



# ASSOCIATION FOR IRANIAN STUDIES

انجمن ایران پژوهی

<http://associationforiranianstudies.org>

AIS Newsletter | Volume 41, Number 1 | April 2020

## EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Readers,

This newsletter reaches you at a particularly difficult time when many of us find ourselves physically isolated and worried about the fate of loved ones and perhaps also oneself. May the newsletter contribute in a small way to brighten your day and pleasantly distract you from darker musings. The AIS community is as vibrant as ever, and we have received submissions from diverse fields of study and various geographies. This edition contains a marvellous collection of research reports, about the journeys of Botanist Carl Haussknecht to Qajar Persia in the late 1860s, about diplomatic relations between China and Iran, about Soviet propaganda in Iran in the eyes of the SAVAK, about the Royal Decrees of Nādir Shāh and Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī, and about the first phase of an archaeological study conducted in Makran, Baluchistan. It also features exciting news on the highly popular special issue that recently appeared in Iranian Studies on “Medicine and Public Health in Modern Iran”, and a literary exploration of the Idea of Homeland in Modern Persian Poetry.

In other news, the current health crisis has not halted at the doorsteps of the AIS Biennial Conference originally planned for this summer, and as you will read in the president's address below, forced the conference committee to make a difficult decision. Further, AIS membership elected new council members and a new president, Naghmeh Sohrabi, who will begin her term in late 2020. Finally, as our president reported in December 2019, AIS' access to US banking services was restored in late 2019, putting an end to restrictions that made routine business both more complicated and more costly. We are relieved the limitations have been lifted, at least for now.

In closing, let me thank all contributors for their thoughtful submissions to this issue and wish everyone solace in the small gestures and wondrous occurrences that present themselves in the confined spaces many of us currently occupy.

Mirjam Künkler

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
2020

CAMRON MICHAEL AMIN  
PRESIDENT  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-DEARBORN

ALI GHEISSARI  
JOURNAL EDITOR  
UNIVERSITY OF SAN DIEGO

RIVANNE SANDLER  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

JAMES GUSTAFSON  
TREASURER  
INDIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

TOURAJ DARYAEE  
PAST-PRESIDENT  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE

NAGMEH SOHRABI  
PRESIDENT-ELECT  
BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY

COUNCIL 2020

CAMRON MICHAEL AMIN  
RIVANNE SANDLER  
TOURAJ DARYAEE  
MATTHEW P. CANEPA  
ROSE WELLMAN  
JAMES GUSTAFSON  
MARYAM MOAZZEN  
NAGHMEH SOHRABI  
FARZIN VEJDANI  
MARYAM N. SABBAGHI  
ARNOLD ALAHVERDIAN

FOR PAST COUNCILS AND  
BOARDS, PLEASE VISIT:

[HTTP://ASSOCIATIONFORIRANIANSTUDIES.ORG/  
ABOUT/OFFICERS/2019](http://associationforiranianstudies.org/about/officers/2019)

PRESIDENT’S ADDRESS

Were you thinking that you needed more time to get that conference paper ready? Well, we got you covered.

For the past few weeks, AIS Executive Committee has been making contingency plans in the event that the COVID 19 pandemic made cancellation necessary. After consultations with our Conference Chair, Miguel Angel Andres Toledo, it is time to implement those plans.

Here is what you need to know now:

- 1 • The AIS Conference scheduled for August 25-28, 2020 is cancelled.
- 2 • Registration fees for AIS 2020 will be honored at the next conference.
- 3 • The rescheduled conference will be at the University of Salamanca, Spain.
- 4 • Awardees will be announced this year, but we’ll celebrate properly at the rescheduled conference.

It is still too soon for us to offer the precise dates for the rescheduled conference. We will advise on that as soon as possible. But, let us assure you of something: the registration fee you have paid will be honored at the next conference you are able to attend. So, if, for some reason, you cannot make the rescheduled conference, you can apply your registration to the next conference.

In the coming weeks, in addition to working on rescheduling the conference, we will be studying ways to support Iranian Studies activity in the near term. I hope to present those initiatives to you soon.

For those of you who were looking forward to an AIS conference in Spain, as I most certainly was, the good news is that we can still look forward to it. Our conference will come.

In the meantime, I know every single one of you is working extra hard to support your students, your communities, and your families through this crisis. In the midst of all that, academic study - even of something so dear to us as Iranian Studies in all its forms – may seem like a misplaced priority. But that is not so. History is so often the miserable tale of disasters and suffering. But, it also the story of people like you who reclaim our common humanity with every act of learning.

I look forward to hearing about your scholarly accomplishments during this difficult time, in person; and I will. So, stay well in the meantime.

Camron Michael Amin  
AIS President

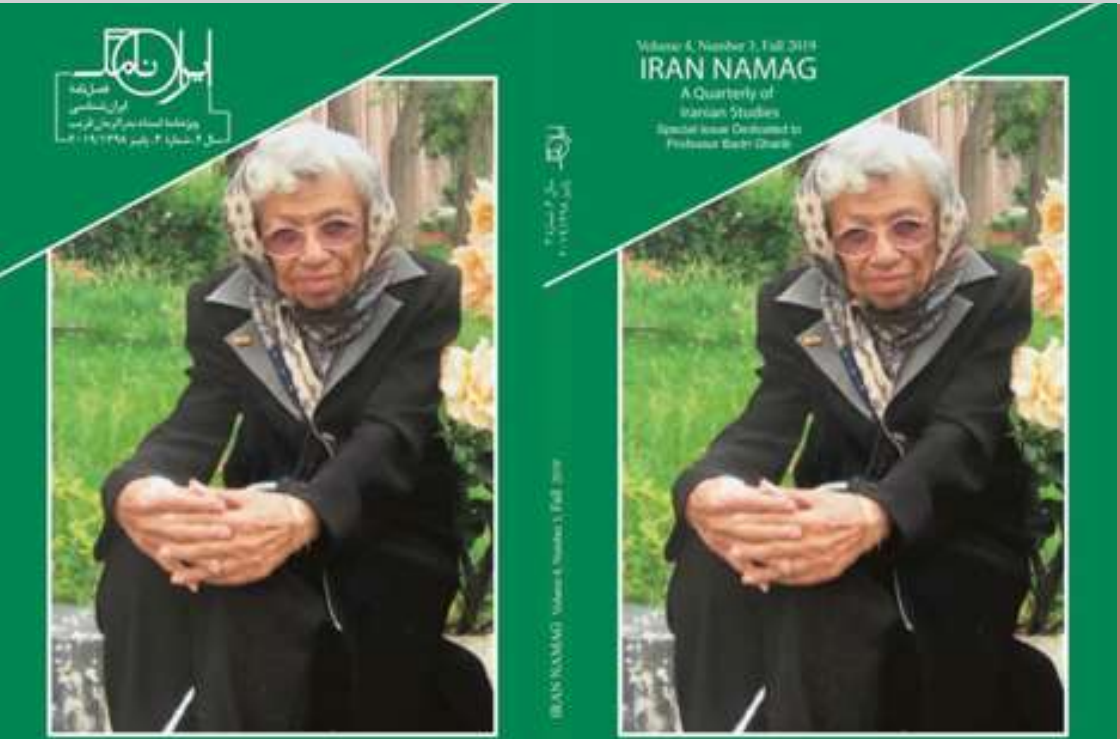
MEMBER NEWS

**Pouya Alimagham’s** monograph *Contesting the Iranian Revolution: The Green Uprisings* has been published by Cambridge University Press, 2020. The book is based on his doctoral dissertation which received the 2016 AIS Mehrdad Mashayekhi Dissertation Award.

**Frank Burrough’s** book *Patterns on a Prayer Rug* was published with Xlibris Publishers in December 2019.

**Alyssa Gabbay’s** book *Gender and Succession in Medieval and Early Modern Islam: Bilateral Descent and the Legacy of Fatima* was published by I.B. Tauris/Bloomsbury in March 2020.

**Helen Giunashvili** has published the article “Studies on the Ancient Aramaic Epigraphy of Georgia,” in: *Iran Namag*, Vol. 4: 3-4 (Fall/Winter 2019), 51-63.

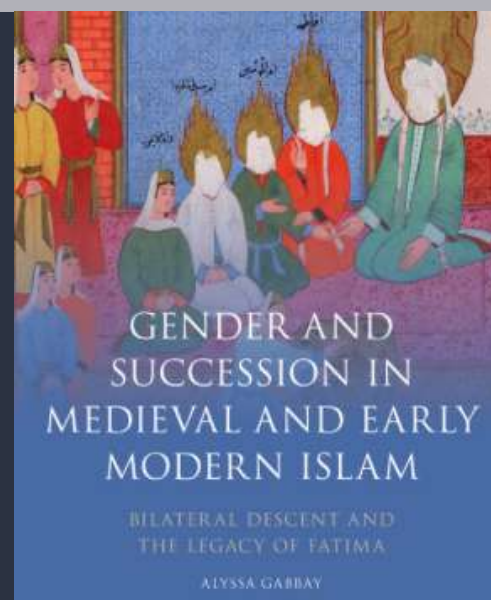
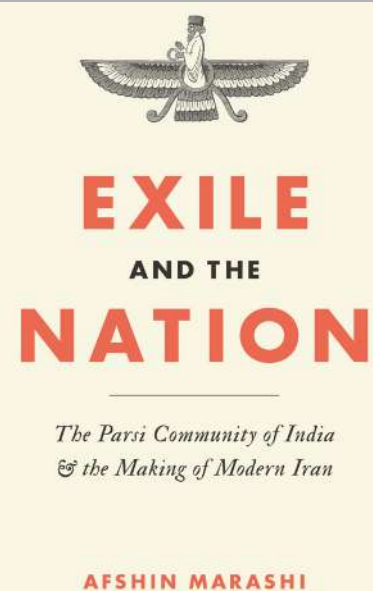




## MEMBER NEWS CONT'D

**Mohammad Ali Kadivar** has published the articles “Electoral Activism in Iran: A Mechanism for Political Change” (co-authored with Vahid Abedini), in: *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 52: 3, April 2020, pp. 493-514(22), and “The Long March: Deep Democracy in Cross-National Perspective” (co-authored with Adaner Usmani and Benjamin F. Bradlow) in: *Social Forces*, Vol. 98: 3, March 2020, PP. 1311–1338.

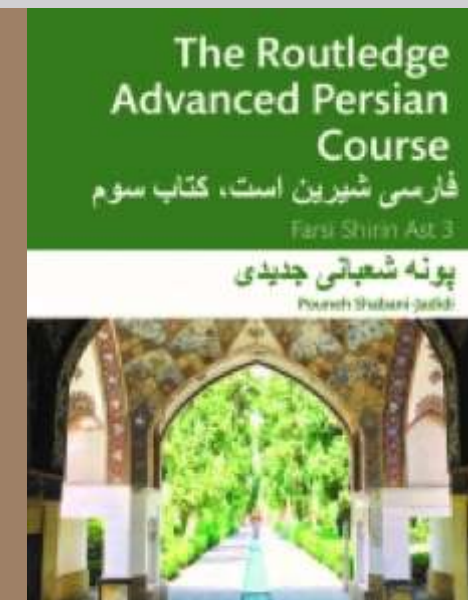
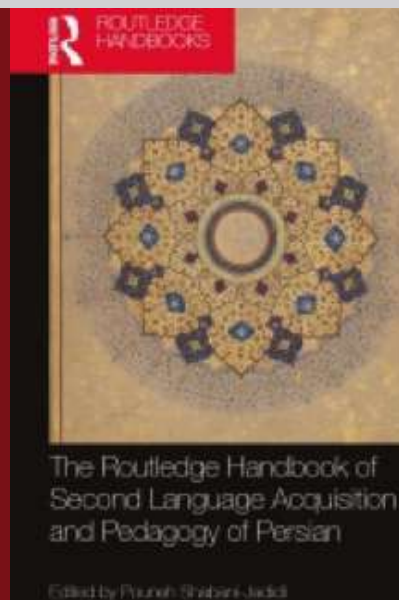
**Afshin Marashi**'s new book *Exile and the Nation. The Parsi Community of India and the Making of Modern Iran* is forthcoming with the University of Texas Press. Pre-orders through June 8th can receive a 20% discount by using the discount code MAREXI at checkout.



**Rudi Matthee** has published “Safavid Iran and the ‘Turkish Question’ or How to Avoid a War on Multiple Fronts,” in *Iranian Studies* 52, 3-4, (2019), pp. 513-42. Further, “A Safe Space for the Shah and His Women: The Practice of *Quruq* in the Safavid Period,” in *Studia Litteraria Universitatis Iagellonicae Cracoviensis*, Special Issue, Volume in Honour of Professor Anna Krasnowolska (2019), pp. 113-33. And finally, “Capitalism in Iran: Exceptionalism and Delayed Development,” in Dilip M. Menon and Kaveh Yazdani, eds., *Historical Capitalisms: Towards a Global Perspective* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2020), pp. 349-80.

**John R. Perry** was given the 2019 Lifetime Achievement Award of the American Association of Teachers of Persian (AATP).

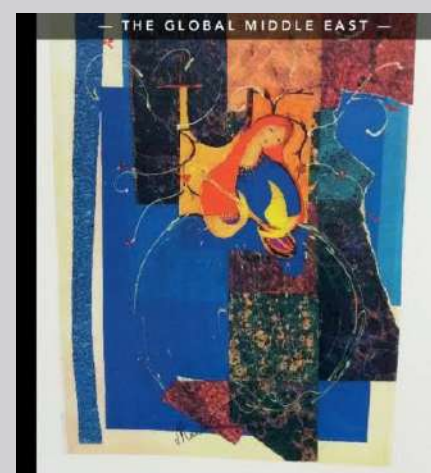
**Pouneh Shabani-Jadidi** has edited *The Routledge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition and Pedagogy of Persian*, Routledge, 2020, and published *The Routledge Advanced Persian Course: Farsi Shirin Ast III*. Routledge, 2020.



**Reza Taher-Kermani**'s monograph *The Persian Presence in Victorian Poetry* is forthcoming with Edinburgh University Press in May 2020. The book explores the variety of ways in which Persia, and the multitude of ideological, historical, cultural and political notions that it embodied, were received, circulated and appropriated in Victorian Poetry.

**Akbar Torbat** has published the book *Politics of Oil and Nuclear Technology in Iran* with Palgrave Macmillan, 2020.

**Claudia Yaghoobi**'s monograph titled *Temporary Marriage in Iran: Gender and Body Politics in Modern Iranian Film and Literature* has been published in the Global Middle East Series of Cambridge University Press. The book examines temporary marriage in Iran, not just as an institution but also as a set of practices, identities and meanings that have transformed over the course of the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries.



