

Peyk

Persian Cultural Center's Bilingual Magazine
P.O. Box 500914, San Diego CA 92150



162

March-April 2016
Vol. XXVI No. 162

ساز نو بک
Happy Nowruz
HAPPY PERSIAN NEW YEAR



Designed by Saeed Jafarizadeh

Celebrating Diversity – Learning To Respect Differences
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By: Shahri Estakhry



Celebrating Diversity – Learning To Respect Differences

Once again, it is time for the jubilation of our New Year and a new day. Time to say farewell to the dormancy of another winter season and welcome the rejuvenation of our Mother Earth with the coming of spring. We should get ready to dance with the blossoming of every flower and be thankful to have been given another spring to celebrate and enjoy the blessings of being alive.

As I write this editorial, early February it will be the beginning of the Chinese New Year, the year of the Monkey. Less than a month ago we celebrated the coming of 2016 in the Gregorian calendar. Now coming up on the first day of spring will be a great celebration, representing a new year for nearly 300 million people around the world.

Due to the amazing progress in technology, we have become a global family involved in one another's cultural heritages and celebrations, giving us the opportunity to be joyous together, and an opportunity to learn the art of tolerance, respect and acceptance of one another and our differences.

Our Mother Earth has around 7 billion living children in 195 nations. We are of different cultural backgrounds and habits, different languages, and different religions. According to infoplease.com "There are roughly 6,500 spoken languages in the world today. However, about 2,000 of those languages have fewer than 1,000 speakers." Ethnologue also reports "a total of 238 languages in the United States, 162 of which are 'living'."

Today, one thing is for sure, in all corners of the world the majority of world citizens are operating a cell phone with all kinds of gadgets and/or at least a computer. We can even see each other's backyards across the world if we choose to. This is how close we are to one another whether we want to recognize these facts or not. We really are a global family and it would be advantageous to all of us to act as a family and support and protect one another. If nothing else, the natural global disasters of recent years should have taught us this lesson.

Annually from November first to mid-January there are over 30 global celebrations, national as well as religious. Thus, here are my resolutions for whatever days of life are left for me to enjoy and celebrate. There are 195 nations on earth and each must have at least one specific day of celebration that represents them – I want to celebrate that nation and its people on their special day. I want to learn more about them and their cultural heritage. Wouldn't it be different and a positive experience if ALL the news media throughout the world would begin by teaching us each day the reason for celebrations and the background of the celebrants of our world? Wouldn't understanding one another bring tolerance and begin paving a road to global peace?

"I have learned that a man has only the right to look down to another when he has to help him to stand up. There is always a tomorrow and life gives us the opportunity to do things right." Gabriel Garcia Marquez

Our New Year brings the message of a new life, hope, gratitude, respect and the wisdom to always remember: Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds for all humanity.

**The Editorial Board of Peyk Wish You a Happy Season of Spring
with Prosperity and
Good Health for the Year Ahead.**

Persian Cultural Center's Bilingual Magazine

Is a bi - monthly publication organized for literary, cultural and information purposes

Financial support is provided by the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture.

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www.pccsd.org

March-April 2016

Vol. XXVI

Circulation: 6000

Persian Cultural Center

A non - profit national corporation

Established in 1989. San Diego, California

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Cover Design: Saeed Jalali



کانون فرهنگی ایرانیان

PCC (Persian Cultural Center) News:

PCC January and February Events:

PCC Board of Directors met on January 6, and February 11, 2016.

Jong e Farhanghi (Cultural Variety Show), takes place on the second Friday of the month at the Iranian-American Center.

The January 8th show was hosted by Reza Khabazian. The first guest of the program was Sheida Mohammadi, poet, writer and journalist who presented her recently published book “yavashhaye ghermez”. The discussion continued on the subject of “Homeland” – vatan in Persian poetry. The second guest was Ali Ashouri who spoke about the democracy and culture. The second part of the program continued with an interview with Jahangir Golestan a documentary filmmaker who showed his recent film “Homeless to Homeowner”. He then talked about making of the movie and answered questions from the audience.

The February 12th show was hosted by Ali Sadr. The first part of the program was an interview with Dr. Babak Rahimi, history professor at UCSD about his recent book “Social Media in Iran” and the role of the social media in political and social arena. The program continued with an interview with Shahla Dorafshan about her style of painting. She also exhibited several paintings at the hall. The last part of the program was introducing Jamshid Maramkhah a musician specialized in Persian wind instruments. He demonstrated several instruments and at the end played three pieces accompanied with Milad Jahadi on percussions. At the start of the second half of the program Anahita Babaei recited two beautiful poems by Saadi.





Film and Discussion Group meets on the first Sunday of the month at the Iranian-American Center.

The January movie was “Sagkoshi” by Bahram Beizaei. After the show the audience had a lively discussion about the movie as well as other previously shown Beizaei’s works such as “Mosaferan” and “Basho”.

The February movie was “Ertefae Past” by Ebrahim Hatamikia which was based on a true story about a flight from Ahvaz to Bandar Abbas. The show was followed by discussion about the filmmaker and his movies.

On January 16, PCC presented a recently released comedy called “Iran Berger” by Masoud Jafari Jozani, The movie was presented by Sohrab Akhavan. After the show he responded to the questions and comments by the audience.

The Annual Bazaarcheh, a fundraising event by PCC took place on Saturday, January 23rd at the IAC. Many local businesses and local artists presented their products and art crafts to visitors.

Mahsa Vahdat Concert - On Sunday January 24, 2016, PCC hosted a sold out concert with Mahsa Vahdat renown Iranian singer. Marjan Vahdat was supposed to accompany her sister in this concert. Unfortunately her trip was disrupted at Frankfurt, Germany due to the recently passed law (HR 158). Three musician accompanied Mahsa Vahdat in this concert, Atabak Eliasi on tar and setar, Misagh Eshaghi on kamancheh and Matin Eshaghi on tonbak.

Play Reading: On February 13, 2016, the newly formed “White Masks” group performed a play reading in front of packed hall at the Center. The play was called “13” and was based on a play by Hossein Fadaihossein called “Mahboubeh”. The performers were Soodabeh Rahmankhah, Kiarash Kiantaj, Tavooos Moshtagh and Hanieh Khatibi. The play was produced by Mahmoudreza Pirouzan who also was narrator of the acts.





To an auspicious Nowruz

As we anticipate the arrival of Nowruz, I wish to relay my heartfelt and felicitous greetings to our readers. It is with hope that the New Year will bring joy, prosperity, good health, peace, and security to people worldwide. I also hope that sanctions on Iran will be lifted so that its economy may open up and its social and political conditions may improve. May the shadow of war never again befall Iran. And for what it's worth, we join all Iranians as they wish for better days.

For our immigrant community, keeping Nowruz and other popular customs alive is a way of preserving an identity. Every year, Nowruz rituals keep us quite occupied throughout the month of March. Some of these rituals are private and family-oriented, others are collective and socially-oriented. In this process, young Iranian-Americans celebrate alongside their family and take pride in being a part of the community. It is our responsibility to help shape their identity by virtue of promoting and preserving worthy aspects of Iranian culture. The right to celebrate our culture and even engage other Americans in cultural celebrations should not be taken for granted. This right is the fruition of decades of minoritarian struggle for equal rights, and now we reap the benefits of their work.

More than two hundred and eighty nationalities live in the United States. People of various origins with cultural and linguistic backgrounds have built this country. However, the dominant race and the ruling class have always imposed their values on the masses. Thanks to the struggles of minorities, other races are now able to preserve their culture and language and even help enrich the composite culture of the United States. This background underlines the fact that our liberties were not achieved overnight. We must be grateful to those who have fought to realize them.

This struggle is ongoing. A fraction of the majoritarian structure still pursues racist and discriminatory laws in order to curtail hitherto achieved liberties and establish its "racial superiority." It is our responsibility, in collaboration with other minoritarian communities, to guard such historic liberties and to prevent racist and reactionary individuals from coming to power. When Mr. Trump calls Mexicans—and he really means *all* Hispanics—rapists and drug traffickers, we must feel insulted. When he announces that, once president, he would ban Muslims from coming to the U.S., it must raise red flags for us. For him, Muslim means anyone who has come from the Middle East and North Africa. For Trump, it does not matter whether we would identify as "Muslim" or not, identify as white or otherwise. Arab

or Persian, Indian or Georgian, we are all under attack. He resents the Chinese who symbolize—for him—all peoples of the Orient. Every time Trump attacks any of these groups, millions of his supporters cheer for him.

