



Ελληνική Εταιρεία Γεωγραφικών Μελετών  
«Ο Στράβων»

## **IRAN: BRIEF COMMON SENSE REFLECTIONS ON THE SOCIAL EXPLOSION**

Iran, is a great country, geographically, historically, civilization-wise. Iran is a huge fortress extending from the Caucasus and Central Asia to the (Persian) Gulf and the rest of the Indian Ocean. Iran is a Moslem Shia country but the psyche of Iran is pro-Islamic, it is Zoroastrian. Persia has been for seven centuries the other great power, the rival of our Roman Empire. It succumbed to the Prophet's blitz armies in the plains of Mesopotamia late 636 AD but they managed to retain their physiognomy by opting for, expanding too Shia manifestation of the Quran. Persian Shiism inherited discreet dualistic dogmas of Zoroaster, more pronounced in the Alevi teachings of indigenous eastern Anatolian populations, in the Yezidis of upper Mesopotamia, the dervishes of Mevlana and the Bektashi orders, and certainly with the Syrian Alawites.

Nowadays, the suppressed elements of the Persian psyche struggle to re-emerge, no matter their particular ethnic or regional background, be it Parthian, median, Azeri, Bakhtiari, Baluch, Kurdish or Khorasani. They are all bearers of, imbued by the sophisticated Persian civilization and culture.

The economic malaise felt even by the generally loyal tradesmen of the Bazaar has been the trigger of the ongoing upheaval. The initial unrest is endogenous, as broad social strata have been hammered by the prolonged western sanctions, mismanagement and corruption within the "Islamic democracy".

It is exceedingly difficult to stem the flow of this huge river of the present Iranian revolt. Yet, no outside intervention will help democracy prevail in Iran. Selective approach would help, wholesale military intervention not. Afghanistan and Iraq lessons are there to stay. Talk of return of Reza Pahlevi will not carry the day; it is a fantasy disseminated by the higher echelons of Iranian emigre circles. Pro shah propaganda plays in the watermill of the Great Leader, as it reinforces the belief that Iran is threatened by the enemy.

Have a look at the regional dynamics; as situation in Iran becomes day by day more tense and volatile, regional actors are in a hurry to coordinate their approaches and tackle to the extent possible the security and stability conundrum in case things degenerate to a civil war and hence chaos prevails in Teheran. This is the reason Turkey and Pakistan hasten to join forces with their antagonist, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and get ready to set up a triangle formation, echoing the Baghdad Pact of the 1950s. There should be no illusion that all three are worried, Turkey more so, as Iranian Kurds have taken advantage of the Bazaar's disaffection to manifest their own opposition to the rule of the state.

Do not expect China and Russia to stay idle as the tumult unfolds. They both have interests in Iran. For China is the procurement of oil and gas, for Russia the Busherr nuclear power plant, as well as reciprocal defence industrial co operation. Do not disregard the Republic of Armenia on the northern bank of river Araxes (Aras); Armenians consider Iran, for whatever it counts, no matter who is at the helm of power in Tehran, a good friend in the face of Azeris and Turks.

STRAVON s bet is that the current Iranian regime as a whole will not be overthrown. Political rights western fashion, will not be established in this great country of southern Asia. Yet, the regime will exit the present big crisis weakened both internally and on the international stage. Its internal equilibria will be adjusted. "Modernists" and "secularists" would gain ground at the expense of traditionalists and hardliners? It remains to be seen. The overall stability of the regime structure will not be put into question by factions within it, as this will destroy the whole ruling edifice. Revolutionary Guards (Pazdaran), the army, Islamic clergy, Majlis (parliament), will not invite their own demise. The regime will walk a tight rope: they are forced to initiate a relaxation of involvement in the private sphere of the individual at the behest of president Pezeshkian or his successor, they will have to deal with the hot potato of the Great Leader s fate, without giving ground on the political level, without jeopardizing the core of their Islamic republic. An Iranian perestroika is a very risky option, but there is no alternative, unless a wave of Islamic terror represents one.

STRAVON, to the same degree as the entire world community does, through his Hellenic intellectual glasses, will keep following the Iranian tragedy.

***STRAVON of Amaseia,  
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