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The Politics of Literacy and the Qashqa'i Nomads of Iran

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This article examined the educational philosophies of the nomadic tribes of Iran and focused on the Qash qa'i culture. The articles, books, interviews, and documentary emphasized the shift in Qash qa'i traditional and formal state-supported education within a socio-historical framework of the Revolutionary and Post-Revolutionary periods. This article will explore questions related to the present day conditions of human educational rights of nomadic cultures in Iran as well as their influence on literacy within a historical perspective.

The Politics of Literacy and the Qashqa'i Nomads of Iran

Annamoradnejad and Lofti (2010) defined nomadic living as one of the leading lifestyles in Iran, its arid and semi-arid climates, and diverse landscapes shaped the migratory patterns of the nomadic lifestyle. The authors investigated the demographic trends of nomadism in Iran from 1956 to 2008. The study revealed that the nomads were the main suppliers of dairy and meat products within Iran. However, Annamoradnejad & Lofti (2010) stressed that political leaders contended to settle the nomads to urban areas due to their underdeveloped methods of farming and overgrazing livestock. As a result, wastelands have increased, which have caused problems in the agricultural production. Furthermore, the authors postulated that by settling the nomads would only result in increased unemployment in the cities. The study further suggested that educational solutions would prevent exploitation of natural resources, which showed that education is essential for the prosperity of the economy and people.

Although modern political and religious ideologies have made an impact on the nomadic lifestyle and culture, it is argued that the modern state undermined the influence nomadic literacy in Iran. In this sense, this paper will explore the socio-political divergence and convergence of modern education and nomadic literacy. This article focused on the Qash qa'i nomads within a historical framework of the revolutionary period in Iran (a) the first constitutional revolution of 1906, (b) the Iranian coup d'état of 1951, and (c) the Islamic Revolution of 1979. This article concludes with modern viewpoints on literacy in Iran during the post-revolutionary period.

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Socio-Political Structure

For centuries the Qash qa'i nomads have dwelled in the southwestern area of Fars, Iran, migrating with their herds of goat and sheep. The changing climate and landscapes have made it necessary for the nomads to create migratory routes from the grassy mountain slopes of the Zagros during the summer, to the arid valleys in the winter. Their culture dates prior to the Persian dynasty and history revealed centuries of warfare to overthrow the royal courts in hope to create a constitution based on a civil government. In this sense, the Qash qa'i have established legitimate political structures (e.g., The Qash qa'i Confederacy), which have assisted in maintaining unity between centralized powers and domestic equilibrium. For example, they have a socio-political structure that is divided into units from the largest to smallest. According to Shabazi, (2001),

The largest political unit is called the *il* leaders, also known as *ilkhani*, they have the authority to negotiate diplomacy with the Shah and state systems. The *tayfih* are the order of chiefs that manage the rights of the pasturelands in different regions, the *baylih* are a kin based unit that manage local pasturelands, smaller units of the eldest male manage household security and education known as the *oba*, and the smallest domestic unit is the *aei*, consisting of the women whom are in charge of the domestic well-being of the tribe. (p. 48)

All units have specific duties that range from political leadership, management of the pasturelands, to management of the domestic welfare of the tribe.

Culture

Furthermore, their nomadic housing consisted of temporary tents or mud huts, and the women decorated the home with colorful tapestry carpets. The Qash qa'i's religious beliefs are based on Islamic Shia yet their ethnicity is diverse which includes people of the Kurdish, Turkish, Arabic, and Loris tribes. They are linguistically diverse as well, however, their prominent language is Farsi with a Turkish dialect. With the emergence of modernization, Shabazi (2001) postulated that, "Qash qa'i ilkhani have maintained a sense of independence for its people by educating them about the broader or modern views of Iranian culture, which intern enabled them to assimilate and attain jobs in the cities and political bureaucracy" (p. 103-105). In order to understand Qashqa'i socio-political structure it is important to further examine the impact that their symbolic and written literacy systems have on their education system.

The Qash qa'i have contributed to literacy through poetry and stories, and weaving elaborate tapestry carpets representing their culture. For example, for centuries the Qash qa'i women and girls have taken great pride in the art of making tapestry carpets.

In the documentary, *Woven Gardens*, Attenborough (1976), portrayed a typical Qash qa'i scene of group of ladies wearing colorful petite coats sitting under a canopy of tents among the landscapes of the arid-valleys and mountain prairies. Their hands

worked briskly, weaving and knotting colorful threads stretched on weaving looms. While weaving, the men tended to their sheep herds and cultivated the soil using a moldboard or basic manual plow, and from time to time participated in domestic duties with the women. The elders read poems and told stories about “Qashqa’iness” as the ladies weaved their stories thread by thread. These scenes of the Qashqa’i that Attenborough portrayed in his documentary are still reminiscent of their culture today.