Such racist thoughts and sentiments have always existed, but there were fewer channels for their articulation, primarily due to the accomplishments of decades of civil struggle. Now those who express such sentiments have found a leader in Trump who also aspires to be president. His victory would endanger liberties that were accomplished in the course of decades. Given such possibility, it does not matter whether we are democrat, republican, or independent. His right-wing and fascist-like views would undermine all civil liberties. We must confront him. Iranian-Americans must join forces with other minoritarian groups and prevent Trump and his supporters' victory. Come November, I hope that Iranians and other minoritarian communities show through their vote just how important their future and identity are for them. Whether it is for the White House, Congress, or local positions, I hope that we elect individuals who are committed to human rights and civil rights, particularly those concerning minorities.

Esteemed readers, Trump and Trump-minded politicians have not been elected, yet we still see just how easily Congress designs and passes discriminatory and Iranophobic laws. As we extensively discussed in the previous issue, H.R.158 is a conspicuous case in point. As of now, binational Iranians residing in Europe and Australia, as well as non-Iranians who have visited Iran in the past five years, will be required to apply for a visa to visit the United States, unlike all other citizens of those countries. The U.S. has been asked by the European Union to annul H.R.158, otherwise it may reciprocate as well and require Iranian-Americans to apply for a visa prior to traveling to the E.U. This is discrimination against Iranian, Iraqi, Syrian, and Sudanese binationals and deprives them of basic civil rights.

As I pointed out in *Peyk* 161, this law has ignited many Iranian-Americans to reflect on their civic vulnerability. In spite of all that this community has accomplished economically, socially, and academically, we can easily be rendered second class citizens. H.R.158 has mobilized Iranians to oppose this law individually or as part of different organizations. Such reactions are fortunately bearing fruit; Congress will soon be discussing H.R. 4380, a bill that counters the "Terrorist Travel Prevention Act of 2015." But this is not all. This bill still needs to pass. As a reminder, all five representatives in San Diego County have voted yes to this discriminatory bill (now law). While it is still relevant, we should voice our opposition to our representatives. This issue assumes even a greater dimension if we encourage our non-Iranian friends to voice their opposition to their local representatives.

Dear friends, let us begin the year 1395(HS) with the determination and hope to see an end to nation-wrecking wars and foster lasting peace in the region. I write these lines with the hope that the dangerous possibility of military confrontation between Iran and the United States would forever be eliminated and that a new relationship based on mutual diplomatic respect would emerge. I hope to see individuals elected in this country who will defend human rights, civil rights, support common welfare and betterment for the majority, and oppose military and political intervention in other countries. I also hope that Iranian-Americans join forces with other minoritarian groups, become more actively aware of their rights as citizens, and defend them. May you and your loved ones live in good health and enjoy security and success in the coming year and beyond.

Nowruz in classroom

By Sheiveh Jones

This time last year, I mentioned I would get into my older son's classroom and talk to the class about Nowruz. So now it is time to do the same thing for my youngest son who is kindergarten. I was impressed this year by the teacher because she approached me and asked if I would give a presentation to the class about Persian New Year. She knew about it because a few years prior, another student's mom came in and presented. This is a great example of the power we have as an ethnic group to educate others, including educators, about the positive aspects of our culture.

By the time children are in upper elementary and/or middle school, they could easily incorporate Nowruz into a cultural project they might be working on in English or social studies. In the lower elementary grades, however, there are still opportunities as a parent to "volunteer" the information.

I thought today I would share with you some tips on how to successfully engage elementary school children on the topic of Nowruz without losing your audience. Younger students have a hard time sitting still and listening to someone speak for long periods of time. The rule of thumb is one minute of talking for



Kimia Jalali Age 7- Iranian School of San Diego (ISSD)

every year of age. So, for instance, when I go to the kindergarten class full of 5 and 6 year-olds, I'm going to limit my talking to 5 to 6 minute chunks and will stick with a ten to fifteen minute presentation.

Below you will find a list of suggestions for engaging students:

- 1- Set up a mini- Haft sin table so students are curious about what you are sharing;
- 2- Ask the group if and how they celebrated New Year's this year. Allow a few students to share what they do for New Years. By doing this, you are creating a connection to and a context for Nowruz.

3- As you talk about the Haft sin table, use the Farsi terms for the various items while holding them up and have students guess what they mean in English. For example, I might hold up garlic and say this is "sir" in Farsi. Can you "sir"? When they say the word, then ask "what do you think sir means in English?"

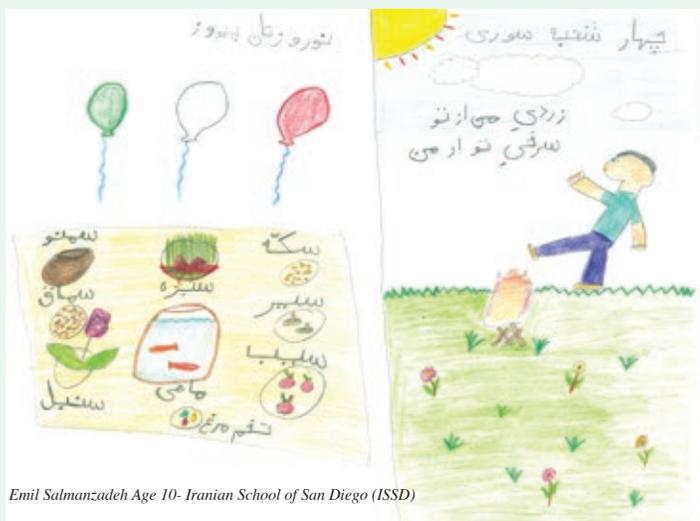
4- Pass around the items so students can see and smell them.

5- When you finish the presentation, take questions. Be prepared, particularly with the younger students, to answer very random questions or hear random comments. You might have a student telling you her mom buys garlic from Henry's!

6- If you are really creative, you might talk to the teacher beforehand about having students create their own Haft-sin. Most teachers would be very happy to help you with this – you can direct students while the teacher deals with the management of the classroom.

Whatever you do, consider you are paving the way for future Iranian students and parents coming to the teacher's classroom in the future. If the experience is pleasant, the teacher will most likely ask the next Iranian parent to do something for the class around Nowruz!

This article was first appeared in Peyk 126. In 2010



Emil Salmanzadeh Age 10- Iranian School of San Diego (ISSD)



Tina Pajouhesh Age 9- Iranian School of San Diego (ISSD)

Our Mission
200-250 Students
Age 6-16

Dollar a Month Fund
www.dmfund.org
www.facebook.com/dollaramonthfund

**105 students have
been sponsored
(as of Feb. 2016)**

Forgotten Routes of Persian Literary Culture

ای لاهور و یحک بی من چگونه‌ای
بی آفتاب روشن، روشن چگونه‌ای

In one of our past issues (*Peyk* #157, Persian side), we commemorated the literary legacy of Muhammad Iqbal of Lahore, a distinguished Urdu- and Persian-language poet and philosopher. Iqbal was born in Punjab, British India. He travelled extensively and passed away in 1938 in India. Before *Peyk* goes to print, columnists upload their contribution to a private online platform so that other writers can read and comment on them. Upon seeing the poetry page, I was heartened to see a few lines of poetry by Iqbal. But a particular sentence caught my eye in his biographical sketch: Perhaps Iqbal can be considered among the most distinguished non-Iranian Persian-language poets. The statement's positive value judgment may conceal its problematic assumption: all Iranians speak Persian while all Persian speakers are necessarily Iranian or somehow connected to Iran. I reached out to my colleagues in *Peyk*, and tried to understand where this rubric had come from. Did it come from within Persian literary theory? In other words, *tazkerehs* (commemorative compendiums) or collections of poetry classify Persian poets in two groups: Iranians and those born elsewhere? It is difficult to trace such a trend in a literary tradition that spans a millennium. *Peyk* # 157 eventually came out and my dialogue with my colleagues may have ended there. But these questions continued to preoccupy me.

