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(Mirass-e-Iran)
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Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I am not Persian but have been interested in Persia since I was a young boy. Over the years I have read a number of Persian Magazines and journals as well as fictional and non fictional books. most of these magazines were in Farsi and I had to seek the aid of my Persian friends to keep apprised of the Iranian current events. Last month I stumbled upon a newsstand which contained a magazine entitled Persian Heritage (Mirass-e-Iran). Much to my amazement this journal contained English and many pages of English. Needless to say I was very happy. I have read the magazine again and again. The material was so interesting. I now could take this magazine and give this to my non Iranian friends and say "here this is what Iranians are really about." The talent starts at a very young age. From the non Persian community I say thank you for this magazine and to the Persian community I say thanks to the Editor. This man is very proud of his culture.

Knowing the Iranian community well I would not be surprised if this magazine ruffled a few feathers. It is my sincere hope that before those in question speak they take a good look at the magazine and understand its purpose. While there is no political propangnda it does make a very positive and political statement. It clearly shows the non Persian world that Persians

are intelligent, loving, non violent, educated, successful and peace loving people. A better political statement could not be made.

Anonymous

Dear friend; as a publisher of a monthly children's magazine in Europe I want to take this opportunity to thank you for my copies of Mirass-e-Iran. The articles will help us educate those lacking in the knowledge of Iranian culture. In the spirit of friendship and education perhaps we will have an opportunity to work together.

M. Djabani, Holland

I received Mirass-e-Iran at the C.I.R.A. conference, England. I believe this is a good opening for the relations between our cultural organization (Cultural Center of Mowlana, Brussels) and your magazine. It is imperative for the young generation to preserve the Iranian cultures and language abroad.

Dr. Colli, Belgium

I received Mirass-e-Iran. Overall it is good and I am sure future issues will improve. Consider raising your price per issue it is worth at least \$5.00 per issue.

Khosrow Eghbal

I received Mirass-e-Iran. I was happy to receive a serious publication, a rare finding today.

It was refreshing to see reports unbiased or slanted. The magazine showed originality and thought. I hope with the assistance of your colleagues that it will continue. Usually magazines of this type have a life as short as a flower and they shine like a shooting star and die fast.

Dr. Mahmoud Enyat,
Journalist, CA

I received *Mirass-e-Iran*. It will be very useful in the small city of Tansville, Australia where there are few Iranians. I have taken the liberty to forward copies to Sydney. The Persian and English articles are readable and informative but I believe can stand improvement. Of course improvement comes naturally with hard work and good writers. I hope it will become a magazine well deserving of the name of *Mirass-e-Iran* or Persian Heritage.

Professor J. Doostkhah,
Tansville, Australia

I received *Mirass-e-Iran*. Again it is obvious you worked alone. The magazine is missing space for good articles. Story telling, music and panting discussion is valuable. The English section is necessary and good. Increase the English this will build a closer bridge between Iranians and our host country,

the United States. I would like to see more history written. With regards to the responding article of your Afghan reader, I suggest that the magazine stay away from articles that cause dissension. Today we need to see more articles of friendship.

Faramarz Soleimoni,
Burke, Virginia

If you want to sell you magazine you must have an attractive cover. The letter to the Editors were very interesting. Your article about Nourooz (in Farsi) was to lengthy and I felt the same about the article regarding the identity crisis. The Asthma article is not an article to be within the pages of *Mirass-e-Iran*, (the goal of this magazine is not health even though its' editor is a physician). I was moved by the memorial pages of Jean Pourfar. The poetry pages however to me showed no value except for Majid Amini and the poem by Faranak Zamani. Please remove the decoration from your poetry pages, its not needed. I commend the English section.

Alexander Tamraz, Glendale

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His Excellency Joseph Verner Reed Under Secretary General and Special SG Representative for Public Affairs Award for 45 Years of Dedicated Service to UN

Getting to know

Mr. Faridi

By: Massih Hakami

All too often a person's success is measured by economic achievement. Wealth, however, as you will see in this feature article wealth is only one ingredient in determining success. Mr. Faridi's hard work, perseverance and devotion to his cause has given him the status achieved by few; respect from his peers and the personal satisfaction of making the world a better place.

About Mr. Faridi, Kurt Woldheim, The UN Secretary General Wrote

"... through your efforts in the academic field you were able to make a successful transition from the general service to the professional category... Your contribution to the development of interlibrary loan services were especially fruitful and appreciated. Your professional competence and spirit of cooperation as well as your interest in the activities of numerous United Nations' clubs have gained for you the respect of colleagues and friends..."

I had the opportunity to interview Mr. Faridi shortly after he was honored by the United Nations. After reading this very brief review of his life you will realize that the words spoken by Kurt Woldheim were spoken with truth and sincerity... Mr. Faridi is truly a great man.

Q. Where were you born?

A. Hamadon, Iran; a small town located in the northwestern region of Iran at the foot hills of the Alvand Mountains.

Q. This is a historical town. Could you give us a brief history?

A. It was once the capital of Iran. It is here that the tombs of Ester, Queen of Persia and her cousin Modecai are found. Ester with Mordicai (the Grand Viser) saved the Jews from persecution. One can also find the tomb of the great physician Avicena, war documents written in mikhi-cuniform and the Shrine of Shahzadeh Hossein one of the Profit Mohammed's direct

descendants.

