No. 262, February 2018 www.echoofislam.com

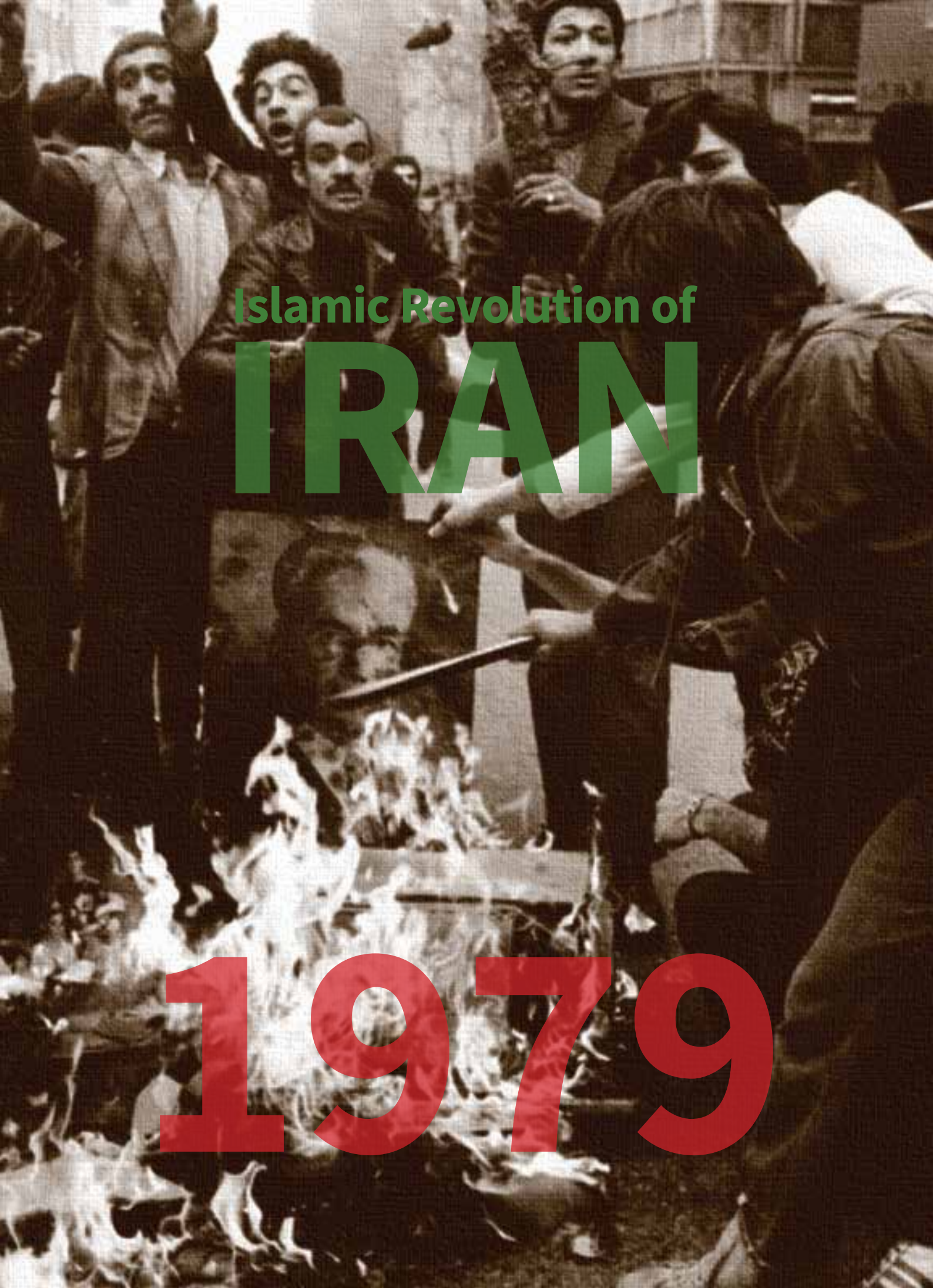
ISSN: 1019-0775

ECHO of Islam



ISLAMIC REVOLUTION OF IRAN IS A BRILLIANT ROLE MODEL FOR OTHER REVOLUTIONARY NATIONS

Austria	€ 4.50	Greece	€ 4.50	Lebanon	LL 7000	Qatar	QR 21.00	UAE	DH 21.00
Bahrain	BD 2.10	Iran	Rls 40000	Mexico	DH 36.00	S. Africa	R 26.00	UK	£2.80
Belgium	€ 4.50	Ireland	€ 4.50	Montenegro	DIN 240	Spain	€ 4.50	USA	$5.00
Croatia	KN 22	Italy	€ 4.50	Morocco	DH 36.00	Tanzania	TSH 4700		
France	€ 4.50	Kenya	KSh 250.00	Nigeria	N 450	Tunisia	TD 3.70		
Germany	€ 4.50	Kuwait	KD 2.00	Oman	OR 2.10	Turkey	YTL 5.50		


Islamic Revolution of
IRAN
1979

ECHO of Islam









Reasons for Islamic Revolution Victory in Iran	**4**
Iranian Revolution's Timeline	**6**
The Role and Contribution of Imam Khomeini In Iran's Islamic Revolution	**8**
Iran's Islamic Revolution Achievements	**16**
Islamic Awakening from Imam Khomeini's view	**20**
New Insights into the Islamic Republic of Iran	**30**
Women's Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran	**34**

No. 262, February 2018



Managing Director:

Muhammad Hussein Ahmadi

Public Relations & Executive Manager: Maryam Hamzeloo

Editor in chief: Seyed Saeed Kalati

Editorial Board: Mahmoud Reza Sanam-Zadeh, Neda Parsa, Ali Fathollah-Nejad, Sajjad Rafiyan, Muhammad Arif Mustunsir, Soraya Sepahpour-Ulrich, and Mina Vakilinejad

Art Director: Majid Ghasemi

Design: Karnic Advertising Agency
Fatemeh Ghasemi, Zahra Ghasemi

Magazine of ITF, P. O. Box: 14155-3899, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran,
Tel: +9821-88897662-5,
Fax: +9821-88902725
Website: http://www.itf.org.ir
Email: Info@ itf.org.ir

REASONS FOR ISLAMIC REVOLUTION VICTORY IN IRAN

Sajjad Rafiyan

Islamic Revolution in 1979 disturbed all global equations and international discipline made by the United States in the Middle East. The initial sparks of the Islamic Revolution revived hopes to reach a new global discipline and to undermine the old bipolar tradition developed following Cold War Era. Iran, which already was one of the main power bases of the US in the region, now is in its way to become a new power threatening hegemony and domination of the United States in the region.

On the other hand, the Islamic Revolution changed equations theorized by the political sociologists. Upon observing the Islamic Revolution in Iran, Ted Skocpol was forced to change his theory drastically, because Islamic Revolution challenged all components of his theory; however, he revised his original opinions through his *Rentier State and Shiite Revolution in Iran.*

Here, we will point to the most important components of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, which according to great analyzers can be considered as the most important revolutions in the world along with France, Britain and Russia's revolutions.

1. Imam Khomeini's Exemplary Leadership

There is no doubt that management and leadership of any revolution is its management and leadership. Without a wise leader, after a while a revolution may forget its ideals and objectives or deviate from the main goal and purpose based on which it has been formed.

For instance, Egypt's revolution, where the Muslim Brotherhood led the revolution, although had all elements necessary for victory, but because of lack of a single and cohesive leadership it collapsed by a military coup d'état.

No one may deny the fact that the lion's share of the Islamic Revolution is due to efforts and high capability of Imam Khomeini in this process. The significance of Imam's role in directing the revolution becomes clear where the main theorist of the Islamic Revolution took the stand of enforcer of the theories. Furthermore, given his great position as the Shiites authority of imitation (Marji Taqlid), Imam Khomeini succeeded to manage the inflamed situation of early days of the revolution. It is necessary to consider that Imam Khomeini had all features and characteristics which are necessary for a qualified leader: an exceptional personal honesty and lack of pride in his lifestyle, determination and capability of a powerful leader, an unbelievable courage and resistance against enormous problems, extraordinary capacity to resist and sympathize with the needy and the oppressed classes of the society and excellent and attractive relations as well as speaking skills were among his features.

2. People's presence and following their Leader's orders

Popularity of the Islamic Revolution was what has been considered by the foreign observers since beginning. Always and everywhere, revolution would be meaningful when people start to participate. However, all world's

revolutions have not been participated by their people like Iran's revolution in 1979. For instance, France Revolution, despite its significant influence on Europe's Liberalism surge was a bourgeois revolution. It was launched and directed by the bourgeois class of the society, while in Iran all walks of life participated in the revolution.

On people's role in the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, says:

The Islamic Revolution did not born neither by the coup d'état, nor by a military attack, … like some revolutions in which some military officers went and replaced a state with another one; …no, this revolution was realized by our people, by their determination, their revolutionary force, their faith; …. It defended itself with the same force and survived and rooted with this force, our people did not fear, our endeared people resisted… [27th anniversary of Imam Khomeini (June 4, 2016)]

3. Political demands prior to economic demands

Islamic Revolution era started exactly after the era when Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi has started a new course of economic development in Iran.

Following Arabs war against the Zionist Regime the oil price was drastically increased, as Iran's oil incomes were maximized during early 1970's. However, this hefty income not only was cont considered as useful capital, but it was used as a factor to cover and hide failures of the economic system; as when oil incomes of Iran were tripled in 1974, the regime started a quick growth based economic policy and doubled the annual budget of the country, but the second Pahlavi devoted a great part of such incomes to purchase and store military firearms. By the years leading to the Islamic Revolution, the dire economic condition of Iranians was left intact; however, there was no word about economic demands among revolutionary people in those years. Most people sought for a political Islam, end of the oppressive dictatorship of Shan and legitimized and religious state.

4. Islamic Revolution and its infra-border objectives

By the years leading to the Islamic Revolution, the dire economic condition of Iranians was left intact; however, there was no word about economic demands among revolutionary people in those years.

Because of its infra-border goals, thinkers categorize the Islamic Revolution among important and effective international revolutions which never restricted to its own borders.

Its freedom-seeking message received by the World's Muslims sooner than what was assumed and attracted Muslim people of other nations. Almost in all Muslim countries some similar movements started against the influence and penetration of the United States. Inspired by the Islamic Revolutions, such Muslim movements made their ways towards their Islamic demands. Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq, Palestinian fighting groups, Lebanese fighting groups led by Hezbollah, Tunis Ennahdha Party, Afghan Islamist groups, etc are just some of these groups and movements.

Finally, it is necessary to remind you that Islamic Revolution of Iran continues its constrictive activities in an environment in which all global powers try to defeat this revolution and used all sorts of animosities and sanctions against it, whereas if the revolution would be realized in a better condition, definitely we will witness some different consequences.

References

http://pahlaviha.pchi.ir/show.php?page=-contents&id=898

https://goo.gl/RPpyQS

https://goo.gl/e95Sak

goo.gl/M81bsB

IRANIAN REVOLU



It was in 1921 that Reza Khan Mirpanj, the commander of an Iranian Cossack force, overthrew the last king of Qajar Dynasty and as Reza Shah Pahlavi established the Pahlavi Dynasty in 1925. During his reign a program of Westernization of Iran was begun. Britain and the Soviet Union occupied areas of the country in 1941 to protect the Iranian valuable oil fields from German seizure. Because of this Allied position, Reza Shah Pahlavi, who had been friendly to the Axis powers, abdicated. His son, Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, succeeded to the throne and adopted a pro-Allied policy. In 1945 the Iranian government requested the withdrawal of occupying troops, concerned that Soviet forces were encouraging separatist movements in the northern provinces. All troops were withdrawn by 1946.

