

The Laureate of all Orators



Shafiqah Habibi

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The Laureate of All Orators

First Volume

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Introduction

When I first saw her, it was when I had already heard her golden voice. In that time, for a moment, I was totally overwhelmed as sound and picture were intertwined. In this meeting, in addition to her beauty which was obvious from afar, I felt that she is the perfect woman for me and has a bright future.

Fortunately, fate got us together and since then I have the pride of living alongside such brave, fighting, selfless and taboo breaking woman. Her perseverance, ideals, positivity, and her ability to manage both family life and career is notable. Therefore, after years of her dedications for the people of this country, I have decided to write about this Laureate through words and sentences to record them in the golden pages of our Afghanistan's history.

My goal is to send her achievements in the world of oratory, rhetorical arts, declamation, her one of a kind style and her god gifted golden voice to infinity. As Mrs. Nelee writes in the Shahr Magazine:

“When you listen to Shafiq Habibi's voice, it is as if a river of light flows through the veins of your body. Her voice is so alluring, fondling and elegant that when you hear it, loneliness fades away from your body. Human's whole body desires to listen as Shafiq Habibi continues to orate and read.”

Furthermore, I intend to reflect what the national and international media have written about her in their stories and have tried to broadcast her dedications for hundreds of girls, in helping them reach their dreams, her campaign against violence, and her struggles for human rights provision.

Mahmoud Habibi Ph.D.

Chapter 1

رَبِّ كَوْنِيْدِه رَا اَمُّ الْكِبْلَاعِيْدِيْنَ
عَلَامَةُ الدِّينِ سَلْجُوْقِيْ
١٣٤٢

Figure Translation: An name this orator as the Laureate of all orators - Salahuddin Saljuqi – 1963

Salahuddin Saljuqi was a writer, philosopher, poet and scholar born of Herat (between 1895 to 1970)



The cover of Zhwandoon Magazine which shows Shafiqah Habibi as the Farsi news orator in Radio Kabul

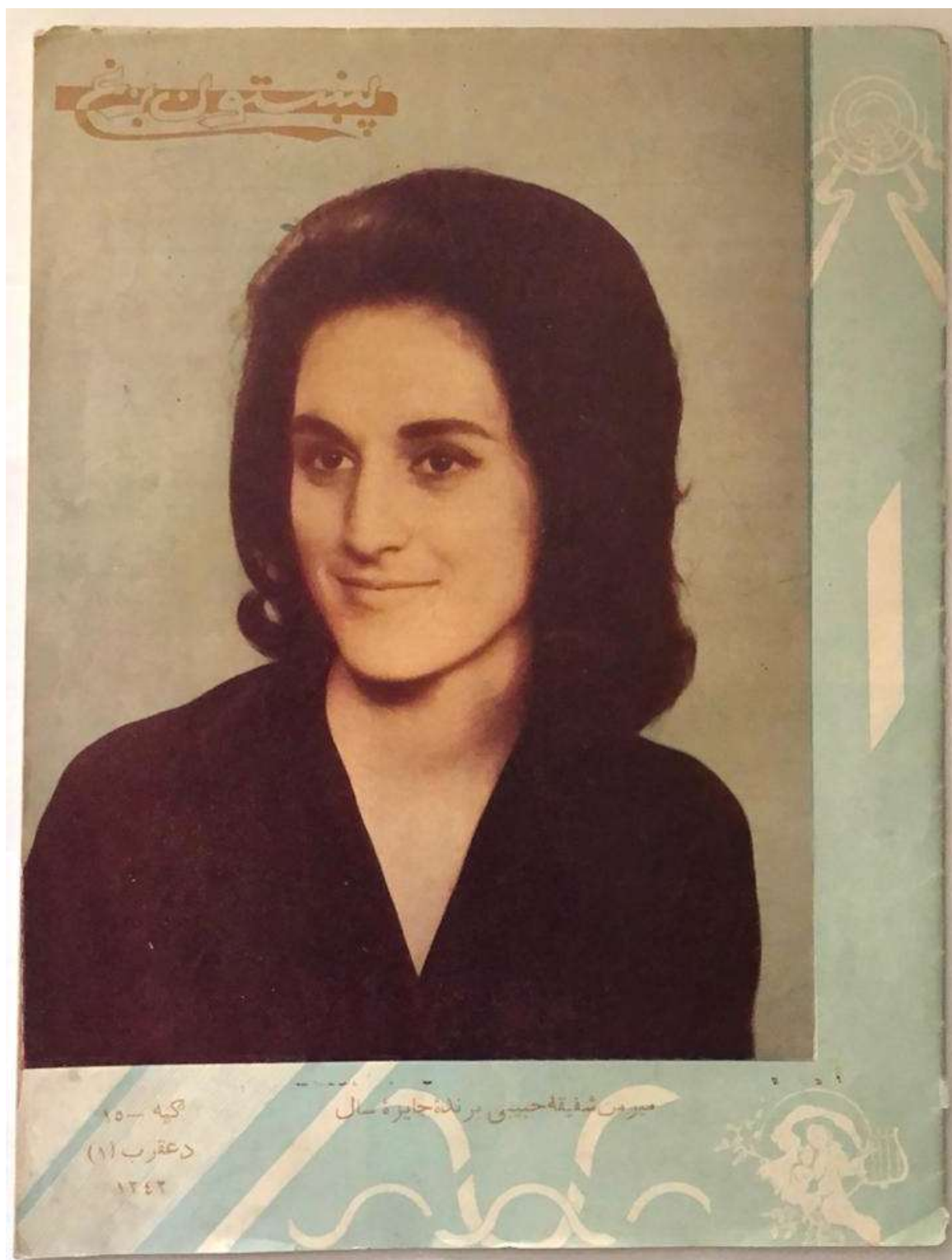
Shafiq Habibi was born and raised in an intellectual and culturally rich family. Her father, Dr. Mohammad Omar Ahmadzai was the founder of preventive medicine in Afghanistan who had studied in Germany. She herself received her Bachelor of arts degree in Journalism in 1966. Through utilizing her talent and the intellectual properties of her family in conducting intellectual, scientific and human rights societies and seminars paired with oratory of news and declamation of epic poems, she turned into a prominent speaker in Afghanistan.

As in the Milad Al-Nabi night (Birthdate of Prophet Mohammad Peace be upon him), year 1963, she performed a declamation for a poem of Khalilullah Khalili after the 8 PM news. The CEO of Afghanistan radio received a call from Salahuddin Saljuqi, Afghanistan's renowned scholar, in which he told him: name this orator Om Olbalagha (Laureate of all Orators) and kiss her hand from my behalf.

Shafiq Habibi served as news anchor of 8 PM news every other night in radio Afghanistan. In the year 1964, when national media awards were being distributed, all relevant organizations were tasked with nominating their top stars. Two news anchors of Persian and Pashto languages, Mrs. Saraj and Mr. Rohina were nominated on the behalf of radio Afghanistan. The jury and selection committee consisted of 25 artistic, intellectual and scientific individuals. There people included: Salah Uddin Saljuqi, Abdul Hai Habibi, Ghulam Muhammad Ghubar, Sarwar Goya Etemadi, Sayed Qasim Reshtya, who was minister of Information and Culture at the same time. Mr. Mobalegh, Professor Abdul Shokoor Reshad, Mr. Latifi, Professor Ershaad, Mr. Benawa, the Pashto poet and others. When the turn of news anchors arrived, the jury asked why Mrs. Habibi's name was absent among the nominees, it was stated that since she is young, she was not included as a nominee. The jury requested for the inclusion of her name in the list of nominees. While such honor occurs rarely in one's life, she took 17 votes out of 25 and became the number one Persian news anchor in the history of Afghanistan's Radio Television.



Picture of Eslah newspaper, one of Afghanistan's most famous newspapers. In this page, the winners of national media awards were presented. Shafiq Habibi's picture can be seen in the top row, second picture from right



Mrs. Habibi featured in Pashtun ghag (Pashtun Voice) magazine, which belonged to the Radio Television Afghanistan, for the National Media Award - 1964



Shafiq Habibi and Dawood Farani on the set of "Golden Scale" program – 1969.

This program was one of the best programs produced by Radio Afghanistan whose producers were Rafiq Yahyayee (Radio Television Specialist) and Mahmud Farani (Famous young poet of Afghanistan)

A Wish and A Success



Picture Description: Shafqa Habibi stating her declamation in front of the royal audience as a long awaited wish for her

Reporter: Naser Amiri

Photo Credit: Mostamandi

I met Mrs. Habibi in her house in Karte Mamoren. After the preliminary questions I asked her an important question about her future aspirations and her memories from her oratory period. Her answer was: With the memorized declamation of “Mehrgan in Alborz” poem (Fall season in Alborz Mountains) of Ustad Khalilullah Khalil, I saw one of my oldest wishes come true. This declamation happened in front of the royal family, prime minister, members of the cabinet, core diplomats and other elites of the intellectual community. My other question was: Why was this a long awaited wish? Her answer was: Since annually, in various ceremonies of our independence day, several artist and literary figures and councils from different countries such as Iran and Tajikistan used to participate. They would perform in front of government officials and other audiences. Among them however, Iranian factions would always perform beautiful declamations in Persian language and I wished the same. I wished to be able to perform declamations in such factions and ceremonies.

Mrs. Habibi spoke of the King's birthday celebration night in the ministry of foreign affair's mansion, with the participation of royal attorney, Prince Ahmad Shah and other royal family members. Furthermore, with the participation of prime minister Noor Ahmad Etemadi, government officials and other core diplomatic members, literary seniors and those foreigners who participated in King Mohammad Zaher Shah's birthday. Mrs. Habibi performed the declamation of Mehrgan in Alborz poem, by Ustad Khalilullah Khalili in this night.

The feast was initialized through Dr. Mahmud Habibi's words and then the announcer, Mahdi Zafar presented the agenda in three languages of Persian, Pashto and French. After that, a young lady with black dress appeared on the stage, bowed a little and started the declamation of poem, with all of the poem memorized by her. Everyone was listening, there was no sound apart from the melodious voice of Mrs. Habibi, Afghanistan's great orator. It was, as if her voice filled the whole space with its beautiful scent. After the end of the declamation, everyone applauded for several minutes.

When Mrs. Habibi came down from the stage, the political deputy to foreign minister and a man of letter, Dr. Rawan Farhadi, handed her an improvised piece of poem.

This is a part of the improvised poem that Dr. Farhadi handed to Mrs. Habibi:

I hail Shafiqah and wish her eyes bright

I hail her and the power of her voice

I hail her ability to memorize whole of the poem

I hail her recitation it in the honor of Ustad Khalili

Ustad Khalili will cry out of separation from country

If he listens to this declamation of yours

Well-known Iranian speaker and declamation artist, Mrs. Serlek was one of those who participated in that feast night. She was ought to present her declamation as well, through hearing the declamation of Mrs. Habibi, she refused to do so and stated that: This night shall be remembered with this memory only.



A picture of Mrs. Sarlack, famous Iranian orator



Mr. and Mrs. Habibi in a dinner invitation. With U.S. vice president Spiro Agnew and his wife who were invited by Afghanistan's king. Prime Minister Etemadi can also be seen in the picture



Mrs. Habibi with Mrs. Ambassador of U.S. in a dinner invitation in Bagh-e-Balaa - 1970

Chapter 2



Mohammed Daoud Khan (1973-1978) The first president of Afghanistan and founder of Afghanistan National Television

Mohammed Daoud Khan took power in the 17 July 1973. In that night, Mrs. Habibi gave birth to her son, all night she watched and witnessed the warfare from the maternity clinic near the Shar-e-now park. In the early days of Mohammed Daoud Khan's presidency, a program was being produced in the Radio Afghanistan called Jumhoriyat (Presidency). Where Shafiq Habibi and Mehdi Zafar, two top tier news anchors presented the Persian speech and Nabi Pakteen, presented the Pashto speech who was also the producer. The program was mostly political and was decorated with epic poetry and political texts. Mrs. Habibi used to perform declamation for these poetries, as she received the poetry declamation award from the ministry of information and culture.

Below is a small part of "The Torch of Culture" epic poem that Mr. Habibi once orated:

The Torch of Culture

Who am I?

A phoenix who flies across the human history peaks

And watches over the endless alterations in the midst of eras

I see time, intertwined, through highs and lows

I see the armies of men and women, who strive to travel through this path

And look forward into an eternity of tomorrows

I see death, which will conquer those who do not voyage this way

And the next generation takes up the torch

I see that movement is survival in history,

While halting is death in history



Shafiqah Habibi and Mahdi Zafar in the Jumhuriat (Republic) program in Radio Afghanistan – 1974 – According to research by professor Ebadi, the professor of Technics at the Faculty of Journalism of Kabul University Shafiqah Habibi's voice was determined as the standard Treble voice and Mahdi Zafar's voice was determined as the standard Bass voice,

Remarks of Mahmood Farabi, one of pioneers of revival of free Verse poetry in Afghanistan, on Shafiqah Habibi's voice:

"Truly, this is a gift from god, I endorse Professor Ebadi's research, for years I am convinced that you are a lady with a Golden Voice, the likes of which are rare in the world; for example, in the world of music, among one billion people of India, only Lata Mangeshkar had such a privilege and honor. And you have this divine gift in the world of speech."

In the late 1977 and early 1978, in the final days and months of president Daoud's reign, Radio Television of Afghanistan which was established with the help of Japan started its pilot broadcasting. The network would have broadcast from 6 PM to 10 PM every Tuesday. In total, for three weeks the network broadcasted three news programs of Pashto at 7 PM each Tuesday and and three news programs of Persian at 8 pm every Tuesday. In the Fourth week, president Daoud was assassinated and the program was halted. Mrs. Habibi anchored the three Persian programs with a male counterpart. The head of Radio Television Afghanistan once stated that the president himself chose the anchors for the news programs and for female anchors, he chose Mrs. Habibi.

Mrs. Habibi would then continue to thrive as a news anchor star for Afghanistan in the years and revolutions to come.



Hence the golden age of narration initiated, with Shafiqah Habibi climbing higher and higher to the top of this circle. Through achieving various narration and declamation awards.



د افغانستان جمهوري دولت

د اطلاعاتو وکتور وزارت

د مطبوعاتو او کلتوري چارو وزارت

محترمه میرمن شفیقه حبیبی !

د افغانستان د جمهوري دولت د اطلاعاتو وکتور وزارت

له دې کبله چې تاسې د ۱۳۵۳ کال د نکلماترې په حیث ټاکل شوي او

د جایزې په کټلوريالی شوي د تاسو مبارکي وانی او د افغانستان

او جېاني پوښی او فرهنگ د خدمت په لار کې ستا

د زیات بریالیتوب په هیله کوی .

پوښه دا کټلورین

د اطلاعاتو وکتور وزیر

نور

The certificate award to Mrs. Habibi as the year 1974 Best Female Declamation Star by the Ministry of Information and Culture
Of President Daoud's Republic

Shafiq Habibi once stated that she does not agree with the way orators perform their declamations. She believes that their declamations are in the romantic poetries' style.

She is right because an orator is exactly the interpreter of the feelings of the poet who seeks to provoke the general minds. And stimulates the epic and love feelings as well, since literature on itself has its own different schools of thought. Hafiz and Sadi are inclined towards the society, Khayyam speaks frankly, Bedil seeks asylum to divinity, and Kalim and Nadim are filled with elegant thoughts. In a declamation, all these rich feelings and specifications should be included with their full feelings. In the past we used to have rehearsals, where we would recite the Shahnamah's (Book of Kings, literary work of Abulqasim Ferdowsi, a Persian poet during the Samanids and Ghaznavids) poems. Till to date narrators and anchors do the same since it eases their performances but in reality, all kinds of feelings should be included in a declamation.



