



Persian Heritage

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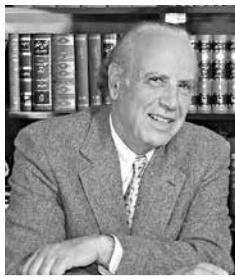
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Persian  Heritage

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Thirty -seven years have passed since Iranians left Iran immigrating to various countries around the world. Happily we have seen the first, second and third generations assimilate into their new communities and cultures. They have reached success socially, in education, in finance, in medicine, in arts and in sciences etc. We have also seen them break high level political positions in England, Sweden, Germany, Holland and we hope soon in the United States.

Unfortunately, unlike the progress made by Iranian Diaspora, over the past thirty-seven years in Iran, Iranians have not fared as well. During these thirty-seven years the youth was suppressed and oppressed.

Today this oppression and suppression is increasing, not lessening. Their rights continue to diminish. Recently 800 clothing stores were forced to shut down by the government, because the clothes they sell did not respect the *hijab*.

Is it right to impose such an unreasonable restriction on people?

Is it right to impose unreasonable Islamic rule on its people? Is it right to impose horrific punishments for non-compliance of these unreasonable demands?

The Iranian government has listed 10 crimes that have recently increased teenagers of Iran, some are alcohol consumption, sexual offenses, traffic fines, physical and public fighting, and stealing. Who is to blame for these increases? What can a government expect from youth who believe they have no future? Saying that breaking the law should not have punishment, what I am saying is that the laws imposed and punishment of breaking these laws should be reasonable and not routinely give rise to torture, beating imprisonment and execution? Compare these punishments with high level banking and governmental officials who were allowed to freely leave Iran with billions of dollars, after committing much more serious crimes?

Reading this news is upsetting. It makes me wonder where past and present generations of Iran youth would be today, if they had and are given more freedom, if they had and are given a better financial, social and educational opportunities and if they believed or believe they have a future, rather than fearing punishment for asserting their human rights?

I would like to share a very sad story with you. In 1988 more than 15,000 young men and women were executed and more than 4,482 disappeared in the first two months of that year. At that time Ayatollah Montazeri was assigned as suc-

cessor to Ayatollah Khomeini. During the transition period a tape aired where Ayatollah Montazeri was speaking to the hanging judges, telling them that such executions were a crime and needed to be immediately stopped. Shortly thereafter he was no longer Khomeini's replacement. Instead the hanging judges were rewarded with high level government positions; for example one who was a prison interrogator became a justice department minister.

Recently Mohammad Tangestani a writer for Radio Zamaneh, a Dutch internet site wrote the following article, *Montazeri, Inside the Death Voices, Where Do These Voices Come From*, " *the voices say 200 prisoners...,the voices say execution..., the voices say solitary confinement...,...execution..., the voices say you cannot bring these prisoners back to prison, ...the voices conflict..., the voices of laughter.... the voice of death, the VOICE, VOICE.*

The writer asks what effect these voices have had on the present history of Iran? What kind of effect do they have on our daily life? Could we be indifferent to these voices like other voices we hear every day and ignore or forget? With the passing of time will these voices become ordinary or will these like nightmares, leave scars on the memory of the Iranian people?

Yes, we have questioned ourselves many times what effects these voices have on the present history of Iran and what effect they will have on future generations of Iranians in and outside of Iran. But do we ever ask ourselves if it is fair that the Iranian youth suffer such horrific consequences—beating, torture, imprisonment and execution- for voicing their opinion against the present political system. To silence such voices confirms the present governments lack of faith in what they impose, a government that is not for the people but rather for the power of a few. And the few can only remain in power through instilling fear.

What kind of Iran would we see today, I ask, if the 15,000 youths executed and 4,482 who disappeared in 1988 had been allowed to exercise simple human rights, were allowed to continue their education, respected rather than feared their government, pursue their careers and have families?

When I read the article about the 1988 execution, I was shocked to see the name of a nineteen year old boy who was imprisoned and executed for not accepting a particular religion. I realized he was the son of my 8th grade physics teacher. He was introduced to my class by the principal; he

was well dressed with a warm smile. I remember him speaking Persian but with an Azari (Turkish) accent. From his first lecture my classmates fell in love with him. I noticed he had a tattoo on the back of his hand. Later as we became closer he told me that in Azarbijan he worked in a shoe repair store. At the time he knew not one word of Persian. He was illiterate and overcame it by reading the daily Persian papers. He continued by telling me that he completed in one year, six years of primary education, in one year he completed three years of high school, in one year he completed tenth and eleventh grade, and then twelfth grade. Finally, three years after that he obtained his master in physics. In other words what often takes fifteen years to achieve took him seven. (On a side note he became one of the most prominent professors in Iran, was one of the founders of a very prestigious private school and his physics books are among the most accepted and read.)

He has passed on. I only hope that he passed before the execution of his son in 1988. No parent should have to witness such an event especially over denying a religion or political system. I do wonder, if his son was not executed and was able to pursue his life, if his achievements would have surpassed those of his father. This young man's execution in 1988 over religious and political choice made me remember a recent news event in the United States.

A member of the National Football League in the United States, refused to stand during the playing of the Star Spangled Banner. When asked later he stated that his reason was in protest of African American Civil Rights, or lack thereof. Public opinion on his action was split.

While he protested, by disrespecting his national anthem in view of millions, he received no governmental punishment. The NFL and President Obama took the position that he was exercising his freedom of speech. When I see the freedoms we have in the United States, my heart aches even more for the youth and the people of Iran, who wish for simple freedoms such as religion, politics, liberty speech and even the right to wear what they want.

I hope someday these wishes come true.

Shahrokh Alavi

Persian KING DARIUS Stele Found in Russian Ruins

Parts of a marble stele with an inscription of the Persian king Darius I were found by archaeologists during excavations on the site of the ancient Greek city of Phanagoria, which is currently in the Russian region of Krasnodar (Southern Russia).



“The deciphered inscriptions indicate that they were made in the name of the Persian king Darius I. The inscriptions on the stele engraved in ancient Persian language. The discovery is dated to the first half of the V century BC,” noted archaeologists. They said the discovery of the stele could become a scientific event in the world. Furthermore, they found the remains of the old fortifications of the city.

The inscription contains a word that could be Miletus, the name of one of the most important cities in Ionia (the area that now bears the name of Asia Minor). During this period, Miletus led the Ionian revolt called Hellenistic cities against Darius I. The revolt was put down in 494 BC.

Scientists believe that the king, after his victory over the Greeks placed the monument glorifying his triumph in the city. Later, the stele would arrive in Russia via ships visiting the port of Phanagoria.

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WHERE IS THE ARAB GULF?

Dear Editor:

Please, say thank you to this compatriot, he is right, about those who use the falsified name for Persicus Sinus (Persian Gulf), they do not refer to the right spot, they raise a "False Flag" they give a "Wrong Address"

It seems that when one in Paris asks for Eiffel Tower, that is visible from almost every corner of metropolitan Paris, but the one answering gives the Versailles Castles address.

If those generals sent their ship or plane to the (Arabian Gulf) they would have never gotten to the right point on the world map.

Peyman Meli

FABLE???

Dear Editor

I am writing about "Ashraf Pahlavi" by Cyrus Kadivar. Whilst Cyrus Kadivar writes well on many subjects, his narrative of Dr. Mossadegh having tea with Princess Ashraf is pure fable.

There are other inconsistencies in the article, concerning her flying visit to Teheran in 1953.

Regards, *Farhad Diba*

(Author: "Dr.Mohammad Mossadegh: A Political Biography")

YOUR AMAZING HARDWORK

Dear Editor

I wanted to thank you and tell you that I am very grateful for the nice book review. Your hard work, in so many areas, never ceases to amaze me.

Wishing you health and continued generous service to our community.

Baa doroud o booseh:

Jahangir Jon Sedaghatfar

SORRY FOR MY COMPLAINT

Dear Editor

I do not think I have ever been disappointed in one issue of *Persian Heritage* magazine until the summer 2016 edition.

I do not read the Persian side but I found the English side to be lacking in substantive articles except for the interview.

For certain I apologize for this complaint because one disappointment since 1996 is not bad. Continue your good and hard work efforts.

Ania Javanmard

ORANGE COUNTY DOCTOR SETS OUT TO COMBAT PARTY POLITICS



When Dr. Max Gouron moved to Texas in 1972, getting involved in politics was a distant thought. Born and raised in Tehran, Gouron moved to the United States to attend Rice University in Houston on a full scholarship and later went on to obtain his M.D. from the University of Texas Health Center. In 1999, he moved to Orange County and has been a practicing anesthesiologist for almost two decades.

But, like most immigrants, he faced a variety of challenges. “Assimilating into American culture takes time,” he said. “As a first-generation immigrant you face multiple hurdles ... you have to worry about your finances, and then you have to familiarize yourself with the language and social behavior, and after all of that you start to become aware of your rights as a taxpaying citizen.”

Now, having conquered these hurdles, Gouron is campaigning to represent California’s 45th district in Congress. He attributes his interest in politics to his immigrant background and Iranian roots, which he said, helped him see the value in civic participation.

To win the seat, Gouron, who is running as a Democrat, must beat Republican incumbent Mimi Walters, which will prove to be a challenging task. Gouron’s district has not elected a Democrat in more than 30 years and Walters won her last election with 65 percent of the vote. Nevertheless, Gouron is optimistic.

Gouron’s district includes a large population of Iranian Americans, many of whom have expressed disappointment over recent visa waiver discrimination measures. Gouron said he intends to fight against such discriminatory policies, including the new Visa Integrity and Security Act (HR 5203), which targets visa seekers from Iran, as well as Iraq, Libya, Sudan, Syria and Yemen, for enhanced security measures.

Gouron said that the sobering reality is that Iranian Americans are not yet politically engaged enough to be a key factor in winning elections and he hopes he can help change that.

“Iranian Americans are just now reaching the point of assimilation and are just now getting involved in politics ... Many are either not registered to vote, or if they are they just don’t vote,” he said. Despite that, he added, Iranian Americans are one of the most successful diaspora communities in the United States.

If elected, Gouron would be the first ever Iranian American to serve in Congress, a feat that he views as a big achievement among a long list of successful Iranian American accomplishments. Referring with pride to other Iranian Americans like Omid Kordestani and Anousheh Ansari, who “are decorated doctors, lawyers, teachers, accountants, business people, entrepreneurs...” he said he believes that “Iranian Americans have proved that they can be successful.” He hopes his achievement will augment this list.

“I’m very proud to be Iranian American,” he said.

**SHEHERZADE’S GIFT:
SUBVERSIVE NARRATIVES**

July 13 - September 24, Event Navigation



Work by Mala Iqbal

MAIN GALLERY

Organized by Jaishri Abichandani, Independent Curator and former director, South Asian Women’s Creative Collective One of the most enduring and influential books in global popular culture is *A Thousand and One Nights*. Understood as an amalgamation of fables originating from West and South Asia, its main protagonist is the fictional Queen Sheherzade, whose stories are told to countless young girls from North Africa to South East Asia. The Queen has been a polarizing figure for many women who have grown up with her, some berating her for failing to challenge patriarchal mores while others have a keener understanding of the nature of her subversions.

It is with this impetus that *Sheherzade’s Gift* examines the work of women artists from Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Egypt and Bangladesh who reside in the US. Their lived experiences vary from being recent immigrants to being second generation Americans. *A Thousand and One Nights* is one of the oldest references from the Islamic world to permeate popular culture, giving us *Aladdin* and *Princess Jasmine* through animated movies and toys, but it is *Sheherzade* who is a more compelling character for the artists within this exhibition. The works in the exhibition, many of which are text based, include painting, sculpture, video, and performance. They traverse through urban and natural landscapes that lay open their experiences. The show focuses on the influence of book content rather than the book form itself in order to demonstrate the ongoing critical impact of the book narrative as source material for contemporary artistic practices. Through painting, sculpture, video and performance, these artists describe many worlds. Telling stories filled with humor and pathos, they traverse through urban and natural landscapes that lay open their experiences.

Artists include: Nida Abidi, Negar Ahkami, Fariba Salma Alam, Ambreen Butt, Ruby Chishti, Dahla Elsayed, Roya Farassat, Mariam Ghani, Meena Hasan, Gita Hashemi, Mala Iqbal, Mona Saeed Kamal, Gelare Khoshgozaran, Sa’dia Rehman, Nooshin Rostami, Hiba Schahbaz, Negin Sharifzadeh and Katherine Toukhy.



Iranian-American Student Conducts SMALL SPACECRAFT TEST PLATFORM RESEARCH

in North Dakota

GRAND FORKS, July 19, 2016 – For the last two years, students from across the country have come to the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks to participate in a ten-week intensive Research Experience for Undergraduates program where they learn how to research and develop software that may one day fly on the Open Orbiter Cube Sat, which will be launched into Earth orbit later this year.

“Developing software for a small spacecraft presents many challenges,” commented Open Orbiter Small Spacecraft Development Initiative director Jeremy Straub. “You have limited computing capabilities and a need to develop optimized code, as the when the processing is running its consuming very valuable power resources that could be used to power other parts of the satellite. It’s not like programming for a desktop, where in many cases you have far more resources that you need for an application – it drives you to make the best possible use of the resources.”

By participating in this National Science Foundation and Department of Defense-sponsored program, students learn development best practices. When in space, you can’t just walk over and reboot the satellite if a program crashes. Faulty code can mean that a mission is not able to complete

all of its goals – or even that the satellite stops working altogether. This provides a real incentive for checking the code and helps to drive home the lessons that students have learned in their coursework. Students also get an opportunity to try their hand at performing real-world research. They choose a topic with their mentor and set off to explore the unknown.

“It was not what I expected. I learned about the integration of software and hardware – about its fabrication, development and CAD software,” said current-year participant Ardlan Khalili. “I also learned a lot about the Raspberry Pi computers.”