In the 1950s, a major political crisis developed over control of the oil industry. In 1951 Dr. Muhammad Mossadegh, a nationalist, became prime minister of Iran. When parliament approved a law nationalizing the property of foreign oil companies with widespread popular support, Dr. Mossadegh pressed the Shah for extraordinary powers. The dissension between pro- and anti-Mossadegh forces reached a climax during 1953 when Muhammad Reza Shah dismissed the prime minister. Dr. Mossadegh refused to yield, and Shah fled to Rome. After three days of riots, the royalists won back control of Tehran, Shah returned, and Dr. Mossadegh was sentenced to prison. Shah then opened negotiations with an eight-company oil consortium that guaranteed Iran a margin of profit greater than anywhere else in the Middle East.

Throughout the 1960s, Muhammad Reza Shah began to exercise increasing control over the government after dissolving parliament in 1961. Programs of agricultural and economic modernization were pursued, but the shah's Plan Organization took charge of economic development, leaving very few benefits to reach the ordinary citizen.

Despite growing prosperi-

TION'S TIMELINE

ty, opposition to the shah was widespread, fanned mainly by conservative Shiite Muslims, who wanted the nation governed by Islamic law. They were directed, from France, by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, a Shiite clergyman who had been exiled in 1963.

As the Shah's regime, supported by the U.S., became increasingly repressive, riots in 1978 developed into a state of virtual civil war. In early 1979 popular opposition forced the shah to leave the country. The process of westernization of Iran was reversed. Imam Khomeini, who had returned to Iran in triumph in February 1979, presided over the establishment of an Islamic republic.

On 4 November 1979, after the shah had been allowed entry into the United States for medical care, Iranian students took the US embassy in Teheran. The Shiite students demanded that the shah must be turned over to face trial and that billions of dollars he had took abroad be returned. Some of the hostages were soon released, but others were held until an agreement was negotiated that freed the hostages on 20 January 1981. Unable to persuade Iran to release them, President Carter ordered a military rescue mission, which failed, resulting in the deaths of eight American soldiers when their aircraft collided in the Iranian desert in Tabas.

As the Shah's regime, supported by the U.S., became increasingly repressive, riots in 1978 developed into a state of virtual civil war.

In September 1980 Iraq took advantage of Iran's internal political disputes to seize territory in the Shatt al Arab and oil-rich Khuzestan province. The full-scale war that resulted severely reduced Iran's oil production and disrupted its economy. The war ended with a cease-fire in 1988 and cost the two nations an estimated 1 million dead and 1.7 million wounded.

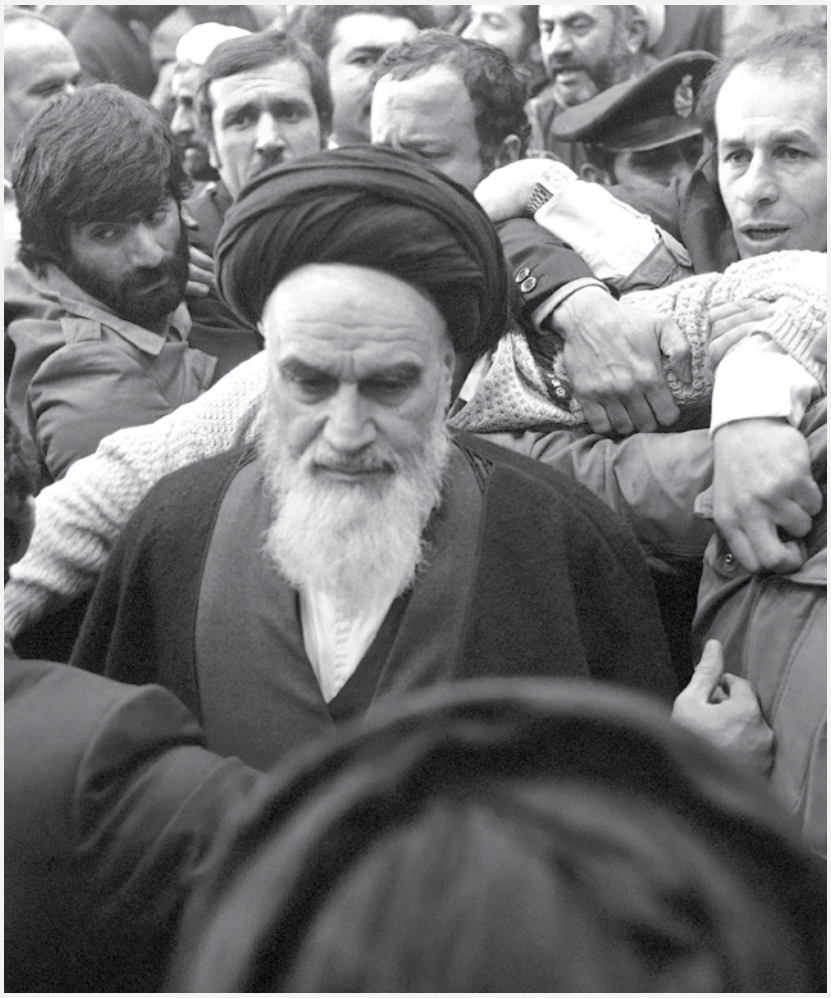
In 1989, Imam Khomeini died and Ayatollah Seyed d Ali Khamenei became Iran's leader. Iran's relations with the West improved, due in part to President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani's role in obtaining the release of Western hostages held in Lebanon. In 1993 Rafsanjani was reelected president.

Timeline

- 6 June 1963, martial law ordered as riots follow the arrest of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.
- 16 January 1979, shah left the country after turmoil.
- 1 February 1979, revolutionary forces under Imam Khomeini seize power after his return to the country (He had gone into exile after arrest in 1963.).
- 31 March 1979, referendum approved the establishment of an Islamic republic with Imam Khomeini as the Leader.
- 4 November 1979, Iranian students took the U.S. embassy in Tehran and held sixty-six occupants hostage, demanding the return of the shah from the U.S. After the shah's death in 1980 in Egypt, an agreement was negotiated that freed the hostages on 20 January 1981.
- 27 July 1980, shah died.
- November 1980, the First Gulf War broke out between Iran and Iraq.

THE ROLE AND CONTRIBUTION OF IMAM KHOMEINI IN IRAN'S ISLAMIC REVOLUTION

Muhammad Arif Mustunsir



The Revolution in Iran is termed by the historians as one of the biggest historical events in the past 100 years. A revolution is a mass movement that aims to establish a new political regime by violently transforming the existing government. The Iranian Revolution of 1978–1979 violently ended the monarchy of Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi (1919–1980) and replaced it with an Islamic republic, the theocracy of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (1901–1989).

The shah's reign had been briefly interrupted between 1951 and 1953 with the interlude of Prime Minister Mohammed Mossedeq (1881–1967). This revolution is regarded as the main turning point of the Islamic World as it opened the eyes of those Islamic states although being powerful with the riches of oil are still being played under western powers.

We have to take a look at the historical elements that lead up to the Iranian Revolution of 1979. Post World War II created a very different world. Colonial (English, French, Dutch, and other) control of much of the Mid-East, Asia, Africa, South American (the Third World) was on the wane. Two superpowers emerged, the United States and the USSR (Russia).

The USSR leaving regimes were based on a military government with socialist tendencies and a strong tribal, regional or ethnic minority base; this was the case in Algeria, Syria, Iraq, South Yemen and Egypt.

BACKGROUND

Different to popular western misconceptions, the Iranian Revolution of the late 1970s was remarkable in that it was motivated by a large alliance

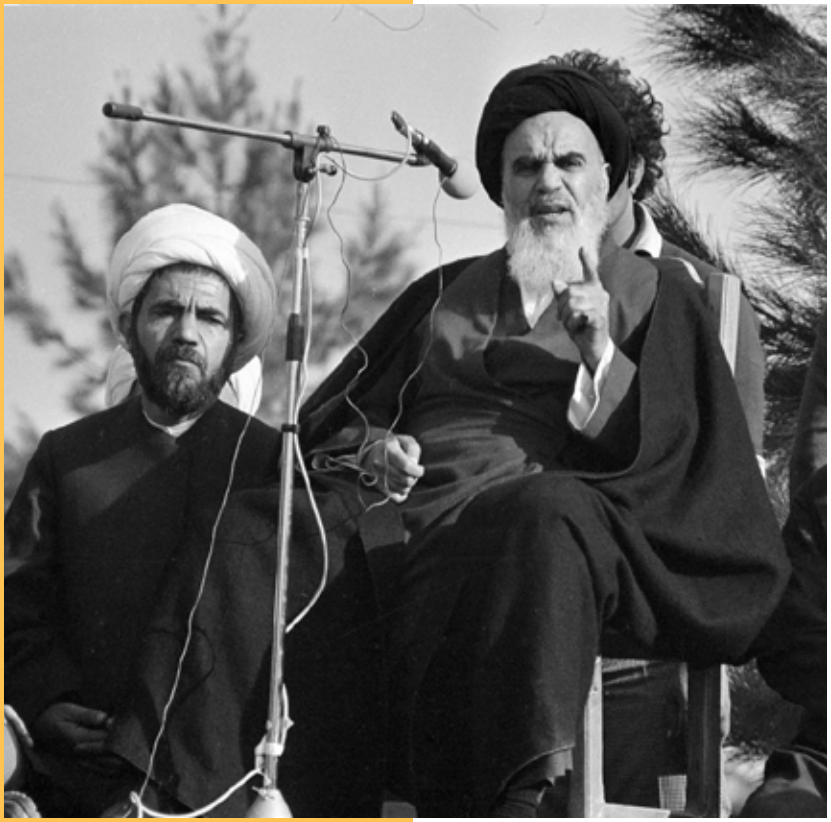
of classes and religious groups within Iran; each with similar social, economic, political, and religious agendas. These groups were united in majority in their initiative to topple the Shah Kingship due to his heavy handed, and dictatorial style of rule (Friedman, 2009).

Additionally, these various groups and organizations were deeply dissatisfied with restrictions on access to the political process, the tight concentration of Iran's huge oil revenues into the hands of a very small, elite group orbiting around the Shah, as well as a growing perception that Iran was becoming too westernized and had lost her grounding in Iranian traditional values and cultures.

It explains that, in 1979, millions of Iranians succeeded in removing Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi (1941-1979), the Shah of Iran and forced him to leave the country. While the Shah was known as a 'darling to the West', he tried to authoritarian modernize too rapidly and did not adapt his political institutions sufficiently to the economic and social changes he had brought about.

Although inspired by hopes for democracy, economic prosperity for all classes, gender equality and a leadership that would not allow Iranian culture to be destroyed by the Western values; many Iranian women joined the rebellion.

The world was surprised and astonished by the Iranian Revolution, which was led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in exile in Paris. The proposal relates that the Muslims believed that the modern age was 20th century remake of the Jahiliyya of ancient times that had to be destroyed as Mohammed the prophet had destroyed its predecessor. That is why Ruhollah Khomeini and his team bore the seeds of this revolution to overthrow the non-Islamic and tyrant rule of the Shah (Seyed, 2002).



Although inspired by hopes for democracy, economic prosperity for all classes, gender equality and a leadership that would not allow Iranian culture to be destroyed by the Western values; many Iranian women joined the rebellion.

