A Study of the Contemporary Struggle for Power in Iran

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A STUDY OF THE CONTEMPORARY STRUGGLE FOR POWER IN IRAN

by

Reza Assadi

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A STUDY OF THE CONTEMPORARY STRUGGLE FOR POWER IN IRAN

Reza Assadi, M.A.
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Historically speaking, the Iranian power struggle is not new. It is, however, the contemporary contest for power which is the focus of this thesis. This study analyzes the struggle for power precipitated by the Iranian Revolution of 1979. It integrates information from a variety of sources, examines key conceptual schemes, major theories of revolution, theories about Islamic Marxism, and describes events which influenced various groups, organizations and individuals in Iran to seek power for themselves. A salient feature of the study is an examination of Iranian communism. Efforts are also made at forecasting how the Iranian power struggle is likely to evolve.
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Reza Assadi
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A STUDY OF THE CONTEMPORARY STRUGGLE FOR POWER IN IRAN

Introduction

The struggle for political power in Iran was not resolved with the Shah's departure from the country in 1979, nor with his death while in exile. Although Ayatollah Khomeini and various elected and appointed officials of the new Islamic Republic of Iran assumed control of the political institutions throughout the country, this has not dissuaded various groups, organizations, nor individuals from abandoning their struggle for the political control of Iran. Neither a new constitution, frequent elections, numerous reforms, nor a new name for the country have ended the power strife there.

In addition to the volatile domestic struggle for political control in Iran, overt and covert external political pressures continue to be exerted upon Iran by leaders from Western aligned countries, Arab countries, as well as from countries in the communist bloc. Trade embargo, sanctions, and embassy closings have not deterred international efforts to gain control over Iran's power in the Middle East.

Political cartoonists tend to illustrate the Iranian political power dilemma as a chess match with the chess board set up with pieces representing personalities of the Islamic Republic of Iran opposing pieces of the various domestic opposition factions. Yet, other geopolitical chess matches depict Khomeini's supporters defending Iran against the top ranking leaders of foreign governments. According to the famous epic poet Ferdowsi (1010/1967), the game of chess like
the struggle for political power is not new but an old intriguing saga in Iran which has remained part of the country's history and fate.

Despite the sustained usage of the word power in various publications about Iran, there seems to be widespread disagreement among authorities as how to define power. For example, Marvin Zonis (1971, p. 6) defined power as:

An interpersonal relationship such that the behavior of one (or more) actor(s) alters the behavior of another actor(s). The powerful in Iran are those individuals whose behavior alter the widest scope of the largest domain, that is, the widest range of behavior of the largest set of persons within that society.

Bill and Leiden (1979) in their discussion about power in Iran maintained that the term power referred to the personal ability to shape and control the behavior of others. In other words, power is a unique type of behavior for individuals who dictate their demands to others.

Marwah (1977, p. 34) taking a much broader view in defending Iran's power in the Middle East region contended that power is a goal—to defend Iranian internal values and structures against involuntary changes at the behest of internal and external adversaries.

There is no consensus among scholars and writers as how to systematically measure power in Iran. In some studies, analyses are made of the performance of the Iranian political elite. Still others rely on Iran's economy as the index of power. Yet others, measure power in Iran in terms of Iran's military might in the Persian Gulf and the Middle East.

Power experiences and expectations indigenous to Iranians tend to
be different from power behavior standards in Western countries (Westwood, 1965; Tyler et al., 1978; Hofstede, 1980). For example, Bozeman (1960; 1980) pointed out that some of the tenets of power implicit in Western political ideologies are incompatible with Iran's history of monolithic power. James Bill (1982) agrees that there are subtle differences between Westerners and Iranians in the meanings and interpretation of power concepts as extremists, moderates, and liberals.

Besides the tenacious habit of many political analysts and writers to assume that power concepts precisely and exactly transfer to the Iranian social scene from other Western countries and Western traditions, there is evidence of bias toward Iranian power behavior (Harris & Moran, 1979; Hofstede, 1980). Bill Moyers (1981) contends that Iran's internal and external power struggles are baffling to Westerners, primarily, because there is "cultural illiteracy", a lack of awareness on behalf of the U.S. and other countries of the Iranian perspective and values. This illiteracy interferes with evaluating and assessing how Iranians exercise and respond to power.

With the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979, the power dichotomy formerly described in secular terms as the power struggle between "legal" versus "illegal" has been re-classified as the power struggle between Muslims versus infidels or pagans. Chubin (1980), Falk (1980), Baker (1981), and others maintain that the internal power struggle in Iran consists of a pluralistic power triad between the right, moderates, and the left.

There is a trend among writers, scholars, and political leaders
to classify the Iranian opponents in the struggle for power by particular colors. The most popular color coding is black versus red. Binder (1979) insisted that initially the power struggle in Iran was a major conflict between the red, the black, and the red, white, and blue.

Despite the efforts of the governmental leaders in Iran to eliminate those who oppose the government in power, the opposition groups continue to recruit members within the country and abroad. The Iranian opposition groups tend to branch off and form new groups on a regular basis (Nyrop, 1978; Halliday, 1979). The struggle for power in Iran has become a pluralistic tug-of-war with some of the opposition factions on the side of the Islamic government while others remain its adversary.

Scope

The purpose of this study is to examine the recent revolution in Iran focusing upon the power politics prevalent during the pre-revolutionary, revolutionary, and post-revolutionary periods. From the external perception, mainly, from Western political analysis, the contention is that the revolution in Iran parallels, or, at least, is analogous to past major revolutions such as in England in 1620's, in France in 1790's, and in Russia in 1917. From the internal point of view, the recent revolution is regarded as a unique Iranian revolution, unlike any other in the world. The special prominence given the Iranian people's uprising in 1978-79 in Iran is not surprising in light of the fact that for several milleniums, generations of Iranians...
have been raised with the belief that accords superiority to their cultural heritage and social achievements (Graham, 1979).

Certainly, the revolution in 1978-79 is an unprecedented event in Iran. Although it is not the first revolution to take place there, the recent one is an epic in terms of the power struggle between extremists and moderates, its course, and the subsequent changes which resulted from the toppling of the tyrannical and corrupt imperial-constitutional government and the severing of diplomatic relations with the U.S. government. For the first time since the establishment of the Iranian state, the ruhaniyyat, the Shiite clergy, have gained absolute control in the governance of the country.

Numerous scholars and writers have examined the revolution in Iran. Their publications are helpful and informative; however, they fail to present or include the Iranian perspective about the struggle for power. The principal goal of this study is to analyze the struggle for power in Iran from the onset of the revolution to the 1982 phase of the post-revolutionary period in Iran.
CHAPTER I

PERSPECTIVES ON POWER

Scope

Besides the personal and scholastic disagreements regarding the recent revolution in Iran and its aftermath, distinct differences can be found with respect to perceptions about power in Iran. The purpose of this chapter is to review the major aspects of the conceptual schemes which influence how Iranians react to power and struggle for it.

Power (Qdrat)

Qdrat is translated from Persian into English as the term power. Long before western scholars, researchers, or political analysts formulated their operational definitions and theories about power, Iranians syncretized notions about power, initially without the benefit of Western advisors and research data. Consequently, their theoretical orientations about power differ from extant Western ideas (Tyler, et al., 1978; Hofstede, 1980; Assadi, 1981).

The pursuit of power and the ensuing struggle for it abounds in the historical accounts of Iranian politics. In this respect, the contemporary struggles in Iran are not sui generis. Fundamentally, there is little difference between Iranians seeking to maintain their power hold on Iran and those groups, organizations, and individuals in the country who challenge it. The only major differences cited in reports are in the respective justifications Iranians make for actions

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and policies.

Despite all the political literature and rhetoric about power in Iran and elsewhere, there continues to be inextricable confusion in the use of the concept power. Power is not a chimerical notion; however, the term power has the long tradition of usage as a normative notion. The various prescriptive statements about power tend to be meaningful and inseparable from the given situation. In a particular setting, power is being evaluated in terms of relevancy or appropriateness (Reynolds, 1981).

The ambiguity and ambivalence surrounding the concept power are due in part to the tendency for writers and commentators to equate the concept power to other conceptual categories such as influence, authority, control, force, success, and goal. Furthermore, conceptual fallacies, ideological fantasies, and misconception also account for misunderstandings about the concept power.

In his perusal of political literature, Charles Reynolds (1981) concludes that all writers seem to consider power to be a form of capacity or quality gained or lost. Instead of trying to assess and evaluate Iran's struggle for power with empirical statistical measures and designs, a starting point for this study is to review the major notions Iranians maintain about power.
Power and Shiism

Generations of Iranians have been, primarily, influenced by theories and precepts about power which are deeply rooted in the history and ideology of Shiite Islam, the official religion in Iran. Fundamental to Shiism is the belief that temporal and divine power are the same. Instead of arbitrarily separating power into two major task areas, power for religion and power over political matters and specifying the limitations of both types of power, in Shiism, power is a total capacity over all aspects of life from birth to death. In Shiism, Allah is esteemed as the sole source of all power; and this power is contingent upon Allah's will. Furthermore, Allah has delegated power to only a selected number of infallible agents, namely, the Prophet, a dozen imams, and four specified substitutes for the twelfth imam.

Although Allah's surrogates have been entrusted with legitimate power, Iran's history amplifies the fact that only various temporal rulers have monopolized power in governing the country, not any of the divine agents. Yet, the divine agents have left an influential legacy of theories and principles pertaining to power which serve as the basis of doctrinal and ideological motives for Shiite Muslims.

Part of the legacy of Allah's agents is the contention that all secular leaders and ruling parties in Iran are illegitimate and involved in usurpation. There is actually no justification in the Islamic tenets that makes such a categorical statement that temporal power is illegitimate (Arjomand, 1979; Akhavi, 1980). Secular rulers in Iran have tended to base their claims to power on their personal...
power or military power rather than on claims of lineage or legitimacy (Ledeen & Lewis, 1981). Nevertheless, the illegitimacy principle has served to justify acts of defiance and insurrection of Shiite Muslims against rulers in Iran. In addition, this principle conveniently served to validate the fact that an Islamic government system is the only legal one, not any monarchy, or a democratic type of government.

The hostility of the Shiite Muslims toward secular rule is also inextricably linked to their controversial and mystical convictions about imams. The majority of Iranian Muslims profess the belief in the divine power of twelve imams. Belief in the imamat as successors to the prophet constitutes one of the five principles of Shiism. The functions of imams also distinguishes the Shiite perspective from the Sunni (Tabatabai, 1975; Jafari, 1979). According to Shiism, a dozen infallible, hand-picked males served as legitimate rulers. Those who believe in twelve imams are referred to as esna-ashaeri Shiites. Shiites maintain the belief that Ali was the first true imam and the rightful successor to the prophet. Hence Ali’s lineage is considered to be the legal one for subsequent imams.

Over a millenium ago, Mohammad Mehdi, the Twelfth Imam, thwarted plans to end his presence by going into hiding; at that time, he was nearly five years of age. Four successive agents served on the imam’s behalf. Afterwards, no other substitutes were appointed to guard the imam’s interests. His disappearance marks the end of the Shiite imamat; however, it does not symbolize the termination or relinquishment of the imam’s power. Shiites argue that Imam Mehdi (Imam zaeman or ghaeb) exists and he is the only one with the divine rights to exercise
legitimate power and all other leaders who try to act as a substitute for the Twelfth Imam are usurpers.

In the absence of the Twelfth Imam, most Shiites believe that certain legal experts have specific duties to prevent Islam from falling into decline and abeyance. The faqih, the foremost religious expert, is to serve as judge and leader of the Shiite community. Specifically, faqih provides guidance and leadership with respect to the laws, judicial procedures, and institutions of Islam. According to Ayatollah Khomeini, the life-long faqih in Iran, all laws relating to government devolve upon the faqih.

Besides the faqih, mujtahid is another authority on divine laws. The mujtahid's role in the Shiite community is to offer opinions by his deductions of the provisions of Islamic laws, its principles, and ordinances (Christopher, 1972). There are also other titles for the religious scholars of lesser rank. Each scholar is vital for the preservation of Islam. Recently the ruhaniyat, the Shiite clerics in Iran obtained their political primacy in the country. They serve as members of the majlis, and hold top government positions in Iran. They claim that they are fulfilling their religious duties in maintaining the power in Iran in anticipation of the Twelfth Imam's return.

Another part of the Islamic legacy pertains to martyrdom. In the seventh century, Imam Hussein, the third Imam, was brutally tortured to death by supporters of Caliph Yazid at Karbala. At that time, Imam Hussein had instigated an armed attack against the caliph. Shiite Muslims have not dismissed the Imam's demise as a mere atrocity perpetrated by a tyrantical and unjust ruler. His death is emotion-
ally commemorated—the tenth day of Muharram—a major Shiite holiday. Imam's defiance is traditionally perceived as the ultimate conflict by Muslims—the just versus the unjust. While the secular ruler and his supporters may have succeeded in sapping the life of one of Allah's agents and countless other Shiite adherents, the rulers in Iran have failed to extinguish the spirit of the Shiite Muslims in their quest to challenge tyranny.

Imam Hussein's martyrdom symbolizes the inviolability of Islam over secular absolutism. Secular rulers have killed off numerous Shiite Muslims. Shiite Muslims, however, have transformed their victims into divine martyrs. Theoretically, the martyrdom phenomenon has been a useful weapon to use against temporal rulers. Shiite Muslims who die while combating tyranny are believed to enjoy the benefits of their hereafter and to be honored as fallen heroes.

