

The Blood of Flowers by Anita Amirrezvani was written by using techniques that created passion, rollercoasters of intensity for the character, and a deep understanding of the setting in Iran. With both a heritage of Iran and knowledge of the culture of the U.S., Anita Amirrezvani created the setting, theme and background for her book. At the age of two, she moved from her birthplace in Iran to San Francisco, California, where she spent her childhood, with her aunt and recently divorced mother. Her one and only book, *The Blood of Flowers*, took nine years to write (Amirrezvani, Anita Biography p. 1, 8). It was originally drafted in complete secrecy over the course of five years, but “the result,” was “a passion-filled, exotic delight,” that is “simply a stunning debut” (Thomas p. 3, 10). Throughout this time, she read about the history of Iran in her college library in order to get information to use in the book, along with visiting Iran, Isfahan specifically, two times to be able to describe the setting in her book (Amirrezvani, Anita Biography p. 8). The economy, the geography, Muslim traditions, Iranian culture, and even her American influence molded Anita Amirrezvani’s Middle Eastern Identity both as a person and a writer, which then, shaped her book, *The Blood of Flowers*, into an amazing piece that was both captivating and inclusive of her identity and knowledge.

The main characters of the book are not based on non-fictional characters; however, they are fictional characters that face situations that an Iranian might face. An example of this in the book is the young marriages; Anita Amirrezvani’s grandmother got married at the age of 14 and her mother at the age of 17. Anita Amirrezvani wrote in the Authors Note that the main character or narrator went unnamed purposely. This was done to honor the artisans of Iran in the

past that never signed their work (Amirrezvani , Anita. PDF. Interview 2-3, 6). The main character of *the Blood of Flowers* once said,

“I will never inscribe my name in a carpet like the masters in the royal rug workshop who are honored for their great skill. I will never learn to knot a man’s eye so precisely, it looks real, nor design rugs with layers of patterns so intricate that they could confound the greatest of mathematicians. But I have devised designs of my own, which people will cherish for years to come. When they sit on one of my carpets, their hips touch the earth, and the crown of their head lifted toward the sky, they will be soothed, refreshed, transformed. My heart will touch theirs and we will be as one, even after I am dust, even though, they will never know my name” (360).

By not naming the main character, Amirrezvani hoped to indicate that no records exist of these artisans who made the stunning things that people have and cherish today. Anita Amirrezvani wanted a better distinction of Iran than people usually see in the news because of the lack of diplomatic relations between Iran and the United States of America. This would create a wider view of Iran and its people. Her goal was accomplished by this through the transition of the main character, “from country bumpkin to city dweller, from immature girl to married woman, and from traditional rug knoter to sophisticated carpet designer” (Amirrezvani , Anita. PDF. Interview 2, 6-7). The protagonist changed from a rash young country girl who completed her actions without thinking, to a mature, wise, city woman.

The main character's transitions through life, not only complete Anita Amirrezvani's goals, but it shows how the threads of Iranian and U.S. culture can be intertwined, creating a whole new culture with different concepts. While the basic Islamic and Iranian traditions are shown throughout the book, westernization is incorporated through the beliefs of individualism and capitalist concepts. In Iran, it would be almost impossible for an Iranian woman to work to benefit herself and become the owner of a rug workshop or any business in general. This is what the main character did however. Throughout her struggles of learning to create beautiful rugs, she learns important lessons, which leads to the creation of her all women's rug workshop that she had in her house. She was different from most of the women at that time period. Wealthier women usually stayed content inside the homes, and most people in her situation with Fereydoon would not have left to become a carpet maker. As the main character reflects on her own life, she thinks:

“I know that most people would never understand why I had traded a life of occasional opulence with Fereydoon for the life of hard work that I have now. I could not have explained it myself at the time, except that I knew in my heart it was right to leave the sigheh. For I, a maker of carpets, had become an aspirant to the highest things” (Amirrezvani, Anita. *The Blood of Flowers* 359)

Even her connections with the shah's wives would be non-existent for a country girl, who is impoverished at this point in the book. The American idea, if you try hard enough then you will succeed, is finely knotted within the culture of Iran during this book. This idea has not worked in America, yet we see it in our books all the time.

Throughout the book, she juggled many important roles. She was a friend, a daughter, a wife, a carpet weaver, and even a servant. At nights, she would have to please Fereydoon because it was her responsibility as a wife; while in the daytime, she was a servant for Gostaham and Gordiyeh in order to have a place to stay. She then had to work in time to better herself through carpet making, in which she would spend hours on the loom. Her want to better herself through carpet making is the individualism not traditional Iranian belief. It was only the men that could work in the royal rug workshops also, so her teachings in the art of carpet making would have never blossomed without the westernized view of Anita Amirrezvani.

Ultimately it is apparent that Islamic traditions, Iranian culture, the economy, the geography, and other factors shaped the book, *The Blood of Flowers*, written by Anita Amirrezvani because of her Middle Eastern Identity. This main character has not only taught important lessons about never giving up, but it shows the conditions of the country and how it affects the people. The Middle Eastern factors of Anita Amirrezvani and her identity have led to a different style of writing that incorporates a lot of information into a great fictional book to read.

Works Cited

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