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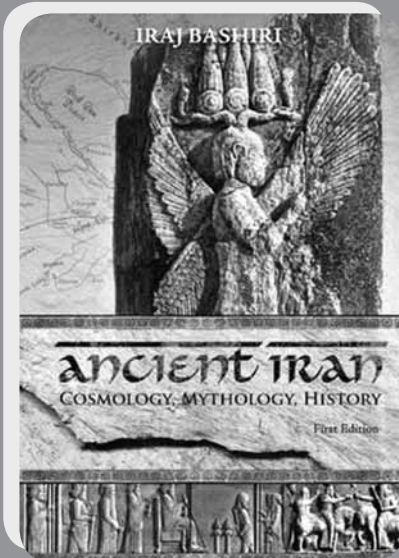
ANCIENT IRAN: COSMOLOGY, MYTHOLOGY, HISTORY

By: Dr. Iraj Bashiri

COGNELLA PUBLISHERS, INC.

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Ancient Iran: Cosmology, Mythology, History presents Iran's pre-Islamic history within the context of both its complex cosmology and rich mythology. The book uses the concept of *farr* to show how authority, finding guidance in the cosmic realm, organized the lives of Iran's hero-saints in the mythic realm. It also discusses how historical monarchs organized their hierarchical societies according to the dictates of *Ahura Mazda*.

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Iraj Bashiri received his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan. He is a Professor of History at the University of Minnesota, where he teaches Ancient Iran among other courses. His published works include:

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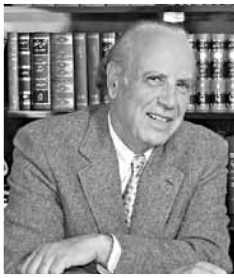
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IMPORTANT NOTICE

All written submissions to Persian Heritage with the expectation of publication in the magazine must include the writer's name, address and telephone number. When an article is submitted we assume the author has complete ownership of the article and the right to grant permission for publication.



FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

It is time for me to wish our readers a very happy New Year. In addition to happiness I wish you, and the people of the world, a year filled with joy, peace, harmony and unity. And I pray this is the year Iranians and the world are united.

Today we live in a world where information is at our fingertips. With a single push of a button we receive information in seconds. Because of advancement in technology, time barriers and borders between countries have been eliminated. The speed in which information is exchanged can be both positive and negative, since people have the ability to respond in equal time.

Each day I receive hundreds of emails, which I read, respond to or discard. The other day I received an email from a friend and a brilliant man. He copied me in a letter sent to Senator Kirk, of Illinois (the home state of Abraham Lincoln, assassinated because he fought for the equality, liberation and freedom of all mankind.) Senator Kirk, in a recent speech asked the question, "How do you define a moderate Iranian." He responded, "One without bullets and without money," and "it is okay to take food from the mouths of Iranian citizens." I was sickened by this statement. I knew what he actually meant was that all Iranians were "terrorists" walking around with guns killing people, who should be completely stripped of their financial value and dignity and that it is a good thing to keep them hungry and allow them to starve to death. This would leave them in a position to beg. I wanted the opportunity to ask Senator Kirk how he decided on this ignorant senseless and inhumane definition, after all he is a politician and supposedly educated and well read. Perhaps his campaign funds were backed by lobbyists seeking to thwart any efforts of normalizing relations between Iran and the United States.

I wanted to ask the Senator, if he personally saw an Iranian captured in a terroristic act. I wanted to ask him if he ever witnessed an Iranian fire a gun or throw a grenade into a crowd of people. I wanted to ask him if he forgot that the horrific terroristic acts on 9/11 were committed by the hands of citizens from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Lebanon, Yemen and Pakistan, NOT IRAN. I wanted to ask him if he thought the people of Iran were terrorists simply by the location of the country.

This HORRIFIC statement, insulted 75 million Iranians in Iran and the millions who now call other countries home. Senator have you ever met or conversed with a "so called moderate" Iranian? Do you know that some Iranians, were forced to leave Iran because of a ruthless and politically prejudicial GOVERNMENT? They left behind prestigious employment, life and family in order to provide a peaceful life for their family? Did you know that once they were relocated they worked whatever jobs they could to provide for their families, rather than become a parasite? Did you know they struggled in every way to make sure their children received an education? Did you know they worked hard at integrating into their new societies? And, did you know that while they will never forget their birthplace, they have worked

and still work hard to become outstanding citizens and patriots in their new homes?

Senator do you know the astonishing number of very successful Iranians in the United States and around the world? Do you know how many are doctors, scientists, CEO's, astronauts, musicians, artists, and professors etc. etc., including 106 year old Professor Ghaffari, who recently passed away. Professor Ghafarri was the first Iranian to participate in the Apollo mission. Do you know that Iranians are considered one of the most successful immigrant groups in the United States? Knowing this Senator Kirk, is this how you would continue to define an Iranian, moderate or not?

Senator, knowing this, are you now embarrassed by your hurtful words against all innocent Iranians? Senator I ask you, have you ever come across on Iranian in the streets of the United States begging. Probably not, because Iranians have pride! Furthermore, an Iranian stripped of everything would still share with another even less fortunate.

Yes Senator, many Iranians were able to make new fortunes outside of Iran. They however, are not arrogant millionaires. They remain grateful for what they have and are willing to contribute to those in need. Yes, Senator, you would be ashamed of what you said, after meeting just a handful of Iranians, hyphenated or not.

This senseless definition for the mass "moderate" Iranians is disturbing. How can an active member of a government describe an entire nation in that light? (An arrogant and baseless comment not much different from what Ahmadi Nejad said at the UN. This type of generalization is the easiest and unfortunately most effective way to convert the masses to think in the same way. Look at the success the media and politicians in keeping the issue of the American hostages alive. This ugly and unfortunate event took place in Iran, over 30 years ago, yet the general population continues to believe that this ugly act was done by the people of Iran by a handful of "so called" students backed up by the government. The story continues with movies depicting Iranians as "terrorists" and "savages" such as 300 and Argo. It is my opinion that without political reasons Ben Affleck would not have received an award for Argo, nor would he have received it from the First Lady of the United States? Again, in my opinion this was just another political maneuver to keep this hatred alive. Maybe I am a bit synical, but I have not seen any reason to convince me otherwise.

Often I wonder how different the world and Iran would be today if the hostage taking in 1979 had not occurred. Would there still have been an Iran Iraq war? Or, would the millions who lost their lives and limbs be active citizens, fathers, mothers and grandparents? Think of what Iran would be like today if the wealth used on the seven year war was instead earmarked to develop schools and hospitals? Perhaps the war was pay back for the hostage taking.

Your statement, Senator Kirk will bear no positive result. This comment and those like it will continue to prevent old wounds from healing, or allow for a superficial mend, that can be broken through by an underlying infection. But I continue to remain hopeful for the normalization of the relationship between Iran and the world. I remain hopeful that Americans, will sort out fact from fiction. My hopes can become a quicker reality if the media and politicians stop using the excuse of a 30 year old incident, as a source of fuel to control American and Iranian citizens.

As I mentioned above the Iranian government's decision to send Ahmadi Nejad to the UN did not help Iranian relations. What credibility could be given to a government who allowed its President to state that the Holocaust did not exist and that his head was circled by a "holy halo", during his United Nations speech? If such a derogatory statement was not used, maybe the sanctions in place today, would not have been imposed! After all, the individuals these sanctions impact are not the government elite. They harm the working class people of Iran and deprive them of medicine, food and livelihood.

Perhaps then Senator Kirk's statement that "a moderate Iranian is one without bullets and without of money," is how they see Iran and Iranians. Maybe they do not want any improvement in Iran but rather a complete collapse. This would allow Iran to be divided like Yugoslavia. Maybe this is the reason that Turkey is recently enjoying the generosity of the west. A stronger Turkey, in their minds, means a weaker Iran. The President of Turkey is currently trying to extend his hand to Mr. Barzani, the head of Kurdistan of Iraq to try and set up a new government in Kurdistan. This is the same individual whose father, Molla Mostafa Barzani, was extended a hand by the Shah for support against Saddam Hussein.

What no one acknowledges, however, is that the Iranians in general such as the Kurdish, Azari people are patriotic Iranians who love Iran. Unfortunately, due to the indifference of the government in Iran and its brutality they have been disappointed. The Kurdish and Azari people have been left out of the political arena even though they had been a big part of the constitutional revolution that made the Iranian Constitutional System with a Parliamentary system in the past. All hoped that with the election of the new Iranian President that his cabinet would have embraced these and other ethnic and religious minority groups. This has not occurred.

The insult by Senator Kirk defining a moderate Iranian, "as an Iranian without bullets or money," will impact 75 million Iranians, in Iran, who yearn for the freedoms of religion, press, speech, life and human rights. And it impacts millions of Iranians around the world. I pray the world citizens will reject this general categorization of a people, a categorization based on the actions of its government, not people. Senator Kirk, are you aware of the fact that the youth of Iran, young men and women, fill its universities and schools. They hunger for a better life, one that is at peace and unified with the remainder of the world.

Senator do you know that Iran, in the past 300 years, has never been the aggressor? The country has been attacked multiple times. They have only defended their nation and their borders. These borders are being threatened to be divided Iran. To date attempts are becoming realities. Slowly Iran's integrity is being chipped away. To some these changes go unnoticed, but to Iranians, hyphenated or not, any changes in the boundaries or in Iranian attributes cannot be accepted. For example the game of polo, always referred to as an invention of the Persian world, now has an origin of the Republic of Azerbaijan!! The Louvre Museum referred to Iranian treasures as Arabic and Islamic trea-

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*Happy
New
Year!*

**A RESPONSE TO UNACCEPTABLE WORDS
OF SENATOR KIRK OF ILLINOIS**

Dear Senator Kirk

Recently, you made the following comment:

"How do you define an Iranian moderate? An Iranian who is out of bullets and out of money."

Apart from the fact that such an insulting comment is not befitting a senator from the state of Abraham Lincoln, it is deeply insulting to the Iranian people. There are seventy million Iranians, a majority of them young. Millions of them rose in protest in 2009 against the oppression of the theocratic regime, only to have their voices crushed. Despite that, the quest for freedom has continued.

Iranians are by nature moderate. They are pro-Western, they thirst for freedom, for integration in the global economy and society. They are no different than you and me. There are also hundreds of thousands, if not millions of Iranian-Americans, who form one of the most educated and talented minorities in the US, loyal Americans, yet with close ties to their homeland. You have insulted them too with your remarks.

By insulting collectively the Iranian people, you have only deepened the wedge between two people who are natural allies. That is a pity. I urge you to retract those comments and apologize to the Iranians and the Iranian American community.

Respectfully submitted
Karim Pakravan

tures and the Persian Gulf is called the Arabian Gulf or the Gulf. If this continues Iranian youth, and the younger generations of the world will no longer know the history and contributions of the Persian Empire. As I stated earlier technology has allowed a flood gate of information, but some of this information can be false and derogatory and can cause instantaneous changes to our history. Iranians need to stop the flood before it entirely wipes out Iran's historical position in the world. And I say to the remainder of the world citizens, who are proud of their heritage and history, **do not think that this cannot be done to your great country's history!**

Prevention of losing Iranian identity can be accomplished through the worldwide unification of Iranians. All must put an end to disparaging remarks like Senator Kirk's. Your silence must be broken and you must react to such vial statements and inadvertent changes to Iranian historical sites ad history. Iranians are a courageous, dignified and intelligent group with an ability to peacefully negotiate change. Remember people do listen to well thought out reason and logic, but people cannot hear SILENCE. I beg us all to no longer be silent and to speak out against all injustices, historical or not. Do not think of these changes as unimportant. There is intention behind each word and action. But we must carefully pick our arguments.

Yes, Senator Kirk's statement made me depressed, angry for his ignorance. But those emotions have now turned to hope. By the number of emails I have received after his comment, from Iranians and non-Iranians, statements like his are not resulting in compliance. In fact statements like Senator Kirk's are creating peaceful movements to neutralize the hatred which has been perpetuated. Youth groups are organizing. Other organizations are mobilizing. I see them beginning to use their influence and power of the positions they now hold. Their voices are being heard. Slowly Iranian American representation in the House and Senate is rising. Remember, it is not numbers alone that provide strength and influence. It is commitment and intelligence. Iranians historically never back an injustice. They side (like Cyrus has taught the world so well) with VIRTUE and EQUALITY for all.

Had Senator Kirk's statement been made to a Senate which included a majority of Iranian representatives and Senators had such statement been directed to another ethnicity, the Iranian Americans would have stood up together against his statement. They would have defended the citizens, from any country, against such a disparaging general statement.

A few years back Persian Heritage had the opportunity to interview a Congressman who embraced Iran and its culture. At the time Senator D'Amato was in office. He too had disparaging words against Iran and Iranians. This Congressman told me that if a handful of influential Iranians went to Senator D'Amato's office and met with him, after ten minutes he would have dropped his head and never have spoken another disparaging word against Iranians.

If a handful of us could do that imagine what we can accomplish as a unified group!

Happy New Year

Shahrokh Rezaian

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THANK YOU

Dear Editor:

Thank you so much for letting me have a copy of the book review you wrote regarding my father's political biography by Dr. Mansoureh Ettehadiyeh. Your review was excellent, as always, and I hope it might persuade some of your readers to obtain the book. I thought the biography was quite well done, although I wish Dr. Ettehadiyeh had made greater use of the rich foreign sources (US National Archives; British National Archives; UNO Archives, as well as some Soviet sources, which I had put at her disposal.

*Ba tajdeede maratebe ehteram va eradat,
Fereydoun Ala*

HONORING

Dear Editor:

All my thanks to for the *Persian Heritage* Fall Issue, you kindly sent me and for the articles related to my husband.

You know how much he appreciated what you are doing to promote Iranian Culture and Iranians, who keep it alive.

My best regards to you.
Claudine Shafa

GREAT ARTICLES

Just to let you know, I have very much enjoyed two articles in the last issue of the "Persian Heritage." Both are very close to my heart. I have studied them and have written essays:

The article about "Cyrus and Jefferson" by W. Scott Harrop was well written.

