

Peyk

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Designed by Saeed Jalali

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ساز نو مبارک

Happy Nowruz
HAPPY PERSIAN NEW YEAR

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By: Shahri Estakhry



CALIFORNIA BY THE NUMBERS

Before getting into my reasons why I have chosen to write about California, please accept our warm and good wishes for the warm and good wishes for the New Year. May the New Year bring us hope - and more hope - with sanity and peace.

When the state of California is put on notice and threatened that funds will be cut for this and that reason, it might be wise to look at California in many ways as a pillar of stability for the nation, and strongly keep in mind that just in our 76,400 farms and ranches on 25.5 million acres annually we output more than 400 commodities. The state provides over one-third of the country's vegetables and two-thirds of the country's fruits and nuts. In 13 areas, California produces 99-100% of these crops: almonds, artichokes, dates, figs, grapes/raisins, kiwifruit, olives, clingstone peaches, pistachios, dried plums, pomegranates, sweet rice, Ladino Clover seed and walnuts. This is just one section, read on!

As an immigrant group, we probably have the largest section of our community members settled in California. The majority of us likely chose to live in California because of family members or friends that had already settled here or because we had heard about the beauty and the climate of this magnificent State. A few of us have probably taken time to learn something about its history as well. There is so much more to this "One of a Kind" state, and I thought as an educated immigrant group we should know why California is so vital to the existence of this nation. Also, with how things are rolling these days it is my old belief that "knowledge is power." I hope the following information will show you just how special and diverse is our California.

*"California became the 31st state as a part of the Compromise of 1850. The compromise allowed admission of the state to the Union, with the requirement that it enter as a free state." Today, as one of the larger states, it has a total of 163,695 square miles. (155,779 in land, 7,916 water area and 840 miles of coastline). As of July 2016 it has been registered as having a population of 39,250,017. It is a diverse population of 38% white, 38.8% Hispanic or Latino, 14.7% Asian alone, 6.5% African American, 1.7% American Indian and Alaska Native, 0.5% Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander and 3.8% two or more races. More than 200 languages and dialects are spoken in California (more than 350 in the US and more than 100 in San Diego). 43.9% of us speak another language at home (US 21%).

As of 2014, 73.5% of households have at least one member using the internet from the home. Also, as of 2014 California has been 4th in the nation for starting new business (over one-third higher than the national average). California outpaces the rest of the nation in capital venture investment and ranks 1st among states in the total number of patents. Immigrant inventors are responsible for many international patents including 72% of Qualcomm's patents, 65% of Merck's, 64% of GE's and 41% of government patents. At least one of the key founders of 25% of technology and engineering companies from 1995-2005 was an immigrant. Over the last decade, immigrant founded venture funds created 450,000 jobs and represented market capitalization of roughly \$500 billion.

We have the sixth largest economy in the world at \$2.45 trillion GDP (US, China, Japan, Germany, UK). Our largest private industry sectors are: Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing 21.3%, trade, transportation and utilities 14.6%, professional and business services 13.3%, manufacturing 11.3%, information 8.2%. California exported \$165.3 billion in products in 2015 and our largest export market is Mexico followed by Canada, China, Japan, Hong Kong, South Korea, Taiwan, Netherlands, Germany and the United Kingdom.

We are the 5th largest supplier of food in the world. As a percentage of the total U.S agricultural exports, California's share represents 14.3% with destinations to: The European Union (Germany,

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PCC (Persian Cultural Center) News:

PCC NEWS

Persian Cultural Center's board of directors holds its meetings every second Wednesday of the month at Iranian-American Center (IAC). The last two meetings took place on January 11 and February 8, 2017.

Jong Report

Jong e Farhangi is a cultural variety show and for the last two years has been a monthly program on the IAC stage. As with any other new program, it took some time for Jong to find its own audience and followers. Jong's emphasis is on arts and culture. The program guests use Jong's podium to share their views on a variety of subjects with an eager audience. Jong e Farhangi is on the second Friday night of the month.

San Diego Jong e Farhangi- January 13, 2017

The November program, hosted by Ali Sadr was presented in two parts. The first guest was Los Angeles based poet and author Partow Nooriala. In the second part of the program Maryam Moein, singer and Agustin Del Moro guitar player performed several songs and solo music.

San Diego Jong e Farhangi- February 10, 2017

The December program, hosted by Reza Khabazian, consisted of four parts. The first guest was Najmeh Mousavi, sociologist, who spoke about her recent book on female sexuality and traditions. Ms. Mousavi lives and teaches in Paris, France. Anahita Babaei was the second guest of the program and discussed philanthropy, in particular a special project about working children in Tehran. The final part of the program was a music performance by Akbar Vahabzadeh on flute and Mahmoud Shamschiri on keyboards. The surprise guest of the program was the legendary Parviz Ghelichkhani, a member of the national Iranian football team in seventies.

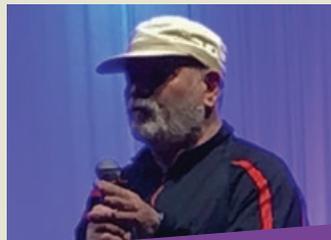


Friday
January 13, 2017
7:30 pm

زمان: جمعه ۱۳ ژانویه ۲۰۱۷
ساعت: ۷:۳۰ شب
مکان: مرکز ایرانیان سن دیگو
برو، برای علاقه‌مندان زبان انگلیسی،
مطرح و سخنرانی در زبان
فارسی و انگلیسی در آنجا
کلاس‌های آموزشی

مهمان های برنامه:
خانم پرتو نوری غلا، نویسنده و شاعر
خانم مزیم معین، خواننده و نوازنده
با همکاری آگوستین آل مورو
مجری: علی صدر

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Friday
February 10, 2017
7:30 pm

زمان: جمعه ۱۰ فوریه ۲۰۱۷
ساعت: ۷:۳۰ شب
مکان: مرکز ایرانیان سن دیگو
برو، برای علاقه‌مندان زبان انگلیسی،
مطرح و سخنرانی در زبان
فارسی و انگلیسی در آنجا
کلاس‌های آموزشی

مهمان های برنامه:
کمنتکو با خانم نجمه موسوی در باره
زن، بینگ و اختیار
کمنتکو با خانم اناهیتا بابایی در باره
کودکان کار
مهمان ویژه: «چهره محبوب ملی»
اجرای موسیقی آقای وهاب زاده
مجری: رضا خبازیان

Hengam Concert- January 28, 2017

PCC presented the Hengam concert by Kouros Taghavi and Namad Ensemble at IAC. Other members of Namad were Hasam Abedini, vocals, Niloufar Shiri, on kamancheh, Roshanak Irannejad, santour and Milad jihadi, tonbak and daf. This was a sold out concert.



Movie and Discussion – February 4, 2017

This is a regular program produced by PCC film group for the first Sunday of the month. The January event did not take place due to the Holidays and the February program was moved to Saturday due to conflict with Super Bowl. The movie was “Asb Heyvan e Najibi Hast” by Abdolreza Kahani. After the show the audience continued with discussion about the movie.



Docunight 34– February 1, 2017

Documentary films about Iran, and or by Iranians, are shown on the first Wednesday of the month in at least 22 cities in the US and Canada. This time the film presented was called “Six Years, Six Centuries.” This was a documentary by Mojtaba Mir Tahmasb about a group of dedicated musicians researching and collecting the music of Abdolghader Maraghi a composer and music theoretician who lived six centuries ago in Iran, and performing and recording the music they collected. The effort took six years which documented in the film.



Movie Night - February 24, 2017

PCC in cooperation with Sheed Film Festival presented a movie “Khaneh Pedari” at the Iranian-American Center (IAC). This movie is directed by Kianoush Ayari and has been banned in Iran.



Official opening of Persian Art Gallery at San Diego Museum of Art- January 18, 2017



Poetry review: Hasan Sijzi of Delhi

Review of *After Tomorrow the Days Disappear: Ghazals and Other Poems* (Northwestern University Press, 2016). Translated by Rebecca Gould.

