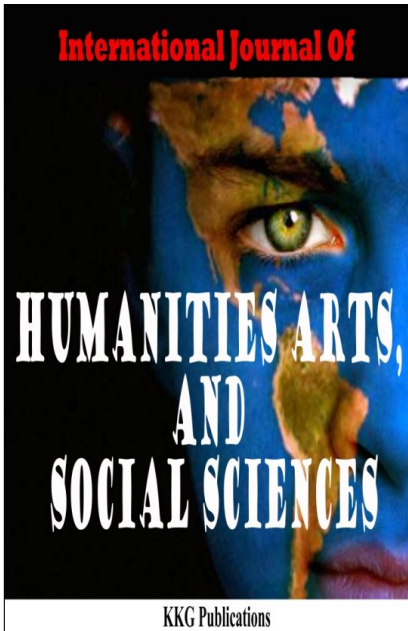


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RE-HARDWIRING THE CULTURAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL INFRASTRUCTURE OF IRAN FOR A BETTER MANAGEMENT

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Abstract. The philosophy of pre-modern Iran dominated by Zoroastrianism before Islam played a more constructive role in social and individual advancement. However, destructive principles of Islam, as outlined below, have rendered cultural attributes and collective world views of the Iranian and other middle-eastern nations unprecedented detriments. Ancient Persia, once occupying most of the eastern hemisphere, surely has contributed a lot to the current human civilization through the early Mithraism, Zoroaster, and his life affirming philosophy and later through the works of its great philosophers and scientists before and after the inception of Islam. However, the Iran today, unlike far east nations, China and Japan which appreciated their cultural and philosophical bed rocks even in modern days, is undoubtedly on a deteriorating track which is very disappointing culturally, socially, and philosophically. We are relating these social and cultural setbacks after the advent of Islam to the dominance of Semitic philosophy and world view, totally unconquerable to costly attempts of the Iranian elite during history, over a more materialistic and life affirming philosophy of life from the ancient Persia. We studied ancient Iranian philosophy and world view through Zoroaster, Mithraism, Iranian Mythology, Iranian literature after the dominance of Islamic philosophy, current cultural paradigms, and compared them to the very outstanding attributes of the Islamic philosophy and found great support for our hypotheses of the two important but forgotten reasons accounting for cultural, economic, and social setbacks of the nation: 1. Taking philosophical bedrocks, cultural attributes, and historical roots regarding the nation's collective world view for granted and replacing them with a rigid philosophy of life has thrust a cultural metamorphosis on the nation. 2. Various offenses of the neighboring nations from the Mongolians to Arabs and the Greek during history has changed the cultural and philosophical bed rocks of the nation.

INTRODUCTION

For many millions of people around the world, Japan today is a paragon of strong economy. Its well-based social and economic infrastructure, deep-rooted and mature democracy, and, on top of all, its well-worked management system are widely referred to patterns in most academic settings around the world. It is known as the second largest economy only after the dominant USA and its high living standards are subject of envy for many other Asians, Middle Easterners, and may be Europeans. Like mentioned above, the case of Japan in modern management is an all-including prototype and widely referred to around the world. However, its neighboring nations like China and South Korea can also be brought forth to help explain the cultural, social, and economic setbacks the country in debate, Iran, is now facing.

A country, though with remarkable natural resources, fourth largest oil producer in Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), second to Russia only in its great gas resources, is socially and economically troubled. In the south west Asia, geographically considered a half dry country, stra-

telegically is located in the Persian Gulf on the most commercially commuted marine route in the Middle East, Hormoz strait. Though even in modern history, Iran has gone through lots of social and economic fall and rises. Now in 2016, a stagnant economic breakdown is looming over the country. A country with several faltering attempts towards democracy in the modern history, radical ideology-stricken thought paradigms, soft and sick management system, nontransparent top-down decision-making, and a good example of a "rentier state" (Mahdavy, 1970; Shambayati, 1994).

However, the purpose of the researcher in this excerpt is not speculating the protruding challenges of the country as they may be above the potential of this paper, but rather, hypothesizing the causal fundamental elements deeply rooted in the historical and philosophical attributes of the nation underpinning the very bedrocks of social, cultural, and philosophical world views of the Iranian community as a whole. However to acknowledge the very basic tenet of humanitarian sciences we admit that for any probable social case we should not just look for linear

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and reciprocal causal relations. According to Lewin's (1943) force field analysis theory various factors for and against any probable social, cultural or economic events must be counted in, and while the multiplicity of the effective factors is one point, interaction of the factors amongst one another is another.

