

Charismatic Leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini in Iranian Revolution: A Sociological Study

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Certificate

Certified that the dissertation entitled “**Charismatic Leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini in Iranian Revolution: A Sociological Study**” submitted by **Munir Ahmad Dar**, in partial fulfillment of M.Phil Degree in the Discipline of **Sociology** is an original piece of research work. This work has not been submitted fully or partially so far anywhere for the award of any degree. The scholar worked under my supervision on whole-time basis for the period required under statutes and has put in the required attendance in the centre.

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I solemnly declare that the dissertation entitled “Charismatic Leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini in Iranian Revolution: A Sociological Study” submitted by me in the discipline of Sociology under the supervision of Dr. Tareak A. Rather embodies my own contribution. This work which does not contain any piracy has not been submitted, so far anywhere for the award of any degree.

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PREFACE

Revolutions make understandably popular research topics. Iran, for example, has received a great deal of scholastic attention thanks to the relatively recent 1979 Revolution, which resulted in the creation of a government headed by the religious establishment. While there are many different studies of Iran's 1979 Revolution, there are few that take into account the uniqueness of Iranian religious history. Moreover, studies of the Iranian Revolution 1979 tend to concentrate only on historical and religious developments during the twentieth century and providing only fleeting mention of events that precede the contemporary. This work will seek to avoid such pitfalls by using charismatic leadership as a unifying factor to investigate Shi'i Iran. The purpose of this work will be to establish the concept of charismatic leadership and to demonstrate how it was appropriated and transformed by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (1902-1989) in order to facilitate Iranian Revolutions in 1979.

Included within the larger arguments of this work, are sections addressing the scholastic categorizations of charisma and its role in bringing social change. The present work also takes into account the social, political and economic structure of

Iranian society that gave birth to the charismatic leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini. The present work also takes into account the response of Iranian society in general to this revolution and various ethnic minorities in particular. Finally the work through some light on the legacy of Ayatollah Khomeini in contemporary Iran.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The term "charismatic leader" has recently attained widespread and almost debased currency. In the past, it was occasionally applied to Gandhi, Lenin, Hitler, and Roosevelt. Now nearly every leader with marked popular appeal, especially those of new states, is indiscriminately tagged as charismatic.¹ To avoid such indiscriminate and therefore meaningless use of the term, we should know what is or should be included in the category of charismatic leadership to distinguish it from other forms of leadership.²

Charismatic leadership has its roots in the writings of Max Weber.³ The word charisma is derived from the Greek word, *charismata*, meaning "the gift of grace," or "gifts presented by the gods". Max Weber adapted the term charisma from the vocabulary of early Christianity, it is used in the two letters of St. Paul – Romans, Chapter 12 and 1 Corinthians, Chapter 12 – in the Christian Bible to describe the Holy Spirit. Max Weber adapted the term charisma to denote one of three types of authority in his classic classification of authority on the basis of claims to legitimacy. He distinguished among (i) traditional authority, whose claim is based on "an established belief in the sanctity of immemorial traditions," (ii) rational or legal authority, grounded on the belief in the legality of rules and in the right of those holding authoritative positions by virtue of those rules to issue commands, and (iii) charismatic or

¹ Reinhard Bendix, 1967, *Reflections on Charismatic Leadership*, Asian Survey, vol. 7, No. 6, p. 341.

² Ann Ruth Willner and Dorothy Willner, 1965, *The Rise and Role of Charismatic Leaders*, Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 358, p. 78.

³ J.A.Conger and R.N.Kanungo, 1994, *Charismatic leadership in organization: Perceived behavioral attributes and their measurement*, Journal of Organizational Behavior, 15, p. 439.

personal authority, resting on "devotion to the specific sanctity, heroism, or exemplary character of an individual person, and of the normative pattern or order revealed by him."⁴

Max Weber suggested that charisma is a leadership trait that sets one individual apart from others. Further, a charismatic leader is endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities.⁵

Of these types, it must be emphasized that they are "ideal types" or abstractions and not empirical realities. None of these types of authority is pure and in the empirical situation they exist as mixed categories. That is to say, there is no purely rational, traditional or charismatic authority, although it is possible to label a given authority system as predominantly rational, traditional or charismatic.⁶ While elements of charismatic authority may be present in all forms of leadership, the predominantly charismatic leader is distinguished from other leaders by his capacity to inspire and sustain loyalty and devotion to him personally, apart from his office or status. He is regarded as possessing supernatural or extraordinary powers given to few to have. Whether in military prowess, religious zeal, therapeutic skill, heroism, or in some other dimension.⁷ Charismatic leader is imbued with a sense of mission, felt as divinely inspired, which he communicates to his followers. He lives not as other men. Nor does he lead in expected ways by recognized rules. He breaks precedents and creates new ones and so is revolutionary. He seems to flourish in times of disturbance and distress. He emphasizes that he and his followers constitute a congregation (*Gemeinde*); he has no officials assisting him, but rather disciples or confidants, who have no career or qualifications in the bureaucratic sense and no privileges. Rather they are personally called by their leader based on his

⁴ Max Weber, 1947, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, (ed.) by Talcott Parsons, New York, Oxford University Press, p. 328.

⁵ Max Weber, 1964, *The theory of social and economic organization*, trans. By A.H. Henderson and T. Parson, The Free press, London, pp. 358-359.

⁶ T.K. Oommen, 1972, *Charisma, stability and change*, Thomas press, New Delhi, p. 4.

⁷ Ann Ruth Willner and Dorothy Willner, 1965, *The Rise and Role of Charismatic Leaders*, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 358, p. 79.

preemptory judgment of their own charismatic gifts; they may be as summarily dismissed when he judges that they have failed his trust in them.⁸

Trice and Beyer summarized Weber's theory as including five elements: (1) an extraordinarily gifted person, (2) a social crisis or situation of desperation, (3) a set of ideas providing a radical solution to the crisis, (4) a set of followers who are attracted to the exceptional person and come to believe that he or she is directly linked to transcendent powers, and (5) the validation of that person's extraordinary gifts and transcendence by repeated successes. They viewed charisma as a sociological phenomenon that *emerged* from the interaction of all of these elements, and argued that *all* of them must be present to some degree for charisma to occur.⁹

The term charisma and its derivatives, introduced into sociology by Max Weber, in his original formulation "*Economy and Society*" in the beginning of 20th century, has lately been utilized by political scientists, psychologists, organizational theorists etc., tamed the original conception of charisma advanced by Weber and, in the process, diluted its richness and distinctiveness. That is why many sociologists argue for a return to Weber's original concept of charisma.¹⁰ In the present study an attempt is made to see how Weber dealt with sociological components of charisma and bring together all that Weber himself wrote on the subject and systemize that material with the help of writings of modern Sociologists in order to develop the theory of Charismatic Leadership into a more workable tool of understanding and research.

Weber dealt sociologically with the concept of charisma as Weber repeatedly emphasized, it is not so much what the leader is but how he is regarded by those subject to his authority that is decisive for the validity of

⁸ Max Weber, 1964, *The theory of social and economic organization*, trans. By A.H. Henderson and T. Parson, The Free press, London, pp. 358-362.

⁹ H. M. Trice, and J. M. Beyer, 1986, *Charisma and its routinization in two social movement organizations*, In B. M. Staw and L. L. Cummings (Eds.), *Research in organizational behavior*, Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, pp. 113 - 164.

¹⁰ J. M. Beyer, 1999, *Taming and promoting charisma to change organizations*, *Leadership Quarterly*, 10(2), pp. 307-330.

charisma.¹¹ His charisma resides in the perceptions of the people he leads. Further in this regard Weber stated, “It is recognition on the part of those subject to authority which is decisive for the validity of charisma”.¹² Thus, leaders depend upon the perceptions of people for their charismatic authority, but nonetheless they also must be exceptional to gain such recognition. It further follows that the attributes of the charismatic leader will vary from society to society.¹³

In the words of Spencer “Charisma is not just the special qualities of the leader nor the recognition of that leader by a group of his followers. Rather, it is the relationship between the two – leader and followers – influenced by the qualities of the leader and the attitude of the followers.”¹⁴

The social dimension of charismatic authority, a dimension which is usually ignored, is the charismatic community or *Gemeinde*. The *Gemeinde* is characterized by an absence of hierarchy, of clearly delineated spheres of authority, and especially by the absence of any form of training or career structure: Disciples are simply called. The personnel of the *Gemeinde* subsist upon voluntary donations, booty; in fact any means that are in sharp contrast with the routine of everyday economic life. The emphasis is thus on fluidity, spontaneity, and ad hoc decision-making by charismatic pronouncement.¹⁵

Charisma and Revolution

According to Mohsen Milani, one of the foremost scholars of the Iranian revolution, "Today few other words in the lexicon of social sciences are more

¹¹ Ann Ruth Willner and Dorothy Willner, 1965, *The Rise and Role of Charismatic Leaders*, Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 35, p.79.

¹² Op cit, Max Weber, 1964, p. 359.

¹³ Op. cit., Willner and Willner, 1965, p. 84.

¹⁴ Martin E. Spencer, 1973, *What is charisma*, British journal of sociology, 24, p. 352.

¹⁵ Max Weber, 1964, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, trans. by A.M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons, New York, The Free Press, pp. 370-373.

ubiquitously and loosely used than the term 'revolution, a reflection of the preparadigmatic stage of the study of revolution"¹⁶

Theda Skocpol regards revolution as, “a rapid, basic transformation of a society's state and class structures... accompanied and in part carried through by class based revolts from below. Social revolutions are set apart from other sorts of conflicts and transformation processes above all by the combination of two coincidences ... societal structural change with class upheaval, and the coincidence of political with social transformation.”¹⁷

For Samuel Huntington, revolution is, “a rapid, fundamental and violent domestic change in the dominant values and myths of a society, in its political institutions, social structure, leadership and government activity and policies. Revolutions are thus to be distinguished from insurrections, rebellions, revolts, coups, and wars of independence.”¹⁸

According to Zimmerman, "a revolution is the successful overthrow of the prevailing elite(s) by a new elite(s) who after having taken over power (which usually involves the use of considerable violence and the mobilization of masses) fundamentally change the social structure and therewith also the structure of authority."¹⁹

Jack Robertson advances a highly purposive definition of revolution, “a revolution is a violent and total change in a political system which not only vastly alters the distribution of power in the society, but results in major changes in the whole social structure.... In political science the primary meaning must be the deliberate, intentional, and probably violent overthrow of

¹⁶ Mohsen M. Milani, 1988, *The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic*, West view Press, London, p. 20.

¹⁷ T. Skocpol, 1979, *States and Social Revolutions*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p. 7.

¹⁸ S. P. Huntington, 1968, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, New Haven, Yale University Press, p. 264.

¹⁹ E. Zimmerman, 1983, *Political Violence, Crises, and Revolutions*, Cambridge, Schenkman Publishing, p. 298.

one ruling class by another which leads the mobilized masses against the existing system.”²⁰

Mohsen Milani defines revolution as “a rapid, fundamental change in the social structure as well as in the state’s personnel, institutions and foundation of its legitimacy, accomplished from outside the legal channels and accompanied in part by a movement from below.”²¹

One can safely assume that social scientists regard popular participation and mobilization as an essential element in either the destruction of the old order or the creation of the new order, or both.

To Weber, charisma was a revolutionary force, one of the most important revolutionary forces in the social world. Whereas traditional as well as rational authority clearly is inherently conservative, the rise of charismatic leader may well pose a threat to that system and lead to a dramatic change in the system.²²

It is generally acknowledged that the contemporary revival of Weber's concept of charismatic authority was prompted by its utility in explaining the revolutionary movements of the first half of the twentieth century. The more recent applications of the concept to the study of leadership in the emerging non-Western states, constituted yet another revival, testifying to the analytical power of Weber's conceptual scheme. In the recent past Weber’s conceptual scheme has been applied to most of the leaders of the charismatic movements like Benito Mussolini's role in Italian history. More challenging are the assertions about the significance of Hitler's charismatic appeal in explaining the Nazi era in Germany. A common description emphasizes his "magnetic" impact on immediate cohorts, while others concentrate on his speaking style, with its mythological evocations, as a clue to his mass mobilizing potential.

²⁰ P. Calvert, 1990, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, p. 3.

²¹ Op. cit., Mohsen M. Milani, 1988, p. 21.

²² George Ritzer, 2000, *Classical Sociological Theory*, McGraw-Hill, USA, p. 237.

Also the most publicized example is V. I. Lenin, his political ideas, his fanatical devotion to his purpose, his ability to engender either avid devotion or antagonism from colleagues. The charismatic label was especially popular in descriptions of those who led upsurges against colonial rule in the post World War II era - Kwame Nkrumah, Gamal Abdel Nasser etc. The charismatic formula has been commonly used in analyzing the popular appeal and public attention of several leaders. Most notable are the discussions about Martin Luther King, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Mohandas K. Gandhi.²³

Although Weber's original ideas were derived from his studies of the prophetic and messianic traditions, no serious attempt has been made to test the applicability of the charismatic typology in the Islamic context. Surprising as it may seem most students of charismatic authority have been unaware of the great wealth of materials found in Islamic history that can profitably lend itself to Weberian analysis.²⁴ The present study will examine one of the influential personalities in Islamic history, The founder of Islamic Republic of Iran, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and his role in Iranian Revolution (1979).

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (1902-1989)

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's prophetic mein, the manner of his rise to power, the overwhelming commemoration of his death, and the edifice of a shrine which was erected over his graveyard leave little doubt that his leadership warrants the attribution, "charismatic."²⁵ Ayatollah Khomeini popularly known as "Imam Khomeini", a personality who led the greatest revolution in contemporary history, will always prove to be interesting and instructive for those residing outside Iran.

²³ For detail on different charismatic leaders, see, Ann Ruth Willner, 1984, *The Spellbinders: Charismatic Political Leadership*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press.

²⁴ Richard H. Dekmejian and Margaret J. Wyszomirsk, 1972, *Charismatic Leadership in Islam: The Mahdi of the Sudan*, , Mar. 1972, p. 193.

²⁵ Ahmad Ashraf, 1990, *Theocracy and Charisma: New Men of Power in Iran*, International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society, Vol. 4, No. 1, Autumn, 1990, pp. 113-152.

Ruhollah Mousavi Khomeini was born on Wednesday, 24 September 1902 in the small town of Khomein, located near the city of Qom, some sixty miles south of Tehran. His ancestors were descendants of the Imam Mousa al-Kazim, 7th Imam of the *Ahl al-Bayt*. Ayatollah Khomeini's grandfather Seyed Ahmad, settled in Khomein sometime in the middle of the nineteenth century. He was the child of a family with a long tradition of Islamic Scholarship.

The father of Ruhollah Khomeini, Seyed Moustafa, had his religious education in Esfahan, Samarra and Najaf. In March 1903, Ruhollah's father was murdered, when Ruhollah was just 5 months old. He was raised by his mother and aunt until they both died in 1917. Ruhollah started to study the Quran at the age of 6. In 1920 he went to Arak and commenced his study under the leadership of Ayatollah Abdul Karim Haeri-Yazdi. In 1921 he followed the Ayatollah to the city of Qom and studied Islamic law (*sharia*), Jurisprudence (*fiqh*), poetry and philosophy (*irfan*). Because of his interest in philosophy and mysticism, Khomeini sought guidance of Mirza Ali Akbar Yazdi, a scholar of philosophy and mysticism. After his death in 1924, Khomeini went on to study philosophy and mysticism with the help of other teachers and sufi mystics. Ruhollah Khomeini became a lecturer at Najaf and Qom seminaries in political philosophy, Islamic history and ethics. He produced numerous writings on Islamic philosophy, law and ethics. By that time he was a leading scholar in Shi'a sect of Islam. Although he was not known in the political scene at that moment, he was focusing on the importance of Islam on the practical social and political issues of society. He wrote the *Kashf al-Asrar* in 1942 which play a major role in the coming of Iranian revolution, because of its detailed interpretation of the Quran concerning practical and social issues of a Muslim society. In 1945, Khomeini became the title of *Hojjat al-Islam*, the highest in rank of Shi'a cleric in Iran under the Ayatollahs.

In 1963 Khomeini became a *marja-e-taqlid* (source of emulation) the highest position in Shi'ite clergy and thus marked the overt expression of charismatic leadership, also begins the political carrier of Ayatollah Khomeini.

In January 1963, the Shah announced the "White Revolution", a six-point programme of reform calling for land reform, nationalization of the forests, the sale of state-owned enterprises to private interests, electoral changes to enfranchise women and allow non-Muslims to hold office, profit-sharing in industry, and a literacy campaign in the nation's schools. Some of these initiatives were regarded as dangerous, Westernizing trends by traditionalists, especially by the powerful and privileged Shi'a scholars. Ayatollah Khomeini summoned a meeting of the other senior *marjas* of Qom and persuaded them to decree a boycott of the referendum on the White Revolution. On 22 January 1963 Khomeini issued a strongly worded declaration denouncing the Shah and his plans. Two days later the Shah took an armored column to Qom, and delivered a speech harshly attacking the scholars as a class.

Khomeini spent more than 14 years in exile, mostly in the holy Shi'a city of Najaf, Iraq. Initially he was sent to Turkey on 4 November 1964, at that time the King of Turkey had good diplomatic relations with the Shah of Iran. Later in October 1965 he was allowed to move to Najaf, Iraq. After that he went to Neauphle-le-Château, suburb of Paris, France on a tourist visa, apparently not seeking political asylum, where he stayed for four months. In the meantime, however, Khomeini was careful not to publicize his ideas for clerical rule outside of his Islamic network of opposition to the Shah which he worked to build and strengthen over the next decade. In Iran, a number of actions of the Shah including his repression of opponents began to build opposition to his regime.

Khomeini had refused to return to Iran until the Shah left. On 17 January 1979, the Shah did leave the country ostensibly "on vacation", never to return. Two weeks later, on Thursday, 1 February 1979, Khomeini returned in triumph to Iran.

Ayatollah Khomeini was the main driving force behind 1979 Iranian Revolution which saw the overthrow of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, the Shah of Iran. Following the revolution and a national referendum, Khomeini became

the country's Supreme Leader—a position created in the constitution as the highest ranking political and religious authority of the nation—until his death.

Iran before 1979 Revolution: The Pahlavi Rule in Iran

The founder of the Pahlavi dynasty, Reza Khan Pahlavi was a commander of the Iranian Cossack division who staged a successful coup in February 21, 1925 and subsequently became the prime Minister, he succeeded a dethroning Shah Ahmad the last king of the Qajar dynasty. Reza Khan became the king of Iran in 1925, he perceived religion as retrogressive and the *ulama* as backward-looking obstacles to progress. He identified national strength with modernization and industrialization. Reza Shah had tried to develop trade relations with Germany which annoyed Britain and Russia and they forced Reza Shah in 1941 to abdicate in favor of his son, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi then aged twenty, who after his father ruled Iran till 1979 and continued on his father's agenda of modernization, centralization and secular nationalism.

Mohammad Reza Pahlavi desired to modernize Iran and introduced several reforms; Iran was officially converted from a mediaeval Islamic state to a modern constitutional monarchy, by the granting of the constitution in 1906. The far-reaching programme of westernization, modernization and centralization of the administration on which Reza Shah embarked, involved a major upheaval of the traditional social order, and the abolition and modification of many traditional Islamic institutions. Reza Shah Pahlavi laid the foundation of missionary schools and modern judiciary system by abolishing the *Maktabs* and gave a big blow to *Shari'a* (Islamic Law). He suppressed political parties, trade unions and the press, the *Majlis* was reduced to the status of a rubber stamp. There was the heavy influence of western countries on Iran, Reza Shah Pahlavi introduced and improved the western ways of life with the help of his cronies. Shah initiated what is known as "White Revolution" in Iran to bring about radical socio-economic change. Mohammad Reza expanded his army men with the financial aid of USA, with the result, military budget rose up in 1961 Iran reached a turning point. There

was an economic, social, religious and political crisis resulting from the monarchical rule. People migrated from rural to urban areas, with the result unemployment rose and business declined because of rise in oil prices, it was in less demand inflation rose up. Khomeini was the first Iranian cleric to try to refute the outspoken advocacy of secularism in 1960's. There were extensive demonstrations in Iranian cities in the spring of 1963, under the leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini; hundreds were killed, Khomeini was arrested then in 1964, he was sent into exile to Iraq, because he most vehemently opposed the extension of westernized, secular state control and foreign influence.

Khomeini in exile in Najaf, sent messages to the people of Iran through audio tapes and gave series lectures on Islamic government which was published as *Hokumat-i-Islami: Velayat-e-Fiqh*, which argued that monarchy was an illegitimate form of rule and the government should be responsible to clergy. The 1960's and 70's saw the growth of reformist movements among both clergy and religious laity under the leadership of Dr. Ali Shariati, a social scientist and reformist and the students of Ayatollah Khomeini which opposed Reza Shah Pahlavi's rule. In 1978 there were riots in Qum following an attack on Khomeini in a government controlled newspaper. Thereafter a cycle of riots emerged and thousands got killed. By the time a huge movement had build up under the leadership of Khomeini to overthrow Reza Shah Pahlavi's government and finally on 16th January, 1979, Mohammad Reza Shah left Tehran forever.

On February 1, 1979 Ayatollah Khomeini returned to Tehran in a chartered Air France Boeing 747. The welcoming crowd of several million Iranians was so large he was forced to take a helicopter after the car he was being transported in from the airport was overwhelmed by an enthusiastic welcoming crowd. Khomeini was now not only the undisputed leader of the revolution, he had become what some called a "semi-divine" figure, greeted as he descended from his airplane with cries of 'Khomeini, O Imam, we salute you, peace be upon you. 'Crowds were now known to chant "*Islam, Islam,*

Khomeini, We Will Follow You”, and even “*God is greatest, Khomeini is leader*”. Judging by events in the latter half of the twentieth century, it appears that some fundamental changes had occurred both in Iran, and in terms of what role of the Shi’a jurist should play in the political sphere.

As Khomeini's movement gained momentum soldiers began to defect to his side, and Khomeini declared *jihad* on soldiers who did not surrender. On 11 February, as revolt spread and armories were taken over, the military declared neutrality and the Bakhtiar regime collapsed. On 30 March 1979, and 31 March 1979, a referendum to replace the monarchy with an Islamic Republic passed with 98 percent voting in favor of the replacement. In November 1979, the new constitution of the Islamic Republic was adopted by national referendum. Khomeini himself became instituted as the Supreme Leader (supreme jurist ruler), and officially became known as the "Leader of the Revolution”.

Khomeini succeeded his major objectives of overthrowing the Pahlavi state and extirpating foreign influence from Iran. He also succeeded in creating a new Islamic order with a new value system, new identity, and new social system and to some extent new institutional arrangements, all of which had purpose of fortifying Islam. However this transfer was not smooth soon after the revolution, Iran engulfed in crises both from outside as well as from inside like American Hostage Crisis (1979-1981), Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988) and Ethnic clashes for autonomy. It was Khomeini’s charismatic leadership which helps Iran to come out of these crises and establish a stronger independent nation, a status it had not enjoyed in the past few centuries. It is independent politically, militarily and culturally. It is able to choose its trading partners with great freedom than before. Above all Iran now has its own political ideology which is rooted in its own history.

Chapter 2

Research Methodology

Universe of the Study

Modern Iran was earlier known as Persia, the name given to it by the ancient Aryan. Iran is situated at one of the main cross roads that link Europe and the Middle East with Central Asia. The name Iran means, “Land of Aryan”. The present Iranian state covers an area of some 628,000 square miles (1,648,000 sq. km) and extends between latitude 250 and 400 N., and longitude 440 and 63 ° E. More than six times the size of Great Britain and approximately three times the size of France, which is the largest country in Western Europe, Iran has a frontier that has been estimated at 2,750 miles in total length, of which over half is sea coast, with 400 miles lying along the southern Caspian shore, and the remainder (1,100 miles) comprising the northern parts of the Gulf of Oman and Persian Gulf and shares land borders with Azerbaijan, Armenia, Turkmenistan Iraq, Turkey, Afghanistan and Pakistan.¹

Since very ancient times, many different peoples have lived in Iran. Iran had an important history and culture before the rise of Islam, with two major dynasties, the Achemenian (559-330 B.C), and the Sasanian (224-651C.E), and the later lasting until Iran’s conquest by the Muslim Arabs from 637-651, after the Muslim conquest only the Mongols , the Safavids (1501-1722), and rulers since 1796 united the territory as one kingdom. Zoroastrianism was the pre-Islamic religion of Iran.²

Iran’s most important mineral resource is petroleum. The country’s oil reserves are the third largest in the world. Iran’s natural gas deposits world’s second largest, are found along the shores of the southern Persian Gulf. These natural resources especially oil reserves in Iran, have from time to time attracted western countries like Britain, Russia, to get the control of oil reserves in Iran.

¹ The Cambridge History of Iran (vol. 1), *The Land of Iran*, Cambridge University Press.

² N. Keddie, 2003 *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution* ,New Haven: Yale University Press. P.2.



Map 2.1 : Iran and its Neighbours



Map 2.2 : Iran and its Provinces

Demographic Structure:**Table: 1.3 Total Population (millions) and average annual growth (%), 1956-2006**

	1956	1966	1976	1986	1996	2006
Total Population	18.95	25.78	33.71	49.45	60.05	70.49
Average annual growth (%)	–	3.1	2.7	3.9	2.0	1.6

Source: Iran statistical yearbooks.

Table 1.4 Urban and rural distribution of population (millions), 1956-2006

<i>Year</i>	1956	1966	1976	1986	1996	2006
Total	18.95	25.79	33.71	49.45	60.05	70.49
Urban	5.9	9.8	15.9	26.8	36.8	49.40
Rural	13.0	15.9	17.8	22.3	23.2	21.09
% of total rural	68.6	61.6	52.8	45.0	38.3	31.5

Source: Iran statistical yearbooks.

Hypotheses

- Religion has shaped the new socio-political order in post-revolutionary Iran.
- Ayatollah Khomeini's charismatic leadership was a potent force in Iranian revolution and subsequent social change.
- Discontent among ethnic and religious minority and women has weakened the legacy of the revolution.

Objectives

The study will be based on following objectives:-

- To analyze the concept of charismatic Leadership and its role in bringing about social change.
- To analyze the role played by Ayatollah Khomeini in bringing about social change in Iran.
- To understand the response of Iranian society in general and ethnic groups in particular in this revolution and its leader Ayatollah Khomeini.
- To study the legacy of Ayatollah Khomeini in the contemporary Iranian society.

Research Methods and Techniques

In general the methods and techniques of a particular study are determined by the nature of the problem. Besides for an efficient and reliable research various interviewing techniques are essential for having insight into the problem. The collection of data depends upon the nature of the problem and the socio-economic environment in which the researcher is placed and the method of data collection must be related to the sort of problem on hand and to the social situation which represents itself to the sociologist. As such for an efficient and reliable research various interviewing techniques are essential for having insight into the problem.

To learn about historical event like Iranian Revolution and personality like Ayatollah Khomeini, the researcher has used many sources, such as books, websites, newspaper articles, photographs, documentaries.

These sources can be separated into two general categories—**primary sources** and **secondary sources**. A primary source is a record of an eyewitness or someone living during the time being studied. Primary sources often provide firsthand accounts about a person or event. Examples include diaries, letters, autobiographies, speeches, newspapers, photographs, and oral history interviews. Libraries, archives, and museums often have primary sources available on-site or on the Internet. A secondary source is published information that was researched, collected, and written or created after the event in question.

In the present study, the researcher has relied on both primary sources and other secondary sources of research. After finding primary and secondary sources the researcher has evaluate them. For this reason, he consulted a variety of primary and secondary sources.

Studying the Iranian Revolution is an extraordinary opportunity for a researcher. The revolution is within the reach of living memory, and researcher find an enormous wealth of memoirs, firsthand accounts, videos, and books on

the subject. As the researcher, I was even able to **interview** many respondents from Iran or those who visited Iran as a primary source of information in order to know the contemporary view of the people about the Revolution and the personality of Ayatollah Khomeini. But since the revolution occurred so recently, it is difficult to gain a perspective on the event. In some ways, the story of the revolution is still being written. Many accounts have been written by Western journalists who spent considerable time in Iran and know the country intimately. Although these accounts are insightful, they still reflect a Western way of looking at Iran and the world. It is difficult for Western writers to truly understand Iranians, their motivations, and their feelings about the revolution. To overcome that, Ayatollah Khomeini's own books and lectures translated in English were used as primary source of data.

Ultimately, the revolution is an extremely complex subject, one that evokes passionate arguments about what exactly occurred, why, and what it all means. One of my main challenges in the present study was to understand the Charismatic Leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini and his role in Iranian Revolution on their own terms. For this purposes a fairly large number of speeches and primary documents from the Iranian Revolution that were available in English were used. However, it's easy to find documents, such as Khomeini's speeches, on the Internet. But, again, a researcher has to be careful. The websites that post these documents might not be reliable. I avoided dubious websites and used material only from highly regarded news organizations, such as the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), *Time* magazine, and the *New York Times*.

Another problem in researching the Iranian Revolution is that Western sources often dismiss Khomeini and the other religious leaders in Iran as fanatics, evil, and inhuman. Some of these descriptions may be appropriate, but Khomeini and the others were far more complex. Most of Khomeini's speeches were part of an ongoing conversation with the faithful. He made numerous references to Shiite and Iranian history and culture. He often merged these

references using literary devices such as allusion, metaphor, and imagery. Khomeini's words represent a comprehensive worldview and a hope for a pure community. Many Americans and other Westerners can't easily understand this worldview, just as many from the Middle East can't always understand Western attitudes.

Further more in the cases of contemporary figures those who are living, it may be possible to investigate the responses of others to them at the formative stages of their careers by interviewing erstwhile associates who speak from personal experience and observation. But in cases of Ayatollah Khomeini we are likely to be dependent to a great extent upon written materials as sources of evidence. The value of the biographical and general historical literature on his figures is limited because biographers and historians, with few exceptions, have not approached the study of his figures with the concept of charismatic leadership in mind, and so have not always been attuned to evidence of it in their researches. On the other hand, for this very reason what evidence we do find of charisma in such general secondary sources is often of considerable value. Memoir literature and interviews of those who were closely associated with the Khomeini early in his career are however, to be of greatest importance in many instances.

An attempt was made to use Max Weber's concept of "Ideal type" as a methodological tool. According to Weber, Ideal types are analytical constructs that don't exist anywhere in the real world. They simply provide a logical touchstone to which we can compare empirical data. Ideal types act like a yardstick against which we can measure differences in the social world. These types provide objective measurement because they exist outside the historical contingency of the data we are looking at. According to Weber, without the use of some objective measure, all we can know about humans would be subjective. In the present study the researcher used the theory of Charismatic Leadership as an ideal type to introspect the personality of Ayatollah Khomeini.

Relevance of the Study

From 1925 till 1975 Iran was ruled by the Pahlavi dynasty. They developed a new political set up in Iran, which had more tendencies towards values/ ideas of modernization, westernization and secularism etc, so Iranian society got access to modernization during the reign of Pahlavi's. But after revolution of 1979 led by Ayatollah Khomeini which over threw the regime of Pahlavi's. All of a sudden a new political order with new institutional arrangements based on the ideology of Islam was created in Iran so there emerged a clash between the traditional Islamic ideology and that of modernist or secular one. As the new political setup with new super structure got framed up, it influenced the basic texture of Iranian society. And the Iranian society in general reacted to these new institutional changes brought about the revolution, with a bit acceptance and bit rejection. The outcome of this whole was on one side the reaction from minorities, which led to the emergence of the protest movements among the ethnic, religious minorities in general and among the women in particular, who face a strong kind of discrimination on certain grounds, and there emerged an internal disagreement among various political parties. On the other hand it affected the relations of Iran with its neighboring countries in general and the west in particular. So all this becomes the concern of present study.

The proposed study will investigate about the charismatic leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini. The study will encompass the impact of the revolution, led by Ayatollah Khomeini and social change brought about by the said revolution in Iran. It will investigate about the present conditions of Iran: what has been the impact of revolution on the overall socio-economic development of Iran, especially on the minorities, and how religious minorities have reacted after the Islamic revolution of 1979. The study would be an effort to bring forth all the causes and factors responsible for revolution in Iran.

