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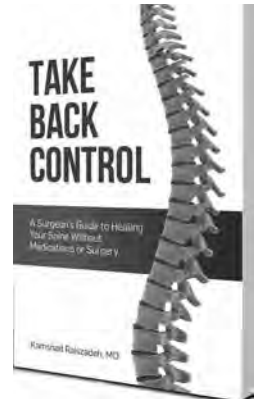
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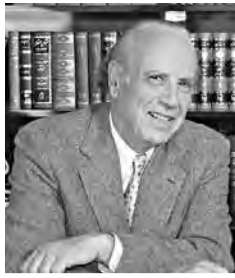
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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

The ancient Norooz celebration represents the birth of spring and nature. This beginning coincides with the work of Persian Heritage which started publication in the spring 1996. Persian Heritage (*Mirass Iran*) has committed itself to protecting the Persian culture and presenting it to the second and third generation Iranians; those either by choice or by force who immigrated and made a new home outside of Iran. During these twenty six years, despite many obstacles, we are fortunate to remain a viable publication. This success is due to the dedication of our colleagues, our volunteer staff, our subscribers, and advertisers. Only one time did we miss an issue and that was due to Covid. Norooz symbolizes and remembers thousands of years of history by Iranians over the years and remains the joy of Iranians all over the world; a celebration dedicated to the arrival of spring and the beginning of life in the new year.

I want to thank our Persian Heritage voluntary staff and everyone who has participated in the magazine on our twenty-sixth anniversary. To all of you and Iranians throughout the world, I wish for a very Happy Norooz. I wish for you and all the people of the world that this coming year, with the passing of the cold days of winter and the awakening of spring, that all your hardships and difficulties will subside, and peace will prevail. I wish for you an end to this horrific and debilitating corona virus that has plagued us the past two years. A virus that has affected the young, old, rich and poor. I wish for you a relief from poverty, hunger, oppression, and violations of human rights. I wish for you the end of all wars that have brought such terrible destruction, displacement, hunger, poverty and death to so many people. I wish for you a year filled with peace, stability, joy and equality.

Over the past weeks our attention has been directed to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, which is not different from many of Middle Eastern wars and their conflict with major world powers. The victims of these conflicts are the country's innocent people. Because of social media and twenty-four-hour coverage of this conflict the images of the people suffering and the destruction of their cities and homes is instant. Some may think my words are harsh. Some do not understand or agree with my position and try to align me with a political affiliation. Some have cursed me for my words and writings. Over these twenty-six years I developed a thick skin and endured this harsh criticism. I remain dedicated to my values and position on certain issues and do not allow myself to be deterred by my critics. I forgive and forget the harshness of those who oppose me, and always without disdain, listen and respect their positions.

As in all wars the victims of this current conflict are the innocent people; children, men and women. But in this conflict,

we are seeing a strong resistance by the Ukrainian people and direction of their president, one who had no prior political experience before being elected. His profession was a stand-up comedian. Some may not agree with his policy and his resistance. Some may consider him a puppet of the West. Some may think he has sacrificed his country for the will of US and the Western countries. Some may favor his decision, not to abandon his country and take refuge in a Western nation. His reaction to this conflict and his refusal of the invitation to be air lifted out of his county during this conflict is admirable. He remains as a true leader encouraging his citizens. He pleads for military equipment and life sustaining supplies for his people in order to defend their country. We see photos of him in military garb. Some have compared him to the greatest military leaders in the world such as Cyrus, Nader Shah and Alexander the Great and others who rose to defend their county, (some have commented that the photos of President Zelensky are over a year old and the display of the same is an effort to make him a hero.) But there can be no denial of the validity to the images of the Ukrainian citizens, who have taken up arms and have and will die defending their country.

What surprises me most is the response of my own countrymen both inside and outside of Iran. Some are supporting the Russian invasion. Some are against it and support the cause of the Ukrainian people. Those in support of the Russian regime have forgotten that it was only one hundred years ago that Russian's forced Iran to give up land and that land became new countries. Some are so horrified by the actions of the Russians. They believe the Russians will once again use their powers to further divide and exploit Iran. Some have forgotten the history of the betrayets by the British, the conspiracies of the French during the Qajar dynasty and the treaties signed, that gave away resources that belonged to the Iranian people at the time. Yes, we have convenient short memories of the British whose actions during WW I were a major player in the starvation of over ten million Iranians. Yes, we have convenient memories of how the British exploited Iran's oil, using it for their own benefit. Yes, we have convenient short memories of how the British encouraged the US to be the source of democratic regime changes in Iran.

Another point that I would like to make here is the hypocrisy of some, who have turned a blind eye to the hardships and the loss of the life in Afghanistan, and other Middle Eastern nations such as Yemen and Syria and now give all their attention and their compassion to this war. Where is the compassion for all those Afghans, Yemenis and Syrians?

If Turkey decides to invade their neighboring countries, such as Azerbaijan, will there be outrage by the international community. The outpouring of support on behalf of the Ameri-

cans and other Western Nations for the people of this current conflict, not more than a few days old (which I hope will not extend to weeks or months) is amazing. We see open borders welcoming the Ukrainian refugees. Many wealthy individuals of Ukrainian decent are reaching out to support these innocent refugees who are fleeing the country. Money is being raised to build shelters for the Ukrainian refugees. Yet every day the pleas of millions Middle Eastern refugees, and African nations trying to take refuge in Turkey, Greece, Italy, Australia, and Austria are ignored, or they are denied entry by these countries.

What distinguishes the Ukrainian refugee from the Yemeni, Syrian, Afghani and the Libyan, etc. refugees? They suffer the same atrocities and hardships. They are losing their lives while crossing oceans and seas or from cold and hunger. And, then they are abused and harassed by their host countries.

In the last forty years I have witnessed and am astonished by the lack of empathy that exists among many wealthy Iranians who reside in the US and other countries who never paid any attention to the hardships of the Iranian refugees. These affluent Iranians refuse to help these individuals. We witnessed the treatment of an Iranian refugee, Behrooz Boochani. He is a Kurdish-Iranian journalist, human rights defender, writer, and film producer. He was held in the Australian-run Manus Island Detention Center in Papua New Guinea from 2013 until its closure in 2017. He was then moved to Port Moresby, Australia until November 2019 when he left for New Zealand.

Behrouz Boochani was sent to Manus Island in Papua New Guinea (PNG) after arriving in Australian waters in 2013, under a government policy of detaining asylum seekers who arrived by boat.

While in detention, Boochani (not be provided a pen or pencil) used his cellphone to write articles about the mistreatment of detainees, one piece won him the 2019 Victorian Price for Literature.

Did the mistreatment he wrote about make world news? Was remorse felt by these affluent Iranians against these atrocities?

Yes, the success stories of the second and third generation Iranians in the US and the world is admirable! They have become famous for their accomplishments. Unfortunately, we are not witnessing remorse, by them, on the suffering felt by the Iranian people. Of course, there are small groups of young people who are active in trying to bring this mistreatment and discrimination to the world stage, but they lack the financial means, influence, or power to do so.

I hope that affluent Iranians now witnessing the actions of the Ukrainian diaspora in support of their fellow Ukrainian men and women in their fight, will learn a lesson and copy their brave actions. I hope the affluent Iranians will reach out and support those Iranians suffering in many places around the globe.

Sadly it seems, too many Iranians, living outside of Iran, remain hopeful and believe that there will be a new US administration, like the Trump administration. They believe that such an administration will rid Iran of Mullah control and save Iran and its people. They further believe that they will then return to Iran and be welcomed. People are entitled to their beliefs! But these beliefs and dreams of those of outside of Iran since 1979 have not yet come to fruition.

But there are ways we can immediately help those suffering

in Iran. Why can't we as a group pull up our sleeves and begin to fight for justice and equality? Why can't we as a group help our fellow country men and women in times of need? Why should we hope and pray that only a regime change will have the strength to make this change happen? Why can't we shift our focus and disregard our personal positions on this matter and unite on helping our fellow countrymen? Let's leave change in the hands of the willful and just perhaps the disheartened Iranians, who continue to suffer, can be saved, can have a right to choose what religion to practice and have the right to vote and choose who they want for their leadership. Let's hope for the day that men and women regardless of their ethnicity, religion or political stand will peacefully coexist. For the last forty plus years Iranians inside and outside of Iran are wishing this wish comes true. People whose roots are planted in good deeds, good words and good work are well deserving of these conditions.

Once again I pray for peace and prosperity for all the Iranian people. Once again, I pray that they will have a future that supports the values that have been part of their inherent makeup. Once again I pray the world will see the integrity and peaceful nature of the Iranian people.

Wishing you all a happy Norooz.

Shahrooz Ghahramani

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KINDNESS

Dear Editor:

Thank you for emailing me the winter 2021-22 Persian Heritage magazine. I showed my mom the page that had her poem and Mr. Sahba's response and she was very surprised and also very pleased. We are so grateful for all your kindness.

God bless you. Kindest wishes,

Shahrnaz Mossaded Rezvani and Goldokht Mossaded

WILL IT END

Dear Editor:

Over the past two plus years your readers and the world have had to deal with so much anxiety, sadness and pain. The source of this was the situation of our lives, so much death and destruction by Covid, the death and destruction of politics, and the death and destruction of governments trying to divide its citizens.

As I read your editorials, though depressing at times, they are thought provoking and make me look at myself and my neighbors. I realize how each of us live, laugh, cry, experience joy, experience sadness, feel pain, feel hunger and feel success in the same way. We miss our friends and families in the same way.

When I read your magazine it is a breath of fresh air and makes me remember Iran, how it was and will be again. I thank you for your pages of joy.

R.S, New Jersey

PASSING OF AZITA RAJI



The Iranian born, American diplomat, banker, and philanthropist passed away in February. She was appointed to her position by President Obama in October of 2014 and confirmed in February of 2016, as Ambassador to Sweden. This made her the first female Ambassador to

Sweden and the first Iranian born American to hold that position. Ms. Raji was also nominated for the highest award for a non career ambassador, the Sue M. Cob Prize for Exemplary Diplomatic Service.



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The Speech of Dr. Shahrokh Ahkami

At a ZOOM Meeting Organized by:
Persian Cultural Center of Atlanta,
on Feb. 15, 2022

I want to first thank Dr. Minoos Varzegar for inviting me to speak at this program.

Dr. Varzegar is well known in the Persian cultural community in New Jersey, New York, Georgia, and other states in the United States who follow her programs. We all have a deep respect for her work in the arts and culture. I would like to also thank those who have worked so hard to put together this gathering and have made this event come into play and those who participate in tonight's session.

Living as a diaspora, whether by will or force, Iranians for the past 40 years have passed on their cultural values from generation to generation. We should no longer refer to them as Iranian diaspora once the second and third generation Iranian is born in their new homeland. We should no longer refer to them as refugees away from home. The sources of connecting these second and third generations are the language, cultural traditions and history that has passed down from the first-generation immigrants on to their children and grandchildren.

I would like to start my speech by using a personal example, my daughter Negar Ahkami. She is an accomplished artist in the American art world who is not well recognized in the Iranian American community. Presently her work is being exhibited for an entire month at an art gallery in Arlington Virginia. I would like to read an excerpt regarding her work from the gallery's program pamphlet.

"In these recent paintings Negar depicts European film and fashion icons clad in caftans and turbans. The paintings fuse campy fashion references in Ahkami's ornate Persian sensibility with motifs from Ancient Greek and Italian pottery, French religious objects and 1960s psychedelics. These diverse Western stylistic references are united in their under acknowledged Middle Eastern influences. This denial of influence has been Negar's commitment to have in her works display this connection to the West. The exhibition includes small self-portraits based on Henri Matisse's portraits of the model Lorette. These stark self-portraits contrast with her fanciful paintings of white women, thereby exploring feelings of being otherized as Iranian American woman."

In reading further, I came to find out that my daughter Negar acknowledges that her success was based on her parents, her mother Nahid and me. She states as follows: **"My Iranian-American life is possible because of my parents, Nahid and Shahrokh Ahkami, who immigrated to the United States in 1969, before my birth in 1971. It's being called Negi to avoid racist associations with my name, and later embracing my name after my college professor told me "Negar" means painting. It's trauma from taunts during the Hostage crisis and the constant backdrop of dehumanizing news images of Iran. It's being exposed to Iranian pride while being immersed in an American system that regards Iran with suspicion, derision, or overlooks**



and lumps it together with other old cultures. It's being regarded as lost and not Iranian by some diaspora because I don't speak Persian, but then also countless being asked "where are you from?" or "what are you?" It's finding-through – through Iranian art-my version of language, my deepest connection, my escape from depressing news, into places I can't travel. It's rolling my eyes at the countless times my father points out Persian origins of things; and realizing that I have become my father, as an artist who constantly points to Persian art's global relevance."

While reading these words, that have probably been read by thousands of Americans and Iranian Americans, and with tears streaming down my face, I realized one truth; perhaps all the work, persistence, efforts, and hardships that my wife and I endured in the past 40 years, if we have not influenced other Iranians, we have at least been successful in influencing our children. We see how it has encouraged our daughter to find her interest and connection to her ancestry.

Most museums that exhibit Persian art insist to present the art and the artist under the flag of Islam. Negar on the other hand is working to change this perspective and present Persian art and artists as Persian who come from the era of the Islamic period.

Take me for example. I am a physician who is enthusiastic about it and thankfully has been successful. But I am also enthusiastic about journalism, a passion that started at an early age when I published my first journal. As a 10–12-year-old my grandfather would ask me to read the news. I must say that during those days in our little town of Ghouchan we only had only access to a few newspapers and magazines. Loving writing, I began writing wall newspapers at my high school. Later I wrote a medical and research journal while I served in the army.

One of the major struggles in the US for my wife and I, and I am sure most diaspora, was finding the proper way to instill in our children, in our case Persian values, as they were growing

up and going to school. How could we make them understand and appreciate what their Iranian ancestry contributed to society? There was no internet or social media venues for them to engage in conversation or receive immediate information. The only resources were the Encyclopedia Britannica, or a few books written in English that would briefly cover the culture and history of Persia (Iran) in a meaningful way. Certainly, at that time the media coverage was all negative. The few Persian publications that existed could not compete with the American based publications.

Again, once the Iranian revolution took place and the hostages were taken, the media coverage of anything Iranian and of Iran was a negative portrayal of the Iranian people, Iranian history, and Iranian culture. It is ironic that other immigrants who came from Eastern European countries such as Lithuania, Poland, and Cuba, though referred to as immigrants from communist countries, they were separated from their communist regime governments. They were treated with kindness and compassion. They were accepted into mainstream society. But because of the hostage crisis Iranians were seen as terrorists and enemies of the US and its people. Sadly, to this day some remain ignorant and still recognize Iranians as terrorists. In my Persian Heritage editorials, I try to impress that the people of a country need to be separated from their government. Yet, after 40 years there is no distinction between Iran's regime and their citizens. There is no understanding or compassion for the Iranian people and the heavy burdens and hardships they have endured during these years. With every positive news or success story that comes out of Iran, to dilute the influence of the story, the media immediately would rerun movies like "Not Without My Daughter" or display footage of the hostages in Iran.

