Qashqa'i Life

The Legacy of a Nomadic People in the Paintings of Bijan Bahadori

Siroos Bahadori, Kees van Burg and Merijn Gantzert

mosae verbo

***Front cover** – commentary by Merijn Gantzert*

This water color painting shows how a man, identified as non-Qashqa'i by his dress, is engaged by Qashqa'i women to write a magic spell. Such a spell, often an appropriate text from the holy book of the Quran, is mostly worn on the body as a talisman. This talisman is supposed to fight off the 'evil eye', to combat an illness or to convey a blessing. Even if many Qashqa'i nomads were illiterate, the real reason that an outsider was chosen was that to write the spell was supposed to be the prerogative of learned and holy men – often a village *mullah* (from Arabic *mawla* 'master', meaning a member of the Islamic clergy). Here a girl has asked the writer for a spell to remedy her childlessness.

ISBN 978 90 8666 354 5
NUR 655

Publishing: Mosae Verbo

Text: Merijn Gantzert

Contents

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

Acknowledgements

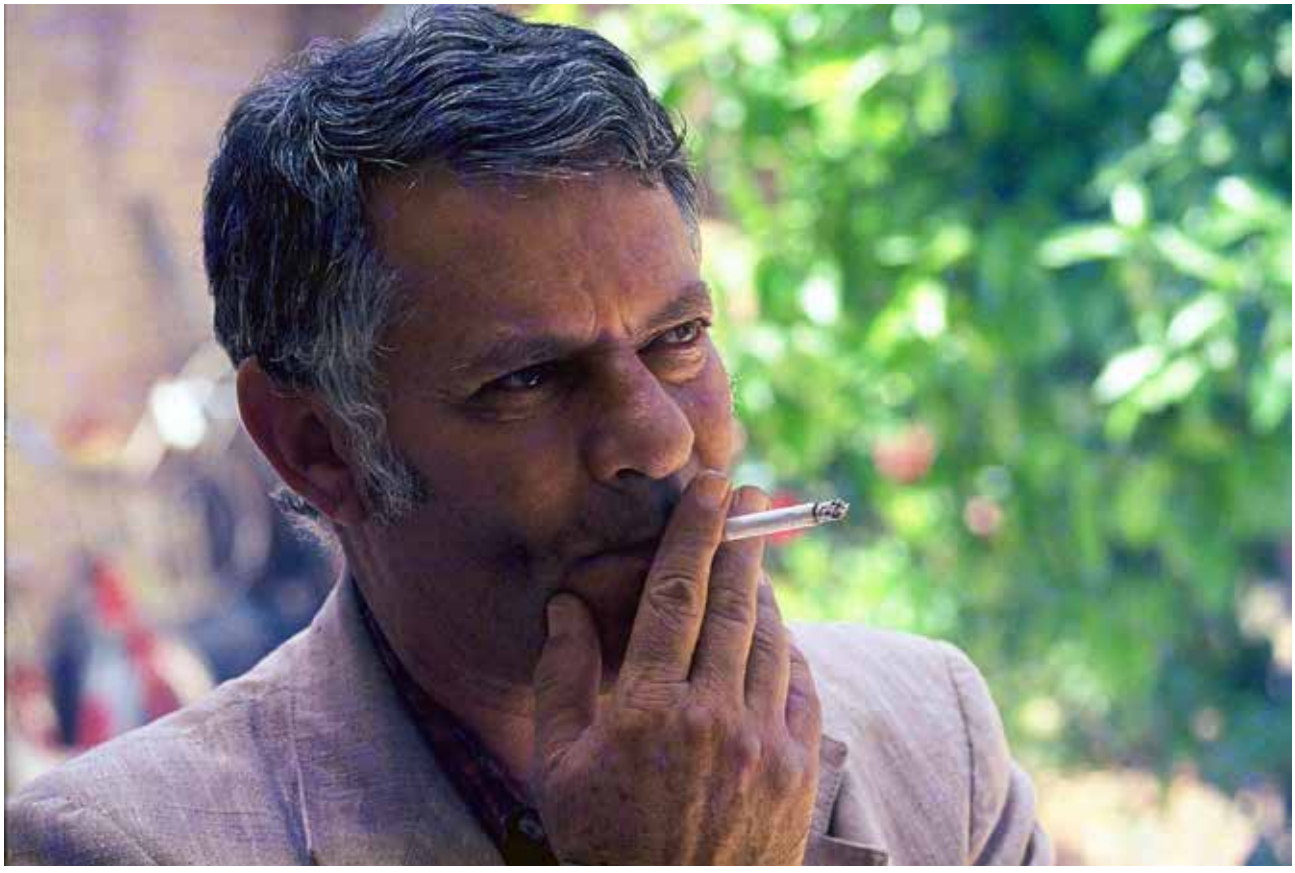
The editors of this book wish to express their gratitude to all those people that helped make possible this book project – a project which had a long and difficult start. It was Bijan Bahadori's son Siros long-cherished wish to see a printed tribute to his father's life work. It is on Siros' behalf that the editors wish to make special mention of to some people who generously contributed their work and time to make his wish come true:

Hussayn Bahadori– for his well-researched ancestry chart;
Sona Bahadori – for translating and for contributing with her interview;
Katarzyna Durys – for her Art Historical introduction 'Memories of the Nomadic Life';
Hassan Ali Ghaemi – for his eloquent poetic dedication;
Manucher Kiani – for his commentary on many of the plates, for his photos and for his text 'Qashqa'i Ethnography and History';
Uitgeverij Boekenplan – for its professional support and advice.

Dedication

Siros Bahadori

In a unique way, my father, Bijan Bahadori, visualized Qashqa'i nomadic culture through his watercolors. The Qashqa'i, nowadays, do not live as they did for hundreds of years. They have had to adapt to the modern world, just like almost all nomadic tribes on the planet. Therefore, the images that my father created are of historical significance. They show a nearly lost aspect of Iran's – and the world's – exceptional cultural variety. Born at the right time, through his art my father ensured that we, the Qashqa'i, have our own record of our own culture and our own honorable history.



Bijan Khan Bahadori Kashkuli

Forud (Siros) Khan Bahadori Kashkuli in his home atelier, painting 'The Storm'

A Poetic Tribute[1]

Hassan Ali Ghaemi, Farvardin 1381 – March/April 2002[2]

This is my most gracious offer to Bijan Bahadori, the great painter of the Qashqa'i people:

'I will arrange as pearls your painted words;

'I will praise your attributes and in words ensure your well-being;

'Whether one of your painted caravans breaks camp, or another stays,

'You, Master, always give every gesture and every color the finest touch ...

Introduction

The ideal nobleman is an artlover[3]

A Tribute to an Artist and a People *– Merijn Gantzert*

The initiative for this book was taken by Siros Bahadori who set himself two complementary aims. First, he wanted to give English-speaking art enthusiasts better access to the work of his father, the Iranian painter Bijan Khan Bahadori Kashkuli, well-known in his own country for his large oeuvre of nomadically themed watercolors. Second, he wanted to bring the culture and history of his people, the nomadic Qashqa'i of Fars Province, to the attention of Western readers. Siros' father Bijan was born in 1929 – his exact birthdate is not known, because at that time the Qashqa'i nomads were not registered in any bureucratic administration. Bijan was the fifth and youngest son of Hasan Qoli Begh, member in the leading lineage of the Kashkuli Bozorg tribe belonging to the larger Qashqa'i tribal confederacy. Bijan Bahadori spent much of his life recording the vanishing nomadic life of his people.

Through popular reproductions of his paintings, television documentaries about his life and several permanent exhibitions – including a Shiraz museum devoted solely to his work[4] – Bijan Bahadori's paintings are well-known inside his own country. Partly this fame is a legacy of what Beck termed the 'state's exploitation of the Qashqa'i image'[5], i.e. the central government's public relation campaign of show-piecing colorful Qashqa'i culture – focusing on carpets, traditional dress and folk dancing – as an intricate part of the modern Iranian nation state's heritage. It was extensively promoted as a tourist attraction, especially during the last decade of Pahlavi rule. Such central government promotion of Qashqa'i imagery, always highly selective in its themes and continuing, in a toned-down manner, even under the Islamic government, has sought to downplay the strong historical antagonism, with sustained armed confrontation between the Qashqa'i tribal leadership and governmental militia as recently as the early '80s, between the central government and the Qashqa'i. It has also ignored the destruction and virtual disappearance of the original modes of Qashqa'i nomadic life, even if the modern Iranian state itself, ever since its creation during the early years of the Pahlevi dynasty, has been directly responsible for the dramatic losses involved – losses of life, property, social structure and cultural expression. The authenticity of Bijan Bahadori's work, however, transcends the political context of modern Iran: he is an eminently a-political artist – his one and only inspiration is the cultural life of his people in its natural setting. Consistently seeking to re-create that reality, he simply painted what he saw and what he remembered from his childhood. His naturalistic artistic genius simply leaves no space for interpretative sophistry, let alone ideological projections. His

enduring popularity in Iran itself, where freedom of cultural expression is limited and everyday-life is burdened by the omnipresent dead hand of ideology, may be partially due to these qualities, which combine refreshing naturalism with a certain nostalgia. It may safely be assumed that Bijan Bahadori's work will endure in Iran; among the descendants of the Qashqa'i themselves because it represents a scarce and precious visual record by one of their own and among the larger Iranian populace because the Qashqa'i a historically significant and provide esthetically attractive part of Persian cultural heritage – a culture in which beauty and continuity are written large.

Outside Iran Bijan Bahadori's work has received significant but intermittent attention. Under the rule of the last shah, Mohammed Reza Pahlevi (1941-1979) there was a considerable presence of Westerners around Iran, especially in its old southern capital Shiraz, with its famous university, its proximity to the oilfields, its extensive agricultural and its rich cultural heritage. Among expat residents, visiting anthropologists and tourists the work of Bijan Bahadori was well appreciated and this interest soon spread back to Western countries, especially to the United States[6]. After the fall of the Pahlevi dynasty and the Islamic Revolution, Iranian culture largely disappeared from Western sight. A-political and artistically rooted in his native soil, Bijan Bahadori was one of the few senior male members of the old Qashqa'i aristocracy to remain in post-revolutionary Iran. Despite repeated offers of help of prominent Western admirers and despite continuous harassment of his family by government zealots and occasionally by resentful lower-class Qashqa'i, he refused to leave his native land. Only recently, with rise of social media networks among a younger generation of political refugee Qashqa'i's spread throughout Europe, America and Australia, many of them home-sick and nostalgic, has Bijan Bahadori's work experienced something of a revival in the West. In pre-revolutionary Iran his work had a 'souvenir value' for Western visitors to Fars province, who came to witness what was then still a living – albeit rapidly disappearing and increasingly 'state-exploited' – nomadic tradition, but since the 1990's there has been a shift in appreciation in the West. Art connoisseurs and academic circles recognize that Bijan Bahadori's work has now 'last living witness' status – it preserves the only authentic *indigenous* (i.e. *emic*) visual record of the lost nomadic life of the Qashqa'i. With this in mind, it is may be deemed important and even urgent that his collected work, now increasingly spreading out of the immediate surroundings and circles of the artist, is presented in a non-transient, coherent fashion – this book is intended to provide a first step in this direction.

The second aim of this book, inextricably linked to its first aim of giving Western art lovers and students access to Bijan Bahadori's work, is to provide ethnographic and cultural-historical introduction about the Qashqa'i people. This book must be more than a simple album of plates, for the reason that Bijan Bahadori's work can

only be fully appreciated in its ethnographic and cultural-historical context. In the same way that only people who have actually seen the shifting lights of the changing seasons across the hills and mountain-scapes of the wild lands of Fars can truly appreciate the sometimes other-worldly colors of his paintings, likewise only people who know something of the tragic history and sophisticated culture of the proud Qashqa'i tribes can completely appreciate the sentiments Bijan's work expresses. Its concerns are sometimes mundane, ranging from the transient smile of girl famed for her beauty to the hunting skills of a warrior, but more often they are bound up with honor codes and heroic sentiments wholly out of the experience of modern Westerners, who have need of – or inclination to – neither. To understand them, it is necessary to know something of the vanished world depicted by Bijan Bahadori's paintings.

In view of a recent upsurge in interest in Bijan Bahadori's work in the Iranian media, perhaps this book should have a third aim as well: to help young Qashqa'i people to rediscover their roots and identity. The younger generation's level of education, its cosmopolitan in outlook, its (digital) access to the world and its command of English are unprecedented in Iranian history. Perhaps this book can show young Qashqa'i that their nomadic heritage, appreciated by foreign art lovers and foreign researchers, is something to be proud of, rather than a shameful, primitive relic to be quickly abandoned in the pursuit of urban commercialism and modernist cultural uniformity.

Finally, it should be clear that a book such as this, which merely aims to present the work of one artist and to present some essays relevant to his subject material, can in no way replace existing anthropological and historical literature, or even aspire to full treatment of the subjects the essays touch upon. It is not intended to – it merely aspires to awakening an interest in the subject matter consistent with basic scientific accuracy. Some notes are added to the various chapters – they include references to the most important English and German language sources available. The various text contributions collected in this book are merely intended as introductions to and commentaries upon the work of a great artist who tells the story of a once great nation. The next paragraph includes a summary of these contributions.

This Book *– Merijn Gantzert*

In accordance with the two aims set out in the first paragraph, this book combines visual imagery and text. The visual imagery is mostly presented in Part 1, the text material mostly in Part 2.

Part 1, entitled *The Land and Its People*, presents the reader with a collection of plates, containing reproductions of 40 watercolor paintings and a few drawings. The organization of this thematically arranged collection is explained in the *List of Plates* and, following the *Plates* themselves, a commentary is provided in a *Summary of Plates*.

Part 2, entitled *The Artist and His People*, presents the reader with a series of five essays. The first chapter is a contribution by the well-known Iranian specialist on the Qashqa'i, Manucher Kiani, giving a general introduction to the history and ethnography of the Qashqa'i people. Chapters 2 and 3 are written by Dutch artist Kees van Burg and treat the themes of, respectively, nomadism in Iran and the origin of the Qashqa'i. Chapters 4 and 5 are written by Dutch orientalist Merijn Gantzert. Chapter 4 describes the role that the Qashqa'i tribal confederacy played in World Wars I and II, showing how its leaders partially determined the course of these conflicts in the Middle East, indirectly influencing the modern history of the West. Chapter 5 talks about the genealogy of the artist's family, belonging to the old aristocracy of Persia and part of the Qashqa'i's inherited tribal leadership.

The rest of this *Introduction* offers three more paragraphs with different perspectives on the work: The first of the following paragraphs treats the issue of *art historical* classification, i.e. of the position of Bijan Bahadori's work relative to the canons of Western art history. This paragraph is a contribution of the Polish art historian Katarzyna Durys.

The second of the following paragraphs gives an example pertaining to issue of *iconography* in the work of Bijan Bahadori, i.e. pertaining to the interpretation of specific elements found in the images of the nomadic life that he reproduces.

The third and last of the following paragraphs is a *personal view* of Bijan, in the form of a short interview with Sona Bahadori, his youngest daughter, sister of Siros. Her personal reminiscences will give some insight into the personal life of her father, shedding light on the context in which his paintings were created.

Memories of the Nomadic Life *– Katarzyna Durys, M.A., M.Ed. (Universiteit Leiden)*

The nomadic life of the Qashqa'i people belongs to the past. Bijan Bahadori's water-colors document the history and memory of their vanished nomadic life. From the point of view of Western Art History these paintings do not elevate Bijan Bahadori to the canon of the 20th Century self-taught artists – they draw too much on folk art and are too decorative in nature. They should, however, not be judged primary in accordance with the Western art historical canon.[7] Using Edward Saeed's term 'Other', it is exactly this 'Otherness' that opens the door of non-western cultural experiences to the western culture.[8] By detailed pictorial narration, Bahadori's paintings give us access to intimate cultural experiences, illustrated as collective memories, making them intelligible for audiences in the modern 'Western world'.

The pictorially reconstructed memories found in the water-colors are subjective and warm. A vanished way of life is reconstructed, sometimes nostalgically, sometimes sardonically, in various loose pictures, portraying the daily life of the Qashqa'i nomads. In the water color entitled 'Arrival of the Bride' the warmly vivid pastel colors recreate the festive, warm atmosphere of the elaborate nuptial ceremonies of the tribes. Here the main theme is the wedding ceremony, but the emphasis is not on the bride and groom or even in the attempt of realistically depicting a wedding scene. The bride is actually not even very visible – she is depicted in the far background on the top of the hill, sitting on the horse. Her figure is wrapped in a yellow cloth and behind her is the wedding procession. Thus, the narrative concentrates on depicting the atmosphere of the wedding, effectively focusing primarily on its ritual and communal significance. In the foreground we find horsemen showing off their abilities, riding in an almost acrobatic style, one of them is holding a prominent red flag. More flags are visible in the foreground, as are the rifle shots and musical performances that form inseparable parts of the wedding ritual.

The combination of vivid pastel colors serves to poignantly re-create a charged atmosphere. Purple and blue colors make for an almost unreal, 'dreamy' sky, seeming to reflect the nearly supernaturally colored hills where the wedding procession slowly makes its way down the hill slopes. As anybody who traveled in the bleak desert lands around Shiraz will testify to, these weird colors are, in fact accurately applied to re-create various seasonal and local atmospheres. The festivity and the happiness of the event, evidently drawing on some intimately lived memory, is depicted not only in the narrative – it is also formally constructed by the preponderance of the hot colors red and yellow. The red flags, red skirts, red horse saddles as well as the red tent interiors draw our attention to what is happening and at the same time pictorially hold the composition together. The narrative seems quite obviously shaped by

the subjective memory of a specific event, but of an event that is simultaneously of an archetypal nature, reflecting what is probably the single most important among the primary social rituals of the Qashqa'i community.

Another 'genre scene' is found in 'Camel Attack' (Plate 29). Next to horses, camels were the most important domestic animals of the Qashqa'i. Emphatically in the foreground, they are being groomed and cleaned, the status of the camels is clear. Camels mainly served as beasts of burden in the traveling caravansary. In the middle of the picture two men are depicted with the loaded camels and an exchange of goods is taking place between two traders. In accordance with trade customs, the Qashqa'i would exchange grapes, dates or wool for livestock such as chickens or for eggs. Here, similarly to the structure found in the previously described wedding scene, atmosphere is created by contrasting 'cold' green tones with warm brown and red ones. It is not a 'realistic' depiction in the sense of Western Art History; rather, it is a narrated memory, a memory of one of the ordinary days of Qashqa'i life in the hills.

Another 'genre scene' depicts a man inside a pig skin: 'The Rheumatism Patient' (Plate 14). The skin was used as a medical device, to cure rheumatism. He is surrounded by two men, one seated and holding the man's head in his lap while the other one is seated at the man's feet. Both men are in conversation, probably chatting and keep each other company while the cure is taking effect. Next to them lies a dog. Similarly to the scene with camels, it is a memory of an ordinary day in the life of the Qashqa'i and its 'ordinary' character is underlined by means of the same tonalities found in the previously described 'landscape with camels'.

Arrival of the Bride

These various narratives in water-colors illustrate the way memories are turned into stories that can captivate an audience. The function of these paintings is to stimulate and focus the experience of Qashqa'i identity. This function is achieved by the paintings' capacity to reconstruct aspects of this identity. Regarded from the perspective of Cultural Memory theory developed by German Egyptologist Jan Assmann[9], the reconstruction process relates knowledge to contemporary reality. In their contemporary context these watercolors serve the reconstruction and concretization of identity through its mere preservation. Here memory is communicated not through the institutions of social heritage, which are 'tangible' heritage – rather, Bijan Bahadori's water-colors stand for a different, 'intangible' heritage. The value of his work lies in preserving his people's heritage in contemporary reality, in which the Qashqa'i people have been forced out of their nomadic life and are subjected to sedentarization, urbanization, modernization and assimilation in the new Islamic Republic of Iran. Bijan Bahadori's water colours can be understood as a last moment snap-shot of a lost culture – a memory of the nomadic life.

Iconography – an Example *– Merijn Gantzert*

The focus of this paragraph is on the iconographical analysis of the work of Bijan Bahadori, i.e. on the interpretation of specific elements found in the images of the nomadic life that he reproduces. Generally, the function and position of various visual elements in ethnographic imagery may be assumed to reflect implicit social values and structures, necessitating anthropological analysis in order to understand the image correctly. This is not the appropriate place for a systematic analysis of Qashqa'i material culture or symbols, but a short commentary on one single visual element will at least serve to remind the reader that there is more than seems to meet the eye. In the images conjured up by Bijan Bahadori, who mostly faithfully recorded what he had seen himself or what others had told him, nothing is actually as straight-forward as his naturalistic simplicity of style might suggest.

An instructive example of the way in which a visual element may carry multiple interpretations in the Qashqa'i tribal setting depicted by Bijan Bahadori can be found in investigating a prominent feature in traditional male dress: the Qashqa'i cap. Here the functionality of this headgear will be approached from the two basic perspectives distinguished by anthropologists: the *etic* and the *emic* – the former gives the interpretation of the outside observer, the latter that of the insider himself.

From an *etic* perspective, to generations of outsiders – ranging from central government policy makers to foreign diplomats, students and tourists – the distinctive two-eared felt hat worn by Qashqa'i males appeared as an emblematic example of age-old

'traditional dress'. As such, wearing this cap became politically charged. Its use was suppressed and discouraged during certain episodes of central government hegemony – it was hidden away or relegated to use at the territorial and social margins of Qashqa'i tribal life. When central government weakened during the Islamic Revolution and the Qashqa'i tribal leadership returned from exile, it quickly came back into public life and was even adopted by neighboring non-Qashqa'i rural elements, who wished to associate themselves with the reviving confederacy[10]. With the subsequent extinction of traditional nomadic life and accelerated assimilation of the Qashqa'i people into main-stream urban life, now heavily pressurized into social and material conformism, the cap has virtually disappeared from public life. Only at wedding parties, an important surviving feature of Qashqa'i cultural distinctiveness, can it still be observed occasionally (e.g. worn by performers of traditional music)[11]. It is ironic that, in fact, this 'traditional' hat is a quite recent modification of Qashqa'i dress code, purposefully introduced by Naser Khan in the 1940's as a symbolic statement of newly regained political autonomy for his people[12].

The Pahlavi crown

An *emic* perspective on the introduction of the two-eared felt hat is gained when the matter is discussed by Homa Bibi, daughter of Naser Khan, now living in exile in Switzerland. She recalls how Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, upon the divorce from his first wife Fawzia Shirin in 1948, decided to strengthen his domestic dynastic position. He had been put upon the throne by the Allies during World War II to replace his pro-Axis father (cf. Chapter 4), but he continued to be confronted with a formidable opposition from nationalists as well as the feudal and tribal lords. He therefore sought a marriage alliance with the Janikhani (Shahilu) family, the rulers of the Qashqa'i, one of his most powerful rivals – they had defeated his army and regained autonomy for their tribes during the war[13]. His proposal of marriage with Homa Bibi, however, was rejected by her father on grounds of lower class ancestry[14] – the Pahlavi's

were considered as start-ups by the traditional elite[15]. When the shah protested that none could equal the splendor of the Pahlavi crown, containing near two kilos of gold and 3380 diamonds totaling 1144 carats, shaped into two distinctive 'flaps' above the ears, Homa Bibi responded that every Qashqa'i could and would wear such a crown. Thus a new hat was introduced for the Qashqa'i, its shape imitating the crown that their leaders had despised. In the event, the shah found another family of tribal aristocrats willing to let him marry one of their daughters: in 1951 he married Bakhtiari princess Soraya Esfandiary. This episode took place during the heyday of restored Qashqa'i power, with the Shahilu family well-entrenched in Fars, and it may well account for some of the vindictive policies pursued by the shah towards the Qashqa'i, after their fortunes fell in the wake of the 1953 overthrow of their ally Mossadegh.

Much of the visual elements and their juxtaposition in Bijan Bahadori's paintings have a specific history, as indeed have the patterns and structures in Qashqa'i traditional products, such as the famous Qashqa'i carpets and saddlebags. Their study is the field of anthropological and art historical specialists and, as such, falls outside the scope of this book, which merely wishes to raise an interest in the issues at hand.

Bijan Bahadori with musician

The Artist at Home

Interview with Sona Bahadori, youngest daughter of Bijan

How do you remember your father when he was painting?

My father always painted at home, never out of doors. He never used an easel – he painted sitting on the floor with a painting in front of him. I remember him sitting like that in corner of the living room, very quietly, surrounded by paintings, material and colors. The only time I saw he sketched outdoors was when he was visited our villages. Children would come running up to him and asked him to draw something – an animal or something else they liked. My father loved children and he would give them drawings and sketches on small pieces of paper.

How did your father's painting affect family life?

My father was famous for his painting among all the Qashqa'i tribes. When we went on Summer holidays visiting the Qashqa'i villages and camps, all he people came out to greet our convoy, singing, with flowers and gifts – people were proud that my father made the Qashqa'i famous. At home we had many visitors – my father had many artist friends and sometimes newspaper and television people came to interview him. My father's English was good and many foreign guests were interested in talking to him, because my father knew a lot about Qashqa'i traditional crafts and our history. During the 2500 year celebration of Persian Empire[16], during a parade at the Tent City[17], my father was presented with medals by the *shah* and my sister Farkhondeh, in traditional Qashqa'i dress, was sent by the Qashqa'i to greet the *shah* and Farah Diba. But after the Revolution the police started raiding our family's houses, so my father buried all the medals and gifts from the *shah* in the garden.

How did your father start painting?

When my father was seven or eight years old and he was in camp in *garmsir*[18], he had started drawing with charcoal on flat pieces of rock. In that time, children had no drawing materials. Sometimes, merchants would come to Ardakan with their donkey caravans and they would bring lumps of sugar to sell – my father went there to ask them for wrapping paper, so he could use it for drawing. Soon, some of adults noticed his talent and started bringing him paper and pencils. My father started using water colors when he was send to school in the city.

What was your father's inspiration?

My father loved nature and social celebrations – they are his favorite themes. He had a completely realistic interest, so he also painted the sad scenes in the nomads' life, involving death, sickness and bad luck. But he is a happy man who likes to laugh and his favorite paintings are the ones that show the beauty of nature and wedding parties. My father knew much about Western and Iranian painting traditions – he especially loved Kamal al-Molk[19] – but he was not interested in modern art.

The Qawam House in the Eram Garden, Shiraz

What do you think about your father's technique?

My father had an eye for every detail: he observed all goings-on of daily life very carefully and remembered to put what he saw in his paintings, even years later. Hunters clean their rifles, women gossip under a tree, chickens play in a tent - for me, his paintings are full of life. Also, I am always struck by how my father would catch a mood: he catches it by his colors. A tired man rests under a sun-less sky (Plate 1), a new bride rides into the camp under wind-driven clouds (Arrival of the Bride), a sick man travels under dark rain clouds (Plate 12).

In your opinion, what are your father's best paintings?

All my father's paintings are based on true stories, that he either saw himself or heard about. His paintings are meant to tell a story and fit the occasion. He was not much interested in portraying actual people; rather he was showing 'types' of people and typical situations in the real life of the nomads. Also, in his time it was rare to paint a woman – people were conservative about that kind of thing. I think his technically best paintings are his war paintings and some paintings that were made for Khosrow Khan[209.] Khosrow Khan had him live and work in his Bagh-e Eram palace[21] for some time and rewarded him with a Belgian hunting rifle. After the Revolution my father

was arrested because of his work for Khosrow Khan, especially because one of the paintings he made for him showed a tent camp story with dogs chasing a *mullah*. Many of my father's best paintings were confiscated by government officials – some were later sold into private collections in Tehran.

