

Mount Soleyman-Prison (Zendan-e Soleyman) IRAN





The lecture program in Iran was initiated and organized by Vahid Pashan and the venue was sponsored by Jalal Zokael, Managing Director, Toranj Group. We also thank Mohammad Ashraf of the distributor Tasvirmadar company for providing samples of textiles, UV cured, thermoformed, honeycomb sandwich board, and other samples which helped as handouts during the lectures.

I appreciate Alex Jahanbani, Editor-in-Chief of ME Printer, for helping organize the post-lectures excursion to learn about the architectural history of Iran.

It was very hospitable and courteous of Morteza Tafreshi, co-editor, Sanat e Chap, graphics arts magazine, to have provided car, hotel, meals, and all guide services to show me the natural beauty and several thousand years of cultural history of Iran during the four days that were available.

Also along on these several days of learning experiences were Arash Ghalamifard, a structural engineer (so I could learn more about the architecture of ancient empires).

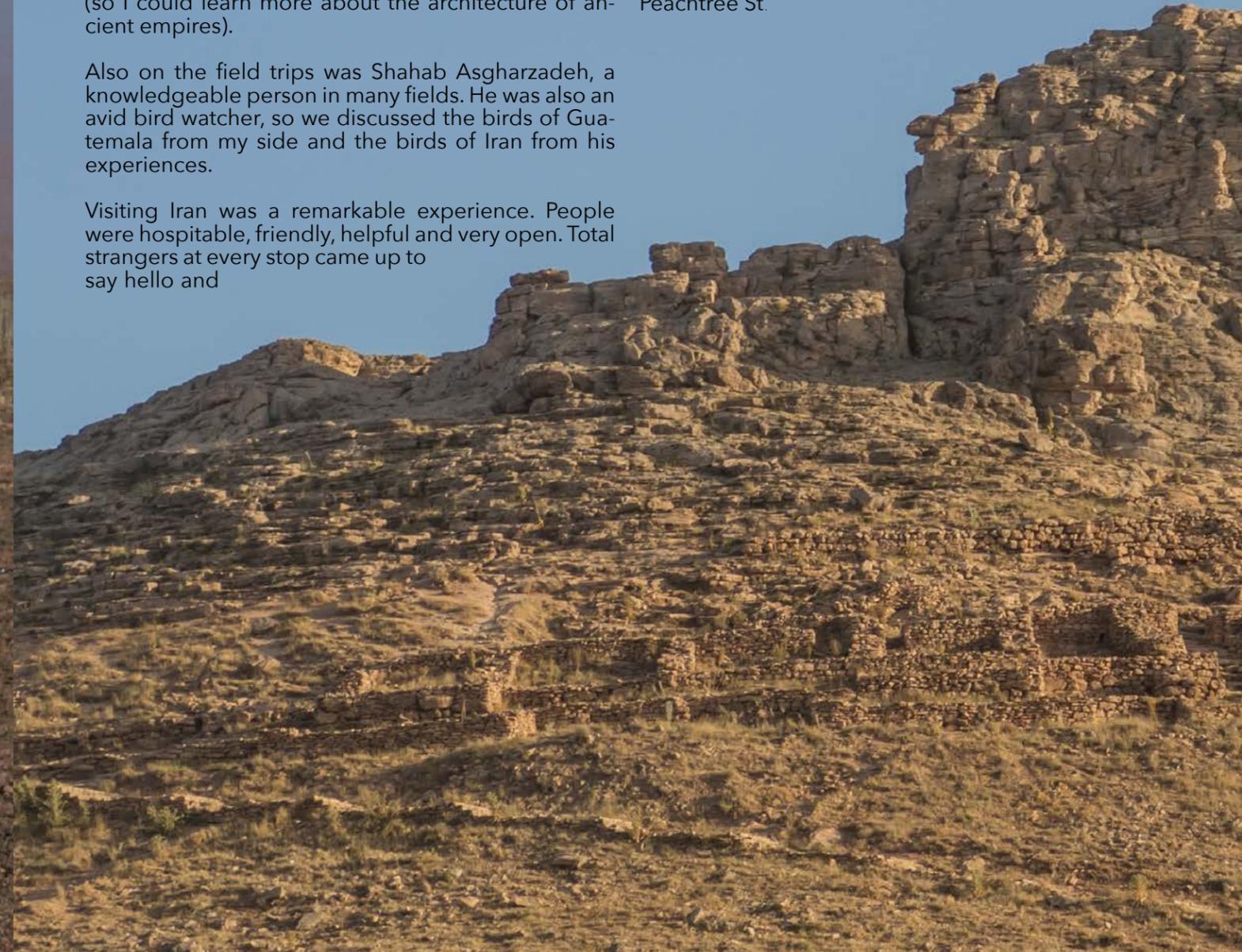
Also on the field trips was Shahab Asgharzadeh, a knowledgeable person in many fields. He was also an avid bird watcher, so we discussed the birds of Guatemala from my side and the birds of Iran from his experiences.

Visiting Iran was a remarkable experience. People were hospitable, friendly, helpful and very open. Total strangers at every stop came up to say hello and

to introduce themselves. Since I am a professor by interest, I gave short lessons in English to assist everyone who asked for a bit of practice in English. Almost everyone we met, in every city, all spoke English (and thus appreciated being able to practice a bit more).

Courtesy of Morteza I stayed in his Tehran apartment, and during the field trip we stayed in villages in addition to hotels in cities. So I had a chance to see home life in Iran (something a normal tourist would never see). This reminded me of my second trip to Japan when I spent about 2 weeks with a Japanese family, in their home, and then traveling throughout Japan with the professor. This is an experience in Japan that no tour group would get a chance to see. I then returned to Japan and spent six months (on a government scholarship, as a visiting research professor at their National Museum of Ethnology, outside Osaka).

My other observation is how safe cities were in Iran, even at 1 am in the morning. I would not walk around Atlanta even after 6 pm within 3 blocks of Peachtree St.



















Photograph by Morteza Tafreshi

Photograph by Morteza Tafreshi, since leaning over the edge with the camera was too close the cliff for me (a slight case of Acrophobia, simply a severe fear of heights when there is no railing to hold on to).