Chapter 3

Review of Literature

There is a lot of literature available on the concept of Charismatic Leadership, Iranian Revolution and Ayatollah Khomeini. However it becomes important to mention here that there is a dearth of relevant and necessary material about the Charismatic Leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini. In order to overcome such problem, the researcher has reviewed the literature on all the themes related to the topic.

T. K. Oommen¹ a renowned sociologist, in his book “*Charisma, Stability and Change*” examines the role of charisma in society. He discussed the concept of charisma as propounded by Max Weber and tries to extend and amend his notion of charisma and analyze it through an examination of a contemporary socio-political movement in India, the *Bhoodan-Gramdan* movement and its leadership. The book deals with the three points: a clarification of the concept of charisma, study of concept of social movement, and the notion of charismatic movement through the empirical examination of the *Bhoodan-Gramdan* movement. The author considers *Bhoodan-Gramdan* movement as a charismatic movement and refers its leader, Vinoba Bhave, a saint, as charismatic leader. The *Bhoodan-Gramdan* movement was the movement of collection of land and its distribution to the landless voluntarily. The author states that Vinoba’s utterances testify to the fact that his is a movement operated through the "gift of grace". "None except God is the owner of land. We mortals can only be his children." He urges people to realize that "...God wants this land (India) to make a successful experiment in a non-

¹ T.K. Oommen, 1972, *Charisma, stability and change*, Thomas press, New Delhi.

violent social and economic revolution." He asserts that "It (Bhoodan) is a phenomenon inspired by God". The inner determination and the inner restraint, so innate to the charismatic, is profusely present in Vinoba. His strength emanates from the highly personal experience of heavenly grace. However the question may be raised that whether this movement can be called as charismatic or not because the main aim of this movement was economic, which is contrary to the spirit of charisma as elaborated by Weber. Also the author maintains that charisma is not only system changing force system maintainer which goes against the Weber's notion of charisma, as Weber states charisma is a revolutionary force.

Robert C. Tucker² in his work "*The theory of charismatic leadership*" has tried to develop the theory of charismatic leadership propounded by Weber into a more workable tool of understanding and research and tried to enhance the applicability of the concept of charisma and its relevance in the modern age. The author has tried to clear the difficulty of applying the concept of charisma in practice and used it as a tool to analyze various social movements. For empirical study the author has taken the example of the role of Lenin as charismatic leader of the Bolshevik revolutionary movement. The author believes that this concept meets a vital theoretical need. Indeed, it is virtually indispensable, particularly for the student of revolutionary movements of various kinds. The author says that "when we study a case or possible case of charismatic leadership, we should always go back to the beginnings of the given leader's personality emergence as a leader, rather than start with the status achieved at the zenith of his career. We should look for indications of a charismatic following or movement very early in the career and in any event before power is achieved" However the author has neglected some of the thoughts of Weber like routinization of charisma and its role in social change and has over emphasized some of Weber's views like the rise and emergence of charismatic leaders. The author has tried to put the concept of charisma

² Robert C. Tucker, 1968, *The theory of charismatic leadership*, Daedalus, MIT press, Vol. 97, No. 3, pp.731-756.

outside the world of religion and apply it to the political world for which he chooses Lenin for empirical study.

William H. Friedland³ in his paper “*For the sociological concept of charisma*” has criticized the concept of charisma as not been empirically useful to sociology even though it has influenced sociological thinking considerably. For Friedland Weber dealt with charisma more a psychological than a sociological phenomenon. The problem, thus, is that Weber is simultaneously concerned with psychological and sociological components: charisma is a "gift of grace" to a person and does not require external confirmation; yet, without social validation charisma does not exist. These conflicting orientations are continually manifested. The author seeks to examine charisma and clarify the psychological preoccupations of the concept and attempts to refocus the concept in the terms relevant to the sociological interests. He has utilized the concept charisma with sociological concern and explained its importance in explaining social change, using an empirical case of modern African leadership in Tanganyika. The author explained the social conditions necessary for emergence of social change and said that “the roots of charisma should be oriented towards social situation”. However the author has neglected the other aspects of charisma like the personal qualities of a leader and leader-follower relationship.

Foil, Harris and House⁴ in their work “*Charismatic leadership: Strategies for effecting social change*” provide support for the theory that charismatic leaders introduce social change because of their unique relationship with followers. However this emphasis fails to uncover why and how the charismatic leader/follower interaction can generate social change. The purpose of their work is to uncover why and how the charismatic leader/follower interaction can generate social change. The team of these social scientists

³ William H. Friedland, 1964, *For a Sociological Concept of Charisma*, Social Forces, Vol. 43, No. 1, pp. 18-26.

⁴ C. M. Foil, D. Harris, and R. House, 1999, *Charismatic leadership: Strategies for effecting social change*, Leadership Quarterly, 10, pp. 449–482.

develops a model with empirical exploration that suggests that charismatic leaders employ a set of consistent communication strategies for effecting social change. According to this model, charismatic leaders introduce social change by employing communication targeted at changing followers' values in a temporal sequence: frame-breaking (phase 1), frame-moving (phase 2), and frame-realigning (phase 3). For empirical study they use the sample of US Presidents speeches. Although Foil et al. provide support of empirical study for their model of social change but there is limitation to their study that their study has limited sample size.

Professor Willner⁵, in her book "*The Spellbinders: Charismatic Political Leadership*", a book about the making of political charisma, the elements that help to generate it, and the processes by which it develops. At the outset, Professor Willner defines the concept of charismatic leadership and describes its core characteristics or properties. She selects seven twentieth-century leaders who exemplify and meet the criteria of charismatic leadership: Castro, Gandhi, Hitler, Mussolini, F. D. Roosevelt, Sukarno, and Khomeini. Charismatic leadership is defined briefly "as a relationship between a leader and a group of followers that has the following properties:

- (a) The leader is perceived by the followers as somehow superhuman.
- (b) The followers blindly believe the leader's statements.
- (c) The followers unconditionally comply with the leader's directives for action.
- (d) The followers give the leader unqualified emotional commitment."

Professor Willner stresses that "charismatic leadership is a relationship, an interactional process, inherently neither moral nor immoral, neither virtuous nor wicked". In stressing that charismatic leadership is a relationship, she identifies a common "misconception" about charisma: it is mistakenly linked "directly to the personality of the individual who is credited with it". It is not so

⁵ Ann Ruth Willner, 1984, *The Spellbinders: Charismatic Political Leadership*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

much the personality of the leader that is important in identifying charismatic leadership as it is the "people's perceptions of and responses to a leader. It is not what the leader is but what people see the leader as that counts in generating the charismatic relationship". Professor Willner identifies other important twentieth-century political leaders for whom the label "charismatic" is a misnomer or who may be considered as "marginal" or "quasi-charismatic leaders." For many different reasons, none merits the designation of charismatic. What is generally missing is the relationship between leader and follower. In addition to identifying the four properties associated with charismatic leadership, Willner identifies four "catalytic factors" which are shared by charismatic leaders. "The first factor is the assimilation of a leader to one or more of the dominant myths of his society and culture. The second is the performance of what appears to be an extraordinary or heroic feat. The third is the projection of the possession of qualities with an uncanny or a powerful aura. Finally, there is outstanding rhetorical ability. Professor Willner's book is a major contribution to the literature of political charisma. By focusing on the relationship and interaction between leaders and followers, rather than upon an elusive search for a typical charismatic personality type, she has provided a substantive dimension to the study of charismatic leadership.

New research and thinking about political Islam offers a variety of ways of looking at Iranian revolutions (1979). There are views which hold it high but at the same time there are other views of social scientists, who consider it mere failure.

Vanessa Martin⁶ an expert in modern middle eastern history talking about the ideological roots of Islamic revolutionary movement led by Ayatollah Khomeini in his book "*Creating an Islamic state: Khomeini and making of new Iran*". In this volume Vanessa martin makes a ground breaking contribution on the dynamics of Iranian revolution and Islamist revival. This

⁶ Vanessa Martin 2007, *Creating an Islamic State: Khomeini and the Making of a New Iran*, New York: I.B. Tauris.

book is the first to analyze the ideological roots of the Islamic state as conceived by Khomeini. Martin finds much of the inspirations behind Khomeini political thinking being influenced by western sources.

It is inspiring work of scholarship on history of contemporary Iran and very simulating in terms of explaining the possible indigenous sources form the construction of modernity based on philosophy and *Irfan* in an Islamic setting. The book shows complex intellectual background to Khomeini's vision and the influence of both the Islamic and western ideas upon him and his following in the creation of the Islamic state. The book discusses in great detail the influence of Plato and Islamic thinkers like Alfarabi, Ibn Arabi and Mulla Sadra. The book discusses in detail the vision of Islamic state by Khomeini in his book "The revealing secrets" and compare with it other Islamist movements like Muslim brotherhood. The book also discusses how Khomeini establishes Islamic republic, but the book has not covered the Khomeini's thought from Islamic intellectual tradition and the role of students in the movement.

Dilip Hiro⁷, a political writer, journalist historian in his book "*Iran Under the Ayatollahs*" offers a comprehensive study of political social and economic history of Iran, while dealing primarily with the events before and after the 1979 revolution and takes into account the Islamic heritage of Iranian society. The book discusses in great detail the rise and fall of Pahlavi dynasty, it describes various phases through which the Islamic revolution has passed, gives an incisive account of the gulf war and provides a historical survey of Iran's relations with the west, the Soviet block and other countries of the region.

The book provides altogether coherent view of the Iranian revolution, the founding of Islamic republic, American hostage, crisis, gulf war and the consolidation of the revolution. However less attention has been paid on the

⁷ Dilip Hiro, 1984, *Iran Under Ayatollahs*, London and New York, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd.

role of Ayatollah Khomeini in Iranian revolution and the consequent social changes brought about by the Iranian revolution.

Sami Zubaida⁸ is emeritus professor of politics and sociology at Birkbeck college London, in his book “*Islam, The People And The State: Political Ideas And The Movements, In The Middle East*” discusses in great detail the Khomeini doctrine of *Vilayat-i-Faqih* and compares it with Islamic fundamentalism in Egypt. The book entitles a chapter “Classes as political actors in the Iranian revolution” and states that the *ulemas*, students and the merchants of bazaar play a vital role in the revolution. The book also includes Shariati’s Islamic sociology.

E. Abrahamian⁹ a distinguished professor of history at baruen university of New York analysis the Iranian revolution in the famous book “*Iran between two revolutions*” emphasizing the interaction between political organizations and social forces. Abrahamian discusses Iranian society and politics during the period between the constitutional revolutions of 1905-1909 and the Islamic revolution of 1977-1979. The book is the study of emergence of horizontal diversions socio-economic classes in a country with strong vertical divisions based on ethnicity, religious ideology and regional particularism. Professor Abrahamian focuses on movements in the ethnic roots on the major radical movements in the modern era particularly of the impact of socio-economic changes on the political structure, especially under the reigns of Reza shah and the failure of the shah’s regime from 1953-1978.

E. Abrahamian¹⁰ in his other book “*Khomeinism : essays on the Islamic republic*” challenges the view of west arguing that Khomeini and his Islamic movement should not be seen as a form of third world political populism or radical movement but pragmatic middle class movement that strives to enter rather than reject the modern age. Abrahamian while critical of Khomeini,

⁸ Sami Zubaida, 1989, *Islam, the People and the State*. London, I.B. Tauris.

⁹ E. Abrahamian, 1992, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, Princeton, Princeton University Press.

¹⁰ E. Abrahamian, 1993, *Khomeinism*, London, Princeton University Press.

looks directly at the Ayatollahs own work and to understand what they meant to his followers in Iran. Abrahamian analysis political tracts dating back to 1943 along with Khomeini's theological writings and his many public statements in the form of speeches, interviews, proclamations' and *Fatwa's* (judicial decrees). These essays reveal how the Islamic public has systematically manipulated history, newspapers and textbooks. All are designed to bolster the clergy's reputations as champions of the downtrodden and as defenders against foreign powers.

Said Amir Arjumand¹¹ in his book "*The Turban for the Crown: The Islamic revolution in Iran*" discusses Iranian revolutions in detail and said that the Iranian revolutions still baffles most western observers. Few considered the rise of theocracy in modernized state possible and fewer thought, it might result from a popular revolution. The book provides a thoughtful, painstakingly researched and intelligibly account if the tutorial in Iran which reveals the importance for this singular event for our understanding of revolutions. The book provides crucial historical background both of the structures of authority in *Shi'ism* and the impact of modern state on Iranian society. These two factors are essential for the comprehension of the revolution of 1979. He then describes the emergence of Khomeini, the infusion of petro dollars into the economy, the blatant political corruption and Khomeini disposal of Bakhtair Bani-sadr and Bazargan, and consolidation of religious rule and establishment of a constitution based on new interpretations of Islamic principles.

Hamid Algar¹² a British American professor emeritus of Persian studies at university of California, in his the book "*Roots of Islamic Revolution in Iran*" which consists of his four lectures delivered on the Islamic revolution at the Muslim institute in London. In a clear and concise fashion, he examined the historical links between Iran and Shi'ism; the life and personality of Imam

¹¹ Said Amir Arjomand, 1988, *The Turban for the Crown: The Islamic Revolution in Iran*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

¹² Hamid Algar, 2001, *Roots of the Islamic Revolution in Iran (Four Lectures)*, Islamic Publications International.

Khomeini, leader of Islamic revolution; the carrier and ideas of Ali Shariati “religious intellectual”; and the course of events that in little more than a year led to the overthrow of one of the many deeply entrenched dictatorship in the Muslim world. The text of these lectures provides useful information to the revolution. New translations made by the author from the writings of Imam Khomeini and Ali Shariati enhances the utility of the work

Baqer Moin's¹³ book *Khomeini: The Life of the Ayatollah* is an excellent overview of the life, career, and ideas of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the leader of Iran's Islamic revolution. The book is the product of careful research and thoughtful scholarship. Moin has made extensive use of both Persian and English material including government publications and published interviews with prominent Iranian figures. The result is a well-documented and tightly argued study of the man who led one of the most far-reaching revolutions of the twentieth century.

From the outset, Moin sets himself the task of explaining 'the tenacious and complex character' of Ayatollah Khomeini by analyzing the social and cultural context in which he grew up. The first chapter focuses on Ayatollah Khomeini's childhood and upbringing in Khomeini. According to Moin, this educational setting combined with the popular shi'a religious festivals, helped socialize Ayatollah Khomeini 'into the culture of Shi'ism'. Moin also discusses Ayatollah Khomeini's subsequent school years in Khomein, Arak, and Qom roughly from 1918 to 1936 and highlights the influence of Abdul Karim Ha'eri on Khomeini.

In the ensuing chapter, Moin analyses the formation of Ayatollah Khomeini as a politician during the reign of Reza Shah and the first two decades of Mohammad Reza Shah's reign (1941-79). Moin uses the next two chapters to analyze the causes of the 1979 revolution and the events that

¹³ Moin Baqer, 1999, *Khomeini: The Life of the Ayatollah*, London and New York: I.B. Tauris.

propelled Ayatollah Khomeini to the leadership of the movement that overthrew the Pahlavi monarchy in February 1979.

After reviving the literature related to Charismatic Leadership, Ayatollah Khomeini and Iranian Revolution it can be surely said that these topics have received a great deal of scholastic attention thanks to the relatively recent 1979 Revolution, which resulted in the creation of a government headed by the religious establishment. While there are many different studies of Ayatollah Khomeini's role in Iran's 1979 Revolution, there are few that take into account the uniqueness of his personality. Moreover, the experts on Iran like E. Abrahamian, Said Amir Arjumand, Vanessa Martin, Dilip Hiro, in their works studied Ayatollah Khomeini's role in Iranian Revolution 1979 which tend to concentrate only on historical and religious developments during the twentieth century and providing only fleeting mention of his charismatic personality. Though there is general consensus among the scholars that Ayatollah Khomeini's personality deserves the attribution "charismatic". However no one so far has attempted to study it in a detail. This work will seek to avoid such pitfalls by using charismatic leadership as a unifying factor to investigate Shi'i Iran. The purpose of this work will be to establish the concept of charismatic leadership and to demonstrate how it was appropriated and utilized by Ayatollah Khomeini in order to facilitate Iranian Revolutions in 1979.

Chapter 4

**Dimensions of Charismatic
Leadership**

The enormous interest of sociologists in the work of Max Weber is indicated by the popularity of his books and by the many articles dealing with Weber in recent times. What has probably been most significant in Weber's work has been his typology of authority.¹ Authority (herrschaft) was defined as “the probability that certain specific commands (or all commands) from a given source will be obeyed by a given group of persons”². Weber's major concern focuses upon legitimate authority or the relationship characterized by the attribution of a degree of legitimacy to the authority. For this reason obedience, importantly, acquires a voluntary element. Whether anchored in unreflective habits or customs, an emotional attachments to the authorities or fear of them, values or ideals, or purely material interests and a calculation of advantage, always exists in the case of legitimate authority³. In essence, authorities seek to convince themselves of their right to exercise authority and attempt to implant the view, in demarcated groups of people, that this right is deserved. If they succeed, a willingness to obey arises, in form of patterned social action that secures their authority far more effectively than would sheer coercion. The character of the typical belief or claim to legitimacy, provides Weber with the criteria he utilizes to classify the major types of authority into ideal typical model.⁴

¹ William H. Friedland, 1964, *For a Sociological Concept of Charisma*, Social Forces, Vol. 43, No. 1, p.18.

² Max Weber, 1964, *The theory of social and economic organization*, trans. By A.H. Henderson and T. Parson, The Free press, London, p.324.

³ Stephen Kalberg, 2005, *Max Weber: Readings and commentary on Modernity (edt.)*, Blackwell publishing house, p. 174.

⁴ Ibid., p. 174.

According to Max Weber there are three pure types of legitimate authority. The validity of their claims to legitimacy may be based on:

- i. Rational grounds:- resting on a belief in the legality of patterns of normative rules and the right of those elevated to authority under such rules to issue commands (legal authority),
- ii. Traditional grounds :- resting on established belief in the sanctity of immemorial traditions and the legitimacy of the status of those exercising authority under them (traditional authority), and finally
- iii. Charismatic grounds:- resting on devotion to the specific and exceptional sanctity, heroism or exemplary character of an individual person, and of normative patterns or Order revealed or ordained by him (charismatic authority).⁵

In case of legal authority, obedience is owed to the legally established impersonal order. It extends to the persons exercising the authority of office under it only by virtue of the formal legality of their commands and only within the scope of authority of the office. In case of traditional authority, obedience is owed to the person of the chief who occupies the traditionally sanctioned position of authority and who is (within the sphere) bound by tradition. But here the obligation of obedience is not based on impersonal order, but is a matter of personal loyalty with in the area of accustomed obligations. In the case of charismatic authority, it is the charismatically qualified leader as such who is obeyed by virtue of personal trust in him and his revelation, his heroism or his exemplary qualities so far as they fall within the scope of individual's belief in his charisma.⁶

Of these three types- and it must be emphasized that they are "ideal types" or abstractions. Weber frequently reminds his readers that his typology is couched in terms of "ideal types", which are conceptual abstractions and not empirical realities. In fact, he goes so far as to say that none of these types of authority is pure and in the empirical situation they exist as mixed categories.

⁵ Op.cit., Max Weber, 1964, p. 328

⁶ Op.cit., Stephen Kalberg, 2005, p. 193

That is to say, there is no purely rational, traditional or charismatic authority, although it is possible to label a given authority system as predominantly rational, traditional or charismatic.⁷ The fact that none of these ideal types is usually found in historical cases in pure form is naturally not a valid objection to attempting their conceptual formation in the sharpest possible form.⁸

Of the three types of authority, the bureaucratic-legal has had the most influence on present-day sociology. Traditional authority has been bypassed by sociologists largely because it has fallen within the purview of anthropology. The charismatic authority has been almost totally ignored by sociologists in empirical research. Charismatic authority, to paraphrase Mark Twain, is a subject about which much has been said but little done.⁹ In spite of Parson's contention that "Charisma is not a metaphysical entity but a strictly empirical observable quality of men and things in relation to human acts and attitudes,"¹⁰ remarkably little research has been undertaken to elucidate this ostensibly empirical quality.

The dearth of empirical studies by sociologists can be explained by the manner in which Weber and his successors dealt with the concept. While Weber clearly indicated a social dimension to charisma, he also stressed charisma as a psychological attribute of a person. Weber's successors have had similarly divided orientations toward charisma but emphasis has been, on the whole, on the idea of an individual commanding certain gifts. Sociologists have been unable to come to grips empirically with the concept because, while charisma has been interesting, as presently developed, it lies outside the purview of disciplinary interests.¹¹

⁷ T.K. Oommen, 1972, *Charisma, stability and change*, Thomas press, New Delhi, p. 4.

⁸ Op.cit, Max Weber, 1964, p. 329.

⁹ William H. Friedland, 1964, *For a Sociological Concept of Charisma*, Social Forces, Vol. 43, No. 1, p.18.

¹⁰ Talcott Parson, 1949, *The structure of social action*, Glencoe: Free press, p. 668.

¹¹ Op.cit., William H. Friedland, 1964, p.19.

Concept of Charisma

Weber defines "charisma" as

“a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities. These are such as are not accessible to the ordinary person, but are regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary, and on the basis of them the individual concerned is treated as a leader.”¹²

In primitive circumstances this peculiar kind of deference is paid to prophets, to people with a reputation for therapeutic or legal wisdom, to leaders in a hunt and heroes in war. It is very often thought of as resting on magical powers. How the quality in question would be ultimately judged from an ethical, aesthetic or other such point of view is naturally entirely indifferent for purpose of definition. What is alone important is how the individual is actually regarded by those subjected to charismatic authority, by ‘followers’ or ‘disciples’.¹³

Weber uses "charisma" in a value-neutral manner. To be a charismatic leader is not necessarily to be an admirable individual in Weber's own expression, the manic seizure and rage of the Nordic berserkers or the demagogic talents of a Cleon are just as much "charisma" as the qualities of a Napoleon, Jesus, Pericles. Among the examples cited are founders of religions, prophets, warrior heroes, shamans, and great demagogues, such as the leader of the Bavarian leftist rising in 1918, Kurt Eisner.¹⁴ Sociologically we must abstain from value judgments, will treat all these on the same level as the men who, according to conventional judgments, are the greatest heroes, prophets

¹² Max Weber, 1964, *The theory of social and economic organization*, trans. By A.H. Henderson and T. Parson, The Free press, London, pp.358-359.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p, 359.

¹⁴ Robert C. Tucker, 1968, *The theory of charismatic leadership*, Daedalus, MIT press, Vol. 97, No. 3, p. 735.

and saviors.¹⁵ As individuals, we can commend the motives of those who wish to distinguish on moral or esthetic grounds between men whose mission leads to Heaven and men whose mission leads to Hell. But as social scientists we must recognize that the empirical or earthly manifestation of inspired and inspiring leadership is one and the same whether in the service of good or evil.¹⁶

We therefore can redefine charisma without departing from Weber's intrinsic intention as “a leader's capacity to elicit from a following *deference*, *devotion*, and *awe* toward himself as the source of authority. A leader who can have this effect upon a group is charismatic for that group.” An analysis of how leaders achieve such an effect, of the means by which and the conditions under which this kind of loyalty is generated and maintained, might give us a better intellectual grasp of charismatic leadership.¹⁷

A number of writers¹⁸, have criticized Weber's conception of charisma by pointing out that charisma, defined by Weber as a supernatural gift of the leader, is not possible in a modern secularized world denuded of super-natural ideas. This observation has led to reflections on the significance of charisma in the modern world. The uncertainty over the contemporary significance of charisma is paralleled by a general confusion in the use of the term. However Weber used charisma in at least three senses:

- i. In the classic Weberian sense of the supernatural endowment of the leader. The leader has a divine gift which he demonstrates to his followers by miracles, signs or proofs. The obedience of the disciples is

¹⁵ Op.cit, Max Weber, 1964, p. 359.

¹⁶ Ann Ruth Willner and Dorothy Willner, 1965, *The Rise and Role of Charismatic Leaders*, Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 358, p. 79.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 79.

¹⁸ For details see, Reinhard Bendix, 1967, *Reflections on Charismatic Leadership*, Asian Survey, vol. 7, No. 6, pp. 341-352. , Carl J. Friedrich, 1961, *Political Leadership and Charismatic Power*, The Journal of Politics, Vol. 23, No. 2, pp. 3-24. , Robert C. Tucker, 1968, *The theory of charismatic leadership*, Daedalus, MIT press, Vol. 97, No. 3, pp. 731-756.

contingent upon their belief in the powers of the leader and the latter may lose his 'gift', and with it his following.¹⁹

- ii. Charisma is used by Weber and others to refer to a sacred or awe-filled property of groups, roles or objects.
- iii. Charisma is used in the popular (and secular) sense to refer to the personal qualities of a leader. The leader is a 'charismatic personality' who attracts a following on the basis of his personal attributes, as opposed to a divine gift. Weber himself uses charisma in this sense in describing charismatic party leaders.²⁰ In this modern usage charisma is thus secularized as the extraordinary, but not supernatural, talents of the 'magnetic' political personality.

Supernatural and Secular Charisma

Supernatural charisma is only possible in an age of belief where the attitude of awe is conceptualized in the belief system of a world populated by devils, angels, spirits, demons, and gods. Charisma then becomes a 'gift' or a 'mana' that flows into and out of persons and objects. These ideas run through Weber's classical ideal type of charisma. In such a belief system magical or supernatural power is the source of awe: "It is primarily, though not exclusively, these extraordinary powers that have been designated by such special terms as 'mana', 'orenda', and the Iranian 'maga' (the term from which our word 'magic' is derived). We shall henceforth employ the term 'charisma' for such extraordinary powers. These extraordinary powers may be deposited in persons or objects: Where this appellation is fully merited, charisma is a gift that inheres in an object or person..."²¹ From this the image of supernatural charisma becomes clear: an attitude of awe directed at persons or objects and conceptualized as a magical essence or divine gift that can be acquired, lost objectivated, and transferred.

¹⁹ Max Weber, 1968, *Economy and Society*, (Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, ed.), Bedminster Press, p.1114

²⁰ *Ibid.*, Max Weber, 1968, pp. 1130-33.

²¹ *Ibid.*, Max Weber, 1968, p. 400.

Secular Charisma: In the case of secular charisma the attitude of awe directed at persons or objects also exists, but it is no longer wrapped in the conceptual package of supernatural belief. The source of secular charisma is in the manifestations of power and order. The secular charismatic leader, in becoming a leader exhibits mastery or representation, or both.²²

The Principle Characteristics of Charismatic Leadership

- a) It is recognition on the part of those subject to authority which is decisive for the validity of charisma. This is freely given and guaranteed by what is held to be a "sign" or proof (Bewahrung), originally always a miracle, and consists in devotion to the corresponding revelation, hero worship, or absolute trust in the leader. But where charisma is genuine, it is not this which is the basis of legitimacy. This basis lies rather in the conception that it is the duty of those who have been called to a charismatic mission to recognize its quality and to act accordingly. Psychologically this "recognition" is a matter of complete personal devotion to the possessor of the quality, arising out of enthusiasm, or of despair and hope.

No prophet has ever regarded his quality as dependent on the attitudes of the masses toward him. No elective king or military leader has ever treated those who have resisted him or tried to ignore him otherwise than as delinquent in duty. Failure to take part in a military expedition under such leader, even through recruitment is formally voluntary, has universally been met with disdain.²³

- b) If proof of his charismatic qualification fails him for long, the leader endowed with charisma tends to think his god or his magical or heroic powers have deserted him. If he is for long unsuccessful, above all if his leadership fails to benefit his followers, it is likely that his charismatic

²² Martin E. Spencer, 1973, *What is charisma*, British journal of sociology, 24, pp. 341-354.

²³ Max Weber, 1964, *The theory of social and economic organization*, trans. By A.H. Henderson and T. Parson, The free press, London, pp.359-360.

authority will disappear. This is the genuine charismatic meaning of the phrase "by the grace of God" (Gottesgnadentum).²⁴

- c) The corporate group which is subjected to charismatic authority is based on emotional form of communal relationship (Gemeinde). The administrative staff of a charismatic leader does not consist of 'officials'; at least its members are not technically trained. It is not chosen on the basis of social privilege nor from the point of view of domestic or personal dependency. It is rather chosen in terms of the charismatic qualities of its members. The prophet has his disciples; the warlord his selected henchmen; the leader, generally, his followers. There is no such thing as 'appointment' or 'dismissal', no career, no promotion. There is no hierarchy; there is no such thing as a definite sphere of authority and of competence, and no appropriation of official powers on the basis of social privileges. There may, however, be territorial or functional limits to charismatic powers and to the individuals 'mission'. There is no such thing as a salary or a benefice. There is no established administrative organ. There is no system of formal rules, of abstract legal principles, and hence no process of judicial decisions oriented to them. From a substantive point of view, every charismatic authority would have to subscribe to the proposition, 'It is written..., but I say unto you...' The genuine prophet, like the genuine military leader and every true leader in this sense, preaches, creates and demands *new* obligations. In the pure type of charisma, these are imposed on the authority of revolution by oracles, or of the leaders own will, and are recognized by the members of the religious, military, or party group, because they come from such source. Recognition is a *duty*.²⁵

Charismatic authority is specifically outside the realm of everyday routine and the profane sphere. In this respect, it is sharply opposed both

²⁴ Ibid., p, 360.

²⁵ Max Weber, 1964, *The theory of social and economic organization*, trans. By A.H. Henderson and T. Parson, The free press, London, p, 360-361.

to rational, and particularly bureaucratic and traditional authority, whether in its patriarchal, patrimonial, or any other form. Both rational and traditional authorities are specifically forms of everyday routine control of action; while the charismatic type is the direct antithesis of this. Bureaucratic authority is specifically rational in the sense of being bound to intellectually analyzable rules; while charismatic authority is specifically irrational in the sense of being foreign to all rules. Traditional authority is bound to the precedents handed down from the past and to this extent is also oriented to rules. Within the sphere of its claims, charismatic authority repudiates the past, and is in this sense a specifically revolutionary force. It recognizes no appropriation of position of power by virtue of possession of property, either on part of a chief or of socially privileged groups. The only basis of legitimacy for it is personal charisma, so long as it is proved; that is, as long as it receives recognition and is able to satisfy followers or disciples. But this lasts only so long as the belief in its charismatic inspiration remains²⁶.

- d) Pure charisma is specifically foreign to economic considerations. Whenever it appears it constitutes a 'call' in most emphatic sense of the world, a 'mission' or a 'spiritual duty'. In the pure type it disdains and repudiates economic exploitation of gift of grace as a source of income, though, to be sure, this often remains more an ideal than a fact. It is not that charisma always means renunciation of property or even of acquisition, as under circumstances prophets and their disciples do. From the point of view of rational economic activity, charisma is a typical anti economic force. It repudiates any sort of involvement in the everyday routine world.²⁷
- e) In traditionally stereotyped periods, charisma is the greatest revolutionary force. The equally revolutionary force of 'reason' works from without by altering the situations of action, and hence its problem

²⁶ Ibid., p, 361-362.

²⁷ Ibid., p, 362.

finally in this way changing men's attitudes towards them; or it intellectualizes the individual. Charisma, on the other hand may involve a subjective or internal reorientation born out of sufferings, conflicts or enthusiasm. It may then result in a radical alteration of the central system of attitudes and directions of action with a completely new orientation of all attitudes toward the different problems and structures of the 'world'.²⁸

The quantity and quality of charismatic leadership differ from system to system depending upon the social forces at work. Thus in crisis facing nations the emergence of charismatic leaders is more as compared to the industrialized and relatively stable nations. The point is that we cannot think in terms of the phenomenon of charisma and charismatic leadership divorced of the nature and type of the social system. The changes in the features of social structure are capable of changing the character of charismatic leadership. In the primitive and traditional systems the *shaman*, the magician, even the physician and the man with legal wisdom was looked upon as a charismatic and often even as a war hero. With the importance of magic and religion declining, the spread of technical knowledge increasing, and the quest for peace as against war steadily gaining ground, the type of personality which came to be called charismatic also changed. This is an additional reason why we should think in terms of charismatic leaders in secular or non-ecclesiastical contexts. The same society, at different times, may be impressed by different appeals. The charismatic who is functional in one situation may be dysfunctional in another.²⁹ The point here is that, the charisma is ultimately a product of social structure and therefore it undergoes a qualitative transformation concomitant to the changes in the nature of society.