Notwithstanding the fact that there have been occasional attempts at addressing the underlying cultural assumptions and the bedrocks underpinning the collective philosophical world views of the Iranians (Zarrinkoob, 1957), it is high time the Iranian intellectual elite rolled up sleeves to face the fact and investigate it. The importance of the matter is so high that neither academicians in the west nor their colleagues in Iran can easily turn a blind eye on.

I am trying to put forth the idea of how the Iranian community and their cultural and philosophical attitudes have undergone a radical metamorphosis over centuries following the historical ups and downs, soft and hard currents from inside and outside which in turn brought about some radical shifts in the long held paradigms of the nation.

There is no doubt in the crucially formative role of Persia (pre modern Iran) in "shaping the current Western consciousness" (Intellectual movement in Iran).

More than 500 years Before Christ "when Herodotus was writing Histories, Persia was supposed to be the West's ultimate other".

Hegel (1975) the German philosopher and one of the most effective sculptors of the current philosophical world views of the West praises the role of Persia and Zoroaster in the world history (Hegel, 1975). Nietzsche as well has been influenced by Zoroaster's social and philosophical principles.

Though glorification of the Persians' works and their impressive history and extolling their formative role in the current intellectual paradigms is not the motive behind this writing, we believe the current degeneration and decadence of the Iranian culture and philosophy are hypothetically related to a heartfelt break off from its wealthy past.

The hypothesis of this essay is thus based on two different but correlated issues:

1- The nation's detachment from its past and the discontinuity of the dominant cultural and philosophical bed rocks such as Zoroasterianism and its slow but steady replacement by Arabic and Islamic logic and philosophy, is hypothesized to be the main cause of the Iranian downfall over centuries.

2- The 2nd but not less noteworthy is the historical ups and the downs of the nation due to occasional offenses of the neighboring groups from as old as the ancient Greeks to the Arabs and Mongols, of which the Arabs offensive has most powerfully shaken off the very fundamentals of the Iranian culture and phi-

losophy for the reasons we are directly addressing in this essay.

CULTURAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL HISTORY AND DEBATE

Studying both ancient and modern history of Iran may seem to be very interesting and also time devouring. However to turn the spotlight on the very basic and focal points and the hypothesis of the paper we will discuss history of philosophical bedrocks of the pre-modern Iran on which cultural and philosophical attributes were developed and while we go further we will discuss how the cultural infrastructures were slowly uprooted and replaced by the current cultural and philosophical worldviews. Picking up the pen on the Iranian ancient thought schools, philosophical beliefs and world view bedrocks may need years of rolled-up sleeves and hard work. However as mentioned above to have brevity and concentration on the very notorious parameters overshadowing current management and thought paradigms which are directly or indirectly related to our hypothesis, we have chosen the most important issues to address.

Undoubtedly, the one century old management science and its criteria have become more rational and confidently in management especially strategic management, being an interdisciplinary, positivism, rationalism and logic are day by day becoming heavier on the scale. And now with respect to Iranian management system we may refer to the past only when we are sure that the qualities and attributes of logical positivism and rationalism were a considerable part of the governing paradigms then, and not now.

Without doubt scientism, logical and scientific positivism were prevalent trends from tens of centuries before the advent of Islam (Soylemez, 2005). What on the very gate way of the Jundishapour School of Medicine established in 310-350 AD was engraved (Knowledge and virtue are superior to sword and strength), implies a traditional trend (Soylemez, 2005). Iranians' excessive interest in science and their high regard for intellectuality and erudition did have significant impact not only on the Arians on the Iranian plateau but also further to Mesopotamian, Caucasus, Anatolia in the west to the Oxus and Indus rivers in the east (Azhar, 2015; Frye, 1962; Lange, 2008; Marcinkowski, 2010). Centuries before Zoroaster, in what during years historians have generally concurred in Mithraism, Masdaism, and Zurvan indisputable traces of rationality and scientism are widely-spotted (Luharman, 1996). In the faiths of the ancient Iran in what we may call a mutual interaction with the Assyrian and Babylonian civilizations sometimes overshadowed by deep cultural contrast, one of the most worshipped gods of the time was the god of wisdom (Boyer, 1968). Zoroaster himself appeared in that Arian context in which philosophical

bedrocks and cultural attributes then helped him disseminate his Mithraism throughout Europe and the east as well. In the *Ushtavaiti Gatha*, *Yasna*, Zoroaster's biggest ever questions posed to Ahura Mazda seem to be scientific questions of "why", and "how" and "by who" earth and sun, stars and the Cosmos were erected and he so enthusiastically asks Ahuramazda to help him find the knowledge (*Avesta: Ushtavad Gatha, Yasna: 44*).