Cover of Pashtun Ghag (Pashtun Voice) magazine, which was associated with Radio Television Afghanistan - 1976

An Orator should be neutral and never indulge on personal feelings

Reporter: Gulahmad Zahab Noori

I am going to include part of this interview here:

She is an experienced narrator in the radio, her voice has a special tone to it. She mostly serves as news anchor, as well as in other informative programs.

We will meet her in her house. Her house is a small yet beautiful house, beautified with different elements. Elements such as flowerpots and her welcoming smile towards us.

She has all the rights to start the speech, as she is one of the rare successful and leading orators of the radio Afghanistan.

I asked her, today you are amongst the top narrators of the radio, how do you feel?

She smiled and continues after a short silence: Actually the listeners should judge for themselves. They hear us behind their radios and they have all the rights to judge whether an orator is successful or not.

A question, dear Shafiq, as you are successful in orating the news, what are the essentials for success in this field?

He answers: An Orator should be neutral in the narration of news and should never indulge on personal feelings. The orator should stay away from any regimes, should believe and focus on the task in her even if the news has affected him/her personally.

Do you have anything more to add?

She continues with saying that our youth are talented and an example of it is our young news anchors and orators who start without professional training on the oratory art and public speaking. This is why I believe that a speaker and orator should never stop learning and developing his/her skills. Studying, training and awareness of daily commotions is a must for a successful orator.

[illegible]

Chapter 3

A sigh of relief

February 1979

In the second revolution of Khalq Democratic party, February 1979, President Babrak Karmal came into power after the assassination of both Noor Mohammad Taraki and Hafizullah Amin.

In his initial days in office, president Barbrak Karmal resided in the Chehelsotoon palace, which was not leveled to dirt in the hands of enemies back then. He called once and invited me to the palace, while waiting for the meeting, I came into acquaintance with general Abdul Qadir. He was Karmal's defense minister, after a little small talk, he asked me whether I am a relative of Mrs. Habibi. I was amazed by his lack of information so after a small break I told him in the Qandaharis' way; she sits beside me (She is my wife).

With an uncommon gesture of abstinence and honesty he added: "Before the revolution I was tasked in the Pol-e-Charkhi prison and every night we had to watch the television for the news. Without any exceptions, every night a young lady would appear in the TV. She would orate the news and publicize any commentaries. She would perform so emphatically and with confidence that we thought she belonged to the regime. Since other political inmates and I were ready for the revolution, I made my decision to shut her voice forever once I get the chance." He perched onto himself and added with a childish goo: "Now that comrade Karmal has come to power, in the same hour and in the same television, the same lady, the same orator, with the same emphatic confidence and oratory continues to narrate the news, orate and provide political commentaries. As if she belongs to our own regime. So I changed my mind and saluted her...." "A sigh of relief." Since I always prefer straight talking over talking in riddles, I told him: this is a gift from god, he has the power to choose whom to give a certain talent. He makes one a ruler, another a general and another a successful orator.

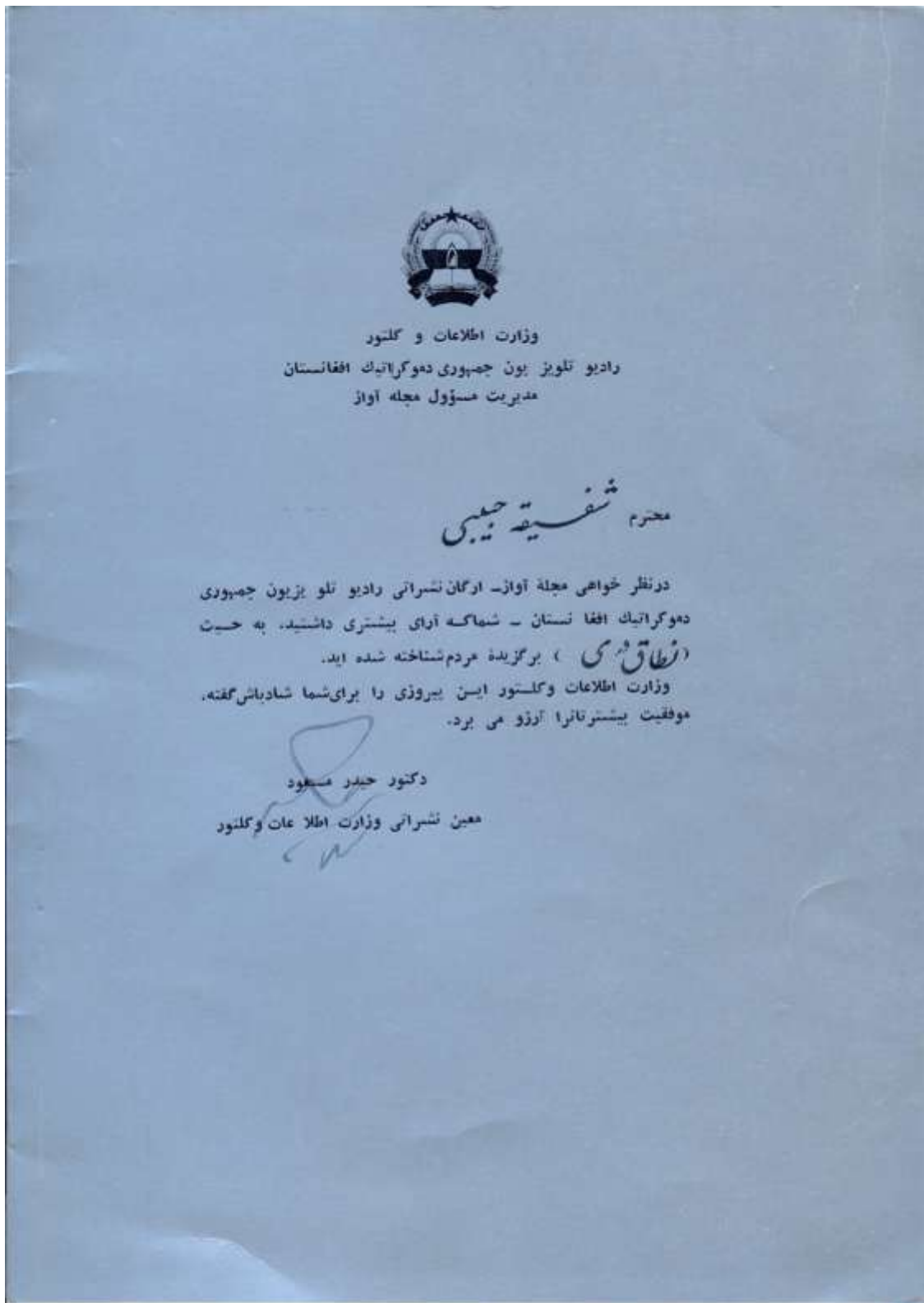
Honors and awards were distributed:

After continues efforts, nominated staff and co-workers of Awaz magazine (Voice Magazine), Radio Television network of Afghanistan and the ones chosen out of public vote were determined. Awaz magazine had printed beautiful award certificates, in addition to other awards. These awards were distributed in 28th of May 1980 in Bagh-e-Balaa restaurant in a ceremony by Prof. Latif Nazemi, director of Radio Television of Afghanistan and jury's head.

Awaz magazine, in an intuitive effort and as a professional courtesy decided to gather the public's opinion about their favorite orators, news anchors, actors, declamatory artist and other TV program hosts. In the span of a few months, around seven thousand letters were delivered to the office of the magazine. Head of jury, Prof. Latif Nazemi, in order to respect women's rights and in order to respect public's demand, demanded that winner nominees should be chosen from males and females separately. This was when Mrs. Shafiq Habibi was chosen as Persian language' best news anchor and orator and stepped towards nationwide fame.



Shafiq Habibi in the cover of Awaz Magazine (Voice Magazine) as the year's best Orator



Award certificate of Awaz Magazine and Ministry of Information and Culture to Shafiqah Habibi for her recognition as year's best orator



Radio Television Afghanistan's 8 PM news, news anchors: Shafiqa Habibi and Hussain Anosh



Radio Television Afghanistan's 8 PM news, news anchors: Shafiqa Habibi and Ahmad Shah Shahab



Radio Television Afghanistan's 8 PM news, news anchors: Shafiq Habibi and Enayat Sharif who was also the news's manager



Shafiq Habibi presenting political commentary and remarks at the end of news



Talent, academic prowess and Shafiqah Habibi's shining in the media turned her into an outstanding star in people's minds and gained her many medals and pride signatures

Chapter 4

Mujahedeen's Era

After the fall of Dr. Najib's regime in 1992, the Mujahedeen regime came into power with the leadership of Burhanyddin Rabbani. During the winter of 1995, Mujahedeen's government was relentlessly hoping and trying for a peace mechanism which would cease the war, bring in security and provide inclusiveness.

In the summer of 1995, Shafiqa Habibi was appointed as the director of Journalist sisters' association of Radio Television of Afghanistan and Afghan Film. To advocate for women's rights and raise their awareness in the radio television through conducting courses, seminars and conferences.

In the time when each and every minute, there was the risk of bombardment from aimless airstrikes, Shafiqa used to travel to radio station every day and think for the betterment of the association. Today, she is due to meet Wasef Bakhtari, Radio Television's correspondent to speak about holding a debate by the members of the association. She looks at her watch which shows 10:30 AM. Association's office does not have a telephone and since still analog phones are used in Kabul, Mrs. Habibi goes to the secretary's office in the other building. She was yet to reach the other building when 3 missiles hit the Television network building. After a long silence secretary asked about what happened, he was told that one missile landed on the association's office and martyred an old lady who served as a cleaner. And other missiles landed on the courtyard which martyred a few more. Mrs. Habibi was relieved of coming to office and others were also relieved apart from those who had responsibility.



Shafiqah Habibi as the director and the board members of Sisters' Association of Afghanistan Radio Television and Afghan Film

Mrs. Habibi stated in an interview with Mermon (Woman) Magazine, the broadcast entity of Naswan (Women) organization, about her family: I have two daughters and one son. "Palwasha Habibi has completed her higher studies to PhD degree in journalism abroad and she lives abroad. My second daughter, Durkhanai Fahim Habibi, has bachelors in English literature". Unfortunately, after back to back revolutions, her daughter's abroad stay and the suspension of communication lines amid the advent of Taliban, Shafiqah Habibi was oblivious of her daughter, Palwash's martyrdom abroad the country until she became aware of it and faced immense sadness.



Late Palwasha Habibi, Journalism Ph.D.



Mermion (Woman) Magazine's Winter Edition of 1995 which featured Shafiqah Habibi and information about her family

نطاقی يك
مسلك ويك
هنر دريك
ساخت
معين
است

حجاب جزء فرهنگ ديرينه زن مومن افغان است

شفیقه حبیبی

آغاز نموده اید ؟
انجمن خواهران رادیو
تلویزیون و افغان قلم
که به توجه
ورهنمایی راهبست
عمومی رادیو تلویزیون
از سنبله ۱۳۷۴ بدینسر
شروع به فعالیت نموده
در اصول کار خود يك
نهاد فرهنگی و آموزشی
و اجتماعی غیر وابسته
است .
در عین زمانی که
در همه کورسهای
م بدی خواهران رادیو
و تلویزیون قرآن پاک فقه
عرف و زبان انگلیسی
را آموزش ببینند
باندیور کنفرانس ها
و برنامه های رادیویی
و تلویزیونی جامعه
افغانی را در آگاهی قرار
میدهند و سعی بر آن
است .



محترمه شفیه حبیبی نطق وریزه رادیو تلویزیون دولت اسلامی افغانستان

از حسن نظر تان تشکر
می سازم . سوال است که بحیث
گوینده اخبار هشت و هشت
و نیم شب در رادیو تلویزیون
اجرای وظیفه نموده ام یا
وجودیکه مشکلات خاموشی
در گذشته امکانات کار
در بیرون از منزل برایم
محدود نبوده .
تاجاتی که ما اطلاع
اظهار کلمات و جملات است
بدون تاثیر و حصول
غایه مطلوب .
لطف نموده در مورد
کارهای روزانه تان
در رادیو صحبت نمائید .
گویندگی در رادیو
تلویزیون و پیشبرد
انجمن خواهران رادیو
تلویزیون و افغان قلم .

داریم شما مسئول
خواهران رادیو
تلویزیون هستید
در مورد کار و فعالیت
زنان انجمن معلومات
بدهید خالی از دلچسپی
نخواهد بود و اینکه از
کدام تاریخ به فعالیت
شروع کردید ؟

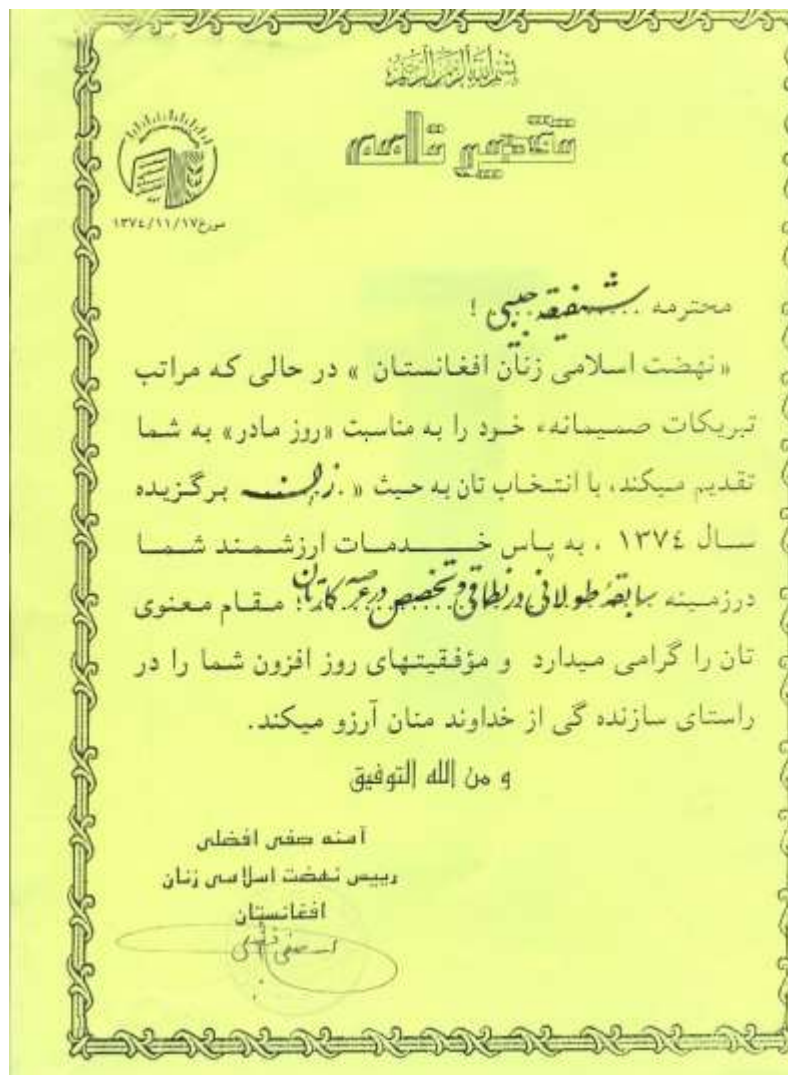
مدت چند سال
میشود که شما بارادیو
تلویزیون همکاری
دارید ؟ چرا وظیفه
رسمی ندارید
با وجودیکه يك زن
با استعداد و فعال هم
هستید ؟

به سلسله شماره های
قبلی خود درین صفحه
(میرمن) شما را
به خواهرانی آشنا
میسازد که در عرصه
های مختلف اجرایی
و وظیفه نموده و در کنار
ایش موفق و مختار
مباشند . اینک شما را
به خوانش گفت و شنودی
دست مینمائیم که با
محترمه شفیه حبیبی
نطاق خوش صدا استاد
عجرب و مستول انجمن
خواهران رادیو
تلویزیون و افغان قلم
صور گرفته است .
شما نظر تان را
در مورد شیوه نطاقی
تحت یک نطاق ابراز
نمائید ؟
نطاقی يك مسلك
ويك هنر در يك ساخت
وجود معین است بدین
شرط که اساسات فنی
و مسلکی آنرا باید
دانست هنر ادای کلمات
و فهم ارزش ادبی آنرا
باید داشت آواز رسا
و مرغوب پالپ ها
و دندانهای مساعد برای
تلفظ و بیان امریست
الزامی در غیر آن نطاقی

The interview page of Mermon magazine where Shafiqah Habibi discussed about her role in the Sisters association, her family and about Islamic Hijab for women

Holy month of Ramadhan's 17th day is concurrent with Bibi Khadeja Kobra's acceptance of Islam religion. For the first time in the country, this day was celebrated in the 17th of Ramadhan of 1995 through a ceremony. This was because in the time of prophet Mohammad (PBUH), women and men used to bear the endeavors of promoting Islam's message and promoting women's newly acquired rights together. And Bibi Khadeja was the first woman who did so in the way of implementing prophet Mohammad's message and establishing women's new movement.