Rebecca Gould's translation of the poems of Hasan Sijzi of Delhi (d. 1330), one of the more lucid yet forgotten composers of the premodern ghazal, captures the genre's dexterity in displaying the range of emotions and implications an encounter with the beloved can elicit. Gould's decision to translate Hasan Sijzi's poetry unknown compared to the frequently translated oeuvre of Iranian poets—notably Hafez of Shiraz, an undisputed virtuoso of the form, or even that of Sijzi's friend and fellow countryman, Amir Khusrau—is indicative of the increased attention of new scholarship seeking to recover some of the lost voices of Persian literary history. They are the voices of poets that have until now remained overlooked and cast aside in accounts of a Persian literary history that has tended more toward privileging Iranian-born poets and literary developments occurring within the geographic space of Iran itself. This is particularly true for non-Iranian lyricists active in South Asia prior to the rise of the Mughal Empire (1526-1707). (While Persian literary culture gained its initial foothold in South Asia at the turn of the first millennium, it was with the formation and policies of the Mughal Empire and the activity of poets, authors, Sufis, travelers, merchants, religious scholars, and others during that time that allowed the Persian ecumene, there and elsewhere, to reach its "peak.")

The omission of a poet like Sijzi in particular is all the more curious in that his biography and poetic output reflect emergent literary and historical trends that helped shape the wide world of Persian literary culture during his time and would continue to do so long after his death: he was descended from a family of immigrants who fled to South Asia from the Mongol invasions of the early 13th century, an event that not only recast the political, social, and literary landscape of the Middle East and its adjoining lands, but helped initiate a "mystical" turn in Persian poetry for poets seeking to explain the travails of a world gone mad; his career exists on the forefront of Persian's own long career in South Asia, whose rise to prominence would continue until the mid-18th century, and leave discernible traces well into the colonial period and beyond; he was a follower of the great Chisti Sufi saint Nizam al-Din Auliya, regarded as one of the greatest of all mystical personalities in South Asia and whose resting place in Delhi continues to be a place of pilgrimage to this day, compiling the most famous work of the Shaykh's sayings, *Morals of the Heart*; and he helped solidify the use of the radif, a feature that would serve as a mainstay of the ghazal moving forward.

It is Sijzi's use of the radif that Gould, a reader in comparative literature and translations studies at the University of Bristol, features prominently in situating the poet's verse. Radif can be loosely translated as a "refrain" consisting of a word, syllable, or set of syllables that recurs at the end of each poetic line. As Gould more carefully puts in her introduction: "Although, like any rhyme, it intensifies the sonic resonance of a verse, the radif

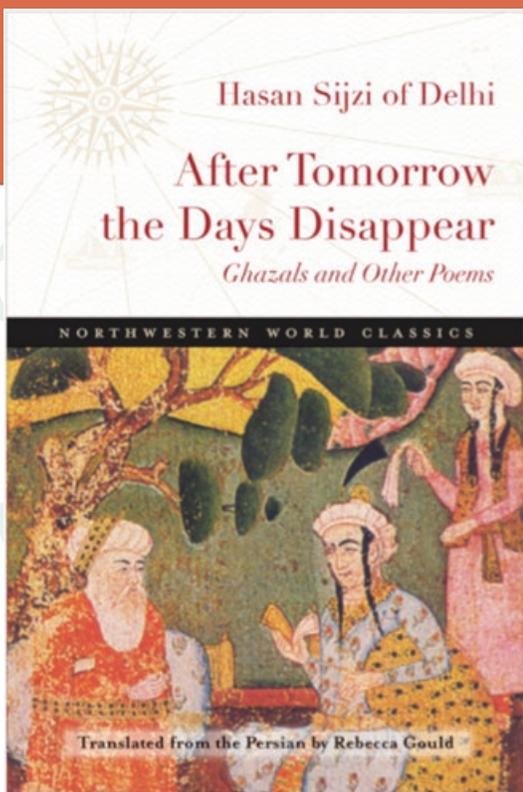
is often more complex, more systematically weighted, and more formally demanding than the rhymes that inform Anglophone poetics." Writing in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, Sijzi was at the forefront of perfecting its use:

Friends, today, in my head, desire is something else.
The flower of hope smells for me of another's loyalty.
I have found another light in the morning breeze.
In the dawn of truthful appearances, the breeze is something else.
Oh, tender heart, terrified of surrendering life.
Dying in the presence of the beloved is survival of another kind.
We do not speak of those who know reality.
For the bird of the garden, even this flute is something else.
I am a fire temple burning in the light of this truth.
The view of the beloved is something else.
The locks of her musky hair have clasped my heart.
Her locked coils bring trouble of a different order.
Oh, Hasan, how often do you circle the beloved's coils?
This movement toward the beloved is something else.
(ghazal 9)

radif: is something else (digarast)

The occurrence of the radif, which Gould notes at most poems' conclusions and diligently relates in her translations, helps establish the conceptual frame of Sijzi's verse and provides a key for the English reader to "access the driving force of the original." As each couplet of ghazals of the premodern period can be hard to connect topically—often times each line does not easily cohere with what precedes and follows it—the radif shows how form helps give a poem its thematic structure. The thematic focus of the above selection, with the help of the radif, should be quite obvious to any reader: the physical trappings of the beloved and this world are something other than what they seem. This movement toward the beloved is something else. The beloved is something else. The beloved is God.

The articulation of a ghazal's main theme will not always be so clear. Most often the conceptual and linguistic interplay between the sacred and the profane is ambiguous and uncertain, a fact which Sijzi renders irrelevant by clearly noting that the profane indeed is something else. In most cases, however, Sijzi's other poems included the ambiguous nature of whether one desires this world or the next (and whether the beloved indeed "is something else") remains unresolved. It is how one goes about interpreting such ambiguity and to what extent one wishes to make meaning from the repeated tension between the two that readers of the ghazal have debated for close to a millennium. Nowhere is this contestation over understanding the profane and its potential mystical undertones better seen than in interpretations of the most profane, alluring, and putatively un-Islamic object of all: wine. Ergo, Sijzi:



Until I sip from your wine colored lips,
 my lust for worshipping wine can never pass.
 You ask me, Hasan, why of drinking I don't repent.
 By Allah, were I to repent, my drunkenness would
 never pass.
 (from ghazal 18)

radif: does not pass (nimiravad)

Is Sijzi's wine the elixir of merrymaking or union with God? Is its pursuit one for physical pleasure or spiritual enlightenment? Does his state of drunkenness refer to the loss of faculties and inability to function or the clear sightedness of fana (self-annihilation), the pinnacle of achievement on the Sufi path? Interpretations will typically diverge here, as they do for most references to wine and drunkenness that flow through the lines of generations of lyricists. Some will read Sijzi's verse as a paean for fermented grapes and the luxuries of physical pleasure; others will see it jam-packed with allusions to spiritual pursuit and betterment. Either way, this dichotomous choice to opt for one set of meanings over the other leaves little room to maneuver elsewhere. Equally so, they are their own interpretative straightjackets.

It is for this reason that a professor once confided in me that after a while he ceased to offer seminars on the poetry of the aforementioned Hafez, whose lines have been debated for centuries for their real or imagined mystical undertones, in particular around meaning of wine. Invariably, he noted, after the first week of class students would divide themselves into two groups, depending on whether they understood Hafez's lexicon as descriptive of this world or the next, and maintain their allegiances to the bitter end. Positions hardened and debates became monotonous. Never the twain would meet.

Sijzi's biography may, for some, be of relevance here. He recounts in his collected sayings of Nizam alDin Auliya his renunciation of wine. If one wishes to follow this line of biographical inquiry

further, then one must attempt to date the composition of the above lines either before or after his forsaking of wine. It is a task no more exact than it is gratuitous.

Whether Sijzi himself, like a host of other ghazal composers, was an inebriate or teetotaler is of only of secondary importance, just as is designating him as someone who ineluctably strives to explain either the sacred in the profane or the profane in the sacred. The ingenuity of Sijzi's verse is in his playful ability to concoct a jumbled world of both, melding the two language fields of sacrality (worship, repent, Allah) and profanity (lust, wine, drunkenness) to not only a point of ambiguity but of apparent contradiction.