What do you think is your father's most important achievement?

He could paint stories and situations very realistically, with colors that give them life. If you look at his paintings it is like you can relive them and experience life in nature. When I was a child some of our land was still free and we went on long Summer holidays in our traditional tents – the nomad's life in nature was something special to enjoy. We lost that and it will never come back, but because of my father's paintings people now can still feel how was Qashqa'i life.

The artist's wife and daughters in traditional dress. From left to right: daughter Faredeh Bibi, wife Geran Bibi (passed away October 26th, 2013) and daughters Sona Bibi, Marzieh Bibi and Iran Bibi.

Notes

Merijn Gantzert

1 This poem is written in Qashqa'i Turkic. The Qashqa'i language, *Qashqay dili* or *Qashqay türki*, together with Aynallu and Afshar, belongs to the Southern branch of the Oghuz (South-western) Turkic language group. Turkey-Turkish and Azerbaijani belong to another, the Western, branch of Oghuz but there is a large degree of mutual understanding for speakers of all these languages. Officially, Qashqa'i Turkic is an unwritten language, but some text fragments, including poetry, may be found written in the Arabic alphabet used in Persia, (i.e. with four additional letters representing particular Persian phonemes) – some text samples may be found on www.qashqai.net.

2 According to the Persian Calendar, i.e. the so-called Solar Hijri calendar, which counts 365/6-days solar years and starts in 622 Anno Domini = 1 Anno Hegirae, the year of the Prophet Mohammed's emigration from Mecca to Medina. The Persian calendar, re-introduced by Parliament in 1911, is the official calendar of Iran and Afghanistan and dates back to Zoroastrian times. Its year starts with the Spring equinox (around the 20th of March), which is celebrated as *Now Ruz* (New Year).

3 Transl. from I. Montijn, *Hoog geboren. 250 Jaar adellijk leven in Nederland* (Amsterdam and Antwerp 2012), 362.

4 This government-funded museum was set up on the initiative of Iranian painter Hasan Meshqinfam and is located near the Bazar-e Vakil, the historical main permanent market of Shiraz.

5 L. Beck, *The Qashqa'i of Iran* (New Haven and London 1986) 290.

6 L. Beck, *The Qashqa'i of Iran* (New Haven and London 1986) plate 29 following p. 199.

7 In this respect it is significant to note that Bijan's work does not approach subject matter from the first person ('I') perspective, which dominated artistic approach in Western art, in music since Beethoven, in painting since Rembrandt – *comment by K. Verburg*.

8 E.W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York 1978)

9 J. Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtniss: Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen* (Munich 1992)

10 L. Beck, *The Qashqa'i of Iran* (New Haven and London 1986) 307-8.

11 Even these wedding parties, traditionally long-lasting, large-scale events involving whole clans, are now subject to systematic government harassment, with security forces enforcing the separation of the sexes, breaking up traditional dances and confiscating fire-arms used in the celebrations.

12 L. Beck, *The Qashqa'i of Iran* (New Haven and London 1986) 206.

13 '*... Naser Khan ... became the prime contender for national leadership in the event of a German victory.*' – P. Oberling, *The Qashqa'i Nomads of Fars* (The Hague and Paris 1974) 170.

14 Reza Shah, the first shah of the Pahlavi dynasty, was born in 1878 in the village of Alasht, Mazandaran province, as Reza Khan, son of an army officer. He joined the Persian Cossack Brigade and rose to the rank of Brigadier General, becoming its first native Persian commander. He came to power through a British sponsored coup in 1921 and, after pressurizing the *majlis* into deposing the Qajar emperor Ahmad Shah, was declared constitutional emperor in 1925. He adopted the dynastic name Pahlavi in a bid to find legitimacy by establishing a link with Persia's ancient history ('Pahlavi' refers to the Parthian and Middle Iranian languages, spoken during the Parthian and Sassanid empires (respectively 248 BC-224 AD and 224- 654 AD).

15 Concerning the marriage 'castes' and regulations formerly prevailing among the Qashqa'i, cf. B. Bahman Begi, 'Moers et coutumes des tribus du Fârs (Orf-o 'Adat dar 'Ashâ'er-e Fârs)' in: V. Monteil, *Les tribus du Fârs et la sédentarisation des nomades*, Le monde d'Outre-Mer passé et présent 12. Documents X (Paris and The Hague 1966) 97-152, there 105-13.

16 This was an elaborate series of celebrations staged by Mohammad Reza Shah around the ancient Achaemid ceremonial capital Persepolis in 1971 (cf. Part 2, illustration and commentary following the 'About the Editor' section).
17 Cf. Part 2, commentary for Illustration 18.
18 The Summer pastures north of Shiraz, cf. Chapter 1.
19 Iranian painter Mohammad Ghaffari (1847-1940) – he was given the honorific title *Kamal al-Molk* 'Perfection of the Kingdom' by Nasereddin Shah and is sometimes referred to as 'the Michelangelo of Persia'.
20 Brother of Qashqa'i *ilkhani* Naser Khan. Khosrow Khan led the armed camp against the Islamic revolutionaries after Naser Khan had escaped abroad. He was captured, subjected to a show trial and executed by the government in 1982.
21 The Eram Garden Palace, the former town residence of the Qashqa'i *ilkhani*'s in Shiraz, a 19th Century pavilion set in an older quadripartite Paradise Garden. The estate was handed over by the *ilkhani*'s to the state during the White Revolution – it now houses a botanical garden and history museum and is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

PART 1 – THE LAND AND ITS PEOPLE

Foreword

Kees Verburg

My first acquaintance with the paintings of Bijan Bahadori Kashkuli was in 2005 when they were in the shop windows of an Amsterdam street under which the so called 'North-South Line' was (and still is) being constructed, an underground-line that in the future will connect the north of the city with the south more rapidly. Siros Bahadori, Bijan's son, invited by the *Projectbureau Noord-Zuid*, had brought the paintings to be shown there.

Then, more than a year later, another encounter with Siros – at which he showed the work of his father Bijan again in the central exhibition of the so-called *Artist Studio Route* in his city district – resulted in the idea of organizing an exhibition together. It became the travelling exhibition *Inspiran* and was shown in the years 2008/2009 at different locations in my country, the Netherlands. A number of the paintings of Bijan were in there too (cf. website www.inspiran.nl under the button 'Sirus Bahadory'). Creating this book since then became an aim.

What strikes me in most of the paintings of Bijan Bahadori is that they are amazingly unique. No other artistic attempt like his is known to me, and perhaps – or probably – to no one else. Tribal communities never produced painters: there was – and is, so far – no Eskimo, no Lapland, no Arab, no Kazakh, no Bedouin and no Hottentot painter that is ever mentioned. Of course, Bijan Bahadori painted in a self-taught way and probably willingly refused professional training and influences. But we cannot overlook the fact that his art as a whole rises far above the level of the amateur. This is his art.

List of Plates

Merijn Gantzert

The first and most important part of this collection has reproductions of thirty-seven paintings by Bijan Bahadori, found in various public and private collections. Some were recently digitally recorded, but others were reproduced from thirty year old color slides, accounting for their occasionally less-than-optimal quality. It should be noted that the paintings reproduced here represent, in fact, only a small fraction of the total artistic output of Bijan Bahadori's – most of his paintings, spread and sold throughout Iran and various Western countries in the course of the years, proved untraceable.

The last section of the collection presented here constitutes a kind of visual 'epilogue'. It shows three paintings by Bijan Bahadori's oldest son, Siros Bahadori. In a way, he has continued his father's work while living in exile in Holland, taking up the nomadic theme, but developing his own style and mood. It is felt that the juxtaposition of the paintings of father and son shows an interesting combination of continuity, development and contrast. The brightness and naturalism of the father gives way to the more subdued mood and meditative style of the son. Perhaps the son's atmospherically charged hues can be interpreted as connected to the recent, dramatic history of the Qashqa'i people – to the loss of the ancestral homeland, replaced by a dream-like, romantic nostalgia.

The reproductions are arranged in more or less thematically related sections. The reproductions are followed by a text commentary; due to Bijan Bahadori's frail state of health the commentaries on his work could not be his own and Manucher Kiani has kindly provided most of them. The commentary on Siros Bahadoris's painting are given in his own words. Following the commentary section a few drawings are shown from Bijan Bahadori's notebooks – they show how he would sketch outdoors and 'on the go', observing small incidents in the daily life of the Qashqa'i nomads.

Migration – Bijan Bahadori
Plate 1 Travel
Plate 2 Arrival

Camp – Bijan Bahadori
Plate 3 Camp
Plate 4 Baking Bread
Plate 5 Weaving
Plate 6 Gypsy Camp-followers
Plate 7 Smoking
Plate 8 Green Pastures

Traditional Medicine – Bijan Bahadori
Plate 9 The Bath Tent
Plate 10 The Medicine Man
Plate 11 Dentistry
Plate 12 A Long Way to the Doctor
Plate 13 Venom Day
Plate 14 The Rheumatism Patient
Plate 15 Born on the Road
Plate 16 The Mad Wanderer

Conflict – Bijan Bahadori
Plate 17 Tribal Court
Plate 18 The Fight
Plate 19 The Battle

Ceremonies – Bijan Bahadori
Plate 20 New Year
Plate 21 The Bridal Chamber
Plate 22 The Wedding
Plate 23 The Musicians
Plate 24 The Rain Dance
Plate 25 Swearing Allegiance
Plate 26 The Sacred Tree

Animal Life – Bijan Bahadori
Plate 27 Partridges
Plate 28 Mourning for a Horse
Plate 29 Camel Attack
Plate 30 Snake Attack
Plate 31 Wolf Attack
Plate 32 Bear Attack
Plate 33 Boars on the Rampage

Women and Children – Bijan Bahadori
Plate 34 The Smile
Plate 35 Collecting Firewood
Plate 36 The School
Plate 37 The Lullaby

My Memories of Qashqa'i Life – Siros Bahadori
Plate 38 Goats in the Sun
Plate 39 The Cuckoo
Plate 40 Khosrow Khan

Drawings – Bijan Bahadori

Plates Commentary

Manucher Kiani

MIGRATION *– Bijan Bahadori*

1

کوچ

Plate 1. Travel

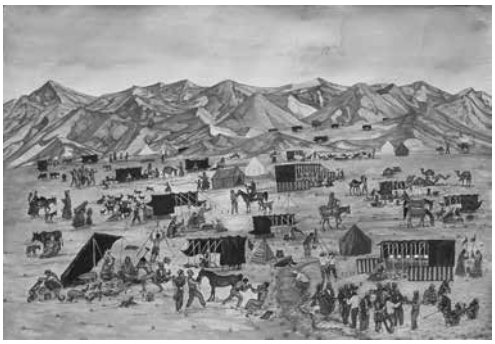
For centuries the Qashqai tribe have lived an adventurous life due to their bi-annual migration. As they must move to survive there is little peace in their life. Their way of life is that of traditional pastorists. Their animals need food, so they follow them to the *yeilagh* ('cool place', i.e. Summer pastures) in Summer and to *geshlagh* ('warm place', i.e. Winter pastures) in Winter. They travel and carry all their possessions on camels, horses and donkeys, moving about five to ten kilometres per day. Twice a year these nomads move up to 600 kilometres between *yeilagh* and *gheshlagh* – year after year, a life long.

2

جابجا شدن

Plate 2. Arrival

CAMP *– Bijan Bahadori*



3

چادر نشینها

Plate 3. Camp

Plate 4. Baking Bread

Most tasks in tribal life, such as baking bread, dairy production, dressmaking, cleaning the house, spinning, weaving carpets, milking and even gathering wood are the work of women. Every day women get up early in the morning and after finishing with dairy work, they bake bread. They knead flour and make big dough balls which are then flattened, using a narrow wooden stick, into very thin, just half a millimetre thick sheets. They put these on a hot metal tray over the fire, baking them one by one. Usually two people work together in the baking process because one of them must control the fire.

4

نان پختن

5

قالی بافی

Plate 5. Weaving

The Qashqa'i are the most famous of the Iranian tribes when it comes to weaving fine and delicate carpets. In famous museums around the world we can find Qashqa'i carpets and *kilims*. These are famed, notable for their natural colours and for the quality of the wool. The women of the tribe use the best wool from those sheep that have had the best kind of natural nutrition. They dye the wool themselves and weave fine-maze carpets which usually win first prizes in international exhibitions.

6

آهنگرهای قشقایی

Plate 6. Gypsy Camp-followers

As in Europe, in Iran Gypsies are a group of migrant people – they tend to live alongside nomadic tribes, such as the Qashqa'i. They are of different ethnic stock and tend to live in the periphery of camp sites, but under protection of tribal chiefs. The gypsies moved from India to Iran in the Sassanid era and are regarded as a very artistic and enterprising people.They undertake blacksmithery and carpentry work, making and repairing various tools needed in the tribe's daily life such as axes, choppers, knives, spinning tools, horseshoes, tripods, wooden tools and copper pots. They also whiten stained metal pots.

7

تریاک کشیدن

Plate 7. Smoking

8

زندگی روزمره

Plate 8. Green Pastures (Qomehr)

'The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. ... Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever'. – *Psalm 23*

TRADITIONAL MEDICINE *– Bijan Bahadori*

Plate 9. The Bath Tent

Though tribal people have very meagre hygienic facilities, they tend not get sick often as they live a healthy life-style in a natural environment. Bathing being one of life's necessities, they have found ingenious ways to organize it with the necessary privacy. The Qashqa'i erect a wooden tripod and surround it with a kind of carpet (*kilim*, *gelim* or *jajim*) in order to protect bathers from the cold. They heat a large pot full of water and take it inside the bath tent to wash their bodies with a strong woollen washcloth, cleaning the grease and dust off.

9

چادر حمام مخصوص زنها

Plate 10. The Medicine Man

Following the medicine man's presciption, a woman on horseback brings herbs, another prepares the medicine and a third serves it to the patient.

10

آل بوردگی

Plate 11. Dentistry

Dentistry is difficult in tribes. There are no dentists – if someone suffers toothache they go to the barber. The barber, without considering the risk of infection that might occur, simply pulls out the tooth and throws it away, even if the root is healthy. The barber's tool is an elbowed tip pincer with long handles. With this rough tool they pull out the tooth from its socket with great force – sometimes it breaks, so that the operation has to be repeated. As this operation is very painful the patient has to be restrained – he has to bear the pain and bear the consequences for the rest of his life.

11

دندان کشیدن

Plate 12. A Long Way to the Doctor

To reach a doctor sick tribe's people have to travel impassable paths through the mountains in very cold or hot weather. They have to sit on a horse or donkey for hours to reach the closest city to find a doctor. In such conditions, even if the patient stays alive, his illness will get worse during the trip. In the cities they have to nowhere to stay and rest as they usually do not have much money for food or medicine. After collecting a prescription they return to their tribe as soon as possible and their life or death is in the hand of God.

12

راهی طولانی به دنبال پزکش

13

مار گزیده

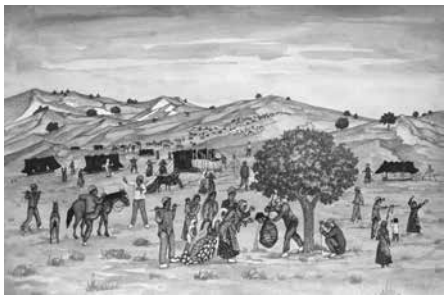


Plate 13. Venom Day

When someone is bitten by a snake or a scorpion, the men of the tribe put the victim in a big sack and hang him from a tree. They make him drink a lot of milk and shake him up and down to make him vomit to get rid of all the venom from his body.

14

مداوای بیمار رماتیسمی

Plate 14. The Rheumatism Patient

From the vast amount of experience accumulated over generations tribal people medicate many of their diseases in their own way. For example: rheumatic complaints, such as backache and sore hands or feet, a common problem for tribe's people due to their extensive travelling, is cured by putting the patient into a boar's skin. For this kind of medication a boar is hunted and as soon as the boar is killed, the hunters inform rheumatic sufferers. They then cut the hog's skin and, while the boar's body is still warm, the patient takes off his clothes and crawls into the into the boar's abdomen. As the heat in the animal's body is about 40 degrees it acts like physiotherapy for the patient.

15

زایمان در مسیر کوچ

Plate 15. Born on the Road

The tribes do not have hospitals or birthing centres. Births mostly take place within the black tents, without access to any first aid or basic birthing facilities. But women who go into labour during the migration are obliged to give birth behind in makeshift shelters or behind trees, helped by some elderly women who undertake the role of midwife within the tribes. The woman in labour endures great pain whilst grappling with potential death in the process of giving birth. The umbilical cord must be cut and, if no knife can be found, sometimes they resort to a sharp stones. The poor women, whilst still haemorrhaging from the birth process, are obliged to quickly take their baby into their arms and mount a horse or donkey to rejoin the migrating tribe, without even an hour's rest.

16

زن دیوانه آواره

Plate 16. The Mad Wanderer

Mentally ill people or those who suffer from personality disorders are not comfortable in tribes -children and sometimes adults tease them, making fun of them, which can also make their illness worse. To escape from this situation the mentally sick often leave the tribe, wandering into the desert alone to find peace. The same is true for elderly people that feel they are about to die

CONFLICT *– Bijan Bahadori*

Plate 17. Tribal Court

There is no judge in the tribe to adjudicate disputes. People's personal honor and their honesty enable them to solve problems by themselves. A few tribal elders, trusted by people, and sometimes a religious man, such as *mullah*, make up the tribal court. They oversee the complainant's protest. The Holy Quran and a sword are displayed in the court. If a murder occurs or somebody's rights are seriously violated, the accused is brought with a chain around his or her neck and the complainant is given the choice between revenge or forgiveness for the guilty. For the sake of humanity the secong is urged by the court – in most cases the affair ends with the complainant's forgiveness and the accused are freed.

17

دادگاه ایلی

Plate 18. The Fight

18

درگیری های محلی

Plate 19. The Battle

In 1918 English forces entered the south of Iran under the command of Sir Percy Sykes and they created the South Persian Rifle force – cf. Part 2, Chapter 4. The southern tribes, especially the Qashqa'i, objected to this force and began to fight them under the command of Ismail Khan Sowlet-e Dowleh, *ilkhani* of the Qashqa'i confederacy. The English tried to bribe the tribal leaders but these did not accept and continued their resistance until the English forces left.

19

ایل قشقایی در جنگ

CEREMONIES *– Bijan Bahadori*

20

مراسم نوروز

Plate 20. New Year

The Qashqa'i people celebrate the Persian New Year, *Now Ruz*, which coincides with the Spring equinox, with great splendour. Just before the start of the New Year, they consecrate a special sweet paste (*halva*) in memory of the dead. They decorate their tents with fresh flowers and garlands and wear new clothes.The hand palms of children are decorated with henna. They wake up on the morning of the New Year to the sound of music and drums. Tribe's people spend the days after New Year visiting family and tribal elders. They present them with gifts such as

woven rugs, clothes or dyed lamb wool, receiving brand-new banknotes (*eidee*) in return. The main entertainments during this period are dancing, singing, animal racing and betting on the outcomes of these races. Holy shrines, such a Shah Cheragh in Shiraz, are visited also (cf. Part 2, note 7).

21

حجله عروس

Plate 21. The Bridal Chamber

There are no houses with rooms for the bride and groom to spend their honeymoon, so they build a special tent, away from the regular black dwelling tents. They decorate it with colourful decorations and carpet it with *kilims* and *jajims*. Sweet smelling aromatic leaves and wedding gifts are spread around the bridal chamber. The strong and stable life the newlyweds look forward to is compared to a tree – they hope for as many babies as there are leaves of a tree.

22

مراسم عروسی

Plate 22. The Wedding

Tribal marriages involve a number of magnificent ceremonies, such as the henna ceremony, the acquaintance ceremony, the courtship ceremony and the ceremony of taking the bride to the groom's house. Each ceremony has specific features based on traditional lore. When the groom's family wants to take the bride to their house, the bride (in her wedding dress) circles the fireplace of her father's house three times and she fastens some bread onto her belt. Many men and women, with their horses and guns, then come and place the bride on a horse to take her to the groom's house. They cover her face and her head with a beautiful, colourful cloth so that nobody can see her face, averting the evil eye. While traditional instruments are played a small boy is put on the bride's horse behind her, hoping that the bride's first child will be a boy. The group of men and women on horseback charged with fetching the bride return at full gallop and to a celebratory round of gunfire, thus ensuring that the bride makes a grand entrance into the ceremonial tent. The Qashqa'i wedding ceremonies tend to take place during Spring or Summer in beautiful green fields and near water springs. A row of tents with interesting designs and decorations are erected next to one another as groups of tribe members come bearing gifts and dine on pastries in these tents. Dancing and dancing with sticks ceremonies all begin with the sounds of horns and drums. The wedding meal generally consists of grilled lamb and rice. A number of brightly dressed women dance in a circle and at night. A fire is lit atop a high pile of stones in the middle of this circle, resulting in an enchanting play of light upon the dancers.

Plate 23. The Musicians

23

Three main kinds of musical instrument are played in the Qashq'ai tribe. One of them is a stringed instrument similar to a guitar called the *sitar*, another is a wind instrument like the *nei* called *sorna* or *korna*, the third is the *naghareh* (drum) – they are the most important instruments in the tribe. Usually these are played on happy occasions such as weddings. The instruments that are played outdoors must be loud enough for all the nomads to hear it and only people who have practised them thoroughly can play them well. These men are called *ostad* (master).

Plate 24. The Rain Dance

24

دعای طلب باران

Tribal life depends on farm and domestic animals. As their flocks are kept traditionally, they need plentiful grass on the pastures. As the growth of grass depends largely on rain, people pray to God for rain when drought occurs, hoping to avoid starvation of their animals and themselves. One of their ancient ceremonies involves dressing someone up like a animal. While singing a song called *Koosse Gelin*, this beast, accompanied by his friends pass all the tents and ask for gifts. The people inside the tents sprinkle water on them and give them gifts.

Plate 25. Swearing Allegiance

25

مراسم سوگند

The tribe's people do not have a formal judiciary system but its members have a deep faith and belief in oral legal tradition. They worship God, his Prophets and Messengers, and especially Hazrat-e Abbas, the brother of Imam Hussein, who was renowned for his bravery. By stacking a number of stones on top of one another they set up a memorial symbol for the allegiance ceremony. They invoke Hazrat-e Abbas and his horse as religious guarantors of the allegiance sworn. When somebody is accused of a crime he is required to topple over such a stack of stones while vowing: 'May my life fall apart like this crumbling horse if I have committed an offence or theft.' It is assumed that any tribe members' faith is so deep rooted that they will never lie in the process of making this vow. So, if they have indeed committed a crime, they will be compelled to make amends from pure fear of Hazrat-e Abbas' retribution – they will apologise and return any stolen goods to their rightful owner.

26

درخت مقدس

Plate 26. The Sacred Tree

Some trees which are regularly passed or rested beneath have become sacred to the tribes. They believe that their wishes will come true if they tear some part of their clothes and while praying tie it around a branch of the tree. So it is not unusual to see a tree full of small colorful pieces of material in an otherwise empty landscape.

27

کبک ها

ANIMAL LIFE *– Bijan Bahadori*

Plate 27. Partridges

Plate 28. Mourning for a Horse

Horses and guns are considered as more than tools – they are signs of honour and pride. When a family obtains a horse it works hard for years at grooming it. A horse is like a child in a family, especially in a poor one – sometimes they love it more than a child. A horse is the family's honour and dignity and the day that the horse dies the whole family, father, mother and children, mourn as if they have lost a best friend or father. They scratch their faces and pull their hair and go without food for a while, avoiding going out in public, feeling they have lost everything.

28

عزاداری در مرگ اسب

Plate 29. Camel Attack

In the Spring mating season, male camels become uncontrollable and excited – they attack people with loud noise, foaming at the mouth and can easily trample them. So you must avoid camels when they are in this state and not approach them.

29

حملہ شترہا

Plate 30. Snake Attack

Nomadic people live with nature, on luscious plains as well as in arid deserts and the high mountains. This is the land of insects, vermin and dangerous animals. Often the tribe's people see mountain snakes (*kohmar*) and venomous insects crawling among the black tents and the tribe's facilities. In this picture we can see a baby playing with a beautiful snake, unaware of the possible dangers. Because the baby's mother has a lot of things to do, for a moment she is not paying attention to her child.

30

Plate 31. Wolf Attack

There are many hungry wolves in the area where the tribe lives, especially in Winter when there is less food for wild animals. These wolves attack the tribe's sheep and other animals. They can even attack humans. They have been known to attack people and rip them apart. One painful scene occurred when wolves attacked a young woman who was holding her child in her arms – the cruel wolves took her child and wounded the poor woman. She tried to get her baby back but was unsuccessful – the wolves killed them both, ripping them apart.

31

حملہ گرگہا

Plate 32. Bear Attack

Hunting is the main pastime of the Qashqa'i tribesmen, especially in their youth. They are proud to be the leader of hunters. They even prefer to marry their daughters to renowned hunters. The area where the Qashqa'i people live has great mountains and valleys which are the habitat of wild animals like panthers, tigers, hyenas, wolves and bears. Sometimes tribal hunters are attacked by these animals. Among these animals the way the bear attacks is very interesting: the bear does not bite or scrape with its teeth, rather, it holds the hunter and tries to throw him down the mountain. The hunter has to be very skilful to escape such a situation and stay alive.

32

حملہ خرس

Plate 33. Boars on the Rampage

33

گراز در ترکیب

WOMEN AND CHILDREN – *Bijan Bahadori*

34

یک دختر قشقایی

Plate 34. The Smile

35

جمع آوری هیزم

Plate 35. Collecting Firework

36

آموزش و پرورش

Plate 36. The School

Commentary by Ashkbous Talebi: The 'Nomadic Education System' (*Talimat-e Ashayeri*) must be seen as an important part of the modernization of Iran which started with Mohammad Mossadegh's nationalist movement. American officials started to play big role in this program starting 1951 through the Four Point Foundation. At first their main concern was reformation of the country's education system. Glen Gagon of Brigham Young University in Utah had researched so-called 'moving schools' to serve Native American tribespeople. American Four Point officials invited Bahman Begi, one of the first academically educated Qashqa'i, to consult experts and learn from the Native American Hopi tribal school system. This secret visit took place in 1952 and later the Americans granted him funds to start a comparable program among the Qashqa'i. The rise of Bahman Begi as spokesman of the 'new', modern Qashqa'i coincided with the fall of Mossadegh and the exile of the traditional Qashqa'i leadership, leaving the way free for him to take advantage of the power vacuum. The result of the tribal education program was positive for all parties involved, the Iranina government, the American sponsors and the Qashqa'i tribe's people, and must be solely credited to the talents and bravery of Bahman Begi.

