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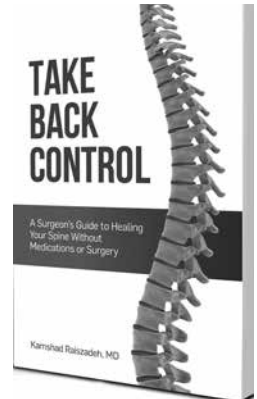
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—James Robinson, PhD, Professor of Health Economics, School of Public Health, University of California, Berkeley

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—Zubin Damania, MD, Founder, Turntable Health, ZDoggMD

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—Steve Kerr, Coach, Golden State Warriors of the National Basketball Association

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# Persian Heritage

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**Winter 2021**

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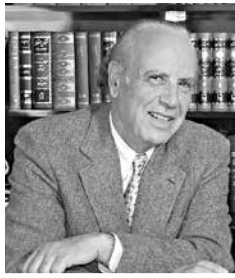
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## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Once again, I offer best wishes to those that celebrate the Christmas and New Year holiday season. My wish is that the new year is filled with joy and happiness for all and especially for Iranians throughout the world. It is time to put this past year behind us; one that was filled with grief, loss, sadness and anxiety caused by the Covid-19 virus that brought the world to its knees. The Corona virus impacted our financial, physical and mental health. There continues to be an increase in suicides and addiction. This has resulted in families being torn apart. For Iranians in Iran the suffering is enhanced by the lack of access to vaccines, medicines, medical and hospital care. These conditions are overwhelming an already fragile and broken health system. These conditions have and continue to result in making the lives of Iranians more difficult. These conditions have caused the death of thousands of innocent Iranian people at a higher percent in comparison to the highest populated countries of the world such as the US, Russia and China.

In the US, despite easy access to vaccines, over sixty million Americans are not vaccinated. This inevitably will result in the needless loss of additional lives; deaths that could be easily avoided.

We just discussed the incompetence of Iran's government officials. I have tried not write about this in my editorials. I have tried to avoid the sadness and daily problems that Iran's people are confronting. BUT, I can no longer close my eyes and cover my ears to these devastating situations. I can no longer ignore these situations and problems that plague the people of the country of my birth.

I become agitated when I listen to acquaintances, who go through their normal routine of life, enjoy their travels, their poetry and their gatherings with friends, without any thought to the hardships and suffering that their fellow country men and women in Iran deal with on a daily basis in Iran. Truly my blood boils and I am shocked to my bones.

How can we ignore the voices of the people of the Province of Khuzestan, deprived of drinking water in the heat of the summer; their thirst for a drop of water was visible on their faces. These people are demanding and protesting for this simple right of access to water; their demands and protests have led to their incarceration. How is it possible that this is happening? How is it possible that this happened during the presidency of Mr. Khatami? He sold Iran's precious water to Kuwait. NOW the Karoon River is dried up and the Province of Khuzestan, that for many years was one of the largest agricultural and producing centers of sugar cane, finds itself in this terrible situation.

Many using the water shortage as an excuse, are removing the palm trees by their roots and selling them to the Emirates; and then when objections are made, the Emirates return six hundred trees. There was a time when Iran was the second largest producer of dates, after Iraq. Unfortunately, many (trees/land)

in Khuzestan were burned down by Saddam during the Iran-Iraq war. Now, this regime is harvesting these date trees by their roots and exporting them back to Arab nations. Iran's exports of pistachios, saffron and rugs are heading towards zero, yet in Afghanistan saffron is sold under the name of "Iranian" saffron for \$160 to \$300 an ounce. Iran's oil exports are down to zero. Recently, the government announced that private companies (that are probably owned by members of their family) will be allowed to sell oil, with the condition that money from the sales is returned to Iran. If you remember this was experienced at another time when billions of dollars from oil sales, with the excuse of sanctions, never came back to Iran.

Isn't it interesting that we are now witnessing a drought and a lack of water in Isfahan, after the Khuzestan disaster? It is also interesting that during the eight-year war, Isfahan lost more than twenty thousand souls (and in one day 370 martyrs). Today the people of Isfahan are being referred to as agitators, anti-revolutionary and being thrown into prison for voicing their concerns against the injustice that this regime has brought them. The peaceful and kind people of Isfahan, in response to the regimes conduct, had a sit down in the dried out Zayandeh Roud River in lieu of demonstrating in the streets. They knew public demonstrations would be confronted with violence by the authorities. They knew that they would be accused of setting fires and destroying businesses. Certainly, they went in a smarter direction. Sadly in the end the "will" of the people did not succeed. The authorities overwhelmed the crowds, and Khamenei in his speech indirectly stated that, if you hit hard, we will hit harder.

At the same time this was happening in Isfahan and in Khuzestan and while my mind was occupied with all the protests and sufferings, a friend of mine sent me a video of a speech by Ayatollah Khomeini from years ago (the date unknown). In this speech the Ayatollah said that we assume that the Shah did a lot of construction to modernize Iran. We assume that the Shah loved Iran and worked hard for Iran. But, if the people of Iran, regardless of his actions, don't want him and voice this through demonstrations and demands, then he should respectfully resign and leave. Let the people choose their own destiny and government.

It is unbelievable that the present rulers do not seem to respect the words of Ayatollah Khomeini, the father and founder of the Islamic Republic. I wonder why they respond with brutality and bullets against the peaceful demonstrators? And I wonder why they do not respect the will and demands of the people?

It is interesting that recently Mr. Khamenei condemned and ridiculed the Western nations about human rights violations, "In France the police blind protestors and then they condemn our behavior towards our protestors." It is shameful when he compares violent acts by authorities and does not distinguish



regarded positions. Most of the Diaspora, like the late Professor Maryam Mirzakhani ( who in 2014 became the first Iranian to be honored with the Fields Medal, the most prestigious award in mathematics and the only woman to date) and other leaders in Nassau and Silicon Valley are graduates of Iran's universities.

I have now ended what I believe to be a dreadful and sad editorial. But I close with continued good wishes to all my fellow country men and women around the world. I wish you all a happy and healthy holiday season. I wish for you all a healthy and fruitful coming year with no Covid and less financial grievances. Finally, I wish for the Iranian people the right to choose their religious practice, the right to speak freely and the right to be free.

I saw in Voice of America a report that Google Doodle honored Professor Lotfi Zadeh. He was a computer scientist and developed the "innovative mathematical framework" known as "fuzzy logic." Voice of America reported this on the anniversary of "Fuzzy Logic's" "creation and placed a picture of Professor Lotfi Zadeh with mathematical symbols and numbers, he used in his scientific achievements.

I am wishing for a day that instead of a brain drain in Iran, that all these brilliant people would return to rebuild a new mighty free Iran, modeling after the more developed countries in the world. I wish for all the people of Iran a new opportunity to be found in the land of their ancestry. I wish for all the intellectuals, the good leaders and many of our young fabulous people to have the opportunity to help build a healthy new Iran. Hoping for this day to come.

*Shahrokh Alavi*



the harshness of the behaviors of the police and the Basiji.

While I was researching and gathering information for this editorial, I came across an article about natural gas being imported into Iran by Turkmenistan. It is upsetting that Iran with the second largest gas reserves, now is required to import gas. This transaction or agreement was completed by Dr. Ayatollah Raisi (who has no more than a sixth-grade education and three years of religious training.) Even worse is the news that Dr. Mohammad Ghalibaf (the head of Parliament, a general, a pilot and PhD of nuclear medicine) along with the newly elected mayor of Tehran, Alireza Zakani (former Basiji, medical doctor and nuclear medicine specialist!!) were selected to the Board of Governors of the University of Tehran. It is important to note that to be on the Board of Governors you must be a highly regarded educator, scholar and or intellectual. A few examples are Professor Mahmoud Hessabi (who worked with Einstein at Princeton,) Ali Asghar Hekmat, Dr. Parviz Khanlari, MohammadAli Foroughi, Dr. Mahmoud Afshar, Dr. Sadigh and so many affluent individuals who were past recipients of this honor. One therefore must be suspicious how Ghalibaf, who was in the eight-year war and from age twenty became a Pasdar, a pilot and a doctor accomplished all of this in such a short period of time. And after the war he became the mayor of Tehran and ran as a presidential candidate in a few.

Someone mentioned on Facebook that the best way to destroy a country is to destroy the power of education and knowledge, to the point of ignorance. This was said by Dr. Ari Babak-Nia. The regret I have for Iranians is that because of the lowering of education and knowledge in Iran there will be a hastened destruction and collapse of the country. The mullahs are trying to infest the minds of the people using hallucination, superstition and illusion. An example of this was done by the head mullah in Mashad, Alamolhoda. He stated to the people in response to their demonstrations over the Isfahan drought, that their problems would not be solved by demonstrating in front of God. These demonstrations, he said, would not bring God's help for rain and water. To get His help, you must do a rain prayer. Again, I ask how can people believe this and put their trust into this type of leadership?

The result and outcome of all this ignorance is leaving Iran a country with a "brain drain." Intellectuals leave to find prosperity in other places. These intellectuals have become the heads of companies, others holding high level government positions as Dr. Massoud Ghareh Khani the new head of the Norwegian Parliament. These are the brains who have fled their birthland, taking refuge in foreign countries and now hold highly



**SHAHNAMEH**

Just when you think you have read , listened to or saw about the SHAHNAMEH another article appears. This one by Rasoul Sorkhabi in the fall issue of Persian Heritage gave me even more information. I pray all Iranians introduce their non Persian friends to this wonderful story.

*KS , NJ*

**MANY THANKS**

I wish I could clone you 1000 times...Proud of you as a physician and a caring human being for Iran and Iranians.

*Javad Fakharzadeh*

**CHER COMPATRIOTE**

Tout en vous saluant, honorable maitre journaliste, je vous souhaite une très bonne santé mentale et physique; de plus espérons aussi l'élaboration d'une paix durable.

*Habibollah Rabbani*

**IMPRESSED**

Very impressive as always. The interview turned out to be interesting also. I hope your readers find it interesting. How would I order some extra copies of this issue. I hope it is not too late.

*Hossein Ghanbari*

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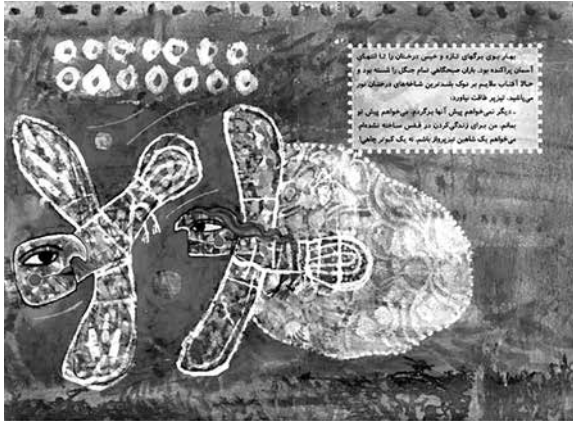
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## EXHIBITION OF BIB TOP ILLUSTRATIONS celebrates National Children's Week in Iran



TEHRAN – An online exhibition showcasing top works from several editions of the Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava (BIB) was launched on Sunday to celebrate National Children's Week in Iran. The exhibit is being organized by Iran's Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (IIDCYA, Kanoon).

Works by 42 Iranian and foreign illustrators have been selected for the showcase available on [kanoonnews.ir](http://kanoonnews.ir). One of the top works of the exhibit is an illustration by Farshid Mesqail, the winner of the Hans Christian Andersen Award in 1974.

Earlier in 2016, his illustrations chosen from "The Little Black Fish", "The City of the Snakes", "Arash, the Archer", "I, the Hedgehog and My Doll" and several other books were showcased in an exhibition in Taipei, Taiwan.

The exhibition also features a work by Farshid Shafiei, who was nominated for the 2021 Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award, a prestigious Swedish honor to promote children's and youths' literature in the world. Illustrations by Nureddin Zarrinkelk, Bahman Dadkhah, Hafez Miraftabi, Karim Nasr, Mohammadreza Dadgar, Alireza Golduzian and Hoda Haddadi are also on view at the showcase.

The Kanoon and several other Iranian children's cultural centers celebrate National Children's Week every year in October. This year's festival is being organized from October 8 to 14. Iranian artists have always been frequent visitors to the Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava (BIB), which is held in the capital of Slovakia.

This year's BIB, which will take place from October 15, 2021 to January 9, 2022, will put seventeen books by Iranian illustrators on display.

A highlight of the collection is "You Are an Explorer" (also translated as "We Are Explorers") by Ghazal Fathollahi. The book written by Shahrzad Shahrjerdi has also been published by La Maleta, a publisher in the autonomous community of Asturias in northwest Spain.

"Lili, Where Are You?" written and illustrated by Taravat Jalali is another major book of the collection. The book aims to help children cope with loss and loneliness, as well as strengthen their skills of observation and problem-solving.

## Injured Iranian Eagle Flying Free After Rehabilitation



A rare Iranian eagle found injured and unable to fly six months ago in Iran's Alborz province is now flying free. The director-general of Alborz Environment Department said the Golden Eagle was rehabilitated after it was found.

He said the rare bird of prey was freed in the mountains of the province after recovering from the injury. The official noted that the Golden eagle is the environmental symbol of Alborz but the species is in danger of extinction.

The director-general of Alborz Environment Department added that it is highly important to preserve the environment of animals and rare birds and that necessary measures must be put in place to protect this valuable indigenous bird. He added that one of the threats the Gold Eagles are facing is the theft of eaglets from their coops and their sale.

*October 17, 2021 by IFP Editorial Staff*

## Iran's Exhibit at Dubai's Expo

October 1, 2021 through March 1, 2022

This expo is expected to be one of the top tourist attractions. The expo was built from scratch and the results are magnificent. Iran's pavilion has water filled runnels that rundown the walk ways. They are inspired by the Iranian Civil Architecture and the streams will be used to cool the outdoor space of the pavilion. There are also hundreds of fired clay balls. Fired clay is amongst the building materials used in the warm dry regions of Iran. They are one of the visual attractions of the pavilion.

There is also an area where you can observe the talents of the Persian carpet weaver and the intricacies of the designs, colors and knots. And to keep up your energy one should experience the syrups and teas of Iran located in the Syrup House.





# POLICE ORGANIZATION AWARDS A LOCAL DOCTOR

**Dee Mazzeo**  
Health Writer

On June 26, 2021, the Police Motor Officer Training Association along with the Paramus Police Department hosted a Motorcycle skills competition, in Paramus New Jersey. This is an annual event where active as well as retired police officers compete and train in order to perfect their skills. In attendance were a variety of pillars of the community. I had the pleasure of meeting one that has been influential in the care of many Law Enforcement Officers and their families. The organization gathers to raise funds to help protect and train police motor officers, inviting active officers, retired police, and the general public. Dr. Mazandarani (Dr. Maz) who was among the participants is a longtime supporter and advocate for Law Enforcement. We were told by multiple officers on site that he has treated many Police Officers and their families.

