

Negar Ahkami

THE CONSUMPTION

Leila Heller announced the opening of *The Consumption*, Negar Ahkami's second solo exhibition at her gallery in New York City. The exhibition ran from June 6 – July 6, 2013. *The Consumption* features a selection of new works by Ahkami, including exuberant paintings with bas-relief surfaces that depict a variety of figures in water. A fully illustrated catalogue, with an essay by art historian Jane Panetta, accompanies the exhibition. Ahkami's water imagery is calligraphic and patterned, inspired by Iran's blue-tiled mosques, which have been said to symbolize water and nature. The artist uses all-over patterning and water symbolism expressionistically, to convey a psychic loss of control. Families under water struggle to keep children afloat. Women sink on opulent loveseats, clinging to their possessions. Female figures submerged in patterned waves appear to be in ecstasy, willingly surrendering control. In these intense yet playful works, water acts as a symbol of struggle and passion.

Emerging in Ahkami's work is a new vocabulary of universal iconography exploring the human condition in today's world. Her current works dialogue with monumental compositions of ancient Near Eastern rock reliefs. While in the past decade, Ahkami routinely created overtly political imagery, in 3 paintings in this exhibit, she revisits her iconography of melting Persianate cityscapes spreading cartoonishly towards the viewer. For Ahkami, this caricature of Iran's regime, and of fears of its nuclear threat, is a product of consumption "of media images that have distorted the view of Iran from a distance". Her recent returns to this theme are spectacles of pattern that shift between entrancing and cartoonish, with more fascination than angst.

Persian art influences continue to predominate in Ahkami's new work. Her paintings' relief-like textures, and glazes of deep blues and pearlescent whites, borrow from Iran's lusterware and molded-relief ceramics. For Ahkami, the dynamic textures of these sources, and the obsessive, hand-made quality of the patterning, "carry the potential for a Persian-Islamic art that can be as emotive and personal as the exaggerated gestures and drips of Western expressionism." Ahkami similarly exploits the expressive potential of complex pattern juxtapositions in Iranian art and architecture. Her depictions of figures in a cacophony of rhythmic pattern evoke their powerlessness against greater forces.

Other influences apparent in her work include 1970s mattresses, majolica pottery, blue and white ceramics, as well as Matisse, Klimt and Pollock. Ahkami's attraction to these sources emerged, in part, from her belief in their connections to Persian-Islamic aesthetics. Her paintings celebrate Persian art's connectivity and its contributions to global visual culture. However rooted in her dialogues and influences, Ahkami's art is distinctly her own, and represents her continued quest for a global art that honors Persian-Islamic art as well as Western traditions of individualism and free expression.

About Negar Ahkami

Born in Baltimore, Maryland in 1971, and raised in northern New Jersey, Ahkami lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. Ahkami received a BA in Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures from Columbia University, a JD from Georgetown University Law Center, and an MFA from the School of Visual Arts. Ahkami is currently participating in Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's Swing Space residency on Governor's Island. Other residencies include LMCC's Workspace Residency and Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. Her work has been included in group exhibitions in national and international venues, including Princeton University's Bernstein Gallery, the Chelsea Art Museum, the Austrian Cultural Forum, the Longwood Art Gallery, and Stefan Stux Gallery. Ahkami's work is represented in numerous public and private art collections, including The New Britain Museum of American Art (New Britain, CT), Depaul University Art Museum (Chicago, IL), and Farjam Collection (Dubai, UAE).

Pictures on the inside covers are courtesy of the artist Negar Ahkami and the Leila Heller Gallery, New York

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

The launch of the summer issue of Persian Heritage magazine coincides with the Presidential elections in Iran. It is hard to believe four years have passed since the inception of Iran's Green Movement. The movement, for Iranians in Iran, ignited a flame, a symbol of hope for, freedom of choice, freedom of religion, freedom of press, freedom to co exist, freedom to follow your lifestyle choice, simply put for basic human rights. The flame that burned so brightly, fueled by the dreams and desires of Iranian citizens was quickly extinguished. The dreams and hopes for freedoms and human rights were reduced to ashes; peoples joy returned to despair and defeat. Many Iranian citizens, young, middle age and elderly, found themselves in jails. They lost their sweet lives and their hopes for a better future was temporarily lost; temporarily because deep in their hearts the ember and the thirst for a better tomorrow remains alive. They continue to sacrifice for liberty, equality and brotherhood.

The Iranian press and media found themselves under continued pressure and soon were altogether suppressed. In a recent poll on the popularity of countries around the world, shamefully Iran placed 191 out of 197 for "freedom of press." Arrests and the jailing of reporters, journalists and writers awarded Iran the number one country for censorship.

Recent worldwide opinion polls placed Germany and Germans as the most loved and respected people and nation in the world. Iran is listed as one of the least loved or the most hated. Being at the bottom reminded me of my marathon running days. I participated in 35 marathons (42km or 26.2 miles, most of them New York City Marathons). Because of my lack of training due to a busy schedule and often laziness, I was always amazed to successfully complete each marathon I started. In the beginning I would finish midway out of 25,000 to 30,000 runners. As time marched my finishing position was with the bottom 2,000 to 3,000. Regardless of the pain I endured during the race, the ember inside of me pushed me to finish what I started (I know in my heart that Iran's citizens will also kindle their ember for freedom and finish what they started four years ago.)

After every race my friends and associates would ask me "what number did you come in?" I would always respond, "I was the number one finisher from the bottom." For a split second they would not understand this response until I added, "After 26.2 miles and my age, please do not ask me what number I came in, I am just grateful to cross the line and get

a medal."

Now, Iran once a strong and prosperous nation, like me with the marathon, has finished at the end of the pack. Who is to blame for this? Is it due to a lack of credibility and a lack of ability of its leaders? Is this the best results Iran could hope to achieve? Was there anyway Iran could have a higher ranking, under the current regime? Iran, my friends, according to world opinion is the **LAST TO BE LOVED AND FIRST TO BE HATED**. Why would this be so surprising? After so much chaos, negative propaganda and Iran's president's knack for creating enemies, why would we think Iran would have a better outcome? **WHY?** Because we know that what the world is seeing is not the real Iran and not a real Iranian! As I have repeatedly written in my editorials, because of negative press, mostly by the west, the world is unable to separate the people of Iran from its government!

Iran and Iranians have been under pressure and suppression for a very long time. It is not because it is a poor nation lacking in resources. Over the past eight years, Iran has received more income from oil exporting, than they have over its entire history of oil production! Hence why are the people suffering, living at poverty level? Who is benefiting from the wealth? How can leadership watch its citizens struggle to survive? And surviving is what most Iranian citizens struggle to do everyday.

It is not uncommon to hear people from the west ask. "If things are so bad for them over there why don't they revolt and topple the government?" Unfortunately those who ask this question are naïve. They do not understand that if one lifts a finger or verbally protests against the regime, they will be greeted with a bullet or sent to prison. Of course, it is human nature, for those sitting outside of the ring of turmoil, to suggest a next move for the players in the ring. It is easy for us to do this because we have nothing to lose. But for the Iranians fighting this battle, life is precious. They have seen enough loss of its youth and other citizens!

A few days ago I read in the paper that Israeli officials are upset with the departure of President Ahmadinejad. They are upset with the departure of a man who is a symbol of inability as a leader; a man who at the United Nations said there was a halo circling his head, a man who denied the holocaust and a man who has been the direct cause of hatred towards himself, Iranians and Iran. The reason they are upset was not because they like and respect him. They were upset because

they are losing a leader of a country who helped them fuel world hatred against Iran and therefore strengthened Israel's world position and cause. Ahmadinejad has helped the world believe that he and Iran could be the next Hitler and cause the death of millions of innocent people.

The ignorance and failure to lead a country by this President is as harmful as the eight-year war created by Saddam Hussein. Unfortunately, the leaders of Iran extended the war in the hopes of defeating their rivals and opposition. At what cost, I ask?

During these past eight years Ahmadinejad has brought shame to Iran, created an economic and social crisis for Iran's citizens and imprisoned or eliminated all of his opponents. This has happened in a country rich in culture, history, honor and the founders of human rights.

Understand that this issue and editorial has gone to press before the actual Iranian elections. I pray the shameful events of June 2009 will not be repeated. I hope I will not read about killings, beatings and suppression of those who simply ask, "Where is my vote?" Instead I hope to read that the youth of Iran have been given greater opportunity of education and can use their intelligence to compete in education and business rather than on a battlefield.

As you turn the pages of this issue of Persian Heritage, you will see that we are featuring two men of science and medicine Dr. Fereydown Ala and Professor Fazlollah Reza. These individuals have attained worldwide respect and admiration, yet remain close to Iran and its people. Also included in this issue are pictures of paintings by an artist and my daughter, Negar Ahkami. I mention this because I am extremely proud of her success in the art world. I am even prouder for the way she has embraced her Persian culture and heritage. Negar, born in the United States, spent roughly 60 days in Iran during the course of her lifetime. But that short exposure to the country and its people, and lifetime exposure to the cultures and traditions, by her parents, touched her heart. Her connection to Iran is evidenced in her paintings through color and subject matter. Each time I look at her paintings and her face I see a genuine love and concern for suppressed people in the world, not just Iran. For this I am very proud!

These are the people and many still out there that we must introduce to the world. We must make our neighbors aware that the majority of the 75 million Iranians in the world are peace loving and humanitarians. They are hard workers who will do what they need to do to provide for their families. They are a group who seeks friendship and respect from its neighbors; they are some of the first to extend a hand to those in need regardless of race, religion or social status.

Over the past thirty years Iranians' by choice or force left Iran. Many left with just a suitcase and education. Most left as professionals, yet when they arrived at their new homes they were willing to take any job or position in order to provide for their families, all with the hope that their children would

have a successful and bright future. They eagerly assimilated into their new homes and neighborhoods. Their hard work and sacrifices has paid off. Today they have gained the respect and friendship of their neighbors and most importantly have seen their children achieve in all aspects of life. It is my deepest wish that this same outcome of success and respect by its neighbors will be the future for Iran and its people. It is my dream that their sacrifices and hard work in their quest for freedom will also be achieved.

It is important that we understand, however, they are still fighting a battle. It is important to understand their opportunities have been diminished by their rulers. They continue to be suppressed! And, it is important for us to understand at any given time, because of pressure by the western powers, Iran and its citizens can face another war; a war that will result in the deaths of innocent people and perhaps the physical division of the country.

Let us hope the day when their difficulties are lifted is in the near future. Let us hope the day they can reach their dreams and goals is in the near future. Let us hope the day when they will gain freedom is in the near future. Let us hope the gates to the world opening for them is in the near future. Let us hope the day when Iranians around the world can freely reunite with friends and family around the world is in the near future. And finally let us hope this is all attained without the loss of one more life.

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I hope your voice will reach and inspire the mass media, disregard of political manipulations, to understand and respect each nation based on what it truly represents rather than its ethnic or religious background. After all, the most fundamental principles of journalism are impartiality, fairness, and factuality.

Azar Aryanpour

A MOST EXCELLENT MAGAZINE

I am thankful to have received a copy of the Norooz edition of your most excellent magazine 'Persian Heritage', with so many interesting articles and features. I especially admired the beautiful cover showing the Fritillaria Imperialis in the wild. This is an unforgettable sight in the mountains of Lorestan early in Spring.

Fereydoun Ala

WHAT A SOURCE OF PRIDE

It is nice to read the degree and the magnitude of Iranian achievements even in a relative short time. What a source of constant pride.

F. Beroukhim

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Dear Editor:

Congratulations. Happy anniversary. Keep up the good work. You deserve an Iranian medal of cultural honor.

As usual very diverse and entertaining.

S.Pourfar

IRANIAN FIREFIGHTER SAVES LIVES, EVEN AFTER HIS DEATH



The survivor girl holding her saver's picture at his funeral

According to Jalal Maleki, the spokesman of Iran's Firefighters Organization, body parts of firefighter Omid Abbasi will be offered to patients in need of transplants. Abbasi died during a mission in north Tehran after saving a girl from a fire in a residential complex.

Jalal Maleki told Mehr News that "firefighters received a call informing of a fire at a residential building in Bagheri neighborhood in Tehran at 2:18 PM on Tuesday.

A young woman with her two children had been trapped inside an apartment. The woman managed to escape along with her son, but her 9-year-old daughter was hanging from a window and was on the brink of a free fall when she was saved by the firefighters. A young firefighter, Omid Abbasi, gave his oxygen mask to 9-year-old girl. But he himself subsequently suffered brain death.

