

Reading Questions for *Savishun*

Please note that the short introduction is useful for understanding the context of the novel. The translator has also provided a list of characters on p. xvii and a glossary of Persian terms on p.325.

1. Describe Zari's household. Why is it so central to the novel?
2. What does Sergeant Zinger's name have to do with his former occupation, and what does it tell you about changing patterns of consumption in early 20th century Iran? What other indications are there of changing consumption patterns?
3. Which foreigners speak in Persian, and which do not?
4. Explain the nature of the British presence. Why are most of the fighting boys Indian? What other foreign influences exist?
5. How is tribal life portrayed in the novel?
6. What is the significance of Zari's charity work? What other forms of religiosity are present in the novel?
7. What kind of education did Zari have, and why does she frequently reminisce about her school days?
8. What do you learn about gender roles from reading this novel? How are the marriage rituals similar and different from what you read in *Midaq Alley*? Why does Zari contemplate abortion?
9. What does politics and government mean to the characters in novel?
10. What rituals of mourning are portrayed in the novel? Why is the novel entitled *Savishun*?