It may bring one closer to an understanding about the power phenomenon in Iran, if one examines the expression of power and the related attitudes about this process. A starting point is to trace the development of the Shiite clerics' role in the Iranian society. Although Mohammad, the Prophet, decreed in his teachings and revelations that there must be no intermediary between Allah and Muslims, a distinct professional stratum of Islamic clergy known as ulama (ulema) evolved. In the seventh century A.D., following the death of Mohammad, some of his close associates took on the task of codifying the fundamental tenets of Islam. Initially, the Arab religious scholars did not hold any claims to priestly powers nor authority (Christopher, 1972). Upon completion of their codification, the
Islamic clergy became entrenched in the countries where Sunni and Shiite Islam prevailed.

Since its conception by some Arab laymen, the ulama have changed extensively (Keddie, 1981). In the early part of the sixteenth century, significant changes occurred with the ulama. At that time, the Safavid ruler established Shiism (with the creed for twelve imams) as the official state religion. Consequently, the clerical ranks were greatly modified. The clerics no longer were exclusively comprised of Arabs or Sunnis. Besides the ethnic changes, the Shiite clerics in Iran evolved their own corporate identity, complexity, autonomy, and integration as a social force (Smith, 1970).

It is relevant to note that the Shiite clergy in Iran comprise one of the most influential minorities in the country. This minority, exclusively male, is a cadre of some activists who are unalterably hostile to Iranian rulers as well as foreigners. The Ruhaniyyat is the common name for the Shiite clergy in Iran. The Shiite clerics also manage an extensive informal network and linkages in the Iranian society and throughout the Shiite community. Consensus among the peers and the community of believers is decisive in determining whether a cleric member attains any of the fifty ranks in the ruhaniyyat infrastructure. The top position of the Shiite clergy is that of imam or ayatollah. In Iran, the clerics receive their economic support from the Shiite community. Besides their own valuable religious property, they rely upon gifts, religious taxes and obligations.

Unlike the Sunni clergy who are hired and paid by the state to
perform religious duties, Shiite clerics, at least in theory, maintained their independency from the secular ruler in the country. However, during the Shah's reign, the clerics did receive an income allowance from the imperial government which he adjusted according to his whims (Rubin, 1980; Ledeen & Lewis, 1981).

Power and Pre-Islamic Notions

Besides the religious notions about power, Iranians also have their share of secular traditions which evolved during pre-Islamic times. For example, Iranian poetry, literature, and history include accounts of the powerful figures in Iran, the kings who ruled the country. Their power has been, mainly, negative power (Ledeen & Lewis, 1981). In other words, the various secular rulers in Iran have exercised plenary power to prevent nearly every action which they did not approve of.

The majority of Iranians tend to regard Iran's kings as legendary figures not just mortals serving as top government leaders in the country. Iranians seem to believe that Iranian monarchs are endowed with quasi-mystical charisma and power. Iran's kings have also propagated this notion by distinguishing themselves with regal symbols, opulence, and building up the military might of the country. It is not happenchance that remnants of the images of Iran's kings are preserved or are frequently the targets of malicious damage. The pre-Islamic history of Iran contains numerous accounts of the Iranian people staging resistance against despotic rulers in their country.
It is relevant to reiterate that Iranian monarchs have served as the linchpin for Iran. To keep order in the country, Iran's kings have not traditionally relied upon democratic means such as elections or rule by consensus. Iran's kings favored a centralized governance system concentrating the power and decision making. Although Iran has a constitutional government, the rulers in the country tend to regulate all the branches of government.

In addition to having plenary power, the kings in Iran tend not to change the basic structure of the Iranian society. For example, the Shah instigated plans to develop a professional class of technocrats in Iran but they were never given any power or any say in the king's use of power. Iranian society tends to be vertically structured. The elite in the country have the privileges in the country and the majority of Iranians in the other strata of Iran are kept powerless, poor, and illiterate (Ledeen & Lewis, 1981).

It is significant to mention that Iran's kings have capitalized upon the uncertainty and insecurity of the Iranian people. Monarchs in Iran tend to maintain their power by keeping the masses fearful of opposition groups and organizations or individuals who profess a better order for the country. The fear among Iranians, thus, strengthens the dependency relationship between the king and the people.

Although Iranian rulers have the wherewithal to exert power, there are times when they avoid using their power. Implicit in such avoidance behavior is the notion that the ruler must first save his face and preserve his clout among subjects rather than
making any unpopular decisions. As Pierre Salinger (1961) mentions, U.S. officials were frustrated and baffled by the avoidance behavior of those in power in Iran. Instead of chancing public rejection because of a decision, Iranian leaders who have power will simply avoid the matter.

Another common notion about power in Iran is that power involves risks. Although Iran's rulers enforced strict laws to regulate the behavior of the masses, opposition factions have no qualms in testing the limits of the rulers' power. As is the case, many of Iran's rulers have had their power removed by violence instigated by their subjects (Ledeen & Lewis, 1981).

One of the instruments of power in Iran is communication. Each of the rulers have maintained absolute control over the media services in Iran and abroad. Besides communication, Iran's rulers have kept tight reigns on the military might in the country.

Power and Iranian Perspectives

The point that tends to be missed by many who analyze Iran's problems with respect to power is which standards are used to assess how Iranians react to power and struggle for it. Galtung (1979) proposed that perception figures significantly in the expectations and role which a country has in the scheme of world politics. Iran has been viewing itself as the center and its neighbors, and other foreign powers as the periphery. This perceptual framework does not coincide with the Western standards or that of the Soviet Union. Each of the two super powers regard Iran as the periphery. Iran is actually expected
to help strengthen the hold of each super power at the center.

Before the Iranian Revolution, the Shah settled for being an affiliate of the center (Ramazani, 1982). His programs and projects were designed to have Iran recognized as the important "fifth power" in the world (Graham, 1979; Ledeen & Lewis, 1981). He forged a power role for Iran, one that would make the country the peace keeping force in the Middle East. Instead of pursuing the Shah's goals, the Ayatollah Khomeini has focused upon making Iran the center for religion and politics (Bill, 1982; Algar, 1981).

Summary

The key in understanding power in Iran is to remember that Iranians have not had the various power experiences nor the same conceptual schemes with respect to power as Westerners or the Soviets have had. Iranians have and maintain their own notions about power.
CHAPTER II

IRANIAN REVOLUTION THEORIES

Scope

Crane Brinton's (1965) *The Anatomy of Revolution* has been used by contemporary writers to understand the recent revolution in Iran. The Iranian people's uprising in 1978-79 is not the first revolution in the history of the country; however, it is an event which has significantly affected the life of nearly all Iranians. Chapter I focused upon the major perceptions Iranians have regarding power. This chapter will be devoted to the various revolutionary theories Iranians used to justify their actions in struggling for power in Iran.

Major Differences

The ambitious task at hand is to analyze one of the major revolutions to have taken place in Iran. As Crane Brinton (1965) pointed out, there is a tendency to regard each and every revolution as a unique one. In the case of the Iranian Revolution of 1979, it is valid to conclude that, in terms of the Iranian history, this revolution is *sui generis*. First of all, it has received unprecedented publicity throughout the world. Initially, the Shah paid millions of dollars for public relations campaigns to convince the world that his regime was stable and popular, even capable of constraining the red and black political opposition to his rule. Myriad publications about the revolution present different versions of why and how Iranians became involved in their revolution to topple the imperial regime of the Shah.
Besides being the top media event of the late 1970's, the recent revolution in Iran is distinctly different from others in terms of the types of communication technology used to disseminate all sorts of propaganda within Iran and abroad. Never before in the history of Iran was such advanced communication technology available and utilized to the extent it was used during the recent revolution. Despite the strict censorship policies and physical risks, numerous anti-government cassette tapes and publications were clandestinely circulated throughout the country and abroad. The various political factions made the best use of bullhorns, microphones, walkie-talkies, telephones, printing equipment, and other communication devices to spread their opposition statements against the imperial regime.

In addition to the communication technology, the recent revolution is significantly different from other revolutions in Iran because of the number of participants taking part in the demonstrations and protest gatherings. On several occasions, there were reports that nearly three million Iranians marched through the urban centers of Iran. This number is highly significant in terms of previous revolutions in Iran. The guesstimates of Iranian protesters have not been consistently accurate (Ledeen & Lewis, 1981). However, the recent revolution has attracted on numerous occasions the largest number of the citizenry from all levels of the society.

Another aspect which distinguishes the recent revolution from others in Iran is the fact that political conscious Iranian women donned their traditional Iranian covering, the chador, and headed the processions of mourners and mass demonstrations. The women
did not comprise the largest group of demonstrators; however, they
loudly chanted anti-government and anti-imperial slogans despite
the risks. Many Iranians were injured, imprisoned, tortured, and
yet others were added to the long list of revolutionary martyrs.
The Iranian women who joined the demonstrations did not represent
the feminist cause in Iran. They belonged to various sisterhoods of
political factions in Iran. Ashraf Dehghani, Ashraf Rabi'i (Majavi),
and other Iranian women have had considerable influence in elevating
the political awareness of the Iranian masses about repression and
resistance to tyranny (Keddie, 1980).

Another distinguishing feature of the recent revolution in Iran
is the coalition—the multiclass alliance which succeeded in toppling
the imperial regime. Throughout the crucial stages of the revolution,
the Iranian demonstrators manifested universal enthusiasm, discipline,
cooperation, and commitment prevailed in Iran (Graham, 1979; Keddie,
1981). Although the revolutionary unity broke down soon after Ayatollah
Khomeini returned to Iran, the alliance of diverse political orienta-
tion and interest comprised a total opposition to the regime.

Another unique aspect of the Iranian Revolution of 1978-79 is
the fact that during the whole revolution, Iranian Muslims continued
to observe their traditional religious celebrations. The aforemen-
tioned details and many others substantiate that the recent revolution
is significantly different from other revolutions in Iran.
Iranian Revolution I

According to Ayatollah Khomeini two revolutions have recently occurred in Iran. The Iranian Revolution I includes all the pre-revolutionary activities up to the establishment of the provisional government headed by Mr. Mehdi Bazargan. The Iranian Revolution II began after the seizure of the American hostages and the end of the Bazargan government. The dual nature of the recent revolution has best been described as the revolution against the Shah's despotism and a revolution against "American imperialism—U.S. involvement in Iran" (Rouleau, 1979).

Iranian Revolution Theories

Disillusionment and discontent were pervasive throughout Iran during the late 1970's. The "isle of stability" which Jimmy Carter believed to exist in the Middle East proved to be a myth. As Keddie (1981), Rouleau (1979), and others have pointed out, U.S. policy makers were misled by Iranian officials that the Shah's government was a popular and strong imperial rule. Western leaders tended to ignore, or, at least, pay the slightest attention to the anti-government propaganda being disseminated by Iranian student groups living abroad.

Prior to the revolution and for some time after Ayatollah Khomeini assumed power in the country, various revolutionary theories which served as the basis to justify the Iranian Revolution were published by the various political factions vying for the power in Iran. The most favorite themes of the different revolutionary
theories were: oppression, tyranny, and foreign domination. Each theory rationalized that a better order was possible by means of revolution. The common contention of each theory was that the revolution would facilitate matters in Iran, thus, enabling Iranians to reorganize and improve conditions in their country.

Monarchist Ideology Mythology

A small minority of Iranians, primarily members of the Pahlavi royal family, large land owners, former top government officials and bureaucrats, and opportunists did not favor any sort of revolution to topple the Shah's regime. They favored the status quo in the country. The monarchists considered the Shah to be the linchpin in Iran who was able to preserve the myth of Iranian kings and maintain a semblance of order there. The Shah had developed a vertical infrastructure in Iran with a small coterie of elite controlling the economic and political power in the country, leaving the majority of Iranians powerless, illiterate, and poor (Ledeen & Lewis, 1981).

The monarchists favored staging pro-Shah demonstrations to violently counteract the political opposition in Iran and abroad. At the time that the Shah and his family departed from Iran for a respite, many of the monarchists fearing for their lives relocated elsewhere in the world. They certainly had the wealth and connections abroad to insure a comfortable stay in exile.

After the Shah's death, Iranian monarchists shifted their support to the Shah's oldest son, Reza. While living in exile in Egypt, Reza Pahlavi performed the ceremony of crowning himself as the ruler of Iran.
in absentia. So far, the Monarchists have been involved in disseminating information with their newspapers throughout the world. They stress the past achievements of the Pahlavi rule and the crimes committed by the Islamic Regime.

On April 12, 1982 Sadeq Ghotbzadeh was arrested in Tehran on charges that he was conspiring with the Monarchists to assassinate Ayatollah Khomeini. Mr. Ghotbzadeh who had served as Ayatollah Khomeini's assistant in Paris and as foreign minister of the Islamic Republic had extensive connections with top ranking communist officials throughout the world. His arrest is not the first of its kind linking Iranians and Monarchists to plotting the overthrow of the current regime. Mr. Ghotbzadeh has been imprisoned on numerous charges since the Ayatollah Khomeini gained power in Iran. Moreover, Mr. Ghotbzadeh has been labeled as an "opportunist" seizing whatever chance seems most attractive at the moment (Ledeen & Lewis, 1981).

