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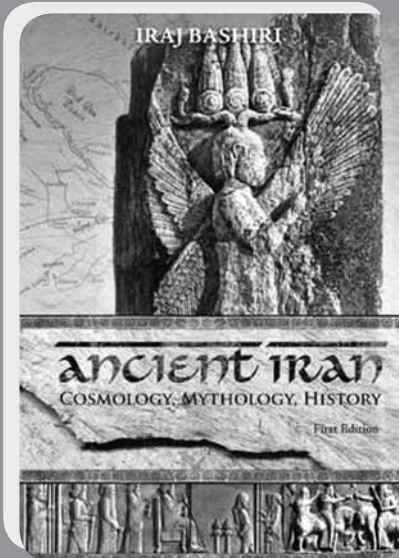
ANCIENT IRAN: COSMOLOGY, MYTHOLOGY, HISTORY

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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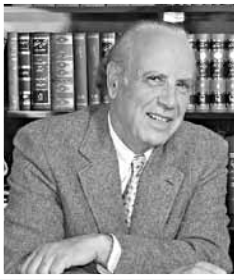
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IMPORTANT NOTICE

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

The arrival of the Persian New Year (Norouz) coincides each year with the anniversary date of the publication of Persian Heritage (Mirass-Iran). Throughout the nineteen years of our existence we have dealt with and survived many obstacles. Yet, we continue to move forward. This would not be the case if it were not for our devoted readers and hard working staff. Educating those with Persian roots and non Persians, on the medical, business, historical, scientific and cultural contributions Persia and Persians have made on society, remains the primary goal of the magazine. Last week I had a firsthand experience on the success of this goal. I would like to share this with you.

My eleven year old grandson, Ryan, called me on the phone and his voice was filled with excitement. "Papa, today our lesson in school was about Islamic culture. My teacher taught us about the rich Islamic cultures and how they influenced other older and modern cultures of the world. He also told us how Islam has affected the world's philosophies and values." Ryan explained that not only did his teacher say these things, but that it was written that way in his text book.

Hearing this I became very curious and asked him how he felt about what he was taught and if he thought it made a difference. Ryan still excited replied, "Papa I thought that many of the things the teacher said were not true!" Of course I had to ask why he felt that way and to my amazement he said, "Papa, because they have taken all that Persia and Persians have given to history and society and credited it to a religion (Islam) instead of to the Persians, this is not true Papa!"

I explained to him that the world of Islam is vast and crosses over many countries with rich and thriving cultures such as Iran, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey and many others. Again I asked why he was so upset and why he thought his lessons were wrong. Quickly he responded, "Papa are you testing me or are you honestly asking me this question?"

"Well Ryan, before I answer your question tell me some detailed information about your lessons today." I was curious to find out if his teacher made mention of the contributions of Iranian(Persian) scholars.

He proceeded by telling me that he learned about Mohammad Zakariya Razi and his invention of alcohol, Sulfuric Acid, while he was searching for a way to make gold (alchemy.) They mentioned him Papa, but in the lesson, Arab and Islamic researchers were given the historical credit for this and for medicine. The teacher taught us about Avicenna who wrote The Cannon of Medicine and other books on medicine, philosophy and poetry. They mentioned Omar Khayyam, who was introduced as a Persian poet, but the rest of the credits of the Persians scientists and poets went to the Arabs in this text book. We learned that the architect and builder of Baghdad, the capital of Iraq, was Iranian and worked along with a Jewish astronomer." Ryan, still excited brought up the Olympics, in Sochi, Russia. He remembered one

ice skating couple who performed to the music of Scheherzade (*Shahrzad*). During the performance the commentator told the audience that the story of Scheherzade was about a Persian Princess who recited stories to her husband king, in order to prevent him from killing her.

I asked Ryan, "What does the story of Scheherzade and the ice skating have to do with your classroom experience?" He simply said, "Because Papa in our text book they state that the story is the story of a Persian Princess but that it was written by the Arabs." Scheherzade, 1001 Nights, I explained, is the story of a Persian Princess, during the Sassanid Dynasty, before Islam. The king's wife betrayed him. As a result, for the next three years, he married a girl every night and murdered her the next day. Scheherzade, the daughter of the vizier (prime minister) volunteered to be married to the king. In order to save her life, she began to tell the king a story every night to put him to sleep. After three years and having fathered many children with her, the king pardoned Scheherzade. The story was in fact first written in the Indian language then translated into Arabic and finally into Persian.

I told Ryan that I was so proud and happy for his interest and knowledge of his Persian heritage. Continuing the conversation I informed him that Persians were represented in medicine with Farabi and Avicenna. In politics and government administration Persians ran the system under the Arab Caliphs. Persians taught them the system which the Arabs continued to apply to their future governments. In poetry, Persians are proudly represented by the great Ferdowsi, Hafez, Khayyam, Rumi, Nezami, Saadi, etc.. In astronomy the Persian Nasir al din Toosi (Tusi) is recognized for building the first observatory, which included a library containing over 40,000 books. And we cannot forget the contributions of Omar Khayyam in algebra, mathematics and astronomy and Nezam-ol-Molk who built *Nezamieh* University in Baghdad. These Ryan are only a few names of Persians who have made notable contributions to their fields and society.

I brought to Ryan's attention that during the Arab invasions and because of Arab expansion Arabic became the universal language. Because of this Persian scientists, historians and scholars were forced to write in the Arabic language. Persians, however, from the beginning of the invasions resisted to submit completely to Arabic culture and the language. If it were not for Ferdowsi and his Book of Kings, Iran like Lebanon, Egypt and Syria would have inherited the Arab language. I ended the conversation with Ryan with a feeling of accomplishment. I was proud of his interest in his ethnicity and I wondered if the conversation I had with him was being held in other Persian American homes.

A few weeks ago, when the president of Iran was speaking in the southern region of Iran, he discussed the riches of Islamic law and culture and made the comparison to western (Oxford University) teachings. It is unfortunate that the President of Iran chooses to embrace the Persian contributions as Islamic focusing

on 1392 years of Persian history in the Islamic period, rather than focusing on the culture and civilization of Persia that is thousands and thousands of years old.

This is important. It is also important to note that an Iranian, who is a university professor, during a lecture claimed that Cyrus and Darius the Great and the celebration of Norouz were not important. The professor, instead tried to embrace the culture and personalities of Islam to be of utmost importance. Iranians always complain that negative events in Iran are due to the actions of the British, Russians and Americans. Iranians claim innocence and play the victim.

On the other hand while visiting museums such as the Louvre in Paris, the Metropolitan Museum in New York and the British Museum, in London, Iranians become irritable seeing how Arab petroleum wealth has been used to change history, such as the renaming of the Persian Gulf and Persian scholars, physicians and other Persian talents and inventions attributed to or regarded as Arabs by association to Islam. Iranians shed tears and blame the West but being honest, true blame should be placed on all Iranians, hyphenated or not.

Face it, if the Iranian president takes no pride in Persian, NOT ISLAMIC contributions and does not acknowledge the great Persian empires, and if an Iranian university professor follows the same suit (denying the importance of Cyrus the Great, Darius and Norouz) how can Iranians expect a different outcome? Yes, Iranians, hyphenated or not, are to blame! Had we unified and used out vast wealth to defend Persian culture, any attempt to change history would have been honorably stopped. Like my grandson Ryan, we must not be afraid to speak out against injustices. We can no longer politely discuss these issues without seriously challenging, as a group, any change in Persian history. Had we done this petro-dollars and Arab influence would not have been able to change Persian history, names and distort historical facts. False statements, made by former Iranian statesmen have been and continue to be used by the western media to support hatred and misunderstanding towards Iran and its people.

Iran, a country with such wealth and resources has been economically drained. This is UNBELIEVABLE when the wealth received in the past eight years from oil, is greater than the revenue received from oil from the inception of the oil industry in Iran. This income, unfortunately has been deposited into personal bank accounts leaving the country in economic shambles and the people under serious financial and social hardship. As I stated on a number of occasions, this tactic of oppression may be the way the regime survives. When people are barely surviving, economic and political issues become secondary in their minds. Again I don't know why Ryan's questions and comments stirred up my emotions but once again at Norouz, I am left with a sense of loss.

Norouz means rebirth. We celebrate this holiday with events and celebrations as we say good bye to the past and welcome a new beginning. These years as we do the traditional spring cleaning of our homes, we should also clear our minds. Let us all start this year with fresh optimism and positive thoughts. This can only be accomplished by changing our way of thinking. Yes, we can sit together and remember the old times, but we can no longer afford to be stuck in the past. It is the future that we must be concerned with. Yes, we must always take pride in our Iranian, Persian history. More importantly, however, we must protect it from future attempts to change it. I truly hope that one day we can live like our host countrymen, take lessons from our past and institute measures and steps toward a better future.

Again thank you for allowing Persian Heritage Magazine to be part of your home. I would like to take this opportunity to wish all a happy and healthy new year, filled with love and compassion.

Shahrokh Akbari

*To the face of the rose the New year's breeze is pleasant
On the background of the meadow a beautiful face is pleasant*

Of bygone yesterday nothing you may say is pleasant

Be merry, speak not of yesterday: today is pleasant

Since the cloud has washed the face the tulip for the new year's day

Arise and pour wine into the goblet speedily

For this verdure which is today the object of your admiration

Will tomorrow spring from your dust

Belong the robe of the rosebud has been torn by the Zephyr

The nightingale is inspired by the beauty of rose

Rest in the shade of rosebush, for such rose

Has often grows out of the soil, while we lie under the earth

Poem by Hakim Omar Khayyam,

Translation by Edward Fitzgerald

**Happy
Norouz!**



**IN REPLY TO COMMENTARY,
PERSIAN HERITAGE,
VOL.18, NO.72, WINTER 2013. PP.18-20**

Dear Editor

Having read Dr. Vaghefi's brief commentary on the life and times of Dr. Mossadegh, may I be permitted to discuss some points?

Dr. Vaghefi states that it was Reza Shah who achieved cancellation of the system of capitulations. It is to be remembered that capitulations were imposed on Iran, first, by Russia at the Treaty of Turkomanchai (1828) and, subsequently, by the British after the defeat of Iran in the Afghan War (1856). In Dr. Mossadegh's persistent quest for the preservation of the sovereignty of Iran, capitulations figured prominently. Having studied the matter at length, he wrote the first book on the subject (Capitulation va Iran. Teheran, 1915). While Governor of Azarbaijan, he dared to have arrested a Russian subject, who had insulted Sardar Sepah, and over-rode Russian threats and objections that they were immune to arrest, arguing that the 1921 Soviet-Iranian Agreement had cancelled capitulations.

Dr. Vaghefi poses the rhetorical question, concerning the failure to achieve an agreement on the oil question. Dr. Mossadegh showed goodwill and went a long way to reach agreement. Such agreement was reached with the Harriman mission. However, as Harriman himself recounts in his memoirs, when he returned to London to put that agreement to the British Government and to the oil company, both refused to entertain an accord.

Again, Dr. Mossadegh had high hopes that an agreement would be reached through the intervention of the World Bank. Again, the British refused to contemplate the proposed terms.

The one-word answer to Dr. Vaghefi's question is: Control.

The British stated that they would accept nationalization, as well as possibly reach some understanding concerning compensation, as long as they kept control. Obviously, this intransigent stand eliminated any further hope of a negotiated settlement.

Knowing in advance that negotiations would be fruitless, the plan to oust Dr. Mossadegh was hatched by the British in March 1953, Operation Ajax was approved by Eisenhower on April 4 and implemented in August of that year.

Dr. Vaghefi has promised us a further article. May I respectfully suggest that it should be passed through an editor. In that way, various minor typos could be eliminated as well data errors, such as the 1963 (and not 1964) uprising, or the date on which the Majless proposed the Prime Ministry to Dr. Mossadegh (1951, and not 1950), or the date of the first constitution (1906, and not 1908).

In general, Dr. Vaghefi is to be thanked for giving us a succinct summary of events of the period.

Farhad Diba

(author of the first English-language biography of Dr. Mossadegh)

COMMENTS ON COMMENTS

Dear Editor:

With regards to your editorial and Mr. Pakravan, I must say you are both correct. But you both missed the fact that the congress of the US in general and the media in particular are totally oblivious about Iran's population. One out of ignorance and the other out of politics. It is quite sad that they still believe that the present regime is a "legitimate Government." It is particularly distasteful when Secretary of State Kerry, referred to that regime as a legitimate government. The result has been disastrous. They

mix the two as if the poor Iranian people have any control or anything to say about the regime. The Khaliphate, who has a few other titles, Faughi, Supreme leader etc, Ali Khameneie, s the ruler who hangs anybody who disagrees with him and appoints a variety miscreants to run the country. Every 4 years they create a phony election to show the world they are legit. Every day hangings take place, yet they are seldom reported here.

Next, the, "Hopeful Deal" page 10. At the end of Iran Iraq war, Ayatollah Khomeini, said, "we must complete the formation of an atomic bomb." That will guarantee the maintenance of Islamic regime. Since then the regime has been sprinting to the finish. To date they are almost there and it is the goal of British and President Obama to let them have it. President Obama has shown his hatred of Israel not once but several times so what you see is only a moppet show.

This created an uproar with many objections. Then I responded that going from one country after another to shed the blood of thousands of people does not make one a "Great" but a mega terrorist. Hitler did it without bloodshed country after country in Europe, why don't we call him Hitler the Great?

Thank you, David Yazdan

THE PHOENIX

Dear Editor:

Upon my return from a trip, I saw my copy of the Fall 2013 issue of Persian Heritage. Thank you so much for including my translation of The Phoenix by Iraj Fatemi in this issue. With all good wishes for continuing success of Persian Heritage.

Best regards, Cyrus Behroozi

POINTS ON THE ISSUE

Dear Editor:

I have just received the last issue of the Persian Heritage, and would like to thank you for publishing my article.