Furthermore, Qash qa’i literacy stems from the northern Asian continent of the Ottoman Empire to the south of the ancient Persian Empire. It is a literacy of landscapes and history interwoven with their spirituality of nature. Their cultural heritage were passed on from generation to generation, and communicated by their elders and leaders of the tribe. Each knot, color, and patterns were unique representations of their heritage.

As noted by scholar Baker (1997), patterns that were typically Qash qa’i illustrated “gardens, flowers, ponds, and different animals and birds, some patterns though, represented certain tribes and communities. Also, the colorful dyes were made from the plants that they have found along their migratory routes” (p. 370).

Qash qa’i women were known for the most elaborate carpets. Historically, they began to weave such beautiful carpets to impress the royalty in hope to earn some wealth or land or to impress a “settled” husband. The girls learned the patterns from their mothers, sisters, and aunts, weaving together the “perfect” patterns that represented their family and tribal heritage. However, currently the patterns are less authentic as women have had to move away from nomadic life to the urban setting (e.g. Baker, 1997). According to Baker (1997), tapestry schools in Shiraz have preserved the art of carpet weaving as well as Qash qa’i patterns. In this sense, the next sections will examine traditional Qash qa’i education and the influence formal state schooling on literacy in Iran.

Qashqa’i Traditional Education

As noted by Hull and Shultz (2001), ethnographer Brian Street hypothesized that, “literacy is tied to social practices and ideologies, such as economic, political, and social conditions, social structures, and local belief systems” (p. 585). Street’s fieldwork in the rural villages of Iran during the 1970s, examined three different literacy types, (a) *makab* associated with Islamic religion, (b) commercial related to reading; and (c) writing for business management, and school literacy associated with state schools. He explored the correlation between state ideologies of schooling and social philosophies, related to their success in urban occupations. He found that people educated in the rural setting were more successful than urban state schooled populations. Street’s views on rural literacy and their success in urban occupations shared similar discoveries about Qash qa’i culture. Accordingly, to Street’s views, how have the Qashqa’i assimilated with regimes for centuries yet maintained their cultural identity? Inquiries related to the social practices and ideologies within Qashqa’i education and culture will be examined.

Furthermore, traditional Qash qa’i education was based on an egalitarian pastoralist and family oriented structure. The children were taught to be loyal to the family and group members, and division of labor was defined at an early age. As noted by Shabazi (2001), “the first lesson of socialization that the children learned was weaning from the mother’s breast. Once this is achieved around two years old the

mother directs her child to eat with other family members or kin” (p. 54). The next stage in their education, children learned about gender roles and the division of labor. Shabazi (2001) stated that, “if a male child approached the women or girls for food they would direct him to the males and vice versa” (p. 54). This allowed the children to observe and reflect on his or her roles within the domestic structure. Traditional Qash qa’i pastoralists were a self-sustained egalitarian society that depended on group loyalty and division of labor to ensure a secure lifestyle. In this sense, as noted by Shabazi (2001), “the children did not learn about the separation from their parents or their home since it was not necessary, and the children were taught to conform to the principles of Islamic religion and Qash qa’i norms and values” (p. 55).

Furthermore, socio-political and socio-economic status played a major role in education as well. For instance, certain elite groups would learn about the political structures of the state or royal courts, and military strategies that allowed them to negotiate and protect themselves against potential crisis. As noted by Shabazi (2001), “certain elite groups such as, Qash qa’i male children of the *il*, would learn horseback riding, firing guns, hunting, and interacting with non-Qash qa’i. Also, children of well-off families would be sent to the *makab* or Islamic schools where they were taught Islamic religion, writing, and reading. On the other hand, less well-off members of the nomadic tribes learned about creating political equilibrium within the group” (p. 56). For example, according to Shabazi (2001), “less well off males such as the *oba*, were taught music, singing, dancing, and storytelling to entertain at celebrations” (p. 56).

Moreover, women’s roles in traditional Qashqa’i education were constrained to domestic work, (Shabazi, 2001) “women and girls were part of the domestic unit, the *aey*, and they learned the duties of child bearing, household chores, cooking, looking after ill animals, tapestry, and sewing” (p. 56). However, both male and females’ roles in tribal society converged as well. For example, both genders were taught the values of hospitality, entertaining and serving guests at home, and obeying authority as well (e.g., Shabazi, 2001). Interestingly, Shabazi (2001) genealogy and heritage was emphasized in Qash qa’i education, and children were taught to recite their family’s history. Socio-economic status was demonstrated within the designs and colors of the tapestry carpets or mats that the children brought to school for prayer. The most elaborate designs and finest materials indeed represented the wealth and tribe of the student.

