

ESSAY 29 – BOOK REVIEW

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Fast Forward to Frashgard

- A Review of Jason Reza Jorjani, *Iranian Leviathan*.
A Monumental History of Mithra's Abode (Arktos: London, 2019)
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*I carry a torch in one hand
And a bucket of water in the other
With these things I am going to set fire to heaven
And put out the flames of hell
So that voyagers to God can rip the veils
And see the real goal
- Rabia of Bassorah*

Preliminaries: Persian Propaedeutics

(*) *Spelling, terminology, definitions.* Here, the writer adheres to the Iranological spelling conventions, terminology choices and concept definitions he applied and explained in his earlier review of Jorjani's earlier work *World State of Emergency*: cf. Wolfheze, *Rupes Nigra*, 335ff.

(*) *References.* For brevity's sake, footnotes for this review chapter have been kept limited to three categories: (1) proper attribution of literary references, (2) page references to relevant content in the reviewer's own published work and (3) occasional content critiques. Many additional notes would be required to provide the reader with the linguistic-etymological and cultural-historical references necessary to truly appreciate the depth and scope of *Iranian Leviathan*, but this would cause the review text to be exceeded by its note apparatus. Those readers interested in delving into the fascinating world of Iranology may consult the introductory remarks given in the author's work *Rupes Nigra* (335ff, 429-30).¹

(*) *Organization.* The review of Jorjani's *Iranian Leviathan* given in this chapter is organized according to the reviewer's analytical scheme rather than Jorjani's chapter structure. *Iranian Leviathan* is not only monumental in intent and conception but also massive in scope and size (comprising fully 584 pages), yet it offers a well-balanced mix of philosophical, historical and political subject-matter that will keep the reader engaged through the originality of many of its ideas and the variety of subjects it touches upon. Jorjani has divided his work into twelve chapters that are organized in a mixed thematic-chronological fashion: the first three chapters introduce three key theses (respectively, the 'Mithraic substrate religion', the 'Iranian origin of philosophy' and the 'Achaemenid Gautama=Buddha=Lao Tan Tzu' theses), the middle six chapters present a chronologically organized 'mythopoetic' re-interpretation of Iranian cultural

¹ For a summary overview of Iranian history by the reviewer, published under another name, cf. Merijn Gantzert, 'Appendix 1 - Timeline of Persian History' in: Siroos Bahadori, Kees van Burg, Merijn Gantzert, *Qashqa'i Life. The Legacy of a Nomadic People in the Paintings of Bijan Bahadori* (Mosae Verbo: Maastricht, 2015) 121-3.

history and the last three chapters give the author's conclusions regarding the archetypal character, present predicament and future potential of Iran as a world power. Because the reviewer has set himself the task of analyzing *Iranian Leviathan* from a Traditionalist perspective, thus in certain ways 'reverse-engineering' the Prometheist perspective of its author, this review chapter necessarily follows a different organization. Another reason for the difference in organization is the reviewer's wish to make *Iranian Leviathan* accessible to the Dissident Right movement - to 'weaponize' it for the Dissident Right, so to speak. Thus, paragraph 1, 'Lettres', serves to point out the value of *Iranian Leviathan* - and, by extension, the whole of Jorjani's work, of which *Iranian Leviathan* is merely a(n important) part - for the Dissident Right. The following three paragraphs serve to point out the relation between Prometheism, which shapes the whole of Jorjani's oeuvre, and Traditionalism, which has been a recurrent reference point in the reviewer's published writings. Thus, paragraphs 2, 'Prometheus', 3, 'Beyond', and 4, 'Judgment', address, respectively, the different perspectives, the shared postulates and the complementary functionalities of Prometheism and Traditionalism. Next, paragraphs five through ten contain the book review proper. Paragraph 5, 'Mundus', introduces the topic matter of *Iranian Leviathan* in a general manner. Paragraphs 6, 'Aşabiyyah', and 7, 'Hommage', give short assessments of the implicit premises and secondary theses of *Iranian Leviathan*. Paragraph 8, 'Caucasian', gives an in-depth overview of Iranian Leviathan's main thesis, viz. the historical continuity of (crypto-)Mithraism as the foundational metanarrative of Iranian civilization. Finally, paragraphs 9, 'Scythian', and 10, 'Fiore', sketch a Traditionalist prognosis and an Archaeo-Futurist end-vision based on Jorjani's text - both highly relevant for Dissident Right meta-politics.

(*) *Assessment.* *Iranian Leviathan* represents a ground-breaking investigation into core elements of Iranian identity as well as into the roots of Indo-European philosophy. Characterized by Jorjani's usual combination of erudition and originality, *Iranian Leviathan* combines many highly philosophical insights with a tour de force overview of three millennia of Iranian cultural history. Solidly grounded in up-to-date historical literature and applying an innovative multidisciplinary approach, Jorjani lays bare the archetypal forces that structure Iranian culture. Perhaps its best chapters are those on Hafez (his Ch. 8) and Imam Khomeini (his Ch. 11), giving Western readers an 'insider's view' of these key figures in Iranian history. Occasionally impetuous and abrasive, its only weakness is its lack of a comprehensive explanatory apparatus for non-specialist Western readers - for them, *Iranian Leviathan* simply takes too much knowledge for granted. Plunging into the deep and under-explored ocean of Iranology with *Iranian Leviathan*, however, these readers will likely be motivated to do their own homework. *Iranian Leviathan* is many things at once: a rich hunting literary ground for history detectives, unexpected food for thought for Iranologists and obligatory reading for Dissident Right thinkers.

1. 'Lettres Persanes' (Rightist Recommendations)

Despite its ostensible 'exotic' - one is tempted to suspect intentionally 'inverse-orientalist' - focus, *Iranian Leviathan* offers ground-breaking thinking relevant to the whole field of Dissident Right meta-politics, i.e. Dissident Rightist 'applied political philosophy'. The exotic focus of *Iranian Leviathan*, which is effectively an iconoclastic re-writing of the cultural history of Iran, the nation into which Jorjani's father was born and for which he has been politically

engaged, does not need to distract or discourage Western Dissident Right readers - for three reasons.

(A) The first is that for Westerners the study of Iran is, in fact, the study of a closely related nation: its people, language and culture are an integral part of the larger Indo-European family of peoples, languages and cultures to which most European nations belong (the most notable exceptions being the Finno-Ugric nations - the Fins, Estonians and Hungarians). In fact, the ancient but still living religion of Iran, Zoroastrianism, preserves the oldest - even archetypal - religious concepts of the Indo-European peoples to a far greater degree than Semitic-origin Christianity does in Europe. The fact that the core identity of the Iranian nation - as carried across time by genetic and memetic continuities in the form of uniquely specialized and diachronically stable ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural structures - has remained separate and intact for over three millennia has long been recognized by Western researchers and literati; it is the very premise of the - lately somewhat neglected and marginalized - academic discipline of Iranology. One of the achievements of *Iranian Leviathan* is that it allows Western laymen to easily grasp the quintessentially Indo-European - and *Aryan* - root identity of the Iranian nation and its remarkable cultural-historical continuity across the centuries.

(B) Secondly, it should be noted that Jorjani's *Iranian Leviathan*, while academically and scientifically grounded, was written for a *metapolitical* purpose, viz. to serve as the political-philosophical grounding of the Iranian Renaissance movement of which Jorjani is a co-founder. This is directly relevant to the metapolitical project of the Western Dissident Right movement because, in unearthing Iran's core identity and in rewriting Iran's history for the Iranian Renaissance movement, Jorjani has unearthed much that needs unearthing and he has rewritten much that needs rewriting for the Western Dissident Right to achieve solid political-philosophical foundations as well. These valuable unearthings and rewritings primarily refer to the numinously-charged *archetypes*, i.e. identity-creating and teleology-determining transcendence-referencing model ideas and sovereignty principles, that once, long ago, created and shaped the European peoples and cultures. Across an immense gulf of time and space, the most primordial, and thus most powerful incarnations of these archetypes are the common - proto- and pre-historic - heritage of the three great branches into which Indo-European humanity split at the dawn of history: the Indian, Iranian and European branches. These archetypes include abstract 'spiritual' directives, such as the 'word power' command principles of *Nomos*, *Techne* and *Evangelion* in the European Tradition, with direct equivalents in the Iranian and Iranian Traditions, no less than concrete 'cultural' expressions, such as the (Proto-)Indo-Europeans' shared root-cosmology, root-language and root-social hierarchy. In fact, the latter category of 'tangible' (i.e. scientifically attested in the past and materially expressed in the present) cultural expressions must be considered *secondary* to the former category of 'intangible' spiritual expressions: the latter merely represent the past and present vehicles for the future-directed 'programs' disguised in the former. Jorjani explicitly recognizes this state of affairs and proposes a deliberate reactivation of the primordial - truly *most ancestral* - Indo-European archetypes to achieve nationalist-revolutionary Iranian Renaissance. For the European Dissident Right to achieve a nationalist-revolutionary victory over the nihilist - and now totalitarian - globalist regimes of the West would require nothing less. To argue that, for the European peoples to have *any* future - i.e. to survive, overcome and overturn the effects of decennia of deliberate ethnic replacement, economic dispossession and social deconstruction by a globalist hostile elite hell-bent on their utter destruction - nothing less than a decisive - and

decisionist - reappropriation of their oldest and powerful archetypes will do is not some 'academic' exercise in 'abstract' reasoning, but a do-or-die imperative. This logically brings this recommendation of Jorjani's *Iranian Leviathan* as urgent reading for the Dissident Right to its third and final argument - the argument of *Realpolitik*.

(C) Thirdly and finally, it is necessary to point to the insights that Jorjani's *Iranian Leviathan* provide for real-world Dissident Right (geo)politics. His cultural-historical analysis of the unique (place- and people-bound) and ideal (history- and incident-overriding) nature of Iran's national identity - as ethically and aesthetically utopian - and Iran's historical vocation - as grand-scale imperial and civilizational - affirms, expands and *updates* the foundational philosophical validations for ethno-nationalist politics of other Dissident Right-relevant thinkers. Jorjani effectively expands the complementary notions of *Blut und Boden* (physical adaptation to group-specific evolutionary niches and self-sustaining biotopes, Darré), *Haus des Seins* (psychological adaption to group-specific communication strategies and thought disciplines) and *Narod* (sociological adaption to existential threats and ethno-kinetic processes, Dugin) by analyzing the 'spectral' aspects of ethnic identity and historical statehood. The spectral aspects of ethnicity and statehood are, above all, relevant to their transcendental 'sanctions' (historical origins, present-day anchors, future-shaping directives), i.e. the 'word power' structures that underpin all forms of ethnicity and statehood, including their most ambitiously abstract historical forms: the Israelite covenant-nation as 'chosen people' and the Anglo-Saxon world-empire as 'New World Order'. To the extent that these spectral aspects include the preservation - or deliberate creation - of cosmological 'openings' by which non-human forces can enter the human life-world, they account for authentic experiences of a numinous nature, with an impact at the collective level. Such 'openings' can be directed either upward, into the superhuman sphere, or downward, into the subhuman sphere. The former category includes the ritual and institutional recognition of prophecy, initiation and charisma in traditional cultures, such as the 'gifts of the Holy Spirit' in the formerly Christian West. The latter category includes the mass hallucinations, collective psychoses and demonic possessions in modern societies, such as the covid-panic, the woke-ideology and the narcissism epidemic in the now nihilist West. The suppression of these sub-human 'underworld' forces, now directly entering the life-world of 'modern' humanity, depends on the reactivation of the super-human 'heavenly' powers that are expressed and preserved in the kind of archetypal forces that are unearthed and reappropriated in Jorjani's *Iranian Leviathan*. No matter how disappointed and disheartened many Dissident Rightists may have been by past failures (most prominently the self-inflicted implosion of the Alt-Right and the controlled opposition distractions of 'Brexit' and 'Trump' in 2017) and by present predicaments (most prominently the practically unopposed triple blow of Covid-totalitarianism, BLM cultural revolution and the Biden-coup in 2020), they can take heart from the simple realization that the outcome of the war against the nihilist globalist regime depends on one single issue: the *spiritual reawakening of our peoples*.

In his *Iranian Leviathan* Jorjani has done all that can be humanly done to point out the ancient Aryan archetypes that, once reappropriated, can direct the Iranian people towards their greatest potential and an unexpectedly self-surpassing future. Western readers of *Iranian Leviathan*, written by a great thinker who is not only solidly grounded in Western philosophy but who is also as solidly [Dissident] Right as it gets, can take heart: these self-same archetypes are *ours*. Even as we are reminded of the daunting and dangerous task of reigniting the Promethean fire preserved in these archetypes - and thus in the hearts of our peoples - we can rejoice: once

reignited, this fire will devour all before it and burn down the whole world of our enemies.

*I Am come to create
Into your heart fire
- Sol Seppy, 'MARK'*

2. 'Prometheus Bound' (Traditionalist Perspectives)

At the very outset, it should be emphatically stated that the book review found in this chapter approaches its subject matter, which is a major work of culture-historical research, critique and speculation that can be categorized as Futurist and - intentionally - *iconoclastic*, from a - formally most - *anti-iconoclastic* perspective, viz. the Traditionalist perspective. At first glance, this counter-intuitive juxtaposition - exposing the most Traditionalist and the most Futurist ideas to each other - may appear to be self-defeating to the point of guaranteeing a 'Mutually Assured Destruction' outcome, but appearances can deceive. In his capacity of book researcher and thought investigator for the European Dissident Right movement, the reviewer estimates that this movement - and the nativist-identitarian resistance to cultural-nihilist globalism as a whole - would be well advised to follow to the 'Archaeo-Futurist' vision of its recently-deceased leading light, Guillaume Faye (French Nouvelle Droite philosopher, 1949-2019). Faye's vision does not aim at a mere stabilization and preservation of 'archaic', i.e. historically recognizable, European humanity in its doubly natural and cultural habitat - although it may be argued that a somewhat 'necromantic' *reanimation* would have to precede even such a limited enterprise - but rather at properly aligning the numinously-charged archetypal, i.e. identity-creating and teleology-determining, forces that once created the European peoples and cultures with the 'futurist', i.e. purposefully nature- and culture-transforming forces (Spengler's 'Faustian' and Jorjani's 'Promethean' forces) that have recently been unleashed by Western techno-idealism and that are now engulfing the whole of humanity and all of the Earth. According to Faye's theory, the current 'sorcerer's apprentice' course of the collective Faustian-Promethean societal experiment, triggered by Western techno-idealism, are self-destructive in the sense that it is causing the demographic collapse, social implosion and ethnic replacement of the peoples that embarked upon it, but they may yet be corrected by political intervention of the decisionist variety. Such an intervention, however, should be sufficient well attuned to the uniquely dynamic - explorative, innovative, boundary-crossing - *ethos* of the collective European *ethnos*.

Faye intuitively grasped the urgent need of the European peoples to achieve a revolutionary break-out of the psycho-historically determined but philosophically anachronistic, now increasingly ethically and aesthetically fatal, public sphere dichotomy between, on the one hand, supposedly science-based and utilitarian-defined 'progress' and, on the other hand, supposedly superstition-derived and privilege-bound 'tradition'. As the architects and carriers of Western civilization, the most 'developed' (technologically advanced, materially prosperous) and psycho-socially experiment-prone world-civilization, the European peoples - here defined as including the European settler-nations found in the Americas, South Africa and Oceania - are now facing the full impact of the potentially fatal side-effects of having become, to all intents and purposes, the creators of the modern world. The socio-economic conditions and psycho-cultural conditionings of 'modernity' have exposed the European peoples to a multi-faceted existential crisis of unprecedented proportions that Faye described as a 'Convergence

of Catastrophes'. Elsewhere, the reviewer has already drawn attention to the effective coalescence of the Traditionalist analysis of the 'Crisis of the Modern World', most clearly delineated by René Guénon (French metaphysicist, 1886-1951), and Faye's 'Convergence of Catastrophes' analysis of the multiple mortal dangers facing the European peoples and their civilization, an analysis that Jason Jorjani (American philosopher, b. 1981), author of the work under review here, has philosophically grounded in his previous work *World State of Emergency* (Arktos: London, 2017). There, the reviewer has synthesized these three analyses (basically 'updating' Traditionalist 'end of the cycle' mathesis) and in doing so he has categorized the self-evident effects of the apocalypse-level crisis described in these analyses under four headings: social implosion, ethnic replacement, transhumanist supersession and anthropogenic ecocide. The reviewer logically agrees with Jorjani's emphasis on the larger-than-life threat of transhumanist supersession, which would be the inevitable outcome of a technological 'singularity', triggering a 'spectral revolution' and possibly a planetary-scale 'technocalypse'. Clearly, this threat outweighs the more 'down-to-earth' threats to Western civilization posed by social implosion and ethnic replacement. For the record, however, it should be noted that the fourth threat identified by the reviewer, viz, anthropogenic global climate change, conspicuously neglected in Dissident Right discourse, may very well, and at shorter-than-thought notice, render moot all discussion of the other threats: catastrophic anthropogenic climate change is the outcome of a long-term process that the reviewer has elsewhere described as Dark Age humanity's ecocidal 'war against the world' and that is now not unlikely to end in an extinction-level event 'nature bats last' scenario (cf. Wolfheze, *Sunset*, 127-54). This 'rogue climate' caveat aside, the coalescence of Guénon's Crisis of the Modern World, Faye's Convergence of Catastrophes and Jorjani's World State of Emergency provides sufficient grounds for a Traditionalist investigation into the - respectively, 'Archaeo-Futurist' and 'Prometheist'² - exit-strategies that Faye and Jorjani propose for the apocalypse-level crisis that they foresee. Thus, Jorjani's *Iranian Leviathan* represents required reading for all remaining 'Deep Right' thinkers. Beyond that, given the fact that quality-thinkers are preciously few and far between these days, his proposed Prometheist exit strategy should be given serious thought by the whole Dissident Right. More bluntly put: if the Dissident Right is to maintain its current head-start advantage in its do-or-die metapolitical arms race with globalist-totalitarian nihilism, it has no choice but to exploit Jorjani's philosophical breakthrough into the hitherto unknown terrain of Prometheism.

