DIGITIZING A ‘DEAD’ WORLD: BUILDING A BRIDGE BETWEEN ANCIENT LITERATURE AND MODERN STUDENTS THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

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A Thesis

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WORLD LITERATURE
EXPLORING OUR WORLD TOGETHER
As for you, Gilgamesh, let your belly be full, make merry day and night. Of each day make a feast of rejoicing. Day and night dance and play!

~The Epic of Gilgamesh
SUMERIAN BACKGROUND

Approximately 4000 years ago, several major civilizations developed in southwest Asia. Consisting of more than just groups of people, these new civilizations boasted a high degree of social organization and are responsible for the creation of many things we consider necessary to modern life.

Located in the Tigris-Euphrates River Valley (now modern Iraq), the Mesopotamian civilization thrived due to its proximity to water. Greek for “the land between two rivers,” Mesopotamia developed into a strategic location and over time many groups would consider this their homeland.

Sumer, the southeastern part of this region, was exceptionally fertile due to the seasonal flooding provided by the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. In an attempt to harness the power of the rivers, early Mesopotamians created irrigation ditches which allowed them to water their crops, even during the dry season.

SUMERIANS

Considered the founders of the Mesopotamian civilization, the Sumerians would go on to impact future generations with their discoveries. Some of the prominent “firsts” attributed to the Sumerians include: the first writing system—cuneiform; the first schools—
a Sumerian city was its temple, which housed an image of the city’s chief god. Ultimately, it was the priests who ruled the city. Among other firsts, Sumerians are credited with the creation of the ziggurat. The ziggurat was the largest building in the temple complex and was thought to be a ladder for the gods to use to ascend into the heavens. Over time, military leaders began to replace the priests as rulers and the installation of kings became common practice.

**BABYLONIANS**

Ultimately known for their powerful kings, the Babylonians replaced the Sumerians as the primary residents of Mesopotamia. The city of Agade became home to the Babylonian kings; King Sargon, who ruled around 2340 BC, was considered one of the most influential and powerful kings to rule. Because King Sargon was from the Akkadian region (which Agade is a part of), he was able to introduce and enforce Akkadian as the primary language of Mesopotamia.

The Babylonians revered the Sumerians and strove to preserve their literature and their language. By reshaping popular Sumerian tales, the Babylonians fashioned a famous Akkadian work known as *The Epic of Gilgamesh*.

**AMORITES**

Following in the footsteps of the great Babylonian kings, the Amorites founded the city of Babylon alongside the Euphrates river around 2000 BC.
Under to rule of King Hammurabi, Babylon became the capital around 1750 BC and remained a strategic city for the region well into its future. Known for his famous legal code, Hammurabi wrote his laws down so they could not be misinterpreted. Viewed as harsh by modern standards, Haummurabi’s laws established the “eye for an eye” system of punishment.

ASSYRIANS

The Assyrians were a semitic group responsible for the creation and development of the city-state of Assur in northeastern Mesopotamia. Their knowledge and use of iron weaponry and skilled cavalry made them strong foes of the Babylonians. Similar to the Babylonians and their revery for Sumerian traditions, the Assyrians recognized and celebrated the merit of other cultures and were champions of diversity.

The Assyrians are well-known for the work of King Ashurbanipal who thought so highly of the Sumerians and the Babylonians, that he created the first library. King Ashurbanipal’s library was home to more than 20,000 clay tablets written in cuneiform.
THE EPIC OF GILGAMESH

The story of Gilgamesh is one of the most famous epics to have survived this time period. This long narrative poem chronicles the story of the Sumerian king named Gilgamesh who lived between 2700BC and 2500BC. Though undoubtedly one of the oldest epics still being read today, *The Epic of Gilgamesh* is far from outdated. Focusing on such issues as the desire to be known and respected, how to manage the grief of losing a loved one, and how to face one’s own mortality, *The Epic of Gilgamesh* encompasses story lines that resonate with every generation.

Unlike most modern stories that boast a single author, *The Epic of Gilgamesh* is a series of stories that were handed down for hundreds of years. Oral tradition kept the stories of King Gilgamesh alive. Following the Babylonian conquest, rather than destroy Sumerian culture, the Babylonians embraced many Sumerian traditions. The oral tales were adapted and sewn together, creating the unified epic read today.

THE STORY OF GILGAMESH

King Gilgamesh ruled the ancient Sumerian city of Uruk. Proclaiming that he is part god and part man, Gilgamesh allows his arrogance to dictate his actions and he is disliked by many of his subjects. Hearing the complaints of the people below, the goddess Aruru takes pity on them and creates Enkidu to distract Gilgamesh and allow the people some relief. Initially living like a wild animal in the forest, Enkidu is drawn out of the forest by a temptress sent by Gilgamesh. Viewing Enkidu as a threat, Gilgamesh hoped to wage war against Enkidu’s weaknesses; instead, Enkidu proves a worthy competitor and the two wrestle.
Following a hard fought battle, Gilgamesh is ultimately victorious, but he admires Enkidu’s tenacity and the two become fast-friends.

Insistent on making a name for himself, Gilgamesh convinces Enkidu that they should slay Humbaba, the evil giant who guards the distant cedar forest. With assistance from the sun god Shamash, the two are able to subdue the giant and he quickly killed.

One constant throughout the Gilgamesh epic is the recurring presence of the gods and goddesses. Sometimes assisting Gilgamesh with his quests and other times thwarting his plans, the gods and goddesses play an active role throughout the epic. Ishtar, the goddess of love, attempts to seduce Gilgamesh. Refusing her advances, Gilgamesh angers the goddess and she sends the Bull of Heaven to destroy Gilgamesh. Together, Gilgamesh and Enkidu kill the Bull, angering Ishtar more.
**THE EPIC OF GILGAMESH**

**GILGAMESH KING IN Uruk**

I WILL proclaim to the world the deeds of Gilgamesh. This was the man to whom all things were known; this was the king who knew the countries of the world. He was wise, he saw mysteries and knew secret things, he brought us a tale of the days before the flood. He went on a long journey, was weary, worn-out with labour, returning he rested, he engraved on a stone the whole story.

When the gods created Gilgamesh they gave him a perfect body. Shamash the glorious sun endowed him with beauty, Adad the god of the storm endowed him with courage, the great gods made his beauty perfect, surpassing all others, terrifying like a great wild bull. Two thirds they made him god and one third man.

In Uruk he built walls, a great rampart, and the temple of blessed Eanna for the god of the firmament Anu, and for Ishtar the goddess of love. Look at it still today: the outer wall where the cornice runs, it shines with the brilliance of copper; and the inner wall, it has no equal. Touch the threshold, it is ancient. Approach Eanna the dwelling of Ishtar, our lady of love and war, the like of which no latter-day king, no man alive can equal. Climb upon the wall of Uruk; walk along it, I say; regard the foundation terrace and examine the masonry: is it not burnt brick and good? The seven sages laid the foundations.

**Chapter 1:**
**THE COMING OF ENKIDU**

GILGAMESH went abroad in the world, but he met with none who could withstand his arms till he came to Uruk. But the men of Uruk muttered in their houses, 'Gilgamesh sounds the tocsin for his amusement, his arrogance has no bounds by day or night. No son is left with his father, for Gilgamesh takes them all, even the children; yet the king should be a shepherd to his people. His lust leaves no virgin to her lover, neither the warrior’s daughter nor the wife of the noble; yet this is the shepherd of the city, wise, comely, and resolute.'

The gods heard their lament, the gods of heaven cried to the Lord of Uruk, to Anu the god of Uruk: 'A goddess made him, strong as a savage bull, none can withstand his arms. No son is left with his father, for Gilgamesh takes them all; and is this the king, the shepherd of his people? His lust leaves no virgin to her lover, neither the warrior’s daughter nor the wife of the noble. When Anu had heard their lamentation the gods cried to Aruru, the goddess of creation, 'You made him, O Aruru; now create his equal; let it be as like him as his own reflection, his second self; stormy heart for stormy heart. Let them contend together and leave Uruk in quiet.'

So the goddess conceived an image in her mind, and it was of the stuff of Anu of the firmament. She dipped her hands in water and pinched off clay, she let it fall in the wilderness, and noble Enkidu was created. There was virtue in him of the god of war, of Ninurta.
himself. His body was rough, he had long hair like a woman’s; it waved like the hair of Nisaba, the goddess of corn. His body was covered with matted hair like Samugan’s, the god of cattle. He was innocent of mankind; he knew nothing of the cultivated land.

Enkidu ate grass in the hills with the gazelle and lurked with wild beasts at the water-holes; he had joy of the water with the herds of wild game. But there was a trapper who met him one day face to face at the drinking-hole, for the wild game had entered his territory. On three days he met him face to face, and the trapper was frozen with fear. He went back to his house with the game that he had caught, and he was dumb, benumbed with terror.

His face was altered like that of one who has made a long journey. With awe in his heart he spoke to his father: ‘Father, there is a man, unlike any other, who comes down from the hills. He is the strongest in the world, he is like an immortal from heaven. He ranges over the hills with wild beasts and eats grass; he ranges through your land and comes down to the wells. I am afraid and dare not go near him. He fills in the pits which I dig and tears up my traps set for the game; he helps the beasts to escape and now they slip through my fingers.’

His father opened his mouth and said to the trapper, ‘My son, in Uruk lives Gilgamesh; no one has ever prevailed against him, he is strong as a star from heaven. Go to Uruk, find Gilgamesh, extol the strength of this wild man. Ask him to give you a harlot, a wanton from the temple of love; return with her, and let her woman’s power overpower this man. When next he comes down to drink at the wells she will be there, stripped naked; and when he sees her beckoning he will embrace her, and then the wild beasts will reject him.’

So the trapper set out on his journey to Uruk and addressed himself to Gilgamesh saying, ‘A man unlike any other is roaming now in the pastures; he is as strong as a star from heaven and I am afraid to ap-
proach him. He helps the wild game to escape; he fills in my pits and pulls up my traps.' Gilgamesh said, 'Trapper, go back, take with you a harlot, a child of pleasure. At the drinking hole she will strip, and when, he sees her beckoning he will embrace her and the game of the wilderness will surely reject him.'

Now the trapper returned, taking the harlot with him. After a three days' journey they came to the drinking hole, and there they sat down; the harlot and the trapper sat facing one another and waited for the game to come. For the first day and for the second day the two sat waiting, but on the third day the herds came; they came down to drink and Enkidu was with them. The small wild creatures of the plains were glad of the water, and Enkidu with them, who ate grass with the gazelle and was born in the hills; and she saw him, the savage man, come from far-off in the hills. The trapper spoke to her: 'There he is. Now, woman, make your breasts bare, have no shame, do not delay but welcome his love. Let him see you naked, let him possess your body. When he comes near uncover yourself and lie with him; teach him, the savage man, your woman's art, for when he murmurs love to you the wild beasts that shared his life in the hills will reject him.'

She was not ashamed to take him, she made herself naked and welcomed his eagerness; as he lay on her murmuring love she taught him the woman's art. For six days and seven nights they lay together, for Enkidu had forgotten his home in the hills; but when he was satisfied he went back to the wild beasts. Then, when the gazelle saw him, they bolted away; when the wild creatures saw him they fled. Enkidu would have followed, but his body was bound as though with a cord, his knees gave way when he started to run, his swiftness was gone. And now the wild creatures had all fled away; Enkidu was grown weak, for wisdom was in him, and the thoughts of a man were in his heart. So here turned and sat down at the woman's feet, and listened intently to what she said: 'You are wise, Enkidu, and now you have become like a god. Why do you want to run wild with the beasts in the hills? Come with me. I will take you to strong-walled Uruk, to the blessed temple of Ishtar and of Anu, of love and of heaven there Gilgamesh lives, who is very strong, and like a wild bull he lords it over men.'

When she had spoken Enkidu was pleased; he longed for a comrade, for one who would understand his heart. 'Come, woman, and take me to that holy temple, to the house of Anu and of Ishtar, and to the place where Gilgamesh lords it over the people. I will challenge him boldly, I will cry out aloud in Uruk, "I am the strongest here, I have come to change the old order, I am he who was born in the hills, I am he who is strongest of all."'

She said, 'Let us go, and let him see your face. I know very well where Gilgamesh is in great Uruk. O Enkidu, there all the people are dressed in their gorgeous robes, every day is holiday, the young men and the girls are wonderful to see. How sweet they smell! All the great ones are roused from their beds. O Enkidu, you who love life, I will show you Gilgamesh, a man of many moods; you shall look at him well in his radiant manhood. His body is perfect in strength and maturity; he never rests by night or day. He is stronger than you, so leave your boasting. Shamash the glorious sun has given favours to Gilgamesh, and Anu of the heavens, and Enlil, and Ea the wise has given him deep understanding. I tell you, even before you have left the wilderness, Gilgamesh will know in his dreams that you are coming.'
Now Gilgamesh got up to tell his dream to his mother; Ninsun, one of the wise gods. 'Mother, last night I had a dream. I was full of joy, the young heroes were round me and I walked through the night under the stars of the firmament, and one, a meteor of the stuff of Anu, fell down from heaven. I tried to lift it but it proved too heavy. All the people of Uruk came round to see it, the common people jostled and the nobles thronged to kiss its feet; and to me its attraction was like the love of woman. They helped me, I braced my forehead and I raised it with thongs and brought it to you, and you yourself pronounced it my brother.'

Then Ninsun, who is well-beloved and wise, said to Gilgamesh, 'This star of heaven which descended like a meteor from the sky; which you tried to lift, but found too heavy, when you tried to move it it would not budge, and so you brought it to my feet; I made it for you, a goad and spur, and you were drawn as though to a woman. This is the strong comrade, the one who brings help to his friend in his need. He is the strongest of wild creatures, the stuff of Anu; born in the grass-lands and the wild hills reared him; when you see him you will be glad; you will love him as a woman and he will never forsake you. This is the meaning of the dream.'

Gilgamesh said, 'Mother, I dreamed a second dream. In the streets of strong-walled Uruk there lay an axe; the shape of it was strange and the people thronged round. I saw it and was glad. I bent down, deeply drawn towards it; I loved it like a woman and wore it at my side.' Ninsun answered, 'That axe, which you saw, which drew you so powerfully like love of a woman, that is the comrade whom I give you, and he will come in his strength like one of the host of heaven. He is the brave companion who rescues his friend in necessity.' Gilgamesh said to his mother, 'A friend, a counsellor has come to me from Enlil, and now I shall befriend and counsel him.' So Gilgamesh told his dreams; and the harlot retold them to Enkidu.

And now she said to Enkidu, 'When I look at you you have become like a god. Why do you yearn to run wild again with the beasts in the hills? Get up from the ground, the bed of a shepherd.' He listened to her words with care. It was good advice that she gave. She divided her clothing in two and with the one half she clothed him and with the other herself, and holding his hand she led him like a child to the sheepfolds, into the shepherds' tents. There all the shepherds crowded round to see him, they put down bread in front of him, but Enkidu could only suck the milk of wild animals. He fumbled and gaped, at a loss what to do or how he should eat the bread and drink the strong wine. Then the woman said, 'Enkidu, eat bread, it is the staff of life; drink the wine, it is the custom of the land.' So he ate till he was full and drank strong wine, seven goblets. He became merry, his heart exulted and his face shone. He rubbed down the matted hair of his body and anointed himself with oil. Enkidu had become a man; but when he had put on man's clothing he appeared like a bridegroom. He took arms to hunt the lion so that the shepherds could rest at night. He caught wolves and lions and the herdsmen lay down in peace; for Enkidu was their watchman, that strong man who had no rival.

He was merry living with the shepherds, till one day lifting his eyes he saw a man approaching. He said to the harlot, 'Woman, fetch that man here. Why has he come? I wish to know his name.' She went and called the man saying, 'Sir, where are you going on this weary journey?' The man answered, saying to Enkidu, 'Gilgamesh has gone into the marriage-house and shut out the people. He does strange things in Uruk, the city of great streets. At the roll of the
drum work begins for the men, and work for the women. Gilgamesh the king is about to celebrate marriage with the Queen of Love, and he still demands to be first with the bride, the king to be first and the husband to follow, for that was ordained by the gods from his birth, from the time the umbilical cord was cut. But now the drums roll for the choice of the bride and the city groans.' At these words Enkidu turned white in the face. 'I will go to the place where Gilgamesh lords it over the people, I will challenge him boldly, and I will cry aloud in Uruk, "I have come to change the old order, for I am the strongest here."

Now Enkidu strode in front and the woman followed behind. He entered Uruk, that great market, and all the folk thronged round him where he stood in the street in strong-walled Uruk. The people jostled; speaking of him they said, 'He is the spit of Gilgamesh. 'He is shorter.' 'He is bigger of bone.' This is the one who was reared on the milk of wild beasts. His is the greatest strength.' The men rejoiced: 'Now Gilgamesh has met his match. This great-one, this hero whose beauty is like a god, he is a match even for Gilgamesh.'

In Uruk the bridal bed was made, fit for the goddess of love. The bride waited for the bridegroom, but in the night Gilgamesh got up and came to the house. Then Enkidu stepped out, he stood in the street and blocked the way. Mighty Gilgamesh came on and Enkidu met him at the gate. He put out his foot and prevented Gilgamesh from entering the house, so they grappled, holding each other like bulls. They broke the doorposts and the walls shook, they snorted like bulls locked together. They shattered the doorposts and the walls shook. Gilgamesh bent his knee with his foot planted on the ground and with a turn Enkidu was thrown. Then immediately his fury died. When Enkidu was thrown he said to Gilgamesh, 'There is not another like you in the world. Ninsun, who is as strong as a wild ox in the byre, she was the mother who bore you, and now you are raised above all men, and Enlil has given you the kingship, for your strength surpasses the strength of men.' So Enkidu and Gilgamesh embraced and their friendship was sealed.
Chapter 2: THE FOREST JOURNEY

ENLIL of the mountain, the father of the gods, had decreed the destiny of Gilgamesh. So Gilgamesh dreamed and Enkidu said, 'The meaning of the dream is this. The father of the gods has given you kingship, such is your destiny, everlasting life is not your destiny. Because of this do not be sad at heart, do not be grieved or oppressed. He has given you power to bind and to loose, to be the darkness and the light of mankind. He has given you unexampled supremacy over the people, victory in battle from which no fugitive returns, in forays and assaults from which there is no going back. But do not abuse this power, deal justly with your servants in the palace, deal justly before Shamash.'

The eyes of Enkidu were full of tears and his heart was sick. He sighed bitterly and Gilgamesh met his eye and said, 'My friend, why do you sigh so bitterly? But Enkidu opened his mouth and said, 'I am weak, my arms have lost their strength, the cry of sorrow sticks in my throat, I am oppressed by idleness.' It was then that the lord Gilgamesh turned his thoughts to the Country of the Living; on the Land of Cedars the lord Gilgamesh reflected. He said to his servant Enkidu, 'I have not established my name stamped on bricks as my destiny decreed; therefore I will go to the country where the cedar is felled. I will set up my name in the place where the names of famous men are written, and where- no man's name is written yet I will wise a monument to the gods. Because of the evil that is in the land, we will go to the forest and destroy the evil; for in the forest lives Humbaba whose name is "Hugeness," a ferocious giant. But Enkidu sighed bitterly and said, 'When I went with the wild beasts ranging through the wilderness I discovered the forest; its length is ten thousand leagues in every direction. Enlil has appointed Humbaba to guard it and armed him with sevenfold terrors, terrible to all flesh is Humbaba. When he roars it is like the torrent of the storm, his breath is like fire, and his
jaws are death itself. He guards the cedars so well that when the wild heifer stirs in the forest, though she is sixty leagues distant, he hears her. What man would willingly walk into that country and explore its depths? I tell you, weakness overpowers whoever goes near it: it is not an equal struggle when one fights with Humbaba; he is a great warrior, a battering-ram. Gilgamesh, the watchman of the forest never sleeps.'

Gilgamesh replied: 'Where is the man who can clamber to heaven? Only the gods live for ever with glorious Shamash, but as for us men, our days are numbered, our occupations are a breath of wind. How is this, already you are afraid! I will go first although I am your lord, and you may safely call out, “Forward, there is nothing to fear!” Then if I fall I leave behind me a name that endures; men - will say of me, “Gilgamesh has fallen in fight with ferocious Humbaba.” Long after the child has been bony in my house, they will say it, and remember.' Enkidu spoke again to Gilgamesh, 'O my lord, if you will enter that country, go first to the hero Shamash, tell the Sun God, for the land is his. The country where the cedar is cut belongs to Shamash.'

Gilgamesh took up a kid, white without spot, and a brown one with it; he held them against his breast, and he carried them into the presence of the sun. He took in his hand his silver sceptre and he said to glorious Shamash, 'I am going to that country, O Shamash, I am going; my hands supplicate, so let it be well with my soul and bring me back to the quay of Uruk. Grant, I beseech, your protection, and let the omen be good.' Glorious Shamash answered, 'Gilgamesh, you are strong, but what is the Country of the Living to you?'

'O Shamash, hear me, hear me, Shamash, let my voice be heard. Here in the city man dies oppressed at heart, man perishes with despair in his heart. I have looked over the wall and I see the bodies floating on the river, and that will be my lot also. Indeed I know it is so, for whoever is tallest among men cannot reach the heavens, and the greatest cannot encompass the earth. Therefore I would enter that country: because I have not established my name stamped on brick as my destiny decreed, I will go to the country where the cedar is cut. I will set up my name where the names of famous men are written; and where no man's name is written I will raise a monument to the gods.' The tears, ran down his face and he said, 'Alas, it is a long journey that I must take
to the Land of Humbaba. If this enterprise is not to be accomplished, why did you move me, Shamash, with the restless desire to perform it? How can I succeed if you will not succour me? If I die in that country I will die without rancour, but if I return I will make a glorious offering of gifts and of praise to Shamash.'

So Shamash accepted the sacrifice of his tears; like the compassionate man he showed him mercy. He appointed strong allies for Gilgamesh, sons of one mother, and stationed them in the mountain caves. The great winds he appointed: the north wind, the whirlwind, the stone and the icy wind, the tempest and the scorching wind. Like vipers, like dragons, like a scorching fire, like a serpent that freezes the heart, a destroying flood and the lightning’s fork, such were they and Gilgamesh rejoiced.

He went to the forge and said, ‘I will give orders to the armourers; they shall cast us our weapons while we watch them.’ So they gave orders to the armourers and the craftsmen sat down in conference. They went into the groves of the plain and cut willow and boxwood; they cast for them axes of nine score pounds, and great swords they cast with blades of six score pounds each one, with pommels and hilts of thirty pounds. They cast for Gilgamesh the axe ‘Might of Heroes’ and the bow of Anshan; and Gilgamesh was armed and Enkidu; and the weight of the arms they carried was thirty score pounds.

The people collected and the counsellors in the streets and in the market-place of Uruk; they came through the gate of seven bolts and Gilgamesh spoke to them in the market-place: ‘I, Gilgamesh, go to see that creature of whom such things are spoken, the rumour of whose name fills the world. I will conquer him in his cedar wood and show the strength of the sons of Uruk, all the world shall know of it. I am committed to this enterprise: to climb the mountain, to cut down the cedar, and leave behind me an enduring name.’ The counsellors of Uruk; the great market, answered him, ‘Gilgamesh, you are young, your courage carries you too far, you cannot know what this enterprise means which you plan. We have heard that Humbaba is not like men who die, his weapons are such that none can stand against them; the forest stretches for ten thousand leagues in every direction; who would willingly go down to explore its depths? As for Humbaba, when he roars it is like the torrent of the storm, his breath is like fire and his jaws are death itself. Why do you crave to do this thing, Gilgamesh? It is no equal struggle when one fights with Humbaba, that battering-ram:

When he heard these words of the counsellors Gilgamesh looked at his friend and laughed, ‘How shall I answer them; shall I say I am afraid of Humbaba, I will sit at home all the rest of my days?’ Then Gilgamesh opened his mouth again and said to Enkidu, ‘My friend, let us go to the Great Palace, to Egalmah, and stand before Ninsun the queen. Ninsun is wise with deep knowledge, she will give us counsel for the road we must go.’ They took each other by the hand as they went to Egalmah, and they went to Ninsun the great queen. Gilgamesh approached, he entered the palace and spoke to Ninsun. ‘Ninsun, will you listen to me; I have a long journey to go, to the Land of Humbaba, I must travel an unknown road and fight a strange battle. From the day I go until I return, till I reach the cedar forest and destroy the evil which Shamash abhors, pray for me to Shamash.’

Ninsun went into her room, she put on a dress becoming to her body, she put on jewels to make her breast beautiful, she placed a tiara on her head and her skirts swept the ground. Then she went up
to the altar of the Sun, standing upon the roof of the palace; she burnt incense and lifted her arms to Shamash as the smoke ascended: 'O Shamash, why did you give this restless heart to Gilgamesh, my son; why did you give it? You have moved him and now he sets out on a long journey to the Land of Humbaba, to travel an unknown road and fight a strange battle. Therefore from the day that he goes till the day he returns, until he reaches the cedar forest, until he kills Humbaba and destroys the evil thing which you, Shamash, abhor, do not forget him; but let the dawn, Aya, your dear bride, remind you always, and when day is done give him to the watchman of the night to keep him from harm.' Then Ninsun the mother of Gilgamesh extinguished the incense, and she called to Enkidu with this exhortation: 'Strong Enkidu, you are not the child of my body, but I will receive you as my adopted son; you are my other child like the foundlings they bring to the temple. Serve Gilgamesh as a foundling serves the temple and the priestess who reared him. In the presence of my women, any votaries and hierophants, I declare it.' Then she placed - the amulet for a pledge round his neck, and she said to him, 'I entrust my son to you; bring him back to me safely.'

And now they brought to them the weapons, they put in their hands the great swords in their golden scabbards, and the bow and the quiver. Gilgamesh took the axe, he slung the quiver from his shoulder, and the bow of Anshan, and buckled the sword to his belt; and so they were armed and ready for the journey. Now all the people came and pressed on them and said, 'When will you return to the city? The counsellors blessed Gilgamesh and warned him, 'Do not trust too much in your own strength, be watchful, restrain your blows at first. The one who goes in front protects his companion; the good guide who knows the way guards his friend. Let Enkidu lead the way, he knows the road to the forest, he has seen Humbaba and is experienced in battles; let him press first into the passes, let him be watchful and look to himself. Let Enkidu protect his friend, and guard his companion, and bring him safe through the pitfalls of the road. We, the counsellors of Uruk entrust our king to you, O Enkidu; bring him back safely to us.' Again to Gilgamesh, they said, 'May Shamash give you your heart's desire, may he let you see with your eyes the thing accomplished which your lips have spoken; may he open a path for you where it is blocked, and a road for your feet to tread. May he open the mountains for your crossing, and may the nighttime bring you the blessings of night, and Lugulbanda, your guardian god, stand beside you for victory. May you have victory in the battle as though you fought with a child. Wash your feet in the river of Humbaba to which you are journeying; in the evening dig a well, and let there always be pure water in your water-skin. Offer cold water to Shamash and do not forget Lugulbanda.'

Then Enkidu opened his mouth and said, 'Forward, there is nothing to fear. Follow me, for I know the place where Humbaba lives and the paths where he walks. Let the counsellors go back. Here is no cause for fear.' When the counsellors heard this they sped the hero on his way. 'Go, Gilgamesh, may your guardian god protect you on the road and bring you safely back to the quay of Uruk.'

After twenty leagues they broke their fast; after another thirty leagues they stopped for the night. Fifty leagues they walked in one day; in three days they had walked as much as a journey of a month and two weeks. They crossed seven mountains before they came to the gate of the forest. Then Enkidu called out to Gilgamesh, 'Do not go down into the forest; when I opened the gate my hand lost its strength.' Gilgamesh answered him, 'Dear friend, do not speak like a coward.
Have we got the better of so many dangers and travelled so far, to turn back at last? You, who are tried in wars and battles, hold close to me now and you will feel no fear of death; keep beside me and your weakness will pass, the trembling will leave your hand. Would my friend rather stay behind? No, we will, go down together into the heart of the forest. Let your courage be roused by the battle to come; forget death and follow me, a man resolute in action, but one who is not foolhardy. When two go together each will protect himself and shield his companion, and if they fall they leave an enduring name.'

Together they went down into the forest and they came to the green mountain. There they stood still, they were struck dumb; they stood still and gazed at the forest. They saw the height of the cedar, they saw the way into the forest and the track where Humbaba was used to walk. The way was broad and the going was good. They gazed at the mountain of cedars, the dwelling-place of the gods and the throne of Ishtar. The hugeness of the cedar rose in front of the mountain, its shade was beautiful, full of comfort; mountain and glade were green with brushwood:

There Gilgamesh dug a well before the setting sun. He went up the mountain and poured out fine meal on the ground and said, 'O mountain, dwelling of the gods, bring me a favourable dream.' Then they took each other by the hand and lay down to sleep; and sleep that flows from the night lapped over them. Gilgamesh dreamed, and at midnight sleep left him, and he told his dream to his friend. 'Enkidu, what was it that woke me if you did not? My friend, I have dreamed a dream. Get up, look at the mountain precipice. The sleep that the gods sent me is broken. Ah, my friend, what a dream I have had! Terror and confusion; I seized hold of a wild bull in the wilderness. It bellowed and beat up the dust till the whole sky was dark, my arm was seized and my tongue bitten. I fell back on my knee; then someone refreshed me with water from his water-skin.'

Enkidu said, 'Dear friend, the god to whom we are travelling is no wild bull, though his form is mysterious. That wild bull which you saw is Shamash the Protector; in our moment of peril he will take our hands. The one who gave water from his water-skin, that is your own god who cares for your good name, your Lugulbanda. United with him, together we will accomplish a work the fame of which will never die.'
Gilgamesh said, 'I dreamed again. We stood in a deep gorge of the mountain, and beside it we two were like the smallest of swamp flies; and suddenly the mountain fell, it struck me and caught my feet from under me. Then came an intolerable light blazing out, and in it was one whose grace and whose beauty were greater than the beauty of this world. He pulled me out from under the mountain, he gave me water to drink and my heart was comforted, and he set my feet on the-ground.'

Then Enkidu the child of the plains said, 'Let us go down from the mountain and talk this thing over together.' He said to Gilgamesh the young god, 'Your dream is good, your dream is excellent, the mountain which you saw is Humbaba. Now, surely, we will seize and kill him, and throw his body down as the mountain fell on the plain.'

The next day after twenty leagues they broke their fast, and after another thirty they stopped for the night. They dug a well before the sun had set and Gilgamesh ascended the mountain. He poured out fine meal on the ground and said, 'O mountain, dwelling of the gods, send a dream for Enkidu, make him a favourable dream.' The mountain fashioned a dream for Enkidu; it came, an ominous dream; a cold shower passed over him, it caused him to cower like the mountain barley under a storm of rain. But Gilgamesh sat with his chin on his knees till the sleep which flows over all mankind lapped over him. Then, at midnight, sleep left him; he got up and said to his friend, 'Did you call me, or why did I wake? Did you touch me, or why am I terrified? Did not some god pass by, for my limbs are numb with fear? My friend, I saw a third dream and this dream was altogether frightful. The heavens roared and the earth roared again, daylight failed and darkness fell, lightnings flashed, fire blazed out, the clouds lowered, they rained down death. Then the brightness de-
When they had come down from the mountain Gilgamesh seized the axe in his hand: he felled the cedar. When Humbaba heard the noise far off he was enraged; he cried out, ‘Who is this that has violated my woods and cut down my cedar?’ But glorious Shamash called to them out of heaven, ‘Go forward, do not be afraid.’ But now’ Gilgamesh was overcome by weakness, for sleep had seized him suddenly, a profound sleep held him; he lay on the ground, stretched out speechless, as though in a dream. When Enkidu touched him he did not rise, when he spoke to him he did not reply. ‘O Gilgamesh, Lord of the plain of Kullab, the world grows dark, the shadows have spread over it, now is the glimmer of dusk. Shamash has departed, his bright head is quenched in the bosom of his mother Ningal. O Gilgamesh, how long will you lie like this, asleep? Never let the mother who gave you birth be forced in mourning into the city square.’

At length Gilgamesh heard him; lie put on his breastplate, ‘The Voice of Heroes’, of thirty shekels’ weight; he put it on as though it had been a light garment that he carried, and it covered him altogether. He straddled the earth like a bull that snuff’d the ground and his teeth were clenched. ‘By the life of my mother Ninsun who gave me birth, and by the life of my father, divine Lugulbanda, let me live to be the wonder of my mother, -as when she nursed me on her lap.’ A second time he said to him, ‘By the life of Ninsun my mother who gave me birth, and by the life of my father, divine Lugulbanda, until we have fought thus man, if man he is, this god, if god he is, the way that I took to the Country of the Living will not turn back to the city.’