²⁸ Max Weber, 1964, *The theory of social and economic organization*, trans. By A.H. Henderson and T. Parson, The free press, London, p, 363.

²⁹ T. K. Oommen, 1967, *Charisma, Social Structure and Social Change*, Comparative Studies in Society and History, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 88.

Emergence or Rise of Charismatic Leaders

Max Weber gave little attention to the conditions under which charismatic leadership can emerge, merely mentioning times of psychic, physical, economic, ethical, religious, or political distress.³⁰ However, there are scholars like Karl Lowenstein³¹ who contends that the world of religion remains the fundamental locus for emergence of charisma. He feels that today "charisma" in the proper sense is likely to be found in those areas of the world, in which a popular belief in supernatural powers is still widespread, as in some parts of Africa and Asia, that have not yet broken away from the 'magico-religious' ambiance. Similarly Carl J. Friedrich³² insists that charisma can properly appear only in the setting of a belief in a divine being ("God or gods").

Erik H. Erikson has suggested that there are certain historical conditions, such as the waning of religion, in which people in large numbers become "charisma-hungry." Pursuing the point further, he distinguished three forms of distress to which a charismatic leader may minister: "fear," "anxiety," and "existential dread," or the distress that people experience under conditions in which rituals of their existence have broken down. Correspondingly, a charismatic leader is one who offers people salvation in the form of safety, or identity, or rituals, or some combination of these, saying to them in effect: "I will make you safe," or "I will give you an identity," or "I will give you rituals."³³

W. H. Friedlan³⁴ mentions three reasons for the emergence of charismatic leadership:

³⁰ H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, 1946, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, New York: Oxford University Press, p, 245.

³¹ Karl Loewenstein, 1966, *Max Weber's Political Ideas in the Perspective of Our Time*, Frankfurt Amherst, p, 79.

³² Carl J. Friedrich, 1961, *Political Leadership and Charismatic Power*, The Journal of Politics, Vol. 23, No. 2, p. 14.

³³ Op.cit. , Robert C. Tucker, 1968, p. 745.

³⁴ William H. Friedland, 1964, *For a Sociological Concept of Charisma*, Social Forces, Vol. 43, No. 1,p.23.

- i. the leaders were expressing sentiments which had been inchoate in the society but which had been brought to consciousness only recently by a handful of people;
- ii. in expressing these sentiments, leaders were engaging in activities defined as hazardous by most people; finally,
- iii. recognized evidence of "success" in the activities of the leaders.

Willner and Willner³⁵ says that charismatic leadership seems to emerge particularly in the newer states that were formerly under colonial rule and were a climate of uncertainty and unpredictability is therefore a breeding ground for the emergence of charismatic leadership.

Philip Smith³⁶ says that the images of 'evil' must be present in the forest of symbols surrounding each charismatic leader. There must be something for them to fight against, something from which their followers can be saved. In many cases this evil is an abstraction such as poverty, capitalism, heresy or injustice. In yet other cases, this evil finds its embodiment in another individual actor, a threatening person who can be taken as embodying a powerful 'negative charisma'.

T. K. Oommen³⁷ speaks of following conditions for the emergence of charisma:

- a) Eruption of crisis;
- b) Submerged discontent;
- c) Failure of the measures hitherto taken to combat an existing evil;
- d) Patronage given by vested interest forces, including those in authority.

The existence of one or more of these conditions may be viewed as a pre-requisite for the emergence of charismatic leadership.

³⁵ Ann Ruth Willner and Dorothy Willner, 1965, *The Rise and Role of Charismatic Leaders*, Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 35, pp. 80-81.

³⁶ Philip Smith, 2000, *Culture and Charisma: Outline of a Theory*, Acta Sociologica, Vol. 43, No. 2, p.103.

³⁷ T.K. Oommen, 1972, *Charisma, stability and change*, Thomas press, New Delhi, p.21.

However there is no uniform set of reasons that can be attributed to emergence of charismatic leadership and that the nature of social situation is a decisive factor in the process. “If genuine charisma is to be understood, analysis must be directed toward the social situation within which the charismatic figure operates and the character of his message”³⁸.

Charismatic movement's growth may be represented in a series of concentric circles. The initial phase is the formation of a charismatic following—a group of persons who cluster around the charismatic personality and accept his authority. As a charismatic following grows, attracting new members in larger and larger numbers, it achieves the status of a movement. It also develops an organization, which in the case of a modern-day revolutionary movement is likely to be a party organization. The growth curve of the movement may fluctuate, periods of growth being followed by periods of decline. Under propitious conditions, the movement may turn into a mass movement with tens of thousands of followers. And if it is a political movement, a further critical growth-point is reached at the time when it acquires (if it does acquire) political power. Once in power, the movement becomes a movement-regime with enormous resources of influence. The entire citizenry of the country concerned as well as others abroad now enter into a vastly enlarged potential charismatic following. Finally, a charismatic movement, particularly one that comes to power in a major nation, may become international in scope, radiating across national boundaries and enlisting new followers everywhere. For the rise of charismatic leaders, we should always go back to the beginnings of the given leader- personality's emergence as a leader, rather than start with the status achieved at the zenith of his career. We should look for indications of a charismatic following or movement very early in the career and in any event before power is achieved³⁹

³⁸ Op.cit, William H. Friedland, 1964, p. 21.

³⁹ Op.cit. , Robert C. Tucker, 1968, pp. 739-740.

Role of Charismatic Leaders

Given the conditions necessary for the rise of charismatic leaders, let us take an account on the roles played by the charismatic leaders.

T. K. Oommen⁴⁰ suggests following roles for the charismatic leaders:

- i. Creating awareness among the people of the social problems and unfolding the possibilities of problem resolution, thereby championing the "felt need";
- ii. Evolving a new approach (means) to solve the problem at hand;
- iii. Voicing commitment to a pursuance of a goal (end) widely acclaimed by the people at a given point of time;
- iv. Expressing the message in such a manner as to appeal to a substantial portion of the population under reference

Willner and Willner⁴¹ suggests that the role of charismatic leader is twofold, incorporating two distinct, although somewhat overlapping stages. The first is the destruction of the old order; the second, which might be termed "political development," is the building of the promised new and better order.

According to Carl J. Friedrich,⁴² there appear to be three primary roles of charismatic leadership, namely initiating, maintaining and protecting leadership to which correspond characteristic behaviors of the followership: imitating, obeying and acclaiming. The initiator or innovator who may be conqueror, entrepreneur or lawgiver, to mention only the most generally recognized forms of initiating leadership, strikes out along novel lines of political action which "inspire" those following him into imitating his action, associating themselves with him. Maintaining leadership upholds the established order of things. The conservator reinforces old lines of political

⁴⁰ T.K. Oommen, 1972, *Charisma, stability and change*, Thomas press, New Delhi, p.96.

⁴¹ Ann Ruth Willner and Dorothy Willner, 1965, *The Rise and Role of Charismatic Leaders*, Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 35, p. 84.

⁴² Carl J. Friedrich, 1961, *Political Leadership and the Problem of the Charismatic*, The Journal of Politics, Vol. 23, No. 1, pp. 3-24.

action which are familiar to all those following him. They obey his commands, and thereby associate themselves with the existing government and its traditional ways of "getting things done." This kind of leadership is more specifically based on "authority," if authority is taken to mean the capacity for reasoned elaboration based upon the recognized beliefs, values and interests of the community. Protecting leadership provides security for the following, more particularly security against bodily, physical destruction, but also security for a particular way of life, a culture and its values, beliefs and interests. Protecting leadership elicits acclaim in the following who willingly grant, as a result of their delight at being protected, whatever is required to have the leader continue those activities which provide the desired security.

Attributes of Charismatic Leaders and Attitude of its Followers

We are aware that the actual rise of a charismatic leader is a composite function of various variables. Here we will try to describe the personal traits and the attitude of its followers that makes a person a potential charismatic leader.

Weber's conceptualization of charismatic authority, however, is limited by its lack of specificity. For example, he used only generalities to describe leader's qualities: "they comprise especially magical abilities, revelations of heroism, power of mind and speech".⁴³ He identified few behavioral dimensions that might distinguish these individuals from other leaders. Although he described charisma as "a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities".⁴⁴ It is this orientation of charisma which aligns itself with the more popular conception which holds that charisma originates from an inner, dynamic force of the leaders personality.

⁴³ A. Etzioni, 1961, *A comparative analysis of organizations*, New York: Free Press, p. 12.

⁴⁴ Op cit, Max Weber, 1964, p. 359.

Sociologists, political scientists, organizational theorists have spent several decades in examining the phenomenon and have identified specific charismatic attributes such as a transcendent vision and ideology, acts of heroism, an ability to inspire and build confidence, the expression of revolutionary and often hazardous ideals, rhetorical ability and a powerful aura, much of their work centered on determining locus of charismatic leadership.⁴⁵

Some of these studies were empirical in nature, which emphasized the behavioral and psychological attributes of charismatic leadership. Certain personal attributes of charismatic leaders that are identified include vision or appealing ideological goals, behavior that instills confidence, an ability to inspire and create inspirational activities, dominance, a need for influence, rhetorical or articulation ability and unconventional or counter normative behavior.⁴⁶

Apart from above mentioned attributes some other traits which can be identified with the charismatic leader are self-actualization motive to attain power, self enhancement openness to change.⁴⁷ Powerful, ascendant, persistent, effectively expressive personality who improve themselves on their environment by their exceptional courage, decisiveness, self confidence, fluency, insight, energy etc.

On the other hand it may be misleading to search for the source of charisma only in the personalities of such leaders which may have resulted from misreading of Weber's frequently cited definition of charisma as "a certain quality of an individual personality by which *he is set apart* from ordinary men and *treated as endowed* with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities." Weber repeatedly emphasized, it is not so much what the leader is but how he is regarded by

⁴⁵ Jay A. Conger, Rabindra N. Kanungo, 1987, *Toward a Behavioral Theory of Charismatic Leadership in Organizational Settings*, *The Academy of Management Review*; ; 12: 4, p. 638.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 639.

⁴⁷ D. Jung, and J. J. Sosik, 2006, *Who are the spellbinders? Identifying personal attributes of charismatic leaders*, *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies* 12(4), p. 15.

those subject to his authority that is decisive for the validity of charisma.⁴⁸ His charisma resides in the perceptions of the people he leads. Further in this regard Weber stated, “It is recognition on the part of those subject to authority which is decisive for the validity of charisma”.⁴⁹ Thus, leaders depend upon the perceptions of people for their charismatic authority, but nonetheless they also must be exceptional to gain such recognition.

We understand that a leader is charismatic, when his followers recognize him as such, but closer examination suggests that both the recognition by followers and the leader's own personality are fundamentally ambivalent. For the charisma of a leader to be present, it must be recognized by his followers, and in the ideal typical case his recognition is a matter of duty as suggested by Weber.

House and Baetz⁵⁰ postulated a set of behavioral dimensions that further distinguished the followers of charismatic leaders from others. These characteristics include an unquestioning acceptance of the leaders by followers, followers trust in the leaders belief, affections for the leader, willing obedience to the leader, emulation of and identification with the leader, similarity of followers beliefs to those of the leader, emotional involvement of followers in the mission, heightened goals of the followers, and feelings on the part of the followers that they are able to accomplish or contribute to the leaders mission.

It is believed that charisma per se is not found solely in the leader and his personal qualities, but rather is found in the interplay between the leaders attributes and the needs, beliefs, values and perception of his followers and both the leader and his followers must share basic beliefs and values in order to validate the leaders charisma.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Ann Ruth Willner and Dorothy Willner, 1965, *The Rise and Role of Charismatic Leaders*, Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. 35, p.79.

⁴⁹ Op cit, Max Weber, 1964, p. 359.

⁵⁰ R. J. House and M. L. Baetz, 1979, *Leadership: some empirical generalizations and new research directions*, Research in organizational behavior, vol. 1, p. 399.

⁵¹ Op.cit., Conger and Kanungo, 1987, p. 639.

The question arises how some leaders are able to gain such recognition while as others fail to do so? The charismatic leaders are able to communicate to his followers a sense of continuity between himself and his mission and their legendary heroes and foster an impression that they and their mission are extraordinary. According to Willner and Willner, “the charismatic leaders adopt certain strategies which might be broken down into such categories as: rhetoric employed in speeches, including rhythm; use of simile and metaphor and allusions to myth and history; use of gesture and movement; employment of ritual and ceremony; manner of dealing with felt doubt and opposition; and mode of handling crises”.⁵²

It should be stressed that the elements of behavior indicated by such categories vary from culture to culture. It follows that the charismatic appeal of a leader is limited to those who share the traditions of a given culture, that is, to those who understand and respond to the symbols expressed in the myths a charismatic leader evokes. It further follows that the attributes of the charismatic leader will vary from society to society.⁵³

In the words of Spencer “Charisma is not just the special qualities of the leader nor the recognition of that leader by a group of his followers. Rather, it is the relationship between the two – leader and followers – influenced by the qualities of the leader and the attitude of the followers.”⁵⁴

Charismatic Leadership and Social Change

Charisma is crucial to Weber's system of analysis as the basis for the explanation of social change. Weber's other types of authority (rational-legal and traditional) are stable systems within which it is conceivable that change will take place only at the micro level. The problem for Weber was to account for large-scale (macro level) social change and the concept of charisma

⁵² Op.cit., Willner and Willner, 1965, p. 83.

⁵³ Ibid, Willner and Willner, 1965, p. 84.

⁵⁴ Martin E. Spencer, 1973, *What is charisma*, British journal of sociology, 24, p. 352.

provided what Bendix calls "a sociology of innovation."⁵⁵ Though a sociology of change was necessary for Weber, it would appear that he was not at ease with it. Not only are two of his three patterns of domination concerned with stable systems but even his discussion of charisma is heavily oriented toward its stabilization and routinization.⁵⁶ Despite this orientation it is obvious from a reading of his work that the problem of change continually concerned Weber. Yet the difficulties in working with his approach to the study of social change become apparent when one examines his writings on charisma in some detail.

Weber stresses in his treatment of charisma is its innovative and even revolutionary character. Charisma, he says, is alien to the world of everyday routine; it calls for new ways of life and thought. Whatever the particular social setting (religion, politics, and so forth), charismatic leadership rejects old rules and issues a demand for change. It preaches or creates new obligations. It addresses itself to followers or potential followers in the spirit of the saying: "It is written..., but I say unto you..." In contrast and opposition to bureaucratic authority, which respects rational rules, and to traditional authority, which is bound to precedents handed down from the past, charismatic authority, within the sphere of its claims, "repudiates the past, and is in this sense a specifically revolutionary force."⁵⁷

We now have substantial evidence that charismatic leaders behave differently than non-charismatic leaders. Further, we know that due to their unique relationship with followers, charismatic leaders can be powerful agents of social change. This emphasis fails to uncover why and how the charismatic leader-follower interaction can generate social change.

A team of social scientist, C. Mariene Fiol, Drew Harris and Robert House presents a model that begins to explain why and how the charismatic leader-follower interaction can generate social change. According to this

⁵⁵ Reinhard Bendix, 1960, "*Max Weber: An Intellectual Portrait*," Heinemann and Co, London, p. 9.

⁵⁶ Op.cit, William H. Friedland, 1964, p. 19.

⁵⁷ Op.cit, Max Weber, 1964, p. 361-362.

model⁵⁸ charismatic leaders tend to use specific communication strategies to inspire followers and implement social change. These social scientists suggest that charismatic leaders affect social change by employing specific rhetorical strategies targeted at changing followers' personal and social values. These strategies are theorized to follow a temporal sequence whereby leaders manipulate different aspects of followers' personal motivations (desires and fears) and social values (convention and innovation), social identity,⁵⁹ during separate and temporally distinct stages.

Phase I: Frame Breaking: In the first phase, charismatic leaders employ frame-breaking strategies by attempting to reduce the value people place on the current social convention. Specifically, these leaders derogate social convention by either: negating people's desire to maintain the status quo; or, negating their fear of change or innovation. During frame-breaking, leaders break ties to the current group identity by: increasing leader identification with followers and stressing group identity by emphasizing their similarity to followers, employing self-references, and inclusive language; and creating a sense of dissatisfaction with the current status quo by reinterpreting the group's past and present, expressing and arousing emotional dissatisfaction, and relaying a sense of urgency or crisis.

Phase II: Frame Moving: In the second phase, charismatic leaders engage in frame-moving strategies by attempting to move people's neutral state of either non-support for convention or non-fear of change to support for change. They accomplish this by either: encouraging people's desire for non-convention; or, encouraging people to fear not changing the old convention. During frame-moving, leaders alter the group's identity by: negating components of group identity and values that supported the convention with high levels of negation;

⁵⁸ C. M. Foil, D. Harris, and R. House, 1999, *Charismatic leadership: Strategies for effecting social change*, *Leadership Quarterly*, 10, pp. 449–482.

⁵⁹ H. Tajfel, and J. C. Turner, 1986, *The social identity theory of intergroup behavior*, Chicago, Nelson-Hall, In S. Worchel & W.G. Austin (Eds.), *Psychology of intergroup relations*, 2nd ed., pp.7–24.

and relaying a new hierarchy of values and defining an alternate identity that is in line with the leader's vision of change.

Phase III: Frame Realignment: In the final phase, charismatic leaders use frame-realigning to convince followers to support their new vision by either: substituting a desire for non-convention to a desire for change or innovation; or, substituting the fear of not changing the old convention to a desire for innovation. It is during this final phase that charismatic leaders mobilize their support from followers and encourage them towards action. During Frame-realigning leaders solidify the group's altered identity and channeling motivations set up in frame-moving into follower commitment and action. To achieve this end, charismatic leaders may: positively affirm the group's altered identity; and use language to foster commitment and encourage followers towards action.

The study suggests that charismatic leaders employ a predictable, consistent set of linguistic techniques to break down, move, and re-align certain beliefs of their followers. To explain why these techniques are effective and how they operate, it is necessary to discuss them within the larger context of social interaction. It is not possible to separate the role of language from its social context. The power of language resides in its potential to both reflect and shape social norms and attitudes. We must locate them within the broader context of leaders' strategic communications and follower responses to such communications.

The Routinization of Charisma

The problem of what happens to charismatic movements on the crisis of succession which occurs at the death of the charismatic leader and the period of consolidation, if it takes place, which follows this event. Weber treated this problem under the heading of "routinization" of charisma. Much of the discussion of the process of routinization has concentrated, probably because Weber himself seemed to give it some importance.

In its pure form charismatic authority has a character specifically foreign to every day routine structures. The social relationships directly involved are strictly personal, based on the validity and practice of charismatic personal qualities. If this is not to remain a purely transitory phenomenon, but to take on the character of a permanent relationship forming a stable community of disciples or a band of followers or a party organization or a sort of political or hierocratic organization, it is necessary for the character of charismatic authority to become radically changed. Indeed, in its pure form charismatic authority may be said to exist only in the process of originating. It cannot remain stable, but become either traditionalized or rationalized, or a combination of both.⁶⁰

The following are the principle motives underlying this transformation: (a) the ideal and also the material interests of the followers in the continuation and the continual reactivation of the community, (b) the still stronger ideal and also stronger material interests of the members of the administrative staff, the disciples, the party workers or others in continuing their relationship. Not only this, but they have interest in continuing it in such a way that both from an ideal and a material point of view, their own position is put on a stable everyday basis.⁶¹

These interests generally become conspicuously evident with the disappearance of the personal charismatic leader and with the problem of succession, which inevitable arise. The way in which this problem is met – if it is met at all and the charismatic group continues to exist- is of crucial importance for the character of the subsequent social relationships.

Weber considered the routinization of charisma a normal part of social process. Pure charismatic authority, he argued, is always ephemeral. It exists *in statu nascendi*, "in a state of becoming." Pure charisma is incompatible with

⁶⁰ Max Weber, 1964, *The theory of social and economic organization*, trans. By A.H. Henderson and T. Parson, The free press, London, pp.363-364.

⁶¹ J.E.T, Eldridge, 1971, *Max Weber: the interpretation of social reality*, Michael Joseph, London, pp. 234-235.

routine and with all systematic economic activity; it is an "antieconomic" force and also an "antistructure" force. Eventually a strong desire arises to transform charisma and charismatic blessing from a unique, transitory gift of grace of extraordinary times and persons into a permanent possession of everyday life". This desire is particularly pronounced following the death of a charismatic leader, but Weber was clear on the point that a degree of routinization can and usually does occur during the leader's lifetime as well.⁶²

The term 'routinization' refers to the leader's efforts to build the foundation of a new order on the basis of the legitimacy derived from his charisma.⁶³ Thus, the new organizational forms and processes that he inaugurates will bear the halo of his blessing. The legitimacy popularly ascribed to these flows not only from his heroic record and exemplary qualities but most basically from the value transformation that has taken place. Therefore, whatever the leader proposes will find general acceptance and legitimacy since these represent the implementation of his ideology which his people have come to share. Logic suggests that to insure stability, routinization should occur at the height of the charismatic relationship, before inevitable reverses erode the leader's charisma. However, not all charismatic leaders are successful routinizers; by temperament and experience some are not inclined to undertake bureaucratic administrative endeavors. Indeed, effective routinization requires a painful psychological readjustment on the leader's part. If he is able to make this transition at the height of the charismatic relationship, he can then proceed to institutionalize his new order which is likely to survive his death or the eventual weakening of the charismatic bond. Early routinization may also facilitate the problem of succession after the leader's departure. This issue can be particularly disruptive not only because a formula of succession is usually lacking, but also because the transference of charisma from the charismatic to his successor is not always possible, even if the leader

⁶² Jonathan G. Andelson, 1980, *Routinization of Behavior in a Charismatic Leader*, *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 7, p. 720.

⁶³ Edward Shils, 1958, *The Concentration and Dispersion of Charisma-Their Bearing on Economic Policy in Underdeveloped Countries*, *World Politics*, vol. 11, p. 4.

has appointed an heir prior to his death. Clearly, effective routinization is imperative to stabilize a charismatically conditioned sociopolitical order which is inherently unstable. Through routinization of various mechanisms for need, satisfaction, the leader's following is transformed into a movement or party to serve as a rule-stabilizing mechanism.⁶⁴

In the light of our discussions hitherto some general characteristics of charismatic leadership can be deduced.

- ❖ It must be emphasized that the concept of charismatic leadership is 'ideal type' or abstractions which may not exist in pure form.
- ❖ The concept of charismatic leadership should be treated in a value-neutral manner and must abstain from value judgments.
- ❖ The essence of charismatic leadership is in an attitude of awe, devotion or reverence directed towards a leader.
- ❖ The term charisma was used in three divergent senses: the supernatural 'gift' of the leader, charisma as a sacred or revered essence deposited in objects or persons, charisma as the attractiveness of a personality.
- ❖ Charismatic authority is specifically outside the realm of everyday routine and the profane sphere. In this respect, it is sharply opposed both to rational, and particularly bureaucratic, authority, and to traditional authority.
- ❖ The charismatic leadership is ultimately a product of social structure and the changes in the features of social structure are capable of changing the character of charismatic leadership.
- ❖ The behavioral attributes of the charismatic leader will vary from culture to culture. So in order to understand the nature of charismatic leadership it is necessary to study the culture of that particular society.

⁶⁴ Richard H. Dekmejian and Margaret J. Wyszomirski, 1972, *Charismatic Leadership in Islam: The Mahdi of the Sudan*, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 193-214.

- ❖ Charisma is not just the special qualities of the leader nor the recognition of that leader by a group of his followers. Rather, it is the relationship between the two – leader and followers – influenced by the qualities of the leader and the attitude of the followers.
- ❖ A charismatic leadership emerges from a critical situation created by the stresses and strains in the social structure.
- ❖ The corporate group which is subjected to charismatic leadership is based on emotional form of communal relationship. They will not have any “office”, “officials” or organizational build up. The division of labor in the movement is not neat and tidy. Hierarchy, promotions, appointments, dismissals, careers, salaries, rules and regulations are of relatively little importance.
- ❖ The charismatic leadership is foreign to the economic considerations and is essentially non-economic in orientation and its economic support should be derived from gifts, donations or other voluntary or unsystematic types of support.
- ❖ The charismatic leadership is greatest revolutionary force, the end or goal of which is the transformation of prevalent social arrangements which culminated into a crisis. This may be system change, revival, restoration, protection or stability.
- ❖ From a unique gift of grace charisma may be transformed into a quality that is either transferable, or personally acquirable, or attached to the incumbent of an office or to an institutional structure regardless of the persons involved. Weber called this process as routinization of charisma.

Weber’s theory as including five elements (1) an extraordinary gifted person; (2) a social crisis...(3)...radical solutions...(4)...followers...linked (through the leader)...to transcendent powers, and (5) validation...by repeated successes. ...All five must be present for charisma to occur. Analyzing these elements and the situation prevailing in Iran during twentieth century provide an ample opportunity for a charismatic leader to emerge. However this

opportunity was availed only by Ayatollah Khomeini as these elements favored him more than anybody else.

The term charisma and its derivatives, has lately been utilized by political scientists, psychologists, organizational theorists etc., tamed the original conception of charisma advanced by Weber and, in the process, diluted its richness and distinctiveness. In the present study an attempt is made to bring together all that Weber himself wrote on the subject and systemize that material with the help of writings of modern Sociologists and tries to return to Weber's original concept of charisma.

Weber's original ideas were derived from his studies of the prophetic and messianic traditions, an attempt will be made to test the applicability of the charismatic typology in the cultural and historical setting of Iran and examine one of the influential personalities in Islamic history, The founder of Islamic Republic of Iran, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and his role in Iranian Revolution (1979).

Chapter 5

**Charismatic Leadership and Role of
Ayatollah Khomeini in Iranian Revolution
(Findings of the Study)**

On February 1, 1979, a lone Air France Boeing 747 jumbo jet specially chartered airliner circled in the dark sky above Tehran, the capital city of Iran. In the streets below, three to five million people¹ strained their eyes upward, hoping to catch sight of the jet. When they did, the city erupted joyfully in cheers and chants. “*Agha Amad*” (the respectful one has come)², “the soul of Hussein is coming back!” “The doors of paradise have been opened again!”, “Now is the hour of martyrdom!” and similar cries of ecstasy, people were shouting³. The jet landed and taxied to a stop. Its door opened. An elderly man, stern and dignified, eased himself down the stairs with the help of two aides. He stepped onto the tarmac. After an absence of fifteen years, Ruhollah Khomeini had come home.⁴ It was an occasion of unbridled religious rejoicing, for which there has probably been no parallel in the modern world.⁵

Ayatollah Khomeini, with no material resources, without the construction of a political party, without waging of a guerrilla war, without the support of a single foreign power, had established himself as the undisputed leader of a major revolutionary movement⁶ which brings the downfall of 2,500 years of monarchy.

¹ It is estimated, For details see, Amir Taheri, 1985, *The spirit of Allah: Khomeini and the Islamic Revolution*, Hutchinson Publishers, London, p. 245; *Islamic Revolution of Iran*, documents published by Islamic Propagation Organisation, Islamic Republic of Iran, Tehran, p. 477.

² Brendan January, 2008, *The Iranian Revolution*, Twenty First Century Books, Minneapolis, p. 4.

³ Dilip Hiro, 1985, *Iran under the Ayatollahs*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, p. 90.

⁴ Op. cit., Brendan January, 2008, pp. 4-5.

⁵ Mohamed Heikal, 1981, *The Return of the Ayatollah: The Iranian Revolution from Mossadeq to Khomeini*, Andre Deutsch Ltd., London, p. 177.

⁶ Hamid Algar, 1983, *The roots of the Islamic Revolution*, Islamic Foundation Press India, p. 53.

Ayatollah Khomeini's charismatic leadership was undoubtedly a major factor in the success of the 1979 revolution in Iran. Khomeini's courage and unswerving determination in challenging the Shah were indeed extraordinary personal qualities that could and did generate charisma. It would, however, be wrong to conceive charisma too restrictively as an extraordinary quality of the individual to whom it is attributed. Charisma is also much in the eyes of the beholder and is determined by his or her cultural sensibilities.⁷

From Weberian tradition, attributions of charisma are strongly rooted in a particular cultural and historical context.⁸ In order to understand the charismatic appeal of Ayatollah Khomeini and his extraordinary personal qualities, heroic statue it is necessary to understand the cultural and historical context of Iranian society because charismatic leadership is ultimately the product of social structure.

In Iranian society appeal of Khomeini's followers was based on the combination of three concepts: Iranian Nationalism, Shi'ism and *Irfan* (Islamic Gnosticism or mystical philosophy).

Iranian Nationalism:

Nationalism is a doctrine that unifies people and it asserts a unitary view of the community termed nation and divides those who are and are not part of the nation. Nationalism can be seen as regional identity or national identity. National or regional identity is what bounds people geographical region. Iran or Persia as it used to be called, had passed a national identity since the King Cyrus who established a dynasty in 550 BC. The characteristics of Iranian culture other than the religion of Islam have lasted for centuries. Iranian culture and pride in Iranian history have served to define what Iranian consider to be

⁷ Said Amir Arjomand, 1988, *The Turban for the Crown: The Islamic Revolution in Iran*, Oxford University Press, New York, p. 100.

⁸ Michelle C. Blig, Jill L. Robinson, 2010, *Was Gandhi "charismatic"? Exploring the rhetorical leadership of Mahatma Gandhi*, *The Leadership Quarterly* 21, pp. 844-855.

nationalism. The Persian Empire was vast and great, enriched with its arts, culture, history and ideology.⁹

The thriving persistence of Persian language, the monumental epic of Ferdowsi (*the Shahnamah*), the towering achievement of Persian literature, the Iranian solar calendar and seasonal holidays and festivals (*Nowruz*) are among the innumerable motifs of Iranian culture identity that has secured a distinct position for Iranian among other Muslims.¹⁰

Shi'ism¹¹:

Shi'i school of thought in Islam has an extremely complex history, has gone through many stages of development, both in Iran and outside.¹² To understand the distinctive characteristics of shi'ism in Iran one has to go back to the earliest days of Islam. Islam, in Arabic means state of submission; and the one who has submitted to the will of Allah-the one and only God-is called Muslim. In Arabia, the faithful were united in their belief in Allah and his precepts as conveyed through Muhammad (pbuh) his messenger. Muhammad (pbuh) was born in 571CE to Abdullah of the Hashem clan of the merchant tribe of Quraish in Mecca, when he was about forty, he began preaching revelations in Arabic that purportedly came to him from the archangel Gabriel. These utterances delivered in rhythmic prose, were noted down and compiled into 114 chapters of varying lengths to form a book *the Quran*.¹³ The prophet Mohammad (pbuh) was both the bearer of the message of God and implementer of the message with his death the message stopped, though the word of God, the Quran, remained in the world in history. The challenge which faced the successors of Muhammad (pbuh) was how to reconcile the continuing

⁹ Fred Halliday, 2000, *Nation and Religion in Middle East*, Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

¹⁰ Hamid Dabashi, 2006, *Theology of Discontent*, Transaction Publishers, U.S.A, pp. 13-14.

¹¹ For an expanded reading of the history of Shi'ism and the development of the Imam see, Moojan Momen, 1985, *An Introduction to Shi'i Islam: The History and Doctrines of Twelver Shi'ism*, New York: Yale University Press.; Mohamed Heikal, 1981, *The Return of the Ayatollah: The Iranian Revolution from Mossadeq to Khomeini*, Andre Deutsch Ltd., London.; Dilip Hiro, 1985, *Iran under the Ayatollahs*, Routledge and Kegan Paul: London.

¹² Op.cit., Hamid Algar, 1983, p. 10.

¹³ Dilip Hiro, 1985, *Iran under the Ayatollahs*, Routledge and Kegan Paul: London, pp. 9-10.

and unchanging the presence of God in history (through the Quran) with temporal rule. The challenge presented itself immediately Muhammad (pbuh) died on 8 June 632 CE.

