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# MOHSEN HEJRI

# Biography



There are so many biographies that begin with such sentences as “he was born into a respectable and prestigious family right at a blessed time and place. From the very beginning, with his special intelligence and foresight, he promised the formation of a different personality in advance. It was evident even at those early hours of his life and everyone could witness the fact that he carried the light of knowledge and wisdom on his forehead. It seems that everything has gone in order from the very beginning and the steps of progress have been followed one after the other!”

But when I come down from heaven and set aside the omniscient narrator, I just remember my childhood walk, the kind of walking provided the viewers with a comic situation to talk about and they often expressed their wonder about what it was like that to walk.

Aunt Azam used to say that Mohsen walks forward while looking behind, unaware of the electric light poles that are in his way! And if I knew the importance of counting and statistics at that time, I would have recorded the number of hitting the light pole or falling into the water, and now I would talk about those facts and figures.

“Many of our behaviors are influenced by our collective unconsciousness,” Jung the analytical psychologist says. And perhaps my looking back was the same unconsciousness that later pushed me into the past and history, oblivious to the impediments and potholes that may lay in my way.

In that narrow, old alley, in that rented courtyard where we had lived for years, there

was a room equipped by the toil and effort of my father, a government employee whose job it was to issue ID cards for the people. Also, there was the result of the efforts of a mother who was only seventeen years older than me, with a grandfather who had given up the art of coppersmithing and was in the last years of his life. He often took me to the mosque and the religious ceremonies to experience being in the community. And there was a grandmother whose stories I so much loved... No fortune teller could ever have guessed what would happen to me in the future.

Who knew if I had not gone to Haj Agha Mahmoud's shop with my father that day, would I have been interested in reading or not?

I clearly remember hearing the words of that deceased man, who told my father that some magazines are published for children to read. Then he mentioned *Boys and Girls* magazine and *Keyhan for Kids*. With these simple words, he encouraged my father to provide me with these publications. This was the first step for me, a child who had no access to TV, so travel to distant worlds through stories.

Who knows, if my late uncle, who was a student, did not bring me books as gifts, would I have become acquainted with the world of fiction or not?

*Oliver Twist* (Charles Dickens), *The Miserables* (Victor Hugo), *Papillon* (Henri Charrière), *The Barefoot* (Zaharia Stancu), *Tom Sawyer* (Mark Twain), and others were the gifts of Uncle Mohammad that made my childhood world.

Who knows that if I had not read the stories of Samad Behrangi in those years and had not played with his Oldoz and Crows, would my soul have ever been informed at that time that Iranians could also write stories or not?

One that day, when books by Samad Behrangi were lost in our house and they were also collected from the school library,

I did not know why this happened, but years later, my mother said that the government of Mohammad Reza Shah, the last king of Iran, did not like these books and we were scared and destroyed them!

The Oldouz and Crows, The Bald Pigeon Fancier, Couraghloo, the Little Black Fish, and many other fictional characters of Samad Behrangi's works were exiled and left us to distant places.

Those days I did not know the meaning of censure but I felt the empty space of those books everywhere. However, we had no shortage of books and I could entertain myself with other books.

And most importantly, who knows, if Mr. Sattari, the teacher of literature, had not come to me, would I have been interested in writing or not?

When I wrote compositions, I found through grades and appreciations that I have the talent to write. But who knew that among all the essays I wrote describing the benefits of cows and water and sleep, only one essay would come to fruition to mix literature, history, ethics, and philosophy in my mind and on the paper! This essay did not have a predetermined subject, but it started with a question. That day, Mr. Sattari wrote at the bottom of the board: Saadi, the classical Persian poet says: "When you are not affected by the suffering of others, You should be called human."

And then on the opposite side of the board he wrote, the French poet Alfred de Musset says: "The burning and pain of my finger is more sorrowful than all the sufferings in the world!"

And then he wrote under these two quotes: "Write to me which of these two poets are right and why?"

I remember the date of this birth very well. Autumn 1975 when I was only twelve years old! This birth happened with open eyes, not with the crying of a baby but with the perplexity and silence of a teenager!

Mr. Mohammad Taghi Sattari threw such a question at us that even the elders did not know the answer. Of course, not that they did not know, but upon hearing, they would suffer from vertigo, which is part of the conflict between personal interests and human values!

Initially, the answer seemed so easy. I said to myself, it is clear that Saadi is right. But a moment later I hesitated and remembered my burning experience. Like when I was three or four years old when I experienced the accident of a hot pot of broth turning over on me and burning parts of my body. Considering this experience, I acknowledged Alfred de Musset as



being right, simply because at that very moment I was burning and screaming, I could not care about the suffering of any other human being! But a few moments later, I gave the right to Saadi, because I remembered how my mother tried with love and affection to reduce the suffering of my pains.

That question was not the subject of an essay, but a philosophical challenge, and there was no way out. Who knew, maybe Mr. Sattari himself was struggling with the same question and wanted to reach a convincing answer through hearing our answers.

To answer that philosophical question, I had to review history to understand the position of both poets. And I had to understand the language of literature, and most importantly, I had to learn logical analysis to be able to judge between those two theories.

Although a twelve-year-old boy could not understand what a great challenge he was facing, he could understand how questioning and writing are intertwined. And how a question motivates the writer to find an answer through writing.

And who knew that this subconscious philosophical challenge would affect the teenager so much that he would go from one field to the other field to arrive at any answer in his way.

It did not take more than a few years for that teenager to see the social materialization of Saadi's poetry in the streets of his city and country: "If one member is afflicted with pain, Other members uneasy will remain!"

By 1979, Iranian society had reached the necessity of revolution. Freedom, justice, prosperity, ethics, and everything I had directly or indirectly encountered in the stories were now materialized in the form of street political slogans. Stancu's *The Barefoot* and Hugo's Paris were now in front of my eyes with peoples like Charrière's Papillon to escape from the prison of the colonies and reach freedom.

In this space, reading and writing found a different color and meaning. There was no space for the self-centered Alfred de Musset, and that philosophical question had faded away. Saadi had overcome de Musset. So, the people had to resolutely defend human morality and achieve their ideals on the streets. In such an atmosphere, reading was different. Those romantic texts of stories and legends and the imaginative atmosphere of novels had given way to texts with a strong predetermination to change the course of history.

It was 1979, and a strong and overwhelming flow of philosophical, historical, and political books and pamphlets had occupied the bookstores, booths, and temporary stalls along the streets.

In those days, it was common for people to stand by the sidelines and start talking and defending their positions. Another form of action was added to reading and writing: street conversation! It was those conversations that created a high motivation to continue reading. Later, when I found out about Plato's Garden of Academia, I think those days were like wandering in the Garden of Academia. It did not matter what was said and how strong the foundations of those conversations were, but people needed to try to show others that their words were based on reading and study. They studied theories in a day and arduously talked about it the other day. Sometimes these discussions lasted until midnight, without us feeling the passage of time.

This was the attraction that made me spend my pocket money to buy every kind of book. If there was going to be a conversation, then I had to figure everything out. But, without realizing it, the philosophical question of the literature teacher had done its job and subconsciously led me to compare and contrast ideas and schools. The result was a tour of history, literature, and philosophy, with no end in sight. Who is right? Who is wrong? Moments of determination and then hesitation, then a question, and search again!

I had to record these searches in a notebook. Notebooks were filled one after the other and were more like books with just one printed copy. I wrote notes on everything from philosophy and theology to history and literature. Without being aware of what will happen next, some of my books provided strong themes for my future works.

It was not more than three months after the Iran-Iraq war broke out that together with a few friends I volunteered to go to Khuzestan – a southwestern border province of Iran. As if another novel



or book was opened in front of me. I had read Oriana Fallaci's *Nothing, And So Be It: A Personal Search for Meaning in War*, a documentary about the Vietnam War that tried to describe the tragedy of the war and was consistent with the book's content. But it was very difficult to feel a tragedy through text, and, naturally, it could not convey the inner depth of the experience. It is just when we are at the heart of the experience of the same kind that all those texts come to life. After years of looking back, I still see



no choice but to defend. There was a strong reason that dispelled any doubt, that my feet were on my motherland; and the other side was nothing but an invading alien, so I had to defend! But with all these undeniable facts, the bitterness and acrimony of war cannot be denied. I will not forget those scenes that while in the city of Susangerd (in Khuzestan province) it was raining and cold, and the coldness of November struck to the marrow, I saw women and children and families fleeing the area with bare feet. They were residents of the small town of Hoveyzeh, which was invaded by the Iraqi army a few days ago. Here the tragic phrase of *Nothing, And So Be It*, and its Persian translation, *Life, War and Nothing Else* and the entire text entered the context, and the words became objective.