Then Enkidu, the faithful companion, pleaded, answering him, ‘O my lord, you do not know this monster and that is the reason you are not afraid. I who know him, I am terrified. His teeth are dragon’s fangs, his countenance is like a lion, his charge is the rushing of the flood, with his look he crushes alike the trees of the forest and reeds in the swamp. O my Lord, you may go on if you choose into thus land, but I will go back to the city. I will tell the lady your mother all your glorious’ deeds till she shouts for joy: and then I will tell the death that followed till she weeps for bitterness.’ But Gilgamesh said, ‘Immolation and sacrifice are not yet for me, the boat of the dead shall not go down, nor the three-ply cloth be cut for my shrouding. Not yet will my people be desolate, nor the pyre be lit in my house and my dwelling burnt on the fire. Today, give me your aid and you shall have mine: what then can go amiss with us two? All living creatures born of the flesh shall sit at last in the boat of the West, and when it sinks, when the boat of Magilum sinks, they are gone; but we shall go forward and fix our eyes on this monster. If your heart is fearful throw away fear; if there is terror in it throw away terror. Take your axe in your hand and attack. He who leaves the fight unfinished is not at peace.’

Humbaba came out from his strong house of cedar. Then Enkidu called out, ‘O Gilgamesh, remember now your boasts in Uruk. Forward, attack, son of Uruk, there is nothing to fear.’ When he heard these words his courage rallied; he answered, ‘Make haste, close in, if the watchman is there do not let him escape to the woods where he will vanish. He has put on the first of his seven splendours but not yet the other six, let us trap him before he is armed.’ Like a raging wild bull he snuffed the ground; the watchman of the woods turned full of threatens, he cried out. Humbaba came from his strong house of cedar. He nodded his head and shook it, menacing Gilgamesh; and on him he fastened his eye, the eye of death. Then Gilgamesh called to Shamash and his tears were flowing, ‘O glorious Shamash, I have followed the road you commanded but now if you
send no succour how shall I escape? Glorious Shamash heard his prayer and he summoned the great wind, the north wind, the whirlwind, the storm and the icy wind, the tempest and the scorching wind; they came like dragons, like a scorching fire, like a serpent that freezes the heart, a destroying flood and the lightning’s fork. The eight winds rose up against Humbaba, they beat against his eyes; he was gripped, unable to go forward or back. Gilgamesh shouted, ‘By the life of Ninsun my mother and divine Lugulbanda my father, in the Country of the Living, in this Land I have discovered your dwelling; my weak arms and my small weapons I have brought to this Land against you, and now I will enter your house’.

So he felled the first cedar and they cut the branches and laid them at the foot of the mountain. At the first stroke Humbaba blazed out, but still they advanced. They felled seven cedars and cut and bound the branches and laid them at the foot of the mountain, and seven times Humbaba loosed his glory on them. As the seventh blaze died out they reached his lair. He slapped his thigh in scorn. He approached like a noble wild bull roped on the mountain, a warrior whose elbows are bound together. The tears started to his eyes and he was pale, ‘Gilgamesh, let me speak. I have never known a mother, no, nor a father who reared me. I was born of the mountain, he reared me, and Enlil made me the keeper of this forest. Let me go free, Gilgamesh, and I will be your servant, you shall be my lord; all the trees of the forest that I tended on the mountain shall be yours. I will cut them down and build you a palace.’ He took him by the hand and led him to his house, so that the heart of Gilgamesh was moved with compassion. He swore by the heavenly life, by the earthly life, by the underworld itself: ‘O Enkidu, should not the snared bird return to its nest and the captive man return to his mother’s arms?’ Enkidu answered, ‘The strongest of men will fall to fate if he has no judgement. Namtar, the evil fate that knows no distinction between men, will devour him. If the snared bird returns to its nest, if the captive man returns to his mother’s arms, then you my friend will never return to the city where the mother is waiting who gave you birth. He will bar the mountain road against you, and make the pathways impassable.’
Humbaba said, 'Enkidu, what you have spoken is evil: you, a hireling, dependent for your bread! In envy and for fear of a rival you have spoken evil words.' Enkidu said, 'Do not listen, Gilgamesh: this Humbaba must die. Kill Humbaba first and his servants after.' But Gilgamesh said, 'If we touch him the blaze and the glory of light will be put out in confusion, the glory and glamour will vanish, its rays will be quenched.' Enkidu said to Gilgamesh, 'Not so, my friend. First entrap the bird, and where shall the chicks run then? Afterwards we can search out the glory and the glamour, when the chicks run distracted through the grass.' Gilgamesh listened to the word of his companion, he took the axe in his hand, he drew the sword from his belt, and he struck Humbaba with a thrust of the sword to the neck, and Enkidu his comrade struck the second blow. At the third blow Humbaba fell. Then there followed confusion for this was the guardian of the forest whom they had felled to the ground. For as far as two leagues the cedars shivered when Enkidu felled the watcher of the forest, he at whose voice Hermon and Lebanon used to tremble. Now the mountains were moved and all the hills, for the guardian of the forest was killed. They attacked the cedars, the seven splendours of Humbaba were extinguished. So they pressed on into the forest bearing the sword of eight talents. They uncovered the sacred dwellings of the Anunnaki and while Gilgamesh felled the first of the trees of the forest Enkidu cleared their roots as far as the banks of Euphrates. They set Humbaba before the gods, before Enlil; they kissed the ground and dropped the shroud and set the head before him. When he saw the head of Humbaba, Enlil raged at them. 'Why did you do this thing? From henceforth may the fire be on your faces, may it eat the bread that you eat, may it drink where you drink.' Then Enlil took again the blaze and the seven splendours that had been Humbaba’s: he gave the first to the river, and he gave to the lion, to the stone of execration, to the mountain and to the dreaded daughter of the Queen of Hell.

O Gilgamesh, king and conqueror of the dreadful blaze; wild bull who plunders the mountain, who crosses the sea, glory to him, and from the brave the greater glory is Enki’s!

Chapter 3: ISHTAR, GILGAMESH, AND THE DEATH OF ENKIDU

Gilgamesh washed out his long locks and cleaned his weapons; he flung back his hair from his shoulders; he threw off his stained...
clothes and changed them for new. He put on his royal robes and made them fast. When Gilgamesh had put on the crown, glorious Ishtar lifted her eyes, seeing the beauty of Gilgamesh. She said, ‘Come to me Gilgamesh, and be my bridgroom; grant me seed of your body, let me be your bride and you shall be my husband. I will harness for you a chariot of lapis lazuli and of gold, with wheels of gold and horns of copper; and you shall have mighty demons of the storm for draft mules. When you enter our house in the fragrance of cedar-wood, threshold and throne will kiss your feet. Kings, rulers, and princes will bow down before you; they shall bring you tribute from the mountains and the plain. Your ewes shall drop twins and your goats triplets; your pack-ass shall outrun mules; your oxen shall have no rivals, and your chariot horses shall be famous far-off for their swiftness.’

Gilgamesh opened his mouth and answered glorious Ishtar, ‘If I take you in marriage, what gifts can I give in return? What ointments and clothing for your body? I would gladly give you bread and all sorts of food fit for a god. I would give you wine to drink fit for a queen. I would pour out barley to stuff your granary; but as for making you my wife - that I will not. How would it go with me? Your lovers have found you like a brazier which smoulders in the cold, a backdoor which keeps out neither squall of wind nor storm, a castle which crushes the garrison, pitch that blackens the bearer, a water-skin that chafes the carrier, a stone which falls from the parapet, a battering-ram turned back from the enemy, a sandal that trips the wearer. Which of your lovers did you ever love for ever? What shepherd of yours has pleased you for all time? Listen to me while I tell the tale of your lovers. There was Tammuz, the lover of your youth, for him you decreed wailing, year after year. You loved the many coloured roller, but still you struck and broke his wing; now in the grove he sits and cries, "kappi, kappi, my wing, my wing." You have loved the lion tremendous in strength: seven pits you dug for him, and seven. You have loved the stallion magnificent in battle, and for him you decreed whip and spur and a thong, to gallop seven leagues by force and to muddy the water before he drinks; and for his mother Sillili lamentations. You have loved the shepherd of the flock; he made meal-cake for you day after day, he killed kids for your sake. You struck and turned him into a wolf, now his own herd-boys chase him away, his own hounds worry his flanks. And did you not love Ishullanu, the gardener of your father’s palm grove? He brought you baskets filled with dates without end; every day he loaded your table. Then you turned your eyes on him and said, "Dearest Ishullanu, come here to me, let us enjoy your manhood, come forward and take me, I am yours.' Ishullanu answered, "What are you asking from me? My mother has baked and I have eaten; why should I come to such as you for food that is tainted and rotten? For when was a screen of rushes sufficient protection from frosts?’ But when you had beard his answer you struck him. He was changed to a blind mole deep in the earth, one whose desire is always beyond his reach. And if you and I should be lovers, should not I be served in the same fashion as all these others whom you loved once?’

When Ishtar heard this she fell into a bitter rage, she went up to high heaven. Her tears poured down in front of her father Anu, and Antum her mother. She said, ‘My father, Gilgamesh has heaped insults on me, he has told over all my abominable behaviour, my foul and hideous acts.’ Anu opened his mouth and said, ‘Are you a father of gods? Did not you quarrel with Gilgamesh the king, so now he has related your abominable behaviour, your foul and hideous acts.’
Ishtar opened her mouth and said again, ‘My father, give me the Bull of Heaven to destroy Gilgamesh. Fill Gilgamesh, I say, with arrogance to his destruction; but if you refuse to give me the Bull of Heaven I will break in the doors of hell and smash the bolts; there will be confusion of people, those above with those from the lower depths. I shall bring up the dead to eat food like the living; and the hosts of dead will outnumber the living.’ Anu said to great Ishtar, ‘If I do what you desire there will be seven years of drought throughout Uruk when corn will be seedless husks. Have you saved grain enough for the people and grass for the cattle? Ishtar replied, ‘I have saved grain for the people, grass for the cattle; for seven years of seedless husks, there is grain and there is grass enough.’

When Anu heard what Ishtar had said he gave her the Bull of Heaven to lead by the halter down to Uruk: When they reached the gates of Uruk the Bull went to the river; with his first snort cracks opened in the earth and, a hundred young men fell down to death. With his second snort cracks opened and two hundred fell down to death. With his third snort cracks opened, Enkidu doubled over but instantly recovered, he dodged aside and leapt on the Bull and seized it by the horns. The Bull of Heaven foamed in his face, it brushed him with the thick of its tail. Enkidu cried to Gilgamesh, ‘my friend, we boasted that we would leave enduring names behind us. Now thrust in your sword between the nape and the horns.’ So Gilgamesh followed the Bull, he seized the thick of its tail, he thrust the sword between the nape and the horns and slew the Bull. When they had killed the Bull of Heaven they cut out its heart and gave it to Shamash, and the brothers rested.

But Ishtar rose tip and mounted the great wall of Uruk; she sprang on to the tower and uttered a curse: ‘Woe to Gilgamesh, for he has scorned me in killing the Bull of Heaven.’ When Enkidu heard these words he tore out the Bull’s right thigh and tossed it in her face saying, ‘If I could lay my hands on you, it is this I should do to you, and lash the entrails to your side.’ Then Ishtar called together her people, the dancing and singing girls, the prostitutes of the temple, the courtesans. Over the thigh of the Bull of Heaven she set up lamentation.

But Gilgamesh called the smiths and the armourers, all of them together. They admired the immensity of the horns. They were plated with lapis lazuli two fingers thick. They were thirty pounds each in
weight, and their capacity in oil was six measures, which he gave to his guardian god, Lugulbanda. But he carried the horns into the palace and hung them on the wall. Then they washed their hands in Euphrates, they embraced each other and went away. They drove through the streets of Uruk where the heroes were gathered to see them, and Gilgamesh called to the singing girls, 'Who is most glorious of the heroes, who is most eminent among men?' 'Gilgamesh is the most glorious of heroes, Gilgamesh is most eminent among men.' And now there was feasting, and celebrations and joy in the palace, till the heroes lay down saying, 'Now we will rest for the night.'

When the daylight came Enkidu got up and cried to Gilgamesh, 'O my brother, such a dream I had last night. Anu, Enlil, Ea and heavenly Shamash took counsel together, and Anu said to Enlil, "Because they have killed the Bull of Heaven, and because they have killed Humbaba who guarded the Cedar Mountain one of the two must, die." Then glorious Shamash answered the hero Enlil, "It was by your command they killed the Bull of Heaven, and killed Humbaba, and must Enkidu die although innocent?" Enlil flung round in rage at glorious Shamash, "You dare to say this, you who went about with them every day like one of themselves!"

So Enkidu lay stretched out before Gilgamesh; his tears ran down in streams and he said to Gilgamesh, 'O my brother, so dear as you are to me, brother, yet they will take me from you.' Again he said, 'I must sit down on the threshold of the dead and never again will I see my dear brother with my eyes.'

While Enkidu lay alone in his sickness he cursed the gate as though it was living flesh, 'You there, wood of the gate, dull and insensible, witless, I searched for you over twenty leagues until I saw the towering cedar. There is no wood like you in our land. Seventy-two cubits high and twenty-four wide, the pivot and the ferrule and the jambs are perfect. A master craftsman from Nippur has made you; but O, if I had known the conclusion! If I had known that this was all the good that would come of it, I would have raised the axe and split you into little pieces and set up here a gate of wattle instead. Ah, if only some future king had brought you here, or some god- had fashioned you. Let him obliterate my name and write his own, and the curse fall on him instead of on Enkidu.'

With the first brightening of dawn Enkidu raised his head and wept before the Sun God, in the brilliance of the sunlight his tears streamed down. 'Sun God, I beseech you, about that vile Trapper, that Trapper of nothing because of whom I was to catch less than my comrade; let him catch least, make his game scarce, make him feeble, taking the smaller of every share, let his quarry escape from his nets.'

When he had cursed the Trapper to his heart's content he turned on the harlot. He was roused to curse her also. 'As for you, woman, with a great curse I curse you! I will promise you a destiny to all eternity. My curse shall come on you soon and sudden. You shall be without a roof for your commerce, for you shall not keep house with other girls in the tavern, but do your business in places fouled by the vomit of the drunkard. Your hire will be potter's earth, your thievings will be flung into the hovel, you will sit at the cross-roads in the dust of the potter's quarter, you will make your bed on the dunghill at night, and by day take your stand in the wall's shadow. Brambles and thorns will tear your feet, the drunk and the dry will strike your cheek and your mouth will ache. Let you be stripped of your purple
dyes, for I too once in the wilderness with my wife had all the trea-
ure I wished.'

When Shamash heard the words of Enkidu he called to him from heaven: ‘Enkidu, why are you cursing the woman, the mistress who taught you to eat bread fit for gods and drink wine of kings? She who put upon you a ‘magnificent garment, did she not give you glori-
ous Gilgamesh for your companion, and has not Gilgamesh, your own brother, made you rest on a ‘royal bed and recline on a couch at his left hand? He has made the princes of the earth kiss your feet, and now all the people of Uruk lament and wail over you. When you are dead he will let his hair grow long for your sake, he will wear a lion's pelt and wander through the desert.'

When Enkidu heard glorious Shamash his angry heart grew quiet, he called back the curse and said, ‘Woman, I promise you another destiny. The mouth which cursed you shall bless you! Kings, princes and nobles shall adore you. On your account a man though twelve miles off will clap his hand to his thigh and his hair will twitch. For you he will undo his belt and open his treasure and you shall have your desire; lapis lazuli, gold and' carnelian from the heap in the treasury. A ring for your hand and a robe shall be yours. The priest will lead you into the presence of the gods. On your account a wife, a mother of seven, was forsaken.'

As Enkidu slept alone in his sickness, in bitterness of spirit he poured out his heart to his friend. 'It was I who cut down the cedar, I who levelled the forest, I who slew Humbaba and now see what has become of me. Listen, my friend, this is the dream I dreamed last night. The heavens roared, and earth rumbled back an answer; be-
tween them stood I before an awful being, the sombre-faced man-
bird; he had directed on me his purpose. His was a vampire face, his foot was a lion's foot, his hand was an eagle's talon. He fell on me and his claws were in my hair, he held me fast and I smothered; then he transformed me so that my arms became wings covered with feathers. He turned his stare towards me, and he led me away to the palace of Irkalla, the Queen of Darkness, to the house from which none who enters ever returns, down the road from which there is no coming back.

‘There is the house whose people sit in darkness; dust is their food and clay their meat. They are clothed like birds * with wings for cover-
ing, they see no light, they sit in darkness. I entered the house of dust and I saw the kings of the earth, their crowns put away for ever; rulers and princes, all those who once wore kingly crowns and ruled the world in the days of old. They who had stood in the place of the gods like Ann and Enlil stood now like servants to fetch baked meats in the house of dust, to carry cooked meat and cold water from the water-skin. In the house of dust which I entered were high priests and acolytes, priests of the incantation and of ecstasy; there
were servers of the temple, and there was Etana, that king of Dish whom the eagle carried to heaven in the days of old. I saw also

Samuqan, god of cattle, and there was Ereshkigal the Queen of the Underworld; and Befit-Sheri squatted in front of her, she who is recorder of the gods and keeps the book of death. She held a tablet from which she read. She raised her head, she saw me and spoke: "Who has brought this one here?" Then I awoke like a man drained of blood who wanders alone in a waste of rashes; like one whom the bailiff has seized and his heart pounds with terror.

Gilgamesh had peeled off his clothes, he listened to his words and wept quick tears, Gilgamesh listened and his tears flowed. He opened his mouth and spoke to Enkidu: "Who is there in strong-walled Uruk who has wisdom like this? Strange things have been spoken, why does your heart speak strangely? The dream was marvellous but the terror was great; we must treasure the dream whatever the terror; for the dream has shown that misery comes at last to the healthy man, the end of life is sorrow." And Gilgamesh lamented, "Now I will pray to the great gods, for my friend had an ominous dream."

This day on which Enkidu dreamed came to an end and be lay stricken with sickness. One whole day he lay on his bed and his suffering increased. He said to Gilgamesh, the friend on whose account he had left the wilderness, 'Once I ran for you, for the water of life, and I now have nothing:' A second day he lay on his bed and Gilgamesh watched over him but the sickness increased. A third day he lay on his bed, he called out to Gilgamesh, rousing him up. Now he was weak and his eyes were blind with weeping. Ten days he lay and his suffering increased, eleven and twelve days he lay on his bed of pain. Then he called to Gilgamesh, 'My friend, the great goddess cursed me and I must die in shame. I shall not die like a man fallen in battle; I feared to fall, but happy is the man who falls in the battle, for I must die in shame.' And Gilgamesh wept over Enkidu. With the first light of dawn he raised his voice and said to the counsellors of Uruk:

'‘Hear me, great ones of Uruk,
I weep for Enkidu, my friend,
Bitterly moaning like a woman mourning
I weep for my brother.
O Enkidu, my brother,
You were the axe at my side,
My hand's strength, the sword in my belt,
The shield before me,
A glorious robe, my fairest ornament;
An evil Fate has robbed me.
The wild ass and the gazelle
That were father and mother,
All long-tailed creatures that nourished you Weep for you,
All the wild things of the plain and pastures; The paths that you loved in the forest of cedars Night and day murmur.
Let the great ones of strong-walled Uruk
Weep for you;
Let the finger of blessing
Be stretched out in mourning;
Enkidu, young brother. Hark,
There is an echo through all the country
Like a mother mourning.
Weep all the paths where we walked together; And the beasts we
hunted, the bear and hyena, Tiger and panther, leopard and lion, The stag and the ibex, the bull and the doe. The river along whose banks we used to walk, Weeps for you, Ula of Elam and dear Euphrates Where once we drew water for the water-skins. The mountain we climbed where we slew the Watchman, Weeps for you. The warriors of strong-walled Uruk Where the Bull of Heaven was killed, Weep for you. All the people of Eridu Weep for you Enkidu. Those who brought grain for your eating Mourn for you now; Who rubbed oil on your back Mourn for you now; Who poured beer for your drinking Mourn for you now. The harlot who anointed you with fragrant ointment Laments for you now; The women of the palace, who brought you a wife, A chosen ring of good advice, Lament for you now. And the young men your brothers As though they were women Go long-haired in mourning. What is this sleep which holds you now? You are lost in the dark and cannot hear me.' He touched his heart but it did not beat, nor did he lift his eyes again. When Gilgamesh touched his heart it did not beat. So Gilgamesh laid a veil, as one veils the bride, over his friend. He began to rage like a lion, like a lioness robbed of her whelps. This way and that he paced round the bed, he tore out his hair and strewed it around. He dragged of his splendid robes and flung them down as though they were abominations. In the first light of dawn Gilgamesh cried out, 'I made you rest on a royal bed, you reclined on a couch at my left hand, the princes of the earth kissed your feet. I will cause all the people of Uruk to weep over you and raise the dirge of the dead. The joyful people will stoop with sorrow; and when you have gone to the earth I will let my hair grow long for your sake, I will wander through the wilderness in the skin of a lion.' The next day also, in the first light, Gilgamesh lamented; seven days and seven nights he wept for Enkidu, until the
worm fastened on him. Only then he gave him up to the earth, for the Anunnaki, the judges, had seized him.

Then Gilgamesh issued a proclamation through the land, he summoned them all, the coppersmiths, the goldsmiths, the stone-workers, and commanded them, 'Make a statue of my friend.' The statue was fashioned with a great weight of lapis lazuli for the breast and of gold for the body. A table of hard-wood was set out, and on it a bowl of carnelian filled with honey, and a bowl of lapis lazuli filled with butter. These he exposed and offered to the Sun; and weeping he went away.

**Chapter 4: THE SEARCH FOR EVERLASTING LIFE**

BITTERLY Gilgamesh wept for his friend Enkidu; he wandered over the wilderness as a hunter, he roamed over the plains; in his bitterness he cried, 'How can I rest, how can I be at peace? Despair is in my heart. What my brother is now, that shall I be when I am dead. Because I am afraid of death I will go as best I can to find Utnapishtim whom they call the Faraway, for he has entered the assembly of the gods.' So Gilgamesh travelled over the wilderness, he wandered over the grasslands, a long journey, in search of Utnapishtim, whom the gods took after the deluge; and they set him to live in the land of Dilmun, in the garden of the sun; and to him alone of men they gave everlasting life.

At night when he came to the mountain passes Gilgamesh prayed: 'In these mountain passes long ago I saw lions, I was afraid and I lifted my eyes to the moon; I prayed and my prayers went up to the gods, so now, O moon god Sin, protect me.' When he had prayed he lay down to sleep, until he was woken from out of a dream. He saw the lions round him glorying in life; then he took his axe in his hand, he drew his sword from his belt, and he fell upon them like an arrow from the string, and struck and destroyed and scattered them.

So at length Gilgamesh came to Mashu, the great mountains about which he had heard many things, which guard the rising and the setting sun. Its twin peaks are as high as the wall of heaven and its paps reach down to the underworld. At its gate the Scorpions stand guard, half man and half dragon; their glory is terrifying, their stare...
strikes death into men, their shimmering halo sweeps the mountains that guard the rising sun. When Gilgamesh saw them he shielded his eyes for the length of a moment only; then he took courage and approached. When they saw him so undismayed the Man-Scorpion called to his mate, ‘This one who comes to us now is flesh of the gods.’ The mate of the Man-Scorpion answered, ‘Two thirds is god but one third is man.’

Then he called to the man Gilgamesh, he called to the child of the gods: ‘Why have you come so great a journey; for what have you travelled so far, crossing the dangerous waters; tell me the reason for your coming?’ Gilgamesh answered, ‘For Enkidu; I loved him dearly, together we endured all kinds of hardships; on his account I have come, for the common lot of man has taken him. I have wept for him day and night, I would not give up his body for burial, I thought my friend would come back because of my weeping. Since he went, my life is nothing; that is why I have travelled here in search of Utnapishtim my father; for men say he has entered the assembly of the gods, and has found everlasting life: I have a desire to question him, concerning the living and the dead.’ The Man-Scorpion opened his mouth and said, speaking to Gilgamesh, ‘No man born of woman has done what you have asked, no mortal man has gone into the mountain; the length of it is twelve leagues of darkness; in it there is no light, but the heart is oppressed with darkness. From the rising of the sun to the setting of the sun there is no light.’ Gilgamesh said, ‘Although I should go in sorrow and in pain, with sighing and with weeping, still I must go. Open the gate ’ of the mountain:’ And the Man-Scorpion said, ‘Go, Gilgamesh, I permit you to pass through the mountain of Mashu and through the high ranges; may your feet carry you safely home. The gate of the mountain is open.’

When Gilgamesh heard this he did as the Man-Scorpion had said, he followed the sun’s road to his rising, through the mountain. When he had gone one league the darkness became thick around him, for there was no light, he could see nothing ahead and nothing behind him. After two leagues the darkness was thick and there was no light, he could see nothing ahead and nothing behind him. After three leagues the darkness was thick, and there was now light, he could see nothing ahead and nothing behind him. After four leagues the darkness was thick and there was no light, he could see nothing ahead and nothing behind him. At the end of five leagues the darkness was thick and there was no light, he could see nothing ahead and nothing behind him. At the end of six leagues the darkness was thick and there was no light, he could see nothing ahead and nothing behind him. When he had gone seven leagues the darkness was thick and there was no light, he could see nothing ahead and nothing behind him. When he had gone eight leagues Gilgamesh gave a great cry, for the darkness was thick and he could see nothing ahead and nothing behind him. After nine leagues he felt the north-wind on his face, but the darkness was thick and there was no light, he could see nothing ahead and nothing behind him. After ten leagues the end was near: After eleven leagues the dawn light appeared. At the end of twelve leagues the sun streamed out.

There was the garden of the gods; all round him stood bushes bearing gems. Seeing it he went down at once, for there was fruit of carnelian with the vine hanging from it, beautiful to look at; lapis lazuli leaves hung thick with fruit, sweet to see. For thorns and thistles there were haematite and rare stones, agate, and pearls from out of the sea. While Gilgamesh walked in the garden by the edge of the sea Shamash saw him, and he saw that he was dressed in the skins of animals and ate their flesh. He was distressed, and he spoke and
said, ‘No mortal man has gone this way before, nor will, as long as the winds drive over the sea.’ And to Gilgamesh he said, ‘You will never find the life for which you are searching.’ Gilgamesh said to glorious Shamash, ‘Now that I have toiled and strayed so far over the wilderness, am I to sleep, and let the earth cover my head for ever? Let my eyes see the sun until they are dazzled with looking. Although I am no better than a dead man, still let me see the light of the sun.’

Beside the sea she lives, the woman of the vine, the maker, of wine; Siduri sits in the garden at the edge of the sea, with the golden bowl and the golden vats that the gods gave her. She is covered with a veil; and where she sits she sees Gilgamesh coming towards her, wearing skins, the flesh of the gods in his body, but despair in his heart, and his face like the face of one who has made a long journey. She looked, and as she scanned the distance she said in her own heart, ‘Surely this is some felon; where is he going now? And she barred her gate against him with the cross-bar and shot home the bolt. But Gilgamesh, hearing the sound of the bolt, threw up his head and lodged his foot in the gate; he called to her, ‘Young woman, maker of wine, why do you bolt your door; what did you see that made you bar your gate? I will break in your door and burst in your gate, for I am Gilgamesh who seized and killed the Bull of Heaven, I killed the watchman of the cedar forest, I overthrew Humbaba who lived in the forest, and I killed the lions in the passes of the mountain.’

Then Siduri said to him, ‘If you are that Gilgamesh who seized and killed the Bull of Heaven, who killed the watchman of the cedar forest, who overthrew Humbaba that lived in the forest, and killed the lions in the passes of the mountain, why are your cheeks so starved and why is your face drawn? Why is despair in your heart and your face like the face of one who has made a long journey? Yes, why is your face burned from heat and cold, and why do you come here wandering over the pastures in search of the wind?’

Gilgamesh answered her, ‘And why should not my cheeks be starved and my face drawn? Despair is in my heart and my face is the face of one who has made a long journey, it was burned with heat and with cold. Why should I not wander over the pastures in search of the wind? My friend, my younger brother, he who hunted the wild ass of the wilderness and the panther of the plains, nay friend, my younger brother who seized and killed the Bull of Heaven and overthrew Humbaba in the cedar forest, my friend who was very
dear to me and who endured dangers beside me, Enkidu my brother, whom I laved, the end of mortality has overtaken him. I wept far him seven days and nights till the worm fastened on him. Because of my brother I am afraid of death, because of my brother I stray through the wilderness and cannot rest. But now, young woman, maker of wine, since I have seen your face do not let me see the face of death which I dread so much.'

She answered, 'Gilgamesh, where are you hurrying to? You will never find that life for which you are looking. When the gods created man they allotted to him death, but life they retained in their own keeping. As for you, Gilgamesh, fill your belly with good things; day and night, night and day, dance and be merry, feast and rejoice. Let your clothes be fresh, bathe yourself in water, cherish the little child that holds your hand, and make your wife happy in your embrace; for this too is the lot of man.'

But Gilgamesh said to Siduri, the young woman, 'How can I be silent, how can I rest, when Enkidu whom I love is dust, and I too shall die and be laid in the earth. You live by the sea-shore and look into the heart of it; young woman, tell me now, which is the way to Utnapishtim, the son of Ubara-Tutu? What directions are there for the passage; give me, oh, give me directions. I will cross the Ocean if it is possible; if it is not I will wander still farther in the wilderness.' The wine-maker said to him, 'Gilgamesh, there is no crossing the Ocean; whoever has come, since the days of old, has not been able to pass that sea. The Sun in his glory crosses the Ocean, but who beside Shamash has ever crossed it? The place and the passage are difficult, and the waters of death are deep which flow between. Gilgamesh, how will you cross the Ocean? When you come to the waters of death what will you do? But Gilgamesh, down in the woods you will find Urshanabi, the ferryman of Utnapishtim; with him are the holy things, the things of stone. He is fashioning the serpent prow of the boat. Look at him well, and if it is possible, perhaps you will cross the waters with him; but if it is not possible, then you must go back.'

When Gilgamesh heard this he was seized with anger. He took his axe in his hand, and his dagger from his belt. He crept forward and he fell on them like a javelin. Then he went into the forest and sat down. Urshanabi saw the dagger flash and heard the axe, and he beat his head, for Gilgamesh had shattered the tackle of the boat in his rage. Urshanabi said to him, 'Tell me, what is your name? I am Urshanabi, the ferryman of Utnapishtim the Faraway.' He replied to him, 'Gilgamesh is my name, I am from Uruk, from the house of Anu.' Then Urshanabi said to him, 'Why are your cheeks so starved and your face drawn? Why is despair in your heart and your face like the face of one who has made a long journey; yes, why is your face burned with heat and with cold, and why do you come here wandering over the pastures in search of the wind?'

Gilgamesh said to him, 'Why should not my cheeks be starved and my face drawn? Despair is in my heart, and my face is the face of one who has made a long journey. I was burned with heat and with cold. Why should I not wander over the pastures? My friend, my younger brother who seized and killed the Bull of Heaven, and overthrew Humbaba in the cedar forest, my friend who was very dear to me, Enkidu my brother whom I loved, the end of mortality has overtaken him. I wept for him seven days and nights till the worm fastened on him. Because of my brother I am afraid of death, because of my brother I stray through the wilderness. His fate lies heavy upon me. How can I be silent,
how can I rest? He is dust and I too shall die and be laid in the earth for ever. I am afraid of death, therefore, Urshanabi, tell me which is the road to Utanapishtim? If it is possible I will cross the waters of death; if not I will wander still farther through the wilderness.'

Urshanabi said to him, 'Gilgamesh, your own hands have prevented you from crossing the Ocean; when you destroyed the tackle of the boat you destroyed its safety.' Then the two of them talked it over and Gilgamesh said, 'Why are you so angry with me, Urshanabi, for you yourself cross the sea by day and night, at all seasons you cross it' 'Gilgamesh, those things you destroyed, their property is to carry me over the water, to prevent the waters of death from touching me. It was for this reason that I preserved them, but you have destroyed them, and the urnu snakes with them. But now, go into the forest, Gilgamesh; with your axe cut poles, one hundred and twenty, cut them sixty cubits long, paint them with bitumen, set on them ferrules, and bring them back.'