May one conflate Persian with Iran? By Iran I mean a territorial entity that connects the Caspian Sea in the north to the Persian Gulf in the south, Azerbaijan in the northwest to Sistan-o-Baluchestan in the southeast. The simple answer is no. Iran is a linguistically diverse nation, home to many other languages. Persian is a transregional language. It may not be “claimed” by a single nation. Let us not lose sight of our particular case: Muhammad Iqbal. Before Iqbal ever set foot in Iran, he was already intimately familiar with Persian literary culture. He was in fact heir to multiple literary traditions, each with its own historical routes in India: Urdu, English, and Persian. Let us only focus on Persian. Roughly eight centuries before Iqbal was born, Lahore, his birthplace, had already been home to another Persian-language



poet: Mas‘ud Sa‘d Salman of Lahore (1046-1121). Lahore was then a frontier town, located between two *interconnected* cultural complexes: Ghaznavid Iran and northern India. It was not wholly part of either cultural complex, yet it was an important urban center for both. During Mas‘ud’s time, Lahore’s population was around 30,000. Only about hundred or hundred fifty of Lahore’s residents were literate in Persian and could “directly” appreciate Mas‘ud’s poetry.

Mas‘ud Sa‘d’s poetry maps out the expanding realm of Persian literary culture during the “early” stages of its development. By the time Iqbal was born in Punjab in 1877, India had already been home to Persian as a language of political administration, literary production, and, more importantly, cultural significance for more than eight hundred years. Indian poets had composed their works in Persian, Indian mystical networks had allowed Persian-language Sufis to take anchor in India, and Indian empires had supported Persian poets (including many émigré from Iran and Central Asia) in such cities as Delhi, Agra, Patna, Lucknow, and Chennai. This broad historical background hardly outlines the geographical corners of one of the most compelling stories of our time, one that largely remains untold today.



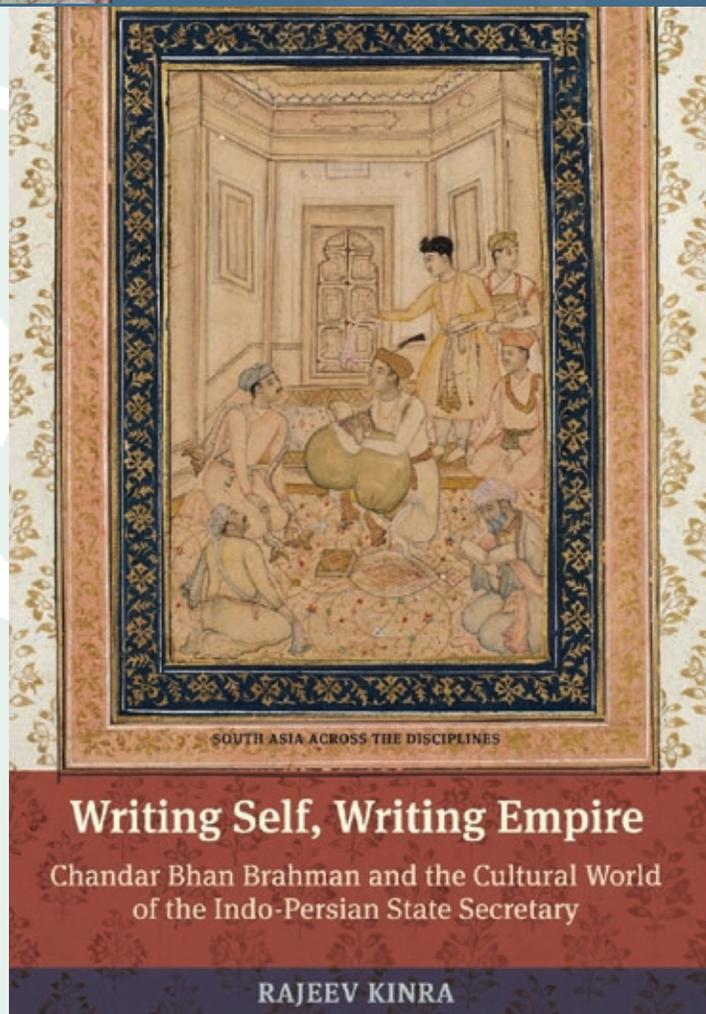


What is this untold story? How does Persian emerge from the shadow of Arabic in the tenth century and rapidly gain grounds (in a territory once stretching from today's Bosnia-Herzegovina in the West to Xinjiang, China in the East)? How does such vast literary ecosystem slowly lose grounds in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and become politically associated with all but three nation states of today: Iran, Afghanistan, and Tajikistan? The books I would like to recommend in the next two issues capture all but a tiny sliver of this untold story. Let us now return to Iqbal one last time: after all, should Iqbal be considered a distinguished non-Iranian Persian-language poet? I argue that this question is necessarily a product of the twenty-first century where one's language is seen as an inseparable index of national and ethnic identity. Such view of language is hardly useful when it comes to the realm of literature, or many others for that fact. To be a poet, in Persian as with all other traditions, one has to gain cultural and grammatical literacy, study the works of its past practitioners, learn its technical jargon, form key social networks with other poets and literary tutors, and obtain many other professional skills.

Persian-speakers do not automatically have access to this cultural universe by virtue of being a native speaker. Iqbal, as with tens of other Persian-language poets whose mother tongue was not Persian, should be considered and judged solely as a Persian poet. The "non-Iranian" qualifier, meant to flatter Iqbal, is anything but flattering. It is irrelevant, ahistorical, and reductive. For the past century or so, many Indian writers have been composing their works in English (as well as other tongues). As heirs to the English literary culture, Indian writers have had to resist such problematic and reductive classifications in the English literary canon. Consider one last example: our own Iranian community has now established itself in North America and has produced a number of writers and poets who write in English, French, and other languages. Could we imagine, several generations from now, a member of our community being praised by an American critic as a "distinguished non-Anglo-Saxon English-language novelist"? Such subclassification cannot even happen now without the scrutiny of many critical readers.

Kinra, Rajeev. *Writing Self, Writing Empire: Chandar Bhan Brahman and the Cultural World of the Indo-Persian State Secretary*. Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2015.

Kinra's recently published book examines the life of Chandar Bhan, a Persian-language *munshi* or scribe at the Mughal court in the seventeenth century. Like Mas'ud and Iqbal, Chandar Bhan was from Punjab which at this time was entirely part of the Indo-Persianate world. In his career, he worked with Mughal officials, munshis, poets, and other members of the literati and formed important networks with them. His career took shape



in an environment of relative pluralism and civility (*solh-e kol*) where one's religion or ethnicity (Brahman in the case of Chandar Bhan) did not predetermine their level of involvement in political enterprises.

However, much of historical accounts written about this period by later historians paint this period as one of religious intolerance and widening divide between Hindus and Muslims. Rajeev Kinra places Chandar Bhan in his own milieu by closely reading his main work, *Chahar Chaman* (Four Gardens). A composite text, *Chahar Chaman* includes the author's memoirs, a general account of life under Shah Jahan (r. 1628-1658), and his insights and experiences on his secretarial role at the court. Many future munshis emulated Chandar Bhan's literary style. He was a very influential figure in his time and for the next generation of Persian writers. Overall, Chandar Bhan's cultural environment is one where one's literary language does not necessarily mark his or her ethnic or religious identity as is evident in many Hindu poets and writers writing in Persian.



In *Peyk* 163, we will review three more books on Persian literary culture. Share your views with Aria: ariafani@berkeley.edu

NEW DAY INTERNATIONAL



Is community building.

Is young people coming together, creating connections, and furthering conversations.

Is professionals inspiring future leaders by sharing their experiences.

Is a community of forward-thinking, problem-solving, and team-building

CHANGE AGENTS.

Converse. Connect. Community. Across professional sectors and civic life, it is found that these three actions foster more tolerant, productive, and prosperous communities – communities that constitute a thriving and fair democracy. Conversations enrich environments with a diversity of thoughts, opinions, and experiences. These conversations lead to deeper human connections, nurturing the growth of empathy, tolerance, and compassionate communities. Community building develops a sense of identity, security, and support for individual citizens who contribute to these communities.

