In the name of Allah the most compassionate, ever compassionate

Iranian way of Chivalry:
On the Culture of Mashdi-gari as a Lived Moral Practice

(In Memory of Master Mohammad Heydarzadeh)

By

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Introduction

The present book is a work of dual purpose. In other words, this volume—crafted as a memorial to Master Mohammad—stands in practice as a vivid exemplar of the culture of Mashdi-gari in contemporary Iran.

Master Mohammad Heydarzadeh, who at the age of eleven lost his father and stepped into the world of heavy-machinery mechanics, in a short span not only rose to become the undisputed authority in his craft across the province—such that German firms invited him to collaborate in Germany—but also attained moral heights that seem almost unattainable.

Showing respect to the snakes and ants in his garden, advising street porters on how to fix their carts, standing surety for strangers at banks, placing his own ATM card at the disposal of the needy, waiving fees for hard-up truckers, and—above all—supplying spare parts free of charge to customers who had hit a financial dead end: these are but a fraction of the chivalry (Mashdi-gari) that filled the brief yet bountiful life of Master Mohammad.

From another angle, by sketching Master Mohammad's relationships—with family, acquaintances, colleagues, and the wider society—all rooted in his mashdi culture, the book effectively offers a panorama of Mashdi-gari in today's Iran, capturing countless subtle details of that bond.

The Dehkhoda Dictionary defines Mashti-gari (mashdi-gari) as:

"Mashti-gari: an abbreviation of mashhadi-gari (to act as a one from mashhad), equivalent to luti-gari. The act of displaying one's wealth to others by wearing the fashion of the day, or by giving away or spending money in public view."

Regarding the culture of mashdi-gari, it must be said: Mashdi-gari is an exalted culture that may have precedents in many corners of the world. Observing it amid the identity crises and self-alienation of modern humanity can serve as a lantern for bewildered, wayward souls, placing before them values that—if embraced—would transform their lives into ones of altruism and beauty, while acting as an antidote to every form of identity crisis and self-estrangement.

The codes of 'ayyāri, futuwwa, javānmardi, pahlavāni, luti-gari, mashdi-gari, and the like refer to individuals who, alongside physical training to forge a powerful body, mastered lofty ethical principles. In acquiring noble character, they made service to humanity the foremost concern of their lives.

According to some religious scholars, the culture of mashdi-gari[1]—rooted in chivalry, self-sacrifice, and forbearance—is fundamentally the culture God intends. That is to say, while contemporary Western culture may be seen as rights-based and legalistic, in the religious tradition—where the latter is also honored (e.g., the injunction to write down every contract between yourselves)—Mashdi-gari receives equal emphasis. For instance, religious teachings state: "The believer who refuses to accept his brother's word and says, 'If I am to lend you money, you must leave collateral,' is doomed; God will not look upon him on the Day of Judgment." And that the "God will deal harshly with such a person on the Day of Judgment." Or that "The believer is like the earth: people take their benefit from it, and people's harms fall upon it. Whoever cannot bear the people's harshness will not attain God's pleasure, for God's pleasure is intertwined with the people's harshness." These latter teachings are quintessential examples of Mashdi-gari in religious parlance, showing that while legal rights are upheld, in the culture of this land Mashdi-gari is held in the highest esteem—something without parallel in contemporary Western culture.

As for the origins of the code of futuwwa and javānmardi, it can be said that the culture of 'ayyāri and chivalry has existed since the dawn of human society across the globe. For in every human collective, there are those who—unlike the many trapped in selfishness and self-absorption—step beyond themselves to aid and support others, placing others before self. The existence of knightly orders in the West, samurai in Japan, 'ayyārs in Iran, ālooftegān[2] in Central Asia, kaka in Afghanistan, pāy kach-ha in Kandahar, and their ilk, all testify to the presence worldwide of free men and free women for whom easing others' pain takes precedence over personal woes.

The Qur'an applies the term javānmard to certain prophets and figures such as Abraham, Joseph (peace be upon them), Joshua son of Nun, and the Companions of the Cave. The Prophet of Islam, before his mission, participated in the Pact of the Chivalrous (Hilf al-Fudul)[3], formed among a group of free-spirited youths of Mecca. The members of this pact sought to restore the rights of the poor and destitute against the tyrannical and overbearing.

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[1] Panahian, A., (2014). Mashti-gari culture. Mashregh.com. 6/11/2014

[2] آلوفتگان

[3] Hilf al-Fudul, or the Oath of Nobility, is a covenant in the history of the Arabs, which was established by a group of young men in Mecca in the years before Islam. They came together and swore an oath to assist the oppressed and the marginalized who had come to the city and were subjected to the oppression of the powerful in Mecca.

Some adherents of futuwwa trace their ethics to the perfections of God Most High. From their perspective, the Exalted Lord shows us models of generosity and chivalry so that, in accordance with the injunction "Adorn yourselves with the ethics of God," we may take those models as our guide.

From the viewpoint of religious teachings, "javānmardi is the most beautiful adornment of a human being," "no ornament beautifies a person more than javānmardi," and "any creed empty of muruwwa and javānmardi holds no good.

"Chastity, reconciliation between people, giving without reminding, and avoiding ostentation are among the other traits highlighted in religious hadiths concerning futuwwa and javānmardi.

Some historians believe that the code of futuwwa reached Spain and Sicily via Iran and other Islamic lands, making those two countries centers of chivalry in Europe. Of course, the futuwwa that arrived there leaned more toward knightly skills (horsemanship, lance-throwing, swordsmanship), though courage, generosity, and chaste love were also among their traits.

Naturally, the valor of Muslim fityān in the Crusades must not be overlooked in the spread of futuwwa in those regions. Although futuwwa is defined in dictionaries as javānmardi and generosity accompanied by magnanimity and nobility, in technical usage the code of futuwwa is a social current with its own conditions, rites, and customs, pursuing benevolent human goals alongside sincere service to individual and society.

The 'ayyārs were a class in Sistan's society who adopted special ethical and combative principles and made aid to the poor their profession. The 'ayyārs were groups who championed javānmardi, generosity, and help for the weak; they would punish—without regard for ruling laws—those they deemed oppressors and distribute their wealth among the people.

The Qābus-nāma by 'Unsur al-Ma'āli Kaykāvus b. Iskandar b. Qābus, in its 44th chapter on the code of javānmardi, defines the term thus:

"…It is said that the root of javānmardi consists of three things: first, that you do whatever you say; second, that you never speak against the truth; third, that you make patience your practice."[4]

[4] Unsuri al-Maʿāli Kaykāvūs ibn Iskandar ibn Qābūs (2021). Qābūs-nāmeh. Edited by Saeed Nafisi. Tehran: Ferdows.

Elsewhere, the Qābus-nāma mentions ‘ayyārs and javānmards side by side and describes their qualities:

“An ‘ayyār is one who possesses several arts: he is bold, manly, and patient in every task; true to his word, chaste in body and pure in heart; he does not use his tongue to profit himself; he accepts harm from friends; he does not raise his hand against captives; he aids captives and the helpless; he restrains the evil of evildoers from the good; he hears truth as he speaks it; he gives justice even at the cost of his own body; he does not betray the table at which he has eaten bread; he does not repay good with evil; he feels shame before women; and he sees calamity as comfort.”

Sa‘id Nafisi, in his book The Wellspring of Sufism, defines futuwwa as follows:

“Whoever inclines toward the path of the fityān must follow three principles:

1- Sakhā: to place whatever you possess on the platter of sincerity and offer it to your companions.
2- Safā: to cleanse one’s breast of grudge and harbor pure intention.
3- Wafā: fidelity to God and His creation.”[5]

Henry Corbin, in describing the pillars of futuwwa in his book Traite's des conpagnons - chevelier, writes:

“ʿUmar Suhrawardī counted the pillars of futuwwa as twelve: six outward and six inward. The six outward pillars are: the belt of the trousers (symbolizing purity from fornication), the belt of the belly (abstaining from forbidden morsels), the belt of the tongue (refraining from backbiting), the belt of hearing and sight (avoiding what should not be seen or heard), the belt of hand and foot (not offending anyone or stepping into tale-bearing), and the belt of greed and longing (extinguishing greed and avarice within oneself).

But the six inward pillars are: generosity (giving without being asked, with good intent), magnanimity (bestowing without reminder of favor), humility (being modest), forgiveness (never consenting to hurt anyone), self-effacement (emptying oneself of ego), and vigilance (remaining aware in the station of union, proximity, and guidance).”[6]

[5] Nafisi, Saeed (2023). The Origins of Sufism in Iran. Tehran: Asatir.
[6] Corbin, Henry (1973). Traités des compagnons chevaliers [Treatises of the Knightly Companions]. Edited by Morteza Sarraf. Tehran: French Institute of Iranian Studies.

Although at first the conditions for entering the code of futuwwa were limited, according to Sa'id Nafisi, over time these conditions increased to 72. In this connection, he writes:

"In the futuwwa-nāmas, the general principles are presented thus: after acquiring knowledge, one must habituate oneself to qualities that the elders numbered at seventy-two, as follows: truthfulness, reflecting to avoid evil, giving aid, freedom from the bonds of the lower self, keeping eyes and skirt pure, fidelity, forgiving friend and foe alike, desiring for others what one desires for oneself, binding heart and soul to one whose love is severed, not training the tongue to speak ill, considering oneself weaker than an ant in strength, fulfilling the wishes of the unfulfilled, not boasting of a deed done and doing whatever is within one's power, yielding in anger, not causing heartache, not being self-centered, forbearance, giving bread, keeping tongue and heart in unison and being the same from front and back, not doing what is unfit to be seen or heard, not speaking of one's forbearance, treading the path of piety, avoiding hypocrisy, cleansing the inner self of grudge, going where one is called even if life is at risk, emptying the mind of pride, practicing humility, shunning arrogance, speaking softly, gently, freshly, and in measure, not revealing the heart's secrets to everyone, harboring no envy, coveting no one's child, fulfilling whatever is said even if it costs one's head, muruwwa, enduring austerity, not going uninvited to a feast, not gazing at a companion with lustful eyes, not being crooked in view, not being self-willed and taking no step for one's own desire, showing muruwwa to the people of the age, befriending none but the generous, bearing with elders and forgiving the young, not boasting before friend or foe, giving people their due and lending a hand, not being conceited, maintaining courtesy, serving, abiding in dignity, concealing even a torrent of blood if it comes, mentioning no one's name save in goodness, not circling rebellion, breaking the whims of the lower self, raising young and old so they feel no shame, giving counsel in private, not giving one's clothes to the unworthy, raising everyone as one's own child, contentment, striving in obedience and being devout, worshiping God and following the elder, stepping into the path of self-effacement, making patience one's trade, thanking God in bounty, enduring in hardship, being sweet-tongued with guests, removing affectation and offering whatever is at hand, winning hearts through kindness and magnanimity, being swift in the path of benevolence, not awaiting thanks, burning like a candle amid the assembly, enduring with love, aligning word with deed."

Although some sources list being male as one of the conditions for joining the ranks of fityān and javānmards, female javānmards have been reported throughout history, and epics such as the Bānū Goshasp-nāma—dedicated to female champions—have also been composed.

Over time, the currents of futuwwa and javānmardi merged with Sufism—both cherished by the masses—due to their many similarities. The physical training of ‘ayyāri and pahlavāni, combined with compassion for creation, defense of the oppressed, self-breaking, and spiritual cultivation in Sufism, created a fertile ground for the realization of the ideal and complete human being.

The ‘ayyārs and javānmards, in defending the lives, property, and honor of their society’s people, confronted tyrants and those who violated the rights of individuals and the community. By confiscating the wealth of such oppressors—sometimes through highway robbery of caravans—they devoted the bulk of what they acquired to the destitute and powerless.

The anti-oppression bent of the javānmards sometimes led them to decide even to assassinate a tyrannical ruler.[7]

During the Mongol domination of Iran, Pahlavān ʿAbd al-Razzāq Bayhaqī and his companions rose against the Mongols’ tyranny and injustice. By launching the Sarbadār movement—which endured for nearly half a century—they fulfilled their religious duty, resisting the invading Mongols and establishing the first Shi‘i government in Khorasan.

In the Safavid era, Shah Ismā‘īl Safavī, inspired by Shi‘ism and the code of javānmardi, officialized Shi‘ism in Iran. Relying on Iran’s religious and national dimensions, he forged a unity that enabled Iran to stand tall and resist the mighty Ottoman Empire.

Alongside the values inherent in the codes of ‘ayyāri, futuwwa, and luti-gari, like any human phenomenon, impure tendencies and selfish, self-centered behaviors also emerged within these currents, partially tarnishing them. Some of this damage came from the ruling political institution, and some from irresponsible individuals infiltrating the ‘ayyāri and futuwwa movements.

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[7] Corbin, Henry (n.d.). Traités des Compagnons-Chevaliers (Rasâ'il-e javânmardân). Translated by Ehsan Naraghi. Tehran: Sokhan. (Published 2003).

“With the rise of the Safavids and the growing power of the Qizilbash and Sufis, the organizations of javānmardi dissolved, and the luti and mashdi sects took their place.”[8] “After the closure of the zāwiyas and langars of the fityān, the followers of futuwwa remained scattered across Iran. Since their men trained immature youths under their wing and inculcated them with their code, the terms luti and alwāt were applied to them. As the majority were in Mashhad, they became known as mashhadi and mashdi. The word akh and akhvī and barādar—formerly used by javānmards for one another—were transformed into dāsh and dādāsh. In the Indian subcontinent and Pakistan, the word dādā remains as the equivalent of dāsh or dādāsh (i.e. brother)”.[9]

Mustawfī, born in 1255 AH (1876 CE), provides a detailed report based on his own observations of this group’s status during the reign of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh Qājār. He writes:

“The closest formation to futuwwa in our time is the fityān or dāsh-mashdis of Tehran. The charitable activities of these dāsh-mashdis in Iran continued in an organized manner until the early part of the last century.”[10]

Beyond certain flaws that somewhat tarnish the currents of futuwwa, javānmardi, and mashdi-gari, the social values and anti-oppression stance of the javānmards and pahlavāns who championed the people cannot be easily denied. This very trait has led various strata of society to place the reading and recounting of the lives of pahlavāns and javānmards at the forefront of practically educating their children. For instance, Chadwick and Chadwick, in their 1950s book The Growth of Literature—a reference for folklorists worldwide—report from Europe that reading tales of chivalry was prized in noble, rural, and impoverished families alike,[11] just as among Iran’s nomads, reciting the Shāhnāma has always been central, and Shāhnāma-reading held great honor in their homes.

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[8] Zarrinkoub, Abdolhossein (2015). The Value of the Sufi Heritage. Tehran: Amir Kabir

[9] Nafisi, Saeed (2023). The Origins of Sufism in Iran. Tehran: Asatir.

[10] Mostowfi, Abdollah (2020). Sharh-e Zendegi-ye Man [The Account of My Life], Vol. 1. Tehran: Hermes..

[11] A session entitled “Rituals of Javanmardi and the Culture of Pahlavani in Iran and the Islamic World” was held on 8 Khordad 1401 (29 May 2022), with the participation of Hassan Zolfaghari (faculty member of the Department of Persian Language and Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Tarbiat Modares University) and Mohammad Jafari Qanavati (member of the Supreme Council of the Encyclopaedia Islamica Foundation, PhD in Folk Culture and Literature). The session was moderated by Mostafa Asadzadeh.

In other words, children's need for practical role models has ensured that—whether in Europe, Iran, or elsewhere in the world—preserving and recounting the codes of futuwwa, javānmardi, pahlavāni, and Mashdi-gari remains a priority for parents intent on the optimal upbringing of their offspring.

The Wikipedia encyclopedia, in defining luti-gari (which is synonymous with mashdi-gari), has mentioned the simultaneous twin traits of javānmardi and the anti-social behaviors of the lutis as follows:

> "Luti has different meanings. In the Qajar era, luti referred to a group of wrestlers and bodybuilders of that time who frequented the zurkhāna. The outward sign of the lutis was the Yazd handkerchief and the Kashan chain. Many of these lutis worked as small traders in the bazaar, and some were engaged in activities such as night watchmanship, protecting city walls, and organizing Muharram ceremonies. Upon joining the luti group, they swore to live according to the ethics of javānmardi, defending the weak against bullies, supporting the neighborhood against external threats, and avoiding lowly occupations. During exercises in the zurkhāna (even in Turkic-speaking cities like Tabriz), they recited the Shāhnāma, and some of them had joined Sufi orders such as the Haydari and Ni'mati.
>
> From the perspective of some people, they were pahlavāns and folk heroes, but in the eyes of others, they were considered rogues...
>
> Mowlavi and 'Obeyd Zākāni considered the lutis to be catamites. Nāser Khosrow equated the lutis with wine-drinkers, thieves, and pimps. On the other hand, in the nineteenth century, this term was used for thieves like Robin Hood who, in the tradition of 'ayyāri, challenged oppressive rulers."

Abolfazl Kāzemi, in his book Kūche-ye Naqqāsh-hā[12] (The Alley of the Painters), recounts his own encounter with the description that the dāsh-mashdis of Tehran gave to Hāj Ebrāhīm Hemmat (commander of the Holy Prophet's Division), reporting it as follows: Hāj Hemmat said:

> "I want to learn some things from you. Everyone is a master and experienced in a field. Teach me your tales of qalandari, mashdi-gari, and 'ayyāri." I, who always had a ready answer, told him a story framed as truth. I said: There was a guy in Tehran, one of the tough guys and pahlavāns of Tehran. His name

[12] Sabouri, Raheleh (2024). Kucheh-ye Naqqāsh-hā: Memoirs of Seyyed Abolfazl Kazemi. Tehran: Sooreh Mehr.

was Mostafā, and because he was crazy about the Ahl al-Bayt, they called him "Mostafā the Mad." This Mostafā, in his youth, on Thursday nights with the dāsh crew, goes to Bāgh-e Khāle (aunt's guarden) in Farahzād, looking for mischief. On the other side, Āqā Seyyed Mehdi Qavām—who has no equal among today's clerics—comes to Bāgh-e Khāle. Seyyed Mehdi's students see Mostafā and say, "Tonight, show a little restraint." One of the dāshes steps forward and asks: "What's happening tonight?" As soon as they say Āqā Seyyed Mehdi Qavām has come, Mostafā stands up, comes to the master, kisses Seyyed Mehdi's forehead, and says: "We are the servants of the seyyeds." Seyyed Mehdi says: "We want to become dāshes like you. Tell us the rule." Mostafā says: "The rule is: wherever you've eaten salt, don't break the salt shaker." Seyyed Mehdi says: "Well, that's in our law too. But do you talk or do you act?" Mostafā falls silent. Seyyed Mehdi says: "You've eaten all this salt of God—why do you break the salt shaker?" They say this remark turns Mostafā inside out and becomes his starting point with "Bismillah." Mostafā mixes with Seyyed Mehdi and ends well. The Hey'at-e Mohabbān-e al-Zahrā in the Pāchenār neighborhood of Tehran is his legacy."

Sobh-e Meyme (25/11/2013) also writes in a report about Tayeb , under the title "In the Law of Mashdi-gari, We Don't Clash with the Children of Lady Zahrā," as follows:

"Tayeb was known as the ignorant (jahel) and luti of Tehran. Tayeb 's help to orphans and consoling them was the talk of everyone. Although ethically he was in the same league as the knife-wielders and rowdies of the neighborhood, he had preserved his manliness alongside it. For example, Tayeb was walking in an alley with his henchmen accompanying him. He saw a seyyed who had a green sash around his waist, sitting on his furniture. He told his entourage: Go ask why Āqā Seyyed is sitting on his furniture.

The seyyed said: I was a tenant, and the landlord threw me out and refused. Tayeb said: Get a van. Now the seyyed was bewildered about what was happening. He himself sat in front and took him beside a newly built house.

He put the house deed in the seyyed's name and unloaded the furniture. He gave the house key to the seyyed and said: Āqā Seyyed, I built this house for myself. Here's the key to the house. Just tell your mother Zahrā to build a house for me on the other side too.

> Tayeb , in the stifling atmosphere of the government when no one dared protest governmental laws, in support of Khomeini on 15 Khordād 1342, single-handedly rose from southern Tehran, rebelled, and was arrested. When the country's leaders held a meeting to strike a deal with Tayeb and force him to say Khomeini gave me money to shoot up the fruit sellers' loads, he didn't go along, and that day in court, facing Colonel Nasiri, he said:
>
> Your words are correct, but in the law of mashdi-gari, we don't clash with the children of Lady Zahrā. I don't know this seyyed, but I won't clash with him.

Mohammad, one of Tayeb 's companions, recounts that day (the Khordād 1342 uprising in Tehran) as follows:

> After the verdict was announced, they transferred us to our cells. At midnight, a police officer came, banged on the prison door, and said: Mohammad Bāqeri! Hāj-Ali Nuri! His Majesty has granted you royal pardon with one rank reduction.
>
> They said this so that Tayeb , out of fear of execution, would retract his words and say Mr. Khomeini incited me, but Tayeb , who was imprisoned in another cell, shouted: Tell that to your grandma! I said it once, I'll say it again: I won't clash with the child of Lady Zahrā (peace be upon her).
>
> The next night, a sound came from Tayeb 's cell. I realized they were taking them for execution. As they were going, Tayeb banged on my cell bars and said: Mohammad Āqā! If one day you see Khomeini, give him my regards and say: Many saw you and bought you; we bought you without seeing you.
>
> Half an hour later, the sound of gunfire came, and it became clear that they had been shot."

As is evident from the report, Tayeb, while possessing the trait of javānmardi, also had inappropriate qualities. But what is here under consideration as Mashdi-gari (mashdi-gari) is the chivalrous and constructive dimension of Mashdi-gari or luti-gari, and it does not pertain to the negative dimension of luti-gari.

Models such as Master Mohammad—some memories of whose Mashdi-gari are recorded in this book—are among the exemplars who, while manifesting the principles of javānmardi and Mashdi-gari in themselves, due to religious commitments, distance themselves from the errors that sometimes occurred among 'ayyārs, fityān, and lutis, and can at least serve as a true model for strata seeking

healthy living and elevation. By transmitting their achievements, they prevent the spread of the crisis of meaning in these individuals and bring about their human radiance.

The personal characteristics of Master Mohammad such as: piety, good temperament and possession of noble ethics, politeness, positive thinking, open-heartedness and smiling, joking, banter and humor, compassion and kindness, gentleness, patience, purity of gaze and modesty, confidentiality, avoidance of hypocrisy and showmanship, concealment of good deeds, humility and lack of pretension, possession of the spirit of javānmardi, prioritizing others over oneself, indifference to the world and material things, open-handedness, clean-handedness and avoidance of financial infractions, fairness, emotional control and swallowing anger and rage, avoidance of verbal and physical violence, and the social characteristics of the Master such as: abundant respect and attention to others, indifference to the world and material things, indifference to money in work relations, prioritizing economically weak strata, support for economically and socially weak strata, effort to solve people's problems, help to the poor, relations with marginalized strata of society, keeping help to people hidden, paying attention and spending time for colleagues, effort to solve colleagues' problems, support for colleagues in necessary cases, effort to solve colleagues' financial problems, help in solving colleagues' technical problems, interaction accompanied by joking and laughter with colleagues, effort to spread joy and cheer among colleagues, honest dealing with customers, giving credit to customers, accompaniment and empathy with customers, forgiving one's own wage, creating deep emotional relations with colleagues and customers, creating deep emotional relations with the people of society—in total—bring about an exalted ethic that can be referred to as ethics based on Mashdi-gari (a phrase that was common and prevalent between Master Mohammad and his friends).

The essence of the aforementioned ethic is attention to creation and prioritizing them over one's daily needs, although individuals who remain trapped in self-absorption lack the capacity to bear the heavy burden of ethics based on mashdi-gari, but individuals who are in search of higher human horizons, by observing the concrete and practical example of Mashdi-gari that was manifested in Master Mohammad, become assured of its realization even in today's turbulent era, achieve it, and naturally enjoy its worldly and hereafter rewards. Cases such as: considering each other as dādāsh, experiencing a peak of joy and cheer by being together, directing verbal communication of individuals toward communication based on gaze, reading each other's gazes, gratitude and appreciation in the face of the individual's

ceaseless efforts, feeling the possession of support and backing in calamities and hardships, support for the individual even in unwanted cases, and the like, are manifestations of worldly rewards that enrich and color the social relations of individuals who have adopted the exalted ethic of mashdi-gari.

The life of Master Mohammad and those around him is a vivid manifestation of the flow of the culture of ʻayyāri, futuwwa, javānmardi, pahlavāni, luti-gari, and Mashdi-gari on the ground of contemporary Iranian society, which can serve as a bright lantern before many teenagers, youths, and other social strata gripped by the identity crisis, and liberate them.

The author (who is Master Mohammad's cousin) after the occurrence of a car accident for the Master and, following it, his ascension to the heavens at the age of 50, set out to prepare a memorial for him, the present book being the result of his effort. This book is compiled based on 37 interviews conducted with family, friends, colleagues, and applicants for Master Mohammad's services, and the information obtained in analyzing the personality and ethical dimensions of the Master has been organized under the five chapters "Connection with the Self," "Connection with the Environment," "Connection with Family and Acquaintances," "Connection with Colleagues," and "Connection with the People of Society." The final chapter of the book is also presented under the title "A Second Reflection."

After compiling the information obtained from in-depth interviews, the initial content of the book was drafted under the chapters mentioned. However, subsequently, 11 individuals from among those interviewed—who had greater oversight over Master Mohammad's life—were requested, after reading the book, to provide their corrective feedback on the compiled content. Based on obtaining new information through the Delphi method, the second edition of the book was prepared and drafted based on the provided feedback. The new edition was again presented to the wife and 4 siblings of Master Mohammad so that their final opinions regarding the amendments and modifications made in the text of the work could be obtained. Therefore, the present text counts as the third edition of the book.

The research method in the present book has been the qualitative grounded theory method, and the process of conducting interviews continued until data saturation became evident.

In the first chapter of the book, which pertains to the individual's "connection with the self," the personality traits and ethical characteristics of Master Mohammad have been obtained and presented from the research population. The discussed titles that

provide a panorama of the Master's individual and ethical characteristics are as follows:

Piety, vigilance and self-control, possession of the state of contentment, avoidance of lying and backbiting, emotional control and swallowing anger and rage, observance of verbal chastity and avoidance of profanity, politeness, good temperament, ethical orientation, compassion and kindness, creating deep emotional relations with children and adolescents, collectivism, support and accompaniment with close kin, tolerance and leniency, sensitivity, gentleness, humor, banter and wit, open-heartedness and smiling, having calmness, patience, purity of gaze and modesty, confidentiality, avoidance of substance abuse, concealment of good deeds, avoidance of hypocrisy and showmanship, humility and lack of pretension, initiating the greeting, respecting elders, possession of the spirit of javānmardi, gratitude toward others, avoidance of reminding favors, prioritizing others over oneself, readiness to perform tasks, responsibility, law-abidingness, patriotism, breadth of vision, positive thinking, foresight, indifference to the world and material things, clean-handedness, fairness, attention to financial dealings with people, generosity and liberality, early rising, self-sacrifice, curiosity, innate talent, welcoming consultation and brainstorming, disseminating knowledge, creativity and entrepreneurship, considerable physical strength and bodily skills, being energetic and possessing a kind of intuition.

The second chapter of the book, titled "Connection with the Environment," pertains to the Master's connection with his environmental factors.

A person's view toward the environment, which directs the individual's environmental behaviors, is a very important matter, the recognition of which greatly aids in understanding the individual's existential depth. In other words, from the perspective of the religious outlook, the best individuals are the best in their connection with their own environment.

In this chapter, under the titles: connection with animals, connection with plants, connection with other environmental factors, the Master's environmental view and behavior have been examined, and his compassionate treatment and deep relationship with environmental factors have been emphasized. The third chapter of the book pertained to "the individual's connection with his family." In this chapter, under the titles: connection with mother, connection with sisters and brothers, connection with spouse, connection with children, connection with relatives, the

Master's deep connection with mother, sisters and brothers, spouse, children, aunts, uncles, and other relatives have been examined.

The fourth chapter of the book has addressed the matter of "connection with colleagues and acquaintances." The titles obtained from the qualitative research conducted in this section are as follows:

Indifference to money in work relations, prioritizing others over oneself, prioritizing economically weak strata, paying attention and spending time for colleagues, effort to solve colleagues' problems, support for colleagues, effort to solve colleagues' financial problems, help in solving colleagues' technical problems, managing situations, interaction accompanied by joking and laughter with colleagues, effort to spread joy and cheer among colleagues, honesty in work, effort to solve customers' road problems, giving credit to customers, accompaniment and empathy with customers, forgiving one's own wage, displaying exalted ethics, mashdi-gari, creating deep emotional relations with colleagues and customers, human-making.

The fifth chapter of the book pertains to the matter of "connection with the people of society," which has delved into the Master's overt and covert relations with strangers in society. In this chapter, while sketching the Master's relations filled with grace, affection, and love with his colleagues, mention has been made of the culture of Mashdi-gari and the formation of the Master's interactions—and at least some of his colleagues'—based on this culture.

The titles obtained based on the qualitative research conducted in this chapter are as follows:

Prioritizing others over oneself, respect and attention to others, interaction accompanied by magnanimity and leniency with others, indifference to the world and material things, support for economically and socially weak strata, effort to solve people's problems, fairness, mashdi-gari, relative distancing from society's political issues, creating deep emotional relations with the people of society, enjoining good and forbidding evil.

In this chapter as well, the footprint of the culture of mashdi-gari—which the Master fully believed in and acted upon—is clearly evident and manifest in the Master's social relations with the people of his society.

In the final chapter of the book, presented under the title "A Second Reflection," an effort has been made to explain the Master's extraordinary growth in specialized fields and particularly in ethical and human arenas.

At the end, it is necessary to mention the dear ones who rushed to the author's aid in this research and accompanied him in its completion. Monir Heydarzadeh (wife), Zinat Heydarzadeh (sister), and Maryam Heydarzadeh (sister) were among those who endured much hardship for the execution of the research. The following dear ones also graciously accepted interviews with the author, for which abundant thanks are necessary:

Khadijeh Razzāq-Rostami (mother), Zinat Heydarzadeh (sister), Maryam Heydarzadeh (sister), Moloud Heydarzadeh (sister), Seyyed Majid Seyyed Musavi (son-in-law of the family), Ali Farzādniyā (nephew), Mohammad Dāvudi (sister's husband), Monir Heydarzadeh (wife), Sakineh 'Abbāspour (wife's mother), Hāj Kāzem Razzāq-Rostami (maternal uncle), Z. Razzāq-Rostami (maternal aunt), Ali Ma'soumi (aunt's husband), M. Ma'soumi (cousin), R. Razzāq-Rostami (maternal aunt), Ahmad Amāni (aunt's husband), Mrs. Bahrām-Ābādi (brother's wife), Gholāmrezā Shādrouz (paternal cousin), 'Abbās Heydarzadeh (paternal cousin), Sinā Heydarzadeh (paternal cousin's son), Sohrāb-'Ali Shiri (initial master and colleague), Hasan Qazvini (colleague and apprentice), Mohammad Hāj Nasiri (former apprentice and colleague), Javād Dousti (colleague), 'Abbās Mohebbi-Khah (colleague), Amir Madāhi (colleague), 'Abdollāh Musā-Khāni (colleague), Kāmrān Samsāriyān (colleague), Mostafā Fārsi (colleague), Mahdi Ātashgar (childhood friend and colleague), Ali Shāh-Mohammadi (colleague), Hamid Mahdi-Tabār (colleague), Yahyā Hemmati (colleague), Seyyed Mohammad-'Ali Nā'ini (colleague), Mahdi Chegini (friend), Abolfazl Qassāb-Tarābi (machine parts seller), Farhād Ma'roufi (customer), Parviz Moqimi (customer)[13].

[13]It should be noted that in the text of the book, the first names of interviewees have been used; however, in cases where there was name similarity, the interviewees' surnames were used instead. Likewise, it should be recalled that, at the request of some interviewees, their first names have been omitted, and they are referred to by expressions such as "the younger aunt," "the elder aunt," "a cousin (daughter of an aunt)," and "the brother's wife.

Chapter One: Connection with the Self

In this chapter, after an initial sketching of the important personality traits and coordinates of Master Mohammad, the foundation for analyzing his connection with the environment, family, colleagues, and the people of society will in practice be laid.

The population under study, in describing the most important characteristics of Master Mohammad, has mentioned the following in explaining his personality:

Piety, vigilance and self-control, possession of the state of contentment, avoidance of lying and backbiting, emotional control and swallowing anger and rage, observance of verbal chastity and avoidance of profanity, politeness, good temperament, ethical orientation, compassion and kindness, creating deep emotional relations with children and adolescents, collectivism, support and accompaniment with close kin, tolerance and leniency, sensitivity, gentleness, humor, banter and wit, open-heartedness and smiling, having calmness, patience, purity of gaze and modesty, confidentiality, avoidance of substance abuse, concealment of good deeds, avoidance of hypocrisy and showmanship, humility and lack of pretension, initiating the greeting, respecting elders, possession of the spirit of javānmardi, gratitude toward others, avoidance of reminding favors, prioritizing others over oneself, readiness to perform tasks, responsibility, law-abidingness, patriotism, breadth of vision, positive thinking, foresight, indifference to the world and material things, clean-handedness, fairness, attention to financial dealings with people, generosity and liberality, early rising, self-sacrifice, curiosity, innate talent, welcoming consultation and brainstorming, disseminating knowledge, creativity and entrepreneurship, considerable physical strength and bodily skills, being energetic and possessing a kind of intuition.

Of course, it should be noted that the population under study had also mentioned other matters such as: effort to preserve the environment, people-orientation, special attention to economically and socially weak strata, taking the lead in solving others' problems, and the like under the individual characteristics of Master Mohammad,

but this category of traits—which have a more social aspect—will be discussed in the subsequent titles that have a more social hue.

Piety

Piety and possession of a spirituality-oriented spirit were among the important characteristics of Master Mohammad, which nearly all interviewees emphasized.

Chegini, who had a friendship background of nearly four decades with Master Mohammad, in his interview referred to him as an individual whose "religiosity was twenty [out of twenty]."

Shāh-Mohammadi, who had multiple trips with Master Mohammad, stated that he, during various work and recreational trips, under any conditions, was committed to his prayer and performed it. Performing fasting by Mohammad Āqā was also emphasized by some of the interviewees, and they occasionally noted that Master Mohammad, despite the difficult work of heavy truck mechanics, observed his fast and did not deviate in this regard.

Zinat, the Master's sister, in her interview, emphasizing the Master's fasting during the month of Ramadan despite his heavy work even in hot days, recalled his commitment to this religious duty.

The Master's wife also in the interview she had, noted:

> "Despite the fact that I and my two daughters did not have seriousness in the matter of prayer and fasting, Mohammad never, under any conditions, abandoned his prayer and fasting and was committed to performing them. Even when Mohammad was supposed to have a work trip in the month of Ramadan, I would tell him, now you can not fast, so why do you torment yourself, but Mohammad, who was sensitive about performing his fast, would wait until the noon adhan was called and after performing his prayer, would go on his work trip so that his fast would not be invalidated."

The cousin and Hāj Kāzem (the Master's maternal uncle) in similar phrases recalled the piety of the Master as follows:

> "We had gone to Hāj Mohammad's garden for the Sizdah Bedar ceremony, and since it was Ramadan, Mohammad Āqā himself was fasting, but we were not fasting; nevertheless, he, while fasting, prepared wood-fired tea for us and gave it to us."

> "I witnessed in the blessed month that Mohammad, while himself fasting, skewered and grilled chicken for those invited to his garden to properly host them."

Nasiri, the Master's apprentice, in his interview stated that he, under the influence of the Master who fasted even in the height of summer and performed the heavy work of repairing trucks, also fasted in following the Master, while at present, his performing of fasting and prayer is not very much in order.

Hāj Sohrāb, Mohammad Āqā's master, also noted that basically Mohammad from his apprenticeship days was mindful of halal and haram and avoided haram and doubtful matters, just as one of his colleagues emphasized that if Master Mohammad felt a work was doubtful and problematic, he would not go along with it and would not proceed to perform it.

Although the Master's friends emphasized that Mohammad in his teenage years occasionally participated in religious ceremonies and personally at the Imāmzādeh Sultān Seyyed Mohammad had the duty of carrying the banner in the month of Muharram, but in adulthood Master Mohammad more than paying attention to appearances such as participating in religious ceremonies, tried not to suffice with the superficial layer of religion which is performing ceremonies and duties, but also paid attention to the essential core of religion and religiosity which is seeing creation as the dependents of God and one must address their problems, although giving vows for 200-300 people continued in the Master's behavioral set.

In the words of Shāh-Mohammadi, the Master's colleague and partner, he, instead of emphasizing Islamic analysis of issues, conducted his analyses based on his human nature that one must safeguard the inherent dignity and respect of humans and service to them is the ultimate desire of religion. Hasan, the Master's apprentice, in his interview in the same vein stated:

> "God was evident in Hāji's life and he believed that everyone is placed in their own grave, therefore regardless of what this one and that one do (or do not do), he considered himself obligated to perform his own religious duties and service to creation..."

The Master's cousin in the interview she had, noted that father (Master Mohammad) had attended the seventh-day ceremony of my aunt and in conversation with my father-in-law had stated that death is the end of all humans, but how good it is that

we leave goodness behind us... and it is for this reason that in my shop it is open to everyone and as much as I can, I try to meet the needs of the needy.

The Master's wife also in her interview emphasized:

> "Mohammad would say, what God wants from us as His servant is that we do not harm each other and take others' hands to help and aid them.

In the same way, Mohammad would say, the only thing that remains from us is good and bad, therefore how better that we leave goodness behind us, because the only thing that will hold our hand in the hereafter and aid us is precisely that thinking of others and bringing about goodness for them."

Chegini in another part of his remarks about the Master stated, I and Hāji from the beginning of adolescence and apprenticeship in a mechanic shop were together and after changing my work profession, I still continued my friendship with him and even our marriages were held in the same week.

Our deep companionship had caused us to have family comings and goings, but since Hāji had two daughters and I had two sons, due to observing religious matters, our family comings and goings stopped as the children grew up, but our friendship continued and sometimes we were together until 11:30 at night.

The Master's wife also in her interview regarding his sensitivity to mahram and non-mahram stated, after my daughter and the suitor's son reached an agreement, Hāji, who had the necessary acquaintance with the boy's family, said, then these two must immediately become mahram to each other so that there is no religious problem in between.

Hasan, the Master's apprentice, in part of his statements recalled the instrumental use of religion by some, noting that the Master would become upset and disturbed in these cases as to why religion should become a plaything and lip service of this one and that one and for a few black coins, the credibility of religion be tarnished. He in this regard would say:

> "The Master would become upset with those who, to advance their work, resorted to verses and oaths, and would say, individuals who want to prove by swearing that for example they will pay their debt by the end of the month, in practice fall short of their words and basically someone who uses oath instrumentally is nothing more than a liar. For this reason, the Master himself never sought swearing and for example would tell his customer, I have done

these works for your truck, now if you want to accept, accept, if you don't want to accept, it's up to you."

Yahyā also in his interview noted that the Master never for selling the parts of his shop was willing to bring verses and swear, and would say, this part's price is this, now if you want to transact and if you don't want, no problem.

Vigilance and Self-Control

In Iranian-Islamic culture, vigilance and self-control are considered essential in the self-making of individuals, and it has been emphasized that those who attain spiritual and ethical elevation are not free from vigilance and self-control. These individuals in the path of their self-making, after safeguarding themselves, strive to compel themselves to perform good deeds and avoid committing sins and evils, and in case of not performing the good deeds they had specified for themselves and occasionally performing inappropriate deeds from which they should refrain, by punishing themselves, in practice prepare their soul to accept good deeds and turn away from undesirable deeds.

Ahmad, the Master's aunt's husband, in his interview stated:

> "Mohammad spent his military service in Qasr-e Firouzeh, which was also my workplace. Mohammad was initially sent to the kitchen section, but after some time I saw that he was expressing complaint from there and saying, I don't want to work in the kitchen environment. I inquired from him the reason for this matter, he said, some of the officers take the rations allocated to the soldiers and carry them to their homes or come to the kitchen and for example scoop out the meats of the soldiers' food with a ladle and pour it on their own food, and when I protest they tell me, you are a soldier, these things are not your concern and I cannot tolerate these conditions.

Of course, Mohammad in another part of his words told me:

> 'As much as possible, I hide the soldiers' rations in the kitchen to keep them out of reach of this type of officers and on holidays when the officers are not there, with the stored rations, I prepare suitable food for the soldiers.'"

But in any case, the head chef who had a problem with Mohammad's truth-seeking had complained about Mohammad and he had been detained for a few days, but

Mohammad had not told me and his aunt about the story of his detention which had befallen him in defense of the soldiers, and regarding those few days of not coming to our house he said:

> "For a while my work in the barracks was a lot and I didn't find the opportunity to come to your house,"

but later I realized that Mohammad's work had reached detention for defending the soldiers' rights.

Ahmad in another matter stated:

> "When I returned from the office with the shuttle, I had to walk a 500-meter path to the house. One time upon return I saw Mohammad in his military uniform carrying a large bag on his shoulder, walking with an old man. I reached Mohammad and the man and said, salam Mohammad, where are you going! Mohammad said:

'I have become acquainted with Hāj Āqā, I am with him for a few steps and returning home.' After some time from my reaching home, Mohammad also came home. But this time he did not have a bag on his shoulder. I asked him, where did you go? He said:

> 'I was talking with that gentleman for a few steps.'"

But I realized that Mohammad had carried the heavy load of that gentleman for him and delivered it to his doorstep, but he had not conveyed this reality to me.

Ahmad in another part of his interview recalled another instance of Master Mohammad's vigilance and his effort to keep it concealed as follows:

> "I had heard several times that there are poor people whom Mohammad helps. One time when I had gone to Qazvin and visited Mohammad at work, a poor young man came to Mohammad's shop and started talking to him. Mohammad took him behind the truck in front of his shop, and I saw that he gave him some money, and the young man bowed and straightened several times before Mohammad. After Mohammad returned, I asked him who this young man was? He said: 'He was owed some money by me, and I returned his money to him.'

> Then when I bid farewell to Mohammad and headed toward the outside of the garage, I saw that the same young man was asking for help in front of another shop, but the shop owner was harsh with him; there I understood that Mohammad had in fact helped that young man and the young man was not Mohammad's creditor, but Mohammad, to conceal his good deed, had told me that he was a creditor."

The recent cases are entirely benevolent acts that Master Mohammad, by concealing them, tried to ensure that, through self-vigilance, the pride of helping others would not deceive him, and thus the value of his good deed would not be nullified and lost.

Hasan, Mohammad Āqā's apprentice, also in his interview noted that Hāj Mohammad was watchful of his behaviors lest an error emerge from him. For example, when the baker, who had prior dealings with Master Mohammad, pointed to him to come out of the line and take his bread without observing the queue, he was not willing to do this, or when distributing charitable breads, he was not willing to take such breads, because he considered these breads the right of the destitute and would say:

> "It is possible that by taking one bread, I trample the right of a have-not and needy person."

Monir, the Master's wife, in a similar statement exactly declared:

> "For continuing my cancer treatment and radiation therapy, the options of Zanjan and Tehran were raised, but Mohammad, because the Zanjan radiation therapy center was charitable and did not charge patients, preferred to take me to Tehran for continuing treatment so that needy people could benefit from the facilities of the center in question instead of me."

If we consider vigilance as the individual's theoretical and practical care over their thoughts and behaviors, self-control is more the individual's care and watchfulness over themselves against the behavioral harms of others. Master Mohammad, alongside the self-care he had and strove lest his good deeds and actions deviate from their path and pursue the praise of creation instead of the pleasure of the Exalted Truth, in his self-controls also endeavored lest the uncalculated actions and behaviors of others inflict harm on him and his beliefs.

Monir in her interview recalled examples of Mohammad Āqā's self-control as follows:

> “Once we set out for a twenty-day trip to Armenia, Georgia, and Turkey. At the same time in Armenia, a concert of Shohreh and Moein and... was held, and I said, let us also take the opportunity and go to their concert. When we went to the concert, Mohammad adjusted his chair in such a way that he faced me and the children, I said, after all, we have paid, why don’t you watch the concert? Mohammad said: ‘I prefer to see you, because I only wanted to accompany you.’”

During the concert, a dancer also appeared on stage to entertain the audience. The dancer, noticing Mohammad’s manner of sitting, came closer and positioned herself in front of Mohammad while dancing, but Mohammad did not raise his head even for a moment, and the dancer, after getting no result from her behavior, said that you are more stubborn than for me to attract your attention to myself, and moved away from Mohammad.

Monir in another part of her report noted:

> “Whenever we had guests or were invited to a party, if among the ladies present in the gathering there were one or individuals without hijab, Mohammad would not participate in that gathering and would go to his mother’s house and say, whenever the party is over, let me know so I can come.”

In other cases, sometimes we were invited to weddings, and in some weddings after the ceremony ended, the attendees would go to the garden and engage in dancing and revelry; Mohammad in these cases also was not willing to come to the garden and would say:

> “I will go and sit in the car and wait for you until you come too.”

Mohammad at his daughter’s wedding, which was on February 14, 2023, when he saw that the groom’s family tradition was holding the wedding in a mixed manner, said, I will not bitter my daughter’s wedding with my opposition in this regard, therefore he used the excuse of his sister’s simultaneous heart surgery and on this pretext did not attend the groom’s family ceremony, but he himself held another wedding for his daughter where he invited his own relatives and friends, and in that wedding, women and men were no longer mixed.

Self-control in the field of health was also another matter that the Master’s wife referred to. In the sense that Mohammad paid much attention to his health and for this reason, did not eat dinner and every night went to bed with a glass of milk. But

if, for example, one day he was invited to a party or someone's wedding, that day he would not eat lunch so that he could eat at the party or wedding, both so as not to upset the host and so as not to disrupt his health regimen.

Possession of the State of Contentment

In Iranian-Islamic culture, the state of contentment is considered the result of obedience to divine commands, and it has been emphasized that with complete adherence to divine commands, the state of contentment increases to the point where, in the words of Imam Husayn, peace be upon him, who faced the most difficult hardships and perils, "we are content with what God is content with."[14]

Ahmad in his interview regarding Master Mohammad's state of contentment stated:

> "From childhood I had close association with Mohammad, especially since Mohammad spent his two years of service in Tehran, and after finishing his daily work in the barracks, he would come to our house; in all this time, I never saw that when I asked about his condition or later asked about his family's condition, he expressed complaint or grievance against the times; in one word, it can be said that he never groaned about his life.
>
> Even when Mohammad's wife became afflicted with cancer, when I called him and inquired about the condition of his wife and children, he always said, thank God, the lady is fine, the children are fine too, and he never expressed lament or complaint against the days and times. Mohammad did not even once tell me and his aunt that my lady is ill and I am involved in her treatment works. Several times when I called Mohammad and his wife was not at home, when I asked about her, he said, Monir has gone to her mother's house, and I did not pursue the matter much. Ultimately, in one word, it must be said that almost everyone knew that Mohammad's wife had a serious illness, but no one had officially heard a word from him about his wife's illness, because he never brought bad on his tongue and did not say."

Hasan, Master Mohammad's apprentice, in his interview referring to the Master's state of contentment, stated:

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[14]Mohaddesi, Javad (2011). Maqām-e Reżā va Taslīm [The Station of Contentment and Submission]. Porseshnameh (Porsman) Journal, Bahman 1389, No. 97.

> "Hāji's lady was ill, and he had several sessions commuting to Tehran and Zanjan and was following up on his wife's treatment works. But I always saw Hāji unchanged, and his behavior was as usual normal; even at times when his wife's condition was bad, I still did not understand anything of Hāji's problem, because he behaved normally normally."

Seyyed Mohammad-Ali, Master Mohammad's colleague (who also had a distant familial relation with him), in his interview in describing his state of contentment, noted:

> "Mohammad was very inwardly full; I knew that he suffered a lot in his life, but he never manifested his distress and did not express complaint, grievance, or distress about the circumstances he was stuck in before me and the colleagues."

Avoidance of Lying and Backbiting

In Iranian-Islamic culture, lying and backbiting are severely prohibited and condemned. Lying means saying something contrary to reality, and backbiting means speaking ill behind others' backs.

Master Mohammad not only avoided lying but was also opposed to backbiting, and if, for instance, in the shop a colleague was witnessed backbiting someone, he would become upset and state: "If so-and-so has a problem, go say it to his face," or he would leave that colleague's shop so as not to witness backbiting of this one and that one.

In cases where those around in Master Mohammad's shop brought up someone's talk, Master Mohammad with statements like "let it go," "go from here and don't backbite," "let's not talk about him," "backbiting prohibited, backbiting outside," and the like, would declare his dissatisfaction with the surroundings' statements.

Maryam, Master Mohammad's sister, Ahmad, the Master's aunt's husband, and Monir, the Master's wife—who have three to five decades of close association with Mohammad Āqā in their record—in their separate interviews regarding the Master's avoidance of lying and falsehood, stated thus:

> "Mohammad was not a person of lying, and this good trait was transferred from him to us too. If sometimes someone also wanted to engage in

backbiting, Mohammad would change the course of the discussion so that no backbiting occurs in between."

"From the time when during Mohammad's two years of military service I lived closely with him and continued my association with him and his family, I saw with my own eyes that lying does not exist in this human's nature."

"During nearly three decades of married life, I did not hear a lie from my husband, and Mohammad basically was careful lest he do a work that would force him to lie because of it."

Mahdi, who in childhood had friendship with Master Mohammad and in adulthood in the capacity of a colleague had association with him, relying on his four-decade experience of dealings with Master Mohammad, stated:

"From the first day of acquaintance until the last day of Mohammad's fruitful life, I did not hear lying or backbiting from him."

Sakineh, Mohammad's wife's mother, also in her interview stated that when Mohammad and my husband went with a truck to Qom to bring bricks for our house under construction and on the way back encountered the police and the police requested their bill of lading from them, since they had procured the bricks for our own house and had no bill of lading in this regard, they told the police:

"We have personally bought the bricks and for the sake of God, we are taking them for a lady who needs help in building her house (meaning Mrs. Sakineh)."

The extreme ugliness of backbiting also caused Master Mohammad to seriously oppose backbiting and engaging in it and to deal in a certain way with individuals who occasionally engaged in backbiting and also to guide them.

Mrs. Zinat, the Master's sister, stated:

"If Mohammad felt that the words were about to deviate from the path of fairness, by saying why have you ignored and not mentioned this person's good qualities, he would change the course of the discussed topics."

Yahyā, the Master's colleague and neighbor, also in his interview with a similar statement declared:

"Hāji extremely disliked backbiting, and if he witnessed backbiting and speaking behind someone's back, he would say, I am in front of you, talk

about me, and if you want to say something behind someone's back, go and say your word in front of him himself."

Nasiri, Mohammad Āqā's apprentice, in his interview noted:

"When Hāji faced backbiting, simultaneously with tossing his head up, he would say to the opposite party, let it go, say something else."

Parviz, who had a three-decade history of being a customer and referring to the Master, also emphasized:

> "In the course of 30 years of association with Hāji, I saw no grudge or backbiting from Hāji; he was basically good with everyone, and if he had a problem with someone and even if someone was hostile to him, he would not come and say something behind that person's back and humiliate and degrade him before others."

The recent cases were confirmed in the interviews of Hamid, Mohabbi-Khā, Javād, Musā-Khāni, and several other friends and colleagues of Master Mohammad.

Emotional Control and Swallowing Anger and Rage

In Iranian-Islamic culture, unlike many psychological texts that consider swallowing anger to have undesirable consequences, swallowing anger is emphasized and praised.

The swallowing of anger that is generally referred to in psychological texts is the suppression of anger out of fear and helplessness, but swallowing anger in Iranian-Islamic culture evokes a kind of purification or sublimation. In the sense that religious texts, by recommending the swallowing of anger, ask the individual to look at the universe from a high horizon, not to surrender themselves to anger, lest after exercising their anger and violence, they commit some excesses in harming their opponent as well.

Amir in describing Master Mohammad stated, during 20-30 years of friendship and collaboration with Hāj Mohammad, I did not see Hāji's frown or anger. Mohebbi-Khah resorted to mentioning similar memories and emphasized that basically no one had seen Hāji's shouting and uproar in the work environment and other societal environments.

Hāj Sohrāb, Master Mohammad Āqā's master, also emphasized that from Mohammad's apprenticeship days, he had not heard bad or inappropriate words from him.

Mohebbi-Khah also noted that although Mohammad possessed high physical and bodily strength, he never brought his arm strength into disputes, and in situations where people might easily turn their anger and rage into fight and quarrel, he would yield.

Hāj Sohrāb, Master Mohammad Āqā's master, in describing mechanics' work stated that sometimes a fault may exist that even with two hours of focus on it, one cannot succeed in fixing it, and this type of problem naturally makes people nervous. But Master Mohammad, in situations where he fell short in repairing a heavy truck, by acknowledging that my nerves can't take it anymore, would suspend the work for one or two hours to regain calmness and renew strength, then address the arisen problem again.

The Master's brother's wife also in her interview noted that Mohammad possessed very high emotional control, in such a way that when his wife was afflicted with a serious illness, we only became aware of Mohammad's wife's illness after a year had passed, because he was accustomed to leaving his distresses from various environments outside and engaging in healthy and tension-free interaction with others even in the most difficult conditions.

Hasan, the Master's apprentice, with similar phrases stated that Hāji's belief was that issues of the work environment and home should not be transferred to each other, and when a person comes to their work environment, they should set aside home issues, and conversely, when going to their home environment, they should leave work issues and problems behind the door of their house and enter.

Naturally, the prerequisite for realizing the recent policy is possessing very high emotional control, which is only expected to be observed in sublimated individuals.

Maryam, Master Mohammad's sister, in recounting her memories, recalled that in her lifetime she had not witnessed her brother's anger toward herself or his other sisters and brothers, although his anger in dealing with individuals who harassed his or others' honor was noteworthy. For example, one night when Mohammad noticed a thief who from atop the wall was gazing at his honor who were sleeping in the yard, by throwing a hammer he found beside himself, he targeted the thief, which later the mentioned hammer was found four houses further away.

Observance of Verbal Chastity and Avoidance of Profanity

Observing politeness in speech and avoiding verbal violence is considered a commendable matter for everyone, especially from strong-fisted individuals with great arm strength, of whom Master Mohammad was also one.

Mahdi, who had a four-decade history of association with Master Mohammad, in his interview reported that Mohammad from childhood was not a person of fight and quarrel, and if someone was seeking bullying, he would lower his head and leave the scene, just as in his adulthood if he witnessed inappropriate words from someone, he would leave the scene and go sit in his shop.

Seyyed Mohammad-Ali also with nearly 50 years of acquaintance with Master Mohammad, in his statements declared:

> "Until the end of Mohammad's fruitful life, I did not hear vulgar words from him."

Shāh-Mohammadi, Master Mohammad's work partner and colleague who had a 30-year friendship background with Mohammad Āqā, considered Master Mohammad the manifestation of good speech, good deed, and good thought, and stated that Hāj Mohammad's lips and mouth did not reach bad speech, and during three decades of friendship with him, he had not even heard a phrase like "father-burned" from him, let alone uglier and more vulgar phrases and words.

Mostafā also in his interview in describing the observance of verbal chastity in the Master stated:

> "Mohammad was an ethical person, and observing verbal chastity was very important to him, but there are masters who, despite their advanced age, do not observe their own age and speak very casually vulgarly."

Parviz, emphasizing that basically the culture of the trucking community and the garage environment is different from the culture and environment outside, and truckers due to distance from family sometimes have more frank interactions with each other, stated:

> "During thirty years of referring to Mohammad for repairing my own car, unlike most truckers who have a lot of coarse words and jokes with each other,

> I did not witness the expression of an ugly word or an inappropriate and improper joke from Hāji."