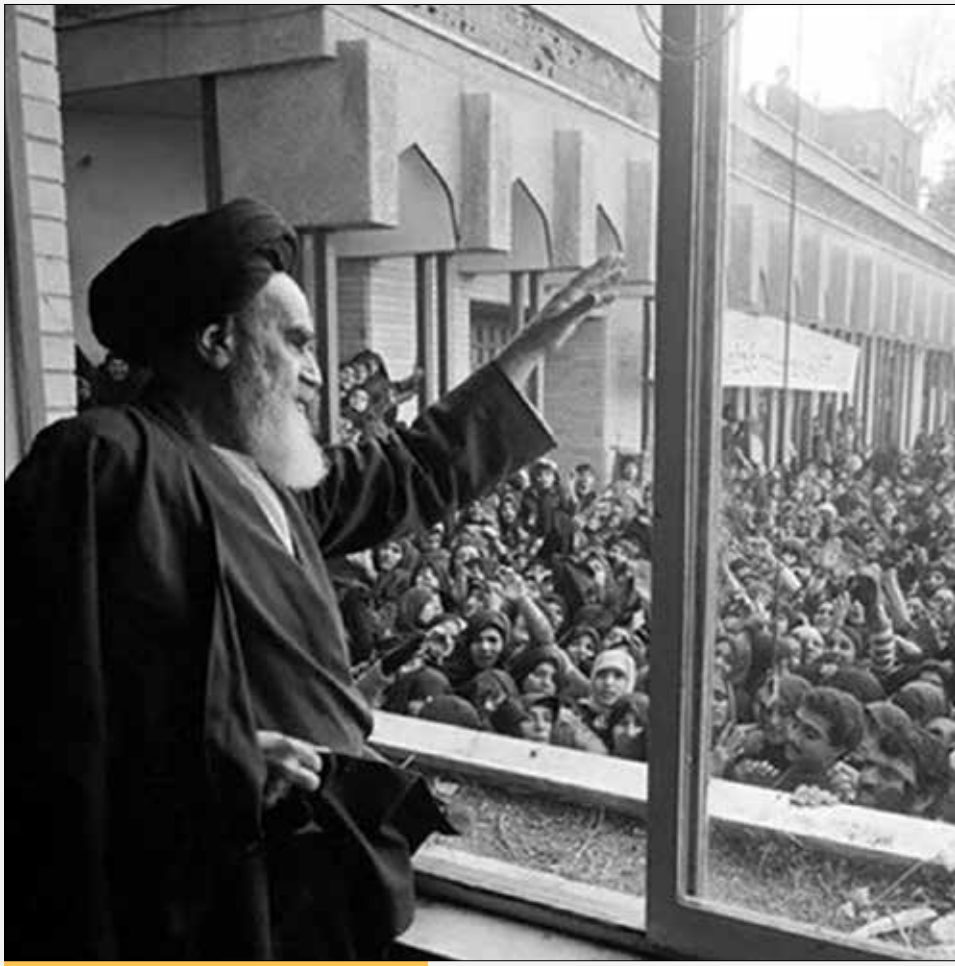
The Iranian Revolution of 1979 has been described as one of the epochal events of the twentieth century, inaugurating a period of Islamic revivalism and struggles against "modernization" in many nations where Islam is the predominant religion. In discussions of the 1979

Revolution, the significance of Islamic fundamentalism, the use of political repression by the regime of Mohammed Reza Shah (heretofore referred to as the monarchist regime), particularly the violence perpetrated by SAVAK (the secret police), widespread corruption by individual public officials and members of the oligarchic economic elite, as well as official favoritism, rising income inequality, and the impact of "Western" imperialism have all played causal roles.

However, there has been a marked paucity of discussions of the way the 1979 Revolution was shaped by struggles over class processes, defined as the particular forms in which surplus labor was produced and distributed. In particular, discussions of the 1979 Revolution have failed to recognize;

i) The role of internecine conflict within the ranks of capitalist appropriators, and

ii) The importance of ancient (or self-exploiting) direct producers and their allied agents in the collapse of the monarchist regime. It is the argument of this chapter that struggles over class processes were a significant factor in shaping the crises that culminated in the 1979 Revolution and of subsequent struggles over the specific form of economic and non- economic relationships in the post-revolutionary Islamic republic. The primary thesis of this chapter is that the efforts of the monarchist regime to create a particular form of capitalism, herein described as oligarchic Capitalism



The personality of Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini was a critical element in defining Iran's war role. Khomeini's background, charisma, and thirst for revenge on those who inflicted personal injury upon him influenced the atmosphere leading to the war.

that would serve as catalyst for Iran's rapid economic growth created a range of social crises that threatened the survival of ancients (or self-exploitation) and non-oligarchic capitalism.

The policies of the monarchist regime sometimes referred to as the modernization programme had a definite impact upon class processes in Iran, created and then deepened the social crises that threatened pre-existing configurations of surplus appropriation, particularly the prevalence of self- exploitation in the rural villages and urban bazaars, resulting in complex forms of re-



sistance (Gabriel, 2001) .

Among those with self-interest in opposing the modernization program were a wide range of social agents who desired an end to these crises, including non-oligarchic capitalist appropriators, ancient direct producers, and social agents allied to one or the other or both of these groups of appropriators, including the Shi'a Islamic clergy.

In so far as the monarchist regime's modernization program was designed to displace self-exploitation, which was arguably the most widespread form of surplus appropriation in terms of numbers of direct producers involved, with oligarchic capitalist exploitation, the 1979 Revolution might better be described as a counter revolution, i.e. a change in the political relationships constituting the state designed to avert a gradually progressing economic revolution. On the other hand, capitalist exploitation was clearly dominant in terms of the total value of produced commodities in Iran (Ibid).

the revolution's core ideology may have propounded the need for a new, radical and egalitarian order; but it was supplemented by pre-existing ideas that were crucial to sustaining domestic support (above all nationalism and a sense of the country's historic standing and mission).

THE UNDISPUTED PERSONALITY OF AYATOLLAH KHOMEINI

The personality of Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini was a critical element in defining Iran's war role. Khomeini's background, charisma, and thirst for revenge on those who inflicted personal injury upon him influenced the atmosphere leading to the war. One can understand Khomeini's personality and beliefs by examining his background. Khomeini's paternal origins were not Iranian, but Indian, and he spent a substantial part of his life outside Iran.

His devotion to Shia Islam, reflected by his simplistic ascetic lifestyle focused on spiritual matters, attracted the majority of Iranian peasant-oriented society. Many of these traditional citizens flocked to the modern cities seeking opportunity, only to wind up crowded into slums.

Khomeini's Islamic ideology countered the former Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi's Iranian nationalism associated with the glory and affluence of the pre-Islamic Persian Empire of Cyrus the Great. Khomeini's connections outside Iran inhibited his adoption of Persian nationalist ideology in the war. But for many Iranians the Iraqi invasion reignited anti-Arab historic feelings dating from the medieval Islamic conquest. For Khomeini, his religious faith enabled him to confront stronger opponents in hostile environments (Gabriel, 2001, Shahi, 2009).

Khomeini's charisma drew followers of Islam, especially in Iran, Iraq and Lebanon, where Shia'ism dominates. The Shiites for centuries served as a low caste of underprivileged here-

tics throughout the Sunni dominated Moslem world. Shia'ism emphasizes martyrdom and suffering along with the belief in a messianic era entering upon the return of the Twelfth Imam, a descendant of Mohammad. Khomeini's life of suffering and final return to Iran replicated a legacy of the Shiite experience.

Khomeini's life paralleled in many ways the sect's medieval founder, Imam Hussein, whose army of followers was defeated by a mightier Sunni-led Umayyad Army. In the aftermath of his defeat, Hussein, the model of martyrdom, was beheaded and his followers were left persecuted and oppressed. Although Khomeini denied assertions of being the messianic 12th Imam returning to bring world redemption, Shiites called him "Imam," alluding to his religious stature of messiah among the illiterate poor.

Khomeini's record of overpowering enemies such as the Shah, President Jimmy Carter, and Saddam Hussein through the Iranian Revolution, the American Hostage Crisis, and the Iran-Iraq war was viewed by his followers as miraculous and a reward for his piety (Society, 2011).

There was a revengeful side to Khomeini's personality which was cast in religious terms of good overcoming evil among his faithful. Khomeini sought personal revenge on those who wronged him by equating personal enemies with enemies of the Iranian state. Khomeini's targets for revenge were the Shah, Jimmy Carter, and Saddam Hussein. Khomeini suffered harassment and expulsion both under the Shah and Saddam Hussein. He finally died in 1989.





IMAM KHOMEINI'S POLITICAL THOUGHT AND LEGACY

- Imam Khomeini adamantly opposed monarchy, arguing that only rule by a leading Islamic jurist would insure Shariat-e-Muhammadi was properly followed (velayat-e faqih).
- Imam Khomeini believed that Iran should strive towards self-reliance. He viewed certain elements of Western culture as being inherently decadent and a corrupting influence upon the youth. As such, he often advocated the banning of popular Western fashions, music, cinema, and literature. His ultimate vision was for Islamic nations to converge together into a single unified power, in order to avoid alignment with either side (the West or the East), and he believed that this would happen at some point in the near future.
- Imam Khomeini expressed support for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; in Sahifah-e-Noor (Vol. 2, page 242), he states: "We would like to act according to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We would like to be free. We would

like independence."

- Imam Khomeini led an ascetic lifestyle, being deeply interested in mysticism, and was against the accumulation of land and wealth by the clergy.
- Many of Imam Khomeini's political and religious ideas were considered to be progressive and reformist by leftist intellectuals and activists prior to the Revolution.
- Imam Khomeini's definition of democracy existed within an Islamic framework. His last will and testament largely focuses on this line of thought, encouraging both the general Iranian populace, the lower economic classes in particular, and the clergy to maintain their commitment to fulfilling Islamic revolutionary ideals (Shraghi, 2009; Wikipedia, 2012).

This revolution did not rely on force, military rebellion or guerrilla war but on politics. This is true in particular with regard to the two instruments that European revolutionaries had themselves long dreamed of using The mass mobilization of people in the streets.

THE SIX MAJOR POINTS IN THIS REVOLUTION

i) First, a broad coalition of opposition forces came together to overthrow a dictatorial regime, building on longstanding social grievances but also energizing nationalist sentiment against a state and ruler seen as too compliant to foreign interests. The coalition mobilized under Ayatollah Khomeini's leadership ranged from liberal and Marxist to conservative and religious forces: in effect a classic populist alliance.

ii) Second, the victory of the revolution both required and were facilitated by the state's weakness of leadership and internal divisions. The Shah was ill, his advisers and generals were uncertain. The resemblance to other figures and regimes in a time of crisis - Louis XVI and Czar Nicholas II, as well as Charles I of England - is evident.

iii) Third, the revolution possessed the quality that distinguishes mere coups d'état or rebellions from major revolutions: namely, it was not just political (in the sense of changing the political elite and the constitution or legitimating system of the country but had profound and ongoing social and economic consequences. Because of it, Iran today has a new social order and a new set of social values - even as a new revolutionary elite, an Islamic nomenclature, united by ties of power, business and marriage, controls state revenues.

iv) Fourth, the revolution's core ideology may have propounded the need for a new, radical and egalitarian order; but it was supplemented by pre-existing ideas that were crucial to sustaining domestic support (above all nationalism and a sense of the country's historic standing and mission). Ayatollah Khomeini at first refused to use the word fatherland, and denounced secular nationalism as an insult to Islam. But with the invasion by Saddam Hussein's Iraq in 1980 all this changed, and he and other leaders adopted the Iranian version of the term used by French revolutionaries in the 1790s.

v) Fifth, the explosion of revolution at the center of a multi-ethnic country - and driven especially from within its dominant ethnic component - had profound reverberations on the relations between the Iran's different national components. In particular, it led not to the era of fraternal cooperation and solidarity anticipated in much of the political rhetoric of the time, but to conflict and war.

vi) Here again, the pattern - a revolt at the heart of a plural country and the consolidation of a new authoritarian regime provoking contrary forces in the periphery - has rich historical precedents. The Young Turk revolution of 1908, the Bolshevik revolution of 1917, and the Ethiopian revolution of 1974 are prime examples; their echo in Iran concerned, above all, the Kurds. The hopes of this significant part of the population, of an autonomous Kurdistan within a democratic Iran (and they knew the first was impossible without the second) were to be dashed.



vii) Sixth, the revolution in Iran had explosive international consequences. There were persistent attempts to export the revolution to neighboring countries, which intensified regional rivalries and fostered conditions that led to inter-state war. The Iranian revolution's efforts to promote its state interests and extend itself soon acquired resemblances to a reviving empire - with traces of France and Russia in particular, not least the contradictory trends whereby some forces in the region were inspired by the revolution while others drew on older antagonisms (such as Saddam Hussein's excoriation of Khomeini as a magus [Zoroastrian priest] and more recent concerns about a powerful new Shi'a "crescent") (Halliday, 2009).