Tent Schools

As noted by Shahbazi (2001) in an interview with a Qash qa’i teacher who taught during the 1940s, formal state-run schooling did not exist, “the teachers of the *makab* only had basic literacy skills and some Quranic knowledge. In those days teacher training, certification, curriculum, a department of education and modern subjects were unknown to us”(p. 57). Traditional *makab* schools were established in tents and often in the teacher’s tent. Shabazis’ (2001) interviewee validated that, “the students learned a combined version of the Persian and Arabic alphabets, recited short verses from the Quran and were trained to write good letters”(p. 57). Elementary education entailed three years of studies, the first year students learned the Arabic alphabet by the end of the year they would recite verses from the Quran. The second and third years the students were taught Persian and Turkish stories, the customs of Islam, and

mathematics. Most students completed their education at the third year due their lower income status; their families could not afford to send them to the city or another town to study. However, the affluent families would send their children to another town where they studied ninth grade level subjects including math, science, social studies, and writing. Upon completion of the ninth grade the students had to move to the cities where they could attain a twelfth grade education and later enroll in higher education (e.g. Shabazi, 2001). According to Shabazi (2001),

Literacy alone did not necessarily lead to the creation of consciousness of continuity of the past. Rather, it is the process of political socialization, the involvement of indigenous educators and elements in the socio-historical development of the social elements under study that contribute to this consciousness of continuity. (p. 59)

In other words, what bound the ethnic identity and unified them as a culture and political structure? Shabazi (2001) postulated that, “literacy alone did not create the nostalgic sentiment of “Qash qa’iness”, yet political consciousness shaped the connection of ethnic identity, which permeated the social consciousness of their past” (p. 59).

Politics and Poetry

Although only minute traces of this nomadic lifestyle exist today, the Qash qa’i still remain a prominent political structure, which have shaped Iranian society. According to the 2008 census, authors Annamoradnejad & Lofti (2010) compared the demographic changes of the nomadic tribes as follows:

At present most of the tribes that live in the Fars region of Iran represent 3% of a total nomadic population of 1,186,398. The 2006 census indicates a drop in total nomadic population from 1,304,089, a loss of 117,000 nomads since 2008. (pp. 337-338)

Annamoradnejad & Lofti (2010) acknowledged, the main reason for the decrease in nomadic populations related to the state’s gradual settlement strategy, which provided living amenities in the rural areas close to the summer pasture in the plains. Also, their study found other factors that led to the changes in nomadic lifestyles such as (a) hiring agricultural lands during their migratory seasons; (b) disallowing them to move their herds; (c) land purchases, (d) drought and diseases, (e) higher education; and (f) regional development that impeded on their migratory routes (e.g., Annamoradnejad & Lofti, 2010).

With the influence of modernization the Qash qa’i lifestyles has faded and became enveloped within a chaotic socio-political landscape. The nomadic lifestyle is now heard in poetic whispers. For example, the poem *Ma ’zunim* written by Mahmud Kaviyani depicts Qash qa’i culture shrouded in politics. For example, one-verse stated:

Ma'sun, many ships sailed through our ocean-like
tribes,
The cosmos turned, the sun came and went,
Rulers emerged, ruled, were gone
Every few days, one after another.
My Ma'sun, oppressive rulers cannot rule for too long.
(pp. 40-41)

The poem consisted of fifteen stanzas or verses which portrayed a socio-historical perspective of the Qash qa'i, relevant to political oppression and nostalgic reflections of their past. Also, it depicted not only the lost past, yet the fall of the Qash qa'i Confederacy under the tyrannical Pahlavis' regimes. Furthermore, it leaves one to inquire about the role of the Qash qa'i in state systems. What educational practices defined the formal education for the Qash qa'i? How did they converge with the state in relation to education and politics? How did they maintain their cultural identity for so long? In this sense, the study will examine the nationalistic convergence of Persian culture to the Iranian state.

