



RAHAVARD

RAHAVARD (*Rahāvard*), a Los Angeles-based quarterly (website: www.rahavard.com), founded by Hasan Shabaz (1921-2006), writer, journalist and translator, and one of the first Persian periodicals published by the Persian community in the U.S.A. after the Iranian revolution of 1979.

Upon an invitation by Nāder Šāleḡ, the founder of the “Society of Iranian Residents of the USA,” Hasan Shabaz, who had left Iran shortly after the revolution, visited Los Angeles in 1981, where he stayed until his death in 2006. Encouraged by Shabaz, a group of Iranian expatriates soon established the “Society of Friends of Persian Culture” and appointed him as its president (Mirzā'i, p. 72). The Society's board consisted of Abu'l-Qāsem Partow-a'zam, 'Abd-Allāh Ḥakimfar, Ḥamid K̄vāja-Našir and Ġafur Mirzā'i. In 1982, Shabaz, assisted by the board members of the two societies, launched Rahavard. It was decided from the outset that Rahavard would stay clear of the day-to-day political affairs of Iran and of identification with any overt political point of view, and concentrate instead on long-term social, historical, and cultural issues that might offer a better understanding of Persian culture. The first issue of the journal was published in 130 pages in the spring of the same year, and the journal appeared intermittently, often in multiple issues, until the winter of 1988. From the 22nd issue (winter 1988) onward, however, the publication of the journal followed a regular quarterly schedule. Starting with the 26th issue (winter 1991) the journal adopted a thematic pagination, comprising seven sections of Literature, Art, Religion, and Philosophy; Poems and Poets; Iranian History; Memoirs; Book Review; Letters to the Editor; and



Obituaries.

The financial support of a number of Iranian philanthropists who considered safeguarding the culture of Iran as their patriotic task, and above all, Ķosrow Eqbāl, the late chairman of the *Encyclopaedia Iranica*'s board of trustees, along with the growing number of the journal's subscribers, from a limited few to above 2000 in less than a decade, secured its publication for the foreseeable future. Shahbaz was assisted by a circle of friends and enthusiasts in running the journal, e.g., Lilly Ġaffāri, Hušang Amiri, Hušang Hedāyati, Manučehr Mo'ayeri, and Ĥosayn Zāhedi, as well as Ĥasan Āđinfar who cooperated with Rahavard for over twelve years. Mention should also be made of two literary figures and journalists, Ġafur Mirzā'i and Nošrat-Allāh Žiā'i, who were full time colleagues of the journal since 1982, and 2002, respectively. Their cooperation ended in 2007.

Rahavard, with its flexible editorial policies, served as a venue for the publication of over 3,000 articles throughout the past 26 years, of which above 700 articles were on Persian literature, art, philosophy and religion, and 600 articles were devoted to history (almost 30, and 25 per cent of the journal's total 22,000 pages, respectively). The journal also published above 500 memoirs, which covered almost 22 percent of its total pages.

Noted among them were the memoirs of prominent Iranian politicians, military figures, bankers and industrialists, including Jamšid Āmuzegār (nos. 32-34, 39, and 42), Ja'far Šarif-Emāmi (nos. 36 and 37), Mehdi Bāzargān (nos. 36 and 38), Fereydun Jam (nos. 20-60), Ja'far Šāne'i (nos. 74-78), 'Ali Režā'i (no. 49) and Ĥasan Āđinfar (nos. 28-69). These accounts furnished new material for the study of some of the less debated aspects of economic, social and political history of the Pahlavi era. Shahbaz himself wrote over 300 articles in the journal. Furthermore, the book review section of the journal provided a venue for reviewing more than 400 books. The reviews, penned by Iranian authors inside and outside of Iran, as well as many books on Iran by international authors, covered around 9 percent of the journal's total pages.

Starting with the 66th issue of *Rahavard*, Shahbaz gradually withdrew from his editing responsibilities. The 74th issue was the last published while he was still alive. In 2005, friends and supporters celebrated *Rahavard*'s 25th anniversary in an elegant ceremony in Los Angeles and honored his dedication to preserving Persian culture and literature. The journal produced a special issue (volume 70) to commemorate this event.

The journal, whose fame and achievements are inseparably linked to the tireless efforts of Shahbaz (Zāhedī, p. 34), and his dedication to Persian cultural heritage (Maḥdavi Dāmġāni, p. 67), has been praised for its significant role in the preservation of Persian language and culture abroad (Yāršāter, p. 70), and in rekindling a sense of pride among Iranians in exile (Saršār, p. 39).

Since the death of Shahbaz in May 2006, Rahavard is published by his wife, Sholeh Shams (Šo'la Šams) Shahbaz. She is assisted by Mehdi Sarreštādāri and Māndānā Zandiān, as the journal's editors. A new addition to Rahavard is an advisory board, which lends the journal a wider scholarly legitimacy. It comprises an impressive array of scholars—Janet Afary, 'Abd-al-Ĥamid Esrāq, Moḥammad Tavakkoli Tarqī, Jalāl Kāleqī Moṭlaq, Touraj Daryāee, Nasrin Raḥimieh, and Moḥammad 'Ali Homāyun Kātuziān—recognized for their contributions to the field of Iranian Studies. In form and pagination, Rahavard continues the same pattern Shahbaz had set up for the journal. To attract the younger generation, however, from the 77th issue onward, English abstract of the articles were also published, which add an extra section to the journal.

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