

**Patriotism and Masculinity
in Iranian Nationalist Discourse:
Taqizadeh and *Kaveh* Periodical (1916-1922)**

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Submitted to
Central European University
Department of Gender Studies

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Critical Gender Studies

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Vienna, Austria

2021

Abstract

This thesis examines the intersection between the constructs of nationhood and manhood in the Iranian nationalist discourse of the early 1920s. The focus of this investigation lies on the questions of patriotism and masculinity in the pages of *Kaveh* (1916-1922), a periodical which was published in Berlin under the supervision of one of the most influential ideologues of Iranian nationalism, Sayyed Hasan Taqizadeh. The nationalist discourse generated in *Kaveh* rests on a set of historical, cultural, and scientific assumptions about European civilization, which shaped the gender politics of the interwar years and influenced the public perception of the modern ideals of manhood during the early Pahlavi era (1925-1941). *Kaveh* was published in two series. The wartime series of *Kaveh* (1916-1919) deals mostly with the events of the Great War. In *Kaveh*'s postwar series (1919-1922), Taqizadeh directed his attention to the social and cultural problems responsible for the deplorable state of affairs in the country. By tracing the conceptual shifts in the meaning of patriotism across the two series of *Kaveh*, this thesis demonstrates that the concept of patriotism in *Kaveh* is amenable to extend its meanings to conform to the changing nationalist demands while retaining its symbolic value as the main masculine property and a moral disposition of the progressive Iranian man. While in the early issues of *Kaveh*, patriotism is defined in terms congruent with the male propensity for defense of the motherland, in the postwar series of *Kaveh*, its connotations extend to the idea of productive citizenry. I argue that Western ideas about education, physical sports and sexual morality co-opted into the nationalist outlook of these Iranian émigré nationalists, inadvertently come to define, and redefine what it means to be a respectable man in a civilized nation. Furthermore, the thesis illustrates how Germany constitutes a cultural frame of reference in *Kaveh*'s nationalist discussions on issues such as education, military, sports, and patriotism.

Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of original research; it contains no materials accepted for any other degree in any other institution and no materials previously written and/or published by another person, except where appropriate acknowledgment is made in the form of bibliographical reference.

I further declare that the following word count for this thesis are accurate:

Body of thesis (all chapters excluding notes, references, appendices, etc.): 20,466 words

Entire manuscript: 25,448 words

Signed: Ali Hashemian

Note on Translation and Transliteration

My thesis follows the transliteration scheme of *Iranian Studies*. The original transliteration is retained when a Persian word is used in a passage directly quoted from a source in English. Most translations from Persian are mine, except for a few quotes, which have been specified in the footnotes.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Literature Review: Masculinity and Nationalism in Iran	2
Thesis Structure and Sources	8
Chapter 1 Taqizadeh and the Persian Committee in Berlin	10
Chapter 2 Patriotic Men as Soldiers	17
“The Awakened Children of Iran”: Manhood/Nationhood	17
A Dialogue between Day and Night: Civilized/Uncivilized Masculinities	26
The Ideal of Manliness: Death of Count von Kanitz	33
Chapter 3 Patriotic Men as Productive Citizens.....	37
National Rejuvenation: Educating the Public	38
Physical Sports.....	44
“Unnatural Love”	48
Conclusion	54
Bibliography	56

Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to study the intersection between the constructs of nationhood and manhood in the Iranian nationalist discourse of the early 1920s. My primary focus is on *Kaveh* (1916-1922), a Berlin-based periodical which was published and edited by Sayyed Hasan Taqizadeh (1878-1970), a renowned political figure and one of the most influential ideologues of nationalism in early 20th century Iran. *Kaveh* which was initially published in 1916 to keep its readers abreast of the events of the Great War, in its second series, turned into a platform of social reform for amelioration of the country's cultural malaise and degeneration. Informed by recent literature on the gendering of the Iranian nationalist discourse, my thesis intends to illustrate that this shift in the editorial policy of the periodical symbolically signals a major change in the meaning of patriotism, which later shaped and influenced the modern perception of manliness in the early Pahlavi era (1925-1941).

By the end of *Kaveh*'s first run, patriotism which was hitherto defined in terms more congruent with the male propensity for defense of the country gave way to a less militaristic sense of the expression to denote a collective striving for national renewal through the adoption and application of Western scientific knowledge. In other words, contrary to the wartime series of *Kaveh*, as the means of manifesting patriotism, a high value is placed on the contribution of Iranian men in national progress as productive citizens rather than their self-sacrificing ability to defend the country. Furthermore, through a close reading of the nationalist writings in *Kaveh*, I demonstrate how Taqizadeh and his collaborators at *Kaveh* used the narratives of forward-striving nations particularly Germany to inculcate their compatriots with patriotic feelings. As I will discuss in detail, for these Iranian émigré nationalists in Berlin, Germany functioned as a cultural frame of reference for their ideas regarding schooling, sports, military service, and patriotism.

Although Taqizadeh's controversial writings in *Kaveh* have attracted the scholarly attention of historians of gender and sexuality, it is mostly his critique of male homosociality that often becomes the subject of inquiry into the emergence of modern sexuality in Iran. Taqizadeh's few references to the ill effects of "unnatural love" are often cited rightfully as the proof of a growing national anxiety over the moral corruption of Iranian society.¹ While

¹ Janet Afary, *Sexual Politics in Modern Iran* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 162-163; Afsaneh Najmabadi, *Women with Mustaches and Men without Beards: Gender and Sexual Anxieties of Iranian Modernity* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005), 162-163; Wendy Desouza, *Unveiling Men: Modern Masculinities in twentieth-Century Iran* (Syracuse: Syracuse university Press, 2019).

benefiting from the valuable insights of the recent debates on gender and sexuality in Iran, this thesis offers a comprehensive analysis of *Kaveh* in which the nationalist writings are treated as a coherent text primarily about the critique of the physical and moral qualities of Iranian men. My reading of the nationalist texts in *Kaveh* exposes the fact that for Taqizadeh and his colleagues at *Kaveh*, this was the cultural appraisal of Iranian masculinity that largely established the parameters of the debate on national progressivism. The *Kaveh* periodical which is often being hailed as heralding a new intellectual orientation in Iranian nationalist discourse, is arguably preoccupied with constructing the modern imagery of the patriotic Iranian man.² By situating the analysis of Iranian modern masculinity within the context of the underlying intellectual assumptions about the existence of distinct Western and Eastern civilizations, this thesis partly illustrates why the question of masculinity should not be understood as an afterthought in Iranian nationalism but rather as an issue that occupied the foreground of early nationalist debates on various topics including politics, military, literature, national historiography, education, and science.

Literature Review: Masculinity and Nationalism in Iran

In the last three decades masculinity as a gendered category of historical analysis found its way into the cultural and social historiography of different regions.³ Despite the recent expansion of the field, Iranian masculinity is still underrepresented in gender scholarship.⁴ While there is substantial literature on the history of women, little is done about men and masculinity.⁵ There have been however a number of recent contributions. The most important

² For arguments about the pioneering role of *Kaveh* in the formation of the Iranian nationalist discourse see Ali Ansari, *The politics of nationalism in modern Iran*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 46; Afshin Marashi, *Nationalizing Iran: Culture, Power and the State* (Seattle and London: The University of Washington Press, 2008), 53. Abbas, Milani, "Majalle-ye Kaveh va mas'ale-ye tajaddod," in *Iranshenasi* 2, no. 3 (1990): 504–519.

³ For an elaborated discussion on the use of gender as a category of historical analysis, see Joan W. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *The American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (December 1986): 1053–1075.

⁴ See, for example, George L. Mosse, *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); John Tosh, *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007); Robert A. Nye, *Masculinity and Male Codes of Honor in Modern France* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998); Mrinalini Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity: The "Manly Englishman" and the "Effeminate Bengali" in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995); Wilson Chacko Jacob, *Working Out Egypt: Effendi Masculinity and Subject Formation in Colonial Modernity, 1870–1940* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press Books, 2011).

⁵ See, for example, Eliz Sanasarian, *The Women's Rights Movement in Iran: Mutiny, Appeasement, and Repression from 1900 to Khomeini* (New York: Praeger, 1982); Parvin Paidar, *Women and the Political Process in Twentieth-Century Iran* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Hamideh Sedghi, *Women and Politics in Iran: Veiling, Unveiling, and Reveiling* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Janet Afary, *The Iranian Constitutional*

of which are Afsaneh Najmabadi's seminal research on the history of sexuality in the Qajar era; Sivan Balslev's study of hegemonic masculinity in late Qajar and early Pahlavi Iran. Balslev traces back the idea of westernized masculinity in the ideas and social practices of the Western-educated elite Iranian men, which as she argues became hegemonic during the Pahlavi era; In much the same way, Wendy DeSouza explores modern views on masculinity and sexuality in both Iranian modernist and European Orientalist writings. In fact, Balslev and Desouza's recent publications have provided the field with a milestone.⁶

Even though there is a great degree of convergence between Balslev and Desouza's works, Desouza approaches the topic of Iranian masculinity in a slightly different way. When Balslev sees the emerging model of masculinity as a direct product of Iranian elites' acquaintance with the Western knowledge which accelerated in the latter portion of the 19th century, Desouza takes a comparative approach informed by post-colonial theories to cautions us against any assumption of two distinct histories of the West and the East as homogeneous entities in which the latter is assumed to be the passive recipient of the former. In Desouza's own word, her study "seeks to deemphasize and decenter the European colonial bourgeois order in the formation of a new sexual ethics in Iran."⁷ In that respect, Desouza's research is an attempt to situate Iranian experience in the broader history of the emergent discourse of modern sexuality whereas Balslev's study remains somewhat confined to the historical borders of modern Iran.

Both authors took inspiration from Connell's groundbreaking theory of masculinities. In her theory, Connell challenges the oversimplified conceptualization of patriarchy as male domination, which portrays all men as beneficiaries of patriarchal system and equally complicit in women's oppression. She instead advocates for an analysis of masculinity that is more historically contingent and appreciates the hidden relations of power withing the realm of masculinity. Hegemonic patterns of masculinity are relational, configured through the interlocking structures of class and race and in this way interconnected with other types of

Revolution, 1906–1911: Grassroots Democracy, Social Democracy, and the Origins of Feminism (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); Janet Afary, *Sexual Politics in Modern Iran*; Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet, *Conceiving Citizens: Women and the Politics of Motherhood in Iran* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Camron Michael Amin, *The Making of the Modern Iranian Woman: Gender, State Policy, and Popular Culture, 1865–1946* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2002).

⁶ Afsaneh Najmabadi, *Women with Mustaches and Men without Beards*; Sivan Balslev, *Iranian Masculinities: gender and Sexuality in Late Qajar and Early Pahlavi Iran* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019); Wendy Desouza, *Unveiling Men*.

⁷ Ibid.

masculinities, namely subordination, complicity and marginalization.⁸ One of the important conclusions drawn from Connell's theory is that only a few, if any, men are the true bearers of hegemonic masculinity and most men are as much away from the glorified image of masculine power as women.⁹

Although Connell's theory has dominated the literature on man and masculinity, not all scholars have devised the concept of hegemonic masculinity in relation with other specific types of masculinity as it is originally proposed in Connell's writings.¹⁰ In that regard Balslev and Desouza are no exceptions. Both authors refer to Connell's term to emphasize the crystallization of a set of male ideals in the early Pahlavi Iran. From the way Balslev uses the notion of hegemony, hegemonic masculinity could be easily interpreted as the cultural capital of a group of Iranian elites by which they intended to establish themselves as an emerging middle class distinguishable from the old aristocracy and other traditional groups of men. In slightly different way, Desouza sees the notion of hegemonic masculinity as a set of modern cultural and sexual norms imposed by the state upon male bodies which ultimately led to the domination of the emerging westernized elite. Nonetheless, unlike Balslev, Desouza does not center her analysis around the concept of hegemonic masculinity and except for a few instances in the introduction, the term is rarely referred to in the rest of her book.¹¹¹²

Although Balslev's work is successful in mapping out some of the underlying themes and ideas that refashioned the notion of masculinity in its modern sense, her overall analysis, in my opinion, suffers from some conceptual inconsistencies in regard to the use of the concept of hegemonic masculinity. Balslev's work has something in common with much of the

⁸ R.W. Connell, *Masculinities* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995; 2nd ed. 2005), 67-81.

⁹ For more on this topic see for example, Tim Carrigan, Bob Connell, John Lee Source, "Toward a New Sociology of Masculinity," *Theory and Society* 14, no. 5 (September 1985): 551-604; Connell, *Gender and Power: Society, the Person and Sexual Politics*. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987). Connell, *The Men and the Boys* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2000); R.W. Connell, J.W. Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept," *Gender and Society*, 19, no 6 (December 2005): 829-859.

¹⁰ Niki Wedgwood, "Connell's Theory of Masculinity – its Origins and Influences on the Study of Gender," *Journal of Gender Studies* 18, no. 4 (December 2009): 335.

¹¹ It is important to note that although Balslev and Desouza do not use the specific non-hegemonic forms of masculinity offered by Connell, their research is a testimony to the fact that the construct of masculinity is historically contested and reproduced and that there is a dynamic of power relations between the hegemonic and subordinate forms of masculinity in the context of Iranian society.

¹² Minoo Moallem also uses the term hegemonic masculinity in her book, *Between Warrior Brother and Veiled Sister* to refer to the domination of the western-inspired model of masculinity during the Pahlavi era, which she defines in contrast with traditional, rural, tribal and religious masculinities Minoo Moallem, *Between Warrior Brother and Veiled Sister: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Politics of Patriarchy in Iran* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005), 71-72.

literature on masculinities and that is a great deal of fascination with the concept of hegemony. Although such concept has its merits and uses, it has turned the study of men and masculinity in the work of Balslev like so many others into a search for identifying a recognizable model of masculinity as hegemonic in each and every social setting and historical period. In Balslev's approach hegemonic masculinity is reducible to the ideas and practices of a group of male affluent urbanites who studied and traveled outside of the country. This specific group of Iranian western-educated elite utilized the hegemonic standards of manliness exclusively to distinguish themselves from the masses. Such assertions are premised upon the assumption that there was a homogeneity of lifestyle and opinion among a diverse group of Iranian elites and therefore it could lead us to the wrong conclusion that these men can be clearly delineated from their rather traditional compatriots. Such delineation barely reflects the complexity of social reality of the time specially when we take into account that some of the high-profile Iranian reformists including Taqizadeh -whose activities constitutes the main focus of this research- received seminary training in their youth.

My research bears strong topical and thematic similarities with the works of these historians. This thesis deals with the questions of masculinity and patriotism in the Iranian nationalist discourse of the interwar years which is roughly the same historical period that has been the subject of investigation for both Balslev and Desouza. Therefore, I view my research not as a departure from the existing literature but rather as a contribution to the scholarship on modern Iranian masculinities, already established in the writings of the aforementioned scholars. My approach however differs to some extent, both in terms of its concentration and historical scope. When Balslev explores the development of the modalities of masculinities parallel to a broader trajectory of modernization which extends chronologically from the latter part of the nineteenth century to the Anglo-Soviet invasion of Iran, I locate my study of Iranian manhood squarely within the confines of the nationalist discourse of the early 1920s generated in the nationalist writings of *Kaveh*. While encompassing a wide range of themes and ideas concerning the issue of men and masculinity, Balslev's research largely overlooks the intellectual contribution of the Berlin-based Iranian nationalists to the official nationalism of the early Pahlavi era. Desouza in turn pays a great deal of attention to Taqizadeh's writings in *Kaveh*. Her interest in *Kaveh* is however confined largely to the issue of sexuality, leaving other relevant aspects of the debate on nationalism such as patriotism, warfare, civilization, education, physical sports, and race unexplored.

