

Persepolis

Volume 6, November/December 2010

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Editorial

Finally we are here with the sixth issue. If you are asking why it took such a long time for this to come out, I have no answer! But we are back on track now with more enthusiasm than ever!

The theme for this issue is women, which is why Anna Chen has chosen "Iran awakening" for the book review section. The book is a memoir of Shirin Ebadi, an Iranian lawyer and Noble Peace Prize winner who reflects on her efforts in defending women and children's rights in Iran. As a tourist and a non-Iranian woman, Katie Johns writes about her experiences and observations during her trip to Iran. Katie O'Neil shares with us her opinion on feminism and criticizes the slogan "feminism is the killer of chivalry."

Azar Masoumi takes us into the history of feminism and demonstrates how the three waves of feminism are unique. Sara Noori explains how Chanel revolutionized women's fashion from elaborate and colourful dresses to modern clothing. Professor Nima Naghibi in conversation with Reza Rad discusses Women's autobiographies, feminism, Hijab and other related issues involving Iranian Women.

Cassandra Thompson examines a "Good Wife's Guide" published in 1955 and explains how the way we look at the family and the role of women in the society today has changed since then. Considering the case of the Bountiful community in British Columbia, Sarah Serajelahi discusses the practice of polygamy and its implications on human rights violations against women. Tayaz Fakhri introduces us to the life and works of Susan Sontag.

Finally, Erfan Hashempour reviews "Manufacturing Dissent," a documentary which "exposes Michal Moore's deceptive and misleading strategies." In "Persian Art Music: Traditional or Invariant", Mahmood Schricker explores the meaning of "traditional" with respect to Persian music.

Additionally, this issue offers: several poems, a story and photos sent to us by our readers.

The theme for the next issue is "violence." Please send us your submissions as soon as possible. Christmas break might be a good time to prepare something for Persepolis. We are looking forward to the next issue!

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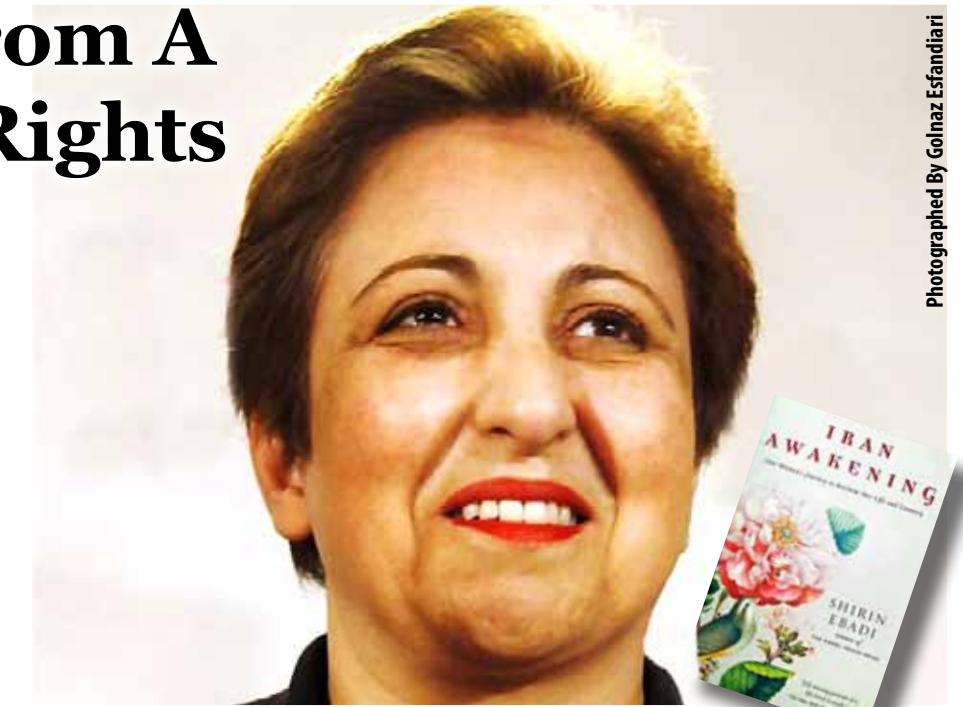
Lessons From A Women's Rights Defender

By Anna Chen. As a Nobel Peace Prize winner, Shirin Ebadi is a well-known and respected Iranian woman. *Iran Awakening* was an easy choice for this women's issue as the book speaks of women's experience in Iran, as well as her own persistent work championing women's rights for since the 1980s.

Her memoir spans most of her life, beginning in 1953 when Mossadegh was overthrown and the Shah returned to power as an absolute monarch, and ending when she won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2003. Through her eyes, we are taken on a journey through Iran in the late 20th century as lived by a woman of her generation.

It is a heavily gendered account of the social and political transformation in Iran, for she never fails to remind us of the challenges of her gender both culturally and politically. She constantly emphasizes her experience as a woman - for example how the 1979 revolution derailed her career as a judge and how, under the Islamic regime, she had to contend with the enforcement of particular laws that were almost absurd.

Shirin Ebadi's book stands out because of her unique role in defending the rights of women and children. With the end of her career as a judge, she worked pro bono as a lawyer and took on cases of injustice involving women and girls. Working with mainstream Shi'a Islamic texts, she describes her work as a long campaign for justice, to show that these rights are guaranteed in Sharia law. Half the book is dedicated to this work, where she emphasizes that equality for women is not incompatible with Islam. Rather, it is 'ijtihad', the idea that Islamic texts are principles open to interpretation and debate, which has rendered Sharia Law unjust in Iran.



Photographed By Golnaz Esfandiari

Her hopes and fears, keen observations and stories of individual injustices offer many lessons that cannot simply be offered up in a quick list. She has lived through decades of rapid change, and a chronological narrated account of her experience lays down the events as she experienced them, which is useful in helping us see how her thoughts and actions evolved.

Her thoughts are particularly insightful in view of the events of the past year. A rigged election gone awry, unexpected public outrage and persistent protestors even months after the election and in spite of the violent crackdown from the government. Shirin Ebadi's memoir extends to the time before the Revolution and puts 2009 in perspective of a long struggle for change.

As a former judge and lawyer, she is a firm believer in political dialogue and peaceful change within the system. She stresses the gradual formation of "a nascent civil society" and she would probably say that these events are the result of an emerging civil society, as part of a long process of change and transformation.

According to Shirin Ebadi, the international pressure from NGOs and foreign governments was effective in pressur-

izing the Iranian authorities to moderate its crackdown on its critics. The case of Zahra Kazemi is one of the most famous examples. She was a Canadian-Iranian photojournalist who was murdered during imprisonment. The government initially claimed that she suffered a stroke, but soon admitted that her death was caused by multiple blows and eventually charged a security agent for the crime.

She suggests that activism and awareness-raising may be one of the best ways to bring about gradual change, and is wary of foreign authorities who might think of interfering in Iran's internal politics.

To build a successful campaign like hers, one needs a solid long-term vision of change, well-measured and smart tactics, some expertise, a network of like-minded peers for support and a great deal of energy and patience. All these seem to be present in Iran as well as the Iranian diaspora abroad, which looks optimistic for those who share Shirin Ebadi's hopes for change through slow reform rather than revolution.♦

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Anna Chen has a B.A. in politics from the University of Toronto.

The Best of Both Worlds



By Katie Johns. The plane took off from London and in several hours would land in Tehran, Iran. There was no turning back now.

As we were about to land, women readjusted their appearance. Out came the head scarves and various degrees of hijab. In shapeless head-to-toe black, I found myself by far the most conservatively dressed person on the plane. Guidebooks told me it was unnecessary, but I had decided to play it safe.

After easily passing through customs, I made my way into a taxi and headed into the city, arguing with the driver over what I had been told should be the price of the trip and what he wanted to charge. Over the next five weeks I would find myself in a number of similar arguments. Looking back, this was the biggest indicator that above anything else, I was seen as a foreigner. However, being a foreign woman would afford me certain advantages.

I later spent a week traveling with an Australian man who pointed out that while I got to do most everything he did because I was foreign, I also got to see things he couldn't because I was, after all, female in a partially segregated country. It was generally okay for me to speak with any man, and always okay for me to speak with any woman. I got to watch a Zurkaneh practice in Esfahan because I was foreign, but was the only foreigner allowed to peek in at a Kerman wedding because I was female. I was allowed to share a twin room with a non-relative male because I was foreign, but spent time alone with my B&B host's wife and sister-in-law, receiving a "ara-

bique make-over", because I was female. I was allowed into the pool hall with "the guys", but given preferential treatment to my male counterpart, given the honour of playing a game of snooker with the reigning champion. I was given smuggled whisky, but was enveloped and fussed over by two buses of female university students in Kandovan while the male tourist I came with could only watch.

My time in Iran was amazing. I believe I got the best of both worlds by being a female foreigner, but that's not to say that either part of this identity didn't have a downside. Taxis and the occasional historical site used dual-pricing. I bore that strange guilty feeling of being able to leave the country after listening to people tell me how sad they were because they couldn't even get a passport until they

served military duty. And at the end of the day, as a female I had to, by law, cover my head and body no matter how hot or uncomfortable I was. I was rarely, but on a couple of occasions the recipient of unwelcome male attention. And my sense of sisterhood was rattled when I saw two women with a sadistic looking face covering made of leather straps and metal.

After five weeks I could come to no clear conclusion about the status of women in the country. It often seemed as varied as any other place, and it's so hard to define the line between what falls under cultural differences and what falls under oppression. I occasionally found people were surprised that I was traveling alone, especially without a male companion; but before I had left for Iran, just as many Westerners were shocked that I was going by myself.

I left Iran with a most favourable impression of the people, having been treated with respect and unprecedented levels of warm hospitality. Maybe with the exception of those taxi drivers....◆

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Chivalry in the Realm of Feminism

By Katie O'Neill. Being born a Canadian female in the 80's, I cannot imagine living in a world with dowries, Chattel laws, unequal rights, suppression and suffrage. The idea of being unequal to my male counterpart seems completely ludicrous to me; granted that I've been raised by a single father who has always taught me the importance of being strong, respectable, and independent. However, it was not long ago that our double x ancestors faced a world of restraint.

-This is the day your dreams come true.

-What do you know about my dreams, Gaston?

-Plenty! Here, picture this: A rustic hunting lodge, my latest kill roasting on the fire, and my little wife massaging my feet, while the little ones play on the floor with the dogs. We'll have six or seven.

-Dogs?

-No, Belle! Strapping boys, like me! Imagine that.

And do you know who that little wife will be?

-Let me think...

-You, Belle!

-Gaston, I'm-I'm speechless. I really don't know what to say.

-Say you'll marry me!

-I'm very sorry, Gaston... but... but I just don't deserve you!

Politically, socially, economically, and culturally, women taking a stand for their rights as human beings have been one of the greatest civil rights movements

to come out of the last century. Although, I am not saying that we aren't still plagued by scantily dressed, faux tanned, make-up slathered females in media, but it is definitely "one small step for (wo)man, one giant leap for (wo)mankind."