When Gilgamesh heard this he went into the forest, he cut poles one hundred and twenty; he cut them sixty cubits long, he painted them with bitumen, he set on them ferrules, and he brought them to Urshanabi. Then they boarded the boat, Gilgamesh and Urshanabi together, launching it out on the waves of Ocean. For three days they ran on as it were a journey of a month and fifteen days, and at last Urshanabi brought the boat to the waters of death: Then Urshanabi said to Gilgamesh, 'Press on, take a pole and thrust it in, but do not let your hands touch the waters. Gilgamesh, take a second pole, take a third, take a fourth pole. Now, Gilgamesh, take a fifth, take a sixth and seventh pole. Gilgamesh, take an eighth, and ninth, a tenth pole. Gilgamesh, take an eleventh, take a twelfth pole.' After one hundred and twenty thrusts Gilgamesh had used the last pole. Then he stripped himself, he held up his arms for a mast and his covering for a sail. So Urshanabi the ferryman brought Gilgamesh to Utanapishtim, whom they call the Faraway, who lives in Dihnun at the place of the sun's transit, eastward of the mountain. To him alone of men the gods had given everlasting life.

Now Utanapishtim, where he lay at ease, looked into the distance and he said in his heart, musing to himself, 'Why does the boat sail here without tackle and mast;
why are the sacred stones destroyed, and why does the master not sail the boat? That man who comes is none of mine; where I look I see a man whose body is covered with skins of beasts. Who is this who walks up the shore behind Urshanabi, for surely he is no man of mine? So Utnapishtim looked at him and said, 'What is your name, you who come here wearing the skins of beasts, with your cheeks starved and your face drawn? Where are you hurrying to now? For what reason have you made this great journey, crossing “the seas whose passage is difficult? Tell me the reason for your coming.’

He replied, ‘Gilgamesh is my name. I am from Uruk, from the house of Anu.’ Then Utnapishtim said to him, ‘If you are Gilgamesh, why are your cheeks so starved and your face drawn? Why is despair in your heart and your face like the face of one who has made a long journey? Yes, why is your face burned with heat and cold; and why do you come here, wandering over the wilderness in search of the wind?

Gilgamesh said to him, ‘Why should not my cheeks be starved and my face drawn? Despair is in my heart and my face is the face of one who has made a long journey. It was burned with heat and with cold. Why should I not wander over the pastures? My friend, my younger brother who seized and killed the Bull of Heaven and overthrew Humbaba in the cedar forest, my friend who was very dear to me and endured dangers beside me, Enkidu, my brother whom I loved, the end of mortality has overtaken him. I wept for him seven days and nights till the worm fastened on him. Because of my brother I am afraid of death; because of my brother I stray through the wilderness. His fate lies heavy upon me. How can I be silent, how can I rest? He is dust and I shall die also and be laid in the earth for ever.’ Again Gilgamesh said, speaking to Utnapishtim, ‘It is to see Utnapishtim whom we call the Faraway that I have come this journey. For, this I have wandered over the world, I have crossed many difficult ranges, I have crossed the seas, I have wearied myself with travelling; my joints are aching, and I have lost acquaintance with sleep which is sweet. My clothes were worn out before I came to the house of Siduri. I have killed the bear and hyena, the lion and panther, the tiger, the stag and the ibex, all sorts of wild game and the small creatures of the pastures. I ate their flesh and I wore their skins; and that was how I came to the gate of the young woman, the maker of wine, who barred her gate of pitch and bitumen against me. But from her I had news of the journey; so then I came to Urshanabi the ferryman, and with him I crossed over the waters of death. Oh, father Utnapishtim, you who have entered the assembly of the gods, I wish to question you concerning the living and the dead, how shall I find the life for which I am searching?'
Utuapishtim said, ‘There is no permanence. Do we build a house to stand for ever, do we seal a contract to hold for all time? Do brothers divide an inheritance to keep for ever, does the flood-time of rivers endure? It is only the nymph of the dragon-fly who sheds her larva and sees the sun in his glory. From the days of old there is no permanence. The sleeping and the dead, how alike they are, they are like a painted death. What is there between the master and the servant when both have fulfilled their doom? When the Anunnaki, the judges, come together, and Mammetun the mother of destinies, together they decree the fates of men. Life and death they allot but the day of death they do not disclose.’

Then Gilgamesh said to Utnapishtim the Faraway, ‘I look at you now, Utnapishtim, and your appearance is no different from mine; there is nothing strange in your features. I thought I should find, you like a hero prepared for battle, but you he here taking your ease on your back. Tell me truly, how was it that you came to enter the company of the gods and to possess everlasting life?’ Utuapishtim said to Gilgamesh, ‘I will reveal to you a mystery, I will tell you a secret of the gods.’

**Question 1 of 3**
Following Enkidu’s death, Gilgamesh sets out on a quest for _______________.

- A. A New Home
- B. Immortality
- C. A New Best Friend
- D. Education

[Check Answer]
Chapter 5:  
THE STORY OF THE FLOOD

‘You know the city Shurrupak, it stands on the banks of Euphrates? That city grew old and the gods that were in it were old. There was Anu, lord of the firmament, their father, and warrior Enlil their counselor, Ninurta the helper, and Ennugi watcher over canals; and with them also was Ea. In those days the world teemed, the people multiplied, the world bellowed like a wild bull, and the great god was aroused by the clamour. Enlil heard the clamour and he said to the gods in council, "The uproar of mankind is intolerable and sleep is no longer possible by reason of the babel." So the gods agreed to exterminate mankind. Enlil did this, but Ea because of his oath warned me in a dream. He whispered their words to my house of reeds, "Reed-house, reed-house! Wall, O wall, hearken reed-house, wall reflect; O man of Shurrupak, son of Ubara-Tutu; tear down your house and build a boat, abandon possessions and look for life, despise worldly goods and save your soul alive. Tear down your house, I say, and build a boat. These are the measurements of the barque as you shall build her: let her beam equal her length, let her deck be roofed like the vault that covers the abyss; then take up into the boat the seed of all living creatures."

‘When I had understood I said to my lord, "Behold, what you have commanded I will honour and perform, but how shall I answer the people, the city, the elders?" Then Ea opened his mouth and said to me, his servant, "Tell them this: I have learnt that Enlil is wrathful against me, I dare no longer walk in his land nor live in his city; I will go down to the Gulf to dwell with Ea my lord. But on you he will rain down abundance, rare fish and shy wild-fowl, a rich harvest-tide. In the evening the rider of the storm will bring you wheat in torrents."
the battening and the caulking; so I handed the tiller to Puzur-Amurri the steersman, with the navigation and the care of the whole boat.

'With the first light of dawn a black cloud came from the horizon; it thundered within where Adad, lord of the storm was riding. In front over hill and plain Shullat and Hanish, heralds of the storm, led on. Then the gods of the abyss rose up; Nergal pulled out the dams of the nether waters, Ninurta the war-lord threw down the dykes, and the seven judges of hell, the Annunaki, raised their torches, lighting the land with their livid flame. A stupor of despair went up to heaven when the god of the storm turned daylight to darkness, when he smashed the land like a cup. One whole day the tempest raged, gathering fury as it went, it poured over the people like the tides of battle; a imam could not see his brother nor the people be seen from heaven. Even the gods were terrified at the flood, they fled to the highest heaven, the firmament of Ann; they crouched against the walls, cowering like curs. Then Ishtar the sweet-voiced Queen of Heaven cried out like a woman in travail: "Alas the days -of old are turned to dust because I commanded evil; why did I command thus evil in the council of all the gods? I commanded wars to destroy the people, but are they not my people, for I brought them forth? Now like the spawn of fish they float in the ocean." The great gods of heaven and of hell wept, they covered their mouths.

'For six days and six nights the winds blew, torrent and tempest and flood overwhelmed the world, tempest and flood raged together like warring hosts. When the seventh day dawned the storm from the south subsided, the sea grew calm, the, flood was stilled; I looked at the face of the world and there was silence, all mankind was turned to clay. The surface of the sea stretched as flat as a roof-top; I opened a hatch and the light fell on my face. Then I bowed low, I sat down and I wept, the tears streamed down my face, for on every side was the waste of water. I looked for land in vain, but fourteen leagues distant there appeared a mountain, and there the boat grounded; on the mountain of Nisir the boat held fast, she held fast and did not budge. One day she held, and -a second day on the mountain of Nisir she held fast and did not budge. A third day, and a fourth day she held fast on the mountain and did not budge; a fifth day and a sixth day she held fast on the mountain. When the seventh day dawned I loosed a dove and let her go. She flew away, but finding no resting-place she returned. Then I loosed a swallow, and she flew away but finding no resting-place she returned. I loosed a raven, she saw that the waters had retreated, she ate, she flew around, she cawed, and she did not come back. Then I threw everything open to the four winds, I made a sacrifice and poured out a libation on the mountain top. Seven and again seven cauldrons I set up on their stands, I heaped up wood and cane and cedar and myrtle. When the gods smelled the sweet savour, they gathered like flies over the sacrifice. Then, at last, Ishtar also came, she lifted her necklace with the jewels of heaven that once Anu had made to please her. "O you gods here present, by the lapis lazuli round my neck I shall remember these days as I remember the jewels of my throat; these last days I shall not forget. Let all the gods gather round the sacrifice, except Enlil. He shall not approach this offering, for without reflection he brought the flood; he consigned my people to destruction."

'When Enlil had come, when he saw the boat, he was wrath and swelled with anger at the gods, the host of heaven, "Has any of these mortals escaped? Not one was to have survived the destruction."
Then the god of the wells and canals Ninurta opened his mouth and said to the warrior Enlil, "Who is there of the gods that can devise without Ea? It is Ea alone who knows all things." Then Ea opened his mouth and spoke to warrior Enlil, "Wisest of gods, hero Enlil, how could you so senselessly bring down the flood?

Lay upon the sinner his sin, Lay upon the transgressor his transgression, Punish him a little when he breaks loose, Do not drive him too hard or he perishes, Would that a lion had ravaged mankind Rather than the flood, Would that a wolf had ravaged mankind Rather than the flood, Would that famine had wasted the world Rather than the flood, Would that pestilence had wasted mankind Rather than the flood.

It was not I that revealed the secret of the gods; the wise man learned it in a dream. Now take your counsel what shall be done with him."

‘Then Enlil went up into the boat, he took me by the hand and my wife and made us enter the boat and kneel down on either side, he standing between us. He touched our foreheads to bless us saying, "In time past Utnapishtim was a mortal man; henceforth he and his wife shall live in the distance at the mouth of the rivers." Thus it was that the gods took me and placed me here to live in the distance, at the mouth of the rivers.'
Chapter 6: THE RETURN

UTNAPISHTIM said, ‘As for you, Gilgamesh, who will assemble the gods for your sake, so that you may find that life for which you are searching? But if you wish, come and put into the test: only prevail against sleep for six days and seven nights.' But while Gilgamesh sat there resting on his haunches, a mist of sleep like soft wool teased from the fleece drifted over him, and Utnapishtim said to his wife, ‘Look at him now, the strong man who would have everlasting life, even now the mists of sleep are drifting over him.’ His wife replied, ‘Touch the man to wake him, so that he may return to his own land in peace, going back through the gate by which he came.’ Utnapishtim said to his wife, ‘All men are deceivers, even you he will attempt to deceive; therefore bake loaves of bread, each day one loaf, and put it beside his head; and make a mark on the wall to number the days he has slept.’

So she baked loaves of bread, each day one loaf, and put it beside his head, and she marked on the wall the days that he slept; and there came a day when the first loaf was hard, the second loaf was like leather, the third was soggy, the crust of the fourth had mould, the fifth was mildewed, the sixth was fresh, and the seventh was still on the embers. Then Utnapishtim touched him and he woke. Gilgamesh said to Utnapishtim the Faraway, ‘I hardly slept when you touched and roused me.’ But Utnapishtim said, ‘Count these loaves and learn how many days you slept, for your first is hard, your second like leather, your third is soggy, the crust of your fourth has mould, your fifth is mildewed, your sixth is fresh and your seventh was still over the glowing embers when I touched and woke you.’ Gilgamesh said, ‘What shall I do, O Utnapishtim, where shall I go? Already the thief in the night has hold of my limbs, death inhabits my room; wherever my foot rests, there I find death.’

Then Utnapishtim spoke to Urshanabi the ferryman: ‘Woe to you Urshanabi, now and for ever more you have become hateful to this harbourage; it is not for you, nor for you are the crossings of this sea. Go now, banished from the shore. But this man before whom you walked, bringing him here, whose body is covered with foulness and the grace of whose limbs has been spoiled by wild skins, take him to the washing-place. There he shall wash his long hair clean as snow in the water, he shall throw off his skins and let the sea carry them away, and the beauty of his body shall be shown, the fillet on his forehead shall be renewed, and he shall be given clothes to cover his nakedness. Till he reaches his own city and his journey is accomplished, these clothes will show no sign of age, they will wear like a new garment.’ So Urshanabi took Gilgamesh and led him to the washing-place, he washed his long hair as clean as snow in the water, he threw off his skins, which the sea carried away, and showed the beauty of his body. He renewed the fillet on his forehead, and to cover his nakedness gave him clothes which would show no sign of age, but would wear like a new garment till he reached his own city, and his journey was accomplished.

Then Gilgamesh and Urshanabi launched the boat on to the water and boarded it, and they made ready to sail away; but the wife of Utnapishtim spoke, and Gilgamesh took a pole and brought the boat in to the bank. ‘Gilgamesh, you came here wearied out, you have worn yourself out; what shall I give you to carry him back to his own country? So Utnapishtim spoke, and Gilgamesh took a pole and brought the boat in to the bank. ‘Gilgamesh, you came here a man wearied out, you have worn yourself out; what shall I give you to carry you back to your own country?'
Gilgamesh, I shall reveal a secret thing, it is a mystery of the gods that I am telling you. There is a plant that grows under the water, it has a prickle like a thorn, like a rose; it will wound your hands, but if you succeed in taking it, then your hands will hold that which restores his lost youth to a man:

When Gilgamesh heard this he opened the sluices so that a sweet water current might carry him out to the deepest channel; he tied heavy stones to his feet and they dragged him down to the water-bed. There he saw the plant growing; although it pricked him he took it in his hands; then he cut the heavy stones from his feet, and the sea carried him and threw him on to the shore. Gilgamesh said to Urshanabi the ferryman, 'Come here, and see this marvellous plant. By its virtue a man may win back all his former strength. I will take it to Uruk of the strong walls; there I will give it to the old men to eat. Its name shall be "The Old Men Are Young Again"; and at last I shall eat it myself and have back all my lost youth.' So Gilgamesh returned by the gate through which he had come, Gilgamesh and Urshanabi went together. They travelled their twenty leagues and then they broke their fast; after thirty leagues they stopped for the night.

Gilgamesh saw a well of cool water and he went down and bathed; but deep in the pool there was lying a serpent, and the serpent sensed the sweetness of the flower. It rose out of the water and snatched it away, and immediately it sloughed its skin and returned to the well. Then Gilgamesh sat down and wept, the tears ran down his face, and he took the hand of Urshanabi; 'O Urshanabi, was it for this that I toiled with my hands, is it for this I have wrung out my heart's blood? For myself I have gained nothing; not I, but the beast of the earth has joy of it now. Already the stream has carried it
twenty leagues back to the channels where I found it. I found a sign and now I have lost it. Let us leave the boat on the bank and go.'

After twenty leagues they broke their fast, after thirty leagues they stopped for the night; in three days they had walked as much as a journey of a month and fifteen days. When the journey was accomplished they arrived at Uruk, the strong-walled city. Gilgamesh spoke to him, to Urshanabi the ferryman, 'Urshanabi, climb up on to the wall of Uruk, inspect its foundation terrace, and examine well the brickwork; see if it is not of burnt bricks; and did not the seven wise men lay these foundations? One third of the whole is city, one third is garden, and one third is field, with the precinct of the goddess Ishtar. These parts and the precinct are all Uruk.'

This too was the work of Gilgamesh, the king, who knew the countries of the world. He was wise, he saw mysteries and knew secret things, he brought us a tale of the days before the flood. He went a long journey, was weary, worn out with labour, and returning engraved on a stone the whole story.

Chapter 7: 
THE DEATH OF GILGAMESH

The destiny was fulfilled which the father of the gods, Enlil of the mountain, had decreed for Gilgamesh: 'In nether-earth the darkness will show him a light: of mankind, all that are known, none will leave a monument for generations to come to compare with his. The heroes, the wise men, like the new moon have their waxing and waning. Men will say, "Who has ever ruled with might and with power like him?" As in the dark month, the month of shadows, so without him there is no light. O Gilgamesh, this was the meaning of your dream. You were given the kingship, such was your destiny, everlasting life was not your destiny. Because of this do not be sad at heart, do not be grieved or oppressed; he has given you power to bind and to loose, to be the darkness and the light of mankind. He has given unexampled supremacy over the people, victory in battle from which no fugitive returns, in forays and assaults from which there is no going back. But do not abuse this power, deal justly with your servants in the palace, deal justly before the face of the Sun.'

**Question 1 of 7**

In order for Gilgamesh to achieve immortality, what must he do?

- A. Cook a 4-course meal
- B. Stay awake
- C. Kill an evil in the world
- D. Conquer a god
The king has laid himself down and will not rise again, The Lord of Kullab will not rise again;
He overcame evil, he will not come again;
Though he was strong of arm he will not rise again;
He had wisdom and a comely face, he will not come again; He is gone into the mountain, he will not come again;
On the bed of fate he lies, he will not rise again, Front the couch of many colours he will not come again.

The people of the city, great and small, are not silent; they lift up, the lament, all men of flesh and blood lift up the lament. Fate has spoken; like a hooked fish he lies stretched on the bed, like a gazelle that is caught in a noose. Inhuman Namtar is heavy upon him, Namtar that has neither hand nor foot, that drinks no water and eats no meat.

For Gilgamesh, son of Ninsun, they weighed out their offerings; his dear wife, his son, his concubine, his musicians, his jester, and all his household; his servants, his stewards, all who lived in the palace weighed out their offerings for Gilgamesh the son of Ninsun, the heart of Uruk. They weighed out their offerings to Ereshkigal, the Queen of Death, and to all the gods of the dead. To Namtar, who is fate, they weighed out the offering. Bread for Ned the Keeper of the Gate, bread for Ningizzida the god of the serpent, the lord of the Tree of Life; for Dumuzi also, the young shepherd, for Enki and Ninki, for Endukugga and Nindukugga, for Enmul and Nimnul, all the ancestral gods, forbears of Enlil. A feast for Shulpae the god of feasting. For Samuqan, god of the herds, for die mother Ninhursag, and the gods of creation in the place of creation, for the host of heaven, priest and priestess weighed out the offering of the dead.

Gilgamesh, the son of Ninsun, lies in the tomb. At the place of offerings he weighed the bread-offering, at the place of libation he poured out the wine. In those days the lord Gilgamesh departed, the son of Ninsun, the kung, peerless, without an equal among men, who did not neglect Enlil his master. O Gilgamesh, lord of Kullab, great is thy praise.

**Review 1.7 Quick Quiz-The Death of Gilgamesh**

**Question 1 of 2**

Though initially irritated with King Gilgamesh, his people eventually took pride in his reign and mourned his death.

- A. True
- B. False
Excavating the remains of the Wall of Uruk

Excavating Uruk circa 1929-1930

The Anu Ziggurat at Uruk is a victim to time and erosion, but it is easy to imagine how it would have looked in Gilgamesh’s time.

INTERACTIVE 1.2 Ancient Noah Discovered
Nestled between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, Ancient Mesopotamia (the Sumer region) is located in modern-day Iraq. Recognized and lauded early on because of its fertile ground, the region is better known today as an international political hot-spot.

Discovered, manufactured, and even potential oil reserves have caused nations to fight over the region and its lucrative piece of the oil producing industry. With perhaps billions of barrels of oil ripe for the taking, Iraq has struggled to fight off unwanted advances by rivals.

Home to numerous international conflicts, the United States has maintained an active presence in the area, including throughout multiple Gulf Wars. The reign of Saddam Hussein brought considerable negativity to the area, though citizens who supported Hussein flourished while his opposition languished in poverty. Captured by U.S.-led forces in 2003, Hussein was executed in 2006.

A troubled region even after the death of the controversial dictatorial president, Iraq faces a multitude of human rights and environmental issues that will undoubtedly plague them long into the future.

Iraqi oil fields produce 3,400,000 per day. They are the seventh largest oil producer in the world.
Women in Anbar, Iraq Form Armed Brigade to Combat ISIS

November 13, 2014
Breitbart
By Frances Martel

The world’s richest terrorist group, the Islamic State (ISIS), has begun making strides in Iraq's Anbar province, now a new epicenter of fighting for the soul of that country. Rumors that the group's leader, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, may have been wounded in Anbar last week have not stopped the jihadist forces, and a group of women in the area are now taking up arms against them.

A report from Radio Free Europe notes that more than 50 women in the province have begun weapons training, according to sources in the group. The group is, according to Anbar Tribal Council members, going by the name Banat al-Haqq, or "Daughters of the Truth." Radio Free Europe quotes a tribal council member named Sakr Salem al-Ithawy as confirming their existence and supporting their work against “the terrorist gangs of IS.”

Radio Free Europe mentions one more report, this time from a publication called al-Qurtas News. "Girls' Right: The First Women's Power Group Forms in Anbar," the magazine writes, quoting a woman named Khansa Ahmed, who runs the province’s women’s center. The women, Ahmed says, will be working in tandem with local police authorities.

The group, which appears to be made up of Arab women, will likely need months—if not years—of training to be as effective as the Kurdish YPG, or Women's Protection Units. The Kurdish armies in Iraq, or Peshmerga, have both long allowed women to serve and trained specialty combat units made up entirely of women to fight jihadists.

There is no indication that Banat al-Haqq is a direct response to the Kurdish female forces, but instead a response to the barbaric treatment that women—Arab and Kurd alike—have received in every area where the Islamic State has managed to establish a foothold. While ISIS has made recruiting women a pivotal part of their jihad, using social media to entice young women from the West to marry a jihadist and bear children to populate the Caliphate, it has also forced these and non-Sunni women into sex slavery. Yazidi minority women have been particularly subjected to a harrowing sex trade in which they are bought and sold among the jihadists themselves.

The YPG have been especially effective in fighting the Islamic State because of their status as women. Jihadists believe that they are only properly martyred—and thus given the gifts of the afterlife—if killed at the hands of an infidel man. If a woman kills them, they lose access to Allah. Thus, jihadists either flee or fight more cautiously against the YPG than they would against the Kurdish men’s forces, the YPJ.
Banat al-Haq, or “Daughters of the Truth” rally against how women are treated in Iraq. More than fifty women in the province have begun weapons training to defend themselves from ISIS.
Yazidi Families Struggle to Find and Free Enslaved Daughters

November 13, 2014
Aljazeera-America
By Alice Su

UN condemns ‘barbaric acts’ but hits roadblocks in releasing thousands of girls still held by ISIL fighters

DOHUK, Iraqi Kurdistan — Aysha hears screams in her sleep. Nightmarish memories flash through her mind — her husband writhing on the village road, face to the ground, hands tied behind his back; 2,000 women huddled on the floor, with men prowling around them, growling words they don’t understand; a man with a deep voice approaching, saying “You are for me.” Aysha shrinks, tosses, opens her mouth to scream but hears only wails from her 1-year-old son. Faces and noises blur together. She yells for her husband, but he is far away and cannot hear. Eventually she wakes up, realizing once again that she is one of the lucky few who have escaped.

Rain leaked into the cold, unfinished house where 19-year-old Aysha, a Yazidi, lives, dripping mud onto her mat on the floor. Her son whimpered in his sleep. Aysha (who asked that her real name not be used) cradled him in one arm, rubbing her bulging belly with the other. Five of her relatives were asleep in the same room, flies buzzing at their faces as rain pounded outside the window. “One more month,” she whispered to her unborn child. “Then you will be here.” The Yazidis caught the world’s attention in August when the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) attacked the Sinjar region of northern Iraq. Some 200,000 Yazidis fled into the mountains, walking for days as the weakest died of hunger and thirst. International forces sent humanitarian supplies and attacked ISIL fighters from the air, opening a path for Kurdish militias to evacuate the Yazidis. They flooded through Syria and took shelter in tents, parks and schools in Iraqi Kurdistan.
Amid the subsequent politics of forming an international anti-ISIL coalition, few asked what happened to those Yazidis who didn’t escape.

But the captured Yazidis’ stories have come trickling and then streaming out in recent months as some manage to escape. In September the United Nations confirmed rumors flying through the Yazidi community: ISIL and associated armed groups were systematically hunting down their relatives, killing the men and abducting women and children for forced marriage, rape and slavery. The U.N. report is a litany of horrors — men massacred in the thousands, disabled people executed, shrines blown up, orphaned children under sexual assault and girls chained in markets for sale.

A month later, ISIL published its own account of sexual slavery, a swaggering explanation of why Yazidi women are “devil worshippers” who can and should be enslaved, as opposed to Jews and Christians, who can pay to keep their beliefs. “This large-scale enslavement … is probably the first since the abandonment of this Shariah,” the article boasted, and then delved into an ostensibly religious justification for use of Yazidis as sex slaves. Men are easily tempted to commit adultery with hired maids, it stated, “whereas if she were his concubine, this relationship would be legal.”

**Do All They Can**

The U.N. is monitoring and reporting on the captured Yazidis’ situation to the Security Council and the Human Rights Council. It is advocating for the Iraqi government and the international community to “do all they can to rescue these women and children” and to care for escapees, said Francesco Motta, a representative of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights in Iraq, in an email.

U.N. officers declined to specify what “do all they can” means, explaining that their mandate does not include military or political action. The Secretary General’s special representative on sexual violence in conflict, Zainab Hawa Bangura, and special representative for Iraq, Nickolay Mladenov, made a joint statement condemning the “barbaric acts” and urging all parties to protect civilians.

Although the Kurdish parliament sent a formal delegation to the Hague asking for recognition of ISIL’s actions as genocide, the request was rejected on grounds that Iraq is not a member of the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Membership would be the “first step” toward international recognition of Yazidi genocide, said Kurdish Iraqi Prime Minister Zana Rostayi. Also, it might spur international accountability for the former Iraqi regime’s anti-Kurdish campaign and chemical attacks in the 1980s, not to mention a host of ongoing human rights violations against civilians committed by the Iraqi Security Forces and affiliated forces. As long as both government and nonstate armed groups continue to violate international law, Iraqi accession to the ICC is unlikely.

In the meantime, who can rescue the captured Yazidis? Helgurd Hikmet, a representative from the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs for the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), said his forces’ priority is not targeted rescue but liberation of entire ISIL-held areas.

“We must save the women, children, all the people there, and the land,” he said. “There are thousands of displaced people in Kurdistan. We must free the cities so people can go back and
live there.”

A rescue mission might have been possible in August, when many of the abductees were concentrated in cities like Tal Afar and Mosul. But now the Yazidi women are spread out, sold by ISIL into private households across swaths of Iraq and Syria.

“Logically speaking, these women are scattered in ISIL houses across wide geographic areas, from Sinjar and Mosul up to Raqqa and the middle of Syria,” said U.N. Population Fund program analyst Solav Mustafa. “We are talking about thousands. Can you imagine a military action that could save these women? Who even knows where they are?”

According to Mustafa, some Yazidis are negotiating with heads of tribes from Mosul and other ISIL areas to buy back enslaved family members. “They are trying all the ways in order to bring back their daughters,” she said.

On Nov. 4 the Kurdish government announced having paid $1.5 million to intermediaries who helped 234 Yazidis escape. “We are not paying any money to the Islamic State,” KRG official Nuri Osman told Kurdish news outlet Rudaw. “We pay the people who are helping us, and it doesn’t matter to us whether they buy them from the Islamic State.”

Yazidi activist Khidher Domle clarified that the KRG reimburses local Yazidi committees, who pay middlemen in ISIL territory providing temporary protection and transportation to escaped Yazidis. “We never pay to buy a woman back from [ISIL],” Domle said of indirect efforts to rescue people from ISIL. “But there are still good people in Mosul who help us. They protect women who run away.”

U.N. officers, Kurdish MPs, international human rights workers and Yazidi leaders alike rejected the idea of direct negotiation with ISIL. “Their only means of negotiation is the sword,” said one U.N. employee who asked to remain anonymous, adding that there can be no reasoning with a barbarian group that brutalizes civilians in the name of God.

“It’s completely inhuman,” he said. “There is no jihad by the name of sex slavery.”

**Sexual Stigma**

Many parties are trying to track the kidnapped and escaped Yazidis, but their efforts are disparate and uncoordinated. Meanwhile, the Kurdish government’s special committee on Yazidi refugees and escapees issues numbers for those who have fled. “Everyone is trying to do something but has no idea what the others
are doing,” said Mustafa.

The result is redundancy at the advocacy level and disillusionment from the girls who have escaped. Aysha said she has told her story to several journalists and NGO workers who promised they were there to help. A few of them gave her some money, she said, about $300 altogether.

The special sensitivity of sexual abuse makes rescue efforts difficult to coordinate. The escaped girls are not only physically wounded and mentally traumatized but also vulnerable to public shame that can lead to further violence. Early in the conflict, U.N. agencies set up a 24/7 hotline in Dohuk, wanting to publicize the number and provide medical services, shelters and specialized trauma counseling for escaped women. But the Dohuk Directorate of Health asked the U.N. to stay out.

“This is a strict society where sexual stigma has serious cultural and social consequences,” said Dr. Bakhtiyar Ahmed, head of the directorate’s technical department. He said his team provides immediate medical care, psychosocial support and any other services to the women, but he would not identify locations or aid providers.

“We prefer to keep this completely confidential. Refer any escaped women to us, and we will give them directions,” he said. “We do not want their trauma used for other sensational or political purposes.”

As a result of the high level of sensitivity, many women do not know about available services. Saad Babir, a doctor who recently spent 10 days on Sinjar mountain attending to sick Yazidis and injured fighters, said 16 escaped women from Tal Afar arrived while he was there.

When asked if he referred them to medical or psychosocial services in Dohuk, he scoffed. “There aren’t any places that help those girls,” said the doctor, who volunteered through the Directorate of Health. “The government doesn’t care. There’s no real place to go.”

According to Babir, the women weren’t even told the fate of their loved ones.

“We knew the women’s families had been killed, but we told them they’d only been captured,” he said. “They were already traumatized enough.”

Aysha said she had never received or heard of free assistance for victims of sexual violence. But she wasn’t seeking it. Since escaping a month ago, she went to a doctor to check on the pregnancy but didn’t mention anything about having been in ISIL captivity. “There are so many sick people. He doesn’t have time for more stories about suffering,” she said.

Luma, a doctor and sexual violence specialist in Dohuk who asked to be identified by first name only, said most women would not come forward for help. “The problem is not finding them,” Luma said. “The problem is convincing them to come and follow instructions when they don’t want to talk about the subject at all.”

When the U.N. had its 24/7 hotline, only one or two cases were identified over two weeks of service, according to UNHCR protection officer Nabeela Sweisat. All the escapees interviewed for this article said they hadn’t been sexually abused, although all said they knew other women who were. Many of them had male relatives in the room who interrupted to say, “She is clean.”

Iraq’s displacement crisis is dire. Many Yazidis are living without blankets or roofs, and winter rains have begun. The girls run away from rape only to live under plastic tarps, nameless and shamed among 1.9 million newly displaced people, more than half
of whom do not have basic food, water and shelter. Aid workers
told Human Rights Watch that three escaped Yazidi women at-
ttempted suicide in the displaced people’s camps since August.
One of them succeeded.

“In this whole conflict, it’s the women who have paid more and
more,” said Mustafa. “They are used like wood for a fire.” Amid all
the horrors of this crisis, the Yazidi women’s plight must be espe-
cially addressed, she said. Those who talk to these girls must not
only take their stories but also refer them to the groups that can
help before it’s too late.

Aysha seems to have given up on obtaining help. She refuses to ap-
proach the service providers in Dohuk, even when told they will
maintain confidentiality and offer free help.

“I’d rather stay at home,” she repeated. Her baby is coming,
and she’s tired.

“Write my story if you want,” she said, “but nothing will hap-
pen.” She turned toward the window and watched the rain, rocking
back and forth, eyes glazing over, alone.

