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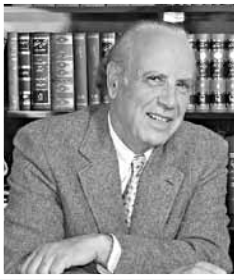
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IMPORTANT NOTICE

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

Over the past few weeks many glorious things have happened to Iranians, the winning of 12 Olympics medals, the Mars Curiosity Landing, which introduced the world to a new shining star of the NASA family, Bobak Ferdowsi and Nima Arkani-Hamed one of the winners of a 27 million dollar prize awarded to scientific researchers, by Harvard University. Yuri Milner donated the 27 million dollars. Their faces and the faces of Iranians, all over the world, were filled with smiles as we reveled in the accomplishments.

For the first time, in a very long time, I thought my editorial would be completely joyous. That all changed when our smiles ended and tears flowed, over the news of the earthquake in Azerbaijan. In a matter of a seconds a 6.2 earthquake erased our joy and over 300 Iranian lives. The dreams of the children, young adults and their parents were forever extinguished. They were stunned as they walked through the town that just moments before was home. Anger was the next emotion we felt. We were angry because, as we watched the recovery mission, we could not understand how a country so rich in natural resources did not invest money into building structures that would not be destroyed in a 6.2 earthquake, for their citizens. After all in the richer parts of the world a 6.2 magnitude earthquake does not result in this kind of loss of lives and destruction. We were angered by the government delay in alerting the world to this disaster. If it weren't for the western news and the media venues of twitter, facebook etc., I am not sure if we would have ever known about this earthquake.

Can someone please tell me how a government can turn a blind eye to its people who are being crushed by sanctions, a rise in prices and a shortage of food, give its full attention and support to the leader of Syria. Can someone also tell me

how a government who knew immediately of the earthquake, hold this information back from the news media therefore denying these victims, its citizens of immediate help? I can tell you with a great amount of certainty that if Assad needed help from the present government of Iran their response to his needs would have been quicker than for their own citizens.

“When it is today, we regret about yesterday” (a Persian expression)

It has been 33 years since the revolution in Iran. Iranians continue to be oppressed and conditions for women are becoming intolerable. Fifty-one percent of the student population at the universities was once women. Now the doors are being slammed in their faces and they are scurrying around trying to find an alternative means to receive a higher education. The wealth of Iran has fallen comfortably into the pockets of thieves. While the government knows the identity of these thieves they refuse to prosecute them. What is worse is the government believes that by keeping its citizens occupied with other social and economic problems they can freely allow the thieves to continue to rape the country of its wealth. But, I know Iranians are smarter than that!

The world is against this regime, yet cannot come up with a proper solution to end it. They believe harsher sanctions will put pressure on the regime and cause the people to rise up against it. How long will the world believe in these ridiculous endeavors. John W. Limbert, Ambassador and former hostage, in his interview with Persian Heritage, addresses these sanctions. “Economic pressure and sanctions, instead of mobilization will result in the citizens feeling more pressure to find food and provide for their families. Sanctions do not break down a regime but strengthens it and causes more



FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



Bobak Ferdowsi



Nima Arkami-Hamed



oppression on the people?”

Let us not forget the eight-year war with Iraq. One million Iranian's died, yet the regime lived on and the opponent was never eliminated. The point I am trying to make is that the West must realize that more sanctions is not the direction to take with Iran.

At the beginning of my editorial I mentioned the joy we all shared in the victories of the Iranian Olympians, The Mars Project and the scientific researchers. Despite bad calls by referees, the Iranian athletes remained true sportsmen. The team took what was dished out and continued to prosper. In the end out of 204 plus countries represented in the Olympics, Iran's athletes placed Iran in the 17th position of total medals.

One of the most overwhelming emotional pictures I saw during the Olympics was after a wrestling match. Two young men one Iranian, the winner of the Silver and the other American, the winner of the Gold, walked arm in arm towards the podium to receive their medals. They were not enemies they were people who respected one another and understood the dedication each other had to their sport, themselves and to their country. This picture spoke a thousand words. It is my hope that those who saw this photograph understood the message it projects. Simply put it stated that Iranians and Americans are not enemies. Iranians love Americans as evidenced in their actions after 9/11. They were the first country to call for a candlelight vigil in honor of those who lost their lives on that dreadful day. It is my hope that this simple picture will weaken the possibility of one of the most destructive wars on the horizon, the bombing of Iran. It is my belief that if the bombing occurs we will lose the purity and friendship that exists between Iranians and Americans and that friendship love and respect will change to hatred. We all know that hatred breed's destruction.

I must raise another issue, one that I believe the media needs to address. To make the point I must give an example. When the Mars Curiosity Project had a successful landing the face of Mr. Boback Ferdowsi (an Iranian American) was all over the news. His name was given as playing a leading role

in the project and the camera captured his excitement. There was no mention of his ethnicity, religion or origin. He was just Boback Ferdowsi, the guy with the crazy haircut, who worked on the project. I believe this is the way it should be, REGARDLESS of your ethnicity, religion or origin, if you are a citizen of the United States, YOU are American. HOWEVER, had that same person, Mr. Boback Ferdowsi been part of a robbery, shooting or other infamous event his ethnicity, religion and origin would be at the center of the news broadcast. Journalists who are writing for the GENERAL MEDIA venues need to cease from this type of labeling under any circumstance good or bad. KEEP IT NEUTRAL. We all know who we are and while we should be proud of our heritage, our religion and our origin it is personal in nature. And yes we should also be disappointed if and when someone does something to tarnish that ethnicity, religion and origin. Labeling is the most successful elements for dividing and division will bring our demise.

There is nothing wrong for ethnic publications to report on their communities' achievements. On that note I am proud to say that this issue is full of wonderful achievements by Iranians around the world. Persian Heritage is proud to share the success of our accomplishments. We hope that the youth of the world will understand the importance of roots. There is no better example of this then as stated by Mr. Siamak Farah Bakhshian, a successful CEO, in his interview in this issue. Despite his professional achievements he has pride and love for his past and present homes.

This editorial has mixed my joy and sadness together. In the future I hope our joy trumps our sadness. Let us all continue to strive for better relations between Iran and the United States. Let us hope that eventually our relationship will return to friendship and true ally.

Shahrokh Alavi

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**PROFESSOR
EHSAN YARSHATER**

Your recent interview with Columbia University's Distinguished Professor Emeritus in-Residence Ehsan Yarshater soothed the nostalgic bare khat-er in great many hearts of those of us in particular, who have now resided more of our lives in Diaspora than our motherland, Iran. Ostad Yare Share's lifelong legacy and seminal contributions toward stewarding our heritage worldwide has, and continues to be seminally inspirational for many, especially the youths, in our global community. With his ancestors originally from Kashan, his courageously noble words, deeds and thoughts, have certainly convinced the skeptics and cynics labeling the Kashanis as cowardice (Jest) to reconsider and retract from their tarnished generalization of the brave people from this great provincial township! May the

illuminating beacon of Ostad Ehsan's life legacy lives on forever....

Davood N. Rahni

THANK YOU

Dear Editor

Very many thanks for the copies of Mirass-e Iran Magazine, which includes my biography. I greatly appreciate your generosity in devoting so many pages of the magazine to an account of my life. I wish I had done enough to be worthy of your kindness.

Sincerely
Ehsan Yarshater

DELIGHTFUL

I was delighted to see Brian Appleton on the cover of the summer issue. He is a remarkable individual and I have followed many of his writings. His love for Iran was certainly felt in the interview. It would be nice to hear from other non Iranians about Iran

and its people.

K.S.

COMPLAINT

I was wondering if you could have a few more pages of the magazine in English. When reading it I always feel that I am missing out on the Persian side. Just a thought!

HN

PERSIAN GULF

Dear Editor:

Your editorial was filled with sentences of passion and frustration over the Persian Gulf. Think of what could be accomplished if Iranians, hyphenated or not living within Iran or elsewhere, also felt as passionately as you do. I trust that there would be no sanctions or potential war with Iran. I beg us all to vocalize our views in a mature and factual manner.

*Thank you,
AI*

**Support UBC
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The University of British Columbia (UBC) Asian Studies Department has embarked on a vigorous initiative to establish a Persian Language and Iranian Studies program at the University. Long recognized as a leader in teaching and research on Asia, UBC has recently reaffirmed its commitment to Asia in its new strategic plan, Place and Promise. To date, UBC's commitment to engagement with Asia has focused primarily on East and South Asia, and indeed, the Chinese and Indic cultural spheres are well represented in the Faculty of Arts – especially so in the department of Asian Studies.

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IRAN STANDS ON 17TH IN OLYMPICS 2012

We salute all of the athletes who participated in the 2012 Olympics. Whether or not they brought home a medal, should not reduce the value of their dedication and passion towards their sport. Regardless of the nation they represented their faces beamed with pride in representing their countries.

It was not different for Iran. Out of a total of the 53 Iranian competitors, eight of which were women, in the 2012 Olympic Games, in London, twelve of these gifted young people came home with a medal. Iran's athletes proudly stood on the podium and heard their national anthem four times, winning gold, five silver and three bronze medals for athletics, weightlifting and wrestling. By this result for Iranian athletics, Iran achieved the 17th rank with twelve medals among 204 countries.

Behdad Salimi, GOLD weightlifting, Hamid Sourian, GOLD wrestling. Omid Norouzi, GOLD wrestling. Ghasem Rezaei, GOLD wrestling. Ehsan Haddadian, SILVER discus throw. Mohammad Bagheri Motamed, SILVER Taekwondo. Navab Nassirshahal, SILVER weightlifting. Sajjad Anoushiravani, SILVER weightlifting. Sadegh Saeed Goudarzi, SILVER free-style westling. Kianoush Rostami, BRONZE weightlifting. Ehsan Lashgari, BRONZE wrestling. Komeil Ghasemi, BRONZE wrestling. We salute all of you in your accomplishment.



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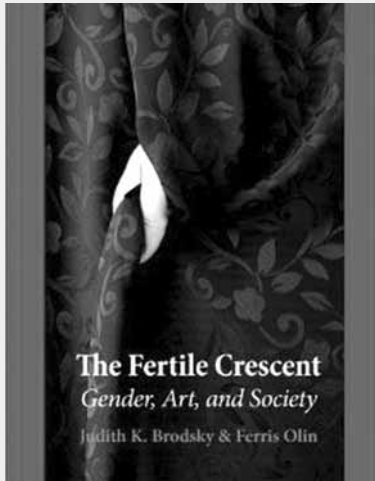
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THE FERTILE CRESCENT: GENDER, ART, AND SOCIETY



The Institute for Women and Art at Rutgers in partnership with Princeton University, Institute For Advanced Study, The Arts Councils of Princeton and West Windsor, And East Brunswick, New Brunswick and Princeton Public Libraries Present:

The Fertile Crescent: Gender, Art and Society, IS conceived and produced by Ferris Olin and Judith K. Brodsky, co-directors of the Institute for Women and Art at Rutgers. It is an ambitious and unparalleled showcase five years in the making of exhibitions, public programming, and an accompanying catalog. The work of these “transnational” artists examines and reveals from their global perspectives the complex social, theological and historic issues that have, and continue to shape, the state of Middle East women. Through painting, video, photography, sculpture, film, and multi-media, these artists explore

issues of gender, homeland, geopolitics, theology, transnationalism, and the interaction between East and West. The work challenges Western stereotypes of Middle East women as oppressed, the sexual objects of men, with their bodies disappearing under veils, while acknowledging existing social and theological restrictions that have caused many of them to leave their homelands.

These artists are part of a global culture that transcends politics, geographic boundaries, and even religious beliefs that have divided the West and the Middle East for centuries. They have multiplied entities as women, and as Muslims, Christians, Jews, or a secular identity, and often as members of the diaspora. Many live outside their country of origin in the US and Europe.

One of the featured artists of the exhibition was Negar Ahkami, whose contributions to the show include “Hot and Crusty”. Ms. Ahkami was also a guest lecturer at the event.

Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Art Museum, 10/8/ 12- 1/13/13

Princeton, NJ: Bernstein Gallery, Woodrow Wilson School, 8/2 7/12- 10/1 9/12

Princeton, NJ: Arts Council of Princeton/Paul Robeson Gallery for the Arts, 10/04/12- 11/2 1/12

New Brunswick, NJ: Mason Gross Galleries, Rutgers University, 8/13/12- 9/9/12

New Brunswick, NJ: Mary H. Dana Women Artists Series Galleries, Rutgers University (3 shows),8/29/12-9/28/12; 10/4/12- 11/1/12; 11/9-12/17/12

VIDA GHAFFARI AND TINSEL TOWN



Vida Ghaffari has been active on the Tinsel town scene as an actress and a reporter. This comedic powerhouse just landed a co-starring role in Mindy Kaling’s (“The Office”) hilarious and much buzzed about Untitled pilot on the FOX network.

Vida also booked a supporting role in Savage Cinema’s campy horror flick, “Pond Scum,” directed by legendary indie Aussie filmmaker Mark Savage. Ghaffari plays the role of a pious woman betrayed by her abusive husband. Savage was so struck by her acting talent, that he will also cast her in a major supporting role in his upcoming thriller called “Circus of Dread,” starring acting powerhouses Domiziano Arcangeli and Bill Oberst Jr.