Susangerd was a city that was captured by us the Iraqi army several times. The city had been hit so hard that we might not have seen a single wall that could not be hit by artillery shells and mortars. And in that battle, there were crowded people who came from all over Iran to that region, the age range of the majority of whom was between sixteen seventeen years old, twenty-five years old. They were not an organized army. Ordinary people from all walks of life. They were few in number, but much stronger than I thought. It seemed to me that Saadi's words prevailed here again: "When you are not affected by the suffering of others, You should be called human." There was no writing or reading in this space, but all the images of war in



my mind in the stories and novels were objectified. And now I regret why I did not put my daily memories on paper in those days and months? Possibly I thought the time was going to stop at the same point, and Nothing Else, as Fallaci said!

However, there remain clear things from those days, like the image of those two brave ladies nursing the wounded in the half-ruined hospital of Susangerd.

Although I never attempted to recreate the memories of those days in the form of a novel, when I was writing *The Eagle's Eye*, although it was a narrative of the Iranians' defense against Mongols in the thirteenth, it seemed I was recreating the same scenes I had seen in our defense against Iraq!

Besides these memories, what occupied my mind was the path we had taken, without knowing where we were heading. This was the cause for my refuge in writing again, I wrote note after note, but only for one audience! There were of course notes and articles that I published under a pseudonym for different magazines. At the same time, I felt that by writing these scattered notes, I could not portray my ideal world on paper.

Marriage and the subsequent arrival of two children in our lives inevitably took me back to my childhood and adolescence. The days when books were my most intimate companions. Now, my kids were growing up in front of my eyes, and I felt I had to do as much work as I could for them and the other kids in my world. My daughter was nine years old and my son was seven when I started writing a story.

The same story was later published as *Fire as Tender as Violets*. The narrative setting was different from what I had experienced in research texts. Especially since I was going to write in a way that my audience, children and teenagers, would communicate with.

I had been acquainted with the Qur'an since I was nine years old, and during the following years it was always one of the books I read constantly in attempts to understand its layers of meanings, and this constant study

allowed me to read and find themes through its verses and stories.

But the subconscious atmosphere that guided me in this space was the same question that began with the comparison of Saadi and de Musset! That's why I created the character of a teenager who lives in the city of stonecutters and questions and criticizes the historical beliefs of the people about the sacred statues of that city. The main theme of this story was taken from the character of Abraham the prophet, who is referred to as the father of the Middle Eastern religions. It



was not Abraham as a famous and accomplished character, but the young Abraham who has not yet reached the level of a prophet and is still evolving. This story was rewritten five times over the course of a year to find a final shape I like. Finally, in 1997 I presented it to the Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults for publication.

With the publication of this story, I discovered new paths for life. When I started the construction of a food factory in 1991 in Boroujerd, my hometown in Lorestan province, it was unimaginable that only six years later I would leave the job to start writing fiction. The notes, which had filled several books over the years, had mostly philosophical, theological, and historical themes with no fictional element. Now that I look back to those years, however, I see philosophical concerns as the main reason for my inclination towards the world of fiction. It seems that literature provided me with the opportunity to express those concerns through narrative.

I do not remember exactly whether it was the late eighties or early nineties, in those same years that the late Nasser Irani – a contemporary Iranian writer – had an entrance exam for his story writing classes. One question was, what is your purpose in writing fiction? My brief answer was that my goal in writing fiction is to address social issues and people’s problems. I did not pass that exam and after that, I never applied for story writing classes. As if rightly or wrongly, I was convinced that writing a story is a personal experience that cannot be achieved through education. Of course, for me, who had read various stories since childhood, the writing experiences of others had subconsciously accumulated in my mind, and I could not escape this long-term impact. But when I started writing a story, I did not think of imitating any writer’s technique or applying his teachings.

That is why my first book, *Fire as Tender as Violet*, found a form of poetic prose in which myth, epic, and sacred texts were combined to portray an avant-garde and radical character, the young Abraham! At that time, because I was an anonymous writer, the book found no warm reception. It was not selected at a festival and no critic wrote about it. But after twenty years, when the students of Persian Language and Literature at the Free University of Tbilisi in Georgia translated the book and read parts of it in my presence, tears fell on my cheeks. On that campus, neither the professors nor the students knew me, and they were not going to flatter me. Regardless of their contextual relationship, something happened between them and the text, an authentic and gorgeous event in Georgia!

Earlier, Aynash Seyedava had translated *The Dawn of That Star* into Kazakh without informing me. But the story of Tbilisi University and the four days I was a guest of the Georgian people was another event with so much sweetness that washed away many bitter memories of the past.

It was in the late 1970s that I became a member of the Association of Writers for Children and Adolescents. An institution that had just been formed and was recruiting with no political or ideological criteria. This progressive and growing feature of the Association was to the point that I repeatedly mentioned it as a unique organization in the field of Iranian children’s literature. It was not more than a year after I joined the Association that I started doing the administrative and organizational work of

this organization as the executive director. Later, I was elected as a member of the Association's Board of Directors for several terms. But the best thing I think I found at the Association was to be a member of its Legal Committee, which is still going on. It was at the framework of this committee that I followed the union and professional problems of the members of the Association and was acquainted with the hidden or obvious problems and opportunities of the publishing industry in Iran. The formation of lasting friendships in the community reminds me of a Platonic utopia in which people go beyond the worries of livelihood and experience ideal life.

In this process, I was also drawn to direct education. For about eight or nine years, I taught children and adolescent literature to the educators of the Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults. They were local coaches who came to Tehran from all over the country for a month of in-service training. I tried to distance myself from the traditional form in the classrooms and to advance the teaching through active dialogues. As I believed and still believe that in education, especially in the humanities, there is no absolute and overwhelming knowledge, and ultimately we are confronted with the individual points of view. After years when I meet the dear local coaches, they have good memories of those class dialogues. I used the same teaching method for a decade in the Children's Book Council training workshops to simultaneously teach and learn in each class – the Children's Book Council represents the IBBY in Iran.

During these years, despite the passage of time and despite other overwhelming concerns that never left me alone, I could not forget the adult audience. I wrote some analytical and fictional texts for them too. But even in such a field, re-reading and re-writing history in different ways remained a priority for me. Even my attempts to find a new style of writing found itself in a historical setting, from science and

philosophy to theology and literature! At least in my mind, this was the path. Traveling through different age groups seems to be a review of my own life at different stages and I had something to share with every group of audience.

But working in the field of books did not make me give up my press activities. In particular, it allowed me to share some ideas and topics with the audience in the form of notes and articles. The effort that has been made since the beginning of the 2000s to provide theoretical support for children's and adolescent literature is reflected in several analytical and research articles that are referred to by specialists, as is evident in citation statistics.

It was in the late 1980s that I spent more time writing novels. First for teenagers and then for adults, but in both age groups, I chose historical themes. Through experience, I have arrived at the fact that that in such themes and subjects, some fundamental questions can be addressed. Some believed that such topics were too heavy for a teenage audience and that they might not receive them. But the feedback showed that this is not the case. Although such themes do not enjoy a wide audience, a significant share of the final readers enjoys them. Feedback on *Eagle Eye* and *The Eighth Sphere* as two writing experiences showed me that teens are interested in discussion over serious topics. If a serious question by my teacher at the age of twelve could create a storm in my mind, this





experience could be repeated again and again.

Many readers and critics of my works point out that the texts are more illustrative than descriptive. They talk about how the text they read, makes them imagine and visualize the events and see themselves at the heart of the incident.

I cannot deny the fact that is the effect of cinema. One of the reasons I chose the academic field of cinema for my further educations, was to know more about the seventh art to import techniques and wisdom to my texts. I think we must draw the audience into the scene and then help them visualize the scene themselves. In this case, the readers visualize the text according to their inner world, without getting tired or confused by the author's descriptions.

Now I return to Mr. Sattari's class to contemplate on his philosophical question. I have never seen a teacher like him in any period of my education, from high school to a master's degree. Possibly because he played the role of a founder for me and gave me the courage to think, to ask, and to comment. He played the role of the first teacher for me, the same title was given to Aristotle, the Greek philosopher.