Khalili spent the past nine weeks developing and integrating the hardware and software for a small satellite test platform called Balloon Sat. This system is designed to mirror aspects of the CubeSat design to allow for data collection and software testing prior to the launch of a satellite in to space. In addition to its testing value, the Balloon Sat platform can serve as a very-low-cost tool for science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) educators who cannot afford to build a satellite.

In addition to the knowledge and experience he gained from participation, Khalili is working to receive academic credit through his own univer-

sity for the experience. During the experience, Khalili and two of his collaborators on this project travelled to St. Paul, Minnesota where they had the opportunity to present a paper they wrote about their Balloon Sat design work at a High Altitude Ballooning conference.

In addition to their research work in Grand Forks and conference travel, student participants traveled to the NASA Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas where they got to see space software research in action. While there, they met the International Space Station’s Robo Naut robot and learned about software development and testing for space applications.

“It is our hope that this experience opens their eyes as

to the multitude of possibilities that their degree affords them,” commented Computer Science Department chairperson Ronald Marsh. “Many of the participants would not have any such opportunity otherwise.”

The Open Orbiter Small Spacecraft Development Initiative at the University of North Dakota is working to launch North Dakota’s first spacecraft. The Cube Sat being developed will demonstrate the ability to make a functional spacecraft for only a few thousand dollars (instead of tens or hundreds of thousands). A largely student-driven effort, Open Orbiter is changing who has access to space by providing a low-cost, easily customizable framework for others to use as the basis for their own satellite.



Iranians at Rio Olympic 2016



Kimia Alizadeh

Iran has participated in the Olympics since 1948 earning an all over total of 60 medals, through the London games. This year in Rio the team added 8 more and ranked in 25th place for total medal takes. Winners included Kianoush Rostami gold in weightlifting 85kg, Sohrab Moradi gold in weightlifting

94kg, Hassan Yazdani gold in the 74 kg men's freestyle wrestling, Komeil Ghasemi silver freestyle wrestling 125kg, Saied Abdevali bronze freestyle wrestling 75kg, Ghasem Rezaei bronze wrestling 98kg, Hassan Rahimi bronze freestyle wrestling, 57kg and Kimia Alizadeh Zenooin, age 18 bronze in the 57kg Taekwondo event. After kissing the mat she stated "I am so happy for Iranian girls because it is the first medal and I hope at the next Olympics we will get gold.

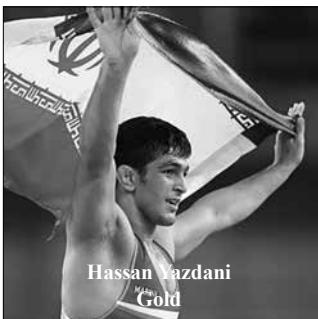
At these Olympics we also saw Helen Morales an American take a gold in women's wrestling after being coached by Mrs. Afsoon Roshan-Zamir Johnston. On the football field we witnessed linesman Alireza Faghani, Reza Sokhandan and Mohammad Reza Mansouri officiate.

From the moment the Iranian team entered the stadium, at the opening ceremony, we knew for the Iranian team and Iranians that this would be a special year. Ms. Zahra Nemati was her country's flag holder at the opening ceremony. Though Ms. Nemati, 31, wanted to compete for Iran in the Olympics in taekwondo, a car accident as a teenager left her paralyzed so she turned to archery. Though Rio 2016 would be her Olympic debut, Zahra, also competed in the Rio Para Olympics in the hopes of defending her gold medal from London 2012.

What the world thought would be a questionable Olympics, in the end, Rio showed the world that the questions and concerns, were merely that. All involved, from organizers to athletes should receive a standing ovation for a job WELL DONE



Zahra Nemati



Hassan Yazdani
Gold



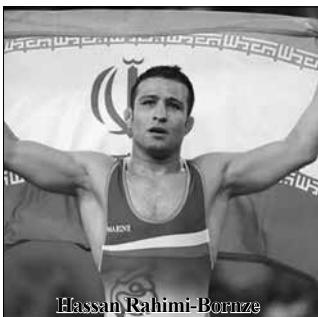
Kianoush Rostami
Gold



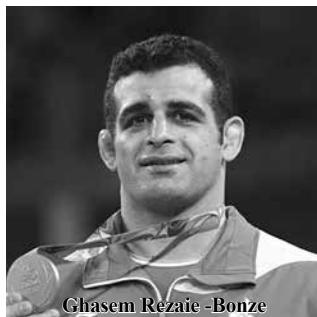
Sohrab Moradi
Gold



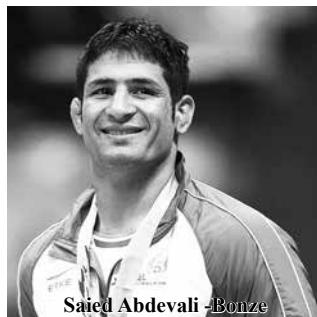
B. Sokhandan, A. Faghani,
MR. Mansouri



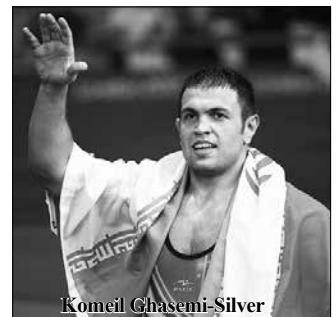
Hassan Rahimi -Bronze



Ghasem Rezaei -Bronze



Saied Abdevali -Bronze



Komeil Ghasemi -Silver

THE BEST IMMIGRANTS the USA Has Ever Inherited

As a rule, I don't like to publicize these types of information. There is good and bad in all, and I feel that the majority of our compatriots are good meaning individuals. I thought, however it would be of interest for our countrymen to know the background of this minority in our country.

Hooshang Guilak

Iranians (Persians) are amongst the most educated, most contributing, most tax paying and most law abiding immigrants that the US of America has ever witnessed.

Iranians in the US, according to extrapolated 2,000 and 2010 U.S. Census data, the subsequent reports and other independent survey analyses carried by think-tanks, it is estimated there are up to: 1.5 million Iranian-Americans living in the U.S. in 2012. Whereby their largest concentration – about 700,000 people – residing in Greater Los Angeles.

An NPR report recently put the Iranian population of Beverly Hills as high as 20% of the total population. Iranian communities in the US; they also have a very diverse religious population.

Muslims, Iranian-American Baha'is, Armenian-Assyrian Christians, Zoroastrians, Jews, Mystics, Spiritualists and Humanists... are eminently present in every community.

Other large (>100,000 each) communities include: New York; North New Jersey; Washington D.C.; Seattle WA, Boston MA, and Houston/Dallas TX.

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

According to Census 2000, 50.9% of Iranian immigrants have attained a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 24.0% among the total foreign-born population.

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

The Small Business Administra-

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

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

According to a study carried out by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology ISG, Iranian scientists, engineers and businesses in the United States own or manage around one trillion dollars.

They are however eminently present in every sector of the society.

At present, there are nearly 10,000 physicians of Iranian heritage working in the United States, who have their own practice and/or work in medical institutions.

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

It is also estimated that the total number of Professors of Iranian heritage, who teach and research in higher education institutions in the United States was approaching 10,000.

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

What is most striking is the majority (>75%) of these 10,000 professors serve in the top 200 of the 4,000 universities and colleges in the nation.

ARAM KHALKHALI, Peace Ambassador Of MusicFestival Of Montignac



According to the head of Limer Music group, Mohammad Reza Baladi, following the performance accompanied with Bushehr's ritual dances at Montignac Music Festival, Aram Khalkhali was selected as the Peace Ambassador of this festival.

Every year, the town of Montignac situated in the Vezere Valley is in charge of organizing the "International Dance and Music festival. Discovery and Friendship are the key words to define this Festival.

Artists from all over the world come to this town where Art originated... (Lascaux cave). The streets are overwhelmed with artists who unveil their cultural wealth and their extraordinary talent to the tourists. Some shows are presented in the area of Montignac.

Every year, about 20,000 people take part in several sections offered by the International Festival of Montignac.

It is one of the most important events of the cultural life in Perigord and over 400 music groups participated in this year's festival from all over the world.

Therefore it is indeed a great honor that Ms. Aram Khalkhali from Iran has won the diploma of honor and peace prize of this prestigious international music festival.

At the closing ceremony, Ms. Khalkhali delivered the Peace Message to the other groups and as the representative of the festival expressed the international great aspiration for Peace on Earth.

Limer Music group has been actively performing Bushehr local music and dances inside and outside the country in the past few years and by attending important international festivals it has managed to introduce a part of Iranian folk music to the world.

Source: Tavoos

KUDOS for Civic Activism and Social Justice: You Are a Born Communicator

Daveed N Rahni

As we stroll along the transitory journey of life, it is only natural to progressively focus first and foremost on our education, acquiring skills, career aspirations, and perhaps marriage so as to form our family and raise children, and to attend to our elders' needs. Along such path of endeavors in life however, and as we feel more comfortable with, or move on beyond our sustenance priorities, a tantalizing sense of reciprocating to our immediate community, society at-large, humanity, and mother nature with the ultimate aim of yearning for justice leading to tranquility and peace in mind, gradually overwhelm us. Altruism, Humanism, Philanthropy and Volunteerism (AHPV) are the four hallmarks for effectuating transformations thereby contributing to justice and peace that humanity has yearned for since the dawn of history. And if you assume you are alone and hence, cannot effectuate reforms and serve justice at any level, think again!

It is in that spirit that we should each carefully identify social ills, injustices, inequalities, exploitations of human and natural resources, etc. and then reach deeply into our own conscience and in tandem with the alike minded, decide which ones we empathize with the most. We should then pivot our actions and intellectual and financial resources through one or more of APV hallmarks; this should in turn contribute toward a policy shift, empowerment paradigm, etc. to ultimately serve justice and peace. Whereas one might solely focus on issues faced by the self-community of residence, others may also give credence to help bring about justice, equality and peace in their respective country of origin. In doing so, the more affluent may donate funds or capitals as benefactors, while others may provide intellectual or expertise input, or simply serve as the foot soldiers for a cause to broaden the grassroots' base or to educate or exert persuasion or pressure on the policy makers.

One of the simplest modes to serve justice is to articulate and communicate your well flushed out thoughts on an impending issue, proactively when possible, and to propose solutions. This may entail your giving a talk at a public setting as in a library, a college or simply your child's school, in a symposium, visiting or the least, calling your senator or congressperson to register your concerns on specific issues whereby you respectfully corroborate your stance with facts

Firmly but "short and sweet", and then close with your proposed solution or expectations to the impending issue.

Everyone concurs pen is mightier than sword! (Replace keyboard strokes nowadays/or pen.) With the ubiquitous pro-

liferation of comm. devices and online social media, websites, blogs, Facebook, twitter, and actual internet based magazines, dailies, etc. alongside with classical print media, expressing your views in writing has become as easy as a few key strokes from your cell phone or iPad and from anywhere and anytime. This could entail, writing a letter to the editor, an op-ed, an essay or a prose, a fully researched article or manuscript, or simply commenting on the feedback/twitter/email section of a recent published article. You could preferably use your real name and affiliation, or alternatively, resort to a penname as you so desire ...

In order to maximize your chances to get your write up/opus published, your first have to carefully review the specific editorial policy of the medium/paper/website you aim at, understand their underlying ideology (mission and vision), and their criteria for submission. For instance, whereas a letter to the editor is limited to 150 to 300 words, op-eds or short articles are 750-1200 words in length. You then devise your writing within such frameworks. You should also use the appropriate writing style be it business style, satirical, humorous, sarcastic, etc. If you write a letter to the editor, then, ensure to refer to their recently published piece or a timely topic, and provide a statement in support of, or amending the said article, or present a counter view and back it up with rationale facts and logical constructive alternative. Although you may or may not follow certain coalescing consensus on advancing a policy or societal issue, do make sure to remain along a virtual path in commonality, solidarity or comradery with your peers who think and/or act alike. Never make personal attack, or resort to smear or defamation campaign, as it is

Counter productive, you lose getting your point across, and you may even be held legally liable.

Always let us remember, the main point is NOT for us to feel great about ourselves or our ego, but rather for a community driven topic to be advanced. And last, do share your draft with a few peers for feedback before you ultimately submit it for publication purpose.

Simply put, between a messenger and the message, it is that latter that is deemed meritorious to share when it helps moving a constructive agenda forward. To sum it up, what are you exactly waiting for now? If you have and continue tackling any of the above and only based on your own conscience and with no pre-judgment by any peers, KUDOS be upon thee! And if you have NOT yet, then get on with it now. And if and when you embark on carrying certain community cause, do not expect all others to

**If you have the power
to make someone happy,
DO IT!
The world needs more of that.**

drop what they may or may not be doing and follow your “crusade.” And if they did not, do not neglect, discount or denigrate what they do at their own discretion. Above all, do not presume simply because you may rightly be doing a specific community activity gratis that everyone else should follow and line up on your path or be doomed when they might as well be pursuing other noble causes.

Again, whether or not you undertake a community endeavor, do not expect others to follow in your leads, as there are ample other community causes they may or may not be actively pursuing; and simply because you feel you do your fair (over-) share, do not become arrogant, self-righteous, self-indulgent, or megalomaniac giving yourself the right to make [misguided] judgment on others.

Once again writing skills, attending community advancement events, calling your senator, congressperson or the White House switch boards to express your concerns and propose alternative solutions, or simply making donations to cause(s) as you deem meritorious, are the least steps one could successfully pursue. Advancing humanity, justice and peace, and/or preserving the mother-earth with much humility, ARE the best rewards which would help ascend to new heights one’s spirit, state of consciousness and clear sense of purpose in life.

For example, look back at the pivotal impact the legendary life of Ralph Nader has had on consumer safety, political and civic activism, and the role of citizenry in American life and beyond. You may even read his latest book *Breaking Through Power* (it’s much easier than you think!) and attend a four day national conference on the same subject and A Historic Civil Mobilization to be held in Washington, DC May 22-26.