Born and raised in the DC area, she comes from a long line of diplomats, scholars, actors/directors, writers, and poets. Ghaffari wants to uphold the family tradition through the arts and the media. She has received research and writing grants from the Woodrow Wilson Center and the National Journalism Center among others. She has a BA in Economics from the University of Maryland, College Park with a minor in Journalism and Theatre.

Rita Jahanafrouz TAKES ISRAEL BY STORM

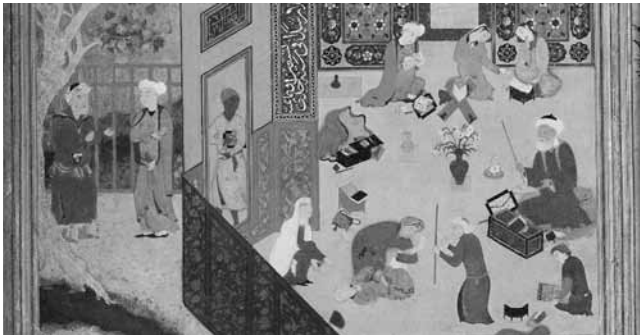


This fifty year old singer is said to be Israel’s most famous and has now become equally famous in, guess where, IRAN. Perhaps, it is because her latest album “All My Joys” is a remake of beloved Persian songs. No they are not old music, they have been given a beat and yes you can dance to them.

Rita’s family immigrated to Israel in 1970. She grew up in Tel Aviv, listening to her mother’s songs of old. Smitten by music she began her own musical career when she joined a band in the Israeli army in the 80’s. Because her formative years were in Iran and the culture was impressed on her by her parents, adapting her songs to Persian seems to have come naturally. Add to this her anti-war feelings, and the “ORDINARY” people of both countries yearning for peace, her bi -country success should not be surprising. Rita, as she is professionally called, hopes that she can be a link between the two countries, a cultural ambassador and anti-war believer. “Iranians we will never bomb your country,” is posted on her Facebook page.

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Sad'i and the Youth of Kashgar

Ascribed to Bihzad From a copy of the Gulistan (Rosegarden) by Sa'di Iran, present-day Afghanistan, Herat, 1486 Opaque watercolor, ink, and gold on paper Lent by the Art and History Trust, LTS 1995.2.33

India’s Mughal emperors, who reigned over a vast and wealthy empire that extended over most of the South Asian subcontinent between the 16th and 19th centuries, were passionate about lavish manuscripts and paintings. Between 1556 and 1657, the greatest Mughal patrons—the emperors Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan—formed grand workshops that brought together and nurtured India’s leading painters, calligraphers and illuminators.

This remarkable artistic legacy was on view in “Worlds Within Worlds: Imperial Paintings from India and Iran” at the Sackler July 28 through Sept. 17. The exhibition brings 50 of the finest folios and paintings from the Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery collections, which together form one of the world’s most important repositories of Mughal and Persian painting.

**BEN KINGSLEY PORTRAYS
ABU ALI SINA
(Avicenna)**

Philipp Stolzl’s new project, *The Physician*, is the cinematic adaptation from the American author Noah Gordon’s 1986 novel of the same name. The movie is set in the 11th century and portrays a healer named Rob Cole who travels across Europe to seek the scientific truth about illnesses and healing; in Persia he finds a new stage. Renowned American actor Ben Kingsley stars as the Persian physician Ibn Sina, a Persian polymath, physician and philosopher who wrote almost 450 treatises on a wide range of subjects. Avicenna’s internationally renowned book *The Canon of Medicine* has been a medical textbook studied in many medieval universities.

Written by Jan Berger, *The Physician* now at the pre-production status is scheduled to begin shooting in Morocco and Germany in June, 2012.

DID YOU KNOW?

Persians account for half of 1% of America’s population. Yet, this miniscule minority is responsible for companies on the NASDAQ and they make up 40% of the population of Beverly Hills. Yet the only depictions of this over achieving minority that the media portrays is reality show. The Shahs of Sunset and offensive stereotypical depictions of wife beaters and terrorists. Society needs to be made aware that Iranian Americans are responsible for companies such as E bay, Qualcomm, YouTube and Expedia, just to name a few. This is an important film because not only will it change the world’s perception of Iranians but it will inspire people from all walks of life to shoot for the stars and push the limits of their potential. My goals in making this documentary are not only to honor and spotlight this miraculous minority for their exemplary achievements but also to bring them into a proper light in the eyes of the world. Perhaps one day when an Iranian is being asked to step out of line at the airport, it won’t be because he or she is being racially profiled but rather to say, “thank you for making the world a better place.”

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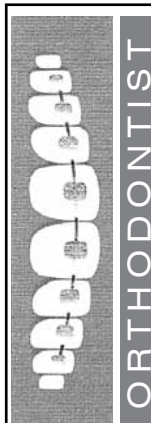


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MOHAWKS ARE THE SURPRISE WINNER OF THE MARS CURIOSITY LANDING



Bobak Ferdowsi unwittingly becomes a hit on the internet while successfully completing a Mars landing mission. Activity lead Bobak Ferdowsi, who cuts his hair differently for each mission, works inside the Spaceflight Operations Facility for NASA's Mars Science Laboratory Curiosity rover at Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in Pasadena, California on Sunday, August 5th, 2012. Photograph: Brian Van Der Brug/AP

Usain Bolt may have rocketed to victory in the Men's 100 final on Sunday, but thousands of miles away, another man was rising to prominence with great speed. The Mars Curiosity Landing, which made a safe touch down on the red planet at 06.14 BST today, wasn't just a further leap for mankind but the scene of one man's unexpected triumph over obscurity.

Bobak Ferdowsi, who is flight director on the Mars Science Laboratory Curiosity mission, attracted a good deal of attention for his haircut, a shaven, stars and red dye combo which has earned him the moniker Mohawk Guy. According to AP, Ferdowsi cuts his hair differently for every mission, and the latest style seems to have turned him into something of a heart-throb. "Cute, stylish AND brilliant!" tweeted one woman, while a man blogging about the landing mission on tumblr wrote: "Bobak Ferdowsi is the new standard of attractiveness. Good looking and smart. Us male-folk are screwed."

The Mohawk, which us Brits tend to call a Mohican, needs a specific context to be rebellious. Once the signature look of punk culture, the very outrageousness of spiky hair made it instantly recognisable as the style of a bygone era. But there's something sweet about Ferdowsi's own version, with its playful dabs of colour and the "I love my job!" message sent out by the sprinkling of stars. Plus, it hardly seems like the kind of thing you often see at NASA.

Anyway, it would be naive to suggest subversion is what has made Mohawk Guy such a hit. The website BuzzFeed dis-

tilled his popularity as: Mohawk + NASA + Twitter = Swoon. "Showed up for work today", reads one doctored photo of the man, "became an internet sensation." Meanwhile, Ferdowsi, it seemed, was pretty busy helping navigate a curiosity rover through space, and the only acknowledgement of his newfound fame was a tweet which read: "Internet, you win this round. I'll be back later, but thanks so much. Now going to celebrate with all my friends and team! #msl".

MUSIC TO OUR EARS

Ramin Djawadi is a German-Iranian composer of orchestral music for film and television. Djawadi may be best known for his Grammy-nominated, guitar-driven score for *Iron Man* and for the TV series *Prison Break*, *Game of Thrones* and *Person of Interest*.

He was born in Duisburg, Germany to an Iranian father and German mother. After graduating summa cum laude from Berklee College of Music in 1998, Djawadi garnered the attention of Hans Zimmer, who recruited him to Remote Control Productions. Djawadi moved to Los Angeles and worked as an assistant to Klaus Badelt.



He then went out on his own with *Blade: Trinity*, collaborating with The RZA for director David Goyer. This was the beginning of his relationship with Goyer for both film and television. Djawadi wrote the score for Goyer's horror thriller *The Unborn*, which was produced by Michael Bay. Further collaboration with Goyer was the hit television show *FlashForward*, earning him his second Emmy nomination. Djawadi also composed the Emmy-nominated main title theme music for *Prison Break* and the title theme for the related show *Breakout Kings*. Djawadi's ethereal score for the film *Mr. Brooks* earned him a World Soundtrack Awards "Discovery of the Year" nomination. His other scores include *Deception*, starring Hugh Jackman and Ewan McGregor, and Robert Towne's *Ask the Dust*.

Djawadi scored the first Sony Animation project, *Open Season*, followed by the sequel *Open Season 2*. Additional animation scores include *The Chubbchubbs Save Xmas*. Djawadi's work in these films attracted the filmmakers of the Belgium-based NWave, who created one of the first animated movies in 3D, *Fly Me to the Moon*. Djawadi completed Warner Brothers' *Clash of the Titans* in 2010. Djawadi also scored the soundtrack for the 2010 video game *Medal of Honor* and HBO's fantasy drama *Game of Thrones*.

He is currently composing the music for the hit TV series *Person of Interest*. Djawadi's usual orchestrators are Stephen Coleman and Tony Blondal.

Broadway Bound



Arash Mokhtar has returned from shooting the pilot episode of the new show, “Political Animals”, starring Sigourney Weaver; directed by Greg Berlanti. Recently he guest starred on episode #105, “Turf War”, of the new CBS show, “NYC 2-2”, executive produced by Robert DeNiro, Richard Price and Jane Rosenthal, aired on May 13th, 2012.

This year he began freelancing with Jenevieve Brewer and Alice Skiba at About Face Talent. And most recently he played Stanley Jerome in Neil Simon’s “Broadway Bound” in New York having just returned from a run of a Christopher Durang show at the Firehouse Theatre Project in Richmond, VA.

Arash is a graduate of Corcoran College of Art.

Collections on Middle-East Minorities

Through the dedicated efforts of George A. Kiraz a wealth of rare and valuable materials about minorities in the Middle East has been saved, collected, and brought together into one comprehensive collection. Through a recently developed partnership with the Rutgers University Libraries, that collection will be preserved digitally and made broadly available to the worldwide scholarly community.

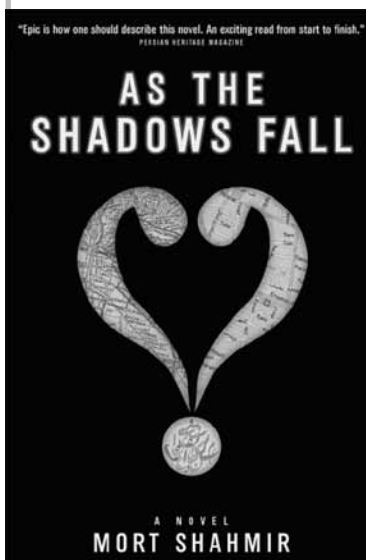
Mr. Kiraz comes from a family with a rich background of involvement in Middle East history. His great-great uncle Thomas and great uncle Giragos were skilled scribes of Syriac liturgical manuscripts (Syriac is a dialect of Aramaic that was commonly used throughout the Middle East, from the 5th through the 14th centuries). His father Anton, an immigrant from Southeast Turkey to Palestine in the 1920’s, was a prominent businessman in Bethlehem who discovered the Talpiot ossuaries in Jerusalem in 1945 and helped acquire the first four Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947.

While in post-graduate study at the University of Cambridge in 1992 George Kiraz noted, that there was lack of any organized effort to preserve and collect publications that illuminate the proud history of Syriac culture as well as the history and culture of other Middle East minorities.

Motivated both by pride in his heritage and a determination to assist in its preservation, he founded Beth Mardutho [Syriac for ‘house of knowledge’]: The Syriac Institute whose aim was to advance the field of Syriac academic studies through the use of computer technology.

As The SHADOWS Fall

A Novel By: Mort Shahmir



وقتی

که

سایه‌ها

می‌افتند

نوشته:

مرت شاهمیر

Please visit: mortshahmir.com

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

The print version will be available soon.

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

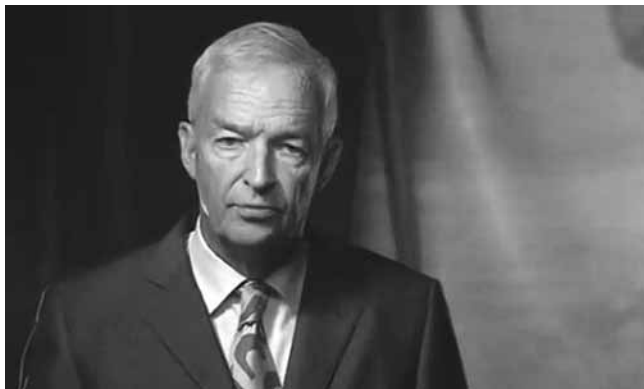
Contact:

mort809@yahoo.com

270 791 9985

An Address at the UK Chatham House about Iran

by Senior Journalist Jon Snow



Iran, a highly diverse sovereign nation in the making for millennia that once spanned from India and western China to eastern Europe and north Africa, and with continuous forms of government for 2,500 years albeit undemocratic for most this period, continues to struggle with her lingering aspirations for human rights, democracy, freedom, justice and peace. Iran's integrity and identify in the context of her multifaceted contributions in the arts and architecture, literature, language and culture, science, medicine and technology, etc. toward world civilization, is yet to be fully recognized.