"Afghanistan Women Islamic Movement", honors Mrs. Shafiqah Habibi as a woman who is committed to Islamic values on Women's superior role in Islam. Hence she is chosen as the year's chosen lady and further recognizes this honor through this certificate award:



Certificate of award to Shafiqah Habibi as the year's chosen lady from behalf of Afghanistan Women Islamic Movement Association

Sultana Rahim, Almomenaat (Women Muslims) organization's reporter states in her interview with this year selected lady; Shafiq Habibi.

Shafiq Habibi is a renowned name who voice we have heard many times through the news and radio broadcasts.

When she orates a poem with the heart-catching style of declamation,

She drags the audience towards a sea of sentiments filled with joy.

She is a speaker who has a mountain of experience in her chosen field,

A career decorated with honors and pride,

In addition to immense talent which guides the listener to an endless timeline.

Shafiq Habibi who has stepped foot towards being a speaker and anchor, is a loving mother as well who has sacrificed a lot of her children as well.

Then the interviewer asks of her current situation in the ongoing crisis in the country, Mrs. Habibi replies with her calmness: "It is necessary for a speaker to keep his/her composure, be well mannered and struggle to learn on his/her field. For an orator to master the rhetoric art, it is necessary to learn language grammar and study continually.



Shafiq Habibi's interview with the Almomenaat Magazine

Question: Have you trained students in this field?

Answer: In 1970, I thought two Speech classes. Furthermore, in 1977,1989,1991 and 2003, I had the responsibility of teaching speech and public speaking classes, with classes duration being two months. There used to be many applicants but only a few applicants, around 30 were chosen every round. The selection was based on a speaking exam in front of microphone which examined the applicant's literacy, voice and accent and I was the teacher.



A number of Shafiq Habibi's students in her oratory class, along with other staff of Radio Television Afghanistan. In the middle, Shafiq Habibi stands with Mehraban Nazarov, the class's Tajikistani adviser

In these anxious and desperate days of 1996, where each and every moment there is a fear, a newspaper called Dariz (Honor) still stands with its voice out loud in the rhetoric and literature parties of the country. This newspaper interviewed Mrs. Habibi as a top speaker and anchor of radio television and Afghan film. The interview started with this question: What role do women have in the society?

Her answer: Today's society needs aware, committed and patriot women for rebuilding the country. Women should not be neglected as they comprise half of society's body and have direct role in reshaping the society. Sadly, in our country, mostly men decide women's fate and rights, yet we thank those who defend our rights.

Another question: Can women have political influence in their society? Answer: Of course, the upheavals in post war societies have indicated that positive changes in the society were brought in through the intervention of both halves of the society.

Last Question: Do women feel inferior to men? Answer: Unfortunately, women feel inferior to men, for example some prefer to be a leader's wife than being the leader herself. This is a result of continued suppression of violence and discrimination.

دریغ صفحه دوم

مصاحبه با شفیقه حبیبی رییس انجمن رادیو تلویزیون افغان

کسرا شکر: رحمت الله بیگانه

سوال: زن چه نقشی در جامعه امروزی دارد؟

جواب: جامعه امروز افغانستان به زنان با دیانت، با تقوا، ایشارگر، وطن دوست، آگاه، هدفمند برای باز سازی کشور ضرورت دارد، نباید کوچک دید، امروز نیمی از پیکر جامعه را زنان تشکیل میدهند و زن مستقیماً در سازنده گی جامعه سهم دارد، چه خوست که زنان این نقش سازنده را با فرهنگ غنامند افغانی توأم سازند.

سوال: به نظر شما زنان در کجای جامعه باشند؟

جواب: سوال شما عنوان کنفرانسی بود که از طرف انجمن خواهران در رادیو تلویزیون راه اندازی شده بود، که انعکاس خوبی هم داشت، من به این اعتقاد که زن افغان نباید از فعالیت های اجتماعی

تحوالات اجتماعی، نشان میدهد که وقتی سخن از تحول متوازن جامعه مخصوصاً در دوره های بعد از جنگ ها میمان آمده برای پی ریزی جامعه فردا نیمه آن مشکل از زنان است.

سوال: زن افغان چرا احساس حقارت میکند؟

جواب: کسی میگفت: زن افغان به مراتب خواسته است که زن رئیس باشد تا اینکه خودش رئیس اداره باشد. و این احساس خود کمتر بهیچ ناشی از سرکوشدن زن است که با شلاقیهای تعصب، تبعیض همواره کوبیده شده اند.

سوال: ارزش های جامعه ما چقدر به زن حق میدهد که در فعالیت های اجتماعی سهم بگیرند آیا میشود این ارزش ها را نادیده گرفت؟

جواب: عدالت خداوندی، شریعت اسلامی، وجدان انسانی و منشور حقوق بشر اعاده، حقوق انسانی و طبیعی زنان، این کتله عظیم بشریت را جداً

کشور ما تصمیم گیرنده گان و پیشتاژان تهضت زنان اکثراً مردان بوده اند. ما از برادرینکه از حقوق ما دفاع کرده اند سیاستگذاریم. ولی علت اساسی این امر بی اطلاعی اکثر زنان از قوانین شرعی و مدنی و کمبود مطالعه

جامعه امروز ما به زنان با دیانت با تقوا، دوست، آگاه و هدفمند ضرورت دارد



Shafiqah Habibi's interview with Dariz magazine

The Light Diamond

3 months before the fall of the capital, Jamiat-e-Islami magazine called Shahr, dedicated its last page of 18 July 1996 edition to Afghanistan's talented orator and speaker, Shafiqah Habibi. Through publishing one of her latest picture in front of a microphone and naming her Light's Diamond. The written text is so delicate that lures every reader towards it.

"When you listen to Shafiqah Habibi's voice,

it is as if a river of light flows through the veins of your body.

*Her voice Is so alluring, fondling and elegant that when you hear it,
loneliness fades away from your body.*

Human's whole body desires to listen as Shafiqah Habibi continues to orate and read."

I went to her office for the interview, I met her in the cultural hub of Radio Television sisters' association, where she is currently its director. With her grasping voice she answered to one of our questions: Public Speaking, Declamation and oratory arts has awakened, lured and persuaded masses from long times ago. Nowadays that a speaker speaks a matter from radio or television; H/She must realize that H/She nourishes minds, teaches, educates and awakens. With him/her, time stops and everywhere falls into darkness and abyss. The speaker is like a confidant that hears and sees everything.



Shafiqah Habibi's interview with the Shahr Magazine

Chapter 5

Taliban's Rule

Work-rate, personality and personal quality of Afghan noble daughter, Laureate Shafiqah Habibi and her struggles to raise the voice of Afghan women across the world had gained the attention of international sources, news agencies, media outlets and especially internet. Her influence persuaded many international correspondents and authors to come to Kabul for conducting several interviews with her, writing stories about her and taking pictures of her which were reflected and broadcasted widely across the world.

Das Magazine, a renowned magazine from Switzerland which used to publish in German language, published a story in its 1st of May 1985 edition. Written by Stephen Grey, Sunday Times's correspondent and its photo reporter Harriet Logan. This report was 12 pages long and was about Afghanistan's situation during Taliban's rule and comprehension on Shafiqah Habibi and her family's difficult life under their rule which became under the radar of readers and critics all around the world. Afghanistan's destruction and anarchy, specially Kabul's disarray, Shafiqah Habibi's life with her family and her wish for access of women to their fundamental rights were perfectly illustrated in this report.

Canada's "The Toronto Star Context" newspaper which covers global discussions, reports and scientific advancements dedicated its first page's headline with a picture of veiled women and its second page's headline with Shafiqa Habibi's picture. This page published in December 15 1996 to illustrate Taliban's strict and suppressing rule on women. This report called "Behind the Veils" written by Paul Watson, Senior correspondent of Asian Office of the newspaper starts with this: "During the 16 years of war, when few to none could raise their voice over the thundering voice of guns and cannons, Shafiqa Habibi was still respected as Afghanistan's audible and delicate voice and as a female orator. Every once and a while, you can see her as youthful as young Elizabeth Taylor.

Paul Watson ends his comprehensive report with these sentences: If Mrs. Habibi is right, then sooner or later Taliban will understand that they cannot implement their objective without the inclusion of women.



Toronto newspaper under the headline of Behind the Veils, which starts with Shafiqa Habibi's name

F4 THE TORONTO STAR Sunday, December 13, 1998

AFGHANISTAN

Women trapped behind veils

Continued from F1

very difficult to work in them.

She already had one in the closet when the Taliban seized power, but she only wore it when visiting villages, out of deference to rural traditions, and sometimes when shopping, to avoid her fate.

Sitting alone in her living room with two men, a reporter and his Afghan interpreter, Habibi was committing a crime.

It was also illegal for her to be photographed, because the Taliban consider picture-taking indecent and a disgusting sign of decadence.

Many of the men who read the Taliban and fight for them refuse to be photographed, videotaped or to even have their voices recorded.

Habibi's offense was all the worse because her face was fully exposed and she showed her head with nothing more than an elegant silk scarf.

It is illegal for women to meet with men unless they are escorted and watched by a close male relative. Taliban soldiers are on constant watch, waiting to hear any whistles.

A woman caught alone with a man outside of her home, especially if her body and face are not encased, is usually accused of being a prostitute or an adulteress.

The Taliban's penalty is death by stoning.

Habibi decided to use the phone to make her appeal to the new government, an achievement in itself in Kabul where few homes have electricity. Lacking said most of the wires in Pakistan.

"When women don't wear the chadri, the Taliban see bad women and will have sexual relations"

SHAFIQA HABIBI

Habibi says she speaks on behalf of "all suffering Afghan women" to the late Taliban official who could reach the heart of the resistance. He only has a radio station to run because the Taliban have also banned television.

Habibi says he promised her the Taliban will be less harsh on women once they have brought security to all of Afghanistan.



UNDER COVER: A woman in Kabul peers from behind her veil. Few dare show their face.

all the babies more than a week ago.

The children haven't eaten meat in eight months or fruit in three months. The last time they had any vegetables was two months ago, said Aburrahman Makhbar, director of administration.

They survive on bread and a thin gruel of water and boiled rice, and there is only enough rice and flour in storage to last a month, Makhbar said.

"The condition of the children is worse than before," Ghol Chera, a 30-year-old cheating woman, said as a 10-year-old girl held an infant half her size, wrapped tightly in a thick blanket.

"But they have to be happy. They thank God for what they are given because of the present conditions we are in."

Five days ago, the new government put a medal in charge of the orphanage — a young soldier who also crawled on his paws and wears a green armband against the wall.

The medal, Abdul Rahim Rahimi, says he has reported to the High Council of Taliban leaders for permission to call back more female workers. He is still waiting for an answer.

"It's difficult for me," he said, as several young fighters watched from armchairs, with AK-47s propped against their knees.

IN AFGHANISTAN

PAUL WATSON

The interview session with Shafiqah Habibi in the second page of the Toronto Star newspaper

Le Monde newspaper, Paris' reliable newspaper writes about an interview with the country's celebrated couple: "Today, everyone is tired and frustrated, the nation remembers the king's era: an era of peace. He country loves symbols and king is a symbol" the reporter asks himself: "Can we govern a country with symbols?"

Another historic French newspaper called La Figaro, under the banner: "Kabul, chain of peace" and the bold headline of "After years of civil war, Taliban force their rule over Kabul through suppression of freedom" remembers country's efforts for freedom of two of its residents from Taliban who were arrested for eating lunch in the presence of women and committing a Sharia law offence. France's famous journalist Patrick de Saint-Exupery, from the family of Antoine de Saint-Exupery (1900 – 1944), famous writer, author of The Little Prince and pilot, writes in an interview in Kabul: "It has not been long since she used to appear in television. But today, nothing is left and there is no television. This communication tool

is a religious offence because it reflects human picture and for illustrating their hate, they hanged and (executed) some televisions in the last September and cut the power supply for Radio Television of Afghanistan. "Shafiq Habibi used to appear in television in the last ten years which is now dark, but she holds no regrets." "People are tired of war and rockets, today we are living in security in Kabul. In the Mujahedeen era, civilians were mistreated and stolen from, today the situation is different...."

"When you listen to Shafiq, it's as if she prefers security over freedom or maybe it only appears like that, her movement contrasts with her words because she cannot stop showing the old magazines, the magazines which showcase her past achievements. She points out to a black and white picture: In this picture my husband and I attended a lunch with Mrs. Pompidou, the president of France. Shafiq adds with energy and vibrancy: "In here I had an interview... In here a talk..." She stares in the succession of past memories. "I know that mistreatments are gone now, but now women need to stay in their homes, its Taliban's order and if they see women outside their homes they get crazy."

- Is this natural?

- I do not know, I stay in my home all day, I read, cook and almost never go out. I never wore a veil before.

- Don't you miss your past life?

- Its winter and the weather is cold, what will I do outside? I have a sorrow in my heart which I know the past years will not return and nothing is left of the past. There are no more schools, museums, libraries and other cultural entities. I have to stay in my country, and I don't know what the future holds.

Then Patrick adds under the title "Between Fear and Hope": Negotiations continue, and Shafiq struggles between doubt, hope and fear.... Under the rule of Taliban, her neighbors witnessed some strangers entering her house. This introduction without the permission of Taliban, is subject to punishment. Yet, no one can resist or do anything about it. In this time of despair and isolation, every meeting with her or her husband, who is a political personality belonging to one of Afghanistan's renowned families is contradicting to Sharia law.

With this all said, Shafiq Habibi can still do something for the women of the country and gains her momentum. For example, she still earns her salary, she can negotiate with Taliban through phone as well. She says that Taliban made us promises. They told us that now they are focused on inclusive security, then they will ease on the restrictions. Anyway, peace is the priority.

Do you believe them?

I do not know, you tell me, I do not have any chance but to believe these promises. If a group of women from our association go out and protest, they will answer us with bullets.