**Temporary Marriage in Iran**  
Gender and Body Politics in  
Modern Iranian Film and Literature  
— CLAUDIA YAGHOOBI —

## FROM THE EDITOR OF *IRANIAN STUDIES*

*Iranian Studies* • Volume 53, Numbers 1-2, January-March 2020

### Editorial Foreword

In 2018 *Iranian Studies* initiated a call for papers on the general theme of Medicine and Public Health in Modern Iran. Scholars of Iranian studies were invited to submit their contributions and new research on the general theme of the history and sociology of medicine and topics relating to public health in modern Iran.

Topics of interest included traditional medicine and medical beliefs in the nineteenth century and beyond; introduction of modern medicine and medical reforms in the twentieth century, including topics on the evolution of medical terminology and texts, institutions of medical education and training, professional setups of health care (in terms of professionalization of medicine), and medical designs and architecture; studies on epidemics, treatment plans, and prevention methods; issues relating to the health of the mind and institutions of mental healthcare; medicine and public health as represented in the arts, literature, and film; studies on addiction and substance abuse; surveys on family medicine, maternity wards, and public access to healthcare; sociology of aging and geriatric medicine; pharmaceutical production and evolution in medication market; surveys on medical laws and ordinances relating to medical and biological issues (such as birth control, gender reassignment, and stem cell research), and medical ethics (such as organ transplant and organ donation); also recent fieldwork, archival accounts, and reports on primary source material were particularly welcomed (*Iranian Studies*, 51/04, July 2018, p. 666).

The field is vast and multidisciplinary. Most of the above topics are continuously evolving and depend on a complex range of documentation and fieldwork. An additional challenge is how to take note of diverse fields and incorporate them together. Moreover, new analysis also involves the adoption of a language and mode of argumentation that is scholarly and exact yet accessible to a wider community of readership in Iranian studies. These concerns were particularly shared by many of our respondents, among them medical practitioners who had both the professional training as well as firsthand experience and exposure to social variables of medical practice.

We hope that various contributions in the special thematic section in the current issue of *Iranian Studies* will promote further research and point to new interdisciplinary directions in the study of medicine and public health in modern Iran.

**Ali Gheissari**

Editor-in-Chief, *Iranian Studies*

## SPECIAL SECTION: MEDICINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH IN MODERN IRAN HISTORICAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

### EDITORIAL

- Ali Gheissari, "Editorial Foreword."

### CONSULTING EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

- Amir A. Afkhami, "Medicine and Public Health in Modern Iran: Historical and Sociological Perspectives."

### ARTICLES

- Willem Floor, "Qal'eh-ye Mehrab Khan: The First Leprosarium in Iran."
- Bryan Sitzes, "Sanitized Modernity: Rural Public Health in Mid-Twentieth Century Khuzestan."
- Soleyman Heidari, "Iran-US Public Health Cooperative Organization (PHCO): Education, Healthcare, and Health Services in the Southwest of Iran (Fars), 1950-60."
- Alex Keivahn Smith, "The Integration of Mental Health Care in Rural Iran."
- Soraya Tremayne, "The Journey of Infertility from Private Sphere to Public Domain: From Cosmetic Surgery to Disability."
- Emily O'Dell, "Performing Trans in Post-Revolutionary Iran: Gender Transitions in Islamic Law, Theatre, and Film."

### BOOK REVIEWS

- Javad John Fatollahi, Review of Mazyar Ghiabi, *Drugs Politics: Managing Disorder in the Islamic Republic of Iran*.
- Mazyar Ghiabi, Review of Amir A. Afkhami, *A Modern Contagion: Imperialism and Public Health in Iran's Age of Cholera*.
- Arash Ghajarjazi, Review of Wendy DeSouza, *Unveiling Men: Modern Masculinities in Twentieth-Century Iran* (Gender, Culture, and Politics in the Middle East).
- Sean Widlake, Review of Alireza Doostdar, *The Iranian Metaphysicals: Explorations in Science, Islam, and the Uncanny*.
- Rudi Matthee, Review of Willem Floor, *Studies in the History of Medicine in Iran*.
- Ali Gheissari, Review of Sayyed Farid Qasemi, *Beginnings of Medical Journalism in Iran: Medical Periodicals in the Qajar period*.

### PRIMARY SOURCES, ARCHIVAL NOTES

- Amir A. Afkhami, "Mortality Matters: Sources on Population Health and Mortality during the First World War in Iran."



FROM THE EDITOR OF *IRANIAN STUDIES* CONT'D

REGULAR ARTICLES

- Dimitri Pirbari,, Nodar Mossaki & Mirza Sileman Yezdin, “A Yezidi Manuscript:— Mišūr of P’Tr Sīnī Bahrī/P’Tr Sīnī Dārānī, Its Study and Critical Analysis.”
- Artur Rodziewicz , “The Yezidi Wednesday and the Music of the Spheres.”

PRIMARY SOURCES, ARCHIVAL NOTES

- Hasmik Kirakosian, “The Orthographic Rules of the Eighteenth Century Armeno-Persian Gospels of the Matenadaran (Ms. 8492, Ms. 3044).”

IN MEMORIAM

- Simone Cristoforetti & Mazyar Ghiabi, “Gianroberto Scarcia (11 March 1933—1 July 2018), Italian Iranologist.”
- Molly Patterson, “David Morgan (1945–2019), Professor of Medieval Iran and Middle Eastern History.”

RECENT TITLES IN IRANIAN STUDIES

Volume 53		Numbers 1–2	January–March 2020
SPECIAL SECTION: MEDICINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH IN MODERN IRAN: HISTORICAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES			
EDITORIAL			
ALI GHEISSARI	Editorial Foreword	1	
CONSULTING EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION			
AMIR A. AFKHAMİ	Medicine and Public Health in Modern Iran: Historical and Sociological Perspectives	3	
ARTICLES			
WILLEM FLOOR	Qal'eh-ye Mehrab Khan: The First Leprosarium in Iran	9	
BRYAN SITZES	Sanitized Modernity: Rural Public Health in Mid-Twentieth Century Khuzestan	43	
SOLEYMAN HEIDARI	Iran-US Public Health Cooperative Organization (PHCO): Education, Healthcare, and Health Services in the Southwest of Iran (Fars), 1950–60	73	
ALEX KEIVAHN SMITH	The Integration of Mental Health Care in Rural Iran	93	
SORAYA TREMAYNE	The Journey of Infertility from Private Sphere to Public Domain: From Cosmetic Surgery to Disability	113	
EMILY O'DELL	Performing Trans in Post-Revolutionary Iran: Gender Transitions in Islamic Law, Theatre, and Film	129	
REVIEWS		165	
PRIMARY SOURCES, ARCHIVAL NOTES		201	
REGULAR ARTICLES		223	
PRIMARY SOURCES, ARCHIVAL NOTES		295	
IN MEMORIAM		331	
RECENT TITLES IN IRANIAN STUDIES		339	

2020 CENSUS

The **Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian Americans** (PAAIA), a nonpartisan nonprofit that represents the Iranian American community, asks all Americans of Iranian background to **#WriteInIranian** in the 2020 census.

The 2020 Census marks the first time in history that individuals will be able to self-identify as ethnically Iranian in the box provided for national origin. The **#WriteInIranian** campaign is encouraging all Iranian Americans and Iranians in America to fill out the census and write in ‘Iranian’ alongside their preferred racial category or categories. By writing in ‘Iranian,’ Iranian will be officially counted in ways that have a direct impact:

Representation

Responses are used to redraw legislative districts and determine how many seats your state has in the House of Representatives. Elected officials also use the data to target ethnic constituencies like the Iranian American community to solicit their feedback and votes.

Resources

Responses are used to distribute over \$675 billion to communities nationwide for infrastructure and programs, and Iranian Americas may be able to receive funding for community-specific work.

Rights

Ethnic and civil rights organizations such as PAAIA depend on ancestry data to identify and mobilize their constituencies and to monitor discrimination. Some organizations are required to provide services that address the needs of a specific ethnic community. (i.e. Persian speaking nurses).

Research

Social scientists, journalists and other researchers rely on census data to study ethnic population groups, demographic trends and educational and economic mobility.

PAIA is happy to send out a comprehensive Census Toolkit – a compilation of census resources, social media graphics, and in-depth information about the 2020 Census.

[www.paaia.org](http://www.paaia.org) | [www.writeiniranian.com](http://www.writeiniranian.com)

7

This project was made possible as a collaboration between the London Middle East Institute, the SOAS World Languages Institute and the SOAS Digital Library.



5

This report offers an overview of the contents of Haussknecht's diaries and of his contributions to the history of science, as well as a summary of his journey to Qajar Persia.



## RESEARCH REPORT CONT'D

### Biographical Notes

Heinrich Carl Haussknecht was born in 1838 in a remote area of the Prussian Kingdom and grew up in what is today Northern Thuringia. He was interested in nature and especially plants from early on, collecting them since he was 15 years old. After completing high school in Jena, Carl Haussknecht became an apprentice in different pharmacies in Thuringia. As common at the time, after having finished his apprenticeship, the young Haussknecht undertook a long journey across Germany and Switzerland, while he worked in different cities as an adjunct pharmacist. In his spare time, he collected and herborized plants. When he found a certain plant in a region where it had not been recorded before, his passion brought him in contact with leading Swiss botanists, among them the wealthy businessman Pierre Edmond Boissier (1810-1885), who owned a large collection of plants especially from the 'Orient', collected both by himself and others. Boissier invited Haussknecht to collect plants for the completion of his book *Flora Orientalis*, a work of immense importance for the knowledge of oriental plants in the 19th and 20th century. In 1865 Haussknecht began his first journey to the Middle East, followed by a second from 1866 to 1869.

After his return from the second expedition, Haussknecht settled down in Weimar, capital of the Grand Duchy of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach, where he worked as a private scholar. In 1882 he founded the Thuringian Botanical Society (which is still active today) and in 1896 built his own herbarium, Herbarium Haussknecht, one of the biggest herbaria in Germany.

He became an experienced and respected botanist for oriental plants and established an extended network with both professional and amateur botanists in Europe. Carl Haussknecht died in the year 1903 and was buried in the central cemetery of Weimar.

### Haussknecht's travel diaries

The travel diaries consist of 15 booklets, totaling almost 1000 pages. During his journeys through the Ottoman Empire and Persia, Haussknecht dedicated himself not only to botanical collections but also to topographical surveys of those landscapes that had hitherto been little known in Europe. His cartographical sketches were published in four parts by Heinrich Kiepert in Berlin in 1882. In addition, they contain very detailed descriptions of the regions visited, in scientific fields including botany, zoology, geology, geography, cartography, but also regional, social, and cultural studies and history.

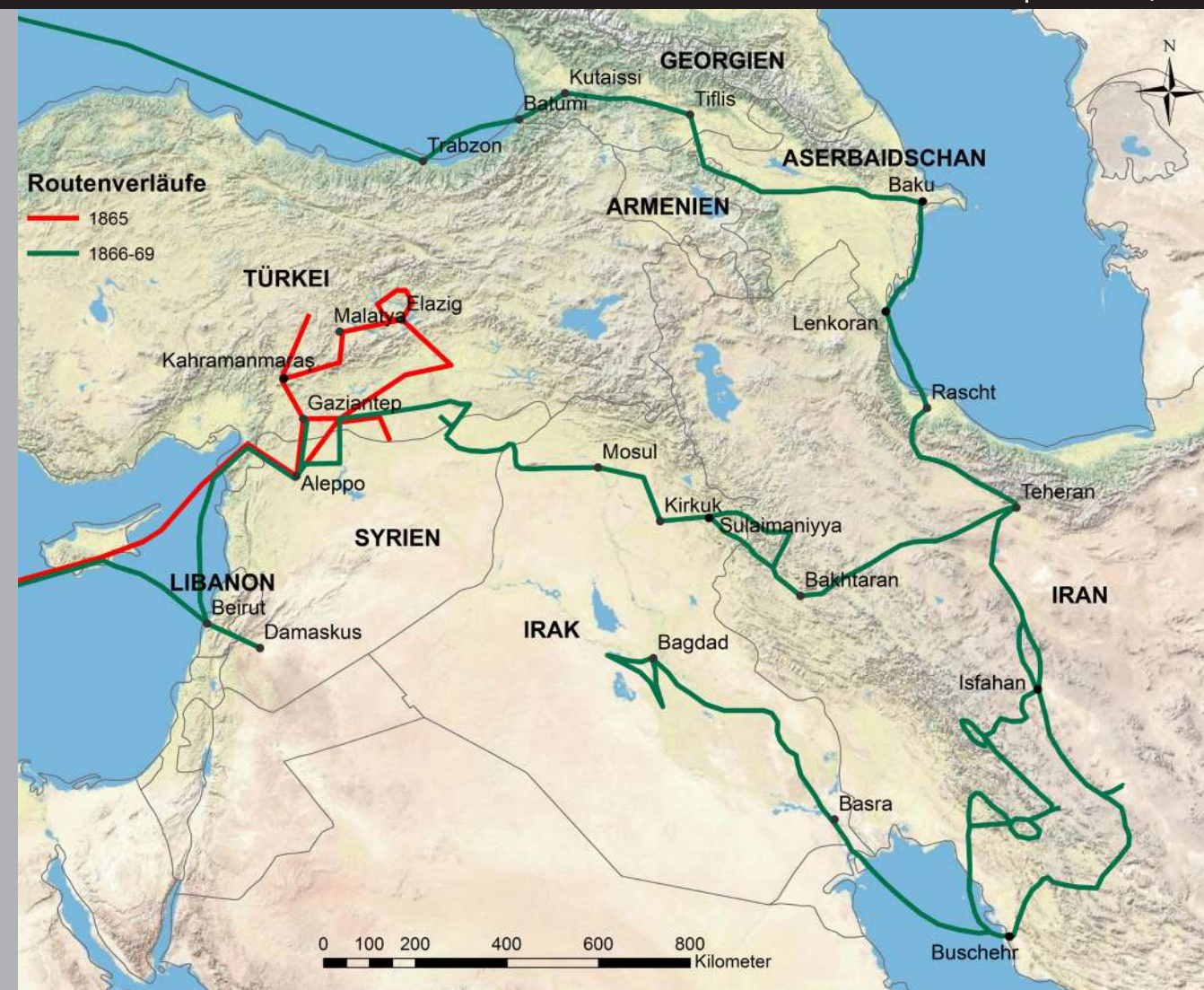


Fig 1:  
Overview of Carl Haussknecht's journeys. Red lines the course of his first travel in 1865 and green the course of his second longer journey through the Ottoman Empire and Persia, 1866-1869.

## RESEARCH REPORT CONT'D

### Haussknecht's focus on plants

In accordance with his mission, Haussknecht collected plants wherever he travelled. Moreover, he noted down an abundance of botanical information. He quoted not only the Latin names of the plants, but also documented – in most cases – common names and local terms. In addition, he made notes about the local environmental conditions.