Socio-Political History

Qash qa'i political resistance stemmed from the Royal Court of the Qajar Dynasty during the eighteenth - early twentieth centuries (e.g., Cleveland, 2004). According to Cleveland (2004),

The Qajar's negotiations with Great Britain as a shareholder in the oil industry brought about inequality among local merchants because of the high import and export tariffs. Eventually, local merchants could not pay their debts, and in turn were punished and humiliated by the court officers by lashing the soles of their feet in public. (p. 146)

At this point, European educated leaders and locals determined that the royal court was corrupt, and they opposed foreign exploitation. Among the revolutionary leaders were the Qash qa'i Khans. In 1906, they decided that a constitutional government was necessary to building a civil society. The first wave of the Constitutional Revolution launched the Fundamental Laws, which reduced the power of the monarchs by giving elected legislatures authority over the allocation of resources, budgets, and businesses. Muzaffir-al Din Shah's regime resisted the Fundamental Laws, which began a civil war that lasted nearly 80 years between the royal courts and the common citizens of Persia (e.g. Cleveland, 2004). As noted by Shahbazi (2001),

State-induced political centralization among Qash qa'i emerged in the late eighteenth century when state rulers encouraged tribal leaders to perform dual functions: to control local and internal problems and to mediate between the tribally organized nomads and state. (p. 37)

Hence, during the early 20th century, the Qash qa'i tribe emerged as an economically and politically independent confederacy. This shift in political power enabled the Qash qa'i to gain influence in the creation of a nation-state (e.g. Cleveland, 2004). However, according to Cleveland (2004) a few days before the death of Shah Muzzafir, he signed the Fundamental Law, which gave elected legislatures authority to form a civil government as well as implemented Shia as the official religion.

In 1907, Muhammed Ali Qajar Shah came to power and debunked the new civil government. As noted by Cleveland (2004), constitutionalism is atheist and made appeal to popular sentiment in favor of monarchy. He declared that by signing the agreement with Russia and Great Britain, which divided Persia into spheres of influence. Britain controlled the southeastern regions and Russia dominated the north. In this sense, the Shah suggested that the constitution was ineffective and re-established the power of the monarchy. As a counter attack he sent the Persian Cossack Brigade (e.g., Persia's military) to the legislative government (e.g., Qash qa'i formed government), arrested and executed them. Again, all out civil war broke out against the Shah's regime. With the newly elected young Persian leader Mohammad Mossedegh, the Qash qa'i Confederacy along with other tribes, established forces in Tehran. The Qajar Shah was overthrown and took refuge in Russia (e.g. Cleveland, 2004). In 1909, his eleven-year old son, Solton Ahmad Qajar Shah took the thrown. By WWI Persia was completely divided, the south was occupied by the British, the north controlled by the Russians, and Tehran invaded by the tribes. All stability broke down in the rural areas, conflicts of religion and state, and issues of equal rights enveloped the landscape. For the Qajars, the future was bleak, and in 1925, Reza Pahlavi and the Cossack Brigade toppled the Qajar regime. The royal Qajars were sent to exile in France. In 1926, Reza Pahlavi ended the entente with the Soviet Union, and he became the Shah of the state of Iran. Under the Reza Pahlavi and later with his son Mohammad Reza, the dynasty was determined to establish modernization from the point of view of western ideologies (e.g. Cleveland, 2004). For example, according to Hamdhaidari (2008), quoted scholar Hussain,

In overhauling the higher education system, some 59 American universities were involved in advising Iranian universities and colleges. The very ethos of education was geared to maintaining the cultural, social, and political status quo as defined by the ruler, and strengthened the foundation for sweeping socio-economic and cultural changes. (p.18)

However, Pahlavis' plans to converge their views of Iranian culture had failed due to their inability to unify the culture at social and political levels. Smith (1991) postulated, that even though the Iranian monarchies ensured the survival of its elites for centuries, colonialism divided Iran against itself, their politics were destroyed and their cultures absorbed by alien immigrants. In 1941, during WWII, Britain and The Soviet Union forced Reza Shah to relinquish his reign to his son Mohammad Reza Pahlavi due to the Shah's negotiations with the Germans. As noted by Saikal (1980),

Germany had given generously to economic and technological assistance to Iran as well as Turkey and Afghanistan. Hitler accounted for 40% of Iran's foreign

trade. He established more than six hundred German professionals in Iran in various educational, industrial, and commercial projects. (p. 25)

Britain and the U.S.S.R. considered this a threat and invaded Iran forcing Reza Shah off the throne.