Epitomizing, as to most people, the glass is always half full. As to a small cohort, the glass is always half empty. However, to very few enlightened special selects, naturalists among others, the glass is always filled to the rim, half with water and the other with [invisible] air, two of the four essential elements of life (the other fire and earth) and the universe. And to top that off and to a Universalist, a glass in utter vacuum in space is still filled with dark matter and dark energy according to first law of thermodynamics, CORRECT!



French Archeologist Who Discovered Oil in Qasr-e Shirin Reintroduced



IBNA- The French archeologist Jean-Jacques De Morgan travelled twice to Iran, and while doing archeological excavations, discovered the existence of oil in Qasr-e Shirin town, west of Iran.

According to IBNA correspondent, in addition to doing research and various excavations in Iran, particularly in Susa, Jean-Jacque De Morgan has left behind many books, notably ‘De Morgan’s Travelogue’, ‘Geographical Studies’ and ‘Humanity before History’.

He was sent on a mission to Iran in 1889 and stayed in this country until 1891. It was in this trip that the five books on geography and geology, archeology and linguistics of Iran were written in nine volumes, of which two volumes on ‘Geographic Studies’ and one on ‘Geology’ were most welcomed by the Iranian researchers.

He first came to Tehran and whence he travelled to Mazandaran, Gilan and Talesh to study their dialects. Afterwards, he went to Kurdistan and Lorestan for geological and archeological research and he was the first one who discovered the existence of oil, in 1271, in Qasr-e Shirin in Zagros Mountains.

Morgan completed his mission for the French government and accomplished the mission for the sake of friendship with the Iranian government. Neither the French government nor the government of Iran paid any attention to this issue at the beginning, but finally in 1281, exploitation of oil by the English William Knox D’Arcy started.

De Morgan returned to France and then went on a mission to Egypt and stayed in that country until 1897, where he started the department of archeology and did important research on the Egyptian history and civilization. On his arrival in France, he’d taken numerous objects with himself to his country and donated some of them to Atelier Saint-Germaine. He provided 620 pictures of Iran together with three maps of Iran and a complete map of the north of Iran as well as one from Kurdistan.

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REVIEWS

TAKE BACK CONTROL
A Surgeon's Guide to Healing Your Spine, without Medications or Surgery,
Kamshad Raiszadeh, MD

(published by OptiFit Publishers 2016)

This wonderful and educational book concentrates on the treatment of those suffering from chronic and debilitating back pain. I believe after reading it, that the same approach can be applied to other chronic conditions.

Just imagine a patient with back pain not having to go for surgery or take opiates that can negatively impact their quality of life. Through the use of his own personal experiences, Dr. Raiszadeh introduces a new approach to treatment and management which includes compassion, patience and wisdom. A caveat of course is that a “non cutting approach” is not ALWAYS the workable solution. What is important, however, is the patient must need to be actively involved with the healing and control of their body and to try to avoid any exposure, through surgery, of the spinal canal.

The book, while filled with technical terms, is understandable because his approach is a story. It begins with Dr. Raiszadeh’s own experience of back surgery. While in the operating room he questions himself if he has done everything possible to treat, heal or manage his condition.

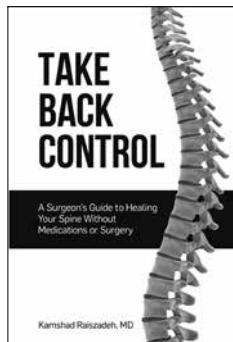
At the end of his thought process he realized that he needed to do the same with all of his patients- has he exhausted, within medical reason, all alternatives to surgery? He realized he needs to make his patient’s understand that sometimes quick pain relief may be short term and/or mask the underlying condition which can cause greater damage, not to mention the risks or surgery and pain medication.

Successful results begins with his engagement of the patient with understanding the condition, understanding their pain, understanding their entire circumstances and introducing them to a true rehabilitation program that will give them an improved quality of life, and not short term physical therapy for temporary relief.

I found it interesting that Dr. Raiszadeh addresses the concept of the Affordable Care Act which is leaning to the quality of care given rather than the quantity. In order to make this part of NEW medicine it must begin with medical school teaching. He believes that along with the technical and diagnostic skills, surgery and medication, the future doctor must also consider holistic approaches.

Our present society is fast moving as is our NEED for a quick fix for pain in order to put us back into our daily routine. We take little time for prevention. It is his belief that good posture, physical and mental activity need to become as routine as brushing our teeth.

One of the chapters I found to be very enlightening is about SITTING. He explains that sitting too much is right up there with smoking as a hazard to our health. The human body he states is not meant to sit for long periods of time. Besides the impact on our circulation and cardio systems, sitting for long



lengths of time puts strain on your spinal cord. With computers and games on our smart phones, not to mention, bigger and better television screens, we as a society are sitting more and more. Of course Dr. Raiszadeh recognizes that sitting is unavoidable both in our professions and personal lives, but he offers information on the proper way to sit. He also offers food guidelines that can assist in prevention and reducing inflammation.

What I found beneficial is his approach to treatment by treating the entire person, not just the pain. Psychological aspects of a person, their outlook on life, their daily activities are all major factors in proper treatment. He suggests that we be tougher about our pain and treatment of, rather than running to a bottle for quick relief.

This book is a must for anyone suffering from chronic back pain, joint pain or other pains; a must for any one who is considering surgery; and a must for one who believes in prevention.

HAFEZ AND HIS DIVAN,
Nasser Kanani

Publisher: Verlag Königshausen & Neumann – Würzburg

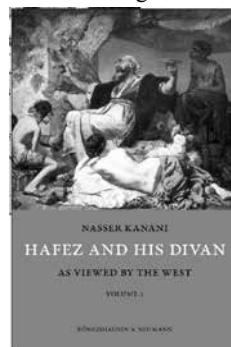
Hafez is by common consent the zenith of Persian lyrics. Due to little reliable information on his life there has always been an air of mystery surrounding his person and his Divan.

The ghazal, his favorite poetical style, has continued to be the most important form of lyrics in Persian literature. Generations of Persian-speaking poets have turned to him as a source of inspiration; none of them, however, has ever been able to match the depth of his thoughts and the elegance of his language.

Almost anyone who reads his poems will be taken captive by the delicious music of his songs and charming imagery. Sir William Jones once (1768) chanted, Hafiz is most assuredly a poet worthy to sup with gods.

In the course of centuries numerous translations, adaptations and imitations from Hafez have appeared the world over. He has inspired poets, philosophers and composers such as Goethe, Emerson and Szymanowski.

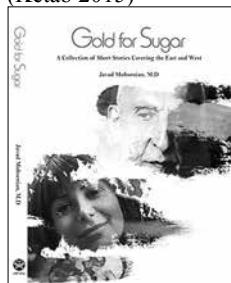
The present book is intended to give readers a detailed look at the life and poetry of this celebrated Persian lyric poet and to answer the question how he became known to the Western world.



GOLD FOR SUGAR
A COLLECTION OF SHORT STORIES
COVERING THE EAST AND WEST,

Javad Mohsenian

(Ketab 2015)



Inner reflections, we all have them as does the author of this book. The meaning behind the short stories in this book is amplified because of the author’s personal perceptions and life experiences. It is a continued question on religion, prejudice and exploitation. The stories are meaningful and thought provoking causing the reader to reflect on their own life journey.

Narrante

an album of two Iranian musicians:

Golfam Khayam

and

Mona Matbou Riahi



Narrante is the fascinating ECM debut album of two Iranian musicians, Golfam Khayam and Mona Matbou Riahi, otherwise known as the Naqsh Duo. The guitarist and clarinetist, both born in Tehran, have established a shared musical language which draws upon their individual experiences with contemporary composition and improvisation and reflects upon – and transforms – elements of their homeland’s rich traditions ...

“Music is about exposing a personal search and the freedom of experiencing,” says Mona Matbou Riahi. “Culture, language, landscape, people, memories and encounters ... “The encounter between Matbou Riahi and Khayam has proven to be fortuitous, a meeting of players with compatible priorities, who had been traveling along similar paths. They founded their duo in 2014 and recorded *Narrante* in July 2015, in Lugano, where they met, for the first time, with producer Manfred Eicher, who had followed some of their music via tapes and videos.

“The whole album has an invisible or discreet string running through it, which sews the tracks together,” Golfam Khayam explains. “But at the same time each piece is separate and has a different source, as a very personal glance at the roots of Persian music. Finally those sources are synthesized and integrated. It’s not ‘traditional’ anymore; it’s no longer from that zone. The freshness and purpose of improvisation

come mostly from the Persian side, while the careful structure and careful crafting come from Western contemporary music. We take these elements and try and figure out a formal structure or find a frame or plot which we can craft them into. Some of the pieces have open sections for improvisation and some are completely pre-composed yet sound improvised.”

Both musicians explore extended techniques as well as the sound color combinations available from acoustic guitar and clarinet, the ways in which “each instrument can vibrate the sound of the other, how clarinet can reflect itself in the guitar and vice versa.”

Golfam Khayam’s primary field of activity has been contemporary classical music, which she studied in Tehran and, subsequently, in Cincinnati and Geneva with teachers including Dusan Bogdanovic, Clare Callahan, Nicolas Bolens, Victor Cordero, and Marc-Andre Rappaz. She has also made studies of traditional Persian music which led her to adapt some of its techniques for the guitar. Jazz, too, has been an inspiration. “I was intrigued by the way in which John Coltrane or Keith Jarrett could just play and create music: the composer and performer are not separate. And in my encounters with traditional music, there was the liberty which the performer has with his palette of colors. It was a challenge and dilemma for me: how can I convey this on my own instrument without fundamentally changing my

musical zone?”

Mona Matbou Riahi’s relationship with traditional music has gone through some metamorphoses. Growing up, she heard much of it at home (“my father listened to it all the time, and my mother sang it”), and when she first moved at age 17 to Vienna, had “a teenage revolutionary feeling” of leaving the music decisively behind. “There was a time when my listening consisted just of classical music and rock.” Then jazz singers and instrumentalists became important: Nina Simone, Billie Holiday, Charlie Parker and more. Encouraged by Vienna-based Brazilian guitarist Alegre Correa to participate in local jam sessions, Mona’s interest in improvising took wings. She went on to study improvisation and experimental music at university, participating in courses led by John Tilbury, Burkhard Stangl and others. “What I really love in improvising is the silence between ideas. I missed it in the jam sessions where everybody was playing all the time, but I found it in free improvisation, this mix of silence and ideas between the sounds: it was a good connection.

In time, the wish to hear music from Persian sources also reasserted itself. “I started to listen to it with new ears, and not with judgement, a process of learning and searching with freedom. The music from Baluchistan was especially beautiful, really magical to me.” It was in attempting to “imitate the music’s landscape”, that

Mona gradually found her own sound on the clarinet. Persian music subsequently informed the repertoire of the groups Gabbeh and Sormeh in which Mona participated. Sormeh recorded an album for Austrian label Lotus, and Mona sent a copy to Golfam Khayam who in turn sent her album *Ravi*, on the Hermes label, with re-interpretations and improvisations on Dusan Bogdanovic’s compositions inspired by Persian poetry and culture.

Mona: “I listened and could really imagine guitar and clarinet together. We were somehow in the same musical space at the same time. When we play we’re like twins, in my eyes and ears. It’s a feeling I never had before meeting Golfam. She might bring in a composition or I might. But very soon her work is my work and vice versa. It’s our work. And it feels to me like writing poetry together.”

Narrante is the first ECM production and in Iran, it appears on co-producer Ramin Sadighi’s Hermes label. Sadighi has released earlier recordings of Golfam Khayam as well.

The Naqsh Duo celebrate the release of *Narrante* with concerts at Tehran’s Chamber Hall on May 4 and 5, followed by an event on May 10 at Haute Ecole de Musique de Geneve, Geneva, which includes open discussion with Golfam Khayam, Mona Matbou Riahi and Manfred Eicher. In August the duo played the Copenhagen Guitar Festival.

A Tribute to Abbas Kiarostami

Death of a Humanist Filmmaker: Kiarostami and the Culture of Peace

By Iran Review

The death of renowned Iranian filmmaker Abbas Kiarostami has jolted the world of cinema mourning the loss of a genius who epitomized Albert Schweitzer's philosophy of reverence for life. Although it is unclear if Kiarostami was familiar with the works of Schweitzer, nonetheless there is a great deal of natural affinity between them, worthy of reflection. It may be apt to say that what Schweitzer achieved in ethical philosophy has been mirrored by Kiarostami in the cinematic medium, which has been nowadays reduced to an "industry" rather than art under the spell of capitalism.

In fact, serious credit is due to Kiarostami for his pioneering role in nurturing a global culture of peace through his films — that were made in Iran, Europe, and Japan. The acclaimed director who deservedly won many awards at international film festivals was a kind, humble, and sincere humanist whose care for the other defined the essence of his work, much of which focused on the downtrodden, the marginalized, the rural invisible, illuminating the profound contradictions of his modernizing society, the role of women, foreign refugees, the poor and so on.

With some seventy short and feature films to his glorious career, Kiarostami was a true mirror of his society that is today self-agonizing for underappreciating him while he was alive, a belated adjustment toward a man who was simultaneously simple yet complex, whose identity was rooted in the Iranian culture yet was able to transcend the national limitations and inspire his audience to digest the humanist values and norms that his movies cultivated across borders east and west. In that sense, Kiarostami with his unique reverence for life approach to filmmaking was a cosmopolite who made films for the whole world and thus touched subjects such as friendship, identity, and relationship that resonate globally in today's "global village."

A clue to his originality, Kiarostami constantly blended facts and fiction and treated us with new discoveries about ourselves in each film, often, as in the movie *Certified Copy*, dwelling on the ambiguities of love and relationship.

According to Mohsen Makhmalbaf, another renowned Iranian filmmaker, Kiarostami was not content to merely show the rich texture of human life and offered solutions as well, such as showing friendship as capable of offering the resolution



A black and white photo by Abbas Kiarostami



ABBAS KIAROSTAMI:

"But in all, I don't like to engage in telling stories. I don't like to arouse the viewer emotionally or give him advice. I don't like to belittle him or burden him with a sense of guilt. These are the things I don't like in the movies.