Maryam, the Master's sister, in her interview recalled, I did not hear a wrong and bad word from Mohammad once, and always God's smile was flowing on his lips.

Ahmad, the Master's aunt's husband and customer of Mohammad Āqā, with similar contents said:

> "I did not hear bad words and profanity from Hāj Mohammad once, and his other surroundings had also not witnessed such a thing and had no quotation in this regard that I had heard such a thing from them."

Finally, Nasiri, Master Mohammad's apprentice, in his interview stated that some customers, out of good faith and good treatment of Hāji, abused and did not pay the Master the debt for consumed parts or car repair, but despite all this, Hāj Mohammad was not willing even behind these offending individuals who had also violated his right, to give an inappropriate attribution and have bad-mouthing toward them.

Ma'soumi, in expressing the only case he had heard of pushing from Master Mohammad, said that once at 12 midnight, a thief rang the bell of the two-story house where Master Mohammad resided on the second floor, and the first-floor landlord, without investigation, opened the door for him, and the thief went to the second floor where he confronts Mohammad Āqā. The Master's wife, who was studying, shouts: thief, thief. The Master wakes from sleep and asks him, what are you doing here, to which the thief says, I have come to invite you to my mother's supplication ceremony, which is met with pushing from Master Mohammad, and he falls to the ground, and subsequently, the thief, by taking a photo of his face, seeks to obtain compensation from Master Mohammad to at least get money and compensation on the pretext of his injury!

Politeness

Master Mohammad, due to the self-making and self-control he applied to himself, was a polite person in his individual and interpersonal relations and possessed polite behavior with others.

Monir, the Master's wife, in her interview in describing his politeness said:

"During the years of living with Mohammad, I did not hear bad words from him, and he always behaved politely with me and his children, in such a way that Mohammad always addressed me with 'you' and called his daughters with titles 'Hanāneh Khānom' and 'Houri-Nāz Khānom'; observing this type of matters in our family relations had astonished others, and they would tell us how Mohammad, after all these years, speaks to you so respectfully and politely.

I myself was a teacher for years, and naturally in the educational environment, politeness was observed with a much higher standard, but despite all this, I felt that I still fell short in front of Mohammad's politeness.

Mohammad himself once told me that when I go to my colleagues or they come to me, they strike each other with their hands, for example, watch out, our side is Hāj Mohammad, and speak more controlled.

Once when we were returning from a foreign trip, at the Turkey border, a bus driver who apparently wanted to illegally pass some goods across the border, cut in front of our car, and the bus body scraped our car.

Mohammad told the driver and the bus assistant, if you had been a bit patient, this would not have happened. This protest caused the nervous driver and his assistant to clash with Mohammad and resort to beating. But Mohammad during the fight, despite the considerable physical strength he had, only defended himself and did not even say one bad word to that offending driver and assistant until the border police intervened in the fight and gave right to Mohammad."

Ahmad, Mohammad Āqā's aunt's husband, in recounting his memories, recalled:

"Mohammad personally came from Qazvin to Karaj for his daughter's wedding to give the wedding card of his daughter to me and his aunt. But because he had apparently arrived early in the morning at our house, he did not ring the house bell and slept in his own car until 8 in the morning, and then rang our house bell at that time, while Mohammad, who had lived his two years of military service with us, knew that I and his aunt after morning prayer do not sleep and are awake. In any case, that day my son, on his way to work, saw Mohammad sleeping in his car in front of our house door and called me and informed me of this matter. I immediately went to the door and saw Mohammad in the car. I called him and asked, Mohammad, when did you

> come? Mohammad said I arrived at your house at 6 in the morning, but for observing politeness, I told myself to wait until 8 in the morning and then ring your house bell."

Nasiri, the Master's apprentice, in his interview, by saying "Mohammad's politeness was twenty,[out of twenty]" praised his politeness in an environment where for reasons its culture is not even at the level of ordinary society's culture.

Kāmrān, one of the Master's colleagues in the Norouziān garage, in his interview in describing Mohammad Āqā's polite interactions, stated:

> "Hāj Mohammad would say, whoever disrespects others is in fact disrespecting himself (because in practice by insulting others, he shows himself as a despicable human)."

Kāmrān continued to note that in our garage where nearly 200 people work, not even one person can be found who says Mohammad has taunted or insinuated me somewhere, and this is a great art that an individual for years be in a collection (especially a collection where due to people dealing with cold iron and steel, it naturally instills coldness in individuals' insides), but no one in that collection is found who has seen distress from that person. Kāmrān continued, emphasizing that many are moody and for example with their check not being cashed at the bank, bring their anger and empty it on their surroundings and their own customers, recalled the balanced interaction of Master Mohammad at any time they saw him, and explained this personality stability in terms of the Master's self-making and observance of politeness.

Good Temperament

Husn (goodness) in lexicon means beauty, therefore, husn khulq means beautiful ethical qualities or good temperament, and just as apparent beauty is realized with the beauty and proportion of all members, good temperament, which is inner beauty, is also realized with the beauty of all good ethical attributes.

The Master Mohammad's mother, in her interview, stated that Mohammad from childhood had observing politeness in his agenda and interacted with others with good temperament, cheerfulness, and good ethics, in such a way that for example when Mehdi Chegini's parents realized that their son was with Mohammad, they

expressed satisfaction, stating wherever Mehdi is with Mohammad, our mind is at ease about him.

Zinat, the Master's sister, also by expressing a similar experience, said:

> "Akbar (Mohammad's older brother) had a friend whose father was very wealthy, in such a way that people said if Qazvin's banks close, this person's money can run Qazvin. In any case, this person's son whenever came to Akbar and Mohammad, would mingle with Mohammad's pigeons and deal with them; this boy's father said, when my son goes to Heydarzadeh's children and spends time with them, my mind is at ease about him, because they are well-behaved children, and I have no problem with them."

Maryam, Mohammad Āqā's sister, recalled the good temperament and cheerfulness of her brother in dealing with nieces, nephews, and other family children, and noted:

> "I have not witnessed or seen elsewhere the similar type of uncle-calling that the children said to Mohammad with intimacy."

In the same way, Maryam, the brother's wife, and some other close relatives of Master Mohammad in their interviews emphasized that when they wanted to go somewhere as a family for a party, the children would ask whether uncle Mohammad is there or not!?

Sakineh, the Master's wife's mother, in her interview emphasized Mohammad Āqā's good temperament and said:

> "Whenever I had a task and referred it to Mohammad, he would not say for example you have a son yourself, why don't you tell him to do this work for you."

The recent phrases are exactly reflected in the statements of Moloud, the Master's sister, that whenever I referred to Mohammad in a problem and sought help and aid from him, he accepted me with an open face and for example would not say you have three other brothers too, why don't you ask them to attend to your work.

Mahdi, who from childhood was a neighbor with Master Mohammad and continued in the mechanic profession as the Master's colleague and neighbor, in describing the depth and extent of his good temperament, stated:

> "I can only say that Hāji was very good, and beyond this, my tongue lacks the ability to define and describe Hāji's good temperament."

Ahmad with similar phrases, in describing the good temperament and exalted ethics of Mohammad Āqā, said:

> "In summary, I say, I have seen bad from my two eyes, but I have not seen bad from Mohammad."

Seyyed Mohammad-Ali from the Master's colleagues and relatives, in his interview noted that Master Mohammad's good temperament continued under the influence of his problems and did not fade. He in this connection stated:

> "Mohammad had an open face, and whenever he greeted others, he showed a cheerful and joyful face and did not show that he had a problem in his life, while he also had problems in his life, but these problems had not been able to take Mohammad's open face from him."

Mahdi also introduces the greatest and most prominent husn of Mohammad Āqā as his good temperament.

Other individuals have emphasized that Master Mohammad in dealing with them interacted with complete and utter good temperament, on this basis not only turning ordinary conditions into desirable and favored conditions, but his good interaction also turned difficult conditions into desirable conditions. For example, Master Mohammad one day when he witnessed the fight of two people in the middle of Norouziān garage, invites them to his shop and without any talk, engages them in tea and snacks. Subsequently, Master Mohammad told the fighting parties, now go to the middle of the garage and attend to your fight! to which the fighting parties, with their anger subsiding, stated that now no pretext for fight remains between us!

Ethical Orientation

One of the other behavioral characteristics of Master Mohammad was creating ethical and respectful relations with those around him.

Gholāmrezā's wife, in her interview describing the respectful relations that Master Mohammad had with her and her family, stated:

> "Mohammad Āqā always had appropriate and good interactions with us, and basically for him it made no difference whether the opposite party was wealthy or not. What was important to him was respecting others and not differentiating between people due to their economic conditions.

I personally, during the 44 years that I was the family's bride and had association with him, saw nothing from him except respect and affection. He was warm with everyone and spoke warmly and affectionately with everyone."

Monir, in describing her husband's educational policy regarding their children, stated:

"Mohammad would say, a child becomes what you and I are; if we are human, he becomes human, otherwise not. Even if a child attends a thousand classes and has education, he may have good education, but he has gained no benefit from being human and humanity. People must be raised as humans so that they are fruitful for themselves and their society."

The Master Mohammad's older brother's wife, who had close family ties with the Master's family, in a part of her interview regarding the Master's educational policy toward his children stated:

"Mohammad Āqā himself stood on his own feet in the issues and problems facing him and did not ask for help from anyone. He instilled the same policy in his daughters and wanted them to always stand on their own feet without deviating from their human path."

The author, who once went with Master Mohammad to visit a sick relative, during the conversation with the Master observed that he stated, my daughter Hanāneh after graduating told me to find her a job through your brother Manouchehr, who is influential in the country's industry, and I told her, my daughter, these matters are nepotism, and a person should not reach a place through favoritism that may not be his own place. You must achieve any position you want relying on your own abilities.

The Master's cousin, in her interview describing Master Mohammad's human, emotional, and ethical relations, stated:

"In my opinion, no one can be found at all who says father (Āqā Mohammad) broke my heart; in his ceremony, I was telling myself, I wish I had a bitter memory from him so that my heart would not burn this much and enduring his passing would be easier for me.

My cousin's daughter also in father's (Mohammad Āqā's) seventh-day ceremony said, if now they come and say Mohammad is alive, I believe this matter more than repeating the news of his passing.

After his departure, many works have remained undone, and this indicates his prominent role in relations with close kin."

Compassion and Kindness

Daily experiences indicate that people are generally influenced by their work conditions and more or less reflect their work conditions in their daily behaviors. For example, the general public has experienced that military personnel extend the strict relations of the military into their educational and family matters as well.

From the cold and dry environment of heavy machinery mechanics, it is also expected to drag the relations of those employed in this profession toward relative violence and hardness, but observing that, for instance, Mohammad Āqā's daughter considered him "the best dad in the world" and describes him, marks a different story for the Master, which is the setting aside of the violence and hardness of the work environment against his extensive and unbiased affections.

The Master's mother in her interview recalled her son's regular visits to herself.

Zinat, Mohammad Āqā's sister, also in her interview stated:

"Mohammad would give his life for his mother and always tried to visit his mother. Mohammad sometimes in the middle of the day and sometimes at nights before going to his own house, visited mother and gave her the food that the sisters had prepared, and although his own policy was not eating dinner, to not reject mother's insistence, he would eat a few bites of dinner with her.

Mohammad's affection and attachment to mother was so much that whatever mother said, he would not say a word against mother's word and would accept it exactly."

Monir in a part of her interview recalled her husband's affectionate, friendly, and emotional connection with his daughters as follows:

"Mohammad had made a circular garden in the northern villa and would tell us, whatever you like, tell me so I plant it in this garden. Then whatever Mohammad obtained, he tried to make them pairs and named the larger plant after Hanāneh who was older and the smaller plant after Houri-Nāz who was younger. Then when he went to attend to the northern villa matters and returned, for example, he would report, Ms. Hanāneh, you are eating Houri-Nāz's right, because your tree is taking the place of Houri-Nāz's tree.

Similarly, when my mother bought a pine tree and said plant this tree in the villa yard, Mohammad named that tree after Houri-Nāz, and in his subsequent reports from the northern villa, for example, he would say, Houri-Nāz's trees are now in the process of overtaking the other northern villa trees."

The Master Mohammad's cousin, in her interview describing the Master's relationship with his children, said:

"They say if you want to know someone, know him in travel. We had many family trips with father's (Mohammad Āqā's) family, and in all the trips I saw how much honor and respect he treated his daughters with and said nothing less than flowers to them. In the childhood of the daughters too, father (Mohammad Āqā) immediately procured whatever toys his daughters wanted without bringing any ifs and buts for them.

I liked Mohammad Āqā's relationship with his daughters so much that in Hanāneh's language, I called him 'father,' and he treated me with all generosity."

Ma'soumi, Master Mohammad's aunt's husband, who also has many family trips with the Master in his record, in his interview describing the Master's abundant love for his daughters said:

"Hāj Mohammad gave much importance to his daughters, and he can be called the best dad in the world, because whatever there was, it first belonged to his daughters. For example, when we prepared roasted chicken for food in a trip, he set aside the best parts of the chicken for his daughters and consumed the remnants of what was left himself."

Ali also in his interview describing the Master's relationship with his children stated:

"Mohammad respected his children's opinions and did not behave harshly with them to dictate what was in his own mind to them."

Just as Ma‘soumi recalled Master Mohammad as “the best dad in the world,” the author in the Master’s fortieth-day ceremony witnessed that when the program host asked the present crowd to text their memories with the Master so he could read them to the attendees, one of the texts (which was certainly from the Master’s daughters) was:

> “The best dad in the world.”

Monir in another part of her interview referred to her husband’s close relations with his daughters:

> “Mohammad’s relationship with the girls was very close, and Mohammad sometimes wrestled with his daughters. Once I saw Houri-Nāz telling Hanāneh, when I wrestle with dad, it is I who win, but when you wrestle with dad, it is you who lose. But Hanāneh in response to Houri-Nāz said, no dad, get these thoughts out of your head; dad considers you because your bones are weak and does not want your bones to be crushed.”

The Master’s brother’s wife in her interview describing the Master Mohammad’s practical supports in interactions with relatives stated:

> “Hāj Mohammad heartily showed that he loved his opposite party, and I always felt to myself that if necessary, Mohammad is someone who immediately comes to my and his brother’s aid in problems.
>
> Hāj Mohammad during his single period when he was in the maternal home, whatever he bought for the house, even if it was one plate, he would send it for us who resided upstairs, or in holidays, if he bought something for his sisters, he would buy the exact same blouse or the like for me too and give it to me.
>
> Once when Mohammad Āqā realized that I was intent on buying a car, he immediately through Moloud his sister conveyed the necessary information in the field of car purchase to me. In any case, I thought as the house’s bride, in Mohammad Āqā’s view, I was no different from his sisters.”

Ali in his interview alongside emphasizing his uncle’s kindness recalled his good-heartedness as follows:

> “Mohammad besides being kind was a very good-hearted human, and if others had achieved something and gained success, he would be happy with their success.”

Yahyā, the Master's colleague and neighbor, also in his interview said, Mohammad in his talks, when recalling his mother, while expressing unbiased and intense affections toward her, would tell me, when I want to give my mother's dinner, due to her insistence, I am forced to set aside my own regimen and eat a few bites of dinner with mother.

The Master's younger aunt also similarly stated, since her husband was a truck driver, he was not present at home much of the time, and Master Mohammad was the person who in difficulties and hardships or the child's illness of the family was in the front line of aiding her and her child.

The aunt of Mohammad, in another part of her statements, stated:

> "Mohammad's ethics was different from the whole world. For example, my brother lived with Mohammad in one building for 13 years; when I went to visit them and after meeting them headed toward home, Mohammad upon seeing me in the middle of the alley would take my hand and with much insistence take me back toward his house, and my brother's wife when saying why when I insist you don't stay in our house, but with Mohammad's insistence you stay?! I could only say that Mohammad took my hand and dragged me toward the house."

Creating Deep Emotional Relations with Children and Adolescents

The affection and caressing of parents and surroundings to the child gives him courage, bravery, and self-confidence and strengthens his spirit against problems; healthy emotional relations are the medicine for many psychological and even physical pains and illnesses of children and adolescents; they become calm and vibrant with affection, while lack or absence of affection is the groundwork for many psychological and physical disorders of children and adolescents.

Master Mohammad paid special attention to children and adolescents and strove to create deep emotional relations with them while bestowing compassion upon them.

Zinat in her interview, in describing "the brother's emotional behavior with nieces and nephews," stated:

> "Rezā, my son, now resides in Tehran, and when sometimes I talked to him, he recalled the past of what happy moments he had with his own uncle and regretted that time.
>
> The other children were the same way. In the sense that when they reached Mohammad, they would climb up and down him and sometimes fight with him.
>
> Hamid's daughter too when coming to her grandmother's house and seeing that uncle is not there, would say, why is uncle Mamad (i.e. Mohammad) not here so we can pull his hair!

Leila's daughter also dealt with Mohammad and would tell him, uncle, your leg is iron, if your leg hits a person, the person bursts, or if your leg hits us, our leg cracks.

Akbar's children also have many happy memories from uncle; for example, I remember when Mohammad had prepared sausage on fire for them in the garden, they constantly recalled the deliciousness of that sausage."

The Master's brother's wife also in this connection in her interview recalled:

> "Mohammad Āqā had a very intimate and good relationship with the children, and for example, if we were on a trip, he tried by any means to provide the satisfaction of the children who were with us on the trip, and the trip, especially for the children, would be enjoyable.
>
> In any case, as far as I remember, my own children from 3-4 years old asked me and their father to take them to uncle Mohammad."

Collectivism

In the religious view, individualism is reprehensible, and humans only achieve their elevation in unity with other individuals of their society and global society. The emphasis on performing Islamic religious rites collectively also expresses this meaning that from the religion's perspective, every human only in unity with other humans and seeing their happiness in the happiness of the collective deserves entry into divine paradise.

Effort to gather close kin and surroundings was another matter that Master Mohammad pursued in relation to others. Maryam in this connection in her interview stated:

> "After Akbar's marriage, he and his wife settled upstairs in our mother's house, and Mohammad whenever he came from work and had bought something, would say, call brother's wife too to come down so we eat together what I have prepared. We sometimes jokingly told him, no, this time don't call her now, that Mohammad would threaten us, if you don't call her, I myself will call her to come down."

Seyyed Majid, the family's son-in-law, in his interview in this connection stated:

> "Mohammad did not see himself at all, and his pleasure was not, for example, to sit and eat one or two plates of food, but his pleasure was that we as relatives gather around each other and provide the means for each other's joy and happiness."

Mohabbi-Khā, the Master's colleague, in his interview recalled, Hāji liked all relatives and acquaintances to gather together, therefore in one of the actions he had in this connection was giving vows on Tāsou'ā, which gathered all surroundings together, and while preparing qeimeh nesār is both difficult and costly, he himself cooked and gave food to 200-300 people.

Master Mohammad in line with his collectivist interests considered himself obligated to establish warm and intimate relations with unfamiliar individuals.

The Master's cousin, in the field of establishing intimate relations with new family members by him, reported:

> "The suitor's family was supposed to come to our house, but at the same time our house's package broke down. We contacted father—Āqā Mohammad—and he, while his hands were still oily, from work reached our house and while fixing the package, organized the messy kitchen so that the suitor's family reached our house. Subsequently, Mohammad with open-heartedness placed himself in our gathering and warmed the assembly, and after a quarter of an hour left our home to return to his work.
>
> My father-in-law after his departure, while admiring his strong public relations, stated that he has how much earthy personality and at the same time a great spirit."

The Master's brother's wife also in her interview recalled his high-level communication skills as follows:

"Hāj Mohammad if he had seen someone only one or two times, would establish such warm and intimate relations with him that it was as if he had known them for years. For example, when my uncle and aunt came to Qazvin for my wedding ceremony, Mohammad had become so warm with my uncle that I was amazed how it is possible for two people who have just seen each other to behave so intimately with each other.

In any case, Mohammad by warming up with individuals who newly entered the family circle behaved intimately with them and liked everyone to be like this and establish strong and good relations with each other."

Accompaniment and Support for Close Kin

The importance of the collective and Master Mohammad's collectivism compelled him to pay abundant attention to those around him, from blood and marital close kin to acquaintances and other individuals, and in case of their need for help and aid, to immediately rise to accompany and support them.

Maryam in her interview recalled her brother as someone who filled the father's void for them as follows:

"Sometimes our mother would tell us about father, a good-tempered, cheerful, smiling, sea-hearted father content with God's contentment and committed, and I who until now had not seen a person as good-tempered as Mohammad, felt that everything about Mohammad was similar to father, and he in practice filled the father's void for us. He not only visited mother every day but also planned, for example, two or three times a week for sisters and brothers to see each other and who on what day to come to mother's house so mother would not be alone. With losing Mohammad, it was as if we all somehow lost our father again."

Monir in similar phrases stated:

"With the passing of Moloud's husband, Mohammad tried to fill the father's void for them; for example, when one of Moloud's children was accepted in Zanjan, he followed up so he would be transferred from Zanjan to Qazvin to be near his mother.

I think... I think with Mohammad's departure, not only my own children became fatherless, but Moloud's children also became fatherless. In other words, Mohammad was not only the man of my house but the man of other houses too."

Moloud in relation to her brother's accompaniment when necessary in her interview stated:

"After my husband's passing, if a problem arose for me and I asked Mohammad for help in solving the arisen problem, Mohammad even without changing his work clothes would come to my aid and never did a work that would make me ashamed to call him again. Mohammad did not even once tell me, for example, Akbar, Sa'id, and Hamid are also your brothers, and for example, this time ask them to help you.

Mohammad's compassion also greatly included my children, and when my children were not at mother's house, he would tell me, without your children here there is no charm, so that in subsequent times I would definitely visit mother's house with my children.

Once when I wanted to go to a real estate agency to prepare housing, I called Mohammad, but saw he was not answering. Then I realized he had called me 16 times and was looking for me, and after me apologized that I had left my phone and did not notice your call.

This type of supports in various cases from moving to buying my house continued constantly."

The Master's brother's wife, in similar phrases, recalling Mohammad Āqā's helpfulness, reported, Mohammad was ready to spend time solving his sisters' and brothers' problems, and if we did not inform him for solving a problem, he would say I wish you had told me so I would come to help you.

Yahyā, the Master's colleague and neighbor in Norouziān garage, stated, I witnessed in the work environment that if a problem arose for the family, especially sisters, Hāji would not let night turn to morning and would leave whatever work he could and go to help them, and perhaps it can be said Mohammad was the first person who with the emergence of a problem for family members was present to solve that problem.

Sakineh, the Master's wife's mother, in her interview stated, after her husband's passing, whenever she told the Master about house problems, he without saying no about the raised work would set out to solve the problems facing her.

Sakineh, in another part of her statements, stated:

> "I became ill, and there was no one to help me at that time; Mohammad came and took me to Tehran for treatment. Also when his uncle was ill, Mohammad came to our house and was at uncle's service to do whatever help he needed for him."

Monir, with a similar statement, noted:

> "When my brother Mohammad was little, he was playful in studying and had even murmured not going to school; I and my mother in coordination with my husband said, well, if you don't want to go to school, then go to Mohammad Āqā's mechanic shop to learn a trade and technical skill. My brother accepted and went to Mohammad's shop, but two days later we saw that my brother had come from the shop and said, I was wrong to say I don't want to study, now I say study! study! study!"

The Master's brother's wife in her interview noted, Mohammad was helpful to us in all circumstances, from moving to giving vows and holding parties. For example, whenever Mohammad himself was invited to our house, he would come to the kitchen and help me in the works. In giving vows too, from preparing food materials to cooking them and dividing and even washing the remaining dishes, all cases were Mohammad's responsibility.

Ma'soumi, the Master's aunt's husband, in describing his practical supports for relatives from his personal experience recalled as follows:

"I have not had a checkbook for several years, but Mohammad had put his bank checkbook at my disposal so that if I had a particular financial work, I would not face problems in giving checks."

The Master Mohammad's cousin, while in her interview stating: "Father has come to our aid thousands of times so far," recalled one of her experiences as follows:

> "From childhood I called him 'father,' and after I grew a bit older, I called him 'Mr. Father'; the reason for this was that when my father due to being a truck driver was not at home much of the time, he fathered me. For example, once when I had caught influenza, as soon as we informed 'father,' he reached

me at 3-4 a.m. and immediately took me to the clinic, and this matter had not happened to me only once, but 'father' had come to my and my family's aid tens of times in the same way.

Also at the time when my mother caught corona and again my father was on a trip, 'father' had contacted us and said, I myself have defeated corona, whatever work you have, tell me so I immediately reach your service!"

The Master's cousin in another part of her report stated:

"My wedding was during corona, and when we were holding the henna ceremony, I was thinking to myself how solitarily my wedding ceremony is being held. But at night I saw that father (Mohammad Āqā) came to our house and while bringing his own dinner, we ate dinner and greatly cheered our house's sad atmosphere, and in the end, by washing the dishes, bid farewell and left our house."

The Master's cousin in her report regarding a similar matter stated:

"Sometimes my father would get angry at home and leave the house, and after a few hours when he returned, there was no trace of anger in him. Then when we inquired about the matter of where you went, my father would say I went to Mohammad. Once I called father (Mohammad Āqā) and said, when my father comes to you, what do you do that he calms down?

Father (Mohammad Āqā) in response to me said, I prepare herbal infusions like several herbs, Mohammad's rose, and the like and give to Ali Āqā Ma'soumi and joke a bit with him, and we talk and laugh together, and after he calms down, he returns home."

Ma'soumi, the aunt's husband, in his report recalled multiple examples of Master Mohammad's help and aid in connection with himself and his family as follows:

"We had ordered furniture, and after that we went on a trip. Suddenly during the trip, we were informed that the furniture factory had sent the ordered custom for us.

Therefore, I telephoned Mohammad to at least go to our house door and by getting workers and opening the house door, provide the possibility of transferring the furniture to the house.

After a few hours, Mohammad contacted us and said he has received the furniture. We like how you want the furniture arranged in the house so we arrange the furniture for you in the same way.

In any case, that night Mohammad from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. was engaged in receiving, moving, and arranging our house furniture.

Similarly, if I needed money and told Mohammad whether he could lend or not, he without saying what you want the money for or when you will return it, only asked how much I should write the check for you and immediately fulfilled my request."

Ma'soumi, in describing another example of the Master's aids to himself, his wife, and daughter, stated:

"I have no son, but I saw Mohammad as my own son, and whatever work arose for me and my family, by immediately informing Mohammad, my mind was at ease about performing that work. For example, once while going on a trip, we left the key behind our house door; when I informed Mohammad of this matter, he had gone to our neighbor's house and by getting the second-floor railings had entered our house and opened the door."

Maryam in the interview she had, regarding the characteristic of Master Mohammad's diligent effort to launch the works of those around him, explained:

"Mohammad tried that if those around him had a work that he could handle, he would not be negligent in that direction. For example, the sister's children had a water motor in a remote area that their motor had broken down; then as soon as they asked Mohammad for help in this direction, Mohammad immediately went to that area and fixed their water motor."

Seyyed Majid, the family's son-in-law, in his interview regarding the Master becoming a problem-solver in family problems stated:

"My job is such that sometimes I had to go on missions, and upon return I would realize that during my mission and trip, Mohammad had visited my wife and child and had mostly taken on their works and in my absence had proceeded to perform them.

I experienced that Mohammad with me as a relative knew neither saying no nor boasting about himself; he was only after performing a service for close kin and even strangers."

Monir in a part of her interview reported:

> "Mohammad had an aunt who in the end of her life had become very incapacitated and had no ability to cook. Mohammad always said, when you prepare food, consider aunt too, and always either he or I would take food to aunt, and aunt would become very happy seeing us."

Shāh-Mohammadi also in his interview noted, Hāj Mohammad's uncle Ali had asthma, and for this reason sometimes brought his own car and entrusted it to Mohammad, and Mohammad from zero to hundred performed his uncle's truck works and ultimately presented the completed work to him.

Mohammad for his aunts and maternal aunts too exactly sacrificed himself and tried to be at their service as much as possible in whatever work they had.

Accompaniment and if necessary support for family members was another characteristic of Master Mohammad. Abbās, Master Mohammad's cousin, in his interview recalled his experience in this direction as follows:

> "Mohammad was a pure and lovable human, and unlike other cousins with whom I have little relation, I had a good relationship with him, and generally I did not count him as my cousin but counted him like my own blood brother, because in every problem that arose for me and my family, I saw that he inquired about our condition and said, if any help is in my capacity, tell me and do not hesitate.
>
> Sometimes I would prepare a box of sweets and head to Mohammad's shop to see him and talk with him. When Mohammad saw the sweets, he would start joking and with laughter and joke distribute the sweets between ourselves and his apprentices. If I went and Mohammad was not in the shop, Mohammad's apprentices would call him and say, Abbās your cousin has come, and he who was, for example, in the spare parts shop would tell his apprentices, keep Abbās, put tea too, I will come in 20 minutes!
>
> Mohammad himself sometimes told me, cousin, if you have work tell me myself, and when my son Sinā was looking for a guarantor to obtain a bank loan, Mohammad did not say no at all in his work and arrived at the bank earlier than us to guarantee Sinā's loan. In any case, Mohammad helped us 3-4 times in my and the family's banking problems.

These same good behaviors caused me to know him like my own brother, and when I saw his corpse in the morgue, I had hugged him and was only shouting.

Mohammad in the talks that he and I had together would say, we must while alive visit each other and understand each other and be helpful to each other, otherwise when we die, what benefit is there in being present at the grave!"

Sinā, Abbās's son, in his interview recalled Master Mohammad's guarantee for himself as follows

"I was after obtaining a loan, and the bank wanted a valid guarantor from me; I consulted with my father, and he said cousin Mohammad is there. I raised my request for cousin Mohammad, and he without bringing any word accepted to perform my guarantee, and because he wanted to travel, he also brought the copies of necessary documents for me so my work would not be stuck. I liked Mohammad Āqā's behavior and told him, cousin, if I myself wanted to guarantee someone, I would take much harder than you, but my response was only Mohammad Āqā's kind smile.

In my opinion, Mohammad was one of those humans that very few of these humans are found, meaning these humans are like a needle that one must search for in a haystack to find them; he was a different human, and this difference could be understood from each and every one of his movements and behaviors."

Gholāmrezā, Master Mohammad's cousin, in his interview about the Master's relationship with himself, brothers, and his mother stated:

"Mohammad always showed much attention and affection to me and my sister and brothers and my father and mother who was considered his aunt.

I saw Mohammad many times in the street riding a car or motorcycle, but when he saw me, he would immediately stop, get off his car or motorcycle, and greet me.

Sometimes too when my mother invited close kin for iftār in the blessed month, Mohammad would go to help my mother and while talking and laughing prepare the necessary food for iftār.

In some cases too when my mom was unwell, Mohammad would visit her, and due to my late father not having insurance, my mother after him had no particular pension; Mohammad would help her financially, of course

Mohammad himself did not talk to us about his aids, and when we visited our mother at her house, mother would refer to this matter that Mohammad Āqā had also come here.

Mohammad sometimes visited our house for greeting and greeted me and the lady. In the weddings of my children too, particularly Mohammad visited our house and said, if there is work, tell me to do it. With Mohammad entering this matter, he performed from zero to hundred the works of my children's weddings.

Mohammad in the retirement of one of my brothers, due to his salary not being paid for several months, rushed to his temporary aid until his retirement pension was fixed.

With my father's passing too, as soon as Mohammad was informed of the matter, he quickly reached our house, and because that day was Friday and I also had no access to the bank, he gave the necessary costs of the burial ceremony until I later took the necessary money from the bank and returned it to him.

Mohammad similarly first in Amir's illness, my younger brother, gave him aids, and second with his untimely passing, rushed to Amir's family's aid and from zero to hundred took on and performed the burial, strangers' dinner, and seventh-day of Amir.

Mohammad at the passing of my younger brother's wife also entered the scene and took charge of the executive affairs and holding the ceremony of his cousin's wife.

I myself think Mohammad because he tried to keep his good works hidden, Monir, Mohammad's wife who is also our cousin's daughter, was unaware of the steps that her husband occasionally took to perform my, brothers', and mother's affairs."

Maryam, Master Mohammad's sister, in a brief summary of her brother's performance in relation to family and close kin, stated:

"Mohammad was the solver of family and close kin's problems, he was our friend and sympathizer, and it was for these same matters that I personally was satisfied to even give my own life for him."

Leniency and Tolerance

Leniency and tolerance mean taking it easy and yielding with forgiveness, magnanimity, and forbearance with people, and Master Mohammad had also placed leniency in his behavioral collection on his agenda.

The Master Mohammad's cousin, in her interview describing an example of his leniencies, stated:

> "Once we were returning from a family trip we had with father (Mohammad Āqā) from Chālous; in Karaj we stopped to rest, then went beside the river to eat food when suddenly I noticed a thief busy opening our car door, so I shouted: father get up, a thief has come!
>
> Father (Mohammad Āqā) got up and quickly went toward the cars, which the thief used the opportunity and fled. Then when we went to the cars, we saw that the thief had taken both the gifts we had bought and the bag containing our identity cards. We became upset, but father (Mohammad Āqā) with laughter said, no problem, let the thief go and enjoy himself, we will go apply for duplicate identity cards and become identity card holders again.
>
> Subsequently, since the thief had taken out Monir's medicines from her bag and placed them on the car, father (Mohammad Āqā) by using this matter as a pretext, with laughter to calm the fellow travelers said, thank God that God placed a thief with conscience and compassion on our way."

Delicacy of Heart

Delicacy of heart consists of tenderness of heart, kindness, sensitivity, and compassion. The attribute of delicacy of heart that many interviewees used regarding Master Mohammad was one of the prominent individual characteristics of Master Mohammad.

Maryam, Master Mohammad's sister, introduced him as an example in kindness and delicacy of heart among surroundings and acquaintances. Shāh-Mohammadi also in his statements reported that Mohammad when recalling his mother, his eyes filled with tears, because his mother after losing her husband in an accident had single-handedly taken on the management of 8 small and large children and with difficulty had raised them, and for this reason, Mohammad's gratitude toward her has no end.

Just as Mohammad Āqā considered himself obligated if in the city to visit mother every day and inquire about her condition and by resolving her possible life problems provide the necessary facilitation for easing her life.

Mousā-Khāni in his interview in this connection stated:

> "One day one of the colleagues was sitting in my guard room eating his lunch. That day I had also brought my thirteen-year-old son to the garage. Hāji as soon as he saw someone eating food and my son was there too, immediately ordered food for him and took him to himself to eat lunch. When I came and realized the matter, I told Hāji, Hāji why did you trouble yourself? And Hāji said no, this work was not trouble, this work was my (human) duty that I performed."

Gentleness

Gentleness consists of mild temperament and having mildness in the individual's behavioral collection.

The realization of the attribute of gentleness especially in strong-fisted and capable individuals (like Master Mohammad) possesses more brilliance. Hamid in describing Master Mohammad's gentleness stated, Mohammad would say:

> "So that in joint travel my friends enjoy, from Qazvin gate when I go out for travel, I put my authority in my friends' hands so they enjoy."

Shāh-Mohammadi also with similar phrases stated, in travels with Mohammad's presence we really enjoyed, and wherever Mohammad was, he had no protest or strictness regarding anything, and whatever I said let's buy, wear, and eat, Mohammad only announced his agreement with it.

Humor, Joking, and Wit

Joking and laughter are among the basic mechanisms in coping with psychological pressure that not only relieve tension but also distance negative thoughts from the individual.

Joking and banter have the capability to change the formal, cold, and dry space of social relations to a joyful, vibrant, and intimate space. Of course, it must be known that jokes in a macro perspective are divisible into two categories: commendable banter and undesirable jokes. In commendable banter, everyone laughs together, but in undesirable jokes, an individual may be ridiculed by the group and the group laughs at him, which this type of banter possesses negative and distressing effects.

Humor was one of the very prominent characteristics of Master Mohammad, and the interviewed individuals from family and relatives and colleagues and customers of the Master simultaneously emphasized the characteristic of his commendable banter and humor.

Monir in connection with the Master's humor said:

> "Once we had gone to Marivān for travel; when we were in Marivān, Mohammad said, I have previously traveled to Erbil, come let's go see the Iran-Iraq border too. Coincidentally that day the border entrance was closed due to the entry or visit of some government officials. We also without information headed toward the border, and when a soldier prevented our entry and asked Mohammad to return, Mohammad who was unaware of everything, jokingly said: 'We have come to visit the border.' The soldier immediately took a military stance and said: 'Please come in.'
>
> When we passed a bit of the path, Mohammad said: 'Then why is no vehicle traveling on the road?'
>
> Mohammad asked an individual passing by why there is no news on the road? That individual in response said: 'How did you come here? A group of leaders is supposed to come here for a visit.' Then Mohammad realized why that soldier had taken his joke seriously and said: 'It is better until we have not created trouble for that soldier, we return.'"

The Master's brother's wife, in her interview, stated that Master Mohammad constantly joked with her two children to the extent that he even lifted them on his two hands and spun them in the air until their 14 and 16 years old. In another case, the Master's brother's wife stated that when she learned Mohammad's car had a flat tire and he had single-handedly attended to patching it, she told the Master, why didn't you call so my son Ali comes to help you, and Mohammad Āqā in response with banter said:

"My intention is to go to Mashhad and there get a flat tire again and then call Ali to come to me."

The Master's brother's wife in another part of her interview noted that Master Mohammad's behavior with her, her children, and his sisters and brothers in joint meetings was generally mixed with banter and joking. She stated:

"We resided upstairs in Khadijeh Khānom's house for ten years, and I sometimes to not be alone would go to our own house or downstairs to Khadijeh Khānom and eat food with them. In occasions when Hāj Mohammad was also there, as soon as I turned my face toward someone at the table to say something to him, suddenly Hāj Mohammad would put a ladle of rice or a piece of meat in my plate. Of course, he did exactly the same behaviors with Akbar and Hamid too.

Similarly, when we were at Hanāneh's wedding, the children reported to me that their uncle at dinner had forcibly put meat in their mouths."

The Master's younger aunt also stated that Mohammad constantly interacted with her with joking, and for example, when Mohammad asks the aunt to bring baklava for him with its pan and she brings the baklava with the pan for him, he would say: aunt this way you ruined my reputation, or when the aunt's house key was left behind the door, Mohammad by jumping on the second-floor railing enters the aunt's house, and in response to the neighbor who was amazed at his ability to jump and pull himself to the second floor and said bravo! bravo! to him, with banter states: "After all, we ourselves were once thieves!"

The Master's older aunt stated that Mohammad joked a lot with her, and for example, whenever she made a video call with her sister's family and Mohammad was also at mother's house, while the aunt was sending a kiss to Mohammad, Mohammad insistently asked her to bring her ear close to the phone camera so he could take a small bite from the aunt's ear!

Zinat, the Master's sister, also from her brother's joking with her 6-year-old granddaughter said, one day Mohammad was telling my granddaughter Anitā: your grandma is not good, and when Anitā responded that my grandma is very good, Mohammad stated, well, I wanted to hear exactly this word from you from the beginning!

Sakineh, Mohammad Āqā's wife's mother, also recalled his joking in the cemetery with herself and her sisters and brothers as follows: when their father had passed

away a few days before Master Mohammad's ascension and they had buried him a bit further from his wife's grave, in negation of the sorrow of sisters and brothers who were crying due to regret of father and mother's separation in their eternal home, he had stated, these two had fought with each other for a lifetime, now you wanted them to be next to each other again and continue their fights, it is better that they are separated from each other!

The Master's colleagues also confirmed his humor. For example, Amir the painter stated, when I went to another garage for work for two or three years, Mohammad would call me and jokingly say, Amir come to the garage, a bus needs painting, and he also in response would say, here a Benz has thrown a rod and only says: Hāj Mohammad!

Nasiri, the Master's apprentice, in describing his humor stated, Mohammad Āqā always joked with everyone. For example, I had opened a car that constantly burned the clutch several times. In explaining the reason for that car's constant clutch burning, I would say, this car's chassis is a bit crooked, and this is the reason for its clutch burning; from then on, the Master whenever he saw that car would say, Mohammad look at this car, how crooked its chassis is!

Mohebbi-Khah also in describing the Master Mohammad's humor and banter said, he even when upset for a reason still preserved his humorous spirit and responded to colleagues' jokes with jokes, and for example, in asking where he had gone to visit, he would talk about inspecting and attending to his imaginary employees for him.

Another colleague in describing Master Mohammad's humor stated:

"By God, however much you praise Hāj Mohammad's humor, it is little."

With precision in the recorded jokes of Mohammad Āqā, it becomes clear that these simple jokes that only bring a smile to the lips do not provide the means for resentment and distress, can be described as joy-bringing jokes, not jokes that in depth effort to settle personal accounts with an individual and behind their apparently banter words much grudge and hatred is hidden.

Ahmad, in his interview, emphasized that Mohammad's jokes were none bad, and he in his jokes did not ridicule or mock anyone.

Yahyā, whose shop was adjacent to the Master's shop, also in his interview stated, from morning when we came to the shop, we would make a topic a subject and laugh with the same subject until night. For example, if one day I saw that Mohammad

was a bit gloomy, with joking I would tell him: what is it, you didn't go to your mother's house, you are upset, or when I bought my shop next to Mohammad, Mohammad told me, you must give kebab for buying your shop's sweets, and I also accepted to give kebab to colleagues on Thursday. But since God's Thursdays have no end, I never gave kebab to friends, and Hāji, after 12 years had passed, whenever he saw friends would tell them, ask from Hemmati, after all which God's Thursday he wants to give his shop's sweets!

Open-Facedness and Smiling

Cheerfulness and open-facedness mean openness of face. It is quoted from past sages that cheerfulness is the first stage and beginning of friendship and affection with others.

Cheerfulness, joyfulness, and smiling were another prominent characteristic that Master Mohammad possessed. For example, the Master's brother's wife stated, from when I entered Khadijeh Khānom's (Mohammad Āqā's mother) family, I saw Mohammad always trying to make those around him laugh, and even in the abundance of problems he strives to make problems less colorful for them by making people laugh. In her expression: "During my nearly three-decade close acquaintance with him, I heard no loud voice from Mohammad except his laughter."

The Master Mohammad's cousin also in her interview reported that she always faced herself with Master Mohammad's smiling lips, and when she asks him:

> "My father sometimes comes to you angrily, why every time upon returning home there is no trace of his previous anger? What do you do that his anger subsides?!"

Master Mohammad stated:

> "I make a few herbal infusions for him and then say some nonsense and make him laugh, and this way his distress ends."

Shāh-Mohammadi and Hamid were also among Mohammad Āqā's colleagues who emphasized "laughter did not fall from Hāji's lips" and "always God, Hāj Mohammad was smiling."[15]

[15] Akbar, the elder brother of Master Mohammad, stated in part of his remarks: "Mohammad was very close to my children and spent time with them and joked around with them, especially with Amin, who is more good-humored

Having Calmness

Preserving calmness, especially in facing adversities, breaches of promise, and unfairness of others, is a valuable characteristic that except through self-making and continuous self-vigilance is not obtained, and Master Mohammad also possessed this valuable attribute.

Shāh-Mohammadi, Master Mohammad's work partner, in his report stated, sometimes Hāj Mohammad and I would buy a car or a car engine and after rebuilding sell it. Once after buying an Ifa and rebuilding it, the car's document faced a problem, and that car stayed in the garage for 13 months, and Master Mohammad and I went to Tehran and returned more than 100 times to fix the car's document. Shāh-Mohammadi noted, I was very upset due to anger at the car seller who did not have a proper document and had even resorted to fighting and quarrel and physical clash with him, but in contrast, Hāj Mohammad not only did not express distress from the arisen situation but also invited me to patience and calmness.

The Master Mohammad's cousin also in her interview emphasized that father's (Master Mohammad's) deep calmness had prevented her from experiencing his voice rising even once during the numerous trips she had with Mohammad and his family.

Patience

Patience is a general inhibitory soul attribute that has two major directions: on one hand, it limits human's instinctive and soul tendencies, and on the other hand, it prevents the individual from evading responsibility and compels him to bear the trouble and difficulty of adhering to individual and social duties.

Patience and composure were always on Master Mohammad's agenda, and he, both in the work environment and home environment, in facing work environment and life problems, dealt with problems with deliberation, slowness, and patience to the extent that those around him did not even notice the serious problems that arose for

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than his brother. However, Amin once said to me, in the course of our conversations, 'Uncle, he no longer has his former cheerfulness.'". This point was likewise repeated verbatim by several of the interviewees, and in Chapter Three of the book, references have been made to the reasons for this matter.

Mohammad Āqā in the course of life. For example, the Master's brother's wife stated, after Mohammad's wife was afflicted with a serious illness and Mohammad took her to Tehran several times for continued treatment, she only became aware of Master Mohammad's wife's illness after a year had passed.

Maryam, the Master's sister, also in her report pointed to multiple cases of the Master's patience and composure, stating that sometimes cases arose for them that inflamed her to her share, but Mohammad behaved in such a way that it was as if no particular matter had arisen.

Modesty and Chastity of Eye

Modesty, unlike shame that arises due to external factors, has an internal origin and returns to the individual's value system. The modest individual strives with continuous supervision over each and every one of his behaviors to refrain from performing incorrect matters. Pursuing modesty, unlike having shame that leads to psychological damage to the individual, due to the repetition of the individual's self-control in performing his behaviors leads to his value elevation; moreover, the individual's modesty can expand to the level of his non-verbal behaviors, which of course this matter is not easily obtainable and achievable.

Mahdi, as an individual who has Master Mohammad from childhood to adulthood in his record, reported that Hāj Mohammad from the dawn of his adolescence was modest and chaste-eyed and did not even with a look harass people's honor. Mohabbi-Khā, in his interview, repeatedly addressed contents similar to Mahdi, and Shāh-Mohammadi in his statements provided an example of Master Mohammad's chastity of eye as follows:

> "Hāj Mohammad when entering a house kept his eye, for example, when in my wedding henna ceremony Hāj Mohammad had also come, I did not see him raise his head. Similarly in ceremonies where men and women were mixed, Mohammad who was committed to mahram and non-mahram issues sat in a place that was not much in others' view."

Nasiri, the Master's apprentice, in his interview emphasized the issue of his modesty, stating:

> "Hāj Mohammad was a modest and chaste-eyed person, and I experienced this matter in multiple cases. For example, when Hāji was invited to our

wedding, he behaved very modestly, or we for establishing a branch in Erbil, Iraq, first went to Marivān, my father's friend's house, and then together to Soleimāniyeh and Erbil, in which cases too I witnessed Hāji's chastity of eye firsthand."

Regarding Master Mohammad's modesty also one of his friends stated:

> "Hāj Mohammad although he was a skilled swimmer, beside Ovan lake was not willing to swim in front of families who had settled there."

Mohebbi-Khah also similarly reported, unlike some gentlemen who sometimes have vulgar jokes in their collection of words and behaviors, Hāji strongly avoided expressing vulgar words, and even in fight and quarrel inappropriate words were not heard from him.

The Master's brother's wife also in her interview noted, Mohammad was very downcast, and when he went to their house and saw new shoes in front of the door, he would pace so much until he understood whether the guest was mahram or non-mahram, then enter the house.

Keeping Secrets

Keeping secrets and protecting one's own secrets as well as others' secrets that are placed as a trust in human's disposal is one of the most important and key ethical virtues in individual and social dimensions.

Mohabbi-Khā, the Master's colleague, in describing several decades of life beside him, stated, during long years of collaboration, we did not see Master Mohammad reveal anyone's secret.

Nasiri, Master Mohammad's former apprentice, also in his interview stated, Hāji was very secret-keeping. Meaning even if we committed the biggest mistakes before him, we knew that Hāji keeps our secret in his chest and does not reveal it.

Keeping family members' secrets hidden, like keeping secrets in the circle of friends and colleagues, was on the Master's agenda.

Monir, the Master's wife, in this connection in her interview stated:

> "Mohammad was a secret-keeping person, in such a way that if I had a talk about his family, Mohammad did not transfer that talk to his family, and if

> they also had a talk about me, he did not transfer his own family's words to me. Similarly, when in the process of brothers' or sisters' matchmaking, the family sought help from him, Mohammad until the last moment did not mention the actions and exchanged words between the parties to me, and when I became upset from this work of his, he would tell me, don't get upset for no reason; when they don't want until their work is done no word be said about it, then why should a person insist to see how others proceed or do not proceed with their works. In summary, Mohammad neither took my words to anyone and hit them nor took anyone's words to me."

Avoidance of Substance Abuse

Addiction to drugs and alcohol, which is called substance abuse, creates extensive psychological effects on humans, one of the initial consequences of which is the loss of the individual's ability to control substance or drug consumption.

Consumption of tobacco substances and beyond that alcoholic substances exists in considerable segments of society, and alongside permanent consumers of the recent cases, other segments resort to recreational consumption of the recent cases.

Ahmad, Master Mohammad's aunt's husband, in his interview noted, I personally during Mohammad's two years of military service which due to being military I had a very close relationship with him and in the barracks environment also more or less followed his work, neither saw nor heard from anyone that Mohammad even approached consuming one cigarette.

Mohammad, the Master's sister's husband, also in his interview stated:

> "I myself worked in escort post for two years and had comings and goings in docks and Bandar Abbās garages; perhaps it can be said 80% of drivers due to the hardness and heaviness of their work on one hand and distance from their family on the other hand show deviations in themselves. For example, I practically saw in dock garages a series of drivers consuming alcohol and drugs in their rooms, but I did not see Mohammad consume even one cigarette in his lifetime."

Mohabbi-Khā, from Master Mohammad's colleagues, in this relation stated, in our garage there were individuals who had alcohol, but Hāj Mohammad although he associated with all these individuals, never mixed with them and avoided cigarette

and alcohol, a work that some did not tolerate and at least in the name of youth and recreation might use these cases.

Concealing Goodness

Master Mohammad from the dawn of youth was after performing good works, and in the process of performing his charitable works, he strove to conceal them to keep himself and his works away from the suspicion of ostentation and hypocrisy.

The Master's aunt, in her interview, stated, one night I dreamed that a large tray of split and colorful pomegranates is placed before Ebrāhim Āqā (Mohammad's father who in his childhood due to an accident had joined the divine presence). For this reason, I asked sister and family members, have you had any particular charity or benevolence for Ebrāhim Āqā or not, to which they gave a negative response to my question, but because Mohammad's denial was not very serious, the Master's aunt had not let go of Mohammad and with insistence inquired about his action; the Master Mohammad's aunt reported, this 17-year-old youth with joking and indifference evaded answering me until the postman brought Mohammad's blood donation card to the house, and the aunt with renewed pursuit forced Mohammad to express the story, that Mohammad had said, a few days ago at the hospital door I saw a poor rural woman who for hospitalizing her child needed blood donation, and seeing this scene I became willing to donate blood, and in response to the nurse who during blood drawing from me asked how much money you took for blood donation, I said nothing, and when after blood drawing she brought a juice and cake for me, I set aside her juice and cake too and said that in exchange for blood donation I don't even want your juice and cake.

Maryam, the Master's sister, stated, although Mohammad was our brother and we had much association with him and knew many of his characteristics, only after his ascension did we become aware of some of Mohammad's good deeds.

Chegini, who has nearly four decades of friendship background with the Master in his record, with similar phrases stated, only after Hāji's passing did we witness that many individuals stated that Hāji helped them, or for example, we would see that a watermelon seller throws himself on Hāji's grave and recalls him as his father and savior.

Monir, the Master's wife, in a part of her interview stated, once I told Mohammad that my friend's sister's house wiring had a problem and due to catching fire all her and her family's life had been destroyed. Mohammad asked me how they themselves became, I said they themselves are healthy but not even one cloth remained for them. Subsequently, Mohammad asked me to get a card number from her so he helps them. Later too Mohammad asked me to indirectly inquire about my friend's sister's condition again and see if their life situation has become normal or not, so that if necessary he helps them again. In other cases too I have witnessed that Mohammad even sometimes gave his share to his beside person who was a stranger too and he did not know him. In any case, effort to keep his goodness concealed was a common matter that was seen in Mohammad.

In a similar case, the Master's brother's wife reported, he helped a woman who had three orphan children through the Master, and he had asked her that in response to that woman's question who is the benevolent individual who helps me, not to mention his name.

Mahdi, friend and colleague who has backgrounds equivalent to four decades of acquaintance with Master Mohammad, explained concealing goodness with Mohammad's fist-fighting characteristic and stated:

> "Hāji wanted to be fist-fighting and no one know what work he did for whom."

Hasan, Master Mohammad's apprentice who has witnessed concealing goodness of Master Mohammad multiple times, stated, one day a lady and gentleman came to the shop and gave 50 million tomans to Hāji. I asked Hāji were these your relatives, to which he very briefly told me no, they are not my relatives. Then I inquired about the money issue, which Hāji evaded expressing the incident. But that lady and gentleman's son told me that my father was after a 50 million toman loan for my sister's wedding, but his loan was not arranged, and the girl's wedding was in danger. For this reason, Hāj Mohammad placed his ATM card at their disposal and said take the needed money from this card, and after your loan is arranged return the money, and this way it was that despite concealing the good work of Mohammad Āqā by himself, the family's son with praising his chivalry expressed it for Master Mohammad's apprentice.

Nasiri, the Master's former apprentice (who himself is now a master), also in his interview stated, Hāji did whatever was in his capacity for others and of course tried to keep them concealed too. For example, after Hāji's accident that led to his passing,

the workplace cleaner of Hāji, while crying, recalled this matter that he had taken some cash from Hāji and now does not know what to do, to which Hasan (the Master's apprentice) told him, I was indirectly informed of Hāji's help to you, and after asking Hāji I saw that Hāji says he has no intention of taking back that cash, so go and your mind be at ease in this regard.

Avoidance of Hypocrisy and Showmanship

Hypocrisy is one of the ethical basenesses, and in Iranian culture, it is said to the instrumental use of religion and religious acts to achieve worldly goals. The hypocrite individual strives to gain others' encouragement by flaunting his work.

Master Mohammad seriously pursued to avoid works that evoke the suspicion of showmanship.

Maryam, Master Mohammad's sister, in a part of her interview stated, sometimes in various ceremonies an individual accepts responsibility and ultimately only gives orders what others should do, but Mohammad in Tāsou'ā and 'Āshourā ceremonies accepted the responsibility of preparing votive food and without giving orders to anyone what to do or not to do, took from zero to hundred the works himself and performed them, and believed that if someone likes, he himself will enter the arena and take a part of the work to perform.

Ahmad also in describing Master Mohammad's avoidance of showmanship stated, Hāji even if he had the world would not bring it to anyone's face that for example where I have shop, house, land, or villa, and in one word I never saw him boast or seek showmanship for what he had.

Mahdi, in his interview in describing Master Mohammad's personal characteristics, recalled his avoidance of showmanship as follows:

> "Hāji did his works in secrecy and even in front of me was not willing to perform his good works, because he was not ostentatious and did not want to do a work that would be raised before others."

One of Mohammad Āqā's other colleagues reported, after being invited to the wedding of one of his Kurdish customers, he asked the program host not to call him to give the gift in front of the guest crowd and secretly put his money in the groom's pocket. Another colleague with expressing a similar experience noted, Master

Mohammad in his colleague Hāj Youssef's wedding also pursued similar behavior and had asked the program host not to call him to give the gift in front of the crowd and had delivered his gift to the groom in a non-public way.

The Master's aunt also reported, Mohammad and his wife after preparing a gift for their daughter placed it downstairs in the aunt's husband's car so that the aunt's family in front of their gift would not even have a dry thank you.

Humility and Lack of Pretension

Humility, meaning humbleness, is considered one of the ethical virtues, and great emphasis is placed on it in religious, ethical, and mystical texts.

One of the most important social functions of humility and modesty is that this characteristic causes the individual to distance himself from engaging with others and in practice frees himself from the target of attacks based on banter with others.