So far the Monarchists have not staged their counterrevolution to re-establish Pahlavi rule in Iran. They still believe that a king should rule Iran and Iranians should be the loyal subjects. Their theoretical basis for a revolution is that it would help to bring Reza Shah to power and preserve Iran's pre-Islamic traditions of governance.

Shiite Ideology

For centuries Shiite clerics and devoted Muslims have adhered to the belief that Islam is the only legitimate life style. The teachings and tenets of Islam specify that Muslims have a duty to
end oppression, tyranny, and protect the Shiite community from non-Muslims. The various Koranic suras and guidelines used to justify Muslim involvement in the recent Iranian Revolution were not new teachings but part of an ancient Islamic tradition. By substituting the names of the contemporary oppressors, the Shiite clerics in Iran were able to use the fundamental teachings of Islam to direct the Iranian Muslims to overthrow the imperial regime.

Besides blaming the Shah and his cohorts, the clerics sustained negative sentiment toward foreigners, particularly, Americans. U.S. leaders were accused of crimes against the Iranian masses and for all the domestic trouble in Iran. After consolidating their hold on the power in Iran, the religious leaders resorted to using Americans as scapegoats for any problems or challenges the clerics encountered.

Of all the revolutionary theories, Shiism had the most credibility among the masses. First of all many Iranians were suspicious of the left and their armed resistance. The majority of Iranians who joined the demonstrations were Shiite Muslims who naively listened to the instructions and guidelines of the Shiite clerics. For many Iranians caught up in the confrontations against the security forces, they were fulfilling their Islamic duty in resisting tyrannical rule. The pre-revolutionary conditions in Iran significantly affected the morale and well-being of nearly every Iranian. Initially their reactions to the stimulus of repression was passive then became more violent. Shiism was considered as the panacea for the country's conditions and problems.
The Mojahedin Ideology

In 1963, a group from the National Front broke away and established the Liberation Movement of Iran (Nehzat-e Azadi-ye Iran). In 1965, Said Mohsen and Ali-asghar-e Badi'zadegan broke away from the Liberation Movement of Iran and along with Hanif-Nejad founded the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI).

From the outset, the Mojahedin were involved in Guerrilla activities fighting against tyranny and reaction. Since their ideology was based on Islam, they justified their guerrilla activities in terms of the Koran. The Mojahedin strive for the establishment of Jamey-e Touhidi (Divinely Integrated Society) in which there is no exploitation of man by man and no class distinctions.

To achieve their goals, besides being inspired by Islamic precepts, the members of the Mojahedin Organization have studied Marxism-Leninism and try to apply its practical aspects. Peykar (Peykar daer rahe azady-e taeebeghy-e kargan) that branched off from the Mojahedin Organization in 1975 advocates Marxist ideology and also armed resistance.

The Fadaeyoon Ideology

One of the major leftist organizations in Iran is the Marxist Fadaeyoon Guerrillas. The first nucleus of this organization was formed in 1965 by Bijan Jazani. Besides this group, several other Marxist groups were involved in theorizing about the Iranian Revolution in the late 1960's. Although Jazani was arrested by SAVAK and imprisoned, his group survived and in 1970 it formed a coalition with Safai Farahani and Ahmadzadeh and his cohorts—Neftahi and Puyan. They all came to the
conclusion that urban and rural guerrilla war against the Shah's regime was inevitable. After much preparation, in February, 1971, a group under the command of Safai Farahani (Jangal group) attacked a rural police headquarters in Siahkal (in the northern Province of Gilan) and seized all of its weapons. This group was later on crushed by the army and other security forces. In addition to this group, most of the urban guerrillas, before gaining a major military victory, were arrested and later on killed.

Siahkal, although a military defeat, was a very important political victory for the guerrillas. It was the beginning of armed struggle and the formation of the Organization of the Iranian People's Fedayee Guerrillas. Many revolutionary groups joined the organization after the political victory in Siahkal.

The communist movement attracted many of the Iranian youths and the Fadaeyoon Organization started to grow. It was in early 1979 that Ashraf-e Dehghani, an influential member, broke away from the organization. She formed her own organization under the same name—the Organization of the Iranian People's Fedayee Guerrillas. Ashraf-e Dehghani adopted Ahmad Zadeh's theories of revolution while the main organization had adopted Jazani's. The former group believed in armed struggle against the Khomeini's regime while the latter concluded that the petit-bourgeois ruling class will safeguard the national interests.

The Fadaeyoon Organization suffered another split after Ashraf-e Dehghani broke away from it. In 1980 the organization branched off into Aksaereyaet (Majority), and Aqaeleyaet (Minority). Aksaereyaet, in turn, branched off into Jenah-e Bast (Right Wing) and Jenah-e Chap (Left Wing). The Right Wing of Aksaereyaet along with the Tudeh Party
are staunch supporters of Khomeini's policies.

The Tudeh Party Ideology

The Tudeh (Mass) Party, a pro-Moscow communist party, was founded in 1941. It was a major opposition force in 1950's and 1960's. In the late 1960's, the Tudeh Party was inactive and many of the members branched off and formed their own groups. Because of its opportunistic nature, the Tudeh Party has been labeled "Hezb-e Khaen-e Tudeh" (the Traitor Tudeh Party) by its opponents.

A source of controversy within the Tudeh Party has been its strong ties with the Soviet Union. Besides close alignment with the Soviet Union, the Party has close ties with the Shiite clerics, especially with Mr. Khamenei, the current President of Iran. The members of the party have managed to infiltrate various government positions; have made an alliance with Aksaerevaet; and plan to govern Iran after the death of Ayatatollah Khomeini.

Liberal and Moderate Ideology

Opponents to the Shah who did not advocate armed resistance but favored peaceful change were the Iranian liberals and moderates. They demanded an end to the corruption and oppression by asking for more reforms. Although they did not instigate a major protest against the monarchy, they joined the coalition and participated in the formation of the Bazargan government as well as the establishment of the Islamic Republic.
Opportunist Ideology

There are some Iranians who were ambivalent towards the revolution. Once the revolution started many joined the Islamic bandwagon showing themselves to be devoted Muslims. Undergirding their basic ideology is the notion that it is best "to ride whichever donkey which is giving rides."

Summary

These major ideologies about revolution in Iran are only a small sample of the sentiments and opinions secretly and openly expressed by Iranians living in Iran and abroad.
CHAPTER III

WHAT IS ISLAMIC MARXISM?

During the early 1970's, the term "Islamic Marxism" was coined and added to the international political vocabulary. At the onset of its usage, the semantic status of the "paradoxical and incongruous sounding word "was pejorative as well as ambiguous (Kedourie, 1978, p. 23). Both Iranians and Western political commentators tended to use the term to refer to various things such as a political philosophy, a phenomenon, a trend, and a formidable opposition force indigenous to Iran. Various theories have been proposed to explain the concept Islamic Marxism. Because of the paucity of the analyses of Islamic Marxism to date, it seems advisable to suggest a classification for the extant theories (Note 1). A discussion will follow concerning four major theories of Islamic Marxism: the Barrier Theory, the Affinity Theory, the Scapegoat Theory, and the Infiltration Theory

The Barrier Theory

The oldest among the theories of Islamic Marxism is the Barrier Theory. In the 1950's when the Barrier Theory was initially expounded, the term Islamic Marxism did not even exist, but the label "Muslim Communists" had already been coined. Contemporary proponents of the Barrier Theory consider the term Islamic Marxism to be an absurdity—-a contradiction. Kedourie (1978, p. 23) explained that the term Islamic Marxism is just a "new guise for an old conflict" brewing between Islam and Marxism in Iran for a long time.

Many writers consider the Barrier Theory to be a valid one. The
Barrier Theory proposed that Iranian Muslims by virtue of their religion are immune to the "godless" ideology of communism (Halpern, 1963). In 1948, the U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs concluded that as long as Islam was strong in Iran, there would be no receptivity to communist propaganda nor alignment with the communist bloc (Halpern, 1963).

Long before Soviet communist ideology was formulated, antagonism prevailed between Muslims and Russians. Their animosity developed, initially, from major conflicts over external security of their respective borders and over territorial expansion plans. Religious ideology did not constitute as a serious factor in their political disputes until the sixteenth century. As Muslims and Russians emerged as significant political forces to be reckoned with, both were intent on fulfilling their plans at the expense of the other. For centuries, Sunni and Shiite Muslims have proven to be formidable adversaries depriving Imperial Russians access to southern territories and seriously undermining Russia's sphere of influence in the Balkans, the Caucasus, and throughout the Middle East and Central Asia.

Imperial Russia's incessant propaganda stressing the importance of Panslavism and Orthodox Christianity did not deter Islamic influence. Even Imperial Russia's cries over Muslim hegemony, as in the case of the Muslim conquest of Constantinople, the capital of Orthodox Christendom in 1453, did little to weaken the Islamic hold there. To reduce Muslim dominance, tsarist governments resorted to counterattacks, espionage, persecution as well as formal and covert treaties.
Despite efforts to gain control over the Muslims in the East, Muslim warriors destroyed Russian military units, inflicted heavy casualties and property losses, sabotaged Russia's invasion plans, and set up clandestine organizations to resist the Russian government. Muslim missionaries succeeded in winning over millions of converts which posed a serious threat to Orthodox Christianity and to Russian state control. Veritable holy wars were also instigated by Islamic leaders against Russian authorities. Moreover, Islam was a unifying ideology and a cultural bond for nomads and sedentary people for resisting Russian dominance (Allsworth, 1967).

Instead of gaining the trust and cooperation of Muslims within and beyond the borders of Russia, the ambivalent policies of the tsars widened the schism between Muslims and Russians and escalated their irreconcilable conflicts. On one hand, the tsars tried to prescribe Islam in Russia by confiscating Muslim wealth and property, by depriving them access to their traditional institutions, by regulating their marriages, by controlling their travel and communication privileges, and by resorting to genocide.

On the other hand, Russian officialdom supported Islamic proselytizing during the reign of Catherine II as a means to thwart Islamic opposition. In the late nineteenth century, the Russian government again had a change of heart toward Islam. Fearing violent resistance of Muslims in Russia, Russian officials enacted a noninterference policy to deal with Muslims. Muslims were not drafted into Russian military service; they were also exempted from educational programs; excluded from top government positions; and denied a say in the land
reform. Prior to 1917, the tsars drastically changed their policies toward Muslims.

The fluctuations in Russian policies toward Muslims was largely due to ignorance about Islam. Kevian princes, tsars, and the Bolsheviks tended to regard Islam only as another type of organized religion, not as a unique form of socialism (Allsworth, 1967). In their struggle for territorial dominance, Imperial Russians were the least concerned about gleaning the intricate details of the socialism originally developed by the Arabs. The tsars were more preoccupied with physically subduing the Islamic opposition, not understanding them.

At least, in principle, the Soviet communists who overthrew the yoke of the tsar in 1917 were fully committed to an alliance with the Muslims as a means to establish the communist party in Muslim dominated countries. The Soviet propaganda repeatedly stressed that Moscow was the Mecca and Medina for all Muslims oppressed by imperialist powers (Spector, 1959). Their implicit motive behind the token goodwill gestures to the Muslims was to thwart any plans that the capitalist countries had for an encirclement of the Soviet Union using the Eastern countries (Lenczowski, 1980).

Despite the friendly overtures extended to the Sunni and Shiite Muslims, the Soviet communists also voiced their strong opposition to Islam. Islam represented a major barrier to the Soviet plans to communize the East. Numerous communist scholars and analysts have scrutinized the origin of Islam and studied its precepts and customs. Various theories have been disseminated by the communists refuting Islam as a tool of capitalism and feudalism. Some theorists insist that Mohammad has been a mythical personality and Islam is just an
ancient escapist ideology. Fundamental to each theory which the communists have developed about Islam is the conclusion that Islam is not in accordance with Marxist doctrine.

The Soviet communist anti-religious propaganda appalled Iranian Muslims. Having been nurtured with Islam, Iranian Muslims have been suspicious of the communists and their ideologies. Since the sixteenth century, Shiism has been the state religion in Iran and the first ideology which generations of Iranians have been exposed to. The physical environment in Iran has been saturated with symbols and reminders of Islam. Shiism is propagated in Iran, while Marxism is banned as illegal and vehemently renounced as foreign paganism. However, some Iranians, Muslims and non-Muslims, learn about Marxism second hand from sources such as underground literature, clandestine communist broadcasts, or through private discussions (Halpern, 1963).

In comparing Islam and Marxism, numerous scholars and political analysts concur that Islam and Marxism are irreconcilable dogmas. As Lewis (1964) pointed out, Marxism is an atheistic philosophy—it is not and cannot even be classified as a religion, while Islam is a monotheistic creed; and that constitutes the core of Islamic resistance to communism.

Long before Marxism was written by German intellectuals, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Islam was divinely imparted to an Arab, the Prophet Mohammad. Islam remains a potent dogma affecting the lives of the majority of Iranians. The basic credo of Shiism is the profession of belief in God and the acknowledgement that Mohammad has been the prophet and Ali as the first legitimate imam. Shiite Muslims
in Iran also believe in eleven other imams. In Marxism, there is no credit given to God, only to the authors of the doctrine, namely, Marx and Engels. Mankind is regarded as the exclusive change agent over nature, according to Marxism, not any religious deity or surrogates of the deity.