Le Figaro magazine under the banner of "Kabul, the chains of peace"

Talented Journalist, Terry Gerry, writer in Reader's Digest magazine and Harriet Logan, photo reporter who has won several awards visited Kabul in 1997. During their visit, they wrote of their interview with Shafiq Habibi: Shafiq Habibi is 54 years of age, she used to be the famous orator in the Radio Television who had a tranquil life with her husband. Now she lives in an old and damp apartment. From the fear of Taliban, we entered her house secretly through our guide. As women fear journalists because talking with a journalist is a risk for itself. When we spoke with Shafiq, she asked us to not write anything intense about the Taliban. This is the lady who is in contact with Taliban for creating a change and states that it has been 6 years that women's life is hugely limited. With the fall of communist regime, Islamic regime came into rule, it was somehow moderate and allowed women to work, but they had to wear veils without hiding their faces and eyes.

She showed us a picture of herself where she was presenting the news while wearing a veil. But her life fell into total darkness in 1996. Today, a small association of women gather in her house. Through their efforts they could extend the salary of the members of this association and Afghan Film for another 6 months which was cut by the Taliban. 70% of Shafiq's friends have fled Afghanistan, she asks herself: Why did not she follow them? Then she answers: I need to stand by my mindset and help create a better future for women. If this situation goes on like this, we will lose a generation. Then the Reader's Digest journalist adds: In a small secret room, a 5-year girl had her book with herself and this is one of the

hundreds of secret schools which are established secretly. This particular school is located in ruins. Sometimes the Taliban get aware of these schools and the fact that boys and girls study in the same classes. While the teachers are proud of what they are doing, they are also afraid that Taliban might know of their whereabouts.

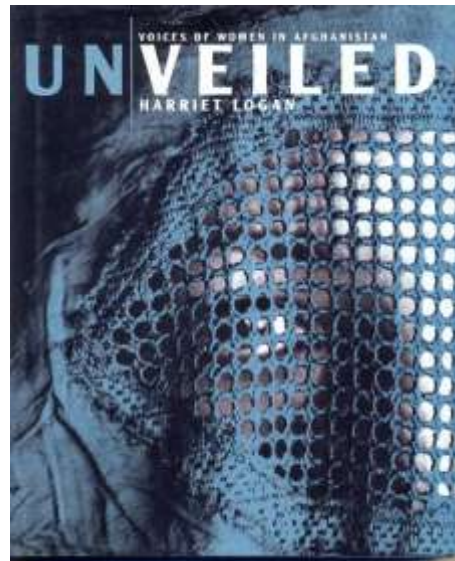


Reader's Digest Magazine's story about Shafika Habibi and her daughter during Taliban rule

During her talks with Unveild's Harriet Logan, with reminiscence of old and past times, she shows them her personal photo album. In one of those pictures she shows herself with France's president Georges

Pompidou. Mr. Pompidou was France's prime minister in 1969 and was elected as president later. He was His majesty, Mohammad Zaher Shah's guest who entered Kunduz to witness a Buzkashi match with his entourage. This was when Doctor Habibi was Kunduz province's governor and host of the entourage.

Then Shafika Habibi states: I remember the initial days of the Taliban's regime when women were beaten for not wearing a veil and it was better for them to just stay at home. I cannot recognize my friends easily, even when they set beside me in the bus. Now that I get into buses, the cleaners shout on me when they collect tickets, before, when there was no veil, they used to smile at me and say: look Mrs. Habibi is with us in the bus!



Pictures of Unveiled Magazine with photo reporting of Harriet Logan

I was a newsreader on television from the age of fifteen. My husband was educated in Paris and became a diplomat. He later worked as a government minister. but when the fighting started with the Taliban, we had to abandon all of this. Of course, my husband lost his job, and now we live in the Microrayons.

These photo albums are like my obituary—they don't even seem real anymore. Look, here I am with [former president of France] Georges Pompidou.

When the Taliban came, three hundred other women at the television station and I were dismissed from our jobs. We have been at home ever since. When we were told to go home, we hoped it would not last. It felt like going back in time—as if the women were going into the shadows or being locked underground, and we did not know for how long. It is going to be a long, long struggle to restore our position.

It has been so difficult for the women of Afghanistan to progress. In 1959, we were told that we no longer had to wear burkhas, and it was at that time that I started to work at the

radio station in Kabul. It was a happy time: we were the first women to do such jobs. And ever since then, things continued going forward, until the time of the Taliban. I wonder if my generation went too far. In the 1970s, when the Communists took over and I went into television, They even showed dancing on television! But it was only here in Kabul. The rest of the country, the illiterate people, were living in another world. What's happening now is a reaction to that separation between the two worlds.

At the beginning of the mujahideen rule, I wore pants and a long coat and a scarf over my head. Men and women still worked together in the office.

A big question for me is, why don't I leave now? Most educated people in this country have gone. I think I stay because I am a religious woman. I also stay because if all of the educated women of Afghanistan left, what hope would there be for others? It is our responsibility to work with the Taliban to make things better.

I believe the destiny of everyone belongs to Allah.

My career is over now. I am not the person that I was: my brain is tired. The past is the past. Now, all I want to do is find a good way of providing some future for young girls. At the moment, they have no destiny. I have to campaign for them. If this situation goes on, we will lose a whole generation.



In the first row, from the left side, third person is Shafiq Habibi and beside her, Prime Minister Noor Ahmad Etemadi can be seen. On the left side of Prime Minister, President Pompidou stands along with his secretary



Afghanistan's prime minister in the welcoming party of Mr. Pompidou in Kunduz airport



Mr. Pompidou meeting a Buzkashi athlete (Chaap Andaz)

In the next page of the unveiled, Harriet Logan meets with Shafiq Habibi's daughter and interviews her, she writes about Shafiq's daughter: I met the both of them on 1997, now in 2001 that I visited their house, Shafiq is in Peshawar while her daughter, Durkhanai is still in Kabul with her husband and three kids.



When I was a child, we had a wonderful life. We had a nice house and a high standard of living.

I was given a good education. My mother is very smart and my father worked as a diplomat. Kabul was very prosperous and the intellectuals here were just like Europeans.

When the Taliban first arrived in Kabul, we were at home. My husband came into the house and told us about the big change and about the public hanging of President Najibullah, and it was so shocking. Then my mother said, "Cover yourself with a big veil and let's look from the window." We saw a man down below in a black coat and a big turban; he hit a mujahideen guard with his gun. That was the first Taliban I saw.

Under the Taliban, it was like a great rest for us. I studied at home—these are my books, as you can see. I am very lucky to have a mother like mine. She was a great inspiration to me. She was like our friend. She told us to study and to learn, and she helped me with my schoolbooks. My mother was a TV anchorwoman for thirty-four years. She was just fifteen when she started! While we were growing up, she told us to speak out for what we wanted. She was very political.

We stayed here under the Taliban. People would ask us, "Why do you stay here, when you can go?" My mother replied, "I stay because I want to experience the pain of my people." We could have left. We were wealthy. But she said we must stay.

It's okay to use makeup and all kinds of shoes right now, but for five years I observed the rules of the Taliban. Anyway, most of the time I was at home and I could use makeup there. I saw the Taliban hitting people on the streets to make them pray. There were men being pushed to go to the mosque.

Sometimes there was fighting in Kabul and sometimes we felt that the city was not safe. We would only wear a veil on the streets during the holy month of Ramadan—never a burkha! My husband saw the Taliban beat a young girl. She was covered completely with a veil but not with a burkha.

Sisters Magazine

The Pearl from the River of Light

A magazine dedicated to Afghan Orphans and Widowed Association published in Peshawar titled "Sisters" in its 1998 edition writes about Shafiqah Habibi under the title: Pearl from the river of light, in the midst of captivity and security"

It's indeed a fascinating interview starring Shafiqah Habibi with Marzia Adeel as the host:

The history of Radio Television is decorated with famous and melodious speakers and orators. These orators have mastered their field and have become nationwide celebrities who are loved by the viewers and audiences. They are renowned and are remembered by good name. One of these orators is Mrs. Shafiqah Habibi whose voice is still tingling the ears with a respectable name both among her colleagues and the public. A melodious and talented speaker who has served truthfully for years in the Radio Television of Afghanistan and anchored many programs.

One of the national magazines compares her with "Light's Diamond" and writes: Listening to her feels as if a river of lights flows through your veins. . . and you only wish to fully hear her through your body and soul.

She has compassionately thought several speaking classes for junior speakers and those who are new to this field. She has thought them various styles of oratory and transferred her knowledge and experiences to them. She has praised their achievements and intelligently amended any shortcomings. She stands alongside the country's noble, patriot, strong and soulful women and continues to serve the country. She is her motherland's kind companion who feels the pain of her people and refuses to leave.

Dear Mrs. Habibi, how do you assess women's situation in Kabul?

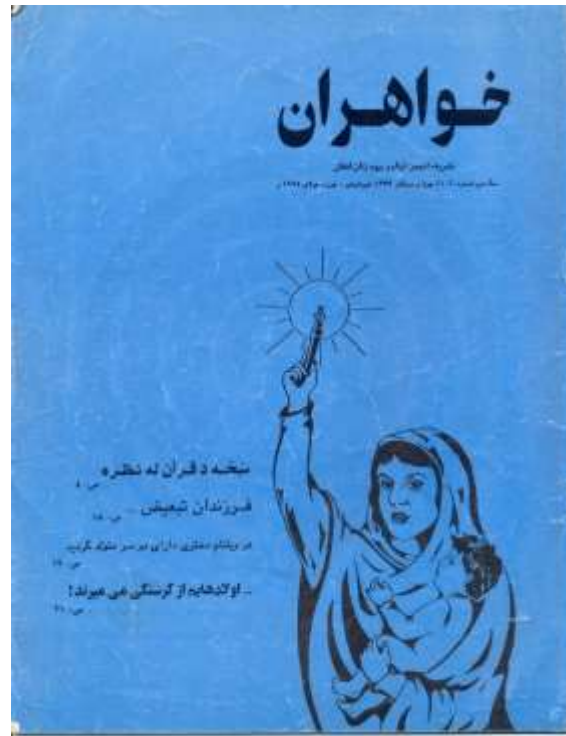
Good question, when we gather for roll call in a small and dark room which only has one small window, believe me, seeing my friends and colleagues gives me immense happiness while I also get really sad by watching the distressed faces of young and talented women who ask me: "What will happen to our future dear Ma'am?" and unfortunately what I have to say to them is to wait and that God is great and kind.

It might be interesting for the readers of the magazine that After the arrival of the Taliban in Kabul in 1996, we, the sisters in Radio Television only received salaries of the last 6 months of 1995, without any extra credits and were fired in 1996. Then we decided to protest in the front door of the Radio Television in a tent, we continued our protests until we were able to meet with the Radio Television's director. The young director who looked like 35 years of age, told us in Pashto language to do not remove you veils, only Mrs. Shafiqah shall remove her veil and speak. After listening to me, he told us: "I will reach your demand to Amir-UI-Momeneen". After a while, we were re-employed and received our salaries, until the time when women were completely made worthless and captive in the Taliban's point of view and were welcomed with stoning and lash.

Following your question, Women have always been devoid of their basic social, civic, Sharia and even their natural rights. Even today, this continues, for example: deprivation of heredity rights, the right to spouse choice, right to work and equal pay. In some cases, apparently women have gained their rights which is

superficial. In my opinion, first we must teach Afghan women literacy and ability to read, in order to help them understand and get aware of their basic civic and Sharia rights. So they can defend themselves.

In the 24, 25 and 26 of December 1995, without exaggeration, more than 100 missiles landed on Kabul. And according to an analysis by the Azad newspaper, after the handover of the government to Mr. Sebghatullah Mujadaddi (Mujahedeen Leader), between the years 1991 and 1996, "Demolition and plunder of Kabul city with the massacre of more than 65,000 innocent civilians of Kabul."



Cover of the Sisters magazine, which published Shafiq Habibi's story

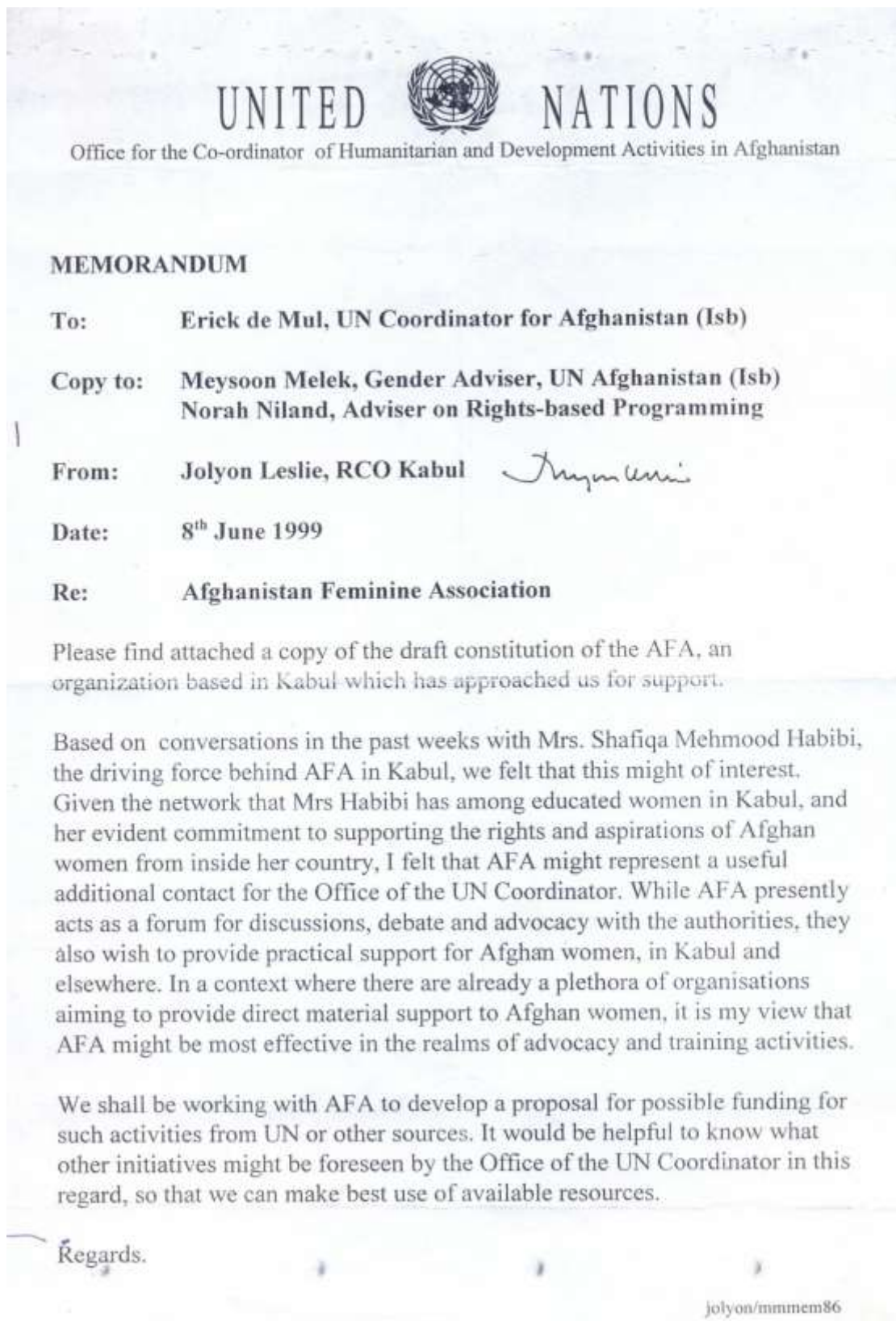
In this way, with the atrocities and miseries of Afghans continuing, Shafiq Habibi stood firm as a women leader who had already achieved international fame and attention. She extended the array of her activities from rhetorical arts and established the Afghanistan Feminine Association in 1999 under the Taliban's strict regime.