It is hard to picture that any of us really enjoyed the Spice Girls, let alone their popularity just over a decade ago, but they were responsible for instilling into the minds of young, impressionable teenyboppers their famous "Girl Power!" slogan. Not to say that the spice's shouts of con-

vention were damaging on their little subjects (in fact I believe it created more confidence), but sometimes I wonder just how far people have taken slogans like these... "Feminists ruined everything. They killed chivalry."

It's important to remember the circumstances of everyday life. Women have fought for rights, independence, and to stand side by side, shoulder to shoulder along side men. However, we cannot also expect that we are treated in a manner that is kind, courteous, gentle, polite, and equal if we too do not return the favour. I firmly believe that if we are to change occupation names to fit our world in a more politically correct tone that chivalry is to be no exception!

Feminism has not changed, nor killed chivalry. Instead it has slightly modified the expectations for the world of modern relationships. Like in every day scenarios, you have to give to receive—not just expect, especially based on individual gender. Believing that women's rise to independence has hindered an already dying existence of manners is an aged opinion, where the conjurer must have values associated with pre-feministic movements. In other words, the bearer of thought does not fully believe in roles outside of the standards of the early 20th century.

Feminism did not ruin chivalry, but merely removed the nail that was holding the 'girls only' sign. So ladies, let's see you take full advantage of our equal rights and let us reignite the nearly lost idea of common courtesy! ♦

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What a Feminist

By Azar Masoumi. Does a woman exist?

It's funny to know that Simone de Beauvoir when writing *The Second Sex* in 1949, which later came to kick off the second-wave of feminism, was trying to see if women actually existed, and if they did, then to discover what these mysterious creatures were.

It's even funnier to know that Simone de Beauvoir did not self-identify as a feminist. In fact, it took her almost twenty years to accept the label by eventually joining the Women's Freedom Movement. And the funniest thing is that she was a woman herself.

Anyways, thanks to her, we now generally believe that "yes, women exist".

So what is feminism after all? Let's not be simplistic. Like any other movement, there are a lot of branches and ideologies within feminism. But all in all, it's safe to assume that feminism criticizes the current power structures which privilege men and works hard to change them. It is also true that some feminists strongly believe that male-female relationships can never be corrected and therefore seek women-only relationships and communities. If it sounds repulsive, then bear

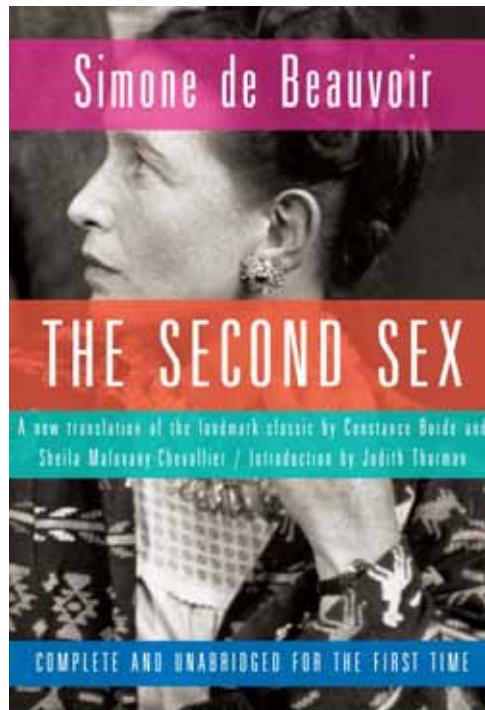
in mind that some feminists, in fact a minority, hold the view. And of course, keep in mind that from the very early days of feminism, like when women were fighting for their right to vote, many men were also fighting on their side, shoulder to shoulder.

Feminism is definitely full of controversies and has a very interesting history. As a movement, it first started in 1860s

with women wanting to be full citizens of the state and holding the right to vote. For this to happen they kept stressing that men and women are equal or even the same. This sameness was even at times taken literally; as if gender was no longer in existence and women and men were no longer anything other than human beings. As De Beauvoir mentions in her introduction to the second sex, some women intellectuals even did not permit their names to be included in collections devoted to women writers.

It took the first wave of feminist campaigners decades of violent and heated struggles to win suffrage for women. Of course the opponents were very reluctant to agree with this feminist demand, because everyone knew that when women are assigned full citizenship they will bring about great change to the social and political system, which was in fact a correct assumption.

However, after women got their right to vote things started to cool down a little bit. It was at this point when Simone de Beauvoir asked if a woman, or the question of gender in fact, existed anymore. Unknowingly she wrote a book that became the theoretical basis for





those female activists who were getting fed up with how men were treating them in other movements including labour and gay liberation. Through a simple observation women activist came to realize that in spite of the equal citizenship rights sexism is still operating: they were clearly being excluded from prominent positions in the movements they thought they were a part of. When they had enough of it the second-wave feminism started. It was in 1960s.

This time feminists stopped arguing that men and women are the same and instead reclaimed their difference. This meant that they reclaimed their femaleness and tried to redefine it. This also meant that they no longer wanted to change women's social and political position; now they were looking for a more egalitarian society for which both women's and men's position had to change.

Second-wave feminists were also linked to many other radical movements through the concern that they all shared about the subordination of the disadvantaged groups. Like anti-racism, anti-homophobia, anti-capitalism, and many other movements feminism is a part of the conflict theory which criticizes inequalities and oppression.

In an attempt to reach beyond what legislations could do, second-wave feminists chose the slogan "the personal is the political". This meant that the way women wore their make-up or the time they spend doing housework was also in the second-wave feminism agenda.

Second-wave feminists developed plenty of theories in numerous domains (from media to sexuality) and won women a lot of rights in reproduction, employment and education. Because these were huge victories, by 1980s people began to wonder if feminism was done with its work and now had to lie in the libraries and serve future historians' curiosity.

But again some other books were published which changed this perception. Among all, *Beauty Myth* by Naomi Wolf is thought to be the most influential in creating a third wave of feminism. Third-wave feminism not only proves that feminism still makes sense to younger generations, but it also defines feminism in a different way than the mainly middle class white feminists of the second-wave. Feminism is now more multicultural, multiracial, and post modern than it has ever been. Moreover, today's feminism also brings about new ways of interpreting women's agency.

For instance, while the second-wave feminists were overwhelmingly opposed to the sexual depiction of women in the media, considering it to be objectifying women for the sake of male pleasure, third-wave feminists generally see these depictions as females' sexual exploration and find it consistent with feminist ideals.

Anyways, this is just to say that for now women apparently do exist and feminism is still on board. And even more importantly, it is to say that men also have a gender and can be feminists. And above all, this is to say that it doesn't matter what we call ourselves, what matters is what we do. Remember, even Simone de Beauvoir was not a feminist for most of her life! ♦

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Gabrielle “Coco” Chanel: A Brief Biography & Her Contribution to Women

By Sara Noori. “Fashion is not something that exists in dresses only. Fashion is in the sky, in the street, fashion has to do with ideas, the way we live, what is happening” (Coco Chanel).

My little black dress has always been there for me. Throughout all kinds of functions; long weddings, even longer birthdays, weather changes and even funerals. The little black dress and me have stayed friends through its comfort and functionality. But it has come a long way. During the Victorian era (1837–1901), black was only

worn for funerals and functionality was a word rarely used in conjunction to women or to fashion. Women were to tend to their homes, had no right to vote or to own property. Women’s fashion consisted of elaborate, heavy, colourful dresses. Fashion only existed among the most wealthy. It was fashionable to have a small waist, so women would wear corsets, tightly pulled by their chamber maids. Coco Chanel grew up around this time.

Born as Gabrielle Chanel, in 1883, in the small town of Saumur, Chanel grew up

in poverty. Chanel’s grand-parents were once farmers but when the crop failed, they took onto the road and tried to make a living as market traders. Chanel’s father followed his parents foot steps and Chanel, who will later become one of the richest women in France, spent most of her childhood travelling from fair to fair in the company of two sisters, two brothers, an alcoholic father and an ill mother.

In 1895, when Chanel was twelve years old, her mother died. Chanel was devastated. What made matters even



Photographed By Ridvan Yavuz

worse was that her father proclaimed himself a free man and decided to abandon them at a Catholic orphanage. The time spent at the orphanage was difficult for Chanel. She felt ashamed that her father abandoned her and her siblings. Being left, unloved, at the age of twelve, permanently scarred her emotionally.¹

In 1900, Chanel moved out of the orphanage to a boarding school in Moulins, France. Since the boarding school accepted her out of charity, Chanel had to sleep in separate quarters than the other girls, who came from rich families. The shame of being segregated strengthened her determination to succeed. Chanel learned sewing clothing in the boarding school.

After leaving Moulins, Chanel attempted to become a cabaret singer. Soon after, she adopted the stage name "Coco". She failed as a Cabaret singer but shortly after, at the age of 20, started working at a Tailor shop, where she later became the seamstress of a wealthy Military Officer, Etienne Balsan. Through Balsan, Chanel met the inner circles of Paris. It was also during this time that Chanel realized the impracticalities of Victorian dresses. Among wealthy Parisian women, it was a sign of wealth to wear lavish, elaborate, colourful dresses. Women would need assistance from someone to sit down. Chanel, who grew up a free spirit, despised wearing a corset because it was uncomfortable and restricting. She no longer wore a corset and started sewing her own dresses, which were often black. During this time, it was a taboo and Chanel got a lot of negative attention. But this negative attention left her unmoved. And while the men in her circles criticized her new style for being too masculine, women admired her and found her clothing practical and wearable. After sewing for numerous wealthy women, Chanel decided to open a boutique and became an instant success. Chanel changed the nature of women's clothing, from being heavy dresses to clothing that is worn even today. Chanel never retired. She worked until her death in 1971.

Chanel's contribution to women's his-



tory has often been underestimated. While the hardships that she endured made her a proud and ambitious woman, Chanel was ahead of her time. She was the first woman to take off her corset and changed the way women lived their lives. Chanel often said that fashion was not just in dresses, but in the times that we were living in. It wasn't just Chanel's designs that made her the most successful woman in the world, but the way she changed the nature of women's clothing. She revolutionised the way women wore clothes and the way women lived. Since Chanel never married, she was one of the first women to establish a business on her own and live as an indepen-

dent woman. Chanel's little black dress has survived and will continue to, not only because of its versatility and comfort, but also because it stands as a symbol of liberation. Gabrielle 'Coco' Chanel had an influence onto world history by changing women's clothing from restricting Victorian corsets to the beginning of what became modern, contemporary clothes. ♦

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P An Interview with Professor Nima Naghibi on Politics of Literature

By Reza Rad. Nima Naghibi's parents, like many Iranian immigrants, envisioned a career in the sciences for their daughter. Naghibi, however, had other plans. As a compromise with her parents Naghibi began her undergraduate studies at the University of Toronto in Political Science. After enrolling in a World Literature course, she became enamored with post-colonial texts, chiefly for their illumination of the link between literature and social context. Late in her undergraduate studies, she came across Farzaneh Milani's book, *Veils and Words: The Emerging Voices of Iranian Women*. It inspired her to pursue an academic career and focus some of her research on the nature and function of Iranian women's autobiographies.