Now that Aristotle is mentioned, let me talk about his role in my life. Initially, under the influence of some of the radical intellectuals of the time, I hated Aristotle. Because I thought he had trained the people like Alexander the

Great, the same general who invaded Iran. I thought he was defending the class system, and I thought his formal logic froze the human mind. And all these ideas were in a situation where I had only read other people's perceptions of Aristotle. Until I became interested to know him through his texts. Gradually I read his *Metaphysics*, *Nicomachean Ethics*, *Politics*, *Physics*, *Poetics*, and other books, and it was in this process that I realized why he was called the first teacher. The clues I borrowed from Aristotle later helped me understand history, literature, and philosophy. Also, I learned a great deal from him how to think without becoming a disciple. And years later, when I began to read Plato's work, including *The Republic* and *Laws*, it was in comparison with the systematic Aristotelian structure that arrived at the understand that his teacher was more of a storyteller than a worthy philosopher. Ironically, Plato weaves strong philosophical stories. Of course, my acquaintance with Plato had the important consequence that I recognized his effects on the children's education system as well as the moral approaches in children's literature. It is, however, an approach that degrades literature as an educational tool and, by depriving it of its artistic and aesthetic features, makes preaching and moralization govern literary texts.

And it is no exaggeration to say that philosophy is my refuge. That is, when I get tired of writing stories, when I get bored of history, and I do not even have the patience for everyday work, I return to the utopia of reading philosophy. And although this is a city founded on questioning, although its certainties are temporary and its doubts are permanent, still it creates exploration spaces that calm me. At times, it was philosophical ideas that have inspired a new subject for my professional career, writing.

I have always believed that the writer should constantly investigate, experiment, and read so that his texts do not grow repetitive. From my point of view, as a writer for different age groups, the task of writing for children and adolescents is much more difficult than writing for adults. And it is not without reason that according to some scholars, children's and adolescent literature should be defined as an interdisciplinary work. And it is this belief that obliges me to study and research in various fields.

# Resume

## Activities

- Collaboration with the first specialized exhibition of children and adolescents, 1995.
- Executive Director of the Association of Children and Adolescent Writers, 2001.
- Hamshahri for Neighborhoods Editor, 2004 – 2006.
- Secretary of the Adolescent Managers Association in the Adolescent Cultural Center, 2005.
- Representative of the Association of Writers for Children and Adolescent in Book Week, 2006.
- Member of the editorial board 'Book of the Month for Children and Adolescents, 2002 – 2005.
- Director of Literary Consultants, Literary Creations of Tehran Municipality Cultural and Artistic Organization, 2007.
- Researcher in Research Project on the Situation of Fiction for Children and Adolescents, 2012.
- Member of the Specialized Council of Religious Texts of the Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, 2012.
- Consultant of the Research Department of the Book House and Reviewer of Quarterly Journal for Criticism of Books for Children and Adolescents, 2105.

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- Member of the Policy Council of the Book of the Month and Book of the Year Book Awards, 2019.
- Member of the Board of Directors of the Association of Writers for Children and Adolescents in six alternate periods, from 2002 to 2020.
- Union Activities in the Field of Writers for Children and Adolescents.

## Published Books

- *Standing on the Ground, Children's Story*, Illustrated by Bahram Khaef, Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, 1999.
- *What is Research? Who is a Researcher?* Student Research Guide, Literature and Knowledge, 2001.
- *The Fox Who Did Not Know Deception*, Children's Story, Illustrated by Mitra Abdollahi, Behnashr Publishing, 2002.
- *Sarbadars*, Adolescent Novel, Madreseh Publications, First edition: 2009, Fifth edition: 2013.
- *The Rise of that Star: The Sweet Story of the Birth of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)*, Children's Story, Illustrated by Leila Derakhshani, Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, 2007.
- *A Basket of Memory*, Children's Story, Illustrated by Mahkameh Shabani, Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, 2007.
- *The Moguls: From the Mogul Invasion to the Beginning of the Safavids*, Illustrated by Farzaneh Tajik, Ofogh Publications, 2007.
- *The Story of Iranian Thought: The Golden Age from the Beginning of the Saffarid Dynasty to the Formation of the Seljuk Empire (Volumes 4 to 6)*, together with Hossein Sheykhrezaei and Hossein Bokae, Ofogh Publications, 2007.
- *Season of Picking*, Collection of Stories, Illustrated by Seyed Hesamuddin Tabatabai, Designed by

Kouros Parsanjad, Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, First Edition: 2010, Second Edition: 2012.

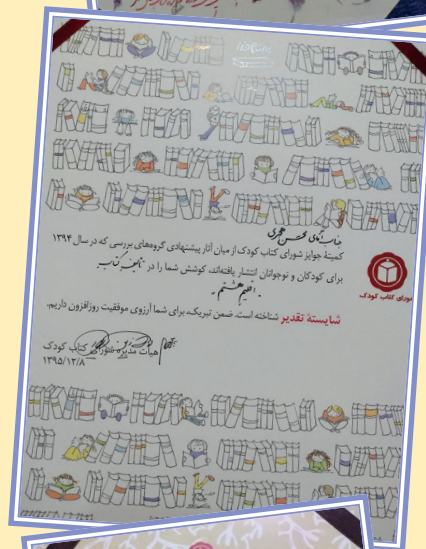
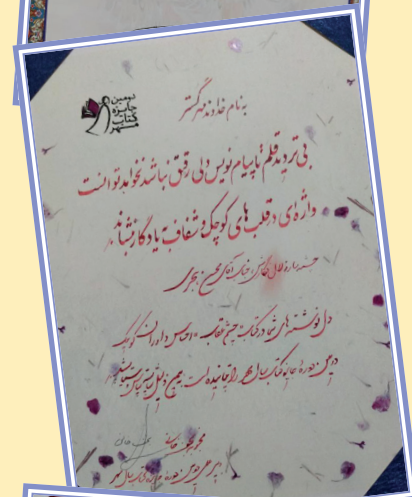
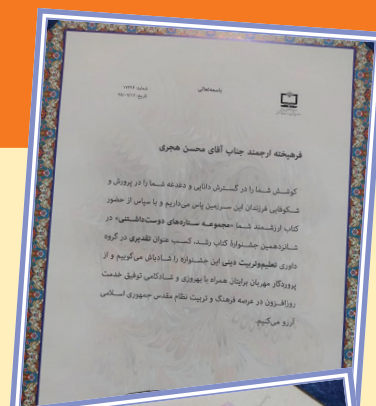
- *The Eagle Eye*, Adolescent Novel, Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, First Edition: 2011, Seventh Edition: 2019.
- *The Father of the Soil*, Children's Novel, Illustrated by Mohammad Ali Baniyasi, Amirkabir Publications, Books of Blossom, 2011.
- *The Eighth Sphere*, Adolescent Novel, Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, 2015.
- Collection of Stories of Prophets (Volume Titles: Jonas the Prophet and David the Prophet), Children's Stories, Illustrated by Noushin Safajoo, Amirkabir Publications, Books of Blossom, 2015.
- Collection of Lovely Stars (14 Volume for every Imam of Shia) Collection of Children's Stories, Illustrated by Mitra Abdollahi, Shahr Ghalam Publications, 2016.
- *Thirteenth Meeting*, Adolescent Novel, Illustrated by Marjan Sabeti, 2017.
- Barriers to the Formation of the Union of Iranian Writers, Book House, 2017.
- Lamp of the Prayer, the Story of the life of Ali ibn Hussein, known as Imam Sajjad (AS), Children's Novel, Sureh Mehr Publications, 2019.
- The Unknown Soldiers of Aras, Adolescent Novel, Sureh Mehr, 2020.
- *In Search of Simorgh*, Children's Novel, Illustrated by Mehdi Amjadian, Bahoosh Publications, 2020.

## Awards and Achievements

- *The Last Wave*, Honorary Diploma, 8th Children and Adolescent Book Festival, November 1999.
- *Standing on the Ground*, Diploma of Honor, 9th Children and Adolescent Book Festival, February 2000.
- *Standing on the Ground*, Diploma of Appreciation, the First Literary and Artistic Conference of Ashura, October 19, 2001.
  - Award of appreciation from the Association of Writers for Children

and Adolescents for the executive activities, 2002.