Dr. Maz of Medwell Orthopedic & Family Medicine in Midland Park was recognized for his participation in the North Jersey Motorcycle Skills Competition. As always in his recommendations to the officers at the event he emphasized on staying pain free and preventative care. During interview Dr. Maz emphasized stress is one of the main causes of many serious illnesses, injuries, and pain. Dr. Maz knows that police officers are under a lot of it. Because he has a special understanding, empathy, and respect for their pain and stress. In addition, Dr. Maz who is a chiropractor at the center works with physicians including spine orthopedic specialist which makes the care officers need more effective and reasonable. With body scans and other powerful diagnostic and therapeutic treatments, he's able to target this stress and naturally relieve the body from pain, then empowering and strengthening them to carry on with their important duties.

When asked Dr. Maz, "Why such a commitment to Law Enforcement"?, Dr. Maz simply replied that this is his way of giving back to the community. We learned that he has been treating law enforcement patients for over 20 years. He has been awarded the coveted Silver Life Award, which is the highest award a civilian can receive by the police and law enforcement with recommendations of officials. Each year only a few select citizens who have demonstrated their continued support to the law enforcement community are given this prestigious award. By way of example, Paterson Police PBA Local 1 has given one award per decade for the last sixty years.

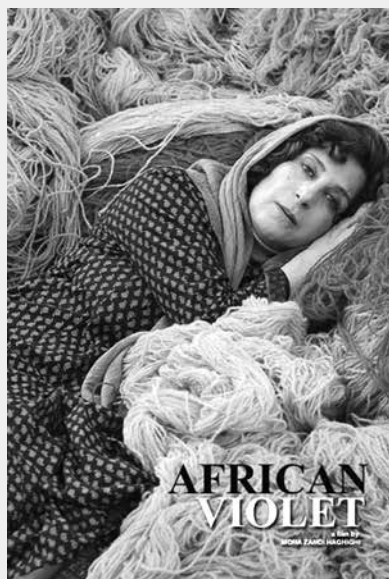
Dr. Maz works at Medwell Orthopedic & Family Medicine which is a integrated multi-specialty facility in Midland Park which focuses on non-surgical orthopedic care, testosterone therapy, medical weight loss treatments and providing alternative therapies for patients suffering from chronic ailments. His goal is simple, relieving the patient's pain as quickly as possible without the intervention of medications or surgery.

Dr. Maz resides in Franklin Lakes New Jersey with his wife Morgan and their three sons, Arya, Amir, and Arman. Although Dr. Maz is a dedicated doctor who insists on being hands on at the office, he is passionate about spending quality time with his family. On any given Sunday you will find him at a family outing, hosting a charitable event or just simply spending a quiet day at home. Whatever his day off brings, you can rest assured that the boys and his wife are by his side.



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## “AFRICAN VIOLET” SCORES BIG WIN at Iranian Film Festival in San Francisco



African Violet was the big winner of the 14th edition of the Annual Iranian Film Festival - San Francisco as it garnered awards in four categories, including best screenplay and best director. Mona Zandi-Haqiqi was selected as best director for the drama, which also won the award for best screenplay written by Hamidreza Bababeigi.

The film tells the story of a middle-aged Shokuh who finds out that her ex-husband, Fereidun, has been placed in a nursing home by their children. She, and her second husband Reza, decide to take care of Fereidun themselves, but in their own home. In doing so, the relationship between Shokuh and Fereidun is significantly transformed. This new situation affects Reza and Shokuh’s daily life and unexpected changes take place in the lives of all three characters.

The festival was held virtually on September 18 and 19 due to the pandemic and the winners were announced during the closing day of the event. Fatemah Motamed-Aria received the award for best actress for the portrayal of Shokuh. The award for best actor went to Amir-Hossein Fat’hi for his role in “The Slaughterhouse” by Abbas Amini. Mehdi Rezai won the best cinematography award for his collaboration in “Kulbarf” directed by Milad Mansuri.

“Duchenne Boys” was named best documentary. The documentary is a personal narrative of its director, Sohrab Kavir, as, battling survivor’s guilt after the deaths of three of his brothers, he returns to Iran from the UK. Once there, he embarks upon an epic quest to form a virtual football team made up of young sufferers of Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, the same disease that took his brothers.

The award for best short was given to “Tattoo”, which also won Farhad Delaram the award for best director in the narrative short films competition. The film is about a young woman who wants to renew her driver’s license but she is sent to the traffic police center for her tattoos.

“A Simple Examination” won the best screenplay award in the short films category.

Written and directed by Meisam Saberifard, the film follows Shabnam and Pedram, who are about to get married, however, Pedram’s behavior causes Shabnam to be skeptical about marrying him.

*Tehran Times, 09/30/21*

## Thousands of Children Left Without Parents in Iran due to Covid

The Iranian welfare authorities have stated that more than 51,000 children in Iran have lost a parent to the Covid-19 pandemic. Because of this a good majority of the children are home schooled leaving them no access to a support network from relatives or teachers. The pandemic which has Iran has suffered one of the worst coronavirus outbreaks in the Middle East and has significantly added to the already weak economy caused by sanctions.

With this continued state it is feared that the children will not receive schooling and therefore be exploited at very early ages to survive.



## DAIRY FREE FUTURE; THE HOPE OF THE SON OF AN IRANIAN IMMIGRANT

Nima Bahrami at the age of nine left Iran with his family and arrived in Vancouver. The move wasn’t easy for him, due to leaving his friends behind and being placed into a society with a different culture and language.

It was also not easy for his parents. His mom was an interior designer but chose to leave her job to care for her family and help them meet the challenges of becoming part of a new country. She became very involved in his elementary school, all in an effort to help him and his siblings to assimilate.

After he graduated high school Nima received his MBA from Cardiff University in Wales. His early love of animals and the environment in which he lived developed from a hobby into a profession. Now he is the founder and CEO of “Bettermoo(d) and their motto is, “What a cow eats and a human needs.”

His company offers a non-dairy alternative to the dairy products we know and love. His goal for the company is to recreate the flavors of the Alps dairy region, as cow’s diets and living conditions influence the flavor of their products.

The free roaming, grass, herbs and flowers certainly influences the Alp’s dairy industry.





## Tehran Short Film fest opens, with shot at Oscars for first time

The festival jury has members from the Islamic republic as well as Italy, Japan, France and Austria.

The festival, now in its 38th edition and running until Sunday, earned qualification this year as a gateway to Hollywood's annual awards showcase.

The event "was added as a qualifying festival in the Short Films categories this year," the US Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences confirmed. "And it is the only current qualifying festival in Iran."

The designation came despite high tensions between Washington and Tehran, which have had no diplomatic relations since 1979, before the festival began.

This year's showcase also coincides with efforts to resume negotiations on reviving Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with the United States and other world powers, with the goal of ending a punishing sanctions regime.

"I am both happy and proud of the qualification of our festival," the event's president Sadegh Moussavi told AFP. "It's a big success of cultural diplomacy," he said with a smile.

"We think that culture and art can have a status more prestigious than politics."

Tehran's festival has been a springboard for the big names of Iranian cinema, including Asghar Farhadi, a two-time Oscar winner, Bahman Ghobadi and Reza Mirkarimi, said festival spokesman Mansour Jahani.

### CENSORSHIP ACCUSATION

Moussavi said Tehran's application to the Academy was initially rejected because its entrants are not required to pay fees.

This year's showcase also coincides with efforts to resume full negotiations on reviving a 2015 nuclear deal between the United States, Iran and other world powers  
ATTA KENARE AFP

"We replied that our country was under sanctions and therefore it is impossible for those who want to present their films to pay registration fees," he said.

Tehran is the only short film festival without such fees among about 130 in the world which are Oscar eligible, Moussavi said.

Following recognition by the Academy, this year's festival competition received more than 6,400 entries from 128 countries - 2,000 more than last year.

Five Iranian films and 58 from abroad were selected for the grand prize and the winner will be presented to the Academy for possible Oscar nomination.

The selections upset some young Iranian directors whose films were not accepted, and led to accusations of censorship, including from film-maker Farnoush Samadi.

"It is my duty to write to the Academy to protest this censorship, injustice and non-professional actions of the Tehran Festival," Samadi said on Instagram.

On the same social media platform Ali Asgari, a director, said that as a member of the Academy he "will not vote for a film pre-selected by the Tehran Short Film Festival in order to support all the film-makers whose films were rejected."

Moussavi denied the accusations, saying that "there was no censorship on our part. We received 1,500 films from Iranian film-makers. We have to make a choice using as criteria the themes and quality of the film."

AFP 10/20/2021

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## The Passing of a Friend and Contributor **Michael H. Whitworth, D.O.**

*Persian Heritage* is sad to report the passing of a friend and contributor to *Persian Heritage*, Michael H. Whitworth, D.O..

He passed away on Sunday, August 22, 2021, after a brief illness. Born in Soda Springs, Idaho, on September 28, 1942, Mike was the third of seven children born to Herb and Ann Whitworth. Mike was raised on a farm and ranch in the Kelly Toponce area in Idaho, where he learned the values of hard work and dedication to his faith and family.

Following his graduation from North Gem High School, Mike served a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Germany. Upon his return to Idaho, he married the love of his life, Sheila Allsop. Mike and Sheila began their journey together, when they were married in the Salt Lake City Temple on September 16, 1964. Mike attended Utah State University, graduating in 1967.

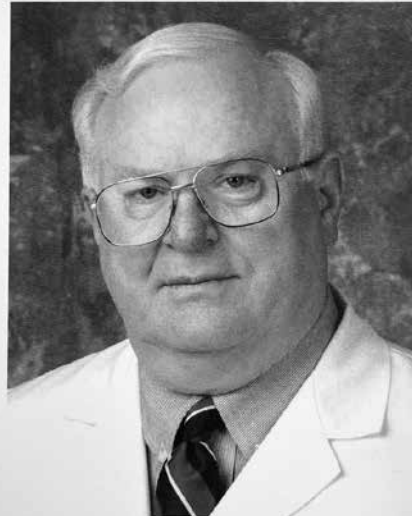
Following his graduation, he, Sheila and their young son, Jeff, moved to Kansas City, where he attended the Kansas City College of Osteopathic Medicine and Surgery and they welcomed their second child, Andra. After finishing school in 1971, Mike, Sheila and their young family moved to Tulsa, where their youngest child, Brandon, was born.

In Tulsa, Mike completed an internship and general surgery residency at Oklahoma Osteopathic Hospital and embarked on his career as a surgeon and educator. Mike's love and compassion for his patients was legendary, as was his concern for the young physicians who trained under him. He was a skilled surgeon who was known by his colleagues and resident physicians as a patient and generous physician – except for occasions in the operating room, where he was known by some as “the bear”.

He served on numerous hospital committees and national committees related to the education and training of residents.

He also received several awards over the years, including the A.T. Still Award of Excellence from the Oklahoma Osteopathic Association in 2010, the Distinguished Osteopathic Surgeon Award from the American College of Osteopathic Surgeons in 2011

IN LOVING  
*Memory*



**DR. MICHAEL H. WHITWORTH**  
SEPTEMBER 28, 1942 – AUGUST 22, 2021

and the 2017 Outstanding Physician Award from the Osteopathic Founders Foundation. Mike never lost his love of the West, and in his retirement, he and Sheila loved to travel with Sheila's sister and brother-in-law, Evelyn and Jim Twiss. Mike particularly loved driving through the mountains and small towns in the area where he was raised.

His family loved it, when they could join him and hear the stories of his younger days as a “cowboy” on the ranch. Mike was a fine example of a loving husband, father, grandfather and friend.

Preceded in death by parents, Herb and Ann; and siblings, Carolyne Eliason and Brad Whitworth. Survived by his wife, Sheila; children, Jeff and Rosie Whitworth, Andra Whitworth and Brandon and Lisa Whitworth; grandchildren, Ryan, Kevin, Wes, Tristen, Alexa and Sam Whitworth; siblings, Thelma Lee and Dick Henson, Wes and Jan Whitworth, Martha Dalton, Mark and Mary Whitworth, Kelly Whitworth and Gerald Eliason; and numerous other family and friends. A memorial service was held on September 24 at 10:30 a.m. at the LDS Church in Tulsa, OK.

## SORAYA MOTAHARNIA Nominated for Global Teacher Prize 2021



Soraya Motaharnia, an Iranian teacher, has been placed among the top 10 nominees for the Global Teacher Prize 2021. Motaharnia, an outstanding teacher of mathematics, Persian language, art, science, and theology, has been praised in Iran for helping the most vulnerable students in rural parts of the country. She helps students in need of medical treatment and multiple special surgeries and provides financial assistance to hundreds of poor students. The Global Teacher Prize, now in its seventh year and organized by the Varkey Foundation in partnership with UNESCO, aims to recognize outstanding teachers around the world and has attracted for the current year more than 8,000 nominations from 121 countries.

Soraya Motaharnia says three major forces have pushed her forward throughout her life: studying, taking care of the weak, and the desire to play a role in promoting her society. As soon as she graduated from university she was assigned a teaching post at a remote village in the deprived province of Sanandaj, capital of Kurdistan Province. Here she was moved by the plight of a young girl with facial scarring from a housefire and a young boy with complex ankle injuries that prevented him from walking. These were the first youngsters she took under her wing and paid for medical treatment their parents could not afford. She paid for the education of another young girl, persuading her parents not to push her into an early arranged marriage.

With the support of her own parents, she established a charity, helping 1,100 students who had medical and educational problems, and providing jobs for women with marriage difficulties and divorce. Her caring crusade has extended to collecting money for earthquake victims in Kermanshah province and flood-stricken people in Lorestan province.

The result of these efforts over nearly 30 years have been seen in her students' educational achievements, many of them going on to specialized jobs and careers after college graduation. She believes her biggest achievement was decreasing the number of school dropouts to near zero. A string of awards, including being declared the best teacher in Iran for two consecutive years, have followed the acclaim for all her efforts.



## Passing of Prominent Painter and Artist: Iran Darroudi

Darroudi was born on September 2, 1936 in Mashhad and passed away on October 29, 2021 in Tehran. She pursued other artistic fields along with painting. She was also active in directing movies and writing screenplays. The artist worked as an art critic and taught history of art at universities. Some are of the opinion that her art consists of surreal paintings dealing with Iranian themed imagery and strong lighting.

Salvador Dali, a Spanish surrealist artist renowned for his technical skill, had never considered Darroudi's style close to his own one, but described her as an Eastern artist with unlimited talent. Darroudi, as a contemporary Iranian artist, held 64 solo exhibitions at renowned museums and galleries around the world. She also produced 80 documentaries for national TV station of former Iranian regime. 8 precious works of the artist are being displayed at the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art as well as other Iranian museums. Some of her art works are being kept at other museums around the globe.