Dr. Ali Shariati (1979) explained that another difference between Islam and Marxism is in terms of moral values. Islam provides answers for mankind about moral values, while Marxism has failed to solve the problems of morality in society. Marxism is a general scientific theory which adheres to the philosophy that society is a natural phenomenon that develops according to natural factors and laws. However, in Islam, there is no distinction between religious laws and secular laws (Jansen, 1979). Muslims are guaranteed, as enumerated in the Koran, the holy book of Islam, specific rights and privileges in this world as well as in a promised after-life. In contrast, Marxism stresses atheistic secular laws and behavioral guidelines for here-and-now.

The focus of Marxism is on specific classes in society—the proletariat and bourgeoisie. Eventually the proletariat will overcome the repressive bourgeoisie and the society will become a classless one. According to Dr. Ali Shariati (1979), Islam recognizes umma—the masses—as the fundamental basis and conscious factor in determining the course of history and society. On the other hand, in Marxism a social system is envisioned which ultimately evolves into a classless society with production, distribution, and consumption equally distributed and delegated to the masses. The economic order in Islam
is different. All classes in the community of believers are obligated to contribute specific amounts of income and property for sustaining the operation of Islamic institutions.

Another common comparison made regarding the two ideologies is in terms of the goals for both of them. The paramount goal for both doctrines is to gain liberation for their followers. In Islam, the liberation is a means to insure the continuation of their way of life. In Marxism, the liberation goal is different. With liberation, it is expected that the workers will become strengthened in their struggle to gain control of production, distribution, and governance. Lenin, Stalin, and successive communist leaders envisioned the cooperation of communist parties throughout the East and the West, committed to a worldwide revolution against non-communists (Rustow, 1965).

In Marxism, revolution will inevitably produce changes in the social system. In Islam, there is a phenomenon referred to as Jihad. As Jansen (1979) pointed out, Jihad has been often described as Islamic holy war; however, the English equivalent for the word Jihad is effort. Abdalati (1975, p. 143) explained that:

War is not the objective of Islam, nor is it the normal course for Muslims. It is only the last resort and is used under the most extraordinary circumstances when all other measures fail. Islam never tolerates aggression from its own side or from any other side, nor does it entertain aggressive wars or initiation of wars. Muslims are commanded by God not to begin hostilities, or embark on any acts of aggression, or violate any rights of others. Islam also dictates that at the time Muslims need to fight in the cause of God, they need to but not transgress the limits.

Another factor to consider is the Islamic clergy. For many
decades, the Shiite clerics have played a crucial role in deterring the spread of Marxism throughout Iran. The Islamic leaders remain intent as ever on preserving Islam in Iran—not Marxism. At stake in the rivalry between Islam and Marxism is the role of the Shiite leaders in society. As long as Iranian Muslims maintain their belief in Shiism, the Islamic leaders will have their support base for their income, their esteem, and power. With Marxism, the Islamic clerics stand to lose everything including their lives.

Since the 1920's, Soviet communist propaganda has been trying to discredit and intimidate the Islamic clergy hoping to alienate the Iranian Muslims from the influential clergy. The recurrent themes in the communist propaganda are condemnation of the clergy as oppressors and parasites. Despite communist propaganda, the Shiite clerics have been instrumental in hindering Soviet efforts to communize Iran. The Islamic clergy incited Muslims in Gilan province and helped demolish the headquarters of the first Iranian Communist Party in 1920. In the late 1940's, the religious leaders played a significant role in subverting the communist hold on Azerbaijan and Kurdistan. In 1953 the Iranian religious leaders also rallied Muslims to prevent a communist coup in Iran. Again in 1978, the Shiite clergy used their clout in gaining political control from the leftists.

As attested by historical evidence, the Islamic barrier to communism has not been ephemeral. However, the Islamic resistance, besides its ideological alienation to Marxism, has another aspect worth mentioning. Anti-communist proponents, especially from the
United States, have encouraged and assisted the Islamic clergy to stage a strong resistance against Soviet intervention within Iran. Although not explicit in Western foreign policy, covert plans exist and have been implemented to provide aid, financial as well as military, to help the Iranian Muslims counteract communist threats and aggressive offensives within Iran. Roosevelt (1979) reported that the Islamic clergy were paid millions of U.S. dollars to stage large pro-Shah demonstrations in 1953. Lenczowski (1980) points out that President Carter dispatched General Huyser to Iran in 1978 to thwart the Iranian military from conducting a military coup against the Islamic leaders.

Foreign powers such as the U.S., United Kingdom, West Germany, Japan, Israel, and others have gambled on the ability of Islam to resist communist influence in Iran. Whether Islam will, in the future, be resilient against communism greatly depends upon whether the orthodox Muslims in Iran can be mobilized against the communists (Halpern, 1963). Islam faces very tough competition for followers in Iran. The polemics between Islam and Marxism continue, as some scholars and political analysts contend under the guise of Islamic Marxism.

The Affinity Theory

Iran's geopolitical survival is inextricably linked to the fact that Iranians have been proselytes to various foreign ideologies. The affinity of Iranians for foreign ideas cannot be ascribed to just one factor. A wide spectrum of opinions have been formulated
as to why foreign doctrines appeal to Iranians. The apparent affinity of Iranians for foreign ideologies has been attributed, mainly, to Iran's geographic position. Iran, sharing its borders with five countries, is situated at the crossroads between the East and West, in contact with different values and ideas.

Rypka (1968) contended that Iranian compliance to foreign ways occurs because Iranians are a spiritually gifted race whose circumstances and experiences with suffering, instability, uncertainty, and disillusionment have conditioned them to be receptive to innovations and doctrines emanating from other countries. Fanatics, reformers, radicals, and heretics have found Iranians most eager and willing to follow them and their causes.

From time immemorial up to the present date, Iranians have been vulnerable to invasion and foreign rule. While compelled to convert or perish, generations of Iranians survived by adopting to foreign ways. While doing so, they also managed to synthesize aspects of foreign dogmas. These Iranian syntheses developed into fundamental ideas, values, and traditions of the Iranian culture. Despite foreign expectations that Iranians conform to, or, at least, imitate foreign standards, Iranians have managed to preserve many of their pre-Islamic and Islamic traditions intact.

Islam, more than any other foreign ideology, has had an ineffaceable impact on socio-political and economic developments throughout Iran. Although Iranians capitulated to previously converted groups—Islamized Arabs, Turks, and Mongols—they, in turn, significantly augmented Islamic practices and teachings in accordance with Iranian needs
and traditions. For five centuries now, Islam has served as the perceptual screen for Iranians to appraise all other foreign ideologies.

Iranian conversion to Islam is one of the best examples of Iranization of a foreign dogma. In the seventh century A.D., when Muhammad revealed the guidelines and laws for Muslims, he did not expect Muslims to formulate any variations or make modifications in Islam. However, in the sixteenth century when Shiism was declared the official state religion in Iran, its practice had significantly changed from what the majority of Arab Muslims followed.

Initially the new Arab credo was not popular in Iran. At that time, the majority of Iranians were devoted to various native religions namely, Zoroastrianism, Manicheanism, and others. Moreover, the attitude of Iranians was so negative toward Arabs for invading their country. Despite the ethnic animosity and resentment about Arab domination, the dregs of the Iranian society—a small minority of Iranians consisting of the oppressed poor, farm laborers, and prisoners-of-war were attracted to Islam (Von Grunebaum, 1970). Their conversion was mainly a survival tactic. By converting to Islam, they avoided cruel religious persecution and the payment of a special tax levied by the Arabs against infidels. Gradually Islam became a permanent and irreversible aspect of Iranian life serving as a primary means to secure prestige and social eminence.

Iran remains the only country whose Muslim population nearly all belong to the Shiah branch of Islam. Shiism is not an Iranian innovation. It emerged as a rival religious-political sect to the
Sunni branch during the middle of the seventh century during the internecine strife in the Islamic community over the issue of the legitimate successor to the Prophet Mohammad. The Shiites preferred that Imam Ali be the legal leader since he was the first to convert to Islam. When the warfare ensued over succession, the majority of Shiite Muslims decided to band together. In 1501 during the reign of the Safavid dynasty, Shiism was adopted as the official state religion. Iranians accepted the belief in Islam and twelve Imams out of national interest (Nyroo, 1978; Bulliet, 1979). Their shift from Sunni to Shiism aligned them with ideas and beliefs more in accordance with Iranian traditions and staved off Arab domination.

Traditionally, the Islamic clergy in Iran, the conservative force throughout the country, has acted as the final judge and jury regarding the acceptance and rejection of foreign doctrines. The top ranking governmental officials have been the gatekeepers showing receptivity toward foreign ideologies which would facilitate their goals and objectives, or showing hostility toward creeds which might hinder their socio-political plans and ambitions. The majority of Iranians have been persuaded to adopt foreign ideology endorsed by the leaders of the country. However, a minority of Iranians who have dared to accept foreign dogmas by the Iranian authorities have been renounced as traitors or pagans.

Since the 1920's communism has been one of the foreign ideologies condemned as "illegal" in Iran. The Soviet communist leaders have relentlessly tried to convince Iranians to abandon Islam and accept the teachings of Marx and Lenin. Despite the social stigma ascribed
to Soviet communism, some Iranians have over the years joined groups, organizations, guerrilla factions, or gatherings oriented toward communism. During the 1950's, nearly one percent of the Iranian population belonged to the Tudeh Party. The Tudeh Party leaders were staunch supporters of the Soviet policies. Reportedly, when the Soviet leaders itched in Moscow, the Tudeh Party organizers in Iran started to scratch. A common saying about the Tudeh Party is: whenever it rained in Moscow, the Tudeh Party leaders in Iran wore their raincoats.

Iran's northern neighbor, the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republic, has not abandoned its geopolitical goal to gain control of Iran and include it among its sphere of influence in the East. As Ziring (1981, p. 191) contends:

Iran appears destined for an experience with Marxism. What form Marxism will take remains unclear, but there is little doubt that one version or another will ultimately gain acceptability in the country.

Proponents of the Affinity Theory conclude that Islamic Marxism is the most appealing form of socialism for Iranian intellectuals and youths. Islamic Marxism, according to the Affinity theorists, is a unique form of socialism with Islam as its basis—a religio-political philosophy as distinct from marxism and other forms of socialism. The proponents do not dismiss the profound differences between Islam and Marxism but rationalize the amalgam of both as a major coalescence of the common themes and tenets.

Why is Marxism appealing to Iranian Muslims and non-Muslims? Marxism is a contemporary socio-political theory which seems attractive to Iranians because it provides appealing answers to solve...
major modern problems. As Halpern (1963, p. 161) explained:

Muslims do not find it difficult to assent to Marx ... In a society in which toil has never been thought to be intrinsic to dignity or an instrumental value for individual purification or salvation, Marxism offers the utopia of satisfaction on the basis of need rather than performance, stressing economic security primarily as a means toward the achievement of human freedom.

Islamic Marxism is considered to be an Iranian innovation postulated by militant Muslims who vehemently opposed the Shah's regime in the early 1970's. Western scholars tend to trace the coalescence of Islam and Marxism to the late 1950's. In 1958, Lewis (1958, p. 312) enumerated similar tenets of the two doctrines:

Both groups profess a totalitarian doctrine with complete and final answers to all questions on heaven and earth; the answers are different in every respect, alike only in their finality and completeness, and in the contrast they offer with eternal questioning of Western man. Both groups offer to their members and followers the agreeable sensation of belonging to a community of believers, who are always right, as against an outer world of unbelievers, who are always wrong. Both offer exhilarating feelings of mission, of purpose, of being engaged in a collective adventure to accelerate the historical inevitable victory of the truth over the infidel evil doer. The traditional Islamic division of the world into the House of Islam and the House of War, two necessary opposing groups, of which the first has the collective obligation of perpetual struggle against the second, also has obvious parallel in the communist view of world affairs. There, again, the content of belief is utterly different, but the aggressive fanaticism of the believers are the same.

Faris (1958) pointed out that Islam and communism are also authoritarian—not democratic oriented doctrines which both proclaim universality. Each profess a certain mission to transcend their homebase and unite followers throughout the world. Moreover, the dominant appeal of communism for Iranian Muslims is due, in part, to the predilection implicit in Lenin's teachings to oppose Western
values and influences in Iran.

In 1965, Said Mohsen and his cohorts who were formerly members of the Liberation Movement of Iran along with Hanif Nejad established a new guerrilla organization—the Organization of the Mojahedin of the people of Iran. The members of the organization held a common belief that revolutionary violence in the form of armed resistance was necessary to defeat the Pahlavi regime. The Mojahedin are considered by their opponents to be the Islamic Marxists within Iran. Their propaganda initially stressed that Islam was a progressive ideology and a revolutionary one. Besides the teachings of Islam, they were familiar with the theories of Marxism and wanted to utilize the practical aspects of Marxism and Leninism. They tended to justify their armed resistance, anti-imperialistic struggle, and recommendations for a classless society by citing parallel passages in the Koran and writings from Marx and Engels, and Lenin.

Ostensibly, Islam and Marxism are different ideologies in their origins, formats, and contents. Separately, each doctrine has been misunderstood by Western analysts and leaders. As an amalgam, the two doctrines pose a new threat to Western policy makers. First, the hybrid—Islamic Marxism is regarded as anti-Western. Relatedly, it has the stigma of being a leftist philosophy. These factors alone alienate adherents to Islamic Marxism from individuals oriented to Western ideas and values.

Secondly, Islamic Marxism is militant as well as comprehensive. The coalescence tolerates and promotes Islam as the superior religion and incorporates the secular theories regarding collectivism, and
solidarity of the masses against capitalism. The supreme divine
law of the Koran undergirds Marxist theory. The guidelines of the
Koran are commonly known throughout Iran. Islamic Marxism represents
a less threatening ideological shift than an abrupt shift from Islamic
ways to Western ones.