There is no question that Jefferson had adopted and implemented many of Cyrus' rules.

What Jefferson embraced from Xenophon Cyropaedia, was the sharp contrast that Cyrus' law had with those enumerated in the Machiavelli's writings, the essence of which is in running a nation can be summarized, as, "It is better to be loved than feared."

The next article was by Dr. Ala, "The Azerbaijan Crisis." As you know I have in detail pointed out this problem and that of Kurdistan in my book. Dr Ala has done an excellent job. I shall anxiously wait for the last part and may write a note once the whole article is published.

Thank you also for your wonderful reviews of my book. I greatly appreciated your columns, both in Persian and English.

Thank you again, H. Guilak

TWO ERRORS IN MY ARTICLE

Thank you for considering my article about the translation and transliteration of one of the famous poems of Sa'di Shirazi, which was published in *Persian Heritage* magazine. I noticed a couple of errors in the published article.

Please consider noting these corrections in the next issue of *Persian Heritage*, with reference to my article. The errors are as follows:

1- In paragraph 10 (second column, third line) the word 'Abear' should have been spelled 'Abir'; elsewhere in the article, the spelling is rendered as "Abir", and both refer to the same word.

2- In the third column, in carry-over paragraph from the second column, the phrase 'humbly whispers' should be deleted; this phrase did not appear in the original article that I sent.

Mahvash Amir-Mokri

**PERSIAN HERITAGE
ACKNOWLEDGES THE PASSINGS OF...****Dr. Manouchehr Pajoohi**

After a long illness Dr. Pajoohi passed away in New Jersey. He was a dedicated obstetrician and gynecologist in Passaic, NJ with an active practice from 1970 to 2001. He was well known in the medical community. Dr. Pajoohi will be remembered for his humanitarian efforts. He is survived by his wife, daughter and son-in-law, son and daughter-in-law, and grandchildren.

Mrs. Khadijeh Shahnava Komeili

Mrs. Komeili was a former school teacher and humanitarian. She passed away in California and is survived by her husband, daughter, grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Professor Ebrahim Amir Mokri

Professor Amir Mokri passed away in Illinois. He was a prominent professor of pathology. His legacy, besides his endeavors in the medical field, include his humanitarian efforts and knowledge of Persian history and culture. He is survived by his wife and colleague Dr. Mahvash Amir-Mokri, his son, the present Assistant Secretary of Treasury, Dr. Cyrus Amir Mokri and daughter Dr. Mina Amir Mokri.

Mrs. Afsar Fatemi

Mrs. Fatemi passed away in New Jersey. She was the beloved wife of Professor Faramarz Fatemi. She is survived by her daughter Mrs. Roshanak, son-in-law and two grandchildren. Besides a devoted mother and wife she was a treasured friend to *Persian Heritage* magazine.

Mrs. Faranak Zamani

Mrs. Zamani passed away in Clifton, NJ. She will be remembered for her poetry and literary skills. Mrs. Zamani was the beloved wife of Dr. Mohommad Zamani and is survived by a daughter and son, and two grandchildren. Besides her commitment to her family, Mrs. Zamani was a member and former President of the Persian Cultural and Humanitarian Association of NJ.

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A HOPEFUL DEAL



Geneva, Switzerland, November 23, 2013. Intense negotiations between representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran and representatives of the P5+1 resulted in a deal regarding Iran's nuclear program. It is a joint plan of action that sets out an approach toward reaching a long-term comprehensive solution.

During the first six months of this interim deal, Iran is to be transparent, and commit to halt its enrichment above 5% and neutralize its stockpile of near-20% uranium. Iran will also make no further advances of its activities at Arak and halt its progress on its plutonium track.

The P5+1's actions during the interim deal is not to impose new nuclear-related sanctions, to suspend certain sanctions currently on gold, precious metals, Iran's auto sector, and Iran's petrochemical exports.

This will provide Iran with a possible additional \$1.5 billion dollars in revenue. P5+1 will also license repairs and inspections for certain Iran airlines and allow purchases of Iran's oil at the current reduced levels. Additionally the agreement provides for the transfer of \$400 million dollars, in governmental assistance from restricted Iranian funds, directly to educational institutions in third countries. This is to defer the tuition costs of Iranian students.

A SHAMEFUL ANNIVERSARY

Persian Territorial Losses after the Gulistan Treaty of 1813 and the Turkmanchai Treaty of 1828



It was 200 years ago today, on October 24, 1813 that the 1st Persian-Russo war was concluded with signing of the Gulistan treaty. The treaty confirmed separation from the Persian empire and inclusion of modern day Azerbaijan, Daghestan and Eastern Georgia into the Russian Empire. The 19th century had marked a new era of expansionism among the European powers, Britain, France, and Russia. Although, both Britain and Russia had the Napoleon's desire for hyper expansion to worry about, they continued their advances in the Western and Central Asia.

Persia, once a mighty and formidable empire had fallen behind the scientific and military advancement that the European countries were enjoying with the help of the industrial revolution. Hence, it was no longer possible for Persia to remain as an empire without being able to afford the military power of the rival European Empires.

Tsar Alexander I's expansionist ambitions were set not only on capturing territories like, Georgia, Daghestan, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Turkmenistan but going all the way and reaching the warm waters of the Persian gulf. And if there were not other competing European powers present in the scene, his total goal would have seemed achievable. Russians waited out a few more years before provoking another war and it was in that second Persian-Russo war and its treaty called Turkmenchay signed in 1828 that Persia lost all of Armenia and the rest of Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan and was reduced to the current size and the present day borders.

(article sent in by C.Mowlavi October 24, 2013)

IRAN PLANS TO SEND THE SECOND MONKEY INTO SPACE

Iranian media reported that the country's space agency plans to send a second monkey into space within a month in its ongoing pursuit of a manned space program. The conservative "Jomhuri Eslami" on October 13 quoted Hamid Fazeli, the deputy head of Iran's space agency, as saying the planned launch is part of a program to send a human into space in 2018. Fazeli refused to set a definite date for the launch. Iran's state-backed English-language broadcaster Press TV also quoted Fazeli on the hopes for a fresh simian launch, adding that Iranian scientists also expect to send "other species" into space in later stages of the program.

Iran in January claimed to have successfully launched a live monkey into space and to have brought it safely back to Earth. The experiment's success was disputed, however, when photos of a different monkey were presented to the media after the landing. In September, an Iranian space program official said Iran was considering launching Persian cats into space.

MASOOD KHATAMEE, M.D. HONORED



Dr. Khatamee, M.D. was honored at the ASRM for a new endowment, Endowment in Fertility Prevention and Fertility Restoration and Prevention. The new program was endowed to him to support educational areas in the areas of infertility.

**MR. PRESIDENT ARE YOU LISTENING?
From the Gun Control Law to the Saga of Infertility
Dr. Masood Khatamee**

Fertility Research Foundation 2012

Now in the second edition, this book captures the trials and tribulations brought about by the loss of a child through death and the loss of a child not ever conceived.

When a parent becomes a parent or the title is stripped from them through illness, fertility or violence, it is often an unrecoverable event.

This book deals with both. It also discusses the frustrations of not being able to accomplish the eradication of one of these events, when it is POSSIBLE. Through letters and writings of the authors and memoirs it is their hope that the President is LISTENING.

A Poem by Katie Holderman

*So in depth, hold on with all of my might.
Waiting in the rain, a cold winter night.
Inhale, exhale. Calm as I am.
Hair blowing in the wind.
Somebody take my hand.
My eyes they close;
As I breathe in deep
You run through my mind
And my life is complete.
I open my eyes
But you're still not there
No one could take your place.
With you my heart I share
A cold afternoon,
Hands as cold as ice
Thoughts go through my mind
My feelings are concise
Lying in your arms
We are the perfect match
The distance is discouraging
Yet still I am attached
Sitting by the fire,
Thinking in a distant stare
Waiting under streetlights
Nobody could compare*

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The U.S. Role and Iran in Southwest Asia

RACHEL ELIASI KOHAN

November 2013 New York

Déjà vu all over again, the U.S. foreign policy has once again arrived at a critical historical crossroad. It is either faced with the prospect of continuing to escalate the geopolitical stability of Southwest Asia aka the Middle East, through its unilateral and preemptive military interventions and the unwavering support of unpopular dictatorial regimes in the region on the one hand, or to commit to a multilateral dialogue and achieve our strategic security, and economic and political objectives in the context of the aspirations of the people in the region for sovereignty, democracy, freedom, equality, justice and peace, on the other. Whereas one might argue that the first option will in the short run lead to a quasi-stability and economic and political concessions by the regimes in the region, it is the latter paradigm that in the long run will ensure the organic acceptance of our leadership for the mutually sustainable economic development and trades that benefit all parties concerned.

After spending up to four trillion dollars and losing thousands of precious American lives in Afghanistan and Iraq within the past ten years—never mind the catastrophic miseries inflicted on the locals—the question still remains as to whether such a heavy toll endured by all sides, has enhanced our strategic objectives or the daily lives of the indigenous. The so-called Arab Spring, which led to a degree of reforms in Tunisia and Egypt and the current stalemate in Syria, seems to have subsided. The struggle of the majority Shiite population in Bahrain, governed by the Saudi-transplanted Sunni clan the Al-Khalifa, for democracy and equality, is quenched (with U.S. approval as the U.S. Fifth Fleet is stationed in Bahrain by the heavy-handed Saudi military forces essentially occupying the “pearl” archipelago. Similar to all other Sheikdoms in the Persian Gulf, Bahrain is a new island nation set up by the British in the early 70’s, which, for the preceding millennium was an integral province of then Persia, aka Iran.

After having no diplomatic relations since 1979, the prospect of a possible rapprochement between the U.S.-West and Iran seems most promising. The Islamic Republic regime, IRI, isolated from the international community for thirty-five years, is increasingly faced with some of the most serious existential dilemmas. Sanctions spearheaded by the U.S. have now impacted every segment of the society, including the acquirement of medicine and food. Overpopulation, unemployment, underemployment, monetary devaluation, corruptions, a systematic violation of civil and human rights, a multitude of shadow government organs, pillage and rampage of natural and financial resources, and repressions of dissent and civil society are exacerbated due to sanctions. The IRI government, acting schizophrenic for its very legitimacy, should take most blame for such blatant failures. The IRI’s political rhetoric inside and outside Iran has faded away into oblivion and its economic and socio-political agenda has miserably failed. The IRI’s mistrust of the West—the U.S., especially after having witnessed the fatal demise of the uncooperative regimes in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Egypt, is understood. By the same token, the U.S. animosity toward Iran has only been

bolstered by events as taking the American diplomats hostage in 1979, which in relation led to provocation and western support of Iraq in a prolonged border dispute skirmish against Iran of inclusive end. It brought up to one million lives lost, Iraqi extensive use of chemical weapons against Iranian civilians, and a half trillion economic loss for both sides. The Americans should finally move beyond the loss of Iran’s Pahlavi monarchy as the closest strategic ally in region; the Shah stretched the green Islamic belt along the southern Soviet borders and served as the gendarme of the west preventing the Russian longing to stretch its feet into the warm waters of the Persian Gulf. Ironically, the Pahlavi dynasty was overthrown due in part to their return to power and erosion of democratic principles back in 1953 when the only nationally elected Prime Minister Dr. Mohammad Mosadegh was overthrown by a coup orchestrated by the CIA.

With the election of Hassan Rouhani as President in Iran and his recent UN address and conversation with President Obama, the question has emerged as to whether the IRI is genuinely interested in joining the international community while allowing the civil society and the rule of law to take hold inside the country. If so, what does the future role of the U.S. in Southwest Asia, to be manifested through Iran, look like?

Iran to outsiders in the occident looks like a theocratic monolithic State. Upon closer examination, however, one can discern a broad spectrum of socio-political forces, not only among the grassroots populace, but also among the so-called establishment oligarchs, that are in a power struggle with one another (see the endnote). The clergies of the religious minorities: the quarter of a million Armenian and Assyrian Christians, thirty thousand Jewish, fifty thousand Zoroastrians and the nearly ten million Sunnis remain apolitical. Nonetheless, as recognized in the IRI Constitution, they have representatives in the Majles, the Iranian Parliament. Up to a half million followers of the Baha’i faith, founded by the Shirazi merchant Mohammad Ali Bab (Bab, means gate to paradise) who claimed to be the last emerging 12th Imam, and his successor ironically a Shiite clergy, Bahau’llah in Iran in the mid-19th century, are not recognized and in fact persecuted by the government. Baha’ism coincided with the national movement for modernization, reformation, and the rule of law and civil society in the mid to latter part of the 19th century. Such progressive movements led to the establishment of the Constitutional Monarchy in 1907 replacing the absolute monarchy 2,500 years in the making. Violation of human and civil rights, imprisonment, torture and execution of political prisoners of conscience remain grave concerns in Iran. Baha’i followers are particularly singled out and more harshly persecuted, discriminated, imprisoned, tortured, exiled and sometimes executed.

Notwithstanding the governments that have come and gone for nearly three millennia in Iran, 75% of its current population, under the age of 35, was born after the 1979 revolution. Iran has the most educated and technologically-savvy population in the region, after Israel. Up to two-third of the nearly three million university students are women. Today’s Iran, which is only a fraction of its zenith existence several millennia in the making, has not invaded any other nation in at least two hundred years. The cultural influence of Iran, formerly known to the West as Persia, continues to reverberate through the Indus Valley, Central Asia, the Caucasus and Asia Minor. The contributions of Iranians since antiquity toward humanity is well documented.

As the U.S. cautiously moves forward for direct negotiation with the IRI, we must succinctly articulate our outcome

expectations and the expectations of the IRI role in the region and fundamental reformations of their domestic policies. The prerequisite for such negotiation is mutual reaffirmation to respect the integrity and security of both nations. We should not extend our domestic eminent domain statutes to tap onto and exploit natural and territorial resources of other nations.

