The Walled Garden. An interview with Professor Bernard Lewis
With special thanks to Mrs. Annamarie Cerminaro, to the Department of Near Eastern Studies Princeton University, and to H. for lasting friendship in a world that smiles not often!

University of Princeton
Department of Near Eastern Studies
Princeton, October 29 ${ }^{\text {th }}, 2003$
"In the first year of the reign of Cyrus king Cyrus commanded that the house of the Lord at Jerusalem should be built again, where they do sacrifice with continual fire." First Book of Esdras - Chapter 6:24

"Persians abhorred the drauga, the lie, and taught their children the arshta, the absolute loyalty."
In 'La Voie Royale des Perses', by Victor Von Hagen ${ }^{6}$
"I think God smiles on them [Turks] more than us," she says, asking to be identified only by her nickname, lest she invite trouble from the police. "Because there it is by choice, and here it is by force".

Nahid, a 31 year old unemployed...
Hundreds of miles from the elite, international neighborhoods of Tehran. In 'A Ride on Winds of Change', by Steve Coll. Washington Post, November $8^{\text {th }}, 2003$.

Professor Bernard Lewis, the Cleveland E. Dodge Professor of Near Eastern Studies, Emeritus, at Princeton University, kindly greeted me in his home town. What follows is the result of an afternoon chat where he narrated aspects of the history and present time of my country.

To the Old Man of Princeton, we shall remain grateful.

Parham: On one side, we have the rapidly modernizing Orient, on the other hand, the modern west ${ }^{7}$. In between, a black hole called the world of Islam...

[^0]Bernard Lewis: this is becoming a matter of increasing concern for the people in the Middle East. They have been aware for a long time that they have been overtaken by the previously despised 'barbarians' of Christian Europe. Now, they are becoming aware that people who, half a century ago, were far behind them are now ahead of them. There is an Egyptian writer, Abdullah Nadin, who, in the late $19^{\text {th }}$ century, wrote an essay in which he asks the question:" why is it that Europe is advancing and the Muslims are falling back?" In response, while dismissing various reasons, he asserts that only the West is ahead of us and India and China are far behind the Muslim world which, in his opinion, remains ahead of the Orient. This is no longer true. I also remember chatting with a Syrian professor who was saying that there are now more than 250 universities in the Arab world...

Parham: ...that's not a lot...

Lewis: well! It's quite a lot. Nearly every one of them has a school of engineering. Between them, they turn out hundred of thousands of diplomed engineers. But, when an Arab government wants to do anything really sophisticated, they have to bring in contractors from outside. In the past, they used to bring in contractors from Europe or America. Now they bring them in from Korea. This is a country which 50 years ago was half a millennium behind the Arab Islamic world! They were just emerging from feudal, colonial servitude. Within half a century, the Koreans have caught up with the modern West and are light years ahead of the Islamic Middle East. So, this raises a very agonizing question...

Parham: this seems to me to be disequilibrium on a global scale, that is to say, the West is modernized, the East is rapidly modernizing and, in between, you have something that, the least to say, is resisting this global trend. This disequilibrium can drag on for how long?

Lewis: I don't know! I am a historian. I deal with the past, not with the future. What you can reasonably ask a historian is not to predict the future, but to formulate alternatives. What are the possible futures? Which ways might things go? There it seems to me that there are basically two such alternatives. Both have their representatives all over the Middle East. Clearly, the crisis of Islam ${ }^{8}$ results from the impact of the West. I don't think anyone could dispute that. Let me put it differently: they wouldn't be aware of any crisis; they wouldn't know that anything was wrong if it were not for the comparison with the West. You know, people can be very comfortable when things are going badly provided they don't know about it. Now, what changed the perception? Modern communications did. In the past, ordinary people just didn't know. Now they know. They know and see that theirs is a failed society, compared with the Western world, and now, with other parts of the non-Western world as well. Colonialism certainly is an important element. But, compare the different kind of colonies. Aden was a crown colony and so were Singapore and Hong Kong. Look at the difference between Aden, on the one hand, and Singapore and Hong Kong on the other, with the same colonial power, the same