Shahnameh as the greatest manifestation of ancient Iran begins with "praising wisdom". The writer of *Shahnameh* envisages wise and knowledgeable man as strongest (Ferdowsi, 391 AD). Zoroaster himself has emphatically pointed out the importance of knowledge, logic, and wisdom in *Avesta* as the most important criterion for human happiness (Zarathushtra, *Aesta*). Pythagorean, as a person to whom current world science and philosophy is too much indebted, learned Algebra and Geometry from Mesopotamians (Boyer, 1968) and Greek Suedas has envisaged him Zoroaster's student. Plato has been completely familiar with Mithraism and Mazdaism philosophy (Vali & Basiri, 1397).

The philosophy governing the ancient Iranian world view was logic and science oriented. Its prime parameter was discovering nature, questioning and criticizing scientific, philosophical and logical paradigms. Heidegger says our way of questioning defines our nature. The corner stone of this world view mostly lies on humanistic bedrocks inherited from the Arians. Muhammad ibn Zakariyya al-Razi, the well known 9th century physician and philosopher believed man, along with his logic and intellect was the fulcrum of the universe (Dashti, 1977). Khayyam the 11th century mathematician and philosopher believed wisdom to have been the very first thing endowed to the Cosmos in its creation by God before any other entity (Dashti, 1977). Throughout ancient history and mythology of the Arians before the advent of Islam there are instances of durable and overwhelming struggle of the Arian man to discover the rules of the universe through beating his absurdity and writing out those rules through the discourse of logic and the language of math and not the language of ideology and sanctimony (as its clear from the word "Mazdayasna": meaning praising and worshipping wisdom).

It was this way of perusing the cosmos and scrutinizing its obscure natural cycles, which finally paved the way for the Arian man to pick scientism and logical positivism as the most applicable tool to help him discover the unknown (Groningen, 1967; Luharman, 1996). He, in the early stages of his struggle against obscurity and darkness of his naive and premature intellect, ruled out the concept of ideology as an investigative tool to discover universe (Campbell, 2004). Achaemenids, through

setting up the biggest empire in human history, from big parts of Asia, some parts of Africa, Europe to further away from Indus river to India, were the most effective propagators of the faith of rationalism and logical positivism, having owned the philosophical and rationalistic paradigms in the background, Achaemenids with almost two centuries of government laid the cornerstones of early scientism and intellectuality. Centuries later, that philosophy yielded fruit and collective aspiration to tread the unknown paths in knowledge became a deep rooted cultural norm. Compared to the small population of the time the number of the emergent inventors, philosophers, and astronomers was overwhelmingly on the rise. Astronomy was no longer only in the myths but was in very forefronts of scientific aspiration. Mithraism per se was the first faith breaking through the boundaries of the ancient Iran to big parts of Europe. Mithraism, which took big parts of the world including Europe, was per se a sign of Arians' proficiency in astronomy. And centuries later when Zoroaster began his faith, applied the same philosophical and cultural bedrocks.

The themes and the principal motifs of this world view were two as bellow:

- 1- Laws and order are inherent in nature (Vali & Basiri, 1397).
- 2- Contrast is inherent in nature with contrasting poles constituting one single wholeness (Vali & Basiri, 1397).

With regard to the first theme, one must say that as the principal motif of the philosophical world view of the Arians, it taught man that he and his intellect along with nature are the pivotal figures in the universe. Man, himself was a part of universe, and nature, skies, earth, and the galaxies are all functioning under special inherent order. Man, to be able to align himself up with this order must be equipped with the substantial tools, which in turn, lie deep both in nature and the human mind. Man in this worldview, under his free will, would decide to take the pains of endless endeavor to surmount the universe through discovering its unknown rules and rhythms (Campbell, 2004; Pour Davoud, 1964). And while giving a real wide berth to sanctimoniousness and religiosity, would resolve his main life challenges applying scientism and physics other than ideology and metaphysics. This principle helps the Arian man steer clear away from ideology as he is sure to know that the only plausible way to overcome the universe is through applying natural, logical, and scientific rules. In his point of view human sanctification is deeply rooted in ignorance and the starting point to beat nescience and the onset of cognition is relying on human intellect and the earth other than the skies (Campbell, 2004; Nokandeh, Sharifi, & Saber, 2012). Man, in the ancient Iranian mythology, is not submissive and passive but rather a strong and a free entity who was even involved in helping