New Day International utilizes the three Cs as its core principles to empower, inform, and support its young members. This 501(c)3 is a non-profit that strives to create a resource-rich platform for youth who identify with the Near East and South Asian regions; youth who aspire to learn and grow into model civic leaders and change agents. These exemplary young people recognize the value in contributing their talents and voice to civic engagement. They are critical thinkers and leaders who bridge the gaps between social, economic, and political lines to support one another in affecting change in their communities and national context.

The vision for New Day International is to create local communities that connect to create a greater national community. The online platform allows for members to transcend geographical limitations and connect with national members and mentors. New Day International represents over 40 nationalities and we welcome cross-cultural dialogue and diversity. Members can garner knowledge and support from mentors through live-chat, Ted-Talks-esque videos (uploaded by mentors from various professions), and featured blogs. Members also create empowered social ecosystems through the volunteer and community service teams they create and join. Information, conversation, and synergies are the key ingredients to understanding the needs of our future leaders.

You might ask, why is a multiethnic and multicultural organization necessary? Everyday, the continued misconceptions and misunderstandings from policy makers and fellow neighbors and friends about counterparts who identify with the Near East and South Asian regions permeate into the greater national consciousness. The best way to address misinformation is to bring affected communities together. Furthermore, there is a growing insecurity among second generation and diaspora youth who have unique identities, but do not know how to reconcile their identities within their American context. With these realities and observations in mind, two Iranian-American students founded a 501(c)3 non-profit with the name New Day International. The name of the organization is a direct translation from the word Nowrooz, a holiday celebrating the onset of spring and the New Year, observed by a diverse range of countries in the Near East and South Asian regions. The word “International” was

added with the ambitious intent to expand the network globally—sometime in the future.

We invite you to learn more about us! Explore our community at newdayint.com.

Ready to join us? If you are in middle school, high school, or attending a college or university, you can create or join an existing chapter on the New Day website. If you hold a Bachelor’s degree, we welcome you to lend your talents to our executive team. If you are a professional with sage advice to impart, connect with us to share your insights via written or video format.

Please forward your questions, comments, and recommendations to admin@newdayint.com.

We are looking forward to conversing, connecting, and building a community with you!

Radin Rahimzadeh, Former Student at ISSD
Co-founder & Executive Director

Armin Shamskhov
Co-founder & Chief Financial Officer

If you are in the neighborhood of the following public libraries, please check-out our Nowruz and cultural presentations.

Carmel Valley Branch Library:
3919 Townsgate Dr. San Diego, CA 92130

Linda Vista Branch Library:
2160 Uric St, San Diego, CA 92111

Rancho Penasquitos Branch Library:
13330 Salmon River Rd, San Diego, CA 92129

Pacific Beach Branch Library:
4275 Cass St, San Diego, CA 92109

North University Community Branch Library:
8820 Judicial dr. San Diego, CA 92122

College-Rolando Branch Library:
6600 Montezuma Rd, San Diego, CA 92115

La Jolla/Riford branch Library:
7555 Draper Ave, La Jolla, CA 92037



Events in San Diego

Persian Cultural Center

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

PCC & AIAP Present:

Annual Nowruz Celebration

Sat. March 5, 2016 at 6pm-Midnight
The Westin San Diego Gaslamp Quarter
910 Broadway Cir, San Diego, CA 92101
Tickets and Information:

PCC: 858-552-9355 or AIAP: 858-215-2427

Persian Cultural Center, AIAP & HOI Present:

Charshanbeh Soori & Sizdehbedar

Charshanbeh Soori

Tuesday, March 15, 2016 7:00 to 10:00 pm

Sizdehbedar

Sunday, April 3, 2016 1:00-6:00pm

Location: NTC Park

2455 Cushing Rd, San Diego, CA 92106

More Information: 858-552-9355

Art Exhibition Open to Public

From 9:00 am to 3:00 pm (Monday to Friday)

Iranian-American Center • 6790 Top Gun St. #7, San Diego, CA 92121

Info: 858-552-9355

Movie and Discussion,

First Sunday of the month at the Center

Iranian-American Center • 6790 Top Gun St. #7, San Diego, CA 92121

Info: 858-552-9355

DOCUNIGHT

First Wednesday of the month

at the Iranian-American Center (IAC) at 7 pm

Documentary films about Iran or by Iranians

Jong-e Farhangi

Every Second Friday of the month at 7:30 pm

Iranian-American Center • 6790 Top Gun St. #7, San Diego, CA 92121

Info: 858-552-9355

Setar Class by 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

Nowruz preparation and Nowruz Bazaar

Sunday, March 6, 2016

Mt Carmel High School, 10am-12pm

Nowruz Celebration

Sunday, March 13, 2016, 4:30-7:30pm

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

Mt. Carmel High School

Branch II, Thursdays from 6-8pm

Mt. Carmel High School

Mount Carmel High School

9550 Carmel Mountain Road • San Diego, CA 92129

Persian Dance Academy of San Diego

(858) 552-9355 www.pccus.org



Dollar a Month Fund

DMF Annual Norouz Charity Bazaar

Sunday March 6, 2016 10am – 1pm

At the Iranian School of San Diego

9550 Carmel Mt. Rd, San Diego, CA 92129

Tel: 858-552-9355 • www.dmfund.org

www.facebook.com/DollaraMonthFund



Association of Iranian-American Professionals (AIAP)

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BRING ON THE SYMBOLISM

By Marriam Zarabi



This story describes a Nowruz celebration with my small Iranian community in Kansas City, and my transition from failed attempts of assimilating to Christmas celebrations to instead assimilating to my Persian culture.

Nowruz is my favorite holiday and a positive reminder of my ethnic identity. As a Kansas City native, celebrating a holiday other than Christmas presented its own nuances in my upbringing. I “gave up” on Christmas after my parents forgot to remove the cookies I eagerly left Santa on Christmas Eve (for Santa to enjoy during his gift delivery). Waking up to a note explaining Santa’s new challenges with diabetes was anti-climactic. I stopped rehearsing Christmas Carols, gave up on the magic of the Advent Calendar, stopped memorizing Santa’s reindeer, and turned my attention to a new holiday. This new holiday focused on a new set of principles and took place during a new season. Nowruz, also known as “new day,” is a Persian cultural celebration embellished with symbolism. Marking the first day of Spring, Nowruz symbolizes rebirth and is a celebration of transitions—winter to spring, cold to warm, dark to light. *Well, I saw the light.* Santa’s diabetes initiated my own transition. Bring on the symbolism.

Our annual spring cleaning marked the beginnings of Nowruz preparations. Playing Persian music and opening the windows to welcome the fresh spring air eventually became something I loved to do. My sisters and I ran errands with my mother and grandmother to specialty stores for the haft-seen. Every year, my parents would explain the significance of each item while we prepared the haft-seen and decorated hard-boiled eggs. The ceremonious haft-seen table is decorated with seven objects beginning with the letter “s,” or “seen,” representing rebirth and prosperity, good health, fertility, beauty, patience, enlightenment, and love. As my love for Nowruz grew through the years, I believed I could smell Nowruz. I still do today. It is a hint of blossoms and fresh air; it is the smell of nature.

Back to my Nowruz transition story—still fresh from the sting of Santa’s poor life decisions, I had yet to develop an appreciation, let alone a Nowruz *smell*. To add a new twist, Kansas City’s celebrated meteorologist was promising snow on the first day of spring. Similar to their relaxed attitude toward punctuality, my family gave a cool, unaffected response to the prediction of snow. Growing up in Kansas City, the moody weather was not as much an adjustment as it was a part of the everyday. Snow, on Nowruz, was something we joked about. *At least we won’t have to worry about this snow during Eid...The freezing temperatures will be gone in a few days*, we would say. Recovering from a cold winter, my family seemed just as eager for the seasonal transition. Little did we know that Kansas City had a big surprise for us. Kansas City had a special Nowruz gift.

