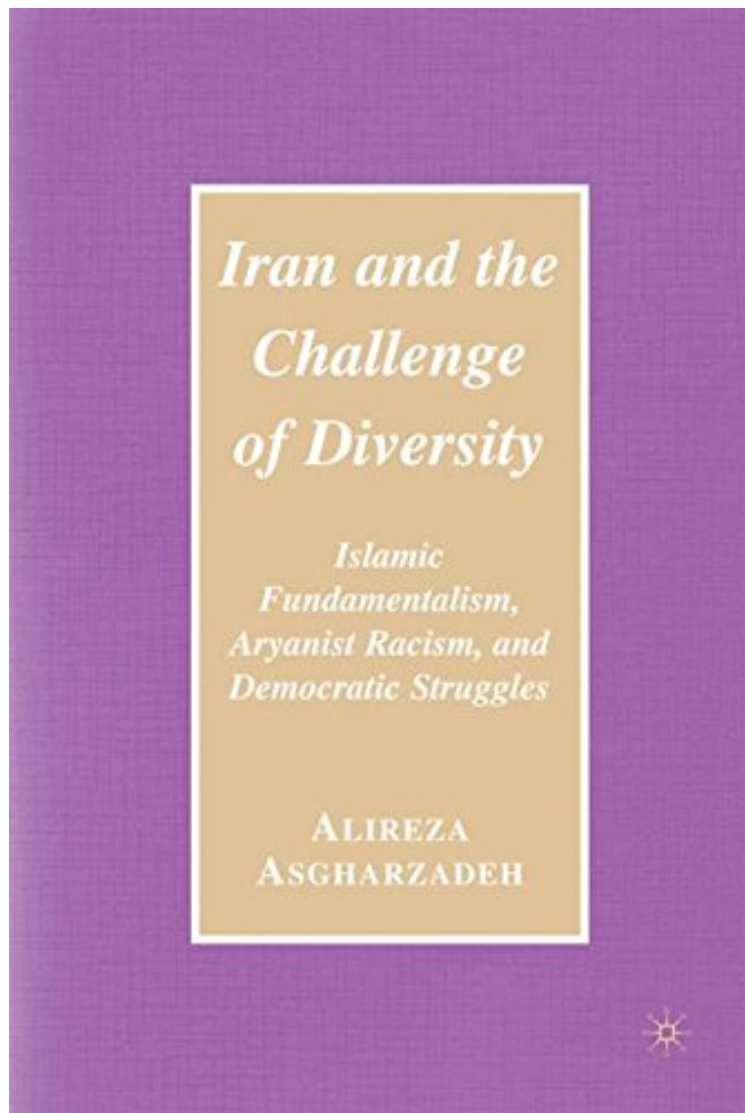


[Read now] Iran and the Challenge of Diversity: Islamic Fundamentalism, Aryanist Racism, and Democratic Struggles

Iran and the Challenge of Diversity: Islamic Fundamentalism, Aryanist Racism, and Democratic Struggles

Ailreza Asgharzadeh

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Ailreza Asgharzadeh : Iran and the Challenge of Diversity: Islamic Fundamentalism, Aryanist Racism, and Democratic Struggles before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Iran and the Challenge of Diversity: Islamic Fundamentalism, Aryanist Racism, and Democratic Struggles:

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great book on the unique challenges within Iran; also fine

scholarship on elements of European racism

By Sam Grant

This book is extremely well written and detailed, and has copious footnotes and a good bibliography for further reading. Even if one had no interest in Iran specifically, it would be extremely profitable for those interested in ancient history generally and/or the sad history of race and racism. On the latter, I've read widely but this book still fills in some fine details better than any other book I've read. On the former, you can draw some really valuable lessons about anachronism in so much of ancient historical scholarship. Because of these combined interests, I found chapter 3 especially rewarding: Planting the Seeds of Racism: Diversity and the Problematic of Orientalist Historiography. The author makes extensive use of direct quotes of the relevant literature, and the story it tells fleshes out the path of how Aryanism rose to dominate European thought from the 19th century onwards. (See Matthias Kntzel's "Germany and Iran" on the WWII era and lingering contemporary political effects of Aryan ideology.) Below is my brief summary on the major points. It is a must read.