[^1]colonial rule, and the same colonial experience. A more dramatic example is that of India. The British Empire's colonial rule in India came to an end in 1947. India was partitioned at that time into two countries: India and Pakistan. India was a secular republic while Pakistan was an Islamic republic. The historical experience is practically identical: the same colonial power, the same colonial rule, the same colonial administration, and even the same pre-colonial history, ethnic and cultural conditions! But, look how different the developments have been. Broadly speaking, there have been many discussions on this larger issue among Muslims. It began, as far as I know, in Turkey. For a very good reason, because the Turks were, so to speak, at the forefront, being in the immediate contact with Europe and having suffered the first modern defeat in the hands of Europe. The loss of Spain in the Middle Ages was remote and peripheral, and had little impact in the heartland of Islam. The defeat of the previously invincible Turks was nearer home, and affected the major Islamic power of the time. So, they knew. The debate begins 300 years ago. It begins in the political and military elite of Turkey and gradually spreads to other layers of the population in Turkey and from there to other countries in the region. Broadly speaking, there are two approaches to this question. There are those who say that we have been falling behind the modern world and the remedy is to modernize. This has been the line of Turkish reformers, of Ataturk and others like him in other countries. The other view is the exact opposite. They say that our bad situation is because we have imitated the ways of the infidels. We have abandoned our authentic traditions. We abandoned the religion which God gave us. Instead, we have brought in foreign rules, foreign ways, and foreign customs. And the remedy is islamization, or re-islamization if you like. These are the two broad categories. Obviously, there are many sub-varieties in each one of them and there are various compromises between the two of them. It is not a clear, contrasted choice between modernization and anti-modernization because many of the modernists have a religious component and many of the islamists have a modernist component. But, obviously, the dominant feature in each is quite different and very contradictory. Recently, there are signs, for the first time, of an awareness in important parts of the Islamic world that things are going badly wrong. You have seen these reports prepared by a committee of Arab intellectuals...

## Parham: ...the Arab Human Development Report, by the UNDP ${ }^{9}$ ?

Lewis: yes, and this is quite remarkable, this degree of self-criticism, self-analysis, and awareness of the various aspects of what is going wrong, which I found a hopeful sign. Naturally, people tend to blame outsiders or someone else, and it is not specific to Middle Easterners but a human natural response. But, out of control it becomes a very dangerous one. In this report, for the first time there is clear self-criticism. One of the tendencies on both sides is to blame the West for their predicaments, and talk about imperialism and colonialism and so on...I have several comments on that. What does imperialism mean? Well! Imperialism means 'you rule us', if 'we rule you' that's perfectly all right! When the Muslims conquered Portugal and Spain and southern Italy and invaded southern France, that was good and it wasn't imperialism! When the Turks conquered Anatolia and Constantinople and parts of Eastern Europe and laid siege to Vienna, that wasn't

[^2]imperialism. That was good! When the Europeans counter-attacked and drove them out and followed them to where they had come from, that is imperialism! Well, life is not quite as simple as that! If one limits the term imperialism to direct rule, then one observes curious things. For example, in the Arab East, since the Arab West is different, colonial rule began after the first World War, when the Ottoman empire was finally defeated and destroyed and its territories partitioned between the victorious allies, Britain and France. And it ended after the Second World War, when these countries became independent and the French and the British left. So the whole period of colonial rule in the Arab East is a little more than a quarter of a century...

Parham: ...which is not very long...
Lewis: not very long! What went wrong ${ }^{10}$ began before they arrived and continued at an accelerated pace after their departure. So, it is not a sufficient explanation. While the imperialists did some bad things, they also did some good things, like setting up schools and universities and building infrastructure and so on...One can not entirely acquit the West's responsibility. Not through imperialist rule, because imperialist rules were generally very cautious and very conservative. It was the enthusiastic westernizers in the Middle East, people like the Ottoman Sultans, Selim III and Mahmud II, Mohammad Ali Pasha in Egypt, and various rulers in Iran...they were not imperial rulers. They were fully independent ruling their countries but introducing western ways and techniques...It seems to me that this was a disaster...

Parham: ...the pace of it?
Lewis: the pace and the manner. What it did was twofold. First, it greatly increased the power of the ruler. I think you know that in the traditional Muslim state the ruler is an autocrat indeed. Islamic traditional rule is authoritarian. But it is not despotic, it is not a dictatorship. There is always consultation. There is very strictly in Islam the notion that the ruler is subject to the law and not above the law. He is bound by the Sharia no less than the humblest of his slaves. There are also, in the law itself some restrictions on the sovereign power, what the ruler may and may not command. Not only that, but the authoritarian rule of the Sultan, or the Shah or whoever, was also limited by the law and tradition and by the existence of other elements in the society who acted as a sort of brake. You have the merchants classes, the bazaars in the cities, the gentry in the countryside, the military establishment, the bureaucratic establishment, the religious establishment, the landlords...This is not democracy, in the modern western sense. But it is a limitation on autocracy, a system which is very far from dictatorship or despotism. Authoritarian, yes, but with an important element of consultation and consent. As you know, in the Islamic political tradition consultation is very important. And the idea of being under the law is very important. The Koran says "obey your rulers". But the prophet is quoted as saying:" there is no obedience in sin." When the ruler orders something which is sinful, then there is no duty of obedience. There is a duty of disobedience. There is another Hadith: "no obedience to the creature against the Creator."

