A Vivacious Visit

In the passage “To Hamadan” by Peter Jon Lindberg, the author delineates his positive experience while visiting his wife’s place of birth, Iran. He claims he “fell for Iran…long before arriving” (Lindberg 66). The term fell is usually affiliated with love, and this entices the reader to continue reading, in search of reasoning for his strong connection. The American media has painted a nefarious picture of Iran. Lindberg effectively disproves the hackneyed ignorance of many Americans through highlighting his first hand experience.

In Lindberg’s endeavor to show the real Iran he draws emotional appeal as he stresses their “insistent generosity, cheek kisses, and warm atmosphere” (Lindberg 68). He witnessed first hand that family is such a pertinent aspect of the society in Tehran. The children go to school and have fun playing “Nintendo and ice skating in ice rinks” (Lindberg 69). As he walked through town he was embraced with warm hospitality, participating in rich culture of dance, song, and sports like horseback riding. To his surprise, the effervescent women “showed much more skin than the nervous first-time visitors” (Lindberg 69). The positive energy was palpable as he saw trade and cheerful exchanges between people in Tehran. This triggered a memory from his hometown of New York a week before he left when a man asked him if it is illegal to laugh in Iran, implying it is a place of harsh rule. He realized it was quite the opposite, while he stood in the middle of a beautiful shop surrounded by red roses and a restaurant flooded with jubilant people. There was no animosity or bigotry, like he “saw in newspaper articles”
back home (Lindberg 74). His only negative encounter was by the U.S. embassy when radical people screamed death to America. He was cognizant of the fact that he received better treatment because his wife was Iranian, but one can alleviate problems such as a language barrier by visiting with a tour group or a Persian friend. Many people are quick to judge and blindly follow stereotypes without understanding the truth. Lindberg teaches a valuable lesson that judging and stereotypes are not healthy or true. One should not jump to conclusions without visiting a place, especially when opinions are based on “false images of sad women” (Lindberg 72). He fosters his point that Iran is a growing country by showing there are a plethora of opportunities to find jobs. He remembers his friend moved from Wisconsin to Iran and finally “opened up a successful consulting business” (Lindberg 79). It is evident that the radical leadership does not reflect the passion, dreams, and pursuit of peace the Iranians yearn for so much.

As Lindberg tells the audience he feels “safe” several times throughout his passage, it sends a message to the reader that the preconceived notions they grasp onto so tightly need to be let go. It sends a message of hope, faith, and peace. As America constantly strives to improve our own situation while simultaneously helping others, he challenges the audience to stay open-minded. The foundation for America is acceptance and the pursuit of the truth, and we must strive to apply this stance to our outlook on countries that seem very different from our own. Lindberg succeeds in painting an honest picture of a land with truly a lot to offer.