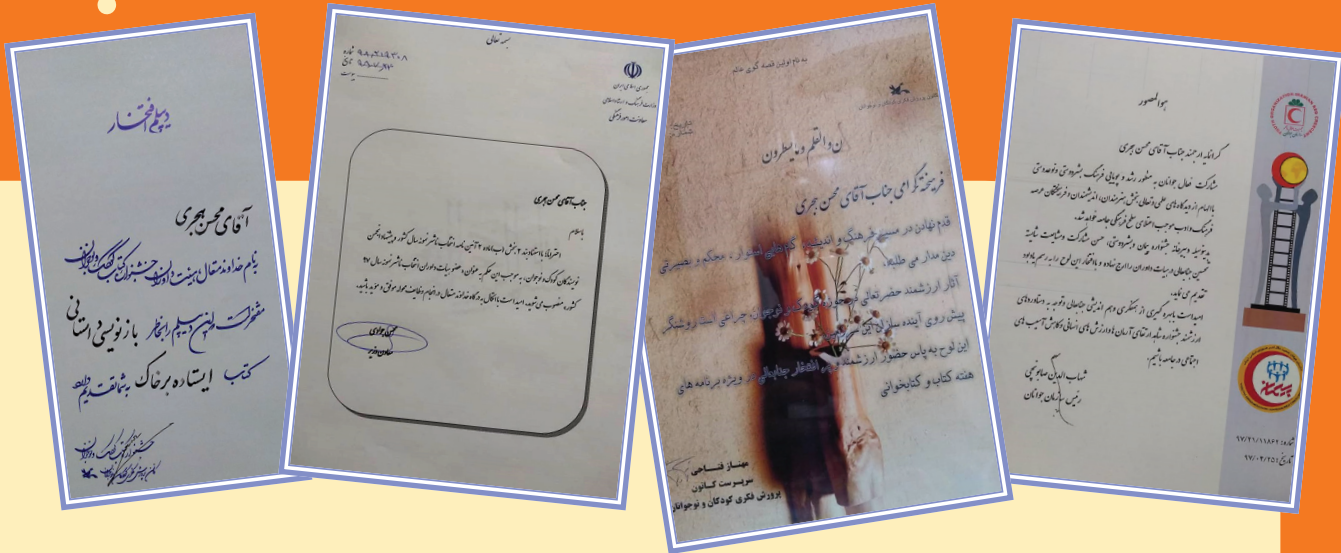
- *The Idea of Journey in Three Works*, Award of Appreciation, The First Festival of Criticism, December 2004.
- Certificate of Appreciation for Media Activities, Hamshahri for Neighborhoods, August 2005.
- Award of Appreciation for Media Activities, Municipality of District 10 of Tehran, August 2005.
- Award for Media Activity for Promotion of Science and Culture, Tehran Cultural Center, August 2005.
- Appreciation of the Association of Writers for Children and Adolescents, 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009.
- Award for Reading Promotion, National Book Week, November 2007.
- Certificate of Appreciation for Running Training Courses for Educators, Isfahan Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, November 2008.
- *Standing on the Ground*, Plaque of Appreciation, Lorestan Province Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, August 2009.
- The Season of Picking, Plaque of Appreciation, The First National Festival for Children and Adolescent Book, February 2012.
- Certificate of Appreciation for Special Presentation of Philosophical Elements in Children's Stories, Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, July 2011.
- Appreciated for publishing suitable works for children and adolescents by Managing Director of the Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, November 2012.
- *The Eagle Eye*, Award of Appreciation, Second Award for Book



of Mehr, March 2012.

- *The Eagle Eye*, Plaque of Appreciation, Semnan Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, November 2015.
- Certificate of Appreciation for Reading Promoting, Library No. 9 of Tehran Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, July 2015.
- *The Eighth Sphere*, Award of Appreciation, Children's Book Council, March 2017.
- Certificate of appreciation for creative content production, 29th Tehran International Book Exhibition, May 2016.
- *The Eighth Sphere*, Listed in Flying Turtle List, 2016.
- Certificate of Appreciation for educational and promotional activities, Yazd Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, July 2017
- Certificate of appreciation for publishing suitable works for children and adolescents, Qom Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults.
- Certificate of appreciation for Reading Promotion Activities, Kermanshah Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, October 2017.
- Award for Presentation in the Third Conference on Children's Literature and the Other, Children's Book Council, Fall 2018.
- Award reading promotion among children and adolescents, Association of Editors, November 2016.





- Award of appreciation to the fourteen-volume collection of *Lovely Stars*, 16th Roshd Book Festival, November 2016.
- Certificate of Appreciation for training rural librarians, the seventh training course for rural librarians.
- Award for creative activities in the field of culture, art, media; Ministry of Culture, March 2017.
- Nominated by the Children's Book Council as one of the most active authors in the field of religious works, 2018.
- Certificate of Appreciation for reading promotion and review of books, Arak Center for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, October 2017.

## Judgments

- Literary Judge, Study and Research Course, District 10, Tehran Department of Education, 2007.
- Judge, Special Books for Children and Adolescents, 13<sup>th</sup> Biennale of Best Books on Holy Defense, 2009.
- Judge, 11th Festival of Poetry and Story of the Revolution, 2010.
- Judge, Nomination of Books, Librarians House, Children's Book Council, 2010.
- Judge, Special Books for Children and Adolescents, Book of the Year, three alternating periods from 2006 to 2014.
- Judge, the section of religious books, 17th Festival and Exhibition of



Children and Adolescents Books, 2014.

- Judge, Nomination of Best Publisher of the Year, 2018 – 2019.
- Judge, Humanitarian Covenant Festival, Red Crescent Youth Organization, July 2016.
- Judge, the Children and Adolescent Press Festival, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> periods.
- Judge, 22<sup>nd</sup> International Storytelling Festival, the Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, 2019.

## Educational Workshops

- Workshop on Literature for Children and Adolescents, the Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, from 2004 to 2010.
- Workshop on Fiction, Unit of Literary Creations, the Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, 2015.
- Composition Workshop, Mashhad, 2008, 2009, and 2011.
- Workshop on an Introduction to Literature for Children and Adolescents, Children’s Book Council, from 2008 to 2020.
- Instructor of Cup of Reading Clubs, Various cities and geographical regions of Iran, 2016 – 2017.
- Workshop on Persian Literature, Tbilisi Free University, Georgia, 2017.

- Workshops for Training of Rural Librarians, 7<sup>th</sup> training course for rural librarians.
- Workshop for Instructors, the Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, 2009.
- Teaching in the first online course of writing and editing children and adolescent texts under the supervision of the Association of Writers for Children and Adolescents and Association of Cultural Editors and Publishers of Books for Children and Adolescents, 2020.

## Meetings and Lectures

- Meeting on Pathology meeting of children's study in House of Writers, 22nd Tehran International Book Fair, 2009.
- Meeting with the adolescents of Yazd Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, 2010.
- Lecture in specialized meetings of the first conference of Iranian writers, 2011.
- Specialized meeting on the reading of *The Eagle Eye*, the Kerman Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, 2012.
- Specialized meeting on the reading of *The Eagle Eye*, the Birjand Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, 2012.
- Meeting with members of Ardabil Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, Reading *the Eagle Eye*, 2013.
- Meeting the children and adolescent writers in Ardabil Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, 2012.
- Meeting with the readers, 28th Tehran Book Exhibition, 2015.

- Meeting with the teenagers of Isfahan Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults and participating in the book review of *The Eagle Eye*, 2016.
- Meeting and talking with the teenagers of Tabriz Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, 2016.
- Meeting and talking with the teenagers of Gonbad Kavous Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, 2016.
- Participating in the second program of the book caravan in Tabriz, a group meeting with members of the Association of Writers for Children and Adolescents with the audience, 2017.
- Lecture at Tbilisi Free University, Georgia, 2017.
- Reading Meeting with teenagers in Arak Correction and Rehabilitation Center, 2019.
- Meeting with the readers in Arak Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, 2019.
- Conversation with kidstalk.ir website about the importance of teaching philosophy to children, 2019.
- Participation in a conversation with CinemaOnline with experts about the capacities of participating in the online organization of the Children's Film Festival, 2020.
- Webinar on Spirituality in Children and Adolescent Literature, Literary Recreation of Spiritual Messages in Children and Adolescent Literature, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, 2020.

## Articles, Papers, and Roundtables

- Roundtable: The status of love in children and adolescent literature, *Book of the Month of Children and Adolescents*, July 2001 No. 45.
- Why did we come? Why didn't we come? (Conversation with members of the Association of Writers for Children and Adolescents), *Book of the Month of Children and Adolescents*, August 2001 No. 46.
- And how soon will this mirror break, *Book of the Month of Children and Adolescents*, July 2001, No. 45.