Whereas blatant violation of human rights, injustice and inequality, lack of transparency, socio-economic and political failure, and impasse in her international relations with west, seem to have only intensified in recent juncture, no other impediment has surpassed the detrimental effects of interference and frankly economic, political and military hegemony exerted by the western powers, presumably for exploitation of its rich natural resources and strategic location, against IRAN (mainly the British, the Russian and the American foreign policy, in particular). The lowest point of such blithe interferences is the ouster of the late Dr. Mohammad Mosadegh by the Americans in the early 1950's, the only democratically elected prime minister Iran. He is credited as the first leader worldwide to have nationalized the oil and gas, and won a lawsuit brought about by the British Petroleum at the International Court in the Hague.

Whereas the mainstream western media continues to trumpet the alleged nuclear development as the only issue, based on which the 77 million people of Iran are once again caught between an inside rock and an outside hard place to pay dearly for it as collaterals, it is noteworthy to hear an alternative perspective on Iran as shared by the UK veteran senior journalist and scholar, Jon Snow. ■

ALEXANDER KNYAZEV, ON IRAN

June 14, 2012 (www.bakutoday.net)

In an interview with Jamie Azerbaijan news network, **BakuToday**, analyst Alexander Knyazev explained that, "the protracted conflict has already used in Syriac its authorization to international institutions and the great powers, it simply projecting on Iran. And Iranian-Azerbaijani conflict node does not have a corresponding attracts international attention and move it to the military phase may well be an effect of surprise, when all international debates will take place already in ex mode, when all will be together to denounce one another and promote and vice versa."

Moreover, the "hypothetical Iranian-Azerbaijani war would entail a number of related conflict of paradigms, such as in the Caspian region. The situation of the war would have been without any reservations to provide permanent stationing of NATO and United States troops and their control over the Caspian Sea, at least in the southern part of it. That, in turn, would be hit further on Iran, actually completing the encirclement of enemy essentially for Tehran's Coalition".

Alexander Knyazev was confident that "the establishment of a" second front "on the Caspian Sea, believing" the first United Front "to the Persian Gulf region, the United Nations Iran-Iraq and the Iran-Afghan border, would negate any gains by the Islamic Republic of Iran in the event of a war. But I want to point out that a single Iranian-American war could not be otherwise, the entire Middle East is threatened by serious reformatting."

Knyazev has different data as an example: "there are several options section of Syria-the Web is not difficult to find even such mapping options. But clear and consistent-if Syria, next will undoubtedly be Turkey. There is a Kurdish problem, there are actually dissected the issues abound, Iraq's territorial integrity of Saudi Arabia, in fact prepared to Afghanistan. ... This is the most negative of all likely scenarios. Just think, if such chaos, by whom, and what will be in this situation Azerbaijan?" asked political analyst.

"This development (the Caspian Sea) most directly hit by the interests of Russia, Kazakhstan, where there is absolutely no desire to become a front-line State, especially in view of the fact that Russia and Kazakhstan and the Caspian go to their already troubled regions. Recently in one of the comments I read the passage of regular exercises of the Russian Caspian flotilla, with emphasis on the fact that the growth of Russian military power in the Caspian is a response to the Iranians. In this respect Russia and Iran are in one camp, there is nothing to share and any talk about some contradictions between Iran and Russia on Caspian sea-level or provocation, or simple journalistic, sorry, stupid.

And, Russia and Iran will by all means let to a foreign, not the Caspian military presence here.

Not necessarily fighting fleets – there are a lot of asimetričnyh of war "I bet expert. In his view, "Azerbaijan might be in the victim role in games. There is also the Karabakh conflict, in which Iran is openly on the side of Armenia, among other things. I need a war on two fronts for Azerbaijan?" ■

Having Fun In Iran

David Rahni

On June 21, 2012, I came across a wonderful editorial in the New York Times. It was written by Nicholas D. Kristof and titled "In Iran, They Want Fun, Fun, Fun."

He starts the article by saying that "one of the most pernicious misunderstandings in the West about Iranians is that they are dour religious fanatics." This could not be further than the truth especially with the youth's hunger for and abundant access to the internet. To his surprise the Iranians, who receive nothing from the United States in aid, look warmly on the United States. This is in contrast to the feelings of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Egypt who receive billions from the United States.

The intent of his article seems to be that the United States and the West need to look deeply on how they describe Iranians to the West and careful on the direction we take in the future.

Why isn't it clear to those posing a war with Iran, that such an action is certain to strengthen the present regime and weaken the movement for freedom by the younger generation?

After a road trip across Iran I believe that Mr. Kristof has it right, "change will come here, too (referring to China in the 60's), if we just have the patience not to disrupt the subterranean forces at work rising education, an expanding middle class, growing economic frustration, erosion of the government monopoly on information. My hunch is that if there is no war between Iran and the West...hard-liners will go the way of Mao, and Iran will end looking something like Turkey."

I strongly suggest you read the article in its entirety!

If You Speak PERSIAN In AMERICA, No iPad For You

Anahita Sedaghatfar,

Attorney at Law, concerning Ms. Sabet vs. Apple.

Picture this: a young woman visits an Apple store hoping to purchase a new iPad, and is DENIED the opportunity to do so.

Why? Simply, because she spoke Farsi. This might seem implausible, but it's exactly what happened to Sahar Sabet, a student at the University of Georgia. When a sales representative overheard Sabet speaking Farsi with her uncle, he refused to sell the teenager an iPad. The U.S. trade embargo that prohibits goods from being exported to sanctioned countries such as Iran was cited as the reason behind the decision.

Although the customer ultimately complained to Apple's corporate offices and was able to order the device online, shockingly, this is not the first time Apple has been accused of discrimination against Iranian Americans. In fact, similar instances have occurred in the past, with Apple denying Iranian customers the right to purchase goods from their retail stores, all the while citing the U.S. trade embargo as the reason. In one instance earlier this year, an Iranian wishing to purchase an iPod was denied and told that he would need to visit another store and not reveal the fact that he was Iranian. That these occurrences take place in 2012 is beyond disturbing.

Because of the trade embargo currently in place, retailers are indeed responsible for prohibiting the sale of goods to those individuals who may be suspected of attempting to export the items to the sanctioned countries. However, it defies any inkling of common sense, not to mention the letter and spirit of the embargo, to claim that the law was intended to apply in situations as those described above. Unfortunately, what we are left with is the very real danger of racial profiling and discrimination. Making matters worse, those charged with enforcing the trade embargo; inaptly trained employees of retailers such as Apple.

As an Iranian American and an attorney who respects the U.S. sanctions against the countries subject to the embargo, the case of Sahar Sabet and other Iranian Americans who have been the unintended targets of the embargo laws, causes me much concern. Perhaps the failure is a result of retailers not being properly trained or retailers not implementing clear policies in line with the spirit of the embargo laws. Without establishing appropriate guidelines, customers may be denied the opportunity to purchase goods based on the whim or mere speculation of retailers; or as seen in the case of Iranian American shoppers at Apple, based upon racial profiling.

While I do not purport to have the answers or the solutions to this intractable problem, what I can say with certainty is that it is crucial that changes be made so as to ensure that retailers comply with the embargo laws without engaging in outright racial profiling and discrimination. I have faith that we, as Americans, will be able to make this happen. Apple, the ball is in your court. Do the right thing. ■

PERSON OF THE YEAR 2011

Virtual Excellence Awards Association

Darius Lahoutifard is CEO of Altadyn, developers of 3DXplorer, the first and the only download-free and browser-based virtual world technology for Enterprises. ALTA-DYN is changing the way we meet online, the way we collaborate, and the way we market, interact and sell online. The service is emerging as the leader in live 3D interactive media. Altadyn is delivering value to major customers including Dell Inc. (NASDAQ: DELL), Cap Gemini, US Air Force, NDU (National Defense University), Aptima, Old Dominion University and more. Altadyn is based in Irvine, California and has offices in Paris, France.



REVIEWS

EQUAL OF THE SUN

Anita Amirrezvani

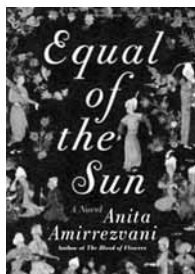
Publisher: Scribner

EQUAL OF THE SUN, by Anita Amirrezvani is a dazzling new novel. You can tell from the beautiful jacket and end papers that Scribner is proud of this book, which is packed with enough scholarly insight and steamy bedroom scenes to satisfy any kind of reader this summer.

We know all about the women leaders of Renaissance Europe: Queen Elizabeth, the Boleyns, Catherine of Aragon, Eleanor of Aquitaine, Mary Queen of Scots. But what was happening in the Middle East at that time?

Few people realize that highly-placed women served as key advisors to rulers, lobbied to get their sons into power, formed major alliances, got exiled for misbehavior, and sometimes paid the ultimate price for their ambitions.

EQUAL OF THE SUN tells one such story, about Pari Khan Khanoom, the favored daughter of the shah who becomes in a bloody struggle for power in 1570s Iran.



NIGHT LETTER

Meghan Nuttall Sayres

With each word written Ms. Sayres sets the stage for this beautiful and epic love story. She has a gift of description that makes it effortless for the reader to place you in the scene of the book rather than outside, just as a reader.

You immediately identify with each of the characters, but don't let that fool you, the ending twists and turns like the history of Persia and only in the last chapters can you begin to formulate the heroines ending. A great entertaining read!



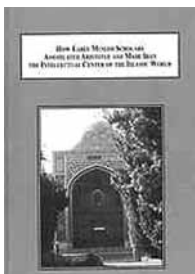
HOW EARLY MUSLIM SCHOLARS ASSIMILATED ARISTOTLE AND MADE IRAN THE INTELLECTUAL CENTER OF THE ISLAMIC WORLD

by Farshad Sadri

Edwin Mellen Press, June 2012

This work demonstrates how *falsafah* (which linguistically refers to a group of commentaries by Muslim scholars) associated with their readings of "The Corpus Aristotelicum" in Iran has been always closely linked with religion.

It demonstrates that the blending of the new natural theology with Iranian culture created an intellectual climate that made Iran the center of *falsafah* in the medieval world.



The author begins this book by exploring the analytical arguments and methodologies presented as the subject of the first-philosophy (metaphysics) in the works of Aristotle (in particular "The Nicomachean Ethics" and "Rhetoric"). Then, he tells the tale of the Muslims' progression as they came to own and expand upon Aristotle's arguments and methodologies as a measure of their own sense of spirituality. Last, Sadri surveys the implications of that sense of spirituality as it is amalgamated within the Iranian culture and today's Islamic Republic of Iran. The author's aim is to present a different perspective of *falsafah* (as it is received by Muslims and assimilated within Iranian culture), while maintaining a sense that captures the texture of everyday life-experiences in today's Islamic Republic of Iran.

This work is thus about (contemporary) Iranian *falsafah* and how it remains faithful to its tradition (as *falsafah* has actually been integrated and practiced by Iranian scholars for the last eleven centuries).

It is a tradition that has taken on the task of understanding and projecting a sense of order upon the multiplicity of forms, ideas, examples, and images that have passed through Iran from East and West; it is a story that has gathered, sheltered, and introduced a style and order of Islamic (Shi'at) *falsafah*.

THE RUBAIYAT OF OMAR KHAYYAM FOR STUDENTS OF PERSIAN LITERATURE

Kuros Amouzgar

Ibex Publishing 2012

If you have gone through life and not read the *Rubaiyat*, than you have inflicted upon yourself a great loss. It is a book written years ago, yet remains pertinent to life. As we know, often the meaning of a book can be lost when it is translated.

It was not until I read the *Rubaiyat* in Persian that I realized other editions in English, French and Arabic severely lacked the true feelings of Omar Khayyam.

The author hopes with his translation, along with the Persian version, that students of Persian literature and language will be able to feel the passion of not just The *Rubaiyat*, but also other remarkable Persian literature and poetry.



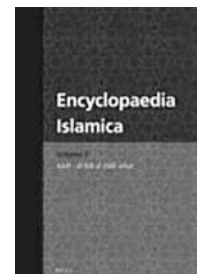
ENCYCLOPAEDIA ISLAMICA, VOLUME THREE

Brill 2011

Perhaps if this research tool became part of an educational curriculum, in the west, sooner than NOW, there would be more understanding and less fear of Islam.

All it takes is a short read to understand the knowledge that surrounds Islam and its influence on the formation of the world.

The book is simple in its setup making it easy to follow. It is a must for any student of religions.



Don't Forget Your Persian Heritage! Subscribe Today!

'Islamic art' a term most experts agree is an inadequate and over generalised term used in places like the British museum, in newspapers and exhibitions. It is misleading and plainly a bad term but what is 'Islamic art'? According to some experts it refers to artefacts and objects made in societies where Islam was the dominant or religion of the ruling elite.

This article focuses on the origin of this construct and explores the reasons behind using the term 'Islamic' for the whole spectrum of art belonging to a vast and diverse region without regard for the period in which it was created, area or specific culture and context. The article further explores why are we using an inaccurate generalised term when in anthropology more specific terms are used. Moreover, the article challenges the usage of a religion to classify and label a construct that encompasses art, culture and history, and has little or nothing to do with the religion or its tenants? This issue is of particular interest since religion, even if it inspires art, it is not founded upon art and it is not the root of art. However, it is puzzling that this terminology is used to describe art belonging to an area and region that is multicultural, multiethnic, multilingual and multi-religious.

