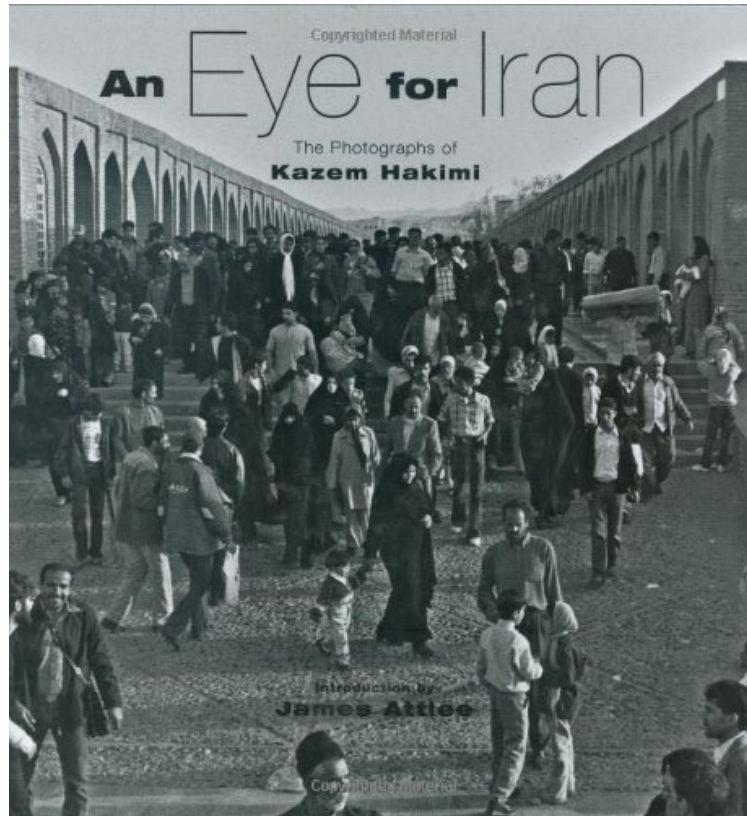


## An Eye for Iran

*Kazem Hakimi*

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**Kazem Hakimi : An Eye for Iran** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised An Eye for Iran:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Ordinary People of Iran By MLW At the beginning there are six pages that introduce us to the photographer, his background, and his intentions with these photographs. After that are the photos, with only a few words to describe them. The photos are all in black and white. At first I was disappointed, but then I became intrigued with the photos because so many of them are ones I couldnt have taken except with a telephoto lens. They are close-up photos of people who would have felt disturbed if I, an American woman, had been the photographer. But Kazem Hakimi is an Iranian, and he took many of the photos while he was traveling in a group, with family members, other Iranian men and women. So his presence wasnt particularly noticed by the people he was photographing. Many of the photos are at tourist sights, but theyre not tourist photos; they are photos of ordinary Iranian people at those sites. Its strange that almost all the women in the photos are wearing chadors, because the book was published in 2009, and when I was in Iran in 2015 I didnt see many women wearing chadors. When I was there almost all the women were wearing the more modern choice, a knee-length coat, and the young women wore blue jeans under their coats. I found it difficult to photograph the few women I saw in chadors; they would turn their heads to one side, or draw some material over their face. Evidently it was my foreignness that caused them to behave like

that. Perhaps the women in chadors, who are the most conservative women, hate Western women like me. But they didn't mind being photographed by an Iranian man. There's only one photo where Hakimi deliberately photographed a woman in the typical knee-length coat. He wanted a photo of a boy dancing while some foreign tourists took a photo of him, and the mother of the boy is standing behind the tourists, wearing a knee-length coat. This is very strange, and I'd like to know what Hakimi's reason was for not photographing most of the women he saw. I'm giving the book 4 stars. It's not a collection of photos of the glorious sights of Iran, but it's a good collection of photos of ordinary people. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Modern Yet Traditional By Mahlax My mom lived in Iran from the 1960s until 1981, much of that time spent in a small Iranian village or in an urban environment but with simple, traditional people. She told me until I got her this book she thought those people and those times were dead, but now she saw that not all Iranians are as terribly modern as the people in Tehran. She said this book really touched her heart and that made me happy, as it was a Christmas gift to her.

Through his use of conventional black-and-white film and a belief that a good photograph is the result of constantly watching to predict the perfect moment, Kazem Hakimi's work harks straight back to the photojournalism of Cartier-Bresson and those early Magnum photographers who were able to capture moments that superficially contained nothing, but which when printed onto photographic paper became iconic images. With the United States and Iran once again squaring up to each other in the Persian Gulf and the actions of firebrand president Ahmadinejad never far from the news, *An Eye for Iran* provides a welcome opportunity to view images that show the human side of a nation we are being led to distrust. Here and there someone spies the lens as the shutter opens, but the drift of Iranian society is caught in the postures of the everyday: human faces in the streets, relaxing in the parks, the glimpse of designer clothes under a chador, pride in a motorcycle, a young couple enjoying a game of chess. Throughout, Hakimi shows how well he understands the techniques of traditional photojournalism: he remains both present but still invisible to the people in the scenes his lens has captured. The result is a captivating book that will appeal to all those wishing to gain an insight into life in this unique and fascinating country.

Iranian-born and London-based photographer Hakimi presents this collection of 60 photographs taken - using conventional black and white film - during his 2004 travels to the Iranian cities of Isfahan, Shiraz, and Mashad. Rooted in the objectivity of the photojournalist's method, the photographs depict what one summary calls "the drift of Iranian society" from a ground-level perspective that, as Richard Atlee acknowledges in his foreword, seeks to supplant the discussion in the West of a dangerous Iran with a more human narrative. *An Eye for Iran* is a perceptive picture book created by photographer Kazem Hakimi, born in Shiraz but living in the UK since 1974. In 2004 he visited Isfahan, Shiraz and Mashad and photographed the people of his native country. He has a keen eye for the unusual, like the woman enclosed in a burqa standing by her motorcycle. Such contrast! His black-and-white candids stirred many exciting memories of my recent trip to Iran. Enjoy Hakimi's wonderful images and you will find yourself on an Iran Air flight to the land of the ancient Persian Empire. About the Author Photographer KAZEM HAKIMI was born in Shiraz in Iran, but moved to the UK in 1974. Having trained initially as a civil engineer, he then studied photography in London. This book *An Eye for Iran* is based on a visit he made in 2004 to the cities of Isfahan, Shiraz and Mashad. Within, he has caught the immediacy of movements from an Iranian way of life that may soon be lost.