Haussknecht already had ample knowledge of oriental plants at the beginning of his journey due to his thorough travel preparation. To increase this knowledge of the flora of the Ottoman Empire and Persia, he had collected various kinds of plants: bryophytes as well as ferns and higher plants. Besides entire plants or parts of them he also collected bulbs, fruits, and seeds. Sometimes the paper for drying the plants ran short and it was very difficult to get some during the journey. Haussknecht's travel boxes were full of dried plant specimens, which he sent to Boissier in Geneva whenever it was possible.

As for botanical matters, Haussknecht was very successful during his journeys. His success was partially facilitated by a recommendation he had received from the botanist and traveler Karl Koch (1809-1879) to the effect that Haussknecht that he should travel as a *hakim* (doctor) looking for medicinal plants on the orders of his sultan. Haussknecht obliged. As a pharmacist, he indeed was often able to help those he encountered on his journey, aiding him to obtain the confidence among the people living in the mountains. As a response to his help they often guided him to mountain ranges where no botanist had been before.

The plant specimens were arranged and determined by Boissier and his assistant Georges François Reuter in Geneva, and after Haussknecht's return also together with him. More than 1000 new species were catalogued as a result, with many descriptions published in the *Flora Orientalis*. According to the agreement that Boissier and Haussknecht had made, one half of the specimens were kept in Geneva in Boissier's collection, the other half Haussknecht took with him to Weimar.

Once online, the digitized diaries will also include links of the plants named in the diaries with the plant specimens stored at the herbaria and with the current accepted species name, thus facilitating a deeper understanding of the flora of the regions visited by Haussknecht. The diaries also provide information about the practice of traveling and botanizing in the 19th century and thus contribute to expand our knowledge in the field of the history of science.

### Haussknecht in Qajar Persia

As already mentioned, Haussknecht's first journey in 1865 led him to the Ottoman Empire, mainly the territories of present-day Turkey and Syria. One year later, he enthusiastically embarked on his second journey leading him to present-day Lebanon, Syria, Iraqi Kurdistan and Iran. The Persian part of Haussknecht's travel diary covers eight booklets, starting in August 1867 when he enters Persia from Kurdistan. His first major stop is Sinah (Sanandaj), he then continues to Hamedan, Tehran, Esfahan, Shiraz and Bushehr. From there he embarks on a ship for a detour to Basra and Baghdad before re-entering Persia in Bandar-e Deylam and continuing to Behbahan, the Zagros Mountains and returning to Tehran via Esfahan. From Tehran, struck by malaria, he sets out in December 1868 on his return journey to Germany via Rasht, Baku, Tbilisi and Trabzon (Trebizond).

The itinerary is one aspect that makes Haussknecht's travelogue special since it covers both rural and urban areas. His route relies on the transportation system of the mounted couriers (*chapars*) and while being on the road, he spends most nights in relay stations (*chapar-khanehs*) and caravansaries. It is only in Tehran that he chooses to stay in a hotel, in Esfahan he takes up quarters in a Christian monastery. Since he did not speak Persian or any other Middle Eastern language, Haussknecht traveled in the company of at least one translator and one horse-lender, a so-called *mukari*.

Haussknecht's inability to speak the language is reflected in his interaction with the various groups he encounters throughout his journey, creating different levels of alterity. It is worth pointing out that Haussknecht probably did not identify himself as German since the territory of present-day Germany was at that time a fragmented carpet-like landscape of cities, duchies, kingdoms and city-states. Haussknecht's basis of identification was therefore his social status as a member of the upper Protestant gentry which gave him access to a higher education, enabling him to study foreign languages, e.g. English and French. Thus, the group to which he feels most drawn in Persia are foreign residents, among them doctors and diplomats, especially employees of the Indo-European Telegraph Department. The second group he frequently meets are Qajar officials who issue him recommendation letters. He therefore pays them a courtesy visit in every major city, the more westernized the official is, the more comfortable Haussknecht feels. Since Haussknecht himself is a freemason, he easily fraternizes with other freemasons, an excellent example being Haussknecht's friendship with Sultan Oveys Mirza Ehtesham al-Dowleh, the governor of Behbahan. A friendship emerges between the two men and Sultan Oveys invites him to join him on an excursion to the Zagros Mountains, allowing Haussknecht to meet another group, the Lurs.



## RESEARCH REPORT CONT'D

A local leader of the Lur people accompanies the group providing Haussknecht with facts and knowledge about the tribes and the locality they pass through. One may think this constellation would offer Haussknecht an excellent opportunity to interact with the tribe's members and to build up shared experiences. But instead he apparently keeps his distance and does not engage directly with them, and the facts he notes afterwards in his diary are rather encyclopedic than personal.

The strongest feeling of alterity occurs with a group that Haussknecht shares an affiliation with: these are the Armenian Christians he encounters in Julfa. One of the city's foreign residents invites him to join an Armenian wedding ceremony. In his diary entry, Haussknecht describes the venues, dresses, and the behaviour of the guests. But he does so with disgust and instead of seizing the opportunity, he backs out and leaves the wedding early. In summary, the more Haussknecht feels a stranger in a situation, the more reluctantly he serves as an observer. Also, his perception is shaped by European orientalist discourses, the most prominent example in his travelogue being his depiction of Naser al-Din Shah as an Oriental despot ruling his country by nepotism. But after discussing the shah's rule with foreign officials who met the monarch personally, he changes his mind and acknowledges the shah's endeavors to modernize the country. A special feature of Haussknecht's second stay in Tehran is that he meets the ruler himself in his hunting lodge in Dowshan Teppeh.

Haussknecht's travelogue also reflects the great variety of topics he was interested in. Before setting out to the Middle East, he prepared for his journey by reading contemporary travelogues and scientific works on archaeology and geography. When on site, he seems to collect and record every tiny piece of information he can find. Still, there are some key topics besides botany that develop into themes within his narrative. One of them is archaeology, and he systematically visits and describes archaeological sites, such as Bisotun, Taq-e Bostan and Persepolis. This goes hand in hand with an interest in ancient Iran, and he eagerly records local legends and stories from Iran's national history. He also has a strong interest in the tribes, recording the number of tents in each area, and their history and customs. When possible, he compiles vocabulary lists, for example, for the Judeo-Persian dialect of Behbahan and Lak-Kurdish.

Some of his interests spring from contemporaneous discussions and discourses, such as his interest in the Babi movement, which he perceives as both fanatic and progressive. He often adds a literature list at the end of a booklet; also, he cites and refers to works within the text. This provides us with information about which works he read, how these works circulated and how they were received.

Another topic of interest to him is Persia's economy and the country's modernization. He writes about the expansion of the telegraph network, and new technologies imported from Europe. But he also compiles lists of the country's trading income, as well as the amount of imported and exported goods.

During his journey to both the Ottoman Empire and Persia, Haussknecht collected items that he brought back to Germany and that are currently kept in several collections at the University of Jena. Among them are coins, letters, a friendship album with entries of the people he met, and *cartes de visite*. The collection also includes a clay copy of the Ganjnameh inscription by Xerxes I., taken by Haussknecht himself during his stay in Hamedan.

Haussknecht's travelogues are a valuable addition to the travel literature produced by nineteenth-century travelers to Qajar Persia and the Ottoman Empire. What distinguishes it from other contemporary travelogues is Haussknecht's background as a botanist whose recordings are unfiltered and direct. We should not forget here that when in Persia, Haussknecht could rely on his past experiences from the Ottoman Empire; the Orient is not that exotic anymore as it used to be for him on his first journey. Nevertheless, Haussknecht's travelogue is an important eyewitness account of two empires in transition, navigating between conservation and change.

### Works cited

Frank H. Hellwig, Christine Kämpfer, Stefan Knost, Hanne Schöning, Kristin Victor, Christoph U. Werner (eds.): *Digitale Edition der Reisetagebücher Carl Haussknechts (1838-1903): Osmanisches Reich und Persien*. Bamberg, Halle, Jena, Marburg, 2017–; <http://haussknecht.thulb.uni-jena.de>.

Frank H. Hellwig, Kristin Victor: The botanist Carl Haussknecht (1838-1903) in the Ottoman Empire and Persia (1865 and 1866-1869): biographical sketch and itinerary of his expeditions. In: Ines Aščerić-Todd, Sabina Knees, Janet Starkey & Paul Starkey (eds.): *Travellers in Ottoman Lands. The Botanical Legacy*. Oxford, 2018, pp. 147-157.

Heinrich Kiepert: Vorbericht über Prof. C. Haussknecht's orientalische Reisen. Nebst Erläuterungen. *Z. Ges. Erdkunde Berlin* 17, 1882, pp. 343-354.

Kristin Victor (ed.): *Carl Haussknecht. Ein Leben für die Botanik*. Beiträge aus den Sammlungen der Universität Jena 2. Jena: Friedrich-Schiller-Universität, 2013.

## CALL FOR SUBMISSION

### Plays from Iran and the Iranian Diaspora

Aurora Metro Books is building up a new collection of plays from new and established writers from Iran and Iranians living globally. The collection shall explore the experiences of contemporary Iranians through the best writing representing the best talent of today.

Aurora Metro Books has an established reputation in theatre scripts and has several anthologies of international drama on its list. Its 200+ published plays are available globally in print and ebook and via Drama online.

Play submissions are welcome on all subjects and themes. Pre-translated works in English are preferred, but plays in any language are generally welcome.

For further information about the project or to discuss anything else, please feel free to get in touch with [Naveed Ashraf](#) or [aurorametro.com](http://aurorametro.com)

## ACHIEVEMENT AWARD (AATP)

John R. Perry, Emeritus Professor of Persian at the University of Chicago, received the 2019 Lifetime Achievement Award by the American Association of Teachers of Persian. Prof. Perry was born in Britain and educated at Cambridge University (Pembroke College), where in 1970 he was awarded a Ph.D in Oriental Studies (Arabic and Persian) under the tutelage of the great luminaries Peter Avery and C.E. Bosworth.

During summer vacations he hitchhiked to Egypt and Iran, and in 1964-65 spent a year studying Persian at Tehran University. He has conducted research in Iran, Iraq (including Kurdistan), Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and Tajikistan, and travelled the Karakoram Highway to Kashgar. He taught in the Arabic Studies Department at St. Andrews University, Scotland (1968 - 1972) before going to Chicago, where he taught from 1972 to 2007. His teaching at Chicago has included courses on Middle Eastern literature in translation and Islamic Civilization as well as Persian (and Tajik) language and literature. His earlier research focused on the history of eighteenth-century Iran and adjacent regions. He concentrates currently on the history of the Persian language, and in particular the mechanisms of the incorporation of Arabic vocabulary into Persian and its dissemination into other languages of the region. Other interests of Prof. Perry include Iranian folklore and vernacular culture, and the language and cultural history of Tajikistan.

### NEWS FROM THE ENCYCLOPAEDIA IRANICA

Fascicle 5 of Volume XVI Published

In October 2019, the Ehsan Yarshater Center for Iranian Studies at Columbia University published Fascicle 5 of Volume XVI of Encyclopaedia Iranica, containing entries from “Khavaran-Nama” to “Khomeini” and including a series of entries on “Khayyam.” Fascicle 5 features nearly thirty articles on various aspects of Persian culture, literature, language, ethnography, politics, and history. Fascicle XVI/5 is the first fascicle of Iranica ever to be printed in color. Copies of the fascicle and subscriptions can be purchased from Brill Publishing ([brill.com](http://brill.com)). Work has begun on Fascicle 6, which will complete Volume XVI.

### CONFERENCE UPDATE

The 2020 AIS Biennial Conference, originally scheduled to be held in Salamanca, Spain, this August 2020, has been postponed to 2021 due to Covid-19.

Please see the president’s message on page 2 for more details.





## AWARDS

### Announcement of the Recipients of Award and Honorable Mention Best Ph.D. Dissertations on a Topic of Iranian Studies, 2019 Foundation for Iranian Studies

The Foundation for Iranian Studies is pleased to announce that the Committee on Selection of the Best Ph.D. Dissertation of the Year on a Topic of Iranian Studies of the Foundation for Iranian Studies has chosen Muhammad Umar Faruque's dissertation "The Labyrinth of Subjectivity: Constructions of the Self from Mullā Ṣadrā to Muḥammad Iqbal," submitted to the Graduate Division of the University of California, Berkeley, as the recipient of the Foundation's annual Ph.D. dissertation award for the academic year 2018-2019.

In making its decision, the Committee, following the criteria established by the Foundation's Board of Directors, noted that Muhammad Umar Faruque has made an exceptional contribution to the field of Iranian and Middle Eastern Studies by, among other achievements, "stating clearly the study's problematic... constructing an adequate and efficient theoretical framework...developing and using successfully a rigorous methodology to bring together a significant array of primary and secondary sources... securing critical information by judiciously examining different but relevant opinions about his subject matter, i.e., meanings and implications of "self" in Islam as defined and explicated by Mulla Sadra, Shah Wali Allah, and Muhammad Iqbal ... adopting an innovative multidisciplinary approach to derive intellectually reasonable and historically modifiable understanding of 'the self' by placing Islamic understanding of 'the self' in a universal framework of a 'tri-partite model of selfhood, incorporating bio-physiological, socio-cultural, and ethico-experiential modes of discourse and meaning-construction' ... demonstrating originality in approach, balance in reaching conclusions, adeptness in conjoining thought, literature, and history to support the dissertation's findings.... excellent organization of the work."

The Committee also cited Narges Nematollahi's dissertation "The Iranian Epistolary Tradition: Origins and Development (6th Century BCE to 7th Century CE)", submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Indiana University, Felisa Marie Hervey's dissertation "Sharp-Edged Verse in 21st Century Afghanistan: an Analysis of Socio-Political Dimensions in Women's Poetry" submitted to the Graduate College, the University of Arizona, and Sheida Dayani's dissertation Juggling Revolutionaries: A Theatrical History of Indigenous Theatre and Early Playwriting in Iran, submitted to Department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, New York University, with **honorable mention** for superior scholarship, originality, clarity, and significant contribution to the field of Iranian Studies.

**Gholam Reza Afkhami**

Chair, Ph.D. Dissertation Awards Committee - Foundation for Iranian Studies

## A HISTORY OF PERSIAN LITERATURE VOLUMES IX AND II PUBLISHED

### Volume IX

In December 2018, the Ehsan Yarshater Center for Iranian Studies at Columbia produced Vol. IX in the *A History of Persian Literature series*, titled "Persian Literature from Outside Iran: The Indian Subcontinent, Anatolia, Central Asia, and in Judeo-Persian". The role of Persian, beyond its early habitat of Iran and other Islamic lands, has long been recognized: European scholars first came to Persian via Turkey and British orientalist via India. Yet the universal popularity of poets such as Sa'di and Hâfez of Shiraz and the ultimate rise of Iran to claim the center of Persian writing and scholarship led to a relative neglect of the Persianate periphery until recently. This volume, edited by John R. Perry, contributes to the scholarship of the Persianate world with the aid of the abundant material (notably in Tajik, Uzbek and Russian) long neglected by Western scholars and the perspectives of a new generation on this complex and important aspect of Persian literature.