Sijzi swears an oath to Allah to not repent for his drunkenness, for to do so means forsaking the opportunity to experience the drunkenness of his beloved, which may be Allah in any case. He endeavors to faithfully pursue wine and drunkenness as a necessary act to fulfill the requirements of his own path of piety. Contemporary readers will likely find this contradiction the reference to pursue wine as explained through the language of faith irreconcilable. The forbiddance of wine, according to Islamic law, is well known and arguably one of the most recognizable proscriptions of the faith. Readers from Sijzi's own time and later in the early modern Islamic world, less accustomed to defining their own piety in direct relation to the letter of the law, would find the contradiction less problematic, even without making the necessary interpretative jump to see wine as something else. Wine was prevalent and accessible, both at the court of Muslim monarchs and elsewhere, to say nothing of the contact between Muslims and members of other faiths with no legal edicts against drinking. Only a precious few, mainly among the community of religious legal scholars, would recognize wine drinking as a major dereliction or, in the extreme, an abdication of faith. Readers of Sijzi in the medieval and early modern Islamic world would be unlikely to register the contradiction between legal prescription and praxis, explained and harnessed in a contested symbol such as wine, as the coexistence of the two in the text would conform to many of their own experiences and observations of what constitutes practiced Islam.

As the late Shahab Ahmed notes in his posthumously published opus *What is Islam?*, Muslims from the Balkans to the Bengal thought and lived seemingly contradictory things "without regarding themselves as transgressing...what it meant to be Muslim." "Indeed," he continues, "these ideas and behaviours were construed, as paradoxical as it might seem, to be not in harmony with, but actually somehow articulating the meaning and truth of Islam." Sijzi's perceptive intertwining of the sacrality of faith and the profanity of wine is remarkable not simply for the ambiguity it creates in intended meaning, but for its skill in reflecting a coherent language field of experienced Islam. His observations here would resonate with those of his readers who would have little problem in connecting the two, as they cohabit the actual space of practiced Islam in society and are reflected in years of literary production and tradition.

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President Trump's Executive Order

By Leily Rezvani

Protesters and activists crowded airports at the end of January to advocate for President Trump to lift the travel ban he imposed on seven predominantly Muslim countries after only one week in office. In a statement to the Pentagon on January 27, 2017, President Trump declared he was

banning citizens from Iran, Iraq, Syria, Sudan, Libya, Yemen, and Somalia. The statement was then followed by a formal executive order which attempted “to protect the American people from terrorist attacks by foreign nationals admitted to the United States,” by banning citizens of those countries. Moreover, for 120 days, the order suspended the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) and the United States’ Syrian Refugee Program (USSRP), which accepted 12,486 Syrians throughout 2016. The executive order also reduced the total number of refugees allowed to enter the U.S. in 2017 from 110,000 to 50,000, and gave preference to Christian refugees over their Muslim counterparts. This was due to the fact that the president holds a firm belief that Christian refugees have been persecuted more than Muslim refugees.

As a form of retaliation to the executive order, the Iranian Foreign Affairs Ministry issued a statement saying: “The US decision to restrict travel for Muslims to the US, even if for a temporary period of three months, is an obvious insult to the Islamic world and in particular to the great nation of Iran. Despite the claims of combating terrorism and keeping American people safe, it will be recorded in history as a big gift to extremists and their supporters.” Many other global leaders expressed the same concern. The London Mayor, Sadiq Khan, publicly stated that he believes the ban to be “shameful and cruel.”

A petition was created by a British citizen in November, when Trump was first elected, and gained momentum after the executive order was signed. The goal of the petition is to encourage the British Parliament and the Prime Minister to rescind their invitation to Buckingham Palace: “Donald Trump should be allowed to enter the UK in his capacity as head of the US government, but he should not be invited to make an official state visit because it would cause embarrassment to Her Majesty the Queen.” It goes on to explain “Donald Trump’s well-documented misogyny and vulgarity disqualifies him from being received by Her Majesty the Queen or the Prince of Wales. Therefore during the term of his presidency Donald Trump should not be invited to the United Kingdom for an official state visit.” The Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Theresa May, said the UK government does not agree with President Trump’s views on the barring of refugees. She claimed to be excited to invite the President for a state visit, despite the petition that has 1.8 million signatures and rising. In fact, after the petition reached one million signatures, the British Parliament planned a debate to decide whether or not they should allow President Trump to visit Queen Elizabeth II in the summer. Although the petition does not request that President Trump not be allowed to visit governmental bodies



in the United Kingdom, if adopted by the British Parliament, the petition would rescind President Trump’s invitation to Buckingham Palace.

Other Western nations have strongly opposed the executive order. Angela Merkel, the Chancellor of Germany, personally called President Trump to remind him of the obligations held by the United States under the Geneva Convention to protect and accept refugees. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau tweeted, “To those fleeing persecution, terror & war, Canadians will welcome you, regardless of your faith. Diversity is our strength.” Canadians welcome refugees with open hearts by referring to them as “new Canadians” as opposed to “immigrants.” After only ten days out of office, former President Obama’s spokesperson issued a statement about the ban saying, “President Obama is heartened by the level of engagement taking place in communities around the country... Citizens exercising their constitutional right to assemble, organize and have their voices heard by their elected officials is exactly what we expect to see when American values are at stake.” Additionally, the former President “fundamentally disagrees with the notion of discriminating against individuals because of their faith or religion.” This statement came less than two weeks after Obama claimed he would refrain from questioning the new President on his policies before giving him the opportunity to succeed.

Similarly, many U.S. elected officials, Republicans and Democrats alike, hold the same views. Republican Senators John McCain and Lindsey Graham wrote, “This executive order sends a signal, intended or not, that America does not want Muslims coming into our country. That is why we fear this executive order may do more to help terrorist recruitment than improve our security.” Trump subsequently accused them of “looking to start World War III.” As Senate Minority Leader, Chuck Schumer, put it: “Tears are running down the cheeks of the Statue of Liberty tonight as a grand tradition of America, welcoming immigrants, that has existed since America was founded has been stomped upon.” The New York senator added, “Taking in immigrants and refugees is not only humanitarian, but has also boosted our economy and created jobs decade after decade. This is one of the most backward and nasty executive orders that

because they did something like this. But, we didn't know we were going to have the same situation here." Conversely, Michael Bower from rural Idaho claimed: "I don't begrudge my grandma who never met a Muslim in her life, but all she sees on TV are Muslims blowing things up." Another example is Dr. Ghassan Assali and his wife, Sarmad, immigrants from Syria. They were one hour away from greeting Ghassan's sister and children at the airport when their guests were deported to Syria. With the hope of securing borders, the couple voted for President Trump in November. But, it was only a week into the president's term when they realized how negatively their votes impacted their close relatives. Since September 11, 2001, no American has been killed in a terrorist attack in the United States by an immigrant or child of an immigrant from any of the seven countries listed in the executive order. Some recent attacks by extremist groups were carried out by Muslims born in the United States. "America is not America," Dr. Assali said. "Like ISIS now, they ask, 'Are you Christian? What do you believe?' And if they are not saying what they believe, they kick you out and they cut your head off. So America, same thing. They ask you 'Are you Muslim?' You've got to change your religion." Only six hours after their relatives boarded a flight to Damascus, Syria, a federal judge issued an injunction lifting the ban, allowing those detained by customs to be released.



the president has issued." In a press conference, Senator Schumer was moved to tears as he began speaking about the executive order.

One of the aides to the French Presidential candidate, Marine Le Pen, said the National Front, a far-right political party, would take into consideration imposing a travel ban on some Middle Eastern countries if Le Pen is elected in April. Two days after the attacks in Paris, French President François Hollande made the announcement that France would accept thirty-thousand more refugees in 2017. However, France's relations with their Muslim citizens has not been as honorable as their policy on the acceptance of refugees. In 2010, the National Assembly of France passed a bill banning burqas, and only recently lifted their ban on burkinis.

Iranians specifically have shown the large continuations immigrants can make to the economy and society. The U.S. Embassy published an article stating that Iranian immigrants contribute far more to the economy compared to the average American due to the taxes they pay based on their income. Massachusetts Institute of Technology reported that the number of Iranian professors teaching at highly-ranked U.S. schools exceeds five hundred. The study concluded that Iranians have a greater likelihood of being more successful because of their academic and professional backgrounds. According to the Kauffman Foundation, from the years 2006 to 2012, more than two-fifths of the startup tech companies in Silicon Valley had at least one foreign-born founder. The Cato Institute, a libertarian think tank, concluded that immigrants boost productivity and the economy and do not have a negative impact on unemployment rates for U.S.-born workers. The Cato Institute found that immigrants and U.S.-born workers tend to gravitate towards differing fields due to their qualifications and areas of expertise.