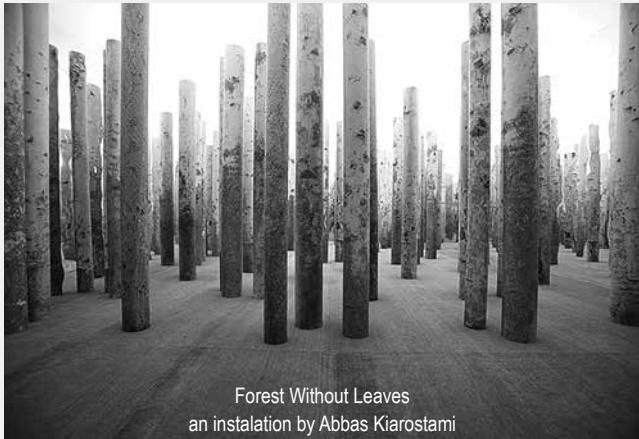
of human alienation and existential loneliness. Indeed, this is what sets Kiarostami and some western like-minded filmmakers apart, that is, his refrain from cynicism and consistently projecting an optimism of will as well as optimism of the intellect.

At the same time, Kiarostami, who was an avid follower of the naturalist Iranian poet Sohrab Sepehri, devoted considerable attention to the beauty of nature and his reverence for nature and its animals, such as dogs featured in some of his movies, forms another unique aspect of his films, particularly those that were made in the countryside and depict the simplicity of rural life.

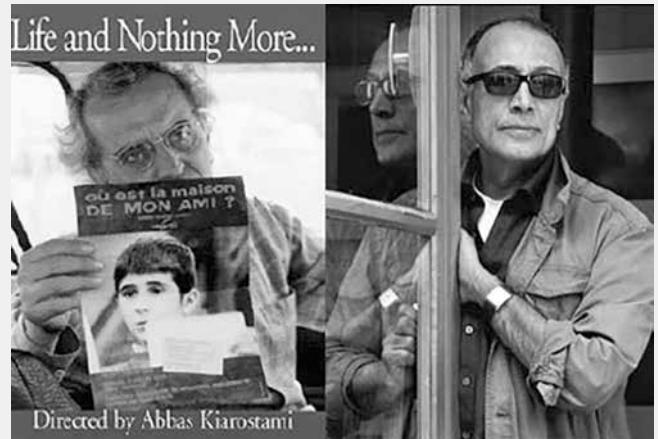
It may well be said that Kiarostami was an artistic populist who romanticized the rural over the urban and even in the urban context constantly searched for the (often lost) humanist element, e.g., in the movie *Close Up*'s main character the hidden reservoir of suppressed human goodness is brought to the fore.

In retrospect, Kiarostami's contribution to cinema may be summed up as restorative, restoring the once upon a time logic of filmmaking that was not insatiably wedded to profit-making but rather to truth and understanding in tune with a filmmic culture of peace, conceived as the antidote for the cinematic-induced alienation of contemporary man.

A Tribute to Abbas Kiarostami



Forest Without Leaves
an installation by Abbas Kiarostami



Why We Should Know Kiarostami?

Tehran, July 18, IRNA

On July 10, several thousands of cinema lovers bid farewell to internationally acclaimed film director Abbas Kiarostami in north of Tehran, whose films served as an introduction to Iran's vibrant cinema industry to movie lovers from all over the world.

Following his death in Paris, a tsunami of headlines from the media and social networks throughout the world followed Kiarostami's demise. People in different languages expressed their profound sadness over the loss of this unforgettable auteur.

"Thank you for paving the tough road of globalization for Iranian cinema," director Asghar Farhadi – whose "A Separation" won the country's only Academy Award to date in 2012 – told a morning memorial service.

Emerged from the Iranian New Wave of the late 1960s, a Persian cinema movement that started in the late 1960s and includes pioneering directors such as Masoud Kimiai, Sohrab Shahid Saless, Dariush Mehrjui, Bahram Beyzai, Nasser Taghvaei and Parviz Kimiavi, the multi-dimensional artist, Kiarostami, also was the ambassador of a vibrant cultural scene who adopted the attitude of success by seeing obstacles as opportunities.

PROGRESS DESPITE RESTRICTIONS:

He was mature enough to progress despite all the restrictions and his movies lured global audience. His non-stop soul was beyond the boundaries of place and time.

As many acclaimed international film critics have pointed out, Kiarostami created a method in making films based on minimalism to express profound humane concepts with a political flavor which was at odds with the style of filmmaking in Hollywood.

With his method, Kiarostami found global audiences and was granted numerous awards above which the prestigious Palme d'Or at Cannes Film Festival in 1997 for his film 'Taste of Cherry'. Master of long shots and long takes, Kiarostami's films contain a notable degree of ambiguity, an unusual mixture of simplicity and complexity, and often a mix of fictional and documentary elements. He has stated, 'We can never get close to the truth except through lying.' According to media reports, Kiarostami is one of the world's great directors. In such groundbreaking works as Close-Up, The Wind Will Carry Us and his

Ten, the Iranian master has pioneered a cinema of revolutionary simplicity. He strips away the artifice of the movies, leaving only a diamond-hard essence. In Ten, he uses just two camera positions and one location – the inside of a car – yet the film seems to contain all of human existence.

The boundary between fiction and non-fiction is significantly reduced in Kiarostami's cinema. The French philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy, writing about Kiarostami, and in particular 'Life and Nothing More...', has argued that his films are neither fiction nor documentary. 'Life and Nothing More...', he argues, is neither representation nor reportage, but rather 'evidence'.

MULTI-TALENTED AUTEUR

The screenwriter, film editor, art director, producer, photographer, painter, illustrator, and graphic designer, Kiarostami was also a poet, which this aspect of his personality was neglected to the public. The multi-talented auteur, Kiarostami, has a number of books in his career as well including 'Kiarostami on Hafez' (2006) about the legendary Iranian poet Hafez-e Shirazi and 'The Book of Fire' which was about the Divan of Shams released in 2011. Kiarostami says the excerpts he selected from Rumi's Divan of Shams and published in his recent book are like text messages he sends to readers. Meanwhile the prominent scholar and Hafez expert Bahaeddin Khorramshahi also endorsed 'Kiarostami on Hafez' book.

MULTI-DIMENSIONAL ARTIST

A bilingual collection of more than 200 of his poems, 'Walking with the Wind', was published by Harvard University Press. His photographic work includes Untitled Photographs, a collection of over thirty photographs, mostly of snow landscapes, taken in his hometown Tehran, between 1978 and 2003.

Kiarostami also produced Mozart's opera, *Così fan tutte*, which premiered in Aix-en-Provence in 2003 before being performed at the English National Opera in London in 2004.

Meanwhile, the artworks of late Kiarostami also were sold at Christie's Dubai evening auctions of Modern & Contemporary Arab, Iranian & Turkish Art on October 21, 2014.

Now at the end we probably ask ourselves why we should know Kiarostami? It is worth mentioning that Kiarostami was one of the most important ambassadors of contemporary Iranian culture and civilization. He was an artist and a poet emerged from Iranian art and culture and also an indication that Iranian thought cannot be neglected across the globe.

A Tribute to Abbas Kiarostami

ABBAS KIAROSTAMI:

“If you remove the roots of a tree from its mainland and then plant it elsewhere, it will not be able to bear any fruit at all or, if it does, that will not be the same good fruit it used to be when it was in the motherland. This is a natural rule. I think, if I had left my country, I could have become just like that tree.”

Film Ends with Abbas Kiarostami!

Death of the internationally renowned Iranian filmmaker Abbas Kiarostami shocked friends and people of cinema both inside and outside Iran. In addition to be a screenwriter, film editor, art director and producer, Kiarostami was also a poet, photographer, painter, illustrator, and graphic designer who had a reputation for his “poetic cinema.”

He won the hearts of millions throughout the globe with his films which were basically an appreciation of life. According to the *Variety*’s writer, the “elusiveness of human connection was Kiarostami’s theme.”

Major world artists admitted that he was a genius at his work including famous French-Swiss filmmaker Jean-Luc Godard who once said: ‘Film begins with DW Griffith and ends with Abbas Kiarostami.’

Commenting on Kiarostami’s departure, American director Martin Scorsese said Kiarostami was ‘a very special human being: quiet, elegant, modest, articulate and quite observant.

‘He was a true gentleman and, truly, one of our great artists.’ The late distinguished Japanese director Akira Kurosawa was often quoted saying, “When Satyajit Ray (prominent Indian movie maker) passed on, I was very depressed. But after seeing Kiarostami’s films, I thanked God for giving us just the right person to take his place.” Kurosawa and Kiarostami met in 1993.

Kiarostami once said: “If you remove the roots of a tree from its mainland and then plant it elsewhere, it will not be able to bear any fruit at all or, if it does, that will not be the same good fruit it used to be when it was in the motherland. This is a natural rule. I think, if I had left my country, I could have become just like that tree.”

This is true, Kiarostami is a deep-rooted tree in the ground of his motherland and all Iranians, generation after generation, will use his artistic fruits as long as this mainland exists.

This is why, Reza Kianian, a senior Iranian actor and writer,



said in his message of condolences that the “flag of the world cinema is half mast today.”

Kiarostami had been a highly influential figure in world cinema and the news of his death has rattled fellow filmmakers and audiences around the world. French President Francois Hollande praised the international director and said in a statement that Kiarostami was an immense artist whose films have profoundly marked the history of cinema.

Hollande added that Kiarostami, who won the Palme d’Or at the Cannes Film Festival in 1997 for “Taste of Cherry” was able to bring forward a unique universal medium to everyday life, while he weaved close artistic ties and deep friendships with France.

French Foreign Minister JeanMarc Ayrault also mourned the death of one of France’s friends, who revolutionized Iranian cinema and left his mark in cinematic history.

American director Martin Scorsese also issued a statement in the wake of Kiarostami’s passing, describing him as “one of those rare artists with a special knowledge of the world.” “Put into words by the great Jean Renoir: ‘Reality is always magic.’ For me, that statement sums up Kiarostami’s extraordinary body of work,” he added.

In a tweet posted on his official Twitter account, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani hailed the ‘different’ and ‘deep’ vision of Abbas Kiarostami toward life, saying his calling on human beings toward ‘peace and friendship’ will remain as a lasting achievement in the film industry.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif also paid homage to the late Iranian filmmaker on his Twitter, expressing deep regret over the loss of ‘a towering figure in international cinema’; “May the Almighty receive him in His Infinite Mercy. Rest in peace ostad,” Zarif said in his tweet.





At some point the Celtic languages divided into two divisions for phonetic reasons, i.e., Languages of the “P” and languages of the “Q”.

Around 100 BC the island of Great Britain was purely Celtic, truly a “Blessed Isle” where there were as yet neither Romans nor Saxons nor Vikings. The language spoken in this “Blessed” Isle was British, a Celtic language very close to Gaulish, ancestor of modern Welsh. Even today many Welshmen refer to yjeir language as “British”. In 100 BC there was no place known as “England”, nor any language known as “English”, nor any people known as “English”.

In 100 BC Ireland was also a purely Celtic island. Though everything, including the Irish tradition, indicates that at one time a Celtic language of the “P”, very like British or Gaulish was spoken in Ireland, by 100 BC a Celtic language of the “Q” had taken its place. This linguistic change, not difficult as the two languages similar, was affected by a migration from Spain, something recalled in both Ireland and Spain. This Celtic language of the “Q” we may call “Gaelic”.

The natives of Ireland called their island “Erinn”, meaning “Land of the Aryans. However, the Romans called Ireland “Scotia” a name which has no Latin etymology. According to the Irish tradition, the name “Scotia” derives from the name “Scotta”, a Celtic queen in Spain, who, as her name indicates, was of Scythian origin.

The Romans were never able to subjugate what are today the Scottish Highlands, so no Alanic cavalry were ever stationed there. In the 4th century AD a migration from Ireland made the Scottish Highlands Gaelic speaking, and brought the name “Scotia” to Great Britain.

The Romans stationed Alanic cavalry in what was the north-west corner of Roman Britain. Obviously, since Ireland and the Scottish Highlands and islands had never been subjugated by the Romans, no Alanic cavalry was ever stationed there, so there can have been no Alanic influence on what one might call the Gaelic epic tradition of Ireland and the Scottish Highlands and Islands.

To above is not to say that there are no Iranian affinities and influences, but that they are of a much earlier time than the Roman Period in most of Great Britain; in other words, the rather numer-

ous Iranian affinities and influences in the Gaelic epic tradition of Ireland and the Scottish Highlands and Islands have nothing to do with the Alans.

The Iranian influences and affinities in the Welsh-Breton epic tradition are very great indeed. However, one must not jump to the conclusion that said Welsh-Breton epic tradition is entirely of Alanic Inspiration.

Firstly, said Welsh-Breton epic tradition is not entirely of Iranian inspiration; never forget that the base of the Welsh-Breton epic tradition is Celtic.

Secondly, the Iranian influences and affinities in the Welsh-Breton epic tradition are not all Alanic; some date from a far earlier time, and it is not always possible to distinguish between the two.

Thirdly, while some romances and chansons de gestes of the Welsh-Breton epic tradition could pass a free translation from the Persian, this is not true of a great many others.

Fourthly, as we have noted, the Celtic and the Iranian traditions have so many elements in common that it is not always possible to distinguish between them.

In 55 AD, Julius Caesar conducted an incursion into southeastern Britain, meeting fierce resistance. As Gaul was still far from subdued, Caesar found himself overextended, and evacuated Britain. Celtic Britain would be free of the hated Romans for 98 years.

In 43 AD the Emperor Claudius decided to embark on the on the conquest of Britain, committing a large force of four legions. The Briton resisted, though generally in a disorganized manner. In 61 AD Boudicca, queen of the Iceni tribe, rose against the Romans followed in this by a number of tribes.