#### Part 1: Persian Literature in the Indian Sub-Continent

Chapter 1: Establishment of Centers of Indo-Persian Court Poetry (Alyssa Gabbay)

Chapter 2: Teaching of Persian in South Asia (T. Rahman)

Chapter 3: The Persian Language Sciences in India (J. R. Perry)

Chapter 4: Persian Historiography in India (B. Auer)

Chapter 5: Persian Literature of the Parsis in India (J. K. Choksy)

Chapter 6: Ismaili Literature in Persian in Central and South Asia (F. Daftary)

Chapter 7: Persian Medical Literature in South Asia (F. Speziale)

Chapter 8: Inscriptions and Art-Historical Writing (Y. Porter)

#### Part 2: Persian Literature in Anatolia and the Ottoman Realms, Post-Timurid Central Asia, Tajikistan, Modern Afghanistan; Judeo-Persian Literature

Chapter 9: Persian Literature in Anatolia and the Ottoman Realms (S. Kim)

Chapter 10: Persian Literature in Central Asia under Uzbek Rule (Ertugrul Ökten)

Chapter 11: Tajik Literature (K. Hitchins)

Chapter 12: Persian Literature in Modern Afghanistan (R. Farhadi and J. R. Perry)

Chapter 13: Judeo-Persian Literature

## A HISTORY OF PERSIAN LITERATURE VOLUMES IX AND II PUBLISHED CONT'D

### Volume II

In December 2019, the second volume in this series, *Persian Lyric Poetry in the Classical Era, 800-1500: Ghazals, Panegyrics and Quatrains*, was published. It presents the reader with an extensive study of some major genres of Persian poetry from the first centuries after the rise of Islam to the end of the Timurid era and the inauguration of Safavid rule in the beginning of the sixteenth century. The authors explore the development of poetic genres, from the panegyric (qaside), to short lyrical poems (ghazal), and the quatrains (roba'i), tracing the stylistic evolution of Persian poetry up to 1500 and examine the vital role of these poetic forms within the rich landscape of Persian literature.

- Chapter 1: The Panegyric Qaside-A Brief Historical Preview (J. T. P. de Bruijn)
- Chapter 2: The Panegyric Qaside in the Eastern Iranian World: Court Poetry in the Samanid and Ghaznavid Periods (Julie Scott Meisami)
- Chapter 3: The Qaside after the Fall of the Ghaznavids 1100–1500 CE (J. T. P. de Bruijn)
- Chapter 4: Qasides of the Khwârazmshâhid Court: Vatvât and Adib Sâber (Alireza Korangy)
- Chapter 5: The Qaside in Western Persia-Persian Poetry Goes West (J. T. P. de Bruijn)
- Chapter 6: The Qaside in the Mongol and Timurid Periods (M. Keyvani)
- Chapter 7: Stanzaic Poems (G. Van Den Berg)
- Chapter 8: The Ghazal in Medieval Persian Poetry (J. T. P. de Bruijn)
- Chapter 9: The Flourishing of Persian Quatrains (A. A. Seyed-Gohrab)
- Chapter 10: Shahrâshub (Sunil Sharma)
- Chapter 11: Hajv and Profane Persian (Paul Sprachman)

To order these volumes, contact I.B. Tauris (a division of Bloomsbury), [www.bloomsbury.com/academic/middle-east/ibtauris](http://www.bloomsbury.com/academic/middle-east/ibtauris).

**Iranian Studies Volume 53, numbers 1-2, 2020 have been published:**  
<http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/cist20/current>.

AIS members are able to access the current as well as all back issues of the journal by logging into their membership account and visiting Publications/Journal/Journal Archives.

## THE IDEA OF HOMELAND IN MODERN PERSIAN POETRY

*by Poet Sheida Mohamadi, from a talk delivered at the University of California, Irvine\**

What is it about the homeland that creates feelings such as nostalgia, love, longing and patriotism? Is it the material aspect, the beauty of nature, and its accompanying blessing that motivate the feelings of the poets? Or is it something more spiritual or intellectual such as love, the longing of seeing a loved one, or is it perhaps better defined as the research for freedom? As an Iranian-American poet, I wondered about those questions that interest me greatly, having been away from my homeland for more than a decade. I have been looking into contemporary Persian poetry, and its precursors for answers. This text is an excerpt from a talk that I gave at UC Irvine. This talk was made into a larger study, written for the most part in Persian.

In truth, my personal concern, as an Iranian-American poet and someone who has lived for more than a decade away from her native land, is this ontological question that perhaps home is not quite as Dihkhudâ defined as an “abode” in his dictionary. Where is this land? Is this “abode,” now empty of my presence, no longer habitable, as Khâqânî asks? And

When there is no comfort at home,  
is a foreign land thus preferred?

So where is this homeland? Is it what the Sufis and Shaykh Bahâ'î called “a place of nonexistence”?

This homeland is not Egypt, Iraq, or Syria.  
This homeland is one for which there is no name!

Or, as Rumi writes:

Our abode has been the heavens; we used to be bosom friends to the angels.  
Once again we shall return to that place, for it is our place of abode.

While away from his homeland, Rumi called himself a mortal, whose place of abode was far beyond any land:

O Muslims, how will you counsel me, for I do not know myself.  
I'm not a Christian, a Jew, a Zoroastrian, or a Muslim  
  
I'm not from the east, the west, the sea, or the land.  
I'm not from the natural elements, or the revolving heavens.

\* Special thanks to Dr. Bahman Solati who helped me translate the summary of an earlier draft of this text.



## THE IDEA OF HOMELAND IN MODERN PERSIAN POETRY CONT'D

Or perhaps home is “Iranshahr”, the place that Firdawsī relying on ancient mythology describes and in which he compares the warriors and festive ceremonies of the Aryans with those of others?

I am “Sīāvash”; I’m not of angels,  
but from Iran, the land of free spirits.

Because Iran is either a paradise or a rose garden.  
Yes, it is true that the scent of musk comes from a rose garden.

O Iran, may our Goddess “Sepandārmaz” be your protector!  
By the warmth and brightness of June may your soul be lit!

Don’t you know that Iran is my place of abode—  
that the whole world is placed under my hands?  
...

It would be lamentable if Iran were ruined—  
and turned to a habitation of lions and leopards.

It has been the place of great warriors—  
the thrones of all kings.

Let there be no more of me,  
or anyone else in this land, without Iran!

Or could it be the same delightful and cheerful climate of those cities and those loved ones, that poets such as Rūdakī, Sa’dī, and Ḥāfiẓ have spoken of?

Here comes the scent of the stream of the beloved.  
Here comes the memory of the benevolent friend. (Rūdakī)

Blessed is Shiraz and its unique climate.  
O Lord, keep it from decline. (Ḥāfiẓ)

Or perhaps, when the so-called homeland is no longer a safe place, one must emigrate:

My heart withered away speaking about Shiraz.  
It is time to ask me of Baghdad.

Have no doubt that my weeping may reach there,  
even if the Lord does not hear my lament.

O Sa’dī, the love of the homeland is indeed a true tale—  
but one cannot die in hardship here, just because it is called home. (Sa’dī)

Or should we agree with Mas’ūd Sa’d, who sees his homeland in distress and composes an obituary of sadness and sorrow?

O Lāhūr, how is your state without me, shame on you?  
How do you remain bright, without the sunlight on you?

Your darling child is abruptly separated from you.  
How weighty is this lamentation and wailing upon you?

Never sent me a note and upheld a pact  
enquiring how I remain in this cage, just like Bīzhan.

Do we believe, like Nādirpūr, that there is only one country for those who leave their native land behind: the country of “Exile”? Where is this “exile” now? Everywhere but our home?

The contemporary definition of home comes from elsewhere: the idea of Iranian ethnicity, borrowed from European thought by Mīrzā Faṭḥ ‘Alī Ākhūndzāda, entered Iran after the Constitutional Revolution, along with the exciting belief in freedom and liberalism. This movement is clearly visible in the poetry of poets such as Mīrzāda ‘Ishqī, ‘Ārif Qazvīnī, Bahār, Īraj Mīrzā, Adīb al-Mamālik Farahānī, and Farrukhī, whose strong views urged opposition to foreign and domestic oppression.

There is much sedition about religion and homeland.  
These two words are the roots of sedition.

What is this argument over religion and home—  
your religion, my home, what does this mean?

The world is home to us all.  
The homeland of every man and woman is everywhere.

What is this thought in your head  
that makes it right to chop off mine? (Īraj Mīrzā)

Iqbāl Lāhūrī, who sought to achieve a united society, was an exemplary poet during the Islamic era. However, this way of thinking, which began during the Ghaznavid era, reached its peak during the Seljuq period. This was also reflected in the works of the poets of the time, although by then, the value of the work of the Sāmānid poets was no longer perceived.

East is like some dust on the road,  
like a hopeless sigh.

Every dust particle of this land is a wandering gaze.  
Rise from India, Samarqand, Iraq, and Hamadān.

Wake up from your deep sleep, wake up, wake up.

## THE IDEA OF HOMELAND IN MODERN PERSIAN POETRY CONT'D

In *Qābūs-Nāma* “Kaykāvūs” called the frontier a “second mother,” “Umm al-Thani” expanding these borders to such a degree that I was encouraged to search for that lost identity in the works of contemporary poets, just to find out, or rather convince myself, whether or not this melancholy ailment of exile is really connected to my homeland. Or perhaps my idea of homeland comes from being away from what is considered pleasant? Or maybe it is just a futile search for something that simply does not exist, or cannot be found? Is this dark tangle behind the Persian language born of a narrow view, or a circumstance in which there is no hope of freedom, because contemporary poets are either enchained or lined up waiting for their turn to be enchained? Or perhaps with a wounded tongue they have crawled into a corner or away from their loved ones and their homes to sink in their sorrows, because every day memories fade and are rebuilt in their minds?

But where has this homeland been for a poetess in a poetic tongue dominated by men? Is it in the mind of a dominant male? If this homeland is the place of security and comfort, why then, prior to the appearance of Furūgh Farrukhzād, has the language of this land’s female poets always been subject to domination and control? In biting verse and in the hope of advancing the knowledge and open-mindedness of her fellow women, Furūgh Farokhzad (like Mahsatī Ganjavī, Rābi’a, ‘Ālamtāj, Zhāleh Qā’im Maqāmī, and Parvīn I’tisāmī, but unlike the motherly Sīmīn Bihbahānī), in her satiric and witty poems, set out to search for the land of the rose and the nightingale. Furūgh Farokhzad used irony in her language and searched for her identity in a discipline which was dominated by men. After several centuries, she brought a feminine voice into the Persian poetry. She mentioned in her poem *O Bejeweled Realm*:

What a blessing to live  
in the land of poetry, roses, and nightingales  
when one’s existence is at last noted;  
a land where from behind the curtains  
my first registered glimpse spies 678 poets—  
scoundrels who in the guise of eccentric bums  
scrounge about trash bins for words and rhymes; (translated by Sholeh Wolpé)

In her letter to Ebrahim Golestan: “I love our own Tehran, whatever it may be. I love it, and it is only there that my life finds a goal worth living for. I love that numbing sunshine and those heavy sunsets and those dusty alleyways and those miserable, wretched, vicious, and corrupt people” (translated by Karim Emami), she expresses in prose what appears in her poems.

On the other hand, Simin Behbahani has a motherly feeling toward her homeland. In her poetry, she revolutionized the classic form and the content. She transformed it into a modern, moving and meaningful poetry that expresses and inspires feminists, activists and nationalists. In her famous poem *I Will Rebuild You, Oh My Homeland*, she distinguished herself as a voice in the movement with the people, who are disillusioned and who are in opposition with their government and authorities. She continually challenges the violent and suppressive policies, which abuse her motherland, her country.

I will rebuild you my homeland, even with bricks of my soul;  
I erect pillars to hold your roof, with my very bones  
I smell the scents of your flowers, for desire of your youth;  
I wash blood from you, with the flood of my flowing tears. (Bihbihani, trans. 1999)

Although I have been dead for a hundred years,  
I will stand again above my grave to tear apart evil’s heart with my shouts  
.... I may be old, but given a chance,  
I will learn to be young beside my children. (Talatoff 2008, p. 25)

Another female voice, Parvīn I’tisāmī, who came before the poets Simin and Furūgh, used the classic form to express her idea and emotions. She characterized and personified the everyday objects, which surrounded the women of the time, and made them into a tool to reason and criticize people and her society. The following extract describes her distinctive vision about women’s condition in her homeland.

A woman in Iran wasn’t Iranian before.  
She was miserable and in distress, that was her occupation.

Her life and death was spent in isolation.  
What was a woman in those days, if she wasn’t a prisoner?

No one like a woman lived in darkness for centuries.  
No one like a woman was a victim-prisoner in the temple of hypocrisy.

In the court of law the fairness of a woman had no witness.  
She had no place in the school of virtue and wisdom

Her complaints remained unanswered for a lifetime.  
This repression was obvious, not concealed. (Parvīn I’tisāmī)

After this recognition, I went in search of poets inside and outside Iranshahr, in whose poetic language I could find the meaning of a land, or “shahr”, that just might be a beautiful woman, as Dr. Reza Barehani expresses about his homeland in *Iran Khanom, Khanom Ziba, “Iran Lady, Beautiful Lady”*. Or maybe in a mythical tale like that of the metropolis. For the Iranian writer and poet researcher Jalāl Sattārī, “Muḥammad ‘Alī Sipānlū is among those poets who viewed the city of Tehran in a somewhat mythical way.” The most important book in Sipānlū’s oeuvre is the *Mythical City of Tehran*. It is composed of three sections: “*Khānūm-i Zamān* [Ms. Time],”



## THE IDEA OF HOMELAND IN MODERN PERSIAN POETRY CONT'D

“*Haykal-i Tārīk* [Statue of the Dark],” and “*Qāyīq savārī dar Tehran* [Boating in Tehran],” in which the birthplace of the poet, “Tehran,” is the setting for a parable. In “Ms. Time,” Sipānlū juxtaposes contemporary Tehran with the Tehran of old, a girl footloose and fancy-free compared to a holy mother. The city is constantly changing.

As YadUllāh Ruyā’ī has said, “Culture itself is a breeding ground for the caged wild”: Tribal and parochial nationalism in the era of globalization is nonsense. In fact, in the context of globalization, lost ethnic and national traditions are better discovered and evaluated from a political perspective, which enables us to find their lost cultural identity. Our identity is no more embedded in the Kurdish or the Balūch than it is in our Turkish tribes, or even in our Shi’a or Sunni education.