Muhammad (pbuh) left no will, nor did he designate a successor, and he left no son. Yet somebody to guide and guard the growing community of Muslims was clearly needed, the only question being how he has chosen, and whom the choice should fall.¹⁴

Most Muslims accepted the transition of power to succession of the deputies known as *Caliphs*¹⁵ who served as the new leaders of Islam. A minority of Muslims however, believed that prophets cousin and son-in-law Ali was the rightful successor of the Prophet (pbuh) both “as temporal head (caliph)” and also “as spiritual head (Imam)”.¹⁶

While Ali and other Muslims were mourning the death of Prophet (pbuh) and burying him, Abu Bakr (father of Ayesha, the Prophets wife) and Omar ibn Khattab, called a meeting of the community elders. After a much debate, the assembly elected Abu Bakr as the Caliph – successor of the Prophet (pbuh).¹⁷

Abu Bakr receives the homage (*bay'a*) of the community, including Ali¹⁸ and two years later Abu Bakr died in 634 C.E. During that time he nominated Omar ibn Khattab as his successor.¹⁹ Omar ibn Khattab, the great warrior-statesman of first generation Muslims, whose armies broke the power of the two empires which for the centuries had divides the land of Middle East

¹⁴ Mohamed Heikal, 1981, *The return of Ayatollah: Iranian revolution from Mossadeq to Khomeini*, Andre Deutsch, London, p. 75.

¹⁵ On the reigns of the first four “Rashideen Caliphs” see, Ira M. Lapidus, 2002, *The Caliphate: A History of Islamic Societies*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ; Tamir Abu as- Su’ood M. Noha, 2001, *Biographies of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs*, Dar Al- Minarah Publishing House.

¹⁶ Moojan Memon, 1985, *An introduction to Shi’i Islam*, New York: Yale university press, pp. 10-11.

¹⁷ Op.cit., Dilip Hiro, 1985, p. 10.

¹⁸ Op.cit., Mohamed Heikal, 1981, p. 76.

¹⁹ Op.cit., Dilip Hiro, 1985, p.10.

between them, Byzantium and Persia.²⁰ The victory of Arab Muslims over the Iranian army of the Sussanian in 637 C.E. at Qadsiya had marked the arrival of Islam in Iran (Persia).²¹ When Omar ibn Khattab died at the hands of a Persian slave named Firuz in 644 C.E., the domain of Islam contained not only Arabia but also Syria, Iraq, Egypt and parts of Iran. Omar ibn Khattab left behind an electoral council of six. The council chooses Usman as the caliph. It was not until the murder of Usman in 656 C.E. that Ali became fourth caliph.

Ali was opposed by Mu'awiya abi Sufian, governor of Syria, Aisha, the prophets surviving wife. They both demanded the Uthman's death be avenged. Ali could not concede the demand. Both sides began to rally their forces and to prepare for the civil strife which now seemed inevitable.

The crucial battle took place at Siffin on the banks of Euphrates, in 659 C.E. it can't be said that the conflict was between right and wrong, between truth and falsehood. Neither side had a monopoly of right and truth, it was this that made collision between them so bitter and its outcome so enduring.

Inspite of Mu'awiya's technical advantages it looked, after three days of intermittent fighting as though Ali's forces were gaining the upper hand. Mu'awiya then had recourse to an ingenious stratagem. He ordered his men to tie the leaves of the Quran to their spears and to proclaim "to led the word of God decide". The ruse worked. Ali and Mu'awiya agreed to abide by the terms of an arbitrarian to be worked out by two representatives, they would nominate. This division and compromise disgusted the extreme puritan element, *the Khawarij* (outsiders) who rejected both Ali and Mu'awiya, claiming that what they were witnessing had nothing to do with the matters of faith but was a simple struggle for temporal power. Soon they began to back their beliefs with the assassination of their enemies, and they decide to kill the both.

²⁰ Op.cit., Mohamed Heikal, 1981, p. 76.

²¹ Op.cit., Dilip Hiro, 1985, p.10.

They succeeded in assassinating Ali in 661 C. E. as he was entering the mosque in the capital of Kufa in Iraq, but not Mu'awiya who managed to escape. He was leader proclaimed the Caliph. Ali left two sons, Hassan and Hussein, who now represented as their father had before them, the dynastic tradition in Islam, the family of the house of the prophet (*ahle byat*).

By the time Mu'awiya died in 680 C. E., those who supported Ali as a caliph all along came to be called as *Shiat Ali* - partisans of Ali or simply *Shi'a*. They argued that because Ali had been divinely appointed successor of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), and because Allah's message had been mostly clearly received by Ali and his family, only the descendents of this first truly Muslim family were fit to rule Dural Islam – the domain of Islam.²² From this arose the concept of *Imamat*: that is, only Imams, the descendants of Ali and Fatima can rule Muslims on behalf of Allah; and the Imams being divinely inspired, are infallible. This view was not shared by Sunnis (those who follow the tradition) who regarded the Caliphs to be fallible interpreters of Quran, the word of Allah. Whereas Sunnis believed in three basic precepts – monotheism, Prophet hood and resurrection- Shias believe in two more: *Imamat* and Justice.²³

Many stories of Muhammad's (pbuh) devotion to his grandsons (Hassan and Hussein) were common currency among the Arabs. They were however, men of different fates. Hassan, a pious but unassertive character, soon retired to private life in Medina, where he died in 669 C. E. his younger brother Hussein, was more combative. He refused to give *bay'a* to the Yazid (son of Mu'awiya), who had inherited not only his father's Syrian possession but also his claim to the caliphate.²⁴

In the autumn of 680 C. E. Hussein left Medina with his family and supporters and marched north across the desert towards his father's old capital, Kufa. The story of how his small force was betrayed, abandoned and finally

²² Op.cit., Dilip Hiro, 1985, p.11.

²³ Op.cit., Dilip Hiro, 1985, pp.13-14.

²⁴ Op.cit., Mohamed Heikal, 1981, pp. 79-80.

surrounded and slaughtered by Yazids troops near the town of Karbala in Iraq is for Shi'i Muslims a tragedy as abiding and personal as the passion of Christ is for Christians.²⁵

When Hussein saw that there was no hope, he welcomed martyrdom. Martyrdom, another important theme in Shi'ism after Imamate. Martyrdom is not in any way a monopoly concern of the Shi'i. It is the common value of all Muslims having its archetype in the example given by the companions of the Prophet (pbuh). Nonetheless, it has acquired a certain particular flavor and importance in the context of Shi'ism. This has been through the martyrdom of Imam Hussein, who we can say is after Prophet (pbuh) and Ali, most important figure in the religious consciousness of the Shi'i. The fact that he met his death in battle, that he attained martyrdom, is seen by the Shi'i not simply as a fact of history, it is seen as a fact of profound and continuing spiritual significance. The commemoration of this incident year after year by Shi'i is not merely a matter of pietistic commemoration, it is not a question of remembering a certain in human history, it is, at least implicitly, a self identification with Imam Hussein and the determination to participate to some degree, through emotion and intention with Imam Hussein in what the Shi'i perceive as having been a struggle for justice against the overwhelming powers of tyranny.²⁶

One of the interesting slogan that was constantly raised during Iranian Revolution (1979) to show the importance of martyrdom, not only for the religious but the political consciousness of the Shi'i was:

“The martyr is the heart of history

Every day is Ashura and

Every place is Karbala”²⁷

²⁵ Op.cit., Mohamed Heikal, 1981, p. 80.

²⁶ Op.cit., Hamid Algar, 1983, pp. 11-12.

²⁷ Bashir A. Dabla, 1992, *Islam and Muslims: Dr. Shariati's Sociological View*, New Delhi, Dilpreet Publishing House.

In Shi'ism the office of the Imamate had come to be equated with certain special attributes. The Imams, for example, were believed to be free from sin and error (*i'sma*), they are infallible (*ma'sum*); as well as having access to special religious knowledge (*'ilm*). The majority of the Shi'a understood that the Shi'i Imam was privy to religious knowledge that was outside of that of the standard Muslim and also free from error, the Imam was the ideal judge and was worthy of the spiritual leadership (*walaya*) of the community.²⁸ Among the Shi'i it is believed that, "the imams are the Gate (*bab*) or the Threshold that allows the passage into Divine Knowledge" that was closed to all but them. At an even more esoteric level, the Shi'i Imamate is conceived in terms of divine light (*nur*), whose existence pre-dated the creation of the world.²⁹ It is this concept of

Imamate that makes Shi'i as a "charismatic community"³⁰ and is permanently charismatic feature of Shi'ism. The Twelfth Imam is believed to have entered a period of occultation or hiding or concealment (*ghayba*) shortly after his father the Eleventh Imam died in 874 C.E. And it is believed that he will one day return to bring justice to the world. The occultation of the Twelfth Imam is often divided into two different phases: The lesser occultation (*al-ghaibah as-sughra*) (874-941 C.E.) and the greater occultation (*al-ghaibah al-kubra*) (941 C.E. and still continues). The lesser occultation is characterized by the lives of a series of mediators, who were able to communicate with and pass on the will of the Twelfth Imam to the *Shi'ah*.³¹ In lesser occultation it is claimed that the Twelfth Imam was represented on earth by a '*wakil*' or 'agent' who was presumed to be in contact with the Imam. There was in fact a succession of four agents, the last dying in 940 C.E. and the time up to that date is known as lesser occultation (*al-ghaibah as-sughra*). After 940 C.E., when

²⁸ Moojan Momen, 1985, *An Introduction to Shi'i Islam*, New York: Yale University Press, pp.155-157.

²⁹ Muhammad Ali Amir Moezzi, 1994, *The Divine Guide to Early Shi'ism: The Sources of Esotericism in Islam*, Trans. David Streight, Albany: State University of New York Press, p. 40.

³⁰ Maria Massi Dakake, 2007, *The Charismatic Community: Shi'ite Identity in Early Islam*, Albany: State University of New York Press, p.168.

³¹ Moojan Momen, 1985, *An Introduction to Shi'i Islam*, New York: Yale University Press, p.162.

there was no ‘*wakil*’ or ‘agent’ and no contact with the Imam, it is the period of greater occultation (*al-ghaibah al-kubra*), and this still continues.³²

With the doctrine of occultation (*ghayba*) also came a doctrine that addresses the return of the Twelfth Imam known as the *raj'a*. The doctrine of the *raj'a* adds an eschatological dimension to the Twelfth Imam who will return to the physical world and his religious and political duties as the Mahdi or rightly guided one. The Mahdi will then engage the forces of evil in a battle and bring about the end of days.³³ Because of the importance of the Mahdi and his mission he is accorded “an extremely high status among human beings in general” In other words, the Mahdi will arrive when the world is full of social and religious strife, harnessing “the charisma inscribed in [the] traditions regarding the Twelfth Imam”. Moreover, those that make the claim of being the Mahdi will, necessarily, break some aspects of the religious establishment in the process of becoming “Shi’ism’s greatest hope”.³⁴

The occultation of the Twelfth Imam is a significant event in its own right; it is also significant because it paved the way for the rise of the Shi’i clergy or ‘*ulama*, who took over the administration and spiritual leadership of the Shi’i community after the Twelfth Imam went into hiding.³⁵

³² Nikkie R. Keddie, 1983, *Religion and Politics in Iran: Shi’ism from Quietism to Revolution* (ed.), Yale University Press, London, p. 27.

³³ Ibid., p.166.

³⁴ Shahzad Bashir, 2003, *Messianic Hopes and Mystical Visions: The Nurbakhshiya Between Medieval and Modern Islam*, Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, p. 28.

³⁵ Karen Armstrong, 2000, *The Battle For God*, New York: Knopf Publishers, p.52.

Shi'ism in Iran

The implementation of Shi'ism in Iran owes itself to two external factors, the Safavid Dynasty (1502-1747) and the Shi'a clergy imported from Arab countries.³⁶ The establishment of Shi'ism as the state religion of Iran dates from the foundation of the Safavid Empire in 1501.³⁷ At the beginning of the sixteenth century the first Safavid Shah, Ismail, made Shi'ism the official religion of Persia (Iran).³⁸ Being a dynasty of Turkic origins, the Safavi monarchs recruited a large number of their followers from outside Iran, mainly Turkic nomads, Syria and Southern Caucasus. For political reasons the Safavis manufactured a false genealogy for themselves that linked them to Imam Musa Kazim, the seventh Shi'a Imam. Then they decided to convert the Sunni majority to Shi'i, by force if necessary.³⁹ However the major problem of Safavi faced in implementing their policy was the non-availability of Shi'i scholars in the country. This problem was however solved when the Safavi rulers began importing Shi'i scholars from various Arab countries to help them in their undertaking. The flow of Shi'i *Ulama* to Iran under the protection of Safavi rulers accounts for the second external factor responsible for the conversion of Iran to Shi'ism.⁴⁰

The *Shi'i Ulama* during Safavi period were dependent on Royal patronage for their presence in Iran; they were initially obedient and loyal servants to the state. It was during Qajar Dynasty (1795-1924) that the antagonism between monarchs and the *Ulama* began to surface.⁴¹

It is interesting to note that the final obstacle to the growth of Shi'ite clerical power in Iran was a doctrinal one. Ever since the disappearance of the

³⁶ Hamid Algar, 1980, *Iran and Shi'ism*, in *The Islamic Revolution in Iran*, Kalim Siddiqui (ed.) The Muslim Institute and The Open Press, London, p. 35.

³⁷ Said Amir Arjomand, 1988, *The Turban for the Crown: The Islamic Revolution in Iran*, Oxford University Press, New York, pp. 11-12.

³⁸ Mohamed Heikal, 1981, *The Return of the Ayatollah: The Iranian Revolution from Mossadeq to Khomeini*, Andre Deutsch Ltd., London, p. 83.

³⁹ Hamid Algar, 1983, *The roots of the Islamic Revolution*, Islamic Foundation Press India, p. 14.

⁴⁰ Suroosh Irfani, 1983, *Iran's Islamic Revolution: Popular Liberation or Religious Dictatorship*, Zed Books Ltd., London, p. 4.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

Twelfth Imam in 874 C. E., the transfer of his authority to the *Ulama* had been problematic. The problem was a theoretical dispute that took place between the two schools known as *The Akhbari* and *The Usuli*.⁴²

The *Akhbari* said that in the absence of Imam it was not permissible for a religious scholar to engage in the use of his reason to enact a certain judgment, to apply the Principles of law to a specific problem or situation. No jurist or rather no human authority could derive any legal norms other than what was explicitly transmitted through the *Hadith* or Traditions (*Akhbar*) of the Imams, hence the name *Akhbari*.

The *Usuli*, by contrast, said that this was not and even in the absence of the Imam it was permissible to adopt the principle of *Ijtihad* (the competence of the jurists to derive new legal norms from the source of the Sacred Law), hence the designation given to them *Usuli*. They were those who believed that there were certain number of principles of law, source of law, which could be applied and expanded through the use of the individual reasoning of a qualified scholar. The qualified scholar in question is the *Mujtahid* that is literally, he who practice *Ijtihad* (he who exercises his reasoning power on the basis of the principles of law to arrive at a certain decision concerning a given problem).

The *Mujtahid* is not merely a legal authority, one who can give an expression in this fashion concerning a problem of Islamic Law, he is also a person whose views must be followed. The *Usuli* believe that in the absence of Imam, the entirety of the community is divided into those who are either *Mujtahid* or who are *Muqalid* (Imitator), those who follow the *Mujtahid*. If they are not *Mujtahid*, they must of necessity follow the guidance of the one who is and this following of guidance is known as *Taqlid* (imitation). A *Mujtahid* who has reached the highest level of Islamic learning and is known

⁴² For detailed discussion of the theoretical issue involved in the dispute between *The Akhbari* and *The Usuli*, see; Hamid Algar, 1969, *Religion and State in Iran (1785-1906): The Role of Ulama in Qajar period*, Barkley Press, London, pp. 33-36. ; Nikki R. Keddie, 1983, *Religion and Politics in Iran* (ed.), Yale University Press, London; Said Amir Arjomand, 1988, *The Turban for the Crown: The Islamic Revolution in Iran*, Oxford University Press, New York.

for his piety, and commands a following among people, and attains the highest religious position in Shi'ism when he becomes a *Marja-e-Taqlid* (source of Imitation),⁴³ it means the *Mujtahid* who is chosen by an individual as his source of authority and guidance. A *Mujtahid* who is *Marja-e-Taqlid* is called *Ayatollah-al-Uzma* (Grand Ayatollah).

Throughout the Qajar rule the antagonism between the Ulama and monarchy become more and more intense. In part of this was because of the logical implications of the Shi'i, amplified by the emergence of the *Usuli madhab*. The Ulama continued to play an extremely important role in Iranian society and displayed their role in the Tobacco Protest or Revolt of 1891 and then in the Constitutional revolution (1905-1911).⁴⁴

Meanwhile, the settlement of the divisive theoretical dispute within Shi'ism prepared the way for the clergy's resurgence in the nineteenth century. The *Akhbaris*, who contested the clerical prerogative of *ijtihad*, were definitely defeated by the *Usulis*, who supported clerical *ijtihad*. The *Usuli* victory had important political consequences, it encouraged a revival of clerical social and political leadership.⁴⁵

Among the various Orientalists theories that have been elaborated with respect to the origins of Shi'ism, it has been said that this was the Iranian response to an Arab Islam. Shi'ism is today closely mingled with the whole Iranian sense of national identity and has secured a distinct position for Iranians among other Muslims.

⁴³ Suroos Irfani, 1983, *Iran's Islamic Revolution: Popular Liberation or Religious Dictatorship*, Zed Books Ltd., London, p.11.

⁴⁴ Hamid Algar, 1983, *The roots of the Islamic Revolution*, Islamic Foundation Press India, pp.18-19.

⁴⁵ Nikki R. Keddie, 1983, *Religion and Politics in Iran (ed.)*, Yale University Press, London, p. 48.

Irfan

Irfan (gnosis) term used in the context of the Islamic culture of Iran to describe a synthesis of philosophy, speculative theology, and mystical thought that emerged in the later medieval period and has persisted until today.⁴⁶

Irfan is a kind of mystical philosophy which encompasses the possibility of unity with the divine one and universal self. At the heart of it is the perception that all the creation derives from the one, the eternal truth. The social and political transformation in the late Qajar period and the Constitutional Revolution coincides with the and were related to a revival of *Irfan*.⁴⁷

Irfan derives from a knowledge of the divine, *ma'rifat*, which has been defined in English as “knowledge by presence”.⁴⁸ It means the true inner knowledge acquired by direct experience of the intelligible order which lies behind the visible world, and enlightened inner awareness of the transcendent. The person who acquires such a knowledge is termed an *arif*. The emphasis in *Irfan* is upon individual union with God without intermediaries and through continual striving to destroy the barrier of the sense or the carnal soul (*nafs*) so the mystic may reach a state of union with the divine (*fana*). In so doing he may also acquire divine wisdom and status of sainthood (*wilaya*).

Ma'rifat, knowledge of the essential reality of things, is acquired by profound mystical training. It comes directly from the divine, the one or universal self, with whom the Gnostic is united by presence to return afterwards to the world of multiplicity.⁴⁹ Such ideas were originally most fully in Islam by Ibn ‘Arabi in his doctrine of “the Perfect Man” (*insan-i-kamil*), created in the image of God as his vice-regent on earth, a synthesis of God and

⁴⁶ Alexander Knysh, 1992, "*Irfan*" Revisited: Khomeini and the Legacy of Islamic Mystical Philosophy, Middle East Journal, Vol. 46, No. 4, pp. 631-653.

⁴⁷ Vanessa Martin, 2007, *Creating an Islamic State: Khomeini and the Making of a New Iran*. New York: I.B. Tauris, p. 31.

⁴⁸ M. Y. Hairi, 1979, *The Treatise on Knowledge by Presence*, Toronto University, Toronto, p. 187.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 187-201.

the Universe.⁵⁰ Ibn ‘Arabi believed in the unity of all existence, which he termed as *Wahdat al- wujud*.⁵¹

The special knowledge of “the Perfect Man” (*insan-i-kamil*) confers powers of judgment which enable him to attain the inner light without recourse to the external provisions of the *Shari’a* (sacred laws of Islam), and perceive through their very nature the just relationship between different matters. He sees all the things in their proper place, to the point where he embodies the precepts of the divine law in his very soul. Those who attain such knowledge reach to the highest of all human levels, sainthood or *wilaya*.⁵²

The revival of Irfan in *Iran* took place in the late Qajar period. The revival of Irfan took the form of renewed interest in the thought of the great seventeenth century mystic philosopher Mulla Sadra (d. 1640) as exemplified in his work *Asfar al- Arba’a* (The Four Journeys). In this book, Mulla Sadra develops Ibn ‘Arabi’s notion of a journey of purification, at the end of which direct knowledge of God and the unseen is achieved. This state cannot be achieved by most people. Ibn ‘Arabi holds that the opening was a gift from God bestowed only on those rare individuals who reached a state of complete or total being. This Perfect Man (*insan-i-kamil*) emerges after four-stage spiritual journey. In the first stage, man travels from his self and the world to God; the second journey takes him from God to God, as he oscillates between considerations of divine attributes and divine essence; in the third stage, man sets out on the road from God back to the world and his self; finally, he begins to wander from man to man, bestowing on his community a new dispensation of spiritual and moral order.⁵³ At that point, according to Mulla Sadra, having experienced withdrawal, transcendence, devotion and contemplation, he turns

⁵⁰ M. Takeshitee, 1987, *Ibn Arabi’s Theory of the Perfect Man and its place in the History of Islamic Thought*, Tokyo University, Tokyo, pp. 49-50.

⁵¹ Op.cit., (Vanessa Martin, 2007), p. 35.

⁵² W. C. Chittick, 1989, *The Sufi Path Of Knowledge*, New York, pp. 29-30.

⁵³ Alexander Knysh, 1992, "Irfan" Revisited: Khomeini and the Legacy of Islamic Mystical Philosophy, *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 46, No. 4, p. 634.

to the active life and also to the guidance of the community with heightened understanding.⁵⁴ This model of human destiny outlined by Mulla Sadra was later adopted by Ayatollah Khomeini. Irfan is important for the understanding of the emergence of Ayatollah Khomeini's charismatic leadership and his relationship with his followers.

Ayatollah Khomeini: A Charismatic Leader

Under the backdrop of Iranian cultural and historical context, we can trace the cultural, social, political and psychological forces that gave birth to Ayatollah Khomeini's charismatic authority. The charismatic leadership of Ayatollah Khomeini in the success of Iranian Revolution (1979) fully accords with conventional accounts of Khomeini's life in general and his personal charisma in particular.

Ayatollah al-Uzma Sayyid Ruhollah al Mussavi Khomeini was born on Wednesday, 24th September 1902, in a small village of Khomein some two hundred miles south of Tehran in Iran.⁵⁵ In Islamic calendar it comes 1320 A. H. on 20th Jumad uth-Thani - a most auspicious date. It is also known as the "Day of Kwothar" is also the birthday of Fatima, the daughter of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) who became the wife of Ali and the mother of Hassan and Hussein. This date has a historical background in Shi'ism which goes like this; after the death of the children of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), the Quraish polytheists rejoiced and made taunting remarks claiming that the progeny of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) will not survive! Just then, this judgment came from God;

"Surely, we have given thee, "the Kowthar" i.e., abundance. So pray unto thy creator and sacrifice. Surely, thy foe is the one who shall be no posterity". (The Holy Quran, Surah al Kowthar, verse 1-3)

⁵⁴ J. W. Morris, 1981, *The Wisdom of the Thorn*, Princeton Press, London, pp. 16-17.

⁵⁵ Hamid Dabashi, 2006, *Theology of Discontent: The Ideological Foundation of the Islamic Revolution in Iran*, Transaction Publishers, New Jersey, p. 409.

That very great day the nectar of Guardianship and Imamate streamed on earth and the daughter of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), Fatima was born destined to be consort to Ali to produce together a generation of which the eleven stars of Imamate standing on the high roads to salvation are but one example.⁵⁶

Ruhollah Khomeini's grandfather, Sayyid Ahmad, had moved from Najaf in Iraq to Khomein and married and settled there. He was survived by two children, a son Sayyid Mustafa and a daughter Sahibeh. Sayyid Mustafa married Hajar Khanum, the daughter of a distinguished cleric. Three sons and three daughters were born to them. Sayyid Ruhollah was the youngest son.⁵⁷ Sayyid Mustafa was a religious scholar, who came from a long line of *Sayyids*. The title of *Sayyid*, meaning "gentleman" in Arabic, is in its more specific application, reserved for those who claim direct descent from Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).⁵⁸ The *Sayyids* are known as *Ahl-e-bayt* or the People of the House, are marked out for special honors and privileges⁵⁹ and of course charisma. To distinguish themselves from others, the *Sayyids*, used to wear a green belt, the color of the House of the Hashim, the Prophets clan. They also wore black turbans, as a sign of permanent mourning over the martyrdom of Hussein.⁶⁰ Nonsayyids, among mullahs wore white or in certain instances, cream turbans.⁶¹ One becomes *Sayyid* only by direct inheritance from ones father. Among the *Sayyids* there are different sub-categories' like *Tabatabai's*, *Husseini Sayyids*, *Razavi Sayyids*, *Mussavi Sayyids* etc. Khomeini himself is a *Mussavi Sayyid*, a *Sayyid* whose family tree is a branch of the sturdy trunk of the progeny of the Imam Musa al Kazim, the seventh Imam of the Shi'ite.⁶²

⁵⁶ Hamid Ansari, 1994, *The Narrative of Awakening*, The Institute for Compilation and Publications of the Works of Imam Khomeini (ICPWIK), Tehran, p, 14.

⁵⁷ Op.cit., Hamid Dabashi, 2006, pp. 409-410

⁵⁸ Amir Taheri, 1985, *The Spirit of Allah: Khomeini and the Islamic Revolution*, Hutchinson Publishers, London, p. 25.

⁵⁹ Ibid. p. 25.

⁶⁰ Sayyid Ali Qaderi, 2001, *The Life of Imam Khomeini (vol. 1)*, ICPWIK, Tehran, p. 92.

⁶¹ Op. cit., Amir Taheri, 1985, p. 33.

⁶² Opc. It., Sayyid Ali Qaderi, 2001, p. 92.

“Ruhollah” means ‘the spirit or the soul of Allah’. It is an extremely rare name, is not one of those popular names that come easily in mind when an Iranian family is seeking a name for a new baby. Religious Iranians, that is to say the vast majority, preferred names such as Muhammad, after the Prophet, or Ali, the name of first Imam, or Hussein, the martyred third Imam. Sayyid Mustafa’s choice of the name Ruhollah was unusual. In Persian literature, it is only Jesus Christ, who is often described as Ruhollah or “the Spirit of God.” To the Ayatollah’s most ardent admirers, the choice was dictated to Sayyid Mustafa by Allah himself.⁶³ Khomeini, connoting the town of his birth. This was in accordance with Shiite custom, which called for religious teachers to be known by their birthplace.⁶⁴

Ruhollah Khomeini did not know his father. For Sayyid Mustafa was killed before the new baby (Ruhollah) was six months old. His father was killed by the Mayor of Khomein in the last days of Qajar Dynasty, because of his protest against the exaction and the unjust taxes and other oppressive practices carried out by the Mayor against the local population.⁶⁵ The historical accuracy of this account is less important than its symbolic meaning. The followers of Khomeini recalled that the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) had also been orphan and raised by his aunt and uncle. More than this Khomeini’s orphan hood echoed the early tribulations of Ali and the Twelfth Imam: both of whom supposedly lost their parents at young age.⁶⁶ From the martyrdom of his father he also inherited another token that is persisting on fighting

⁶³ Amir Taheri, 1985, *The Spirit of Allah: Khomeini and the Islamic Revolution*, Hutchinson Publishers, London, p. 33.

⁶⁴ Daniel E. Harmon, 2005, *Spiritual leaders and thinkers: Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini*, Chelsea House Publishers, Philadelphia, USA, p. 23.

⁶⁵ The account of death of Sayyid Mustafa is not clearly known. Different authors have presented different views, for details see; E. Abrahamin, 1993, *Khomeinism: Essays on the Islamic Republic*, University of California Press, Berkley. ; Baqer Moin, 1999, *Khomeini: Life of Ayatollah*, I. B. Tauris Publishes, London. ; Amir Taheri, 1985, *The Spirit of Allah: Khomeini and the Islamic Revolution*, Hutchinson Publishers, London.

⁶⁶ Bruce Mazlish, 1979, *The Hidden Khomeini*, New York Magazine, 24 December, p. 51.

oppression. As from those days of life he used to hear that his father was the victim of his combat with injustice.⁶⁷

Three women became the primary caretakers of Khomeini throughout his childhood: his mother Hajara Khanum, his paternal aunt Sahibeh Khanum and a nurse called Naneh Khavar. Khomeini's aunt Sahibeh is noted as having been a particularly distinguished and strong willed lady. She along with Khomeini's mother repeatedly travelled to Arak to demand the arrest of the assassins of Sayyid Mustafa. When one of the suspected killers was finally apprehended, the entire family lobbied the acting prime minister to impose justice. The accused was duly beheaded, and the family returned to Khomeini.⁶⁸

For Khomeini this marked turning point in his life. Although he had been denied a father – a devastating blow that he apparently never put behind him - his family's relentless pursuit of his father's killers taught him that self-sacrifice and suffering can serve a higher purpose by defeating evil and bringing justice to this world. The seeds of “active asceticism” were thus planted in the young Khomeini's mind.⁶⁹

Tragedy soon struck Khomeini again, in 1917, when he was fifteen years of age, he suffered the death of his aunt and then his mother back to back. With such a childhood driven by tragedies and cruel fate necessarily help him in the time to come to emerge in the grandiose manner a typical charismatic leader.

Khomeini's early education took place in his home town of Khomein, where he studied in a local *Maktab* (a place where elementary theology is taught) under a number of local teachers and seminaries, including his own elder brother Sayyid Morteza (a cleric who was later known as Ayatollah

⁶⁷ Sayyid Ali Qaderi, 2001, *The Life of Imam Khomeini (vol. 1)*, ICPWIK, Tehran, p. 111.

⁶⁸ Baqer Moin, 1999, *Khomeini: Life of Ayatollah*, I. B. Tauris Publishes, London, pp. 10-11.

⁶⁹ Daniel Brumberg, 2001, *Reinventing Khomeini: The Struggle for Reform in Iran*, The University Chicago Press, London, pp. 42-43.

Pasandideh. By the time he had passed his sixth birthday, he had learned the whole of the Quran by heart and was already developing his talent as polemicists.⁷⁰ His progress was promising enough to encourage him to go for further studies.

Ruhollah had just turned sixteen when his *Maktab* teacher, Sayyid Abol-Hassan told him that there was nothing more he could learn in Khomein, and he must become a *Talabeh*. *Talabeh* translated literally means “seeker”.⁷¹ Six distinct grades are open for those who embark on their training at the Shi’a religious schools. The initial grade is that of *talib ilm*, a learner. On graduation he becomes a *mujtahid*, which literally means someone who exerted himself so as to be able to frame an opinion. The third stage is that of *mubelleg al-arisala*, or carrier of the message; the fourth that of *hojat al-Islam*, or authority on Islam; the fifth, that of *ayatollah*, or sign of god. The sixth and final grade is that of *ayatollah al-uzma*, or great sign of God. He then automatically becomes a *margieieh* (a person to be referred to on everything or *marja-e-taqlid* (source of emulation). The nucleus of the Shi’a religious schools is the *hawza* (circle) of disciples who collect around a teacher and accept his interpretations. When a novice reached the grade of *hujat al-Islam*, he can form his own *hawza* and the more disciples he gathers the nearer he comes to achieving the next grade, that of *ayatollah*. But a candidate can only reach the final grade, of *ayatollah al-uzma*, if he is accepted by others in the grade and if he can present them with a theological treatise of sufficient merit.⁷² In case of Ayatollah Khomeini his treatise was entitled *Tauzih al Masail*, (*Clarification of Points of the Sharia*) - a title of no little significance.⁷³

In 1919 at the age of seventeen, he left Khomein for Arak, a city of modest size situated in a fruit growing region about 140 miles southwest of

⁷⁰ Amir Taheri, 1985, *The Spirit of Allah: Khomeini and the Islamic Revolution*, Hutchinson Publishers, London, p. 36.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 37.

⁷² Mohamed Heikal, 1981, *The Return of the Ayatollah: The Iranian Revolution from Mossadeq to Khomeini*, Andre Deutsch Ltd., London, p. 83.