I would like to bring a couple of things to your attention: The beautiful painting of the back cover, I believe from your daughter, deserves a great citation. How does she feel to incorporate dimensions in her paintings? This will bring them out of the rudimentary state to reality. Of course it all depends on the artist's view. She may not like that. I will be very much interested to know her thinking. Nice, but will give a better opinion once I get a chance to read it all in detail.

Thank you again for your great efforts.

Hooshang Guilak

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NUCLEAR NEGOTIATIONS: IS IT REALLY THE FUNDAMENTAL IMPASSE BETWEEN THE U.S. AND IRAN?

Contrary to popular conceptions and to how they are portrayed in the media, the so-called nuclear negotiations between Iran and the U.S. (P5+1) is only the tip of an iceberg. The U.S. has not yet fully accepted the loss of Iran as its most influential ally, as well as the loss of the Shah as the gendarme for cheap oil and the most important customer for American military and manufactured commodities in the Persian Gulf region. At the same time, the Islamic Republic (IRI) regime in Iran is now more vulnerable due to its failed domestic and international socio-economic and political policies, and is thus more apprehensive than ever about its very own existence: the regime's exaggerated portrayal of its costly nuclear program is inextricably the indication of its schizophrenic anxieties.

The theocratic class with Ali Khamenei at its helm is particularly fearful of being overrun and discarded into the history bin of oblivion by the revolutionary guard military coup d'état. The IRI is facing intensifying domestic dissent and oppositions, and is surrounded on all sides by the mighty U.S. pre-emptive military forces. The IRI leaders have witnessed the precedents set by the fates of Osama Ben Laden and Al-Qaeda lynchpins of Saudi Arabia in Afghanistan and Pakistan, Saddam Hussein of Iraq, Moammar Kaddafi of Libya, Hosni Mubarak of Egypt and Bashar El-Assad of Syria, and by such extrapolations, fear their own demise. The nuclear negotiations are therefore a desperate ploy on their part to seek legitimacy from the U.S./West, along with guarantees that they will not be overtly or covertly overthrown by internal or external forces.

The pivotal challenge for the international community, especially the U.S., is to reach a multilateral accord whereby the long-term strategic and economic interests of the West/U.S. are amicably reconciled with the self-serving interests of the IRI establishment; in essence, the latter amounts to the IRI remaining in power long enough at least for a homegrown peaceful transition in Iran. What is more fundamentally at stake, however, is to ensure the sovereignty of Iran and the integrity of its 80 million citizens are conserved; this remains the paradigm shift and the major litmus test for the U.S. foreign policy.

The Iranian people are the only nation in the region still staunchly pro-Western/pro U.S., notwithstanding their trials and tribulations. They should fulfil their longing – 150 years in the making – for socio-economic and political reformations, democracy, freedom, equality, human rights, justice and peace. Without the latter principle, any possible resolution to these so-called nuclear negotiations is short-sighted, unsustainable, and detrimental to the primary interests of all parties concerned. Reiterating the mutually beneficial interests of the American and Iranian peoples should remain our pivotal focus.

Nothing productive will materialize if we continue to allow other governments in the region, be they Saudi Arabia, Israel, or others, to deflect their own failing policies by muddying the water and meddling in the U.S. ongoing dialogue with Iran. We cannot any longer serve the ulterior motives of Israel or Saudi Arabia serving as their military might, and instead should focus back on the primary strategic, security, economic and cultural priorities of the American people.

Rachel Eliasi Kohan

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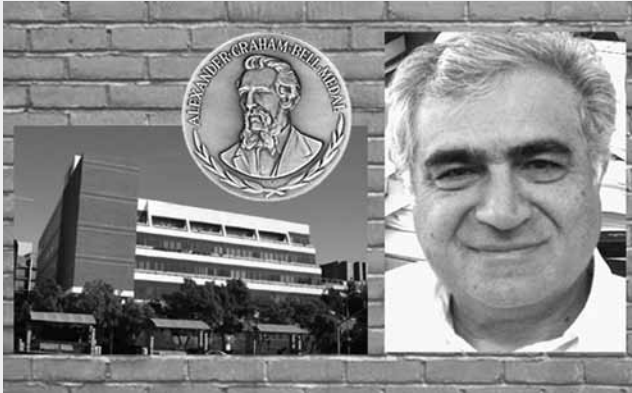
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The First Iranian-American Wins 2014 IEEE Alexander Graham Bell Gold Medal



Dr. Dariush Divsalar is the recipient of the 2014 IEEE Alexander Graham Bell Gold Medal. Dariush is the first Iranian-American to win this highly prestigious award. He was also the recipient of the NASA Exceptional Engineering Achievement Medal in 1996.

Dariush is an Adjunct Professor at UCLA. He also works as the Senior Research Scientist at JPL, the NASA laboratory, which has the following background information on its website:

Dariush Divsalar received the Ph.D. degree in electrical engineering from UCLA, in 1978. Since then, he has been with the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), California Institute of Technology (Caltech), where he is a Principal Scientist. At JPL, he has been involved with developing state-of-the-art technology for advanced deep space communications systems and future NASA space exploration. Since 1986, he has taught graduate courses in communications, and coding at UCLA and Caltech. He has published more than 200 papers, coauthored a book entitled *An Introduction to Trellis Coded Modulation with Applications*, contributed to two other books, and holds 19 U.S. patents in the above areas. He was co recipient of the 1986 paper award of the IEEE Transactions on Vehicular Technology. He was also co recipient of the joint paper award of the IEEE Information Theory and IEEE Communication Theory societies in 2008. The IEEE Communication Society has selected one of his papers for inclusion in a book entitled *The Best of the Best: Fifty Years of Communications and Networking Research*, containing the best 56 key research papers ever published in the Society's 50-year history. He has received over 40 NASA Tech Brief awards and a NASA Exceptional Engineering Achievement Medal in 1996. He served as an Area Editor for the IEEE Transactions on Communications from 1989 to 1996. He became a Fellow of IEEE in 1997 for contributions to the analysis and design of coding and modulation techniques for satellite, mobile, and deep-space communication systems.

The IEEE Alexander Graham Bell Medal was established in 1976 by the IEEE Board of Directors in commemoration of the centennial of the telephone's invention and to provide recognition for outstanding contributions to telecommunications.

The invention of the telephone by Alexander Graham Bell in 1876 was a major event in electrotechnology. It was instrumental in stimulating the broad telecommunications industry that has dramatically improved life throughout the world. As an individual, Bell himself exemplified the contributions that scientists and engineers have made to the betterment of mankind.

IRANIAN AMERICANS CONTRIBUTE TO RICHNESS OF AMERICAN LIFE

November 26, 2013, Washington, D.C. – The Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian Americans contributed: Hamid Moghadam was named the overall winner of the 2013 National Ernst and Young Entrepreneur of The Year. Mori Hosseini became the Chairman of Florida's State University System Board of Governors. Both Moghadam and Hosseini are well-known for their passion and support of the Iranian American community and causes.

WORLD PREMIERE VIOLA CONCERTO BY IRANIAN COMPOSER

Santa Rosa Symphony Music Director Bruno Ferrandis led the orchestra in a world premiere by award-winning contemporary composer Behzad Ranjbaran on March 22, 23, and 24, 2014, in Weill Hall at Sonoma State University's Green Music Center. Guest soloist Paul Silverthorne, the principal violist of the London Symphony, performed the premiere of Concerto for Viola and Orchestra. Ranjbaran, who is currently on the faculty of the Juilliard School, has been hailed as "a master of the orchestra" by the Dallas Morning News and his pieces have been described as having "radiant luminescence" by the Washington Post.

About Behzad Ranjbaran

Born in 1955 in Tehran, Iran, Behzad Ranjbaran's musical education started at the age of nine when he entered the Tehran Music Conservatory. He came to the United States in 1974 where he attended Indiana University. He received his doctorate in composition from the Juilliard School where he currently serves on the faculty. His honors include a National Endowment for the Arts grant, and a Charles Ives Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. He is also the recipient of the Rudolf Nissim Award for his Violin Concerto.

Ranjbaran's music has been performed by soloists Renée Fleming, Joshua Bell, and Yo-Yo Ma, among others. Recordings include Persian Trilogy on the Delos label by the London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by JoAnn Falletta. This orchestral cycle, comprising the works *Seven Passages*, *Seemorgh*, and *The Blood of Seyavash*, takes its inspiration from ancient Persian legends, as recounted in the 11th century epic poem "*Shahnameh*" (The Book of Kings).

Juniper Networks Names Shaygan Kheradpir Chief Executive Officer



(Marketwired – Nov 13, 2013) – Juniper Networks (NYSE: JNPR), the industry leader in network innovation, today announced Shaygan Kheradpir as its chief executive officer, effective January 1, 2014. Kheradpir succeeds Kevin Johnson, who in July announced his plan to retire as CEO. Johnson will remain as a member of the board.

“The board has conducted

a comprehensive search process and we’re very excited to name Shaygan Kheradpir as our next chief executive officer,” said Scott Kriens, chairman of the board, Juniper Networks. “Shaygan has a proven track record of successful business operations and technology leadership, with industry knowledge and technical vision from the perspectives of both telecommunications service providers and global enterprises. Most importantly, Shaygan’s values and vision for the company align very tightly with our own, building a strong foundation for Juniper’s future.”

Kheradpir joins Juniper Networks from Barclays PLC, where he served as the chief operations and technology officer, and as a member of its

executive committee. Prior to joining Barclays, he was executive vice president and chief information and technology officer at Verizon Communications.

“Juniper Networks delivers innovations that are transforming the way people interact, conduct business, and connect as a global community,” said Kheradpir. “I am honored to lead this visionary organization and look forward to working with this group of dedicated and talented professionals to drive the next phase of the company’s growth.”

Kheradpir joined Barclays, a major global financial services provider, in 2011. While responsible for its operations and technology, he was also a catalyst for the bank’s transformation imperatives of 21st century industrialization and customer-focused innovation.

Kheradpir was an original

member of the management team when Verizon was created, and through a decade of leadership, was an instrumental member of the team that transitioned Verizon from a regional telephone company to a broadband, media and global communications leader. During his tenure, he helped to create and implement technologies and products that anticipated future market needs such as IP multi-media and Fiber Optic Service (FiOS).

Kheradpir holds a bachelor’s, master’s, and Ph.D. in electrical engineering from Cornell University.

Juniper Networks delivers innovation across routing, switching and security. From the network core down to consumer devices, Juniper Networks’ innovations in software, silicon and systems transform the experience and economics of networking.

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Expanding On Print

Davood N. Rahni

I write to further expand on the article in Economist Magazine, “*The Road to Renewal of science in the “Muslim” world*” as it has in 2013, appeared in the international issue of the Economist. (economist.com/news/international/21570677-after-centuries-stagnation-science-making-comeback-islamic-world-road)

As a prolific professor of chemical science in the U.S. for nearly forty years, and born to a multi-religious (Islam, Judaism, Zoroastrianism and Christianity) family in Iran, I found your article, the Road to Renewal, quasi-intriguing and somewhat informative; nonetheless, I wish to provide your readers with the following perspectives on the topics you had covered:

You contrasted the enlightened proliferations of the “Islamic” science in the “Orient,” circa eighth through the thirteenth century CE, while in the same period science in the utter darkness of the Occident remained nonexistent. You further provided information on the contemporary advancement of science in the west albeit carried in part by an ever increasing cadre of involuntary émigrés from the so-called “Islamic” world, as compared to the dismal records in the “Islamic” world itself where, with the exceptions of Iran and Turkey, science remains rather dormant today. I consider your analysis offensive to many sovereign nations among the 57 countries you cited. I find the [mis-] use of terms like “Islamic” or the “Muslim” world inadvertently negligent at best, and blithely belligerent, at worst. Your analysis may be genuinely well intent; nonetheless, it does come across as deeply tainted with an ulterior Eurocentric naïveté along with nostalgic perception of a post-colonialist myopic lens. Let me further elaborate with specifics:

First, the misnomer “Islamic” world wrongly connotes the “Arab” hegemonic world extended over a vast region where the majority are Moslem; this is far from the truth, as most if not all 57 nations that you cite, do preserve their own unique historic values and distinct ethno-cultural diversities; Iran with a rich heritage nearly ten thousand years in the making, is a succinct example. Rhetorically speaking, are we in parallel referring to Europe and its continental American expansion as the “Christian” world?! Furthermore, is there any recorded historical evidence to support your implied claim that the Caliphs of Baghdad or Damascus had felt religiously obligated-according to Koranic scriptures or Hadith-to patronize and nurture the advancement of empirical science? Science was supported by the political, economic and hegemonic strategies of the emerging Islamic rulers as it was supported by the pre-Islamic Sassanid Dynasty in Iran. The merging trumpeting rulers in turn relied heavily on the existence of the uniquely rich [science, arts, literature, technology, etc.] cultures of the non-Arab nations such as then Persia (aka Iran) that were conquered by the Arab Muslims. In fact, all the historical names of the scientists you rightly cite, Avicenna, Al-Kahrazmi (Algorithm), Biruni, as well as many others you left out, namely, Rhazes, Khayyam, Rumi, Phazabi, Jābir ibn Hayyān, Ghazzaali, Sa’adi, Hafēz, Ferdowsi just to name a few, are all Persians.

These non-Arab, mostly Persian scholars in the region had to function in an ever expanding loosely federated Islamic Empire, where the impending language gradually became Arabic for

the period 7th through the 13th century. Maimonides in Spain is another luminary example of the renowned Jewish philosopher-scientist who had to carry his impressive treatise in Arabic under a political Islamic Emir of the Iberian Peninsula and not under “Islamic” scripture mandate. Simply put, Arabic then as English is today was simply the communication vehicle for dissemination and communication of ideas, nonetheless, this should not be misconstrued as radical superiority to the Arab tribes of the Hejaz and Najd in the southern Arabian Peninsula. The pinnacle distinction between the Islamic dominance and the western Christianity/ Colonialism was that the former did not entirely destroy existing cultures and establishments but rather allowing some to flourish to its own advantage and leverage.