All in all, homeland is a mixture of the mastery of a language and an accent, and therefore, sometimes a feeling of belonging, knowledge of stories, folklore, mythology, and memories from places and events, which mix spiritual feelings with rational thinking. All this knowledge approach us to that feeling of safety, a place we need to get near. Homeland is associated with memories, knowledge and a sensation of spending the least amount of energy to understand and feel a situation or an event. The poets define homeland in an intricate manner as a promised paradise, a beautiful woman, a lost lover, or perhaps even a curse that cuts deep, it could be a voice of protest or a rare sorrow, or it could be defined by the lost memories of those who have forgotten you. As a poet, the borders I admire are the borders of dreams, the misty borders of love and indifference, the borders of courage and fear, literature and reality.

## PHOTOGRAPHY PRIZE

Mohsen Kaboli has won the 23rd Luis Valtueña International Humanitarian Photography Prize for his work on surrogate mothers “for his novel photographic expression and for his success in addressing the nuances and complexity of the controversial issue with great sensitivity”, as the jury has reported. Kaboli will receive a € 6,000 grant to develop a photographic project.



LIKE OUR AIS FACEBOOK PAGE!

[HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/ASSOCIATIONFORIRANIANSTUDIES/](https://www.facebook.com/associationforiranianstudies/)

## RESEARCH REPORT

### Soviet Communist Propaganda in 1950s and 1960s through the lens of the Iranian Secret Services

by Urszula Pytkowska-Jakimczyk, Department of Iranian Studies, University of Warsaw

The Russian presence and quest for domination in Iran can be traced back centuries. Throughout the years, and especially with the rise of the Bolsheviks at the beginning of the 20th century, the official contacts upheld by diplomats, cultural institutions and tradesman were accompanied by unofficial ones, conducted by the intelligence services or offices responsible ostensibly for international cultural communications, such as VOKS (All Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries), which was used primarily for foreign intelligence operations and undercover dissemination of propaganda materials.

In the history of these bilateral relations, the Soviet Union's support for various Iranian leftist groups in 20th century (to name few: Azerbaijan Democratic Party, Democratic Party of Kurdistan, The Red Spider (Ankabut-e Sorkh) and, of course, Tudeh), was just one lever in the multifaceted attempt to influence Iranian politics. Although the first half of the 20th century had seen some successes in this area, throughout the 1950s and 60s overall Soviets performance could not be considered outstanding or even satisfactory. Due to the constant fear of Iran falling into the communist net, Iran-Soviet relations were laden with distrust. These reservations became even more severe after Iran joined the Baghdad Pact (later CENTO) in 1955 which according to Yodfat "ended its officially proclaimed policy of neutrality and even-handedness between East and West"<sup>1</sup>. Four years later, in March 1959, when the bilateral Iran-USA pact was signed, Iran-Soviet relations worsened further, and it was at this time that harsher Soviet propaganda actions were aimed at the Iranian authorities. Even though the 1962 visit of the Soviet deputy minister of foreign affairs, Sergiey Lapin, to Tehran marked a slight rapprochement between the two countries leading to several important economic agreements, the Soviet targeting propaganda in Iran had not ceased. According to the SAVAK documents, it was still flourishing.

My research on the Soviet propaganda in Iran is based upon the SAVAK documents gathered in two books published by the *Markaz-e Barresi-ye Asnad-e Tarikhi-ye Vezarat-e Ettela'at* (Centre of the Iranian Historical Documents of the Ministry of Intelligence) and titled: *Chap dar Iran be revayat-e asnad-e tarikhi-ye SAVAK. Ankabut-e Sorkh* (The Left in Iran according to SAVAK's Historical Documents. The Red Spider), and *Chap dar Iran be revayat-e asnad-e tarikhi-ye SAVAK*.

*Ravabet-e Iran va Shouravi* (The Left in Iran According to SAVAK's Historical Documents. Iranian-Soviet Relations). Both books consist of document copies (facsimile) along with their transcripts.

Reading the documents, one is led to assume that SAVAK officers would agree with the propaganda definition proposed decades later by Oliver Thomson, which stated that: "propaganda is the use of communication skills of all kinds to achieve attitudinal or behavioural changes among one group by another"<sup>2</sup>. This is a very broad definition that literally any action can fit in – but this was actually how SAVAK perceived propaganda: literally any action, undertaken by the Soviets was described as "*tablighat*" and thus being tracked down.

For the purpose of my research, I have grouped the propaganda activities according to the means of communication through which they were transmitted: personal propaganda, press propaganda, propaganda spread by books, and radio propaganda.

#### Personal propaganda

Personal propaganda can be described as the one that involved any actions performed through the personal contact. To this group I assigned: banquets in the Soviet embassy and touristic travels to the Soviet Union.

In the documents dated on November 1958 we find information that six beautiful women were sent to Tehran as spies. Their job was described as "to attract men" during lavish parties organized by the Soviet embassy and "to collect various information". Such conspiracy activities were seen by SAVAK officers as particularly dangerous, because the Iranian guests invited to the parties consisted of celebrities, politicians, members of the royal family, as well as publishers and editors in chief of various Iranian newspapers. In the documents SAVAK pointed out that the hosts appeared to have a scheme whereby they would introduce publishers, editors and journalists of less established Iranian titles to the mighty ones of the Iranian political scene or Iranian celebrities. SAVAK interpreted these actions as a way to create a sense of gratitude among Iranian publishers and editors towards the Soviets that resulted in them being more eager to publish materials and articles that were favorable of the Soviet Union. Interestingly Soviets performed such activities mostly towards the publishers of titles described as "with small circulation or local". The local publishers were, according to the SAVAK officers, particularly liable to the Soviet propaganda. They were described as "not necessarily communist or even anti-communist" however due to "their lack of necessary intellectual prowess to resist the Soviet propaganda" were highly in danger of falling into the red net.

<sup>1</sup> A. Y. Yodfat, *The Soviet Union and Revolutionary Iran*, St. Martin's Press, New York 1984

<sup>2</sup> O. Thomson, *Easily Led. A History of Propaganda*, Sutton Pub., USA 1999.



## RESEARCH REPORT CONT'D

Another type of contacts between Iranian and Soviet citizens that was closely monitored by the SAVAK officers were touristic travels to the USSR, sponsored by the Soviets and offered to a wide range of personalities in the Iranian political and cultural scene. Well known Iranian politicians, journalists, and editors eagerly accepted such invitations. SAVAK was alarmed about the potential impact on journalists since by writing articles they reached a wide audience and therefore had a broad impact.

One of the examples was Farhad Masudi, publisher of the Ettela'at newspaper, heir to the fortune of Abbas Masudi, a loyal supporter of the Pahlavi dynasty, who founded the first news agency in Iran, and later the Ettela'at newspaper, one of the two main dailies in Iran. Farhad Masudi had written numerous articles that praised the USSR, where, according to his reports, people lived in harmony, where food was delicious and the taste of coffee one of a kind. Interestingly, SAVAK underlined here that an ordinary Iranian knew that there could be no such thing as *good food* in the USSR. An ordinary Iranian would also know that in order to buy bread in the USSR, one needed to queue for most of the day. However, according to SAVAK officers, such testimonies published in a newspaper that had been considered pro-Pahlavi and thus rather anti-Soviet appeared to be more credible.

### Press Propaganda

Even if a press article was critical to the Soviet Union, according to SAVAK, it still posed a considerable threat. In such a case, the Soviet embassy would claim its right to publish a response and this answer would consist of questions that compared Iran to the USSR. The questions were usually tendentious and thus the answer was already suggested in the question and ultimately in favor of the USSR.

Overall, the Iranian press was a tasty morsel for the Soviet propaganda masterminds. Although the literacy rate in Iran at the time was just about 25%, the newspapers reached those whom the Soviets aimed at: intellectuals, students, bureaucrats, etc.

Apart from personal contacts between the USSR and Iranian journalists and editors, SAVAK considered other activities no less threatening. Among them were sponsored articles, whose publishing costs were fully covered by the Soviet Union, without however any information disclosing this important detail. In addition, according to SAVAK, Soviets spent much money on buying whole page ads and getting an in-favor article in return that portrayed the USSR as a mighty and wealthy state. For example, they would publish an ad of a crusher machine produced by the Soviet industry and by reading the article on the next page the reader could learn that Soviet economic governance should be of an example for Iran.

The Soviets were also sending thousands of pages of their press releases daily to all the Iranian newspapers. As SAVAK noted, such actions were quite fruitful as many of the local newspapers, due to a scarcity of original material, were happy to fill the pages with the information prepared by the Soviets.

### Propaganda spread by Books

Another serious threat, as perceived by SAVAK, was posed by Soviet propaganda hidden in books, of which thousands were sent to Iran. Books that were openly communist were not that common as Iranian booksellers eschewed distributing them. Yet there was a vast range of books that spread communist ideas indirectly. Mostly these were translations of Russian novels telling stories of ordinary heroes who fight the obstacles of life and help the oppressed, as well as books about the victory over fascism or those that compared tsarist Russia unfavorably with the Soviet Union. Interestingly, not all books viewed as communist by SAVAK were actually communist. For example, Vasili Aksionov's *Colleagues*, which was distributed by Soviets for free to the passengers of the train from Jolfa to Tehran, in fact today is considered rather to be a diffident critique of the life in the Soviet Union.

Another example was Alexander Pushkin's poetic version of the Fisherman and the Fish tale. According to the SAVAK documents, the message of this tale was purely communist since the fisherman's wife only behaves well and humbly towards her husband once they live a simple life full of hardships. Her behavior changes dramatically with the successive gain of wealth. SAVAK officers seemed not to acknowledge that the wife was haughty and disrespectful from the beginning irrespective of her economic conditions, for those are the first words she speaks to her husband "Simple fool, fool of a simpleton"! Nonetheless SAVAK officers claimed that the story transmitted communist ideas to children and prepared the ground for the belief that only wealthy people are mean and greedy and treat others with disrespect. Furthermore, they argued that children would see the 'class society' through the communist lenses and that they would start to feel hostility towards those higher in the social hierarchy.

On the other hand, SAVAK seemed to understand the power of attraction of the various Russian prints. The SAVAK documents indicated that 25.000 children's Russian books to learn English were distributed in Iran, and even though they did not transmit even a hint of communist ideology, their readers would nonetheless remember them as being beautiful and colourful. According to SAVAK, this posed a serious threat because as adults, these readers would associate Soviets and communism with the beautifully printed images of their childhood.

### Radio propaganda

As mentioned, another propaganda channel used by the Soviets was the radio, especially in order to reach illiterate populations. There were several radio stations that operated in Iran's neighboring countries and broadcasted the news as seen from

## RESEARCH REPORT CONT'D

Moscow's perspective. Radio Moscow, Radio Stalinabad (Dushanbe), Radio Baku, and Radio Baghdad altogether covered most of the country and were indeed listened to mostly by Iranian peasants and workers. The most powerful, according to Iranian intelligence services, was Radio Moscow, that launched its Persian broadcast in June 1941, just a day after the German attack on the USSR.

In 1958 SAVAK concluded with alarm that Radio Moscow's broadcast had had a severe impact on the Iranians who listened to it, as it evoked fear, anxiety and reluctance towards the Iranian political authorities. SAVAK expressed its concerns that Iranians could be receptive of the Soviet propaganda materials suggesting that rising costs of living in Iran were caused by the numerous Americans residing in Iran, and the struggle of the ordinary people to meet the expenses of their families. SAVAK likewise noted that Radio Moscow aimed its propaganda also towards the minority groups, especially nomads, and that they expressed their support for Kurds, and the necessity for creating the Qashghai Tribe Union.

Throughout my research, additionally, I have come across the documents that provides us with the directions of what should be done in order to diminish the Soviet propaganda. SAVAK thus suggested broadcasting anti-Soviet messages through Radio Iran, supporting religious publications such as Maktab-e Eslam, a popular weekly newspaper with a relatively high circulation rate that was read across all social classes. SAVAK recommended that the Iranian clergy should be inspired to speak out against the actions of the communists, and to encourage people to take a stand against communism. They suggested that leaders of local organizations should be assisted in giving public speeches contradicting the information broadcasted by Radio Moscow, as well as praising the shah. Furthermore, the Fars Agency was ordered to build its branches in the countries that belonged to the Baghdad Pact, along with at least one in Europe. All those efforts were undertaken, in SAVAK's eyes, to fight the Soviet (dis-)information campaigns harming the good name of Iran.

## The “Soft-Relations” between China and Iran

by Roie Yellinek, Middle East Institute

Even though diplomatic relations between Iran and China were officially established only in 1971, the parties frequently describe their relation as “two thousand years of friendship, cooperation and trade”.<sup>1</sup> Iran and China manage relations in a wide range of fields, with the main ones being economics and energy, given Iran's extensive gas and oil reservoirs and China's ever-growing demand. China, along with Russia, also stood alongside Iran during the standoff over its nuclear enrichment program and the sanctions imposed on it by the Western countries. Thus, in votes regarding Iranian affairs in the UN Security Council and in other international organizations, China has frequently voted in Iran's declared interest.<sup>2</sup> During the negotiations leading up to the JCPOA, the Chinese, along with the Russians, supported Iran's right to nuclear enrichment, and rejected any kind of sanctions.<sup>3</sup>

Relations are not limited to economic and political aspects, however, and as with other countries in the world, China has invested much in cultural ties with Iran as well, not least through the establishment in 1998 of the Iran-China Friendship Society, upgraded a decade later to the China-Iran Friendship Association.<sup>4</sup> These actions are just a part of what Joseph Nye has termed “soft-power”, defined as the use that countries make of interpersonal and cultural tools in order to persuade other countries of what they wish to achieve, rather than forcing them to do so through economic-political or military efforts. Although Iran has not been a passive or overwhelmingly receiving partner in this relation, China is no doubt the dominant party. This article focuses on three arenas of the soft power-relations between the two countries: literature, television, and cultural events.

### Popular Culture

Popular culture includes a wide range of cultural and artistic activities from various fields, such as cinema, television, music, literature, exhibits and various public events.<sup>5</sup> Despite Chinese efforts in the popular culture field towards the international

<sup>1</sup> Mahmoud Pargoo, “What Does Iran Really Think of China?”, The Diplomat, November 07, 2018, <https://thediplomat.com/2018/11/what-does-iran-really-think-of-china/>, last accessed April 02, 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Simpson Jr, “Russian and Chinese Support for Tehran Iranian Reform and Stagnation”.