This thesis aims at exploring the linkage between mutually constitutive constructs of Iranian modern manhood and nationhood. Patrica Hill Collins identifies the study of the intersection of the analytical categories of nation and gender as one of the major themes of the intersectional scholarship best exhibited in the works of prominent scholars such as Nagel and Mosse.¹³ These scholars not only treated masculinity as a subject worthy of study in its own right but also proved that the category of masculinity can be used as a novel tool of analysis with which we could come to grips with the gender dimensions of discourses on nationalism. Likewise, their works are a testimony to the fact that nationalism is an integral part of the study of masculinities. The strong ties between nationalism and masculinity is neatly encapsulated in the words of Mosse, where he in his widely read book, *The Image of Man: The Creation of Modern Masculinity* (1998) cogently remarks that “nationalism, a movement which began and evolved parallel to modern masculinity, will play an important role as such an educator, for it adopted the masculine stereotype as one means of its self-representation.”¹⁴ Much of my research is geared towards trying to understand the production and reproduction of the masculine stereotypes in the development of the Iranian nationalist discourse of the interwar years.

Iranian nationalist discourse has been the subject of scholarly investigation from different perspectives. Richard Cottam’s *Nationalism in Iran* (1964) is the first attempt to study Iranian nationalism. Cottam focuses on the nationalization of the Iranian oil industry during the time of Mohammad Mosaddeq (1951-53). Mostafa Vaziri’s book *Iran as Imagined Nation* (1993) locates the genesis of the construct of Iranian national identity in Orientalist writings and Aryan race theories. Vaziri’s approach has been contested by other scholars for the reason that it undermines the mediatory role of Iranian nationalists in the appropriation of Orientalist ideas.¹⁵ Reza Zia-Ebrahimi’s *the Emergence of Iranian Nationalism* (2019) aims at finding a right balance between the share of European orientalists and that of 19th century Iranian nationalists such as Akhundzadeh and Kermani in the creation of Iranian national discourse. Zia-Ebrahimi uses the term, “dislocative nationalism” to describe the specific nationalist

¹³ Patrica Hill Collins, “Intersectionality’s Definitional Dilemmas,” *The Annual Review of Sociology* 41, (March 2015): 12.

¹⁴ Mosse, *The Image of Man*, 7.

¹⁵ Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi, for instance, argues that “to challenge the nationalist historiography it is not sufficient to construe it as a fabrication of Orientalists and Aryan supremacists [...] attribution of such 19th-century developments to Orientalists obliterates the creative voices of Iranian intellectuals and reproduces a Eurocentric paradigm that constitutes Occidentals as passive subjects of European analysis and gaze. Mohammad Tavakoli-Targhi, “Review, Mostafa Vaziri’s *Iran as Imagined Nation: The Construction of National Identity*,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 26, no. 2 (1994): 317–18.)

ideology that emerged in the works of Akhundzadeh and Kermani arguing that this brand of Iranian nationalism gained favor with the nationalists of the interwar years.

Although Vaziri and Zia-Ebrahimi rightfully put so much emphasis on the role of the racialization of Iranian history in the formation of Iranian national identity, their view is not shared by all students of Iranian nationalism. Ali Ansari, for instance, argues that the centrality of racist views in the nationalist discourse of early twentieth century Iran is somewhat overrated.¹⁶ Other have approached the topic of nationalism from entirely different angles. Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet in her book *Frontier Fictions* (1991) tries to draw attention to the connection between the rise of national consciousness and the important but often overlooked notions of “land” and “territory”. Her contention is that the tangible sense of historical belonging to a specific territory is one of the main components of Iranian nationalist discourse which existed long before the advent of nation-state. Rasmus Elling in his *Minorities in Iran: Nationalism and Ethnicity after Khomeini* (2013) picks up the politically sensitive topic of ethnicity in post-revolutionary Iran in order to investigate the inclusiveness of the construct of Iranian national identity. Elling’s research explores the challenges that the cultural diversity poses to the claims to the authenticity of the pervasive Persian-centric narrative of Iranian nationalism. Despite the apparent differences, much writing on Iranian nationalism is replete with some recurring themes and ideas such as national language, the production of nationalist historiography, and the use and misuse of myths of antiquity.

As the work of the above-mentioned scholars reveals, gender issue in the scholarship on nationalism in Iran, as other countries, has often been relegated to a subsidiary subject. There have, however, been different attempts by a number of scholars to examine the gendering of the Iranian national imagery in the turn of the century. With the notable exception of Joanna de Groot’s, the early studies on the cross-construction of gender and nation, such as those of Afsaneh Najmabadi and Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi are more concerned with the broader questions regarding the feminization of the national body than its consequent impact on the meaning of masculinity. What these scholars insightfully recognize as instances of anthropomorphism in depiction of homeland is not confined to the nationalist writings of the Constitutional era. As Camron Michael Amin’s article, “Selling and Saving “Mother Iran”” (2001) demonstrates, the portrayal of Iran as a vulnerable female body is a common theme in the press of the 1940s. The findings of these scholars have been particularly important for my

¹⁶ Ali Ansari, “Iranian Nationalism and the Question of Race,” in *Construction Nationalism in Iran: From the Qajars to the Islamic Republic*, ed. Meir Litvak (New York: Routledge, 2017) 111-117.

research, since Taqizadeh and his collaborators in *Kaveh* deploy familiar tropes and echo patriotic sentiments not dissimilar to those expressed earlier during the Constitutional Movement.

Thesis Structure and Sources

Preceded by a brief overview of the establishment of the Persian Committee (das Persische Komitee) in Berlin, the thesis is structured in two main chapters, each corresponding to one of the two series of *Kaveh*. Chapter 1 offers a brief overview of Taqizadeh's political life and situates the activities of the Committee in the broader historical context of the evolving Iranian nationalism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Furthermore, it provides the backdrop against which themes such as manliness, patriotism, nationalism, progress, and civilization are defined and redefined in the pages of *Kaveh*.

Second chapter focuses mostly on the wartime series of *Kaveh*. In this chapter, I examine the linkage between manhood and nationhood in *Kaveh*'s nationalist texts in order to elucidate how commitment to the patriotic ideology is perceived to be an indication of one's quality of masculinity. Defining patriotism as the masculine trait of a modern Iranian man comes at the cost of the emasculation of those whose practices were deemed unpatriotic in the nationalist eye. Furthermore, I will illustrate that a progressive conception of civilization is at work in the understanding of a hierarchy of masculinities that defines the Iranian modern man not only against his unpatriotic compatriots but within a relational context of his differences with European men as his significant Other. In the final section of the chapter, I use the portrayal of the German military attaché, Count Georg von Kanitz in Mohammad-Ali Jamalzadeh's memoir, as a tangible example of an ideal patriot to shed particular light on the civilizational differences that from the Iranian nationalist standpoint determines the alleged superiority of the modern European man.

The third and last chapter deals with the articles pertaining to the social and cultural themes published in the postwar series of *Kaveh*. As *Kaveh* moved to its second run, the concept of patriotism underwent significant semantic shifts. In the second series of *Kaveh*, a patriotic man is often described as an educated, sport-minded, and productive male citizen who conforms to the norms of monogamous heterosexuality. The chapter focuses on a number of polemical pieces bearing on the nationalist debates about education, sport and male homoerotic desire. The chapter seeks to illuminate that so much of *Kaveh*'s discussions about national renewal was in fact an attempt to revitalize the moral and physical qualities of Iranian men. In

addition, the chapter discusses Taqizadeh's critique of Iranian elite men for their failure to embrace Western civilization in its entirety and the neglect of their national duty to cultivate their less privileged compatriots with modern knowledge.

Concerning the sources, *Kaveh* comprises the main focus of my investigation into the interwar Iranian nationalist discourse. Yet alongside this periodical, I will consult the memoirs written by Taqizadeh and Jamalzadeh. In addition, in certain instances, I make some scattered references to a few other Iranian nationalists and political figures. This happens mostly when I see similar arguments are brought forth by other prominent historical figures. In so doing, I intend to draw attention to the fact that the publication of *Kaveh*, despite its undoubted importance in the history of Iranian nationalism, did not occur in a vacuum but instead was part of an ongoing intellectual debate around the resuscitation of national virility in late 19th and early 20th century Iran.

Chapter 1

Taqizadeh and the Persian Committee in Berlin: Nationalism, Modernity and Manhood

The publication of *Kaveh*, in an important sense, marks the beginning of the history of Iranian nationalism.¹⁷ After his arrival in Berlin in 1915, Taqizadeh, the editor of the journal, established “the Iranian Committee for Cooperation with Germany” and invited the Iranian intellectuals in Europe for collaboration in the publication of *Kaveh* in 1916.¹⁸ The first series of *Kaveh*, which was published between the years, 1916 and 1919 covers the events of the First World War with a blatant pro-German bias. After the collapse of Imperial Germany in 1918, *Kaveh* in its second series, which lasted until 1922 turned its attention towards cultural, educational and scientific topics in order to bring about a set of reforms that could tackle the country’s social malaise. *Kaveh* served as a template for other Berlin-based Iranian journals, namely *Iranshahr* (Country of Iran) (1922-27) and *Name-ye Farangestan* (European Letter) (1924-26), which attempted to respond to the same concerns regarding the plight of the country. These Iranian émigré nationalists set the paradigms of a brand of Iranian nationalist ideology that became prevalent in the early Pahlavi era.¹⁹

Taqizadeh was a veteran of the Constitutional Movement of 1906 and a prominent member of the Democrat Party in the Second Majles (the National Assembly). After the cannonade of Majles in 1908, he sought shelter in the British legation and left the country to Britain where he with the support of Edward Brown established “the Persian Committee”. During his stay in Britain, he published a number of articles in the British press including “Persia’s Appeal to England” in October 1908 with the hope that he could secure the support of London against the Russians’ clear and flagrant disregard for constitutionalism in Iran. Taqizadeh’s intention was to persuade London to recognize Iran’s territorial integrity which was undermined by the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907. In spite of his best endeavors, it was proved unrealistic to expect immediate change in the imperialist policies of Great Britain in the region. Frustrated at the British inaction, Taqizadeh and other Iranian nationalists, who

¹⁷ Afshin Marashi, *Nationalizing Iran*, 53.

¹⁸ Hasan Taqizadeh, *Zendegi-e Tufani* (Tehran, 1993), 202-206.

¹⁹ Afshin Matin-Asgari, *Both Eastern and Western: an intellectual history of Iranian modernity*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 43-78.

were not holding out much hope for British sympathy, turned to Germany in order to safeguard Iran's independence against the imperial powers.²⁰

After the outbreak of the First World War and while the threat of a Russian attack on Tehran was imminent, pro-German Democrats left Iran's capital in 1915 and formed a provisional government in the western province of Kermanshah. Taqizadeh, who at the time was in his second exile in the US, was contacted by the German consulate in New York to join the Berlin-based Indian "revolutionary committee". After his arrival in Berlin, Taqizadeh established an independent Iranian committee and agreed to support German government's anti-British military operation in Iran. Taqizadeh who had been ideologically inclined towards Germany's Social Democratic Party (SPD) even before the war, at this point, viewed German expansionism towards the Middle East in agreement with Iranian national interests.²¹ Germany's position in the new global order made it a perfect ally for the champions of Iranian nationalism, not only because growing German influence could potentially counter the influence of the Russians and the British in the region but also the German tradition of Orientalism appealed to Iranian intellectuals as it offered a rich reserve of ideas to draw upon in their endeavor to raise national consciousness. Moreover, as an emerging nation, German's experience provided an inspiring model for local nationalists in the Islamic World, who aspired to gain independence.²²

The failure of the Constitutional movement in achieving its democratic goals, led these radical reformers, who became by then disenchanted with the prospect of sweeping political reforms to seek a speedy solution in the top-down imposition of cultural and social reforms. The most prominent members of the Berlin Circle were journalist Hosein Kazemzadeh, who later launched his own periodical, *Iranshahr*; scholars Mohammad Qazvini and Ebrahim Purdavood and fiction writer Mohammad-Ali Jamalzadeh, who is the pioneer of short story literary genre in Iran.²³ High on the agenda of the nationalist campaign for reform were the spread of Persian as the national language, the promotion of physical sports, mandatory conscription and the establishment of a standing army, the import of industrial technologies, secularization of the state and fight against superstition and religious fanaticism, expansion of

²⁰ Taqizadeh, *Zendegi-e Tufani*, 105-210; Ali Ansari, *The politics of nationalism*, 51-55; For an elaborated discussion on Taqizadeh's political life see Homa Katouzian, "Seyyed Hasan Taqiadeh: seh zendegi dar yek 'omr," Iran Nameh vol. XXI, nos. 1-2 (2003), <https://fis-iran.org/fa/irannameh/volxxi/seyyed-taqizadeh-lifetime>.

²¹ Matin-Asgari, *Both Eastern and Western*, 50-51.

²² Ansari, *The politics of nationalism*, 55.

²³ Taqizadeh, *Zendegi-e Tufani*, 206.

secular educational system and eradication of illiteracy and last but not least, improvement of women's status.²⁴ Unlike the woman's question to which some specific articles are allocated in most nationalist periodicals of the time, there is almost no specific article bearing directly on the question of men and masculinity. However, as I will show, a close reading of *Kaveh* reveals that masculinity is central in the articulation of the nationalist project.

In the 1920s, most of these nationalist intellectuals coalesced around the former head of the Cossack Brigade, Reza Khan and publicly embraced the idea of the "man on horseback" who was able to execute the necessary reforms and salvage the nation. In the years between 1909 and 1921, which is known as the period of disintegration, most political reformists and intellectuals gradually became convinced that any proposal for fundamental reform is pure wishful thinking without a centralized state that was able to restore the internal security of the country and withstand foreign intervention.²⁵ This strategic retreat from the democratic values of the Constitutional Movement could be accounted for by different historical factors including the disappointing outcome of the Constitutional Revolution, Anglo-Russian rivalry in Iran which was exacerbated after the 1907 agreement and the devastating impact of the Great War.²⁶ Although these are often offered in much of mainstream historiography as the most compelling reasons to explain such a shift in the trend of Iranian intellectual thoughts, Afshin Matin-Asgari contests that the exposure of these individuals to Germany's political and cultural milieu is equally important and should not be discounted.²⁷ Furthermore, the rise of Reza Shah to power by no means was an end to the legacy of constitutionalism. Unlike his predecessors, Reza Shah lawfully ascended the throne with the backing of reform-minded nationalists and through parliamentary legislation.²⁸

Reza Shah's ambitious campaign for reform to a large extent materialized the demands of Iranian intellectuals. The reign of Reza Shah has all the hallmarks of a nation-building era.

²⁴ These themes were common in the most important nationalist periodicals of the time, namely *Iranshahr* (Country of Iran) (1922-27), *Name-ye Farangestan* (European Letter) (1924-26) and *Ayandeh* (The Future) (1925). See Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran between two revolutions* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982), p. 123-26.

²⁵ Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, 34-35.

²⁶ Ansari, *The politics of nationalism*, 68-9.

²⁷ Matin-Asgari, *Both Eastern and Western*, 43-78. Ali Ansari takes issue with Matin-Asgari's assertion about the German influence on Taqizadeh and his colleagues arguing that such a dramatic turn from Enlightened liberalism to illiberal nationalism "is not reflected in Taqizadeh's subsequent associations and affiliations, which remained resolutely British, nor does it reflect the reality that Berlin remained then and for many years afterwards, among the most liberal parts of the German Reich." Ali Ansari, "Taqizadeh and European Civilization," *The British Institute of Persian Studies*, 54, no. 1 (2016): 54.

²⁸ Ansari, *The politics of nationalism*, 50-67.

He consolidated his power and built a centralized state through the creation of a well-equipped army and the expansion of bureaucracy. Reza Shah's New Order expanded the size of the educated middle-class and at the same time, caused massive disruption in the livelihoods of the tribal population. The might of his army pacified the unruly tribesmen in volatile peripheries, stripped them of their ethnic identities and forcefully brought them into state institutions through mandatory conscription, where Persian was the medium of communication. The state intensified its antagonism against the clerical establishment and successfully broke their centuries-old monopoly over education and judiciary. Private matters became the matter of public interest and the powerful state intruded into the most private recesses of family life. The new state required new male and female citizens to populate the national spaces and as such forced them in different ways to bear responsibility for the national rejuvenation of the country. The reforms were modeled after Western societies and encouraged the emulation of European practices which reached a climactic point in the imposition of the uniformity of dress law in 1926.²⁹ These reformist measures that fulfilled the intellectuals and political elites' infatuation with all things Western are indeed reminiscent of Taqizadeh's controversial pronouncement in *Kaveh* in 1921 that "Iran must outwardly and inwardly, materially and spiritually, become European."³⁰

Modern reforms not only changed the configuration of social classes by tilting the balance of power in favor of a rising educated middle class but also created excitement about Western-inspired social practices and ideas, which rippled across class boundaries and led to the gradual refashioning of gendered social expectations of men as well as women.³¹ By the early decades of the twentieth century, men were expected to live up to some social standards that were flatly denounced in previous generations by religious authorities as signs of cultural decadence and even heresy and if done a few decades ago could have encouraged the humiliation of their peers in certain social settings. To understand the significance of the change in male attire and its profound implications for one's identity as a man, it is enough to note that at the time, men's headgear held significant symbolic value, so much so, that it not only

²⁹ Ervand Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 66-96; Abrahamian, *Iran between two revolutions*, 135-65. For more on the relationship between the state and society in Iran and Turkey during the same period see Touraj, Atabaki ed. *The State and the Subaltern: Modernization, Society and the State in Turkey and Iran* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2007); Touraj, Atabaki and Erik J. Zürcher, eds. *Men of Order: Authoritarian Modernization under Ataturk and Reza Shah* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2004).