Hāj Sohrāb, as Master Mohammad Āqā's master craftsman, stated that Mohammad from the apprenticeship period, despite his many talents, adopted humility and always had a claim of smallness. Hāj Sohrāb further noted that although Mohammad had gone beyond him in specialized dimensions, he always observed the respect of apprenticeship toward him and did not show a feeling of self-importance and superiority over others by having the final say in the works done in his shop.

Kāmrān also reported that although through Master Mohammad a table was spread for colleagues (painter, panel beater, lathe operator, pump maker, battery maker, air plumbing, and the like), he was courteous and such cases did not provide the means for his pride.

Parviz, as a customer of the Master for many years, in summarizing his long experiences of interaction with the Master, noted that there are many individuals who upon learning a matter or mastering a trade trick, pride takes them and they drown in their own pride, but Hāji was not a proud person who would say, for example, no one could assemble this truck, but I assembled it.

Initiating Greeting

Social bonds need consolidation, and strengthening them is not achieved with generalities; it requires practical behaviors so that emotional relations become strong and stable. One of the consolidating behaviors of social relations is greeting. The individual by greeting another in practice assures him that he desires his health and well-being and has no intention of harming him.

Maryam, Master Mohammad's sister, in her interview stated that Mohammad every night when he came to mother's house would say, peace Hāj Khānom! Then he would say, why don't I see all the sisters and brothers and their children here, and if we were also in the gathering, without expecting us and our children who were younger than him to greet, he would greet us too.

Kāmrān and Javād, while emphasizing Master Mohammad's good manners, stated:

> "The great virtue of Hāj Mohammad was his initiating the greeting."
>
> "Although my age was less than Hāj Mohammad, Hāji would preempt in greeting me, and small and large, poor and rich made no difference to him, and all were the same to him. Meaning Hāji behaved with the worker here like the same rich individual who exists here."

Another colleague noted that Mohammad was an early riser and came to the garage earlier than him, but to initiate greeting he would try when Mohammad was busy opening his shop door to approach him and greet so as to precede him in this regard.

Mohebbi-Khah also in his report stated that Hāj Mohammad not only greeted everyone and small and large made no difference to him in this regard, but even when he saw a customer from 20 meters away he would stand to his full height and greet him and welcome him. Similarly, according to Mohabbi-Khā's statement, the Master upon leaving also bid farewell to everyone.

Nasiri, Master Mohammad's former apprentice, also in his interview noted that when I was apprenticing the Master, the Master who came to work earlier than us would stand at the shop door and until we came would exchange greetings with everyone.

Respecting Elders

In Western culture, old individuals are not remembered positively; elders do not enjoy particular esteem and dignity, whereas in Iranian-Islamic culture old individuals are respected, and others are recommended to respect them and benefit from their existential values.

Respecting small and large was on Master Mohammad's agenda, and of course respecting older individuals which was emphasized in his culture was an important matter to which he paid attention and strove to realize it.

Hāj Kāzem, Master Mohammad's maternal uncle, in his interview stated that since customers knew the relationship between me and Mohammad, sometimes when Mohammad had work and told his customer, for example, I won't make it to do your truck's work today, go come tomorrow, customers to get their work done would resort to me, and I by calling Mohammad would ask him to somehow get that customer's work done, and Mohammad without contradicting my word would say yes, I will go home two hours later and do that customer's work today.

In other cases too, for example, a customer would call me and say my truck's load is perishable vegetables, and in case of delay my load will spoil, so my car's problem must be solved urgently, which again I would ask Mohammad to somehow get these servants of God's work done, and Mohammad without saying any word against my word, by cutting from his sleep and food, would do their work.

Moloud, Master Mohammad's sister, also in her interview stated that if for example Akbar did a work for us, Mohammad would preserve the elder brother's sanctity and not say a word against his word. For example, once Akbar had bought socks for us from his workplace cooperative, and due to Akbar's inattention the socks happened to be a bit thin. When Mohammad saw the socks on our feet he faulted us why your socks are so thin, and when we said the socks were bought by Akbar for us, Mohammad no longer said any word above his elder brother's word.

The Master's brother's wife also in her report of honoring her husband by Master Mohammad stated:

> "We intended to travel to Syria and did not expect anyone to come to the bus at 12 nights to see us off, but at 11 night we saw that Mohammad reached us and said, I have come to see Akbar and you.

Upon returning from Syria too he was among the first who came to welcome us, and in the party we had in this connection he took all the works upon himself and performed them well."

Maryam, the Master's other sister, in her interview said that before Mohammad's ascension, the same teacher who had punished Mohammad so much in school that Mohammad dropped out due to his punishments, when in a relative's funeral ceremony had sought forgiveness from Mohammad for his severe punishments, Mohammad with magnanimity due to his being older had passed over him and forgiven him.

Mohebbi-Khah in his interview recalled the Master's modesty and respecting those younger than himself, which inherently includes respecting elders.

Hāj Sohrāb in his interview stated that Mohammad as an individual who once had the apprenticeship position under him, as a master had special respect for him.

The Master Mohammad's aunt's husband also emphasized that Mohammad in the family as the second brother always had respect for his elder brother, and for example when it was the Master's sister's engagement ceremony and the suitor's family had mistakenly thought Mohammad was the elder brother and asked him to start speaking, the Master by stating that Akbar Āqā is my elder brother handed the thread of speech to the elder brother.

Hamid also reported that Hāj Mohammad would say I like old people, and when he came with me to the countryside we would walk 4-5 kilometers so he could see my father and exchange greetings and pleasantries with him, and in summary he had become very compatible with my father.

Possessing the Spirit of Chivalry

In the code of chivalry, individuals are asked while welcoming ethical virtues to seriously avoid ethical vices, prioritize others over themselves, and strive for their welfare and happiness.

Master Mohammad's chivalrous spirit was a matter that from childhood Mohammad's surroundings acknowledged, Mahdi who was Mohammad's childhood playmate in this regard said:

> "Hāj Mohammad had the chivalrous spirit from childhood, not that when he grew up with understanding the value of chivalry he adopted this attribute. Mohammad's chivalrous spirit was such that with whichever of the children one spoke, they confirmed and acknowledged Mohammad's chivalry."

The Master's aunt also in her report stated that once Mohammad's grandmother argued with Mohammad because grandmother said Mohammad when eating apparently dips his bread in the stew but does not eat the stew lest the share of grandfather and grandmother from the food decrease.

Maryam, Master Mohammad's sister, in her interview noted that after Mohammad's uncle Ali was assaulted in the process of buying his car, Khadijeh Khānom, Mohammad's mother, had told him it is not right that you are nephews and your uncle is harassed by others. For this reason Mohammad from that time obligated himself to visit his uncle more and see if he (who had a young son) had any work that Mohammad could do for him or not. Similarly in periods when uncle Ali's asthma illness had bedridden him for a while, Mohammad regularly inquired about his uncle's condition so that if a problem arose for him he would be his uncle's helper.

Master Mohammad after completing military service sought independence and with a person named Mr. Youssef in partnership bought a shop in Nourouziān garage.

Nasiri in his interview in this connection stated:

> "Mr. Youssef did not devote himself much to work and was not very responsible. Sometimes it happened that Youssef would not even show up at his own work for a month. But despite all this Hāj Mohammad who single-handedly carried the burden of managing the shop, at the end of every month set aside Youssef's full share and paid it to him, while Youssef really had no serious role in the obtained income. After nearly 5 years had passed, meaning from 1988 to 2004, Hāj Mohammad sought independence, which with magnanimity he gave the shop to Youssef and prepared another place for continuing his own work."

Mostafā in his interview addressed a similar memory from the Master as follows:

> "Youssef was Mohammad's partner, and after Mohammad separated from Youssef due to not devoting himself to work and lack of organization and such issues, but he did not forget Youssef and always kept him in mind and occasionally sent work to him so he could bring bread for his family."

Mahdi in a report of Master Mohammad's approach in his adulthood noted that I gave the wedding invitation to the Master for my daughter's wedding. But since Mohammad had promised the family to take them to Chālous, Mohammad first took the family to Chālous and then returned the traveled path and attended the wedding ceremony and after eating dinner again headed to Chālous to after 6 hours of driving return to his family again.

Mahdi emphasized that if I myself were in a situation similar to Mohammad I would not be willing to return from Chālous and eat the wedding dinner and return to Chālous again.

The Master Mohammad's aunt's husband also in his interview reported that after one of Hāj Mohammad's mechanical apprentices had a stroke and one hand and foot became defective in the stroke and lost the necessary efficiency, Mohammad not only did not dismiss him but also gave him double salary, and when his account was closed, Mohammad Āqā took a loan for his apprentice and provided his financial need until his bank account was reopened again. But afterward, his apprentice by choosing bicycle making which was a much lighter work than heavy vehicle mechanics opened a bicycle making shop and thus provided for his and his family's livelihood.

Maryam, Master Mohammad's sister, also in her interview in describing her brother's chivalry stated that when we go to our brother's grave, familiar and unfamiliar individuals also present at Mohammad's grave who upon recognizing us sometimes stand at the grave for more than half an hour and talk to us about Mohammad's chivalries.

Gratitude Toward Others

Thankfulness or gratitude expresses the feeling of gratitude and thanks of an individual who has witnessed others' kindness toward himself.

Master Mohammad had the spirit of gratitude toward others to a very high degree, and even for small and sometimes unimportant works of theirs that were done in the direction of a good, he considered himself obligated to gratitude toward the opposite party and thus by praising his good work play a role in expanding good works in his society.

The Master's wife in her interview stated that once Mohammad told me about a driver who due to an accident had committed involuntary manslaughter. Mohammad told me it seems the child of the victim's family is your student. If you can get their phone for me, because until the blood money is determined the driver must stay in prison, and during this period his family has no one to attend to them. I contacted my student's family and learned that they are very inflamed and upset from the accident and say they want to find the driver in question and kill him. So I told Mohammad I don't think the victim's family will give the least consent in any way. Anyway Mohammad took that family's phone number from me and opened the channel of interaction and conversation with them, and I don't know what he did that finally he succeeded in obtaining their consent. But the important point of this matter here was that Mohammad thanked me several times for getting my student's family number and said if you had not gotten this number this driver's work would have remained unsolved and there would be no one to give bread to his wife and children.

Sakineh, Master Mohammad's wife's mother (who was also his uncle's wife), in expressing a similar memory stated that sometimes I would tell Mohammad for example let's visit aunt Zāghi's (Sedigheh) house and inquire about her condition. Mohammad upon hearing this word would become very happy, and although aunt Zāghi was considered my own relative too, Mohammad with gratitude toward me would say I am very happy and thank you that I see you make my aunt Zāghi happy with these visits.

Ahmad also in his interview stated:

> "Sometimes I would drop by the garage and go to Mohammad's shop. Mohammad in his shop treated me with much respect and praised me a lot in front of his colleagues that he had spent his military service period in my and his aunt's house and we had pulled much trouble for him."

Parviz also in his interview recalled Master Mohammad's grateful spirit as follows:

> "Mahmoud, one of Mohammad's colleagues, recounted that he had a crankshaft in his shop that a thief had stolen. So he went to the Afghan market in Qazvin to find his crankshaft and observed that his crankshaft was in an Afghan seller's hand. Mahmoud by paying the crankshaft money told the seller individual that this crankshaft was mine and a thief stole it and now it is in your hand. That Afghan got scared and wanted to return the taken money, but Mahmoud did not accept and said perhaps you will lose. The Afghan man

said no, I will get back the crankshaft money from the one who sold it to me, but Mahmoud did not take back his money from the Afghan crankshaft thief seller, and to the Afghan who was about to have a stroke from fear and knew that if his foot reached the police intelligence his work would knot badly, gave assurance that he would not hand him to the police.

When Hāj Mohammad heard this account of Mahmoud's chivalry he kissed his forehead and told him: Mahmoud truly you are very manly!"

Mostafā in his report recalled the Master's characteristic in gratitude toward others as follows:

"Mohammad when he saw someone even did a small work for him would not pass indifferently from this matter and would seek to gratitude toward that individual and perform the necessary gratitude toward him."

Mostafā in expressing his own experience in this connection (which in a way also reflects the Master's precision in friend-making), noted:

"In 2007 I saw Mohammad for the first time over a bulldozer. I had gone for the bulldozer's lathe works and Mohammad had also come for its mechanical works.

After some time passed I once saw Mohammad in the coffee house near the garage, and since my breakfast finished earlier than his I paid for his breakfast too. Then Mohammad when paying the breakfast money upon realizing that I had paid it pursued where I was, and two or three days later sent a lathe work to me. I did the intended work, and subsequently I realized Mohammad had asked the employer about the result of my work, and since he had said I had excellently performed the assigned lathe work, from then on Mohammad's relations with me became warmer and friendlier."

Avoidance of Putting in Obligation

Some individuals who are in the middle of their spiritual growth path, having not yet passed their selfishness to reach the stage of value elevation, may while performing a commendable action try to respond to their selfishness and self-worship too by flaunting their action, which the recent action is strongly negated in ethical traditions.

The reports of the interviewed individuals regarding Master Mohammad's behaviors indicate that he alongside concealing his good works was not willing to put in obligation over someone for whom he had done a good work, and if the opposite party also insisted on thanks he would prevent his exaggeration in the performed matter.

The Master's sister stated that after his wife's passing Mohammad always took the lead in solving her life difficulties, never expressed that beside me there are three other brothers too and you sometimes for solving your life problems can refer to them.

Hamid also reported that he and Hāji went to the village of Alolkeh for the fātiheh of one of the garage employees' grandfather, and upon returning realized that Master Mohammad's shoes had been taken, and he without the host noticing this matter by obtaining a slipper returned to Qazvin.

Prioritizing Others Over Oneself

From some teachings of Iranian-Islamic culture it is inferred that man must prioritize others over himself. Prioritizing others indicates the unimaginable human growth of individuals who have freed themselves from self-centeredness and reached other-centeredness, and in the new condition consider honoring others their duty.

The majority of interviewees regarding Master Mohammad recalled his characteristic of prioritizing others' work over his own work.

The Master Mohammad's cousin in describing him stated:

> "Firstly, I called Hāj Mohammad father (and later when I grew up for more respect I called him Mr. Father), because in times when my father due to the profession of heavy truck driving was not at home, whatever problem arose for us father (Hāj Mohammad) by setting aside his work would immediately present himself at our house to rush to help me and my mother, in such a way that sometimes he while still not having cleaned his oily hands would reach us by any possible means to solve the problem, for example once when cars were parked in front and behind his car he by borrowing a bicycle from someone reached us. Secondly, as my experiences show Mohammad was not only like this with our family but in connection with friends, acquaintances, and even strangers too if a work was in his capacity he would seek to help

them, and basically in my opinion father (Master Mohammad) spent so much of his energy on starting others' works that in this path he neglected himself."

Yahyā, Master Mohammad's colleague, in his interview in describing the Master's valuing others stated:

"Hāj Mohammad had one major characteristic and that was that he first saw the group's interests and then his own interests, and in this line whatever he wanted he first wanted for others and subsequently if possible wanted it for himself too."

Yahyā further by referring to Master Mohammad's not eyeing an individual or group that on the occasion of his charitable works would appreciate him, regarding the Master's recent characteristic stated:

"Hāji had much self-confidence and in no condition would fall into panic. For example, if Hāji saw that someone needs his help he would rush to his help and no longer think that after all in performing these actions and efforts will someone be found to appreciate and thank him or not? While many individuals around and in our surroundings are engaged in exactly this type of issues in their works."

Shāh-Mohammadi also in his report noted that I have gone on many work and recreational trips with Hāj Mohammad, and in travels I have always witnessed that Hāj Mohammad adopts yielding and manliness and in using good place, good food, and the like does not go forward and dedicates them to others.

Ma'soumi, Master Mohammad's aunt's husband, also stated that one of the colleagues had newly become acquainted with Hāji and for his honeymoon came to borrow Hāji's car, and Hāji gave his car to him, and he a week later returned the car to Mohammad; the aunt's husband emphasized in my question why you lent the car which is your own work tool to another, the Master stated:

"I cannot use the word no in the face of friends and acquaintances' requests."

Readiness to Perform Tasks

The psychology of ordinary humans is mixed with laziness, procrastination, and delay in performing affairs. Lack of action toward advancing individual and social

duties is called laziness, and procrastination is also the irrational postponement of an individual's duties despite their possible negative consequences.

In the etiology of laziness and procrastination, various and different reasons are mentioned, but the common aspect of all mentioned cases can perhaps be found in not being full of enthusiasm in life and the lack of dynamism of individuals who, despite the damages that laziness and procrastination inflict on their lives, easily fall into the cycle and abyss of laziness and procrastination. However, individuals who are brimming with the enthusiasm of life and pursue lofty goals in their lives not only distance themselves from laziness and procrastination but are always ready to perform and advance affairs, and by welcoming hardships and difficulties, in any condition personally create their desirable and ideal situations.

Master Mohammad's mother in her interview stated that Mohammad would tell me, Mom, whenever you have guests, tell me yourself, I will prepare the guests' food, don't think about food at all. Then he himself would get meat, make kebab, cook āsh, and in summary provide all the means for hosting the guests completely.

Maryam, the Master's sister, in her interview in a similar statement to the mother, stated that for several years we gave nazri at mom's house. Mohammad from two days before giving the nazri would come to mom's house and take charge of all the works from zero to hundred and perform them. He would prepare all the equipment, cook the food, and when we came to the pot in the morning we only had to distribute the food, and Mohammad himself without taking anything for himself from the pot would hand the pot to us and go after his own works.

Mohammad was so responsible and took on and performed various family affairs in this way that after his ascension we feel that nothing is within our capability in the family, because previously Mohammad alone had taken charge of and performed all these works.

Seyyed Majid in a similar statement regarding Master Mohammad Āqā's readiness to perform affairs noted:

> "Mohammad was after picking up the neglected works and performing them, even if that work had no benefit for him. For example, when Mohammad heard from me that for instance a certain part of my car is broken, he would pursue fixing it and remind me who had forgotten the issue several times that I have pursued your work and spoken with such and such person about solving

your car problem, and you must go to such and such place so that person solves your car problem."

Hāj Kāzem, Master Mohammad's maternal uncle, also in his statements by referring to the fact that in Mohammad's work there was absolutely no saying no, noted that whatever work I wanted to do, Mohammad was ready and at my service, for example when I wanted to prepare fruit for the wedding, Mohammad took charge of this work and immediately went and brought 300-400 kilos of fruit from the cold storage for me. In the wedding process too I said there is no one to distribute the baklavas, which Mohammad said I myself will do this work, ultimately there was no work that Mohammad would fall short in front of it and bring no for it.

The Master Mohammad's younger aunt quoting the maternal grandfather of Mohammad stated that grandfather regarding Mohammad in his early teenage years had said:

"Mohammad is like a mountain, lean on any part of it, it holds the person."

The grandfather's description is a description that many of Master Mohammad's acquaintances and colleagues have confirmed and emphasized.

Master Mohammad's aunt in expressing her experiences also reported that when Mohammad in his teenage years came to their house, since Mohammad spontaneously pursued bringing water, lighting the samovar, and the like, mother would tell them when Mohammad is there your work decreases.

The recent spontaneity for performing affairs was also confirmed by Master Mohammad's elder aunt. Because when Mohammad for military service in Tehran went to her house, he not only personally performed his usual affairs such as washing clothes and the like but also became in charge of performing the aunt's daily works and attended to them as much as possible and performed them.

Master Mohammad Āqā's elder aunt also in her interview stated that Mohammad was a person ready and prepared for performing any work, for example when we wanted to go courting for my husband's brother I was worried about the children, Mohammad said entrust the children to me and go. When in the courting process our work dragged on and I became worried about the children and their food, after we returned home we saw that Mohammad had made kalleh gonjeshki for the children, fed them dinner, and put them to sleep.

Mohammad in many other cases in necessary times came to our help, for example we ourselves changed house three times and in all three times Mohammad said I myself am here, don't be upset and worried about moving at all. Then he would call uncle Hassan too and the two would load all the belongings onto the truck, take them to the new place, unload them, and help in arranging them.

Ma'soumi, Master Mohammad's aunt's husband who was a heavy truck driver, in his interview expressed a clear example of the Master's readiness to solve arisen problems as follows:

> "My truck with load broke down in Āstārā. At 5/6 in the morning I called Mohammad and said my truck has broken down. Mohammad reached Āstārā by 5/9 in the morning, after examining the truck called his friend in Rasht and asked him to send the necessary equipment with an agency for him. At 5/11 the equipment reached Mohammad. Mohammad had disassembled the car until the agency arrived. Simultaneously with the equipment arriving rain started pouring, but Mohammad without paying attention to the rain and my advice indicating to stop the work until the rain stops, to prevent the truck's load from spoiling went under the car to repair it. After repairing the car Mohammad without even consuming food headed toward Qazvin, and I went after my work in the customs."

Ahmad, Master Mohammad's other aunt's husband, in his interview by emphasizing Mohammad's readiness for starting and executing various existing works stated:

> "Mohammad was ready and prepared for performing any work, it was only sufficient to tell him I want to do such and such work, Mohammad upon hearing this very word would go and perform that work completely. For example in my son's wedding I said it would be good if we also had Shāni grapes for hosting the guests, which immediately Mohammad got up, went from Tehran to Qazvin, and prepared the best Shāni grapes for my son's wedding ceremony and brought them with himself."

Finally Mahdi in describing his playmate of distant years and colleague of closer years said:

> "Hāj Mohammad had no equal in problem-solving."

Responsibility

Master Mohammad in the family gathering, surroundings, and colleagues had no fear of responsibility and by accepting detailed and more general responsibilities tried to optimally perform his assigned responsibilities.

Monir, Master Mohammad's wife, recalling the Master's complete responsibility stated that almost the duty of preparing all the house's needed items was with Mohammad. In this way that Mohammad would tell me whatever you need write on paper and give to me. Later I did the same work by sending SMS to Mohammad and wrote the house's needed items, and he would prepare and bring them. It was after Mohammad's departure that for the first time I referred to various shops for buying meat and the like. Because until before that Mohammad personally had taken charge of and performed all the works.

The Master's elder aunt in describing the two years that he for performing military service resided in their house in Tehran in her interview stated:

"During the two years that Mohammad was in our house in his military service period, I didn't even wash a pair of his socks, let alone his clothes. Mohammad when night came would bring everyone's bedding and spread it, in the morning when he himself wanted to go to the barracks he would gather his own bedding and put it in its place, when we wanted to set the table he would say aunt let me help you, he would bring the dishes, bring the food. Whatever food we had too he wouldn't say a word I don't like this food and won't eat it.

At my children's weddings too Mohammad would enter the scene and pull much trouble for them, in our own weddings we had guests for three days from henna to pā takhti, Mohammad worked with us, washed dishes, cleaned the house, and told me aunt don't do any work. Just say what work must be done so I perform that work for you. In summary Mohammad with these works of his showed that he was a human being in the full sense."

Master Mohammad's cousin who had numerous family trip experiences with him and his family in the overall description of these trips stated that when we went on a group trip father (Master Mohammad) would absolutely not sit and his work was delivering tea and fruit and food and the like to others. He would eat his own food when everyone had eaten theirs and usually ate his food standing to not lose his supervision in managing affairs.

Chegini, Master Mohammad's friend of nearly four decades, in describing the Master's complete and utter responsibility in his interview said:

"Mohammad's mother had an inherited garden that this garden was left to itself. Mohammad while the other brothers and sisters paid little attention to performing the garden's affairs single-handedly put attending to the family garden on his agenda, and when he harvested the remaining garden product that remained from the grace of birds and passersby he would take the remaining cases to the maternal house and without considering an extra share for himself divide them among the family members.

Mohammad in response to my question indicating that this garden has no profit for you why do you pull so much trouble for it would say this garden is our family heritage and it is my duty to attend to it so it doesn't get destroyed and the neighbors don't say the owners of this garden are incompetent individuals.

Mohammad's attendance to the garden was such that when Hāj Kāzem, Mohammad's uncle, once took Moloud Khānom's son to the garden to show him the garden he was astonished by the intensity of changes made in the garden.

Similarly when we went on family trips together wherever we stopped for rest and eating food Hāj Mohammad would tell us don't touch black and white and only rest, I myself will perform all the works. Then Mohammad would light fire, brew tea, make food, and leave no work for us to do. One can rarely find and seek such complete responsibility in someone."

Law-Abidingness

Human life is a social life. On the other hand, the requirement of social life is conflict and clash between the interests of society's individuals; therefore to eliminate these conflicts or reduce them to borders and laws are needed to specify the limits of humans' exploitation from existing resources, because if limits and borders for individuals' exploitation do not exist or humans do not observe them the goal of social life which is enjoying natural blessings as much as possible toward human material and spiritual perfection will not be realized.

Some of the interviewees when in their discussions reached the issue of law and law-abidingness confirmed Master Mohammad's law-abidingness and described him as a law-oriented and law-abiding individual.

Ahmad, Mohammad's aunt's husband, in his interview stated:

> "Mohammad spent his two years of service in Tehran and for this reason during that period every night he came to our house. Of course Mohammad in the arisen holidays would head to Qazvin to meet his mother and family. But when Mohammad wanted to come from Qazvin to Tehran for presence in the barracks he always set off Friday afternoon to be present in his barracks Saturday morning, and the reason for this matter was only and only this issue that Mohammad was afraid if he wants to set off from Qazvin early morning he might not find a car and cannot reach the barracks on the appointed time, and this issue manifests a glimpse of Mohammad's law-abidingness and being regulated."

Parviz also in his interview emphasized the issue of the Master's law-abidingness, introducing him as an individual committed to the ruling laws. In his statements he stated:

> "When I went to Mohammad's garden in Najafābād I saw that in a part of the garden there is a gentle slope that reaches a pit, and in that same pitted part grass had grown. I told Mohammad the growing of grass in this part indicates the existence of water here, if you dig a well here water comes out easily, some time later an Afghan well-digger too upon seeing Hāj Mohammad's garden told Hāji similar to my word, but Mohammad in response to him and me said I can dig a well in my own garden but this work is not legal and one should not perform work against the law, if I do this work perhaps a few mornings later natural resources or municipality and the like come and due to digging an illegal well confront me, my reputation is more important than this that I put it at risk and for my personal interests trample the law."

Master Mohammad's wife also in her interview noted that whenever tax came for Mohammad's shop he would immediately pay his tax on the appointed date and say observing the law is necessary and provides the means for one's peace, and one should not by violating the law put himself and others in trouble.

Patriotism

In Iranian-Islamic culture patriotism is emphasized, loving the homeland and sincerely defending its interests is considered necessary. Love for the land and

homeland is a natural instinct such that it is observed that even animals have an instinctive tendency toward their living place.

Master Mohammad loved his homeland and stated that he would not exchange his homeland's soil with the soil of another place.

Monir, Master Mohammad's wife, in a part of her interview by referring to the issue of his patriotism stated:

> "A few years ago a German company that had heard the fame of Mohammad's work invited him at its own expense to go to Turkey and meet some of that company's officials.
>
> In Turkey they took Mohammad to a very luxurious hotel and performed worthy hospitality for him, and after several people from the company side talked with Mohammad they invited Mohammad to go to Germany and work in one of their specialized companies. Nearly a month after the Turkey trip again the agents of the same German company invited Mohammad to Tehran and talked with him again and invited him to Germany, but Mohammad was not willing to go to Germany.
>
> My daughter Hanāneh who had much interest in migrating to Europe insisted to her father to accept the German company's invitation to go to Germany so they could migrate to Germany as a family, but Mohammad in response to Hanāneh said here is my homeland, my mother and my life is here and I don't want to leave my homeland, now if you very much want to go to Germany or a similar place there is no problem, you are free to go, I will also come there to see you, but I personally am not willing to leave my country."

Ahmad also in a passage of his interview stated:

> "Once I witnessed Mohammad talking with my son. They were talking about society's political issues. Mohammad after some talk with my son ultimately in summarizing his words said look, no place in the world is like Iran, and if someone wants to pull trouble in Iran he can easily earn money and provide a good life for himself, therefore what need is there for migration that you talk about."

Breadth of Vision

Charlie Chaplin in his film Modern Times draws a human who because from morning to night in his work environment is busy screwing screws sees his entire life summarized in screwing screws and even when he sees a button on a woman's clothes that resembles a screw he runs after that woman with a wrench to screw the mentioned buttons like the screws he screws.

Master Mohammad's former apprentice also in his interview in describing individuals of their own trade stated that we mechanics see everything as gearbox, crankshaft, and the like, while Hāj Mohammad was a separate weave and when I was traveling with him in the west of the country and Iraq too he would talk to me about the environment and trees there, and I astonished would think to myself how Hāj Mohammad can see all this surrounding world differently from us and how he has obtained all this information.

Therefore in a summary definition breadth of vision can be defined as seeing existence deeper and more extensively, not limiting oneself to daily work and duties, and freedom of vision in traveling and examining various arenas.

Ma'soumi in his interview recalled Master Mohammad's breadth of vision. In the sense that he by quoting the Master's statement that "I am not for work, rather work is for me" in practice reminded and questioned the common mistake of many individuals. In other words, sometimes individuals drown and occupy themselves so much in the work they have that in the first degree they cut from family rights and in the second degree even from their own rights (such as exercising, attending to health affairs, and the like). While man must not make himself captive to work or his position and with mastery over his affairs while attending to the responsibility and work he has attend to other parts of his personal, family, and social life too, which Mohammad by stating the phrase I am not for work rather work is for me in practice displays his superiority and not being captive in the hand of work.

Monir in a passage of her interview noted that the Master directly and indirectly by stating cases such as "our humanity is the principle," "helping the poor is superior to spending money for umrah hajj," "children's modeling from our humanity and education alone is not sufficient for people's good end," in practice displays his breadth of vision in this earthly world.

Maryam also in her interview stated:

> "Sometimes Mohammad would talk with nieces and nephews and transfer his experiences to them, for example once I saw him telling them studying is good but what elevates and raises individuals is not their studying rather their being human and their humanity, man must in the first degree of importance be a human, and the recent statement was a reflection of Mohammad's own life who not with his own studying but with his being human elevated and became famous among others in cognition and chivalry."

The recent point in an era where many parents imagine their children reach the destination and purpose with studying narrates the limited view of the recent parents to the universe, manifesting the depth and breadth of the Master's vision in this field.

The Master's sister's husband in his interview in a different example of having and giving breadth of opinion to surroundings noted:

> "My wife and I in our old house had argued and I said let's go to your brother so he clarifies our matter. When we saw Mohammad and gave the account of what happened Mohammad said sir what are these words! Prepare the food let's go out together for recreation and variety. We went out according to Mohammad's suggestion and with spending some time in nature's bed upon returning home I in practice felt the disagreement that seemed very major to me really is not an important disagreement and one can easily pass over it."

Positive Thinking

Positive thinking is a form of thought in which the individual is in expectation of obtaining a good result. The positive-thinking person never recognizes negative issues but confronts them.

One of the important effects of positive thinking is the meaningful difference in the view of these individuals with others. Since ordinary individuals in life's arena have remained from realizing many human values, in encountering others who are placed and act beyond them they may by negating and denying parts of the works of exalted individuals in practice try to incomplete show them and pull them to their backward row. But positive-thinking individuals by focusing their attention on the positive dimensions they see in others can revive the enthusiasm of progress in them and encourage and motivate them toward advancing their affairs.

Monir, Master Mohammad's wife, in her statements noted that when in our talks we said a negative point from someone Mohammad would tell us try to think positively, because if a person thinks negatively in the first importance he has struck himself (because in this way he numbers a scary world for himself. While in positive thinking such a thing does not exist).

Chegini, the Master's friend from teenage years onward, in his interview recalled the Master's positive thinking as follows:

> "Mohammad regarding everyone said they are good and even if someone openly performed a wrong work Mohammad said leave it, now he has made a mistake and performed a bad work.
>
> Mohammad when reporting some events too in which an individual had performed a wrong work would not mention the wrongdoer's name so others do not open their tongue to blame him.
>
> Hāj Mohammad in his work did not fall short for anyone and if necessary he would cut from his own rest and fix his customers' trucks. Of course some customers too would tell him they don't have money, and Mohammad would say okay work and later give me my wage. Even some individuals would say they don't have money for the parts necessary for their car too, and again Mohammad would personally buy the necessary car parts or guarantee the individuals with the parts seller so their work gets going, but some drivers too were who abused this good treatment of Hāj Mohammad and did not return Hāji's money on time. Even sometimes 6 months would pass but they still wouldn't bring it to their own face that they are indebted to Hāji's grace and have not yet paid their debt to him.
>
> Some of Hāji's colleagues too upon observing this type of wrongdoers would tell Hāji we for the party to give his own money fix the car but do not put one of its parts so after settling the account by putting the same missing part we start the car for him, but Hāj Mohammad in response to them said:
>
> 'Some drivers in this time period have tight hands and we must deliver the car to its driver so he works and can pay his debt. By keeping the car as pawn in a way everyone will lose.'"

Hamid in describing Master Mohammad's positive thinking stated:

> “Hāji always said always bring people’s goodnesses to your own tongue and by saying their badnesses do not embarrass them.”

Hassan, Master Mohammad’s apprentice, also stated that Hāji trusted everyone and if for example he put something outside the shop and they took it he would say to himself surely someone needed that thing who took it and that object or part ultimately became a problem-solver for an individual.

Shāh-Mohammadi too in his interview reminded:

> “Hāj Mohammad was absolutely not negative-oriented and looked at all issues from their positive side and said think positively and proceed so your works get fixed. Absolutely positive talking and positive seeing was in Hāji’s blood.”

The Master in the process of his positive thinking in practice displayed his good-thinking too and invited others to good-thinking about each other. Mohebbi-Khah in this relation stated:

> “Hāji never suspected anyone and did not hit for his colleagues that for example this person’s work is bad, rather in encountering a customer he remembered all his colleagues with the title that they are good masters.”

Foresight

Foresight is synonymous with caution and consequence-thinking. In the religious view, the foresighted person is an individual who while enjoying foresight in his worldly important affairs does not neglect foresight in his hereafter important affairs.

Hamid in describing one of the other behavioral characteristics of Master Mohammad stated:

> “Hāj Mohammad in his talks constantly recommended try not to offend anyone from yourselves and do not destroy the bridges behind yourselves because this work will throw you into peril.”

Humans’ daily experiences show that right is always not completely belonging to one side, sometimes both sides have a share of rightness, and those who imagine that all right belongs to them and on this basis endeavor to eliminate the opposite side due to their lack of foresight fall into regret and sorrow.

Indifference toward worldly matters and materialism

In religious mysticism, the world in itself due to attribution to the Sacred Right is entirely right and not blameworthy, and in this midst the type of human's relation with the world determines its being praiseworthy or blameworthy. In the sense that if the world is placed in line with human and his society's elevation it is praiseworthy, and if placed as human's ultimate goal it prevents him from his human elevation it is blameworthy.

Monir, the Master's wife, in her interview recalling her husband's indifference to the world stated that Mohammad was not much after precise accounting of various financial issues, and when she asked her husband how much money he gave for the purchases he made Hāji by saying I don't know would end the discussion.

Sakineh, Āqā Mohammad's wife's mother, also in her interview stated that Mohammad for preparing a house took a loan in my name and necessarily the house became in my name. But after paying and settling the loans whenever I told Mohammad the house is yours come let's go I return the house to your name he would say no problem we and you don't have, and when I emphasized again that with transferring the house my mind becomes comfortable again he had no seriousness in returning the house document to his own name and ultimately would say return the house to Monir's or the children's name.

Mohammad, the Master's family son-in-law, in an interview he had noted that his customers in his work parking after realizing that he is the Master Mohammad's family son-in-law by mentioning Mohammad Āqā's dāsh meshti-gari for example would tell him that the repair wage cost of the truck in the garage and on the road is different, and when a mechanic is forced to for repairing a truck that is stuck on the road in the middle of day or night by taking necessary equipment go to the stuck truck on the road the road repair wage is nearly double the truck repair wage inside the garage, but Hāj Mohammad takes the same garage truck repair cost from repairing stuck trucks on the road.

Seyyed Majid, the Master Mohammad's family other son-in-law, in his interview in connection with the Master's indifference to the world stated:

> "Mohammad absolutely did not have the spirit of accounting and materialism and was not like ordinary individuals who in all situations are after accounting affairs for their own interests and see where and in what conditions they obtain more benefit. He unlike us who are captive to our worldly position and rank

had a free and high spirit that prevented him from attending to material and worldly affairs."

Maryam in a passage of her statements regarding her brother stated:

> "I was in love with watching Mohammad praying. When Mohammad came to our mother's house and in the small hall of the house started praying I deliberately went to the kitchen that overlooked the hall and from behind Mohammad watched his prayer and mystical qunuts of his prayer and enjoyed his praying. Mohammad's prayer qunuts narrated his complete and utter indifference to the world."

Hassan in describing his master said:

> "Hāj Mohammad was indifferent to the world and he and I had no contract between ourselves and Hāj Mohammad in paying my share paid much more than what was customary to the point that sometimes Hāj Mohammad gave the entire received amount from the repaired and fixed truck repair to me.
>
> Similarly Hāj Mohammad sometimes in encountering a driver who did not have money for the equipment used for truck repair or the performed repair wage would forgive that individual's debt, and if he after some time referred to Hāj Mohammad for settling the account Hāji by stating that I previously forgave the equipment cost or wage would not be willing to receive any amount from the opposite party."

Shāh-Mohammadi too in reporting an example in connection with Master Mohammad's inattention and indifference to the world stated that in conditions where mechanics with less experience than Master Mohammad came to their workplace with high-class cars Master Mohammad for years only came to his own work with an old bicycle and upon observing the mentioned individuals would not bat an eyebrow.

Mousā Khāni in his interview reminded that after Hāji becoming car-owner too his car was entrusted to many to get their work going. Regarding himself he stated:

> "Once for a fātiheh ceremony I wanted to go to the village and had no means too. My mind reached Hāji. I went to him and said we who are always black-faced to you if possible with your car I go to the village for the fātiheh ceremony and upon return also fill gas for the car bring it.

> Hāji too while bringing a smile to his lip extended his Samand car key toward me and said here go, by the way the gas is also yours!"

Clean-Handedness

Being clean of hand from contamination to property and illegitimate works is called clean-handedness, and when it is said an individual is clean-handed it means his hands are not contaminated to sin and harām.

Clean-handedness and avoidance of financial violations were important characteristics of Master Mohammad in his work and life environment.

Ahmad, Master Mohammad's aunt's husband who during his two years of military service had close connection with him in the barracks and house environment in his interview reminded that because Mohammad was proficient in mechanics I entrusted to the barracks officials to send him to the barracks mechanical workshop. Of course I myself also distantly watched Mohammad's movements and behaviors both in the barracks and in our own house where Mohammad came at nights, and ultimately reached this conclusion that Mohammad in terms of cleanliness and trustworthiness is twenty out of twenty.

Chegini who in the beginning with Mohammad apprenticed Hāj Sohrāb and Hāj Nāser in his interview stated:

> "When I went to military service in my leaves I would come to Nourouziān garage and help Hāj Mohammad in mechanical works. I although in the beginning of work with Mohammad had banter but later became enamored with his manner and cognition and became his fan, and in continuation in the process of work for Mohammad my love and interest to Mohammad increased more too because I saw Mohammad in his profession that the probability of abuse in it is high has not even a needle tip's financial violation and transgression and does not waste a particle of people's belongings and equipment. In summary Mohammad's approach was that if necessary he would cut from himself but was not willing to take a particle of others' property."

Ali, Master Mohammad's nephew, in his report by referring to the Master's clean-handedness noted:

> “Mohammad was an individual extremely clean-handed in the sense that when for example an individual wanted a high invoice from him Mohammad was not willing to register in the invoice a rial more than what he had taken, and in front of an individual who insisted to hit the invoice amount higher he resisted and for example said I if I want cut from my own wage and instead of 120 toman take 100 toman but I am not willing by giving an invoice with higher amount to deviate from the road of right and justice.”

Nasiri, Master Mohammad’s other apprentice who currently himself is a master in his interview with similar phrases stated thus:

> “Many times it had happened that while assembling a truck engine one of its screws would get lost and we for finishing the work would tell Hāji that for example now it is night and parts shops are closed let’s take a similar screw from another engine and complete this work and tomorrow buy the necessary screw put it in the place of the taken screw, but Hāj Mohammad opposed this work and did not allow us to perform such a work that was against the custom of trustworthiness in the truck that was entrusted to us.
>
> Similarly when I felt I can work as a master I separated from Mohammad and set up an independent shop for myself. Once when I had gone and seen him he gave me 500,000 toman and said when you were working here they gave me a check that that check has just been cashed and this money is your right from the performed work.
>
> Hāj Mohammad gave me the previous work’s money while perhaps nowhere else a master especially with an apprentice who has also left the shop has such behavior.
>
> Ultimately in my own work experiences I was eyewitness that Hāji did not take even 1000 tomans unjustly.”

Yahyā, Mohammad Āqā’s neighbor, also in his interview emphasized his clean-handedness and noted:

> “Hāji was very trustworthy in such a way that if I entrusted a part to him even if ten years passed from the time of entrusting that part Hāj Mohammad would not allow anyone to touch a part that was entrusted to him.”

Alongside Master Mohammad’s clean-handedness his avoidance of any financial violation was noteworthy. In the sense that the possibility of financial violation

exists in various professions but its amount depending on the type of profession and intended job may be less or more. For example in a profession like teaching the possibility of financial violation is less and in a profession like heavy vehicle mechanics the possibility of violation and transgression is more because for example a heavy vehicle mechanic can by referring the truck owner to a specific store in return for 100-150 million purchase cost of engine parts receive 10% of the recent amount from the parts seller as commission. Exactly taking commission from referring a truck driver by a mechanic to colleagues lathe operator, electrician, battery maker, and the like exists.

According to some statements of the interviewed individuals the amount of commission exchange in the mechanical profession reaches 40% of cases too.

There are other mechanics who for obtaining more and more financial benefits instead of time-consuming repair of car equipment consider quick replacement of car equipment and parts or beyond that without replacing specific parts take the cost of unreplaced parts from the truck owner too in the list of replaced parts or use parts disassembled from one truck as new parts in another truck.

Some of the interviewees by confirming the issue of taking commission and receiving cost of unreplaced parts and the like recalled Master Mohammad's clean-handedness in this connection noted that Hāj Mohammad fundamentally was not willing to cooperate with commission-giving sellers or commission-giving colleagues and did not cooperate with them. Hassan in his interview in this connection said:

> "Hāj Mohammad was absolutely opposed to the issue of taking commission. Here we have masters who take commission from lathe operator and pump maker and electrician and the like because they send their own customer to them too. Similarly about 20-30 percent of mechanics take money for parts not put from the work owner or take the part of one car after replacement use it for another car but Hāji was not of any of these works that he wasn't."

Fairness-Orientedness

Fairness means administering justice by observing equality and parity in behavior with others and paying people's rights without discrimination.

The author well remembers that when Master Mohammad Āqā for taking him to one of the relatives' house insisted on having him ride in his own car, in the midst of exchanged words he also mentioned his daughter that after graduating from university had asked him to with his recommendation to the author's brother (Manouchehr who had various responsibilities in the country's industry) arrange a suitable job for her, which Mohammad in response to his child had said:

> "No these party-playings and works are not right, you must stand on your own feet and with your own effort and trouble obtain the suitable work."

Master Mohammad besides being fair in social relations was also endowed with fairness-orientedness in work and financial relations.

Hāj Kāzem in his interview emphasized that Master Mohammad while taking fair wage was not willing to displace the parts of a truck that had been entrusted to him for repair, therefore he was favored by many truck drivers, even some stated they are willing to change their truck, buy Master Mohammad's specialized truck to establish work relation with him in their work relations.

Nasiri, Master Mohammad's apprentice, in his interview noted that when we assembled a car and for example due to the part being unsuitable the car still had defect Hāj Mohammad with this reasoning that the part had defect the driver should not see loss because of the unsuitable part without taking wage again would disassemble the car again to perform the necessary repair for it.

Parviz also as a customer in his own interview stated that Hāj Mohammad was a scale whose pan always went toward the right, as an example when my car needed a part and Hāji's colleague wanted to sell me a new part and install it for me Hāji told me how much is the price difference of the intended part of his colleague and a better part and I by paying a few percent more money can prepare a better part for my car and absolutely did not consider that the parts-selling colleague might get upset with him.

Amir from the Master's colleagues also in his interview said:

> "When Hāji for example brought the work of his relatives to me without wanting me to due to acquaintance with him give discount for his relative would say whatever your wage is (without any consideration) say that amount."

Financial Ethics in Human Interactions

Transaction and financial intercourse with people is considered an inseparable part of humans' social life, those who observe ethics and fairness in their financial intercourses in practice display their ethical values that see ethics beyond economy, but those for whom money and earning profit hits the first word easily put aside ethics to realize their goal.

Javad in describing the Master's financial intercourses said:

> "Hāji's accounting was twenty. We who worked for him his accounting was correct and on time he performed our payment and if incidentally his payment became later he apologized to us for the arisen delay. Ultimately work with Hāji might have late and early but never had burn and scorch."

Generosity and Munificence

Generosity and munificence both mean giving and opposite of stinginess, but some have considered generosity a bit different from munificence, considered generosity as giving before asking but munificence as granting after asking.

Moloud, Master Mohammad's sister, in her interview reported that when the Master had just entered mechanical work and did shop errand and apprenticeship at the end of the week with receiving his wage not only bought sweets and some of the needs of his younger sisters and brothers for them but also told her if a class is necessary for advancing her work register in it and don't worry about that class's cost because he will pay the class cost with his own wage.

Zinat and Maryam both in reviewing their common memories in numerous cases recalled their brother's open-handedness.

Mousā Khāni in his interview about Master Mohammad stated:

> "Hāji never ate anything alone and even if he drank water he would tell us come you too eat."

What Mousā Khāni remembers was a reflection of Mohammad Āqā's big-heartedness, open-handedness, and indifference to the world. In other words the Master did not consider what had reached him only belonging to himself and considered a share for the needy in his properties too.

Shāh-Mohammadi recalled that Hāj Mohammad was ready to put his possessions in the service of the needy and Hassan, the Master's apprentice, stated that Hāji in facing the problems of surroundings and even strangers would put his ATM card at their disposal so in this way they perform their necessary payments.

Hassan reported that the 6-5 code of Hāji's card (that he would give them to me to deposit money for myself or others) is still in my mind. Mahdi also in describing preparing his daughter's dowry stated:

> "When I wanted to prepare an item for my daughter's dowry Hāji would call one of his acquaintances and say go to so-and-so take whatever you want if you didn't have its money no problem say I myself go and account."

Ma'soumi also in reporting his car breaking down in Āstārā and Master Mohammad coming from Qazvin to the car and repairing it noted that when a mechanic comes to a broken truck on the road his wage is double the city wage when I too wanted to pay Hāj Mohammad's wage according to the usual procedure he only took the city wage from me and however much I insisted he was not willing to take the out-of-city and road wage from me.

One of the other interviewees also emphasized that when we went to Hāj Mohammad's Najafābād garden from entering the garden gate Hāji would say this garden and this you too. Then he himself would get busy with garden work. In the evening too when we wanted to return from the garden he never allowed us to go out of the garden empty-handed.

Parviz, Master Mohammad's customer, in describing the Master's open-handedness reported:

> "Whenever they brought something for Hāji Hāji liked to consume what they had brought for him with others. Now what they had brought might be watermelon beet and the like. Hāji by preparing what they had brought for him would invite neighbor's acquaintances and even strangers to come to his shop and eat that watermelon beet or the like with each other."

Mohammad Ali too in his own interview said:

> "One day I saw that Hāji had brought a shovel from his garden and is fixing it in his shop. I told him now that you are also fixing shovel I too have a shovel in my garden that is broken bring it to you to fix it. Hāji gave me his own

shovel that he had fixed and said take this and did not take back his shovel from me anymore."

The author also personally many times witnessed that when Master Mohammad intended to take him or his sister to the terminal for returning from Qazvin he insisted prepared souvenir and was absolutely not willing to take its money. Just as when the author intended to visit a patient from relatives the Master not only took the author with his own car to the city's best pastry shop and paid the purchase cost for visiting the patient but also took him to the destination and then went after his own work in the garage.

Self-Sacrifice

Self-sacrifice means preferring others' profit over one's own interest and expediency.

Ma'soumi in his interview noted that breaking down a truck on the road while it has hit a load creates a dire situation and stopping the truck on the road may cause wasting food materials that have become the truck's load. Therefore quick attendance to trucks that are stuck on the road for the load owner and generally preventing wasting society's food investments has complete necessity and Hāj Mohammad was among the mechanics who had given his number to many customers so if their truck even midnight faced problem they contact him he goes to their truck on time. Ma'soumi in his report emphasized that Mohammad many times even midnight too for repairing stuck trucks on the road left the sleep bed and pursued solving the problem of individuals needing his expertise.

Shāh-Mohammadi too in describing the Master's behavior stated:

> "My life had much similarity to Hāj Mohammad I too due to losing my father very early entered the work arena to give family expenses I too similar to Hāji had abundant interest in my mother and did not want the dust of sorrow memory sit on her face but anyway passing a teenager in life's problems is difficult but Hāji was my model in patience having sacrifice and self-sacrifice and respect to elders especially my mother and I by having a model like Hāj Mohammad with more peace confronted the problems facing my life."

Curiosity

Curiosity means tendency to obtain information. The characteristic of curiosity as a feeling and behavior throughout history has been the driving force of human in his scientific transformations and progresses.

Although Master Mohammad due to early loss of father could not continue his lesson and find the necessary promotion in scientific ranks but his innate talent caused him with necessary precision and curiosities in the process of life's practical experiences and work experiences to benefit from his talent if not in scientific theoretical issues but in professional and practical issues become an outstanding individual for himself and his society.

The Master Mohammad's aunt in reporting his childhood period said:

> "From when Mohammad was very small he showed his curiosity in various issues for example when my brother wanted to do plumbing wiring and the like Mohammad paid attention to this type of technical works with precision and in similar cases asked my brother to refer the arisen work to him so Mohammad personally proceeds to perform that work. In other words Mohammad from 12-13 years old performed most of the house's technical works personally."

Early Rising

As it appears from the phrase early rising early rising is equal to overcoming the feeling of good sleep at dawn time leading to results like strengthening will and self-control time management and progress in individual and social duties related to the person.

Early rising was another of Master Mohammad's prominent characteristics.

Monir the Master's wife in her interview stated that Mohammad was an early-rising individual and for this reason at nights did not stay awake until late and usually at nights slept at 11 o'clock. Of course if me and the children were not home Mohammad would wait for our coming. But he also emphasized that if you want for example to stay at mom's house at night inform me so I sleep on time.

Nasiri the Master's former apprentice also regarding the characteristic of his early rising stated:

> "Hāj Mohammad at 6 in the morning went to Salāmat road and there walked and at 7 in the morning was already in the shop.
>
> Even when Hāji had bought house in Mollā Sadrā and had to pay the house installments and until 2 midnight was at work and worked with all this again the Master's tradition of early morning walking was not forgotten."

Ahmad Master Mohammad's aunt's husband also in his interview noted that Mohammad for giving his daughter's wedding card personally from Qazvin came to Karaj and at 6 in the morning reached their house door but due to early arrival stayed in the car lest by ringing the house bell he disturbs the aunt's family sleep that the family son when going to work noticed Mohammad's presence in his car in front of their own house and informed the family.

Master Mohammad in the last day of his fruitful life for repairing a car that had broken down in the Almout region headed to Almout and at 6 in the morning had performed the car repair that a short time later due to a horrible accident that happened by falling into the valley ascended.

Innate Talent

The existence of talent is innate but its discovery and nurturing is acquired besides this just as can be clearly observed among various individuals the quantity and quality of individuals' talent is also different.

Master Mohammad was endowed with an innate and brilliant talent.

Hāj Kāzem Master Mohammad's uncle in his interview stated that Mohammad's father who in early youth due to accident ascended was a truck driver and his colleagues in a nickname had named him "Doctor" because he with one look at the car would notice its defect.

Mahdi Master Mohammad's childhood playmate who had known Ebrāhim Āqā Mohammad's father in a similar statement recalled the father of Master Mohammad being called Doctor among his colleagues. The recent references point to the innate talent of the Master's father.

Master Mohammad too with regard to the favorable genetic background that he had inherited from father in any field he entered with his high talent in that field immediately reached shining.

Chegini the Master Mohammad's friend from childhood until the end of life in his interview stated that in the Ākhound neighborhood that his family and Mohammad resided in it perhaps nearly half of the neighborhood houses had pigeons and pigeon-playing in that time and place was seen as a customary and accepted matter. In the same period Mohammad's entertainment was playing with uncle's or his friends' pigeons like Chegini.

Mohammad sometimes took the pigeons of the neighborhood pigeon-players from the air and they as complainants referred to Mohammad's uncle protesting this matter and when uncle Kāzem asked Mohammad whether he had taken others' pigeons from the air or not Mohammad while confirming this matter stated yes I have taken these's pigeons from the air but because they are cheeky they are not willing to give their pigeon but ultimately uncle Kāzem told Mohammad why return their pigeons and Mohammad too returned the professional pigeon-players' pigeons.

Bringing down the pigeons of pigeon-players who according to Chegini pigeon-playing was in their blood was a difficult work that was not in everyone's hand.

Master Mohammad in his service period too after passing the military training course first was sent to the kitchen but after a short time due to opposing the officers who encroached on soldiers' provisions was transferred from the kitchen to the barracks mechanical part. But the same little cooking experience caused Mohammad Āqā to become a skilled cook who easily accepted the responsibility of preparing food for several hundred people too.

Zinat the Master's sister in her interview stated that once when the Master prepared food for 400-500 people for Āshurā day saw that some chicken water is extra immediately told us prepare pearl barley and carrot and after preparing the mentioned items with the extra chicken water prepared a delicious soup that beside the chelo morgh prepared for Hosseini mourners we put a bowl of soup too.

Monir the Master's wife too in expressing her memories stated that when we married each other Mohammad's education was up to 5th grade elementary. But he in continuation while working started education too and in continuation chose technical vocational field but Mohammad said that in the technical vocational center teachers only know theory and because they have not performed practical work in practice

they do not have useful education for learners. For this reason Mohammad who had learned mechanics in the mentioned classes instead of the teacher sat in the teaching position and with regard to his practical experiences in mechanics taught technical topics practically and experientially to classmates (and his teacher).

Anyway Mohammad in this way progressed every year and instead of teachers gave lesson until he succeeded in obtaining technical vocational diploma.

The Master's wife in another passage of her statements stated that Mohammad as the first mechanic of Qazvin was introduced in the first book and his high expertise caused the Germans to come after him and invite him to work in their own car manufacturing factories.

Moloud Master Mohammad's sister in her interview stated that once I saw Ayatollah Khomeini's Makāsib book in Mohammad's car. I asked my brother what is this book and what is it doing here Mohammad said from above they have told us you must give Makāsib exam so your permit is renewed otherwise your permit will be invalidated. Therefore I too have prepared the book to read it and give the exam. Master Mohammad's sister who herself has university education by stating that I myself upon seeing the book Makāsib's ambiguous concepts was startled did not think Mohammad would bring passing grade in that book's exam but after Mohammad gave Makāsib exam I saw that he had taken 19 in this book's exam.

Master Mohammad's cousin too in expressing the memory of one of the trips they had with the family with Master Mohammad reported that at sunset and darkness in the desert Mohammad and his father had gone beside a car that had broken down on the road for repairing it that suddenly stray dogs attacked him and his mother. Cousin and mother by shouting made Mohammad and father aware of the danger that Mohammad by making dog sound stopped the attack of the attacking dogs until quickly reach the ladies and protect and guard them.