Commentary by Merijn Gantzert: Bahman Begi, whose 'tent school' program is illustrated in Bijan Bahadori's painting 'The School', used American sponsorship and government support for the tribal education program to his own advantage while claiming to pursue the well-being and beneficial 'modernization' of his people. Due to the obvious importance of education in the modern nation-state, many have credited Bahman Begi with providing access to professional education to all Qashqa'i, regardless of rank and birth. Bahman Begi's program, however, was effectively something of a 'Trojan Horse', designed to destroy the traditional life of his people. Bahman Begi himself certainly betrayed the Shahilu (Janikhani) family, who stood at

the head of the confederacy when he was young men and who, recognizing his talents, originally sponsored his education – with that education he gained his position as director of the tribal education program. He sought to take over the traditional Shahilu leadership of the Qashqa'i when his old masters were removed by the central government – cf. L. Beck, *The Qashqa'i of Iran* (New Haven and London 1986) 271ff. Historically, his implementation of central government policy and application of foreign methods of social engineering constituted a dramatic betrayal of his own people. This is not to demean his Bahman Begi's effort in bringing Qashqa'i culture to the attention of the world – cf. B. Bahman Begi, 'Moers et coutumes des tribus du Fârs (Orf-o 'Adat dar 'Ashâ'er-e Fârs)' in: V. Monteil, *Les tribus du Fârs et la sédentarisation des nomades*, Le monde d'Outre-Mer passé et présent 12 Documents X (Paris and The Hague 1966) 99-152.

Plate 37. The Lullaby

The tribe's people tend to have specific work songs associated with most daily activities, such as milking, herd grazing, migration and carpet weaving. One of the famous songs of the Qashqa'i women is the lullaby, which they sing to their infants as they lie in cribs that have been designed and hand-made by their mothers. The gentle movement of the cribs, combined with the soothing impact of the lullaby have the desired soporific impact on the babies. The mothers, already tired from their daily chores and migration, spend long and hard nights watching over their babies until the morning.

37

آهنگ لالایی

MY MEMORIES OF THE NOMADIC LIFE *– Siros Bahadori*

38

Plate 38. Goats in the Sun

After my escape from Iran, for the last twenty years I have lived in Holland, but I still miss the mountains and colors of my native land. In Northern Europe the sun shines differently. In Holland, between the rain and clouds, the sun sometimes gives the crystal-clean clarity you find in Vermeer. But I miss the southern sun – I see this feeling in the French sunscapes of another Dutch painter, Van Gogh. Many of his paintings are in a museum just twenty minutes walking from my home and

39

I often go to look at them – this is my tribute to him and my adopted country, Holland.

Plate 39. The Cuckoo

My people lived in nature and had to be acute observers of the land, finding their way, guiding their animals, keeping off predators and hunting for game and birds. People's experience of nature is very different in Holland, but the painters of the Dutch Golden Age were famous for their perfect depiction of lifestock and still-life fish and birds. This tradition is still alive in the hand-painting of decorative ceramics, which is my profession – some souvenir art shops sell ceramic vases and plates with my work in Amsterdam and Delft.

40

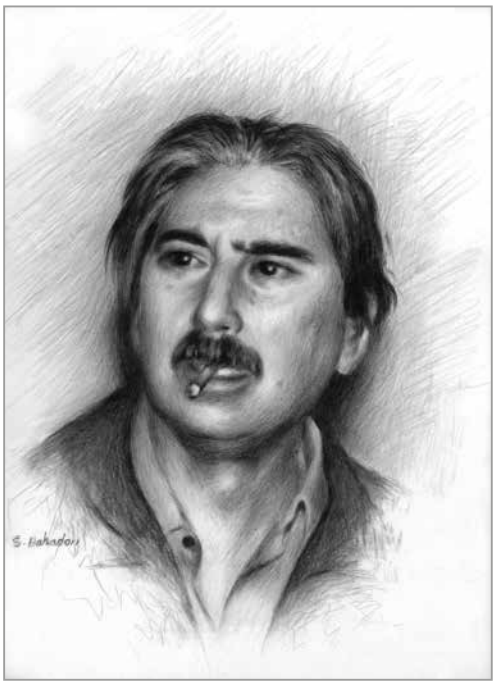
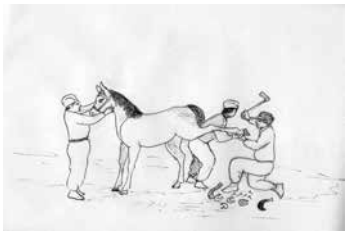


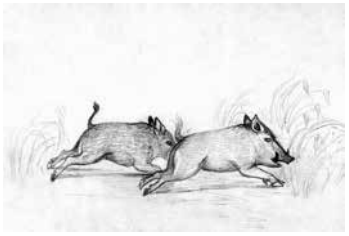
Plate 40. Khosrow Khan

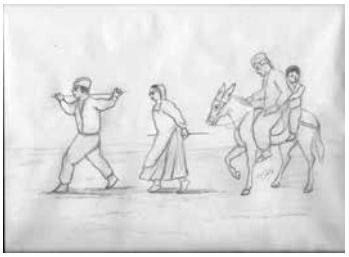
Sadness fills my heart when I remember what my people have lost: their land, their freedom and their culture. Now that even the last living memories of these things are starting to fade, I wanted to paint a portrait of our last leader, Khosrow Khan, for reproduction in this book. As a young man my cousin Hussayn Bahadori and me joined his mountain camp where he was leading Qashqa'i rebels against a large force of government troops. When it was clear we were doomed, Khosrow Khan send us away – soon afterwards he was captured, tortured for a show-trial and publicly executed. For many days our people were in mourning for him – we got up and went to sleep hearing women wailing. I think that, together with him, the Qashqa'i nation died – but I want to remember him as a honorable man who gave his life for his people.

DRAWINGS *– Bijan Bahadori*

Commentary by Sona Bahadori, his youngest daughter:
When outdoors among his people, my father had the habit of making impromptu sketches of scenes of daily life and small incidents – a horse being shoed, wild boars running around an encampment or a woman smoking a waterpipe. Some of these sketches later formed the basis of his watercolor paintings, but most of them are now lost. A few that were preserved by the family can give you an impression of how my father worked. It can be seen that Bijan Bahadori sketched on what ever material was at hand – here a ringed notebook from which he tore out pages. You can see that he sometimes wrote down small sentences, to remember the context. In the drawing where a man and a woman hail a car, the sentence reads like in a cartoon: 'My brother, how much to go to Shiraz?'. *Note by Merijn Gantzert: that sentence is in Persian, but that the word kaka, 'brother', is Turkish, the polite form of address common among Qashqa'i men of equal rank.*







