

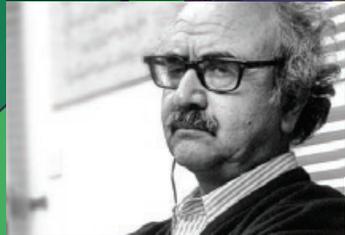
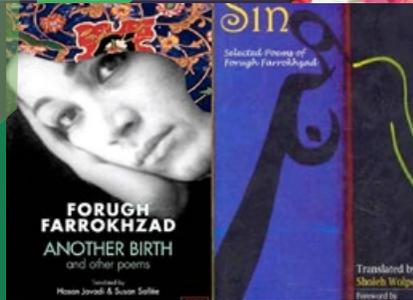
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By: Shahri Estakhry



We Must Find Better Humanitarian Solutions

Today, there are 50 million people displaced globally from their homelands due to war, bomb destruction, or similar. I guarantee you that none of them wishes to be a refugee to other lands, in particular the Western civilizations that are so deeply unfamiliar to them. They are where they have been placed due to the unfortunate circumstances of their lives.

If we believe in human rights, then would that not include human respect for all? What is it with us that we want to force our kind of living and beliefs as conquerors on everybody in the name of “human rights” and “freedom” for all? Their lives have no value, but we insist on their having rights and freedom. Can they practice these “rights” from their graves?

Thousands of refugees have arrived in San Diego in recent years. The majority of them are unhappy for many understandable reasons. A simple farmer from outside of Damascus, not literate to begin with, having lost his home to bombs and fighting, has ended up not only having no wealth but also with one or more permanently injured family members. He and his family are given the status of refugees, are here now and, upon arrival, have been given a welcome fund per family member, along with a monthly allowance that ends up being less than the rent of the apartment given to him. The apartment management has raised their monthly rent, knowing that the government gives funds, but the family is already in arrears for the cost of the rental on monthly basis. Just about all of them are in the same situation. They heard if they have children, they will be helped with funds for each child. Seriously? Does this really resolve the problem, or does it actually add to or even create a future threat to their welfare and security? There are stories of family after family expecting a child in hope of adding to their monthly income, hoping to help them survive. There are many stories to be told that would break any human spirit.

The most difficult task for the elderly generation (not children) is learning English and finding a job to help their income. Many face setbacks and become deeply discouraged in trying to survive the situation in front of them. Men, in particular, face depression and often want to go back. This brings up for me the question: Is it enough for these suffering refugees to be given the status of refugee and then, after some time, to leave them to survive in such a manner?

Today, there are so many charitable organizations for those who wish to help. They too are pausing and wondering where and how to give.

I propose a Council for the Welfare of San Diego Refugees consisting of representatives of different nationalities, with the intent to view and seriously plan with relevant governmental departments a better and a more stable program, acting with compassion and understanding to help with the future of our refugee population. They must make sure there is no abuse of funds, as well as sincerely helping with the needs of these new arrivals. This is a necessity for us to know we are treating each and every new refugee to our beautiful city with respect and dignity and be prepared with any help they may need.

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Persian Cultural Center Annual Meeting and Election Sunday May 21, 2017

The Persian Cultural Center will hold its annual meeting and election for members of the Board of Directors on Sunday May 21, 2017 at the Mt. Carmel High School, from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM. Mt. Carmel High School is located at 9550 Carmel Mtn. Rd, San Diego, CA 92129.

The agenda for the meeting will be as follows:

- Welcome by PCC president
- Annual Board of Directors' report
- Introducing the new candidates
- Election process and results
- Adjournment

If you have been a member for the last year and are interested in running for the board, please contact us immediately. If your membership has lapsed or you would like to become a member, this is the best time to do so and join us in our annual meeting. You can find the membership form on our website at www.pccsd.org.

In a few days a list of candidate and instructions will be sent to all PCC members. Thank you for your support. If you are a current member and did not receive the voting package in mail, please contact us immediately.

Thank you,

Board of Directors of Persian Cultural Center



San Diego Jong-e Farhangi- April 12, 2017

The April program, hosted by Ali Sadr, featured three guests. The first guest was fellow San Diegan, psychologist, Dr. Cyrus Nakhshab. The conversation was about post-election trauma among immigrants and Iranian-Americans in particular. The second guest was another fellow San Diegan, musicologist and musician, Dr. Bijan Zelli who presented the results of his recent paper on "Zaryab" an 8th Century artist who was a central figure in taking the music and culture of "the Middle East" to the Andalusia and Iberian Peninsula. Between the two parts of the program Dr.



Zelli, accompanied by Ms. Elena Edgar on piano, performed a classical piece.

Iranian School of San Diego Nowruz preparation and Dollar a Month Fund's Annual Nowruz Charity Bazaar- March 5, 2017

ISSD students took part in the egg coloring and wheat sprouting ceremony in preparation for Nowruz celebrations. Students, their families, and community members shopped at the DMF annual Nowruz bazaar to support the foundation's programs.

Persian Cultural Center Annual Nowruz Celebration- March 11, 2017

PCC celebrated Nowruz at the La Jolla Marriott, with ISSD's Dance Academy performance and a night of music, dance, food, friends, and family. The MC of the program was comedian "Teheran". DJ Julius presented an excellent selection of dance

PCC NEWS

Jong-e Farhangi Report

Jong-e Farhangi is an arts and culture program that presents interviews with authors and other artists, literary readings and musical performances, and lively discussions with audience participation. Jong is held on the stage of the Iranian-American center (IAC). Hosting the program rotates between Ali Sadr and Reza Khabazian. The program guests are typically interviewed by the host 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- March 8, 2017

This program was cancelled to accommodate for Nowruz celebrations and programs.



music. The memorable evening was complemented with delicious “Sabzipolo-Maahi” presented by Chef Amir Gowhari.

**Iranian School of San Diego Nowruz Celebration-
March 12, 2017**

Students, families, teachers, and staff celebrated Nowruz at ISSD with songs, music, plays, and awards at the Mount Carmel High School Amphitheater.



Cheharshanbeh Soori- March 14, 2017

Several thousand Iranian-Americans and friends celebrated Cheharshanbeh Soori on the last Tuesday evening of the winter at NTC Park in Point Loma, with music, dance, and plenty of food. Every year Charshanbeh Soori and Sizdehbedar are sponsored by Persian Cultural Center, Association of Iranian American Professionals, and House of Iran. For almost eight months representatives of these organizations meet with the City officials in order to get proper permits for these events. The costs of the programs is approximately \$12,000 and is paid by the organizations to create a safe, family friendly & organized environment in which community members can participate in, and celebrate, our culture. The expenses are for the City permit, police overtime, DJ, renting trash bins and portable toilets, as well as security personnel. Fortunately, majority of the expenses get covered by contributions of vendors and booth rentals to local businesses. However, every year, these organizations end up covering a few thousand dollars. We would like to keep the events free for all. We are looking for sponsors to step forward and help us to continue these beautiful and unique events. If



you know of any businesses that would like participate, please contact our office at (858) 552-9355.

Nowruz Celebration at 4S Ranch Library- March 8, 2017

PCC and 4S Ranch Library, in a collaborative effort, celebrated Nowruz in the library’s multipurpose room with a performance by Persian Dance Academy and crafts for children.

Sizdeh Bedar- April 2, 2017

The Iranian American community celebrated Sizdeh Bedar with a picnic at NTC Park in Point Loma, with music, dance, and plenty of food. This year between three to four thousand people attended the park for “eid didani” and enjoyed DJ Julius music and delicious food.

Docunight #36, March 1

Docunight is the title of a program that takes place on the first Wednesday night of every month, in approximately 22 cities around the country and Canada. The program consists of screening documentaries about Iran or made by Iranians. Participants join the discussion and analysis after the show. The March documentary was “Sohrab” (2016, 77 minutes) produced by Omid Abdollahi. The film was about the famous Iranian filmmaker Sohrab Shahid Sales, his life and movies.