Ma'soumi in his interview stated that after with the guidance of Hāj Kāzem Master Mohammad's uncle he was given to Hāj Nāser and Hāj Sohrāb to apprentice in heavy car mechanics once while more than two years had not passed from Mohammad's apprenticeship[16] he had gone to Hāj Nāser and Hāj Sohrāb's shop to

[16] In the customary practice of heavy-vehicle mechanics, it takes approximately ten years for an individual to become a specialist in a particular type of truck. Within this ten-year period, the first two years are spent working as a shop assistant. Subsequently, for about six to seven years, the individual gains hands-on experience as a mechanic, working directly with tools. In the

ask after Mohammad that he was not in the shop. Therefore fearfully asked Hāj Nāser where is our Mohammad that Hāj Nāser with a smile told him Mohammad now has become master for himself and now I have sent him out for repairing a truck that is stuck on the road.

Master Mohammad after returning from military service with another colleague intended to prepare a shop in Qazvin's Nourouziān garage and in the mastership side got busy repairing heavy trucks.

Mahdi in his interview reported that during 32 years of cooperation with Mohammad in the garage I never saw a truck that was repaired by Mohammad go and return again.

Hassan Master Mohammad's apprentice in an interview he had noted that Hāj Mohammad was the first person in the province level who touched repairing 8 and 10 cylinder "MAN" trucks. Hāj Sohrāb Mohammad's first master also stated that Hāj Mohammad was not afraid of work and disassembled cars I who was his master did not touch that work.

Hassan in continuation of his report recalled some of Master Mohammad's creativities as follows:

> "Hāji had many momentary initiatives and executed his own initiatives for example Hāji used 8 cylinder MAN crankshaft for 457 car or touched engine strengthening for example converted the inside piston from 125 to 128 and increased its horsepower.
>
> Hāji also gave MAN truck and 20 ton engine ring to the lathe operator to lathe it for him and similar other works that as I said in the moment and that reached Hāj Mohammad's mind."

Mohebbi-Khah Ma'soumi Hassan and some other of Master Mohammad's colleagues in their reports reminded that Hāji said if someone cannot handle a car I can handle it and due to his expertise becoming famous among common and special individuals were who put their own trucks either on trailer and from various cities of Iran brought to Qazvin's Nourouziān garage or towed it and transferred to Qazvin so Master Mohammad attends to their repair.

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following years, the person begins taking on percentage-based jobs, and ultimately this process leads to the acquisition of skill and to becoming a master mechanic.

Buying out-of-service engines and reconstructing them shows another part of Mohammad's creativities.

Monir Master Mohammad's wife in a passage of her statements stated that sometimes when we were on family trip a heavy truck of a driver would break down and mechanics stationed in the city that the truck had broken down in could not handle the broken truck repair. In some of these cases that the truck driver by phone became desperate to Mohammad Mohammad would tell them:

> "Give the phone to the repairman you have referred to and by phone guide that repairman until ultimately the truck problem is solved."

Mohammad Ali also in his interview noted that just as Master Mohammad's father without being a mechanic diagnosed and found the problem of broken trucks Mohammad too followed in father's footsteps and without being after money exactly noticed the truck problem and proceeded to fix its defect.

Openness toward Consultation and Brainstorming

"Consultation" and "counseling" from one root and mean referring to knowledgeable and informed individuals for finding way to solve the issue and benefiting from others' experiences and knowledge and since no one has all sciences and experiences at disposal consultation is considered one of the most important intellectual supports of human.

Since consultation is sharing in others' intellect Master Mohammad considered much value and dignity for consultation and brainstorming and according to Javad's statement sometimes Hāj Mohammad said come let's consult because sometimes someone sees something that I don't see. In a similar way Hassan stated that when a truck's problem was not solved Hāj Mohammad said come let's brainstorm with each other to solve the problem.

Parviz from Master Mohammad's customers in his interview in the matter of the Master's consultation-seeking stated thus:

> "Hāj Mohammad was very knowledgeable but from technical aspect never considered himself and was not proud of his knowledge Hāji even if he was 99% sure about an issue again did not see himself needless of consultation

and consulted with his colleagues regarding the truck problem that they had brought for him."

Shāh-Mohammadi and Javad too by confirming that Mohammad Āqā gave consultation and took consultation emphasize that Master Mohammad after taking consultation acted according to his own summary just as after giving consultation to others told them now however you see expedient behave.

Disseminating Knowledge

At the world level the discussion of disseminating knowledge is mixed with extensive economic and financial issues and transferring knowledge in return for taking exorbitant financial costs is an established matter while throughout Iran's cultural history (that in practice has many mixtures with religious views too) the discussion of disseminating knowledge has been considered praiseworthy and valuable and from knowledgeable individuals this has been expected that in line with paying their knowledge zakat put it at others' disposal.

Publishing and disseminating knowledge and work experiences was among the important categories that Master Mohammad had firm belief in and although some colleagues with regard to his distinguished expertise suggested to him by not responding to others keep the secret and mystery that he had found in repairing new heavy trucks for himself so he does not find a competitor in the work arena but Master Mohammad was not satisfied with this matter and considered his duty responding to the question of those who might in the future become his work competitor in terms of expertise.

Chegini in his interview regarding the characteristic of disseminating knowledge by Master Mohammad said:

> "The beginning of my acquaintance with Hāj Mohammad was in Khorshid garage. My father put me there in Hāj Sohrāb and Hāj Nāser's shop to learn work.
>
> In the beginning of work for some reasons I opposed Mohammad and bantered with him but 2-3 months passed I saw that Mohammad is very different from others and while being man easily puts all his experiences and learnings in mechanics at my disposal these issues themselves caused me to become

enamored with him and in continuation we became like brothers for each other.

What I said was not an issue that Hāji had only done in relation to me. Rather he in continuation of his work and reaching mastership level too preserved this special characteristic of his and when colleagues who claimed too stated to him they are stuck in solving a problem he without claim would go and solve their work problem and show them the jug's secret. Even after Hāj Sohrāb who was Mohammad's initial master came to Nourouziān garage when he encountered a problem Mohammad would pursue that work and without claim solve Hāj Sohrāb's technical problem."

Hassan Master Mohammad's apprentice in describing the recent trait of his stated:

"Hāji taught others whatever he knew and in front of those who told him don't tell your information to others so you be alone and single in your job field said no let people learn and get going I perform my work for God's satisfaction.

If a master too came to the shop and after asking his question did not correctly understand Hāj Mohammad's guidance he would tell him bring the work to his shop to explain it to him practically and for this issue was even not willing to take one toman as commission and said whoever wants any help I perform it."

Creativity and Entrepreneurship

Creativity is a process that as a result of it a new effect whether idea or a new and different thing is produced that is valuable for individuals and societies. Entrepreneurship too is considered fructifying and economizing a new idea. The entrepreneur person is an individual who by relying on his own creativity and innovation and with attention to existing opportunities endeavors to create a new business and obtain profit.

By examining the statements of the interviewed individuals it seems Master Mohammad in the first degree of importance was a creative individual and in the second degree of importance he benefited from his creativity in the path of entrepreneurship.

Examining the field information collected about Master Mohammad narrates that he unlike many individuals who have only acted creatively in a specific field (such as

presenting a physics or chemistry formula) the Master had manifested his creativity in various "human" and "technical" dimensions. Ali in his interview recalled the Master acting creatively in human fields as follows:

> "Mohammad dealt with everyone with his own special style that is with children he talked and associated childishly with common people he was like themselves and his words were similar to those people's words and with reputable individuals according to themselves and talked and associated with them. For example Mohammad was very intimate with children and for example on one side even wrestled with his brother Hamid's 11-year-old daughter and on the other side established warm and intimate connection with adult and stranger people around him."

Nasiri Master Mohammad's former apprentice in his interview recalled the creative mechanical education that in the Master's apprenticeship period he benefited from as follows:

> "My own father also has mechanics but when I go to his shop from fear of work spoiling I don't even dare to open and close a Khāvar tire but Hāji nurtured me that I face even the most difficult mechanical problems and try to solve them.

For example when we in the work process due to carelessness and ignorance broke and destroyed a part Hāji would not bring a word to us that you broke the part and now must replace it. Sometimes too when I with a work spoiling saw myself unable to continue it Hāji encouraged me not to let fear enter myself and continue the work I had abandoned and perform it.

Even sometimes when a new car came to our garage for repair Hāji would tell me you disassemble this car and when I mentioned this issue that I'm afraid to spoil the work Hāji said you disassemble to learn in the end closing the car is with me."

Nasiri in another passage of his statements recalled Master Mohammad's different viewpoints as follows:

> "We mechanics have learned to see everything as connecting rod and piston but Master Mohammad was never like this. For example when me and Hāji went to Erbil Iraq together due to the distance being long I constantly slept but Hāji's attention was to the environment there and while describing the geographical position there for me talked to me about the wind direction type and kind of the region's trees and the like."

In other words when an individual does not summarize everything in his own profession and can look at the universe from various angles he has more flexible and creative thinking than others.

Shāh-Mohammadi too in his interview stated:

> "Hāji one day told me Mr. Doctor Mojābi several times without visit saw our teeth now we too to make Mr. Mojābi realize invite him to Ovan lake.
>
> Following this decision Hāji took uncle Hossein's Land Rover and with Mr. Doctor Mojābi headed to Ovan lake. On the way the car radiator found defect and we had to constantly pour water in it so the radiator works. After some time our water finished. I was stuck where to find water that Hāji said we have brought a box of soda with ourselves. Open the sodas and pour in the radiator. I said Hāji the car finds defect but Hāji said I am mechanic and if the car found defect I myself fix the car. Ultimately we with this trick and pouring soda in the car radiator reached Ovan lake and after a day and night recreation again headed to Qazvin."

In the definition of entrepreneurship too it was stated that entrepreneurship is launching a (new) production line and employing individuals in this direction Master Mohammad too with aging intended to launch a dealership for selling parts and giving consultation to customers but until the time of his untimely passing did not find the financial possibility to launch his new plan.

Hassan Master Mohammad's apprentice in this relation said:

> "Hāji wanted to set up a dealership for heavy cars but well setting up dealership had heavy cost and he for taking dealership had to at least build a 2000 square meter shed too that Hāji's life did not suffice for this issue. But anyway Hāji in expressing the motive of this work of his said launching a dealership firstly has necessary income and secondly with launching dealership and selling part practically we create employment and 7-8 people too beside me eat bread from this work."

Remarkable Physical Power and Bodily Skills

Human genetics plays a determining role in his fitness and physical power. Suitable genetics are in endurance aerobic capacity heart capacity lung capacity explosive

power flexibility tendon and ligament strength of the concerned individual and individuals who are endowed with suitable genetic capital in practice while feeling more health in their physical performances act suitably and are endowed with higher self-confidence.

Master Mohammad on one side due to enjoying suitable genetic background and on the other side due to bodily work that in the process of repairing heavy trucks from the dawn of his puberty had had a proportionate and strong physique (with weight nearly 100 kilos) and remarkable power.

Master Mohammad's mother in an experience in this relation stated:

> "Once they were painting our neighbor's house and a thief by using the opportunity of the neighbor's house being empty through this way came on our wall to see if conditions are ready to come to our house for theft. We too were sleeping in the yard Mohammad who was sleeping beside grandma grandpa in the room with the thief's image falling on the room glass noticed him found a hammer beside his hand that threw the same hammer toward the thief and the thief upon seeing this scene by leaving his shoe fled. Mohammad immediately rode the motorcycle to by circling around the house and neighborhood see if someone is without shoe catch him that of course did not reach the thief. But anyway the next day we found the hammer four houses further."

The Master's brother's wife too in a part of her interview stated that Mohammad Āqā lifted my children who were in 14 and 16 years old with their relative chubbiness and heavy weight on hand and spun them in the air.

Similarly Shāh-Mohammadi reports that Hāji had fearless head and was endowed with remarkable bodily ability in such a way that we when we went beside Ovan lake easily swam to the middle of the lake and returned.

Being Energetic

Being energetic in individuals largely returns to their positive-minded spirit and life conditions, cases such as: sleeping and waking up at specified hours, avoiding stress and tension, eating food at regular hours, avoiding consumption of unsuitable foods, avoiding substance abuse, avoiding excessive use of social networks and virtual space and the like, are effective in preserving individuals' energy. But as was

mentioned from it, beside specified physical conditions, enjoying positive-minded view will create a spirit of vitality that compensates any shortcoming in the individual's energy, makes him ready to perform his intended affairs.

If to the recent list the ideological factor is also added, and individuals obligate themselves every day to be grateful for their haves and have-nots, complete and full energy can be expected in them.

Since Master Mohammad in his fruitful life possessed all the aforementioned cases, his being energetic was an expectable matter.

The Master's cousin in describing one of his days in the numerous family trips they had together stated that except from 12 at night until 6 in the morning that we saw father (Master Mohammad) in rest state, he was in motion and performing various works the remaining 18 hours of the day. My imagination of him was that he has endless energy. Seyyed Majid also in his report by referring to the Master's being energetic noted:

> "Mohammad was always active and in motion and as if he absolutely had no rapport with fatigue and was alien to it. I in the long period that as family son-in-law dealt with Mohammad and his maternal family never heard from Mohammad that he expressed inability or say that I am tired from a work."

Hamid also in his report of the Master noted:

> "Hāj Mohammad was early-rising and constantly in activity and if in his own shop he did not have work in hand instead of sitting and resting in the shop he would go to visit his friends and colleagues."

Enjoying a Kind of Intuition

Intuition is unmediated reception of a thing or acquiring knowledge needless of proof and reasoning.

In the book "Religious Experience and Mystical Revelation"[17] about discovery and intuition it has come thus: Discovery is of the kind of presential knowledge and is not transferable to others and remains in the domain of the discoverer's "I".

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[17] Faʿālī, Mohammad-Taqi (2010 / 1389). Religious Experience and Mystical Unveiling. Tehran: Publishing Organization of the Research Institute for Culture and Islamic Thought.

Some of Master Mohammad's surroundings have confirmed his mysticism and mystical experiences. For example Seyyed Majid in this connection stated:

> "Mohammad was beyond an ordinary human in the sense that perhaps we say Mohammad did not have much academic literacy but he was a mystic person and if with tolerance we want to remember mystical literacy and experiences he had many mystical experiences."

Other interviewed individuals in their statements have referred to the intuitive dimensions that the Master displayed in his life. For example Hāj Kāzem quoting the Master Mohammad's apprentice in his interview said:

"Hāj Mohammad one week before his ascension had told Hassan I saw my grandmother's sleep that she has come after me."

Similarly Mohammad Āqā one day before his ascension by presenting documents and evidences that perhaps he had never given to his wife put her in the know of some of his life's financial minutes. Monir Master Mohammad's wife recalled this story in her interview as follows:

> "Mohammad one day before the accident that led to his passing brought various documents for me. For example he had written the code of all his ATMs on a paper for me. He had even entered his own fuel card code. He also brought tax documents and said I have paid the shop's last tax too. I am not indebted to anyone and have 300 tomans claim from so-and-so person.

Mohammad in continuation talked about the 120 million loan that he had taken with mother's pension card and said I am worried that I cannot pay the loan installments that in that case they will block mom's salary.

I who was surprised by Mohammad's works inquired the reason for bringing the documents and explaining them that Mohammad said ultimately I have worked for years and it is necessary that you too be in the know of these documents.

After Mohammad's passing Āqā Seyyed Mousā who are from close relatives upon hearing this incident with disbelief stated I the day before was with Mohammad Āqā in the finance department for paying tax and we talked and laughed a lot how can this event be believed?"

Master Mohammad's wife in another passage of her interview noted that there is no night that I do not see Mohammad's sleep and a problem of my problems after that sleep does not get solved. For example after I due to Mohammad's ceremony costs

saw that no money remains in our disposal at night upset slept and saw Mohammad's sleep that in this relation consoled me and the next day from the garage contacted me and said: "For receiving the funds that belong to Mohammad give account number so we have the necessary deposit for you."

In a similar case Monir stated:

> "In the past Mohammad had fixed Mr. Eskandar's car that was stuck on the road and got his work going. Eskandar who had witnessed Mohammad's chivalry gave address to Mohammad and this issue provided the beginning of his intercourse with Mohammad and his family.
>
> Since Mr. Eskandar in Āstārā had rice cultivation and preparing honey and the like we every year prepared our rice and honey needs from him.
>
> After Mohammad's passing I thought to myself that we for ourselves and Mohammad's maternal family had ordered 300 kilos of rice to Mr. Eskandar now how to arrange the money for these rices.
>
> Immediately after this worry that I had found Mr. Eskandar's wife called our house and said we saw Hāji's sleep and Hāji said I am now a bit busy and Monir's hand is tight consider her situation. Then she continued we after seeing this sleep our state became bad by God you do not think about the rice money issue Mr. Eskandar says Hāji has place in my heart we absolutely do not want money that I in response said Mohammad does not remain under anyone's debt. If you agree I will give your rice money in installments."

Master Mohammad's elder aunt also in her interview stated:

> "My habit is that after reading morning prayer I do not sleep anymore. But the day of Mohammad's passing I after reading morning prayer felt sleepiness and took and slept and in my sleep I saw sleep that in a big hall flock by flock breakfast tablecloth have spread and only heard Mohammad's voice that said they have taken place for eating breakfast.
>
> At noon that I heard the news of dear Mohammad's accident I told myself O heedless heart so the interpretation of my sleep was this that I saw."

The population studied in the research in describing Master Mohammad's characteristics besides the cases that until here were mentioned from them have also remembered the following cases as the Master's prominent characteristics:

Effort to preserve the environment, special attention to mother sister brother and relatives, compassion to children, affection to wife, compassion to relatives, remarkable communication skills, leniency with companions, collectivism, special attention to friends and acquaintances, people-orientedness, special attention to economically-socially weak strata, prioritizing weak strata, taking the lead in solving others' problems, management and crisis management and relative distancing from society's political issues. But since in the next chapters of the book Master Mohammad's connection with environment family surroundings and society will be discussed the mentioned cases will be referred to in the related chapters.

Chapter Two: Relationship with the Environment

The relationship of human beings with their environment is an important aspect that theorists and researchers have often passed over with little or no attention.

In the Qur'an, the religious book of Muslims, there are numerous verses that introduce the universe as God's creation and present nature as living and glorifying (God). On the other hand, an examination of the Qur'an indicates that many of the words used in it are related to nature. An enumeration of environmental concepts employed in the verses of the Qur'an shows that nearly one-fifth of the Qur'anic verses pertain to environmental issues.

A look at the chapters (surahs) of the Qur'an also indicates that a considerable number of surahs are named after natural phenomena. The aforementioned matters, in turn, express the importance of nature in the Islamic viewpoint. The Qur'an not only swears by certain natural phenomena in various instances, but also draws attention to the manifestations of nature and invites human beings to reflection and contemplation upon them.

What has been mentioned presents nature as a respected entity within the divine worldview. It is for this reason that the Messenger of God forbade any form of disrespect or abuse toward nature and stated: "For me, the whole of the earth is a mosque."[18]

In three instances (Tā Hā, 53; Al-Zukhruf, 10; Al-Naba', 6), the Qur'an explicitly refers to the earth as the cradle and resting place of humankind. In other words, it may be conceived that these verses seek to convey the meaning that human beings must grow within the cradle of the earth and attain their value-based transcendence.

If, in order to examine those humans who, from the Qur'anic perspective, have attained the peak of self-actualization, the expression "ahsanu 'amalan" (those who perform the best deeds) is examined in the Qur'an, it is observed that this expression is repeated four times (Al-Kahf, 7 and 30; Hūd, 7; and Al-Mulk, 1–3). In three of these cases, directly, and in one case indirectly, emphasis is placed on the testing of human beings within their environmental setting.

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[18] Haq, S. nomanual (2003). Islam and ecology: Toward retrival reconstruction. In Foltz, R. C.; Denny, F. M. & baharuddin, A. (Eds.). Islam and ecology. (pp. 121-154). U. S.: Harvard university.

In other cases, the Qur'an, by presenting the testing of human beings, refers to their examination not in human environments but in their environmental context (verse 94 of Surah Al-Mā'idah), reminding that human beings can reach God through optimal interaction with their environmental factors.

The religious perspective, through its extensive emphasis on environmental factors (animals, plants, water, soil, air, and the like), alongside the rights that have thus far been discussed (the right of God, the right of the self, and the right of people), has in practice advanced the concept of the "right of the environment" or "environmental right." Beyond that, it depicts "human growth and transcendence within the context of nature." That is, contrary to the previous focus of ethics on human-to-human relations, with the emphasis of religious teachings on ethical conduct toward environmental factors, Islam practically introduces environmental ethics and emphasizes that human growth and transcendence, and one's attainment of the summit of perfection and the rank of the Perfect Human, depend upon optimal and appropriate interaction with one's surrounding environment.

Therefore, in a brief summation, it may be concluded that from the religious viewpoint, not only is the environment regarded with a sacred perspective, but human growth is realized not through relations with other humans, but through one's optimal and compassionate interaction with one's environment. In other words, from the religious perspective, the environment is considered as a bridge for reaching the heavens.

With the characteristics mentioned above, examining individuals' environmental perspectives is an important matter that should not be passed over with inattention or neglected.

An examination of master Mohammad's environmental viewpoints indicates a high degree of harmony between him and environmental factors—including animals, plants, water, soil, and similar elements. In what follows, his environmental views and behaviors will be presented based on statements from the interviewed individuals.

Master Mohammad was sensitive in his relationship with animals, plants, and other environmental factors and tried not only to avoid, as much as possible, causing harm or loss to the aforementioned elements, but also to serve them to the extent possible and to provide comfort and ease for his environmental surroundings. In the following, Master Mohammad's environmental perspective will be discussed under

three subheadings: “Relationship with Animals,” “Relationship with Plants,” and “Relationship with Other Environmental Factors.”

Relationship with Animals

Haj-Kazem, in his interview, described Master Mohammad’s environmental inclinations during his childhood as follows:

> “Because of the small age difference between Mohammad and his older sister, Zinat, Mohammad would come to our house so that my sister could attend to Zinat with greater peace of mind. After that, since Mohammad was often with us, the people of the neighborhood thought that Mohammad was our younger brother. In any case, at that time we had both pigeons and sheep in our own house. Even at that young age, Mohammad took care of both the pigeons and the sheep. For example, he would chop watermelon rinds for the sheep or clean the place where the pigeons stayed.
>
> Once, when I came home, I saw that Mohammad’s face and clothes were covered with pigeon feathers, and when I asked about the reason, I realized that Mohammad, despite his young age, had cleaned the place of our 45 pigeons and said that pigeons should not be confined; you must give them water and grain, and their place must be clean. That is, from early childhood, Mohammad treated animals with compassion and kindness.”

Monir also stated in her interview regarding her husband’s environmental perspective:

> “Mohammad took care of the animals that were in his garden in Najaf-Abad or that passed through it. For example, there was a turtle in Mohammad’s garden, and Mohammad had placed a bowl of water for it. There was also a rabbit in the garden that had dug a burrow there, and Mohammad did not disturb that rabbit. There were also snakes in the Najaf-Abad garden, but Mohammad would say that snakes do not bother us. If you see a snake, stay exactly where you are standing; the snake will go its own way, and then you can go your own way as well.

In the northern villa as well, the neighbors once told Mohammad that he should concrete the garden area of his residential space so that lizards and ants would decrease. However, Mohammad told them that if he were to concrete the garden

space, then where would the lizards and ants go? They also need to exist and live their own lives. You should also pay attention to the fact that these very lizards eat mosquitoes and reduce their nuisance for you."

The Master's wife stated in another part of her remarks:

> "Mohammad used to say, keep the leftover food so that I can give it to the dogs and cats around the garden. Then he would also advise us to make sure that the food had not spoiled or become moldy, because it would make the animals sick. Then, when he took the food to the dogs and cats around the garden, if the dogs and cats came close to him, he would say, go eat your food and do not rub yourselves against me."

Sakineh, the mother of the Master's wife, also said in part of her interview:

> "Firstly, in the northern garden, Mohammad fed all the animals as much as possible, from the dog at the front of the house to the cows and sheep of that area. Secondly, he had no desire to harm any animal. For example, once after I saw a lizard on the wall, I told Mohammad, hit this lizard, but he said, no, let the lizard go. Then he said, do not tell the women and children either, so that they do not get scared."

Yahya, a colleague and neighbor of Master Mohammad in the Najaf-Abad gardens, said in his interview about the Master's environmental perspective:

> "Haji's slogan was that animals also take their own share, and we should not prevent them from eating their share and sustenance."

Seyyed Mohammad-Ali, another colleague of Master Mohammad, also stated similar remarks in his interview:

> "Haj-Mohammad believed that everyone has their own share: the crow takes its share of walnuts, the sparrow takes its share of figs and pistachios, and the bee eats its share of grapes, and they should not be prevented."

Yahya noted in another part of his statements:

> "Haji was opposed to the idea that, like some owners of nearby gardens, we should scare away sparrows or engage in sparrow-chasing, and he considered the actions of those who poured sulfur on pistachios so thatYahya noted in another part of his statements:

"Haji was opposed to the idea that, like some owners of nearby gardens, we should scare away sparrows or engage in sparrow-chasing, and he considered the actions of those who poured sulfur on pistachios so that sparrows would not eat them to be a great injustice. He said, how much capacity do their stomachs have anyway? They eat two or three pistachios and go on with their lives. Why should a person be so unjust as to pour sulfur on pistachios, thereby not only preventing sparrows from taking their sustenance, but also causing a human who eats those pistachios to be poisoned.

Haji used to say, if bees did not eat grapes, that would not be possible; bees must stay alive so that we can benefit from their honey.

I myself used to kill many snakes during my youth, but after seeing Haji and people like him, I abandoned this bad habit, and at present there are snakes in both my garden and Haji's garden. We even had a large snake which, when it moved, the sound of grass breaking along its path could be heard. There is also a beautiful white snake with fine patterns in our garden.

One day Haj-Mohammad said that he was lying down in the garden when he noticed a snake passing over his leg. Despite all this, Haji was not willing to kill the snakes in his garden and said that snakes, like foxes, hedgehogs, and similar animals, regulate the ecosystem of the earth, and if, for example, there were no snakes, the large rats that we have in the garden would eat us."

Seyyed Mohammad-Ali mentioned in another part of his interview:

"The Najaf-Abad garden even had rats as big as a cat, and naturally wherever there are rats, there are also snakes. But Haji neither bothered the rats nor the snakes in the garden.

When almonds fell from the tree, the garden rats—which were very numerous—would quickly go and eat the almonds, and Haji would say, let us leave the work of rats, snakes, owls, and the like to themselves so that they can do their own work. The white owl and the snake eat the rats and prevent their population from increasing."

Yahya, a colleague and garden neighbor of Master Mohammad, stated in his report:

"There was no fence between my garden and Haji's garden to separate them, so we did not have 'my garden' and 'his garden.' In our garden, we had both white-tailed foxes and rabbits and turtles, and our dealings with the rabbits of

the garden reached the point where the rabbits were no longer afraid of us, because we liked them and did not harm them.

The most I did in my garden to reduce damage by birds was that, for example, for the shrikes that pecked holes in apples and tomatoes, I would set traps, and when they were caught, with their cries they would scare away their companions. I would then put them in a bag and take them somewhere else and release them. But Haji would not tolerate even this, and he placed his garden, without any conditions whatsoever, at the disposal of every bird and grazing animal that was in it or passed through it."

Many of the interviewees reported during their interviews that Master Mohammad's treatment of animals was full of kindness and compassion.

Chegini, a close friend of nearly 40 years of Master Mohammad, reported in his interview:

"Although at first I worked with Haj-Mohammad in mechanics, unfortunately I later separated my professional path from Haji and entered my father's butchery profession. However, my interactions with Haji continued. In addition to the fact that he would sometimes come to see me and we would spend time together, sometimes until near midnight, and associate with one another, when he was going to his garden, he would call me and say, set aside your meat scraps; I want to go to the garden and take the meat scraps to the dogs around the garden. I would do so, and I have generally become accustomed that if anyone else wants meat scraps for animals, I give my meat scraps to them free of charge."

Hassan, a student of Master Mohammad, stated in his interview that sometimes Haji would give him money and say, buy food for the dogs outside the garage.

Another friend of Mohammad-Agha also said that when they wanted to go to the countryside for recreation, at the time of shopping Haj-Mohammad would say, first get some bones from the butcher for the dogs, then buy meat for ourselves.

The wife of Master Mohammad's brother also noted in her interview that during trips Haj-Mohammad would tell them not to throw leftover food on the ground, but to place it on a piece of plastic so that when an animal wanted to eat the food, it would not become contaminated with soil.

Haj-Mohammad also instructed those around him at home and at the workplace not to throw away leftover food and dry bread, so that he could take them outside or to the countryside to feed dogs.

One of Mohammad-Agha's colleagues recounted that Mohammad would collect leftover food and dry bread to take them to the dogs.

The guard of the garage where the master worked had several dogs. One of the dogs had an injured neck, and Haji instructed him to attend to the wound on the dog's neck, and this matter led the guard to pursue the healing of the dog's neck wound.

When the garage guard did not properly take care of the garage dogs, Master Mohammad would tell him either to properly care for his dogs or to let them go outside so that they could seek their own sustenance.

On one occasion, when the number of dogs inside the garage had increased, Haj-Mohammad asked me to take three of the five dogs to the countryside so that they could guard our sheep there and, at the same time, not remain hungry.

The wife of Mohammad-Agha's brother stated in part of her interview, in describing Mohammad-Agha's environmental behavior:

"When we went collectively to the countryside for Sizdah-Bedar, some stray dogs would also gather around us. Haj-Mohammad would take the untouched food and lead the dogs with him to a point farther away from where we were settled, so that the dogs would not be close to the people and people would not throw things at the dogs out of fear, and so that the dogs would be at a distance and pose no threat to the group. That is, Haj-Mohammad simultaneously took into consideration both us and the dogs."

During the process of conducting interviews with Master Mohammad's colleagues, in one case the author encountered a critical view toward Mohammad-Agha, in which his behavior toward dogs was considered harsh. However, the father of that individual stated that his son and daughter-in-law sometimes bought dozens of kilograms of poultry waste from poultry farms and fed roadside dogs with it. Upon further investigation of this matter, the author realized that Mohammad-Agha's concern was that the guard of his workplace garage released the dogs at night and the dogs contaminated the garage area with their waste. Mohammad-Agha said that it was not right for the ground to be contaminated, because he had to lie under vehicles to repair them. With this explanation, the critique of the aforementioned engineer is effectively undermined.

Another colleague stated in his interview that Mohammad-Agha would tell the garage guard that if the number of dogs increased, he should send some of them to the countryside so that their excess presence in the garage would not become problematic.

According to the statement of Master Mohammad's aunt, he had pigeons from childhood, and since he did not have a place to keep them, he kept the pigeons in the basement of his uncle, Haj-Kazem.

Another colleague of Mohammad-Agha recalled his compassionate behavior toward pigeons and stated:

"I had a pigeon whose wing was broken. I brought the pigeon to my shop. From the time I brought the pigeon to the shop, in practice the pigeon went out of my control, and Haj-Mohammad personally took care of it. He talked to the pigeon, sometimes took it outside and said, let me take you outside so that your wings can open. After some time passed, my pigeon recovered."

Hassan, a student of Master Mohammad, reported a similar experience:

> "Since I am not home for long periods, sometimes I would bring my pigeons to the shop and take care of them there. Of course, on Fridays, when the garage was closed, the pigeons would be left alone, but later I found out that Haj-Mohammad would come even on Fridays to take care of the pigeons I had brought to the shop, give them water and grain, take them outside for a short flight, and then go about his work.
>
> In a sense, when I brought my pigeons to the shop, control over them passed out of my hands, and it was Mohammad-Agha who took care of them.
>
> I had another pigeon that became ill. I brought it to the shop for about 30 days. The pigeon reached a point where it cooed next to Haj-Mohammad, whereas a solitary pigeon does not coo by itself. Then, when I took my pigeon back home, it became sad again, because I saw that it ate very little food and water. Even now this pigeon is sickly and weak, and I have not heard any cooing from it anymore. It has crouched in a corner and does not eat food.
>
> The glass above Haj-Mohammad's shop was also somewhat broken, and sometimes doves would enter the shop through that opening. Haji told me to make a nest for these doves near the ceiling so that they could lay eggs there. I made a nest near the ceiling, and now for about three years the doves have

been coming to this nest, laying eggs and raising chicks, and then leaving until the next year. After all, the doves spend their winters here.

When at the very beginning I wanted to close the entrance opening to the shop, Haji said no, do not close the opening. I said, then these doves will no longer come. Haj-Mohammad said no, these are my tenants; they will come again.

If someone had an animal and did not take care of it or did not feed it properly, Haj-Mohammad would become upset with him and say, sir, if you cannot properly take care of your animal, either release it or sell it, and do not create the means for tormenting and harming the animal. For example, Saeed had pigeons, and he told him either release them or sell them; he said the same thing to Haj-Kazem, who also had pigeons.

Another colleague stated that once Haj-Mohammad wanted to clean his house, so he brought his pigeons to me and said, keep my pigeons in the countryside for a while (where you have facilities) so that I can organize and clean my house."

Hassan said in a similar case:

"Before marriage, Haj-Mohammad had pigeons in his uncle's basement, but after marriage, when they lived in an apartment, he gave his pigeons to others. Haji said, I myself am confined in an apartment; now if I also take these mute creatures into captivity under my own captivity, this is not the right thing to do.

Alongside pigeons, Haji was also interested in chickens, roosters, and horses, but he did not have the possibility of keeping them with himself.

Some shopkeepers here also have a few pigeons and let them fly during the day. Haj-Mohammad told their owners, will you allow us to whistle for your pigeons? And after obtaining permission for this, even hypothetically we divided the pigeons in the air among ourselves, and each of us owned a portion of the pigeons in the air."

Another colleague said in his interview:

> “Haji also liked chickens and roosters, and when I wanted to go check on my chickens and roosters, he would say, there is grain in the shop, take some for them.”

Hassan, in his report regarding Master Mohammad’s environmental behaviors, also mentioned his efforts to alleviate the suffering of animals and stated the following example:

> “Once, the leg of one of the colleagues’ roosters had developed a corn, and the animal was limping. Haj-Mohammad told me, catch the rooster and bring it. Then we applied grease to the rooster’s leg and bandaged it, and we continued this for two weeks until the corn came off on its own and the animal was cured and relieved of pain and suffering.”
>
> “I myself have never seen a person with so many virtues and with such attention to human beings and animals.”

Masoumi, in part of his interview, referring to Master Mohammad’s environmental perspective, stated:

> “Once we went to the countryside for a family outing. There I asked, are there snakes here as well? He replied yes, there are two snakes here. I said, aren’t you afraid of them, don’t you want to eliminate them? He said no, we have come into their place; they have not come into ours for us to object to them.
>
> The neighbors of Mohammad’s garden would hang cans on the branches so that, due to the movement of the wind and the cans striking one another, noise would be produced to scare away crows so that they would not damage the fruit on the trees. But Mohammad refrained from doing this in his own garden and said that crows eat two or three fruits, become full, and then leave. Hanging cans on branches and similar actions in order to prevent crows from eating their sustenance is not the right thing to do.”

The cousin of Master Mohammad reported in her interview that once, when they had gone to the countryside with her father (Haj-Mohammad) and the family, they saw a scorpion at the campsite, and Master Mohammad killed that scorpion. However, it appears that if his family had not been with him, based on the same logic that we have come into the animals’ place and not that the animal has come into ours for us to object to it, he would have passed by the scorpion without harming it.

Relationship with Plants

Alongside showing compassion toward animals, Master Mohammad did not overlook plants and treated them with love, interest, and kindness.

The mother of Master Mohammad, in her interview, described his interest in plants as follows:

> "Mohammad was very interested in gardens from the beginning, and when an inherited garden remained for our family, I paid the shares of the other brothers and sisters and took over the garden, because I knew that Mohammad had a great interest in gardening and my hope in this regard was also on Mohammad, that he would take care of the family garden.
>
> My late father would bring three or four sacks of pistachios and almonds from the garden every year, and after purchasing the garden, Mohammad single-handedly set out to develop and cultivate it. By regularly visiting the garden near the cemetery, he took care of it and every year brought us the produce of the garden.
>
> Some time ago, Moloud's son asked his uncle where his mother's garden was, and Haj-Kazem took him and showed him the garden…"

Haj-Kazem recalled his visit to the inherited garden, which he had seen again after 15 years, as follows:

> "I took Moloud's son to show him the inherited garden. When I saw the garden again after 15 years, I felt that Mohammad had done great work in that small garden and had turned it into a paradise."

Monir, the wife of Master Mohammad, in part of her interview, recalled her husband's deep love and interest in nature as follows:

> "The villa that we have in Chalus is located in an area adjacent to a pine forest, and on the land that we bought there were also two tall pine trees. Our house also has access to the street from two sides. When the architects came to our land to design the building, they said that you must cut down these two pine trees so that we can implement a suitable plan for building your villa. Mohammad said, these trees have been here from the beginning and we have come into their place; therefore, it is not fair to cut them down.

The architects said that with these trees, a car cannot enter your villa. Mohammad said, it does not matter; make an entrance for the villa from the other side. These trees are a source of beauty for my house.

The architects again said that even bringing construction materials into the land would be problematic because of these trees. Mohammad said, that is not a problem; let the truck unload the materials ahead of my land, I will hire workers and bring the materials into the villa land myself.

The architects again objected that the presence of the pine trees would disrupt their intended composition, but Mohammad said, to resolve your concern, I will bring stones from the seaside and by creating natural steps, solve the problem you are mentioning.

Finally, Mohammad, with the argument that the pine trees had been here from the beginning and that he had come there to see the beauties of nature and that cutting the pine trees would defeat the purpose, compelled the architects to carry out their work while taking the presence of the pine trees into account."

Monir stated in another part of her interview her husband's efforts to prevent environmental pollution and his compassion toward animals and plants:

"From the very beginning of our life together, when we ate fruit and I intended to throw the peels into nature, Mohammad would say, no, do not do this, because both nature becomes dirty and people are forced to bend down to pick up this trash, which is not fair.

Fruit peels should be collected and buried under the soil. that I when eating fruit or food at home, Mohammad would say, collect the fruit peels so that I can give them to the cows, and put the food bones aside so that I can give them to the dogs.

I remember once when we wanted to go from our villa to the Hesel Lagoon, we set off at 5 a.m. and reached the lagoon three hours later. But the interesting point of our trip was that several dogs had also set off with us and were with us for the entire route to the lagoon. At first I was afraid of the dogs, but Mohammad said, these are the same dogs to whom we give bones and food; do not be afraid. After returning from the Hesel Lagoon, the dogs also returned with us from the lagoon.

In addition to showing compassion toward animals, Mohammad also had a strong interest in plants. For example, our land in Chalus was initially empty, but through Mohammad's efforts it has now become a garden.

I remember that when we were traveling north with Mr. Fotovat's family in two cars, during a stop for rest, Mohammad went diagonally down to the bottom of a ravine beside the road, and when he came back up, he brought with him a plant branch whose leaves resembled grape leaves and whose fruit resembled blueberries.

When Mohammad reached the villa, he laid that branch in sand, and after some time it grew so much that it now covers seven or eight meters of the wall of our villa and produces a fruit similar to grapes but with a different taste.

On another occasion, in Nowshahr, after several hours of walking and traversing part of the route with the help of ropes, we reached a waterfall that was a pristine location. Ferns were growing next to this waterfall. Mohammad pulled out some of these ferns and placed them in a plastic bag, and upon returning to the villa, he planted them in the villa yard, where they have now grown.

On another occasion, one of my colleagues brought walnuts for me from Alamut. When Mohammad saw the walnuts, he said these walnuts are of very good quality; place a few of them in sand in a pyramidal arrangement—if they turn into walnut saplings, that would be very good. I did exactly that, and now one of the walnut trees in the Najaf-Abad garden has grown from that very walnut that we planted.

Mohammad also said on other occasions that if you plant a date pit that you eat in the ground, either it will return to nature or it will turn into a tree, and you can benefit from both its beauty and its fruit.

Mohammad not only turned the empty land of our villa compound into a garden, but also purchased an empty piece of land in the Najaf-Abad area and, with great effort, planted trees there. For a time he watered them using water containers, and later installed a drip-irrigation system for them, turning the area into a garden that has pistachios, almonds, pears, and various other fruits.

Likewise, due to his interest in medicinal plants, firstly, in part of our garden he planted items such as rosemary, pennyroyal, and the like, and secondly, during his recreational trips into nature, he gathered many medicinal plants,

dried them for use, and prepared herbal infusions from them at home and in the shop for consumption.

Another activity of Mohammad was studying the properties of various plants and herbal infusions.

In addition to his own great interest in his surrounding environment, including plants and animals, Mohammad tried to make us attentive to our surrounding environment as well and to strive toward improving it. For example, when my father passed away, Mohammad told me: give food to birds or water plants with the intention of your father, so that the great reward of these actions may reach your late uncle."

Sakineh, the mother of Master Mohammad's wife, also mentioned similar points in her interview regarding the Master's interest in the environment. In part of her interview she stated:

"I had a potted schefflera plant that was on the verge of drying out. When Mohammad saw the pot, he said, let me take this plant north and plant it in our villa; perhaps it can be saved from drying out. Eventually, Mohammad took the potted plant north and took care of it, and that ornamental plant turned into a large shrub. Once, when Mohammad went to a florist and showed him a picture of that grown ornamental plant, the florist could not believe that an ornamental plant had achieved such growth.

When Mohammad came to our house as well, he paid attention to our house plants. For example, he would say, why haven't you pruned your grapevine, and then he would come and take care of our grapevine and potted plants."

Sakineh mentioned in another part of her account the Master's strong sense of responsibility toward plants:

"According to our customs, we had to host the first Friday gathering. Therefore, as the bride's mother, I invited some relatives and acquaintances to come to our house for lunch on the first Friday. After all the guests arrived, Mohammad did not come. In any case, the guests were received, and I became upset with Mohammad for not being present at the gathering I had arranged. After Mohammad came to our house after lunch, I asked him why he had not come earlier, and Mohammad said, I had to stay and water my mother's garden. After all, we are responsible toward the garden trees we have and must fulfill our responsibility."

Ahmad, Mohammad-Agha's uncle-in-law, in a similar statement, recalled the Master's strong attachment to plants and animals and said:

> "One day we were invited to Ali-Agha's house, who was Mohammad's uncle and father-in-law, but I did not see Mohammad at the gathering. Later, when Mohammad arrived, I said to him, boy, where have you been, you are never around. Mohammad replied, I have planted a number of plants, and after all I am responsible for them and must attend to watering and caring for them.
>
> In another gathering as well, Mohammad again arrived late. I asked him, where have you been this time? Mohammad again replied, I have responsibility toward the plants I have planted. I would say to him, you are always going to the plants you have planted. Mohammad would say, after all there is responsibility for caring for plants, and one cannot forget responsibility.
>
> At one time, Mohammad also had a canary in his shop, and sometimes he would sit and watch the canary or take care of it. I would ask, boy, are you unemployed that you sit and spend time on the canary and watch it? But Mohammad would say, after all, these too need care and must be attended to."

Chegini, a friend of Master Mohammad, stated in his report regarding the Master's interest in the environment that when he spoke with Mohammad and said, you spend a lot of time on the garden, Mohammad would say to him, the garden has life, the garden has breath, and one cannot be indifferent toward it.

Yahya, a colleague and neighbor of Master Mohammad in the Najaf-Abad gardens, stated in his interview:

> "Mohammad had a strong interest in gardens and trees, but this great interest did not cause him to be harsh toward animals that in some way damaged garden produce or to seek their elimination.
>
> In this same 2,000-meter garden of his, Mohammad had planted 30 to 40 pistachio trees, 20 pear trees, and 50 almond trees. He also had precise knowledge of the trees and considered himself obliged to water and care for them in the best possible manner."

Amir, in his interview, described the Master's deep interest in plants as follows:

> “We went to Master Mohammad’s garden; he brought fruit for us and we began eating. When we observed his own work in the garden, it was clear that he treated the trees with love and took care of them with affection.”

Moloud, the sister and cousin of the master, also stated in their interviews:

> “Several branches of the grapevine in the yard of the maternal home had come down below their trellis and were catching on people’s heads and scarves. I told Mohammad-Agha to cut these troublesome branches, but he said that pruning trees should be done in winter. Whenever winter comes, I will cut the extra branches, but now is not the time for pruning and cutting tree branches, and this should not be done.”

> “When Haj-Mohammad was pruning trees, he told me, trees should be pruned with love. Imagine a person is in a barber shop and you want to cut his hair—you must treat that person well. A tree is the same way; it must be treated well.”

Hamid, regarding the Master’s sense of responsibility toward the family garden, said:

> “Haj-Mohammad’s family had an inherited garden below the cemetery, and Haj-Mohammad would regularly go there to inspect and take care of the garden. Haj-Mohammad said, if my brothers do not have time to take care of the garden and do not come, let them not come, but I, for my part, am responsible toward the garden and have a duty to take care of it so that it remains for the heirs.”

One of Master Mohammad’s colleagues and close friends stated in his interview:

> “During the New Year holidays, Haj-Mohammad bought a 2,000-meter plot of land in Najaf-Abad and told me that he wanted to plant pistachio saplings in it. I said, come to our house, I have 40 pistachio saplings, I will give them to you. Haji came to our house and took the saplings, but he did not touch one sapling that had grown more than the others at all and said, let this sapling stay right here, because it would be a pity and it might dry out for some reason during relocation.”

Shah-Mohammadi also spoke about the Master’s enthusiasm and passion regarding a small garden he had created:

> “Haji loved trees and did not entrust the care of his garden to anyone. He personally attended to all matters of the garden—from obtaining saplings and planting them to pruning the trees and removing weeds. The important point here was that Haji did not cultivate the garden to increase its value; rather, he cultivated it for his own satisfaction. I have not seen a passion and enthusiasm for nature like Haji’s in anyone else around me.”

The sister of Master Mohammad also stated:

> “Whenever Mohammad grafted a branch somewhere, it would take and grow. I personally attribute the reason for this growth and flourishing to the love that Mohammad had for plants.”

The Master’s deep interest in nature meant that any plan he proposed to his friends was not held in places such as restaurants, swimming pools, or the like; rather, in the vast majority of cases, the setting for gatherings of friends and acquaintances was nature itself.

Hassan spoke about Mohammad-Agha’s fondness for gardens and his personal care of several other gardens in the surrounding areas:

> “Haj-Mohammad’s family had an inherited garden that no one took care of, but Haj-Mohammad personally attended to all matters of this garden—from watering to clearing weeds and pruning trees.
>
> Of course, the garden did not produce much; the total yield was six or seven baskets of grapes and a small amount of pistachios and almonds, and that only if passersby allowed them to remain undisturbed. Nevertheless, all these issues did not prevent Haj-Mohammad from tending the inherited garden. If any grapes or almonds remained on the trees, he would take them home and distribute them among his brothers and sisters.
>
> Haj-Mohammad had another garden in the Najaf-Abad region. Many friends told him to abandon this garden because its irrigation was very difficult. I myself told Mohammad-Agha that the garden was located at a high elevation in the mountains, and suggested that he sell it so that I could buy him a garden in the Takestan region instead. But he said, ‘I love the mountains.’
>
> At one time, Haj-Mohammad prepared about fifteen twenty-liter containers to irrigate this very garden. He would carry the water in these containers and water the trees he had planted in his garden.

> Haj-Mohammad also had a garden in the north, which he likewise took care of. Sometimes when we saw him heading north and asked why, he would say, 'The trees in the garden are thirsty.' I even witnessed Haj-Mohammad sometimes going to his Chalus garden at five in the morning to water the trees.
>
> At times when there was little work in the afternoons, Mohammad-Agha would say, 'Let's go to the garden,' and after going there, we would sit until eight or nine in the evening and enjoy the blessings of nature. Sometimes, when Haj-Mohammad wanted to go to the garden and I accompanied him, he would say, 'I have to go to the garden for the trees.' I would reply, 'I love the garden too.'
>
> There were even occasions when, after purchasing the necessary items for repairing cars, Haj-Mohammad would say, 'Let's go to the garden,' and we would head directly to the garden with the purchased equipment."

The wife of Mohammad-Agha's brother stated in her interview:

> "Haj-Mohammad was very fond of nature and liked to be in nature every week. If his family did not accompany him and go with him to the plains and fields, he would go to nature on his own and spend a few hours there."

Monir, in another part of her interview, recalled the Master's attention to environmental considerations that many people overlook:

> "Every week when we wanted to travel for recreation and relaxation, Mohammad would say, 'Bring Mama too.' Once, when we were about to travel, I said to my mother, 'Mama, you come too.' But my mother said, 'Today it's my turn, and I have to take care of my father, so I can't come with you.'
>
> Anyway, we set off and had been driving for about an hour when Mohammad stopped and said, 'It's better that we go back and bring Mama too. Have your mother ask her sisters to look after their father today instead of her, and then she can take over the responsibility on another day.'
>
> I said to Mohammad, 'We've been out of Qazvin for an hour now, and we're at the Rasht toll station.' But Mohammad said, 'The purpose of our trip is to enjoy the journey. When we return, we will enjoy the beauty of the road again…'"

Relationship with Other Environmental Factors

Not harming nature and keeping it clean was an important matter to which the master was highly sensitive. In this regard, Masoumi noted in his report:

> "Haj-Mohammad insisted on keeping nature clean and protecting it. For example, when we went into nature for recreation, he would not only collect our own trash, but also gather the garbage others had left behind and put it in a plastic bag to dispose of it in proper trash bins.
>
> Haj-Mohammad would also extinguish any fire and say, 'If we neglect this matter, the fire might spread to farmers' crops and cause damage.'
>
> When Haj-Mohammad saw a tree branch that people had broken, he would say, 'People come and benefit from the fruit, shade, and beauty of a tree, but in the end they commit a great injustice by breaking its branches.' From Haji's perspective, breaking a tree branch was like breaking his own finger. He would say, 'When I see a broken branch, I feel as if my own finger has been broken.'"

Hamid, describing Master Mohammad's great love for flowers and plants, stated in his interview:

> "Haj-Mohammad had a deep affection for flowers and plants. For example, whenever he went to the Chalus garden, he would say, 'I've brought such-and-such a flower or plant as well.' At the northern villa, alongside crops such as green peppers, cucumbers, okra, and the like, he also planted flowers.
>
> To a limited extent, Haji also engaged in cultivation and farming in his gardens."

Another colleague stated in this regard:

> "Mohammad-Agha was passionate about flowers and plants and would turn a dry plot of land into a garden full of trees, flowers, and plants."

The cousin of Master Mohammad recalled his aesthetic sensibility as follows:

> “On the thirteenth day of Nowruz, which coincided with Ramadan, the iftar ceremony was held in the desert. After setting the table, Father (Mohammad-Agha) decorated it with flowers he had picked from nature and said, ‘Now this table looks beautiful.’”

Ali, the Master’s nephew, described his behavior as follows:

> “Despite his sensitivity toward nature, Mohammad-Agha would not reprimand children if they stepped on the plants he had planted during their play, so that their game would not be interrupted or spoiled.”

Alongside his profound affection for animals, trees, flowers, and plants, Master Mohammad also regarded mountains with a sense of wonder and was fond of them, visiting them whenever possible. Hassan stated in this regard:

> “Haji was fond of mountains and said that it is very good for a person to spend some time alone in the mountains. The mountains are calming and give me peace.”

Mahdi, a childhood friend of the master, recalled his interest in mountains, noting that he and his friends would sometimes ride motorcycles into the mountains or travel north together.

The cousin also stated:

> “When we went to the desert as a family with Father (Master Mohammad), he knew all kinds of plants and would immediately prepare herbal infusions by picking chamomile, mountain tea, thyme, rosemary, and similar herbs.
>
> Father would sometimes go into the mountains to collect medicinal plants so that, by digging them up and bringing them home, we could use herbal infusions in times of necessity and illness.”

Another colleague, describing Mohammad-Agha’s fondness for nature and spending time in it, stated:

> “Some Fridays, Haj-Mohammad would come to the desert and say that he had come to help Haj-Rostam (our shepherd). On those occasions, he would actually take the sheep out to graze instead of Haj-Rostam.”

Preventing the waste of environmental resources was another important principle to which Master Mohammad adhered. One of his close relatives stated:

> “When Haj-Mohammad wanted to wash his car, he would not use a hose. Instead, he carried water in buckets and washed the car using bucketfuls of water.”

Chapter Three: Relationship with Family and Relatives

The individual's relationship with the family represents another aspect of understanding the person in the model of examining the individual within their environment. It encompasses the family, relatives, colleagues, and other members of their society, providing valuable information for comprehending the personality of the individual under study. In examining the individual's relationship with the family and relatives, the following will be briefly reviewed in order: relationship with parents (father, mother), relatives (paternal and maternal grandparents, maternal uncles, paternal uncles, paternal aunts, and maternal aunts), relationship with sisters and brothers, relationship with spouse, relationship with children, and relationship with other family members.

Relationship with Parents[19]

Both the father and mother of Master Mohammad were virtuous and morally elevated individuals. From an early age, by observing parents who were principled, religious, kind-faced, and ethical—despite poverty and the hardships of making a living—Mohammad learned morality and insight from his father, and after that, from his mother, he learned commitment, devotion, and contentment with God's will. Until the age of eleven, when his father was still alive, these values shaped his character.

Khadijeh-Khanom, describing her husband's religious commitment, stated that during the lifetime of Ebrahim-Agha, they held a monthly home mourning ceremony, during which four reciters would come to their house and recite elegies.

She further described her husband's integrity and religious devotion as follows:

> "Ebrahim-Agha was a driver by profession, and for a period he worked with a man who owned a truck but did not have a driver's license. Therefore, he

[19] Upon the request and insistence of some of master Mohammad's relatives, certain parts of this chapter have been omitted, and the master's inherent magnanimity in dealing with family disputes that arose over time has remained largely concealed.

hired Ebrahim-Agha as the driver and himself worked as an assistant, transporting cargo between cities.

Once, Ebrahim-Agha's employer told me, 'Madam, your husband has very high principles.' I asked, 'How so?' and he recounted an incident that Ebrahim-Agha had never mentioned to me. He said that while we were traveling on the road, we saw a sack weighing about one hundred kilograms lying abandoned in the middle of the road. We got out of the truck and picked it up, and I realized that the sack was completely filled with narcotics.

I said to Mash-Ebrahim, 'If we take this sack and sell it, we'll be financially secure for the rest of our lives—we'll only need to eat and sleep.' But Mash-Ebrahim said, 'I am absolutely not willing to touch this sack or its narcotics,' and in the end, he turned us back thirsty from the very spring."

Khadijeh-Khanom reported another similar example of her husband's religious and moral commitment:

"Later, when Ebrahim-Agha accepted a driving job at a company, one day the company manager told him to go and buy alcohol for him. Ebrahim-Agha stood his ground and said, 'I am not willing to do such a thing.'

An engineer at the company tried to mediate and said, 'When someone works somewhere, they must do whatever they are told.' But Ebrahim-Agha rejected that argument as well, left the company, and stayed at home.

Three days later, one of the company employees came to our house on behalf of the company and told Ebrahim-Agha, 'Ghandchi says we have no problem with you—come to the company and tell us your final word.'

Ebrahim-Agha went to the company, and when Ghandchi asked him whether he wanted to work there or not, Mash-Ebrahim said, 'I am willing to work, and even if you put a basin of filth on my head, I will carry it for you—but I will not carry alcohol.' Eventually, the company officials withdrew their decision to dismiss him and allowed him to continue working."

The author, who during childhood had traveled several times with Uncle Ebrahim in his Khavar truck, personally witnessed that when, in one of the northern cities, Uncle Ebrahim's truck was sent to the royal camp to load cargo, and he realized that the intended cargo consisted of crates of alcoholic beverages, he refused to load the

cargo. Despite the reprimands and threats of the camp officials (likely SAVAK[20] agents), he turned the truck around and left the area.