Q. Do you remember growing up in Hamadon?

A. Very clearly. My father owned three villages in the northeast, north west part of town. My brothers and sisters (there were 8) learned a great deal from my father. He was devoted to his people. Both my parents were strict and my life was filled with culture. My father always encouraged me to read classical Persian works in philosophy and poetry.

Q. How was it that you left Iran to come to America?

A. One night in September of 1948 I dreamed that I would leave for America, within 30 days. The next morning I began to pack my belongings and sell my land. I convinced my office to give me a 3 month leave to study and do a research project in the United States on American radio and film.

Even though I did not speak English, arriving in New York was a great relief for me. I

quickly enrolled in a radio/film course at NYU as well as an English course.

Q. Did you return to Iran at the end of the 3 months?

A. No. When my visa expired I wrote my office to tell them I had acquired a student visa which would allow me to stay and continue my research. I was put on leave without pay. I interpreted that to mean I was fired. You can imagine how I panicked. My money was running out and I was unable to obtain a job after the summer. I then saw an advertisement in the New York Times for a job at the United Nations.

Q. How long have you been affiliated with the UN?

A. I started in 1950 as a dispatch clerk in the document distribution section, at that time the UN was located in Lake Success, NY. The demand for documents was great and since the organization was new, a great deal of backlog was accumulating. I was young and energetic and worked extra hours without pay to organize the section. Eventually I was rewarded for my hard work. My plan for a new mailing system was accepted and discussed at the upper levels and implemented.

In 1954 I was transferred to the Index Section of the library, upon the recommendation of my superiors. This opportunity allowed me to improve my position in the organization. I was again fortunate to have another of my proposals implemented. This program resulted in the reorganization of the UN and special Agencies documentation files in the Post Index System. The new system saved both manpower and time.

I was then called upon to help Woodrow Wilson and the League of Nations. This collection was incomplete, as were most of the documents at the League of Nations in Geneva. The result of

our efforts resulted in a 3,000 volume collection making the collection unique in the world.

Q. Has your work with the United Nations ever taken you abroad?

A. From 1966 to 1968 I served as the UN expert at the Kuwait Institute of Economic and Social Planning in the Middle East, both as advisor and administrator. There I assisted in establishing the library, advised on formulation of library policies and procedures, trained the local staff, and wrote a Library Manual which was published by the Institute. It has been used as a guide on small libraries. I then served in Somalia where I organized the library for the Somali Institute for Public Administration. My last foreign assignment was in Iran. I reorganized and set up microfilming of archives for the Iranian Foreign Ministry's Library. When I returned I was put in charge of the interlibrary loan, where my comprehensive plan for reorganization and simplification was implemented.

Q. You have served under and met, I am sure many Secretary Generals to the United Nations as well as other important political figures. What individuals stand out in you memory.

A. I believe all the dignitaries I have met have given me a valuable memory. I have met Tric Vaerde from Norway who was a learned gentleman and Nasroolah Entezome, the 5th President of the General Assembly. He was a very dignified and religious gentleman. He served during the highest point of the cold war, when the danger of a third world overshadowed everything. He worked well with the third world delegates who described him as having iron hands in velvet gloves. Dag Hammersjold, in my opinion, was one of the greatest Secretary Generals and dedicated to world peace. One of his first actions was to bring order into the administration. His last dignitary act was to go to the Congo. Unfortunately for the world the plane carrying him to the Congo crashed and he was among the



Mr. Faridi and Melina Mercuri



Mr. Faridi and Sherly MacLeen

dead. I remember when I heard that he died, I wept.

U Thant was a special man. He was constantly worrying about the children and social world problems. In fact he once said to Dr. Robert Moula, "Robert we are old but we have to do something about the children, it is the children who will lead the world of the future.

One of the greatest Secretary Generals was Butros Butros Galdy. He, in my opinion, brought the UN to its highest prestige.

During these years I also encountered individuals involved with the history of Iran. Besides Nasroulaah Entezome, there were Mr. Hossein Ala the Iranian Ambassador in Washington, Dr. Taghi Zadeh (we worked together on a list of publications for Iran) and Professor Reza-Zadeh Shafagh. I remember taking him to Radio City Music Hall. He was so amazed at the production.

Q. You were given the position of secretary on the recreation council and maintain that position today.

What events caused this Recreational Council to be organized?

A. In 1960 an article was written which addressed depression among the staff. This was understandable since most were far from their home and families and were dealing with a new strange culture. The Staff recognized this and, with the encouragement and support of the late Dr. Stavropolous, (former Under-Secretary General) and Dr. Zee (director of Medical Services) the Recreation Council was formed.

Q. This year the Recreation Council celebrated its 50th anniversary. Can you tell us about the celebrations?

A. Attendance at the event included 91 heads of State, 4 Kings, 2 Presidents, 8 Vice Presidents, 37 Prime Ministers, 10 Deputy Prime Ministers, 21 Foreign Ministers, 23 Observers and 177 other state officials. In addition the event was covered by a press pool of 5,000.

Q. What made you return to

the UN after retirement.