The next few days were swift movements of haft-seen decorating, preparing gifts for family and friends, new clothes for the first day of Nowruz, and requesting \$2 bills from the bank. Our most difficult task was finding *sonbol*, the traditional hyacinth. Looking

back, I am not sure where we found them before Trader Joe’s moved to town. I monitored the weather predictions and reported back to my family. Every year, we joined our small Iranian community at a big Nowruz party. Snow was scheduled to arrive the *night* of the party. *That’s okay, we’ll dance and celebrate*, my mom said. *Thanks a lot Santa*, I thought to myself. With many preparations still needing attention, my weather worries fizzled and were replaced with explaining the significance of Nowruz and why I wasn’t celebrating Easter to non-Persian friends at school, and why I needed to display garlic, sumac, live goldfish, and hard-boiled eggs to welcome spring.

Nowruz is celebrated at the exact minute and second of the spring equinox, meaning it is at a different time every year. This is one of my favorite parts of Nowruz. No matter the time, we spend the hours up to the new year gathered with family, preparing the traditional dish of Sabzee Pollo Mahi, playing music, reading Hafez, and reminiscing of Nowruzes past. We admired our haft-seen table, listened to Persian music, and looked at pictures of haft-seen tables from all over the world on the Persian Satellite TV. The next thirteen days were usually welcomed with visits from family and family with movie-like spring weather, but this year was the opposite: Chicago-like winds and peacoat temperatures. We were kidding ourselves when we put our winter woools away. *Eyd-didani* turned out to be much more similar to singing Christmas Carols than I’d hoped as I was greeted at each relative’s door wearing a thick coat and scarf. *So much for the light, symbolic and otherwise.*

Finally, the night of the Nowruz party arrived. As we were taking pictures, the snow began to fall. Certain the host was going to cancel the party, my parents were shocked by my normal and healthy reaction.

That’s like canceling Nowruz. You can’t just cancel Nowruz!

It’s snowing. The blooming flower buds are frozen.

That’s okay. Let’s get in the car.

Growing up with the small and intimate Iranian community provided many excuses to gather and celebrate with lots of food, exaggerated stories, police-knocking-on-the-front-door-noise-complaints-volumes of dance music, and innovative dance moves. Nowruz festivities included all of the above, but with a logical reason to celebrate. Every year, about 100 members of the small Iranian community gathered at the home of a gracious host the first Saturday of the new year for a night of eating and dancing. It is a big, elaborate, loud house party, unlike anything out of any movie sequence or music video. Sure, it isn’t comparable to the parades in New York or the celebrations in Tehrangeles, but it is a community of people who shaped my childhood and passed on their innovative dance moves. It is our local tradition.

The night of the snow was no exception. I am not sure anyone but the children really noticed the snow. I’m not sure how our car



Mental Health and Children

By: Lisa Hildreth, LMFT

didn't get stuck and I'm also not sure how so many people arrived in one piece, but we were all there and we were all ready to celebrate. Even if Kansas City weather was still in winter-mode, the spirit of Nowruz was enough.

After a long night of pictures, eating, and dancing, I said my goodbyes and left the party with my family. With the temperature still below freezing and snow still falling, I took a deep breath and made my way to our car. Although the weather was not ready to transition to spring, a group of Persians in the house behind me were celebrating into summer. Celebrating Nowruz was very different than my forced attempt at celebrating Christmas. A ceremonious table ornamented with garlic, sumac, live goldfish, and hard-boiled eggs sounds really weird, but then again, so does snow on the first day of spring.

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. Nowruz Mobarak!

Mental health issues affect all families. With children, there can be some tale-tell signs that something may be wrong. The below are classic signs that I see in practice consistently. According to Mayo Clinic, warning signs that your child might have a mental health condition include:

- Mood changes. Look for feelings of sadness or withdrawal that last at least two weeks or severe mood swings that cause problems in relationships at home or school.
- Intense feelings. Be aware of feelings of overwhelming fear for no reason — sometimes with a racing heart or fast breathing — or worries or fears intense enough to interfere with daily activities.
- Behavior changes. These includes drastic changes in behavior or personality, as well as dangerous or out-of-control behavior. Fighting frequently, using weapons and expressing a desire to badly hurt others also are warning signs.
- Difficulty concentrating. Look for signs of trouble focusing or sitting still, both of which might lead to poor performance in school.
- Unexplained weight loss. A sudden loss of appetite, frequent vomiting or use of laxatives might indicate an eating disorder.
- Physical symptoms. Compared with adults, children with a mental health condition may develop headaches and stomachaches rather than sadness or anxiety.
- Physical harm. Sometimes a mental health condition leads to self-injury, also called self-harm. This is the act of deliberately harming your own body, such as cutting or burning yourself. Children with a mental health condition also may develop suicidal thoughts or actually attempt suicide.
- Substance abuse. Some kids use drugs or alcohol to try to cope with their feelings.
- Seek help if you suspect your child is struggling and you have concerns about their mental health. Don't avoid getting help for your child out of fear or shame. Contact your child's physician and seek advice. Consult with your child's teacher, close friends or other caregivers to see if they've noticed any changes in your child's behavior. Share this information with your child's doctor, too.

Thankfully, there are many treatment options available medically/ with medication and/or with psychotherapy to assist your child to achieving their healthiest full potential.

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



Public Announcement

Rates Are Changing

Starting in September last year, San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) began to transition its customers to a new electric rate structure approved by the California Public Utilities Commission. A new three-tier electric rate structure replaced the previous four-tier structure. Starting in March 2016, these changes will continue as the new electric rate structure will be further reduced to two tiers.

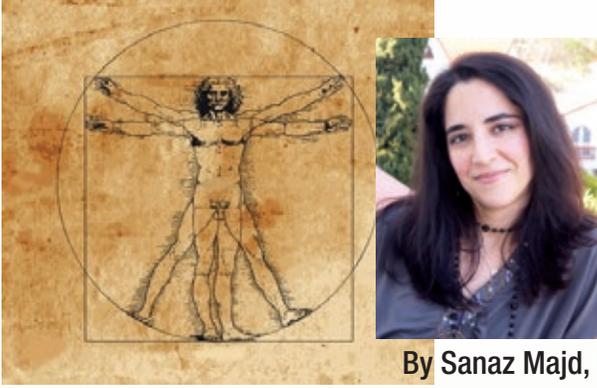
"We want people to understand the changes to how they are billed and also how they can manage their energy costs."
- Caroline Winn, chief energy delivery officer at SDG&E -

SDG&E customers can take advantage of a number of tools to help manage energy costs such as:

Keep track of energy bills with spending alerts. Receive an alert by text or email when your account has reached your pre-set spending goal. Visit sdge.com/energy-use-alerts to sign up.

Did you know that you can receive a weekly email that summarizes your energy use? Subscribe today! sdge.com/myaccount

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By Sanaz Majd, MD



5 Symptoms No One Should Ignore

In my pursuit to empower *Peek* readers to take charge of their health, it's imperative to learn what symptoms are potentially serious and warrant a visit to the doctor. For some medical conditions, seeking care earlier, rather than later, can make a larger impact on your health.

Although the list of possible red flag symptoms is much longer than I can cover in one article, here are at least five of those potentially concerning symptoms that no one should ignore:

1. Bleeding:

Typically, bleeding from any orifice is not considered “normal.” Blood in the urine (note that orange or “black tea” urine can also signify blood) is most commonly due to a urinary tract infection in women who also have other accompanying urinary symptoms (such as burning with urination) and, in older men, it often signifies a benign prostate enlargement. However, bladder cancer can also present similarly, and therefore blood in the urine is vital to report to your doctor right away.

Bleeding in the stool (note that black stool can also represent a bleed) is more often due to internal hemorrhoids or an anal fissure (think of it as a “cut”). However, it can also represent polyps in the colon, diverticulosis (small “outpouchings” of the colon), or most concerning...colon cancer.

Coughing up or vomiting blood is not normal. If you catch a cold or the flu and can't stop coughing, you may find a smidgeon of a blood-tinge in your sputum. That *may* be insignificant. But bright red blood is not. Active tuberculosis can cause coughing up of blood. And tears in the stomach or esophagus, called varices, can also cause regurgitation of blood. These require immediate attention.