Khadijeh-khanom's sister also described Ebrahim-Agha's honesty and integrity in her interview:

> "Mash-Ebrahim was truly something else. He was honest and never lied. I was closely involved with their life, and I personally witnessed that he was never willing to set aside ethics and moral principles in any situation. There is no weakness in his record.
>
> Mash-Ebrahim was kind-faced and cheerful, and even in times of poverty, his smile never left his face.
>
> Once, I told my sister—who lived with many children in a small room with an even smaller storage space—'Sister, your place is very small.' She replied, 'Yes, our house is small, but our hearts are big.'
>
> Mash-Ebrahim owned a truck and would sometimes tell his wife and children to ride in the back so he could take them to the Imamzadeh Barjin in Qazvin. He would also emphasize that as long as there was room in the truck, they should invite the neighbors as well. I told him, 'These people aren't part of your family,' but he replied, 'They don't have many means—let them come too, get some fresh air, and open their hearts.'
>
> Just as I never heard a single bad word, lie, or instance of backbiting from Mash-Ebrahim, I also never saw my sister complain about poverty or speak ill of others. She always thanked God that her children were healthy and around her."

Although Ebrahim-Agha's profession was driving, he was so familiar with heavy-truck mechanics that he could easily diagnose mechanical problems. For this reason, his fellow drivers had nicknamed him "Doctor" (the doctor of trucks).

Moloud, Master Mohammad's sister, stated in her interview:

> "I have heard that when my father passed away in a traffic accident at the age of thirty-nine, people said, 'Don't say the doctor has died—a doctor should

[20] Bureau for Intelligence and Security of the State

> still be alive for many years.' Decades later, at the time of Mohammad-Agha's passing, his colleagues used exactly the same expressions for him."

Atashgar, a childhood friend and later colleague of Master Mohammad, described the family background from the perspective of a neighbor:

> "Mash-Ebrahim was a very good man, and the neighborhood knew him as kind and well-mannered. His wife was also a very good woman, and after his death, she raised her children well and brought them to fruition."

Hamid, another colleague of Master Mohammad, stated in his interview:

> "Mohammad always said that when his father wanted to take them to Imamzadeh Barjin in his truck, he would inform all the neighbors and take them along as well.
>
> Mohammad's mother is a pure-hearted woman. Mohammad loved his mother deeply and tried every day to set aside a specific time to visit her.
>
> Mohammad's sisters and brothers are also good people. Mohammad not only considered himself their brother, but also their friend, and he tried to support them in various aspects of life."

Shah-Mohammadi, speaking with knowledge of the paternal family's relationships, stated:

> "Haj-Mohammad was born into a family where love for family was the guiding principle of life. Even after the family was struck by tragedy with the loss of the father, its functioning did not suffer serious damage. Haj-Mohammad's noble mother raised the children successfully, and today all of them have good lives of their own."

Khadijeh-Khanom, the mother of Master Mohammad, stated in her interview that she herself had been a cherished child in her family. Part of her account is as follows:

> "From childhood, I was very dear to my parents, because before me my mother had given birth to three daughters, all of whom had passed away. My mother used to tell me, 'We made countless vows and prayers to God so that He would let you remain with us.'

During my childhood, my eye became ill and remained closed for three months. My parents were terrified that after losing three children, I too would become blind and remain so.

My aunt took me to Sultan Seyyed Mohammad and made vows for me there, because she saw how much my mother was crying and distressed over my eye condition. Later, they took me to a herbalist who gave me a medicine, and by noon that day my eye opened and the illness was resolved. These events caused me to become the cherished child of the household.

At that time, our courtyard was large, and I was afraid to cross it at night to go to the toilet. When my father realized this, he would take me with him under the pretext of checking on the sheep, so that I could use the toilet on the other side of the yard.

I grew up in a very religious family alongside good brothers and sisters, and at the age of seventeen I married Ebrahim-Agha. In 1961, I gave birth to my first child, Akbar. Over the next two years, I had two daughters who did not survive. In 1964 and 1965, I gave birth to Zinat and Mohammad.

Because Zinat and Mohammad were born close together, I had to breastfeed both at the same time, while also doing household chores such as drawing water from the well, and I fasted during Ramadan as well. The combination of these pressures caused dizziness when I stood up, but since at that time we were told that we must still fast, I felt compelled to observe Ramadan while breastfeeding both children.

Because my father-in-law loved daughters very much and I had lost Akram, he told me, 'You weaned Akram too early, and that is why she died.' Therefore, my younger sister came to help me, and she would take Zinat to her own home so that I could better care for Mohammad. Later, when the children grew a little older, Mohammad would go to my father's house, while Zinat stayed with me.

Because Mohammad was close in age to my younger brothers, Hossein and Hassan, the people in my paternal neighborhood thought that Mohammad was also one of my brothers—Kazem, Hossein, and Hassan."

The elder maternal aunt of Master Mohammad referred to her sister Khadijeh as "a precious jewel" in her interview and stated:

> "I never saw my sister speak ill of anyone, and like her husband Ebrahim-Agha, she was always content. Sometimes I told her, 'Sister, the room you live in is very small[21],' and she would reply, 'It doesn't matter—our hearts are big.' I always saw her thanking God that her children were around her.
>
> In my view, this woman was a precious jewel. Mash-Ebrahim was also exceptional. I never heard a lie from him, and even in times of poverty, he never abandoned his cheerfulness and kindness toward others."

The author, who was Ebrahim-Agha's nephew, recalls that he and his older brother Manouchehr were sometimes sent from Tehran to Qazvin during childhood, where they stayed for several weeks with Khadijeh-Khanom, or with Masoumeh-Khanom (another maternal aunt), or with Sedigheh-Khanom (their aunt).

In other words, the author became acquainted with Khadijeh-Khanom (as well as Masoumeh-Khanom and Sedigheh-Khanom) from about the age of five, and this acquaintance has continued to the present. Over several decades of close interaction with these three noble women, the author testifies that despite the hardships of life, he never witnessed lies or backbiting from any of them.

Regarding Khadijeh-Khanom's religious devotion and great spirit, the author recalls that once, while speaking with her as she was distressed by illness, she said:

> "There was a time when, whenever I prayed in the morning, my prayer would be answered that very day. But now I don't know why it isn't so anymore."[22]

The period of married life between Khadijeh-Khanom and Ebrahim-Agha ended very early. In 1976, Ebrahim-Agha passed away in a traffic accident while driving. From that point onward, Khadijeh-Khanom lost her life partner and was left with seven children (and another child she was pregnant with), and she was forced to bear the heavy burden of life alone and provide for herself and her children.

With the passing of Ebrahim-Agha, although the company where he had been employed paid a monthly stipend of 1,100 tomans to his family, this allowance was by no means sufficient to comfortably manage the lives of eight small children.

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[21] This room was a small 3x4 room along with a much smaller closet.

[22] Once, when the author went to Qazvin to visit the elders of the family, and after visiting the graves, called upon Khadijeh Khanom, she said to the author: "This morning I said to myself, 'Mortaza hasn't visited me for a while,' and you came in the afternoon."

One of the relatives suggested to Khadijeh-khanom that she accept support from the orphanage (Dār al-Aytām). However, Kazem, Khadijeh-Khanom's brother, advised his sister by saying that she must also keep the future of the children in mind, and therefore should by no means accept assistance from the orphanage.

In this regard, Khadijeh-Khanom stated in her interview:

> "After the passing of Ebrahim-Agha, representatives from the orphanage came to our house twice and suggested that I place myself under their coverage, but I was not willing to accept this matter. I said that I would raise my children myself, no matter how much hardship and difficulty it entailed. And thereafter, God helped me in such a way that I never asked a single creature to help me even with one toman.
>
> Our situation was such that some relatives later found it astonishing that the children had grown up without receiving help from others. For example, Moloud's brother-in-law said that you must certainly have received help from the orphanage, and after I denied this, he went to the orphanage himself and examined their records page by page in order to prove that we had received assistance from them—but he did not find the name of me or my children anywhere in the orphanage's documents."

Haj-Kazem, in a passage from his interview, stated in this connection:

> "I told my sister, even if you have to eat bread and yogurt, do not extend your hand to anyone. And truly, my sister did exactly that. With every hardship and bitterness, she brought up her eight children out of water and mud, and all of her children have turned out to be good people. They should award my sister a medal for dignity, honor, and courage."

Khadijeh-Khanom, while recounting some of the difficulties she endured along her life's path, stated:

> "After the passing of Ebrahim-Agha, Akbar, who was still no more than an adolescent, was accepted by my husband's workplace and became a partial contributor to the family's expenses. I myself also received the monthly stipend of 1,100 tomans from my husband's workplace. But even with all this, the costs of living were high.
>
> For example, I would buy one jacket; Zinat would wear it in the mornings to go to her school, and in the afternoons Mohammad would wear it to go to his

own school. Or I bought another jacket for Akbar, which Mohammad wore and damaged the back of it. I said, after all, what's done is done, and I calmed Akbar, who had become upset.

Many times when I ran short of money, I borrowed from my mother and later repaid the borrowed money to her. Of course, I must say that my parents and my brother Kazem were also supportive of me. For example, my mother would cook food and tell me, 'Come here with the children, I've cooked food,' or Haj-Kazem would say, 'Bring the children here to me,' and would tell Hassan and Hossein, 'Go get kebab so we can eat together with the children.'

In short, my brother Haj-Kazem was in every way a support to me in the process of raising the children."

Mohammad, the son-in-law of the family, stated in his interview, describing Khadijeh-Khanom's management:

"I myself was a member of a family with eight children and lost my father, and my mother single-handedly carried our life forward. I know how difficult and arduous it is to manage several children despite economic challenges.

Khadijeh-Khanom played a key role in raising her eight children and bringing them to fruition, and nearly all of her children have attained good levels of education.

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Over three decades of living with Khadijeh-Khanom's daughter, I have seen in practice how excellently she managed and guided the lives of her children. For example, regarding myself, I must say that I may have complainedh-Khanom's daughter, I have seen in practice how excellently she managed and guided the lives of her children. For example, regarding myself, I must say that I may have complained many times to Khadijeh-Khanom about problems that I felt existed in my life and in my relationship with her daughter, but in the course of all my complaints, she never once took my side, nor did

she take her daughter's side. She always showed us, through her guidance, the correct path in life and how to overcome life's difficulties.

These matters have led me to always say that I accept your mother more than anyone else. In my view, she is a self-sacrificing woman and the central pillar of her children's lives."

Regarding Khadijeh-Khanom's magnanimity, it suffices to say that despite the hardships she experienced after her husband's death in the continuation of her life, when her beloved son passed away, she was not willing to accept even the smallest share of inheritance. Despite others advising her that by receiving her share of the inheritance—if she did not wish to use it personally—she could at least spend it on charitable works, she bestowed her inheritance share upon the children of Mohammad-Agha.

Haj-Kazem, in a brief summation of nearly four decades of the mother's efforts to bring her children out of water and mud and to guide and direct them in their later lives, stated:

"Even if my sister's children were to place their mother on their shoulders and take her on foot to Mecca ten times, they still would not have sufficiently repaid their mother."

In light of what has been briefly recounted of Khadijeh-Khanom's life, the love shown by her children—and especially Mohammad—toward her becomes more comprehensible.

Mohammad, who was no more than eleven years old at the time of his father's ascension, continued his studies in elementary school. However, because he possessed a certain amount of mischief (which is natural in intelligent individuals), he was subjected by his teacher to such severe punishment that at times his body would be injured. Eventually, he left school. His uncle Kazem, who witnessed this situation, in order to prevent Mohammad from becoming idle in the streets and neighborhood and from being harmed in that process, took him to Haj-Sohrab and Haj-Naser so that he could begin working there as an apprentice in their mechanical shop.

After apprenticing for nearly six years in the shop of Haj-Sohrab and Haj-Naser, Agha-Mohammad entered military service in 1983. After completing his service, he opened a joint shop with Mr. Yousef. He married in 1995, and in 2006 he opened an

independent shop and continued his work as a well-known and outstanding master craftsman.

After marriage and establishing an independent life, Mohammad-Agha maintained his close relationship with his devoted and exemplary mother, and it can be stated that on the vast majority of days when he was in Qazvin, he would visit his mother and inquire about her condition. Khadijeh-Khanom, describing her son's humility toward her, stated:

> "After all the daughters and sons grew up and became independent, I became alone, but the children constantly visited me, and especially Mohammad, who came to see me almost every day.
>
> When Mohammad visited me at night before going to his own home, he would see that the daughters had prepared food for me and put it on the stove. But since I sometimes had no desire to eat due to illness, Mohammad would insist that I eat. And when I said I did not like to eat alone, he would laugh and say, 'I need to lose weight for my work, so I don't eat dinner at night—but for your sake, I'll eat the crispy bottom of your rice.'"

Maryam, the sister of Master Mohammad, stated in her interview regarding the extent of Mohammad's attachment to his mother:

> "All the children consider themselves indebted to their mother's kindness and efforts, but Mohammad showed a particularly strong and special affection toward his mother. He even tried to visit her every day, and if by chance he was traveling or had an important matter that prevented him from visiting her, he would call her and inform her, saying, for example, 'Tonight I'm tied up somewhere and can't come, but I'll come see you tomorrow.'"

Master Mohammad also arranged his mother's pilgrimage to Hajj, and he himself accompanied his mother on the Umrah pilgrimage.

Monir, the wife of Master Mohammad, recalled Mohammad's deep relationship with his mother in her interview as follows:

> "At the beginning of our married life, we did not even have a television. Mohammad bought a television to start our life, but since his mother and family did not have a color television, he gave that television to them. After a long time, he took out a 50,000-toman loan and bought a television for ourselves.

> Throughout his life, whenever Mohammad wanted to do anything, his mind first turned to his mother. For example, when I said that I would like to go to Mecca, Mohammad said, 'If you take the hand of a destitute person, its reward is greater than Hajj.' But I told him that I had some coins and wanted to sell them to go to Mecca. Mohammad said, 'Let me first take my mother to Mecca, and then I will be at your service.'
>
> Mohammad visited his mother every day. Sometimes he went to see her at noon and sometimes at night, and there he would eat a few spoonfuls of food with his mother to encourage her to eat. He would then come home around 10 or 11 at night, and of course we never objected to this."

Sakineh, the mother of Master Mohammad's wife, noted in her interview that about fifteen years earlier, Mohammad-Agha's knees had become swollen and painful. He went to a doctor, and the doctor told him that he could no longer sit cross-legged on the ground. Upon hearing this, Monir began to cry, because they had purchased a house and needed to repay the home loan. But I comforted Monir and told her that since a mother's prayers were behind Mohammad and he also treated you well, your prayers had been accepted and Mohammad's knees would recover. And afterward, over the next fifteen years (that is, until the time of his passing), Mohammad's knees never once became painful.

The cousin of Master Mohammad referred to his love for his mother with the phrase: "Visiting his mother, for the father—meaning Master Mohammad—was like prayer; it was among his obligations."

The brother's wife, Gholamreza's wife, and Masoumi also mentioned in their interviews Master Mohammad's great affection for his mother as follows:

> "Mohammad was always compassionate toward his mother. He visited her every day, warmed her food for her, gave her her medications, chatted warmly with her, and then went on to attend to his other affairs."
>
> "I have a photo of Mohammad-Agha and his mother on my phone in which Mohammad-Agha is kissing his mother's hand."
>
> "Mohammad loved his mother very much and visited her every day. And if, due to some circumstance, he could not come to his mother's house, he would call her, ask about her condition over the phone, and promise that, for example, 'I'll come tomorrow.'

Mohammad's love for his mother was such that whenever his mother merely hinted at an issue in the house or mentioned that something had broken, Mohammad would personally follow up on resolving the issue or repairing the damage, and he would personally pay all the repair costs."

Shah-Mohammadi, the colleague and business partner of Master Mohammad, stated in his interview, referring to Mohammad's relationship with his mother:

> "No one has partnered with Haj-Mohammad or traveled with him as much as I have. We traveled five or six times a year together with Haj-Mohammad to Kurdistan to procure motor and battery-repair supplies, and on our return I would see that Mohammad would either buy things for his mother, or for both his mother and his own household.
>
> For example, once when we went together to the Tanakura market in Mahabad, we saw glass teapots placed on gas burners, and Mohammad first bought one of those teapots for his mother, and then bought one for his own home. Or when we bought two microwave ovens together, I saw that Haj-Mohammad intended to take the microwave he had bought to his mother. I strongly insisted that he take this souvenir to his own home for now and, on a future trip, buy the necessary items for his mother.
>
> Even outside of trips, I spent a great deal of time with Haj-Mohammad. For instance, when we went together to the produce market or to buy household necessities, I could plainly see that Mohammad's purchases were far greater than what would be needed for his own four-member family, because he could not consume something himself without his mother also consuming it."

Chegini, who had been friends with Master Mohammad from childhood until his ascension, stated succinctly in his interview that "Mohammad's life was bound to his mother."

Of course, in this section, one should not neglect to mention Master Mohammad's brothers and sisters. Mohammad, with a four-year age difference from Akbar and a one-year age difference from Zinat, was the third child of the family. Due to the young age of his other siblings, he was less influenced by them and more looked up to Akbar, who, after the father's passing, began working at the father's workplace during his teenage years and became a support to the mother.

Khadijeh-Khanom, in her interview, stated regarding the honesty and integrity of Akbar, her eldest son:

> "After the passing of Ebrahim-Agha, the factory officials agreed that Akbar could work in the factory in place of his father, and afterward I heard them say, 'Truly, this son is his father's son,' and like his father, he has honesty and integrity in his work."

Relationship with Close Relatives *(Paternal and Maternal Grandfathers and Grandmothers, Maternal Uncles, Paternal Uncles, Aunts, and Maternal Aunts)*

With the early passing of Ebrahim-Agha, the responsibilities of both the paternal and maternal families of Master Mohammad increased more than ever before, and the necessity for Khadijeh-Khanom to draw upon the support of her own parental family and the paternal family of her late husband, in order to manage and raise the eight small children of their shared life, became even more pronounced.

An examination of the field findings derived from the conducted interviews (as well as the author's direct observations in his capacity as the nephew of Ebrahim-Agha) indicates that after the ascension of Master Mohammad's father due to an accident, Khadijeh-Khanom and her children relied more on her own parental family and benefited from their assistance, rather than turning primarily to the paternal family of Ebrahim-Agha—although the paternal grandparents of Master Mohammad were not significantly different from the maternal grandparents in terms of moral integrity.

Some of the reasons for the inclination of Ebrahim-Agha's wife and children toward Khadijeh-Khanom's parental family can be enumerated as follows:

The average age of the paternal grandfather and grandmother was higher than that of the maternal grandparents, and with the passing of the paternal grandfather, the paternal grandmother was left alone. This was especially so because, due to fraudulent actions by some acquaintances, the paternal grandmother had lost her lands and herself suffered from financial hardship.

As a consequence of the age difference between the paternal and maternal grandparents' families, the average age of Master Mohammad's paternal uncles and aunts was also higher than that of his maternal uncles and aunts. In other words, while prior to the father's early passing, Ramadan-Agha, the brother of Ebrahim-Agha, had already passed away, two of Master Mohammad's maternal uncles were, due to their young age, practically of the same age as Mohammad himself—so much so that residents of the neighborhood where Khadijeh-Khanom's

parental family lived believed that Mohammad was also one of the sons of that household.

Additionally, one of Master Mohammad's paternal aunts resided in Tehran. For these reasons, the family of Master Mohammad turned more toward the maternal grandfather's family than toward the paternal grandfather's family.

Nevertheless, although Mohammad was inevitably influenced by his mother's parental family and, through emulating them, achieved moral refinement, he was by no means uninfluenced by the family of his paternal grandparents as well.[23]

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[23] The author clearly remembers that his grandmother, Fatemeh Khanom Thalath, in describing the magnanimity of her husband, would recount, for example, that when Dādā had bought kebab for the household, from the head of the alley until reaching the end of the alley he offered so much of the purchased kebab to the neighbors that by the time he arrived home, only the bread of the kebabs remained for the members of the household.
The nobility and broad mindedness of the parents had been transmitted in full to the children of the family—namely Ramazan Agha, Ebrahim Agha, Ali Agha, Tooba Khanom, and Sedigheh Khanom.
When the author, during childhood, on several occasions between the ages of ten and twelve, traveled with his uncle Ebrahim by truck thanks to his kindness, he witnessed that Uncle Ebrahim would order the best possible food for him at roadside restaurants for lunch and dinner. Meanwhile, despite his young age, when the author mentally calculated his uncle's earnings from freight transport by truck and his expenditures during the trip, he was astonished to realize that with such generosity on his uncle's part, in practice no money remained for him to take home to his family.
The author experienced the same trait of magnanimity in his Uncle Ramazan as well. Uncle Ramazan, who had lost four fingers of his hand in a road accident and had thus become disabled in one hand, was compelled to take up simple jobs (which naturally brought lower income). Sometimes, when familiar truck drivers entrusted him with unloading their cargo, he would spend all the money he earned on buying kebab to host the author and his older brother, who had been sent alone by their mother to Qazvin—despite the fact that the next day, due to being without work, his own family's table might be empty.
Ali Agha, the author's uncle and the younger paternal uncle of Master Mohammad, was also, in his own right, a great human being. In the final days of his fruitful life, when the author went to visit him, he sensed the vitality of the path of union at its highest possible level within him—meaning that while Uncle Ali was lying on a bed in the intensive care unit, struggling with death, he bade farewell to the author (for the last time) with his customary humor and laughter.
Tooba Khanom, the paternal aunt of Master Mohammad, was likewise a refined and elevated individual. Despite the fact that her eldest son was the CEO of Iran Khodro, she refused to make use of his personal driver. While traveling from Qazvin to Tehran, having gotten off the bus near Karaj in order to visit the author's children—who were living in the university residential complex in Hesarak, Karaj—she was involved in a severe accident and ascended to the higher realm. In this way, she presented to her children and grandchildren a complete embodiment of reason and love, demonstrating that love must be taught to children and grandchildren; for example, that on this path one must, with a basket full of various treats (for one's grandchildren), even when lacking the physical ability to climb and cross a highway pedestrian bridge, consent to crossing the width of the busy Tehran–Qazvin highway (and be torn apart in an accident—which indeed happened).
Aunt Sedigheh, the paternal aunt of Master Mohammad, was herself a gnostic minded individual. After the passing of her husband, she reached a state of hardship in life without any financial support, yet her inner richness never allowed her to utter a word of complaint or grievance about fate. In her prayers and night vigils, she prayed only for others. When the author heard, for the first time, her groaning about remaining in this world, he told his family, "Aunt is leaving," and within less than a month she passed to the eternal abode.
The remarkable qualities of the Heidarzadeh family were not limited to the children, but could also be observed in some of the grandchildren of this family (such as Master Mohammad). For example, when the author told Mahboubeh Khanom, another grandchild of the family who was suffering from cancer and at the same time was

Khadijeh-Khanom's paternal family had already placed helping their sister on their agenda even before the passing of Ebrahim-Agha. In this regard, Khadijeh-Khanom's younger sister stated in her interview:

> "Since my sister had children born very close together, I helped her from the very beginning. For example, at the age of 10–12, I would first take Akbar to our own house and tire him out. Then I would go back to my sister's place, exchange Akbar for Zinat, and after tiring Zinat out, I would return to my sister and take Mohammad from her so that I could tire him out through play as well… And whenever my sister went to the bath, I would take the children one by one so that she could wash them."

After the unfortunate traffic accident involving Ebrahim-Agha, which resulted in his death at the age of 39, Khadijeh-Khanom's paternal family—including the grandfather, grandmother, maternal uncles, and maternal aunts—all set out to support another child of the family and to assist her in the optimal upbringing of her children.

Haj-Kazem stated in his interview that: "My mother paid very close attention to her children, especially her daughter Khadijeh and her grandchildren (including Mohammad, who had come to stay with us).[24]

> My late mother would nurture Mohammad just like my other brothers, and if by chance I said to Akbar or Mohammad at the table, 'Give me the glass of water,' my mother would become upset and ask why I had used such words toward Akbar or Mohammad and ordered them around."

He further stated:

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traveling for the Hajj pilgrimage, that at the Kaaba she should ask God Himself before asking for her own healing, she responded magnanimously, "Yes, I myself had thought exactly the same."
Similarly, in the many meetings the author had with Amir, another grandchild of the family who, due to illness, for many years had to expel bodily waste through an attached abdominal pouch, he never once heard a word of dissatisfaction from him regarding his illness. Or Ashraf Khanom, who despite having undergone spinal surgery, rushed to help her mother when she saw her in danger of falling—an act that resulted in her spine being crushed and injured again, necessitating another spinal surgery.

[24] Since two of Khadijeh Khanom's daughters had passed away during infancy, and immediately after Zinat's birth Mohammad was born, Khadijeh Khanom's family feared that the combined burden of household duties on the one hand and caring for two nursing infants on the other might harm the children. Initially, they took Zinat to live with them so that Khadijeh Khanom could better attend to Mohammad. After Zinat and Mohammad grew somewhat older, and especially after Mohammad's father's ascension, Mohammad increasingly moved to live with his maternal grandfather's family—to the extent that local residents, since he was the same age as several of his maternal uncles, thought he was one of the children of that household and a brother to the uncles.

> "My father also looked kindly upon my sister Khadijeh's children, and especially monitored Mohammad's behavior—since he was at our house more often—and watched over him so that he might not commit any mistake."

The younger maternal aunt of Master Mohammad noted in her interview that sometimes their father (Mohammad's grandfather) would take him along to the garden, and upon returning Mohammad would say, "Grandpa digs the garden very deeply," thus showing that he had been influenced by his grandfather's serious approach to work.

Khadijeh-Khanom stated in her interview:

> "I used to tell Mohammad and the other children to go and take your uncle as your role model."

Abolfazl, who had inherited the spare-parts business from his father and had long-standing interactions with Haj-Kazem as a truck driver and customer, referred to him in his interview as a "gem"—a description that several other interviewees repeated verbatim.

The younger maternal aunt of Master Mohammad also emphasized in her report that although all of Mohammad's uncles were good people, Haj-Kazem's seniority had caused him to exercise direct supervision over Mohammad's movements and conduct, and consequently Mohammad was more influenced by him in terms of upbringing.[25]

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[25] One of Haj Kazem's important actions on behalf of Mohammad-Agha was entrusting him to morally upright individuals for vocational training. In this sense, after Mohammad ran away from school at the age of eleven, Haj Kazem sought to place him under the supervision of righteous men so that, through apprenticing with them, Mohammad would not only learn a profession for his future but also continue his moral upbringing and ethical education. Accordingly, he entrusted Mohammad to Haj Naser and Haj Sohrab, so that Mohammad would first work as an errand boy in their mechanical shop and later, upon entering the field of mechanics, be employed as their apprentice.

In the field interviews conducted, some interviewees emphasized the integrity and probity of Haj Naser and Haj Sohrab, describing apprenticeship under them as a valuable opportunity for Mohammad-Agha.

Atashgar, in his interview, emphasizing that Master Mohammad was also morally trained during his period of errand work and apprenticeship under Haj Naser and Haj Sohrab, stated:

> "Haj Mohammad took the good from everyone, and he also took the good qualities of Haj Naser and Haj Sohrab.
>
> The community of drivers often suffers from certain moral shortcomings, and the community of mechanics, too, has not always remained free from other issues such as swapping parts, taking commissions, and the like.
>
> Haj Naser was a noble and good man, and I never once witnessed foul language from him. Likewise, this good man was not someone who took commissions or similar things. When an apprentice sees that his

Masoumi, the aunt's husband, stated in his report that he had repeatedly heard Master Mohammad say, "My main pillar of support is Uncle Kazem." Mohabbi-Khah, one of Master Mohammad's colleagues, explained Mohammad's ethical and spiritual elevation in his interview by stating:

> "Haj-Mohammad himself used to say that Haj-Kazem was my role model, and that during my growth period he guided and directed me greatly."

The wife of Master Mohammad's brother emphasized in her interview that Mohammad's uncle was, in essence, a highly elevated human being, for whom even a small sin was considered a major sin, and for this reason Mohammad had grown up with very precise and compassionate guidance.

In his interview, Haj-Kazem occasionally referred to his own conduct when speaking about Master Mohammad, in order to point to the observational learning effect of his behavior on his nephew. In one passage, he described his own actions as follows:

> "Fasting while driving is very difficult. Once during Ramadan, my colleague and I realized after breaking the fast that we had nothing in the truck to eat.

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master believes in what is lawful and unlawful, he is trained accordingly. But if he sees his master stealing, then committing wrongdoing and deceiving people later on becomes easy for him.

Haj Naser may not have helped needy people very much, but his purity of character was enough for Mohammad to learn that even in an environment where one can easily make money by swapping parts and the like, it is still possible to live honestly and earn a lawful livelihood."

Haj Sohrab, in his own interview, referred to his religious commitment and ethical conduct in his work environment as follows:

> "I have been working since 1973 (1352). At first, I was an apprentice to Haj Naser, and later I became his business partner. Over nearly half a century of my working life, I have tried not to let even one thousand tomans go this way or that unjustly.
>
> For example, if a truck part remains with me, I tell the driver, 'Are you taking this part or not? If you're not, I'll sell it.' If the driver gives me a negative answer and does not want his part, then that item becomes lawful for me. Right now, it has been a week that I have set aside an item that belongs to a customer in the corner of my shop so that I can return it to its owner.
>
> It has never been my practice to take commissions that would lead me to install poor-quality parts for a customer and harm them for my own benefit. Likewise, if, for instance, a machinist has done poor work or a part is counterfeit, since I do not take commissions, I hold them accountable and defend my customer's rights. That is why my customers—from different parts of Iran—leave their engines with me with full confidence and only tell me to send them the invoice.
>
> My honesty has resulted in the fact that after nearly half a century of work, even now I do not have thirty million tomans to do anything special with. Yet I thank God that I have never been left helpless in my life and work."

In another part of his account, Haj Sohrab indirectly referred to his own humility, a form of capital that was also added to the moral capital of Ostad Mohammad. In one passage of his interview, he stated:

> "I was in another garage, and when I came to Nowruziyan Garage to buy my current shop, I consulted Haj Mohammad about it as well. Mohammad said, 'Haji, you're buying the shop at a high price.' But I replied to him, 'A place where you are present, and where you are my master, is worth it.'"

So we mixed potatoes with tomato paste and ate that. The next morning we overslept and missed suhoor. My friend asked, 'What should we do now?' I said, 'I am going to fast.' Haj Nazar also followed my lead and agreed to fast. But that day the fast was so hard on us that half an hour before iftar Haj Nazar had poured tea into his saucer and was saying, 'Come on, where is the muezzin? Just say the call to prayer already!'"

In another part of his statements, Haj-Kazem said:

"I have worked in the extreme heat of Ahvaz and Zahedan, and with my own hard-earned money I have gone on the Hajj pilgrimage twice."

Describing another part of his conduct—which in fact reflects his work integrity—Haj-Kazem said:

"Once I went beyond Jiroft to Dambeh-Vey to load watermelons. The farm owner told me beforehand, 'Sir, let me warn you, the road here is damaged, and the drivers who have come here before have cursed me countless times. What will you do?'

I said, 'Obviously I will load your watermelons and I won't utter a single inappropriate word, because you are not at fault for the condition of the road, and after all, you have to get what you have grown to the market.'

Another time, in Mil-Kaj, which was a border area, they asked me to go and load watermelons. Eventually the watermelons were loaded onto the truck. The farm owner brought me some large melons and watermelons and said, 'You are the fiftieth truck that has come here. Others who came saw the unevenness of the land and backed out, refusing to load the produce. But you loaded my watermelons without making excuses and without touching the melons and watermelons in the field. That's why I brought these melons and watermelons to thank you.'"

Parviz also described Haj-Kazem's high moral values, stating:

"A vehicle had broken down on the Bandar Abbas road and was stuck in the middle of the road. In such situations, other drivers usually became angry at the driver of the broken-down vehicle for blocking the road. But Haj-Kazem stopped his own truck by the roadside and went into the middle of the road to stop traffic so that an accident would not happen."

In another account of his activities, Haj-Kazem stated:

> "Sometimes I have parked my truck for ten days just to pursue someone else's problem. For example, a driver had been involved in an accident in which a person died. The police arrested the driver and took him to prison. Because the driver had a family who had no supporter to provide for them, I went to get that driver released from prison. I took a wreath to the deceased's funeral, but the family of the deceased tore my wreath apart. Still, I continued to pursue the family's consent so that the driver's family might be saved from severe suffering.
>
> Another time, a man had been in an accident and had spent 17 months in Khaf Prison in Mashhad. I collected money and went to pay the blood money and obtain the consent of the victim's family. When I went to the gendarmerie to get the address of the deceased's home, they told me, 'Don't go to their village, because they might attack and kill you.' Nevertheless, I gathered courage, found the victim's family in the village, and met them. The victim's brother demanded cash, while we had brought a check. Eventually, a charitable man stepped forward and said, 'Someone who comes from Qazvin to seek consent will not steal people's money. I guarantee him—let him go and bring the cash.' They gave their consent, and thank God the matter was resolved happily."

In his interview, Abolfazl noted that long-haul drivers, because they are often far from their families, may fall into various forms of corruption such as addiction, alcoholism, and illicit relationships, but Haj-Kazem was free from all of these. Haj-Kazem himself referred to this issue in his statements, saying:

> "In Zahedan the road was under security control. I was driving when a soldier raised his hand and I stopped. He asked me for sugar and tea; I said I didn't have any. He asked for cigarettes; I said I don't smoke and don't have cigarettes.
>
> Then the soldier told his superior, 'Sir, we've found a driver who has no tea, no sugar, and no cigarettes.' His commander said, 'Then we should submit this driver's name to the television program *Didani-ha*[26] so they can introduce him there.'"

[26] Didani-ha was a television program broadcast in the 1980s and 1990s, hosted by Jalal Maqami, and aired on Sundays on Channel Two of Iranian television.
The broadcast of this program began in 1983 and continued for twelve years. During those years, which coincided with the eight year war period, it became one of the most popular television programs in Iran and is now remembered as a nostalgic program. Various segments of this program were compiled and broadcast from diverse

With the purity of character described above, Haj-Kazem took the upbringing and support of his sister's children very seriously and often considered it his duty to intervene at key formative moments and guide them.

Khadijeh-Khanom stated in her interview:

> "After Ebrahim-Agha passed away, some people volunteered to help our family, but Haj-Kazem told me, 'Keep your focus on the children's future. Even if your food is just bread and yogurt, do not accept money from others.' Since I thought the same way, I gave negative responses to those who came to help us and did not accept their assistance."

Haj-Kazem stated in his report that when the children were small, he sometimes took Akbar and Mohammad along with him for recreation while hauling cargo to different cities, letting them splash and play in irrigation canals along the way.

In another part of his statements, Haj-Kazem mentioned that he had clearly established himself in the neighborhood as the defender of his sister's children. He recalled:

> "Once a neighbor went to my sister's house and said, 'Mohammad caught my pigeon in mid-air, and he must return it; it's a valuable pigeon.' When I heard this, I went to the neighbor's house and told him, 'Come and see whether your pigeon is among Mohammad's pigeons.' Then I told him, 'Let this be the last time you come to my sister's house. My sister's children have an owner. You or anyone else have no right to lower your head and enter my sister's house. If you have business, you must come to me.'"

As Master Mohammad grew older, since the schoolteacher drove him away from his studies through severe corporal punishment,[27] Haj-Kazem took him by the hand and brought him to the garage so that he would not be left idle in the streets, entrusting him to Haj Sohrab and Haj Naser for errands and later apprenticeship.

Afterward, Haj-Kazem regularly visited the garage and inquired about Mohammad's behavior and good conduct from the master craftsmen and those around him. In this regard, Haj-Kazem stated:

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sources, including domestic productions, the archives of the national broadcaster, its representative offices in Paris, London, and Bonn, as well as films sent in by viewers.

[27] The account of Master Mohammad's mother in law differs on this matter, and in her view, Mohammad left school in order to help support the family

> "Driving is a difficult profession, and drivers, because of being far from their families and the hardship of their work, may commit certain mistakes. For example, once as I was passing by a park, I saw several retired drivers sitting on a bench, and among them was an acquaintance who had become wheelchair-bound. As I passed by, the wheelchair-bound driver said, 'God, what did I do to end up like this?' At the same time his friend said, 'Say what you didn't do!' The protesting driver immediately said, 'Enough—don't say any more!'
>
> That's why I felt obliged to constantly check on Mohammad's workplace and ask the masters and apprentices about his behavior. I used to tell them, 'Mohammad is a piece of my flesh; I must look after him.'"

Haj-Kazem noted in his report that both Mohammad's grandfather and he himself would, from time to time and in various situations, advise Mohammad (and his siblings) and explain to them the proper way of living a healthy life. In one passage, regarding the grandfather's behavior toward Mohammad-Agha, he said:

> "Mohammad's grandfather visited Khadijeh-Khanom and her children frequently and paid close attention to them, always asking whether they lacked anything. He would bring them the best early fruits, or tell Mohammad, 'Mohammad, come to the square and take fruit for your house.' Sometimes the grandfather would sit and talk to Mohammad (and the other children), saying things like, 'My dears, be considerate of people, love people, and try to make people happy.'"

Haj-Kazem stated in his interview that in addition to the grandfather, he himself, as the eldest son, considered it his duty—alongside providing various forms of support to his sister and her children—to teach his nephews the code of chivalry. Describing some of the advice he gave Mohammad-Agha, he said:

> "I constantly advised Mohammad and explained the plan for his work and life. For example, once a woman in a spare-parts shop secretly put some money from the counter into her bag, and the seller raised his hand against her. I told Mohammad, 'Mohammad, look—don't be like this person, and never raise your hand against a woman! Wheat has a center line; we too must have a line and not be without one.'
>
> I have several friends who have sheep and take them to pasture. But when they take their sheep out, they only accompany the herd with female dogs,

because they know that wolves are shy of female dogs and are unwilling to attack them. You too should learn to be modest toward women and observe modesty.

When Mohammad opened his shop, I told him, ‘Mohammad, only pursue lawful money, and don’t seek to take excessive money from people. Because someone who does not respect rights and takes more money from people ends up eating pears on a hospital bed, whereas someone who respects people’s rights can eat a pear while sitting.’

Similarly, I advised Mohammad, ‘Always be fair and deal fairly with people. If a person is fair and takes money from people fairly, all his dealings will be fair.’ For example, I told him about a mechanic who became the owner of everything in two years, but it turned out he had taken people’s car parts, installed them for others, and taken their money. Eventually, that man became miserable. There was another person who even cheated his own father, to the extent that his father said to him, ‘May you become such that you cannot put bread in your mouth,’ and his situation truly reached the point where for four full years a nurse had to put food in his mouth until he died. Or so-and-so—because he cheated others—firstly, I and many others cut ties with him and stopped visiting his shop because we knew his dealings were not lawful, and secondly, he developed laryngeal cancer.

Therefore, never seek to violate people’s rights, and know that just as we give grain and water to our own chickens every morning, we too are like God’s chickens, and He provides our sustenance. So we should not think about cheating this one or that one in order to secure our livelihood”.

Haj-Kazem noted in his interview that, alongside showing Mohammad the way of life, whenever necessary he would admonish and even reprimand him:

“Since Mohammad spent most of his time in our house, I constantly supervised his actions and behavior, and if even a small mistake came from him, I would admonish him so that the mistake would not be repeated. And he would lower his head, and out of shame would say nothing.”

Mohammad-Ali, in his interview, recounted a similar memory about Master Mohammad:

“Once Haj-Mohammad was telling me that we were hauling cargo with Haj-Kazem’s truck when my eyes fell on a woman in the street. Haj-Kazem

noticed the direction of my glance and reached the same woman with his gaze, and he reprimanded me, saying, 'Why are you looking at people's honor?' I replied to Haj-Kazem that my look had been accidental, and the matter ended there."

Haj-Kazem's supervision over Mohammad's behavior on the one hand, and his firm support of him on the other, continued in later years as well. In this regard, Haj-Kazem stated in his report:

"When Mohammad was stabbed by a few unruly individuals because of an act of *enjoining what is right* toward them, I pursued the matter and asked Mohammad not to simply let it go, but to take their action to the law-enforcement and judicial authorities so that a record would remain for them in the police departments and courts, so that they would not dare again to assault others so easily and, God forbid, take a person's life in the process."

Regarding his support for Mohammad-Agha, Haj-Kazem stated:

"One day at the garage, government-priced clutch plates were being distributed. Since the clutch plate of my own vehicle was broken, Mohammad removed it and installed a government-priced clutch plate for me. Later, the union representative made a sarcastic remark to me, saying that your nephew has engaged in favoritism. I told him your claim is not correct; now let us bring in an arbitrator, and if the arbitrator rules against you, you must wash the trash out, and if the arbitrator rules against you, you must wash the trash out of the truck.

The union representative accepted, and we chose Haj-Hossein as the arbitrator. After examining the heat marks left on the vehicle, he ruled in my favor. I then told Haj-Abbas, the union representative who had baselessly accused Mohammad of favoritism, 'Now sit down and wash the trash out of the truck.'"

The very, very simple advice of Haj-Kazem bore fruit in practice in Master Mohammad and manifested itself in his behavioral moments.

Chegini noted in his interview that after Mohammad had become established in the garage, Haj-Kazem would say to him:

> "I take pride in the fact that in this garage I have a nephew who, while being skilled, also possesses ethics, manners, and people-centeredness, and for this reason has become a source of pride for me and for his family."

Masoumi, Master Mohammad's uncle by marriage, emphasized in his report that Mohammad always said that Uncle Kazem had been and remained his pillar of support, and that whenever Mohammad heard a word or message from Haj-Kazem, he accepted it wholeheartedly. Haj-Kazem himself stated in this regard:

> "Once I encountered a stranger whose vehicle had broken down, and he told me that he neither had money to buy the needed part nor money to pay the mechanic's wage. I sent him to Mohammad, and Mohammad did his work without taking any payment.
>
> In other cases, when Mohammad was very busy and could not service some drivers, they would appeal to me, and when I called Mohammad and said, 'If you can, also take care of so-and-so's work,' he would say, 'All right, I'll go home a few hours later tonight and fix the vehicle you asked about as well.'"

Haj-Kazem's compassionate conduct continued not only toward Mohammad and his siblings, but also toward his sister Khadijeh-Khanom. In the matter of dividing the inheritance among Master Mohammad's heirs, while some people urged Khadijeh-Khanom to take her share of her son's inheritance and spend it on charity, she relinquished her share in favor of Haj-Mohammad's daughters. When this reached Haj-Kazem's ears, he said: *I do not interfere in my sister's affairs, and I respect her decisions.*

Relationship with Sisters and Brothers

From early childhood, Master Mohammad was sensitive toward his sisters and brothers and felt a sense of responsibility toward them. As he grew older, according to several siblings, he tried—alongside his elder brother—to fill the void left by their father for the younger siblings. Mohammad-Agha avoided issuing commands or giving orders and spoke to the younger family members from the position of a counselor, sharing his life experiences with them so that, by benefiting from those experiences, they could choose the correct and appropriate path in their own lives.

Of course, when necessary, according to the interviewees, the Master did not refrain from providing practical and financial support to his relatives, and when required, he would enter the scene in a practical manner and take action.

Zinat recalled her brother's sense of protective honor toward his sisters from childhood as follows:

> "Mohammad had a special sense of protectiveness over us, his sisters. For example, he would say to me, 'Don't come out into the alley; God forbid my friends might see you,' and I would say, 'Okay.'"

Moloud, Master Mohammad's younger sister, also noted in her interview that she would realize her mistake simply from her brother's look and would try to correct it.

> Sakineh recalled in her report that Mohammad, from early adolescence when he began working, tried to support his sisters and brothers in this way: when he received his apprentice wages at the end of the week from the mechanic's shop, he would buy sweets for his younger siblings. And to people such as Moloud, who wished to attend various classes, he would say, "Go to the classes you need; if necessary, I will cover the costs of your classes."

Master Mohammad's supportive outlook continued into adulthood. By spending money on the family home, he expanded its second floor, which was later placed at the disposal of his elder brother so that he could live there after marriage. Monir, the Master's wife, stated in this regard:

> "When Mohammad and I got married, everyone thought that since Mohammad had built the second floor of his mother's house, he might ask Akbar to move so that he could use that floor himself. But this was not the case, and Mohammad told me: 'We will not live on the second floor of my mother's house.'"

Maryam, in her interview, described her brother as someone who had filled the void left by their father:

> "Sometimes our mother would describe our father for us—a kind-hearted, good-natured, cheerful, open-hearted man, content with God's will and devout. And since I had never seen anyone as good-tempered as Mohammad, I felt that everything about Mohammad resembled our father, and that he had, in practice, filled our father's absence for us. He not only visited our mother every day, but also planned things so that, for example, two or three times a

week the siblings would see one another, and who should go to our mother's house on which day so that she would not be alone. With the loss of Mohammad, it is as if all of us have once again lost our father."

Monir expressed similar sentiments:

> "After Moloud's husband passed away, Mohammad tried to fill the father's role for his sister's children. For example, when one of Moloud's children was admitted to Zanjan University, he followed up to have the student transferred from Zanjan University to Qazvin University so that the child could stay close to the mother.
>
> I think… I think that with Mohammad's departure, not only did my own children become fatherless, but Moloud's children did as well. In other words, Mohammad was not only the man of my household; he was the man of other households too."

Chegini, in his interview, similarly recalled the Master's extensive affection toward Moloud's children, who had lost their father:

> "Because Moloud-Khanom's children had lost their father, Haj-Mohammad showed them extra affection so that they would not feel deprived. For example, I saw that when cooking for a votive offering, Haj-Mohammad would involve Ali as well, and the two of them would cook together. Mohammad would tell me, 'All the children of the siblings are one side, but Moloud's children are another side.' This stemmed from his great spirit, so that Moloud-Khanom's children would not feel the loss of a father and supporter."

In his interactions with his siblings, while preserving respect for his elder brother, Master Mohammad sought, to the best of his ability, to support his sisters and brothers through counseling, practical assistance, and financial help.

Zinat said about her brother:

> "Mohammad was not into giving orders. For example, if he wanted water, he wouldn't tell someone, 'Bring me water.' He would get up himself and bring water so that if anyone else was thirsty, they could drink as well. In other words, Mohammad taught or reminded others of things through his own actions."

In another aspect of his relationship with his siblings, Master Mohammad offered them counsel. Haj-Kazem recalled the Master's gentle and compassionate manner toward a family member who had made a mistake, and Zinat noted that if Mohammad saw an error from his younger brother, he would not treat him harshly but would, through his words, draw his attention to more serious matters of life.

In another part of her interview, Zinat described an instance of Mohammad advising Moloud after she had lost her husband to illness:

> "Our Moloud's husband passed away due to illness, and she consulted Mohammad about what would be best to do at that time. Mohammad told her, 'At present, because of some problems created by your husband's family, your living environment has become somewhat unfavorable, so it would be better for you to leave your current home so that your nerves are not under pressure. And so that you won't have the problem of moving every year, it's better to sell whatever is necessary to gather the money to buy a house.'
>
> So Moloud even sold her gold to gather the money to buy a house, and with Mohammad's help, she found a house and bought it for herself and her children. After Moloud bought the house, Mohammad said, 'Now my mind is at ease regarding Moloud and her children.'"

Practical intervention was another dimension of Mohammad-Agha's actions, alongside counseling his siblings. In this regard, Moloud said in her interview:

> "After my husband passed away, whenever a problem arose for me and I asked Mohammad for help, he would come to help me even without changing out of his work clothes, and he never did anything that would make me hesitate to call him again. Mohammad never even once told me, for example, 'Akbar, Saeed, and Hamid are also your brothers—this time ask them to help you.'
>
> Mohammad's compassion extended greatly to my children as well. When my children were not at our mother's house, he would say to me, 'Without your children, there is no warmth here,' so that next time I would be sure to come to our mother's house with my children.
>
> Once, when I wanted to go to a real-estate agency to arrange housing, I called Mohammad but he did not answer. Later I realized that Mohammad had called me 16 times looking for me. Then he apologized, saying that he had left his phone behind and hadn't noticed my call.

> These kinds of support continued constantly when I needed to speak with my brother-in-law, move house, or buy a home."

The wife of the Master's brother similarly recalled Mohammad-Agha's helpfulness, reporting that Mohammad was always ready to devote time to solving his siblings' problems and would even say, "I wish you had told me too, so I could have come to help you."

Yahya, a colleague and neighbor of the Master at Norouzian Garage, stated:

> "In the work environment, I witnessed that if a problem arose for the family—especially the sisters—Haj-Mohammad would not let night turn into morning. He would drop whatever he was doing and go to help them. One could say that Mohammad was the first person to be present whenever a problem arose for a family member."

Financial support of siblings during various difficulties formed another aspect of Master Mohammad's actions.

Monir reported that when Moloud's husband was ill, Moloud's brother-in-law had told her to keep her husband in Qazvin, but Mohammad stepped in and said, "If it is necessary to transfer your husband to Tehran for continued treatment, do so, and I will stand behind you in any way needed." to Tehran for continued treatment, do so, and I will stand behind you in any way needed." After Moloud's husband passed away, Mohammad also took care of the arrangements for transferring the body and holding the ceremonies.

Zinat also recalled the Master's financial accompaniment during the financial hardships of relatives, and Atashgar—Master Mohammad's childhood friend and later his colleague—referred to the expenses he incurred for his siblings in times of necessity.

Maryam, Mohammad's sister, offered a brief summative assessment of her brother's role in the family:

> "Mohammad was the problem-solver of the family, our friend and our confidant, and it was because of these things that I personally was willing even to give my life for Mohammad."

Relationship with His Wife[28]

The simple life of Mohammad and Monir began and progressed in harmony. Several interviewees, while acknowledging that they had taken many family trips with the Master, his wife, and his children, unanimously spoke of Monir's personal virtues, mentioning her religious observance, proper hijab, modesty, avoidance of makeup, devotion to pilgrimage and prayer, hospitality, and similar qualities.

At the same time, Master Mohammad, with love and interest in his wife and family, sought to explain his own values to his wife and encourage her to walk along the value-based path he envisioned. For example, Monir stated in her interview—alongside remarks that Mohammad tried as much as possible to meet the family's needs and to help with household chores—that the Master familiarized her with his values both directly and indirectly. Statements such as "Our essence is our humanity," "Helping the poor is superior to spending money on the lesser pilgrimage," and "Children take their cues from our humanity, and education alone does not guarantee a good end," were among the Master's beliefs that he expressed at various points in life.

Naturally, since men and women possess notable psychological differences—such as men's tendency to approach life issues more rationally and women's tendency to approach them more emotionally, or men's more holistic view versus women's more detail-oriented perspective—the emergence of disagreements between spouses is a natural matter. However, in such situations, the Master acted with great humility and patience so that the course of family life would not suffer serious disruption. Monir recalled one such instance of the Master's calming approach as follows:

> "If an issue arose in life that made me upset with someone or a family, I expected my husband to support me and, like me, condemn them. But in those moments Mohammad would tell me, 'Let it go. Even if others have made a mistake, it is not fitting for us to pursue this matter. These people speak and act according to their level of understanding—why should we take it personally?' But I was not convinced and would say, 'You are forgiving

[28] Some of the interviewees in this section were unwilling to express their views. For example, Moloud, in explaining her reluctance to provide information in this regard, stated:

> "One of Mohammad's ethical traits was that no one's dignity should be violated. For this reason, I am also not willing to violate anyone's dignity by recounting the confidences Mohammad shared with me."

Similarly, statements by some other interviewees, in line with this approach, have not been included in this section.

toward everyone and deal with them through forgiveness, and you shouldn't act this way…'"

In any case, the course of Monir and Master Mohammad's life continued with the usual ups and downs present in many families, until Monir was diagnosed with cancer.

Because of the many psychological pressures that cancer brings with it, it often pushes those afflicted toward intense psychological reactions such as anxiety, depression, and the like. At this stage of her life, Monir faced the severe psychological pressure of cancer and mistakenly tried to conceal it, simultaneously reducing her interactions with others. Had a psychologist assisted her at that point, perhaps an opposite course would have been explained to her—so that in the low point of her life, she might experience compassion, kindness, and the prayers of others, thereby reducing some of the psychological pressure she faced and continuing her life with less emotional tension and in a more reasonable manner.

Monir described her encounter with cancer—which on one hand was accompanied by severe psychological pressure, and on the other hand by her husband's full support during this sensitive period—as follows:

> "For some time I felt a small tumor in my chest, so I decided to immediately go for an ultrasound. But each time it came to actually doing it, out of fear that the result might indicate cancer, I would step back and regret going. The state of fear and hesitation that had taken hold of me persisted until one time I came down with cold-like symptoms. I went to the doctor, and after ordering several tests, he told me that all your biological indicators are disrupted. From there on, I seriously submitted to a mammogram to understand the physical problem I had developed.
>
> The mammogram result was exactly the horror that I had tried for a long time to keep buried in the back of my mind and divert my attention away from.
>
> The involvement of the breast with cancerous tumors and the involvement of the lymphatic system and lungs is a terrifying event for any woman. The severity grade of my cancer was 3, and for many people this grade is synonymous with a complete dead end and the loss of hope for any kind of treatment.
>
> I told Mohammad about what had happened, and he told me, 'It's no problem. You go look for the best specialist in this field and don't think about the

money at all. If necessary, we'll even sell our own house and spend it on your treatment.'

Mohammad had a friend whose brother was a highly skilled surgeon in Tehran. He would, while removing the breast, simultaneously perform cosmetic breast surgery as well. Through this friend we followed up about that doctor, but found that he had left Iran. I went to another doctor who warned me, 'Pay the hospitalization cost tonight so that I can remove your breast tomorrow morning.'

Mohammad told me, 'Consult with a few more people and then make your final decision.' I contacted my cousin Manizheh in Tehran, and she gave me the address of the Tehran Cancer Patients Association, through which I pursued my treatment. Eventually, after getting an appointment with a doctor we had found, I went to his office at 4 a.m. The doctor reviewed my documents and said that he needed to know the latest status of my disease, so he ordered numerous tests related to the breasts, lymph nodes, and lungs. I gathered this information over the course of a month and finally submitted to surgery. Along with the breast removal, the necessary cosmetic surgery was also performed using tissue taken from my back.

On the day of the surgery, Mohammad brought my children as well and placed them in a hotel so that immediately after the surgery he could bring them to see me and thus give me encouragement.

After the difficult surgery, with the beginning of chemotherapy I found myself in another ordeal, because the chemotherapy affected me so severely that I would approach the verge of fainting.

My mother and sister, who were aware of my illness, became extremely distressed when witnessing my chemotherapy sessions. So in order to spare them further pain, I no longer told them the dates of my chemotherapy, and I endured the pain and suffering of the illness and the psychological fear of it on my own. Only Mohammad and my children accompanied me along this path and comforted me.

Since my chemotherapy coincided with the peak of COVID-19, Mohammad would drive me to the chemotherapy center in Tehran and then sit in the car until the treatment was finished, and we would return to Qazvin together.

> After ten chemotherapy sessions, my radiotherapy began. There were two options for radiotherapy—Zanjan ten chemotherapy sessions, my radiotherapy began. There were two options for radiotherapy—Zanjan and Tehran—but since the Zanjan radiotherapy center was a charitable center, Mohammad told me, 'Since we have a relative level of financial ability, it's better that we go to Tehran and not take the place of needy and ill people in that charitable center.' So Mohammad took me every day to a radiotherapy center in Tehran and did this for forty days. The radiotherapy also affected me greatly and caused inflammation, so Mohammad would turn on the car's air conditioner to reduce the heat and inflammation that had overtaken me.
>
> Throughout the period of my illness, Mohammad made great efforts for my health. As far as I know, just for my surgery he spent 50 million tomans. But no matter how much I asked him how much he had spent on my illness in total, he never told me, so that I would not feel ashamed. Yet I know that for this he had taken both loans and borrowed money, and only once did it slip from his mouth that to treat one's patient, one must pay doctors and medical centers the price of an apartment."