- Roundtable: The status of editing in children and adolescent literature (Cultural meeting of the Association of Writers for Children and Adolescents), *Book of the Month of Children and Adolescents*, August 2001, No. 46.
- Note: Audiences as judges (under the Occasion of the Great Festival of the Nominees), *Journal of Research on Children and Adolescent Literature*, 2001, No. 25.
- Roundtable: The Essential Differences of Children and Adolescents, Cultural Meeting of the Association of Writers for Children and Adolescents, *Book of the Month of Children and Adolescents*, December 2001, No. 47.
- Roundtable: Pathology of Religious Literature, Cultural Meeting of the Association of Writers for Children and Adolescents, *Book of the Month of Children and Adolescents*, December 2002 No. 63.
- The role of Metatextual Elements in the formation of the view of the readers of ideological works, *Journal of Research on Children and Adolescent Literature*, 2002, No. 31.
- Children, Literature and Idealism, *Book of the Month for Children and Adolescents*, February 2003, No. 76.

- The Approach in Children's Literature; To Teach or to Please?, *Book of the Month of Children and Adolescents*, November 2003, No. 73.
- The Semantics of Journey in 3 works, *Book of the Month of Children and Adolescents*, March 2003, number 77.
- Hermeneutic Approach in the Critique of Children's Literature, *Book of the Month of Children and Adolescents*, December 2003, No. 74.
- Children's literature and Philosophical Reasoning, *Book of the Month of Children and Adolescents*, December 2003 No. 75.
- Searching for Gray Zones, Philosophical Research in the Thought and Works of Samad Behrangi, *Book of the Month of Children and Adolescents*, October 2003, No. 72.
- The Dried Source of Inquiry, *Book of the Month of Children and Adolescents*, October 2003, No. 72.
- The authoritarianism of the Critic and the Claim to Truth, *Book of the Month of Children and Adolescents*, July 2004, No. 81.
- Sociological understanding of the concept of childhood, *Book of the Month of Children and Adolescents*, June 2004, No. 80.
- Roundtable: Wisdom Means Questioning, Review Meeting of Non-Fictional works for Children and Adolescents, *Book of the Month of Children and Adolescents*, December 2004, No. 87.
- Roundtable: Is the Child Harmed by the Question or by the Answers of the Adults, Review Meeting of Non-Fictional works for Children and Adolescents, *Book of the Month of Children and Adolescents*, February 2004, No. 88.
- Roundtable: Review of Journal of Scientific Explorations: Exploration in Exploration, Review Meeting of Non-Fictional works for Children and Adolescents, *Book of Children and Adolescents*, March 2004. No. 89.
- An example of nostalgic feeling in children and adolescent literature (Critique of the first period of Farhad Hassanzadeh's literary activities), *Journal of Research on Children and Adolescent Literature*, 2004, No. 37.
- Roundtable: The Empty Space in TV, *Book of the Month of Children and Adolescents*, November 2004, No. 85.

- Roundtable: Small Children, Big Questions, *Book of the Month of Children and Adolescents*, December 2004, No. 86.
- Children's Literature in Iran, the Interaction of Tradition and Modernity, *Journal of Research on Children and Adolescent Literature*, 2004, No. 38.
- Reconciling Myth and Reality in the Rational Paradigm of the Child (Reviewing *Harry Potter*), *Journal of Research into Child and Adolescent Literature*, 2004, No. 36.
- Roundtable: Question one: Define social knowledge! Meeting of Non-Fictional works for Children and Adolescents, *Book of the Month of Children and Adolescents*, September 2005, No. 95.
- Roundtable: Does the social science book create a "desirable citizen"? Meeting of Non-Fictional works for Children and Adolescents, *Book of the Month of Children and Adolescents*, August 2005, No. 94.
- Roundtable: Formal education of religious sciences to children; how and why. Meeting of Non-Fictional works for Children and Adolescents, *Book of the Month of Children and Adolescents*, May 2005, No. 91.
- Roundtable: Decentralization in children's literature is both a goal and a method. Meeting of Non-Fictional works for Children and Adolescents, *Book of the Month of Children and Adolescents*, April 2005, No. 90.
- Roundtable: Sociology of Childhood, Meeting of Non-Fictional works for Children and Adolescents, *Book of the Month of Children and Adolescents*, July 2005, No. 93.
- Roundtable: How to give "Gifts of Heaven"?, Meeting of Non-Fictional works for Children and Adolescents, *Book of the Month of Children and Adolescents*, June 2005, No. 92.
- The Power of the Child as a Literary Audience: Proving the Aesthetic Understanding of the Child in Kant's Epistemological System, *Journal of Research on Children and Adolescent Literature*, 2007, No. 51.
- Characteristics of literary criticism in children's literature; Relationship between text and metatext, *Roshanan Pajuhesh Magazine*, Center for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults, Spring and Summer 2014, No. 18.

- From the Pond to the Sea; Another Interpretation of the Myth of the “Little Black Fish”, *Angah Cultural and Artistic Quarterly*, Spring 2017, No. 2.
- The necessity of tolerance and patience in dealing with adolescents, Website of the Association of Writers for Children and Adolescents, *nevisak.com*, December 2017.
- Adolescence, a modern but wandering concept, *Journal of Research on Children and Adolescent Literature*, April 2020.

## Articles about the Writer’s Works

- Where the Arrow Speaks, Reviewing *Standing on the Ground*, Masoumeh Ansarian, *Book of the Month for Children and Adolescents*, Issue 29, March 1999.
- The Fox Who Did Not Turn to an Ass, Reviewing *The Fox who didn’t Know Deception*, Shahram Eghbalzadeh, *Book of the Month for Children and Adolescents*, December 2003.
- The subtleties of historical novels; Reviewing *The Eagle Eye*, Farkhondeh Hagh Sheno, *Children and Adolescents Book Review Quarterly*, No. 21, Spring 2019.
- The Benefits of a Historical Novel for Adolescents, Reviewing *The Eagle Eye*, Abuzar Karimi, *Book of the Month of Children and Adolescents*, October 2012, No. 180.
- History Prevents Madness!, Interview with Mohsen Hejri, Interviewed by Niloufar Nikbonyad, *Bicycle Weekly*, No. 995, July 2016.

## List of Translated Works

- Translation and publication of the book *The Dawn of That Star* in Kazakh, translated by Dr. Aynash Seyedava, 2009.
- Translation and publication of seven books in Georgian by students of Persian language and literature at Tbilisi Azad University, 2017. Translated titles include *Standing on the Ground*, *Father of the Soil*, *Fire as Tender as Violets*, *Dawn of Star*, *The Last Wave*, *A Basket of Memories*, *Picking Season*

## Overview of Works

In the field of children and adolescents, Mohsen Hejri is one of those well-known post-revolutionary writers of Iran. He spent his childhood and adolescence years during the Islamic Revolution and the Iran-Iraq war. Despite the great effects of these two events of contemporary history on his life and unlike other contemporary writers, Hejri did not deal only with these two events. Rather, he went beyond it and found hidden corners of Iranian history that no one before him had spoken about these events to teenagers. So, he can be considered as one of the most influential novelists who has narrated history specifically to teenagers. It is not a history that is limited to the Iran-Iraq war or the 1979 revolution. Rather, it is a history that is not covered by school textbooks and even the elders do not have adequate information about it.

Hejri uses the language of fiction in his historical works so that it is not dry and boring for adolescents. At the heart of his historical novels, he also deals with the issues and inner questions and aspirations of teenagers so that they find the narrative setting a familiar and friendly one.



In addition to dealing with historical issues, Hejri has made other innovations in his books. He proves to be courageous enough to deal with religious issues from a different perspective in many of his works.

