia and communism.

***I believe Ms. Condoleezza Rice graduated from the Hoover Institute, is this true?***

No, she did not graduate from Hoover, but she was a fellow. She also taught political science at Stanford University.

***What is considered to be the most important work of the Hoover Institute?***

The most important work of the Hoover has been the study and fight of communism.

***Who founded the Institute?***

President Hoover. I can tell you that Hoover has the most important libraries on communism, in general and also on Iran from 1922 to the days after the revolution.

Three years ago I helped The Hoover Institute prepare an exhibition of the Revolutionary posters of Iran. A small group of them were on exhibit at NYU, New York.

***With such a concentration on communism some might think that the Hoover Institute favored communism.***

In fact the opposite is true. It is known for having been a center on research against communism. Ms. Rice is a specialist on the subject of the Soviet Union. Since fifteen years ago, when the Institute merged with Stanford, there has been greater diversity of opinion and of research topics at the Hoover. In a recent survey, for example, 60% of the Fellows turned out to be Republican and 40% Democratic.

***Have they expanded their activities?***

Yes, they now have a program called The Iran Democracy Project and I am one of the codirector of this center. Another person involved in this project

is Mr. Larry Diamond one of the experts on democracy in the world. He recently published a book critical of U.S. in Iraq and Mr. McFaul, who is a world-class specialist on the movement of communism to democracy in Eastern Europe and Russia. In 1991 Mr. McFaul was invited to Russia as a consultant during their transition to democracy.

***While we are on the subject of Stanford, how did you find the intellectual and social level of the Iranian students at the university?***

Iranian students at Stanford are



really one of the brightest groups. I am proud of all of them and am grateful to have the opportunity to be with them everyday. Some of the Iranians in my classes I understand are on full scholarships. In fact the head of the Electrical Engineering Department said in a talk that in last years PhD exam, at Stanford while only 60% of the students had passed 100% of the Iranian students passed. They also placed first, third and seventh in the class.

He also revealed that the Iranian students who came to Stanford for their doctorate in electrical engineering had a greater pass rate on the exam then those coming from MIT. This was accomplished in spite of language and cultural barriers.

***I heard that you were responsible for organizing a conference at the Hoover Institute, can you please tell us about this?***

Yes we had a two day conference. We invited individuals; some of the most important associations in the world and twelve of the invitees were from Iran and included Shirin Ebadi, Mrs. Talghani, Mr. Rajaee, the reformist journalist Mr. Baghi and Mrs. Kamali. Unfortunately due to problems in the U.S. visa policy, Mr. Baghi and his wife were not able to attend. He did, however, send an article which I translated and read at the conference.

***What was the subject matter of the meeting?***

We discussed politics, economics, nationalism and reform in Iran. In addition to this conference we have organized a number of smaller ones in Washington and at Stanford University that dealt with the nuclear issue in Iran.

***I am also told that you have organized a center for Iranian studies.***

Yes we now have an Iranian Studies program at Stanford. I did not organize it, but was simply chosen as its director. It is a program endowed by Hamid and Tina Moghaddam. By the time your readers read this interview we will have sponsored our first lecture series, this one on Zoroastrian religion and culture. We were honored to have Dr. Farhang Mehr as our first speaker, Dr. Insert from Yale University was next. Next year we are planning to have a two day program called "Rumi in Stamford." I would venture to say that most Americans do not know he is Iranian.

***During these troubled times between Iran and the United States if one speaks out they marked either as a supporter of the Islamic Republic or a Royalist etc., you seem to have escaped such labeling. What I am interested***

***in knowing is what is the current plan to achieving democracy in Iran?***

First I allow me to explain that I am at no means a political activist. I am a teacher and all that I do revolves around education. The concern of all of my writings is how we can improve the broken down relationship between the country I was born in and the one I now live in, particularly a relationship where both can emerge as winners. This is not only in the best interest of these two countries but also the world. We all have to do whatever we can to prevent any additional damage to this relationship.

***Have you written some articles on this subject?***

Last year I wrote some articles and offered my opinion on how the political between these two countries should evolve. Following the publication of the articles I have also talked to some in administration and given my views on the subject of U.S.-Iran relations.

***What exactly did they want your opinion on and what if I may ask what was your suggestion?***

Certainly. They wanted my opinion, U.S. policy in Iran. I told them I believe neither a military strike, nor sanctions, as they are, will solve the problem. Both will have a tremendous and negative impact, not on the government, but on the innocent citizens of Iran. When people are deprived of their basic needs of life or are killed in a military attack the attacking country does not make friends. In fact it will cause the majority of Iranians, who are clearly against this regime to rally around it and guarantee its existence for another thirty years.