Your comparison of science carried by western scholars hired and imported into Saudi Arabia on short term contracts hired western professors and scholars on short term contracts, and of the presence of native scientists in Iran and Turkey, conjures up in mind comparing dates with pomegranates and apples, respectively! Paradoxically, the several million Iranian population in diaspora is comprised of a disproportionately high number of educated, skilled and immensely contributing scientists, professors, physicians, etc. in the U.S. and the west; however, we should neither label them as transplanted from the “Islamic” world nor should we stigmatize them as imported scientists (they are naturalized citizens) into the “Christian” world. Instead, let’s reiterate the pursuit of science and its impact on humanity as universal!

Lastly, whether it was by pure coincidence or orchestrated, two concurrent events of historical proportions transpired in reverse directions in the Occident and the Orient in the 13th century CE. The Magna Carta signed in 1215 by the English King John paved the way for the European enlightenment through science and progressive free thinking paradigm, which ultimately came to fruition a few centuries thereafter. By the same token, the emergence of the puritan Shiite Sufism in Persia leading to the inward introspections of higher eternal ascension and later scattered throughout the region, when ironically paralleled with the Sunni Islam reinforcing a zealot reversion to traditionalist SUNNI Salafi Vahabism in Saudi Arabia (the major sponsor of most ideologically driven terrorism in the region today) and its newly fabricated new sheikdoms in the southern shores of the Persian Gulf, led to a downward spiral deterioration of progressive thoughts and science. In retrospect, the frequent genocidal incursions of the catholic crusaders of the same era into the region, followed by the European colonialists pillaging and exploiting natural resources in the East, further exacerbated the plights and aspirations of Moslems as they became cynically xenophobic about, and skeptically suspicious of western ulterior motives, in the vast region stretching from Africa and eastern Europe to southeastern Asia where the majority of the population happen to be Moslem by birth and beliefs.

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SUNNIS AND SHIAS

JEREMY BOWEN

BBC Dec 20, 2013

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SUNNIS AND SHIAS

Muslims are split into two main branches, the Sunnis and Shias. The split originates in a dispute soon after the death of the Prophet Muhammad over who should lead the Muslim community.

The great majority of Muslims are Sunnis - estimates suggest the figure is somewhere between 85% and 90%. The two communities share fundamental beliefs - the "oneness" of Allah, that Muhammad was the last prophet, prayer, fasting and the pilgrimage to Mecca for example. But there are differences in doctrine, ritual, law, theology and religious organization. They also often seem to be in competition. The Iranian revolution of 1979 launched a radical Shia Islamist agenda that laid down a theological and ideological challenge to conservative Sunni regimes, particularly in the Gulf. In countries with large Shia communities, Shias often make up the poorest sections of society and see themselves as oppressed and discriminated against. In many countries the two communities live separate lives. However, in Iraq intermarriage between Sunnis and Shia was common until recently. In Lebanon, Shias have gained widespread respect and a strong political voice due to the political and military activities of Hezbollah. Some conservative Sunni doctrines preach hatred of Shias. Pakistan has a history of Shia-Sunni bloodshed dating back to the 1980s.

SUNNIS: Sunni Muslims regard themselves as the orthodox and traditionalist branch of Islam. The word Sunni comes from "Ahl al-Sunna", the people of the tradition. The tradition in this case refers to practices based on precedent or reports of the actions of the Prophet Muhammad and those close to him. Sunnis venerate all the prophets mentioned in the Koran, but particularly Muhammad as the final prophet. All subsequent Muslim leaders are seen as temporal figures. In contrast to Shias, Sunni religious teachers and leaders have historically come under state control.

The Sunni tradition also emphasizes a codified system of Islamic law and adherence to four schools of law.

SHIAS: In early Islamic history the Shia were a political faction - literally "Shiat Ali" or the party of Ali. The Shia claimed the right of Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad, and his descendants to lead the Islamic community. Ali was killed in a power struggle over who should be caliph, leader of the Muslims. His sons - Hussein and Hassan - also struggled to capture the caliphate. Hussein died on the battlefield opposing a subsequent caliph and Hassan is believed to have been poisoned. These events gave rise to the Shia cult of martyrdom and the rituals of grieving.

There is a distinctive messianic element to the faith and Shias have a hierarchy of clerics who practice independent and ongoing interpretation of Islamic texts. Estimates of the number of Shia range from 120 to 170 million, roughly one-tenth of all Muslims. Shia Muslims are in the majority in Iran, Iraq, Bahrain, Azerbaijan and, according to some estimates, Yemen. There are large Shia communities in Afghanistan, India, Kuwait, Lebanon, Pakistan, Qatar, Syria, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and the UAE.



Happy New Year!
Best wishes to you!

Persian Heritage

In Tehran, on April 4th, Qavam signed an agreement with Ambassador Sadchikov for the formation of a 51%/49% joint-stock oil company, contingent upon future Majles approval. Gromyko immediately took advantage of the opportunity to assert that since complete agreement had been reached in Tehran, the proposed May 6th session should be cancelled, and the Iranian complaint permanently removed from the SC Agenda. Ala responded on April 9th that Iran's stance remained as previously reported, and formally requested that the Council remained "seized" of the case. Worried about Qavam's repeated vacillations, Ala saw this as a key point, which would ensure continued UN SC support, even if Iran failed to prosecute its plea. In the opinion of Harold Minor, a US diplomat quoted by Bruce Kuniholm ('The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East', Princeton University Press, 1949; p. 340), had it not been for Ala's personal initiative and his persistence at this crucial juncture, the Iran Case would almost certainly have been dropped from the Security Council's agenda.

As if to confirm his worst fears, on April 15th, in a further diametrically opposed letter, Ala reported that he had been instructed by the Prime Minister, to withdraw the case from the agenda in the light of a complete Iranian accord with the Soviet Union. Gromyko triumphantly returned to the chamber having overcome his pique, claiming previous SC resolutions were invalid, and reiterating his previous demands.

Much uncertainty and debate ensued: can a government's request for removal of a complaint be valid when foreign forces are still in occupation? Once the Security Council has formally taken up a complaint, is it not the SC itself which must decide on retention or removal of an issue on the Agenda? Trygvie Lie even expressed his anxiety lest the moral authority of the United Nations would be damaged by this seemingly insoluble conflict.

In the end, a majority of members voted in favour of the Security Council remaining 'seized' of the case, until it could be confirmed on May 6th that Soviet troops had completely left the country. Once again, Gromyko angrily vowed he would no longer take part in future discussions about Iran.

On the appointed day however, Ala wrote that "most Soviet troops have apparently left the northern provinces, but since access has been denied to Iranian officials since 1945, it is impossible to be certain whether or not this is also true of Azarbaijan." Due to this incomplete report, the Council voted to defer the question till May 20th.

On May 20th, the Council received a first letter from Ala saying: "...I cannot ascertain complete Soviet departure; they continue to cause disorder, and Russian soldiers in civilian dress are arming separatists. The situation remains a threat to world peace."

On the Same day, a further entirely contradictory letter was received from Ala with new instructions from Qavam, and a report stating: "...a commission to western Azarbaijan could find no trace of Soviet forces, which departed on May 6th". Agnostic members of the Security Council took this to be an indication of discord between Ala and the Prime Minister, probably caused by overwhelming Soviet pressure on the PM in Tehran.

In Gromyko's sulky absence, it was Poland's Oskar Lange who aggressively cross-questioned Ala: "...if no Iranian officials had been able to get to Azarbaijan, how did they inspect the province – from the air, or through a telescope...?" Ala countered by saying that he knew nothing of microscopes or telescopes – all he was certain of was that Iranian officials, chosen by the Azarbaijan Democratic Republic, had been flown to selected areas of Azarbaijan in a Russian military plane. All these inconsistencies and contradictions caused much confusion and further anxiety among Security Council members.

Ala openly expressed his belief in the continued covert interference of Soviet agents in north-western Iran, and his doubts about the true intentions of his government to the media, attributing Qavam's astonishing volte-face to extreme pressure from Sadchikov in Tehran.

At this point, Prime Minister Ghavam publicly reprimanded Ala for causing him embarrassment and exceeding his brief, instructing him to remain in Washington, and forbidding any further representations at the Security Council – an exceptionally humiliating experience for a senior diplomat! Indeed, only US Ambassador George Allen's intervention, prevented his recall. At home in the Embassy, I well remember that my father told us we should be prepared to pack, as he anticipated being recalled for not following the Prime Minister's express instructions. He was meanwhile comprehensively vilified by Pravda as "the well-paid representative of Wall Street and the City of London".

The US diplomat Harold Minor (quoted by B. Kuniholm) dismissed rumours that Qavam had colluded with Ala in appearing to demand withdrawal of the Case, while secretly instructing him to persist with his complaint at the Security Council, in order to assuage Soviet threats. He asserts that Ala had shown considerable courage in

expressing his personal opinion without Qavam's sanction, and in accepting the potential consequences of his action.

**THE AZARBAIJAN CRISIS
OF 1945 – 1946**
The Third and Last Part
FEREYDOUN ALA

THE COURSE OF EVENTS IN TEHRAN

In fact, Soviet troops did leave Iranian soil on May 6th. There is an amusing, ironic anecdote from Robert Rossow, US Vice-Consul in Tabriz, who reported that as Russian tanks departed in clouds of diesel smoke, they suddenly ground to a halt after travelling for only a few kilometres – they had run out of fuel!! Anglo-Iranian Oil Company tankers had to be hastily rounded up to refuel Stalin's armoured vehicles, before they changed their mind!

Following the signature of the Qavam/Sadchikov agreement in April 1946, the USSR waited impatiently for a 15th Majles to sanction the oil accord, which was beginning to take precedence over Azarbaijan autonomy in their mind. Meanwhile, the boldness, demands and influence of the ADR and Pischevari grew considerably, and Qavam's beleaguered government chose the path of conciliation and appeasement:

1. First of all, three Tudeh Party members were included in Qavam's cabinet;
2. On April 28th - Qavam held talks with Pischevari's "autonomous government" in Tehran, to discuss ADR demands,

and reach some compromise compatible with the Constitution.

3. June 14th – Mozaffar Firouz signed a 10-point agreement with Pishevari in Tabriz (in the presence of the Soviet Consul!), where he conceded most of the ADR requests. Firouz was also sent to assuage the demands of striking oil industry workers in Khuzestan, and to seek reconciliation with Qashgha'i and Bakhtiari tribal leaders in revolt.

4. Finally, Qavam held negotiations with Qazi Mohammad's Kordestan autonomous republic, granting many of their demands.

Hitherto, the Shah had merely been a passive, but acutely anxious observer of his country's deteriorating situation, and his all-powerful Prime Minister's handling of these critical events. Now, in mid-October, he summoned Qavam to an audience, ordered the organisation of fresh parliamentary elections, and asked for Qavam's resignation and the formation of a new cabinet free of Tudeh Party members, but above all, free of Mozaffar Firouz and his insidious influence. "Firouz must either face the Courts for treason or he must be exiled" he insisted. Although Ghavam still astonishingly sought to defend his deputy, he eventually complied, and Firouz was appointed Iranian Ambassador to the USSR – "...they will treat him like a dog in Moscow...", the Shah added.

Upon hearing of these decisions, Sadchikov hurried to Qavam's office in protest, and threatened dire consequences for this "unfriendly act". Qavam hesitated, fearing that Soviet troops might re-occupy Iran, but after consulting with George Allen, the new US Ambassador, the Shah adamantly insisted that his troops were immediately despatched north to Azarbaijan.

In October, the Shah issued his 'Farman' calling for elections to the 15th Majles; Iranian armed forces commanded by General Razmara entered Zanzan on November 16th, and Tabriz on December 13th, meeting with little resistance, and to a tumultuous public welcome. Mianeh was also taken soon after, ending both the Independent Republics of Kordestan and Azarbaijan almost exactly 12 months after they were first formed. Qazi Mohammad was publicly hanged, and Pishevari escaped to Baku, having been cynically dropped "...for greater revolutionary reasons...", as Stalin wrote to him.

The 15th Majles (carefully packed with members of Qavam's newly created 'Democratic Party') overwhelmingly rejected the Qavam/Sadchikov oil agreement in October 1947, and Qavam was formally 'forgiven' for signing the agreement in contravention of Mossadegh's Law. The United Nations Organisation was immensely strengthened by the peaceful resolution of this first, highly significant case brought before the new-found Security Council. However, this also represented the start of a near half-century of Cold War, which persisted until the Soviet Union founded, essentially for economic reasons, in 1991.

Qavam o-Saltaneh, ever an accomplished self-publicist, claimed a lion's share of the kudos for "hood-winking" or duping Marshall Stalin, and resolving the Azarbaijan crisis virtually single-handed, despite the manifest inclination for compromise and accommodation he had shown throughout his premiership; his vacillation and the repeated concessions he had granted this menacing neighbour for fear of reprisals. Indeed, to this day, he is credited with such masterful manipulation of events, that he alone achieved this diplomatic success, without due recognition of the immensely significant roles, the courage and perseverance of Ala and Taqizadeh in helping to change the world perception of Soviet post-war designs, and ensuring the sometimes reluctant support of the United States, the UN Security Council, Britain

and other influential members of the international community.

After the resolution of this crisis, which had placed an immense strain upon his mental and physical resources, my father became feverish and lost weight, and he was found to be suffering from a recurrence of an old pulmonary tubercular lesion. Many years later, not long before he died in 1964, Ala was asked by an interviewer to describe what he considered to have been the most challenging and demanding episode in his entire 60 years of service to Iran. Without hesitation, Ala replied: "...representing my country at the Security Council in 1946, to prevent the dismemberment of Iran..."