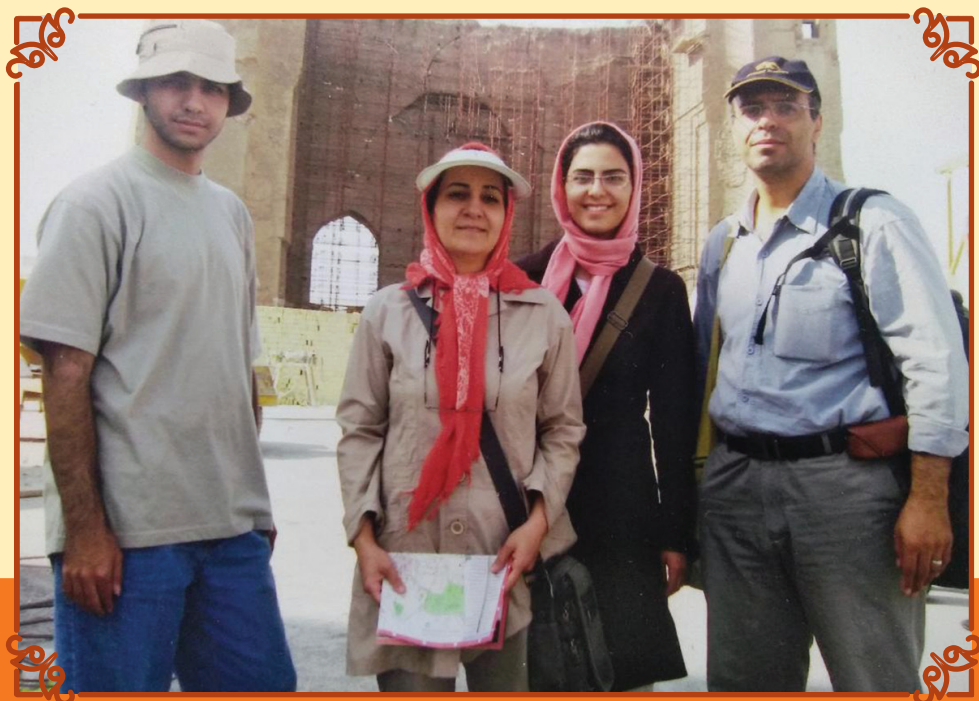
Before being a writer, Mohsen Hejri is more of a researcher. Before writing his historical and religious novels, he researches enough to avoid wrong information in his works. But he has fundamental differences with other researchers and scholars in that he is not after absolute answers. Rather, he is always looking for new questions. Questions that may not be specific to our time and are still relevant in our time. In his books, he confronts the audience with various issues and puts them in a situation to think deeply about the issues, such as war and peace and our reaction to these situations. He places his protagonists in complex historical situations. He creates challenging situations in which the reactions of the heroes can be examined from a philosophical perspective.

Mohsen Hejri is a writer who constantly meets his teenage audience. *The Eagle Eye* can be considered as one of his successful works that have been criticized many times by teenage audiences in the Centers for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults all over the country at the presence of the author. Hejri is not apart from the society for which he writes. He arises from the heart of this community and did not cut ties with his readers. He is familiar with the concerns of contemporary teenagers, and in addition to addressing historical issues in his novels, he tries to address issues that are not outdated and that contemporary adolescents are also involved with. He has not limited his target community to reading adolescents who are members of the Center for Intellectual Development. Rather, he seeks to connect with adolescent audiences from the marginal strata of society. One of these cases can be seen in his meeting with the adolescents of the Correction and Rehabilitation Center. Also, due to his many activities in the Association of Writers for Children and Adolescents, he has a good relationship with other writers and educators and is familiar with the tastes and needs of the audience. Therefore, he has always focused on unique and exceptional themes and topics that are not covered in contemporary children's literature. These include writing about philosophy for adolescents. Especially in *The Eight Climate*, which deals with the life of an important Iranian philosopher and introduces teenagers to his philosophical ideas and their relevance to contemporary life.

Mohsen Hejri is one of the first writers who attempt to raise the philosophical knowledge of children and adolescents. In addition to his books, he has written articles and reviews in this field and has various articles on the subject of children's literature and the importance of teaching philosophical reasoning to children. *The Fox Who Did Not Know Deception* can be considered as one of the first books that spark philosophical questions for children and encourages the reader to criticize and question the common stereotypes in society and move toward finding the reality in the face of social problems. All these are reached through questions and questioning.

Mohsen Hejri can be considered a pleasant combination of history, religion, and philosophy in Iranian children's literature. He has done extensive research in these areas and has presented his findings in an understandable format to contemporary children and adolescents. This is the group that is his main concern. As he puts it in a conversation:

“I think reading historical novels is essential for teenagers because it confronts them with their real roots and the causes of their thoughts and actions. If teenagers are not familiar with the history of Iran, their true identities are not formed which is the sign of a great loss. The contemporary generation of teenagers is supposed to take on responsibilities and manage the society in near future, so if teenagers are not familiar with our history, their sense of roots and identity will not be formed.”



## Review of Some Works



### **The Unknown Soldiers of Aras**

*Yashar Hodayi*

In the first days of September 1941 Forty-eight-hour resistance of three Iranian border guards named Mosayeb Malek Mohammadi, Seyyed Mohammad Rasi Hashemi, and Abdullah Shahriari resist the invasion of the Red Army of the former Soviet Union through crossing the Aras River bridge in the Jolfa region. This is the historical event that forms the subject of Mohsen Hejri for the creation of *The Unknown Soldiers of Aras*.

There are no detailed historical reports to provide extensive information about this tragic event, and what is stated in historical sources is not so homogenous to create a vivid and realistic picture for the contemporary young generation. Therefore, Mohsen Hejri attempts to provide light on this neglected incident in history and introduce these “unknown” heroes to the young reader. The story of *The Unknown Soldiers of Aras* is a narrative of a historical event whose creators have remained “unknown”. The same ones that were defending the country in the context of World War II, but were considered marginal. Those who have been active forces in the depths of society and history, but have not been seen, and despite their presence and efforts in the center of the crisis, have been evaluated as marginal to the crisis.

Beyond the historical perspective, the introduction of these *Unknown* figures through narrative allows their internal world to be seen in the context of external events of history. In other words, in the narrative of *The Unknown Soldiers of Aras*, an answer is provided to the question of why they chose this path? What internal action and what internal interaction could lead to the practical action of resistance and bargaining of life? History cannot provide answers to these questions. Chroniclers and reporters are responsible for recording external events and have nothing to do with the world of the actors inside, especially if



they are “unknown”. But their stories and narratives are not so. Through imaginative narrative, it is possible to recreate this inner world. Possibly this is why a historical novel has a greater impact on the audience than a historical report.

The story begins with the introduction of “Abdullah”. He is a poet and believes that existence starts with love. Poetry is something institutionalized inside him to such an extent that it is a criterion for action and selection.

Abdullah’s poetry throughout the story is a form of link between other characters. His poetry is an excuse for the audience to be introduced to the emotional interests and thoughts of other characters. It is the location where they ask Abdullah to tell them a poem about their favorite subject.

Seyed Mohammad is the next fictional character. He fights with a gun he has inherited from his constitutionalist fighting father. The gun that his father used to carry over his shoulder after the Russian Liakhov ruined the Constitutional Assembly. It was his father that had already defended the Constitution along with the Tabriz defenders.

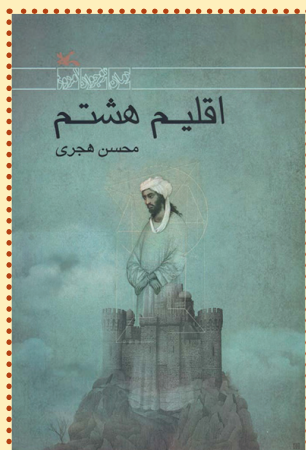
The next character is “Mosayyeb” who before these events, despite his parents’ opposition, accepted to serve in the army out of sheer personal interest. He is now a lieutenant in the role of commander of a small group. He is one of those people who is aware of the question of “why death”. So much as he not only prevented the soldiers from fleeing, but warned that “from now on, the price of staying here is very high. Whoever wants to leave is free to leave now!” He pays this heavy price at the end of the story since he believes: “I was not wrong in one thing, and that is to be in love on the home and land that our ancestors have lived in, and many will continue to live after us.”

Philosophical concepts such as “abandonment”, “anxiety”, “responsibility” and “choice” in the story of *The Unknown Soldiers of Aras* are not limited to these three characters. Other characters are also involved in these existential concepts.

The relative involvement of other fictional characters *The*

*Red Army* with some concerns have led the writer not to fall into the abyss of stereotyping and dividing the characters into two camps of saints and demons. But by drawing a lower level for such concerns, he does not sacrifice narrative element conflict to this avoidance, so that the ranks and identities are not distorted and the position of value and heroism is not occupied by anti-value and the anti-hero. In this paradox, the notion of “anxiety” is reduced to the extent of fear of disobeying Stalin’s order, and the notion of “responsibility” is reduced to the extent of carrying out the superior order, and the notion of “choice” is reduced to choosing the tactics of war; that is the choice between the use of infantry or cavalry units.