This raises the question as to the role of all the earlier philosophies, ideologies and world-views that have gone into making the Dissident Right as it stands today. In this regard it should be noted that the Dissident Right's lack of a precise philosophical, ideological and world-view identity may, in fact, well turn out to be its greatest asset: the Dissident Right - even the

² Jorjani's Prometheism (cf. his 'Prometheist Manifesto', published on Independence Day 2020 and freely accessible at *Prometheism.com*) should not be confused with the identically named Intermarium-based and anti-Russian geopolitical project that was promoted by Polish statesman Pilsudski and heavily influenced Polish foreign policy during the interbellum years. It should be noted that the recent resurrection of 'Neo-Prometheist' geopolitics in the Intermarium region represents an artificial and globalist-sponsored initiative rather than an authentic indigenous movement. The fate of this globalist 'Neo-Prometheist' strategy seems rather sinister, resulting in a series of disasters for its leaders and the countries they represent. In 2007, Polish President Kaczynski and Georgian President Saakashvili jointly unveiled a statue of Prometheus in Tbilisi - less than a year later, Saakashvili's war of aggression against South Ossetia resulted in Georgia being invaded and decisively beaten by Russia. Kaczynski subsequently perished in the 2010 Smolensk Air Disaster. Saakashvili lost the Georgian presidential elections of 2012, went into exile to start a second political career in Ukraine, only to be deported from there to Poland in 2018 - he has forfeited both his Georgian and his Ukrainian nationality.

designation itself is turning into an anachronism as we speak - has a decisive advantage in its *openness*. This openness allows it to deal with - digest, absorb, overcome - the ongoing transformations of the Western life-world, which are historically unprecedented in terms of speed, scope and implications. Over the course of just a single generation, economic globalization, automatized production, worldwide digitalization, big data-based surveillance, mass migration and global warming have already changed the physical Western life-world beyond recognition. A new stage of transformation was reached with the Covid-BLM-Biden-coup triple blow of 2020: now, artificial intelligence applications (automated surveillance, algorithmic censorship, 'election safeguard' software) and transhumanist technologies { weaponized viruses, mRNA 'vaccines', nanochip tracking) are being forced on all but the most invisible parts of humanity by totalitarian measures of unprecedented depth and scope. This sped-up rate of transformation, and the rapid onset of societal conditions that make Orwell's '1984' and Huxley's 'Brave New World' visions look childishly optimistic, are effectively forcing the Dissident Right to rise to the challenge and evolve accordingly - it must do or die. The utterly transformative, even world-shattering developments and crises of the 2020s require an appropriate riposte: if the Dissident Right is to ever challenge the globalist cabal that is currently imposing its highly sinister 'new normal' vision virtually unopposed, it must transform itself into something entirely new. The Dissident Right must quite literally re-invent itself and rid itself of all outdated ideas; only thus can it achieve the fully focused, utterly dedicated and ruthlessly bold state of mind that is needed to pull Excalibur out of the stone of history. There is only one answer to the question of what is the present role of all the earlier philosophies, ideologies and world-views that once created the Dissident Right - from 'old right' Integral Nationalism, National Syndicalism, Fascism and National Socialism to 'alt-right' Paleo-Conservatism, Anarcho-Capitalism, Right Libertarianism and White Nationalism - as place-and-time-bound entities, *they are now redundant*. Those elements and insights that are still unique, valuable and useful - true, proven, functional - in them will have to be reworked and fused into something entirely new. In his earlier work, Jorjani recognized this new stage in 'world-view warfare' and in his recent work he has put his philosophical project under the aegis of the ancient Indo-European archetype of Prometheus, proposing the light-bearer as inspiration as a revolutionary guide for all those who wish for a future of *true* progress - a future beyond globalist nihilism, as represented by the conjoined evil twins of liberal-normativism and cultural-marxism, now rapidly coming of age in fully-fledged oligarchic crony-capitalism and woke bio-leninism. *Iranian Leviathan* provides the Dissident Right with a valuable lesson in how Jorjani's universal world-view warfare 'Prometheus Unbound' strategy can be applied to combat these globalist evils at the national level: through the re-construction, re-definition and re-conquest of the archetypes that are foundational to all forms of authentic identity at the highest levels of collective consciousness, i.e. the national and imperial levels. The Dissident Right's quest for its philosophical Hyperborea requires the ability to *out-think* globalist nihilism:

[Let us] resolve to go with bold entreaty whither no man had gone before, and dare the icy deserts through the dark, [into the] unknown, veiled in clouds and crowned with unimagined stars, holding the secret and nocturnal onyx castle of the Great One. - freely inspired by Howard Phillips Lovecraft, 'The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath'

3. *Beyond the Pillars of Hercules*³ (Archaeo-Futurist Postulates)

Given the relevance of *Iranian Leviathan* to the Dissident Right metapolitical project and the radically innovative - often speculative, always iconoclastic - ideas of its author, which tend to break with conventional philosophical categories, it is useful to remind the reader of some basic philosophical reference points by which he can, at least approximately, 'triangulate' the direction of Jorjani's philosophical explorations. The reviewer is content to leave the - eventually unavoidable - formulation of a logically coherent and politically foundational philosophical system for the Dissident Right to those better qualified, but a few basic philosophical reference points will help him appreciate the value of Jorjani's work in creating such a system - and for the 'world-view warfare' that building such a system requires.

(A) First, it is useful to point to the pragmatic (functionally defined) hierarchy of relevant philosophical categories: there, *politics* (i.e. the teleology of authority) is a function of *ethics* (i.e. the teleology of - interactively collective and individual - value judgments), ethics is a function of *epistemology* (i.e. the teleology of knowledge) and epistemology is a function of *ontology* (i.e. the teleology of being). From a Traditionalist perspective, the modern philosophical category of ontology is nothing but another name for the traditional category of *metaphysics*, i.e. the highest reference level of philosophy. Irrespective of the word used, this is the level at which the re-framing and the de-construction of world views can be achieved because this is the level at which *reality* itself is defined and re-defined. The functional difference between modern ontology and traditional metaphysics is found in the fact that the former rejects the transcendental reference point of the latter, where humanly-perceived reality is a function of higher principles. This rejection reduces modern philosophy to its now widely recognized status as a socio-politically meaningless (because self-referential and self-serving) and even psycho-socially detrimental (because nihilistically directed) 'academic exercise'. Jorjani's break-out of the 'groundhog day' vicious circle of modern ontological philosophy is effectively achieved through a reappraisal of modern techno-science (understood as the discursive *frame* of 'ontology') and through the incorporation of cutting-edge research findings regarding the body-mind interface of consciousness itself (understood as the *subject* of human bio-technology as well as non-human psychic phenomena). This break-out - what Jorjani terms the 'Spectral Revolution' - effectively re-establishes metaphysics as the 'apex predator' in the newly reopened field of philosophy.

(B) Second, it is useful to juxtapose some of the cultural-historical terminology that Jorjani uses (adopts, invents, applies) in *Iranian Leviathan*, which includes some highly original and eminently useful neologisms, to other key terminology in the humanities - this will clarify his cultural-philosophical 'drift'. (a) With regard to ethnography, Jorjani adopts Dugin's concept of the crucial formative *Narod* stage of collective (tribal, national) identity. The *Narod* can be defined as an endoconsistent entity, propelled by psychokinetic power with a distinct noetic function: it results in a nested psychic force that restructures the collective and triggers accelerated psychic (hence: psychological, social) evolution. (b) With regard to cultural history, Jorjani adopts the term 'Super Culture', which he uses in a manner somewhat similar to

³ For the author's on the 'Pillars of Hercules' theme in Sacred Geography, cf. Wolfheze, *The Former Earth* (henceforth *TFE*), 48-9 and 183.

Huntington's 'major civilizations' but without Huntington's neglect of the organic relation between ethnicity, culture and civilization. In this regard, it is also useful to point to the close analytical relation between Jorjani's concept of 'Super Culture' and the reviewer's concept of 'Original Imperium', in which the original force of the latter appears as a triggering mechanism for the historical continuity of the former (cf. Wolfheze, *The Former Earth*, henceforth *TFE*, 103-11). (c) With regard to psycho-history, Jorjani effectively recreates the 'Spectral Geography' of Iran to explain the historical development of the Iranian peoples. Key locations, such as the civilizational heartland of Fars Province and the citadel refuge of the Elburz Mountains, are shown to produce and preserve specific manifestations of a 'numinous nature' that consistently retain specific functions throughout Iranian history. Here, again, it is useful to point to the close analytical relation between Jorjani's concept of 'Spectral Geography' and the reviewer's concept of 'Sacred Geography', in which the original force of the latter appears as a triggering mechanism for the residual presence of the former (cf. Wolfheze, *TFE*, 33-9). (d) Again with regard to psycho-history, Jorjani develops the promising concept of 'Spectral History', necessarily closely related to that of 'Spectral Geography' as complementary dimensions of a shared time-space continuum. Jorjani uses this concept to account for the persistently 'haunting' presence and recurrence of quasi-mythological archetypes throughout Iranian history, explaining the rise of enigmatic revolutionary leaders that (partially, provisionally, tentatively) 'incarnate' these archetypes at key junctures. Jorjani points to the continuity of visionary leadership that link early prophets such as Mani (founder of Gnostic-influenced religion of Manichaeism, b. 216 d. 274 or 277 AD) and Mazdak (religious revolutionary leader, b. unknown d. 524 or 528 AD) with later rebels such as Babak Khorramdin (leader of the Khurramite nationalist-sectarian movement, b. ca. 795 d. 838) and Hassan al-Sabbah (founder of the Order of the Assassins, a.k.a. the 'Old Man of the Mountain', b. ca. 1050 d. 1124) - and finally Imam Khomeini (founder and Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, b. 1900 d. 1989). The concept of 'Spectral History' is highly useful for students of European cultural history to explain the recurrent rise of archetype-incarnating 'sacred leaders', as pointed out by Jorjani himself: *Presumed dead - like the Führer of the Third Reich - the spectral sovereign endures outside the limits of the law, as a haunting figure. ...The Germanic term ban designates both an ostracism, namely an exclusion from the community, and also the insignia of the sovereign. ...That sacred man or homo sacer who is outside the hearth, the sacrament, and the law, is the ultimate form of the exiled individual. ...The sacred man, like anything that is taboo, is both something - or rather someone - who at the same time provokes terror and is worthy of veneration. What this figure points us back towards is a twilight zone of awful power that precedes both the dichotomy of the sacred and the profane as well as that of the religious and the political....The ambiguity of the sacred is also the propensity for what is impure, for a thing or a person who is banned as the most contaminated and contaminating creature, to be transmuted into the most holy person in this world - sacred insofar as he is a conduit for a power that seems otherworldly as it breaks through the crust of the mundane. ...Among politicians of our nihilistic age, so far only Adolf Hitler has succeeded in becoming sacred. But someone else is coming* (p. 523-5). (e) With regard to comparative religious studies, Jorjani's central thesis, which identifies (crypto-)Mithraism as the hidden (or: 'esoteric') foundational dialectic and largely unrecognized metanarrative of Iranian civilization and cultural history (cf. paragraph 8, 'Scythian', below), finds an important parallel in Vögelin's well-known analysis of 'political religion' in European cultural history, where he assigns a role to heretical and millenarian 'Gnostic politics' that is strikingly paralleled by the role that Jorjani assigns to similarly inclined 'Mithraic politics' in the Iranian world. Throughout Iranian history,

Jorjani assigns a role to neo- and crypto-Mithraic revolutionary thought, preserved through ‘encryptions’ in non-orthodox esoteric traditions, that parallels the role of Vögelin’s neo- and crypto-Gnostic ‘demonio-maniacal politics’ in European history. The common direction can be sought in what Vögelin terms the ‘Immanization of the Eschaton’ - the forceful, political implementation of a utopian ideal-state. It is not too great a step to conclude that the most easily identifiable common denominator of possible contemporary incarnations of these neo-Mithraic and neo-Gnostic movements would be Jorjani’s *Prometheism*.

(C) Third, it is useful to point to Jorjani’s respectful treatment of the philosophical category *aesthetics* (i.e. the teleology of holistic perception), to which he assigns autonomous status, independent from the category hierarchy listed under point (1) above. This respectful stance towards aesthetics as a hermeneutic instrument of understanding human (human-incarnated and human-created) as well as non-human (natural and imaginal) phenomena (i.e. their analysis as functions of a beauty-perfection principle that incarnates the Highest Referent) is important for all practitioners of true Philo-Sophy, which is the Love of Wisdom: it permits them to break free from sterile rationalist and scientist abstractions and to directly reference their teachings and projects to the Highest Referent.

4. Judgment Day in Duidain (Perennialist Epitaphs)

*And when the word is fulfilled concerning them,
We shall bring forth a beast of the earth to speak unto them
because mankind had not faith in Our revelations.*
- Quran 27:82

If, as stated in the ‘Prometheus Unbound’ paragraph above, the earlier philosophies, ideologies and world-views that once created the Dissident Right have become redundant in the face of the new societal realities of the 2020s’ West, the question arises what, if any, can be the future role of Traditionalism in the presently unfolding critical stage of ‘world-view warfare’ against globalist nihilism. To be sure: raising this question in no way invalidates the Traditionalist premises of the present review. Here, Traditionalist hermeneutics merely serve as a means to an end, viz. to achieve a higher (‘structurally juxtaposed’) analytical perspective. Rather, the question as to the future role of Traditionalism involves its future status as a viable ‘world-view’. Elsewhere, the reviewer has pointed out that, beyond these *hermeneutical* and *world view* aspects of Traditionalism, there exists a third aspect, viz. its *experiential* (ontology-shaping, ‘lived’) aspect. If the first two aspects of Traditionalism are indeed bound for redundancy, the same is not necessarily the case for its third aspect, at least to the extent that this third aspect is *not* bound to any place or time. This quite enigmatic experiential aspect of Traditionalism is also the one aspect that is most substantially synonymous with Traditionalism’s alternative title: *Perennialism*, which refers to its (perceived) concern with ‘eternal wisdom’.

Within the experiential aspect of Traditionalism, the term Perennialism applies to nothing less than the reality of (search for, maintenance of, transformation by) transcendental reference systems in the immanent human life-world, including the *lived* presence of transcendental experiences in the here and now. This reality and this presence are *intrinsic* to the human

condition on Earth: they are, so to say, ‘non-negotiable’ - they are only be declared absent, or programmatically denied, to the extent that the declarer and denier are no longer *human*. The observation that at this particular (‘late’, ‘modern’, ‘dark’) cosmological juncture (or: ‘developmental stage’) ever greater numbers of human-looking creatures devoid of actual humanity are roaming the Earth is entirely compatible with key Traditionalist teachings: the rise of utterly regressed and debased subhuman ‘mass-man’ can be understood and predicted from such teachings as Guénon’s ‘closure of the sacred’ and Baron Evola’s ‘regression of the castes’. The final stage of these historical developments, philosophically grasped as ‘transhumanism’ and popularly intuited as the ‘zombie apocalypse’ (cf. Wolfheze, *Alba Rosa*, 147-86), may very well be the (bio)technological erasure of the human condition or even the physical extinction of the human race - the latter option is also available in an unintended version as the simple, unintended side-effect of an anthropogenic climate apocalypse. In that case, however, Perennialism would still retain its validity - as lived reality - until the very last moment of human history, viz. till the very last breath of the very last human.

To illustrate this point, it is useful to note that the animal-symbol coding of Jorjani’s Prometheism, which equates the rising of a neo-titanic (by transhumanist extension: ‘super-men’-ruled) world-state with the *return of Leviathan* - which is the central theme of *Iranian Leviathan* (‘Iran has been destined to be the Leviathan among nations’, p. 6) - finds its antecedent in Perennialism’s ‘esoteric’ teaching that, at the end of time, the ‘sea monster’ Leviathan will arise simultaneously with its primordial twin, viz. the ‘land monster’ Behemoth. In the Abrahamic Traditions, Leviathan and Behemoth represent the twin-pinnacle of all animal creation, which procreates through the female-male divide and which is ‘evolutionarily’ shaped around the sea-land divide - at this highest pinnacle, both divides coincide in an absolute sense. The greatest animated creatures, Leviathan and Behemoth, represent the boundaries set to human power (they are set aside, invisible and unconquerable) - hence their symbolic associations with the concepts of ‘higher power’ and ‘higher sovereignty’.⁴ Their final rising and their final battle are scheduled for the Day of Judgment - a concept highly appropriate to Jorjani’s Prometheist vision.