Whereas the U.S. has not yet gotten over the hangover of losing its most strategic ally, the Pahlavis, in the Near Eastern oil sphere, IRI is only using the nuclear issue as an ace close to its heart so as to receive survival security guarantees of not being overthrown. Hence, the sovereignty and security of Iran and the nation's destiny as decided by the people must be guaranteed. By the same token, the safeguard of the rule of law and civil society, civil liberties and human rights, and equality and transparency in Iran, should remain paramount in reaching any breakthroughs. In two recent independent polls in Iran, up to 90% asked for the normalization of diplomatic relations with the west, especially the U.S. No other nation in Southwest Asia could even come close to that resolve. The nation of Iran must ultimately decide as to its future directions; the nearly three million Iranians in diaspora could only play an auxiliary and facilitating and not a decisive role. Notwithstanding, one could only surmise for a government in Iran to be anchored on a national secular and democratic principle, whereby all religions and ethnicities, including Shiism, are respected, but none become the exclusionary political force.

ENDNOTE

The latest number of Muslims worldwide reported by Pew Research at 1.65 billion, comprises nearly 25% of the world population, second only to all denominations of Christianity. The Shiites comprise over 15%, of the total, that is, 250 million Muslims. There are over a hundred thousand Shiite clerics who intrude in the daily lives of the 90% of the 80 million, the population of Iran; the additional one hundred fifty million Shiites, in order of percentage of the total population live in Bahrain, Azarbaijan, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan, Oman, Tajikistan, Turkey, and Syria. Each have their own interpretation of Juris Prudence and the level of participation in political activities religiously allowed. The Shiite clergies, comprised of the more "revered" black turbans (descendent of the prophet Mohammad through his daughter Fateme) and the white turbans (commoners), subject to which original school (Najaf, Qom, Mashhad, Damascus or JabalAmel of Lebanon) they adhere to, have a somewhat divergent set of decrees on society, politics,


economics, etc.

The black turbans at times wear a green shawl on their waist to accentuate their loyal pedigree to Mohammad's family as well. There is a highly structured hierarchy within the Shiite clergy that in many ways resembles, and was presumably adopted from Catholicism (the grand ayatollah Ol-Ozmais equivalent to the Pope.) Most Shiite clerics, resorting to a theological detour called Taghieh, can make a U-turn on any fatva (decree) and retro-legitimize an action or inaction under a hadith (narrative.) It is exactly this theological concept that allows Shiism to turn and reform as it fits, when compared to Sunnism, which considers reformations tantamount to the fundamental sanctity of Islam.

The Vahabi-Salafi movement of Saudi Arabia, the cornerstone of the Al-Qaeda, justifies any despicable act to preserve the traditionalist Sunni Islam. The Saudi royal family of nearly one hundred thousand and their extended network belong to this sect. Although the Qur'an and most religious narratives believed by both the Shiites and the Sunnis are in common, deviations from the origin of Islam and how Mohammad lived and acted will rarely happen among the more zealot Sunnis. Paradoxically, it is the fatalist Shiites--the believers of the arrival of the messiah Mehdi, who is the 12th Shiite Imam and descendent of Mohammad--that are regarded as the most radicals. The Fadaian Islam and Hojatieh movement of the 20th century in Iran are staunch subscribers to occultation and as such would resort to any acts imagined so as to expedite the arrival of Mahdi on the day of Reckoning and who is expected to establish the [just] kingdom of God.

In today's Iran, the Hojatieh adherents have penetrated and taken hold of every segment of the government and trades. The supreme leader, Ali Khamenei is struggling to strike a deal whereby he could circumvent the Hojatieh clan by seeking Western security guarantees for the regime's existence and receiving recognition by the U.S.-Western nations. In fact, due to the ever increasing presence of the western allied U.S. forces in almost every country surrounding Iran, Khamenei and his chosen President Rouhani are exploiting the nuclear issue and their influential proxies in Syria in particular but also in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Persian Gulf states so as to bolster their legitimacy and survival.

In doing so, they hope to provide a degree of relative comfort for the Iranian populace thereby delaying any fundamental overthrow of their IRI both from within and without. The misguided military and foreign policies of the West in the region of the past few decades has bolstered Iran as the only quasi-stable country in the region.



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9/11 And Alexander The Great

By Qasim Raza

Source: Pravda March 10, 2013

In 356 BC, a child was born to Greek King Philip with clot of blood grasped in his right hand. This incident of birth was viewed as extraordinary by many astrologers and fortunetellers. They had predicted that the child will spill a lot of blood, and will be responsible for large scale massacre and loss of millions of lives.

There were also many persons at that time, who were not viewing it as an extraordinary event. To them, it was like a normal birth, and they were completely unaware about the fact that what doom would fall upon many people of the world at the hands of this child. The astrologers were completely familiar with the fact that what a doom would fall upon the humanity due to the birth of that child.

For the first three years of his life, he played with snakes of his mother Olympia instead of toys. In the following years, he underwent rigorous training, equipped himself with martial arts, and became an expert of sword and spear fight. He also became familiar with the art of taming beasts, turning rebels into his faithful, and handling the traitors. He became the disciple of the great thinker and philosopher Aristotle, who polished his intellectual qualities. He also learnt to make strategies and tactics of war.

He was such an extraordinary person that at the age of 13 he became a complete warrior, who was having dream of conquering the world. To fulfill his dreams, he was prepared to show no mercy on anyone in his way. He was just waiting for the right opportunity to strike.

Fate was kind to him, and he got an opportunity to fulfill his dream, when his father died, and the rein of the Kingdom of Greek came in his hands. He obsessively started pursuing his dream, and declared war against the world at large. Blood of humanity was spilled like water. Many people were constrained to face death as the same was necessary for the fulfillment of the dream of a ruler. His efforts bore fruit, and he successfully conquered various countries from the Ionian

Sea to the great Himalayas. The world still remembers him as “Alexander the Great”.

Thousands years from the day of “Alexander the Great”, another event like that happened. A day under the name and style of “9/11” was born. That day changed the whole scenario of world, and it also swallowed millions of human life and caused large scale devastation. Though the event happened on 9/11 worth condemnation, but a common man had not anticipated that this day would be an excuse to wage war for those, who are having a dream like that of the “Alexander”. But the astrologers of the present day had seen the clot of blood that this day was having in its hand, and they were aware of the devastations that were / and are still likely to follow from what had happened on 9/11.

This day has instilled a feeling of insecurity among masses of the world. That day has given the conquerors of the present world an opportunity to give a silent message to various countries of world that they are free to take whatever they want, and the map of world would be changed as per their whims and desires. The conquerors of present day, like Alexander, are also fanatically pursuing their designs to conquer the world, and crush those, who dare to raise voice against them.

It was Afghanistan, which was immolated at the fanatic desires of the conquerors of present day. Iraq was another country, the population of which country had/have to bear the cost of the dream of ruling the entire world. Unrest in Middle East and Africa, e.g., the humiliating death of Colonel Gaddafi, strange revolutionary attempt in Egypt, protests in other states of Middle States, has also some sort of nexus with the dream of conquering the world. Now, Syria has become the target of these conquerors. It is to be seen that the turn of which country would be next.

The thirteenth year of 9/11 is about to come. I am afraid that what has happened in past thirteen year was just part of training to conquer this world, the real devastation is about to come...!■

These expansionist energies were particularly directed towards oil-rich Iran, where the chances of success were high. After all, northern Iran was still occupied by the Soviet army, Stalin's greatest asset, and while it was still in control, it would be a relatively easy matter to foster Azari nationalist sentiment by manipulating the pro-Soviet Tudeh Party, and creating popular pressure for the 'reunification' of Soviet and Iranian Azarbaijan – the Azari Motherland, which incidentally was said to extend as far as Tehran.

In July, 1945, Stalin had accordingly sanctioned the organisation of national autonomous movements in the provinces of Azarbaijan, Gilan, Mazandaran, Kordestan and Khorasan, together with the provision of armaments, printing presses and money. The local administrative apparatus of the Tehran government was rapidly dismantled by NKVD and Soviet Azarbaijani officials; a revolutionary 'Azarbaijan Democratic Party' was established; Iranian troops and gendarmes were disarmed and confined to barracks; landowners were intimidated and dispossessed; judges arrested, and local Azari militia – 'muhajers' in Russian uniform, were armed and trained. Mir Jaafar Baqerov, the First Secretary of the Soviet Azarbaijan Communist Central Committee in Baku, was put in charge of these initiatives, and took great pains never to employ weapons of Russian manufacture. The 'tool-marks' of overt Soviet interference were to be carefully effaced. In consequence, arms were only from foreign sources: Colt, Brno and Browning. Repeated protests from the Iranian Ministry for Foreign Affairs that the Soviet Union was in breach of all its commitments, were ignored or given short shrift. All efforts by the central government to send troops to Azarbaijan or Kordestan to quell the disorder created by the separatists, were blocked by the Red Army at Zanjan, west of Tehran. Again, the Politburo justified adoption of this policy "for fear that the presence of Iranian troops would cause violence and bloodshed, requiring the despatch of further Soviet reinforcements". The Kremlin was short of time, and needed to hurry to implement its programme, and to bully the Iranian government into granting an oil concession in northern Iran as soon as possible. In accord with the 1942 Tripartite Treaty of Alliance between Britain, the USSR and Iran, and the Tehran Conference Declaration of December 1943, Iran was guaranteed its "territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence", and all foreign troops were to be withdrawn by March 2nd, 1946, six months after the cessation of hostilities.

The patrician, subtle and highly experienced Ahmad Qavam (Qavam o-Saltaneh), who always treated the young Shah with some contempt as a novice, was appointed Prime Minister on January 26th, 1946 – not without his careful solicitation of the post with the Soviets. Among the first actions of his premiership was to fly to Moscow in a Soviet military plane with a delegation, to seek a resolution of what was now an international crisis, directly with the Soviet government. He was most lavishly received, met for discussions with Stalin no less than three times, and with Molotov four times, and remained for altogether three weeks. Under pressure to grant an oil concession, Qavam could only say that his hands were tied by law, as the Majles had forbidden direct negotiations

without their express consent.

Little of any substance resulted from all these meetings and negotiations however, and Qavam was merely advised by Stalin at the magnificent 'Last Supper' held in his honour, that all further discussions would be deferred pending the arrival of the new Soviet Ambassador Vasilyevich Sadchikov in Tehran. However, even before Qavam left, a radio Moscow announcement on March 1st that Soviet forces would only 'partially withdraw from peaceful areas' of northern Iran, while the rest would remain for an 'indefinite' period caused acute anxiety in Tehran and Washington, where Ambassador Hossein Ala was already sounding the alarm in the US Press and among influential members of the Administration.

Even before Qavam's return empty-handed on March 11th, Tudeh manifestations in front of the Majles at Baharestan had reached a climax, preventing deputies from entering and reaching a quorum in the dying days of the 14th Majles. With the Majles dissolved, Qavam was left in sole charge of government, to cope with both a chaotic internal situation, and an obdurate, menacing Soviet neighbour. Indeed, when Robert Rossow, US Vice-Consul in Tabriz reported on March 11th that, rather than evacuating Iranian soil, fresh Soviet armoured columns had poured across the Iranian border, some of which were heading west towards the Turkish border, the image so fondly fostered by Roosevelt, of a benign 'Uncle Joe', a valiant ally in the struggle against the evil Axis powers, was finally shattered.

With Harry Truman as President, United States policy was undergoing a radical change at this time, and following George Kennan's advocacy of a 'Containment Policy', and Churchill's famous 'Iron Curtain' speech in Fulton Missouri in March, confrontation replaced cooperation in American strategic and military thinking. The decades of 'Cold War' and Soviet isolation which followed,

were probably initiated by Stalin's diplomatic mistakes and the openly acquisitive, aggressive stance he adopted in the Iranian case. In addition, after Roosevelt's death, the USSR had progressively lost most of its influential friends in the Administration: Harry Hopkins, Henry Morgenthau, Ickes and other exponents of New Deal politics.

After the unsuccessful Moscow talks, it was almost certainly Taqizadeh, and Hossein Ala, whose previous experience at the League of Nations had made him a strong supporter of such international agencies, who persuaded Qavam o-Saltaneh to appeal to the United Nations Security Council once again. Qavam accordingly instructed Ala to take up Iran's case with the Security Council on March 17th, 1946.

THE UNITED NATIONS IN NEW YORK

As soon as Ala had arrived to take up his post as Ambassador to the US, with accreditation to the UNO in September 1945, he had already been immersed in the preliminary stages of taking up Iran's case against the Soviet Union at the recently constituted UN Security Council, on his own initiative, for he had not yet been instructed by Qavam to formally lodge a complaint.

Already, he was being endlessly interviewed by an increasingly sympathetic US press (most particularly by the influential

THE AZARBAIJAN CRISIS OF 1945 – 1946

Part Two

FEREYDOUN ALA

James Reston of the NY Times); endeavouring to win the support of President Truman, Jimmy Byrnes at the US State Department, as well as representatives of France, Britain, and other 'free' nations. At first, Ernie Bevin and UN Secretary Trygvie Lie, were reluctant to alienate a recent ally and a prestigious permanent member of the Security Council, and they were agnostic about the chances of achieving redress for Iran through the UNO. Indeed, there is some evidence that Britain might even have been prepared to consider compromise with the USSR, leaving them free to exploit northern Iran, provided Britain's oil interests in the south were safe – echoes of 1907!