[^3]So, you do have a concept of limited government under the law. We have evidence of this in 1786. The French ambassador in Istanbul, Monsieur le Comte de Choiseul-Gouffier, 3 years before the French Revolution, wrote a letter to his masters in Paris explaining why things are moving slowly. He says, here it is not like in France where the King is master and does what he pleases. Here, he says, the Sultan has to consult, with the current and even retired previous holders of high offices, with prominent people, and son on...he was referring to the system of 'mushavereh' ${ }^{11}$. What happened with modernization is that it gave the ruler far greater power that he had in the past. He communicates by telegraph, which gives him direct communication with his governors and his garrisons. He can send troops by rail or by mechanized transportation...

Parham: ...he can disintermediate previous consuls...
Lewis: right. Not only that, but at the same time, the previous intermediate powers are being either weakened or eliminated. They are no longer independent elements in society as they used to be and are now under strict government control. The Sultan or the Shah or whoever it is does really whatever he pleases. This is getting worse and worse and worse...today, even any small dictator in a small country has far greater power than Suleiman the Magnificent, or Harun al Rachid or Nader Shah...it is an evil effect as I said, this reinforcement of the sovereign power and the elimination of the limiting powers. So for the first time in Islamic history, you get real dictatorship, despotism that didn't exist before. So, when they blame the West, they are not entirely wrong. But, they are wrong in blaming it on imperialism, because imperialism didn't do that. It was their own rulers, on their own free choice, trying to imitate the West, who brought this evil. That's the important point.

Parham: sort of a collateral damage of an otherwise necessary modernization process?
Lewis: yes!
Parham: because you had to reform the land and give power to the peasant...
Lewis: but they didn't give the power to the peasants. They gave power to the central government! There was this British naval officer, named Slate, who traveled extensively to the Middle East in the $19^{\text {th }}$ century. He was attached to the Ottoman navy as an adviser with the title of 'Mushaver Pasha'! And he wrote some fascinating books. In one in particular, he talks about what he calls the 'new nobility'. There was the 'old nobility' who lived on their estates. Their authority derived not from the Sultan but from the traditional recognition. He (Slate) says that the 'old nobility' is gradually being eliminated and replaced by a 'new nobility' in the service of the state. Officials, bureaucrats and soldiers exercising the Sultan's power. And he has a very dramatic formulation on it. He says, "The old nobility lived on their estates; for the new nobility, the state is their estate"! So, when they blame the West, they are being unjust. When they blame westernization, they have a good deal of justification. You must remember that we are not talking a Hitler or Stalin type of colonial rule. I give you an example. We all have

[^4]tremendous admiration for Gandhi and for his successful struggle to win independence for India from British rule. But he was able to do that because he was dealing with a democratic imperial power. Gandhi wouldn't have lasted a week against a Hitler or a Stalin, or Saddam Hussein. It is important to bear this in mind.

Parham: identity and alterity are related in such a way that who I am is also defined by the quality of my interlocutor...

Lewis: yes! And there is yet another accusation, what they call 'puppets'. Old style colonialism is now gone. This ended decisively with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the last of the colonial powers, a classical European imperialism, ruling over vast areas of Asia and subjecting Muslims people to their rule. And the Muslim world carefully avoided taking notice of this (Soviet) imperialism. They were much more hostile to Islam than any of the Western powers, which tended to be rather protective. What is happening now, is rule by native tyrants. But, as many Muslim see it, these are being ruled by 'puppets' of the West. Which more and more now means of the United States, since the rest of the West hardly matters. You had a classical example of this in Iran where the Shah was seen as 'a western puppet'. But look at what they got instead!

Countries in the Middle East, in terms of their attitude towards the United States, can be divided into three groups. You have countries with bitterly anti-American regimes and therefore strongly pro-American populations, notably Iran and to a remarkable extent also Iraq. Then you have countries with officially pro-American regimes, like Egypt and Saudi Arabia, and therefore anti-American populations. And finally, you have countries where both the population and the government are friendly, i.e., turkey and Israel. And these are the only two countries where the governments are freely elected and can be removed by elections and thus represent the population.