Thirdly, Islamic Marxism is a model of socialism native to Iran.
The appeal of a native ideology is far more credible than any imported
idea, at least, at the present juncture of Iranian history. Although
Marxism was not formulated within Iran, as a non-Western dogma its
acceptance seems to be justified. However, an ideological alignment
with the Soviet Union is considered a step toward communism. Having
Iran within the communist bloc would significantly alter Western
influence in the Middle East and the rest of the world.

It is relevant to point out that political commentaries published
after 1979 rarely mention or use the term Islamic Marxism. Instead
of Islamic Marxism, the contemporary synonym being used is "Islamic
left" or "left Islamic." No longer are political scholars and
writers speculating about the potential affinity of Iranian Muslims
toward Marxism. Political analysts nowadays (1982) do not dismiss
the affinity of Iranian Muslims for Marxism. Their speculation
has shifted to analyzing and scrutinizing the impact which Islamic
Marxism will have in the revolutionary changes in the Iranian society.

The Scapegoat Theory

Proponents of the Scapegoat Theory contend that Islamic Marxism
was a propaganda scheme developed, financed, and supported by the
Shah and his cohorts. The Shah, certainly, had the power, authority and means to wage extensive and effective propaganda campaigns to maintain his power. Media coverage throughout the world promoted his version of events in Iran, even his claims and accusations about Islamic Marxism (Dorman & Omeed, 1979). He had access to the media as well as plenary power to enforce strict censorship limiting information which might cast his regime in any bad light.

Islamic Marxism, alleged foe of Iranians, ranked high on the Shah's scapegoat list. Scapegoating is regarded as a common strategy used for conflict management (Frost & Wilmot, 1978). A review of the Shah's political behavior under stress substantiates that he frequently resorted to exonerate himself by blaming others for domestic and international problems (Hoveyda, 1979; Ledeen & Lewis, 1981). By identifying various scapegoats, the Shah cleverly evaded enmity and condemnation. He merely diverted the public attention onto others and gained supporters and sympathizers for his plans of action.

The Shah turned to scapegoating as a means to save his face. The maintenance of personal dignity is highly valued in the Iranian society (Smith et al., 1978; Harris & Moran, 1979). Face-saving or gheyrat or aberu is more a social custom rather than a religious tradition among all segments of the population in Iran (Graham, 1979; Deming & Harper, 1979). Scapegoating served the purpose of preserving the Shah's dignity as ruler of Iran.

Why did the Shah promote propaganda about Islamic Marxism? Halliday (1979) contended that the Shah maintained disdain for the
Islamic clergy and communists. He perceived each faction as politicized forces undermining his efforts to modernize Iran and to make Iran a dominant regional power in the Middle East. Although the Shah claimed to be a Shiite Muslim, he remained suspicious of the Islamic clergy. Long before the Shah assumed the monarchy, his father left a legacy of limiting the Islamic clerical influence throughout the country. Reza Khan banned various religious practices such as self-flagellation; females wearing a special veil known as the chador; discouraged pilgrimages to Najaf and Karbala; and confiscated religious incomes (Perez, 1978). While in power, Reza Khan also restricted the influence of the religious courts. He limited their control over information by establishing and encouraging secular education throughout Iran.

Hoveyda (1979) pointed out that Reza Khan's son, the Shah, merely continued his father's anti-clerical policies. The Shah deliberately approved programs and plans which would reduce the political, economic, legal, and educational power control of the Islamic clergy. For example, in 1963, the Shah by royal proclamation ordered the reapportionment of land owned by the clergy. He also dictated changes in calendar to undermine the dominance of the mullahs and ayatollahs in the country. The Islamic clergy were disturbed by the Shah's actions, particularly, his reduction of their religious income and over the allocation of extraterritorial rights which the Shah granted to the U.S. for monitoring outposts (Halliday, 1979). The Shah's orientation toward Western values and ideas was in stark opposition to the traditional values promoted and adhered to by the
Islamic clergy.

In addition to the Islamic clergy, the Shah perceived the Soviet and communists to be hostile adversaries to his rule. In the late 1940's the Shah claimed that he was the master-mind in disbanding Soviet communist rebels from Iran. To further deter communist influence within the country, the Shah outlawed the Tudeh Party labeling it as an illegal political party (Echo of Iran, 1977). He also established a special police force, the SAVAK, just to rid the country of communist sympathizers, and their subversive activities. During his reign, numerous communists were imprisoned, executed, tortured, or exiled. The Shah also permitted U.S. agents to spy on the Soviet Union and on communists in Iran.

By expounding the belief that a coalition of Islam and Marxism was threatening the stability of Iran, the Shah attempted to spread fear among Iranians not to join or tolerate individuals who were Islamic Marxists. Using the adjective Islamic to modify Marxists, the Shah tried to revive Muslim resentment against the communists (Moss, 1978). Iranian Muslims distrusted the communists and the Soviets for various reasons. Iranian Muslims detested the communists for the dissemination of propaganda which was anti-religious and anti-clerical in context. Besides the propaganda, Iranian Muslims were full of resentment over the Soviet's shelling of their holy shrine in Mashad in early 1900's (Nyrop, 1978).

By insinuating that Islamic Marxism was dangerous, the Shah expected that the Islamic clergy would endorse his actions. By using the claim that Islamic Marxism was more dangerous to the Iranian
establishment than simple Marxism, atheism, or organized religion, the Shah wanted to provoke the trepidation Westerners had for any form of communism in the free world.

Nyrop (1978) asserted that there was, in fact, no organization or group in Iran having the name Islamic Marxist. During the late 1970's some guerrilla groups in Iran formulated ideological guidelines which characterize Islamic Marxism; however, there were never any claims that their ideologies were a pure version of Islamic Marxism. Throughout his reign, the Shah (1967; 1980) insisted that Islamic Marxism was a particular religious-political hybrid—the holy alliance of black and red evolving in Iran. He considered Islamic Marxism to be synonymous with terrorism.

According to the Shah (1980, p. 145), Islamic Marxism is deeply rooted in Iran's conscious:

The black—the clergy—had opposed my father, and supported my rule only sporadically. Religious fanatics who did not understand the true nature of Islam had allied with the Tudeh back in 1940's. Our investigation of my would be assassin, Fakhrarai in 1949, attested to this consideration. Mossadegh's government demonstrated how such a red-black alliance could thrive without a clear understanding by the non-communist members of its consequences. The situation is different today.

The Shah (1980, p. 162) maintains that the recent amalgam of Islam and Marxism resulted from:

Those prelates who naively put their hands on those of militant atheists. The prelates are doomed in this fatal alliance. They will leave their mark on history only through crimes which they were forced to commit and for which they took frightful responsibility in the name of God. The tragedy is that religion will be obliterated by militant atheism, in the name of the Sovereign People and the Communist Gospel.
It is noteworthy that the Shah was the most informed and the main source for all details about Islamic Marxism. More than any other individual or group, the Shah reported the origin, the ideological orientation, even the goals and objectives of Islamic Marxism in Iran. His sister Ashraf (1980, p. 113) agrees with the Shah that Islamic Marxism was not a new phenomenon but "a political force evolving in Iran over the past generations or gaining strength whenever there was a period of disenchantment with the West." Neither leading Iranian communists, Soviet communists, Shiite Muslims, nor other political activists publicized news about Islamic Marxism. On the other hand, it seemed that the Shah knew exactly what Islamic Marxists were trying to do in Iran. While it may seem redundant to cite the Shah regarding information about Islamic Marxism, there is no other alternative since he maintained the inside tract on its origin, and activities.

There is no evidence to substantiate that the Shah actually coined the word Islamic Marxism. He never admitted that he devised the expression Islamic Marxism for propaganda and strategic purposes. In fact, the Shah asserted that the Mojahedin disseminated it through the country with the help of the mullahs. The Shah (1980, p. 162) alleged:

For the first time the slogans of Islamic Marxism were trumpeted before large audiences. The Mojahedin—besieged in Lebanon and Libya—took this surprising theory to our naive masses who listened with interest for the first time; the agitators now had the backing of mullahs and thus the blessings of organized religion for their propitious statements.
However, the Mojahedin members refute all charges that they are leftists or Marxists. They claim that they are a lay Islamic organization supporting progressive Shiism. Members of the Mojahedin consider the label Islamic Marxist to be merely the Shah's verbal weapon to denigrate their organization in Iran and abroad (People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran, 1978).

There is evidence that the Shah conspired against the left and his religious opponents. At the Shah's insistence a controversial article entitled, "Iran and the Red and Black Imperialism," was published in the January 7, 1978, edition of the Ettela'at newspaper. The two column article included an expose against exiled Ayatollah Khomeini and a discussion about a conspiracy instigated by a union of Islamic leaders and Marxist groups to destroy Iran.

The publication of the article is regarded by many as one of the Shah's catastrophic blunders which sparked the advent of the Iranian Revolution (Rubin, 1980; Keddie, 1981; Leen & Lewis, 1981). The day after the article was featured in Iran, one of the bloodiest demonstrations since 1963 took place in Qom between theology students and Iranian security forces. Keddie (1981) asserts that the newspaper attack decisively altered the anti-Shah protest movement by strengthening the religious led opposition in Iran.

The Shah had called wolf so often during his reign that even when he complained about Islamic Marxists, he did not gain the substantial domestic or foreign support he needed. He used Islamic Marxists as his scapegoat at a time when the U.S. government leaders did not have the political clout internationally nor sound foreign
policy to keep the Shah in power (Alexander & Nanes, 1980).

Long after the Shah departed Iran, Islamic Marxism served as the scapegoat for Ayatollah Khomeini. The majority of Iranians and foreigners remain skeptical about the amalgam of Islam and Marxism. Proponents of the Scapegoat Theory, Hoveyda (1979), Balliday (1979), Forbes (1980), and others conclude that Islamic Marxism was a figment of the Shah's imagination which became an obsession of his during the 1970's.

The Infiltration Theory

For some years now, it has been assumed that the Shah had created the label Islamic Marxism as a publicity stunt to gain domestic and international sympathy for his troubles. If the Shah did not invent Islamic Marxism, then who did and for what purpose? To solve this whodunit, Moss (1978) proposed that the Scapegoat Theory is invalid. Moreover, he contended that Islamic Marxism was a Soviet communist invention.

Infiltration is not a new Soviet tactic to be used in Iran. As early as 1919 when Iran was selected as the first non-Western country to be communized, plans were devised in Soviet Russia to dispatch communist agents to Iran to disseminate communist propaganda and to help organize an Iranian communist party (Zabih, 1966). These agents made sure that there were sufficient untruths and rumors about the British government's collaboration with the Iranian leaders. The ultimate goal was to stir up distrust and fear among Iranians.

During the 1920's the communist propaganda network was extensive throughout Iran. Soviet leaders trained their own agents to speak
Persian and other native Iranian dialects in order to facilitate the spread of communism within Iran. In addition, a select number of Iranians were also educated in the Soviet Union. According to Zabith (1966), Soviet leaders found it beneficial to offer Iranians political asylum as a means to gain Iranian sympathizers.

During the 1950's, the Soviet leaders changed their intervention policy toward Iran. Instead of using military force to subdue Iranians, the Soviet leaders resorted to diplomatic channels to win over the Iranian masses (Kazemzadeh, 1974). By 1953, Iran's largest political party, the Tudeh Party was infiltrated with communist agents from the Soviet Union (Cottam, 1979). These agents helped to gain control of numerous newspapers, trade unions, and institutions in Iran (Fatemi, 1980). After the 1953 coup d'etat in Iran, much of the communist activities went underground. Despite the physical risks, communist agents continued to help organize Iranians conduct anti-Shah demonstrations and protests (Nyrup, 1979).

By the late 1970's, the Soviet communists tried another tactic, namely, Islamic Marxism. Islamic Marxism was not the name of a local base terrorist organization but a generic term used to describe a new solidarity directed by the Soviet communists in Iran for defeating the Shah.

As Moss (1978) related, the new communist tactic relied on the credibility of the adjective Islamic among the Iranian masses. The new coalition of Islamic Marxism was envisioned as a strong political force to deter Western domination and exploitation. This new amalgam deliberately had no central leadership or headquarters. The main
goal for the Soviet communists was to end Western influence and terminate further dependency on Western aid. To accomplish this goal, the amalgam was promoted. Eventually, the adjective Islamic would be dropped and Marxism would become the exclusive ideology for the Iranian masses (Moss, 1978).

The Soviet leaders tested their new strategy of Islamic Marxism in Iran. As far as the Soviet leaders were concerned, Islamic Marxism was the best way to establish communism in the Middle East (Moss, 1978). First of all, the new tactic was a progressive solution for Muslims and communists. This new tactic was carefully planned so that top billing was given to Islam—the traditional ideology of the Iranian population (Habiby & Ghavidel, 1978). Secondly, Islam was a credible guise to attract followers in Iran. Thirdly, Islamic Marxism focused on common fears and hatred among the Iranian masses, particularly, the concern that the Shah was selling the welfare of the Iranian people to Western entrepreneurs and the Shah's repressive regime was being fortified by the West.

Although the U.S. media reported news about Islamic Marxists, and U.S. political leaders, scholars, and writers identified the alleged group as a leftist organization, such rhetoric and print did little to explain the Iranian enigma of Islamic Marxism. Radio Moscow kept reiterating during the late 1970's that Marxism and Islam were totally compatible.