Unfortunately, much of this contribution goes unnoticed. Hossein Khoshbakhty has been a U.S. citizen for over twenty years. While he was awaiting the arrival of his brother at LAX, he was brought to tears after learning that his brother would be deported. Trying to fight back his tears, Khoshbakhty told reporters: "I am American and Iranian... We ran away from Iran to this country

As a form of retaliation, some companies have taken action to protect refugees and those affected by the executive order. Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz has announced that Starbucks will hire ten-thousand refugees within five years. While many of President Trump's supporters are boycotting Starbucks for its decision, people who are against the ban are boycotting Uber for its decision to not support the protestors. Protesters and opponents of the ban are encouraging users to delete the app after Uber did not participate in a protest planned by taxi drivers and the companies for which they work. Other large companies - such as 21st Century Fox, Goldman Sachs, Facebook, Netflix, Apple, and JPMorgan - are condemning the order. Airbnb is offering free accommodation to refugees and those displaced by the ban, and Google employees protested outside of their headquarters alongside the CEO and one of the co-founders. Additionally, Google has created a two million dollar fund with two million extra dollars from its employees to donate to organizations such as the American Civil Liberties Union and Immigrant Legal Resource Center. Nearly one hundred Google employees and seventy-nine Microsoft employees are affected by the ban and are unable to reenter the U.S. Microsoft and Amazon have taken legal action against the President to lift the ban.

While supporters of the ban reminded us that the protection of the American people indeed comes before any other issue. For dual citizens in particular, it may feel as if America does not accept them as a result of their Iranian identity, and Iran does not accept them as a result of their American identity. The promises made by both sides has made it especially difficult for people who identify with both countries to discover their cultural identity. Within the span of twenty-four hours, Iranians living in the United States went from belonging to two nations to belonging to neither as both countries made promises to bar the entry of the other country's citizens.

Leily Rezvani is an intern at the National Public Radio and a student at High Tech High North County.



George Ourfalian/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images

The Ban – How to Address Children’s Fears

By: Lisa Hildreth

On January 28th, a presidential executive order was signed which suspends immigration and travel from seven countries: Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen. I don’t have to fill any of you in on the devastation and heartbreak this is having on so many people’s lives. The news is filled with such stories. In my line of work, family and children’s counseling, and now in my own home, it is the innocent children who are most affected. I am left to trying to help them make sense of all of this, and to soften their anxieties.

My nine-year-old daughter watched the presidential inauguration, live on television, with her class at school. She came home upset. Her classmate had been crying, worried that the children at school would no longer like him because he is Mexican. One week later, with the signing of an executive order, my daughter’s grandmother, aunt and uncle, and extended family have been banned from coming to visit from Iran. She is upset and anxious. She does not understand why the new president “wouldn’t want people from Iran to come here?” In her nine short years of life, she has traveled to Iran nine times – every year of her life. All she knows of Iran is overly kind people, amazing food, fun family gatherings, and incredible, beautiful sights. Those are all of the things that I, too, as a blonde-haired, blue-eyed, American woman have experienced in my many trips to Iran. Our family is fortunate. We are only mildly affected by the order. The now-blocked refugees from the seven specified countries are the ones who are most deeply affected, according to a United Nations assessment. Our children are deeply affected as well, whether directly or indirectly. So, when the majority of the world can’t wrap their heads around this order, how do we help our children to understand and cope? Here are some suggestions:

- Only share age-appropriate information. If you are having a hard time processing the anxiety and life changes that have come with the ban, think how difficult it is for a child.
- Assure them that we will protect them by fighting for what is right, through proper democratic processes.
- Model appropriate behavior. As we all know, children are parrots. They mimic and repeat everything that they see and hear, especially from their parents.

- Teach them how to stand up for themselves and others, and how to disagree respectfully if bigotry presents itself. Teach them how to stand up to all bigotry, whether it is about the rights of women and girls, LGBTQ, minorities, or immigrants.
- As with any issue, allow your child to express his or her fears and feelings openly.

Lisa Hildreth has a Master of Science in Counseling. She is a licensed therapist for children and families, both in private practice and school settings.

Editorial continued...

Spain, Canada, China/Hong Kong, Japan, Mexico, Korea, India, United Arab Emirates, Turkey and Vietnam accounted for 69% of the 2014 export value.

Our Movie and TV industry supports 1.9 million workers nationwide and contributes \$41 billion to over 345,000 businesses and \$19.3 billion in federal and state taxes. There are 191,399 jobs paying \$19.89 billion in wages 4,007,237 firms in California. California has 19.4 million workers as of October 2016 with 518,000 (2.9%) increase in jobs over the prior year. At the same time nonfarm employment rose in 8 industry sectors. The unemployment rate as of December 2016 was 5.0%, San Diego 4.2%, Nationwide 4.7%. Our capita income for 2015 was California \$30,318 and US \$28,930.

We have 946 districts with 10,021 schools for K-12 with 6.2 million students and 570,000 faculty/staff. In community colleges 72 districts and 113 colleges with 1.2 million students and 64,000 faculty/staff. California State University has 23 campuses with 371,000 students and 41,000 faculty/staff members and the University of California has 10 campuses and 5 medical centers, three national labs and 211,000 students with 153,000 faculty and staff.

California’s top five exports in 2015 were: Computer and electronic products-\$43.1 billion, transportation equipment-\$17.6 billion, machinery (except electrical)- \$15.1 billion, miscellaneous manufactured commodities-\$13.6 billion and chemicals-\$13.3 billion.*

ARE YOU GETTING THE PICTURE? I have a research paper of 12 pages in front of me with much gratitude to my daughter (which she uses to teach her class), many sections I haven’t even touched (tourism, health, etc.) I would have printed all for you but already I have exceeded my space in this Editorial section. What I have shared with you is more than sufficient knowledge for us to know why California is the 6th largest economy in the world and any person that challenges us with, “We will do this and that, or cut funds from you”... just smile and pretend you didn’t hear it. No sane person would anyway!

Sources include: Legislative Analyst’s Office, US Census, Visit California, Employment Development Department, Department of Commerce, Motion Picture Association of America, Assembly Committee on Jobs, Economic Development and the Economy, Californian Department of Fish and Wildlife, US Geological Survey, US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Protected Areas Data Portal and County of San Diego

Events in San Diego

Persian Cultural Center

Tel: (858) 552-9355 Fax & Voice: (619) 374-7335
www.pccus.org



PCC & AIAP Present:

Nowruz Celebration 1396

Saturday March 11, 2017
at San Diego Marriott La Jolla
Tickets and Information: 858-552-9355

Charshanbe Soori

Tuesday, March 14, 2017 7:00 to 10:00 pm

Sizdebedar

Sunday, April 2, 2017 1:00-6:00pm
Location: NTC Park
2455 Cushing Rd, San Diego, CA 92106
More Information: 858-552-9355

Art Exhibition Open to Public

From 9:00 am to 3:00 pm (Monday to Friday)
Iranian-American Center • 6790 Top Gun St. #7, San Diego, CA 92121
Info: 858-552-9355



Movie and Discussion,

First Sunday of the month at the Center
Iranian-American Center • 6790 Top Gun St. #7, San Diego, CA 92121
Info: 858-552-9355

DOCUNIGHT

First Wednesday of the month
at the Iranian-American Center (IAC) at 7 pm
Documentary films about Iran or by Iranians

Jong-e Farhangi

Every Second Friday of the month at 7:30 pm
Iranian-American Center • 6790 Top Gun St. #7, San Diego, CA 92121
Info: 858-552-9355

Setar Class by Kourosh Taghavi

Registration and info: (858) 717-6389

Tombak Class by Milad Jahadi

Registration and Info: (858) 735-9634

Daf Workshop

Sundays 11am-12 at Iranian School of San Diego (ISSD)

Piano Class by Farid Afshari

Registration and Info: (858) 349-1913

Iranian School of San Diego

858-552-9355

Nowruz preparation and Nowruz Bazaar Egg Coloring and Sabzeh Kari

Sunday March 5, 2017 10am to Noon at ISSD



ISSD Nowruz Celebration

Sunday March 12, 2017 at Mt. Carmel High School/ISSD

Branch I, Sundays from 9:30am-1pm

Mt. Carmel High School

Branch II, Thursdays from 6-8pm

Mt. Carmel High School
Mount Carmel High School
9550 Carmel Mountain Road • San Diego, CA 92129

Persian Dance Academy of San Diego

(858) 552-9355 www.pccus.org

Dollar a Month Fund

DMF Annual Nowruz Charity Bazaar

Sunday March 5, 2017 10am – 1pm
At the Iranian School of San Diego
9550 Carmel Mt. Rd, San Diego, CA 92129
Tel: 858-552-9355 • www.dmfund.org
www.facebook.com/DollaraMonthFund