This way she started another plausible and empirical campaign. But It should be mentioned that before the association was established and shortly after receiving United Nation's Office of the Coordinator of Humanitarian and Development Activities in Afghanistan's approval by Mr. Dawood Eltaaf who worked in UN, it came down to Taliban to approve of her association. They called the establishment of the association as impudent and in offence with Taliban's Sharia. They shouted: "Such association should be eradicated and the founder should be jailed for insulting Islamic values." Alarms ringed as moderates of the ruling regime and leaders in the Radio who were close to the Habibi family and aware of their position and value, advised them to flee the country as soon as possible. This was when in November 1999, Shafiq Habibi and her husband left Kabul for Peshawar, temporarily seeking asylum from tyrannizers who were slowly leaving the country in the hands of strangers. But her trip to Peshawar initiated her many non-

official trips from Peshawar to Kabul, sometimes on foot or on horse from impossible paths. She fought for empowering women and girls through keeping her association alive. Fortunately, all this misery ended with the end of the Taliban's regime.



First board meeting of Afghanistan Feminine Association



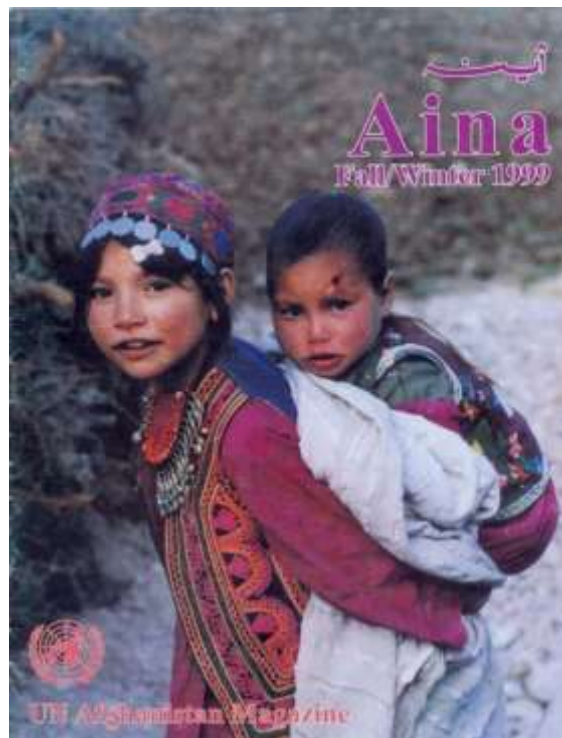
Memorandum of understanding between Afghanistan Feminine Association and Office for the Coordinator of Humanitarian and Development activities in Afghanistan

If United Nations Shows a Credible Way, Afghans Can Follow Up!

Ayeena (Mirror) Magazine, an affiliate of United Nations for Afghanistan, in its fall of 1999 edition interviewed Shafiq Habibi after she established the Afghanistan Feminine Association.

In here I am writing a brief of the interview:

- How do you describe Afghan women?
- Answer: In this time of social deterioration, it is revealed that women are shaped by their traditions. Afghan women are a product of their family and religions practices.
- A woman need to understand that before anything else, she is a human, being a Muslim and an Afghan comes after that. Many of the Afghan women live in material and intellectual poverty and the fundamentals of their lives are below the basic humanitarian standards.
- Afghan women have always been deprived of their civil, social and even natural rights. Their lives are almost identical to the life of a caged bird. They have always been a prisoner, a prisoner of their brothers or parents when they were unmarried and a prisoner of their husbands or children as a mother. They have accepted their faiths. The society has thought them that until a male is by their side, they are respected.
- Question: What is your point of view about United Nations in Afghanistan?
- I have lived a long time in Afghanistan and have witnessed many changes and revolutions. In this critical times, it is expected of the UN to act according to the Human Rights Conventions and resolutions based on Afghanistan's geo-politic, socio-economic and cultural state of Affairs. While a literate Afghan woman might know of universal declarations and statements of human rights, an illiterate Afghan woman will only think about peace which will still need efforts of the UN.



Cover of the Ayeena magazine, a UN based magazine in Afghanistan

Interview:

Mrs. Shafiqah Habibi

By Saboor Siasang, UN Afghanistan

Aina: How would you describe Afghan women?

Shafiqah Habibi: In a time of such social regression, we are facing up to the fact that Afghan women are the outcome of their tradition and customs. Afghan women originate from a religious family background.

Aina: And freedom?

SH: This word sounds good, but it must be accompanied by knowledge. In this country, and particularly in the present social context, where there are few literate women, "freedom" does not seem to be a priority for us. It has to come after food, clothes, and education.

Aina: And?

SH: A woman must realise that first she is a human being, then a Muslim, then an Afghan. Many Afghan women live in material and spiritual poverty, in a state of illiteracy and in sub-human living conditions.

Aina: How do you see the position of women in Afghan society?

SH: Afghan women have always-over history-been deprived of their basic civil, social and even natural rights. Their lives very much resemble that of a jailbird: behind bars forever. The Afghan woman has been destined to live in captivity at every age—a captive in the grips of father and brothers when she is a girl; a wife to a husband in her youth and ultimately a mother captive to her

sons and daughters. This is what she herself has accepted. Society has taught the Afghan woman that she will be more privileged, respected, and safe if she has a "he" beside her.

Many Afghan women live in material and spiritual poverty, in a state of illiteracy and in sub-human living conditions.

Aina: And the prospect?

After graduation from Malalai High School and the Faculty of Journalism, Kabul University, Shafiqah Habibi headed the Journalist Sisters' Association of Afghan Radio and Television in Kabul. In 1959, when an end to purdah was decreed, she began part-time work at Kabul's radio station almost immediately. By the late 1970s, when the communists took over, she went into television as a TV presenter. After 1992, she continued her job with a scarf over her hair, but not completely veiled.

After the advent of the Taliban in Kabul, Shafiqah Habibi and her husband, Mahmood Habibi, who was governor of Kabul and a government minister, were dismissed from their jobs.

As one of Afghanistan's most famous women for decades, Shafiqah Habibi has been openly campaigning and negotiating with the local authorities for change. She has now founded the Afghan Feminine Association (AFA).

SH: In the past, present, and future, women have to respect Afghan traditions in addition to Islam. Some values have to be respected. I still believe the saying, "A woman sways a cradle by one hand and the world by the other." Obviously, neither the world nor the cradle will be safe in brutal and unskilled hands.

Aina: Have you thought of solutions to the problems mentioned?

SH: The problems are very complex. In regard to their cultural and educational problems, Afghan women can be categorised as follows: girls of school age; girls whose educational programmes are incomplete; women in rural areas; educated girls/women. The constitution of the Afghanistan Feminine Association (AFA) envisages various solutions. Educated women can be employed for religious education, conducting literacy courses, teaching language and literature, organising religious schools, setting up libraries, and in publishing. They can also be used in establishing or providing a wide range of health care services. Qualified women can also take part in offering vocational training to less fortunate women.

Aina: What are your views about the role of the United Nations in Afghanistan?

SH: I have lived in Afghanistan for years and closely observed the vicissitudes of in-country political events. In these critical moments, the UN is expected to take action based

on its Charter, declarations, and conventions, and in accordance with the conditions (ranging from geopolitical to socio-economic and cultural) peculiar to Afghanistan. However, while a literate Afghan woman may understand and think in terms of United Nations human rights charters and declarations, the illiterate one thinks only of peace, which again requires the humanitarian efforts of the UN.

Aina: What about humanitarian assistance?

If the UN shows a credible path, Afghans can follow up.

SH: As Muslims, we believe almighty Allah is the only Great Supplier for us. Still, we need (and appreciate) the humanitarian assistance of the UN for the vulnerable communities in the country and of course we worry about its lack and/or shortage. I applaud

those UN projects in which people's participation is evident. Such initiatives will gradually bring changes in people's sense of powerlessness. The motto for progress and development in Afghanistan should be, "If the UN shows a credible path, Afghans can follow up."

Aina: Any personal remark at the end of this interview?

SH: I continue existing alone and dislocated. I am counting the days--at home,



Shafiq Habibi's interview with the Ayeena magazine

Like this, the hidden campaign of Afghan women continues, the educated girls that are left in Kabul suffer from the current situation but they continue to self-study and Shafiq Habibi has established handicraft homeschools for some of these girls.



Shafiq Habibi's visit to the sewing course held for girls





Shafiqah Habibi evaluates the bead sewing skills of girls



Durkhanai Habibi, Afghanistan Feminine Association's deputy supervises the bead sewing of girls in the home schools



This picture and the pictures above indicate Shafiqa Habibi's home schools for girls

But now, the fame of "The Laureate" has gone beyond the pages of magazines and TV news channels into global and international scenario. And organizations such as the European Union, United Nations and other organizations working for the women rights and development of human rights in United States and Europe invited her in international gatherings and conferences. For example, the UNIFEM round table and the Afghan Women Leaders Conference (Brussels 2001), a workmanship of Bonn conference.

Trip of Afghan Women Leaders to Foreign Countries

Erada (Will) magazine, published in Peshawar in its 18 January publication wrote of an exclusive interview with Shafiqa Habibi in the end of the Brussels conference. It quoted a part of her speech: "The Brussels conference was a historical gathering happened in a historical period of Afghanistan." One of its obvious messages was: "The country's girls should be educated to the best level as much as possible."

She continues: In Brussels I participated in two conferences. First one named Afghan Women Summit held in 4 and 5 of December 2001 and the second summit called UNIFEM (now UNWOMEN) conference in the 10th and 11th December of 2001. Both conferences were held with the cooperation of the European Union, United Nations and other human rights and women rights organizations. In both conferences, a total of 60 Afghan women participated from outside and inside the country. It should be noted that in these two gatherings of women, after recitation of Holy Quran, the conference was initiated through a video message of Jordan's queen "Maleka Noor", consequently the message of UN's general secretary Kofi Anan was recited by Angela King, deputy and advisor to UN General secretary in Women Affairs. The conference's agenda was recited by Mary Robinson, United Nation's High Commissioner in Human Rights.

Both Brussels conferences contained leaders and renowned characters such as Noelene Heyzer, director of aiding to women movement in the United Nations. Miekonishnize, deputy director of the World Bank in Asia, Denise Fuchs head of European Women Movement, Eve Ensler director of Women Rights Equality Organization in US, Emma Bonino member of European Union parliament who all laid out speeches and promised to aid for women empowerment and conjunction from behalf of their countries. Later 6 members of Afghan women traveled to Washington D.C.



Shafiqah Habibi's interview with the Erada newspaper



Speech of Mrs. Angela King, deputy and adviser to UN General Secretary



Speech of Mary Robinson, High Commissioner of UNHCR



Speech of Hibaaq Osman, founder of the Strategic Initiatives for Women



Hall of the European Union conferences in Brussels



Shafiq Habibi in the Hall of the European Union Conferences in Brussels



Mrs. Habibi and some of the participants of the Afghan Women Summit



From right to left, Angela King, deputy of Kofi Annan, Shafiqah Habibi and Eve Ensler, actress, writer and women rights activists

Meeting With United Nations
Secretary General Kofi Annan
December 21, 2001



From Left to Right: Shafiqah Habibi, Soraya Paikan, Sima Wali,
Kofi Annan, Leila Enayat-Seraj, Sahar Saba, Shakila Khalje

Shafiqah Habibi with Kofi Annan (man in the middle, the seventh Secretary-General of the United Nations from January 1997 to December 2006)

FINAL PRESS CONFERENCE
Equality Now, New York, December 20, 2001



From left to right: Sahar Saba, Soraya Paikan, Meryl Streep, Adeena Niazi, Leila Enayat-Seraj, Shafiqah Habibi

Shafiqah Habibi with Meryl Streep (third person from left, famous Hollywood actress)



Meeting of Afghan women leaders with the democratic party congress members in the white house

Women Who Sacrificed their Lives to Change Our Lives

Every year, a number of women are labeled as “Leaders” and are merited through international awards. They are recognized as leaders because of their efforts, struggles and campaign in accordance to the criteria of professionalism, comprehension and standing against life’s problems and helping their nations.

In 2002, under the title of “21 Leaders for 21st Century), 21 prominent women were chosen and awarded with prestigious intellectual award. This way for the first time an Afghan Woman, Shafiqah Habibi, the leading campaigner for Journalism and Women Rights was recognized alongside other 20 global prominent women.

This award is named Ida B. Wells, an American journalist woman in the 18th century which Shafiqah Habibi was awarded with. Shafiqah Habibi told in an exclusive interview with the Erada (Will) Magazine in June 14 2002: Women E. News is a global news agency which is active in internet as well. This agency collects the news and narrative of journalists around the world and publishes them through the so called “Top Flight Journalism” method electronically.

Internet Explorer 4.01 (64-bit) - http://www.womennews.org/21leaders.cfm





















Address: http://www.womennews.org/21leaders.cfm

Women's We NEWS

June 7, 1999

21 LEADERS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY GALA

Tuesday, May 21, 2002

<p>Women who used Their Lives To Change The World</p>  <p>SHAFIQAH HADDAD from Afghanistan First Recipient of the Ida B. Wells Bravery in Journalism Award Send Shafiqah a message</p>	<p>Women who Changed the Rules for Nations</p>  <p>CHARLOTTE BUNGE Director, Center for Women's Global Leadership Rutgers University Send Charlotte a message</p>	<p>Women Who Made Their Voices Heard for All of Us</p>  <p>GAIL EVANS Former Executive Vice President CNN Send Gail Evans a message</p>
 <p>ALLISON ANDERS Filmmaker, "Things Behind the Sun" Send Allison a message</p>	 <p>ELEANOR SPITAL Founder, Feminist Majority Send Eleanor a message</p>	 <p>JESSICA HALEM Director, Lesbian Community Cancer Project, Chicago Send Jessica a message</p>
 <p>JANET HARPSTER Founder, Milestone Capital Management 85 Broads Send Janet a message</p>		 <p>ELIZABETH MARTINEZ Director, Institute for Multiracial Justice Send Elizabeth a message</p>
 <p>MAVIS NICHOLSON-LENO Chair, End Gender Apartheid Campaign Send Mavis a message</p>	 <p>MIDDEL AGHEDA Founder, Women's Coalition for Sexuality and Health, Tokyo Send Middel a message</p>	 <p>DINA MERRILL Vice-Chair, Republican Pro-Choice Coalition Send Dina a message</p>
 <p>SUSAN SIFUENTES-TRIGUEROS President, Hispanas Organized for Political Equality Send Susan a message</p>	 <p>ELOUISE CORRELL Founder, Blackfeet National Bank Send Elouise a message</p>	 <p>DR. ROSE MARIE ROBERTSON Professor of Medicine, Vanderbilt University Medical Center Send Rose Marie a message</p>
 <p>PAT SUMMITT Head Coach, University of Tennessee Send Pat a message</p>	 <p>TRACY GARY Founder, Changemakers, Donor Activist Send Tracy a message</p>	 <p>WANDA BARACK-KYMEK President, Agora International, Poland media conglomerate Send Wanda a message</p>
 <p>DEZIE WOODS-JONES Founder, Black Women Organized for Political Action Send Dezie a message</p>	 <p>SHIRLEY JACKSON President, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Send Shirley a message</p>	 <p>SISTER CHRISTINE M. ADMIRE Priress, Benedictine Sisters of Erie, Pennsylvania Send Christine a message</p>

53rd Street and Avenue of the Americas
 New York City
 Tuesday, May 21, 2002

Yes! I want to make a reservation!