I saw how a mighty quaking made the heaven of heavens to quake, and the host of the Most High, and the angels, a thousand thousands and ten thousand times ten thousand, were disquieted with a great disquiet. And the Head of Days sat on the throne of His glory, and the angels and the righteous stood around Him. ...And Michael sent another angel from among the holy ones and he raised me up, and when he had raised me up my spirit returned; for I had not been able to endure the look of this host, and the commotion and the quaking of the heaven. And Michael said unto me: Why art thou disquieted with such a vision? Until this day lasted the day of His mercy; and He hath been merciful and long-suffering towards those who dwell on the earth. And when the day, and the power, and the punishment, and the judgement come, which the Lord of Spirits hath prepared for those who worship not the righteous law, and for those who deny the righteous judgement, and for those who take His name in vain - that day is prepared, for the elect a covenant, but for sinners an inquisition. When the punishment of the Lord of Spirits shall rest upon them, it shall rest in order that the punishment of the Lord of Spirits may not come, in vain, and it shall slay the children with their mothers and the children with their fathers. Afterwards, the judgement shall take place according to His mercy and His

⁴ Cf. I Esdras 6:49-52, II Baruch 29:4, Enoch 60:7-9.

patience. And on that day were two monsters parted, a female monster named Leviathan, to dwell in the abysses of the ocean over the fountains of the waters. But the male is named Behemoth, who occupied with his breast a waste wilderness named Duidain, on the east of the garden where the elect and righteous dwell, where my grandfather was taken up, the seventh from Adam, the first man whom the Lord of Spirits created. - 1 Enoch 60:1, 4-9

English:	Leviathan:	Behemoth:
Hebrew:	לויתן (‘twisted in folds’)	בהמות (‘great beast’)
Arabic:	لويثان	بهموت
creature:	sea monster; serpent, whale	land monster; dragon, bull
gender:	female	male
place:	sea, abyss, west of Eden (‘Mediterranean Sea’)	land, desert, east of Eden (‘Duidain’ ⁵)
time:	winter solstice	summer solstice
principle:	sea-power, modernity, demonic enlightenment	land-power, tradition, divine mercy

Pursuing this analogy to its logical conclusion, it appears that, if Prometheism has Leviathan as its guardian, then Traditionalism must have Behemoth as its guardian. If that is true, then both are bound to be with us till the very end. Because about Behemoth it has been said that

he is the foremost of God’s works; only his Maker can draw the sword against him
- Job 40:19

5. *Mundus Imaginalis Manhattensis* (*Prolegomena*)

*At length upon the lone Chorasmian shore
He paused, a wide and melancholy waste
Of putrid marshes. A strong impulse urged
His steps to the sea-shore. A swan was there,
Beside a sluggish stream among the reeds.
It rose as he approached, and, with strong wings
Scaling the upward sky, bent its bright course
High over the immeasurable main.
His eyes pursued its flight: ‘Thou hast a home,
Beautiful bird; thou voyagest to thine home...
And what am I that I should linger here?’*
- Percy Bysshe Shelley. ‘Alastor, or, the Spirit of Solitude’

Before the reviewer attends the actual content of *Iranian Leviathan*, it should be stated how key ethnonyms will be used here, and - more importantly - what they essentially refer to. Above all, it is important to point to the difference between the *Persian people*, i.e. the specific

⁵ The Jewish Encyclopaedia suggests the reading Dendaid* < Greek ἐν γῇ Ναιδ ‘from the land of Nod’, in reference to Gen. 6:16.

ethnicity that carried the *Persian Tradition*, and the *Iranian civilization*, i.e. the much greater civilizational sphere that was historically created by successive Persian empires. The Persian Tradition, carried by the Persian people, shaped and directed these empires for over three millennia. Thus, the true reference point for the great Iranian civilizational sphere was not any specific Persian state structure (Persian statehood was non-existent across sizeable intervals) but rather the Persian Tradition as such. Jorjani addresses this complex state of affairs as follows: *For more than 2,500 years, the Persian ethnicity and language have defined the core identity of Iranian Civilization. That was not lost on all of the various Europeans who dealt with Iran as an imperial rival, starting from the days of the classical Greeks and continuing to the pagan Romans, the Byzantines, the British, the French and the Russians. All of them, without exception, always referred to all of Iran and its entire civilizational sphere as 'Persia' or the 'Persian Empire' (p.17). ...To borrow a term from the Russian philosopher, Alexander Dugin, the Persian ethnicity and language could be described as the narod or pith of Iranian Civilization. This would be comparable to the role of the Mandarin language and the Han ethnicity in contemporary Chinese Civilization, or to the role of Latin and the Italian ethnicity in Western Civilization at the zenith of the Roman Empire...* (p. 15; for the author's macro-historical analysis of the evolution of the 'Imperium' principle, cf. Wolfheze, *TFE*, 103-11). It should be noted that Jorjani acknowledges one major shift in the 'pith' ethnicity of Iranian civilization:⁶ *In the three thousand years of Iranian Civilization, the narod of the civilization has shifted only once. For the first five hundred years of discernable Iranian history, the Median ethno-linguistic consciousness was at the core of Iran's identity as a civilization that included other non-Median Iranian cultures, such as the Scythians. ...This lasted for maybe a couple of hundred years before the revolt of Cyrus the Great in the sixth century BC saw the Persians displace the Medes and expand the boundaries of Iranian Civilization into the borders of the first true empire in history, one that included and integrated many non-Iranian kingdoms, and encompassed almost the entire [then] known world (p. 16).*⁷

Given Jorjani's comparatively strong focus on the formative and early stages of Iranian Civilization (which are addressed in his first six chapters), it is important to remind the reader that, at a much later stage in history, the extent of the Iranian civilizational sphere became even more impressive, reaching deep into Europe and into South East Asia. Traditionally inclined thinkers prefer to describe the Modern Age Iranian civilizational sphere as the 'Persianate World', defining it as those regions where the Persian language, Persian ideas and Persian art forms dominate high culture. During the Early Modern Era - which the reviewer defines as the years between 1488 and 1776 (for the author's summary chronology of the Modern Age, cf. *Sunset*, 390-2) - the Persianate World included the Persian, Ottoman and Mughal Empires and it stretched halfway around the world, from Hungary and Poland to Aceh and Mataram. Further

⁶ As an aside, Jorjani correctly points out that a similar, albeit prematurely aborted, shift to another 'pith' ethnicity occurred in European civilization: *The narod of a civilization can change. ...The lack of a clear narod in Western Civilization at present is symptomatic of its decline and dissolution following the intra-civilizational war that prevented Greater Germany from becoming the ethno-linguistic core of the entire West. A very strong argument could be made that Germany... w[as] long destined to succeed Italy in this role, which Italy still plays to some extent through the Vatican's patronage of Latin and the Roman Catholic faith. The alliance of Hitler and Mussolini could have prepared for such a transition (p. 15-6).* Yet another example of such a 'pith' shift is reflected in the Sumerian-to-Akkadian (Babylonian/Assyrian) language transition of Mesopotamian civilization around 2000 BC.

⁷ Depending on the precise ethnographic definition criteria used, it could be argued that there were a few other 'pith' ethnicities of Iranian civilization in certain (mostly transitional) epochs, most prominently the Parthians (238 BC-226 AD).

study of this Early Modern Persianate World, which was not sustained by the state-power of a single empire but which rather constituted an ‘empire of the heart’, is bound to confirm Jorjani’s concept of Iran as a ‘super culture’ (cf. p. 18) surmounting the boundaries of any historical nation-state.

In that sense, ‘Iran’, which means the ‘Realm of the Aryans’, constitutes an ‘ideal’ to be *retrieved* and *reached*, in the sense of the Platonic εἶδος, shining through the mere visible forms of the past and present (cf. p. 14). Thus, *Iranian Leviathan* essentially views the past and present realities of the Iranian civilizational sphere, the Persian Tradition and the Persian people as mere *prolegomena* to a future, higher ‘ideal’ state - ‘ideal’ in the sense of potential-through-imagination. It is only through this ‘imaginal’ lens, which shapes its ethic and aesthetic judgments, that the premises, theses and propositions of Jorjani’s *Iranian Leviathan* can be fully understood.

Before proceeding to the premises, theses and propositions of *Iranian Leviathan*, the reviewer wishes to remind the reader of the substantial price that its author has paid for his principled stance for philosophical integrity and freedom of expression, concepts that have been completely abandoned by ‘mainstream’ academia, media and politics after the globalist-nihilist triple (‘Covid’-‘BLM’-‘Biden’) coup d’état of 2020. Effectively, the early work of Jorjani has cost him his academic career, his media reputation and his political prospects. Of course, it may be somewhat unempathetically argued that Jorjani’s removal from academic life, the mainstream media and political life is actually a *good* thing, because it will make him focus on creative thinking and writing instead of on prosaic ambitions and chores. But even so, his former friends and allies in the Dissident Right should recognize Jorjani’s sacrifices for a cause that is also theirs: the pursuit of the all that is high, good and beautiful - and, by necessary extension, the defence of Western civilization :

Les gens de lettres, qui ont rendu le plus de services au petit nombre d’êtres pensans répandus dans le monde, sont les lettrés isolés, les vrais savans, renfermés dans leur cabinet, qui n’ont ni argumenté sur les bancs de l’université, ni dit les choses à moitié dans les académies : et ceux-là ont presque toujours été persécutés. - Voltaire

6. ‘Aṣabiyyah (Premises)

*This is my home, the country where my heart is
here are my hopes, my dreams, my holy shrine
but other hearts in other lands are beating
with hopes and dreams as true and high as mine...
May truth and freedom come to every nation
may peace abound where strife has raged so long
that each may seek to love and build together
a world united, righting every wrong
a world united in its love for freedom
proclaiming peace together in one song*
- Lloyd Stone & Georgia Harkness, ‘This is My Song’

(A) *Emic premise* (nationalist ‘bias’): It should be emphasized that, despite Jorjani’s undoubted qualifications in Western philosophy and his self-evident ability to address issues of universal scope, his *Iranian Leviathan* is a work with an unabashedly nationalist agenda. This is not to say, however, that its content and conclusions are in any way ‘invalid’; actually, from a Traditionalist perspective, its metapolitical agenda and the nationalist bias make it *more* interesting. From a Traditionalist perspective, it offers Western readers a unique insight into a fascinating - very ancient and highly sophisticated - non-Western Tradition that is culturally-historically distinct from but also primordially related to the European Tradition: the Persian Tradition - and into the *Volksgeist* that underpins it. Thus, *Iranian Leviathan* is of great value as an *emic* testimony to the inner self-experience that underpins the outer self-expression - or, more precisely, to the Persian Tradition that has underpinned Iranian civilization across an impressive gulf in time (from the pre-historic conquest of the Iranian Plateau to the present predicament of the Islamic Republic) and space (between the Indus and the Danube). Jorjani gives the Western reader unprecedented access to the inner psycho-historic and political-philosophical dynamics of the Persian Tradition, uncovering a complex dialectic that has organically shaped and directed Persian *Dasein* for three millennia. *The history of Iranian Civilization has an inner logic, a dialectic driving Iran toward the fulfilment of its destiny on the world stage. The purpose of [Iranian Leviathan] is to reveal the teleological structure directing the historical development of Iran...* (p. 18). In Jorjani’s view, this teleological structure is typified by a Hegelian-type, future-oriented (r)evolutionary concept of successive historical epochs leading up to an unprecedented end of history (cf. p. 17). In uncovering its inner logic, Jorjani allows for a truly ‘Archaeo-Futurist’ re-assessment of Iranian historical consciousness - and for a deliberate re-orientation of Iranian civilizational destiny: *Only by discovering the [teleological] structure that defines this civilization as Iranian... can we wisely approach the question of Iran’s future development* (p. 19). The re-orientation of Iran’s destiny, aiming at an ‘Iranian Renaissance’, is precisely what Jorjani’s work aims at - which brings us to its second, *instrumental* premise.

(B) *Instrumental premise* (metapolitical ‘program’): By writing what he terms a philosophically *monumental* (teleologically anagogical) history instead of either a *rightist-antiquarian* (culturally conservative) or a *leftist-critical* (nihilistically deconstructive) history Jorjani deliberately and explicitly engages in world-view warfare at its most fundamental level, viz. the level of archetypal re-activation and identity re-invention. *The ultimate aim of this monumental history is to provide the basis for the distillation of the principles of an Iranian Renaissance from out of Iran’s vast and ancient civilizational heritage. Consequently, the present work does not simply operate in the domain of historiography. It makes sovereign decisions regarding the past and future constitution (ethos) of an entire civilization* (p. 18). Jorjani is equally explicit in the revolutionary rather than conservative direction of the Iranian Renaissance he aims at: *The idea of a repeated rebirth of a culture or civilization, as in the case of the rebirth of Europe through the Italian Renaissance and the type of human being that it produced, presupposes something like this monumental conception of history. ...[Accordingly, a] Leonardo da Vinci [can never be] mistaken for an ancient Greek or a pagan Roman. Monumentalizing the past to inspire future development never merely reproduces a past form of culture. A true renaissance is always an evolution beyond what has been achieved before, albeit one firmly rooted in the blood and soil of concrete community* (p. 18). Thus, the Iranian Renaissance aimed at by Jorjani is radically *futurist*. At the same time, it is also radically *archaist* because it explicitly seeks to bring about the Zoroastrian ‘ideal state’, viz. the state of

Shahrivar [‘Desirable Dominion’], which can ...*be translated as the Most Choice-worthy Kingship. In other words, it is the ideal form of government, that which one would choose if only one could see it. Shahrivar comes into being when Ordibehesht [‘Best Righteousness’] is not only discerned by Bahman [‘Good Purpose’] on an individual basis and embodied by a single person, but when an entire political order is rightly guided to bring society as a whole into harmony with cosmic order and the creative divine intellect* (p. 105-6).⁸ The link between these - superficially contradictory - archaist and futurist radicalisms is explained by Jorjani’s analysis of the teachings of Zarathustra: *His cosmology was unique in the ancient world for its goal-directed or teleological - rather than cyclical - conception of time and world ages. On the whole, Spenta Maiynu [‘Holy Spirit’]⁹ works to progressively and innovatively improve the human condition throughout successive epochs* (p. 106-7).¹⁰ This brings us to the actual aims of Jorjani’s metapolitical (Iranian Renaissance) program, which are covered by his third and fourth premises:

(C) *Realpolitik* premise (neo-imperialist ‘supremacism’): Effectively, *Iranian Leviathan* provides a blueprint for (re-)establishing an Iranian Empire based on a truly Archaeo-Futurist synthesis of the archetypal principle of anagogic Imperium and a futurist vision of techno-idealism. Here, Jorjani points to the historical precedent of the Achaemenid Empire, which was the first Iranian Empire and which pursued a grand-scale anagogic program that combined a paternalist political hierarchy with a proto-techno-idealist ethos. The Achaemenid Empire was characterized by a system of compartmentalized cultural diversity, guaranteed by political power devolution (the proto-federal satrapy system) and it was highly innovative in terms of administration, legislation and infrastructure development. It was the first state to operate a credit-based banking system, a standardized coinage, a regular long-distance postal service and to implement welfare-state-type arrangements such as a government-imposed minimum wage and paid maternity leave. It was also the first to build and maintain a large-scale paved highway system, systematic desert-reclamation irrigation works, a canal through the Suez Isthmus, a bridge across the Bosphorus. The result was a tri-continental super-power characterized by unrivalled military strength on the outside and a maximum-trust society on the inside. Its legacy of grand-scale public works left an indelible imprint on all of its Near Eastern and North African successor states, which sought to emulate the monumental scale and style of its botanical and zoological gardens, its sports grounds, its palaces and its tombs. Jorjani’s Iranian Renaissance project is inspired by this historical precedent and its imperial successors and proposes the creation of a new Iranian empire of equal scale. Recognizing that ...*the present political unity*

⁸ Note that Jorjani’s association of Shahrivar, more correctly ‘Desirable Dominion’, one of the six Amesha Spenta (or ‘Holy Immortals’, i.e. divine creative sparks that emanate from Zoroastrianism’s Supreme Creator, Ahura Mazda, or ‘Lord of Wisdom’), with righteous rule is borne out by its identification as an acquisitive male principle and by its secondary association with metal creation. Righteous rule must be constantly re-established by force and the sword of the righteous ruler must be re-conquered and re-forged time and time again, as it is in the ‘myth’ of Excalibur. For the author’s overview of the Amesha Spenta, their functions and their (symbolic) representations, cf. Wolfheze, *Rupes Nigra*, 362-8 and 429-30.

⁹ Note that although *Spenta Maiya* (which, as Jorjani correctly states, is also the Spirit of Innovation) is often counted as one of the *Amesha Spentas*, it actually represents their shared operative and creative power projection, under the aegis of the Supreme Creator Ahura Mazda (somewhat like the Holy Spirit operates under the aegis of God the Father in the Christian Tradition).