Docunight #37, April 5

The April documentary was “Sonita” (2015, 91 minutes) by Rokhsareh Ghaemaghamsi. This movie was awarded at Sundance Film Festival in 2016.

Movie and Discussion, March 5

On the first Sunday of the month, the PCC film group screens movies at the IAC. The March movie was “About Elly” by Ashghar Farhadi (2009). Before the movie Milad Jahadi, a member of the group spoke about the director and the movie. After the show, a majority of the audience stayed for a lively discussion.

Movie and Discussion, April 1

Due to Sizdehbedar, falling on Sunday, the movie and discussion was moved to Saturday. The April movie was “Things You Don’t Know” (2010) by Fardin Saheb Zamani. We were honored to have the director present at the show. Mahmoud Reza Pirouzan, one of the members of the film group, introduced the director. There was a very lively discussion with the director after the show. An interview with Mr. Saheb Zamani is in the following pages of this Peyk.

PCC’s Board Meetings

Persian Cultural Center’s board of directors holds its meetings every second Wednesday of the month at IAC. The last two meetings took place on March 8 and April 12, 2017.

On Poetic Untranslatability

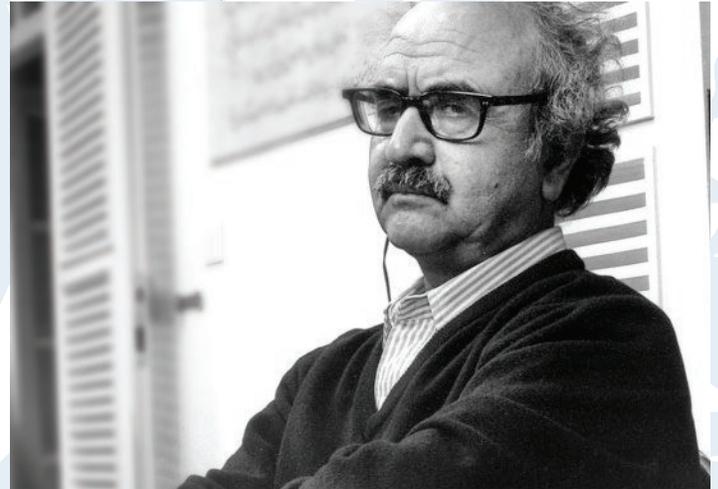
Mohammad Reza Shafī‘i-Kadkani (b. 1939) is a distinguished scholar, poet, and emeritus professor at Tehran University. His essay, *Dar tarjumah napaziri-yi shi‘r* [On Poetic Untranslatability], was first published in *Hasti* magazine in 2002. Below is an abridged version. We encourage you to refer to *Peyk* # 151 to read about Shafī‘i-Kadkani’s poetry and to the following issue (152) for a commentary on “On Poetic Untranslatability.”

If we accept that poetry is a verbal art, or verbal architecture, then translation is similar to moving an architectural monument from one place to another. To move this entire monument with a crane would be like reciting the *Rubāiyāt* of Umar Khayyām to a French audience in the source language, which is not an act of translation. An architectural structure has simply been moved from one locale to another. You may say in haste, “how delightful, now the French will get to see it as well.” But linguistic architecture, manifest in poems, is unseeable. This type of architecture requires a different set of eyes which are embodied in parts of speech, music, semantics, allusion, and overall rhetorical edifice. In order to render this architecture visible, we must transform it into French words, as if to move its pieces, bricks, doors, windows, and tiles piece by piece. If we are dismantling an ordinary house to facilitate its transference (and reassembly), then any average bricklayer or construction worker (with minimal changes to the house’s aesthetics) will be able to reconstruct it in a new place. It is even possible for its parts to take on a more pleasant appearance in the new locale.

What if we’re talking about Isfahan’s Shaykh Lutfullah Mosque, an architectural masterpiece? Moving its parts to another place may be an easy task, but rebuilding it altogether is beyond the average construction worker. Such a task will necessarily require engineers and architects of the same stature as the monument’s original architects. The translator of a poem is essentially its secondary architect. If the translator chooses an average work, it is likely that the poem’s form and shape will seem even more beautiful in its new locale (the target language) than they did in its source context. But if said poem is of artistic import, no average translator (or bricklayer) will be able to accomplish the task.

Even the most inept and talentless translator will be able to undertake the translation of the majority of “poems” published in Tehran’s literary journals today; the translation will probably either approximate the original or read even more beautifully than the original. However, the poetry of Sa‘di and Hafiz, our classics, or a contemporary poet such as Mahdi Akhavān-Salis requires a creative and gifted translator, otherwise their poems will appear uninspiring and mediocre. It will be the equivalent of reducing the Shaykh Lutfullah Mosque to bricks and tiles and trusting that an average bricklayer will reassemble them together—obviously the outcome will be laughable! The task is quite different from the transference of a slipshod house to another locale while not damaging its original worth (since moving it may even increase its worth).

The task of translation is precisely the act of destroying a monument and transferring its constitutive materials to another locale; the task of the translator whose credibility relies on linguistic proficiency is to pick up and move these components. In this context, the translator’s physical strength (or the crane at her disposal) is her familiarity with grammar and lexicon. Having stronger command of



language is akin to being stronger. But when it comes to rebuilding the new monument, strength will not suffice. The translator’s physical strength (or crane) is indispensable in transferring the bricks, stones, and tiles; the next stage requires different types of strength: creativity, artistic vision, and a knack for summoning words. A creative architect must be able to rearrange the transferred materials with both artistry and harmony.

If in this process, a brick or tile breaks beyond repair (i.e., a metaphor or allusion unique to the source language proves untranslatable, similar to Hafiz’s *rend* and *pīr-i mughān*), the secondary architect must use her creativity to compensate for the broken tile by seeking an alternative metaphor or allusion in the target language. Let us further develop this allegory: the easiest source component to incorporate into the new [reassembled] monument are windows (i.e., use of imagery). The windows easily fit the new structure, but is it all that simple? Where do we place them? Onto what landscape will the windows open? A blue sky? A mountain range to the East or a garden of cypress trees? We can place the windows anywhere we so please, but we have no control over the landscape that they will overlook; it may be confining, overcast, and depressing. Any architect-translator, however creative, will be helpless.

Translating from French to German is easier than translating from French to Arabic or from Persian to English. European languages have a shared cultural background; the



windows will open onto similar horizons. But to move Hafiz's imagery into English or French would be to open the windows of the Shaykh Lutfullah Mosque onto London's overcast and foggy ambiance rather than Isfahan's blue and heavenly skies. We haven't even gone past the simple problem of installing the windows, the most transferable component of this monument. Then we will get to moving the tiles; embedded in each tile is an expression, reference, or lore from Islamic theology, itself rooted in the theological labyrinth of Manichaeism and Zoroastrianism. The translator now has quite a mountain to climb! How will a foreigner decode this knowledge? Let us assume that he did, how much of its meaning will he grasp? We will also assume that he did understand its surface meaning—how will he discern the vastly profound field of knowledge on which it lies? In place of a tile, we must imagine all the references, allusions, and codes of Persian poetry.

At Harvard, I spent a few classes just on conveying the meaning of a single *bayt* [the equivalent of a line]:

به می سجاده رنگین کن گرت پیرمغان گوید
که سالک بی خبر نبود ز راه و رسم منزل ها

*bih may sajjādah rangīn kun garat pīr-i mughān gūyad
kih sālik bikhabar nabvad z-i rāh-u-rasm-i manzilhā*

I am certain that my audience at Harvard hardly understood an iota of its meaning. One who doesn't understand the distinction between Iranian and Western cultures might naively conclude that *may* in English is "wine" and *sajjādah* is "prayer rug," and this is how he will approach the line's other concepts as well: *sajjādah rangīn kardan*, *pīr-i mughān*, *sālik*, *rāh-u-rasm-i manzilhā*.