Born in Kabul, where her father was stationed by the Iranian foreign service before the 1979 revolution, Nima Naghibi now lives in Toronto, working as an Associate Professor of English at Ryerson University.

Q: Why has there been a recent surge in Iranian women's autobiographies?

A: I am quite fascinated by this recent surge and am still thinking through the various implications of this sudden outpouring of Iranian women's life narratives. This phenomenon is particularly interesting because as Farzaneh Milani and Afsaneh Najmabadi observed in the early 1990s, the genre of autobiography was generally discouraged in Iran, particularly for Iranian women, because autobiography was seen as a form of metaphorical unveiling. So what accounts for the sudden outpouring of life narratives which really begin with Tara Bahrampour's *To See and See Again* (1999)? What is interesting for me is that the common element in all of these

narratives is the authors' experiences of the 1979 revolution as a traumatic break or rupture in their childhood. So, telling and re-telling the story of their memories of revolution works similarly to how trauma works as a kind "return of the repressed" or a constant folding over the past into the present.

At the same time, we live in an age where self-disclosure is the number one

of understanding this phenomenon.

Q: In what ways is nostalgia "constructed" in these memoirs?

A: Nostalgia as a concept and as a feeling is of great interest to me. As diasporic Iranian subjects, we are all nostalgic for some memory of Iran, and for some memory of ourselves or of our families before 1979. Iranian women's autobiographical texts are fuelled by a strong sense of nostalgia, and

since nostalgia is an emotion that encourages a looking back, a celebration of the past, a desire to glorify bygone days, we need to think about it critically and consider how it operates as a conservative force in these narratives. The term, nostalgia, was coined in 1688 by a Swiss medical doctor who diagnosed nostalgia as a medical condition, and its cure was understood to be a physical return to the homeland. The more contemporary definition of the word still retains a sense of loss and longing for the homeland but it is no longer seen as a medical disease. The strong sense of loss, however, is what really marks the nostalgic condition. Something I'm thinking about is whether the nostalgic impulse in these texts sets up a kind of authentic Iranian subject (who remains faithful to her Iranian "pastness") versus the inauthentic Iranian subject (tainted by her culturally hybrid diasporic state).

*Q: Azar Nafisi's bestselling memoir, *Reading Lolita in Tehran*, and Marjane Satrapi's popular graphic novel, *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood*, have both enjoyed significant success in the West. How do they differ in the way they communicate the realities of Iran to a Western audience?*

A: In that co-authored article, we argued that Satrapi's autobiographical text is a nuanced and self-reflexive narrative of her



pastime. I think we also need to understand these memoirs as emerging out of a culture obsessed with the minutiae of our daily existence. Every unremarkable thought or act is recorded on Facebook or Twitter for mass circulation and consumption, and these memoirs are certainly coming out of and feeding into this cultural phenomenon.

But there's still more to it than this and that is the focus of my current research. So I continue to think about ways

experiences growing up during the revolution and the Iran-Iraq war. In many ways, her autobiography is part of a politics of redress; she is very keenly attempting to challenge Western perceptions of Iranians as backward, as terrorists, as members of the axis of evil, etc. Azar Nafisi's book, on the other hand, does the exact opposite. She merely re-confirms for the Western reader what they already know: that the veiled woman is oppressed, and that freedom comes through Western forms of knowing. This idea of liberation via the West is exemplified by her book club that only reads canonical Western literature, and reduces its literary engagements to a simple "East as oppressive" and the "West as liberating" binary. Further, liberation for these surreptitious lovers of Western literature comes through a celebration of the "Great Books," a label long since discarded in most English departments in the West. Nafisi's book is deeply conservative both in its approach to literature, and in its gestures to the West as a site of freedom and liberalism. In contrast, Satrapi challenges the simplistic binary endorsed by Nafisi, as she humanizes the Iranian Other by simultaneously Othering the European subject (many of whose traditions appear bizarre as depicted through Marji's 14 year old eyes) and by drawing similarities between the Iranian and the Western subject.

Q: Why are Westerners so obsessed with the hijab? Is the hijab a distraction from the real issues related to Iranian women's emancipa-

tion?

A: The Western fascination with the hijab goes back to at least the eighteenth century. Part of this fascination has to do with the emphasis Western culture places on the visual, and on the relationship between knowledge and sight. In the Western literary and cultural imagination, the figure of the veiled Muslim woman has been both eroticized and vilified. The recent debates in Quebec about denying veiled women access to public services are a good indication of how the veiled woman remains an object of fascination and fear for Westerners. Certainly, I think the focus on the hijab detracts from the greater, more important issues facing Iranian women. I generally shy away from using words like "emancipation" that intimate the ignorance of Iranian women, or that they are somehow lagging behind other (Western) women. Rather, I would suggest that Iranian women are active, intelligent women who are working hard to change the laws that discriminate against them, and that their concerns extend far beyond the question of whether or not to wear hijab.

Q: What do you think the future holds in store for Iran's women's movement?

A: I don't know. It's impossible to make any sorts of predictions particularly at this volatile historical moment. However, this is what we do know: there are many strong, outspoken and active Iranian women who are working very hard in Iran for women's

rights. And they need to do this important work without Western interference.

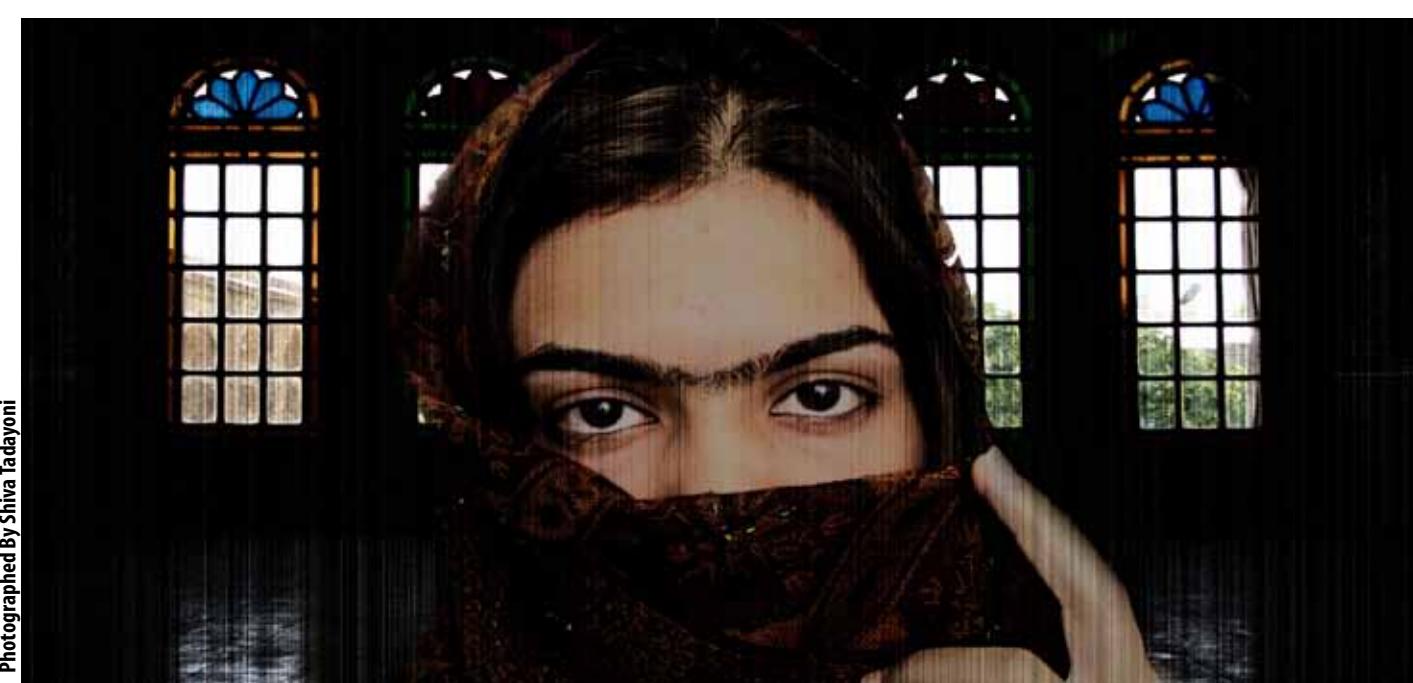
Q: Iranian families place a great deal of pressure on their children to enter high-status, wealth-acquiring professions such as medicine and engineering. Do you think it's important for the Iranian community to have more young Iranians in the social sciences and humanities?

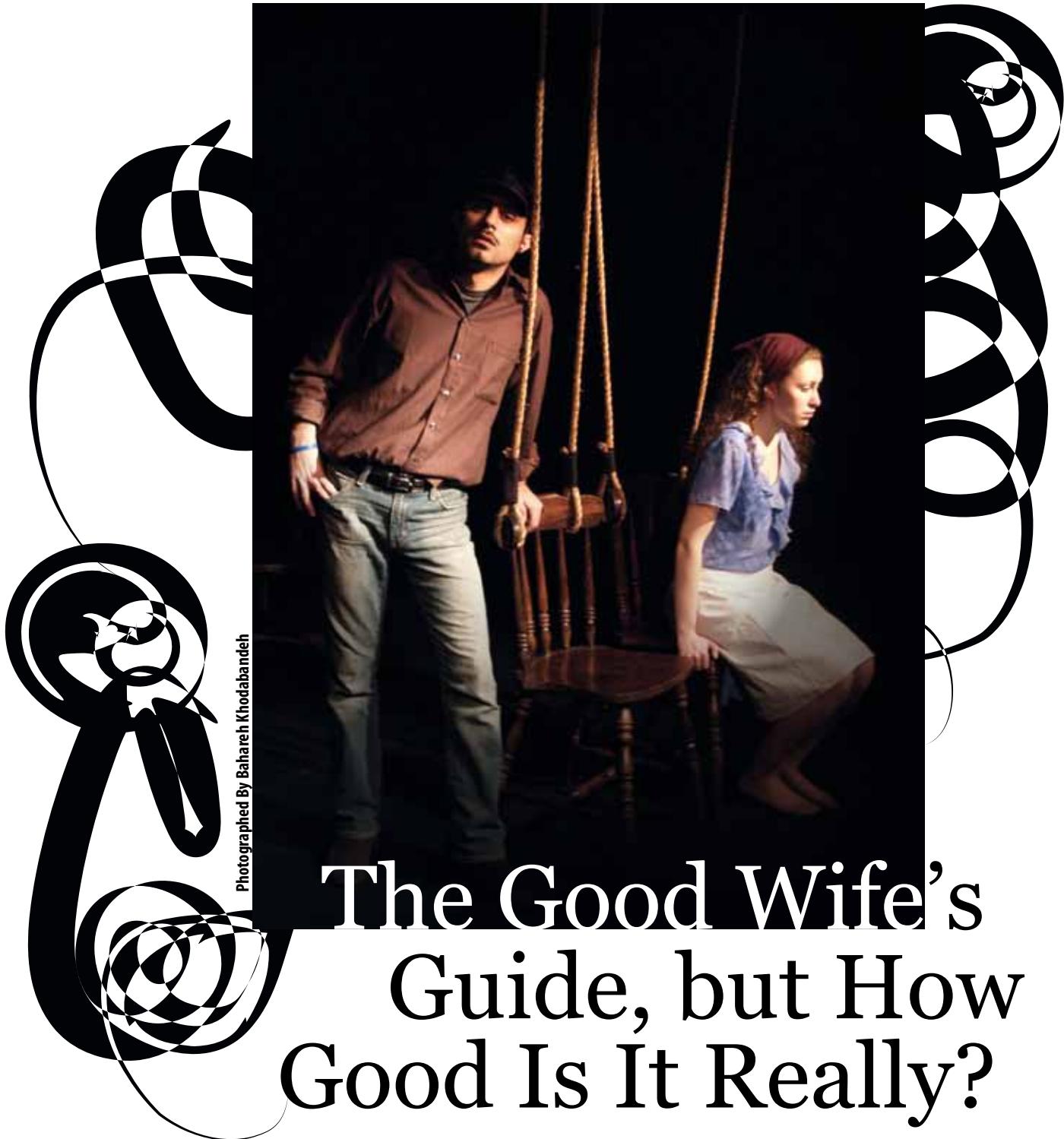
A: Absolutely. I think it is very important for the Iranian community to recognize the value of Social Sciences and Humanities training. I think simply celebrating and glorifying careers in medicine or engineering as is the dominant trend amongst Iranians is extremely short-sighted. I also understand that, in part, the pressure Iranian families place on their children to enter the traditional professions of medicine or engineering is part of the new immigrant anxiety to ensure a secure economic future for their children. But I look forward to the time when the Iranian community recognizes the value of the critical thinking skills taught in the Social Sciences and Humanities - skills that are highly desirable in any field. There is, in fact, a significant amount of research indicating that private businesses and corporations are eager to hire Humanities graduates precisely because they value the critical thinking and problem-solving skills. ♦