Proponents of the Infiltration Theory justify the takeover of the Islamic faction from the Marxist faction as merely an intermediate stage in the plan that the Soviet communist leaders have for Iran.
First of all there is a need to view events of Soviet infiltration in both regional and global contexts. The Soviet willingness to assist in covert and indirect ways is blunt and opportunistic. Soviet policy or rather style is to make denials of its involvement while it supplies aid to pro-Soviet surrogates to assist them in activities to transform conditions in Iran in directions favorable to Soviet influence.

Secondly, the proponents of the Infiltration Theory stress that the Soviets capitalize on the growing discontent in Iran by manipulating the perceptions of native Iranians with Islamic Marxism. Along with the Tudeh Party, Islamic Marxists were to augment pro-Soviet support and guarantee the Soviet foothold in Iran. The Soviet leaders expected Islamic Marxism to be a self-fulfilling prophecy with Iranian Muslims joining with the Marxists first to defeat the Shah, to sever ties with the U.S. and then become an ally of the Soviet Union. Islamic Marxism was to serve as a precedent in the Middle East region to transform Iran and other countries in the area to the pro-Soviet camp.

After experiencing the inadequacy of the Islamic clergy to satisfy and fulfill the needs of the Iranian society, the Soviet communists would offer their assistance to Iran in the form of treaties; then in aid to create a dependency relationship between the Soviet Union and Iran. By wearing the mask of Islam, the communists would have a better chance of being accepted by the masses in Iran.
Summary

Is Islamic Marxism a myth or a contemporary nemesis? There are various theories, the Barrier Theory, the Affinity Theory, the Infiltration Theory, and the Scapegoat Theory, to support either of the two notions about Islamic Marxism. Of all the theories, the Affinity Theory comes the closest in explaining that Muslims and Marxists share some common contentions. However, the Affinity Theory stops short of crediting Iranians with syncretizing a viable contemporary ideology.

It is not surprising to find in the literature the mixed reaction toward an Iranian based doctrine, considering that all other extant theories about creation, evolution, revolution, and governance also have their share of proponents and adversaries. In Iran during the late 1970's some Iranians who had studied Marxism and other political theories formulated an avowed militant and progressive form of Shiism. Their alternative ideology is still regarded as a leftist doctrine and is even commonly referred to as Islamic Marxism. Khomeini labeled this type of Shiism as elleghati—a hybrid.

Islamic Marxism and elleghati are both inaccurate descriptions for the credo advocated by the Nojahedi-e Khalgh. Their ideology is based on true Islam—progressive shiism—which is different from that of the fundamentalists. Very few writers or commentators have reviewed Tabiine Jahan which serves as the manifesto of the proponents of the Nojahedin in Iran and abroad. Instead, the rumors and allegations about Islamic Marxism continue to be propagated by those opposing the influence of the Nojahedin.

The Nojahedin in Iran and abroad are regarded as one of the
Iranian extremists vying for power in Iran. On one hand, the Mojahedin are discredited as leftists and radicals; yet, on the other hand, the Mojahedin have been loyal to their ideology and commitment to fight against oppression. This organization has weathered the critics who have accused them of being Islamic Marxists. Their leaders have been executed, imprisoned, and tortured. To date, they have not cooperated with Iranian Marxists or Soviet supporters. Moreover, their armed defiance and attacks against Ayatollah Khomeini's version of Shiism still arouses mixed reactions from critics and supporters.
CHAPTER IV
COMMUNISM IN IRAN

Scope

The main intent of this chapter is to provide an historical-comparative analysis of communism in Iran from 1920 to 1982. Much controversy exists about communism in Iran. Zabih (1966) suggested that this confusion was due in part to the strict censorship policies enacted in Iran. Girling (1980) contends that this perplexity is due to bias towards communism which dominates much of the available reports and publications.

This case study will focus on the perceptions of Iranians, Americans, and Russians about communism in Iran from 1920 to 1982. Have the perceptions about communism in Iran changed? If there has been change, in what direction? What have been the effects of the perceptions of Iranians on communism? With these questions in mind, an essential starting point for this study is to analyze past and present attitudes toward communism in Iran.

Perceptions about Soviet Communism in Iran

Throughout this thesis, the word "communism" will be used to refer to doctrines and movements which claim to be derived from the teachings and political examples of Marx and Engels, and Lenin (Seton-Watson, 1977). Communism is not a distant phenomenon but an omnipresent one for Iran. Geographically the U.S.S.R. and Iran share a border together
Within Iran, some Iranians have been supporters of Soviet communists, while other Iranians have favored communism but not an alliance with the Soviet Union. Fatemi (1980) contends that the ultimate goal of the communist leaders in the Soviet Union has been to gain control of power in Iran. From the Soviet perspective, Iran is likened symbolically to an apple which in due time will be ripe for harvest (Troianowsky, 1957; Fatemi, 1980; Chubin, 1981).

The Shah (1980, pp. 12-13) expresses the belief that:

In the forty years I had lived as neighbor to the masters of the Kremlin, I had never seen any wavering of Russia's political objectives: A relentless striving toward world domination. Moscow had time. It could wait fifty years, accept a step or two backwards, deal, accommodate, but never lose sight of its final aims.

Communism is a controversial topic which evokes various reactions from Americans and Iranians. There is a bipolarity in the attitudes which Americans and Iranians have toward communism. Initially U.S. leaders decided that Soviet communists as well as all other forms of communism are formidable adversaries which need to be stopped at all costs. U.S. foreign aid is especially earmarked to fight against Soviet communists and communists throughout the globe (Heravi, 1969; Harrison, 1978; Alexander & Nanes, 1980).

Official surveys providing information about Iranian public opinions toward communism are rare. Rogers and Sills (1958) reported in their 1951 survey with Iranians that there is a distinct bipolarity in the attitudes of Iranians with respect to communism. In a recent perusal of Iranian government literature, Iranian religious writings, underground rhetoric and publications, and communist periodicals, two viewpoints are dominant: Anti-communist opinions and pro-communist
opinions.

For over half a century the rulers in Iran have never favored adopting communist doctrines nor surrendering Iran's power to the control of Soviet communists. The Iranian ruling elite have widely publicized and openly demonstrated their hostility toward communism. As Cottam (1979) pointed out, negative sentiment toward Soviet communists and their Iranian supporters has been pervasive among the vast majority of the people in Iran.

Various methods have been utilized by the Iranian rulers to check the spread of communism within Iran. For example, Reza Shah enacted Iran's first Anti-Communist Law in 1931. This law prohibited all genuine disguised activities and propaganda which extolled communism.

In addition, subsequent Iranian rulers have exerted their plenary powers to censor all information and events which they considered as being communist and subversive to the Iranian regime. Each Iranian ruler has regarded it as a duty and mandatory responsibility to maintain massive propaganda campaigns against communism. Ayatollah Khomeini (1980) also proposes that communists must be purged from Iran. Despite the rhetoric, many Tudeh Party members and also one faction of Fadaiyoon—Aksareyaet members still hold numerous governmental positions. The major reason for the assignment of positions to the supporters of the above two groups is their support of the government policies.

Halliday (1979) reported that special bureaucratic divisions have been established by Iranian rulers to check all opposition to the ruling clique. As the Shah (1960, p. 158) recounts, the SAVAK,
the organization for Information and State Security, was instituted in Iran to combat communism subversion after 1956. The current Islamic government in power in the country has established the SAVAMA, the National organization of Information and Security of Iran, to regulate communist subversives and dissidents (The Iran Times, September 8, 1973). Besides SAVAMA, the current regime in Iran uses hezbollahi—party of God—komiteh members—revolutionary committees, pasdaran—revolutionary guards, basiji—mobilized units, and others. Khomeini himself claims that a thirty-six million member organization exists in Iran to safeguard his interests and those of the mullahs.

Under the Shah a large budget was allocated to counteract any opposition in Iran and curtail the communist influence within the country. Nyrop (1978) points out that an extensive public relations campaign was initiated to extol the Shah's achievements. Consequently, during the 1960's, school books were re-written to emphasize the accomplishments of Iranians, especially the "King of kings—the Shah of Iran." Baraheni (1977) claimed that the Shah deliberately censored all literary works which did not praise the monarchy.

The Shah himself was one of the foremost experts about communists. His books contain passages devoted to discussion about communists. For example, the Shah (1974, p. 162) pointed out that:

Communist dictators resemble Fascist ones in that they enjoy holding elections. They hope to give the ordinary working man the idea that he has a voice in the government of their country. But the communist leader allows only one political party; anybody who tries to start another, or speaks against the ruling party is, likely to be liquidated. In the elections (if you call them by that name), the voter has no choice, for only candidates listed are those of the ruling party. Purely as a
matter of form, the citizen is urged or ordered to go
and vote; the authorities then triumphantly announce that,
let us say 99.9% of the votes cast, were for the ruling
party. I wonder how many intelligent people are fooled
by that sort of thing.

During the Shah's reign, he was never suspected of being a
communist agent or even pro-communist. However, he used to favor
a one-party system. He ordered all Iranians to become members of the
Rastakhiz or Resurgence Party, his own political party which he founded
despite votes being cast, only the Shah's favorites were given power
positions in his government. The Shah had mentioned that communist
dictators resorted to liquidating their opposition. While in power,
the Shah himself tried to get rid of all his opponents. Although there
are thousands of cases of human rights violations, the Shah (1980)
asserts that the Iranians were never pursued or subject to police
arrest for their writings or rhetoric.

Despite laws, tortures, executions, intimidation tactics, various
individuals and organizations support communism in Iran. For several
decades, communism has been propagated through a legacy of martyrdom,
rhetoric, newspapers, underground literature, and by overt and covert
activities within the country and abroad.

The pro-communist and anti-communist sentiments in Iran cannot
be traced to just one factor or event. Intense nationalism has been
prevalent in Iran long before there were communist activities in the
country. Cottam (1979), Halliday (1979), the Shah (1980), and Fatemi
(1980) concur that Iranian rulers expressed negative sentiments
towards the Russian czars and feared being invaded. This negative
attitude was automatically transferred to Russian communists. Initially, Sultan Zade (1921), and Armajani (1972) concluded, there was considerable disagreement among the communists whether Iran was actually ready for revolution.

Heravi (1969) reports that the Russian communists were enthusiastic about exporting communist ideology to Iran. Much preliminary planning went into their decision to first communize Iran. Their major objective, according to Zabih (1966), was to establish an extensive network of communist parties throughout Asia. These parties would be modeled after the Russian communist party, and would, in fact, be guided by the central government in Russia. The proposed strategies were to develop international communism in the Asian countries as a strong defense against capitalism.

Troianowsky (1918) and Lenczowski (1949) concur that the communists intended to first incite a revolution in Iran "against foreign imperialism" while simultaneously "educating the laboring masses in the East" that communism is a desirable ideology. The Russian communists ultimately wanted the control of the warm water port—the Persian Gulf to assume access over all of Asia.

Contemporary communist theoreticians like Chertikhin (1975) and others stress that the chances for communist ideology to be accepted in Iran greatly depends upon the ending of nationalist movements in the country. The Iranians have in the past shown propensity towards communism because communism offers a strong alliance against further capitalistic imperialism and its control.

As the Shah (1980) points out, the Persian communists and
especially the Americans have preconceived notions about what Iran ought to be rather than what Iran really is. The Shah (1980, p. 27) makes the point that "comparing what happens in Iran to other nations . . . is like comparing apples and oranges." Sills (1968) concurred that the reactions of Iranians to international communism is unique in the Middle East, in that, national communism has been emerging within Iran. The term "national communism" is used in this context to refer to indigenous forms of communism which have developed in Iran but reject the control of Russia. Iranian communists were attracted to the communist ideology that would free them from foreign imperialism but at the same time they did not want Russian hegemony either (Lacqueur, 1956; Morris, 1959; and Shoup, 1962).

Perceptions About Iranian Nationalism

Integral to the study of communism in Iran is an analysis of Iranian nationalism. American and Iranian leaders tend to describe Iranian nationalism in Orwellian terms. George Orwell, the British novelist, did not originally develop his classification for nationalism based on circumstances in Iran. Orwell (1953) initially identified three types of British nationalism: "positive" nationalism, "negative" nationalism, and "transferred" nationalism. According to Cottam (1979), Americans consider Iranian nationalism to be "negative" nationalism. Orwell (1953) proposed that "negative" nationalism characteristically entails anglophobia, a hostility toward Britain. Throughout the contemporary history of Iran, anglophobia has been pervasive while at the writing of this thesis, xenophobia seems to be
mainly predominant.

According to the Shah of Iran (1974), "negative" nationalism was the product of local traitors or outside powers. The Shah considered Mossadegh, his opponent during the 1950's, to have instigated "negative" nationalism in Iran. Nirumand (1969, p. 92), an Iranian writer, perceived Mossadegh's so-called "negative" nationalism to be the emanicipation of Iran from the tutelage and exploitation from foreign powers with the accentuation on Iranian nationalistic feelings, and the Shah's alleged "positive" nationalism to be the type of nationalism which re-instituted court ceremonies and re-awakened support for the traditional role of the king in the Iranian society.

On the other hand, the Shah asserted that his efforts to develop Iran exemplified "positive" nationalism (Cottam, 1979). As the Shah (1974, p. 125) explained:

We daily become stronger and more prosperous; we are building a new country, and at the same time, we are maintaining the truest nationalist sentiments... In its truest form, nationalism can lead a country to greatness.