out gods and goddesses in their war against all evil (Mirfetros, 1990). From Zoroaster's view point man is a thoughtful and creative being and in quest for answers for the big questions of his life rather than a passive and thoughtless entity who has picked mysticism and prayer as the skeleton key of his life problems. Zoroaster postulated strong hands for the Iranian man who possessed the power of creativity and change, feet willful and strong enough to tread the unknown lands along with an astute and creative intellect that privileged their owners with the promising ability to question paradigms, create, and recreate. He believes that the biggest obstacle in the way of man and his collective wisdom is his ignorance and supposes that man is the greatest source of evolution per se in self and the universe as well. The Semitic philosophy thrust upon the Iranians from the inception of Islam believes in the ultra-human powers residing in the skies to be the absolute power, leaving man no other choice except from being totally submissive and obedient to fate. Zoroaster believed that humanity and his life are the outcome of Man's conduct, learning, his manner and the steps he takes in life. Nietzsche (1883) influenced by Avesta says that the most honorable nisus is the one which breaks through the boundaries and creates beyond self (Nietzsche, 1883). Thought paradigms within the Iranian philosophy and attitude, under which Zoroaster himself grew up, held man accountable for self, family, and society and above all for nurturing nature, and the earth and helping society flourish, and held every single person in whatever profession accountable for his social obligations and the quality of what they deliver to society. Zoroaster's general philosophy like Plato's will eventually result in moral philosophy which was itself under the impact of society and was absolutely social bound (Vali & Basiri, 2000). More than two millenniums later Bertrand Russel says "the most important part of philosophy is criticizing and clarifying notions which are apt to be regarded as fundamental and accepted uncritically" (Stroll, 2000).

With regards to the second theme, Zoroaster's philosophy was the momentum of human philosophy then and even tens of centuries later.

Zoroaster envisages the contrasting notions of good vs evil, positive vs negative and morality vs immorality all inherent in one single wholeness of cosmos. In a way he succeeded to narrow down and incorporate all various entities worshiped at the time to a bipolar and contrasting dichotomy of goodness and evil and in a novel and totally unprecedented practice visualized both of these entities as forces inherent in the universe and in absolute compliance with the inherent laws and rules of the universe (Vali & Basiri, 2000). Man's substantial duty was a nonstop effort to decipher these complicated universal codes

into common understandable language through knowledge, science and wisdom. He laid this purpose on top priority and praised man's indefatigable effort in this way. However, he did not preach Man's failure in this way to deserve the torment frightfully awaited for in the Semitic philosophy. This inherent contrast in the universe was not regarded as a demerit and their overcoming through discovery was a big responsibility on human shoulders. Humanity was envisaged as a complete wholeness, not detached from universe but rather the biggest chunk of it with great accountability on his strategic logic and collective wisdom to manage the world.

It was under this thought paradigm that a couple of thousands of years later the venerable Iranian poet Sadi irazi in around 1289 AD said (Sadi irazi, 1289):

Human beings are members of a whole,
In creation of one essence and soul.
If one member is afflicted with pain,
Other members uneasy will remain.
If you've no sympathy for human pain,
The name of human you cannot retain

It may be quite reasonable to say that the philosophy and worldview propagated by Zoroasterianism could have, applying twentieth century terminology, practiced early but not theorized version of epistemic secularization (Campbell, 2004) which could have in reality practiced scientism.

The Islamic Arabic army under the second Caliphate vanquished the Sasanids in the 7th century. The Arabic Islamic Philosophy having had a rigid Semitic philosophy of life, viewed man as a disconnected being from the universe which does not necessarily have to indulge himself in pains of knowledge and discovering though he is taught to restrain from questioning the ideology-stricken and rigid world view and sanctify whatever pain befalls him and is then forced to restrain from rethinking and questioning whatever illogicality inherited from the past with Islamic man's top duty to be scraping together some savings of goodness in order not to encounter the Hell fire in the afterworld.

Being an interdisciplinary, management in theocratic nations like Iran and Egypt has drastically been thrust upon too much religiosity and has then got so much softened.

Philosophy deals with the most fundamental questions of man, questions which outline the framework, direction, and the periphery of his world view. Our philosophy is our definition of man and his life. Our definition of life speculates which tools we need ourselves to be equipped with in life. For the Aryan man science and then positivism were in practice for those tools. The greatest purpose of science is to discover the relations amongst events and while we may decisively rule out

the role of something in an event, the reason is not they are not related but rather we may lack the knowledge to discover the relation and the impact.

Iranians are now in a critical situation and must embrace the notion that vicious philosophy towards all aspects of human life and its context have virtually plagued their past and present and only a revolutionary will of transcendence of a more life affirming (Sakhai, 2000) philosophy to management can rid them of the plague they are coping with.