First let me say that any book that charges any form of racism in the present is sure to generate controversy. But I had already come to my own conclusions on Persian superiority complexes based on personal experience with the complexities of Iranian identity among some of the Iranian-Americans I've known. The Iranian identity of many who identify as Persian seems to me to be quite confused. It was already quite clear to me over the years that at least a superiority complex akin to some form of racism was afoot for some. There is simply no other reasonable way to explain it. On to the summary.

Everyone knows what Aryanism is, a racial ideology spawned in the 19th century that had such an attraction for those it flattered and privileged that the ghastliness of its reality was only made plain after the defeat of the Nazis. Yet, racism that feeds on outdated and discredited Aryanist paradigms and racist theories of eighteenth to twentieth century Europe has outlived the Nazis, as it did Jim Crow segregation, European fascism, and the apartheid regime in South Africa. Darwin provided the impetus for an evolving view of the world, and combined with the new science of linguistics that gave knowledge of Sanskrit and other Eastern languages, the Europeans sought to distance themselves from the Semitic races and their religious, mythological, and historical worldview by making language a primary factor in determining race and lineage. In this way the European elites found their roots within the Indo-Europeanist/Aryanist realm. Aryanism was the outcome of an Orientalist search for European roots in other than the traditional historiography, which acknowledged the Egyptian heritage in the creation of Greek and Roman civilizations. Whereas an earlier scholarship's understanding of the influence of Egypt on Judaism and Christianity, this new view sought to do away with both African and Semitic/biblical narratives of origin. Now Egyptian civilization was viewed as the work of labors of Indian missionaries. Attention now shifted from Africa to Asia, and from places such as Europe to Iran and the Indian subcontinent. These are the foundations of Aryanism, Indo-Europeanism, and white supremacy. Thus European scholars constructed an identity, origin, and homeland for Europe's white race. But the Aryan myth also constructed an identity for ethnic groups in Iran and India, and thus certain ethnic groups realized they had a superior identity as Aryan. In Iran the Persian ethnic group sought to take advantage of the identity the Europeans had constructed for them. Though it had never been a homogenous people, suddenly a past was conceived in which one group among many could claim supremacy. Reza Khan took the name Pahlavi the name of the Middle Persian language and named the country Iran, which means the land of the Aryans. In the Pahlavi dynasty, Farsi was proclaimed as the legitimate Iranian language, and the languages of other nationalities were banned. The Nazi ideology soon propelled the idea of a superior monolithic racial and ethnic group. The intended projection was a linguistic and ethnic purity of the Persians in Iran. He echoed the racist ideology of European fascism and Nazism, and identified the Persian minority as the true Iranian founders and inheritors, and called on non-Persian ethnic groups to abandon their culture for the superior Aryan/Persian culture and language. Thus a mythic unitary past based on ethnic and linguistic homogeneity was projected for present purposes, rather than the reality that the Iranian plateau had always been populated by diverse groups of people. Forms of ancient federalism were common, as the ongoing scholarship on the fascinating variety of federal arrangements in ancient Greece certainly show, and the author thinks as do most that federal systems are also freer and more just systems of government in the present. The Khomeini regime after the revolution didn't have the same agenda, but neither did it change the prevailing attitudes that had become entrenched within public schools, government, and academia by that time. Islamic fundamentalism merely added another dimension to what was required to be an authentic Iranian: Shiism, in addition to Farsi. Additionally, even though the dominant group claims that certain ethnic groups, such as Kurdish, Baluchi, Luri, Gilaki, and Mazandarani speak Iranian languages, these languages are afforded no similar status to Farsi. In the opinion of the author, this is a cynical play of a race card to divide those ethnic groups assigned an inferior status against each other.