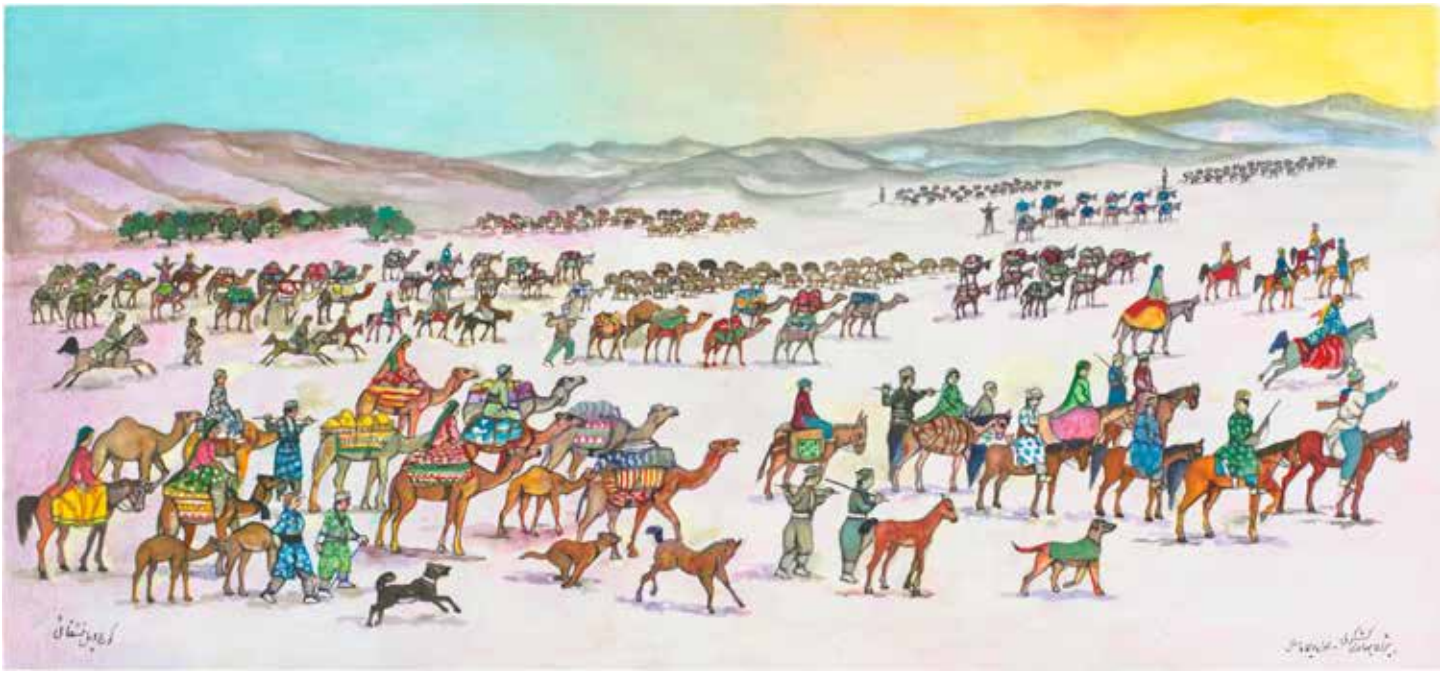


Plate 1. Travel

Plate 2. Arrival

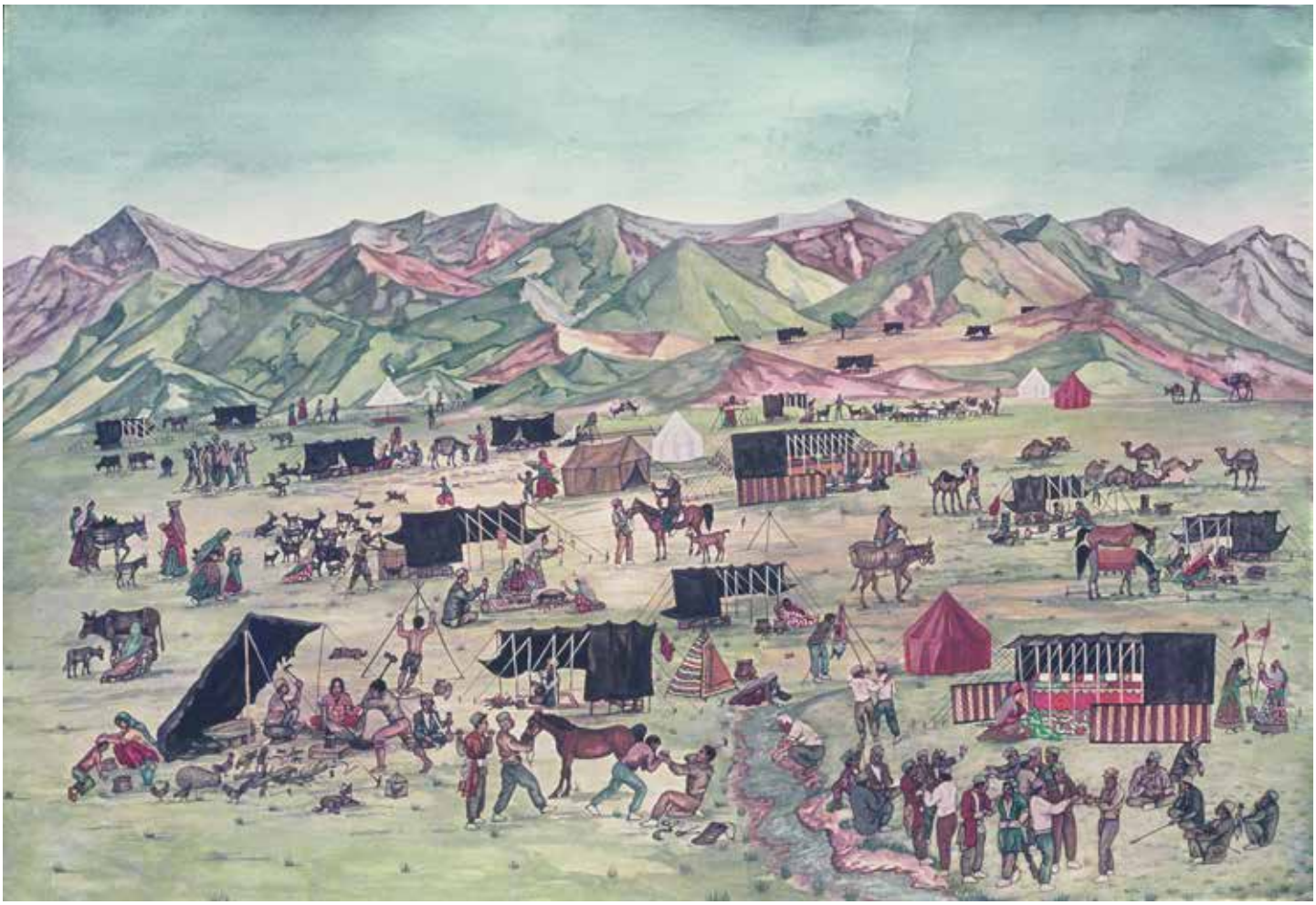


Plate 3. Camp

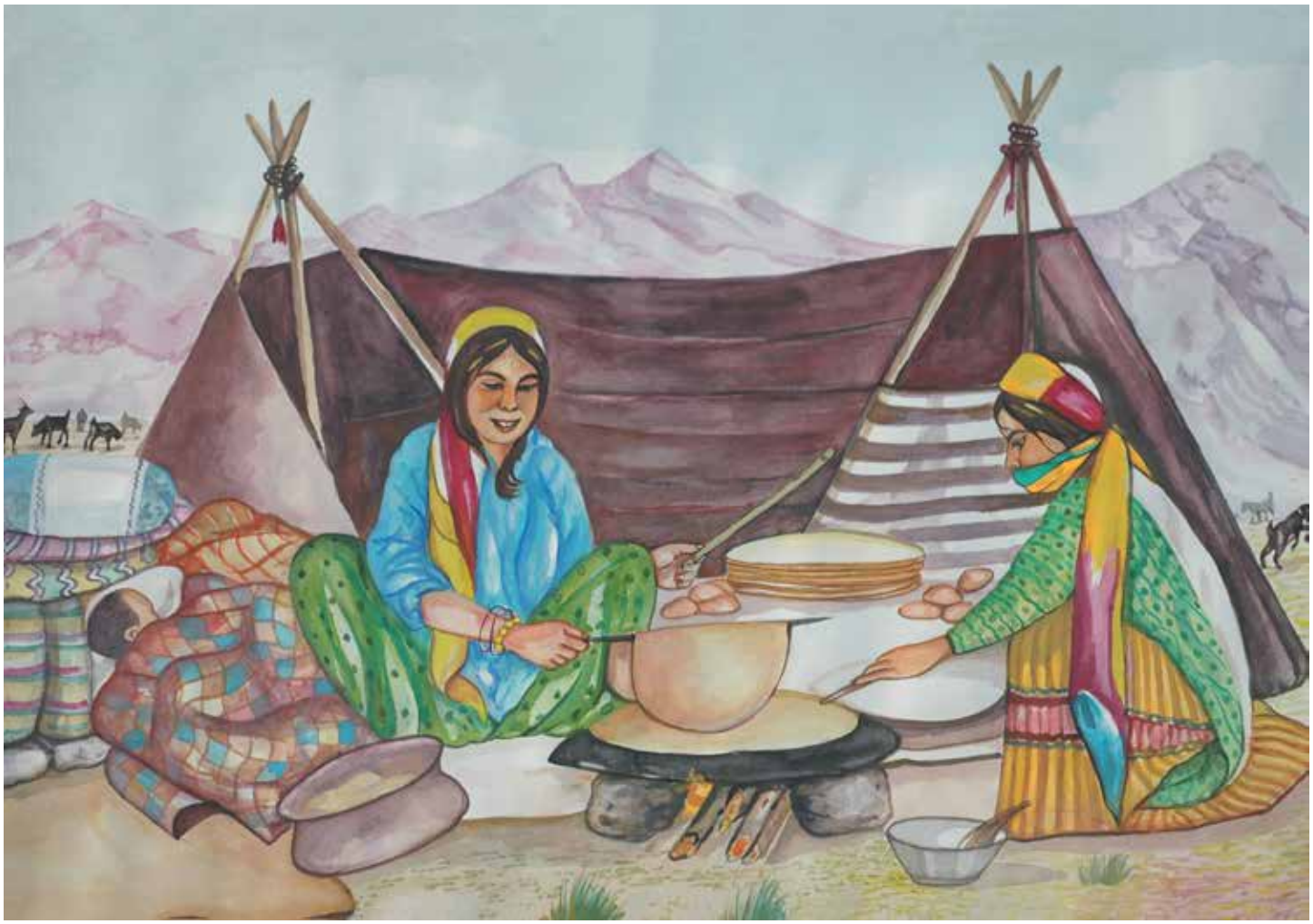


Plate 4. Baking Bread

Plate 5. Weaving

DEZE KAN NIET GROTER

Plate 6. Gypsy Camp-followers

Plate 7. Smoking

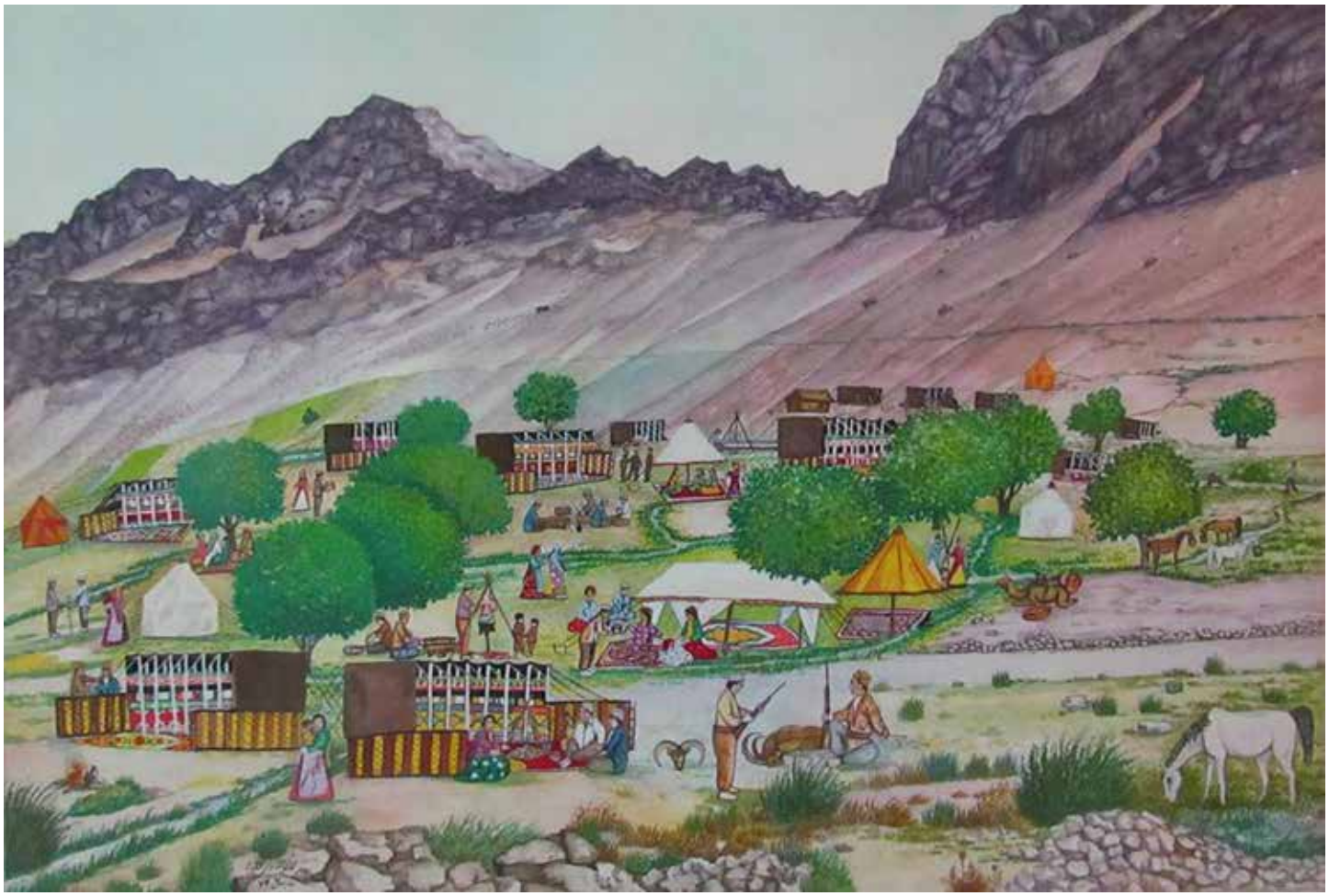


Plate 8. Green Pastures

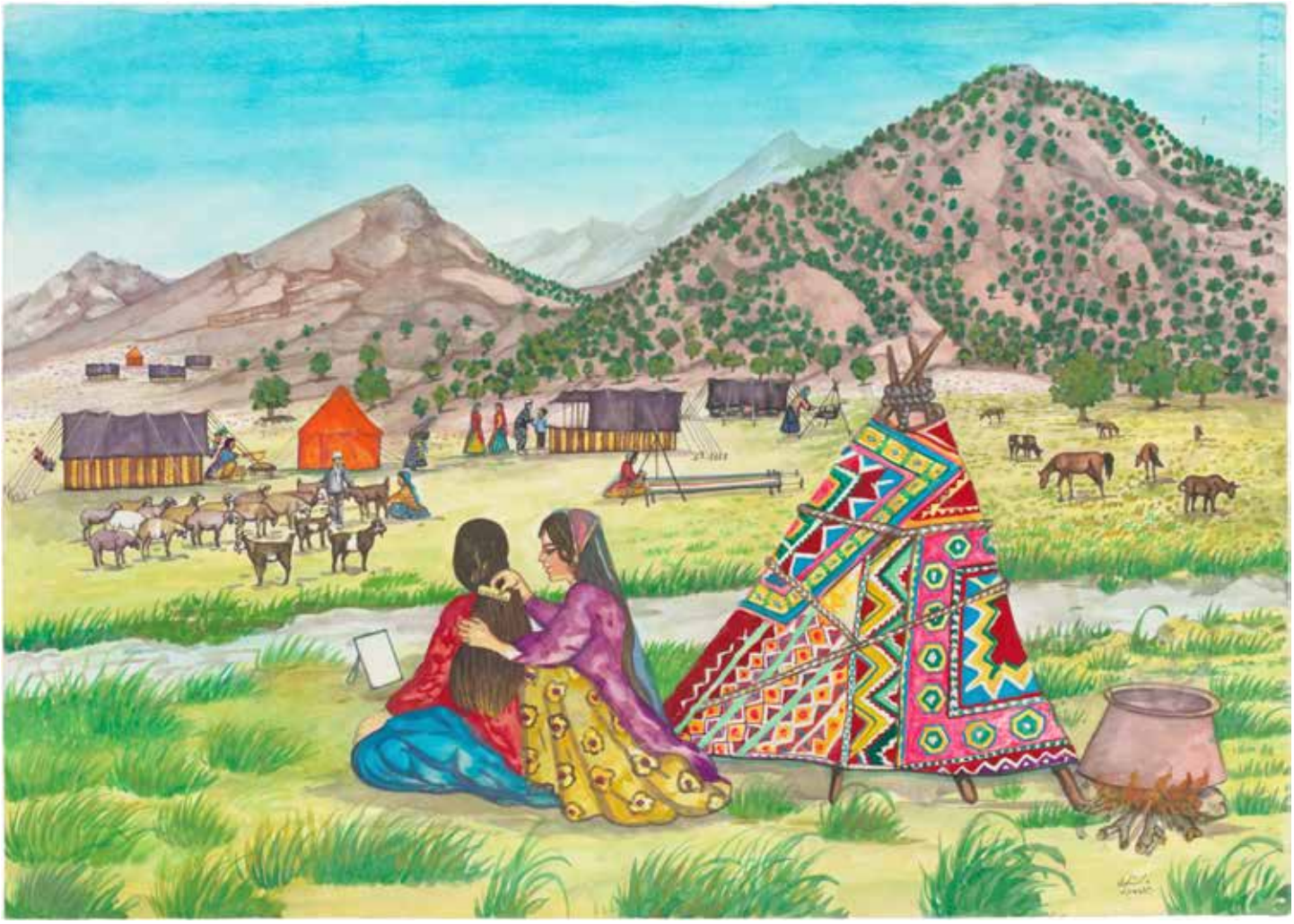


Plate 9. The Bath Tent

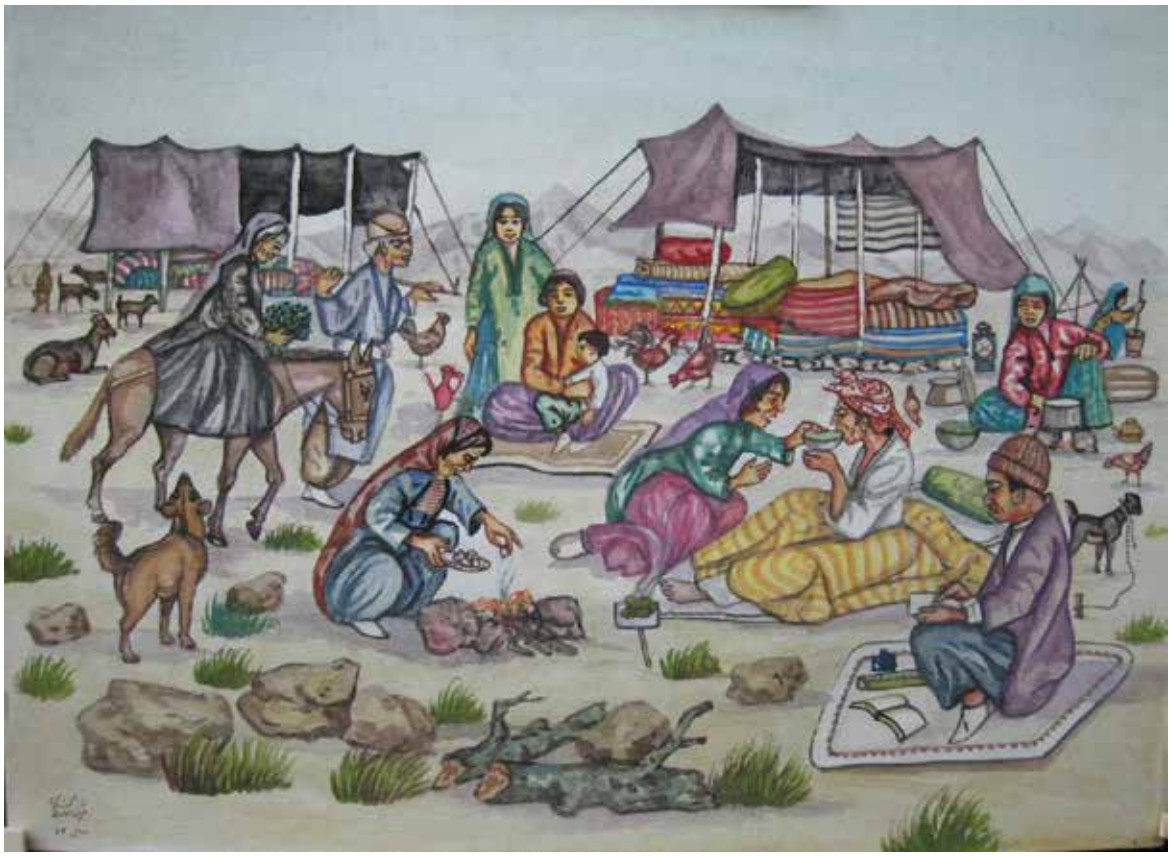


Plate 10. The Medicine Man

DEZE KAN NIET GROTER

Plate 11. Dentistry

Plate 12. A Long Way to the Doctor

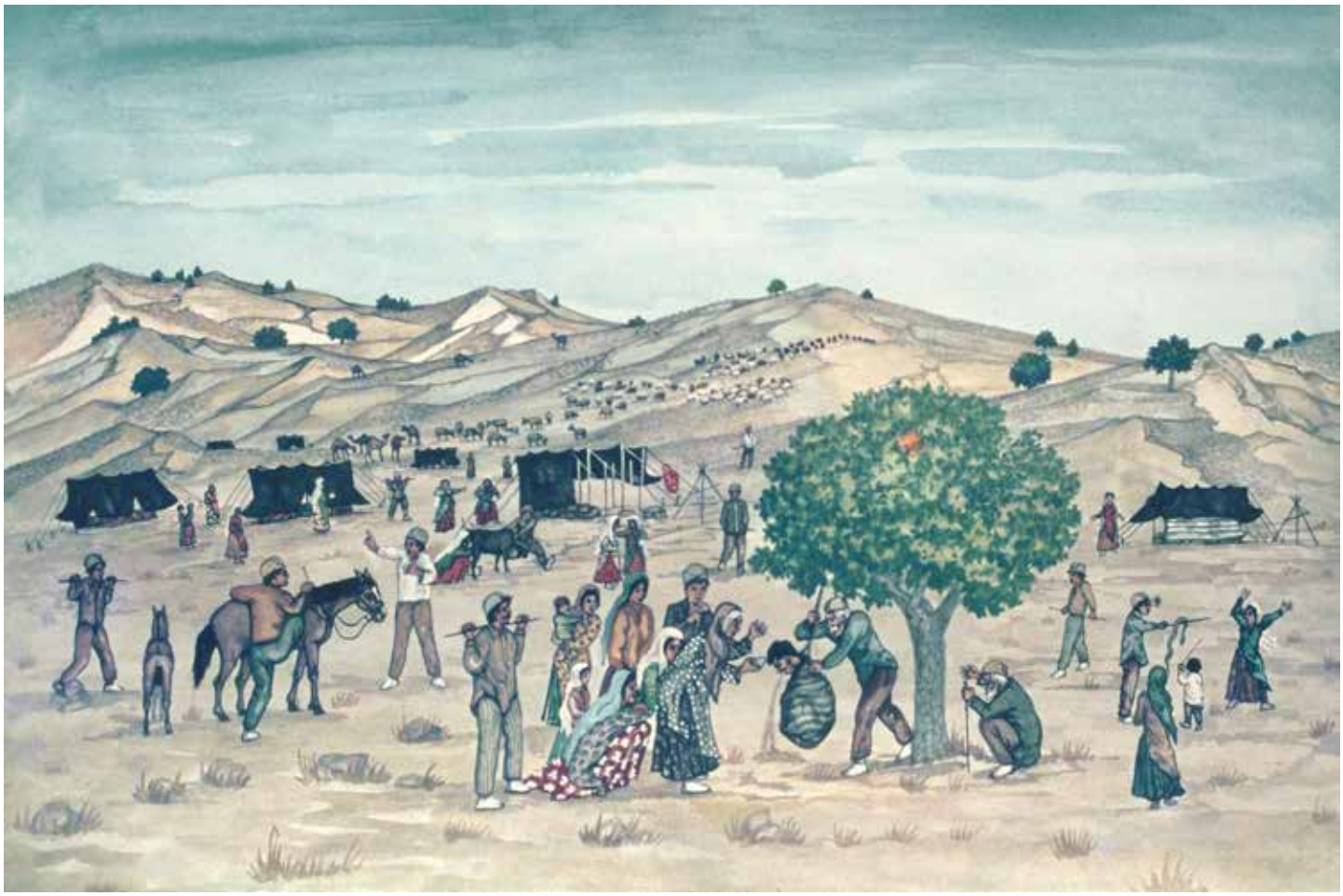


Plate 13. Venom Day

Plate 14. The Rheumatism Patient

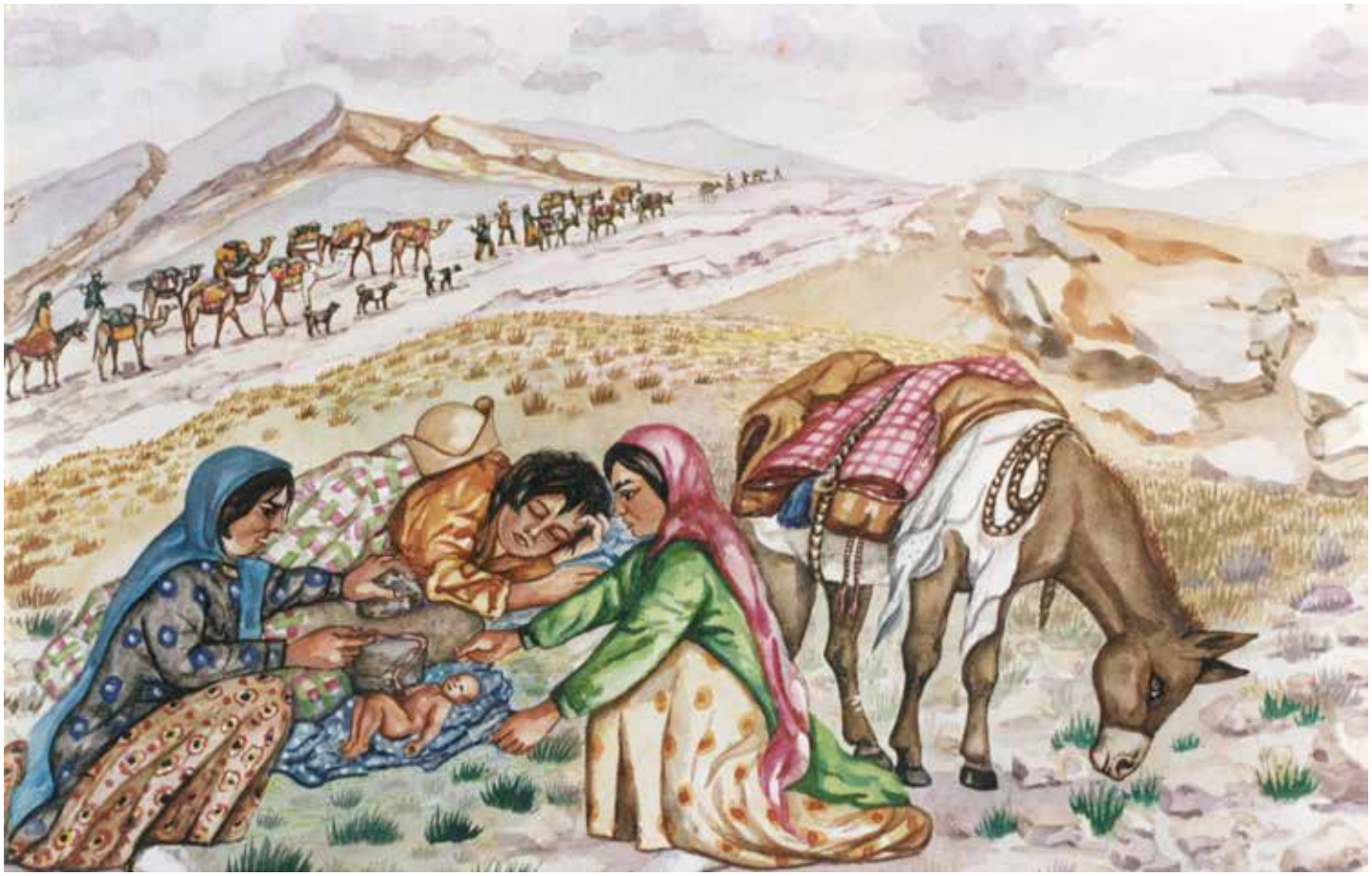


Plate 15. Born on the Road

Plate 16. The Mad Wanderer

Plate 17. Tribal Court

Plate 18. The Fight

Plate 19. The Battle

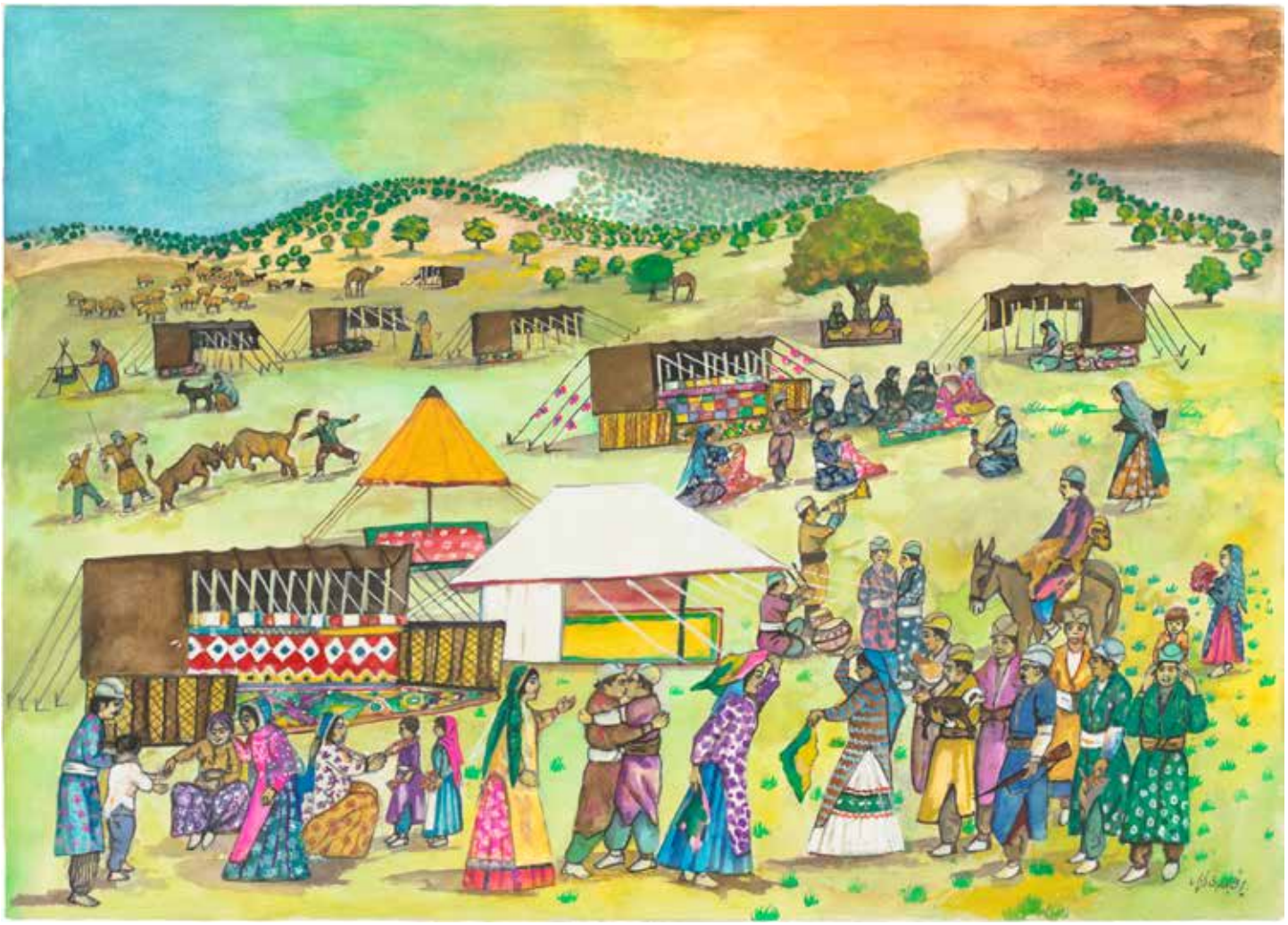


Plate 20. New Year

Plate 21. The Bridal Chamber

Plate 22. The Wedding

Plate 23. The Musicians

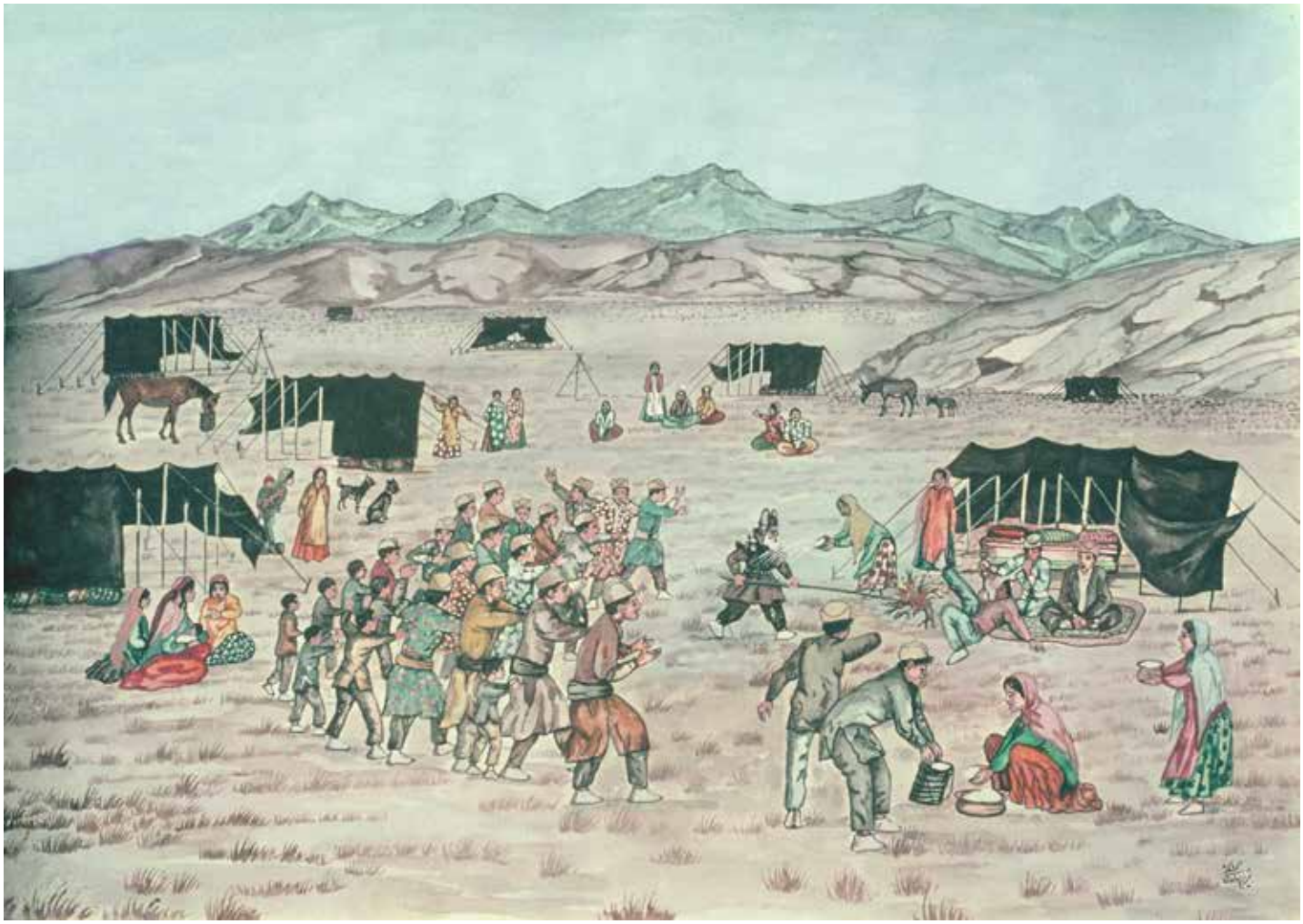


Plate 24. The Rain Dance

Plate 25. Swearing Allegiance

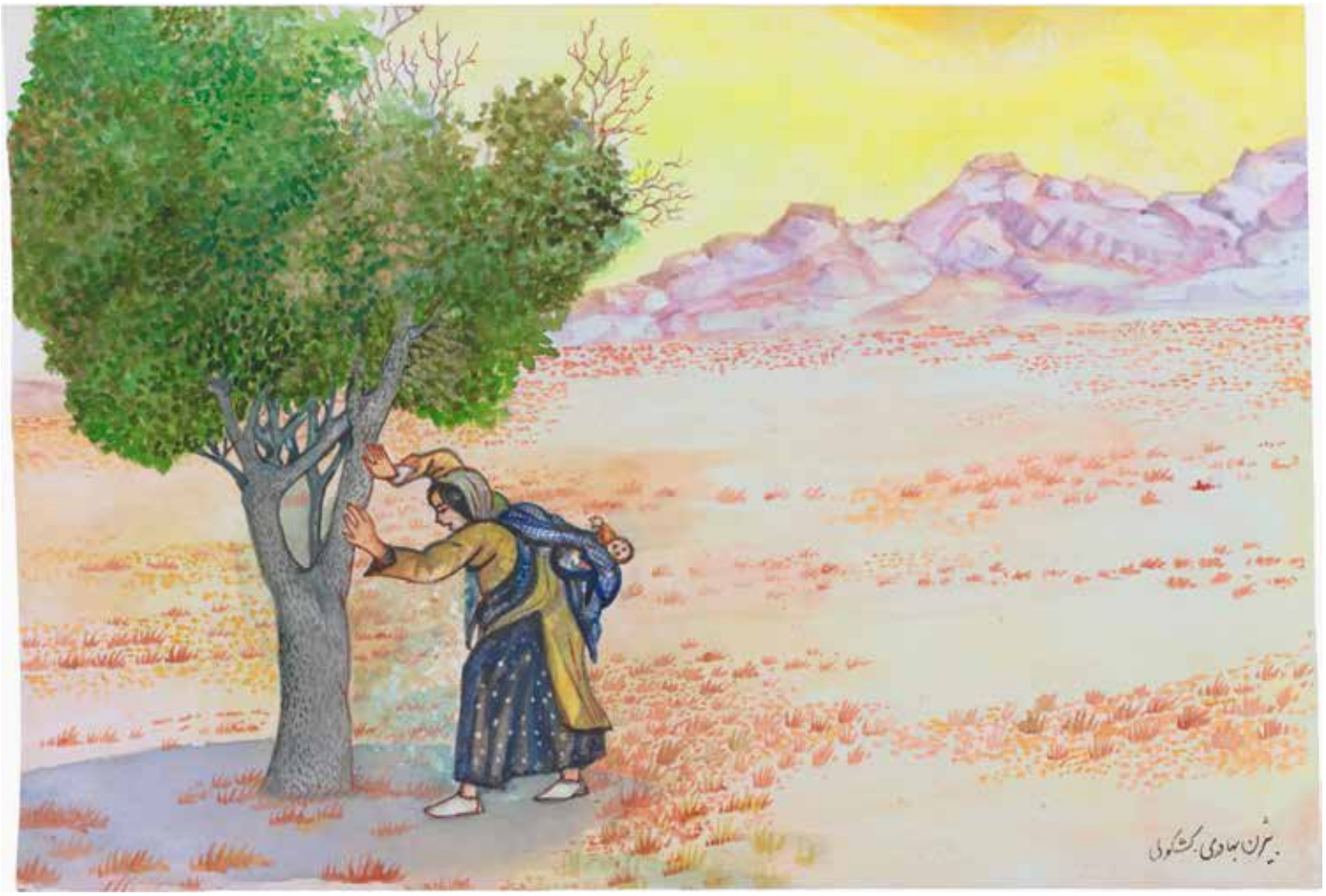


Plate 26. The Sacred Tree

Plate 27. Partridges

Plate 28. Mourning for a Horse

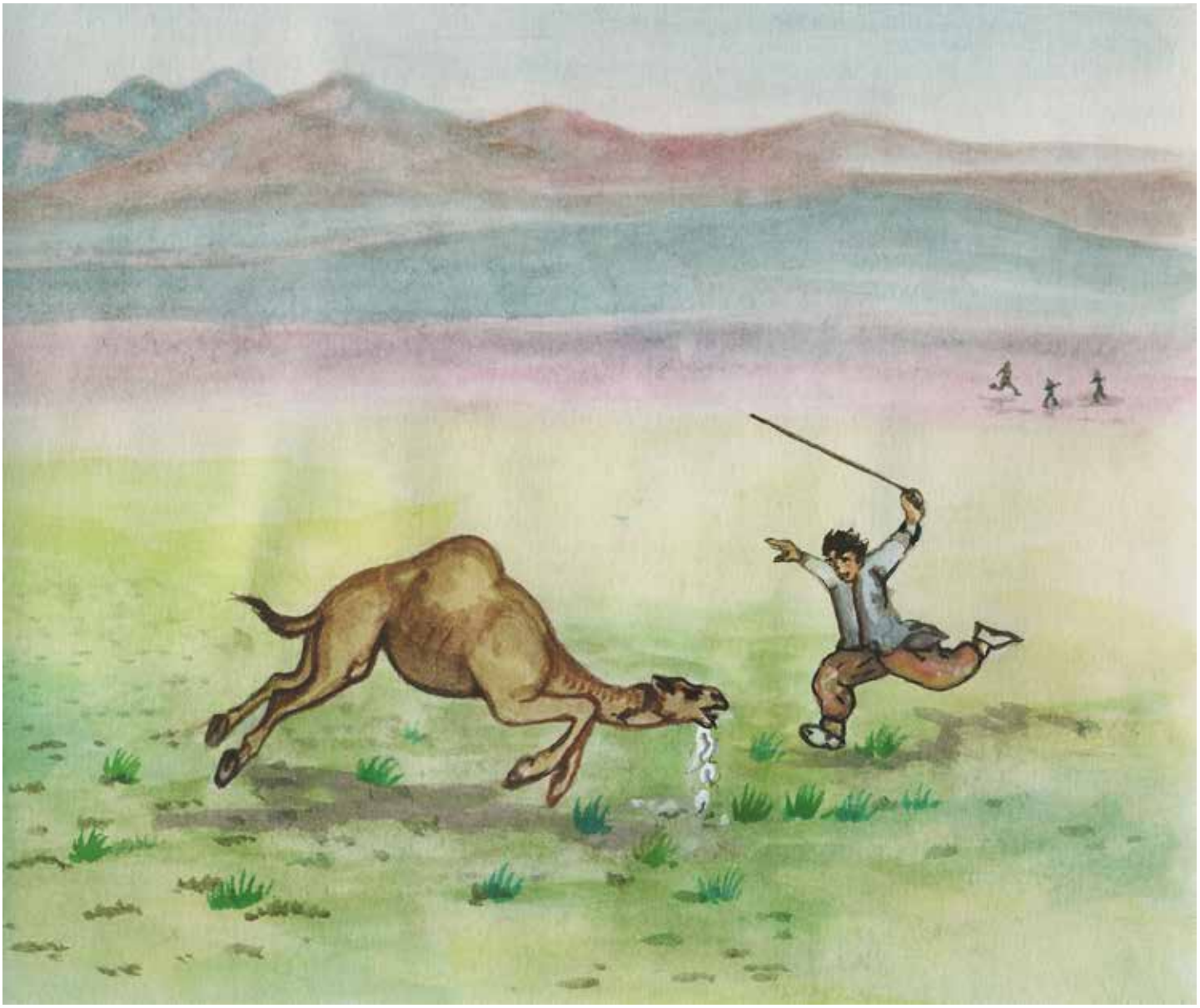


Plate 29. Camel Attack

Plate 30. Snake Attack

Plate 31. Wolf Attack

Plate 32. Bear Attack

Plate 33. Boars on the Rampage

Plate 34. The Smile

Plate 35. Collecting Firework

Plate 36. The School

Plate 37. The Lullaby

Plate 38. Goats in the Sun

Plate 39. The Cuckoo

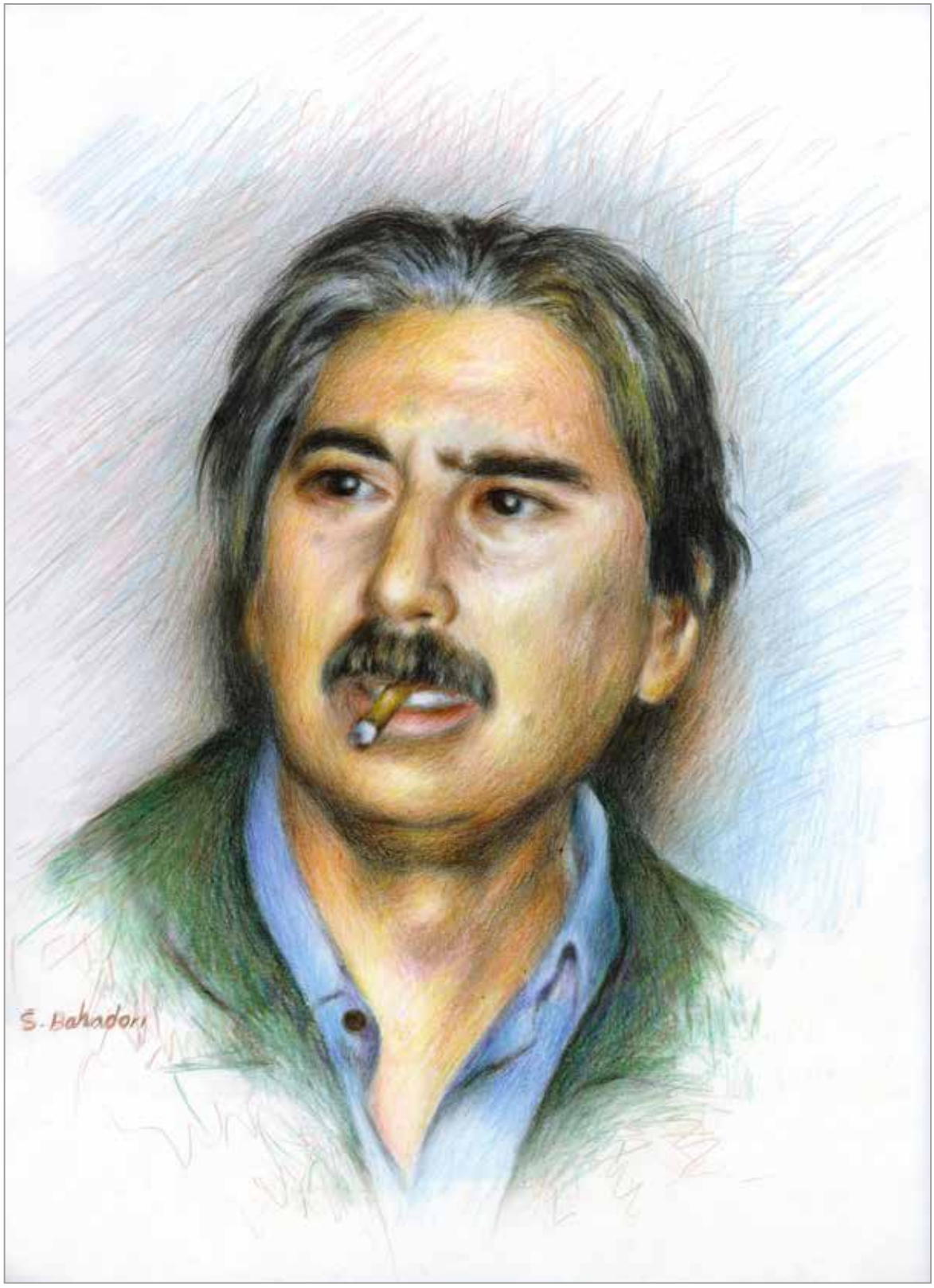


Plate 40. Khosrow Khan

PART 2 – THE ARTIST AND HIS PEOPLE

Dedication

Merijn Gantzert

Despite more than five decennia of central government persecution of his family, part of the traditional Qashqa'i tribal aristocracy – persecution ranging from petty administrative harassment, expropriation and imprisonment to enforced exile and judicial murder – and despite the rapid decline of the traditional Qashqa'i way of life he knew during his younger years, my father-in-law spent much of his adult life producing a pictorial testimony of his memories. Hence the title of this book, Qashqa'i Life – it is a tribute to the painter himself, as well as to the past of his people. Still living in Shiraz, the traditional seat of Qashqa'i Ilkhani chiefs, to whom he is closely related, he is now the last of the leaders of the Kashkuli tribe still alive. Around him are the remnants of his people, now long sedentarized, steadily Persianized, slowly but inexorably assimilated into the nondescript cultural anonymity of standardized urban modernity and dictatorial quasi-theocratic conformity.