Above: Map indicating movement of the Yazidis following pres-
sure from ISIL.

Left: Yazidi children in Dohuk.
Mideast Water Wars: In Iraq, A Battle for Control of Water

August 25, 2014
Yale Environment 360
By Frank Pearce

Conflicts over water have long haunted the Middle East. Yet in the current fighting in Iraq, the major dams on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers are seen not just as strategic targets but as powerful weapons of war.

There is a water war going on in the Middle East this summer. Behind the headline stories of brutal slaughter as Sunni militants carve out a religious state covering Iraq and Syria, there lies a battle for the water supplies that sustain these desert nations. Blood is being spilled to capture the giant dams that control the region's two great rivers, the Tigris and Euphrates. These structures hold back vast volumes of water. With their engineers fleeing as the Islamic State (ISIS) advances, the danger is that the result could be catastrophe — either deliberate or accidental.

"Managing water works along the Tigris and Euphrates requires a highly specialized skill set, but there is no indication that the Islamic State possesses it," says Russell Sticklor, a water researcher for the CGIAR, a global agricultural research partnership, who has followed events closely.

The stakes are especially high since the Islamic State's capture earlier this month of the structurally unstable Mosul Dam on the Tigris, which Iraqi and Kurdish forces, supported by U.S. air-strikes, succeeded in retaking last week. Without constant repair work, say engineers, the Mosul Dam could collapse and send a wall of water downstream, killing tens of thousands of people.

Fights over water have pervaded the Middle East for a long time now. Water matters at least as much as land. It is at the heart of the siege of Gaza – the River Jordan is the big prize for Israel and the Palestinians. And over the years, water has brought Iraq, Syria and Turkey close to war over their shared rivers, the Euphrates and Tigris.

The Islamic State's quest for hydrological control began in Syria, when it captured the Tabqa Dam in 2013.

The Euphrates flows out of Turkey, and through Syria and into Iraq, before entering the Persian Gulf via the Mesopotamian marshes. The Tigris rises further east in Turkey and flows through territory currently controlled by the Kurdish army in Iraq. There, it follows a parallel path to the Euphrates before the two rivers mingle their waters in the southern marshes.

The two rivers water a region long known as the "Fertile Crescent," which sustained ancient Mesopotamian civilizations. They were the first rivers to be used for large-scale irrigation, beginning about 7500 years ago. The first water war was also recorded here, when the king of Umma cut the banks of irrigation canals alongside the Euphrates dug by his neighbor, the king of Girsu.

Not much has changed. The dependence persists, and so do the disputes. The main difference today is that the diversion dams are bigger, and supply hydroelectric power as well as water. And that is why in recent months, many of the key battles in Iraq's civil war have been over large dams.

The Islamic State's quest for hydrological control began in northern Syria, where in early 2013, it captured the old Russian-built Tabqa Dam, which barricades the Euphrates as it flows out of Turkey. The dam, which is the world's largest earthen dam,
is a major source of water and electricity for five million people, including Syria’s largest city Aleppo. It also irrigates a thousand square kilometers of farmland.

The Islamic State’s control of the Tabqa Dam has been haphazard, to say the least. In May, the reservoir behind it, Lake Assad, dramatically emptied. Many blamed Turkey for holding Euphrates water back behind its own dams upstream. But the Arab news service Al Jazeera quoted engineers at the dam as saying that their new masters had ordered them to maximize the supply of electricity. That required emptying the reservoir’s water through the dam’s hydroelectric turbines.

Since late May, the Islamic State has been trying to refill the reservoir by rationing electricity from the dam, with blackouts in Aleppo for 16 to 20 hours a day. Meanwhile, other fighting groups have shut down a water pumping station, cutting off clean water supplies for a million people in Aleppo. The UN’s under-secretary for humanitarian affairs, Valerie Amos, condemned this as a “flagrant violation of international law.”

From the Tabqa Dam, the Euphrates flows downstream through Iraq. Close to Baghdad, in the center of the country, it meets the Fallujah Dam, which diverts water for massive irrigation projects that produce the crops that feed the country. In early April, Islamic State forces captured the dam. Reports of what happened next are confused, but it appears that the troops immediately shut the dam and stopped flow downstream.

This left towns such as Karbala and Najaf, a Shiite holy city 160 kilometers away, without water. But it also caused the reservoir behind the dam to overflow east, flooding some 500 square kilometers of farmland and thousands of homes as far as Abu Ghraib, about 40 kilometers away on the outskirts of Baghdad.

Later, the rebels reopened the dam, causing flooding downstream.

This mayhem may have been a simple failure by Islamic State fighters to understand the hydrology of the river and the consequences of how it operated the dam. It may initially have been an attempt to deprive Shiite communities downstream of water. But Ariel Ahram, a security analyst at Virginia Tech University, suggests the eastward flooding was a deliberate act to repel Iraqi government forces attempting to retake the dam.
The UN secretary-general’s special representative in Iraq, Nickolay Mladenov, called the flooding deliberate, and demanded the restoration of “legitimate” control of the river. The Iraqi government says it has since recaptured the Fallujah Dam. But the conflict in the area continues, and events remain very worrying for anyone downstream.

But the battle for the Fallujah Dam may be a sideshow compared to that for much bigger Haditha Dam, further upstream on the Euphrates. This is the first Iraqi structure on the river after it flows out of Syria. At eight kilometers across, it is Iraq’s second largest dam. It regulates the river for the whole of Iraq, providing the majority of water for irrigation, as well as generating a third of the country’s electricity. It keeps the lights on in Baghdad.

Islamic State fighters controls nearby towns, and in recent weeks have launched repeated offensives to capture the Haditha Dam, which the Iraqi government is equally determined to hold onto. “If the dam fell, then a large source of electricity for the capital could be shut down,” says Sticklor.

If the Sunni rebels want to use water as a weapon of war against the Shiite south of the country, the Haditha Dam would be a potent weapon. “They could disrupt downstream flow, either by withholding water or releasing a wall of floodwater, as they did from Fallujah this spring,” says Sticklor. “It would have a potentially crippling effect on food production and economic activity in central and southern parts of the country.”

It could also be lethal. The water behind Haditha has long been recognized as a potential weapon of war. In late June, employees at the dam told the New York Times that Iraqi government generals were prepared to open the floodgates against Islamic State forces rather than giving up the dam.

A decade ago, invading U.S. troops made the Haditha Dam their first target, fearing that Saddam Hussein would release a catastrophic flood. (He had a history of making hydrological war. After the first Gulf War, he built huge earthworks to divert both the Tigris and Euphrates away from the Mesopotamian marshes, where rebellious Shiites were hiding.)

The Islamic State fighters have also at times gained control of the other great river, the Tigris. Early on in their offensive, they grabbed the Samarra Barrage, just upstream of Baghdad, which diverts water to fields for irrigation. Messing that up could cripple the country’s breadbasket.

Much worse could happen at the Mosul Dam, which Iraqi and Kurdish forces recaptured from the rebels last week. That dam is the largest in Iraq. It barricades the Tigris about 40 kilometers upstream of Mosul, Iraq’s second largest city. Living downstream of the Mosul Dam on the River Tigris looks particularly risky right now.

The Mosul Dam is an engineering disaster waiting to happen. Back in 2007, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers called it “the most dangerous dam in the world.” Its foundations are built on porous gypsum that is constantly being dissolved by water in the reservoir, creating sinkholes that threaten the structural integrity of the dam.

In 2011, the Iraqi government decided to let a two billion Euro contract to the Bauer Group, a Germany-based engineering company, to make the dam safe by constructing underground walls around its foundations. But the scheme has been on hold ever since, because of what the company has called the “political disturbances.” Nor is there progress on a plan to build another dam a little way downstream as a safety net to catch any moving
wall of floodwater.

Despite the concerns, Iraqi government engineers have so far managed to keep the Mosul Dam working and the reservoir behind it full. To keep it intact, they have worked around the clock for years, pouring tens of thousands of tons of cement into grouting holes beneath the dam.

Last week, I contacted an Iraqi civil engineer, Nadhir Al-Ansari, now based at the Lulea University of Technology in Sweden, who had been planning to visit the dam this month to check on its state. He told me: “I had to cancel the trip. I tried to call the director of the dam on his personal mobile and there is no answer.”

The reservoir can hold more than 11 cubic kilometers of water. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ report cited a 2004 study by Mark Wheeler of the U.S.-based engineering firm Black and Veatch that predicted a failure of the dam would flood Mosul city within three hours. The flood wave would peak at 20 meters high. Within 72 hours, it would hit Baghdad, still about four meters high.

Despite such disasters in the making, many more dams are on the drawing boards. The Kurds want to complete the half-built Bekhme Dam on a tributary of the Tigris in Iraq close to the Turkish border. At 230 meters high, it would be the largest yet in Iraq. And both Turkey and Iran are capturing even more of the flows of rivers that drain into Iraq, with Turkey building dams on both the Tigris and Euphrates.

Last month British researchers Furat Al-Faraj and Miklas Scholz of the University of Salford reported the demise of the Diyala River. Called the Sirwan in Iran, it is a major tributary of the Tigris, watering crops east of Baghdad. But in the past 15 years, the Iranians have reduced its flow by more than half. And worse is to come in 2018, when the Iranians plan to complete a new dam. The Karkeh River once helped fill the Mesopotamian marshes. But Iran now takes so much of its water for irrigation that the river rarely crosses the border.

This dam-building flies in the face of growing evidence that the entire region is becoming drier. As the rivers empty, the temptation to fight over what remains can only grow. It is a true tragedy of the commons. Below average rainfall has persisted for almost a decade now. Less rainfall combined with water diversions have reduced the flow of both the Tigris and Euphrates by more than 40 percent in recent years, says Al-Ansari. Some analysts say that the intense drought of 2007-2009, and the resulting failed crops, helped trigger Syria’s civil war by creating social breakdown as farmers became refugees and food prices soared in cities.

Japanese and Israeli climatologists predicted in 2009 that the drought is likely to be permanent and the Fertile Crescent, which has sustained the region for thousands of years, “will disappear this century.”
Water as a weapon of war

The militant Islamic group ISIS now has control over the flow of both of Iraq's major rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates.
EGYPTIAN POETRY

Pastoral Poetry--The word *pastoral* comes from the Latin word for shepherd--*pastor*, however, pastoral poetry is about far more than shepherds and sheep. Pastoral poetry is rooted in the simple pleasures of rural life. This simplicity, according to Barris Mills, “invites us to forget for a while man’s destiny...and to indulge ourselves in a daydream of rustic simplicity and romantic love.”

Though the focus of pastoral poetry is simple in nature, it was typically authored by sophisticated, well-cultured Egyptians. Pastoral poetry is often considered a version of escapist literature because Egyptian socialites could read the simplistic verses and “escape” from their daily lives and temporarily live in an untroubled pastoral world.

Over its illustrious history, the state of Egypt was continuously in flux. The New Kingdom (1570-1085 BC) in Egypt strove to increase the kingdom’s influence on the rest of the known world. This era included significant expansion of the kingdom. Women were treated as valuable citizens, equal to their male counterparts, and the sophisticated legal system in existence allowed men and women to own property, initiate a lawsuit, and divorce their spouse. With the amount of options available to citizens, it is not shocking that they craved the simplistic lifestyles described by pastoral poems.
YOUR LOVE, DEAR MAN, IS AS LOVELY TO ME

Your love, dear man, is as lovely to me
As sweet soothing oil to the limbs of the restless,
   as clean ritual robes to the flesh of gods,
As fragrance of incense to one coming home
   hot from the smells of the street.

It is like nipple-berries ripe in the hand,
   like the tang of grainmeal mingled with beer,
Like wine to the palate when taken with white bread.

   While unhurried days come and go,
Let us turn to each other in quiet affection,
   walk in peace to the edge of old age,
And I shall be with you each unhurried day,
   a woman given her one wish: to see
For a lifetime the face of her lord.
I THINK I’LL GO HOME AND LIE VERY STILL

I think I’ll go home and lie very still, feeing terminal illness. Then the neighbors will all troop over to stare, my love, perhaps, among them. How she’ll smile while the specialists snarl in their teeth!—

she perfectly well knows what ails me.

Reader Response: Have you ever known anyone who felt love-sick? Describe the symptoms of this “disease.”
Thinking About Egyptian Poetry

“Your Love, Dear Man, Is as Lovely to Me”

1. What is the mood of this poem? Identify specific words that contribute to this mood.

2. This poem is filled with similes--figurative comparisons between unlike things. What inferences do you make about the speaker based on the things to which the author compares her love?

3. In what ways is this poem timeless? In what ways is it rooted in a specific time and place?

“I Think I’ll Go Home and Lie Very Still”

1. In “I Think I’ll Go Home and Lie Very Still,” why will the speaker’s love smile when she sees him lying “very still”?

2. What role does irony--the difference between appearance and reality--play in this poem?
“Poetry can be dangerous, especially beautiful poetry, because it gives the illusion of having had the experience without actually going through it.”

~Rumi, The Book of Love: Poems of Ecstasy and Longing
Over 800 million people in the world today follow the religion of Islam. Spreading from Morocco on the Atlantic Ocean to the island of Mindanao in the Pacific and from the tropical forests of West Africa to the arid steppes of Central Asia, Muslims comprise a mosaic of cultures and a myriad of linguistic groups. Yet, for most of their 1500 years as a religious community, Muslims have relied almost entirely on two languages to express their ideas and record their history. These languages are Persian and Arabic.

The Persian Empire was huge; it stretched from the border of India to Asia Minor and from the edge of Egypt to the coasts of the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. In an effort to manage the vast empire, early Persians divided the landmass into twenty provinces, each with its own local government responsible for collecting taxes and managing the area from day to day. Persians built a system of interconnecting roads which allowed people to travel easily between provinces. Aiding people, especially messengers, to travel more quickly, the Persians created relay stations--or rest stops--where one could pick up a fresh horse and continue traveling.

Despite the vastness of the empire and its societal improvements, the Persian empire only lasted about two centuries. Numerous failed attempts to conquer Greece left the empire weakened. In 331BC, Alexander the Great and his armies conquered Persia.
Religion in Persia

Popularized by Zarathustra, Zoroastrianism would remain a prominent religion in Persia even after the fall of the empire. Dating back to the seventh century BC, Zoroastrianism became the official state religion around 500BC. Boasting a dualistic philosophy, Zoroastrianism taught that the world is monitored by two opposing gods: Ahura Mazda, the god of goodness, wisdom, and truth; and Ahriman, the god of all things evil. Followers of the religion chose which god to emulate their lives after and were rewarded aptly for their behavior while they lived.

Originating in the sixth century AD, Islam filtered across the empire and became the dominant religion still practiced today. Muhammad, the founder of Islam, was born in Mecca in AD572. When Muhammad was forty, he began receiving revelations from Allah (God) and assumed the role as his prophet on Earth. Muhammad would receive revelations throughout the remainder of his life. Fearing what would happen following the prophet's death, his followers copied the revelations down and organized them into what we now call the Koran.

Muhammad's message throughout the Koran encouraged people to remain just and pious, and to live their lives in relation to these values. This message maintained wide-appeal, and people converted to Islam in large numbers. By the time Muhammad died in AD632, all of Arabia was united as the nation of Islam. As Arab armies conquered nations near and far, the number of Muslims in the world continued to increase. Arab leaders did not force conversion of conquered peoples, but instead embraced the traditions of the new people. The blending of cultures and traditions helped establish a diverse civilization. Because Arabic was the official language of Islam, it became the dominant language spoken throughout the empire.

Persian and Arabic Literature

As a result of the blending of traditions and cultures following the conquering of new lands, Persian and Arabic literature was vast and included a broad cross-section of poetry and prose.

In addition to an extensive collection of scholarly works, Arabs also enjoyed creating and reading fables and folk tales. One of the most famous collections of these stories is The Thousand and One Nights. Bridging East and West, this collection has garnered fans that span the globe and thousands of years. Due to its popularity, The Thousand and One Nights is considered the most famous Arabic work of literature.

Ethics and morals were also popular topics to write about. Persian writers were well-known for their poetry. Sa’di and Hafiz were popular authors who wrote books of verse encouraging the public to live virtuous lives and for the government to do the same.

Epic poems covering Persian history were also quite popular. The most famous of these, the Shah-nama, written by Firdawsi, is still read today. Other types of poetry gained a global audience because of their timely messages. The Rubaiyat, a collection of poetry written by Omar Khayyam, was written using short, four-line stanzas called “rubai.” Not considered as elegant as the epic poetry of the time period, Khayyam was not highly regarded by his peers; however, following his death, The Rubaiyat would go on to claim a near cult-like following throughout the twentieth century.
INTERACTIVE 2.1 Iran—Behind the Veil (with National Geographic)
THE RUBAIYAT

One of the most well-known poets in the West, Omar Khayyam was also an accomplished scientist and mathematician. Though the exact date of his birth is unknown, by 1075 he was already a recognized mathematician. At this time, Khayyam was tasked with reforming the Persian calendar; a job reserved for specialists within the mathematics field. Khayyam was also famous for his work in philosophy, history, law, and astrology. In recent times, however, Khayyam has been celebrated for his poetry—specifically for *The Rubaiyat*. Although Khayyam did not write the majority of the poems included in the work, he is still considered its original author though other writers have continued to add to the piece.

The oldest known copy of *The Rubaiyat* dates back to 1457 and contains 131 poems; whereas an edition published in 1894 contains 770 poems. Though so few of the poems were actually written by Khayyam, the translation of the work by Edward Fitzgerald enabled generations of English-speaking readers to enjoy the vivid poems. Fitzgerald was less concerned with textual accuracy when translating and more concerned with capturing the original spirit of the poems. The poem is written using a series of four-line stanzas called *rubais* (hence the title of the work) and follows an AABA rhyme scheme.

The main topics addressed in *The Rubaiyat* are philosophical and religious in nature. Khayyam questions the fleeting nature of life and encourages readers to celebrate each moment and live fully, for one does not know when life will end. *The Rubaiyat* conveys Khayyam’s pessimism and his awareness of the preciousness every moment of a person’s life.
I Wake! For the Sun, who scatter'd into flight
The Stars before him from the Field of Night,
Drives Night along with them from Heav'n,
and strikes The Sultan’s Turret with a Shaft of Light.

Before the phantom of False morning died,
Methought a Voice within the Tavern cried,
"When all the Temple is prepared within,
Why nods the drowsy Worshipper outside?"

And, as the Cock crew, those who stood before
The Tavern shouted:
"Open then the Door! You know how little while we have to stay.
And, once departed, may return no more."

Now the New Year reviving old Desires,
The thoughtful Soul to Solitude retires,
Where the White Hand Of Moses on the Bough Puts out, and Jesus from the Ground suspires.

Iram indeed is gone with all his Rose,
And Jamshyd’s Seven-ringed Cup where no one knows;
But still a Ruby kindles in the Vine,
And many a Garden by the Water blows.

And David’s lips are lockt; but in divine High-piping Pehlevi, with
"Wine! Wine! Wine! Red Wine!"--the Nightingale cries to the Rose
That sallow cheek of hers t’ incarnadine.

Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring
Your Winter-garment of Repentance fling:
The Bird of Time has but a little way
To flutter--and the Bird is on the Wing.

The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam
VIII Whether at Naishapur or Babylon, Whether the Cup with sweet or bitter run, The Wine of Life keeps oozing drop by drop, The Leaves of Life keep falling one by one.

IX Each Morn a thousand Roses brings, you say; Yes, but where leaves the Rose of Yesterday? And this first Summer month that brings the Rose Shall take Jamshyd and Kaikobad away.

X Well, let it take them! What have we to do With Kaikobad the Great, or Kaikhosru? Let Zal and Rustum bluster as they will, Or Hātim call to Supper--heed not you

XI With me along the strip of Herbage strown That just divides the desert from the sown, Where name of Slave and Sultan is forgot--And Peace to Mahmud on his golden Throne!

XII A Book of Verses underneath the Bough, A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread--and Thou Beside me singing in the Wilderness--Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!

XIII Some for the Glories of This World; and some Sigh for the Prophet's Paradise to come; Ah, take the Cash, and let the Credit go, Nor heed the rumble of a distant Drum!

XIV Look to the blowing Rose about us--"Lo, Laughing," she says, "into the world I blow, At once the silken tassel of my Purse Tear, and its Treasure on the Garden throw."

XV And those who husbanded the Golden grain, And those who flung it to the winds like Rain, Alike to no such aureate Earth are turn'd As, buried once, Men want dug up again.

XVI The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon Turns Ashes--or it prospers; and anon, Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face, Light-ing a little hour or two--is gone.
XVII  Think, in this batter’d Caravanserai  Whose Portals are alternate Night and Day,  How Sultan after Sultan with his Pomp  Abode his destined Hour, and went his way.

XVIII  They say the Lion and the Lizard keep  The Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep:  And Bahram, that great Hunter--the Wild Ass  Stamps o'er his Head, but cannot break his Sleep.

XIX  I sometimes think that never blows so red  The Rose as where some buried Caesar bled;  That every Hyacinth the Garden wears  Dropt in her Lap from some once lovely Head.

XX  And this reviving Herb whose tender Green  Fledges the River-Lip on which we lean--  Ah, lean upon it lightly! for who knows  From what once lovely Lip it springs unseen!

XXI  Ah, my Belov'ed fill the Cup that clears  To-day Past Regrets and Future Fears:  To-morrow!--Why, To-morrow I may be  Myself with Yesterday’s Sev’n Thousand Years.

XXII  For some we loved, the loveliest and the best  That from his Vintage rolling Time hath prest,  Have drunk their Cup a Round or two before,  And one by one crept silently to rest.

XXIII  And we, that now make merry in the Room  They left, and Summer dresses in new bloom  Ourselves must we beneath the Couch of Earth  Descend--ourselves to make a Couch--for whom?
XXIV  Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,  Before we too into the Dust descend;  Dust into Dust, and under Dust to lie  Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and--sans End!

XXV  Alike for those who for To-day prepare,  And those that after some To-morrow stare,  A Muezzin from the Tower of Darkness cries "Fools! your Reward is neither Here nor There."

XXVI  Why, all the Saints and Sages who discuss’d  Of the Two Worlds so wisely--they are thrust  Like foolish Prophets forth; their Words to Scorn  Are scatter’d, and their Mouths are stopt with Dust.

XXVII  Myself when young did eagerly frequent  Doctor and Saint,  and heard great argument  About it and about: but evermore  Came out by the same door where in I went.

XXVIII  With them the seed of Wisdom did I sow,  And with mine own hand wrought to make it grow;  And this was all the Harvest that I re-ap’d--  "I came like Water, and like Wind I go."

XXIX  Into this Universe, and Why not knowing  Nor Whence, like Water willy-nilly flowing;  And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,  I know not Whither, willy-nilly blowing.

XXX  What, without asking, hither hurried Whence? And, without asking, Whither hurried hence! Oh, many a Cup of this forbidden Wine Must drown the memory of that insolence!
XXXI Up from Earth's Centre through the Seventh Gate rose, and on the Throne of Saturn sate; And many a Knot unravel'd by the Road; But not the Master-knot of Human Fate.

XXXII There was the Door to which I found no Key; There was the Veil through which I might not see: Some little talk awhile of Me and Thee There was--and then no more of Thee and Me.

XXXIII Earth could not answer; nor the Seas that mourn In flowing Purple, of their Lord forlorn; Nor rolling Heaven, with all his Signs reveal'd And hidden by the sleeve of Night and Morn.

XXXIV Then of the Thee in Me works behind The Veil, I lifted up my hands to find A Lamp amid the Darkness; and I heard, As from Without--"The Me Within Thee Blind!"

XXXV Then to the lip of this poor earthen Urn I lean'd, the Secret of my Life to learn: And Lip to Lip it murmur'd--"While you live Drink!--for, once dead, you never shall return."

XXXVI I think the Vessel, that with fugitive Articulation answer'd, once did live, And drink; and Ah! the passive Lip I kiss'd, How many Kisses might it take--and give!

XXXVII For I remember stopping by the way To watch a Potter thumping his wet Clay: And with its all-obliterated Tongue It murmur'd--"Gently, Brother, gently, pray!"
XXXVIII  And has not such a Story from of Old  Down Man's successive generations roll'd  Of such a clod of saturated Earth  Cast by the Maker into Human mould?

XXXIX  And not a drop that from our Cups we throw  For Earth to drink of, but may steal below  To quench the fire of Anguish in some Eye  There hidden--far beneath, and long ago.

XL  As then the Tulip for her morning sup  Of Heav'nly Vintage from the soil looks up  Do you devoutly do the like, till Heav'n invert you--like an empty Cup.

XLI  Perplext no more with Human or Divine,  To-morrow's tangle to the winds resign,  And lose your fingers in the tresses of  The Cypress--slender Minister of Wine.

XLII  And if the Wine you drink, the Lip you press  End in what All begins and ends in--Yes;  Think then you are To-day what Yesterday You were--To-morrow You shall not be less.

XLIII  So when that Angel of the darker Drink  At last shall find you by the river-brink,  And, offering his Cup, invite your Soul Forth to your Lips to quaff--you shall not shrink.

XLIV  Why, if the Soul can fling the Dust aside,  And naked on the Air of Heaven ride,  Were't not a Shame--were't not a Shame for him  In this clay carcase crippled to abide?
XLV 'Tis but a Tent where takes his one day's rest A Sultan to the realm of Death addrest; The Sultan rises, and the dark Ferrash Strikes, and prepares it for another Guest.

XLVI And fear not lest Existence closing your Account, and mine, should know the like no more; The Eternal Saki from that Bowl has pour'd Millions of Bubbles like us, and will pour.

XLVII When You and I behind the Veil are past, Oh, but the long, long while the World shall last, Which of our Coming and Departure heeds As the Sea's self should heed a pebble-cast.

XLVIII A Moment's Halt--a momentary taste Of Being from the Well amid the Waste-- And Lo!--the phantom Caravan has reach'd The Nothing it set out from--Oh, make haste!

XLIX Would you that spangle of Existence spend About the Secret--Quick about it, Friend! A Hair perhaps divides the False and True-- And upon what, prithee, may life depend?

LI A Hair perhaps divides the False and True; Yes; and a single Alif were the clue-- Could you but find it--to the Treasure-house, And peradventure to The Master too;

LII Whose secret Presence, through Creation's veins Running Quicksilver-like eludes your pains; Taking all shapes from Mah to Mahi; and They change and perish all--but He remains;
LII A moment guess'd--then back behind the Fold Immerst of Darkness round the Drama roll'd Which, for the Pastime of Eternity, He doth Himself contrive, enact, behold.

LIII But if in vain, down on the stubborn floor Of Earth, and up to Heav'n's unopening Door You gaze To-day, while You are You--how then To-morrow, You when shall be You no more?

LIV Waste not your Hour, nor in the vain pursuit Of This and That endeavour and dispute; Better be jocund with the fruitful Grape Than sadden after none, or bitter, Fruit.

LV You know, my Friends, with what a brave Carouse I made a Second Marriage in my house; Divorced old barren Reason from my Bed And took the Daughter of the Vine to Spouse.

LVI For "Is" and "Is-not" though with Rule and Line And "Up" and "Down" by Logic I define, Of all that one should care to fathom, Was never deep in anything but--Wine.

LVII Ah, but my Computations, People say, Reduced the Year to better reckoning?--Nay 'Twas only striking from the Calendar Unborn To-morrow, and dead Yesterday.

LVIII And lately, by the Tavern Door agape, Came shining through the Dusk an Angel Shape Bearing a Vessel on his Shoulder; and He bid me taste of it; and 'twas--the Grape!
LIX The Grape that can with Logic absolute
The Two-and-Seventy jarring Sects confute:
The sovereign Alchemist that in a trice
Life's leaden metal into Gold transmute:

LX The mighty Mahmud, Allah-breathing Lord
That all the misbelieving and black Horde
Of Fears and Sorrows that infest the Soul
Scatters before him with his whirlwind Sword.

LXI Why, be this Juice the growth of God, who dare
Blaspheme the twisted tendril as a Snare?
A Blessing, we should use it, should we not?
And if a Curse--why, then, Who set it there?

LXII I must abjure the Balm of Life, I must,
Scared by some After-reckoning ta'en on trust,
Or lured with Hope of some Diviner Drink,
To fill the Cup--when crumbled into Dust!

LXIII Oh, threats of Hell and Hopes of Paradise!
One thing at least is certain--This Life flies;
One thing is certain and the rest is Lies;
The Flower that once has blown for ever dies.

LXIV Strange, is it not? that of the myriads who
Before us pass’d the door of Darkness through,
Not one returns to tell us of the Road,
Which to discover we must travel too.

LXV The Revelations of Devout and Learn’d
Who rose before us, and as Prophets burn’d,
Are all but Stories, which, awoke from Sleep,
They told their comrades, and to Sleep return’d.
LXVI  I sent my Soul through the Invisible,  Some letter of that After-life to spell:  And by and by my Soul return'd to me,  And answer'd "I Myself am Heav'n and Hell."

LXVII  Heav'n but the Vision of fulfill'd Desire,  And Hell the Shadow from a Soul on fire,  Cast on the Darkness into which Ourselves,  So late emerged from, shall so soon expire.

LXVIII  We are no other than a moving row  Of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go  Round with the Sun-illumined Lantern held  In Midnight by the Master of the Show;

LXIX  But helpless Pieces of the Game He plays  Upon this Chequer-board of Nights and Days;  Hither and thither moves, and checks, and slays,  And one by one back in the Closet lays.

LXX  The Ball no question makes of Ayes and Noes,  But Here or There as strikes the Player goes;  And He that toss'd you down into the Field,  He knows about it all--He knows--HE knows!

LXXI  The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,  Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit  Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,  Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.
LXXII And that inverted Bowl they call the Sky, Where under crawling coop’d we live and die, Lift not your hands to It for help—for It As impotently moves as you or I.

LXXIII With Earth's first Clay They did the Last Man knead, And there of the Last Harvest sow’d the Seed: And the first Morning of Creation wrote What the Last Dawn of Reckoning shall read.

LXXIV Yesterday This Day's Madness did prepare; To-morrow's Silence, Triumph, or Despair: Drink! for you know not whence you came, nor why: Drink! for you know not why you go, nor where.

LXXV I tell you this—When, started from the Goal, Over the flaming shoulders of the Foal Of Heav'n Parwin and Mushtari they flung In my predestined Plot of Dust and Soul.

LXXVI The Vine had struck a fibre: which about If clings my being—let the Dervish flout; Of my Base metal may be filed a Key, That shall unlock the Door he howls without.

LXXVII And this I know: whether the one True Light Kindle to Love, or Wrath-consume me quite, One Flash of It within the Tavern caught Better than in the Temple lost outright.

LXXVIII What! out of senseless Nothing to provoke A conscious Something to resent the yoke Of unpermitted Pleasure, under pain Of Everlasting Penalties, if broke!
LXXIX  What! from his helpless Creature be repaid  Pure Gold for what he lent him dross-allay’d--  Sue for a Debt he never did contract, And cannot answer--Oh, the sorry trade!

LXXX  Oh, Thou, who didst with pitfall and with gin Beset the Road I was to wander in, Thou wilt not with Predestined Evil round En-mesh, and then impute my Fall to Sin!

LXXXI  Oh, Thou who Man of baser Earth didst make, And ev’n with Paradise devise the Snake: For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man Is blacken’d--Man’s forgiveness give--and take!

LXXXII  As under cover of departing Day Slunk hunger-stricken Ramazan away, Once more within the Potter’s house alone I stood, surrounded by the Shapes of Clay.

LXXXIII  Shapes of all Sorts and Sizes, great and small, That stood along the floor and by the wall; And some loquacious Vessels were; and some Listen’d perhaps, but never talk’d at all.

LXXXIV  Said one among them--"Surely not in vain My substance of the common Earth was ta’en And to this Figure moulded, to be broke, Or trampled back to shapeless Earth again."

LXXXV  Then said a Second--"Ne’er a peevish Boy Would break the Bowl from which he drank in joy, And He that with his hand the Vessel made Will surely not in after Wrath destroy."
LXXXVI  After a momentary silence spake Some Vessel of a more ungainly Make; "They sneer at me for leaning all awry: What! did the Hand then of the Potter shake?"

LXXXVII  Whereat some one of the loquacious Lot-- I think a Sufi pipkin-waxing hot-- "All this of Pot and Potter--Tell me then, Who is the Potter, pray, and who the Pot?"