Over recent years there has been a rise in awareness of Islam and Muslims in the West. Since the events of 2001 there has been a keen interest in the media, popular culture including films on Muslims, Islam and the overall Middle East. There has also been coinage of words and concepts such as Islamic terrorists, Muslim politics, political Islam; demonisation of Muslims particularly Middle Easterners on one hand and the consequent movements to counter Islamophobia on the other. This has caused a huge political movement at both ends of the spectrum. Interestingly there is a corresponding rise of 'political correctness' on the issue of Islam and Muslims. When looking at the term and categorisation of 'Islamic art', it is worthwhile exploring the definition of 'Islamic' and how does it apply to art and people. Of particular interest is the validity of this definition in the context of a multiethnic and multi-religious area that encompasses the whole region and the origins of this art work.

One of the things we must remem-

ber is that Islam is not a nation, ethnic group, nor language. It is solely a religion. So how does this apply to the definition and categorisation of 'Islamic art'? How can art historians and anthropologists use a definition like 'Islamic art' as a mass generalisation thus excluding the contribution to art of distinctively different groups within that society. The use of such a term is problematic due to the fact that it excludes the input of different groups and negates the contribution of the local culture, religions and people and their unique contribution to the art of that time.

ISLAMIC ART

part one

Aryan M. Divan



Besides wiping out the contribution to art in the multicultural spheres on territories dominated by Muslims and societies that were not Muslims, a loose term such as 'Islamic art' wipes out the time, context and ignores the secular and societal art works produced by different cultures and groups.

First let us look at definitions of 'Islamic art' as found on the internet. Then let us explore some of the points in the definitions of the various civilisation and cultures that contributed vastly to art even in post Islamic period of their history. One critical thing to take into consideration is the fact that in reality there

is no hegemony in the Middle East or the 'Muslim' world just like there is none in the Christian world. That is to say that there was no one leadership, one religion or homogeneous view point. To illustrate the point, the Persians were Sunni then later Shia Muslims while those who followed the caliphate were Sunni Muslims. The history of Sunni Islam in Iran differs to that of the Arab and Turkish world; in the Christian world it would be likened slightly to the differences to Catholicism and Protestants in division.

The first definition from High Beam says: 'Islamic art' [Arabic Islam, 'surrender (to God)'] art produced in the service of Islam, the monotheistic religion revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (d. 632) in early 7th-century Arabia, which quickly spread throughout much of Eurasia and Africa to become one of the major world religions. Islamic visual arts are decorative, colourful, and, in the case of religious art, non-representational. The Koran regulated every detail of the lives of the Faithful but gave few precise rules for the arts apart from banning the production of cult image.

Wikipedia's definition is that, 'Islamic art' encompasses the visual arts produced from the 7th century onwards by people (not necessarily Muslim) who lived within the territory that was inhabited by culturally 'Islamic' populations (Marilyn Jenkins-Madina, Richard Ettinghaus and Architecture 650-1250, Yale University Press). It includes fields as varied as architecture, calligraphy, paintings, and ceramics, among others. Typically, though not entirely,

Islamic art has focused on the depiction of patterns and Arabic calligraphy, rather than on figures, because it is feared by many Muslims that the depiction of the human form is idolatry and thereby a sin against Allah, forbidden in the Qur'an.

Thus the phrase 'Islamic art' is an umbrella term used for post-7th century AD visual arts, created by Muslim and non-Muslim artists within the territories occupied by the Muslims and non-Muslims while being ruled by a Muslim leader who is either a King, governor or Caliphate, while in some instances the Muslim population did not have rulers who were Muslims (India). 'Islamic art'

embraces art forms such as architecture, architectural decoration, ceramic art, faïence mosaics, lusterware, relief sculpture, wood and ivory carving, friezes, drawing, painting, calligraphy, book-gilding, manuscript illumination, lacquer-painted bookbinding, textile design, metalworking, gold smithery, and gemstone carving, amongst others. Historically, Islamic art has developed from a wide variety of different sources and cultures as well as religions. It includes elements from Greek and early Christian art which it combines with the great Middle Eastern cultures of Egypt, Byzantium, and Persia, along with far eastern cultures of India and China.

Before the invasion of the Sassanid empire nomadic Arab tribes' artistic production was centred on small scale portable items like jewellery, pottery, weapons, riding equipment, ceremonial ornaments, etc. The items are described as being aniconic; that is that the decorative designs were focused on vegetation and geometric patterns rather than human or animal figures.

There are claims that Islam forbids images, but it has regardlessly been done countless times within different branches of Islam and in different periods. However, there is evidence of religious artwork depicting people, animals, religious leaders and mythology. There are Haddiths, which argue against the production and depiction of human form, arguing that only God can create a perfect image and that the artist cannot bring things to life but only God can. As with Haddiths it must be noted that the two major branches of Islam follow different Haddiths; one is from the caliphates and the other from imams, hence as such claim to such a tenant has nothing to do with the original Quranic scripture.

There is a view by certain fractions within Arab dominated Islam that reflect negatively on artistic expression except when it is expressed in an aniconic way. However, no issues of this kind arises in other predominantly Muslim nations such as Turkey and Iran which do not have a strong aniconic artistic expression. The next problem is that there is no overall hegemony in Muslim societies nor a singular perception in religion, but rather a cultural affiliation that is divided into sects and ethnic groups. However there does not seem to be anything in the Quran that prohibits art nor does Quran issues any guidelines to art forms. As an illustration to this claim, an example is seen in

the words of Husn, Jamal and Zeenah on beauty and aesthetics - while no guidelines are given, it is clearly mentioned that art is to be enjoyed: Qur'an 7:13 "O children of Adam, attend your embellishment..." The word embellishment can also mean beauty, for in Arabic it is *zeena takum*. Another reference to beauty is Yusuf Ali 20:8 "God, there is no god but He! To him belong the most beautiful names". There are multiple references in the Qur'an on beauty: 16:6, 16:8, 33:52, 37:6; the images: 34:13, and so on.

Another issue to focus on is the spread of Islam and the first territories that became Muslim. The first were the Sassanians whose artistic expression is based on figural art works while at the same time producing a vast amount of textiles and metal works in which aniconic is also expressed in production of artefacts. Art in the Muslim world became separated from artistic production and moved into the secular sacred sphere, separating religious art and local and secular art in the most simplistic definition.

The typical example of 'Islamic' art like the exterior tile of geometric form and the interior crown and vine mosaics found at the dome of the rock (a sacred place to Muslims) to the Mihrab tiles found in Isfahan are aniconic in form and depict no human forms.

In addition to this there are the palaces and luxury goods found throughout the Muslim world produced specifically for secular consumption and usage. While many palaces and luxury goods used aniconic art form, there are depictions of animals and people in luxury items and in mosques throughout Iran and its former territories in Central Asia, the Caucasus South Asia, Arabia and Turkey. So now the issue that arises is that if 'Islamic' art is aniconic as a matter of a rule, why then can we find non aniconic art works, textiles, metal works, etc., on and in mosques, poetry, books, and in all kinds of artefacts? Furthermore, the Persian love poetry is illustrated with paintings of its protagonists as well as images of the hunter and hunted and so forth.

While there seems no crossover of figurative images in the so called 'sacred' art of Islam this distinction is often ignored by Western scholars as there is secular and illustrated religious text depicting Muhammad, Ali, Jesus and Hus-sain based on the history of the world rather than Islam or its text. To claim that there is no figurative representation in 'Islamic art'

is mnemonic when taking in the territorial extent of the Muslim world and diversity of cultures, languages and people who produced art. To illustrate the crossover from this idealised sacred and secular art in Islam is this website of images of religious figures in Islam.

What we also see is that secular books do depict human and animal forms - albeit mainly Turkish and Persian works - including religious figures. An example of this is the book *Universal History or History of the World* by Rashid al-Din, published in Iran in 1307 A.D. this book is also known as *Jami Tawarikh*, which literally means *Compendium of Chronicles* (its significance is that it shows the acceptability for images of Muhammad), depicts Muhammad, Adam and Eve etc, while the Koran has none of these images they are found nevertheless in the Muslim world and are still part of the mass generalised categorisation of 'Islamic' art.

Moreover, by using the term such as 'Islamic art' there is an implicit assumption that the Muslim world and societies are united, and this claim cannot be substantiated. This is because of the divisions in language, ethnicity, social politics, society, art, and politics is vast. Since the cold war ended it seems that Muslim countries have taken on in some ways the role of the Eastern Bloc in how they are categorised and viewed. However, unlike the Eastern block there is no ideological hegemony or unity in the Islamic world. An article in the *New York Times* "Muslims won't play together" by Efraim Karsh (who is the head of the Middle East and Mediterranean studies at King's college in London and the author of "Islamic Imperialism: A History" and the forthcoming "Palestine Betrayed.") talked about the divisions in the Muslim world, questioning the term 'Islamic' and its loose usage and further elaborating on how the perceived hegemony crumbles in the light of divisions between the Arab world and Iranians.

Thus, for example, not only do Arabs consider themselves superior to all other Muslims, but inhabitants of Hijaz, the northwestern part of the Arabian Peninsula and Islam's birthplace, regard themselves the only true Arabs, and tend to be highly disparaging of all other Arabic-speaking communities. (Karsh 2010)

to be continued

Human Rights

Majid Kafai

Is human rights just a cruel joke
 I envy your credulity
 I wonder
 How easily you accept empty promises
 For in that swollen water-skin
 There is nothing but
 Empty promises

**what is important
 is profit and profit and again profit**
 wherever there is oil and profit, human rights are there
 they will play with you
 and have plans for doing that
 except hypocrisy
 they do not have anything else in their bag

O! liberal man! this word is also true
 although accepting it, is difficult and painful
 as, for centuries, you remained religion stricken
 West advanced and your ignorance did not help you

so much science

so much knowledge
 so much industry and progress
 whose work is that?
 as it is not your work so do not complain
 why they are blackmailing you
 they blackmail you for the knowledge that they have
 once you become as knowledgeable as they are
 they can not blackmail you anymore

as long as you are weak, brain-washed and sick
 your days and nights are dark and you will be miserable
 until you become alert and awake my friend
 you will remain behind and remain despised

believing in the name and in the game of Imams
 is a kind of sickness
 is a kind of spreading nonsense and idleness
 the end result of it
 is stalemate and going backwards all the time
 why you lament! for the death of your own enemies?

O! "Kafai" tell the truth and tell it frankly
 never say anything which is not true
 in the hope that this asleep nation would wake up
 and would advance in the path of dignity and dialogue.

WASHINGTON REPORT

On Middle East Affairs

28 Years of Telling the Truth



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Once, when filling out an INS application form for legal permanent residency, Albert Einstein came across a question asking him about his race. He answered – “Of Human Race”.

It was in the news last February, that a conference was being held in Rabat, Morocco, presided over by King Hassan II, about “Peaceful Coexistence Among the Followers of the Monolithic Religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam in the hope of establishing an increasing level of friendship and good will among the participants.

It is always delightful for a follower of these religions to hear such news, and I was especially pleased to see that the attention of sages of the world is finally drawn to the plain fact that it is not rational for religions to have antagonistic attitudes toward each other, as some of them do. Rather, they should support and compliment one another in an effort to maintain peace and security for their followers.

Schiller once said, “Accumulating ever-increasing power is not a wise way to gain fame and power. Greatness comes

A Jew, a Christian or a Zoroastrian, whether he or she drinks wine or not, is untouchable. The poor baker was not aware that a 10 year old boy knows nothing about wine and ignorantly kept his distance from this untouchable boy.

Despite my young age, I felt humiliated, and vigorously resented and hated anykind of discrimination, mistreatment or insult. I recall my father always saying: “the remedy for these wrong doings is the advancement of knowledge, and in the future, the well educated man would never tolerate such capricious attitudes.

Once I was talking with a close and highly-educated friend who is a medical doctor. He loves wine and indeed drinks it much more than any Jew. During one discussion, I noticed a hint of anti-Semitism in his remarks. I told him: “I notice that your attitude towards Jews is not much different from that of your father or your ancestors. I understand the difference between the cleansing properties of alcohol and its intoxicating effects. My objection is to the philosophical aspects of this nonsense. Do

Is it not astonishing to see Europeans, Greeks, Sunni Muslims, Shiite Muslims, Catholics, black African, some of whom have pledged to serving the children of Jesus, alliving and acting in the black tunnel of hatred and discrimination?

Why?

Pope Pius XII, who was the leader of Christianity during World War II, could have saved millions of lives, and prevented all the killing and destruction, but he did not.

Why?

The Orthodox Christian Serb priest could have saved the lives of thousands of Muslim men, women and children, in Bosnia, sooner and better than the armies of the UNor the U.S.. He refused to do so.

Why?

Even religious leaders provoked and promoted bloodletting and killings. For centuries during their fame and power, many religious leaders of the three monolithic religions could have saved millions of lives, just as Mahatma Gandhi did in aborting the murder of millions of Muslims

HUMAN RIGHTS AND RELIGION

NORMAN NOORALLAH GABAY

when we utilize power in logical, proper and rational ways.”