A final comment. It is well known that the Iranian heads of state in modern day Iran, as with many other groups in the Middle East, posit the West and Westernization as an enemy. But there is a lot more going on and it does relate to the subject of the book. The reach into the past to find binding ethnic and "cultural" roots, whether for Europeans or Iranians or Muslims or anyone, is a rejection of the Greco-Roman understanding of man as the fundamentally rational and political being. It is certainly not uniquely an "Eastern view", in fact it can be seen as merely a feature of what many would call "postmodernism". It is a desire to find a supposed more solid ground than ideas for such things as nations. But as can be seen in this book, all nations are sustained by ideas, the only question is whether they are better or worse ideas (related to justice), or in the case of modern Iran positing false ideas of a past monolithic identity for

the benefit of a privileged group in the present. This familiar postmodern rejection of politics casts doubt on or denies that a sustainable political order may be negotiated by diverse peoples to be governed by their own consent. People that don't believe this is possible deride the United States, the most conspicuous modern example of this model, and others on this model as corrupt and inferior. Those who think this is a new idea should read Abe Lincoln's speeches on how he knew that the usual suspects were gleefully hoping for the collapse of the Union to prove that the democratic "experiment" wasn't sustainable.⁵ of 8 people found the following review helpful. When a Pan Turk writes a book By H. Shafeian I wanted to write a review on this garbage but I have seen Dr. Farrokh's statements better than mine. I use his writing but I totally am agree with it. Asgharzadeh profoundly dislikes Iran and his views are wholly consistent with those activists who wish to carve up Iran into small mini-states. (1) Iran is an imaginary construct. Asgharzadeh links the late Edward Said's "Orientalism" (which actually concerned itself mostly with Turco-Arab relations with the West) and claims that Iranian history as we know it is based on "Orientalist" scholarship - he labels these as "Aryanist" and "Indo-Europeanists". In a sweep (by attaching academic-style references - like Brenda Shaffer), he has labelled ALL of Indo-European scholarship as "racist" and "Orientalist". Interestingly, it seems as if Asgharzadeh is placing Sociological theory above anthropology, linguistics, and historiography, It is as if, Sociology alone is able to replace these other aforementioned disciplines. Here we see a case of ideology using "scientific" sociological theory to suppress other disciplines that produces data that contradict one's views. (2) Asgharzadeh subscribes to the conspiracy theory that the ancient world fabricated the history of Iran. Again, he relies on a small set of "historical references", but these are not primary sources. He makes no allusion to references in ancient Japan, Greece, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam - I also doubt if he reads Greek or Latin - he makes no references to the works of scholars such as Mazzini or Spatari (these are in Italian and not translated to English as of yet). He is also re-interpreting a select number of Greek and Roman references, among others. What is fascinating is that Asgharzadeh insists that the term "Aryan" is simply the application of western "Orientalist" scholars - yet fails to explain why the term keeps appearing in Greco-Roman sources such as Strabo, Herodotus or in archaeological sites such as Paikuli (Shapour I's inscriptions of victory against Rome). (3) He promotes the notion that the vast Majority of Iranian Azarbaijanis, Kurds and Iranian Arabs wish to separate from Iran. Using sociological theory (while failing to