However, this was not the end for the young firefighter, as his family decided, in a laudable act, to give his body parts to be transplanted to patients in need of his organs.

Arrangements for transplanting of organs of young firefighter have been made in Masih Daneshvari Hospital in Tehran.

(Sources: Mehr News Agency&ISNA)

Three Iranian-Americans Among The 30 Most Important Women Under 30 In Tech



Parisa Tabriz



Soraya Darabi



Roxanne Varza

Parisa Tabriz manages Google’s information security engineering team at Google, which is responsible for improving Google’s product security. This team of “hired hackers” conducts security design and code reviews, builds and enhances Google technology to make secure development possible and easy, conducts security engineering training, and does vulnerability response. Parisa received her B.S. and M.S. from the University

of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign and was advised by Nikita Borisov.

Soraya Darabi is a two-time entrepreneur working on her latest venture, Zady. Zady is still in stealth mode, but has already raised a \$1.35 million round led by NEA. Prior to starting Zady, Darabi founded Foodspotting, a geo-local guide for finding quality eats around you. Earlier this year, Open Table acquired the startup for \$10 million.

Roxanne Varza currently runs some of Microsoft’s startup-related initiatives in Europe, specifically its BizSpark and Spark programs. Prior to joining Microsoft, Varza worked as the editor of TechCrunch France. She is also VP of Business Development and Partnerships for Girls in Tech Global and started and leads the French and British chapters of the organization.

Source: Business Insider

Newly Appointed Iranian-American Judge Makes History

Susan Amini was appointed to King County Superior Court judge position 20 in Washington State. Ms. Amini is the second Iranian American to serve as a Superior Court judge in the country, and the first of Middle Eastern descent in Washington state history. At the courthouse ceremony, Governor Jay Inslee described Susan Amini as someone who “believes strongly in equal access to justice, regardless of a person’s economic status, education level, or disability,” and said “she has worked tirelessly to help eliminate barriers that exist within our court system.”

Born in Iran, Susan Amini was educated at Catholic schools in Tehran and Paris and received her bachelor’s degree in Political Science from Tehran University and J.D. degree from University of Maryland School of Law. She began her legal career as a public defender before establishing her own law practice, in 1994, focusing on criminal defense, family law and immigration. Ms. Amini has also served as a King County District Pro Tempore judge since 1994, and currently serves as a King County Bar Association Trustee and is a member of the Washington State Trial Lawyers.

Susan Amini is also considered an expert in the rights of individuals with disabilities. Part of her expertise comes from raising a child with a disability. Her son, Cyrus Habib, lost his eyesight in early childhood to a rare eye cancer and has been fully blind since age 8.

Susan Amini’s term as King County Superior Court judge begins on May 13, 2013.

By Solmaz Elmi-Sarabi, National Iranian American Council (NIAC)



Two in the mid: Cyrus Habib and Susan Amini

THE FIRST SUCCESSFUL HAND TRANSPLANT SURGERY IN THE MIDDLE EAST PERFORMED IN TEHRAN



Members of the Tehran's **15th Khordad Hospital** surgery team have successfully completed hand transplant surgery during 8.5 hours of breathtaking procedure.

Masoud Yavary in an interview with Pars health reporter said: "this transplant operation was performed in an ultra specialized ward of the 15th Khordad Hospital He continued: "in this transplant operation, the wrist of a 25 year old young

brain dead person was transplanted to a 37 years old man who had lost his hand 6 years ago in an accident while using a meat grinder."

The Deputy of Beheshti University of Medical Sciences added: "the transplant of hand operation for one's own member have been done numerous times, and there are plenty of people who have lost their hands in an accident, and we have transplanted [their hand] back to their own body in this hospital."

"The importance of this unique operation is that for the first time in Iran, Middle East, and Eastern Mediterranean countries, we have used a hand from a brain dead person, and transplanted it to another person."

He added: "this hand transplant with all details and links to nerves, and the vessels was successfully been finished, and blood is running in the transplanted hand, but whether the man can move his transplanted hand or not? Time would tell, we need at least two weeks before we can tell."

Yavary added: "measures including chemotherapy to prevent rejection after the transplant must be continued, but the transplant has been completely successful."

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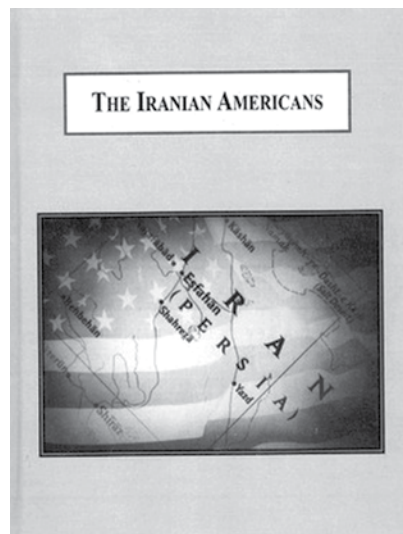
The following articles are the main points of the introduction of my newly published book, IRANIAN-AMERICANS, (2013) by Edwin Mellen Press. This book is the first in-depth sociological study of the making of the Iranian-American community.

The major Iranian experience of the past three decades has been one of forced emigration, be it to the United States or to almost any other country. This significant movement created history's largest concentration of Iranian Diaspora. Those who involuntarily left Iran in the early 1980s could not imagine that their place of exile would eventually become a permanent home. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, it is estimated that approximately 464,000 Iranian-Americans reside in the United States. However, other estimates put the size of the Iranian-American population as somewhere between 500,000 to 1 million. Of this number, more than two thirds are first-generation Americans, arriving since 1980....

The Iranian migration to the United States began over 50 years ago with the study abroad of young Iranians. However, it was the Iranian revolution of 1979, which was both organizationally and culturally crucial to the making of the Iranian community in the United States. Emigration was the last outlet for political frustration experienced by large number of Iranians. It was a voluntary decision but contained involuntary factors....

What is most significant about the Iranian community today is its continuing growth. In three decades, Iranians in the United States have grown from a scattered, dually marginal, ambivalent and uncertain immigrant group (123,000 in 1980) into a new ethnic community of close to 500,000 or more. Today, more Iranians live in the United States than in any other country in the world except Iran. With the current rate of influx and birth, the Iranian population in the U.S. is expected to triple by 2020...

Moreover, a profound demographic change with wide-reaching implications is taking place in the Iranian-American community; the growing number of second-generation Iranian-Americans. The integration that follows does not mean for-



getting the old homeland. On the contrary, after thirty three years, they have in their own terms, remained Iranian and show a commitment to passing on their "Iranian-ness" to the next generation commitment to passing on their "Iranian-ness" to the next generation....

Iran is one of the world's oldest continuing civilizations and has one of its richest and most diverse cultures. Like the United States, Iran is a multilingual society, which has a religious and an ethno-linguistic dimension. Each of these groups has played a major role in the revival of Iran as a nation-state in the wake of the various Arab and Mongolian invasions throughout its history. The population that calls itself Iranian-American or Persian-American is extremely diverse. As a community, Iranian-Americans reflect much of the religious, cultural, social and regional diversity of Iranian society. As such, they are comprised of numerous subgroups defined in terms of ethnicity, religious affiliation, occupational status, political ideology, lifestyle and age. However, despite their extreme diversity, Iranian-Americans are nevertheless bound

by a rich historical heritage and strong sense of "Iranian-ness"....

It is ironic that while the tragedy of American-Iranian relations (hostage crisis of 1979) was still unfolding and the Islamization of Iran was already underway, a new secular "Little Iran" inside America was growing increasingly Americanized and rapidly asserting itself as a high status ethnic community. This new community in the United States was comprised of many of Iran's intellectuals, professionals, entrepreneurs and capitalists who are assimilating today in remarkable and unexpected ways.

From the start, the Iranian experience in the U.S. has been a blend of ethnic pride and resourceful participation in American society. However, their Iranian pride does not just come from where they came from but from what they've been able to achieve in the United States. Despite the setback of tragic political events such as the hostage crisis, September 11th and 33 years of animosity between the two governments, the Iranian-Americans today are one of the most successful of all recent immigrant groups.

As one of the recent, premier ethnic communities in America, the Iranian community has had a largely positive influence on American society, particularly on the American economy. Herein lies the supreme irony of the closing decade of America's post-World War II imperial claim over Iran; Iran's loss ultimately turned out to be America's gain. Today, as the nation of Iran is passing through its own critical historical moments, Iranian-Americans are also making their own social history though not under conditions of their choosing.

Despite the fact that the relationship between Iran and the United States has been highly strained all these years, the Iranian community has not only been capable of withstanding major challenges but has continued to contribute toward the

advancement of the quality of life for all Americans at an unprecedented level....

Since their earliest arrival, the Iranian immigrants differed from other immigrants by their high socioeconomic background. They belong to a generation of upwardly mobile, secularized cosmopolitans. As of 2009, Iranian-Americans had the highest educational attainment level and median household income of any ethnic (or racial) group in the United States. Today, American-trained professionals comprise the largest occupational segment of Iranian-Americans. An occupational profile of Iranians in the United States shows that they rank very high in the percentage of the population working in professional and managerial occupations....

Iranian-Americans hold prominent positions in American society such as senior executives at Fortune 500 companies, presidents of universities, physicians with distinction, distinguished professors and scientists, engineers, nurses, social workers, computer experts, lawyers at prestigious law firms, professional athletes, top executives at Google, top scientists in NASA, an eBay inventor, Deputy Assistant to the President, philanthropists, editors, senior correspondents, chief economists, architects, designers, consultants, bankers, writers, journalists and artists, all of whom are making significant contributions....

While Iranians can be found in a variety of occupations, one striking aspect is their self-employment rate of 22 percent, making them one of the most entrepreneurial ethnic groups in the United States. It is estimated that they are among the top twenty-five immigrant groups with the highest self-employment rate. There is growing evidence that such a high rate of self-employment has played an important role in the economic adaptation of the newly arrived Iranian immigrants in the United States....

Iranian immigration also brought one of the most significant waves of affluent families to the United States. Regarding those super-rich Iranians or "money refugees," there is no success like exile. They are today, most likely naturalized Americans and have established themselves as wealthy real estate developers, bankers and successful businesspeople in corporate America. Wherever Iranian-American entrepreneurs have concentrated their efforts, they have injected new dynamism into local and national economies....

Today, people of Iranian origin

have truly "arrived" in America and are making their own history. Much of this history-making contains the best of both world adaptations. In doing so, Iranian-Americans borrow heavily from their host society as well as from the resurrected imagery, symbolism and cultural heritage of ancient Persia. In this state, even as the Iranian-American community continues to accommodate to the American context, it rummages the distant past to self-consciously maintain and/or recreate its ethnic identity or "Iranianess." Thus, the ethnic identity of this community, as modified by its American experience, is not simply Iranian but is something that is grounded more in Iranian nationalism and secular ideas....

The anti-Iranian sentiments in the United States then are a fairly recent phenomenon. It was during the anti-monarchical revolutionary movement of 1978-79, with its sharp anti-American edge and the hostage crisis of 1980, that anti-Iranian sentiments in the U.S. reached its apex. The hostage crisis was a diplomatic crisis between Iran and the United States, where a group of Islamist students took over the American Embassy in Tehran and held 52 Americans hostage for 444 days from November 4, 1979 to January 20, 1981. Anti-Islamic sentiment that Iranian immigrants experienced during this time, was the first major example of media-driven stereotypes about Middle Eastern Americans being perpetuated in the United States....

During the entire fourteen months of the hostage crisis, American citizens (including Iranian-Americans) watched in horror and anger as the slogans "Death to America" and "Death to the Liberals" became increasingly part of the ritualistic chants of the religious masses in Friday prayer in Tehran. The whole nation's collective psyche and pride became bruised since never before had the U.S. government been subjected to this type of confrontation which it deemed uncompromising. Therefore, a wave of anti-Iranian sentiment swept across America and served as an anti-Iranian rallying point for years to come. Eventually Iran became an American national obsession. It was transformed from being an American ally to a member of President Bush's "Axis of Evil. Thus, anti-Iranian sentiment emerged as the first xenophobic reaction to the humiliation of America during the hostage crisis and the hatred of Iranians in the U.S. grew fast and deep among Americans....