Association of Iranian-American Professionals (AIAP)

Tel: (858) 207 6232 • www.aiap.org

Nowruz 1396 Celebration

Saturday, March 25th, 2017
Sheraton San Diego Hotel & Marina
Last Wednesday of each month at 6:30 PM
at Sufi Mediterranean Cuisine
5915 Balboa Ave, San Diego, CA 92111



ISTA (Iranian Student Association at UC San Diego)

www.istaucsd.org



House of Iran

Sunday March 26, 2017 11am-6pm
House of Iran Balboa Park



Tel: (619) 232 Iran Balboa Park,
Sundays 12:00-4:00pm

Iranian-American Scholarship Fund

Tel: (858) 552-9355 • www.iasfund.org
www.facebook.com/Iranian-AmericanScholarshipFund



Mehrgan Foundation

www.Mehrganfoundation.org Tel (858) 673-7000

PAAIA

Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian-Americans
www.paaia.org



NIAC

National Iranian-American Council
www.niac.org



Book Club Meeting

Last Saturday of each month
Iranian-American Center (IAC)
6790 Top Gun St. #7, San Diego, CA 92121
Tel (858) 552-9355

Iranian-American Life Science Network (IALSN)

www.ialsn.org

for latest Events in San Diego visit:
www.chekhabar.com



Visit Our web site at www.pccus.org

★ KNOW ★ — YOUR — RIGHTS



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS *Stopped by Police, Immigration Agents, or FBI*

If You're Stopped By Police

- You have a right to remain silent. If you wish to remain silent, tell the officer. (Some states may require you to identify yourself to the police if you're suspected of a crime.)
- Stay calm. Don't run. Don't argue, resist, or obstruct the police. Keep your hands where police can see them.
- Ask if you're free to leave. If yes, calmly and silently walk away.
- You do not have to consent to a search of yourself or your belongings.

If You're Stopped In Your Car

- Stop the car in a safe place as quickly as possible. Turn off the car, turn on the internal light, open the window partway, and place your hands on the wheel.
- Upon request, show police your driver's license, registration, and proof of insurance.
- If an officer or immigration agent asks to search your car, you can refuse. But if police believe your car contains evidence of a crime, they can search it without your consent.
- Both drivers and passengers have the right to remain silent. If you're a passenger, you can also ask if you're free to leave. If yes, silently leave.

If You're Asked About Your Immigration Status

- You have the right to remain silent. You do not have to answer questions about where you were born, whether you're a U.S. citizen, or how you entered the country. (Separate rules apply at international borders and airports, and for individuals on certain nonimmigrant visas, including tourists and business travelers.)
- If you're not a U.S. citizen and have valid immigration papers, you should show them if an immigration agent requests it.

- Do not lie about your citizenship status or provide fake documents.

If The Police Or Immigration Agents Come To Your Home

- You don't have to let them in unless they have a warrant signed by a judge.
- Ask them to show you the warrant. Officers can only search the areas and for the items listed on the warrant. An arrest warrant allows police to enter the home of the person listed on the warrant if they believe the person is inside. A warrant of removal/deportation (ICE warrant) does not allow officers to enter a home without consent.
- Even if officers have a warrant, you may remain silent. If you choose to speak, step outside and close the door.

619-398-4485 (SAN)
213-977-5245 (LAX / SNA)
415-621-2488 (SFO)

If You're Arrested by Police

- Do not resist.
- Say you wish to remain silent and ask for a lawyer. If you can't afford a lawyer, the government must provide one.
- Don't say anything, sign anything, or make any decisions without a lawyer.
- You have the right to make a local phone call. The police cannot listen if you call a lawyer.
- Don't discuss your immigration status with anyone but your lawyer.
- An immigration officer may visit you in jail. Do not answer questions or sign anything before talking to a lawyer.
- Read all papers fully. If you don't understand or cannot read the papers, say you need an interpreter.

If You're Taken Into Immigration (Or "ICE") Custody

- You have the right to a lawyer, but the government will not provide one. If you don't have a lawyer, ask for a list of free or low-cost legal services.
- You have the right to contact your consulate or have an officer inform the consulate of your arrest.
- Tell the immigration officer you wish to remain silent. Do not discuss your immigration status with anyone but your lawyer.
- Do not sign anything, such as a voluntary departure or stipulated removal, without talking to a lawyer. If you sign, you may be giving up your opportunity to try to stay in the U.S.
- Know your immigration number ("A" number) and give it to your family. It will help them locate you.

If You Feel Your Rights Have Been Violated

- Write down everything you remember, including officers' badge and patrol car numbers, which agency the officers were from, and any other details. Get contact information for witnesses. If you're injured, seek medical attention immediately and take photographs of your injuries.
- File a written complaint with the agency's internal affairs division or civilian complaint board. In most cases, you can file a complaint anonymously if you wish.

This information is not intended as legal advice. Some state laws may vary. Separate rules apply at checkpoints and when entering the U.S. (including at airports). Updated Dec. 2016.

For more information, call your local ACLU
www.ACLU.org/affiliates.

ACLU

OBAMACARE

TO BE

By Bijan Zayer, PhD

... NOT TO BE

The major provisions of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), also known as Obamacare, include: coverage of children under the age of 26 under their parent's health insurance plans, expansion of Medicaid to include all adults with income below 138% of the federal poverty level, guaranteeing health insurance for those who have pre-existing conditions, creation of healthcare insurance marketplaces, and offering various subsidies depending on income levels.

The Covered California marketplace enrolls 1.42 million Californians in private plans. Over 3 million additional people have enrolled through Medicaid expansion. Consequently, according to the American Community Survey, the uninsured dropped from 17.2% in 2013 to 8.6% in 2015. This increase in Californians getting healthcare coverage has led to higher employment in the healthcare industry. In a study, we conducted at the DeVry University, we attempted to quantify the nature of this increase.

A model was built to forecast employment in health service and social assistance without the ACA. Our findings show that employment would have increased from 1,972,000 employees in 2013 to 2,225,000 employees in 2020. A second model that takes into effect the impact of ACA, showed that the number of employees would increase to 2,375,000 in 2020.

The two models indicate that the ACA has added over 40,000 employees to the payrolls of healthcare services and social assistance through 2015, and that this number will increase to a total of 90,000 by 2020.

With Donald Trump as the President, the ACA is in jeopardy. If the program is repealed, most of the jobs created due to the existence of the program will be lost, and all the additional jobs that would have been created by 2020 will no longer materialize. Almost all Californians who were able to get healthcare insurance will no longer be able to afford it since the subsidies will no longer exist. According to the Urban Institute only 3,383,000 will be uninsured in 2021 with ACA in existence, but without it that number goes to 7,531,000.

Nationally, by repealing the ACA, 22 million fewer people will be enrolled in 2018 according to the CBO. Some believe that President Trump has a replacement plan that includes allowing insurance companies to sell across state lines and allowing individual healthcare insurance premiums to be tax deductible. Others believe the replacement plan will promote tax-free health saving accounts and high-deductible health plans. President Trump is also intent on eliminating the penalty for those do not buy healthcare insurance.

The above measures will increase the budget deficit because the tax deductibility of the health saving accounts and insurance premiums, and elimination of a penalty on those who do not buy healthcare insurance, will decrease government revenue.

It is too early to know how President Trump's plan will ultimately play out. But it is clear from the study that any decline in the number of insured people will result in lower employment in the healthcare industry.

Bijan Zayer, Ph.D. is Professor of Economics and Management at USD/ Keller Graduate School of Management



Sempra Energy utility

Public Announcement

Love is in the Air

Do you love to save money? San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) offers a variety of tools, programs and services to help their customers do just that!

As utility rate reform continues in 2017, energy saving programs will be worth looking into for your household's energy needs. For more information about Rate Reform, please visit: <http://www.sdge.com/RateReform/>

By pairing programs and services with helpful energy management tools, SDG&E can create a perfect match for your energy saving needs.