Parham: How do you see Iran shaped by history? ${ }^{12}$
Lewis: there are two ways in which people are shaped by history. One is the reality and the other is the perception. What people see may be very different. There are very different ways of seeing and presenting the same history. I think Iran has played an enormously important role in the history of the whole Middle East and indeed of the world. There are some specific things that one can document. For example in religion, most of the ancient Middle East was idolatrous. They worshipped many gods in the form of many idols and some of them are quite nasty! There were only two peoples who departed from that, Israel and Iran. And that is why they immediately recognized each other. If you look at the Hebrew Bible, the Old Testament, whose books do not normally speak very kindly of many rulers of the region, Cyrus is acclaimed as God's anointed. And the government of Cyrus was very helpful to the Jews to return to their homeland. I think the basic reason for this is mutual recognition that they had the same kind of religion, not polytheist, not idolatrous. The Iranian form is more dualist but still the same basic principle. There is mutual recognition and mutual respect. There is one thing that is very clear, and that is if you compare pre-exilic Judaism and post-exilic Judaism, the

[^5]signs of Iranian influence are manifest. We can do this fairly easily because we have the books in the Old Testament before and after the exile. The ones that are written after the exile show clear signs of Iranian influence. No doubt about it. There are some basic Iranian ideas. One could argue that Christianity is the result of Iranian impact on Israel. Christianity emerges from Judaism, although with certain differences. Some of these differences can be identified in Iranian terms. For example, the whole idea of an 'afterlife', that of 'punishment and reward', the idea of 'temptation'... are of Iranian roots. There are even Iranian words in the Old Testament, like 'pardes ${ }^{13}$. So the religious element is very important in this history. When Islam came, it didn't take Iranians very long to develop their own brand of Islam. I found the situation of the Iranians very similar to that of the English in certain respects. Take the language for instance. The Romans conquered the whole Western Europe and their language still survives in derived forms in Spain, Portugal, France, Italy, but not in England. The Anglo-Saxon English is very much like Persian in this respect. In Persian you have an enormous Arabic vocabulary, but you have the basic Iranian structure. In English you have an enormous Latin vocabulary, but the basic structure is Anglo-Saxon. The British also became Christian at a very early date but they too developed their own brand of Christianity! ${ }^{14}$ Iran also has an enormous cultural impact on the Turks, east and west, and to the south to the Indo-Pak peninsula. Chronologically, Persian is the second language of Islam, after Arabic and in many parts of the world it is chronologically second, but practically first! ${ }^{15}$ Yet another important point is in Iran's enormous contribution to the whole business of communication. They (Iranians) developed the first network of (postal) couriers and relay stations. The ancient Greek visitors comment on it with admiration since there was nothing like it. Iranians certainly introduced the stirrup -Rekâb- to the Middle East. They either invented it or learned it from the steppes people but as far as we know Iranians introduced it to the Middle East. The Greek, the Romans, none of the ancient civilizations of the Middle East had it. And when you think how important the stirrup is both in riding and in war, a rider with the stirrup becomes the battle tank! You could carry out mounted charges with lances, which you couldn't without the stirrup. You would just be pushed off your horse! It also made possible the whole courier system. It is one of the major inventions in human history ${ }^{16}$.

[^6]Parham: like the wheel!
Lewis: yes! Like the wheel...
Parham: Islamic religious law, or the Sharia, deals in some detail with matters of war to the extent that it even regulates the types of weapons that may be used. ${ }^{17}$ Is the acquisition and use of a nuclear device, precluded by the theocrats of Tehran as antidoctrinal, conceivable in such a pragmatic doctrine?