## In the Memory of: DR. BETMANSUR

**We lost a humanitarian legend, a great father, a wonderful husband, and an outstanding friend.** Dr. Betmansur was born in Uromia (rezieh) to a successful and famous family. He graduated from Alborz High School, a high standard school in Iran. He completed medical school at the University of Tehran and then a residency in OB/GYN at New York University. Dr. Douglas, one of the leaders in OBS/GYN in the world was his mentor, and he insisted on keeping Dr. Betmansur at New York Hospital. However, Dr. Betmansur could not wait to return to his country and his community. He was not only a highly educated and skillful physician, but he was a turning point in the history of assyrians in Iran. He was elected a representative to the Iranian parliament and as an outstanding member and patriot was close to the Shah of Iran. He received Hodayoun and three cultural, health and social medals from the Shah. Mr. Hovada was present in Dr. Betmansur's meetings and events to relay the Shah's messages.

Dr. Betmansur was the founder and initiator of many causes, union, social, cultural, athletic, charity, medical and international political bodies such as the Assyrian Universal Alliance, the Ninevah Liberation Party and Ashur newspaper which was published in three languages.

Dr. Betmansur was the first personality who struggled and requested freedom of Assyrians in their ancestor land of Mesopotamia. During his illness, Eunice, his daughter, was an angel. Through the computer she learned the physiology and therapy of her father's disease and the nurses and doctors involved in his care treated her as a physician. Raman traveled back and forth from Europe to take care of his father. Mrs. Betmansur was a great pillar in the ordeal and we wish her health.



# A Calamity called Islamic Revolution and Inevitability of an Unprecedented Tragedy

Part One

By: C.N.

The following article was sent to Persian Heritage and does not represent the opinion of the magazine.

## INTRODUCTION:

### If there is a God, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini will have much to answer”

This is a statement coming from the 16th century regarding the atrocities, brutalities and cruelties of some spiritual leaders in Europe; a statement that equally supposedly applies to the supposedly spiritual people world-wide and in Iran. It is quoted here because it so aptly applies to the beginning of the atrocities committed by Islamic revolution during the reign of **Ayatollah Khomeini**, which began in Iran in February 1979. At times, it seemed the execution of innocent people, highly competent generals, university professors and topnotch civil servants never stopped. Indeed it never did! Only the numbers lessened, but they included major figures and leaders of the movement, who never thought they would be personally in danger. What is more cruel, disastrous and absolutely unacceptable is that it was done under the banner of “Islam” and “of bringing freedom” as advocated by the leaders of the crowds. These same crowds pushed the movement and assisted in turning it into a huge tyrannical mower of freedom; crushing the very phenomenon the advocates pronounced.

This moral evil is a very significant part of contemporary Iranian history and has had massive implications to the past, present and future; blaming people from all walks of life, military, politics, education and business as **“Corrupt on Earth”** or **“Fighters against God.”** Regardless of God’s vindication and irrelevance in such tragedies, they invoked a phenomenon that would not allow God to defend God’s own position. I wonder how **Evil exists if God is All-good and All-fair?** This very phenomenon has had a tremendous impact on peoples’ belief systems. Thousands of families who have lost loved ones to the forces of this regime also lost faith in Is-

lam. The followers of the directions of the Ayatollah added insult to injury, taking all measures to maximize the pain and suffering they inflicted on people, including charging the surviving families for the bullets used to kill their loved ones. People wondered what had they done to deserve such awful punishments. Not receiving answers, they turned against Islam and anything Islamic. Only the people who, amassed tremendous wealth and the clergy who dreamed of wealth, illiterate and absolutely ill-informed and mercenaries of the regime, continue to believe in the system that was created; a system loaded with a corrupt clergy and underlings. They are morally, financially, judicially, ethically and administratively corrupt.

The effect of this new thinking is felt and is evident on a daily basis since of his reign and it is getting worse. Khomeini helped create an environment where the killing of innocent people is not much of a shame. It is my belief that the present regime in Iran is more corrupt. From day one, they have brought nothing but misery and devastation to a country that was on the verge of being recognized as one that could help world stability and economic prosperity. Instead, the Iranian people have received nothing but economic hardship and enhanced superstition that only destroys what is fundamentally a healthy intelligent society. One has to look beyond Iranian frontiers to see what symbolizes the people of Iran.

When I was in high school and had to take Iranian history and geography, I often wondered why such a great land mass was inhabited by such a small number of people (11 million at the time.) Aside from the forces of nature, famine, less rain meaning less agricultural production and other elements out of the peoples’ control, it was and still is a small population that inhabits the size of this beautiful country.

A country that has four seasons and tremendous wealth hidden. Additionally, the land carries a deep culture that impressed its invaders and is known world-wide as Persian culture. Persian culture covers a wide geography beginning with the northern areas of Iran and countries such as provinces of the region called the Caucasian land mass. As I read more, I realized that this landmass suffered many brutal, savagery and cruel barbarian invading armies such as the Arabs, Mogul Turks from Central Asia (including Timberlane) not to mention the internal rivalries among tribal forces who would slaughter other sides’ people and armies. The last mass execution of people took place about 200 years ago when the people of Kerman, in South West Iran, provided sanctuary for Lotf Ali Khan Zand who had just assumed leadership of the country, after the passing of Karim Khan Zand, his beloved and respected father. An unknown young man by the name of Agha Mohammad Khan Qajar (who had been a helper in the Karim Khan’ household) mobilized his Qajar’s tribe and challenged Lotf Ali Khan. Lotf Ali Khan ran away from Shiraz and sought asylum from the people of Kerman a southwestern city on the edge of central desert. People knowing his father and what a of kind ruler he had been, let him hide in the Baam fortress, which had been built to provide thousands of people a safe haven when competing armies showed up.

Agha Mohammad Khan, with Central Asian Turkish background, surrounded the fort and deprived the inhabitant of food and other necessities for months. He found a traitor who showed him a weak point. He entered the fort and captured Lotf Ali Khan who was executed along with thousands of the people of Kerman, who helped the asylum seeker. The invading Khan ordered the killings and made a little



hill out of the heads of the slaughtered people. The ultimate brutality, cruelty and savagery was on exhibit in plain sight.

Agha Mohammad Khan established the Qajar's dynasty, which turned out to be the most ruthless, incompetent, corrupt dynasty and extremely alien to Persian culture. During their reign, Iran lost Herat, in the Afghanistan of today, a good portion of the Northwestern Caucasian region, as the result of an incompetent army and lack of interest to protect Iranian territory. They slaughtered people for minor offences and sold or contracted part of the country to foreign powers for money! Multiple marriages and producing hundreds of children was another entertainment of this corrupt and ruthless Ghajar tribe. This then was one reason why so few people inhabit this land-mass. Other reasons included forces of nature that created dangerous conditions, at times, for people to raise a family and live a peaceful life.

The last invasion I witnessed was the second Arab invasion (albeit with Iranian names, Khomeini regime to be specific) and of course the third Arab invasion by Saddam Hossein. He received a green light from Zebignief Birjinsky, President Carter's National Security Advisor, who ordered his army to attack Iran at Ghadessyeh, referring to the first Arab invasion which took place at Ghadessyeh, centuries earlier.

I think it is quite appropriate to look at the international environment that made this disaster in Iran possible. This attack scrapped the border agreement that Saddam had signed in 1974 with the Shah in Algeria. My emphasis and discussion here would be limited to the emergence of Khomeini, who under the banner of Islam, began a wave of terror unknown in modern Iran. The disastrous effects of this event continues to exist for the Iranian people. The calamitous effect of the Khomeini regime will come out in details as a most cruel event in modern Iran. One has to wonder how it allowed a group of clergy, Mullahs, to ascend to leadership positions of some of the most intelligent people in this world.

### SHAH MOHAMMAD REZA PAHLAVI: HIS LEGACIES

The whole tragedy took place under the watchful eye of the security apparatus which evolved over many years. It began with the Coup d'état of 1953 which was planned and implemented by the CIA agent Amit Roosevelt and British MI6,

the British Military Intelligence Services. The plan was to bring down the legitimate government of legendary Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh, who epitomized honesty, integrity, the utmost love for Iran and respect for the rule of Law. Mossadegh's love of Iran and the Persian culture was legendary and he had a deep respect for the people who adhered to the same principles. He wanted to rid Iran of British influence. He ultimately did that and became the second patriot after Amir Kabeer to have done such good for the country.

It must be stated here that while the planning of August 1953 had been done by the CIA and the British intelligent service, there were many Iranian traitors who were instrumental in the plan's execution. Among the most corrupt were the Rashidian brothers, known as British spies who were free to move and erode the power of the government. Many army officers who had actively opposed the government were heavily engaged in the operations and later received precious rewards for the participation. Among them were General Batmanghelich, and some close relatives of Mossadegh who, as traitors, later enjoyed lucrative positions in the government. They all owe their wealth and promotion to the Central Intelligence Agency, which was flagrantly moving around the world, destroying democracies and national movements in Chile, Argentina, all while the U.S government was superficially propagating democratic ideals. The dreadful calamities that overthrew legitimate governments was just a façade of that strategy.

In many ways, the Shah's destiny was made by the Shah himself. He did not know it. I wonder if he even had a deep understanding of Iranian culture. The decisions that the Shah made were not deeply developed nor did he have a good feeling of the consequences of those decisions. In retrospect, each of those decisions had a profound implications in the short and long term. For instance, had he supported Dr. Mossadegh, who singularly tried his best to protect Iran's main assets which were being selfishly exploited by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC), for over 50 years, the Shah would have been buried in the land that he loved and by the people he admired. Instead because of his decisions the people he admired took extreme measures to dislocate him and turned him into a wandering man in search of a home. It was a tragic event in Iranian history. Where and how did he go

wrong beginning in 1960s?

Sometime in 1961-1962 the Shah made an announcement that Iran was recognizing Israel, on a de jure, basis, as a Sovereign state as recognized by the newly created United Nations. This act was like a huge bomb explosion in the Middle East and North Africa, where most Arab Islamic countries are locted. This act coming from the head of a Moslem majority country was a shock to all of them. There was Jamal Abdul Nasser of Egypt who, as a mouthpiece (he thought) of Arab countries, began bad mouthing and condemning the Shah for abandoning Moslem countries by recognizing Israel. But none of these threats meant much as Iran, under an emboldened Shah, was pursuing a national policy. It is noteworthy to mention, that Jews had lived in Iran for centuries since, Cyrus the Great conquered Babylon and invited them to come and live in Persia. So, there was an active Jewish population of thousands in Iran engaged in medicine, universities, trade and other professional activities. The only high rise business center in a popular place called Istanbul Street was built (in 60s) by a Jewish merchant called Haji Elghanian. Additionally, Jews were invited to come and settle in Persia hundreds of years earlier and long before the Arabs invaded Persia That invasion destroyed a well-established civilization, literature and libraries and were replaced with force and/or heavy taxation, totally alien to Iranians. This set them back hundreds of years. Despite serious efforts by Reza Shah and Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, the nation was and has not been able to dislodge the primitive features exhibited in Islamic thinking. The early 1960's coincided with the height of Nasser's popularity in the Middle East Arab countries. He was instrumental, under General Najeeb, to overthrow the Monarchy in Egypt (in 1954). He also forced through, the creation of the United Arab Republic, as a union that started with Syria and Egypt with the hope other Arab countries to join. But they all shunned Nasser's assertiveness and his Arab unity concept never actualized. The United Arab Republic between Egypt and Syria collapsed due to overwhelming influence that Egyptian officers exercised on Syrians. Thus the concept of a union among Arab countries disappeared for good.

The Shah was really emboldened to the extent that some of his actions, globally pronounced, were not perceived friendly in Washington. The Shah was

invited to Moscow, the capital city of the then Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) which collapsed in 1990's. In an address regarding the status of the Persian Gulf and, probably at the urging of the Russians, he announced that affairs of the Persian Gulf should be determined by the countries bordering the huge waterway. It may have been a coincidence, but right at that time, the governing body of the Island of Bahrain had permitted the United States to establish a naval presence in the Persian Gulf.

Historical events with outlandish results, as is the case of revolution in Iran, are sometimes triggered by seemingly unimportant acts which may have been prevented if critical thinking was applied and had prevailed. Or, if people with different opinions were allowed to sift through the issues and offer their opinions. This was the case of Capitulation which was deeply rooted with intense resentment in Iran and had been eliminated from the Iranian political repertoire. It was considered to be an enormous act of courage when it was excreted from the body politics. Reza Shah the Great took a bold step in the process and informed the foreign government, that any criminal act by their people, while working in Iran will go through Iranian jurisprudence for necessary action.

*to be continued*

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Iranians in US: According to extrapolated 2010 & 2020 U.S. Census data, the subsequent reports & other independent survey analyses carried by think-tanks, it is estimated there are up to: 1.9 million Iranian-Americans living in the U.S. in 2012

Whereby their largest concentration - about 900,000 – residing in Greater Los Angeles.

An NPR report recently put the Iranian population of Beverly Hills as high as 20% of the total population.

Iranian communities in the US have a very diverse religious population.

Muslims, Iranian-American Baha'is, Armenian-Assyrian Christians, Zoroastrians, Jews,

Mystics, Spiritualists and Humanists...are eminently present in every community.

Other large (more than 100,000 each) communities include:

New York; North New Jersey; Washington D.C.; Seattle WA, Boston MA, and Houston/Dallas TX.

The majority of the Iranian born had a bachelor's degree or higher.

According to Census 2020, 50.9% of Iranian immigrants have attained a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 24.0% among the total population.

According to the latest census data available, more than one in four Iranian-Americans holds a master's or doctoral degree, the highest rate among 67 ethnic groups

ever studied.

The Small Business Administration (SBA) recently conducted a study that found Iranian immigrants among the top 20 immigrant groups with the highest rate of business ownership, contributing substantially to the U.S. economy.

Almost one in two Iranian-American households have annual income exceeding \$100K (compared to one in five for the overall U.S. population).

According to a study carried out by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Iranian scientists, engineers and businesses in the United States own or manage around one trillion dollars. They are eminently present in every sector of the society.

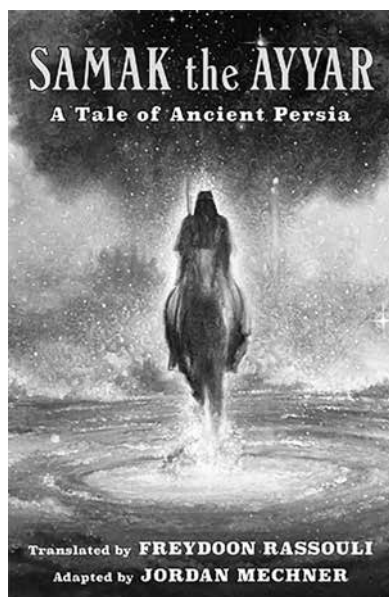
At present, there are nearly 15,000 physicians of Iranian heritage working in the United States who have their own practice and/or work in medical institutions.

