

He insisted upon teaching in religious attire



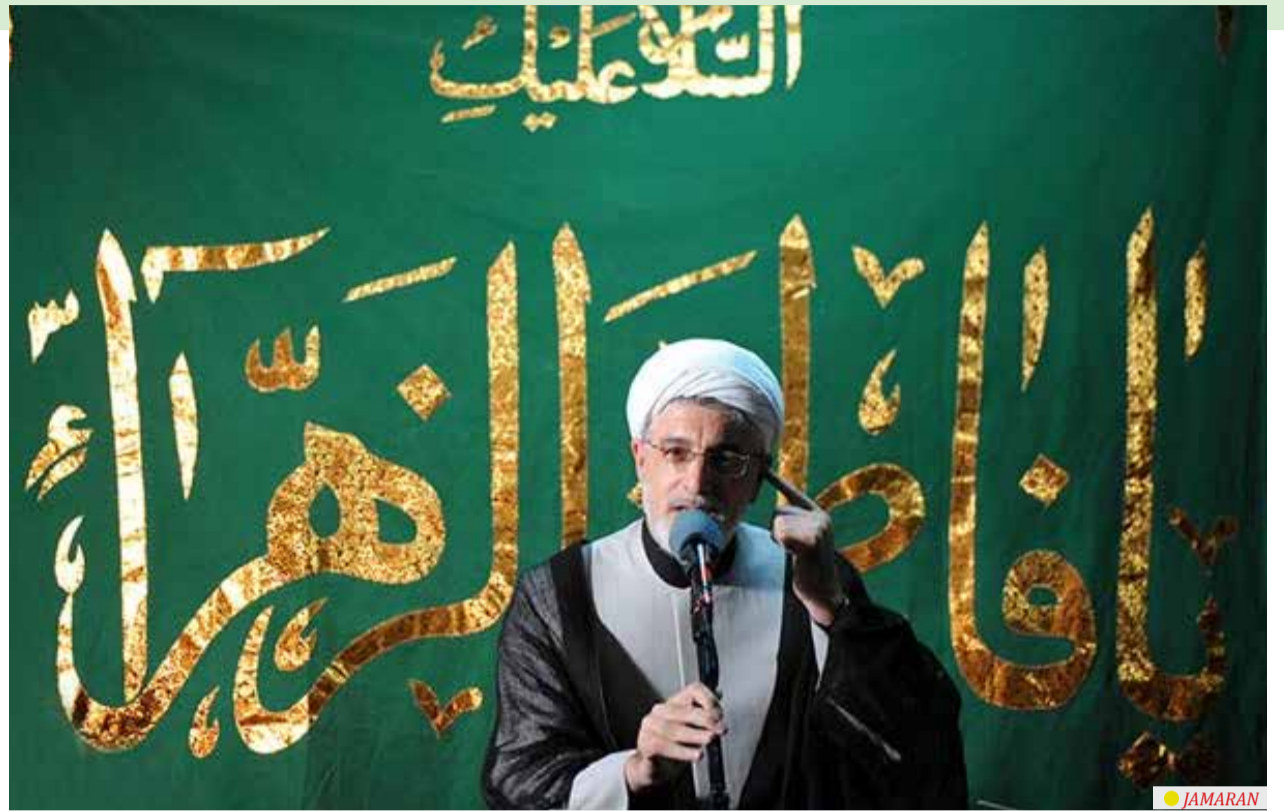
By **Rahim Abolhasani**
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We lost one of the prominent, distinguished, and influential professors of the University of Tehran: Dr. Davood Feirahi — addressing the various dimensions of whose personality cannot be summarized within these few words. Nevertheless, in addressing some of his most manifest characteristics, it must be said that, upon first encounter, it was the professor's behavioral demeanor and ethical decorum that attracted everyone. As a colleague, I must state that I never, not even once, witnessed this kind and polite personality commit the slightest disrespect toward anyone. Analogous to what the late Professor Motahari articulated concerning the co-existence of attraction and repulsion within personalities, it must be said that even Dr. Feirahi's repulsion was accompanied by decorum and ethics and, consequently, was a cause of attraction. Another dimension is that he was a profound thinker who endeavored, in addressing the whatness, whys, and hows of a subject, to benefit from numerous and diverse currents of thought. Any form of dogmatism was absent from the realm of his thought. Feirahi was among the rare clerical figures who possessed, in perfection, an acquaintance with West-

ern thought; and, although he was an informed individual and a defender of Islamic principles and thought, he utilized, in his authored works, the thoughts of Western political science thinkers in the finest manner.

He was not a mere political thinker. Rather, he adopted an active and responsible stance toward the reform of society and the political system and the resolution of the country's political problems, and he paid the price for that stance as well. We do not forget that, in 2009, he was elected as the head of the political department at the Faculty of Law and Political Science of the University of Tehran; but, unfortunately, the officials of the University of Tehran at that time refused to confirm his qualifications and to issue his appointment decree as department head.

I wish to state that Professor Feirahi was not a reclusive thinker. On the contrary, he was present on the scene and was perpetually concerned with the people, the reformation of the country, and the legitimacy of religious identity. Based on his mastery over the history, thought, and political philosophy of the religion of Islam, Dr. Feirahi, in his last years, engaged with society's political issues with sensitivity and endeavored, in confronting the deviations that he observed being perpetrated in the name of religion within the political sphere, to communicate with society what was necessary and to defend the



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domain of religion.