It was during this period that my wife Nahid Ahkami and a few friends decided to form and register *Persian Cultural Heritage Association*, PCHA as a nonprofit corporation. This was one of the first foundations found on the East coast of the United States that represented the Persian community. I was president of the PCHA for the first 4 years and it was a true honor. Everyone involved worked diligently to make it a success. We all agreed that the organization needed a newsletter that could reach the Persian community in our area. It began as one page and would get out news and updates about PCHA's work. Though one page, I cannot impress upon you the amount of work involved, especially not being able to type or use a computer to make a one-page newsletter. It would take a few weeks to complete.

After a while I realized it was time for me to start a magazine in place of a newsletter. Twenty-seven years ago, the first issue of the magazine went into publication in two languages Persian and English. For the first issue all the members took ownership of the project, but within a couple of months and at the time of preparing for the second edition everyone cleaned their hands and stepped away; the second issue never came out.

I saw this as an opportunity to fulfill my lifelong dream to become a real journalist. It was not easy and there were obstacles to move, go through or step over but we succeeded in publishing the first bilingual Persian and English magazine in 1996, *Persian Heritage (Mirass Iran)*. It was the first Persian publication that had a 50/50 ratio of both languages published in the US. Our purpose for the magazine was to introduce our culture and history to second generation Iranians and the American people. We wanted to have them understand Iran and its glorious history. We wanted to have them learn that Iran and its people were not

the hostage takers or terrorists they read about. Our purpose was also to shed light on the success stories and achievements of Iranian Americans and Iranian diaspora. Our purpose was to instill pride. Our purpose was to show the American people, who initially welcomed us and then turned on us, due to regime change in Iran, what being Persian was all about. Of course, to this day Iranians who travel within the US or elsewhere in the world may still receive unwelcome treatment when authorities see where they were born. It is this perception that our magazine wishes to change. And I believe we have had success.

Because of these reasons and other issues, I was determined to publish this magazine despite the emotional and financial burdens that we faced and continue to face. Despite harsh criticism from those who forgot the country of their birth I made the decision I would, for as long as I am able, to continue to publish this magazine.

For the initial publications I sought help from friends I knew in publishing. In a brief time, however, I was able to continue without their help, and became a sort of expert myself in the field of publishing and editing of the Persian section. I am honored to say that the colleagues of the magazine continue to support the publication and give so much of their own time each issue published.

I have continuously been impressed with the number of second-generation Iranians who have reached out to me to express their gratitude and support for this publication. Many of them speak of their experiences of having parents who did not have much knowledge on Iran. Too often when they asked their parents about Iran the question was unanswered or dismissed with a response, "Oh Iran is a land with an ancient history." It brings such satisfaction to know that Persian Heritage has been a source to answer their questions through our articles. The other night I was entertained by an Iranian comedian who made a joke about Iranians, how the only attachment and knowledge they have if asked a question on the subject is, "Oh Iran has a rich history." The joke was on them. Over the past twenty-six years Persian Heritage has addressed current issues, news, and events that Iranians have found valuable in its publication.

I remember when the very offensive and demeaning movie, *Not Without My Daughter*, was released many Iranians had positive support for the film because they believed that the images portrayed would hurt the image of the regime in Iran. They did not realize how damaging this film would be on the world's perception of the people in Iran, a perception that was one sided. The story was based on an American woman who after her Iranian husband completed his residency in anesthesiology in the US, moved back to Iran with their daughter. After time passed, with the help of Iranian friends she left Iran with her daughter and without her husband's consent. The film was adapted from the book based on this woman's life. It was published at the height of the hostage crisis. She became an overnight success and appeared on TV interviews. Eventually a production company received the rights to make the story a movie. It is important to mention here that the film was criticized when released by the NY Times and the LA Times. The movie was filmed at locations outside of Iran and the country and people were portrayed as ugly and dirty. It created an unjust image of the country. In my editorial at the time this film was released I wrote that the US won two wars in the Middle East; 1) the war against Saddam in the Gulf War and 2) with the making of this movie, that portrays Iranian men, their families and the country of Iran in a negative light. It

is an image that remains in the minds of many around the world.

About the same time, I addressed this film in my editorial I also addressed the story of the US commercial airline pilot from Connecticut who placed his wife in a shredder. No one even blinked an eye. While they acknowledged the horrifying nature of the event, they never labeled the man as a representative of all American men. It was fairly reported as an isolated act of one and not a portrayal of a whole culture and its people. In the US if a spouse or other individual, without the permission of the other, removes their child from one state to another, let alone another country, the person is considered a criminal, a kidnapper, under US law. In this movie the mother does this without her husband's consent and she is considered a hero. This profit driven propaganda against the Iranian people is unjust and unethical.

This magazine remains neutral and has no affiliation to any religious or political groups. This magazine is a cultural and nonpolitical publication. For the past 26 years it has been financed by my family, since advertisements, and subscriptions are not enough. And only once, because of Covid have we missed a publication, the summer of 2020.

Even though Persian Heritage does not have a political affiliation but there are political and social events that impact the livelihood of the people of Iran and must be addressed. We cannot close our eyes and pretend that those that are suffering do not exist. It is our duty to address their hardships. I take full responsibility for writing about these events in my editorials. Only I as the editor in chief am responsible for those words.

Because of the time restrictions I will leave time for the questions and answers. Before I end this conversation, I would like to take a moment and mention something. In the early days of the publication of this magazine many asked me where I received my degree in journalism or what kind of degree I have in journalism. We must note that many scholars, journalists, and writers did not or do not have degrees, yet their work has been and continues to be of great value and appreciated by their readers.

So, in response to the question as to where I received my degree in journalism, "friends, I do not have a degree in this field of journalism, it has just been my passion and fate has given me this opportunity to do this work."

I was once asked by a friend, who writes my editorials. I jokingly respond that I have a lovely grandmother who passed away many years ago but because of her love for me, every three months she appears and helps me write my editorials and assists me in assembling the work at the magazine. The friend realizing the extent of the question slowly disappeared into the crowd.

In closing I am not certain how I, who comes from a family without much wealth, has been able to withstand the trials and tribulations in publishing this magazine for 26 years. I question as to why at this age when others are retired and enjoying their golden years, I remain driven to keep this magazine alive. Why do I continue when subscriptions and advertisements do not sustain the costs? The answer is the love I have for my culture and my heritage.

And as I stated earlier as long as I, my family, and my voluntary staff have the strength and the power we will continue this path to serve our duties. That duty is to educate society on the reasons we take pride in our culture, our customs and our past and future accomplishments. From the deepest part of my heart, I wish all a wonderful Norooz, one that brings financial prosperity, laughter, and joy back to our hearts. As we watch the snow and drift winter disappear let us all welcome the beauty of Spring.

Glazed Bricks from Western Iran

Iran Heritage Foundation

An article in *The Art Newspaper* for September concerns a collection of 51 glazed polychrome bricks from the Mannaean site of Qalaichi near Bukan in Western Iran that have recently been returned to Iran from Switzerland. They were looted in the 1980s and taken to a bonded warehouse in Switzerland where they were seen in 1991 by John Curtis, then Keeper of the Middle East Department in the British Museum and now Academic Director of the Iran Heritage Foundation. He stressed that the bricks should be returned to Iran. This eventually happened in December 2020, following the intervention of the Swiss authorities and with the help of London lawyer Jeremy Scott. The bricks, dating from the 8th century BC, have a wide variety of painted motifs, such as winged lions and bulls with human heads, mythological figures, birds of prey, deer and floral or geometric designs. The bricks are an important source of information for the art of Mannaea, and show there was much Assyrian influence but with a local interpretation. There will be exhibitions of the bricks both in Bukan and Tehran as soon as the Covid-19 situation allows. In the meantime, there is a full publication of the bricks in an exhibition catalogue in Persian and English by Yousef Hassanzadeh and John Curtis, entitled *The Repatriated Boukan Glazed Brick Collection from Switzerland* (Tehran 2021). This catalogue is part-sponsored by the Sarikhani Foundation and can be obtained from the National Museum of Iran.



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She is an artist whose bold, vibrant paintings take inspiration from Iran's ceramic traditions. Through her art Negar navigates deep feelings around Iranian representation in American culture and she creates spaces where Iran's contributions are globally relevant and interconnected. In the exhibit announced below at the Arlington Arts Center in the D.C. area, Negar depicts European beauties dressed in caftans and turbans, as a way to explore the West's cultural appropriation of Middle Eastern traditions.

She explains how her Iranian – American life became possible as follows:

"My Iranian-American life is possible because of my parents, Nahid and Shahrokh Ahkami, who immigrated to the United States in 1969, before my birth in 1971. It's being called Negi to avoid racist associations with my name, and later embracing my name after my college professor told me "Negar" means painting. It's trauma from taunts during the Hostage crisis and the constant backdrop of dehumanizing news images of Iran.

It's being exposed to Iranian pride while being immersed in an American system that regards Iran with suspicion, derision, or overlooks and lumps it together with older old cultures. It's being regarded as lost and not Iranian by some diaspora because I don't speak Persian, but then also countless being asked "where are you from?" or "what are you?"

It's finding – through Iranian art my version of language, my deepest connection, my escape from depressing news, into places I can't travel. It's rolling my eyes at the countless times my father points out Persian origin of things; and realizing that I have become my father, as an artist who constantly points to Persian art's global relevance."

Solo Show by the Artist Negar Ahkami

ARLINGTON, VA – Opening January 29 and running through March 19,

Negar Ahkami The Artist



Le Caftan, Le Turban features new work by AAC resident artist Negar Ahkami. In her recent paintings, Ahkami depicts European film and fashion icons clad in caftans and turbans. The paintings fuse campy fashion references in Ahkami's own ornate Persian sensibility with motifs from Ancient Greek and Italian pottery, French religious objects, and 1960s psychedelics. These diverse Western stylistic references are united in their underacknowledged Middle Eastern influences.

By combining Middle Eastern signifiers used in Western pop culture and art, Ahkami exposes the broader, complex phenomenon of cultural appropriation. Ahkami struggles with Western culture's devaluation of Middle Eastern cultures, while at the same time taking guilty pleasure in its seductive applications of Middle

Eastern influences. Her ambivalence takes shape in dynamic paintings that move from the playful to the intentionally vulgar, with textures and colors that range from aggressive to exquisite.

This exhibition also includes small self-portraits of Ahkami wearing caftans and turbans that are based on Henri

Matisse's portraits of the model Lorette. These stark self-portraits contrast with her fanciful paintings of white women, thereby exploring feelings of being otherized as an Iranian-American woman.

Negar Ahkami (b. 1971 Baltimore, MD) holds a BA from Columbia University and an MFA from School of Visual Arts. She is an alumnae of Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture and Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's Workspace Residency. Ahkami has exhibited at The Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, The North Carolina Museum of Art, The Walters Art Museum, Rutgers University, The Bronx Museum of Art, Leila Heller Gallery and Rossi and Rossi Gallery. Her work is in the collections of The New Britain Museum of American Art, Depaul University Art Museum, Wellington Management Company, the Mohammad Afkhami Collection, and the Farjam Collection. For more information, visit www.negarahkami.com.

About Arlington Arts Center

Arlington Arts Center is an independent, non-profit contemporary arts center and gallery that enriches community life by connecting the public with contemporary art and artists through exhibitions, educational programs, and artist residencies. Located at 3550 Wilson Blvd, Arlington, VA, it is open Wed.-Sun., 12:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m., or by appointment. AAC is free, has on-site parking, is easy to reach by metro and bus, and is accessible. For more information about its other programming, visit: arlingtonartscenter.org. AAC programs are supported in part by The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation; Arlington County through the Arlington Cultural Affairs division of Arlington Economic Development and the Arlington Commission for the Arts; the Virginia Commission for the Arts/ National Endowment for the Arts; the Washington Forrest Foundation; The Community Foundation for Northern Virginia; and generous individual donors.

THE EXHIBITION WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY PUBLIC PROGRAMS; FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT:

arlingtonartscenter.org/events.

FOR EXHIBITION IMAGES, VISIT

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/2b0m47exf0kxncw/AACrdS0DufZB16W0JSEkpW9Ea?dl=0>.

A Calamity called Islamic Revolution and Inevitability of an Unprecedented Tragedy

Part Two

By: C.N.

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

Years later and during the reign of his son, Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, that bold decision was reversed and during the short premiership of Hassan Ali Mansoor it was reactivated. It was done in a surreptitious way assuming that it would not be public because it was so unpopular. But one member of clergy, Hojatolislam Ruhollah Khomeini learned about it and worked out a plot to embarrass the Shah, and thus was the source of what has happened ever since.

His revolt exploded on 15th of Khordad, June of 1963. It was a serious blow to the regime and had it not been suppressed it may have hastened what came to be known as the Islamic Revolution. That was the whole purpose. At the urging of Assadolla Alam, who was trusted by the Shah, this violent uprising was brutally suppressed and many people lost their lives. However, the movement never died. It changed its strategy working under the radar and slowly and methodically prepared the foundation of what followed so violently 16 years later. There were numerous plans that were implemented one by one. They seemed innocent at the time but later showed up as components of a larger destructive scheme. The remnants of the slaughter of 15th Khordad had penetrated the armed forces. The soldiers in the Shah's army were conscript and heavily religious. During some of the demonstrations they sided with demonstrators. Worse than that the plotters penetrated in Imperial Guard which was designed to protect the Shah. They were called the Immortals. On one occasion one of the soldiers opened fire in the soldiers' mess and killed quite a few. All of these were designed to shake the regime and were extremely effective. They also showed deep penetration in the regime where the Shah and his sycophants presumed they were secure.

As part of a long-term strategy, the schemers picked simple young men from highly religious communities, like Isfa-

han, and sent them to countries like Syria, Libya and Palestinian camps to be trained as terrorist. It should be reminded that these countries and Palestinian (after the revolution succeeded and the Shah left, Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader visited Tehran where he met with his collaborators. This did not go well with the nationalist who were completely against the Shah's regime for his action in recognizing Israel. They were doing everything to undermine his regime. One effective way was to train young men in terror tactics so that could be used to terrorize people and institutions that the regime depended on to run the government. It turned out, that whoever thought of the scheme, knew exactly what they were doing. Another plan which seemed to be very effective was to establish schools just for girls. On the face of it seemed very innocent. But in the process, they trained young women to take part in demonstrations against the regime and against the Shah. These girls dressed in black veils formed the first line of the demonstrations. They knew that the soldiers, who were most likely from poor or middle class families, would hesitate or not fire at women. These girls were also trained to follow the members of the clergy, who were always present during such moves.

While these demonstrations were taking place, another violent group called the Mujahidin were doing their destructive share by blowing up bars and businesses like the BMW dealership (which catered to the wealthy) or setting movie houses on fire. To finance their destructive operations, they would rob banks which forced the banks to hire armed guards for protection. Meanwhile the young people that were sent (by the invisible Mullahs) to Syria, Libya and Palestinian camps for terrorist training were busy doing their destructive work. All of these activities were intended to destabilize the regime and prepare it for ultimate collapse, which succeeded.