To demonstrate just how challenging the task of the translator is, I will briefly examine only one part of the line: *bih may sajjādah rangīn kardan* (making your prayer rug colorful with wine). First, the Western reader must know the importance of such religious concepts as *najis* (impure) and *tāhir* (pure) in Irano-Islamic culture. Westerners have no clue what constitutes *najis* or *tāhir* for they deem whatever is free of dirt or germs "clean," but cleanliness for us has a religiously sanctioned meaning which is hard to grasp for a Westerner. It takes a long discussion to explain it! He [a Westerner] washes his dog in his own bathtub and dries him with his own towel while we would go through such troubles to purify ourselves even if a drop of water from a dog splatters on us. Once he understands these concepts, more or less as Muslims do, we still have to explain how wine is impure and if it splatters on clothes or a place of prayer, it needs to be washed away. Cemented within the long history of Christianity, wine symbolizes the blood of Christ and is deemed sacred for Westerners. How could this sacred wine be considered impure? I won't even delve into the concept of the prayer rug for it requires too much preliminary knowledge. Let us not even bother with the paradoxical articulation of a poet [Hafiz] who asks his Muslim fellows to wash (make colorful) their prayer rug or, essentially, suspend their Islamic rites and rituals in order to reach a mystical and more genuine level of religiosity.

How intricate is this expression alone: *make your prayer rug colorful with wine!* It evokes the association of Persian carpets with

the color of wine in Persian poetry while "wine," "prayer rug," and "dye" in English do not evoke such imagery. Can we really translate *bih may sajjādah rangīn kun* as "dye (or color or tint) the prayer rug with wine?" There would be nothing in this world more pathetic than that! A clever and creative architect will give up on transferring all the components of Hafiz's "edifice" to a foreign environment. If obligated [to translate it] for some reason, she would pick simple and transferable components according to her taste, crafting her design with those selected components. From Edward Fitzgerald to Coleman Barks, most successful translators have done just that. A reader competently proficient in English and with a strong command of Persian (one who can also recite *Dīvān-i Shams* and the *Rubāiyāt* of Umar Khayyām by heart), will be able to tell, with some labor, to what bayt of Rumi or Khayyām any given translated line corresponds, and identify the rest as all but free translation.

For argument's sake, let us say that we informed the Western reader (one who has also taken the right preliminary steps) of the meanings of *may* (wine), *sajjādah* (prayer rug), and *rangīn kardan* (making colorful); there are still many other missing links that stand between the reader and aesthetic gratification which is derived from an automatic understanding of these expressions. If he hasn't learned [the meaning of] *pīr-i mughān* and *sālik* according to their mystical cultural teachings, he will not understand that in the *sulūk* [the spiritual path a Sufi wayfarer follows], a *pīr*'s station is such that even he if were to order one to suspend their adherence to *shari'a*, one must unconditionally obey him for he knows "the way" of "higher stages." Such an understanding takes many lifetimes of preparation and cultural familiarity.

Once more, we will overlook these challenges, and we will provide the Western reader with all this information. The nature of knowing entails a process. There is a difference between attempting to recall a stored piece of information about Hercules or Siyavash and having their characteristics reside in your subconscious. True aesthetic gratification is derived from both the conscious and the subconscious. When we enjoy a musical composition, a poem, or a painting, it's not just our conscious mind that is active, but rather it is the subconscious mind that works most laboriously. Siyavash, Rustam, and al-Hallāj reside in the subconscious of Iranians. But if an Iranian reader comes across a footnote about Hercules in a Western poem, that information will not be as potent in [mobilizing] her aesthetic gratification as is her knowledge of Siyavash and Rustam in Persian poetry. The same is true for a Western reader who encounters a footnote about Siyavash or al-Hallāj [in a translated poem]. He may work hard to recall such references, but his subconscious will not play an active role in [shaping] his experience, and will be deprived of aesthetic gratification. These challenges provide obstacles for the enjoyment of all but one bayt of Hafiz, now imagine just how much principle and preparation need to go into reading his entire *Dīvān*.



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An Interview with Fardin Sahebzamani

the Director of “There Are Things You Don’t Know”



On April 1, 2017, our “Film and Discussion” group screened the feature film “There Are Things You Don’t Know” by Fardin Sahebzamani. The movie was made in 2010 in Iran, starring Ali Mosaffa, Leila Hatami, and Mahtab Keramati. The screenplay was written by Fardin Sahebzamani and Payam Yazdani. This film has been shown in many film festivals and awarded at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival, in the same year. We were honored to have Mr. Sahebzamani present at the screening and during the discussion. We seized upon this rare opportunity to sit down with him in an interview about the movie.

Peyk: Thank you, Mr. Sahebzamani, for this opportunity. This is your first feature film. Can you tell us how you came up with the idea of this movie and how long it took you to finish the screenplay?

FS: A friend asked me and Payam Yazdani to write a screenplay on the basis of his idea. The written script was not what he had in mind and he decided not to make it. Therefore, we forged it according to our taste and wrote the next versions the way we liked. During the time of rewriting the script we tried to arrange the facilities we needed for the production of the film. The script was rewritten several times and took six years!!

Peyk: When you were writing the screenplay, did you have anyone particular in mind for the roles, or did you wait until after completion to select the actors?

FS: From the very beginning we had the three main roles in mind. That is Mr. Mosafa, Ms. Hatami, and Ms. Karamati. We were lucky that at the time of shooting they were all free and could be present in the film. The rest of the actresses were chosen from among professional theatre artists.

Peyk: Considering your background in sound design and editing, can you tell us the significance of this art in movies in general and in this film in particular?

FS: I was sound designing and editing during the year when I was working on the film and it is possible I tried to design the sound again so as to enhance the atmosphere of the film. So in my film I had the sound designing in mind during the writing of the script. For instance, in the sequence in Denise Café, when Sima asks Ali whether he wants to continue their relationship or not, the sound

you are hearing is that of building construction which during all these years is heard in any corner of Tehran. This sound begins with the sound of iron hammering in Ali’s house and continues in the café; when Sima and Ali meet, softly and gradually this sound changes into cutting stone. This is a device to show the existing tension between these two and probably conveys the inner feeling of the characters to the viewer; maybe even without the viewer being conscious of this process.

Peyk: There are many strong scenes in this movie, including Ali’s house with the simple blue interior, which created a space that was one of the main strengths of the film. Can you elaborate on that?

FS: The only safe places in Ali’s life are his home and his car. With Kamyab Amin Ashayeri, who was the costume and scene designer, we decided that Ali’s home should be indicative of what Sima (and later on the viewer) knows of his character. “Whoever sees you understands what’s wrong with you! Once you wanted to change the world... now you have gone into your cave... from there you just look... if possible wouldn’t even look.” That is to say that it has the same simple and cold atmosphere of a cave. A cave that opens to a cement wall and the only sign of hope in it is the ... pots in the balcony and the green growth on the cement.

Peyk: In many of the scenes the camera concentrates on the characters, making the surrounding background blurry. Why were you using the tele lens for these scenes?

FS: It was the idea not to see anything from Tehran but it is understood that it is happening in Tehran, a city which is more aggressive and frightful during the night. The tele lens helped us to separate Ali from his background when in his car, exactly like his emotional condition and how he feels about society and his surroundings.

Peyk: The story line appears to be very simple but it touches a very complex issue which is depression and disillusion of a generation. And in my opinion, this is one of the main strengths of the film. Although the story takes place in Iran, it could take place anywhere and at any time. Is this a fair take?