It is still a mystery to me to know how and why such a patriotic, perceptive, crafty and experienced politician as Qavam o-Saltaneh, supported Mozaffar Firouz, and allowed him so much power and freedom to strive against the interests of his country, for so long. Even though Firouz had previously shown his allegiance to Britain as editor of Seyed Zia'adin's newspaper Ra'ad, his subsequent and unexpected Russophilia may have been motivated by a vengeful desire to destroy the Pahlavi dynasty, which had harmed his family in the past*, even at the cost of Iran's integrity and sovereignty.

Why, despite its enormously dominant position and its success in creating a 'cordon sanitaire' of client states in Eastern Europe, the USSR abruptly decided to drop its ambitions in Iran, must await the full availability of the relevant Soviet Archives, which have only been partially opened so far. In his memoirs, written many years after the event, Truman claimed that he had issued an ultimatum, threatening the USSR with nuclear attack, and that it was this which led to Stalin's 'climb-down'. There is no evidence that he ever issued such a threat however, in any of the writings of his aides and contemporaries.

**Nosrat o-Dowleh Firouz was murdered in prison by order of Reza Shah, in 1938.*

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Hassanein Heikal : Three Islands Belong to Iran

TEHRAN - Prominent Egyptian journalist Mohamed Hassanein Heikal says that the three Persian Gulf islands of Abu Musa, the Greater Tunb, and the Lesser Tunb belong to Iran, and the United Arab Emirates' dispute over Iran's sovereignty over the islands is baseless and politically motivated.

"I was present at the negotiations during the time of Gamal Abdel Nasser in Egypt and Feisal in Saudi Arabia in which the Arab states traded the three islands for Bahrain," the Iranian daily Jomhour-e-Eslami quoted Heikal as saying in an interview with the CBS network.

"They legitimized the rule of the Sunni minority over a big Shia majority in Bahrain to recognize it as an Arab state," he said. "Instead of insisting on the notion that the islands belong to the UAE, one should accept the balance of power in the region," he added.

According to the daily, Haikal concluded his remarks on the issue by asking, "Why didn't the Arabs dare to raise the issue of the three islands at the time of the shah, but only started to highlight the case after

the revolution of 1979 and continue to sow discord."

Iran's sovereignty over Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tunbs has been disputed by the UAE. The dispute between Iran and the UAE began in 1974, three years after the UAE became independent. Iran's historical claim to sovereignty over the islands goes back to the Parthian Empire (247 BC to 224 CE) and the Sassanid Empire (224 to

651 CE). Iran believes the islands were occupied by Britain and refers to the agreement between Iran and the Emirate of Sharjah of 1971. The current emir of Dubai (who is also the vice president, prime minister, and defense minister of the UAE), Sheikh Muhammad, has stated publicly that "he believes the tensions over the islands have been fabricated by the United States."

(www.tehrantimes.com January 4, 2014)



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The vast land of America was once inhabited by a relatively small number of indigenous people. These native ‘Indians’ had lived throughout the land for thousands of years, and they will always remain the true fathers of America. American Indians helped the Pilgrims survive the winter. Later, more European immigrants came, and American settlement finally outgrew the Indian fathers.

Then, on July 4, 1776, America declared its independence from England, the old white grandfather across the sea. The miracle of America happened, and its dynamic birth rapidly changed the entire world.

America developed into thirteen colonies, then into the strong 50 states that she is today. In a very short time, America grew from a log cabin to the largest and most technologically powerful economy in the world. The United States is a nonpareil icon, and the envy of the world.

In many surprising ways, America resembles the great, ancient Persian Empire. Like the Persians, who rarely regret the past, Americans always believe “the best days are ahead.” Like the ancient Persian Empire once was, the United States is now the greatest country in the world.

Like the ancient Persians who were the first world managers and the most tolerant empire-builders, America, with its Constitution, is also the most tolerant and benevolent nation in the world. Ancient Persian kings released the Jews from Babylonian captivity, financed the reestablishment of their nation, and restored their national religion. (Zionists, they were!)

America has basically done the same. America is, in a strange sense, a reincarnation of Persia, an extension of the Achaemenid Empire. No wonder the immigrant Persians (Iranian-Americans) hold the United States very close to their heart and have blossomed here in their new home.

Unfortunately, tragedy reigns in the land of the old Persians. The remnants of the great Persian Empire were swallowed up by the Muslim conquerors storming out of Arabia. A tyrannical version of Islam eviscerated the spiritual life of tolerant old Persia. It has taken decades for the Persians (modern Iranians) to recover their spirit. Zoroastrianism, the original Irani-

an religion, was not an effective barrier against the radical, murderous version of the religion from the Arabian Desert, and Zoroastrianism has not rebounded with the new Persian nationalism today.

The Persian renaissance lies in the spirit of the Iranians themselves. This spirit alone can overcome the Islamists who rule as tyrants.

Islam, as it is officially practiced in Iran today, is a stultifying, iron cowl. Today, after 1400 years, Islamofascism is again the greatest threat to existence of the free world and Judeo-Christian civilization. Persians underestimated the power of a militant aggressive Islam; something America must not do the second time.

For the past 35 years, the Iranian people have been kept hostage in their own country by a group of barbaric savages who despise anything Iranian and are slowly purging any remnant left of the pre-Islamic Persia, as well as Persian textbooks. These pro-Arab, are not Iranians by any means. “Iranian” is defined by

dream still looms large in the eyes of so many people everywhere. We the People should join hands with heroes today and express our love for America. America is far more than a country. It is a place of greatness, where the souls of Indians still dwell side by side with modern heroes. Native Americans, a group with a proud military heritage of patriotic service, see that America is in grave danger, yet they believe all heroes, past and present, need to unite to preserve America.

In spite of the current political uproar in America, the United States remains the last haven of hope where humanity and freedom can flourish. The world owes a great deal to America for inspirational and practical accomplishment. A true American is generous. Americans have helped every other nation in the world. America’s enemies decry her greatness, yet they want to be in America, and to be American.

A Pakistani newspaper allegedly offered a reward to anyone who killed an American, any American. So, Peter Ferrara, an associate professor of law at George Mason University School of Law wrote the following: “Let everyone know what an American is so he’ll know when he’s found one.”

An American is English...or French, or Italian, Irish, German, Spanish, Polish, Russian or Greek.

An American may also be African, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Australian, Iranian, Asian, or Arab, or Pakistani, or Afghan.

An American is Christian, or he could be Jewish, or Buddhist. The only difference is that in America they are free to worship as each of them choose. An American is also free to believe in no religion. For that he will answer only to God, not to the government, or to armed thugs claiming to speak for the government and for God. So you can try to kill an American if you must. Hitler did. So did General Tojo and Stalin and Mao Tse-Tung, and every bloodthirsty tyrant in the history of the world.”

But in doing so you would just be killing yourself. Because Americans are not a particular people from a particular place. They are the embodiment of the human spirit of freedom. Everyone who holds to that spirit, everywhere, is an American.”

Americans have defined freedom.■

America: Still Defines Freedom

Amil Imani

10 Nov 2013

a state of mind, not by a place of residence. The barbaric mullahs and their mercenaries presently ruling Iran are not Iranians. They are Islamofascists who have enlisted themselves in the service of a most oppressive, discriminating, and demeaning ideology.

It was apparent on September 11, 2001 that Americans had already underestimated the power of Islam’s madness. There must be no weakness in American resolve now.

Islam is a brutal, tribal warrior cult that glorifies jihad and martyrdom. The Quran is replete with acts of murder, terrorism, and genocide. Nearly a billion and a half of the human species — a species supposedly endowed with the greatest of intelligence — swallows Islam whole and even dispenses it to others by any and all means possible. It is one of those great mysteries of life that defies any and all logic. While America is experiencing all sorts of hardship within, the American

REVIEWS

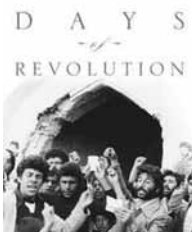
DAYS OF REVOLUTION

Mary Elaine Hegland

2014 Stanford University Press

Her trip to Iran, with her family in June of 1978, was to study the affects of the agriculture credit system in rural Iran, three villages located near Shiraz. Once settled in, however, her plans changed because of the start of the Iran revolution. Her research shifted to field research about the revolution. While most of the friends she made in the villages encouraged her to leave Iran, she remained true to her project. Eventually, through an Iranian friend, she obtained the papers she needed to remain in the country.

This book takes you on her journey, as an American in Iran's heartland. It discusses the build up to the revolution. What makes this book unique is the way she has set it up. A list of the players and a description of their positions and chronological chart of the events are great points of reference for the reader. In the last chapter, the author discusses the state of affairs in Iran thirty four years after the revolution. As you close the cover, one can only hope that relationships between Iran and the west, especially the United States normalize. BUT you also hope that normalization does not mean back to the way they were pre revolution. As talks go forward with Iran we must hope that a new relationship, factors in respect, fairness and an understanding that the citizens of Iran are the BEST hope for peace in the Middle East.



will see their homes and families again. All too soon it becomes clear to them that this is no ordinary mission – indeed, the very fate of the empire might rest upon their efforts. But for Pavo the burden is weightier still, for he knows that the east also holds something even more precious to him . . . the truth about his father.

Gordon's Strategos trilogy is set around the build up to the Battle of Manzikert in 1071 AD and follows the dark and troubled life of a Byzantine general in a land riven with bloodshed and doubt. All of Gordon's novels are available from good online stores in paperback and eBook format. Just click on any one of them on the slideshow (left) to find out more.

As long as the ideas keep coming to Gordon, there will be many more books to enjoy.

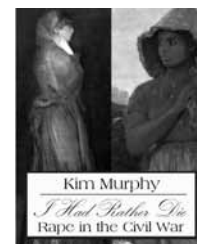
I HAD RATHER DIED, RAPE IN THE CIVIL WAR

Kim Murphy

Coachlight Press 2014

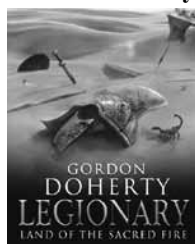
Rape has always been an event in every war that has taken place in the history of mankind. Yet, it has never been an important issue! Ms. Murphy defies the lack of interest in the rapes that occurred during this period and understands that women were mocked with only 30 soldiers punished for their actions.

Her effort, with this book, cannot go back and restore the dignity of the women so horrifically treated during the Civil War. BUT, it can help in placing the world on notice that RAPE should not be an accepted event, war or life and that stricter punishment for the offender should become universal.



HISTORICAL NOVELS

Gordon Doherty



Gordon Doherty is a Scottish writer, who describes himself as being addicted to reading and writing historical fiction, a task for which he is certainly highly accomplished.

Gordon Doherty's most recent book "Legionary: land of the Sacred Fire" is of keen interest to readers of Sassanian Military history as it deals with the Romano-

Byzantine's Eastern frontier with the Sassanian Empire. The book is set in 377 CE, just as Emperor Valens has stripped the Sassanian-Persian frontier of its legions, sending every available man to Thracia in an effort to contain the rampaging Gothic hordes. This allows the Sassanian leadership in Ctesiphon to cast their gaze upon Rome's trade-rich but (now) weakly-defended desert provinces. Shapur II (309-379 CE), *Shahanshah* (King of Kings) of the Sassanid Empire and his many client *Shahan* (kings) have long challenged Rome's eastern holdings as theirs by ancestral right, and those lands have never been more vulnerable to a powerful Sassanian military strike. Thus, Valens must grasp at the slimmest of hopes that a Sassanian invasion can be staved off, not by the brute force of absent legions, but by the tenacity of a hardy few.

When Optio Numerius Vitellius Pavo and a select group of the XI Claudia are summoned to the Persian front, they leave Thracia behind, knowing little of what awaits them. They know only that they are to march into a land of strange gods. They whisper tales of the mighty Persian Savaran cavalry and pray to Mithras that they

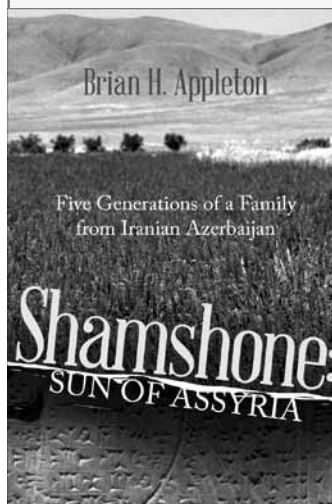
Shamshone:
SUN OF ASSYRIA

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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Zirzamen.com

A GUIDE TO GUIDEBOOKS ON IRAN

part one

Rasoul Sorkhabi



Books play an important role in our increasingly interconnected world. People can easily learn about the culture, literature, history, geography and social issues of other countries through these publications. The addition of electronic and online books to the traditional printed volumes has strengthened the role that books play in our society. Iran remains a little-understood and misunderstood country for the outside world.

Here, we introduce 14 guidebooks on Iran published in English in recent years which provide useful information for non-Iranians. These books are annotated under three categories: 1. cultural and social guidebooks; 2. historical guidebooks, and 3. travel guidebooks.

CULTURE AND SOCIETY

Despite the spread of communication technologies and globalized economies throughout the world, traditions and customs are still regionally based. And these cultural differences are indeed good and desirable for they create diversity and novelty in our world. Nevertheless, cultures and etiquettes of a nation may be easily misunderstood by other peoples, and this, in turn, can result in misinformed views and biased attitudes. Cultural understanding of other peoples thus promotes international peace and cooperation and also enriches the traveler's experience and observations.

Culture Shock! Iran: A Guide to Customs and Etiquette
by Maria O'Shea (Graphic Arts Center Publishing Company, Portland, 2003, revised edition), 304 p.

Published in the "Culture Shock" Series, this book presents an essential volume on Iranian social life and etiquette, and is full of insight for a foreigner planning to visit or live in Iran. Maria O'Shea, a freelance writer, spent many years in Iran, and her book is thus based on her observations and hearings from her Iranian acquaintances. The main chapters of the book include: Inside the Islamic Republic; A tour of Iran; The language of poetry and sugar; The inner Iranian family, women and children; The oiled wheels of Iranian social etiquette; Relaxing in Iran; Eating and drinking; A time to celebrate and a time to mourn; Living and working in Iran.