⁷³ Daniel E. Harmon, 2005, *Spiritual leaders and thinkers: Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini*, Chelsea House Publishers, Philadelphia, USA, p. 37.

Tehran, forty miles from Khomein, to begin his learned and religious carrier. After a brief attendance of a number of other circles of study, Ruhollah eventually joined the group of seekers gathered around on Ayatollah Shaikh Abdul Karim Ha'eri Yazdi.⁷⁴ Ha'eri himself had been the student of Mirza Hassan Shirazi, a famous cleric, the leader of Tobacco protest who had declared tobacco illegal.

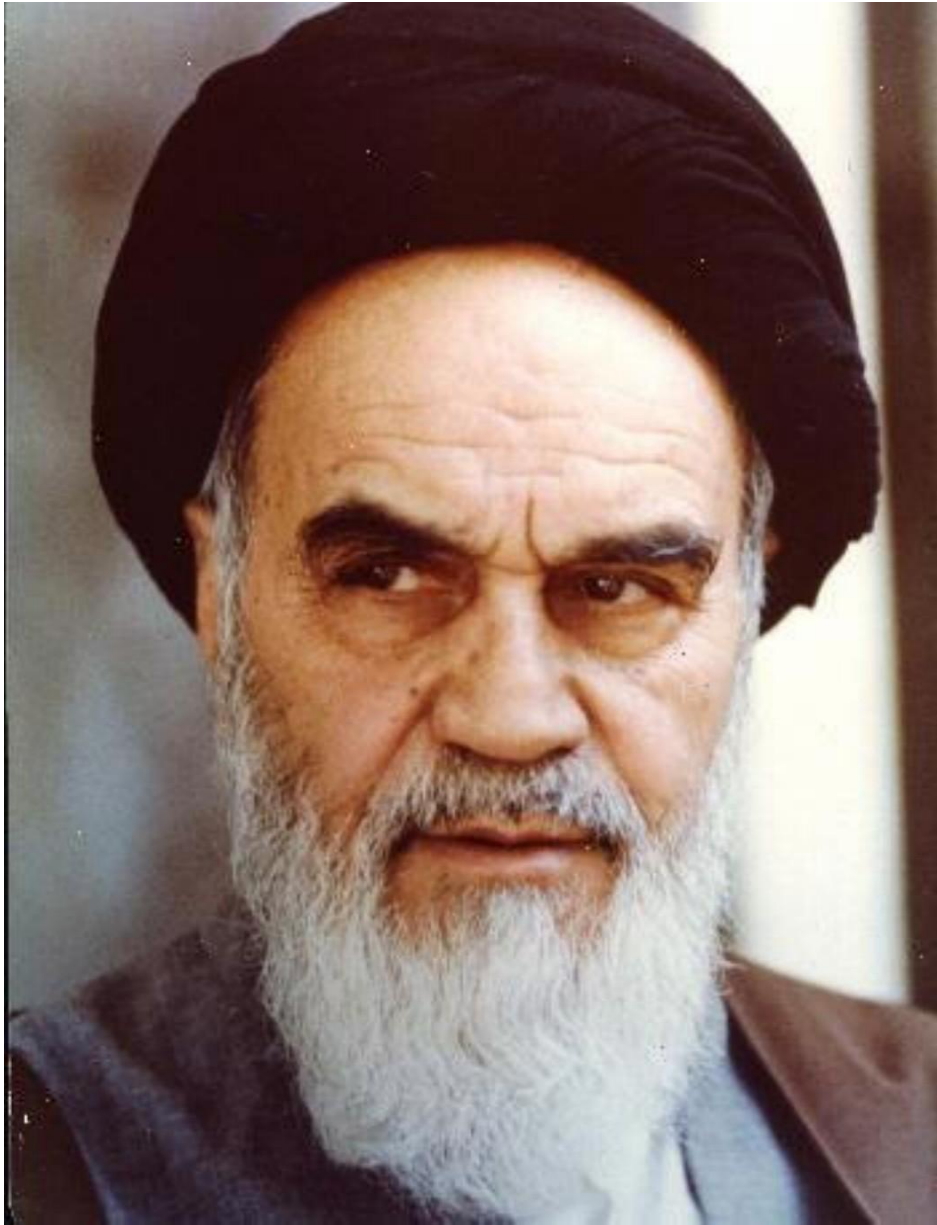
In 1922, Ayatollah Ha'eri moved to the city of Qom, an ancient center of the Shiite faith located in a dry, dusty region about 100 miles south of the capital. Qom is a city of special importance to Shiite Muslims because the historic tomb of Fatimah Ma'suma is there. Fatimah was the sister of Ali al-Rida, the eighth imam—a holy man descended from the Prophet Muhammad's son-in-law Ali ibn Abu Talib. For centuries, Shiites had made pilgrimages to Qom to pay their respects at Fatimah's tomb. Ha'eri was invited there to take over the local school and develop it into a respected Muslim training center. The school became known as the *Madraseh Faizieh*.⁷⁵

Khomeini also accompanied Ha'eri to Qom, would and become Ha'eri's most impressive students. The sensitive searching spirit of Khomeini could not settle with just Arabic literature and lessons on *fiqh* (jurisprudence and principles). He was interested in other sciences as well. Therefore, along with learning of *fiqh*, he also took lessons in mathematics, astronomy and philosophy. Above all he developed a specialty in Islamic Gnosticism or mystical philosophy (*Irfan*) and in ethics (*akhlaq*). He received his *ijaza* or permission to act as *mujtahid* in 1936, at the remarkably early age.⁷⁶ In the ensuing three decades, Khomeini's personal charisma would fully blossom.

⁷⁴ Ayatollah Shaikh Abdul Karim Ha'eri Yazdi was a great jurisconsult and a religious authority. After studying preliminaries, he went Najaf where he attended lectures and lessons given by outstanding Shi'a scholars. He went Qom and founded Qom Theological Assembly. Under his tutorship many outstanding scholars received training prominent among them was Ayatollah Khomeini.

⁷⁵ aniel Brumberg, 2001, *Reinventing Khomeini: The Struggle for Reform in Iran*, The University of Chicago Press, London, p. 21.

⁷⁶ Vanessa Martin, 2007, *Creating an Islamic State: Khomeini and the Making of a New Iran*. New York: I.B. Tauris, p. 29.



AYATOLLAH RUHOLLAH KHOMEINI (1902-1989)

Irfan had a great influence on Khomeini in developing charismatic traits. In *Irfan*, Khomeini's teachers in Qom include Mirza Ali Akbar Yazdi, a pupil of Sabzavari.⁷⁷ Mulla Hadi Sabzavari (d. 1872) produced a summary of the teachings of Mulla Sadra in *Sharh-i-manzuma* (commentary on the composition), one of the main texts of Islamic mystic philosophy. A second early guide was Mirza Aqa Javad Maliki Tabrizi (d. 1924), who held classes in philosophy and ethics and probably the most radical of the Qom schools, and taught *Irfan* privately at home, a pattern Khomeini was to follow.⁷⁸ His principle mentor was Ayatollah Mohammad Ali Shahabadi,⁷⁹ who led Khomeini through

Fusus-al-Hikam (The Bezels of Wisdom) of the outstanding twelfth century mystic philosopher Ibn Arabi, and also taught him the thoughts of Mulla Sadra. Inspired by *Kitab al-Asfar* (Book of Journey) by Mulla Sadra, this was the first mystical word that he read under Shahabadi's tutelage, had a momentous effect on Khomeini.

The concept of "Perfect Man" (*Insan al-Kamil*) by Ibn Arabi and the journey to reach this level by Mulla Sadra in his book *Kitab-ul-Asfar* (Book of Journey) seems to have momentous effect on Khomeini. His published works, twenty-one eventually between 1925 and 1937 were mainly on the subject of *Irfan*. His book *Misbah al Hidayah* (The Light of Guidance) published in 1931,

⁷⁷ H. Algar, *Imam Khomeini 1902-1962: The Pre-revolutionary Years* in E. Burke and I. M. Lapidus (eds.), *Islam, Politics and Social Movements*, 1988, Berkeley, London, p. 268.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 268.

⁷⁹ Ayatollah Mohammad Ali Shahabadi had a great influence on Khomeini. Shahabadi was a pupil of Aqa Muhammad Riza Qumshai, a leading exponent of the thought of Ibn Arabi, as well as other Gnostic luminaries in Tehran such as Mulla Hashim Rashti. Shahabadi was not just a teacher but a political activist with influence among the ordinary people, he sought to train, with the co-operation of other students, in groups which met at his home. In particular he spread the message that Islamic countries had begun to decline as a result of corruption so the pride of all Muslims and their rights under the Islam had been undermined. Disillusioned with the failure of clergy to act in a unity in the face of government weakness over foreign interference, in the late 1920's Shahabadi criticized the regime and exhorted the clergy to struggle for Islam even to martyrdom. He was much respected for his piety and simplicity of his life style, for Shahabadi's influence on Khomeini see; Ruhani, *Nuzhat*, Vol. 1, p. 27.

refers to both Ibn Arabi and Mulla Sadra and they were again mentioned in *Kash al-Asrar* (The Revealing Secrets) published in 1943-44.⁸⁰

Khomeini considers the ability derived from the knowledge of divine gives the Gnostic, the capacity to see on the one hand the one and on the other the many, and set out on the journey to unity with the divine, a course of action open only to the chosen saints, prophets and *arif*s of high position. In the course of the four journeys the *arif* arrives at a state of perfect being.⁸¹ Khomeini is here following Ibn Arabi and Mulla Sadra. To Khomeini, only one who has accomplished the fourth journey, that is to say reached the point where he may reveal the secrets of the immutable emanation and act as guide to others on their own journeys, may be said to have attained the rank of saint or prophet.⁸²

The believers' journey along the path of *ma'rifat* and *Irfan* may provide him with the qualities of leadership. In addition to the knowledge conferred by the holy law, the *arif* possesses exceptional spiritual qualities derived from his striving towards knowledge by presence (*ma'rifat*) which entitles him to respect and obedience. He is thus eminently equipped to be the guide and leader – *imam* and *rehbar* – of the community. Such titles were not inadvertently applied to Khomeini at the time of revolution, for the exceptional understanding and therefore charisma they imply. They form part of a conceptual vocabulary that was used to mobilize the ordinary people and create a unique image for Khomeini.⁸³ Khomeini began his teaching career in 1928, before he was twenty seven years old. His primary interest in teaching was Islamic mysticism and philosophy. He was very selective in his group of students.⁸⁴ It was his classes on ethics which attracted the widest attention

⁸⁰ Vanessa Martin, 2007, *Creating an Islamic State: Khomeini and the Making of a New Iran*. New York: I.B. Tauris, p. 32.

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 38.

⁸² R. Khomeini, 1981, *Misbah-al Hidayah*, Tehran, p. 210.

⁸³ Vanessa Martin, 2007, *Creating an Islamic State: Khomeini and the Making of a New Iran*. New York: I.B. Tauris, pp. 40-41.

⁸⁴ Hamid Dabashi, 2006, *Theology of Discontent: The Ideological Foundation of the Islamic Revolution in Iran*, Transaction Publishers, New Jersey, p. 410.

perhaps because of their link to self empowerment. The ethics he taught were drawn from the tradition of *Irfan* and propounded the benefits in terms of self discipline which may arise from self knowledge. In the late 1930s he held classes at the *Faiziyya* School in which many ordinary people, *bazarris*, artisans and workers of Qom district attended. The fame of the classes become such that people from other areas joined them.⁸⁵

Irfan is also important for understanding how Khomeini constructed himself as a leader, the philosophical and cultural tradition he drew upon, the objectives he gave his followers, his relationship with them, and his vision, particularly of authority, of the relationship between the leader and the community. Although Khomeini studied conventional topics such as *fiqh* (law), it was his exposure to the esoteric and highly controversial world of *Irfan* (Islamic mysticism) that imbibed him with a charismatic aura and sensibility.

Khomeini was widely read and interested in politics from his youth, and would probe his teachers concerning their political memories. During the rise to power of Reza Shah and the consolidation of Pahlavi state, he was still a student, a very young man. In political terms there were two major options confronting him, that of following Ha'eri Yazdi policy of quietism, accommodation and consolidation or that of supporting Sayyid Hassan Mudarris⁸⁶ activist struggle against the perceived rise of dictatorship. Khomeini greatly admired Mudarris for the struggle and courage of his stand against Reza Shah. Mudarris had a great influence on Khomeini. Sayyid Hassan Mudarris – a man full of vividity and enthusiasm. In his time he was one of the few persons who, from inside of religion looked at the current social affairs and believed in dignified politics when he was admitted to the parliament so as to supervise the parliament's ratified laws. Khomeini used to accompany

⁸⁵ Op.cit., Vanessa Martin, 2007, p. 42.

⁸⁶ Sayyid Hassan Mudarris (1870 – 1937) The main ayatollah opposed to Reza Shah. A member of the Majles since 1914, he was known chiefly as a parliamentary politician. He participated in the national government that opposed the Allies in 1914–18, was a vocal opponent of the 1919 Anglo-Iranian Agreement, and tried to stem the rise of Reza Shah. Banished to the provinces, he was eventually murdered there. Modern Islamists view him as one of their forerunners.

Mudarris to the parliament as a spectator. Probably he wanted to know strictly, for what reasons and on what mental and ideological base Mudarris took parliament so seriously. The impacts of the political opinion of the martyr Mudarris on Khomeini can easily be traced, particularly his saying: “our politics is our very religion, and our religion is our very politics.” Mudarris was the first teacher who taught Khomeini his deep lessons in politics and its inseparability from religion.⁸⁷

In 1929 at the age of twenty seven, Khomeini married the daughter of a distinguished cleric, Hajj Mirza Muhammad Thaqafi Tehrani, Khadija. “When she heard of the marriage proposal she protested. She had no wish to marry a mullah, her ambition being to marry a government official and go to live in Tehran.” But she consented after being convinced in a dream to accept Ruhollah as her husband.⁸⁸ Khadija Thaqafi told her dream to her grandmother: “I was there with an old women wearing *chador* (veil). The old woman was small and I did not know her. We were sitting behind the door of the room which had glass panes. I asked her: who are those there? The old women said, these are the Prophet (pbuh), Ali (the first imam), Hasan (the second imam), and I was over joyed. The old women said: ‘how it is you who dislike them!’ I said: I do like them. They are my Prophet and my imams! The old women said: ‘why do you not like them?’” Grandmother interpreted the dream as follows: “It seems that Ruhollah is a real *sayyid*, and the Prophet and the Imams are not pleased with you. There is no other way. It is your fate.”⁸⁹

Khomeini had made a suitable marriage. He was being taken into a wealthy, highly respected family. Khadijah was a *Sayyidah* and the match, therefore, meant that the blood of the prophet would not be mixed with that of outsiders. The marriage proved to be an enduring one. Ruhollah was to remain

⁸⁷ Sayyid Ali Qaderi, 2001, *The Life of Imam Khomeini (vol. 1)*, ICPWIK, Tehran, p. 374.

⁸⁸ Mohammad Heikal, 1982, *Iran: The Untold Story*, Pantheon Books, New York, p. 135.

⁸⁹ Sayyid Ali Qaderi, 2001, *The Life of Imam Khomeini (vol. 1)*, ICPWIK, Tehran, pp. 414-415.

scrupulously monogamous all his life to the astonishment of friends and foe.⁹⁰ Ruhollah was to prove a kind and considerate husband. Years later, the couples daughters were to relate how their father never even asked our mother to bring him a glass of water – something that even in 1985 could well be thought part of a wife's duties.⁹¹ Of the eight children's they had, five survived, his oldest son Hajj Sayyid Mustafa, who died in 1978, became a distinguished cleric. His younger son, Ahmad, became his closest companion during the revolutionary period and three daughters were Faridah, Sadiqa and Fatima.⁹²

Khomeini's early life and scholastic learning and writing coincides with the two crucial decades of the 1930's and 1940's and then extended up to the formative decades of the 1950's and 1960's. The 1930's was a decade of grave political events in Iran. Reza Khan carried out the coup d'état on February 21, 1921 and held the military powers as the commander of the Cossack Brigade. The rise of Reza Khan and the creation of modern army are closely interwoven. He began to create a standing army as soon as he became the minister of war. As he was building the new army, Reza Khan was also consolidating his political powers. Despite the outcry from the press, he successfully used the device of martial law, appointing some officers as martial law administrators and provisional governors, and other officers in civilian grab as commissars to represent him in departments of government, thus spreading a military net over Iran. At the end of October 1925, the Majlis abolished the Qajar Dynasty and ordered the election of a constituent assembly to change the Fundamental Laws. Reza Khan, who had recently assumed the surname of Pahlavi with a view towards reviving the imperial glory of pre-Islamic Iran in his fourth coming reign, was voted Shah by the Constituent Assembly in December 1925. The Qajar Dynasty was thus replaced by Pahlavi Dynasty, with a monarch almost as new to the name chosen for his Dynasty as the thorn itself. Reza

⁹⁰ Khadija (Khomeini's wife) in an interview with the Beirut Magazine, *Shater al – Shoara*, April 1980.

⁹¹ Faridah (Khomeini's daughter) in an interview with the Tehran Magazine, *Zan-e- Ruz*, 6th Feb. 1982, Vol. 966.

⁹² Dilip Hiro, 1985, *Iran under the Ayatollahs*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, p. 50.

Khan used the title of *Sardar-e-Sepah* (Marshal of the Army) until he became Reza Shah Pahlavi in 1925.⁹³

Once enthroned, Reza Shah began a comprehensive modernization-from-above programme which affected virtually every facet of the society. Its ideological base was a blend of nationalism and glorification of pre-Islamic Persia. The selection of the name Pahlavi, the language of pre-Islamic Persia, the changing of country's name from Persia to Iran in the early 1930's and the emphasis on Iran's Aryan heritage were the symbols of Reza Shah's brand of jingoism. A passionate but ruthless nationalist with no formal education, Reza Shah, had a clear vision of Iran's transition to modernity.⁹⁴

The agent for the societal transformation was the state which under Reza Shah acquired some of the attributes of modernity. By furnishing them with much of the meager oil revenues, the armed forces were invigorated and modernized. The state was centralized by curtailing the centrifugal power of the ulama, of the landlords and of the tribal's. Centralization of the state and the limited secularization of laws undermined the foundation of the *ulama's* power. Reza Shah drastically reduced the ulama's power. On the political level, the *ulama's* participation in the *Majles* was reduced from 23 percent of the deputies in 1926 to less than 6 percent in 1940. Reza Shah suppressed the unfriendly ulama. On the ideological level, the below to the ulama was no less severe: the state's propaganda machine was used to glorify the pre-Islamic Persia to emphasize "Aryan nationalism." This policy created an intellectual atmosphere in which prominent writers, like Ahmad Kasravi, denigrated Shi'ism. On the legal front, the power of *shar'i* courts, administered by the ulama, was greatly diminished. By requiring that all judges have a formal degree, many of the ulama were forced out of the judicial branch. European civil and penal codes gradually replaced Islamic laws. Newly created state agencies deprived the ulama of their control over the administration of civil

⁹³ Said Amir Arjomand, 1988, *The Turban for the Crown: The Islamic Revolution in Iran*, Oxford University Press, New York, pp. 60-63.

⁹⁴ Amin Banani, 1961, *The Modernization of Iran, 1921-42*, Stanford Press, California.

services. On the educational level, hundreds of modern schools were created to the detriment of the traditional *maktabs*, administered by the ulama. The state became directly involved in the administration of traditional schools a theology department was created at the new University of Tehran, thus breaking the *ulama's* monopoly of teaching religion. The state also began interfering with the internal affairs of the ulama establishment. The Shah personally took over the administration of the affairs and finances of the rich and holy shrine of *Meshhad*, thus denying the ulama much power, income and status they enjoyed from controlling the shrine. New auqaf regulations were promulgated by the newly created *Auqaf* Organizations, limiting the *ulama's* control over charitable lands. Passion plays and self-flagellations in public were forbidden, and veils were declared illegal in 1936. Veiled women were harassed by the police, forced many women into virtual exile as they refused to appear unveiled in public. Secularization was accompanied, as it must, by the spread of modern education. Modern schools were built and, for the first time, some of them became co-educational. All schools were brought under the auspices of the state, and school curricula were standardized.⁹⁵

All these atrocities left an indelible mark on the Khomeini's political consciousness. When Sayyid Hassan Mudarris died in 1934, Khomeini lost a clerical model whose political activism he greatly admired. A year later his principle teacher and mentor, Ayatollah Ha'eri Yazdi died in 1936, Khomeini left with a relatively eminent position of Hojjat-ul-Islam in the Qom clerical establishment and a highly charged political consciousness.⁹⁶

After Ha'eri's death in 1936, by the mid-1940's some at least of the clergy of the Qum, including Khomeini, came to recognize that the old generation of leaders who had rebuild the seminary was passing, and the opportunity now presented itself for a new style of leadership. They began to

⁹⁵ Mohsen M. Milani, 1988, *The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic*, Westview Press, London, pp. 60-62.

⁹⁶ Hamid Dabashi, 2006, *Theology of Discontent: The Ideological Foundation of the Islamic Revolution in Iran*, Transaction Publishers, New Jersey, p. 411.

quest for someone who could be a credible *marja* or sole leader of all the Shi'a. The quest of the ulama of the Qom for the *marja* ended in the choice of Ayatollah Muhammad Hussein Borujerdi.⁹⁷ Khomeini including other ulama invited him to move to Qom. As a result he arrived there in winter of 1944-45, and he became sole *marja-e- taqlid*. Ayatollah Borujerdi reposed the basis of his policies on non-intervention. Under no circumstances he was ready to fight and oppose the regime.⁹⁸

However encouraged by Borujerdi, Khomeini published a book, entitled *Kashf al-Asrar* (The Revealing of Secrets) in 1943-44, first published criticism of the Pahlavi regime. This work was written primarily in refutation of attacks upon the ulama by the writers in the press during the Reza Shah period, and to rectify misconceptions that had arisen among the public as a result of the dissemination of those views. It was however, mainly a refutation of one of work, *Asar-i hazar Sala* (The Secrets of a Thousand Years) by Ali Akbar Hakamzadeh published in 1943. Hakamzadeh had accused the ulama of encouraging superstitious practices to perpetuate their own power, and bring main cause of the country's backwardness. Khomeini does not mention Hakamzadeh and Ahmad Kasravi, the latter's mentor, a rationalist political thinker and historian, an intellectual figure of his time, but the ideas of both are recognizable in his work. Khomeini accuses them of undermining religion and thereby destroying the basis of the country's independence. He infers that these attacks took place under the patronage of Reza Shah, and claims that the ulama

⁹⁷ Ayatollah Hussein Tabatabai Boroujerdi, (1875–1961) The last paramount Shi'i leader. After a long seminary career in Najaf and Boroujerd, in 1944 he moved to Qom where he soon gained the reputation of being the supreme *marja-e taqled*. Although he Boroujerd, the last paramount Shi'i leader. After a long seminary career in Najaf and Boroujerd, in 1944 he moved to Qom where he soon gained the reputation of being the supreme *marja-e taqled*. Although he frowned on clerics participating in politics, he turned a blind eye to those who helped the 1953 coup. His death prompted younger grand ayatollahs to compete for his paramount position.

⁹⁸ Islamic Revolution of Iran, 1991, Islamic Propagation Organization, Tehran, pp. 18-19.

were singled out as a special target because they alone could oppose policies detrimental to the country.⁹⁹

Kashf al-Asrar (The Revealing of Secrets) consists of six parts (i) Divine Unity (*Tauhid*), (ii) The Imamate; (iii) The role of the Ulama, (iv) Government, (v) Law and (vi) Traditions (*Hadith*). When appropriate he unsurprisingly attack Reza Shah, seen as enemy of religion. The ideas of an Islamic government dominated by *mujtahid* are developed.¹⁰⁰

In sum, in *Kashf al-Asrar* (The Revealing of Secrets) Khomeini was already looking towards the possibility of a more truly Islamic and modern government, though his ideas were not fully formulated. He intended the execution of the *shari'a* and the organization of a government, but saw problems with an elective and legislative assembly, a mistrust created by the perceived examples of the Constitutional Revolution.¹⁰¹

In the late 1940's and throughout the 1950's Ayatollah Borujerdi reigned supreme upon the highest seat of the Shi'i judicial establishment. His apolitical disposition was in effect. Throughout 1950's, termed by scholars as "quietist period"¹⁰² and in the shadow of Ayatollah Borujerdi, Khomeini taught a variety of classes, *fiqh*, *usul*, philosophy and *Irfan*, attracting, as he did quite a number of students, devotees and judicial followers.¹⁰³ The classes in *fiqh* and *usul* were lesser and had a general intake. The classes on *Irfan* were exclusive to the most brilliant and familiar students such as Mutahhari and Muntaziri, and numbered no more three to five people attending in private at his house.

Khomeini's students held him in the highest respect, emphasizing his piety, his purity of character and his strength. He was without pomp, pretensions of self promotion and always greeted people with respect. Outside

⁹⁹ Vanessa Martin, 2007, *Creating an Islamic State: Khomeini and the Making of a New Iran*. New York: I.B. Tauris, pp. 103-104.

¹⁰⁰ Nikki R. Keddie, 2003, *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of the Revolution*, Yale University Press, London, pp. 191-192.

¹⁰¹ Op.cit., Vanessa Martin, 2007, p. 111.

¹⁰² Op.cit., Nikki R. Keddie, 2003, p. 192.

¹⁰³ Op.cit., Hamid Dabashi, 2006, p. 412.

of his classes, unlike most of his senior clerics, he did not walk around accompanied by an entourage of students. He was also decisive, fastidious, efficient and meticulous; he was so well ordered that even marriage could not disturb his routine. He had a strictly moral life style, pursuing continuously the subject of ethics and its study, which he believed formed the greatest protection against oppression. His students derived strength from him and absence from him produced a kind of loneliness. He emphatically hates gossips. His students respected him because he appeared to practice what he preached. Khomeini as a young man adopted a simple lifestyle and followed it into his old age. For example, he preferred to sleep on a blanket, called a *doshak*, on the floor.¹⁰⁴

Khomeini's students were also an important link between him and the *bazaar* (traditional centre of retailing) which were active in raising and disbursing funds. Khomeini had two qualities which his bazaar following especially values – the first was courage and the second was piety. Khomeini's piety was well known. He was a devout and ascetic, his life-style imbued with self-discipline and his conduct immaculate all times. He was also perceived as a man of the people living a humble life and disregarding material comforts. These qualities were important for both gaining and mobilizing support among the devout poor.¹⁰⁵

However the decades of 1940's and 1950's were great below to the *ulamas* and the religious establishments. Firstly due to the forced abdication of Reza Shah in 1941 by the Allied forces and their occupation of Iran, and inheritance of the "Peacock Thorn" by Mohammad Reza Shah, twenty two year old inexperienced son of Reza Shah. Secondly the rise and fall of Socialist movement (1941-49) in form of Tudeh Party, who with Marxist ideology dominated the modern intellectual circles of Iran. And finally the Nationalist

¹⁰⁴ Daniel E. Harmon, 2005, *Spiritual leaders and thinkers: Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini*, Chelsea House Publishers, Philadelphia, USA, p. 24.

¹⁰⁵ E. Abrahamin, 1993, *Khomeinism: Essays on the Islamic Republic*, University of California Press, Berkley, p. 49.

movement (1949-53) under the leadership of Mohammad Mossadeq¹⁰⁶ which led the Shah to leave the country and finally in 1953 the coup d'état of Mossadeq has often been depicted as a CIA venture to save Iran from international communism. In fact, it was a joint British–American venture to preserve the international oil cartel.¹⁰⁷

Muhammad Reza Shah continued after 1953 where his father had been forced to leave off in 1941. He restarted at full speed the drive to expand the three pillars that held up his state: the military, the bureaucracy, and the court patronage system.¹⁰⁸ This was time when Khomeini began to participate actively in the politics of the ulama although his participation was mostly covert, he managed nevertheless to gather supporters and build his position in the Qom religious center as the political cleric. He rallied around himself a group of dedicated, politically-minded theology students and awaited an opportunity to engage in overt political action and to enter onto the scene of national and international politics. This period marked the phase of **Frame Breaking** which begins from the beginning of teaching career of Khomeini up to the 1960's until the death of Ayatollah Borujerdi. Ayatollah Borujerdi was, however, a highly conservative and apolitical leader who forbade the young theology students to get involved in political controversies. His death in 1961 opened up the Qom Center to new ideas and let a militant charismatic leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, to rise to the highest position of the *marja-e-taqlid* (source of emulation). This started the phase of **Frame Moving** which continued up to the February 1, 1979 until the return of Khomeini.

¹⁰⁶ Muhammad Mossadeq, (Mossadeq al- saltaneh) (1881 – 1967), The icon of Iranian nationalism. From a long line of notables, he studied in Europe and had a successful career in government Service until forced into retirement by Reza Shah. Returning to politics in 1941, he gained fame first as an “incorruptible” deputy, and then as leader of the National Front campaigning for the nationalization of the British owned Oil Company. Elected prime minister in 1951, he promptly nationalized the oil industry and thus sparked off a major international crisis with Britain. He was overthrown by the military coup organized by the CIA in August 1953. Islamists distrusted him because of his deep commitment to secular nationalism.

¹⁰⁷ Ervand Abrahamian, 2008, *A History of Modern Iran*, Cambridge University Press, New York, p. 118.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

Generally it is said that the Khomeini's political activities started in 1962 simultaneously with the declaration of his being the *marja-e-taqlid* (source of emulation) the highest position in Shi'ite clergy and thus marked the overt expression of charismatic leadership. Death of Ayatollah Borujerdi in 1961 and Ayatollah Kashani in 1962 created a vacuum in the leadership of the radical clergy. Given the prestige and status that Khomeini, now sixty years old, had by then acquired, it seemed almost natural that he should become the doyen of militant ulama. That is what brought him into direct conflict with the Shah whose secular and dictatorial policies he had always abhorred.¹⁰⁹

Ayatollah Khomeini's opposition to the Shah in early 1960's revolved around three issues: The Local Council Election Bill (1962); The National Referendum for White Revolution (1963) and the granting of Capitulatory Right to Americans in Iran (1964).

In early October 1962, the Shah introduced some of the major changes in the constitution; government passed the new bill for election of the provincial and district councils. The Bill eliminated the profession of Islam as a condition for the electors and candidate i.e., now non-Muslim candidate is entitled to Muslim votes. Also in the constitutional changes was the amendment called for a modification in the oath taking ceremony of the government officials. According to new procedure, government officers were not to require swearing specifically on "The Quran" but by referring to "the Heavenly Book". Also in the changes was for the first time in history, Iranian women were given right to vote.¹¹⁰

There was much in these constitutional changes to enrage religious leaders. Ayatollah Khomeini vigorously reacted against all these propositions. He denounced the Bill as first step towards the abolition of Islam and the delivery of Iran to the Baha'is, the presumed agents of Zionism and

¹⁰⁹ Dilip Hiro, 1985, *Iran under the Ayatollahs*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, p. 51.

¹¹⁰ Suroosh Irfani, 1983, *Iran's Islamic Revolution: Popular Liberation or Religious Dictatorship*, Zed Books Ltd., London, pp. 79-80.

imperialism who were implicitly enfranchised by the bill alongside the women. The enfranchisement of women was vigorously denounced as a ploy to destroy the family life and spread prostitution.¹¹¹ Khomeini called it a “decadent trap” the Shah had laid for Iranian women to draw them to the “swamps of corruption, prostitution and destruction”¹¹²

It was against this decree that for the first time Ayatollah Khomeini united the ulama’s and called frequent meetings. He along with other ulama’s sent telegrams to the Shah and Alam (the then prime minister), declaring the decree unconstitutional. Throughout the country the ulama in general and Khomeini in particular used the mosque to incite population against the government. It paid off and after the two months of its passage by the cabinet, Alam withdraw the entire bill. The ulama had scored temporary victory, leading to a lull in their activism.¹¹³

Ayatollah Khomeini’s opposition to the government intensified in January 1963 when the Shah, hoping to legitimize his “White Revolution” called for national referendum.¹¹⁴ “White Revolution”, a six point programme was presented to Iranian people; the already implemented land reforms; the sale of the state factories to finance land reform; nationalization of forests; the creation of rural literacy corps; a new election law to extend the vote to women; and a profit-sharing scheme for industrial workers. This was “The Shah People Revolution” or “White Revolution”. To legitimize the revolution Shah announced the national referendum.¹¹⁵

On 21 March 1963, Nowruz (New Year), the day marking the beginning of Iranian New Year, Khomeini addressed the *Faiziyya* Theological School in Qom after referendum and proposed that *Nowruz* 1963 be declared as “public

¹¹¹ Said Amir Arjomand, 1988, *The Turban for the Crown: The Islamic Revolution in Iran*, Oxford University Press, New York, p. 81.