Lewis: the literature of Islamic law is vast. There are many different schools of law which often give quite different rulings on the same question. Since Jihad is seen as an obligation imposed by Sharia, it is therefore regulated by Sharia. All the text books of Sharia contain at least a chapter on the conduct of war. Generally speaking, the tendency of the jurists is quite strict in regulating what may or may not be done in war. They are against weapons of indiscriminate slaughter. For example, in discussing sieges, many of the jurists disliked the weapon that was used in siegecraft, such as the catapult. They are generally against the killing of non-combatants, which means, in particular, children, women, and the elderly. That is the majority view although there are differences. But, Hanbali jurists, the basis of Wahabi Islam, tend to be much more ruthless. There line essentially is "à la guerre comme à la guerre", without worrying much about mass slaughter. For example, they discuss chemical weapons, poison-tipped arrows and poisoning water supplies. But the overwhelming majority of the jurists forbids this. Today, what is much in question is suicide. The classical Islamic literature is overwhelmingly against suicide. Suicide is forbidden, it is a sin. Anyone who commits suicide would go to eternal damnation. And the punishment in hell would consist on the eternal repetition of the act of suicide. If he hangs himself, there is an eternity of choking. The opposition to suicide is so strong that they even discuss whether it is permissible to attack against overwhelming odds, in other words, to attack when attacking means certain death. The Hanbali jurists permit this provided it is in the service of Islam and for the good of the Muslims. Quite recently, in the mid to late $20^{\text {th }}$ century, you have Wahabis who even go a step further by allowing a man to die by his own hands. Previously, the unanimous view of the Muslim jurists held that you may go to a certain death in battle,

[^7]for your cause, but under no circumstances may you die by your own hands. If I were a Muslim believer committing suicide, I would want to know whether I would be going to eternal virgins or to eternal self-explosion! Unfortunately, they did not know their own religion very well. There is a story on this. Do you know what a 'Hadith Qudsi" is?

Parham: no!
Lewis: 'Hadith Qudsi" is where the prophet quotes God directly. There was a man who was a brave loyal fighter in the Islamic cause, the Jihad. In the battle he was wounded mortally. There was no hope that he could recover. But he was dying slowly and painfully. So he took his sword and killed himself, to shorten the pain. Then, God said:" my servant has preempted me. He will go to hell and not to heaven." He shall not enter paradise. So, even from an Islamic point of view there is a lot of distortion and misrepresentation in the case of the suicide bomber.

Parham: Attributed to the Prophet, a hadith says: "There is no obedience in sin". "Then the duty of obedience is replaced by a duty of disobedience". ${ }^{18}$ If the strategy of nonviolent civil disobedience succeeds in Iran, in bringing down a tyrannical oligarchy, wouldn't it set a fantastic precedent not just for the region but the entire Muslim world?

Lewis: yes, it will. And I am told that in Iran it is possible. No need for a military operation. Iranian people can do it, with a little help and encouragement. Am I right in thinking that the overwhelming majority of the population is against the regime?

Parham: yes they are. Professor Lewis, my last question pertains to the future relations between Israel and a free Iran. How do you see the potential for such relations and the possible synergies?

Lewis: there are common roots going back to antiquity with a sort of mutual recognition. That gives an obvious basis for the present time. They are both threatened by the same forces. I know that in Israel there is tremendous good will to Iran.

[^8]»فضاى واقعيت، فضاى توهم«- گفتتگوى رامين پرهام بـا پروفسور برنـارد لوئيس
"ايران هنوز كمـابيش . . . ب كيلومتر مرز بى خدفاع در شمـال با اتـــاد خجمـاهـير




 انتشارات نيلوفر، چـاپ سوم • .

















 موقت است. پرهام: از يكسو ما خـاور دور را داريم كهه بـه سرعت مدرنيزه مـى خشــود و از خسـوى











 يك استاد از اهـالـى سوريـه صحبتى داشتم و او بـه اين نكتـهـ اشـاره مسى خكـرد كـهـه پرهـام: بـه نظرم اين تعد اد پـنـا
 دانشگگاهخهـا يك دانشكده مـهندسى دارد. روبهم رفته، آنهـا صـدهـا هـزار خمـهـنـدس بيرون مـى خدهند












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 از انتقاد از خود است. يكى از تمـايـلات رايـج مـلامت كـردن »امـپـريــالـيـزمه" و خـيـا






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 را بـه ارمـغان آوردند. نكتـه مهم اين است است

 پروفسور لـوـئيس: بـلـها
 نـاگزییر بـود.....



 Slate

 كـه »اشرافيت قديم« رفتـهخرفتـه از مـيـان مـى خخرود و جـاى خـود را بــه خهاشـرافـيـت




مى خكند كه: »اشرافيت قديم نـان ملكخاش را مىیخخورد؛ اشرافيت جديد، خمـكـخاش حكومت است!«




 نكنيد كه كاندى در برابر يك قدرت استعمـارى دمـكـراتيك مـبـارزهه مـى خكـرد. خدر

هفته هم دوام نمى خآورد! ا اين نكته مهم را از يـاد نبريد.

