Here are two SDG&E solutions that can help you save energy and money in 2017:

You can't hurry love but you can sign up for SDG&E's Energy Goals & Alerts! <https://www.sdge.com/energy-use-alerts>

Love is in the air, here's something good to share...get monthly discounts on your SDG&E bill! <http://www.sdge.com/residential/apply-financial-assistance-programs>

#espsdge

The Science of Nutrition



8- Benefits of exercise

By **Mohammad Ahrar, Ph.D.**

Introduction

The ultimate fate of food that we eat is to produce energy. The energy produced by the body is used for various functions, such as physical activities, keeping our body warm, and proper functioning of the brain, heart, and other organs. Muscles use more energy than any other tissues in the body. The more muscles we use during any physical activity, the more energy is used up (discussed in Peyk 166).

Although the terms physical activity and exercise are frequently used interchangeably, they have different meanings. Physical activity includes those actions that make up one's daily routine, such as washing one's face, brushing teeth and working around the house. Exercise, on the other hand, is a structured and repetitive physical action done to improve general health and physical fitness. In this article, we discuss the benefits of exercise on general health.

1- Exercise's effect on brain functions

A recent study conducted at UCLA shows that exercise relieves stress and, in long run, promotes the growth of neurons in the brain. Results of other studies indicate that common aerobic exercises (physical activities that makes you breathe faster and get more oxygen to the lungs and tissues, and increasing your heart rate)—such as fast walking, jogging, biking, and swimming enhances oxygen transport to the brain, increases levels of serotonin and other mood-lifting hormones in the brain, improves memory and brain activity, and promotes neurogenesis (production of new nerve cells), while destroying Alzheimer's disease-causing plaques. It has also been shown that, when exercise is done consistently, the benefits are as effective as drug therapy and can even outperform antidepressant medicines (3).

A recent study published in the Journal of the American Geriatrics Society found that exercises requiring attention and memorization of new skills, such as Tai Chi and yoga, enhance cognitive function in the elderly. On the other hand, published data shows that lack of exercise and a sedentary life style—such as spending long hours in front of the TV—have a negative effect on the brain and increase the chance of “fogging” the brain (1).

2- Exercise's effect on the cardiovascular system

According to governmental studies (5), cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in the United States, and the cost of medication is staggering. But it doesn't have to be that way, and can be prevented. Results from the British Regional Heart Study found that regular exercise cuts the risk of heart disease more than most drugs, besides delivering multiple benefits for the heart, blood pressure, and blood cholesterol level.

- **Blood pressure.** High blood pressure is called a silent killer, because it has no warning signs or symptoms — until a stroke or heart attack occurs. Regular aerobic exercise, such as walking, jogging, hiking, bicycling, or similar activities, help reduce the

risk of developing high blood pressure. Even if you already have high blood pressure, exercise can help bring it down. During exercise, blood pressure usually rises temporarily, but afterward, it falls to levels that are lower than before exercise. From a different perspective, too much salt (sodium chloride) intake can also increase blood volume, and blood pressure. The fact is that the kidneys are not very efficient for removing excess sodium from the body. The good news is that a lot of sodium can be excreted from the skin through sweat glands during aerobic exercise and, as a result, blood volume and blood pressure can go down. That is how most blood pressure drugs work; in essence, most of these drugs help to remove sodium from the kidneys which, in turn, removes water from the blood and, as a result, blood volume and blood pressure goes down.

- **Blood cholesterol.** Numerous studies have shown that blood cholesterol dropped significantly for people who had high blood cholesterol when they were engaged in daily exercise. Regular exercise lowered LDL (so-called bad cholesterol) and increased HDL (so-called good cholesterol) and, with proper nutrition, the blood cholesterol level can be maintained in the normal range without even taking medication. According to Dr. Sherry Rogers (2), some cholesterol lowering drugs (such as some forms of statins) do more harm to the body than do good. An important medical study reveals that when there is inflammation in the body, levels of a substance produced in the liver called

C-reactive protein (CRP) rise. People with high CRP levels are at greater risk of developing heart disease, even if their cholesterol levels are normal. Regular exercise reduces inflammation, lowers CRP levels, and lowers the risk of heart disease. Regular aerobic activity increases HDL, keeping the inner lining of the arteries healthy and less prone to injuries that set the stage for plaque formation.

3- Exercise's effect on diabetes

It is well documented that Type 2 diabetes is most influenced by lifestyle. Unhealthy dieting and a sedentary lifestyle have been linked to Type 2 diabetes. Medical studies show that exercise and a healthy life style can help prevent Type 2 diabetes. There are two reasons for this:

1) Exercise causes body cells to burn more calories, meaning the cells need to draw more glucose from the blood for cellular metabolism, lowering the blood glucose level.

2) Exercise stimulates body cells to produce more insulin receptors on the cell membrane to allow more glucose to enter the cell. Muscle cells can stay sensitive to insulin for another day or two after exercise, which can be very helpful for regulation of blood sugar in diabetic people. Exercise may even reduce the dosage of insulin.

Reports (4) indicate that when seniors at risk for diabetes walked for 45 minutes a day, their blood sugar level dropped to normal level. In another study for the Diabetes Prevention Program, 3,000 participants with a high risk of developing Type 2 diabetes were assigned to three test groups. One group was on a diet and moderate exercise (150 minutes a week), the second group received the diabetes drug metformin, and the third group received inactive pills (placebo). The big winners were the participants in the first

group; their risk for diabetes dropped by 58%—versus 31% for those taking the drug metformin.

4- Exercise's effect on the immune system

Exercise stimulates bone marrow to produce more lymphocytes and other white blood cells that are responsible for our immune system. Studies have shown that men and women who walked at least 20 minutes a day, 5 days a week, had 43% fewer sick days than those who did not exercise. Besides, if they did get sick, it was for a shorter duration, and their symptoms were milder. Experiments with people aged 61 to 76 suggested that moderate exercise helps counteract the natural decline in immune system that occurs with age, and older people who are engaged in exercise stay healthier for a longer period of time.

5- Exercise's effect on the skeletal system and bone growth

Two major factors influence bone growth. The first factor is the presence of certain hormones, such as growth hormone, thyroid and parathyroid hormones, and sex hormones. The second factor involves the stress from the muscles on the bones. During exercise, the muscles contract and their tendons pull on the bones. The resulting stress activates the bone-forming cells (osteoblasts), resulting in stronger bone which will be less prone to osteoporosis. X-rays from the bones of athletes and tennis players who favor using one hand more than the other show that the hand that is used more often has a bigger bone than the other one. Results of many medical studies have shown that women who are engaged in routine exercise develop stronger bones that combat osteoporosis as they age.

6- Exercise's effect on cancer prevention

While results vary, some medical studies support the idea that exercise can help protect people from certain cancers, including breast and colorectal cancers. In fact, exercise can lower levels of specific hormones that fuel the growth of tumor cells. In addition, engaging in routine physical activity, such as walking, will reduce inflammation, enhance the immune system, and prevent certain cancers. According to the strongest available evidence, it takes at least 30 to 60 minutes daily of moderate to vigorous activity to lower the risks for colon and breast cancers. One report from Harvard Medical School indicates that women who walked seven or more hours a week developed a better immune system, and had 14% lower risk of breast cancer than the control group.

7- Exercise's effect on arthritis pain

Several studies have found that even regular walking can reduce arthritis-related pain, and walking five to six miles a week can prevent arthritis from forming in the first place. Additionally, moderate exercise—whether aerobic or resistance—can help to relieve pain by increasing blood circulation in the area, providing more oxygen to tissues, and removing waste products from the joints. Proper exercise activities also reduce swelling, lubricate the joints, and strengthen the muscles that support them. One of the important effects of exercise is weight loss, which decreases the pressure on joints and directly reduces the chances of developing arthritis. According to the Arthritis Foundation, for every pound you add, the load on your knees increases by 4 pounds.

Other studies showed that overweight women who lost an average of 11 pounds cut their risk of developing knee osteoarthritis by half (4).

8- Exercise's effect on sleep quality

Good sleep is essential for general health. Hormones released during sleep allow the body to renew and repair body cells and tissues, fight infection, and reserve energy. Regular aerobic exercise like walking, running, or swimming provides three important sleep benefits, including falling asleep faster, attaining

a higher percentage of deep sleep, and awakening less during the night. In fact, exercise is the only known way for healthy adults to boost the amount of deep sleep they get. As the result of exercise, the level of serotonin in the brain elevates, which directly affects the quality of sleep. (The effects of physical activity and exercise on weight management was discussed in previous issues of *Peyk*.)