This revolution was termed as the Islamic Revolution as the country had lost its Islamic Ideology throughout the Shah's Rule and struggle was to re-instate the Islamic Values and the Sharia't Law in the Country. So the accusation stands false on its ground rejected by ever concerning source.

CONCLUSION

This revolution (more than any other in history) did not rely on force, military rebellion or guerrilla war but on politics. This is true in particular with regard to the two instruments that European revolutionaries had themselves long dreamed of using The mass mobilization of people in the streets (in the Iranian case, the largest such opposition demonstrations ever recorded anywhere) and the political general strike to identify.

The non-acceptance of the Shah's decision (which, from October 1978, paralyzed the economy and foreign trade with foreign national particular American). This was perhaps the most consistent and original aspect of the Iranian revolution: in its political form and process, and despite its religious and tra-

ditional appearance, it was said to be the first modern revolution.

Iran's experience departed from the standard prescribed by both historical example and textbooks of historical sociology: namely, that a revolution's crucial requirement was the weakening of the state, usually as a result of foreign pressure - either defeat in war or by invasion, or via the withdrawal of support from an external supporter (in the case of China and Cuba, this was the United States). Some people (majorly from the West and Middle East) argue that this revolution was initially a Worker's Revolution which was later on hijacked by the extremist Islamic Clerics of the country.

This revolution was termed as the Islamic Revolution as the country had lost its Islamic Ideology throughout the Shah's Rule and struggle was to re-instate the Islamic Values and the Sharia't Law in the Country. So the accusation stands false on its ground rejected by ever concerning source.

It was the Ayatollah's effort that the country (the people and all Clerics belonging to different sects and ethics) collectively made him the country's Supreme Leader of the country (a person who is

responsible for the election of the government and the Islamic Constitution) where he remained till his death in 1989. It was said that his funeral was attended by 6 Million people approximately which is the biggest in history until now.

References

REFERENCES

* ANSARI, A. M. 2001. The Myth of the White Revolution: Mohammad Reza Shah, 'Modernization' and the Consolidation of Power. Middle Eastern Studies, 37, 1-24.
* AXELROD, A., AND PHILLIPS CHARLES 1995. "Mohammad Reza Pahlavi." Dictators & Tyrants: Absolute Rulers and Would-Be Rulers in World History. Modern World History Online. 1995 Ed. New York: Fact on File Inc.
* BRITANNICA, E. 2012. Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi. In:MANSUR G. ABDULLAH, A. M. C. (ed.) Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi: Article. Chicago, USA: Encyclopedia Britannica.
* BRITANNICA, E. B 'A'. 2012. White Revolution. In: MANSUR G. ABDULLAH, A. M.
* ESHRAGHI, A. R. 2009. Khamenei vs. Khomeini [Online]. Washington DC: The New Republic. Available: http://www.newrepublic.com/article/politics/khamenei-vs-khomeini [Accessed 15-01-012 2012].
* FRIEDMAN, G. 2009. Western Misconceptions Meet Iranian Reality. Geopolitical Weekly. Austin, USA: Stratfor International.
* GABRIEL, S. J. 2001. Class Analysis of the Iranian Revolution of 1979. In: J.K. GIBSON-GRAHAM, R. S. A. W. R. (ed.) Re/Preseting Class essay in postmodern Marxism. Durham, NC: Duke University press.
* HALLIDAY, F. 2009. Iran's revolution in global history. Available: http://www.opendemocracy.net/article/iran-s-revolution-in-global-history [Accessed 23- 01-2012].
* SEYED, F. S. 2002. The Literacy Corps in Pahlavi Iran (1963-1979): Political, Social and Literary Implications, Switzerland, Lugano: Sapiens.
* SHAHI, A. 2009. Thirty years on: The Iranian revolution and its impact on the region
* SOCIETY I. C. "B" 2012. White Revolution the post-Mosaddeq era and the Shah's White Revolution In: SOCIETY, I. C. (ed.) History of Iran. Tehran: Iran Chamber Society.
* SOCIETY, I. C. "A" 2012. History of Iran:Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi Arya Mehr and Shahanshah (King of the Kings) In: SOCIETY, I. C. (ed.) History of Iran. Tehran, Iran: Iran Chamber Society.
* SOCIETY, I. C. 2011. History of Iran Ayatollah Khomeini Ayatollah Rouhollah Mousavi Khomeini (Imam Khomeini) In: SOCIETY, I. C. (ed.) History of Iran. Tehran, Iran: Iran Chamber Society.
* VAKILI-ZAD, C. 1990. Organization, Leadership and Revolution: Religiously-Oriented Opposition in the Iranian Revolution of 1978-1979. Journal of Conflict Studies, 10, 21.
* WATSON, K. 2006. The Shah's White Revolution—Education and Reform in Iran.
* WIKIPEDIA 2012. Political thought and legacy. In: WIKIPEDIA (ed.) Ruhollah Khomeini. Wikipedia.
* WOLFE, L. R. 2012. THE WHITE REVOLUTION IN IRAN [Online]. Washington DC: coldwarstudies.com. Available: http://www.coldwarstudies.com/2012/05/30/the-white- revolution-in-iran/ [Accessed 07-03- 2012].



IRAN'S ISLAMIC REVOLUTION ACHIEVEMENTS

The 38th anniversary of victory of the Islamic Revolution has arrived with a plethora of achievements for Iran. The Islamic Republic of Iran has left behind big developments both inside and abroad and has got a special status in the regional and global scenes.

In order to understand the developments of the past nearly 4 decades and the status of Iran in the global system we should see in what conditions the Islamic Revolution gained victory and how it has passed the crises and reached stability affecting the international developments.





The Islamic revolution of Iran gained victory during the bipolar system of world. Any uprising or revolution that was staged was affiliated to one of the eastern and western superpowers. In fact the global system after the World War II was divided between the two powers: USSR and the USA. Each of the two superpowers had satellite states in five continents of the world. While trying to preserve their domain, the two attempted to penetrate in the rival's territory. As a result of this rivalry many regional and international wars broke out and millions of people lost their lives and the infrastructures of many poor countries were obliterated.

Iran was placed in western bloc under the US hegemony. Over 40 thousand American advisors came to in Iran with different titles. Former US President Richard Nixon, who was in office from 1969-1974, described Iran as the island of stability in West Asia. Nixon doctrine had repercussions in the Persian Gulf region with the policy called twin policy. Based on this policy, the Iranian and Saudi governments, as the two main columns of the US plans, had the mission of filling the power vacuum in the Persian Gulf region.

Giving economic and military aid to Iran and Saudi Arabia, the US empowered them as a tool for bolstering what it deemed as "security in the region", without the need for having direct presence. Out of the two columns, the first option was Iran and the Saudi regime was noticed as the second column to provide financial support. Due to its low number of population, industrial backwardness and lack of firm administrative and political organizations, Saudi Arabia failed

to be the gendarme of the region. Iran as the first column of Nixon doctrine, assumed the duty of gendarme of the region after the withdrawal of Britain from the Persian Gulf.

Nixon doctrine was implemented in countries which enjoyed the required capabilities for preserving the US interests and bolstering its influence. From Nixon's viewpoint, Iran was the best choice. Existence of oil reserves in the south and Soviet communism in the north were the two causes for this choice. Among the regional states, Iran is the only country with full dominance over the Persian Gulf. According to the military researcher, Joshua Epstein, with reliance on several documents released by NATO, Pentagon and the Soviet military, Iran had amazingly got high importance in the US military strategy. To establish its regional strategy, the US had always been seeking allies that enjoy the stability and security required for its survival. In other words, the US could not rely on allies which were engaged in domestic unrest and could not secure the US interests. In view of this, the victory of the Islamic Revolution was a huge shock for the US.





Even weeks after the victory of the revolution, they could not make a logical analysis about the causes of the regime's overthrow.

Former member of US national Security Council, Gary Sick, says: Nobody was prepared to face Iran's revolution. The government of Jimmy Carter was also surprised at culmination of the revolution and the quick overthrow of the monarchic regime of Iran. The Shah and his supporters had no proper understanding of what took place in the final months of 1979. Even weeks after the victory of the revolution, they could not make a logical analysis about the causes of the regime's overthrow. For us acceptance of the point is very difficult. The deep contradiction between reality and our expectations was observed by the reports and the analysis which we relied on. Jimmy Carter, after failure in the 1980 presidential election said: This is very noteworthy that a president's fate in campaigns is determined not by his American rival in Michigan, Pennsylva-

nia or in New York but in Iran.

The point to note is that the Islamic Revolution is completely religious and gained victory with the slogan of reviving religious values under the leadership of Imam Khomeini who was the serious critic of the eastern and western colonialist policies. The Islamic revolution gained victory in contrast to the equations of the bipolar system ruling over the world and dealt a heavy blow on the US expansionist policies in West Asia. Iran's freedom from the influence and hegemony of the Americans made them use every political, economic and military way against the Islamic Republic of Iran. Attempt for coup, support for the separatist groups in the borders, enforcement of economic sanctions and imposing the destructive 8-year war through the US puppet Saddam were among the most important schemes for overthrowing the Islamic Republic system of Iran. But the Iranian nation and government unlike all other revolutions has reached stability in a short time and is achieving growth and development in every political, human, scientific, economic, social, cultural, security and defense domain.

During the blessed life of the Islamic revolution, through trust in God and support of people the Islamic Revolution has gained great achievements so that today not only the fair western and eastern thinkers and observers, but the sworn enemies of Iran have acknowledged its glory and its high impact. Patrick Seale, analyst from Middle East on Line, stressing Iran's turning into a brilliant democracy writes: Under the rule of theologians, Iran is considered one of the freest, most modern and robust countries of West Asia.

Interestingly, 38 years after the victory of the Islamic Revolution, nearly 38 elections have been held. In the heat of war when Saddam bombarded Iranian cities, elections were held with no delay under bombs and missiles.

The neo-conservative think tank American Enterprise in a report has warned the American officials about Iran's future status as the center of balance of power in the region. Today one of the great honours for the Islamic Republic of Iran is the increasing growth and the country's active presence in scientific arenas. In terms of research, the Iranian researchers by registering 8513 scientific articles rank 16 in production of knowledge and Iran's scientists and researchers are among the top scientists and researchers of the world. Access to the nuclear fuel technology and knowhow as the 6th country entering the club of nuclear fuel and taking

During the blessed life of the Islamic revolution, through trust in God and support of people the Islamic Revolution has gained great achievements so that today not only the fair western and eastern thinkers and observers, but the sworn enemies of Iran have acknowledged its glory and its high impact



big strides toward new vistas of knowledge and gaining spectacular breakthroughs in new sciences such as Nano technology are among other progresses that the Islamic Republic of Iran has made. It should be noted that in the field of Nano technology the Islamic Republic stands at the 7th position and is looking for reaching higher ranks in this domain.