appreciate the science of historiography), Asgharzadeh fails to provide any hard data to back up his assertions. A number of preliminary surveys have found these assertions by Asghar-Zadeh to be untrue. Not surprisingly, one of the "reviewers" of Asgharzadeh's book is Iran-hater Brenda Shaffer (see link to shown before below the book cover). Both Asghar-Zadeh and Shaffer have shot themselves in the foot. This is because both rely on the narratives (and creative fiction) of Nasser Pourpirar. You may wish to see the following link regarding Pourpirar in Wikipedia: Nasser Pourpirar in Wikipedia Here are a few quotes from that link: He claims that construction of Persepolis was never finished and the Achaemenid dynasty whom he considers as a group of ancient barbarian Slavic invaders ended with Darius the Great, after they returned to their homeland in Eurasian steppes. The rest of the Achaemenid, Parthian, Sassanid, Tahirid, Ghaznavid, Seljuqid, and Samanid dynasties according to Pourpirar were fabricated by historians of mostly Jewish background as part of a Jewish conspiracy. This is fascinating. Brenda Shaffer (herself of Israeli descent) has often cited Pourpirar as "evidence" for her notions of questioning the legitimacy of Iran as state. It appears that in her zeal to discredit Iranian history, Shaffer is citing any source she can without carefully checking it first. She (like Asghar-Zadeh) have endorsed the views of an anti-Jewish fanatic. Note Pourpirar's hatred of Iran and the Persian language (he was born in Tehran in 1940): Regarding the importance of Arabic language for a predominantly Muslim country like Iran, he has stated that: "It is very unfortunate that we can not put the Persian language aside and replace it with the language of Koran. However the future of Iran is at the hand of Islamic Unity. Spreading Arabic language among Iranian youths and incorporating it more seriously into the education system [...] can make a foundation for such Islamic Unity." Pourpirar has reportedly praised Saddam Hussein, who followed the doctrines of Pan-Arabism and is disliked by Iranians and Kurds for killing millions of Iranians and Kurds, referring to Saddam as the "Great Arab hero" and the "symbol of resistance". Pourpirar is quoted saying: "Saddam is a hero of the Islamic movement against Zionism and if he is killed, like any other POW, he is a martyr at the hands of infidels." Asgharzadeh also writes for the Newspapers of the Republic of Azarbaijan. See the following sample below: The Anatomy of Iranian Racism: Reflections on the Root Causes of South Azerbaijan's Resistance Movement Baku Today Newspaper [...] Asgharzadeh is in the Department of Sociology at York University. This is alarming. We are now getting more and more historical revisionists (harboring a political agenda sympathetic to ethnic-conflict discourse) being allowed to teach in western academic mileaus just as Iranian programs in history correspondingly decline. This vacuum is allowing for historical revisionism to accelerate. Here is a small sample list of anti-Iran academics (there are many more): Mehrdad Izady (Author of: Kurds: A Concise Handbook) He has helped establish a "Kurdish Studies" (separate from the all-inclusive Iranian Studies which includes Kurdish studies) in the Czech Republic: [...] Brenda Shaffer (Author of: Borders and Brethren: Iran and the Challenge of Azerbaijani Identity) Caspian Studies Program Harvard University There are many other venues being pushed into mainstream western academia aiming to reduce Iran as legacy (e.g. Arab Gulf Studies, Central Asian Studies, Azarbaijani Studies, etc.) thanks mainly to various lobbies harboring petroleum and geopolitical interests. The common aim of all of these "academics" and lobbies is to discredit Iran as a state and especially its history before Islam.⁷ of 15 people found the