In 1941, Mohammad Reza Shah was also instrumental in modernizing Iran, yet he took on the legacy of his father in regard to foreign and domestic policies. He continued laws of westernization in order to gain wealth for the royal court. With the wealth he used it to expand urbanization, and created a settled aristocracy. However, the peasants were ignored and as a dictator, he enforced his power to eradicate them, and anyone who disagreed with his governance. Furthermore, to make matters worse for Iran the Shah implemented a curriculum that indoctrinated students into westernized cultural viewpoints. As noted by Mohsenpour (1988),

Mohammad Reza Shah implemented Marxist and anti-religious ideologies, and in social science textbooks, democracy was introduced as the best type of government. But this contrasted sharply with the despotic government of the shah. To resolve this conflict, the compilers of the textbooks excluded the despotism of the shah and indicated that the shah was the light of God. (p. 79)

In other words, depicting the Shah as a divine monarch and portraying the monarchy as admired and romanticized. Mohsenpour (1988) affirmed that, the major goal of teaching history at schools is to strengthen the students' feelings for the royalty and nationalism. Additionally, as noted by Mohssenpour (1998), curriculum emphasized capitalism in mathematics with an emphasis of ideas of usury or interest rates, which contradicted Islamic views. At any level, the Shah's motives were to indoctrinate Iranians into western ideologies and to eradicate any deviant cultures including the Qash qa'i culture.

In 1951, Saikal (1980), Mossedegh's popularity rose, and again created momentum for revolts against the dictatorial regimes. Also, the U.S. CIA established a plot known as Operation Ajax, for the Shah to topple Mossedegh and to pay journalists to write anti-Mossadegh literature. By 1953, the Operation Ajax was successful and Mossadegh was imprisoned and put under house arrest. However, the Reza Shah's oppressive dictatorship became more and more obvious as demonstrated in 1971, his twenty-five hundred years celebration of the "Iranian" monarchy, he re-crowned himself as the "Aryamdhr" that is "Light of the Aryans" [e.g. Cleveland (2004), Mohssenpour (1998), & Beck (1991)]. As noted by (Beck, 1991), during his re-crowning as a divine king, he made a symbolic gesture against the rural populations and blocked the winter migratory routes of the Qash qa'i, leaving them to starve and freeze to death in the Zagros Mountains.

In 1978-79, Ayatollah Khomeini entered the political scene as the main leader in the Iranian Revolution. His vision of nationalism encompassed secular and religious collectivity. Author Juergensmeyer (1993) theorized about Khomeinis' political philosophy as follows:

His nationalist ideologies embrace the influence of religious nationalism which extends rights to individuals because of the notion of individualism counter to the logic of religious nationalism as follows: that a nation should reflect the collective values of the moral community that constitutes it. (p. 197)

Furthermore, Juergensmeyer (1993) attested that Khomeini's nationalistic philosophy was ingrained in the unity of the collective conscience and morals of the people, a constitutional nationalism based on religion. Abrahamian (1993) validated the religious based philosophy, "Khomeini's influence started socio-political turmoil in 1978, with his book, *Shahid'e Javid (The Eternal Martyr)*, he emphasized martyrdom in terms of revolution and religious rights. For example, according to Abrahamian (1993), Khomeini stated, "Islam belongs to the oppressed, not the oppressors. Also, Islam will eliminate classes in a truly Islamic society there will be no shanty towns and he continues using this same form" (p. 31). Moreover, Khomeini's admiration for the Qashqa'i nomads is expressed in one of his speeches according to Shahbazi (2002) the nomads of Iran are the treasures of the revolution. Khomeini's book and speeches inspired students, merchants, and nomads to join together to protest against the Shah's regime. Moreover, the Shah's views of modernization in Iran contrasted with western socio-political ideologies. For example, in 1974, a reporter for BBC interviewed the Shah, Snow (1974) inquired to the Shah as follows:

Can you see the conflict between the social and economic demands of your people, about 50% of them cannot read or write, yet the amount you have spent on military? The Shah responded, No because we couldn't spend more either on literacy and social things because first of all we wouldn't have the teachers and then for instance, we would not have the doctors or trained nurses, and it could create inflation too.

The Shah continued to state (Snow, 1974):

Can I say that this year we are going to have 40% national growth at constraint prices which is more than two or three times the world record which is held by the Japanese. In other words, the Shah infers that he supported his military budget over increasing the budget for education because in his opinion more education meant producing more professionals therefore, creating an inflated economy.

His intentions were also to establish a landed aristocracy with the labor of his people as well as foreign labor. Moreover, Snow (1974) continued to question the Shah's political intentions as follows:

Do you think that as your country becomes more prosperous you will be able to restrain the demands of your people for more of the kind of democracy that we have in Britain?

The Shah responded, but who says my people are demanding a democracy that you have in Britain? Our tradition, the people and the king are so close as they feel they are the same family.

By September 1978, “Black Friday”, “not feeling part of the royal family”, the Iranian people protested in streets of Tehran against the Shah’s regime, seven hundred lives were lost. Following Black Friday more and more strikes were against the regime, and the people became more radical issuing the Shah to be beheaded. Reza Shah took refuge in Panama. Triumphant, Khomeini arrived back to Tehran with a victorious Islamic establishment.