FS: When we were writing the script we wanted to create a character as Ali who is unique and not similar to anyone, except for the writers who naturally lend some of their own characteristics to the character. We didn’t want Ali to be the representative of any



person or group in the society, but after seeing the film many of the viewers said Ali was like them! Interestingly, many of these were women. These were inside Iran but in other places there were viewers who found similarities with the film and the self-imposed isolation of Ali in themselves and in their society.

Peyk: *Along with the main story line, there are several side stories that could each be its own story line. Why don't you develop them and just leave them?*

FS: While writing we would create a complete story for all the episodes and personalities so we could know them better and be able to write their reactions and dialogues. What was essential for us was that the viewer could see and hear what Ali as a driver grasps from their dialogues or manners.

Peyk: *Many years ago, you translated the script of "Taxi Driver" by Martin Scorsese into Persian. In one scene of your film, one of the passengers—the translator—mentions a quotation from "Taxi Driver." Where you influenced by that film?*

FS: The only point which is shared by the two films is the lonely character and of course their shared job. And although I love that film, I didn't take any direct or conscious influence from the film. In the scene with "Taxi Driver" script, we made the character in a way so he will have bits of all the characters we have seen in the film, including the filmmaker himself.

Peyk: *Thank you very much for your time. We look forward to seeing your next project.*



32nd Annual Linda Vista Multi-Cultural Fair and Parade

Persian Cultural Center successfully participated in the second year of Linda Vista Multi-cultural event on Saturday April 22, 2017. This event is 32 years old now and Persian Cultural Center is happy to be a part of this celebration.

Especial thanks to those of you who were there and able to support and help.



The Linda Vista Fair, held annually on the 6900 block of Linda Vista Road, (between Comstock and Ulric Streets) is intended to promote cultural awareness and understanding within the City of San Diego. Its numerous cultural exhibits, varied ethnic food offerings and delightful artistic performances are eagerly anticipated by residents and visitors to San Diego.

We were very excited for the 2017 Linda Vista Multi-Cultural Fair and Parade! Our theme in 2017 was focused on Healthy Communities!



Observation Comedian: **Max Amini**

By Leily Rezvani



Comedy is a form of self-expression in which comedians are able to captivate and humor their audience through a series of stories linked together by a central theme. Some comedians use comedy to bring to light social and political issues such as the gender gap, race relations, and international conflicts, believing our society’s approach to solving these problems is recognizing them in a lighter sense. Iranian comic Negin Farsad uses comedy to educate others on social justice issues—including her faith, ethnicity, and gender—that affect her life. In her comedy, Farsad, along with other comedians, reflects on the struggles she faces as a Muslim, Iranian-American woman. Her activism in the form of comedy and storytelling helps educate crowds who are not exposed to the experiences she encounters.

In a similar fashion, Max Amini uses the experiences in his own life to create material for his work. As a self-proclaimed observational comedian, Amini derives inspiration from events he finds to be interesting: “My comedy is based on my perspective on the world.” To Amini, comedy means perspective and belief, “Comedy is your perspective of the world you live in and through the eyes you see them with.” Amini is drawn to the fact that he is able to share his experiences. He believes comedy to be a “phenomenal tool to talk about things that are important in the world, and, yet, resonate to people in an easier way with them being less defensive.” Through his work, he has found “affecting people in a positive way” to be the most rewarding part. Another aspect of comedy Amini holds close to him is that his comedy is exciting and challenging because he is able to write, direct, and produce his own material. Amini believes the way to combat discrimination within the Iranian community is to “put our best foot forward so people cannot stereotype us as much as possible. But, some people are ignorant and they’ll do it anyways. We shouldn’t really take that to heart and let it affect us in a personal way because, clearly, it has nothing to do with us. It’s their ignorance and lack of knowledge to live a life within that mentality.” Since his comedy reaches beyond borders, Amini finds himself to be a very universal comedian, tailoring his material to various crowds. Through his years as a comedian, he has learned that comedy is about relating to his audience with a shared experience.

After being raised in Tucson, Arizona, until the age of seven, Amini moved to Washington, D. C., with his family. Although his parents were born and raised in Iran, his mother

attended a boarding school in London and his dad moved from Iran to Austria to Germany and then, finally, the United States. “They were family friends, so every summer when they would go back to Iran they would hang out. My mom and dad say they were lovers since day one.” After getting married, Mr. and Mrs. Amini moved to Arizona to study at the University of Arizona. Amini gives credit to his parents for supporting him throughout his career. After he graduated from high school, Amini recalls his father telling him, “Whatever major you decide to pick, make sure you love it. Make sure you really love that major, so after you graduate college, you continue doing the same work.” Moreover, his father “supported me through the idea that this was my passion.” Amini believes his success is due to the fact that he “had the love and support of my family and they wanted me to do what I wanted to do.” Amini went on to receive a degree from UCLA’s school of Theater, Film, and Television with the support of his family.

Along with the support of his family, the comfort of his culture has helped him throughout his life. Specifically, it the beauty of the poetry from poets like Rumi that make him proud of his cultural identity: “Everyone in the world now understands how important these poets are.” He finds poetry and acceptance to be the essence of the Iranian culture. Amini advises: “If you have the opportunity to live in another country, you need to keep all the great elements of the Iranian culture and you need to learn about all the great elements of the other cultures that are around you to make yourself a more dynamic human being.” He believes that, “In some aspects, I’m very Iranian and in some aspects, I’m very American.” Looking into the future of the Iranian community, Amini feels as if “we now have enough doctors and engineers.” He believes the only way in which the Iranian community’s voice can grow is to “inspire more young, brilliant Iranians to become politicians” and to be more politically engaged.

As an observational comedian, Max Amini uses many of his own experiences as material for his shows whether they be political or cultural. Most of that material extends beyond his story of his mother and her persistence to feed him tomato juice. Through his work, Amini has proven that comedy is another form of self-expression and storytelling. For tickets and other inquiries, please visit www.maxamini.com.

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

Events in San Diego

Persian Cultural Center

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



Mother's Day Concert; Santour & Taar duet
Santour: Faraz Minouei, Taar: Behfar Bahaadorean
May 14th, 2017 - 7PM

Iranian-American Center • 6790 Top Gun St. #7, San Diego, CA 92121
Info: 858-552-9355

The House of Bernarda Alba (Play Reading)

Saturday May 20th, 2017, 7PM
Iranian-American Center • 6790 Top Gun St. #7, San Diego, CA 92121
Info: 858-552-9355

Persian Cultural Center Annual Meeting and Election
Sunday, May 21, 2017

At Iranian School of San Diego 10am- noon

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 Kouros 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

End of the Year Program

Sunday June 12, 2016 at 10-12

Mt Carmel High School, 10am-12pm

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

Tel: 858-552-9355 • www.dmfund.org
www.facebook.com/DollaraMonthFund



Association of Iranian-American Professionals (AIAP)

Tel: (858) 207 6232 • www.aiap.org
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.istausd.org



House of Iran

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

Fiesta del Sol 2017

The BEST free festival in Southern California!
Solana Beach Chamber of Commerce
(858) 755-4775
May 20 - May 21, 2017

Art of Élan: Agents of Change

San Diego Museum of Art
619-232-7931
May 9, 2017

Julian Woman's Club Wildflower Show

Julian Chamber of Commerce
May 10 - May 13, 2017

Mass Creativity

Free community art-making celebration
The New Children's Museum Jun 24, 2017

Shaping Sound

California Center for the Arts, Escondido
800-988-4253 Jun 21, 2017



Visit Our web site at www.pccus.org

Modern Iranian Poetry in Translation

By: Kaveh Bassiri

Classical Persian poetry has held an important place in English-language literature: Khayyam is a central figure of the Victorian era; Rumi remains a best-selling poet in America; and Hafez has been one of the most frequently translated poets. But modern Persian poetry is absent from contemporary surveys. No modern Persian writer appears in the *Norton Anthology of World Literature* or in the *Encyclopedia of Literary Translation into English*.