 تا واقعيت بهتر دستگيرتـان شود!
از نقطه نظر طرز نكرش نسبت بـه ايـالات متحده آمريكا، مردمـان خـاورمــيـانـهـ را


















موارد مشخصى مـوجـود اسـت كـه مـى ختـوان در تـصـديـت ايـن خگـفـتـه خـخـاطـرنـشـان
 بودنـد





































 پپ





















 قابـل تــوريزيزه كردن است؟























 برمىیخشمـارنـد بـه شرط آن كـه در خدمت مسلمـين و اسلام بـاشد.









 چֶرهام: خير!



روزگارى مردى بود بسيار شجاع و از از جنگجويـان صـادق راه اه اسلام يـــنــى جـهـاد.




 نظر اسلامى شمـا بـا مقدار زيـادى تحريف و سوء تعبـيـر در ايـن زمـيـنـه خـبـرخـورد مـى خكنيـي




 دنياى اسلام بـه جاى نـخواهد گـذا اشت؟


 كه اكثريت قاطع مردم ايران بر عليـه رثيم كنونـى خاند؟
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Le figaro, 02 Janvier 2004. The Crisis of Islam, by B.Lewis- -

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The Revolt of Islam, by B.


[^0]:    ${ }^{6}$ Collection 'Les Premiers Matins du Monde', dirigée par Christian Bernadec, édition Française FranceEmpire, Paris 1981.
    ${ }^{7}$ The Crisis of Islam, by B. Lewis, Modern Library Edition, New York, 2003, page 4.

[^1]:    ${ }^{8}$ Cf. The Crisis of Islam, by Bernard Lewis, Modern Library Edition, New York, 2003.

[^2]:    ${ }^{9}$ Arab Human Development Report 2003, UNDP.

[^3]:    ${ }^{10}$ What Went Wrong: the Clash Between Islam and Modernity in the Middle East, by Bernard Lewis, Oxford University Press, New York 2002.

[^4]:    ${ }^{11}$ Arabic word for 'consulting'.

[^5]:    ${ }^{12}$ The revolt of Islam, by B. Lewis. New Yorker, issue 2001-11-19

[^6]:    ${ }^{13}$ Paradise, Middle English paradis, from Old French, from Late Latin paradisus, from Greek paradeisos, garden, enclosed park, paradise, from Avestan pairidaeza-, enclosure, park

    14 '"There are interesting parallels between the Norman conquest of England and the Arab conquest of Irana new language, created by the breakdown and simplification of the old language and the importation of an enormous vocabulary of words from the language of the conquerors; the creation of a new and compound identity, embracing both the conquerors and the conquered." From "The Iranians" by Bernard Lewis published in 2001 by Tel Aviv University's Mushe Dayan Center.

    15 "In a sense, Iranian Islam is a second advent of Islam itself, a new Islam sometimes referred to as Islam-i Ajam. It was this Persian Islam, rather than the original Arab Islam, that was brought to new areas and new peoples: to the Turks, first in Central Asia and then in the Middle East in the country which came to be called Turkey, and of course to India. The Ottoman Turks brought a form of Iranian civilization to the walls of Vienna." From "The Iranians" by Bernard Lewis published in 2001 by Tel Aviv University's Mushe Dayan Center.
    ${ }^{16}$ The Royal Road: according to the Greek researcher Herodotus of Halicarnassus (fifth century BCE) the road that connected the capital of Lydia, Sardes, and the capitals of the Achaemenid empire, Susa and

[^7]:    Persepolis. From cuneiform texts, other royal roads are known. Herodotus describes the road between Sardes and Susa in the following words: "As regards this road the truth is as follows. Everywhere there are royal stations with excellent resting places, and the whole road runs through country which is inhabited and safe". At Persepolis, many tablets were found that refer to the system of horse changing on the Royal road; it was called pirradaziš. Herodotus describes the pirradaziš-for which he uses another name- in very laudatory words: "There is nothing mortal which accomplishes a journey with more speed than these messengers, so skillfully has this been invented by the Persians. For they say that according to the number of days of which the entire journey consists, so many horses and men are set at intervals, each man and horse appointed for a day's journey. Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor darkness of night prevents them from accomplishing the task proposed to them with the very utmost speed. The first one rides and delivers the message with which he is charged to the second, and the second to the third; and after that it goes through them handed from one to the other, as in the torch race among the Greeks, which they perform for Hephaestus. This kind of running of their horses the Persians call angareion." In Livius, Articles on Ancient History, at http://www.livius.org/ro-rz/royal_road/royal_road.htm
    ${ }^{17} \mathrm{cf}$. reference 5 .

[^8]:    ${ }^{18}$ Item.