¹¹² E. Ruhani, 1979, *Nezhat – e – Imam Khomeini*, Tehran, p, 145.

¹¹³ Mohsen M. Milani, 1988, *The Making of Iran’s Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic*, Westview Press, London, pp. 90-91.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

¹¹⁵ Ramy Nima, 1983, *The Warth of Allah: Islamic revolution and Reaction in Iran*, Pluto Press, London, p. 41.

mourning”.¹¹⁶ Enraged by this unsparing attack, the government sent elite units of Imperial Guards to storm the *Faiziyya* Theological School, the venue of Khomeini’s lectures in Qom, the day after Khomeini’s bulletin was published, the shah’s troops invaded *Faiziyya* and severely bashed up students, teachers. Over a hundred people were injured and a dozen killed during the rampage. The Shah expected that after this punishment, Khomeini would leave him alone. Not only had he failed to intimidate Khomeini into silence, he would provide him with another occasion to lash out against the monarchy.¹¹⁷ Khomeini greatly exploited the situation created by *Faiziyya* tragedy in order to condemn the agents of the regime. He never let any opportunity be lost. On the fortieth day¹¹⁸ of the *Faiziyya* incident Khomeini delivered another speech¹¹⁹ against the Shah and his government. He also gave the historic *fatawa* (decree) that *Taqiyyah*¹²⁰ is *Haram* (prohibited).¹²¹

In May-June 1963 which coincides with the month of *Muharram* in the Islamic Calendar is considered as one of the sacred months, particularly by Shi’a Muslims who observe it as a period of religious mourning. The religious processions that paraded the streets of Tehran in June 1963, during the holy month of *Muharram*, had an unmistakable political flavor. Students from Tehran University led their procession to the city’s densely crowded bazaar where in their speeches they hailed the struggle of the Iranian people and Khomeini’s leadership.¹²²

On the tenth day of *Muharram*, *Ashura*, tens of thousands of people belonging to the general masses who were closely associated with the struggle of Khomeini, hold photograph of Khomeini in their hands raising slogans of “

¹¹⁶ Islamic Revolution of Iran, 1991, Islamic Propagation Organization, Tehran, p. 73.

¹¹⁷ Suroosh Irfani, 1983, *Iran’s Islamic Revolution: Popular Liberation or Religious Dictatorship*, Zed Books Ltd., London, pp. 80-81.

¹¹⁸ It is customary for Shi’ites to mourn the deceased forty days after their death.

¹¹⁹ For the full speech see Appendix “*Historic Speeches of Ayatollah Khomeini.*”

¹²⁰ *Taqiyyah* means hiding one’s true faith and beliefs when in a position of weakness. It is one of the principles of Shi’ite theology.

¹²¹ Islamic Revolution of Iran, 1991, Islamic Propagation Organization, Tehran, pp. 84-90.

¹²² Suroosh Irfani, 1983, *Iran’s Islamic Revolution: Popular Liberation or Religious Dictatorship*, Zed Books Ltd., London, pp. 82-83.

Khomeini may Allah protect you”, “Nation supports You”, Death to Dictatorship”, “Khomeini the Idol Breaker” reached their peaks.¹²³

As for Khomeini, he made his historic speech¹²⁴ which gave him title “Idol Broker”, on *Ashura*, 4th June – the day when Imam Hussein was martyred 13 centuries ago. In this speech Khomeini once again bitterly criticized the Shah and his regime. A few hours after his speech Khomeini was arrested. As news of his arrest spread, furious demonstrations spread in Tehran and Qom, which quickly spread to major cities like Tabriz, Shiraz, Isfahan, Mashad and spread all over the country. The government immediately took action and deployed a large number of army units to quash the demonstrators. In Qom, it took the army half a day to silence the demonstrators protesting the arrest of Ayatollah Khomeini. But in Tehran, demonstrators proved themselves to be more resilient. And it took the army three days to crash the uprising. The Shah admitted killing 56 persons; the foreign news agencies put the figure at several hundred, while the opposition claimed that 15,000 people had been killed. The exact number of people will never be known, but it is clear that the scale of the demonstrations and the retaliation by the army led to the loss of many lives.¹²⁵ The event came to be known as “June 5 Uprising” or “15 Khordad” which marked the turning point in the history of Iran.

With the increase in the support of Khomeini and according to the article two of the supplementary laws a *marja-e-taqlid* shi’a ulama enjoy immunity and may not be jailed, tortured or exiled. Ayatollah Khomeini was released but was denied return to Qom and was kept under house arrest in Tehran. But Khomeini was in no mood to compromise with the Pahlavi regime. As the *Majles* election approached, the first of its kind in nearly four years. Khomeini’s supporters asked people to boycott the elections. The elections, open only to the Shah’s loyalists, proceeded peacefully and resulted in the victory of the Progressive Center group, led by Hasan Ali Mansur. Mansur was

¹²³ Islamic Revolution of Iran, 1991, Islamic Propagation Organization, Tehran, pp. 95-96.

¹²⁴ For the full speech see Appendix “*Historic Speeches of Ayatollah Khomeini.*”

¹²⁵ Op.cit., Suroosh Irfani, 1983, p. 83.

named prime minister by the shah. He did not share Alam's strategy of direct confrontation with the ulama. To improve the relations with the ulama, he allowed Khomeini to return to Qom.¹²⁶

By the time Khomeini returned to Qom in January 1964, he had emerged as the most popular religious leader in Iran. He was given a hero's welcome. The most significant consequence of the June Uprising was the emergence of Ayatollah Khomeini as religio-political leader. In Weberian sense a charismatic leader.

It was not until March 1964 that Khomeini was finally released and allowed to return to Qom. As the Shah regime was becoming more and more dependent on the United States for implementing its policies, the presence of an ever increasing number of U. S. personnel was necessitated. The regime realized that its survival rested on the continual arrival of large numbers of U.S. advisors in all spheres of development, particularly defense. The regime was therefore prepared to accept any condition imposed by the U.S. that would accelerate the inflow of U.S. advisers. A primary condition that Iran had to meet was to ensure the immunity of Americans to Iranian Law. In the contest, the Shah-sponsored parliament passed a bill that granted diplomatic immunity to all U.S. servicemen and their families and personnel stationed in Iran. Under this bill, Americans who violated the law or were implicated in events requiring legal procedure could be tried only in U.S. courts. Khomeini viewed this bill as the surrender and capitulation of the Iranian nation to America.

On 26 October 1964, the day marking the forty-fifth birthday of the Shah and a national holiday for nationwide festivities, Khomeini made a speech¹²⁷ that was to be his last in Iran for the next 15 years. In this speech Khomeini made a systematic exposition of the 'regime's treason' for 'selling the nation to America'. Khomeini's temper exploded. He proclaimed:

¹²⁶ Mohsen M. Milani, 1988, *The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic*, Westview Press, London, p. 93.

¹²⁷ For the full speech see Appendix "*Historic Speeches of Ayatollah Khomeini.*"

“They have reduced the Iranian people to a level lower than that of an American dog. If someone runs over a dog belonging to an American, he will be prosecuted. Even if the Shah himself were to run over a dog belonging to an American, he would be prosecuted. But if an American cook runs over the Shah, the head of state, no one will have the right to interfere with him.”¹²⁸

Khomeini vowed that the clergy would never allow an American puppet such as the Shah to rule Iran with such handedness. It would ‘kick him out of Iran.’¹²⁹ In effect, he stated, the country’s parliament had committed an act of treason in passing this law. His accusations struck a cord with the people of Iran. Leaflets and tape recordings of his speech were widely distributed. It was in this speech that Khomeini publicly declared that the regime in power in Iran was ‘American’. By now, Khomeini’s deepening hatred for the United States appeared irreversible. He felt the same way toward the Pahlavi government, which he considered a puppet of Americans. His open criticism, which was attracting a disturbingly large following, could not be ignored. After Khomeini rejected the shah’s appeals to moderate his criticism and demonstrated that he could not be silenced by force, he was exiled to Turkey in late 1964.¹³⁰

Ayatollah Khomeini in Exile

Ayatollah Khomeini, the sixty two year old cleric was expelled from his home land on 4 November 1964. Ayatollah Khomeini spent the next eleven months from November 1964 – October 1965 in Turkey before he left for what appeared to be his final exile in Najaf in Iraq.¹³¹ Ayatollah Khomeini life in exile in Turkey lasted for 11 months and then due to the pressure of the domestic and foreign opinion, he was banished to Iraq. The regime aimed to

¹²⁸ Akbar Husain, 1988, *The Revolution in Iran*, Vero Beach, FL: Rourke Enterprises Inc., p. 26.

¹²⁹ Suroosh Irfani, 1983, *Iran’s Islamic Revolution: Popular Liberation or Religious Dictatorship*, Zed Books Ltd., London, p. 86.

¹³⁰ Daniel E. Harmon, 2005, *Spiritual leaders and thinkers: Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini*, Chelsea House Publishers, Philadelphia, USA, p. 40.

¹³¹ Hamid Dabashi, 2006, *Theology of Discontent: The Ideological Foundation of the Islamic Revolution in Iran*, Transaction Publishers, New Jersey, p. 423.

get rid of criticism of domestic and foreign circles and at the same time it envisaged that the Khomeini's scholarly image would be overshadowed by the prominent Shi'a ulama of Iraq.

Ayatollah Khomeini's efforts in encouraging the ulama to rise up against the Shah's regime during the first days of his entry into Iraq remained fruitless. Therefore, he immediately ceased to rely on them. On the other hand, the Imams classes, opened 40 days after entry into Najaf (the old seminary) turned into a place for congregation of all Iranian freedom fighters, theology students and ulama. Also the Iranian Islamic Students Association in Europe and America could then onward meet and talk to the Imam with ease and keep him abreast of the political situation of the country, the Shah's foreign relations and their own political activities.

With Khomeini in exile his students took up leadership of his movement in Iran, occasionally referring to him but often acting on their own initiative. An organization was established with 11 people at centre, including Ali Khamenei, Husain Ali Montaziri, Ali Akbar Rafsanjani and Ali Mishkini.¹³²

Khomeini's students in Najaf were also active in maintaining contacts, with the movement in Iran and distributing propaganda for it. Mostly the propaganda material and Khomeini's lectures were given to travelers to take it in their suitcases. As this was risky and people were frequently caught, the tactic was changed to sending one copy in, for example, traveler's shoes.¹³³ Khomeini's was a "cassette revolution". Once exiled in Najaf, his speeches and lectures were taped, and his fiery and defiant voice, smuggled easily into Iran, reached thousands of people.¹³⁴

A notable point in the Ayatollah Khomeini's political strategy was that he never believed in the armed struggle and resort to assassination in the course

¹³² Vanessa Martin, 2007, *Creating an Islamic State: Khomeini and the Making of a New Iran*. New York: I.B. Tauris, p. 70.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

¹³⁴ *Op. cit.*, Hamid Dabashi, 2006, p. 419.

of his revolutionary struggle. Even in the course of Revolution and clash between the army troops and the people which led to the massacre of thousands of people, he did not issue order for armed struggle.¹³⁵ He regards it as an ineffective and weak strategy.

However the most important, the chief ideological statement by Khomeini in the period of exile is the now-famous *Velayat-e-Faqih* (Authority of the Jurist), in which he outlined the juridical agreement for the assumption of political authority by the cleric – a doctrine that outlined clerical rule and would become guiding influence in the formation of the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran following the revolution.

Khomeini's systematic presentation of his views on the *Hukumati Islami* (Islamic Government) and the *Velayat-e-Faqih* (Authority of the Jurist) may be found in a series of lectures in Najaf in Iraq in 1970. These lectures, collected from students notes, were published in 1971 in Persian and Arabic and appeared under different titles (i) *Hukumati Islami* (Islamic Government) (ii) *Velayat-e-Faqih* (Authority of the Jurist), and (iii) *A Letter from Imam Musavi Kashef al-Qita*.

According to Shi'i juristic theory of Authority, the rightful ruler is the absent 12th Imam. There will be no truly legitimate ruler until the return of the twelfth imam, Shiite doctrine assumes that "all states are inalienably usurpatory, even those of formal Shi'i affiliation."¹³⁶ Every ruler or ruling party is by definition a usurper, since by the very act of ruling he is substituting himself for the Twelfth Imam, the only one with the right to execute the divine will.

Meanwhile, in the absence of the Twelfth Imam, *Shiaism*, as it has evolved in Iran in the course of the last few hundred years, has enjoined all believers to choose a living *marja-e taqlid* (source of emulation) and strive to

¹³⁵ Op. cit., Sadroddin Moosavi, 2001, p. 85.

¹³⁶ Hamid Algar, *The Role of the Ulema in Twentieth Century Iran*, in *Scholars, Saints, and Sufis*, ed. Nikki Keddie (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), p. 232.

follow his interpretations of the *Sharia* (religious law) and the *hadiths* (declarations of the Prophet and the imams). Although there has been widespread consensus among the Shi'i jurists that during the occultation of the Twelfth Imam their mandates should cover the religious and legal spheres, their direct involvement in political and governmental affairs has been (and continues to be) a subject of enormous controversy.

However Khomeini produced evidence in support of Islamic government. For evidence of the desirability of Islamic government in the Muslim tradition, Khomeini pointed in particular at the Prophet Muhammad who not only established a government but also, according to Shi'i tradition, designated a "ruler to succeed him."¹³⁷ If Muhammad believed the best way to achieve the ends of Islam was through the establishment of an Islamic government, Khomeini asked, why then should we not also seek Islamic government now? As further evidence in support of this claim, Khomeini reiterated some of his more familiar claims regarding the *shari'a*. He argued that the very existence of *shari'a* as a comprehensive set of laws that embodies a "complete social system" in which "all the needs of man are met," is "proof of the necessity for establishing government."¹³⁸ Lastly, Khomeini asserted that the need for Islamic government stems from the tendency of average men to stray from the path of righteousness. To keep men from corrupting vices there must be a guardian (or trustee) who ensures that they obey certain divine constraints.

At its simplest, *Velayat-e-Faqih* (Authority of the Jurist) is the rule of the divine law as interpreted and applied by the, it is an established principle that "the *faqih* has authority over the ruler." If the ruler adheres to Islam, he must necessarily submit to the *faqih*, asking him about the laws and ordinances of Islam in order to implement them. This being the case, the true rulers are the

¹³⁷ Imam Khomeini, 1970, "Islamic Government" in *Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini (1941- 1980)*, translated and annotated by Hamid Algar London, Mizan Press, 1981, p. 41.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

*fuqaha*⁵⁹ themselves, and ruler- ship ought officially to be theirs, to apply to them, not to those who are obliged to follow the guidance of the *Fuqaha* on account of their own ignorance of the law.¹³⁹ Since *faqih* does not rule according to his own will, the system is not dictatorial. And as the position of just *faqih* is not hereditary, the system is certainly not monarchical.

Khomeini's lectures on *velayat-e-faqih*, also discusses program for establishment of an Islamic Government, for this he primarily aimed at his fellow clergy to renounce quietism and assume its rightful position of political leadership in the Muslim community. Drawing on primarily Shi'i traditions he both critiqued those clergy who claimed to be practicing *taqiyya as* being more worried about their own well being than that of Islam.¹⁴⁰ He also asserted that without clerical leadership any movement for Islamic government is doomed to fail. "The people must be instructed in these matters and helped to mature, intellectually and politically," he claimed. "We must tell them what kind of government we want, what kind of people would assume responsibility for affairs in the government we propose, and what policies and programs they would follow."¹⁴¹ The government that Khomeini envisioned in his lectures in 1970, nine years before the success of the revolution, was strikingly similar to the Islamic Republic that emerged as the product of the revolution.

Khomeini closely followed the social, economic and political developments in Iran and criticized the Shah's ploy and mistakes in his messages which he sent to the people of Iran from time to time. Between 1964-1967 Ayatollah Khomeini created, gradually but consistently, unsystematically but coherently, a language of revolt with which he would reclaim the scepter of power from "the king of kings" in Iraq he gradually developed a revolutionary

¹³⁹ Ibid., pp. 59-60.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 144.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p. 129.

discourse that, combined with concomitant events in Iran, would lead to the dramatic return and the establishment of the Islamic Republic.¹⁴²

After the White Revolution of 1963, the Shah continues his repressive and autocratic rule as a result of which there were crisis ever increasing in Iran. The roots of the Shah's crisis can be found in three vitally interrelated aspects of his regime; the economic development programme, its social consequences and the political dictatorship.

Economic Crisis:

The economic development programme launched by the Shah contained within it the seeds of his own destruction, even though it was consciously designed, as the inflated rhetoric of the 'White Revolution' and the 'Shah-People Revolution' indicated, to strengthen the monarchical system and the capitalist character of Iran. The key to this programme was oil and with annual oil revenues.¹⁴³ Iran's oil revenues rose from \$34 million in 1954–55 to \$5 billion in 1973–74, and further to \$20 billion in 1975–76. In the course of these twenty-three years, oil provided Iran with more than \$55 billion. In any average year, it gave the government more than 60 percent of its revenues and 70 percent of its foreign exchange.

Only a small portion of it was spent on developmental projects. However substantial sums were squandered on palaces, royal extravagances, bureaucratic consumptions, outright corruption nuclear installations, and ultra sophisticated weapons too expensive even for many NATO countries.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴² Hamid Dabashi, 2006, *Theology of Discontent: The Ideological Foundation of the Islamic Revolution in Iran*, Transaction Publishers, New Jersey, p. 424.

¹⁴³ Fred Halliday, 1979, *The Genesis of the Iranian Revolution*, Third World Quarterly, Vol. 1, No. 4 (Oct., 1979), pp. 1-16.

¹⁴⁴ E. Abrahamian, 1992, *Iran Between two Revolutions*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, p. 427.

The Shah launched the new era by changing the name of the defense ministry back to ministry of war to make it clear that civilians had no business meddling in military matters. Iran became one of the few countries in the world with a ministry of war rather than of defense. In the period between 1954 and 1977, the military budget grew twelvefold and its share of the annual budget went from 24 to 35 percent – from \$60 million in 1954 to \$5.5 billion in 1973, and further to \$7.3 billion in 1977. Its manpower expanded from 127,000 to 410,000. By 1977, the regular army had in excess of 220,000 men, the air force 100,000, the gendarmerie 60,000, and the navy 25,000. Much of the military budget went into ultra-sophisticated weaponry.

The Shah also Established in 1958 as a tax-exempt charity, the Pahlavi Foundation began holding in trust for the nation the previous shah's landed estates. At its height, the Pahlavi Foundation had assets worth in excess of \$3 billion, with shares in 207 companies active in such diverse fields as mining, construction, automobile manufacturing, metal works, agrobusinesses, food processing, banking, insurance, and tourism (casinos, cabarets, and grand hotels). It also had shares in international corporations such as Krupp and General Electric. The shah's personal portfolio was estimated to be more than \$1 billion. The royal family's total assets were estimated to be in excess of \$20 billion.¹⁴⁵ The New York Times reported in 1979 that: "Behind the façade of charitable activities the foundation is apparently used in three ways: as a source of funds for the royal family, as a means of exerting control over the economy, and as a conduit for rewards to supporters of the regime."¹⁴⁶

The so called 'White Revolution' and the 'Shah-People Revolution', Yet despite all the claims made for it, and the very real changes in Iranian society, this development programme proved to be very unsatisfactory. While some land had been redistributed by the land reform of the early 1960s, this failed to expand output at more than 2 per cent per annum on average, and food demand

¹⁴⁵ W. Branigin, "Pahlavi Fortune: A Staggering Sum," Washington Post, 17 January 1979.

¹⁴⁶ A. Crittenden, "Bankers Say Shah's Fortune is Well Above a Billion," New York Times, 10 January 1979.

rose at 15 per cent. This stagnation in the countryside had two very negative effects. First, it necessitated increasing food imports so that whereas in 1968 Iran spent \$142 million on food imports, this had risen in 1977 to \$2,550 million. Iran was, by the mid-1970s, importing 15 million tons of wheat, a quarter of the total demand. The second major problem was that because agricultural output was not properly organized and promoted, it failed to provide adequate employment for the half of the population still living outside the towns, with the result that millions flocked to the towns and half of the rural population became landless laborers, even more socially outcast than they had been prior to the reform.¹⁴⁷

The Shah's poorly planned and mismanaged policies had negative consequences for the Iranian economy. Inflation rose from 9.9 per cent in 1975 to 16.6 per cent in 1976 and then to 25.1 per cent in 1977.¹⁴⁸ Meanwhile, oil revenues dropped from "\$21.8 billion in 1976/77 to \$21.3 billion in 1977/78.

In October 1971, the Shah celebrated his thirtieth year in power (he did not count British and Soviet occupation or the Mossadegh usurpation against his reign) and the 2,500th anniversary of the founding of the Persian Empire by Cyrus the Great with one of the most expensive parties the world had ever seen. Kings, emperors, princes, presidents, sheiks, sultans, and hundreds of immensely wealthy jet-setters came to a tent city the Shah had built on the ruins of Persepolis. The Shah's shindig cost the Iranian people, a majority of whom lived in poverty, some \$200 million. A few well-placed Americans were disgusted by the Shah's garish extravagance. Inside Iran it was dangerous; a small group of students who dared to protest the extravaganza were badly beaten by the Shah's security force. When Khomeini, in Iraq, spoke out in

¹⁴⁷ Fred Halliday, 1979, *The Genesis of the Iranian Revolution*, Third World Quarterly, Vol. 1, No. 4 (Oct., 1979), pp. 1-16

¹⁴⁸ Thomas Walton, 1980, *Economic Development and Revolutionary Upheavals in Iran*, Cambridge Journal of Economics, vol. 4, pp. 271-92.

support of the students and intoned, “We do not want you to celebrate over our people’s corpses.”¹⁴⁹ He described the celebration as “disgraceful feasts”.

Social Crises

The changes in Iran since the early 1960s bred social conflicts that, whilst largely invisible until 1978, nevertheless underlay the breakup of the monarchical system and the rise of a popular opposition. Among the most important changes was the migration of population to the cities so that by 1978 half of the population lived in the towns, as opposed to less than a third two decades before. Some towns, such as Isfahan, experienced a doubling of their population in less than a decade, and in all a mass of first generation immigrants, badly housed, disoriented and insecurely employed, were created.¹⁵⁰ Although the regime financed the impressive economic growth, it failed, for two major reasons, to win much support from either the salaried middle class or the urban working class. First, the 1953 coup not only overthrew the popular leader Dr. Mossadeq, but also destroyed labor unions, professional associations, and all independent political parties, and dug a wide, even unbridgeable, gulf between the regime and the two modern classes. Second, the regime further widened this gulf by implementing policies benefiting the upper class rather than the middle and lower classes, who had no pressure groups through which they could alter or peacefully oppose government decisions. It was true, as supporters of the regime often argued, that during the quarter century, particularly after the White Revolution of 1963, great strides were made in the areas of health, education, and public welfare: the number of doctors increased from 4500 to 13,000, the literacy rate rose from 26 percent to 42 percent, and the infant mortality rate dropped from 20 percent to less than 12 percent. But it was equally true that after 14 years of the so-called White Revolution 68 percent of adults remained illiterate, the number

¹⁴⁹ David Farber, 2005, *Taken hostage : the Iran hostage crisis and America’s first encounter with radical Islam*, Princeton, New Jersey, pp. 67-68.

¹⁵⁰ Fred Halliday, 1979, *The Genesis of the Iranian Revolution*, Third World Quarterly, Vol. 1, No. 4 (Oct., 1979), pp. 1-16.

of illiterates actually rose from 13 million to 15 million, less than 40 percent of children completed primary school, only 60,000 university places were available for as many as 290,000 applicants, the percentage of population with higher degrees was one of the lowest in the Middle East, and the doctor-patient ratio remained one of the worst in the whole of Western Asia.¹⁵¹

More controversially, Shah also promoted secular ideals, emphasizing anti-Islamic culture and anti-clericalism in particular. He instituted a wide range of fundamental changes aimed at secularizing the very foundation of Iranian society. These include: removing the judicial system from clerical control and turning it into a modern and non-religious one; changing prevalent Islamic customs and norms by, for example, forbidding men, other than those in the clergy, from wearing turbans, and prohibiting women from wearing the veil and eliminating religious materials from the education curriculum and establishing secular knowledge and modern, Western-oriented academic disciplines, culminating in the foundation of Tehran University in 1934.¹⁵²

The regime waged a simultaneous war against the religious establishment. The Resurgence Party declared the Shah to be not only the "political leader" of the state but also the "spiritual guide" of the community. The Shah himself announced the coming of a "new great civilization." To hasten its arrival, he replaced the Muslim calendar with a new royalist calendar and thereby jumped over night from the year 1355 to 2535. Parliament, disregarding the *shar'ia* laws, raised the age of marriage for girls from 15 to 18 and for boys* from 18 to 20. The Justice Minister instructed judges to be stricter in their enforcement of the 1967 Family Protection Law, which had been designed to restrict both polygamy and men's right to obtain easy divorces. The Education Minister ordered universities not to register women who insisted on wearing the *chador* (long veil). Moreover, the newly

¹⁵¹ Ervand Abrahamian, 1980, *Structural Causes of the Iranian Revolution*, MERIP Reports, No. 87, Iran's Revolution: The Rural Dimension (May, 1980), pp. 21-26.

¹⁵² M. Fallahi, 1993, *Foundations of Education in Iran and Education after the Cultural Revolution of 1980*, WI: Marquette University, p.57.

established Religious Corps, modeled on the Literacy Corps, intensified its activities so as to teach peasants that "true Islam" differed from that preached by "black reactionary mullahs." In the words of an exiled newspaper affiliated with the clerical opposition, the aim of this corps was to "nationalize religion" and undermine the "spiritual leaders."¹⁵³

Political Crises

The other major cause of popular dissatisfaction with the Shah concerned his extreme political policies. To further consolidate his control, the Shah announced, in 1975, the abolishment of all political parties in favor of a single party—the *Rastakhiz party*—created by him. The Shah all of a sudden in March 1975 dissolved the *Mardom* and *Iran-e Novin* Parties and declared with much fanfare the establishment of the brand new Resurgence Party (*Hezb-e Rastakhiz*). He announced that in future Iran would be a one-party state; that all facets of political life would come under the supervision of the party; that all citizens had the duty both to vote in national elections and to join the party; that those reluctant to join must be “secret communists”; and that such “traitors” would have the choice of either going to prison or leaving the country – preferably for the Soviet Union.¹⁵⁴ Also worthy to note is the establishment of a new secret police named *Sazman-I Ittiala’at va Amniyat-I Keshvar* (National Security and Information Organisation) soon to become notorious under its acronym SAVAK. The powers of SAVAK, the secret police, grew so that it pervaded all walks of Iranian life and torture became a regular instrument of interrogation. Political imprisonment increased so that, on a modest but informed estimate, there were at least 10,000 political prisoners in the mid-1970s.¹⁵⁵ In early 1975, the London based Amnesty International, discovered that Iran was one of the world’s “worst violators of human rights.”¹⁵⁶ In 1975, over 90 per cent of all magazines in the country were closed down, in order to

¹⁵³ Op. cit. , Ervand Abrahamian, 1980, p. 25.

¹⁵⁴ Ervand Abrahamian, 2008, *A History of Modern Iran*, Cambridge University Press, New York, pp.149-150.

¹⁵⁵ Op. cit, Fred Halliday, 1979, p. 5.

¹⁵⁶ Amnesty International, Annual Report for 1974-75, London, 1975.

focus attention on the few chosen organs of the regime. Intellectual and cultural life was also blocked because of the ban on a whole range of relevant topics, and the contradiction between what existed in Iran and what many knew was possibly reinforced by the observation of those tens of thousands of Iranians who were studying abroad.

With the ever increasing social, religious, economic and political crisis, the Shah's policies alienated almost all the sections of the society especially the *bazaaries* (traditional centre of retailing), the ulama, and the middle class. These atrocities were opposed by number of organizations and intellectuals both inside and outside Iran. After the defeat of Mossadeq's popular movement in 1953 and the crushing of the June uprising in 1963, some political activists began questioning the old tactic of peaceful coexistence with the Pahalvis. The sixties was a decade of defensive mobilization against the state, and the seventies of violent actions against it by experimenting guerrilla warfare. The ideological dimension of guerrilla warfare ranged from Marxist-Leninism to Maoism to Shi'ism. Of the dozen or so underground organizations created in Iran in sixties and seventies, the impact and role of the *Sazeman-e-Mojahedin-e-Khalq-e-Iran* (popularly known as Mujahidin) and the *Sazeman-e-Cherikha-ye-Fada'i-ye-Iran* (popularly known as Fida'iyun) were the most consequential. Their contribution to the development of a revolutionary situation in 1977-79 period was substantial, but indirect: substantial because their activities were inspiring to the young, which constituted a large portion of population in Iran during seventies (about 55 percent of population were below 20 years of age), and were embarrassing to a regime obsessed with an image as stable and powerful; indirect because increased guerrilla activity provoked indiscriminate retaliation by the authorities, thus intensifying alienation and opposition among population at large.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁷ Mohsen M. Milani, 1988, *The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic*, West View Press, London, p. 135-136.

The Mujahidin and the Fida'iyun, unlike the National Front and Tudeh Party, called for the end to monarchy and strongly condemned any collaboration with Shah's regime. As the overthrow of the monarchy was their ultimate goal, much of their literature was devoted to criticism of the Pahlavi regime.

Outside Iran was the great personality of Ayatollah Khomeini, however inside Iran there were number of intellectuals, clerics and students of Ayatollah Khomeini like Mutahharri, Montazeri, Ayatollah Shariatmadari, Ayatollah Taleqani, however the worth mentioning and who is discussed here is Dr. Ali Shariati.

Ali Shariati¹⁵⁸ (1933-1977)

Let us turn to the consideration of Shariati, who is relevant to the present discussion in two ways. First, Shariati represents another interesting paradox of fundamentalism in that he advocated the revival of Islamic community modeled on the percepts and examples of the Quran and conduct of the Prophet and the Shia Imams. But he supports his arguments and exhortations by extensive recourse to modern European social thought while insisting that all the modern concepts and doctrines were contained in superior form in the Quran. Second, Shariati in explicitly articulating the concept of the people demonstrates the necessity of this concept to the idea of 'revolution' which is in turn necessary to transition to Islamic government.

Shariati was typical of the new generation of college-educated professionals coming from traditional middle-class backgrounds. He was born in 1933 in rural Khurasan into a small landowning clerical family. Throughout his life he stressed his modest provincial roots. His father was a school teacher.

¹⁵⁸ For detail see, B.A Dabla, , 1992, *Islam and Muslims: Dr. Shariati's Sociological View*, New Delhi, Dilpreet Publishing House.; Hamid Dabashi, 2006, *Theology of Discontent: The Ideological Foundation of the Islamic Revolution in Iran*, Transaction Publishers, New Jersey, pp, 102-146.; Suroosh Irfani, 1983, *Iran's Islamic Revolution: Popular Liberation or Religious Dictatorship*, Zed Books Ltd., London, A.Shari`ati, 1979b, *On the Sociology of Islam* (translated by Hamid Algar), Mizan Press, Berkeley; N. Keddie, 1981, *Roots of Revolution*, New Haven, London, pp. 215-3.