As the most law abiding ethnicity ever, the rate of allegations or even convictions for major or even minor (misdemeanor) crimes in the Iranian-American community ranks as the lowest ever for any community, immigrant or otherwise, in the history of the U.S.

It is also estimated that the total number of university professors of Iranian heritage who teach and research in higher education institutions in the United States is over 12,000.

One is hard pressed to find a single American university or college, where one or more Iranian American professors at bare minimum, is not serving.

What is most striking is the majority (more than 75%) of these 12,000 plus professors serve in the top 200 of the 4,000 universities and colleges in the nation.



## Samak Ayyar (A Tale of Ancient Persia)

Translated by: Freydoon Rassouli

Adapted by: Jordan Mechner

The adventures of Samak, a trickster-warrior hero of Persia's thousand-year-old oral storytelling tradition, are beloved in Iran. Samak is an ayyar, a warrior who comes from the common people and embodies the ideals of loyalty, selflessness, and honor—a figure that recalls samurai, ronin, and knights yet is distinctive to Persian legend.

Translated from the original Persian by Freydoon Rassouli and adapted by Prince of Persia creator Jordan Mechner, this timeless masterwork can now be enjoyed by English-speaking readers. A thrilling and suspenseful saga, Samak the Ayyar also offers a vivid portrait of Persia a thousand years ago.

We are delighted to welcome Freydoon Rassouli (artist, author and translator) and Jordan Mechner (author, screenwriter, graphic novelist and game designer) to our latest edition of #FarhangConnect to talk about their new collaboration on SAMAK THE AYYAR, A TALE OF ANCIENT PERSIA, translated by Freydoon Rassouli and adapted by Jordan Mechner for Columbia University Press.

**Freydoon Rassouli** is an artist, author, and translator whose books include *Fusionart*, *Rumi Revealed*, and *The Book of Creativity*. His artworks have been exhibited widely, and he painted two major street murals in Venice, California, and downtown Los Angeles.

**Jordan Mechner** is a New York Times best-selling author, screenwriter, graphic novelist, and game designer. He is the creator of *Prince of Persia*, one of the world's most successful video game franchises, which he also adapted as a feature film. His books include the Eisner-nominated graphic novel *Templar* (2013).

## Illustrated Book Profiles 15 Trailblazing Women with Roots in Iran

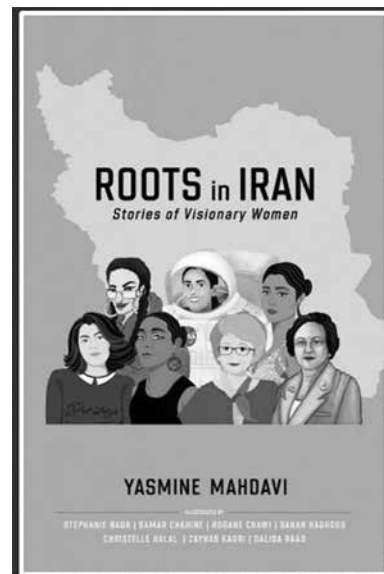
### YASMINE MAHDAVI

New York, NY, October 14, 2021-(*PR.com*)- This gorgeous book introduces readers (ages 12+) to fifteen incredible women with Roots in Iran. In their biographies, readers will find athletes and artists, scientists and activists, astronauts and authors whose struggles are universal. Yet they persevered. *Roots in Iran* celebrates the achievements of transformative pioneers whose vision of who they wanted to become will surprise and inspire readers of all ages.

In Summer 2017, Yasmine Mahdavi's children listened to her tell them about the recently deceased Maryam Mirzakhani, a woman, born and raised in Iran who became a world-famous mathematician. In fact, she is the first and only female to date to win the Fields Medal, the highest prize in mathematics. Telling Maryam's story to her children, set Yasmine off on a marvelous adventure of curiosity. Who are the other women with roots in Iran who overcame significant obstacles, and how did they achieve success? Four years after Yasmine told Maryam's story around the kitchen table, she is delighted to share *Roots in Iran* with readers. The book is divided in two sections, the longer chapters provide an in-depth look into the lives of five trailblazers. Readers learn how Anousheh Ansari's fascination with the galaxies led to her triumphs and travails as an entrepreneur and how Jasmin Moghbeli, riveted by the achievements of Valentina Tereshkova, became a Marine helicopter and eventually a U.S. astronaut. The shorter chapters introduce readers to ten more dynamic women. Readers travel with Farnaz "Spider-Woman" Esmailzadeh, rock-climbing star, to find out how she got her start, and discover how Melody Ehsani, designer extraordinaire, champions women's rights even though she didn't end up in law school.

Each story is accompanied by brilliant, full-color portraits created by female artists with roots in the Middle East. The book also offers sidebars that give a glimpse into Iran's culture and history as well as the intriguing vocations the women pursued. Moreover, each chapter offers a discussion guide aligned with Common Core Standards.

Yasmine Mahdavi was born and raised in Iran. She left Iran for the U.S. when she was twelve years old. She wrote this book—her first—to her thirteen-year-old self as an homage to her country of birth and an ode to her adopted country. Yasmine lives in New York City.

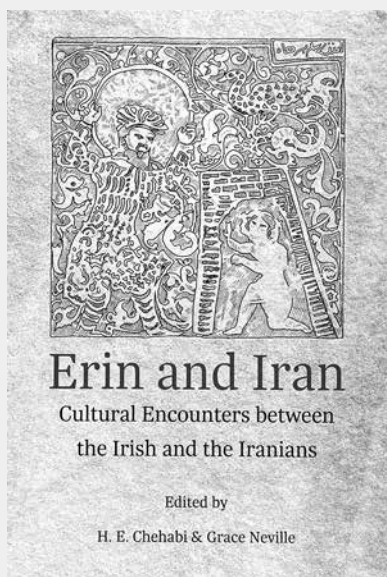




## Erin and Iran

CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS  
BETWEEN THE IRISH  
AND THE IRANIANS

Edited by H.E. Chehabi  
and Grace Neville



“In Erin and Iran” there are ten essays by North American and European scholars who discuss parallel themes in and interactions between Irish and Iranian cultures.

In the first section three essays explore common elements in pre-Christian Irish and pre-Islamic Iranian mythologies, common elements that have often been pointed out by scholars of Indo-European mythology but rarely examined in detail.

The essays address literary subjects, ranging from medieval romances such as Tristan and Isolde and Vis and Ramin to twentieth-century novels such as James Joyce’s Ulysses and Simin Daneshvar’s Savushun and three nineteenth-century travelogues are presented, of which two are written by Irish travelers to Iran and one written by an Indo-Persian traveler to Ireland.

Together, these studies constitute the first-ever collection of articles dealing with cultural encounters between the Irish and the Iranians.”

## “Zalava” Film’s World Poster RELEASED FOR SCREENING AT 78TH VENICE FILM FESTIVAL

On the eve of the world premiere of the movie “Zalava” in the competition section of the 36th edition of “Critics’ Week” at the 78th Venice International Film Festival in Italy, the international poster of this movie was unveiled.

The movie “Zalava” directed by Arsalan Amiri, produced by Rouhollah Baradari and Samira Baradari and written by Arsalan Amiri, Ida Panahandeh and Tahmineh Bahram will be screened in three times including 13:15 on Wednesday, September 8, 2021 at the Perla Cinema and at 19:15 and 19:30 on Thursday, September 9, 2021 at the Astra 1 and Astra 2 cinema halls in this international prestigious film festival.



Mohammad Hossein Houshmandi “has designed the poster of this film. “Zalava” will compete with six films, including; “They Carry Death” by Helena Girón and Samuel M Delgado from Spain and Colombia, “Erasing Frank” by Gábor Fabricius from Hungary, “Dogworld” by Alessandro Celli from Italy, “Mother Lode” by Matteo Tortone from France, Italy and Switzerland, “Detours” by Ekaterina Selenkina from Russia and the Netherlands, and “The Salamander” by Alex Carvalho from Brazil, France and Germany.

Claudio Cupellini from Italy, Sandrine Marques from Spain and Vanja Kaludjeric from Croatia are the judges of the Venice “Critics’ Week” organized by the Italian Film Critics Association.

In the meantime, Uberto Pasolini from Italy, Martin Schweighofer from Austria and Amalia Ulman from Argentina are the judges of the “Lion of the Future” section which judge the works of the first filmmakers of this prestigious cinematic event.

“Zalava” was filmed in the fall of 2020, starring Navid Pourfaraj, Pouria Rhimi Sam, Hoda Zineh Al-Abedin, Basit Rezaei, Shaho Rostami, Fereydoun Hamedi, Saleh Rahimi, Zahed Zandi, and a number of other Kurdistan Theatre and Television actors.

Arsalan Amiri’s first cinematic experience as a director has been produced with the support of the Hong Kong Film Forum HAF, the South Korean Film House KOFIC, in partnership with the Farabi Cinema Foundation and the investment of Toubia Film.

The film was nominated for an award in 10 categories at the 39th Fajr Film Festival, with Best Actor for Pouria Rahimi Sam, Best Screenplay for Arsalan Amiri, Ida Panahandeh and Tahmineh Bahram, Diploma of Honor for the best cinematography for Mohammad Rasouli and the best first director for Arsalan Amiri.

The 78th Venice International Film Festival, the world’s oldest film event, chaired by Alberto Barbera in the competition category; Main Competition, Short Film, Orizzonti, Critics’ Week, Venice Development and the Out of Competition section; Venice VR Expanded, Special Screenings, Orizzonti Extra, Biennale College Cinema and ... was held September 1 to 11, 2021 in Venice, Italy.



# THE LAND OF PERSEPOLIS: Introducing Persian Culture to the West

September 24-December 10, 2021  
Lewis-Clark State College Center for Arts & History

An exhibit called “The Land of Persepolis: Introducing Persian Culture to the West,” which features the work of more than 50 artists, was on display Sept. 24-Dec. 10 at the Lewis-Clark State College Center for Arts & History, located at 415 Main St. in Lewiston, Idaho.

The free exhibit featured artists from the United States and Iran who are inspired by the aesthetic beauty and rich traditions of Persian culture. The exhibit included ceramics, mixed media, painting, photography, and textiles.

In lieu of an opening reception, the Center will host a series of free virtual public programs throughout the fall semester.

The first presentation was on Sept. 29 by Mohammad Ghaedi, who holds a Ph.D. in political science from Washington State University and master’s degrees in political science and government, international relations, and psychology. He has taught at WSU and is a visiting scholar at the Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution at George Mason University focusing on U.S. and Iran conflict resolution.

His presentation introduced Iran as a mosaic of ethno-linguistic groups from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds. Each of these groups for thousands of years, through their traditions and pop culture including food and music, have contributed to a rich and vibrant multicultural country. Ghaedi addressed the similarities of Iran and the U.S. in terms of geographic diversity and cultural values.



On Oct. 16, Los Angeles celebrity/private chef and owner of Noush Catering Mojdeh Eghbal provided a lively cooking demonstration of a traditional Persian dish. Complimentary ingredient kits were available for pick-up at the Center for Arts & History in advance of the event for participants to prepare their meals at home.

Other virtual public programs included: a calligraphy demonstration led by award-winning calligrapher, curator, designer, and exhibiting artist Arash Shirinbab; a presentation on the history of Persian dance by choreographer Somaye Dadgari and a performance by the Rahaa Dance Group from Seattle; a Skype conversation with the producer and director of the film Broken Grail, was available to be watched online throughout the course of the exhibition; an arts workshop examining the motifs and patterns in Persian textiles led by exhibiting artist

Rachael Mayer; a presentation by LC State professor emeritus of psychology Rhett Diessner on his personal encounters with Persian culture; a traditional Persian music performance by WSU students Nasir Haghighi and Maziar Mivehchi; and a closing lecture on Persian architecture by Vahid Vahdat, an assistant professor of architecture and interior design at WSU’s School of Design and Construction.

Artists in the exhibit include Laura Ahola-Young, Ebrahim Ali-poor, Hassan Almasi, Amir Amiri, Hamidreza Amirimatin, Nasser Azizi, Kaveh Baghdadchi, Mohammadhassan Bagheri, Mohammad Bahmanziari, William Bybee, Shelley Cutler, Tirazheh Eslami, Hossein Esmaeili, Christopher Farnes, Ali Ghahremani, Hossein Hajilari, Abdollah Heydari, Majid Hojjati, Davoud Izadpanah, Keyvan Jafari, Parisa Jafari, Bahar Jafarinejad, Pooneh Jafarinejad, Phil Jenkins, Amirhossein Kamali, Yaghoub Khansalar, Ali Khavanin, Azadeh Khoramyar, Zohreh Lak, Leslie Lambert, Forrest Lesch-Middletton, Mehran Mafibordbar, Nasim Mansouri, Rachael Mayer, Borna Mirahmadian, Hossein Mirkamali, Sara Mousazadeh, Mohammadreza Nazmi, Hamidreza Norouzi, Steven Oberg, Omidreza Pournabi, Milad Rafat, Amir Sadeghi, Ramona Shamsavar, Arash Shirinbab, Javid Tafazoli, Ahmad Taji, Fahimeh Zandi, and Mehrzad Zarrabian.

The exhibit was part of the college’s Multicultural Awareness Month in September.



## WINDOW TO THE PAST: Gigantic Underground City is Chock-full of Untold Stories

**Afshin Majlesi**

Tehran Times on September 11, 2021

Situated in the city of Tafresh (capital of Tafresh County, in Iran's Markazi Province), the underground city was accidentally discovered several years ago during a construction operation. Located within the high mountains, Tafresh is situated approximately 222 kilometers southwest of the capital, Tehran.

Legends describe the underground city as having sheltered the local inhabitants during the Mongol invasion of Persia in the early 13th century.

Based on academic findings so far, the creation of handmade troglodytic architectural sites depends on several factors including climatic and geographical conditions, defense, security, durability, and religion, which were deeply tied with the cultural, political, social, and economic circumstances. This architecture can be classified into various formal types in terms of their external form, internal space, and function (religious, tombs, residential, and shelter). The handmade troglodytic architecture is a distinctive kind of architecture, which does not require major construction materials and consequently very low environmental load since its creation is majorly by extraction of space rather than the addition of mass. Architecture by subtraction rather than addition provides many opportunities that call for comprehensive research and analysis.

As there is no obligatory method in making spaces rather than material cohesion, there is no priority in constructing a troglodytic structure, either from the roof or from the floor. Dealing with stone blocks, rocks, and piles of the earth requires a variety of tools as an ax, hammer, chisel, and sledgehammer to shape the interior space.

In Iran, many magnificent cases of this type of architecture have taken place in different regions due to its various climates. This unique architecture is at odds with the conventional settlement patterns and construction methods and is always can take advantage of the mountains and valleys on the floor or wall, which is a good way to control climate fluctuation in different regions.