LXXXVIII  "Why," said another, "Some there are who tell Of one who threatens he will toss to Hell The luckless Pots he marr'd in making--Pish! He's a Good Fellow, and 'twill all be well."

LXXXIX  "Well," Murmur'd one, "Let whoso make or buy, My Clay with long Oblivion is gone dry: But fill me with the old familiar juice, Methinks I might recover by and by."

XC  So while the Vessels one by one were speaking, The little Moon look'd in that all were seeking: And then they jogg'd each other, "Brother! Brother! Now for the Porter's shoulder-knot a-creaking!"

XCI  Ah, with the Grape my fading Life provide, And wash the Body whence the Life has died, And lay me, shrouded in the living Leaf, By some not unfrequented Garden-side.

XCII  That ev'n my buried Ashes such a snare Of Vintage shall fling up into the Air As not a True-believer passing by But shall be overtaken unaware.
XCIII  Indeed the Idols I have loved so long  Have done my credit in this World much wrong:  Have drown’d my Glory in a shallow Cup  And sold my Reputation for a Song.

XCIV  Indeed, indeed, Repentance of before  I swore--but was I sober when I swore?  And then and then came Spring, and Rose-in-hand  My thread-bare Penitence apieces tore.

XCV  And much as Wine has play’d the Infidel,  And robb’d me of my Robe of Honour--Well,  I wonder often what the Vintners buy  One half so precious as the stuff they sell.

XCVI  Yet Ah, that Spring should vanish with the Rose!  That Youth’s sweet-scented manuscript should close!  The Nightingale that in the branches sang,  Ah, whence, and whither flown again, who knows!

XCVII  Would but the Desert of the Fountain yield  One glimpse--if dimly, yet indeed, reveal’d,  To which the fainting Traveller might spring,  As springs the trampled herbage of the field!

XCVIII  Would but some wing’ed Angel ere too late  Arrest the yet unfolded Roll of Fate,  And make the stern Recorder otherwise  Enregister, or quite obliterate!

XCIX  Ah, Love! could you and I with Him conspire  To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,  Would not we shatter it to bits--and then  Re-mould it nearer to the Heart’s Desire!
C  Yon rising Moon that looks for us again-- How oft hereafter will she wax and wane; How oft hereafter rising look for us Through this same Garden--and for one in vain!

Cl  And when like her, oh, Saki, you shall pass Among the Guests Star-scatter'd on the Grass, And in your joyous errand reach the spot Where I made One--turn down an empty Glass!
1. In verse I, what impression of the sun does Khayyam convey? How does he convey this impression?

2. In verse XIII, what is the meaning of the line “take the Cash, and let the Credit go”?

3. How do the ideas conveyed in verse XVI relate to those conveyed in verse XIII?

4. In verse XLVII, what does Khayyam suggest about the world’s attitude toward human life and death? How does he convey this idea?

5. Throughout The Rubaiyat, Khayyam emphasizes the inevitability of death. Which of these poems best expresses this sentiment to you? Why? Which of these poems best emphasizes the resulting need to enjoy life while it lasts? Why?

6. What themes recur throughout these verses? Explain your answers.
MASNAVI BY RUMI

Regarded as not only one of the finest Persian poets of all time, Rumi is considered by many scholars to be one of the best poets the world has ever read. Muslims from all over the world study the teaching written within his poetry. Rumi was the founder of Sufi order of the “Whirling Dervishes.” Dervishes were known for spinning in a series of hypnotic dances designed to allow the dancer to reach enlightenment.

Following his father’s death, Rumi assumed his position as a Sufi master and amassed a large group of followers. A murder would play a significant role in Rumi’s life. Shams, a wandering Sufi, impressed Rumi with his knowledge and the two became fast friends. Rumi’s other disciples became jealous of how much time Rumi was spending with Shams and secretly murdered Shams, hiding his body in a well. Distraught over the disappearance of his friend, Rumi searched everywhere for Shams. Instead of returning to his previous routine as his disciples had hoped, Rumi spent his time writing poetry and dedicating it to Shams. Remembered primarily for three works, Fihi ma Fihi (In it What is in It) is well known as a collection of religious and mystical sayings. He is most famous for the Masnavi, a long poem written at the suggestion of one of his students and intended to provide guidance for his disciples and for future generations.

Also famous for his unique means of composition, Rumi composed while walking, dancing, or taking a bath. He seldom bothered to revise his verses, and for this reason many people enjoy the raw, realistic tone his writings exude.
The Masnavi became popular in the Middle Ages throughout Europe, thanks to a Latin translation by Petrus Alphonsi, a famous Arabic writer and physician, who served at the court of King Alfonso VI of Spain. In 1106 Petrus converted to Christianity and he later wrote the *Disciplina clericalis*, a collection of "tales for preachers" in Latin, based on popular Arabic folktales. The "Counsels of the Bird" was one of the stories that Alphonsi translated into Latin, and from his book it spread throughout all of western Europe.

*Raise your words, not your voice. It is rain that grows flowers, not thunder.*

-Rumi

A graphic illustration of a whirling dervish—a unique group of Sufis.
From the *Masnavi* by Rumi

“The Counsels of the Bird”

A man captured a bird by *wiles* and snares; The bird said to him, "O noble sir, In your time you have eaten many oxen and sheep, And likewise sacrificed many camels; You have never been satisfied with their meat, So you will not be satisfied with my flesh. Let me go, that I may give you three counsels, Whence you will see whether I am wise or foolish. The first of my counsels shall be given on your wrist, The second on your well-plastered roof, And the third I will give you from the top of a tree. On hearing all three you will deem yourself happy. As regards the counsel on your wrist, 'tis this, - 'Believe not foolish assertions of any one!' " When he had spoken this counsel on his wrist, he flew Up to the top of the roof, entirely free. Then he said, "Do not grieve for what is past; When a thing is done, vex not yourself about it." He continued, "Hidden inside this body of mine Is a precious pearl, ten *drachms* in weight. That jewel of right belonged to you, Wealth for yourself and prosperity for your children. You have lost it, as it was not fated you should get it, That pearl whose like can nowhere be found." Thereupon the man, like a woman in her *travail*, Gave vent to lamentations and weeping. The bird said to him, "Did I not counsel you, saying, 'Beware of grieving over what is past and gone?' When 'tis past and gone, why sorrow for it? Either you understood not my counsel or are deaf. The second counsel I gave you was this, namely,

'Be not misguided enough to believe foolish assertions.' O fool, altogether I do not weigh three drachms, How can a pearl of ten drachms be within me?" The man recovered himself and said, "Well then, Tell me now your third good counsel!"

The bird replied, "You have made a fine use of the others, That I should waste my third counsel upon you! To give counsel to a sleepy ignoramus Is to sow seeds upon salt land. Torn garments of folly and ignorance cannot be patched. O counsellors, waste not the seed of counsel on them!"
From the *Masnavi* by Rumi

“The Marks of the Wise Man, of the Half Wise, and of the Fool”

The wise man is he who possesses a torch of his own; He is the guide and leader of the caravan. 
That leader is his own director and light; 
That illuminated one follows his own lead. 
He is his own protector; do ye also seek protection 
From that light whereon his soul is nurtured. 
The second, he, namely, who is half wise, 
Knows the wise man to be the light of his eyes. 
He clings to the wise man like a blind man to his guide, 
So as to become possessed of the wise man’s sight. 
But the fool, who has no particle of wisdom, 
Has no wisdom of his own, and quits the wise man. 
He knows nothing of the way, great or small, 
And is ashamed to follow the footsteps of the guide. 
He wanders into the boundless desert, 
Sometimes halting and despairing, sometimes running. 
He has no lamp wherewith to light himself on his way, 
Nor half a lamp which might recognize and seek light. 
He lacks wisdom, so as to boast of being alive, 
And also have wisdom, so as to assume to be dead. 
That half wise one became as one utterly dead 
In order to rise up out of his degradation. 
If you lack perfect wisdom, make yourself as dead 
Under the shadow of the wise, whose words give life.

The fool is neither alive so as to companion with ‘Isa, 
Nor yet dead so as to feel the power of ‘Isa’s breath. 
His blind soul wanders in every direction, 
And at last makes a spring, but springs not upward.

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Let yourself be silently drawn by the strange pull of what you really love. 

~ Rumi ~
Thinking About Masnavi

“The Marks of the Wise Man, of the Half Wise, and of the Fool”

1. Explain the statement that “the wise man is he who possesses a torch of his own.”

2. Why does Rumi comment that people who lack perfect wisdom should make themselves as “dead”?

3. What does Rumi mean when he writes that the fool “is neither alive” nor “yet dead”?

“The Counsels of the Bird”

1. Why does the bird give his second counsel from the top of the man’s roof?

2. What is the meaning of the bird’s comment that “to give counsel to a sleepy ignoramus is to sow seeds upon salt land”?

3. Based on “The Counsels of the Bird,” summarize Rumi’s ideas about people who are not wise.
The Thousand and One Nights is the most famous work of Arabic prose known in the Western world. It is not a single story, but rather a collection of different tales loosely pieced together into one long narrative.

The story that frames all of the tales is that of King Shahriyar and Princess Shaharazad. King Shahriyar marries a new woman each evening and puts her death the following morning. Wishing to preserve her life, Princess Shaharazad tells the King a story, but withholds its ending until the following day. So captivated by the story, the King lets the Princess live. Repeating the same process the next night, the Princess is able to stave off her death. Eventually, after 1001 nights according to the tale, the King has fallen so deeply in love with the Princess that he chooses to spare her life and they live happily ever after.

There probably never was a real King Shahriyar or Princess Shaharazad, nor is there one author who claims to have written the tale. Following the translation of the earliest known version in AD 850, The Thousand and One Nights became popular and storytellers quickly added the tales to their own stories. As the years progressed the original story was added to and embellished. Names of characters and places within the stories were changed to add to their appeal, and consequently the story was transformed into a uniquely Arabic collection of stories.

Three unique story strands are still visible within the whole piece. The first story strand includes some of the oldest stories and con-
tains the original story of Princess Shaharazad. The second story strand is set in the Baghdad (the capital of Iraq) and tells the story of King Harun ar-Rashid. Popular stories included in this strand are the tales of Sinbad and Aladdin. The third story strand contains many short, humorous tales that originated in Cairo (the capital of Egypt). All of these strands have been woven together like a tapestry where the characters included in one story become the narrators for the following story.

Because folktales are handed down orally, most are told in simple language so they can be easily understood by a general audience. These stories are far from realistic in many ways; instead, they were designed to teach lessons or express general truths about life. Due to this aim of versatility, many of the characters tend to be stock characters, or stereotypes embodying a human quality or emotion.
From The Thousand and One Nights

THERE was a certain fisherman, advanced in age, who had a wife and three children; and though he was in indigent circumstances, it was his custom to cast his net, every day, no more than four times. One day he went forth at the hour of noon to the shore of the sea, and put down his basket, and cast his net, and waited until it was motionless in the water, when he drew together its strings, and found it to be heavy: he pulled, but could not draw it up: so he took the end of the cord, and knocked a stake into the shore, and tied the cord to it. He then stripped himself, and dived round the net, and continued to pull until he drew it out: whereupon he rejoiced, and put on his clothes; but when he came to examine the net, he found in it the carcass of an ass. At the sight of this he mourned, and exclaimed, There is no strength nor power but in God, the High, the Great! This is a strange piece of fortune!—And he repeated the following verse:

O thou who occupiest thyself in the darkness of night, and in peril!
Spare thy trouble; for the support of Providence is not obtained by toil!

He then disencumbered his net of the dead ass, and wrung it out; after which he spread it, and descended into the sea, and—exclaiming, In the name of God!—cast it again, and waited till it had sunk and was still, when he pulled it, and found it more heavy and more difficult to raise than on the former occasion. He therefore concluded that it was full of fish: so he tied it, and stripped, and plunged and dived, and pulled until he raised it, and drew it upon the shore; when he found in it only a large jar, full of sand and mud; on seeing which, he was troubled in his heart, and repeated the following words of the poet:

O angry fate, forbear! or, if thou wilt not forbear, relent!
Neither favour from fortune do I gain, nor profit from the work of my hands.
I came forth to seek my sustenance, but have found it to be exhausted.
How many of the ignorant are in splendor! and how many of the wise, in obscurity!

So saying, he threw aside the jar, and wrung out and cleansed his net; and, begging the forgiveness of God for his impatience, returned to the sea the third time, and threw the net, and waited till it had sunk and was motionless: he then drew it out, and found in it a quantity of broken jars and pots.

Upon this, he raised his head towards heaven, and said, O God, Thou knowest that I cast not my net more than four times; and I have now cast it three times! Then—exclaiming, In the name of God!—he cast the net again into the sea, and waited till it was still; when he attempted to draw it up, but could not, for it clung to the bottom.
And he exclaimed, There is no strength nor power but in God!—
and he stripped himself again, and dived round the net, and
pulled until he raised it upon the shore; when he opened it, and
found in it a bottle of brass, filled with something, and having its
mouth closed with a stopper of lead, bearing the impression of
the seal of our lord Solomon. At the sight of this, the fisherman
was rejoiced, and said, This I will sell in the copper-market; for it
is worth ten pieces of gold. He then shook it, and found it to be
heavy, and said, I must open it, and see what is in it, and store it
in my bag; and then I will sell the bottle in the copper-market. So
he took out a knife, and picked at the lead until he extracted it
from the bottle. He then laid the bottle on the ground, and shook
it, that its contents might pour out; but there came forth from it
nothing but smoke, which ascended towards the sky, and spread
over the face of the earth; at which he wondered excessively. And
after a little while, the smoke collected together, and was con-
densed, and then became agitated, and was converted into a ‘jin-
nee, whose head was in the clouds, while his feet rested upon the
ground: his head was like a dome: his hands were like winnowing
forks; and his legs, like masts: his mouth resembled a cavern: his teeth were like stones; his nostrils, like trumpets; and his eyes, like lamps;
and he had dishevelled and dust-coloured hair.

When the fisherman beheld this ‘jinnee, the muscles of his sides quivered, his teeth were locked together, his spittle dried up, and he saw
not his way. The ‘jinnee, as soon as he perceived him, exclaimed, There is no deity but God; Solomon is the Prophet of God. O Prophet of
God, slay me not; for I will never again oppose thee in word, or rebel against thee in deed!—O Marid, said the fisherman, dost thou say, Solo-
mon is the Prophet of God? Solomon hath been dead a thousand and eight hundred years; and we are now in the end of time. What is thy
history, and what is thy tale, and what was the cause of thy entering this bottle? When the Marid heard these words of the fisherman, he said,
There is no deity but God! Receive news, O fisherman! Of what, said the fisherman, dost thou give me news? He answered, Of thy being in-
stantly put to a most cruel death. The fisherman exclaimed, Thou deservest, for this news, O master of the ‘jinnees, the withdrawal of protec-
tion from thee, O thou remote! Wherefore wouldst thou kill me? and what requires thy killing me, when I have liberated thee from the bottle,
There I remained a hundred years; and I said in my heart, Whosoever shall liberate me, I shall enrich him for ever:—but the hundred years passed over me, and no one liberated me: and I entered upon another hundred years; and I said, Whosoever shall liberate me, I will open to him the treasures of the earth. I then fell into a violent rage, and said within myself, Whosoever shall liberate me now, I will kill him; and only suffer him to choose in what manner he will die. And lo, now thou hast liberated me, and I have given thee thy choice of the manner in which thou wilt die.

When the fisherman had heard the story of the ‘jinnee, he exclaimed, O Allah! that I should not have liberated thee but in such a time as this! Then said he to the ‘jinnee, Pardon me, and kill me not, and so may God pardon thee; and destroy me not, lest God give power over thee to one who will destroy thee. The Marid answered, I must positively kill thee; therefore choose by what manner of death thou wilt die. The fisherman then felt assured of his death; but he again implored the ‘jinnee, saying, Pardon me by way of gratitude for my liberating thee.—Why, answered the ‘jinnee, I am not going to kill thee but for that very reason, because thou hast liberated me.—O Sheykh of the ‘jinnees, said the fisherman, do I act kindly towards thee, and dost thou recompense me with base-ness? But the proverb lieth not that saith,—

We did good to them, and they returned us the contrary; and such, by my life, is the conduct of the wicked.

Thus he who acteth kindly to the under serving is recompensed in the same manner as the aider of Umm-‘Amir.

The ‘jinnee, when he heard these words, answered by saying, Covet not life, for thy death is un-avoidable. Then said the fisherman within himself, This is a Jinni, and I am a man; and God hath given me sound reason; therefore, I will now plot his destruction with my art and reason, like as he hath plotted with his cunning and perfidy. So he said to the ‘jinnee, Hast thou determined to kill me? He answered, Yes. Then said he, By the Most Great Name engraved upon the seal of Solomon, I will ask thee one question; and wilt thou answer it to me truly? On hearing the mention of the Most Great Name, the ‘jinnee was agitated, and trembled, and replied, Yes; ask, and be brief. The fisherman then said, How wast thou in this bottle? It will not contain thy hand or thy foot; how then can it contain thy whole body?—Dost thou not believe that I was in it? said the ‘jinnee. The fisherman answered, I will never believe thee until I see thee in it. Upon this, the ‘jinnee shook, and became con-
to which the fisherman answered, Yea, without fail! yea, without fail! The Marid then addressing him with a soft voice and humble manner, said, What dost thou intend to do with me, O fisherman? He answered, I will throw thee into the sea; and if thou hast been there a thousand and eight hundred years, I will make thee to remain there until the hour of judgment. Did I not say to thee, Spare me, and so may God spare thee; and destroy me not, lest God destroy thee? But thou didst reject my petition, and wouldst nothing but treachery; therefore God hath caused to fall into my hand, and I have betrayed thee.—Open to me, said the ‘jinnee, that I may confer benefits upon thee. The fisherman replied, Thou liest, thou accursed! I and thou are like the vizier of King Yunan and the sage Duban.—What, said the ‘jinnee, was the case of the Wezir Yunan and the sage Duban, and what is their story? The fisherman answered as follows:—

The Story of King Yunan and Duban the Doctor

KNOW, O ‘jinnee, that there was, in former times, in the country of the Persians, a monarch who was called King Yunan, possessing great treasures and numerous forces, valiant, and having troops of every description; but he was afflicted with leprosy, which the physicians and sages had failed to remove; neither their potions, nor powders, nor ointments were of any benefit to him; and none of the physicians was able to cure him. At length there arrived at the city of this king a great sage, stricken in years, who was called the sage Duban: he was acquainted with ancient Greek, Persian, modern Greek, Arabic, and Syrian books, and with medicine and astrology, both with respect to their scientific principles and the rules of their practical applications for good and evil; as well as the properties of plants, dried and fresh; the injurious and the useful: he was versed in the wisdom of the philosophers, and embraced a knowledge of all the medical and other sciences.

After this sage had arrived in the city, and remained in it a few days, he heard of the case of the King, of the leprosy with which God had afflicted him, and that the physicians and men of science had failed to cure him. In consequence of this information, he passed the next night in deep study; and when the morning came, and diffused its light, and the sun saluted the Ornament of the Good, 1 he attired himself in the richest of his apparel, and presented himself before the King. Having kissed the ground before him, and offered up a prayer for the continuance of his power and happiness, and greeted him in the best manner he was able, he informed him who he was, and said, O King, I have heard of the disease which hath attacked thy person, and that many of the physicians are unacquainted with the means of removing it; and I will cure thee without giving thee to drink any potion, or anointing thee with ointment. When King Yunan heard his words, he wondered, and said to him, How wilt thou do this? By Allah, if thou cure me, I will enrich thee and thy children’s children, and I will heap favours upon thee, and whatever thou shalt desire shall be thine, and thou shalt be my companion and my friend.—He then bestowed upon him a robe of honour, and other presents, and said to him, Wilt thou cure me of this disease without potion or ointment? He answered, Yes; I will cure thee without any discomfort to thy person. And the King was extremely astonished, and said, O Sage, at what time, and on what day, shall that which thou hast proposed to me be done? Hasten it, O my Son.—He answered, I hear and obey.
He then went out from the presence of the King, and hired a house, in which he deposited his books, and medicines, and drugs. Having done this, he selected certain of his medicines and drugs, and made a stick, with a hollow handle, into which he introduced them; after which he made a ball for it, skilfully adapted; and on the following day, after he had finished these, he went again to the King, and kissed the ground before him, and directed him to repair to the horse-course, and to play with the ball and stick. The King, attended by his Emirs and Chamberlains and viziers, went thither, and, as soon as he arrived there, the sage Duban presented himself before him, and handed to him the stick, saying, Take this stick, and grasp it thus, and ride along the horse-course, and strike the ball with it with all thy force, until the palm of thy hand and thy whole body become moist with perspiration, when the medicine will penetrate into thy hand, and pervade thy whole body; and when thou hast done this, and the medicine remains in thee, return to thy palace, and enter the bath, and wash thyself, and sleep; then shalt thou find thyself cured: and peace be on thee. So King Yunan took the stick from the sage, and grasped it in his hand, and mounted his horse; and the ball was thrown before him, and he urged his horse after it until he overtook it, when he struck it with all his force; and when he had continued this exercise as long as was necessary, and bathed and slept; he looked upon his skin, and not a vestige of the leprosy remained: it was clear as white silver. Upon this he rejoiced exceedingly; his heart was dilated, and he was full of happiness.

On the following morning he entered the council-chamber, and sat upon his throne; and the Chamberlains and great officers of his court came before him. The sage Duban also presented himself; and when the King saw him, he rose to him in haste, and seated him by his side. Services of food were then spread before them, and the sage ate with the King, and remained as his guest all the day; and when the night approached, the King gave him two thousand pieces of gold, besides dresses of honour and other presents, and mounted him on his own horse, and so the sage returned to his house. And the King was astonished at his skill; saying, This man hath cured me by an external process, without anointing me with ointment: by Allah, this is consummate science; and it is incumbent on me to bestow favours and honours upon him, and to make him my companion and famil-
his distinction, and meditated evil against him; agreeably with the adage which saith, There is no one void of envy;—and another, which
saith, Tyranny lurketh in the soul: power manifesteth it, and weakness concealeth it. So he approached the King, and kissed the ground be-
fore him, and said, O King of the age, thou art he whose goodness extendeth to all men, and I have an important piece of advice to give
thee: if I were to conceal it from thee, I should be a base-born wretch: therefore, if thou order me to impart it, I will do so. The King, dis-
turbed by these words of the vizier, said, What is thy advice? He answered, O glorious King, it hath been said, by the ancients, He who look-
eth not to results, fortune will not attend him:—now I have seen the King in a way that is not right; since he hath bestowed favours upon his
enemy, an upon him who desireth the downfall of his dominion: he hath treated him with kindness, and honoured him with the highest hon-
ours, and admitted him to the closest intimacy: I therefore fear, for the King, the consequence of this conduct.—At this the King was trou-
bled and his countenance changed; and he said, Who is he whom thou regardest as mine enemy, and to whom I shew kindness? He re-
plied, O King, if thou hast been asleep, awake! I allude to the sage Duban.—The King said, He is my intimate companion, and the dearest
of men in my estimation; for he restored me by a thing that I merely held in my hand, and cured me of my disease which the physicians
were unable to remove, and there is not now to be found one like to him in the whole world, from west to east. Wherefore, then, dost thou ut-
ter these words against him? I will, from this day, appoint him a regular salary and maintenance, and give him every month a thousand
pieces of gold; and if I give him a share of my kingdom it were but a small thing to do unto him. I do not think that thou hast said this from
any other motive than that of envy. If I didst what thou desirest, I should repent after it, as Sinbad repented who killed his falcon.

The Story of King Sinbad and the Falcon

ONCE upon a time (went King Yunan) there was a Persian king who was a great lover of riding and hunting. He had a falcon which he him-
self had trained with loving care and which never left his side for a moment; for even at nighttime he carried it perched upon his fist, and
when he went hunting took it with him. Hanging from the bird's neck was a little bowl of gold from which it drank. One day the king ordered
his men to make ready for a hunting expedition and, taking with him his falcon, rode out with his courtiers. At length they came to a valley
where they laid the hunting nets. Presently a gazelle fell into the snare, and the king said: “I will kill the man who lets her escape!”

They drew the nets closer and closer around the beast. On seeing the king the gazelle stood on her haunches and raised her forelegs to
her head as if she wished to salute him. But as he bent forward to lay hold of her, she leaped over his head and fled across the field. Look-
ing round, the king saw his courtiers winking at one another. “Why are they winking?” he asked his vizier. “Perhaps because you let the
beast escape,” ventured the other, smiling. “On my life,” cried the king, “I will chase the gazelle and bring her back!”

At once he galloped off in pursuit of the fleeing animal, and when he had caught up with her, his falcon swooped upon the gazelle, blinding
her with his beak, and the king struck her down with a blow of his sword. Then dis-
mounting he flayed the animal and hung the carcass on his saddle bow.

It was a hot day and the king, who by this time had become faint with thirst, went to
search for water. Presently, however, he saw a huge tree, down the trunk of which
water was trickling in great drops. He took the little bowl from the falcon’s neck and,
filling it with this water, placed it before the bird. But the falcon knocked the bowl
with its beak and toppled it over. The king once again filled the bowl and placed it
before the falcon, but the bird knocked it over a second time. Upon this the king be-
came very angry and, filling the bowl a third time, set it before his horse. But the fal-
ccon sprang forward and knocked it over with its wings. “Allah curse you for a bird
of ill omen!” cried the king. “You have prevented yourself from drinking and the
horse also.” So saying, he struck the falcon with his sword and cut off both its
wings. But the bird lifted its head as if to say: “Look into the tree!” The king raised
his eyes and saw in the tree an enormous serpent spitting its venom down the trunk.
The king was deeply grieved at what he had done and, mounting his horse, hurried
back to the palace. He threw his kill to the cook, and no sooner had he sat down,
with the falcon still perched on his fist, than the bird gave a convulsive gasp and
dropped down dead. The king was stricken with sorrow and remorse for having so
rashly killed the bird which had saved his life.

When the vizier heard the tale of King Yunan, he said: “I assure your majesty that
my counsel is prompted by no other motive that my devotion to you and my concern
for your safety. I beg leave to warn you that, if you put your trust in this physician, it
is certain that he will destroy you. Has he not cured you by a device held in the
hand? And might he not cause your death by another such device?”

“You have spoken wisely, my faithful vizier,” replied the king. “Indeed, it is quite
probable that this physician has come to my court as a spy to destroy me. And
since he cured my illness by a thing held in the hand, he might as cunningly poison
“Spare me and Allah will spare you!” cried the unfortunate doctor. “Kill me, and so shall Allah kill you!” But the king gave no heed to his entreaties. “Never shall I have peace again,” he cried, “until I see you dead. For if you cured me by a thing held in the hand, you will doubtless kill me by the scent of a perfume or by some other foul device.”

“Is it thus that you repay me?” asked the doctor. “Will you thus requite good with evil?” But the king said: “You must die; nothing can now save you.” When he saw that the king was determined to put him to death, the physician wept and bitterly repented the service he had done for him. Then the executioner came forward, blindfolded the doctor and, drawing his sword, held it in readiness for the king’s signal. But the doctor continued to wail, crying: “Spare me, and Allah will spare you! Kill me, and so shall Allah kill you!” Moved by the old man’s lamentations, one of the courtiers interceded for him with the king, saying: “Spare the life of this man, I pray you. He has committed no crime against you, but rather he has cured you of an illness which your physicians have failed to remedy.”

“If I spare this doctor,” replied the king, “he will use his devilish art to kill me. Therefore he must die.” Again the doctor cried: “Spare me, and Allah will spare you! Kill me, and so shall Allah kill you!” But when at last he saw that the king was fixed in his resolve, he said: “Your majesty, if your needs must kill me, I beg you to grant me a day’s delay, so that I may go to my house and wind up my affairs. I wish to say farewell to my family and my neighbors and instruct them to arrange for my burial. I must also give away my books of medicine, of which there is one, a work of unparalleled virtue, which I would offer to you as a parting gift, that you may preserve it among the treasures of the kingdom.” “What may this book be?” asked the king.

“It holds secrets and devices without number, the least of them being this: that if, after you have struck off my head, you turn over three leaves of this book and read the first three lines upon the left-hand page, my severed head will speak and answer any questions you may ask it.” The king was astonished to hear this and at once ordered the guards to escort the physician to his house. That day the doctor put his affairs in order and the next morning returned to the king’s palace. There had already assembled the viziers, the chamberlains, the nabobs, and the chief officers of the realm, so that with their colored robes the court seemed like a garden full of flowers. The doctor bowed low before the king; in one hand he had an ancient book and in the other a little bowl filled with a strange powder. Then he sat down and said: “Bring me a platter!” A platter was instantly brought in, and the doctor sprinkled the powder on it, smoothing it over with his fingers. After that he handed the book to the king and said: “Take this book and set it down before you. When my head has been cut off, place it upon the powder to stanch the bleeding. Then open the book.”

The king ordered the executioner to behead the physician. He did so. Then the king opened the book, and, finding the pages stuck
together, put his finger to his mouth and turned over the first leaf. After much difficulty he turned over the second and the third, moistening his finger with his spittle at every page, and tried to read. But he could find no writing there. “There is nothing written in this book,” cried the king. “Go on turning,” replied the severed head.

The king had not turned six pages when the venom (for the leaves of the book were poisoned) began to work in his body. He fell backward in an agony of pain, crying: “Poisoned! Poisoned!” and in a few moments breathed his last.

“Now treacherous jinnee,” continued the fisherman, “had the king spared the physician, he in turn would have been spared by Allah. But he refused, and Allah brought about the king’s destruction. And as for you, if you had been willing to spare me, Allah would have been merciful to you, and I would have spared your life. But you sought to kill me; therefore I will throw you back into the sea and leave you to perish in this bottle!”

**REVIEW 2.1 Quick Quiz-The Thousand and One Nights**

**Question 1 of 8**

_The Thousand and One Nights_ is a single story.

- A. True
- B. False

- B. False
CURRENT CONTEXT

The words Persia and Iran are often used interchangeably. Iran is the modern name of the country. Persia refers to one of more than 240 kingdoms that existed within the borders of Iran more than 2,500 years ago.

Settled in the heart of the Middle East, Iran faces many of the same issues that Iraq does, and shares a troubled past in relation to the United States.

Banking on its burgeoning tourism industry, Iran hopes to rekindle the world’s curiosity with the foreign images of Arabia that have been marketed for generations through literature and film. Exotic locales tempt the imagination to see a glimpse of world that is hardly recognizable to modern society.

Still struggling to adapt following nagging disagreements which resulted in a brutal war with neighboring Iraq in the 1980s, Iran seeks to improve its world image by making a concerted effort to showcase is broad and colorful historical traditions in a way that is relative and inviting to the modern world.

The ancient city of Qom in Iran is the largest center for Shi’a scholarship.
Deal or No Deal in Iran Nuclear Talks?

January 10, 2014
CNN
By Chelsea J. Carter and Jim Sciutto

Iran's lead nuclear negotiator announced a tentative agreement was reached Friday over the implementation of a plan that requires Tehran to limit its nuclear program, even as U.S. officials described the talks as ongoing.

The conflicting reports came as Iran wrapped up two days of talks in Geneva with the European Union, the United States, China and Russia over how to put in place a deal that calls for Tehran to limit its nuclear activities in exchange for a softening of sanctions that have crippled its economy.

Negotiators from both sides appeared to make progress, with Iran’s lead negotiator -- Abbas Arachchi -- telling state-run Press TV that the two sides reached a tentative deal. Neither Arachchi nor the top negotiator for the six world powers detailed the agreement.

If all sides accept the plan, an official announcement will be made within two weeks, Arachchi said, according to the official IRNA news agency.

But U.S. officials say while progress has been made, the agreement still needs to be finalized.

"The accurate description would be that they are ongoing. The negotiations are ongoing," State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said during a briefing in Washington.

The nuclear deal struck in November has been widely hailed as a successful interim measure to stave off an unwanted conflict over Tehran’s nuclear program.

But after initially celebrating a diplomatic success, Iran has reportedly lashed out at the United States for making public a modified version of the agreement that they say does not reflect Tehran’s interpretation.

Late last month, Iranian lawmakers drafted a bill that would force the government to enrich uranium up to 60% if new sanctions are imposed, state media reported.

The move came only days after bipartisan legislation was introduced in the U.S. Senate that would authorize new economic sanctions on Iran if it breaches an interim agreement to limit its nuclear program or fails to strike a final accord terminating those ambitions.

On Friday, the Senate moved toward a veto-proof majority supporting legislation authorizing new economic sanctions on Iran.