¹⁰ From a Traditionalist perspective, the contrast between Zoroastrian and other traditional cosmologies is somewhat tempered if the supposed ‘cyclical’ nature of the latter is understood as (derived from, aimed at and inducing) an ‘state of mind’ instead: traditional cosmologies seem to tend to a constant re-enacting, re-experiencing and re-living of macro-micro-cosmological synchronicity.

of Iranian civilization is currently near its lowest point in a history spanning at least 3,000 years (p. 15), Jorjani proposes the re-establishment of Iranian state-control over parts of the (former) Iranian civilizational sphere: *Iran is a civilization that includes a number of different cultures and languages that hang together around a core defined by the Persian language and imperial history. Besides the Persian heartland, Iranian civilization encompasses Kurdistan (including the parts of it in the artificial states of Turkey and Iraq), the Caucasus (especially northern Azerbaijan and Ossetia), Greater Tajikistan (including northern Afghanistan and eastern Uzbekistan), the Pashtun territories (in the failed state of Afghanistan), and Baluchistan (including the parts of it inside the artificial state of Pakistan)* (p. 14).¹¹ At this point, Jorjani's neo-imperialist project conflicts with Huntington's 'great civilization' boundaries clash model: Jorjani rightly disputes the inclusion of Iran in Huntington's 'Islamic Civilization'. Rather, Jorjani's project substantially overlaps with the Traditionalist concept of Imperium, which is implicitly 'supremacist' to the extent that it is carried by a specific *Narod* and a specific Tradition. Jorjani recognizes the potential of the contemporary Iranian state to once again grow into a fully-fledged empire: to him, Iran is one of the few major world-historical states ...*that can be considered 'core states' of a civilization encompassing many peripheral vassal or client states* (p. 20). Thus, Jorjani's project fits in quite well with the Traditionalist-inspired vision of contemporary Neo-Eurasianism. At a minimum, Jorjani's nationalist insistence on full Iranian state sovereignty conforms to the Neo-Eurasianist vision of a multi-polar world. Above and beyond that, the realization of his neo-imperial project would allow a new Iranian empire to join an alliance of multiple Eurasian neo-imperial land-powers (China, India, Russia) against their common enemy: the globalist-nihilist sea-power-based (as represented by the ex-Anglo-Saxon, now woke-satanist United States): *All of the Western (especially Anglo) rhetoric about Iran becoming a 'responsible' member of the 'international community' or a 'normal' nation is just that - rhetoric. The tacit aim of such discourse is simply to affirm the dominance of a certain Anglo-Saxon paradigm of power that would be threatened by the reemergence of Iran as an independent pole of cultural, economic, and political influence* (p. 19). Thus, Jorjani fully endorses the uncompromising defence of the territorial integrity of the contemporary Iranian state as well as its expansion as a regional power - in this regard, his Iranian Renaissance project is fully aligned with the goals of the current leadership of the Islamic Republic. *If Iran can remain united, it could reemerge not just as a regional hegemon but even as a world power - a role that Iran has played more than several times. Even regaining an imperial power comparable to that of the Achaemenids is achievable. Given the strategic significance of the Islamic world, and the demographic destiny of Islam in the twenty-first century, an Iran that successfully dominates the Muslim heartland could even establish itself as one of several rival superpowers within the foreseeable future* (p. 45).¹² It is Jorjani's contention, however, that

¹¹ The reviewer does not necessarily agree with Jorjani's 'short shrift' description of contemporary Turkey and Pakistan as artificial states. From a Traditionalist point of view, the Turkish and Pakistani nation-states that arose in the ashes of the Ottoman Empire and the British Raj, which still retained many of the characteristics of Traditional Imperia, represent rump-states that give a 'national home' to the core ethnicities of these now-defunct Imperia (the legitimate continuity of Pakistani statehood from the Mughal Imperium is situated in its Muslim identity). It should be remembered that, from a Traditionalist perspective, *all* modern (nation-)states are 'artificial' to the extent that they are not ruled by a legitimate monarch, subject to 'constitutional' arrangements and/or trans-nationalist 'legislations'. In that sense, the only authentic Imperium still extant in the contemporary world - in theory, at least - would be Japan (for an overview of the progressive 'occultation' of the principle of authentic Imperium during the Modern Age, cf. *TFE*, 103ff.). In addition, it should be noted that, from a Traditionalist perspective, contemporary Iranian civilization is best described as a (truncated, degraded) 'remnant civilization', in the same way as the present-day remnant of Greek civilization, which is equally ancient and venerable.

there is a much weightier obstacle obstructing the neo-imperialist reemergence of Iran than the threat posed by globalist-nihilist sabotage: in his view, the ethnic substrate of its core ethnicity has fallen below the qualitative threshold prerequisite for any sustained Iranian Renaissance - which brings us to his fourth premise:

(D) *Bio-realist premise* (racialist ‘political incorrectness’): *Iranian Leviathan* makes uncomfortable reading for many Iranian nationalists and patriots when Jorjani addresses the human potential of the Iranian nation in a harshly bio-realist manner. Undaunted by the prevailing ‘politically correct’ censorship of all things pertaining to the genetic aspect of human group identity, Jorjani gives a blunt assessment of the genetic make-up and potential of the contemporary Iranian nation: *The Turkic and Mongol invasions of Iran from 1050-1250 were genocidal in nature and the dramatic demographic shift that they brought about correlates to an eventual decline in the intellectual capacity and cultural brilliance of Iranian civilization after 1300 AD. The Turks and Mongols brought a Siberian mentality to Iran that is inimical to the daring dialectical debate and revolutionary intellectual discovery characteristic of Caucasians. This Promethean mentality has a genetic basis. You do not find it in Asians, Arabs, Africans, and other non-Aryan peoples* (p. 484). ...*Before the Arab, Turkic, and Mongol conquests of Iran... the majority of the Iranian elite were genetically identical to the Indo-Europeans who migrated into Europe from the same region that was the racial cradle of the Iranians* (p. 508). Obviously, these bio-realist statements are bound to be wholly unpalatable by the globalist-nihilist ideologies that now dominate the Western educational, media and political domain, but Jorjani’s rightly dismisses these ostensible ‘humanist sensitivities’ as part and parcel of an artificially imposed and politically motivated collective ‘false consciousness’: *After 1945 in the Western world it became politically correct to claim that ‘race’ is a social construct that does not correspond to any biological reality. This is essentially a Marxist view that, for reasons having to do with the outcome of the Second World War, became... culturally predominant in the West... In the last five years, [however,] advances in gene sequencing technology and new archaeological finds have destroyed this left-wing myth of human racial equality. ...Racial difference is real, and it matters. ...[There is now] overwhelming evidence of ethnic differences in cognitive capabilities that correlate to the relative industrial productivity and socio-economic welfare of groups of nations that cluster along ‘racial’ lines... The real problem is that thinking along [race-realistic] lines is now a ‘thought crime’ in the West* (p.

¹² While agreeing with Jorjani’s assessment of the vital geopolitical role of Iran in the Muslim heartland and in preventing the rise of a Da’esh-style primitivist caliphate (*From a global strategic standpoint, this Greater Iran would be saving the West, India, Russia, and even China from the prospect of a late twenty-first century world defined by a global Sunni Caliphate governing a human population demographically dominated by Muslims. This is Iran’s cultural and historical responsibility... [and t]his would be the key to Iran’s reemergence as a global superpower* (p. 22), the reviewer cautions against the notion that Iranian superpower leadership over the entire Islamic world would be in any way feasible - or even advisable. Rather, the Islamic world should be allowed to split into cultural-historically sensible power agglomerates, represented by viable empires and nation-states, along naturally occurring lines of ethnic, linguistic and (Sunni-Shi’a-Ismaili) interdenominational differences, much like the Western world is divided into such spheres and empires along such lines (the Protestant Anglosphere, Catholic South-Central Europe and Orthodox Eurasia). In an ideal dispensation, the Islamic world would be centred on a small number of sphere-sovereign neo-empires, headed by a Sunni ‘Neo-Ottoman’ Turkey, which would rule vassal-states from Algeria and Nigeria to Yemen and Somalia, a Shi’a Persian Empire, including eastern Caucasia, the entire Persian Gulf basin, much of Central Asia and most of Afghanistan, and a syncretic ‘Neo-Mughal’ South Asian Empire. The geographical outliers of the Islamic world could then be ruled by independent monarchically ruled nation-states such as an enlarged Morocco, a restored Oman-Zanzibar sea-empire and a loose Malaysian federation covering all the Muslim-majority regions of South-East Asia (which should then include the southern regions of Thailand and the Philippines but exclude the eastern regions of Indonesia).

506-8). From a Traditionalist perspective, the genetic factor may not be the only or even most important factor in the origins and development of racial and ethnic identity (for the author's Traditionalist take on of racial and ethnic identity, cf. Wolfheze, *TFE*, xix-xxiv and 59-63), but neither can it be ignored, as it has been by the globalist-nihilist hostile elite in the West over the last decennia - to great detriment to Western civilization and the European nations. At the very least, Jorjani's radical proposal of eugenic intervention deserves a fair hearing - especially because neo-eugenic thinking is part and parcel of the rapidly rising bio-technological and trans-humanist sciences: *[T]he dysgenic decline of Iranian Civilization can [only] be reversed through the emergence of biotechnology with Neo-Eugenic potential, such as pre-implantation genetic diagnosis, embryo selection, and germ-line genetic engineering. These technologies are certainly going to be used for Neo-Eugenic purposes by countries such as China and Japan. There is no reason why Iran should not follow the lead of, or even preempt, these East Asian countries rather than sheepishly stand behind the West, which was traumatized by Nazi Eugenics* (p. 484). ...*With the[se] emerging technologies, ...it would be possible, with the right leadership and government planning, to restore the pre-Turkic and pre-Mongol genetic character of the majority of the Iranian population within only one or two generations. Bringing about an Iranian Renaissance in the near future would require, in addition to numerous cultural factors, us of such biotechnologies to restore relevant aspects of the ancient and even early medieval Iranian genetic constitution, such as those that correlate with IQ* (p. 512).

7. 'Homage to Hyrcania': Seven Challenges to Iranology

(Secondary Theses)

The following seven theses found in Jorjani's *Iranian Leviathan* may be seen as related to but subsidiary to his main thesis, viz. the 'Mithraic' thesis, which will be looked at more closely in the next paragraph. Nevertheless, each of these seven secondary theses is iconoclastic enough in its own right to cause a major disturbance in the tranquil corner of academic life known as Iranology - and is *therefore* likely to be either silently ignored, haughtily dismissed or rejected out of hand. For over a century now, (hints of) most of these theses have been haunting the still half-unexplored field of Near Eastern Studies; one of the merits of Jorjani's work, which doubles as a 'popular scientific' introduction to Iranology, is that it puts these theses firmly back on the academic agenda. At least in theory. The problem is that, even if Jorjani would have painstakingly documented and expanded these very interesting theses and attempted to publish them in state-of-the-art academic research papers, they would have still be ignored, dismissed and rejected. Since the late '60s, the formerly exciting field of Near Eastern Studies, once inhabited by scary 'dead white guy' giants, has been gradually reduced to a 'safe-space bubble' for intellectually toothless femo-woke polcor appointees who are neither able nor inclined to indulge in substantial research or difficult debates. Let alone research into and debates with somebody like Jorjani, who falls in two 'enemy' categories at once: 'white male' and 'far right'. The reviewer is a student of Near Eastern Studies himself and therefore regrets this state of affairs, but he is unable to remedy it in any substantial manner since he was unceremoniously removed from academic life himself. The only thing he can do is simply remind the reader of the rich world of under-explored mysteries and fascinating theories that Jorjani seeks to unlock for the reader - and to add some 'verdict' remarks, giving his own 'best guess' assessment.

(A) Iranian origin of Western (Greek-Roman) philosophy. Chronological outline: *In 600 BC, when Zarathustra composed his thought-provoking Gathas, thought among the Greeks was still deeply immersed in the world of myth and superstition. ...For six centuries, from at least the Trojan War om 1230 BC to Hesiod's Theogony in 650 BC, we see essentially no change in the mythic worldview of the Greeks (p.108). ...[I]f we place Zarathustra in the Median Kingdom circa 650 BC, he is the first philosopher in recorded history and, with very solid historical continuity, we can trace the origin of what came to be known as 'Philosophy' in the West to the transmission of what Zarathustra calls Mazda-Yasna or 'Wisdom Worship' to Greece by the Median Magi during the Persian colonization of Western Anatolia. ...The Median Zarathustra of 650 BC, whose message was brought to Greece by Persian conquest, made the first 'philosophers' out of Pythagoras and Heraclitus (p. 89). ...[B]oth [were] very closely connected to Imperial Iran - the former studies in its capital for a dozen years and the latter was summoned by Darius to be its court philosopher... (p. 24-5). Then, suddenly, in the 500s BC, we have twelve philosophers appearing within just a single (and suspiciously overlooked) coincidence that the sudden rise of philosophy like a meteor from a Greek mind sunken for millennia in the dark marches of myth and superstition, coincides precisely with the Persian conquest and colonization of Greece... (p. 108). Iranian influence on Greek thought began with Cyrus' invasion and occupation of Lydia, whose capital city, Sardis, was the resort of all Greeks inclined toward learning. A short time later, Lampsacus was one of the first Hellenic towns to be conquered by Cyrus and once under the authority of the Pax Achaemenica it became a haven of thinkers persecuted for blaspheming against tradition in Greek mainland cities such as Athens (p. 111). ...Th[e] first generation of Greek philosophers were writing in the westernmost provinces of the Persian Empire. They were already political subjects of Iran (p. 89). ...The entire first generation of Greek philosophers lived, not in mainland Greece, but in colonies that had become part of Imperial Iran. Thales of Miletus, Anaximander of Miletus, Pythagoras of Samos, and Xenophanes of Colophon - every single one of them was an Iranian subject. Most were from Ionia, the part of Greece that was longest governed by Iran - to the point where, to this day, Iranians refer to all of Greece as Ionân. (p. 112). ...The channels for influence increased drastically when, by 450 BC, Darius had extended Persian rule beyond the Hellespont to the shores of the Danube in the North, and the Adriatic Sea to the West. Herodotus reports that Darius' conquest brought many Iranian colonists to settle in Greece, particularly in Macedonia and Thrace, in cities such as Abdera and Eion. W[e] know of instances in which Zoroastrian Magi became tutors of children of Greek aristocrats, one such case being that of Protagoras, whose father Maendrius welcomed and feasted Xerxes (p. 111) Key elements of Persian > Greek conceptual borrowing: *Fravashi* 'Soul Spirit' (individuated archetype) > Εἶδος (Eidos); *Shahrivar* 'Desirable Dominion' (utopian end-state) > Καλλίπολις (Kallipolis); *Tanâsokh* 'Reincorporation' (combined body-soul transformation) > Μετεμψύχωσις (Metempsychosis); *Arta* 'Truthful Order' (cosmological ordering principle) > Λόγος (Logos); *Mazdai* 'Wise One' (supreme creative mastermind) > Σοφόν (Sophon).¹³ Assessment: correct. With two caveats: (a) during this time, the Iranian and Greek cultures were still quite similar and therefore prone to mutual exchange, during the crucial years 6th Century BC, which represent the crucial formative stage of both; (b) the association of philosophy in its narrow sense, i.e. a systematic and academic discipline. with Greek rather than Persian culture dates back to the Hellenic Era, following Alexander the Great's conquest of the Achaemenid Empire*

¹³ For Jorjani's analysis of Zoroastrian concepts found in the teachings of Greek philosopher Heraclitus (ca. 535-475 BC), cf. *Iranian Leviathan*, 115-8.

(330 BC) and the final split between Western and Persian philosophy dates back to the fall of the thoroughly Hellenized Parthian Empire (226 AD).

(B) Iranian origin of Eastern (Indian-Chinese) philosophy: *The Buddha Dharma and Philosophical Hinduism (earliest attested in the Upanishads) were contemporaneous responses to the introduction of Zoroastrianism into the Indo-Iranian world that included northern India. Not only was Gautama the philosopher whose teachings became the basis of Buddhism, he was also the foreign sage who dictated the Tao Te Ching during his travels in the part of China that bordered Scythian Iran. In other words, Lao Tzu and the Buddha were the same man* (p. 90). Basing himself on comparative chronologies, etymological hypotheses, iconographic analyses and conceptual parallels, Jorjani tentatively equates the Magus Gautama mentioned in Achaemenid records with Gautama Buddha, founder of Buddhism (whose name Siddharta and title Sakamuni he reads as, respectively, Old Persian ‘Power of Truth’ and ‘Scythian Sage’), as well as Lao-Tze, founder of Taoism (whose posthumous name Lao Dan he derives from Old Persian Gautama). Jorjani views the philosophical-investigative rather than religious-dogmatic inclination of (early) Buddhism and Taoism as reflective of their origins in Achaemenid-era Persian philosophy.¹⁴ Here it should be noted that Jorjani does *not* equate early Persian philosophy with Zoroastrian thought, but rather with an older Iranian philosophical tradition covered that could be typified as (crypto-)’Mithraic heterodoxy’ (for a summary of Jorjani’s main ‘Mithraism’ thesis, cf. the next paragraph), opposed to all forms of closed-circle religious dogma through an open-ended dialectic approach. In terms of its historical antecedents, Jorjani’s Iranian Gautama=Buddha hypothesis expands and modifies the long-standing theory of the Aryan - in casu: aristocratically martial and essentially Faustian - ethos of early Buddhism and the ‘warrior king’ role of its founder, developed by Ariosophists and Traditionalists of name, including Baron Evola. With regard to his Iranian Gautama=Lao-Tze hypothesis, Jorjani points to the ‘Aryan’ parallels in Taoism: *Scholars of Chinese culture have for a long time taken notice of how alien the spirit of ‘Taoist’ ideas are to the mainstream mentality of the Chinese. The latter is patriarchal, authoritarian, hierarchical, and collectivistic, whereas the Tao Te Ching [i.e. the foundational text of Taoism ascribed to Lao-Tze] introduces the spirit of anarchy, implicit matriarchy, egalitarianism, and free-spirited personal spontaneity into Chinese culture. It should be no wonder that this ‘Taoist’ school of thought always remained a fringe phenomenon that was never attractive to more than a small minority of Chinese, as compared to the Confucian majority, who... also rejected Buddhism. ...Th[e Taoist] philosophical tradition is an anomaly against the broader backdrop of Chinese culture, which was then - and remains now - extremely worldly and utilitarian, therefore not given to contemplation of abstract or ethereal ideas, and also not given to philosophical debate on account of its deep conformism, collectivism, and deference to authority. By contrast, Iranian culture was then, and remains now, preoccupied with the ethereal and the unseen to a fault, and Iranians relish heated discussions over various questions, even just for argument’s sake* (p. 127-8). Assessment: interesting but undecided - more research is needed (quite a challenge, given the paucity of source materials and competent scholars).¹⁵ With one major caveat: from a

¹⁴ It should be noted that, in support of this thesis, Jorjani argues that ...*a comparison of the fragments of Heraclitus with the Tao Te Ching or the kind of early Buddhism reconstructed on the basis of Hellenistic travelogues, reveals a largely overlapping metaphysics and epistemology* (p. 26-7). A systematic structural-comparative analysis of relevant material might yield interesting results.

¹⁵ With regard to Jorjani’s criticism of Jasper’s ‘Axial Age’ theory (What Karl Jaspers got wrong in his ‘Axial Age’ theory is that the various contemporaneous flowerings of sagacity are not, as he believed, mere parallels attesting

Traditionalist point of view, the scientific ‘deconstruction’ of still-living religious traditions (and Buddhism and Taoism are *that*), while legitimate in strictly-bounded research areas and close-circle philosophical exercises, is neither legitimate nor useful in the public sphere, where the propagation of such ‘deconstructions’ invariably serve politically motivated mass demoralization and anti-identitarian decomposition. The numinously experienced origins, cultural-historical functionality and socio-psychological value of religious traditions are entirely independent of their rationally deduced origins, philosophical consistency and scientific validity.