The Iranian revolution and the hos-

tage crisis had the most formative effect on U.S. foreign policy towards Iran and the public views of Iranians and even Islam as a whole. Over the last thirty years, the images, words, sounds, films, radio and television reinforced the negative anti-Iranian, anti-Islamic sentiments. As a result, Iranian immigrants were transformed in the public imagination from friendly foreigners to enemy aliens. In a manner reminiscent of the experience of Japanese-Americans in the 1940s, Iranians residing in the United States became the immediate targets of American anger and frustration. Paradoxically, Iranian immigrants and the political refugees who allied themselves with Americans against the extremist religious government in Iran felt that Americans resented them and unfairly blamed them for the hostage crisis.

Following the hostage crisis a virulent anti-Iranian sentiment spread. Though, discrimination and prejudice are common problems confronting immigrant groups in the U.S., Iranian-Americans had been singled-out more so than any other group since they were facing dual prejudices—being Iranians and being Muslims. The anti-Iranian reaction was so widespread that it forced many Iranian-Americans to either change their names or to misrepresent their ethnic identity because one's Iranian identity was a stigma to be hidden or evaded as much as possible. To avoid potential confrontations and differential treatment, most Iranian-Americans started to call themselves Persian-Americans. However, as the conflict between Iran and the U.S. escalated, more and more anti-Iranian, anti-Islamic incidents of varying degrees in seriousness occurred within the Iranian-American community.

Among Iranian-Americans, the years of hatred toward Iranians loom as a decisive experience, which had a devastating effect upon their children. Negative characterizations have had a damaging effect on the self-image of Iranians. Despite the Iranian-Americans' high rate of citizenship at the time and their remarkable contributions toward building a better American society, they became, yet again, victims of defamation, negative media stereotyping and discrimination....

Another major event after the hostage crisis that fueled the anti-Iranian, anti-Muslim feeling in the United States was the publication of the book, *Not without My Daughter* in 1984. This book and especially its 1991 movie adaptation were met with angry reactions from Iranian-Amer-

icans offended by what they considered a biased depiction of their culture. Many agreed that the movie portrayed Iranians as mean, irrational and fanatical....

The September 11, 2001 attacks were a tragic event in the lives of many Americans, and Iranians living in the United States were no exception. The first reaction of many Iranian-Americans to the attacks was disbelief followed by fear. Many Iranian-Americans were angered by the terrorists who they believed had betrayed the ideal of Islam and had hijacked their religion. After the tragedy, Iranian people were the only group in the Islamic community that took to the streets in Iran and held a candlelight vigil in solidarity with the Americans. Similarly, in the United States, the Iranian community was among the very first ethnic groups that condemned the terrorist act and showed its support by contributing to the World Trade Center Relief Fund. The Iranian-American community of New York had a full page advertisement on the first page of The New York Times expressing profound sadness and condemning the attacks of 9/11/2001 as a vicious criminal act, calling it "inexcusable and without any justification in Islam or authentic Muslim tradition"....

In the beginning, the predominant orientation of the majority of the post-revolution political immigrants was the hope for eventual return to Iran. A powerful nostalgic feeling was central to the mind of the immigrant, particularly the refugees and self-exiles. The nostalgia for some individuals was frequently accompanied by a sense of guilt, disguised or unrecognized, at having left home....

For political immigrants with an exile mentality, the political affairs of Iran were of foremost importance. The public discourse among the political group was largely preoccupied with the political conditions in the homeland. The exile mentality was functional for the group as a whole because it was a survival strategy allowing the undecided immigrant to live and remain hopeful for an eventual return to Iran.

Up until the early 1990s, Iranians remained obsessed with the impossible desire of returning to Iran. It was impossible because given the Islamization of Iran after the revolution; the homeland they once knew no longer existed except as memories. For political immigrants with an exile mentality, the political affairs of Iran were of foremost importance. The public discourse among the political group was largely preoccupied with the politi-

cal conditions in the homeland. The exile mentality was functional for the group as a whole because it was a survival strategy allowing the undecided immigrant to live and remain hopeful for an eventual return to Iran. Nevertheless, the political immigrants maintained a "mission" orientation; a national commitment towards an eventual return to their homeland. However, since they were diverse as a community and politically divided and disillusioned, their "mission" orientation did not function as an organizational element in the Iranian Diaspora in the United States....

Being essentially one generation removed from their homeland, Iranians in the United States have retained strong cultural and emotional ties with Iran. When it comes to home politics, Iranian-Americans today are incredibly diverse and the differences are not only generational. In fact, what makes the Iranian-Americans even more intriguing, aside from their remarkable achievements, is the complexity of their community itself. The complexity of the Iranian-American community is characterized by several layers of social, economic and political distinction....

The most remarkable achievement of the last century for Iranian immigrants has been the making of the Iranian community in America. Today, Iranian-Americans are more conscious of the fact that they have already become ethnic Americans. The new second-generation Iranian-Americans are already expanding the idea of assimilation to include more of reverse assimilation-- molding a culture of their own in which they are representative of two cultures.

The Iranian-American community is fairly unique in a sense: it is undergoing assimilation to the American context just like most other ethnic communities have done. At the same time, however, the defensiveness caused by the hostage crisis, and the fact that they have a very strong literary and cultural heritage, has led them to search the distant past to self-consciously attempt to create an ethnic identity that is grounded more in an ancient Persia, since they apparently have difficulty identifying with contemporary Iran. Therefore, the ethnic identity and community they are creating is not simply Iranian, as modified by the American experience; it is also something broader, as a result of their rejection of contemporary Iran. They turn to the symbolism and imagery of something that is neither American nor strictly Iranian. ■

No Traces of Old Trees

Firouz Hejazi

They opened the gate,
and Greeted me in a warm manner
Smiling, I put my bundle down
I greeted some strangers too
As I was looking around
Several strangers were staring at me
With curiosity; if I was one of them
A part of the house was still there
But the place of a few, was empty
They were missing,
not just in that home,
But also in me,
and I had to sit down
Behind the door
from lack of strength
There were no traces of old trees
But around the front yard,
noisy crops
Had earned them pride of
their heritage
I did not say I was hearing voices
Of the people I grew up with.
I did not say that I was seeing
faces which
Were looking at me
from behind the years
Like the time of my childhood.
However, I knew that
they had been gone
But I did not want to say,
or ask questions
Then, I accepted their invitation
I walked with them nodding, smiling
However, in reality
I was still behind the door
Sitting in silence
with all the memories
And the hot moving tears
inside the veins
Of my battered body.

**2600 YEARS OF
WORLD HISTORY
MAKES U.S. DEBUT**



The Cyrus Cylinder, considered to be the Iconic Object Lauded as Symbol of Great Leadership and Human Rights was on display at the Sackler Museum, Washington DC, from March 9 through April 28.

The Cyrus Cylinder, sometimes referred to as the first “bill of human rights,” traces its origins to the Persian king Cyrus the Great’s conquest of Babylon in the sixth century B.C. Almost 2,600 years later, its remarkable legacy continues to shape contemporary political debates, cultural rhetoric and philosophy. It is on loan from the British Museum. After the Sackler it will continue Houston, New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

The Cylinder a football-sized, barrel-shaped clay object covered in Babylonian cuneiform, one of the earliest written languages-announced Cyrus’ victory and his intention to allow freedom of worship to his new peoples. When placed in context, it becomes evident that Cyrus allowed displaced Jews to return to Jerusalem, one of the most important religious events of the ancient world. Cyrus’ legacy as a great and diplomatic leader inspired rulers for millennia, from Alexander the Great to Thomas Jefferson, and the Cylinder itself was used as a symbol for religious freedom, the veracity of the Bible, and peace in the Near East.

“You could almost say that the Cyrus Cylinder is a history of the Middle East in one object, creating a link to a past that we all share and to a key moment in history that has shaped the world around us,” said Neil MacGregor, director of the British Museum. “Objects are uniquely able to speak across time and space, and this object must be shared as widely as possible.”

**COULD AN OLYMPIC SPORT
BE THE HEALER OF
IRAN AND US RELATIONS?**



People have so much more in common than what our government’s propoganda leads us to believe.

For certain Iran and the United States do not see eye toeye on the political field. But to wrestling, Mitch Hull the director of the US national team believes, that Iran is one of the strongest American allies. He stated this before his trip to Iran this past February and said his team and Iran would stand arm in arm in an effort to reverse the decision of the International Olympic Committee to exclude wrestling from the 2020 games.

Mr. Hull stated that he had great confidence in gaining the support of the Iranian wrestling federation, Iranian wrestlers and the Iranian people to show the world that, “no matter what is happening politically, we have the same goal and the same belief and passion for the sport of wrestling.”

During the week, Zeke Jones, the US freestyle coach said a number of countries including, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Georgia, Iran, Japan etc. metto discuss how they can join forces to reverse the IOC’s decision. He said there would be no problem in unifying all to reach their goal.

While this unified action may impact wrestling most are doubtful that it will change the political turmoil between the two countries. But, the world is shrinking because of technology the world is traveling and meeting people they once believed foreign and the enemy. The world is beginning to understand that while there will be differences, when it comes to the basics we are all the same. We want to have freedom, to worship as we want, to study as we want, to be in love, get married, have children, see their smiles, watch them achieve and go on with their lives. So those looking at this simple wrestling match and unification should not be so quick to believe that it will not have a positive impact on the future.

As a result of the February match the United States Wrestling Federation is scheduled to host a match with Russia and Iran at Grand Central Station in May.

THEFT OF PERSIAN ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

DAVOOD RAHNI



JALAL-E-DIN MOHAMMAD BALKHI RUMI

The purpose of this commentary is to share with you and your colleagues the growing perspectives and concerns by a large number of independent scholars worldwide with respect to the well-orchestrated and lucratively financed (albeit covert and subversive) futile efforts by political pundits in southwestern Asia (Iran's neighbors, i.e., the Turkish government and the totalitarian regime in Baku) to retroactively fabricate ultra-nationalistic and cultural identities that have no historical basis whatsoever. As to Turkey, this is the reminiscent of the Ottoman Empire defeated in WWI and after it has annihilated 2 million Armenians in a genocide against humanity, now resurrected, to reclaim a vast territory under "Turkish" ultra-nationalism; as to the newly established government in Baku and the Aliev's clan, it is the lingering effect of ulterior motives of the Soviet (dis)Union era of divide to conquer, and the continued insinuating instigation of their "brethren" in Turkey that has led to claiming the cultural and historical heritage of Iran and calling these their own.

To an ordinary Iranian with rudimentary linguistic Persian fluency, it is natural

to go to Rumi's Mausoleum in Konia Turkey, and read, understand and impart Rumi's poetry as inscribed on this tomb to others, whereas the most proficient Turkish tourist guide or scholars cannot read even a word of these otherwise brilliant Rumi's Persian poetry!

Whereas one should hasten to reiterate that there is NO statistically significant genetic bio-markers among the people of Iran, Turkey, Armenia, "Azarbaijan" Afghanistan, Tajikistan, or even Iraq, etc., history teaches us there is a vast area spanning from northern India to central and southwest Asia and the Trans-caucuses, Arabia and North Africa that was once governed by the Persian Empire, which is now comprised of several dozen sovereign nations.

Let us remember today's Iran, still diverse for its citizenry, and in lieu of its repressive system of government, is only a fraction of what PERSIA/IRAN once was. In fact, a dozen newly established countries in central Asia and the trans-caucuses were integral provinces of Iran through the 19th century when in two separate treaties unilaterally imposed, by the Russian Tzars, on the inept Persian Shahs of Qajar dynasty, were taken away from Iran. The Ottoman Empire, despite their repeated futile warring efforts, could never take away any major territory of Iran in their four hundred year reign, however. The common cultural heritage has been produced and shared by all people in this vast region and should, therefore, be cherished forever by ALL. In much the same token that English is currently the universal language for arts and science, or Arabic or Greek were the



NEZAMI GANAVI

predominant languages in certain era, Persian was also the most common (oral and written) language for almost two millennia.

In fact, the language of Divan, the governments in Turkey, Baghdad and India among others was Persian for almost a millennium. As to Altaic Uighur (Turkish) dialect brought in by a few sheep/horse herding tribes (e.g., Ghare-ghoyounlou, Agh-ghoyounlu) from northwestern Mongolia-China and acquired by the majority Iranian and closely related stock indigenous inhabitants of the trans-caucuses, central Asia and northwestern Iran, it laid the foundation for a truly hybridized language, AZARI, that also had major Persian and to some extent Arabic in the philology.

That notwithstanding, an acquired language is not to be misconstrued as having altered the ethnicity and/or the national gene pool of people in a region, as that remains common among them all. Simply put, Iranians, Turks, Arabs, Afghans, North Indians, Central Asians, the people of the Caucasus, Armenians, and those living around the Caspian Sea and Persian Gulf and many more are people of the same common culture and genetic pool.