Meanwhile the American Ambassador urged the Shah to leave the country, because the regime was collapsing piece by piece. The terrorist elements trained by the Arabs who could not stand the Shah, because of his non-Arab policies which were strictly in the best interest of Iran, were enjoying the destructive events that were being orchestrated by the Mullahs. The coalition that had emerged was also taking great pleasure knowing the structure that had evolved during the last two decades after the Coup. In this coalition, certain persons have to be blamed more than anyone else. Those persons were the National Front leaders who assumed that once the Shah left they would take over the government. They did not understand their own culture one, where some Mullah's are like a parasite and therefore has no incentive to disappear and is by nature a consumer who prospers, while others have suffer, as is happening right now in Iran.

The questions are how, however, how does this parasite emerged, how and where did it come from and who is or was the main sponsor/mentor and benefactor of this process? To emphasize the core of this paper.

1: The Role of the Old Nemesis of Iran, the British Intelligent Services

The destructive and demanding behavior of the British in Iran dates back about more than two centuries, when the British made a vast empire on the shoulders of the poor but essentially rich people from the Far East to Asia and the United States.

One of the lasting damages that the Safavi Shahs did to Iran was to create a national religion, an act that was absolutely unnecessary, but was used for political purposes. The decree that Shiate was the official religion of Iran brought misery to thousands of people who were Sunni, which was an established religion imposed on Iranians by Arabs. From then on, the Shiate clergy found a receptive dynasty and began to get close to the ruling

kings, through sycophancy and spreading of superstitions to make sure that people believed in it.

In the early 1500 Century, the British had already expanded their territory and influence world-wide and began to dominate the Indian subcontinent which was endowed with tremendous wealth including precious minerals and natural wealth. Given the Naval power that had contributed to the expansion of the British Isles, they knew that protection of the subcontinent, the best prize in the empire, was paramount, and that the Persian Gulf was the most visible area where other powers of the time, the Ottoman empire, could begin to encroach the friendly relations with the rulers of Iran. This could prevent the Turkish sultanate to subvert the British in that area.

Therefore, they decided to establish some sort of relations beginning with a commercial interest in Iran by using clerical powers with deep influence in the Iranian communities. They began with sending an Indian by the name of Maqsood Ali to investigate the situation. Maqsood was fluent in Persian poetry (the elite language of India before the British changed the whole thing) and entertained groups of Darwish and Soofis. In doing so he earned praise and accommodations. He ultimately convinced the people he was entertaining, to name him "Majlessee" meaning a person who can entertain people in a setting. The date goes back to late 16th century when the British were still expanding the empire and Maqsood was as a matter of fact the first British spy in Iran.

Another small but influential tribe which had serious influence in the emerging Shiite sect was Jabal Ameli. Despite its size it had an out of proportion influence in spreading Shiite and by definition superstition in Iran. The reason that these dogmatic elements persisted in Iran and continued to influence kings and other leaders were in a way masters in creating supercilious agents. Agents, that managed to spread false stories among the uneducated and rural people, thereby spreading ignorance. And by definitions they became subservient to regimes that adhered to such superficially myths and made it possible for the rulers to maintain their grips on the population. In many ways, these were the elements that enhanced the rule of Mullahs in Iran.

According to Torab Sultanpour none of what happened, which took about 8 years to take the nation to such a miserable social and economic state, would have

occurred had there been good objective advice given to the Shah with serious discussion of the potential consequences that might take place and damage the monarchy. The origin of what happened, and has brought much misery to the nation, goes back to the early 1960's. This is about 9 years after the CIA and British Intelligence Coup that put an end to premiership of Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh, who, for the first time, had shown that the Iranians were capable of surviving the ruthless economic sanctions that the British had imposed on them.

Iran was moving ahead in spite of limited foreign exchange resources imposed on the country. Different strata's of society were beginning to move on, when the sudden shock was felt deeply by the religious community highly concentrated in the city of Qom (a city not known for any political ambitions). This was because the leadership had decided that supporting the Shah was in their interest and their job was educating young men to assume religious activities in different parts of the country. These Houwzez (circles of religious teachings) were guided by young and aspiring clergy and were financed by personal endowments or subsidies provided by the central government.

According to Turab Soltamour (Centuries of British Intervention in Iranian Affairs) in one of these Houwzes the teaching of religion was not the only subject. The leading clergy was also interested in seeing appropriate implementation of axioms of religion. This young clergy was Ruhollah Khomeini. So when extensive land reform in addition to other social measures were initiated under Prime Minister Assadolah Alam, Mr. Khomeini was alarmed. He wrote a very polite and cordial letter to the Shah expressing great concern about some of the social movements that the Shah had initiated and Alam implemented, regardless of the economic and social-societal-religious structure of Iran.

The Shah's response was positive and had instructed Alam to inform Mr. Khomeini that his concerns would be considered. Instead Alam shelved the letter and completely ignored the Shah's instruction. Subsequently Khomani led an uprising and Alam being in charge crushed the uprising violently with considerable people losing their life. In his memoirs Alam refers to the suppression of Khomeini's movement many times telling the Shah there will never be another Mulla uprising.

In modern historical and commentar-

ies about Alam, one comes to the conclusion that he was a dedicated, trained and absolutely loyal British Intelligent services. In his 6-volume memoir authored by late Dr. A.N. Alikhani, he mentioned specifically that Alam's grandparents (Arabs) were dispatched to the North Eastern province of Iran to put down a movement that people there had led against the Arab rulers. From then on Alam, being a powerful minister of the Imperial Court did whatever he could to insulate the Shah from criticism and the real deep changes that were taking place in Iran.

The Shah was alarmed at some of the changes and decided to retire Premier Howaida and replace him with a leading technocrat Jamsheed Amuzegar who had shown his capabilities in various high positions in the Government. Being careful about the nation's Treasury and in preventing waste, Amuzegar created the position of Assistant Premier, who was in charge of the religious endowments which were wealthy and had remained outside the control of the government. This move was not welcomed by numerous Ayatollahs, who had enjoyed the privilege of these endowments.

All of a sudden there was a major fire in a Cinema in Abadan, where hundreds of people lost their lives because the exit doors were locked. That fire was followed by numerous events which gradually created the movement against the regime. The fire at Abadan Cinema was the beginning of serious religious events that nobody could comprehend. Amuzegar resigned and was followed by some incompetent government individuals, all of who were chosen by the Shah himself. This process of course indicates either no close wise advice or no advice at all was given to the Shah. Unfortunately, the Shah ditched the last hope by considering very wrong advice which again was based on no counsel or deep thoughts.

The Final Act and Shah's Departure:

During the final days and after failures of numerous incompetent cabinets installed by Shah, the time came to ask for help from the peoples 'people. The Shah invited Dr. Gholam Hossein Sadighi, a distinguished Tehran University Professor, to meet with him. Dr. Sadighi's last job was Minister of Interior in Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh's cabinet. He was most well-known for his devotion to Iran and the national interests. Rule of law had an unequal primacy in late the Dr. Sadighi's mind.

In his last desperate hours and days, the Shah was alone. All the men who had

advised him, honestly and carefully, were either dead or had left the country heart-broken. The ones inside the country did not trust the Shah to tell him anything. On the one hand American Ambassador Sullivan was telling him to find someone with national popularity and with a base of political support and on the other hand military people were telling him to appoint a strong general to quell the turmoil. While he was considering Dr. Sadighi's appointment as a leader to take the helm and provide some sort of stability, something happened that was completely false and loaded with potential problems and possible violence. The person who did this was head of SAVAK, the intelligence agency who intervened and convinced the Shah to allow Dr. Shahpour Bakhtiar to take the helm. Bakhtiar was an honest man who had fought against foreign interest, primarily British, in Iran, but he did not have a strong political base nor the support of the leadership of the National Front. The head of the SAVAK argued on points that were irrelevant at this crucial time, but the Shah bought the argument and finally appointed Bakhtiar as prime minister. Soon after the appointment, the National Front leaders denounced the appointment *Ipsa Facto* and denied Bakhtiar the moral and political support that he needed at the time.

In a few weeks, his government collapsed and leadership of the Armed Forces declared their neutrality and the Calamity began to wreak havoc for the last 42 years.

The system has taken human cruelty to new levels. First was execution of more than 5000 political prisoners (most of them talented university students) ordered by Khomeini and implemented by the Death Commission, whose members included Ibrahim Raisi, Rafsanjani (himself killed by Khomeini's order) and many others whose credentials included executing innocent people. The last act is the presidency of Raisi, whose election was rigged in broad day light.

Human suffering has been taken to new heights under a regime, who has a well established reputation for corruption and human suppression. Raisi admitted that the execution of the 5000 bight and talented students was one of the proud achievements of the system.

"As Robespierre of the French Revolution and Trotsky of Russia reflected in their final moments, all revolutions end up eating their own."

What else one can say??

THE GREAT WALL OF GORGAN: LONGEST ANCIENT BARRIER BETWEEN CENTRAL EUROPE AND CHINA

Tehran Times on October 30, 2019.



The wall was involved in a series of wars first against the Hephthalites or White Huns and later against the Turks.

2. *One of the views of the engineering works of the Gorgan Wall Courtesy of Yataahoo Website). Iranian engineering skills were on par with those of Rome, China and India. Many of the structures of the Gorgan Wall have*

stood the test of time.

Most parts of the gigantic monument are still hidden underneath the surface though some segments have so far been unearthed and even restored to former glory.

Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts along with cultural heritage experts are making efforts to put the landmark monument on UNESCO World Heritage list in the years to come.

The wall is lined by 38 forts. It is the longest fort-lined ancient barrier between Central Europe and China, longer than Hadrian's Wall and the Antonine Wall put together, according to UNESCO.

1. *Stretched for almost 200 kilometers along northern Iran, the ancient Great Wall of Gorgan was constructed from 420s CE to 530s as a northern frontier of the then mighty Persian Empire, which was then ruled under the Sassanians (Source: Tehran Times). The gigantic barrier is also more than three times the length of the longest late Roman defensive wall built from scratch, the Anastasian Wall west of Constantinople. The combined area of the forts on the Gorgan Wall exceeds that of those on Hadrian's Wall about threefold.*

UNESCO adds that the Gorgan Wall is remarkable not only in terms of its physical scale, but even more so in terms of its technical sophistication. In order to enable construction works, canals had to be dug along the course of the defensive barrier, to provide the water needed for brick production. These canals received their water from supplier canals, which bridged the Gorgan River via qanats. One of these, the Sadd-e Garkaz, survives to 700 m length and 20 m height, but was originally almost one kilometer long.

3. *The Sassanian Savaran counterattacking against invading Hun-Hephthalites in northeast Persia. The Sassanian Military High Command often channeled invading forces into "kill zones" and destroyed them by deploying Savaran units from castles along the Gorgan wall and other areas further east. The figure to the left is a Kushan warrior wielding the large east-Iranian straight two-edged swords. The central warrior (with armor and mail) is derived from the figure of Khosrow II and his steed Sabdiz at Tagh-e-Bostan in Kermanshah, western Iran. The right figure is a female warrior who is a local governess (Paygospanan-Banu). (Farrok, 2005, pp.41-42, 53-54, Plate C).*

The Gorgan Wall and its associated ancient military monuments provide a unique testimony to the engineering skills and military organization of the Sassanian Empire. They help to explain its geographic extent, from Mesopotamia to the west of the Indian Subcontinent, and how effective border defense contributed to the Empire's prosperity in the interior and to its longevity. These monuments are, in terms of their scale, historical importance and sophistication, of global significance.

Regime Change and its Aftermath: Iran, Chile, Guatemala, Indonesia, Brazil, Vietnam and More.

M. Reza Vaghefi

INTRODUCTION:

The American University of Beirut, Lebanon was built in 19th Century inaugurating in 1864. This magnanimous act was accomplished during the height of Ottoman Empire. At above the main entrance to the University on Rue Bliss in Beirut it is engraved: Syrian Protestant College, meaning the land was at the time part of Syrian Province in the Ottoman Empire.

The monumental act was followed by the American University of Cairo, Egypt, again part of Ottoman empire. Roberts College in Istanbul, at heart of Ottoman empire, was the third institution of Higher education sponsored by Presbyterian mission. The same Mission built Alborz College in Tehran, Iran. All these institutions were profoundly affecting all aspects peoples' life in these countries and throughout the Middle East and North Africa. The awakening movements in the Middle East and North Africa was a testament to the effectiveness of teaching objectives at these institutions of higher learning such as freedom and democracy. For instance, Ismail Al Azhari led the Independence movement in Sudan from British empire was the first to be noted by the world.

At the International conference in San Francisco in 1945 to establish the United Nations as a stabilizing force in international relations, Middle Eastern Countries, including Iran, were represented by 45 distinguished citizens of the Iran, Egypt, Sudan etc. Nowhere could the impact of these institutions be felt more than the Conference which was creating four major organizations: The United Nations with all its constituent units such as U.N. Security Council, International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank. These three institutions have had profound impact on many countries of Middle East and elsewhere. Add to this list the International Court of Justice in the Hague, the Netherlands with Charter to resolve problems among member nations. Given this brilliant and lasting contributions to the world, one

wonders what has happened to the United States that so many people are suspicious of its activities and are careful when asking for help? Or as General Eisenhower is quoted to have said: "Why these people do not like us?"

WW11 AND ITS AFTERMATH

After WW11 and the creation of international institutions like the United Nations which included in its charter organs that were designed to deal with world-wide injustice or human rights etc., nations who had been harmed by colonial powers like Britain, felt some rejuvenating spirit and began movements that would allow them to seek independence. Indian subcontinent, under Mohandas Mahatma Gandhi and his immediate lieutenants like Jawaher Laal Nehru felt that the time was ripe to claim their freedom from British oppression. Gandhi's movement which had begun immediately right after WW11 ultimately gave birth to a free India.

The success of Indians did not go unnoticed in Iran. With emergence of a puritan man like Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh in the lead, Iranians began to demand their rightful share of the underground wealth dominated by British company, Anglo Iranian Oil Company. There was nothing Iranian in that name, it was just the façade. The movement called National Front led by Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh received its total support from Iranians in a general election where a good number of National Front candidates found their rightful seat in the National Parliament, called Majlis. Dr. Mossadegh was nominated as the Prime Minister. He said that he would accept the honor after the Parliament approved the Nine Articles of the Nationalization law which had been initiated by deputies under the chairmanship of Dr. Mossadegh. This request was immediately approved and all deputies, even those whose loyalty remained in supporting the foreign oil company. With the approval, Parliament expressed its support for Dr. Mossadegh and dispatched its approval to

the Shah who appointed Dr. Mossadegh as legally elected Prime Minister of Iran. This was the process that had been established years ago. The Parliament votes for a person who has won the majority support and Shah approves and appoints the person as prime minister. For years Dr. Mossadegh had fought to establish this parliamentary procedure.

The question is what all this has to do with the title of the paper? The answer is a lot and here is the rest of the paper to explain in detail, as much as possible, why it is important to revive the story of the old wounds as painful as they were and continue to be to this day. Because the following cases have a lot to do with policies that have created a lot of pain, suffering and resentment. These are some case studies that are important to know and have had profoundly negative and destructive impact on the societies where such unlawful acts took place.

Iran: August 1953 Coup d'eta.

The Indian success in achieving independent from a stubborn colonial power did not go unnoticed in Iran and in many ways, time was ripe for serious action. The fundamental ingredients were there and a puritan leader like Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh was emerging from the shadow and ready to lead.