<sup>3</sup> Emma Scott, “A Nuclear Deal with Chinese Characteristics: China's Role in the P5+1 Talks with Iran”, Jamestown Foundation - China Brief, Volume: 15 Issue: 14, July 17, 2015, <https://jamestown.org/program/a-nuclear-deal-with-chinese-characteristics-chinas-role-in-the-p51-talks-with-iran/>, last accessed April 02, 2019.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.cpaffc.org.cn/index/index/index/lang/2.html/content/details28-22342.html>. “China-Iran Friendship Association Established”, Tehran Times, December 28, 2008, <https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/185778/China-Iran-Friendship-Association-established>, last accessed April 02, 2019; “The China-Iran Friendship Association”, Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, no date, <http://en.cpaffc.org.cn/content/details28-22342.html>, last seen April 02, 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Dafna Hirsh, Motti Regev, Popular Culture - Learning Guide, (Raana: Open University, 2012).



## THE “SOFT-RELATIONS” BETWEEN CHINA AND IRAN CONT'D

arena in general and to Iran in particular, the popular culture of China's two neighbors, South Korea and Japan, is actually much more known internationally, including in Iran. The Japanese animation by the creator Hayao Miyazaki or the South Korean Dae Jang Geum who plays in the “Diamond in the Palace” series, for example, are much more familiar to Iranians than the popular culture of China.<sup>6</sup> The reason is partly due to the fact that compared to its neighbors, China has only recently begun to operate more aggressively in this field.

### Literature

The Beijing Book Fair, organized by China's National Publishing Corporation, has been held since 1986 and is considered the largest book fair in China. Each year, a different country is chosen to be the guest of honor, who is paid special attention to by the organizers and by the huge audience that visits the fair. Iran was guest of honor during the 24th fair, held in July 2017. The opening message by the organizers noted: “Iran will bring us a cultural celebration under the slogan ‘Iran – the Silk Road's colorful dream’”, and later introduced the Iranian delegates who would attend, and outlined the activities which the Iranian representative would hold at the fair.<sup>7</sup>

The following year at the 25th fair, the Iranian representatives were invited to convene an “Iranian day”, in collaboration with the Iranian Cultural Center in China. As part of program, Adel Khani, Iran's cultural attaché in China (appointed by Iran's Supreme Leader), presented the main characteristics of Iranian and Islamic culture to Chinese publishers and others<sup>8</sup>. The Chinese invitation to expose Iranian culture to the Chinese, was also designed to be reciprocated. In July 2018, the Chinese embassy in Tehran donated a book section to the ECO Cultural Center Library, which is a cultural institute in Tehran. The positive manner in which the Chinese donation was received can be gleaned from the ceremony that was held at the Institute, attended by the wife of the Chinese ambassador and the wife of the head of the Institute, and the mutual invitations for visits that were exchanged there.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Marjohn Sheikhi, “One Belt-One Road may be Iran, China Gateway to Becoming Soft-Power Giants”, Mehr News Agency, May 16, 2018, <https://en.mehrnews.com/news/134085/One-Belt-One-Road-may-be-Iran-China-gateway-to-becoming-soft-power>.

<sup>7</sup> “Iran Guest of Honor: The Colorful Dream of Silk Road”, Beijing International Book Fair, July 21, 2017, <http://www.bibf.net/en/NewsDetail.aspx?Id=112&NID=35&PID=35>.

<sup>8</sup> “The Day of Iran” held in Beijing Book Fair”, Iran Book News Agency, August 26, 2018, <http://www.ibna.ir/en/doc/naghli/264754/the-day-of-iran-held-in-beijing-book-fair>; “Day of Iran commemorated at Beijing Int'l Book Fair”, Iran Daily, August 24, 2018, <http://www.iran-daily.com/News/220287.html?catid=11&title=-Day-of-Iran--commemorated-at-Beijing-Int-l-Book-Fair>.

<sup>9</sup> “Chinese Embassy Donates Books to ECO Cultural Institute”, ECO Cultural Institute, July 15, 2018, <http://en.ecieco.org/news.aspx?id=6063>.

### Television

One of Iran's most popular TV series, “The Capital”, was aired in March 2011. In the series' third season it is told that Aresto, the cousin of Naji the protagonist of the series, decides to reveal to his family that he is engaged to a Chinese woman named Chun Chang. It is further told that this Chinese woman converted to Islam and the story of a relationship between an Iranian man and a Chinese woman and the challenges they face will occupy much of the series. Zhang Meng Khan is a Chinese actress who plays in the series, and additionally, she is a Chinese student studying in Iran and speaks fluent Persian. Zhang joined the series players in 2014 after one of her university teachers recommended her. Now she is a star in Iran and continues to play the series also in its fifth season.

According to Chinese journalism, the series in general and the Chinese actress in particular, helped many Iranians get to know better China and its culture. The series and actress introduce a new angle on China to the Iranian television viewers, both through the series and as viewers follow the life of the Chinese star who lives in Iran and speaks their language.<sup>10</sup> In the fifth season of the series, the character of the Chinese actress is lost and her husband goes to look for her. Some of the filming of this season was conducted in China, and thus China was really presented in many homes in Iran, as the series aired during the peak of television viewing, after the fast-breaking in the month of Ramadan.<sup>11</sup> The centrality of the series and the way in which China is portrayed not only by Chinese actors but also through the shots filmed on Chinese soil has profoundly shaped the public image of China in Iran.

In another step to intensify cultural relations between the two countries, the Chinese Academy of Film in January 2019 named Majid Majidi, the Iranian film director screenwriter and producer, an honorary professor. Majidi was also invited to work on a joint project with Chinese filmmakers about children. The Chinese, as was reported by the Iranian cultural attaché at the Iranian embassy in Beijing, want to benefit from Majidi's experience of successfully presenting Iranian cinema to the world to do the same for Chinese cinema.<sup>12</sup> This indicates that the Chinese not only see Iran as a target for cultural influence by “prize-giving”, but also as an opportunity to disseminate Chinese culture around the world.

### Cultural events

Especially in Tehran, but also elsewhere in Iran, the Chinese celebrate various festivals with the aim of deepening the locals' acquaintance with China. In August 2016, the Chinese State Council, the Xinjiang Autonomous Regional Government, and the Chinese embassy in Iran jointly organized an exhibition about the different

<sup>10</sup> “Chinese student shoots to fame in Iran for role in TV series”, China Daily, January 22, 2016, [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2016-01/22/content\\_23204274.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2016-01/22/content_23204274.htm).

<sup>11</sup> Koh Choon Hwee, “Iran's Aristotle searches for his Chinese wife”, Today Online, July 13, 2015, <https://www.todayonline.com/world/asia/irans-aristotle-searches-his-chinese-wife>.

<sup>12</sup> “Majidi to helm joint movie with China”, Iran Daily, January 13, 2019, <http://www.iran-daily.com/News/237282.html?catid=11&title=237282>.

## THE “SOFT-RELATIONS” BETWEEN CHINA AND IRAN CONT'D

cultures in Xinjiang Province. The exhibit was displayed at the Niavaran Cultural Center in North Tehran. The event included a photograph exhibition from Xinjiang, along with other activities such as dance performances and music. Yu Zhengsheng, the chairman of China's 12th Advisory Political Committee, sent a greeting for the opening of the occasion and explained the purpose from the Chinese perspective: “the event will help all Iranians understand the stable and harmonious region of Xinjiang and the rapid economic development it is experiencing, and this is along with promoting the cultural exchange” between the two countries. Yu added, similar to the examples given above, “that the two countries have exchanged representatives for more than two thousand years, and engaged in exchanges of information in all areas, and during this period the parties developed a deep friendship”.<sup>13</sup>

One of the Iranian delegates at this meeting said that in his opinion “the relations between Iran and China will lead to peace around the world”<sup>14</sup>. The Chinese choice to present this specific province to the Iranian people is not coincidental. The choice was made mainly because this province is often the subject of news articles around the world about conflict between the Uyghur Muslim population and the central government in Beijing. The goal for China is to present the Iranian Muslim minority alongside other ethnic minorities, and to present the entire province as a thriving and prosperous region. This shall serve the Chinese interest of gaining approval, or at least Iranian nonintervention, about the central government's conduct in the province. The fact that the Iranian authorities have allowed and supported this kind of exhibition indicates their acceptance of the Chinese wish that Iran not interfere in the central government's relations with the Uighur Muslim minority.

In September 2017, the Chinese held two more festivals in Iran. On September 19, 2017, the opening ceremony of the Chinese Culture Festival was held at the Museum of Contemporary Art in the Iranian capital. According to the Chinese embassy in Tehran, the purpose of the event was “to promote their cooperation in order to promote better cultural understandings between the two communities”. The opening ceremony ended with a screening of the Chinese film “The Last Wolf,” which, according

<sup>12</sup> “Majidi to helm joint movie with China”, Iran Daily, January 13, 2019, <http://www.iran-daily.com/News/237282.html?catid=11&title=237282>.

<sup>13</sup> “Xinjiang-Themed Cultural Festival in Tehran Promotes China-Iran Exchange”, Xinhua, August 23, 2016, <http://english.cctv.com/2016/08/23/ARTI3eq239kmjLlzaYZG6xmH160823.shtml>; <http://realiran.org/photos-chinese-cultural-festival-opened-at-tehrans-niavaran-center/>; “Photos: Chinese cultural Festival Opened at Tehran's Niavaran Center”, Real Iran, August 23, 2016, <http://m.womenofchina.cn/xhtml/culture/costumes/16083852-1.htm>.

<sup>14</sup> “Silk Road Boosts Iran-China Cultural Ties”, Iran Daily, August 23, 2016, <http://www.iran-daily.com/News/167399.html>.

to the Chinese embassy's report, was very positively received by Iranian viewers.<sup>15</sup>

An additional festival was the Music Festival at the Music Museum in Tehran, held on September 20, 2017, during which a variety of musical pieces were performed by performers from both countries. Speakers at the festival emphasized that the exchange of views and mutual learning facilitated by the ancient “Silk Road”, and that up until today there were mutual musical influences between the two countries. The speakers added that they expect that the “Belt and Road Initiative” will continue to deepen the cooperation in this field and to foster additional types of ideas exchange between the people in both countries.<sup>16</sup> The manner of acceptance of the Chinese “soft-power” in this case can be gleaned from the way the speakers spoke at the events, which repeated over and over the desire to cooperate and the desire to promote the friendship among the Iranian and Chinese peoples.

In March 2019, the Chinese embassy in Tehran held another event, which aimed at a joint celebration of the new year according to the Chinese and Iranian calendars, which this year were celebrated very close to one another. As part of this activity, the Chinese held an exhibition highlighting Chinese achievements in the last forty years, the years since the reforms were led by Deng Xiaoping, whom the exhibition credited with China's rise to the central role it plays today in the international arena. Feng Shan, China's ambassador in Tehran, said of the exhibition that its aim was to provide “a window to the Iranian people through which they will be able to see both traditional and modern China”.<sup>17</sup> The special angle of this exhibition compared to those mentioned above was the attempt to “market” China to the Iranians as a good place, and indeed a source of appreciation and inspiration.

### Conclusion

The “soft-relations” between China and Iran were accelerated during the 2010s, and this is probably due to the increase in China's economic power and its desire to establish relations in more areas beyond the political-economic realm. The parties' use of soft power is based on the understanding that, if relations between the two countries are also maintained at the interpersonal and cultural levels, and not only the political, they will stabilize the relationship and allow it to be developed optimally. It is “soft-relations” between people from different countries that account for the difference between superficial and transient relations on the one hand and deep and long-term relations between countries on the other. The cultural and interpersonal relationships are key to overcome difficulties arising in the political-economical realm, and both China and Iran seem to have internalized this insight.

<sup>15</sup> “Opening Ceremony of the Chinese Culture Festival Held in TMOCA”, Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Islamic Republic of Iran, September 19, 2017, [http://ir.china-embassy.org/eng/zygx\\_1/ylwh/t1494459.htm](http://ir.china-embassy.org/eng/zygx_1/ylwh/t1494459.htm).

<sup>16</sup> “Chinese Culture Festival-Chinese Music Evening Held in Iran”, Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Islamic Republic of Iran, September 24, 2017, [http://ir.china-embassy.org/eng/zygx\\_1/ylwh/t1496321.htm](http://ir.china-embassy.org/eng/zygx_1/ylwh/t1496321.htm).

<sup>17</sup> “Cultural activity held in Iran's capital to celebrate Chinese, Iranian New Years”, =, March 01, 2019, [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-03/01/c\\_137858704.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-03/01/c_137858704.htm).



## STUDY REPORT

### A Study and Comparison of the Royal Decrees of Nādir Shāh (1732–1747) and Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī (1747–1772)

by András Barati, Avicenna Institute of Middle Eastern Studies, Hungary

Regardless of the respective age or century, the difficulties of research in the administrative history of Iran are several, ranging from the complexity of defining terminology to the obscure use of terms by contemporary authors and the general lack of adequate information concerning the organization of the state apparatus. The turbulent decades of eighteenth-century Iran, however, are a particularly demanding period to study. Therefore, relying to a greater extent on the examination of surviving royal decrees in order to gain a better perspective regarding the inner workings of the chancellery in the post-Safavid era is an utmost necessity.

In this regard, the royal decrees of Nādir Shāh and Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī serve as a good example. Regarding the external characteristics of their documents, the most observable attribute is the lack of ornamentation. Three out of one-hundred and forty-seven documents are gilded and lavishly decorated; however, these embellishments were certainly added later. The top of the document gives place to the *invocatio* and the royal seal. The size of the margin on the right side is approximately one-third of the paper; therefore, the text of the decree forms a closed block, and a further attribute is the indented first lines due to the introductory formula. The style of the script is *shikasta-nasta'liq*, and almost exclusively black ink was employed in every section of the documents, unlike in the Safavid era, when gold and red ink were often utilized under the different rules of the chancellery. The use of *siyāq*, as a numerical notation system, in the decrees of Nādir Shāh continued to remain in practice, since he banned merely its application in the registers (*sarrishtajāt-i dafātir*) according to the chronicle of *Ālamārā-yi Nādirī*. Surprisingly, in the deeds of Aḥmad Shāh, the *siyāq* was not implemented.

Concerning the royal seals, to our current knowledge, Aḥmad Shāh employed no more than one seal during his reign. It is pear-shaped with a peacock inside and the text is as follows: *al-ḥukm lillāh yā huwa aḥmad shāh durr-i durrānī yā fattāḥ*, and the year 1160/1747. The inspiration for this was clearly drawn from one of the seals of Nādir Shāh, which is also pear-shaped with the text of *bismillāh al-ḥukm lillāh* in a stylized peacock. However, it appears only one time on an undated decree, and taking into consideration the effort of Aḥmad Shāh to display continuity between himself and Nādir Shāh, the more widely applied seals, such as the rectangular one with a crown at the top or the one with the lion and sun (*shīr-u khwushīd*) would have been the more obvious choice to emulate.

