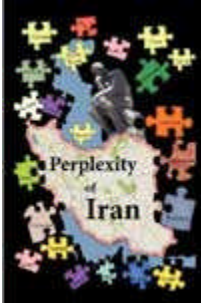


Book Review: *Perplexity of Iran* by Sohrab ChamanAra

Iran is one of the world's oldest, continuous civilizations. Iran's potential to negatively impact the U.S. and its allies came to the fore after World War II. Today, there is a wide-spread perception among Americans that Iran is the last vestige of the so-called Axis of Evil. While there is little doubt that the U.S. could readily defeat Iran militarily, the perplexing question remains: "What then?" In his new book, *Perplexity of Iran*, Kurdish Iranian-American Sohrab ChamanAra offers his own thoughtful and heartfelt answer.



Sohrab ChamanAra is a citizen historian, not a scholar. The 68 pages of content are straightforward and easy to follow — more of a lengthy essay than a book. And ChamanAra prominently clarifies from the beginning that the “information in this book is most often copied from Wikipedia...as this Internet Encyclopedia is the best English translation of the facts...accepted by all Muslim scholars.” He has done good job of paring down this scholarly writing. He is quietly passionate about what he writes and his motivation appears to be a genuine respect for humanity and a desire for world peace.

Perplexity of Iran begins by providing the reader with a relevant topline historical perspective on the strategic positioning of the Iran, within both its own geographical region and in relationship to the West. The author then moves to significant insights into the cultural and social relationships between specific groups within the country. ChamanAra refutes the perception of a relationship of violent conflict between the Shia and the Sunni, at the same time, confirming long-standing hatred between Wahhabi and Shia. He also explains the notion of a “proxy” war going on within the region between these two factions in which “...American troops could regard as bystanders.” ChamanAra wraps up his analysis of the information he presents by offering what he believes is the only true solution to the perplexity of Iran.

For the average westerner, especially Americans, the leadership and actions of the Iranian government and of certain radicals within the country, incites anger and hatred. *Perplexity of Iran* by Sohrab ChamanAra provides notable insights and explanations of the misconceptions — which fuel those emotions — about the social fabric of the country and of its people, particularly the admiration and high regard the average Iranian (certainly not the government) has for America. *Perplexity of Iran* might be considered by some to be too simplistic in its approaches. But it is, at the least, a thought-provoking, easy-to-follow primer, offering the personal thoughts of an upstanding Iranian-American, on a difficult and complex problem affecting us all. And it might just compel the average American to reconsider his or her own thinking on the matter.

(Reviewed by Joseph Yurt for Reader Views)

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