There are many reasons for this lack of recognition. After all, only a very limited number of foreign authors are translated into English, and aside from considering the quality of the writing, editors and translators are also influenced by political and social factors. Yet, given the constant presence of Iran in the American media over the past 35 years, one would think that modern Iranian literature would provide a popular alternative narrative, similar to the way the recent wave of Iranian-American memoirs offer Americans a different understanding of Iran. Here, I would like to introduce four post-WWII Iranian poets available in English. All of these writers are much loved by Iranians. Their poems are often memorized, recited, and even turned into songs. In conclusion, I'll consider possible reasons for why their work has been neglected.

Forugh Farrokhzad (1935-1967)

Usually remembered intimately by her first name, **Forugh Farrokhzad** is the most frequently studied and translated modern Iranian poet. Farrokhzad was a vivacious and maverick writer who became an icon of the modern Iranian woman — not just for her writing but for her defiant rejection of traditional social expectations in her personal life. She wrote freely about her experiences and desires while introducing a new representation of Iranian male and female personas in Persian poetry. Farrokhzad also produced one of the most influential Iranian films, *The House Is Black*, which the important critic Jonathan Rosenbaum called “the most powerful Iranian film” (*Chicago Reader*). She died in an unfortunate accident when she was only 32, at the peak of her creative writing.

Farrokhzad's earlier poems were written in looser formal quatrains (*Char Parah*), but as she grew more confident she also began experimenting and writing more complex and profound poems. In *Veils and Words: The Emerging Voices of Iranian Women Writers*, Farzaneh Milani writes, “Her poetry reveals the problems of a modern Iranian women with all her conflicts, painful oscillations, and contradictions.” Hamid Dabashi, in *Masters & Masterpieces of Iranian Cinema*, argues, “Farrokhzad became the prophetic voice and vision of the dark side of her culture, the return of its repressed. Farrokhzad was no mere ‘woman poet.’ She was the poetic voice of a millennial denial at the heart of her culture.”

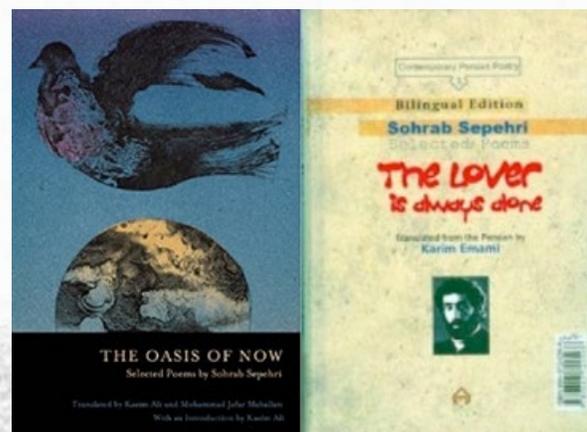
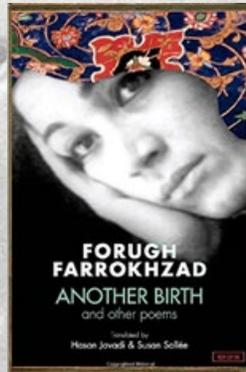
There have been many translations of her poetry. *Another Birth and Other Poems* (2010), translated by Hasan Javadi and Susan Sallée, is a revised edition that includes a good deal of supplementary material, such as letters and interviews. Iranian-American poet **Sholeh Wolpé** produced the latest book of translation, *Sin: Selected Poems of Forugh Farrokhzad* (2010). Though not as literal, Wolpé's translation offers the best poetic versions of the poems in English.

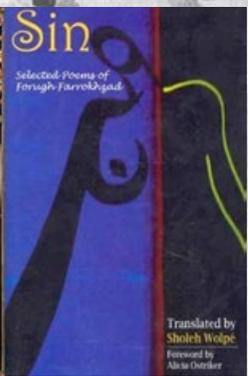
Sohrab Sepehri (1928-1980)

Sepehri is among the most loved and influential Iranian poets. His major collection, *Eight Books (Hasht Ketab)*, published in 1976 and comprised of poems from all his previous works, has been a steady bestseller in Iran. There are more than forty books written about him and his work.

He also was a well-known painter, and his work was shown in various galleries and exhibitions, including in the Venice and San Paolo Biennales. He won the Grand Prize at the second Tehran Biennale and a “Special Prize” at 1969 International Painting Festival in Paris.

Like Farrokhzad, Sepehri began as a more formal poet and only later wrote his more influential free verse poems that expanded the personal lyric in Persian poetry. Sepheri's writing is vibrant and gentle like his brush, often engaging with abstraction, the natural world, and solitude. He was influenced not just by the rich Sufi tradition of Iranian poetry but also by eastern thought (Taoism and Buddhism). He even translated some Chinese and Japanese verses. His work embodies a modern mystical understanding, and he uses rich metaphorical language to capture the physical, sensual, and concrete with the metaphysical, spiritual, and abstract.





Sepehri has been translated a number of times into English by translators in Iran who want to promote and celebrate his writing. The best example of such a translation is the bilingual selection by his friend and scholar Karim Emami, *The Lover is Always Alone* (2004).

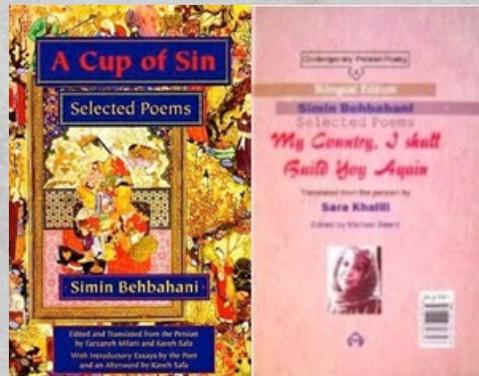
In 2013, with the help of Mohammad Jafar Mahallari, writer **Kazim Ali** produced the first selection of Sepheri's poetry published in America, *The Oasis of Now: Selected Poems*. Though Ali doesn't know Persian, his skill as an American poet, has enabled him to produce compelling translations that capture the unique spirit and tone of Sepehri's poetry.

Simin Behbahani (1927-2014)

Unlike Farrokhzad and Sepehri, whose works are from before the Islamic Revolution, Simin Behbahani and H.E. Sayeh continued to write into the 21st century. Behbahani and Sayeh compose mainly in form (primarily ghazals), which makes the translation of their poems more challenging. Translators have avoided producing their versions in verse. No translation has been able to capture the rich musicality and diction—a necessity to appreciate their work. Behbahani's and Sayeh's imagery is more traditional. Their innovations require the Persian poetic tradition, something that is hard to reproduce in another culture. They also do not have the metaphoric imagery that makes Farrokhzad and Sepehri language so rich in translation.

Behbahani has been called "the lioness of Iran" and is the most frequently cited modern Iranian poet in America. She was the mtvU poet laureate. President Obama quoted her poetry in his message of Nowruz (Persian New Year) in 2011. Different media, from *The New York Times* and the *Washington Post* to the PBS NewsHour and *The Economist*, published articles in remembrance of her recent death.