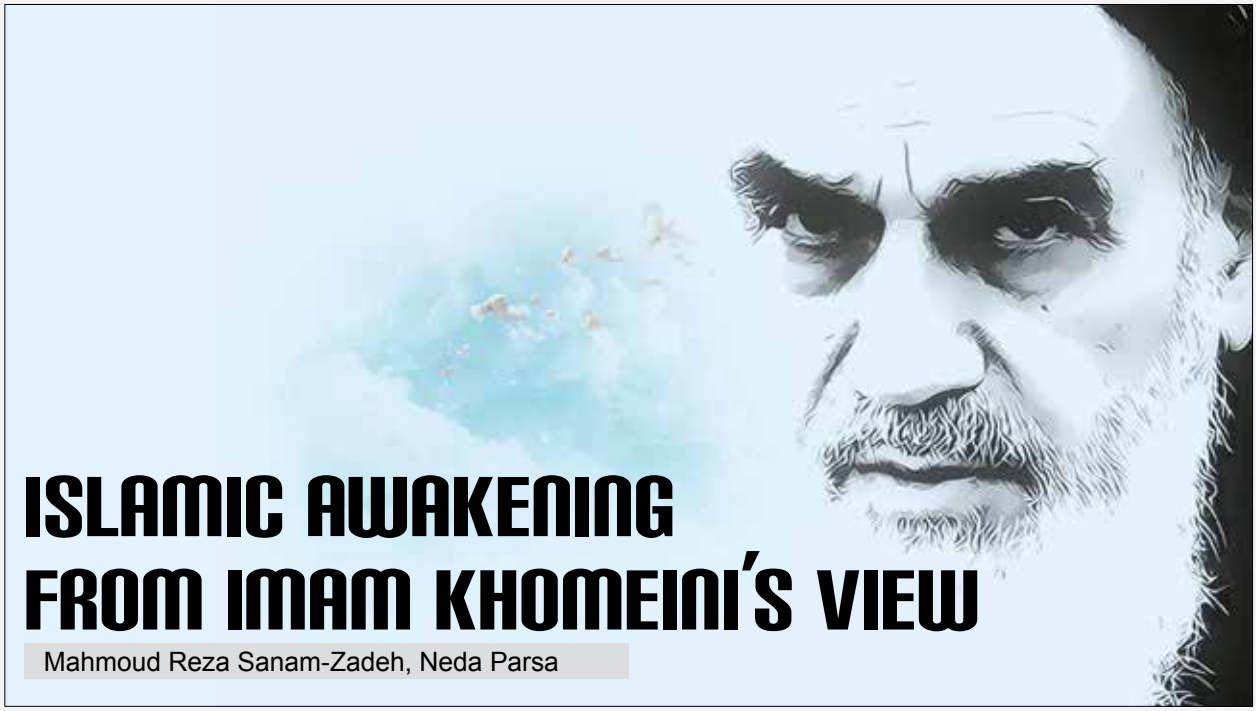
Today the number of students has increased from about 175 thousand before the Islamic Revolution to over 4.2 million after it. Iran has made astounding progresses in production and development of various ballistic missiles, long-range surface to surface missiles, surface to air missiles and various sea missiles. These include Safir satellite-carrier missile, Shahab, Sejjil and Cruise missiles. These progresses have placed Iran among a handful of countries possessing the technology of developing highly precise surface-to-surface missiles. It should be noted that all these military breakthroughs have been designed and produced for defensive and deterrent purposes. Iran has enemies in the region and the world. These military achievements have been made so that no regime will even think of attacking and invading Iran since it will receive a crushing and irreparable response.

Despite all hostilities of some West Asian states and the trans-regional interventions by the US and Britain, the Islamic Republic of Iran has proved time and again that it wants peace, stability and security for itself and all regional states. Now that the west-fostered terrorism has become the source of threat for the region and the world, the Islamic Republic of Iran is the only country in the region which is seriously fighting terrorism in the region. This is a point which has been acknowledged even by the enemies. They have admitted that fighting terrorism is impossible without taking into account the role of Iran and seeking Iran's help to this end. This shows the magnitude of the Islamic Republic of Iran's influence in materializing peace, stability and security in West Asia (the region that the west likes to call Middle East).

Parstoday.com







ISLAMIC AWAKENING FROM IMAM KHOMEINI'S VIEW

Mahmoud Reza Sanam-Zadeh, Neda Parsa

Introduction

Several years ago, Middle East and North Africa have been observing widespread public uprisings and massive protests that have never existed in this area. These public movements which had been started initially following self-immolation of a young Tunisian and which have caused to prevalent revolutions and changes in the region, and consistent with wisely prediction of the Revolution's Leader, has even penetrated to Europe, are addressed in the form of Islamic Awakening. When speaking of Islamic Awakening, a chain of concepts and words, which puts us in a sense within the "political culture" of Islamic Awakening emerges. These words bring us truly and clearly to the real nature and identity of Islamic Awakening, and reveal its deep reality. In this regard, we can pay attention to words such as: Muslims' Awakening, sense of humiliation, revival of Islamic identity, esteem-seeking, Muslims' unity and unison, Islamic civilization etc.

Although Islamic Awakening has crossed the middle of the history of Islamic countries' past two centuries like a river's raging waves, and depending on the conditions and circumstance, each time in a country a movement or a cry for peace has risen, in some stages, this movement has gained depth, range and symbolic model effects. In February of 1979, the victory of Islamic Revolution and the establishment and continuation of Islamic Republic themselves come to be the "effect" of Islamic Awakening and after that the "cause" of Islamic Awakening as a comprehensive and living model, and it was the Islamic Revolution of Iran that could advance the depth and the dimensions of Islamic Awakening through revival of political and social life of Muslims in a vast country. This being a model and inspiration-giving of Iran's Islamic Republic for Islamic Awakening returns to two important and main factors. First, offering the theoretical model of "religious democracy" in the form of Constitution and the political structure of Iran's Islamic Republic which, by reliance on the text of Islam's instructions and values, gives an absolute and real role to people in governing their own destiny; and second, the continuation and evolution of this theory which

has presented the political systems of Iran's Islamic Republic as the model of the world of Islam. The influence and role of Islamic Republic in Islamic Awakening as follows:

"Without doubt, revivalism and Awakening of the world of Islam gained a new meaning and sense with victory of Islamic Revolution, and reached from theory to practice. Although from about one century ago thinkers like Seyyed Jama-O'dean Asad-Abadi and Mohammed Abdah were born to this world and cried for return to Islam and contrast to the culture of the west, victory if Islamic Revolution proved to all Muslims that the matter of return to Islam has not been just a fantasy, but it can turn into reality… which has been increasing Muslims' hope and confidence and made them more hopeful of returning to golden era of Islam".

Now considering the explanation of Islamic Revolution's status in Islamic Awakening and Imam Khomeini's determining and unique role in this revolution which truly demonstrated to the oppressed nations in the world that the strongest regimes associated with the Arrogance can be defeated with trust in God, resistance and stability of people and non-reliance upon the schools of the east and the west and dependence on Islam's salvation-giving school, it should be determined which coordinates and aspects Islamic Awakening has from Imam Khomeini's perspective. Thus, then, the present paper attempts to address the aspects and components of Islamic Awakening in Imam Khomeini's thought and system of thinking in addition to defining and presenting the conceptual explanation and stating Islamic Awakening's waves and history.

Islamic Awakening as a phenomenon influenced by intellectual movement of Islamic Republic in the current era, in the form of social, organizational or military institutions has claims.

Islamic Awakening Origins and Causes

1. Islamic Awakening as a phenomenon influenced by intellectual movement of Islamic Republic in the current era, in the form of social, organizational or military institutions has claims. Not only has this stream approved its existence and influence in the arena of political and security conflicts, but it also goes to become the uncontested power at the global level.
2. Entering of new generation with revolutionary characteristics into the arena of conflicts who has deeper and more realistic understanding of the reasons of scientific, economic and social backwardness of their societies especially in the field of intellect and culture.
3. Attention to religious unity and ideological motifs and right understanding of the strategies



of hostile and arrogant powers for creating gaps in the world of Islam.
4. Regional and global Awakening events such as the crisis of Palestine, events of September eleven, occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan and the strategy of ideological war of the west with the centrality of USA which is done with the aim of domination over the world of Islam have remarkable impacts on Islamic Awakening.
5. Growth and development of mass media and the evolution of the methods of promoting Islam.

6. Lack of political freedom.
7. Aggravation of economic status.
8. Increase of the role of regional and international powers.
9. Islamic Revolution which is the main reason of Islamic Awakening and has played an especial role in Awakening Muslim nations.

At the level of function, the abovementioned factors are the effects of the first cause which is called Islamic Revolution which in 1979 in a move based on people's will, changed all political, social, intellectual, and security infrastructures of hegemonic countries and their associated agents of authoritarian, and in a historical generation, presented a powerful and intellectual model with efficient management to the waiting streams and minds.



Imam Khomeini's view regarding Islamic Awakening

Imam Khomeini is among those leaders of religious revolutions that by reliance upon Islamic instructions, associated with understanding, planning and implementing, attempted to revive the resistance against despotism and arrogance. Although some peacemakers in the world of Islam outlined the path of Islamism's direction through rising against oppression in internal despotism or external arrogance, due to not having the roadmap in each path, they couldn't go beyond their time and space. Imam Khomeini came to revive the literature of resistance and stability. Using Quran's language, he negated all Taghuts and created a literature by means of which the spell of Taghuts was broken, and people were invited toward God, according to which Islamic movement has kept itself alive and dynamic.

In fact, it should be said that with emergence of Imam Khomeini into the global arena, a new wave of Islamic Awakening started. The role of Imam Khomeini in this period is a legendary one, similar to the very myth and legend that Seyyed Jamal O'din points out about in one of his articles in Orvatol-



Awakening is the first step and Islamic countries, Muslim nations, and poor nations all over the world have woken up.

vosgha. According to this myth, in very old days, there was a temple outside the city in which travelers took refuge at night, but nobody came out it alive. This tale was so well-known that nobody had the courage to get to the vicinity of that temple anymore. Then a man turned up, went into the temple loud and proud and heard horrific and terrifying voices from everywhere, which threatened him to death. As such, the spell was broken all of a sudden and all hidden treasures unveiled. Seyyed tells this tale and wishes for a day when a man comes and breaks the spell of colonialism. Yes, Imam Khomeini is the very legendary man who broke the spell of colonialism and turned Islamic Awakening to a dominant discourse. The new wave of Islamic Awakening under the leadership of Imam Khomeini was neither a cultural movement limited to political and intellectual elites (such as the movement of Seyyed Jamal and co-thinkers) nor a political temporary movement following recruiting from among members of a certain society (such as the movement of Ekhwan olmoslemin), but it was a universal and widespread movement which associated with itself all walks of human societies at the global level. Not only did Imam have the concern of Awakening Iranian society, but he also had the concern of all the poor: "Muslims must wake up. Today is not the day for each Muslim to live by himself in one corner and live in a certain country for himself. In such a time that the policy of superpowers is to devour everything, Muslims must wake up and be under the banner of Islam and under the domination of Quran. Their behavior toward Muslims was so that they got disappointed with themselves, i.e. they lost themselves. Muslims must be serious and find themselves again". Thus, the first step is "Awakening": "Awakening is the first step and Islamic countries, Muslim nations, and poor nations all over the world have woken up." "You must wake up from the dream that have injected to us for hundreds of years. The first step is to wake up. We must understand that we are of humankind too… Awakening is followed by determination."

The general Principles of Islamic Awakening from Imam Khomeini's perspective

1. By pulling Islam away from the arena of the society, western culture and rules found their way through the Islamic societies, and the ground for dominance and growth of foreign counselors and agents was provided. Of course in the world of Islam, this universal attack did not remain without respond, and the keepers of Islamic values all over the Islamic countries and lands defended Islam through disseminating books, articles etc., and proved the opposite of that, i.e. Islam is of the comprehensiveness of a prosperity-giving school. In the meantime, Imam



has a special characteristic. He realized the source of danger, introduced it, and presented the solution to deal with it.

Imam regarded colonizers and their agents as the reason of hopelessness and disappointment of nations with Islam and says: "They disseminated the propaganda that Islam is not a universal religion, is not the religion for life, does not have principles and foundations for society, has not brought governmental rules and principles" [10]. In his will, he has warned about the continuation of this mysterious movement by enemies and strays, and says: "from among the important conspiracies which in the recent year, especially during the contemporary decades particularly after the victory of Islamic Revolution, we can see, is the broad propagandas with various aspects for making nations especially the selfless nation of Iran disappointed with Islam. Sometimes awkwardly and explicitly it says that because Islam's sentences have been enacted 1400 years ago, it cannot manage countries in the modern era, or that Islam is a reactionary religion and is against any innovation and the manifestation of civilization, and that countries cannot avoid the world's civilization and its manifestations in the modern age."