The 14 Parliamentary election was underway, and an active enthusiastic group was gathering around Dr. Mossadegh whose charismatic leadership had created hopes and a sense of achieving the unachievable, freedom from a colonial power that had suffocated the Iranians for decades if not centuries. "To millions of his compatriots Mossadegh personified their country more completely than anyone else. Quite simply he was Iran". Patriot of Persia, Christopher de Bellaigue.

He was the most qualified to lead the nationalization of the most significant resource, oil, that had been exploited by the British for decades with minimum contribution to Iranian economy. The amount of money that the Oil company paid to Iran was a fraction of the Taxes they paid to the Ex-chequer in the British government, a malignant evil that had penetrated in the Iranian society for decades and prevented any major economic plan, according to A.H Ebtehaj in "Entrepreneurs of Iran 1974, Palo Alto, CA. (by the author)", that would contribute to a revival of the society. Of all the people

that were in the position to help Iran” it was Mossadegh who saw the hidden hand of the British everywhere because that is where it was. The United States allowed itself to become British accomplice and triggerman, naively helped to overthrow a legitimate government which up to that moment Dr. Mossadegh had considered the United States a force for good in the world affairs.

The problem was that the British influence had penetrated Iranian society at all levels of government agencies and major commercial enterprises. The hidden instrument of the influence exercising were Masons whose presence were unknown, but influence was real and effectively protected the British interest.

Generally, in the eyes of public, the main elements to implement the nationalization law were pre-sent. These composed the Shah as head of the State, the government led by Dr. Mossadegh and the religious community whose symbolic presence was filled by Ayatollah Kashani. The perceived tri-umvirate, as powerful as it seemed to public, had limited life because the head of State, the Shah, was not fully behind Dr. Mossadegh’s plan and Ayatollah’s real intent was not in line with Dr. Mossadegh’s as he was pushing to interfere in the affairs of the government directly for his cro-nies. Such religious involvement was not acceptable to a man, Dr. Mossadegh, who had fought all his life to keep state and religion two separate entities. Mossadegh’s profound hatred of the British was not shared by the two other members of the triumvirate.

The British at the United Nations

The British government took the case to the United Nations Security Council where her representa-tive made an insensate argument that did not impress any one and certainly not India or other mem-bers of the Council that thought the issue did not belong there. Throughout the process Dr.Mossadegh wanted a deal that would guarantee Iran’s independence from sleazy British be-cause he knew them so well and had seen how they operated to undermine the government and Iran economic and social development. During his stay in the United States, he provided ample evidence between Iran’s struggle and that of colonies in 1776 a struggle to free Iran from the chain of British imperialism just as the Americans had done so to free

themselves centuries ago.

In the whole process Dr. Mossadegh had impressed people around President Truman, people like McGhee, Assistant Secretary of the State, who told the British that they were digging themselves in a hole but the Imperial mindset would not allow the British to understand the depth of hatred that they had accumulated over a long period of time. McGhee was the only one in the Truman administration that appreciated the “strength and validity of the national-ist movement in Iran”. Ibid, page 183. McGhee was soon to be transferred to Turkey as US Am-bassador, one more sleazy British gimmick, to remove the people that do not share your imperial design and thinking.

At home a part of the triumvirate which was critical to achieving Dr. Mossadegh’s objective, the Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, was wobbling knowing full well what the British had done to his father. Shah remembered the old British hands were available to undo what had been done so far. The old hand was Syed Zia whose Anglophile devotion and identities were as clear as day light and well-known in political circles. Zia’s credentials were directly opposite to the “moral authority wielded by Mossadegh as unparalleled in history of Iran, and one may say the entire Middle East.”

The most interesting part of this damaging story was the British role and how they were able to manipulate the Americans, as they do to this day (U.S. Submarine to Australia). How this manipulative strategy worked and to whose benefit is by itself a fascinating story.

Clement Atlee’s Labor government in England had provided some indirect support to the notion of Oil Nationalization. The argument in Tehran was that if it acceptable to nationalize coal and steel etc. in England why not in Iran where there was every legitimate reason to nationalize an industry that had been exploited by a foreign company for its own benefit and at the price of Iranian nation. But the 1952 elections on both side of the Atlantic brought in new faces and philosophies quite contrary to the previous government of Labor in England and Democrat in Washington. Winston Churchill, the symbol of Imperialism and Dwight Eisenhower, a man with a military mindset at the beginning of a Cold War was not a welcome sign for Dr. Mossadegh whose de-meaner and mental framework was obsessed with a puritan

adherence to law, local or international, was quite the opposite of what lied ahead. The most intriguing aspect in this process was how the British expressed their view of the oil issue. Their emphasis to the new and naïve administration was that they feared the influence of Communists in Iran and the potential that they may overwhelm the government of Dr. Mossadegh at which time the Soviet Union may take advantage of the conditions and help a communist takeover in Iran. Eisenhower was a “Gloves-off warrior who believed that America was pitted against an implacable enemy whose avowed objective is world domination and that long standing American concept of fair play must be reconsidered.” p.220, Ibid. This seemed to have provided a good moment for a muscular force.

The British had a mischievous strategy of emphasizing the threat of communist in this process and that is what triggered the American reaction and set in motion to overthrow of a legitimate government the likes of which did not exist in the entire Middle East and has never existed since. The old “Fox” and the new naïve administration were bad omen for government of Dr. Mossadegh. British were downplaying Britain oil interest and dwelling on the dangers of communism. As a matter of fact some of the apparently communist organizations were indeed created by the British spies to be used as weapons against Mossadegh’s government. The author of this paper was a part of the nationalist youth movement and witnessed how the British were playing the communist card. Mossadegh called them TudehNafti meaning the ones created by the oil company early on to play the communist role.

The tragedy was that not even for moment Eisenhower thought that what he was about to do would restructure entire movement that may have long run implications for the region. The Model government that Mossadegh had established, the rule of law, justice and respect for established tradition was to be supplanted by military where the basic of human rights and law and order were to be thrown out of the window and replaced by people that had no respect for any of those precious phenomena that had been tested and applied in Iran such as free election, and separation of powers, executive, judiciary and legislative that had provided the core of Mossadegh’s government. A great oppor-tunity, in that

part of the world was thrown to the fire and replaced by ruthless military.

The Coup d'eta of 1953 took sometimes to take place. The British had pronounced their opposition to nationalization of oil and used every trick and dirty instrument in their scheme to neutralize the movement which ultimately took place in 1953. The effect of such a dramatic unlawful act lasted for a long time and the old wounds never healed but kept watching for the moment to arrive and ultimately ended up in the Islamic revolution of 1979.

“Few foreign interventions in the Middle East have been as ignoble as the Coup of 1953 and few Middle Eastern leaders have less deserved our hostility than Mohammad Mossadegh. His understanding of independence and democracy was the result of long immersion in the ideas of the west and even more profound identification with his own society and people. Nationalization had been a force for decades but he was the first to try to build a modern Middle Eastern state on the basis of collective and individual liberty” de Bellaigue, p.273. The freedom of a person is meaningless if his/her government makes policy based on external influences. This was Mossadegh’s fundamental thinking all along. Primacy of law and national interest based on the rule of law preceded every-thing else. These phenomena were not compatible with what had been an established norm between outsider’s interest and the local authority’s willingness to challenge that *modus operandi*.

As a final word for the reader, and possibly policy makers in high places, it is not farfetched to say that had there been some deep thinking with good intentions, Iran history might have been quite different from what we see.

To-day, Mossadegh’s Iran may indeed have been a positive force for many in the region and instead of constant conflicts there could have been peaceful relationships with results that would have produced a healthy standard of living instead of poverty, a strong middle class instead of power and wealth highly concentrated which by itself generates gloom and misery. Some of these dreams materialized years later though short lived because the institutions that would have strengthened sustainability did not exist and primacy of law, a darling of Mossadegh, did not take roots to provide life for the changes that rank, and file

were pursuing. There is ample evidence that in august 1953 Iran was not going to communist, it only existed in the mind of those in power, in the West, who did not wish Iran to actualize its dream but remain a reliable client and dependent for host of products which had nothing to do with basic standard of living of its population.

Chile

On the morning of October 22, 1970, ..General Rene Schneider, the Head of Chile’s armed forces had been shot by a commando on the street of Santiago, Chile. He was not expected to survive ((NYTimes December 17, 2016). In that country Salvador Allende who run on a program of eco-nomic development and justice for the people was a great success. His election was not a welcome news in Washington and President Richard Nixon. Nixon was not satisfied with the results. And So they set up the Coup and General Pinochet took over in Chile and a massive reign of terror began to kidnap, execute, torture, and eliminate thousands of people. Years later Pinochet was detained in London Airport, England for massive violation of human rights. “While Washington encouraged democracy in Western Europe as an ideological counterweight to the Soviet Union it suppressed its spread in much of the world. It backed or installed

Dictators, encouraged violent repression of the left-wing elements, and sponsored anti-democratic armed groups “by Thomas Carothers NYT, Nov.17, 2021,p.A.11. Ret. General Pinochet was ultimately released due to old age and health, but the world saw firsthand a brutal bloody hand under whose rule thousands of people of Chile lost their life and no one heard about them.

This was done despite pronounced statements which advocated democracy as the fundamental goal of the American government in its outlook for the world.

As a matter of fact, the Coup d eta in Iran seemed to have provided a playbook for implementation in other nations. This was followed in Indonesia where Sukarnou, the leader of freedom movement, was overthrown by a military man named General Suharto who followed the recipe. Torture, execution and disappearance of thousands.

Guatemala:

The implementation of the playbook

did not stop in Indonesia. Jacobo Arbenz was overthrown to be replace by a military man Col. Carlos Castillo Armas to follow the footsteps of others before him to suppress the peoples’ wishes in order to protect American business profits The Guatemalan leader had forced the United

Fruit Company to rescind a portion of the land under its control so that the Guatemala farmers could cultivate and enjoy a limited living income. The elected Iranian and Guatemala leaders had challenged the power or large corporations in their respective countries. In a short period “Guatemala fell into a maelstrom of guerrilla war and state terror in which thousands of people died”. NYT Nov.30, 2003, p. wk,3 The reign of terror was initiated under the presumed thinking that communism was taking a foothold, a phenomena that was highly exaggerated a thoughtless act on part of the American leaders led to destroying of a nascent democratic movement that had created serious hopes in a nation deprived of democratic values for a long time.

Conclusion:

After all the damages done in different parts of the world, one would think that regime change and imposition of some western values, sometime totally alien to local cultures, and some other times simply destroying what had been built under the guise of fighting communism. The American so-ciety may have learned to remind the decision makers that they should look at global issues with a deep sense of curiosity and understanding of the past mistakes if there is any inclination to establish open and transparent communication for the betterment of mankind. We should never forget the Iraqi debacle created on the basis false intelligence to fit an aggressive plan. Actions of the United States have world-wide implications and must be carefully analyzed and discussed before events get out of hand and other factors become the *modus operandi*. Killing of innocent people, then blaming intelligence Is the cause of what General Eisenhower asked: why people do not like us”. “The valor of the Marine, the terror of Afghans, the disastrous denouncement of the war. How can anyone read this story and not be moved? The human anguish and the unimaginable waste of these international conflicts are powerful lessons that never seemed to be learned by those who cause them” Keith W. Hall, NYT,9-10-2021. p. A 20.

THE MYSTERIES OF MITHRAS

(Simon and Schuster)

Payam Nabarz

This book is an overview of Mithraism, the ancient Iranian mystery religion popular in the Roman Legions.

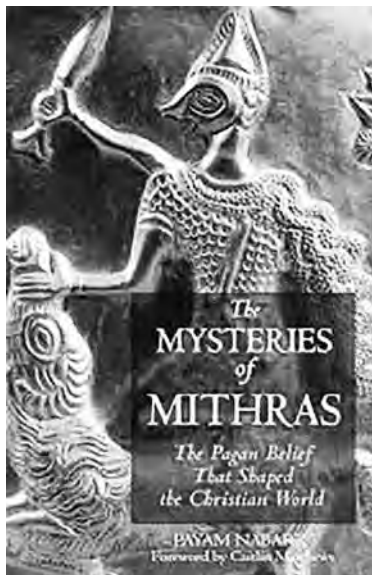
It provides a comprehensive history of Mithraism, including its influence on Christianity and Islam that includes rituals, meditations, and teaching tales for readers who wish to follow the Mithraic path.

“The Mysteries of Mithras presents a revival of the magical practices and initiatory system of Mithraism, the ancient Roman mystery religion that was immensely popular in the Roman Legions from the late second century B.C. until A.D. 400 and was taken to every corner of the Roman Empire.

As the last pagan state religion in Europe, it was the most important competitor to early Christianity and heavily influenced Christian doctrine and symbolism. The parallels between Christianity and ancient Mithraism are striking--for example, the god Mithra was born of a virgin in a cave on December 25.

Payam Nabarz reveals the history, origins, and spiritual and philosophical tenets of Mithraism and its connections to Christianity, Islam, and Freemasonry.

He also describes the modern neo-pagan practice of Mithraism in evidence today and for readers who wish to adopt the Mithraic path, he includes seven of its initiatory rituals and meditations, as well as orations and teaching tales, that open the door to the seven Mithraic grades of passage.”



A SIMPLE STORY,

With a Large Meaning



At 40, Franz Kafka (1883-1924), who never married and had no children, was walking through a park one day in Berlin when he met a girl who was crying because she had lost her favorite doll. She and Kafka searched for the doll unsuccessfully.

Kafka told her to meet him there the next day and they would come back to look for her.

The next day, when they had not yet found the doll, Kafka gave the girl a letter “written” by the doll saying “please don’t cry. I took a trip to see the world. I will write to you about my adventures.”

Thus began a story which continued until the end of Kafka’s life. During their meetings, Kafka read the letters of the doll carefully written with adventures and conversations that the girl found adorable. Finally, Kafka brought back the doll (he bought one) that had returned to Berlin.

“It doesn’t look like my doll at all,” said the girl. Kafka handed her another letter in which the doll wrote: “my travels have changed me.” The little girl hugged the new doll and brought the doll with her to her happy home. A year later Kafka died.

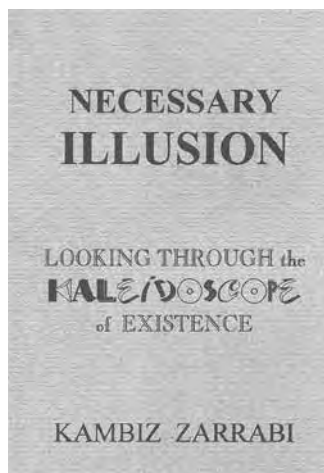
Many years later, the now-adult girl found a letter inside the doll. In the tiny letter signed by Kafka it was written: “Everything you love will probably be lost, but in the end, love will return in another way.” Embrace change. It’s inevitable for growth. Together we can shift pain into wonder and love, but it is up to us to consciously and intentionally create that connection.

Necessary Illusions

Paperback – September 29, 2021

Kambiz Zarrabi

We use the toolbox of the mind to uncover the secrets of existence, the meaning of life, and our purpose and place in the universe. What tool do we have to investigate the nature of the mind; surely not the mind itself. Can the mind be its own witness to testify for its legitimacy? What judge would consider such testimony convincing enough to vindicate the claimant? The dilemma is resolved when the judge who presides at this trial is the mind’s own reflection, projected to create NECESSARY ILLUSIONS, its deliverance from chaos and confusion. But such illusions work only if they are perceived as real, even beyond real; SACRED!