I cannot attend, but would like to make a contribution to support Women's News.

(Note: Those who contribute \$250 before May 14 will be listed in the program.)

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Women's News 21 Leaders for the 21st Century Gala May 21, 2002 - Microsoft Internet Explorer

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Address http://www.womennews.org/21leaders.cfm

Sbridging the gender gap every day








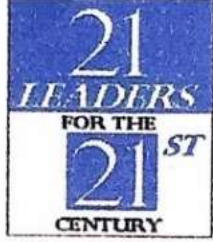

Women's We NEWS

FOR SUBSCRIPTION WE SOURCES

June 2, 2002

21 LEADERS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY GALA

Tuesday, May 21, 2002

<p>Women who Used Their Lives to Change Ours</p>  <p>SHAFIQAH HABIB from Afghanistan First Recipient of the Ida B. Wells Bravery in Journalism Award Send Shafiqah a message</p>	<p>Women who Changed the Rules for Nations</p>  <p>CHARLOTTE BUNCH Director, Center for Women's Global Leadership Rutgers University Send Charlotte a message</p>	<p>Women who Made Their Voices Heard for All of Us</p>  <p>GAIL EVANS Former Executive Vice President CNN Send Gail Evans a message</p>
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 <p>JANET HANSON Founder, Milestone Capital Management 85 Broads Send Janet a message</p>		 <p>ELIZABETH MARTINEZ Director Institute for MultiRacial Justice Send Elizabeth a message</p>

Pictures of the 21 Leaders for 21st Century winners

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Women's Enews



SPYGLASS Today's Cartoon

May 23, 2002

U.S.

Women's Enews Delivers Crucial Information Daily

Run Date: 05/22/02

By Rita Henley Jensen
Editor in chief

Women's Enews founder Rita Henley Jensen recalls how information she received in the 1970s aided her in creating a battered women's center, now helping up to 10,000 annually. Today, Women's Enews delivers similar vital information to women worldwide.

NEW YORK (WOMENSENEWS)--I recently received an e-mail from a friend living in Washington state whom I had lost track of 25 years ago when I moved to New York to attend graduate school. Turns out she reads Women's Enews and noticed my name.



Rita Henley Jensen

Connecting us across vast distances is the fantastic power of the Internet, yet there is also the pain it brings. Receiving the note brought the memories of our times together flooding back, including the hollow place left from our not being able to really be together--having a cup of coffee or tea and just chatting and laughing like we used to do.

In fact, because of finances and time constraints, it is possible that we may never have that chance again.

The same is true for all of you, Women's Enews readers. If all of you could have the funds and the time to join us, we could fill a football stadium many times over--just to enjoy being with one another--laughing and carrying on like the huge community that we are. Our market research indicates we are reaching nearly a million readers a month--because so many readers forward our stories to so many other readers--and that does not count the newspapers that reprint us.

And we may do that some day, but for now, Women's Enews had to settle for inviting all of you over the Internet to last night's \$500 a plate dinner in New York that honored the Women's Enews 21 Leaders for the 21st Century--women nominated by our readers for making news and changing the world.

I wish you all could have been there. It was a fantastic program that left everyone in an upbeat mood, confident that women's leadership was an unstoppable force for the better.

<http://www.womensenews.org/article.cfm/dyn/aid/916>

5/23/2002

Rita Jensen's interview about Women's e-news and the organization's activities

LETTER OF WELCOME

It is with great pride and humility that we at Women's Enews name the women featured in this booklet to be the 21 Leaders for the 21st Century. Together, these leaders signify the breadth, the depth, the expertise and the impact of the millennial women's movement.

These women were nominated by Women's Enews subscribers and readers from across the globe. They truly represent the best of humankind: women who will stop at nothing to ensure that all women are full participants in every aspect of life and have the freedom and resources to achieve our greatest potential.

Women's Enews was created to produce and disseminate daily news and features about women. We intend to continue to keep you up-to-date about the women and ideas shaping our world. We know that you will be as inspired as we were by the commitment and dedication of this year's 21 Leaders for the 21st Century.


Rita Henley Jensen
Editor-in-Chief

letter of welcome to Shafiqha Habibi in the Women's e-news awards



SHAFIQA HABIBI

Founder, Women's Radio and Television Broadcast Organization

2002 Ida B. Wells Bravery in Journalism Award Winner

Shafiqha Habibi is one of Afghanistan's most prominent journalists, with more than 30 years of experience. Known as the laureate of news, she was a reporter, public speaker and reader of poetry—an art popular on Afghanistan radio and television. She won four prizes and two medals for her work before the Taliban came to power in 1996.

Habibi graduated in 1966 from Kabul University with a degree in journalism and immediately went to work for Radio Afghanistan. She was reporting both on radio and television when the veil for women was made voluntary in 1959 and when women gained the right to vote in the 1964 constitution; she was reporting when women became members of Parliament and cabinet ministers. Throughout her career, Habibi made a point of encouraging and promoting women in broadcast journalism, and founded the Women's Radio and Television Broadcast Organization in 1994 to protect women's rights by holding conferences and cultural meetings. When the Taliban seized power in 1996, Habibi's voice was stifled for five years and the nation's radio network was used to broadcast the Taliban's order for women to return to their homes, to cease all employment immediately and to wear the burqa, the head-to-toe version of traditional Pashtun desert clothing.

During the Taliban's reign, Habibi started an underground women's organization, which she translates as the feminine Association, and ran crafts schools throughout Afghanistan and Pakistan, where women could manufacture items that they could sell.

When the U.S. bombing of Kabul began, Habibi escaped to Peshawar, Pakistan, the heart of the Afghan refugee community in that country, where her association now maintains an office. She soon began to take part in the international conversation on the future of her homeland. She attended the December Afghan Women's Summit in Brussels and traveled to Washington, D.C. to meet with members of Congress, a number of whom promised assistance in restoring nationwide broadcasting. Afghanistan now has one radio station and one television station functioning. Habibi is hopeful about the future of Afghanistan. The challenge now, she says, is for journalists inside and outside of Afghanistan "to ensure that the violations of women during the Taliban are not repeated."

Shafiqha Habibi—Salon.com: www.salon.com/mwt/feature/2001/12/05/brussels_women/index1.html?x

Shafiqha Habibi's bio as an award winner



Ida B Wells award, the journalist American woman in the 18th century. Which was awarded to Shafiq Habibi



The certificate letter for Shafiq Habibi



From left to right, Rita Jensen, the Women's eNews director hands the awards to Shafiqah Habibi

A brief of Mrs. Habibi's interview with Sabawoon Magazine

When the discussion of rhetorical arts and speaking comes into the table, it is clear that Radio Television of Afghanistan has the best speakers within it. In this art there are a few personalities who have mastered it through reaching the peak of experience and ability. One of the speakers who have dedicated their lives to their field through hard work and serving the youth, in addition to refusing to leave the country and serving the field of journalism, is indeed Shafiqah Habibi.

I heard her voice a while ago through radio BBC where she was speaking of her latest trip to the Netherlands, Germany and United States and the award she had received from the United States while she was there. I met her in her apartment in Macroryan. In continuation of the interview she added: I was one of the front runners of speaking and news anchors in Afghanistan, I have established my own school and style in this art and have had many students throughout the years.

Mrs. Habibi has won awards in four political regimes, two truthfulness medals and one pride medal. In her latest trip to the US, she has won the Ida B Well award of 21 Leaders for 21st Century.

The era of exile ended for the Habibi Family when Taliban fell and Shafiqah Habibi and her husband returned to her apartment in Macroryan. Shafiqah Habibi returns to her country as a mother, wife and a woman who strives towards serving her country with pride. Her first act in the days of evolution and change was celebrating Afghan Women's Freedom. Kabul weekly magazine, writes about Shafiqah Habibi's impression on its February 7 of 2002 edition: "The first and second editions of Kabul weekly magazine was brought to me by a friend, my eyes were brightened by the mere sight of them. Indeed, freedom is a blessing, freedom of choice, thinking and speech. Years ago during women's captivity once I had an interview with

a French journalist. Where I expressed my disgust from war's hell upon us and emphasized on security, I remember her telling me that you will lose your freedom for the price of security. With time's pass it was made clear that we were indeed hostages in the security of a cemetery." I wanted to inform you of a huge gathering of more than 200 Afghan women leaders in Sardar Mohammad Daoud Khan hospital's hall under the banner of (Grand Celebration of Afghan Women's Freedom).

The conference was initiated with the recitation of Holy Quran and National Anthem, after that a long round of applause was echoing in the hall. UN secretary General's message to Afghan women was recited by Durkhanai Habibi (Shafiq's Daughter). This message emphasized on realization of Afghan women's rights in Afghanistan's construction and nation building. The conference's agenda was recited the Zarghoona School's director and the conference's manager was Shafiq Habibi.



In the cover of Sabawoon Magazine, from left to right, Rita Jensen from the Women's eNews hands the award to Shafiq Habibi



UN secretary General's message to Afghan women was recited by Durkhanai Habibi



Zarghona school director demonstrating the conference's agenda

The Laureate of All Orators
Second Volume
Shafiqah Habibi's Social Activities

Book Specifications:

Book's Name: The Laureate of All Orators (Shafiqah Habibi's Social Activities)

Writer and gatherer: Sultan Masoud Habibi

Translator and Editor: Esmat Tariq Fahim

Publish Year: 2021 – Kabul, Afghanistan

A few days after the death of my father, I was organizing his documents when a thought struck me about who I am and what important duty I must fulfill.

Exactly years ago my father chose me and pointed his finger towards the papers on his table and told: you have to finish what I have started. That means the second volume of the book that you have in hand.

Years passed, father's death, war, chained suicide bombings and my mother's internal and external travels along with many more problems did not allow me to properly think through about the book. Now that my father's writings are organized in one book, although I live in Europe, I come to Afghanistan frequently and gather documents.

Please allow me to introduce my mother to you:

My mother Shafiqa Habibi is a symbol of bravery and generosity,

fighting spirit,

kindness and love.

It is as if God has accumulated all these attributed in one human who is my mother.

Although she is thousands of kilometers away from me,

But she is my closest friend, teacher and guide.

I still benefit from her guidance and advice filled with unconditional love.

My mother ignored her prosperity for me to reach somewhere in life.

My mother has never left me alone.

My mother, although paradise lies beneath your feet, but I am putting my whole world under your feet and honor it with a carpet of love under your feet.

You who are reading the book, I was supposed to help my mother with writing this volume of the book but unfortunately the pandemic did not allow me to come to Afghanistan. Hence I have gathered documents and pictures from my mother's New Afghanistan Women Association and Afghan Women journalist's Union, (in both these organizations she served as their executive director) coupled with her activities in Afghanistan's Social Foundation as its board member.

Chapter 1

After the fall of Taliban and with advent of a new era, the Afghan Feminine Association which conducted homeschools during the Taliban era, was registered in the ministry of justice under the new name of New Afghanistan Women Association (NAWA) and converted the homeschools into literacy courses, additionally it initiated rapid education classes (three grades in one year) for young women and girls. Which made girls eligible for entry to 3rd or 4th grade after one year of study.



Pictures of Literacy Home Schools in Chehelseton and Agha Ali Shams villages

The literacy project continued till 2005 in different areas of Kabul such as Qalai Wakeel, Airport, Macroryans, Chehelsotoon and Agha Ali Shams. The project gave more than 800 girls and women the ability to read and write and most of them entered government schools and continued their lessons. In addition to that, other smaller awareness projects about women rights in Islam and government were also being conducted. In 2006, NAWA decided to create a studio production called Hareer (Silk) with the help of gtz (GIZ) organization and teach young girls about TV programs and their production.





Picture of the gftz organization's country director



Picture of NAWA organization's director



Training of how to use video camera



Training on editing TV programs



Training on production of investigation genre TV programs



Public speaking and oratory mentorship by Shafiq Habibi

Hareer Production: Hareer production produced more than 150 spots, programs and discussions about women rights, family law, constitution and empowered the laws in the constitution in support of women. Furthermore, empowered the eradication of violence against women, elimination of improper traditions against women and many more subjects through discussions with people active in this area, pundits, religious personalities and other social justice activists. There programs were broadcasted to millions of people through telecommunication channels of TV and radio.



First round table held in Hareer production with Mrs. Fowzia Kofi about Women's movement



Discussion with late Ayaaz Niazi about women rights



Discussion with Ustad Massoud, about Women in Literature



Round table with Mrs. Soraya Parlika and Mr. Lewaal with Saleha Soma as host



Round Table with Mullah Abdulwali about women's Mahr in Islam

One particular program of the Hareer production was called The Red Line, in the program's first episode Mrs. Habibi demonstrated the program's goals: "The NAWA organization determines that which actions against women should be below and which violence actions should be above the red line which should not happen against women. This program broadcasted in Khurshid TV in primetime of 07:45 PM for 16 months.



Fahim Kohistani, one of the hosts of the Red Line program



Shafiq Habibi stating the program's goals



Discussion with Malek Sitez in the Red Line program with Dawod Najim as host



Discussion with Fatima Gelani in the Red Line program



Interview with Mr. Ajmal Balochzada in the Red Line program



Interview with Farkhonda Zahra Naderi in the Red Line program



Interview with Dr. Alawi in the Red Line program



Interview with Dr. Aalema Aalema in the Red Line program



Hammad Ghafari, the program's producer instructing Dawood Najim, the program's host



Interview with Mrs. Zarqa Yaftali in the Red Line program

“Why War” project was Afghanistan Open Society Association’s project which included the process of the producer finding war victims’ houses through the help of aid organizations and listening to their stories of war and how they were victimized. The stories included how rockets landed on their houses and the martyrs they had given with the ruins left behind. This program mostly covered the war victims in Kabul and its outskirts, Salang District villages where Soviets bombarded, and mass graves in Mazar-e-Sharif during Taliban’s occupation.



In the end of each episode, the victims would receive basic humanitarian aid in the form of food

Membership of New Afghanistan Women Association (NAWA) in Afghan Women Network (AWN):

The new Afghanistan Women Association (NAWA) earned the membership of Afghan Women Network (AWN) in 2005 and Mrs. Habibi lead the assemblies of the AWN as a senior board member.



Shafiq Habibi in the Radio Television Afghanistan' hall



Shafiq Habibi in the Kabul Star hotel's Hall



Shafiqa Habibi in Chehelseton castle



Shafiqa Habibi among the senior members of Afghan Women Network



Mrs. Habibi and Mrs. Hasina Safi in Chehelseton castle



Shafiqa Habibi's certification of her participation in the Delegation of Afghan Women Leaders: Women's Inclusion in the peace process in the US



The Delegation of Afghan Women Leaders: Women's Inclusion in the peace process in the US. Where Shafiq and her fellow delegate team members pleaded for peace and justice for women in the Pentagon and the white house

A movie titled "Fatima" was its time's filmmaking masterpiece which was produced in Persian language and later was dubbed into Pashto language as well for the relevant provinces along with English subtitles. This movie showcased the violence of an illiterate husband against his wife and her daughter. This movie was broadcasted to more than 2000 people in 12 provinces of Afghanistan. Before the movie's broadcast, the manager used to tell the audience that after the movie's end an open discussion will be conducted and the victims of violence in their own lives will talk about their past and then the opinion of all male and female audience about the movie will be collected.