In addition, in women over the age of 35, menstrual bleeding in *excess* in any way (longer duration, increased frequency, heavier periods, spotting in between periods, etc.) also requires attention. Although much more commonly due to benign fibroids (growths on the uterus), thyroid disorder, or polycystic ovarian syndrome (a common endocrine disorder), women over the age of 35 need to be ruled out for endometrial cancer (cancer of the lining of the uterus) with increased vaginal bleeding of any kind.

2. Unintended Weight Loss:

Some of us may be excited to shed pounds without even trying. However, significant weight loss unintentionally can sometimes be a sign of something concerning.

Problems with the thyroid gland when it overproduces thyroid hormones could do this, as can other metabolic dysfunctions. Stress, depression, and anxiety can also cause weight loss in some.

However, a growing, replicating tumor or cancer can steal energy from the body and also cause weight loss. Therefore, if you are shedding significant pounds without meaning to (meaning your dietary intake and your activity level has remained unchanged), it's a good idea to discuss this with your doctor right away.

3. Passing Out:

Passing out, or the medical term “syncope,” is another one of those symptoms we should take very seriously. Although many younger patients who pass out with a brief warning prior to the event do so due to a benign condition called “vasovagal syncope,” arrhythmias and structural defects of the heart, seizures, and other neurological conditions must be ruled out at any age. Anemia, electrolyte abnormalities, dehydration, and medications can sometimes contribute to syncope as well. No matter what the cause, passing out on the way down can cause significant injuries or bleeding. Therefore, no matter what the cause, this is one symptom that should never be ignored.

4. Chest Pain:

This can be frightening for those who experience it. However, from a primary care physician's perspective, chest pain is rather common, and infrequently reflects heart etiology. But it should never be ignored, as heart disease is the number one killer of both men and women in the United States. And chest pain is one symptom reflecting possible heart disease.

Those more at risk for “angina,” which is chest pain due to decreased blood flow to the heart, are those with the following risk factors: diabetes, hypertension, cigarette smokers, elevated cholesterol levels, early family history of heart attacks and strokes, and age (the older you are, the higher the risk).

Other causes of chest pain, however, are much more common. Anxiety and/or a panic attack can cause a constellation of symptoms, including chest pain. Acid reflux is another very common cause, most especially while lying down, and is triggered by certain foods (such as caffeine, sodas, citrus, tomatoes, mint, blueberries, spicy foods, and alcohol).

5. Fatigue:

Fatigue is definitely one of those top 20 symptoms reported to the doctor – it's that common. We live in a high-stress, busy world, where we fight time as we multi-task our home life with our work life. As a result, it's not uncommon to feel fatigued at times.

Nine times out of ten, it's a benign cause. Depression, stress, and anxiety are top culprits. Any disorder that interferes with sleep can also cause fatigue, such as sleep apnea or restless leg syndrome. I seldom do discover a low-acting thyroid disorder or anemia via blood work as well. That blood work is especially imperative, however, because leukemia and blood disorder are also rare but vital causes of fatigue that should not be missed.

And there you have it, five symptoms that no one should ignore. As you can see, most of these symptoms are still caused more commonly by benign etiologies. But even that small percentage that reflects a more ominous cause is really enough to encourage you to seek care earlier rather than later.

I am wishing all of you a very happy, and most of all, healthy Nowruz and beyond.

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



Nush-e-Jan

A Traditional Nowrouz Feast Celebration

From: *The Joy of Persian Cooking*

By: *Pari Ardalan Malek*

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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



turmeric; ½ teaspoon cinnamon.

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

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

The Science of Nutrition



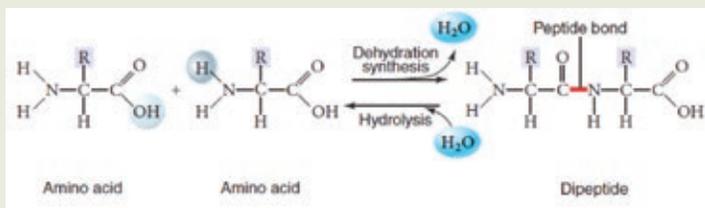
4- Importance of protein

Introduction

The material in this series of articles is based on science and research, and free of commercials. Information about fats, Omega 3 fatty acids, and cholesterol were discussed in the previous issues of *Peyk* (Nos. 159, 160, 161). In this article, we will discuss the importance of proteins in the diet.

Proteins and your body. Protein is one of the major nutrients that our body needs for growth and maintenance of all tissues and organs. Protein is found in muscles, bones, tendons, ligaments, skin, hair, brain, eyes, heart, liver, kidneys, and virtually all bodily tissues and organs. Almost fifty percent of protein in the body is found in muscles. The hemoglobin that carries oxygen in blood and the enzymes that digest food and catalyze chemical reactions in cells are specialized proteins.

What is a protein made of? Proteins are made of subunits called amino acids. Each amino acid contains an amino group (-NH₂), and an acid group (-COOH), hence called amino acid. Amino acids also contain a central carbon and other compounds attached to it (represented by R group). When two amino acids are combined, the product is called dipeptide. For example, thyroxine—a hormone of the thyroid gland—is a dipeptide, which is made of two amino acids (tyrosine). Many amino acids combine to make polypeptides and proteins. The figure below shows a dipeptide, made from two amino acids.



Some proteins may contain hundreds of amino acids that bind together and twist around to make a specific protein such as an antibody, collagen, or a hemoglobin. There are 20 known amino acids that make proteins.

Digestion of dietary proteins. Most foods that we eat contain some protein. The ingested proteins are partially broken down into smaller molecules (polypeptides) by the stomach enzyme. Polypeptides enter the small intestine and are broken down into amino acids by pancreatic and intestinal enzymes. Amino acids and other nutrients are then absorbed from the small intestine, enter the blood circulation, and reach the liver and other organs of the body where the amino acids are assembled into new proteins.

How proteins are made in the cells. For a protein to be synthesized in the cells of the body, all 20 amino acids must be available to the cells, and they must be put together in an exact sequence, otherwise the right protein cannot be synthesized. You may think of the 26 letters in the English alphabet to make

words and sentences. You need to put the letters (amino acids) in a specific order to write words and sentences (proteins). Even a misplaced amino acid in a protein can result in a health problem or a disease. One example is sickle cell anemia, in which only one of the 146 amino acids in the hemoglobin of red blood cells is misplaced. This causes the red blood cells in affected persons to look like sickles, an abnormality that prevents efficient carrying of oxygen in the blood stream.

What controls protein assembly? The way that all 20 amino acids are linked together in a specific order is controlled by DNA, which determines how the genes (segments of the DNA) carry the code to put each of the twenty amino acids in the right position to make a unique protein. For instance, if an individual does not have the gene (or has a different version of the gene) that codes for synthesis of lactase, the enzyme that breaks down milk lactose into glucose and galactose, the person can become lactose intolerant.

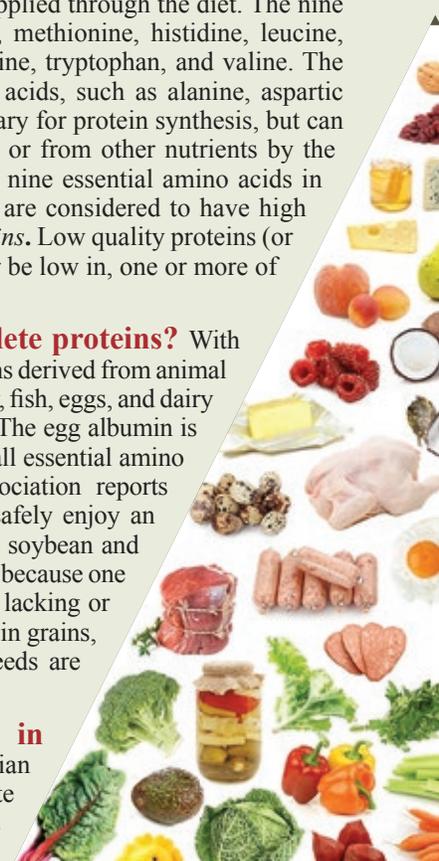
Do all foods supply the necessary amino acids?