In his March 18th letter to the Security Council, Ala set out Iran's grievance, protesting the presence of Soviet troops beyond the March 2nd deadline, in breach of the 1942 Tripartite Agreement, and the Tehran Conference Declaration in 1943, and accusing the USSR of gross interference in Iran's internal affairs, fostering insurrection and separatism, all of which constituted a threat to world peace and the security of all small, vulnerable nations of the world, in direct contravention of the principles of the UN Charter, to which the Soviets had subscribed. Like Taqizadeh before him, he nevertheless emphasised Iran's desire for friendly relations with her powerful neighbour. "If a strong stand were not taken now, the United Nations Organisation would lose all significance as an instrument for preserving peace based on justice; the history of Manchuria, Abyssinia and Munich would be repeated, and Azarbaijan would prove to have been the first shot fired in the third world war." (Iranian Ambassador to the US, Hossein Ala, 20 December, 1945. FRUS, Dec. 21, 1945, p.508) In response, Gromyko once again raised the time-worn objections voiced by Vyshinsky in London, but in more cool and measured tones. However, he pretended that successful negotiations were taking place in Iran at that time, and requested a delay in discussions of the 'Iran Case' until April 10th. This was clearly calculated to buy time while Qavam was being 'tenderised' by Sadchikov. Ala countered by stating that no such negotiations were taking place and that there was nothing to negotiate anyway, since the Soviets had clearly reneged on their commitments by outstaying the deadline of March 2nd. He added that this was a matter of great urgency, as the situation in Iran was deteriorating every day, and threatening world peace.

Ala's problem was not confined to marshalling support for Iran among influential members of the US government, or other members of the Security Council, nor was it merely facing down Gromyko and Lange, the sarcastic representative of Poland, now a USSR client state. A further difficulty was dealing with plots against him in Tehran, hatched mainly by the openly Russophilic Deputy Prime Minister Mozzafar Firouz, who worked tirelessly to undermine Ala's position at the UN by issuing false press releases, and deliberately distorting Qavam's instructions. But his main problem was coming to terms with the prevarications of his cousin Prime Minister Qavam and his contradictory instructions.

On March 27th, Gromyko once again insisted that agreement had been reached in Tehran, and referred to a March 23rd Associated Press interview with Qavam, where the Prime Minister had ostensibly declared that he had no objection to deferral of Council discussions of the case to April 10th, or even later. The Soviet delegate persisted in claiming that there were differences between Qavam and Ala, who was exceeding his brief, and misrepresenting his government's views ("..whom are we to believe, the Prime Minister or his so-called representative..?"). Gromyko then reiterated his request for a delay in discussions of the case,

and refused to countenance allowing Ala to address the Security Council directly. However, James Byrnes, the US Secretary of State, who was present at the session, deplored Gromyko's quoting an uncorroborated press report, and provided evidence from the US Ambassador in Tehran, that no agreement had been concluded with the USSR. He went on to correct Gromyko's misinterpretation of Qavam's interview. In effect, it was Qavam's Deputy and Press Officer, Mozaffar Firouz, who had deliberately altered the tenor of Qavam's remarks in translation. In the event, a majority of Council Members voted to turn down Gromyko's request.

At this dramatic juncture, Gromyko and the entire Soviet delegation walked out of the chamber in protest – a red-letter day for the assembled world press!

After many frustrating weeks of waiting in the wings, Hossein Ala was finally invited to take his place at the horse-shoe table at Hunter College in the Bronx, and was given the opportunity to present his case to the members of the Security Council at last!

On April 3rd Gromyko reported in writing that agreement had been reached with Iranian authorities and that Soviet troops would be leaving Iranian soil within 6 weeks, "provided that no unforeseen circumstances arise", adding that troop evacuation was entirely unrelated to the desire of the USSR for an oil concession, and that there was no longer any need for retaining the 'Iran Case' on the SC Agenda. The following day, Ala expressed his concern regarding Gromyko's caveat 'unforeseen circumstances', which he considered quite unacceptable. A further SC resolution proposed by the US was eventually adopted unanimously, supporting this view, and requiring both parties to report to the Security Council as to whether Soviet troops had actually evacuated all of Iran on May 6th.

to be continued

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SUSAN LINSS AND ALI DOWLATSHAI

Disciples of Love

Designer Susan Linss and her father Persian artist Ali Dowlatshahi combined their artistic talents and legacies in a cross-cultural and generation spanning exhibition this past spring in New York City.

This is the first time father and daughter shared an exhibition. Susan introduced her new line from Susan Linss Designs for Vincenza; Decormani and her father's latest paintings lined the gallery's walls. The vibrant colors of Ali's paintings coupled with the distinctive lines of Susan's furniture provided the visitor with a collage of color and movement. ■



WAALM Letter of Appreciation to KAVEH FARROK

Dear Dr. Farrok,

Hereby, The World Academy of Arts, Literature and Media –WAALM appreciates your kind contribution by sharing voice and knowledge with our podcast Show Episode 1 – ‘Arts for Peace’; Celebrating the International Day of Peace on September 21, 2013.

Your insights on the topic were precise, engaging, informative and educational, and the positive feedback we have received from our listeners on them and that your segment certainly assisted the message of ‘Peace’ to get through to many.

We wish you all the best for your scholastic career.

Warm regards

Mosi Dorbayani, MSc, PhD

President of WAALM



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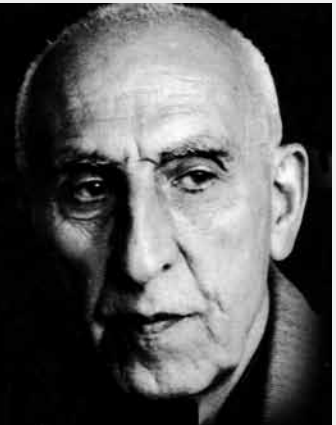
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Charismatic Agents of Change and Leaders' Dreams: Life and Achievements of Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh

M. REZA VAGHEFI, PH.D.

Professor Emeritus of Management and International Business



INTRODUCTION:

What did Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh of Iran, Mohandas Mahatma Gandhi of India? Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. of the United States and Nelson Mandela of South Africa have in common?

The answer ought to be charisma and a missionary zeal. They were charismatic agents of lasting changes the likes of which are rare in the history of mankind.

They all led a nonviolent movement to achieve their objectives. Three of them succeeded and one did not although he created the spirit of standing up for your rights.

Charisma is the most distinctive human quality that draws thousands of people to listen to you, follow you and act on your behalf. The four leaders mentioned above, while the charismatic, had four different objectives in their quest to serve their respective nation. The first man, Dr. Mossadegh had two objectives. One was to nationalize Iranian oil and to eliminate or at least minimize the British Imperial influence that had penetrated and affected the entire spectrum of Iranian society which included but not limited to political structure, economic system and simply socio-economic and political development of the country and two was to radically change the electoral law which had allowed domination of the national elections (for years) to be corrupted by succeeding government, landed gentry and feudal landlords. The British influence was exercised through surrogates, such as legislative figures, some members of the press that were paid off, paid agents as well as politicians who relied on British money for better life.

These agents were instrumental in keeping the so-called "British interest" intact. As a whole they were known as "Anglophiles". Mossadegh's dream was

to establish a real sovereign secular system (according to the Iran's constitution of 1908) where rule of law determined the implementation of justice and people in the government were selected on the basis of their expertise rather than whom they knew or which strata of society they came. He believed that government should be based on popular support rather than support of foreign powers.

A government based on democratic system by the people and for the people. He had personally suffered from tyranny and knew the pain that tyranny had unleashed on him in exile or at house arrest. He knew that time was not on his side and the opportunity was not going to last forever. Probably, he thought liberal democracy would allow establishing a meritocracy as a foundation for institutional development. Such institutions would create a society with checks and balances so that the country could leap forward with a governing infrastructure that would support real and solid advancement. In this paper we will provide ample evidence of the mind-set of Dr. Mossadegh the likes of which Iranian society had never seen since Mirza Taghi Khan Amir Kabir, an enlightened chancellor, in the 19th century, who was way ahead of his time when the entire Middle-East region was run by the Ottoman Empire autocratic rules.

Mossadegh's dream was to lead a non-violent movement to restore Iran's sovereignty, a dream that was shattered when the national movement was scuttled by the British-American-Intelligence Services planned by the British MI6 and executed by CIA agents in August 1953 coup d'état.

It may very well be said that the emergence of Islamic Regime in Iran is the *raison d'être* of that MI6- CIA's un-

fortunate action. About 10 years after the Coup, the United States having sizeable military personnel in Iran and worrying about unexpected episodes (that may put the US personnel in jeopardy) demanded extraterritorial rights as part of the Status of Forces (SOF) agreement. Such agreement would prevent any crime committed by US military personnel to be tried under the Iranian criminal justice system but be tried in the United States under the US penal code.

This may sound natural and a legitimate request by the United States, given its influence and contributions to building up of the Iranian armed forces. But they forgot that one of the great achievements of late Reza Shah (the first Shah of Pahlavi dynasty) was the cancellation of the very same privilege given (before his rise) to foreign powers.

The Iranians took great pride in that they would not allow foreign powers to ignore Iranian laws and jurisprudence. This is why granting such privilege triggered the uprising of June 15, 1964 itself a preamble to the Revolution that took place 15 years later.

The uprising of June 15 was crashed violently but created the seeds of the 1979 revolution.

Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent struggle against the colonial Britain achieved its objective, independence from Great Britain in 1948; and to-day India is a well-respected nation with a potential of achieving a super power status in just a few decades.

In early 1990s' after intensive pressure from all corners of the world and many governments, South Africa's Apartheid regime collapsed and in a first free election, Nelson Mandela, who had spent 27 years in Apartheid regime's prison, where he was infected with tuberculo-

sis, was elected president of South Africa. Upon assuming power, he created a Commission of Truth and Reconciliation chaired by Archbishop Desmond Tutu (a Noble Laureate) where leadership of the apartheid regime were questioned and given appropriate sentences.

Mandela avoided a bloodbath that would have eliminated thousands of people some guilty but may be many non-guilty, a magnanimous act that was the trademark of Mandela and earned him a Noble Peace prize. Nelson Mandela has earned the respect of all world leaders and a special place in history of mankind, an achievement that would be rare in this world. At the age of 95 the world seems to be concerned about his deteriorating health.

Such sentiments cannot be observed about many world leaders, present or past leaders.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. led a non-violent movement in the United States that involved millions of blacks and whites citizens. He tolerated extensive humiliations and hardship at the hands of authorities, especially in the southern part of the United States but his patience and perseverance paid off and 1964 the Civil Rights Act was passed by the Congress of the United States awarding the Afro-Americans the right to vote.

However, in 1967 Dr. King was assassinated by a white man but the fundamental movement that he created survived and prospered.

An indirect outcome of this achievement was the election of Mr. Barak Obama to the US Senate (in 1984) and four years later (2008) the first Afro-American to be elected the President of the United States which is a tribute to the American system of election but also a sense of giving credit to personal achievement and success of the individual.

A further achievement of the movement was President Obama's re-election for another four years, itself a monumental event. Dr. King's famous statement "I have a dream..." continues to pay off dividend and there is no end in-sight.

Although Mossadegh's dream was not materialized but the dream never died and earned him a lasting honorable place in modern Iranian history as one who never succumbed to foreign or foreign-sourced powers. Mossadegh's legacy has kept his name alive even after more than 60 years from collapse of his government and his death in 1967. Before and after

the 1979 Islamic revolution his name was a slogan that invited millions to demonstrate against the prevailing regime.

Dr. Mossadegh's 28 months tenure as legitimately elected prime minister of Iran shed light on the life of a man whose ascendancy to power ushered in an era of unparalleled opportunity to change Iran for ever, an opportunity that paved the way for many national movements in other parts of the Middle East. It is noteworthy also that Dr. Mossadegh was the most single individual that Iran's history will always honor in spite of his failure to conclude an oil agreement with a foreign company. He was also the most secular Prime Minister in contemporary Iran. His profound belief in the rule of law, his unquestionable adherence to the constitutional monarchy and the Iranian constitution of 1908 and his zealous determination to protect the interest of people of Iran has no rival in Iranian history.

During the height of his popularity, in 1952, he was named Man of the Year by Time Magazine. "Story of Mossadegh in memory of our generation has changed into an 'Epic of Freedom'. This episode for Iranian people is not only a historical event but it is freedom song, a story that emerges from a limitation of history. It recites a phenomenon and admires something that has not happened or not completely yet but yearns that it may happen in future. The Epic of Freedom is one of desiring and yearning. The people saw a phenomenon in the past and are searching for the one lost in there. It is a history reaching an impasse which promises an opening in the future, repetition of which creates a resounding excitement that may actualize some day".

THE BACKGROUND:

British exploitation of Iran and using it as a buffer between its vast Indian colony (in 17th-20th centuries) and Russia is well known and beyond the scope and intentions of this article.

My purpose here is to analyze, albeit in summary form, the ascendancy of Dr. Mossadegh, the problems he faced and search of an optimum solution to the oil problem.

The decade of 1940s was a crucial period for Iran. The aftermath of WW II was even more uncertain and pregnant with problems that no one had any illusion about and the country was ill prepared to deal with. Pressures from Imperial Russia, under the guise of USSR

to acquire, by any means, oil concession from Iran (during the occupation of the northwestern part of the country 1946), activity of political parties, communist, nationalists etc, all added to a high degree of uncertainty.

To pre-empt the Russians from acquiring any concession, Dr. Mossadegh took the initiative and submitted a resolution to the Parliament according to which all government officials were forbidden from even initiating any contract or contacts foreign power.

With WW II over and after years of pent-up frustration with an intransigent foreign oil interest, the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, a slapdash supplementary oil agreement was prepared which was still-born at the outset. A group of nationalist deputies organized the genesis of a national movement generically called National Front the standard-bearer of which was Dr. Mossadegh, the immaculate, uncorrupt and intellectually unrivalled who had established his reputation for over forty years, headed the movement. The small group of law makers that made the core of National Front also shared these principles in addition to the fact that they all loathed British influence that had so much destructive and forcible impinging and had been a major impediment to progress in Iranian society.

The intoxication of power had its delusional effect on the British who thought, with so much influence cultivated over years, they could do anything to maintain their grip on Iran. Not so with Dr. Mossadegh whose ascendancy to executive power had not been expected but when it happened they did everything they could to destroy it from the very outset. Britain's long and documented history of meddling in Iran resonates with most Iranians. In late 19th and early 20th centuries it reduced Iran almost to a protectorate, extracting lucrative concessions in oil and minerals, tobacco and banking which it protected by armed forces (in the South) and proxy rulers elsewhere (Financial Times June 30th 2009)". Mossadegh remembered that the British government, through bribery, outright monetary compensation and promise to protect its agents in time of crisis, had secured an agreement in 1919.