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# THE STAMP SET OF 1935

## REZA SHAH

Sender: Jafar Sepehri

The most ambitious effort to turn postage stamps into an instrument of official propaganda, and to disseminate the ideology of the Pahlavi state, formed the already mentioned set of nine denominations that was issued in 1314/1935 in celebration of the tenth anniversary of Reza Shah's coronation. These stamps are especially remarkable not only due to the fact that here, for the first time, an attempt was made to deliver a coherent iconographic program, but also because the administrative background of their publication is documented. According to a note kept in the National Archives,<sup>68</sup> the edition of these stamps, with the intention to celebrate "the progresses that had been achieved in the country", had been decided during a cabinet session on 4 Farvardin 1313/24 March 1934, upon an initiative that emanated from Mohammad 'Ali Dowlatshahi, then acting minister of post and telegraph. The early date of this decision, almost a year before the actual issue date on 3 Esfand 1314/22 February 1935 (which as the anniversary of Reza Khan's coup d'état was celebrated as the actual beginning of the Pahlavi era), could be explained by the anxiety to have the stamps available in time. Just like the coronation stamps of 1914, the printing of this prestigious set had been assigned to Enschede and Sons in Haarlem. Furthermore, they were the last Iranian stamps that bore in Latin the inscription "Postes Persanes" before the country's designation as "Iran"; "Postes Iraniennes" became obligatory from the beginning of the year 1314/1935. The significance that was attributed to this set as an instrument of official selfrepresentation could be judged from the high triage of altogether 2,750,000 stamps, a number that was equivalent to the annual need for stamps of the Iranian postal administration. The highest numbers - 1,000,000, 500,000 and 300,000 stamps respectively - were printed of the three lowest denominations.

Given the occasion of their issue, the most striking feature of this set was the fact that Reza Shah, i.e. the man to whom those achievements were attributed and whose portrait had been dominating the design of Iran's stamps for almost a decade, did

not appear on any of these stamps. In a symbolic way, however, he was present in all the illustrations.

The respective motifs of the nine denominations of this set depicted, framed by elements of Achamaenid architecture, allegories of justice (5 Dinar) and education (15 Dinar); a view of the Apadana in Persepolis (10 Dinar).

Tehran aerodrome (30 Dinar); the sanatorium at Sakhtsar (Mazandaran) (45 Dinar); the cement factory at Shah 'Abd al-Azim (75 Dinar); a gunboat of the Iranian navy (90 Dinar); the railroad bridge over the Karun River at Ahvaz (1 Rial); and the general post and customs office in Tehran (1.50 Rial).

The achievements of Reza Shah's rule that were glorified on these stamps could be divided into several topics. These were social and political reform, exemplified by the reform of the judicial and education system, the creation of a modern communication system (airfield and railroad), industrialization, social welfare and, finally, military and financial sovereignty. In short, the topics of these stamps cover the central features that Ervand Abrahamian has identified as the pillars of Reza Shah's rule: the military, communication and taxation.

To begin with the first topic, the two stamps dedicated to the reorganization of the legal system and education differed distinctively from the other denominations, with their naturalistic depictions of buildings and industrial plants, both by their smaller format as well as by their design, with their allegorical representations of *Justitia* (Figure 7.4) and *Prudentia* (Figure 7.5).

Their high triage, on the other hand, indicated the significance that was attributed to the establishment of a new education and legal system according to Western patterns as two of the most important and lasting political and social reforms implemented under Reza Shah. Another reason may have been that education and legal reform had been the field of activity of two of the most prominent cabinet members, Prime Minister Mohammad 'Ali Foroughi (1294-1421/1875-1942) and 'Ali Akbar Davar (1276-1316/1883-1937).

The prominent place that had been

given to these two subjects on the stamps may be explained by the fact that since the days of the Constitutional Revolution the establishment of a secular legal and education system had been on the agenda of the radical nationalists, who saw both measures as a precondition for the creation of a modern national state in Iran, which thus would be able to enter into contention with Western powers and to regain and maintain Iran's status as a self-conscious and independent state. Both reforms were also seen as necessary steps to destroy traditional (and especially tribal and clerical) structures, which were regarded as obstacles for the aspired national renaissance. Aside from social and cultural progress, the subjects gave an indirect indication of the principal objectives of those reforms: the training of loyal state servants, and the formation of a police state. The allegorical style of the illustrations on both stamps was strongly influenced by the iconography of the constitutionalist press of the *Mashrutiyyat* period, in which the Iranian nation or abstract ideas such as justice and enlightenment were usually depicted by symbolical figures. A late echo of this symbolism could for instance be found in the title of the widely read newspaper *Nahid*, which had an angelic figure placed protectively against a sinister, devil-like creature before a blooming landscape with railroads and telegraph lines as a vision of Iran. To understand the message conveyed by these two stamps correctly, it is essential to regard their iconography in connection with the depiction of the ruins of Persepolis on the 10 Dinar-denomination (Figure 7.6).

The relics of Iran's pre-Islamic past had already played an important role as symbols of national identity in the nationalist discourse, in which the

Iranian nation was not only defined by political borders, but also by the sum of monuments that could be found on her territory (as exemplified in the stamps of the



Figure 7.4 1935 commemoration set, 5 Dinar; allegory of education



Figure 7.5 1935 commemoration set, 15 Dinar; allegory of justice



ruler's set). Consequently, the title heading of *Iranshahr*, one of the most influential political periodicals of the early 1920s, displayed, among others, the tomb of Cyrus the Great and the ruins of Persepolis and Ktesiphon. In contrast to the ruler's set, the depiction of royal palaces had in consequence of the deposition of the Qajars given way to illustrations of factories, bridges and other modern buildings that played a similar role as symbols of modern Iran and the resurgent Iranian nation.

In this context, the placement of the ruins of Persepolis on the 10-Dinar denomination, between those stamps with the allegories of justice and education, was certainly not a coincidence. On the visual level, the Achamaenid monuments, as an emblem of the glorious past, were framed by symbols of progress, modernity and Westernization - "the combination of practical needs and ancient virtues" typical for the ideology of the Pahlavi era. The message conveyed by these stamps could be described as the radical reshaping of administration and society that took place under Reza Shah, which was supposed to create the precondition for a national renaissance by which Iran would regain her former greatness. This strange conflation of past and future was not only limited to these stamps, but during that period could also be found in the architecture of the National Bank, with its copious stylistic borrowings from Achaemenid architecture, or the new Ministry of Justice, which displays even now on its facade reliefs with an allegory of justice and a depiction of the court of Khosrow Anushiravan.

The presentation of architecture as a symbol of power gave a further indication of the radical change that took place at that time in urban planning, with the construction of new administrative areas in many major Iranian cities. In this context, apart from the need for an appropriate accommodation for the reformed and strengthened institutions, the construction of the new general post and customs office had been part of the architectural re-planning of the city area around the Tupkhaneh Square and the Golestan Palace in Tehran with buildings that were intended to represent the new order.

The topics and illustrations of the other stamps also mainly referred to the ideology and iconography of the constitutional movement, in which social and cultural development had been inseparable from technical progress. Such ideas were avidly propagated in the periodicals pub-

lished by Iranian expats in Berlin during and after the First World War, i.e. by men who actively supported Reza Shah's seizure of power and under his rule played an active role in the political and cultural life of Iran (such as Hasan Taqizadeh (1257-1348/ 1878-1969) and Mohammad 'Ali Jamalzadeh (1274-1997/1895-1997). Apart from the creation of a strong centralized government, these intellectuals considered the acquisition of modern technology as a necessary precondition to enable Iran to withstand the challenges of modernity and the dominance of the imperialist powers, whose position of strength was generally attributed to their technological and scientific advance.

Images of railroad bridges, airplanes and factories, which had represented the promise of the modern world in the days of the Constitutional Revolution, could be frequently found in the exile newspapers, which were widely read in Iran. Against this background, the picture of the cement factory at Rey (Figure 7.7) was for a contemporary viewer a familiar element of a well-known iconographical code.

In a similar way, the cement factory was a first manifest sign of Iran's industrialization, which formed a key element of the modernization policy under Reza Shah that was gaining momentum at the time when this stamp was issued. In this respect, the factory did not only constitute a symbol of government politics under Pahlavi rule (in which the economy to a great extent was monopolized by the Shah himself), but did in addition serve as an example of the growing industrialization. As a sign of Iran's waning dependency on imported foreign goods, it could also be interpreted as a symbol for the newly gained freedom of action.

The aerodrome in Tehran (Figure 7.8), and the railroad bridge at Ahvaz, together with the newly built general post and customs office, did in a similar way exemplify steps towards modernity and sovereignty.

On the other hand, they epitomized the nature of the modernization undertaken under Reza Shah, and the close interconnection of the central issues of Iranian politics during that period: nationalism, the adoption of modern technology and government control.

Knitting together the various regions and provinces of Iran by means of traffic and communication had been a key issue



Figure 7.6 1935 commemoration set, 10 Dinar; ruins of Persepolis.



Figure 7.7 1935 commemoration set, 75 Dinar; cement factory in Rey.

of the modernization of Iran and the creation of a powerful state since the early reforms of the nineteenth century. The nationwide postal and communication system established under Amir Kabir had formed a fundament on which his successors could build, making the postal system one of the important institutions of the Qajar period. The mail system owed its significance not least to the fact that the governmental monopoly over the flow of information could serve as an instrument of social control. This correlation between communication and power was also to be found in the two stamps that, in the shape of aviation and the Trans-Iranian Railroad, celebrated the newly created transportation systems. In addition, with the customs office in Tehran and the Imperial navy, the stamps celebrated two other symbols of regained sovereignty.

The image of the new building of the postal and customs administration (Figure 7.9) in Tehran served the same purpose.

During the Constitutional Revolution, a permanent issue in parliamentary politics had been the demand for the demission of the Belgian inspectors in the Financial Department, of which the customs office and (as far as the printing of stamps was concerned) the postal administration were a part. Not only was their presence seen as interference in the country's financial affairs, some of the Belgians were accused of the embezzlement of national property by illegally selling postage stamps on their own account, which was considered a flagrant violation of Iran's sovereignty. Therefore, one of the first measures of Reza Shah's government after the 1921 coup had been the removal of the last remaining Belgians from the Finance and Customs Department. A similar political success had been the abrogation of the capitulations for foreigners and the restoration of government control over Iran's customs administration in 1928. Furthermore, the industrialization of Iran under Reza Shah was to a great extent bankrolled by a road tax levied on all imported goods. Against this background,



Figure 7.8 1935 commemoration set, 30 Dinar, Tehran airfield.



Figure 7.9 1935 commemoration set, 1.50 Rial, post and customs office in Tehran.

the image of the general headquarters of the post and customs service not only depicted a symbol of the strong centralized government, but also of Iran's newly won sovereignty over her financial and economical affairs.

The railroad bridge over Karun River (Figure 7.10) played a similar role in the official iconography of the early Pahlavi state. The construction of the Trans-Iranian Railroad in the first place constituted the most spectacular part of the ongoing program of road building that was initiated in the 1930s and had been an important part of the modernization process insofar as it had made possible the industrialization of Iran. Even though the extent of the constructed motor roads exceeded that of the railroad by its expansiveness and economic importance, the railway played a special role in the public consciousness of the Pahlavi state. As an epitome of modern technology, illustrations of railroads and railroad installations had been a staple in the iconography of the constitutionalists and nationalists with their admiration for science and technology. This symbolic significance was still augmented by the fact that in the period before World War I the rivalry between Britain and Russia in Iran had prevented any attempt to build a railway in Iran (which may have given an advantage to the competitor), making railroads one of the symbols of the aspired economic and political independence. Furthermore, the fact that Iran had been able to venture the construction of the Trans-Iranian Railroad without taking up a foreign loan, but entirely with her own funds, made the railroad an example of autonomy and independence - even though, compared to motor roads, it proved to be a costly investment without much economical benefit. Having the construction of the first nationwide railway connection realized under his reign, and under the circumstances just mentioned, Reza Shah could claim to have finally realized the demand for modern technology as well as for political freedom of action. The gunboat depicted on the

90-Dinar denomination (Figure 7.11) in much the same way constituted an emblem of the resurgent nation.

Originally established for the prevention of smuggling tea and sugar (by whose taxation the construction of the railroad had been mainly financed), the navy had,

from the outset, been much more than just a branch of the armed forces. Together with the necessity to defend the country's territorial integrity, the control over the Persian Gulf became another issue of the nationalist discourse, not least due to the strong British presence in the Gulf and the imposed ban on Iran from maintaining her own naval forces in this area during the Qajar period. In the Caspian Sea Russia had enjoyed a similar position before and in fact also after World War I. Even though insignificant in strength (consisting of only half a dozen small vessels), the new navy had proven to be an effective instrument not only to police maritime trade and trafficking in Iranian waters, but also in order to exert an effective control over the local rulers in the coastal areas. For this reason, the navy had become an institution whose significance as a symbol of national sovereignty was not lesser than that of the Trans-Iranian Railroad. An early political triumph of Reza Shah had been the crushing of Sheykh Khaz'al's rebellion in Khuzestan, which was celebrated as a successful effort of the central government to regain her complete control over the territory of Iran. The fact that Sheykh Khaz'al (1239-1315/1860-1936) had enjoyed British backing also gave the Shah the credit for having both successfully restored Iran's territorial integrity and challenged British hegemony in the Persian Gulf. Already at that time, a caricature of Reza Shah entering Moham-mareh aboard a warship emphasized not only the Shah's efforts and achievements as the defender of national integrity who had restored the nation's pride and dignity, but also the importance of the armed forces for the independence of Iran.

This close relation of nationalism, modernization and a strong military, as emblemized in the motif of the gunboat, was also inherent in the motifs of other stamps of the set. At a closer look, the airplanes in the picture of the Tehran aerodrome could be easily identified as military aircraft. Thus, the image not only symbolizes the

introduction of an up-to-date traffic system, or the integration of Iran into the worldwide system of air transport (which at that time still had been very rudimentary). It also gave a hint of the importance of the newly created air force as an instrument of efficient domination especially over those areas that had not been accessible, and therefore impossible to control, by regular military forces. In a similar way, the TransIranian Railroad, apart from its role as a national object of prestige, had been planned and built not so much under economical as under military aspects. Especially with its routing through the unruly tribal areas in the southwest of Iran, it enabled the government in Tehran quickly to employ a great number of troops from the capital to the rebellious provinces - one has to bear in mind that the Bakhtiari uprising, a trial of strength between the Shah and the traditional elites, which had lasted several years and had led to the dismissal and arrest of Ja'far Qoli Khan, was only subdued at the time when the issue of the jubilee stamp set was decided.