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The Good Wife's Guide, but How Good Is It Really?

By Cassandra Thompson. *The Good Wife's Guide*, lists the steps a woman should take in order to be the 'ideal' housewife for her husband.

- Have dinner ready. Plan ahead, even the night before, to have a delicious meal ready on time for his return. This is a way

of letting him know that you have been thinking about him and are concerned about his needs. Most men are hungry when they get home and the prospect of a good meal is part of the warm welcome needed.

- Prepare yourself. Take 15 minutes to

rest so you'll be refreshed when he arrives. - Touch up your make-up, put a ribbon in your hair and be fresh-looking. He has just been with a lot of work-weary people.

- Be a little gay and a little more interesting for him. His boring day may need a

lift and one of your duties is to provide it.

- Clear away the clutter. Make one last trip through the main part of the house just before your husband arrives. Run a dust cloth over the tables.

- During the cooler months of the year you should prepare and light a fire for him to unwind by. Your husband will feel he has reached a haven of rest and order, and it will give you a lift too. After all, catering to his comfort will provide you with immense personal satisfaction.

- Minimize all noise. At the time of his arrival, eliminate all noise of the washer, dryer or vacuum. Encourage the children to be quiet.

- Be happy to see him.

- Greet him with a warm smile and show sincerity in your desire to please him.

- Listen to him. You may have a dozen important things to tell him, but the moment of his arrival is not the time. Let him talk first - remember, his topics of conversation are more important than yours.

- Don't greet him with complaints and problems.

- Don't complain if he's late for dinner or even if he stays out all night. Count this as minor compared to what he might have gone through at work.

- Make him comfortable. Have him lean back in a comfortable chair or lie him down in the bedroom. Have a cool or warm drink ready for him.

- Arrange his pillow and offer to take off his shoes. Speak in a low, soothing and pleasant voice.

- Don't ask him questions about his actions or question his judgment or integrity. Remember, he is the master of the house and as such will always exercise his will with fairness and truthfulness. You have no right to question him.

- A good wife always knows her place.²

This type of advice - in our age, and per-

haps even in the era it was published - would probably make a lot of women and men squirm with discomfort.

The advice encourages the idea that the husband's wants and needs must always come before the needs and concerns of his wife, given his socially constructed superiority. She's expected to live for him, to satisfy his needs and interests, and live to simply enhance the quality of her husband's life. Through this antiquated advice, she has become the slave, and the husband, her master.

Some may view this reading of the text as radical; but it's undeniable the manual aims to socialize the average American housemaker into believing that the ideal of domestic servility is a normative fact, and not a social construct of society. This publication was just one instance of how the media reinforced these common ideals of American society. What we must understand is that our 'male-ness' and 'female-ness' is not entirely the product of biology. Rather, our gender is determined by the way in which we are raised, from the toys we are given to play with to the stories we are told. We are socialized in our gender roles at a young age.

Consider the common practice of giving a young girl a baby doll with a bottle and spoon for feeding it and a comb for brushing its hair (some of these dolls even urinate to give the child the added experience of changing diapers). Young boys, on the other hand, are given toy cars, building sets and toy guns, fostering in them stereotypical male-related interests such as cars and construction, along with aggressive

behavior expected of "real men." Young girls, however, are trained for a life of motherhood, and through the powerful influence of Barbie, they are trained to make themselves attractive for their "Ken doll" and the public eye. This form of socialization reduces the value of women to their physical attractiveness and ability to bear and rear children. Enjoying a dominant position, men are viewed as offering creativity and strength, particularly through their role as the breadwinner. The wife is then seen as dependent on her husband for survival, and therefore, must always keep him happy to ensure that he provides for her. As the *The Good Wife's Guide* advises, "A good wife always knows her place."

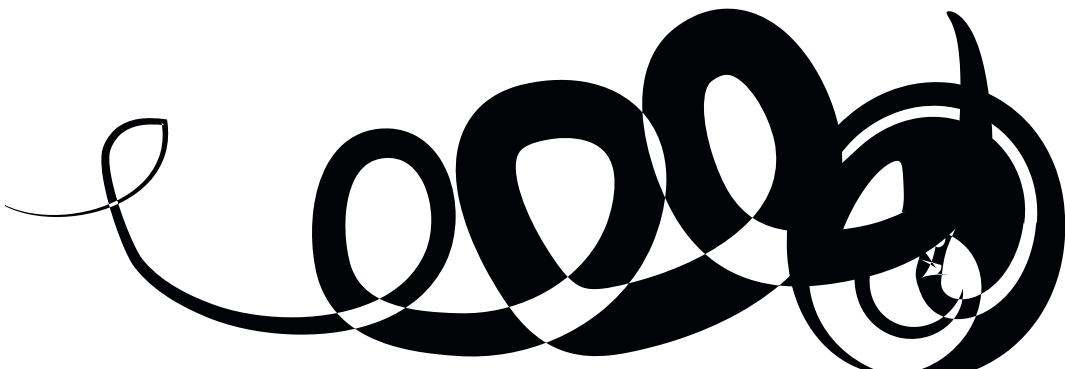
How do we want the next generation to view the family and the role of women in society? After reading *The Good Wife's Guide*, we might smirk at its quaintness and feel smug about how we've evolved from such archaic notions of womanhood. But we need to be aware that sexist ideas still prevail in our society, even if they are less explicit. Next time you view a beer, make-up or personal grooming commercial, pay close attention to its implications about the status, role and nature of women and men. Sadiy, our modern notions of womanhood might not be as far removed from the ideals of *The Good Wife's Guide* as we might think. ♦

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1. <http://www.feministezine.com/feminist/historical/Good-Wifes-Guide.html>

2. *The Good Wife's Guide*, 1955, Housekeeping Monthly





Polygamy for Men

By Sarah Serajelahi. The practice of polygamy seems to be widely misunderstood in public discourse. Polygamy, or rather “polygyny”—men married to several wives simultaneously, is the reality for virtually every case of polygamous relationships in the United States and Canada, namely the Bountiful community in British Columbia Canada. So in fact, the majority of polygamous cases would be more accurately classified as cases of Polygyny.

In fundamentalist Mormonism, polygyny is legitimized based on the religious belief that men have a divine obligation to take multiple wives and beget as many offspring as possible¹. Their founding prophet, Joseph Smith has reportedly said that polygamous marriages are “the most holy and important doctrines ever revealed to man on earth.” He further states:

Under the “law of priesthood” a man “cannot commit adultery with that that belongeth to him and to no one else. And if he have ten virgins given unto him by this law, he cannot commit adultery, for they belong to him... If any man have a wife... and he teaches unto her the law of my priesthood, as pertaining to these things, then shall she believe and administer unto

him, or she shall be destroyed, saith the Lord you God².

This passage reveals a great deal about gender inequality, and more specifically female subordination by a male-headed religious group, where males are the teachers or preachers. Not only is Smith speaking directly to men and encouraging male control over women in society; he also denounces women by framing them as property and subservient persons who must obey their husbands. It becomes apparent that the polygamy of which he speaks is a practice reserved for men, as he ignores female persons. Hence, Smith is actually promoting polygyny.

The practice of polygamy is essentially used by men as an exploitative means to employ social control over women in the name of religion, which ultimately violates women’s fundamental human rights and infringes on section 293 of the Canadian criminal code which condemns the practice of polygamy³. Polygamy has long been the subject of criticism among human rights activists; international human rights laws deem the practice as an infringement on the rights of women. General concerns involve gender-based stereotypes: men prosper in

the public realm of paid work and religious teaching, while women are praised as wives and encouraged to stay home and do domestic tasks, including child rearing⁴. This kind of social restriction prohibits women from engaging in activities that allow them to explore their capabilities in the public realm, and equally participate in their community.

Although women in the Bountiful community are victims of patriarchal monolithic doctrines that oppress them, there are women who are prospering in the realm of religious theology and actively fighting for gender equality. Today, feminist theologians condemn traditional ways of practicing religion. They have been striving for the acceptance and appraisal of women in the male-dominated area of religion⁵.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted by the General Assembly of the U.N. in 1979, is devoted to protecting the rights of all women, and is legally binding for all state parties. Since Canada ratified the convention, the government is legally obligated to take affirmative action in protecting the women living in these polygamous communities.

So why is polygamy still being practiced despite the prohibition in the Criminal Code of Canada and in human rights laws?

The Canadian government has had difficulty convicting members in the Bountiful community for practicing polygamy. There are a few barriers. First, in fundamental Mormonism, men legally marry one wife and the subsequent marriages are performed by priests as celestial marriages². Hence, these marriages are not legal. Second, the lack of evidence and community cooperation are responsible for the failure of legal punishment³. However, the greatest difficulty faced by the four British Columbia attorney generals who have attempted to charge community leaders for practicing polygamy, has been provisions in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which protect religious freedom (Section

2 (a) freedom of conscience and religion). Since this is a right granted in the constitution, it becomes a complicated legal battle when faced with conflicting provisions in the criminal code.