³⁰ "Dor'y-e Jadid" (the New Era), in *Kaveh*, January 22, 1920, 2.

³¹ For a comprehensive study of the formation of the middle class in Iran see Cyrus Schayegh, *Who Is Knowledgeable Is Strong: Science, Class, and the Formation of Modern Iranian Society, 1900–1950* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2009)

revealed individuals' social status but also connoted political persuasions, religious beliefs and even ideological commitment to patriotism.³²

Iranian intellectuals' autobiographies are full of illustrative personal anecdotes about the importance of sartorial habits. Taqizadeh in his autobiography, retells a detailed account of his refuge in the British legation in volatile days leading up to the dissolution of the National Assembly. There, he praises Mirza Ali Mohammad Khan Tarbiyat for his clever idea to borrow a Western-style full-brimmed hat from one of the servants of the British Legation. Full-brimmed hat, which later became mandatory in 1935, at that time was a sign of foreigners and thus wearing one could perfectly conceal Tarbiyat's identity from the threat of the Cossack Brigade.³³ In much the same way, Mohammad-Ali Jamalzadeh stresses the role that the style of his hat played in his short detention in Ottoman Turkey. Jamalzadeh who was dispatched in 1915 by "the Iranian Committee" in Berlin to western Iran on a mission to instigate agitation among tribes against British and Russian interests, recounts that during his travel through Turkey he was arrested by Ottoman officers in part because his European-style hat aroused their suspicion.³⁴

Going back to 1920s Iranian nationalists' intellectual contribution to Iranian nationalism, it is worth mentioning that what I have described as overarching Pahlavi reforms was not to suggest that the project of modernity occurred overnight and as a product of the single-handedly crafted manifesto of reform by Taqizadeh and his collaborator at *Kaveh*. Instead, their intellectual achievement was the result of a long history of the Iranians' cultural and economic encounter with European powers, which intensified in the latter portion of the nineteenth century. Taqizadeh acknowledges his indebtedness to the prominent reformer Mirza Malkom Khan (1834-1908), the editor of influential newspaper *Qanun* (The Law) and political activist, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1839-1897), who was a staunch advocate of Pan-Islamism.³⁵ Furthermore, Taqizadeh and other 1920s Iranian nationalists' critique of religious superstition, seclusion of women and the prevalence of male homoeroticism echoes earlier diagnoses of

³² On the significance of the male dress reform in Iran, see Houchang E. Chehabi, "Dress Codes for Men in Turkey and Iran," in *Men of Order: Authoritarian Modernization under Atatürk and Reza Shah*, ed. Touraj Atabaki and Erik J. Zürcher, 209-237. (London: I. B. Tauris, 2004); Chehabi, Houchang E. "Staging the Emperor's New Clothes: Dress Codes and Nation-Building under Reza Shah," *Iranian Studies* 26, no. 3-4 (1993): 209-233. Balslev, *Iranian Masculinities*, 205-244.

³³ Taqizadeh, *Zendegi-e Tufani*, 72-73.

³⁴ Iraj Afshar, Ali Dehbashi, ed., *Khaterat-e Seyyed Mohammad-Ali Jamalzadeh* (Tehran, 2000), 73.

³⁵ Taqizadeh, *Zendegi-e Tufani*, 37; Ansari, *The politics of nationalism*, 46.

Iran's cultural deficiencies made by 19th century nationalists Mirza Fathali Akhunuzadeh and Mirza Agha Khan Kermani.³⁶

In comparison with some other regions in the Middle East, early nineteenth century Iran remained relatively isolated from the cultural and economic penetration of the West. The humiliating defeats from the Russians in the first half of the century and the loss of Herat to the British Empire resulted from the treaty of Paris in 1857 shook the country out of its torpor and stimulated the interest of reform-minded Qajar officials in acquisition of European science and technology. Prince Abbas Mirza, who invested his political career in the foundation of a standing army, dispatched the first group of Iranian students to Europe. The establishment of the first secular high school, Dar al-Fonun in 1851 provided a greater number of students with Western-style educational training. Besides those students who traveled directly to Western European capitals, the northwestern region of Iran, particularly Tabriz, the birthplace of Taqizadeh, became an important center for the transmission of modern ideas through Ottoman Turkey and Russia.³⁷ Promulgation of Western knowledge paralleled a growing disdain for rapacious Qajar aristocrats and wicked clerics whose lifestyle hereafter were to be seen as hindrance to national progress. As flawed and limited as it was, the perception of European civilization in the writings of these educated Iranian men infiltrated the public debates around social and political issues and popularized hitherto unknown concepts of modernity, nation and patriotism.

Before proceeding to a discussion about the interplay between the constructions of manhood and nationhood in the pages of *Kaveh*, it may be useful to briefly explain the emergence of the term intelligentsia and its historical roots. One of the most important impact of the Iranian encounter with the European powers was the emergence of a group of Iranian intellectuals in the late nineteenth century. The Persian word, *monavvar al-fekr* (intellectual), which later in the twentieth century became *rowshanfekr* translates as enlightened-minded. Throughout the 19th century, the intelligentsia as a social stratum remained confined to a heterogeneous group of men with diverse social backgrounds, including aristocrats, civil servants, army officers, clerics and merchants who sought the same goal of creating political,

³⁶ Afary, *Sexual Politics in Modern Iran*, 163; for an elaborated discussion on Kermani see Mangol Bayat, "Mīrzā Āqā Khān Kirmānī: A Nineteenth Century Persian Nationalist," *Middle Eastern Studies* 10, no. 1 (1974): 36-59.

³⁷ Abrahamian, *Iran between two revolutions*, 50-58; Abrahamian, *A history of modern Iran*, 34-45; Nikki R. Keddie, *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), 22-57; Said Amir Arjomand, *The Turban for the Crown: The Islamic Revolution in Iran* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 20-33.

economic and social reforms in the country. Unlike the old “men of pen”, for whom there was no clear distinction between sacred and profane knowledge, these new reforming lay intellectuals drew inspirations from the secularly oriented ideas of the French Enlightenment.³⁸ Two points are worth highlighting here. first, in understanding the early 20th century Iranian nationalist discourse, one has to bear in my mind that traditionalism and modernism are not diametrically opposed and second, despite the hostility between the intellectuals and the clergy evident in the texts produced during the time under consideration, until early twentieth century neither class had constituted a homogeneous group completely distinguishable from the other.³⁹

³⁸ Mangol Bayat, *Iran's First Revolution: Shi'ism and the Constitutional Revolution of 1905–1909* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 34-44; Abrahamian, *Iran between two Revolutions*, 61-69; Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, 35-36.

³⁹ Ali Gheissari, *Iranian Intellectuals in the Twentieth Century* (Texas: The University of Texas Press, 1998) 13-16

Chapter 2

Patriotic Men as Soldiers

This chapter examines the linkage between the constructs of manhood and nationhood in the nationalist writings of *Kaveh* with a particular focus on the first series of the periodical (1916-1919). The first section explores the ways in which the editors of *Kaveh* employ the concept of patriotism as the manly virtue of a progressive Iranian man to shame their compatriots to take action against the foreign encroachment. In the nationalist writings of *Kaveh*, those men who are deficient in patriotism are often degraded to the status of a lesser man. The chapter partly discusses the nationalist appropriation of Ferdowsi's epic poems for the stimulation of the patriotic feelings of chivalry and heroism among the general public. The second section explores the centrality of the concept of civilization at the core of power relations within the realm of masculinity. Though by no means comprehensive, the chapter captures the German cultural influence on the general perception of national progressivism among the Berlin-based Iranian nationalists. The traditional groups of Iranian men whose political ideas and practices were deemed irreconcilable with the modern realities of a civilized nation came under assault for being unpatriotic. To demonstrate this point, I draw upon Jamalzadeh's memoir which offers some concrete examples of the noted differences between the nationalist notions of the civilized and uncivilized men.

“The Awakened Children of Iran”⁴⁰: Manhood/Nationhood

Kaveh's first editorial declares the agenda of the periodical in the midst of a global crisis. *Kaveh* was founded to be the voice of “the awakened children of Iran” (ollad-e bidar-e iran) who understood the urgency to rescue the country at the crucial moment of the Great War. The article presents its readers with an apocalyptic vision of the world where the waves of war which had been sweeping across countries is compared with another Noah's flood in which "the negligent nations" are doomed to be drowned in "the horrifying storm of fire and blood". The editorial names the period of war as the day of nations' resurrection and goes on to argue that the right to existence and a dignified life, preservation of national rights and national honor and pride are "sacred principles" that prompted thousands of people to be willing to sacrifice their lives. The editorial board of *Kaveh* states that since "today's battlefields decide the fate of

⁴⁰ (ollad-e bidar-e iran)

all nations", they like other "aware members" of other nations set themselves the task of awakening their compatriots and inciting them to join the camp of national defense.⁴¹

With a highly polemical tone, the piece argues that now that the country's enemies, namely Russia and Great Britain have got entangled in war, Iran has to seize the opportunity to put an end to their involvement in the country's domestic affairs. It then viciously attacks Qajar leaders, the political elite and aristocrats for their ignorance and inaction that allowed foreign armies to march through the heart of the country. The criticism goes further to hold the whole population responsible for the devastating situation that has befallen the country since except for a minority of brave zealots who sacrifice their lives, the rest have accepted the shame of conceding to subjugation by the Russians. Here, like other articles in the first series of *Kaveh*, Russia is often depicted as a "savage bear" and Britain as a "deceitful aging lion" that made Iran the victim of their imperial rivalry in the region. *Kaveh* attempts to refute the idea that neutrality or even worse, the alignment with either of the two neighboring powers could dissuade the Russians and the British from their interventionist policies towards Iran.⁴²

After stressing the necessity of fighting against the British and the Russian forces, the article goes on to discredit the potential opponents to this view as "traitors to the nation". It also calls for revenge on the enemy arguing that the war would be the last chance to rescue Iran which should not be wasted. As a response to those who use the possibility of defeat to excuse their irresponsibility and laziness, the article emphatically asserts that "the revenge is the most necessary of all things and the masculine trait of a nation; personal and national dignity is tied to revenge and indeed for this reason the divine attribute of vengeance is derived from the glory of God".⁴³ Here a Qur'anic verse is cited, blending the patriotic rhetoric with religious sentiments to appeal to as broad a constituency as possible. Implicit in this argument is a strong association between masculinity and nationalism. National dignity is argued to be dependent upon one's ability to avenge and the act of revenge is indicative of masculine quality of a nation. This inadvertently implies that male citizens' manliness is derivative from a collective trait of masculinity that characterizes a nation.⁴⁴

⁴¹ "Aghaz" (Beginning), in *Kaveh*, January 24, 1916, 1.

⁴² Ibid., 1-3.

⁴³ Ibid., 2.

⁴⁴ In order to explain the interplay between masculinity and nationalism, Nagel argues that not only state institutions are mostly populated by men but also "the culture of nationalism" resonates with "masculine cultural themes" such as honor, patriotism, duty and bravery. Nagel, "Masculinity," 251-2.

Our dear country has become bruised and battered, our brave youths, national wealth, our dignity, pride, honor and nobility, our religion and belief, all have been impaired by wicked enemies. The hanged bodies of Theqat al-Eslam and Zia al-Olama, and other one hundred and fifty martyrs of Tabriz, the hanged men of Rasht and Gilan and the hanged of Orumie, the [damaged] holy dome of Imam Reza are all telling evidence of Russian brutality. The shore of Persian Gulf is seized by Britain and is the field of aggression of that perfidious nation. And besides the hope for national salvation, if the old and glorious Iran were to end and become extinct, shouldn't its death be at least a glorious one? Does she deserve to be thrown dishonorably and shamefully to the arms of Russian savages?⁴⁵

Characterization of Iran as a vulnerable female body being defiled in the hands of enemies is a familiar trope that has its roots in the political literature of the nineteenth century. In particular, the printing press of the Constitutional era is replete with the examples of the anthropomorphism of *vatan* (homeland) as a fragile womanly body in need of rescue. In much of nationalist writings of the time, Iran is depicted as a beloved or a dying mother inflicted with the ills of tyranny and foreign aggression seeking the protection of her patriotic sons. In some cases, the threat of foreign aggression, particularly the Russians merged with the imagery of rape or even the instances of alleged sexual offense committed by Russian soldiers to remind men of their patriotic duty and to impel them to take action. The suffering of mother-Iran was often blamed on her treacherous children, who were hostile to real national progress. As it is evident in the heavily romanticized nationalistic language of the first editorial, the 19th century nationalist discourse in Iran created a lexicon of nationalism that its impact survived the demise of the constitutional revolution in 1911.⁴⁶

Rise up the renowned and fortunate country of Iran. The soil of prophets and the frontier of kings. The land of glory and grandeur and the plateau of pride and bravery. Rise up that the wretches have weakened you and your treacherous children want to leave you a permanent scar of disgrace on the face. The wicked have conspired to conquer your lands and the northern beasts have got their hands on your heavenly land of angels. Rise up and erect your banner of Kaveh (*derafsh-e kaviyani*) and flaunt the manliness of your warriors to the world.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ "Aghaz" (Beginning), in *Kaveh*, January 24, 1916, 2.

⁴⁶ See, for instance, Tavakoli-Targhi, "From Patriotism," 217-238; Najmabadi, "The Erotic Vatan," 442-464; De Groot, "Brothers, 137-156; Balslev, "Gendering the Nation," 68-85; Balslev, *Iranian Masculinities*, 89-121.

⁴⁷ "Aghaz" (Beginning), in *Kaveh*, January 24, 1916, 3.

Here the writer resorts to the glorification of ancient Iran and the myths of antiquity to arouse the nationalist feelings of the readers. *The derafsh-e kaviyani* (Kaveh's banner) is a reference to the legend of grassroots uprising in Ferdowsi's epic poem, *Shahname* (the Book of Kings). Kaveh is a legendary hero of a humble background, who symbolizes the potential power of commoners in a fight against oppression. In *Shahname*, Kaveh is a blacksmith that leads an uprising against the demon king, Zahhak, which successfully leads to the downfall of his tyrannical kingdom and the ascend of the righteous king, Fereydun to the throne. According to legendary narratives, under a spell of demon, Zahhak has grown two serpents on his shoulders which should be fed regularly with the brain of youths. In some sources, Zahhak is said to be of Arab descent and thus the epitome of a foreign ruler in a nationalist reading of the myth which as the story goes, becomes rightfully overthrown by a blacksmith whose heroic action arouses national consciousness among the oppressed masses.⁴⁸ The choice of Kaveh as the title of the periodical coupled with a lithographic image of the blacksmith's revolt on the front page of each edition attests to a desire on the part of editorial board of the periodical to link their call for patriotic actions to a purportedly uninterrupted history of Iranian nationalism.