following review helpful. Racism Iranian style

By P. NagyIran and the Challenge of Diversity: Islamic Fundamentalism, Aryanist Racism, and Democratic Struggles by Alireza Asgharzadeh (Palgrave Macmillan) interrogates the racist construction of Arya/Aria and Aryanism in an Iranian context, arguing that a racialized interpretation of these concepts has given the Indo-European speaking Persian ethnic group an advantage over Iran's non-Persian nationalities and communities. Based on multidisciplinary research drawing on history, sociology, literature, politics, anthropology and cultural studies, Alireza Asgharzadeh critiques the privileged place of Farsi and the Persian ethnic group in contemporary Iran. The book highlights difference and diversity as major socio-political issues that will determine the future course of social, cultural, and political developments in Iran. Pointing to the increasing inadequacy of Islamic fundamentalism in functioning as a grand narrative, Asgharzadeh explores the racist approach of the current Islamic government to issues of difference and diversity in the country, and shows how these issues are challenging the very existence of the Islamic regime in Iran. This study is a multidisciplinary work that draws on fields of history, sociology, literature, politics, anthropology, and cultural studies to explore the origination, development, and continuation of racist ideas in Iran. It analyzes the relationships among European racist ideas, the creation of the Indo-European language family, and the emergence of modern racism in Iran, interrogating the construction of notions such as Aria, Aryan race, and Aryanism in an Iranian context. By situating Iran within the Orientalist dis-course and by exploring its cultural, linguistic, and ethnic developments in light of Orientalist/Aryanist reconstruction of Iran's history, the study examines various levels of nation building, identity construction, and aggressive nationalism in Iran. It shows the way in which nationalism and racism worked to place the Indo-European-speaking Persian ethnic group in a position of advantage vis-a-vis Iran's non-Persian nationalities, ethnic groups, and communities. In so doing, it challenges conventional notions about Iran's history, culture, and language by privileging the multinational, multicultural, and multilingual character of Iranian society. Employing multiple perspectives and theoretical frameworks, the study analyzes issues of ethnic inequality, exclusion, and oppression in Iran from antiracist and anticolonial standpoints. It establishes the existence of racism in Iran as a salient determining factor in creating social inequality, oppression, and unequal power relations. Surveying select works of history, literature, religion, politics, and various official and nonofficial publications, the research examines how the dominant group uses sites such as literature, history, language, and the education system as strategic spaces from which to justify its privileged position in society. Through a critical exploration of the dominant discourse, the study suggests the possibility that the minoritized can also use their own discursive sites to resist acts of racism, colonialism, and oppression. To this end, it offers an analysis of a "counterhegemonic" dis-course created by the marginalized to resist and combat racism. The study points to obvious limitations of these sites for the colonized and offers ways to improve their effectiveness. By way of a conclusion, the study highlights future directions for research and possibilities for democratic transformations in an Iranian as well as a Middle Eastern context. In completing this study, in addition to benefiting from other experiences in the form of existing narratives on the topic, Asgharzadeh also draws on his own personal experience and knowledge. As a member of the minoritized Azerbaijani ethnic group in Iran, from early childhood Asgharzadeh learned the pain and agony of not being able to communicate, read, and write in my own mother tongue. Shortly after the establishment of the Pahlavi dynasty in 1925, all non-Persian ethnic groups and nationalities in Iran were denied the right to education in our own languages. Notwithstanding the fact that Azeris, Kurds, Arabs, Baluchs, Turkmens, and others constituted the numerical majority in the country, the government sought to supplant our languages, cultures, and histories with those of the Persian minority. As non-Persian citizens of Iran, we were subjected to open and shameful acts of linguicide, cultural annihilation, and forced assimilation. Asgharzadeh completed his primary and secondary education in a schooling system where he was not allowed to read, write, and even speak his own mother tongue. The education system in Iran promoted and enforced a superficial sense of nationalism based on Persian language and identity. The richly multicultural, multiethnic, and multilingual character of Iranian society was explicitly denied. The school environment, textbooks, curricula, extracurricular activities, teachers, and school administrative personnel all subscribed to and served the view that saw Iran as one nation with one language and one identity. In essence, monoculturalism and monolingualism became the official doctrine of nation-building processes in the country. As a result, the Iranian education system itself came to function as a huge engine for linguicide, deculturation, and assimilation. Like millions of non-Farsi-speaking Iranians, Asgharzadeh grew up longing for an education system where difference and diversity were valued, where students were encouraged and felt proud to talk in their own language, to read their history along with other histories, to see that their people's contributions were registered in textbooks alongside other contributions, to feel proud of who they were and where they came from. However, achievement of these aims and goals in his birthplace remained an ideal for me and millions of other students, teachers, and educators. Asgharzadeh left Iran in his early twenties with a vision of aspiring to live in a society where difference and diversity were respected. Later on when Asgharzadeh finally found his way into Canadian learning centers, he was really impressed to see the level of attention, discussion, and analysis that went into conceptualization, theorization, and realization of difference and diversity in these institutions of learning and education. It was in Canada where Asgharzadeh learned to read and write in his own mother tongue. For a period of three years he closely worked with a bilingual magazine published by the Azeri-Canadian Community Center in