This linkage between technology, modernization, administrative reform and Westernization was less apparent but nonetheless evident in the stamps in praise of education, legal reform or communication. The post and customs head office in Tehran for instance did exemplify the state's claim for absolute control over its citizens by supervising the distribution of information and the traffic of goods, while the judicial reform and the new system of education in the last analysis would secure for the state the control over their bodies and minds. Apart from glorifying the progress Iran had made under the rule of Reza Shah, the stamp set also displayed the instruments of power of the new state, and gave a clear allusion to the true character of the Pahlavi state, which was in essence not more than a royal dictatorship that rested on the army's bayonets, aided by "a state machine to destroy adversaries and establish despotic rule".

Thus, while praising the efforts of modernization, and the apparent achievements in this regard, the stamp set also constituted an unintended manifestation of the actual political situation in Iran under Reza Shah, which Mehrzad Boroujerdi has aptly defined as "Bonapartist etatism". This raises the question of the cabinet's motivation in issuing this set, and the political convictions and political backgrounds of those who had been involved in this decision.

## The Story of Hāfez's Eternal Resting Place

Part two

Nasser Kanani (Berlin)

In 1811 the British scholar William Price (1780-1830), who had obtained the situation of *Assistant Secretary to the Right Honourable Sir Gore Ouseley, Ambassador Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary from His Britannic Majesty to the Court of Persia* thanks to his good knowledge of Persian, copied the complete inscriptions on the tomb of Hāfez during a visit to his shrine and published them in 1825.

At the top of the gravestone the following sentence was sculptured in Arabic: God is the enduring, and all else passeth away.

In the middle of the gravestone the following *ghazal* was engraved:

مژده وصل تو کو کز سر جان برخیزم  
طایر قدسم و از دام جهان برخیزم  
به ولای تو که گر بنده خویشم خوانی  
از سر خواجگی کون و مکان برخیزم  
یارب از ابر هدایت برسان بارانی  
پیشتر زان که چو گردی ز میان برخیزم  
بر سر تربت من با می و مطرب بنشین  
تا به بویت ز لحد رقص کنان برخیزم  
گر چه بیرم تو شبی تنگ در آغوشم گیر  
تا سحرگه ز کنار تو جوان برخیزم  
خیز و بالا بنما ای بت شیرین حرکات  
که چو حافظ ز سر جان و جهان برخیزم

*Announce the glad tidings that my soul may rise in thy enjoyment.*

*I am a bird of Paradise, and will fly from the snares of the world.*

*Were I but a servant of the table of thy elect,*

*I should rank above all the great men of the universe.*

*Oh Lord, let the cloud of guidance rain, I may arise enriched with thy glory.*

*Sit on my tomb with wine and music,*

*That I may rise out of it amid dancing lovers.*

*Though I am old, let me embrace thee one night,*

*And I shall rise next morning in the vigour of youth.*

*Oh image of sweet actions, arise and show on high*

*That I as Hafiz, soar above the world and evil spirits.<sup>1</sup>*

Around the *ghazal* the following verses were enmeshed:

ای دل غلام شاه جهان باش و شاه باش  
پیوسته در حمایت و لطف الله باش  
از خارجی هزار به یک جو نمی خرم  
از کوه تا به کوه منافق سپاه باش  
امروز زنده ام به ولای تو یا علی  
فردا به روح پاک امامان گواه باش  
آن را که دوستی علی نیست کافر است  
گو زاهد زمانه و گو شیخ راه باش  
قبر امام هشتم و سلطان دین رضا  
از جان بیوس و بر در آن بارگاه باش  
حافظ طریق بندگی شاه پیشه کن  
و آنگاه در طریق چو مردان راه باش<sup>2</sup>

*Oh my heart! submit to the Sovereign of the universe and govern thy passion.*

*Show a sense of gratitude for divine protection*

*Many who put on an outward show, are not worth a single barley corn;*

*Let such hypocrites be banished to the mountains.*

*This day I am living with thy people, O Ali, And to-morrow I may be summoned before the tribunal of the saints.*

*He who is not Ali's friend, lives in infidelity,*

*Tell him to depart, and spend his days in solitude.*

*Let him kiss the tomb of the eighth emperor, and high-priest of the true faith,*

*And perform his devotions at its gate.*

*Oh Hafiz, prepare the way for the King's servant,*

*And guard it whilst man is on this passage.<sup>3</sup>*

From a historical point of view, the most important inscription on Hāfez's tombstone was the two lines (چراغ اهل) (معنی خواجه حافظ/بجو تاریخش از خاک مصلى) engraved on the corners of the tombstone.

They are the first and the last lines of the original Persian chronogram mentioned earlier. The intermediate lines had been omitted probably for lack of space. William Price himself offered the following

English translation for these two lines: *Khojeh Hafiz the lamp of the wise, Seek the date in the soil of Mosella*

He also provided the procedure for calculating the year of Hāfez's death.

In 1812, a German diplomat by the name of M. Freygan, took a trip to Shiraz and while residing in the city he paid a visit to the shrine of Hāfez. His description of the burying place of the poet reads as follows:

"Hafiz, their greatest poet, sang the praises of love and wine: his Anacreontics<sup>4</sup> are much esteemed by the Persians. He was buried at the distance of two miles from Shiraz; Kerim Khan erected near his tomb a magnificent hall, in the midst of a beautiful garden; opposite to which, formerly, there played a grand fountain, whose streams refreshed the air. The tomb of white marble stands amidst a thick shade of planes; here the young people of Shiraz assemble, to repeat the verses of Hafiz; while they indulge in the wine of the place, which is so much the more relished, as it is prohibited by the Koran."<sup>5</sup>

In 1821 Sir William Ouseley (1767-1842), a British orientalist and Sir Gore Ouseley's elder brother, gave the following description of Hāfeziyeh in his travel accounts:

"The *Hāfiziah* is built of brick; the wall which enclose the cemetery is ornamented on that side next the road with shallow niches, or arches filled up; the garden-wall is plain. In a chamber near his [Hāfez's] grave, are prepared the Poet's collected works or *Divān*, as a *vakf* or religious endowment. I do not believe that it is the same book described by Pietro della Valle, (who visited the Tomb of Hāfiz in 1622) as well written, ornamented with gold, and perfect."<sup>6</sup>

In 1827 an English scholar by the name of Josiah Conder (1852-1920) visited the graveyard of Hāfez and provided the following report:

"The tombs of Hafiz and Saadi<sup>7</sup> are



among the first objects which a stranger naturally inquires after. That of Hafiz is placed within a quadrangular enclosure, called the *Hafizeah*, not far from the Isfahan gate. A range of chambers forming a pleasure-house, divides the quadrangle into two parts: one, facing the city, is a garden; in the back court is placed the poet's tomb, at the foot of one of the cypresses planted with his own hands. The monument, which, in its present state at least, is the work of Kureem Khan, is a parallelogram of Tabriz marble, beautifully variegated, with a projecting base. On the tablet, two of his odes are very beautifully cut. In one of the adjoining chambers, the poet's collected works are preserved as a *vakf* or endowment. This is a place of great resort for the citizens, who repair thither to smoke *Kaleoons*, drink coffee, and chaunt the anacreontics of their favourite poet...<sup>78</sup>

In 1830 the British author, journalist and traveler James Silk Buckingham (1786-1855) spent some time in Shiraz and wrote a long report after visiting the burying place of Hāfez:

"It is formed of an oblong case of marble, twelve spans in length, by four in breadth, and about the same in depth, standing on a basement of stone elevated about a foot from the ground, and projecting a foot each way beyond its lower dimensions. The sides and ends of this case are perfectly plain, and the marble is marked by slightly waving veins running horizontally along the slabs in close order, changing the general colour of white by its variation of shades to a cloudy yellowness. The upper slab, which is laid flat on these sides and ends, is free from such veins, and may be called perfectly white. Around its edges is a small rope moulding, neatly cut; and the body of the interior contains the Ode of Hafiz, in the letter Sheen [ش], beautifully executed in high relief; the letters large, and of the finest possible forms. This ode occupies the whole face of the stone, except just leaving room for a small border round it; and this border is formed by a succession of certain sentences and sayings of the poet, in separate compartments, going all around the edge of the tomb. The marble is said to be that of Tabreez, which is in general described to be formed of a combination of light green colours, with here and there veins of red, and sometimes of blue; but in this instance the upper stone is perfectly white, and the sides and end ones only streaked horizontally by a close suc-

cession of cloudy and waving lines, thus differing from any other of the Tabreez marbles that I had elsewhere seen. Like the tomb of Saadi, that of Hafiz was said to have been placed on the spot which he frequented when alive; and his grave, it is believed, stands at the foot of a cypress planted by his own hands. It is only six months since that this sacred tree had fallen down, after having stood so many years; and though it was sawed off, the trunk is still preserved above ground, to be shown to visitors. Had such an event happened in England, every fibre of it would have been preserved with as much care as the mulberry of Shakespeare, but here it was generally disregarded. The first constructor of the tomb of Hafiz was one of his contemporaries. The present structure, however, is ascribed to the munificence of Kurreem Khan... In the open central portico of the building which divides the burying-ground from the garden, are some marble pillars with Arabic capitals, no pedestals, and plain shafts, each in one piece; their proportions being, like those already described, nearly Doric. The garden beyond it has many fine cypresses and flower-beds, but there are no tombs there. Travelling Dervishes from all parts of the East come here occasionally to occupy the few chambers that are set apart for them; but the place itself, with the Book of Hafiz, and the tomb, are all under the charge of a Moollah of Shiraz."<sup>79</sup>

In 1830 the English author-traveler George Fowler who spent three years in Persia noted the following after visiting the tomb of Hāfez:

"His tomb is of white marble, in a small garden called Hafizeen, near Shiraz, and on the tablet are two of his odes very beautifully cut. I copy the following from his epitaph.

"*It is but just that thou shouldst receive attribute from all fair youth, since thou art the sovereign of all the beauties of the universe. Thy two piercing eyes have thrown Khata<sup>10</sup> and Khoten<sup>11</sup> into confusion. India and China pay homage to thy curled locks—thy graceful mouth gave the streams of life to Khezer<sup>12</sup>—thy sugared lip renders the sweet reeds of Egypt contemptible.*"<sup>13</sup> The Persian original of the poem George Fowler has referred to here reads as follows:

سزد که از همه دلبران ستانی باج  
که بر سر همه خوبان کشوری چون تاج  
دو چشم شوخ تو برهم زده خطا و ختن  
به چین زلف تو ماچین و هند داده خراج  
دهان شهید تو داده رواج آب خضر

لب چو قند تو برد از نبات مصر رواج

This poem is, however, not inscribed on Hāfez's gravestone!

In 1839 Jean-Baptiste Flandin (1809-1889), a French orientalist, archaeologist and painter set out for Persia accompanied by the above-mentioned French architect Pascal Coste. During the years 1839 to 1841 they traveled across the country and visited also the tomb of Hāfez in Shiraz. In their book "*Voyage en Perse*" they published remarkable drawings and paintings of Persian monuments and landscapes, among them of Hāfeziyeh (Fig. 6).

Fig. 6: Hāfeziyeh around the year 1840<sup>14</sup>



### TAHMĀSB MIRZĀ

The tomb of Hāfez and the site around it were restored and repaired one more time in 1857 by Tahmāsb Mirzā<sup>15</sup> a governor of the province of Fārs.

A year later, in 1858, a British official by the name of Robert Binning (1814-1891) who was an administrator in the East India Company visited Shiraz and the shrine of Hāfez. Here is his account of the burial site of the poet:

"In the morning, I went in company with my landlord, to view the gardens and remarkable places, in the vicinity of the town; and we proceeded, in the first place, to visit the tombs of the two great bards of Sheerauz, Hāfiz and Sādee, with whose works I had long been familiar. The tomb of the great lyric bard of Persia lies in a garden named the Hāfizēeya, about half a mile north-east of the Isfahan [Isfahan] gate of the city. The garden, which is scarce two acres in extent, is surrounded with a brick wall about twelve feet high; and is divided into two portions, by a kind of summer-house, running across the centre from side to side. The southern half of the garden is several feet lower than the rest, and is filled with trees and shrubs; while the upper division is, in fact, a burying ground, containing, besides the tomb of Hāfiz, a great number of monuments. The exterior wall enclosing the upper half, is worked in *tauk-nemā* [طاق نما] or false arches, a common fashion here, which looks better than a plain brick partition. The door of the garden is on the west side

of the upper half, and in the centre of the cemetery, lies the grave of Hâfiz, covered with a huge slab of marble, on the surface of which are sculptured two of the poet's odes. This marble is of a yellowish colour, streaked with veins of red, white, and green; and closely resembles Egyptian alabaster. It is brought from a quarry near Yezd. The slab was placed here about ninety years ago, by Kureem Khan, then sovereign of Persia, and who made Sheerauz his capital; who with very doubtful propriety, removed the old monument, which had stood here since the poet's interment. The slab is more than nine feet long, about four feet broad, and a foot and a half thick. The odes are beautifully carved in low relief, upon its level surface—one occupying the centre of the stone, and the other inscribed round the margin of the first. There formerly stood beside the tomb, a cypress tree, said to have been planted by the hand of Hâfiz; and which, the custodian of the garden told me, took fire and was burnt, some years ago. It is a common belief, among the Persians, that the cypress, as well as many other trees, when very old, take fire spontaneously and consume. The keeper of the garden has in his charge, a large and finely written copy of the works of Hâfiz, which was transcribed and placed here, in Kureem Khan's time. It has been asserted that the copy written by Hâfiz's own hand was taken from hence by Shah Abbas the Great: but this must be an error, as it is generally known that Hâfiz, like Shakespeare, left no complete volume of his works; which were not collected and given to the world, until after his decease.<sup>16</sup>

In 1867 Ármin Vámbéry (1832-1913), a Hungarian orientalist and scholar of oriental languages, was along the way to Shiraz to pay a visit to Hâfez's graveyard. He noted in his travel accounts:

"The grave of Hafiz, standing in a larger cemetery, may be seen not far from Saadi's mausoleum. The site of his grave is marked by a monument of white marble erected by Kerim Khan, and the inscription carved upon it is a verse from his own book, the Divan. I frequently visited the grave, and, to my astonishment, found at times a merry carousing company seated about it, drinking their wine; at other times it was surrounded by penitent pilgrims. The former look upon Hafiz as their great master in a life of carelessness and jollity; the latter consider him a saint and come here to beseech him to intercede for them. Some sing his songs while the cheering

cup is going the rounds, whilst others deem his book as holy as the Koran itself.<sup>17</sup>

On the occasion of visiting Shiraz, Ármin Vámbéry also witnessed the dilapidated state of Hâfez's beloved river, the stream of Roknâbâd:

"The recollection of some verses by Hafiz, full of praises of the shores of Ruknabad and the flowery places of Musalla, which I had retained in my memory, contributed to raise my expectations to the highest pitch. We had been advancing for about half an hour when the shout of "Ruknabad! Ruknabad!" burst simultaneously from the lips of my companions. I immediately dismounted, thinking we should have to pass over the bridge, crossing the river, and wishing, in doing so, to lead my animal by the bridle; but my pains were all wasted. The Ruknabad river, of which poets deemed it right to sing, had shrunk into an insignificant brook hardly three spans wide, the shallow waters of which gaily leap over its gravel bottom.<sup>18</sup> In 1869 the British orientalist and linguist Herman Bicknell (1830-1875), while residing in Shiraz and translating Hâfez's poetry, caused to make a plate of the Mossallâ Gardens, which he published in 1875 in his book "*Hâfiz of Shirâz*." The plate is reproduced in Fig. 7. The cemetery in which Hâfez was buried can be seen on the right side of the plate.