The Heartbeat of Iran: Real Voices of A Country and Its People

Paperback

Tara Kangarou

“Here are tender, lyrical, colorful stories of an Iran that Americans do not know and have no way of discovering directly. Tara Kangarou has created a work of people-to-people diplomacy, using her words to paint pictures of a very different country than the harsh, angry land depicted in the news. If only Iranians could read a similar account of the Heartbeat of the United States!” —Anne-Marie Slaughter, CEO, New America

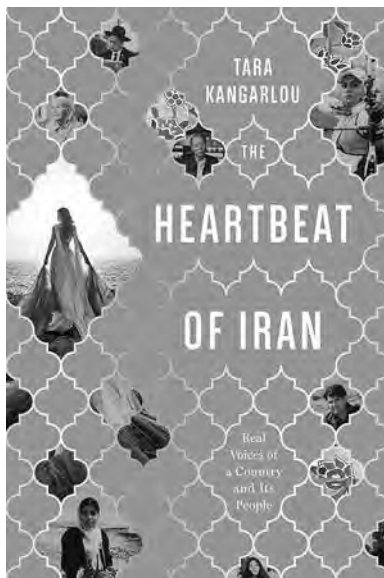
“With all of the talk about Iran, we hear far too little about the stories of the Iranian people themselves. *The Heartbeat of Iran* gives us the individual stories of Iranians – an illuminating and powerful portrait of a people who have been so often mischaracterized, and whose voices deserve to be heard.” —Ben Rhodes, author of *The World as It Is: A Memoir of the Obama White House*

“In no other time in history has there been such need for building bridges and closing the divides. Tara Kangarou’s *Heartbeat Of Iran* takes us to a country that has long been isolated and enables us to see Iran through its heart and soul — its people.”—Margot Wallström, former Foreign Minister Of Sweden

“Tara Kangarou’s *The Heartbeat Of Iran* is an impressive, unique, and much needed addition to the compendium of literature on Iran. Using the personal stories of ordinary individuals, she brings to life the Iranian people—a people much misunderstood (and even maligned) in the west—and allows them their own voice in showing us what makes them who they are.” —Hooman Majd, author of *The Ayatollah Begg to Differ*

In today’s interconnected global village, Iran remains a mystery to much of the rest of the world—especially to those living in the United States and the west. While the country is often synonymous with rogue behavior on the world stage, there is also another, rarely seen side to this nation of 80 million, including being home to the greatest number of Jews in the Middle East outside of Israel, and having the largest transsexual population in the region, among other unexpected surprises.

The Heartbeat of Iran takes us on a journey into everyday life in Iran, where we meet the diverse people who make up the country’s delicate socio-cultural, political, and religious mosaic. Through textured portraits of regular Iranians—from a blind Sunni environmental activist to the gay son of a general, from Iran’s first female race car driver to a young rabbi who is training the future generation of Jewish rabbis in Israel’s enemy state—*The Heartbeat of Iran* reveals a people whose dreams and fears mirror that of millions of others worldwide, and who yearn to join an international community that often views them through the blur of a hostile political fog.



Who Is Susan Pourfar?

A DAUGHTER, WIFE,
MOTHER, FRIEND,
CELEBRATED AMERICAN
ACTRESS... AND MORE



Susan Royce Pourfar was born in Goshen, New York to Mohamad Pourfar and Jane Benson Pourfar. Her father Mohamad is from Tehran, Iran and her mother is from Brooklyn, NY. After graduating magna cum laude from Brown University, Susan began her career in NYC, gathering substantial stage credits. In 2012, Susan was awarded the Obie Award, the Clarence Derwent Award from Actors Equity and a Theater World Award for her portrayal of Sylvia in the Off-Broadway production of “Tribes,” by British playwright Nina Raine, directed by David Cromer. Susan is married to social activist, educator and writer Brian Jones. Susan and Brian are frequent collaborators in staged readings of Voices of a Peoples History of the United States.

Her credentials as stated are extensive encompass theater, television and film. Most recently she played the role of Miriam in *A Journal for Jordan*.



Poems by
Caspar McNaulty
 3rd grade, 9 years old

SPIDERS



*You the real Black widow, the hero
 of the bugs, you eat many gross
 things like mosquitos and slugs.
 Without you we would be bitten by
 mosquitos in the air,
 without you there would be mosqui-
 tos everywhere!
 Some have cool designs,
 but as deadly as pretty and
 sometimes even more, you are very
 help but deadly to the core*

BEES



*Your movements so merry, your body
 so hairy, as you flap your wings,
 you do your buzzing sound and sing!
 Hundreds of you sit in your hive,
 the whole bee family seems to thrive!
 Your flying makes me cheer up,
 as you collect nectar from your
 buttercup.
 Your color makes my eyes feel hazy,
 as you land on a daisy.
 You are such a pretty site,
 you make the sky irrupt from light!*

HUMANS

*We have done stupid acts, but that
 does not stop us in our tracks,
 although we keep going,
 our mistakes keep showing.*

*The smartest and the dumbest,
 the worse and the best,
 it's good to care about our problems,
 but some people couldn't care less.
 This is one of the reasons we are dumb,
 when it comes to nature
 our bodies
 just turn numb.*

FLOWER



*Your petals so hazy, rose, tulip, daisy
 as you swing in the spring wind,
 you seem to cheer us up,
 sunflower, carnation, buttercup*

*The prettiest plant of all,
 you send out your call,
 to all the bees in the world,
 to come get nectar
 from my inside, I made it just for!
 But you have to do something
 for me too!*

THE SUN



*The source for all living things,
 though you keep staying,
 without you we would freeze,
 freeze in the winter breeze.*

*Without you
 we would already be dead,
 all of the animals would go extinct,
 it would be a matter of days,
 before we would freeze and
 not be able to say a phrase!*

ANTS



*You the food stealer,
 because of you we pack sealers.
 The strongest for its size,
 it should win a prize!*

*Thousands and thousands
 in their nest,
 all of them seem to have
 so much enthusiasm and zest.
 To our surprise,
 they have six pack abs,
 they take your food
 and drag it
 into their underground labs.*

GOLDFISH



*As we keep as a pet,
 your life goes to an end,
 your life seems to descend,
 as you flash in the water,
 you seem not to grow,
 swimming around helplessly
 in your not big enough bowl.
 So lonely you are without a friend
 and if you do have a friend,
 your friend's life will end.*

TREES



*As your branches sway,
 how pretty you look in May,
 you the one,
 without you we are undone.
 The biggest of plants,
 though the calmest of them all,
 when you are in the morning sun,
 you seem never to fall.
 Most animals rely on you,
 you give us our air
 we give you yours,
 your bark has the roughest pours.*

An Interesting Gourmet Find

While researching an article for Norooz 2022, I came across an article by Coral Sisk, found in a publication called *The Florentine*. The title of the article is, *Celebrating Spring with Iranian Food in Florence and Tuscany*. I found the article along with the entire publication to be wonderful and learned so much about Norooz outside of Iran and the United States. Italy is home to approximately 12,000 Iranians, according to the article and the country's office of statistics, ISTAT. Iranians bring to their new countries a diverse community and the same holds true for Italy. They are represented in the arts, medicine, engineers, entrepreneurs and of course education.



There are presently 700 Iranians registered in Florence and over one thousand in Tuscany along with a large showing in Rome. What is most interesting about this article is her in depth research on where to find Persian ingredients to cook Persian food and where to eat it. Perhaps the next time you visit Italy these businesses and restaurants are worth a look up. Advise a market that includes all the essential herbs, fruits, berries, syrups, rice, tea etc. But if you are more into the eating rather than the cooking of delicious Persian food try Ristorente Tehran. There is also La Congrega wedged between Migone and Robiglio near the Duoma on via dei Tosinghi. It is noted for its fine Persian dishes alongside traditional Tuscan fare delivered by an Italian couple Mahyar Sanago Moghadam and Stefania Giani. There are other Persian experiences that allow you to join and dine with the chef right in their own home. We continue to hope that the above restaurants and markets were able to survive the "Covid" period.

Persian  Heritage

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ESFAND (*sepanđ, sepanj, espanj* <Proto-Ir. *svanta; Ar. *hāarmal*, Lat. *Peganum harmala*; wild rue), a common weed found in Persia, Central Asia, and the adjacent areas (for the the plant's name in other Iranian languages see Flattery and Schwartz, p. 40).

Esfand was well known among the ancient Indo-Iranians. Dioscorides provides in the 1st century C.E. the earliest description of the plant, calling it *péganon agrion*. Later Greek authors refer to it as *persaia botane* (Flattery and Schwartz, pp. 35-42, 144-48).

Two varieties of the plant are mentioned in the early medical texts, the white rue and the more potent black rue. The plant is considered to be hot by nature, and can be used as a diuretic, a vomitive, and an agent to facilitate menstruation in cases of amenorrhea (Ebn Rabban, pp. 415, 469; Jamālī Yazdī, p. 173). Although the most important use of *esfand* in Persia involves magical practices, its various parts were used in cures for a variety of ailments (e.g., throat diseases; Ebn Rabban, p. 466; cf. Lazard, *Premiers poètes* II, p. 190). It was considered efficacious to cold swellings, and some classical physicians such as Kendī also used it in treating epilepsy and insanity (Jamālī Yazdī, p. 75; Samarqandī, p. 206).

Aphrodisiacal properties have been suggested for the plant. Crushed seeds of *esfand* may be used in the preparation of a fertility drug for women, while smoke from its burning roots can help determine whether or not the woman is barren (Hāseb Tabarī, p. 108; for other medical benefits of the plant see Andalosī, pp. 311-16).

Folk medicine practices reflect a classical belief in the medical properties of *esfand*, while attributing a number of magico-medical properties to it. It is considered to be a divinely favored plant which can cure seventy-two varieties of ailments the least severe of which is leprosy (Majlesī, pp. 220-21; Qomī, I, p. 245). Furthermore, the smoke from its burning seeds is believed to ward off harm from persons or places that are exposed to its smoke. Thus *esfand* is burned at potentially harmful moments such as during circumcision ceremonies or for the protection of the woman in childbed (Šakūrzāda, pp. 152, 160, 610-11). The burning of the seeds is accompanied by the recitation of a magical formula. Purely curative uses of *esfand* are occasionally encountered in folk medicine. For example, the smoke from burning a combination of

ESFAND

(Encyclopedia Iranica)

Below is an article taken from The Encyclopedia Iranica. The tradition of burning *Peganum Harmala* seeds dates well back in history. Its uses and benefits are worth knowing, enjoy the read!



rue seeds, a bit of Bulgarian leather, and a piece of crab shell is used as a remedy for nosebleed. Another non-magical practice involves applying a concoction of roasted *esfand* seeds and other materials to the head and hair of a new mother to improve both her health and the condition of her hair (Šakūrzāda, pp. 147, 245).

The practice of burning *esfand* seeds to avert the evil eye is widely attested in early classical Persian literature (e.g., Lazard, *Premiers poètes* II, p. 12; Šāh-nāma, ed. Khaleghi, I, p.337; Farrokī, p. 106). This practice may have been influenced by the association of *esfand* with *hao-ma* (q.v.), the sacred beverage of Zoroastrian lore (for argument in favor of such identification see Flattery and Schwartz).

The continuity of Persian tradition has brought the ancient sacred plant into Islamic sources. A Shi'ite tradition states that there is an angel in each of the plant's leaves and seeds. Its root drives away sorrow and magic, and the devil stays a distance of seventy houses away from homes in which it is kept (Šakūrzāda, pp. 611, 629). Shi'ite sources tell of the benefits of ingesting *esfand* or its juice. For instance, drinking a bit of *esfand* juice every day for forty mornings brings about wisdom in addition to fortifying the imbiber against seventy varieties of diseases (Qomī, I, p. 245). The apotropaic value of *esfand* is

reflected in its burning against evil presence. In a curious ceremony to counteract effects of evil upon a child, which is manifested in the condition called *bača-ye 'aważī* (changeling), burning of *esfand* is required (Šakūrzāda, p. 235). In some villages of Khorasan, a new mother will be given a concoction to clear her bowels on the third day after she has given birth. Then, forty pebbles, forty balls of sheep dung, forty raw chickpeas, and forty *esfand* seeds are placed in a large bowl of water (*jām-e čehel kelīd*), dipped in the bowl forty times, and the water is ritually poured over a cloth, held above the woman's head. This ritual purges the woman from the effects of evil spirits and harmful entities (Šakūrzāda, p. 141). During the ceremony presenting a new child, *esfand* seeds are burned to avert the evil eye during the ceremony of presentation. Each of those present give a piece of thread from their clothing to be burned with the *esfand* seeds and other items, while a certain formula is recited (Hedāyat, pp. 43-44; for examples of the formula see also Horn, translator's note, p. 107; Flattery and Schwartz, pp. 49-50).

Evidently *esfand* seeds were also used to produce an invisible ink. The process involved pounding the seeds before soaking them in water for two days. The juice thereafter functioned as an invisible ink when written on paper. In order to read it, the paper is brought close to a flame and the heat make the writing visible (Hāseb Tabarī, p. 55).

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The Story of Hāfez's Eternal Resting Place

Part 3/the last part

Nasser Kanani (Berlin)

In 1875 the British politician Sir Arthur Arnold (1833-1902) traveled through Persia and rendered his observations on Hāfez's tomb into following words:

"We were at liberty to look at the grave of Hafiz, which is placed about the middle of the square inclosure. The ground is thickly beset with tombs, mostly flat, like that of Hafiz, but none so exquisitely carved, nor, like his, of marble. Hafiz's tomb is covered with a single block of the beautiful marble of Yezd, of which about eighteen inches appear above the ground. The upper surface of this fine slab is nine feet long by two feet nine inches in width. In the centre there is an ode, written by Hafiz himself. Raised in low-relief, this ode, in the beautiful letters of the Persian alphabet, occupies the centre only of the slab. Round the edges, in a band about four inches deep, appears another ode. The tomb is probably not yet two hundred years old."¹

Persian alphabet, occupies the centre only of the slab. Round the edges, in a band about four inches deep, appears another ode. The tomb is probably not yet two hundred years old.²

FARHĀD MIRZĀ

1878, an iron railing was built around the tomb of Hāfez by another governor of Fārs by the name of Farhād Mirzā³. He was an ardent admirer of Hāfez and his poetry.

Ten years later, in 1887, the famous British Iranologist Edward G. Browne (1862-1926), who spent the year 1887/8 in Persia, paid a visit to the shrine of Hāfez and noted:

"The Hafiziyye (Tomb of Hafiz), far more popular and better cared for, rendered conspicuous by its tall dark cypresses and white walls. The tomb of Hafiz occupies the centre of an enclosed garden beautifully planted with cypresses and orange-trees. It is marked by a simple oblong block of stone, engraved with in-

scriptions consisting for the most part of quotations from the poet's works. At the top is the following sentence in Arabic: "*He (i.e. God) is the enduring, and all else passeth away.*"

Beneath this is the ode beginning—
Where is the good tidings of union with Thee?

*For I will rise up with my whole heart;
I am a bird of Paradise, and I will soar upwards from the snare of the world.*

Round the edge of the stone is inscribed the ode beginning—

O heart, be the slave of the King of the World, and be a king!