The editorial is followed by a piece penned by German orientalist, Oskar Mann who gives a brief genealogy of *the derafsh-e kaviyani* (Kaveh's banner) as it has remained in different historical sources. *The derafsh-e kaviyani* was in fact the blacksmith's apron, which served effectively as the waving flag of the insurrection and later was decorated with gold and

⁴⁸ Ali Ansari, *The Politics*, 57-58; see also Zia-Ebrahimi, *The Emergence*, 101-107.

jewelry. Oskar Mann offers a nationalistic reading of the legend, in which the lowly blacksmith becomes an Iranian patriot who consciously runs a nationalist revolution against a foreign usurper of power in his homeland. Mann's use of expressions such as "foreign oppression", "the fall of a foreign breed", "pure Iranian race", "ancient glory" and "Iranian national pride" turns a story of a blacksmith who simply does not want any more of his sons to be dismembered in the royal kitchen as a sacrificial into a myth of Iranian patriotism in the modern sense of the term. It is worth mentioning that in a footnote to Mann's article the editorial board of *Kaveh* make a suggestion that Iran could adopt a version of *the derafshe-e kaviyani* with the tricolor of red, yellow and purple as the national flag or at least for its army instead of the current flag with the emblem of lion-and-sun which -as they claim- originated from Seljuk Turks.⁴⁹

As the title of the periodical indicates, for Taqizadeh and his *Kaveh* collaborators like other early nationalists, epic poems, particularly *Shahnameh* took precedence over other forms of traditional poetry as it provided them with a repository of myth for crafting an Iranian national identity. In addition to being a national epic, another source of appeal for *Shahnameh*'s legendary narrative lay in the associations it evoked of chivalry which could stimulate manly virtue of patriotism and thus bolster the morale of the nation. This quality of epic poetry came in sharp contrast with the literary tradition of mysticism whose teachings were to be blamed for the cultural malaise that plagued the country. Among the early nationalists, Mirza Aqa Khan Kermani was one of most vocal advocates of epic poetry. He admires Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh* as an Iranian equivalent to Homer's epic poems and stresses the potentials of "poesy" in "rejuvenation of a nation, elevation of thoughts and instillation of courage and heroism into hearts".⁵⁰ Aqa Khan Kermani holds the rich tradition of mystical poetry in contempt and denounces Iranian poets as promoters of idleness, sloth and beggary.⁵¹ The resentment against mysticism continued well into the early twentieth century and found currency among prominent Iranian nationalists including renowned Ahmad Kasravi, who goes as far to blame the defeat at the hands of Mongols in the thirteenth century on mystic poets whose practices as he claims led to the decline of chivalry and manliness among Iranians.⁵²

Going back to the editorial, it is worth mentioning that despite a great degree of indulgence in glorification of ancient Iran, towards the end of the editorial, the writer laments

⁴⁹ "Kaveh va derafshe-e kaviani" (Kaveh and Kaveh's Banner), in *Kaveh*, January 24, 1916, 3-4.

⁵⁰ Mirza Aqa Kan, Kermani. *Se maktub (Three letters)* ed. Bahram Choubine (Essen: Nima Verlag, 2000), 229-230

⁵¹ Ibid., 210-13. See also Mangol Bayat, "Mīrzā Āqā Khān Kirmānī: A Nineteenth Century Persian Nationalist," 40-41.

⁵² Kasravi, Ahmad. *Hafez Che Miguyad? (What Does Hafiz Say?)* (Tehran: 1943), 14-16.

that since there is no legendary figure like Fereydun in Iran, now it is time that *mellat* (the nation) itself revolt against the enemy.⁵³ A word should be said about the term, *mellat* (nation) which by the emergence of nationalism in Iran in the 19th century along with the word, *vatan* (homeland) underwent significant semantic shift. In its historic usage, *vatan* was used either to refer to a person's birthplace or in its a-territorial meaning, originated from sufi thought as "the originary home of the human soul". Likewise, *mellat* which once meant the community of Muslims, gradually lost its religious connotations to denote a sense of national community defining the collectivity of all members of the nation.⁵⁴ Women's active participation in the constitutional movement granted them an entrance into the familial space of nation. As constitutional writings illustrate, unlike their male counterparts who took on the manly task of fighting for the motherland, daughters of the homeland [*dokhtar-e vatan*] were entrusted with the equally important but different task of nursing the diseased Iran.⁵⁵ As far as Iranian men were concerned, one of the consequences of this nationalist interpretation of the familiar concepts of *vatan* (homeland) and *mellat* (nation) was the construction of a fraternal bonding that allowed all men regardless of their religious background to equally participate in the making of the nation.⁵⁶

With the withering away of the Islamic privileges inherent in the traditional notion of *mellat*, the construction of Iranianhood came to define Muslims, Zoroastrians, Christians and Jews as equal members of a unified nation. That not only meant a greater equality in front of law but a collective sense of national belonging. Yusof Mirza Yans's call at the second National Assembly in 1911 for a broader conscription law that mandate the recruitment of men from the community of Armenians is a telling example of such early attempts for more political inclusion. Yusof Mirza Yans who served as the deputy of Armenians in the second National assembly, argues that "what is it that a group of people go and shed blood and the others rest in comfort without paying a price. In a country that multiple communities or a community don't provide horsemen or soldiers. They benefit from the country but have no participation in difficulties." Mirza Yans's suggestion was however confronted by the prominent clerical deputy Hasan Modarres who believed that non-Muslim contributions to the military should come in the form of taxation arguing that the responsibility of providing manpower is

⁵³ "Aghaz", January 24, 1916.

⁵⁴ Tavakoli-Targhi, "From Patriotism," 218-220; see also, Najmabadi, "The Erotic Vatan," 446-450.

⁵⁵ Najmabadi, "The Erotic Vatan," 463-67.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 459.

exclusively the obligation of Muslims.⁵⁷ Be that as it may, Mirza Yans's insistence on the recruitment of Armenians and the subsequent objection of Modarres points to the fact that military service is one of the means by which men could rank their social status as members of the nation.

The first editorial sets the tone for the rest of *Kaveh*'s wartime issues. In its entire first series, *Kaveh* gives tantalizing glimpses of war hopping that a global surge in patriotic fervor could stir Iranian men to action. An article entitled "the Historic Days of Iran" in the February 1916 issue of *Kaveh*, describes Iran as a tranquil, motionless and paralyzed nation on the verge of extinction comparing it to a dying human body suffering a massive stroke after blood has congealed in its artery due to extended period of immobility. The article lays the blame for lack of action squarely on Qajar rulers, who debilitated the nation by spreading the ills of idleness and laxity [tanbali va gheflat] and hopes that the roar of cannons and gunfire in the ongoing war could raise Iran from its prolonged torpor. *Kaveh* editors seize the occasion once again to remind their audience of the importance of the national flag which _as a substitute for historic Kaveh's banner_ has become the laughingstock of the world. To make sure that the message is getting across effectively, the sprite of Darius is invoked who anxiously views the sacrifice of the children of Iran [janfeshaniy-e olad-e iran] in the battlefields of Kermanshah and Hamedan.⁵⁸

Tomorrow that the history of our century will inscribe with golden ink the inception of the eternal lives of several subjugated nations that due to their bravery, courage and wisdom have ascended to the rank of dominant nations and when it sings the march of their heroism for the future generations, it will briefly mention the story of ancient Iran in a few sentences that the Iranians escaped from death and conceded the defeat and lost their chances while they knew they could do something and stayed at home like women and non-men [na-mard] not to encounter a bunch of runaways from German, Austrian, Turkish and Bulgarian battlefields, and they scared to the point that the defeated enemy found the house empty of man and to compensate for their defeat in Poland, they moved to settle in Iran.⁵⁹

In a shame-inducing manner, here patriotism is tied to masculinity in order to question the manliness of those who remained hesitant to take side with the pro-German camp. Deficiency in patriotism equals a lack of masculinity. Therefore, those men who fall short of

⁵⁷ *Mozakerat-e Majles-e Meli*, second session, meeting 209, February 11, 1911.

⁵⁸ "ruzhay-e tarikhy-e iran" (the Historic Days of Iran), in *Kaveh*, February 8, 1916, 1-4.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 4.

the patriotic ideals are described in such terms that relegate them to the inferior position of womanhood. The article marvels over German soldiers' awe-inspiring military performance contrasting it with the inaction of allegedly inert and indolent Iranian men. Moreover, it labels unpatriotic men as traitors or even illegitimate children of Iran [farzandan-e haramzadehy-e iran]. The accusation of treason is leveled at the members of the political elite who acted like servants [nokar] of Russia and Great Britain and those self-serving government officials whose actions are motivated by greed for political power or personal economic interests.⁶⁰ In the pages of *Kaveh* like other nationalist writings of the time, patriotic language is invariably replete with expressions of masculinity which allows for an assessment of masculinity solely based on men's commitment to the patriotic ideology.

The conspicuous concerns over the patriotism of Iranian men brings the question of military service to the fore. In an article in the 4th issue of *Kaveh* entitled "Iran's Military Force", the author, presumably Taqizadeh, berates his compatriots for their reluctance to serve their country as soldiers. As it has been already hinted at, the establishment of a well-equipped army ranked high in the agenda of Iranian nationalists since the bitter experience of territorial losses to foreign powers in the first half of the nineteenth century. The free movement of foreign soldiers on Iranian soil during the course of the Great War brought to surface the feelings of anxiety over territorial integrity that had run deep in the Iranian national psyche. With a fairly straightforward tone that lacks the poetic flair of the first editorial, the author criticizes the current state of affairs that allowed Iranian men to be exceptionally exempted from military service while other adult men across the globe are subject to mandatory military service: "What is the reason for such privilege and exception? Why an Iranian should be an exception from all other human beings in the world and stretches his legs from his sixteen to sixty, sitting somewhere idly and put on his garment to go back and forth between home and the market."⁶¹ Mandatory military service is prescribed as an antidote to the degenerative effects of idleness prevailing among Iranian men who have been historically endowed with patriotic virtues of bravery and manliness [shoja'at va mardanegi].⁶²

In order to justify his call for the establishment of universal military service, the author takes his argument further by claiming that military service is an inevitable task for all men that should be done either willingly for the sake of the country's national interests or against it

⁶⁰ Ibid., 3.

⁶¹ "ghovay-e jangy-e iran" (Iran's Military Force), in *Kaveh*, March 14, 1916, 3.

⁶² Ibid., 1.

at the service of colonial powers. “Citizens of all independent countries go to military service for their national interests and dependent nations go to military service forcefully to preserve somebody else’s interests. “In France and Germany there are all voluntary soldiers and in India, Poland and Algeria [there are] forced soldiers.”⁶³ The same theme comes up more stridently in the July 15th issue of *Kaveh* where the author warns Iranian youths that if they evade their responsibility to defend their country, sooner or later they would be dispatched as soldiers by the Russians to Siberia, where they would likely freeze to death. Earlier in the same article the author gave a romanticized image of soldiering describing it as a task that like all other activities have both material and spiritual benefits. The life-sacrificing duty of a soldier not only has public benefit for his descendants and the country as a whole but a spiritual one derived from the act of putting one’s life into the service of a higher cause.⁶⁴ Therefore, dying for the higher purpose of defending one’s own country was considered to be indicative of male patriotism and a proof of manly quality.

Furthermore, patriotism was often deployed as a masculine property and a moral disposition of the reformist-minded elites to distinguish them from their conservative counterparts. In an editorial entitled “Apostasy” in 1916, the author expresses his concerns over the restoration of the pre-constitutional political order and the return of Qajar aristocrats to positions of power. Here, reformist-minded men are depicted as “patriots and enlightened youths” who were emigrating from the country. The Qajar aristocrats are in turn vilified as “the runaways of the constitutional era”, “the old decaying nobility”, “the insects of despotism” and a bunch of “rats” which are coming out from their holes. The Qajar aristocracy was accused of betraying the cause of patriotism by granting lucrative concessions to foreign powers. “Selling the country” [vatan forushi] to the enemy is an unforgivable crime in the nationalist eye.⁶⁵ August 1917 issue of *Kaveh*, published a letter from one of the members of the Qajar nobility who expresses his dissatisfaction at the mischaracterization of his political persuasion in the periodical. He labelled himself as one of “the exiled youths” [javanan-e mohajer] and dissociated himself from the Qajar aristocracy. *Kaveh* hails his announcement and concludes: “what we want from both royal princes and ordinary Iranians is patriotism regardless of their political inclinations, be that one of republican or monarchical form of government.”⁶⁶

⁶³ Ibid., 4.

⁶⁴ “vaghti ke yek melat asir mishavad” (When a Nation becomes Subjugated), in *Kaveh*, July 15, 1916, 5-7.

⁶⁵ “Ertedad” (Apostasy), in *Kaveh*, June 15, 1916, 1-2.

⁶⁶ “Maktub” (A Letter), in *Kaveh*, August 15, 1917, 7-8.

A Dialogue between Day and Night: Civilized/Uncivilized Masculinities

O Iranians! O brethren of my beloved country! Until when will this treacherous intoxication keep you slumbering? Enough of this intoxication. Lift up your heads. Open your eyes. Cast a glance around you and behold how the world has become civilized. All the savages in Africa and Negroes in Zanzibar are marching towards civilization, knowledge, labor, and riches. Behold your neighbors the Russians, who a hundred years ago were in much worse condition than we. Behold them now how they possess everything. In bygone days we had everything, and now all is gone. In the past, others looked on us as a great nation. Now we are reduced to such a condition that our neighbors of the north and south already believe us to be their property and divide our country between themselves. We have no guns, no army, no secure finances, no proper government, no commercial law. All this backwardness is due to autocracy and to injustice and to want of laws. Also, your clergy are at fault, for they preach that life is short and worldly honors are only human vanities. These sermons lead you away from this world into submission, slavery, and ignorance. The monarchs, at the same time, despoil you . . . And with all this come strangers who receive from you all your money, and instead furnish you with green, blue, and red cloth, gaudy glassware, and luxury furniture. These are the causes of your misery.⁶⁷

Based on what has been discussed so far, it is not a far stretch to argue that patriotism is the constitutive element of what is described in the nationalist writings as the most honored way of being a modern man. Patriotism as it is described in the pages of *Kaveh* constitutes the main masculine trait of a modern Iranian man that defines him not only against his internal countertypes but within a relational context of his differences with foreign men outside of national boundary. In the wartime series of *Kaveh*, the European powers are both admired and despised, and the excessively masculinized image of their economic and military advancements is often juxtaposed with the backwardness of Iranian traditional men who, conversely, exhibit negatively cast female traits of passivity and idleness. The concept of civilization is central to the understanding of a relational hierarchy that configures the position of Iranian patriotic men vis-à-vis the nation's internal foes namely, aristocrats, the traditional clergy and tribesmen, and the European powers as their significant Other.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ An excerpt from a sermon by a local preacher in 1907. British Minister to the Foreign Office, "Translation of the Controversial Speech," *F.G.* 3711Persia 1907/34-301. Quoted in Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, 82-83.

⁶⁸ Koen Sloodmaeckers analysis of the structural similarities of masculinity and nationalism, which suggests that both phenomena function through similar "technologies of Othering" can help us better understand the operation of these internal/external relational hierarchies that shape and sustain a set of discursively constituted masculine standards as hegemonic in a national context of Iran. Koen Sloodmaeckers. "Nationalism as Competing

There is a progressive conception of civilization ubiquitous in *Kaveh*'s nationalist writings, which locates the West at the top of the hierarchy of humanity as a utopian society worthy of emulation. In its second run, *Kaveh* ran a series of articles entitled "A Dialogue between Night and Day" which aimed at providing a comparison of Western scientific knowledge with that of the East by focusing each time on a specific topic in different fields of science. The goal was to shed some light on the cultural deficiencies on the part of Islamic societies whose tradition of scientific practices amount to nothing more than a blend of fairy tales and ancient superstitions. Interestingly, the first choice of topic for the column comes from the field of primatology. The author draws attention to the scientific speculations about the biological affinity among primates, which has historically made apes and monkeys a special focus of scientific curiosity. The article contrasts the groundbreaking discoveries of the American researcher, Richard Lynch Garner about the intrinsic ability of chimpanzees in language acquisition with some scattered accounts of primates in the Old Persian and Arabic sources that anecdotally point to the evidence of their human-like ability to speak.⁶⁹ Although, the piece is initially meant to educate the public about the recent scientific breakthroughs in the West, it is worth paying attention to the images that such comparisons could evoke of the fragility of civilized humanity and the blurring boundaries between the civilized and the uncivilized; the human being and animal existence.