Following his father's profession, Shariati entered the teacher's college of Mashhad and continued to study Arabic and the Koran with his father. After graduating from college in 1953, he taught for four years in elementary schools in his home province. In 1958, Shariati entered Mashhad University to study for a masters degree in foreign languages, specializing in Arabic and French. Completing the MA in 1960, he won a state scholarship to the Sorbonne to study for a PhD in sociology and Islamic history. In Paris at the height of the Algerian and Cuban revolutions, he immersed himself in radical political philosophy as well as in revolutionary student organizations. He joined the Iranian Student Confederation and the *Nahzat-i Azad-i Iran* (Liberation Movement of Iran) which was formed in 1961-62 by lay religious followers of Dr. Mossadeq. In France Shariati took a number of courses with such famous Orientalists as Massignon and attended lectures by Marxist professors. He avidly read the works of contemporary radicals, especially Jean-Paul Sartre, Franz Fanon, Shariati returned to Iran in 1965. After spending six months in prison, and on being denied a position in Tehran University, he returned to his home province Khurasan. He taught first in a village school and later in Mashhad University. In 1967, however, he was able to move to Tehran and take up a lectureship at the *Husseinieh-i Ershad*, a religious meeting hall. His lectures were circulated widely both through booklets and through recorded tapes. They were later published in thirty-five book-length volumes. He was eventually arrested and forced to leave for England where he dropped dead at the age of forty-four, prompting some to suspect SAVAK of foul play.

By then Shariati was a household name. His prolific works have one dominant theme: that the true essence of Shi'ism is revolution against all forms of oppression, especially against feudalism, capitalism, and imperialism. Shariati drew his inspiration from outside as well as from within Islam: from Western sociology particularly Marxist sociology as well as from Muslim theology; from theorists of the Third World - especially Franz Fanon-as well as from the teachings of the early Shi'i martyrs. In fact, Shariati devoted his life to the task of synthesizing modern socialism with traditional Shi'ism, and

adapting the revolutionary theories of Marx, Fanon, and other great non-Iranian thinkers to his contemporary Iranian environment. He is held as one of the most influential Iranian intellectuals of the 20th century. Shariati worked for his ideals throughout life and struggled against evil forces inside and life and outside Iran. Through the methods of teaching, lecturing and publications, he restored the faith of the Muslim youth of Iran in the efficacy of Islam; developed confidence among them for maintaining and practicing Islam in totality and in contemporary sense, created strong consciousness among them about basic Muslim problems, and made them aware about their role in the transformation of the Muslim society, particularly in Iran. In short, he put the younger generation in Iran on the revolutionary path of Islam called *Surate Mustaqeem* (the right path). In this way, Shariati provided basis, made groundwork, generated momentum and developed infrastructure for the revolutionary change in Iran. He was rightly honored by the title of *Ustaade-Inqilaab* (Teacher of the Revolution).

Iran on the Verge of Revolution (1977-1979)

The revolution erupted like a volcano because of the overwhelming pressures that had built up over the decades deep in the bowels of Iranian society. By 1977, the Shah was sitting on such a volcano, having alienated almost every section of society. He began his autocratic rule adamantly opposed by the intelligentsia and the urban working class. This opposition intensified over the years. In an age of republicanism, he flaunted Monarchism, Shahism, and Pahlavism.¹⁵⁹ He not only intensified existing animosities but also created new ones. His White Revolution, Resurgence Party, SAVAK, alienating much of the country. These grievances began to be aired in 1977 – as soon as the Shah relaxed his more stringent police controls. He did so in part because Jimmy Carter in his presidential campaign had raised the issue of

¹⁵⁹ Ervand Abrahamian, 2008, *A History of Modern Iran*, Cambridge University Press, New York, pp.155-156.

human rights across the world, especially in Iran.¹⁶⁰ Ayatollah Khomeini understood the political significance of this new development, he wrote a letter to ulama in September 1977, in which he mentions that Iranians should take advantage of this opportunity and write letters to criticize Shah.¹⁶¹

Until the end of 1978, the opposition focused its energies on indoor activities: writing letters, forming new groups, reviving old ones, drafting manifestoes, and publishing newspapers. The situation worsened in January 1978 when the government-controlled paper *Ittila'at* dropped an unexpected bombshell. It ran an editorial denouncing Khomeini in particular and the clergy in general as “black reactionaries” in cahoots with feudalism, imperialism, and, of course, communism. It also claimed that Khomeini had led a licentious life in his youth, indulging in wine and mystical poetry, and that he was not really an Iranian – his grandfather had lived in Kashmir and his relatives used the surname *Hindi* (Indian).¹⁶² The only explanation one can give for this editorial is that the regime was puffed up with its own power. One should never underestimate the role of stupidity in history.¹⁶³ This marked the turning point in the history of Iran.

The entire population of Iran condemned the fatuous attack on Khomeini. In the following two days on January 9, seminary students in Qom took to the streets, in support of protest local *bazaaries* closed down their shops, and eventually marching to the police station where they clashed with the authorities. The regime estimated that the “tragedy” took two lives. The opposition estimated that the “massacre” killed 70 and wounded 500. In this, as in all clashes during the course of the next thirteen months, casualty estimates differed greatly.¹⁶⁴ Soon after the Qom riot, there were violent confrontations between the government forces and the ulama’s supporters in at least seven

¹⁶⁰ Suroosh Irfani, 1983, *Iran’s Islamic Revolution: Popular Liberation or Religious Dictatorship*, Zed Books Ltd., London, pp. 152-153.

¹⁶¹ Mohsen M. Milani, 1988, *The Making of Iran’s Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic*, Westview Press, London, p. 187.

¹⁶² Editorial, “*Iran and the Black and Red Reactionaries*,” *Ittila’at*, 7 January 1978.

¹⁶³ Op. cit. , Ervand Abrahamian, 2008, p. 158.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 158.

other cities. The bazaars in these cities closed in the sympathy with the ulama, making the entry of the shopkeepers and merchants in the revolutionary movement and their historic alliance with the ulama.¹⁶⁵ The Qom incident elevated Ayatollah Khomeini as the symbol of opposition to the Shah's regime and ulama's captured the leadership status of the movement under the umbrella of Shi'ism.

The Qom incident triggered a cycle of three major forty-day crises – each more serious than the previous one. The first – in mid-February – led to violent clashes in many cities, especially Tabriz. The regime rushed in tanks and helicopter gunships to regain control of the city. The second – in late March – caused considerable property damage in Yazd and Isfahan. The shah had to cancel a foreign trip and take personal control of the anti-riot police. The third – in May – shook twenty-four towns. In Qom, the police violated the sanctity of Shariatmadari's home and killed two seminary students who had taken sanctuary there. The authorities claimed that these forty-day demonstrations had left 22 dead; the opposition put the figure at 250.¹⁶⁶

Tensions were further heightened by two additional and separate incidents of bloodshed. On August 19 – the anniversary of the 1953 coup – a large cinema Rex in the working-class district of Abadan went up in flames, incinerating more than 400 women and children. The public automatically blamed the local police chief, who, in his previous assignment, had ordered the January shooting in Qom. The second bloodletting came on September 8 – immediately after the Shah had declared martial law. He had also banned all street meetings, ordered the arrest of opposition leaders, and named a hawkish general to be military governor of Tehran. Commandoes surrounded a crowd in Jaleh Square in downtown Tehran, ordered them to disband, and, when they refused to do so, shot indiscriminately. September 8 became known as “Black Friday” – reminiscent of Bloody Sunday in the Russian Revolution of 1905–06.

¹⁶⁵ Op. cit, Mohsen M. Milani, 1988, p. 191.

¹⁶⁶ E. Abrahamian, 1992, *Iran Between two Revolutions*, Princeton University Press, pp. 505-508.

European journalists reported that Jaleh Square resembled “a firing squad,” and that the military left behind “carnage.” Its main casualty, however, was a feasible possibility of compromise. A British observer noted that the gulf between shah and public was now unbridgeable – both because of Black Friday and because of the Abadan fire. The French philosopher Michel Foucault, who had rushed to cover the revolution for an Italian newspaper, claimed that some 4,000 had been shot in Jaleh Square.¹⁶⁷

Ayatollah Khomeini intensified his attacks on the Shah. He tape recorded anti-shah messages for distribution to his followers in Iran. The shah’s regime must be overthrown, he exhorted. In response the Shah requested Iraqi government that either limit Khomeini’s agitational activities or force him out of Iraq. Saddam Hussein’s government, having a cordial relations with Shah, first put Ayatollah under house arrest, and then expelled him out of Iraq on October 7. Khomeini’s original destination was Kuwait, but the Kuwaitis denied the entry. Ultimately on October 6, he was permitted by France, to go to Neauphle le-Chateau, in the vicinity of Paris.¹⁶⁸ Iranian officials supposed that Khomeini’s hegira to a western nation would substantially diminish his effectiveness and activities, and would expose to the world the reactionary mentality of the Ayatollah. But exact the opposite happened, during his 114-day residence in France, Khomeini’s enigmatic personality became the focus of western media, and Neauphle le-Chateau became the Mecca for the opposition against the Shah where thousands of Iranian from all over the world paid homage to the Ayatollah. Ayatollah Khomeini skillfully exploited the modern communication system to spread his attractive gospel of freedom, independence, and Islamic government to Iran and to the rest of the world.¹⁶⁹

Khomeini sent daily messages that were distributed by the thousands throughout Iran. The people heeded his call. Khomeini said that the Shah must

¹⁶⁷ Op. cit. , Ervand Abrahamian, 2008, p. 158-159.

¹⁶⁸ W. Sullivan, 1981, *Mission to Iran*, New York Press, N. Y., p. 166.

¹⁶⁹ Mohsen M. Milani, 1988, *The Making of Iran’s Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic*, Westview Press, London, p. 202.

go. He said it over and over, to thousands of Iranian pilgrims who came to pay court and to hundreds of foreign journalists. Ayatollah Khomeini, who at this phase has emerged as a popular alternative to the Shah, adhered to an effective strategy. One of Khomeini's tactics for undermining the Pahlavi regime was to appeal to the military. Winning the sentiments of the soldiers eventually would be necessary, he knew. Although countless demonstrators were dying at the hands of the army, Khomeini did not condemn the men in uniform. Rather, in his taped messages he implored them not to harm the protesters, for they all were Muslims. Instead, he said, the army must turn against the godless shah and unite with the revolutionaries in a grand war on behalf of Allah. Khomeini's message to the army was "You kill us, but we forgive you; we forgive you, but you must awake to the fact that each day you are creating more *shahids* (martyrs).¹⁷⁰ His appeals clearly had an effect. By autumn 1978, many soldiers were refusing to use force against demonstrators; some literally were joining the protesters on the spot. It would be perhaps the most incredible development of the revolution: One of the most modern armies on the planet, excellently equipped with Western weaponry purchased with oil money, was about to disintegrate.¹⁷¹

From his exile in Paris, Khomeini ordered Iran's workers to strike as a protest against the Shah's rule. Workers obeyed this order, refusing to work and paralyzing the country. Laborers in the oil industry—Iran's national lifeblood—went on strike within two weeks of Khomeini's arrival in France. Protesters disrupted banks, airlines, and Western-aligned businesses. In response, Shah Pahlavi appointed a military government to take over petroleum processing and to confront the radicals. This measure seemed to succeed momentarily, but by the end of the year, it was obvious to practically everyone that Iran's government was bound to change. Strikes had brought productive work in the country almost to a standstill. There were food shortages and power

¹⁷⁰ Mohamed Heikal, 1981, *The Return of the Ayatollah: The Iranian Revolution from Mossadeq to Khomeini*, Andre Deutsch Ltd., London, p. 167.

¹⁷¹ Daniel E. Harmon, 2005, *Spiritual leaders and thinkers: Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini*, Chelsea House Publishers, Philadelphia, USA, p. 48.

reductions. Ironically, the oil-rich country was forced to buy heating oil from the United States.¹⁷²

December 2, 1978 was the beginning of the Muslim holy month of Muharram. During Muharram, Shiites commemorate Husain's death at Karbala. The shah ordered curfew, the word came from Khomeini: 'defy the curfew!' thousands obeyed his instructions and crowded into the streets. In defiance of the shah, millions of Iranians crowded into the streets, chanting, "God is great—Khomeini is our leader."¹⁷³ Millions of people participated in the anti-shah marches in Tehran and in other cities. They were impressive, superbly organized, and massive, incomparable in recent memory in Iran. In the crowd were men and women from all walks of life, young and old, rich and poor, educated and illiterate, students, teachers, professionals, the *Bazaaries*, workers, government employees and many more – a testimony to the multiclass essence of the revolutionary movement. It recognized Khomeini's leadership and it called for an end to the Shah's rule and the creation of government on Islamic precepts.¹⁷⁴ All these protesters were carrying the banners and chanting the slogans of Ayatollah Khomeini.

Once the shah's regime began to topple, it fell quickly On January 16, 1979, Shah Pahlavi and his immediate entourage left the country, reputedly taking a vacation. Antigovernment militants rejoiced in the streets and toppled a public statue of the shah. They were confident he never would return—unless in custody, to stand trial for what they considered a long list of crimes against the people.¹⁷⁵ The Shah left governmental control in the hands of a newly appointed prime minister, Dr. Shahpour Bakhtiar, a leader of the National Front. Khomeini scoffed at the prime minister and his new council. He considered Bakhtiar illegitimate because he was controlled by the Shah. Khomeini announced instead an Islamic Revolutionary Council and made plans

¹⁷² Ibid., p. 52.

¹⁷³ Brendan January, 2008, *The Iranian Revolution*, Twenty First Century Books, Minneapolis, p. 42.

¹⁷⁴ Op. cit, Mohsen M. Milani, 1988, p. 215-216.

¹⁷⁵ Op. cit., Daniel E. Harmon, 2005, p. 53.

to fly home to Iran in triumph. Bakhtiar tried to prevent Khomeini's return, realizing the people needed only the presence of their legendary ayatollah for the revolution to explode. He ordered airports closed. But Bakhtiar's authority was evaporating.¹⁷⁶

As the plane carrying Ayatollah Khomeini touched down on Iranian soil, on February 1, 1979, a journalist on board asked the Ayatollah how he felt about finally returning to Iran. Reportedly, his answer was, "Nothing. . . . I don't feel a thing."¹⁷⁷ The same lack of emotion was not true for the one million Iranians who had assembled to welcome home their spiritual leader. Khomeini immediately made a speech in which he reassured Iranians that Islam would triumph over the corruption left behind by the shah. From the airport he went to the Behesht-e-Zahra, the main cemetery of the martyrs of the Islamic Revolution. There he made a historic speech¹⁷⁸ and made it abundantly clear that he was the undisputed leader of Iran and that he was unprepared to compromise with anyone. Khomeini was popular because of his uncompromising attitude to the Shah, his anti-imperialistic and populist rhetoric, his simple life-style which contrasted with the ostentatious life of the Shah, his genius to communicate with the masses, in an easy-to-follow language, his extraordinary appeal to incite the masses to pour into the streets in millions and his religious status as a Marja-e- Taqlid turned Khomeini into the personification of the Revolution, a mystical sage, a national hero, the savior of Islam and Iran.¹⁷⁹ This marked the end of **Frame Moving** Phase which begins from 1960's up to the 1979. Now begins the **Frame Realigning** Phase which continues up to the death of Ayatollah Khomeini.

Khomeini as a young man adopted a simple lifestyle and followed it into his old age. He was an unquestioned hero to the underprivileged, nonetheless. Khomeini continually associates himself with the needs of the poor or

¹⁷⁶ Ibid. , p. 153.

¹⁷⁷ H. L. Wagner, 2009, *Creation of the Modern Middle East: Iran*, Chelsea Publishing House, New York, pp. 63-64.

¹⁷⁸ For the full speech see Appendix "*Historic Speeches of Ayatollah Khomeini.*"

¹⁷⁹ Op. cit, Mohsen M. Milani, 1988, p. 248.

‘dispossessed’ and has taken steps to implement this identification, which adds to his popularity.¹⁸⁰ Journalist and author Mohamed Heikal, in 1981 provided a quaint glimpse of the home life of Iran’s new leader: It is still Khadijah (Khomeini’s wife) who cooks the Ayatollah’s food for him. His routine is regular and his menu simple. He wakes at about 5 a.m. for the dawn prayer, then goes back to sleep again. His breakfast, consisting of bread and a saucer of honey, is placed by Khadijah for him beside his *doshak* (floor blanket). At 11 a.m. he has a little fruit juice, usually orange juice, and at noon a little rice and boiled meat, which he eats with a spoon—the only utensil he ever uses. He is particularly fond of the yellow Persian water-melons. After his midday meal he has a nap, then wakes for the afternoon prayer and continues dealing with business and meeting people until after midnight. Khomeini does not smoke, and never uses the telephone, though while he was in France he once made an exception to this rule when he heard that his brother, Basandidah, was very ill and he wished to hear his voice. The elder brother now occupies the small house in a side street which used to be the Ayatollah’s home until he attained power. Now he has moved to a new residence, one of a group of four houses, all single storey, grouped on either side of a street. One pair contains the offices of his secretary and personal mullah, his security guards, and so on. Across the street one house contains a section of revolutionary guards and the other is the Ayatollah’s own home. Inside there is a reception room, about 16 feet by 24, with an undistinguished blue carpet on the floor and spotlights cluttering the ceiling. It looks like a makeshift television studio. This leads into three tiny private rooms and a minute kitchen. One of these rooms is for Khomeini’s wife, one for any member of the family who wishes to make use of it, and the final one is Khomeini’s own bedroom. From what I could see, all his worldly possessions there consisted of his *doshak* and a trunk containing his clothes.¹⁸¹

¹⁸⁰ Nikki R. Keddie, 1981, *Roots of Revolution: An Interpretive History of Modern Iran*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, p. 267.

¹⁸¹ Mohamed Heikal, 1981, *The Return of the Ayatollah: The Iranian Revolution from Mossadeq to Khomeini*, Andre Deutsch Ltd., London, p. 136.

Time magazine named Ayatollah Khomeini its 1979 Man of the Year. “Rarely has so improbable a leader shaken the world,” the magazine’s editors noted. “The revolution that he led to triumph threatens to upset the world balance of power more than any political event since Hitler’s conquest of Europe.”¹⁸²

Titles and Slogans of Ayatollah Khomeini

Ayatollah Khomeini came to be known as “Imam”, by his followers in 1970’s was an unprecedented event in the Shi’ite history. The connotations of Imam as a divinely inspired leader in sacred history in the mind of the believers has undoubtedly worked to enhance Khomeini’s charisma. “Imam” – the mere word – is an invitation to obedience. More it is a command to believe. The term Imam rings of infallibility and of immortality in a Shi’i ear. It approximates the man to the sacred vicinity of the twelve infallibles, the immortals of the Shi’i attendance upon metahistory. There is scarcely any term more sacred than Imam in the cherished remembrance of the Shi’i mind. They have had it somehow exclusively for Ali and a particular line of his infallible descendents. Add it to Khomeini; you have extended your absolute obedience to the uppermost, deepest level of your piety, humility, devotion. Khomeini earns the thankful recognition of “Imam” from an ecstatic crowd.¹⁸³

The other titles of Ayatollah Khomeini are; Abraham of our Age; the Disseminator of the Elevated School of the House of the Prophet; the Founder of the Islamic Republic; the Glorious Upholder of the Faith; the Great Awakener of the Century; the Great Savior of the Age; the Greatest Guide; the Guardian of All Muslims; the Guardian Jurisconsult; the Highest Ranking Warrior; the Hope of the World’s Oppressed; the Idol Smasher; Leader of the Islamic Revolution; Leader of the Islamic Community; Moses of the Time; the

¹⁸² Brendan January, 2008, *The Iranian Revolution*, Twenty First Century Books, Minneapolis, p. 60.

¹⁸³ Hamid Dabashi, 2006, *Theology of Discontent: The Ideological Foundation of the Islamic Revolution in Iran*, Transaction Publishers, New Jersey, pp. 482-483.

Reviver of Religion in the New Century; the Torchbearer of the Universal Islamic Movement; and the Vanguard of the Global Islamic Movement.

As far as Revolutions are concerned slogans play the crucial part in mass mobilization, same is the case with Iranian Revolution. However, here only those slogans are included which are related to Khomeini, in order to show the awe, devotion or reverence directed towards Ayatollah Khomeini which are the essence for the leader to be charismatic.

- Three were the idol-breakers;
Abraham, Muhammad, and Ruhollah (Khomeini)
- America is our enemy;
Khomeini is our leader.
- America, America supporters of murderers;
Khomeini, Khomeini supporters of labourers.
- Army is our brother;
Iran is our nation;
Khomeini is our leader.
- God is Greatest;
Khomeini is the leader. (*Allah-o-Akbar; Khomeini Rehbar*)
- Khomeini the light of God, the Commander in Chief.
- O Imam, your path is our path,
Your choice is our choice.
- Oh if Khomeini orders me jihad,
The cannon and machine gun cannot stop me.
- We are soldiers, the soldiers of Khomeini;
- We sacrifice our lives for Khomeini.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸⁴ M. H. panahi, 2001, *An Introduction to the Islamic Revolution of Iran and its Slogans*, Al-Hoda Pub., London. Pp. 83-121.



Ayatollah Khomeini (center, with black turban) is greeted by supporters after his arrival at the airport in Tehran upon his return from exile

Consolidation of Revolution

On 5 February, Khomeini appointed Mahdi Bazargan prime minister of the provincial Islamic government. On 7 February, representatives of the air force personnel clandestinely met Khomeini and swore allegiance to him. Their lead was soon followed by representatives of the army and the navy ranks.¹⁸⁵ By February 11, 1979, it was clear that the revolutionary forces were in control of Tehran. Khomeini broadcast a triumphant message: Iran was now an Islamic state. On the other side was the far more formidable shadow clerical government. In the last days of the revolution, Khomeini set up in Tehran a Revolutionary Council and a Central *Komiteh* (Committee). The former acted as a watchdog on the Provisional Government. Since Khomeini had in his edict of 5 February instructed the Bazargan government to hold a referendum on the issue of ‘changing the political system of the country into an Islamic Republic’, public debate centered around the wording of the question to be placed before the voters, and the exact title of the republic. Khomeini summarily dismissed the suggestion of *Fedain Khalq*, National Democratic Front, Democratic Party of Kurdistan who suggested names like People’s Democratic Republic, Democratic Islamic Republic etc. The question on the ballot paper read, ‘Should Iran be an Islamic Republic?’ Yes or No. the referendum was held on 30 and 31 March. The *Fedain Khalq*, National Democratic Front, Democratic Party of Kurdistan and other ethnic groups boycotted it. According to government, 98.2% of the 20,251,000 voters said ‘Yes’ to the Islamic Republic. The Ayatollah declared 1 April as ‘the first day of the Government of God’.¹⁸⁶

This laid the ground for elections to a 73-man constituent body with the newly coined name of *Majles-e Khebregan* (Assembly of Experts) – a term with religious connotations. In August, the country held elections for these delegates. All candidates were closely vetted by the Central *Komiteh*, the

¹⁸⁵ Dilip Hiro, 1985, *Iran under the Ayatollahs*, Routledge and Kegan Paul: London, p. 91.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

Central Mosque Office, and the newly formed Society for the Militant Clergy of Tehran (*Jam'eh-e Rouhaniyan-e Mobarez-e Tehran*). Not surprisingly, the elections produced landslide victories for Khomeini's disciples. The winners included fifteen ayatollahs, forty *hojjat al-islam*, and eleven laymen closely associated with Khomeini. The Assembly of Experts set to work drafting the Islamic Constitution. The new constitution was ratified by the referendum on the 2 and 3 December. The document contained 175 clauses – 40 amendments were added upon Khomeini's death. The document was to remain in force until the return of the Mahdi. The preamble affirmed faith in God, Divine Justice, the Koran, Judgment Day, the Prophet Muhammad, the Twelve Imams, the return of the Hidden Mahdi, and, most pertinent of all, Khomeini's concept of *velayat-e faqih*. It reaffirmed opposition to all forms of authoritarianism, colonialism, and imperialism. The introductory clauses bestowed on Khomeini such titles as Supreme *Faqih*, Supreme Leader, Guide of the Revolution, Founder of the Islamic Republic, Inspirer of the *Mostazafen*, and, most potent of all, Imam of the Muslim Umma – Shi'is had never before bestowed on a living person this sacred title with its connotations of Infallibility. Khomeini was declared Supreme Leader for life.¹⁸⁷

However the consolidation of power for Islamic regime was not so smooth. During the first decade there were many crises both from outside as well as from inside like American Hostage Crisis (1979-1981) and Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988). However the main problem which Khomeini faced was the rebellion from the ethnic groups. The response of these ethnic groups is discussed in detail.

Social Change in Iran

Some important social changes have been occurred in Iran after revolution to improve the lives of rural populations through technology and health care and to expand all levels of education for both genders to the entire

¹⁸⁷ Ervand Abrahamian, 2008, *A History of Modern Iran*, Cambridge University Press, New York, pp. 163-164,

country. Two other major changes have been the rapid pace of urbanization, so that the great majority of population now lives in a variety of urban areas, and unusually dramatic demographic transition, changing from rapid population increase until the 1980's to a dramatic lowering birthrates since then.¹⁸⁸ Every revolution introduces a new system of morality and behavior. After revolution the regime has imposed an Islamic morality and behavior on the society at large. Moral purification is taken seriously because the regime regards Islamic Revolution as a ideological one against the blasphemy and decadence of the Pahlavis. whereas under the Shah, individuals who resorted to political quietism or apathy enjoyed the relative freedom to exercise their own moral and religious values and choose their life-styles, under the Islamic republic these choices have become increasingly limited, if not absent.

The Office for Propagation of Virtues and Prevention of Sins was formed to regulate and supervise Islamic morality and behavior. Aspects of this morality and behavior are discernable everywhere. Discos and bars are dismantled, the productions of alcoholic beverages are forbidden, and only traditional music sung by men and martial music are aired on national radio and television. Western-made films examined for compatibility with Islamic norms and values seldom pass the sensors.

Society is segregated on gender lines. Co-education is eliminated. Women are encouraged by the government not to seek employment and instead preoccupy themselves with the precious function of motherhood. The Family Protection Laws of 1967, which under some circumstances granted the women right to ask for divorce and created special family courts, were declared illegal. Polygyny has been legalized.

New dress codes are imposed on women. Female students below the university level are required to wear a uniform with an Islamic *hejab* (veil), or dress code. In July 1980 the Islamic Republic ordered government employees

¹⁸⁸ Nikki R. Keddie, 2003, *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of the Revolution*, Yale University Press, London, p. 285.

to wear *hejab*. A year later, the *Majlis* required all the women to wear *hejab*. Thus what went down by force went up by force: in the 1930's, Reza Shah unveiled the women by force, in the 1980's the Islamic Republic veiled them the same way.

Response of Ethnic Minorities To Iranian Revolution

The Ethnic and Religious Composition of Iran

The Islamic Republic of Iran is ethnically diverse. Persians comprise only a little over half the country's population. The Azeris constitute another quarter. Gilaki and Mazandarani, Kurds, Arabs, Baluch, and Turkmen form significant minorities (Figure 1). It is difficult to get an exact understanding on the populations of ethnic and religious minorities, as since 1956 there has not been an official census in Iran that takes into account religious and ethnic minorities. Furthermore, the categories of ethnic and religious minority are not mutually exclusive. Often, if one is a member of an ethnic minority (such as Kurd, Baluchi or Turcoman), one will also be a member of a religious minority (Sunni).¹⁸⁹ Ethnic and linguistic diversity in Iran is much greater than in Iran's western neighbors. For example, Iraq is about 60 percent Shi'a Arab, about 20 percent Sunni Arab, and a little less than 20 percent Kurd, with small populations of Turkmens and Assyrians.¹⁹⁰ Perhaps the closest analogue to Iran in terms of ethnic diversity is Pakistan: The share of the largest group, the Punjabis, is similar to that of Persians in Iran; the remainder of the country consists of a large number of ethnic minorities. In contrast to the diversity of its ethnic landscape, Iran is relatively homogenous in terms of religion: 89 percent of the population is Shi'ite (Figure 2). What little religious diversity does exist is highly correlated with ethnicity: Iran's largest non-Shi'a bloc—Sunni Muslims—is largely drawn from Iran's Kurdish, Baluch, and Turkmen populations.

¹⁸⁹ Kerim Yildiz and Tanyel B. Taysi, 2007, *The Kurds in Iran: The Past, Present and Future*, Pluto Press London, p. 49.

¹⁹⁰ Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), *The World Fact Book*, 2007.

In the past, overlapping identities within Iran have posed political challenges to the regimes. The country's Azeri and Kurdish populations have frequently agitated for more cultural freedom and a greater degree of local autonomy vis-à-vis Tehran. These two groups have a geographically consolidated critical mass. Moreover, large communities of co ethnics live in neighboring states (Figures 3). The last shah, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, his father, Reza Shah Pahlavi, and the current rulers of Iran have managed to thwart and mitigate the secessionist tendencies of these two groups. Currently, only a very few individuals from these two groups are actively seeking to secede from Iran.

Figure 1: Iran's Ethnic Composition

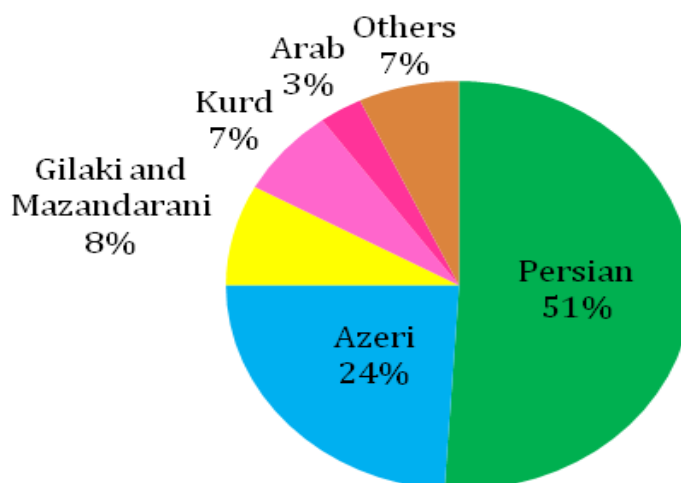
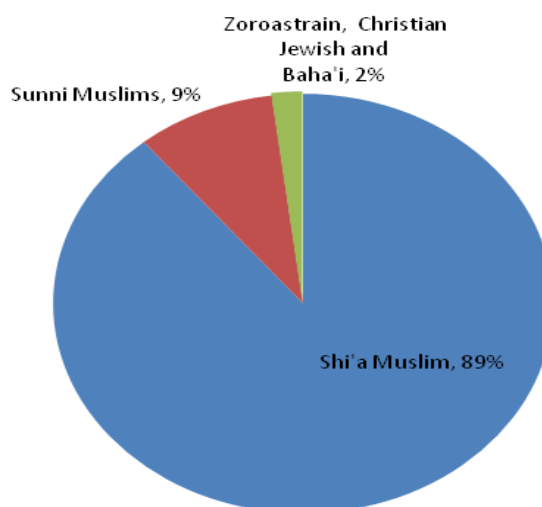


Figure 2: Iran's Religious Composition



SOURCE: U.S. Department of State, *Background Notes*, March 2008.

Figure 3 Geographic Breakdown of Iran's Ethno-religious Diversity



SOURCE: University of Texas, Perry-Castaneda Library Map Collection, 2004.

The situation of religious and ethnic minorities in Iran has been generally poor since before the revolution in 1979, and there exists substantial suspicion in the social, political and economic spheres regarding ethnic and religious minorities. This is based on political uncertainty, excessive centralization and ideological intolerance of minorities.¹⁹¹

During the Pahlavi monarchy, the multiethnic, multinational, and multicultural character of Iranian society was vigorously denied and brutally suppressed. The Reza Shah's policies were authoritarian and often brutal, including the forced settlement of thousands of nomads, the compulsory unveiling of women, neglect or suppression of non-Persian minorities, and the concentration of power in Tehran.¹⁹² Another important facet of Reza Khan's consolidation of authority was the pursuit of investment and economic

¹⁹¹ N. Ghanea-Hercock, 2003, *Ethnic and Religious Groups in the Islamic Republic of Iran*, UN Commission on Human Rights E/CN.4/Sub.2/ AC.5/2003/WP.8, 5 May 2003, p. 3.