Imam considered not only colonialism and enemies of Islam as being responsible for pulling Islam away from the arena of society and the life of Muslims and dissemination of irreligion, but also many clergies who have addressed just some parts of Islam's orders and have failed in introducing other parts due to their lack of right insight and understanding or nonchalance or other weaknesses: "clerics who do not care about introducing Islam's theories and principles and ideology and spend the major part of their time doing what they tell them to do, must be admonished. They are guilty too, not only foreigners".

Imam regards the solution as in the effort and right introduction of Islam. Therefore, he has always encouraged scholars and students to reach a correct understanding of Islam and present it to the people of the world, and has emphasized the integrity and influence of Islam for managing the people of every period, and has noted the fundamental principles of Islam, and taken steps as much as he could in this direction during the continuous fighting clashes and prisons

and exiles: "scholars should outline and state all aspects of Islam and present them all over the world, and if possible, find a representative so as to present the truths of Islam at a broader range."

2. Awakening of nations:

With a deep understanding, Imam Khomeini has regarded reforming the status of Muslims of the world in accordance with the domination of despotism and arrogance and the increasing Islamic governments' attachment to and dependence on the devourers of the east and the west as unacceptable and undesirable, and in this regard, he considers nations' Awakening as the condition of change and move toward the desired. He says: "Until when should we under the domination of foreigners and until when should our countries under their plunders? Why don't Muslims wake up from sleep?" "In every country you live in, defend your Islamic and national reputation; and courageously defend Islamic nations and countries against your enemies, meaning America and international Zionism and superpowers of the east and the west; and reveal the tyrannies of Islam's enemies. Come to your sense and find your Islamic personality. Don't go under oppression and reveal smartly the evil plots of international devourers who are headed by America". "Nations must themselves decide about these matters, because governments have partnership with those very superpowers, even for a little."

With a deep understanding, Imam Khomeini has regarded reforming the status of Muslims of the world in accordance with the domination of despotism and arrogance.

3. Unity of Muslims:

Imam Khomeini regarded Islamic Awakening and the unity as interdependent: "problems of Muslims are due to the differences among walks of them". [17] Thus, "unity of the world of Islam" was one of the long-lasting and fundamental mental concerns of Imam Khomeini who never ignored it during his social and political activity, whether before or after the victory of Islamic Revolution. In Imam Khomeini's opinion, to sow discord is a colonialism policy which must be fought off. Fueling religious and ethnic differences in lines with the policy of Islam's enemies is a big sin. It is under the shadow of maintaining unity that we can suppress Islam's enemies and return to Muslims their lost esteem, and curtail the hand of superpowers from Islamic countries, and succeed in establishing the Islamic government: "the secret of Islamic countries' all problems lies within lack of harmony, and the secret of victory is unanimity and harmony".

In other speeches, he says: "O the Muslims of the world and the poor under the domination of colonialists, be aware, rise and be unanimous and defend Islam and your predeterminations and don't fear powers' bustle because by Almighty God's will, this century is the century of defeating of the poor over the arrogant and of truth over falsehood".

Considering the important role of Ummah (the nation), in every chance and occasion, Imam invited the Muslims of the world to unity and solidarity, and reminded them of the value of unity, and reiterated the positive results of unity and the negative consequences of discord and division: "Islam has come to unite all nations of the world including Arab, Ajam, Turk, Fars with each other and establish a great Ummah, called the Ummah of Islam, in the world so that those who want to gain any domination over these Islamic governments, over Islamic centers,

can't do that because of the big community which is comprised of Muslims from every nation. The plot of superpowers and their agents in the Islamic countries is to separate these Muslim walks, among which Almighty God has created "Okhovvat" (brotherhood) and has named believers as brothers, and make them separate from and enemy to each other by calling them nation of Turks, nation of Kurds, Nation of Arabs, and nation of Persians. And this is the antithesis of the path of Islam and Holy Quran. All Muslims are brother and equal to each other and none of them is distinct from the rest, and all of them must be under the flag of Islam and under the flag of Towhid (monotheism). Those who sow discord among Muslims using the name of nationality, sociality, and nationalism, are armies of Satan and the helpers of superpowers and are against Holy Quran".

In another speech, he has introduced Islamic Republic as the implementer of unity among Muslims and says: "Islamic Republic wants to implement the order stated by God and Holy Quran and Holy Prophet in all countries and Iran is the first place of all; it wants to make all countries understand that Islam's basis is on equality and brotherhood and unity, and all Muslims are an single hand against others. We want to make all nations understand that Islam is the religion of unity".



In section of unity's results and benefits, Imam Khomeini regards Muslims' unity as the cause of the return of their lost authority and dignity, and wants the Muslims of the world to convene under the flag of Towhid and curtail the hand of superpowers from their country and treasures: "O Muslims of the world who believe in the truth of Islam, rise up and convene under the flag of Towhid under the shadow of Islam's teachings and curtail the hand of superpowers from your countries and valuable treasures and revive the splendor of Islam and give up on sensual passions because you possess everything". In Imam Khomeini's opinion, victory over the enemies of Islam and defeating superpowers are achieved only through unity of Muslims and says: "O the Muslims of the world and the poor under the domination of oppressors, rise and be

unanimous and defend Islam and your predeterminations and don't fear powers' bustle because by Almighty God's will, this century is the century of defeating of the poor over the arrogant and of truth over falsehood"; According to Imam Khomeini, colonialism, corrupt governments, courtier clerics, westernized and easternized intellectuals, nationalism, ethnicity, and sensual passions are the factors of discord and division, and fight against Zionism, the Hajj, commemoration of Islamic rituals, making most out of Ayamollah (God's days), and Mahdism are the factors of unity.

4. Utilizing resources and facilities

"I hope that all Muslims wake up. Muslims must unite and slap it and know that they can; they have the ability of doing this; they both have the personnel and people and nation supports them in doing everything; they have facilities; the artery of America and the west depends on the oil of this region".

5. Global mobilization of Muslims

"O Muslim nations, O the oppressed nations of all the Islamic worlds, O dear nations that got under the domination of some people who offer your treasures to America and you struggle to live! Wake up, rise up, O the poor of the world! Rise up and stand against superpowers because if you do so, they can do nothing".

6. Using martyrdom-seeking youth

"O Muslims all over the world, since you have suffered from gradual death under the domination of foreigners, you must overcome the fear of death, and use the presence of zealous and martyrdom-seeking youth who are ready to break through the lines of blasphemy front. Don't consider maintaining the current situation. But think about getting rid of bondage and redemption from enslavement and attacking enemies of Islam because esteem and life are achieved via fight and the first step in fight is the determination".

Today, people of the world should pay attention to this big problem in the world, and every stratum, writer, the press all over the world should consider this matter and should give people the awareness to rise up appropriately against what these do.

7. Following the method of Islamic Revolution

"Today Islamic Iran, thanks to strong faith and devotion to Islam and the great change that has been created in various strata, curtails hand of the east and the west and of the deviant parasites from the country, and does not allow any power to minimally interfere in the Islamic country of Iran, and this is an absolute Hojjat (proof) for Muslims and the poor of the world to know that with nations' will, nobody can overrun their country, and a nation that chooses martyrdom over humiliation will surely invincible".

8. Mission-orientedness of Islam's scholars

"Today, people of the world should pay attention to this big problem in the world, and every stratum, writer, the press all over the world should consider this matter and should give people the awareness to rise up appropriately against what these do". "Scientists must think, wake people up; writing does not suffice, telling does not suffice, trust in governments does not suffice; people and writers and speakers must themselves wake people up, and a pen is valuable which wakes masses of people". "Today that the breeze of Awakening is blowing all over the world and the deceiving plots of tyrants have been revealed to some extent, it is time the true sympathetic with the oppressed from each folk and tribe and in every country revealed atrocities of oppressors during its black history with pen and speech and thought

and reflection, and presented their criminal records to this planet's residents, and scholars and scientists all over the world especially scholars and thinkers of Islam rose up unanimously in the path of save humanity from the unjust domination of this foxy minority that has spread its unjust domination over the world by its conspiracies and plots, and eliminated the false fear dominating over the oppressed using their speech and pen and action".

9. Fighting with export culture of west

"If Muslim nations and governments are national, they should try to remove themselves from intellectual dependence on west, and find their own culture and originality, and know and spread the progressive culture of Islam – which receives inspiration from Divine Inspiration… and fight with export culture".

10. Attention to Islamic rituals

From Imam Khomeini's perspective, another factor of reviving Islam and disseminating it is to hold Islamic rituals and to appropriately use it. Regarding the importance of this set of Islamic orders, Imam Khomeini says: "many Islamic religious rulings are the source of social and political services. Worships in Islam are basically associated with politics and managing the society. For example, Congregational Prayer and Hajj Congregation and Friday have political impacts in addition to spirituality and the moral and belief effects. Islam has provided such congregations so that they can be religiously used, their emotions and cooperation are promoted, they grow intellectually".



a) Hajj

Imam Khomeini considered revival of Hajj is the revival of Islam and Muslims, and in this regard he made efforts, and warned through speeches and messages in order to giving awareness and Awakening to Muslims about the philosophy of Hajj and enemies' attempts in distorting it and about taking a political aspect of Hajjes, including: "one of the great philosophies of Hajj is its political aspect the criminal hands from every angle are working to pound, and unfortunately their broad propagations has influenced on Muslims that many of them consider Hajj as an mere worship without attention to Muslims". [34] He also in this regard, addressing to Hojjaj (Pilgrims), emphasizes better using the capacity of Hajj in the Awakening of Muslims, and says: "The Hajj that Almighty God accepts and the Hajj that Islam has wanted

from us, is that when you go Hajj, wake up the Muslims of this country, unite them, make them understand why over one billion Muslims are under the pressure of two multimillion powers".

In messages about Hajj, Imam Khomeini informed people of the danger of oppressive rulers and of the domination of arrogant powers over the world of Islam and usurp of Islamic territories and Israel's domination and destroying their wealth, and invited them to unity and unanimity. Imam Khomeini says about the philosophy of Hajj: "Hajj is among the matters the political aspect of which is far important than its religious aspects, and you…must pay attention to this sense and eliminate this colonialist thought which has been imprinted into the mind of many, even the clerics of the Islamic countries. In your statements, in your communities, tell them that Islam's position has not ever been like that Muslims come and merely walk around the Holy House and do such stuff and don't care about what arrogant powers do on people of the world and on Muslims".

b) Friday Prayers and communities

In lines with this great Islamic ritual, in the invaluable book Tahriratolvasilah, Imam Khomeini says about the contents of Friday Sermons that: "Imam Jom'e (Friday Imam) should state, while giving sermons, what's beneficial to religion and the world of Muslims, and inform them of what is current in the Islamic and Non-Islamic countries and is to their advantage or disadvantage and what Muslims need in their life in this world and in the Hereafter, and talk with them about political and economic affairs influencing their independence and freedom, and make them aware of the interference of tyrant and colonialist governments in the political and economic affairs leading to them get colonized and exploited. The gist of Friday Prayers and its two sermons, such as Hajj and two Eids and the like, are of great benefit to Muslims, but unfortunately Muslims are unaware of the important political responsibilities and benefits of this worship".

In messages about Hajj, Imam Khomeini informed people of the danger of oppressive rulers and of the domination of arrogant powers over the world of Islam and usurp of Islamic territories and Israel's domination and destroying their wealth, and invited them to unity and unanimity.