Another article in the second series of *Kaveh* captures the essence of civilizational differences between the East and the West by arguing that ancient Greece and India were the birthplaces of the two historically divergent strands of civilization. While the rational Greek *Weltanschauung* has prevailed in the Western hemisphere, the Indian *Weltanschauung* marked by spirituality and metaphysics took root in much of the East including Iran. The author asserts that such differences in worldview may account for the political, military and scientific domination of the British over India, despite its extensive territory which is twenty-fold the size of Great Britain. The root of the inferiority of Indians as the author argues should be traced in the pursuit of spirituality and the abandonment of worldly possessions and attachments which stands in sharp contrast with materialism, Western philosophy of nature and rationalism emanating from the Greek *Weltanschauung*. By placing Iranian culture squarely within the Indian *Weltanschauung*, the article postulates that many years of war and political conflict

Masculinities: Homophobia as a Technology of Othering for Hetero- and Homonationalism," *Theory and Society* 48 (2019): 239-265.

⁶⁹ "Monazer'y-e shab va ruz" (A Dialogue between Night and Day), in *Kaveh*, May 21, 1920, 5.

between the Iranians and the ancient Greeks might have led to a cultural animosity whose long-lasting effects have cut the Iranians off the Greek *Weltanschauung*, “the fountainhead of knowledge and the sun of cultivation in the universe.”⁷⁰

Perhaps no text in *Kaveh* exemplifies the embeddedness of the notion of civilization in the expressions of masculinity and patriotism better than a series of informative articles entitled “A Glance at History and its Lessons”. Each article is dedicated to the history of an individual nation whose quest for independence has been thwarted by colonial powers. *Kaveh*’s accounts of the Russian expansionism in the Caucasus and the British colonial administration in India is replete with anecdotal evidence that attests to the brutality of the colonial soldiers against the local population particularly women. These articles offer a reading of history in which a notion of national consciousness is imposed upon isolated instances of political uprisings and armed resistance, interpreting them all as national struggles.⁷¹ At its roots, the history of emerging nations originated out of a desire for progress, which explains why a few privileged nations have attained the full grandeur of civilization while others have been lagging behind. Therefore, the major area of national endeavor should be to shake off the yoke of existing backwardness, which ultimately will set a nation on the right path towards civilization and empower her men for good measures to overcome the shame of emasculation inflicted upon them through colonialism.

The first article from the column, “A Glance at History and its Lessons”, appearing in the 5th/6th issue of *Kaveh* in 1916 is dedicated to the story of Georgia whose fate left into the hands of the Russians due to her political elites’ negligence. The piece displays how the Russian encroachment, took the key administrative positions away from the local population, deprived them of their own mother tongue, imposed involuntary military recruitment on their youths and even worse brutalized and defiled their women. The author compares a nation with a living creature endowed with the human features of body and soul arguing that in much the same way that the state of enslavement is often regarded as the most degrading experience for a human being, captivity and subjugation [esarat va heqarat] are the worst of misfortunes that could befall a nation. Here again nation is described in biological terms in such a manner that conjures

⁷⁰ “Binesh-e hendi va binesh-e yunani” (Indian and Greek Worldviews), in *Kaveh*, October 3, 1921, 1-5.

⁷¹ The column is allocated to the story of different nations, including Georgia, Poland, Finland and India. See, “Dastan-e Gorjestan ya farday-e iran” (The Story of Georgia or the Future of Iran), in *Kaveh*, April 18, 2016; “Engheraz-e lahestan ya ekhtar be iranians” (The Extinction of Poland or a Warning to the Iranians), in *Kaveh*, May 16, 1916; “Sargozasht-e fanland” (The History of Finland) in *Kaveh*, June 15, 1916; “Ya majaray-e Hendustan” (Or the Story of India), in *Kaveh*, October 15, 1916.

up the image of a living organism struggling for survival. This article like other writings of the sort serves the task of reminding Iranian men of the pernicious influence of foreign powers and not least imploring them not to repeat the same delinquencies that led to the decline of other nations.⁷² Although there is not such explicit mention of masculinity per se in the text, at a discursive level, the notion of masculinity comes into play in more abstract terms functioning as a metaphor for the nation. In other words, the power disparity between the dominant European nations and the colonized others have similar gender overtones corresponding to the notions of hegemonic and subordinate masculinities.

What is noteworthy is that in *Kaveh* racial ideologies have little place if any in the conceptualization of civilization. Although the supremacy of Western civilization is described in such terms that may connote a racist view on humankind to the ears of a contemporary reader, there is not such explicit claims about the biologically determined characteristics of non-Westerns to be the main reason behind the cultural stagnation of the East. In fact, for Taqizadeh and his colleagues at *Kaveh*, education is the central tenet of Western civilization and hence, in their view, every nation could ascend the highest stage of civilization through the cultivation of manners of modern life.⁷³ Despite the frequent use of the word *nejad* (race) in *Kaveh*, it often conveys the meanings of nation or kinship and by no means bears the negative connotations that the word has acquired later in the Persian language. Moreover, a few references to *nejad-e ariyai* (Aryan race) should not be taken as proof of a belief in Aryanism as Taqizadeh unequivocally rejects the nationalist self-aggrandizement of those who sought to find cultural and racial affinity between Iran's pre-Islamic past and the Europeans.⁷⁴ The centrality of education becomes more evident when we see how *Kaveh* sets up an image of Germany as a patriotic nation distinct from the bloodsucking colonial powers⁷⁵ which has transcended them all in its merits and might.

⁷² "Dastan-e Gorjestan", 5-9.

⁷³ For a similar take on the issue of race in Iranian nationalism, see Ali Ansari, "Iranian Nationalism and the Question of Race", 111-117. Reza Zia-Ebrahimi who believes that the discourse of Aryanism is central in the formation of Iranian nationalism, still acknowledges that *Kaveh* does not have "a racist outlook" and a few references in *Kaveh* to "Aryans" as the ancestors of Iranians are philological rather than political. Reza Zia-Ebrahimi, *The Emergence of Iranian Nationalism*, 156

⁷⁴ For an example of the use of the term "the Aryans" as the common ancestors of Iranians see, "Nouruz-e jamshidi" (Jamshidian Nouruz), in *Kaveh*, April 18, 1916, 2. For Taqizadeh's criticism of the delusional nationalist self-aggrandizement of some of his fellow nationalists, see "Nokat va molahezat" (Notes and Considerations), in *Kaveh*, January 17, 1920; "Nokat va molahezat" (Notes and Considerations), in *Kaveh*, November 13, 1920.

⁷⁵ See for instance, "Vaghti ke yek mellat asir mishavad" (When a Nation Becomes Subjugated), in *Kaveh*, July 15, 1916. In order to stress the fundamental difference between the modern colonial politics and military aggression of ancient empires for territorial acquisition, the author opines that "The time of futile bloodshed is over, and the new era is the era of sucking blood".

Biased in its coverage of war, *Kaveh* paints a glorious image of German warfare. While the patriotic ardor of German soldiers is admired in the pages of *Kaveh* as a clear sign of national virility, the military activities of their enemies depicted as symptoms of colonial greed for domination. Russian soldiers in particular are the common target of criticism for being excessively aggressive, undisciplined and recalcitrant. In an article published after the October revolution of 1917, the author stresses with sarcasm that cruelty is firmly anchored in the nature of the Russian soldiers so much so that the abolition of monarchy has not brought about any meaningful change in their behavior.⁷⁶ Although most articles acknowledge the military might of the British and the Russians, their power is often depicted in a pejorative sense referring to the barbaric nature of their colonial practices. *Kaveh* looks at German military with a mixture of admiration and awe, expounding on latest developments in the production of military submarines that gave the German Navy a competitive edge over its enemies.⁷⁷ Despite the considerable attention given to its military strength, the reason behind the rise of Germany is seen as lying in the fact that it has allegedly surpassed the other European nations in the field of education. This point was elaborated upon in detail in an article published in 1917 under the pseudonym of Shahrokh:

Germany's enemies say that the German Monarchy is militaristic and German people are acquiescent and blindly follow their rulers. And from their statements, it seems that they are concerned about the German people, and they claim that their goal in the war is to abolish German militarism to bring freedom to the German nation. One must be so unfair to assume that a country like Germany that based on all census figures has a illiteracy rate lower than every other country in the world [...] and it has only one illiterate person in 2500 could in such a way blindly obey their government. Germany's enemies call the sacrifice and unity of German people and their complete trust in their leaders, subjugation, and obedience; and have gathered the savages of a variety of races in different regions to stand up against one of the most civilized nations of the world arguing that they intend to eradicate barbarity! But it would be better for a country like Germany where the soldiers sacrifice their lives in a manly manner [mardane] and the factories manufacture the mountain-piercing artillery from the forges and the old and the young take on the public duty with dedication and men and women give their money, lives, possessions, sons and brothers [farzandan va baradaran] and all they have for the sake of their country to respond to her enemies in action and not words.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ "Ta'adiat-e nezamian-e rus" (The Acts of Aggression by the Russian Forces), in *Kaveh*, September 17, 1917.

⁷⁷ "Safar-e yek tahtolbahri-e almani be amrika" (The voyage of a German Submarine to America) in *Kaveh*, Jul 15, 1916, 8. "Jang-e zirdarya'i" (Submarine War), in *Kaveh*, April 15, 1917, 4-5.

⁷⁸ "Baz etmam-e hojat" (Again an Ultimatum), in *Kaveh*, April 15, 1917, 3-4.

For *Kaveh*, the inculcation of the public with knowledge is the bedrock of Western civilization, best exemplified in the German system of education, which it admires the most. An illustrated table in the February 15th issue of *Kaveh* in 1918, demonstrates how Germany leads other major European countries, namely France and Great Britain in terms of knowledge production. As the table flaunts the country's achievements in the eradication of illiteracy, the share of education spending, the annual number of published book titles, the number of Nobel laureates and innovation has put Germany on top the other two.⁷⁹ Another article published in 1920, takes up the same theme of education in Germany, stressing the importance of the accessibility of knowledge for everybody in the society. "Knowledge and power of a few individuals is not enough to guarantee the strength of a nation and to achieve this goal, the majority of people ought to be willingly supportive of that individual great talent. The existence of a few men of great talent is not the cause of the elevation of a nation's [qowm] civilization but instead the national support of the great men is indicative of an exalted civilization".⁸⁰ This contention is substantiated with a quotation from the German classical scholar, Hermann Diels which suggests that knowledge should be taken out of the confines of educational institutions to benefit the ordinary people on the streets.⁸¹

میزان تمدن اروپا		
آلمان	انگلیس	فرانسه
۲	۱۰۰	۳۲۰
عدهٔ بیسواد در ۱۰۰,۰۰۰ نفر		
۱۰۹,۷۵	۴۸۰	۳۱۱,۲۵
مصرف مدارس در سال		
آلمان	انگلیس	فرانسه
۱۰۹,۷۵	۴۸۰	۳۱۱,۲۵
عدهٔ کتابهای مطبوعه در سال		
آلمان	انگلیس	فرانسه
۱۴	۳	۲
جایزهٔ نوبل		
آلمان	انگلیس	فرانسه
۱۱۹۹	۱۱۸	۱۲۵۶
تصدیقنامه اختراع		

An article published in the 26th issue of *Kaveh* celebrates the steady rise in the number of Iranian students in Germany, arguing that the excellence of German system of education

⁷⁹ "Jashn-e iranian-e berlin" (The Iranian Ceremony in Berlin), in *Kaveh*, February 15, 1918, 12.

⁸⁰ "Olum va sanaye' dar alman" (Science and Technology in Germany), in *Kaveh*, January 22, 1920, 9.

⁸¹ Ibid., 8.

would make Germany an advantageous alternative over France which hitherto had been a popular destination for Iranian students dispatched to Europe. The spread of French language in Iran, the author opines, is the main reason behind the disproportionately high number of Iranian students in France. According to the article, the number of students who received their education in French is higher than other European languages to the extent that out of 500 Iranians who had been studying abroad prior to the outbreak of the war, an overwhelming majority of them were in Paris and the French-speaking area of Switzerland, while only 34 students pursued their training in Great Britain. The article ends by giving a brief overview of the activities of the Advisory Board for the Training of Persian Students in Germany [Beirat zur Ausbildung persischer Schüler in Deutschland], which made available a limited number of scholarships funded by the German government.⁸²

The article not only hails the German government's decision as a positive move that would eventually pave the way for a larger number of Iranian students to attend the German educational institutions but also says a few words about what fields of education became prioritized by the Advisory Board. To meet the practical needs of the time, the article argues that priorities should be given to practical fields such as teaching, agriculture and industrial science. Political science and law in turn are deemed to be the least favorable academic majors as they tend to exacerbate the already existing ills of venality and the greed for involvement in politics for self-serving ends.⁸³ In much the same way, another article in 1920, views the growing interest in politics among the layman as a threat to the social and moral welfare of the nation, advocating instead for the rise of professionalism in scientific fields. To explain this point, the article adds sarcastically that while the country is full of political experts bestowed with titles such as "the pride of Iran and the savior of the country", the country suffers from the shortage of skilled workforce including medical and veterinary profession.⁸⁴ These types of prescriptive writings, which appeared more frequently in the post-war period of *Kaveh* implicitly or explicitly convey the same conclusion that in order for Iran to rise to the rank of a civilized nation, there should be some Western-educated patriotic men, who could impart modern knowledge to the public and thus, address the single most vexing problem of backwardness that they considered to have enfeebled the nation.

⁸² "Mohaselin-e irani dar alman" (The Iranian Students in Germany), in *Kaveh*, March 15, 1918, 6-7.

⁸³ Ibid., 7.

⁸⁴ "Molahezat" (Considerations), in *Kaveh*, January 18, 1920, 3.

The Ideal of Manliness: Death of Count von Kanitz

The May 16th 1916 issue of *Kaveh*, features an article that lamentably confirms the untimely death of the German military attaché, Count Georg von Kanitz who was killed on January 16th, 1916, while retreating from a battle against the Russian troops in western Persia. The article introduces Kanitz as a man of great wit, whose dedication to the cause of the defense of Iran earned him the unreserved trust of Iranian people from all walks of life making him a celebrated figure in the whole country.⁸⁵ Here, the image of Kanitz is elevated to an idealized war hero popular among ordinary Iranians. Although some Iranian nationalists deluded themselves into believing that Kanitz's efforts could secure national integrity of Iran, an ambition that Iranian nationalists held dear, it would be straining credulity too far to pretend that the German officer fits the romanticized descriptions associated with him in *Kaveh* as well as other texts produced by Iranian nationalists.⁸⁶ Propagandistic approach of *Kaveh* as a political tool funded by the German government could partly explain such an hyperbolic admiration of Kanitz's character. Nonetheless, if we put this short condolence message next to Jamalzadeh's account of his encounter with Kanitz, it becomes evident that there is a desire on the part of Jamalzadeh and probably his fellow Iranian nationalists to project their ideal image of an exemplary patriotic man onto figures the likes of Kanitz, one that they hoped they could imprint upon the minds of Iranian nation.

Count von Kanitz was assigned the task of strengthening the German position in Iran by making an army of pro-German tribes to fight against Allied forces. By the outbreak of the war, Iran's strategic location which effectively made the country a potential gateway to Afghanistan and India, attracted the attention of German leaders in Berlin. Kanitz's activities were in fact part of the broader efforts by Germany to persuade the Iranian Government to join the Central Powers in the war. With the assistance of their Iranian allies, including the pro-German democrats and the members of the Persian Committee, Kanitz along with other German agents attempted to arouse nationalist feelings among tribes in order to unleash the anti-Allied resentment of the local population. Contrary to the report of *Kaveh* which claims with certainty that Kanitz was killed, the evidence indicates that Kanitz mysteriously disappeared and allegedly committed suicide after realizing that his poorly organized force of

⁸⁵ "Vagh'ye asafnak m'suf-e alayh-e graf kanitz" (A Heartbreaking Accident for Graf Kanitz), in *Kaveh*, May 16, 1916,

⁸⁶ See for example Iraj Afshar, Ali Dehbashi, ed., *Khaterat-e*, 80-2; also, Yahya Dowlatabadi, *Hayat-e Yahya (Yahya's life)*, vol. 3 (Tehran: Ferdousi, 1983), 311-22.