Different levels of concern move the plot to its climax. Both sides turn to choices and trades. One camp long for victory and triumph, and the other camp long for life. Both sides reach the goal they have chosen. But at the end of the story, a balance is reached through the expression of tribute of the merchants of victory to the merchants of life.



## **The Eighth Sphere**

*Nikoo Karimi*

Shahāb ad-Dīn Yahya Suhrawardi (1154–1191) was a Persian philosopher and founder of the Iranian school of Illuminationism. He is one of the most influential philosophers in history, whose complex wisdom still hard to grasp by his readers and requires explanation and interpretation. Mohsen Hejri in *The Eighth Sphere* narrated the life story of this complex philosopher for teenagers. Hejri’s strong prose is so enjoyable and readable even for teenagers who do read the ancient literary texts. It encourages the readers to

continue their reading through such other important works as Suhrawardi's *The Red Intellect* and other philosophical works.

The story begins with the Crusaders attacking the port of Acre. It is the reign of Salahuddin Ayoubi, who is known in the western world as Saladin. Already Saladin had defeated the Crusaders once and is referred to by others as Saladin the Victorious. Shahabuddin Suhrawardi is close friends with Malik Zahir, Saladin's son, with whom he studies at an Aleppo school. Suhrawardi's highly complex arguments frighten the jurists of Aleppo. He is such a reckless young man who introduces strong arguments against the customary belief system. He wants to surpass philosophers like Aristotle and talks about his dream of a utopia. But throughout history, new approaches have never been welcomed. Ibn Shaddad and other jurists are opposed to Suhrawardi's ideas and use the opportunity and the bipolar atmosphere of the war-torn society to force Saladin to imprison Suhrawardi.

The story has no linear structure. Part of its chapters are spent in dark prisons and part of the story flashes back to his childhood and adolescence years in Suhraward, the land of red roses. The young Shahabuddin says that he had an inquiring soul and out of sheer curiosity he left his family and home to find out the truth, to travel through the seven spheres. Part of the story takes place by Malik Zahir, Salah al-Din, and even with Ibn Shaddad and other jurists of Aleppo. Hejri does not judge any of the characters. He seems to have taken his objective camera to take us back in time to nine hundred years ago, to the city of Aleppo in contemporary Syria. It is a city that is in turmoil, but Hejri's camera follows along the actions of Malik Zahir to show us the streams, gardens, and alleys and the fate of an important philosopher. The setting of the story is rich and its atmosphere is not alien to the reader. Mohsen Hejri, very much like a director who arranges a *mise-en-scène* in front of his camera and adjusts the light and sound, has used all devices to advance the story. The atmosphere of Shahabuddin's prison is in absolute darkness, but the parts that deal with his

past are flooded with light. He uses the sounds of everyday life to make the atmosphere of the story more perceptible and sometimes predicts the events. Like when Shahabuddin's friends are thinking of helping him run away, and in the meantime, the sound of a woodpecker is heard constantly pecking at the tree.

In this novel, dialogue plays a pivotal and prominent role. Hejri introduces us to the characters through conversations and debates. To the extent that the dialogues become like a play and create a theatrical atmosphere. Part of the book deals with debates between Suhrawardi and his opponents. Debates that the writer deals with complete objectivity and impartially. Sometimes we feel that Ibn Shaddad's argument is strong, and a little later, we give the right to Suhrawardi.

The author has done thorough historical and philosophical research before writing this novel. He has a deep knowledge of the political setting of Suhrawardi's society and brilliantly conveyed it to the audience. He has internalized Suhrawardi's philosophical ideas with such clarity that he could talk about those complex concepts to teenagers.

Finally, the writer does not reveal the fate of Suhrawardi. As in historical documents, the real cause of his death is vague. In this book, we only read that Suhrawardi, after his long quest and many travels, finds the seven spheres as too narrow like a cage. In these seven spheres war and inequality prevail. At the end of the book, he goes on a different journey. A trip to *The Eighth Sphere*, a sphere he has already written a lot about in his treatises and is considered as a Platonic utopia. He considers himself as a bird whose wings have been broken, so as he could not reach *The Eighth Sphere*. But then he expands himself to all his readers that upon close investigation, that bird dwells always inside the readers....



## Standing on the Ground

Masoumeh Ansarian

The story begins with a dramatic situation: “The arrow had hit the ground with its head, and the hot midday wind was shaking its feathers. Among the spears and arrows scattered across the plain, only this one was standing on the ground.”

The theatrical situation in the first paragraph of the story fascinates the readers and makes them continue reading. The war is over and a young, lonely man gathers scattered arrows in the hot desert. The only arrow standing on the ground catches his attention. Through the use of such elements as the hot desert, the loneliness of the young man, the scattered arrows in the plain, the horrifying setting of post-war, after such a massacre, the writer instills the inner fear and artfully provides the basis for entering the world of imagination.

The arrow starts speaking and asks the young man to listen to his story. The arrow tells his story of his descent into the ground and what he has seen. At the heart of the story of the arrow, the story of Ashura, the historical story of the martyrdom of the second Iman of Shia in the land of Karbala, is also narrated. It is another narration of the same story, but it is the very new language and point of view that makes the story interesting and compelling. In *Standing on the Ground*, the writer personifies an object, an arrow from the adversary army, an arrow that was once a branch over an old tree, an arrow that used to wake up from hibernation with the song of the roots, an arrow that hears the sound of the tree moaning under the blows of the ax, an arrow that whispers the promise of God and finally wishes not to fall on the body of the martyr of Karbala.

If religious stories have just advanced the religious knowledge of the people and have failed to arouse their emotions, it is because the writers had no other desire. But through the creation of such a character who had such profound emotional dimensions, Mohsen Hejri incites the reader's deepest level of feelings and provides intensive motivations for thinking.

“Why couldn't an arrow speak? If you open your ears, you will hear the sound of other arrows and spears. You people do not hear many voices? The sound of a leaf, the sound of a branch, the sound of a root.”

The writer makes the arrow to speak. Why? What narrative necessities and motivations are there for the writer to do this?

They have forbidden the young man to set foot on this plain. The sound of the arrow adds to the young man's inner anxiety. The writer personifies the arrow to create a space that the lonely and anxious character of the story could become friends and intimate with it.

From a mystical point of view, all the phenomena of the world have been created by God, everything is from the same origin and move toward God. Mysticism helps the writer to feel close and friendly with objects and nature. The arrow asks the man what are you afraid of? And

after expression of sympathy and establishment of a sociable relationship, it says: “Don't you want to know why I was sitting on the ground and not on the target?” and then begins his story.

The narrative of *Standing on the Ground* in comparison with other stories written about the Ashura event shows free creativity in form and form that is to a great extent based on the mystical ideas of the writer.

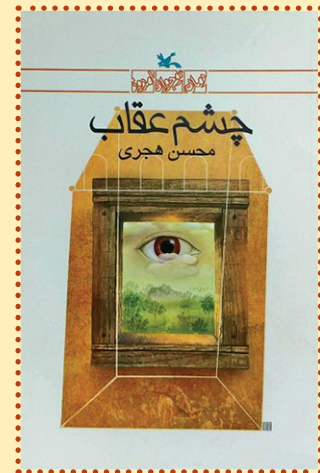
It is an innovation to choose an object and to narrate the story from its point of view. The writer raised the arrow to the level of a human

being with equivalent intelligence and transcendence. The arrow talks to a character and through the talk brings about a qualitative transformation within the character. At the end of the story, the arrow addresses the young man, asks him to return to the field to hear the sound of all the arrows, spears, and swords, and also the sound of the root.