References

- Eftekhari, Asghar; (2012), Islamic Awakening in theory and practice, Tehran; Imam Sadeq.
- Afshar, Asad-o'llah (2011), the age of nations' Awakening, Tehran: Alamse Danesh
- Imam Khomeini, Rouh'ollah; (2006); Imam Khomeini's works, Tehran, Institute for Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini's works (Institute for Print and Publication of Orouj).
- Imam Khomeini, Rouhollah (Beeta), Tahrir olvasilah, Translator: Ali Eslami, Qom: The office of Islamic Publications, 4 Volumes.
- Imam Khomeini, Rouhollah; (2000), Velayate Faghih, Tehran, Institute for Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini's works, 6th impression.
- Hosseini-Far, Reza (2009), Imam Khomeini and Islamic Awakening, Qom, Nashre Ma'aaref
- Khajeh-Sarvari, Gholam-Reza, (2012), "the relationship of Iran's Islamic Revolution with Islamic Awakening", Quarterly of Islamic Revolution Studies, No. 28, 95-110; 11 pages
- Sheeroudi, Morteza; (2011), "Islamic Revolution and Islamic Awakening; effects and examples", accessible at http://www.rasekhoon.net/article/show-28627.aspx
- Sufi Niaraki, Taqi; (2011) Islamic Awakening (civilization identity and the facing challenges); Tehran: Cultural Research Institute of Islamic Revolution
- Abbasi, Rouhollah; (2012), the nature of Awakening, Tehran, Daftare Elm
- Farzandi Ardakani, Abbas (2007), "theoretical fundamentals of Revolution issuance from Imam Khomeini's Perspective (reasons, importance and necessity of issuing revolution)", Bulletin of Matin, p. 36, pp. 98-99.
- Fouler, Graham; (1994), Qiblah of the world: Iran's Geopolitics, Translator: Abbas Mokhber, Tehran: Markaz.
- Cultural Institute of Ghadre-Velayat (2003), 92 achievements of Islamic Revolution
- Cultural Institute of Ghadre-Velayat (2012), Political Sireh of Hazrate Imam: the principle of Revolution issuance and attention to Islamic Awakening, Tehran, Ghadre-Velayat.
- Mohammadi, Manouchehr, (2011), global manifestation of Islamic Revolution, Tehran, Institute for Islamic culture and thought.
- Navvab, Mohammad; (2006), "Ummah in motion", Publication of Sureh, New Era, No. 27
- Yazdan-Panah, Mehdi; (2011). Student short articles on the subject of Islamic Awakening, Tehran: the Office for Cultural Studies and Social Planning, Ministry of Science, Research and Technology.

NEW INSIGHTS INTO THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

By Ali Fathollah-Nejad

The Iranian Revolution of 1979 is considered a defining moment because the Islamic Republic replaced an authoritarian monarchy that was friendly to the West. The revolution, moreover, linked religion to politics in an unprecedented way.

Arguably the most important reason for the international interest in Iran is its strategically pivotal geography. Like some of its Muslim neighbors, it has tremendous oil and gas reserves. For the United States, the revolution in Iran was nothing less than a geopolitical shock.

Revolutionary dynamics in the Arab World have recently rekindled the debate in the West on "political Islam". To get a good understanding of the phenomenon, however, it is necessary to define it properly – which, so far, has hardly been done.

The issue is generally approached from two directions. The cultural-essentialist or Orientalistic school holds that Islam determines political, economic and social realities. Orientalists argue that the entire Muslim world is not only somehow monolithic, but even downright resistant to change. Samuel Huntington's book "The clash of civilizations" is a prominent expression of such thinking. This school is not alone in emphasizing religion as the single most important defining feature of society, Islamist fundamentalists say so too.

The competing school emphasizes structural aspects





that have evolved in history. Its analyses take a wide range of factors into account, namely socio-economic conditions, political trends, historical change, class conflict and revolutions.

The current Arab Spring has dealt the Orientalist school a severe blow, and may yet discredit it once and for all. Obviously, there is a widespread desire in Muslim societies for change, and the revolutionary motivation is not primarily rooted in faith. Rather, the desire for universal freedoms and social justice is making itself heard in Tunisia, Egypt and elsewhere.

The books about Iran discussed here do not belong to the Orientalist camp. Nonetheless, each author assesses the topic from a different angle.

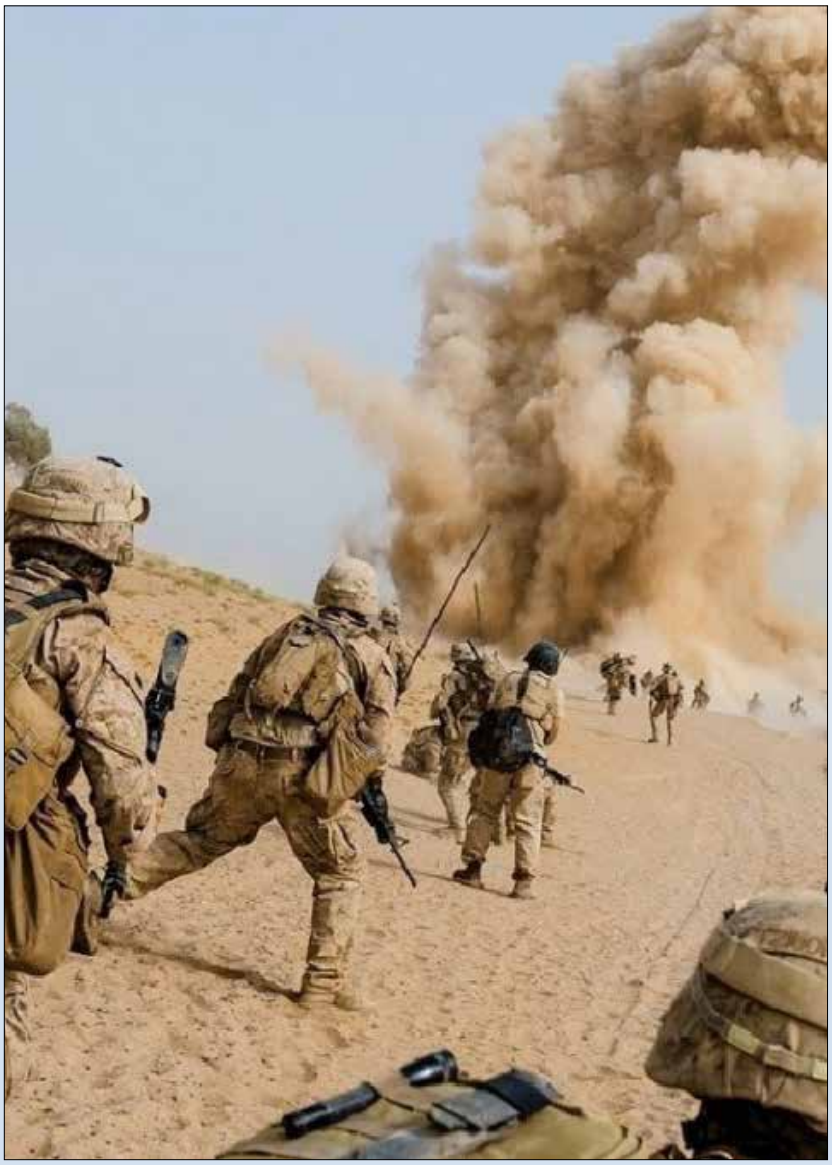
Struggle for democracy

In "Iran: a people interrupted" (2007), Hamid Dabashi analyses nearly 200 years of history from the literary-intellectual and political perspectives. The author takes his readers on a trip through time, revisiting major historical events. With unparalleled eloquence, he argues that Iranians have been fighting for democracy and against "foreign and domestic tyranny" for more than a century. Dabashi says the anti-colonial Tobacco Revolt at the end of the 19th century, the Constitutional Revolution at the beginning of the 20th, the nationalization of the oil sector under Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh in the 1950s and the "Islamic Revolution" at the end of the 1970s were the most important steps in this process.

He disagrees with the notion of Iran being caught between tradition and modernity, calling it a "fabricated paradox".

He disagrees with the notion of Iran being caught between tradition and modernity, calling it a "fabricated paradox". Instead, he argues that since the 19th century an "anti-colonial modernity" marked by the struggle against both domestic and foreign oppression has defined Iranians' emancipatory experience.

Dabashi traces three major ideological formations back to the multicultural, pluralistic Constitutional Revolution of the early 20th century: liberal-democratic nationalism, social-democratic socialism and theocratic Islamism. In his view, these three ideological formations do not necessarily clash. Rather, they all have their roots in the anti-colonial struggle and serve as catalysts for one other.



In the early 20th century, the idea of the modern nation-state with the notion of citizenship took shape, including both women and religious minorities, with relevant roles for a free press and intellectuals. However, it was never fully realized because of the repression of a series of Shah Regime which were allied to colonial and imperial powers. These ideals have yet to materialize.

Dabashi sees Shia Islam as inherently oppositional in its political focus. Accordingly, a dilemma arises when Shia clerics assume state power and get corrupted by it – which is what happened in the Islamic Republic.

Dabashi assesses the role of Shia religious leaders in the context of Iran's political development. He makes a distinction between progressive clerics who oppose unjust rule and conservative ones who are closely connected to power or strive for it. In doing so, he shows that Shia clerics in Iran do not form a monolithic block. As is evident today, some important leaders sympathise with the democracy movement, and many are not pleased with the increasingly militaristic system that was set up in the name of religion.

A wide range of voices

In "Iran's influence: a religious-political state and society in its region" (2010), Elaheh Rostami-Povey quotes a wide range of contemporary voices – journalists, refugees, expatriates and researchers from Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine and Egypt. She conducted her interviews with Muslim modernists, secular leftists, nationalists and feminists from 2007 to 2009. She shows that all of them demand democracy and liberty.

Her book is an encyclopedic discussion of the political dynamics within the religious-political state of Iran. She shows that its internal contradictions have fostered the growth of a new democratic movement, which calls the regime, but not religion as such, into question.

At the same time, she demonstrates why the Iranian state's foreign policy has found approval in the region where a majority of the public identifies with Iran's stance against

the USA, Israel and the "war on terror". One reason for the popularity of criticism voiced by Tehran is that many Arab autocracies cooperate with Washington, and open debate has been impossible so far.

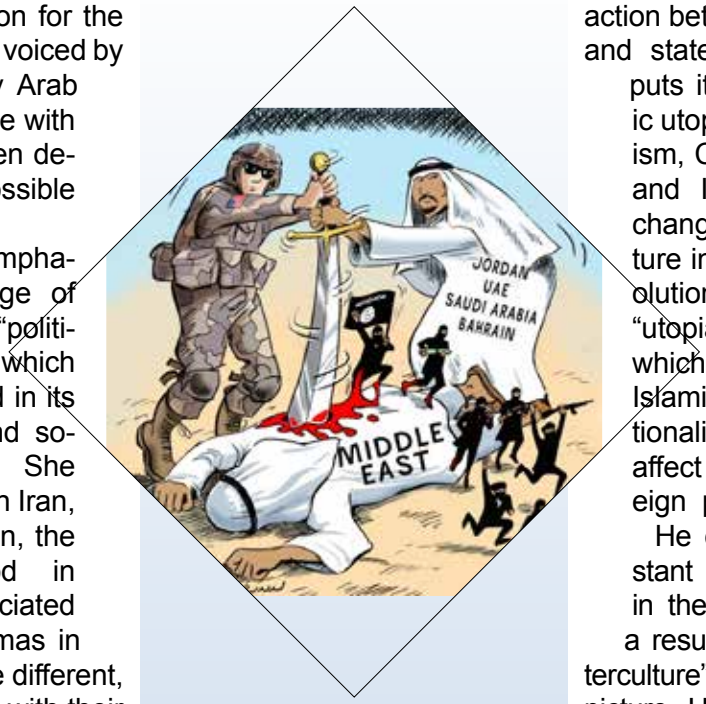
Rostami-Povey emphasizes the wide range of manifestations of "political Islam", each of which has to be considered in its specific historical and socio-political context. She writes that Islamists in Iran, Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and its associated organizations or Hamas in Palestine are all quite different, and all are struggling with their own internal contradictions. However, all varieties of Islamism have one thing in common: they mobilize popular support by opposing imperialism and Zionism.