Apart from these, dominant philosophy in the Zoroastrian Iran before the invasion of Islam and the fall of the Sasanids might even fall within the realm of "materialism" (Daftary, 1996) meaning that Zoroastrian philosophy presumed the society members to be able to control their own fate which was an outstanding tenet in the philosophy of man. Zoroaster postulated strong hands for the Iranian man which possessed the power of creativity and change, feet willful and strong enough to tread the unknown lands along with an astute and creative intellect that privileged their owners with the promising ability to question paradigms, create and recreate. The revolutionary idea of having to put an end to the submissive world view to man in the late medieval ages was the very prime motive behind the renaissance movement in Europe (Durant & Ariel, 1939). While it was way before it in the 9th century when the great Iranian philosopher, physician and alchemist Rasis (Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Zakariya al-Razi, 865-925) rioted against the ruling Islamic philosophy in favour of the Zoroastrian one (Alchemy, n.d.), totally rejected the concept of prophecy and prioritized wisdom over submission to prophets (Dashti, 1977, p. 83).

Cyrus the great was born and brought up to that philosophy under the influence of this context. We know that "every historical individual is the outcome of a social-historic course of events that is manifested in the course of social interactions and perception of the collective and social values. Then after being consolidated is involved in order to respond to social exigencies" (Mirfetros, 1990).

Cyrus the great, Chosroes (Anushirawan the Just) and many others undoubtedly have been affected by the domineering cultural and philosophical world views at the time. What is so challenging and also interesting at the same time is the subliminal effect of dominant culture and philosophy. People may not be aware of the paradigms but decades and centuries gradually help the attributes get grounded and become a part of the social and collective life. If a few notable individuals reach the apex in a corrupt era and become the well-remembered personalities, factor of chance and accident should not be ruled

out but when a succession rule, lasts for centuries under which emerge the most praised "centuellectuals"¹ and revolutionaries whose breakthroughs brighten centuries ahead of them, dominant philosophy must then be taken into account. The philosophy of life preached to man in Avesta addressed the real life with the core presuppositions that embraced the idea of man controlling the Cosmos and not the opposite (Campbell, 2004; Mirfetros, 1990). Shocking it may be that even man was presumed to possess the power to join Ahuramazda (the god of goodness) in the fight against Ahriman (the god of badness) and the conquest of Ahuramazda was only feasible through the help of man whose real power was deeply rooted in earth not the skies. Neitche says Zoroaster pleaded people not to take earth for granted (Nokandeh et al., 2012) and believed that life starts and ends from the very earth beneath our feet and it could be very precarious to yield to illusionary metaphysical powers dwelling in the skies at the expense of real, happy and a truthful adventure of life on the earth. The philosophy governing the state then refuted the ideology of man resting on his back striving for nothing, praying and looking forward to the skies to feed him, raise him and finally take him to the better after world. The philosophy and the culture emerging from it centuries after wards respected the "free will" concept and censured the not so rampant fatalistic world views. The world view preached in Avesta gave rise to an authentic life affirming (Sakhai, 2000) paradigm which in turn had unimaginable impact on educational settings, cultural bedding, and the social interaction and even the human right charters during territorial wars. Cyrus the great and Anushirawan the just must have ruled under the influence of dominant philosophy and worldviews inherited from Zoroaster. Psychological findings have proved that almost all human prodigies and their highly praised personal qualities and unprecedented humanitarian breakthroughs emerge in experimental setting and latent collective "action research". Cyrus's creation of human right charter, Khayam's unprecedented endeavors in philosophy, Math and Astronomy and Avesina's breakthroughs in Medecine could not have been heavenly revelations or oracles from skies, but rather their specific characteristic and mind frame were shaped by the ebb and flow of the dominant philosophy. Similarly is this true for Islam's Mohammad, while his subliminal impressionability from the Christianity and Jewish context of the time can not be totally rejected, his followers tend to attribute his revolutionary ideology to revelation from the seven skies. In leadership methodology in management research, macro strategies of any ruler are affected by his attitude and philosophy which are either conscious or subconscious. In other words, the first and

¹By centuellectuals we mean those intellectuals whose breakthroughs in human thought and philosophy go on for centuries

prime parameter in leadership is how man is defined, meaning that any single leadership theory is formed under a specific anthropological theory, which itself is overshadowed by the philosophical world view.

The incursion of Islam with an absolutely different philosophy of man and his life transformed the widely dispersed and time-tested views of the Iranians. Lower order needs orientation, pessimistic and radical attitude to man and his nature, supremacy of world after over the so-called transitory sinful life on earth, and the most destructive tenets of fatalism leading to man's submissiveness and passivity to fate and whatever hardship and turmoil befell them were all principal tenets of Islamic philosophy. Although later interpretations of Islam tried to probe the issues through the work of some Islamic scholars, the pre deterministic denotations and connotations were too strong to be thwarted by an elite coterie. Radical to an extent that every aspect of human life was stereotyped according to so called heavenly rules of the Holy Quran on which no criticism was tolerated. So much that the biggest libraries ever in human history in Egypt and Iran were totally burnt down to ashes during the Islam's second caliphate Omar invasion with his order reasoning that having had the Holy book they did not need any others. It was four centuries after the conquest of Iran by the Arabs, when Omar Khayyam the great Iranian philosopher and poet in total disappointment found himself and other scientists and intellectuals frustrated against the stubbornness of the invaders in propagating the philosophy of ignorance and wrath (Dashti, 1977).