By exploring the endorsements and seals of the chancellery that had to be placed on the back of the documents, much information concerning the inner workings and the actual members of the administrations can be gleaned. These seals are very diverse in terms of design and text. The seals more or less follow the same structure. The first part is an *āya* from the Qur'an or a section of a *ḥadīs* or a prayer. The second part contains the name of the Prophet or an Imam and the third one consists of the name of the seal's owner followed or preceded by the '*abduhu*, *al-rājī*, or *al-aqall khalqullāh* phrases. More than two-thirds of the *sayyids* are *ḥusaynīs* and *raḥawīs*, and the devotion is most commonly aimed at Muḥammad, 'Alī and Riḏā. Unfortunately, connections between the text of the seal and a particular profession cannot be established.

The direct relation between the administrations of these rulers even in the middle and lower echelons is testified by the seal of Muḥammad Taqī which can be found on a document of Nādir Shāh from August 1741 and on two separate decrees of Aḥmad Shāh issued in August 1754 and February 1755.

A significant dissimilarity between the royal decrees of these two monarchs is the royal mandate. Those departments of the chancellery and the finance chamber, which are tasked with the issuance of documents, are fundamentally executive bodies since the instructions they receive are originated elsewhere. Primarily from the *shāh*, though high-ranking functionaries also had the authority to do so. In the Safavid period, the different formulas of the mandate were penned on the back of the document by the office of the *nāẓir-i daftarkhāna*. The mandate issued by the grand vizier was called *ta'līqa* or *niwishta*; otherwise, it was designated as *risāla*. This bureaucratic remark was a permanent component of the Safavid decrees, and until now the findings of the research was that by the post-Safavid era it would disappear. It is partly true, since in the documents of Nādir Shāh there is no trace of it whatsoever, and yet, it resurfaces in a few documents of Aḥmad Shāh. These decrees reveal that the royal mandate almost entirely preserved its Safavid form, and the word of *risāla* continued to be the designation of the mandate of a lower-ranking official.

On the subject of the inner attributes of the royal decrees, that is the formulary, the first part is the protocol, which begins with the *invocatio* at the top of the document. In the case of Nādir Shāh, it is highly varied, but on the documents of Aḥmad Shāh it usually starts with a *bismillāh khayr al-asmā'*, and below that, a calligraphic *basmala* is to be seen. On the left side, a bit lower than these two elements is the *lā 'ilāha 'illā allāh*. All three elements of the *invocatio* are written in the same elegant calligraphy on every document. The characteristic *devotio* of the Safavid documents in the form of *al-mulk lillāh* can be found neither in Nādir Shāh nor in Aḥmad Shāh's decrees. Nevertheless, the *devotio* of the simple *parwāncha* type of document during the Safavids was drawn with gold ink, and the *lā 'ilāha 'illā allāh* part always appears with gold ink; therefore, it would seem that this element can be considered as the *devotio*.

## STUDY REPORT CONT'D

Furthermore, the *al-mulk lillāh* phrase was incorporated into the seal.

Regarding the introductory formulas, which are essentially internal notes of the chancellery, these rulers have remarkably similar ones both externally and in content. Accordingly, the introductory formula of every decree resembles the *ṭughrās* of the Ottoman Sultans characterized by the very ornate, elongated letters and the excessive oval bows. It always starts with this religious motto: *a'ūdhu billāhi ta'ālā sha'nuhu al-'azīz* and followed by the phrase of *farmān-i humāyūn shud*, as a rule. The texts of the decrees always begin with introductory formulas, and the *intitulatio* of the Safavid era disappears completely.

The *protocol* is followed by the *corpus*, of which the first section is the *promulgatio*. The main difference between the documents of the two rulers in this regard is that in the decrees of Aḥmad Shāh a short comment is always present stating that the addressee enjoys the support of the ruler, usually in this form, or in some version of this one: *ba ashfāq-i bī ghāyāt-i shāhanshāhī wa alṭāf-i bī nahāyāt-i ḥaẓrat-i ẓill-i ilāhī sarafrāz gashta* (who is distinguished by infinite royal kindnesses and unlimited imperial favours). The “shadow of God” phrase is employed in the documents of Nādir Shāh from the year 1739, which had strengthened his divine legitimacy and it can be considered as an innovation compared to the previous era, which continued to be present in Aḥmad Shāh's decrees.

Following the *promulgatio* comes the *narratio*, *arenga* and *dispositio*, where no significant changes can be observed between the practice of the two administrations. However, it should be noted that in the *adhortatio*s of the documents issued by Nādir Shāh the sentence of *ḥasb al-muqarrar ma'mūl dārand* was applied extensively and out of all his successor states, the Durrānīs, Zands and Nādirids, Aḥmad Shāh's chancellery was the only one which availed itself of this in the *adhortatio*. Furthermore, in contrast with the documents of Nādir Shāh, in the *adhortatio*s of Aḥmad Shāh's decrees, the warning against any deviations from the instructions of the ruler is, for the most part, expressed in the imperative mood (*dar 'uhda shināsand*) and not in the negative imperative form (*az farmūda takhalluf nawarzand*). The corpus may comprise the *sanctio* stating that the violation of the orders will provoke the anger of God and the *shāh*. Though, in the documents of the rulers in question, the threat of prosecution (*bāzkhwāst*) is a more recurring and customary element.

The last part of the decree is the *eschatocol*, which in the decrees of both Nādir Shāh and Aḥmad Shāh only contains the *datatio*. Its form mirrors the one employed in the *raqam*, the *parwāncha-yi sharaf-i nafāz* and the simple *parwāncha*

of the Safavid period, namely the *tahrīran fī* sentence. A major adjustment is, however, that next to the month and the year, the day also appears in numeric form. Other regular segments of the Safavid decrees, such as the *apprecatio* and the *corroboratio* completely disappear in this period.

It may be observed that in every single decree of these two monarchs, the self-denomination of the document is solely the *raqam*. If there is a reference in the decree to another document, in most cases we encounter the phrase *raqam*; and the same can be observed in the petitions sent to the *shāh*, as well. Considering that at the time of the decline and fall of the Safavid empire, the use of *raqam* dominated the administration, it would seem logical that the practice survived in the next decades. Interestingly, in spite of the wide range of themes of the decrees, from matters of religion to the military, (unlike in the Safavid period) there was no distinction made between the different documents in terms of administrative rules and regulations. Consequently, the issuing of decrees was reduced to a single type, the *raqam*. By contrast, the authors of the contemporary chronicles, such as the *Jahāngushā-yi Nādirī* or the *Tārīkh-i Aḥmadshāhī*, who were either employed by the Chancellery and the Finance Chamber or were in some way involved in the administration, call the royal decrees *farmān* and every other designation is in negligible quantities. Nonetheless, it can be established without doubt that under Nādir Shāh and Aḥmad Shāh, every royal decree was officially called *raqam*.

However, despite the name, this *raqam* evidently carried the attributes of the simple *parwāncha* of the Safavid period. In the documents of both *shāhs*, the *farmān-i humāyūn shud* phrase was employed exclusively as the introductory formula, which is unexpected since the formula of the *raqam* in the seventeenth century was the *ḥukm-i jahānmuṭā' shud*, and this one was the introductory formula of the simple *parwāncha*. Concerning the *devotio*, in the Safavid period, it was inscribed with gold ink on the simple *parwāncha*, similarly to the decrees of Aḥmad Shāh. Hence, under the name of the *raqam*, actually not the *raqam*, but the simple *parwāncha* was the document type that survived into the post-Safavid era.

Be that as it may, the conclusion can be drawn that Mīrzā Mahdī Khān Astarābādī, the head of Nādir Shāh's chancellery as *majlis-nawīs*, evidently implemented wide-ranging reforms in the inner workings of the administration, and during the reign of Nādir Shāh a simplified form of Safavid chancellery practice lived on, and although Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī inherited and followed this *modus operandi*, the application of seals was regulated to a greater extent and the utilization of previously neglected Safavid procedures, such as the royal mandate and the *devotio* were revived and employed again.



## STUDY REPORT CONT'D

### Preliminary Results from an Ethno-Archaeological study in Sefidkuh Makran (Baluchistan)

*by Hossein Vahedi, M.S in Archaeology, Shahrekord University, and Research Project Manager Sefidkuh*

The land of Iran, due to having a diverse climate and an abundance of different resources, has been one of the most susceptible areas in the establishment of human cultures since ancient times. The presence and existence of people from different cultures indicates continuity of human settlement in this land from the Palaeolithic to the present day. The history of human settlements and the emergence of centralized villages in southwestern and central Iran, as well as on the Zagros slopes, has been traced back to the Neolithic, Chalcolithic, and newer ages. By contrast, south and southeast of Iran (about one-third of the size of Iran today) feature different climates, rough earth and areas that are impenetrable until today. It includes areas such as Sistan, Baluchistan and part of Kerman, and has a variety of climates such as warm, dry, humid, and tropical. Human societies were established there, too, in ancient cultural centers, such as the Shahr-e Sukhteh and the Shahdad as well as Bampur of the Bronze Age, and the Yahya Hill site in Kerman dating back to the Early Neolithic period. Some parts of the area have been important sites for the exchange of ancient cultures such as Mesopotamian cultures, as well as the Sindh valley and even the Iranian plateau. Other areas have been less susceptible to changes, and cultures have often developed with a high level of continuity.

Sefidkuh is the name of the mountain range that forms a high and impermeable wall to the south and the eastern half of south-eastern Iran. The mountain range starts from Kerman province, runs through Hormozgan province and ends in Baluchistan. The mountain separates the coastal and southern lowlands from the plains and northern highlands and geologically the area is part of the Makran subdivision that extends east to west. According to the rock formations in the region, it is likely that from the Cretaceous period onward younger sediments left by the retreat of the sea resulted in the formation of this mountain range. Geologically, the area belongs to the Cretaceous, Oligocene, Miocene, Pliocene, and Quaternary periods, and is generally a part of the Zagros Mountains (Figure 1).

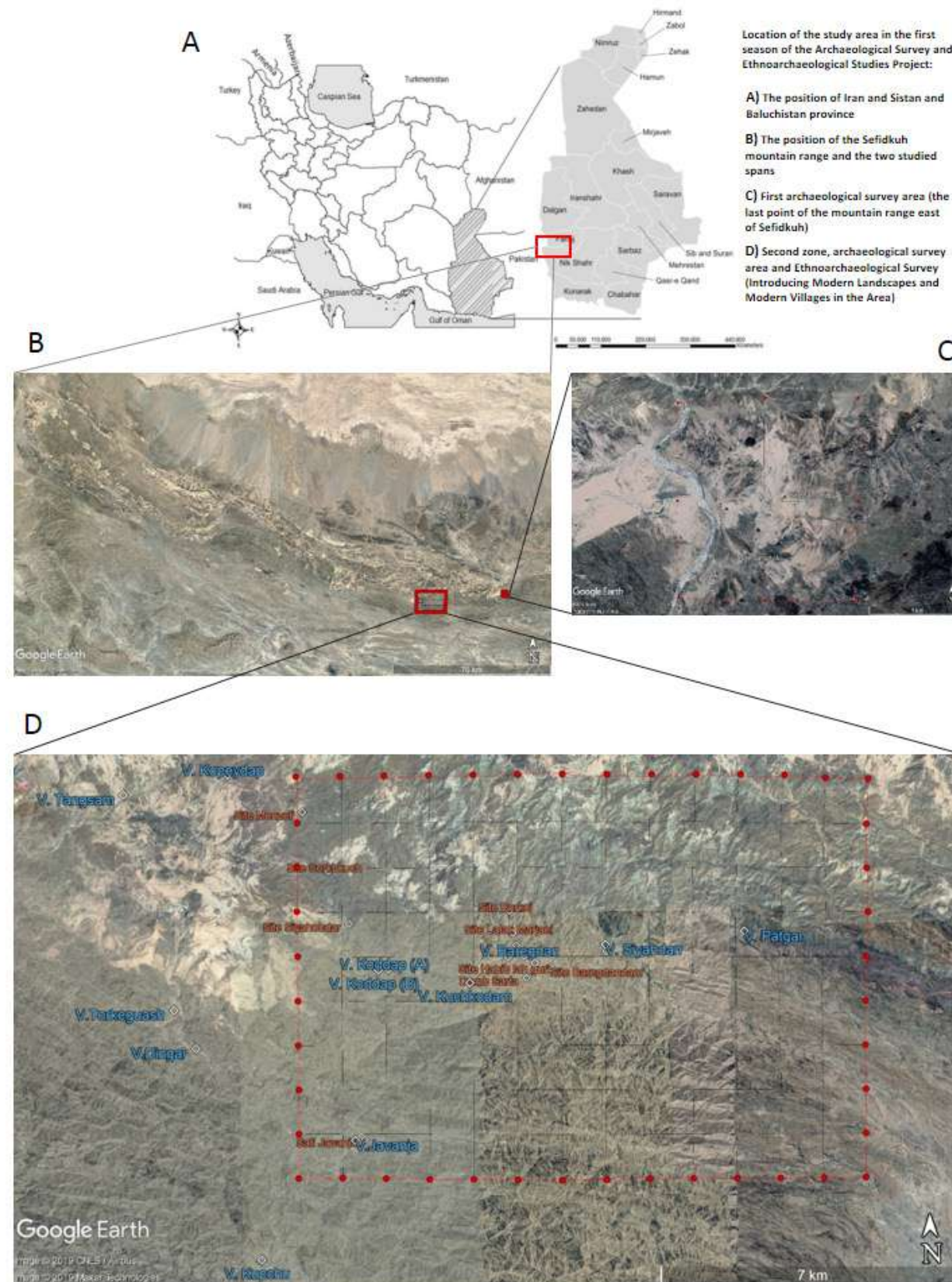
This mountain range is the habitat of leopards and Baluchistan black bears. Due to the rough earth and the density of the mountain texture, it is somewhat impenetrable and only a very specific and limited part of this area is suitable for habitation. The Sefidkuh mountains of Baluchistan have in the past been a shelter for rebels opposed to the central government and served as a hideout. Today, Sefidkuh Mountain in Baluchistan, also known as Sefidkuh Makran, is one of the most impenetrable areas in Baluchistan. It is situated between the city of Nikshahr and the city of Fanuj. To the south, it is connected with the steppe areas, dry and coastal hills, to the north with the Jazmurian basin, and in the eastern part it borders the dense central Baluchistan Mountains.

Whereas this project focuses on the Sefidkuh Baluchistan (Makran) range, a future project will also study other areas of Sefidkuh mountain range.