Rostami-Povey warns that the term "Islamic fundamentalism" prevents us from seeing the diversity of various Islamism schools. As she puts it, "homogenization and essentialism" make us blind to dynamics of change and thus promote Orientalism and Islamophobia. She argues that, ultimately, the West's ongoing hostility towards Iran and Islamist movements only strengthens those conservative forces.

Arshin Adib-Moghaddam comes to similar conclusions in "Iran in world politics: the question of the Islamic Republic" (2007). He has worked up an intricate theory on the interaction between society, culture and state institutions. As he puts it, "counter-hegemonic utopias" – such as Marxism, Communism, Maoism and Islamism – radically changed Iran's political culture in the 1960s. The revolution therefore pursued "utopian-romantic" ideals, which left their mark on the Islamic Republic's institutionalized norms and still affect its approach to foreign policy.

He emphasizes the constant possibility of change in the Islamic Republic as a result of an "active counterculture". He shows that the picture US neo-conservatives paint of Iran is perverted and calls for "critical Iranian studies" which would pluralize the ways one sees Iran and dissect the international politics surrounding the country.

These three books by noted scholars lay the foundation for a better understanding of Iran and "political Islam". They theoretically and empirically assess the context in its entire complexity. Without such comprehensive knowledge, Western understanding cannot add up to more than biased knee-jerk reactions. The books show that political trends do not come about in a vacuum, but rather are rooted in complex settings with domestic and foreign social, economic and political factors. The idea of a "monolithic Islam" is not only wrong – it is dangerous.



Rostami-Povey warns that the term "Islamic fundamentalism" prevents us from seeing the diversity of various Islamism schools.



WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

By Soraya Sepahpour-Ulrich

Marcel Proust said: "The voyage of discovery is not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes." During the past two decades, I visited Iran on numerous occasions staying 10-14 days at a time. This time around, I stayed for 2 months and heeding Proust, I carried with me a fresh pair of eyes. I discarded both my Western lenses as well as my Iranian lenses and observed with objective eyes. It was a formidable journey that left me breathless.

Part I – Women of the Islamic Republic of Iran

It is hard to know where to start a travel log and how to describe a newfound world in a few pages. However, given the obsession with the status of women, it is perhaps appropriate to start with the women in Iran as I perceived them.

Western media with help from feminists and Iranians living outside of Iran portray Iranian women as being "oppressed" — foremost because women in Iran have to abide by an Islamic dress code – hijab. Yes, hijab is mandatory and women choose to either wear either a chador or to wear a scarf. But what is crucial to understand is the role chador played in pre 1979 versus the post Revolution era.

Prior to the 1979 Revolution, the chador was indicative of a thinly veiled caste system. While a few distinguished women of high socio-economical background chose to wear the chador, the rest, the majority of Iranian women, were simply born into the habit. In short, the socio-economically disadvantaged wore the pre 1979 chador. In those days, the chador was a hindrance to a woman's progress; she was

looked down at and frowned upon. She could not move forward or up. She was oppressed. But Western feminists were blind to this oppression. After all, the Shah was modern and America's friendly dictator.

The Revolution changed the status quo and chipped away at the caste system. A revolution, by definition, is a complete change in the way people live and work. And so it is with the Iranian Revolution. The post 1979 chador is no longer an impediment to a woman's future. Today's Iranian woman, the same (formerly) less privileged class, has found freedom in her chador. She has been unshackled and she marches on alongside her (formerly) more privileged colleague. This emancipation is what the Western/Westernized feminists see as oppression.

I myself come from yesterday's tiny minority of "privileged" women, far too comfortable in my "Western" skin to want to promote hijab, but I will not allow my personal preferences to diminish the value of the progress made because of hijab. The bleeding hearts from without should simply change their tainted lenses instead of trying to change the lives of others for Iranian women do not need to be rescued, they do not follow – they lead.

On two separate occasions I had the opportunity to sit and talk with a group of PhD students at Tehran University's Global Studies Department. Frankly, these young women charmed me. Their inquisitive and sharp minds, their keen intellect, their vast knowledge, their fluent English, and their utter confidence dazzled me. Western feminists would consider them "oppressed". Seems to me that feminism needs rescuing, not Iranian women.

The Revolution changed the status quo and chipped away at the caste system. A revolution, by definition, is a complete change in the way people live and work. And so it is with the Iranian Revolution.

The inordinate success of women goes vastly beyond education; they participate in every aspect of society: motherhood, arts and sciences, high tech, film and cinema, research, business, administration, politics, sports, armed forces, bus and taxi drivers, fire-fighters, etc. Women's active role in society is undeniable. What I found tantalizing was their role as cultural gatekeepers.

Women – The Cultural Warriors

Cultural imperialism is part and parcel of neocolonialism. The eradication of an indigenous culture and replacing it with a hegemonic one enables the hegemon to exert influence on the subject nation – to own it. And women are the nuclei. They hold the family together and



pass on traditions. To this end, in every colonial adventure, regardless of geography, women have been the primary targets (i.e. victims of rescue). Iran has been no different. While some have indeed abandoned their culture in order to embrace that of another, the vast majority have resisted and fought back with authentic Iranian tradition.

One group of these cultural warriors left a deep impact on me. I attended a dance ensemble at the famous Roudaki Hall (Talar Roudaki). Girls aged 6 to 18 sent the packed hall into a thunderous applause when they danced to various traditional songs from around the country. Their dance was not MTV stuff. It reflected the beauty and purity of an ancient culture. Their movements and gestures were not intended to be seductive, they were graceful and poetic ushering in the ancient past and bonding it with the present, strengthening it. These were the women of Iran who would guard Iran's precious culture and traditions against modern, Western culture deemed central to 'civilization' and 'freedom' by Western feminists.

It is not my intention to give the false impression that every woman in Iran is happy, successful, and valued. Like any other society, Iran has its share of unhappy, depressed girls and women. It has its share of women who have been abused and betrayed. It has its share of girls and women who turn to drugs, prostitution, or both. I came across these as well. I also noted that laws in Iran do not favor women, be it divorce, child custody, or inheritance. Yet women have leapt forward.



Part II – Esprit de Corps

Washington Just Doesn't Get It

Numerous visitors have travelled to Iran and brought back reports describing the landscape, the food, the friendliness of the people, the impact of the sanctions, and so forth. For the most part, these reports have been accurate — albeit incomplete. I do not want to tire the reader with my observations on these same topics; rather, I invite the reader to share my journey into the soul of the country – the spirit of the Iranian nation.

Washington's missteps are, in part, due to the simple fact that Washington receives flawed intelligence on Iran and Iranians. This has been a long-standing pattern with Washington. Prior to the 1979 Revolution, a plethora of US personnel lived in Iran. Thousands of CIA agents were stationed there. Their task went beyond teaching torture techniques to the Shah's secret police; they were, after all, spies. In addition to the military personnel that came in tow with the military equipment sold to the Shah by the U.S., there were official US personnel who



worked at the American Embassy in Tehran. None got it.

They all failed miserably in their assessment of Iranians. These personnel were simply too busy enjoying a lavish lifestyle in Iran. As the aforementioned travellers have all repeated, Iran is beautiful, the food scrumptious, the people hospitable. These personnel attended parties thrown by those close to the Shah (or other affluent Iranians) and lived the kind of life they could not have dreamt of elsewhere. American ambassadors doled out visas to the lazy kids of these same families who would not have otherwise been able to make it to the US under normal student visa requirements.

These same Iranians, the privileged elite, provided Americans in Iran with intelligence – inaccurate, flawed information that was passed onto Washington. Washington was content. After all, why doubt your friends, and how could possibly the secret police trained by CIA not get the facts right? To this end, Washington believed Iran would remain a client state for the unforeseen future. The success of the revolution was a slap in the face, but Washington did not alter course.

For the past several decades, Washington has continued to act on flawed intelligence. Today, it relies on the "expertise" of some in the Iranian Diaspora who have not visited Iran once since the revolution. In addition to the "Iran experts", Washington has found itself other sources of 'intelligence', foremost; the Mojahedeen Khalg (MEK) terrorist cult. This group feeds Washington information provided them by Israel. Previous to this assignment, the cult was busy fighting alongside Saddam Hossein killing Iranians and Kurds. Is it any surprise that Washington is clueless on Iran.

What Washington can't fathom is the source of Iran's strength, its formidable resilience. Thanks to its 'experts', and the personal experience of some visitors, Washington continues to believe that the Iranian people love America and that they are waiting for Washington to 'rescue' them from their government. No doubt Iranians are generous, hospitable, and charming. They welcome visitors as guest regardless of their country of origin. This is part and parcel of their culture. They also believe a guest is a 'blessing from God' — mehmoon barekate khodast. Karime khodast. But this is where it ends.

While the Iranian people love people of all nationalities, including Americans, they see Washington for what it is. Over the past decades, Washington and its policies have adversely affected virtually every single family in Iran. These include those whose dreams and hopes were shattered by the CIA orchestrated coup against their nascent democracy and its popular leader, Mossadegh. Later, lives were turned upside down the Shah's CIA/Mossad trained secret police arrested, brutally tortured, killed or sim-

These same Iranians, the privileged elite, provided Americans in Iran with intelligence – inaccurate, flawed information that was passed onto Washington.



ply made disappear anyone who dared venture into politics. Thanks to America's staunch support, these stories never found their way to the papers. And then there are the millions of war widows and orphans, the maimed soldiers, the victims of chemical weapons supplied to Saddam Hussein by America to use against Iranians while the UN closed its eyes in an 8-year war. Not to forget the victims of American sponsored terrorism, and sanctions. Millions of Iranians have firsthand experience of all that has been plagued upon them by Washington.

It is these victims, their families and acquaintances that fight for Iran's sovereignty, that are the guardians of this proud nation. They are the source of Iran's strength. Victor Hugo once said: "No army can withstand the strength of an idea whose time has come." There simply is no army on earth which can occupy, by proxy or otherwise, the land the people have come to believe belongs to them not by virtue of birth, but because they have fought for it, died for it, kept it from harm.

I met many such families; one in particular was more memorable. During the Shah's regime, this family worked on my father's farm. The father and his sons worked the farm and the mother helped around the house. In those days, this family and future generations would have simply continued to work on the farm, remain 'peasants' with no prospects for the future. But the revolution rescued them.

Shortly after the revolution, the war started. The boys in the family all went to war. One uncle lost his life to chemical warfare. The rest survived – and thrived. They got themselves free education provided by the same government America wants to dislodge. One of these boys, the man I met after some 35 years, Kazem, once condemned to be a 'peasant', had become a successful businessman. I spent hours talking to the family and to Kazem in particular. What impressed me was not just his affluence and his success in business, but the

There simply is no army on earth which can occupy, by proxy or otherwise, the land the people have come to believe belongs to them not by virtue of birth, but because they have fought for it, died for it, kept it from harm.

wisdom that only comes with age, and yet he had acquired it in youth. He had intellect and dignity. A gentleman, I found his knowledge of global affairs to be superior to most one would meet at a college in the US. He had experienced war and witnessed death. Iran belonged to him. He would fight for it over and over without hesitating to die for it.

This is the Iran the Diaspora has left behind, the Iran that is unknown to them. This is a far superior country than the one I left behind as a child and visited throughout the years. Iran's guardians, its keepers, are all Kazems. It has been said that the strength of an army is the support of the people behind it. The whole country is that army. As Khalil Gibran rightly observed: "Out of suffering have emerged the strongest souls; the most massive characters are seared with scars." With every wrong policy, America adds to the scars, strengthens the character and spirit of this unbreakable nation. This is what Washington is not able to grasp.

Soraya Sepahpour-Ulrich is an independent researcher and writer with a focus on U.S. foreign policy and the role of lobby groups in influencing US foreign policy.







الهدی

مؤسسه فرهنگی، هنری و انتشارات بین المللی الهدی

Alhoda International, Cultural,Artistic
& Publishing Institution

دارالهدی الثقافیة و الفنیّة للنشر الدولي



WWW.ALHODAGROUP.IR