Toronto. Shortly after, he became the editor of another Azerbaijani-Persian journal titled *Qurtulush*. Working with these journals opened up new ways of learning about issues of power, cultural hegemony, and linguistic repression. The mere fact that these journals were partly written in the Azeri language was reason enough for members of the dominant language to brand him and his colleagues as traitors, secessionists, and separatists. Without even reading the journal and knowing its content, former friends and acquaintances began to isolate him, considering Asgharzadeh a dangerous, radical element disloyal to Iran's territorial integrity. It was due to this painful experience that he came to realize the degree of shortsightedness and narrow-mindedness that a reactionary sense of nation, nationalism, national boundaries, and nation-statism can generate. Experiencing the oppressive conduct of members of the dominant group made me conscious of the degree to which being positioned in a place of privilege due to one's language and ethnicity can blind one to the viciousness of injustice and oppression. The repressive actions and behaviors of some members of the dominant group resulted in his deeper understanding and appreciation of such basic rights and freedoms as the freedom of expression, democratic rights, and the right for self-determination at both individual and collective levels. The experience of writing for, and running, a minority-language journal placed me at the center of various nationalistic, ethnic, and linguistic encounters. More and more Asgharzadeh came to an understanding that, given the history of Oriental despotism, arbitrary incriminations, persecutions, and marginalizations in an Iranian and Middle Eastern context, any notion of a democratic system in a society such as ours must be grounded in a clearly articulated principle of "the right for self-determination." What this means is that any democratic system for us should be based on a voluntary desire and willingness of various nationalities to come together and form a federal or a confederative political system. A most essential requirement of such a system is both the acknowledgment and realization of the individual and collective freedom of Iran's various nationalities and ethnic groups to choose and to determine in a democratic manner their own destiny. For an antiracist and antioppression activist, working on issues of difference and diversity is not and cannot be an exclusively academic matter. It is, first and foremost, a matter of working toward the larger ideals of social justice, human rights, inclusivity, and democracy. Such ideals may have a chance of being realized in a Middle Eastern context, only if and when the right to be different is properly acknowledged and implemented. The time for denying difference and diversity, for ignoring ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and religious plurality in our Iranian society has long passed. It is high time to embrace an inclusively representative democracy in line with universal principles of human rights and freedoms. The book is divided into four main interconnected parts: (1) theoretical and methodological issues; (2) Iranian diversity in historical contexts; (3) dominant discourse and counternarratives; (4) conclusions, implications, and future directions. Chapter 1 establishes the boundaries of the study, providing a comprehensive introduction to the book. This chapter also gives an overview of current state of difference and diversity in the Islamic Republic of Iran, the way the government deals with this phenomenon, and the way this phenomenon challenges the totalizing and totalitarian Islamic state. Chapter 2 provides an overview of discursive/theoretical frameworks that inform and influence this study. They include the anticolonial discursive framework, antiracism theory, critical discourse analysis, and postcolonial theory. The chapter discusses the main tenets of these theories and outlines their relevance to the present work. The chapter also covers the literature review, methods of research, data analysis, and related research tools and issues that have been used throughout the study. Chapter 3 contextualizes the construction of the "Iranian nation" in a historical setting. It interrogates the paradigm of "Aryan myth" and its implications for the current racism in Iranian society. The chapter surveys various methods and genres of historical investigation on and about Iran. In particular, the chapter looks into the construction of images of Persia, Cyrus, and the Achaemenids through such sources as the Old Testament as well as in certain Greek and Islamic writings. A study of the construction of the image of Persia in ancient texts is important because of its relevance to issues of ethnic domination, cultural appropriation, and denial of diversity in the present. The chapter also investigates the Orientalist reconstruction of Iran's history which sought to find an original homeland for the white Nordic race. In order to establish the existence of such an origin, Orientalists had to fabricate various myths crafted by way of misinterpretations and misrepresentations, which culminated in, among other things, the elevation of the Persian minority to the status of a "superior race" with superior culture and language while excluding non-Persian ethnic groups from Iran's history. An interrogation of the Aryanist paradigm illustrates the extent to which Aryanist based racism is still relevant and functional in contemporary Iran. Chapter 4 looks into the rise of Reza Khan to power, the establishment of the Pahlavi dynasty, and the implications that it has had for Iran's non-Persian communities. Brought to power in 1921 through a British-engineered coup d'état, Reza Shah's regime gave birth to the infamous doctrine of "one nation, one language, one country." This doctrine was faithfully followed by his son, Mohammad Reza Shah and has had detrimental consequences for non-Persian ethnic groups. In essence, a main concern of the Pahlavi regime was to create a monolithic Iranian nation based on the Persian language and culture. The chapter explores the stifling of diversity in this era and its implications for the present. The chapter also explores the current state of difference and diversity in Iran by exploring salient aspects of the politics and policies of the Islamic Republic toward minoritized communities. Deviating from conventional methods of research on the subject, the chapter highlights the historical continuity of struggle for equal treatment and equal rights on the part of such major ethnic groups as Azeris, Kurds, Arabs, Baluchs, and Turlunens. Chapters 5 and 6 focus on the role of the dominant literature and the marginalized