So what is IRANISH you ask?

Dear Friends:

I have coined a new word that should be added to a lexicon of the Iranian cultural words, if not to the Websters dictionary. It is IRANISH. The ish suffix is not intended to make the word a relation but rather an approximation. Not like ish in Irish or Swedish as a nationality but rather close approximation. For example, I will be there sixish, give or take 15 minutes. So what is IRANISH, please allow me to elaborate:

If you are a citizen or a long time resident of another country, you are no longer Iranian, you are Iranish.

If your children do not speak Persian or speak it with an accent of your residence country, you are no longer Iranian, you are Iranish.

If you cannot make good complete Persian sentences without the use of foreign words, you are no longer Iranian, you are Iranish.

If you don't know what month or day it is in Persian Calendar without searching for it, you are no longer Iranian, you are Iranish.

If your only connection remaining with Iran has been reduced to Persian food, occasional Persian music etc., you are no longer Iranian, you are Iranish.

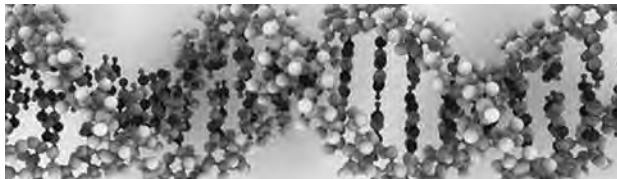
If it is easier for you to read and write in another language than in Persian, you are no longer Iranian, you are Iranish.

If you know in your heart that you are not going back to live in Iran, even if it had a secular democratic government, you are not Iranian, you are Iranish.

Cyrus Mowlavi

Mapping the Iranian Genome

Source: The HAND Foundation



Since PARSA Community Foundation granted \$250,000 to Stanford University's Iranian Genome Project in 2010, the project has grown significantly.

The Iranian Genome Project aims to provide knowledge to both the scientific and Iranian community by studying and understanding the genetic background of Iranians representing all ethnicities in Iran, including Armenians, Kurds, and Turks. Based on the emerging field of genomics, where scientists map the genetic code, this project allows for research on how variations in the genetic code lead to differences in health and disease across and within populations.

The Iranian Genome Project believes that furthering the knowledge of the Iranian genetic code will enable the community to gain a better understanding of how certain "Iranian" genes affect health in the population.

This may one day allow for the creation of tailored treatments and drugs. This is important as most genetic research has been conducted on people of European descent. As the age of personalized medicine begins, knowledge of genetic variation will be key in making sure that everyone's unique needs are met.



ROXANA DANESHJOU

The research is being done by the Department of Bioengineering at Stanford University, lead by the Principal Investigator Russ Altman, Chairman of Department and Director of Biomedical Informatics Training Program. The lead researcher is Roxana Daneshjou, a medical student at Stanford University School of Medicine and a Ph.D. candidate in Genetics.

The team also has two consultants who are leaders in the field of genetics: Mostafa Ronaghi, Chief Technology Officer and Senior Vice President at Illumina and a former principal investigator and senior research associate at the Stanford Genome Technology Center; and Pardis Sabeti, Assistant Professor at the Center for Systems Biology at Harvard, Department of Organismic and Evolutionary Biology, and Senior Associate Member of the Broad Institute of Harvard.

2013 NATIONAL SURVEY OF IRANIAN AMERICANS

National poll gathers accurate demographic and attitudinal information about the Iranian American community

April 18, 2013, Washington, D.C. - The Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian Americans (PAAIA) today released the findings of its fifth national public opinion survey of Iranian Americans. The 2013 survey was conducted by George Mason University in February and follows similar annual surveys commissioned by PAAIA. The surveys are an integral component of better understanding the Iranian American community and having its voice heard through the availability of on-going accurate scientific data.

SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

According to the survey, Iranian Americans maintain close ties to family and friends in Iran. Thirty-two percent (32%) report that they have at least one parent living in the country. Sixty-six percent (66%) of Iranian Americans surveyed stated that they communicate with their family and friends in Iran at least several times a month.

Iranian Americans want to see change in Iran. The survey indicates that from among a list of seven issues relating to U.S-Iran relations, the greatest number of Iranian Americans, fifty-six percent (56%), cited the promotion of human rights and democracy as the most important, followed by thirty-one percent (31%) who chose promotion of regime change.

Iranian Americans differ in their views as to what would be the best course of action for the U.S. to take towards Iran. Forty-two percent (42%) believe either the promotion of regime change or the promotion of human rights and democracy would be in America's best interest, while thirty-five percent (35%) cite diplomatic negotiations or establishing diplomatic relations. Only three percent (3%) said that military action against Iran would be the best course of action.

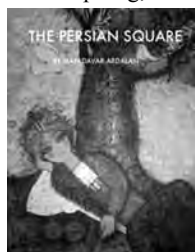
When asked about potential U.S. strikes against Iran's nuclear facilities, a total of sixty-four percent (64%) of Iranian Americans said they were opposed to such strikes, while eleven percent (11%) said they would support them and seventeen percent (17%) might support them in some circumstances. Nine percent (9%) were not sure.

A solid majority of Iranian Americans-fifty-nine percent (59%)-stated they approved of President Obama's handling of Iran's nuclear program, although they are divided about whether U.S. policy in this area will be successful. A large majority of sixty-eight percent (68%) would support the removal of sanctions on Iran if the Iranian regime reached an agreement with the U.S. and the international community concerning its nuclear program.

Most Iranian Americans do not support opposition groups or figures in Iran. In the 2013 survey, only fifteen percent (15%) said they did so. This should not be interpreted to mean that the current Iranian regime has significant support among the Iranian American population. In fact, in the 2011 PAAIA survey, sixty-seven percent (67%) of respondents stated that they wanted to see Iran become a democracy. Only two percent (2%) said that Iran should continue to be an Islamic republic.

REVIEWS

THE PERSIAN SQUARE
 Shirley Jahad with Mike Roe
 www.scpr.org, March 24th, 2013



Los Angeles has the largest Iranian community in any city outside of Iran. The vast majority arrived in a wave of immigration just over 30 years ago after the fall of the Shah. A new digital book, “The Persian Square,” traces over a century of Iranian-American experience. It was written by “Tell Me More” senior producer Iran Davar Ardalan.

In the book, Ardalan found the first Iranian-American on record — Hajj Sayyah, a world traveler who went to New York, then to San Francisco.

“He was completely enamored by American way of life and thought, and learned about democratic values, and took some of that back with him to Iran,” Ardalan said.

Sayyah was later imprisoned for helping to support the constitutional movement in Iran. He ended up taking refuge at the American consul in Tehran as an American citizen.

“Some of the stories are just fascinating how Iran and America’s cultural ties and political ties go way back, centuries.”

Before being known for its political turbulence, Iran was known for its poetry. “Ralph Waldo Emerson, back in the 1800s, helped popularize Persian poetry.” Emerson wrote a book named after a famous Iranian poet, Omar Khayyam. “It was just remarkable how Americans were enamored by Iranian culture, and especially Iranian poetry, so there’s hundreds of verses and song that are inspired by [Iranian poets].”

You can listen to one such song below, “Gems from In a Persian Garden,” performed in Camden, New Jersey on Feb. 19, 1915 by the Victor Opera Company.

The book’s name has a Los Angeles connection. In 2010, the L.A. City Council named the corner of Wilshire and Wilkins Boulevard “Persian Square,” named for the contributions that Iranian small business has made to L.A. The Nowruz Iranian new year festival takes place Sunday at the square, with thousands from around Southern California coming out to celebrate.

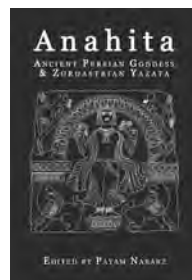
“Of course, the weather is beautiful, and Hollywood is here, and it was very attractive to Iranian-Americans who were leaving and having to live in exile, to be able to be here in Southern California, where, to a certain extent, some of the climate is similar to parts of Iran.”

Ardalan says she hopes to meet more Iranian-Americans whose stories can be included in updated versions of the book. You can see pages from the book in the photo gallery above.

ANAHITA, ANCIENT PERSIAN GODDESS AND ZOROASTRIAN YAZATA
 Edited by Payam Nabarz

The Indo-Iranian Anahita is an ancient Persian Goddess, who became a Zoroastrian Yazata (or Angel) and is still part of contemporary Zoroastrianism. Described as a beautiful maiden, who is strong, tall and pure, she is depicted as wearing a mantle embroidered with gold and as holding the baresma (sacred plant) in her hand. She is the Goddess of all the waters upon the earth, her full title being AredviSuraAnahita which means moist, mighty and immaculate (pure), and she travels on her

chariot pulled by four horses: Wind, Rain, Cloud and Sleet. Closely associated with the King’s investiture she is a Goddess of Sovereignty, thought by some to be the Persian Aphrodite, who also has some remarkable similarities to numerous other ancient goddesses, including Ishtar, Venus, Nana and Isis. Anahita: Ancient Persian Goddess and Zoroastrian Yazata is a collection of papers, art and poetry celebrating this fascinating Goddess from more than



25 esteemed international academics, Zoroastrians, artists and writers. Each in turn share their research and insights leading the reader on a journey of discovery - from the Achaemenid Royal Inscriptions featuring Anahita and Mithra, to the possible relationships between Anahita and the Dame du Lac of Arthurian Legend, representations of her in Sassanian art, William Morris Hunt through to Anahita as the pre-Christian Virgin Mother of Mithra, as well as her role in purification and purity. Studies of the Sassanian rock reliefs, hot mineral springs, and her water ritual in Mahāyāna Buddhism, in addition to an examination of the Sassanid stucco discovered in the Barz-e-qawela in Lorestan province of Iran and women in ancient Elam are all brought together illustrating the significance of Anahita throughout Persian and Middle Eastern history. This book is the most extensive study of the figure of Anahita in recent years, and includes new and never published before research. Anahita: Ancient Persian Goddess and Zoroastrian Yazata is essential reading for all those interested not just in this Goddess and her history, but also all those interested in Persian and Middle Eastern history.

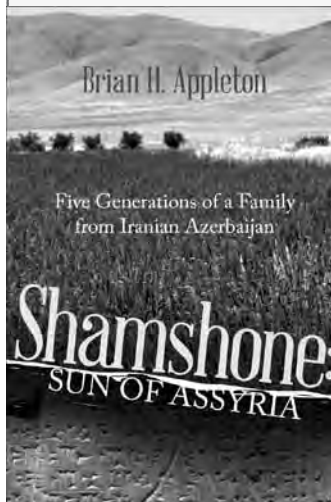
Shamshone:
 SUN OF ASSYRIA

Five Generations of a Family from Iranian Azerbaijan

Brian H. Appleton

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

John W. Limbert



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IRANDOKHT: DAUGHTERS OF IRAN

**How an accidental find prompted
an art project to document a forgotten era
before the Iranian revolution**



In the autumn of 2005, Najaf Shokri was on his way to work when he made an intriguing discovery in a rubbish bin near his house in downtown Tehran. The bin, outside a branch of the National Civil Registrations Organization, was filled with old national identification documents, all issued in 1942 and long expired.

“It was like discovering a mass grave,” says Shokri. “They could have gone away and faded into history with no remaining trace.” He decided to create an art project out of his find, a collection of ID photographs that documents a generation. Shokri called the project *Irandokht* – “daughter of Iran” – after he noticed so many women by that name among the documents. It used to be a common first name in Iran.

Shokri’s presentation focuses entirely on the pho-

tographs, revealing no names or personal information. The original meaning-making process is reversed, turned on its head as it were. The ID portraits no longer refer to specific individuals but to what we now call “meta-data”: the postures in front of the camera, the hairdos, the makeup, the outfits, and even the photographic style of the time. All this meta-data evokes the era between the second world war and the Iranian revolution, an era that already seems very distant.

Before their replacement with more modern ID cards, Iranian identification documents consisted of four-page birth certificates issued without photographs. A holder was required to add a photograph to the document before using it for various legal purposes such as marriage, the national university entrance examination

(known as the *concourse*), or voting. Though the documents Shokri found were issued in 1942, the images in *Irandokht* are largely drawn from the period between the late 1950s and the late 1970s, when most of the women pictured added their photographs to their IDs.

Between 1950 and 1978, women’s roles in Iranian society transformed dramatically. The middle class rapidly expanded, and women from different backgrounds found their way into schools and the job market. Basic primary education, once the preserve of the economic elite, spread to much of the populace. Young women in Iran’s cities either removed their hijab or never wore it in the first place.