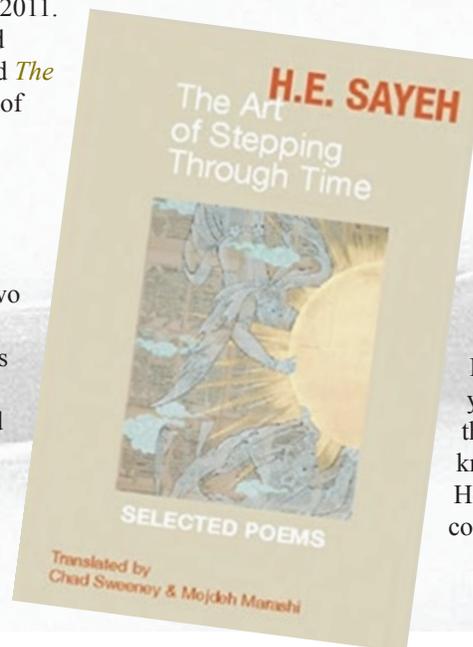
Behbahani was not only a bold activist but a poetic innovator. She won numerous awards and recognitions for both, including the 1998 Human Rights Watch Hellman-Hammet and two nominations for the Nobel Prize for literature. As an activist, she became the voice of Iranians championing for human rights and civil liberties. Her later poetry is especially suffused with sociopolitical concerns of the time. While the West highlights her outspoken stance against oppression and in support of the disenfranchised, it is with her transformation of the traditional poetic form that she has



had her greater impact on Persian poetry. She reinvigorated the familiar and ancient form of ghazal by making it strange and new again. Her poems combine the formal and classical with the modern and colloquial.

Ghazal has been primarily a lyrical form for love and spiritual longing. With Behbahani, it became a voice for gender discrimination, domestic violence, prostitution, poverty, oppression, war, and theft. She also added new meters based on the rhythm of everyday speech.

There have been two books of translation of her poems, one published in Iran and the other in America. As with the work of Sepehri, the publisher Sokhan brought out a bilingual collection of her poems. *My Country, I Shall Build You Again* (2009) is translated by Sara Khalili and edited by Michael Beard. Syracuse University Press published selected translations by Farzaneh Milani and Kaveh Safa under the title *A Cup of Sin: Selected Poems* (1999). In that book, Safa includes a long essay providing a helpful analysis of many of features of Behbahani's poetry. Milani has also written about Behbahani's work in her scholarly texts, such as *Words Not Swords: Iranian Women Writers and the Freedom of Movement*. (Milani will be representing Behbahani and Iranian poetry this year at AWP.)



H.E. Sayeh (b. 1928)

Our final poet, Hushang Ebtehaj, is still alive and is better known by his penname, (H.E.) Sayeh. He is mostly admired for his ghazals, though he also has written free-verse poetry. His body of work is small. The poems aren't complicated or dense. He writes wonderfully crafted poems following in the tradition of the great master Hafez, whose work Sayeh has studied for years. Sayeh's work is in conversation with the earlier poets, and he often references known metaphors, images, and phrases. He puts the form and images into a modern context with contemporary concerns.

Continued on Page 19

The Science of Nutrition



9- Vitamins and Health-I

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

Introduction

The discovery of vitamins goes back to about 100 years ago, when scientists were looking at the cause of deficiency diseases such as scurvy (a form of gum disease) that occurred in many sailors who did not have access to fresh fruits and vegetables during a long voyage. Thirteen vitamins are universally recognized at present. In this article, we review the general characteristics and classification of vitamins (due to space limitations, we will only discuss the importance and functions of vitamin A). Hopefully, information about additional vitamins will be discussed in subsequent issues of *Peyk*.

Characteristics of vitamins

Vitamins are chemical compounds needed by the body for normal growth, maintenance, and health. Most vitamins cannot be synthesized in the body and must be provided via diet. Microorganisms in the gastrointestinal tract can synthesize vitamin K and vitamin B12, but not in amounts sufficient to meet the body's needs. Unlike carbohydrates, fats, and proteins that can provide energy (discussed in earlier *Peyk* editions), vitamins do not provide energy, but they do facilitate biochemical reactions within cells to produce energy. Most vitamins, such as B vitamins, are coenzymes that activate most enzymes to run essential chemical reactions in the body. Some vitamins, such as vitamins C and E, are antioxidants that protect body cells from the damaging effect of oxidants. Vitamins are needed in very small quantities (microgram or milligram), and therefore are referred to as micronutrients.

Classification of Vitamins

Vitamins are classified according to their solubility. Vitamins A, D, E, and K are fat soluble. This group of vitamins is found in the fat and oil portion of foods, and is absorbed with fats in the digestive tract. When a diet is free of fat or there are metabolic disorders that affect fat absorption, secondary deficiencies of fat-soluble vitamins can develop. Fat-soluble vitamins can be stored in the liver and adipose tissues (fat cells) when consumed in excess of need. For this reason, deficiency of fat-soluble vitamins usually does not happen, or can take months or years to develop. Vitamins that are water soluble, on the other hand—including B vitamins and vitamin C—are vitamins that can be absorbed by the intestine, along with other water soluble nutrients.

Vitamin A

Vitamin A, a fat-soluble vitamin, comes in two forms: preformed and provitamin.

Preformed Vitamin A, such as retinol, is the biologically active form of the vitamin, which the body can use and store as is. About 70-90 percent of preformed vitamin A is absorbed in the small intestine, so long as at least 10 grams of fat is consumed concurrently. (1) The active form of vitamin A is only found in animal sources such as liver, kidney, fish, egg yolk, and some other animal products. Preformed vitamin A is not found in plant sources. Excessive intake of preformed vitamin A can be stored mostly in the liver, and some in adipose tissues (fat cells). Too much intake of a vitamin A supplement over a long period of time can cause toxicity (see discussion below).

Provitamin A, a precursor of Vitamin A, is found in plants and must be converted to active vitamin A in the body to be useful. Good examples of provitamin A are carotenoids, found in most plants. Beta-carotene, lutein, and lycopene are among the most common forms of provitamin A, found in deep yellow and orange color fruits and dark-green leafy vegetables. When green leaves turn yellow, they still contain lot of carotenoids. All forms of provitamin A can be converted to active forms of vitamin A (retinol) in the body. However, absorption and conversion of provitamin A (such as carotene) to the active forms of vitamin A is not very efficient. Studies indicate that less than 5 percent of carotene is absorbed from raw vegetables. (2) Provitamin A is abundant in ripe colored fruits, cooked yams and sweet potatoes, carrots, squash, apricots, cantaloupe, and dark green leafy vegetables, including spinach, collard greens, broccoli, and cabbage.

Functions of Vitamin A

Vitamin A is best known for its role in normal vision, gene expression, reproduction, embryonic development, growth, and immune system functioning. Studies show that a form of active vitamin A (retinol) is an essential part of a chemical in the retina (light sensitive layer in the back of the eye) which is necessary for night vision. Deficiency of this vitamin can cause night blindness.

Vitamin A plays a hormone-like role in normal cell differentiation in the body. When body cells multiply and the tissues grow and



Tornado Warnings

By Marriam Zarabi



The sound was as jarring and unwelcoming as I remembered from childhood. I looked outside the window. There was an eerie stillness against the splintered clouds. The stillness in the trees and the plants outside, the lack of sound and movement, made it seem as if even nature couldn't predict what was looming. *Parvin, berim payin fekre badi nist, na?* Our family cat looked at me with telling eyes. *I think going in the basement is a good idea, too,* I told her. Turning away from the window, I asked my mom if we should consider taking shelter downstairs to prepare for the possibly imminent weather. *Maman, berim zirzamin, na? Hava kheyli badjoore.* As I turned on the TV, our local meteorologist identified a large wall cloud in a thunderstorm, known for turning into a tornado, heading toward Kansas City. *Mom! I left the TV on and walked toward the kitchen. Mom, the weather is going to get really bad and we are going to have a tornado,* I explained the wall cloud and the incoming thunderstorm as I turned on the kitchen TV.

Eh, Agha Brian! Bebin che papiyonesh ghashange!

Yes Mom, his bowtie is very nice. Can we listen to what he is telling us about the weather? The National Weather Service has issued a tornado warning until midnight.

Chizi ke nemishe azzam, everything will be okay. Kay tornado shode? We haven't been hit with a tornado since I've lived here, and it has been over thirty years. She barely looked up from the book she was reading. *Eh, mogeye sham-e! I have to start dinner!*

At that moment, a large clap of thunder rattled throughout the house. Parvin ran from the back room to the kitchen, eventually perching on the kitchen table. My dad came home shortly after, at the beginning of the thunderstorm.