Culture Smart! Iran: The Essential Guide to Customs and Culture, by Stuart Williams (Kuperard, London, 2008), 168 p.

Published as part of the "Culture Smart!" Series, this book is another attempt by a Western observer to explain how the modern Iranian culture works. Chapters include: Land and people; Values and attitudes; Customs and traditions; Making friends; Private and family life; Time out; Health, travel and safety; Business briefing; Communicating. Stuart Williams is a British journalist who worked for AFP in Tehran.

The Complete Idiot's Guide to Understanding Iran, by Joseph Target (Alpha/Penguin Group, 2003), 320 p.

The "Complete Idiot's Guide" has published a large number

of books on various subject as easy-and-fun-to-read books for the general public. "You're no idiot, of course. You know Iran is one of the world's largest suppliers of oil and that its relationship with the United States over the years has been less than amiable. Iran's climb to a strategic position as a power in the Middle East has been a volatile one." This book "explores the major events and people that shaped this country's past, present and future." The book includes five parts: The Basics; Ancient Persia to Modern Iran; The era of Ayatollahs; Iran's relationship with the world today; What happens next. A glossary,

Iran's timeline, and information resources come as appendices at the end of the book. Joseph Target is co-founder of the Massachusetts-based North Ridge Associates, an international consulting firm. He has also written similar guidebooks on Iraq and North Korea.

Understanding Iran, by William R. Polk (Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2009), 266 p.

Subtitled, "Everything you need to know, from Persia to the Islamic Republic, from Cyrus to Ahmedinejad," this book is written by a veteran Middle East policy consultant for the US government and a former professor of history at Harvard and Chicago. Chapters include: Becoming Iranian; Being Iranian; Shahs, ulamas and western powers; From political revolution through social revolution to violent revolution; The revolutionary regime; The United States and Iran today.

Among the Iranians: A Guide to Iran's Culture and Customs, by Sofia Koutlaki (Intercultural Press, Boston and London, 2010), 256 p.

"The seed of this book lay dormant in my mind for almost ten years," begins Sofia Koutlaki, "until I visited the Word Into Art exhibition at the British Museum in September 2006. As I stood looking at the work of an Iranian photographer, I overheard an Iranian woman trying to explain to her non-Iranian companion what each element in the photograph meant to her. While the friend listened to the explanation and things began to make sense to her, I had the idea: what if there were a book that contained a basic grounding in Iranian culture, a sort of handbook?"

A Greek writer, instructor, researcher and well-versed in Persian, Sofia Koutlaki has lived in Greece, Britain and Iran, and holds a Ph.D. from University of Wales College of Cardiff. She acknowledges her Iranian friend Hayedeh Mashayekh who "read every chapter line by line."

This is an encyclopedic work in eleven chapters: Getting there; Relationships and face; Minding your Ps and Qs; In his name: religion and calendrical feasts; The world of work and business; Dress and make-up; From the cradle to the grave: education and health; Partners in joy and sorrow; The food of love; Going places and doing things; The soul of the nation.

to be continued

An Interview by**BRIAN H. APPLETON with****Michelle Nickelson****Managing Director at MENA CineFinance, SPC**

*Ms. Nickelson is currently executive producer of two upcoming films; **We the People of The Islamic Republic of Iran**, a documentary about ordinary Iranian citizens, their lives and aspirations in Iran today which will feature live interviews of four local subjects and the feature film historic drama: **"Shah"** starring Ben Kingsley about the last years of the Shah. Both films will be shot on location in Iran this year.*

Let us start by telling us about your family and your childhood? Where were you born, where did you grow up? Go to university?

I was born in New Hampshire, and grew up all over the place, which I see as a huge plus. By traveling at an early age, you get an opportunity to meet different people and experience their culture and I feel that has been a very positive influence on my adult life.

Who was the biggest influence on you and your career choice?

My biggest influence is my mother, Carole. She is one of those women who is an "Iron Lady." She does not take much nonsense, but people absolutely love her, as she is kind and considerate.

My career choice has changed a few times, but always in a creative field, so I'm not sure that there was any one influence.

How did you become interested in film production and finance?

My father got involved in a visual effects (VFX) company, Manex Entertainment. I had always been an artist, writer and designer, so it was a fairly easy transition. However what I was doing at Manex was also business-oriented, not really creative.

How about your parents, were they involved in the film industry too?

No, not directly, but my father was a shareholder in the VFX company.

Tell us about your profession as the average movie goer knows nothing about production.

A lot of what I do has to do with the business end of film, specifically finance. I spent some time working in the investment industry, but figured out it was not something I wanted to pursue professionally. However, it was great background info for what I am currently doing.

How did you come to have such an interest in the Middle East and how did you end up in the United Arab Emirates (UAE)?

When Manex closed, I was looking where would be another location for a VFX company, as I had spent considerable time working to develop the Manex property into a studio city complex. My research showed that Dubai would be a good place (this was 2003) however, I was a bit ahead of the curve, no one quite understood what I was looking to do with a VFX studio.

How did you come to have such an interest in people with disabilities?

It's one of my personal interests as far as CSR (corporate social responsibility) goes. I think children, and people with disabilities are pretty much innocents. They need people who are able to play a role in making sure they have rights and opportunities, as they are not able to do this themselves.

What is the story of the film "Brain that Sings"?

It's the first feature film from Emirati filmmaker, Amal Al Agroobi. The story follows the progress of two Autistic Emirati boys, with music therapy. I found it fascinating how these boys were able to relate to music, and how the younger boy, was able to become much more responsive by playing music.

What about WIFT and your role in it?

I am the Co-Chairwoman of Women in Film and Television (WIFT); we are the only WIFT Chapter in the Middle East. In this capacity, I work to help setup different projects for women in the UAE to meet contacts in the international film community. We also work on community service projects, and recently did a commercial for the Abu Dhabi Autism Center.

While in Iran in 2012, I met with some women filmmakers as well as various women's groups. I would like to launch a WIFT Chapter in Iran so Iranian filmmakers can also interact with international filmmakers, and exchange films and creative ideas. I personally believe film and art are the best ways to not only tell some amazing stories, but it also gives people the opportunity to find common ground for ideas.

What is the 51 about?

The 51 is a short film we shot in Abu Dhabi, starring TV star Navid Negahban. It's a 30 minute long, Sci-Fi story. I wrote the script and was the Executive Producer.

What do you consider your greatest career accomplishment so far?

Still working on that! Lots of great small ones!

How did you become interested in Iran?

I have always had an interest in the Middle East. When I was a kid in Phoenix, there were a lot of Iranian students at the Universities there, and I met a lot of these students. We lived close to one of the popular business schools.

What is the purpose or mission of your upcoming film "Shah?"

To tell a really interesting story, it's what I would call a political drama. The story will focus on the last two years in the Shah's life.

Will this feature film be fictionalized?

No, it will be based on factual events that are in the public domain.

Will this film be shown in Iran and what is the position of the Iranian government regarding this film? Will they retain any ability to approve or disapprove of the content?

I don't know if it would be allowed in Iran.

Yes they will have the opportunity to read the script, but a lot of the story takes place once Shah is exiled. We will probably shoot 2 to 3 weeks in Iran.

Is this film being developed for American audiences?

I would say it's an international audience.

Did you present a film at the Fajr International Film Festival last year?

No. It was not the Fajr Festival. They had cancelled that in 2012. They had an alternative one as part of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) meeting in September that year and I was invited to Iran as a guest of this festival. It was an interesting opportunity to meet other filmmakers and get to see Iran first hand. I was able to spend time being out in Tehran and seeing what the city is like.

It was pretty amazing. Everywhere I went, when people would hear me speaking to my friends on the street, strangers would walk up and ask where I was from. Once they knew I was American, all were excited to exchange stories, and their friendliness and hospitality was infectious.

One day, I had asked my friends, who were my hosts, if we could go to some different areas. We went to a synagogue. My friend knocked on the door, and when an elderly woman answered, he explained that I was visiting from the US. She invited us in and took us to a room where a meeting had just finished, apparently there had been a wedding there the day before.

There were probably 30 people there, all ages from kids to grandparents.

They all came over to say hello and take pictures, as they had never had someone just stop by to visit, and certainly not from Los Angeles. Many spoke English and it was as if I was among old friends, catching up on the latest news.

Before I left, I was asked if I would like to come to the sanctuary with several of the members and pray.

I cannot say that I am a religious person, spiritual would be a better definition and my friend who was with me is Sufi. We went down to the sanctuary with them and filed into the small but beautiful room. Surrounded by strangers, I could hear the melody of their prayers.

The feeling was one of the most powerful things I have experienced. I was a stranger to these people, not of their religion, nor their country or culture. I was accepted and welcomed by them, as I was everywhere I went. I sincerely hope that as the US and Iran move towards improved relations, I will be able to experience more moments like these.

Will you be presenting a film this year in the Fajr Film Festival?

No, we are starting pre-production this year, hopefully shooting the end of the year. I hope to be presenting a film there in 2015.

Well I want to thank you for your time and for sharing your experiences with our readers. I want to say that I have recognized your gift of team building for many years now and in advocating for women and local talent in a very competitive industry and I share your love for Iran and the Middle East in general.

I am particularly grateful for your efforts towards peace and collaboration through cross cultural exchange and the film media both in promoting national pride and recognition of local talent and also your efforts to promote and publicize the rights of the handicapped who are present in every society. I wish you every success in your new film productions and I hope to see you in Iran soon.



Snow Globe Sea

anonymous

*Sailing on a plastic boat
in a snow globe sea*

*Look out into reality
Oh what there might be
Pass the glass and plastic,
Hang a left on happiness.
Turn onto misery lane,
Pass the shop of wind blown
kisses.*

*I'd rather stay
in my plastic boat.
Where nothing is real or fake.
But that doesn't matter
anyway.*

*Nothing here is at stake.
Its quiet and peaceful
As the real world screams
Its unharmed and strong
as the real world bleeds.
I'd rather be in my plastic boat.
On my snow globe sea.
Where murder is
an unknown word.*

*And pain is but a theory.
Heartbreak isn't
comprehended*

*Nor is it in reach.
And everyday is based on
pure simplicity.*

*So here out on my plastic boat,
I can watch real life unfold.
Shielded by my glass coating
I will stay unharmed.*

*From the things life can cause.
From what it can do
to a perfectly good heart.*

*It can shred it and hurt it.
Until its pieces, torn apart.
But my little too-blue sea
Only knows of love.*

*And my little plastic boat
Only that he's above.
But they get along and
do not fight.*

*Or lie or yell out
of hatred or spite.
These words are
nothings to them,
for they are at peace.*

*So here I stay
on my Snow globe sea.*

Persian Leopard



The Persian leopard also called the Caucasian leopard, is the largest leopard subspecies, and is native to northern Iran, eastern Turkey, the Caucasus mountains, southern Turkmenistan, and parts of western Afghanistan. It is endangered throughout its range with fewer than 871–1,290 mature individuals and a declining population trend. The Persian leopard is large, weighing up to 90 kg (200 lb), and light in color. They vary in coloration; both pale and dark individuals are found in Iran. Biometric data collected from

25 female and male individuals in various provinces of Iran indicates average body length of 259 cm (102 in). A young male from northern Iran weighed 64 kg (141 lb).

Leopards were most likely distributed once over the whole Caucasus, except for steppe areas. Surveys conducted between 2001 and 2005 confirmed that there are no more leopards in the western part of the Greater Caucasus, and that they survived only at a few sites in the eastern part. The largest populations survive in Iran. The political and social changes in the former Soviet Union in 1992 caused a severe economic crisis and a weakening of formerly effective protection systems. Ranges of all wildlife were severely fragmented. The former leopard range declined enormously as leopards were persecuted and wild ungulates hunted. Inadequate baseline data and lack of monitoring programs make it difficult to evaluate declines of mammalian prey species.

As of 2008, of the estimated 871–1,290 mature leopards, 550–850 live in Iran, which is the leopard stronghold in Southwest Asia.

Leopards are widely distributed in Iran, but more abundant in the northern part than in the southern part of the country.[3] They are present in 74 protected and non-protected areas, of which 69% are located in northern Iran. They are mainly found in the Alborz and the Zagros mountain ranges and throughout the northwestern region, which crosses these mountain chains. The Hyrcanian forests located in the north and along the Alborz mountain chain are considered as one of the most important habitats for leopards in the country. Their habitat comprises climates with temperatures ranging from -23°C (-9°F) to 49°C (120°F), but they are most often found in habitats with temperatures of 13 to 18°C (55 to 64°F), 0 to 20 days of ice cover per year and rainfall of more than 200 mm per year.

With more than $3,500$ km² ($1,400$ sq mi), the Central Alborz Protected Area is one of the largest reserves in the country where leopards roam. In the Sarigol National Park in northeastern Iran, four leopard families with two cubs each were identified during a survey carried out from 2005 to 2008. A male leopard was photographed in January 2008 spraying urine on a Berberis tree; he was photographed several times until mid-February in the same area.

In Bamu National Park located northeast of Shiraz in Fars Province, camera trapping carried out from autumn 2007 to spring 2008 revealed seven individuals in a sampling area of 321.12 km² (123.99 sq mi). *(Taken from wikipedia.org)*

Persian  Heritage

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Nostalgia

I still seek the backyard
 Which I left a long time ago
 Some times I am walking close by the house,
 Or I think it might be the similar house,
 Which has the same backyard
 And I get strange feelings;
 Hair stands up on my skin
 I like to look in the mirror,
 For I believe I am getting younger again
 I wish I could knock at the door
 And you would open it
 With your smile, which you know I loved dearly
 Your kind smiling.
 With your shiny hair standing there
 Last flame on your face,
 And majesty of your being like the rainbow
 Cross to hinterland.
 And I loved those unforgettable short moments.
 It seems I am the only person in that alley,
 Looking at you in real happiness:

To be with you again in that house at the backyard
 Before the sun goes away.