People are not born with prejudice and hatred. Religious discrimination being the worst, I can not express the humiliation I constantly suffered as a result of religious persecution and prejudice during my childhood in the city of Kashan (in Iran 1940’s).

Often, I am forced to remember the prejudice-infested environment of Kashan, where I was raised and grew up. Agonizing memories of our neighborhood baker who persistently refused to put a loaf of bread I intended to buy in my hands, as it was customary to do. He considered me, a 10 year old boy, as untouchable (najess), and thought that touching my hands or contacting my flesh would make him unclean. The origin and cause of this dreadful misconception was his religious discourse, usually read or told to him by someone, more often than not, his mullah. He had been taught that the Christians, Zoroastrians and Jewish people are filthy and “najess” because they drink wine containing alcohol, which causes intoxication.

you cleanse ‘dirt’ with ‘dirt’? Why you! you with your higher education?”

“It is an inherited trait,” he said.

I remember my father saying education will eradicate this kind of thinking. But, in this day and age, even my highly educated friend and personal doctor is no different from the old neighborhood baker in Kashan.

Why?

In spite of the fact that he has been exposed to Christian values during his education abroad, he is still under the influence of his past religious doctrine, and there are many more like him throughout the world.

Discrimination exists in various forms. In public and private gatherings, practiced by literate and illiterate people. Our good doctor is one of them.

Why?

Let us not blame only my fellow Iranians. Religious discrimination is practiced by people of all lands. In Europe, Africa, America and other countries, there is prejudice against Muslims, Christians, and Jews.

Why?

by the prejudiced Hindu of India. But they did not. (The Hindu religious leader once said, “all doors of heaven are opened to a Hindu who kills a Moslem whose shadow has fallen on him”).

Why!

The answers as well as the root of the question will remain alive among the Jews,

Muslims and Christians Until the end of time. Since discrimination is based in part in negative writings of the great religions, and since tire stability and continuity of these writings is tied to the stability and continuity of these religions, discriminations will always be with us in some form or another. All prophets have tried to predict the future to satisfy a basic need of human beings to be prosperous and happy. But, history is also a prophet, which predicts the future based on the past. If we remain unaware of the past, we cannot build the future. Look at the lengthy Crusades of the Ottomans, including the massacre of one million and five hundred thousand Armenians.

Considering the fact that almost all

the cruelties inflicted on all people over the past centuries have been in the name of religion, the neutralization of hateful religious writings and edicts is THE ONLY WAY to preserve the human rights of their followers. Such an act will also avoid further cruelty in the name of religion eliminate the use of religious edicts to create chaos and riots, and prevent a few religious leaders from enriching themselves and living a life of luxury by exploiting the religious fervor of their own flock.

It helps when, sometimes, a wise, moral and intelligent clerical leader is in the seat of power, like Pope John Paul II. He declared formally that, based on accepted and reliable evidence, "the hands of Jews are not red with the blood of Jesus Christ" (meaning all the massacres, looting, rioting and burning Jews suffered in the past for this reason, have been for nothing).

Or the case of Mullah Mohammed Mohsen Feiz, (in the 17th Century) who upon witnessing the massacre of one hundred and fifty Jews at the hands of Mohammed Beik Etemad-aldeh in Kashan, hurriedly ran to the palace of Shah Abbas, without any fear of the dreadful consequences to himself: and obtained from the Shah a decree firing Etemad Aldoleh from his position, that put an end to the madness.

Or the case of the wonderful priests, who hid many Muslim and Jewish children in Bosnia and in Germany in the basement of their church. But, there is no assurance that a prejudiced Priest, mullah or rabbi, in order to protect and preserve his personal political or economic interests, not starts brainwashing his flock against other religions. This could start a bloodbath so vast, like in Bosnia that the UN would not dare to step in. Such things are happening as you read this in Yugoslavia,

IRELAND, SUDAN AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Christianity and Islam are not even mentioned in the Torah, because they came into existence respectively 1300 and 1800 years after it was written. However, there are some extremely negative statements about non-Christians while at the same time conforming Judaism. Similarly, there are shameful and dark remarks against both Jews and Christians in printed Persian Farsi treatises, such as Jews and Christians being untouchable (najess), despite containing common grounds with the rules and laws of Judaism.

Such writings as well as edicts put forth by some powerful religious leader

have repeatedly been responsible for pogroms, massacres, as well as individual acts of hatred that have changed the course of history for the worst. It was not Igal Amir who assassinated Itzhak Robin, the peaceful warrior and a champion of peace. His act was a reaction to and the result of the words and speeches of the so-called fanatic Jews and their like-minded fellow Jews.

It was not the Christian Serb who captured several dozens innocent Muslim children and women, kicked them in a house and set the house on fire. This was the reaction to centuries of hateful religious preaching.

Yes! They did what they were told: But it was centuries of indoctrination by their preachers that triggered it, and we shall unfortunately witness similar incidents in the future.

Once I was listening to a speech by a state senator in which he repeatedly referred to human rights. I asked him afterwards if he really believe that the UN and super-power nations really cared about human rights? When he answered that he was quite sure they did. I reminded him of the many instances that religion has been responsible for the abuse of human rights, and mentioned the case of Solomon Rushdi as the latest example. I then asked whether it would be advisable to have an international law banning issuing of formal or informal religious decrees and edicts, like the one Mr. Solomon Rushdi now faces?"

The Senator said, "Write this down and I shall hand it over to the proper authorities, especially the Office of Human Rights in the UN, 'for I, myself, am a member of the Human Rights Commission of the US Senate.'"

I did as he asked, but I never heard from him or about it again. I mention this only to draw attention to the adverse effect of religious edicts on human rights.

All inventions, discoveries and initiatives were first a simple "thought" or "hypothesis".

Then later turned into amazing and admirable results. A new heaven will be born, right in this earth, the day hate, prejudice and resentment is eradicated from all religions. A long time after sending a letter to the Senator, I read an interesting notion in the "Payam" magazine No. 159, dated Feb. 6, 1998 and I mention it here only for the sake of quoting news. In an interview with a reporter in the Davos Conference in Switzerland,

Mrs. Masoomeh Ebtekar, the Vice President of the Islamic Republic of Iran,

was asked by a reporter, "do you see any conflict between Islam and Judaism?" Her answer was, "absolutely not, we are all children of Holy Abraham. I have faith that there will be a merger of all three major religions of the world, i.e. Islam, Judaism and Christianity in the new century, based on the universal belief in one God."

I read this interview several times and I convinced myself that religion can not be forced on anybody, and challenging religious beliefs is totally useless. The only remedy is to establish equilibrium, a balance and conformity with the times. Destruction and nullification was the destiny of the communist regimes, which killed, burnt, and destroyed for seventy years and tried to eradicate religion and religious beliefs. Now their successors are trying to create equilibrium, and for this the world is welcoming them.

In a time not too far in the past human beings, including girls and boys were hunted like animals and sold as slaves. No religion in the world came forward to put an absolute ban on slavery or the selling, buying and exploiting of human beings. Nobody, indeed, imagined at that time there would come a day when there would be an end to these brutal and shameful deeds, when cruelty is defeated by the intellect and rationality.

The world witnessed the abolishment of the import and export of human beings throughout the world without a credit being given to any particular religion. This was accomplished without the forces of the UN or the Human Rights Organizations or contemporary mass media. Only the force of human determination and morality was in play.

Let us look forward to the day, when all the hateful writings are eradicated and abolished, when nobody would be allowed to commit cruelty or discrimination, and when no man is imprisoned by false and whimsical judges who rely on baseless religious edicts.

Comprehending the message I am trying to deliver is more important than agreeing or disagreeing with my thoughts. I respect all readers, who disagree with my ideas, but understand my message for my main goal is "Delivery of the Message."

Berthold Brecht once said, "Remember us when the times comes that a man rushes to help another man and humanity supports humanity."

Let us look forward to a day when man reaches the height that no one but God can envision. ■

INTERVIEW WITH

Siamak Farah Bakhshian**FOUNDER AND CEO OF
INFOSTREET, INC.****Shahrokh Ahkami***Tell us about your childhood, moving to America and your education.*

I was born in Tehran on a snowy day in January. At the time, my father was simultaneously working full-time and obtaining his Master's degree. As with everything in his life, he excelled so well in his studies that he was sent to the States for a second Master's degree. During this time, he obtained his second Master's and a PH.D. As a result, I actually lived in America from the age of 3 to 6.

Our family moved back to Iran just in time for me to attend first grade. Repatriation was never a question in our family. We had moved to America to complete a process and we were to go back to repay the country that afforded us that great education to begin with.

I attended the avant-garde Roya elementary school headed by the great late Dr. Parirokh Behnam whose philosophy in child education was focused on treating every child as unique and exceptional, not as entities going through the assembly line. Her approach fostered independent thinking; something that not only worked very well with my personality, but also was absolutely necessary for me. I am forever thankful to her for what she has done for me, for my schoolmates, and for the children of Iran.

After Roya, I attended Alborz high school headed by the outstanding Dr. Mohammad Ali Mojtahedi. Dr. Mojtahedi needs no introduction to any Iranian or to many scholars around the world. He singlehandedly created an unparalleled institution of excellence. What Alborz accomplished was to instill confidence, competitiveness, camaraderie, leadership, pursuit of exceptionalism, and the yearning to change the world in every one of its students. Some of these traits are orthogonal to one another; yet, Dr. Mojtahedi and the team of caring educators at Alborz managed to take students from all walks of life and produce graduates that would personify all these characteristics at the same time.

Alborz was so exceptional that foreign student advisors from many U.S. universities would visit it. One such advisor was Mr. Art Tichenor, the International Student Office director for Purdue University. He had seen the advanced education level at Alborz first-hand, and since Purdue is an engineering school he would admit Alborz students even prior to graduating from high school.

As such, I left Iran in the middle of my Junior year (sevvom nazary) and headed for West Lafayette, IN. Since Iran required everyone to have a high school degree or would consider their



college degree void, I attended Purdue and West Lafayette high school simultaneously and graduated from high school at the end of my freshman year in college. I graduated from Purdue with a degree in Industrial Engineering. I could not be more honored to have attended all these first-class institutions.

Where did you start your professional career?

Graduating as an engineer in the early 80s had many challenges. There were definitely fewer jobs for engineers than there were number of engineers around. Thanks to a dare from one of my dearest friends while we were in college, I was fortunate enough to have minored in Computer Science.

As a result, I was able to land a job in the software field, which was growing in leaps and bounds. To this day, I have yet to make a dime from my engineering degree, although I would not trade the Purdue experience for the world.

I started at a company called Vertigo. Our company built computer animation software, which was at its very infancy. It was at this time that I made a decision that I would like to run a software company. I systematically chose jobs that would give me the training for my future goal, and at the same time gave my employers an employee that was eager and passionate to give it all. A true win-win situation.

At Vertigo, I had an opportunity to work as a Unix administrator, software developer, team leader, and head of customer support. When a much larger company was buying Vertigo, I moved to Microstat, a company that offered stock quotations via a modem dial up (boy, am I dating myself or what). The Web did not exist then and what we developed at Microstat was considered quite advanced. At Microstat, I started as a release coordinator and quickly rose to COO of this public company and sat on its board of directors. By this time, I pretty much knew how to run most of the facets of a software development firm – except for sales and marketing. I was fortunate enough to join NeXT (a company started by Steve Jobs after he left Apple) in a technical sales position; from technical sales I moved to developer partnerships, on to the dealer channel, and finally to full software sales.

In 1994, having been in the industry for 10+ years and with my goal of being familiar with the requirements of a software company realized, I started InfoStreet. I have been here ever since and could not be happier.

Tell us about your relationship with Steve Jobs.

For starters, I am forever indebted to him. He was an amazing person. In addition to the experience of working for Steve, NeXT had an exponential factor for all employees. Steve being who he was attracted the top talent of the Industry. As a result, we not only learned from him, but also from all the exceptional people that worked at NeXT. Today, most of my colleagues are either running companies or are clearly in the upper echelons of the industry. NeXT was like a club for future hardware, software, and Internet leaders, and it's all thanks to Steve.

I admired his desire to produce perfection and loved the fact that although many criticized him for it, he would still have a hand in actual product development. It truly reinforced the lesson I had learned from my amazing mom and dad that if something has your name on it, it better be exceptional.

Contrary to public belief, Steve truly enjoyed those who spoke their mind and did not like “yes men”. As a result, on the personal level we got along great, as I don't know any other way.

I am proud to call him a friend and not just a boss. His passing was very hard for me. I did not expect my own reaction since I was well aware of the severity of his illness, yet I was in no way prepared for it. To this day, I don't like seeing his pictures from the time of his illness, since I would like to remember that keen eye for perfection, that smile that only conquerors can boast, and his zest for winning. Steve was a vegan and would not eat any product that came from animals. To me, Persian food is synonymous with meat. Yet, my wonderful wife and I had the honor of having Steve and Laurene (then Steve's finance) at our house for dinner. Our Persian food which consisted of *Addass Polo* with dates and raisins, *Aash Reshteh* (without *Kashk*), and my mom's famous recipe of *khoresh artichoke nanaa jafari* was so enjoyed that they took some home with them.

Tell us about InfoStreet.