Abide continually under the protection of God's favour!

Written diagonally across the two triangular spaces formed by the upper corners of the tombstone is the couplet—
When thou passest by the head of our tomb, invoke a blessing,

For it will be the place of pilgrimage of (all) the libertines of the world.

The corresponding spaces at the lower end of the tablet bear the well-known lines composed to commemorate the date of the poet's death:—

*That Lamp of the mystics, Master Hafiz,
[Who was a candle of light from the Divine Effulgence,*

Since he made his abode in the Earth of Musalla]

Seek his date from "the Earth of Musalla."

The unequalled popularity still enjoyed by Hafiz is attested by the multitude of graves which surround his tomb. What Persian, indeed, would not desire that his ashes should mingle with those of the illustrious bard from whom contemporary fanaticism would fain have withheld the very rites of sepulture?⁴

In 1889 the British statesman and Viceroy of India George N. Curzon (1859-1925) visited Persia and spent little more than three months there. While staying in Shiraz he photographed the tomb of Hāfez.

On his return to London Curzon wrote his *magnum opus* "*Persia and the Persian Question*." The following is an excerpt of his detailed account on his visit to Hāfeziyeh:

"Nearer the city, and on the outskirts of its northern suburbs, the tomb of Hafiz stands in a cemetery crowded with Moslem graves. The enclosure, known as the Hafezieh, consists of an upper and a lower path, i.e. the graveyard and a garden, separated by a summer-house. The cemetery is of comparatively modern growth; for ancient authors described the poet's tomb as surrounded by trees, the last survivor of which, a cypress, said to have been planted by himself at the head of his grave, was cut down about 1811 A.D. The copy of the poet's works that was once chained to his tomb was carried off by Ashraf the Afghan. But the original marble slab on which was said to have been sculpted a cypress, was taken down by Kerim Khan, who built it into the tank in the Jehan Nemah [جهان نما: Displayer of the World], and replaced it by the present sarcophagus. This is made of yellow Yezd marble, and has two odes from the Diwan, or collection of the poet's works, beautifully chiseled in relief in a number of elegant panels upon lid. Of that which is sculpted on the centre panels I have made a translation in elegiacs, a metre that seems to me to do least offence to the structure and spirit of the original:—

Tell the glad tidings abroad that my soul may arise in communion,

I, with celestial wings, rise from the snares of the world.

Didst thou but call me to come and wait a slave on thy bidding,

Yet should I rise in esteem over the lords of the world

Lord, may the cloud of Thy mercy descend in raindrops upon me,

Now ere my body arise, scattered as dust on the wind

Sit on my tomb, ye friends, with mirth of

*minstrel and flagon,
So shall I rise from the grave dancing,
aglow with desire.
Though I be old, one night do thou lie in
my loving embraces,
Then from thy side in the morn fresh in my
youth shall I rise.
Image of deeds that are lovely, on high
shine forth, that as Hafiz
I from the grave may arise, soar above life
and the world.*

A frail iron railing now surrounds the tomb, which is visited by bands of admiring pilgrims, on devotional or festive aim intent; but I confess I think that in any other country in the world a greater distinction would encompass the last resting-place of a national hero and the object of adoration to millions. It is interesting to contrast the grave of the Persian poet with that of his European contemporary, Dante, whose sepulchre is not less an object of pilgrimage at Ravenna.²⁵

In 1891 Henry Wilberforce Clarke (1840-1905), a British Captain with the Bengal Engineers, who translated the complete *Divān* of Hāfez for the first time into English, described the burial site of the poet as follows:

“He [Hafez] is buried at a spot two miles north-east of Shiraz in the centre of a small cemetery, whereof the rest is laid out as a flower-garden with an avenue of cypress trees of gear size and age. The tomb of Hafiz is placed at the foot of one of the cypress trees which he himself planted. The cemetery is separated from the garden by an ornamental wall with a central portico. This site is called the Hafiziya.”²⁶

In 1892 Gertrude Bell (1868-1926), the well-known British political officer, archaeologist and translator, traveled to Persia and while staying in Shiraz she paid a visit to the burying place of Hāfez. She wrote:

“The garden contains the tombs of many devout Persians who have desired to rest in the sacred earth which holds the bones of the poet [Hāfez], and his prophecy that his grave should become a place of pilgrimage for all the drunkards of the world has been to a great extent fulfilled.⁷ A very ancient cypress, said to be of Hafiz’s own planting, stood for many hundreds of years at the head of his grave, and “cast its shadow o’er the dust of his desire.”²⁸

In 1894 and in 1898 Ella Sykes (1863-1939), a British traveler and writer, paid two visits to Persia and spent nearly three years. After her visit to Shiraz she

noted the following about the shrine of Hāfez:

“The handsome tomb of Hafiz at Shiraz, planted round with tall cypresses, is constantly visited by all classes, the pleasure-seekers coming to pay homage to a master who understood the *joie de vivre* [joy of living], and who loved art for art’s sake; while the religious look upon the poet as a mystic, whose most apparently material utterances have an esoteric meaning for the elect. Hafiz has thus the somewhat remarkable fate of being adored by both saints and sinners after his death, and his tomb is surrounded by the graves of countless admirers.”²⁹

KHOSROW SHAH JAHĀN

In 1899, a Zoroastrian philanthropist by the name of Khosrow¹⁰, who was a Parsi¹¹ from India, succeeded in obtaining permission from the *ulema*¹² of Shiraz to build a new shrine of iron and wood around the grave of Hāfez.

His decision to do so was based on an omen taken from the *Divān*. However, before the construction work was completed, an influential religious authority of Shiraz known as Ali-Akbar Fāl Asiri¹³ encouraged his followers to destroy the building. He argued that a *Gabr*¹⁴ should not be allowed to raise a building over the grave of a Muslim. When the people of Shiraz protested the destruction and the government led by Nezām-ol-Molk¹⁵ ordered the rebuilding of the monument, Fāl Asiri again threatened to destroy the building.

MALEK MANSUR MIRZĀ

The burial site of Hāfez remained in ruins until 1901 when Prince Malek Mansur Mirzā¹⁶ secured the necessary funding and commissioned his painter Ali-Akbar Mozayyen-ol-Dowleh¹⁷ to make a decorative iron Latticework around the tomb. The Latticework with little metal flags decorating its top was inscribed with verses and the names of its patrons.



Thus, Hāfez’s memorial was turned into a mausoleum.

During the Qājār dynasty (1779-1925) numerous Europeans from all walks of life traveled to Persia, each one following his own business. Some of them took a trip to Shiraz to pay a visit to the tomb of Hāfez, the most famous son of that city.

In 1903 Abraham Valentine Williams Jackson (1862-1937), an American specialist on Indo-European languages, made a journey to Persia and while visiting the shrine of Hāfez he took a photograph from his mausoleum and noted:

“The tomb of Hafiz stands in the middle of the garden and is surrounded by a number of graves, since burial near the poet’s dust is now a special privilege. A handsome oblong block of marble covers the grave and takes the place of the original slab, which Karim Khan is said to have placed in the Jahan Namah [جهان‌نامه] Garden when he replaced the stone by the present sarcophagus.

The block is beautifully carved with verses from the poet’s writings and at the top is an Arabic inscription, the tenor of which is the transitory character of human things and the eternal nature of God; while at the bottom is added the date of the poet’s death, which is given as the year 1389 (A.H. 791).

The present governor of Shiraz has taken pains to have the sepulchre protected by a large iron grating which is more imposing than the old metal cage that formerly enclosed it, and the scrollwork and design show some artistic taste. The stanchions and corner-posts, however, are iron telegraph poles, received from the Indo-European Telegraph Company, and the Shirazis seemed to be almost as proud of these and of the little metal flags that decorate the top, as of the inscribed slab over the poet’s dust.”¹⁸

In 1925, Alphonse Marie Tracey Woodward (1876-1938), a British philatelist, traveled to Persia and in 1928 published an article titled “Notes on a Journey across Persia” reporting on his experiences during his journey.

The photograph shows the badly damaged overall status of the shrine only twenty year after Williams Jackson had visited the shrine in almost acceptable condition.

ANDRÉ GODARD

In 1931, the orange grove (*Nārenjestān*) was restored and a large stone portal was erected in the south wall

of the Hāfeziyeh by the then governor-general of Isfahan and Fārs Faraj-Allāh Bahrāmī¹⁹. Further plans for renovation were postponed until 1935. In this year, the French architect and archeologist André Godard (1881-1965) was commissioned by the Minister of Education Ali-Asqar Hekmat (1893-1980) to draw up an appropriate design for a completely new mausoleum for Hāfez. The Execution of the project was delegated to Ali Riāzi (1893-1957), the head of the Department of Education of Fārs, and the Iranian scholar and archeologist Ali Sāmi (1910-1989) was appointed as the project supervisor.

André Godard, who had been granted the technical directorship of the Iranian Antiquities Department in 1928²⁰, **designed** – probably in cooperation with another French architect and archeologist by the name of Maxime Siroux (1907-1975) – an **octagonal pavilion** for Hāfez's mausoleum, which was then erected in an elaborately verdant garden.

Hafez's tomb was elevated one metre above the ground level and surrounded by five circular steps. Eight columns, each ten metres tall, support a copper dome shaped like a dervish's hat.²¹ The interior of the copper dome sheltering the tombstone is covered in polychrome glazed tile work; eight distiches (*beyt*) of the *ghazal* beginning

حجاب چهره جان می شود غبار تنم
خوشا دمی که از آن چهره پرده برفکنم

The dust of my body is becoming the veil in front of the face of the soul.

O happy the moment when from off that face I cast the veil aside!²² „
are inscribed in *Thuluth* (ثلث) script, one on each eight façades.

The modern tomb of Hāfez has become the most popular pilgrimage site in Shiraz, and ever since it was erected it has been the pantheon of literates, scholars, poets and artists from all over the world. During the last decades many prominent foreign poets and literary figures as well as a large number of famous personalities from all walks of life have attended the modern mausoleum.

The famous verse, in which Hāfez had envisaged that his tomb would once become a place of pilgrimage for *rendan*²³ from all over the world turned out to be a self-fulfilling prophecy. When the English novelist and historian Robert Payne (1911-1983) said he thought the best thing about Persia was Persepolis, the British

poet Basil Bunting (1900-1985) replied that he was wrong and reminded him of the inscription on the tomb of Hāfez:

*When thou passest by the head of this tomb, invoke a blessing,
For this is a place of pilgrimage for all the libertines of the world.*²⁴

While visiting Hāfez's shrine in April 1932 the Bengali polymath Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), the winner of the Nobel Prize for literature in 1913, touched and intrigued by Hāfez's poetry and his mystic lyrics made the following remark in his travelogue: "Sitting beside the tomb of Hafiz, a bright glint from Hafiz eyes passed through my mind; like the spring sunlight shining now. I feel very clear. Although centuries have passed and many have come and gone, sitting beside Hafiz's tomb means conducting accompany him."²⁵

NOTES:

1. Arthur Arnold: "Through Persia by Caravan," Harper & Brothers, Publishers, New York, 1877, pp. 349-351.
2. فرهاد میرزا معتمدالدوله (۱۱۹۷-۱۲۶۷ خورشیدی) فرزند عباس میرزا نایب السلطنه و از رجال مشهور دوران ناصرالدین شاه بود.
3. بر سر تربت ما چون گذری همت خواه / که زیارتگه رندان جهان خواهد بود
4. Edward G. Browne: "A year amongst the Persians: Impressions as to the Life, Character, & Thought of the People of Persia," Adam & Charlie Black Ltd, London, 1893, p. 278 and pp. 280-281.
5. Mahmoud Ashraf, an Afghan army commander, briefly succeeded to the throne of Persia (1725-1729), but was completely defeated by Nāder Shah. He was flying from Shiraz toward his own country when he was killed by a party of tribesmen in 1730.
6. George N. Curzon: "Persia and the Persian Question," *op. cit.*, pp. 108-109.
7. Henry Wilberforce Clarke: "The Dīvān written in the fourteenth century by Khwāja Shamsu-d-Dīn Muhammad-i-Hāfiz-i-Shūrāzī otherwise known as Lisānu-l-Ghaib and Tarjumānu-l-Asrār," 1891, Vol. I, p. xxxiii.
8. The prophecy Gertrude Bell has referred to in this passage is the following verse:
بر سر تربت ما چون گذری همت خواه / که زیارتگه رندان جهان خواهد بود
9. Gertrude Bell: "Poems from the Divan of Hafiz," William Heinemann, London, 1897, p. 29.
10. Ella C Sykes: "Persia and its People," London, 1910, p. 313.
11. چهار برادر زرتشتی از پارسیان هند به نام های پرویز، خسرو، گودرز و رستم که همگی به شاه جهان شهرت داشتند، به علت وابستگی شدیدی که به سرزمین دیرین خود ایران احساس می کردند می کوشیدند تا خدمات با ارزش و گسترده ای برای مردم انجام دهند. خسرو شاه جهان در صدد بود که "بقعه" زیبایی از چوب و آهن برای حافظ بنا نماید.

11. Parsis or Parsees (lit. 'Persian' in the Persian language) are an ethno-religious group of the Indian subcontinent whose religion is Zoroastrianism. Their ancestors migrated to the region from modern-day Iran following the Muslim conquest of Persia in the 7th century CE. (From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)

12. In Islam, the *ulama* also spelled *ulema* (literally "the learned ones") are the guardians, transmitters, and interpreters of religious knowledge in Islam, including Islamic doctrine and law. (From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)

13. سید علی اکبر فال اسیری (۱۲۱۹-۱۲۸۱ خورشیدی) یکی از روحانیون بسیار با نفوذ شیراز بود که خود را از شیفتگان و مریدان حافظ نمایش می داد. او حتی هنگامی که حکومت خود می خواست مقبره حافظ را بازسازی کند، روی منبر رفته و فریاد زد، "اگر شاه هم بخواهد بسازد باز من خراب می کنم." جسد فال اسیری پس از مرگ در جوار حافظ به خاک سپرده شد.

14. Gabr is a Persian term to denote a Zoroastrian; it has a pejorative meaning.

15. عبدالوهاب خان نظام الملک (۱۲۹۶-۱۳۳۰ خورشیدی) از رجال و درباریان دوره قاجار و به مدت یک سال حاکم فارس بود. به دستور او مقداری تخته و آهن برای ساختن مقبره حافظ سفارش داده شد اما سید علی اکبر فال اسیری با گروهی از طرفداران خود آن ابزار با خود به غارت بردند و ایادی نظام الملک نیز به روی خود نیاورده و قضیه را به فراموشی سپردند.

16. میرزا شعاع السلطنه (۱۲۲۰-۱۲۶۸) دومین پسر مظفرالدین شاه بود. او از همسران متعدد خود صاحب یازده فرزند شد که همگی آنها در دوره رضاشاه نام خانوادگی "ملک منصور" را برای خود برگزیدند.

17. میرزا علی اکبر خان نظنزی، ملقب به مزین الدوله (۱۲۷۳-۱۳۱۳ خورشیدی) مشهور به نقاش باشی از مترجمین و موسیقیدانان دوران قاجار و از نخستین بنیانگذاران تئاتر ایران بود.