A collection of factors—such as the grief of losing her father (which occurred shortly before Monir's struggle with cancer), fear of confronting cancer (which, due to Monir's delay in visiting medical centers, led to the worsening of her condition), enduring the anxieties of surgery, chemotherapy, and radiotherapy on one hand, and concealing her illness from others, cutting off relationships, and medical centers, led to the worsening of her condition), enduring the anxieties of surgery, chemotherapy, and radiotherapy on one hand, and concealing her illness from others, cutting off relationships, and the extensive psychological distress caused by cancer on the other—created a fragile psychological condition for Monir, especially since those who did not know the reason for her withdrawal might have confronted her with harsher criticism.

At the same time, significant social changes within the country, as well as notable transformations at the global level, created a suitable space for Monir to seek refuge in Instagram and virtual media.[29]

[29] In a five volume series, the author has examined the cultural effects of the use of the social network Instagram, demonstrating the cultural shift of Instagram users from their indigenous culture toward the dominant culture prevailing on Instagram.

According to many interviewees (family members, relatives, friends, and colleagues), some value changes in the Master's wife during the final years of the Master's fruitful life had reduced her inner vitality.

With the occurrence of the accident on the day of Eid al-Adha in the year 2023, many transformations took place for the Master's wife and children, the maternal family, relatives, and other friends and colleagues of the Master.

Zinat stated in her interview that once, when they had gone to her brother's grave, one of the cemetery workers approached her and said that a woman comes to this grave every morning before sunrise and throws herself onto it. In the quiet hours of early morning, the cemetery is not very safe, and she should be told to act with greater caution.

Zinat added that now Monir, like the rest of them, understands what a blessing she has lost.

Monir said in her interview, referring to the loss of Master Mohammad:

> "Mohammad and I had nearly 30 years of married life together, and during that entire time I never once bought meat, chicken, fish, or similar items myself, and my refrigerator and freezer were always completely full. But with Mohammad gone, I realized that life is much harder and more difficult than I had imagined. Now that I go from one office to another to get my work done, I truly understand how skillfully Mohammad managed life, and sometimes I think to myself: can I really get through the hardships ahead of me?"

It should also be noted that, just as was mentioned in the first chapter of the book under the title *"Possessing a Kind of Intuition"* regarding Master Mohammad, Monir reported in her interview that at present, whenever she encounters a difficulty in her life, her husband comes to her aid in her dreams and visions, and she then observes the concrete realization of that help and assistance in the real world.

As an example, Monir stated in one part of her interview:

> "Because of the heavy expenses I had incurred for Mohammad's ceremonies, my hands were completely empty. One night after falling asleep, I dreamed that Mohammad said, 'You have guests for a forty-day memorial. Akbar should manage the men's section, and you should run the women's section.'

Then I said to Mohammad, 'But right now I don't have any money in hand,' and Mohammad told me, 'Okay, I'll think of something for it.'

And exactly the very next day, they called me from Mohammad's workplace (Norouzian Garage), asked for my bank account number, and transferred an amount of money to me."

Relationship with the Children[30]

Monir, the mother of Hananeh and Houri-Naz, the daughters of Mohammad-Agha, described her husband's educational approach toward their children as follows:

> "Mohammad would say, 'A child becomes exactly what you and I are. If we are human beings, the child becomes a human being; and if not, not. Even if a child attends a thousand classes and becomes educated—perhaps even very well educated—if they gain no share of being human and humanity, it is of no use. People must be raised as human beings in order to be beneficial for themselves and for their society.'"

The wife of Master Mohammad's elder brother, who had a close family relationship with the Master's household, stated in her interview regarding the Master's educational approach toward his daughters:

> "Mohammad-Agha stood on his own feet in dealing with his own issues and problems and did not ask anyone for help. He conveyed this same approach to his daughters and wanted them, when facing problems, always to stand on their own feet."

The author, who once accompanied Master Mohammad on a visit to see a sick relative, observed during a conversation with him that he said:

> "After Hananeh graduated, she told me to find her a job through your brother Manouchehr (who has an influential role in the country's industry). I told her, 'My daughter, these things are rent-seeking and favoritism. A person should

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[30] To depict master Mohammad's relationship with his children, interviewing the two surviving daughters of the master was necessary. The author (who was, in fact, also their paternal cousin once removed) made several requests through individuals close to the master's daughters for conducting interviews, but unfortunately faced their opposition in this matter. Therefore, in this section, the discussion is based solely on interviews with the mother and a few relatives and kin regarding Master Mohammad's relationship with his children.

not reach a position through connections where it may not even be their rightful place. You must achieve whatever position you want through reliance on your own abilities.'"

Monir, in another part of her interview, recalled the friendly, emotional, and deep relationship her husband had with his daughters as follows:

"Mohammad made a circular garden bed at our villa in the north and told us, 'Tell me whatever you like so that I can plant it in this garden.'

Whenever Mohammad bought plants, he tried to buy them in pairs, and he named the larger plant after Hananeh, who was older, and the smaller plant after Houri-Naz, who was younger.

Then, when he went to take care of matters at the northern villa and returned, for example, he would report, 'Ms. Hananeh, you are encroaching on Houri-Naz's rights, because your tree is taking up the space of Houri-Naz's tree.'

In the same way, when my mother bought a pine tree and said, 'Plant this tree in the villa's yard,' Mohammad named that tree after Houri-Naz. Later, in his reports from the northern villa, he would jokingly say, 'Houri-Naz's trees are now overtaking the other trees in the northern villa.'"

The Master's cousin (his maternal aunt's daughter), in her interview, described his relationship with his children as follows:

"They say that if you want to know someone, travel with them. We had many family trips with Mohammad-Agha's family, and on all those trips I saw how much dignity and respect he showed toward his daughters. He never spoke harshly to them, not even as much as a flower's thorn.

During the girls' childhood, whatever toys his daughters wanted, he would immediately provide them without making excuses or conditions.

I loved Mohammad-Agha's relationship with his daughters so much that I would call him 'Dad' in Hananeh's language, and he, with the utmost generosity, treated me accordingly."

Masoumi, the Master's uncle by marriage, who had many family trips with him, said in his interview regarding the Master's deep affection for his daughters:

> “Haj-Mohammad cared deeply about his daughters, and he can truly be called the best father in the world, because whatever there was belonged first and foremost to his daughters.
>
> For example, when we prepared roasted chicken for a meal during a trip, he would set aside the best pieces for his daughters and eat whatever remained himself.”

Ali also stated in his interview about the Master’s relationship with his children:

> “Mohammad respected his children’s beliefs and did not behave harshly toward them in order to impose what he himself wanted on them.”
>
> Just as Masoumi referred to Master Mohammad as “the best father in the world,” the author witnessed at the Master’s fortieth-day memorial ceremony that when the program host asked attendees to text in their memories of the Master to be read aloud, one of the messages—undoubtedly from the Master’s daughters—read:
>
> “The best father in the world.”

Monir, in another part of her interview, pointed to her husband’s close relationship with his daughters:

> “Mohammad’s relationship with the girls was very close, and sometimes he would even wrestle with them. Once I saw Houri-Naz say to Hananeh, ‘When I wrestle with Dad, I’m the one who wins, but when you wrestle with Dad, you’re the one who loses.’

But Hananeh replied to Houri-Naz, ‘No, Dad, get these thoughts out of your head. Dad is going easy on you because your bones are weak and he doesn’t want them to break.’”

Relationship with Other Relatives

Because of the special attention Master Mohammad gave to human relationships, and because he felt obligated to interact even with strangers with gentleness, patience, affection, and respect, he managed his relationships with relatives and kin to an even greater extent on the basis of love, respect, and assistance.

In this section, the Master's relationships with relatives are discussed under the following headings:

"Establishing deep relationships with children and adolescents of the family," "Engaging in humor and joking with others," "Establishing respectful and affectionate relationships with relatives," "Honoring the elders of the family," "Efforts to bring relatives together," "Quickly forming intimate relationships with new in-laws," "Financial support of family members," "Practical attention to relatives," "Efforts to set relatives up in work," "Attempts to solve relatives' problems," and *"Mediation in close family disputes."*

Master Mohammad paid special attention to the children and adolescents of the family and tried to establish deep emotional bonds with them.

Zinat, in her interview, described her brother's affectionate behavior toward nieces and nephews as follows:

> "My son Reza now lives in Tehran, and sometimes when I talk to him, he remembers the past and the happy moments he had with his uncle, and he regrets that time.
>
> The other children were the same way. Whenever they reached Mohammad, they would climb all over him and sometimes even wrestle with him.
>
> Hamid's little daughter, when she came to her grandmother's house and saw that her uncle wasn't there, would say, 'Why isn't Uncle Mohammad here so we can pull his hair!'
>
> Leila's daughter would also wrestle with Mohammad and tell him, 'Uncle, your leg is made of iron; if it hits someone, they'll burst, or if it hits us, our leg will crack!'
>
> Akbar's children also have many happy memories of their uncle. For example, I remember when Mohammad made sausages over a fire in the garden for them, and the children would constantly talk about how delicious they were."

The Master's sister-in-law similarly stated in her interview:

> "Mohammad-Agha had a very warm and close relationship with the children. For example, when we traveled, he would try in every possible way to ensure that the children traveling with us were happy and enjoyed the trip.

> As far as I remember, my own children, from the age of three or four, would ask us to take them to Uncle Mohammad."

Another characteristic repeatedly emphasized by interviewees was the Master's humor and playfulness with relatives.

Monir recalled in her interview the jokes her sister Marjan would make with Master Mohammad—jokes that she considered quite heavy. Since Monir herself did not engage in such joking with her husband, she felt obliged to apologize to him for her sister's jokes.

The Master's sister-in-law noted that his behavior toward her, her children, and his siblings during gatherings was often mixed with humor and playfulness, stating:

> "We lived for ten years on the upper floor of Khadijeh-Khanom's house, and sometimes, so I wouldn't be alone, I would go to our own house or to the lower floor to eat with them.
>
> When Haj-Mohammad was present, if I turned my face to speak to someone at the table, suddenly he would put a ladle of rice or a piece of meat into my dish. He did exactly the same thing with his brothers Akbar and Hamid.
>
> Likewise, at Hananeh's wedding, the children reported to me that their uncle was forcefully putting meat into their mouths at dinner."

Another prominent trait of Master Mohammad was establishing respectful and affectionate relationships with relatives.

The wife of Gholamreza described these respectful interactions in her interview:

> "Mohammad-Agha always treated us well and appropriately. It made no difference to him whether someone was wealthy or not. What mattered to him was respecting others and not distinguishing between people based on their financial situation.
>
> Personally, in the 44 years that I was part of their family as a daughter-in-law, I saw nothing from him but kindness. He was warm with everyone and spoke to everyone with affection."

Khadijeh-Khanom, the Master's mother, described his deep emotional ties with relatives:

> “My sister would always say, ‘My Mohammad!’ And some of her neighbors would say, ‘You don’t have a son,’ but my sister would say, ‘No, Mohammad is my son.’”

Monir also noted that Masoumi, the husband of Mohammad’s younger aunt, would immediately call Mohammad whenever his car broke down, because he regarded Mohammad as his own son.

Sakineh, the Master’s mother-in-law, stated that in the absence of her husband—who was a driver traveling between cities—whenever she needed help, she would refer matters to Mohammad, or Mohammad would ask her to come to her daughter’s house during her husband’s absence.

Sakineh added that Master Mohammad was like an elder brother to her youngest child and had a close relationship with him.

The Master’s elder maternal aunt said in her account:

> “Tomorrow marks the beginning of the fourth month since Mohammad left us, yet not for a single minute has he left my sight.
>
> I ask myself, what did Mohammad do that he never leaves my eyes? My tongue cannot turn to accept his death, and I still cannot believe that he has passed away.”

His cousin expressed similar sentiments:

> “I don’t think there is anyone who could say, ‘Mohammad-Agha broke my heart.’ At his ceremonies I kept thinking, I wish I had even one bitter memory of him, so that my heart wouldn’t burn this much and enduring his passing would be easier.
>
> My cousin also said at the seventh-day ceremony, ‘If they came right now and said Mohammad is alive, I would believe that more than hearing again that he has passed away.’
>
> After he left, many things were left undone, which shows how significant his role was in family relationships.”

Masoumi added:

> “My daughter called Mohammad ‘Dad,’ which shows that Mohammad deserved to be a father figure for my daughter and for many others.”

Masoumi, the wife of the Master's maternal aunt, also noted in her interview:

> "My daughter called Mohammad 'father,' and this indicates that Mohammad was worthy of fatherhood for my daughter and many others."

> "Honoring the elders of the family and relatives" was another characteristic of Master Mohammad. Haj Kazem, in his interview, mentioned several times Mohammad Agha's obedience to him and his compliance with his commands and prohibitions.

The Master's obedience to his uncle and older brother was also a notable matter that many people recalled in their interviews.

The brother's wife stated in her report on this matter:

> "We intended to travel to Syria and did not expect anyone to come to see us off at the bus at 12 midnight, but at 11 p.m., we saw Mohammad arrive and say, 'I have come to see Akbar and you.'
>
> Upon our return from Syria, he was among the first to come welcome us, and at the party we held in this regard, he took charge of all the tasks and carried them out excellently."

"Efforts to bring together close relatives and kin" was another matter that Master Mohammad pursued with the family. Maryam, in this connection, stated in her interview:

> "After Akbar's marriage, he and his wife settled in the upstairs floor of our mother's house, and whenever Mohammad came home from work and had bought something, he would say, 'Call Mrs. Akbar too so she comes downstairs to eat what I have prepared together.' Sometimes we would jokingly say to him, 'Not this time, let's not call her,' and Mohammad would threaten us, 'If you don't call her, I will call her myself to come downstairs.'"

Seyyed Majid, the Master's son-in-law, stated in his interview in this regard:

> "Mohammad never saw himself; his pleasure was not in, for example, sitting down and eating one or two plates of food, but rather his pleasure was in us as family gathering together and providing each other with the means of joy and happiness."

Mohbikhah, the Master's colleague, recalled in his interview that Haji liked all family and acquaintances to gather together; therefore, in one of his actions in this

regard, the master would gather all those around him by distributing votive food on the day of Tasu'a, and while preparing qeymeh-nesar is a difficult and expensive task, he himself would cook the food and serve it to 200-300 people.

"Possessing strong public relations skills and quickly establishing intimacy with newly added family members" was another behavioral characteristic of Master Mohammad in relation to relatives. The Master's maternal cousin reported on his establishment of intimate relations with newly added family members:

> "My suitor's family was supposed to come to our house, and at that very time, our house's package boiler broke down. We called Father—Agha Mohammad—and he, with his hands still oily from work, rushed to our house, fixed the boiler, and tidied up the messy kitchen so that by the time the suitor's family arrived at our house, everything was in order. Afterward, Mohammad joined our gathering with a cheerful face, warmed up the atmosphere, and after a quarter of an hour, left our home to return to work.
>
> My father-in-law, after he left, while praising his strong public relations skills, said that he has such a humble personality and yet a great spirit."

The Master's brother's wife also recalled in her interview his high-level communication skills as follows:

> "Haj Mohammad, even if he had seen someone just once or twice, would establish such a warm and intimate relationship with him as if he had known them for years. For example, when my uncle and aunt came to Qazvin for my wedding ceremony, Mohammad had become so close with my uncle that I was amazed: how is it possible for two people who have just met to behave so intimately with each other?
>
> In any case, Mohammad would warmly embrace those who were newly joining the family, behave intimately with them, and wanted everyone to be like that and have good relations with each other."

"Financial support for family members" was another distinction of Master Mohammad. Gholamreza, the Master's paternal cousin, stated in his interview about the Master's relationship with him, his brothers, and his mother:

> "Mohammad always showed great attention and affection to me, my sister and brothers, and my father and mother, who was his aunt.

I saw Mohammad many times in the street riding a car or motorcycle, but whenever he saw me, he would immediately stop, get off his car or motorcycle, and inquire about my well-being.

Sometimes, when my mother invited relatives for iftar during the blessed month, Mohammad would come to help my mother, and while talking and laughing, he would prepare the necessary food for iftar.

In some cases, when my mom was unwell, Mohammad would visit her, and since my late father was not insured, my mother had no specific pension after him, Mohammad would provide her with financial help—of course, Mohammad himself never mentioned his helps to us, and when we visited our mother at her house, she would mention that Mohammad Agha had also come here.

Mohammad would sometimes visit our house to check on us and inquire about me and my wife. During my children's weddings, Mohammad would specifically visit our house and say, 'If there's any task, tell me to do it, or if you need money, tell me so I can provide it for you,' and upon Mohammad entering this matter, he would handle everything from zero to a hundred for my children's weddings.

During one of my brothers' retirement process, since his salary was not paid for several months, Mohammad rushed to help him and met his financial needs until his retirement pension was sorted out.

Upon my father's death, as soon as Mohammad learned of it, he rushed to our house, and since it was Friday and I had no access to the bank, he covered the necessary costs for the burial ceremony so that I could later withdraw the required amount from the bank and return it to him.

Similarly, firstly, during Amir's—my younger brother—illness, Mohammad provided him with helps, and secondly, upon his untimely death, Mohammad rushed to help Amir's family and took charge of everything from zero to a hundred for Amir's burial ceremony, shab-e ghariban, and seventh day, and carried them out.

Upon the death of Asghar's—my other brother's—wife, Mohammad stepped in again and took responsibility for the executive costs and holding the ceremony for his paternal cousin's wife.

I myself think that because Mohammad tried to keep his good deeds hidden, Monir, Mohammad's wife who is also our cousin, was unaware of the steps her husband occasionally took to handle matters for me, my brothers, and my mother."

Master Mohammad, in his relations with close ones and relatives, through his actions, concretely demonstrated that he had "practical attention" to the family and their issues, and when necessary, was ready to be in the front line of those willing to support them.

Monir recalled in her interview the Master's practical attention to those around him as follows:

"Every week when we wanted to go on a trip for recreation and relaxation, Mohammad would say to bring Mom too. Once when we were about to go on a trip, I told my mother, 'Mom, you come too.' But my mother said, 'It's my turn, and I have to take care of my father, so I can't come with you.' Anyway, we set off on the trip and drove for an hour on the road when Mohammad stopped and said, 'It's better to go back and bring Mom too. Now let your mother ask her sisters to take care of their father in her place, and then she takes care of their father in their place.' I told Mohammad, 'We have been out of Qazvin for an hour, and now we are at the Rasht city toll,' but Mohammad said, 'The purpose of our trip is to enjoy the journey; on the way back, we will enjoy the beauties of the journey again…'

Similarly, when my brother Mohammad was little, he would play games instead of studying and even muttered about not going to school. With coordination with my husband, we said, 'Fine, if you don't want to go to school, then go to Mohammad Agha's mechanic shop to learn a trade and skill.' My brother accepted and went to Mohammad's shop, but two days later, we saw that my brother had come back from the shop and said, 'I made a mistake saying I don't want to study; now I say study! Study! Study!'"

The Master's brother's wife stated in her interview describing Master Mohammad's practical supports in interactions with relatives:

"Haj Mohammad truly showed that he loved the other person, and I always felt that if necessary, Mohammad was someone who would immediately come to help me and his brother in problems.

> During his bachelorhood period when he was at his mother's house, whatever he bought for the house, even if it was one plate, he would send it to us who were settled upstairs, or on holidays, if he bought something for his sisters, he would buy exactly the same blouse or similar for me and give it to me.
>
> Once when Mohammad Agha realized I was intending to buy a car, he immediately conveyed the necessary information about buying a car to me through his sister Moloud. In any case, I thought that as the bride of the house, I was no different in Mohammad Agha's eyes from his sisters."

Masoumi, the Master's maternal aunt's wife, recalled in describing his practical supports for relatives from her personal experience as follows:

> "I haven't had a checkbook for several years, but Mohammad has given me his own bank checkbook so that if I have any specific financial matter, I won't face problems in issuing checks."

The Master's maternal cousin stated similarly:

> "My wedding was during the corona period, and when we were holding the henna ceremony, I thought to myself how strangely my wedding ceremony was happening. But that night I saw Father (Mohammad Agha) come to our house, and while he had brought his own dinner too, we ate dinner, and he greatly cheered up the gloomy atmosphere of our house, and finally bid farewell after washing the dishes and left our house."

In another aspect of his relations with relatives, Master Mohammad earnestly endeavored to "set up jobs for his acquaintances" and, to the extent of his ability and expertise, strove to resolve relatives' issues.

Maryam explained this recent characteristic of the master in her interview:

> "Mohammad tried not to neglect if those around him had a job he could handle. For example, the sisters' children in a remote area had a water pump that had broken down; as soon as they asked Mohammad for help in this regard, Mohammad immediately went to that area and fixed their water pump."

Sakineh stated similarly in her remarks:

> "I got sick and there was no one to help me at that time; Mohammad came and took me to Tehran for treatment. Also, when his uncle was sick,

Mohammad came to our house and served his uncle to do whatever help he needed."

Master Mohammad's maternal cousin stated in her interview: "Father has come to our aid thousands of times so far," and Masoumi, the maternal uncle-in-law, providing an example in this regard, stated:

> "We had ordered sofas and then went on a trip. Suddenly, during the trip, we were informed that the sofa factory had sent the order we had given for us.
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> So I called Mohammad by phone to at least go to our house door, hire a worker, open the door, and make it possible to transfer the sofas into the house.
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> After a few hours, Mohammad called us and said he had received the sofas. 'Arrange them in the house however you like, and I will arrange them for you in the same way.'
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> In any case, that night Mohammad was busy from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. receiving, moving, and arranging our house sofas.
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> Similarly, if I needed money and asked Mohammad if he could lend it, without asking what the money was for or when it would be returned, he would just ask, 'How much check should I write for you?' and immediately fulfill my request."

The Master's brother's wife recalled in her interview that Mohammad was always helpful to us in all situations, from moving furniture to distributing votive food and holding parties. For example, whenever Mohammad himself was invited to our house, he would come to the kitchen and help me with the tasks. During votive food distribution too, from preparing the food ingredients to cooking them, dividing, and even washing the remaining dishes, all were under Mohammad's responsibility.

Shah-Mohammadi also reported in his interview that Uncle Ali, Haj Mohammad's uncle, had asthma, and for that reason sometimes brought his own truck and entrusted it to Mohammad, and Mohammad would handle everything from zero to a hundred of his uncle's truck tasks and finally deliver the completed work to him.

Mohammad would similarly go out of his way for his paternal aunts and maternal aunts and try to serve them as much as possible with whatever tasks they had. For instance, Monir stated in her report:

> “Mohammad had a paternal aunt who, in her old age, had become very weak and unable to cook. Mohammad always said, ‘When you prepare food, consider the aunt too,’ and always either he or I would deliver food to the aunt, and the aunt would become very happy upon seeing us.”
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> “Efforts to address problems arising for close ones” was another action reported in Master Mohammad’s interactions with those around him.

Sakineh stated in her interview that after her husband’s death, whenever she told the master about household problems, he would strive to solve the problems facing his close ones without saying no to the raised matter.

Seyyed Majid, the son-in-law, stated in his interview regarding the master becoming a problem-solver for family issues:

> “My job is such that sometimes I had to go on missions, and upon return, I would find out that during my mission and trip, Mohammad had visited my wife and child and taken charge of most of their tasks and undertaken to carry them out in my absence.

From experience, I learned that Mohammad neither knew how to say no, nor how to boast about himself; he was only after performing a service for those around him and even strangers.”

Masoumi, in describing the Master’s helps to himself, his wife, and daughter, stated:

> “I don’t have a son, but I saw Mohammad as my own son, and whatever happened to me and my family, by informing Mohammad, I would feel relieved about carrying out that task. For example, once while going on a trip, we left the key behind the door of our house; when I informed Mohammad of this issue, he had gone to our neighbor’s house and entered our house by climbing the second-floor railing and opened the door.”

Master Mohammad’s maternal cousin also stated regarding the master being a problem-solver:

> “From childhood, I called him ‘Father,’ and after growing a bit older, I called him ‘Mr. Father’; the reason was that when my father, being a truck driver, was often not at home, he would father me. For example, once when I had the flu, as soon as we informed ‘Father,’ he rushed to me at 3-4 a.m. and immediately took me to the clinic. This recent matter had not happened to me

just once, but 'Father' had come to help me and my family in this manner dozens of times.

Also, when my mother got corona and my father was on a trip again, 'Father' called us and said, 'I myself have defeated corona; whatever you need, tell me so I can immediately come to your service!'"

The Master's maternal cousin stated in a similar case:

"Sometimes my father would get angry at home and leave the house, and after a few hours when he returned, there was no trace of anger in him. When we inquired about where he had gone, my father would say, 'I went to Mohammad.' Once I called Father (Mohammad Agha) and said, 'When my father comes to you, what do you do that he calms down?'

He replied to me, 'I prepare herbal teas like several herbs, rose flowers, and the like, give them to Mr. Ali Masoumi, joke with him a bit, we talk and laugh together, and after he calms down, he returns home.'"

"Efforts to resolve arising family disputes" presents another aspect of Master Mohammad's interactions with relatives.

The Master's brother-in-law stated in his interview an example in this regard:

"My wife and I had argued in our old house, and I said, 'Let's go to your brother to clarify our situation.' When we saw Mohammad and explained the situation, Mohammad said, 'What is this talk! Prepare food, let's go out for recreation and variety.' We went out according to Mohammad's suggestion, and after spending some time in nature, upon returning home, I practically felt that the dispute which seemed very major to me was really not an important dispute and could easily be overlooked."

In a brief summary, it can be stated that Master Mohammad's warm, intimate relations accompanied by self-sacrifice and forgiveness with close ones had been so effective on them that some of those around him explicitly stated in their interviews that they had accepted the master as their practical role model. The statements of Seyyed Majid and Ali in this regard are as follows:

"I had a few select role models in my life, the most prominent of whom was Mohammad. He was always good-tempered and content, did not look to his own wishes and interests, and was only waiting to rush to help others if needed anywhere.

> Mohammad was a complete and cultured man; he treated everyone with respect, was cheerful and smiling, and gave positive energy to those around him."
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> "Mohammad was not one to command or prohibit others and did not oblige anyone to do this or not do that. Mohammad himself was a man of action; he would realize and implement what he believed in, and believed that everyone knows how to talk, but few are men of action, and if someone believes in something, they must personally enter the arena and by implementing their desire, become a practical role model in practice before others… These recent characteristics had made me see Mohammad as my own role model."

The Master's brother's wife stated in her interview, describing Master Mohammad's practical supports in interactions with relatives:

> "Haj Mohammad truly showed from the heart that he loved the other person, and I always felt within myself that if necessary, Mohammad was someone who would immediately come to help me and his brother in problems.
>
> During his bachelorhood period when he was at his mother's house, whatever he bought for the house, even if it was one plate, he would send it to us who were settled upstairs, or on holidays, if he bought something for his sisters, he would buy exactly the same blouse or similar for me and give it to me.
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Chapter Four: Relationship with Colleagues

Just as an individual's relationship with themselves, their environment, and their family reveals and displays important aspects of their existence, their relationship with colleagues and the work environment depicts and illustrates another part of the depth of an individual's being.

In field investigations conducted regarding Master Mohammad's social relationships, the following general titles have been obtained: Indifference to money in work relationships, prioritizing others over oneself, prioritizing economically disadvantaged groups, paying attention and spending time for colleagues, efforts to solve colleagues' problems, supporting colleagues, efforts to solve colleagues' financial problems, helping to solve colleagues' technical problems, managing situations, interacting with colleagues with humor and laughter, efforts to spread joy and happiness among colleagues, honesty in work, efforts to solve customers' road problems, valuing customers, accompanying and empathizing with customers, forgiving one's own wages, displaying exalted ethics, chivalry, creating deep emotional relationships with colleagues and customers, human-building. In the following, these titles will be examined.

Indifference to Money in Work Relationships

Shams al-Din Ahmad Aflaki in Manaqib al-Arifin says about true freedom: "Wealth is in contentment, health is in solitude, freedom is in lack of desire, friendship is in lack of inclination, and enjoyment is in patience. The greedy have no honor, and the content have no humiliation, and the free become slaves through greed, and the slave becomes free through contentment."[31]

Many of Master Mohammad's interviewed colleagues stated in their interviews that the master, while being honest, did not pay much attention to accumulating wealth and did not value wealth accumulation much in exchange for gaining others' trust.

[31] Shams al-Din Ahmad Aflaki (1401). *Manaqib al-Arifin*. Edited by Tahsin Yaziji and Tufiq Subhani. Tehran: Doostan.

Masoumi, Master Mohammad's uncle-in-law, who was also responsible for driving heavy trucks and was one of the Master's customers, noted in his report:

> "Haj Mohammad would say, I consider my customer's pocket, so if the neighboring mechanic takes 100% fee for a job, I take 70% wage, this issue caused Hajji to have many admirers, and for example, they would call from the village and ask the master to go to their village to repair their engine."

Javad, in describing part of his work relationships with Master Mohammad, said:

> "Haj Mohammad sometimes paid me in advance for the items I wanted to bring for him. Besides that, if I ever needed something from him, he would say go take it and don't mention the price at all, and give whatever you want, then regarding trading with me, he would say, buying items from you is hard for me because you don't tell me the price of the goods."

Hassan, Master Mohammad's apprentice, in his interview, described his indifference to money:

> "To become a master, an apprentice first needs 2 years of errands and fetching and bringing wrenches, then for about 5 years, open and close engines to get their hands fluent, and then work on percentage with a master for 2-3 years so that when they get stuck in a job, the master solves their problem.

At the beginning, for percentage work, I proposed 20% to Hajji, of course, percentage work is usually up to 30%, I told Hajji that outside and on-the-road work should be mine. The percentage for on-the-road works increases and reaches 50%-50%. During the work, Hajji sometimes paid me 40%, 50%, and even 100% of the received wage, meaning money had no meaning for him.

Sometimes Hajji himself had no money on hand, but if I needed money, he would deal with me generously and resolve my financial need in any way possible."

Haj Sohrab, Mohammad Agha's initial master, also said in a part of his interview:

> "Once we reached a deadlock in a job. I told Haj Mohammad to come see the work and give his opinion. He gave his opinion and said he has the tool and will bring it. We had some doubt in implementing Haj Mohammad's suggestion that it might leave costs on our hands, but Hajji said, I'll bring the tools, if the work doesn't result and gets ruined, no problem, you don't pay the costs incurred either."

One of Master Mohammad's other activities in Nowruzian Garage was partnership in matters like buying a car and truck, rebuilding it, and selling it after rebuilding. Field examination of existing partnerships in society indicates that many partnerships reach a deadlock due to financial disputes between the partners. But Master Mohammad, due to not valuing wealth accumulation, never faced problems and disputes with his partners in his partnerships. Mehdi stated in this regard:

> "Hajji, along with Ali Agha the battery maker, would buy some cars, fix them, and sell them again. In one word, it must be said that during Hajji and Ali Agha's partnership, no problem arose, and if any dispute was about to happen, Hajji would settle the issue by overlooking his own interests."

Parviz, one of Master Mohammad's customers, stated in his interview:

> "I had left my engine with Hajji to repair it for me when the bitter accident happened to him. When I left my engine with Hajji, he didn't tell me the repair cost at all, these issues make me, although I respect all the mechanic colleagues in the garage, feel like a stranger here in Hajji's absence."

Another important point related to the Master's low attention and indifference in facing earning money is the issue of receiving commissions from machine parts sellers or other mechanic colleagues (such as battery makers, electricians, bodyworkers, painters, and the like).

Abolfazl stated in his interview:

> "I am a parts seller, I inherited this profession from my father, and just as my father collaborated with Mohammad's father, the fathers' collaboration reached us, their children, as well. Mohammad was an honest person, but unfortunately, in our profession, there are people who, instead of service, take steps towards betrayal and only think about filling their own pockets. If I want to provide a simile in this field, I must say that we are like two rails that never meet, and nothing can ever be done for this problem.
>
> Mohammad sometimes guaranteed various people to us, and we gave them parts, but that person wouldn't return our money, and I personally wasn't after getting the money from Mohammad who had guaranteed, because I know he also stepped in to get the work done for someone who had a problem, and I, out of respect for Mohammad's chivalry, wasn't after getting the lost money from Mohammad himself. Although I knew Mohammad would call the person who took the goods so many times and follow up to get my money to me that

when the guy came to us for settlement, he would say I got tired of Mohammad's follow-ups, he called and reminded me so much."

Javad noted in his report that in his opinion, the amount of giving and taking commissions among mechanics with parts sellers or other trades related to the mechanic profession reaches 30, 40%. But Master Mohammad did not accept giving and taking commissions and said, if parts sellers or side professions of car mechanics are after giving commissions, the best person is the owner himself to give him a discount. Based on this, since Mohammad Agha did not accept the commission issue, he basically did not collaborate with people who were after giving and taking commissions. Shah Mohammadi stated in this connection:

"Some parts shops would say, if you send us a customer, we'll give you a commission in return, but Hajji wouldn't accept. Preparing engine parts for a truck might cost 100-150 million tomans, and the parts seller is willing to give up to 10% commission for a 100-150 million sale, but Hajji didn't consider these things right. Similarly, for example, machinists would say, send us a customer, we'll write a higher invoice amount and give you a commission, but Hajji would tell them, no, if you want to do something, give a discount to the car owner himself. After all, in these days of disloyalty, it takes a real man to forgo money."

Indifference to money caused Master Mohammad's proposed figures for customers to be realistic and fair. However, if among them there were customers who, as usual in other places, resorted to bargaining and did not accept the Master's price evaluation and suggested lower amounts, Mohammad Agha would refuse to sell the part or do the work for them. Haj Sohrab and Mohbi-Khah, citing examples in this regard, stated:

"If someone came to bargain with Hajji, Hajji would say, we won't accept the job, please go."

"If someone wanted to take the item cheaply and bluffed that the price of the item somewhere else is cheaper than yours, Haj Mohammad would tell him: 'No problem, please go buy it from the place where it's cheaper.'"

Prioritizing Others Over Oneself

The characteristic of prioritizing others over oneself was an excellent trait to which Master Mohammad was committed both in his personal life and in his professional life.

The sister-in-law and cousin's daughter, in their interviews about the characteristic of prioritizing others' work over his own in the master, expressed:

> "Hajji's whole job was to see how he could help someone."
>
> "Father (Mohammad Agha) was a kind and charitable person; 100% of his priority and energy was for others. For example, he was willing to get up from his sleep without even discussing the wage for the job, rush to the work, and resolve the arisen problem."

Seyyed Mohammad Ali, Mohbi-Khah, and Shah-Mohammadi, colleagues of Mohammad Agha, in describing the Master's prioritization of others and setting aside his own interests in this regard, made the following statements:

> "Mohammad was very considerate of his customers; for example, if a driver came and Mohammad's hands were busy with another job, he would go to that driver's vehicle with open arms, check the vehicle, guide the driver, or completely solve his problem. I myself, in such cases, tell new customers, I have work in hand and can't come to your vehicle.
>
> More importantly, Mohammad was even willing to answer his customers' calls at 2 a.m.; I myself never do this and never leave my phone on at night, but Mohammad would say, people are in trouble and we must help them solve their problems."
>
> "Haj Mohammad was a man of existence. Meaning that he did whatever he could for others. But some people, even though they have the ability to solve others' problems, are not willing to sacrifice themselves and solve others' problems."
>
> "Haj Mohammad was initially a partner in the shop he had. Sometimes in talking with Hajji, I would say, now that the partnership dissolution is being discussed, you take the shop, you are superior, but Hajji wouldn't accept.
>
> I thought to myself that maybe Hajji has financial problems and can't take the three shares of the partnership shop. So I personally arranged the money and

told Hajji, Hajji, if your problem is money, don't worry, I have money and I'll give it to you, but Hajji said no, it's too much work for me, let Mr. Yousef take the shop so he can provide bread for his family with that shop…

Sometimes Hajji and I would also go to Kurdistan to buy truck parts; I remember in 1378 (1999), I, Hajji, and Ahangari set off towards Kurdistan and Maragheh for shopping. In the train, we shared a compartment with three others, and right from the first moments, Hajji put the seeds and nuts he had brought in the middle and offered them to everyone to eat.

When it was time to sleep, we gave Hajji the worst spot, but he didn't complain at all. When we arrived in Kurdistan, we joined a broker for buying parts. We went to Mahabad at night and rented a room in a hotel to sleep; I, Haj Mohammad, the blacksmith, and the broker, total four of us, had to sleep two by two in the place given to us. I told Hajji, I'm afraid of this broker guy, maybe in the middle of the night he brings calamity upon us and takes our money. Hajji said, no problem, I'll sleep next to him, and if he gets up to do something, I'll put him to sleep with one punch."

Chegini, one of the Master's early colleagues and later friends, in his interview describing the importance the master placed on customers, colleagues, friends, and others, stated:

"Haj Mohammad didn't have 'no' in his nature and always tried not to give a negative answer to anyone and to get various people's work done as much as he could. For example, if a driver had a problem and even asked for help from Mohammad on a holiday, Mohammad would ruin his holiday and go to get that driver's work done.

I myself once asked him for a loan and he lent it to me, but later I found out that Mohammad himself didn't have money at that time, had borrowed, and arranged the money I needed by borrowing. Of course, the issue I mentioned wasn't exclusive to me. Mohammad was like that with everyone, and if he didn't have it himself, to meet the financial need of a friend or acquaintance who came to him, he would even borrow from someone else to get his friend's work done and not let his friend leave empty-handed."

Attention and Prioritizing Economically Disadvantaged Groups

Since Master Mohammad, on one hand, had lost his father in his teenage years and, on the other hand, was a very compassionate person, he always paid attention to poor and economically weak groups and tried not to overlook or ignore them because of their poverty. The Nowruzian Garage guard, in his interview referring to the recent issue, said:

> "Haj Mohammad really liked lower classes like me and Safer (the garage sweeper); for example, my brother doesn't ask about my condition, while Hajji would inquire about my well-being every day and console me in my sorrows that the world is like this, don't grieve too much about the world. Safer also said on New Year's Eve, Hajji called me and said Safer where are you, I said I'm in such and such place, then Hajji came to me and gave me 400-500 tomans as New Year's money."

Hamid also described the Master's heartfelt interest and devotion to poor people:

> "Haj Mohammad would take great steps for weak people and did not fail as much as he could. For example, if a customer didn't have money, he would send him to Haj Abolfazl to get the needed part, then he himself would go and pay for the part. Similarly, Hajji tried, if for example he had to attend two funerals simultaneously, to go to the poor person's funeral first and then attend the rich person's funeral. For example, once when we wanted to go to the funerals of two people together, he told me, let's first go to Sultan Seyyed Mohammad's funeral ceremony, there's a poor person's funeral there, then go to so-and-so's funeral who was a wealthy person."

Paying Attention and Spending Time for Colleagues

In the transition from tradition to modernity, human and ethical values in society have become fainter and dimmer than before, relationships are moving towards formal and non-emotional ones. In this midst, few people may not let themselves be captured by the value and normative transformations of their time and seek to deepen their emotional and human relationships with surroundings, acquaintances, and even strangers.

The interviewed individuals unanimously confirmed and emphasized Master Mohammad's attention to colleagues and, if necessary, spending time to solve problems arising for them.

Yahya also mentioned in his interview the great respect that existed between the master and his work neighbors as follows:

> "In our workplace, we have witnessed neighbors quarreling many times; for example, this neighbor would fight with that neighbor about why your customer's truck is parked in my shop's space and the like. But I and Hajji, during the 12 years our shops were next to each other and we were wall-to-wall neighbors, never had even a single dispute between us, and in these 12 years that we were together, we didn't even say 'you' to each other, let alone break each other's sanctity and quarrel over issues that happened in our neighborhood."

Some interviewed individuals mentioned the master spending time to solve colleagues' problems. For example, Mohbi-Khah stated in this regard:

> "If we didn't come to work one day, Hajji would call and ask, if you have work, shall I come help? Once when I had a problem and needed to introduce someone as a guarantor to the court, Haj Mohammad took the trouble and came to the court for my guarantee."

Another colleague noted that Mohammad Agha had gone with him to Taleqan to solve his shop deed problem and helped resolve his shop deed issue.

Hassan, the Master's apprentice, also reported that, for example, when my car broke down and I was short on money, Haj Mohammad would give me directions: go to such and such place to repair your car, and then cover all the costs from zero to hundred with me.

For procuring the needed vehicle parts, he would give me his debit card so that the purchase cost wouldn't burden me. Meanwhile, he would call his friend and recommend repairing my car.

Hamid also reported in his interview:

> "I had bought a Peykan (Zhian) that I used to go to the desert and back; Hajji told me the Peykan is weak for desert trips, for desert you need a Jeep, if you want, I'll buy one for you. Finally, I agreed, and Hajji himself found the Jeep

and completed the deal himself, and this way I exchanged my Peykan for a Jeep."

Efforts to Solve Colleagues' Problems

Striving to resolve financial and non-financial problems of those around him was one of the important matters that Master Mohammad's acquaintances discussed, considering him unparalleled among colleagues in this regard.

Mohbi-Khah, in his interview, recalling a memory of a friend whose eye had developed a problem, mentioned that Haj Mohammad had called him and said, if you happen to need money, I am at your service.

Hamid recalled various supports from the master for himself and his family as follows:

> "I was involved in construction; Hajji not only helped me at the construction site but also came and became my guarantor for obtaining a loan.
>
> When we went to the desert, we didn't have electricity there; Hajji said, come, I'll get you legal electricity. Then, with the help of a friend he had in the electricity department, based on our livestock farm deed, he got us legal electricity.
>
> In Qazvin, since our house was in the south of the city, they wouldn't enroll my child's name in central city schools which were better educationally, saying you must register in your own area, but Hajji said, go write my home address so your child's problem is solved this way. To solve Mr. Karim's child's registration problem, Hajji told him to write his sister's home address instead of their own house address so his child's problem would be solved this way.
>
> Finally, Hajji would say, if you have a problem in the education department, my sisters are in education, tell me so I can follow up the issue through them and solve your problem."

Masoumi noted in his report that Abbas Agha Mohbi-Khah's shop didn't have electricity, and it was agreed to use electricity from Haj Mohammad's shop for one month, but this one month turned into three years, yet Haj Mohammad himself said, no problem. Then Haj Mohammad himself recommended to his friend in the

electricity department to fix Abbas Agha's shop electricity, and he arranged for his shop to get electricity.

Mohbi-Khah, in his interview referring to the recent issue, also mentioned other cases:

> "I needed an electricity meter; Hajji called his friend and solved my problem. I needed a loan; he would call. There was someone who needed a guarantor and even his brother wouldn't guarantee him, or another case where the person's father-in-law wouldn't guarantee him, but Hajji accepted to guarantee them.
>
> If the person was negligent in paying his installments, Hajji himself would pay the installment until that person came and settled the necessary account with Hajji."

Zinat, Master Mohammad's sister, reported in her interview that one of the matters the master paid full attention to in the work environment was trying to resolve disputes and resentments arising between his colleagues. She stated:

> "If a customer quarreled with Mohammad's colleagues or Mohammad's colleagues quarreled with each other and their dispute escalated, Mohammad would invite them to his shop and say, come tell me what your quarrel is about so we can solve the issue together."

Hamid, in his interview, mentioned a dispute between two colleagues and said, I told Hajji, Hajji, this problem can only be solved by you, and Hajji, without saying anything to those two and without intending to show off in between, went and solved the problem behind their backs.

Parviz and Yahya, in their interviews in themes close to each other, recalled Master Mohammad's efforts to resolve disputes arising in the work environment as follows:

> "When Hajji became aware of a quarrel and estrangement between some colleagues, he would prepare sweets and, without informing those colleagues, say, let's a few of us go to these two and reconcile them so peace and harmony is established between them. The quarreling parties, who themselves were not willing to take the initiative to resolve their disputes, upon facing Haj Mohammad and a few other colleagues who begged them to set aside their differences, would submit to the group and take the path of reconciliation with each other."

> “One of Hajji’s good traits was that he said there should be no estrangement between people; therefore, if he learned that there was bad blood between two people, he would buy sweets and say, let’s go reconcile these people so there is no estrangement between colleagues.”

Chegini, in his interview, recalled Master Mohammad’s helps to colleagues who had encountered problems in their lives as follows:

> “Hajji had a neighbor in the garage who had faced an illness problem, and he stepped forward and helped that colleague’s family for several years and supported his children until relief came for them and they were freed from their problems.”

Masoumi, in his interview, mentioned the marriage problem of one colleague’s child. He said:

> “One colleague’s child had some mental disability and he couldn’t find a wife for his child. Haj Mohammad, upon learning of this, found a family around Qazvin who were willing to marry that young man. Hajji was involved in the proposal, hosting, wedding shopping, and all these matters in the process, helping the progress of the work, and when there was no hairdresser there, he took his own wife to do the girl’s makeup for her wedding, and this way the colleague and his son’s problem was solved.”

Yahya also, in his interview referring to the recent case, stated:

> “Hajji was always at the forefront in charitable matters. We had a worker who hadn’t succeeded in getting a wife for his son. But Hajji took the initiative in this regard and got a wife for his son, and now they have two children. In other words, what this child’s parents couldn’t do for him, Hajji did for him.”

The Master’s existential magnanimity had become so famous that even customers sought to exploit the Master’s magnanimity, wanting by entrusting their work to Mohammad Agha, for him to follow up their work and solve their truck problem in the best way. As Hamid expressed, the person’s vehicle didn’t need mechanical work which was Haj Mohammad’s specialty and needed another work, but still that person, by resorting to Hajji, wanted his work to be solved in the best possible way through Hajji’s mediation with colleagues.

Supporting Colleagues

Supporting colleagues was an important issue that was noticeable in Master Mohammad's value system, and he tried to support his colleagues in various forms. These supports sometimes were in the form of confirming other colleagues and sending customers to them, and in other cases, these supports were in the form of intervening to free some colleagues from problems that had befallen them.

Ahmad, in his interview describing the supports Master Mohammad provided to confirm his colleagues' expertise and send customers to them, stated:

> "Some customers, upon hearing Mohammad's professional fame, would come to the garage and only ask for Mohammad and seek to get an appointment from him to attend and repair their truck. But in these cases, Mohammad, while being embarrassed that everyone comes and asks for him, would personally tell customers, so-and-so and so-and-so are also in this garage and have the required expertise, and try to send customers to his other colleagues, although some of these people still tried, by making various excuses, to ultimately entrust their truck to Mohammad."

Chegini also stated in describing Master Mohammad's support for his other colleagues:

> "One of Mohammad's habits was that if other colleagues' customers came to him, he usually wouldn't accept them. For example, Sohrab or Hassan's customers would come to Mohammad, and Mohammad would tell them, for instance, Haj Sohrab has been my master, and his work is better than mine anyway. But in cases where the customer's work really had a serious flaw, in those cases he would accept their work with reconfirming his colleagues."

Master Mohammad not only paid to confirm and support his colleagues in professional matters but also, in cases where evil had arisen and caught his colleagues, he wouldn't refrain from active intervention and, by throwing himself into the middle of the created problem, in practice tried to stop and collect the arisen evil.

Musa Khani, the Nowruzian Garage guard, in his statements referring to the Master's active intervention to solve arising problems, recalled his intervention in an evil that had caught him as follows:

> “A fight broke out between me and a few Lors. On one hand, the Lors had come outside the garage with their crowd with sticks, and my friends and brothers inside the garage were ready for confrontation, and if the fight continued like that, very bad things might happen in the clash of the two groups. It was in this midst that Hajji came, hugged me with about 95 kg weight and brought me and sat me in the guard room and said: Hush! Say nothing and cover your ears tightly with your fingers. Then he went to the conflicting parties and calmed them. Of course, the next day that group came and apologized, but I said, if Hajji’s intervention wasn’t there at that time, it wasn’t clear what unpleasant incident would happen to both groups in the war and fight.”

Musa Khani stated a similar experience:

> “Masoud was a thug who beat everyone, and once when he reached me, he cursed me without reason; I also grabbed him and hit him. Someone arrived and said, you killed the young man and grabbed my collar. Hajji, upon seeing this scene, came forward and rescued me from that person’s hand and said: Go and don’t stay here! With my leaving, a Nissan full of people had come for war and fight.
>
> After two or three days, I returned to the garage; colleagues said you did well to go, if you had stayed, a severe confrontation would have occurred.”

Mohbi-Khah, in his interview, recalled Master Mohammad’s defense in a fight that had caught him as follows:

> "I had a bad tenant whom I asked to leave because he didn’t pay the rent. The tenant acted tough and said an impolite word to me. Hajji, who had come for mediation, upon hearing the tenant’s impolite word, slapped him on the ear. This slap laid the tenant, who had twice Hajji’s build, on the ground; finally, the matter went to the police station, and it was decided that Hajji stay in jail for the night. I told Hajji, Hajji, let me go to jail instead of you; you intervened for my work, but Hajji said no, you go.
>
> The next morning when the guy’s father came, he turned out to be Hajji’s acquaintance. The father said: Mohammad Agha, why are you here? Then, without hearing the story, he ruled against his own son and said: Sorry Mohammad Agha, my son made a mistake. Meaning that father, just by seeing Haj Mohammad as the other side of the story, said sorry, my child was

impolite, and the affair ended this way, and I remained indebted to Hajji that for defending me, his work led to the police station and imprisonment."

Masoumi, in his interview, in a similar example reported that since the garage people knew I am one of Haj Mohammad's relatives, whenever my truck work fell to them, out of respect for Hajji, they took less wage from me, and if for example the cost of a job was 100 tomans, they sufficed with taking 60 tomans.

Efforts to Solve Colleagues' Financial Problems

Master Mohammad, in cases where he encountered colleagues' financial problems, tried to actively intervene to the extent of his ability to resolve his friends and colleagues' financial issues. Therefore, he often tried to resolve their financial problems by giving his debit card to colleagues and friends or by giving them checks.

At a deeper level, when Mohammad Agha witnessed a financial dispute between two friends or colleagues, as religious teachings have guided[32], he tried to resolve the arising dispute by spending his own money. In these cases, Mohammad Agha would say the 10-20 million disputed amount will either reach me later or not, but if not, in any case, its value is less than two friends and colleagues reaching peace and harmony.

Finally, the master sometimes, upon understanding the financial problem of those around him, tried without raising the financial problem issue with the other party, to be effective in discounting and adjusting it by finding an excuse.

Hassan, in his interview, recalled Master Mohammad's ethics in resolving the financial problems of those around him as follows:

> "I bought a car, but I was short on money a bit and worried that the deal might fall through due to my money shortage. When I came to the shop, Hajji just by seeing me felt that I had encountered a financial problem; he gave me his debit card and said, maybe you'll be short" on money for the car deal, keep my card with you. I said how did you know I might be short on money; Hajji

[32] It has been reported in religious teachings that the Infallible, peace be upon him, says: "When you witness a financial dispute between two people, pay the disputed amount from my share (the Imam's share) so that the disagreement between you may be resolved."

said after all, we people are often stuck with money, and by seeing your anxious face, I felt you are stuck with money now.

In any case, at the deal, the other party agreed for me to give a check for my money shortage, and this way the problem was solved, but Hajji's greatness and magnanimity became more evident to me than before."

The Nowruzian Garage guard, where Master Mohammad worked, in part of his interview mentioned a similar experience:

"A few years ago, one day I was short on money and needed 200,000 tomans. Hajji had a nice ethic. I told him Hajji, I'm short 200,000 tomans. Hajji surprisingly said: Two hundred thousand tomans! I got embarrassed and wanted to go when Hajji said: I didn't say I won't give it. Then he gave me his debit card and said: There is 10,000,000 tomans in this card. Go take as much as you want, and this way he solved my financial problem."

Hamid, citing examples of Mohammad Agha's efforts, noted that when Haj Mohammad encountered a friend's financial problem, he would say this is my checkbook, go write as much as you want until your problem is solved.

As mentioned, at a deeper level, Mohammad Agha, when facing financial disputes between two friends, tried to end their quarrel by paying the disputed amount. Now, the spent amount might return to Master Mohammad or not. But he (who perhaps was unaware of the religious teachings entered in this direction but had reached and committed to it in practice due to its innate nature), considered the value of the spent amount less than resolving the problem of two acquaintances and friends.

Mehdi, whose acquaintance with Master Mohammad dated back to his childhood, stated in this regard:

"I have seen many cases from Haj Mohammad where he intervened in a financial dispute between two neighbors or acquaintances and colleagues and solved their problem by giving the disputed amount. For example, Haj Mohammad would say: Sir, how much is your financial dispute? Here is the disputed money. Now, the quarreling parties might return the given money to Hajji later or not at all. But Hajji's approach in financial disputes between two colleagues was as I said."

Mohbi-Khah also stated in a similar report:

> “If someone had a problem and Hajji could, he would solve his problem. For example, someone had a construction problem; Hajji would pay from his pocket, or when two people had a dispute over 10-20 million, Hajji would pay that money and say, return it to me later, or if someone needed a guarantor, he would guarantee him and say, if this person doesn’t return your money, I’ll pay your money.”

The Nowruzian Garage guard, while describing Master Mohammad as:

> “Hajji was very great, very,” in providing an example for his statement, recalled his own memory that one day I was doing labor work; Hajji saw me and noticed my torn shoe. Then apparently Hajji had gone and bought a very good shoe in my foot size and the next day told me, this is my own shoe; I have many shoes, you wear this shoe, and I realized that Hajji with this excuse wants me to take the shoe without getting embarrassed. That’s why I say: “Hajji was very great, very.”

Assistance in Solving Colleagues’ Technical Problems

Mousavi-Khani described Mohammad Agha as follows: “Haji absolutely had no habit of saying no,” and based on this, one should expect that the master, unlike many people who, to remain unique, were unwilling to share the tricks of their trade with others and refrained from providing necessary information, had a positive view toward disseminating his knowledge and experience. In necessary situations, he would strive to resolve the technical problems of his other colleagues.

Hassan, in connection with Mohammad Agha’s sharing of technical experiences with others, stated:

> “Haji was unique in every way. For example, there were people who came and asked Haji technical questions, and he would answer them. Even the same apprentice who had been with Haji and then left him, when he came to Haji with a question about a problem, Haji would answer his question and not reject him.”

Haj-Sohrab, who was Mohammad’s master at the beginning of his work, noted in his interview:

> "When a technically unsolvable problem arose for me, I would discuss it with Haj-Mohammad so we could solve it together. Similarly, my son is an engineer whom I have brought to work with me. When my son wants to assemble an engine, for example, he doesn't say to our neighbor 'come see the engine,' but to Haj-Mohammad, whose shop is on the other side of the garage, he says 'come see the engine, if there's no issue, I'll assemble it.'"

Mostafa, in his interview, referring to the master's efforts to solve colleagues' technical problems, recalled his own experience as follows:

> "A car was brought to the garage 3-4 times in a row, but the mechanic hadn't accurately identified the car's problem, and the issue remained unresolved. Haj-Mohammad saw the car and told the mechanic and the driver, 'The car's problem is such-and-such,' and coincidentally, 'I have the necessary part too; I'll give you the part for free so you can install it.' Finally, the mechanic, with Haji's guidance, succeeded in solving the car's problem. But honestly, I know that the same colleague whose reputation Haji saved, if a similar problem arose for his friend, wouldn't be willing to do something similar."

Managing Circumstances

Some of the interviewed individuals recalled Master Mohammad's appropriate management. This management ranged from proper execution of routine affairs to managing difficult and somewhat critical situations.

Masoumi, in describing the master's proper management, noted that when Haj-Mohammad's friend (a POWs[33]) was coming, Haj-Mohammad gathered various items from pots and other hospitality utensils to the necessary consumables from different places to provide a worthy reception for that freed person.

Another colleague stated that sometimes a driver who needed both mechanical work and other tasks like battery making, bodywork, painting, wind piping, and the like would entrust his truck to Haj-Mohammad. After performing the mechanical work that was his specialty, he would also supervise the work of other colleagues so that

[33] Azadeh (آزاده) refers to Iranian war captives or prisoners of war (POWs) who were captured by Iraqi forces, held in Iraqi prisons, and later released.

other truck tasks, such as battery making, electrical work, and the like, would be done correctly and on time.