Furthermore, Shahbazi (2002) framed the divergence and convergence of the Qashqa’i and the Shah’s regime, Reza Shah’s and even his son’s, anti-Qash qa’i policies helped to create Qash qa’i political consciousness. He continued to point out that the Shah’s policies dismantled the socio-political, socio-economic systems of the Qash qa’i. Yet, it also enabled them to attain a political consciousness, which in this sense, allowed them to converge with the oppressive regime. The Qash qa’i teachers played a major role in this process of assimilation with the state regimes. In this sense, political ideologies have established the influence of literacy practices Iran. In the following sections will explore how the Qash qa’i leaders assimilated their culture with state schooling to traditional educational practices.

Qash qa’i Formal State Education

In the 1950s, Mohammad Bahmanbaigi, a well-educated *ilkhani* leader of the Qash qa’i tribe, built on an existing *makab* and state educational program. Part of the program included developing Qash qa’i ethnic identity and developing a wider state perspective of Iranian culture. Author Anderson (1980), emphasized this nationalist perspective, formal education promoted nationalism and created a consciousness of continuity with the past. In this sense, one must inquire about Bahmanbaigi’s intentions; did he want to fully integrate the Qash qa’i? Or did he have other motives to educate them about the state-government, while incorporating ethnic identity as a way to gain momentum for the revolution? Indeed, within the context of the 1979 revolutionary period, one could infer that his motives were to establish a collective ethnic consciousness, which might have been a contributor for the revolution. Also, understanding that literacy is a method of reifying cultural values and ideologies, it is evident that his intentions were to reestablish the Qash qa’i as a legitimate power. Bahmanbaigi was instrumental in persuading the royalty to support an educational program for the nomads. His educational program proved beneficial in the sense that literacy rates among the rural tribes increased from pre-revolution to post-revolution periods (e.g. Shabazi, 2002).

Moreover, according to Afkhani, Friedl, and the Iranian Statistical Center (1994), statistics indicated that literacy rates among rural populations increased in Iran as follows:

In 1976, the literacy rate of males was 43.6, females 17.3, by 1986 the literacy rate had increased in males to 60.0 and females 36.0. This literacy rating is defined as percentage of literates in the population six years and older. (p. 45)

Furthermore, the statistics revealed literacy rates nearly doubled. Also, these improvements in literacy were attributable to Bahmanbaigi's collaboration with the United States Four Points, program under President Truman's Marshall Plan. This educational policy had gained him a good reputation with Iranian officials. In other words, during the reigns of the Pahlavis', they had enforced westernized state-education, which essentially excluded the tribal communities. Also, it was not in the royal courts interest to allow tribal governments to have power in the legislative system. In fact, most tribal leaders were ostracized from government positions, especially during Mohammad Reza Shah's regime. In collaboration with the U.S. the Shah's Education Administration were impressed with Bahmanbaigi's negotiations with the Four Points program, hence allowing him to establish a school system. The Four Points program assisted developing countries in respect to budgets and education. With the money from the U.S. he set up an educational program for the Qash qa'i tribes that encompassed a formal state curriculum and traditional Qash qa'i education. As noted by Shabazi (2002), The Four Points program allowed Bahmanbaigi to develop "Tent Schools", in which he trained and hired teachers to educate the Qash qa' i. Furthermore, Bahmanbaigi and the Qash qa'i school teachers received a salary from the U.S. as well, which helped to support their educational program. Additionally, Shabazi stated, eventually the schools expanded from Teacher Training School for Nomads, to the Middle School, High School, Technical Schools, Carpet Weaving, which were located near and in Shiraz the capital of the Fars region. Shabazi (2002) confirmed that by 1979, the literacy program had produced 9,000 male and female schoolteachers, and each schoolteacher had at least fifteen students, one-third female. According to Afkhani & Fiedl (1994), the data illustrated a contrast in literacy rates between 1976 and 1986. The Iranian Center of Statistics classifies the levels of literacy according to grade level as follows:

Both urban and rural populations indicate an increase in elementary literacy illustrating that male literacy in urban populations increased from 92.1 (1976) to 93.5 (1986) and female elementary level literacy increased from 85.5 (1976) to 89.7 (1986). In the rural populations of elementary literacies, males increased literacy from 74.6 (1976) to 82.3 (1986) and females 41.7 (1976) to 61.5 (1986). (p. 47)