He consistently attempted to articulate society's problems within religious attire. At the peak of the pressures that existed, over his last three decades, within academic spaces against enlightened clerics — pressures that compelled some thinking clerics to remove their religious attire — he insisted upon teaching at the university in religious attire and upon preserving the sanctity of religion. Professor Feirahi, through his kind ethics and his excellent teaching method, was able to

offer highly fruitful and beneficial classes. He was not only a reputable author but also a highly skilled pedagogue, whose classes were enthusiastically received by the students of the faculty, to such an extent that, if he offered an elective class, the students would pursue that class even more assiduously than their core courses. He was an extraordinarily industrious individual. For this reason, within this same short lifespan, he left behind numerous works in the domain of contemporary Iran's political thought. Although, in my

belief, unfortunately, this very quantity of work caused his body to experience premature aging and to succumb easily to illness.

All of us regret his loss. However, Professor Feirahi, to the extent that the opportunity of a lifetime permitted, yielded his fruit. This is the custom of the history of all societies: that the pioneering elites are solitary, but, only later, will they exert influence; and, God willing, our society will also benefit from his opinions in the future.

A thinker who was thinking of Iran



By **Alireza Hosseini Beheshti**
Professor of Political Science
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Neither your awareness that death constitutes the conclusion of a stage of our existence — which all of us will, by necessity, traverse — nor your knowledge that, these days, many of your compatriots and fellow humans are embarking upon a journey without return, nor your cognizance that you have reached an age wherein those whom you knew and who knew you are abandoning you and departing, none of these provide consolation upon hearing the news of the passing of a beloved one among your beloveds. This grief, it seems, is perpetually alive. In a fear born of reluctance to check one's mobile phone — lest you learn of the death of another friend or relative — you bury your head in a book and grant your eyes the indulgence of gazing upon the beautiful autumnal nature, so as to experience moments of unawareness; but, again, you err, and you behold the news. Yet another friend, another colleague, another companion in conversations, Hojjatoleslam Dr. Davood Feirahi, professor of political thought at the University of Tehran, has passed away. In the effusion of friendship, he was open-handed, and, in confront-



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ing adversities, he was open-countenanced. When he spoke of the books he had written and the books he was in the process of writing, the radiance of the fervor of a concerned and profound thinker would ripple across his countenance. When he spoke of his anxieties concerning the future of the country and the nation, he would assume the stance of a committed intellectual and a compassionate critic. He never denied his knowledge nor his affection to any student, seminarian, professor, or researcher. Many times, he spoke to me about adopting the late Martyr Beheshti as a model for simultaneous study in the seminary and the university from the earliest years of his youth;

and how well and steadfastly he had trodden this path. And, above all, there was the purity that, in this era of impurity, filled every moment of the hours of your companionship with him.

We are all destined to depart, and no reality more naked than death exists in human life; yet, blessed are those who considered the world a bridge and crossed it safely, without committing injustice against another or against themselves. Blessed are those who lived in such a manner that every moment of their life serves as a reminder of goodness, and whose death leaves behind irreplaceable losses. I cannot write beyond this. This is the time for silence.

What a premature flight



By **Hamidreza Jalaepour**
Assistant
professor of
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University of
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With profound sorrow, we witnessed the unexpected passing of Dr. Davood Feirahi, a neo-thinking cleric and professor of political thought at the University of Tehran. Alas!

He was a person of knowledge and thought as well as an ethical researcher in the public sphere. His research program, for which he labored for 30 years, was "the rational reconciliation between the science of jurisprudence and the science of politics". He was not merely a university professor; he frequently brought his intellectual products into the public sphere and into society and supported democracy and the co-existence of Iranians with one another. He had a responsible patriotism, and, on this path, he did not fall into



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the abyss of genealogical, racial, and divergent perspectives.

Beyond his attention to the science of jurisprudence and political thought, he paid special and illuminating attention to the history of Islam, the political experience of Islamic countries — especially the experience of Egypt — and, finally, to the contemporary politics of Iran. Dr. Feirahi, while being a person of knowledge, was extremely humble and a person of dialogue. He endured the hardship of travel and participated in all intellectual gatherings in every

corner of the country. He was committed to writing down and publishing his intellectual products, and, in this respect, he left behind a valuable legacy.

He absolutely did not commodify his scientific and professional competence for himself and his family, and he lived as a liberated and light-spirited individual. Alas, he suddenly flew away from among us at the zenith of his intellectual fertility. I offer my condolences for his untimely and agonizing death to his honorable family and to all people of culture and thought.

In eulogy for my lost friend



By **Ahmad Naghibzadeh**
Professor of Political Science at the University
of Tehran

It is difficult and painful for me to speak in mourning for Feirahi. I shall keep those sentiments for myself and shall introduce him to you as I knew him. From an ethical standpoint, he was a man of integrity, good-tempered, and possessed of forbear-

ance, and he conducted himself with people in the manner that one expects from a cleric in the precise sense of the word. I never, not once, witnessed him engage in backbiting or wish ill upon anyone. He was devoid of prejudice and was extremely humble and modest toward the professors with whom he had studied during his student years. It was impossible for him to walk ahead of them. From a scientific standpoint, he was highly capable and correctly apprehended key concepts. He was an ex-

emplary embodiment of the unity of the seminary and the university. He taught Islamic subjects in such a manner that they ranked among the most attractive courses.

In my opinion, he rendered a great service to the culture of the Islamic Republic of Iran, even though some benighted individuals committed injustice against him.

In addition to theoretical courses, in the practical domain, he constantly sought a solution that would

be simultaneously Islamic and feasible and practicable in today's world. He was concerned with the intractable problems confronting the Islamic Republic: how to conjoin theocracy with democracy, what significance a political party possesses from the perspective of Islam, and how it can be justified. May he rest in peace.

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