Mohebi-Khah, in describing the management of difficult situations, stated that if, for example, a delivery was delayed, Haj-Mohammad would intervene to resolve the dispute and, for instance, tell the owner, “Don’t worry about your work; delivering the work after the new agreed deadline is on me.” Then, Haj-Mohammad would really check on the work every day and say, for example, “The owner is coming in three days or two days; proceed well so I don’t lose face in front of him.”

Interactions Accompanied by Humor and Laughter with Colleagues

Being cheerful was one of Master Mohammad’s prominent personal characteristics, and as one of his colleagues said, it was impossible to see or imagine him without a smile. Mohammad Agha’s lively and smiling spirit in practice fostered an atmosphere of humor and laughter in the work environment for him and his colleagues, which softened the hard and difficult work atmosphere.

Hassan, in describing the work atmosphere in their shop with Master Mohammad, said, “We used to talk and laugh a lot at work.” Haj-Sohrab also recalled his many jokes with Mohammad Agha, to which Mohammad usually responded with a reciprocal joke, thus bringing smiles to each other’s lips.

Mehdi, Amir, and Javad also stated in parts of their interviews:

> “Sometimes when we saw Haji, we would say: ‘Haji, aren’t you giving us afternoon snacks?’ Haji, who was generous and had generosity, would immediately tell his apprentice: ‘Here’s the money, go buy afternoon snacks.’ After the snacks were ready, we would eat the snacks we had imposed on Haji with laughter and jokes.”
>
> “I considered Haji Mohammad’s shop as my own, so I would drop by Haji Mohammad’s shop, drink tea there, joke, and laugh. For example, I would say ‘Haji, we’ve come so you can give us lunch,’ and he would say: ‘Sure, what do you want? I’ll call and have it brought.’”
>
> “Haji was a warm and kind person. Everyone came to his shop; at tea time, we would drop by his shop, sometimes he would call himself and say ‘We’ve got sweets, come eat tea and sweets.’ Then we would go and while having tea

and sweets or afternoon snacks or even eating lunch, we would talk and laugh."

Hamid also recalled Mohammad Agha's humor and cheerfulness in environments outside work in his interview. For example, Hamid stated in one instance:

> "Haj-Mohammad sometimes came to the desert with his little daughter. We also had a shepherd named Mash-Rostam whose mind was stuck in the past. Mash-Rostam, for example, would ask Haji, 'What's your daughter's name?' and Haji would say: 'Hananeh,' then Mash-Rostam would say, 'What kind of name is that you've given her?' and Haji would say: 'No problem, you call her Hendavaneh (watermelon),' and then both would end their discussion with laughter."

Efforts to Spread Joy and Cheer Among Colleagues

Master Mohammad desired to extend his inner cheerfulness to the group level and direct them toward joy and cheer. Therefore, not only did he create joy for himself and his friends multiple times by going to the desert with friends or recreational trips, but he also tried to benefit from the joy traditions existing in the folk culture of his environment, thus creating joy and cheer for his colleagues. Hamid, in his interview, expressed one such instance as follows:

> "In Qazvin, similar to the Sizdah Bedar ceremony, we have the 50 Bedar ceremony where people in the past would go to the desert and pray to God for rain. Haji would also tell me in May when 50 Bedar was, 'Let's go to the desert, and if friends come too, even better.' Finally, with Haji's insistence, the 50 Bedar ceremony gradually took hold among colleagues. For example, once Haji said, 'Gather the kids for this 50 Bedar and let's go to the desert.' Then we bought 10-15 kilos of tripe and cooked them in the shops to prepare the kids' afternoon snacks, and then with the garage kids, some of whom had brought 3-4 of their friends, we all went to the desert and talked and laughed there. For example, when I jokingly told Haji, 'This Haj-Mehdi is bothering me,' then Haj-Mohammad would go hug him and squeeze him, and he would jokingly make a jackal's howl sound, and everyone would laugh. In any case, that day we were in the desert until 11 PM, and when we were returning from

the desert, a truck driver said, ‘In these 30 years, I haven’t seen such a joyful ceremony.’ In any case, Haji was the initiator of this.”

Honesty in Work

Master Mohammad had honesty in his work, and this honesty could be observed in his interactions with customers, colleagues, and parts sellers.

In his interactions with his customers, Master Mohammad primarily aimed to achieve the best efficiency for the customer’s vehicle with the minimum possible cost, and secondarily, he strongly avoided commission-based relationships between himself and parts sellers or himself and other colleagues whose specialties were related to heavy trucks.

Farhad, one of Master Mohammad’s customers, in his interview, said about Mohammad Agha’s proper treatment of himself and his other colleagues:

> "Haj-Mohammad was a person such that if a car stayed with him for even a month, nothing would be missing from the car; he was a masterful craftsman.
>
> Haj-Mohammad wasn’t a replacer; many in the mechanical profession have turned to replacement work. Haj-Mohammad was a repairer. For example, my clutch disc was damaged; Haj-Mohammad gave me a piece of metal and said, ‘Take this to the turner; if it has no warp, I’ll put this piece on your clutch disc, and it will work better for you than a new Chinese part.’
>
> After the turner[34] confirmed the piece had no warp, Haj-Mohammad installed it for me, and that piece worked for me for a long time. Meaning, Haj-Mohammad was thinking about the customer’s pocket. Haji would say, for example, ‘If I repair this part for you, it will work for a year; now it’s up to you, if you want, you can buy a new part and I’ll install it for you.’
>
> There are other repairers who, besides turning their work solely into replacement, unnecessarily create expenses for the owner; for example, my friend’s truck broke down. When he went to settle the account, the mechanic said, ‘Besides what you mentioned, I also changed your car’s oil seal.’ When

[34] Lathe Operator

my colleague asked for the old one, it turned out the mechanic was lying and hadn't changed the oil seal either.

Such people are not few in the mechanics' guild. Just as in this guild, a considerable number of people are after taking commissions. For example, they send the customer to buy car parts from a specific person, and in this case, they are more thinking about getting their own commission, not whether that person gives good parts to the customer or not.

There are also some repairers with whom one can't even talk, because they are unwilling to give information to the customer or anyone else. Whereas Haj-Mohammad had none of the flaws I mentioned; he was cheerful and smiling, and with his customer, he had more of a friendship attitude, and his customers left him with complete satisfaction.

There were also people who really didn't have money for repairs and were empty-handed; Haji would tell them 'Go work, pay me later!'

Haji's unquestionable expertise on one hand and his accommodation with the customer on the other had caused some truck drivers to even load their trucks from various cities onto trailers and bring them to Haj-Mohammad to fix them."

Shah-Mohammadi, one of Master Mohammad's colleagues, in a similar expression of the master's honest treatment of his customers, recalled as follows:

"Haj-Mohammad strongly avoided things like creating expenses for the customer, installing unsuitable parts for him, replacing new car parts with used ones, and the like, and this issue had caused customers, over time, with knowledge of his characteristics, to blindly approve his work and have complete satisfaction with him and his work."

Hassan, regarding Master Mohammad's empathy with his customers, noted that Haji's work was heavy vehicle mechanics, but sometimes someone would bring his motorcycle to him or his grape juice extractor, and Haj-Mohammad would proceed to repair and restart them. Of course, in some cases, the work wasn't Haji's, so Haj-Mohammad would say to someone who had brought his passenger car to him, 'Come, let's go to my friend so-and-so; he'll fix your car.'

"In the end, Haji would do whatever he could, both for his own customers and for those who weren't considered his customers.

> Master Mohammad's empathetic and honest treatment of his clients in some cases turned into friendships and even family interactions. Masoumi in his interview noted, "I had a friend who had a MAN truck. When my friend's car developed a fault, I gave him Haj-Mohammad's address, and after Haji fixed his car with the minimum price and maximum possible efficiency, my friend never left Haji, and subsequently, not only did he bring Haji's annual rice, but he also became acquainted and interacted with his family."

Parviz, one of the customers who had three decades of experience working with Master Mohammad, in his interview, referring to the master's honesty, said:

> "In my opinion, Haj-Mohammad was at the level of an imam, because he wasn't thinking the slightest about cheating or skimping on work and the like.
>
> For rebuilding my MAN engine, which costs 300 million, I only bought two parts myself, and all other supplies were personally bought by Haji and installed on the engine. He was an honest person and his eyes were satiated. We have people who, when we go to their shop, it's as if we've gone to a car spare parts shop.
>
> Many install parts from this car to that car or get subsidies from the parts seller they sent the customer to or give fake goods to the customer instead of original, but Mohammad was completely unfamiliar with all these."

Chegini, who had nearly four decades of collaboration and friendship with Master Mohammad, recalled the master's work honesty as follows:

> "Haji's trustworthiness was 20 out of 20. In Haji's profession, there is possibility for many wrongful acts, for example, the mechanic, while not having changed a part, says 'I also changed such-and-such part,' or gives fake goods to the customer or by sending him to a specific parts seller, gets a subsidy from that person, but Haj-Mohammad wasn't into any of these.
>
> To reduce the cost for the customer, Haji would personally go to Kurdistan and the Iraq border and procure goods, and the goods he brought, he would give to his customer with low profit. Haji's reasoning in these cases was that the customer doesn't know the goods and first, original goods must be given to the customer, and second, minimum cost should be imposed on him."

Master Mohammad had adopted an honest approach in his interactions with car parts sellers and other colleagues who collaborated with mechanics in specialties like

electricity, battery, bodywork, and the like, and he did not deviate from this policy until the end.

Abolfazl, who had nearly half a century of acquaintance with Master Mohammad, in his interview regarding the master's work honesty, stated:

> "My fathers and Mohammad's collaborated in their time, meaning Mohammad's father and uncle were employees of my father, and I, who later succeeded my father, knew him from the time Mohammad started working as an errand boy in Haj-Sohrab and Haj-Naser's shop. In one word, Mohammad was a trustworthy person. Meaning, in the customer's absence, he both preserved and defended his interests, and for this reason, he never sought to exploit his customers by creating commission-based interactions with parts sellers."

Yahya, one of Master Mohammad's colleagues, also stated in his interview:

> "Some car parts sellers in Tehran who had become acquainted with Haj-Mohammad over time would suggest to him 'Come take more goods from us,' but Mohammad would say, 'I don't have money for your goods.' They would say, 'You have credit with us, come take,' but Mohammad was cautious and didn't receive extra goods from Tehran parts sellers. But if Mohammad wanted to use the credit he had earned, he might have bought 10 houses for himself."

Chegini in his interview, referring to Master Mohammad's work honesty in relation to his colleagues, with reference to the master's first partner in setting up the shop, stated:

> "Mohammad's partner wasn't committed in terms of work, meaning sometimes he would go to the village and come to the shop a month later or wouldn't show up at work for consecutive days, but despite all this, Mohammad would set aside half the shop's income for him, while his share, who was perhaps only in the shop 50% of the time, was by no means equal to Haji's himself."

Mostafa also in his interview, in describing the master's work honesty, stated:

> "Mohammad was very honest in his work, and everyone was sure that when they left their car with him, nothing from their car would be displaced."

One of Master Mohammad's colleagues, in another part of the master's honest interactions with his customers, noted that to preserve and protect his customers' interests, Haji would tell them, for example, 'You must buy the exact goods I say or buy from such-and-such place so it's not fake or they don't overcharge the customer; otherwise, unsuitable goods will waste my efforts and impose costs on you again.'

Ali, from a different perspective in his report, stated:

> "Mohammad had honesty in his work; for example, if he saw he couldn't fix a car's problem, he would tell the owner 'This car is not in my range of work; it's better to give it to so-and-so,' meaning if Mohammad knew a car wasn't his work, he wasn't willing to touch it."

Efforts to Resolve Customers' Roadside Problems

Master Mohammad's expertise on one hand and his appropriate and empathetic treatment on the other caused many people to turn to him and feel assured that this mechanic would come to their aid in necessary and critical situations, such as a truck breaking down with a load on the road. Masoumi stated in this regard:

> "Some customers would bring their trucks to Haji, and after fixing the truck, Haji would tell them, for example, 'I guarantee for two years that your truck won't have problems,' or he would assure them that even if you break down at midnight on the road, you can call my house, and I'll come to your truck.
>
> Such behaviors of Haji caused some people to bring their broken trucks from all over Iran—either by loading them onto trailers or towing them—to Haji for repair and to rely on him as a trustworthy specialist."

Hassan, Master Mohammad's apprentice, in describing how Mohammad Agha treated his customers, said:

> "Haji had become friends with most customers. For example, I remember a person named Gol-Agha called Haji and said, 'My crankshaft broke in Bandar Abbas, and I have no money; what should I do?' Haji said, 'Don't worry.' He himself went and bought a crankshaft on his own account, and we set off for Bandar Abbas, where we helped Gol-Agha's truck and repaired it.
>
> There were also customers in the midst who were empty-handed, and for example, if they needed to pay 10 million tomans for their work, Haji would

> say, ‘No problem, pay half the wage,’ and he would say, ‘The wage must be halal, and the customer must pay the fee with satisfaction.’"

Master Mohammad’s sister-in-law also noted in her interview that some of Haji’s customers later turned their interactions with Haji into deep friendly relationships and associated with him even in non-work matters.

Valuing Customers’ Credit

Some advertisements speak of customer orientation, but these advertisements, in depth, are aimed at bringing more profit to the individual or organization in question.

The interviewees in the research recalled Master Mohammad’s customer orientation not for gaining more profit, but as respect for the customer as a human being worthy of respect. Cases such as accepting wage payments in installments, accepting fees during the harvest season, accepting wages after the customer works, buying parts on the master’s account, and occasionally forgiving part or all of the wage confirm the view that the master’s crediting of his customers was not out of thought for more profit, but out of respect for their inherent dignity and human personality.

Hassan and Mohebi-Khah recalled Mohammad Agha’s crediting of his customers in their interviews as follows:

> “Many customers had broken vehicles and needed parts and supplies but didn’t have the money to buy the required parts. Haj-Mohammad would call his parts seller friends and say, ‘Handle this person’s matter; I know him.’ Then he would tell that person, ‘Go to so-and-so and mention my name.’ If the customer went to those whom Haji had recommended and emptied their shop, the shop owner wouldn’t say anything to him. In any case, Haji would tell these people, ‘After working, bring your debt in pieces and installments and pay me.’”

"Haji was the most honest mechanic in this garage, and not only did he not create unnecessary expenses for his customers and get their work done, but if someone didn’t have the necessary money, he would say, for example, ‘You’ve just bought your truck; go work and bring the money later.’

There were also people who not only didn't have money for the wage but also for the replacement parts of their vehicle. Haji would call his parts seller friends and say, 'I'll guarantee this person; give him the necessary supplies.'"

Masoumi and Mousavi-Khani also mentioned the following regarding Master Mohammad's crediting of his customers:

> "They would bring tractors and bulldozers from the Alamut region to Haji for repair and then say, 'We'll pay your fee at harvest time,' and Haji would accept."
>
> "I myself witnessed a customer who didn't have money to buy the part for his vehicle, but Haji would buy the necessary part with his own money, get the customer's work done, and later collect his money from that person."

Forgiving His Own Wage

Although Master Mohammad received money for parts and consumables of vehicles and his own wage in the future and in installments in many cases, some customers were truly unable to cover the costs of parts and wages. In cases where Mohammad Agha realized the other party had no ability to pay the incurred costs, he would completely forgive his own fee, and at a higher level, the wage and cost of replaced parts. And if later those people obtained the necessary money and sought to repay their debt, Mohammad Agha would say, "I forgave it right there, and now we have no account with each other."

Hassan, Master Mohammad's apprentice, stated in this connection:

> "Sometimes the customer had no money and would ask Haji to keep the vehicle's smart card as collateral until he brought the money later to retrieve his vehicle's card, but Haji would say, 'Go, I've forgiven the wage' and would only take the cost of the vehicle's consumables.
>
> In cases where the driver didn't even have money for his replacement parts, Haji would say, 'The part was mine too; go, I've forgiven the part money too.' I myself witnessed that sometimes these people, after working and getting the cost of wage and parts, would come to Haji to pay, but Haji would say, 'I forgave it at the time' and wouldn't accept any money from them.

> Of course, it's necessary to mention here that Haji, in cases where he was to work for free, would perform his work at the highest level, not that since it had to be free, he would do it carelessly and imprecisely."

Yahya in his report noted that if Mohammad told a customer, "Since you have no money, go and bring the part and repair wage later," and then felt that customer was playing smart—having promised "After two loads, I'll pay my debt"—but after 6 months hadn't paid his debt, even if necessary, he would go to his house to collect his right.

Sina also recalled the latter characteristic of the master in his interview as follows:

> "Mohammad was a generous person, and I had heard that he sometimes might even forgo his own wage and fee. But if someone wanted to act stingy toward him and, for example, by tricking, pay less and get a discount, Mohammad would firmly stand against him and take his right."

Demonstrating Elevated Ethics

Master Mohammad strived to always keep ethical issues in mind and to display elevated ethics in himself.

Abolfazl, in his interview, describing the ethical orientation of Master Mohammad's paternal family, stated:

> "Mohammad's father (Doctor) and his uncle Ali (Ali-Hemadani), both were employees of my father and were renowned for their truthfulness and honesty. With the passing of the previous generation, Mohammad and I, as the new generation, continued our fathers' relations, and during the several decades of collaboration I had with Mohammad, I never saw a single negative point in him."

Atashgar and Seyed Mohammad Ali also endorsed the authenticity of Master Mohammad's family background in their report:

> "I knew Mohammad's father from childhood, whom they called Doctor (Doctor of machines), and I knew him. Similarly, I knew Mohammad's uncle, Haj-Kazem, and I must say that both of these great men were renowned for their ethics, people-orientedness, and clean hands."

> “I initially worked in another garage, and Mohammad’s Uncle Ali was our customer, and I knew him well and completely. He was a people-oriented and virtuous person. From 1358 when I moved to this garage, I got to know Haj-Mohammad himself, and over the many years we were together, I saw him as an ethical and elevated person.”

Sakineh, the mother-in-law and aunt’s wife of Master Mohammad, also stated in her interview:

> “Mohammad was an honest and truthful person, and for a while during his uncle’s illness, he would visit our house to help if his uncle needed assistance or treatment. Both before Mohammad’s marriage to my daughter and after, I have only seen good from Mohammad and have not witnessed any bad from him.
>
> Mohammad not only behaved well with me and his uncle but also with my daughter, and he provided a comfortable life for her.
>
> Mohammad was so respected and had behaved so well with our family that when the marriage proposal for our daughter Monir was raised, his uncle told him, ‘I’ll give my daughter only to you,’ and as a result, Mohammad and Monir got married in 1995.”

Ali also recalled the master’s broad sphere of attraction in his interview as follows:

> “Mohammad behaved well with everyone; of course, there were people with impurities, and Mohammad would say, ‘I don’t like so-and-so from the heart,’ but when that same person visited Mohammad’s shop, he wouldn’t treat him badly.”

Abolfazl in his interview about Mohammad Agha’s ethics stated:

> “Mohammad was a clean-handed person and would say, ‘A person’s worth is much more than the commission offered,’ and with laughter and jest, he would say, ‘Our price isn’t cheap.’”

Parviz, Master Mohammad’s customer, also recalled the master’s elevated ethics in his statements as follows:

> “Usually, when we lose someone, we exaggerate their qualities, but whatever I say about this man, it’s too little, and I know I’ve only expressed a percentage of his goodness.

> Haj-Mohammad was content with what God gave, accepted God's halal and haram, was human, and considered humanity the condition of being human. For this reason, he never wanted to take a shortcut to reach the top quickly.
>
> Mohammad was someone who didn't interfere in others' affairs, and while living and working, he paid attention to himself and worked on himself to become a complete human and put his humanity on display for all."

Chegini, a friend from Master Mohammad's teenage years, in describing his ethical orientation and elevated ethics, stated:

> "Our friendship that started, I saw that Mohammad, in all aspects—forgiveness, loyalty, and correctness—is 20 out of 20.
>
> Mohammad was a patient person; if someone did bad to him, he would respond with good; if his colleague took his customer, but when that same colleague got stuck in his work, Haj-Mohammad would help him and solve his problem without ever mentioning it, 'You were the one who stole my customer.'
>
> Mohammad's forgiveness in relation to colleagues, customers, and strangers was great; Mohammad was a complete human in every way, and every good that one could think of and search for, one could find in his being."

Nasiri, Master Mohammad's former apprentice, in his interview about the master's ethics, stated:

> "If someone searches the entire Asadabadi Boulevard (Master Mohammad's work location) and asks fellow mechanics, parts sellers, and the like, 'What kind of person was Mohammad?' everyone unanimously testifies to his goodness; even if you ask his enemies, they too confirm his elevated ethics, and if the result isn't like this, I'm willing to have my head cut off.
>
> Mohammad was inherently a noble person; he wished good for people and sought to get people's work done. His benevolence and goodness caused God to smooth his path so he could more easily do good to friends, acquaintances, and strangers.
>
> In any case, if we bring a morsel of bread to our table, it's due to him, and others know us by Haj-Mohammad's name and respect us."

Ahmad, Master Mohammad's cousin-in-law, in describing the master's ethical behavior, stated:

> "We had seen Mohammad in our life and knew how modest and ethical he was, but I didn't know much about his work environment. Once when I visited Mohammad's shop, I saw that everyone coming from afar toward Mohammad's shop would bow to him from a distance, and there I realized that Mohammad was as good in his work environment as in his family relations, behaving well, which is why people respect him so much."

Master Mohammad's elder aunt, in her report regarding the depth of the master's emotional impact, noted:

> "Tomorrow marks the beginning of the fourth month since Mohammad left us, but not a minute has he been out of my sight during this time.
>
> I tell myself, what did Mohammad do that he doesn't leave my sight? My tongue doesn't turn in my mouth to accept his death, and I still haven't believed his passing."

Mostafa in his interview, describing the depth of Master Mohammad's impact on himself, recalled as follows:

> "I haven't seen anyone like Mohammad in terms of humanity, honor, and manhood. Some of Mohammad's customers, when they learned Mohammad had passed, said, 'Haji the man is gone, we men are gone too.' We have a friend who says, 'Now that Haj-Mohammad isn't in Nozarian Garage, throw away the whole garage.'
>
> I myself, after Mohammad's passing, felt my back was empty; meaning, when I went and saw Haj-Mohammad or thought I have such a friend, I felt a great power behind me, but now I feel bad and think my back is empty, and I've lost my support and protector."

The latter statement indicates the master's attainment of the highest possible levels of ethics in an era and time when many people, by withdrawing from others, seek to free themselves from their harm.

Mashti-gari (Mashdi-gari)

Among the interviewees, several notable individuals recalled and spoke about Master Mohammad's *Mashti-gari* (Meshedi-gari).

Recent *Mashti-gari*, apart from what has been described in accounts of Meshedi-gari and Luti-gari in Iranian society and cultural history, pertains to gentlemanly conduct free from everyday profit-seeking in people's social relations.

Yahya, Master Mohammad's neighbor and colleague in the Nowruzian Garage, in his interview, emphasizing that in the 80 shops of this garage, one might scarcely find 6 people with even a high school diploma, pointed out that individuals whose jobs generally do not require studying or reading books can be influenced not through theoretical arguments, but by practically observing others' behaviors, and Haji acted in precisely this manner.

Nasiri, Master Mohammad's former apprentice, in providing an example of the master's recent actions, stated:

> "During my apprenticeship, I personally witnessed at least 4 cases where a master mechanic was assembling a vehicle, and due to a mistake in the work, the vehicle was damaged. When they selected Haji as the arbitrator to determine the share of fault between the master mechanic and the vehicle driver, Haj Mohammad, for instance, when he deemed the driver's and repairman's shares equal, would say, 'Well, this vehicle has sustained 30 million [Toman] in damage; 10 million is on the driver, 10 million on its repairman, and I'll cover the last 10 million.'"

Hamid, in his interview, depicted aspects of Master Mohammad's *Mashti-gari*, a summary of which is as follows:

> "Haji would accommodate certain customers who were financially strained and had no money, for example, after repairing their vehicle, he would tell them, 'Go work, earn, and pay me my money.' Even in some cases, Haji would buy the necessary vehicle parts on his own account to get a desperate person's work done.
>
> I myself have been in situations where I was short on money, and Haji, without even asking how much I needed or when I would return his money, would give me his ATM card and say, 'Go and withdraw whatever amount you want.'

On another occasion, we were spring cleaning near Eid, and the lady of the house said, ‘Take these rugs and dishes to the desert and get new rugs and dishes for the house.’ I went with one of my friends in front of the municipality and got two clean second-hand rugs from a rug seller. When I brought the rugs home, the lady of the house got upset and said, ‘We already had old rugs; what you bought is no different from the previous old rugs.’

When Haj Mohammad learned of my problem, he said, ‘Take the rugs, put them on top of the Jeep, let’s go get new ones.’ In short, we went, returned the second-hand rugs, and Haji told the rug seller, ‘Give two new 9-meter rugs; don’t worry about the money.’ Haji paid for the rugs, we took them, brought them home, and the lady was very happy about it.

Another time, my Jeep had thrown a rod bearing. Haj Mohammad directed me to open it up at his friend’s place in the Thalath Garage. Then Haji himself got the necessary Jeep parts, did the machining work, and afterward said, ‘Come, start the Jeep and take it.’ I wanted to give Haji money, but Haji took neither a rial of labor fee nor the money for the Jeep’s consumables. I said, ‘Haji, your *Mashti-gari* has become very evident to us!’ Then I went, bought a sheep for Haji, slaughtered it, and brought the meat to him. Haji wouldn’t accept it until I said, ‘Haji, even if I buy ten sheep for your work, it still won’t repay your favor.’ Finally, Haji accepted the meat.

Haji had a lot of such *Mashti-gari*. Another time, when I had gone on a trip with the Jeep, the engine light came on en route. I told Haji, ‘It’s like this,’ and he said, ‘How many months since you changed the oil?’ I said, ‘3-4 months.’ In short, I brought the Jeep to Haji’s shop, and he fixed it for me but instructed me not to take long trips with this Jeep. Whenever you want to go on a long trip, come take my Samand!

On another occasion, when I was going north with my friend, Haji saw our car and said, ‘Where are you going with this junk Peykan? Come take my Samand; you can even take two more friends with you north.’ Of course, I should say Haji had given his Samand to many other people too.

On yet another occasion, I had a troublesome tenant who was bothering me and wouldn’t vacate on the due date. I told Haj Mohammad, ‘What should I do with this troublesome tenant; he’s not leaving my house.’ Haji asked, ‘Which agency wrote your first lease?’ I told him. Haji went to that agency and told the agent to write a new lease in the tenant’s own name, then based

on the new lease, got a court order, showed it to the guy, and said he had to vacate, and the guy finally left out of necessity. Meaning, Haji not only stood by his friends in good matters but also helped them in bad situations and stood by them."

Hamid, in another part of his interview, recalled mutual services to Master Mohammad. He said in one example of such cases:

"It was 1999, and I had gone to Mashhad with Ali-Agha and some garage guys. Haj Mohammad called and said, 'What are you doing?' I said, 'I've come to Mashhad with the guys.' Haji said, 'Where's your Jeep?' I said, 'Such and such place.' He said, 'Where's the key?' I said, 'At home.' He took the Jeep and went to Astara with Mehdi Chegini."

Ahmad, in his interview, pointed out that if he and Master Mohammad's maternal aunt had a task and the master did it, he wouldn't easily say how much it had cost him to do the work, and he had to insist a lot to make the master reveal the incurred costs so he could return them to him.

Chegini, in describing Master Mohammad's *Mashti-gari*, stated:

"A full glass is full; everything is complete, and no more water can be added to it. Haj Mohammad was a complete human, and one cannot imagine anyone surpassing him in *Mashti-gari*."

Yahya also stated in his interview:

"I myself had land in Najafabad and bought 2000 square meters next to mine for Haj Mohammad. Haji didn't put up a fence between my garden and his and said from the start, 'There's no here or there; come and pick whatever you want.' That's why I would pick from his garden, and he, for example, would pick from the vegetables I had planted. If any of Haji's friends or acquaintances came to his garden, Haji would say, 'This isn't my garden or Yahya's; everyone is free, pick whatever you want,' and they, like us, would pick whatever they wanted from both gardens."

Ali, Master Mohammad's nephew, also pointed out in his report:

"Mohammad was affable and respected everyone's honor, and his work with others had reached the point where if someone had a task in the garage, they would refer to him and come to him. Similarly, anyone who wanted to drink tea and rest would consider Mohammad's shop the best option, go there, drink

tea, chat with Mohammad, smile, refresh themselves, and possibly find a solution to their problem with Mohammad's help."

What has been briefly mentioned above depicts examples of humans who displayed *Mashti-gari* in its elevated meaning in an era of crumbling values and meaning crisis, practically showing the path to human moral elevation by relying on authentic role models.

Creating Deep Emotional Bonds with Colleagues and Customers

The social relations briefly mentioned above practically led to creating deep and extensive emotional bonds between the two sides.

Ali stated in his interview:

> "Mohammad was complete in *Mashti-gari* and affable with everyone, treated them well, and when he had any upset from somewhere, he wouldn't bring the upset to his workplace or home. I myself have witnessed master mechanics who were upset from elsewhere and would vent their frustration on their apprentice, insult them, or even beat them. Sometimes, when a vehicle's work goes wrong, some master mechanics simply raise their hand against their apprentice and beat them, but Mohammad never behaved this way; he always respected the young and old and generally considered the subordinate like his own brother."

Mousavi-Khani stated in his interview that when he told Master Mohammad, "Your apprentice is such and such," Mohammad Agha said to him:

> "Don't say apprentice; we are brothers."

Amir also stated in this regard:

> "Haji was like a brother to me, and I was always looking for an excuse to visit his shop and see him again for the umpteenth time."

Mousavi-Khani also referred to Master Mohammad in his interview as his own brother.

Ali, Master Mohammad's nephew, in another part of his report, pointed out:

> “Mohammad would sometimes buy fruits and snacks with his own money so that all his colleagues in the garage could use them.”

With the master’s untimely passing to the heavens, many of his admirers became distraught and heartbroken. Khadijeh khanom stated in her interview:

> “Eskandar, who had become acquainted with Mohammad through his help in solving his problem, when in contact with Mohammad’s house he heard that Mohammad was no longer among us, burst into loud crying and said, ‘Why should we be here and Haj Mohammad dead?’”

Monir, the master’s wife, with similar content, stated:

> "The neighborhood baker, after Mohammad’s passing, saw me and said, ‘I cried more for Haji’s loss than for my sister’s.’ He said, ‘Haji always considered me and greeted me hello and goodbye.’
>
> Mohammad’s shop apprentices also refused to attend the funeral dinner that night and said, ‘How can we eat dinner without Haji? How can we go anywhere Haji isn’t?’"

Haj-Sehrab also stated about his former apprentice:

> “I don’t cry for anyone, but I cried a lot for Haji, so much that I didn’t cry this much for my father and mother’s passing.”

Mousavi-Khani, in describing Master Mohammad’s neighbor, stated:

> “Hemati didn’t cry when his brother died, but he cried at Haji’s grave and said, ‘Haji, in these 20 years of neighborliness, you never even said “you” to me.’”

Mousavi-Khani continued:

> "Haji wasn’t my friend; he was my brother, older than me. I didn’t cry for my father’s passing, but I cried for him for a full day and night.

I know people who were stone-hearted; I know people who if you hit their head, it would break but no tears would come, yet they cried at Haji’s ceremony."

Nasiri, Master Mohammad’s former apprentice, stated in his interview:

> “I’m a person who hardly ever sheds tears in any situation, but I cried a lot at Haji’s grave, and my father, upon returning from Haji’s funeral, told my mother, ‘Our son cried profusely at Haji’s funeral procession.’”

Parviz also said in his report:

> “When my son saw the text message about Haj Mohammad’s passing, he said ‘Dad’ and froze, and after a few minutes, he burst like a pomegranate.”

According to some interviewees, the news of Master Mohammad’s passing to the heavens shocked many of his colleagues and even customers.

Monir reported:

> "The Chalus neighbors called me and said, ‘We’ve been waiting for Haji since morning; why hasn’t Haji come?’ I said, ‘Haji has flown,’ and they were stunned, saddened, and pained.
>
> Mr. Sarbanha, who is a merchant and parts seller, called me inquiring about Mohammad, and when I spoke of Mohammad’s passing, he sternly said to me, ‘This is the last time you say that.’ Then he went to the shop entrance and asked Mohammad’s apprentices about him, and when they said Mohammad had gone to God’s mercy, he lost it and broke the shop window."
>
> Hassan also reported that upon hearing Haji’s early passing, some customers went into shock.

Kamran also reported that when he told an acquaintance who had asked about the master that he had passed away, the person froze for a while. Another colleague said that upon hearing the regrettable news of Haji’s passing over the phone, his hands remained motionless for ten minutes, and the author personally witnessed that during the interview with Hassan, when a colleague came by for some work and learned the interview was about Mohammad Agha, he showed his hands to the author and said to him:

> “Look, upon hearing and remembering Haji, all the hair on my arms has stood up.”

Some colleagues, in their interviews, recalled the pain of their wives in the master’s absence and mourning. Hamid stated in his interview that his wife had only encountered Haji once when taking the new rugs, but with that single encounter, she became so enamored of Haji’s ethics and character that she cried for a long time

after his death, and when they go to the graves of the righteous every week with her husband, she insists first on reading Fatiha at Haji's grave and then at her brother-in-law's grave.

One colleague spoke of the crying of his elderly wife in mourning for Haji, pointing out that his wife cried all the way from Karaj to Qazvin on the way to Haji's funeral ceremony.

Masoumi also reported that although Haji's work was mechanics for heavy vehicles, Haji had repaired his brother's broken verjuice extractor machine and restored it to working condition, and this fond memory caused his brother and wife to grieve the loss of this great man.

Haj-Sehrab, Mohammad Agha's initial master, stating that the secret to his apprentice's longevity was his people-orientedness, pointed out that Haji's connection with all customers and colleagues was good. For example, if a customer didn't have enough money, he would say, 'Give whatever you want for the labor I've done for you,' and I don't think even one colleague held a grudge against him, and no one can be found to say otherwise.

> "Now there are people who die, and not even four people are willing to attend their ceremony or grave, but with Haji's passing, all garage colleagues came to the ceremony, and even some customers, upon learning of Haji's passing, complained to us, 'Why didn't you tell us so we could attend Haji's commemoration?'"

Haj-Sehrab, in his interview, in a brief summary of his ongoing spiritual pain, said:

> "I, who used to go to Haji's shop constantly with enthusiasm for jokes and laughter, now when passing by there, cannot look at the empty space of Haj Mohammad, so without glancing at the shop where Haji once was, I continue on my way."

Mousavi-Khani, with similar expressions of his heartfelt pain, stated:

> "I burn that no son of Haji remains for us to refresh our hearts by seeing him."

The outcome of Master Mohammad's deep emotional relations with customers and colleagues can be summarized in his exemplary influence and human-making effect.

Hassan, Master Mohammad's apprentice and colleague, in a part of his interview, recalled his exemplary influence as follows:

"I myself was in fourth grade of elementary school when I lost my father and was forced into the work environment very early.

Haj Mohammad filled the void of my father (tears up), and I called him Uncle-Khan. Whatever I needed and voiced or didn't voice, Haji would do for me within his means. We had a deep bond, and our connection had become eye-to-eye. For example, when Haji looked at his watch, I understood he wanted to go to the garden and would say, 'Haji, let's go to the garden.'

Sometimes I had my own work, but when Haji said 'Where are you?' and I knew he wanted to go to his garden, I would say, 'I'm free,' and go with him to the garden.

Since I saw Haji supporting me in every way and having my back, I too tried to be the son he didn't have and do whatever I could for Haji. For example, I hired workers for Haji's garden, and I, another shop apprentice, and the workers did drip irrigation piping for the garden. Then we bought a tank for the garden, took it with a crane, poured concrete for three full days, leveled it, installed the tank, and connected it to the drip irrigation network.

I learned these from Haji himself, because Haji would take from his own work to get others' work done; I too learned to sacrifice from myself and do others' work, but in any case, Haji's passing broke us."

Javad, who was one of Master Mohammad's colleagues, also recalled his exemplary influence, pointing out that by observing Haji's behaviors, people-orientedness, and manhood, he learned to behave this way as much as possible.

Some interviewees recalled the deep effects of friendship with Master Mohammad in themselves, citing cases such as hanging several pictures of Master Mohammad in their workplace, greeting and talking to the master's picture daily, taking a shoe sole of the master as a memento from the accident site, taking the placard on the shroud, and the like, indicating the intensity of their attachment to Master Mohammad.

Chegini stated in his interview:

"On the day of Haji's accident, I had left my mobile somewhere, and when I went back and picked it up, I saw my wife had called me 17 times. I called her back asking what was up, and she said, 'They say mechanic Mohammad

has fallen into the valley with his car.' I called Ali to inquire, and he said, 'We're doomed!'

That night I cried until morning and couldn't eat at Mohammad's house or our own.

After Haj Mohammad's burial, I was at his grave every day until the 40th day, and I saw that two of his sisters were always at Haji's grave too.

Although after the 40th day I reduced my visits to the cemetery, I have hung two pictures of Haj Mohammad in my shop, and every morning when I go to the shop, I first greet his picture. Sometimes I even talk to Mohammad's picture, like saying, 'Haji, shall I pour you tea?' Sometimes during the conversation with Haji's picture, tears come, and I say, 'Damn the soil! Damn the soil!'

Two days ago, I was telling my wife how much I miss Haji, and she said, 'Read Fatiha and don't be so nostalgic, lest Haji come and take you with him too,' and I said, 'No problem, let him come and take me so we can be together!'

In any case, even though I had a nearly 40-year relationship with Haj Mohammad, I always regret why when Mohammad suggested we open a mechanic shop together, I pursued my father's profession and didn't accept Haji's request."

Kamran, in a similar manner in his interview, referring to the two pictures of Master Mohammad he had installed in his small guard booth, said, "What a shame this great human is gone from us."

Nasiri, Master Mohammad's former apprentice, reported in his interview:

"Me and a few other friends went to the accident scene with a van of tools. Then we tried to pull Haj Mohammad's car up from the bottom of the valley but failed, but I, who had gone down into the valley to attach the car to the tow cable, picked up Haji's shoe sole and belt that had burst in the accident to take as a memento for myself, but unfortunately due to the steep slope and difficulty of the valley path, they slipped from my hand and went to the valley floor.

But as you see on the wall, I took the placard on Haji's shroud and hung it on the shop wall so that no day passes without remembering Haji."

Parviz, one of Master Mohammad's customers, also recalled his and his children's attachment to Master Mohammad, reporting:

> "My son is 32 years old, and like me, he's a heavy truck driver. My son, with just a few encounters with Haji, became so enamored that he wanted to change his car and buy a Man truck so that Haji, who was our Man mechanic, would become his vehicle's mechanic.
>
> I know another person who exactly changed his truck to a Man so that Haj Mohammad would be his vehicle's mechanic.
>
> This much affection is only because Haji was affectionate to others; humans thirst for affection, and Haji was full of it, that's why my son or the likes were in love with Haj Mohammad."

Sina, from a different perspective, recalled Master Mohammad's conquest of those around him during his fruitful life as follows:

> "When Mohammad passed away, I attended his ceremony with my father. There were so many participants that one of the cemetery guards said, 'It's been a long time since I've seen such a ceremony with this volume of attendees.'"

Given what has been mentioned, in a brief summary of Master Mohammad's relations with his colleagues and customers, one can say that Mohammad Agha's *Mashti-gari*, people-orientedness, and gentlemanliness practically served as a model for the ethical and humane behavior of those close to him with others and became (and will become) a guiding light for those seeking to understand the true meaning of existence and their own human elevation in an era dominated by profit-seeking.

Human-Making (Insan-Sazi)

The matter of self-cultivation and consequently human-making was one of the important affairs to which Master Mohammad paid serious attention and effort throughout his fruitful life. He sought to be effective not only in his own self-cultivation but also at the level of those around him, realizing the supreme and ultimate goal of life—attaining the station of humanity—in himself and his surroundings.

In other words, since elevation is not possible without self-cultivation, and self-cultivation without practical action for human-making, Master Mohammad paid attention to other-making and human-making in the course of his own self-cultivation. In all his movements and stillness in connection with relatives, friends and acquaintances, colleagues, and even strangers who were his fellow townspeople and compatriots, he indicated pursuing humane behaviors and stepping into value arenas. Depending on the talent of the audience, the master's recent teachings bore fruit in some cases.

Maryam, in her interview regarding the human upbringing that Master Mohammad provided to her children, said:

> "Although observing Mohammad's behavior and demeanor was in itself a lesson in how to be and how to become for my children and other nephews and nieces, sometimes Mohammad directly taught my children, for example, regarding the money they earn, to pay great attention that it be pure and lawful so they can consume it with assurance.
>
> Similarly, Mohammad's demeanor of *Mashti-gari* has been effective on my children, and for example, now Ahmad has covered the cost of plumbing work for a poor rural family, and Milad, my other son, has been doing that family's work for free for several days."

Maryam's husband also, in his interview regarding his children's influence from Master Mohammad's path, said:

> "Our Ahmad is a copy of his late uncle, always with a smile at the corner of his lips. I myself sometimes get nervous and sharp with Ahmad in the parking lot where we work, and many times in front of my colleagues at work, I have scolded Ahmad, but he always looks at me and leaves me with a smile, and this is exactly the behavior observed in his uncle Mohammad."

Chegini, who has over four decades of companionship with Master Mohammad in his record, regarding Mohammad Agha stated:

> "In the long period of friendship from adolescence until Mohammad's ascension to the heavens, I emphasize that I have had no friend like Mohammad and will not have.[35] I learned many lessons from Mohammad,

[35] Haj Kazem, the Master's maternal uncle, recalled in his interview that once, when he had gone to Master Mohammad's grave and was standing nearby, he witnessed a man approaching the grave from about ten paces away.

like the demeanor of magnanimity. He considered himself small in front of his friend and companion at the peak of his greatness, and this was a lesson for me. Mohammad was my ethics teacher, and I learned from him to put forth my code of honor to the utmost for a friend."

Observing Master Mohammad's apprentices, it is seen that both Hassan (current apprentice) and Nasiri (former apprentice who is now working as a master mechanic) exhibit some mystical behaviors in themselves, whose origin they attribute to Master Mohammad. In other words, Master Mohammad, while teaching the ins and outs of heavy vehicle mechanics and training creative apprentices, also had in mind their direct and indirect ethical education and spent time on this path.

Hassan, in his interview, stated that Master Mohammad, besides technical training and resolving his skill problems, also paid attention to his life issues, and for example, by reading the worry on his face, pursued his problem and took action to solve it. Similarly, Hassan stated that Master Mohammad, by following up on the condition of his friends, practically deepened human relations in him, and by visiting my sick pigeon (which I had brought to the shop for more care), on Friday holidays and tending to it, taught me respect for environmental factors, and by placing his ATM card in my hand to resolve the problems of acquaintances and strangers, practically taught me *Mashti-gari*.

Hassan, who under the influence of what he learned from his master, himself acts in a mystical manner, in a passage of his interview stated:

> "Haji had no son, and I considered myself his son, and wherever necessary and a task was within my power for Haji, I never withheld. For example, when I saw that Haji Mohammad's Najafabad garden had an irrigation problem, I pursued implementing the drip irrigation plan for the garden and realized it."

Nasiri, Master Mohammad's former apprentice who held the position of apprenticeship from 2007-2013, in his interview stated that while learning the intricacies of heavy vehicle mechanics, he received many lessons in creativity and creative action, piety, deepening human relations, and *Mashti-gari* from his master. In this regard, he stated:

The man was striking his head and lamenting, "Oh no, oh no, we're doomed!" Haj Kazem realized that this individual was Chegini, Mohammad's friend.

“My father and brothers are mechanics. My father had asked his colleagues where to place me for mechanical training so that I would be well-trained, and everyone said only take your son to Haji Mohammad.

During the apprenticeship period, when we were working and broke a piece or assembled it wrong and the piece was damaged, Haji Mohammad, without saying a bad word, would end the matter with a passing glance. I may have broken the edge of the gearbox engine 1000 times in my own work, and again Haji Mohammad would buy the same piece and say ‘You assemble it.’ Naturally, breaking the piece lowers one’s confidence, and in these cases, I wanted to refrain from reassembling and said ‘I’m afraid the work will get damaged again,’ but Haji would say ‘No, you must assemble it yourself.’

Unlike other masters who deduct the cost of the broken piece from the apprentice’s wages, Haji not only didn’t deduct the piece money from our wages but gave us courage so we wouldn’t step back from work out of fear, to train us as successful mechanics. In other words, while in Haji’s shop I have no fear or hesitation from doing any task, in my father’s mechanic shop, I don’t have the courage to do the simplest mechanical task like removing a Khavor wheel, and this exactly goes back to the master’s training.

Haji, besides usual training, trained us to be creative in a way that when a new heavy vehicle came for repair, Haji would tell me ‘Go open the vehicle’s engine to learn,’ but I was afraid, but Haji, to reassure me, would say ‘You open it, assembling the vehicle is on me.’

This way, I, who was afraid to assemble a piece, gained a lot of experience in challenging new engines.

Training the ethics of apprentices was another issue Haji paid attention to in his teachings. Meaning, for example, in 2009, I wanted to go to Mashhad with my friends. We went to an agency to buy plane tickets, the agency ticket seller encouraged us so much to go to Kish instead of Mashhad that I bought Kish tickets. When I returned to the shop, Haji learned that instead of Mashhad tickets, I had taken Kish tickets. He told me not to go on this trip, but I went ahead with my trip and returned three days later and went back to work. When Haji came to the shop that day, I was working. I greeted him. He answered me and said ‘Where were you those three days?’ I said ‘I went to Kish.’ Haji told me ‘Go back to where you were!’ I too got upset by this behavior, picked up my things, and left the shop.

A quarter of an hour later, Haj Mohsen the hardware seller called me and said to come to him. I went to Haj Mohsen, and he very paternally inquired about the story between me and Haji and said 'You are a 17-18-year-old young man, listen to Haji Mohammad's words, he is your master and besides your technical training, he wants to train you ethically and behaviorally too.' At that moment, Haji Mohammad also came to Haj Mohsen's shop. Haji Mohammad started talking to me and said 'Look, I love you like my own child and don't want you to deviate, don't think I'm upset that you didn't show up for work for three days. Whether you work three days or not, I won't become poor or rich, I wanted to discipline you so from now on you pay more attention to the actions and behaviors you take.'

Finally, I realized Haji's good intentions and understood that despite my sulking, he had involved Haj Mohsen to fix our strained relations, I returned to the shop and worked there until 2 a.m. that day.

After that, I worked in the shop for a few more years, but this time I considered myself devoted to Haji, even though I knew he was devoted to me too.

When Haji and his family went to Armenia for Nowruz holidays in 1389 (2010), instead of coming to the shop after 5-6th of Farvardin (March) as usual every year, I went to the shop from the second of March and worked like a bulldozer. Neighbors thought I was working to pocket Haji's money in his absence, but it wasn't so, and after the heavy work I did in the shop until Haji Mohammad's return, I earned 5 million Tomans, while usually we would earn about 2 million Tomans in that period. When Haji returned from the trip and I gave him the 5 million Tomans, from that day he made my wage percentage-based and considered 20% for me from the day I had worked, and I, who in 1388 took 400,000 Tomans monthly salary, once received 1 million Tomans cash for two weeks of work. These issues made me work in Haji Mohammad's shop with more love and interest, and I wouldn't even stand still. For example, by the time Haji went to eat lunch and returned, I had opened the vehicle. Neighbors, seeing the intensity of my work, would tell Haji 'Our hen doesn't lay eggs even in the nest, your rooster lays eggs on a nail,' which this last expression alludes to the intensity of my attachment and interest to Haji and the work I did in the shop for him.

What I said about my love and interest in working with Haji, I did in other cases too. For example, at that time, when I saw that Haji even in the heat

fasted the month of Ramadan, I too following him kept my prayers and fasts in place, something that has now faded in my life.

In any case, the relation between me and Haji was father-son, and I respected Haji a lot, and during the 6 years I was with Haji, I never sat in front of him and always stood alert near him, and if Haji wanted to even cut off my head, I wouldn't say a word to him why do you want to do this!

After the apprenticeship period passed, when I thought my training period was complete, with Haji Mohammad's permission, I pursued opening an independent shop, but since I was very committed that I must preserve Haji Mohammad's respect in all conditions, I opened my shop in Takestan instead of Qazvin so that no suspicion of work competition arises between me and Haji Mohammad and his respect be somewhat tarnished.

If Haji Mohammad's customer came to me even in Takestan itself, I wouldn't accept him and would say go to Haji himself. Finally, I respected Haji a lot, and of course he also respected me, to the extent that when I opened a shop in Takestan, he brought a wall clock as a gift and shopwarming sweet for me.

I worked in Takestan for about 7 years, and then circumstances arose that 5 km outside Qazvin, we opened a garage with my brother, but later I had a disagreement with my brother and for 4 months I looked for a shop to relocate, but couldn't find a suitable shop. Of course, I knew there was a shop in Nowruzian Garage next to Haji Mohammad, but I wanted to preserve Haji's respect and didn't go towards Nowruzian Garage. Finally, when I faced the issue that I had to vacate the shop outside the city in two days, I went to Haji and said 'Haji, I'm stuck in my work' and asked for his help. Haji said 'Mr. Hemati has a shop, come take his shop' and he himself talked to him and in 30 seconds rented his shop for me and took the key and gave it to me.

Then Haji told Mr. Hemati 'Do you want rent or not' and he said 'You are in charge,' and I said 'Whatever Haji says, I'll give that to Mr. Hemati.' Finally, despite the shop owner believing that in a deal one must exchange a handwritten note, out of respect for Haji, he didn't even take two lines from me, and after several years, he still hasn't pursued getting a handwritten note from me.

In short, Haji trained me not only in mechanics but also in ethics and knowledge and how to be human. That's why I say the favor Haji did me and

the kindness he showed me, neither my father nor my brother have done or shown me any of it."

Chapter 5: Interaction with the Community

This chapter focuses on the theme of "Interaction with the Community," examining Master Mohammad's overt and covert relationships with strangers in society. The key themes identified based on the qualitative research conducted in this chapter are as follows:

Prioritizing others over oneself, respect and attention to others, dealing with others with tolerance and leniency, disregard for the world and materialism, support for economically and socially weak strata, efforts to solve people's problems, fairness, *Mashti-gari* (generosity/masterfulness), relative detachment from societal political issues, creating deep emotional connections with the community, enjoining good and forbidding wrong. In the following, these aforementioned themes will be discussed in order.

Prioritizing Others

Master Mohammad not only prioritized the interests of his relatives, acquaintances, and colleagues over his own in his interactions with them, but also paid attention to and practiced this beautiful human trait in his dealings with strangers.

Khadijeh khanom reported in her interview on this matter:

> "Once during the month of Ramadan, when it was close to Iftar time and Mohammad's mouth was dry, someone called Mohammad and said, 'I am stranded on the road and need your help.' Mohammad called home and said, 'I will be late,' and went outside the city to fix the stranded vehicle.
>
> Later, I found out that fixing the car had taken a very long time, and Mohammad arrived home near dawn."

Monir, Master Mohammad's wife, stated in her interview regarding the priority given to others by her husband:

> "Mohammad always prioritized others and their work over himself and his own work, and he worked for others solely for his own satisfaction. I never

saw Mohammad hold anything over the heads of acquaintances or strangers for the work he did for them."

Moloud also recalled in her interview:

> "When Mohammad was teaching me and my other sisters how to drive, while teaching the intricacies of driving, he would tell us, 'If, God forbid, danger arises for you, never hit the oncoming vehicle; instead, try to hit your own car against walls, barriers, or road protections so as not to threaten the other party.'"

One of Master Mohammad's sisters stated regarding his boundless help even to strangers:

> "I once asked Mohammad for help with a banking matter, but he couldn't do it for me. In the meantime, I learned that a young couple had asked Mohammad to be their guarantor for a marriage loan, and after they took the maximum possible marriage loan, they did not proceed to repay the installments. Mohammad was forced to pay the installments for that strange lady and gentleman month by month."

Monir in her report, referring to the recent issue, stated:

> "Mohammad paid the marriage loan for that young couple, and of course, this was not the first time he did this; he became guarantor for other people as well, and sometimes due to their failure to pay the installments, he was forced to pay their installments too."

Ali stated in his interview regarding Master's prioritization of those around him and even strangers:

> "Mohammad considered others' troubles as his own, and in some cases, I witnessed him closing his own work to go solve someone's problem.
>
> Similarly, Mohammad would not tolerate anyone's loss or damage; for example, if someone had cargo in their truck and said, 'I need to deliver the truck's load to the province; fix my vehicle's issue quickly,' Mohammad would even cut into his rest time to do that person's work."
>
> Ahmad recalled in his interview that once on the way home, he encountered Mohammad who had taken an old man's load on his shoulders and was carrying it for him. Similarly, Chegini stated in his interview that helping

others was Mohammad's routine. This help could be financial, performing work, or resolving someone's problem. For example, on the way to his garden, Mohammad encountered a man who was struggling to carry a load, and relying on his strong physique, Mohammad took the man's load and carried it for him.

Mohammad sometimes said, 'What you like for yourself, like for others too,' but more often his final word was, 'Whatever is good should first be for my neighbor and others, and then for myself.'"

Yahya, colleague and next-door neighbor to Master Mohammad in the Norouzi Garage and in Najafabad Garden, in describing Master Mohammad's prioritization of others, stated:

"Unlike many people whose fists are closed and who don't let anything slip from their grasp for others, Mohammad's fist was always open and ready to help others. Even if he himself happened to have nothing, for example, to someone who came and asked for help, he would say, 'Go take a walk and come back,' and in that time, he would get something from someone else so as not to disappoint the person who hoped for help from him.

Haji's generosity was so great that, in my opinion, if someone took off his coat and took it, he wouldn't say anything to him, or if someone needed his shoes, he would give them to him. That is why, despite his high expertise in heavy vehicle mechanics, Mohammad gained little from the world.

I once witnessed a stranger from Alamut coming to Mohammad for his wedding and asking for help, and Mohammad provided the necessary help. I said to Mohammad, 'If these people don't return the money you give them, what happens?' Mohammad said, 'Yes, they might really not return it, but the important thing is that I have fulfilled my human duty.'"

Respect and Attention to Others

Many people are self-centered, focused only on their own emotions, desires, wishes, and interests, but there are few individuals who view the universe from a broader horizon, not seeing only their own interests and pleasures, and who have the ability to look at surrounding issues from others' perspectives as well, unlike self-centered individuals.

Master Mohammad, being a refined human being, did not limit his attention to his own emotions and feelings; he also thought of and paid attention to others.

Monir recalled her husband's attentions to others in her interview as follows:

> "Sometimes I would say to Mohammad, 'They say the income from mechanics is very good, so why isn't your income significant?' And Mohammad would reply, 'I don't belong only to you and our children; I consider myself belonging to my maternal family, my surroundings, and even other people, and I feel committed to them as well.
>
> Sometimes profitable job offers were made to Mohammad, but due to the precautions in his life, he did not accept them. For example, Mohammad did not accept the offer to take a large volume of truck spare parts on consignment from one of the major importers of truck parts, or my own father said to Mohammad, 'Since my son also has a factory of his own, come and take responsibility for maintaining my son's factory machinery,' but Mohammad said, 'If I go to your son's factory, it will cause those to whom I provide services to be left stranded; therefore, the better solution is for your son to send his machines to my workplace in the garage for repair so that while providing services to him, I can also continue serving others.'"

Monir in another part of her report recalled:

> "Whenever Mohammad was invited to the wedding celebrations of acquaintances or strangers, he would give significant gifts to the bride and groom to help them start their life."