Turkish battalion, the Persian gendarmerie and the tribes of Kurds and Lurs would not be able to confront the better-equipped Russian forces.⁸⁷

As has been already noted, Jamalzadeh was the first member of the Berlin circle who was dispatched by the committee to take on the task of inciting tribesmen of western Iran into rebellion against the British and the Russians troops. In his autobiography, Jamalzadeh briefly describes the events of his “16-month-long patriotic mission in Iraq and Iran”⁸⁸ where he recalls the detail of his encounter with Kanitz as well as Werner Otto von Hentig, a former German diplomat who at that time headed an expedition to Afghanistan. Jamalzadeh sees in Kanitz whom he highly praises, an exemplary soldier who upheld the patriotic ideals. For him, Kanitz is a brave and diligent young man [javan-e shoja’ va fa’al] who fought for the interest of his own country and in this way, lost his life, albeit indirectly, for the sake of Iran’s independence.⁸⁹ Being associated with the manly virtues of patriotism and bravery, Kanitz’s image contrasts sharply with Jamalzadeh’s portrayal of Iranian tribesmen, who except for a few, are described as greedy, ignorant with a weak sense of national belonging. Jamalzadeh blames the tribesmen for Kanitz’s failure pointing out that tribal support which predictably, fizzled out quickly was driven by their insatiable greed for money and not deep patriotic feelings.⁹⁰

Kanitz who was a brave and diligent young man became the victim of trickery from our tribal population and not only he could not get anything done, but he was also murdered at the end somewhere in the mountains and valleys of western Iran. And apparently, they couldn’t even find his dead body. It is such a pity that this dedicated and chivalrous young German officer was somewhat naive and inexperienced. With trunks packed with gold coins, he was riding around in the plains and mountains of western Iran under a delusion that he is fighting for his country and persuading the local population to fighting and chivalry. And the writer of these lines personally saw him with his own eyes in one of those cabins in Kangavar while with the assistance of his interpreter, he was negotiating with one of the members of a small tribe of Kurds. He had laid out a very large military map of Iran in the middle of the room asking that guy who had claimed he could gather a few thousand foot soldiers and cavalymen from his own tribe to show him the location of his tribe and was waiting for that a-hole who couldn’t even read and write in Persian to put his finger on the place where his tribe is

⁸⁷ Donald M. McKale, *War by Revolution: German and Great Britain in the Middle east in the era of World War 1* (Kent: the Kent State University Press, 1998), 133-145.

⁸⁸ Iraj Afshar, Ali Dehbashi, ed., *Khaterat-e*, 116.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 80-2.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 85.

settled. God bless him that he sacrificed himself for his own noble ideals and inexhaustible dedication.⁹¹

In the above, Kanitz is depicted as a civilized patriotic man. Tribesmen, by contrast, are the epitome of everything that is associated with the traditional masculinity. Iranian tribesmen are described as ignorant, morally corrupt, archaic in their social practices and more importantly devoid of any national consciousness. We should indeed situate Jamalzadeh's contempt for Iranian tribesmen in the broader context of early twentieth century attempts at the modernization of the country where in nationalist eye nomadic life was not only conceived as incompatible with the values of modern civilization but also feared as a real threat to the idea of national unity.⁹² In his interaction with the tribespeople, Jamalzadeh is scornful of their social norms claiming that what characterizes nomadic life of Kurds can be summed up only in four things: the prevalence of titles that sound perplexing to non-local ears, swearing, perfunctory courtesy and cursing. He admires the spectacular scenery of Hersin comparing it to an earthly Heaven but laments the fact that instead of nymphs, this lush, green village in western Iran is populated with strange-looking Lurs [lorhay-e ajib va qarib]. Jamalzadeh who is famous for his satirical style, as an example, mocks the appearance of one of the tribal leaders describing his hat, with a touch of hyperbole, as an unusually long urban hat that seems to be half meter long like a giant pot that one wears on his head.⁹³ Despite Jamalzadeh's ethical criticism of tribesmen's social behaviors, there is no acknowledgment of the fact that Jamalzadeh himself was somewhat dishonest in dealing with the local people and he on his part tried to exploit them in the furtherance of a nationalist objective.

In his memoir, Jamalzadeh recounts another interaction that took place between a German officer, presumably Werner Otto von Hentig, and an Iranian cleric in Baghdad. Jamalzadeh writes that when the German officer took out his bag to show his passport to the Iranian consul general, accidentally a family photo slid out of his bag and dropped onto the floor. The cleric who was sitting around in the room got his hand on the photo and muttered jokingly under his breath that "he looks better than his sister". The cleric is described as a turbaned, beardless man, a weak and pitiable figure who crawled into a corner of the room. Jamalzadeh chastises the cleric for his ignorance and the fact that he uttered those words

91 Ibid., 81.

92 Stephanie Cronin, *Tribal Politics in Iran, Rural Conflict and the New State, 1921-1941* (London: Routledge, 2007), 17-18.

93 Iraj Afshar, Ali Dehbashi, ed., *Khaterat-e*, 88-9.

without knowing that the German officer understood Persian and even worse that he was a national hero who was later awarded a prestigious medal of honor for his military valor. Stressing the officer's versatile personality, Jamalzadeh admires him for being athletic, apparently a strong swimmer and a military man with a strong spirit of adventure. In contrast, the meek clerical figure crawling in a corner of the room stands in for all that was wrong about Iranian traditional men.⁹⁴ Moreover, the homoerotic hints implicit in the cleric's lewd remark is a reference to the homosociality of traditional Iran, what nationalists like Taqizadeh condemned as the worst cultural vice of the Iranians, a sign of backwardness and a visible marker of difference between a civilized and uncivilized society that should be erased.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ Ibid., 82-3.

⁹⁵ In his long proposal for reform published in Kaveh in 1921, Taqizadeh views homosexuality, "the shameful practice of unnatural love", "a major obstacle to civilization". Ali Ansari, *The Politics of Nationalism*, 63.

Chapter 3

Patriotic Men as Productive Citizens

The writing of *Kaveh* occurred in the midst of a rapidly changing global order, which influenced the editorial policy of the periodical. The defeat of Germany in the war, the revolutionary upheaval in Russia, and the subsequent consolidation of the British position in Iran, all these events ultimately left an imprint on the political vision of Taqizadeh and his collaborators at *Kaveh*. Having been disappointed at the outcome of the war, Taqizadeh focused his attention on what he viewed as the prevailing social ills of Iranian society, which as he claimed had long obstructed the prospect of national resurrection. As Ansari has astutely noted most of the articles published in the second series of *Kaveh* fall into one of these categories: “educational”, “critical” and “prescriptive” articles.⁹⁶ This chapter is more concerned with the last two types which respectively deal with the shortcomings of Taqizadeh’s contemporaries in understanding the essence of European civilization, and the immediate actions required to remedy the many observable defects caused by the current state of ignorance.

As evident in the pages of *Kaveh*, any attempt to revitalize the moral and physical qualities of men of the nation is understood as having an immediate impact on the national progress of Iran. The post-war series of *Kaveh* features a number of pieces pertaining to issues as diverse as education, sport and male same-sex sexual behavior. This chapter explores how the modern ideas of education, physical sports and heteronormative sexual mores were co-opted into a nation-building proposal brought forth by Taqizadeh in the early 1920s. Having employed these Western-inspired ideas, Taqizadeh sought the goal of setting new masculine values that conform to the changing realities of his time. The first section of the chapter deals with the issue of public education. Taqizadeh bemoans Iranian elite men for their poor understanding of Western civilization, holding them accountable for the ignorance of the masses, and consequently the national degeneration of Iran. With a particular attention to Taqizadeh’s language in the texts, I demonstrate how the debate of a nation in decline is cast in medicalized terms. The second section addresses the regenerative impact of physical sports for the making of a generation of physically fit and productive Iranian men. The last section focuses on Taqizadeh’s call for the eradication of “unnatural love” as one of the main obstacles to civilization. His critique of male homoeroticism of Iranian society invited strict regulations

⁹⁶ Ansari, *The Politics of Nationalism*, 59.

of male sexuality and concomitantly facilitated the nation-wide acceptance of the normalization of heterosexual eros in the interwar years.

National Rejuvenation: Educating the Public

In the first editorial of the post-war series of *Kaveh*, Taqizadeh proclaims that by the end of the Great War and the conception of the international peace, Iran has begun to experience “a new era” [dore’y-e jadid], fundamentally different from the wartime period of disintegration. By the outbreak of the revolution in Russia and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, Great Britain moved quickly to expand its influence in Iran. In order to draw attention to the significance of such a shift in Iran’s situation in a changing global context, Taqizadeh deploys medicalized metaphors, arguing that while during the war the country was suffering from acute diseases [maraz-e had], now it is chronic diseases [maraz-e mozmen] that have struck the country. “The political threats prior to the war resembled plague, tuberculosis, gangrene, today’s diseases in turn are like cancer and syphilis. The old diseases required quick actions, scrambling, seeking doctors and medicine, and intense fighting against the disease, while current the disease requires prevention, constant care, precaution and a strong and stable mind.” Unlike the threat of the Ottoman and Russian encroachment, which was militaristic by its nature, the British threat, Taqizadeh stresses, is much more complicated and “involves not only the use of troops, artillery, gun, hand bayonet but also knowledge, mind, expediency [tadbir] and duplicity”.⁹⁷

Fighting against this disease, which gradually penetrates into the veins and roots of the nation and its aim is to make it economically dependent and probably hold it back in science and knowledge, the means of salvation, requires stability, endurance, reason and prudence.⁹⁸

As a prescription for real national progress, Taqizadeh adamantly calls for the acceptance and dissemination of all aspects of European civilization without reservation except for the language, which he believes that as a cultural marker of national peculiarity of Iran should be preserved, improved, and disseminated. Taqizadeh heaps scorn on the profound nationalist conceit of those who take pride in Iran’s imperial past and refuse to embrace the cultural superiority of the West, rejecting their delusional nationalist self-aggrandizement as a

⁹⁷ “Dor’y-e Jadid” (the New Era), 2.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 2.

sign of “false patriotism”. The editorial ends with Taqizadeh’s controversial pronouncement in bold letters that “Iran should be Westernized in appearance and essence, physically and spiritually”. To make his statement sufficiently persuasive, Taqizadeh even reassures his readers that if Iranian intellectuals take his advice seriously, there would be a high probability that Iran not only weather the storm of the current crisis but also immune itself from the probable reemergence of Russia in the future and the threat of pan-Turkism of the Ottomans, a phenomenon that in his words resembles “a microbe of decay” which is spread in the northwest of Iran.⁹⁹

A year later in the January 11 issue of *Kaveh* in 1921, Taqizadeh released a long list of prescriptive reforms that he deemed absolutely necessary in order to reverse the current downward spiral of national degeneration in Iran. Fully aware of the censorious responses that such announcement could generate in the public opinion, Taqizadeh preemptively reminds his potential critics that the new emphasis on tackling the cultural and social malaise of Iran is by no means a retreat from politics on the part of *Kaveh* editors, but instead such a shift in emphasis reflects the differences of opinion on what should be given the priority in the current situation. Taqizadeh vehemently criticizes the dislocated priorities of those who he terms “professional politicians” [siyasat chi], for the reason that they have concentrate all their energy on political disputes in the capital at the expense of more serious underlying issues the likes of high illiteracy rate and a lack of interest in physical exercise among the general public. Taqizadeh discredits the efforts of those who seek temporary remedy in politics, comparing them with a doctor who tries to remove the symptoms of an illness rather than cure it. Taqizadeh’s manifesto of reforms, which includes seventeen essential and six desirable prescriptions, focuses more on the fundamental necessities of “national life” [zendegy-e melli] without which “national survival” [nejat-e melli] could not be achieved.¹⁰⁰

1. A universal public education (talim) and self-awareness/analysis (khod-keshi).
2. The publication of useful books, the translation of European books and their publication.
3. The taking and accepting without reservation the principles, manners, and customs of European civilization.
4. The extensive and maximum promotion of physical exercise according to European standards.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 2.

¹⁰⁰ “Dibach’y-e sal-e dovvom-e kaveh” (The Preface to the Second Issue of Kaveh), in *Kaveh*, January 11, 1921, 1-3.

5. The preservation and unity of the nation of Iran.
6. The preservation of the national language, meaning Persian, from corruption.
7. A declaration of war without mercy against opium and alcohol.
8. The war against ignorant prejudice and the [implementation] of complete equality between religions.
9. The war against disease, especially malaria, genital illnesses, tuberculosis, typhus, and polio.
10. The preservation of the independence of Iran.
11. The cultivation (abadi) of the country in the European manner especially through the import of industry (mashin).
12. The freedom of women, and the education and instruction of their rights and privileges.
13. A vigorous war against lying.
14. The endeavor to rid ourselves of the wicked quality of ambiguity and 'diplomacy' which of late has unfortunately taken hold and even is considered to be positive.
15. The ridding of ourselves of the shameful practice of unnatural love which has historically been one of the worst practices of our people and which is a major obstacle to civilization.
16. The fight against frivolous, lewd behavior, and exaggeration, and the cultivation of seriousness among the population.
17. The revival of the ancient traditions and customs of the Iranian nation.
18. The settlement of the tribes and their disarmament.
19. The eradication of banditry and the elimination of the roots of theft.
20. The existence of political freedom and equality (democracy).
21. The enforcement of penalties against public officials who abuse their power.
22. A confrontation of the parasites on the government payroll.
23. The reinforcement of government authority and provision of security.¹⁰¹

As perfectly exemplified in this eclectic list of prescriptions, *Kaveh*, in its second run, turned into a strong platform for social and cultural reforms, in which a universal public education was the centerpiece. So much emphasis on the necessity of the acquisition of Western knowledge in the second series of *Kaveh* signaled a major shift in the meaning of patriotism. As the national anxiety over the war began to wane, patriotism which was hitherto defined in terms more congruent with the male propensity for defense of the country, gives way to a less militaristic sense of the expression to denote a collective striving for national renewal through the adoption and application of Western scientific knowledge. In other words, contrary to the wartime series of *Kaveh*, as the means of manifesting patriotism, a high value is placed on the contribution of men in national progress as productive citizens rather than their self-sacrificing

¹⁰¹ "Dibach'y-e sal-e dovvom-e kaveh" (The Preface to the Second Issue of Kaveh), in *Kaveh*, January 11, 1921, 2-3. the translation of the quote is taken from Ansari, *The Politics of Nationalism*, p. 62-3.

ability to defend the motherland. For instance, imbued with patriotic values, the job of a teacher as the promulgator of modern knowledge is described to be of a greater practical importance for the survival of the nation than that of the deputies of the National Assembly. *Kaveh* depicts the eradication of illiteracy as the only effective remedy for the national malaise of Iran [alaj-e haqiqiy-e maraz-e melli] without which the nation steadily and ineluctably goes down the slope of degeneracy; contagious diseases, addiction, alcoholism, and poverty drive the nation to the brink of almost extinction and that will lead people to succumb to foreign domination.¹⁰²

One short pamphlet on deleterious effects of opium which is physical, mental, hereditary, moral and national and social could persuade fifty thousand people to quit smoking. One article in a newspaper is enough to convince one hundred thousand men to sign up voluntarily for military service to defend their country at the time of danger. One good book creates a great social or moral revolution and the Iranian National Assembly to match the liking of those who prefer to use its European equivalent becomes a real parliament which means that even in [the small towns] like Golpayegan, Kazerun, Ardebil and Tuysarkan bowler hatted educated men will be a common sight and since the likelihood of finding the industrious and patriotic people among the educated is higher; even if two thirds of them happened to be useless, corrupt and irresponsible [biqeyd], the remaining one third would suffice to reform the country.¹⁰³

Preoccupied with concerns over moral welfare of the nation, *Kaveh* in its second run, turns its attention away from foreign enemies, focusing more on internal foes whose practices were perceived as impediment to the national rejuvenation of the country. In the manner of anti-clerical writings of the time, the clergy is particularly singled out as the main culprits who along with the ruling class “have blocked every gap through which a ray of light could possibly shine in the field where their innocent flock were gazing in the dark”.¹⁰⁴ One article claims while every school kid in the West becomes acquainted with basic astronomy facts, the minds of Iranian adults are still filled with superstitious claims, again laying the blame at the door of ignorant clerics who spoon feed the masses with their dubious facts. The plebeian taste of those semi-Westernized clerics or semi-religious Westernizers [tollab-e nim-e farangi maab ya farangi maaban-e nime akhund] who refuse to embrace wholeheartedly the enlightened truth of Western science [haghayegh-e nurani-ye elm] is to be blamed for the ignorance of the

¹⁰² “Nokat va Molahezat” (Notes and Considerations), in *Kaveh*, April 10, 1921, 1-4.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 5.