Dad I pass, I got first position see here is my result sheet



I had to stop going to school. I felt non human. home was like prison for me. I did not like to get up in the morning and when I saw girls

Scenes of the Fatima movie where she is banned from school by her father, along with the part where people were asked to provide their feedback about the movie

Abstract of Analysis and Research on Rape cases against Women and Children in 6 provinces of the country:

Shafiq Habibi says: Through the cooperation of UN-Women, I participated in one of ministry of justice's assemblies which were held along the participation of internal and external lawmakers and presented this research's findings. The research was well welcome and accepted by all of the participants. The assembly's speaker said: "We need such researches to base our laws on empirical findings", and told our research group: "now create a draft for violence and rape law and according to this research and bring it to me." In our group, Mrs. Zarqa Yaftali director of Women and Children research association and other delegates of UN-Women such as Mr. Ahmadi and Maseha Faiz were also present and for the first time NAWA association earned the pride to open a door for creating a law for rape cases through advocacy.

Violence against women and children is an extreme phenomenon in Afghanistan and one of its ugly yields is rape against women and children which continues to victimize this part of the society. This research is a field research conducted in Takhar, Balkh, Kunduz, Sar-e-pol, Herat and Jowzjan provinces. In this research more than 2000 questionnaires were filled with the cooperation of ministry of women affairs and its directorates in each of the provinces.

Below you can read the yielded results from the research questionnaires:

- In the answer to question "Has any rape case happened in your province?" 63.7% of participants have answered positively.
- In the answer to question "Do the rape cases undergo legal prosecution?" In all of the 6 provinces, 5% have answered negatively.
- In the answer to the reason why cases aren't prosecuted, 36% of participants answered that the guilty are mostly powerful or wealthy individuals or affiliated to special groups who are above the law.
- The reasons for reoccurrence of rape cases in all 6 provinces have been, 30% exemption culture and lack of fear from persecution, and 27% ignorance about the values of Islam and lack of preaching about marriage and efforts of reducing marriage's costs from Imams.
- Local military commanders, gunmen and influencers hold this research's highest rape committers with a percentage of 35%. Other people, including victim's family members such as father, brother, uncle and etc. Form 18.2% of the research as rape committers. The remaining percentage belongs to drug addicts and personal vendettas.

This research also includes many cases which have not been reported to general attorney offices or courts or media. Among the 245 rape cases registered in these questionnaires, 40 cases belonged to rape cases by family members, and 65 cases were rape cases against children and babies aged from 6 months to 13 years. Unfortunately, 25 percent of such rape victims either died or were killed immediately while the remaining percentage died later.

I am writing a narrative here for instance:

Father rapes three of his daughters, wishes to rape the fourth one but he fails. His daughter shouts and the rest of the family finds out (Form no. 100th of Balkh Province).

This case has two major messages, this girl is a hero who raised her voice against violence and indeed she is a role model for other women and children who should raise their voices against any violence conducted against them. Second, the unfortunate fact that if a girl father's houses is not safe for her, nowhere is safe.

Another finding of the research indicates that in Sar-e-Pol province, the rape cases were resolved by local elders' Jirgas (councils) through taking money from the rapist's family and giving it to the victim's family or bad handing another girl from the rapist's family in compensation to the victim's family. Which unfortunately means that the victim for a rape is yet another innocent woman or a girl.

NAWA organization has published all these findings in an epistle and below you can see pictures of technical workshops with activists and pundits in finding factors for rape cases against women and children.



Workshop of Solution and Analysis for rape cases against women and children held in Kunduz Province



Workshop held in Sae-e-Pol province



Workshop held in Herat province



Workshop held in JowzjanI province



Workshop held in Balkh province



Workshop held in Takhaar province



The findings of the research published in the epistle called Analysis and research of rape cases against women and children

Another important project of UN-Women was called the Elimination of Violence Against Women Commissions (EVAW) which was being implemented through the Elimination of Violence against Women law. The commissions' main executive assemblies were held in the ministry of women affairs with minister of women affairs as assemblies' speaker along with directors and deputies. Then the participants would commission provincial assemblies according to the elimination of violence law with each province's governor as the speaker. In these commissions the cases of violence against women that were referred to provincial attorney general offices were attended to comprehensively and inclusively which were later directed to the related entity for further processing.

The second part of the project consisted of awareness for the elimination of violence law which NAWA association had divided into parts. First, awareness to people in villages, precincts and districts, second, awareness to young cadres for universities for seeking solutions for violence and third, awareness to girls at their secondary education and teaching them computer and internet literacy through resource centers provided by the UN-Women. The NAWA association provisioned the project and resource centers as a coordinator and logistics assistant in five provinces of Balkh, Jowzjan, Sar-e-Pol, Kapisa and Parwan. Mrs. Habibi's prior coordination with governors of each province facilitated the implementation of the project. In this that project lasted 4 years from 2016 to 2019 in five provinces in three parts, approximately 4500 individuals received awareness in villages, many received awareness in schools and universities and hundreds of violence cases were resolved.



Coordination meetings with Parwan province's governor, Mr. Salangi for holding the EVAW commissions



Coordination meeting with Mr. Asim, Parwan's governor



Awareness session in Parwan province



Monitoring and Evaluation session with Parwan province's program coordinator



Parwan province's resource center



Public awareness session in Balkh province



Elimination of violence against women session in Balkh province



Resource center of EVAW commissions and student awareness session of the commissions in Balkh province





Commission meeting with the Jowzjan province's governor office



Monitoring and evaluation session with Balkh province's coordinator



Capacity building workshop for commission members in Jowzjan province



Coordination meeting with Jowzjan's governor



Monitoring and evaluation session in Jowzjan province



Public awareness session in Jowzjan province



EVAW commission meeting in Kapisa province



Coordination meeting with the governor of Kapisa



Monitoring and evaluation session in Kapisa province



Public awareness session for students in Kapisa province



Kapisa province's resource center



Public awareness session for police sources in Kapisa province



Public awareness session in Sar-e-pol province



Coordination meeting with Sar-e-pol governor



Public awareness session for students in Sar-e-pol province



EVAW commission meeting in Sar-e-Pol province with the participation of its governor



Resource center of Sar-e-pol province and the other picture is the public awareness session on students in Sar-e-pol province



Monitoring and Evaluation session with Sar-e-pol province's coordinator and EVAW coordination meeting in Women Affairs directorate of Sar-e-Pol province





Shafiq Habibi with the staff of NAWA association in Serena hotel. Along with Mrs. Anwari, the ERAW commission liable in UN-Women

The project of Leadership for Educated Girls in Balkh province's university was conducted for the senior students of Law faculty for one month. Additionally, In Nangarhar province, it was also conducted for students of public and private universities for one month as well. These workshops included theory and practice of leadership, management, advocacy, networking and other soft skills related to management paired with group activities which were later published in an epistle as well.



Leadership for Educate girls project in Nangarhar university of Nangarhar province



Leadership for Educate girls project in Balkh university of Balkh province



Certificate distribution in Nenaarhar province



Leadership for Educate girls project in Balkh university of Balkh province



Certificates distributed to educated girls in Balkh province



The published epistle of the leadership training for educated girls

Furthermore, many awareness projects were also completed in the villages of Kapisa province, districts of Kabul and Logar provinces as well as other provinces. For instance, here are pictures of an awareness session in Kapisa province:



Awareness workshop for Women and Men in Kapisa province

Chapter 2

Shafiqa Habibi's activities in Afghanistan Women Journalists Union (AWJU)

First ever union of Women Journalists in the history of the country's media was established in 8 March 2005. Under the name of Women Journalists Center by Mrs. Shafiqa Habibi which later officially changed name into Afghanistan Women Journalists Union. This union is one of founding members of Afghanistan Journalists Federation as well. The association has branches in 12 provinces of the country, Balkh, Jowzjan, Parwan, Kapisa, Nangarhar, Baghlan, Farah, Faryab, Laghman, Herat and Badakhshan.



Mrs. Habibi in the process of signing an MOU with other founders of the Afghanistan Journalists Federation



Special magazine for the establishment of Women Journalists Center in 8 March of 2005



Epistle of Women Journalists Center about a capacity building workshop funded by the Swedish Committee



Union's branch in Farah province



Union's branch in Balkh province



Union's branch in Baghlan province



Union's branch in Herat province



Union's branch in Faryab province



Union's branch in Nangarhar province



Union's branch in Jowzjan province



Union's branch in Parwan province



Union's branch in Laghman province



Union's branch in Badakhshan province

The Afghanistan Women Journalists Union signed an agreement with the Finland Women Journalists Association in 2009. Based on this agreement, each year women journalists of Finland used to travel to Afghanistan and hold weekly workshops in Kabul and 3 day workshops in provinces for the Union's members. The project was funded by the Finland foreign ministry which was why Finnish ambassadors inaugurated the workshops. The association's end of agreement was selecting beneficiaries and members for the training programs in addition to facilitating the travel and visa for Finnish trainers in Afghanistan. The AWJU did not receive additional funds for the program apart from visa processes.



Different Finnish ambassadors inaugurating the Women Journalists workshops held by the Finland Women Journalists Union in coordination with AWJU



Members of the Afghan Women Journalists Union in the training hall



Finland ambassador's invitation to the members of the AWJU and Finland Women journalists Union



One of the AWJU's members presents the Union's activities and achievements

Bamyan province is a province devoid of professional women journalists since it does not have a journalism faculty. Hence Afghanistan Women Journalists Union (AWJU) established its temporary branch in there and called upon the female students of law and literature faculties to gather in a women journalist workshop and receive Journalism and Photojournalism training.



Group photo of Finnish journalists with the workshop participants



Workshop for Bamyan province's students



Bamiyan province's students receiving certificates from the AWJU



The second and third general assemblies of the AWJU chose Mrs. Shafiqa Habibi as the Union's general director consecutively

In the inauguration day of the workshop for the members of the Afghanistan Women Journalists Union which was held for training participants in coaching and leadership; Mrs. Ann Meskenen the ambassador of Finland in Kabul, who was once a journalist addressed the participants:

I am proud of you, proud of you that in the situation where you do not have security, you have chosen journalism as your profession. Mrs. Ambassador along with expressing her gratitude for her part in the conference added: It is my wish to facilitate support for freedom of speech and journalists and you journalists have earned the right for protection from your government.

Despite challenges and barriers, you have fought and worked well. In my 14 months of observing the situation in Afghanistan I am happy that the situation is getting better by day. Later Mrs. Habibi thanked her excellency for the participation and wonderful speech about journalism.



Ann Meskeneen, the Finland ambassador with Mrs. Shafiqah Habibi in the workshop held by Finland Women Journalists for the AWJU members

United Nations and World Conferences on Women

The series of world conferences and the United Nation's general assemblies led by women about women have profound influence on movement of women and their commitment towards further empowerment. The 20-year review and appraisal of the Beijing platform for action took place in 2015 with the participation of United Nation member countries and other NGOs from all over the world in New York city. In this conference Dr. Abdullah Abdullah Afghanistan's CEO and Angela Merkel promised on implementing gender equality goals for 2030.



Mrs. Habibi demonstrating Croatia president Mrs. Kolinda Grabar's promise for gender equality in a general assembly of the united nations for the planer 50- 50 by 2030 vision of the united nations to the workshop



Angela Merkel providing their promises for the Planet 50-50 vision of the UN-Women in UNGA on 20-year review and appraisal of the Beijing platform – March 2015. These were also part of the workshops' curricula



The union's members receiving certificates after the end of the workshops



The end of the Finland women Journalists unions mission and farewell party for the Finland ambassador



Group photo of both associations in the farewell party which marked the end of the workshop series

A capacity building program for women journalists in remote districts of Afghanistan which was funded by UNESCO, benefitted a number of women journalists of Kunduz, Badakhshan, Takhar and Baghlan provinces through three-day trainings. Training on genres of journalism and publishing research reports, TV reports and other matters.



Some pictures of the trainings held in remote provinces in Afghanistan

Meeting with Irina Bokova, UNESCO Director General

In this meeting, Mrs. Habibi talked about the activities and achievements of Afghan Women Journalists, especially the establishment of branches of the Union in provinces and publish of Journalist Women magazine and other brochures. Mrs. Bokova expressed her happiness for the achievements of the association.

Head of UNESCO in Kabul, addressed the audience in his speech in the World Press Freedom Day celebration: "Only independence, neutrality, personality and proper judgement of journalists can overcome the dark storms of today's world where freedom of speech is threatened everywhere. In reality, we need modern journalism that can criticize and research professionally and with journalistic ethics, so it can help in lawful prosecution of events."





Pictures of Shafiqa Habibi's meeting with Irina Bokova



International Radio Day celebration in National Radio Television Hall



Mrs. Habibi delivering the message of UNESCO's general secretary for the International Radio day celebration

For capacity building of journalists of journalists' network of National Radio Television of Afghanistan (RTA), Afghanistan Women Journalists Union conducted many workshops through mentorship of talented and experienced ex correspondent of CNN, Mrs. Tanya Mehna in National Radio Television. Mrs. Tanya was happy for the chance to share her experiences with Afghan Journalists. She discussed with the news anchors of RTA about how to make news more fascinating and how to merge classic and modern media activities alongside other matters.



The news workshop in Radio Television Afghanistan



Group photo of the journalists of the RTA and their mentor along with their certificates



Mrs. Habibi the director of AWJU, Mr. Anzor, the RTA's director in the training program

The Afghanistan Women Journalists Union, as the pioneering Union for supporting women journalists, in the pursuit of solving the challenges against their way, started a series of professional courses alongside creating employment opportunities for them as well. For this to happen, a series of meetings with various national and international organizations were conducted where through opinion exchange they announced their support for journalists.

Shafiq Habibi and other members of the Afghanistan Women Journalists Union met Mrs. Sharmini Boyle, the country director of Internews in Afghanistan at her office. Mrs. Habibi spoke about the Union', its achievements and activities and its goals. She stated the goals of the Union to be capacity building for women journalists and advocating for their rights in media entities and answered her questions. Mrs. Boyle praised the Union's achievements and called such Union as major improvements of Afghan women. She added: Internews has been active in Afghanistan for 15 years and continuous to support media in here. She also added: International donors counts media is important achievements of Afghans. She added: We aim to priorities programs focused on women and pave the way for their capacity building in

remote areas. In the end Mrs. Boyle thanked the union and pledged for more support to the organization in the future.



Meeting with Sharmini Boyle

Mrs. Marjory Rose, deputy of central Internews office for Asia sat down with Internews's cooperating agencies and discussed about their activities. Each organization's director explained their projects. Mrs. Habibi, in addition to thanking the Internews for their cooperation with Afghan Women Journalists, explained the union's projects. In the end Mrs. Marjory added: In this Achilles's Heel, you work is impressive.



Picture of the meeting with Mrs. Marjory Rose

Internews's first cooperation with AWJU was production and publication of Afghan Women Journalists monthly magazine. The magazine was primarily established to broadcast the internships held for female journalism students of Kabul and provinces. The interns were chosen based on an application system where applicants sent their applications to Internews, then the Internews in coordination with the AWJU would choose from the shortlisted applicants along with the union's members who did not have empirical

work experience. Based on the agreement, in every edition of the magazine, 3 to 4 pages were dedicated to the internship programs.