Eliminated from history through the larger-than-life processes of modernity, with its technological 'progress', economic 'globalization', social 'reform' and cultural 'transformation', the Qashqa'i – like so many other 'traditional', 'native' and 'primitive' people, from the Inuit of the melting Northern ice to the Yanomami of the cut-down tropical rainforests – are silently disappearing into the night. The assassinated Qashqa'i leaders are silent in their anonymous graves, the dispossessed tribes' people have lost their ancestral lands, the exiled dissidents have abandoned their forlorn causes. Economically, ritualized reciprocity has given way to rationalized market mechanisms. Socially, hereditary nobility has given way to democratized conformity. Culturally, tribal honor has given way to individualistic expediency. Even the old nomadic pastures themselves have disappeared, dug up by farmers, paved over by residential developers, bulldozed by recreational entrepreneurs.

Tourist picnickers leave their litter on the lands of the Lords of the Mountains. All that remains is their memory. This memory is preserved potently and brightly in the paintings of Bijan Khan Bahadori. It also lingers, dimmed, nearly surreal, in the paintings of his son Siros. This book is dedicated not only to their work but also to the memory of their people – the Qashqa'i of Persia.

Qashqa'i Ethnography and History

Manucher Kiani

La Haute Asie... se présente ainsi comme la matrice des nations... destinée dans le tumulte de ses Völkerwanderungen, à donner des sultans et des fils du Ciel aux vieux empires civilisés. Cette descente des hordes de la steppe qui viennent périodiquement asseoir leurs khans sur les trônes... de Pékin, de Samarqand, d'Ispahan ou de Tauris, de Qonya ou de Constantinople, est devenue une des lois géographiques de l'histoire. Mais il est une autre loi – opposée -, celle qui fait lentement absorber les envahisseurs nomades, par les vieux pays civilisés; phénomène double, démographique d'abord : les cavaliers barbares, établis à l'état d'aristocratie sporadique, sont noyés et disparaissent dans ces denses humanités, dans ces fourmilières immémoriales; phénomène culturel ensuite: la civilisation chinoise ou persane vaincue, conquiert son farouche vainqueur, l'enivre, l'endort, l'annihile.[1]

High Asia... thus appears as the Womb of Nations... destined, in the chaos of its barbarian invasions, to give Sultans and Sons of Heaven to ancient civilized empires. This descent of steppe hordes, which periodically establish their khans on the thrones... of Peking, of Samarkand, of Isfahan or of Tauris[2]*, of Qonya or of Constantinople, has become one of the geographical laws of history. But there is another law – opposed [to it] – which causes the nomadic invaders to be slowly absorbed by the old civilized lands. [It is] a double phenomenon, first a demographic [phenomenon]: the barbaric horsemen, established as a transient aristocratic caste, are drowned and disappear in the masses of human material, in those timeless ant colonies, second a cultural phenomenon: the vanquished Chinese or Persian civilization, conquers its wild conqueror, [it] inebriates him, lulls him asleep, annihilates him.*

Origins

The Qashqa'i are descendants of Turkish tribal people who lived in Mesopotamia around 3000 BC[3]. They later migrated, initially north to Azerbaijan – around 600 years ago they entered southern Iran, whilst continuing to live a nomadic lifestyle. Nowadays, out of a total population of approximately two million[4], an estimated 10.000 Qashqa'i still live in the traditional nomadic pastoral way, while the rest of the population has settled in towns and cities in Southern Iran.

Warriors and craftsmen

The Qashqa'i are a brave warrior race which throughout its existence defended the borders of Iran and whose battles with insurgents have been formally recognised and recorded in history. Artistically talented, their carpet and woven wool skills are internationally renowned. They are a self-sufficient people, making a living through agriculture and animal husbandry. They dwell in black tents which they themselves weave out of goats' hair.

Bi-annual migration

The tribes migrate to the higher grounds of the summer pastures of central Iran during the summer months and spend the winters at lower altitudes in the warmer climates of the south. The distance between these two destinations is around 500 kilometres, which these tribes cover twice a year, enduring many hardships in search of grazing land for their herds. With herds of some 3 million animals, they are a major contributor to the economy of the country. The migration process is arduous. The tribes' people load their belongings onto donkeys and camels and ride on horseback through inhospitable terrain, across wide rivers and through high mountain passes in their search for pastures for their herds. *Note by M. Gantzert: The Summer quarters, in the high mountains, are known as* yailagh *(Turkish) or* garmsir *(Persian) and the Winter quarters, near the Persian Gulf coast, as* qishlagh *(Turkish) or* sardsir *(Persian).*

Tribal history

The Qashqa'i confederacy comprises five large tribes: the Kashkuli, Darrehshuri, Amaleh, Farsi Madan and Shish Boluki[5]. Each tribe consists of several sub tribes of which there are around 250 in total. Notable characteristics of this race include horsemanship, marksmanship, hospitality and bravery.

Administrative affairs are typically conducted by the confederate chieftains[6]. For the past five centuries the chieftains (*ilkhani*'s) were appointed by the emperors. Each chieftain would in turn appoint a leader per clan referred to as sheriffs (*khan*'s). Each sheriff would select headmen to preside over the affairs of each sub tribe. These headmen were responsible for collecting taxes and providing fighting forces for their Sheriffs. The Qashqa'i belong to the Shi'a Muslim religion[7] and speak a Turkic language. Their resistance during the First and Second World Wars, especially with regard to British occupation forces, caused them great hardship and resulted in their

alienation from the political scene. Because they lived near the southern, oil-rich areas and trading ports of Iran, they were confronted with foreigners looting local and national resources and therefore felt compelled to fight. Their nomadic lifestyle hitherto impacted adversely on their schooling and access to higher education. As a result, levels of literacy were very low. However, nowadays, the majority of these people have settled into urban life and they now count amongst them highly educated individuals and a credit to the nation.

A rich cultural tradition[8]

The Qashqa'i have a rich culture with ancient customs and rituals which they proudly abide by and which they work hard to preserve from generation to generation. National festivals such as *Mehregan* (Persian Autumn Festival), *Cheleh Bedar* (Winter Festival), *Esfand* (Fire Festival, marking the end of Winter) and the New Year are all celebrated with great splendour, as are certain religious festivities, such as *Eid-e-Ghorban* (Arabic: *Eid al-Adha*, the Festival of Sacrifice). Great importance is also attached to their magnificent circumcision, sheep shearing and wedding ceremonies (cf. Plate 22). Because the roving Qashqa'i did not stay in one place, they did not have access schools or medical facilities. They were therefore obliged to provide their own medical treatment for the ill and infirm (cf. Plates 10-14). Over many centuries, experienced members of the tribes have developed alternative therapy techniques with which to treat ailments. Most of these techniques are today endorsed by medical professionals.

A visual record

In the past, elderly men and women developed their own methods of curing ailments. No film or photographic records have been made of these techniques or of the tribe's daily living activities. Bijan Bahadori, however, made many paintings of Qashqa'i life. This talented painter, *khan* of the Kashkuli tribe, grew up in the traditional large black tents and has personally witnessed many of the scenes he painted during the course of his life. He experienced the hardships of his people (cf. Plates 12, 15, 27-29), which resulted in paintings that provide great insight into the lives and experiences of the Qashqa'i tribe.

Qashqa'i tent

Iran and its Nomads

Kees van Burg

Geography, social structure, history, politics: the etic view

Looking at Iran, it can be argued that nomadic tribes played an important role in Iranian history because of the region's geography. Vast areas of Iran are unsuitable for intensive grazing or crops, but offer other opportunities[9].

Iran is a country that, throughout its history, has been repeatedly invaded and conquered. As a state and political entity Iran has thus frequently been reorganized, with invaders causing turmoil among its various peoples. Usually the invaders were nomadic, with tribal leaders at the head of armies of well-trained horsemen. In fact, all the Shah-dynasties between the Seljuqs (1037-1194) and the Qajars (1796-1925) were founded by leaders who drew on a tribal power-base for their authority over territory.

A tribe is a community to which one *belongs*, not necessarily through paternal or maternal lineage. People join tribes, since belonging to the tribe brings security. Different tribal groups coexist, sharing common interests, geography, language, and customs, and they can form confederations, as the Qashqa'i did. Its confederacy consists of major and minor tribes.

When intelligent and capable leaders emerge, successful tribes usually grow larger – they become dominant in relation to other tribes. In Iranian history successful management earned the tribal leader and his family a strong position, and tribes became hierarchical. Prominent leaders were granted titles by a shah, such as: *Ilkhani* ('highest prince') or *Ilbeg*, ('first noble'), titles that were inheritable. Their families played important roles in negotiating with the central government, and essentially became part of it.

Originally, the title *Khan* is the Mongolian title reserved for the highest ranking warlords, 'uppermost', with the secondary meaning of 'sovereign prince', equivalent to 'king' or 'emperor', depending on the context. The title *Ilkhani* originally means 'peaceful, subordinate *Khan*' and was chosen by Hulagu, grandson of Genghiz Khan, to express his intention not seek to a quarrel over the position of *Khan* with his senior brother, Kublai Khan. It then became the honorary title of the leaders of his dynasty

who ruled the state known as the 'Ilkhanate'. This prestigious title was extended to Qashqa'i confederate leaders by successive Persian rulers, affirming their position of special power in the state.

Nomadic tribes are experts at surviving in harsh environments and defending the inhospitable places where they feel at home. This can be a disadvantage for a centrally governed state. When the Qajar dynasty came to power in 1796, it is estimated that half the population of Iran consisted of tribal individuals living nomadically. Central government turned this disadvantage into an advantage by letting tribes manage their own affairs – in return they could count on their loyalty to maintain central government authority and protect state borders. In times of war, the nomads and their horses made an excellent auxiliary army that could take control over areas that the shah's regular army could not reach. This the Qashqa'i did in 1918, when the British invaded from the Persian Gulf during World War I.

At first the Qajar's central government could only maintain a weak hold on outlying provinces. Large areas of the Qajar state were defined as tribal regions, and administered through local tribal leaders who were held responsible for collecting government taxes. The Shah needed the tribal leaders' support and granted them privileges accordingly. In due course, however, the central government reinforced its position at the expense the tribal leaders and they gradually lost power throughout the 19th and early 20th Century. After the Reza Pahlavi was crowned shah in 1925 this process continued until, finally, the Islamic Revolution of 1979 completely swept away the traditional feudal and tribal system, replacing it with entirely centralized state control.

The Qashqa'i migration: the emic view *– Merijn Gantzert*

Malek Mansur Khan, one of the four Shahilu brothers who formed the leadership of the Qashqa'i confederacy from World War II till the Islamic Revolution, described the Qashqa'i migration to Madame Ullens de Schooten in 1953.[10]

'The yearly migrations of the Qashqa'i, seeking fresh pastures, drive them from the south to the north, where they move to their Summer quarters, *yailagh*, in the high mountains; and from the north to the south, to their Winter quarters, *qishlagh*.

In Summer, the Qashqa'i flocks graze on the slopes of the Kuh-e Dinar; a group of mountains from 4.000 to 5.000 metres, that are part of Zagros chain. In Autumn,

the Qashqa'i break camp, and by stages leave the highlands. They winter in the warmer regions near Firuzabad, Kazerun, Jerre, Farashband, on the banks of the river Mound, till, in April, they start once more on their yearly trek.

The migration is organized and controlled by the Qashqa'i Chief. The Tribes carefully avoid villages and towns such as Shiraz and Isfahan, lest their flocks, estimated at 7 million head, might cause serious damage. This annual migration is the largest of any Persian tribe.

It is difficult to give exact statistics, but we believe that the tribes now number 400.000 men, women and children.'

Qashqa'i migration

Qashqa'i Origins

Kees van Burg

Various theories: the etic view

The following is a summary of various theories concerning Qashqa'i origins discussed by L. Beck[11] *– elements of truth may exist in each of these theories. Note that a systematic chronology is provided in Appendix 1 – Timeline of Persian History.*

Some sources place the origins of the Qashqa'i among the Khalaj, a Turkic people originating in Central Asia, one of twenty-two branches of the western Oghuz, and one of the Middle East's largest Turkic groups. At the end of the fourteenth century Mongol ruler Tamerlane moved some Khalaj from Asia Minor, where they had settled in the 11th and 12th Centuries, to central and eastern Iran, at which time a group of them was said to have fled and settled in Fars. According to this theory, this group was called *Qashqa'i*, meaning 'fugitives' or 'those who fled' from the Turkic verb root *kaçmak* 'to flee'.

Another theory connects the Qashqa'i with Iraqi Turkmen who escaped from Ghaznavid ruler (975-1187) and settled in western Iran. A 19th Century Iranian historian states that the Qashqa'i are a branch of a Yomut Turkmen tribe named 'Qashqah' that accompanied the Salghurid Atabegs to Fars in the 12th Century. A related notion is that the Qashqa'i descend from Kara-Khitai[12] who were sent to Fars by Mohammad Khwarezm Shah (1199-1220) to spy on his vassal, the Salghurid Atabeg Sa'd. The dynasties of the Salghurid Atabegs (1148-1284), who ruled in Fars as tributaries of the Seljuks and of the Khwarezm shahs were of Turkic origin and based their power on nomadic tribes near Gandoman in northern Fars, which is regarded as the ancestral pastureland of the Shahilu lineage. Southern Fars provided an inexpugnable haunt for Turkic tribes under the Muzaffarids (1313-1393)[13,] and Ibn Sihab Yazdi noted the presence of Qashqa'i nomads in summer pastures at Gandoman in 1415.

Some 19th Century Qashqa'i leaders stated that the Mongol leader Hulagu brought the Qashqa'i to Iran from Kashgar in Turkistan – hence the name. More recent leaders recount the popular legend that the Qashqa'i originally were cavalrymen whose families tended flocks for Genghiz Khan in eastern Turkistan and who later participated in his westward campaigns.

A quite solid theory concerning the Shahilu lineage of Qashqa'i *ilkhani*'s is that it descends from the Aq Quyunlu ruler Uzun Hassan (d. 1478)[14], but this does not adress explicitly the issue of the origin of the Qashqa'i people as a whole, unless it is assumed that they also descend from Aq Quyunlu groups (which were diverse).

Finally, a Soviet scholar states that the Qashqa'i were part of the Turkic-speaking Shahsevan tribes of Mughan in northwest lran at the end of the 16th Century and that Safavid Shah Abbas (1597-1628) moved these Qashqa'i to Fars to assist in military operations in the Persian Gulf area.

About Qashqa'i origins: the emic view *– Merijn Gantzert*

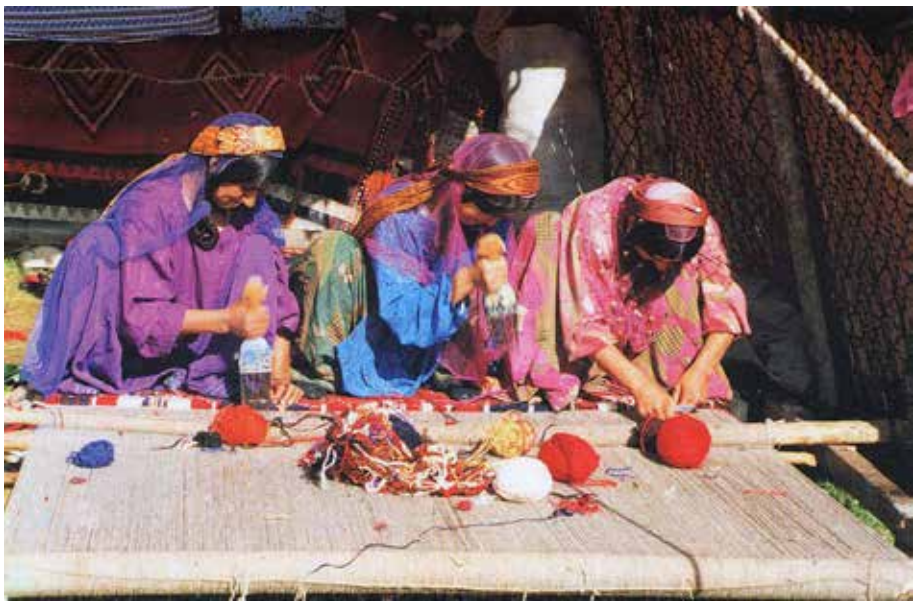
This is how Malek Mansur Khan, one of the four Shahilu brothers who formed the leadership of the Qashqa'i confederacy from World War II till the Islamic Revolution, spoke about Qashqa'i origins and nomadism to Madame Ullens de Schooten in 1953. [15]

'To survive, nomads have been always obliged to fight. They lead a wandering life and do not accumulate documents and archives. But in the evenings, around fires that are burning low, the elders will relate striking events, deeds of valour in which the tribes pride themselves. Thus the epic tale is told from father to son, down the ages. The tribes of Central Asia were forced by wars, strife, upheavals, to abandon their steppes and seek new pasture grounds ... so the Huns, the Visigoths, and before them the Aryans, had invaded India, Iran, Europe.

When Genghis Khan set forth as 'Conqueror of the World', the eddies of his wars and battles sent new waves across the Asian plateau. The Turks, forsaking the regions where they had dwelt for centuries, started moving down through the Turan and Caspian depressions, establishing themselves eventually on the frontiers of the Iranian Empire and in Asia Minor. We are the descendants of the Turkish Ghuzz Tribe, known for its cruelty and fierceness, and that our name is derived from the Turkish 'Kashka' meaning 'a horse with a white star on its forehead'. Others think this name indicates that we came from Kashgar in the wake of Hulagu. Others still that it means 'fugitive'.

Though the versions differ, we believe that the arrival of our Tribes in Iran coincided with the conquests of Genghis Khan, in the 13th Century. Soon after, our ancestors established themselves on the slopes of the Caucasus. We are descendants of the Tribe of the Aq Quyunlu, the Tribe of the White Sheep, famed for being the only

tribe in history capable of inflicting a defeat on Tamerlane. For centuries we dwelt on the lands surrounding Ardebil, but, in the first half of the 16th Century we settled in southern Persia, Shah Ismail having asked our warriors to defend this part of the country against the intrusions of the Portuguese. Thus, our Tribes came to the Province or Fars, near the Persian Gulf, and are still only separated from it by a ridge of mountains, the Makran.'



Qashqa'i carpet weaving

The Qashqa'i in the World Wars

Merijn Gantzert

For a mighty nation like us to be carrying on a war with a few struggling nomads ... is a spectacle most humiliating, an injustice unparalleled, a national crime most revolting, that must, sooner or later, bring down upon us or our posterity the judgment of Heaven.[16]

Introduction

Among the historically most interesting paintings of Bijan Bahadori are those dealing with the Qashqa'i military confrontations with British forces during the World Wars (cf. Plate 19) – confrontations which claimed the lives of his grandfather and father. Another reason for looking at the Qashqa'i during World Wars I and II here is that the most striking way in which Qashqa'i and European history are related is through the prominent role of the former in the Persian involvement in both World Wars. In both conflicts, the simmering Qashqa'i conflict with the central government broadened to include the Allied powers. Russia and Great Britain had vital interests at stake in the Near East in general and in Persia in particular – they sought to control the central government by a combination of political pressure and military intervention. Despite their geopolitical dominance in Persia, the Allied powers found themselves facing consistent opposition from the Qashqa'i leaders, which were seeking to preserve or restore the traditional independence and privileges of their people. In both conflicts, the Qashqa'i, obtaining some support from the Central and Axis powers, posed a substantial military threat to Allied control of Persia. It should be noted that this article aims at nothing more than providing a short historical background and a basic outline of Persian involvement in general, and the political and military role played by the Qashqa'i tribal confederacy more specifically, in World Wars I and II. Extensive bibliography can be found on the Encyclopaedia Iranica website (www.iranica.com).[17]

Context – late Qajar Persia

The political situation in Persia at the time of the outbreak of World War I was determined by two interrelated factors: first the internal, modernizing attempt at political, economic and social reform and second the external, imperialist pressure

to maintain the privileged positions gained by Great Britain and Russian during the preceding decades.

The reform movement culminated in the Persian Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1907, the first of its kind in Asia, during which Mozaffar al-Din Shah Qajar (1896-1907), pressured by a powerful alliance of bazaar merchants and clergy, was forced to grant a constitution to the nation. Soon, however, the reform movement faced important set-backs: the new shah, Mohammad Ali (1907-1909), seeking to roll back Constitutionalist usurpation of royal power and, backed by the Russian-officered Persian Cossack Brigade, effectively fought and disbanded the majlis, the new parliament. In a swift counter move, Constitutionalist forces gathered in the provinces, marched on Tehran and disposed Mohammad Ali, forcing him into exile and putting his 11-year old son Ahmad (1909-1925) on the throne. However, as soon as the reinstated Constitutionalists appointed the American administrator Morgan Shuster as treasurer general and seriously attempted to reform the national finances, corrupted and dominated by imperialist interests, the Russian army, already present in various garrison cities in the northern part of Persia, intervened. Again the majlis were disbanded, the constitution was suspended and Shuster sent home.

During the last part of the 19th and the early years of the 20th Century the imperialist interests of Russia and Britain, competing in the so-called 'Great Game', clashed in western Asia. To the north was the greatly expanded Russian Empire, which had severely encroached on the Persian sphere of influence, in the Trans-Caucasian as well as the Trans-Caspian areas, and which used its status as guarantor of Christian minorities in Muslim lands, including the Ottoman Empire and Persia, as a power lever. To the south was Great Britain, deriving much of its power and prestige from its rule over the Indian subcontinent, but anxious to preserve a buffer between its colonial interests and Russian expansion. As the technological advances of the Industrial Revolution made fossil fuel a highly desirable resource, the Great Game became increasingly dominated by concerns over control of significant oil reserves in the region: Russia controlled the rich Baku fields on the Caspian Sea, while Britain dominated the exploitation of oil fields around the Persian Gulf, including those in south western Persia. In the belt of lands not directly controlled by either great power, including the Ottoman Empire, Persia and Afghanistan, there was a certain room for manoeuvre by nominally independent local governments. Another factor strengthening the relative position of the independent states of western Asia became visible in the last years of the 19th Century with the rise of Germany as a great power, posing a challenge to the English and Russian imperial dominance of the region. German political power in the region, relying on economic expansion, was not projected through colonial imperialism but rather through strengthening the independent states, which provided a natural conduit for German aspirations in the Old World, otherwise largely carved up into colonial empires subject to protectionist

control. Most visible was the German expansion in the Ottoman Empire, where the Berlin to Baghdad railway project was undertaken, but a German trade network was established around the Gulf too – here German industrial products, superior in quality and lower in price compared to British or French products, found a ready market. It was in the context of the Great Game Anglo-Russian rivalry and the rise of Germany that the Persian Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1907 and the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 should be seen: they were, at least in part, emancipatory movements aimed at modernizing and strengthening pre-modern state structures which faced with great dangers as well as opportunities.

The rise of Germany was one of the factors[18] contributing to the Anglo-Russian Convention 1907, in which Britain and Russia decided to settle their claims in Asia and establish an informal alliance between the two countries – it was one of the key stones of the Triple Entente which Germany would soon find itself faced with in Europe. For Persia the convention, which divided the country into delineated spheres of interest (the north and west went to Russia, the southeast to Britain, with a neutral buffer zone in the middle), was equally disadvantageous: the new Constitutionalist government found itself faced with a united imperialist front, blocking any attempt at significant economic or political emancipation. Effectively, British and Russian interests were better served by the old status quo, which guaranteed the imperialist economic and political privileges – they therefore supported the Royalist cause. When in 1911 Russia intervened militarily to suppress the Constitutional movement, Britain conveniently acquiesced – a move sharply in contrast with the otherwise much-vaunted British concern with so-called liberal and democratic values.

The eve of World War I

Ismail Khan Sowlat al-Dowla, Qashqa'i ilkhani since 1904, had managed to reverse the decline of the Qashqa'i in the last decennia of the 19th Century – a decline caused by a combination of a prolonged famine and of the deliberate policies of a relatively strong central government, policies aimed at eroding tribal power. Under the corrupt and weak rule of Mozaffar al-Din Shah and his successors, the main obstacle against the resurgence of Qashqa'i tribal power under Sowlat al-Dowla was the Qawami clan, concentrated around the most powerful merchant family of Shiraz, whose head was the hereditary mayor of the city and bore the title Qawam al-Molk. The central government supported them and in 1862 had put the Qawam at the head of a newly created tribal confederacy, the Khamsa, made up of mixed Turkish, Persian and Arab tribal elements previously associated with the Qashqa'i. The business interests of the Qawami clan, based on and extending outward from the city of Shiraz, largely coincided with those of British traders – both were keen on combating tribal banditry and road tolls in the hinterland of Fars province, espe-

cially on breaking Qashqa'i control of the Bushire-Shiraz highway, vital to British trade from the Gulf[19]. Thus, aside from the rather weak provincial militia and his own much stronger tribal army, the Qawam could rely on British support when needed – he was in fact viewed as a British stooge, not only by his Qashqa'i rivals but also by much of the common city people of Shiraz. The lack of indigenous support for the Qawam even in his Shiraz stronghold became acute during the Persian Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1907, when the powerful clergy roused much of the populace in favor of the Constitutional cause and against the Qawam, who was associated with the corrupt old Royalist regime. Sowlat al-Dowla, grasping the opportunity to regain Qashqa'i dominance in Fars province, threw in his lot with the Constitutionalists and several times held a triumphal march through Shiraz with his army. He also joined in an anti-Qawami 'League of the South' with leaders of some of the other tribes of southern Persia. In March 1908 Mohammed-Reza Khan Qawam al-Molk was assassinated and in the next years his son and successor, Habib Allah Khan, was barely able to withstand repeated Qashqa'i attacks. In June 1911, he was nearly killed by the Qashqa'i as he was travelling into exile by order of the new governor-general of Fars province, but he escaped and returned to Shiraz, seeking refuge in the British consulate.