Masoumi, the husband of Master Mohammad's maternal aunt, recalled in his interview an experience of his great attention to strangers as follows:

> "One year, we went to Alamut for recreation with Mohammad's family. When we arrived at Mohammad's friend's garden, the cherry pickers were picking cherries. The garden owner asked the cherry pickers to go to the neighboring garden and continue their cherry picking there so that his guests' family could be comfortable in the garden.
>
> Finally, after some time, Mohammad skewered the livers he had brought for lunch and grilled them, but sent most of the grilled livers to the cherry pickers. We said, 'Mohammad, what did you do?' And Mohammad replied, 'The

smell of the livers was reaching the neighboring garden too, and it wasn't right for us to eat the livers alone.'"

Haj-Sohrab and Hamid, colleagues of Master Mohammad, stated in their reports about his attention to others:

"Haj-Mohammad was not only very sociable and fond of friends, but he also tried to respect everyone and not be inattentive or rude to anyone."

"Haji liked to mingle with everyone, so when he repaired the vehicles of some Kurds and Lors, they in turn would invite Mohammad to their ceremonies. For example, I remember Mohammad was invited to the weddings of Lors in Chariys Town, and he accepted their invitation and participated in their celebration. Similarly, Mohammad was invited to Kurdish weddings. In other words, Kurds who did not invite anyone other than Kurds to their celebrations respected Mohammad so much that they invited him to their party and said, 'Come to our ceremony with your friends.' Similarly, sometimes northerners and Alamutis also invited Haji to their ceremonies.

Master Mohammad also placed special importance on elderly and aged people or marginalized social strata. Haj-Sohrab and Hamid raised examples of these cases in their interviews as follows:

'I invited Haj-Mohammad to a party in Suga Village, and we went there together on a mule. In the village, Mohammad became very friendly with my father, and my father, due to the affection in Mohammad's behavior, became fond of him and later became one of Haji's staunch admirers.'

'We had a shepherd in the desert who was somewhat simple-minded, and when we wanted to take a sheep for recreation, he would protest, saying, 'Why are you taking the sheep?' Or sometimes he would say to us, 'You take the sheep and buy scrap metal (car) instead; why do you do that?'

But Mohammad, who sometimes came to the desert with me, had established a good relationship with him. For example, Mohammad would sometimes say to him, 'Give me your sheep so I can graze them instead of you and you rest a bit,' or he would roll a cigarette for fat Rostam and give it to him, and they had a good friendship.

Finally, the same person who always complained about us taking a sheep, when Mohammad said to him, 'Give me a sheep so we can go have fun,' even

though Mohammad wasn't Haji yet at that time, would say, 'Haj Mammad, take all the sheep.'"

Another important point observed in Haj-Mohammad's behaviors was that if he was invited to two places at the same time, first, he acted with calculation, meaning he would first attend, for example, a ceremony in Qazvin and then go to the one outside Qazvin, lest in the reverse case, road problems prevent him from reaching the city ceremony. Another priority that was important for Haji in this regard was the socio-economic class of the people; he prioritized ceremonies of poor and needy people over those of wealthy individuals.'

Chegini stated in describing Mohammad's attentions to others:

> "Haji would greet both young and old first, and he never felt superior to others. That is why Haji's apprentices did not think of themselves as Haji's students but considered themselves like his younger brothers."

Atashgar, Master Mohammad's colleague, recalled in his interview:

> "I wanted to go to a memorial service for one of my relatives, and I saw Mohammad also stood up and came with me to that memorial service, even though he did not know the deceased or his family.

In other words, Mohammad considered paying attention to others and establishing rich social relations as his duty, and for this purpose, he was willing to spend time and various financial costs."

Dealing with Others with Tolerance and Leniency

Master Mohammad was an easygoing individual in his social interactions and strove to deal with various people with tolerance and leniency, without rejecting them due to their shortcomings and violations, because resorting to negation and denial of one another leads to the closure of the file of their social interactions, and with the blocking of the door of dialogue with others, the possibility of influencing the other party practically diminishes and reaches zero. In contrast, through dealing with magnanimity and tolerance, the emotions of the other party are affected, and he naturally becomes more submissive than before toward the side that has approached with a manner of forgiveness, pardon, and tolerance.

Khadijeh khanom spoke in her interview about her son's magnanimous behavior from his early childhood:

> "Until Ebrahim Agha was alive, he had given money to the bathhouse attendant in the Akhoond neighborhood so that when the children went to the bathhouse, he would wash them. After Ebrahim Agha's passing, my brother Kazem gave money to the attendant to wash the children in the bathhouse.
>
> One time, I saw that no matter how much we told Mohammad to go to the bathhouse, he wouldn't go. For example, he would pick up clean clothes, go behind the curtain, change his clothes, come out, and say, 'See, I've become clean!'
>
> Eventually, Mohammad didn't go to the bathhouse for a while, and later we found out that Mohammad's teacher had punished him so harshly in class that the backs of his feet were wounded, and Mohammad, so that we wouldn't find out that the backs of his feet were injured due to the teacher's punishment, was unwilling to go to the bathhouse and reveal this secret."

Monir, in one part of her interview, recalled her husband's magnanimous behavior toward one of the relatives in buying a house and Mohammad Agha's patient and composed demeanor during their 13 years of partnership and neighborliness.

Monir, in another part of her statements, spoke about her husband's tolerant interactions as follows:

> "Mohammad dealt with others very forgivingly. Once I felt that some stubborn people were speaking ill of Mohammad, so I said to him, 'These people curse you; why don't you confront them?' And Mohammad would say to me: 'If they calm down by cursing, it's okay; let them curse. They curse me, no problem. These people have completely lost control of themselves; don't pay attention to them.'"

Haj-Kazem, Master Mohammad's great uncle, also placed great emphasis on Master Mohammad's magnanimous and tolerant behaviors in recounting shared memories with Master Mohammad. In this regard, he stated:

> "A while ago, a thief stole Mohammad's and his neighbor's belongings. Mohammad told me that we checked the garage camera and saw an individual holding a flashlight, and Mr. Thief was taking the piston. After the matter was clarified, Mohammad refrained from pursuing legal action for his own case

so that the individual accompanying the thief wouldn't be deprived of his livelihood, whereas his neighbor pursued his complaint and received the necessary compensation.

Similarly, I sometimes witnessed that some customers, at the time of settlement, did not give Mohammad the money they were supposed to pay, but Mohammad also dealt with these cases with tolerance and waived his rightful dues."

Ali stated in a similar report in his interview:

"I haven't seen a mechanic who works on credit in this day and age, but Mohammad was willing for others to work with him on credit so that their work could get done."

The wife of Master Mohammad's brother noted in her report:

"I have repeatedly witnessed Haj-Mohammad imparting his experiences to my children and other nephews and nieces, and sometimes he would remind his mother too: 'Let the children live however they like and want and be comfortable; this way is better than constantly arguing with them bitterly.'"

Parviz, a customer of Master Mohammad, reported in his interview:

"Haj-Mohammad considered it his duty to get others' work done. But some did not fulfill their reciprocal duty. For example, Hajji once told me that a driver had a bad disc, and I replaced it for him, but he didn't even give me half the money. When I said to Hajji in surprise, 'Then why did you get his work done?' Hajji replied, 'I did my part; the rest is up to his conscience. I shouldn't tie my behavior to his inappropriate behavior.'"

Seyyed Mohammad Ali, another colleague and neighbor of Master Mohammad in the Norouzi Garage, stated in his interview regarding Master Mohammad's easygoing approach:

"A man brought his water well motor to Haj-Mohammad, and Hajji fixed his motor. Even though that man was in good financial condition, he didn't give Hajji part of the motor repair money. Hajji called that man several times and reminded him of his debt, but the man was unwilling to pay his debt. Eventually, two or three years passed, and the man's water motor broke down again, and he came back to Hajji seeking help; Hajji repaired his water well motor again.

> I said to Hajji, 'This man who previously ate your right, why do you work for him?' And Hajji replied, 'I don't consider it befitting my dignity to pass indifferently by people's problems and not do his work by recalling this man's previous trick.'"

Indifference to the World, and antiMaterialism

Unlike many people who consider human life an opportunity to acquire material needs, Master Mohammad did not see the purpose of his life as making and accumulating money; rather, as quoted from Master Mohammad's wife, "he considered the ultimate goal of people to be their humanity," and he only attached importance to money to the extent that he himself would not be needy of others and, relying on it, could untie some of the knots and problems of human life.

Master Mohammad's mother, in her interview, referring to her son's generosity in worldly matters, stated:

> "When someone wanted to marry off their daughter and we prepared a gift for them, Mohammad would say to us, 'This gift is not very useful to them; you prepare a better gift for them and give it. Young people at the beginning of their life need more attention.'"

Zinat, Master Mohammad's sister, stated similarly: When we said a poor person had come to our house, Mohammad was sensitive to see if we had helped him or not, and he would say to us, 'Don't disappoint anyone by sending them away without help.'

Ali stated in his report regarding Master Mohammad's indifference to materialism:

> "One of the common issues among mechanics is that if someone comes to a mechanic at the end of the day and wants the mechanic to spend extra time repairing their vehicle, the mechanic demands more wages from them. But I had seen Mohammad willing to stay in his shop until late at night to work on the vehicles of those who were in some kind of distress, without demanding extra wages."

Mohebi Khah noted in his report: One day, a trailer in the garage hit Haj-Mohammad's car trunk while maneuvering forward and backward and damaged it. The trailer driver came apologizing to pay the damage to Hajji, but Hajji was

unwilling to take the compensation and said, ‘No, we are colleagues, and the damage is not worth mentioning.’ Whereas if others were in his place, they might have demanded the car damage with a lot of quarreling and altercation.

Parviz recalled a similar damage incident during a theft from Master Mohammad’s shop in his interview and emphasized: “Hajji, while he could have demanded the stolen property and damage, magnanimously refrained from pursuing it, because he thought his dignity was the dignity of forgiveness and magnanimity, not revenge.”

Mostafa recalled in his interview his experience regarding Master Mohammad’s indifference to the world as follows:

> “We had a customer who owed Haj-Mohammad for two years, and Hajji hadn’t even called him once during these two years. The colleagues’ kids would say, ‘Hajji, why have you let this man go?’ And Hajji would say, ‘No, eventually he’ll bring his debt; if he doesn’t, it’s okay, maybe he’s in a tight spot.’”

Chegini, in describing Mohammad Agha’s indifference to the world and what is in it, stated in his report:

> “Hajji would say, 'Everything in this world stays in this world, and we can’t take it with us, and the more one strives to acquire the world, the more drowned in it one becomes; therefore, it’s better for a person to be content with what is destined for them and know that their share will reach them, and they shouldn’t turn heaven and earth upside down to get their share!
>
> If Hajji only disassembled one truck wheel in a day, even though the payment for that work wouldn’t cover his worker’s wage, he would say, ‘Praise God that the shop worker’s wage came in.’
>
> Hajji was not greedy for the world, and to the extent he toiled, no wealth or property remained from him, because from family to acquaintances and strangers, he helped everyone, and he fundamentally considered helping others his duty, and without holding it over anyone, he saw it as a blessing for himself.
>
> By closing his eyes to this world, Hajji opened his eyes to another world and attained a greatness that others rarely reach such greatness and station.”

Support for Economically and Socially Weak Strata

Having lost his father in childhood, Master Mohammad practically became acquainted with the hardships of the outside world earlier than usual and knew well how much life's difficulties, if they exceed limits, can be damaging and destructive; therefore, without forgetting his own past, he showed special attention to economically and socially weak strata. Moreover, he fundamentally considered the purpose of a person in their two-day worldly life to be becoming human and displaying their humanity, which to a large extent is tied to protecting people (who in religious parlance are considered the dependents of God).

Zinat, Master Mohammad's sister, recalled in her interview his defense of the rights of weak individuals from his youth as follows:

> "Mohammad was initially assigned to the barracks kitchen during his military service, and since he saw that some non-commissioned officers were taking oil, rice, meat, and other items allocated for soldiers' nutrition to their homes, he tried to prevent the officers' misuse of the soldiers' rations by hiding part of these items. On holidays when the officers were not in the barracks, he would prepare elaborate meals for the soldiers with the hidden items, and the soldiers always prayed for him for somehow preventing the waste of their rations. But the officers, who had noticed this situation, did not sit quietly and arranged for Mohammad to be imprisoned in the barracks and transferred from the kitchen to another section."

Khadijeh khanom, Master Mohammad's mother, described one of her son's actions in her report as follows:

> "Outside the Norouzi Garage, there was a man who sold watermelons with a pickup truck. One time, Mohammad saw that this watermelon seller was upset and distressed; he asked the reason for his distress and found out that a pickup truck load of his watermelons hadn't sold and had spoiled, and the man said, 'Now I don't know what to do.' Mohammad told him, 'What's done is done; go throw away these spoiled watermelons, and on my guarantee, take two tons of watermelons from so-and-so and start your business again.'
>
> Eventually, the watermelon seller restarted his business on Mohammad's guarantee, and from then on, he would bring at least one watermelon for Mohammad every day to somehow show his gratitude for Mohammad's assistance and help."

Ali (nephew), Gholamreza (maternal cousin's son), and Abbas (cousin's son) stated in their separate interviews regarding Mohammad Agha's support for the weak strata of society:

> "Helping the needy was Mohammad's routine. For example, I witnessed him sometimes buying something (like a box of garlic) that wasn't of good quality, but anyway, with this action, he practically wanted to help the seller in question and even paid more money than the price demanded for that substandard item."
>
> "I attended Mohammad Agha's 40th day ceremony, and sitting in the front row ahead of me was a rural man who said, 'Mohammad Agha was a very charitable person, and during his visits to the Rashtqan area, he helped the people there a lot.'"
>
> "I sometimes went to Mohammad's shop and chatted and confided in him. In one of our conversations, Mohammad briefly mentioned to me that, without his family's knowledge, he had bought dowry for several brides who were facing financial problems and helped them that way. Similarly, on another occasion, very generally and vaguely, he told me that he had visited many people during their poverty and helped them."

Atashgar, Mohammad Agha's colleague, referring to the topic of Master helping the fruit seller outside the garage in his interview, stated:

> "The watermelon seller outside the garage has been parking his pickup truck outside the garage and selling watermelons for two years. Sometimes Haj-Mohammad would tell him, 'At night, so you don't wander here and there, come put your load in front of my shop inside the garage.' Anyway, after Hajji's passing, we saw that man throw himself crying on Hajji's grave and say, 'You were my father,' and he wouldn't get up from the grave. Later we found out that Hajji, besides the helps he had done for him, once when his entire load had spoiled, had come to his aid and helped him stand on his own feet again."

Maryam, Master Mohammad's sister, stated in her interview:

> "I was supposed to take a loan and needed a guarantor; I asked Mohammad to be my guarantor. When we went to the bank, they told us that Mohammad couldn't be my guarantor because he had guaranteed for a lady who hadn't paid her installments.

> Later, whenever I asked Mohammad, ‘Who was that lady you guaranteed for?’ Mohammad would evade answering my question and say, ‘Forget it, don’t you have anything else to talk about?!’"

Yahya, Master Mohammad’s colleague and neighbor, noted in a similar report that he personally knew of 5-6 cases where Mohammad had guaranteed loans, the borrowers hadn’t paid their installments, and Mohammad had been forced to pay them, but despite all this, he didn’t stop guaranteeing for this and that, even strangers, and would say, ‘These servants of God are in desperation, and someone must help them.’"

Monir (Master Mohammad’s wife) recounted in her report:

> “After Mohammad’s passing, I would go to the cemetery early in the mornings to speak comfortably with Mohammad. Then I would see a thin man also coming early to Mohammad’s grave. With his arrival, I would step away from the grave and sit on a bench until after he left, I would return to the grave. He would wash Mohammad’s grave and speak with him. One time, the same individual came to me and said, ‘Haji was a real man. I work in the garage, and Haji was always helpful to me, held my hand, and helped me without making me feel obligated. Now I come to Haji’s grave and ask him to pray that someone like himself is found to help me in my life again without making me feel indebted.’”

Monir, in another part of her interview, recalled her husband’s benevolence and assistance to the needy:

> “During the COVID period, a family in the village lost their father and mother. Mohammad went to that village, entrusted the children of that family to one of the village elders, and occasionally visited them and helped them.
>
> In another case, there was a poor family deprived even of basic living facilities. Mohammad said, ‘We must provide them with basic household items.’ Since my mother’s friend had recently passed away and I knew she was very clean during her life, I contacted her heirs, and Mohammad took their bedding, put it in the car at night, and delivered it to them to somewhat alleviate their hardships.
>
> In any case, there were other individuals in similar situations whom Mohammad helped, and I neither knew their names nor where they lived.

> The neighbor across from our villa in the north was another case; a while before Mohammad's passing, I witnessed Mohammad helping him. Mohammad sometimes provided assistance to this neighbor, and in response to my question of why he helps this person, he said, 'His life is passing with hardship; helping him doesn't go far, and besides, he is a neighbor, and we must win hearts.'
>
> For a while, the neighbor across from us was not around. When Mohammad and I saw him after some time, Mohammad inquired about his condition, and he said his recent tests showed he had stomach cancer. Mohammad told him, 'Don't worry about the cost of your treatment; I will help you. Go pursue your treatment so that, God willing, you recover and continue your life in health.'
>
> From then on, Mohammad would put money in an envelope, ask about his condition upon seeing him, give him the envelope, and say, 'Accept this envelope instead of compote from me,' assuring him that Mohammad would be by his side for his treatment expenses."

Master Mohammad's younger aunt, in a similar report, noted:

> "Sometimes when Mohammad came to me and we talked about various issues, I would mention poor families in need of help, and Mohammad, jokingly always saying to me, 'Villager,' would give me some money and say, 'Villager, deliver this money to them, but don't say I helped.'"

The wife of Master Mohammad's brother reported similarly: When I told Haji about a family living on cardboard and rugs, and that I had given them one of our home carpets, Haji gave me some money and asked me to buy them a new carpet to put under their feet.

Shah-Mohammadi and Mohebi-Khah, in their separate interviews describing Master Mohammad's behavior in supporting deprived individuals in society, stated:

> "Mohammad Agha, despite being a top-tier mechanic in the province, associated with society's laborers too; for example, when he saw a laborer's cart wheel broken, he would bring him to his shop and repair his broken wheel."
>
> "We had a street sweeper in the garage who worked privately. I witnessed Haji calling him on New Year's Eve to find out where he was so he could go give him a New Year's gift."

Mousa-Khani, in his report, repeatedly recalled similar memories of Master Mohammad:

> "When Haji saw a bully pressuring someone collecting garbage, he would stand up in defense of that person and say, 'This is a human being, and you have no right to bully him just because he is poor and infringe on his rights.'
>
> Similarly, Haji would many times take the garage sweeper with him to Chahar (his village) and never tell him, for example, 'Your clothes smell bad' or 'My car smells.' Haji would seat this person in the front of his car, turn on the AC for him, take him to his destination, and then go about his own work."

At the end of the discussion on supporting socially weak strata by Master Mohammad, mentioning a few points seems necessary.

The first point is that, although Mohammad Agha helped some individuals and families, his slogan was that we must teach people to fish so they can stand on their own feet, rather than giving them fish.

The next point is that Master encouraged halal earning among those suffering from unemployment. For example, Zinat reported that when Haji encountered an addict asking for help, he would say to him, 'If you quit your addiction, I am at your service in every way and will help you. For instance, if you want to sell potatoes and onions, I am willing to buy even your damaged goods so you can be at ease from potential losses.'

And the last point is that Master Mohammad tried to conceal his good deeds, which naturally had a significant effect in preserving the dignity of those who accepted his help.

Ahmad, Master Mohammad's uncle-in-law, in his interview referring to Master's efforts in concealing his help to others, said:

> "After Haji Mohammad's passing, we now witness people calling and saying they are Haji's debtors and asking for the number to return the loan to Haji's family.
>
> Fundamentally, this was Mohammad's moral approach: if people want to make their helping others a means for self-boasting and pride in it, they not only nullify the value of their work themselves but also question themselves."

Hassan, Master Mohammad's apprentice, in a similar narration of innocence, recalled one of the garage colleagues who was very upset at the time of Master's passing and said, 'What should I do with Haji's debt?' He had told him that Haji, after helping him, had said he was not seeking to get the money back from him, so be at ease about it.

Shah-Mohammadi, Master Mohammad's colleague and partner, in his interview with similar expressions, recalled concealing Master's good deeds:

> "Mohammad did many things, both in action and financially, for relatives, friends, and others, but he was unwilling to talk about them, and my experience indicates that talking about Haji where there was any suspicion of self-worship was very difficult."

Efforts to Solve People's Problems

Intervening in people's problems and striving to solve them is a noble act expected only from noble individuals, because in most cases, humans are confined within their own existential framework and constantly speak from their limited perspective: my money, my facilities, my comfort, my degree, and the like. However, humans who can step out of self-centeredness and their existential framework, look at the world from others' perspectives, and beyond that, without any expectation, dedicate themselves to preserving and securing others' interests, are very rare and few.

Khadijeh khanom, in her interview describing Mohammad Agha's efforts in solving others' problems, stated:

> "Mohammad has a villa in the north, and once he said he had given money to someone to do work at the villa. When he visited the villa in the north again, he saw that the man hadn't done the intended work. He asked him, 'Why haven't you done the work you were supposed to do?' The man replied, 'My wife wanted two million from me for some work, but I didn't have it to give her, so she got upset and left, and after this incident, I have no heart for work.'
>
> Mohammad gave the man two million and said, 'Here, take this money, go bring your wife back, and also do my work that you were supposed to do.'"

Monir, in her interview referring to Mohammad Agha's efforts to solve and set up people's affairs, stated:

> “Mohammad could not say no to people in need; therefore, if someone came and asked him to guarantee a loan or lend money, Mohammad would accept, and I was always protesting this behavior of Mohammad, saying why do you create conditions where some people can exploit and eat your money? And Mohammad would reply to me, ‘I didn’t give money to get it back!’
>
> Once, two young couples, each wanting to take a 150 million toman marriage loan, came to Mohammad and asked him to guarantee for them. Mohammad guaranteed for both, but that man and woman broke their promise, didn’t pay their loan installments, and Mohammad was forced to pay their unpaid installments for three full years. I told Mohammad in this case too, ‘Go through the bank, find these people, and take your right from them,’ but Mohammad said, ‘I don’t know who they were’ and never pursued legal action against that young couple.”

Monir, in her report, also recalled Mohammad Agha’s intervention in solving problems between people:

> “Besides trying to financially help those who came to him, Mohammad was also concerned with resolving problems that arose between people and was, so to speak, a treasure chest of secrets for many people; many came to him and confided. I remember Mohammad many times casually saying he was mediating to reconcile so-and-so and so-and-so so they would return to their lives and not divorce. Later, I met people who said, ‘We returned to our lives because of Mohammad’ or ‘With Mohammad’s intervention, our life turned around.’”

Khadijeh khanom, in her interview reporting another example of Mohammad’s intervention in disputes between people, said:

> “Sometimes people in the garage would fight over a disagreement and come to blows, and Mohammad would intervene, asking them to come to his shop and have tea. When the disputants acted according to Mohammad’s wish and after tea faced Mohammad’s joke, ‘Now that you’ve had your tea, go to the middle of the garage and beat each other,’ the people who had left their anger beside Mohammad’s calm and cheerfulness would realize with this joke what a small issue had led them to intend to fight and quarrel with each other.”

The wife of Master Mohammad’s brother, in her interview describing some of Mohammad Agha’s helps to unfamiliar people, recalled:

> “Once Mohammad and his family, while traveling, encountered a broken-down car in Bam city. The driver said, ‘My car is broken, and I’ve been stuck fixing it for two days, and the mechanics here tell me nothing can be done and I must take it to nearby big cities.’ Mohammad had seen the car and diagnosed the problem, stood there, and fixed it.
>
> After finishing, when Mohammad wanted to leave that driver, despite all his insistence that Mohammad at least accept payment for his work, Mohammad refused and left without taking any money.
>
> The story of getting Mr. Eskandar’s work done is similar; by fixing his issue, Mohammad made him enamored of his character, and from then on, Eskandar personally pursued continuing relations with Mohammad and establishing family ties with him.
>
> Of course, I must mention that Mohammad, to solve people’s problems, did not limit himself to spending time; if needed, he also resolved their financial issues.
>
> After Mohammad’s passing, I realized how many good things he had done; for example, he had taken loans for many people or lent them money and told them, ‘Whenever you have it, pay back your debt; if not, no problem.’

Seyyed Majid and Ali, in their separate interviews, recalled Master’s efforts to solve people’s problems:

> “I have seen and experienced many people in my life, but what I saw in Mohammad was that he didn’t think of his own interests first and didn’t see himself at all; perhaps it can be said he simply didn’t know how to say no to others. He always tried to do things that might have no benefit for him, but since he considered himself a sacrifice for others, the lack of material benefits for himself didn’t bother him much… For example, if I said my car’s AC is broken, he would personally follow up on fixing my car’s AC and then tell me, ‘Regarding your car’s AC repair, I contacted so-and-so, and he is waiting for you.’
>
> In some cases, when Mohammad and I went somewhere to buy, when the seller saw Mohammad, he would mention a problem he was facing, and Mohammad would promise to follow up on his matter, saying, for example, ‘Okay, I’ll go to such-and-such place for you and talk to so-and-so about your issue so it gets solved.’ In other words, if our purchase was supposed to take

20 minutes, another 20 minutes would be added for Mohammad to listen to the other party's problem and see what he could do for him.

I experienced this with the fruit seller, someone with banking work like getting a loan, the kebab shop owner, a villager, and many others, and always saw Mohammad personally take the initiative in solving their problems."

"Moreover, if during the process of handling these individuals' work, there was a problem that wasn't easily solvable, Mohammad was not in the habit of complaining or grumbling in such cases, thereby possibly expressing his own fatigue or holding it over the other party."

"Mohammad was committed to performing all his religious obligations and even tried, for example, to pray on time; that is, if food was ready, he would delay the food to perform his prayer. However, if someone was stuck in their work and had brought it to Mohammad, Mohammad would first complete that person's work and then pray, because he believed serving people is serving God, and delaying the prayer from its first time and replacing it with serving people does not entail loss."

Parviz, in his interview and report, stated:

"Haj-Mohammad rarely traveled on the road, but when I shredded a disc plate on the road and called him out of necessity, without pausing, 2.5 hours later, he brought me the disc and plate in the middle of the road with his own car and solved my problem."

Abolfazl, one of the trusted parts sellers for Master Mohammad, after recalling that Mohammad had guaranteed some struggling drivers with him and asked him to give them the needed parts on the condition of receiving payment in the future, noted:

"Mohammad considered people's property as his own and defended it, and his services considered both sides. Meaning, when Mohammad guaranteed someone with me and that party, after the due time, was unwilling to pay for the part taken from me, Mohammad would go to that person's door to protect my interests and take my right from him; that is, perhaps Mohammad didn't pursue his own fee, but he pursued securing my right, and when that driver came to settle with me, he would say, 'Mohammad has worn us out because of you!'"

Fairness

Fairness means creating equality and equity, indicating that a person should desire for others what they desire for themselves and dislike for others what they dislike for themselves.

Ahmad, in his interview referring to Master's fairness, recounted the following memory:

> "During the construction of Mohammad's northern villa, a dump truck driver's vehicle that had brought sand for him hit the house door, and the garage door was dislodged. The driver was upset about the situation and apologized to Mohammad, saying, 'I will compensate your damage,' but Mohammad, after examining the accident scene, said, 'No, your truck slipped and then hit the door and dislodged it. I not only don't want money for the door damage but will give you the sand money.'"

Masoomi, in his interview recalling Master's fairness, stated:

> "One of the employees of the parts shop and oil change in front of Master's workplace garage once spoke to me and, referring to Mohammad, said, 'Whoever comes to me around here and wants to buy a part for a vehicle under repair asks me to issue an invoice with a higher price; some even say make the invoice much higher so they can take a difference for themselves, and I argue with them that, sir, with this high invoice price, my reputation is at risk, but they insist and take a high invoice to pocket the difference. But Haj Mohammad was the only one who said, "Issue the invoice for me at the price you sell the part to me." '"

Parviz, in his interview recalling Master's fairness, stated:

> "Haj-Mohammad's practice was to take less fee from customers than his colleagues. For example, if others charged two million tomans for disassembling four wheels, Haji wouldn't take more than one million for disassembling the same four wheels, and if we reminded him of prices elsewhere, he would say, 'No problem, I'm satisfied.'
>
> This feature of Haji was more pronounced with strangers, and his hand was more generous with strangers.

> Besides taking fair and lower prices from people, Haji wasn't one to haggle with customers, and if a customer didn't pay Haji's usual fee, Haji would only say, 'May God bless, but you gave less.'"

Parviz, in describing Master Mohammad's fairness, noted that Master would even stand up for customers' rights in front of his parts seller friends and defend them. He gave an example of such cases:

> "Mohammad was a fair man and tried in his work relations to defend the rights of the customer, parts seller, or other colleagues responsible for parts of heavy truck repairs wherever necessary. For example, when Haji himself brought parts from Tehran, he only took the part price and transportation cost from the customer, while other mechanics would also take a subsidy for themselves in between. Similarly, I witnessed once when Mr. Sarbanha, due to market fluctuations, told Mohammad, 'The part that is 130, I charged 100 to the customer you sent me,' Mohammad, in defense of the customer, said, 'First, I hadn't given the price to the customer and only sent him to you for an original part; second, you yourself be careful that sometimes a part that was 1.2 million, you sold to my customer for more, and I didn't interfere in your business.'
>
> Thus, Haj-Mohammad would defend the customer against his friends. In any case, in a brief summary, I must say I personally haven't witnessed or seen this much fairness in others."

Toughness (Mashti-Gari)

The culture of toughness is a culture based on manliness, self-sacrifice, and forgiveness, and some consider turning to the toughness culture a cure for many disruptions in contemporary Iranian society.

Ali and Seyyed Majid, Master's nephew and brother-in-law, in their separate interviews explaining Master's toughness, stated the following:

> "One of Mohammad's habits was that he would repair the vehicle of someone who didn't have money without taking payment and give them time to pay his fee. Even when collecting the debt, Mohammad might say to the same person, 'If you have another need now, go spend your money on that need and pay me later'; that is, if someone came to Mohammad after two years to repay the

debt, Mohammad would tell him, ‘If you need the money, okay, come settle later!’ I myself witnessed at least 10-15 such cases during visits to Mohammad’s shop and companionship with him.

Of course, if Mohammad felt someone was trying to exploit his tolerance, he would resist him and not give in, because he said, ‘If we yield to an oppressor, we have in practice oppressed others.’ In other words, Mohammad was yielding with the oppressed as much as possible but wouldn’t yield to the oppressor.”

“Mohammad was inherently a tough man, meaning first, he set himself aside and only sought to do this and that person’s work, and second, he didn’t want the work he did to provide occasion for his pride and boasting against others and tried to keep the good he had done hidden.

For example, I had a vow, and many times I was tired of the troubles of giving the vow offering, and it seemed hard and difficult for me, but Mohammad would come, spend 3-4 days preparing the preliminaries, make it, and finally distribute it. I myself was tired from the many tasks of preparing the vow during those days, but he would do everything without a word or holding it over me, to the point where I felt ashamed of his kindness."

Atashgar, in his interview describing Master Mohammad’s toughness in relations with society members, stated:

“Haji had a lot of toughness, with relatives, colleagues, and even strangers; for example, when in our morning chats, I referred to someone, say, ‘So-and-so has become broke and needy,’ without saying ‘My hand is empty myself’ or ‘What happened that he became broke’ and such issues, he would say, ‘Tell me how much I should give.’”

Hamid, in his report on Master’s toughness with someone he didn’t know, recalled:

“Our son-in-law had bought a car and was short some money. I told Haji, ‘Lend him some,’ Haji gave the needed amount and said, ‘Consider this my gift for his car, and don’t mention returning the money to me.’”

Parviz, in his interview describing Master Mohammad’s toughness, stated:

“When in a group of friends, talk turned to someone who had suffered damage, loss, or harm for some reason, Haji would empathize with him and encourage others to help him. Haji’s reasoning in such cases was that after all,

time has brought this person here and he has done something bad, but since we are not fully aware of his matter, instead of judging and one-sidedly ruling, it's better not to judge him and help him as much as we can to get out of the problem he is in."

In a brief summary, it can be said that Master Mohammad's warm, intimate relations full of self-sacrifice and forgiveness with close ones had such an effect on them that some relatives explicitly stated in their interviews that they had accepted Master as their practical role model. The statements of Seyyed Majid and Ali in this regard are as follows:

"I had a few role models in my life, the most prominent of whom was Mohammad. He was always ethical and content, didn't look to his own desires and interests, and only waited for where his help was needed to rush to others' aid. Mohammad was a complete and cultured man; he treated everyone with respect, was cheerful and smiling, and gave positive energy to those around him."

"Mohammad wasn't one to command or prohibit others and didn't impose on anyone to do or not do something. Mohammad himself was a man of action and would realize and implement what he accepted, believing that everyone knows how to talk, but few are men of action, and if someone believes in something, they must personally enter the arena and by implementing their desire, become a practical role model for others… These features made me see Mohammad as my own role model."

Relative Distance from Society's Political Issues

The study group, in response to the question of what political approach Master Mohammad had and whose positions he defended, responded that Master generally distanced himself from the existing political stances in society.

Akbar and Zinat, Master's older brother and sister, in their statements explaining Master Mohammad's avoidance of political discussions and political stances, reasoned as follows:

"To Mohammad, when grand societal discussions don't lead anywhere and among close ones only provide occasion for disagreement and division, it's better to avoid and refrain from such stances."

"Mohammad wasn't uninformed about political issues but wouldn't talk about them and would say, 'Why bring different political views among family members and introduce partisan and factional disagreements into our family environment?

But Mohammad had a negative view toward foreigners and, for example, once while talking to Ali, his sister's son, said that foreigners don't care about us; one shouldn't place their trust and reliance on foreigners.'"

Ali, in his report referring to Master's political thinking, stated:

"Mohammad associated with people who had agreeing and opposing political views and treated them tolerantly, meaning he said, 'Each person's opinions are their own, but political agreeing and opposing opinions shouldn't cause people to distance from each other; rather, humans must stay connected, tolerate, and accept each other.'"

Atashgar, Master's friend and colleague with half a century of interaction, on Master's political analyses, stated:

"Mohammad wanted his society to become one where no one is in pain or need, but since he wasn't involved in drafting society's grand policies, he tried to fulfill his own share in improving social conditions to the best and consider others' duties their own, hoping they too would fulfill their duties.

But when political discussions arose among colleagues, Mohammad wouldn't talk about this official or that and would tell friends, 'Speak your own words and don't go after words that cause irritation.'"

Amir and Parviz also commented in their reports on Master Mohammad's political view:

"Some colleagues in political discussions would reach the point of cursing this and that, but Mohammad distanced himself from these issues and would say, 'We fulfill our responsibility; others' responsibility is on them; why should we disagree and quarrel over others and whether they fulfill or not their responsibilities?'

Mohammad had calm nerves and wasn't after what this person did or that didn't; he wanted to perform his own duty in the best way, that's all."

Creating Deep Emotional Bonds with People in Society

In Mulla Sadra's four journeys (*Asfar Arba'ah*), although the first journey is from the individual toward the Truth, ultimately the individual reaches a stage of greater transcendence where, upon return from the journey of Truth, they move among the people and guide them toward the Truth.[36] Master Mohammad, in his inner reflections on the ultimate and final goal of humans in this world, had concluded that the ultimate purpose of humanity here is to alleviate people's pains and win their hearts. Therefore, he strove, as much as his capacity and ability allowed, to elevate others and his society.

Abbas, Master's cousin, in his interview regarding Master Mohammad's creation of deep emotional bonds with people, stated:

> "Mohammad participated in people's joyous and mourning ceremonies, and this was not limited to his friends and acquaintances. He even tried to attend the ceremonies of strangers. His slogan was that as long as he was alive, he wanted to serve his people and society and, within his capacity, solve their problems."

Monir, in describing Master Mohammad's people-oriented nature in her interview, stated:

> "The school where I taught was near the bakery where Mohammad bought bread for the family every morning. Naturally, due to the proximity of the school and the bakery, Mohammad sometimes saw my male colleagues on the way to school or while buying bread for home. In such cases, if he had bought bread, he would insistently offer the bread he had bought to my male colleagues, and sometimes he would give his bread to a neighbor on the way and stand in line at the bakery again to buy bread for his own family this time."

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[36] The discussion of the Four Journeys, orAsfar-e Arba'ah, holds a prominent place in Sufi discourses. It delineates the path traversed by the wayfarer (salik) in reaching the Supreme Origin, along with the stations and ranks attained along this path.
Among the people of gnosis (ahl-e ma'rifat), the Four Journeys are generally described as follows:
1.First Journey: Journey from creation to the Truth (Seyr az khalq be-haqq) – Traveling from people to God.
2.Second Journey: Journey from the Truth to the Truth through the Truth (Seyr az haqq be-haqq bel-haqq) – Traveling with God about God.
3.Third Journey: Journey from the Truth to creation through the Truth (Seyr az haqq be-khalq bel-haqq) – Traveling from God to people with God.
4.Fourth Journey: Journey from creation to creation through the Truth (Seyr az khalq be-khalq bel-haqq) – Traveling among people with God.

Monir, in another part of her report describing Master's people-oriented nature, recalled:

> "After the horrific accident Mohammad had, where his car had fallen 250 meters into the ravine, provincial rescue teams came and pulled the car out of the ravine depths. While pulling out Mohammad's car, some villagers from the nearby village were present at the scene and told me, whom they thought was one of Mohammad's relatives, 'We knew Hajji; he fixed our equipment, so after the car fell into the ravine, we watched over it so that no one would come and empty the items inside the car.'"

Maryam, in a similar report, recalled the devotion expressed by the people of the village near the ravine where Master's car fell, emphasizing that almost all the villagers knew Mohammad and expressed their devotion to him, were saddened and affected by the incident that had befallen him, and asked Mohammad's relatives to seriously pursue prosecuting the at-fault driver responsible for Mohammad's death.

Molud, in her report on Master Mohammad's deep emotional bonds with others, stated:

> "Mohammad's neighbor in the north wouldn't leave him, and after Mohammad's passing, when she called and saw his phone wasn't answering, she contacted his home, and upon hearing the news of Mohammad's death, she said to Monir: 'Why are you saying these things? Why do you say Mohammad has passed away…?'
>
> This neighbor, after calming down, in another part of her words said, 'In all my life, I haven't encountered someone as pure-hearted as Mohammad.'"

Maryam, Masoumi, and Ahmad, among Master Mohammad's close relatives, in describing the neighbors' regret over his passing and loss, recalled in their interviews as follows:

> "One of the neighbors of Mohammad's mother-in-law said, 'As soon as I saw the placard announcing Mohammad's passing, I was stunned for a quarter of an hour and bewildered by Mohammad's name on that paper.'"
>
> "Our previous neighbor, upon hearing the news of Mohammad's demise, started crying and couldn't easily accept this matter. Even a stranger found the loss of a good person like Mohammad heavy and unacceptable."

Monir, Maryam's cousin, and Masoumi described the Master's funeral ceremony in their interviews as follows:

> "The people responsible for serving the crowd at Mohammad's funeral distributed 1,500 glasses of syrup to the attendees and still couldn't adequately serve all the guests."
>
> "I encountered a huge crowd at Hajji's ceremony and wondered to myself, what relation did all these people have with him that they had come to the grave like this with grief and sorrow on their faces?"
>
> "I don't know what behavior Mohammad had even with the watermelon seller outside the garage that he wouldn't get up from Mohammad's grave."

Masoumi recalled in his interview that perhaps there was no village around and in the vicinity of Qazvin whose people didn't know Mohammad, and whenever he went to various areas for recreation (like Lake Evin), as soon as the villagers came to us to collect rent for the accommodation site by the lake and we said we were acquaintances of Haj-Mohammad, without taking money and with much gratitude, they would leave us.

Hassan, Master Mohammad's apprentice, in his interview on Master's deep emotional bonds with strangers and unfamiliar people, recalled as follows:

> "Hajji's people-oriented nature was one-on-one, and if someone interacted with him even once, they would be eager to continue their relations with him. For example, sometimes my friends would come looking for me and visit the garage; after one or two encounters with Hajji, they became so enamored that it was as if they had completely forgotten about me. I witnessed this firsthand with 10-12 of my friends.
>
> My friends, for instance, would say, 'We decided to go see Hassan for twenty minutes,' but when they came to our shop, Hajji was so affable and talkative that when they came to their senses, they realized, for example, they had been sitting in the shop for three hours. Then Hajji would go prepare lunch for them because they had arrived at 10 a.m., and it was now 1 p.m., lunchtime.
>
> Sometimes, if my friends' visits were delayed, Hajji himself would say, 'Hassan, call your friends to come here. Have they seen something bad from me that they don't come!?

I would call my friends once a week as per my usual habit, but if my calls were delayed, Hajji himself would remind me why I wasn't calling my friends!?

I have five brothers, and upon Hajji's passing, all my brothers came to his grave. One of my brothers said, 'Hajji was an example,' another brother said, 'I considered Hajji like a member of my own family.'

The depth of Hajji's emotional impact was such that my nephews whose workplaces are around Norouzi Garage would come first thing in the morning to greet Hajji. Sometimes I would drop the kids off outside the garage earlier to go to their jobs, but they would still come inside our garage to exchange greetings with Hajji before going to work.

Another brother of mine from Minoudar, on the other side of Qazvin, would come twice a week to see Hajji because he had become enamored with his ethics and conduct.

Another brother of mine who is a mechanic came to the shop once to see me; after meeting and talking with him, I said, 'Hassan, aren't you going about your work?' He said, 'No, Hajji said now sit here, and I'm sitting.'

In short, Hajji was one in his relations with others."

Chegini, who had nearly four decades of friendship and collaboration with Master Mohammad, in his report on the deep emotional bonds Master had with acquaintances and strangers, recalled as follows:

"Mohammad was a positive thinker and treated everyone well, and perhaps no one can be found who speaks ill of Mohammad behind his back. He interacted so well with everyone and established extensive relations with them that all my relatives knew him and had dealings with him and invited him to their weddings."

Parviz, in describing the depth of Master Mohammad's appropriate social relations with others, noted:

"I have been coming and going to Norouzi Garage for thirty years, and during these thirty years, I haven't seen even once that Mohammad had a dispute with his neighbors. Because, after all, very often a mechanic's customer's truck would park in another mechanic's shop space, causing disagreement between them.

> In any case, Mohammad had no objections in such cases, and even though he was right, he preferred not to create bitterness and discord between him and his neighbors."

Hassan, Master's apprentice, reported that upon Haj-Mohammad's passing, many people were saddened, even those who weren't our customers but had seen Hajji's conduct during their comings and goings to the garage.

Finally, Yahya, Master's colleague, in describing his greatness and penetration into the hearts of those around him, stated:

> "I witnessed that at the time of Haj-Mohammad's burial, many people came spontaneously, or at his seventh-day ceremony at Shahzadeh Hossein Mosque, the mosque filled and emptied several times. This much interest and devotion from the people is astonishing, and I myself haven't seen people spontaneously welcome similar ceremonies like this."

Enjoining Good and Forbidding Evil

Enjoining good and forbidding evil leads to promoting virtues in society and reducing falsehoods and vices in the human social environment, and people who see horizons wider than their own emotions, interests, and desires consider themselves obligated in practice to be sensitive to their social duties of affirming goods and negating evils and act accordingly.

Many of Master Mohammad's associates recalled his indications toward enjoining good, for example, noting that Master conditioned help to addicts on their quitting addiction and pursuing an honorable profession, assuring them that if they quit, he would support their business so they wouldn't suffer losses.

Master Mohammad, simultaneously with enjoining good, also practiced forbidding evil and would warn offenders to abandon the evil when necessary.

Khadijeh khanom, Master's mother, in her interview recalling this trait of her son from his youth, stated as follows:

> "I was passing through the alley. Heavy snow had fallen. Two modern young men on bicycles pulled at my chador, and Haj-Mohammad grabbed one of their hands and pulled him, saying, 'Don't you see someone is walking here? You must respect passersby.' Those boys harbored resentment against him

after the incident where Mohammad admonished them, and at a suitable opportunity, they stabbed Mohammad with a knife and injured his hand.

The matter went to the police station and police intervention; my brother Haj-Kazem said, ‘Don’t forgive them easily so these ignorant people realize the ugliness and badness of their action,’ and after those youths expressed much regret, we forgave them.”

Monir also stated in her interview:

“Mohammad, in dealing with me or his children, always promoted what was good and wasn’t much into forbidding this or that, because he believed that if someone wants to be guided, imposition can’t guide them, and imposing various matters on people causes them to flee from what is promoted. Therefore, although he adhered to his own prayers and fasting, if someone was negligent in these, he wouldn’t impose on them to act likewise, but with kindness and friendship, for example, would say to them, ‘I accept prayer and fasting and perform them.’

Others’ honor was extremely important to Mohammad, and he tried never to let his words or actions threaten someone’s honor. For example, when a dispute arose between two people, Mohammad would mediate to resolve the issue and gain both parties’ satisfaction. But after unity was established between them, privately, for instance, to the mechanic who had demanded more wages, he would say: ‘The wage you demanded for this work is higher than usual,’ but as I said, he wouldn’t discredit his colleague in front of the customer or group."

Sina (cousin’s son), in another part of his interview, recalled Master Mohammad’s gentle interaction with him as a trendy young man as follows:

“My most encounters with Mohammad Agha were at celebrations. At one wedding, I had shaved the sides of my head and spiked the middle. Mohammad saw me at that ceremony and started joking with me, saying: ‘Well, where did you go to model your hair? Give me the address so we can go too,’ while others might look at me and my style with negation and denial, potentially causing a young person like me to distance myself.”

This latter interaction paves the way for Master’s emotional relations with the next generation to have the necessary impact at the right time, just as Sina considers Master one of his life role models.

The collection of cases discussed in this section under the titles: Prioritizing Others, Respect and Attention to Others, Dealing with Tolerance and Leniency, Indifference to the World and Materialism, Support for Economically/Socially Weak Strata, Efforts to Solve People's Problems, Fairness, Toughness (*Moshti-Gari*), Relative Distance from Society's Political Issues, Creating Deep Emotional Bonds with People in Society, Enjoining Good and Forbidding Evil, narrates Master Mohammad's philanthropic and elevating emotional relations with the people of his society.

Chapter Six: Reflection Once More

In this chapter, under the title "Reflection Once More," reference will be made to Master's family (father, mother, sister, and brother), close relatives (paternal and maternal grandparents, maternal uncles, paternal uncles, paternal aunts, and maternal aunts), Master Mohammad's teachers during his initial apprenticeship period, his friends, and ultimately his personal spiritual exercises (*moraqabeh*), as factors influencing Master Mohammad's spiritual growth and elevation.

In a brief review of Master Mohammad's life, mention was first made of a righteous father who passed away during Mohammad's childhood and a committed, pious, and sacrificial mother who, even in Ramadan while simultaneously breastfeeding two children, performed daily household chores such as drawing water from the well and still observed her fasts.

Continuing with a brief look at Master Mohammad's associates, reference was made to paternal and maternal grandparents, maternal uncles, paternal uncles, paternal aunts, and maternal aunts who were all good-thinking and good-natured and played a role in Master Mohammad's upbringing during his childhood and adolescence. Observing the many simple and basic examples from Master's maternal uncle (*Haj Kazem*) for Mohammad shows that, despite the uncle's limited formal education, these guiding examples shaped a path of transcendent life for Mohammad during his childhood and adolescence.

Master's older brother and sister were also healthy individuals who, in their own way, contributed to his upbringing and guidance.

During his growth and elevation, Master Mohammad benefited from good friends whose disposition was characterized by mysticism (*arif-maslak*)[37] and toughness

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[37] Shah-Mohammadi, a friend and business partner of Professor Mohammad, analyzed human life from a broad perspective in his interview, stating:

> "The guiding principle of human life should be: 'Let go and move on.' Look but do not attach your heart, for sooner or later, one must let go and pass by.
> If this mindset prevails in people, they will easily recognize the necessity of attending to the halal and haram in their lives.

(*moshti-gari*).[38] However, what played a role alongside these worthy role models in Master was his deep religious commitment and personal spiritual exercises in this direction. In this sense, Master, having received the core essence of religious guidance—*those who believe and perform righteous deeds* (*al-ladhina amanu wa 'amilu al-salihat*)—not only believed but manifested righteous deeds in his life in

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Throughout years of partnership with Haj Mohammad, I never encountered any problems with him, because both of us strived to uphold this principle: let go and move on, so as not to defile ourselves with the haram."

Yahya, Professor Mohammad's neighbor in the garage and garden area of Najafabad in Qazvin, indirectly alluded to his own mysticism in his interview as follows:

"Haji would plant dry wood, and that dry wood would turn green. If you stroke a tree with love and affection, it bears more fruit.

Once, two people came to my garden and asked, 'Don't you sell your garden's produce?' I replied, 'No, there are many people around me, and I must bring my products for them too.' Then they asked, 'What have you done to your trees that they are so fruitful and bear like this?' I told them, 'I pour love onto my garden trees, and that's why they bear this way. I always feel my trees are waiting for me to come and visit them. If I delay in visiting, their leaves turn yellow and fall.'"

Chegini, another friend of Professor Mohammad (who has hung several photos of the professor in his shop and even offers his tea to the professor's photo while drinking), remarked in part of his report:

"I used to work in the market from 6 a.m. until midnight, but I thought to myself that a bit more money isn't worth all this turmoil and hustle. So I moved from the market to my current shop in a quiet, low-population area. Although sales are low, I feel great peace in this environment.

Mohammad was my friend and my moral teacher. I witnessed many times that when I asked him for a loan, even if he didn't have it, he valued me so much as his friend that he would go borrow it himself to help me out. Then, when Mohammad gave me the money, without asking what I needed it for or when I'd repay it, he would say, 'Go, and a year from now, if you have it, pay it back!'

I have learned many such moral lessons from Haji."

[38] Abolfazl, one of Master Mohammad's friends, referred indirectly in his interview to his own sense of mardānegi (chivalrous conduct) as follows:

"At times, there was a truck driver who did not have the money to pay for the part his truck needed. In order to get the man back to work, Haj Mohammad would guarantee that person to me, so that I would give the required part or parts to him on a trust-based, consignment basis, with the understanding that he would pay me back after a specified period of time.

However, some people, once their work was done, would forget to settle their accounts. Naturally, in such situations, the shop owner should go to the guarantor and demand the money from him. But since I knew that Haj Mohammad had guaranteed that person purely out of a humanitarian impulse, despite that individual's financial misconduct, I did not demand compensation for the loss or damages from Haj Mohammad. Even now, there is still one such driver from whom I am, for example, asking for ten million [tomans], but after two years have passed, he has still not been willing to pay the cost of the parts he took from me."

Hassan, a student of Master Mohammad, also said in his interview:

"Although Haj Mohammad was like a father to me and treated me with true paternal care, I, too, tried to fill the place of the son he did not have. I would even, if necessary, sacrifice my own personal affairs and make an effort to take care of Hajji's work."

Nasiri, a former apprentice of Master Mohammad, likewise stated:

"Solely and exclusively so that, after the completion of my apprenticeship, there would be no suspicion that I might be competing with Haj Mohammad, I opened my own shop in Takestan, and later outside the city of Qazvin, so that it would not even cross anyone's mind that I intended to engage in even the slightest competition with my master."

practice, striving in this path to see his associates and even strangers in society before seeing himself, and to address the issues and problems of his associates and society before attending to his own personal needs and requirements.

From the conducted interviews, it appears that Master Mohammad, alongside deep religious commitment, had notable personal spiritual exercises.

Many interviewees also recalled in their statements Master Mohammad's adherence to obligations such as prayer and fasting, noting that despite his heavy work in the hot summer days, his fasts were not abandoned, and his prayers were not neglected.

Brother's wife, cousin, Atashgar, Javad, Yahya, and Nasiri, in their separate interviews, attributed Master Mohammad's elevation to the hardships he endured in childhood and adolescence and his efforts to create a world without poverty and deprivation. Master's brother's wife, in this regard, stated:

> "Haj-Mohammad had endured much hardship in his life, and although these hardships had seasoned him, he didn't like to see anyone in difficulty. So, when he once heard from me, for example, that a lady didn't even have a mat in her home, he immediately prepared a carpet for her to take to her."

Chegini stated in his interview that Master Mohammad, from his early adolescence when he was an apprentice at Haj-Nasir and Haj-Sehrab's shop, displayed his fair behavior toward everyone, such that Mohammad would collect the apprentice tips that some truck drivers paid after repairing their trucks and divide the collected tips equally among everyone at the end of the week, without differentiating between those who worked more or less. If other apprentices complained behind the driver who took his truck without giving a tip, he would tell them, 'We have done the work, we receive our wages, and there is no place for protesting the driver for not giving us sweets and tips!'

Haj-Kazem also stated in his report about Master Mohammad:

> "If Mohammad made a mistake, once we admonished him, we wouldn't witness the repetition of that mistake in Mohammad. Similarly, Mohammad had a pure gaze, and unlike many people who can control their behavior but not their gaze, Mohammad controlled his gaze, and even if he talked to a woman for an hour, he wouldn't make eye contact with her."

Ali recalled in his interview Master's spiritual exercises and mysticism as follows:

> “Mohammad sought to do work for his own heart’s sake, for this reason, he even tried not to let his closest associates notice the charitable works he did for others.”

Shah-Mohammadi noted in a part of his report about Master Mohammad:

> “If a person pays less attention to material things, spirituality within them flourishes, and traits of good thoughts, good words, and good deeds manifest in them. Mohammad, because he had transcended money, was able to see higher horizons in the universe and, in this path, prioritize people—who are the dependents of God (*'iyal Allah*)—with the new values he had found, seeing their work as his own and seeking to resolve their problems.”

Abolfazl and Shah-Mohammadi stated similarly:

> “Haj-Mohammad preferred the interests of the community to his personal interests, thus becoming an elevated human with much growth.”

> “In my view, whoever transcends money is cheerful; Mohammad viewed money only to the extent of meeting his daily needs and as a means to help others, not more, therefore he was grown, elevated, and cheerful.”

Master’s wife’s statements about her husband’s behavior in Armenia reveal another aspect of Master’s personal spiritual exercises. Monir stated in her interview that she and the children, during a trip to Armenia, wanted to attend a concert, and after arriving, Master placed his chair with his back to the stage and facing his wife and children. The dancer, seeing this scene, deliberately came in front of Master, but Master’s head remained down, so after a while, unable to attract his attention, the dancer left him, saying that he was stronger than to be affected by her.

Perhaps the most prominent spiritual exercise of Master can be seen in his extraordinary respect for the environment. In the Quran, the phrase *ahsan 'amala* (“best doers”) appears 4 times, and in three of these, the best doers are humans who, in connection with their environment, perform with gentleness, tolerance, and respect. Therefore, given that Master showed special attention to his environment in various aspects of his life (e.g., he refused to pour concrete in his villa yard due to harm to lizards and ants, did not kill the snakes in his garden, and even on Fridays didn’t forget to check on a sick pigeon that his apprentice had brought to the shop), it can be concluded that these behaviors stemmed from his inner reflections and personal spiritual exercises; Master brought the results of these reflections into realization and practice in his life.

What has been mentioned so far are statements from some of Master Mohammad's acquaintances who had decades of lived experience with him and sometimes, in summarizing their statements, referred to him as "a piece of jewel."

A comparative review of the traits that Master Mohammad's associates described about him in their interviews with the traits of *javānmardān* (magnanimous heroes) throughout Iran's cultural history shows extensive overlap and congruence between the traits enumerated for Master in the conducted interviews and those historically attributed to *javānmardān* and *pīrān* (elders). The realization and emergence of shining figures like Master Mohammad indicates the vitality of the culture of magnanimity, heroism, and toughness in this land, and the brilliant life of Master and humans like him can serve as a guiding light for free men and women who, in the turbulent present era, on one hand, reveal the path to salvation from the crisis of meaning and moral crisis, and on the other, the path to understanding the essence and depth of religiosity, which has been caught in many superficialities and superstitions.