Hence, it becomes the responsibility of the Canadian government to continue the fight against these injustices, given that their role is to protect the rights of citizens, as outlined in various United Nations human rights conventions. The government must utilize appropriate human rights provisions and should see to it that they supersede any personal freedoms if they infringe on another's freedoms, regardless of where they are protected in law. In order to adequately protect the human rights of these women and eradicate present injustices, the Canadian government must dismantle the Bountiful community of fundamentalist

Mormons who practice polygamy. Polygamy has been illegal in Canada since 1892; accordingly, measures should be taken to punish those who continue to practice it.◆

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2. Cook, R & Kelly, L. (2006) *Polygyny and Canada's Obligations Under International Human Rights Law*. Ottawa: Department of Justice Canada.

3. Lewis, C. (2009, January 7). *Bountiful B.C polygamy case likely to stir up religious freedoms debate*. National Post.

4. Stuckey, J. (1995). Women and religion: Female spirituality, feminist theology, and feminist goddess worship. In J. Golden (Ed.), *Women and human rights* (279-294). Canadian Scholars Press INC.

Designed By Bahar Almasi



Susan Sontag

An Icon

By Tayaz Fakhri. 1937, New York City. She was in a park with her Irish Nanny talking to another giant person: "Susan is very high-strung." Susan thinks: That's an interesting word. Is it true?" She later on claims that already at four, she was engaged in critical analysis, wondering about the word. Susan had preferred the word "Restless" for her child self, one who felt that "Childhood was a terrible waste of time!"

At the end of the 20th century, Susan Sontag (1933-2004) stood as an American author, a literary theorist, a theatre and movie director, and a political and feminist activist. Few writers were able to address the subject of photography, science fiction, or pornography without referring to, and often taking issue with, Susan Sontag. She has been recognized as one of the seventy-five female writers whose words have changed the world. Her celebrated and widely-read article "Notes on 'Camp'" is ranked 72 on American Journalism's top 100 works, and she is listed as number 61 on Life's list of "Women Who Shook the World."

Sontag did graduate work in philosophy, literature, and theology at Harvard University. It was as an essayist that she gained early fame and notoriety. While her 1964 essay "Notes on 'Camp'" made it clear to everyone that a star was on the rise, it was

the publication of "Against Interpretation" (1966), accompanied by a striking dust-jacket photo by Peter Hujar, which helped establish Sontag's reputation. "Notes on 'Camp'" was epoch-defining, examining an alternative classification of art called "camp art." Rather than judging art as "good" or "bad," this approach gestured towards the natural and sensible art that stays serious in the form while at the same time naïve and exaggerated in content; everything in its slight content is decorative, aesthetic and stylish. The word "Camp" specifically is applied in her article's topic to involve duplicity: behind the public sense in which something can be taken, one has found a private experience of "the thing".

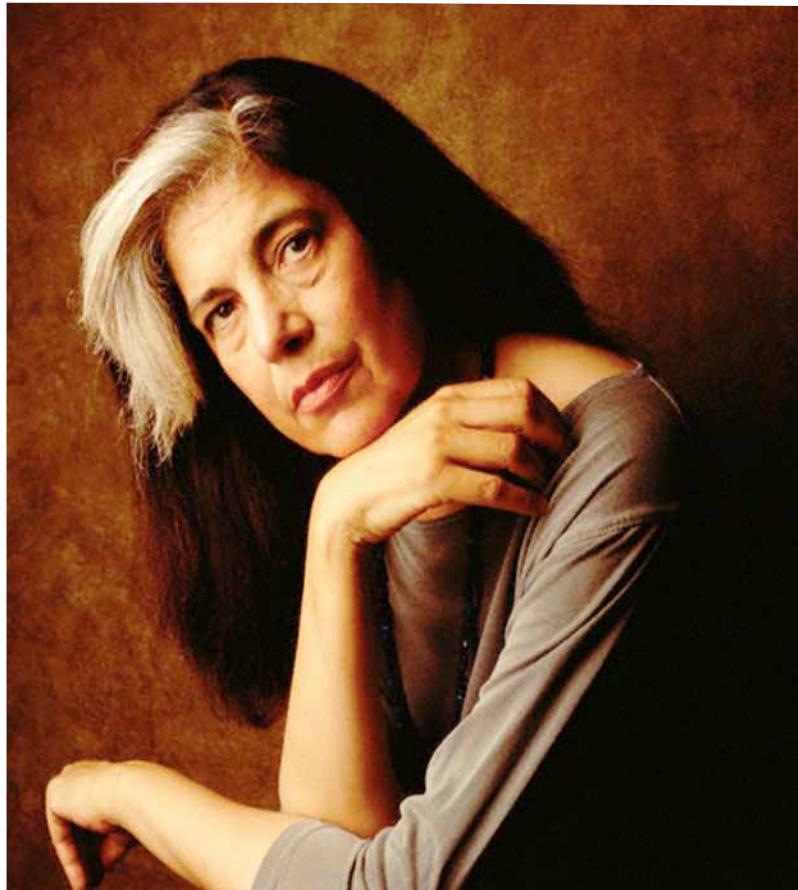
In "Against Interpretation", however, she focuses on the form/content dichotomy across the arts. She challenges the

Aristotelian and Platonic theories of art as a representation or mimesis, and argues that the idea of content today is mainly a hindrance and a nuisance. She renounces justifications of what a work of art "says" and highlights the value of "form." Susan begins her article with a quote from Oscar Wilde: "It is only shallow people who do not judge by appearances. The mystery is the visible, not the invisible."

Sontag's essay, "On Photography" (1977), established an entirely different view of the camera in the modern world. Sontag highlights the notion that photographs are a way of imprisoning reality, causing the memory to stand still.

In 1989 when Iranian leader Ayatollah Khomeini issued a fatwa death sentence for writer Salman Rushdie in response to his novel *The Satanic Verses*, which was deemed profane, Sontag, as then president of the PEN American Center, offered uncompromising support of Rushdie, and was critical in rallying American writers to his cause.

Sontag lived in Sarajevo for many months during the Sarajevo siege and encouraged other artists and public figures to visit, in an effort to raise awareness. She also went to Hanoi, and wrote of the North Vietnamese society with much sym-



pathy and appreciation.

Sontag added further controversy, when she wrote that, "the white race is the cancer of human history." Sontag later issued a partial apology for her statement, saying it was insensitive to cancer victims.

She was also accused of plagiarism in *In America*. It was suggested that her work was very similar to passages in Willa Cather's novel, *My Mortal Enemy*, Cather wrote: "When Oswald asked her to propose a toast, she put out her long arm, lifted her glass, and looking into the blur of the candlelight with a grave face, said: 'To my coun-n-try!'" Sontag wrote, "When asked to propose a toast, she put out her long arm, lifted her glass, and looking into the blur of the candlelight, crooned, 'To my new country!'" "Country," muttered Miss Collingridge. "Not 'coun-n-try!'" The quotations were presented with neither credit nor attributions to Cather. Sontag said that she had used other sources, with a complete transformation on them, adding that "There's a larger argument to be made that all of literature is a series of references and allusions."

Sontag also caused controversy over her remarks in *The New Yorker* (September 24, 2001) in the immediate aftermath of the September 11th, 2001 attacks. Sontag wrote:

"Where is the acknowledgment that this was not a 'cowardly' attack on 'civilization' or 'liberty' or 'humanity' or 'the free world' but an attack on the world's self-proclaimed superpower, undertaken as a consequence of specific American alliances and actions? How many citizens are aware of the ongoing American bombing of Iraq? And if the word 'cowardly' is to be used, it might be more aptly applied to those who kill from beyond the range of retaliation, high in the sky, than to those willing to die themselves in order to kill others. In the matter of courage (a morally neutral virtue): Whatever may be said

of the perpetrators of Tuesday's slaughter, they were not cowards."

On March 30th 2009, five years after her death, it was announced that the Theater Square, in front of the National Theater in Sarajevo, will be named after Susan Sontag.

"Her name has become synonymous with a set of expectations- most notably of the dream of self-creation, of self-fulfillment, of standing alone, of the cutting edge, the articulate, the independent, and the attractive.... Susan was a platonic figure," writes Carl Rollyson, author of her biography, *Susan Sontag the Making of an Icon*. "Susan Sontag as the world now

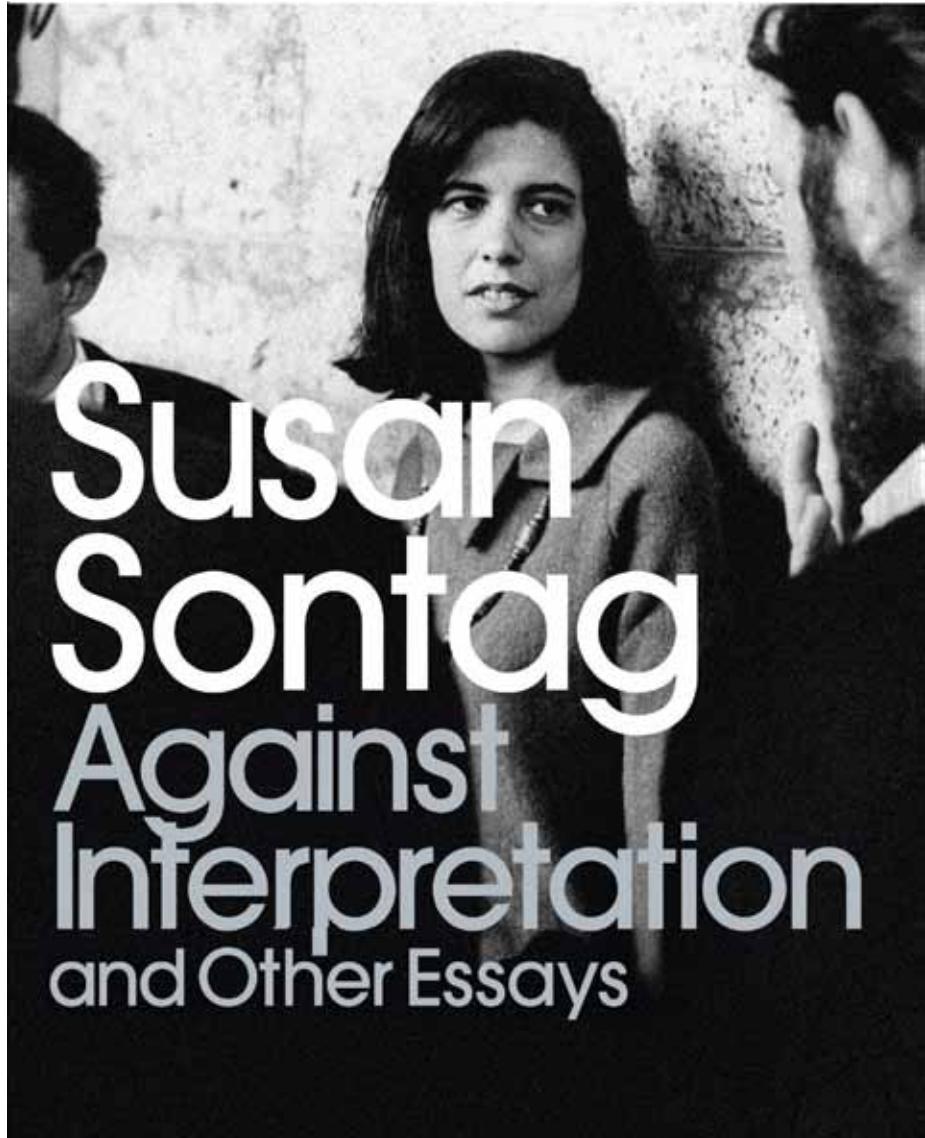
knows her is a dream of Susan Sontag." Susan was never finished with her work. In an autobiographical essay, "Singleness," she writes, "My life has always felt like a becoming.... I enjoy beginning again. The beginner's mind is [the] best." ♦

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1. Susan Sontag: the making of an icon by Carl Rollyson and Lisa Paddock. New York: W.W. Norton, c2000.