At this point the British, who regarded the Qawam as the main guarantor of their interests in southern Persia, decided to intervene in a strong manner. These interests now included not only trade but, more importantly, the large British oil concession in Khuzestan, The Qawam was given ample funds to raise a new force, while the Qashqa'i were forced to withdraw from Shiraz under threat of direct military action – this despite the fact that Shiraz fell outside the official sphere of influence allotted to Britain under the terms of the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907. The British had also pressurized the central government into setting up a modern police force, the Government Gendarmerie, trained and led by Swedish officers and tasked with strengthening law and order and combating tribal banditry. The Gendarmerie, funded by foreign loans, steadily increased its position in the country and, attracting educated and competent native personnel commanded the respect of the population. At the outbreak of World War I it, besides the Persian Cossack Brigade, constituted the only modern combat force in Persia, but it allegiance was not necessarily to the imperialist nations which had been instrumental in setting it up. After the war started, funding by Russia and Britain dried up, and the Gendarmerie, its Swedish officers mostly recalled, was now led by educated natives with reformist and nationalist sympathies, increasingly politicized in a nationalized direction. Germany offered not only financial support but also an alliance against Russia and Britain, which were seeking to keep Persia under firm control in the face of Central Power aspirations in Asia. In late 1914, as the Ottoman Empire sided with the Central Powers and the sultan called on the Muslim subjects of the Allied colonial empires to rise in Holy War, these threats became acute. Except the general threat posed to the Russian and British hold on their empires in Asia, there was a specific threat

to the Middle Eastern oil fields and to Allied communications, most importantly through the Suez Canal. In Persia, the main forces that would end up siding with the Central Powers were the southern tribes, eventually including the Qashqa'i, as well as the very Gendarmerie that had originally been meant to contain and fight them.

World War I

Officially Persia was neutral in World War I, but its central government was weak and the country became a battlefield for external forces, i.e. armies from neighbouring belligerent powers, as well as for various internal warring factions, aligned with either the Allied or Central powers. In January 1915 Ottoman detachments started infiltrating western Persia, extending the Caucasian battle front against Russia, taking Orumiye and Tabriz – this move also served to encourage the pro-German faction in the majlis to openly side with the Central powers. Russia responded by sending a substantial army into Persia, driving the Turks from Tabriz and occupying large sections of Persian Azerbaidjan. In February 1915 Wilhelm Wassmuss, German consul in Bushire before the war, convinced the German and Ottoman government to support him in infiltrating into southern Persia, aiming to foment a tribal revolt and to start a guerilla war against British interests. He was intercepted early on by a pro-British chieftain, but managed to escape moments before being handed over to the British. Eventually, aided by Qashqa'i hospitality and assistance, he made his way to Shiraz, where he set out to subvert the Gendarmerie and align the tribes with the Central powers. The British, in order to protect their interests in the Gulf area, intervened militarily early on: in November 1914 they landed an expeditionary corps in southern Mesopotamia, to cover the British oil concession in Khuzestan and impede Ottoman operations into southern Persia. In August 1915 they also occupied the important port of Bushire.

In November 1915 the rising nationalist tide in Persia prompted direct Russian military intervention: the Russians advanced on Tehran, causing a mass exodus from the capital – nationalist government officials and majlis deputies and their retainers, as well as members of the Central powers legations and hundreds of escaped Austrian prisoners of war, fled south. In Qom the nationalists established a Committee of National Defence, which acted as a provisional government at war with the Allies, and most of the Gendarmerie now openly sided with them. In Shiraz the Gendarmerie, at the instigation and with the assistance of German infiltrants led by Wassmuss, staged a coup and took control of the city, occupying the British consulate and sending its members south as prisoners. Similarly, in many cities in the western and central regions of Persia, such as Hamadan, Kermanshah, Isfahan, Yazd and Kerman, the nationalist Gendarmerie took over, expelling Allied nationals. In the process, part of the Persian Cossack Brigade was disarmed, with some members joining the nationalist cause.

Without substantial Central power support, however, the overall nationalist position was precarious. German and Austrian help was limited to intelligence operatives and logistic support while the Ottoman Empire, under serious Allied pressure on the Mesopotamian and Caucasian fronts, could spare few troops to support the Persian nationalists. When the Russians had advanced in November, Ahmad Shah had remained behind in Tehran – he appointed a new pro-Allied government, supported by the Persian Cossack Brigade and a rump of the Gendarmerie. In the last month of 1915 and the early months of 1916 the Russians under general Baratov occupied Hamadan and Kermanshah and, aiming at Baghdad, reached the Ottoman border, sweeping the nationalist Committee and Gendarmerie out of Persian territory. In the northern Gilan area, were there had been resistance against a heavy Russian presence for many years, Baratov managed to largely suppress the Jangali nationalist resistance. In the south, meanwhile, the British equipped a private army for Habib Allah Khan Qawam al-Molk, who had escaped from Shiraz to join the British in Bushire. Soon after, he died in a hunting accident, but his son, Ibrahim Khan, retook Shiraz at the head of this army in February 1916. To strengthen his position and make sure there would be no repeat of the nationalist coup, the following month the British landed a small British-Indian force at Bandar Abbas, headed by Percy Sykes. This force was to be the nucleus of an indigenous force, named the South Persian Rifles, recognized by the pro-Allied Tehran government but controlled and maintained by the British. Its task was to police southern Persia and to subdue the nationalist forces and tribal elements stirred up by Wassmuss. After marching inland, continually expanding his force with tribal mercenaries on the way, Sykes set up headquarters at Shiraz, where Ibrahim Khan had been appointed acting governor-general. Throughout the year, the South Persian Rifles force grew in strength and spread out across the region – except Shiraz, they also controlled the key cities of Kerman, Yazd and Isfahan and guarded the main roads, keeping open the trade routes. In early 1917, the strong position of Sykes led the Qashqa'i to accept an agreement by which they halted their raids, allowing the South Persian Rifles to concentrate on other hostile tribes.

This, however, proved to be the high-water mark of Allied success in southern Persia. Among the factors that contributed to the following crisis in Allied fortunes was the growing resentment of the Rifles among the Persian population. They were increasingly seen for what they basically were: a mercenary force which served the military and commercial interests of Britain and which obstructed the nationalist cause, still enjoying undiminished support among key interest groups, such as the merchants and Shi'a clergy. In the mosques the clergy kept up an unrelenting anti-British campaign, fostering wide-spread discontentment with the status quo. Especially in Fars province, where the Rifles had incorporated significant numbers of the disbanded nationalist Gendarmerie, they began to experience large-scale desertions, leading to the virtual disintegration of the Shiraz brigade. Another reason for a resurgence of the nationalist cause was a series of serious Allied set-backs in the war. The British

surrender at Kut el-Amara in April 1916 was followed by a renewed Ottoman offensive in western Persia, where by August Turkish troops and Gendarmerie had retaken Kermanshah and Hamadan. In the Autumn Ahmad Shah, faced with a pro-German coup, had to take refuge in the Russian legation until the Russian army entered Tehran in December 1916. From this point onward, however, the Russian position became steadily weaker as the Russian Revolution started taking its toll on military effectiveness. Disruption of the command structure by political interference and agitation, failing supplies and communications and large-scale desertions of the troops effectively led to the collapse of the Russian position in Persia. The loosening of the Allied grip on Persia led to the fall of the pro-Allied Tehran government in June. The new government soon withdrew recognition from the South Persian Rifles, leaving them even more exposed than before. Eventually, the Armistice of Erzincan of December 1917 put a complete end to the Russian Near Eastern war effort. In an attempt to fill the vacuum created by the collapse of its Russian ally, Britain decided to establish send a military expedition, Dunsterforce, north from Hamadan, making its way to Qazvin and Enzeli in February 1918 on its way to secure the important oil fields around Baku. This force, however, could not prevent the resurgent Ottoman army from occupying most of the Trans-Caucasian territory vacated by the dissolving Russian armies. The Ottomans took Tabriz in June 1918, Orumiye in July and Baku in September. Meanwhile the resurgent Jangali nationalists increasingly radicalized and in a provisional alliance with Russian Bolshevik forces, took control over the Gilan area.

Against the background of these developments, Wassmuss' efforts at obtaining a Qashqa'i alliance paid off at last when in early 1918 Sowlat al-Dowla declared war on Britain and its South Persian Rifles. Soon Qashqa'i forces controlled most of Fars province, besieging Shiraz. Despite their numerical superiority, however, they were defeated in pitched battle against the British at Khana Zenyan in May 1918 (cf. Plate 19). Qashqa'i intervention, in any case, had come too late: the balance of power had decisively shifted to the Allied side. With the failure of the German Spring offensive and the growing strength of the American army in France as well as the Ottoman defeats in Palestine and Mesopotamia it was clear that the Central powers could no longer win the war. In August 1918, after the failure of the Qashqa'i to dislodge the British from the south and with Dunsterforce in control over most of the north, a new pro-Allied government took power in Tehran. The new government took active action to support the British in suppressing hostile nationalist and tribal forces in the provinces. In October 1918 the tribal rising in the south had largely collapsed and Wassmuss had to flee to Qom, only to be arrested near the city by the British in March of the following year. After his release he temporarily returned to Persia in a failed attempt to settle on a farm in the south, thwarted by disputes with tribal leaders about money he had promised on behalf of Germany – he eventually returned to Germany and died a broken man.

It should be noted that as a result of the events of World War I a major change took place in Qashqa'i confederate structure. Already before the war Sowlat al-Dowla was in dispute with the leaders of one of the largest of the Qashqa'i tribes, the Kashkuli, over toll rights on the Kazerun section of the Bushire-Shiraz highway. As a result, during the war, most of the Kashkuli sided with the British against Sowlat al-Dowla and fought against him. After the fighting stopped, Sowlat al-Dowla, despite his close relationship with the Kashkuli – his mother and one of his wives were Kashkuli – decided to exact revenge by various means. Most importantly, he split up the Kashkuli into three parts: those that had been faithful to him during the war were organized into two separate tribes, the Kashkuli Kuchek and the Qarachahi, while the rest, i.e. those that had stood up against him, became known as the Kashkuli Bozorg. Afterwards, despite largely standing with Sowlat al-Dowla's sons in later years, the Kashkuli Bozorg leaders, Elias Khan and Esfandiar Khan, claimed at least nominal independence from the Qashqa'i ilkhani.

A meeting with the Qashqa'i – here General Sir Percy Sykes (3rd of left, middle row, seated with arms crossed) is visiting Sowlat al-Dowla (seated to the general's left) for negotiations.

The Interwar years

Among the important results of World War I for Persia was the elimination of Russia as an imperial power. In May 1920 Soviet Russia, however, tried regain the Russian position in the north of Persia by supporting the increasingly radicalized Jangali movement in Gilan province – by some in the Soviet government it was hoped that the successful establishment of friendly regime in northern Persia might be a first step to a hoped for communist rising against imperialist dominance among the peoples of Asia. The reality was that the Jangali movement soon foundered due to the combination of a lack of support among the alienated local population and a strong military response by the central government, which sent in the Cossack Brigade under command of Reza Pahlavi. The rapid collapse of the Gilan experiment must

be seen against the background of a shift in Soviet policy, away from internationalist revolutionary aspiration to a pragmatic rapprochement with the West, as well as strong anti-Soviet support for the Persian government by Britain, which feared for its grip over its empire in Asia. In April 1921 Reza Pahlavi executed a coup with British consent – the British government favored leaving him in place as a nationalist, anti-Bolshevik strongman after the departure of British troops. Despite resistance from feudal landlords and residual Qajar loyalists, his power steadily increased. In 1923 Ahmad Shah went into exile and in 1925 the majlis declared him deposed – Reza Pahlavi was made constitutional emperor in his stead.

Reza Shah proceeded with an ambitious program of reforms, seeking to establish an effective central government and modernizing his country, which was internationally named 'Iran'[20]. Among his many modernizing policies were infrastructure projects (e.g. the Trans-Iranian railway, from the Gulf ports Bandar Shapur and Khorramshahr to the Caspian Sea ports or to the Soviet border crossing points at Julfa and Askhabad), health care and educational reforms (e.g. establishment of a secular school curriculum and the foundation of a university), social reforms (e.g. emancipation of women, including a ban of the traditional veil) and administrative reforms (e.g. the introduction of birth certificates and of regular salaries for officials, to combat corruption). One of his political goals was to establish a strong central government – he therefore set out to break the power of the feudal landlords and of the tribes. As part of this policy he called the Qashqa'i chiefs Sowlat al-Dowla and his son Naser Khan away from the tribal area to Tehran, to take up seats in the parliament – there they were pressured into agreeing upon the disarmament of their tribesmen. Not much later, in 1926 they found themselves jailed, while in the tribal areas the central government made an all-out effort to establish full control over the tribes. The various measures decreed included legal subjection to governmental officials, the introduction of military conscription and the imposition of taxation. The excessive demands involved in this new government policy, executed with brutality force and by corrupt officials, led to a large-scale tribal rising, led by the Qashqa'i. After months of fighting the government, frustrated by the level of armed resistance, decided to negotiate and a compromise was reached: Sowlat al-Dowla and Naser Khan were released and reinstated in parliament, the military governors were withdrawn and a general amnesty declared. This, however, proved to be no more than a temporary respite for the tribes: in 1932 the Qashqa'i rose against government suppression. This time Sowlat al-Dowla was assassinated and the army was used to forcibly block the migration routes of the nomadic tribes. Deprived of their leader and access to their seasonal pastures, the Qashqa'i were forced to abandon migration and to settle into squalid shelters under military supervision. This situation was slightly improved in the following years, when it became clear that immediate, wholesale sedentarization of the tribes was unrealistic, entailing, aside from terrible humanitarian suffering, huge economic cost and unwelcome political instability. The anti-tribal policies

of Reza Shah, however, had set the stage for renewed confrontation between the Qashqa'i and the central government as Iran found itself involved in World War II.

As his domestic position strengthened, Reza Shah increasingly sought to free Persia from the imperialist tutelage and capitulations which it had been subject to under his Qajar predecessors. Having successfully fought off Soviet Russian expansionism in the north of the country, upon coming to power in 1921 one of the first acts of his new government was to old tsarist treaties which had allowed Russian interference in Persian domestic affairs. In 1928 he announced the abolishment of the old 19th Century capitulations: foreigners residing in Persia became subject to Persian law, the right to print money was transferred to a national bank, the telegraph system and customs came under Persian administration and the property and travel rights of foreigners were restricted. Next, Reza Shah, having risen to power with the support of Britain, which had regarded him as a staunch anti-Bolshevik ally, turned against the British. In 1931 he cancelled the airspace rights of British Imperial Airways and the next year he cancelled the oil concession of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company – the latter cancellation was soon revoked, but only after a renegotiation of the revenue percentages due to the Persian government. Among other measures to lessen British influence in Persian domestic affairs, was the preferential employment of German expatriate specialists as technicians and advisors. Reza Shah encouraged a growing German economic presence as a useful counterweight to Russian and British influence. On the eve of World War II Reza Shah's policies had considerably alienated the Soviet Union and Britain, who increasingly viewed him as a potential friend of Nazi-Germany, and hence as a threat to their regional interests.

World War II

Two factors had originally brought Reza Shah to power: the army, which he led, and support by Britain. At the start of World War II he had alienated most of his own people, who resented many of his reforms and his autocratic measures, as well as Britain, which had lost its privileged status and was suspicious of his pro-German course. The death of Ataturk had doomed Reza Shah's attempt at building a regional alliance to counter Russia and Britain and with friendly but distant Germany and Italy ringed with hostile territory, he now found himself internationally isolated. In Spring of 1941, occupying first Axis-friendly Iraq and then the Vichy colony of Syria-Lebanon, Britain had illustrated its firm determination to keep Axis influence out the Middle East. When Germany launched its invasion of the Soviet Union tensions between the Allies with Persia came to a head. Vital Allied interests were at stake in Persia: the rapid advance of Axis forces deep into the Soviet Union brought into question the security of the crucial Persian oil fields. More immediately, there was the urgent need for the western Allies, principally Britain but covertly America as

well, to supply war supplies to their faltering Soviet ally. Supply through the northern route, by sea to the Arctic ports, was severely hampered by Axis interdiction (U-Boat and bomber action). The most readily available alternative route was through the 'Persian Corridor', i.e. the road and rail network which connected the Persian Gulf ports to the Caspian Sea ports and to the Soviet Trans-Caucasian and Trans-Caspian land borders. Reza Shah, however, refused to comply with urgent Allied requests to open the corridor for the transit of aid to the Soviet Union and to expel Axis nationals residing in Iran.

On August 25th 1941 Persia was invaded by the Soviet Union and Britain simultaneously: three Soviet armies crossed the border from Trans-Caucasia, with detachments landing at Bandar Pahlevi, while Britain send in two (Indian) divisions and three (one British and two Indian) brigades, crossing from Iraq and by naval landing in Bandar Shahpur. The approximately nine division strong Persian army, unprepared and outnumbered, was simply overwhelmed. The Allied attack took the defenders by surprise: the small Persian navy was swiftly destroyed in coastal waters and the Gulf ports were occupied against no more than sporadic resistance. The British had occupied the Naft-e Shah oilfield and the strategic PaiTak position in western Persia by August 27th and they had reached Ahvaz, at the heart of the Khuzestan oilfields, on August 28th. As resistance evaporated, Soviet and British troops rapidly advanced into the interior, meeting each other at Senna and Qazvin on August 30th and August 31rd. Casualties on either side had been minimum and Allied victory swift. There was a change and government as Reza Shah was forced to abdicate in favor of his son, Mohammad Reza, on September 16th[21]. The new government gave in to all Allied demands but failed to deliver on the hand-over of Axis nationals, triggering a month-long Allied occupation of Tehran starting September 17th. In January 1942 Mohammed Reza signed a Treaty of Alliance with the Allies, granting them non-military aid, allowing the transit of war materiel and the stationing of Allied troops for the duration of the war. In September 1943 Persia declared war in Germany, officially siding with the Allies, and in November 1943 it hosted the Tehran Conference, the first joint meeting of Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin. The unimpeded operation of the Persian Corridor, which saw the transport of more than eight million tons of war materiel, and the uninterrupted supply of Persian oil for the duration of the war were of crucial importance to the Allied cause, prompting Churchill to refer to Persia as the 'Bridge to Victory'.

With the Persian Corridor operational and guarded by a large number Allied forces, the Allies left the Persian hinterland unoccupied – security there was entrusted to the Persian armed forces, under supervision of Allied intelligence officers. It was in this area that the Germany would attempt to emulate the strategy of Wassmuss to undermine the Allied position by subverting the tribes. Again, the key to the success of such a strategy were the Qashqa'i. Ironically, the German presence in Persia, cited

by the Allies as one of their chief reasons for invading and deposing Reza Shah, was quite insignificant from the start. Only a few German intelligence personnel were left in the field once Persia was swept by the Allied forces and these had to survive in isolation, faced with a wholly Allied controlled administration and without access to bordering friendly territory. The most remarkable of these was Berhardt Schulze-Holthus, the vice-consul at Tabriz, who, after failing to escape to Afghanistan, managed to escape the tight Allied dragnet in hiding in Tehran. There he was clandestinely contacted in Spring 1942 by Naser Khan, the son and successor of Sowlat al-Dowla. In the turmoil of the Allied invasion of 1941, Naser Khan and his brother Khosrow Khan had managed to escape from Tehran, where they had previously been forced to reside, and they had returned to Fars province. Seizing the moment of central government weakness, Naser Khan declared himself ilkhani, repossessed the tribal lands and reinstated the traditional Qashqa'i migration. Sharing his father's resentment of Britain and sympathy for Germany, he looked with mounting expectation on the German military successes in Russia, calculating that German military intervention in Persia might soon materialize from across the Caucasus. He therefore contacted Schulze-Holthus, who was smuggled into the Qashqa'i headquarters at Firuzabad in June 1942 to become Naser Khan's military advisor and liaison officer. German involvement with the Qashqa'i, codenamed 'Operation Francois', headed by famous SS special operations leader Otto Skorzeny, remained limited but had a number of tangible results: in 1943 an airstrip was constructed at Farrashbad, to be used for landing German supplies and troops (which eventually never materialized) and a three-man commando unit was landed in Qashqa'i territory, bringing a radio, gold and some weapons. The mere presence of the German operatives, soon known to the government, gave serious pause to the Allies – they feared for the security of the Khuzestan oilfields and their overland supply route, both within striking distance of the Qashqa'i heartland.

The Allies insisted on large-scale military action by the government to counter the threats from the tribal rising in the south. Naser Khan, however, managed to inflict a number of serious defeats on the government army – especially devastating was the destruction of the garrison at Semirom by a combined Qashqa'i-Boir Ahmadi force. Thus, he found himself in a position to negotiate for the restoration of Qashqa'i autonomous rights. The Germans in his army were a valuable asset and several times he turned down substantial bribes offered by the government for their hand-over. In the Autumn of 1943, having achieved an advantageous agreement with the government concerning Qashqa'i autonomy (in return for accepting government garrisons in a number of key cities) and with the tide of war having clearly turned against the Axis, Naser Khan came under mounting pressure to rid himself of the Germans in his territory. The matter was finally brought to a head by the arrest by the British Secret Service of two of Naser Khan's brothers, Malek Mansur Khan and Mohammad Hussayn Khan – they had been attempting to return from exile in Germany, but were intercepted near Aleppo. British threats against their

WW II in Iran – local women watching an Allied supply convoy halted somewhere on the Persian Corridor.

lives, combined with the offer of their exchange against the Germans in Qashqa'i territory and an intrigue involving their mother, resulted in the final hand-over of Schulze-Holthus and the other Germans in March 1944. By that time, the receding fortunes of the Axis had in any case substantially decreased the chances of success for any Axis strategy involving the Qashqa'i.

Epilogue

On balance, it may be said that the World War II Axis alliance brought the Qashqa'i great benefits – Naser Khan managed to use the alliance to substantially restore his people's autonomy and privileges. A second rising in 1946, actually in collusion with the government against the threat of Soviet influence in Persia, brought further benefits, leading to a time of relative freedom and prosperity for the Qashqa'i under the leadership of the Four Brothers, as Naser Khan and his brothers were known.

Because of their sharp anti-Pahlavi stance during the failed coup of Mosaddeq, however, in 1954 the Four Brothers were exiled and their property confiscated. The central government set out to systematically eliminate the tribes as a political force. Various factors – most importantly the economic transformation and urbanization of the country – contributed to the success of the government's sedentarization policy. The social cohesion of the tribes was increasingly lost. During the 1963 White Revolution,

aimed primarily at destroying the traditional feudal structure and strengthening the legitimacy of his own autocratic rule, Mohammad Reza Shah declared the tribes non-existent, while abolishing the titles and privileges of the tribal nobility. Against this background, it is unsurprising that among the Qashqa'i hostility to the Pahlavi regime ran deep and that most of them supported the 1979 Revolution which toppled Mohammad Reza Shah. Naser Khan and Khosrow Khan returned home after his fall from power and initially had harmonious relations with the new Khomeini government. Soon, however, fractures appeared. Traditional tribal autonomy and feudal privileges were incompatible with the totalitarian control aimed at by the new theocratic central government. For nearly two years a military stand-off ensued in the mountains around Firuzabad, where Naser Khan and Khosrow Khan defied the government, encamped between their tribal warriors. In May 1982, after the death of his oldest son, Naser Khan fled into exile and in July of that year Khosrow Khan negotiated a settlement, ending the last of the Qashqa'i rebellions. The settlement, however, was soon betrayed by the government, who hanged him in one of the main squares of Shiraz in September 1982. It is said that the history of the Qashqa'i ended with the death in exile of Naser Khan in January 1984.

With hindsight, it may be argued that the Qashqa'i involvement in the World Wars, in which they consistently found themselves on the 'wrong side', may be seen as symbolic. Despite all the turns and twists of political developments and pragmatic alliances, a tragic central theme may be found here: the valiant, but doomed struggle of Tradition against Modernity. Seen in this light, the fate of the Qashqa'i at the hand of larger-than-life (state and imperial) powers may be seen as an illustration of terrifying historic forces at work on a global scale, forces which pit traditional peoples against modern states, nomadic tribes against sedentary societies, feudal privileges against egalitarian revolutions. Such a quintessential 'Revolt against the Modern World' was the 20th Century history of the Qashqa'i.

Last stand of the Qashqa'i – Naser Khan's and Khosrow Khan's armed camp near Shiraz 1980-1982

Portrait Gallery – Characters in Modern Qashqa'i History

Ismail Khan, Sowlat-e Dowleh, Sardar-e Ashayer

'Commander of the Nomads' – ilkhani of the Qashqa'i confederacy from 1904 till his deposal by Reza Shah in 1931. He was a prominent leader in the resistance against the British intervention in southern Persia and in the opposition against Reza Shah's authoritarian rule – he was assassinated in 1933. In this photo: Ismail Khan in a council of tribal elders, depicted standing right center stage (dark moustache, no beard, white shirt and shoes)

Naser Khan

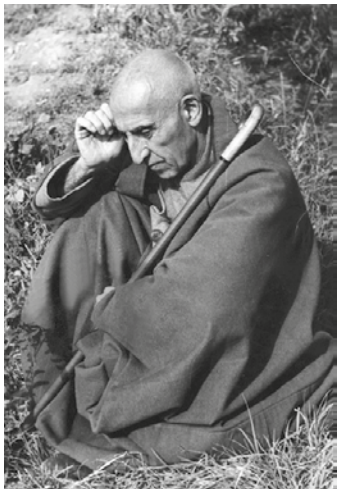
Eldest of the 'four brothers' who led the Qashqa'i after the death of his father, Ismail Khan. In 1941, in the wake of the fall of Reza Shah, he escaped from Tehran, established himself as ilkhani and restored Qashqa'i autonomy. After the coup of 1953 he was exiled as a prominent supporter of Mosaddeq, only to return during the Islamic Revolution of 1979. He soon fell out with the new government and led a two-year armed resistance in the mountains of Fars – he fled after the death of his eldest son to die in exile in 1984.

Wilhelm Wassmuss (1880-1931)

German consul at Bushire, during WWI he fomented anti-British revolts among the tribes of southern Persia, including the Qashqa'i. His daring exploits made him famous as the 'Lawrence of Persia'. After the war, he attempted to honor war-time German debts to the tribes through a failed private agricultural enterprise in southern Persia – he died, broken and forgotten, in Berlin. In this photo: Wassmuss with a Mauser and in the robes of a southern tribesman.

Sir Percy Sykes (1867-1945)

Army officer, diplomat and writer, he widely travelled throughout western Asia. In 1916 he was appointed Brigadier-General in command of the South Persian Rifles and campaigned to pacify the tribes. His performance during the war was somewhat erratic and his subsequent opposition to the Anglo-Persian Treaty of 1919 led to his forced retirement.



Mohammad Mosaddeq (1882-1967)

Prime minister of Iran from 1951 to 1953, leader of the nationalist Jebhe Melli 'National Front' party supported by the Qashqa'i leadership. He implemented wide-ranging reforms, including the nationalization of British controlled Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, and was removed from power in a CIA-sponsored coup in August 1953. Tried for treason by a military court, he was condemned to death but his sentence was later commuted to three years solitary confinement – he died under house arrest. In this photo: Mosaddeq at his Ahmadabad home ca. 1965.

Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi (1919-1980)

Shahanshah 'King of Kings', *Aryamehr* 'Light of the Aryans', *Bozorg Arteshtaran* 'Head of the Warriors' – emperor of Iran from 1941 to 1979. Although his policies regarding the Qashqa'i were generally more liberal and less heavy-handed than those of his father, Reza Shah, his 1963 'White Revolution' resulted in the destruction of tribal social structures. His accelerated and unbalanced social-economic policies caused the end of traditional Qashqa'i life as well as the destabilization of the whole country, resulting in his own downfall during the 1979 Islamic Revolution. He died of cancer in exile and is buried in the al-Rifa'i Mosque in Cairo, near to the grave of Farouk, the last king of Egypt, his former brother-in-law. In this photo: Mohammad Reza Shah crowning Farah Diba as Shahbanu in 1967.

The Bahadori Family –

MerijnGantzert

Gone are the kings and lovers of religion,
leaving the world to underlings.
Those were true kings, but who are these?
See who now sits on the throne of Kings...