The agreement was finally defeated in 1921 when the government of coup-d'état, took control of the country. Almost thirty years later, Dr. Mossadegh thought it dangerous to let a main ele-

ment of the 1921 coup d'état, return to power. So when in 1950 when the job of Prime Minister was offered to him backed by the Parliament vote, he could not refuse fearing the alternative would turn the clock back to early 20th century. In contemporary Iran, Mossadegh's ascendancy to power was a sea change.

An impermeable statesman with an absolutely honest record whose service had been admired by millions of Iranians from all walks of life seemed the most appropriate person for the job of leading the nation and implementing the law of nationalization of oil industry.

THE COALITION BEHIND THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT

The nationalization of oil ushered in an era of unparalleled national revival the likes of which had only occurred in early 20 century with constitutional movement and establishment of constitutional monarchy, the first in the entire Middle East. An emerging political movement had raised many peoples' hope that Iran was on its way to actually experience a democratic system of government. In reality, the second decade of 20th century witnessed a parliamentary system where representatives of various strata of society were elected in the House of Parliament and openly debated the issues facing the country routinely. The system was far ahead of all countries in the Middle East and South Asia. Most of these countries were colonies of one power or the other. British ruled in the Indian sub-continent, the French were in North Africa and Russia had settled at the northern doorstep of Iran.

Iran was slowly moving to absorb and practice modern parliamentary process. But a series of events pre-empted the development of democratic practices. Chief among these were the emergence of a powerful king, Reza Shah, who to his credit restored security throughout the country and respect for the rule of law for a short period of time. But as he speeded up the pace of modernization and reconstruction something gave in and that was the parliamentary debates that were the hallmark of new era and were beginning to shape the future of Iran.

Among the things that Reza Shah, the founder of Pahlavi dynasty, did was to renew an oil concession that had been granted to a British citizen by Ahmad Shah of the now defunct dynasty.

Ahmad Shah had been promised

pecuniary reward on annual basis and protection by the British government if he ever experienced trouble with Iranians. In early 1920, the dynasty of which Ahmad Shah was the last king was overthrown and Reza Shah took command of the country. The British never kept their promise to Ahmed Shah who died in Paris years later. In 1941 Iran was occupied with British and Soviet forces and Reza Shah were sent into exile by British, who had championed his rise to power.

The country began to experience some sense of freedom with various social forces unleashed and press enjoying unprecedented revival. This period also witnessed the emergence of a new phenomenon, the Communist Party the seeds of which were planted by the some of the students whose education in France and German had been initiated and finance by the government of Reza Shah who saw education a potent force to modernize Iran.

EMERGENCE OF NATIONAL FRONT

According to Dr. Mossadegh's memoir, the National Front was a concept, which emerged in a meeting of like-minded deputies at his house. The election of the 16th session of the parliament was a watershed and most critical for a nationalist movement in post war history of Iran.

In spite of intensive efforts by the forces loyal to Shah and some elements, who opposed anything remotely similar to what Dr. Mossadegh had in mind, he was elected at the top of 12 deputies representing the Tehran region. These deputies composed the core of the National Front.

If parliamentary elections were not held simultaneously, Tehran election was considered a trend setter whereby other provinces and towns would be influenced by the national movements rather than the influence of local landlords of power centers.

To this core group were added others who aspired a country free from of intoxicated atmosphere that the likes of Anglophiles had cultivated over years.

Why he failed to conclude an agreement with the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company that had been nationalized? These are some serious questions that have yet to be answered. Among these questions will be looked into and analyzed in a following article. ■

If
Rudyard Kipling

If you can keep your head
 when all about you
 Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;
 If you can trust yourself
 when all men doubt you,
 But make allowance for their doubting too:
 If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
 Or, being lied about, don't deal in lies,
 Or being hated don't give way to hating,
 And yet don't look too good,
 nor talk too wise;

If you can dream
 – and not make dreams your master;
 If you can think
 – and not make thoughts your aim,
 If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
 And treat those two impostors
 just the same:
 If you can bear to hear the truth
 you've spoken
 Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
 Or watch the things
 you gave your life to, broken,
 And stoop and build'em up
 with worn-out tools;

If you can make
 one heap of all your winnings
 And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
 And lose, and start again
 at your beginnings,
 And never breathe a word about your loss:
 If you can force your heart
 and nerve and sinew
 To serve your turn long after they are gone,
 And so hold on
 when there is nothing in you
 Except the Will
 which says to them: "Hold on!"

If you can talk with crowds
 and keep your virtue,
 Or walk with Kings
 – nor lose the common touch,
 If neither foes nor loving friends
 can hurt you,
 If all men count with you,
 but none too much:
 If you can fill the unforgiving minute
 With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
 Yours is the Earth and everything that's
 in it,
 And – which is more –
 you'll be a Man, my son!

REVIEWS

SKY OF RED POPPIES

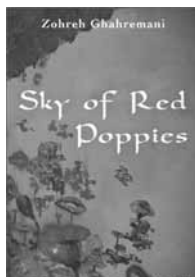
Zohreh Ghahremani
(2010)

FEMALE IMPOWERMENT, in one word describes this novel, by Zohreh Ghahremani. Shireen and Roya are two young women who went to school together and became dear friends.

Like most friendships they are the same, yet different.

It is the differences in their journey through life, that is the storyline behind this novel. Happiness, joy, disappointment and tragedy unfold in the pages.

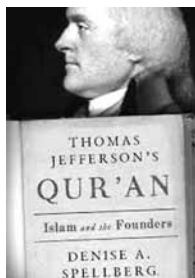
The author has the ability to hold your attention. Added to this is the use of Iran as a backdrop. Do not think you can guess the ending, but even if you can figure it out, their journey is thought provoking.



THOMAS JEFFERSON'S QU'AN, ISLAM AND THE FOUNDERS

Denise A. Spellberg

If you are an historian, especially one who followed Thomas Jefferson, it would not be surprising to discover that he owned and read the Quran. Jefferson used the teachings of the book in determining whether or not the United States would be an exclusive Protestant nation. But it is not that quite that simple and after reading the following review as posted by Amazon, one will feel the urge and need to read the book in its entirety.



In other words one should not, as we so often do, be quick to judge, especially when opinion is based on what we hear and read and not a result of research and comparison.

“Denise A. Spellberg reveals a little-known but crucial dimension of the story of American religious freedom—a drama in which Islam played a surprising role.

In 1765, eleven years before composing the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson bought a Qur’an. This marked only the beginning of his lifelong interest in Islam, and he would go on to acquire numerous books on Middle Eastern languages, history, and travel, taking extensive notes on Islam as it relates to English common law.

Jefferson sought to understand Islam notwithstanding his personal disdain for the faith, a sentiment prevalent among his Protestant contemporaries in England and America. But unlike most of them, by 1776 Jefferson could imagine Muslims as future citizens of his new country.

Based on groundbreaking research, Spellberg compellingly recounts how a handful of the Founders, Jefferson foremost among them, drew upon Enlightenment ideas about the toleration of Muslims (then deemed the ultimate outsiders in Western society) to fashion out of what had been a purely speculative debate a practical foundation for governance in America.

In this way, Muslims, who were not even known to exist in the colonies, became the imaginary outer limit for an unprecedented, uniquely American religious pluralism that would also encompass the actual despised minorities of Jews and Catholics.

The rancorous public dispute concerning the inclusion of Muslims, for which principle Jefferson’s political foes would vilify him to the end of his life, thus became decisive in the Founders’ ultimate judgment not to establish a Protestant nation, as they might well have done.

As popular suspicions about Islam persist and the numbers of American Muslim citizenry grow into the millions, Spellberg’s revelatory understanding of this radical notion of the Founders is more urgent than ever.

Thomas Jefferson’s Qur’an is a timely look at the ideals that existed at our country’s creation, and their fundamental implications for our present and future.”

FANATISM

Dr. Samar
AuthorHouse, 2011

This book is about the journey of two men, who by happen chance meet on a ski slope in Switzerland. Both are physicians and their chance meeting is the start of a very interesting relationship, disclosed in the final chapter. This is a true story, directly written by the author. The lack of editing makes the story more inviting as you can truly feel his emotions.



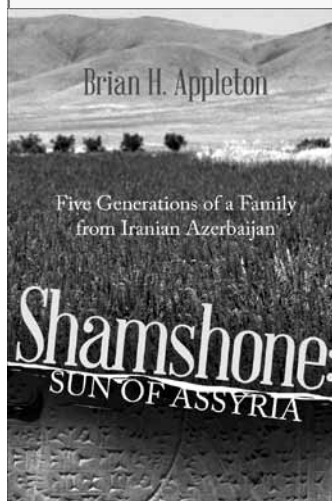
**Shamshone:
SUN OF ASSYRIA**

Five Generations of a Family from Iranian Azerbaijan

Brian H. Appleton

A moving story, beautifully told. Brian Appleton has painted for us an exquisite portrait of the disappearing multi-ethnic society of the Middle East. He captures a reality that unfortunately threatens to vanish under forces of intolerance and the drive for uniformity.

John W. Limbert



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1

I had been keen to interview the prominent Dr. Shams-o-din Mofidi for a long time. I wanted to introduce him to the readers of *Mirass-Iran* Magazine. Every time I learned of his visits to the US or Europe, I tried to explore the possibility of contacting him through his children, but with no avail.

I was then sadly informed that Dr. Mofidi has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's and that he was no longer able to recognize people. I was utterly shocked and devastated at this news. How is it possible for a person with such a high level of intelligence, sharpness and comprehension to lose his access to the endless treasure trove of his knowledge, experience and wisdom?! It just wasn't fair.

I had lost the opportunity to interview and introduce Dr. Mofidi. I decided that the least I could do is to write about some of my memories and recollections of the contacts I had with him over the years. Specifically, I wish to outline all I have learned from him and to express my gratitude to such a knowledgeable master. By doing this, I am hoping to share with the readers what I owe him – and to try to ease my pain of the loss, to some degree.

Anyone who knew Dr. Mofidi would agree that his unique qualities, determination and his sincerity were without question. I remember, when I was in the second year of medical school in Tehran, I was introduced to Dr. Fereydon Amini, Assistant Head of the Parasitology department and eventually became employed by the Department of Parasitology. This was led by Dr. Hajian. Having learned preliminary work such as parasite testing and spending hours in front of the microscopes, I was then assigned to do the same job but on night

A Tribute to My Maestro: Dr. Shams-o-din Mofidi Great physician and Scholar

Shahrokh Ahkami



duty, at the infectious disease ward of Firooz Abadi Hospital in Shahr-e-Ray.

It was during this time that I developed quite a curiosity concerning Dr. Mofidi. He had an impressive reputation. He was the youngest professor at the institution and indeed supervised a number of doctors that were older or more experienced than him.

I was becoming keener and keener to meet with him. I remember standing sometimes, at the entrance of the University and watching him rush out of his car and at the same time as he was trying to put his white coat on. I remember him walking fast to his office then shutting the door behind him. It was a puzzle for me why he was the only professor with a white coat none of the others bothered with one.

At a memorial ceremony for a French scientist, Professor LeBlanc at the Pasteur Institute, Dr. Mofidi gave a presentation on the Professor's professional life. Dr. Mofidi spoke in French and I remem-

ber being impressed at how fluently he spoke. I remember him describing that one day he and Professor LeBlanc had arranged to meet outside the institute, but when the professor came he did not look around and just got in his car and drove away. Dr. Mofidi said that he did not become upset but rather he took a lesson from the experience: "in life no one will wait for you". At that time, being young, I was quite surprised at his conclusion, but as I grew older I understood his point and indeed have learned from it.

2

One year Dr. Amini arranged for me and a few others to visit Dr. Mofidi at his house on the first day of Norooz (the Persian New Year). We arrived there at 11.00am, and were warmly welcomed by his lovely wife. But there was no sign of Dr. Mofidi himself and when enquired about his absence, Mrs. Mofidi said that he was working at the university. We sat there for hours until he eventually arrived, in the afternoon.

His wife then made a sarcastic comment about him having to work even on the first day of Norooz. His reply was something like "when we married, I admitted that I will work on public holidays and weekends but just for half a day." That occasion was yet another lesson to us and we realised that Dr. Mofidi's sense of duty and dedication to his medical-scientific work was endless. We learned that he would not allow laziness, tiredness or any other excuses to interfere with his commitments.

Towards the end of medical school, my work at Firooz-Abadi and at the Parasitology Department became somehow noticeable to Dr. Mofidi, Dr. Hajian and Dr. Siadat, and they granted me a scholarship to go to France. After a year I returned from France and entered the Army to perform my Military Service. The first couple of months were extremely hard for me. One Friday, I visited Dr. Mofidi in his office and asked him to help me carry out laboratory based research work as a part of my army service. He looked at me with his usual kind smile while he was holding a pipe in the corner of his lips. He then adjusted his glasses and said that he had tried himself for several years to conduct research in the Army but with no success and asked me why I would succeed. I replied politely that I wished to also try this but with his permission. With his usual kindness he said ok, go and write up a research proposal. A few days later I gave him the proposal so anxiously, but he told me to go ahead and submit it and also offered his support. Luckily the proposal was approved by General Ma-nii.

When the laboratory was established with all the necessary equipment and work was in good progress, we had an official visit from Mohammad

Reza Shah, the Shah of Iran. Dr. Mofidi proudly accompanied the Shah for the whole visit.

Based on the research carried out in that laboratory several papers were published in English, German and Persian. Articles were also published in several popular magazines. We also established working guidelines concerning the handling of several diseases such as cholera. All of this was the outcome of work from that laboratory.