Moreover, in contrast to elementary literacy rates, data revealed a drop in literacy rates at the high school level in both rural and urban populations from 1976 to 1986 as follows:

In urban males 63.6 (1976) to 51.1 (1986), and females fell from 45.0 (1976) to 37.1 (1986). The rural populations took a steeper curve illustrating that males decreased in literacy from 25.4 (1976) to 10.3 (1986) and females 6.7 (1976) to 2.7 (1986). Also, in the Fars region literacy rates in 1986 among males and females represent males as 69.3 literate and females 48.6 literate. (p. 47)

Literacy rates and elementary level attendance between 1976-1986 increased, while high school attendance decreased, due to economic factors related to the 1979 Revolution and the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988) as well as socio-economic factors. As noted by Afkhani & Friedl (1994), the Iran-Iraq war pressured women (men as well) to withdraw from the workforce. However, the decline of the economic activity rate of women is also consistent with a strong emphasis on the priority of familial and household roles for women in the Islamic Republic. During the 1979 Revolution and post-Revolutionary Iran, rural educational institutions such as the Qash qa'i schools were gradually dismantled, however, the nomads continued their struggle to assimilate and to keep their culture and ethnic identity intact.

Furthermore, Bahmanbaigi's knowledge of his tribal culture and the royal court's politics of Iran earned him a position that would help the Qash qa'i to integrate into the modern Iranian state as well as maintain their ethnic identity. However, with the dominance of the tyrannical regimes, independence for the Qash qa' i was desolate, it wasn't until the revolt in 1979 when they could re-establish a national identity. The following quote from Shabazi's informant validates the Qash qa'i perspective on education and collective conscience:

It is true that socio-cultural values have, to some extent, paled, but this should not mean that educated Qash qa'i should turn away from their culture and say good-bye to an age old heritage. The true value of education for us has been the elevation of a feeling in us that our cultural heritage must not die. That our history and experience, our roots are embedded in this heritage. (p. 22)

How did Bahmanbaigi structure the educational program to maintain ethnic identity and converge with formal state educational practices? What was his philosophy of education, under the coercive Shah's regime and the Shah's indoctrination of western philosophies?

According to Shahbazi (2002), although Bahmanbaigi gained the royal families support with his collaboration with the U.S., he often refused to accept high-ranking officials from the court to teach in his schools. This information is documented in the former Office of Literacy for Nomads. In other words, Bahmanbaigi established a curricula that incorporated Qash qa'i culture within the state mandated curriculum.

Qashqa'i Curricula

In order to create a learning environment conducive to Qashqa'i cultural identity Bahmanbaigi implemented penalties for teachers whom did not teach the values of "Qash qa'iness", yet he gifted those whom taught the ways of the tribe (Shahabzi, 2002). He implemented symbolisms of the Qash qa'i, which was often represented warfare, he stated that the famous slogan for tent schools was, "blackboard is my gun, white chalk is my bullet" (p. 109). This slogan was meant to intimidate or persuade the royal state to understand that the Qash qa'i were no longer an enemy of the state and to attempt to create diplomacy. Bahmanbaigi taught his teachers that the purpose of the schooling was

not to be the enemy of the state systems, hence, attempting to obliterate violence and persuade the tribes to stay open to the state's educational curriculum.

Furthermore, the elders or *oba* played a major role in the schooling of the Qash qa'i children. As noted by Shabazi (2002), a schoolteacher stated, "If teachers wanted to just act on the new values, elders would not support them. In the absence of the elders' support, a teacher would not have as much success" (p. 112). Indeed, this represented the traditional social structure of the Qash qa' i, and their respect for elders. Shabazi (2002) affirmed that, outsiders including state officials who inspected the educators were invited to the elders' tent, served meals and entertained. Additionally, elders watched the schoolteachers closely for behavior that they considered to be morally corrupt such as consuming alcohol or listening to Persian popular music. If such matters were observed elders would publically humiliate them and Bahmanbaigi would transfer them to a less desirable place. In regard to textbooks, the books were the same as in the Iranian state schools, and content was based on "western" ideologies as enforced by the Shah's regime. However, the elders filtered out many values and symbols that were not related to Qash qa'i values. At this point the school's cultural landscape and curriculum of the Tent schooling was developed by the state, and Bahmanbaigi's Qash qa'i centered program.

Overall, Bahmanbai and other tribal leaders interacted with the state systems on behalf of their communities and shaped the ethnic identity of the group. The Qash qa'i teachers were the functionaries that created a liaison between state curriculum and Qash qa'i culture. They have converged with centralized government and diverged creating a culture of literacy for the future prosperity of Iranian culture. As noted by Shabazi (2002), the Qash qa'i wanted to learn and internalize the norms and values of their fellow Iranians, to be assimilated quickly, so that they could get rid of the social stigma associated with nomads and nomadism.