“One can see the history of the era in these faces,” Shokri says. “Many of these women had moth-

ers who were born to rural or small-town families but were married to men who came from the cities. The urban population was expanding and life was changing. It seems despite the fact that many of these families came from more traditional backgrounds they were in the process of adapting to the more westernized life of the big cities.” A popular term from the early 1920s through the early 1940s, during the country’s preceding surge of modernization, *Irandokht* is now out of fashion both as concept and name. But that’s in part exactly why Shokri chose it for his project.

“I wanted to transform expired private documents into public heritage,” he says. *Irandokhts*, the daughters of Iran, remind us of a past - in fact not so distant - when the Middle East had a different face. **Tehran Bureau**

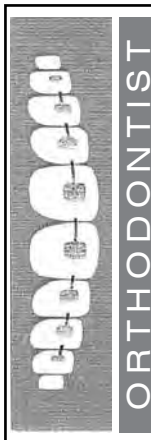
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The Art of Kevin Hosseini

Debra Hosseini



Despite his young age of eighteen, Kevin Hosseini, diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), is an incredible visual artist having created hundreds of pieces of art in his nine years of painting. In 2009-2010, Kevin was inspired by a visit to Iran, to create a series of paintings called "Impressions of Iran."

His rendition of the food, buses, landscapes and texture of Iran propelled three pieces to a prestigious venue - the Museum of Modern Art of the Ukraine. These paintings then travelled to The Good Purpose Gallery in Lee, Massachusetts where they were quickly sold.

Like most people on the autism spectrum, Kevin has trouble with social and verbal communication. When people talk to him, he sometimes is slow in responding. The filters that many of us are born with he doesn't have. He compensates through his heightened visual and sensory skills. He notices many things that others may overlook. His sense of color, texture, and placement on canvas is highly advanced.

In 2009, when Kevin was nine years of age, he was introduced to art by Colin, a therapist from the UCSB Koegel Autism Center in Santa Barbara. Art became Kevin's preferred activity and before long Kevin became fluent in different styles and techniques of painting. He enjoyed hearing about famous artists and poured over the art books that Colin brought to his home. His favorite era of art is Impressionism. He loves the thick colorful swirls of paintings by Vincent Van Gogh and the color and richness of the paintings of Paul Gauguin.

Kevin's love of Iran translates well onto canvas. He paints from photographs of his visits as well as from pictures in books and magazines about Iran. Despite having travelled to many beautiful places in the United States, Kevin prefers his trips to Iran to all others. He loves to visit with his relatives and his grandmother in his Dad's hometown of Mashad.

In 2012, Kevin was honored to have one of his acrylic paintings "Bus or Cycle" on display at the S. Dillon Ripley Center of

the Smithsonian Institute of Art. The sponsoring organizations VSA and VW of America flew Kevin and his mom to Washington D.C. for a congressional reception. The painting is now on a travelling display visiting various galleries in the United States.

Kevin is unimpressed by the receptions and accolades he receives. He prefers to listen on headphones to his favorite Iranian singers - Googoosh or Moein. When asked what he would like to do for a living, he replies, "Open an Iranian restaurant or be part of an Iranian band."

In April 2013, Kevin traveled to San Antonio, Texas, where he will be honored with an award from the Council on Exceptional Children (CEC) for his art.

Kevin's art was on display at a one-man exhibit at the Friends of the Library in Carpinteria, California in Spring 2013, the Faulkner Gallery in Santa Barbara, California, in May 2013, the Good Purpose Gallery in Lee, Massachusetts in April-May 2013. ■

Peter Afrasiabi and John Tehranian Named to Variety's 2013 Legal Impact Report Featuring Top 50 Entertainment Lawyers

Peter Afrasiabi and John Tehranian, were recognized in Variety's 2013 Legal Impact Report, which features the world's top 50 entertainment lawyers.

Variety's 2013 Legal Impact Report profiles them, along with other noted attorneys from O'Melveny & Myers, Gibson Dunn & Crutcher, Munger Tolles & Olson, Kirkland & Ellis, and Loeb & Loeb, in its list of the top litigators in the business.



An interview with

Professor Fazlollah Reza

Scientist and Electrical Engineer

Shahrokh Ahkami

Thank you for granting this interview to Persian Heritage magazine.

I thank you also, I was so pleased by your request. I am older now and do not have the strength to do what I did in my younger days. Therefore this interview is an opportunity to continue my dream. This magazine is an enormous help in educating the world and young Iranians on Persian history contributions, as well as its culture; you took on an important project. It is evident that because of your love for Iran, your courage and support from your family and friends, that your project has succeeded.

Thank you for your compliments. Please tell us about your youth and your studies as an adolescent.

I was born in Rasht, located in the northern part of Iran, by the Caspian Sea. I spent my childhood and adolescent years going to school in both Rasht and Tehran. Ever since I remember I had a love for two disciplines in school, or perhaps two languages: One is the language of math and numbers (the language of thinking) and the other Persian literature (the language of art and Persian poetry). I thoroughly learned the basics of these languages. When I look back I can say I spent my high school years loving and adoring two books. One was written by Euclid over two thousand years ago, titled **Euclidean Geometry (Euclid's Elements)** and the other the **Shahnameh, The Book of Kings**, by Ferdowsi also written over a thousand years ago. All of my thinking and writing have been embellished by these books; I was impacted less by my formal schooling, university lessons and lectures... My education came

more from something I enjoyed as early as I can remember, and that is reading and inquiring. I would learn from a number of sources, some of them I have retained and some have been replaced with new matters to learn.

What about high school?

In the year 1307 (the years I give you are according to the Persian calendar) I was a student at Cyrus High School in Tehran. There I had a teacher who was fluent in French and was well versed in that language. So, I picked up books in French, especially math books and journals, and drowned myself inside of them. They became a fundamental basis for my thoughts.

Tell us about your higher education and how it was that despite your love and interest in math and literature that you went to school to become a scientist - engineer?

During the Constitutional Revolution period in Iran, about 100 years ago, it was common for students to study Western languages and curriculums in school. After finishing high school you would aim to travel and continue your education in the West, mostly in France and then you would return and work for a governmental agency. This trend for education abroad lasted for about 10 years (back then all the heads of government were foreign educated.) This however ended in 1933 when Reza Shah, the father of the last Shah, announced that they would no longer be sending students to Europe for their education. This was because he founded Teheran University and wanted Iranian students to study in Iran. After that came WWII and education in Europe as well as travel abruptly ended.

In the year 1933 I was ready to enter Tehran University, my interest as I mentioned earlier was to attend either the Faculty of Science and Math or the Faculty of Literature. I was advised by my family members that it was best to pursue a career in engineering and that I could self educate myself in literature and mathematics. This was how I became a student of engineering.

I graduated from Tehran University in engineering in 1938 and then spent two years in compulsory military service and then taught four years at Teheran University. When the doors to seek an education

outside the country opened once again, I left for the United States through India in the year 1944. I obtained my Masters and Doctorate in engineering from Columbia University and the Polytechnic Institute of New York University.

Please tell us about your research and your literary work?

Allow me to reflect back for a few minutes. During the four years of my teaching career at Tehran University I was able to produce two memorable gifts, the writing of two books on mathematics and literature, respectively that are still used today. One is called “**The Modern Book of Geometry**” and the other, “**Contemplations on the Universe**,” both written in classical Persian style. In the first book on geometry I included a few outstanding mathematical problems and ideas. This was new to math books of that era. In the second book, for the first time in the Persian language, a novel presentation which included questions on astrophysics and relativity was introduced. Later on, the scientific atmosphere of the United States drove me to immerse myself in research and teaching for twenty years. While I have written and published numerous scholarly articles and scientific books in English the above two are what I personally feel are my fondest contribution to progressive thinking and philosophy in Persian.

In 1961 I published in English the first book in any language on “**Information Theory**,” a forerunner in the scientific area of science, the basic mathematics of computer science and space technology. This book was used in Master and Doctorate programs at universities worldwide and translated into many languages. Today, of course, changes and new discoveries in the field of science and technology are beyond what was accomplished earlier. New publications of books and journals on new discoveries and findings are the norm in the field.

What are your thoughts on the scientific and socio-economic situation before the Constitutional Revolution and the new world? What changes do you see if any?

Two hundred years ago, while the West was on its path to industrialization and growth in both social and economic

forums, Iran was simultaneously going through series of dictatorships. This limited any social movement towards growth in all aspects of life. People were more geared to old titles, awards and acclamations than new creation.

After the Constitutional Revolution, those people who had studied in the West, were placed on a pedestal and highly regarded. This was actually detrimental for Iran. As I mentioned earlier prior to WWII, Iranians would go to Europe for higher education and training. With the war however, those doors were closed, and what then became gradually available, at the end of the war was travel to the United States. I was one of the few who were able to go to the States and it was said that I was the first Iranian to teach and do research at MIT.

Of course there were obstacles, one being no one really knew about Iran. But the hurdles were tackled. What followed was a life time in search of knowledge, wisdom and education. Even to this day I find myself on this path, though I have slowed down due to old age; I still wish to accomplish a lot. One important issue that became very clear to me in the early years of my sojourn in the US was that because of the freedoms allowed and the economic comfort this was the place to dedicate oneself to academics.

At MIT, I was honored to become a member of an outstanding group of scientists at R.L.E. (Research Laboratory of Electronics). I worked amongst scientists doing research that would place them at the highest ranks in many areas of physics and math, and other scientific areas. Some, like D. Gabar went on to receive the Nobel prize, and others like Norbert Wiener were at the highest echelons in mathematics. It was such a privilege to work alongside them at the R.L.E. laboratories and be included in this group.

It is with pride and joy to know that you were the first Iranian to initiate and head a western style scientific and technical university in Iran. Can you tell me about that?

Yes, I was one of the first to do this, but I was just a messenger who helped uphold the intelligent minds and scientific enthusiasm that already existed in Iran. I had the opportunity to help build and change the educational system in the universities of Iran, which was received

enthusiastically by Iranians. At that time the world was opened to us and we were able to go to Europe and elsewhere and learn and stand as an equal to the other outstanding research minds in the world. There were so many experts. Much of what we learned about the education and curriculum offered to us, we brought back to Iran and this laid the foundation for rejuvenating the educational system in Iran. It was my hope to bring together the best of the two worlds. Throughout the world today Iranians are holding high rank positions in business, science, politics and economics. Their success should be credited to the emphasis placed on the educational system they were offered.

As Chancellor of Tehran University what changes were accomplished and how did you find the university?

It is important to note that initially I was asked to be the Chancellor of Sharif University, a brand new institution. Actually when I was invited to become Sharif’s Chancellor I was a professor at Syracuse University, where at that moment I was supervising several hundred GE and IBM engineers working on their advanced degrees. At Sharif University, we tried to implement the same program strategies and curriculum of ideas that were used at the best universities in the U.S. such as M.I.T. We looked hard at the old programs that were practiced before the war and tried to add new procedures. It was our success at Sharif that led me to Tehran University. I was asked to implement the same program strategies and curriculum into this university. We invited 100-150 young Iranian educators from all over Europe and United States to come back to Tehran. The new academics replaced part of the old faculty at the university. We started a two semester calendar at the university and introduced idea and subject specific research programs. What was important to me was to have the students become creative, rather than copiers, translators or note takers. With the help of all colleagues we started the link between the best schools all over the world and the universities in Iran. The intercultural and intellectual exchange of ideas began to fast forward between Iran and the rest of the world.

Our governments throughout the years have been bogged down with problems and setbacks. Years of dictatorships and the prevention of free speech

and free press hindered our capabilities. The authorities seemed to be less aware of what was going on in the government and leadership. Sadly, it often seemed that there was loss of perspective of what was happening within Iran. This environment made me realize that perhaps the circumstances for change were not ideal at that time. Initially they offered me an ambassadorship to UNESCO or the Presidency of the Iranian Academy of Sciences and Arts. I opted to go to UNESCO in Paris where in addition I was offered a teaching and research opportunity at the University of Paris. After five years I was offered an ambassadorship to Canada. I accepted this and continued to teach and do research at McGill University and Concordia University. I kept this position for many years.

I want to go back for a moment when you were discussing the connection between Iran and the Western universities.