(C) Iranian influence on Judaism: Jorjani’s investigation of the well-known ‘special relationship’ between ancient Iran and ancient Israel, well-recognized by Biblical scholars, focuses on the little-researched Aryan-Iranian influence on the development of Judaism rather than the better-known Semitic-Mesopotamian influence. *[T]he history of [Judaic] divine revelation is inextricable from the history of Imperial Iranian political power* (p. 42) ... *Judaism as we know it today is inconceivable without the assimilation of numerous Iranian beliefs that radically restructured the entire Israelite religion. There was hardly any notion of an afterlife in the religion of the Israelites before they were exposed to Iranian culture. ...Ancient Israelite religion did not have any notion of the ‘devil’ either; there were simply other gods besides [the Lord] that it was prohibited for Israelites to worship. ...The figure of Satan... [and t]he Jewish idea of the devil is developed under the direct influence of the Iranian theological idea of Ahriman. That is fairly clear from the fact that the Jews wind up with a theology in which six arch demons serve Satan, just the way that Ahriman has six arch demonic beings in his service. Likewise, the seven archangels are a theological idea that the Jews modeled on the six Amesha Spentas together with Ahura Mazda himself, of which they are an emanation, as the seventh of them. ...The eschatological conception of time that has... been seen as so characteristic of a prophetic conception of history ending with an apocalyptic judgment and the establishment of heaven’s kingdom on earth was utterly lacking to the ancient Israelite religion. [It and t]he related concept of a messianic savior arriving at the end of the world... only entered the Israelite belief system after prolonged exposure to the religious life of Iran* (p. 195-6). Once again, it should be emphasized that Jorjani does *not* equate the religious life of Iran of this period of time with Zoroastrianism, but rather with the kind of crypto-Mithraism he ascribes to the Achaemenid monarchy, which he convincingly shows to have extensively patronized its post-exilic Jewish subjects: *...Cyrus the Great develops such a close rapport with the Jewish community exiled to Babylon, that after he conquers Babylon he is hailed as the only gentile Messiah in the Jewish scriptures. Cyrus orders the rebuilding of the Jerusalem Temple, at cost to the Persian royal treasury, a project that is completed by his successor, Darius the Great. Cyrus also coordinates with the Jewish community to provide them with Achaemenid state support for the project of the resettlement and redevelopment of Israel as a Jewish homeland, the first explicitly Zionist project in history. He is hailed as ‘the salvation of Zion’. Meanwhile, Darius the Great establishes the world’s first credit-based private banking system, with the introduction of che[ques] and standardized coinage known as shekels, a system through which the Jews of cities such as Susa, Ecbatana, Nippur, and especially Babylon, become the*

to a parallel evolution of human consciousness in discrete geographical locations. Rather, they all had a common wellspring - the transcontinental phenomenon of Iranian Civilization, which extended into Greece in the West, and both India and China in the East - p. 128), it should be noted that Jasper’s ‘Axial Age’ and Jorjani’s ‘Iranian origin’ theories, perhaps slightly modified, are not necessarily incompatible: the former can be said to relate to the latter as an account of ‘subsoil’ quality relates to an account of a ‘seeding’ event.

financiers of the first international economic system based on the manipulation of trust and expectations of growth. ...Artaxerxes makes an exception to the Imperial Iranian policy of not allowing satrapies to have defensive walls by authorizing his cup-bearer, the Jew Nehemiah, to go to Israel and re-build the fortifications of the city of Jerusalem (p. 40-1). ...If the Achaemenids had really been Zoroastrians... they would - at the very least - never have shown the slightest care or concern for the Israelites, [whose] ...theology and ethics is in many ways antithetical to Zoroastrianism. ...A good case could be made that, in line with the [Zoroastrian] worldview, it would even have been justified for them to treat the Jews as demonic enemy combatants. Instead, ...the Achaemenids went out of their way to support this community and got involved in the details of its reorganization. In the case of those who wished to be repatriated, the Shah handpicked those in leadership roles in the project for the reconstruction of Israel - especially Jerusalem - with funding from Iran's royal treasure (p. 198, 200). Here, Jorjani argues that, based on the Mithraic mystery rite and oath cultus, the Achaemenid power elite acknowledged and appropriated the Ahrimanic (in other words: 'Satanic') force of the Israelite tribal deity (cf. p. 204). Assessment: likely correct. With the same major caveat as given under thesis B above.

(D) Iranian influence on Christianity: Jorjani views the well-known iconographic, ritual and doctrinal influence of Mithraism on early Christianity as a function of 'world-view warfare' between the late Roman and Sassanid Empires. In Jorjani's view, Mithraism, which had infiltrated the military establishment and political class of the Roman Empire during its long rivalry with the Parthian Empire, the predecessor of the Sassanid Empire, was purposefully 'weaponized' by providing it with a popular 'carrier religion' that could rival the powerful Zoroastrian national religion adopted by the Sassanid state, viz. Christianity: *...the institutionalized form of Christianity was invented by the circle around Constantine in order to erect a defensive barrier between Romans and the puritanical Zoroastrian zealots of [the Sassanid state] (p. 239). ...[T]heir reaction was to fortify the Roman state against the orthodox Zoroastrian crusaders of the [new] Sassanian Empire by adopting a hierarchal and totalitarian state religion of their own. ...So the social engineers of Constantine's time discovered [Christianity], a Jewish cult that could do the job, [but] incorporated many Mithraic ideas, symbols, and rituals into this universalist form of Judaism, so as to placate th[e many] Romans who were already Mithraics. There was no pagan religion that could have fulfilled for Rome the function that Zoroastrianism was fulfilling for Ardeshir, [i.e. Ardashir I, founder of the Sassanid Empire, r. 211/2-224 AD], so as to defensively match it with the same degree of hierarchical conformity and doctrinal rigidity. So the Roman elites settled on a modified version of a non-European religion to do the job. At the same time, they rejected and eventually persecuted the Gnostic form of this religion because its anti-authoritarian and antinomian bent was exactly the opposite of what they needed from a doctrine that had to serve as an imperial state religion (p. 244). Assessment: likely correct as to function, likely incorrect as to program. The formation of early Christianity under Roman rule, alternately proscribed, persecuted and tolerated, necessarily involved under-dog coexistence with, and thus a maximally permeable stance on other pre-existing (Mithraic as well as older and other) religious forms: the highly syncretic form taken of institutionalized Christianity as the state religion of the late-Roman Empire is sufficiently accounted for by this organic formative process. At a certain point, when Christianity had reached a certain developmental stage (one might say: a 'maximally adaptive' form), it was simply recognized as simultaneously powerful and useful by the power elite, which then adopted it as state-religion. Once established as state-religion, 'Mithraized' late-*

Roman Christianity did *function* as a ‘world-view warfare’ counter-balance against Sassanid Zoroastrianism - but there is no need to postulate its (intentional, deliberate) ‘purpose design’ as a state-ideology. Beyond that: the same major caveat as given under theses B and C above.

(E) Iranian origin of Islam: With respect to the historical origins of Islam, Jorjani adopts a radically ‘revisionist’ stance. Since the late-19th Century rise of the secular-scientific practice of textual criticism and religious sociology, the Islamic Tradition has been the subject - rather: *target* - of several philologically and historiographically informed ‘critiques’. The text-critical method, comparative linguistic studies and multi-disciplinary (historical-archaeologic-anthropological) deep-source research have been applied by scholars as well as dilettantes, leading to uneven results, ranging from *constructive* scholarly contributions (including the daring but insight-enhancing philological explorations of Goldziher and Luxenberg) to *deconstructive* attempts at the intellectual sabotage of the Islamic Tradition as a whole. Most notoriously, the latter category includes the ‘revisionist Islamic studies’ of Crone & Cook (*Hagarism*, 1977, claiming a Jewish revolutionary program for the origin of Islam) and Nevo & Koren (*Crossroads to Islam*, 2003, denying the historicity of the Prophet Muhammad). Although Jorjani’s ‘Iranian origin of Islam’ thesis, which proposes that the early Islam was a crypto-Mithraic psy-op designed and used by a dissident faction in the Sassanid Empire to overthrow the Sassanid state and Zoroastrian orthodoxy, tends to lean to second rather than to the first category, its most remarkable feature is its ‘nationalist-idealist’ character. Jorjani’s ‘Iranian origin of Islam’ thesis quite literally ‘appropriates’ early Islam, ‘embedding’ it in Iranian national history and representing it as a historical function of a very specific Iranian form of dialectic idealism, the latter being the subject of Jorjani’s main thesis, referred to above in paragraph 3, section B, point (e), and explored in more detail below in paragraph 8. *[T]he Islamic Conquest of Iran was engineered by the Parthian elite, as a weapon of last resort against the social and political order of the Sassanids* (p. 34). ...*Magi among the Parthian feudal houses designed Islam as a weapon against the Sassanid state...* (p. 42) *[T]he Parthian feudal elites and what remained of their Mithraic magicians conspired against the Sassanian state and its Zoroastrian orthodoxy. Once their [earlier] attempt at a coup under Mazdak and Kavad was met with... brutal massacres and inquisitorial persecution under Khosrow, they decided that no internal solution was possible. So they created a fifth column in the part of Arabia near Yemen, then an Iranian colony, together with a doctrine designed to act as a psycho-social inoculant that would destroy the Orthodox Zoroastrianism at the foundation of the Sassanian state* (p. 275). In Jorjani’s view, the rise of Islam was the result of an occult conspiracy within the Iranian elite: *Islam was the ideological equivalent of a genetically engineered virus designed to inoculate a particular population... The Mithraic Magi and their Parthian feudal lords had designed Islam to work on the Iranian psycho-social system, with the aim of catalyzing an immune response that would manifest as a rebellion against both Islam and any other form of religious totalitarianism - [including] the Sassanian state orthodoxy. ...[It] was supposed to incite Luciferian rebellion in the free-spirited minds of Aryans, ...trigger[ing] the Aryan immune response to oppressive hierarchy, conservative litigiousness, draconian discipline and sadistic punishment...* (p. 35).¹⁶ On the one hand, Jorjani states that a

¹⁶ As part of this thesis, Jorjani speculates about the Iranian aspects of several specific themes in the history of early Islam. Thus, he speculates that Salman the Persian, an early companion to the Prophet Muhammad and early convert to Islam, was a crypto-Mithraic-Mazdakite Persian magus taking on the role of Archangel Gabriel, that the angelic host that intervened in the Battle of Badr was an Iranian (more specifically Hyrcanian) cavalry detachment of conspiring feudal knights, and that several key elements of Islamic heraldry are of Iranian origin

thus-conceived conspiracy is entirely plausible if viewed against the background of the crypto-Mithraic postulate of a cosmologically creative ‘balance of power’ struggle between the opposing forces of ‘good’ (rather: static order), and ‘evil’ (rather: dynamic chaos), hypostatized in the Iranian pantheon as Ahura Mazda and Ahriman: *For Ahura Mazda* [‘Lord of Wisdom’] *to be bounteous rather fatalistically omnipotent, Spenta Mainyu* [‘Holy Spirit’] *must be limited by a niggardly spirit of constraint and constriction. That this [counter-spirit] is also an agency of deception implies that Truth or Ordibehesht* [‘Best Righteousness’], *namely cosmic order, is evolutionary* (p. 108). On the other hand, Jorjani concedes that the ‘Islam-as-psy-op’ conspiracy backfired spectacularly: the conspirators ...*never dreamed that a bunch of Arabian tribesmen who had been busy slitting each other’s throats for hundreds of years before that, who had no literary culture, who had no organized political life, would be able to maintain the cohesion of th[e] caliphate and actually rule over Iranians. They probably did not even think that the Arabs would make it as far north as Azerbaijan or the Caspian coast of Iran. They were simply bringing about a temporary unity of Arabian tribes for the purpose of unseating the Sassanids and returning to power themselves. This worked - for a while (i.e. until the Turco-Mongol invasions starting in the mid-11th Century)* (p. 298). Assessment: unlikely as a *program*, yet relevant as a psycho-historical *motivation*. The remarkably speedy collapse of the Sassanid Empire during the Islamic conquest, often connected to its weakening by continuous invasions by the Huns from the east and constant war with the Byzantines to the west, and the relatively easy success of Islam in displacing Zoroastrianism in Iran, suggest that domestic support for the Sassanid state and popular attachment to Zoroastrian orthodoxy were, to say the least, lacklustre. As postulated by Jorjani, a combination of residual popular resentment of Zoroastrian orthodox repression and feudal resistance to central state authority may very well have ‘evened the way’ for the Arabic-Islamic conquest of Iran. Beyond that: the same major caveat as given under theses B, C and D above.

(F) ‘Islamic Golden Age’ as ‘Iranian Renaissance’: Narrowly defined, the Islamic Golden Age refers to the later part of the Abbasid Caliphate, starting with the rule of Harun ar-Rashid (who founded the Baghdad House of Wisdom and whose court was the setting of the One Thousand and One Night cycle, r. 786-809) and ending with the sack of Baghdad by the Mongols under Hulagu in 1258. More broadly defined, it may be said to include a ‘swan song’ epilogue of the so-called Timurid Renaissance under Tamerlane (r. 1370-1405). In either case, the apogee of Islamic civilization, marked by an unprecedented flowering of the arts and sciences, has a distinctly Persianate character and it largely coincides with the de facto independence of the lands of Greater Iran under the ethnically Persian Buwayhid and Samanid dynasties and under the Persianate Turkic Ghaznavid, Seljuk and Khwarezmshah dynasties. If taken to include the Timurid Renaissance, then the Persianate aspect of the Islamic Golden Age is confirmed by the fact that it is marked by the work of Iran’s greatest genius, the world-famous Shirazi poet Hafez (b. 1315 d. 1390). Jorjani emphasizes the *Iranian* rather than *Islamic* aspect of this Golden Age: *The Golden Age of Islam has nothing to do with Islamic theology in a positive sense. In fact, it has to do with Islamic theology in a negative sense in that when one looks at the work of someone like Zakaria Razi, [the Persian polymath Rhazes (b. 854 d. 932)], one sees an extremely humanistic, secular, skeptical thinker, who has been freed from Zoroastrian orthodoxy to think as an Iranian free-thinker. [This is what essentially] characterized the whole culture of*

(e.g. the green battle banner and its crescent moon and star motive - the star representing the planet Venus in transit).

that period, which, in a real travesty, is described as a 'Golden Age of Islam'. The point is that Islam [functioned as an] inoculant, inoculat[ing] the Iranian psyche against any form of religious totalitarianism (p. 297). In Jorjani's estimation, Islam did not cause the decline of Iranian Civilization [p. 34]. Rather, ...[r]eacting against Islam freed the Iranian mind to transcend itself [and] the so-called 'Golden Age of Islam' [represents] ...the zenith of Iranian psycho-social evolution up until the present day, ...the apex of achievement in Iranian Civilization (p. 35). Jorjani's points to the doubly political and spiritual nature of this 'First Iranian Renaissance': the former quintessentially expressed by the state project of the Shia Nizari Ismailis, a.k.a. Assassins (a term said to be derived from the Arabic word for 'hashish smokers'), centred on Alamut fortress and lasting from 1090 to 1276, and the latter quintessentially expressed by the *Din-e Eshq*, 'Religion of Love', which permeates the works of Iran's greatest poets, Rumi (b. 1207 d. 1273), Saadi (b. 1210 d. 1291/2) and Hafez (b. 1315 d. 1390). The Nizari Ismailis were Shia religious dissidents and nativist Persian resistance fighters who broke away from the orthodox-Sunni and Turkic-Seljuk Empire in alliance with the Ismaili Fatimid caliphate; they founded a knightly order that operated from a number of isolated mountain fortresses and that engaged in targeted assassinations - these Assassins were known for the fanatical devotion and ruthless 'total war' mentality. Jorjani points to historical continuities and formal parallels that can be drawn between the radically antinomian and millenarian character of the Nizari Ismaili state project and the great heretical and revolutionary movements that recur throughout Iranian history (e.g. the Khurramites, the Mazdakites and the Babists). Jorjani views these formal parallels, including the revolutionary redistribution of private property, the opening state granaries, the break-up harems, the indulgence of sexual promiscuity and polyandric practices, the promotion of tantric-type ritual orgies and gender role-reversals, as periodically recurring exoteric expressions of long-term underground teachings of an ancient crypto-Mithraic esoteric tradition that connects these revolutionary movements: *What we glimpse at Alamut is a culmination of the occult project of the Mithraic movement that began in the Parthian period... The esoteric teachings about the nature of God, prophethood, occult initiation, social evolution, and an apocalyptic conception of history that are expressed by Ismaili scriptures... are ideas completely on a continuum with Mithraism or Mazdakism* (p. 279). The overwhelming odds that the Nizari Ismailis faced during their last stance against the Mongol invasion of Iran only served to reinforce their apocalyptic 'bunker mentality' fanaticism. After the downfall of the Nizari Ismaili state, its remnant warrior groups and its core doctrines went underground, surviving in with various secret sects. Jorjani points to the fact that core aspects of crypto-Mithraism, which he views as the essence of Nizari Ismailism, were subsequently preserved in the esoteric teachings and multilayered symbols of the *Din-e Eshq*, which became the unifying principle underpinning all of Iran's later speculative philosophy and high art (to be described under G below). Thus, the downfall of the Nizari Ismaili state at the hands of Hulegu and Hafez's synthetical statement of the *Din-e Eshq* during the rule of Tamerlane mark, respectively, the material end and the spiritual culmination of the First Iranian Renaissance. Assessment: correct - cultural-historically, the Islamic Golden Age simply equals the First Iranian Renaissance. With the caveat that, from a Traditionalist perspective, strict separation of the term of 'Islamic' and 'Iranian' in reference to this Golden Age would be inappropriate (because anachronistically-projected and etically-skewed): the self-representation - and self-experience - of its participants in terms of Islamic and/or Iranian identity would have been a matter of comparative rather than complementary distribution.