Contemporary Iranian leaders such as Khomeini, Bani Sadr, Rajai, and others abandoned Orwellian terms in favor of equating Iranian nationalism with freedom from foreign intervention in Iran's internal and international relations (The Iran Times, October 26, 1980). Harrison (1978) maintained that this perception is an Asian or Third World version of nationalism which focuses on terminating foreign interdependence and involvement. In addition, the current Iranian ruling clique advocate Islamic unity as a means to end the control of foreign influence in Iran (Falk, 1979).
Communists have mixed opinions about nationalism in Iran. For example, Marx and Engels (1897) proposed that nationalism throughout the world was the tool of the bourgeoisie used to insure their existence and control. In the case of Iran, Lenin (1919/1957) decided that Iranian nationalism was a vital catalyst to speed up the dialectical process against the overthrow of feudalism and the imperialistic stage of capitalism. By infiltrating the national movements in Iran, the communists hoped to shift the revolutionary struggle from the national level to a social and class level fight. As Harrison (1978) explained, such strategy is commonly referred to as "subnationalism."

Sills (1968) and Seton-Watson (1977) wrote that the Soviets had a dual approach to nationalism—on one hand they wanted to use it for their own ends, but also on the other hand, they had fear of being used by the nationalists. Later communist ideology indicated that nationalism was a force to be eliminated before communization would succeed (Chertikhin, 1975).

Jazani (1978), an Iranian, pointed out, Iranian nationalism remains a considerable force much underestimated by foreign powers. This force, he contended, resulted from the suffering from the effects of foreign imperialism and the suffering from the effects of economic, political, cultural, and religious oppression imposed by Iran's ruling clique. Sills (1968) observed that no ideological amalgam actually took hold among the majority of Iranian nationalists and the communists. Cottam (1979) stated that Iranian nationalists recognized the contradiction between international communism and
Iranian nationalism. The Iranian nationalists discerned no difference between foreign imperialism and Russian hegemony.

The Ripening Experiments

The Russian communists' efforts to communize Iran are all considered as failures. Sultan Zade (1921) and Zabih (1966) attributed the fiascos to the Soviets' miscalculation about Iranian nationalism. The Russians had expected the various Iranian nationalist movements to be receptive to communist support, later receptive to communist ideology and control. The communists did not anticipate the weaknesses of Iranian nationalism (Seton-Watson, 1977).

As the Shah (1980, p. 12) observes the Soviets have had a great desire to dominate Iran. Although Iran did not have optimum conditions for communism, Lenin and other communist leaders selected their neighbor Iran as the first Eastern country to have communism (Zabih, 1966).

Lenin (1957) appraised Iran as a weak, semi-colonial nation in the feudal stage of development being exploited by Western capitalists. Despite these apparent shortcomings, the Russian communists unrelentlessly pursued Iranians to join them. Fatemi (1980) comments, the communists decided that the seeds of communism with careful cultivation would produce a good harvest of revolutionary spirit in Iran.

Much preliminary planning went into the first communist offensive in Iran. Sultan Zade (1921) reported that international conferences were held to plot strategies and decide what to do about Iranian nationalism. Zabih (1966) pointed out, a special branch of the
Department of International Propaganda for Eastern Peoples was established to prepare materials in the Persian language to be disseminated among Iranians.

Soon after the terms of the Anglo-Persian Treaty of 1919 were known, the Jangalis, those who were working with Marza Kuchek Khan Jangali, organized a local nationalist group of Kurds to resist against the establishment of a British protectorate in Iran. Mirza Kuchek Khan, a former theology student and landowner, became the leader of the nationalist movement in the Gilan Province of Iran. Armajani (1972) reported that the supporters of Mirza Kuchek Khan vowed not to shave or cut their hair until foreign troops had withdrawn from Iran. Cottam (1979) related that they also threatened the central government of Iran that inhabitants of the Gilan Province would secede from Iran if the British were permitted to stay in their country.

Ehsanollah Khan, a follower of Mirza Kuchek Khan, convinced him not to attack the Russians when they entered Iran to chase the British. After the Russian army chased the British from Baku, they stationed themselves in Gilan—a province in the northern part of Iran. Besides the military presence in Iran, Soviet communists infiltrated the local Iranian political organization known as the Edalat (Adalat) Party. In 1920 the Edalat Party formally changed its name to Hezb-e Komonist-e Iran (The Iranian Communist Party) with Lenin as its honorary chairman (Kambakhsh, 1972).

Shortly after the name change, The Iranian Communist Party began to distribute anti-religious propaganda. The communist agents had anticipated that Muslims in Iran would revolt against Islam and
the clerics. The communist agents did not expect their anti-religious campaigns to back-fire and antagonize the Iranians as it did.

Reza Khan crushed the Gilan rebellion. Red Army withdrew from Iranian territory without any explanation. The Iranian Communist Party and the Jangalis left without any support. It was then that Reza Khan ordered the destruction of the Iranian Communist Party headquarters (Zabih, 1966). Thereafter Iranians grew more suspicious of the Russian communists.

After the Gilan fiasco, the communists did not abandon their goal to communize Iran. For a decade, much of their efforts were subtle in the form of disguised groups and organizations. Zabih (1966) pointed out, sports clubs, poetry groups, trade unions, and other organizations were established to disseminate information about the communism ideology. As soon as Reza Shah detected such activities, he enacted the Anti-Communist Law in 1931 (Ravandi, 1944).

The second communist attempt to communize Iran was not the brain child of the Russian communist leaders. Fatemi (1980) explained that Dr. Taghi Arani studied Marxism while living in Berlin. Upon returning to Iran, he and other Iranians organized the "Arani Circle" for the expressed purpose of studying the teachings of Marx and Engels. The "Arani Circle" published a journal entitled Donya (The World) which featured discussions about Marxism in Persian (Abrahamian, 1970).

In 1937 all members of the Arani Circle were imprisoned for violating the Anti-Communist Law. The survivors of the Arani Circle later organized the Rezbe Tudeh or the Mass Party in 1941 (Halliday, 1970).
1979). By 1943 the Tudeh Party had developed into a highly structured nationwide political party. Initially the Tudeh Party avoided mentioning its affiliation with communism or the Soviet Union. However, the top governmental officials did not hesitate to discuss publically the affiliation of the Tudeh Party. The Shah (1980, p. 73) remarks that:

Moscow helped found the Iranian branch of the communist party, the Tudeh. I say "helped found" because the British had a hand here, too, however difficult that fact may be for naive people to believe. An employee of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and a known British agent, Mustafa Fateh, financed the Tudeh newspaper, Mardom (The People). Media ownership, of course, is crucial to any fledgling party's political success and Tudeh was no exception.

Fatemi (1980) claims that the Tudeh Party became the strongest in the northern regions of Iran where the Tudeh hierarchy was more influential than the officials of the Iranian central government. During the late 1940's, the Tudeh Party had an extensive network of supporters in Azerbaijan, Kurdistan, and Gilan. Even the Soviets made it clear that no government officials would be given permission in the north unless they were supporters of the Tudeh Party (Kazemzadeh, 1974).

As a political party, the Tudeh members had parliamentary privileges to support the Soviet goals (Cottam, 1979). The Tudeh Party included a number of nationalists who were involved in the party's activities (Armajani, 1972; Fatemi, 1980). The Tudeh Party was organized similarly to the communist party model with a central executive committee, a platform of labor legislation, social insurance, trade unionism, free education, distribution of land, rights of minorities, disarmament of tribes, and equality in the courts. Zabih (1966) pointed out that the Tudeh Party did not advocate nationalization.
of any property.

The Tudeh Party slogan was: "Bread, health, and education for all" (Armajani, 1972, p. 153). The objectives of the Tudeh Party were cited in their newspaper Rehbar (December 16, 1944) as follows:

Our fight against the ruling class will be relentless and continuous. This corrupt and decayed structure must be destroyed. Any government which fights our movement is fascist and must be eliminated. Any group which obstructs real cooperation between Iran and the Soviet Union is a lackey of British imperialism and the foe of the Iranian people. The present ruling groups are holdovers of the Reza Shah regime and friends of the imperial embassies, the masses should unite to bring about their liquidation.

The Tudeh Party Programs had mass appeal throughout the country (Cottam, 1979). Twenty editors joined together to promote the Tudeh Party's credibility and its propaganda. The Tudeh Party was not the only means to communize Iran. For example, the Russian communists decided to back national movements in Kurdistan and Azerbaijan. The Shah (1980) points out, the British suggested to Stalin to accept the autonomy of the Iranian provinces but Stalin refused this offer.

After World War II the Red Army was to evacuate from Iranian territory but did not. The Russian leaders ignored Iran's appeals to withdraw the Russian troops. However, the Red Army advanced into Kurdistan and Azerbaijan and established the Peoples' Republic of Kurdistan and the Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan (Abrahamian, 1970).

Armajani (1972) explained that by 1945 the Demokrat Party under the leadership of Fishevari replaced the Tudeh Party in Azerbaijan. The Tudeh Party continued to recruit members and expand in other regions of Iran. The Soviet leaders were counting on the two political parties in Iran to help achieve Soviet goals and plans for Iran.
For example, in the case of oil rights for Russia within the Iranian territory, members of the Tudeh Party and supporters of the Demokrat Party staged demonstrations and protests in Iran to persuade Iranian leaders to grant oil concessions to Soviet leaders.

Dr. Mossadegh proposed a piece of legislation which prohibited any oil concessions to foreign governments while foreign troops were occupying Iranian territory. This legislation complicated the situation in Iran. The Shah (1980) claims that he took a chance to confront the Red Army in northern Iran, and his gamble paid off. Before the Iranian troops started combat, the Red Army withdrew from Kurdistan and Azerbaijan (Zabih, 1966). Avery (1965) and Arfa (1964) reported that the Tudeh Party headquarters were raided and members disbanded. In 1947 the Tudeh Central Committee voluntarily relinquished its powers and confessed its errors. The Tudeh Party lost its membership and its mass popularity because it backed the Russians, and it also lost its powers (Cottam, 1979).

As the Shah (1980, p. 77) contends:

His military intervention prevented the second attempt in the 20th century to erase Iran from the map of the world. What the communists did in Azerbaijan was truly a 'landmark' in Middle East history. The threat of communist imperialism was first clearly drawn in Iran. It was in the course of the Azerbaijan chaos that the U.S. for the first time in history began to play a leading role in the Middle East.

Cottam (1979) mentioned that Reza Shah and his son considered themselves to exemplify nationalism but, in fact, both never were able to project to the Iranian people credible images as nationalists. Since the Iranian rulers were unable to command the allegiance of the Iranian people with nationalistic fervor, they traditionally utilized
repressive and autocratic means to maintain Iranian support for the regime's policies. Armajani (1972) speculated, the Pahlavi rulers, either by "instinct" or "osmosis" had grasped the central message of Western nationalism, namely that whatever is good for the state is good for the people, rather than vice versa.

Anti-communist activities remained unrestrained in Iran. However, as Winder and Kritzeck (1960) related efforts were instituted to thwart the spread of communism in Iran. They maintained that the Society for the Propagation of Islam, a British supported organization functioned until 1953 disseminating tenets of Islam via daily broadcasts on the government radio, provided classes at the theology school at Tehran University and distributed anti-communist literature.

Armajani (1972) discussed another right wing, pro-British, anti-communist group called Erade-ye Melli or National Will. In 1944 Tabatabai, who had been exiled from Iran, had used British support to organize a group known as the National Will. Specifically the members of the National Will advocated strong defences of the political and economic independence of Iran and a foreign policy of eternal neutrality for the country (Lenczowski, 1949).

Other groups emerged during the chaos in Azerbaijan and Kurdistan. On the right were groups religiously oriented such as the Bedaiyan-e Islam under the leadership of Navvab Safavi and the Mojahedin-e Islam or Warriors of Islam led by Ayatollah Abol-Qasem Kashani who strongly opposed communist activities in Iran. The Pan-Iranist Party, a non-religious group, had the reputation of being a fascist organization (Armajani, 1972).
A well organized leftist organization was the Tudeh Party which re-established itself after the oil concession rights for the Soviets. Khalil Maleki left the Tudeh Party and started his own group, known as the Third Force which was Marxist oriented but not aligned with Stalin. Dr. Mozaffar Bagai also founded the Toiler's Party which vacillated between Marxist and non-Marxist teachings. Allahyar Saleh, a former minister of finance, organized members of the Iran Party to campaign for changes in Iran (Cottam, 1979).

On February 6, 1949 the Shah officially decreed that the Tudeh Party in Iran was illegal. His action resulted from the evidence collected by his security agents that the Tudeh Party may have helped to plot his assassination. Despite the royal decree, the Tudeh Party continued its activities in Iran. Dr. Mossadegh, who served as the Shah's Prime Minister, did not enforce the Shah's decree against the Tudeh Party. However, there was method to Dr. Mossadegh's madness in using the Tudeh Party as a ploy to attract the interest of U.S. leaders to come to the aid of Iran and help deter the spread of communism there (Cottam, 1979).