InfoStreet is a Cloud App Provider. We have a number of patent-pending products that bring all the benefits of the Cloud to small businesses. The Cloud is the great democratizer. It provides everyone with solutions that at one time were only available to large businesses. In the old days it may have taken two million dollars to build, let's say, a Sales Force Automation system and was therefore out of reach of most. Yet, today many small businesses can use such software for as little as \$5/month. This is truly a paradigm shift in the use of software and has already changed the way business is done in all industries – and will continue to do so.

InfoStreet delivers a Cloud-based Desktop that is similar to the desktop or laptop you use on a daily basis, yet it lives in the Cloud. Anywhere in the world you have access to the Internet, you can access your apps, your files and your entire environment. InfoStreet also offers an app market, where you can purchase Cloud apps that suit you best. This market includes apps from InfoStreet as well as other Cloud companies, giving our clients a wide breadth of choice.

How do you find the success of Iranian-Americans in Silicon Valley?

Simply amazing. I could not be more proud. During the hostage crisis many Iranians had a great shame factor and would not readily identify themselves as Iranian. That shame factor has

now been replaced with a great sense of pride that almost every company in Silicon Valley or Telecom has a CxO (CEO, COO, CTO, CIO, CMO, CSO) that is of Persian origin. The innovations are numerous and Iranians as a group have been quite sought after in our Industry.

How do you feel about your Persian Heritage?

Even though I have only lived in Iran for less than one-third of my life, most of those years were formative years. I believe I am who I am, for good or for bad, based on the investment that both Iran and the US have put in me. While I am very happy that I do my small bit in creating jobs and advancing technology in the United States, I have a great guilt that I have not been able to ever work in Iran and help further its people. My goal is that if I can ever retire, I go to Iran and teach a course on entrepreneurship.

I have a love for Iran that is inexplicable to many of my friends. I look at Iran as my birth mother and the U.S. as my adoptive mother. While I love my adoptive mom, I always long for my birth mom as well. My awesome wife and I have done everything in our power to ensure our children know our culture. Thinking about it, in many ways, this is both for their benefit and for ours.

As a parent, if you find something great, you want to share it with your children. We find the Persian culture amazing. This is why my wife and I try to speak Persian with our sons and make sure we celebrate Persian events. Even though born in America, our kids know their heritage and are proud to call themselves Persian.

In addition, we already have a generation gap with our children. The last thing we need is to have a cultural gap with them as well. So, teaching children our culture will ensure that we can all relate to one another.

What message do you have for the other generations, those before and after you?

When it comes to the older generation, many have not been back to Iran since the revolution, and justifiably so almost all of them are saddened by that. I would like to reach out to them and assure them that “They can take the person out of Iran, but can't take Iran out of the person.” Be an Iranian wherever you are. Spread the culture! Help the next generation and non-Iranians who aren't familiar with Iran to get to know this great country.

To the younger generation, I would like to let them know that when people go to college, they join fraternities. When they work, they join professional societies. All of this is to help them further their life. You have a pre-made society with thousands of years of history. Learn it and take advantage of it. There isn't a day of my life that I don't use a Persian proverb to help me solve business problems, and this may just be why so many Persians excel in business. It's there for your taking, you benefit from it, and it could be quite fun, so don't let this opportunity pass you by.





ARMAN SHARIF

FIRST PLACE IN THE 2012 IRANIAN ALLIANCES ACROSS BORDERS ESSAY

Arman Sharif, a 16 year-old high school student from New Jersey, won 1st place in the 2012 Iranian Alliances Across Borders (IAAB) essay contest with his essay, "The Inevitable Interrogation". He was awarded with a full \$925 tuition stipend to IAAB's popular annual high school leadership program, Camp Ayandeh.

When asked where you are from, what do you say?

Is your response always the same?

THE INEVITABLE INTERROGATION

When it was my turn to enter this world, it happened to be in Morristown, New Jersey. However, in an ever increasingly apprehensive society, a kid with "olive-colored skin" and "distinctively Mediterranean features" has no luck in trying to pass as just your average "Joisey boy." He has to be subject to the inevitable interrogation: where are you originally from?

This opens the door for an awkward question and answer session, something for which many Iranian-Americans like myself have developed colorful remedies.

I find that employing a mix of these remedies works well, depending on the situation, as I must take into account the background of the person with whom I am speaking. I have taken on either the "Persian pride" or educational approaches when asked where I am from; motives for using one approach over another include avoiding prejudice as well as eliminating ignorance.

Although considered by some as toxic to the image of the Iranian diaspora, touting "Persian pride" in the face of possible prejudice is usually the easiest manner of saying where one is from. It works its magic through difference of connotation.

It is no secret that Iranians are discriminated against and labeled as nuke-hungry terrorists. However, many Iranians have been cowardly combatting this connotation since the 1979 hostage crisis by only partially owning up to their identity in calling themselves Persians. With sole mention of this ethnicity, and deliberate omission of nationality, we are able to instantly become associated with a bygone, romanticized era of 1950's Iran, affluence,

benign cats and rugs, Mercedes-Benzes and, more recently, reality shows.

I have been trying to distance myself from this device and say "Iranian" instead. Although "Persian" is by no means a negative term on its own, to also say that one celebrates "Persian New Year" or attends "Persian summer camp," essentially appending "Persian" to activities shared by all members of the Iranian community, forsakes the near 29 million Azeris, Lurs, Kurds, Baluchis, Mazandarani, and other ethnic groups living in Iran as well as their respective diasporas. In other cases, one who exaggerates gaudy stereotypes of Iranians and glamorizes the Persian label can plague Iranians with a supplemental stereotype of material obsession and form ethnic hierarchy.

Shirin Vossoughi, PhD, affirms, "unexamined reactions to discrimination can erase the ethnic and religious diversity among Iranians and contribute to divisions with other communities of color" (Jadaliyya, 2011). Although a fun and easy fix to what can be a sensitive topic, the fallacies of "Persian pride" reflect gross chauvinism by perpetuating and playing on existing stereotypes. It neither describes where I am from nor quells people's curiosity as to where exactly a Persian comes from.

I often want to convert prejudices that arise into an interest in the Iranian culture through presentation of the cold hard facts. At a certain point in the conversation, the hopeless attempt at passing my family off as New Jersey-native has certainly failed. Then comes the hardest part: interpreting the inevitable expression of a friend upon saying "my parents are from Iran."

Although many are only too quick to realize that Iraq and Afghanistan border Iran, I offer further perspective. I tell of how Iranians are not Arabs, despite the fact that our people share the same beautiful region of the world.

My parents are from two of the largest cities in Iran, Mashhad and Isfahan, which have just as much hustle and bustle as New York City.

I can say phrases and write friends' names in Persian, followed with an explanation of how the language has the same Indo-European roots as English. I am "originally from" a country of intellectual and hospitable people where diversity is embraced. Although my Muslim family is from the Islamic Republic of Iran, religions such as Judaism and Christianity have been prevalent in the country since the reign of King Cyrus centuries ago.

In just minutes, one can humanize an entire nation through traversing basic pillars of society and drawing connections. Difficulty comes with the struggle of explaining where I am from against the media-propagated slander of Iran and the obvious strained diplomatic relations that exist between my two homes. I shrug my shoulders and tell my friends that I do not quite know why the Iranian and American governments hate each other, nor do I care to know, but I assure that is all it is: a conflict between government leaders.

Conglomerate peoples have always put forth convoluted answers to this seemingly simple question. In answering this question, however, it is no easy feat to conceal a part of one's identity that is so demonized in society without condoning some sort of stereotype in the process, such as with "Persian pride."

To avoid directly bringing up one's origin simply garners it further regard as taboo subject area for conversation. The irony becomes that in trying to avoid prejudice, the passiveness is indeed contributing to its perpetuation.

One should be forthright in saying where he or she is from, and then decide in the case of prejudiced or ignorant reactions whether it is worth it to elaborate on his or her culture.

When asked where I am from, I know I have done at least my "diasporal duty" as an Iranian-American when I invest the extra minute to humanize my culture through this educational elaboration, as opposed to sputtering a term such as "Persian" to allay what is essentially short-term prejudice.

The cloning of the ewe in Scotland brought the entire world into surprise and controversy.

An editorial by Charles Krauthammer¹, after an extensive description of human cloning, included a philosophical statement which had an astonishing resemblance to a verse from Sa'adi, a revered Persian poet, a philosopher and scholar in the Eleventh Century, born in 1184 A.D. and died in 1291 A.D.².

Charles Krauthammer wrote, "Cloning is a second chance at life. There is the opportunity to pour all the accumulated learning of your life back into a new one, to raise your exact biological double, to guide your very flesh through a second existence³."

Sa'adi, in one of his many Eleventh Century proverbs, says:

*"A wise enlightened man embellished with knowledge
and prudence retorted
we should live twice in this era
with one life to learn experience
with the other apply that experience."*

This analogy of philosophical attitude toward a discovery with enormous magnitude encouraged me to delve further into the Persian scholarly prophecies and to find more of the same.

In this scientific breakthrough, a major fundamental biological question was answered: embryonic, fetal, adult cultured cells can produce offspring and secondly, differential phenotype can occur. I was astonished to discover the more I read, the more I realized nothing in this universe is new – that someone, even in the darkest days of history, had an understanding of ideas that technology has made a reality today.

It is interesting to note that although civilization has a ten thousand year history, and humans have existed for two hundred thousand years, real progress has only been uncovered in the last one hundred years of human existence.

Donald N. Wilber⁴, in a book *Iran*, refers to this point. He states that early man, Homoerectus, lived almost half a million years in absolute darkness. To consider an imaginary scale of fifty inches and consider each inch ten thousand years, mankind began cultivation in three quarters of the last inch. It took one half of an inch to start to write and civilization as we know it was brought about only in the last three quarter of an inch of this scale.

Homosapian Habilis followed the Homosapian Erectus. This type of human species has been found in the mountains Zagros between Iraq and Iran, Khorasan and Kermanshahan (carbon 14 dating). In the Paleolithic period of human existence, samples have been found to exist in the region of the Caspian Sea forty-four thousand years ago and eight thousand five hundred years ago in Kermanshahan. After the Paleolithic period, comes the Esolethic and Neolithic period of human existence.

The cradles of civilization are considered to be Egypt, Greece, India, Iraq, and Iran or old Persia. Earlier civilizations than these are considered to be during the Confucius in Southeast Asia era (551-479 B.C.) and the Socrates era (470-399 B.C.).

SOCRATES

Socrates was born in Attiq and died in Athens. His mother, Phuinarete, was a midwife. Socrates was a great thinker, and said: "My mother delivers children and I deliver their thoughts." Unfortunately, neither books nor writings have been contributed directly from him. Our knowledge of him comes from the writings of others.

PLATO

Plato was born in 427 B.C. and died in 347 B.C. *Fedone Banquet* and *Republic* are considered to be masterpieces. His philosophy carried through until the French Renaissance in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries.

ARISTOTLE

Aristotle followed Plato (384 B.C. – 322 B.C.). Fifty-two books are attributed to him.

RAZI

After the birth of Mohammad and the introduction of Islam around 400 A.D., Zakaria Razi was born (860 A.D.). Razi wrote *The Book on Smallpox and Measles* in which, for the first time,

he referred to the measles and smallpox and was able to differentiate the two with a differential diagnosis that is still used today. He practiced sterilization techniques and used dressings on wounds. He is also known to have discovered alcohol.

Although he is referred to as an Arab scholar, he is Iranian.

He appeared during the time Iran was invaded by Arabs. In Western literature, Avicena and Razi are referred to as Arab scholars.

In a church in Princeton University, a color glass etched picture of Razi is displayed,

titled "Arab Scholar," a misnomer that should read "Persian Scholar." Razi died in 923 A.D.

FERDOWSI

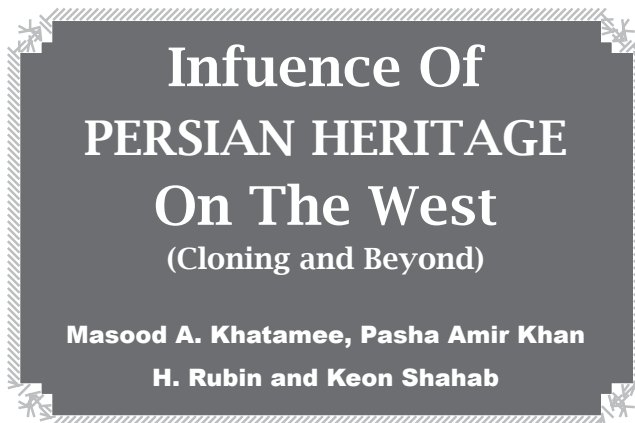
After Razi's era comes the most revered Persian poet's era, Hakim Abolgasem Ferdowsi (940-1021 A.D.), similar to Homer.^{5,6} Ferdowsi was the supreme architect of the Persian cultural revival in the Tenth Century. His monumental magnum opus, the *Shahnameh* or *The Book of Kings*, remains one of the greatest works of the Persian literature and is a strong pillar of the Persian identity.

Shahnameh is a compendium of Iranian myths and epic legends from the beginning of time to the Kingship of Kayumrs, through the fall of the Sassanian dynasty in the Seventh Century.