Although most foods contain some protein, not all proteins contain all of the amino acids. Nine of the 20 amino acids are considered *essential*, because the human body cannot synthesize them from other sources, so they must be supplied through the diet. The nine essential amino acids are lysine, methionine, histidine, leucine, isoleucine, phenylalanine, threonine, tryptophan, and valine. The other eleven nonessential amino acids, such as alanine, aspartic acid, and glycine, are also necessary for protein synthesis, but can be made from other amino acids or from other nutrients by the body cells. Foods that supply all nine essential amino acids in adequate amount and proportion are considered to have high quality protein, or *complete proteins*. Low quality proteins (or incomplete proteins) may lack, or be low in, one or more of the essential amino acids.

What foods contain complete proteins?

With the exception of gelatin, the proteins derived from animal sources—such as red meat, poultry, fish, eggs, and dairy products—are complete proteins. The egg albumin is a complete protein, and provides all essential amino acids. The American Heart Association reports that “normal healthy adults can safely enjoy an egg a day.” Plant proteins (except soybean and quinoa) are considered incomplete because one or more essential amino acids are lacking or inadequate. For example, proteins in grains, vegetables, legumes, nuts, and seeds are considered incomplete (1).

Importance of proteins in vegetarian diets. Vegetarian eating patterns range from complete elimination of all animal products to simply avoiding red meat.



Many leading health organizations are in favor of plant-based diets. The American Institute for Cancer Research recommends a balanced diet with an emphasis on grain, fruits, and vegetables. This is in part because plant foods contain minerals, vitamins, fibers, phytochemicals, and antioxidants. Available research indicates that people who consume plant-based diets are less likely to form kidney stones or gallstones, and may be at lower risk for osteoporosis. (5). The American Heart Association reports that vegetarians seem to have a lower risk of obesity, coronary heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes mellitus, and some forms of cancer.

Are vegetarian diets always healthy? Vegetarian diets are not automatically healthier than nonvegetarian diets. Poorly planned vegetarian diets may lack certain essential nutrients, which endangers health. Vitamin B12, for instance, can be of concern as this vitamin is found only in animal products and does not occur naturally in plants. Grains are typically low in the essential amino acid lysine. Legumes are low in methionine and cysteine. Iron in plants is not as well absorbed as the iron in meat (3). Moreover, some plants contain substances that inhibit protein digestion (most inhibitors are destroyed by heat processing).

Do vegans get enough essential nutrients? Although most vegan diets contain fruits and vegetables which contain ample amounts of minerals, vitamins, and other essential nutrients, they may not be adequately consumed in a daily diet. Most salads contain bulky vegetables, which may not be consumed in large enough quantities to supply all the essential nutrients. For instance, the water content in lettuce is 96%, cucumber is 95%, tomatoes 94%, and raw peas 80%. Besides, all of these vegetables contain incomplete protein, which may be deficient in some essential amino acids. Some hormones such as thyroxin and insulin, some neurotransmitters such as serotonin and acetylcholine, and all antibodies in our body are made from amino acids. The essential amino acid, tryptophan, is a precursor of serotonin and melatonin which control sleep cycle. Deficiency of essential amino acids can cause health problems. Reports from *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* indicate that “Any nutritional deficiency slows your metabolism, causing you to hold onto weight.”

Likelihood of amino acid deficiency. Deficiency of amino acids is not common, and rarely occurs in the diets of vegetarians or vegans even if they may not consume complete proteins in each meal. The reason is that the body recycles its own complete proteins, which compensates for any deficiencies of a few essential amino acids in a meal. The grain quinoa contains complete protein, and is used in most vegan diets. Soy protein is also a complete protein and can substitute for meat protein. Generally, plant-based food diets can provide complete proteins when people eat a variety of protein-containing foods. A combination of legumes (beans, peas, lentils, soy), grains, and vegetables provides all essential amino acids necessary for the body.

Traditional meals. Some cultures naturally combine grains with legumes (peas, beans, lentils). When eaten together, the two incomplete proteins complement each other and provide a complete protein. For instance, a Mexican burrito (a thin cornmeal bread filled with beans), or the Iranian staple of rice, plus beans, peas, and lentils (and

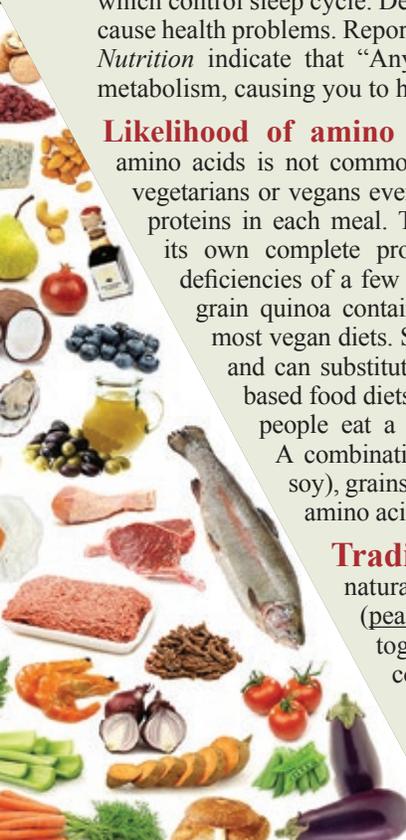
variety of dishes of this sort) can provide all of the essential amino acids that the body needs.

How much protein do we need per day? According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA) of protein in the U.S. is 46 grams per day for adult women, and 56 grams per day for adult men. You may also calculate your daily protein requirement by multiplying 0.8 by your weight (in Kilograms). Studies show that pregnant women, lactating mothers, athletic individuals, older individuals, and people who are sick or recovering after surgery need more protein (2). The protein content of common foods are shown in the table below, which may be useful for calculating your protein intake.

Protein requirement for the elderly. The gradual loss of lean muscle mass (sarcopenia) occurs as we age. By age 80, up to 30% of muscle bulk may be lost, which can cause poor muscle strength. A recent report entitled “Protein and Healthy Aging,” published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, indicates

Unit per 100 gram.	Protein (%)
Apple	0.4
Avocado	2.6
Almond Milk	0.62
Almonds (Raw)	19.5
Bacon	15.8
Bagel - plain	10
Banana	1.2
Beef Stake, tenderloin	23.7
Beans, green, raw	2.4
Beans, white cooked	7.5
Bread, Whole wheat	8.3
Bread, Pita, white	8.8
Broccoli, raw	3.3
Cheese, Cheddar	25.4
Cheese, Feta	14.2
Chicken breast, no fat, cooked	30
Eggs, boiled	12.9
Fish	20.8
Hamburger	21
Milk 2%	3.1
Peanut butter	26
Quinoa, uncooked	16.2
Salmon, Atlantic raw	20.2
Sardines, in oil, canned	22.5
Sesame seeds	20.9
Soy milk, plain	3.8
Spinach, raw	2.5
Walnuts	14.4
White Rice cooked	2.5

that aging adults might need more than the current RDA for protein, and the amount of extra protein intake recommended depends on the amount of physical activity needed to maintain muscle mass. The results of one study of 2,066 men and women between the ages of 70 to 79, performed over the course of three years, showed that those who consumed less protein lost more lean muscle mass than those who consumed more than the RDA guideline.



The Science of Nutrition

Percentage of protein in some common foods. (The values are derived from <http://www.foodnutritiontable.com/nutrition/>.)

Nutritional value of some common food (in 100 grams).

Overconsumption of proteins. Studies show that overeating of proteins, greater than two or three times the RDA, may adversely affect a person's health. High protein diets burden the kidneys to excrete nitrogen, and over time may lead to loss of kidney functions (5). Unlike fats, the body is not able to store excess amino acids for later use. Therefore, protein consumed in excess of need will either be used for energy or converted to body fat.

Is red meat good for you? Reports from Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health indicate that lean beef contains complete proteins and is an excellent source of zinc, iron, and vitamin B12. Many health organizations, however, warn about high consumption of processed meats such as hot dogs and sausage. Consumption of these products on a regular basis, and overconsumption of red meat, might increase the risk of some cancers, including stomach, colorectal, breast, and prostate cancers, and may even increase the risk of Type 2 diabetes. Overconsumption of animal protein can also be related to the occurrence of kidney stones (4).