A. I missed my work, the staff and the excitement of the UN. Soon after my return I was elected to the position of secretary of the Recreation Council (1982) and have been reelected every year since.

Q. What comprises the Recreation Council?

A. There are sixty clubs and societies with a membership of nearly 3,000 staff members and delegates. We have been able to hold nearly 1,000 events each year. Because I am retired I am one of the few who can devote their full time. However, without the help of retired President of World Good Will Perry Codes, Assistant Secretary Mrs. Ligna Arellano, and other members of the Executive Committee, the events and organization could not come to pass.

Q. As a young man what were your hopes and dreams?

A. I always wanted to be recognized and respected. My chance to achieve these goals came at a very early age. After

my father died my mother was appointed executor of my minor brothers and sisters. They in turn asked me to administer the villages for them. This was a difficult task but I persevered. I soon received the respect of the villagers once given to my father.

Q. Why do you continue to work as a volunteer?

A. I always believed that I should work and serve people through love, truth and friendship. This has always brought me my greatest pleasures, including the first recipient to receive a work tuition at the Graduate Library school of Long Island University. It has brought me the love and respect from my peers and other officers at the UN. For me, being appreciated by those for whom I worked continues to be my greatest source of satisfaction. H.H. Ambassador Joseph Verner Reed, Under-Secretary General, once gave me a gift at Thanksgiving. On the card he wrote "you are the tops", Mr. Samir Sandbar, Assistant Secretary General wrote to me "I want to express to you my personal appreciation for the tireless efforts you undertake in support of the Recreation Council... I am particularly impressed by the enthusiastic support with which you approach any assignment entrusted to you. My experience in my first year as President of the Committee with you as Secretary, has been as pleasant as it was effective and useful to all concerned..." and Dr. Ho a former Under-Secretary General for Conference Services gave me a beautiful Chinese box which I treasure to this day. These are only a few of my true rewards in life. I apologize to those whose names I have not mentioned. But I am and will be ever grateful for their words and gifts of support and thanks.

Please understand that I am only one of the "staffs silent majority" who have worked

ceaselessly during our productive years for this organization. We were not instructed nor did anyone demand we put in these long hours. We did it out of love and friendship. There is a great difference between a soldier and someone hired for carrying on urgent work throughout the world. The majority of the hardworking staff works diligently; not for money but for their belief in the UN and its goals. They are simply rewarded with the fact that they may have had an impact upon the course of the world and its search for peace.

Q. You are a lover or parapsychology. How has this science influenced your life?

A. My life has been one of turbulence. Often I was not able to find comfort, guidance and support in what society would deem appropriate avenues. I therefore looked to my dreams for guidance. They have constantly rejuvenated my life.

Q. Do you believe dreams impact all people?

A. Everyone dreams. Some people choose not to remember dreams, others disregard them because they are afraid. Often dreams can seem violent and disastrous. One must look into the dream to find the message.

Q. You mentioned that your master degree was received in the field of production and direction of motion pictures, radio and television. Have you ever directed or produced a film?

A. Yes, but the one which is "Wedding in a Persian Village". It was reviewed in the American Library Association Journal (1964). It was later presented at the first festival of Films at NYU and selected for presentation in the Queen Elizabeth Playhouse. The film received a Certificate of Merit at the Vancouver International Amateur Film

Festival. Recently and upon the request of the late Professor Magouian, Acting Chairman of NYU Communication Art Group I offered the certificate to the University where it has been framed and hung on a wall. I am happy to say that the film is still in demand. It is in the custodial hands of the Donnell Media Center at the New York Public Library.

Q. What message would you leave to society and Persian Americans growing up in the world today and in the United States?

A. In order for us to understand and accept ourselves as well as one another we must educate ourselves on the development of mankind and society. There was a time that there were only a few families scattered about. These families formed villages then countries, then regimes and now the United Nations. This unification must come without the loss of custom and tradition. Iranians have contributed so much to the world. We as Persian Americans have an obligation to ourselves to know these customs and traditions. Without customs and traditions relationships are shallow and there is never understanding.

I say to the young generation that, we can no longer afford to show indifference towards one another. Natural and man made disasters have changed the course of the world. All our youth must work together to try and find solutions to the problems that have plagued the world and continue to do so today. Without this understanding there will be no future. Today their job is easier yet more difficult. Access to world information is at their fingertips. This has greatly increased the greed and power struggles in the world. Our youth must learn how to regain this control. *



ECLAIRCISSEMENT

GETTING TO KNOW

OMAR KHAYYAM BETTER

By: F.A. Sadeghpour

Since Antediluvian times, Zarathustra taught the ancient Iranians the triad of good citizenship as an every day prayer. "Goftaur-e-neek, good dialogue or words; Pendaure-neek, good suppositions or thoughts; Kerdaure-neek, good deeds." The trine of human character in the early days of establishing a healthy society, plus the four basic immaculate and divine elements of a generous nature, - air, fire, earth and water, were the requirements which the Iranians had to respect and behold sacred in order to receive all that nature offers.

Happiness in an earthly life whose foundation was "smile upon your fellow mankind" has been the subject of thoughts and certain philosophies of the Iranian poets. Even Nietzsche, the German Philosopher, in particular, became fascinated by these ideas, and has aptly written of Zarathustra's (Zoroaster) teaching: "This crown of laughter, the rose-wreath crown: to you, you higher men, learn - to laugh!"
-"Thus spoke Zarathustra."