When I submitted my doctorate thesis, Dr. Mofidi, as my supervisor refused to sign it off. His reasons for refusal were not about the content or rationale of the thesis but rather the punctuation mistakes. My thesis was in fact a translation of my French thesis, which had already been submitted and approved by Professor Dupont in Paris.

In order for me to convince Dr. Mofidi that others do not consider punctuation problem as being a reason for refusal, I decided to persevere. I obtained approval from four other professors and presented them to him. With his kind smile he persisted that when one does a job, it should be to one's own total satisfaction. He insisted that to do a sound scientific job, punctuation must be correct. In short, it took me a few months to correct the punctuation but learned yet another lesson from Dr Mofidi: when you do a job you must be fully satisfied with the quality of it.



During the years of my army service, I was also working in Mehr Hospital to earn some income, but I didn't stop visiting the master. I would come to see him every Friday in his office. On his wall was a prominent picture of the Shah's visit, I was in the picture as well. At that time Dr. Mofidi was working hard to a fight against disabling and

fatal diseases such as malaria and many other diseases. By that time he had a great reputation for his valuable service to Iran and because of his genuine dedication to his work, without being after financial or personal gains.

Despite having had a great deal of admiration for Dr. Mofidi's work, I started thinking about other professional options and asked him to arrange for me to take my speciality further in England. He then had a different idea and was suggesting I gain experience in the "field" - meaning experience in some deprived and diseased areas of Iran. This was the first time I had to tell the master that I was not keen to follow his suggestion. The result of this was that, with a great deal of sadness, I had to end my Friday visits, due to my move to England. It was doubly sad for me because I was saying goodbye to my research interest and publications as well.

In the years that followed, my respect and admiration for Dr. Mofidi never ceased. I keenly followed any

news about his work - until I read that he was appointed as the Minister of Education and Sciences during the time of political upheaval in Iran. This news was hard to believe. I could not imagine, how someone like Dr. Mofidi, who had sacrificed most of his life for medical research trying to find cure for illnesses, could accept a political post.

Some years later Dr. Mahbobin clarified Dr. Mofidi's decision for me. He was solely acting out of his love for Iran. He was never after money or power, but at the time he must have thought that the nation was facing a critical period that could end very badly for everyone. It was his sincere sense of patriotism that forced him to accept a ministerial position. He just wanted to help. Unfortunately, this position cost him dearly, as he was imprisoned and suffered greatly afterwards. I heard that many people attended his trial as character witnesses to support him. Sadly four years of his productive life was wasted in Islamic Republic prison,

and the nation was deprived from utilising the ocean of his knowledge.

Later on, I remember when I was visiting Tehran for a few days I heard that Dr Mofidi was working in *Mehr* hospital's laboratory. I begged a friend to take me to see him. As I entered the laboratory, I saw the master sitting behind a microscope in a corner of the place and I felt an overwhelming sense of sadness. He, however, welcomed me with his usual kindness and simply talked about work. But suddenly he changed the subject and with a smile said to me:

"Do you remember those days when you had a beautiful face and fit figure and had also many admirers around you?" I was taken back and replied "master I remember seeing you always running with such a hurry to your office and assumed that you were not noticing anything else."

That day, I left his office with a deep sense of sadness thinking that he could have left Iran like many others who did and managed to start a successful life for themselves. He could have easily been awarded a medical/scientific Chair in a reputable university or a high ranked job at WHO. But, instead he stayed in Iran, working like a technician in a laboratory with no true recognition.



It is with great regret that I write about Dr. Mofidi, someone with such a high level of intelligence, with his invaluable knowledge and experience, and now he has lost his cognitive abilities. It is with great regret that we did not appreciate nor support such a treasure. But, maybe this a lesson to us all to recognize and look after our dedicated scientists, scholars, doctors - or anyone who has done any service to humanity - while they can still comprehend our appreciation. ■

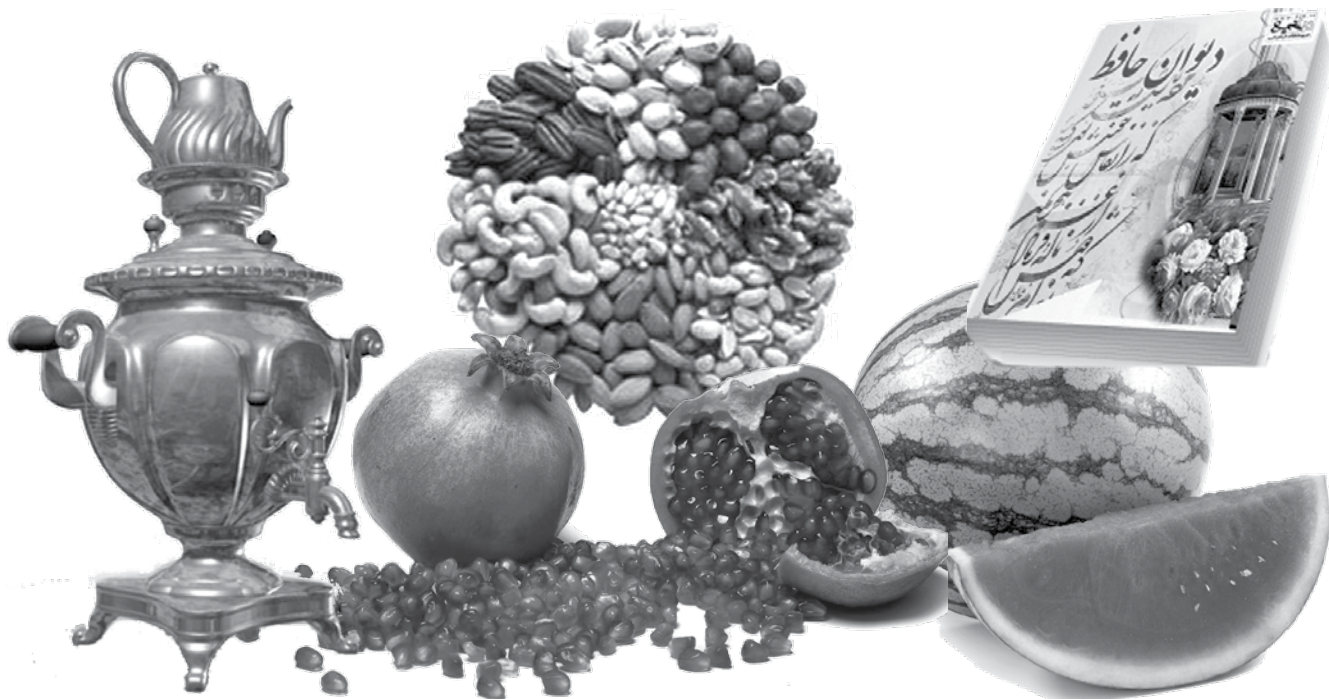
MEMOIRE

I was greatly moved by your very personal memoir regarding Dr. Mofidi, and your recollections of working with him in your youth. I also deeply regret the humiliation fate has visited upon this great man at the end of his life.

When I returned to Iran after an absence of almost twenty years in 1999, I started work at the new-found Haemophilia Centre, which is very near the Mehr Hospital. In consequence, I often visited the laboratory in order to see Dr. Mofidi at lunchtime. As you say, he was as charming and delightful as ever, and the soul of modesty. He never mentioned the terrible period of imprisonment he had to endure, nor was he bitter about the injustice and ingratitude he had been subjected to after a lifetime of selfless service to medicine and his country. As you know, he was also completely impoverished. Alas, he is remembered with much greater respect and regard abroad, than in his own country.

I am so very glad that you have written in praise of this wonderful scientist and patriot, and I thank you on behalf of all his many students and admirers.

Eradatmand, Fereydoon Ala



Winter Solstice Commemoration Performance

Davood N. Rahni

The captivating audience from all walks of life and backgrounds, that was nearly 2,000 in number, nonetheless, felt as if they were many folds much larger representing every corner of the global village, were stunned when the saxophone soprano Paul Winter was succeeded by the overwhelming sound of the organ at the Cathedral of St. John's the Divine on Amsterdam Avenue, adjoining the Columbia University in upper Manhattan's Harlem neighborhood. Paul was metamorphosed on the stage as Lucifer blowing his horn to herald the rebirth of the sun to humanity. Was it not so ironically perplexing that the Christianity which had struggled for four hundred years after its inception to make the European pagans quit the habit of observing their grandest annual celebration, the winter solstice, by presumably trans-locating the birth of the Jesus from March to December thereby masking the pagan ritual, to now proudly host and extravagantly sponsor the commemorative celebration of the winter solstice for the

past three decades?!

My family, accompanying a lifelong friend musicologist and composition maestro, and another dear IT executive friend, enjoyed the nearly two hours of the concert, Winter Solstice, with much nostalgic exhilarations. Every performance genre was uniquely mesmerizing, especially the dance ensemble choreographed by Abdel R. Salaam, and the rise of the sun after the longest night of the year, a somewhat deliberately lengthy prose that combined the music, lyrics, sound and light special effects, and induced the audience into a trance for retrospection of the year passed and introspective contemplation of what the new year may bring. As reverberated through the existing thankful spectators, most would recommend the participation and support of such events to friends and families alike.

It is believed that even before the advent of the myriad religions as Mithraism, Manichaeism, Mazdakism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, and Hinduism, which had preceded three Abrahamic religions,

that most people in the prehistoric world had independently revered and worshipped the sun, later transformed into a religion, the Sol Invictus.

Yalda, the celebration of winter solstice, has been continuously observed throughout Southwest Asia, Iran and its dozen surrounding nations, for nearly ten thousand years. The Syriac Aramaic word *Yalda*, literally means (re-)birth and has been used to denote the longest night of the year for the sun's rebirth. It is also a common given name to girls in Iran. Most Germanic and Scandinavian people use a derivation of the same word, God Yule, or God Jul, first as a means of congratulating the most important pagan celebration of winter solstice, and later adopted for expressing Christmas best wishes.

Winter solstice, that usually falls on December 21 has been celebrated by human communities throughout the world for millennia. Many of the oldest civilizations have evolved between the Indus and Ganji rivers to the east, and Tigris, Euphrates and Nile rivers to the west, where

current Iran falls in the center; there the celebration has been called *Yalda* (*aka* Daygan) since antiquity. The word means (re-)birth of the *Sun*. There are other derivations of the same Syriac (Aramaic) word adopted in the Indo-European Persian language, such as *Tavallod* and *Milad* that are synonymous, meaning birth. *Yalda* puts behind the longest “pregnant” night of the year, and daylight, with birth of the new sun, begins to become longer again (the triumph of light over darkness). It is also called “*Shabe Chelleh*”, meaning the first night of a twenty days period before another revered Persian celebration, *Jashne Sadeh*. The latter is one hundred days before the grandest Persian commemoration, *Norouz*, or the Persian New Year. *Yalda* was adopted from the Babylonians and incorporated into Zoroastrianism by Persians.

The ancient Roman festivals of *Saturnalia* (God of Agriculture, Saturn) and *Sol Invicta* (Sun God) are amongst the best-known observances of winter solstice in the West, and as commemorated by European pagans. The Romans, especially the aristocracy celebrated the birthday of Mithra, the Persian Goddess of the unconquerable sun, on December 25. It was believed that Mithra, an infant god, was born of a rock. For some Romans, Mithra’s birthday was the most sacred day of the year. In the early years of Christianity, Easter was the main holiday as the birth of Jesus was not celebrated. In the fourth century, church officials decided to institute the birth of Jesus as a holiday, which was thought to have occurred in spring. Pope Julius I, however, chose December 25 for the birth of Jesus in order to supersede the pagan Saturnalia or Mithra’s festival. Mithra (Mehr) is responsible for protecting “the light of dawn called *Havangah*.” The day after *Yalda*, known as “*khoram rooz*” or “*khore rooz*” (the day of sun) belongs to Ahura Mazda, the Lord of Wisdom.

One of the themes of the festival was the temporary subversion of order. The king dressed in white would change place with ordinary people. A mock king was crowned who ruled with disorder and chaos as they believed order came of chaos, and masquerades spilled into the streets. As the old year died, rules of ordinary living were relaxed. Following the Persian tradition, the usual order of the year was suspended. Grudges and quarrels forgotten, wars would be interrupted or postponed. Businesses, courts and schools

were closed. Rich and poor became equal, masters served slaves, and children headed the family. Cross-dressing and masquerades, merriment of all kind prevailed.

A mock king, the Lord of Misrule, was crowned. Candles and lamps chased away the spirits of darkness. The Iranian Jews, who are amongst the oldest inhabitants of the country, in addition to “*Shab-e Cheleh*”, also celebrate the festival of “*Illanout*” (tree festival) at around the same time.

Their celebration of *Illanout* is very similar to *Shab-e Cheleh* festival. Candles are lit; assorted varieties of dried and fresh winter fruits (pomegranates, watermelon, meddlers, and persimmons) will have to be consumed, special meals are prepared and spiritual prayers recited.

JASHNE SADEH

The Hundredth Day Celebration *Jashne Sadeh* is a mid-winter celebration, commemorated since antiquity in **IRAN**, then *Persia* to non-Iranians, that falls twenty days after *Yalda*, the *winter solstice*. The figure *Sad-eh*, 100, actually coincides with 100 days before the arrival of *Norouz*, i.e., the *vernal equinox*. *Norouz* is the grandest Persian New Year celebration that has, along with the three other seasonal festivities, been observed by all peoples in the large territory spanning from central Asia to western India, and into the western Fertile Crescent and the Caucasus including the current country of Iran, for the past millennia. *Sadeh* reverberates with the exhilarating terrestrial message of *light* and *warmth*, by leaving the frost and cold behind (the triumph of light over darkness). A version of the *Sadeh* celebration in Yazd, according to *Fasli* Calendar, is called *Hiromba*.