18. A. V. William Jackson: "Persia Past and Present. A book of travel and research with more than two hundred illustrations and a map." Mac-Millan & Co., Ltd. London, 1906, p. 332-333.

19. میرزا فرج الله خان دبیر اعظم (۱۲۶۱-۱۳۳۰ خورشیدی) که نام خانوادگی بهرامی را در دوران رضاشاه برای خود انتخاب نمود از روزنامه نگاران و نیز دولتمردان آن زمان و مدتی نیز رئیس دفتر رضاشاه بود.

20. Godard held this position until 1953. He served again as director of Iranian Archeological Service from 1956 to 1960, in which year he returned to Paris.

21. The dome is well lit at night, providing an attractive focal point.

22. "The Collected Lyrics of Hāfiz of Shirāz. Translated by Peter Avery", Archetyp, Cambridge, UK, 2007, p. 413.

23. The term *rend* in the sense of Hāfez refers to one who abandons everything for love. For this expression, which is one of Hāfez's central concepts, various English translations have been proposed such as *brigand*, *debauchee*, *drunkard*, *libertine*, *lout*, *pious rogue*, *rake*, *ruffian* and *vagrant*. Yahya Kemal Beyatli (1884-1958), the last classical poet of Turkey, has used the term in his poem *Rindlerin ölümlü*.

24. Richard Burton: "A Strong Song Tows Us – The Life of Basil Bunting," Infinites Ideas Limited, Oxford, UK, 2013, p. 314.

25. <http://www.ibna.ir/vdchiknz-23vmd.01t2.txt>

The Achaemenid Empire of the Medes and the Persians (the *Khshassa* [Empire]) was essentially the first true world empire composed of a diversity of peoples, languages and cultures. A key figure from that empire echoing across the millennia is Xerxes I (Old Persian: *Xšayāršā*; r. 486-465 BCE) who was enthroned following the death of his father Darius the Great (*Dārayava[h]uš*; r. 522- 486 BCE) in November 486 BCE. In practice, Darius' first-born son was Artobazanes, whose mother was a daughter of Gobrytas, a member of one of the empire's leading families. Darius was evidently cognizant that the elevation of Artobazanes as heir would have resulted in the promotion of Gobrytas' lineage at the expense of the Achaemenid house. Xerxes' mother was Atoosa, the daughter of Cyrus the Great, making him a close relative of the founder of the Khshassa. In this regard, Xerxes' blood ties to Cyrus made him a favoured choice for Darius as heir. Indeed, Darius' inscription at Behistun (also in modern Persian: Bisutun or Bisitun; Old Persian: Bagastana [god's locale/land]) made clear his message of being united with the lineage of Cyrus. It is also notable that the Behistun inscription clarifies Darius' cognizance that his succession be conferred upon one of his own sons as to ensure the continuity of the Achaemenid dynasty. Interestingly Xerxes' inscription at Persepolis (Old Persian: Pārsa) attests:

“Saith Xerxes the king: Other sons of Darius there were, (but) thus onto Ahuramazda was the desire, Darius my father made me the greatest after himself. When my father Darius went away from the throne, I became king on his throne by the grace of Ahuramazda. After I became king, I finished what had been done by my father, and I added



WHO WAS THE REAL XERXES IN HIS EARLIER YEARS?

Kaveh Farrokh (Ph.D.) (Langara College)

other works.” (XPf, Harem inscription)

Another factor that may have regally privileged Xerxes in Darius' eyes was the fact that Xerxes had been born after Darius had secured the throne. Interestingly, Herodotus attributes Xerxes' ascension as having been due to the power of Atoosa's influence concomitant with her determined resistance against other regal claimants to the Achaemenid throne. Modern historiography questions this view; note that the XPf makes no mention of Atoosa for example. While Atoosa certainly had a privileged status at the Achaemenid court (i.e., Athenaeus, XIII, 556b), her standing as the mother of the crown prince did not bestow

her with any privileged entitlements perse.

Who was Xerxes as a personage of history? Despite the plethora of academic and popular literature (and entertainment media) descriptions of the king, much of the historiography pertaining to Xerxes has been biased as a result of Hellenistic propaganda derived as a consequence of the Greco-Persian wars. The most significant and detailed descriptions that have formed the basis for the characterization of Xerxes have been from the (oft uncritical analysis) of Herodotus' Histories (VI-IX) and Classical sources in general. This has essentially led to the judgement of Xerxes as having been dominated by

passion rather than reason and being characterized by self-righteousness, spending much time with women of maleficent influence, as well as being a sanctimonious man beset with lethargy, cruelty, superstition, childish dispositions, neurasthenia and religious fanaticism. In summary, Xerxes is summed up as a ruler with a feckless personality who stood in the shadow of his great father Darius. These conclusions however are grossly derivative from the Hellenic perspective. As averred to by modern historical experts, the Greek sources distinctly fail to provide concrete factual information on the actual character of Xerxes. The Hellenic and Classical perspectives in general, have been the base of much historiography concerning the ancient Achaemenids (and ancient Iran in general).

Modern scholarship has experienced a significant paradigm shift towards a more comprehensive study by moving away from a singular reliance upon the Classical views (and derivative secondary historiography) of Xerxes, the Achaemenids and ancient Iran. Modern scholarship for the study of the Achaemenids consults sources such as the following: (1) cuneiform sources in Old Persian but also in Elamite, Akkadian and Babylonian – of special note are the Persepolis Treasury Archives and the Persepolis Fortification Archives (30,000 cuneiform tablets) (2) Egyptian popular/colloquial as well as hieroglyphic texts (also letters from Jews based in Elephantine, etc.) (3) Babylonian (as well as astronomical) and Aramaic sources (4) the Hebrew Bible and Jewish sources (5) archaeological sources such as seal impressions and seals, coins, metal works, and various artifacts (6) archaeological sites such as Bisitun and their inscriptions as well as architectural

sites such as Persepolis and of course (7) Classical or Greco-Roman sources. It is in the meticulous and balanced examination of all of these sources that modern historians have, in past decades, arrived at a much more nuanced reconstruction of the person of Xerxes (and the Achaemenids in general). It is thus notable that non-Hellenic sources (e.g., Aramaic, Akkadian, Elamite, Egyptian) dated to the Achaemenid period (555-330 BCE) often contradict the writings of Greco-Roman writers such as Ctesias, Arrian, Herodotus, etc. Nevertheless, Greco-Roman sources continue to provide a valuable resource with respect to the military history of the Achaemenids and these also can, while qualified with bias, also provide information on the Achaemenids in general.

The reconstruction of the person of Xerxes, notably his upbringing and education, remains a formidable academic task due to the inadequate and fragmentary nature of the sources pertaining to his reign. With respect to education, we can again refer to the Hellenic perspective of Plato who described Xerxes as having had "...a womanish education" (Laws, 695ce), indicative of the negative views of women as held by Greek writers (e.g. Plato, Republic, Book V, note dialogue of Socrates, 455c, 456a, 563b) who often derided the Persians as "*effeminate*" (e.g. Athenaeus, XII, 528e-f). In reference to the education of Persian nobles Herodotus states that they were taught "riding and archery and truth-telling" (Histories, I, 136) with Xenophon (who also cites of javelin throwing and hunting – Cyropaedia, I, 2.3-16) stating that "... [Persian] boys go to school and spend their time in learning justice..." (Cyropaedia, I, 6). Strabo also notes of Persian education involving the recitation of the accomplishments of

past heroes (Geography, XV, III, 18). Cyrus the Younger (d. 401 BCE) is generally acknowledged for example for having excelled at archery, javelin throwing and the hunt as well as having engaged in gardening. These descriptions would suggest a traditional "Spartan" upbringing involving the cultivation of a warrior ethos concomitantly imbued with the sense of justice, veracity and the extolling of past heroes. Interestingly Plato (while not referring to Xerxes per se in the Alcibiades I) describes of teachers instructing their Persian pupils to exert their sense of self (or impulse) control (notably with respect to pleasures) and to cultivate judiciousness, sagacity, and courageousness. Notable is also the following description by Dīogénēs Laërtios:

"When King Xerxes was entertained by the father of Democritus, he left instructors there, from whom, while still a boy, he learned theology and astronomy." (9.34)

Extrapolating from these select sources, it would not be unlikely that Xerxes' upbringing and ensuing character would have been significantly influenced by this type of education reserved for the Persian nobility. Even with the limitations imposed by the available sources, it may be surmised that the singular portrayal of Xerxes as a ruler primarily animated by maladaptive characteristics, is open to question.

Due to his subsequent invasion of Greece, Xerxes' portrayal by the classical sources is that of a pompous and vain-glorious ruler, a view increasingly questioned by modern historians of ancient Iran. One of the emergent schools of thought for example, views Xerxes as a ruler bestowed with a sense of benevolence as well as having had an appreciation for artistry and architecture. It has been proposed that Xerxes may have wanted

to avoid a major war against the Greeks but was forced to relent to his generals (led by his cousin Mardonius) after they had accused him of timorousness. Nevertheless, it must be cautioned that a full-spectrum psychological analysis of Xerxes (or indeed of any of the Achaemenid rulers) is not possible. This is mainly due to the Hellenic sources (e.g., Herodotus) and the available inscriptions essentially providing a Classical interpretation of an Iranian monarch and (Achaemenid) imperial ideology respectively. Portrayals of Achaemenid monarchs at sites such as Persepolis and Nagsh-e Rostam certainly provide static "imperial" visual representations (attire, headgear, etc.) but these are void of any information with respect to the personality profile of the persons being depicted.

Xerxes' family history during his married life remains challenging to reconstruct given the available sources having so assertively set the narrative of this domain. In general, he is known to have married a noblewoman named Amestris as his primary queen. Amestris was the daughter of Otanes, one of Darius' chief supporters who had aided his seizure of the Achaemenid throne in 522 CE. Mention must be made of the Hebrew Bible's Book of Esther which narrates a Jewish girl named Esther who, entering as a concubine of the harem, subsequently succeeds in marrying Xerxes. The Book of Esther (which a number of scholars have concluded as being essentially fictional) then describes Esther as having used her influence to safeguard the Jews from the nefarious designs of the Achaemenid aristocrat, Haman.

While Xerxes is well known for his epic invasion of Greece, notably the land battles of Thermopylae (480 BCE) and Plataea (479 BCE), as well as the naval battle of

Salamis (480 BCE), he was obliged to combat anti-Achaemenid rebellions in Egypt and Babylon prior to his invasion. A powerful rebellion had been underway in Egypt since the end of Darius I's reign. The death of Phereclides (the local Achaemenid satrap) posed a serious military challenge against the authority of the empire. This explains in part Xerxes' obligation to arrive in person with the Achaemenid military into Egypt to crush the rebellion and restore Achaemenid authority. A major challenge in scholarship however pertains to the three general paradigms as to the chronology of the Egyptian rebellion during Xerxes' reign: (1) the Classical school generally proposes 487-485 BCE (or 487/486 to 485/484 BCE) (2) the Egyptology school commonly suggests the dates(s) of 486-485/484 BCE (3) with a more confined third school of historiography proposing 486/485-485/484 BCE as the chronology of these events. In general, it is agreed that the Egyptian revolt occurred after Darius' failure at the Battle of Marathon (490 BCE) and before Xerxes' invasion of Greece (480-479 BCE). After Darius' defeat in Greece, mobilization efforts were made to raise troops for a new army. In the fourth year of these troop-raising efforts (as per Herodotus, Histories, 7.1) a massive rebellion is said to have broken out in Egypt. This would be in 486 BCE, four years after the defeat at Marathon, which may have actually begun earlier in 487 BCE. A hint of this may be provided by the Daivā inscription of Xerxes (XPh, lines 28-34):

Proclaims Xerxes, the king "When I became king, there was among those lands that are inscribed ... that was in turmoil. ... By the favor of Ahuramazda, that land I defeated ..."

While the above descrip-

tion certainly alludes to a serious rebellion, it is cautioned that the XPh does not specify as to exactly where this occurred. It may even be referring to a different event, notably the rebellion which broke out in Babylon as discussed further below. In general, not all Egyptians fought against the Achaemenids with some of these even remaining loyal to the empire. Xerxes in turn crushed the anti-Achaemenid rebels to then install his brother Achaemenes as the new satrap of Egypt (Herodotus, Histories, 7.5-7).

Following the subjugation of Egypt, the Achaemenid military undertook four years of preparations for Xerxes' upcoming invasion of Greece. In practice the Achaemenids were to be diverted (from their upcoming invasion of Greece) with more serious revolts, this time in Babylon. Achaemenid rule in Babylon had been viewed with increasing dissatisfaction by the local populace. The revolt which did break out in 484 BCE may have had a religious element alongside the endeavour to (re)establish an independent Babylonian nation. A possible indication of a religious element in the rebellion may be provided by the Daivā inscription of Xerxes (XPh, 35-39):

And among those lands, there was (one) where (where) the daivā were worshiped. Afterwards by the favor of Ahuramazdā, that place of the daivā I destroyed.

Nevertheless, as in the previous citation of the XPh in its possible Egyptian revolt context, the linear application of the above quotes to the Babylonian rebellion cannot be set with absolute certainty as no actual mention of Babylon is provided. Scholarship is in agreement that the scope of the rebellion was widespread, beyond just the city of Babylon and inclusive of cities such as Borsippa, Dibat, Sippar and



Kish. In general, the rebellion is believed to have broken out in July 484 BCE. In practice there were two factions in the rebellion: (1) A northern faction led by Shamash-eriba with its power centre in Sippar and (2) a southern faction led by Bel-shimanni, based in Dilbat and Borsippa. What is less clear is whether these leaders were coordinating their revolt against the Achaemenids or were in rivalry against one another. What may be surmised is that Bel-shimanni's rebellion was very brief (approximately 2 weeks) after which Shamash-eriba became the sole leader of the entire Babylonian rebellion. It's possible that Bel-shimanni decided to yield leadership to Shamash-eriba or that he was coerced (or defeated) by Bel-shimanni, however the combatants of both factions do appear to have united in order to fight against the Achaemenids. As in Egypt, Xerxes was forced to deploy the Achaemenid army in a massive counter-insurgency operation in order to put down the rebellion, a task not accomplished until (circa) the end of October 484 BCE. In practice it was Megabyzus who militarily accomplished the crushing of the rebellion. Megabyzus who was Xerxes' cousin (and son-in-law married to his daughter, Amytis) was to later become one of the leading Achaemenid commanders in the upcoming invasion of Greece. Modern historians (and Assyriologists in particular) have questioned the veracity of Greek sources

claiming that Xerxes exacted widespread destruction and harshness following the defeat of the rebellion. Archeologists for example have reported on the lack of evidence for vehement devastation in the aftermath of the Babylonian revolt. Instead, modern historiography reports of Xerxes' policies as having been restrained, proficient and stable.