Caution about burned meat. Research shows that meats (including kabob) that are barbecued on high heat or are burned by flames produce chemicals that are carcinogenic. Low heat barbecuing or boiling of meat are preferred cooking methods. Consuming burned meat is not advisable.

Gluten. Gluten is a protein found in wheat, rye, barley, and a cross between wheat and rye (called triticale). The two main proteins in gluten are *glutenin* and *gliadin*. Gliadin is responsible for most of the negative health effects. According to a report by Mayo Clinic, gluten causes inflammation in the small intestines of people with celiac disease. Some people who don't have celiac disease also may have symptoms when they eat gluten. Celiac disease is an inherited autoimmune disease. Symptoms and severity vary, with the most common symptoms being diarrhea and weight loss. Prevalence of celiac disease in the US is 1:10,000 (5). For more information visit <http://authoritynutrition.com/what-is-gluten/>.

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NOWRUZ (new-day) is in harmony with rebirth of nature. This New Year celebration is always on the first day of spring. Throughout the world, over 300 million people celebrate as the year changes on the vernal equinox, which may occur on March 20, 21 or 22. The arrival of the New Year is at the precise moment of the sun crossing the equator.

The ceremonies for this tradition represent the ancient concepts of Good and Evil, as well as, End and Rebirth. Weeks before the arrival of the New Year, homes are cleaned, new clothes purchased and different pastries baked.

Before the arrival of Nowruz, all households spread a cloth known as *sofreh-ye-haftseen* – a cloth of seven dishes that begin with the Persian letter S. The number seven has been sacred since ancient times, and the seven main dishes placed on the cloth each represent earth's abundance and life.

Sabzeh – sprouts from wheat or lentil for *rebirth*;

Samanu – a sweet pudding made of wheat sprouts for *rebirth*;

Sib – apple for *beauty*;

Senjed – sweet dry fruit of lotus for *happiness and love*;

Serkeh – vinegar for *age and patience*;

Seer – garlic for *health*;

Somaq – sumac berries for *joy*

Other traditional foods, sweets and flowers are added to the *haftseen*. *Sekeh* (coins) are placed in a bowl of water and once the New Year arrives, the coins are given to the family members as a wish for *prosperity and wealth*. Colored eggs in the number of children or family members represent *fertility*. A naranj (Seville orange) floating in a bowl of water is symbolic of the *earth*. A goldfish in a bowl of water represents *life* and the end of the astral year – Pisces. Hyacinth, iris, narcissus, tulips and other spring blooming flowers are added to the *sofreh*. A mirror and candles are placed on the *sofreh* for reflections of *creation, light and for happiness* throughout the year. Some families also add seven dishes of different traditional sweets or pastries to their *sofreh-ye-haftseen*.

As the sun enters the constellation Aries from Pisces, the equinox occurs – Nowruz arrives and festivities begin. Everyone is offered a sweet pastry and given a coin by the eldest member of the family and wished a year of happiness and good fortune – **“Good Thoughts, Good Words and Good Deeds throughout the year.”**

Persian Cultural Center – San Diego

(UN) RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION

Shaghayegh Hanson

In the last few months, Islamophobia has slowly and insidiously morphed into not only a “legitimate” political viewpoint but also official legislative action. One need not look any further than the new restrictions on the United States’ Visa Waiver Program (H.R. 158). Thirty-eight, mostly European countries, participate in this program which allows the citizens of these nations visa-free travel to each other’s countries on trips of 90 days or less. The new restrictions state that if any of the citizens of those states are also citizens of Iran, Sudan, Iraq and Syria, they must now apply for an entry visa to the U.S. even if their other citizenship would ordinarily allow them to enter the country without one. The official reasoning for the new restrictions was based on the fact that the attackers in the Paris bombings were all European citizens who were eligible to receive visa waivers, and that such terrorists could exploit the program and travel to the United States to commit similar attacks here. Because the visa waiver program works on reciprocity between nations, the worry is that Europe will also impose these restrictions on dual citizens of the U.S.

To support this law in any form, one has to disconnect from all forms of logical deduction and ignore the certain futility of it as applied to 99.9% of those it affects. Quite apart from the ludicrous assumption the new law makes that all the individuals from the target nations are potentially terrorists, there are several practical problems with it. For example, those caught in the net would include children born to Iraqi, Iranian, Syrian, and Sudanese parents in those European countries, raised there, and perhaps never even traveled to their parents’ countries. European citizens with none of these ethnic backgrounds will be dragged into the net if they have traveled to Iraq, Iran, Syria or Sudan in the last five years. Although the law was motivated by the San Bernardino attacks, it would not have applied to Tashfeen Malik, the female attacker, who was from Pakistan. Many civil liberties groups opposed H.R. 158 based on a variety of sound arguments. And yet, the passions that have been raised by rabble-rousers such as Donald Trump have had ripple effects into mainstream society, jolting even Congress into passing a bad law, based on fear, rather than no law at all.

It is truly hard to believe that just a few months ago people were debating whether Islamophobia existed. I had even seen a number of fellow Iranians jumping on the anti-Muslim wagon. I can understand it to a degree; so many in the Iranian diaspora are resentful of the Islamic regime that tore them from their homeland, separated them from their families, and even tortured and/or killed loved ones, that they are loathe to identify with Islam in any way. And now that Iranians have been targeted under the new visa waiver laws, some Iranians are protesting the law by pointing fingers at, or joining in the vilification of, other minority groups in an effort to say that the law may be justified as to other nations or other types of Islam or other types of Muslims but certainly not as to Iranians. This approach is not only discriminatory in and of itself but it also falls on ears that just do not care about understanding Islam, the Middle-East or the role of the West in creating the terrorism to which we are all now subject.

While the definition of a Muslim is sophisticated and nuanced for Iranian Americans and others



from Muslim majority countries, it is entirely one-dimensional for the majority of Americans. The blind panic created by the Paris and San Bernardino attacks has resulted in wholesale condemnation of anyone wearing a Hijab, anyone Middle Eastern, anyone who looks remotely like they could be Muslim, and anyone who

looks remotely like they could be Middle Eastern. Ordinary, law abiding citizens are being thrown into the cesspool of the likes of ISIS and Boko Haram, just for their color, race, and religion. Sikhs have been mistaken for Muslim and attacked. In schools, students as young as 7 years of age have been physically assaulted for wearing a hijab. Muslim shopkeepers and mosques have been attacked. There are vile and contempt-filled comments on social media and the internet about Muslims. Combatting these views by arguing the finer points of national origin and the wide spectrum of Islamic faith is pointless and ineffective.

The ACLU’s opposition stated the problem in the correct way, by using objective language that has long resonated in this country’s democratic paradigm, in the legal system and the Constitution, and that is “[b]y singling out these four nationalities to the exclusion of other dual nationals in VWP countries, H.R. 158 amounts to blanket discrimination based on nationality and national origin without a rational basis.” Regardless of what those specific nationalities are, it is fundamentally wrong to ascribe the acts of a few to entire groups of people. As Iranian Americans, it is one thing to rally against a law that discriminates against us versus other American citizens, but once we start to say, or even imply, that it is justified as to the other groups because the bad apples of those groups were the ones involved, we slide further into the game of bias. And bias will always be answered with equally biased self-interest. One side’s righteous indignation will be seen by the other as unrighteous.

If we are to fight this law effectively, we must base our arguments on the fundamental values of this country. As the Declaration of Independence states, “We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness....” The American Immigration Lawyers Association opposed H.R. 158 upon this premise, stating “Standing by our founding principles of freedom and liberty is what keeps us strong....History has shown overbroad programs that target people based on nationality, race, ethnic origin or religion are not effective at combatting terrorism. [Instead such programs become] a stain on our nation’s history that we should never repeat.”

It is wrong and ineffective for us Iranian Americans to oppose the new visa waiver restrictions by arguing that it is justified against others more than it is against us. That is because these restrictions were inflicted upon us based on the same type of discrimination directed at the other groups. It is a bad law; that is the plain and simple higher ground. Our voices will be stronger if we are united in this fight. And in the spirit of that unity: we are all Muslim, we are all Iraqi, we are all Syrian and we are all Sudanese.