In Sassanid Dynasty era (7th century

C.E.), huge bonfires were set up at *Sadeh*. *Mobad*, the Zoroastrian Priest led the prayers of those congregating around the sacred fire “*Atashe Niyayesh*” and performed the spiritual rituals before it was lit at sunset, generally outdoor near the temple and along a pristine stream. The fire was also meant to drive off the demons of frost and cold, which could otherwise turn water into stone (ice), and kill the plant roots beneath the earth. Traditionally girls (boys after 1979 in Iran!) would go door to door asking for firewood. Knocking on doors they would chant poetic verses like “If you give firewood, God will grant your wish, and if you don’t, He won’t either!” People would dance around the bonfire. Wine, a then luxurious intoxicating elixir, was served communally.

The most elaborate report of the celebration comes from the 10th century during the reign of *Mardavij Zeyari*, the ruler of Isfahan. A major suburb of this City is still called *Sadeh*! During the three days of *Sadeh* celebrations, huge bonfires were set up along the *Zayandeh Roud*, while hundreds of doves carrying lit fireballs were released to light up the dark sky at night. There were fireworks, clowns, dances, music and storytelling, with lavish feasts of roasted lamb, beef, chicken kabobs and other delicacies served to participants as well as to the needy in the city.

In modern Iran, many people have reverted to show particular awareness to historical celebrations.

This is manifested in their major pre-Islamic heritage, commemorating *Norouz* (spring equinox) and *Chaharshabeh Souri* (bon fire jumping) preceding it, as well as *Tirgan* (*summer solstice*), *Mehregan* (*autumnal equinox*), *Yalda* and of course *Sadeh* as many people worldwide cherish these special seasonal events. ■

When the Divine Consumes You

Bahar Bastani

When the Divine Door opens to you

When His Grace overwhelms you

When His Wine overflows your cup

When His Pure Love fills you up

When you can feel inside, His Presence

When every thing, is a site for His Presence

Your dewdrop existence expands in His Ocean

As a rain-drop dissolves in the waves of a vast ocean.

Memories of the Past

H. GUILAK, M.D.

The following is an essay of "My Memories during the Early Stage of WWII, the War and the Post War Era in Tehran, Iran. It was presented at the Life Writing Group of the Retired Physicians Organization of the Harris County Medical Society and the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute of the University of Texas Medical Branch Of Galveston

THE WAR AND WAR On the Occasion of the Sixtieth Anniversary of August 19, 1953

During our lifetime, one may encounter incidents that incorporate into our soul and body and remain with us through the end of our lives. Sometimes they connote wonderful events, and at times they are sinister and form dreadful phenomena that one wished had never happened. As a rule, the latter ones are those remaining vivid and forever in our mind, heart and spirit.

The Great Russian writer, novelist and essayist, Count Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy (1828-1910), named his book of the Franco-Russian war of 1812, (The Patriotic War of 1812 as it is known among Russians), "The War and Peace." It was published in its entirety during 1869. Tolstoy was influenced by Victor Hugo's book, "Les Miserable" which he read when he visited Hugo during the years of 1860-1861. He took the title for his novel from the book of the French anarchist living incognito in Belgium, Pierre Joseph Prodhon, "La Guerre et la Paix" (The War and Peace). I thought that in this piece of mine, the war not even having an artificial or factitious peace; I shall call it "The War and War".

Monday August 19, 2013, the sixtieth anniversary of the CIA coup in Iran was one of such crisis that I cannot ever forget. During the summer of 1953, I was serving as an intern in one of the departments of medicine at the Pahlavi Hospital in Tehran. It was my last rotation, scheduled to be completed by September 21, 1953. I was busy with preparation of my thesis. It had to be presented to the jury in early December in order for me to graduate by the year's end. It was a difficult time for all Iranians. Our country was in a prodigious turmoil due to nationalization of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company under the premiership of Dr. Mossadegh. The British considered the Iranian undertaking unacceptable to their interest. They did not wish to lose the lucrative business of literally stealing Iranian oil for decades.

There were daily demonstration by the supporters and opponents of the Prime Minister. The British blockade of Iranian ports and preventing export of our oil was taking its toll on the country's economy. With all these problems, the people were steadfast behind its leader and tolerating the hard life caused by lack of food and essential goods. The Iranian Government's request for sixty million dollar loan from Eisenhower administration was outright rejected.

The details of what was happening were in our daily papers. The behavior of the United States Government was puzzling to most Iranians, especially the young. We could not see the rationale behind Mr. Eisenhower's lack of support for our government. Every day, before starting our work at the hospital almost all of us interns would gather in the dining room for breakfast. The subject

of discussion would invariably turn to the role of the US toward the Anglo-Iranian problems. It became evident that the Americans were following a course of action supportive of the British and against the Iranian interests. A sense of dismay, resentment and hostility was created among the people, namely in young Iranians toward the United States and its policy in Iran.

A few days earlier the attempt for a coup by the military failed; and the people showed utmost support for their elected government. We had demonstrations in front of the house of parliament in which many of us took part. The reported news by local and foreign media indicated that the American Ambassador, Mr. Loy Henderson, and members of the US embassy including the American military attaché were involved in the failed coup. What we could not understand was why the Iranian Government refrained of closing immediately the American Embassy in Tehran and expelling the American delegates? This could have helped preventing possible future problems. We were certain that by failure of the coup d'état, we have not yet seen the end. We knew through the patriotic media that the Americans were paying clergies large sums of money so they could get the mass of the ignorant people in the street and against the Prime Minister. We were aware of the payments made to newspapers for their support, and to the army officers to participate in an uprising against their own government. There were no questions that the Americans were also paying the hoodlums such as the man well known as ShaabanBimokh (The Brainless Shaaban) to create chaos and terrorize the masses. This hoodlum later was rewarded permanent residency in the US for his services rendered toward the Americans' goal (he resided in California).

Wednesday August 19, 1953, began as another ordinary day but a tense one. I started my rounds at eight o'clock in the morning and prepared the charts for the arrival of our professor and chief of the service Dr. Motazedi. By noon our round was completed. Dr. Motazedi left the service leaving me, the chief intern of his service, with instructions about some of our problem cases. By 2.30 PM I had completed my work and along with the two other interns of the service, we headed for the interns' quarter to get a bite to eat and for a short rest. In the Iranian system of medical education during my time, the interns rather than the residents were directly responsible for patients care.

Concurrent with our arrival into the house staff building, another intern was returning from the city with the demeanor of an unhappy and angry individual, tense and murmuring under lips. He was cursing and insulting the US Government. Someone asked, "What is the problem, what is wrong with you?" He gave a short response: "The Americans stabbed us in the back."

He went on and said that he was in the center of the city and his work took him to the parliament square. He said that had seen army trucks packed with soldiers, armored cars and tanks everywhere in the streets. He recounted that people coming from the direction of the American Embassy, were saying that they have witnessed armored cars exiting the compound of the Embassy. He concluded: "With friends like Americans we do not need any enemies."

The American Embassy in Tehran, I believe occupied roughly between 18 and 19 acres of land (probably the second largest embassy, the first one being that of the Russians).

A coup d'état took place, this time successfully, and our country changed direction within hours. Killing of civilians began. The hoodlums ransacked and plundered people's houses on the pretense that they were Mossadegh's followers. Nobody felt safe. I called home and told my parents that I had to remain in the hospital.

Casualties were coming in, and everyone had to help, irrespective of their specialty rotation. There was chaos.

This barbarism continued for days to come. It was a few days later that I could return home to see my parents. It was around 5.00 PM. The courtyard was sprayed with water to reduce the extreme August heat. Two large wooden benches around the basin were covered with relatively thin mattress. A samovar was in another corner with a teapot on its top. I had barely sat down when the doorbell rang. It was the husband of one our servants. He entered the house carrying one half of a door with him.

“What is that?” My father inquired.

“It belongs to Dr. Mossadegh’s house Sir. I participated in its occupation, and got this piece for myself.”

My father got up from the bench. His face usually so quiet, calm, patient and respectful to all, suddenly darkened into deep purple red, his eyes bulged, looking as they were getting out of their sockets. I thought that he was going to kill that man. I shouted, “Father, please sit down.” Not paying any attention, he was approaching the newcomer. My mother intercepted and stopped him by holding on his arms, she said almost in a begging manner, “Sit down please.” He slowly overcame his anger, turned back and while taking his seat told that incomer, “Get out of my house and take that piece of wood with you, and don’t ever come back here. I don’t allow criminals and thugs to enter my house that no one except people with integrity and patriotism has ever entered.”

Days that followed, we lived in fear. Fear of being arrested by the government agents. It was easy to accuse people of being a member of the Tudeh Party (the communist). Some law intelligence individuals used this method to get revenge of those that they had a grudge with. The hospital issued identification papers for each one of us. It stated that the bearer of the note was a member of the house staff and free of any political affiliation. I carried mine in my pocket at any time that I was out and in the street. I was often stopped by army personnel’s or plainclothes policemen to check on my identity. The young were the main target for the new government.

A number of our friends were arrested and detained for a period of time. Some, we never saw them again. Thousands of nationalists and patriots were killed, and thousands more were arrested and imprisoned. The democratically elected Prime Minister was arrested, and later tried in a dummy court and sentenced to three years of solitary confinement. The nation became slave to the military and the ruffians. The Shah reentered the country with lots of fanfare and the Anglo-American blessings. The basis for a despotic rule by the British and the United States was placed in motion and was getting worse by the day and continued for the next twenty five years. It soon became known that the American CIA in collaboration with the Israelis Mossad was in the process of forming the Iranian secret service, later known as the dreaded SAVAK (Sazman-e AmniatvaEtalat-e Keshvar--- The National Organization for information and Security), better known to the nation as the “Iranian Gestapo.”

Just to add salt to our injuries, a few days later we read Mr. Eisenhower’s speech in the papers about the events that took place in Iran. He said, “....Matters came to a head in August when for three days, Mossadegh backed by the Communist Party seemed to be the irresistible dictator of Iran....But fortunately the loyalty of the army and the fear of communism saved the day....” He failed to tell the American people how much his administration had paid the clergy, Ayatollah Kashani, the newspapers, the army officers, the ruffians and the hoodlums to achieve his goal. Also, he should

have told the Americans the truth, that there was no support of the communists for Dr. Mossadegh and the freedom that Iranians received under Mossadegh was unique and surpassed that of many free countries in the world.

We were dismayed by this speech and considered it an insult to our integrity. He delivered a pack of lies to the people of the United States, but was unable to convince the world. It was just seven years earlier that another President, Mr. Truman, stood by the Iranians against the Russians to maintain the unity and integrity of our country. Just about two years earlier he denied British requests to attack Iran or to sponsor a coup d’état by the CIA. What a striking difference between these two individuals.

The US role in that coup d’état was no mystery to the Iranians. It took decades for the American Government to admit its role. US Secretary of state, Madeline O’Brien, was first to apologize to the Iranian people for the role played by the Americans in overthrowing the legitimate and democratically elected government of Dr. Mossadegh and then on the sixtieth anniversary, August 19, 2013, CIA finally admitted that the coup was one of their projects to save the Iranian oil for the western governments. Of course it is clear that this could not be the main reason, since Iranians always said that they would welcome the western experts under the directorship of Iranians. The principal reason for the American involvement was manipulation by the British and the masterly political expertise of Prime Minister Churchill, for which Mr. Eisenhower was no match

President Eisenhower on the pretense of bringing freedom to us destroyed our young and fragile democracy. By advocating helping our economy he became a party to the British scheme in robbing us of our resources. The Eisenhower government created a war in the Middle East with no end in sight and which is continuing to the present. “The War and War” later perpetuated by another of our Presidents, Mr. Carter

The unforgettable memories of the August 19, 1953 are still burning in my heart. Every year during that period of time, the horrors of the day puts my soul into a flame and reminds me of the suffering of people whose only crime was to benefit of their resources, to live better and have the freedom to speak their minds freely. The United States government was responsible to deprive them of those elementary rights of life. It is said that on the last days of his reign, Mohammad Reza Shah told the American officials in Tehran, “I represent Iran, by overthrowing me, you destroy Iran; by demolishing Iran you disintegrate the Middle East and open the door for the world’ greatest conflict.” It seems that his prophesy is becoming a reality and today, we are repeating the history again, in the worst possible way.■



Kashani in the middle with the blackTurban, and on his lower right is the Brainless Shaaban (the man with the beard)

HONORING A GREAT LADY

Mrs. Eshrat Ghorashi Ahkami, was honored by the *Banou Foundation* this past November for her years of educational and cultural activities. The event included dinner and entertainment and was held at the Rockleigh Country Club, Rockleigh, NJ.

Mrs. Ahkami was the first graduate of the women’s high school in her home town of Quchan, Iran. After years of being a dedicated wife and mother, she graduated from college with her daughter, with a major in history. Mrs. Eshrat Ahkami is the wife of the late Mr. Mahmoud Ahkami, mother of five children, grandmother to ten grandchildren and eleven great grandchildren.

The *Banou Foundation* was founded by Mrs. Mahin Khatamee and her female colleagues. All are active in the promotion of humanitarian and cultural activities.

YALDA NIGHT

The Persian Cultural and Humanitarian Association held their annual *Yalda* night.

This year’s event included a lecture by Dr. Shahrokh Ahkami and a screening of Ahmad Mahmoud: A Nobel Novelist, written, produced and directed by Dr. Bahman Maghsoudlou.

IRANIAN RESEARCHER DESIGNS CLOTH FOR MORE REALISTIC VIDEO GAMES AND MOVIES



TEHRAN (ISNA) Wed 14 Aug 2013: An Iranian student along with his colleagues at California University, San Diego, has developed a new model to simulate with unprecedented accuracy on the computer the way cloth and light interact.

The new model can be used in animated movies and in video games to make cloth look more realistic. Existing models are either too simplistic and produce unrealistic results; or too complex and costly for practical use. Researchers presented their findings at the SIGGRAPH 2013 conference held in Anaheim, Calif.

“Not only is our model easy to use, it is also more powerful than existing models,” said Iman Sadeghi, who developed the model while working on his Ph.D. in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering at UC San Diego. He currently works for Google in Los Angeles, after earning his Ph.D. in 2011.