Post-Revolutionary Nomadic Education

With the dawn of the post-revolution in 1980, the common ideology was freedom and freedom of expression. Yet after the death of Khomeini in 1989, the few Qash qa'i leaders in government were eventually replaced due to a lack of knowledge about the newly elected leaders. Additionally, nomadic views were undermined and their pasturelands bought by non-nomadic farmers. As noted by Shabazi (2002) during the post-revolutionary period, "nomadic educational programs were covertly taken from them." Again, the regime attempted to dismantle the nomadic spirit of the Qash qa'i. As a result, Shabazi (2002) "formally educated Qash qa'i turned to promoting their indigenous music, as a cultural identifier, to set themselves apart from other Iranians." Shabazi continues to state, that the Qash qa'i made their music and poetry public through radio and films, such as the poem *Ma'zun* as I discussed earlier in the paper. For example, two verses illustrate the expression of the Qash qa'i to re-form their unity:

Oh! Ali, hear the just voice,
 Help to open the plugged ears,
 Do not let my beautiful tribes disappear,
 My Ma'zun, we have many afflictions, our hearts have turned into

boiling blood.

...

My Ma'sun (the poet) knows our leader is kind.
He is the protector of the oppressed, he is our eye
(pp. 40-41)

This public expression of poetry and music is a representation of modern culture, that is culture unified through the structure of feelings of nostalgia constructed by the media.

Old World Nomadism and Modern Nomadism

As noted by scholar Appauderai (1998), the definition of modern globalization is that cultures through “imagined” landscapes are mobilized by nostalgic media. Accordingly, Hickson, Bodon, and Bodon (2009), defined modern globalization’s central theme is encompassed by nation-states and taxonomic control over cultural differences. That is, nation-states utilizing the media as the medium for visual representation of culture and technology as a tool toward communicating to the masses. Furthermore, the goal of the media and politics is to create a universal sentiment among all groups of the world. Nation-states attempt to achieve this sentiment of “sameness” by supporting a persuasive cultural media, which reified their political ideals, a method of seducing minor groups with imagery and fantasy. With the emergence of globalism a “*new nomadism*” has shaped cultures around the globe (e.g. Hickson, Bodon, & Bodon (2009). Appauderai (1998) defined the suffix “scape” which represented the multi-perspective views and interpretations of *ethnoscapes* (ethnography), *mediascapes* (media), *technoscapes* (technology), *financescapes* (finance), and *ideoscapes* (ideologies). The cultural assimilation mobilized by immigration, refugees, exiles, and guest workers, called ethnoscapes, represented human migrations across continents in search for satisfaction of individual needs. These human groups appeared to affect politics and appeared to be cultural attractors to multi-nationalist enterprises. That is, do these immigrants affect politics? Are they affecting culture? Or are they affected by the encompassing politics and cultures of their original homeland? In this sense, as noted by Appauderai (1998), “modern migrations are similar to those of old-world migrations, people are influenced by the economy and politics of their homeland”. The ramifications of these human migrations are the creation of a culture of “*new nomads*” (Hickson, Bodon & Bodon, 2009). Although the Qash qa’i are considered a “minority” group in Iran, they have been successful in establishing a landscape of literacy and ethnic identity that is the most influential socio-economic and socio-political ideologies of modern Iran and the world. Likewise, Qashqa’iness has established a legitimate “*scapes*” as the “*new nomads*” in the modern world. Their nomadic culture has converged with nation-state building and diverged as well, recreating their *ethnoscape and financescape* socio-economic and socio-political ideals. Their influence has reached worldviews in that sedentary lifestyles are becoming less the norm. However, the ideals of a “settled” aristocracy maintains its power as an elite “ideoscape” that imposed a fantasy of hope for a sedentary lifestyle. Human groups today are becoming more dependent on

migration to support their families, following the dominant “ideoscapes” and “financescapes”.

And so the nomadic journey continues, as inspired by Attenbourough (1975), the Qash qa’i have not yet come to the end of the centuries of migratory journeys across the slopes and valleys from northern Asia to the southern regions. Twentieth and twenty-first century regimes have not succeeded in claiming them and denying their journeys across the vast landscapes of the globe. Ideologies of globalization have expanded their nomadic territories and they have continued to influence worldviews. And so their women continue to weave their family heritage thread by thread, with splendors of woven symbols, looking nostalgically to the past as the future brings them forward to new innovations, new landscapes, and *new nomadism*.

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