Despite Iranians' resistance for centuries, the rule of sword and blood, intolerance of any enlightening movement, a step by step eradication of millennium old Iranian civilization and ruthless measures helped supplant the Zoroasterian philosophy and establish the nascent immature Islamic one. The smartness of the Arabs and their governors are quite notorious here when they stubbornly resist all Pan Iranistic and anti Arab movements for centuries all over the Iranian land knowing the fact that keeping their flags up will at last thwart the visible tips of the millennium old Iranian cultural ice berg. Now that fourteen centuries have passed since the Islamic forces invaded Persia, we see how the philosophical infrastructure and cultural bedrocks have undergone an unprecedented metamorphosis. During the first few centuries after the onset of Islam, Iranian history is full of anti-Islam riots throughout different parts of Persia, ones which were finally silenced through the force of sword and blood. Today a big majority of the Iranians, even the intellectuals are proud to be Muslims and discussing Iranian philosophical heritage even in many academic settings is out of the question. As it can be very confidently pointed out, this

historical transformation was at the beginning through hard elements. The Arabs invasion took years to let the Islamic forces first tread the Iranian lands, then decades later when the Islamic Caliphate in Baghdad governed Iran through the rule of its governors throughout Iran, frequent bloody riots nationwide against the Arabs' rule wrest peace both from the Iranians and their Arab governors. Several centuries later, today, we see how soft elements have successfully replaced the hard ones. Too many millions of the Iranians today yearn to visit Mecca and Karbala and while millions visit Imam Reza's Holy city of Mashhad, few might even know that one of the greatest guardians of Iranian culture and history, Ferdowsi lies only a few miles away.

The society yearned by Avesta, in which man was assumed to be the sculptor of his life and the guardian of earth, is now while lying on his back extravagantly dissipating his nation's wealth and depleting natural resources while mindlessly praying Heaven to sort things out for them.

Unlike Zoroasterianism, Semetic ideology stricken cultures, lack the potential of reforming and recreation. They in most cases, keep and support the old paradigms which are in most cases illusory and rehearse them hundreds and thousands of years only in order not to let it be questioned the least possible. They teach their followers that accomplishment and perfection in a paradoxical notion lie safe in sticking to the past. This critical set-back in one word tangles up their followers minds with a destructive version of absolutism. Iranians have unintentionally cremated their historical nucleus, have buried the remnants and have virtually broken off with what in my term can be the stamina and vitality of a great social drive and then have helped domination of a radical Islamic rule and its mastery over time.

Iranian literate must know that cultural themes, historical and philosophical attributes are the prime drive behind any nation's strategic intent. Herman (1970) resembles (corporate) culture to an iceberg. In the outer layer, there are overt elements (which are mostly formally accepted like goals, technology, structure, policies, strategies, and financial resources). In the sub-surface section lie covert and informal elements such as corporal life which includes social presumptions, attitudes, shared feelings along with a collection of shared values toward humans, the essence of human relations, and all what the corporate can recollect (Herman, 1970). Undoubtedly, what is of utmost importance is the sub-surface layers of the iceberg which leads the behavior and direction of the outer layer. The sub-surface layer is what has been formed and compiled during history and is the outcome of the historical ups and downs, turmoil, and probably pains, and is the same thing which under "double

and multiple loop learning processes” emerges from social, economic, and cultural interaction amongst social members and has, thus, become all-including totality and has constituted the collective wisdom of the society. However, it must be clearly pointed out that these historical and cultural bedrocks have not proved to be insurmountable and as we see in the case of Iran against Islam, they can be slowly and gradually pushed down deep to the unconscious of the society. Due to historical events and their interaction with the contemporary paradigms, older themes slowly immigrate to the sub-surface section and newly born attributes will be translated into the body of the outer layer which, in turn, constitutes the strategic intent of the society. When a cultural setback with a ruling destructive current is emerging in a society, it is the elite only who can play the enlightening role while the masses are tangled up with the current. It will be then the elite who will take up their fight against history and time and it has always proved to be a deadly fight in which, paradoxically though, the elite will find the masses on their opposite. The elite will then tremble the very foundations of the ruling paradigms. Will this happen in Iran? We will have to wait and see.