(G) The historical continuity and palingenetic potential of the (crypto-)Mithraic utopian end-state vision (of an *applied* neo-Platonic character) are key factors in shaping Iranian history and civilization right into the Modern Age. Certainly, the heart of the Iranian Tradition, as it survives till today, resides in the esoteric teachings and multilayered symbols of the *Din-e Eshq*, which are ‘hidden in plain sight’ in the monumental works of Medieval Iranian high culture and which have remained the standard reference points for Iran’s philosophy, literature and visual arts ever since. Jorjani views the *Din-e Eshq* as having grown out of, and profoundly shaped by, crypto-Mithraism, but he recognizes its symbiotic development into an organic synthesis of pre-Islamic and Islamic concepts and narratives. If the *Din-e Eshq* is postulated as the premise for the utopian end-state visions of Modern Age Iranian religious groups and revolutionary movements, then it is important to give a summary description of it. Jorjani defines the core tenets of the *Din-e Eshq* as follows: (a) *the absolute unity of God - God as reconciliation of all opposites, whose opposed attributes allow for the manifestation of a hidden divine abundance through the apparent strife in the multiplicity of becoming* (p. 320), (b) *the ultimate non-duality of Spirit and Matter and [an] affirmation of a spectral metaphysics that encompasses the most ethereal and the most earthly dimensions as phenomenological aspects or experiential polarities on the continuum of a singular Existence* (p. 320), (c) the human condition is the *raison d’être* of material creation, with each single human as a potential ‘mirror’ or ‘manifestation’ of God and collective humanity as a microcosmic representation of God Himself (cf. p. 321ff.), (d) hierarchical differentiation of human beings into three types,¹⁷ in line with the Nizari Ismaili classification scheme: *...not just any member of Homo Sapiens qualifies as a ‘human’ being. One must earn the right to be considered human. One becomes human through cultivating one’s heart and mind* (p. 332). In passing, Jorjani points to the fact that several religious groups are keeping alive various explicit elements of older and even original Mithraic doctrines till today. This somewhat underexplored avenue of research may well be worth pursuing, but within the confines of the present review the reviewer cannot do more than point to existence of three main groups of interest: (a) the Yezidis, an ethnically Kurdish but strictly endogamous group defined by their pagan religion, living spread throughout the Middle East but concentrated in Iraq - their highly syncretic belief system, which is often described as ‘devil worship’ in older literature and which can be coherently traced back to the 12th Century, includes Mithraic elements such as belief in an angelic heptad (the seven Amesha Spenta) and the retention of a ritual bull-slaying at an Autumn Equinox festival (ancient form of the Zoroastrian Mehregan festival), (b) the Ahl-e Haqq, again an ethnically Kurdish group, living mostly in the borderlands of Iraq and Iran since the early 15th Century, a mystery sect that is formally part of Islam but emphasizes esoteric teachings and initiation ceremonies with a clearly Mithraic imprint, and (c) the best-known of these are the Bahai, a religious movement of a charismatic character that grew out of the Babist movement (which started in 1844, at the millennial anniversary of the Great Occultation of the 12th Imam). In these - and other - ‘sectarian’ groups may be said to certain Mithraic features ‘resurface’. Religiously, these features include a reliance on esoteric codes, acceptance of new revelation, emphasis on initiation rites and persistent reports of antinomian rituals. Socially, they include a strong public

¹⁷ It is worth pointing out the similarity between the cosmologically informed social hierarchy proposed by the 13th Century Nizari Ismaili movement in the Middle East and the simultaneously occurring Cathar movement in Europe: both posited a transcendently grounded three-fold social hierarchy, made up of (1) the ignorant and benighted masses. For the Nizari’s these included ordinary Muslims, who were necessarily subject to the Sharia due to their enslavement by their lower instincts), (2) the believers (Nizari *khvass*, Cathar *credentes*) and (3) the elite saints (Nizari *akhass-e khvass*, Cathar *perfecti*).

role for women and deference to charismatic leadership. Possibly the most original element of Jorjani's thesis is his analysis of the Islamic Revolution (1979), the rule of Imam Khomeini (1979-89) and the Islamic Republic (1979-present): Jorjani views these as phenomena that fit into a psycho-historical pattern of revolutionary millenarianism, charismatic leadership and utopian state-projects punctuating Iranian cultural history - all reflections of a largely hidden but archetypically imprinted Mithraic world-view, a world-view that the reviewer will here provisionally typify as 'dialectically-utopian'. About the Islamic Revolution Jorjani writes that it represented an all-out dialectic challenge to Western-based Modernity itself, pointing to the *...transcendent nature of a movement that sought nothing less than to resist and overthrow the hegemonic and soulless regime of Western nihilism* (p. 455) and to the *...philosophical rejection of both the Liberal Capitalism and Hegelian-Marxism of secular enlightenment rationalism, [both] leading inevitably towards the nihilistic profanation of everything* (p. 462). In Jorjani's view, the Islamic Revolution fits the pattern of the many earlier crypto-Mithraic revolutionary movements punctuating Iranian history, including the Mazdakite challenge to Zoroastrian orthodoxy under the Sassanids and the Assassin challenge to Sunni orthodoxy under the Abbasids and Mongols. The Islamic Revolution, too, was aimed at nothing less than a transfiguration of the human life-world. It too was simultaneously transcendent in nature and reflective of a 'general will'. It too was led by a 'mystic saint': Imam Khomeini represented a fixed point for a transcendently inspired and collective voiced will to existential transformation, accounting for its rapturous and ecstatic nature. Effectively, Imam Khomeini charismatically 'channeled' this collective will - more precisely: the transcendently referenced but collective experienced spectral force-field - that lay behind it: *[c]harisma is the overflowing of energy into this world, as channeled by a particular person, from a source that almost seems to be out of this world* (p. 461).¹⁸ Thus understood, Imam Khomeini provided Iran with the charismatic leadership befitting its archetypically imprinted dialectic-utopian world-view: *...his passionate searching and attainment of mystical and philosophical knowledge in his early years is the key to [his] life and mission. It is the key to understanding the regime that he founded as an attempt to establish a Platonic Republic of Virtue on earth in a conscious reaction to the rise of Western nihilism* (p. 449). The fact is that Imam Khomeini was indeed exceptionally well-qualified this philosophy-ruled Republic of Virtue: he was one of the very few clergymen of his day who had been 'cleared' for highest-level philosophical studies, including highly restricted scholarly access to Greek speculative philosophers and Persian mystical writers, including Suhrawardi¹⁹ and Mulla Sadra²⁰. This attempt at achieving a Republic of Virtue is borne out by the *...core structures of the Islamic Republic of Iran [which] mirror the constitution of the ideal state that Plato delineates in his Republic governed by sagacious Guardians* (p. 447). The 'Guardian Council' of the Islamic Republic is an example of one such institution: it is shielding keeping state institutions and policies free from its still-unenlightened citizens, including the corruption and vanity of power-hungry money-elites as well as the vice

¹⁸ Jorjani's points to the relevant remarks of one qualified Western witness: *[h]aving observed the Iranian Revolution of 1978-1979 first-hand as a journalist from Tehran, [French philosopher Michel] Foucault concluded that Khomeini was the most perfect embodiment of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's idea of the 'general will' that had ever manifested in the history of nations* (p. 447).

¹⁹ Yahya Suhrawardi (b. 1154 d. 1191), founder of the Persian philosophical school of Illuminationism (author of *Hikmat al-Ishraq*, 'Wisdom of Enlightenment', effectively a synthesis of ancient Iranian, other pre-Islamic and speculative philosophy within the operative framework of Islamic theology) and executed for heresy.

²⁰ Muhammad Shirazi, a.k.a. Mulla Sadra (b. ca. 1571/2 d. ca. 1635/40), Persian philosopher, mystic and master of the Illuminationist School (author of *Hikmat al-Muta'alyahfi*, 'Transcendent Philosophy', effectively a commentary on the universal history of philosophy).

and self-conceit of ‘democratically empowered’ masses. Theoretically, the goal of the Islamic Republic is to implement divine law, which is the goal of any Republic Virtue: its anagogic aim is to allow its citizens to reinvent themselves, at the private as well as the collective level, according to the Illuminationist vision of the *Ensân-e Kâmil*, ‘Perfect Man’, as set out by Ibn-Arabi²¹: ...*while the macrocosm of the material universe is not God in its full essence, the microcosm of the soul of man is of the divine essence. Thus through disciplining and refinement of the soul by the guidance of the divine law, man can bring about a congruence between his inner perfection and his material existence in such a way that it comes to reflect the essence of God. The profound and controversial implication of this process of ‘opening’ is that it is indeed possible to achieve divine perfection in this very life, rather than spending life in blind submission to religious law with the hope of redemption and understanding only after death* (p. 451). Assessment: correct - the consistent recurrence of structural patterns throughout Iranian cultural history indicates the psycho-historical persistence of an archetypally-specific reference frame of a dialectic-idealist nature. Jorjani uses the term ‘Mithraic’ for this reference frame - its (historical) origins and (philosophical) nature, which are the key thesis of *Iranian Leviathan*, are the subject of the next paragraph.

8. ‘Caucasian Sketches’: Seven Aspects of Mithraism (Primary Thesis)

*O Lord, if tomorrow on Judgment Day
You send me to hell
I will tell such a secret
That hell will race from me
- Rabia of Bassorah*

The main thesis of Jorjani’s *Iranian Leviathan* is that Mithraism, sometimes explicitly and sometimes implicitly, represents the cosmological foundation of the Persian Tradition and the cultural reference frame of Iranian Civilization. In his view, the central tenets of Mithraism are simultaneously religious and philosophical and they have existentially conditioned the Persian people and Iranian civilization at such a fundamental level that a very specific ‘mind-set’ and a very specific ‘world-view’ are bound to recur in the material and immaterial creations of the Persian people and Iranian civilization. Jorjani describes this Mithraic mind-set and world-view, which in his view underpins the entire Persian philosophical tradition, as strongly dialectic and utopian in nature. Before addressing Jorjani’s view of Mithraism’s form and content, however, it is necessary to address two of its more basic aspects: the name and antecedents of Mithraism - the reader is entitled to know what are its etymological and historical credentials before he is asked to consider Jorjani’s claim as to the seminal importance of Mithraism for the Persian Tradition and Iranian civilization:

(A) Etymological aspect (definition): Proto-Indo-Iranian **mitrás* ‘binding’, hence ‘covenant; oath’ > Old Persian *Mithra* > New Persian *Mehr*. In the oldest sources (the Vedas and the Avesta), Mithra is a divinity associated with the sun (justice) and fire (enlightenment) and ...*the war god who... presides over the making of oaths, and takes vengeance upon those who break*

²¹ Muhammad Ibn Arabi (b. 1165 d. 1240), Andalusian philosopher, mystic and poet (author of *Al-Futuhat al-Makkiyah*, ‘The Meccan Revelations’, a classic Sufi treatise on Islamic philosophy).

covenants or contacts. ...*Mithra is an Ahura, part of a class of titans who are depicted in Indo-Iranian mythology as the 'demonic' rivals of the gods* (p. 48-9). The cult of Mithra was later partially absorbed in Zoroastrianism and is still preserved in several key elements as such as the name of the Zoroastrian temple as *Dar-e Mehr*, 'Gate of Mithra', and the including of the *Mehr Yasht*, 'Worship of Mithra', the 10th hymn of the Avesta, the most important sacred text of Zoroastrianism. During the second half of the Parthian Era, the cult of Mithra spread from the Iranian east to the Roman west, where it was initially adopted by soldiers who had fought in the east. More correctly, Mithraism can be typified as a mystery cult, contemporaneously known as the 'Mithraic Mysteries' - it functioned alongside various other religious practices in the Persian and Roman Empires until its disappearance after the rise of Zoroastrian and Christian orthodoxy in the 3rd and 4th Centuries AD.

(B) Etiological aspect (origin): Jorjani views Mithraism as the oldest religion of Iran: as the 'default setting' of the Iranian world, Mithraism antedates and surmounts Zoroastrianism: *Zoroastrianism can in no way, shape, or form, be considered an uncontested ideological foundation of Iranian Civilization, nor should Zarathustra be seen as the founder of this civilization in anything like the singular sense in which many Chinese would confer upon Confucius the honor of being the father of Chinese Civilization. Rather, if a single religious worldview defined Iranian identity in its formative phase, it was Mithraism...* (p. 25). ...*Prior to Zarathustra, all branches of Iranians had been worshipers of Mithra...* (p. 48). According to Jorjani, the earliest stages of Iranian history, memories of which are preserved in the myths of the *Shahnameh*, 'Book of Kings'²², are characterized by a doubly ethnic and religious conflict between different Iranian tribes, with northern and nomadic Scythians remaining Mithraic when the southern and sedentary Medes and Persians became Zoroastrians: ...*the context for Zarathustra's revolution is a conflict between the Medes and the Scythians...*²³ *The epic war between Iran and Turan in the Shahnameh is the Median-Scythian War of the seventh century BC. ...[T]his was an ideological crusade of the [Zoroastrian] Medians against Scythian paganism* (p. 88). ...*The conflict between Zoroastrianism and an older Mithraic worldview that evolves in response to Zoroastrianism is not a matter of mere tribalism, it is a fundamental philosophical clash* (p. 27). ...*[T]he revolutionary message of Zarathustra can be better appreciated against the backdrop of the older Iranian magical Mithraism that the Scythians refused to relinquish* (p. 88). ...*The cosmological, psychological, and ethical content of the [Zoroastrian] Gathas is unmistakably philosophical rather than pre-philosophically religious.*

²² The Iranian national epic written in poetic form (counting no less than 50.000 verses) by Ferdowsi Tusi (b. 940 d. 1019/25) and published in 1010, is a literary masterpiece that has come to take a central place in the cultural identity of the Persian nation.

²³ It should be noted that Jorjani adheres to the 'late-date Zarathustra thesis', which places the life and work of the Prophet Zarathustra in the 7th Century BC, a thesis which conforms to the orthodox Zoroastrian tradition: ...*the raging debate over the epoch of Zarathustra... is not a mere debate of dates, but a controversy over the cultural matrix of Iranian Civilization as a whole. Using, ...as a guiding thread, ...the Shahnameh, ...indicating that Zarathustra [was] still alive [at Esfandiyar's] father's side in the royal court of Iran...[it can be concluded that] he lived not in 6,000 BC, nor even in 1,500 BC, separated by a vast gulf from the rest of recorded Iranian history, but in 650 BC, a century before Cyrus the Great...* (p. 87). *A Zarathustra separated from the rest of the history of Philosophy in Greece and India by many hundreds of years simply does not make sense from the standpoint of psycho-social evolution within the Indo-European community. However, a Zarathustra who is the forerunner of philosophical thought within a century of the Imperial Iranian colonization of Greece, and the rise of Pre-Socratic Greek philosophy in the Iranian colonies of Ionia, makes a great deal of sense* (p. 24). ...*[F]or all we know Zarathustra himself was a Persian composing his Gathas in a dead language of theological authority - much like a Roman Catholic still writing in Latin during the Renaissance...* (p. 88).

The closest point of comparison are the compositions - also in poetic style - of the Pre-Socratic Greek philosophers (p. 89). Jorjani views all of Iran's subsequent culture and history as being profoundly affected by the dynamic - and *dialectic* - relation between the older, Mithraic and 'magical',²⁴ and the newer, Zoroastrian 'rational' religious worlds, allowing for uniquely fertile philosophical amalgams to arise. For Jorjani, however, the recognition of the primordial status of Mithraism is not only the key to Iran's past, but also the key to its future: he recognizes *...Mithra as the guardian of the Aryan Realm, i.e. Iran. [In t]he Mehr Yasht... the domain of Mithra...[is] bounded by the Indus river in the east and the Tigris in the west. This essentially amounts to a determination of Greater Iran as the abode of Mithra* (p. 53).

(C) Historical aspect (development): Effectively tolerated, as a cultic practice compatible with state security, during the Zoroastrian-Achaemenid and Hellenic-Seleucid Eras, Mithraism experienced its heyday during the Parthian Era, when it also penetrated the Roman Empire: *The Parthians... were Mithraics who took over the mantle of the Persian Empire after centuries of Greek colonization. ...[T]hey favored a new, somewhat Hellenized form of Mithraism over Zoroastrianism* (p. 27) *...It is this religion that the Parthians deliberately injected into the Roman Empire in a psychological warfare campaign spearheaded by the Cilician pirates, the black ops navy of Mithridates in the Mediterranean Sea* (p. 206) The decline of Mithraism set in with the fall of the Parthian Empire, which was replaced by the Sassanid Empire: *...the Iranian cultural conquest of the Roman Empire through the spread of Mithraism was nearly victorious. It was undone, not by the Romans, but by Ardeshir Babakan, the founder of what can be seen as the Second Persian Empire.*²⁵ *Ardeshir's suppression of Mithraism and invention of an Orthodox Zoroastrianism as the ideological foundation of [his new] Sassanian state... and the inquisitorial persecution of those who resisted this orthodoxy...[aimed at the] eradicat[ion of]Mithraism* (p. 239). From that point onwards, effectively forced underground, Mithraism is transformed, at least within the confines of the Iranian state, into crypto-Mithraism, surviving as a 'heterodox' undercurrent in Iranian society. During the Sassanid Era, crypto-Mithraic tendencies periodically resurface as reform movements and revolutionary upheavals. The first of these crypto-Mithraic 'reactions' is Manicheism, which eventually rose to become a world religion in its own right: *Under [the] protection [of] Shapur [I, the second Sassanid emperor, r. 240-270 AD], if not with his support, Manichaeism spreads both to the East, as far as China, and deep into the West. The core of Manichean belief, ...[effectively a] synthesis of the teachings of Zarathustra, Buddha, and Jesus, ...[which] every 'hearer' (or common believer) was expected to comprehend and accept, was the doctrine of the 'Two Principles and the Three Times'. The Two Principles were Light and Darkness, conceived of as radically distinct from, and opposed to each other. The Three Times were (1) the [past] epoch before the entanglement of the two substances, (2) the present epoch of the imprisonment of the light in the darkness of matter, and (3) the final epoch of the ultimate state of their permanent separation. ...Even more unique than its dualism, the greatest innovation of Manichaeism is that Mani was the first person to explicitly advocate a universalist or Unitarian unification of*

²⁴ *...[D]espite... a tremendous diversity of thought and belief, [one can notice the] cosmological, psychological, and ethical contours of a single, albeit evolving, Mithraic meta-narrative that rivaled Zoroastrianism* (p. 28).