Salaam, salaam, che rado-barghy! Cheghad baroon!

Hi Dad, how was your day? The thunder shook the entire house! It looks really bad and I think it is going to get worse, pointing at the TV screen.

Rado-bargh keh badjoore vali hala ke baroon shooroo shode, fekr nemikonam chizi beshe. There is less of a chance of a tornado if it is raining, and it is raining pretty hard out there.

Exactly! My mom went through the same reasoning. *In the middle of the war, we would go outside and try to predict which direction the bombs were falling. We knew the bombs were falling, and we didn't think there was much we could do. We had to continue with our daily lives, even when we were told not to go outside because it was dangerous. People get scared so easily here. You have nothing to worry about.*

You would go outside?! In the middle of a war...you voluntarily went outside?

Areh madar! Tornado ke chizi nist.

See Maryam, everything is okay, said my dad as he told the cat to get off the table. *Gorbeh, payin. Now what's for dinner?*

I had no idea what to do with this information. Do I unpack the importance of emergency preparedness with my mother? Do I call my older sister and ask her if Mom is okay, and if emergency preparedness is a joke in Iran? Do I continue preparing for the possibility of a tornado and try to convince my father instead of my mother? I decided to try my father since my mother believed she and Mother Nature were best friends from the old country.

Dad? Do we have a list of important items we should take downstairs with us? Remember we talked about making a list when I was in elementary school?

Sweetie, that was over a decade ago. And don't worry, we will be okay. If the sirens go off, we can think about going downstairs. We can think about going downstairs? That is when it is definitely time to take action Dad, not think about it.

Remember all those practice drills you did at school? This is nothing more than a practice.

Dad, did you see the warning on TV? Issued by the National Weather Service? Why am I the only one taking this seriously?

Halah bebinim chi mishe. Let's not worry about it right now. Let's just see what happens.

This idea of "not worrying about that right now" existed from elementary school into present-day tornado warnings. I remember our tornado drills during elementary school very well. Students in public schools are required to participate in tornado drills on the first Wednesday of every month, when the state of Kansas participates in a county-wide outdoor warning system comprised of a siren that rings at 11 a.m. The tests are designed to prepare residents living in participating counties of dangerous weather and to take immediate shelter. In Kansas, the sirens usually indicate a tornado warning issued by The National Weather Service. I remember what great assertiveness the teachers used to explain the importance of walking single-file to our designated meeting spot in the school yard. During a school-wide assembly, teachers encouraged us to go home and create a safety plan and pick a meeting spot with our families to be as prepared at home as we were at school. We were provided with handouts and a worksheet, which I carefully put in my homework folder and passionately showed my parents during dinner. My sister also showed our parents the same worksheet and encouraged them to help us fill out the blanks. As a family, we decided that our meeting spot would be the three-trunked tree in our front yard, about thirty feet from our front door. When we introduced the idea of creating a list of "most important items" to remove from the house during a state of emergency, my parents lost interest. *Oh sweetie, we don't need to worry about that right now,* said my dad, and my mom, shortly after, inquired *would you like more rice?*

In addition to this idea of "not worrying about that right now," my family also firmly believes that offering more rice, and eating more rice, during any form of imminent weather or crisis will alleviate tension or sense of emergency. Although the sirens have never turned on in my neighborhood during a tornado watch (*bezanam be choob*, knock on wood), and they didn't in this story, I am still shocked every time by my parents' reaction and the role rice plays.

Believe it or not, as I write this story now, there is a tornado warning. While this is not unusual in the spring months, it is my mom's reaction that is the most unusual.

Maman, hava gharare bad beshe emshab. The weather is supposed to get bad again tonight, I said nervously.

Well, I'm making rice and there isn't much I can do about that right now.

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



Ground Chicken Kabab Ingredients:

- 2 lbs ground boneless chicken breast
- 2 tsp. olive oil
- 1 large onion, peeled and grated
- 1 tsp. salt
- 5 cloves garlic, peeled and grated (optional)

Baste:

- ¼ cup butter
- ¼ tsp. ground saffron dissolved in 1 tbsp. hot water

- 2 tsp. powdered sumac or juice of 1 lime
- One 12-ounce package of lavash bread
- 12 flat 1 inch-wide sword-like skewers

1. In a large bowl, combine meat or chicken and the rest of the ingredients for each, except the baste ingredients. Knead this mixture with your hands (15 minutes) or with the aid of a mixer for several minutes to form a paste that will adhere to cooking skewers. Cover and let stand at room temperature for 15 minutes.
2. Using damp hands, divide the meat paste into 12 equal lumps about the size of oranges. Roll each into a 5-inch sausage shape and mold it firmly around the skewer.
3. Start charcoal 30 minutes before you want to cook and let it burn until the coals are glowing evenly. Make sure you remove the grill so that the skewers are suspended above the flame and do not lie on the grill.
4. Melt the butter in a small saucepan and, if desired, add the saffron water and a pinch of salt.
5. Arrange the skewered meat about 3 inches away from the coals; after a few seconds, turn the meat gently to prevent it from falling off.
6. Grill the meat for 3-5 minutes while turning frequently, brushing occasionally with the baste. Avoid overcooking, the meat should be seared on the outside, juicy and tender on the inside. When the meat is done, baste it.
7. Spread lavash bread on a serving platter. Slide the meat off the skewer with another piece of bread. Arrange the meat on the bread, sprinkle with sumac or lime juice, and cover meat with more lavash bread to keep it warm. Serve immediately with chelow (white rice) or bread, fresh herbs, scallions, salad, yogurt and cucumbers (mast-o-khiar), and Persian pickles (torshi).



Iranians are experts at making kababs. In the next several issues, we will have recipes for chicken, kubideh, barg, and lamb kababs. With spring and summer seasons ahead, these are wonderful meals with which to entertain.

From: *New Food of Life* by Najmieh Batmanglij

Grilling – Kabab

Since the discovery of fire, chefs have found that meats are imbued with a wonderful flavor when cooked over an open flame. The Persian word for grilled meat, kabab (kebob, kabob), has entered the West's culinary vocabulary.

Kababs, convenient and virtually foolproof, are very popular. The meat is marinated in herbs, onion, garlic, and vinegar or lime juice or yogurt. Then, when it is nearly time to eat, the meat is threaded onto skewers and cooked over glowing charcoals for a flame-rich flavor. Persians like to use the very tender meat from the loin, but leg of lamb can also be used, best when it is marinated for at least 24 hours before grilling.

The method for preparing and cooking kababs varies from traditional American barbecuing. Instead of wooden skewers, long, flat metal (preferably stainless steel) skewers are used. Different widths are used for different types of kababs. Thin, 1/8 inch-wide skewers are used when the meat is in cubes. Medium width, 3/8 inch-wide skewers are used for strips of meat and chicken. Large, 1 inch-wide skewers are used for ground meat kababs. For best results, ground meat kababs should not be cooked on a grill surface; rather they should straddle the coals and be supported at either end by the grill edges or bricks. The meat is brushed with the baste mixture occasionally and turned frequently. The kabab is cooked just long enough to be seared on the outside, juicy within. The following is a listing of the most popular kabab dishes that can be served with rice (chelow) or salad:

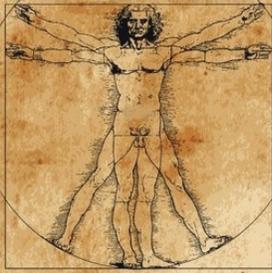
- Fillet Kabab – *Kabab-e barg*
- Chicken Kabab- *Jujeh kabab*
- Lamb-pieces Kabab – *Chenjeh kabab*
- Shish Kabab – *Shish kabab*
- Ground Meat Kabab – *Kabab-e koubideh*

Ground Meat or Ground Chicken Kabab (Kabab-e-kubideh):

Makes 6 servings; preparation time is 40 minutes and cooking time is 10 minutes

Ground Meat Kabab Ingredients:

- 1 lb twice-ground lamb (shoulder)
- 1 lb twice-ground beef or veal
- 2 medium onions, peeled and grated
- 1 tbsp. yogurt or ½ tsp. baking soda
- 2 tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. freshly ground pepper
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- ½ tsp. turmeric or ¼ tsp. ground saffron dissolved in 1 tbsp. hot water



By Sanaz Majd, MD



5 REASONS TO SKIP THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE

We all lead very busy lives. The last thing we want is something to occur rather suddenly that requires us to disturb our typical productive routine – forcing us to arrange childcare, report our absence to our boss, postpone our grocery shopping and vital chores, etc.