Ferdowsi was born into a family of local landowners in the village of Paz near Tus in the Province of Khorasan. He embarked on the composition of *Shahnameh* in his middle years (980 A.D.). Ferdowsi died in poverty and was buried in his own land.

The magnificence of his work, however, has immortalized Ferdowsi's name in the Persian history.

Ferdowsi's greatest contribution to today's medicine is the



flawless explanation of Cesarean Section. The oldest document of cesarean birth and anesthesia is written in Ferdowsi's book. This procedure is one of the most common surgical procedures; today in America, twenty percent of all deliveries are by Cesarean Section.

According to a publication by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) by Jane Eliot Sewel, this procedure is contributed to the birth of Julius Caesar⁷ (*The Lives of the Twelve Caesars* by Gaius Suetonius Tranquillius).

It is stated in *Shahnameh* that Roudabeh was married to Zal and shortly after, Roudabeh got pregnant. The baby she conceived was Rostam, the powerful figure who fought ills and evils. Roudabeh has a very troubled pregnancy and developed jaundice. Further into her pregnancy, her condition deteriorated and, near the birth of Rostam, she became comatose. Her mother, Sindokht, was at her bedside at all times. Zal, Roudabeh's husband and Rostam's father thought of a solution. In his desperation, he seized a piece of feather of Simorgh, a legendary griffin, and glasses of wine to anaesthetize Roudabeh.

He brought a physician with a dagger and Roudabeh's abdomen was opened and Rostam was delivered. The abdomen was sutured and vegetable antiseptic was applied to the wound. Ferdowsi wrote:

*"He (high priest) slit the flank of the Goddess of beauty (Roudabeh) and the head of the boy came into view. The boy (Rostam) was brought out of the womb magnificently without harm
No one had seen this wonder up to then
The Icon-like child entered this world
and flank of that Goddess was filled with blood.
High priest said the agony and ordeal is over,
and the boy was named Rostam (then Hercules)"*⁷.

It should, therefore, be suggested that Cesarean Section is a misnomer and should be referred to a Rostam Section.⁸

AVICENNA (ABU ALI-SINA)

Abu-Ali'sina' – (Avicenna) was an Iranian astronomer and a physician, who again is referred to as an Arabian scholar in Western literature. Avicenna was born in 980 A.D. in Afshineh near Bokhara, now in Afghanistan, then a part of old Persian Empire, and died in 1037 A.D. in Hamedan where his mausoleum is visited by millions in Iran. He wrote the first book on meteorology⁹.

His most important contribution to medicine was without question his book, *The Canon of Medicine*, a timeless masterpiece. The translated versions of *The Canon of Medicine* into major languages were taught in medical schools all over the world until the mid Eighteenth Century. Avicenna was also a great poet and the following is a notion he particularly referred to:

*"Thought my heart in the wilderness of the world
recognized so many problems
Even my heart did not have one iota of matter's knowledge
But delved carefully in the question of particle
But thousand sun discovery is parked and
Scintillated in my heart and not comprehend the secret of
the atom."*

Avicenna, being disappointed for not being able to split the atom, went on to write another book, *Shafa*, which is the ency-

clopedia of knowledge and philosophy.

His other masterpiece was a book on meteorology. For many years, this book was erroneously attributed to Aristotle.

Avicenna treated his patients directly. He used the word "kline" (clinic); he recognized meningitis, acute fever, allergies, pleurisy, and epilepsy. He was the father of the renaissance of medical science. It is unfortunate that Avicenna and Razi are both recognized in the West as Arab scholars.

HATEF ESFAHANI

Hatef Esfahani, born in the Iranian province of Isfahan, was an 18th century poet and a talented man of many trades. In addition to his poetry, Esfahani studied mathematics, medicine, and was fluent in Turkish and Arabic. Another reference to the atom is contributed by Hatef Esfahani in one of his poems:

*"Open thy eye in order to see the essence of life
Whatever is unseen, will be visible and clear
If you splinter the core of every particle,
Or analyze the heart of matter,
You will see a luminous sun in the center."*

Hatef Esfahani died in his hometown of Isfahan in 1783.

OMAR KHAYYAM

Omar Khayyam was a Persian poet and astronomer. He was born in the Nishapur province of Khorasan in 1048 and died in 1131 A.D. The name Khayyam translates as "tent-maker," possibly his vocation before turning to scientific research. Sultan Malik Shah offered the poet a position at court, but instead he chose to retire and devote himself to the pursuit of knowledge. Accordingly, he received a pension and pursued researches, most notably in mathematics and astronomy, subsequently being named Royal Court Astronomer.

He was appointed by Malik Shah to reform the Muslim calendar, a task comparable to Pope Gregory XIII's revision of the Julian calendar, though some authorities judge Khayyam's revision to be the better work. He published a series of astronomical tables, known as *Ziji Malikshahi*; and some of his early mathematical writings, such as his study of *The Difficulties of Euclid's Definitions*, still survive.

His work on algebra was the most notable contribution of his age to the study of mathematics; Khayyam was the first to make an attempt to scientifically classify equations of the first degree and to consider cubes from the standpoint of the general equation¹⁰.

This philosophy he set forth in *Rubaiyat* (quatrains), of which, according to convention, the first, second, and last lines rhymed (the rhyme being in many cases even quintuple), while the third line was for the most part blank, but rarely followed the rhyme of the other lines. He seems to have been of changeable mood, sometimes humble before Allah, again defiant; hopeful and fatalistic; and rebellious.

Omar Khayyam questions the reason for existence, and the birth and death of mankind and asks the creator for the reason:

*"Exhilarated for sometimes that we seek a teacher or master
Gleeful and merry for sometimes that
we are a teacher or master
See what happened at the end of brilliant discourse
To dust we belong and to dust we return."*

Recently scientists discovered, via Hubbell telescope, the creation of stars. We have also witnessed the formation of embryos in a laboratory, as well as cloning of a human being. We have witnessed this explosion of technology in the past decade or two. Khayyam’s analogy is a contrast to what we have noted:

*“The mystery of eternity is neither known to you or me
You or I cannot resolve the perplexity
Behind the curtain of life is dispute about either you or me.
When the curtain is raised survive neither you nor me.”*

By all means, Khayyam is the most revered and famous Iranian poet in the world and his book has enjoyed being published in most major languages. The most notable is the work of Edward Fitzgerald who made a select portion of Omar’s translation.

SA’ADI

Sa’adi (real name Musleh-ud-din) was the greatest Persian critic, poet, and philosopher. He was born in Shiraz about 1184 A.D. and died there in 1291 A.D. After completing his studies and spending many years travelling he settled in Shiraz where he

which reflects genes”, he states:

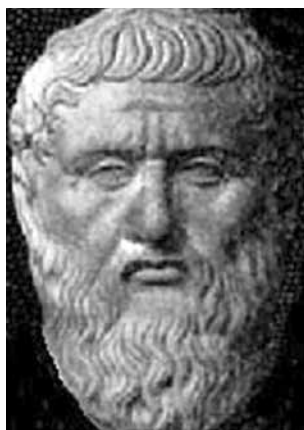
*“Lowbred boorish individuals are refractory
and unmanageable
Wild and violent being hard to discipline and coach
As it is laborious to keep a walnut on a dome.”*

Regarding the relationship between education and knowledge of people and family size and fertility, he says:

*“The wealthy man, that God bestowed upon him knowledge,
opulence,
Supplanted two hundred times
For offspring, but he was denied
That mendicant that was needy of a morsel
Of crumb, the heavenly father, grants him
Twins or triplets with a glance.”*

In a different context of flight of human being in the Seventh Century he predicts the flight of mankind soaring, he states:

“Low and behold how bird flying high in sky



enjoyed the favor of several Persian rulers. The Persians esteemed him exceedingly on account of his golden maxims, which they consider a treasure of true wisdom, and also on account of his pure, simple and elegant style.

His works comprise: 1. a collection (*Divan*) of lyric poems in the Arabic and Persian languages; 2. *Gulestan* (*Rose Garden*) (1258), a didactic work composed both of prose and verse, in eight books; 3. a work in verse called *Bustan* (*Fruit Garden*) (1257), containing a collection of histories, fables and moral instructions. The complete works of Sa’adi were published in Persian at Calcutta (1791-95).

His books, *Gulestan* and *Boostan*, have been translated into major languages. At the early 16th Century, they were translated into Chinese. He is considered as the Western Confucius.

His books cover all aspects of human life and are full of advice and guidance. Reading his books today brings many poems and references to modern life and technology. His mausoleum is in Shiraz, a city in south of Iran, which is visited by millions of tourists every year¹¹. He has commentary on issues that pertain to advanced technology of today’s life. He refers to the genetic implication of matters. In a lyric under “bad or defective principle

*Liberate thee self from carnal passion and lust
Then see the soar and height of humanity and virtues.”*

His wisdom and insight regarding the essence of humanity and the fact that the human being is exalted Supreme, he even considers the man even above the angelica straita. As mentioned in Cloning and Advanced Reproduction Technology, we are asked by theologians and ethicists, “Then what? How far can we or should we go?” Sa’adi makes a very fascinating and beautiful analogy. He states,

*“Man soar to a new height that he sees everything
but God uphold the magnitude of human beings.”*

RUMI

“Jelaluddin Balkhi,” known in the United States as Rumi, was born September 30, 1207, in Balkh, Afghanistan, then part of the Great Persian Empire. He died December 17, 1273¹² in Konya, Turkey, where he is now buried. During the invasion of the Mongolian army of Persia, he fled to Konya, hence the name Rumi (Roman Anatolia).

In the past decade in the United States, there has been a great surge in Rumi's publications. His popularity encouraged many countries to take pride in Rumi's ethnicity. The most flagrant false attribution has been the statement by Mr. Chopra that Rumi is a Hindu – not only a Hindu, but a hippie as well⁸. Although Rumi was born in Balkh, Afghanistan, and buried in Konia, Turkey, neither country has ever claimed him.

Rumi gained popularity among the notable and elite of Hollywood – the most popular being “The Love of Rumi” by Madonna.

Rumi was a devout Muslim who originated the sect of Islamic Sufism. He had union with God in a most startling manner, freeing his soul by praying to God with whirling dervishes, which up to this date is still practiced by a large group of Sufis around the world. Rumi's meeting with the Shams of Tabriz ended in everlasting spiritual love and affection.

“Mathnawi,” his masterpiece, shifts fantastically from theory to folklore to humor to ecstatic poetry.¹³

*“You insane, me inebrious, who will guide us home
I mentioned to you hundred of times
to drink a few goblets less.
There is a community of the spirit.
Join it, and feel the delight
of walking in the noisy street, and being the noise.
“Drink all your passion, and be a disgrace.
“Close both eyes to see with the other eye.”
“An eye is meant to see things.
The soul is here for its own joy.
A head has one use: for loving a true love.
Legs: to run after.”*

HAFIZ

Hafiz was Persia's greatest lyric poet and one of the renowned lyrists of the world.

He was born in Shiraz about 1325 and died about 1388. For nearly six centuries, the Odes of Hafiz have received universal acknowledgement as masterpieces in the lyric vein.

Hafiz was a native of southern Persia. While the Persian name Hafiz is really only a title meaning “gifted with a good memory,” as bestowed upon him as a pupil who knew the whole Koran by heart, it has clung to him by fame instead of his real name which was in full Shams ud-din Mohammed, or “Mohammed, the Sun of Religion.”

Hafiz lived to a fairly ripe old age, and allusion is made in his lyric verses to sons born from his marriage.

In the environs of Hafiz's beloved city of Shiraz lie his remains in an enclosed tomb that is still a place of pilgrimage, including visits as tributes from lovers of poetry in the West.

Hafiz, in a similar fashion as Khayyam, questions the significance and the meaning of existence.

*“O heavenly bartender serve me goblet of wine
That divine mysterious holy grave*

Has designed and created wonders

That is not clear to us in the curtain of mystical creation.”

His strong stand against deceit and the institutions of hypocrisy and religion is evident in this poem:

*“O, Hafiz, be tippler, reveler and merriment
but weave not the web of deception, hypocrisy as those
who make reciting Holy Book Quranto
to cover their fabrication.”*

The burden of his lyric verses in love, wine, the nightingale, and the rose:

*“Bring me secret goblet of wine,
that my heart is weeping blood,
from the turquoise heaven
in my lush state I will unravel the
perplexity in turquoise colored goblet.”*

He also states:

*“As I pass away from this desolate and lonely world
cleanse me, from my sin by limped vine.”*

I wonder if Razi would have not invented alcohol, where would Hafiz be without his magnificent and divine poetry ?

The review of the above, in the mind of a physician and an educator who ascends in thoughts and philosophy can reflect modern advancements of technology as something that had been hinted by models and poems and philosophy down through history.

As Sa'adi proclaimed in the Seventh Century:

*“Man soar to a new height
that he sees everything but God
uphold the magnitude of human beings
Lo and behold, the lofty and stately position of humanity.”*

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And the OBIE Goes to...

Susan Pourfar

Susan Pourfar received the OBIE award for her performance as lead actress in *Tribe*. This prestigious award is the Off Broadway version of the Tony Award.

Other NY credits include but are not limited to: Lisa Kron's *In the Wake* (Public Theater).