²⁵ The author disagrees with Jorjani's 'empire numbering': the Sassanid Empire represents the *third* and not the *second* Persian empire. The second Persian empire was the Parthian, or Arsacid, Empire - although its rulers were originally ethnically Scythian (or northern Iranian) rather than Persian, they explicitly identified with the Persian Tradition, claiming legitimacy as heirs to the Achaemenid Empire, continuing the use of the Iranian calendar and adopting elements of Achaemenid iconography in their art and architecture.

diverse prophetic messages. The idea of a 'seal of prophets', namely an individual whose spiritual message is a culmination, summation, and synthesis of all previous divine messengers, ...begins with Mani. ...He claimed to be the Holy Spirit whose coming Jesus prophesied, as well as the arrival of Maitreya, the Buddha of the future, and of course, the Saoshyant or world savior that the followers of Zarathustra expected to appear at the apocalypse. ...For the first time in recorded history, we are seeing a self-conscious will to unify all of humanity on the basis of a single worldwide religion supported, if not enforced, by an Imperial Iran... (p. 250-1). The second crypto-Mithraic reaction is the 3rd Century *Dorost Din*, 'Right Religion', reform movement, based on the mystical doctrines of Zaradust Khuragen, a native of the Fars region and known as the 'Persian Zarathustra'.²⁶ ...[I]n the *Dorost Din*... the Promethean spirit of the original teaching of Zarathustra, with its emphasis on personal conscience and creative individuation, [is] reasserting itself in an adaptation of the figure of Mithra, a guarantor of free will who lies beyond good and evil (p. 258). Zaradust was the teacher of the great heresiarch Mazdak, and Jorjani points to the origins of Mazdak's revolutionary belief system in his teacher's doctrines: *Zaradusht taught that... the Ahrimanic demons must be appeased - but at the same time neutralized - by practicing free love and communal property holding. On account of these beliefs, contemporary Christian commentators in the West described [the Dorost Din] 'Magi' as 'devil worshippers. ...They are, [in fact], Mithraics who recognize evil as a necessary cosmic force.Theirs was a libertine doctrine of unbinding Desire, not by denying sensuality as the Manicheans did, but by liberating it. It was not only libertine, but also antinomian* (p. 267). In the third crypto-Mithraic reaction, which is the Mazdakite movement, the *Dorost Din* heresy metastasizes into a full-blown social revolution. According to Jorjani, the Mithraic cult long persisted among sections of the feudal aristocracy as well as among dissident magi, accounting for widespread elite-support for the Mazdakite movement. *Mazdak was a utopian revolutionary [initially] backed by Kavad, [Sassanid emperor, r. 488-96 and 498/9-531], in a bid to bring human history to an end and establish heaven on earth. The transformation of human consciousness demanded by the Mazdakite social policies was impossible, and it was meant to be impossible. [It was] the deliberate Mithraic invitation of an Apocalypse ending in Utopia - what the Zoroastrians called Frashgard and the Assassins would later refer to as the Qiyamat*. (p.33). ...*The Mazdakite redistribution of wealth and encouragement of free love was based on a fascinating Neo-Mithraic metaphysics and psychology. ...The Mazdakite Revolution was a failed attempt at [realizing the Mithraic final] revelation. ...[I]t dynamited all of the pillars of any traditional society: vast inequalities in the possession of private property, monogamous marriage and the patriarchal family, inquisitorial religious hierarchy, and the political persecution of dissidents*. (240-1) Interestingly, this Iranian apocalyptic theology of the 'end of history' would reemerge in the Hegelian-Marxism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, together with the foremost Mazdakite symbol of the Red Flag (p. 33). After the Arab-Muslim conquest of the Sassanid Empire, which Jorjani views as having been triggered and supported by crypto-Mithraic dissidents among the landed aristocracy and dissident clergy within the empire (cf. paragraph 7 point E), Jorjani traces the continued recurrence of crypto-Mithraism reactions against Arab-Sunni rule in various heretical and revolutionary movements. Undeniably, there are significant structural and formal parallels between pre-Islamic movements such as the *Dorost Din* and the Mazdakites and Islamic-era movements such as the Khurramites²⁷ and Assassins - as Jorjani argues, some of these parallels even recur in the

²⁶ These doctrines include the concept of a universal and inner truth, roughly equivalent of the later Islamic concept of *batin*, 'inner', 'hidden', hence esoteric meaning. On this point, the *Dorost Din* movement, represent the earliest promoters of what the Illuminatonists would later come to term *Javidan Kherad*, 'Perennial Wisdom'.

revolutionary movements that founded the Safavid state in the 16th Century and the Islamic Republic in the 20th Century. As stated above (paragraph 7 point G), the reviewer agrees with Jorjani's thesis of the long-term historical continuity and the enduring palingenetic potential of the crypto-Mithraic utopian vision.

(D) Iconographical aspect (mimesis): Although Jorjani does not attempt a systematic study of Mithraic iconography, he does point to the origins and subsequent associations of some of its key symbols. Surviving symbols of contemporary relevance include: (a) the Mithraic communion ceremony preserved in the Christian sacrament, (b) Mithra's virgin birth celebration on 25 December preserved in the Christmas holiday, (c) Mithra's solar aspect preserved in *Sol Invictus*, 'Unconquered Sun', (d) the Wheel of Mithra preserved in the Swastika, (e) the Mithraic Greek letter *chi*-code preserved in the 'Jolly Roger' skull-and-bones flag and the Catholic crossed-key sign,²⁸ (f) the Mithraic red-white-green tricolor (ritually present in the evergreen tree, red wine and white mushroom) in the flags of Iran and several other Indo-European nations, (g) the attributes of Mithra's consort, Anahita, preserved in sun-crowned and chain-breaking Lady Liberty and (h) the Mithraic right-hand oath symbol preserved in the military salute²⁹ (for a summary of Mithraic key symbols, cf. Appendix A).

(E) Cosmological aspect ('liberation cosmology'): Jorjani correctly states that the Mithraic Mysteries were underpinned by a cosmology that is radically different from the Abrahamic religions that later outflanked and outlawed them. Most crucially, this difference stems from Mithraism's intentionally sought and ritually enacted 'conquest of time'. Whereas the Abrahamic religious revelations offer believers an *exit* from time, either in a time-less 'state of grace' or after-live 'salvation', the Mithraic Mysteries sought to *master* time itself. In Mithraic astrol/nomical iconography this principle is expressed by representing Mithra as Cosmocrator, viz. lord over the time-ruled heavenly spheres. This is most obvious in Mithra's mastering the precession of equinoxes (e.g. in the Tauroctony): *On a cosmological level, Mithra qua Perseus³⁰ was understood to be the agency responsible for the astronomical precession of the equinoxes. As the god above the god who designed the astrological sphere, Mithra overpowers the Gorgon of Fate, namely Zorvân (or Chronos) by tilting the axis of heaven and shifting the entire celestial sphere. From a psychological perspective, this signifies a reaffirmation of the free will that was so central to the teaching of Zarathustra, and the ethos of the ancient Iranians...* (p. 205). Thus, ...[t]he devotee of Mithra, the perfected human being for whom Mithra is the archetype, practices divine love to overcome the astrologically fatalistic and archontic influences of the

²⁷ The *Khorram-Dinân*, 'Joyful Religious', a.k.a. *Sorkh-Jâmagân*, 'Red Clothed', were an Iranian nationalist as well as a heretical revolutionary movement, led by Babak Khorramdin (b. 795/8-838).

²⁸ *The crossed bones represent the Greek letter chi or the X of the intersecting zodiacal plane of astrologically marked time as the realm of fateful death* (p. 219) ...*The exact angle formed by the two intersecting bands symbolized by the crossed bones is the 23-degree angle, the same angle formed by the ecliptic's intersection with the celestial equator. ...The skull and bones symbolize the initiatory death of the Raven. ...In this connection it is relevant that another variant of it are the crossed keys, which in the Vatican came to symbolize the inter regnum between the death of one Pope and the appointment of another - in other words, the fact that the throne is vacant* (p. 230).

²⁹ *The military salute has its origin in the Mithraic symbolism of shielding one's eyes from the brilliance of Mithras, the Invincible Sun* (p. 225).

³⁰ In Greek mythology, Perseus, whose name is said to mean 'Destroyer', is the ancestor of the Persians, conqueror of the Medes and founder of the Order of the Magi - in his capacity as the bringer of celestial fire and arch-magician he is sometimes presented as a hypostasis of Mithra.

stars and planets that move most men through their passions. The Mithraics symbolized this as Mithra overcoming the Gorgon-headed Lord or Time, Zorvân, in such a way as to be able to shift the axis of the entire heavens from above the stellar sphere. ...This alternative Iranian worldview is divergent from [orthodox] Zoroastrianism in all of its dimensions - cosmological, psychological, ethical and political (p. 29).

(F) Ethical aspect ('world-view warfare'): Mithraism's very particular cosmology, as described by Jorjani, explains its very particular ethos, which is more concerned with 'leverage' than with 'salvation'. It is in its ethical aspect that Mithraism most diverges from Zoroastrianism, which focuses on the alignment of thought, speech and action (the Zoroastrian ethical trinity, aimed at the incarnation of Logos in man). Mithraic ethics are, in a sense, 'beyond good and evil': *Mithra is not a 'good' god, ...[rather], on a cosmological level, [he is] the mediator... between the forces of Good and Evil (p. 202)...* Above all, *...Mithra is a warrior god who vigilantly enforces covenants, ...punish[ing] oath breakers regardless of the contents of the contracts that they broke. Covenants to Mithra were customarily sworn over or before a fire. One reason for this is the association between fire and truthfulness in the sense of a 'trial by fire'...* (p. 202). In other words: Mithra is charged with continuously building up the cosmic order, irrespective of the human-perceived nature of that order. In the course of this cosmic 'building project' *...any thing or idea that proves itself is entirely indebted to what it prevails against in the perpetual conflict that defines the nature of things. What proved to be lower and was enslaved to the higher is not on that account an 'evil' that the 'good' prevailed over. ...To be truly sovereign in life is to adopt the attitude of the Aeon, [i.e. the principle of Transcendental Order hypostatized as a divine actor], to try to see things from the perspective of the life force as it manifests the cosmos from out of primordial chaos over the course of cosmic time. If we were to do so, we would realize that the opinions we form about things being good and just and others being evil and unjust are not true to the nature of things (p. 158-9).* This principally - but not dogmatically - antinomian ethical stance explains Mithraism's antithetical relation to the Zoroastrian and Abramahic religious orthodoxies that finally destroyed it. It also explains the ferocious nature of the subsequent 'world-view warfare' whenever crypto-Mithraic rebels attempted to dislodge these orthodoxies and the state powers that sought to implement them. Despite the consistent failure of these revolutionary movements and despite the progressive dilution of their Mithraic core content over time, however, Mithraic ethics remain a viable alternative to one-dimensional orthodox dogmas of all kinds, including the new secular dogma's of contemporary totalitarian liberalism and woke bio-leninism. In fact, the decisive re-appropriation of Mithraic ethics - under whatever name required - by a sufficiently motivated and sufficiently strong revolutionary movement, which is what Jorjani proposes for his Iranian Renaissance as well as his Prometheist movements, could very well bring down the whole globalist-nihilist New World Order. The philosophical *tabula rasa* necessary for such a movement has already been achieved by Jorjani's indefatigable philosophical demolition work - the last point of this paragraph will investigate its progress.

(G) Philosophical aspect ('weapon-grade wisdom-worship'): To understand Jorjani's view of the contribution of Zarathustra to (per Jorjani's theses discussed in paragraph 7 points A and B: world) philosophy, it is important to have some understanding of Zarathustra's basic tenets, as viewed through Jorjani's philosophical lens. In his view, Zarathustra makes an important contribution to philosophy in his concept of *Ordibehest*, 'Best Order', which is *...cosmic order [a]s a precondition of any truth. The claim that it is possible to ascertain the truth about some*

state of affairs as opposed to being deceived by a semblance or otherwise mistaken as to how things really are, has as its precondition the existence of an order in the world. It presupposes that we are not confronted by mere chaos and that there is actually a cosmos to be comprehended. This is a simple but profound statement. A world that is entirely random, or one wherein any apparent order is taken to be only a product of our own subjective categories, is not a world wherein anything can be verifiably true...[Thus, i]n his inner dialogue with the transcendent intelligence of Ahura Mazda, the 'Lord of Wisdom', Zarathustra inquires into the meaning of the majestic order at work in the wheelwork of the heavens, ecological processes, and human life (p. 100-1). ...[B]efore Ahurâ Mazdâ creates physical beings he conceives of their archetypes or ideal forms, [the] ...Fravashi. The physical creation does not simply follow the conception of the ideal forms in a chronological fashion, because the former exist even with Ahurâ Mazdâ having initiated... measurable time. These forms are consequently motionless and invulnerable to corruption, perfect prototypes of the things and persons who will come to populate the physical world. The archetypes are internal differentiations within a realm of light that is separated from a realm of darkness by a chasm or void. Both realms are described as infinite in their own dimension, in other words infinitely transcendent light and bottomless abyss of darkness, except that their meeting place is finite. ...[F]rom a [timeless] primordial standpoint [the common boundary] is a chasm, but in [ordered] time it comes to be filled with the good creation that is assaulted by the forces of darkness. ...[T]he difference between [the] ideal form and the physical beings that are shaped based on this prototype is on account of the corrupting influence of the realm of darkness and the limiting conditions of the receptacle within which the finite creation is fashioned.³¹ Both the good creation and the dark forces deranging it are finite in nature. ...[Thus] the power of Ahurâ Mazdâ is limited. ...[O]nce the physical creation begins, the constellations and other celestial bodies are described, [i.e. in the Zoroastrian scripture *Bundahishn*,³²] as a 'warlike army which is destined for battle' against the forces of darkness. Th[us], the sky is also created by Ahurâ Mazdâ as a shining steel egg, a metal 'rampart... formed so that the adversary should not be able to mingle with' the good creation.³³ In other words, the Zoroastrian cosmos is a giant war machine (p. 113-4). Here, Jorjani peels back Zoroastrian cosmology to its bare essence, viz. that of a 'dual creation', or rather: the radical differentiation between the ideal concept and the material creation. But only once Mithraism is superimposed on this cosmological model (cf. point F above), in other words: once Mithra is activated within it, it can be philosophically 'weaponized'. Mithra, Jorjani recognizes, has a unique role: ...Mithra [should be] seen as the champion and savior of humanity, [because he is] a just and impartial mediator in the cosmic battle between the opposed forces of Ohrmazd (Ahura Mazda) and Ahriman (p. 28). ...The supreme God, [i.e. the Creator Who antedates these opposed forces], only becomes good over the course of time, S/he only gives birth to Ohrmazd after attaining self-consciousness by witnessing the exteriorization of His or Her own inner Evil. This process of God [eventually] transcending unconscious [Evil]... is symbolized by Ohrmazd triumphing over Ahriman at the conclusion of a battle extending through ages of human history. Without Mithra acting as mediator, Ohrmazd would

³¹ This process is the subject of the Qabbalic teaching of the *Qelipot*, i.e. the 'shells' that necessarily limit all emanations of the Divine within the immanent sphere.

³² The *Bundahishn*, 'Primal Creation', is a Zoroastrian work on cosmogony, dating back to the 8th and 9th Centuries AD.

³³ Note that Jorjani speculates that the intrusion of Ahriman into the Earthly realm as described in the *Bundahishn* could be read as a cultural memory of some great natural catastrophe (specifically: a meteor impact) transposed into cosmology - cf. *Iranian Leviathan*, 114-5.

not be able to secure this victory - especially at the apocalyptic end of history, where Mithra has a key role to play as a savior (p. 28-9). Once shifted from dualism to non-dualism and Mithraically ‘weaponized’, the Zoroastrian cosmological model yields a philosophical critique of essence itself: *[o]ur minds provide the differentiae that are lacking in things without inherent self-identity. These differentiae usually involve category words or quality descriptors. ...[U]neasy minds project definite types and absolute qualities as criteria for the categorization of what is only relatively graded and always variable. [Thus, t]he idea of ‘perfection’ [merely] serves the purpose of orienting an aim (telos) for a certain endeavor, whether scientific, political, or artistic, by defining a goal that is itself not attainable. ...Although they never perfectly instantiate their vaguely imagined ideal, the aim does produce beautiful things* (p. 120). This synthesized Zoroastrian-Mithraic philosophical critique allows for a dynamic (process-oriented) and dialectic (teleologically directed) understanding of reality - in certain aspects it bears resemblance to the modern phenomenological and existentialist schools, initiated by Husserl and Kierkegaard: *[c]onceptual distinctions are grounded on nothing other than complex social and linguistic practices. This is what determines the appropriateness of certain concepts depending on their intentional context, such as what is considered metaphorical versus literal depending on whether the context is fiction or non-fiction. Our everyday thought, with a view to action, never really involves absolutes - let alone require them. This does not mean science is impossible. Rather, it means that we have to acknowledge that science is a practical endeavor and that it is a science of [mere] perceived phenomena. ...In phenomenological science, we should neither look for absolutes nor expect to find them. ...Imperfect science is no problem at all, because it is the only kind of knowledge that there is. A scientific theory is ‘valid’ when it works well enough in application* (p. 295-6). Effectively, Jorjani argues that pre-modern Iranian philosophy, and from their classical Greek and Indian philosophy, already contained all the seemingly uniquely ‘progressive’ insights of (scientist-rationalist) modern and (relativist-deconstructive) post-modern Western philosophy. Thus, pre-modern Iranian philosophy could be said to have stated many of these insights not only much earlier, but also in a much more (metapolitically) ‘actionable’ manner. Unsurprisingly, it takes an American-Iranian philosopher, able to bridge the cultural divide, to apprise Western philosophers of the backward and limited outlook of their discipline - something they are not likely to forgive him for any time soon. But a far greater shock is awaiting all those many ‘professional’ philosophers who have consistently failed to grasp the value of Jorjani’s philosophical demolition work ever since the publication of his pioneering work *Prometheus and Atlas* (Arktos: London, 2016): the shock of being shortly consigned to the dustbin of history.