Extensive archaeological studies have been carried out in south-eastern Iran by both Iranian and foreign explorers. Sir Marc Aurel Stein first studied in the Sindh-Fars region in 1936 to understand the cultural dependence and dual influences between the Sindh and Mesopotamian cultures, and also excavation has taken place at the sites of Chah Hosseini, Daman Cemetery, and Khorab Cemetery. Beatrice DeCardi (1968) found evidence of historical beginnings in Bampur Hill, Iranshahr. Gary Hume of the University of Minnesota surveyed the terraces of the Ladiz, Simish and Mashkid rivers in 1967, and the results of his project led to the discovery of ancient Palaeolithic tools. Judith Marochek also excavated archaeological sites in the Khash region in 1976 and found evidence of Palaeolithic traces. Other explorers and researchers, such as Professor Tozi, Dr. Seyed Sajjadi, Dr. Hossein Moradi, Dr. Ruhollah Shirazi, and Dr. Heydari have noted the challenges of archaeological activity in the area. Anthropologists like Professor Philip C. Salzman and Professor Brian Spooner, and ethnologists like Muhammad Saeed Janabollahi have provided studies of different subjects in different areas also with important results. But so far ethnoarchaeological studies, such as the present one, have hardly been undertaken.



Figure 1: Location of the study area: Sefidkuh Mountain and Sefidkuh mountain of Makran section (Baluchistan) and identified villages and archaeological sites discovered.



In 2016, visits undertaken by researchers from various parts of Baluchistan, Iran, led to the identification of deserted villages left by the specific habitation pattern of indigenous people (Baluchi) in mountainous and impassable areas. During the study, thanks to satellite maps of central areas of Baluchistan, and due to consultation with tourism experts and locals, the presence of indigenous peoples was discovered in faraway areas in the heart of the impassable mountains of Nikshahr and Fanuj. Three unique modern settlements similar to the prehistoric period (Epipaleolithic, Neolithic, Chalcolithic) were identified in the Sefidkuh area of Baluchistan (Makran).

In 2018, for the first time, a formal research project titled “An Ethno-Archaeological Approach to the Central Highlands Settlement of Baluchistan. A Case Study of the Villages of Bent Zone, Nikshahr” was registered and implemented (it was the author’s master’s thesis, presented to Shahrekord University). In order to identify the ancient sites and the continuation of human settlements in these mountains, in 2019, a second research project was carried out with the agreement of the Cultural Heritage and Tourism Research Institute and the Archaeological Research Institute. This was titled “Investigation and Identification of the Ancient Sites of the Sefidkuh Region of Makran” (license number: 98101388). The significant results obtained in these two projects then led to the start of other long-term projects by the author, carried out through the relevant institutions, including the Cultural Heritage and Tourism Research Institute. Beyond ethno-archaeology, the research lends itself to the involvement of experts from various fields, including experimental archaeology and statistics. There is also potential to incorporate anthropologists, architects, geneticists, biologists, sociologists, and ethnologists.

The main context of the first phase of this archaeological survey is the focus on ethnoarchaeological studies by analogical comparisons to better identify and compare with communities in prehistoric sites (ancient sites from Mesopotamian, Levant, Anatolian, Sindh, Persian Gulf, Caucasus). Twelve locations with evidence of pre-historic (Epipaleolithic, Neolithic, Chalcolithic) settlement were identified, where life continues today. These twelve are located in the mountainous area of Sefidkuh. The names of the villages are: Baragdan, Kuchkodam, Koddap, Tangsam, Kopidap, Javanja, Torkeguash, Dangar, Kupchu, Sorkhkalut Patgan and Siyahdan.

The twelve villages are societies with simple and semi-complex biological and cultural structures and patterns, which is similar to prehistoric societies in the Epipaleolithic, Neolithic, and Chalcolithic eras. The location in a pristine and isolated region with commercial, economic, social and political inter-regional and sub-regional relations and semi-sedentary settlement patterns has made them one of the most unusual living communities in the Middle East and Iran. Their study and documentation provide unprecedented insights and even allow generalization to areas that have similar environmental structures as the Makran Sefidkuh region.



## STUDY REPORT CONT'D

### Architectural Model, Subsistence Model, and Settlement Patterns

In this phase of the project, three socio-biological models of these communities were studied and documented, including: architectural model, subsistence model, and settlement patterns. It also attempted to identify and study the social, economic, political, and cultural patterns and interactions in these communities. One of the aims of the research project is to compare the differentiation and similarities of these communities with those of prehistoric societies.

In general, comparisons were made with areas such as Tel Nemrik, Ein al-Ghazal, Red Valley (Mesopotamia), Sholavry-Gora, Eimris-Gora (Trans-Caucasian), Wadi Ein, Hefit, Maruh, Umm al-Anar, Sabiyah, Marawah, Jabal al-Kaluya, Kharimat Khor, al-Manāhil, Khor al-Manāhil (Persian Gulf and Oman), Jarraf Ella Ahmad, Wadi Tambak, Uhalou II (Levant), Cleimonas, Khirokhitia, Kalavasos Tentas, Shiluvorukambu (Mediterranean), Jericho, Goebkili Tepe, Chayuno, Achalice (Anatolia), Harappa (Sind) and Ganjdareh(e), Shahrān (with layers of Neolithic)(Iran). A high degree of similarity in the architectural and settlement patterns was found between these and the twelve villages based in Sefidkuh of Makran, and also in the pattern of livelihood. The type of function of ancient sites which has been compared with modern societies includes residential, religious, political, practical and public uses, and also sepulchral uses, which in all cases has close similarities with the use of space and architecture within the Sefidkuh area.

Circular architecture is dominant in the area while oval architecture is less common and right-angle architecture rare. (Figure 2).

Figure 2:  
The interior space of  
Baragdan Village.



Pictures of livelihoods in Sefidkuh (Makran) A) Trade (harvesting Summer Vegetables) B) Workers C) Collecting D) Fishing E) Hunting (hunter with weapons and hunting equipment) (Javad Gharaei personal photo's collection) F) Agriculture (Harvesting vegetables) G) Livestock (Goat herds) H) Production I) Gardening.

Figure 3:  
Living patterns of communities in the region



## STUDY REPORT CONT'D

A circular grave specimen was found, not dissimilar to the examples found in neighbouring areas such as Pakistan and Oman (areas such as Haif, Umm al-Anar and Jalan) in the prehistoric time period, such that it is probable that the Makran region, and especially Sefidkuh, was dominated by semi-nomadic communities and was one of the important areas of trade between the southern marginal communities of the Persian Gulf and the high-lying communities of Baluchistan and Sistan and neighbouring areas. Evidence of historical and Islamic cemeteries was also found, and it is probable that due to the strategic importance of the region, it has long been the home of semi-sedentary nomadic people.

The livelihood patterns of the studied communities are very diverse; common jobs in these societies include hunting, gathering, agriculture, livestock, horticulture, labor, trade and fisheries. These livelihood patterns have influenced each other directly and indirectly as well as impacted on political, social, architectural structures, and provided the sustenance pattern of these communities (Figure 3).

Finally, the settlement pattern of these societies, which is directly related to their type of livelihood, political and social circumstances and economic growth and decline, is relatively complex. The pattern of dispersal is clustered, and occurs in areas such as terraces of rivers and flat surfaces, such as plains, in the mountains with water resources such as springs and embankments. The settlement pattern revolves around a central location system, where a large and coherent village is centrally located, surrounded by small and individual settlements, which are under the supervision of the larger one. The social system is a combination of matriarchy and patriarchy. Communities have a leader titled Khan or Great man, and a council that also oversees village affairs, which means the social organization falls into the category of semi-khan societies. Use and division of space are based on political and social hierarchies and patterns of blood relations.

In general, all three patterns of architecture, livelihood, and settlement have a direct impact on each other and are major contributors to the establishment and continuation of current settlements in the region. One of the main causes of the unchanging (or slow changing) nature of these societies may be the location and position (located in impassable and inaccessible mountains) and lack of connection and accessibility to modern cultures (Figure 4).



Figure 4:  
Villages of Baragdan, Kuchkodam, Jovanja and Tang Sam; four villages with different architectural pattern and volume and density of architecture and location



## STUDY REPORT CONT'D

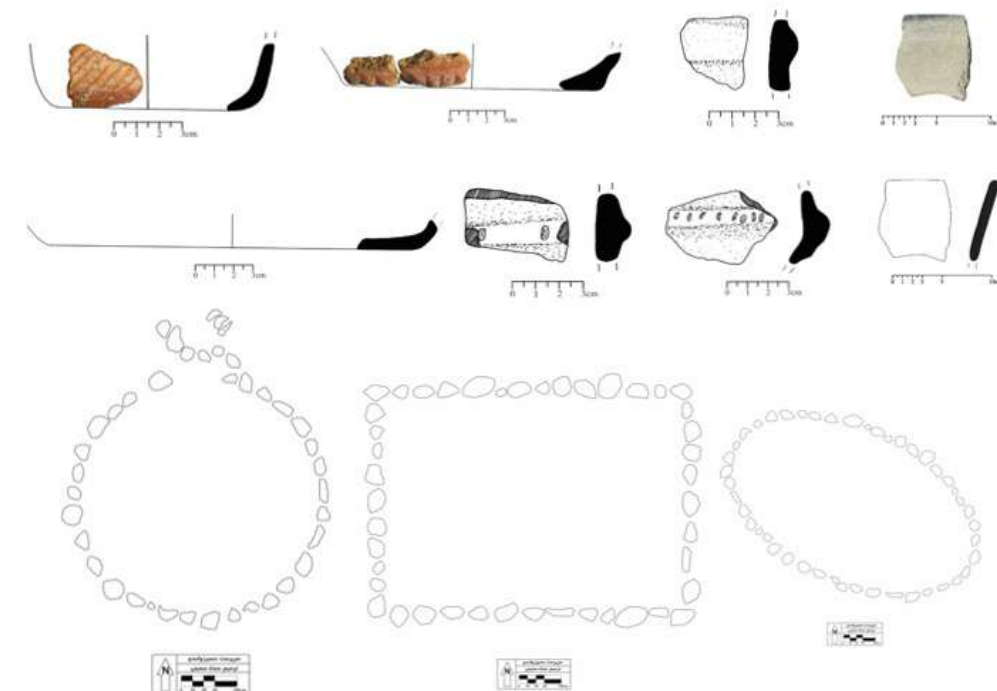
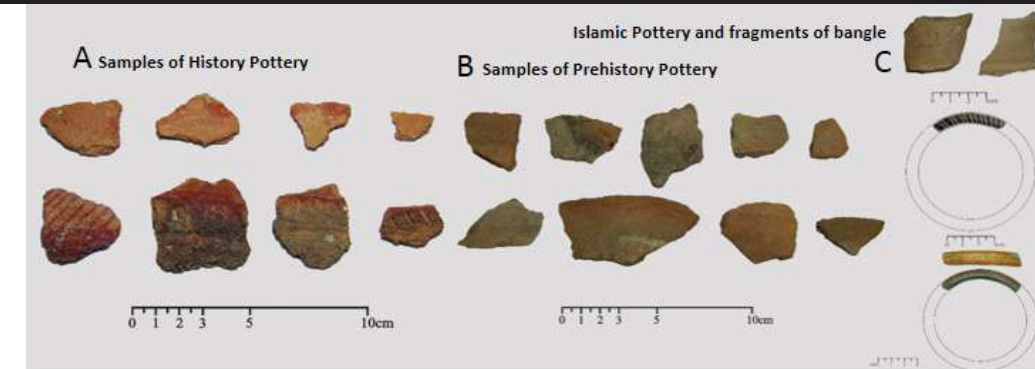
### Pottery

A limited number of pottery remnants were identified. Half of the pottery data obtained is painted and decorated with engraving. According to a preliminary chronology, about two-thirds of pottery data are consistent with the Parthian Pottery Index and the Londo Pottery Index. Based on the archaeological findings in Pakistan's Baluchistan, some scholars believe this type of pottery belongs to the second and third centuries BC, but this date may be different in the Baluchistan of Iran. It is hoped that the results of the absolute chronology test will provide clarity on this point.

It should be noted that Londo-ware is one of Baluchistan's index potteries and can be found in the layers of Yahya Hill of Kerman, Kaftari site in Fars, and all over western Pakistan, including the area of Jahawalan, Budi Buti and Las Bella, Domb Kouh site, and Hezar mardi in Bampur and the Ghale Dokhtar Castle area in South Khorasan. Londo-ware is the second largest pottery group in the Persian Gulf, the Oman Sea and the Makran region, which testifies to the trade between the peoples of the region. But a small part of the pottery data found from field research based on relative chronology is suspected to be of Chalcolithic origin.

### Jewelry

Finally, in addition to the pottery data, two pieces of bracelets were found in two separate areas. One of the specimens is a piece of glass bracelet with rope ornament and multi-color stone in green, orange and yellow colors, probably from the 8th century BC, similar to those found in Zulfabad, Bampur, Kalat. Jamshidi, Chah Hosseini and Qasr al-Qadim. The other piece is a specimen of circular wire glass bangle with black, green and orange multi-color carbuncle stones, which probably dates from the 10th century BC and can be compared to similar pieces found in al-Hashar in Yemen (Figure 5).



E Islamic Cemetery

D Ancient Grave



## STUDY REPORT CONT'D

Based on four types of archaeological evidence, including architecture, pottery, jewellery, and tombs (in remnants of dilapidated abandoned villages, single graves, and cemeteries), the evidence indicates the establishment of human societies from the prehistoric period (probably Chalcolithic) and its continuation in the historical period to the present. (Figure 6).



Figure 6:  
The peoples of Baragdan village (son of Khan and children village)

Therefore, according to the present ethnoarchaeological evidence, the ongoing project documents a high percentage of similarity with the architectural, settlement, livelihood patterns and political system from the prehistoric societies in the Epipaleolithic, Neolithic and Chalcolithic periods to the present (Figure 7). This is based on comparative archaeological studies at the level of ancient cultures in areas such as the Levant, Mesopotamia, Caucasus, Sindh, Persian Gulf and Iran.

The small villages that migrate horizontally through the mountains, looking for water resources and flat land resemble patterns in the Epipaleolithic and Neolithic era. The wide pattern of subsistence is similar to those found from the Neolithic and the Chalcolithic era, and the settlement pattern and the particular tribal or semi-khansalari political system also is similar to societal organization in the Neolithic and Chalcolithic periods.

The ancient communities living in the Sefidkuh heights have still not been accurately identified and it is necessary to conduct more extensive archaeological and ethnoarchaeological studies in other parts of the Sefidkuh Mountains in the Hormozgan and Kerman areas. The study and identification of Palaeolithic archaeology in Sefidkuh area must also be pursued which will have very important results in the field of Palaeolithic studies of Iran and archaeological studies in Sefidkuh Makran. This can be achieved by multi-disciplinary work involving different professionals, institutions and universities to reach these goals.



Figure 7:  
Khan of Kuchkodam village along with son of Khan Baragdan village