Part of the 9th Legion was destroyed, and for a time it appeared that the Romans would be forced to evacuate Britain. However, Boudicca, though a charismatic leader, had little tactical sense. Had a Celtic hero such as Viriatus (the “Torque Wearer”), Brian Boru, William Wallace (“Braveheart”), Owen Glendower, Alasdair MacDonald, or Cadoual been present, the Romans would have been driven out of Britain, and the history of Britain and perhaps all western Europe would have been quite different.

By 84 AD the conquest of what would become Roman Britain was more or less complete. However, most of what is today

Scotland called Caledonia" by the Romans, proved unconquerable. The construction of Hadrian's Wall, 122-130 AD, and the Antonine Wall, 142-144 AD confirmed the northern limits of Roman Britain.

So, the situation of Roman Britain remained precarious; Ireland was proudly and defiantly independent, as was Caledonia, and much of Roman Britain remained imperfectly subdued, as is proven by the survival of the Welsh language and Celtic ways in the western half of Roman Britain, and the persistence of local revolts.

So, Roman Britain was heavily garrisoned, something proven by the abundance of place names ending in "-chester", "-cester" or "-caster" from the Latin "castrum", meaning fort or military camp. Also, the Romans in Britain obviously had need of a mobile force in case of Irish or Caledonian raids and, perhaps, scattered local revolts. The Roman legions were basically heavy infantry, slow moving and quite unable to serve as a mobile force.

We will be frequently referring to "Brittany" and the Breton. So, some information may be helpful.

What is today the Brittany peninsula was known as "Armorica" by the Romans. In the 5th century AD a certain number of Celtic Britons migrated to Armorica. Many more Celtic Britons migrated to Armorica in the 6th century AD, fleeing the Saxon invaders. Unlike both Romans and Saxons, the Sarmatians and Alans had many affinities with Celtic Britons. Said Sarmatians and Alans became the most implacable enemies of the Saxons invaders, and some of them accompanied the Celtic Britons in their migration to Armorica, where some Alans were already present. The prevalence of the personal name "Alan" in Brittany, especially among the nobility is proof of this.

The Celtic Britons gave their name to Brittany, and brought the Celtic British language, known as Breton", which is, of course, very similar to Welsh. Some scholars believe that the Celtic British language became dominant in the former Armorica because its spread was favored by the survival of the Gaulish language in Armorica. According to some scholars, particularly the Breton spoken in the area of Vannes contains Gaulish elements.

When Duke William of Normandy decided to invade England in 1066, many Bretons were only too happy of the opportunity to strike a blow against their ancient Saxon enemies, and joined Duke William with great enthusiasm.

St. Isadore of Seville among others described the tactic of "feigned retreat" as being widely used by Alans and Goths. At the battle of Hastings in which the Normans and their Breton allies crushed the Saxons, the Bretons used the tactic of feigned retreat to deadly effect, pretending to flee in disorder, then a given moment turning and slaughtering the pursuing Saxons. The Bretons used this tactic against the Saxons not once but several times killing many Saxons and weakening the cohesion of their line; this reveals very poor generalship on the part of Harold Godwinson, the Saxon. It is possible that the number of Saxons slain and the loss of cohesion in the Saxon line caused by the deadly tactic of feigned retreat may have been decisive in the Norman victory at Hastings. The English try to make a hero of Harold Godwinson, but the fact is that at the battle of Hastings he had the advantages of numbers and position, but lost the battle - and his own life - due to poor generalship. So prodigious was the slaughter of Saxons at Hastings that Duke William was able to take London and most of southern and central England with almost no resistance.

Duke William observed the effectiveness of the tactic of feigned retreat, and this Alanic tactic was adopted by the Normans and used by them with deadly effect in England, Italy, Sicily and during the First Crusade.

Now would seem to be the time to clarify certain things. There is much confusion between the terms "Arthurian Cycle" and "The Welsh-Breton branch of the Celtic Epic Tradition", known in the Middle Ages as "The Matter of Britain".

The expression "The Arthurian Cycle" refers to the tales of King Arthur and his knights. I am reminded of the opening of the novel *Sword at Sunset* by Rosemary Utcliff:

Arthur is gone
Tristan sleeps with a broken sword
And Isolt beside him
Where the spume-crested waves roll over drowned Lyonesse
To the sounding deep ...

Dante Alighieri was very fond indeed of what he called "the beautiful tales of King Arthur", though, of course he knew the Arthurian Cycle only in French and Provençal recensions, as he read neither Welsh nor Breton.

I also loved "the beautiful tales of King Arthur" since childhood. The expression "The Welsh-Breton Branch of the Celtic Epic Tradition" or "The Matter of Britain" is a somewhat broader term; it includes the Arthurian Cycle and much more besides.

Some have claimed that the romance *Tristan and Isolt* is not part of the Arthurian Cycle. However, Sir Tristan appears as one of King Arthur's knights at a very early date, and in the romance, King Arthur is an important if somewhat background figure.

So evident is the Iranian influence in the Arthurian Cycle that some have claimed it to be a free translation of Iranian epic material, and that it should be called the *Arthurnama*, or at least that a part of it should be called the *Percivalnama*. There are many objections to this extreme view, including the chronological, since the Arthurian Cycle long antedates the time of *Firdausi* and the *Shahnama*. Also, said theory takes no note of that which is part of the common Iranian-Celtic cultural background; we have already given examples of this, and will give more.

In the Welsh-Breton branch of the Celtic epic tradition, there are elements which no doubt are the result of Sarmatian-Alanic influence, other elements which are part of the Iranian-Celtic heritage, and yet other Iranian or Persian elements of which one can only scratch one's head in puzzlement when someone asks how said elements reached Celtic Britain. The most absurd theory concerning how said Persian elements reached Celtic Britain is that said elements were brought back from the East by Welsh and Breton knights who fought in the Crusades.

The above is totally absurd because, among other things, it involves a gross anachronism: The Welsh-Breton branch of the Celtic epic tradition is of a far earlier date than the First Crusade.

Obviously, there is much to discuss here, many controversial points, many apparently unsolvable enigmas.

To be continued



Ashraf Pahlavi

Portrait of a Persian Princess

part two

By Cyrus Kadivar

Payvand News - 01/21/16



The letter to the Shah had contained a strong message from the Americans and the British that they would support His Majesty's decision to exercise his constitutional right to dismiss Mossadeq. However, plans to remove Mossadeq failed and was condemned by the prime minister as a coup while his supporters and Tudeh communists toppled the king's statues. The Shah, his wife and two aides flew out of Iran seeking refuge first in Iraq and then Italy. The Shah was in Rome when Ashraf phoned him. She found him anxiously awaiting for events to unfold. A friend drove the edgy princess from Nice to the Hotel Excelsior. When she reached the hotel lobby she found her brother in a jubilant mood as he told reporters how the tables had turned against Mossadeq.

The events of 1953 has been amply documented and debated by academics years after it happened. However, on that 20 August, the Shah had spoken of how the people of Tehran had risen in support of their king. He made no mention of Operation AJAX (the orchestrated plan drawn up by US and British intelligence to depose Mossadeq) nor the fact that the day had been won with American money (it has been claimed that between \$60,000 and a million dollars was given to royalist forces), the CIA network run by Kermit Roosevelt, the Shah's active supporters in the army, the mosque and the bazaar, but also the 'spontaneous' uprising of downtown Tehranis. Backed by tanks and loyal military units, General Zahedi was now the new PM and in charge of the country. Royal statues that had been uprooted were triumphantly restored and his portraits brandished everywhere. The Shah was received at the airport as a hero by his officers and ministers. A new chapter in Pahlavi history had been written.

When Mohammed Reza Shah reclaimed his throne, an exhausted Princess Ashraf retreated to a private sanatorium in the Swiss village of Arosa to recover her health. Upon her return to Tehran the

princess found her brother more resolute than before. With Dr Mossadeq out of the way (he was later tried and sentenced to 3 years in prison) and the new secret police rounding up National Front supporters and the Tudeh communists (there were dozens of executions), the Shah was determined to restore order and pull his bankrupt country out of its underdeveloped status. In 1959, a year after the Shah divorced Soraya for failing to produce an heir, he married Farah Diba, an Iranian arts student who twelve months later gave birth to Crown Prince Reza. That same year, Princess Ashraf left Ahmad Shafiq and married Mehdi Bushehri in Paris. They spent their honeymoon on the Cote d'Azur at her house in Juan-les-Pins.

During the 1960s the Shah broadened his popular support by launching his White Revolution and exiling Ayatollah Khomeini, a religious leader fiercely opposed to the reforms including women's right to vote. Ashraf soon emerged as a trail blazer for gender equality as more women entered parliament, the armed forces and other professional vocations. One of her key achievements was the creation of the Women's Organisation of Iran which grew to have a million members and thousands of branches around the country. Her support for the Family Protection Act in 1967 gave Iran's women the most sweeping civil rights in the Islamic Middle East.

In 1969 Ashraf turned her attention to combating illiteracy, poverty and improving human rights for women. While the Shah's wife dealt with social and cultural affairs, and Princess Shams served as the head of the Lion and Sun Organization, Ashraf chaired committees and charities. A noted diplomat she led Iran's delegation to the United Nations, spoke on world affairs and went on a friendly visit to China. On every occasion, she publicized her brother's efforts to take Iran to greater heights. Andy Warhol immortalised her in one of his paintings.

Notwithstanding the dizzying changes in Iran and the rising standards in living, the political system remained rigid and subservient to the king. For those seeking to discredit the Shah, Ashraf was an obvious political target. Mullahs and dissidents at home and abroad viewed her as an apologist for her brother's authoritarian regime. They accused her of amassing a fortune, meddling in state affairs, and every other sin. In September 1977, hooded gunmen fired on her Rolls-Royce killing her lady-in-waiting and injuring her chauffeur as the party returned from a casino in Cannes. Her love affairs and business dealings were a source of much gossip and embarrassment for the Shah and his government.

By the mid-Seventies the luxurious lifestyles of the Pahlavi family and the myriad stories of alleged corruption, nepotism and scandal provided plentiful ammunition for the anti-shah dissidents. It wasn't until September 1978 when opposition to his rule turned to revolution that the monarch ordered a code of conduct for the imperial family to be drawn up. Many of the royals abandoned their mansions, packed their valuables and suitcases, and left the country. In her memoirs Princess Ashraf described a depressing helicopter ride over the sprawling Iranian capital where she had observed tens of thousands of angry men and women demonstrating against the Shah. 'Is this how it ends?' she had wondered. When Princess Ashraf reached the palace she described what she had witnessed. She offered to stay with her brother but he sent her away. Parviz Radji, Imperial Iran's last ambassador to London who owed his exalted position to Ashraf's patronage, would later recall in his revealing diaries how a gloomy and bitter princess had called him to say: 'For us Pahlavis, it is virtually over.'

From the safety of her Manhattan apartment the princess followed the rapid disintegration of the Pahlavi monarchy on the news. Mohammed Reza Shah eventu-

ally left Tehran for good in January 1979. After the Ayatollah returned from France and took power in Iran he demanded the Shah's extradition. In desperation, Ashraf wrote to her friend David Rockefeller to help find her brother asylum. After his short stay in Egypt and Morocco, the Shah and his family, thanks to the Rockefellers moved to the Bahamas and then Mexico. His arrival in the US led to the seizure of the American embassy in Tehran and the Hostage Crisis.

On December 7, 1979, when the Shah was in Texas, Ashraf's son Shahriar, an imperial Navy captain, was murdered by one of the Islamic government's agents in Paris, where he was organizing a resistance movement against the Islamic revolutionaries. Abandoned by the Americans and his former allies, the sixty year old Shah moved to Panama and then Egypt where he died on the 27 July 1980. Ashraf was present at the hospital alongside the empress and loyal retainers when the emperor drew his last breath. The Shah was buried at the Grand Rifa'i Mosque after Sadat ordered a state funeral. In Tehran revolutionaries destroyed the mausoleum of Reza Shah as they built

an Islamic republic.

In exile, Ashraf shuttled with her ever-present bodyguards between homes in Paris, New York and Monte Carlo. Besides her memoirs, she published two more books in which she defended the Shah's record and refuted the exaggerated charges against herself. She also accused the West of 'betraying' her brother and his enemies of 'hypocrisy' and of 'using lies and propaganda' to besmirch the Pahlavi dynasty. Her greatest regret was seeing Iranian women wearing the black veil again. Every year she took out ads in the International Herald Tribune in order to keep her brother's memory and his legacy alive.

Those who knew Ashraf Pahlavi intimately spoke of her kindness, generosity and monarchist fervor. She gave money to groups seeking to overthrow the Khomeini regime, set up an opposition newspaper and supported several families of officers shot by the revolutionaries for serving under the Shah. She also left an endowment to a non-profit institute dedicated to historical research on Iran's past. Family tragedies haunted Ashraf: two of her twin brother's youngest children, Leila and Ali

Reza, took their lives. Her own daughter Azadeh (Dodi), a political activist, died in 2011. Gradually the princess faded from public view.

Although she grew frail and lost her memory, Princess Ashraf spent her last years in dignity, looked after by her nurses and a caring entourage, at her home in Monaco. Her husband Mehdi Bushehri and her son Shahram managed her personal and financial affairs. It was Reza Pahlavi, the shah's eldest son, who broadcast his aunt's death on social media. This was followed by a statement by Robert F. Armao, a loyal friend and spokesman for the royal family. 'Her Highness did an awful lot for her country, whatever her human faults,' he said. For a woman whose lust for life was marked by intrigue, glamour, privilege and personal tragedy, these words seemed like an appropriate epitaph.

Note: Ashraf Pahlavi died on January 7, 2016 in Monte Carlo. She was buried in Monaco on January 14, 2016 in the presence of Empress Farah and close members of the Pahlavi family and about 70 other Iranians.

The first person to bring Europe the fame of Hafez was a highly cultured and erudite Roman nobleman by the name of Pietro della Valle, a consummate writer, poet and musician. In addition to Greek, Latin and several other European languages, he was capable of communicating in Arabic, Turkish, and Persian.

Della Valle undertook a long journey of almost twelve years to the Orient at the suggestion of his friend, Mario Schipano, a Neapolitan professor of medicine, distinguished for his oriental learning and abilities. During his journey della Valle added the nickname *Il Pellegrino* (*The Pilgrim*) to the end of his last name.