Fig. 7: Mossallâ Gardens (left) and Hâfeziyeh (right) around 1869<sup>19</sup>



In 1874 an English traveler by the name of John Piggot who had visited Shiraz and the tomb of Hâfez in, noted:

"The garden, called the Hafiziya, which contains the tomb of the poet, is close by the city of Shiraz. This garden contains both a burial ground and pleasure garden. In the centre of the former is the tomb, covered with a large slab of yellow and red Yezd marble, placed there by Kureem Khan (1753-79). Two of the poet's odes are sculptured on its surface, but the tomb and surrounding walls were much injured by the earthquake of 1825. Not content with rebuilding the tomb, Kureem placed in the hands of its custodian a fine

copy of the odes of the poet. This is much used for taking fals."<sup>20</sup>

to be continued

1. Ebenezer Pocock: "*Flowers of the East; with an Introductory Sketch of Oriental Poetry and Music*," Hamilton, Adams & Co., London, MDCCCXXXIII (1833), p. 201.

2. این غزل که به حافظ نسبت داده می شود فقط در چند نسخه قدیمی آورده شده است، از جمله در نسخه قدسی، نسخه کتابخانه مجلس شورا به شماره ۲۴۱۴، نسخه کتابخانه ملک به شماره ۴۶۷۷ و نسخه فریدون میرزای تیموری. در دیوان های امروزی بجز در دیوان حسین پژمان این غزل دیده نمی شود و در آنجا نیز در زیرنوشته تصریح شده است که این غزل در نسخه های قدیمی نیامده و سستی کلام و مضمون آن با فکر و بیان حافظ همخوانی ندارد. اما «رویش نیوز» اصفهان در گزارشی آورده است که آیت الله حاج شیخ عبدالقائم شوشتری از قول استاد خود حاج سید ابوالحسن حافظیان نقل کرده که «جناب حافظ یک سفر به مشهد مقدس به پاسوسی حضرت امام رضا صلوات الله علیه داشته و در آن سفر یک اربعین در دارالتوحید معتکف شده و بعد از آن یک اربعین اعتکاف این غزل را سروده است.» علامه طباطبائی نیز اظهار داشته است که «بنده گمان نمی کردم این غزل از خواجه باشد، ولی کنار مز را ش که رفتم بر من ثابت شد که این غزل از اوست.»

3. Ebenezer Pocock, *op. cit.*, pp. 201-202.

4. Anacreon (582-485 B.C.) was a Greek lyric poet.

5. F. K. von Freygang and W. von Freygang: "*Letters from the Caucasus and Georgia: To which are Added, the Account of a Journey into Persia in 1812*," John Murray, London, MCCCXXIII (1823), p. 358.

6. Sir William Ouseley: "*Travels in Various Countries of the East*," Vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

7. Saadi considered one of the greatest poets and prose writers in the Persian language was born in Shiraz in 1210 and died there in 1291.

8. Josiah Conder: "*Modern Traveller: A Description, geographical, historical, and topographical of the various countries of the globe in thirty volumes, volume the twelfth: Persia and Chian*," James Duncan, London, MDCCCXXX (1830), pp. 341-342.

9. James Silk Buckingham: "*Travels in Assyria, Media, and Persia*," Vol. II, Hery Colburen, London, 1830, pp. 23-27.

10. Cathay: ختآ، the old Persian name for China.

11. Khitan: ختن، the old Persian name for Tartary, the north-eastern region of modern-day China.

12. Khezer (خز): a highly revered figure in the Muslim world because of his great wisdom and mystic knowledge. The Sufis believe that he, always clothed in a green robe as an emblem of perennial youth, occasionally appears at holy places to persons whom he desires especially to favor.

13. George Fowler: "*Three Years in Persia with Travelling Adventures in Koordistan, in two volumes*," Henry Colburn, Publisher, London, 1841, pp. 45-46.

14. Drawing by the French orientalist Eugène Flandin, see footnote 17.

15. شاهزاد تهماسب میرزا مؤیدالدوله (۱۲۶۱-۱۱۸۴ خورشیدی) از نوادگان فتحعلی شاه قاجار و در شمار رجال معروف دوران محمد شاه و ناصرالدین شاه بود. او سال ها در ایالات مهم ایران از جمله در فارس فرمانروایی کرد.

16. Robert B. M. Binning: "*A Journal of Two Years' Travel in Persia, Ceylon etc. in two Volumes*," WM. H. Allen and Co., London, 1857, pp. 216-219.

17. "*Arminius Vambéry: His Life and Adventures Written by Himself*," T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1884, p. 127.

18. Arminius Vambéry, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

19. Herman Bicknell: "*Hâfiz of Shirâz, a selection from his poems*," London, Trübner & Co., 1875, pp. xvi-xvii

20. John Piggot: "*Persia — Ancient and Modern*," Henry S. King & Co., London, 1874, p. 198.

America is obsessed with race, and Iranian-Americans have long been a casualty of that obsession. There is an idea of us as a cultural group, but whether or not our lived truths align with that idea is a matter of perspective and debate. Regardless of our individual ethnic backgrounds, politics or religious beliefs, Iranians in the United States are unified by the common experience of being fundamentally alienated – legally white, but socially brown.

Division as a practice is a natural human tendency. Creating categories and classifications allows us to better organize objects and ideas, and simplify the world around us. Division helps us to learn, predict, infer, make decisions, and generally interact with our environment more effectively. Division also serves to protect the status quo – America’s various ethnic minority groups united under a common ideology could potentially have the social, economic, and political power to upset ruling class interests, but a divided society is easier to control. Division can be tremendously harmful. As evidenced by the events of Jan. 6, 2020, an us-vs-them mentality manufactured for the purpose of political control has the potential to become violent and threaten democratic systems.

When it comes to our national fixation with race, the need to define and categorize nationality and ethnicity is especially problematic for Iranian-Americans, for whom legal status does not reflect social status. Never are we fully considered to be authentically white, yet in being legally classified as such we are conveniently jumbled together with miscellaneous Arab nationalities, our truth essentially erased. It is symbolically fitting that a hyphen separates our two cultural affiliations, because our lives are interrupted by a symbolic racialization that places us between the tra-

## Iranian-American Identity and the Spirit of Ethno-Futurism

By Bavand Karim

ditional binaries of whiteness and blackness. Despite the browning that our national identity endures in the United States, Iranian-Americans are staunchly rooted in a racially liminal territory, occupying a unique cultural space of our own that exists simultaneously on both sides of the threshold of whiteness.

The power of whiteness in America is ubiquitous and makes its presence felt in many forms – when we apply for jobs and loans, attempt to purchase homes, or seek out the best opportunities for our children. Many Iranians covet white privilege. The golden generation of Iranian-Americans remembers abruptly being targeted and othered after the hostage crisis in 1979. My generation reached adulthood in the post-9/11 zeitgeist, where our nationality has drawn renewed scrutiny and activities that were once simple and straightforward – like passing through customs – have become crucibles gatekept by whiteness. But what good is obligatory classification when the identity thrust upon us not only distorts who we are, it is a form of coercion – or worse yet, deletion? The ironic harms of misrepresentation and undercounting are well documented – Iranians are removed from consideration for minority scholarships, and deprived of essential services and rights because we are legally white. How can we address the discrimination we face when our own diversity is not legally recognized? We are forcibly assimilated into the very cultural

paradigms that oppress us.

Precious little research has been done to offer insight into the Iranian-American experience or explore the ways in which our lives are haunted by the microaggressive revenants of America’s colonial antecedent. Ours is a world where “Where are you from?” is always potentially much more than a friendly icebreaker; it is the gateway to disaffection, estrangement, and animosity over politics, religion, and a multitude of other manufactured differences. There is currently only one existing text – *The Limits of Whiteness: Iranian-Americans and the Everyday Politics of Race* by Neda Maghbouleh – that attempts to define the complexities and paradoxes of the Iranian-American identity through first-hand accounts of second-generation Iranians in the United States. It thoroughly documents the browning experienced by Iranian-Americans that is inconsistent with our legal racial categorization of white and all that it signifies. Moreover, it affirms our alienation as a widely-shared communal experience which, although singular to each of us, is not unique among Iranians. This shared reality is symbolically powerful, for it signifies that there may be hope for a cohesive sense of identity among the Iranian-American community.

Defining a person is inherently complex. Identity is an elastic dynamic of polymorphic values that can be interpreted through the lenses of race, culture, geography,

language, or religion. The development and application of ethno-racial socialization and identification is spread across a spectrum of environments: the home, the classroom, commercial, community and recreational spaces. For Iranian-Americans, who are a diverse group in terms of ethnicity, religion, and social class, and who are alienated for numerous political, geographic, and pseudo-scientific reasons, a cohesive or unified sense of identity is not only convoluted, it seems impossible.

For most Iranian-Americans, any claim to whiteness is a revolving door. Whiteness is less a legal classification than a shifting identity politic – a socially constructed designation that can be circumstantially or arbitrarily activated and revoked. If the paradox of being Iranian-American lies in liminal racialization, then the paradox of whiteness is that it derives power from the constantly shifting ground upon which it sits. In the United States, the inherent privilege of whiteness derives its strength not only through sheer hegemonic force, but also through a resilient flexibility; it ebbs and flows, it adapts over time, evolves, and defines itself by distinguishing itself from what it is not. Every non-white ethnic group is subjugated by the power of this exclusion. For some second-generation Iranians, the alienation runs even deeper, as the lack of full fluency in Farsi or first-hand knowledge of Iran leaves them estranged from their Iranian peers as much as being othered separates them from whiteness.

For the Iranian immigrants who arrive in America with an inherent sense of white identity, the contradiction and resulting ambiguity of being legally white but socially brown can be especially confounding. Iranians meet the traditional criteria of acceptability in white



America; generally speaking, they are highly educated, work white collar jobs, and live middle-class lifestyles. Iranians hold prominent positions in government, industry, and academia. Yet we remain othered. The ramifications of marginalization ripple through generations, contradicting theories of race and assimilation that claim that successive immigrant generations will develop stronger attachments to whiteness as a social identity. Instead, first-generation Iranian parents are raising a second generation of hyphenated individuals who are increasingly aware that Iranians are not white. Not quite. Not in America.

The foundational idea that there is a group of original, ancestral Whites or Aryans – the Caucasians who descended from the Caucasus mountains – is ineffectual in any practical application, and potentially harmful to subsequent generations of Iranian-Americans. No matter how precisely we frame our Aryan cultural heritage, Caucasian geographic origin and Indo-European language, or how strongly we desire the concomitance of a white racial identity, or how passionately we covet the acceptance of hegemonic white groups, these beliefs are not transmutable to life in the United States unless they are accepted by the hegemony and integrated into the status quo. Until then, Iranians will be perpetually negotiating and renegotiating our position on the periphery of whiteness.

There are ways in which we can help or hurt ourselves. It is problematic when Iranians selectively link to the ancestral Aryan narrative as a means to elevate their social status and separate themselves from stigmatized groups, especially if this separation is negotiated as being distinct from the racist identity framing used by white supremacists. Given the inherent anti-Black sentiment that is prevalent in Iranian culture,

any attempt by Iranians to claim Aryan heritage is vulnerable to being interpreted as a poorly-veiled if not transparent attempt to illegitimately secure the prestige of white privilege, and therefore labeled as a form of internal whitewashing that utilizes the same logical mechanisms that uphold white supremacy.

If we are to navigate America's racialized rhetoric with integrity, we should acknowledge that whiteness and the privilege it espouses comes at the expense of a multitude of racialized groups – which could accurately be characterized as everyone else including ourselves. While we may take comfort in being legally included in the definition of white, American mainstream media continues to demonize Iran and Iranians. As a result, American whiteness – its values, connotations, and all that it signifies – must remain incongruent with who we are. This is why, for myself and many of my peers, our identities align less with whiteness and more with other racialized groups.

En route to defining what it means to be Iranian-American there is a proximal objective of also describing what it means to be American. America, as a nation, is more than a geographic location or political entity. It is more than a combination of values. America is an idea. For many, that idea is rooted in the belief that anything is possible, and that perseverance and hard work can lead to immense achievement, material success, and social recognition. To the Iranian immigrants who fled the Islamic Republic, America might represent a safe harbor for human and civil rights, or the potential to enjoy cultural, religious, or political freedom. Franklin D. Roosevelt famously said that "Americanism is a matter of the mind and the heart; Americanism is not and never was, a matter of race and

ancestry. A good American is one who is loyal to this country and to our creed of liberty and democracy." This rings true to many of us second-generation Iranians, for whom identity is a permutation of traditional cultural family values intertwined with American conceptions of personal liberty.

America is often characterized a melting pot – an experiment where a plethora of different traditions come together to form a common theme. In becoming American, we detach from our native cultures. We no longer have ancestors. We submit to the hegemonic nature of American popular culture and its shifting definitions of who we are. America's own identity is an inherently transitional and divided one, and so concordantly in tempo we follow, ceaselessly diverging and melding, never coming to rest, and remaining forever divided within ourselves.

As our identities are perpetually being negotiated and re-negotiated with each new interaction, how many hands touch us and influence our being? By the time we reach adulthood, our fully formed selves, are we truly any longer our own?

A humanistic democratic culture should respect individual ethnic identities and

encourage different cultural traditions to develop fully their potential for expression of the democratic ideals of freedom and equality. The ideal form of multiculturalism attempts to promote a changing understanding of our nation, its values, and its faults – but to what purpose? Iranian-American identity represents a form of ethno-futurism in that is inherently liminal, transitional and therefore not easily defined. An ethno-futurist perspective asks: Who are we? Where do we come from? Where are we going? It seeks to answer these questions by creating a bridge between the national and the international, between and beyond the collective pasts and futures of our ethnic cultures as Iranians. It recognizes that we live in a fragmented space in-between Iran and America, and encourages us to create our own authentic cultures and identities, simply by being. Framing the discussion of identity politics through ethno-futuristic contexts gives us Iranian-Americans an opportunity to define ourselves in innovative ways that are authentic and independent of any prior connotations or restrictions surrounding race, culture or politics. To resolve the scrutiny of "Where are you from?" the ethno-futurist posits simply, "I am."