When *The Rain Stops Falling* (Lincoln Center Theatre, David Cromer, dir), *The Singing Forest* (Public Theater, Mark Wing-Davey, dir), *The Poor Itch* (Public Theater, Lisa Peterson, dir), *The Small* (The Ohio, Les Waters, dir), *Sasha* in *Chekhov's Ivanov* (Lake Lucille, Brian Mertes, dir), *Swimming In The Shallows*, and *The Dear Boy* (Second Stage, Trip Cullman/Michael Garces, dir), *Iron* (Manhattan Theatre Club, Anna Shapiro, dir), *The Last Sunday In June* (Rattlestick Theatre and Century Center for the Performing Arts, Trip Cullman, dir) and multiple productions with the Atlantic Theatre Company.

Susan has developed new work at the prestigious Sundance Lab, CTG in LA, and most recently with Bill Cain and Sarah Treem at the Ojai Playwrights Conference, in Ojai, CA. TV/Film: "Nurse Jackie," "Numbers," "The Sopranos," "Third Watch," "Law & Order." Webisodes: "The Suffersons."



Iranian-American Scientist

Celebrates 105th Birthday!

Payvand News, 06/25/2012

Professor Abolghassem Ghaffari, who worked with Albert Einstein and J. Robert Oppenheimer as well as NASA's Apollo 11 mission, celebrated his 105th birthday with his dear friends, the Honorable Jimmy Delshad, the former Mayor of Beverly Hills and the artist Kamran Khavarani.



Dr. Abolghassem Ghaffari helped NASA to put a man on the moon for the Apollo 11 mission. Born in Teheran, he was educated at Darolfonoun School (Teheran). In 1929, he went to France and studied Mathematics and Physics at Nancy University. After obtaining post-graduate diplomas in Physics, Astronomy, and Higher Analysis, he obtained in 1936 his doctorate from the Sorbonne (Doctor of Sciences with "Mention tres honorable") for basic research on Mathematical Study of Brownian Motion.

In 1956, moved permanently to the US to take up a position as a senior mathematician at the U.S National Bureau of Standards.

In 1964, three years into the manned space program, he joined, as aerospace scientist, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Goddard Space Flight Center.

Ghaffari is a Fellow of the New York Academy of Sciences, the Washington Academy of Sciences, and the American Association for the Advancement of Sciences and a member of the London Mathematical Society, the American Mathematical Society, The Mathematical Association of America, and the American Astronomical Society. He has published numerous books and received many awards including the US Special Apollo Achievements award in 1969.

Nima Arkani-Hamed: \$3-Million Fundamental Physics Prize

Nima Arkani-Hamed, a scientist at Princeton University, is among 9 scientists receiving the biggest prize (\$3,000,000 each) in theoretical physics. Nima is the son of Jafar Arkani-Hamed, former professor and chairman of Physics Department at Tehran's Sharif University of Technology.

The Milner Foundation announced the launch of the Fundamental Physics Prize

Foundation, a not-for-profit corporation ("Foundation") dedicated to advancing our knowledge of the Universe at the deepest level by awarding annual prizes for scientific breakthroughs, as well as communicating the excitement of fundamental physics to the public.





An Interview with

John W. Limbert

**Former hostage,
scholar and diplomat
who is hoping for peace
between Iran and
the United States**

PART ONE

BRIAN APPLETON

John W. Limbert attained the rank of Minister-Counselor in the United States Foreign Service after a 33-year career there. He was appointed Assistant Deputy Secretary of State for Iran in the State Department's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs by the Obama administration. Among his last postings prior to retirement were Dean of the Foreign Service Institute's School of Language Studies, Chief of Mission in Khartoum, Sudan, president of the American Foreign Service Association, Ambassador to Mauritania and Director of Orientation at the State Department's Foreign Service Institute in Washington DC. While serving as Ambassador to Iraq in 2003, he was one of the first civilian officials to enter Baghdad with the Organization for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance. His earlier postings include Algeria, Djibouti, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. He is fluent in Arabic, Persian and French.

He was awarded the Department of State's highest award-the Distinguished Service Award and the Award for Valor after being held hostage for fourteen months in Iran.

Of his hostage experience he stated that it taught him a new appreciation for his profession of diplomacy namely how do you solve problems between nations and between people?

He has written numerous articles and authored four books all on the subject of Iran. He obtained a BA, an MA and a PhD in History and Middle Eastern Studies from Harvard and was a Senior Fellow at Harvard University's Center for international Affairs.

In 2006 he was appointed Distinguished Professor of International Affairs at the US Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md.

He has a long standing love for Iran and Persian culture stemming from his first visit there in 1962 as a student while his parents were on assignment with USAID, his years there in the Peace Corps, his marriage to an Iranian and his time there in the Foreign Service. He extremely interested in finding peace between our nations. It has been my great privilege to know John Limbert.

Thank you, John for taking the time to do this interview for Persian Heritage magazine. I think the last time I saw you was either at the US Naval Academy when we screened Bam 6.6 with the film's director Jahangir Golestan-Parast or at the World Affairs Council in San Francisco in 2009 when you were launching your latest book: Negotiating With Iran: Wrestling the Ghosts of History.

I am honored to do this. It is great to speak with you again. By the way, I really like your new book about Western Azerbaijan.

Thanks so much for endorsing it. We have a lot of questions for you that have not been covered by the press, so let's begin. Were you one of those whiz kids who always knew that you wanted to be a diplomat when you grew up?

Not at all! I never planned to be a diplomat, I wanted to be a teacher.

You were born in Washington DC, did you grow up there and where did you go to

school K-12?

I went to all public schools in Washington DC.

How did you first become interested in Iran?

My parents were there working for USAID and I went over in 1962 and visited with them and fell in love with Iran.

What was USAID doing in Iran at that time? Was it related to President Truman's Point Four program?

That's exactly what it was...a continuation of that program...there were vaccination programs and vaccination of cattle as well.

You went to Harvard, as did my late father, Class of '36. Who was your favorite professor there?

My academic advisor was Richard Frye.

It doesn't get any better than that!

I also worked a lot with Richard Bulliet (at Columbia University now) who was an Associate professor at Harvard at the time working on his thesis on the urban history of Nishapur.

Did you learn Arabic and Persian at Harvard?

I did a year of Arabic as an undergrad and Persian as grad student. I studied Arabic further at the Foreign Service Institute.

What did you write your PhD thesis on?

It was on Shiraz in the Age of Hafez. I researched it while I was teaching in Shiraz between 1968 and 1972 and in fact my thesis was the basis for my book: Shiraz in the Age of Hafez: The Glory of a Medieval Persian City published in 2004.

Let's talk about teaching. What did you teach and at what level while in the Peace Corps?

I taught English at high school level.

Which students did you like the best; the high school pupils, Shiraz University students or the US Naval cadets?

Well I have to say that I wasn't really cut out for teaching high school students but I really enjoyed teaching the college students in Shiraz. They were very studious and sincere. About the midshipmen, they are not necessarily going for PhDs but they have made a certain commitment which includes personal sacrifices and they are very dedicated. They are very openminded and eager to learn and I have enjoyed teaching them.

You are married to a wonderful woman Parvaneh; where did you meet? Where in Iran is she from?

Parvane was teaching at the same high school as I was during my time in the Peace Corps which was in Sanadaj. My wife is from Sanandaj and her father was a medical doctor there.

You were in Sanandaj? No wonder you wrote that study on: The Origins and Appearance of the Kurds in Pre-Islamic Iran for Iranian Studies in 1968. Did you go to any Khanegahs while you were in Sanandaj and see the derives in Sama? What did you think about all that? I myself tend to lean in that direction.

I did see them indeed.

We know that you were one of the US Embassy hostages during the revolution of 1979 and I will address that later. At the moment tell us the story that is behind the American Foreign Service Association's Rivkin Award for Creative Dissent, which you received?

Actually there is no particular story on that. I received it along with the Department of State Award for Valor after being held hostage in 1979-81.

What is it about Persian culture that really attracts you:

Terence O' Donnell said it best: Ira-

nians are like us only more so.

I often say that the price of Persian friendship is heavy but worth it.

Agreed, that's another way of saying it. Marriage also had made me become part of the Iranian culture, you absorb it and assimilate through family. Our children are bilingual.

Have they ever been to Iran?

They were born in Iran. The last time they were there was when they were 9 and 7 years old and they still remember a lot.

Have you ever wanted to go back? Could you go there for a visit?

Politically it is still difficult for me and my children but yes we would love to go for a visit.

I may be a bit of a dreamer but I believe the whole impasse and tension between Iran and the USA could be ratcheted way down although many Americans would oppose it if Obama would just hop on a plane and go lay flowers on the graves of some of the young men who died in the Iran Iraq War at their national cemetery, Behesht e Zahra.

That's not that far fetched a notion. It's what in diplomacy is called the "Sadat to Jerusalem plan"...one huge gesture to try to break the impasse.

And I guess there is the question of western cultural influence.

Well of course the regime has tried to restrict Western influence and impose dress codes and so on to prevent a soft revolution but the more they restrict the more people resist.

That's human nature isn't it? Nobody likes being told what to do.

Everyone likes creature comforts and Iranians do too.

Our readers want to know about your hostage experience. Do you have anything more that you haven't already said in other venues that you would like to say about it?

First it taught me the importance of my profession, of diplomacy in trying to resolve or avoid hostility. Secondly it pointed out to me the dangers of mixing religion and politics which we need to recognize in the USA since it has not produced good results in Iran.

You mean the rise of the religious fundamentalist right wing here and its influence on politics and public policy?

Yes and thirdly I learned about the power of ignorance or what Orwell called "collective stupidity."

Why do you think that the American public and politicians won't let go of this hostage crisis when most Americans live by the 24 hour news cycle and can't remember anything past five years?

Clearly it is due to humiliation by people whom we considered inferior.

That is why the hostage crisis remains so alive for 30 years in our collective consciousness.

One thing I learned in reading your last book was that under a treaty started by Truman during US occupation of Iran during and following WWII that American military were exempt from Iranian law. I had always wondered why the employees and their dependents of Bell Helicopter acted with such impunity to the local laws when I worked there.

These laws did not apply to civilians. Unfortunately that original agreement – dating to WWII – was extended in 1963 -64 and expanded to the exempt US military trainers and their dependents. By the way Khomeini started out his political career in the early 1960s as a right wing religious ideologue trying to stop religious minorities from having an equal vote in municipal councils. His position, however,

did not have wide appeal or support until he attacked the 1964 immunity law, then he became the darling of the nationalists.

I read recently that you were the first civilian official to enter Iraq after the US invasion. You had a role in trying to restore the looted national treasures to their national archeological museum. How did that go?

We had some modest success. I had never dealt with the world of antique collectors, dealers, museums administrators, archeologists and others who made that their life's work who all consider the other the enemy. What we did was offer amnesty for those who looted the Iraqi National museum. . . \$100 to \$200 for a \$35K Sumerian head for example for a hungry family was usually enough of an incentive to return the artifact. The damage was worse at the actual archeological dig sites which couldn't be secured or guarded. At the museum the damage was more cosmetic. The looting was not as bad as first anticipated because a lot of the most valuable items had been squirreled away.

What is your opinion about the use of Sanctions? Do you think they are effective?

They are better than bombing but 30 years of sanctions haven't fixed anything. To decide upon their success it depends on what your goals are. One group of politicians wants sanctions to make the IRI get serious about negotiation. A second group wants the sanctions to force the IRI to capitulate with all the US demands. A third group thinks the discontent generated by the sanctions will foment an overthrow of the regime. So depending upon which political group you belong to you can claim with total justification that the sanctions are working or not working.

The reason crippling sanctions don't foment revolutions is that people begin to struggle so mightily just to subsist that they do not have time nor energy for political activism and protest.

Is there any proof that the IRI is actually sponsoring terrorism?

Well there were all the assassinations of dissidents in Europe, of Sharpour

Bakhtiar in Paris, there was the bombing of the Jewish Center in Buenos Aires. . . so they have engaged in terrorism in the past but it waxes and wanes.

But I mean when the IRI helps their Moslem brothers the Palestinians whom no one else seems to help, the Egyptians built a wall, they call it humanitarian aid but the West calls it terrorism.

Well of course it is hard to define terrorism. Some of the dreariest conversations I have been involved in were spent trying to define it.

Lastly do you think the IRI has a Nuclear weapons program?

I don't know, but one thing is clear: The real threat to the IRI is an internal soft overthrow for which the possession of nuclear weapons is no defense at all. To me it doesn't make much sense for Iran to have one. What good would it do them?

Perhaps it goes back to that notion of national pride for one, or any country which possesses one has never been attacked so it seems to serve for defense.

But it goes back to the question, if they had a nuclear weapon then what? Would they be another Pakistan? Ahmadijad when asked about nuclear weapons on one occasion responded by saying no and for all the reasons of expense, against Islam and so on but finished by saying that whether Iran had a nuclear weapons program was Iran's choice and not a decision to be imposed upon them by the outside world.

There you have it back to the issue of national sovereignty and pride. Mr. Ambassador, I want to thank you for giving us so much of your time for part I of this interview for Persian Heritage Magazine. I would love to continue our conversation with the subject of "peace". Is it possible and how? How can a war between the USA and Iran be avoided. Thank you again.