I think I closed my eyes for a moment,
 Because everywhere it looks darker now
 The door of the house is closed
 An older women's face is watching me curiously,
 From behind the window
 I feel cold and alone again
 I start walking away
 Like an old man
 At sunset every day
 Like an old man ---at sunset---every day.

Firouz Hejazi

Persian  Heritage

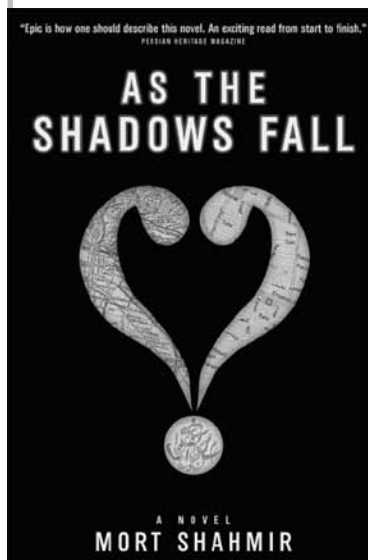
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As The SHADOWS

Fall

A Novel By: Mort Shahmir



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نوشته:

مرت شاهمیر

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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.

Contact:

mort809@yahoo.com

270 791 9985

An Interview with

Jalil Doostkhah

IRANOLOGIST AND RESEARCHER

Shahrokh Ahkami



Please tell us about your childhood, including your elementary, secondary schools courses and your higher education?

I was born in Isfahan - Iran, in 1933. I began my earlier educational course at Maktabkhâne. During the years 1940-1951, I continued my education at elementary school secondary school, and Teacher's Training College. From 1957 to 1968, I was a student of literature and humanities at Faculty of Literature & Human Sciences, Tehran University and I graduated as a Doctor of Persian Literature & Human Sciences (PhD.).

Did you teach after your educational courses?

Yes, I was teaching at elementary and secondary schools in Isfahan & Tehran from 1952 to 1968 and as a professor at the Universities of Isfahan and Ahvaz (Jondishapur) as well as one year at Durham University, Yorkshire -UK. (1969-1981).

Meanwhile I worked also with my late professor Dr. Mohammad Mo'in as his assistant editor at Loghat-nâme-ye Dehkodâ (Dehkodâ Encyclopaedic Dictionary) and Farhang-e Fârsi (A Persian Dictionary).

When did you leave Iran and

what was your aim in moving to Australia?

Before I migrated to Australia, my elder daughter Anahita had gone to Germany and my elder son Siyavash, had gone to Australia.

The rest of the family: Fereshteh; my wife, Rozita; my younger daughter, Nima; my younger son and myself joined Siyavash in Australia in 1991. Anahita came to Australia 3 years later.

What did you teach in Australia?

I did not undertake any formal teaching in Australia. I have been very busy with my own research and also participating in seminars and giving lectures at the universities as a guest speaker. Another activity that I was involved with was participating in more than forty Shâhnâme Research meetings at Audio Library, Online, Ketabkhaneyegooya.blogspot.com.au.

Once you were in the United States how did you find it?

I was invited by the Centre For Iranian Studies at Columbia University, I worked as an assistant editor of Encyclopaedia Iranica under the super vision of Prof. Dr. Ehsan Yarshater (1993-1994).

Please tell us about your works.

My works include the following published books and articles:

1. Avestâ, a simplified of my late Prof. Ebrâhimpûrdâvûd's translation, under his supervision. One vol., Morvarid-publiations-Tehran. 6 editions- 1964 -1987 (Plus 2 editions in Cyrillic (Russian) scripts – Tajikestan & Uzbakestan).

2. Himaliya: An anthology of Urdu poems, Translated with Co-operation of Dr. S. A. Naqavi, Tahûrî publications-Tehran-1963.

3. A translation of Creation and Termination, A Semantic Study of the Qur'anic World View, by Shinya Makino, Ph.D., Keio Professor at Tokyo University for Foreign Studies, Lecturer at Keio University. Amirkabir Pub., Tehran - 1984 & 1996.

4. Cults & Legend of Ancient Iran & China, by SIR. J. C. Coyajee, late principal, PRESIDENCY COLLEGE, CALCUT-

TA, Pocketbook pub., Tehran- 1974, 1983, 2001 & 2004.

5. Avesta, The Most Ancient Iranian Cultural Texts, 2 Vols. (In commemoration of the Third Millennium of Zoroaster's Birthday, Announced by Unesco). Morvarid Publications-Tehran, 1992-2012-Sixteen Editions. This is my best seller work.

6. Studies In Shahnameh, by SIR. J. C. Coyajee (No. 4), Zanderoud Pub., Isfahan- 1996.

7. The Origins of the Iranian Mythology and Epics, by SIR. J. C. Coyajee (No. 4) Agah Pub., Tehran- 2001 & 2006.

8. The Iranian Epics, A Monument from beyond the millenniums. First ed.: Bârân Pub., - Sweden, 2001, second ed.: Agah pub. -Tehran -2002.

9. Seven Adventures (Haft Khân) of Rostam, Qoqnûs Pub., Tehran - 2004.

10. Rahyâfti be Gâhân-e Zartosht-vamatnâ-ye now-Avestâyî (An approach to Zoroaster's five Hymns & New Avestan Texts (A Persian translation of Avestâ Reader, Texts, Notes, Glossary & Index, by Hans Reichelt) - Qoqnûs Pub., Two eds. Tehran - 2004 & 2007. This work is the textbook of The Ancient Iranian Languages at a postgraduate course at Tehran University.

11. Irânšenâkht, Twenty researches. (Prof. Jackson Memorial Volume, Papers on Iranian Subjects, Written by several scholars (The Persian translation was a recommendation of Prof. Ebrahim Pûrdâvûd.), Agah pub. Tehran-2005.

12. Some articles and book reviews in the literary magazines and periodicals (inside Iran & abroad): Râhnâmâ-ye Ketâb, Payâm-e Navin, Payghâm-e Emrûz-e haftegi, Negâh-e Now, Kelk, Bokhara & Jahân-e ketâb (Tehran), Jong & Zanderûd (Isfahan), Irân-Nâme, Irân-šenâsi, Bar-rasi-ye Ketâb /Book Review) & Daftar-e Honar (USA.), Fasle ketâb (U.K.), Ârash (France). Iran & Caucasus (Arminia).

13. In process of publication: An edited version of The Narrator's Šâhahnâme, by late famous narrator (Naqqâl) Abbâs Zariîrî, 5 Vols. Kârnâme Pub.- Tehran. A Persian Dictionary of Isfahânian Dialect. Remaining Iranian & becoming Universal, a collection of ten discourses on Iranian subjects.

Persian words are admirable, but sometimes your selected words are unfamiliar and understanding them is

difficult for the public. Please comment on this?

These days the Persian language is facing a lot of difficult problems and many of Persians including myself are challenging them. As a matter of fact, I believe neither to use unlimited loan Arabic or Western, nor pure Persian words (So called Sare-nevisi).

The language in its nature and structure is a live and dynamic phenomenon and the speakers and users of any languages, should always be the guardian of it, otherwise it will face a critical situation.

Here I refer you to an article on "The Persian Language from disturbance to order" by myself written in my forthcoming book "Remaining Iranian & becoming Universal."

Tell us about your opinion of Ferdowsi and Shahname.

My interest in Shahname treasure and the great Ferdowsi, began from my childhood and continues up to now. It has had a very big effect on me. It has become institutionalized and my main emotion in life.

You have an interesting web-site, what is your motivation in publishing it?

You mean my web site: Iranshenakht (<http://iranshenakht.blogspot.com.au>). Thank you for your attention towards this cultural work.

Nearly one decade ago, I began to publish this electronic media and wanted to open a window beyond my academic works towards the current aspects of the contemporary cultural life and updated and dynamic aspects of actions. In this regards my experience was very positive and successful and I am satisfied of it.

You were friends with my late friend Dr. Parviz Rajabi. Would you please tell us something on his characteristics and his research?

My friendship with Dr. Rajabi, began in the final years of the Pahlavi Regime, when he came back to Iran from his educational journey to Germany and joined the University of Isfahan to work as a Professor of History. But our visit in Isfahan was very short; as usual SAVAK

did not let him to teach and he was sent to Tehran to undertake an office-job in the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, but our friendship became deeper and continued until his sorrowful death in 2012.

Dr. Rajabi was representative of a new generation of the Iranian historians and was admired by both Iranians and non-Iranians like Prof. Hide Mary Kokh, a German archaeologist and Iranologist, who recognized and validated his unique work, he stated about him: "Parviz Rajabi is such a person who has turned a blind eye on his personal problems and tirelessly works on service to his nation's culture."

Rajabi was Indeed a distinct example of this line of Sâeb of Tabriz:

"I am afraid that the time will consider my tolerance, as an inability, otherwise I would make it shameful!"

All of Dr. Rajabi's research are outstanding, among them Hazârehâ-ye gom-šode (The Lost Millenniums) - 5 Vols and Sadehâ-ye gom-šode (The Lost Centuries) - 10 Vols are unique.

What is your advice to the younger Iranian generations at home & abroad?

As a matter of fact, I believe that advice will not be accepted nor effective. My own experiences showed me that everyone and each generation must learn from their own experiences. As Rûdâki – the father of Persian Poetry – said:

"One who didn't learn through passing of the times, would never learn from any teacher!"

What are the best experiences that you have had during your educational and cultural life?

I have had a lot of sweet and bitter experiences during the eight decades of my life which I have pointed to some of them in my books and articles and are available to the readers.

Do you have any additional thing to say?

I would like to thank you for organizing this interview.

I wish you and your colleagues more success in your useful and impressive cultural job.

A Perpetual Paradigm on the Concept of Time, Calendar, and Norouz

part one

DAVOOD N. RAHNI



*For in and out, above, about, & below,
Tis nothing but a Magic Shadow-show,
Play'd in an "Earth" Box whose candle is the Sun,
Round which we the phantom Figures come and go. . .*

(Quatrain by Omar Khayam,
the 11th century Persian Poet, Mathematician, and Philosopher)

NOROZ PIRUZI!

1393 A.H. Iranian/2573 Achaemenid Persian; 2584 Zoroastrian Persian (the birth of Zarathustra); 2014 Common Era Christian; 2018 A.D. (the actual birth of Jesus ~4 BCE?); 5133 Mayan; 5774 Jewish; 6250 Egyptian; 2558 Buddhist; 1434 Moslem; 2723 Mede; 1730 Coptic; 2763 Babylonian; 2767 Old Roman; (~4615) Chinese Dragon Year; Bede's 5965 after Creations

As the Iranian New Year Norouz is once again upon us, and before this historical celebration is showcased in this prose, the concept of time and emergence of calendars merit much elaborations. As our Persian narrative herein concentrates on the concept of time, calendar and history of human civilization, we should first appreciate the existentialistic essence of our planet, the rich human diversity and other species it bears, and continues to nurture. The Universe is believed to have been born out of the [latest] Big Bang 13.8 billion years ago. The Earth is estimated to have been born 4.5 billion years ago. The earliest form of life on the earth must have appeared over 3 billion years ago. The current species, including the mammals and hominids have only proliferated after the asteroid collision on Mexico's Yucatan's peninsula of 65 million years ago when more than 75% of the earlier species had gone extinct. Whereas Homo sapiens diverged from our primate pedigree five million years ago, Mother Lucy's fossil traces our past to three millions years ago and modern humans emerged in the horn of northeast Africa about 200,000 years ago when a transcontinental migration into southwest Asia less than a hundred thousand years ago occurred. It is also paradoxical that an intergalactic collision between our Milky Way and Andromeda is projected to occur in a mere three billion years from now!

Prehistoric humans had most likely developed a certain cognitive appreciation of the concept of time and frequency of seasons perhaps as early as several million years ago. It goes without saying, however, that a biological clock, that is, a harmonic biorhythm based on physiological and biochemical dynamics, seasonal changes, equilibriums and needs, must have existed in all flora and fauna throughout evolution; this is programmed by tmating, migrating and reproductive cycles and in the latter phase the concept of birth and death, philosophy of life, and speculations on "before-life" and "after-life" quandaries that still perplex us today. Based on our anthropological, mythological and

geo-archaeological understandings, we can only retrospect on the past one hundred thousand years of human history, at best. We should, nonetheless, accept the possibility that humanoids may have evolved to certain advanced cognitive state of consciousness throughout the past millions of years-far earlier than the latest modern human cycle of 50-100 thousand years-just to be annihilated into oblivion by a mysterious cataclysmic phenomenon of epic proportion.

Esthetically Artistic expressions such as the cave paintings of rhinos, bison, and horses created in south-central Europe, of using black charcoal and red ocher (iron-ore mud) around 32,000 BCE preceded the regular recording of time; concurrently, humans in Africa, Australia and Asia used the same pigments to paint local animals and starlit skies. Coincidentally, the Greek soldiers 2,500 years ago, played dead by dying their naked bodies with the same red "blood looking" mineral paste when they were able to fool the gullible Persian army to cross the Bosphorus channel west, just to be defeated by their rivals. Musical expression can be traced back to 100,000 years ago, based on a set of bird-bone flute found in Ireland. Although a new allotrope of carbon other than diamonds and graphite, named buckminsterfullerene, C60, was serendipitously discovered in the laboratory by the late Nobel Laureate Richard Smalley in the 1980's, we would remain self-centered if we assumed such compound was not hanging in the soot on the ceilings of pre-historic caves. One should also cite a 30,000 year-old bone found in France, which is covered with rounded engravings illustrations of the moon's two-and-a-half month cycle, i.e., a quarter, to half, to full, and to a quarter moon, presumably made by the Cro-Magnon species who occupied the area. In today's Northwestern Iran nearly 10,000 years ago, grapes, domesticated amongst a slew of other fruit trees and animals, was first crushed to ferment wine, and if it went sour, to produce vinegar for preserving vegetables; there is also evidence for a barley based beer brewery (1). The site for the earliest use of fire is now discovered in today's Israel-Palestine territories to date back to nearly 800,000 years ago.