However, with the admixture of Islam, the Pre-Islamic philosophy of the Iranians, to a certain degree, suffered, but through the poems and

verses of some scholars such as Omar Khayyam, were renewed and conveyed eloquently.

During the advent of Islam in Iran, these subtleties were lost to the invaders whose righteousness was the sword. The invaders' temperament was formed by pompous, arrogant, dispassionate, self-appointed intermediaries who were unforgiving and devoid of any sense of compassion or humor.

The Iranians believed the "smile" was born and introduced by and with Zarathustra in their country of tulips, roses, and nightingales. Zarathustra asked and demanded nothing but love and good deeds toward one another and nature. One thing was certain, the Iranians believed that our temporary existence on earth was, at best, uncertain and short. They believed anxiety and anger was folly and futile, and that revenge and confrontation was but embarrassment. In the 13th century the great Iranian poet and philosopher, Hafiz, clearly said,-

"many a time was rebuked! But am faithful and ever so joyous, Since in our creed the practice of indignation is impious."

Iranians were aware that worries and anxieties solve nothing and, above all, were sinful deeds, and life as a whole was process of truth and truthful statements, forgiving and happiness no matter how short life may seem.

Hence, Khayyam's poems are artfully happy and incorporated in the best and shortest, and perhaps, the oldest form of poetry "Rubai" which conveys these beliefs so eloquently.

In praise of poetry, I would like very much to note several quotations, then, I would like to articulate my opinion as an Iranian, a countryman of Omar Khayyam.

"Poetry is the music of the soul; and, above all, of great and feeling soul."
—Voltaire

"The poet is the rock of defence for human nature; an upholder and preserver, carrying everywhere with him relationship and love. In spite of differences of soil and climate, of language and manners, of laws and customs; in spite of things silently gone out of mind and things violently destroyed, the poet binds together by passion and knowledge the vast empire of human society, as it is spread over the whole earth, and over all time."

—William Wordsworth

Mr. Louis Untermeyer in the preface of his "Treasury of Great Poems" has quoted, -"poetry should surprise by a fine excess and not by singularity". John Keats wrote to John Taylor in 1818. "Its touches of beauty should never be half-way... If poetry comes not as naturally as the leaves to a tree, it has better not come at all."

I am certain that Mr. Untermeyer had read these lines and discerned what they meant. However, let us begin with his description of Omar Khayyam and his translator, Edward Fitzgerald. "The name of Edward Fitzgerald is so bound up with the name of Omar Khayyam

(to English readers, at least) that the biography of one inevitably involves the other. To establish the odd relationship, we must go back almost eight centuries to a village in northeast Persia. The manufacture of carpets, for which the district of Khorasan is still noted, was practiced by old Ibrahim who specialized in tough woven cloth for tents. So, when his son was born at Naishapur in Khorasan, the child was named Ghiathuddin Abdulfath Omar bin Ibrahim al-Khayyami, which signified nothing more portentous than that Omar was the true son of Al-Khayyami, or the Tentmaker. The boy seems to have followed his father's trade. During his youth, he frequented the haunts of the dialecticians, the wandering Sufis, whom he enjoyed and distrusted, and the scientist, whom he feared and worshipped. Soon he was dabbling with and attempting to fuse, mysticism and mathematics. He became known as Persia's outstanding astronomer. He wrote an authoritative text on algebra; he revised the old astronomical tables; he persuaded the Sultan Malik-Shah to reform the calendar."

Mr. Untermeyer without a thorough knowledge of Iran or of Iran's accomplished past, and without a thorough knowledge of Khayyam's life and youth has made certain remarks which we have to look into with a greater depth in order to understand Omar Khayyam and his time better. Mr. Untermeyer had imagined a youthful Khayyam in gamin make up!

In Khayyam's period, circa 1070 A.D., Iran was at one her brightest periods in history. Naishapur was not a "village" by any stretch of the imagination! Perhaps, if Naishapur were not as important a metropolis as Ray or Isfahan or Herat, Samarcand or Boukhara, it was certainly important within its own right as a center for science. Naishapur boasted that its library contained over twenty thousand volumes of books, which, ironically, at that same time

and period, Manchester, the capital city of England, had only a few more than four hundred volumes, and in Paris, at this same time, only seven hundred twenty-three volumes were available. Therefore, under the circumstances, Naishapur could be a huge metropolis not just a mere "village"! As my learned friend, Mr. H. Hakami, an authority of Persian literature points out, that since there was a dearth of fine paper and printing machines, a branch of highly educated professional scribes were hired to write down books of importance, such as scientific, mathematical and literary subjects. These books were for distribution among libraries in other cities. In the west, only a few educated monks would do the same work as these scribes.

Regarding Khayyam's full name, it was not meant to be "portentous". It simply was the custom and form of the time to name a child born into a family who was socially and economically comfortable. Khayyam certainly did not "dabble" in the curriculum of science and the philosophies of his day. A youth as precocious and bright as Khayyam could not have accomplished what he did, or could not have achieved his stature if he had only "dabbled". For someone to have "dabbled" in science could not calculate the creation of the most accurate calendar to date.