## The Eagle Eye

*Farkhondeh Haghsheno*

Nasser is a young man who lives in the Persian castle of Alamut. He is the son of Hamed, a librarian who is trusted by the people inside and outside the castle. Nasser is engaged to Nahid, whose father collaborates with librarian Hamed. Nahid, like her father, is a man of books and study. But Nasser is a man of war and does everything he can to keep the castle against external enemies. The Mongols are approaching to capture the castle. They had already defeated Sultan Mohammad Khwarazm Shah and his son Jalaluddin and had captured the Meimoon Fortress. Also, Amir Roknuddin had surrendered to Hulagu Khan. This is happening following the assassination of Genghis Khan's messengers by the Iranian government, who came forty years ago to deliver his message. Nasser participates in the war against the invading Mongols who have besieged the castle and attacks them at night. He kills them, watches them at the top of the tower, guards the castle. Together with Salim, Asad, and Esfandiar, works to destroy the Mongols' catapults and other war machines and fight with them one-on-



one. Many call him a hero, including the friends, his fiancé Nahid, and his mother. The Mongols do not leave them; they decide to conquer the castle by any possible means. They have set their catapults in front of the castle and tried to attack it several times when Hulagu Khan in negotiation with Khajeh Nasiruddin Tusi and dispatching Atamalek Joveini to the throne, negotiate with the people of Alamut to leave the castle in peace and occupy the castle and the library.

*The Eagle Eye* is a historical novel that can be examined as a form of social realism through a classical realist approach. Generally, it adheres to the principles, rules, and frameworks of the classical realist approach.

According to the situational structure, *The Eagle's Eye* is a historical novel. A narrative is presented that is related to historical events or movements of a specific period. The confrontation of two forces, or two or more cultures is portrayed where the victory of one, leads to the decline of the other.

Real and important and historical characters are considered, and in fact, these are the characters that form the basis of the events of the novel. *The Eagle Eye* has well-known historical characters in the real world, such as the Hulagu Khan, Atamalek Joveini, Roknuddin, Khawaja Nasir Tusi, and others. But the protagonist of the novel who is also narrating the story is not known in the real world. No one knows Nasser. Therefore, *The Eagle Eye* differs in this respect from other important historical novels in that this novel imagination has its important contribution. This does not mean that *The Eagle Eye* is not a historical novel, because there have been well-known historical novels that have not presented the famous historical figures and have just focused on events. But there are also event-centered historical novels that develop the hero as a character throughout the story, like the way Napoleon is developed in Tolstoy's *War and Peace*. What is important, is that the structure of these novels evolves through events, just as the structure of *The Eagle Eye* inevitably develops through events. Therefore, *The Eagle Eye* is a narrative of events and incidents.

The important thing about historical novels is their connection to regional or indigenous climatic affairs which is a great idea presented in a novel. This is because, in most historical novels, the focus is mainly on specific historical, geographical, indigenous, and regional issues. Every region has special indigenous characteristics,



such as dialect and language, habits and customs, beliefs and rituals, and even dressing and culture. *The Eagle Eye* is a great novel in this regard. The castle of Alamut is like the castle of an eagle, and since Esmail has sharp and keen eyes, it is compared to the eye of the eagle, which is strong and has several times the sight power of a human eye. Choosing the title of *The Eagle Eye* a smart choice that motivates adolescents and young people to read.

Considering the multiple and various cultures, subcultures, and lifestyles of the people of Iran is one of the most important aspects of this work that the writer could successfully achieve through his selection of an important historical event and geographical location. The narrative includes a portrayal of realistic pictures of the costumes, beliefs, and traditions of that specific time and place as it undergoes a series of historical events. The young readers are invited to initiate into the small and large codes of belief and rituals of the specific part of their homeland – The Alamut Castle.

Another important point about *The Eagle Eye* is that it has proved to be attractive for this age group. The adolescents are both adventurous and curious about their past. The novel fulfills these desires simultaneously.

## **The Fox Who Did Not Know Deception**

*Shahram Eghbalzadeh*

What does the “fox” or “donkey” remind you of? Perhaps these “names” or “words” immediately remind the listener or reader of the “deceptions” of the fox and the “stupidity” of the donkeys. These are cultural connotations. The use of the metaphorical meaning of these words is so entrenched that we no longer even think about its meaning!

But since when did this happened? Maybe there is a fox who doesn't want to be a deceptive one?

Now there is a writer who wants to claim that he has created a fox who acts



differently from his parents' teachings. To be polite to the parents is one thing but to accept all their professions without reason is something else!

The short-tailed fox, the protagonist of this story, who is separated from his parents, behaves unusually in his first independent encounter with an incident where he encounters a crow with a piece of cheese in its beak. This is a reminder of the old tale of the crow and the fox, but it is no longer a matter of talking about this theme or message. What is important is criticizing the false traditions of the past – the parents – because the short-tailed fox does not want to live on and satisfy hunger through cheat and deception.

This unusual behavior is also strange for crows. The writer indirectly criticizes the old habits and false traditions by using the technique of de-familiarization. According to the old tradition, it is not necessary to be right to achieve a “loaf of bread”. One can resort to every lie and deception to flatter everyone. Every tradition or habit is not necessarily true just because of its longevity!

But instead of contemplating and thinking, the traditionalists are amazed and they think that there must be more benefit. But the fox shows by his answer that, contrary to some people's beliefs, honesty is not always a sign of stupidity. The work of foxes amazes the animals of the forest so that for a while they doubt that he is a real fox!

In this story, with a simple language and a childish story, the writer betrays the power of propaganda, the story of how those with special power or interests can distort the facts.

In a symbolic story and simple and comprehensible language, he de-familiarizes the “instituted” concepts and criticizes the false cultural, social, and sometimes political traditions. Of course, the child audience may not be communicated with all these semantic layers, but at least he or she enjoys its fascinating story in the first place, and gradually begins to think and reflect and reach to deeper layers of meanings. The writer has introduced simple, deep, and multi-layered concepts in coordination with the vocabulary level of his audience and simple and sincere narration.

# بازی پرخطر کودکان در میدان «مولتی مدیا»

چگونه فرزندان مان را از پدیده جدید «چند رسانه ای» به سلامت عبور دهیم



بچه‌ها در حال حاضر در دو فرقه در خدمت کودک و نوجوان قرار گرفته‌اند. فرقه اول فرقه بازی است که در آن بازی‌ها و بازیچه‌ها جای خود را از دست داده و به جای آن تبلت و گوشی هوشمند و کامپیوتر و اینترنت و شبکه‌های اجتماعی قرار گرفته‌اند. فرقه دوم فرقه بازی است که در آن بازی‌ها و بازیچه‌ها جای خود را از دست داده و به جای آن تبلت و گوشی هوشمند و کامپیوتر و اینترنت و شبکه‌های اجتماعی قرار گرفته‌اند.

توجه به این نکته است که کودکان در این عصر دیجیتال، با دنیایی کاملاً متفاوتی روبرو شده‌اند. بازی‌ها دیگر تنها وسیله سرگرمی نیستند، بلکه ابزاری برای یادگیری و کشف دنیای جدید هستند. این تغییر پارادایم، والدین را با چالش‌های جدیدی مواجه کرده است.

در این عصر، کودکان با دنیایی پر از تصاویر و صداها روبرو شده‌اند. این دنیای دیجیتال، کودکان را با مفاهیم و ارزش‌های جدیدی آشنا کرده است. والدین باید بتوانند این دنیای جدید را برای کودکان خود مدیریت کنند.

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## تاریخ جاوگگیری هی گندا!

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**گندوگیا، محسن هجری، نویسنده و پژوهشگر ادبیات کودک و نوجوان**

گندوگیا، محسن هجری، نویسنده و پژوهشگر ادبیات کودک و نوجوان. او در این کتاب به تاریخچه جاوگگیری هی گندا می‌پردازد.

## زبان نارسای گفت و گو میان نسل های دیروز و امروز

ریشه‌یابی کشمکش جانش جدید در جامعه

این کتاب به بررسی شکاف بین نسل‌های مختلف در جامعه معاصر می‌پردازد.

## شاخه

بزرگ‌ترین سبزی استنشاقی

بزرگ‌ترین سبزی استنشاقی. این گیاه به دلیل خواص دارویی و طعم خاصش شناخته شده است.

## بازی پرخطر کودکان در میدان «مولتی مدیا»

چگونه فرزندان مان را از پدیده جدید «چند رسانه ای» به سلامت عبور دهیم

این کتاب به بررسی چالش‌های والدین در عصر دیجیتال می‌پردازد.

بچه‌ها در حال حاضر در دو فرقه در خدمت کودک و نوجوان قرار گرفته‌اند. فرقه اول فرقه بازی است که در آن بازی‌ها و بازیچه‌ها جای خود را از دست داده و به جای آن تبلت و گوشی هوشمند و کامپیوتر و اینترنت و شبکه‌های اجتماعی قرار گرفته‌اند.

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