Cognitive, instinctive, and intuitive evolution of mind as the pre-requisite toward the understanding, appreciation, logic, rationale, control and mimicking of natural phenomena and periodic "seasonal" transformations were accomplished more distinctively by humans in contrast to the rest of the animal spe-

cies, although many migratory species have followed a degree of the same repetitive harmony with nature. These included the appearance, disappearance and color variations of vegetation and animals, i.e., flora and fauna, climate, temperature and shadow patterns, animal migrations, the annual rise of the Nile River in Egypt, and above all the movement of celestial objects, the moon, the sun and other stars in the deep blue sky. Serendipity must have also played an enlightening role in harnessing natural resources by humans. The concept was further strengthened by extraterrestrial and celestial observations, namely, those of the heavens and heavenly bodies and epitomized by the repetitive variation pattern in shape, brightness and locations associated with the two main celestial bodies, the Sun and the Moon, as well as other key shining stars. One could retroactively infer the emergence of lunar calendars before the solar and zodiacal ones. This must have most probably occurred in [southern] Mesopotamia where pre-historic humans roamed the desert at night to use the moon and stars as compass, since days were way too hot to surface. Human race has certainly evolved a long way from the pre-historic state to the ultra-accurate time monitoring with the Atomic Clock that operates based on the oscillation of cesium and is located in the U.S. Naval Observatory since 1972. A “cesium (-beam) atomic clock” (or “cesium-beam frequency standard”) is a device that uses as a reference the exact frequency of the microwave spectral line emitted by atoms of the metallic element cesium, in particular, its isotope of atomic weight 133 (“Cs-133”). The integral of frequency is time, so this frequency, 9,192,631,770 hertz (Hz = cycles/second), provides the fundamental unit of time, which may thus be measured by cesium clock. In contrast, an ideal human life expectancy of 100 years (1.15x10¹⁴ seconds) today, only amounts to negligible 8.7x10⁻¹⁵ Hz on the above astronomical frequency scale! Thence, modern human civilization was preceded for the past few million years by human evolution, which is continuing today. In fact, a biological clock for growth, survival, passing on the gene pool and leaving something eternally behind (a book of poem, a discovery or an invention, etc.), is encoded into every living species genes. The sheer fact that livestock and mammals tend to mate in time to have their offspring born at the very beginning of spring in the northern hemisphere (e.g., Iran) to maximize the offspring survivals, is not coincidental but rather the result of elution of harmonizing with natural elements of weather and food sources.

Around ten thousand years ago, the Sun in Mesopotamia and western Iran in particular, was gradually recognized to be the much more vital celestial object to which early humans depended on for both spiritual and material energy needs. There may have as well been the recognition that the earth and the moon orbited around the sun. Zoroastrianism and Mithraism (Mitra means the sun-god(dess) or the goddess of love), perhaps the first monotheistic religions, were preceded by a form of sun worshipping as far back as 6,500 BCE; hence, the reason for the sacredness of light and fire in these and many subsequent religions. Later, even the Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) as well as many others placed their saints and religious icons superimposed to a sun, thus the halo aurora around Jesus’ image, for instance. Carl Jung, the famous Swiss psychiatrist who left Ziegmond Friedud’s camp, has elaborately presented the influence of Mithraism on Christianity in his writing, *Symbols of Transformation* (15). Zoroastrians feel obliged to continuously keep a sacred fire alive in their temples ever since. In fact, light manifested itself as an aura “halo”, an important religious symbol

in almost all religions thereafter. Iranian Mazdakism and Manichaeism religions that were based on pictorial conceptualization and spatial visualization, utilized the power of light, fire, and energy immensely.

Winter solstice was presumably among the earliest annual celebrations since it was a turning point for the shortest sun day to begin becoming longer. As such many peoples believed that due to their sins the sun was about to abandon them! In fact, Dies Natalis, i.e., December 25, the date when the Invincible Sun God (Sol Invictus) was born, became the most sacred festival for Mithraism, Zoroastrianism, for the Egyptians in honor of Isis the mother of the Sun-God Horus, for Norse pagans who called it Yule (note the similarity to Yalda, the Syriac later Persian equivalent!) which celebrated Odin, the god of ecstasy, and, later for the Romans who held observances in honor of Saturn, the god of harvesting. Moreover, the Jewish month of Kisleve and the Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah, sometimes referred to as the Feast of Lights) has preceded the Christmas traditions. Illanut, a tree based Jewish celebration preceded the Hanukkah that had its roots in Persian way of life. In fact, the celebration of Winter Solstice on December 21 by the Babylonians, Persians, Romans, leading to its adoption by the Christians as the birth of Jesus in the year 350 CE had preceded the December 25 celebration (14). Ylada, a Syriac/Soryani word meaning birth, is still celebrated on December 21 in most Middle Eastern and Southern former Russian Republics especially in Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan. The ancient Roman festivals of Saturnia (God of Agriculture) and Sol Invicta (Sun God) are amongst the best known celebrations based on Winter Solstice in the Western World, again the precursors to today’s Christmas. The date was adopted millennia later by the Christians to signify the birth of their Messiah, Jesus, even though there was some earlier historical evidence of placing the Jesus’s birth in March. All the above notwithstanding however, and based on archaeological evidence of Africa as the cradle of human race, one should hasten to cite the skeletal remains of Mother Lucy of over 3 million years ago, in the mountainous northern Ethiopian region of Hadar, as the common maternal ancestor all humans. Accordingly, it is natural to note there are much historical evidence and extrapolation back in time, although not universally accepted, that many of the biblical stories, discoveries, and contributions to world civilizations have their roots deeply embedded on the African continent and the Mesopotamian and western Iran region.

Before the agricultural era ten thousand years ago in Mesopotamia and western Iran when herding and cropping and thus landlord-ship emerged, humans were initially scavengers and later hunter-gatherers, wandering randomly from one place to the other in search of food and shelter. Based on memories, they had intuitively concluded that they only needed to identify and migrate between two adjoining regions for food, protection from heat and cold, in order to increase their chances for survival and sustenance. Undoubtedly, this was one of the earliest junctures that are so pivotal to the establishment of the systematic method of keeping track of time known as a CALENDAR. This tracking of time is also observed in the behavior of many migratory species, specially birds and mammals as well. The reappearing of such birds in key has in turn served for humans as a returning of a cyclical calendar.

Upon careful observation of various natural phenomena, humans must have first considered many of the more dramatic ones as supernatural or as signs of gods’ wrath against or pleasure with

their conducts, and thereby worshipped many inanimate objects such as the Sun and the Moon. Catastrophic disasters, namely, giant floods, earthquakes and asteroid strikes were deemed as apocalyptic Armageddon ending an era of injustice and inequity, and the rebirth of a just world by the "return" of a messiah. Understanding the behavior of fire, and harnessing its properties for the benefit of mankind must have indeed been preceded by the sight of lightning striking trees and prairies. Observation of directions and length associated with shadows of natural and man-made objects provided an effective means of keeping track of daily time and seasonal variations (precursors to sundials). Such frequencies were in unison with the built in biological clock in humans and other species. If a tree feels naturally compelled to throw its pollen/seeds in the air in early spring breeze, it aspires to spreading and sustaining its gene pools, whether we acknowledge it or not. By the same token, if a sockeye salmon (*Oncorhynchus nerka*) has the annual migratory urge to swim all the way back from the Pacific Ocean, through the Columbia River and upstream into the specific calm fresh water estuaries to spawn and then leave water and die, who are we not to believe that they also possess an appreciation of the concept of time and thus optimal timing!

Before I further delve deeper into the presentation of this prose, let me reaffirm my life-long commitment to universal HUMAN globalism, although I may at times resort to a Persian/Iranian narrative lens in order to utter my perspectives as they are anchored on my heritage. The internal struggle in humans manifested itself in creating and visualizing mythological dual gods and images for every scenarios: god of day vs. goddess of night, death vs. life, light vs. dark, thunder vs. serenity, good

vs. bad, heaven vs. hell, and later God vs. Satan or the devil (in Zoroastrianism, Ahura Mazda vs. Ahriman). The need for having a calendar became even more important after people settled in small agricultural and herd based communities, and had to keep track of their important events and rituals in their lives. As a matter of fact, one may conclude that planting and harvesting became the two earliest cyclical focal points in time. Zoroastrians believed in the sacredness of the four elements of life: fire, earth, water and air. So, they never buried their deceased nor did they cremate their dead, as they thought that would contaminate these sacred elements; instead, they would leave the dead atop a mountain to be consumed by vultures and other birds of prey and for the bones to drop down the dry well in Dakhmeh. They believed when the flesh of the corpse is gone, the soul will be liberated, ideally to enter heaven.

to be continued

The Captive (Asir)

*I want you, yet I know that never
can I embrace you to my heart's content.
you are that clear and bright sky.
I, in this corner of the cage, am a captive bird.*

*from behind the cold and dark bars
directing toward you my rueful look of astonishment,
I am thinking that a hand might come
and I might suddenly spread my wings in your direction.*

*I am thinking that in a moment of neglect
I might fly from this silent prison,
laugh in the eyes of the man who is my jailer
and beside you begin life anew.*

*I am thinking these things, yet I know
that I can not, dare not leave this prison.
even if the jailer would wish it,
no breath or breeze remains for my flight.*

*from behind the bars, every bright morning
the look of a child smile in my face;
when I begin a song of joy,
his lips come toward me with a kiss.*

*O sky, if I want one day
to fly from this silent prison,
what shall I say to the weeping child's eyes:
forget about me, for I am a captive bird?*

*I am that candle which illumines a ruins
with the burning of her heart.
If I want to choose silent darkness,
I will bring a nest to ruin.*

Forough Farrokhzad

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An Interview with

Kaveh Farrokh

Historian and Researcher

Shahrokh Ahkami

We know our readers are very familiar with your writings but may not know you. Can you please give us a brief background of your academic activities?

I will try as best to be succinct as possible, starting off with my education and academics. I have been teaching ancient Persian history at the University of British Columbia's Continuing Studies Division since 2004 and hope to introduce a course entitled "Women of Ancient Iran" as a pilot course this summer of 2014. I have worked also to support the University of British Columbia's Asian Studies Department Iranian Studies initiative.

I obtained my PhD in 2001 at the university of British Columbia – my Dissertation examined the Relationships between cognitive processes, language experience and errors among bilingual Persian speakers.

It was in the depth study of the cognitive process involved in learning Persian and English that led me to study other Iranic vernaculars such as Kurdish, Middle Persian (Pahlavi) and even Indo-European etymology. The intense study of Persian as a whole obliged me to study the history of the development of Persian from its origins thousands of years ago to the present. I quickly realized through my faculty committee that language development influences culture and that history essentially documents this process.

I also found that military history plays a major role in history as whole, which explains why I often emphasize military terminology in my textbooks on the subject. After September 2001 I literally exploded into reading primary and secondary references.

A pleasant by-product of my study of Persian orthography was my ability to read Islamic era maps in Arabic that has helped me a great deal in dealing with historical falsifications with respect to the Southern

Caucasus, Azerbaijan in particular.

In addition to my lectures at the University of British Columbia, I have also delivered lectures in other North American Universities, such as Portland State University, University of Southern California, Stanford University and Yerevan State University. I have authored three history books thus far (with a fourth one on the way) which have been translated into Russian and Persian; I also write articles for journals.

I am currently a member of the Academic Board for the Institute of Historical Iranian Studies, the Hellenic-Iranian Studies Society, the UNESCO-affiliated Pasargard preservation Society, the UN-affiliated and Nobel-prize nominated WAALM Institute in London where I am Chair of the Cultural Diplomacy's Department of Traditions & Cultural History (affiliated with the Academic Council of the United Nations System-ACUNS- and the International Peace Bureau).

Could you also give us an overview of your family background and ancestry?

To summarize, my paternal and maternal family roots are connected to northern Iran, Azerbaijan and the Caucasus. The Farrokh clan is mentioned at the time of Shah Ismail (r.1501-1524) with the Diba being one of the oldest clans of Azerbaijan. On my maternal side the Behzadi and Pirbastami clans are for the main part military in background with the latter traced to the armies of Nader Shah (r. 1736-1747). Put simply, my paternal and maternal ancestry hails from persons of military and/or political backgrounds.

My paternal grandfather, Mehdi Farrokh was to become an active member in the Iranian political arena from the early twentieth century to his passing in 1973. Mehdi Farrokh wrote his memories in a 2-volume book entitled "*Khaterat e Siyasiye Farrokh* [The Political Memoirs



of Farrokh]". Mehdi Farrokh was among those officials and military leaders who deeply resented Anglo-Russian interference in Iran (both before and during World War First and the Second) and the negative consequences this had on the civilian population.

The Farrokh clan was one of the contributors to the Dar ol Fonoon, originally built as a polytechnic to train Iranians in military sciences, medicine, geological sciences and engineering. The Dar ol Fonoon continued to develop and expand its academic programs – eventually becoming the University of Tehran.

My parental grandmother was of the Diba family, one of the most long-standing families of Iran's Azerbaijan province with a long history of public service throughout Iran. The Diba clan is also closely related to the long-standing Zolfaqari clan.

Mehdi Farrokh was strongly opposed the Russo-British occupation of Iran during the Second World War, especially due to the severe hardship and famine this imposed on Iran's civilian population. He was strongly opposed the Soviet Union's attempt to forcibly absorb Iran's Azarbaijan province in 1941-1946. Note that Iran's civilian population also suffered terribly during and after the First World War as a result of Russian, British and Ottoman military activities and political interference.