Mr. Untermeyer was right when he wrote that Khayyam was an outstanding astronomer, but had forgotten that the title of Khayyam was "Hakeem"; a person who mastered more than three sciences would have the privilege of having such an honor. Khayyam had seriously studied mathematics. Overall he was a serious man, and his fertile mind always sought the mystery of his universe. His philosophy was the foundation of modern and questionable mystics and philosophy. When Khayyam was investigating the puzzles of science and philosophy, Cambridge

University in England did not exist! Cambridge was not founded until the fourteenth century, and up until 1806, thirteen years before Charles Darwin entered Cambridge University, science at that time was considered anti-religious! Thanks to Professors Adam Sedgwick and John Stevens Henslow this attitude was changed. Together in 1819, they formed The Cambridge Philosophical Society. Yet Mr. Untermeyer has given preferred credit to members of Oxford and Cambridge, even if they attended these universities prior to 1819! It appears that Mr. Untermeyer saw the light of poetry, philosophy and literature as a gilded halo within the world, which according to his arcane accent of writing, only dwelt in Oxford and Cambridge which became manifest through the English language. It seems that only these universities could discover recondite and revelatory meanings. Perchance the very compendium of all wisdom! It appears that Mr. Untermeyer would like to relay to the reader that there are a host of galactic wonders which only existed within the English universities, and they have access to divine afflatus! However, Mr. Untermeyer assumed that Naishapur of the 1930's was the very same Naishapur of Khayyam's time.

We must bear in mind that Naishapur being one of the most important cities in the province of Khorasan suffered a tremendous loss of lives, books and fertile lands during the Mongol internecine. After these Mongolian attacks, the city of Naishapur unfortunately never reached its former zenith.

Above all, the 1930's was a period in which Iran herself was emerging out of one of the most atabiliar periods in her history; naturally the city of Naishapur was limping along with the county into the twentieth century. I believe that our esteemed scholar and docent, Mr. Untermeyer, should have chosen a merrier and brighter period of Iran,

and particularly Naishapur of Khayyam's time which seemed to be a lyceum of numerous Iranian scholars who were contemporaries of Khayyam.

In another paragraph, Mr. Untermeyer had written, "When he was not consulting the stars and balancing equations, Omar permitted himself the intoxicants, verse and the vine. Before he died in 1123, he had composed some five hundred epigrams in quatrains or rubais, peculiar in rhyme and pungent in tone. The stanzas were, for the most part, independent; they embodied a tight and self-contained idea. But they were connected, if not unified, by a careless philosophy: a light, free-thinking hedonism, a frank appeal to enjoy the pleasure of life without too much reflection."

Well, this is quite an opinion! Let us see what Khayyam really had in mind. I must say that for any Iranian whether it is Khayyam or the most humble of citizens, poetry would never be considered an "indulgence". An Iranian always "permits" himself or herself to write or read poetry. Poetry to an Iranian is as air is to breathe or water to quench thirst. Hence, poetry is the dew of the soul. If it is as Mr. Untermeyer suggests an "indulgence", then they are accustomed to "indulgence" and will always "indulge". It has never been a "luxury" for an Iranian to write poetry. To prove my point, perhaps a conservative estimation of over eleven thousand poets within Iranian literature is not an exaggerated estimation. A quatrain or rubai is a very compact and precise, and one of the oldest forms of poetry in Persian literature and has many forms and style of rubais which Khayyam could have chosen, yet he chose the very same form that we see today as his vehicle to "indulge" and relate his ideas. We must remember the poet must have the ability and mastery of language as such, that within the limited four lines of the rubais, he is able to say all that he has gathered within his mind. It has to be "pungent" and certainly does seem

"peculiar in rhyme and tone". (Only to the English reader, of course)!

"Verse and Vine" to a Persian poet are not strangers. "Wine" has more meaning and vicissitude in Persian language and mysticism than just a mere "intoxicant". Unfortunately, there is neither the time nor space at this time to delve into every aspect of Persian literature and mysticism. It suffices to say that the rich and potent Persian language and poetry has seven to eight thousand years of experience and stamen, not five to six hundred years. If Mr. Untermeyer knew anything about Persian poetry and the history of the language, perhaps in his "A Treasury of Great Poems", he would have written that Persians do write much differently than English-speaking poets.

A Persian poet according to his or her subject matter, his or her own ability and penchant, and his or her power of metaphor and euphemism allows himself or herself to become buoyant as a feather in order to explore his or her vast universe. The poet allows the reader to perceive the breadth of his anchoretic universe.

As Mr. Untermeyer has opined that Khayyam had "a careless philosophy" and practiced "hedonism", perhaps, Mr. Untermeyer believed the incomplete phrase of the English poet, Alfred Tennyson, who called Khayyam "that large infidel", though others respectfully remarked, "the voltaire of the east".