The bipartisan proposal introduced by Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Sen. Robert Menendez, D-New Jersey, and Sen. Mark Kirk, R-Illinois, now has 59 senators who have formally committed to support it, a senior Senate aide told CNN.

The aide said that the current informal count is even higher -- at 77 yes votes -- and that more are expected to come on board once the undecided are forced to vote. A two-thirds majority in both the Senate and House of Representatives is necessary to override a presidential veto.

President Barack Obama has threatened to veto any legislation that would authorize new economic sanctions on Iran, saying such a bill at this time would undermine delicate efforts to forge a lasting deal with Tehran.

The bill could come to the Senate floor for consideration during the week of Obama's State of the Union address on
January 28 or the following week, said the aide, who spoke on condition of anonymity, citing the sensitivity of the issue.

The proposal would give Obama more than a year to engage in further diplomacy before any new sanctions would kick in against Iran’s oil exports and other key areas of its economy, but sanctions would hit sooner if Iran cheats on the interim deal or fails to reach a final accord.

The United States and other Western powers believe Iran is attempting to build a bomb through uranium enrichment. But Tehran says its nuclear intentions are peaceful.
The Long Shadow of the Iran-Iraq War

October 23, 2014

*National Interest*

By Behnam Ben Taleblu

No single event has defined Iran’s revolutionary ideology, politics, perspectives on society, and security more than the Iran-Iraq War.

For a conflict that still captivates much of Iran’s ruling elite, the Iran-Iraq War gets very little attention in the United States. Over the years, we’ve regularly seen events commemorating the August 19, 1953 coup against Prime Minister Mohammad Mosadegh. Op-Eds on the 1979 Islamic Revolution are always with us. The date September 22, 1980—when Saddam Hussein’s Iraq invaded Iran—hasn’t, however, been compelling for Iran watchers, let alone the general foreign-policy crowd in Washington.

This is a mistake. No single event has defined Iran’s revolutionary ideology, politics, perspectives on society and security more than the Iran-Iraq War. Here are four reasons why that conflict still matters, and why the West ignores its legacy at its own peril.

**Iran’s Revolutionary Ideology Marches On**

In the intellectual framing of the Iran-Iraq War, the nascent Islamic Republic, led by its founding father, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, believed it was fighting a Holy War. Indeed, in Iran the war has gained the epithet, Defa-e Moqadas, or “the Holy Defense.” For Iran’s leaders, the ideological magnitude of the war helped blur national boundaries, parsimoniously dividing the world into good and evil. Similarly, anti-American themes used against the Shah were later refashioned for Saddam. On the day of the Iraqi invasion, Khomeini declared that, “It is Saddam Hussein who on behalf of America attacked us, and if we respond to him, it will never have anything to do with the Iraqi nation, which is our brother.” These two dimensions, American support for Saddam and the (strategically misguided) belief in Iraqi popular support, would become hallmarks of the war.

Undoubtedly, these notions had policy implications. The late Ayatollah Hussein-Ali Montazeri—now an icon of the Green Movement—zealously supported the controversial 1982 decision to invade Iraq, hoping to prompt a “coup d’état” there. Interestingly, former Iranian president Hashemi Rafsanjani still maintains that “the people of Iraq supported us more during the war” than their Ba’athist leaders. With respect to the United States, Khomeini’s thinking is best echoed by Iran’s current Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who claims that the United States “gave Saddam a green-light” to attack Iran. For Khamenei, American intrigue always remains omnipresent. Sadly, the notion of American support for Iraq would prove correct, but only after the much discussed “tilt toward Iraq,” which only occurred in later, more compartmentalized portions of the war.

Furthermore, Khomeini projected his Islamist notions abroad, telling the Iraqi people to “arise against the person who has now arisen against Islam.” Khomeini’s perception of the Revolutionary experience was not to be limited to Iran. After all, the renowned slogan, “export the revolution” and the birth of Lebanese Hezbollah have their roots in this period. To date, for Iran’s leadership, Khomeini’s ideals live on. In a recent speech, Major General Mohammad-Ali Aziz Jafari, the Commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), stated that the mission of the
IRGC Quds-Force (IRGC-QF) was “to help Islamic movements, develop the Islamic Revolution, and to help the oppressed resisters across the world.” In short, the Iran-Iraq War paved the way for the globalization of Iran’s Revolution, which had to be both spread and defended by bombs and bullets.

**Politics, or the Iran-Iraq War by Other Means**

Political and military giants of modern Iran made their names in the battlefields and backrooms of the Iran-Iraq War, drawing tremendous legitimacy from their service. Take, for example, Major General Qassem Soleimani, who is now the Commander of the IRGC-QF. During the war, he was known for his commitment and valor. Or Ayatollah Rafsanjani, who would rise to become Iran’s postwar president (1989-1997). Rafsanjani has published a host of memoirs providing insight into Iran’s questionable prosecution of the war and aiding him in factional infighting which continues to this day. Despite the considerable hype over former president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as a war veteran himself, virtually every president of the Islamic Republic, with a debatable exception of Mohammad Khatami, played some role in the broader war effort. This certainly holds true for current president Hassan Rouhani, who bore witness to controversial moments during the war, such as the Iraq invasion. Rouhani is particularly noteworthy since he held a host of positions, such as head of Iran's air defense, and also served on the Supreme Defense Council during the conflict. It is rumored that he served as Rafsanjani’s eyes and ears on the IRGC as well.

While Ayatollah Khomeini may have drunk from “the poisoned chalice” to end the war with Iraq, his doing so would inaugurate a war within Iran. Khomeini’s contentious decision to accept a UNSC ceasefire resolution, coupled with his death a year later, cleft the Islamic Republic’s fractious political elite in two over whether to partake in the existing global order (particularly by way of its oil companies), or to eschew it. A cursory review holds that this divide neatly matches with those in Iran who learned from their wartime errors, and those who continue to insist upon doubling down on them. In one sense, the Iran-Iraq War still rages, as some factions in Iran have replaced their guns with pens, turning on their compatriots over their war-records. Almost daily, the war is referenced in headlines, and new revelations continue to alter the Iranian political mosaic. To date, the dueling narratives and legacies endure, and have real policy implications for the West.

**The War’s Social Legacy Remains of Great Import to the Islamic Republic**

Iranian officials often view the war era with nostalgia, using the war as a prop and reference point in their conversations. From a regime-centric lens this is understandable, as the charismatic Ayatollah Khomeini was alive and able to guide his nation, asking them to bear hardship for the benefit of the Revolution. Concurrently, while united against an external enemy, the Islamic Republic used the war to sequentially decimate a diverse milieu of political opponents at home. A closer look at this period, however, reveals immense human suffering, as total war subsumed Iran, and its population endured tremendous sacrifices. Today, the human brunt of that sacrifice is evident in graveyards like the sprawling Behesht-e Zahra [Paradise of Zahra] cemetery near Tehran. These sacrifices are not only commemorated by fading murals and stamps (which this author doggedly collects), but are actively reinvigorated through tweets from Iranian officials seeking to reinstill a culture of sacrifice and martyrdom in a society that has
outgrown it.

The postwar era has proved particularly challenging for this narrative. The revolutionary values that put the Islamic Republic at odds with both East and West during the tail end of the Cold War have yet to be cast aside. Faced with generational changes, Iranian leaders, such as Armed Forces Chief of Staff Major General Seyed Hassan Firouzabadi, continue to praise the war, noting that “the Holy Defense, much like the Islamic Revolution, must forever remain alive.” Iran has obliged, creating museums that enshrine the sacrifices of those who partook in the war. Cognizant of the diverse and sharply differing views of Iran’s populace, and especially its youth, officials have sought to use the Iran-Iraq War to promote “unity,” while extolling the virtues of knowing the war “for the postwar generation.” It should thus not come as a surprise that the conservative newspaper Kayhan ran the following quote from Commander Ali Fazeli as a headline, “The Holy Defense is the best historical period of the Islamic Republic.”

Even Khamenei has weighed in, saying “While the earthly and spiritual sacrifices of the imposed war were high, the achievements of the nation of Iran in the eight years of Holy Defense, when compared to its sacrifices, were quite great.” These accomplishments include successfully turning the war into a “culture,” into something to be lived and wielded at a grassroots level in order to “combat sanctions” or fight threats like a “cultural invasion.”

**Iran’s Security Doctrine: Both Holy and Defensive**

For Iran, the Iran-Iraq War was full of harsh military lessons. The conflict highlighted Iran’s numerous conventional military deficiencies and command and control issues, and forecasted unresolved civil-military tension. During the war, Iranian onslaughts against Iraqi fortifications crudely epitomized what valor and zeal could wreak against technological superiority. Yet Iran’s limited tactical successes, like taking the Faw peninsula, would be short lived. In near succession, Iran would come up short against Iraqi chemical attacks, Super Étendard jets equipped with Exocet missiles, and the U.S. Navy in the Persian Gulf.

Despite such battlefield setbacks, Iran touts its war record as having sufficiently frightened and even deterred its enemies, denying them the ability to launch an invasion or strike on the Iranian homeland. This thinking is best exemplified by Hassan
Rahimpour Azghadi of the Supreme Cultural Revolution Council who said, “If it wasn’t for this eight years of war, ten wars would be imposed on us. And these very same wars that they have commenced in Lebanon, Syria and Iraq, they would have created in Iran… And it is the Holy Defense that has made the enemy not dare attack us.” While this may seem like exaggeration, given Iran’s teetering markers of military effectiveness during the war, for the Islamic Republic, the war’s deterrent benefits continue to reap dividends.

From a strategic perspective, the Iran-Iraq War is magnified inside Iran, even being likened to a “third world war.” As time went on, Iran focused obsessively on the war’s lessons, lauding concepts such as “self-sufficiency” as a “great achievement” of the war. In time, Iran moved to invest in a host of unconventional capabilities and asymmetric tools. According to UNSCOM figures, roughly 63 percent of Saddam’s missiles were fired at Iran during the war, prompting it to acquire and create a missile command. To this day, outlets continue to sing the praises of the IRGC officer who had the foresight to “reverse engineer” Scuds, as opposed to firing them all at Iraq. These became the basis for Iran’s missile forces.

Broadly speaking, the timelines for Iran’s nuclear and ballistic-missile programs are intermingled, and often overlapped during the war and in the reconstruction era immediately after. Iran’s experiences hardwired into the country’s strategic braintrust that the world is both unjust and anarchic. Indeed, Iran’s nuclear march is best understood by coupling that thinking with comments by Rafsanjani, who in 1989 said, “international laws are only drops of ink on paper.” Call it a formula for “Islamic-Realism,” if you will.

Indeed, nearly every aspect of Iranian behavior troubling to the United States is rooted in, or underlined by, the war. This is true for terrorism in Lebanon, disdain for Saudi Arabia, speedboats in the Persian Gulf and support for “resistance” against Israel. Today, Iran backs the Assad regime in Syria, since it was Bashar’s father, Hafez, who supported Iran during the war. Furthermore, the war taught the Islamic Republic that who governs Baghdad matters, slating Iran to intervene in Iraq for the foreseeable future. Despite the sharp learning curve, Iranian officials continue to fondly look upon the war, exclaiming that “Eight years of Holy Defense made Iranians experienced.” They are correct, since the experiences of the war provided Iran its current security blueprint. **Revolution Reaffirmed**

The Islamic Republic went “all in” on the Iran-Iraq War. In part, Iran’s enduring obsession with “resistance” and sacrifice stems from this cataclysmic event. The war remains a timeless analogy in Iran, the root of many domestic political disputes, and the international case study for both war-making and peacemaking with the Islamic Republic. With the postwar generation yet to come to power, Iran’s leaders today are mostly the same men who fought in that conflict or oversaw it. It was a system that they, and many of their deceased and martyred colleagues fought for in the 1980s, endured despite every possible setback. For many, the war epitomized the ceaseless struggle of “truth against falsehood.” To those soldiers and statesmen, the war was not a prelude to normalization. It was a divine and righteous test to a continuing Islamic Revolution.
Americans Check Out Iran’s Golden Eagle Danube Express Tourist Train

November 15, 2014
NBC News
By Ali Arouzi and Alexander Smith

TEHRAN, Iran — While many Americans view Iran as a shadowy and perhaps even dangerous place to travel, others see the opportunity for a vacation.

Officials in Iran have heralded the maiden voyage of the first private passenger train to travel from Europe to the Islamic Republic as part of a wider tourism boom in the country. However, with tickets going for as much as $40,000 per head it’s unclear how many tourists will take to the tracks.

Operators of the luxury tourist train — majestically named the Golden Eagle Danube Express — said they were surprised to discover the most common nationality among their passengers was American.

Marnie Shultz, a senior citizen from Kansas who was on the maiden journey, said her friends back home were perplexed about her plans to visit a country that once described the U.S. as "The Great Satan."

“They think I am absolutely nuts," she told NBC News about her family’s reaction, during a stop-off in Iran’s ancient city of Isfahan. "There is no reason not to come to Iran, don’t let what is perceived to keep you home."

Golden Eagle Luxury Trains, the U.K.-based company which runs the service, admitted it was caught off guard by the demand from America. Of the 109 passengers who traveled on the east or westbound legs of the two-week journey, twenty-six were American citizens. For the eight near-sell-out journeys scheduled next year, forty-five percent of bookings came from the U.S.

“It was a bit of a surprise,” said Natasha Baker, a sales executive at Golden Eagle Luxury Trains. “We wanted customers from America, but because of the history we were just seeing how it went.

The 14-day trip takes tourists on a winding, 4,000-mile journey from Hungary’s capital of Budapest through Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey and finally to Iran — or the reverse, for a return route. Stop-offs in Iran include visits to Tehran’s Grand Bazaar — whose corridors stretch for miles — a holy shrine in Mashhad and Isfahan, the ancient city that served as Persia’s capital until 1722.

“Generally speaking our passengers tend to be more adventurous and well-traveled,” Baker said. They also appear to have deep pockets.

The lavish experience is modeled on the 19th-century indulgence of the Orient Express, with prices ranging from $14,695 to a staggering $39,995 per person. In the lounge car, passengers
can enjoy drinks and champagne receptions — except for when the train travels through conservative Iran. The train’s restaurant car serves upscale Hungarian and Persian cuisine on crystal glassware and brass lamps dot the tables.

Some in Iran insist the train service’s popularity is part of a wider tourism boom not reserved for wealthy globetrotters.

Bahman Zenhari, a marketing executive with Iranian tour operator Pasargad Tours, said Americans have been visiting Iran for years — but numbers surged after the more-moderate President Hassan Rouhani was elected last year and replaced hardliner Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. He claimed there has been a 350 percent increase for tour demands in Iran since the election.

"When American tourists first came to Iran they would tell locals that they were Canadian, but not today," he added.

It’s hard to measure the purported post-Rouhani boost: the latest figures from the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) only go up to 2013. But the UNWTO’s figures do show that since 2009 the number of tourists to Iran has more than doubled, from 2.1 million to 4.7 million. Between 2009 and 2013 the number of Americans coming into the country remained around 1,500 per year.

"For as long as I can remember the Islamic Republic has been trying to improve its tourism, which it regards, rightly, as a potentially lucrative foreign-exchange earner," said Ali Ansari, an Iran expert at the U.K.’s University of St. Andrews. But like many aspects of Iran’s ailing economy, tourism had been sorely underdeveloped, Ansari said.

"Strict application of Islamic laws, including the insistence on headscarves for women, can act as a deterrence for all but the most dedicated cultural tourists," he added. "And this latter group is at the end of the day quite a small number of the potential visitors that could come."

Joseph Cheavens, a Houstonian traveling with his wife, said his friends were shocked by his decision to take his chances on the Golden Eagle Danube Express.

"I just had an email before I left from a business colleague saying, 'You are going to a dangerous part of the world,'" he said. "Well, it's not dangerous."

While he acknowledged the cultural differences -"it has more obvious religious observance" and "all women have to wear the headscarf"- he noted that Iran is not all that different from home. "The one thing that's the same is the people are very friendly," he said.
There are only two mistakes one can make along the road to truth; not going all the way, and not starting.”

~Buddha
**INDIAN BACKGROUND**

Indian tradition spans three and a half millennia; because of the vast amount of history and time covered, Indian literature has grown to include works written in Sanskrit, Persian, and Tamil. These works weave Indian values, beliefs, and religion together in ways that make these ideas accessible for readers—including those of us who are generations removed from the original authors. These pieces of literature are crucial to understanding India’s dominant Hindu culture.

The geographical location of India adds to its vibrant history. Making up a significant portion of Asia, India is an independent country, but is often referred to as a subcontinent. Isolated throughout much of its history, India is surrounded by oceans and seas along its southern, eastern, and western borders and the Himalayan Mountains along its northern border. Regularly invaded, India’s isolated locale cut invaders off from their homelands and invaders were often quick to assimilate with the native Indian population. This extreme isolation led many early Indian thinkers to believe that India was the center of the universe.

**Early Civilizations**

The number of settlements and kingdoms in India’s history is well into the hundreds; constantly shifting boundary lines occurred as...
each new group took control of the vast country, fought off invaders, and in many cases lost control, thus leading to a new boundary. One of the earliest settlements we have record of was in the northwest region of the country. Named for the river that runs through it, the Indus River Valley Civilization was an urbanized and sophisticated society. The civilization included an extensive religious cult, a series of farms that produced enough food for the people and also maintained a surplus, and created an intricate series of irrigation and drainage systems. The Indus River Valley Civilization disappeared around 1500 BC. At this same time, the Aryans migrated to India from the north and west and the Dravidians inhabited the southern regions of India.

Hinduism

Important to India from a cultural standpoint as well as a religious one, Hinduism includes elements from all of the cultures native to India. Hinduism, from the Sanskrit word *sindhu*, meaning river, refers to both an organized religion and social system. Recognizing many gods, Hinduism teaches that the human soul can be reborn into a number of bodies before reaching its final reunion with the universal soul. Hinduism divided society into a rigid caste system. Each caste came with its own expectations and duties and the only way to move from the caste one was born into was to fulfill one’s moral duties and obligations (one must fulfill his or her dharma).

Consolidating the Empire

Third century Emperor Ashoka was the first ruler to unite the majority of the subcontinent under his control. Other rulers would follow him, such as King Chandragupta Maurya and eventually Mongol leaders who were descendants of Genghis Khan, and add to the vast land-mass of the empire. The entire subcontinent was not unified under a single group until the British succeeded in making India one of its colonies. The British ruled India from 1800-1947; a relatively short amount of time considering India’s long history.

Cultural Background

Many advancements in mathematics, technology, and medicine can be attributed to early Indian thinkers. While traveling through Europe, Arabic traders brought their number system--Arabic numerals--and we still use this system today. We can thank Indian mathematicians for the creation of the zero and our understanding of decimal notation. Indians also excelled in metalworking. Indian physicians understood how to set broken bones, appreciated the importance of keeping wounds clean, and developed the earliest practices of plastic surgery.

The ancient Indians improved technology, but they also played an important role in the development of the arts. Artists would travel around to different kingdoms showcasing their work. Artists peddled their work and often created pieces that were specifically commissioned by the individual kings. Some of the most famous art created in ancient India was not on canvases or in the shape of sculptures; rather they were frescoes painted on the walls of caves. Created by monks, these masterpieces connected religious themes to the lives of the people. Most impressive, though, was their size. The frescoes served as an incredible architectural feat--some were 75ft high, 75ft wide, and 280ft long--HUGE!

Religious Thought

Aside from Hinduism, India is the birthplace of many other important faiths. Hinduism is the dominant religion, but Buddhism, Jainism,
and Sikhs all share roots in India. The earliest surviving record of Indian thought, and the basis of Hinduism, is a collection of hymns known as the *Rig Veda*. Made up of more than a thousand hymns, the *Rig Veda* allows readers to experience an Indian perspective of nature and creation. Explaining the devotion to the gods and the manner of piety by which they live their lives, the *Rig Veda* outlines the basic beliefs of Hinduism. Not only did these hymns stand alone, but they often accompanied elaborate sacrifices made to the gods.

The universal concern with religious values in Hindu life explains the lack of clear separation between the literature of Hinduism and the religion itself. Language was regarded as sacred, not simply utilitarian. For example, repetition of the word “*om*” during Hindu prayers is a religious act. The word “*om*” was a means of saying “yes” to the universe.

Historically, Sanskrit was considered the most perfect language. Because Indians believed that language was holy, they speculated about its power to convey ideas and emotions. Likewise, memory was also considered extremely important. The traditional way of studying a subject was to fully memorize an entire text, and then listen to a teacher’s lecture covering the material. It took a student years to memorize the entire 1028 hymns of the *Rig Veda*. This unyielding dedication preserved these hymns unchanged from 1500 BC until now. Memory was regarded as the safest way to guard a text.

**Sanskrit Literature**

Indian poetry and literature did not fully come into its own until several centuries after the *Rig Veda* was compiled. Using vivid language, Sanskrit literature was designed to assist people in achieving their dharma (fulfilling their duties and moral obligations). Kālidāsa, who lived between the fourth and sixth centuries, became recognized as the greatest Indian poet of all time. His plays and epic poems set the standard for the two genres and other authors used his writing for inspiration and guidance.

The Taj Mahal is a marble mausoleum in Agra, India. It was built by the emperor Shah Jahan in memory of his third wife.
INTERACTIVE 3.1 The Beginning of India–A BBC Documentary
RIG VEDA

Originally written in Sanskrit, the Rig Veda relies heavily on double negatives: “non non-existence.” It is the earliest known record of Indian religious thought and focuses on personal devotion and piety. Made up of 1028 hymns, the Rig Veda is a lengthy text enabling scholars to learn a great deal about the early Indian civilizations. The specific authors are unknown, but the work is believed to have originated with Aryans, an Indo-European civilization who migrated to India around 1400BC.

A Vedic hymn is a poem or song of praise that emphasizes the importance of gods and nature in Indian life. Vedic hymns ponder timeless questions, such as the origin of the universe and their relationship to those early beginnings. The hymns were designed to be chanted, so the diction and syntax reflect this intention; however, some of the original intent has been lost through its series of translations.

Utilizing personification and speculation, the Rig Veda brings to life the nature that surrounded the early Indians and allowed them to pose a series of questions, without concern for the “rightness” of their answers, speculating on how the earth as they know it was created. The Rig Veda establishes and archetypal setting of order from chaos--beginning with the idea that there was nothing in the beginning. The Rig Veda's view of creation is distinguished from other systems of belief because Hindus believe that the gods came after creation; a belief not held by other early civilizations.
There was neither non-existence nor existence then. There was neither the realm of space nor the sky which is beyond. What stirred? Where? In whose protection? Was there water, bottomlessly deep? There was neither death nor immortality then. There was no distinguishing sign of night nor of day. That One breathed, windless, by its own impulse. Other than that there was nothing beyond.

Darkness was hidden by darkness in the beginning, with no distinguishing sign, all this was water. The life force that was covered with emptiness, that One arose through the power of heat. Desire came upon that One in the beginning, that was the first seed of mind. Poets seeking in their heart with wisdom found the bond of existence and non-existence. Their cord was extended across. Was there below? Was there above? There were seed-placers, there were powers. There was impulse beneath, there was giving forth above.

Who really knows? Who will here proclaim it? Whence was it produced? Whence is this creation? The gods came afterwards, with the creation of this universe. Who then knows whence it has arisen?

Whence this creation has arisen - perhaps it formed itself, or perhaps it did not - the One who looks down on it, in the highest heaven, only He knows or perhaps He does not know.
The goddess Night has drawn near, looking about on many sides with her eyes. She has put on all her glories.

The immortal goddess has filled the wide space, the depths and the heights. She stems the tide of darkness with her light.

The goddess has drawn near, pushing aside her sister the twilight. Darkness, too, will give way.

As you came near to us today, we turned homeward to rest, as birds go to their home in a tree.

People who live in villages have gone home to rest, and animals with feet, and animals with wings, even the ever-searching hawks.

Ward off the she-wolf and the wolf; ward off the thief. O night full of waves, be easy for us to cross over.

Darkness--palpable black, and painted--has come upon me. O Dawn, banish it like a debt.

I have driven this hymn to you as the herdsman drives cows. Choose and accept it, O Night, daughter of the sky, like a song of praise to a conqueror.
Thinking About the *Rig Veda*

**“Creation Hymn”**

1. Identify the images in the poem that suggest the Aryans were an agricultural people. Give reasons for your choices.

2. The poet begins and ends this hymn with questions. Which of the questions are answered and which are not? Explain.

3. A paradox is a statement that seems contradictory but that may in fact be true. Explain what the poet means when he speaks of finding “the bond of existence in nonexistence.”

**“Night”**

1. In the first two verses, the poet tells us that the goddess Night “has put on all her glories” and “stems the tide of darkness with her light.” To what do you think the poet is referring to?

2. Notice the verbs and verbal phrases that the poet uses in this hymn: stems, pushing aside, ward off, banish. What do these words and phrases reveal about the poet’s attitude toward night?

3. Dawn is also a character in this hymn. What does the poet suggest about the relationship between Night and Dawn?
When trying something new, many of us resort to the Internet or “How-to” books from the library. Ancient Indians believed in the power of a “How-to” book and created one that would teach young royals how to become strong leaders. The education of Indian royalty included military training, instruction in art and literature, and guidance in the social graces: how to dress, how to behave with women, and how to spend one’s leisure time. Also important to the education of young princes was instruction in politics. Covering every base imaginable, princes could study administrative handbooks when they were older, and listened to fables as children prompting them what to do in a fun and interesting way.

*Aesop’s Fables* is the most popular example of animal fables used to teach a lesson. Stories such as the “Tortoise and the Hare” and the “Boy Who Cried Wolf” have been passed down from parents to children to teach specific lessons that are easier to understand when put in language that children can relate to. Similarly, the *Panchatantra* was a series of Indian animal fables designed to teach young princes how to be good kings.

Potentially dating back to 200BC (scholars are unable to pinpoint a specific origin date), the *Panchatantra* utilizes a mix of prose and poetry designed to princes remember the key story points, which could then be recalled later and applied to any variety of situations.
INTERACTIVE 3.2 Panchatantra—Numskull and the Rabbit
Numskull and the Rabbit

Numskull was a lion lording over the jungle, killing deer, boars, rabbits, bison’s, etc. Yet he was not happy with his kill. The victims too were unhappy and met the lion one day in a delegation. “Oh, lord,” they said, “why do you kill so many animals every day when you need only one for your food? Let us come to an understanding. From today, you need not move from your place. We will send an animal every day to you. That will spare you the trouble of hunting and us our lives.”

“Our forebears have said that the duty of the king is to rule and not to destroy. Just as a seed sprouts, grows into a tree and yields fruit, a people protected by the king come to his rescue in times of need.”

“What you say is true,” the lion said and added a condition. “If you fail to send one animal every day, I shall kill all of you.”

“Agreed,” said the animals and began roaming the forest without fear and sending one of their own folk to the lion for his lunch. One day it was the turn of a hare. He started leisurely on his last journey and saw a big well on the way and saw his own reflection when he peeped into the well from curiosity.

Suddenly an idea struck the hare. “I will somehow tempt the lion to the well and persuade him to jump into it,” the hare thought to himself. It was late in the evening when the hare reached the lion’s den. The lion was hungry and so angry and decided to kill all the animals when the hare came and knelt before him.

“First, you are too small for my lunch. Second, you have come late. I shall kill you and all the others too,” the lion warned the hare.

“My lord, it is not my fault or the fault of other animals.”

“Let me know who it is who delayed you and I will kill him at once.”

“Our folks have decided that it is my turn today. Since I do not make a full meal, they have sent three more hares with me for your meal. As we were all coming to you, a big lion came out of his den and demanded to know where we were all going.”
Question 1 of 4
Though small in comparison, the __________ proves to be an equal opponent for the lion.

- A. Goat
- B. Rabbit
- C. Badger
- D. Raccoon

“We are all going to Numskull as his meal according to our arrangement, we said. The big lion said that this jungle belonged to him and that all animals obeyed its orders. He also told us that you are a cheat and asked us to bring you to him for a trial of strength. Whoever is the victor will become the king. He commanded me to summon you to his fort. That’s why I am late. It is now for you to decide,” the hare told the lion.

“In that case,” Numskull told the hare, “show me that lion. I will kill him and have him for lunch. According to the elders territory, friendship and gold are the rewards of war. Wise men do not go to war unless there are gains.”

“Yes, my lord,” said the hare, “what you say is true. But the big lion lives in a fort. He knows that the king without a fort is like a cobra without fangs and an elephant without heat.”

“Stop that nonsense and bring him here. Don’t you know that you have to crush the enemy and disease at the first opportunity? Otherwise, they will grow in strength and crush you.”

“But the big lion seems to be very strong. Haven’t you heard elders saying that one should not go to war without assessing one’s own strength and the strength of the enemy? He who meets the enemy in haste will perish like the locusts in a fire.”

Growing impatient, the lion roared, “why all this tall talk. Show him to me.” Asking the lion to accompany him, the hare took him to the well. He told the lion that the big lion was there in that fort and showed him the well. The lion then peeped into the well and mistaking his reflection in the water for the big lion jumped into the well to kill him. Thus the foolish lion perished and all the animals in the jungle lived happily ever after.
INDIA—CURRENT CONTEXT

One of the most populous countries in the world, India is home to more than 1.2 billion people. Rooted in the traditional values that have been present for generations, India finds itself in a unique situation as it attempts to combine its history with its future.

Facing issues relating to food, medical care, and the economy, India must come to terms with a host of situations relative to their bulging population. Because the population is so large, many Indians live in poor conditions and earn only a meager living. Families face difficult decisions regarding raising a family and providing educational opportunities for their children.

On the flip-side of their population issues, India is also home to some of the largest technology companies in the world. This influx in corporate needs calls for an increase in skilled labor.

With the continued growth of its population, India will undoubtedly struggle to find a balance between serving the needs of its population with honoring the desires of the technology-based corporations who call India home.
Why Indian Women are Victims of Sterilization 'Cattle Camps'

November 16, 2014
Aljazeera America
By Lisa De Bode

India’s reproductive health policies are firmly rooted in state-enforced discriminatory practices, experts say.

The deaths this week of at least 15 women who were sterilized in an Indian health camp allegedly stocked with tainted drugs has resurfaced memories of the country’s mass sterilization campaigns during the 1970s, when millions of Indian men were forced to undergo the procedure as part of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi’s family planning policies.

Forty years later, though, India’s sterilization campaign has mostly claimed female victims. That, in part, is explained by the nature of the medical procedure — vasectomies are safer, medical experts say, than the operation women undergo, which involves cutting and tying fallopian tubes through a keyhole-sized opening in the abdomen.

Another explanation lies into sheer figures, which began to shift radically in the mid-1990s. Less than one percent of the Indian male population chooses to undergo the sterilization procedure, while nearly four out of ten women choose sterilization — the highest percentage in the world, according to the World Health Organization. Men’s reluctance, centered on cultural taboos, comes despite more generous financial compensation for the procedure: In most states, men who choose to be sterilized are paid $33 by the Indian government. Women, on the other hand, typically receive $23.

India’s reproductive health policies are firmly rooted in state-enforced discriminatory practices, according to Abhijit Das, director of the Center for Health and Social Justice in New Delhi, India. Health care workers tasked with hitting sterilization targets deliberately seek out women and don’t inform them about the risks of the procedure or alternatives of birth control, said Das.

“There is no other method being provided consistently,” he said, adding that a fear of overpopulation in Indian policy circles drives politicians to prefer female sterilization over other methods of population control. Das said lawmakers regard poor women in rural areas — where 850 million Indians live — as “irresponsible breeders.”

Indian woman shows the location of her incision following sterilization surgery at an Indian health camp.
The massive demand for sterilization means that at clinics that house six beds up to 100 women lie on floors waiting for surgery, said Das. Some state-employed surgeons operate on as many as 13,000 women per year, like Dr. R.K. Gupta, who was arrested on Wednesday on charges of breaching government protocol when he plowed through more than 83 surgeries in less than three hours at a health camp in Chhattisgarh state.

“It’s basically like cattle camps, it absolutely inhuman,” said Das. “These venues are not meant for so many people.”

In 1994, global health officials at a conference on population and development in Cairo, Egypt, decided to move away from coercive sterilization methods, favoring informed consent. Around the same time, the science of female laparoscopies improved, and it became easier to perform the procedure.

These two influences, said Das, influenced India policy makers to focus sterilization campaigns on women instead of men. Women, furthermore, are considered less politically powerful and more susceptible to pressure, said Das.