Yes. Our lack of scientific information from the West goes back as far or maybe even before Galileo and lasted 400 years. During their lifetimes our three famous scientists Sheikh Bahaie, Molla Sadra and Mir Fendereski were not aware of Galileo's premises and research findings. Of course, neither was Galileo aware of them! During the Constitutional Revolution which encompassed a movement towards freedom of press we were far from the level of Western creative research. However, we excelled in literature. Books used in mathematics and sciences were not original but rather copies of Western textbooks. The West was still the creator. Even for thirty years after Tehran University's inception (founded in the European style) the emphasis was still not on scientific research. In the West, after completing their education most graduates in medicine, science etc. would continue to write or do research in their field. This did not happen in Iran. Once the formal education was complete, be it foreign or domestic, no additional papers or research happened or it was infrequently. Their thesis for graduation was often their last writing.

When invited to Tehran University I tried to take the Persian misleading word for "graduation" (*faregh-al-tahsil*) out of their academic vocabulary. I tried to emphasize that their research and education must continue lifelong. I am happy to say that this seed that I planted for research in

Iran continues to thrive today. And so, after 400 years of being left out of the scientific loop, Iran is making its way forward and today research, not copying, is at the forefront. This is also taking place in all the sciences and medicine. I am honored to still be recognized for implementing this endeavor in Iranian education.

Let us change the subject and speak of poetry and literature. You are well versed on this and have written many articles and books on the subject. Tell us about this.

The beautiful poetry of Iran, (Persia) is penetrating and has an awakening melody. It talks about, love, beauty, hope, creativity and all imaginable beauty of the universe. It can be far surpass any formal books in any place in the world. I analyze this in my books: *Hadith Arezoomandi*, and *Ferdowsi, King of Epics*. In most of my writing I refer back to Hafez, Rumi- Molana, Sa'adi, Omar Khayam and Ferdowsi.

Can you explain the relationship between literature, poetry, math and science?

This is a question that requires a very lengthy answer. But I will try to provide a brief answer or summary. Forty years ago I wrote many articles and books on this subject. I would refer any readers who are interested to a list of my Persian contributions. In summary pure science tends to have a mechanical structure. A thinker combines his thoughts with the element of understanding mathematics, which is the key to comprehension.

Science and math contain the essence of thought, but any common literature without thought tends to be meaningless. If you are flying through the air and look down you will see fields with both flowers and weeds. But because of the height you are at, you cannot differentiate between the two. They become mixed together. Ordinary, elementary poetry is like this, a mixture of culture, art, and random thought. The poetry of our great poets is eternal, as it is void of weeds.

You mentioned the friend we have in common, the late Professor Hashtrouidi. Indeed, he was a mathematician also very versed in literature.

Do you have any words of wisdom for our youth?



Future success of any individual depends on their expertise in a subject and how they manage it. It was the discipline in the West that allowed them to become successful. We must aim for a balance between freedom and respect for our laws which are the foundation of civilization. This could eventually eradicate greed and poverty. Some sublime poets like Ferdowsi and Molaana (Rumi), or Hafez have beautiful poems which are endowed with great wisdom, and adorned with exquisite artistic symbols. In any interpretation, of such poetry, we must try to avoid lack of precision, exaggeration, idol worshipping, selfishness, etc.

We should not replace old Eastern icons with new Western icons.

And do you have any words for Iranians in general?

Yes, it is based on what I respectfully stated above. This is for the young and old. Again we must learn always not to be caught up with the pomp and circumstance that surround our achievements. Many statues were built in the east after the success of individuals and many of those statues have been beaten to the ground. So be humble and be willing to give back to your society. Do not dwell on economic gain and title. But should you become wealthy use that money wisely to contribute to society like Bill Gates, to try to make the world a better place.

And finally always remember the foundation of your heritage, Persian language, culture and literature is in the heart of all of us and was the foundation of our history.

Thank you for this interview and allowing me to contribute something to Persian Heritage.

Could the Almaty talks have been the turning point the international community has so long been yearning for?

“Useful” and “realistic” are two words not generally used when characterizing Iranian nuclear negotiations, yet that’s exactly how American and Iranian officials labeled the Almaty talks that concluded on February 27th. Walking away from Kazakhstan, there appears to be a blooming, yet remote, possibility that Iran and the world powers have struck a common cord with an agreement on new rounds of auspicious talks in the coming months. International statesmen directly involved with the negotiations have privately expressed a measured sense of hopefulness that the most recent round of talks might possibly lead to the elusive concessions both parties have long been waiting for since the escalation of this diplomatic row. Such a small-scale agreement among the two parties is a well-deserved sight for sore eyes.

With renewed talks scheduled for March and April, the P5+1 and Iran seem to be heading toward an unprecedented and publicized diplomatic route which is the only legitimate way to handle an issue of this magnitude. Yet, as this precious flame of diplomatic opportunity weakly flickers in its infancy, the immediate threat of its extinguishment is ever-present as a result of the violent winds fanned by pro-Israeli lobbyists, led by the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and the Foundation for Defense of Democracy (FDD),

who detest any proposition of non-aggressive measures pertaining to Iran. Much to the dismay of rational thinking high-level officials, immediately following the groundbreaking talks in Almaty, Ed Royce (R-CA), Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and his equally hawkish House colleague, Eliot Engel (D-NY), introduced yet another hard-line bill against Iran, adding to their ever-growing anti-Iran legislative history.

of their time away from their perpetual Iran-bashing, they would come to the conclusion that sanctions did not deter Cuba, North Korea, Pakistan, India and pre-US invasion Iraq from pursuing their domestically developed agendas.

Punctuating sanctions’ ineffectiveness, the Supreme Leader of Iran, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and many of his fellow influential policymakers have publicly rebuked renewed American economic

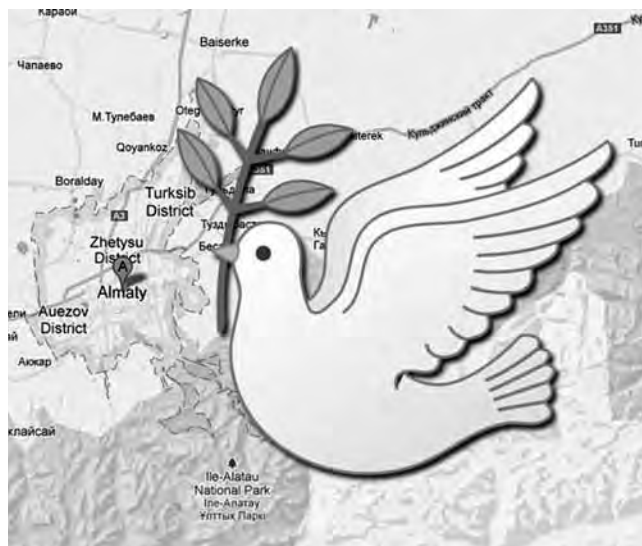
tially alienate Iranian leadership from talks for good, forcing their hand to acquire a nuclear warhead.

As a second-term president, Mr. Obama finds himself comfortably situated in a very favorable circumstance permitting him to tackle head-on what many regard as the United States’ most pressing foreign policy issue. Immune to the election cycle’s constant scrutiny, President Obama must invest a large portion of his political capital in an effort to resolve the Iranian nuclear issue once and for all, giving future administrations an opportunity to allocate their time, capital, and personnel to more pressing and tangible threats such as the rise of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and the Islamic Maghreb as well as newly emerging dangers stemming from the deteriorating Syrian conflict which all threaten to disrupt the stability of the region, not to mention the 65 year-old plight of Palestinians who continue a life in constant limbo and uncertainty.

In Tehran, officials need to come to terms with realizing that the current American administration is the single most friendly president and cabinet to reside at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue since the overthrow of the Shah. Shortly after winning his historic presidential bid in 2008, President Barak Hussein Obama went so far as to offer a new direction in American-Iranian relations announcing the United States seeks engagement with Iran that is “honest and grounded in mutual respect.” Such language is a sharp departure from the pugnacious language of the Bush administration which

The Promise of Almaty

OMID IRANI



The proposed bill would seek to strengthen existing sanctions against the Iranian government, with measures that, if passed, would essentially position Iran face-to-face with a comprehensive commercial and financial embargo. Sadly, these two legislators and all those who so strongly advocate for Iranian sanctions are either ignorant of history or simply refuse to learn from it. If such esteemed individuals reappportioned a remote amount

restrictions referring to them as “a gun to [their] heads.” Despite such staunch resentment toward these measures, Iran was still, surprisingly, willing to cooperate with the P5+1’s demands and protract the Almaty talks for more meetings anticipating an appropriate resolution. Talks of intensifying punitive measures against Iran at such a fragile junction threatens to unravel the very foundation established during the two-day talks and could poten-

infamously branded Iran as part of the “axis of evil.”

President Obama, flanked by Secretary of State John Kerry and Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, offers Iran the greatest possibility for a peaceful resolution to this often hostile predicament. Despite ratcheting up sanctions which have decimated Iranian exports, the rial’s value, and the attainability of medical resources, this administration has, on numerous occasions, attempted to engage the Iranians through diplomatic channels in the face of public and private pressure not to do so. In what can best be described as an unimaginable offer during the Bush era, Vice President Biden recently proposed the idea of unconditional unilateral talks to Iran in hopes of

relaxing the tension between these two feuding nations, a course then Senator Hagel strongly urged President Bush to pursue in 2007 to no avail. President Obama’s recruitment of a man with an extensive track record of lucidity and rationality towards Iran speaks volumes about his intentions in the coming years. Iran ought to read the tea leaves and truly embark on a committed path of negotiations with the United States, provided the latter also acts in good faith, as the current atmosphere seems to provide everyone with the most optimal window for a resolution.

The P5+1 and Iran must responsibly seize this rare opportunity and wisely establish a precedent for which consensual reductions in

animosity and hostility, both overt as well as covert, becomes a long-term staple in dealings with one another. For too long, the route of coercion and intimidation has been used relative to Iran yielding no desirable outcome, conversely, at this time a more mature and established approach is slowly taking shape in the form of talks which are delightfully void of previous absolutist demands and rejectionist ideologies.

After countless squandered negotiations, emerging optimism of bilateral concessions may seem to be a discernible reality, albeit slowly. At a time when international sanctions are visibly crippling the Iranian economy, leadership may be hospitable to a scenario

whereby it can save face by preserving its entitlement to harness nuclear energy, while simultaneously, alleviating a bulk of its privations. With ostensible domestic strife among the political hierarchy tarnishing the Iranian image at home and abroad Mr. Khamenei must judiciously weigh his options to attain a resolution to this decades-old standoff, which re-invites Iran into the community of nations.

Payvand News, 03/14/13

Omid Irani is a student at Seton Hall University pursuing a major in Political Science and a minor in History. He has written several articles analyzing Iran’s nuclear issue with respect to U.S. and international sanctions thereon.

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(U.S. Funds only, please)

Warsaw (PMN)—Isfahan is best known for its architecture. It is so beautiful, Iranians say, that to visit the city is to see “half the world.” And, Isfahan is famous for its carpets in classical Persian court styles. But, in Poland, the city is known for still something else. It is “Isfahan – the City of Polish Children” [“Isfahan – Miasto Dzieci Polskich”]

In June 2008, the Polish postal service issued a stamp that explained why.

The stamp shows a small boy dressed in a cadet’s uniform. Draped behind him is an Isfahan carpet emblazoned with the Polish eagle. And next to him is the city’s nickname in Polish: “Isfahan - Miasto Dzieci Polskich.”

The stamp commemorates two things: a huge tragedy in Poland’s history, and how Iran helped rescue some of the victims. But to understand the whole story, which today is largely forgotten outside Poland, one must go back to the very start of World War II.

In 1939, Germany and the Soviet Union attacked Poland and divided it between them. Both the Nazis and Soviets sent huge numbers of Poland’s elite to prisons and labor camps. But, the Soviets went a step further. They deported some 1.5 million Polish citizens to distant points in Siberia and Central Asia.

The deportations of military families, police, doctors, teachers, and anyone else suspected of patriotic feelings were intended to simplify the Polish territory’s incorporation into the Soviet Union. It also provided more laborers for the Soviet Union’s collective farms as Moscow prepared for an inevitable war with Germany.

Then, after forcibly settling all these families and, in the meantime, executing some 20,000 Polish officers held in prison camps, the Soviet leaders suddenly changed their strategy. As the war began with Germany in the summer of 1941, they decided to raise an army instead from among the thousands of still interned Polish soldiers. And to improve the mood, they granted an “amnesty” to all Polish deportees.