Mr. Tennyson's remark was more to Mr. Untermeyer's liking since Tennyson had attended Trinity college, Cambridge. Or perchance, when Ralph Waldo Emerson celebrated "The Seven Masters of the Persian Parnassus", there was no mention of Khayyam, therefore Khayyam could not be as important as one of "The Seven

Masters". Or perhaps, when the editor of Frasser's Magazine would not publish poetry that violated Victorian priggishness in nineteenth century England; that forced Fitzgerald to publish the works of Khayyam under an erroneous introduction, a sort of "epicurean eclogue in a Persian garden". However, as Mr. Untermeyer had written, Khayyam did not have a "careless philosophy". Far from it! Khayyam was quite familiar with the works and philosophy of giants such as Mansur Hallaj and Mohammad Zakaria Rauzi, who Mr. Untermeyer knew nothing about. And above all, Khayyam's keen mind, scientific and literary knowledge, and his rich and fertile Persian culture which was manifested in his poems, was never expounded or manifested as "hedonism without reflection". Yes, I agree that Khayyam was a "Free thinkers" when not many free thinker existed in the rest of the world at that time. When he declared, "I, myself, am Heaven and Hell", he understood through the eyes of a man of the third millennium, not a man of the eleventh century. Khayyam had noticed that man made a virtue of vice, and put much faith in form rather than the essence of creeds, and conducted himself as if, indeed, vice well-performed became virtues's very self, while virtue ill-performed became but the essence of vice. Hence, he wrote the following quatrain:

Some nations theologize in creed
and its bliss,
The others in awe asking,
"What's certain, what's amiss?"
I'M afraid someday, somewhere
a herald will cry, —
"O ye dullards! The right way is
neither that nor this!"
_F.A.S.

The very same quatrain as translated by Fitzgerald has taken away the pungency and the preciseness of Khayyam's rebuke



of pretentious cavilers.

Alike for those who for today
prepare
And those that after a tomorrow
stare,
A muezin from the tower of
darkness cries —
"Fools! Your reward is neither
here nor there!"

Khayyam tried to throw some illumination into the tenebrious crannies of custom and creed. He could see that superstitions created a world of cruelty and little justice, and that it is man himself who causes pain and cruelty for his fellow man; he wanted man to be a "free thinker", and to observe his surrounding, and to believe that only the humane behavior of man is the salvation of man and his world. Khayyam tried to convey, what best we could of our imperfect evolution. He did not want the form of religion, or actions done in the "Name of God" to create inhumanity to man. Here he wrote the following quatrain with the utmost courage:

Had I had the acumen of a Deity
I would have eliminated this
firmament readily;
And would have wrought a new
one as such,
A Freethinker could reach his
heart's desire easily! _F.A.S.

Fitzgerald, however, romanticized it in the following manner:

Ah love! Could thou and I with
fate conspire
To grasp this sorry scheme of
things entire,
Would not we shatter it to bits—
and then
Remold it nearer to the heart's
desire?

At this point, I must quote Mr. Untermeyer for what he has written about William Blake (1754-1827), the English poet, which could apply to Omar Khayyam, but Khayyam is considered to follow "hedonism", while William Blake was "clairvoyant" and inspired. Mr. Untermeyer writes, "Blake filled his seventy years with relentless creation. One purpose impelled his energy: the regeneration of man. The intensity of his belief animated every piece of prose and verse, every drawing, engraving, and water-color; he invented a whole mythology to expound it. Some of Blake's work is charged with clear meaning; some of it is too clairvoyant for immediate comprehension. But his poetry is so often unadulterated that, as A.E. Housman wrote 'Nothing except poetic emotion is perceived and matters'. And Blake remains unfathomable, as pure as he is inexplicable".

Well, let us see what William Blake has written that he rightfully received such accolade. Some of what he has written follows:

For mercy has a human heart
Pity, a human face:
And love, the human form divine
And peace, the human dress.
—Songs of Innocence

Cruelty has a human heart
And jealousy a human face
Terror, the human form divine
And secrecy, the human dress
The human dress is forged iron
The human form, a fiery forge
The human face, a furnace seal'd

The human heart, its hungry gorge.
-A Divine Image

It is, indeed, wonderful. Blake has shown human nature very well, but not the arcane vehicle of this nature. But, Khayyam has shown us how to find reality of man's hidden nature and life. He has tried to convey that man ought not be defeated, and that the misfortunes of life should not force us to surrender. We must always remember to recognize our end but never mourn it. Hence, here come the "Wine" which represents, life, a light heart, and forgetfulness, not necessarily the intoxicating nature of it. This is exactly as Eliza Cook, a feminine English poet, wrote in 1887:

Shall we forget each sunny morn,
And tell one dire lightning - stroke?
Of all the suits that we have worn,
Shall we but keep the funeral cloak?
-Some Call The World A Dreary Place.

Yes, Omar Khayyam, that master of science and philosophy of "Free thinking" knew that only mankind with his wit and mettle, carp and cavil, also with heavenly heart and soul, is capable of a better life combined with peace and brotherhood and happiness; regardless of personal belief or creed. He did not preach "hedonism". He tried to convey and manifest that life is

tenuous and short, art perdurable and long, opportunity at best, instantaneous and experiment definitely uncertain, and misery, disease, and death ever present.

It is the extraordinary thought and philosophy of Khayyam and his piquant and pervasive language that by reading his poems nearly a thousand years later, they seem fresh and contemporary; and unleashes the imagination of the most torpid reader, that could without any restraint or fear, peek at the reality of life; as in ancient Iran celebrated, even the arrival of each month; that man was alive and well in order to see another month! He delved into man's history and experience. He has seen love and compassion, decency and kindness, and also the selfishness and lewdness, mendacity and avidity of mankind.