Della Valle departed from Venice by boat on June 8, 1614, and arrived in Jerusalem on March 8, 1616. After visiting the holy sites, he traveled to Damascus and from there to Aleppo. After seeing by chance the portrait of a beautiful Assyrian Christian by the name of Sitti Maani Gioerida (Arabic: Ma'ani Juwayri) della Valle fell in love with the unknown maiden. He immediately traveled to Baghdad, where she was said to live, to find her. There he met Maani and married her a month later. She accompanied him on his voyage until her death four years later in Persia.

Nearly twelve years later, della Valle returned to Rome, on March 26, 1628. During these years he traveled throughout Asia, and recorded his experiences in fifty-four letters that he addressed to his friend Mario Schipano. In the decades subsequent to his return to Rome, della Valle's letters were edited and published between 1650 and 1663 in four volumes consisting of three parts.

ARRIVAL IN PERSIA

Three years after his departure from Venice, on January 4, 1617, della Valle proceeded to visit Persia. In the summer of 1618, he joined the Persian Emperor Shah Abbas I in a campaign in the northern of the country.

In 1621, della Valle left Isfahan for Shiraz and on July 27 of that year he wrote a letter from the Gardens of Shiraz (Lettera XVI, Dai giardini di Sciraz, del 27 di Luglio), in which he described his visit to the tomb of Hafez. There he visited the shrine of Hafez on July 1, 1622, and took down in his notebook:

del 27 di Luglio, in which he described his visit to the tomb of Hafez as follows:

"On July 1, I went alongside a lengthy and beautiful route, which led to the shrine

Pietro della Valle

(1586-1652)

The first European to visit the shrine of Hafez in 1621

from the book: *Hafez and His Divan*,
by Nasser Kanani



of Chogia Hafiz, the celebrated Persian poet. The entire *Canzoniere* (*Divan*) of this poet consists of lyric poems, similar to our Tuscan sonnets, or Latin epigrams. His poetry is highly admired and keeps changing hands like that of our famous

Petrarch. The first thing the visitor perceives in the spacious and ornate garden is a small temple covered by a cupola, under which the tomb of the poet is located, as well as a marble arch, on which scripts are engraved. The poet's name is written on the gravestone. I copied it, but I shall not reproduce it here since the language and the characters are foreign to us. The whole place has been created solely for the poet although there are other gravestones belonging to less noble people. It is called by the Mahomettani [Muslims] a place of *ziara*, a holy place."

"The book of Hafez, called *Divan*, is preserved here. It is beautifully written with golden characters on large sheets of paper. It is, however, not written by the poet himself. I, always fascinated by poets and poetry, composed four verses in our language while I was beside Hafiz's shrine. But I did not leave them there because the Muslims would then think that I, a Christian, had honored the shrine of an infidel. My verses are mentioned below as they were improvised:

Hafiz, il gran Poeta, in questa tomba
Le ossa caduche; il nome, in mille
carte,

Da lui vergate, con mirabil' arte,

*Lasciò, che ancor famoso a noi rim-
bomba."*

*Hafiz, the great poet, in this tomb
His perishable bones, his name on thou-
sand sheets,*

*Written with wonderful art,
Left behind for us, still reverberating.*

On their way back to Italy, Sitti Maani died between Persepolis and Hormuz Island of the pestilential fever then raging along the shores of Persian Gulf. She was only in her twenty-third year (1600-1621). Among other possessions collected by her husband, she arrived in Rome as a mummified corpse after years of traveling in a lead-lined sarcophagus:

She faded—but her beauty's bloom
About the traveler's heart did glide;
In all his wanderings her tomb
Was ever by his side

In his country, della Valle translated a few poems of Hafez into Italian, which he would read at gatherings of learned friends and congenial spirits. In so doing, he planted the seeds of the culture of translations from the *Divan*. Thus, Hafez became the first Persian lyricist to be translated into Italian.

Unfortunately, none of della Valle's translations has remained.



Della Valle's "Viaggi" ("Travels"), nearly 1,800 pages, were published in 1650

Persian Influence on Kashmiri Art

Mehrdad Shokoohy
Encyclopedia Iranica

The Iranian influence on the art and architecture of Kashmir is indirect, appearing in ancient times via Hellenistic and Kushan culture and later through Muslim India. Spread over the western Himalaya, the once relatively inaccessible region's architecture still reflects Himalayan traditions in its extensive use of timber and the pitched and tiered roofs. Even as late as the 17th century, its people lived in rudimentary huts and tents; only palaces, mansions of the wealthy, and temples were constructed of timber, still a perishable and combustible material. As a result, little is preserved of the ancient monuments except in the ruins of a very few stone temples, which, to a great extent, reflect the style of the timber structures.

The earliest Iranian influence can be seen in a fragment of a 2nd-century statue of a Kushan ruler, carved in the Parthian style, found in the ancient site of Huvishkapura (modern Ushkar), and preserved in the Sri Partap Singh Museum at Srinagar. Huvishkapura, founded by Emperor Huvishka (see *huviška*) in the 2nd century CE, is one of the many towns built by the Kushan kings in Kashmir. Little survives of the town today, except for the remains of Huvishka's stupa, which was reconstructed in the 8th century and later became a Vaishnavite Hindu site (Kak, 1933, p. 152).

Extensive Iranian influence impacted Kashmir after the disintegration of the Parthian empire in 227, when numerous artisans and stonemasons seem to have left the eastern borders of the empire for Kashmir and northwest India. As the Sasanian conquest of Kushan did not extend as far as Kashmir, the Parthian style continued to flourish in the Buddhist sites of the region, as presented in the stupas and monastery at Harwan, which preserve numerous figures in Parthian costume carved in the Parthian style.

Parthian traditions seem to have remained prevalent, as wherever Indians in Indian costumes are represented they are carved in a non-Indian manner. Nevertheless, the images show that Indians were indeed in the region, and when their art is reflected, it is in typically Gupta floral motifs. By the end of the 4th century, the Iranian influence started to decline, and Indian culture began to dominate. Later Buddhism, along with its arts, much related to Gandharan and Partho-Hellenistic culture, was replaced by Hinduism, and the Iranian influence would not be seen in Kashmir until the introduction of Islam into the region in the mid-14th century. But in the 9th-century temples of the Utpala dynasty at Avantipura, decorative motifs of Sasanian style are prevalent in the surface decoration, while the design principles relate to North India. It seems that, with the collapse of the Sasanian empire after the Muslim conquest, once again Iranian craftsmen together with others from the Near East moved to the relative safety of the mountains of Kashmir (Goetz, 1952, p. 81).

Kashmir was never conquered by a Muslim army, but Islam was introduced to the region by one Šāh Mirzā or Šāh Mir, a Muslim adventurer who entered the court of the local raja in 715/ 1315-16; subsequently, in 747/ 1346-47, he married the last Hindu ruler, Queen Kutāh Div (Kotā Devi), but killed her a day after their marriage (Ferešta, II, p. 338; Neẓām-al-Din Aḥmad

Heravi, *Ṭabaqāt-e akbari* III, p. 425). The spread of Islam was slow but firm, and the sixth Šāh-Miri sultan, Sekandar b. Hindal, known as Botšekan "Idol-breaker" (r. ca. 796-819/ 1393-1417), converted the entire population. This was after the coming of the Kobrawi Sufi, Sayyed 'Ali Hamadāni, who resided in Srinagar and was instrumental in the spread of Islam in Kashmir. Among his many followers was the Kashmir Sultan Qoṭb-al-Din Ṭāher (ca. 772-88/1370-86; *Aḏkā'i*, pp. 51-53). Sekandar expelled those who did not convert, although his son, the enlightened Sultan Zaynal- 'Ābedin (r. 826-77/1422-73), allowed some Hindus to return.

Sekandar earned his epithet by destroying whatever temples were left from earlier eras. Little remains of his own edifices, but the buildings of the time of Zaynal- 'Ābedin leave the impression that the early mosques and tombs would either be built over the remains of the sanctum of an earlier temple or be erected on a square plan following the traditional style. They were often made entirely in timber or with brick or stone walls and Islamic arches, but with a timber pitched roof surmounted by a square canopy with an elongated pitched roof—similar in form to the pinnacle (*chattrāvali*) of a Himalayan stupa—used as a minaret for the call to prayer. The style appears in many buildings, such as the shrine of Madani or Mādin Šāh at Zadibal and the mosque of Šāh Ḥamdān (the local name for Sayyed 'Ali Hamadāni) in Srinagar, both originally founded at the time of Sultan Zayn-al- 'Ābedin but many times rebuilt.

The exception is the tomb of Zayn-al- 'Ābedin's mother, which is a brick structure consisting of an octagonal, double-shelled domed chamber with four smaller double-shelled domes



Statue of King Kanishka I (c. AD 127–163)

over three square chambers and the entrances at the cardinal points. The building, and particularly its domes, seems to have been inspired by the grand monuments of Samarqand, but executed on a modest scale (see below).

An example representing all aspects of traditional Kashmiri architecture is the mosque at Avantipura, erected near the ruins of the ancient site, but, unlike the earlier mosques and shrines, not incorporating spoil of ancient monuments. The most outstanding monument of the sultanate of Kashmir, however, is the Jāme' Mosque of Srinagar, which has an Iranian and Central Asian four-ayvān plan built with brick walls and grand arches for the ayvāns, but with wooden columns supporting a traditional, Kashmiri-style timber superstructure. In his memoirs, the Mughal emperor Nur-al-Din Mohammad Jahāngir (p. 338) describes this mosque:

“In the town there is an extremely elegant mosque of the edifices of Sultan Sekandar, which was founded in 795 [1392-93] but after some time it burnt, and Sultan Hasan reconstructed it; but before its completion the mansion of his life collapsed on its foundations and in 909 [1503] Ebrāhīm Bākari, the vizier of Sultan Moḥammad completed the mosque with auspicious ending. . . . It has four ayvāns and the surfaces of the ayvāns and columns are covered with paintings executed with elegant motifs. Truly, no monument better than this has survived from the time of the rulers of Kashmir.”

Elsewhere (p. 340) he notes that the roofs of the mosque, as with those of other buildings, were covered with soil and planted with tulips (also see Lāhuri, I/2, p. 23). The mosque was, however, rebuilt at the end of the reign of Jahāngir (r. 1605-27) and was completed in 1637 at the time of Šāh-Jahān (r. 1628-57), apparently without much alteration to its original layout and appearance, but the tradition of planting tulips on the roof has long been abandoned.

Kashmir was taken by the army of the Mughal emperor Akbar in 994/ 1585-86 ('Allāmi, III, p. 474; Jahāngir, p. 338), who himself visited the region three years later ('Allāmi, III, pp. 542-52), constructed a fort in Srinagar, and established a garden known as Bāḡ-e Nurafzā (Jahāngir, p. 343). The garden may be the same as what is now known as Nasim Bāḡ, a sizeable but dilapidated garden on a Persian čahārbāḡ layout, the avenues of which are lined with lofty plane trees and said to date from the time of Akbar (r. 1556-1605). Whether or not the two gardens are the same, there is little doubt that Akbar's gardens would have been on a čahārbāḡ layout, as the form was introduced to India by Bābor in his garden at Agra, and subsequent Mughal gardens were laid out on similar principles. Akbar also introduced a number of fruit trees native to Khorasan and Badakhshan, including sweet cherries and an early fruiting morrello cherry called aškan (Jahāngir, p. 348). Akbar's fort, completed by Jahāngir, has, however, survived and, as with other Mughal monuments of the period, the Persian influence is apparent in the profile of the arches, which follow closely the style of late Timurid and Safavid four-centered arches.

PERSIAN GARDENS IN KASHMIR

Although only a few of the many Mughal gardens in and around Srinagar have survived, the remaining ones are the main attraction of the town. Two such gardens established by Jahāngir in 1029/ 1619-20 are Šālimār (called Šālmāl by Jahāngir, pp. 343-44, and Šālmār by Kanbō, II, p. 28), a rectangular čahārbāḡ by the Dal Lake in Srinagar, laid out on three ascending platforms, each with stylish pavilions, and the Vērṇāḡ garden (Jahāngir, p. 356) with a large, octagonal pool at the source of the river Jhelam, which was favored particularly by Nur Jahān, Jahāngir's

influential Persian queen. On her order a mosque called Patthar Mašjid was built of stone in Srinagar, following the traditional Indian plan but with a wooden pitched roof. In the vicinity of Srinagar Jahāngir established other gardens, including one in Achhabal (Jahāngir, p. 355).

“Kashmir's shawls . . . are so famous that they need no words of admiration; another type is therma which is thicker than shawl and is a twill weave (mowjdār) and soft . . . The wool of the shawl is from a type of goat, which is specific to Tibet.”

Whatever the patterns of the pre-Mughal shawls might have been, the motifs of surviving Mughal and later examples are closely comparable to traditional Islamic and Iranian designs. A fashionable article in 19th-century Europe, Kashmir shawls became a victim of their own success when machine-made imitations from centers such as Paisley in Scotland gradually took over their market in the 1870s. The Mughals also introduced carpet weaving with traditional Persian knots and patterns, and even today some of the best carpets of India are produced in Kashmir.

Šāh-Jahān also spent many summers in Kashmir, where he established new gardens, improved the older ones, and at Vērṇāḡ garden added an arcade around the pool (Lāhuri, I/2, pp. 23-29, 47; Kanbō, II, pp. 28-31, 276). His daughter, Jahān Ārā Begum, built a stone mosque with a grand arched portal for her spiritual leader, Mollā Šāh Badaḡši, in Srinagar; and near Šālimār his minister, Ašaf Khan, a brother of Nur Jahān, established Nešāt Bāḡ (Lāhuri, I/2, p. 47; Kanbō, II, p. 355), a grand garden, again on several platforms. Some suggest (Agrawal, p. 181) that the platform arrangement seen in the gardens of Kashmir follows the concept of palaces and houses with a forecourt at the lower platform, leading to a middle platform as the public area (biruni) with the highest platform acting as the private quarters (andaruni), but the more likely reason for terracing is to bring out the potential of the sloping terrain while resolving its problems in a pragmatic way.