The result was one of the epic journeys of World War II. The new Polish army, under an agreement between Moscow and the exiled Polish government in London, was to be sent to the North African front to fight alongside the British. So the Army assembled just north of the border with Iran, on the road to the Middle East. And it was there, at bases in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan that tens

An Iranian City Is Known As: THE CITY OF POLISH CHILDREN

POLONIA TODAYONLINE



of thousands of deported Polish families headed in hopes of rejoining the soldiers.

But for the families to succeed, they first had to escape the farms they had been assigned to (and many local bosses refused to release them), have money to buy train tickets, and travel for months from Siberia to the south under appalling conditions.

Parents unable to go farther gave their children to others who could. And as the journey went on, the number of orphans multiplied, to the point that the Polish army reception centers had to set up special orphanages to accommodate them all.

The Polish army, known as Anders Army for its commander General W. Anders, crossed into Iran by ship across the Caspian or by road from Turkmenistan at the end of 1942. The exodus numbered 115,000, composed of 45,000 soldiers,



Polish cemetery in Anzali, Gilan

37,000 civilian adults, and 18,000 children. Just after they crossed, the Soviet government closed the border again, preventing any more of the some 1 million Polish citizens still in the USSR from leaving.

For those Poles who reached Iran, after thousands died along the way, the emotions were overwhelming. Ironically, the Poles had reached a country that itself had been occupied in late 1941 by Russia and Britain. They allies did so to secure the oil fields and keep Iran open as a supply route to the Soviet army. Reza Shah Pahlavi, who had earlier brought Iran closer to Germany, was in exile in South Africa and his son was on the throne in his place.

However, if Iranians resented the Russian and the British presence, they were sympathetic to the Polish refugees and welcomed them. Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi opened his private pool to the orphans. Polish soldiers saluted Persian officers when they passed in the street. And, over time, all the orphans were relocated to Isfahan along with many Polish families because the beauty of the city was thought to be conducive to their physical and mental health.

After the Polish Army left for the Middle East, the families and children stayed on. From 1942 to 1945, there were 2,590 Polish children in Isfahan below the age of seven, living in what became a lively community, which was very interested in Iranian culture.

During this time, Polish academicians in Isfahan began an Institute of Iranian Studies. And the carpet in the background of the commemorative postage stamp was woven by Polish girls in the Isfahan school of weaving.

At the end of the war, the refugees went on to Britain or to British colonies, or to the United States and Australia. But, due to a final twist of fate, none returned to Poland. That was because the Allied leaders had agreed at a meeting in Tehran in 1943 to put Poland in the Soviet Union’s orbit. It remained there until 1989.

The Polish postage stamp issued in 2008 recalls all this history. One of the orphans, Przemek Stojakowski, is the boy on the postage stamp. On the First Day Cover that accompanies the stamp, the names of just a few of the hundreds of other orphaned children are also printed.

The stamp helps to explain several other things, too, including why Dariusz remains a popular name today for Polish boys. ■

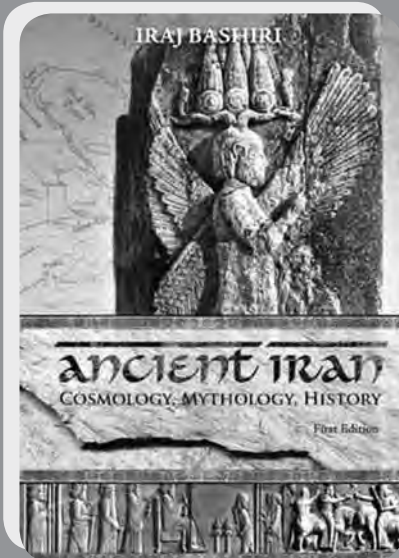
ANCIENT IRAN: COSMOLOGY, MYTHOLOGY, HISTORY

By: Dr. Iraj Bashiri

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

The book is divided into three parts. The first part examines cosmology, concentrating on *Ahura Mazda* and the *Ahuric* order that emanates from him. The next section addresses mythology and describes how the rulership of hero-saints promoted the *farr*, culminating in the unique creed of Zoroaster. The final section tells the history of pre-Islamic Iran. It begins with a study of life on the plateau, moves on to the stages of empire and concludes with the rule of the Parthians and Sassanids.

Additionally, through a new interpretation of Firdowsi's *Shahname*, the volume shows how the prophet Zoroaster reorganized Mazdian cosmology to fit the ethical, philosophical, and sociological dynamics of Achaemenid and Sassanid Iran.

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

The Ishraqi Philosophy of Jalal al-Din Rumi

The Fiction of Sadeq Hedayat

Prominent Tajik Figures of the Twentieth Century

Samanids and the Revival of the Civilization of Iranian Peoples.



A MONOLOGUE

ALEXANDER TAMRAZ

I am not afraid of passing away, I am only ashamed of those who are still alive.

I have no time to read books, but I like to buy them and make love with them.

I wish to have been created as a statue, and you too, in order to live together in peace.

Life is as a duel, hence the victory is so hard that even Pushkin and Lermontov were defeated.

History is made of dead people like Plato, Victor Hugo, Jean Jacques Rousseau and Einstein, and thousands of others like them, not by live elites.

I prefer to give not to receive.

Day and night the earth circles around the sun but never says: thank you.

The theater is pulse of life beating on a stage.

When somebody talks too much he speaks foolish and if one writes too much he writes fiddle-faddle.

Freedom is an imagination that folks are looking for it in today's society.

The best book is one that when you read it you never forget, but worst is the one, you forget after you read it once, twice, even for the third time.

I am unhappy for bad things I have done, and unhappy for good things I have not done.

Existence is not to exist because if it was we couldn't say nonexistence exists.

If I would die, I would never wish to be born.

Nowadays there is competition between oldies. If somebody dies later he is winner.

The most cruel thing in the world is a clock. It advances without mercy.

To grow into habit is the worst habit.

There is only one thing that humankind wishes, dyeing without wishing it.

When you want the time to pass fast it goes slow, and if slow it goes fast.

I wish to live up to fifty, and after that not die.

The best book is the one not to want to be finished, but bad one that ends soon.

People, when I or you die become happy, because they are still alive.

Listening is much better than talking.

My wife has two characters, if you do something bad she never forgets, but if you do your best she will forget at once.

My wife never agree with me, even if I agree with her.

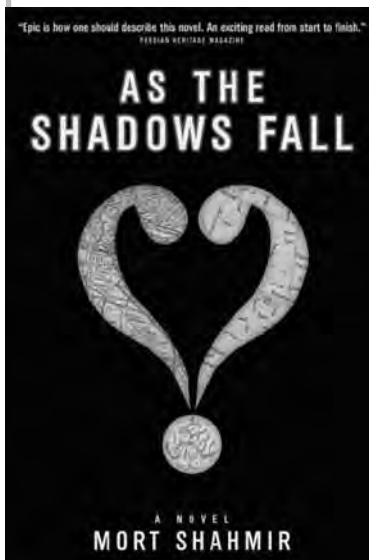
CORRECTION

Please note the article "Making Ghelye Mahi" located on page 28 of the Spring Edition was written by Tori Egberman.

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**

Abu Ali Sina (Avecenna)

Abu Ali al-Hussain-IbnAbdallahIbnSina was a Persian physician and philosopher. He was born in 980 A.D. at Afshana near Bukhara then capital of the Samanid Dynasty. He is a Persian polymath, who wrote almost 450 treatises on a wide range of subjects, of which around 240 have survived. In particular, 150 of his surviving treatises concentrate on philosophy and 40 of them concentrate on medicine.

His most famous works are The Book of Healing, a vast philosophical and scientific encyclopedia, and The Canon of Medicine, which was a standard medical text at many medieval universities. The Canon of Medicine was used as a text-book in the universities of Montpellier and Leuven as late as 1650. IbnSina's Canon of Medicine provides a complete system of medicine according to the principles of Galen (and Hippocrates).

His corpus also includes writing on philosophy, astronomy, alchemy, geology, psychology, Islamic theology, logic, mathematics, physics, as well as poetry. He is regarded as the most famous and influential polymath of the Islamic Golden Age.

IbnSina also contributed to mathematics, physics, music and other fields. He explained the "casting out of nines" and its application to the verification of squares and cubes. He made several astronomical observations, and devised a contrivance similar to the venire, to increase the precision of instrumental readings. In physics, his contribution comprised the study of different forms of energy, heat, light and mechanical, and such concepts as force, vacuum and infinity. He made the important observation that if the perception of light is due to the emission of some sort of particles by the luminous source, the speed of light must be finite. He propounded an interconnection between time and motion, and also made investigations on specific gravity and used an air thermometer.

In the field of music, his contribution was an improvement over Farabi's work and was far ahead of knowledge prevailing else-where on the subject. Doubling with the fourth and fifth was a 'great' step towards the harmonic system and doubling with the third seems to have also been allowed. Ibn-Sina observed that in the series of consonances represented by $(n + 1)/n$, the ear is unable to distinguish them when $n = 45$. In the field of chemistry, he did not believe in the possibility of chemical transmutation because, in his opinion, the metals differed in a fundamental sense. These views were radically opposed to those prevailing at the time. His treatise on minerals was one of the "main" sources of geology of the Christian encyclopedists of the thirteenth century. Besides Shifa his well-known treatises in philosophy are al-Najat and Isharat. ■



My Journey in Life

Bahar Bastani

*Oh, Saghi, who distribute the eternal wine,
Bring me a cup of your pure and clear wine.*

*Free from the world and its earthly attachment,
I can now fly high with eagles in a magical enchantment.*

*In this world, I had many moments of happiness and sadness,
Wondered in its bewilderments, confusions, and madness.*

*As a child, I was preoccupied with my playful games,
Life was filled with joy and happiness, dreams
and wonderful games.*

*When I reached the thirties and forties of my age,
I got consumed with work and wealth, like others in that age.*

*Working hard, taking advantage of the energy
of my youthful age,
Like a nightingale wandering between flowerbeds,
searching for a golden cage.*

*Now married, with a beautiful wife and children,
more wealth and fame,
I was drowned in daily life, not seeing its wonderful game.*

*When I passed through my sixties and seventies,
and as life went on,
I noticed declining energy and health,
and that my youth was gone.*

*However, with age I had acquired a new depth in my vision,
And could see through the mist what as a young
I couldn't see in a clear vision.*

*I had acquired an inner eye,
and a depth of vision at my old age,
That I could see on a muddy wall,
what I couldn't see in a mirror at a younger age.*

*It became clear that the waves and upheavals in our lives,
Are like dreams, filled with sorrows, laughter, joys and cries.*

*That one cannot take his wealth, fame, or his worldly state,
When it is the time to leave this earthly state.*

*That one will live on with what he has made of himself,
Through his good thoughts and deeds,
and caring beyond himself.*

*Oh, my brother, be mindful of the great value of your life,
As no gold or treasures can return you to your past life.*

*Live a life so enriched with kindness, love, care and grace,
That when leaving it, all would cry,
while you have a smile on your face.*



An Interview with
Dr. Fereydoun Ala

**Worldwide Famous Hematologist,
and honorary President of the Iranian Haemophilia
Comprehensive Care Centre in Tehran**

Shahrokh Ahkami

Thank you for this interview. Let us start with a discussion about your childhood, your environment and your late father.

My maternal family – the Gharagozlou (a spur of the Gharaghoyunlou according to Professor Minorsky), was a part of the Central Asian Oghuz from Turkistan, who were settled in Hamadan by Amir TeymourGurkani (commonly known in the West as Tamerlane), because they were warlike, and helped him in his empire-building enterprises. My grandfather Abolghassem Khan, was raised by his grandfather Mahmoud Khan Nasser ol-Molk Farmanfarma, a great favourite of Nasser ed-Din Shah, because his own father died young. Mahmoud Khan noted his grandson's love of learning and arranged for him to further his studies at Balliol College, Oxford University. Indeed, he was one of the first Moslems and the first Iranian to attend this prestigious college, which was at the height of its fame at the time. After returning to Iran, he was briefly Prime Minister, and was later appointed Regent, while Ahmad Shah Qajar was still a minor. My mother, Fatemeh was the eldest of three siblings, and she ran her father's household with an iron hand.

My father Hossein, was born in Tibilisi in 1882, where his father Prince Mohammad Ali Khan Ala'os-Saltaneh was Iranian Consul General. He was related, through his mother Azematod-DowlehSinaki, to his first cousins Ghavamos-Saltaneh, Vos-

soughod-Dowleh, and Ali Amini, and he was also more distantly related to Mossadeghos-Saltaneh. When Mohammad Ali Khan Ala'os-Saltaneh was appointed Iranian Minister at the Court of Saint James in England, Hossein was sent to pursue his secondary education at Westminster School in London. He then studied law at London University and qualified as a Barrister at the Inner Temple in 1906. Hossein perfectly mastered both the English and French languages, and could read Latin and Greek; he was an accomplished pianist, and a gifted cartoonist, who often irreverently sketched dignitaries who visited his father. He went on to become his father's 'Chef de Cabinet' when Ala'os-Saltaneh was appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs, and he virtually ran the Ministry while his father, Mohammad Ali Khan was Prime Minister in 1917.