No doubt that the old patterns as the cultural themes and historical attributes are not totally demolished but rather taken to the unconscious layers and they still possess the potential of revitalization to emerge and lead the strategic direction of the outer layers. That’s why in management studies, culture along with its historic course of development is a very crucial subject we should be cautious not to fail to address properly. History proves pivotal in social and management studies of any society and similarly important for development purposes are historic and social notions along with philosophy which must be brought into attention.

The most notorious cultural and philosophical attributes, which were incorporated into the Iranians’ collective thought frames with the inception of Islam and drastically influencing their management systems, are as below:

Fatalism

Fatalism is a basic tenet of the Islamic teachings in Quran and Arab and Iranian exegetes of Quran later helped it disseminate throughout Iran. It negates all free will and all attempts for change. Man’s passivity to his surroundings and his submissiveness to whatever pain befalls him are very decisively supported by Muslim clerics. To prevent any misinterpretation, we must clarify that this is a philosophical subject which could also be spotted in Iran before the inception of Islam. However, the conquest of the Arabic-Semitic philosophy totally eradicated whatever positive work had been done through the work of

Iranian sophisticated elite to erode it to the date.

Denying the Role of Human Intellect, Wisdom and Logic

The inception of Islam in the 7th century and the freedom given to Islamic missionaries shackled almost all philosophical breakthroughs of the Iranians and marginalized all Iranian intellectuals. Many Iranian scholars such as Zarrinkoob (1957) have named the first couple of centuries of the Islamic rule in Iran “centuries of silence” meaning that intellectual works of the Iranians were almost totally suppressed (Zarrinkoob, 1957). Concepts like rationalism already had the dominance before the invasion of Islam.

The Akhbaris and Asharis were two of those thought schools which were given unprecedented freedom to contradict Iranian logic and philosophy under the rule of Islam. They simply rejected the use of reasoning and rationalism and instead relied totally on the Quran and Hadith (sayings of prophet Mohammad and his relatives and friends). However this suppression faced Iranian elite opposition first through the enlightening movement of the Motazele (separatist movement established by Wasel Ibn Ata (700-748) who questioned the Islamic philosophy of ignorance and tried to revitalize the Iranian rationalism and wisdom) in early 9th and 10th centuries (Surhone, Tennoe, & Henssonow, 2011). Several movements like this were one after the other silenced by force. Some researchers even relate the emergence of the Iranian Sufism and Erfaan as an intellectual revolt to the bloody suppression of the Iranian philosophy and propagation of ignorance and injustice (Mirfetros, 1990).

Iranian philosophers such as Ave Sina, Aburihan Birooni and Raazi all emerged in this era but were all disrespected and pressured both by the governing system and by the collective thought patterns and social presumptions which were now already at a precarious turning point. The cultural and philosophical bedrocks now needed only several decades or most probably a couple of centuries to reach the threshold of an unprecedented metamorphosis. Starting from 11th century the Iranian masses were all awakened with the sound of Adhan (the call for prayers), were proud to be Muslims and the elite too mostly were fluent Arabic speakers or writers. However, up to this date many Iranian intellectuals with the intention of revitalizing the old good days, have been either assassinated or marginalized by common forces or the Islamist governors. Sohravardi, Mansoor Ibn Hallaj, Amir Kabir, Mosadeq and Reza Khan and many others can be named.

Throughout the Holy Quran, man is reminded of the uselessness and futility of this world and hence the life on it. He is always frightened to be wary that life is not a chance of trial and

error but rather a precarious path full of risky traps at the end of which only a sinless, flawless passage is acceptable. Worldly pleasures and hence their related knowledge and tools to retain them are all rejected as sinful and transient. Man is not here to prioritize logic and philosophy, math, physics, and art. Human involvement with these stops him from caring and preparing for the world after. Supremacy of the afterlife is correlated with discrediting knowledge, scientism, and all efforts to acquire them.

Being Soft Rather than Hard

There is no doubt that management is a hard element, i.e., managers tend to be strategy-oriented meaning that they try to keep sustainability with the prime goals in mind, linking the short-range goals to the long-range vision, mission, and the true collective goals of the society. Ideology and religion, on the other hand, are too soft. What matters most in ideology is not a set of clearly defined rules which keep up with the pace of occurrences during time, but whimsical and taste-bound interpretations of religion. Ideologies and religions begin to diverge into different directions soon after inception and war of exegetes soon becomes the war of groups proving that too much softness negates the privilege of integrity and being hard. What is most precarious is that visions and prime goals are always forsaken while practicing softness.