How much aerobic exercise is enough?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) suggest that moderate intensity activities (such as fast walking, or jogging at 4 to 5 mph), provide most of the health benefits. For health benefits, the ACSM recommends a minimum of 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity most days of the week. The activities need not be continuous to provide benefits; in other words, 30 minutes of walking can be accrued in three 10-minute walks. Additionally, for health benefits and prevention of weight gain, the Institute of Medicine recommends 60 minutes per day of moderate intensity physical activity (e.g., walking/jogging at 4 to 5 mph).

Precautions

- It is wise to warm up the muscles and stretch before a strenuous exercise.
- Cut back on exercise if your joints become painful.
- If you already have osteoarthritis, are diabetic, or have any symptom of heart problems, you need to talk to your doctor before engaging any physical activities.

Conclusion Exercise and strenuous physical activity improves quality of life in various ways—it sharpens the memory, relieves mental stress, controls blood cholesterol, lowers blood pressure, stimulates metabolism, improves the immune system, increases bone strength, and improves sleep quality. The benefits translate to lower risks of cardiovascular disease, hypertension, Type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, and cancer of the colon and breast. Exercise can lower your risk of heart disease as effectively as medications. It can also help to ease arthritis pain, trim your waistline, and preserve your independence.

What's the one prescription that can lower your risk for 5 major diseases with no side effects?



The first step to starting exercise is determination. You may need to reach beyond your comfort zone to get the full benefits of exercise. Start today by 5-minute walking, tomorrow may never come. Good friends and companions, or joining group activities can provide a great motivation.

Selected references

- 1- Mike Dow, MD, *The Brain Fog Fix, Reclaim your focus, Memory, and Joy in just 3 weeks*, Hay House, INC., New York, 2015.
- 2- Sherry A Rogers, MD. *The High Blood Pressure Hoax*. 1st Ed.2008, Prestige Publishing. ISBN-13: 978-1887202053
- 3- <http://fitness.mercola.com/sites/fitness/archive/2010/02/02the-single-most-important-thing-to-preserve-our-brainfunction.aspx>
- 4- <http://www.health.harvard.edu>
- 5- <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/trends.html>



Oranges

By Marriam Zarabi



*You're going to love it!
Italians are just like us, they are warm and love to eat and laugh!
You are going to fit in so well! I bet they will think you are Italian!*

These were comments I frequently heard when I told my extended family that I was going to study abroad in Rome, Italy. Despite the cultural and physical commonalities everyone easily recognized, I was very nervous about being away from my close-knit group of friends at school, from my family, and from my organizational involvements. While I was in Italy, my black hair and olive complexion provided an easy physical camouflage, but it was hard for me to find a cultural connection. It was hard for me to find any sort of personal connection while I was studying abroad.

I had the opportunity to visit Tunis, Tunisia, the year before the Arab Spring. Tunisia was one of the two countries I visited that felt like home, looked like home, and tasted like home. I found beauty in the characteristics that my classmates found off-putting or fear-inducing, and I enjoyed speaking with locals in the bazaars and small restaurants about their experiences in Tunisia. There was a heaviness associated with socioeconomic, religious, and gender oppression that was obvious in my everyday exchanges with the local Tunisians. Hearing about their experiences, paired with lectures about women's rights at the Tunisian university and tours of the U.S. Embassy, allowed me to form a deeper understanding of the world and pose thoughtful questions about myself, my identity, and my culture.

One afternoon, we were invited to a luncheon with Tunisian law students at a local restaurant. We were invited to discuss the political climate of Tunisia following a lecture about women's rights and religious rights. I sat in-between three young Tunisian lawyers, and we discussed their experiences as women in a male-dominated field and in a male-dominated country, the misconception of Tunisia as a "third world country," and my experiences growing up Iranian-American. This was one of the few moments I felt at home. This was one of the few moments that I felt what it meant to "study abroad." Not only did these women look like me, but they had similar stories.

As we exchanged stories and shared culturally similar anecdotes, I offered the tray of dessert fruits around the table. My classmates picked apples, grapes, and bananas, while the Tunisian women and I chose oranges. We carefully—routinely—cut in a circular motion at the top of the orange, broke the skin, and began peeling so that the peel formed a single coil. I noticed that my classmates grew silent as we started peeling our oranges, and less engaged in the conversation. Their eyes carefully darted between my hands and the hands of the Tunisian students as we peeled. I didn't think

much of it, or much of the sudden lull in conversation, until one of my classmates approached me after the luncheon.

Are you like them? she asked
Am I like... I was confused by her question.
The Tunisian women. Are you one of them?

It seemed that my experiences of being "other" were simplified to the art of peeling an orange. Although my classmate's questions were in the similar vein of questions I was asked throughout my childhood—like *where are you from?*, which was usually followed up with an additional question: *no, but where are you from?*—one would assume that I would be used to these questions. At this intersection of familiarity and foreign, comfort and homesick, usual and unusual, my relationship with my cultural and ethnic identity skimmed beyond the surface.

Visiting Tunisia played a large role in understanding my cultural identity. I found answers to many of my questions about my identity and my role in the world, although these questions were not anomalous to any twenty-something. I had more in common with the Tunisian law students than peeling an orange, but my classmate used that commonality as an entry point for her questions.

Finding things in common with others is the most natural way to feel at ease and to find common ground with which to begin a conversation, ask questions, and reflect on differences and commonalities. As I reflect on things I share in common with my friends, family, my immediate community, and the extended community this Nowruz, I also reflect on the things I do not have in common. It is what we do with our shared ideas and views, and how we navigate the differences in ideas and views, that makes the difference. I believe we all have something in common, if we choose to see it.

Marriam is a young professional exploring her dual identity through narrative and written prose, often writing about her personal experiences as a second-generation Iranian growing up in Kansas City.



Nash-e Jan

A Traditional Nowruz Feast Celebration

From: *The Joy of Persian Cooking*

By: *Pari Ardalan Malek*

“Following dishes are traditionally served on the eve of the Iranian New Year- Nowruz. Polo is prepared exactly the same way as Chelow (white rice recipe, Peyk #107), but in order to maintain the light, fluffy quality of the rice, boil the rice in polo recipes for only 2 minutes, instead of 3-4. It is important not to over cook the rice, as the other ingredients mixed in any polo recipe will tend to make the rice soft.” In addition to the three main dishes listed here we can also add Ash e Reshteh (Peyk # 156, recently published).



Sabzi Polo: Preparation time 1 hour; serves 6-8

3 cups dry rice; 3 cups chopped parsley; 3 cups chopped spring onions; 1 cup chopped dill; 3 teaspoons liquid saffron; ¼ cup butter; 2 cups water; ½ teaspoon salt.

1. Cook rice (*Peyk* #107- Chelow) for 2 minutes.
2. Just before draining the rice, add the chopped greens (except for dill), stir gently, boil for 1 minute, and drain in a colander. Mix the chopped dill gently with drained rice. Add salt.
3. Melt ¼ cup butter in the cooking pot and add ¼ cup water to it.
4. Add rice mixture to cooking pot.
5. Before covering with a lid pour ¼ cup of melted butter and ¼ cup of water over the rice.
6. Cook for 45 minutes on low heat.
7. To make *tahdig* (rice crust), cook rice for an additional 15 minutes on medium heat.
8. Remove 1 cup of the rice from the top of the pot and save on a separate plate.
9. Add 1 teaspoon liquid saffron to the plate and mix gently with the rice. Reserve the saffron rice mixture for garnish.
10. Add the remaining 2 teaspoons of liquid saffron to the mix in the pot and stir gently.
11. Spoon the rice out onto a serving platter, garnish with saffron rice (step #9), and serve.

Fried White Fish: Preparation time 1 hour; serves 6-8

2 small white fish; 2 eggs slightly beaten; flour for dredging; ¼ teaspoon salt; 1/8 teaspoon pepper; oil for frying; ¼ cup chopped parsley; 6-8 lime halves.

1. Wash fish, cut into 3-inch long pieces.
2. Mix flour, salt, and pepper.
3. Dip fish in eggs and then roll in flour mixture.
4. In a skillet, fry fish in oil on both sides and drain on paper towel.
5. Garnish with lime halves and parsley.
6. Serve with *Sabzi Polo*.



Kookoo Sabzi: Fresh Herb Quiche/Souffle; preparation time 45 minutes; makes 8 wedges.

4 cups chopped parsley; 4 cups chopped spring onions; 1 cup chopped Chinese parsley; 1 cup chopped dill; 4 green lettuce leaves; 7 eggs; 1 teaspoon baking soda; 1 tablespoon flour; 6 tablespoons oil; ¾ teaspoon salt; ¼ teaspoon pepper; ½ teaspoon turmeric; ½ teaspoon cinnamon.