“The model solves the long standing problem of rendering cloth,” said Sadeghi.

The model is based on a novel approach that simulates the interaction of light with cloth by simulating how each thread scatters light. The model then uses that information based on the fabric’s weaving pattern. “It essentially treats the fabric as a mesh of interwoven microcylinders, which scatter light the same way as hair, but are oriented at 90 degrees from each other,” Sadeghi said. Sadeghi is an expert on the subject of simulating light interacting with hair. While a Ph.D. student in Jensen’s research group, he developed a model that does just that and that was later used in Disney’s “Tangled,” a retelling of the Brothers Grimm fairy tale Rapunzel. The animated movie’s main character sported 70 feet of simulated blond hair.

THE IRANIAN AMERICAN WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



The Iranian American Women’s leadership conference was held this October in New York City. From the moment you entered the conference, until the closing statement, you were proud of the individuals you met, listened to and spoke with; a group of women, representing all walks of life and education. Though different in many ways they all share very important components: intelligence, drive, commitment and a desire to introduce themselves and others to the American community.

Mariam Khosravani, the organizations founder and President, described this conference, as a forum to help other women explore their potential for professional and personal success. Their most important goal was to help them with their “daily journey of growth and learning.” The participant speakers as well as the organization committee of the event were made up of an impressive group of women, all of which we hope to have the ability to introduce to our readers.

Persian  Heritage

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Fasha (Farshad) Mahjoor Listed in the Top 100 in the World

By David Rahni

Mr. Farshad Mahjoor has been listed among the TOP 100 Analytical Scientists in the world. An architect by academic training, he has, nonetheless, made seminal contributions for the advancement of the Separation Sciences for the past nearly four decades. The cutting edge chromatographic instrumentation, columns, accessories, methodologies that his Phenomenex Corporation, has devised and commercialized are literally found and put to great use in the service of science, medicine, environment, forensics, production in every corner of the globe. As surprising that his recognition is to some who do not know him first hand beyond the chemical sciences, to the rest of us, Farshad has and continues to surpass his own high standards of exemplary service, advancing technology, and extending resources to humanity and with much humility.



What is even more striking than Farshad's contributions to the advancement of science, is his unwavering altruism, humanism, volunteerism and philanthropy toward noble causes everywhere. It is these latter qualities that have made Farshad the aspirational role model of great many peers, colleagues and friends.

Although Farshad's ancestry is rooted in the historical township of Kashan, Iran, and we the Persian-Americans might proudly claim him as one of our very own, it is more fitting to recognize him as a most precious human being among the jewels of humanity worldwide. Confessedly, his grandfather, a renowned physician who gave his entire life to help out the impoverished, is resting peacefully in paradise, as he would be proud of his offering following in his giant footsteps. The Persian Pomegranate does NOT fall too far from the tree after all, does it?!

Congratulations with best wishes for a long productive life, Mr. Farshad Mahjoor!

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WHERE ARE YOU FROM, ROCKY?

**For my father: Fakhr (Pride),
daughter: Leila (Re: Night),
son: Thunder & grandchild: Sky.**

I: The Origin

*I am from the world.
My father is the sun god (Mithra),
My mother is the earth.
I was born in the mountains.
I shall die in the oceans.*

*Every dawn my father travels the sky
To spread the original trinity of
Light, Warmth, and Eternal Pledge.
To guard the harmony of universe.
Tired, he returns to waiting souls
Passing his gene for new offspring.*

*My house, like a Hogan faces east
To capture the first rays of sun
Where angels carry Mithras' Pride
(And Moroni's god shall arrive resurrected).*

*At the heat of noon I look for Thunder
To bring a suiting coat of the rain
Emerging a new life out of the ocean.*

*At the eve of loneliness, I return to dusk,
Upon the edge of sky and ocean,
Waiting for black hole of the Night
To gaze at her mysterious eyes
Wandering among millions of stars.*

II: The Pride

*I am a Kurd, a Median, and an Iranian
From the great plateau of ancient Iran,
Where Medians, Persians, and Parthians meet;
Where a small empire of Medians followed by
The greatest empire the world has ever seen.*

*Alas my ancient glories have fallen apart;
Wounded, bewildered, massacred, and burned
By Greeks, Arabs, Moguls and Tatars.
Centuries of pages written in blood & tears.*

*Hope is dying, but is never dead
Let me carry the Pride of ancient glories
The phoenix will rise from his ashes
And I will raise my head high with a new Pride.*

Rockni Jalili, (Marco Island, Florida)



An Interview with

Mariam Khosravani

**Founder and President of the Iranian-American Women Foundation
and Executive Director of the Coastline Community Foundation**

Shahrokh Ahkami

Thank you for giving the readers of Persian Heritage a chance to get to know you. Let us start with a brief childhood background.

I was born and raised in a middle class family in Niavaran, in northern Tehran. My father's family was from Arak, while my mother's family was originally from Yazd. My father introduced me to charitable work and philanthropy in my early childhood. I accompanied him when

he delivered food, blankets and other necessities for the poor in Southern Tehran. He wanted me to see their situation and teach me how to give to those who were not as fortunate as we were. My father was a man with much integrity and love for humanity; I believe my love and passion for humanitarian work came from him. Unfortunately we lost him twenty-five years ago, but his memory and charitable work have resonated with me.

Your father's charitable work

had an impact on you, I am sure, but first came your education, where did that start?

I went to Kharazmi and Safinia High Schools in Shemiran, Tehran. When I was 25 years old, I moved to the United States, moving first to Utah to go to the university, and then settled in California. I received my MBA from National University & Certificate in Managing Non-Profit organizations from University of California, Irvine (UCI), while working full time.

After your schooling you went into the workforce can you tell us about your current employment?

I am currently employed by Coastline Community College as the Executive Director of the Foundation. My responsibility is to raise funds so that we may offer scholarships to our students and support various college projects and programs. I love my job because I can see the results of my efforts are making a huge difference in the lives of our students and our college. I always enjoy seeing hope in the eyes of our students when they receive their scholarship checks at our annual ceremony.

I have been told and now have witnessed your impact on the community, can you tell our readers a bit about your endeavors in the community?

I have lived in Irvine, CA for the past twenty-five years, and have been very involved in the community. I was appointed by the Mayor of Irvine to serve as a Commissioner on the Community Services Commission.

I was also the Chair of Investment Council for United Way of Orange County, a board member of California Community College Foundations as well as a board member of Association of Fundraising Professionals of Orange County, President of Network of Iranian Professionals of Orange County.

I am currently sitting on the advisory Board of PBS SoCal (Southern California) and board member of PAAIA.

You are extremely busy yet also founded the Iranian-American Women Foundation. What is your intent and goals of that organization?

Yes, I am so happy about this Foundation. Coastline Community College hosted the first two Iranian-American Women's Leadership Conferences, which was organized by my committee and me. We had no idea that our conferences would be embraced by the community – our first two conferences sold out within weeks before the deadline! We had approximately 500-600 guests at each event. After the second conference, I realized that this was a huge responsibility for our college. I knew that the college could not continue to offer the conference but at the same time, I realized that I couldn't stop what I have started because the need within our community existed for such an inspiring event. Therefore, I registered a non-profit organization and called it "Iranian-American Women Foundation" and offered our women's conferences under that umbrella.

Since you moved the conference from Coastline where have you now held it?

Since 2011, we hosted six conferences-including four in California, one in Washington, DC, and one in New York City. All six conferences sold out. So far, over 3000 women and men participated at our conferences in the last few years.

And the goals of the Foundation?

Our tagline and three major goals states "Inspire, Empower and Connect".

1: To INSPIRE our younger generation of Iranian women to follow their dreams and providing them with mentorship opportunities.

2: To EMPOWER women in our community by acknowledging and recognizing their contributions to American society and our own community.

3: To establish a networking opportunity for Iranian women to CONNECT and learn from each other's experiences and knowledge.

What keeps you inspired to host these conferences?

Before we offered our 2nd conference, I received a phone call from an Iranian woman asking me if she can bring her daughters to our event. She was very concerned about their direction in life and was worried that they were not very interested in attending a university, or preparing for

their future. She asked me if I thought that our conference would make a difference for them, knowing that they had to drive a few hours to participate at our conference. I assured her that this is probably the best thing she can do for them, "Give them an opportunity to see what they can become. If they only focus, and pick the right direction in their lives. Let them see their potentials."

Immediately after the conference, I received the most beautiful email from this mother, thanking me for this life changing experience for her daughters. They realized that sky is the limit and they were not going to waste their lives. Now after two years, all three daughters have been accepted to the best universities in California and still get emails from their mother updating me about their progress.

During the most recent conference in Orange County, CA, three UCI students came to me with tears in their eyes, sharing their experiences with me. One received a job offer and two others received internship opportunities from a few of our speakers who were their role models

Another mother called me a week after our conference in NYC, to tell me that her daughter (who was born and raised in America) went to our conference. She couldn't believe her ears when her daughter was telling her how she felt and what she learned at our conference. Her daughter said that for the first time, she was proud of her heritage, her history, her culture and most importantly her mother who is an Iranian-American woman. These stories inspire me to continue offering these conferences.

You have a panel of speakers, how do you pick them?

We do lot of research throughout the year. We seek out women with Iranian background, who has made a difference in their community or made a major accomplishment in their field. We also receive a lot of recommendations from our community members. My goal from the beginning wasn't to highlight the most successful women in our community –if you notice, we have a panel of speakers from a variety of backgrounds sharing their stories.

It is evident that you dedicate a great deal of your time to this Foundation, do you have any assistance?

Without the help of many none of this would be possible. I have to thank a group of 30 women in Orange County who were with me from the beginning stages. They are all volunteers who assist me with planning and on the day of the event. They came to Washington DC and NYC with me, I know they will join me around the world to offer these conferences, because they all believe in the mission of the organization and are eager to provide these opportunities to women all over the globe. In addition, we have a host committee in every city we go. Our wonderful planning committee in NYC opened their arms to IAW Foundation & reached out to their local communities in order to gain their support.

The best part of arranging these conferences is the friendships we build among the committee member, speakers and audience. In the last three years, I was fortunate to meet so many wonderful, successful and passionate Iranian –American ladies, who I am proud to call my friends.

These endeavors do not come without challenges, what are yours?

There are many obvious challenges to organize, implement and host an event of this caliber. My main concern has been the quality of our program. No matter what happens, we need to stick on our schedule and be on time. I guess more than anything else, our participants were surprised and impressed by our organizational skills and keeping the entire event on time!!!



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Another challenge is obtaining sponsors for our event. The IAW Foundation is a non-profit organization and as you noticed, our entrance fee is minimal so that more people can participate and benefit from these seminars. However, it doesn't cover the cost of the event. In order for us to offer these conferences, we need several major sponsors in each city who are willing to take the leadership of the conference and assist us with financial support.

What are possible venues for future conferences?

We have been contacted by so many women's organizations to take our conference to their cities, such as Vancouver, Texas, San Francisco, and a few countries in Europe. I am hoping to take this conference to London in 2014, so that Iranian women from European countries can join us and recognize their contributions to society, as well. I also would like to host one conference in Turkey, so our sisters from Iran can join us without the difficulty of obtaining a visa. This would be a powerful and dynamic conference. I can't wait for it!

PASSING OF LOTFI MANSOURI



This past September the international music world suffered a great loss with the passing of Lotfi Mansouri. *Persian Heritage* had the great honor of interviewing him for the Fall 1997 issue. He was a gentle, kind, intelligent person and one we will always consider to be a friend. His professional legacy as an innovator in the opera world began in 1983, when he introduced a simultane-

ous translation device. It translated in the opera into English and the translation appeared on a screen over the stage. It is called the proscenium a/k/a subtitles.

Born in Teheran, Iran on June 15, 1929, he left to study medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles. His passion for music, however, trumped medicine. His musical career includes directorships of the Canadian, Zurich, Geneva and San Francisco Operas. He will be remembered for his talent, support of youth in music and of course for his infectious smile. wife she was a treasured friend to Persian heritage magazine.

RECIPIENT OF GRAND PRIX FILM ITALIA AWARD

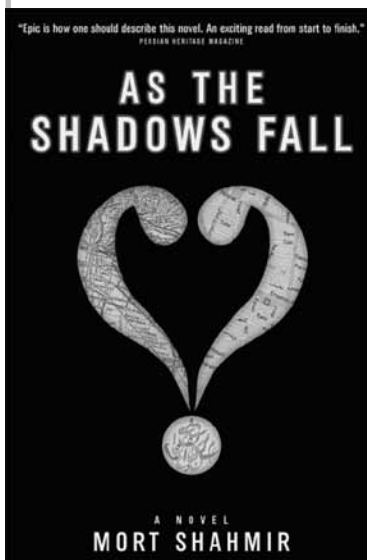
Dr. Mohammad Ala has produced three documentary films inside Iran in 2011 and 2012. One of them, *Immortality* received an Italian International Film Festival Award in June 2013. The film festival listed the work as *Immortality* from Iran because it was produced in Iran with an all Iranian crew. Thirty countries were present at the 2013 festival and a jury of film directors, film experts, and journalists selected *Immortality* to receive the Grand Prix Film Italia Award. The film producer Dr. Ala attended the festival and received the award.

Over 150 films were submitted to this festival with only 30 chosen to receive awards (there were no financial awards). All award winners received a certificate, several tours of Italian historical sites, and a 2012-2013 Italian film festival book.

As The SHADOWS

Fall

A Novel By: Mort Shahmir



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سایه‌ها

می‌افتند

نوشته:

مرت شاهمیر

Please visit: mortshahmir.com

for a review of the synopsis and the excerpt of the book and download instructions to Kindle, Nook, or iBook.

The print version will be available soon.

As The Shadows Fall is the love story of a young man and a young woman of Persian heritage in the US, the friendship of their families, and a brief account of Persian history (past and present), customs, literature, and arts. As the story unravels the reader will learn about the characters' secrets, past traumatic lives, and their undiminished yearning for the beautiful country and the rich culture that they have left behind.

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