– Allah Qoli Khan Amir-Suleymani Qajar

Introduction

The central part of this book is the work of the Iranian painter Bijan Khan Bahadori Kashkuli, living in the city of Shiraz in Fars Province – it also shows a few of the works of his son Siros, now living in exile in the Dutch capital Amsterdam. Bijan Bahadori is well-known in his country as a painter of the folklore and history of his people, the Qashqa'i. This family, which belongs to the clan of ruling khan's of the Kaskhuli tribe and is closely related to the ilkhani rulers of the Shahilu family, descends in the male line from Nader Shah Afshar, emperor of Persia from 1736 till 1747, as well as the Zand dynasty, which effectively ruled Persia from 1760 till 1794. This chapter will provide some remarks about the background Bahadori family. The Kashkuli khan's and their royal ancestors played a prominent role in the history of the Qashqa'i people as well as that of the Iranian state, even if its fortunes have recently declined due to relentless government persecution during the social upheavals of the 'White' and 'Islamic' revolutions – persecution including extrajudicial killings and expropriations. It should be noted that this chapter aims at nothing more than a basic introduction of the historical position of the Bahadori family in Fars province. Extensive bibliography can be found on the various websites referred to.

Context – Persian nobility

Nobility in Persia could be inherited or conferred by the Emperor – the Bahadori family province belongs to the former group. Many of the old hereditary families belong to Persia's tribal peoples, from which also many of its imperial dynasties were derived – the Bahadori family is the hereditary leading family of the Kashkuli tribe, which is incorporated the Qashqa'i tribal confederation. The Qashqa'i speak a (Western Ghuz) Turkic dialect, but are of mixed ethnic origin, including Turkish,

Arab, Kurdish and Lur elements – the Bahadori family is of partial Lur origin through its Zand ancestry.

Usually the early 16th Century, i.e. the reconstruction of the Persian state following the post-Timurid upheavals, may be given as the cut-off date for counting immemorial nobility in Persia. As the foundation of the Qashqa'i confederacy dates to this time, much of their tribal nobility, including the Bahadori family, may be considered to fall within this category. It should be noted that it is highly likely that, in fact, this family is indeed of much older stock. One indication of this likelihood is that in Turkic tribal structures the highest honorary title of *bahadir* was reserved for those belonging to the Aq Suyuk 'White Bone', i.e. to the lineage of Genghis Khan.

During the 1963 'White Revolution' Mohammad Reza Shah attempted to legitimize his dynastic position and weaken the old landed aristocracy, which he perceived as a serious threat to his rule, declaring null and void the titles and prerogatives of the Qashqa'i leading families. Although his land reform program weakened their economic position, the 'White Revolution' failed to break their privileged social position. Only during the revolutionary government of the Islamic Republic, which legally abolished all noble titles and which violently suppressed the last vestiges of tribal autonomy, was the Qashqa'i aristocracy finally eliminated as a socio-economic class. However, membership of the nobility is still identifiable through certain family names to the extent that these names are generally the preserve of certain noble families. In addition, some family names are, in fact, (part) of noble titles, even if some of these titles are not anymore widely recognized as such – this holds also true for the Bahadori family[22].

The family name – meaning and use

The Persian family name Bahadori dates from the early 20th Century, when family names first became mandatory in state administration. It is derived from the last part of the title 'Khan Bahador', with an added –i suffix, which in Persian normally indicates the adjective ('of; from'). The 'Khan' part, initially included in personal identification documents, was suppressed in the second half of the 20th Century during an aggressive policy of social engineering by successive governments. As a Turkic and Persian title 'Bahador' was originally understood as an adjective (etymology below), indicating the hierarchic classification 'high' or 'first' when added to the title 'Khan'. When used for a specific person the title 'Khan Bahador' follows the first name but precedes any further classifications. E.g. the well-known Shiraz painter would correctly be addressed as Bijan (first name) Khan Bahador (title) Kashkuli (tribal jurisdiction).

Etymology according to the Encyclopaedia Iranica article 'Bahador':

'(A) Turco-Mongol honorific title, attached to a personal name, signifying 'hero, valiant warrior'. In the form *baghatur* (from which *bahador* derives) the term was in use among the steppe peoples to the north and west of China as early as the seventh century, according to the history of the Sui dynasty (589-619), and it is found as Old Turkish batura century later in the Kokturk khanate. Further to the west, the Proto-Bulgars used *baghatur* in the ninth century. As an honorific formally conferred upon an individual by the ruler, *baghatur* (also *ba'atur*) was given currency by Genghiz Khan (whose father was called Yesugei Baghatur), who awarded this designation to those members, reportedly one thousand in number, of his personal forces whom he wished to recognize for outstanding valor and service. This use of *baghatur*/*bahador* was continued in the Mongol successor states. In the Ulus Chaghatay, for example, according to the Tarikh-erashidi, the chief figures of state around the *khan* included, alongside the great tribal chieftains, a large group of *bahadors*, men with no following of their own who were yet recognized by the *khan* for their personal qualities and achievements; and in the Indo-Timurid state established by Babor the title was commonly conferred upon major men of state whose ties were primarily to the dynasty rather than to their own kin groups. *Bahador* remained in use in India even under British rule. *Bahador* was also adopted as a regnal title by Muslim Mongol and Turkman dynasts. The first to do so was the il-khan Abu Saeed (716-36/1316-35), who styled himself 'al-Soltan al-Adel Abu Saeedd Bahador Khan' in official documents. This regnal usage was followed by the dynasts of the Jalayerid, Timurid, Qara Qoyunlu, Aq Qoyunlu, Safavid, Indo-Timurid, and, most particularly, (in the) Ozbek states.'

It is impossible to find a precise European equivalent for the title 'Khan Bahadori'. The power it conferred was primarily social, indicating political and legal jurisdiction over a people (tribe), rather than territorial or governmental. Real territorial jurisdiction was, however implied due to extensive (pastoral) land titles held on behalf of the tribe in various parts of Fars province. Governmental jurisdiction was originally also implied, due to the political and military obligations of the Khan Bahador towards the confederate Ilkhani, who in turn stood in allegiance to the Persian crown. It should be remembered that in the Persian context, where it is exclusively inherited, the title covers a different social status than in Moghul or Raj India, where the title could also be conferred. Taking into account its wide range of applicability to various non-reigning noble positions, perhaps in Europe the title could be translated simply as 'Prince'.

Hierarchical position

In Turkic noble hierarchy the position occupied by those titled 'Khan Bahadur' (in case of the Bahadori family: tribal leader) is higher than mere 'Khan' (in case of the Kashkuli tribe: clan leader) and only subject – exclusively in political authority – to the 'Ilkhani', i.e. to the leader of the confederacy that his tribe is possibly a member of. In relation to the tribal leaders, such as the Bahadori's, the 'Ilkhani' of the Qashqa'i, a hereditary function within the Shahilu or Janikhani family, occupied the position of *primus inter pares*. The intermarriage of the Bahadori's and Janikhani's, continuously attested throughout the history of the Qashqai'i, points to the rank equality prevailing between them. It should be noted that, in fact, due to their extensive genealogical intertwining, in various sources the families are sometimes identified as a single entity (e.g. in the identification of one of the leaders of the 1980 Qashqa'i revolt against the new Islamic Republican government as 'Ebrahim Bahadori Qashqa'i Kashkooli' –www.iranrights.org/english/memorial-case--2800.php). Cf. also the analysis found on www.everyculture.com/Africa-Middle-East/Qashqa-i-Sociopolitical-Organization . It should also be noted that, after a series of conflicts in the early 20th Century (most notably during WW I), the Bahadori family eventually wrested control of (most of) the Kashkuli tribe out of the hands of the Janikhani Ilkhanis, assuming political independence (cf. Encyclopaedia Iranica article 'Kaskuli Bozorg'), a stance it theoretically maintains till today.

During the Afsharid and Zand periods the Bahadori lineage becomes recognizable in its present form as a result of intermarriage between successive royal dynasties, of Turkic respectively Lur descent – these dynasties derived much of their socio-political power from advantageous marriage alliances. The relation of the Qashqa'i ruling families with the later Qajar dynasty, however, was far more ambivalent due to the Qajar persecution of the closely related Afsharid house. The Qajars created a large new aristocracy, by awarding ceremonial court titles, theoretically based on state service. In addition, they also sought to emphasize their own legitimacy by seeking marriage ties with the old aristocracy – in this they were only partially successful (listing of various intermarriages with members of the Bahadori lineage for the Afsharid, Zand and Qajar dynasties on www.royalark.net/Persia). During the Pahlavi period the Qashqa'i nobles refused any marriage liaison with the ruling dynasty because of it perceived lack of noble pedigree (cf. the anecdote related in the Introduction paragraph on Iconography). The constant hostility, open during various uprisings and concealed at other times, between the ruling dynasty and the Qashqa'i elite (and the Persian nobility in general) was exacerbated by the problematic social – as opposed to political – status of the ruling dynasty in the eyes of the old landed aristocracy.

The Wikipedia article 'Khan (title)' gives the following additional information:

'In imperial Persia, Khan (female form Khanum[23]) was the title of a nobleman, higher than Beg (or Bey) and usually used after the given name. At the Qajar court, precedence for those not belonging to the dynasty was mainly structured in eight classes, each being granted an honorary rank title, the fourth of which was Khan, or in this context synonymously Amir, granted to commanders of armed forces, provincial tribal leaders; in descending order, they thus ranked below Nawab (for princes), Shakhs-i Awwal and Janab (both for high officials), but above Ali Jah Muqarrab, Ali Jah, Ali Shaan (these three for lower military ranks and civil servants) and finally Ali Qadir (masters of guilds, etc.). The titles Khan … and Khan Bahadur … were also bestowed in feudal India by the Great Mughal (whose protocol was largely Persian-inspired) upon Muslims and Parsis, and later by the British Raj, as an honor akin to the ranks of nobility, often for loyalty to the crown.'

Portrait Gallery – Ancestors of the Bahadori Family

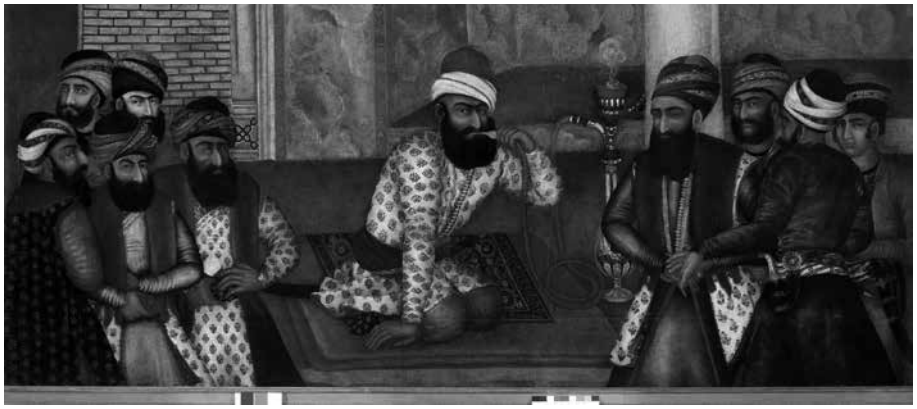
Nader Shah Afshar

Nader Shah

Nader was born in the nomadic Afshar tribe of Qizilbash Turkmen in Dastgerd, Khorasan in 1688 or 1698 – through military talent and marriage alliance he became a powerful local leader. At that time, the power of the once-powerful ruling Safavid dynasty was in decline and in 1722 Shah Sultan Husayn was forced to abdicate after his capital Isfahan was taken by the rebellious Afghan Ghilzai tribal confederacy. Their leader, Mahmud Hotaki, was acknowledged as emperor (1722-1725), but soon found himself confronted by formidable external and internal opposition. While the Ottomans and Russians took advantage of Persian weakness by occupying border areas, Tahmasp, son of Sultan Husayn, set himself up as rival emperor, triggering a national revolt against the foreign usurpers. His main initial support came from the Qajar tribe – Nader joined their cause and soon became chief of the rebel army, adopting the name Tahmasp Quli 'servant of Tahmasp'. Nader's fame spread with a string of brilliant victories, including the capture of Mashad in 1726, the defeat of the Abdali (Durrani) Afghans at Herat in May 1729 and the double defeat of the new Hotaki emperor, Ashraf (1725-1730), at the battles of Damghan and Murcheh-Khort in September and November 1729. The Hotaki's fled back to Afghanistan and on December 9th, 1729, Tahmasp re-entered the capital Isfahan – he owed this throne to his army commander Nader. In the following years Nader campaigned to restore Persian rule over the border provinces lost in the previous years; in Spring 1735 he inflicted a decisive defeat on the Ottomans at Baghavard, regaining Georgia and Armenia while in the Summer of the same year the Russians signed a treaty at Ganja, agreeing to withdraw their armies from Persian territory. Meanwhile, in 1732, Tahmasp had been disgraced and forced to abdicate in favor of his baby son Abbas after Nader had repudiated an unfavorable peace treaty with the Ottomans that had been signed by Tahmasp. Since that time Nader was regent of the realm, but in January 1736 he called a kurultai, a meeting of tribal elders and imperial dignitaries, which deposed the Safavid dynasty and proclaimed him emperor instead – he was crowned on March 8th, founding the Afsharid dynasty. In 1737 Nader Shah led his army east to destroy the last Hotaki outpost, which was accomplished after the storming and destruction of Kandahar in April 1738 – he spared the lives of the Hotaki royals, who were sent into exile in Mazandaran province. Next, Nader Shah crossed the Hindu Kush, attracted to the rich plains and cities of India beyond. The Great Mughal empire that lay before him was of high prestige and immensely wealthy, but was its rule was corrupt and its rulers weak. In the Battle of Karnal on February 13th, 1739, Nader Shah routed the Mughal army, taking prisoner the

Nader Shah in contemporary eyes – the Napoleon of the Orient

Mughal emperor Muhammad Shah. He entered capital Delhi unopposed and occupied the imperial suite in the Red Fort, the Mughal residence. Following disturbances in the city and the killing of some Persian troops, Nader Shah ordered the sack of the city – in the space of a few hours, on March 22nd, between 20 and 30 thousand townspeople were massacred in an orgy of killing, rape and plunder. Nader Shah took the fabulous Mughal treasury, including items such as the Peacock Throne and the Koh-i Nur and Darya-i Nur diamonds, and his army brought an enormous amount of loot back to Persia, loaded on a long caravan of elephants, camels and horses – after this campaign Persia was exempted from taxes for three years. The fame of Nader Shah spread to Europe, where, in later years, he has been described as the 'Napoleon of the East' and the 'last great Asian conqueror'. In the last years of his rule Nader Shah continued to add important conquests, such as Khiva, Buchara, Bahrain and Oman, but his military skills declined- as evident in the inconclusive last campaigns of the resumed war against the Ottomans. He built a navy, strengthened border defense through tribal resettlement and reformed the coinage. However, the increased taxes needed for his reforms weighted heavily on the nation, contributing to increasing revolts against his rule. Increasingly he grew paranoid and cruel, ordering the assassination of many rebels and plotters, real and imaginary. On June 19th, 1747 in Quchan, Khorasan he was assassinated in his sleep by his own body guards, following a plot of his officers, who had grown increasingly fearful of his wrath. It is likely that his successor, Adil Shah, who was his nephew but had rebelled against him, was involved in the plot – Adil Shah was himself executed less than a year later after another conspiracy, which replaced him with his brother's son, Shahrukh (ruled 1748-1760).Note that this contemporary allegorical illustration depicts a mountain of skulls in the background.



Karim Khan Zand – the 'Wakil'

Karim Khan Zand

Mohammad Karim Beg, of humble origins, was born around 1705 in the general area of Malayer (formerly Dowlatabat) and belonged to the nomadic Zand tribe of the LakLurs. In 1732 Nader Shah deported a large number of Bakhtiari and

Zandtribes people to Khorasan, but after his assassination in 1747 they returned to their homeland in western Persia – the Bakhtiari were led by Ali Mardan Khan and led the Zand by Mohammad Karim Beg. When the Afsharid successors of Nader Shah failed to establish effective control over western Persia, these two tribal leaders joined Abul-Fath Khan, another Bakhtiari chieftain, to form a triumvirate, controlling the capital Isfahan. From there they ruled in the name of the young Safavid prince Ismail III (1750-1773), a grandson of Sultan Husayn Shah in the maternal line. Ismail's power was wholly illusory – he spent much of his 'rule' as a virtual prisoner in the fortress of Abada – and real power was exercised by his 'regents'. When Mohammad Karim Beg was away pacifying Luristan and Kurdistan, Ali Mardan Khan staged a coup: he killed Abul-Fath Khan and invaded Fars province, plundering Shiraz. On the way back to Isfahan, however, he was waylaid by irregular local militia and had to flee into the mountains. In January 1751 Mohammad Karim Beg could return to Isfahan, from where he started a campaign against Ali Mardan Khan, whom he defeated repeatedly – Ali Mardan Khan fled and was eventually killed by Zand tribespeople in 1754. With his rivals out of the way, with control over Isfahan and having recovered Ismail III, Mohammad Karim Beg gained the support of various tribal elements and, rising to the rank of khan, took on the Bakhtiari chieftain's title Vakil-e Dowleh. This title he later amended to Vakil-e Ra'aya ' Regent of the People', accurately reflecting his considerable popular support. Although in the next years he would rise to be the virtual ruler of most of the Persian Empire, Karim Khan would never claim the throne itself – in Iran he is remembered as an enlightened, modest ruler, whose prime concern was the welfare of his people. Meanwhile, Karim Khan faced three main rivals for control over the Persian Empire. The first was Mohammad Hasan Khan of the Qajars – Karim Khan defeated him in the west in 1752 but, for the time being, failed to dislodge him from his homebase at Astarabad (ancient Hyrcania, modern Gorgan). The other two were the Ghilzai Afghan commander Azad Khan, based in Tabriz, and Fath-Ali Khan, an Afshar leader, based in Urmia – they allied against Karim Khan and managed to take Isfahan, but Zand troops cut their communications and they were defeated in the field. On November 29th, 1754, in the pursuit of his fleeing enemies, Karim Khan took control of Shiraz, the city that would become the new capital under his rule. The multi-sided civil war continued for several years. There were continuous confrontations between Azad Khan and the Qajars, who were joined by his former ally Fath-Ali Khan. The Qajars suffered a decisive defeat at Astarabad in February 1759, after which Mohammad-Hasan Khan was assassinated. Karim Khan's steady ascendancy throughout the civil war culminated in his 1763 campaign in Azerbaijan, which ended with the surrender of his rivals Azad Khan and Fath-Ali – the former was allowed to retire at Shiraz, but the latter was executed. After his triumphal return to Shiraz in July 1765, Karim Khan's control of the earlier Persian Empire was still incomplete. After the fall of Nader Shah the eastern Georgian states Kartli and Kakheti had become independent and united under Heraclius II (ruled 1744/1762-1798), while Karim Khan, out of respect for the memory of Nader Shah, left Khorasan province under the nominal rule of his blinded grandson Shahrukh (ruled 1750-1796, tributary to the Afghan

Durrani's). Despite Karim Khan keeping hostage Aga Mohammad Khan, son of the late Mohammad Hasan Khan and future first ruler of the Qajar dynasty (kept in care of the Qashqa'i ilkhani), and despite him having married Mohammad Hasan Khan's sister Kadija Begum, the Qajars in the north never fully submitted to his rule, fomenting revolts and plots. In addition, Zand control over some tribes and outlying areas such as Khuzestan and the Gulf islands remained tenuous. In spite of these limitations, Karim Khan is generally considered to have been one of Persia's best rulers – he is known as a wise and moderate ruler, with a genuine concern for the poor and for justice. In the words of the British historian John Malcolm: '...though born of an inferior rank, (he) obtained power without crime, and ... exercised it with a moderation that, for the times in which he lived, was as singular as his humanity and justice'. He controlled prizes, gave out food in times of famine and he resettled Armenian and Jewish refugees. He promoted prosperity by boosting trade (e.g. inviting the British East India Company to establish a trading post at Bushire) and was a patron of the arts. During his rule Shiraz became a large and rich city – many of the buildings he commissioned, including the citadel and the large covered bazar are still standing today. He died of sickness on March 1st, 1779.

Loft Ali Khan Zand

Lotf Ali Khan Zand

Loft Ali Khan was born in 1765 as son of Jafar Khan, a nephew of Karim Khan who became the fifth ruler of the Zand dynasty in 1785, only six years after the death of Karim Khan. None of the Zand rulers styled himself shah, even if they held what was in fact royal power and foreign recognition as 'kings'. Upon the death of Karim Khan Persia had descended into a series of ruthless and brutal struggles for power: various members of the Zand clan fought each other, battling and plotting for leadership. Meanwhile the Qajars had thrown off the pretence of allegiance to the Zands and they set out to consolidate an independent power base in northern Persia. After the death of Karim Khan, the Qajar hostage Aga Mohammad Khan had managed to escape and join his relatives in Mazandaran province. By the time Lotf Ali Khan's father Jafar Khan came to power, the Zands had already relinquished all claims to the northern provinces and in 1789 – despite the military skills of Jafar Khan, who had thrice defeated Aga Mohammad Khan – the stronger Qajar forces forced the Zands out of Isfahan. After falling back on Shiraz, Jafar Khan was assassinated in a palace coup and replaced by Sayed Murad Khan, a member of another lineage of the Zand clan. Sayed Murad Khan dispatched troops to capture Jafar Khan's son Lotf Ali Khan but these troops mutinied. Upon hearing of his father's murder, Lotf Ali Khan marched on Shiraz, where he had popular support. The city's mayor, Hajji Ibrahim, secured the city for Lotf Ali Khan and after a short while Sayed Murad Khan, who had taken refuge in the city's citadel, was caught and executed, after a reign of less than four months. Having avenged his father and having taken up power, Lotf Ali Khan immediately had to confront a Qajars challenge, with Aga Mohammad Khan

marching towards the Zand capital Shiraz. Aga Mohammad Khan, using camels to scare the Zand cavalry, defeated the Zand army in open battle, but Lotf Ali Khan managed to hold the city against a determined assault by the Qajar army, which had to retreat to their base at Tehran. When Lotf Ali Khan marched on Isfahan in 1791, he was betrayed in a plot lead by his former ally Hajji Ibrahim: Hajji Ibrahim himself took control of Shiraz, offering his allegiance to the Qajars, while his brother led a mutiny in Lotf Ali Khan's field army. With only a handful of faithful followers remaining, Lotf Ali Khan fled to the Persian Gulf, where he managed to raise a small army. Turning north to confront the Qajar onslaught, he defeated the much larger Qajar army in a series of daring battles, before being overcome in a battle near Persepolis. On July 21st, 1792, Aga Mohammad Khan entered Shiraz, capturing the families of Lotf Ali Khan and other Zand nobles – they were deported to Tehran. As a reward for his betrayal of the Zands, Aga Mohammad Khan nominated Hajji Ibrahim grand vizier – he became a major political figure during the early Qajar dynasty. Lotf Ali Khan and his remaining followers fled to the desert town of Tabas, attempting to rebuild his army. After receiving reinforcements from tribal elements, in 1794 he managed to take Kerman, which he held for four months against an overwhelmingly superior Qajar force. After the gates where opened by treason, Aga Mohammad Khan subjected the city to terrible vengeance: the city was destroyed, the women and children were sold into slavery and the men were killed or blinded, with a pile of 20.000 detached eyeballs collected in front of the victorious Qajar leader. Lotf Ali Khan fled to Bam, where he was betrayed by the governor – it is said that before being captured, he fought fourteen men single-handedly for two hours. After the long conflict with his arch-rival, Aga Mohammad Khan subjected his royal captive to horrible indignities – it is reported he was castrated, publicly raped by servants and made to watch his wife being dishonoured and his daughters married off to 'the scum of the earth' before finally being tortured to death in November 1794. Through internecine warfare and failure to inspire confidence among the ascendant urban classes, Karim Khan's successors destroyed his achievements, forfeiting the Zand mandate to the Qajars. It is ironic that Lotf Ali Khan paid the price for this, as all accounts of Lotf Ali Khan's personality agree in depicting a man that was renowned not only for his exceptional physical beauty and courage, but also for his high character and the ability to inspire loyalty in his followers. He was the only one of Karim Khan's successors to win admiration for courage and integrity. In today's Iran Karim Khan and Lotf Ali Khan Zand are the only former rulers whose names are preserved in the names of streets and squares.

Notes Part 2

1 R. Grousset, *L'empire des steppes. Attila, Gengis-Khan, Tamerlan* (Paris 1939) 27 (Quote added by editor).

2 Editor: Here 'Tauris' (the Classical Tauride) refers to the Crimean Khanate, which gained independence from the Mongol Golden Horde in the early 15th Century and remained an autonomous state under the House of Giray – under nominal suzerainty of the Ottoman sultans – until the Russian conquest of 1783. The old capital Bakhchisaray, with the famous Khan's Palace which inspired some of Pushkin's and Mickiewicz's most famous poems, remains a cultural center for the Crimean Tartars.

3 Editor: This statement reflects an old-fashioned strand of academic debate, still current in Iran, which seeks to link the Turkish tribal presence in Iran to the prestigious cultural heritage of Mesopotamia and may be considered as fitting into the tendency to 'construct an identity' increasingly noticeable among various people of the modern Middle East. For a different view, more in line with the contemporary Western scientific consensus, cf. Chapter 3. For an in-depth analysis of the origins of the Qashqa'i, cf. P. Oberling, *The Qashqa'i Nomads of Fars* (The Hague and Paris 1974) 27ff. and L. Beck, *The Qashqa'i of Iran* (New Haven and London 1986) 41ff.

4 Editor: The figure of two million seems rather high; in 1953 Malek Mansur Khan put the number at perhaps 400.000 – cf. M.T. Ullens de Schooten, *Lords of the Mountains. Southern Persia and the Kashkai Tribe* (London) 1954. A listing of historical estimates may be found in P. Oberling, *The Qashqa'i Nomads of Fars* (The Hague and Paris 1974) 236.

5 Editor: This basic division ignores several facts. First, the Kashkuli tribe is now split into three parts: the Kashkuli Bozorg, the Kashkuli Kuchek and the Qarachahi. Second, there are numerous smaller tribes, of which both the Safi Khani and the Namadi warrant special listing. It should also be noted that the Amaleh tribe are in fact the retainers of the Shahilu family, which are the hereditary rulers of the confederacy as a whole – the word Amaleh means 'Workers' and this tribe is made up of heterogeneous elements. For a detailed overview cf. P. Oberling, *The Qashqa'i Nomads of Fars* (The Hague and Paris 1974) 223ff. and L. Beck, *The Qashqa'i of Iran* (New Haven and London 1986) 180ff.

6 Editor: It should be noted that the following is a theoretical model – in fact, the positions of *ilkhani* and *khan* became hereditary – cf. discussion in Chapter 2 and L. Beck, *The Qashqa'i of Iran* (New Haven and London 1986) 200ff. . The Bahadori lineage belongs to the clan of Kashkuli's *khan*'s, who descend from the Zand royal bloodline through Qasem Khan Zand. Qashqa'i *ilkhani* Jani Khan married his sister and appointed him hereditary leader of the Kashkuli tribe – cf. L. Beck, *The Qashqa'i of Iran* (New Haven and London 1986) 183 and P. Oberling, *The Qashqa'i Nomads of Fars* (The Hague and Paris 1974) n.30 p.43.