2. Against interpretation, and other essays by Susan Sontag. New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1966.





Longing to scream Zsa Zsa Zsu

By Mehdi Hassanian Esfahani

I take out my contact lenses, every night, and wait for you.
Wear them in the morning, another day starts.
And life goes on.



"What should I do with you?" He said.

God hates writers. He likes to surprise, and we simply spoil his secrets. We have no control on it, and he is aware of that, too. We interpret his signs and predict the climax; we expect the downfall and accept up and downs; we don't cry. He wants us cry, sometimes, but we don't.

God loves writers. We are the only ones who know his language. He shows us signs and waits to be interpreted. He knows that we seek for them, and pay attention to clues. He awaits us as well. He refuses to declare, but we are his only friends.



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زن

شہین ولایتی

دیگر نمی خواهم خدایا
از ترس تو آرام باشم
عمری اسیر و پای در بند
از دوزخت ترسیده باشم
آه ای خدای مهربانی
دنیا فقط این یک قفس نیست
جای من اینجا در قفس نیست
من یک زنم اما دل من
چون کودکی پراشتیاق است
می خواهد از فردا بداند
می خواهد از دنیا بفهمد
با این دل پراشتیاقش
به صبح فردaha بخندد
دنیا پر از ابر است و باران
دریا پر از موج است و طوفان
یک گل پر از احساس عشق است
این دل پر از امید و مهر است
من چشمها باید بجوشم
رودم به دریا می خروشم
اینجا هوا هست و هوا نیست
اینجا نفس هست و نفس نیست
جای گل و ریحان و پونه
در باغ ما جز خار و خس نیست
می ترسم از بیهوده بودن
می ترسم از پژمرده بودن
آه ای خدای مهربانی
دنیا فقط این یک قفس نیست
جای من اینجا در قفس نیست





One Night,

Shahrzad walked around her bedroom whispering an old song. She lit the candles, watered the plant at the corner of the room and removed the dead leaves resting on its soil. Then she looked around. Everything looked neat and clean. The room was very well designed. The burgundy curtains made a good match with the flowers of the Persian carpet. A beautiful red lampshade erected beside the miniature paintings hanging on the wall, a shelf full of poetry books on the other side of the room, and a big bouquet of twelve deep red roses in the ceramic vase sitting on the table, all gave warmth to the room. A cool breeze slowly moved the curtains and spread the fresh smell of the water from the river down the hill. Burning incense was the last thing she did every night before her prince arrived. She loved watching the dance of the incense smoke in the air; It was like meditation to her, and she could stare at it for hours. Shahrzad thought about the story she was going to tell him tonight, a story about love. She stood in front of the big mirror hanging on the wall and stared at her reflection. She felt beautiful; her white Harir clothes were moving around like a dream when she walked, her long black silky hair parted in the middle, falling down on her naked shoulders, her black irises hid behind her dark and long eyelashes, and her red lips were so luscious, as if they craved for his kisses. Thinking about their romantic moments made her blush and brought a smile to her fair skinned face. She sprayed some perfume on her fresh skin and looked at the clock. The time has arrived. Any minute she

would hear his footsteps at the door. He would wait a little trying to find the keys and she could imagine him checking all his pockets. Finally he would find the keys and then the familiar sound of the key turning in the lock. Then his breath, his look, his charm and his arms wide open, the safest place for her to forget all her worries. Shahrzad looked at their framed picture sitting on the bedside table. He was handsome. He was tall and had broad shoulders. His stare was full of stories and Shahrzad felt lost anytime she looked deep into his eyes. His smile invited her to kiss him forever. Thinking about his warm voice when he whispered in her ears brought to dance the butterflies in her chest. "Where is he? Where is he?" Shahrzad said. She kept busy with the poetry from the book of Hafez. All she had to do was to have a question in mind, open a random page, and the first poem she saw, amazingly, would reveal to her the answer; a game that she never got tired of. That night, thinking about her prince, she held the book close to her chest, touched the paper cross section a few times until she was sure, opened it, and then read the poem. Suddenly her smile disappeared. Hafez wasn't being friendly tonight. The poem was all about separation, and Shahrzad hated separation. She had no strength for another try and another sad poem, so she put the book back in the shelf. An hour passed and he was not home yet. "Why is it so quiet tonight? Why is he late?" Shahrzad thought. She walked in the room, picked the bottle of Shiraz and poured herself a glass, smelled it, watched it in the candle light; "what a beautiful color", she thought. Then she put the glass down on the table and thought about the little creature



growing inside her. She walked to the window. The dark sky was full of shiny stars and they looked very close to earth, so close that she wanted to grab one and put it in her hair. She listened to a lonely bird singing in the garden. The tiny red moon in the horizon looked so shy. It was a new moon, and she made a wish while staring at it. All she wanted was for him to come home soon. She felt tired, so she went back and lied down on the bed. The smell of clean sheets relaxed her. She rubbed her hand on the purple satin and closed her eyes.

Suddenly she woke up, sobbing from a nightmare. She looked at the clock and noticed that it was past midnight. In her nightmare her prince was in the devil's prison with his feet in large chains and a huge weight resting on his shoulders. She tried to call him but no sound left her lips. She tried to run toward him but her feet were too heavy to move. He was surrounded by the devil's guards. She

screamed but he didn't even turn his face. He didn't see her, he didn't hear her. "What a horrible nightmare", she thought. Her heart was beating very fast echoing loud in her head. Her hands were shaking. Her mouth was dry. She drank a sip of water and the coldness of water calmed her down. Yet, she was struggling with the most horrible thoughts: "What if it is true? What if the devil is back? What if he put her prince in jail?" Suddenly, Shahrzad felt cold and started shivering. She walked to the window and closed it. She saw that the moon had disappeared behind the clouds. It was getting windy outside. "Where was he? Was he cold? Was he hungry?", she thought. She couldn't stand that. He had to be there by now. She missed him. "He has to be here!", she said loudly. Shahrzad didn't know what to do, or where to go, or who to ask about him. She felt like a stranger in the city. She couldn't take the risk of walking out of her home in that dark night. All she could do was to wait until the

morning. She stood in front of the mirror and looked into her own red eyes and said; "I will find him, I will go to the devil's castle and bring him back. I have to be strong now. I will find him tomorrow." But who was going to listen to her story tonight? She had promised her prince to tell him a story every night. "Breaking a promise is bad luck", she thought. She paced the room. The walls looked tall and dark. The smell of incense was not intoxicating anymore. The dance of the candle lights was now irritating her. She turned them off and hid herself in the darkness of the room. She felt so lonely. She sat on her bed and cried. She missed him very much. A new story came to her mind. She wiped her eyes, cleared her voice, put her hand on the little bump in her abdomen and whispered her story to her unborn child: "Yeki bood yeki nabood" that's how Shahrzad began the story. Simorgh, nesting on the top of the highest cliff of Mount Alborz, loved sitting in her nest and

looking at the sunrise and the city that woke up with it shine every day. The loud noise of the cars and people who were rushing to work, the school bell that invited sleepy children to the classrooms, and the loud voice of street vendors, who were advertising their goods, was like music to her ears. She knew those people by their names, their secrets and their wishes. Simorgh flew every morning, and with her long, beautiful and colourful wings and tail, she spread a rainbow of colors behind her in the sky over the city, giving people love, hope and peace. At night when she was back to her nest she hid her little head under her wings and went to sleep dreaming about the beautiful city and the lovely people, until the sunlight sneaked in her nest again in the morning and woke her up. One day she woke up by the sound of a thunderstorm. She took out her head from under her wings and looked around. She didn't see the sun. Instead, there was a big dark cloud covering the horizon. It was getting cold. She was puzzled: "When did this happen? How long did I sleep for? How are the people?" Simorgh thought. She wasn't able to see anything from up there. Simorgh waited and waited but nothing changed. She prayed for a strong wind to blow away the smog over the city or a rain to wash it out, but it didn't happen. The smog got thicker and thicker every day. It was darkness everywhere. Simorgh missed the light, the children, young lovers, grandparents, men and women. She decided to fly over the city and took off into the sky, her beautiful wings and tail spreading around her little but strong body. She went lower and lower but wasn't able to see anything. It was difficult for her to flow there, and thought of striking lightning was scary, but she felt strong when she thought about the people. "What is going on there?" She asked herself and went further down. It was hard to breathe and hard to see anything. Then she started to see the shadows of the buildings and the people on the streets. It looked like