Dr. Mossadegh's plans to sustain power in Iran were never fulfilled. The Shah instigated other arrangements with U.S. officials to overthrow Dr. Mossadegh in 1953. In the midst of the chaos in Tehran, Tudeh Party members staged massive demonstrations. The CIA agents dispatched to Iran organized a counterrevolutionary faction consisting of paid Iranians to stage pro-Shah protests. The Red Army did not
come to the aid of the Tudeh members. Instead, the Soviet government decided to conduct business with the Shah as if nothing had happened. Iranian-Soviet relations have fluctuated since 1953; however, the Soviet leaders have tended to maintain a non-interference policy in dealing with the rulers in Iran.

In 1978 when Iranians took part in massive street demonstrations and resistance efforts, the Marxist groups in Iran were not leading the uprisings in the country. Halliday (1979) concluded that there was no strong communist coalition backing the overthrow of the Shah. Guerrilla groups as the Mojahedin, the Liberation Movement, and Fedaeeyoon guerrillas were actively involved throughout the pre-revolutionary period, during the revolution, and in post-revolutionary times.

At the top of the Islamic government list of infidels and enemies of Iran are Americans, Iraqis, the Mojahedin, and leftist groups in Iran which do not support Ayatollah Khomeini's plans and policies. The Tudeh Party members and the Aksaereyaet have shifted their full support to the clerics in power.

In 1983 another chapter will be added to Iran's history. What will be included in that chapter of post-revolutionary Iran and the struggle for power will depend in part upon the pervasive mood of the Iranian masses toward Soviet communists or other forms of communism.

Summary

Iranian bipolarity toward Soviet communism has served as an Iranian survival tactic for over sixty years. Especially when
Iranian rulers have perceived that their political opponents are undermining their efforts or plans, or those times when the Soviet leaders are strengthening their hold in Iran, Iranian rulers have stressed the evils of communism and imposed strict sanctions against communist supporters in Iran.

Iran's anti-communist position has also facilitated trade and diplomatic relations with the U.S. and other Western powers which also oppose the spread of communism. However, when the U.S. and its allies imposed sanctions against Iran, Iranian rulers made deals with the Soviets. As is the case in post-revolutionary Iran, Ayatollah Khomeini has completed numerous trade agreements with the Soviets and other communist aligned countries. KGB specialists have been invited to train SAVAMA and help set up a top-notch security system throughout Iran.

In conclusion, Soviet leaders have not altered their plans in 1982 to exclude Iran from the communist bloc. The ripening of Iran seems to be an on-going process. At the same time, the Shiite clerics in Iran are not instigating any short or long range plans to convert to communism or make an alliance pact with Soviet leaders. Future events in post-revolutionary Iran will determine whether the majority of Iranians will maintain or change their perceptions about Soviet communism.
CHAPTER V

POST-REVOLUTIONARY POWER PROGNOSIS

Scope

Nearly all of the Western scholars, political analysts, writers, and some Iranians who have written books, articles, and commentaries about the recent revolution and its aftermath include some prognostications regarding the power struggle in Iran in their works. A perusal of the available publications reveals that there is no consensus among the writers about the future prospects for power in post-revolutionary Iran. The purpose of this chapter is to provide an analytical review of some of the major predictions about the future struggles for power in Iran.

Prognosis: The End

One of the most common prognoses found in the contemporary literature and reports is that the power struggle will end in Iran. Numerous versions have been proposed describing how the power struggle will end. For example, Chubin (1980) suggests that there will be a slow collapse of the Islamic regime, primarily, from its own weakness rather than from any direct challenges. Bill (1981) contends that the end to the power struggle in Iran will come when the extremists burn themselves out and enough Iranians become repulsed by conditions in the country. Rouleau (1980) foresees the termination of Iran's internal power strife followed by a lengthy, major civil war.

As of April, 1982 there has been no relevant changes in the power
hold in Iran. Ayatollah Khomeini remains the faqih, Mojtahed or imam; however it is evident that his popularity and support among the Iranian masses is seriously waning (Rouleau, 1980; Ledeen & Lewis, 1981; Bill, 1982).

Prognosis: New Leader for Iran

Not only do Iranians and others anticipate an end to the revolution but they also maintain a common belief that a leader will emerge to save Iranians and restore the country. Shiite Muslims expect that Imam Mahdi, the Twelfth Imam who disappeared in the ninth century, will rescue the country (Forbis, 1980). However, monarchists living in exile are hopeful that the Shah's oldest son, Reza Shah II will become the leader of the country. There certainly is sufficient propaganda available extolling the Pahlavi successor as being willing and capable of assuming power in Iran and upholding a constitutional government in the country. However the chances of reviving the monarchy in Iran seem very remote.

Other nationalists favor different nominations for leadership in Iran. Bakhtiar, Madani, Bani Sadr, and some others are among the nominees. However, there is serious doubt among the people in Iran that these exiled leaders will ever rule the country. There is growing sentiment that the exiled Iranians are plotting with foreign governments to compromise Iran's power (Madonee, 1982).

Ayatollah Khomeini expects a council to assume the power in the country when he succumbs. One gets the impression from the newspapers in Iran that the Shiite clerics are best qualified to take over the power
controls. The opposition press reports present a different story about
the anarchy and tension within the country. Iranian jails and prisons
are full as well as the cemeteries.

Rumors continue to circulate that the aged religious ruler in
Iran is ill. On March 23, 1982, on a new broadcast, Frank Reynolds
of ABC reported that Ayatollah Khomeini was not dead. A few seconds
of that particular broadcast were devoted to coverage of a recent
appearance of the Ayatollah.

When Ayatollah Khomeini dies or decides to give up his power in
Iran, James Bill (1981) contends that an "Iranian strong man" will
come to power. The various prognosticators agree that the new
leader in Iran will be strong, but they do not venture to identify
him.

Prognosis: Mojahedın

Another popular prognosis regarding Iran's power is aptly
described by Mr. Chubin (1980, p. 25):

The left stand only to benefit from the failures of the
present regime. . . . If the government falters, there­
fore, it will be there to pick up the pieces. . . . within
the left, the Mojahedın is the most likely contenders
for power. It combines the right ingredients—revolu­
tionary credentials and the acceptable face of Islam.
The Mojahedın may emerge as the group most likely to
bring stability and order to Iran.

Prior to the revolution and even during the post-revolutionary
period, the Mojahedın Organization in Iran and abroad have claimed
that they have solutions and plans for Iran. They describe their
plans as democratic and Islamic. However, the leaders of the
Mojahedın report that they are planning a new revolution in Iran,
not for the sole purpose of struggling for power in Iran. The Mojahedin leadership contend that their ultimate goal is to put an end to oppression and establish a democratic Islamic republic in their homeland—Iran.

In 1982, the Mojahedin continue to promise that the new revolution will take place soon. According to the Mojahedin leadership, the Khomeini's regime will collapse in 1982 unless either a miracle happens, or a foreign power interferes in the internal affairs of Iran to save the current regime from its inevitable downfall.

Prognosis: Communism in Iran

Communism in Iran is not a new phenomenon. Iranian rulers have adopted an anti-communist stance and enacted measures to thwart the spread of communism in Iran. Iranian leaders have tried to keep the majority of Iranians ignorant about communist ideology, or, at least, hostile toward the communists. Undergirding the convictions of the Iranian rulers is the belief that if communism is kept out of sight or detestable, it would stay out of the minds of Iranians. To this end, the Iranian ruling elite has enforced strict censorship to prevent the dissemination of communist propaganda within Iran. Baraheni (1977) claimed that all Iranian writers and poets, classical and contemporary, whose works did not extol or please the rulers of Iran, have been banned throughout the country and kept from public circulation. Consequently, the publication void has been filled by government sanctioned materials containing Islamic and anti-communist themes.

Besides controlling the print media, the Iranian rulers have
used the government-owned television and radio to convey their anti-communist and anti-Mojahedin messages. Regularly scheduled programs have been pre-empted so Iranians can be educated about what the Khomeini regime has labeled "alteghati"—a hybrid in reference to the ideology of Mojahedin. Imitating his predecessor, Ayatollah Khomeini has been accusing the Mojahedin of not having just an Islamic ideology. Prime-time programs have been devoted to instruct Iranians about their Islamic duty to report communists along with idle supporters of the Mojahedin to authorities. In addition, telephone calls and correspondence are regularly being monitored in Iran.

The Iranian rulers have also tried to hamper the development of revolutionary unity and consciousness deemed so crucial for Soviet communism by intentionally reducing the numbers of known Iranian communists. Reza Khan set the legal precedent by having Iran's first anti-communist law drafted in 1931. This law which prohibited all political organizations from engaging in any communist activities and propaganda served for many years as the legal basis for Iranian ruling elites to get rid of communists as well as opponents to the Iranian government.

Perhaps the most popular and expedient reduction tactic condoned by the Iranian ruling elite has been physical annihilation of alleged Iranian communists and Mojahedin supporters without due process. Numerous Iranians, young, old, males, females, pregnant women, true communists as well as non-communists have been summarily executed. Other Iranians suspected of communist affiliation have been imprisoned or exiled from the country as part of the government efforts to rid
the nation of communists.

A perusal of published statistics reveals significant inconsistencies in the number of anti and pro-communists in Iran. The official claim is that the anti-communists far outnumber the pro-communists. Likewise, the various communist organizations in Iran also tend to overestimate the number of their rank and file (Myrop, 1978).

It is relevant to point out that the Iranian masses do not make any distinctions between communism and the Soviets (Chubin, 1980). Some leftist groups in Iran maintain links with communists in other countries such as the Soviet Union, North Korea, and the South Yemen. The leadership of the different leftist groups make the distinction about their specific alignments; however, the majority of Iranian laymen do not differentiate the communists from the Soviets.

The Iranian antipathy toward communism has, in part, delayed Iran's ripening for communism. For decades, the Iranian ruling elite have managed to keep the majority of Iranians fearful and suspicious of Soviet communists and their plans to invade and dominate Iran. It has been the policy of rulers in Iran to rely upon physical force to deter communist influence throughout the country. To this end, billions of dollars have been spent to purchase sophisticated weapons from abroad as a means to ward off Soviet invasion. During the Shah's reign, Iran's military ranked as one of the more sophisticated in the world (Graham, 1979; Ledeen & Lewis, 1981).
Prognosis: Soviet Involvement

It is no secret that the Soviet leaders have been interested in more than Iranian oil and natural gas. Iran is strategically significant because it commands the eastern shore of the Persian Gulf (Ball, 1980; Lenczowski, 1980; Chubin, 1980; Ledeen & Lewis, 1981). Instead of initiating an invasion into Iran, the Soviets have supplied food stuff, military aid, and technical assistance to the Khomeini regime. The Soviet leaders are also providing aid to Iraq, Iran's adversary, based on agreements signed before the start of the war between Iran and Iraq.

Iran would represent a strategic prize for Soviet Russia. Despite the deep-seated anti-communist sentiment pervasive throughout Iran, Ayatollah Khomeini is reviewing additional contracts and treaties with the Soviets. Despite the Soviet support of the present regime, Iranians still remain suspicious of the Soviet Union and its intentions. Since 1979 a popular slogan chanted by Iranians has been: "Neither East nor West."

Keddie (1981) contends that Western political leaders and writers have been using the prognosis about Soviets taking control of power in Iran as a pretext to justify their own plans for the region. It is relevant to mention that U.S. propaganda about Iran being in the throes of the Soviets is not a new theme. Yet, many writers tend to agree with Dr. Lawrence Ziring's contention that the Soviets are actively involved in Iran. If the Khomeini's regime collapses and the leftists—the Tudeh and Aksaereyaez coalition—take over in Iran, they will ask for assistance from the Soviet Union. If there is direct Soviet
military involvement in Iran, the U.S. will probably retaliate using its Radid Deployment Force and may possibly get involved in a limited nuclear war. Such conflict between the two super powers would most likely develop into World War III (Molander, 1982).

Summary

There are a variety of prognoses about the struggle for power in Iran. One can find little optimism among the various prognosticators regarding Iran's future prospects with or without Khomeini.

Conclusion

The contemporary struggle for power in Iran is a complex and highly significant political dilemma for the country. Further descriptive research is warranted about the various factions vying for power in Iran. Presently each of the opposition groups is circulating publications hoping to recruit members and establish clout in the international community promoting their ideology as the best for Iran. As more material becomes available, political analysts, writers, and scholars will be able to gain more insight into the contemporary struggle for power in Iran.
APPENDIX A

Iranian Political Factions
Iranian Opposition Factions

Adalat Party

Hezbeh Komuniste Iran (Iranian Communist Party)
1920-Marxist, Pro-Soviet Union

Erani Circle

Taghi Erani

Hezbeh Tudeh Party (Mass Party)
1941-Marxist, Pro-Soviet

Jazani Group

Mitu-ye Sevom (Third Force)
1952-Titoist, Anti-Soviet

Democratic Party

Fishervani
1944-Marxist, Pro-Soviet

Ahmadzadeh Group

Sazman-e Cherikhaye Fedaeyoon Khalq
1970-Armed Struggle

Ashraf Group

Ashraf Dehghani

Aksaeraet

Agalleyaet

Ashraf Aksaeraet Tagalleyaet

Dehghani

Group

Nezhat-e Azadi-ye Iran

Sazman-e Nojehadin-e Khalq

Peykar

OTHER GROUPS

Raazmaendgan
Roushanfeekran
Kumaleh
Zaehmaet Keshane
Kurdestan

Jonbeshe Daneshjuyane Pishgam
APPENDIX B

Chapter Note
Note 1. The terms Islamic Marxism and Islamic Marxists are used interchangeably. The classification for the theories about Islamic Marxism originated with the writer of this thesis.


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