“We think we can push women, we can coerce women,” said Poonam Muttreja, executive director of the Population Foundation of India.

Leaving men out of the family planning conversation has put the burden of population control entirely on women. Contraceptive counselors, Muttreja said, do not discuss vasectomies as a suitable alternative to female sterilization.

“Indian men think that their virility will be affected and that they become weak. That’s a myth, and the government has done nothing to correct that,” Muttreja added.

India’s family planning policies hit the country’s poor and underprivileged women hardest, say experts. Laws, for example, that bar people with more than three children from holding office in local village councils disproportionately affect socially disadvantaged groups, according to a study backed by the United Nations’ Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA). The policy also led to a rise in forced abortions and abandonment of female fetuses, the researchers found.

“India’s a democracy,” Muttreja said. “It’s not necessarily a democracy for poor women. But for men if you’re poor, you still have choices. If you’re a woman, you have less.”
MUMBAI, India — Gaurav Bamania, a hedge fund analyst who works in one of the many downtown office towers that now dominate the skyline of India’s financial capital, could easily eat lunch at one of the city’s better restaurants. Instead, Mr. Bamania, 26, follows a practice dating back over a century to the early years of British rule: he has a hot meal, lovingly cooked at home by his grandmother, and delivered to his desk every workday. In India, where many traditions are being rapidly overturned as a result of globalization, the practice of eating a home-cooked meal for lunch lives on.

To achieve that in this sprawling urban amalgamation of an estimated 25 million people, where long commutes by train and bus are routine, Mumbai residents rely on an intricately organized, labor-intensive operation that puts some automated high-tech systems to shame. It manages to deliver tens of thousands of meals to workplaces all over the city with near-clockwork precision.

At the heart of this unusual network is a chain of delivery men called dabbawallas.

The word comes from tiffin dabba, a colonial reference to a box containing a light meal, and walla, the man who carries. The precision and efficiency of the dabbawallas have been likened to the Internet, where packets identified by unique markers are ferried to their destination by means of a complex network.

“There is a service called FedEx that is similar to ours — but they don’t deliver lunch,” said one dabbawalla, Dhondu Kondaji Chowdhury.

The British introduced the service 125 years ago after the city was flooded by workers from different regions. The dabbawallas made it possible for workers to bridge the distance between work and home and between regional food tastes.

The service has until recently thrived purely on word of mouth. But it is now getting a high-tech lift, as the dabbawallas have joined up with Web service providers. An office worker, with someone lined up at home to cook, can sign up for the service through text messaging or an e-mail message.

“The old fashioned, inexpensive dabbawalla system is a rare survivor in this fast-paced world.”

The Chiplunkars are loyal customers of 64-year-old Mr. Chowdhury. Like many fellow dabbawallas, Mr. Chowdhury is a migrant from a rural village in the region, still illiterate but having learned on the job to read the numbers and letters painted
“This is the best profession for somebody like me in Mumbai,” Mr. Chowdhury said, pausing from his rounds, which consist of walking up and down winding staircases in old Mumbai apartment blocks, carrying food-laden containers in the morning and returning empty ones later.

With the 5,000 rupees (about $123) he earns every month, he manages to support his wife, son and daughter in a two-room home in the distant Goregaon suburb. Mr. Chowdhury dreams of sending his son, a ninth-grade student, to college. Yet, there is no dearth of dabbawallas as younger men stream into the city from the vicinity of Mr. Chowdhury’s native village.

For Suresh Shivekar, who hauls lunch boxes by train from the Versova suburb to Colaba, the workday starts at 8:30 a.m. as he sprints to collect lunches. He transports the boxes by bicycle and arrives at the train station not long afterward. The boxes are re-sorted there, loaded on to a large wooden crate, which Mr. Shivekar heaves onto the train. On a regular day, the luggage compartment at the front of the train is a sea of lunch boxes, all coded in colored paint.

Mr. Shivekar arrives at Colaba at 11:30 in the morning, where he gets together with a group of other dabbawallas. In a crowded pavement with barely enough space for pedestrians, Mr. Shivekar and his fellow dabbawallas furiously trade boxes, each batch headed for different buildings.

The boxes are then hauled on a wooden cart through the bustling Mumbai traffic, with each lunch personally delivered to its rightful owner. Rarely do Mr. Shivekar, Mr. Chowdhury or any of the dabbawallas know the name of the person or the company they deliver the lunches to.

All they know from the code is the building and the floor number.

At 1 p.m., when all the lunches are delivered, Mr. Shivekar and a group of dabbawallas break for their own lunch, settling down in a nearby corner to quickly eat the meals they have carried from their homes.

In the afternoon, the thousands of dabbawallas collect empty lunch boxes and board the trains back. Rarely has Mr. Shivekar missed a delivery or delivered the wrong lunch — on the rare occasion he has, the painted numbers on the boxes had worn off.

And that reliability pays off with loyal customers. Anand Sahasrebuddhe, 46, who works in the Churchgate offices of ACC Limited, one of India’s largest cement and concrete makers, has been depending on the dabbawallas for 26 years.

“He simply loves home-cooked food,” said his mother, Suman Sahasrebuddhe.
India’s Particulate Problem

February 9, 2014
The New York Times
By Michael Greenstone and Rohini Pande

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — Two years ago, China seemed oblivious to the extraordinary levels of air pollution in many of its cities and the health consequences. But over the past six months, there has been an explosion of information on pollution concentrations, warnings from the media and new policies from the government. It took a long time, but change is happening.

Could India be next? In January, India was startled by the release of the annual country rankings of the Yale Environmental Performance Index, which highlighted its troubling air pollution. The calls for change have started: On Monday, the country’s powerful Supreme Court will hear an amicus plea on the worsening pollution in New Delhi.

Despite a national election coming in May, air pollution has been largely absent from the debate between the two major political parties, Bharatiya Janata and the Indian National Congress. But many successful Indian environmental policies have come from the Supreme Court, and we encourage it to proceed in this vein by embracing more transparent and flexible market-based regulations to better protect the health of its citizens and allow robust economic growth to continue.

Particulate matter air pollution, which is produced primarily by power plants, industry and vehicles, is deadly, causing short- and long-term cardiorespiratory problems such as strokes, heart attacks and cancer. Throughout India, the extreme levels of this pollution are cause for concern.

According to the most recent data from India’s Central Pollution Control Board, the 2010 average for respirable particulate matter concentration across 180 monitored Indian cities was six times what the World Health Organization considers safe and twice India’s own national standards. And the concentration in Delhi is about 13 times higher than the W.H.O. guideline.

A 2013 study (co-written by one of us, Michael Greenstone) measured the effects of particulate matter on life expectancies in China. It found that an additional 100 micrograms per cubic meter of particulate matter in the atmosphere reduced life expectancy at birth by about three years. Using this metric, we estimated that the 200 million people who live in the 180 Indian cities would lose an average of 3.3 years of life because of particulate matter concentrations that exceed India’s standards.
This translates into the loss of about 650 million years of life for just the one-sixth of India’s population that lives in these cities. Satellite data makes clear that pollution also exists outside the monitored zones where the other one billion people who make up the rest of India live. So the total loss of life expectancy is much greater.

The recent decades of economic growth reflected, in part, significant reductions of regulatory constraints, and the fear of slowing growth has reduced the political will to increase regulations on emissions. But India can continue that growth and provide its citizens with a healthier environment by adopting a regulatory system that is both effective and efficient.

India’s current command-and-control style of regulating is handicapped on both counts. It mandates that industrial plants purchase expensive pollution abatement equipment and specifies common pollution standards across the board. Because emissions reductions are much more costly for some plants than for others, these standards are excessively onerous for some and fail to compel the most cost-effective reductions.

Regulators at under-sourced pollution control boards must rely on infrequent and often unreliable manual monitoring samplings of emissions by their staffs, which in the best case occur only a couple of times per year, to identify the plants that are violating the standards. As a result, expensive pollution abatement technologies that plants are mandated to install are not used efficiently and sometimes not at all.

So the outcome is doubly bad: Regulations impose substantial costs on the economy while pollution emissions often exceed the state-mandated limit.
Even worse, any violations of these standards are criminal offenses. This means that to penalize violators, regulators must file and win a criminal case in India’s overburdened justice system, making enforcement difficult. So the only potential, swift alternative for regulators is to close down a business — but this, too, is often challenging to enforce.

Cap-and-trade would impose a cost on polluters for every unit of pollution emitted and create incentives to reduce those emissions. At the same time, it would decrease the economic burden of regulation by allowing the regulated firms to coordinate among themselves to hit a specific emissions reduction target in the most cost-effective manner.

In the 1980s, the United States instituted a cap-and-trade market to solve the problem of acid rain; it greatly reduced sulfur-dioxide emissions at a fraction of the projected cost. However, the American experience makes clear that cap-and-trade succeeds only when governments are fully committed to the enforcement of the rules.

India has taken initial steps toward implementing cap-and-trade markets for particulate matter pollution. With guidance from the national regulator, some state regulators are already piloting continuous emissions monitoring and training potential participants for cap-and-trade markets. But more support is necessary to get India’s fledgling cap-and-trade markets off the ground.

When the Supreme Court takes this up on Monday, it should consider two key policy changes that would allow India to more efficiently regulate pollution.

First, stationary sources, like power and industrial plants, should be required to install continuous emissions monitoring equipment in order to provide reliable real-time reporting of emissions by polluters and to make these data publicly available. While increased transparency about pollution greatly enhances regulators’ effectiveness in its own right, it is also a critical ingredient for a cap-and-trade market.

The second critical ingredient: Instead of having to take polluters to court for breaking the law, regulators should be authorized to impose financial penalties on firms that breach emissions regulations. The United States’ successful cap-and-trade markets were, in part, made possible by a little-known but very important part of the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments that enhanced the Environmental Protection Agency’s ability to levy large civil fines on environmental violators.

It is also essential that the pilot markets are rigorously evaluated in stages to ensure that regulators and the public are informed about costs and benefits.

Pollution is not simply an unavoidable side effect of economic growth, but a reflection of societal choices. Seizing these opportunities for reform would lead to longer and healthier lives.
Two Technologies Propelling India Forward

November 28, 2012
Forbes
Iqbal Quadir

The well-known success of information technologies (IT) in India is actually two successes, with two sets of implications and potential. To understand these two phenomena, it may be useful to think through what Joseph Schumpeter and Adam Smith have said about economic progress. Let me explain.

About 100 years ago, Schumpeter argued that a special type of people, called entrepreneurs—who stray from the beaten path, break the mold and create something new—are the ones who produce economic growth. In Schumpeter’s vision, the main role of entrepreneurs is not to invent technologies, provide capital or manage businesses. Rather, they seize new opportunities by combining economic forces in new ways—by producing new products, employing new technologies, pursuing new processes, or addressing new markets. In Schumpeter’s language, entrepreneurs provide “the will and action” to forge new reality. Empowered by new IT, that is exactly what Indian entrepreneurs like Narayan Murthy, Nandan Nilekani, Ajim Premji and Shiv Nadar began doing about 30 years ago, breaking through the Kafkaesque bureaucracy of the Indian License Raj. These entrepreneurs combined at least three economic forces: rapidly falling prices in computing technology; world-class programing talent in India at relatively low cost thanks to the country’s then slow economic growth; and the rising costs of software production in high-income countries.

Their formula worked, spectacularly. Satellite connections in the mid-1990s and fiber optic connections by 2000 further propelled the digital entrepreneurs by allowing them to ship their exports without the impediments of poor physical infrastructures or overbearing bureaucracies. In short, entrepreneurs like Murthy, Nilekani, Premji, Nadar and others have successfully combined low-cost Indian skills with increasingly cheaper computers and communications to address a market eager to contain costs. Today, the Indian IT industry is valued at over $67 billion in 2000 constant US dollars, employing 3 million. The industry has given rise to ripple effects by increasing demand in housing, transport, insurance, entertainment and other industries, employing an additional 12 million and advancing Indian GDP by another $67 billion in 2000 constant US dollars.

There are larger effects of this success: India’s IT infrastructure has improved with more than 25 million Internet connections providing access to 150 million; the younger generation has found meaningful role models in these exemplary entrepreneurs; and the industry has instilled in many Indians confidence and a can-do attitude. There is much to celebrate in this achievement that perhaps we can call the Schumpeterian effect of Indian IT.

Meanwhile, less than two decades ago in the mid-1990s, the relentless increase in processing power of microchips and corresponding price declines unleashed another form of IT, commonly known as mobile phones. Entrepreneurs like Sunil Mittal and industrialists like the Ambanis, among others, introduced this device with its first killer-app: voice communication. One beauty of this IT device is that it is fundamentally egalitarian. While the “regular” IT industry employed the successful graduates of elite universities, mobiles could be useful to millions in India who could not read or
write, but had the same desire and need to advance as anyone else. While the regular IT industry catered to the global needs of cost-effective software and business processing, mobiles served the communication needs of average Indian citizens.

Mobiles provide a near universal means of advancement because better communication and coordination save time (which translates to saving labor), money, and opportunities. This leads to higher productivity and earnings, enabling people to purchase the service. People can spend pennies to make calls while advancing by dollars. The fact that millions of people subscribed to mobiles is evidence enough that they are economically empowering because low-income people cannot sustainably indulge in purchases that do not advance them economically.

The spread of mobiles is the modern-day proof of the "natural effort of every individual to better his own condition" that Adam Smith considered the cornerstone of a prosperous society. When Smith wrote The Wealth of Nations nearly 250 years ago to find ways to foster "universal opulence which extends itself to the lowest ranks of the people," he found this "natural effort" to be "so powerful...that it is alone...capable of carrying on the society to wealth and prosperity." Further, the low-cost and widespread means of communication embodied by mobiles furthers the process of specialization and exchange that Smith championed as the key means of increased productivity and efficient resource allocation.

In short, the "natural effort of every individual to better his own condition" found expression, affordably and universally, in a hand-held technology. People of all walks of life reached out for mobiles, even if some mobile businesses started by selling services to high-end customers. Mobile businesses soon found plentiful evidence for Smith’s assertion that the “whole consumption of...those below the middling rank...is in every country much greater, not only in quantity, but in value, than that of the middling and of those above the middling rank.” Though there were no mobile phones in India as late as 1995, there are 940 million today, equal to roughly 80 percent of the population. Although the mobile phenomenon also involved Schumpeter’s entrepreneurs, let us call this second IT phenomenon the Smithian effect because it more readily contributes to the cause of “universal opulence.”

Does the Smithian effect on Indian GDP compare to the $134 billion Schumpeterian effect of the regular IT industry? The answer is an emphatic “yes.” When one adds up the small advancements made by a billion people, the resulting impact can be quite powerful. To roughly calculate, I build on a study of 120 countries by Christine Zhen-Wei Qiang of the World Bank that found that a 10
A 0.8 percent increase in mobile phone penetration correlates with a 0.8 percent average increase in GDP growth. I calculate, conservatively, that the increase of 0 to 80 percent mobile phone penetration in India over 15 years contributed on average an additional one percent annual economic growth from 1996, when GDP was $381 billion, to 2011, when GDP was $1,040 billion (both measured in 2000 constant US dollars). What would the Indian GDP have been in 2011, in 2000 constant US dollars, if it had grown one less percentage point each year? The answer is $903 billion: a $137 billion difference, in 2000 constant US dollars, in India’s economy due to mobile phones. I consider this calculation conservative for at least two reasons. First, though the average penetration of all of India is 80 percent, higher-income pockets are likely to have higher penetration and thus a greater growth-boosting effect on larger incomes. Second, the assumption of one additional percent of growth over a 15-year period possibly overestimates the effect in the early years, but underestimates to a far greater degree in later years when the economy is larger, the penetration is higher and the network effect is greater.

In addition to their comparable effects on GDP, the two IT industries are also similar with regard to job creation and in terms of ripple effects in other industries. In fact, the mobile industry has also enabled Indian immigrant workers in high-income countries to better connect with their homes in India. Immigrants in high-income countries whose relatives have low incomes even by low-income country standards tend to send money home; they sent $53 billion to India in 2010.

While the aggregate GDP contributions of what I call the Schumpeterian and Smithian effects are comparable, and both have been important breakthroughs in the Indian economy, I believe the Smithian effect is more powerful for the country. First, it leverages India’s greatest strength, namely, its own population. As communication facilitates more efficient collaboration within its population and greater specialization-and-exchange within its vast market, the Indian economy will move steadily towards greater optimization. While India’s regular IT industry contributes to greater efficiency in the global economy, the mobile industry engenders greater efficiency within India itself. Second, the Smithian effect mitigates rising inequality in India, a serious issue: 48 billionaires in India own 10.9 percent of the GDP (in China, another country with significant inequality, 95 billionaires represent only 2.6 percent of GDP). Third, rising incomes in the poorest ranks spur greater innovations: entrepreneurs find markets with greater purchasing power, larger markets give greater economies of scale for producers, and production facilities search for labor saving innovations.

Mobile phones are in effect handheld and connected computers and hold great potential in this role, since businesses in promising areas such as payments and banking, healthcare, and entertainment require combining the services of multiple providers. Like computers, mobiles can connect multiple providers; store and process huge amounts of data in various forms (text, images, video, audio); and create and deliver complex services using intricate sets of logic. Businesses are being launched on the mobile platform to provide a wide range of services from medical advice and diagnosis, to pharmaceutical authentication, to payment and finance systems. Although NGOs and governments administer many of the emerging services, there are also myriad
for-profit enterprises that, using mobiles as a platform, are meeting needs ordinarily considered appropriate for the state to provide. For instance, mDhil sells health tips to 18 to 25 year olds through text messages, conveying confidential information on issues from nutrition to various ailments for the tech-savvy age group for a monthly charge of 30 Rupees. A company called Beam is providing micro-payment services for customers without bank accounts or credit cards.

As mobiles gain greater computing power and smartphones further proliferate in India, the emergence of such services on the mobile platform, and their corresponding economic benefits, will accelerate. Expertise in developing apps and software for mobiles is gaining momentum, and, moreover, smartphones tend to loosen the hold of network operators on phones, allowing small entrepreneurs to create products on the mobile platform. A lack of other infrastructures strengthens “the natural effort to better ones conditions,” leaving Indian citizens ready to embrace these new ideas and services if they indeed advance people.

India, a country of many strengths, has yet another in the Smithian effect of mobile phones. The country can serve as an example for other low-income countries in South Asia, Africa and Latin America, where innovations that work in India are likely to work as well. And, just as individual economic advances have added up to rival the effect of the formidable regular IT industry, these minute advances in total can create world-class business opportunities. The innovators and entrepreneurs currently working for multinational companies may do well to turn their attention to the several billions of people who lack many fundamental services but hold powerful computers in their hands.
The darkest places in hell are reserved for those who maintain their neutrality in times of moral crisis.

~Dante Alighieri
Nestled between the Latin civilization of the Roman Empire and the Renaissance Period of Greece and Rome, the Middle Ages fills a significant historical gap in Europe. The period is marked initially by the decline of the classical Roman Empire and is considered complete following the onset of the Renaissance in southern Europe. The end date of the time period is argued amongst scholars considering that the Renaissance arrived in southern Europe first and slowly made its way north.

Heavily influenced by Germanic tribes, the previous Roman Empire was dissolved as varying tribes took over the lands they settled and created individual kingdoms. What had once been a unified empire now showcased a variety of different cultures and traditions, thus adding to the changes experienced throughout this time period.

Adding to the “middle-child” mentality possessed by the Middle Ages, this time period is linked to the decline of Latin cultural dominance. The Germanic tribes, though converts to Christianity and by default, speakers of Latin, altered traditional Latin and created a new family of languages, including French, Spanish, and Italian. These new mediums of communication caused a cultural split. The Church, rooted in its Latin past, was no longer able to share ideas with its modern followers who spoke a variety of new languages. This inability to share ideas easily caused some followers to fall
away from the Church, but encouraged others to find unique ways to bridge the ideas of modern society with the traditional views and values of the Church. A great example of merging between past and present is found in Dante Alighieri’s *The Divine Comedy*, where Alighieri blends the classical poet Virgil with the modern issues presented by the secular world Alighieri lives in.

Another prominent element of the Middle Ages is the Crusades. Fueled forward by Pope Urban II in 1095, Christian kings across Europe joined forces in order to regain the Holy Land. Followed by an ebb-and-flow of success and failure, Jerusalem was regained in 1099, but ultimately fell again as Islamic Arab armies reorganized and forced the crusaders out of the Holy Land. By 1187 the Holy Land was once again occupied under Islamic influence.

Though limited in terms of military success, the Crusades opened Europe to the wonders possessed by the Middle East. As crusaders returned home from battle, they brought with them textiles, new spices, and dozens of unfamiliar products. Inspired by these new items, commerce sprung up across Europe and created a new class of merchants based initially in the Italian cities of Venice, Florence, and Genoa.

Despite managing issues as complex as plague and poverty, the installation of trade routes between East and West marks the Middle Ages as a pivotal era in history. What started with the sharing of products developed into the sharing of ideas, cultures, and traditions. By the end of the Middle Ages (approximately the year 1300) many areas began embarking into an enlightened era; and by 1500 all of Europe was deeply entrenched in the glamour and new vision provided by the Renaissance.
Ovid (Publius Ovidius Naso) was born in the Abruzzi region of Italy in 43BC, one year after Julius Caesar’s assassination. Well-educated, including being trained in law, Ovid chose life as a poet, much to the frustration of his family. Ovid loved Rome and wrote many verses describing its vibrant lifestyle. After publishing many books, including *The Art of Love, Cures for Love*, and *Cosmetics, or How to Care for Your Face*. Ovid is most known, however, for his mythological epic the *Metamorphoses*.

At the peak of his popularity and without reason, Augustus exiled Ovid from his beloved Rome. Banished to Tomis, Ovid was removed from the high society he had become accustomed to and no one could speak Latin with him. Scholars think that it was the *Metamorphoses* that upset Augustus. Not only had Ovid proven his writing prowess with the epic, but he posed a threat to Augustus’s hope of moral reform in Rome. Years of writing reprieves and seeking an end to his exile never yielded Ovid his desired result. Augustus refused him entrance to Rome and Ovid died without ever seeing his beloved home again.

The story of Pyramus and Thisbe, two young lovers, echoes that of Romeo and Juliet. Shakespeare was an avid fan of Ovid and studied him in school. While penning his great tragedy, Shakespeare certainly would have included ideas from the stories he read in childhood. “Pyramus and Thisbe” is one section of the *Metamorphoses*. Chronicling the desperation of the couple and their desire to be together, Ovid tells the sorrowful tale of what can happen when miscommunication occurs and assumptions cloud one’s judgement.
THE METAMORPHOSES

“Pyramus and Thisbe”

In Babylon, where first her queen, for state
Rais’d walls of brick magnificently great,
Liv’d Pyramus, and Thisbe, lovely pair!
He found no eastern youth his equal there,
And she beyond the fairest nymph was fair.
A closer neighbourhood was never known,
Tho’ two the houses, yet the roof was one.
Acquaintance grew; th’ acquaintance they im-
prove
To friendship; friendship ripen’d into love:

Love had been crown’d, but impotently mad,
What parents could not hinder, they forbad.
For with fierce flames young Pyramus still burn’d,
And grateful Thisbe flames as fierce return’d.
Aloud in words their thoughts they dare not break,
But silent stand; and silent looks can speak.
The fire of love the more it is supprest,
The more it glows, and rages in the breast.

When the division-wall was built, a chink
Was left, the cement unobserv’d to shrink.
So slight the cranny, that it still had been
For centuries unclos’d, because unseen.
But oh! what thing so small, so secret lies,
Which scapes, if form’d for love, a lover’s eyes?
Ev’n in this narrow chink they quickly found
A friendly passage for a trackless sound.
Safely they told their sorrows, and their joys,
In whisper’d murmurs, and a dying noise,
By turns to catch each other’s breath they strove,
And suck’d in all the balmy breeze of love.
Oft as on diff’rent sides they stood, they cry’d,
Malicious wall, thus lovers to divide!
Suppose, thou should’st a while to us give place
To lock, and fasten in a close embrace:
But if too much to grant so sweet a bliss,
Indulge at least the pleasure of a kiss.
We scorn ingratitude: to thee, we know,
This safe conveyance of our minds we owe.

Thus they their vain petition did renew
’Till night, and then they softly sigh’d adieu.
But first they strove to kiss, and that was all;
Their kisses dy’d untasted on the wall.
Soon as the morn had o’er the stars prevail’d,
And warm’d by Phoebus, flow’rs their dews exhal’d,
The lovers to their well-known place return,
Alike they suffer, and alike they mourn.
At last their parents they resolve to cheat
(If to deceive in love be call'd deceit),
To steal by night from home, and thence unknown
To seek the fields, and quit th' unfaithful town.
But, to prevent their wand'ring in the dark,
They both agree to fix upon a mark;
A mark, that could not their designs expose:
The tomb of Ninus was the mark they chose.
There they might rest secure beneath the shade,
Which boughs, with snowy fruit encumber'd, made:
A wide-spread mulberry its rise had took
Just on the margin of a gurgling brook.
Impatient for the friendly dusk they stay;
And chide the slowness of departing day;
In western seas down sunk at last the light,
From western seas up-rose the shades of night.
The loving Thisbe ev'n prevents the hour,
With cautious silence she unlocks the door,
And veils her face, and marching thro' the gloom
Swiftly arrives at th' assignation-tomb.
For still the fearful sex can fearless prove;
Boldly they act, if spirited by love.
When lo! a lioness rush'd o'er the plain,
Grimly besmear'd with blood of oxen slain:
And what to the dire sight new horrors brought,
To slake her thirst the neighb'ring spring she sought.
Which, by the moon, when trembling Thisbe spies,
Wing'd with her fear, swift, as the wind, she flies;
And in a cave recovers from her fright,
But drop'd her veil, confounded in her flight.

When sated with repeated draughts, again
The queen of beasts scour'd back along the plain,
She found the veil, and mouthing it all o'er,
With bloody jaws the lifeless prey she tore.

The youth, who could not cheat his guards so soon,
Late came, and noted by the glimm'ring moon
Some savage feet, new printed on the ground,
His cheeks turn'd pale, his limbs no vigour found;
But when, advancing on, the veil he spied
Distinct'd with blood, and ghastly torn, he cried,
One night shall death to two young lovers give,
But she deserv'd unnumber'd years to live!
'Tis I am guilty, I have thee betray'd,
Who came not early, as my charming maid.
Whatever slew thee, I the cause remain,
I nam'd, and fix'd the place where thou wast slain.
Ye lions from your neighb'ring dens repair,
Pity the wretch, this impious body tear!
But cowards thus for death can idly cry;
The brave still have it in their pow'r to die.
Then to th' appointed tree he hastes away,
The veil first gather'd, tho' all rent it lay:
The veil all rent yet still it self endears,
He kist, and kissing, wash'd it with his tears.
Tho' rich (he cry'd) with many a precious stain,
Still from my blood a deeper tincture gain.
Then in his breast his shining sword he drown'd,
And fell supine, extended on the ground.
As out again the blade lie dying drew,
Out spun the blood, and streaming upwards flew.  
So if a conduit-pipe e'er burst you saw,  
Swift spring the gushing waters thro' the flaw:  
Then spouting in a bow, they rise on high,  
And a new fountain plays amid the sky.  
The berries, stain'd with blood, began to show  
A dark complexion, and forgot their snow;  
While fatten'd with the flowing gore, the root  
Was doom'd for ever to a purple fruit.

Mean-time poor Thisbe fear'd, so long she stay'd,  
Her lover might suspect a perjur'd maid.  
Her fright scarce o'er, she strove the youth to find  
With ardent eyes, which spoke an ardent mind.  
Already in his arms, she hears him sigh  
At her destruction, which was once so nigh.  
The tomb, the tree, but not the fruit she knew,  
The fruit she doubted for its alter'd hue.  
Still as she doubts, her eyes a body found  
Quiv'ring in death, and gasping on the ground.  
She started back, the red her cheeks forsook,  
And ev'ry nerve with thrilling horrors shook.  
So trembles the smooth surface of the seas,  
If brush'd o'er gently with a rising breeze.  
But when her view her bleeding love confest,  
She shriek'd, she tore her hair, she beat her breast.  
She rais'd the body, and embrac'd it round,  
And bath'd with tears unfeign'd the gaping wound.  
Then her warm lips to the cold face apply'd,  
And is it thus, ah! thus we meet, she cry'd!

My Pyramus! whence sprung thy cruel fate?  
My Pyramus!- ah! speak, ere 'tis too late.  
I, thy own Thisbe, but one word implore,  
One word thy Thisbe never ask'd before.  
At Thisbe's name, awak'd, he open'd wide  
His dying eyes; with dying eyes he try'd  
On her to dwell, but clos'd them slow, and dy'd.

The fatal cause was now at last explor'd,  
Her veil she knew, and saw his sheathless sword:  
From thy own hand thy ruin thou hast found,  
She said, but love first taught that hand to wound,  
Ev'n I for thee as bold a hand can show,  
And love, which shall as true direct the blow.  
I will against the woman's weakness strive,  
And never thee, lamented youth, survive.  
The world may say, I caus'd, alas! thy death,  
But saw thee breathless, and resign'd my breath.  
Fate, tho' it conquers, shall no triumph gain,  
Fate, that divides us, still divides in vain.

Now, both our cruel parents, hear my pray'r;  
My pray'r to offer for us both I dare;  
Oh! see our ashes in one urn confin'd,  
Whom love at first, and fate at last has join'd.  
The bliss, you envy'd, is not our request;  
Lovers, when dead, may sure together rest.  
Thou, tree, where now one lifeless lump is laid,  
Ere-long o'er two shalt cast a friendly shade.  
Still let our loves from thee be understood,
Still witness in thy purple fruit our blood.
She spoke, and in her bosom plung'd the sword,
All warm and reeking from its slaughter'd lord.
The pray'r, which dying Thisbe had preferr'd,
Both Gods, and parents, with compassion heard.
The whiteness of the mulberry soon fled,
And rip'ning, sadden'd in a dusky red:
While both their parents their lost children mourn,
And mix their ashes in one golden urn.

Thus did the melancholy tale conclude,
And a short, silent interval ensu'd.
The next in birth unloos'd her artful tongue,
And drew attentive all the sister-throng.

**Question 1 of 5**
Pyramus and Thisbe had their parents' approval to wed.

- A. True
- B. False
DANTE ALIGHIERI/ INFERNO BACKGROUND

Born into a politically turbulent Florence in 1265, Dante Alighieri grew up in a world where being on the “right” side of the political arena proved to be critical in determining one’s future. The Guelphs and the Ghibellines, two opposing political groups, divided Florence. The Ghibellines supported the Holy Roman emperor in politics whereas the Guelphs favored the pope. After exiling the Ghibellines, the Guelphs struggled to unify Florence and eventually split themselves into two parties: the Whites (supporting the Roman empire) and the Blacks (supporting the papacy).

Scholars suggest that Dante probably attended the University of Bologna, where he received a premier education in law and rhetoric. Dante took full advantage of his learning opportunities and was introduced to the city’s poetic tradition. Dante’s time in Bologna would result in a strong collection of lyrical poetry and the foundation for the Divine Comedy.

Finding himself caught between the political conflict of Florence, Dante sided with the White Guelphs. Aided by Pope Boniface VIII and the French, the Black Guelphs rose to power in Florence and in 1302 Dante was exiled for his participation in the Battle of Campaldino and his aversion to the Black Guelphs. Writing a series of letters pleading his case and requesting papal consideration, Dante begged to return to Florence. His request would never be granted. Dante died in Ravenna, Italy in 1321.

Dante faced backlash from assigning prominent historical figures to the circle in hell that corresponded with the sins Dante believed they had committed.
Gustave Dore, a French artist, created a series illustrating Alighieri’s pinnacle work—The Divine Comedy.

Background: The Inferno

The Divine Comedy consists of three parts: the Inferno, the Purgatorio, and the Paradiso. The Inferno chronicles Dante’s poetic journey as a man attempting to reconcile himself to a seemingly undeserved exile through the lens of love. Symbolically starting on Good Friday and ending on the vigil of Easter Sunday, Dante shares with readers a picture of a society in despair, not yet redeemed by the crucifixion of Christ, and ends with a renewal of hope, having been saved by the grace of God. Inspired by the Holy Trinity, Dante utilizes the number three throughout his work. The Divine Comedy is the last piece of a poetic trilogy and is made up of three parts. The Inferno, the Purgatorio, and the Paradiso each contain thirty-three cantos and are written using terza rima, a series of three-line stanzas. From beginning to end, the number three is crucial to how the piece of literature works.