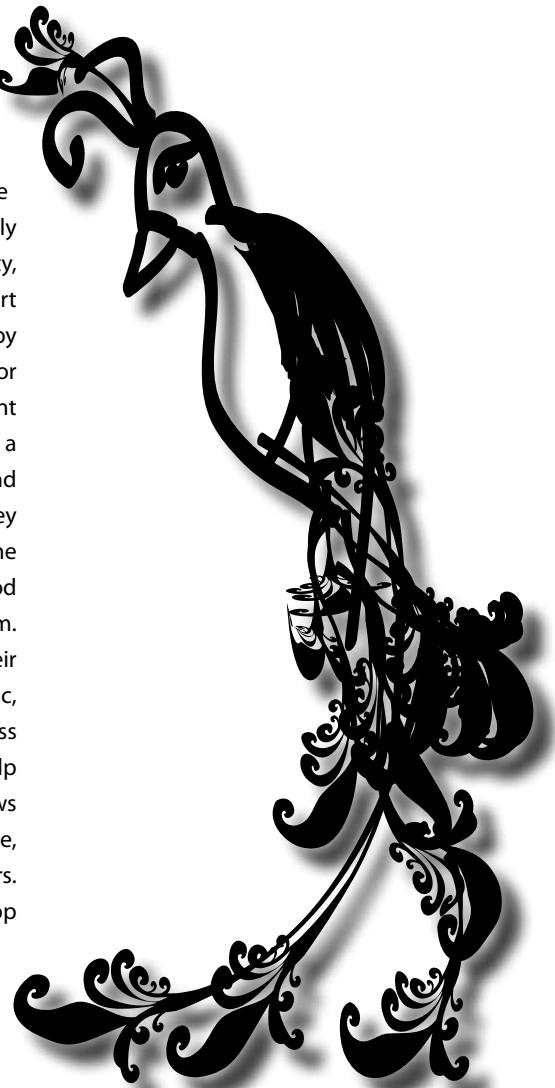
a city of ghosts. Why were they so quiet? Why wasn't anyone singing? Where are the people, trees, rivers, flowers, butterflies, and birds? What was going on there? Who built all these walls around the city? Why were the windows painted in black? Who cut all the trees? When did that big river dry out? Simorgh was shocked by all she saw. There were devil's guards everywhere marching on the streets, fighting against the light. She could hear the devil's loud laughter, who was celebrating his victory. The devils voice brought chills to Simorgh's bone. She found out what was happening. The devil saw her and pointed at her. The guards shot at Simorgh, so she flew back to her nest. Simorgh couldn't believe what she had just seen. She was aware of the devil's power and knew that he wouldn't go away easily. Simorgh was upset. Her feathers looked dull and covered in dust, with no sign of life. Somewhere, people whom she loved were suffering and she couldn't do anything for them. She was so sad. Simorgh was looking for answers, why? Why? Why? That night was the longest night of her life. She struggled all through the night but wasn't able to sleep at all. Early in the morning, she flew back to the city, but seeing the dead city broke her heart again. The playgrounds were covered by corpses of lovely people she had known for years. The prisons were full of the innocent people. Devil's guards were hanging a man. They were stoning a woman and she was screaming of pain and fear. They were raping young boys and girls in the prison and torturing anybody who stood against them and talked about freedom. The rest of the people were hiding in their dark and silent homes. No light, no music, no laughter, and no party. Happiness was forbidden. Simorgh wanted to help them but the devil shot poisonous arrows at her. As Simorgh flew away, hope, love and peace froze on her feathers. Since then Simorgh sat in her nest at the top

of Mount Alborz and looked at the scene in front of her eyes, bearing witness to what was happening to her people and her city. Her pretty and colourful feathers were all gray and dull, but at the bottom of her heart Simorgh knew that the clouds would go away one day. That sunshine would destroy the devil and happiness would grow back in people's hearts. She believed it. She was just waiting for that moment." That was how Shahrzad ended her story. She took a deep breath, wiped her eyes, put her head on her knees and closed her eyes, hoping to dream of her missing prince.♦

By Shirin Kabiri

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غروب

در کوچه های ابری یادت
تا خود صبح
پرسه می زنم
و چتری که
در آخرین دیدار
به من دادی
به خود می فشارم

نمی دانی از وقتی رفتی
چقدر مسخره ی گربه های ولگرد شدم

تا وقتی بودی
کلاغ

مرا در آخوش می فشد
و به من اطمینان می داد
که عشقم به بیراهه می رود

تا وقتی بودی
واگن های مردمان خوشبخت
وقتی زیر باران
از کنار من پیاده می گذشتند
آهسته می رفتند
تا آب خیابانهای خیس
به من اصابت نکند

امروز
آدمهای خوشحال

در واگن های خوشبختی
به من می خندند
و از کنارم تند می گذرند

امروز
تنها همدمم کلاغ
به دوردستها پرواز کرده
که تا ابد
اشکهایم را نبیند

امروز
باران تندر می بارد
تا از روزنه های چترت
خیس شوم

امروز
ابرها
کوچه ها را تاریک می کنند
تا ندانم کجا می روم

اما

دلم

از پوز خند تو می شکند
وقتی در واگن خوشبختیت
تند از کنارم
می گذری



شب سرد

شب سرد
باران سخت
و من هراسان
بر پنجه ات کوییدم
خیس و لرzan
دلتنگ چشمان
و خسته
از سوز شباهی بی تو
مثل همیشه
منتظر
که پشت پنجه بیاییں
و با لبخند تلخت
به من اطمینان دهی
که یادم هستی
اما آشپ
چراغ اناقت خاموش
و تو
با مسافری مرمز
همبستر بودی
با خود اندیشیدم
که چرا
حتی یکبار
پنجه را نگشودی
و مرا
از باران
نرهاندی
که چرا
کوییدن قطرات باران را
بر من
نادیده گرفتی
و مرا
در سیل اشکهایم
رها کردی
و از پشت پنجه
به من خنديدی

اشکهایم
در باران
گم شد
و صدای قهقهه ات
در آخوش مسافر مرمز
با رعد
هم آوا شد

By Mahan Habibi

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Mahan was Graduated in Electrical Engineering
from the University of Toronto.

Joy Division

By Foad Hassan Poor

She waits for him to come
His stench most fearsome
And just as quickly he leaves
She patiently waits for the next one

Terrible can't begin to describe
The thing she's endured in life
Not one of her choosing
Rife with pain and strife

Now with her belly swelling
Her hate would know no quelling
An unwilling participant
Of the child's father there would be no telling

Even then she knows no rest
Continually questioning God's cruel test
A part of her dies
Every time they ask "who's next?"

When finally she does give birth
All she has in abundance is dearth
No one's left to mourn her passing
Merciful is her exit from Earth

At the birth there is no joy
Crueler still is the sex, a boy
Better a culprit than a victim
The future owner of another dejected toy

Worry not for there is a happy ending
And your view of reality requires no bending
War is perpetual and man will not know peace
And a bullet for each of these men is pending



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Foad is an undergraduate student in English at York University.*

Woman Absorbed from Her

By Maryam Nayeb Yazdi

She who gives her heart to anyone who
embraces it
and is always aware of the sword.

She who ignites her inner passion to exude
in strangers
a knowledge already understood.

She who wins her tests created to challenge
the reasons that make life worth living.

She who patrols her surroundings to her
desire
so she affords a care so boundless.

She is strong as a member of creation
She blesses life in its natural state.

She is acquainted with many daily woes
She helps and wants nothing back.

She brushes offenses off her shoulder
She plans and life goes forward.

She brings with her intangible ardor so delicate
She empties wants in an unlocked jar.

She who loves and interprets hate
and goes toward her captivating fate
is a force not easily reckoned with.



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دهانت

قمنای گرم بوسه ها را

در من میرویاند

و شکفتن لبختند

در باغ نگاه

آینه روشن فرداها را

در گلشن رویاهایم

پدیدار میکند

من

تروانه ی پر تزم نامت را

بر بلندای آسمان

فریاد میکشم

و موج نگاهت را

بر سینه ی دریاها

با حریر سر انگشتم

و به مساحت شور همدلی

نوازش میکنم

نگاه پاک نیاز

در رود گرم چشمان

آلوده به تردید

و من

مغروف

در امواجش

و تو

میشویی دستانت را

از عشق

در آبی چرکین

از پیشنهایی

گل الود

اکنون

سنگینی عطر باغ دم را

که با شبمن پلاکهایم

سنگینتر شده

میسنجدی

با ترازویی برخاسته از

چوب ترد نارنج منطق

و زنجیر کهنه ی تجربه ی تاریک

و وزنه های سیاه

قولهای شکسته

آدمی

عشق را

در قمار زندگی

روان در می بازد

حالا کجاست رسول رندان بی دل
که در امتحان یزدانش
”خرد“ را
قربانی کند؟

ترنگ محبت
در عصر مرگ عاطفه
خاموش
و باور صبحدم
ز افقها خالیست

در این عصر،
آدمی
پیکر آتشینش را عربان میکند
از هوس
و عربانی کهربای دلش را
جامه به تن!

اما من،
هنوز
به آواز چکاوک
در روزن نگاه
بر بام موسیقی لمبایت
در پیش دست ها
و در ضرب‌آهنگ صدایت
در تکرار سرود عشق
ایمان دارم

تو نیز ایمان اور
به جایگاه ازلی آدمی
در قلمرو عشق!



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Persian Art Music: Traditional or Invariant?

By Mahmood Schricker. What is the relationship between the world of computers and the world of handicrafts and masonry? Is it better to cling to the traditional ways of living or is it better to acknowledge the aid of technology and take advantage of it? It is probably best to appreciate both worlds and to take into consideration traditional values as well as modern advances towards better living standards. But exactly how much to take from each world requires careful thinking. Mixing the traditional and the modern together in everyday life is a difficult task, but what about in music and art? Surely any artistic achievement contains in itself influences from the past, and at the same time adds something new, but where must one draw the line from tradition and continue forward? This article is an exploration of the meaning of 'tradition', its effect on individuality, and its application in Persian art music.

The word tradition comes from the Latin *traditionem*, which means 'handing over, or passing on'. The degree of accuracy or perfection in the 'passing on' process, however, is a question that needs to be addressed and is dependent on individual or communal interpretation. Whatever tradition may be, it is a force that is still alive in the present. Everything in our lives has its own tradition and it is always part of everything we do. Similarly, music is highly dependent on its past. Tradition is the key that helps us understand why certain things are the way they are. From the way we tie our shoelaces to the way we speak and the way we live, our actions are determined by our past that was paved a way by our ancestors. Therefore, by using Krenek's definition, tradition can be defined as the continuity of ideas expressed through the repetition of procedures and is the continuation of things created in the past, but still alive in the present. This continua-



Photographed By Shiva Tadayoni

tion of ideas can then explain why Persian music sounds a particular way, why it is played on certain occasions, and why certain aesthetic principles are ascribed to it

The above definition is only one of the many different definitions of tradition. There are those who see tradition as that which is old and without meaning while there are others who look at it as the principle meaning of everything. As Talbot Hamlin argues, those who are against tradition and desire only the new are at a loss because it is impossible to be independent of it. To be against tradition is to be against the entire past of the human race. If one is against history and tradition and seeks only the 'new' then one seeks only what is 'fashionable', and art undoubtedly has layers that are deeper than just the fashionable. At the same time, those who think that tradition is the sole truth are the ones who fear the future and perhaps fear that they will not be able to rise to its challenges.

It would appear that the meanings inherent in the concept of tradition are extremely diverse depending on the cultural

context. A perfect example is the difference in meaning of the term for Iranians and Westerners. Something that is traditional or *sonnati* in Iran, has more or less the connotation of something of high value which should not necessarily be changed. In the West, however, tradition is looked upon as something that is evolving and constantly changing. It might even be more accurate to refer to the music that developed from Machaut to Debussy as 'traditional' than it is to call Iran's music traditional, since Iran's music has sometimes gone through breaks in continuity and periods of renewal. This is evident in the music of the Qajar period, which has little in common with the music described in ancient treatises. These breaks are due to various factors, including conflicts and religious issues; but what is certain is that musical tradition in Iran was not simply a 'continuity of ideas' and therefore Krenek's definition does not really apply to it.