9. ‘Scythian Suite’: ‘Prometheus Unbound’

(Prognosis)

*It’s not possible -
No, it’s necessary
- ‘Interstellar’*

If the ‘Second Iranian Renaissance’ that Jorjani is gearing up to in *Iranian Leviathan* involves the full-blown ‘world-view warfare’ of an all-out ‘Neo-Mithraic’ revolution, then what would the application of a similar revolution look like on a world-scale? After all, Jorjani recognizes that a ‘world state of emergency’ is required to cope with the currently unfolding ‘convergence

of catastrophes' (for the author's Traditionalist analysis of key elements in this 'world state of emergency' and 'convergence of catastrophes', cf. *Alba Rosa*, 13ff.) and he emphasizes the globally-relevant - even unabashedly universalist - philosophical vision underpinning Mithraic-style 'world-view warfare'. Jorjani himself answers this question in his metapolitical synthesis, as laid out in his 'Prometheist Manifesto' and his work *Prometheism* (Arktos: London, 2020), both a year after *Iranian Leviathan*. Effectively, 'Prometheism' proposes a radically futurist strategy of harnessing the driving force of modern civilization, techno-science, including its cutting-edge bio-engineering and trans-humanist spearheads, and using them to achieve a break-out of the outdated - and purposefully regressive - totalitarian-nihilist New World Order currently being foisted upon the world's masses through a concerted program of brainwash ('BLM'-style bio-leninist conditioning, 'Biden-coup'-style MSM psy-ops) and blackmail ('pandemic'-style social engineering and 'vaccine'-style biological warfare). 'Prometheism' requires a deliberately accelerationist but carefully calibrated *techno-idealism* that requires the literally 'fantastic' (simultaneously dream-like and nightmarish) power potential of modern technology to be advanced, applied and directed by an entirely new kind of ruling elite. After replacing the current totalitarian-nihilist globalist elite (for the author's etiology of the globalist hostile elite, cf. Wolfheze, *Alba Rosa*, 162ff.), economically bankrupt, ethically discredited and intellectually defeated but still clinging to power throughout West, and after clearing away the discredited dogmas of anti-civilizational egalitarianism and unsustainable consumerism, this new ruling elite of techno-idealist 'philosopher-kings' would have to 'fast forward' society towards a utopia in which 'human development' is no longer measured by ego-centric profit hoarding and sub-human escapism, but rather by ego-surpassing potential enhancement and super-human exploration.

At the first glance, the requirements of a deliberately accelerationist as well as carefully calibrated for such a 'fast forward' techno-idealist may seem contradictory: how can the most dangerous powers ever to have come within reach of humanity - bio-engineering gene-therapies, trans-humanist nano-applications, virtual/actual reality identity-shifts, panoptic surveillance-systems, particle-collision energy-sources, 'spectral' research-projects - ever be controlled? Jorjani's answer to that question is simple: *time has run out* - there is no choice but to 'jump into the unknown'. Stagnation equals regression - the now-unfolding totalitarian power-bid of the old globalist elite proves the point beyond the shadow of a doubt. In the space of a single year, the triple 'Covid'- 'BLM'- 'Biden' coup of 2020 has already undone the work of generations: free-market capitalism, civil liberty and liberal democracy have been wiped out. In its desperate bid to retain power at all costs, the globalist-nihilist hostile elite is resorting to a burnt-earth strategy, tearing down its own global economic system (as in ending its much-vaunted free movement of goods, services and people and in revisiting national infrastructure requirements) and abandoning its own military outposts (i.e. abandoning its proxy-wars in Ukraine and Syria and its regime-change experiments Syria and Afghanistan). Under the guise of 'covid' and 'green' strategies, undoubtedly to be followed by even more unpleasant 'inflation pressures' and 'austerity measures', the living standards and conditions of the masses, especially the future perspectives and opportunities of the young, are being degraded at an unprecedented rate - that is: unprecedented in *peacetime*. But the globalist-nihilist hostile elite is *waging war* on these masses now, especially on the young. Tiny doses of this reality are starting to filter down into the (sub)conscious of the most bovinely docile sections of the masses: 'conspiracy theories' about massive 'culling' projects abound, with stories of bio-engineered viruses and infertility-inducing vaccines now reaching even the dumbest minds, not only through the heavily-censored alternative media but also through simple mouth-to-ear

rumours. The ‘scorched earth’ strategy of the hostile elite’s - limiting exposure, jettisoning ballast, denying resources, ‘evacuating’ people - is obvious for all to see. As it abandons the last pretence at good governance and rule of law, its regressive movement is certain to be ‘covered’ by desperate and inhuman measures. Here, the important question to ask is: *what* is being covered up? Jorjani’s ‘Prometheist Manifesto’ answers this in an unequivocal manner: the hostile elite seeks to create its own ‘safe space’ bubbles where it can pursue its hollow trans- and super-human ambitions. Given the psycho-historical developmental trajectory of the hostile elite thus far, these ambitions are bound to focus on the vacuous (billionaire-style space-tourism), the perverted (Epstein-style sex-periment retreats) and the vampiric (boomer-style ‘Vanilla Sky’ life-extension). Its subject population is likely to be strictly reduced to a certain minimum ‘human resource’ pool, sufficiently large to man its residual production facilities, to satisfy its jaded appetites and to feed its experimental laboratories. Jorjani counters this vision with an uncompromising ‘do-or-die’ alternative: a revolutionary movement that eliminates this self-appointed elite and establishes a revolutionary state with a levelled playing field for all. The question as to whether or not Jorjani’s Prometheist alternative is viable has little relevance: his main argument stands - *time has run out*. If the globalist-nihilist elite is playing *va banque*, so should its enemies.

If Prometheism is defined by its use of ‘fore-thought’ - which, according to its most common etymology, is its literal meaning - then it shares an important characteristic with Traditionalism: a capacity for pattern-projection through time. Projecting the building patterns of the new 21st Century New World Order project of the globalist-nihilist hostile elite backwards, immediately the great social-engineering experiments of its proto-globalist and proto-nihilist 20th Century predecessors come to mind. Stalin’s ‘Holodomor’, Mao’s ‘Great Leap Forward’ and Pol Pot’s ‘Year Zero’ models provide the genocidal precedent - Charles Manson’s ‘Helter Skelter’, Jim Jones’ ‘White Night’ and Malema’s ‘Dubul’ Ibhunú scenarios match the moral imperative. But what, it may be asked, differentiates these globalist-nihilist models and scenarios from the crypto-Mithraic models and scenarios enacted by the Mazdakites, the Khorramdinân and the Assassins? In other words: to what extent are they not the same, in as far as both contain ...*a doctrine that rejects the family, overcomes the gender binary, has utter contempt for political power and worldly wealth, even intends to watch the entire earth burn, and to see the end of all human life on it, with only those who surmount the human condition saved* (p. 233)? The answer to this question, not to be entrusted to anyone but the highest developed minds and spirits, requires discernment at the most rarefied level: *you see: the step between ecstatic vision and sinful frenzy is all too brief*.³⁴ At that level, however, the answer is exceedingly simple: the difference between the two can be found in their *aim* - the aim of the former is enslavement, control and stasis, the aim of the latter is liberation, freedom and evolution. The results are distributed according. But because history is written by the victors - and therefore and thus far by ‘those who hang others’ - the record of these results is expunged, twisted and inverted to the extent that no difference is visible by superficial students of history. Thus, any proof of the integrity and worth of the Prometheist vision will be in its implementation. The fact of the matter remains that there never has been any attempt at real-world implementation of either this Prometheist vision or its earlier (crypto-)Mithraic (one might say: ‘proto-Prometheist’) versions. As time has run out, as all other visions have failed and as the alternative is *hell*, it -

³⁴ From the script of the historical drama film ‘The Name of the Rose’ (1986) by French director Jean-Jaques Annaud (b. 1943).

in other words: *heaven* - must be tried. It should be clearly understood that, at this juncture in history, 'Hell on Earth' is not merely some 'prepper' phantasy or 'doomer' fiction: it is a palpable reality, about to manifest - as soon as a sufficient section of humanity falls short of the minimum requirements for membership of the human race:

It is a frightening thought that man also has a shadow side to him, consisting not just of little weaknesses - and foibles, but of a positively demonic dynamism. The individual seldom knows anything of this; to him, as an individual, it is incredible that he should ever in any circumstances go beyond himself. But let these harmless creatures form a mass, and there emerges a raging monster; and each individual is only one tiny cell in the monster's body, so that for better or worse he must accompany it on its bloody rampages and even assist it to the utmost. Having a dark suspicion of these grim possibilities, man turns a blind eye to the shadow-side of human nature. Blindly he strives against the salutary dogma of original sin, which is yet so prodigiously true. - Carl Jung, On the Psychology of the Unconscious

The final question then arises: *who* can realize the alternative to 'Hell on Earth', viz. 'Heaven on Earth'. In other words: who can realize the Prometheist vision? Again, Jorjani's answer is unequivocal: it is the *King in the Mountain*. This is the immortal and archetypal philosopher-king who must hide till his time has come. Imaginally this is Lord Aragorn, who travels underground to raise an 'army of the dead' to regain his throne, religiously this is Imam Mahdi, who hides in the Earth and bides his time in 'Great Occultation', and mythologically this is Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, who sleeps in a cave till he can rise to restore the Holy Roman Empire. The King in the Mountain's legitimacy will be self-evident: it is a function of a charismatic embodiment of an archetypal vision - by definition, his sovereignty is *spectral*. This numinous presence, however, has been thoroughly demonized - and *banned* - by the globalist-nihilist hostile elite, which has been trying to erase its archetypal imprint from the masses for as long as living memory reaches back. This is the underground spectre that haunts the never-sleeping eye of the demonic power that has taken possession of the surface:

*Presumed dead - like the Führer of the Third Reich - the spectral sovereign endures, outside the limits of the law, as a haunting figure. ...The Germanic term ban designates both an ostracism, namely an exclusion from the community, and also the insignia of the sovereign. ...That sacred man or homo sacer who is outside the hearth, the sacrament, and the law, is the ultimate form of the exiled individual. ...The sacred man, like anything that is taboo, is both something - or rather someone - who at the same time provokes terror and is worthy of veneration. What this figure points us back towards is a twilight zone of awful power that precedes both the dichotomy of the sacred and the profane as well as that of the religious and the political....The ambiguity of the sacred is also the propensity for what is impure, for a thing or a person who is banned as the most contaminated and contaminating creature, to be transmuted into the most holy person in this world - sacred insofar as he is a conduit for a power that seems otherworldly as it breaks through the crust of the mundane. ...Among politicians of our nihilistic age, so far only Adolf Hitler has succeeded in becoming sacred. But someone else is coming (p. 523-5 - for a Traditionalist view - through Carl Schmitt's conservative-revolutionary lens - of the 'Hitler phenomenon', cf. Wolfheze, *Rupes Nigra*, p. 2 n. 4; for an Archaeo-Futurist view of the same, cf. ibidem, p. 180).*

10. 'Il fiore delle mille e una note': Fast Forward to Frashgard

(Epiphany)

*In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree...
That with music loud and long
I would build that dome in air
- Coleridge*

Jorjani's 'world-view warfare' prognosis, as summarized in the preceding paragraph, leaves this review to deal with one last matter: the 'utopian end-state vision' of *Iranian Leviathan*, i.e. the vision that Jorjani pursues with his nationalist Second Iranian Renaissance project as well as his universalist Prometheist project. To help the reader understand this vision, it is convenient to express it in terms of traditional Zoroastrian eschatology. In Zoroastrian cosmology, the 'end of history' is viewed as an *evolutionary stage*: it does not equal the end of creative development nor the end of cosmic time, except as viewed from the - rather limited - perspective of present-stage human biology. Thus, the Zoroastrian 'end of history' can be understood as the end of a specific evolutionary stage and the beginning of another. Here, the analogy of *holo-metabolism*, the complete *ovum-larva-pupa-imago* metamorphosis of an insect, comes to mind: the 'human condition' resembling the intermediate 'nymphal' stage between the *pupa*, 'doll', and *imago*, 'imaginal', stages. Zoroastrian teachings and ethics merely serve to optimize evolutionary progress during this intermediate 'human condition' stage: *Zarathustra thinks that a truly human life is one devoted to the cultivation of Bahman, the best thinking or intellectual excellence that can discern and bring one into harmony with the cosmic order so that one may contribute to the great work of the creative spirit. ...This is the prototype of the Latin concept of humanitas... The idea is that one is only a properly human being if one cultivates one's mind* (p. 105).

Zoroastrian cosmology states that human history unwinds across three evolutionary stages according to an inverted 'dialectic' process: the Age of Creation (the 'precious metal' Silver Age), the Age of Mixture (the 'mixed-metal' Bronze Age) and the Age of Separation (the 'sword metal' Iron Age). The end of the third age, aspects of which are described in the revelations of Christian Tradition, includes the King in the Mountain-style appearance of the *Saoshyant*, 'Benefactor', a saviour-figure who will lead mankind in its final, Armageddon-style battle against the forces of evil, to be followed by a universal resurrection of the dead, a final judgement, a trial by fire and a final communion ritual. The purified righteous then enter a state of immortality as time itself is 'reset', or 'refreshed', auguring in the state of *Frashgard*, 'Renovation'. As Jorjani recognizes, humanity does not have an entirely passive role in this process: human history and end-time revelations reserve an important place for a (mostly hidden) group of 'elect'. *Various prophets appear in successive historical epochs, beginning with Zarathustra and including Christ. Whereas these messengers publicly preach an exoteric doctrine for the sake of social revolution, they also initiate an elect [group] of sagacious guardians into an esoteric secret doctrine that holds the key to the purpose and end of this divine evolution* (p. 240). Here a right understanding of that doctrine, which is preserved in the *batin*, i.e. the esoteric sphere, is necessary: *The inner knowledge of batin was conceived of by the Dorost Dinân, [i.e. the followers of Zaradust Khuragen, cf. paragraph 8 point C above], as the universal Truth at the heart of every right-minded religion or philosophy throughout history. In each age there is an attempt to define it in terms of words and concepts. Zaradusht taught that*

a given doctrine arises in this manner but is ultimately fated to lose its vitality or relevance, petrify and then be destroyed in order to clear the way for a fresh re-enactment of the same Truth. These ideas are rooted in a belief that letters, words, and concepts are facets that manifest God as a "divine verb". A line of prophets extends throughout history to perform this periodic renovation. This succession will continue until enough people are enlightened so that there is no longer a need for outward practices and allegories, whereupon a final prophet will come to abolish all religions and liberate the esoteric knowledge to its fulfillment in the social and political world without the need for any exoteric façade (p. 257-8). ...At the apocalypse, Mithra... will ultimately force Az, [i.e. the female hypostasis of primordial chaos], to devour the demons that assail the hearts and minds of men. This will happen through revelation of the secret doctrine guarded by the initiates (p. 240).

The actual experiential reality of Frashgard is effectively beyond mere-human comprehension, even if, at great intervals throughout human history, a handful of prophets, seers and artists were granted a few tantalizing 'pre-views'. In ordinary humans, however, some vague precognition of Frashgard may account for the 'unearthly' - numinous - quality of some extreme liminal experience or some rarefied high dream. The easiest rational speculation as to the 'quality of life' in Frashgard would be to project the highest human ideals and the most beautiful phantasies onto it. A thought experiment appropriate to the lived realities and concerns of early 21st Century 'post-modern' man would be to take up the Near-Term Human Extinction hypothesis of American evolutionary biologist McPherson (cf. *Guymcpherson.com* a.k.a. 'Nature Bats Last'), and then write down all that comes to mind for an all-humanity 'bucket-list'. The Traditionalist contribution to this 'bucket-list' would aim at a total societal *Katharsis*, paving the way to Frashgard: '*Jubilee* ('collective debt remission' - an end to the usurious dictatorship of the banks), *Amnesty* ('collective pardon' - an end to party politics and social divisions), *Manumissio* ('liberation of slaves' - the repatriation of guest workers and displaced persons), *Gaia Principle* ('bio-ethical revolution' - the end to industrial ecocide and bio-industry) and *Purification* (ritual cleansing - the re-consecration of desecrated places). The resulting *restitutio in integrum* [would] imply the final fulfilment of the destiny of the Western peoples.' (Wolfheze, *Alba Rosa*, 239).

In *Iranian Leviathan*, Jorjani has done all that is humanly possible to show the Iranian antecedents to and build up the critical mind-mass necessary for a decisive Promethean break-out into Frashgard. But the realization of Jorjani's Promethean Revolution, which would effectively be the equivalent of what Vögelin termed the 'Immanization of Eschaton', also requires a worthy *metaxy*, or 'in-between' - ideally, a humanity open to and worthy of the task. But then again, perhaps one single soul suffices to let that lotus flower

and perhaps Sophia Achamoth already lives among us.

*Come to me in essence and in vision, Oh Wisdom
May I be renowned before the Order of the Magicians
By working through Best Righteousness and Good Purpose
May the solemn promises made by you
Be understood and fulfilled by us
- Yasna XXXIII, 7*