discourse, respectively. In addition to official documents produced by the governing bodies, the literature in these chapters also include works of elites as well as "ordinary" writers, poets, and intellectuals. Allocation of an independent space to explore this genre of work was necessary in that many dominant bodies contend that acts of racism and exclusion are committed only by the governing apparatuses and that ordinary intellectuals and writers are "innocent" in the oppression of minority communities. An investigation of samples of the dominant literature in chapter 5 shows that the majority of writers, poets, and intellectuals producing work in the dominant language are not so "innocent" as we are led to believe that they are. For the most part, they are at least accomplices in perpetuating feelings of superiority complexes for the dominant, while inferiorizing the others. When it comes to articulating various linguistic and ethnic/national demands, the dominant group promotes the position that the majority of members of non-Persian communities are quite happy with the subordinated status of their language and culture; and that it is only a few elite who raise the banner of ethnic equality and equal treatment. An exploration of works of various genres produced by the marginalized in chapter 6 shows that, contrary to the dominant claims, the excluded communities indeed do want realize their ethnic, cultural, and human rights and that they do resist acts of racism and xenophobia directed against them. Moreover, the allocation of an independent space to the marginalized literature serves to decolonize the spaces traditionally considered as the exclusive domain of the dominant. And finally, chapter 7 brings together the thrust of various arguments pursued throughout the book. It also elaborates on a number of democratic possibilities that may have a positive impact on the status of diversity and its management in contemporary Iran. This chapter highlights the importance of education in initiating change and transformation in society. Likewise, it explores the functioning of such democratic bodies as civil society, the need for transparency, and freedom of expression as significant stepping stones on the path to equal treatment and full inclusion. Moreover, the section highlights the importance of acknowledging difference and diversity in dismantling such totalizing ideologies as Islamic fundamentalism in the Middle East generally, and in Iran in particular.

This interrogates the racist construction of Aryanism and Aryanism in an Iranian context, arguing that these concepts gave the Indo-European speaking Persian ethnic group an advantage over Iran's non-Persian nationalities and communities.

"At a time when there is so much interest in Iran and such temptation to oversimplify or stereotype political developments in the region, along comes Alireza Asgharzadeh, an Iranian-raised Azerbaijani now working in Canada with a flowing, decolonizing, poetic call for a new and energizing look at language, power, race and hope. Brilliant." - Budd Hall, Senior Fellow, Centre for Global Studies, University of Victoria "This book makes an original contribution to the scholarship on race and the poetics of anti-racism by highlighting the intersections of race with language, culture, and education. The book is a bold attempt to re-theorize race and its intersections with language, class and the cultural politics of education. It adds to our knowledge on how to resist the poisonous virus of racism. It is a most welcome addition to literature on difference and power, multilingualism, and critical anti-racist education." - George J. Sefa Dei, Professor and Chair of Sociology and Equity Studies, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto "There is no doubt in my mind that this is the most comprehensive and exhaustive study in the English language of the roots of the plight of oppressed nationalities in Iran. The book will allow academics, literary theorists and professors, politicians and journalists - as well as laymen - to acquire an in-depth knowledge of what systematic oppression can inflict upon cultures which could have flourished." - Reza Baraheni, Professor of Comparative Literature, University of Toronto "This provides a powerful unraveling of the historical, political and discursive strands of racism and nationalism woven through the complex tapestry of Iranian society. The anti-racist and anti-colonial framework of the book enables a critical engagement with the politics of nation building that has silenced and excluded marginalized and minoritized histories, languages and cultures within Iran. This book is a unique, timely and much needed examination of the social, cultural and religious politics in Iran." - Jasmine Zine, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Wilfrid Laurier University "The book makes an original contribution as the first multidisciplinary study of Iran's multiethnic factor, and it will prove a timely resource to students and policy-makers." - Brenda Shaffer, Research Fellow, International Security Program, Harvard University
About the Author ALIREZA ASGHARZADEH is Course Director, Sociology of Education, York University, Toronto, Canada.