Xerxes, like his father Darius before him, was a builder. Darius had initiated the construction of the magnificent city-palace of Persepolis (Old Persian: *Pārsa*) in circa 515 BCE with this project being vigorously continued by Xerxes, notably the Gate of Nations and the Hall of a Hundred Columns. *Pārsa* was not just a "ceremonial" capital, as revealed by the meticulous excavations of researchers and archaeologists. In addition to the large audience halls (and reception rooms) as well as private quarters, *Pārsa* also featured a massive network of military billets, stockrooms and treasury centers. While the Achaemenids also moved their capital between Susa, Ecbatana and Babylon each year, *Pārsa* was the site where Xerxes and other Achaemenid kings would engage for the annual *Nowruz* spring equinox on March 21, a tradition continuing among Iranian and Persianate peoples to the present. The following inscription by Xerxes reveals the multi-cultural aspects of the Khshassa (not unlike that to be seen with the later Roman Empire):

"*Saith Xerxes the king:*

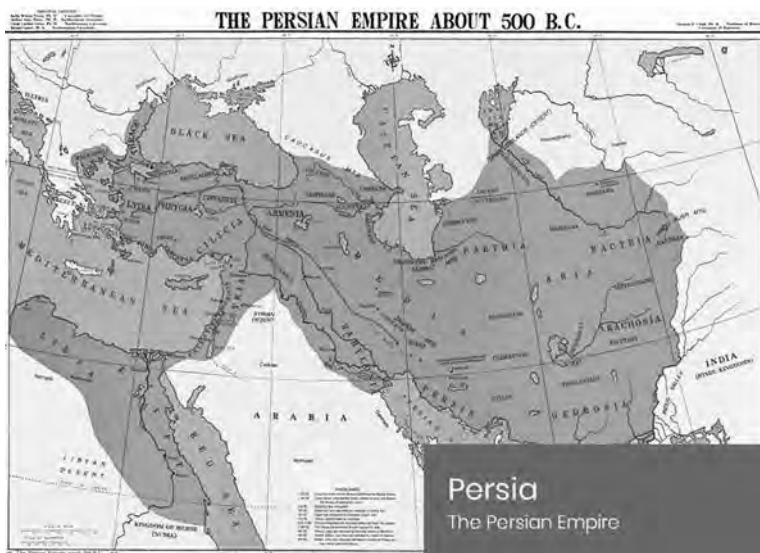
By the favour of Ahuramazda these are the countries of which I was king outside Persia [roughly equivalent of Iran's contemporary Fars province] ... Media, Elam, Arachosia, Armenia, Drangiana, Parthia, Aria, Bactria, Soghdiana, Chorasmia, Babylonian, Assyria, Sattagydia, Sardis, Egypt, Ionians, those who dwell by the sea and those who dwell across the sea, the Maka people, Arabia, Gandara, Indus, Cappadocia, Dahae, Scythians who drink haoma, Pointed-Cap Scythians, Skudra, the Akaufaka people, Libyans, Carians, Nubians." (Xph, 13-28)

In contrast to the militaristic depictions of violence against conquered peoples in Assyrian arts for example (e.g., flaying alive of prisoners in the siege of Lachish, British Museum, no.124909), *Pārsa* depicts a myriad of peoples in harmonious and non-violent procession bringing tribute to the king in celebration – absent are depictions of warfare, violence or suppression at the city-palace. Exceptions are those depictions at *Pārsa* of Achaemenid kings locked in combat against evil entities represented in non-human form.

Xerxes however had yet to resolve "the Greek Question" – Darius' unfinished business of bringing the Greeks of Europe under Achaemenid dominion. The massive military expedition to come against the Greeks (for more see *Persian Heritage*, 2021, no.101, p.22) was as much about the extension of Achaemenid dominion into Europe as it was about maritime and economic commerce in the eastern Mediterranean. The Greeks however would prove to be an exceptionally formidable opponent for Xerxes, whose failed campaign against them would mark the zenith of the Khshassa's military efforts at territorial expansion.

PERSIANS ARE NOT ARABS, Any More Than Koreans Are Japanese!!!

(WWW.PERSIANSARENOTARABS.COM)



This site looks at Persia, which at one point had been one of the greatest empires of all time. From this great culture we gained beautiful art seen in the masterful woven Persian carpets, melodic poetic verse, and modern algebra. It is referred to as an “ancient” empire, but, in fact, some Persian practices, such as equal rights for men and women and the abolishment of slavery, were way ahead of their time. The fall of this great dynasty to Islamic control in 633-656 will also be touched upon. Since that time,

surrounding Arab nations have forced the former power to repeatedly restructure changing former Persia into present day Iran. (see “Renaming Iran” for more information).

But with history and culture this rich, it is to no surprise that Persians want to be distinguished from others including their Arab neighbors.

Persians are not Arabs; – & here is why:

From this great culture we gained beautiful art seen in the masterful woven Persian carpets, melodic poetic verse, the most beautiful and eye catching pieces of art and modern algebra. It is referred to as an “ancient” empire, but, in fact, some

Persian practices, such as equal rights for men and women and the abolishment of slavery, were way ahead of their time.

The Persian Solar calendar is one of the world’s most accurate calendar systems.

The questions,

- “Are Iranians the same as Arabs?”
- “Persians versus Arabs?”
- “Iranian vs Persian?”
- “Are Iranians and Persians considered white?”
- “Is the language Persian or Farsi or Arabic?”
- “Is the country Iran also called Persia?”
- “The difference between Arabs and Persians?”
- “Is it the Persian Gulf or Arabian Gulf?”
- Are Persians white? Black? Caucasian? Muslim? Asian? Iranians? Arabs?

These are common ones that are asked here in the Western world. Search the internet for an answer, and many different sites and forums come up each with a different response.

Unfortunately, the average American’s study of history usually starts with the Ancient Egyptian civilization, followed by the Greeks, Romans and then somehow skips to Christopher Columbus’ discovery

of the New World.

That other distant civilizations developed in between those periods is new information to many. Studying our Eastern neighbors opens an entirely new world of history, culture and achievements.

The Persian empire is referred to as an “ancient” empire, but, in fact, some Persian practices, such as equal rights for men and women and the abolishment of slavery, were way ahead of their time.

For instance women in Persia were very honored and revered; they often had important positions in the Courthouse, Ministries, Military, State and Treasury Department, and other official administrations. Women were treated like Goddesses esteemed as mothers of creation before the barbaric invasion upon Persia.

Recent works on the role of women in ancient Persia show great participation by women in all facets of life, indicating not only their autonomy and independence, but the existence of an equal social system which accepted the authority and independence of women. Even in the modern era compared to other countries in the region Iranian women have relatively more rights, especially if compared to countries like Saudi Arabia, where women are not allowed to drive. In fact, in Iran many households are ruled by women. Mothers have the upper hand at home. The education rate is higher between Iranian women and girls. The number of female doctors, engineers and experts in high positions is just the proof of that.

The fall of this great dynasty to Islamic control in 633-656 will also be touched upon. Since that time, surrounding Arab nations have forced the former power to repeatedly restructure changing former Persia into present day Iran. Persia was conquered by the Arabs, but they did not lose their language or their identity. Ethnic Persians make up 60 percent of modern Iran, and modern Persian is the official language. But with history and culture this rich, it is to no surprise that Persians want to be distinguished from others including their Arab neighbors.

If you call the Iranian people “Arabs”, it will most certainly annoy them. Iranians are proud of their glorious ancestry, nationality and culture and are very touchy on this subject! This may have been amplified since Persians and Arabs have been rivals throughout the history. Clarifying the appropriate use of the term “Persians”?

Persia is now thought to be synonymous with Iran, but does either of those



terms define the myriad of ethnic groups within the country, such as the Kurds or Turks, those who neither identify themselves as Persian nor speak the Persian language of Farsi?

Or should it simply be used to identify goods and wares we have all become familiar with like the Persian cat or Persian Rug?

This website will look into what is really behind the name “Persian” by briefly discussing its rich history and unique culture. And perhaps finally one will understand why Persians Are Not Arabs.

Iran’s Population by Ethnicity

The majority of Iranians are of Persian ethnicity. Even within this ethnic group, the Persians have a diverse ancestry, but all of them have one thing in common: their language. Persians speak Persian, also called Farsi. The statistics from 2011 shows the ethnicity breakdown for Iran as follows: 51 percent Persian, 24 percent Azeri, 8 percent Gilaki and Mazandaran, 7 percent Kurd, 3 percent Arab, 2 percent Lur, 2 percent Baloch, 2 percent Turkmen, 1 percent other.

Official Language of Iran

The official language of the country is Persian, though locally it is called Farsi.

- 58 percent of Iranians speak Persian or a Persian dialect

- 26 percent speak Turkic and Turkic dialects

- 9 percent speak Kurdish

- Others speak Luri, Balochi, Arabic, Turkish and other languages.

SO ...Are Persians Arabs? The answer is NO! Persians are not Arabs! Different Language: Arabs speak Arabic;

Persians Speak Iranian Languages and Dialects.

Different Geo-Location: Arab people live in the Arab world is made up of countries in the Middle East and North Africa such as: Algeria, Bahrain, the Comoros



Islands, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania, Oman, Palestine and more. Arabs trace their ancestry to the original inhabitants of tribes of Arabia from the Syrian Desert and Arabian Peninsula. While, Persians live in Iran and their neighbors are to the East Pakistan and Afghanistan and to Turkey in the west. Persians are a part of the Iranian inhabitants.

Difference Between Religions

After the Arab invasion in 651 Islam did eventually displace the native Zoroastrian religion, however, the Persians held onto their identity through their language, literature and arts which are discussed in in detail other parts of the website. The confusion between the two ethnicities seems to arise from their shared religion of Islam. Islam is not a nation, nor is it an ethnic group. It is solely a religion. Much like African Americans and Japanese can be Christian, Persians and Arabs can be Muslim.

Islam Has Two Branches Shia and Sunni. The cause of this division are said to happen after the prophet Muhammad the original leader of Islam passed away in 632. The followers of Islam were divided into two sections:

The ones that consider the Prophet



Mohammad’s main followers as their next leader and the ones that wanted his bloodline, his cousin and son-in-law Ali, to rule over Muslims.

The first group of followers is called the Sunni, and the second group is Shia. Nowadays the official religion of Iran is Shia, but Sunni is practiced in a few places.

Most Persians, including most Iranians, practice Shia branch of Islam!

Shia followers are actually a small group in the Islam world and are considered a minority (about 10%, of Muslims worldwide). Most Shias today live in Iran, Pakistan, India, and Iraq, and they adhere to Twelve Shiism – they believe that twelve Imams, appointed divinely, descended from Ali. Arab Muslims in fact don’t consider Iranians ‘true’ Muslims because they do some rituals so different from Sunni Muslims in the Arab world do. Zoroastrian Persians refused to convert to Islam, fled to India. Persians, because of their background and Zoroastrian past developed a different culture from the Arab counterpart.

Persians do a lot of Islamic rituals differently!

Even though the main religion in Iran is the Shia Islam, there are a few smaller religious groups: For example the Sunni Islam is the religion undertaken by the Kurdish in the west, the Turkmen, and the Arabs in the southern part of Iran. Apart from these, there are also a handful of faith groups around the country; the distinguished ones for example are Christianity, Bahai’at, Judaism and Zoroastrianism.

Persians Have Different Traditions

Persians have different traditions and ceremonies than Arabs! Even though Arabs invaded Persia (Iran) and had to change their religion, Iranians kept most of their Zoroastrian traditions and ceremonies and still celebrate them. At the time



of Arabs ruling Persia, Persians now had to choose whether they wanted to accept a new culture, change their language to Arabic and religion to Islam. Persians did everything to maintain their language when Egypt and other countries from north of Africa started to speak Arabic. Persians actually pride themselves that they fought to remain as Persians, not Arabs.

The most important holiday in Iran is Norooz (also Nowruz) which marks the first day of the Persian New Year. Yalda Night (also known as Shab-e Chelleh) is one of the most ancient Persian festivals celebrated by Iranians which marks the longest night of the year. Other notable Persian festivals are: Chaharshanbe Suri, Mehregan, Tirgan and many more.

Neither of these festivals and ceremonies are celebrated in Arab countries.

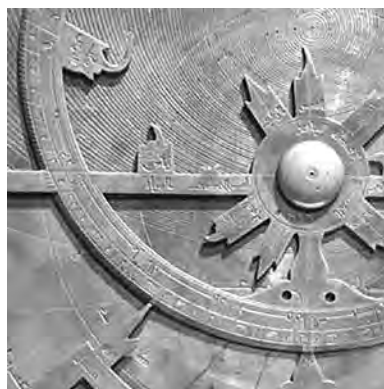
As you can see the Persian and Arab culture are fundamentally very different!

A fun fact to know is that unlike most nations, Arabs do not celebrate their new year! Eid al-Fitr (a religious ceremony) is the most important holiday celebrated in Arab countries or "Arab World". Eid al-Fitr marks the end of Ramadan. Ramadan is a holy month in which Muslims fast.

Eid al-Adha (also known as "Festival of Sacrifice") is the second most important Islamic holiday. It is celebrated by Muslims all over the world.

A Difference in Calendar

If you still think Persians and Arabs are the same, you'd be surprised that they do not even use the same calendar! Arabs use the Hijra calendar which begins its count from the Islamic New Year in 622 CE and is based on an important event in Islamic history. On that day in history in the Islamic lunar calendar, Prophet Mu-



hammad and his followers migrated from Mecca to Yathrib (now Medina) as they were fighting native Pagans.

Iranians have the Iranian calendar which is based on the ancient calendars Persians used in pre-Islamic era. Iranians do celebrate Persian new year (Norooz or Nowruz) and actually it is considered as the most important time of the year! Norooz comes from an ancient ritual when Persia's official religion was Zoroastrianism. The Iranian calendars were invented and used for over two millennia in Iran and ancient Persia, which is one of the longest chronological records in human history.

The origin of the Persian calendar that is used nowadays by Iranians can be traced back to the 11th century. When a group of astronomers such as the well-known poet Omar Khayyam created what is now known as the Jalaali calendar. The Persian Solar calendar is one of the world's most accurate calendar systems. It has less than 1 second per year (1 day in 110,000 years) error percentage.

As you can see based on the things explained in this article and other articles you can find in this website...

Persians Are Not Arabs!

SANANDAJ PICKED AS IRAN'S 2022 BOOK CAPITAL

(Tehran Times December 27, 2021)

TEHRAN – Sanandaj, the capital of Kordestan Province, has been named Iran's 2022 Book Capital on Monday.

In a special ceremony held by the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, the jury said in a statement that the city was selected for the persistence of plans to promote reading. The city also achieved the title for launching different campaigns for the book reading, use of cultural potentials and innovative ideas for promoting book reading, and great endeavors for the development of bookstores.

The jury picked the city in three stages from among 192 submissions. In addition, Bam, Evaz, Najafabad and Semnan were selected as Iran's Innovative Cities of Book Reading.

Due to the choice, Sanandaj and the four cities will receive special funds, equipment and service to develop cultural centers and libraries. With a population of over 410,000, Sanandaj enjoys only seven public libraries.

To promote reading, the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance in collaboration with several cultural organizations, including the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO, selects an Iranian city as book capital every year.

In addition, ten villages across the country are selected as Book Loving Villages of the Year.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the ministry was unable to make arrangements for selecting a city as Iran's book capital in 2021.

Shiraz, the hometown of the celebrated Persian poet Hafez and Sadi, was Iran's 2020 Book Capital.

Yazd, the central Iranian city that is home to many magnificent historical mosques and ancient Zoroastrian fire temples, was picked as Iran's 2019 Book Capital.

Kashan in 2018, Bushehr in 2017, Neyshabur in 2016 and Ahvaz in 2015 previously have won the title.