Absence of Feedback

Self-checking on the outcomes of the human behavior is a universal fact of humans. No matter where you are born and brought up, you are intrinsically willing to peruse what the feedbacks of your actions are. This is something that is absolutely missing in the Semetic and Islamic philosophy. Frequent attempts at something while delaying the feedbacks or reactions may be depressing psychologically speaking and could cause mental complexes in the long run. While humans are intrinsically tuned in to see the outcomes of their endeavors, Islamic philosophy promises actors to await consequences not in their life time but in the afterworld. This is a philosophical set back which has pounded unprecedentedly the Iranian true philosophy after the inception of Islam. Details and dimensions may be out of the potential of this paper. However it needs to be addressed by the academicians and the managerial elite of the country.

Alienation

“Monotheistic religions themselves have, to a large extent, regressed into idolatry. Man projects his power of love and of reason unto God; he does not feel them any more as his own

powers, and then he prays to God to give him back some of what he, man, has projected unto God. In early Protestantism and Calvinism, the required religious attitude is that man should feel himself empty and impoverished, and put his trust in the grace of God, that is, into the hope that God may return to him part of his own qualities, which he has put into God.

Every act of submissive worship is an act of alienation and idolatry in this sense. What is frequently called ‘love’ is often nothing but this idolatrous phenomenon of alienation; only that not God or an idol, but another person is worshiped in this way. The ‘loving’ person in this type of submissive relationship, projects all his or her love, strength, and thought, into the other person, and experiences the loved person as a superior being, finding satisfaction in complete submission and worship. This does not only mean that he fails to experience the loved person as a human being in his or her reality, but that he does not experience himself in his full reality, as the bearer of productive human powers. Just as in the case of religious idolatry, he has projected all his richness into the other person, and experiences this richness not any more as something which is his, but as something alien from himself, deposited in somebody else, with which he can get in touch only by submission to, or submergence in the other person. The same phenomenon exists in the worshipping submission to a political leader, or to the state. The leader and the state actually are what they are by the consent of the governed, But they become idols when the individual projects all his powers into them and worships them, hoping to regain some of his powers by submission and worship” (Fromm, 1956, p. 119-120). What we strictly believe is that leaving a much more mature philosophy of life grown from historical and cultural attributes and mythological heritage, which have in turn deeply rooted from the Arian’s fight for better days within their geography, at the expense of an immature, rigid, and a submissive one and practicing it for centuries has not only, according to Herman (1970), changed the culture but has also alienated the whole nation from itself according to Fromm (1956). However, the challenges of the prevalent philosophy of today’s Iran are not limited to the above, as there are other aspects which need to be addressed but we have outlined the most notorious ones.

With regards to the second hypothesis, we may not even briefly touch on the historical ups and downs, failures, conquests, and the wars Iranians have gone through during history mostly because of Iran’s geographical position as even outlining the events may make a long list. Needless to say that Iranians have gone through more tumult than peace during history and I suppose we would better, for brevity, touch on it in our next work.

CONCLUSION

Studying philosophical and cultural attributes of Iran is not possible without taking history into account. Surely current philosophy and the prevalent culture can not be seen independently as a big single point in the midst of a bigger white sheet, but rather, observing the most fundamental principle of the humanitarian studies, we envisage concepts of culture and philosophy holistically as collective outcomes resulting from linear and unbroken chain of events. Events are interconnected and each precludes the succeeding one while they tend to leave a collective impact. Any nation's history, no matter how long, complicated or enormous it is seen holistically, but the nation itself, culture and its philosophy can be studied at different stages within that history. Iranians can be proud of their philosophy, culture, and civilization at different stages of their history but the Iran we have inherited today needs to undergo various surgical operations culturally and philosophically and for this, relying on its

past is an inevitable panacea. However, I hope that philosophy will more seriously be translated into management studies, especially in some Middle Eastern and also The Gulf nations as we believe they have been mostly affected by haphazard management systems relying on tumultuous philosophy in the fight between past and modernity.

There is no doubt that Far East nations like Japan, South Korea, and China have benefited greatly from their rich philosophy mostly inherited from Confucianism and they have carried over the bedrocks of this philosophy very cleverly through history to their current management paradigms. Some Middle Eastern nations like on top of them Iran has taken their rich philosophy for granted. With regards to Japan, China, and South Korea, their being located in the Far East and much away from the earth's "turmoil belt"² has helped their Confucian philosophical attributes not be shaken off every now and then as our second hypothesis points out for Iran.

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²By turmoil belt we mean the very geographical belt stretching from Pakistan way up to Syria and Lebanon including Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon which have seldom experienced long term peace after the second world war.

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– This article does not have any appendix. –