So when we get sick, wouldn't it be fabulous if we just knew whether or not it's something that warrants a doctor's visit? Well, short of calling your cousin Jamshid in Iran, what can you do?

Most symptoms take some teasing out, as simple as they may seem. This is the precise reason it's not easy to address symptoms over the patient portal emails or phone. Therefore, there aren't too many symptoms I'd recommend skipping that visit to the doctor for, especially without examining a patient in person.

However, 9 times out of 10, you can skip a visit to your primary care doctor for these 5 symptoms:

Dental Pain

As a physician, I am always surprised to discover so many people who neglect their teeth. It may seem tempting to bypass that yearly dental visit (honestly, who in their right mind enjoys the dentist?). But once or twice a year should really be a preventative effort. I know this because I more often than not see a patient in the office in tooth agony. Even though your physician will be able to prescribe antibiotics for a "presumed" infection or tooth decay, we cannot tell you exactly what may be going on. This is why dentists train for four years minimum. In this case, skip the doctor, see the dentist.

Vision Correction

Apart from children, who get screened at the physician's office for potential visual changes during their physicals, your physician will not be performing a routine eye exam. Our eye chart is basic and simply a screener. This is because your physician doesn't prescribe glasses or contact lenses. So if you are having gradual changes in your vision and/or believe you may need vision correction, skip your physician. You also do not need a referral from your doctor to see an optometrist, a professional who is trained in a school of optometry (not school of medicine like ophthalmologists) to prescribe glasses/contact lenses. If you do not have optometry health coverage, warehouses such as Costco and Target often offer these services at a lower cost.

Common Cold

The common cold is so very, well...common. And yet we still see so much of it in the doctor's office in the winter time. Unfortunately, there's no cure. Once you catch that virus, it needs to simply play itself out. The symptoms often consist of an initial sore throat, fever, and malaise that resolves as soon as the runny and/or stuffy nose sets in. The typical course appears as such: symptoms begin and worsen slightly with each day until peaking somewhere between day 3 and 5 after onset; then they begin to improve gradually from then on. Most people have good improvement somewhere between day 7 and 10. So if you are the average healthy patient, without lung disease, diabetes, or other immune compromised conditions, and are not experiencing any concerning symptoms (shortness of breath, wheezing, intractable fevers with ibuprofen/Tylenol, etc.), you can wait at least 7-10 days before you seek your doctor. Over-the-counter (OTC) medications can help treat the symptoms to make them more tolerable until you get through it, but are not a cure.

Severe Acute Symptoms

If you experience severe acute symptoms involving chest pain, abdominal pain, symptoms of a stroke, or passing out, your doctor will likely tell you to head straight for the ER. No one wants to miss a heart attack, "acute abdomen" (which includes emergency abdominal symptoms, such as appendicitis, perforated gastrointestinal system, bowel obstruction, pancreatitis, etc.), a fatal arrhythmia of the heart, or a stroke. So please call 911 or head to the nearest emergency room.

Vaccines

If you only need updating on your vaccines in adulthood, there's no reason to schedule your appointment with the physician. Most medical clinics have an outpatient nurse clinic which administers vaccines, and sometimes without a co-pay. So if you are due for that whooping cough shot, pneumonia vaccine, or shingles, there's no need to wait at the doctor's office. When you call to make that appointment, simply ask if you can just see the nurse for the immunization updates.

Dr. Sanaz Majd is a board-certified family medicine physician who podcasts and blogs at <http://housecalldoctor.quickanddirtytips.com>.

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Modern Iranian Poetry in Translation

By: Kaveh Bassiri

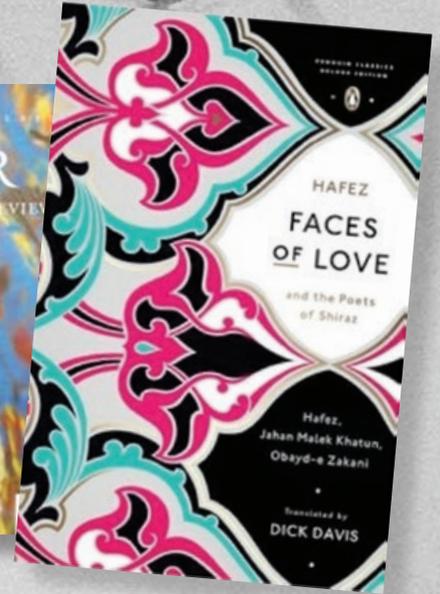
Although he is not typically portrayed as a major political poet in Iran, he has written important political poems and has even been imprisoned a year for his work. His poetry is often romantic and melancholic. There has not been much translation of his work. *Art of Stepping Through Time* (2011), translated by Mojdeh Marashi and the American poet Chad Sweeney, is the first book of his poetry in English. He lives between Cologne, Germany, and Tehran.

As I mentioned earlier, there can be many factors for the limited translations of modern Persian poetry. We could question whether modern Iranian poets have written important works of world literature or wonder about the quality of the translations.

I believe a good sign of important translations are how well the poets of the target language respond to them. Can the works speak to American poets and readers? There are many obstacles here. One factor is whether the work's innovation is relevant and new for the target language. This might be a difficulty that the works of Behbahani can experience in translation. Her innovations cannot easily be appreciated by a culture that has not had the same relationship with ghazals. Some may even be commonplace in the tradition of modern English poetry.

Sometimes the problem is the unique language, meter, and diction that take advantage of a well known intertextual discourse of poetics. Hafez is a good example of such a poet, and his translations have never been able to convey the power of the original work. Dick Davis, for example, wrote an essay, "On Not Translating Hafez," in which he argued why Hafez is untranslatable. (Though he later succumbed to the challenge and translated Hafez as part of *Faces of Love: Hafez and the Poets of Shiraz*.) Some of Sayeh's poems share the same difficulty of translation.

There is also a problem in the politicization and exoticism of poetry from Iran that regulates the way the poems are packaged and received. An example can be found in the titles of the most popular translations of modern Iranian women poets, Farrokhzad and Behbahani. Both Milani's and Safa's as well as Wolpé's books, which have also won the Lois Roth Persian Translation Prize, reference "sin"—highlighting the Iranian female poets as transgressors of social norms and conducts. It is as if these poets were writing as part of the memoir trend by Iranian-American women, who often invite readers to participate in the unveiling and liberation of oppressed women caught behind the black veil that has dominated the western ideological discourse on Iran in recent decades. Do Iranian women writers need to resort to "sin" in order to validate their work and be seen as progressive modern agents?



The problem is even greater if we consider that poets such as Farrokhzad hope to write beyond their sex and sexuality. In a 1964 radio interview, Farrokhzad argued that it is only natural if her poetry shows concern with being a woman, however, her sex is not the measure of her artistic merit—the essential thing is being a human. Issues of sin and transgression have an even more limited role in the sociopolitical or personal poetry of Behbahani. Highlighting such attributes are even more incongruous for her work.

Source: Michigan Quaternary Review, March 27, 2015

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Public Announcement

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