7 Editor: The post-revolutionary state-religion of Iran is the Twelver Shi'a denomination, short for *Shi'atu 'Ali*, the 'party of Ali'. Ali (601/7-661 AD) was the Prophet Mohammad's cousin and son-in-law; his followers regard him as the Prophet's rightful successor – he and his descendents provide them with 12 divinely ordained Imam's, the last of which is Mohammad al-Mahdi ('Guided One'), born in 869 and considered to be in Major Occultation since 941. It should be noted that in many respects Qashqa'i religious observances deviate from the norms officially imposed by the present-day Islamic Republic government. The practical demands of nomadic life and the absence of day-to-day clerical supervision led to flexible prayer hours, looser fasting standards and irregular congregational attendance. The nearest place of pilgrimage, the Shah Cheragh ('King of Light') mosque in Shiraz, housing the mausoleums of two brothers of Ali Reza, the 7th Imam, is infrequently visited on the occasion of special prayers. Very few Qashqa'i have ever made ever made the Hajj pilgrimage. A clerical career is unheard-of between them and clerical inference rejected.

After a pre-revolutionary painting of Bijan Bahadori, showing dogs chasing a Mullah from a Qashqa'i encampment, was found in the possession of Khosrow Khan, the artist was questioned by Revolutionary Guards, explaining that he had merely painted a scene that he had repeatedly witnessed. Anthropologists have noted the comparative freedom and independence of Qashqa'i women, who tend to interact freely with their men folk and to reject the strict dressing code found among city-dwellers.

8 Editor: A useful introduction to the social organization and cultural heritage of the Qashqa'i can be found in Bahman Begi's study of the tribes of Fars Province: B. Bahman Begi, 'Moers et coutumes des tribus du Fârs (Orf-o 'adat dar 'ashâ'er-e Fârs)' in: V. Monteil, *Les tribus du Fârs et la sédentarisation des nomades*, Le monde d'Outre-Mer passé et présent 12. Documents X (Paris and The Hague 1966) 97-152.

9 Editor: A study of all (semi-)nomadic tribes of Fars Province, which, except for the Qashqa'i confederation, include the Khamse (Turkic and Arab), the Mamassani (Lur) and the Kuh-Giluye also known by the name of its most prominent sub-clan – Boer-Ahmadi (Lur,), can be found in V. Monteil, *Les tribus du Fârs et la sédentarisation des nomades*, Le monde d'Outre-Mer passé et présent 12. Documents X (Paris and The Hague 1966) 13-27 and 97-154.

10 M.T. Ullens de Schooten, *Lords of the Mountains. Southern Persia and the Kashkai Tribe* (London 1954) 53-4.

11 Editor: L. Beck, *The Qashqa'i of Iran* (New Haven and London 1986) 41ff.

12 The Khitans were Mongolian nomads who had established a sinicized empire in Transoxiana known as the Kara-Khitan Khanate (referred to in China as the Western Liao dynasty) – it was absorbed by Genghis Khan in 1218/20. Their name lives on in the name 'Cathay', by which China was known to Medieval Europeans.

13 The Arab Muzaffarids ruled large parts of western Persia as vassals to the Ilkhanate; with the collapse of central authority they became the strongest regional power until they were brought to heel and absorbed by Timur Lenk.

14 Through intermarriage with the Jenikhani (Shahilu) clan, which counts Safavids among its ancestors, Uzun Hassan is among Bahadori's ancestors. In 1458 Uzun Hassan had married Theodora Komnene, the daughter of John IV of Trebizond (1429-1459) by a Bagration princess – their daughter Halima married Haydar Safavi and became mother to Shah Ismail I.

15 M.T. Ullens de Schooten, *Lords of the Mountains. Southern Persia and the Kashkai Tribe* (London 1954) 52-3.

16 D. Brown, *Bury my Heart at Wounded Knee. An Indian History of the American West* (London 1970) 157.

17 Two important reference works should be mentioned specifically: D. von Mikusch, *Wassmuss, der deutsche Lawrence. Auf Grund der Tagebücher und Aufzeichnungen des verstorbenen Konsul, sowie deutscher und andere Quellen* (Leipzig 1937) and B. Schulze-Holthus, *Aufstand in Iran. Abenteuer im Dienste der deutschen Abwehr* (München 1980). A useful overview of the Persian central government attempts to control and sedentarize the tribes of Fars Province is found in V. Monteil, *Les tribus du Fârs et la sédentarisation des nomades*, Le monde d'Outre-Mer passé et présent 12. Documents X (Paris and The Hague 1966) 20-5 and 135-7.

18 Other factors were the weak position of Russia after the twin disasters of the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905 and the Russian Revolution of 1905-1906, as well as the preoccupation of Britain with the naval arms race triggered by the build-up of the German navy.

19 The importance of Bushire in British trade is illustrated by the fact that it became the main theater of operations during the Anglo-Persian War of 1856-1857.

20 The word 'Persia', by which the country was traditionally known internationally, strictly speaking refers to Fars province, and the word 'Persian' originally refers to an ethnicity and language which is one among many of the ethnicities and languages found in the empire to which the natives themselves refer as 'Iran', meaning 'the land of the Aryans'. Usage of the name 'Iran' instead of 'Persia' to refer to the country in international diplomatic correspondence was ordered by Reza Shah in 1935. Although this decision was reversed

by his successor, Mohammad Reza Shah, 'Iran' is still the more commonly used term. The debate about the names 'Persia' and 'Iran' continuous and is politically charged.

21 Reza Shah was forced into exile, first to Mauritius and then to South-Africa, where he died of heart failure in 1944.

22 Cf. Wikipedia article 'Nobility': *'In Iran, historical titles of the nobility, includ(ing) Mirza, Khan, Shahzada, (are) now no longer recognized. An aristocratic family is now recognized by family name, often derived from the post held by their ancestors, considering the fact that family names in Iran only appeared in the beginning of the 20th century*'.

23 In Modern Persian *khanum* came to be used as the common polite form of address for women of any rank, comparable to English 'madam'. In Turkic tribal hierarchy the wives and daughters of the high khans are addressed as *bibi*.

Appendix 1 – Timeline of Persian History

Merijn Gantzert

Antiquity

Elamite civilization and intermittent statehood exist in South Western Iran from	ca. 3200 BC
until the sack of Susa by Assyrian king shurbanipal in 646 BC; fragmented, semi-independent Elamite states continue until 540 BC	
migration of Indo-European Iranian peoples to the Iranian plateau (Medes, Persians, Parthians, Bactrians, Scythians)	ca. 1000 BC
Median Empire	ca. 700-550 BC
Cyaxares (independence from Assyria and destruction of Nineveh)	ruled 625-585 BC
Achaemenid Empire	550-330 BC
Cyrus II the Great	ruled 559-530 BC
Hellenic conquest and wars of the Diadochi	*330-312 BC*
Alexander III the Great of Macedon	ruled 336-323 BC
Seleucid Empire (Greek)	312-238 BC
Note: Seleucid rule in Mesopotamia continued till 139 BC and in Syria till	63 BC
Parthian Empire (Arsacid dynasty)	238 BC-226 AD
Sassanid Empire	226-651

Middle Ages

Omayyad Empire (Arab)	651-750
Abbasid Empire (Arab)	750-867
Note: nominal Abbasid caliphate in Baghdad continued till 1258; de facto rule by local dynasties:	
West: Buwayhid dynasty (also ruled Mesopotamia)	934-1062
East: Samanid dynasty (also ruled Central Asia)	819-999
East: Ghaznavid dynasty (Turkic, also ruled Central Asia India)	975-1187

Seljuk Empire (Turkic) 1037-1194
Alp Arslan ruled 1063-1072
Qashqa'i TURKIC ANCESTORS' PROBABLE ARRIVAL IN AZERBAIDJAN
Note: Seljuk rule in Asia Minor (Rum) continued till 1307/1328

Khwarezmid Empire (Turkic) 1194-1231

1st Era of Fragmentation (in the wake of invasion of Genghis Khan) *1230-1256*
Genghis Khan ruled 1206-1227

Ilkhanid Empire (Mongol) 1256-1335
Hulagu Khan ruled 1256-1265
Note: Ilkhanid claims persisted till assassination of last pretender in 13532nd Era of Fragmentation (civil war after collapse of Ilkhanid Empire) *1335-1380*

Timurid Empire (Mongol)
Timur Lenk ruled 1380-1405
Note: Timurid rule continued in Central Asia till 1507 and in Mughal India from 1526-1857
3rd and 4th Era of Fragmentation *1405-1461/1468-1502*
rule by local dynasties:
West: Kara Qoyunlu (Turkic, also ruled Mesopotamia) 1447-1468
West: Aq Qoyunlu (Turkic, also ruled Mesopotamia & E. Anatolia) 1468-1508

Early Modern Age
Safavid dynasty (mixed Turkic and Kurdish) 1502-1722
Qashqa'i TRANSFERRED TO FARS UNDER SHAH ISMAIL I ruled 1502-1524
Note: the Safavids were nominally restored 1729-1736 and 1747-1760

Hotaki dynasty (Afghan) 1722-1729
Note: Hotaki rule continued in Afghanistan till 1738

Afsharid dynasty (Turkic) 1736-1748
Nader Shah – Cf. PORTRAIT GALLERY ruled 1736-1747
Note: nominal Afsharid rule of Shahrukh in Khorasan continued till 1796

Zand dynasty (Lur) 1760-1794
Karim Khan– Cf. PORTRAIT GALLERY ruled 1760-1779
Lotf Ali Khan– Cf. PORTRAIT GALLERY ruled 1785-1794

Qajar dynasty (Turkic) 1796-1925
Naser al-Din Shah (westernizing reforms,

assassinated by islamist)	ruled 1848-1896
Mozaffar al-Din Shah (D'arcy oil concession 1901; Constitution 1906)	ruled 1896-1907
Mohammad Ali Shah (deposed, died in exile in St. Remo 1925)	ruled 1907-1909
Ahmad Shah (deposed, died in exile in Paris 1930)	ruled 1909-1925
Qashqa'i WW I PRO-CENTRAL POWER UPRISING	1918

Modern Age

Pahlavi dynasty	1925-1979
Reza Shah (deposed, died in exile in Johannesburg 1944)	ruled 1925-1941
Qashqa'i FORCIBLE SEDENTARIZATION ATTEMPTED BY CENTRAL GOVT.	
Qashqa'i WW II PRO-AXIS UPRISING	1941-1944
Mohammad Reza Shah – Cf. PORTRAIT GALLERY	ruled 1941-1979
Qashqa'i LEADERS DEPOSED AFTER OVERTHROW OF MOSADDEGH	1953
Qashqa'i SUPPRESSED AND DISPOSSESSED DURING WHITE REVOLUTION	1963

Islamic Republic 1979-present day	
Qashqa'i ANTi-REVOLUTIONARY UPRISING	1980-1982

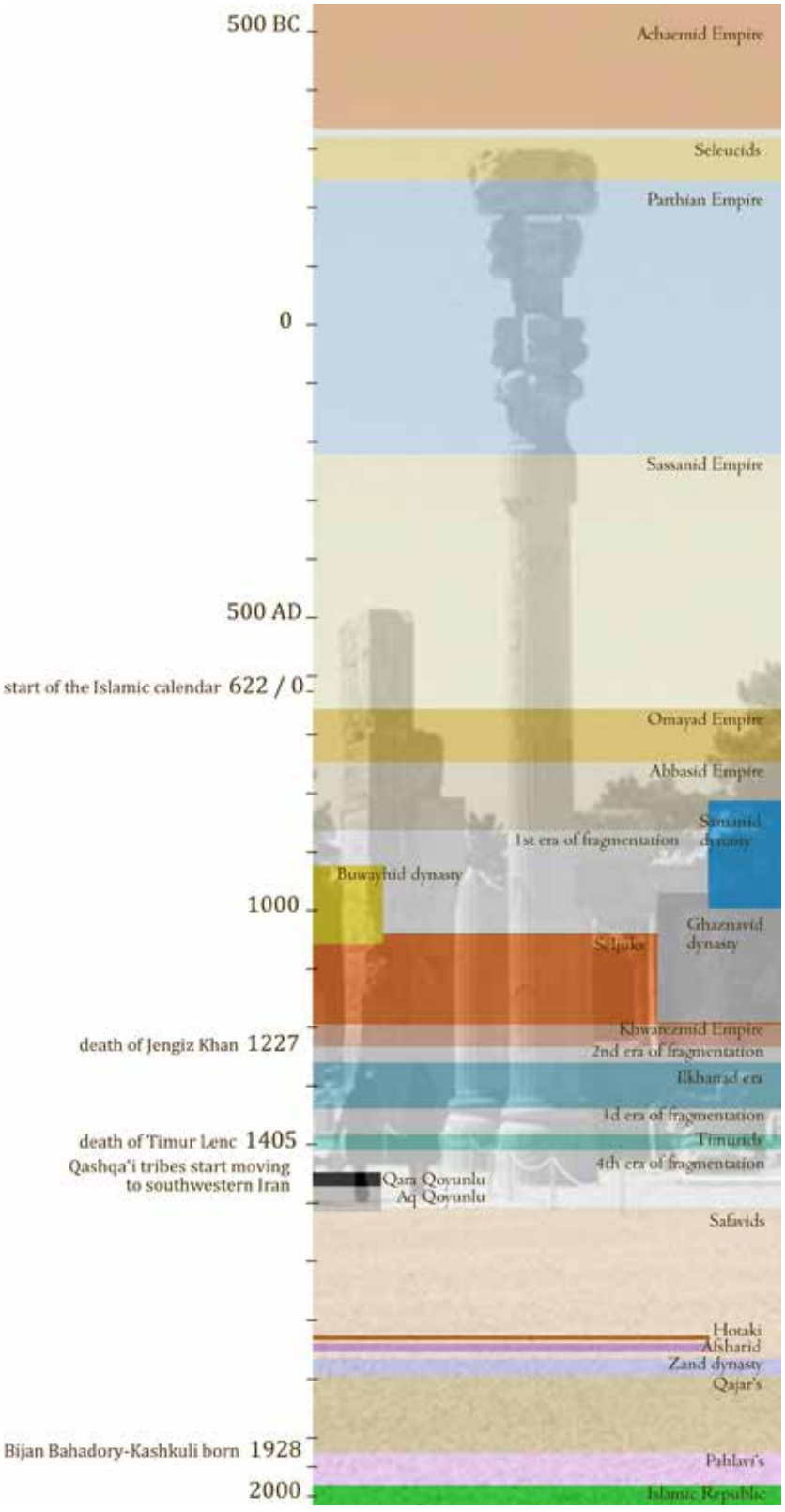


Illustration by Kees van Burg

Appendix 2 – Ancestry Chart of the Kashkuli Khan's

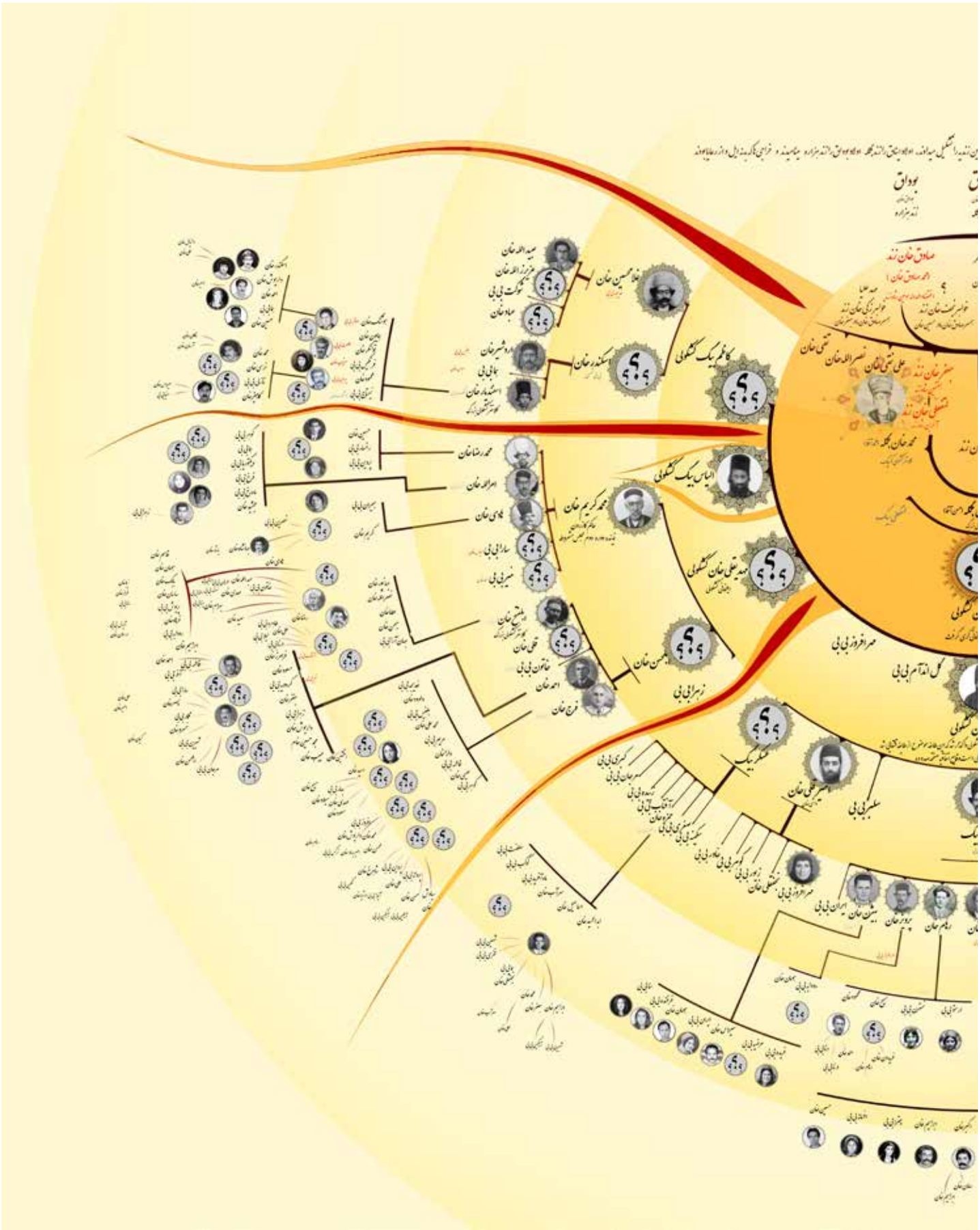
Hussayn Bahadori

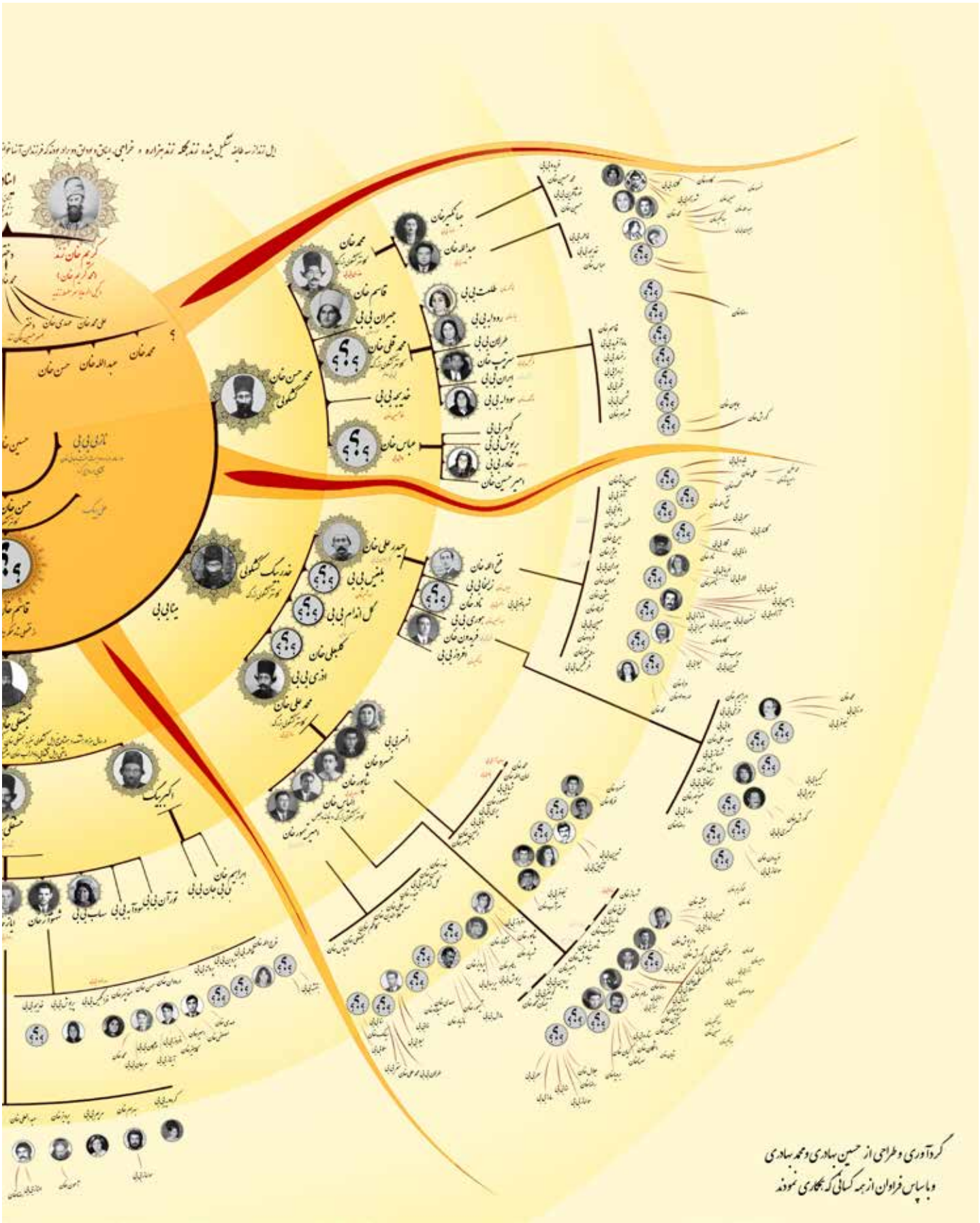
Commentary by Merijn Gantzert: This chart, kindly provided by Hussayn Bahadori, traces the genealogy of the Kashkuli Khans back to the brothers Inaq and Bodaq (top names), with whom begins the Zand dynasty. Their ancestry is not shown here, but includes Nader Shah and – through intermarriage with the Jenikhani (Shahilu) family – the Safavids.

Royal ancestors (cf. Portrait Gallery) depicted are Karim Khan Zand, shown on top of the central sun, and Lotf Ali Khan Zand, shown slightly left inside the sun.

The radiating arms depict clan divisions derived from the six sons of Qassim Khan – they are depicted in the first circle around the sun. Among them, depicted at the '6 o'clock position' straight down, is the grandfather of Bijan Bahadori, Najaf Qoli Khan, of whom it is written that he was given supreme leadership of the Kashkuli Bozorg in 1875.

Bijan Bahadori is found in the third circle around the sun, again straight down, in the first miniature picture on the left between the children of Hassan Qoli Begh. His children, including his eldest son Siros and youngest daughter Sona, are shown in the fourth circle.




گردآوری و طراحی از حسین بهادری و محمد بهادری
و با سپاس فراوان از همه کسانی که همکاری نمودند

About the Editors

Kees van Burg – Part 1

Information about Dutch artist Kees van Burg and his work, given in his own words, may be found on his personal website: www.keesvanburg.nl . Note that this website also shows the painting *Een bezoek aan Istanbul*, 'a Visit to Istanbul', found under the button 'agenda'. This painting gives an artistic impression of the artist's stay in Istanbul, where he attended a Bahadori family reunion (many Iranian exiles meet their family in Turkey, one of the few countries that permits visa-free visits by Iranian nationals): it shows Bijan's wife Geran (who has since passed away), two of his daughters and sons-in-law and some of his grand-children talking in a street.

Merijn Gantzert – Part 2

Born in 1968, I am a Dutch orientalist specializing in the languages and cultures of the ancient and modern Middle East, combining linguistic, historical and anthropological approaches. My doctoral research at Leiden University involved an interdisciplinary approach to a number of philological, epistemological and cultural-historical questions concerning dictionary-style clay tablets written in Sumerian and Babylonian cuneiform, some of which date back to the 3rd Millennium BC. I have widely travelled throughout the Middle East and studied a wide range of contemporary and historical issues pertinent to the region. Married with Sona Bahadori, youngest daughter of the painter Bijan Bahadori, it is with great pleasure that I contributed to this book, which is meant to bring the artistic work of her father and the cultural heritage of their people to Western readers. The culture and history of the Qashqa'i of Iran is a precious part of the great and splendid mosaic of peoples and traditions that is Persian civilization. The tent camps of the Qashqa'i may be found right next to the great monuments of Persepolis – a reminder of the continuity of culture and tradition in Iran. It is this exotic and fascinating world that I invite the reader to enter.

Persepolis – known in Persian as Takht-e Jamshid, was the ceremonial capital of the Achaeminid Empire (550-330 BC), destroyed after its conquest by Alexander the Great. Persepolis is adjacent to the former migration routes of the Qashqa'i. After the Islamic Revolution Qashqa'i guards protected the site from iconoclastic religious fanatics.

The Tent City near Persepolis – erected in 1971 as the staging ground for the 2500 year celebration of the Persian Empire, hosted by Mohammad Reza Shah and attended by hundreds of international royals and presidents. It included the longest and most lavish official banquet in modern history and the building of a lavishly equipped tent city nearby. Many Qashqa'i, dressed in their colourful traditional clothing, lined the avenues by which foreign dignitaries travelled. Khomeini pointed to the extravagant celebration expenditures to discrete Pahlavi rule, and called the celebrations the 'devil's festival'.

The Tomb of Cyrus the Great – now part of the UNESCO Pasargadae World Heritage site, adjacent to the former migration routes of the Qashqa'i. Cyrus (ruled 559-530 BC) was the greatest of the Achaemenid kings of Persia, conqueror of the Median, Lydian and Neo-Babylonian Empires. Herodotus writes he fell in battle fighting the (Scythian) Massagatea desert tribe at the Jaxartes (modern Syr-Darya) river in Central Asia. His mausoleum was looted during the conquest by Alexander the Great, who personally visited it, and survived the destruction of the Arab conquest because its caretakers convinced the invaders that it was the tomb of the mother of the Quranic figure of King Solomon. In Persian the instigator of this book, the eldest son of Bijan, is named after king Cyrus. He was born in the time when the Qashqa'i lived in two worlds – the old world of nomadic Turks and the new world of sedentary Persians – and thus he has two names: Turkish Forud and Persian Siros.

The Cyrus Cylinder – a royal building inscription in Babylonian cuneiform, commissioned by Cyrus the Great (King of Persia 559 BC, King of Media 549 BC, King of Babylonia 539 BC) and left as a foundation deposit in the Esagila ('House of the Raised Head') Temple, dedicated to Marduk, in Babylon. The broken and damaged cylinder was found during archaeological excavations in 1879 – its written content has – wrongly – been heralded as the 'first declaration of human rights'. This 'declaration' features large in Iranian pride on being among the world's oldest civilized peoples. It is therefore ironic that exactly 100 years after its discovery, the Islamic Revolution brought a new dark age for Iranian human rights – a dark age in which ethnic minorities such as the Qashqa'i have suffered disproportionally.

List of Illustrations

Merijn Gantzert

All illustrations are in the Public Domain, except where indicated otherwise.

nieuw

vervangen. Maar deze is alleen slechter dan de verbeterde versie die ik kreeg met de eerste nazending.