Using the most well-known Latin poet read during the Middle Ages, Dante selects Virgil to be his tour guide through hell. Escorting Dante beyond hell was Beatrice Portinari. Initially the subject of Dante’s love poetry, Beatrice evolves into Dante’s ideal woman and her selection as his tour guide was certainly intentional.

According to Dante, hell is divided into different circles, each boasting a different group of sinners based on the gravity of their sins. The further into hell that Virgil and Dante descend, the more serious the crimes of the sinners become. The virtuous pagans rest peacefully in Limbo, a place without pain or hope. Medieval thinking assigns the souls of unbaptized children and righteous people who lived before Christ’s birth to this circle. Closely behind are the lustful, the gluttonous, the avaricious, the prodigal, and the wrathful. The Wall of Dis separates the harmless sinners from the serious sinners. Dante reserves the lowest level of hell for traitors, including Lucifer, Brutus, and Cassius—destined to remain frozen for all time.
[Midway in his allotted threescore years and ten, Dante comes to himself with a start and realizes that he has strayed from the True Way into the Dark Wood of Error (Worldliness). As soon as he has realized his loss, Dante lifts his eyes and sees the first light of the sunrise (the sun is the symbol of Divine Illumination) lighting the shoulders of a little hill (The Mount of Joy). It is the Easter season, the time of resurrection, and the sun is in its equinoctial rebirth. This juxtaposition of joyous symbols fills Dante with hope and he sets out at once to climb directly up the Mount of Joy, but almost immediately his way is blocked by the Three Beasts of Worldliness: The Leopard of Malice and Fraud, The Lion of Violence and Ambition, and The She-Wolf of Incontinence. These beasts, especially the She-Wolf, drive him back despairing into the darkness of error. But just as all seems lost, a figure appears to him. It is the shade of Virgil, Dante’s symbol of Human Reason. Virgil explains that he has been sent to lead Dante from error. There can, however, be no direct ascent past the beasts: the man who would escape them must go a longer and harder way. First he must descend through Hell (the Recognition of Sin), then he must ascend through Purgatory (the Renunciation of Sin), and only then may he reach the pinnacle of joy and come to the Light of God. Virgil offers to guide Dante, but only as far as Human Reason can go. Another guide (Beatrice—the symbol of Divine Love) must take over for the final ascent, for Human Reason is self-limited. Dante submits himself joyously to Virgil’s guidance and they move off.]

Midway in our life’s journey, I went astray
from the straight road and woke to find myself
alone in a dark wood. How shall I say
what wood that was! I never saw so drear,
so rank, so arduous a wilderness!
Its very memory gives a shape to fear.
Death could scarce be more bitter than that place!
But since it came to good, I will recount
all that I found revealed there by God’s grace.

How I came to it I cannot rightly say,
so drugged and loose with sleep had I become
when I first wandered there from the True Way.

But at the far end of that valley of evil
whose maze had sapped my very heart with fear!
I found myself before a little hill
and lifted up my eyes. Its shoulders glowed
already with the sweet rays of that planet
whose virtue leads men straight on every road,
and the shining strengthened me against the fright
whose agony had wracked the lake of my heart
through all the terrors of that piteous night.

Just as a swimmer, who with his last breath
flounders ashore from perilous seas, might turn
to memorize the wide water of his death--
so did I turn, my soul still fugitive
from death’s surviving image, to stare down
that pass that none had ever left alive.
And there I lay to rest from my heart’s race
till calm and breath returned to me. Then rose
and pushed up that dead slope at such a pace
each footfall rose above the last. And lo!
almost at the beginning of the rise
I faced a spotted Leopard, all tremor and flow
and gaudy pelt. And it would not pass, but stood
so blocking my every turn that time and again
I was on the verge of turning back to the wood.

This fell at the widening of the dawn
as the sun was climbing Aries with those stars
that rode with him to light the new creation.

Thus the holy hour and the sweet season
of commemoration did much to arm my fear
of that bright murderous beast with their good omen.

Yet not so much but what I shook with dread
at sight of a great Lion that broke upon me
raging with hunger, its enormous head
held high as if to strike a mortal terror
into the very air. And down his track,
a She-Wolf drove upon me, a starved horror
ravening and wasted beyond all belief.
She seemed a rack for avarice, gaunt and craving.
Oh many the souls she has brought to endless grief!
She brought such heaviness upon my spirit
    at sight of her savagery and desperation,
    I died from every hope of that high summit.

And like a miser--eager in acquisition
    but desperate in self-approach when Fortune’s wheel
    turns to the hour of his loss--all tears and attrition

I wavered back; and still the beast pursued,
    forcing herself against me bit by bit
    till I slid back into the sunless wood.

And as I fell to my soul’s ruin, a presence
    gathered before me on the discolored air,
    the figure of one who seemed hoarse from long silence.

At sight of him in that friendless waste I cried:
    “Have pity on me, whatever think you are,
    whether shade or living man.” And it replied:

“Not man, though man I once was, and my blood
    was Lombard, both my parents Mantuan.
    I was born, though late, sub Julio, and bred

in Rome under Augustus in the noon
    of the false and lying gods. I was a poet
    and sang of old Anchises noble son
who came to Rome after the burning of Troy.  
But you--why do you return to these distresses 
instead of climbing that shining Mount of Joy

which is the seat and first cause of man’s bliss?  
“And are you then that Virgil and that fountain of purest speech?” My voice grew tremulous:

“Glory and light of poets! now may that zeal 
and love’s apprenticeship that I poured out
on your heroic verses serve me well!”

For you are my true master and first author, 
the sole maker from whom I drew the breath
of that sweet style whose measures have brought me honor.

See there, immortal sage, the beast I flee.  
For my soul’s salvation, I beg you, guard me from her, 
for she has struck a mortal tremor through me.”

And he replied, seeing my soul in tears:  
“He must go by another way who would escape
this wilderness, for that mad beast that fleers

before you there, suffers no man to pass.  
She tracks down all, kills all, and knows no glut, 
but ,feeding, she grows hungrier than she was.

She mates with any beast, and will mate with more 
before the Greyhound comes to hunt her down.  
He will not feed on lands nor loot, but honor
and love and wisdom will make straight his way. He will rise between Feltro and Feltro, and in him shall be the resurrection and new day of that sad Italy for which Nisus died, and Turnus, and Euryalus, and the maid Camilla. He shall hunt her through every nation of sick pride till she is driven back forever to Hell whence Envy first released her on the world. Therefore, for your own good, I think it well you follow me and I will be your guide and lead you forth through an eternal place. There you shall see the ancient spirits tried in endless pain, and her their lamentation as each bemoans the second death of souls. Next your shall see upon a burning mountain souls in fire yet content in fire, knowing that whenssoever it may be they yet wil mount into the blessed choir. To which, it it is still your wish to climb, a worthier spirit shall be sent to guide you. With her shall I leave you, for the King of Time
who reigns on high, forbids me to come
there since, living, I rebelled against
his law.

He rules the waters and the land and air
and there holds court, his city and his
throne.

Oh blessed are they he chooses! And I to him:
“Poet, by that God to you unknown, lead me
this way. Beyond this present ill and worse
to dread, lead me to Peter’s gate and be
my guide through the sad halls of Hell.”

And he then: “Follow.” And he moved ahead in
silence, and I followed where he led.

INTERACTIVE 4.1 Dramatic Reading of Canto One
Thinking About *Inferno*

"Canto One"

1. Describe the appearance of the three animals. Why do you think Dante chooses these animals for the purpose of “Canto One”?

2. How is Virgil described? Why does Dante describe him in this way?

3. Why is it appropriate that Virgil is Dante’s tour guide?

4. Explain the significance of the straight road.

5. Explain the significance of the dark wood.

6. What does Dante’s attempt to climb the hill represent and why is he confronted by the beasts?

7. In what ways does Dante represent a person living in Florence in the late thirteenth century? In what ways does he represent all people?
ITALY—CURRENT CONTEXT

One of the most popular travel destinations on the globe, Italy has mesmerized the imaginations of visitors for centuries. With a long-standing history dating back more than 200,000 years, Italy has witnessed, participated, survived, and thrived through a number of global altercations.

From the days of Julius Caesar to its participation in the European Union (EU) beginning in the 1990s, Italy boasts a vibrant political and historical landscape. Home to many of the most famous pieces of artwork, Italy draws artists, art historians, professors, and tourists from around the world to view its art. Michelangelo’s David and Leonardo da Vinci’s painting The Last Supper both call Italy home.

Aside from its political and artistic endeavors, Italy is also home to the Roman Catholic Church. Vatican City, its own city within Rome, has been home to the pope since the early thirteenth century. Also a prominent tourist attraction, the Vatican museum possesses some of the most priceless pieces of art and antiquities known to man. At the heart of Vatican City is St. Peter’s Square. The square allows millions of visitors an up-close view of the pope as he says mass weekly for the thousands of visitors who visit the Vatican each day.

In AD 79, Mount Vesuvius erupted spewing stone, ash, fumes, and molten rock more than twenty miles into the air. The nearby city of Pompeii was encased in the ash. The remains of the city are a popular tourist destination.
A Poor Man’s Cathedral

Fall 2014
UNO Magazine
By Kara Schweiss

Though Martina Saltamacchia’s research on the Milan Cathedral sends her to and from her native Italy, her greatest journey has been an academic one.

Now an assistant professor in the UNO history department and director of medieval and renaissance studies, the internationally recognized expert on the Milan Cathedral Duomo di Milano started her studies in the field of economics.

“In the weeks I was thinking about the topic of my dissertation, I heard a friend — in a total different context — say the sentence how one’s life is made for doing great things, like medieval Christians who lived in hovels and built cathedrals,” she says.

“From an economical point of view, I thought, ‘Hmm, this sounds weird. Like a romanticized version of the Middle Ages, because how is it possible that poor people built the cathedrals?'”

Her pondering roused her “to verify that point economically” via her dissertation. Her real journey had begun.

“By chance I stumbled upon documents nobody had looked at,” she says. “My research found out that the vast majority of income came from these miniscule gifts from the poor people ... all put together it was like 84 percent of the (total) income. I was so shocked by this discovery that I decided that I would study the history instead.”

She has explored documents six centuries old from when the cathedral was started. Its finishing touches didn’t come until the 1970s, Saltamacchia says, adding that the cathedral has become a metaphor for a long period of time.

“In Italian, we say ‘As long as the construction of the Cathedral of Milan.'” She was enthralled by the level of detail and attention put into every remote facet of the structure by artisans and workers and by the financial sacrifices made by peasants. Her research ultimately led to several academic papers and books, was turned into an exhibition and even inspired a play.

“All of these people have in a sense become my friends because I spent all this time with them. They were ready to give themselves completely for something they knew they would never see finished,” she says.

“This idea of what does it mean to work in this way, to build something great, this is something that is universal and this is simply a great historical example of that.”

Dr. Martina Saltamacchia, Director of Medieval and Renaissance Studies, UNO
Speaking About the Unspeakable

January 30, 2014
The Florentine
By Kirsten Hills

New play puts domestic violence on center stage

The high rate of domestic violence and femicide in Italy is a well-documented fact, and the expat community is not immune to this problem. An American professor has developed a play that looks at domestic violence among American women married to Italian men, striving to break the silence surrounding not only personal pain but this larger social issue. Eighteen percent of all pregnancies in Italy end in termination due to partner violence. This is just one of the statistics from the United Nations that reflects the severity of domestic violence in Italy. For Amy Sarno, statistics like these were the starting point for writing a play on the subject. As a professor of theatre arts at Beloit College in Wisconsin and a survivor of a violent relationship, Sarno volunteered for 10 years at a women’s shelter.

I worked with women from Mexico, Guatemala, Russia and China,’ she explained. ‘Their challenges as victims of domestic violence were all the bigger, being foreigners living in the United States. It got me thinking, “What about the American women who are foreigners abroad?”

When she discovered the American Overseas Domestic Violence Crisis Centre (AVODC) had some of the highest number of calls from Americans living in Italy, the idea for her play began to take shape. Basing the play in Florence seemed an obvious thing to do, because of the number of Americans studying and working in the city and the number of women who subsequently marry and settle here.

I am half Italian, so I understand in Italy there is a “code of silence”: important personal issues aren’t discussed. Having grown up in this environment, I thought, this is the perfect container for violence to happen,’ Sarno said.

In September 2013, Sarno moved to Florence to do research and conduct interviews. But fewer victims were prepared to talk than she had expected: ‘It makes sense—they’re in a culture that isn’t their own, and, also, when you’re going through it, you can’t step out of it and talk about it. There’s a certain level of denial.’ Eventually, Sarno found six women prepared to share their stories, past and present. The result is Plan B: Love Love Stories Gone Wrong. The play centers on three American women in Florence
who fall in love with Italian men and experience domestic violence. The play explores their desperation, shame and sense of isolation as well as the challenges of navigating the complex and cumbersome Italian legal system. A first reading was recently held at the British Institute, performed by the English-language theatre group FESTA. Sarno hopes to return to Italy to present the play in 2014.

Although support is available to women (see box), do expat women in abusive relationships access it? Of the six women Sarno interviewed, just one turned to Florence’s Artemisia association against domestic violence. ‘Few of these women would talk to their friends. There is a lot of shame linked to it. I think for someone living in a foreign country there’s a sense of, “I moved here for the relationship,” that perhaps adds another level of shame.’ In addition to support organizations, the Italian government is seeking solutions to domestic violence. In 2013, legislation was passed that makes it easier to report abuse, remove abusers from the home and increases penalties against them.
Italy Has Europe’s Highest Percentage of Children in Poverty, Says UNICEF

March 4, 2012
The Daily Beast
By Barbie Latza Nadeau

Close to 2 million kids live in poverty in Europe’s third-largest economy, according to a new UNICEF report. The country has the highest percentage of child poverty in all 25 European countries, a longstanding crisis that predates the nation’s current economic woes.

Italy may conjure up postcard perfect images of beauty, art, and culture, but it is also a country in which nearly 2 million children are struggling to survive.

Every morning, hundreds of thousands of children in Italy’s poorest regions wake up hungry. Some have never used a computer because the schools can’t afford them in the classrooms. Many don’t go to school at all, or when they do they drop out, hoping to find scarce jobs. While their parents try to eke out a living, infants are left alone with young children as caregivers because of a lack of public day care. A growing number of children work as laborers on farms. Others are pushed into the sex trade to help support their families. Thousands live without basic amenities like hot water, regular meals, or simple health care—all in picturesque Italy.

According to a report by UNICEF (United Nations Children’s Fund) issued Feb. 28, Italy has the highest percentage of children living below the poverty line of 25 European nations, and the situation is only getting worse.

“In Italy, there are 1.8 million children living under the poverty line,” says Giacomo Guerrera, head of UNICEF Italy. “We could make this problem go away if only it were a priority on every local community and government agenda.”

This shouldn’t be happening in Italy, Europe’s third-largest economy. Sure, the country is in the midst of an epic financial crisis that saw it nearly default on its deficit late last year. The new interim government under technocrat Mario Monti has also been forced to tighten up the country’s budget. But that’s not the crux of the child poverty problem. After all, it’s hard to cut services that have never existed. In fact, childhood poverty was a problem in Italy long before the current economic debacle.

The divide between Italy’s wealthy north and its suffering south has always been a point of contention for lawmakers in Rome. Italy allocates only 4.4 percent of its total social expenditures on social services for children, meaning only 1.1 percent of the total GDP goes to investing in services like public child care that would allow more parents to work. Private investments from businesses do fill the gap. But in most cases the “Mezzogiorno,” as the poorest regions of the deep south are known, is often overlooked because of the high rate of organized crime that has infiltrated both the public-works sector and local government entities. In recent years companies have received tax breaks for investing in the Mezzogiorno and defying the mob, but many of those companies are now closing factories and heading back north where their investments are safer during these tough economic times.

These attempts to bolster the southern communities as a whole have been moderately successful through the years, though the efforts rarely trickle down to the region’s most vulnerable. Many of the country’s poorest children live in or near the
very cities where recent government investments have greatly enhanced the lives of many others. But so many families in the Mezzogiorno live on the edge of the poverty divide that government aid and incentives are never enough to cover everyone. Urban renewal and government investments over the years have provided playgrounds, better schools, and safe sports facilities for communities that have been overlooked for decades. Public child care has also increased, but spots are first given to working parents, so the unemployed who are searching for work don’t qualify, creating a Catch 22 situation.

In most cases, Italy’s very poorest children have fallen through the cracks, and as the country struggles through an economic crisis, there is no expectation that things will get better any time soon. Instead, an increasing number of families with children are joining the ranks of the extreme poor. What meager services are available will have to be spread even thinner.

“In Italy, some 25 percent of children are now at risk of poverty,” Daniela Del Boca, director of CHILD (Center for Household, Income, Labor and Demographic Economies) at the University of Turin. “This proportion is much higher than the average proportion of children at risk of poverty in the rest of the European Union.”

One in two minors in Italy lives in what is considered “absolute poverty,” a condition under which basic needs are not met. According to the UNICEF report, that means families are able to provide only one adequate meal every two days and they often cannot provide necessary medical treatment, either because they cannot access public-health services due to lack of funds for transportation, or they cannot buy simple over-the-counter medicines like aspirin or even Band-Aids for their children. Of the poorest of the poor, 42 percent live in Sicily, 32 percent in Campania, 31 percent in Basilicata, and the rest are spread around the wealthier northern regions, including 8.6 percent in the very wealthy Veneto region.

Italy’s disgraceful inability to bring such a vast majority of minors above the poverty level is compounded by growing job shortages and the lack of many social services, says Del Boca, who had hoped that some of the new taxes instituted by the Monti government, like the IMU (rural property tax) would be used to help fund child care so parents can work. “We were hoping that part of the IMU could be devoted to child care, but it is not and child-care availability will actually be reduced instead,” she told The Daily Beast. She says 42 percent of the neediest families in Italy have three or more children. More than 36 percent have only one wage earner, and nearly 80 percent have no wage earners at all. “The difficulties in work opportunities, both for mothers and fathers, is one of the main reasons for child poverty,” she says.
“The other is the lack of public services like child care, which could also support children's education.”

UNICEF is not the only international organization wagging a finger at Italy’s dismal record. Save the Children has also warned that Italian children today have far less than their parents did when they were young. “The quality of life of our children is incomparable to that of a generation ago,” says Valerio Neri, director of Save the Children in Italy. “There is no more tuberculosis or war to threaten the children, but minors today have to deal with poverty, the scarcity of services, polluted cities, and unhealthy lifestyles. The problems of the economic crisis amplify the risks for these youngsters if there is not an immediate intervention.”

Neri worries that with all the other problems in Italy right now, the investment in children’s futures has been largely ignored. “The children will pay the highest price in the current crisis in Italy,” he says. And that's a price they simply can’t afford.
Italy’s Economic Problems are Not Caused by the Euro, but by the Country’s Chaotic Political System

June 3, 2014
LSE (The London School of Economics and Political Science)  
By Salvatore Perri

In Italy, the debate about the euro is becoming increasingly complex. Many analysts, politicians, and also some economists have openly suggested that exit from the euro could be a good solution for the Italian economy. Nevertheless, there are some aspects which are not given sufficient attention in this analysis. What would the impact of leaving the euro actually be on the Italian economy?

The most important argument which has been made against the euro in Italy is that the productivity of Italian workers has declined since monetary union. This may well be true, but it is difficult to assert that the euro was the biggest cause of this development. In all developed countries, the so-called ‘financialisation’ of the economy has generated a reduction in the weight of work for modern societies due to the financial sector absorbing a greater chunk of a nation’s financial resources.

Historically, Italy was a country which was capable of transforming raw materials into products which could be sold to other countries. Independently of which currency is used, globalisation has reduced the opportunity for Italian goods to be successful in world markets as developing countries have gained a larger stake in exporting goods to areas such as Europe.

Competition over goods will always be determined by two factors: cost and quality. Italian goods are now in a situation where they will only be in an advantageous position if they are of greater quality than alternatives, with a high level of technological skill in terms of production. Reducing wages is therefore not the solution to making Italian goods competitive again and the productivity of workers is not the problem facing Italian industries.

Exit scenarios

Leaving this issue to one side, let’s imagine that Italy did leave the euro and opted to take a ‘new lira’ as its legal currency. Under this scenario what would happen to wages? The new lira would be weaker than the euro and, as such, Italian firms which export goods would be at an advantage. Unfortunately, however, Italy is not blessed with oil or other raw materials and would therefore have to pay a premium to produce these goods, which could also potentially lead to high levels of inflation.

Far from obtaining an advantage by leaving the euro, this course of action would probably achieve the opposite of what is intended. Workers would have to pay higher prices to sustain themselves and, as a consequence, would demand higher wages. Firms, in turn, would have to increase prices further to compensate for the higher staff costs, potentially leading to requests for government support to help production.

The result would likely be similar to the situation in the late 1970s, with high inflation and high levels of social instability. Under these conditions Italian exporters would certainly not be in a position to compete more effectively in world markets. Moreover, it should also be remembered that in southern Italy criminal organisations remain strong: if inflation is growing and the state becomes weak, the main beneficiaries may end up being Italian Mafias.

The real problem with Italy’s use of the euro

Clearly, the euro has more than one problem, but these
issues have been presented incorrectly in the Italian debate. In reality the solution is not ‘less Europe’, but more Europe. Monetary policy has become integrated, but local governments still compete over fiscal policy. The result is that countries across the Eurozone possess different kinds of policies, from social security to commercial laws. The fact that the European market is not complete is what disadvantages Italian firms.

High levels of corruption, criminality, and inefficiencies in the country’s bureaucratic and banking systems are additional problems in Italy. None of these problems will be solved by exiting the euro and in many ways leaving the single currency could achieve the opposite result. If Italian politicians again have the capacity to determine both fiscal and monetary policy why should we expect a different situation from that which occurred in the 1980s, where policies were regularly set with the aim of securing votes rather than solving existing problems?

Contrary to public opinion, Italy is not respecting important European legislation in the areas of competition and anti-corruption, among others. The reasons for this are clear: the Italian system is not competitive internally, with banks and firms closely connected to each other, and politics having to take into account the opinion of the strongest voting blocks. The sale of the ‘old’ Alitalia airline in 2008 is a prominent example, where the Italian government split the company into two parts and sold the profitable section to a group of Italian investors, at great cost to taxpayers, under the guise of preventing it becoming French property.

Earlier this year, in the last period of Enrico Letta’s government, banks were also granted support through a highly unusual operation which involved hiking the value of the Italian central bank’s share capital from 156,000 euros to 7.5 billion euros (something which had not previously been done since the 1930s). The decree simultaneously set a ceiling of three per cent on the amount of the bank’s shares that could be owned by any individual stakeholder.

This ensured that other banks such as Intesa and UniCredit were ‘forced’ to sell most of their existing stakes in the Italian central bank (42 per cent and 22 per cent respectively) back to the central bank itself at the now greatly increased rate. Contrary to the way it was presented, the legislation thereby sought to provide substantial financial support to these banks directly from the central bank.

Normally, if a government helps banks it is required to implement a change of governance strategy at the banks being granted support (as happened, for instance, in the United States), but in this case this did not happen. In Italy, the rule appears to be ‘help without control’ and this is the real problem. Italian politicians and bureaucracy evidently do not like to lose power with respect
A vicious circle

To avoid problems, Italian politicians accept some European Commission indications related to austerity measures and cuts of public expenditure. However these are precisely the policies which are harming the Italian economy as the reduction of workers’ incomes (through labour reforms) reduces consumption and the level of production.

At the same time, these policies increase unemployment and thereby raise the amount of public debt. Considering the structural problems within the Italian economy, the fall in GDP experienced since the start of the crisis has virtually no limits as firms that close will not be replaced by others. Moreover, some of the measures within the fiscal compact and balanced budget requirements have fuelled Euroscepticism.

It is still possible to halt this trajectory with the right reforms. First, structural funds should be managed by international actors and not by an Italian bureaucracy which is largely unfit for purpose. Second, the European institutions should take a tougher line on the application of EU legislation in Italy, particularly with respect to anti-corruption laws, public agencies, private firms that work for the public sector, and the timing of judgements.

Finally, the European Commission should recognise that the economic conditions in Italy are close to a disaster and remove (temporarily) some hurdles in terms of public investment to sustain aggregate demand. This can be done in two ways: by helping firms to change production processes and by considering universal forms of protection for people that lose their jobs (such as a basic income). These measures have costs and may entail being flexible on the current deficit/GDP limit of three per cent. It may also be necessary to adapt the strategy of the European Central Bank and move resources directly to these projects without the intermediation of Italian banks.

Ultimately, the issues surrounding Italian public opinion and the European Union are generated by the contrast between Italian politicians and the European institutions. The Italian system is blocked by the inability of policy-makers to arrive at the correct solutions because they are scared of disrupting the political consensus.

In this context, the European institutions have to help Italy to implement reforms – not with absurd economic parameters, but through anti-corruption laws, social protection, a reduction in inequality and strict control of European funds to reduce the gap between the South and the North. The Eurozone may have real problems, but the current exit strategies being put forward for leaving the single currency are little more than a smokescreen used by Italian politicians to obscure their own responsibility for the crisis.
Scale Model Discovered for Florence Cathedral

January 10, 2013
Discovery News
By Rossella Lorenzi

Italian archaeologists have unearthed the remains of a mini dome near Florence’s cathedral — evidence, they say, that the structure served as a scale model for the majestic structure designed by Filippo Brunelleschi (1377-1446).

Found during excavations to expand the Cathedral museum, the model measures 9 feet in circumference and it’s made of bricks arranged in a herringbone pattern.

“This building technique had been previously used in Persian domes, but Brunelleschi was the first to introduce it into Europe when he worked at the dome,” Francesco Gurrieri, professor of Restoration of Monuments at the University of Florence, told Discovery News.

“Although at the moment we cannot confirm the small dome was the demonstration model for Brunelleschi’s plans, it did belong to the yard he created between 1420 and 1436, when he worked at one of the most incredible feats of engineering,” Gurrieri said.

One of the most instantly recognizable churches in the world, the dome of Santa Maria del Fiore is the highest and widest (143 feet in diameter) masonry dome in the world.

For centuries scholars have wondered how the Florentine architect could roof the huge octagonal of the Cathedral using not concrete and steel, but 25,000 tonnes of stone, timber and brick — and no scaffoldings.

Indeed Brunelleschi won the right to build the dome by saying that he wouldn’t need any internal scaffolding.

He raised sandstone and marble slabs hundreds of feet into the air and boldly constructed the huge masonry bubble without relying on a centering wooden framework.

To do so, the Renaissance genius used complex techniques — still debated by experts — and inventive brickwork which included creating a new way of sharing the weight around the dome so that it wouldn’t collapse.

Laying the bricks in the herringbone pattern was a crucial aspect as it allowed the bricks to convey the forces downward along the curving of the dome.

“The small dome could be the first example of an herringbone pattern structure in Europe,” Gurrieri said. Roberto Cecchi, the undersecretary of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, agreed that the finding is important.
“The herringbone technique is very much linked to Brunelleschi and Florence. Outside the city we have only a couple of examples of this technique, and they date later to the 16th century,” Cecchi said.

Once it is fully excavated and restored, the mini dome will be permanently displayed at the new museum of the “Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore,” which is set to open in October 2015.

Above: Intricate herringbone design utilized in the Florence Cathedral’s dome

Right: Excavation of the mini-dome; Brunelleschi’s sketch of the mini-dome
ADAD

The god of storms and weather

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AMULET

A small object worn to ward off evil, harm, or illness or to bring good fortune; protecting charm

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ANTUM
Mother of Ishtar

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ANU

Father of the gods and the god of the sky

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ANUNNAKI

Gods of fertility who became associated with the underworld; eventually became judges of the underworld.
ARMOURERS

A person who manufacturers, services, and repairs firearms

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ARURU

Sumerian earth and fertility goddess

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BATTERING-RAM

An ancient military device with a heavy horizontal ram for battering down walls, gates, etc.

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BENUMBED

To render inactive; to deaden

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BESEECH

To beg eagerly for

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BOW OF ANSHAN

Crafted by the skilled armourers of Shamash and gifted to Gilgamesh

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BULL OF HEAVEN

Controlled by the god Anu; Ishtar (Anu's daughter) asks to use the bull to destroy Gilgamesh once he rejects her admiration.

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CHAFES

To make sore by rubbing

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COMRADE

A person who shares in one's activities, occupation, etc; companion, associate, or friend

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COUNTENANCE

Appearance, especially the look or expression of the face

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COURTESANS

A prostitute or paramour, especially one associating with noblemen or men of wealth

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CUBITS

An ancient linear unit based on the length of the forearm, from elbow to the tip of the middle finger, usually from 17 to 21 inches

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DECREED

A formal and authoritative order, especially one having the force of law

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DE SOLATE

Barren or laid waste; devastated

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EANNA

Ancient Sumerian temple dedicated to Ishtar

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EGALMAH

The sacred temple of Ninsun in the city of Uruk

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ENKIDU

Gilgamesh’s friend and adviser

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ENLIL

The god of earth, wind, and air

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ENTERPRISE

A project undertaken, especially one that is important or difficult or that requires boldness or energy

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EXHORTATION

An utterance, discourse, or address conveying urgent advice or recommendations

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EXTOL

To praise highly; to laud

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EXULTED

To show or feel a lively or triumphant joy

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FERRULE

A ring or cap, usually metal, put around the end of a post, cane, or the like, to prevent splitting.

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FOOLHARDY

Recklessly or thoughtlessly bold; foolishly rash or venturesome

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FORAYS

A quick, sudden attack

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FORGE

A special fireplace or hearth in which metal is heated before shaping

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GARRISON

Any military post, especially a permanent one

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GILGAMESH

Hero of the epic, King of Uruk

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GOAD

Anything that pricks or wounds--like a stick

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GORGE

A narrow cleft with steep, rocky walls, especially one through which a stream runs

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HARLOT

A prostitute

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HEIFER

A young calf over one year old who has not produced a calf

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HERMON AND LEBANON

Two mountains in the Sumerian region

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HIEROPHANTS

An official expounder of rites of worship and sacrifice

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HUMBABA

The giant who guards the cedar forest

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IMMOLATION

To sacrifice

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INSENSIBLE

Incapable of feeling or perceiving; deprived of sensation; unconscious, as a person after a violent blow

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ISHTAR

The goddess of love

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ISHULLANU

One of Ishtar’s scorned lovers

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KULLAB

Goddess of the city

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LEAGUES

A unit of distance, varying at different periods and in different countries; in English-speaking countries it is usually estimated roughly at three miles
LUGULBANDA

Second king of Uruk

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Chapter 1 - The Epic of Gilgamesh
In Sumerian tradition, the Boat of Magilum ferries the dead to the underworld
NAMTAR

Mesopotamian god of death

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NINGAL

Goddess of reeds

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NINSUN

Goddess and mother of Gilgamesh

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NINURTA

The god of war
NISABA

Sumerian goddess of knowledge and grain

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OMINOUS

Portending evil or harm; foreboding; threatening

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PERIL

Exposure to injury, loss, or destruction; grave risk; jeopardy; danger

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PYRE

Such a pile for burning a dead body (made of combustable materials), especially as part of a funeral rite

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QUAY

A landing place, especially one of solid masonry, constructed along the edge of a body of water; wharf

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RANCOUR

Bitter, rankling resentment or ill will; hatred; malice

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ROUSED

To bring out of a state of sleep, unconsciousness, or inactivity

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SAGES

Someone venerated for the possession of wisdom, judgement, and experience

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SAMUGAN'S

Babylonian god of cattle

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SCEPTRE

A rod or wand borne in the hand as an emblem of regal or imperial power

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SHAMASH

The sun god

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SILILI

Mother of a scorned lover of the goddess Ishtar; according to tradition, Ishtar made Silili wail for the rest of her life

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SQUALL

A sudden, violent gust of wind, often accompanied by rain, snow, or sleet

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SUCCOUR

Help, relief, aid, or assistance

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SUPPLICA

To pray humbly; make humble and earnest entreaty or petition

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TAMMUZ

Mesopotamian god of fertility
TOCSIN

A bell used to sound an alarm

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TORRENT

A rushing, violent or abundant and unceasing stream of anything

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VOTARIES

A person who is bound by solemn religious vows

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WANTON

Sexually lawless or unrestrained; loose

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