¹⁰⁴ “Ahd nam’ye iran va rus” (Russo-Persian Treaty), in *Kaveh*, October 6, 1921, 14.

masses.¹⁰⁵ Furthermore, as a response to those who harbor doubts over the wisdom of leaving the affairs of the country in the hands of foreign advisers, Taqizadeh contends that in the lack of a qualified doctor it is the responsibility of a Muslim to rescue his patient from the quackery of crooked and uneducated domestic pretenders and leave her into the reliable hands of a competent Christian doctor who know how to save her life.¹⁰⁶

Although the importance of Western-style education is emphasized in different articles of *Kaveh*, sending students to the European countries did not come without its own risks. From a nationalist standpoint, the risk involved dispatching Iranian students abroad was that a firsthand encounter with the superior West despite all its benefits could turn into a bitter experience of disappointment at the prospect of any progress in the homeland, and consequently lead to the weakening of nationalist feelings among the educated youths. In order to distinguish the “real” conception of patriotism from its counterfeit, Taqizadeh splits the educated elite men of his time into three distinct groups explaining how each on their part have betrayed the cause of national progress in Iran. The first group is comprised of corrupt and self-serving political elites and ill-intentioned aristocrats who are at best utterly indifferent to Iran’s backwardness or at worst like the enemies of the country actively at work of harming Iran’s national interests. As opposed to the first group, there are indeed reformist-minded patriots and constitutionalists who genuinely seek reforms with the best interest of the country in mind but unfortunately, Taqizadeh laments, the genuine endeavors of these men have yielded no meaningful result. This is mostly due to the fact that a large portion of these individuals despite their earnestness are blinkered in their outlook and thus their unhealthy admiration for their native culture does not allow them to be sufficiently appreciative of the civilizational differences between the progressive West and the regressive East. Taqizadeh faults the nativist frenzy of these Iranian nationalists dismissing their claims about the glory of Iran’s past as symptoms of what he calls “false patriotism”. The second half of the latter group are significantly smaller in number but properly trained in Western knowledge. What pains Taqizadeh though is that still among this small circle of educated individuals, on whom he pins so much hope there is a common trend that indicates a gradual loss of faith in the prospect of the rehabilitation of Iran into a civilized country.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ “Monazereye shab va ruz” (A Dialogue between Day and Night), in *Kaveh*, 1921, 6-7.

¹⁰⁶ “Nokat va Molahezat” (Notes and Considerations), in *Kaveh*, October 6, 1921, 4.

¹⁰⁷ “Nokat va Molahezat” (Notes and Considerations), in *Kaveh*, November 13, 1920, 1-3.

One of the educated men of Iran told the writer of this piece about another trained Iranian youth, whom he admires that “this fellow is a nice guy with a unique personality who chose a life of solitude in Paris and has no interaction with his fellow countrymen. He is very disdainful of Iran and Iranians, to the extent that once he himself told me that whenever I look in the mirror, I squint in disgust as again I’ve seen an Iranian.”¹⁰⁸

The rarity of Western educated Iranian men for whom the cherished idea of national progress is a matter truly dear to their heart is what Taqizadeh describes as the worst of Iran’s misfortunes. Taqizadeh uses an interesting analogy of the nation being like a disadvantageous child who bears the brunt of the poor parenting of his educated elite men. He depicts the nation as a ragged, ugly and ignorant child whose parents want to either keep him as he is and pretend that he is the best of all children in appearance and talent or they humbly accept that their child has some problems but instead of seeking remedy to cure him they shamelessly decide to abandon the poor thing to adopt the healthy child of an affluent neighbor. The cause of civilizational degeneration of Iran, Taqizadeh claims, is that Iranian students often leave their education unfinished and come back home like some inauthentic creatures that are neither fully trained in the European manner nor their own native culture. Those Iranian youths who earn their degrees successfully, in turn, tend to stay in the West as immigrants. In a satirical manner, Taqizadeh alludes to Darwin’s theory of “survival of the fittest” to shed some light on the degenerative effects of the brain drain that has exacerbated the national regression of Iran. Taqizadeh metaphorically uses the example of Darwin’s research on the evolution of flightlessness in some species of insects in the Canary Islands in order to explain how those Iranian youths who become equipped with the wings of knowledge fly towards the ocean of civilization and selfishly leave their less privileged countrymen in the island of ignorant and poverty.¹⁰⁹

Disappointed at political elites in Tehran, in the September 1921 issue of *Kaveh*, Taqizadeh contemplates, albeit reluctantly, the idea of an “enlightened despot”, who could single-handedly materialize the wholesale reforms outlined early in *Kaveh* in January of the same year. The “enlightened despot” is depicted as a benevolent father figure who drags his children out of their archaic mode of existence and mold them forcefully into the civilized men of a modern nation. Seldom such a man rises to power in the history of a country. An “enlightened despot” emerges either from the aristocracy and among those uncorrupt members

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 3.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

of the ruling class who are endowed with the traits of manliness, bravery and honor or sometimes from the commoners in the aftermath of a revolution. As the most suitable exemplar of “the enlightened despotism” [estebdad-e monavvar], Taqizadeh hails Peter the Great of Russia and the Mikado of Japan who treated the ignorant masses of their respective territories as sick children [atfal-e mariz] and forced them for their own sake to swallow, whether willingly or otherwise, the bitter pill of civilization and progress [tamaddon va taraqqi]. Here, Taqizadeh envisioned the emergence of a patriotic savior who would follow the footsteps of Peter the Great and thus in the manner of a domineering father will cultivate his reactionary subjects with modern manners, shave their beard off their face and put short clothes on them.¹¹⁰

The writing of these lines occurred a few months after the February Coup of 1921, which led to the establishment of the Pahlavi regime in the mid-1920s. Reza Shah who rose to power with the backing of the nationalist intellectuals of the time materialized most of the desired reforms indicated in Taqizadeh’s proposal.¹¹¹ Interestingly, Taqizadeh’s reference to sartorial policies of Peter the Great became a reality in Iran by the end of the decade, when a unifying dress law came into effect in 1928 to force Iranian men to abandon their traditional attire for the Western-style suit and hat.¹¹² Revered as an Iranian incarnation of an “enlightened despot”, nationalists like Taqizadeh saw in Reza Shah a national hero, who had arrived on horseback to salvage the Iranian nation from the abyss of disintegration.¹¹³ While admiring him as an enlightened man, Taqizadeh attributes Reza Shah’s success in what was a hasty execution of ambitious nationalist reforms with the fact that he by the time of his ascend to power had not visited the West.¹¹⁴ Therefore, unlike the Iranian elites of his era who often traveled to the European countries, his pride was not suffering from a similar feeling of self-inferiority. In other words, Reza Shah did not undergo the humiliating experience of seeing oneself in the mirror of the superior West.

Physical Sports

As opposed to mass public education which dominated much of the prescriptive discussions in both series of the periodical, the salience of physical education in the

¹¹⁰ “Nokat va Molahezat” (Notes and Considerations), in *Kaveh*, September 4, 1921, 3-4.

¹¹¹ Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, 72-96; Abrahamian, *Iran between two Revolutions*, 135-165.

¹¹² Chehabi, “Staging the Emperor’s New Clothes,” 213-214.

¹¹³ Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, 62; Abrahamian, *Iran between two Revolutions*, 103.

¹¹⁴ Taqizadeh. *Zendegi-e Tufani*, 433.

reinvigoration of the national body is rarely, if at all, emphasized in the early issues of *Kaveh*. A serious engagement with the topic occurred only in the January 1920 issue of *Kaveh*, where the writer of the editorial, presumably Taqizadeh, draws attention to physical exercise as one of the less accentuated factors in determining the inferiority and weakness [*sosti va khari*] of the Iranian nation. Taqizadeh opines that in addition to the palpable causes of this state of affairs including illiteracy, the spread of fatal diseases, subjugation of the commoners and the abysmal state of women's education and social life, there are other equally important though lesser known causes such as physical exercise and lack of professionalism in the workforce, which have debilitated the nation.¹¹⁵ As opposed to the issue of education whose liberatory impact on women's wretched condition is emphasized in the pages of *Kaveh*, there is almost no explicit mention of the regenerative potentials of sport for women. As a matter of great concern for the physical and spiritual qualities of the nation, modern sport is believed to be essential for the creation of a new generation of Iranian men, who are by modern standards, progressive, disciplined, and productive.¹¹⁶

As far as Taqizadeh is concerned, in the making of the modern Iranian man, sport is second in importance only to a universal public education. In an article on women's social status, Taqizadeh expresses regret that his fellow members of the intelligentsia have neglected the importance of physical education warning that "how could the determination and endeavor [*azm va hemmat*] of the educated class of a nation among whom physical exercise is uncommon and the use of opium and alcohol is in turn prevalent, resist the vexing [social] problems and the iron hindrances[?]"¹¹⁷ Such emphasis is all the more needed since these civilized loving [*tamaddon dust*] enlightened class of Iranian men are the ones who have truly understood the significance of women's social status for national progress and potentially have the power to free them from the yoke of religious fanaticism. Somewhere else, he urges "the professional politician" [*syasat chi*], one of the chief villains of his polemical writings, to pay

¹¹⁵ "Molahezat" (Considerations), in *Kaveh*, January 18, 1920, 3.

¹¹⁶ Although later in the early Pahlavi era, modern sport was integrated into the national building project for both men and women, they were expected to benefit from sport and healthy body in different ways. Sport was assumed to enhance the productivity of men at work and women at home. Cyrus Schayegh, "Sport, Health, and the Iranian Middle Class in the 1920s and 1930s," *Iranian Studies* 35, no. 4 (September 2002): 350–352. On the topic of sport in the early Pahlavi era, see also Houchang E. Chehabi, "Mir Mehdi Varzandeh and the Introduction of Modern Physical Education in Iran," In *Culture and Cultural Politics under Reza Shah*, edited by Bianca Devos and Christoph Werner, 55–72. (London: Routledge, 2014); Mikiya Koyagi, "Moulding Future Soldiers and Mothers of the Iranian Nation: Gender and Physical Education under Reza Shah, 1921–41," *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 26, no. 11 (September 2009).

¹¹⁷ "Faaj-e shagi" (Paralysis), in *Kaveh*, December 13, 1920, 1–2.

more attention to social and cultural issues, most importantly public education and sport, which he identifies as the fundamental pillars of national progress.¹¹⁸ Furthermore, in a discussion about sending the students abroad, Taqizadeh suggests that possible candidates should be vetted and carefully selected based on a variety of requirements including their health and physical strength.¹¹⁹ To leave no one in any doubt of the importance of sport, the periodical also features a series of instructive articles on chess which as a mind sport [varzesh-e fekr va khiyal] enlightens the mind and enhances players' self-determination and learning abilities.¹²⁰

After a year, in an effort to buttress his case for the integration of modern sports into Iran's potential nation-building project, Taqizadeh allocated an entire editorial to the topic of sport in 1921 in order to flesh out some of the underdeveloped points already made in the January 1920 issue of *Kaveh* about the connection between sport and civilization. As one of the most important "secrets of civilization" and "hidden causes" [elal-e khafiy'] of national progress, Taqizadeh claims that sport is a prerequisite for the attainment of "national power", "progress", "independence", "civilization" and specifically "morality" and "earnestness" at both social and individual levels. Furthermore, he asserts that there is a proven correlation between body strength achieved through intense physical exercise and moral virtues such as righteousness, courage, manliness [mardanegi], honesty, sincerity, chastity, frankness, and chivalry. He goes on arguing that the dissemination of Western-style sport uproots lying and other frivolous and lewd behaviors which have corrupted the morality of Iranian nation and thus will make a generation of "true gentlemen" [gentelman-e hesabi] out of the existing decadent and degenerate Iranian traditional men.¹²¹

Those children and youths who are nurtured and trained in these manners will become the main pillar and the backbone of the nation. They don't lie, they refuse to engage in deceit, duplicity and conspiracy, they don't break their oath, they don't indulge in servility and sycophancy, they are not loquacious, they uphold decency and rigid moral standards, _what our ill-fated country needs the most_ ; they won't smoke opium or drink alcohol; they won't use tricks to deceive one another; they will never act like an opportunists; they remain resolute in their beliefs and fearlessly utter the truth; they don't do flip-flop depending on which way the wind blows; they possess high ideals in spirituality and don't cater to their every whim and

¹¹⁸ "Nokat va Molahezat" (Notes and Considerations), in *Kaveh*, September 4, 1921, 2.

¹¹⁹ "Nokat va Molahezat" (Notes and Considerations), in *Kaveh*, April 10, 1921, 6.

¹²⁰ "Shatranj" (Chess), in *Kaveh*, December 13, 1920, 5-6. It is interesting to note that *Kaveh* is the first journal which has published an article on chess in the Iranian press. Milani, "Majalle-ye Kaveh va mas'ale-ye tajaddod," 506.

¹²¹ "Khiyalat" (Ideas), in *Kaveh*, January 8, 1921, 1.

don't capitulate with weakness to the ills of the society. They choose to be abstinent and do not indulge in lust and tend to eat less.¹²²

As the above illustrates, Taqizadeh details the everyday activities of typical office clerks drawing attention to the differences that modern sport could make in the physical strength, health, morality and productivity of Iranian men as active members of the nation. The clerk who abstains from physical exercise is described as an unhealthy, lazy, addicted and morally corrupt traditional man. The one who practices sports is in turn clean, healthy, disciplined, diligent and industrious: "He works seriously and uninterruptedly for eight or ten hours which is ten times as much as the addicted clerk and in the late afternoon, he goes for a ride or a walk or plays a game and while he has finished his job with discipline, he returns home happily and full of hope (not melancholic)... and at night, he goes to bed at 10 or 11 and does not sleep for more than seven or eight hours".¹²³ Again, Taqizadeh stresses that the debilitating effects of the lack of sport-minded individuals among teachers is higher than other professional groups as they have the responsibility in "the creation of a new class of the nation" [khelghat-e tabaghey-e jadid-e mellat].¹²⁴ Here, sport is prescribed as an effective remedy for the ill of idleness which _as has been already noted_ is characterized as the symptom of the moral corruption of the Qajar aristocracy and by extension Iranian traditional men.

In an attempt to tie the issue of individual body strength with the physical quality of the nation, in the consecutive paragraphs, Taqizadeh draws his readers' attention to the national efforts that promoted physical sports in post-war Germany. Taqizadeh notes that physical exercise for the youth gained nationwide popularity in Germany so much so that it even aroused the suspicion of the press in other countries about the real motivation of the German leaders. Likewise, he associates that strong willpower and firm determination of the British to their steely strong bodies [badan-e pulady-e engelisi]. This quality, he explains regrettably, has enabled the British to sustain their empire in the face of enormous military conflicts and made them invincible in the Great War. Taqizadeh refers to the historical evidence that attests to the prevalence of sports among ancient Iranians in the pages of Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* in order to substantiate his argument about the relation between the physical weakness of Iranian men and national decline. "Ancient Iranians were physically strong, fearless of war with great determination and as has been repeatedly reported by historians, they lied so little as

¹²² Ibid., 1.

¹²³ Ibid., 2.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 2.

Zoroastrianism prohibited lying as one of the worst sinful acts and in fact, honesty was one of the main pillars of that holy religion”.¹²⁵ Taqizadeh adds that although Zoroastrians embraced the idea of freedom of person’s voluntary action, the importance of willpower among Iranians dissipated particularly under the negative influence of determinism inherent in the teaching of the Sufi mystics.¹²⁶

In the last issue of *Kaveh* in December 1921, Taqizadeh seized the opportunity once again to remind his compatriots of the regenerative potentials of physical sports. The editorial sums up neatly in a paragraph what has been argued so far regarding the centrality of Western-style modern sport in *Kaveh*’s national building proposal. Far from being a progressive nation, Taqizadeh asserts, Iran despite its bountiful natural resources and the natural talent of its inhabitants suffers from some basic shortcomings, the most important of which are, “physical strength”, “moral values required for national progress” and “knowledge”. From these three, the first and the last are the easiest to be remedied, but the inculcation of the ethics compatible with modern values requires “a sufficient number of righteous, physically fit and educated individuals with firm determination, who are bestowed with true patriotic aspirations and willing to endeavor with all their energy on this path”.¹²⁷ In the end, Taqizadeh speculates that modern sport may be an effective remedy that could improve the moral disposition of the nation. Sport as a matter of national interest is discussed in *Kaveh* in such a way that provides a moral basis to justify the assumptions about the moral superiority of the sport-minded men as real patriots and productive citizens of the country.