I believe I met your grandfather many years ago! Your grandfather was the governor



of Khorassan and I was a student in the tenth grade. During a student camp session I had the honor of having my picture taken with your grandfather. This remains a memory in my life. Did you ever meet him and if so what do you remember about him?

Yes, you are referring to my late grandfather Mehdi Farrokh (-1973). I last saw him when I was around 10 years old and we all miss him. What was remarkable about him was his dedication to Iran's heritage and I vividly recall how he loved his country, family and grandchildren. His memoirs recount his long career in the politics of Iran. Historians would find his reports and photographs on the history of Iran from the early 1900s to the 1960s-1970s of great interest, especially the constitutional revolution, the revolt of Colonel Taghi-Khan Pesyan, the Anglo-Russian invasion of Iran in 1941 and the subsequent setting up by the Soviet Union of puppet separatist movements in Tabriz and Mahabad, etc.

Mehdi Farrokh and colonel Pesyan were very close friends, a fact duly noted in my grandfather's memoirs. Few are aware that Pesyan was one of Iran's first air combat air aces even before Iran had an air force! Pesyan had joined the Imperial German Air Corps during World War One where he distinguished himself by having shot down numbers of British combat aircraft. Recall that the British were highly unpopular in Iran at the time due to their policies.

Mehdi Farrokh remained dedicated to his country right up to his final days. He bitterly opposed the yielding of Iran's stance on Bahrain and one of his last actions in the Iranian Majlis before his passing in 1973 was to ensure that universal retirement

pension plans became enshrined in law.

My Grandfather had other interesting missions as well, one of which was his ambassadorship to China, before the Communists took over that country. Mehdi Farrokh wrote a book on his mission to China entitled "*Safar be Keshvar e Asrar Amiz e Chin*" [Travel to the Wondrous/Mysteri-

ous Country of China], in which he highly praised the people, culture, cuisine, civilization and work ethic of China. This book along with scores of others from the late Mehdi Farrokh's office, had been donated by Kaveh Farrokh to the "Ketabkhaneh Melli Iran" [National Library of Iran] in Tehran in the summer of 2001.

You were not born in Iran but did you have the opportunity to spend any time in Iran? If so what were your first impressions? If not what are your regrets?

This is true as I am born in Athens, Greece during my father's mission to that country in the early 1960s. My father worked as a career diplomat resulting in my family often residing outside of Iran (the majority of my time growing up was in Germany, both the former East German Democratic Republic and what was then known as West Germany).

In total I spent around 2-3 years in Iran, although I recall my summer vacation visits to Iran with great passion. In fact, I always remember how I looked forward to school ending and summer to begin so that I could visit Iran

As my stays in Iran would be limited, I tried to maximize my short sojourn by travelling as much as possible in the country. I was fascinated by Iran's pre-Islamic-era monuments (e.g. Persepolis, Pasargad, Naghshe Rostam, etc.) as well as Safavid-era works, notably at Isfahan. At the same time, I enjoyed myself thoroughly in Tehran, which was (and remains to this day in my opinion), the city that never sleeps.

You have written many books and articles including the creation of multi states

following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and regarding Azerbaijan. Why do you have such an intense interest on these matters?

This perspective is actually the derivative of my primary interest in ancient history and its continuum towards the present. The Ottoman Empire is often viewed as a Muslim Empire for example (especially by Western historiography) which in a strict sense is correct, but in practice, the Ottomans were simply the heirs of the Romano-Byzantines who had been the rivals of the Sassanian Empire. The difference however was that the Ottomans, like Iran, were Persianate in that they highly appreciated and promoted the Persian language with their arts and music shared with the Iranians.

The advent of modern nationalism resulted in much historical re-writing although the modern Turks are increasingly appreciating and acknowledging of their shared culture with the Iranian world. This is perhaps best described by Turkish History Professor Ilber Ortayli of Galatasaray University in Istanbul in his interview with BBC Persian: "*The influence of Iran upon the Turks is like the influence of ancient Greece upon Europe*"

You are also a great supporter and defender of Persian culture and history and an active protector and preserver of both, what influenced you to do this? What was it about Iran especially Iranian history that sparked your interest?

Interest in ancient Iran was always a fascination of mine ever since early childhood; I cannot think of any specific event that sparked this interest, however I noticed from an early age how under-appreciated Iran has been in contrast to Classical (Greco-Roman) and Arabo-Islamic civilizations.

One event I recall vividly is from a long time ago when I was a university undergraduate student taking an ancient history course. In one case the professor was discussing the "arts of the ancient Middle East" and not one word was mentioned about ancient Iran – instead he simply traced all arts and architecture to ancient Babylon and Egypt. He even stated "Human rights originates in Greece and Babylon". When I asked him about Cyrus (the Great) and his proclamation, he retorted

“Who?? You mean Osiris of Egypt? There is no Osiris of Persia!” This is a problem that is alive and well in academia, and shockingly, this is also infiltrating Iranian studies. Below is one of many complaint letters I received in 2013 alone – the one I display for you below is from a lady pursuing graduate work in Iranian Studies – for her protection, I am keeping her name and the parties involved confidential:

“I must report to you about numbers of Professors and their anti-Iranian comments! ... It may be too early to judge but so far I found Professor xxxx in the same line as Josef Wiesehöfer and Amelie Kuhrt! She tells us to read their books but then encourages us not to read any of Richard Frye’s books! Some examples of her anti Iranian notes are: Cyrus the Great were not at all about human rights and all he really did was to wage bloody wars, Cambyses was evil as well as a psycho, Darius was a cruel king who ordered noses, ears, etc. to be cut...however her tone always changes when Greece, Rome, Arabia, Babylon, etc. are involved. For example, she speaks very highly of Alexander being a humanitarian! Remember, that this is a Iranian Studies course! Another professor, Dr. xxxx, calls the Persian Gulf, as “Gulf”, because according to his logic “... some call is Persian and some Arabic” ...fine, but what about the historical records, including Arab maps and references that say otherwise? Is this not a history course? He even says in his class (and I quote) “no body in the world like Iranians! This professor is making such strong hateful comments, demonizes the Iranians and is essentially brainwashing students against Iran! Yet another professor trashes Zoroastrianism entirely... I asked Dr. xxxx who is going to teach me Zoroastrianism next semester and whether these claims are true and to my surprise he also approved of all of this!

Just imagine if the Iranians had killed Jesus, engaged in Roman-style gladiator acts or other despicable acts such as bull-fighting...even without all that, this so-called ‘new generation of professors’ who are almost all Western by the way with a few Iranian supporters lash out – and the strangest part: They are all WITHIN Iranian Studies!”

In a sense, the professors cited in the letters cannot be blamed as their education appears to stem from a Eurocentric view which often emphasizes Babylon and Egypt, which were of course important, but this often means that the Iranic world and especially the Persianate is often marginal-

ized. The real question however is this: why are these specific types of persons being promoted in Iranian Studies, and who or what is promoting and funding them?

Another case in my experience occurred when I was an undergraduate student many years ago when another professor made a presentation claiming that Rome conquered all of the “ancient Middle East”. I politely noted that this was not the case as Rome was actually defeated in its attempts to absorb the Parthian and Sassanian empires of Persia. He then responded in front of the class” ah, you say this because you are emotional which is typical of all Persian people”! Ignoring his racist comments, I focused the discussion back to the topic: I cited Classical (non-Persian) references documenting the defeats of Roman emperors such as Valerian, Philip the Arab, Gordian III, Julian, etc. Needless to say he was not pleased. I have noticed that there seems to be a circumspect view when it comes to ancient Iran, especially with respect to its achievements and how these have influenced world civilization. I feel a humble need to redress this imbalance of thought, or if I say, misconceptions.

As you are aware, many of the books and articles you have written on Pan Turkism and Azerbaijan have been printed in Persian Heritage. Can you give us a brief lesson on the “geo politics” and “petro diplomacy in conjunction with Iran?”

If we are speaking about “geopolitics” and “petrodiploamacy” with respect to pan-Turkism and Iran, then we must look into the Caucasus, namely the Baku oilfields. When we speak of British petroleum interests in the Caucasus we need to go back to the early 20th century and not just Iran but Ottoman Mesopotamia and Baku (which was Iranian territory until Russia annexed this region in 1828). Few are aware that Imperial Britain has had a keen interest in the Baku oilfields since the beginning of the twentieth century. This is dramatically illustrated in the May 23, 1914, London Petroleum Review, which reports the Ottoman oils fields of Mesopo-

tamia (now modern Iraq and Kuwait) as “a second Baku in the making”.

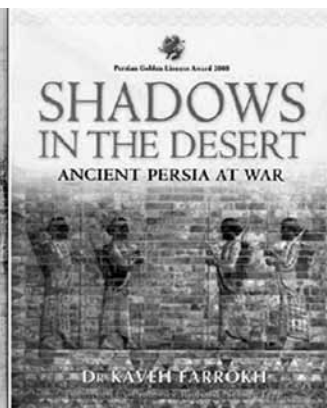
After World War One, British troops used Iran as a staging post and marched into Baku but were unable to hold it; eventually it was the Soviets who prevailed and the Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan was born. In summary, British imperial interests in the early 20th century eyed not just Iran but also Ottoman Mesopotamia and Baku (in what was then Imperial Russia). British petroleum has set up shop in the Baku region since the 1990s, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, however, the current relationship between the current Aliev administration and British petroleum is difficult to ascertain and appears to be in flux (at least at the moment).

Can you also enlighten our readers on the subject of British oil companies and their historical relationship with Iran?

This is a very interesting question that requires a textbook (or textbooks) to answer. However some important historical points may be summarized here. Almost as soon as British oil interests arrived into Khuzestan, they supported their protégé, Sheikh Khazal who was trying to carve up his own emirate inside Iranian territory. The main impetus for this was due to the fact that the Qajar administration and especially military was very weak allowing more powerful empires to take advantage of opportunistic elements within not only Iran but also the Ottoman Empire.

The case of British petroleum and the Mossadegh story is well known and we defer to dozens of books and articles already available on the subject.

What is your opinion of Bernard Lewis and his plans?



Professor Bernard Lewis is a world-class expert of the “Middle East” – which by the way is an invented geopolitical term originating among British policy makers. Lewis is truly a doyen on the Turks, Arabs and Iranians. But knowledge can be wielded in several ways, including the promotion of geopolitical perspectives

Put simply, a number of books have identified Professor Lewis as the 1979 architect of the “Bernard Lewis Plan”. In essence the plan has proposed the fragmentation and balkanization of the following Iranian provinces: Khuzestan, Kurdistan and Azerbaijan. These are, according to the “plan”, to then join analogous regions in neighbouring countries. In a sense this “plan” is to not only fragment Iran, but also Turkey, Iraq and Syria. The Lewis map actually surfaced shortly after the revolution and is reported as being drafted around April 1979, just months after the overthrow of the Pahlavi establishment.

The “plan” is very much alive and well, at least according to retired military professional, Ralph Peters as seen in his version of the “Bernard Lewis plan”. Professor Lewis has been questioned regarding his connections to these plans: he has denied having any connection to the map attributed to him or all other pertain-

ing maps. The professor claims that the sources citing him as the originator of these plans are false.

What are your goals for the future?

To keep writing and overcoming misconceptions against ancient Iran and Iranians as a whole. This means that I must produce more articles, books and on-line postings. To that end I have been EXTREMELY fortunate as I now have many young Iranians as well as folks from across Europe, the Caucasus, the Near East, the Indian subcontinent, Europe, Africa, Asia, etc. who have worked hard to manage a Facebook Fanpage and run the humble website (www.kavehfarrokh.com).

Besides writing what other passions do you have?

I also enjoy reading the history of inventions as well as the First and Second World Wars. Another interest of mine is archery which I hope to pick up soon, but given the multitude of tasks I must devote myself to, this will be a few years off I think. I hope to also tabulate Iranian popular music and arts being developed

in the Iranian underground scene; I am amazed at the level of talent Iranian youth are displaying in the arts, cinema and music (classical and contemporary). On a personal level, I enjoy classic movies, not just of the Hollywood genre but those that came from Europe, Russia, Iran, and Egypt in the 1960s and 1970s.

We always close an interview with a message to our readers, especially to the younger generations, is there any thing you would like to impress upon them regarding their Persian heritage as well as their future in this ever changing world?

My humble advice is to read and get informed, and always question. No human being is beyond question, and this includes experts, professors, etc. Critical thinking is a human gift that is not necessarily the preserve of academics. I suspect the battleground of today and tomorrow is the internet and it is here where historical revisionists hope to re-write the history of Iran. It is also imperative that folks become organized and active in the propagation of the culture, history and legacy of Iran.

The Caspian Horse - Among The World’s Rarest

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The Caspian Horse was believed to be pets of the Royal family of Persia. King Darius would use these brave and agile horses to pull chariots in public demonstrations of battling lions, to prove his strength as a leader. He valued his little horses so much that they were engraved on his Royal Seal in 550 B.C. The Caspian Horse was known by different names in ancient Persia, such as Lydian, Moulecki, Pouseki or Pumpelli horse. The Caspian Horse was last known in 224 A.D. on a rock relief of King Ardashir where he is mounted on a horse so small the King’s feet are almost touching the ground.

Then came a great war in 637 A.D. This was the last recorded sighting of these fine purebred horses, the Royal court of Persia was destroyed, and the Caspian horses were thought to be extinct, until, one day... Louise Firouz, a Washington graduate of Cornell University where she studied animal husbandry among other disciplines. She married Nancy Firouz, an Iranian and is now occupied in farming and breeding horses. In 1965 Louise Firouz began searching for a pony that her children could ride. She ‘discovered’ the stallion Ostad pulling a heavy cart in Amol. Louise purchased him. Ostad was the first Caspian to be re-discovered. Two more, Aseman (another stallion) and Alamara (a mare) joined Ostad at Louise’s farm.