Providing Khayyam's quatrains are translated correctly, one can recognize the lucid tempest of his philosophy within the ocean of the Persian language and literature. At times one will notice how smoothly he defuses the lightning temper of his antagonist. One can witness how he can disarm the most pugnacious dilator through his verse. Khayyam succeeded to some degree in cutting the fetters of nefarious practices of fraudulent religious leaders. The quatrains of Khayyam possess the éclat which was not realized previously by some translators. *

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تسهيلات لازم برای چاپ فارسی فراهم می باشد

THE LEGEND OF JAMSHID AND ITS MYTHOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Prof. Dr. Helmut Humbach, the distinguished Iranist and Professor Emeritus of Iranian philology at the University of Mainz (Germany), gave a talk of the "Legend of Jamshid and its Mythological Implications at the Seminar on Iranian Studies. In this talk, Professor Humbach introduced several new interpretations of the Jamshid legend.

Jamshid, or Avestan Yima (twin), is the kind of Paradise in the legendary Iranian tradition as it has come down in the Avesta and in Ferdowsi's Shahnameh. Yima "the twin." The primeval king, shares some characteristics with the primeval man. Thus his name "twin" indicates that he had originally been considered a hermaphrodite, he was a twin himself. However, Zarathustra seems to have depicted him as the prototype of a person of duality of character, combining in himself both good and evil.

Jamshid's notoriety is for having lost paradise. This was in consequence of a sin which he committed in order to please people. The nature of his sin is alluded to in the Gathas, in their Pahlavi translation, and in the Zamyad Yasht. Additional evidence is drawn from a passage in the Denkard (9,31, 12), which is much corrupted but the restoration of which is possible. Prof. Humbach suggested restoration of this passage reads: "Jam, the son of Vivanghan gratified/pleased mankind and gratified/pleased the beneficent cattle, "O, Zardusht, when he addressed men with the following speech; 'be you contented with your cattle, i.e. eat you your own meat in the quantity apportioned (to you) and you will be contented, do not eat meat immodestly because of greed or because of envy; with the quantity apportioned (to you) you must be satiated. There is (one who says): Do not throw away the warm entrails nor throw away the fat of the limbs. Do slaughter by (professional) slaughtering so that your body will be fine and your body will be healthy." The "sin" is thus identified as his allowing the killing and eating of cattle. This is considered a sin because on Indo-Europeans' regard for vegetarianism. However, the practice of eating meat was probably followed before this and

Jamshid's allowing it, and consequently being punished by losing Paradise and also by being dissected in hell, was a way of recognizing an accepted practice.

During the discussion period, this matter was brought up and Prof. Humbach recognized the irony that to this day Zoroastrians not only eat meat but also sacrifice animals and that this deviation may result from an inevitable human need for nutrition in parts of the country where vegetarianism could not have been sustained for very long. He further pointed out that some of the earlier documents contain statements suggesting the sinfulness of an immodest consumption of meat. This he concluded, tells us that eating meat was an act done more out of necessity than for its pleasure.

Jamshid is famous for having constructed a subterranean stronghold which was identified to have been located in "Pars" by the sources of the Pahlavi encyclopedia, the Bundahishn. It is now clear from sources, including numismatic evidence, that this Pars was not in the Iranian plateau but rather in the center of the Hindukush mountains, thus identifying the Bamiyan cave system with Jamshid's subterranean stronghold.*

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The "Other" Racism Middle Easterners Face Bias

On The Topic of "IRANIAN BASHING," by Mana Behbin 17 years old (1978) is senior at Poly Prep Country Day School in Brooklyn. This June she will graduate cum laude. Recently she received a letter of commendation and certificate of distinction from her school. Ms. Behbin will attend Columbia College, NY September 1996, and aspires to be a medical physician. She immigrated to the United States in 1987.



By: Mana Behbin

One night in June, as I was reading The New York Times, I came across a letter written to President Clinton by the Iranian American Society of New York. The letter was meant to bring attention to the speech given by the President in which he called Iran a "nation supporting terrorism" and used racist phrases such as "Iranian behavior." As I read on I realized that this racist and incorrect view of Iranians and other Middle Easterners is one that I have encountered in many people since I came to this country from Iran. I have seen racism towards a whole people in children as young as 11. My question to the President of the United States of America is...How can you claim to wish to get rid of racism in your country when in a national speech you use racist comments which, if they were made to the people of

African heritage or of the Jewish religion, would be deemed unacceptable and inappropriate.

As stated in the Iranian American Society's letter, Iranians are a proud race. We make up very little of this country but I assure you that we are holders of the most prestigious ranks in American hospitals, schools, court rooms, homes and offices. We came to this country seeking better future, not because we dislike our homeland. We contribute to this country and we try to repay it for the opportunities that we have been given. However, it seems that we have been deemed a nation of terrorists and a nation with "behavior" problems. Very few who judge us know of our values and morals and proud heritage. To be called terrorists is misleading, racist, and just

plain wrong. Comments such as those made by the President create an environment which brings harassment to Iranian in this country.