“Unnatural Love”¹²⁸

In his proposal for reform, Taqizadeh denounces “unnatural love” (*eshqe gheyre tabi’i*) as one of the worst practices of Iranian men and “a major obstacle to civilization”. Taqizadeh, however, is not the first Iranian modernist, who has championed the cause of the heteronormalization of sexuality. Before him, similar criticism of the homosociality of Iranian men appeared in the writings of Akhundzadeh and Mirza Agha Khan Kermani. Most critics of male homosexuality saw a clear correlation between the seclusion of women and the prevalence

¹²⁵ Ibid., 3.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 3.

¹²⁷ “Nokat va Molahezat” (Notes and Considerations), in *Kaveh*, December 4, 1921, 6.

¹²⁸ (*Eshqe gheyre tabi’i*)

of same-sex practices in the Iranian society.¹²⁹ The advocacy for gender desegregation of society went hand in hand with the moral repugnance for homosexuality. This argument is summed up in Afsaneh Najmabadi's statement that "the most feminist Iranian reforming men...were the most homophobic".¹³⁰ Although "unnatural love" by no means bears the same importance as public education and physical sports, as a visible symbol of decadent morality of traditional Iran, it gained significant attention in Taqizadeh's polemical pieces. As has been noted, relative to the two issues of physical health and strength of the nation, and the promotion of Western-style knowledge, the difficulties of instilling the public with the ethics of modernity is argued to be much harder to surmount.¹³¹ This partly explains why for Taqizadeh sexual orientation of male citizens warrants critical attention in his hastily crafted manifesto of national renewal.

Despite what it may seem at first glance, Taqizadeh's critique of "the shameful practice of unnatural love" is not fueled with genuine moral concerns; rather, as a close reading of his writings reveals, he as a pragmatist was of the belief that all cultural particularities of the Iranian society one of which same-sex practices of men that is in any form or shape stands in the way of Iran to become recognized as a respectable member of the commonwealth of nations should be cast aside without reservations. Taqizadeh points to the hypocrisy of what he considers the "ignorant masses" who are surprised when they hear that in other places like India people let the wife of a deceased man to be burnt alive with him or in Europe, men and women dance together but they see nothing wrong in the fact that "some well-believing Muslims every day beat up their wives and then go out to have fun and gaze at their own kind (!) [exclamation mark in original] and think all this is perfectly natural and normal."¹³² By using these examples, Taqizadeh shows the relativity of culturally determined values attributed to social practices hoping that in this way he could lay the ground for national-wide acceptance of universal, albeit imported, modern moral values.

These people . . . are useless when it comes to the salvation and progress of Iran, because a person who from his youth has laid down on a mattress and smoked opium, has recited poetry about *filthy and unnatural love* [my emphasis], has measured time using ciphers and the sunset, has reckoned the year and the month from lunar rotation, regard men's clothes to be long but

¹²⁹ Afary, *Sexual Politics in Modern Iran*, 118; Najmabadi, *Women with Mustaches*, 148

¹³⁰ Ibid., 162.

¹³¹ "Nokat va Molahezat" (Notes and Considerations), in Kaveh, December 4, 1921, 6.

¹³² "Nokat va Molahezat" (Notes and Considerations), in Kaveh, October 16, 1920, 2. The translation is taken from Najmabadi, *Women with Mustaches*, 162-163.

women's to be short, has shaved his head but let his beard grow, has eaten soup from a bowl with four other people and two spoons . . . such a person has a difficult time grasping and believing in the civilization of clean-shaven Europeans with all its spirituality. No matter how far he would progress, he ends up talking about our "6,000 year old" kingship, and ends the conversation in the pleasures of rice and the ugliness of frogs and crabs, which is the food of "stupid Europeans." These "progressives" most of whom are bearded children, will never understand the secret of the progress and decline of nations. No matter how much you tell them about universal education and its primary importance in political revolution of Iran, they absolutely cannot understand you, and wonder what this has to do with the subject matter. Instead they answer you by telling you about the "cabinet" and the need to change it, and they talk about the necessity of arranging a religious memorial sermon in order to push through a particular national goal, or they will speak about the need to bring the neighborhood prayer leader on board for some political goal by going to kiss his hand. If they end of becoming journalists under the "literature" section of their newspaper, with the rhyme of "O good boy" or if they be elected to the parliament, they propose a legislature requiring paying a stipend or revenue expediently for all the distinguished '*ulama*'.¹³³

Here, more than a cultural vice, homosexuality as an archaic practice incompatible with modern ethics is indicative of one's lack of intellectual capacity to grasp the essence of Western civilization. In Taqizadeh's view, those Iranian youths who idly lay down on a mattress and smoke opium and enjoy reading poetry about "filthy and unnatural love" are incapable of understanding the secrets of European civilization in its entirety. For Taqizadeh, lyrical poetry as a traditional literary genre is of particular importance in the dissemination of heterosexual love. "It is incumbent on our poets, who hold the key of the distribution and nurturing of all sorts of love and affection, to bring back this tender, natural and sublime feeling from the despised course they have taken, and to purify from that divine light the filth that their predecessors had mixed with that pure essence."¹³⁴ Taqizadeh holds Iranian poets responsible for the historical deviation of national morality from normative heterosexuality and claims that it is moral responsibility of them to not only "instill a pure affection in the heart of men of the nation" but also compensate for the crime that their predecessors committed against Iranian women.¹³⁵

¹³³ "Nokat va Molahezat" (Notes and Considerations), in Kaveh, November 13, 1920, 2. The translation of the quote is taken from Desouza, *Unveiling Men*.

¹³⁴ "Faaj-e shagi" (Paralysis), in Kaveh, December 13, 1920, 2. The translation of the quote is taken from Desouza, *Unveiling Men*.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 2.

But not all types of traditional poetry are rejected. While mystical poets are condemned for degrading portrayal of women, the figure of Ferdowsi is admired for his deep love and affection for his wife. As has been previously mentioned, unlike mystical homoerotic poetry, Ferdowsi's epic poems in *Shahnameh* appealed to the champions of Iranian nationalism. An autobiographical piece in the last issue of *Kaveh* depicts Ferdowsi as a married man, who remained faithful to his wife in a monogamous, heterosexual relationship. He was also not corrupted by "unnatural love", which, as the author claims, was prevalent among most Iranian poets in the past. Ferdowsi's character, as it is described in the piece, perfectly demonstrates the virtues of a patriotic man depicted in Taqizadeh's nation-building prescriptions. He was against lying, sycophancy, greed, harming other people, and refrained from using obscene language. More importantly, Ferdowsi is described as a staunch patriot and a true Iranian nationalist, who never shied away from expressing his disdain for Arabs.¹³⁶ Here, the author not only introduces compassionate marriage as the only morally acceptable way of performing sexual desire, but also makes heterosexual desire the purview of a patriotic man.

With the rise of nationalism in Iran, the masters of mystical poetry came under modernist suspicion of being promoters of homoerotic love in the Iranian society. As has been already hinted at, similar criticism of the harmful impact of Persian poetry was voiced by Ahmad Kasravi who ran a moral crusade against traditional homoerotic poetry. Kasravi called for a ban on the publication of homoerotic poems in high-school textbooks and newspapers and his campaign effectively influenced the educational policies of the early Pahlavi era. For instance, he successfully lobbied The Education Ministry to remove chapter 5 of Sa'di's *Golestan*, entitled "Love and Youth," from school texts.¹³⁷ Moreover, in *What does Hafez say?*, a book which is intended to be a moral appraisal of Hafez's poetry, Kasravi argues that the figure of "the road-sitter poor" [geday-e rah neshin], whom Hafez highly praises, is in fact a pederast. "The road-sitter poor is in fact the same filthy wrecked figures that you see every day at the corner of the walls. One has stripped naked. The other one has burned himself to put a mark on his arm or foreleg. The other made a half-naked child who is trembling and crying to sit in front of him...Hafez -the twaddling Hafez- admires these types of people and says: these people have the chief seat of honor."¹³⁸ Undoubtedly, Kasravi stands as an exception among his contemporaries regarding the degree of moral repugnance he feels towards the homoeroticism

¹³⁶ "Mashahir-e sho'ray-e iran: Ferdowsi" (Renowned Iranian Poets: Ferdowsi), in *Kaveh*, December 4, 1921, 24-26.

¹³⁷ Afary, *Sexual Politics in Modern Iran*, 163-165.

¹³⁸ Kasravi, *Hafez Che Miguyad?* (What Does Hafez Say?), 23.

of mystical poetry. Nonetheless, such disdain for male same-sex practices which sprang out of a desire for the heteronormalization of sexuality was something that he shared with his nationalist peers during the interwar years.

In addition to Taqizadeh's editorials, in which the ill-effect of homosexuality is directly addressed, the issue of homoeroticism of Iranian society appears occasionally in other articles of *Kaveh*. The most noticeable example of is an article about astronomy, where the author uses different metaphors to explain the composition of the solar system. The example of a king and his young male servants [gholam bachchah] is used to explain the position of the sun in the middle of a group of planets which orbit around it. In the subsequent paragraph, the author digresses from the subject to question his unconscious use of such metaphor. "I don't know why we Iranians like our poets always speak of King, servants and young male servant [gholam bachchah] when we use similes or metaphors and why we have not said as Europeans would say that the solar system resembles an affectionate family: a wife and a husband that affectionately gathered their offspring around themselves."¹³⁹ The relationship between a king and his young male servants invokes the idea of "older man-younger man sexual practices" prevalent in the Iranian society. Although the word *bachchah* meaning the child implies the sexual practice of pederasty to our modern ears, Najmabadi argues a teenager could be a more accurate contemporary equivalent for the word *Bachchah*, which was gradually transformed in the nineteenth century to a child. This transformation laid the moral ground for the nationalist efforts to eradicate male same-sex practices in favor of normative heterosexual love.¹⁴⁰ In this article, the moment of self-criticism is in fact the author's confession to the deep cultural embeddedness of male homosociality

Nationalist efforts were made to establish a regime of compulsory heterosexuality to put an end to male same-sex practices and women's seclusion as the markers of Iranian backwardness. The need for such cultural transformation was initially triggered by a sense of shame that Iranian nationalist felt under the scornful gaze of the superior West. In case of Taqizadeh, in particular, there was a sense of urgency to remove all visible signs of backwardness, which would prevent Iran from earning the respect of the West as a recognizable modern nation. Although Taqizadeh's critique of homosociality apparently arises out of concern for misery and degradation of Iranian women, for him, in some respects, the symbolic

¹³⁹ "Monazarey-e shab va ruz: elm-e hey't" (A Dialogue between Day and Night: Astronomy), in *Kaveh*, January 11, 1921, 4.

¹⁴⁰ Najmabadi, *Women with Mustaches*, 60.

value of gender politics is arguably more important than the social realities of women's lives.¹⁴¹ That explains why despite a great emphasis on social inclusion of women, his articles in *Kaveh* do not offer any meaningful engagement with the woman's question as to explain what he actually means when he speaks of "women's rights and privileges".¹⁴² For instance, in his only editorial, which was allocated to the topic of women's freedom, Taqizadeh argues that considering the current condition of women in the country, it should come as little surprise that the American president, Woodrow Wilson who was accompanied by his wife in the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 did not take Iran's appeal to the Conference seriously.¹⁴³ In other words, one could say that for Iranian intellectuals like Taqizadeh this was the broader nationalist goals that shaped and influenced different aspects of gender politics rather than real concern for women's enfranchisement.

¹⁴¹ In her discussion on the centrality of gender politics in the formation of the nationalist discourse of late 19th and early 20th century Iran, De Groot argues that "it was the symbolic significance of supporting women's emancipation which mattered rather than any specific economic or political goals or programs." Johanna De Groot, "The Dialectics of Gender: Women, Men and Political Discourses in Iran c.1890–1930," *Gender & History* 5, no. 2 (June 1993): 263.

¹⁴² Matin-Asgari, *Both Eastern and Western*, 60.

¹⁴³ "Faaj-e shagi" (Paralysis), in *Kaveh*, December 13, 1920, 1.

Conclusion

The nationalist writings of *Kaveh* are testimony to the argument that “nationalism is a masculine enterprise”.¹⁴⁴ Taqizadeh and his collaborators at *Kaveh* couch their concerns over outside encroachment in gendered terms. Articles published in the first series of *Kaveh* are invariably replete with the expressions of masculinity. Nationalist rhetoric is often deployed to encourage Iranian men to take on the patriotic task of defending the country by taking side with the pro-German camp. There is an attempt implicit in much of *Kaveh*’s nationalist writings to define patriotism as the manly virtue of modern progressive Iranian youths which distinguishes them from their traditional counterparts. Taqizadeh and his collaborators appropriate the epic myths of Ferdowsi’s *Shahname* to instill national pride into their compatriots and stimulate the patriotic feelings of Iranian men. While Ferdowsi is elevated to the place of national prominence as the composer of Iran’s national epic, the traditional mystic poets are often kept in low esteem for their role in the national decline of Iran. From a nationalist standpoint, a number of social ills ensued from mystical poetry which have historically corrupted Iranian men’s morals including, the promotion of idleness and male homosexuality. Inspired by the military might of Germany, *Kaveh* editors also advocate for a universal military service as an antidote to the cultural embeddedness of laziness attributed to 19th century Qajar society. *Kaveh*’s articles often place the blame squarely at the door of Qajar rulers who are accused of spreading the ills of idleness and laxity among the general public.

Furthermore, the emasculation of the colonized world is partly predicated upon the cultural assumptions about the civilizational differences between the superior West and the inferior East. The neglect of worldly matters in the Eastern *Weltanschauung* is partly to be blamed for the humiliating experience of colonization inflicted upon the East. An intellectual encounter with the Superior West not only influenced the shaping of a national self-image for reformist-minded Iranian men but also rendered the traditional values associated with the clergy, the old aristocracy, and tribesmen as a mere hindrance to their efforts to lift the country to the height of civilized humanity. Although the emulation of Western civilization is prescribed in *Kaveh* as the only way out of the current national stagnation, the representation of European powers involved in the Great War indicates that the West is not perceived to be a monolithic entity. While *Kaveh* admires the patriotic ardor of German soldiers, the colonial warfare of the British and the Russians is perceived of as being excessively masculinized and thus barbaric

144 Sloodmaeckers, “Nationalism as Competing Masculinities,” 240.

by nature. The exaltation of the manly virility of German soldiers is often employed as a rhetorical device to expose the weakness of the allegedly inert and indolent Iranian men.

As the case of *Kave* perfectly exemplifies, Patriotism is not a fixed concept, meaning that its implied meaning fluctuates at times to conform to the changing needs of nationalist ideology and the developing nation-state. In the post-war series of *Kaveh*, a patriotic man is not defined so much as the defender of the motherland in the narrow sense of the expression but instead its connotations extend to the idea of productive citizenry. Therefore, a patriotic man is a physically fit and educated individual who keeps his sexual desire within the acceptable confines of a heterosexual procreative relationship. Taqizadeh believed that the consumption of alcohol and opium, the prevalence of deviant sexual practices and the neglect of personal hygiene among other things had impaired the moral quality of Iranian men. To avert the downward spiral of national degeneration, he suggested that physical sports could not only reinvigorate the physical quality of men of the nation but also their moral dispositions. Unlike the issue of education whose importance for women is accentuated in different articles in *Kaveh*, there is almost no mention of women in Taqizadeh's discussions about sports. Finally, sexual desire of Iranian men became another subject of nationalist concern over moral quality of the Iranian nation. In *Kaveh*, Taqizadeh advocates for the eradication of unproductive male sexual behaviors as a marker of cultural backwardness in favor of a regime of compulsory heterosexuality.

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