We all know that President Ahmadinejad has already stated that if the U.S. attacks Iran that it will be looked upon as a war between Islam on one side and Christianity and Judaism on the other. That is precisely what this world does not need. The world and the U.S. should avoid the fate that comes in the form of the Mr. Ahmadinejad taunts.

Additionally I believe that an attack on the nuclear centers of Iran to be impossible without the loss of many innocent lives and cultural and ancient artifacts.

And if I may add economic sanctions would only increase the inflation that now exists in Iran. This coupled with zero growth will lead to "stagflation."

What Iran desperately needs is a way out of the economic crisis. People need jobs. And the democratic movement inside Iran which is incidentally our only hope for a better future will be greatly damaged by such an attack. The U.S. should do its best to help this movement. Removing the sanctions, that hurt the people and replacing it with smart sanctions, that put a pressure on the regime, will help bring democracy to Iran.

***I get the feeling that you are not confident that will happen. It sounds similar to the Cuban situation in this country. Every time there was positive movement to lift the sanctions in Cuba the movement was thwarted by those Cubans in Miami who have no interest in the country's redevelopment.***

Exactly, those who are getting very wealthy now will not enjoy the same growth if sanctions are lifted. There are also those in Diaspora who are against ending the sanctions. They think such a move consolidates the regime. My message to this group in Iran is to look closely at Cuba. For forty-five years the Cuban-American community has successfully blocked any connection between the U.S. and Cuba but Castro is still in power. I believe if Cuba's economy was open Castroism would have ended by now.

There is another problem with the situation of Iranians in America. In spite of our community, we collectively share over 800 billion dollars in wealth according to a recent MIT study, we don't have the commensurate political power. This wealth coupled with the level of our education should allow us the privilege of a voice in this government. Making changes through the political system is the only path that will establish permanent changes for us in this country and for Iran. But so far we have failed to establish this power.

Take a moment and compare the success of the Cubans in this country to those of the Jews. The Cubans have settled in one area where they have power but the Jews have branched out to all the states; they have truly assimilated into the fabric

of society and therefore have created a far more significant and powerful bond. We have to follow their process.

***I would venture to say that in order to actualize this we need good leaders, honestly I am not certain we have yet found that leadership power within the Iranian - American community. Do you believe we still have a chance in the near future?***

I think that it will happen in our generation. It is happening, but slowly. We need to stop thinking in terms of conspiracy. We have to believe that each and every one of us can bring change. Only then will we, as a community, reach our full political potential.

We in this country as Iranians must do everything in our power to change the view of Americans on Iran and Iranians. Next week I will attend a high school session at Menlo High School. This school has 100% of their graduates going to universities and 10% attending Stanford. We must educate the minds of these young women and men and explain to them about the culture and history of Iran and how important it is for them not to think that Iran is defined or limited to what they see on television, and in the rhetoric of the current regime.

***Unfortunately the United States seems to be angry with Iran. Do you really believe that it is possible to effect a change there without dropping bombs?***

That is how it must be. I think if the U.S. did bomb Iran it will guarantee the regime's survival for the next thirty years.

What we need to closely study is how this regime came into existence and how they consolidated their hold on power. Remember after the revolution Iran was in flux. The political situation was unstable. In order to save themselves, they had to keep the minds of the people occupied. Accordingly, they created the hostage taking and then they used the war, and prolonged it to consolidate their hold.

At the present time the regime is shaky. In order to maintain its position they need to create another diversion

another crisis for instance the U.S. takes military action and the regime will consolidate their hold.

Remember the crisis of the Iraq War and the hostage taking caused a great deal of damage for Iran and Iranians and I am not just talking about just the financial side of the damage. These events changed the lives of many Iranians, even those outside of Iran. They were no longer allowed to freely come to the U.S. for education. Homes were also broken. The financial damage can be easily seen in the agreement they signed.

**What agreements are you talking about?**

There was an agreement negotiated with Iran for the release of the hostages. The negotiations took place in Algeria. They are sometimes called the Algerian accord.

**Do you think this was the coup d'etat for the establishing of this regime?**

If you remember when Ayatollah Khomeini was in Paris his platform was basically for democracy. In it he said that there would be a majority rule rather than rule of absolute power (velayat-e faghih). Mr. Habibi aided in the writing of the new constitution for Iran and it was a democratic law. However, when Ayatollah Khomeini returned to Iran he changed his tune and began advocating the velayat-e faghih.

According to Bani Sadar, when Ayatollah Khomeini went from Iraq to Paris he was given a list of subjects and words to avoid when he spoke. These were words that might frighten America. We can see this caution even in the Ayatollahs dealings with Carter.