## Beauty Candidate

Miss Earth 2021 will once again be held virtually. Despite this eighty-eight beautiful women have entered the competition for the title. Iran makes its first appearance at this 21 year old pageant with Hima Zaker. She is an accomplished 27 year old already being a veterinarian and advocate for food and water in Iran.



## Iran in Children's and Juvenile Literature

RASOOL SORKHABI, PH.D.

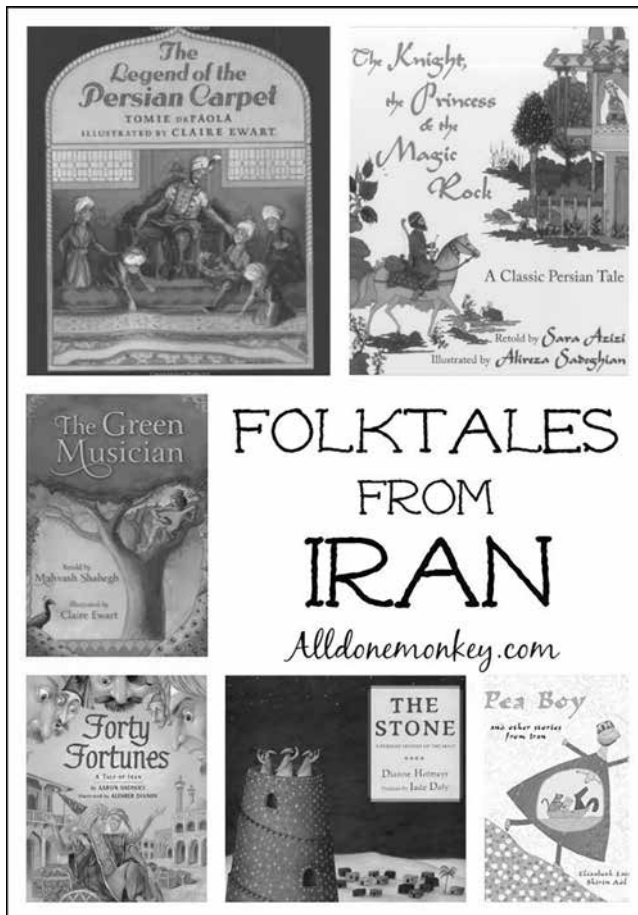
Children's and juvenile books are among the primary resources conveying information about overseas countries. This article compiles a bibliography of children's and juvenile books published in English about Iran dating back to 1923; however, only four books were published prior to 1970 in contrast to 115 books after 1970, of which 9 were published in the 1970s, 6 in the 1980s, 10 in the 1990s, 51 in the 2000s, and 39 in the 2010s. The increasing trend of these publications is related to several factors, some related to Iran (modernization, tourism, revolution, wars, and political conflicts) and others related to spread of information technology and population growth. The bibliography is categorized thematically into General (36 titles), Ancient Persia (25), Modern History including both Pahlavi and Islamic Republic periods (38), Persian Myths and Folktales (11), and Cultural Traditions (5). The vast majority of these books were written by non-Iranian professional writers.

### INTRODUCTION

Children's (5-12 years old) and juvenile (12-18 years old) literature is an important area of writing and publishing; it provides essential resources for the education and literacy of children and teenagers. People often think that writing brief books for children is easier than writing lengthy books for adults. But this is a misconception. Just as talking with children differs from chatting or arguing with adults, children's and juvenile literature requires its own skills and sensibilities (Klein, 2016; Frederick, 2018). I am not aware of a systematic effort to compile a list of children's and juvenile books on Iran in English. Even the magnificent work by Cyrus Ghani, *Iran and the West: A Critical Bibliography* (1987), has ignored this category. This article, based on the author's years of book collection, aims to fill this gap to some extent. As this bibliography shows, there is a large number of books on Iranian history, land, people, and culture published in English for children and young readers. These books have played an important role in conveying information and images about Iran to children and young adults in the English-speaking countries, and it is important to compile and chronicle them. This bibliography can also be helpful for the education of second-generation Iranian youth who live in the USA and other English-speaking countries but would also like to read and learn about their homeland's history and culture in English.

### PRE-1970 BOOKS

In my research I found that the bulk of children's books on Iran have been published since 1970. For the period before 1970, I should especially mention the following four books.



*Persia* (part of the “Peeps at Many Lands” series) by H.F. Haig (A. & C. Black, London, 1923, vi+ 88 p.) covers the following chapters: Her history; The country and the climate; The religion of the Persians; Zahak and Faridun; Rustam son of Zal; Tehran; Travelling; Half of the world; Life in the “Anderon;” and Agriculture and trade. It includes eight color illustrations. This book was published in 1923 during the reign of Ahmad Shah, the last Qajar king. This book, therefore, offers interesting information about the Iran of those days as portrayed by a British writer.

Haig begins the book with a comment on the size and name of Iran: “Persia is larger than France, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, and Italy together, but so much of it is desert that its population is not much more than twice that of London. The English name of the country is taken from one of its provinces, which the Greeks called Persis, and the modern Persians call Pars or Fars, but the Persians themselves call the land Iran - the country of the Aryan, or noble race - and try to persuade themselves that it has existed as an independent kingdom for six thousand years, but it has been so many times conquered and ruled by foreigners and cut up into small States, each independent of the other, that these pretensions must be attributed to national vanity” (p. 1).

On the geography, Haig mentions the names of important historical towns in Iran, but remarks that “Persia is a country which is very difficult to get to know well, as the towns lie

far apart, separated by great tracts of desert. As there are no railways in the country except for one short line running from the Russian frontier to Tabriz, traveling is slow and tiring. There is, however, not very much variety in the country, and all the towns bear a strong family likeness to one another" (p. 13).

On the life style, Haig remarks that "the houses are built in two parts: the outer, or *birun*, is given over to the men, while the women live in the inner part, or *anderun*, which is reached through a curtain-covered doorway ... The floor is covered with carpets, a few of the best are hung upon the wall ... As almost everything is done upon the floor, and as there is so little furniture in a room, the floor-coverings are of great importance" (p. 72-73). At times, Haig becomes very simplistic and opinionated. For instance: "The national dress of the Persians is extremely ugly, but it is seldom worn now. It consisted of narrow black trousers, an absurd little skirt, or rather frill, about nine inches long, mounted on a broad band and worn well below the waist-line, and a straight coatfastening down the front and with long, narrow sleeves" (p. 78).

*The Splendor of Persia* by Robert Payne (Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1957, xvi+234 p. with 19 black and white photographs) contains ten chapters: Land and the people; Great kings; Persepolis the sacred city; Divine radiance; The Parthians; The Sasanians; Persia under the Conquerors; The Persian poets; Great shahs; Awakening. The book is written by a prolific British American writer who studied under Professor Arthur Upham Pope at the Asia Institute in New York. Robert Payne visited Iran in 1949 and published a travelogue entitled *Journey to Persia* (Dutton, 1952).

Payne takes a systematic and sympathetic approach to the history and cultural richness of Iran. For instance, he lists 60 English and European words that were originally derived from the Persian language: Azure, bazaar, candy, caravan, cheque, chess, cinnabar, cypress, dervish, divan, exchequer, gazelle, henna, jackal, jargon, jasmine, jasper, julep, jungle, khaki, lemon, lilac, lime, Magi, magic, margarine, marguerite, muscadell, musk, myrtle, naphtha, narcissus, orange, palanquin, paradise, peach, peacock, pear, puttee, pajama, rice, rook,

saccharine, saffron, sash, satrap, scarlet, scimitar, seersucker, shawl, sherbet, spinach, sugar, taffeta, tapestry, tiara, tiger, tulip, turban, and verandah.

*The Land and People of Iran* by John Sheannan (Adam & Charles Black, London; Macmillan, New York, 1962, 96 p. with 20 photographs). The book is part of the "Lands and People" series of the publishers. Most of the books in this series were actually translated into Persian and published by the Bongah-e trajom-e va nashr-e ketab in Tehran; but this one on Iran was not probably translated. Chapters in the book include: Approach; Early history; Later history; Tribes and tribesmen; Villages and villagers; Oil; Water; Some Iranian towns; Bazaars and festivals; Travel and food in Iran; Now and the future. The book ends with appendix on Iran's statistical data, a table of important dates in Iran's history, and books for further reading.

Sheannan opens his book with a note on Iran that is still informative to many people around the world: "We are going to talk about the country whose modern name is Iran. We know it better as Persia. Its name was changed officially from Persia to Iran in 1935, but Iran is an ancient name for it too. It means 'The Land of the Aryans.' The present Shah has said that either name, Persia or Iran, may be used interchangeably ... If you are speaking Persian, you would call the language Farsi. The Persian language is written in Arabic characters. The Persians have added a few letters, such as those standing for 'p' and 'ch', which Arabs do not use. Arabic and Persian read from right to left of the page ... The Persian language has some Arabic words, but officially Persians want their language to be as free as possible from them ... Persian belongs to the family of the Indo European languages, as do English, French, and German, whilst Arabic is a Semitic language, as is Hebrew" (p. 7-8).

In contrast to Haig's 1923 description of traveling in Iran, Shearman writes: "The roads of Iran are remembered long after one has visited and left the country. There is the road that stretches endlessly before you, buff and stony, across the plateau; the road winding down to cultivated valley from some high mountain pass; the road that drops you six thousand feet, in a series of hairpin bends, from above Shiraz to the coast of the Persian Gulf; the desert road that leads you east to Meshed, across wasters familiar only to the camel. Very few roads are asphalted, most of them being covered with loose gravel" (p. 79). Here is another observation from Shearman: "Two material things - water and oil - are all important to Iran today, and two spiritual things - Islam and history" (p. 13). Sheannan mentions a population of 20 million for Iran in 1961, compared to 14 million people in 1921.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

Children's and juvenile books are categorized according to the age range of readers. Picture books are appropriate for pre-readers (up to 5 years old). Early reader books aim to improve reading skills of children (ages 5 to 7). Chapter books are appropriate for children ages 7-12. Young adult books are mainly for teenagers (ages 12-18). The bibliography of 115 books presented above shows that a large number of English books have been published on Iran for children of various ages in the past 50 years. Some of these are out of print, but the vast majority of them (new or used) can be purchased from online





booksellers, and each public or school library most likely possess some of these books.

Books particularly on the history of Iran either pertain to the ancient (pre-Islamic) Iran or the modern Iran during the Pahlavi and Islamic Republic regimes. The vast part of the Iranian history from the eight to the nineteenth century is included briefly in the general books.

Obviously, young adult books contain more pages and more content and information as well as commentary and ideas. For example, in *The Iranians: How They Live and Work* (1977), John Abbott analyzes Iran's situation in the 1970s and comments on the Shah's rule describing his efforts for development of the country as well as his absolute dictatorship and suppression of political dissent.

Books on "Ancient Persia" and "Mythology and Folk Tales" focus on particular topics, while "General" books offer overall images of Iran to the reader. These images include a country rooted in two distinct legacies and histories: (1) Pre-Islamic Persian Empire blended with the Zoroastrian religion, and (2) Islamic Iran (or particularly Shia Iran); the latter image has been heightened after the 1979 Islamic Revolution. But as some authors have pointed out, this demarcation is not rigid and impermeable. *Persians: Masters of Empires* (Time-Life Books, 1995) ends with these words: "The Arabs began to show an appreciation for Persian literature and history, to embrace Persian modes of government and administration, to value and imitate Persian architecture and other visual arts ... In the 10th century, Muslim rulers of Iran proved even more enthusiastic soon adopting what they considered to be a Persian lifestyle and officially endorsing a rebirth of the Persian language. In the end, Muslims nurtured and spread the memory of Persia. Wherever Muslims penetrated other cultures, from the Iberian Peninsula to southern Asia, they transmitted the genius of Persia to a wider world."

Images of "Modern Iran," as evidenced from the titles of the books, are dominated by "Islamic Revolution," "Iraq-Iran War," "a Country in Crisis," "a Nation in Conflict," a geopolitical "Hotspot," an "Issue" with "Opposing Viewpoints", and a Shia theocracy. Nevertheless, many of the books depict Iran as country with rich history, culture, and landscape with many interesting places to visit from Tabriz and the Caspian in the north to Shiraz and Kerman in the south. Although the capital Tehran is usually the first port of entry for many visitors, it is misleading to limit Iran to a few streets in northern Tehran.

I was particularly drawn to a slim but profusely illustrated book entitled *Iran in Pictures* ("Visual Geography Series"). First published in 1968 (when Iran's economy was "growing at a rate of 12 per cent a year") by Sterling, New York, the book has gone through several updates, the latest of which was released in 2004 by Lerner Publishing, New York. The book contains brief chapters on the Land, History, Government, People and Economy. During the recent decades, Iran witnessed seismic shifts in economy and politics (both domestic and foreign), and its population grew from 24 million in 1968 to over 80 million today.

The vast majority of the books are written by Western authors who specialize in children's literature. Only a few of the books are written by Iranian authors living in the USA or

England; the most prolific among them is Massoume Price. Some of the books are written by scholars and deserve a special attention for their content. For example, John Russell Hinnells (1941-2019), author of *Persian Mythology* (1977), was an authority on Zoroastrianism and professor of comparative religion at the School of Oriental and Asian Studies of the University of London.

Some of the juvenile works in English deserve to be translated into Persian, especially those illustrated with amazing photographs, such as *The Persians* (Jim Hicks and the editors of Time Life Books, 1975), *Persians: Masters of Empire* (Time-Life Books, 1995), *Persian Mythology* (John Hinnells, 1997), and *Wise Lord of the Sky: Persian Myth* (Time-Life Books, 1999).

## Safarani Sisters



Bahareh and Farzaneh Safarani (born 1990) are Iranian collaborator twin visual artists who live in Massachusetts. Known primarily for their innovative video-painting and video-performance arts.

The two sisters make dramatic compositions of themselves as the subjects to explore to sense of self in relation to the other. The Safarani sisters choose to incorporate particular themes and symbols in their work. A major theme that the sisters address is one of identity—as twins, as individuals.

THE sisters Bahareh and Farzaneh began painting at the age of thirteen. They earned a B.A. in painting from Tehran University and, upon graduating, came to the U.S. to further their art education at Northeastern University. Currently working and residing in Massachusetts, the Safarani sisters further collaborated on incorporating video and performance art into their passion for painting. They garnered attention from their performances and video-paintings that weave together loose but striking narratives.

Together their works serve as an exploration of their identity as Iranian women, both shared and individual, and as studies on finding beauty in drama. The Safarani sisters have shown their work extensively in the United States and internationally in solo and group shows, including the German Embassy, The Massachusetts State House, Yuan Art Museum in China, and various galleries. Their innovative "video paintings" have recently been acquired by the Peabody Essex Museum and The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.