A more suitable definition for tradition in Persian music can perhaps be drawn from Hobsbawm's idea of 'invented traditions'. He defines 'invented tradition' as a set of practices governed by explicitly

accepted rules that seek to inspire certain values through repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, this is only an attempt to establish continuity with the past. These practices are not factual continuation , rather they are in contrast with the constant change and innovation of the modern world and they are an attempt to structure themselves as unchanging and invariant. Similarly the characteristic of 'tradition', the way it is being used in Persian music, is invariance-as something that should never change, as if it was always a fixed practice, or that it only contained innovation and change up to a limited point. Persian music could well have been changed in 1845 by the Farahani family (who are known as the originators of radif and whose descendants recorded the audio sources of contemporary Persian repertoire: the radif) . There is no audible reference before Farahani to show us what the Persian music was like. Although there are treatises on music from the twelfth and thirteenth century, none of them clearly explicate what the music sounded like. Therefore the Persian system and styles of today do not have the historical weight often ascribed to them.

However, what is clear is that each individual has his or her own history and a tradition of their own. As a result, each artist looks at music differently, having been influenced and affected by their childhood, family background, and education."Artists who fear their traditions [their own subjective backgrounds], thus creating without a base in the total self, will inevitably try to create like others". I believe that a work of art is only meaningful if it is combined with the unique experience of the individual. "Merely to repeat, to echo, or to reproduce either the beauty of the past or the fashion of the present is the basis of much pseudo art, both conservative and radical."

Since Persian music has historically had many gaps and renewals, and lacks a transparent continuous history, it is understandable that there is much resistance towards change by some musicians. This loyalty leaves musicians with two choices: to not change any parts of its tradition, so that it is safeguarded in its most original



form; or to manipulate it by subjective interpretation, vis-à-vis a historical interpretation, allowing for its eventual continuation.

If it is agreed that continuity is a positive thing, then one must accept that for things to remain continuous they need to be 'destroyed' (in the Bataillean sense if the word). That is to say, by merely imitating a tradition one can ultimately prevent continuity because continuity depends on the general historical interpretation and historical interpretation ultimately leads to destruction. When Debussy made the transition from late-Romantic music to the twentieth century modernist music, some

components of late-romantic music were left behind. To clarify, let us look at life itself. Life is continuous, passing from one generation to another, through reproduction. The most elementary of life forms, a single-celled organism, achieves continuity through reproduction: the single celled-organisms divide at a certain point in their development resulting in two nuclei, and therefore two new organisms. Although new cells have been reproduced, the initial cell has disappeared. Georges Bataille has based his philosophy on this important fact: continuity cannot take place unless something is destroyed . Bataille argues that continuity takes place when a discontinuous ovum and sperm unite; consequently, a continuity between them comes into existence to form a new entity, out of the death of the ovum and sperm. The new entity is also discontinuous, but bears within itself the transition to continuity: the potential fusion of two separate beings. The new cell integrates, "transcends and includes" the two components .

If one wants to preserve Persian music and provide it with a continuous tradition, then one has to 'destroy' it by refining it for each coming generation through historical interpretation that is derived from one's personal history. The new music that is produced may outwardly look as if it is something completely new, but in reality it "transcends and includes" the older music. We can conclude that disappearance and destruction is inherent in continuity, and continuity is what gives way to tradition. ♦

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MANUFACTURING DISSENT: UNCOVERING MICHAEL MOORE?



By Erfan Hashempour. "Manufacturing Dissent" is a Canadian documentary commissioned by CityTV in 2007 and directed by Rick Caine and Debbie Melnyk. Manufacturing Dissent mainly focuses on Michael Moore's professional career, exposing his deceptive and misleading strategies to influence the public mind towards the left of United States' political spectrum. Creators claim that the film is an eye-opener for many of Moore's supporters, who believe in his arguments without knowing much about him. The title "Manufacturing Dissent" is partly taken away from Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman's 1988 book "Manufacturing Consent", which introduced Propaganda Model. In brief, the entire theory Chomsky and Herman suggest is that there are five classes of filters

that determine the news in media. They argue that these classes of filters have created corporate oligopoly that lets elite corporations use media as a propaganda tool. "Manufacturing Dissent" claims to have discovered the same kind of propaganda used by dissent - in this case Michael Moore - to establish their argument. The film first takes on Moore's speech during the 2003 Academy Awards, when he openly criticized George W. Bush for invading Iraq. Later on, Caine and Melnyk present footages of Moore elaborating on his speech in different occasions, each time telling a different story. The directors argue that he lied while explaining the true motive behind his famous acceptance speech. In another occasion, "Manufacturing Dissent" takes on Moore's 1989 documentary

"Roger and Me" where he claims to be ignored and denied by Roger Smith –the CEO of General Motors— for doing an interview with him. Through interviews with Michael Moore's former colleagues, we find out that he was in fact able to interview Mr. Smith twice before making the movie, however he never used them in his work. The list continues with exploring other misleading tactics by Michael Moore in his other productions such as "Bowling for Columbine" and "Fahrenheit 9'11". The film is full of interviews with Michael Moore's friends and former colleagues that usually comment negatively about him. Throughout, we also follow Debbie Meinyk in her quest to interview Michael Moore, which never happens as she is always denied or misled by Moore and his associates.

"Manufacturing Dissent" also elaborates on Moore's manipulative attitude, not only in his movies, but also in his personal life. For instance, we see different footages of him hugging people, and in one occasion, when he hugs Meinyk, she feels very "manipulated", as she is Canadian and according to her, Canadians do not hug, as much as Americans.

The creators also claim to look at Michael Moore from a liberal point of view, and at the beginning of the film Mainyk describes herself as an admirer of Moore's work. However, as they learn more about Moore, their positive view of him fades away. Although this might add to the fairness of their view on Michael Moore, the enormous amount of negative thoughts, and one-sidedness presented throughout the film, does not match with this claim. Also, many of the interviews, which mostly consisted of negative comments about Moore, were conducted with people who no longer have a say in Moore's life, and in some occasions the interviews were irrelevant to the focus of the film. For instance in an interview with a person who wrote for Michael Moore's magazine in 1970s, the interviewee was complaining about how Moore never paid him enough! Now the question is, does that make him a "bad" person? I certainly believe that they wanted to portray him as an unpleasant lying bastard! But why? Because of his manipulative attitude? Or maybe for his refusal to grant them an interview? If they had interviewed him, would they take the same path in criticizing Moore? I'm not sure.

As an admirer of Michael Moore's work, watching this movie left me with many contradictory feelings. I still think all Michael Moore movies have been great efforts in raising awareness about socio-political issues in United States and around the world. What Michael Moore has done in the past several years, many others haven't been able to achieve and there is no doubt that he has influenced

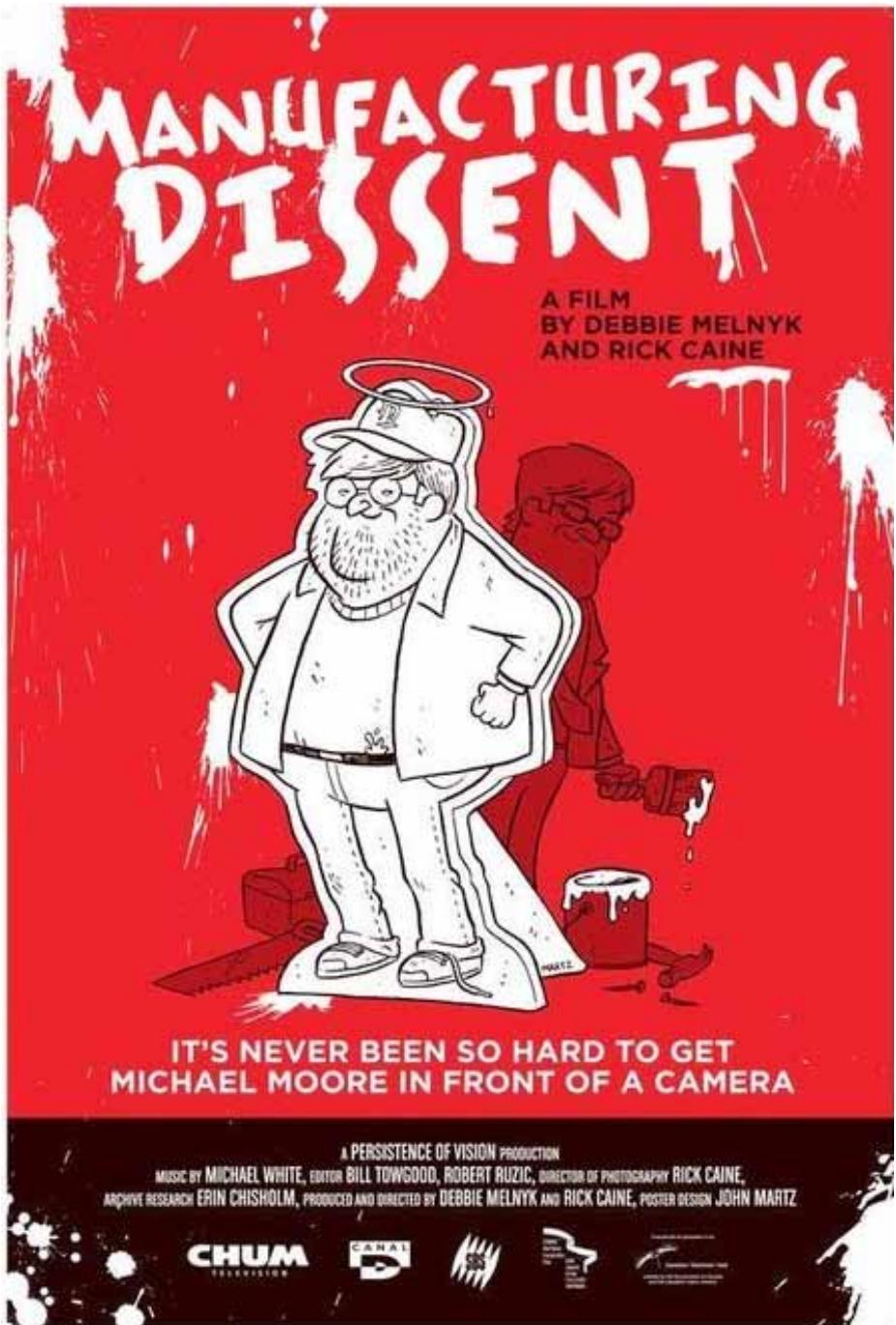
many people throughout these years. On the other hand, the information which was provided in the movie was very eye opening and somewhat accurate that I think now I know more about him and his personal life and character. The fact that he wants to establish and legitimize his argument by any means necessary, including occasional lying and misleading tactics, seems to be disturbing, however it won't change my positive view on his profes-

sional career. ◆

In case of Michael Moore not agreeing to give an interview to the directors, I feel as if he already knew that this film was going to be critical of him, and he definitely had the right to not partake in it. ◆

<http://www.youtube.com/user/ErfanTV>

Erfan is a Radio and Television Arts student at Ryerson University.



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