**Did the Ayatollahs actually have contacts?**

In January 1979 Ayatollah Khomeini wrote a letter to President Carter. I found a section of that letter in another government declassified document. In the letter he told Carter that if Carter stopped his support of Bakhtiar and if Carter asked the Iranian army not to interfere, then

he would return to Iran and establish a new government those poses no threat to the U.S.. When, Khomeini arrived in Iran, however all the promises made in Paris were forgotten. A new constitution, granting the Faghih dictatorial power was rammed through the constituent assembly. So what we have is a democratic constitution in Paris turned into a totalitarian or Islamic constitution once Ayatollah Khomeini arrived in Iran.

*I thought president Carter by the suggestion of Brezsinski wanted to make a green belt around Russia with Islamic countries in order to block Russia and the spread of*



*communism. It seems the result of this suggestion was the Taliban in Afghanistan and Islamic governments in Iran, Pakistan etc.. Was it true that Brezsinski established a Middle Eastern Affairs Desk at the white house and Cyrus Vance established one at the State Department ?*

Yes it is partially true but you need to understand the background. There are two theories the first believes that during the seventies the U.S. decided that the way to stop the spread of communism was to spread Islam, using Islam against the communists. This was not only limited to the green of Islam but also

encompassed Christianity. An example of this is said to be the selection of a Polish Pope who travels to Poland.

Because I do not believe in the theory of conspiracies and found no document to support this theory I am not certain it is true. Having said this however, there is a document that was written in the mid 70s where the CIA developed a huge presence in Pakistan. It was second in size to that in the U.S. The work of this CIA center in Pakistan was to spread Islamic documents in Russian and to translate or print and distribute the Islamic texts into languages used in Moslems states of the Soviet Union. In reaction to this movement Russia is said to have given an ultimatum to Pakistan, and demanded that they stop.

Of course this happened before Russia arrived in Afghanistan and before the U.S. decided to fight Russia by relying on the Islamic forces in Afghanistan. If you remember President Reagan invited some of their leaders to the White House. They came in their national dress some carrying walking sticks. President Reagan praised them as George Washington and as freedom fighters of our time. In fact, as we now know, some were opium farmers and all were not freedom fighters.

We have the Polit Bureau minutes from the period of Russia's attack on Afghanistan. They show that the Russian attack was essentially because of Iran's revolution. The Russians said in these minutes that Iran was getting an Islamic government and that the U.S. has lost its influence in Iran so they will have to turn to a new area, Afghanistan. In response Russia decided to attack Afghanistan before the U.S. attacked. On that day Russia sent their army to Afghanistan. Mr. Brezsinski is said to have sent a telegram to Carter stating "the bear is falling into the trap and it is now our turn to punish Russia for Vietnam."

**What about the U.S. policy on Iran?**

I interviewed the Officer in charge of Iran's Desk, Mr. Henry Precht. I also read some of the documents in the National Archive. They reveal a large dif-

ference of opinion between Brezsinski in the White House and Vance in the State Department.

In the White House Gary Sick was in charge of Iran and at the State Department was Henry Precht. I had a lengthy interview with Precht. He told me that during the crisis there was a long stretch when he and Gary were not on speaking terms.

Their tension reflected a difference of opinion amongst their superiors. Vance took the position that the human rights of the Iranian people must be protected, while Brezsinski believed that the Shah must stay in power and that he must quiet down the country, with an iron fist if need be, and then, once his position was stable then there would be time to address human rights.

The U.S sent two different messages to the Shah. It has also been said that President Carter paid little attention to Iran and was preoccupied with The Camp David Accord between Israel and Egypt. If you remember the Shah sent a telegram to Carter congratulating him on his election. It was merely formal gesture but Carter's response came too late. In Iran many, including the Shah thought that this was an intentional political slap in the face to the Shah. But all the evidence points to the contrary and that the tardy response by Carter was accidental.

The problem in Iran at the time was that the Shah was sick. He was given a medicine without his knowledge, or without the knowledge of his wife, and the medication had horrific side effects. It created paranoia, depression and indecisiveness. The drug was called Clorombucile and he was taking 6 milligrams a day.

**DON'T FORGET YOUR**

**Persian Heritage**

**(973) 471-4283**

**[www.persian-heritage.com](http://www.persian-heritage.com)**

## FLOWER OF THE EAST

### Kish Island — Iran

**It is a 1.7 billion euro (USD 2.0 billion) German project which be held in Kish Island. The first construction started last year and is expected to be completed in 2009. The whole project contains a lot of residential and other activity facilities, such as sport centers and golf courses. The project also contains a unique 7-stars hotel. The tower is a clever combination of sophisticated aesthetics of Persian architecture and ultra modern high-tech architecture.**