Think about Iranian-Americans, Arab-Americans, American Muslims, and other Middle Easterners. Think about what you were taught.

Two years ago as I walked through the Poly hall, I noticed a map on a billboard. The map was a project done by a sixth or seventh grader, pointing out countries and displaying pictures that showed what each country would be recognized by. I looked at England and saw the London Bridge. France had the Eifel Tower. Then I got to Iran and the picture associated with it was young man holding a gun over his shoulder. When I saw that picture all of my beliefs in Poly as a melting pot of a community were erased. I

realized that this picture and the mentality behind it was a result of so many years of the media bashing Iran and the accusations made by the media and the government against Iranians. I feel that if something of this sort was presented about another race it would never be displayed for people to see, it would be reprimanded. I understand that this was not looked at or meant to be offensive and racist but my question is why not? Isn't it wrong that a young pre-teen would so quickly associate Iran with that stereotype? Readers, think about what you think when you think of Iranian-Americans, Arab-Americans, American Muslims, and other Middle Easterners. Think about what you were taught.

Think about what you associate with Iran and What has been programmed into your mind. What nation do you think of when you hear of a terrorist act? I wrote this article to bring to your attention a different kind of racism that exists and is rampant in this nation. Those of you who are so ignorant and unsympathetic as to make a derogatory remark about my view after you read it instead of bringing up intelligent and coherent thoughts and issues, why don't you look inside yourselves and try to find the wound from which your hatred feeds? Just remember the words which welcome all at the entrance of the United Nations in Geneva, which were written by the IRANIAN poet, Sa'adi: "If thou feel'st

not for others' misery, A son of Adam is no name for thee. " I am not a feminist or an activist of any kind, I'm just tired of being bashed. I am grateful for the chances that I have been given in America and I wish to repay this country, by becoming an active resident and helping its people and children grow, but if we have ignorance so will the generations to come. In that case, how can this country grow? I know that other races and ethnicities are also stereotyped and so I want to tell you how I feel when I am misunderstood, so that may be you will think twice before stereotyping somebody else.*

PERSIAN HERITAGE (MIRASS-E-IRAN)

LOOK AT WHAT IS COMING IN THE FALL....

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The Choice

By: Nina Navid

While walking in a garden one day a handsome young man stumbled upon a lone flower. His eyes were taken by her beauty. The flower at first did not notice the young man but soon felt a chill as his body blocked her sun. She noticed immediately that his face was sad and lonely and confused. Why did he not come closer? Over the next few weeks the young man returned to the flower. As his desire to go closer and touch her velvet petals became stronger, so did her yearning for his touch.

Then one day it happened, the young man extended his hand. As he felt her soft petals her beautiful scent filled the summer air. At that moment she knew that she would soon leave her empty world and now have a purpose, someone needed her.

Carefully the young man placed the flower into his pocket. He knew that he must put her in a safe place. If she were discovered she would be destroyed. She now understood his need for her and now understood his loneliness.

The flower was so happy to share his life. She continued to grow and grow and blossom and blossom. And as she grew so did the young man's strength.

He kept telling the flower, that soon he would defy everyone and take her out of this secret place and show her off to the world, because you see the flower was his reason to live. Time went by, year, after year, after year.

One day the flower heard a great

deal of commotion coming from within the man's home. Suddenly he appeared his face was confused and angry and sad. Sad like the day she first saw him in the garden. He cried out "my dear flower you have been discovered and now I must take you away for if you are found you will be destroyed. But please don't be frightened we will find a way and I will keep you safe."

For the next few weeks the man came as he said he would and brought her water. But she felt something had changed. The strength he once took from her was no longer needed. The daily visits soon turned into weekly then monthly. Soon she began to grow weak. He would stay away so long that there would be no water left to quench her thirst. She could no longer drink the dew from her tears because she could no longer cry.

It seemed, however, that every time she was near her end, her Prince would return. She would understand that for a very short moment he needed her again and for a very short moment she had a reason to live.

Again he left and the flower became very weak. She could no longer make a brilliant petal, she could no longer radiate the air with her beautiful scent.

She sat there lonely in her beautiful crystal vase and began to wonder. She wondered why she believed that she could become part of human's world. She wondered if the hopes and dreams they both shared were just dreams. She knew now that she would never adorn his

mantle for the world to see, the world she wanted would not be.

When he occasionally came to her she would try to make him see what was happening. He heard but did not listen. It was clear to her now that something or someone provided him with the strength he once sought from her. Over time her stem weakened and there in the dark she waited and wondered if he would return and wondered what he would do if he found her dried and dead. She thought and then realized that her prince would be distraught over her passing and would for a moment be angry and sad. But soon he would rationalize the event. He would make an excuse for his action and choice and then gently take her from the vase and place her gently between the pages of his book. There she would remain.

Oh how sad she thought. How could such hope and love turn into something so cold and dark. How sad that he allowed his fears to destroy something few are able to attain. How sad and yet this was life.

As she sat there reliving her beautiful memories the door opened and her Prince appeared. There he stood with a look of panic in his face. In one hand he held a glass of water to nourish her and in the other his past. With what little strength she had inside her she raised her weary petals and softly smiled, hoping that he would see in her eyes the happiness they once shared and then it was dark.*

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