One of the association's interns receiving her certificate from AWJU



The series of published magazines with the help of Internews

Internews's second cooperation with AWJU was a six-month project called (Women and Media). Which was conducted successfully by the Afghanistan Women Journalists Union (AWJU) in Kabul, Jowzjan, Farah and Nangarhar provinces. According to Mrs. Habibi, AWJU's director, this project followed three major goals: 1. Mentoring 6 of the association's prominent members as trainers and mentors. 2. Training of journalism's basics to the women who work in media but are not professionals by the 6 mentored and educated trainers. 3. Introduction of two important laws, (the law of women and children harassment and the law of access to information) to the media entities' owners, government organizations and people in the campaigns at the end of each program in each province.



Group activity and certificate distribution session for workshop members in Farah province



In the Jowzjan province's program, the Harassment law was demonstrated through a play



Association's representative explaining the Access to Information law to the workshop's participants



Project manager explaining the program's goal to the Women affairs director in Nangarhar province



The mentor providing mentorship for the workshop incumbents in Nangarhar province



Campaign for the program in the women affairs directorate in Nangarhar province

Internews's third cooperation with AWJU was a project called (Leadership for Young Women Correspondents). The program's first phase included a three month course on leadership which was thought by Mr. Khelwatgar. Paired with other essentials for a leader such as advocacy, gender equality, confidence building, public speaking, interview and panel interviews which were thought by Mrs. Habibi. The students' performances were recorded on camera and feedback was given by Mrs. Habibi as well. Finally, academic writing, letter and essay writing essentials were thought by Omar Saeed.

*Speaking behind tribune training**Speaking theory being thought by Mrs. Habibi**Leadership training by Mr. Khelwatgar**Group Activity**Roundtable discussion training*

After the course's completion, a group of women journalist leaders were selected to go to radio and television outlets and evaluate the women's situation according to gender equality and other challenges against them and report based on their findings. For finding out about the challenges, young leaders of AWJU discussed with heads of television and radio networks and transferred their findings to Internews and the federation of journalist for their awareness and finding solution to the problems.

*Gender equality advocacy in Zan TV network**Gender equality advocacy in Arezo TV network*



Gender equality advocacy in Tamadon TV network



Gender equality advocacy in Maiwand TV network



Mrs. Habibi collecting the opinions of Mr. Tasal, Mr. Poya and Mr. Mojadaddi, the members of the Afghanistan journalist's federation about finding ways to alleviate gender inequality and the challenges which lie ahead



Another phase included the empowerment of women inside the federation of journalists in the sphere of gender equality among the Federation of Afghanistan Journalists. For this to happen, a number of tasks were conducted; first the preparation of gender strategy for the federation and handed to late Mr. Fahim Dashti, the federation's CEO. Second, in an invitation by the AWJU, Mrs. Habibi presented the gender strategy to the audience. Third, a number of young women journalist leaders who were trained theoretically and empirically by the AWJU were introduced to the federation.



Shafiqah Habibi submitting the gender strategy to late Mr. Dashti



Mrs. Habibi explaining the gender strategy for the federation members



Shafiqah Habibi introducing the women journalist leaders to the federation's members

The gender strategy document for the federation included the federation's history, introduction, goals, the federation's vision and a SWOT analysis of the mission. In here we only include the federation's mission:

Through utilizing the strengths and opportunities and considering the weaknesses and threats, the core members of the association decided to act based on the gender guide which was prepared by the Internews and was shared to the federation's members; and create a group of young women journalist leaders. Fortunately, this group was formed in the inclusion of the three women-led associations inside the federation. This group of young journalists forwarded their mission according to the federation's strategic goals and advocated:

- To make sure that the women's voice is heard in the development process of the media;
- Make sure that in all the education programs, gender equality is considered;
- Earn success in creating an atmosphere in the federation and media where all members (men and women) are treated equally and utilize the opportunities equally.

Young women journalist leaders also advocate in other matters such as:

- Employment of professional women journalists in the leadership and key posts of the media;
- Professionalizing staff in the media production and correspondence;
- Taking measures for hindering violence against women and girls in the media in light of Women and Children Harassment Law;

- Campaign against any kind of discrimination, specially gender discrimination against women in the media in the light of article 22 of the constitution and article 9 of the Labor law.
- Emphasis on equal pay between male and female journalists and correspondents in the media in the light of article 9 of the Labor Law;
- Facilitation for women inclusion in the media based on the articles 126 and 134 of Labor Law;
- Emphasis on leave days for women In the media in the light of article 54 of Labor Law.

In another part, the women led associations in the federation decided to hold a joint meeting with the Internews's representative and share their activities. These meetings were held with the participation of young journalist leaders for them to learn empirically. And, some of these meetings were held with their leadership to enhance their leadership and self-confidence.



The three women led associations in the federation sharing their activities



The ending ceremony of the leadership development program of young women journalists

In a lunch invitation held by Mr. Andres Schuberg, ambassador of Sweden in Afghanistan, director and board members of AWJU were invited.

The goal of this opinion exchange meeting was focused on these matters:

- Supporting freedom of speech, which Sweden has passed its law 250 years ago;
- Journalists' safety;
- Aid of Sweden for employment creation in Afghanistan for the next ten years;
- Organization of an International regulation for Insurance to media workers;
- The challenges against Afghan women journalists in the society and in media and the women journalists' commitment to defending the freedom of speech;
- Fate of the Afghan asylum seekers in Sweden.



Pictures of AWJU board members' meeting with Mr. Andres Schuberg



Meeting of the director and board members of AWJU meeting with Mr. Dominic Medley, speaker and head of the media in the UNAMA about empowering media and journalists' connection with them

An 18 membered council with Dr. Said Makhdom Rahin as its head traveled to Paris through an invitation by Koichiro Matsuura, general director of UNESCO. In the council's executive committee, Mr. Marofee, president of Afghanistan's advisor and Mrs. Habibi, renowned journalist, were appointed as deputies and Dr. Zahir Sediq was appointed as the committee's secretary. Through the coordination of Mohammad Zaher Aziz, Afghanistan's ambassador in UNESCO, all the members in the executive committee generated valuable papers and articles over information and communication, mass media, the journalism faculty and ministry of information and culture. The goal of generating articles and reviewing other articles was to publish a book called "Series of Afghanistan's Articles."



A glimpse of the lunch invitation of UNESCO general secretary to the members of the council



The 18-member council with their French colleagues



Shafiqah Habibi's picture in Paris through the invitation of UNESCO general secretary

In a symposium held in Chahar Chenaar castle (Inside the presidential palace), one panel was dedicated for the Afghanistan Women Journalists Association where Mrs. Habibi served as the panel's host. One of the association's members expressed the challenges in front of women journalists in the media outlets, family and society. Then each of the panel members discussed issues regarding Afghan Journalist Women.



Members of the Journalists' panel in Chahar Chenaar castle (Presidential Palace) symposium

Shafiq Habibi in Afghan Women's National Assembly on Peace

Afghan women are no longer the silent majority, they have a voice, a voice of peace and reconciliation. But raising this voice and echoing it out to the world needed ample management. Hence through the sessions held in the office of the first lady, members of the High Peace Council, Minister of Information and Culture, Deputy of Ministry of Women Affairs, Afghan Women Network (AWN), Members of the civil society and members of the office of the first lady participated. They participated to decide to initially hold a major ceremony of women in Amaani High School of Kabul and gather everyone's opinion about both the political and social peace and create a resolution inclusive with all the participants' opinions. Then, members of this major ceremony traveled to the remaining 33 provinces of Afghanistan in groups. In each province, with the coordination the province's governor, other smaller ceremonies were organized where through the presentation of the resolution, the participants' opinions were gathered. The process was completed successfully and in total, 15,000 women participated in the ceremonies across the 34 provinces of Afghanistan. In the end of the travels, a major Jirga with the participation of around 3500 women from all the 34 provinces of Afghanistan was held in the Loya Jirga Hall. In this Jirga, President Ghani and First Lady were also present and Mrs. Habibi presented a valuable speech to initialize the Jirga.



Picture of women consensus for peace in Loya Jirga hall



Mrs. Habibi in Loya Jirga hall



Shafiq Habibi presenting a video conference on the history of women movement in Afghanistan in the National Afghan Women Consensus for Peace in Loya Jirga Hall



President Ghani kissed Mrs. Habibi's hand after she presented speech in the Women Consensus for

Peace in Loya Jirga Hall

A glimpse at the awards, certificates and appreciation letters given to Mrs. Habibi as a renowned and respected journalist, or as director of AWJU and NAWA throughout the years until 2019.



The first lady honoring Mrs. Habibi in one of the assemblies in the presidential palace



The "Freedom Award" presented to Shafiqah Habibi in the 100th annual celebration and literary seminar of the Media in the ministry of information and culture





Award of the Afghan Women's Network for Shafiq Habibi



Shafiq Habibi was honored by former Afghanistan CEO Dr. Abdullah in the "Free Media" celebration day



In another Free Media celebration day which was held by the Afghanistan Journalists Federation in the Government Media Information Center (GMIC), the award for Mrs. Habibi was handed to Shafiq Habibi by Dr. Abdullah



Academy of Sciences of Afghanistan's award to Shafiq Habibi for the Women's Day Celebration



The award of "Nai, the supporter of free media" an organization based on supporting the free media in Afghanistan, for Shafiq Habibi. She was awarded this for her endeavors in promoting freedom of speech



The award of Afghanistan Women Affairs ministry for Shafiqah Habibi and her recognition as Afghanistan's noble woman





Chapter 3

The Afghanistan Social Foundation was established in 2008 by Mr. Ahmad Shah Shahab who was once the Dari news anchor of National Television, Mrs. Habibi and others. This foundation used to donate food packages and other essentials such as blankets and clothing to the refugee and internally displaced people camps twice or thrice a year. Furthermore, basic food needs such as flour and oil were also regularly donated to the families of the cleansing staff of the municipality who receive very low wages. Paired with monthly stipends to families of Radio Afghanistan singers, war victims and their families. Mrs. Habibi was the foundation's executive and reached the donations to the ones needy ones. From more than 1000 donations, a glimpse is shown in the pictures below:



Payroll for Singer Ustad Hamahang



Ahmad Shah Shahaab



Payrolls for war victims



Payroll for Singer Ustad Amaani



Aid distribution for refugee camps in 5th and 2nd precincts of Kabul city



Food Aid and cash distribution for the family of a martyred cleaning crew of municipality



Food Aid and cash distribution for the cleaning crew of Kabul municipality



In the picture above, the first person from right in the panel is Mrs. Habibi who served as the executive member of the High Peace Council. In the picture below, Mrs. Mari Akrami, Mrs. Hasina Safi, Mrs. Habibi and Mrs. Malalai Shinwar, the women members of the High Peace Council had a work trip to Indonesia and met its president about Indonesia's cooperation in the Afghanistan's peace process.



Mrs. Habibi and others with Mrs. Malalai Shinwari



From right, Mrs. Mari Akrami, Mrs. Hasina Safi and Mrs. Habibi

The Lady Whose Voice Bestowed Significance to News!



By: Ph.D. Malek Sitez, senior political and international relations analyst and Associate Professor in University Selinus

It was 2004, me and doctor Diego Bang had been tasked with launching the Human Rights Management education program to the staff of the newly established Human Rights Commission. In this program, key personalities of the Human Rights Commission were present. The program was a three-day program. Among the participants of the educational workshop, Afghanistan media's well known news anchor and eloquent speaker, Mrs. Habibi was also present. She followed the program with immense precision and commitment. Her voice was a memory in my head, a memory which used to take me back into my sweet childhood days. When I was little, my father used to listen to the Radio Afghanistan and through that, I used to listen to the lady's mystical voice tingle through my ears.

I myself was a fan of declamation oratory and loved to do so. Mrs. Habibi expressed each word and sentence of the news in accordance to the feeling that it should have bestowed upon the listener. In another word, she made the news feel so significant. When I saw this wise lady listening to me thoroughly, I got overwhelmed by a wonderful feeling. In fact, I had learned the art and melody of public speaking indirectly from her while listening to her orate through the radio. When the program ended, Mrs. Habibi approached through kindness and said: "There are methods for teaching and then there are concepts for teaching, you are best in both of them." This evaluation from someone of Mrs. Habibi's caliber who is a master of rhetorical arts affected me deeply.

I asked about Doctor Mahmud Habibi, she answered calmly: He is fine but he is a little weakened now. Late Mr. Mahmud Habibi, the country's prominent politician, researcher, intellectual and writer was the husband of Mrs. Habibi. Shafiqah Habibi has stood firm against any discrimination and has appeared in the media as an intellectual woman. She proofed that women can indeed, orate better than men.

In my next trip to Kabul in 2006, Mr. Habibi invited me to his house in the 3rd Macroryan. The proper and organized life of this couple was very pleasing to my eye. Professor Habibi was Afghanistan's living modern history and tales. He had served as General Secretary of Radio TV Afghanistan, Chief Executive of media, governor, diplomat, minister and house speaker in Afghanistan. He has many research papers and other historical and cultural literary works.

I found his personality humble, intelligent and decorated with knowledge. He spoke with precise, he spoke of his first meeting with King Zahir Shah and Afghanistan's first president Daoud Khan, his cultural and scientific endeavors, during his time as house senate speaker and his views on the cold war. When he spoke of political negotiations, his scientific proficiency was obvious. Dr. Habib spoke well of his wife's companionship with him during their toughest times.

I remember Dr. Habibi asking me to meet him every time I visited Kabul. Mrs. Shafiqah was very happy with this decision and that day went to well. But unfortunately, that day was my last meeting with Dr. Habibi. I was so depressed for not meeting him after his passing away in 2011. My work and frequent trips did not allow me to do so and going to his house after his passing away was also another emotional burden for me. In 2015 I met Mrs. Shafiqah Habibi in my office in Karte 3, she wanted to hold a media discussion with me. This was when Mrs. Habibi was directing an important discussion based media entity.

I started the interview with young journalist Mr. Hamdard Ghafoori who anchored under the supervision of Mrs. Habibi. I got to admit, I was ashamed for not fulfilling Doctor Habibi's request. In my belief, Mrs. Habibi is a valuable role model for Afghanistan women. We men, have failed to hail the influence of such women in Afghanistan. We need to write more and broadcast more on the personality of such prominent women, they deserve it. Because they opened the path for the young generation, they are our pride and I wish her a long and prosperous life.

I, Sultan Masoud Habibi, am the organizer of this book's second volume. I really appreciate you for bearing with me till the end of this book. Now that my goodbye is inevitable, I want to thank Esmat Tariq Fahim, the book's editor and translator into English language for his tireless efforts for making this book happen and bringing it into national and international attention. Additionally, I want to thank my dear sister, Durkhanai Habibi who assisted me in the collection and organization of documents in all these times.



Sultan Masoud Habibi



Durkhanai Fahim Habibi

With Respect

The end



Senior researcher and candid academician, late Ph.D. Mahmood Habibi was born in year 1924, in an enlightened family in Qandahar province of Afghanistan. After completing his graduation from the Esteghlal high school, he entered Kabul University and then traveled abroad to France for his higher studies. After completing his bachelors in French language literature and degrees in Political Journalism, Social Sciences and International Relations in France, he obtained his Ph.D. in Anthropology from Sorbonne University. In 1960 he returned to Afghanistan and from that year until April of 1992 he served in various senior government positions such as minister of Information and Culture, two times governor of Kabul province, governor of Kapisa province, governor of Kunduz province and Finally, house senate speaker. Throughout these years he served his people and his country honestly and decently. He was indeed a national figure, devoid of any prejudice. He loved every ethnic group of the country equally and viewed everyone on the basis of their humanity, not their ethnic or social identity, he was loved among Pashtuns, Tajiks, Uzbeks, Hazaras... and others.