Hossein Ala served his country for some sixty years as a Member of Parliament; diplomat; Iranian envoy to the League of Nations and later to the UNO Security Council (at the time of the 1945-46 Azarbaijan crisis); Cabinet Minister, twice Prime Minister and Minister of Court. He married Fatemeh Gharagozlou in 1927.

It was while my father was Iranian Minister Plenipotentiary in Paris that my sister Iran, and I were born. We grew up in a household, whether in France, England or Iran, where Persian, English and French were quite interchangeably spoken, in an atmosphere of perfect emotional security. Upon our return to Tehran in 1936, through Soviet Russia at the height of the second 'Terror' of Yezof, to Baku and Bandar Pahlavi (now Enzeli), we were met by my father, who was clearly proud and excited in equal measure about the radical reforms Reza Shah was undertaking to establish a modern secular state, after the rotten, impotent Qajar dynasty foundered in chaos.

Please continue with your education.

Towards the end of World War II In 1944, I was ruthlessly sent off to England as a boarder at Harrow School near London, where German V2 rockets still fell at random, sowing terror. Hossein Ala was appointed Iranian Ambassador in Washington, and Delegate to the new-found UNO Security Council in 1945, where he successfully prosecuted Iran's complaint against the Soviet Union, which was gravely threatening the independence and territorial integrity of Iran, despite Soviet machinations and the initial indifference of the US and Britain.

I joined my parents in the USA in 1946. My secondary education continued at Milton Academy, near Boston, and I went on to Harvard University as an under-graduate in 1948.

You did not follow in your father's footsteps as a profession please tell us why?

You are correct. I was studying history, it was my major. But, I had learned the virtues of service to one's country without expectation of reward, from my father, and despite my family's opposition, I decided upon a medical career late in my course. I had applied to Cornell Medical School, but this coincided with the extreme economic hardship of Dr. Mossadegh's premiership, which followed the nationalisation of Iran's oil industry, and the consequent dearth of dollar exchange put this option out of my reach financially. Instead, I went to Edinburgh University Medical School (famed for the body-snatchers Burke and Hare), which was then considered the best medical faculty in Europe. Here,

tuition fees were an astonishing £300 Pounds Sterling per year! After qualifying MB ChB in 1960, and completing my junior posts at the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, I obtained a trainee research grant from the Sir Henry Wellcome Trust, and became involved in studying the haematological sequelae of intestinal malabsorption in Edinburgh. After passing the Membership of the Royal College of Physicians examination (in internal medicine and haematology) – the first Iranian to do so, I continued my post-graduate studies at the Haematology Department of the Royal Post-Graduate Medical School, Hammersmith Hospital, in London, under the aegis of the famed Professor Sir John Dacie.

When did you return to Iran?

I returned to Iran in 1965, and joined the medical faculty at Tehran University Pahlavi Hospital (now Emam Khomeini Medical Centre), with the princely salary of 600 Tomans a month! Here, I was instrumental in establishing the first Department of Clinical Haematology in Iran, with its own associated laboratories, thanks to a further personal grant from the Wellcome Trust, which enabled me to purchase all the equipment needed to create a modern department. Among many other areas of interest, I became interested in blood coagulation and inherited defects of haemostasis such as Haemophilia – orphan disorders which had almost no local advocates at the time.

It was exciting to make definitive laboratory diagnoses of Haemophilia A or B (the form Queen Victoria passed on to most of the royal families of Europe, including the little Tsarevich Alexei), von Willebrand's Disease, or other less common bleeding disorders, for the first time in Iran. However, providing treatment for these unfortunate children crippled by repeated bleeding into their joints, was another matter. The only blood or plasma available anywhere in Iran, whether in public, teaching, military or private hospitals, was obtained from wretched blood sellers, drawn from the dregs of urban society, and suffering from anaemia, covert hepatitis or drug-addiction, who were herded by shady 'agents'. Quite apart from the ethical implications of buying and selling living human cells as a commodity, this blood also constituted a grave health hazard to society. Despite these problems, we initially had little choice but to use plasma from these professional donors to manufacture a home-made Factor VIII concentrate, just discovered by Dr. Judith Poole in the US, called 'Cryoprecipitate'. By stock-piling this material, we were able to allow severe haemophiliacs to undergo major orthopaedic, gastro-intestinal or pulmonary surgery in safety, and without abnormal bleeding – a most unusual outcome anywhere in the world at that time.

Indeed, it was the plight of my beloved Haemophiliacs, as well as the scandalous inadequacies of the blood services, which served as a spur for the creation of a centralised, national blood transfusion service, based entirely upon purely altruistic, voluntary, non-remunerated blood donations from safe urban blood donors, and taking blood transfusion out of the hands of commerce, into the realm of medicine and science, altruism and high ethical standards. Above all, a rapidly escalating urban population, the increasing sophistication of medicine and surgery, frequent road traffic accidents, and the growing expectations of the public, called for a better, less fragmented, safer and more scientific blood service.

Is this the reason the blood bank was established?

Yes, with the support of the Shah and under the High Patronage of Shahbanu Farah, a decree was passed through Parliament, establishing the Iranian National Blood Transfusion Service (INBTS) as a legal entity. A Board of Trustees was appointed, and with an initial annual budget of 800,000 Tomans, the former Tehran Clinic on Avenue Villa (now Ostad Nejatollahi) was rented from the public-spirited Mrs. Firouzgar, and radically altered to create an attractive, clean, modern centre with the best automated equipment we could afford, which formed a profound contrast to the tawdry, filthy blood centres so well illustrated in the brilliant Darioush Mehrjou'i film, 'Dayereye Mina'.

The most important equipment of course, was the staff, who had to be selected and trained to the highest standards for their specialised tasks, either in Iran or abroad. Yet our most challenging task was to inform, motivate and recruit voluntary blood donors from the urban population. To mobilise a cynical, suspicious public; to gain their trust and confidence, and persuade them that to give blood on a regular basis is entirely safe, was formidably difficult. 'Why does not the government import blood in compute tins, like the United Arab Emirates – after all, we are a rich country?' 'Let the poor give blood – we do not really need the money.' 'I am too weak to give blood...' Very quickly however, these fears and suspicions were overcome; people realised that if they wanted safe blood for their family and themselves, merely spending government money or promulgating official decrees would accomplish nothing. They had to roll up their sleeves and give blood for their community. This was the social dimension of transfusion science and medicine, which represented a veritable revolution in public thinking and attitudes, and served as a surrogate for a burgeoning democratic movement, with citizens voluntarily undertaking their civic duties and responsibilities towards society without coercion or remuneration – an unprecedented attitude indeed among urban Iranians, who are ever loath to trust each other, and particularly their government. Our slogan at the time was: "From the people, to the people".

We started at the very top, conducting mobile donor sessions in Ministries, Universities, religious establishments, the Boy Scouts, factories....everywhere. Very soon after the creation of the INBTS, Tehran became self-sufficient in blood from volunteers, and the blood-selling 'agents' were bankrupted. However, being pragmatic businessmen, they took up fish or mink farming instead.

The INBTS initiated Histocompatibility Testing to underpin the first kidney transplants in Iran; it established a frozen blood section to store rare blood for transfusion; it created the first Clinical Immunology Department in the country; it was the first to start testing for Viral Hepatitis in Iran; it introduced multiple PVC blood bags instead of glass bottles, to allow for separation of the cellular components of blood and 'Component Therapy', in a sterile, closed system. Fractionation of plasma into Albumin, Immune Globulin (including the unique specific anti-Rabies Immune Globulin), Anti-Haemophilic Globulin, was initiated as a 'pilot' project; the potent anti-viral agent, Leucocytic Interferon derived from white cells separated from whole blood, was manufactured as another pilot project, to treat corneal dendritic ulcers – a major cause of blindness in Iran.

Perhaps the most unique and significant achievement of the fledgling INBTS, was to obtain the support of the highest authority for merging the Armed Forces Blood Service with our Service in the civil sector. It was argued that the service provided by the Armed Forces was mediocre and inadequate; that



in case of national disaster or conflict, neither service could cope singlehanded, and that while officers never provided leadership in giving blood themselves, the lowest ranks were coerced into donation, and 'rewarded' with 72 hours leave, confirming their mistaken view that giving blood was harmful.

How did the government react to this?

Despite some resistance from senior military staff, the agreement of the Shah, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, to this proposal, swept aside any impediment, and the two services were merged, giving INBTS access to donors among the military throughout the country. In consequence, both junior and senior officers voluntarily donated their blood for the first time, on a regular basis.

Having consolidated the establishment of the National Centre in Tehran, it was then time to create Regional Services in the main urban centres. Shiraz was the first such centre, soon followed by Ahvaz, Mashhad, Sari, Hamadan in 1980. Although it was my feeling at the time, that Provincial Centres should be few in number, but of high quality, the current Service has created hundreds of centres throughout the country, over the past 33 years, and currently has some difficulty in maintaining high standards as a result.

After a gestation period of some two years, and only seven years of formal activity, the INBTS had succeeded in achieving a breadth and scientific standard unmatched anywhere in the Eastern Mediterranean Region and well beyond.

But you left Iran, why?

I was unfortunately compelled to leave Iran for the United Kingdom, as a matter of some urgency, in 1981.

In the United Kingdom, I was appointed Director of the National Blood Service in the West Midlands Region, a WHO Collaborating Centre in Transfusion Medicine, and the largest such centre in Britain at the time. In addition, I became Consultant Haematologist and Senior Lecturer at the Birmingham University Department of Haematology. I also continued working actively

with the World Health Organisation as a short-term consultant in transfusion medicine and science, mostly in the Eastern Mediterranean Region and Central Asian Republics.

It was not until 1999, that I returned to Iran after an absence of over nineteen years, to conduct a WHO EMRO Seminar in Blood Transfusion. I was kindly received, and have regularly returned to spend nearly half the year in Iran since.

I currently work as the Honorary President of the Iranian Comprehensive Haemophilia Care Centre (ICHCC) in Tehran, a non-governmental, non-profit clinic which was established a little over ten years ago by the Iranian Haemophilia Society, a registered charity affiliated to the World Federation of Haemophilia. Over these past ten years, the ICHCC has developed into a world-class centre for the diagnosis and treatment of inherited bleeding and thrombotic disorders, which not only sees and treats some 100 patients a day, it also publishes useful research papers in the international scientific literature. As the name implies, this centre provides out-patient diagnosis and care; genetic counselling; dental treatment; physiotherapy; orthopaedic consultation, and a hepatology clinic for patients infected with the hepatitis C virus.

We are fortunate in having a sophisticated coagulation laboratory, as well as a molecular genetics laboratory, both of which are accredited by the External Quality Assurance Scheme in Sheffield, UK. One of the most important assets of the ICHCC is a superb computerised data-base management system, designed at the centre, which covers and documents the details of every activity: patient registration; treatment; patient pedigree; genotypic analysis, etc... The software also captures information regarding drug use and expenditure, which is of value to the long-term planning of Ministry of Health and to research workers.

Latterly, international sanctions imposed upon Iran, and the blocking of international money transfers have had an increasingly adverse effect upon our access to both medication and laboratory reagents. Were it not for a small UK-registered charity I set up ten years ago in London, which is dedicated to the support of the ICHCC in Tehran, and the despatch of materials to Iran via DHL, we would soon be unable to continue our work.

You made difficult choices in your life with so many opportunities in both the United States and England you stayed in Iran. Based on your life choices how would you advise our youth?

It is difficult to advise others, each of whom has different aspirations and gifts. However, in general, one can say to young Iranians that studying assiduously to achieve the best possible qualifications is a valuable asset nobody can take from you, while riches and material possessions may be lost in this uncertain world, as many of us have discovered to our chagrin.

Many of our compatriots will have emigrated permanently, but it is incumbent upon us all never to forget our distinguished cultural heritage, and to ensure that our children and grandchildren retain their familiarity with our language and history, wherever they may live and work. Let us hope the future will permit many among our expatriate Iranian community, to return and serve their country, which needs them and their skills more than the countries where they currently reside.

Thank you again.