1. Chop dill and lettuce leaves finely by hand.
2. Chop remaining vegetables in a food processor or by hand.
3. Heat 3 tablespoons oil in a large skillet, then sauté vegetables, and set aside.
4. When cool, mix vegetables with remaining ingredients (except oil) in a large bowl. Beat with an electric mixer for 3 minutes.
5. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Pour remaining oil into a 9- or 10-inch round Pyrex dish and place in the oven.
6. When oil is hot, remove Pyrex dish and fill with vegetables, smoothing the top.
7. Bake uncovered for 35-45 minutes.
8. Remove from oven and slice into wedges.
9. To give the sides an even color, fry *kookoo* on all sides in 1 tablespoon oil.

OPTIONAL: Add 2 tablespoons barberries (*zereeshk*) and 2 tablespoon chopped walnuts in step 3.



By Sanaz Majd, MD

Medical Marijuana

Cannabis, otherwise known as marijuana, has been used as a medical remedy for well over 3,000 years. According to previous studies, it is also still the most widely consumed illicit drug in the world today.

The progressive state of California was the very first state to legalize medical marijuana back in 1996. And after the recent passage of highly controversial Proposition 64 in November 2016, California gained some media headlines as it also became the fifth state to legalize recreational marijuana.

Some of us Californians may be wondering what this entails and how it will all play out.

Surely, it will be an interesting transition even for the liberal state of California, which will be ironing out the kinks in the months and years to come. For instance, even though you can no longer get arrested for using marijuana, there's no legal source for purchase at the moment. To sell pot, vendors are required to carry a license first – similar to alcohol. And licenses to sell will not be issued until 2018. Therefore, an exchange of money is still currently grounds for arrest even though use of the drug is legal. But if a friend actually gives it to you, or you grow it in your back yard, that would be a different story.

What about marijuana's effects on your health? Is it safe? After all, we are quite familiar with the consequences of alcohol and cigarette smoking. What about marijuana?

Challenges with Marijuana Research

Because marijuana is not well-studied, it is also not currently a well-accepted treatment remedy in mainstream medicine. More research would be necessary before its adoption.

Why aren't researchers studying this substance?

According to an excellent article in the *Journal of Family Practice*, one of the reasons for the lack of sufficient evidence-based research on cannabis is that it contains more than 60 pharmacologically active components called "cannabinoids," whose receptors have been found in the brain and in our immune system. But the main cannabinoid in marijuana is one you may have heard of: THC (delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol), responsible for the "high" and euphoric state achieved with the drug. The challenge is actually the inconsistent concentrations of these cannabinoids from one source to another. How can we study a drug whose dose is inconsistent?

In addition, marijuana is consumed in numerous forms: it can be inhaled, smoked, vaporized, ingested in food, and even applied on the skin. This also poses a challenge to study.

Is Medical Marijuana Effective?

Cannabis has now been advertised for seemingly everything under the sun—from chronic pain to Hepatitis C. But is it really effective for all that it's claimed to be? Which conditions can be treated effectively with marijuana?

There was an important scientific study published in the *Journal*

of American Medical Association in 2015 that reviewed 79 randomized, prior clinical trials on cannabis, but found only four of the 79 to be without substantial bias. However, this review of the literature did include some evidence that marijuana may be effective (via either moderate or low-quality evidence) in the treatment of the following medical conditions:

1. Pain and muscle spasticity in those with Multiple Sclerosis
2. Nausea and vomiting in chemotherapy patients
3. Appetite stimulation in HIV patients
4. Tourette's Syndrome
5. Chronic, neuropathic, and cancer pain

For all other conditions, the effectiveness of marijuana was generally not well-supported, according to the study.

Marijuana Risks

Cannabis itself is not FDA approved. However, interestingly the FDA has approved two synthetic cannabinoids to date, dronabinol and nabilone, for the treatment of cancer-related symptoms (such as nausea, vomiting, and pain). Still, prescribing them has been encouraged only as a last resort and at the lowest possible dose. This is because, like everything else, marijuana is not risk-free.

Marijuana has an addictive potential in about 9% of overall users and is deemed a high risk drug for abuse as a result. It is also a common "gateway drug," which means it opens the door to further illicit drug use from other categories.

According to an article published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, other adverse effects include:

- Impaired short term memory
- Impaired motor ability, leading to increased rate of motor vehicle accidents and injuries
- Impaired judgment, leading to increased sexual behavior and STDs
- Paranoid behavior
- Psychosis
- Altered brain development, therefore not recommended in children or adolescents
- Lower IQ in adolescent users
- Higher rate of dropping out of school
- Diminished life satisfaction and achievement
- Symptoms of chronic bronchitis

In addition, inconsistent studies have linked marijuana use to various types of cancers, including lung, prostate, throat cancer, and testicular cancer. But the jury is still out on this one, as the evidence is inconclusive.

Key Points:

1. There's still a lot we do not know about marijuana, and further higher quality research is necessary.
2. Some moderate and low-quality studies do show some potential promise in treating a handful of medical conditions.
3. It is not risk-free. And like any other medical treatment, benefits must outweigh these risks before consideration.

With time and further research we will hopefully learn more about this mysterious plant. Until then, before you consider joining Cheech and Chong on their adventures, a frank conversation with your doctor may be worthwhile.

As a last (but certainly not least) vital note -- it is not legal to use marijuana, or any drug, and then operate a vehicle.

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Elsewhere Sijzi relates the most iconic symbols of love in the Islamic literary tradition with the most sacred place of worship in Islam to similar effect:

Oh, Layli, you drive your followers' camels toward the
Ka'ba.
You see how the guardians of the shrine are crazier than
Majnun.
(From ghazal 40)

The story of Layli and Majnun, undoubtedly the most famous love story of the Islamic world, is one in which the Arab poet Qays died from heartbreak and madness (in Arabic, majnun) in the wilderness of the desert, consigned to a fate absent his beloved, Layli. He had glanced the beauty of Layli but once. The story has been retold, recast, and referenced across thousands of lines of poetry and longer individual poems. To frame the followers headed toward the Ka'ba and its guardians in terms of Layli-inspired madness, itself the result of carnal lust and melancholic love, is so rich in the layering of Islamic textual and cultural tradition that it immobilizes any one interpretation. Is Layli redirecting her followers to follow the path of sacredness over profane love? Are the guardians of Islam's holiest site more mad than the lovestruck Majnun? Does their madness too stem from losing Layli's love or is it the madness of religion?

Once again it is the playing on tropes, whether profane, literary, or religious, steeped in discursive traditions of Islam on which Sijzi hangs his craft. Whether one wants to see the Islamic faith as crazier than Majnun's love, and whether such an interpretation is favorable or not, is left for the reader to decide. Sijzi's brilliance comes from the blending the two and the resulting emotive dissonance (or coherence), based on one's own praxis and observations, when they appear in combination on the page. His readers would surely revel at the imagery.

Sijzi no doubt was able to hone such delicate verses by watching all that was around him: a Sufi saint, fellow poets, mendicants, wayfarers, monarchs, and all stripes of Muslims and non-Muslims. It is the composite of these experiences of observation that allowed him to more piercingly see into his world and bemoan that so few are able to do so:

The universe has no one to be one with
Out of hundreds of watchers, not one can see.
(From ghazal 16)

Gould's translation allows us to watch one of the great watchers of his world. How we choose to see what he sees, or even see at all, is left to us.



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Power of People

By Hana Julazadeh

I believe in the power of people,
Who never lose their fate.
Those who stand for what they want
And Believe that love beats hate.

I believe in the power of kindness,
Washing away any sin.
Allowing us to capture
The strength from within.

I believe in the power of unity,
Bringing together different kinds
With varying opinions
And unique frames of mind.

I believe in the power of family,
Supporting relatives and friends.
Always helping their fellow brother
Until he ascends.

I believe in the power of hope,
Making the dark seem more bright.
Allowing even the poorest to dream
They may fly higher than a kite.

I believe in the power of people.
Souls from near or far,
Reaching out to others
No matter who they are.

Hana Julazadeh is a high school 10th grader. She has finished 5 years of Iranian school of San Diego and currently is helping as a teacher's assistance. Her passion is tennis and currently plays for her high school varsity team.