The last of the Mughal gardens of Kashmir is the Pari Maḡal or Pir-e Maḡal, built by Dārā Šokuh in 1644 as his residence on the side of the steep hill with a commanding view over Srinagar and the Dal Lake. The terraces and structures of the garden have survived, but little remains of the garden and its trees. Most of the gardens of Kashmir have been restored in recent years and have been replanted with flowering shrubs and ornamental trees, but the many varieties of fruit trees, a prime feature of these gardens described by Jahāngir in detail, are missing.



The Grand Mosque of Kashmir (known locally as “Jamia Masjid”) of the city of Srinagar, bears strong Persian architectural influences

For generations they have signified femininity and glamour – but a pair of high heels was once an essential accessory for men. Beautiful, provocative, sexy – high heels may be all these things and more, but even their most ardent fans wouldn't claim they were practical.

They're no good for hiking or driving. They get stuck in things. Women in heels are advised to stay off the grass – and also ice, cobbled streets and posh floors. And high heels don't tend to be very comfortable. It is almost as though they just weren't designed for walking in. Originally, they weren't.

"The high heel was worn for centuries throughout the near east as a form of riding footwear," says Elizabeth Semmelhack of the Bata Shoe Museum in Toronto. Good horsemanship was essential to the fighting styles of Persia – the historical name for modern-day Iran.

"When the soldier stood up in his stirrups, the heel helped him to secure his stance so that he could shoot his bow and arrow more effectively," says Semmelhack.

At the end of the 16th Century, Persia's Shah Abbas I had the largest cavalry in the world. He was keen to forge links with rulers in Western Europe to help him defeat his great enemy, the Ottoman Empire. So in 1599, Abbas sent the first Persian diplomatic mission to Europe – it called on the courts of Russia, Germany and Spain.

A wave of interest in all things Persian passed through Western Europe. Persian style shoes were enthusiastically adopted by aristocrats, who sought to give their appearance a virile, masculine edge that, it suddenly seemed, only heeled shoes could supply.

As the wearing of heels filtered into the lower ranks of society, the aristocracy responded by dramatically increasing the height of their shoes – and the



A men's 17th Century Persian shoe, covered in shagreen – horse-hide with pressed mustard seeds (Source: Bata Shoe Museum)

Why Did Men Stop Wearing High Heels?

WILLIAM KREMER

BBC NEWS MAGAZINE, JANUARY 25, 2013



Louis XIV wearing his trademark heels in a 1701 portrait by Hyacinthe Rigaud (Bata Shoe Museum).

high heel was born.

In the muddy, rutted streets of 17th Century Europe, these new shoes had no utility value whatsoever – but that was the point.

"One of the best ways that status can be conveyed is through impracticality," says Semmelhack, adding that the upper classes have always used impractical, uncomfortable and luxurious clothing to announce their privileged status.

"They aren't in the fields working and they don't have to walk far."

When it comes to history's most notable shoe collectors, the Imelda Marcos of his day was arguably Louis XIV of France. For a great king, he was rather diminutively proportioned at only 5ft 4in (1.63m). He supplemented his stature by a further 4in (10cm) with heels, often elaborately decorated with depictions of battle scenes. The heels and soles were always red – the dye was expensive and carried a martial overtone. The fashion soon spread overseas – Charles II of England's coronation portrait of 1661 features him wearing a pair of enormous red, French style heels – although he was over 6ft (1.85m) to begin with.

In the 1670s, Louis XIV issued an edict that only members of his court were allowed to wear red heels. In theory, all anyone in French society had to do to check whether someone was in favor with the king was to glance downwards. In practice, unauthorized, imitation heels were available.

Although Europeans were first attracted to heels because the Persian connection gave them a macho air, a craze in women's fashion for adopting elements of men's dress meant their use soon spread to women and children. As noted by Semmelhack:

"In the 1630s you had women cutting their hair, adding epaulettes to their outfits... They would smoke pipes, they

would wear hats that were very masculine. And this is why women adopted the heel – it was in an effort to masculinize their outfits.”

From that time, Europe’s upper classes followed a unisex shoe fashion until the end of the 17th Century, when things began to change again.

Helen Persson, a curator at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London state:

“You start seeing a change in the heel at this point...Men started to have a squarer, more robust, lower, stacky heel, while women’s heels became more slender, more curvaceous.”

The toes of women’s shoes were often tapered so that when the tips appeared from her skirts, the wearer’s feet appeared to be small and dainty.

Fast forward a few more years and the intellectual movement that came to be known as the Enlightenment brought with it a new respect for the rational and useful and an emphasis on education rather than privilege. Men’s fashion shifted towards more practical clothing. In England, aristocrats began to wear simplified clothes that were linked to their work managing country estates.

It was the beginning of what has been called the Great Male Renunciation, which would see men abandon the wearing of jewelry, bright colors and ostentatious fabrics in favor of a dark, more sober, and homogeneous look. Men’s clothing no longer operated so clearly as a signifier of social class, but while these boundaries were being blurred, the differences between the sexes became more pronounced. Semmelhack avers:

“There begins a discussion about how men, regardless of station, of birth, if educated could become citizens...Women, in contrast, were seen as emotional, sen-

timental and uneducatable. Female desirability begins to be constructed in terms of irrational fashion and the high heel – once separated from its original function of horseback riding – becomes a primary example of impractical dress.”

High heels were seen as foolish and effeminate. By 1740 men had stopped wearing them altogether. But it was only 50 years before they disappeared from women’s feet too, falling out of favor after the French Revolution. By the time the heel came back into fashion, in the mid-19th Century, photography was transforming the way that fashions – and the female self-image – were constructed.

Pornographers were amongst the first to embrace the new technology, taking pictures of naked women for dirty postcards, positioning models in poses that resembled classical nudes, but wearing modern-day high heels.

Semmelhack, author of *Heights of Fashion: A History of the Elevated Shoe*, believes that this association with pornography led to high heels being seen as an erotic adornment for women.

The 1960s saw a return of low heeled cowboy boots for men and some dandies strutted their stuff in platform shoes in the 1970s.

But the era of men walking around on their toes seems to be behind us. Could we ever return to an era of guys squeezing their big hairy feet into four-inch, shiny, brightly colored high heels?

“*Absolutely*,” says Semmelhack. There is no reason, she believes, why the high heel cannot continue to be ascribed new meanings – although we may have to wait for true gender equality first:

“If it becomes a signifier of actual power, then men will be as willing to wear it as women.” ●

Al-Khwarizmi

Persian Mathematician, Astronomer and Geographer

part one

Nasser Kanani, (Prof. Dr.Ing. Dr. Habil.) Berlin

Al-Khwarizmi was a Persian mathematician, astronomer and geographer who disseminated the Indian numbers throughout the Islamic world and introduced them as “Arabic” numerals to the West. He founded the mathematical branch algebra, which is why he is referred to as the “father” of algebra, and his name has become what is known today as “algorithm,” meaning how to find the solution for a given problem. Without al-Khwarizmi’s “Arabic” numerals and his “algorithm” the invention of the modern computer would have never been possible. In recognition of his services to the scientific world NASA has named a crater on the moon after him (photo below).



Name and Epithets

Al-Khwarizmi’s full name was Abu Jafar or Abu Abdallah Muhammad ibn Musa al-Khwarizmi. The last part of his name refers to his birth place, Khwarizm in the Greater Khorasan, which then occupied the eastern part of the Greater Iran. Khwarizm or Chorasmia was part of the Persian Empire, and its name appears in Achaemenid inscriptions as *Huvarazmish*. The remainders of Khwarizm belong nowadays partly to Uzbekistan and partly to Turkmenistan.

Al-Khwarizmi is also known by two epithets: al-Majusi and al-Qutrubbulli. The first epithet, meaning magician (a Zoroastrian priest), indicates that his Persian ancestors and parents were adherents of the Zoroastrianism founded by the Old Persian prophet Zoroaster. The second epithet refers to a viticulture district of Baghdad by the name of Qutrubbull which was famous for its wines, touring minstrels, and *carpe diem* atmosphere.

Birth and Death

Al-Khwarizmi was born around 783 CE¹ probably in the city of Kath in Khwarizm. He died around 850 CE in Baghdad after having served three Muslim Caliphs: al-Ma’mun (813-833), al-Mu’tasim (833-842) and al-Wathiq (842-847)².

Education and Religious Belief

Only few details of al-Khwarizmi’s life are known with

certainty. He must have studied mathematics and astronomy vigorously when he was an adolescent, since as a young man he was already an accomplished mathematician and astronomer. In the course of his academic training he must also have made the acquaintance of scientific manuscripts, which were written in Pahlavi³ and Sanskrit.

The pious preface to his book on algebra clearly shows that al-Khwarizmi was an orthodox and devout Muslim. This fact gives rise to assume that either both his parents abandoned their Zoroastrian religion and converted to Islam after the conquest of Khwarizm by the Muslim Arabs in 712 CE, or he himself became later a Muslim.

At al-Ma'mun's Court

The young al-Khwarizmi drew the attention of al-Ma'mun, who was the younger son of Harun al-Rashid, the legendary Abbasid caliph (786-809), and his Persian wife Marajil. He had been appointed governor of the Greater Khorasan by his father and his capital was the city of Merv, nowadays in Turkmenistan.

Al-Khwarizmi was invited to join al-Ma'mun's courtiers and soon became a member of his scientific entourage.

When al-Ma'mun was appointed caliph in 813 CE he decided to rule the Islamic Empire, which stretched from the Mediterranean Sea to India, from his capital Merv and continued to do so for six years. However, in 819 CE he was forced by many conflicting circumstances to leave Merv for Baghdad and entered the Islamic capital on August 11, 819.

Al-Khwarizmi accompanied the new caliph to Baghdad and there became one of the scholars at the House of Wisdom.

House of Wisdom

The House of Wisdom was originally a scientific institute initiated by Caliph Harun al-Rashid for translating books on alchemy and medicine, logic and philosophy, astrology and astronomy, mathematics and geography from Pahlavi, Greek and Sanskrit into Arabic. It soon became a center of learning where educated men gathered and translated scientific works.

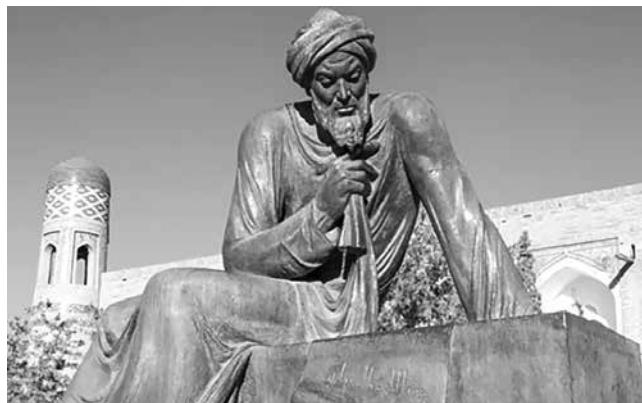
Its point of culmination reached the House of Wisdom during the caliphate of al-Ma'mun, a patron of the sciences, and developed into the largest repository of books in the world accumulating a huge collection of knowledge. Many learned scholars from all over the Islamic Empire set out for the House of Wisdom to study and teach mathematics and astronomy, medicine and alchemy, geography and cartography, and other sciences. They were engaged in translating all the known scientific works as a consequence of which the Arabic language started to flourish. Thus, al-Ma'mun's era became the *Golden Period* of the Islamic civilization.

Under Ma'mun's patronage, and the spirit of openness towards other religions and cultures that he fostered, many scholars from all over the empire gravitated towards Baghdad, drawn by a vibrant sense of optimism and freedom of expression.

Scientific contributions

Al-Khwarizmi made contributions in various fields of science including astronomy, geography and cartography as well as mathematics. He also wrote a treatise on Hebrew Calendar called "*Extraction of the Jewish Era*" and authored some treatises on mechanical devices such as astrolabes and sundials. After all he was one of the developers of the astrolabes and sundials and by writing these treatises he wished to prove his astronomical abilities.

Al-Khwarizmi's talents were holistic and ranged from one



Statue of Al-Khwarizmi in Uzbekistan. Image by © Melvyn Longhurst/Corbis

subject to another. He never hesitated to explore new dimensions in fields that intrigued him, and turned out to be a scientist of great merit paving the way for further development of many sciences.

Prior to discussing some of al-Khwarizmi's major works, it should be pointed out that even though he was a brilliant mind, discovered astronomy, geography and mathematics in a way no one had before, and wrote on his own findings, some of his achievements can be traced back to the Babylonian, Indian, Greek and Persian sources. He reviewed the existing knowledge in various fields and left his own mark in a way that his achievements could continue their legacy till present time. Unfortunately, not all the works written by him have survived.

Astronomical Works

Following al-Ma'mun's order two lavishly equipped observatories were constructed around 823 CE, one in Baghdad and the other one in Damascus, so that al-Khwarizmi and his fellow astronomers could perform their astronomical research and make their own discoveries. It should be added that the knowledge of astronomy was also critical for certain religious exercises such as determining which direction to pray and ascertaining the times for the first sighting and setting of the crescent moon at the start and end of the holy month of Ramadan.

Zij al-sind-hind

Most of al-Khwarizmi's contributions were in the field of astronomy. He produced a considerable amount of astronomical tables, called *Zij*, containing calendars and calculations of the true positions of the sun and the moon and five planets known at his time. His development of this kind of astronomical tables was a significant contribution to the field of astronomy.

Al-Khwarizmi's major astronomical work known as *Zij al-sind-hind* was based primarily on Persian and Hindu astronomical sources and to some extent on Greek texts. It is known that the original tables in his *Zij* employed the Persian solar year and date of origin corresponding to the era of Yazdegerd III,⁴ 16 June 632 CE. The Indian text on which al-Khwarizmi had based his treatise was one that had been given to the court in Baghdad around 770 CE as a gift from an Indian political mission.

The original Arabic version of *Zij al-sind-hind* was lost. A Latin translation that has survived in its entirety indicates that the original text consisted of 37 chapters and 116 tables containing astronomical and astrological calculations as well as detailed data on the sun and the moon and other celestial bodies. It also encompassed tables of solar and lunar eclipse and parallax⁵ as



Al-Khwarizmi's World Map

well as tables for trigonometric functions such as *sines*, cosine and *tangents*. Al-Khwarizmi's astronomical work marked the turning point in the Islamic astronomy. Hitherto, Muslim astronomers had been translating works of others and learning already discovered knowledge. Al-Khwarizmi, on the contrary, not only expounded extensively the works of ancient astronomers, but also performed his own research. As a sign of service to the Muslim faith, he developed a method to calculate the time of visibility of the new moon, indicating the beginning of the month of Ramadan.

Geographical Works

From among al-Khwarizmi's geographical works two are in particular worth mentioning, one is *"The Image of the Earth"* and the other *"The World Map of al-Ma'mun"*.

"The Image of the Earth"

Around 1875 a German specialist in Middle Eastern and Oriental studies by the name of Wilhelm Spitta (1853-1883) discovered in Cairo a geographical manuscript entitled *"The Image of the Earth"*. On its cover it was attributed to Musa al-Khwarizmi. The Italian scholar Carlo Alfonso Nallino (1872-1938) was the first to recognize in it al-Khwarizmi's work on geography commissioned by Caliph al-Ma'mun.⁶

As it turned out *"The Image of the Earth"*, a major work in the field of geography in its own right was based on *Geographike Hyphegesis* put forward Ptolemy⁷ around 150 CE. According to the American scholar, Walter B. Bevens:

"First extensive use of Ptolemy known is by ibn Musū al-Khwarizmi in his work, *Kitab surat al-arḍ*. In this work, al-Khwarizmi produces an elaboration of Ptolemy's material made with liberties taken to make it more acceptable to Muslim thought."⁸

Al-Khwarizmi, however, not only revised Ptolemy's views, but also made some considerable alterations in his Geography in that he improved or corrected Ptolemy's data with more accurate values for sites in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. Based on his own findings, al-Khwarizmi provided better values for the length of the Mediterranean Sea than Ptolemy.⁹

Al-Khwarizmi's *"The Image of the Earth,"* which was finished in 833 CE, provided the latitudes and longitudes of more than 2400 sites in the known world, including oceans, seas, rivers, mountains, islands and cities as well as other geographical features, in particular in the Islamic world. This is easily compre-

hensible when one takes into consideration that where more local knowledge was available to al-Khwarizmi such as the regions of Islam, Africa and the Far East then his work was considerably more accurate than that of Ptolemy. As for Europe, al-Khwarizmi seems to have used Ptolemy's data.

An interesting aspect of *"The Image of the Earth"* was the classification of *weather zones*. Al-Khwarizmi had ordered the inhabited quarters of the world in different climates.¹⁰ His contribution in the field of geography has been praised by Nallino as follows: "His geography is not a servile imitation of the Greek model, but an elaboration of Ptolemaic material made with more independence and ability than is displayed by any European writer of that period."¹¹

The World Map of al-Ma'mun

At al-Ma'mun's behest al-Khwarizmi cooperated with a team of geographers to create a map of the known world to be called *"The World Map of al-Ma'mun"*. The Caliph wanted his geographers to create a world map that accurately depicted the shape of the world, which would enable him to recognize countries and regions conquered by the Muslims.

The only one surviving copy of *"The Image of the Earth"* does not contain such a map. However, the German scholar, Hubert Daunicht,¹² and the Indian scientist, Razia S. Jafri¹³, have been able to reconstruct the missing map from the list of coordinates given in *"The Image of the Earth"*.

to be continued

Notes:

1. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO, has declared the year 1983 as the 1200th birth anniversary of al-Khwarizmi.
2. The most recent date associated with the name of al-Khwarizmi is 847. This year died Caliph al-Wathiq, and al-Khwarizmi is mentioned among the persons who were present at his death.
3. Pahlavi or Pehlevi, also known as Middle Persian, was the Middle Iranian language of the Sassanid era (224-654 CE).
4. Yazdegerd III was the last king of the Sasanian Empire (Reign: 632-651 CE)
5. Parallax refers to the phenomenon that objects in the further distance appear to move slower than the objects closer to the observation post.
6. There is only one surviving copy of *"The Image of the Earth"*, which is kept at the Strasbourg University Library. A Latin translation is kept at the Biblioteca Nacional de España in Madrid; the complete title translates as "Book of the Image of the Earth, with its Cities, Mountains, Seas, all the Islands and Rivers, Written by Abu Jafar Muhammad ibn Musa al-Khwarizmi, According to the Geographical Treatise Written by Ptolemy the Claudian."
7. Claudius Ptolemy (90-168 CE), Greek mathematician, astronomer and geographer
8. Walter Bascom Bevens: "Al-Yaman and the Hadramawt: Translation from Medieval Arabic Geographers and Analysis," a dissertation submitted to the Department of Oriental Studies of the University of Arizona, 1988, p. 15
9. Edward S. Kennedy: "Mathematical Geography," in "Encyclopaedia of the History of Arabic Science," Volume 1, edited by R. Rashed in collaboration with R. Morelon, published by Routledge, London New York, 1996, p. 185
10. The classical "Tetragonus mundus" (four-fold world view, or dividing the Earth in four quarters) is often attributed to the Greek philosopher Aristotle (384-322 BCE) even though the roots are older.
11. Carlo Alfonso Nallino: "Al-Huwarizmi e il suo rifacimento della Geografia di Tolomeo" (Al-Khwarizmi and his Reconstruction of the Geography of Ptolemy," in *Atti della R. Accademia dei Lincei*, fifth series, Memorie, Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche, Vol. II, 1896, pp. 11-53
12. Hubert Daunicht: "Der Osten nach der Erdkarte al-Huwarizmi's: Rekonstruktion der Karte," Band I-IV, Bonner orientalistische Studien, Selbstverlag des Orientalischen Seminars, 1968/70
13. Razia S. Jafri: "Al-Kharazmi's Geographical Map of the World Based on the Book *Surat al-arḍ*," Soviet Committee of the International Association for the Study of the Cultures of Central Asia, Dushanbe, 1985

An Interview with

Dr. Nader Engheta

Physicist and Professor

Shahrokh Ahkami

Please introduce yourself to our readers with information of your childhood and your family.

My name is Nader Engheta, and I was born in Tehran in 1955 (1334) in “Chaahaar Rah-e-Aziz Khaan” (later it was called Hafez Avenue). We moved to Pasteur Avenue when I was 6 years old, and I lived there until 1978 (1357) when I came to the US.

Where did you begin and end your education in Iran and in the United States?

When we moved to our home in Pasteur Avenue in 1961, I went to elementary school at Ebn-e-Sina, and then to Hadaf No. 1 High school. After I got my high school diploma in 1973, I went to Daneshkadeh-e-Fanni’s Electrical Engineering department, and graduated first ranked from there in 1978, and then came to the US to the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) where I got my MS and PhD degrees in 1979 and 1982, respectively.

When did you become fascinated with waves?

I first became fascinated with waves when I saw one of my brothers, Iradj, working on a battery-operated transistor radio. What was amazing to me was how this radio was producing sounds even though it was not connected to anything. I asked Iradj how this worked. He explained to me that there was a wave, which we could not see, coming from the radio station to the antenna of the radio, and that was how the radio got the information (like that particular music) from the radio station. This was very fascinating to me.

That fascination was the reason behind my interest in waves and fields, and why I decided to go to University of Tehran’s Daneshkadeh-e-Fanni and then to Caltech in the US to study science and engineering behind the waves. My brother Iradj told me then this was the

field in which we could learn about the technology.

What in simple terms is the actual science and technology in the field of waves?

Waves can be quite useful, and if harnessed properly, they can provide us with interesting functionalities and useful devices. One of the main questions is: How can we manipulate waves? One can use materials to control and manipulate waves.

A good example is a microwave oven, in which the metal of the oven keeps the waves inside for cooking, and does not allow the waves to come out. Optical fibers are another good example, in which we put the optical signals inside the glass fibers and then you use the light as a useful mechanism to send information from one place to another. So as you can see, waves can have very useful technological features.

You have worked in both the optical and the microwave domain, please elaborate on this.

Both of these are electromagnetic waves, but they have different wavelengths. Microwave signals can have wavelengths in the order of centimeters and millimeters, whereas optical waves have wavelengths around 400 nanometers to micrometer scales.

What is your current position at the University of Pennsylvania?

I am an endowed scholarly chaired professor, which is called H. Nedwill Ramsey Professor, and I have affiliations in four departments: Electrical and Systems Engineering, Bioengineering, Physics and Astronomy, and Materials Science and Engineering

Does your work take you outside of the university,



photo by the UPenn photographer, Mr. Felice Macera

worldwide?

Yes, I attend many international conferences and symposia all over the world, and I lecture and give colloquia in various universities and research institutions worldwide.

Can you explain metamaterials?

In Greek “meta” means “beyond”, and “metamaterials” refers to engineered structures that exhibit unusual, “beyond-the-ordinary” properties in their interaction with waves. For example, if you consider an ordinary material in nature, e.g., gold, it consists of an array of gold atoms arranged in a specific pattern. These gold atoms and the way they have been arranged determine how light interacts with this material.

In metamaterials, however, we consider arrays of building blocks made of materials and we embed these “inclusions” in a host matrix. With the proper arrangement, alignment, and density for these inclusions, we can design this “composite” structure such that when the light illuminates this “engineered material” or “meta-material”, it behaves very differently from the interac-

tion of light with the individual inclusion and the host. This concept provides us with a fascinating possibility to design and construct materials that are not readily available in nature, but they can be designed and engineered at will. So we can obtain exciting possibilities for the light interaction with such structures.

What is the application of your works on the different methods of use?

In my group, we have explored a variety of applications of metamaterials. For example, one application has been how to design metamaterials that when you put it around an object, it would make the scattering of waves from the object less noticeable, i.e., effectively the object may become “invisible”.

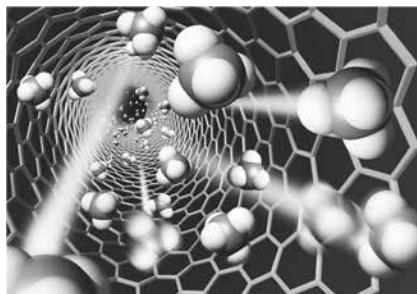
Another application, we have introduced is a new paradigm for optical circuits inspired by metamaterials, in which nanometer-scale structures can function as “lumped” circuit elements that work with light instead of electricity...Such a circuit, which I named “optical metatronics”, can have a wide variety of use and applications.

What is a nano antenna and miniature antenna?

We are all familiar with conventional antennas, which often we see on the rooftop. These conventional antennas transmit and receive electromagnetic waves with the wavelengths that are meters, centimeters or millimeter length scales. You can tell the wavelength roughly from the size of the antennas.

However, nano antennas are the antennas that can interact with optical waves with the wavelength much much smaller, e.g., in the micrometer and nanometer scales. In order to get an intuition about such a small size, let’s do the following: Get a single strand of your hair, which has the diameter of about 0.1 of a millimeter, and that is about 100 microns (100 micrometers).

Now let us divide this hair thickness by a factor of 1000. This will get you to about 100 nanometers. That is the size of such nano antennas, which are good for visible light. (by the way, the wavelengths of visible light are in the range from 400 to 700 nanometers). Such nano antennas can interact with light, and can affect the light interaction with the materials.



You have a remarkable number of publications, books, achievements, medals, do you actually have time left for a personal life?

Yes, I do have some time for my personal and family life. I am very thankful and very much indebted to my family, particularly my wife, Susanne, who has been my great partner and best friend all these years. By the way, this year she and I celebrated our 30th anniversary.

Can you tell us a bit about you being on the list of Scientific Americans top fifty.

I was very pleased when I got the news that the Scientific American Magazine selected me as one of the 50 leaders in science and technology in 2006. It was a great and unexpected surprise. It was for my work in introducing and developing the new optical nanocircuit paradigm (which I named optical metatronics).

When did and how did you make your way to the United States?

I came to the US on August 31, 1978 (1357) to attend California Institute of Technology (Caltech) for my MS and PhD degrees.

Did you encounter any problems in assimilating into the US or achieving your goals?

Immigration is a brave act, and any immigrant is a courageous person. Leaving your comfort zones and coming to a new land with a new culture and new habits could be overwhelming for anyone.

The US is an amazing and wonderful country, in which immigrants can achieve their dreams by working hard. Just like any immigrant, I also had challenges that

I had to be overcome.

I am very thankful and grateful to the US for providing me with a great possibility to achieve my goals of becoming a scientist.

I am certain your goals and dreams have not been completed, what does the future hold for you?

We always have dreams and goals as long as we are alive. For me, one of my scientific dreams is to see how we can do mathematical computation with light at the atomic scales, i.e., can we “solve” equations using light and a few collections of atoms.

If successful, that will open up tremendous possibilities for information processing, much more than we currently have, and this will lead to betterment of human kind through better interaction, better health, and more efficient energy harvesting all over the world.

As for my pedagogical goals, I hope to be able to inspire many young minds all over the world to pursue their passion in learning, to develop joy of discovery, and to consider science as their friend. Science is a universal language that is beyond borders and politics.

Do you read the works of Persian writers or other authors, if so who?

I love Persian poetry, particularly the poems of Omar Khayyam and Saadi. I also like history, and I read the history of the middle east in the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. As for the contemporary Iranian writers I like the work of Professor Abbas Milani and the work of my brother, Nasser Engheta.

Do you have any inspirational words for our younger generation?

Go after your passion, find the topics that you are interested in, whether in science, engineering, arts, literature, painting, and/or business, and follow it with passion. If you are interested in something, you will work hard for it, and success will come sooner or later.

Thank you for your time.

Thank you very much.