¹⁹² Juan Cole, 2002, *Sacred Space and Holy War: The Politics, Culture and History of Shi'ite Islam*, London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, pp. 189–211.

development in Iran's central Persian region; the periphery where the country's Azeri, Kurd, Arab, Baluch, and Turkmen populations resided was relatively neglected. This marginalization of the periphery continued under the rule of Mohammed Reza Shah (1941–1979). On the eve of the Islamic Revolution, the heavily Azeri, Kurd, and Baluch provinces trailed the Persian regions significantly in indicators of health, education, and income. In the Persian central provinces, 20 percent suffered from poverty, but more than 30 percent lived below the poverty level in Kurdish and Azeri areas and more than 70 percent in Baluchistan. Similarly, while literacy rates in Persian areas stood at nearly 20 percent above the national average, the corresponding figures ranged from 5 percent to 18 percent below the mean in heavily minority provinces.¹⁹³

If one could sum up the legacy that Pahlavi Dynasty left behind particularly in terms of governance and nation building, it should be the legacy of “one nation, one language, one country”. It was under these conditions that autonomous movements remained largely in the background until they reappeared in the antimonarchy push that precipitated the 1979 Revolution. The ethnic minorities especially the Kurds and Azeri supported the Iranian Revolution and played an important role in the general unrest that forced the shah to abdicate. All ethnic groups – Baluchis in the East, Azeri Turks and the Kurds in the North-West, Turkomans in the North-East and Arabs in the South – all of whom constituted more than one-third of the total population of Iran demanded local autonomy. The Slogan raised there were on the lines “Democracy for Iran, Autonomy for Region”.¹⁹⁴

The Minorities in Post-Revolution Iran

It was expected by many ethnic minorities that the Islamic revolution of 1979 would enhance their position and afford them some decentralization. It had been thought that Ayatollah Khomeini's calls for the revival of Islamic

¹⁹³ Akbar Aghajanian, “Ethnic Inequality in Iran: An Overview,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 2, May 1983, p. 216-218.

¹⁹⁴ A. A. H. Abidi, 1989, *Iran at the Crossroads: the Dissent Movement*, Patriot Publishers, New Delhi, p. 174.

community may also conceive of loyal but autonomous ethnic areas. These hopes were, however, dashed early on. The 1979 Islamic revolution proved to be largely negligent of the ethnic minority issue. Despite strong support and participation from ethnic minorities during the Islamic Revolution. After the revolutionary regime established power, ethnic groups once again attempted to carve out a measure of autonomy. Iran's Turkmen, Baluch, Arabs, and Kurds all staged revolts. With the exception of the Kurdish challenge, the regime put each down relatively quickly (1979–1980).¹⁹⁵

Kurds

West Azerbaijan, Kurdistan, Ilam, and Kermanshah Provinces are heavily populated by Kurds, about 75 percent of whom are Sunni. Also, Kurdish refugees from Iraq settled in the area. There are many Kurds living immediately across the borders, too. The areas in Iran inhabited by the Kurds tend to be underdeveloped and have high unemployment. According to the 1999 Human Development Report of Iran, these provinces are in the lower half of the provincial scale of the human development index¹⁹⁶. Kurdish writers and intellectuals also complain about a lack of political representation in Tehran and the lack of attention to their cultural needs. Iran's revolutionary regime came to see the predominantly Sunni Kurds as its greatest challenge. Former officers of the Shah's military had established units in the Kurdish regions and threatened the new regime. Tehran also feared what it saw as the Kurds' separatist tendencies. Shi'a Kurds who did not have such intentions ended up in conflict with the Sunni Kurds.

The central government also sent troops, mostly the highly-committed Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC), to fight against the Kurds. While the regime was fighting the Kurds; it also was fighting Iraq, which was something of a distraction. By July 1984, however, the Iranian government

¹⁹⁵ Dilip Hiro, 1987, *Iran Under the Ayatollahs*, New York: Routledge, pp. 111–113

¹⁹⁶ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 1999, *Human Development Report of the Islamic Republic of Iran*, pp. 21.

controlled much of Kurdistan. The region suffered a great deal of devastation during the 1980-1988 war with Iraq and because of Iranian government repression. Tehran eliminated villages, expelled their populations, and planted mines. There has been some reconstruction of local infrastructure in the years since the war, but a great deal remains to be done. Local management was not used, furthermore, and as unemployment climbed, many local youth left for the cities to find work.¹⁹⁷

Baluchis

The majority of south-eastern Sistan va Baluchistan province's population of 1.2 million is ethnically Baluchi and religiously Sunni (most Sistanis are Shi'a, while Baluchis are Sunni). As such, they have more in common with Baluchis across the border in Pakistan and Afghanistan than they do with the Shi'a central government in Tehran. Furthermore, the region is underdeveloped and suffers from a higher-than-average unemployment rate, leaving people with few options other than illegal activities, such as smuggling. The 1999 Human Development Report of Iran notes that Sistan va Baluchistan is at the bottom of its index¹⁹⁸. The government blocked attempts to create a political organization that would represent Baluchi interests. According to Baluchi activists, furthermore, Tehran has forcibly relocated Baluchis to remote areas, while encouraging non-Baluchis from other provinces to replace them through the provision of incentives like free land, government jobs, and subsidized housing. There also is the sense among locals that there is anti-Sunni discrimination.¹⁹⁹

Azeris

Azeris make up a large proportion of the Iranian population, with estimates of 24 percent. Most of the Azeris live in East Azerbaijan, West

¹⁹⁷ A. William Samii, 2000, *The Nation and its Minorities: Ethnicity, Unity and State Policy in Iran*, Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East, Vol. XX Nos. 1&2, pp.131-135.

¹⁹⁸ Op. cit., p. 21.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., pp. 134-135.

Azerbaijan, Ardebil, Zanzan and Ghazvin provinces. They enjoy of having regional TV channels in Azari language and lot of newspapers and local press. Nearly all Azeris are Shi'a, subsequently; there are not any religious differences between them and the central government in Tehran. Iranians of Azeri origin are active in all walks of life (government, military, clergy, business), and many of them, such as Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei himself, are major players in Iranian politics. During Khamenei's trip to the predominantly Azeri-inhabited northwest (West Azerbaijan, East Azerbaijan, Ardebil, and Zanzan Provinces), he said that "one of the strongest bases of this great revolution and Islamic system lies in these very Azeri speaking regions." Yet many Azeris do not think they get adequate attention from Tehran, either politically or culturally due to its inattention to Azeri culture and language.

Arabs

The Arab community in Iran is around 3% of the total population. The Arab community mainly lives in the Khuzestan region adjoining Iraq. It is the site of much of Iran's oil resources. Members of Iran's Arab community have a long-standing grievance against successive governments that Arabs have been overlooked in terms of the distribution of resources aimed at social development. They have largely stood firmly behind the revolutionary government since 1979. However Arab activists claim that the attitude of the present government does not differ from that of the previous regime in its efforts to stamp out Arab culture. There is no Arabic-language newspaper dealing with domestic issues in Khuzestan. Arabic is not taught in elementary schools, and the Arabic teaching in secondary schools focuses exclusively on religious texts. The governor of Khuzestan is not an Arab, and very few high-ranking government officials are from an Arab background.²⁰⁰ Suspicion and discrimination therefore remains against the Arabs, despite what may be

²⁰⁰ N. Ghanea-Hercock, 2003, *Ethnic and Religious Groups in the Islamic Republic of Iran*, UN Commission on Human Rights E/CN/4/Sub.2/ AC.5/2003/WP.8, 5 May 2003, p.09.

considered as a surprising level of loyalty by the Arabs for the revolutionary regime.

It can be considered that with the Islamic emphasis on the brotherhood of all Muslims despite race and color, Iran's Islamic revolution was fuelled with the ideology of de-emphasizing ethnic diversity, especially amongst co-Muslims. Article 19 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran states 'All people of Iran, whatever the ethnic group or tribe to which they belong, enjoy equal rights; color, race, language, and the like, do not bestow any privilege.' In effect, however, this means the privileging of the Persian race and language to the detriment of all others. As one writer comments, "The concept of ethnic minority in the Iranian constitution is strictly cultural; it has no juridico-political identity ... In the constitution of the Islamic Republic the identity of political power is uniform and ethnic; Persian ethnicity defines the identity of the sovereign, the conditions of citizenship and hence the boundaries of the state and civil society".²⁰¹ Ayatollah Khomeini's regime was paranoid about the need to preserve Iran's territorial integrity, and a highly centralized and Persian-dominated rule resulted. The need to build up the new regime and ensure its legitimacy and survival, and the war initiated by Iraq, only served to heighten the regime's concern with 'national security' yet further. All attempts by ethnic minorities to maximize on any weaknesses in the country with the outset of the Iraq-Iran war, and all demands for levels of independence, were heavily quashed. Iran also accused a number of powers, such as the Soviet Union, the US and Iraq of supporting ethnic opposition to its rule. All in all it has been highly evident over the past decades that, "Iran's Islamic Republican regime favors a strong center and is very hostile to ethnic dissidents."²⁰²

Legacy of Ayatollah Khomeini in Contemporary Iran

In May 1989, the imam, by then about ninety years old, underwent surgery to stop intestinal bleeding. Eleven days later, on June 3, he suffered a

²⁰¹ Ibid., p. 10.

²⁰² Ibid., pp. 10-11.

heart attack and died. The announcement of his death, made the next morning, threw the nation into grief. Millions crowded into the streets to view Khomeini's body. Iranians sent him to his grave with the same hysterical idolization they had shown when he arrived in Tehran from exile. Ignoring a wilting summer heat wave, millions from across the nation converged on Tehran to pay their respects as his corpse lay in state. During his funeral procession, mourners rushed the open casket to tear off fragments of his white burial cloth. As in the days of revolution, soldiers had to fight off emotionally charged Iranians—this time, though, in a conflict of a quite different nature. At one point, thronging mourners upset the coffin, tumbling out the ayatollah's body. A helicopter had to be ordered down to lift it away from the melee. The master of the Iranian revolution and the undisputed leader of its government was gone. His death left a huge void in Iranian society that would be virtually impossible to fill. Many Iranians had regarded Ayatollah Khomeini as an Imam—not as one of the historic Twelve, but similar to them in stature as a spiritual leader. "Stern, demanding, and righteous, refusing to be seduced by materialism and power, Khomeini linked the Iranians to traditional faith and national identity, held a place in Iranian politics and culture that had never been occupied before nor is likely to be occupied by any other man again."²⁰³

However, Ayatollah Khomeini's theological and political legacies will continue to dominate the country. The legacy of Ayatollah Khomeini can be seen in the victory of Iranian Revolution, over the 2500 years of monarchy. The Revolution and Imam Khomeini are two inseparable phenomenon, in the same way Khomeini made Islam and Politics inseparable through his concept of *Vilayat-e-Faqih*, which is still working in Iran after more than three decades of its implementation.

The shrine of Ayatollah Khomeini graveyard is addressed the sacred shrine "*haram-e mottahar*," an epithet which is used for the shrine of the saints

²⁰³ Sandra Mackey, 1996, *The Iranians: Persia, Islam and the Soul of a Nation*, Penguin Group, New York, p. 346.

in the Shi'ite tradition.²⁰⁴ The tomb of Ayatollah Khomeini is a commemorative monument built to honor both the man buried in it and the revolution he inspired. In particular, it symbolizes the tensions between the disparate interpretations of the past and the future in the Islamic Republic of Iran. As a place of pilgrimage, its form recalls earlier Shi'i shrines, as do many of the rituals that take place in it. As a state symbol, it necessarily participates in the propagandistic agenda of the re- public. The traditionalism thus is not at the cost of its primary role as a civic monument.²⁰⁵ The shrine of Ayatollah Khomeini has become the religious symbol of Iran where thousands of people attend to remember his legacy.

“The late imam was the greatest political and military analyst and a great politician. Imam Khomeini was the best possible pattern for all people in all ages and eras,” says President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in 2008.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁴ Ahmad Ashraf, 1990, *Theocracy and Charisma: New Men of Power in Iran*, International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society, Vol. 4, No. 1 (Autumn, 1990), pp. 113-152.

²⁰⁵ Kishwar Rizvi, 2003, *Religious Icon and National Symbol: The Tomb of Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran*, Muqarnas, Vol. 20 (2003), pp. 209-224

²⁰⁶ Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) (June 1, 2008).

Conclusion

Ayatollah Khomeini's incorruptible, uncompromising and sincere character, the manner of his rise to power, the overwhelming welcome by the millions of people on his return to Iran after fifteen years of exile, likewise the commemoration of his death by millions of people and his grave which has been identified as a sacred shrine (*Haram-i-Mutahhar*), has received millions of pilgrims. This mass support necessarily elicits awe, devotion and reverence which provide in Ayatollah Khomeini a charismatic leader.

The attributions of Ayatollah Khomeini's charisma and his extraordinary personal qualities, heroic statue are strongly rooted in the cultural and historical context of Iranian society. The charismatic appeal of Ayatollah Khomeini has deep roots in the Iranian sense of national identity based on Shi'ism and *Irfan*. Both Shi'ism and *Irfan* had a great influence on Khomeini in developing his leadership and charismatic traits.

Khomeini was endowed with multiple charismatic traits that could easily appeal to the hearts and minds of his followers like the auspicious day of his birth, the orphan hood, the title of *Sayyid*, and the title of the "*Imam*", the position exclusively reserved in the Iranian Shi'ite community for the twelve infallible Imams.

The charismatic dimension of Ayatollah Khomeini's leadership rests on the dialectical growth of a unique relationship between him and his followers as Charisma is not just the special qualities of the leader nor the recognition of that leader by a group of his followers. Rather, it is the relationship between the

two – leader and followers – influenced by the qualities of the leader and the attitude of the followers. Khomeini possesses exceptional qualities which include simple way of life, refusal to compromise, austerity, consistent, sincere, transcendental vision and ideology, an ability to inspire and build confidence, the expression of revolutionary ideals, rhetorical ability, powerful aura and asceticism. The followers also see in Khomeini a charismatic leader which can be seen in their unquestioning acceptance, trust, belief, affection, obedience, emotional involvement in his mission as Khomeini gave to the masses a sense of personal integrity, collective identity, historical rootedness, and feelings of pride and superiority.

Ayatollah Khomeini was the main driving force behind the 1979 Iranian Revolution. The revolution and Khomeini are two inseparable phenomena. Ayatollah Khomeini with no material resources, without the construction of political party, without support of a single foreign power has established himself as the undisputed leader of a major revolutionary movement which bring the downfall of 2500 years of monarchy and also succeeded in creating a new Islamic order with a new value system, new identity, new social system and to some extent new institutional arrangements, all of which had the purpose of fortifying Islam. Ayatollah Khomeini's charismatic leadership was undoubtedly a major factor in the success of the 1979 revolution in Iran. Therefore it sustains and demonstrates the validity of the related hypothesis that Ayatollah Khomeini's charismatic leadership was a potent force in Iranian Revolution and subsequent social change.

The role played by Ayatollah Khomeini in bringing about social change in Iran can be broadly divided into three phases.

Frame Breaking Phase: This phase begins from the beginning of teaching career of Khomeini up to the 1960's until the death of Ayatollah Borujerdi. During this phase Khomeini's participation in politics in the period of the 1940s and 50s was mostly covert, he managed nevertheless to gather supporters and build his position in the Qom religious center as the political cleric. In the

first phase, he employs frame-breaking strategies by attempting to reduce the value people place on the social convention prevailing during Shah's Period. Specifically, he derogates social convention by negating people's desire to maintain the status quo and negating their fear of change or innovation. During frame-breaking, Khomeini breaks ties to the group identity by: increasing leader identification with followers and stressing group identity by emphasizing their similarity to followers, employing the Shi'ite history of Iran and his claim that he and only he had the mission he believed called upon to perform was the mystical charisma he felt within himself. This feeling was reinforced by his deep rooted belief in the gnostic and pantheistic ideas of Ibn al-Arabi and Mulla Sadra. These self-references, and inclusive language; and creating a sense of dissatisfaction with the current status quo by reinterpreting the Shi'ite past and present, expressing and arousing emotional dissatisfaction, and relaying a sense of urgency or crisis.

Frame Moving Phase: This phase begins when Ayatollah Khomeini rises to the highest position of the *marja-e-taqlid* (source of emulation) and continued up to the February 1, 1979 until the return of Khomeini. In the second phase, Ayatollah Khomeini engage in frame-moving strategies by attempting to alter the group's identity and values prevalent during Shah's Period and relaying on new values and defining an alternate identity that is in line with his vision of change. During this phase (1964-1979) Ayatollah Khomeini created, gradually but consistently, unsystematically but coherently, a language of revolt which lead to the dramatic return and the establishment of the Islamic Republic.

Frame Realigning Phase: This phase begins when Ayatollah Khomeini returns to Iran after fifteen years of exile and continues up to his death. In the final phase, Khomeini use frame-realigning to convince followers to support his new vision and encourage them towards action. The third phase begins with the consolidation of revolution. Khomeini succeeded in creating a new Islamic order with a new value system, new identity, and new social system and to some extent new institutional arrangements, all of which had purpose of

fortifying Islam. Furthermore religion plays a determining factor during the revolution and also shaped the new socio-political order in post-revolutionary Iran which confirms the validity of our hypothesis.

The transfer of Iran from a monarchical state to a theocratic state was not smooth soon after the revolution, Iran engulfed in crises both from outside as well as from inside like American Hostage Crisis (1979-1981), Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988) and discontent among women and ethnic minorities. However, it was the eight year war with Iran that has weakened the legacy of Iranian Revolution, more than other crisis therefore it partially sustains and demonstrates the validity of the related hypothesis that discontent among ethnic and religious minority and women has weakened the legacy of the revolution.

It could be concluded that the manifestation of Ayatollah Khomeini as a charismatic leader had deep roots in the country historical past. Khomeini was an embodiment of tradition among the masses of Iran in general and Shi's in particular, but due to his profound, wide and comprehensive effects in social and political affairs of new era, has made of him a unique and unparalleled charismatic figure.

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Appendix

Glossary

<i>akhlāq</i>	ethics
<i>alim</i>	learned man
<i>arif</i>	gnostic, one who has achieved the knowledge
of divine	
<i>ashura</i>	tenth day of Muharram; day of martyrdom of
Imam	
	Hussain and mourning for them
<i>ayatollah</i>	high-ranking cleric (lit. “sign of god”)
<i>basej</i>	support volunteer fighters (lit. “mobilized”)
<i>bay’a</i>	oath of allegiance
<i>chador</i>	long-covering for women
<i>fana</i>	state of union with the divine
<i>faqih</i>	jurist
<i>fatwa</i>	religious pronouncement
<i>fedayi</i>	fighter; self-sacrificer
<i>fiqh</i>	religious jurisprudence
<i>fuqaha</i>	jurists, plural of faqih
<i>hadith</i>	traditions concerning the Prophet
<i>haram</i>	forbidden
<i>hijab</i>	Islamic dress
<i>hojjat al-islam</i>	middle-ranking cleric (lit. “proof of Islam”)
<i>hukumat</i>	government, state
<i>husseinieh</i>	religious center
<i>ijma</i>	consensus
<i>ijtihad</i>	independent judgment (of a <i>mujtahid</i>
pronouncing a	
	legal ruling)
<i>imam</i>	leader, usually in a religious sense
<i>Imam</i>	one of the 12 infallible successors to the Prophet
in Shi’ism	
<i>Irfan</i>	Islamic Gnosticism, mystical philosophy
<i>isma</i>	infallibility
<i>jihad</i>	Strive, struggle
<i>khalifat</i>	rightly guided succession

<i>marifat</i>	knowledge by presence of the divine, mystical
knowledge	
<i>majles</i>	meeting, parliament
<i>maraj-e taqlid</i>	source of emulation (most prominent <i>mujtahid</i>
of his	time)
<i>mellat</i>	nation, people
<i>mujahed</i>	fighter; crusader
<i>mujtahed</i>	one who may use his own judgement (<i>ijtihad</i>) in interpreting the religious law
<i>mostazafen</i>	the meek, oppressed, exploited, wretched of the
earth	
<i>muqalid</i>	ordinary believer, follower of a <i>mujtahid</i>
<i>nabi</i>	prophet
<i>nafs</i>	soul
<i>nuzhat</i>	movement
<i>rahbar</i>	leader
<i>sayyid</i>	one claiming descent from the Prophet
<i>shahed</i>	martyr
<i>shari'a</i>	sacred law of Islam
<i>taqiyyah</i>	dissimulation of religion
<i>taqlid</i>	imitation of a <i>mujtahid</i>
<i>tauhid</i>	unity, oneness
<i>taziyeh</i>	passion play
<i>ummat</i>	community
<i>usul</i>	principles
<i>ulama</i>	clergy
<i>velayat-e faqeh</i>	guardianship of the jurist
<i>wali</i>	saint

CHRONOLOGY: Khomeini and the Iranian Revolution

September 24, 1902 - Ruhollah Khomeini is born in Khomein, a village of about 2,000 people in central Iran about 200 kilometers north-west of Isfahan.

March, 1903 - Ruhollah's father, Mostafa Khomeini is shot and killed at age 47 by two local warlords who want to prevent Mostafa from seeking the help of the provincial governor in Arak in preventing the warlords harassment of the populace.

1909 - At age seven, young Ruhollah is sent to a local *maktab* to begin his religious education. He learns how to read and write Arabic through study of the Qur'an and other religious stories. He shortly thereafter moves to a new school built by the constitutional government as part of its modernization program. There he receives elementary education in arithmetic, history, geography, and basic science. Khomeini also works with private tutors, an opportunity available to him because of his family's affluence.

1918 - Khomeini's mother and aunt are killed by cholera leaving Khomeini an orphan at age 16.

1919 - At age 17, Khomeini begins his formal seminary education in Sultanabad-Arak in a theological college run by Sheikh Abdol Karim Ha'eri. Ha'eri's firm piety and disinterest in the material world becomes a model for Khomeini. However, Ha'eri's disinterest in political matters—he unequivocally believed that the clergy should remain aloof from politics—was something Khomeini would not inherit.

1921 - Coup by Reza Khan begins the process of even stricter secularization for the Iranian state.

1922 - Khomeini follows Sheikh Ha'eri from Arak to Qom. For the previous hundred years Qom had been in decline as a center of religious learning. In 1920, however, British authorities expelled Shi'i leadership from Najaf, leading to a migration of many clergy to Qom, and the city's corresponding revival as a center of Shi'i religious learning and authority. As he begins his formal seminary education, Khomeini also seeks out masters with whom he can study *irfan*. One of his later masters would be Mirza Mohammad Ali Shahabadi, "an ascetic who, perhaps more than any of his other mentors, captured Khomeini's imagination as a model of a good teacher, disciplined, thoughtful, unpretentious and introverted." Shahabadi was also politically active and forcefully opposed Reza Shah's policies, an attribute that Khomeini was likely attracted to and in turn influenced by.

1925 - After adroitly negotiating a political rapprochement with Iranian clergy (initially opposed to his seeming anti-clericalism), Reza Khan, as prime minister, introduces a bill that deposes the Qajars and convenes a new Constituent Assembly that proclaims him the new monarch. Only one prominent religious leader, Seyed Hassan Mudarres, opposes the new government. Besides this one 'progressive *mojtahed*' the rest of Qom lets its silence be interpreted as an implicit endorsement of the new regime.

March 21, 1928 - Reza Khan is enraged when his wife is reprimanded by the clergy for unveiling herself while attending a service at the shrine of Fatemeh at Qom. He punishes the clergyman who issued the reprimand, Ayatollah Baqfi, by publicly horsewhipping him and arresting him. Baqfi is later internally exiled to Rey, and the relationship between the religious establishment and Reza Khan begins to rapidly deteriorate.

1929 - Khomeini requests the hand of Qods-e Iran, the daughter of a wealthy Tehrani cleric. Initially 'Qodsi' refuses but eventually changes her mind after being persuaded in a dream by the Prophet Muhammad's daughter Fatemeh. Khomeini and Qodsi remain married for sixty years. By all accounts, Khomeini is an attentive husband who, although a strict enforcer of Islamic law in his household, shares a larger burden of the household duties than was expected of men at the time.

1929 - Khomeini publishes a commentary on "The Dawn Supplication" (*Do'a al-Sahar*) in which he demonstrates his mastery of mysticism and mystical terminology.

1934 - Reza Shah, inspired by a trip to Turkey, begins a fiercely secular modernization plan. This includes a ban on religious garb (except for those qualified as *mujtahids*), requiring men to wear European hats and women to be unveiled in public, that enrages the clerical establishment. Reza Khan refuses to give ground and the clergy back down out of fear of violent repercussions (arrest, exile, and death). Khomeini is still too junior to take a lead in protests and so goes along with the other clergy in the practice of *taqiyya*.

1936 - Khomeini receives his permission to "derive his own rulings," giving him the status of *Hojjat al-Islam* and allowing him to officially conduct his own classes and develop his own following (which he has been doing unofficially as a recognized rising star in the religious community). Khomeini is well respected and well liked in the Qom seminary system and his following continues to grow.

1941 - Needing to secure the supply route from the Persian Gulf to Russia, and wary of Reza Shah's pro- German sentiments, the Allies invade Iran. On September 17, Reza Shah is forced to abdicate the throne and is replaced by his twenty-one-year-old son Crown Prince Mohammed Reza. Mohammed Reza is less overbearing in his commitment to secularization and initially enjoys a more amicable relationship with Qom.

1942 - Khomeini anonymously publishes *The Discovery of Secrets (Kashf al-Asrar)*, an explicit attack on secularism and the decay it was causing in Iranian society. Beyond attacking Reza Shah, however, Khomeini also reprimands the clergy who have not only opposed the Shah but have actively collaborated with him.

1946 - Ayatollah Borujerdi rises to the position of sole *marja',e* of the Shi'a. Borujerdi is an immensely competent administrator who strengthens the organizational structures of the Qom seminaries and religious community. He, however, is very much opposed to mixing religion and politics and pursues an amicable relationship with the state in which the clergy largely remain removed from the political sphere. Despite Borujerdi's political stance, Khomeini is one of his fervent supporters.

1949 - Dr. Mohammad Mosaddeq founds the National Front to represent a growing segment of the Iranian population unhappy with what it sees as British colonial influence over Iranian oil.

1951 - Mosaddeq becomes prime minister. There is some cooperation between him and the clergy, particularly in his effort to nationalize the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. Within the next couple years, however, relations deteriorate as the clergy become concerned about Mossadeq's emphasis on secularity and the perceived anti-clerical stance of many of his supporters.

August, 1953 - Mosaddeq is overthrown in a coup d'état organized by the CIA and the British. The coup actually enjoys the support of much of the clerical establishment, which more strongly comes out in favor of the Shah. General amity between the Shah and the religious establishment continues until the late 1960s as the Shah is willing to grant concessions to Qom (such as freedom to fight the spread of Baha'ism) in return for clerical support. During this period, Khomeini continues to build his reputation and following as a teacher in Qom. His network of supporters gradually expands throughout the country.

1960 - The Shah puts forth a land reform bill to the Majles that many feel violates the principles of Islam (as well as threatens the land endowments on which members of

the religious establishment depend). For the first time, Borujerdi enters the political sphere to announce his opposition to the bill. The Shah strips the bill to the point of it being virtually useless to assuage the concerns of the clergy. He is growing impatient with the clerical establishment, however, and increasingly confident of his own position to march ahead with reform plans with or without them. He puts far less effort into maintaining a cordial relationship with Borujerdi.

March 30, 1961 - Ayatollah Borujerdi dies and the Shi'i community is unable to agree on a successor as sole marja-e taglid. Khomeini at this point is too young to be a serious candidate for the position but is considered the fourth ranking theologian in Qom.

January 7, 1962 - The Shah replaces the prime minister, Ali Amini, an independent minded and competent politician who enjoyed amicable relationships with the clergy, with Asadollah Alam, a personal friend of the Shah's "unashamedly servile to him." Confident in the loyalty of the new PM and in his own political strength, the Shah is determined to march forward with reform regardless of clerical support. Khomeini, now free from Borujerdi's prohibition of clerical involvement in politics, is prepared to actively enter the political fray.

October 8, 1962 - The Shah announces a bill to extend the right to vote to women. Khomeini sees it as a perfect issue (important to much of Iranian society) on which to enter the political scene. He begins to mobilize the clergy in opposition to the Shah. The new activity among the clergy also gains the attention of more liberal reformers, such as Mehdi Bazargan and Ayatollah Taleqani, who see a chance to create a larger coalition of opposition to the Shah's authoritarianism. Khomeini, seeking to gain the support of these more liberal opposition leaders, begins to incorporate rhetoric of the 1906 constitution and emphasizes the past constitution's Islamic nature. Khomeini also begins to utilize a tactic he would employ frequently in the years to come, shaming other members of the clergy into acting in defense of Islam. **January 1963** - The Shah announces a six-point reform bill intended to solve the social, political and economic problems of Iran. He calls it the 'White Revolution.' It is to be put to referendum on January 26, 1963. Khomeini successfully galvanizes the clergy into boycotting the referendum. On January 23, many Iranians, organized by Khomeini and other activist clergy, take to the streets. Confrontations with police occur in which two senior clerics that were formerly quietist and had collaborated with the Shah in the past are disrespected. The demonstrations do not bring about a counter referendum

as ideally hoped, but the now increasingly radicalized clergy look to Khomeini for leadership. The secular opposition also boycotts the referendum but it is deemed to pass despite low turnout. In response, President Kennedy sends the Shah a telegram of congratulations.

March 22", 1963 - A service being led by Ayatollah Golpayegani, one of the three highest-ranking Ayatollah's in Qom, to commemorate Ja'far al-Sadeq, the sixth Shi'i Imam, is interrupted by the Shah's secret policemen who disrupt the ceremony and ransack the Feiziye mosque. It is the first instance of the Shah demonstrating his willingness to use force to harass and silence clerical opposition.

April, 1963 - The Shah orders the forced conscription of seminarians overriding the past exemptions that had been granted religious students.

June 3rd, 1963 - In a sermon given to commemorate *Ashura*, Khomeini unleashes the most powerful and insulting attack yet leveled against the Shah. The Shah is helpless to react for fear of igniting a large scale protest and for being compared to the hated Yazid. The following day there are pro-Khomeini marches in Tehran that attract around 100,000 people. Towards the end of the day, the police crackdown arresting more than one hundred and twenty people.

June 5th, 1963 - Khomeini is arrested along with 320 others deemed to be his key supporters. To the regime's surprise, thousands take to the streets in Qom, Tehran, and other Iranian cities. The protests continue the following day despite martial law being instituted in Tehran. Some of the protests turn bloody and more than 300 protesters are killed or wounded. Society is further radicalized and the regime begins to do damage control implementing a massive propaganda effort to discredit Khomeini and dismiss the protest movement as incited by foreign agents. A period of relative calm ensues as the clergy wait anxiously to see what is done with Khomeini. After a month he is moved to a house where he is allowed to meet with visitors to reassure the religious community of his safety.

July, 1963 - A stay at home strike to mourn protesters killed on June 5th, marks the first use of "fortieth day mourning" as a political act.

April 7th, 1964 - Khomeini is released and allowed to return to Qom. Despite efforts by the regime to mollify Khomeini, he picks up exactly where he left off loudly criticizing the reforms of the Shah he deems to be anti-Islamic. The rest of the clerical regime, however, is reticent to reignite the conflict.

Autumn, 1964 - On the heels of a new military cooperation agreement with the U.S., the regime pushes through a bill allowing the United States to have jurisdiction over all civil disputes and/or criminal transgressions of American government personnel on Iranian soil. Khomeini delivers a fiery condemnation of the bill, which he sees as a violation of Iranian sovereignty. His attempt to tackle an issue of sovereignty marks his official emergence as a political rather than purely religious leader.

November 4, 1964 - Khomeini is arrested for a second time and exiled to Turkey.

October, 1965 - Fearful that Khomeini is being exploited by his Turkish handlers and turned even further against the Iranian regime, SAVAK moves Khomeini to the holy Shi'i city of Najaf in Iraq. They hope that in this foreign Shi'i center Khomeini will drift into obscurity.

January 1' - February 8th, 1970 - Khomeini delivers a series of twelve lectures that will become his defining treatise on Islamic government. In these lectures he clearly lays out the doctrine of the *velayat-e faqih*, which is the foundation for his conception of an Islamic state. Published clandestinely these lectures are distributed throughout Iran, Khomeini's doctrine of the *velayat-e faqih* draws praise but also criticism from leading figures in the clerical establishment such as Ayatollah Kho'i of Najaf.

June 2nd, 1970 - Grand Ayatollah Mohsen Hakim, the most senior Shi'i cleric in Iraq, dies leaving a power vacuum at the top of the Shi'i religious community in both Iraq and Iran. Leading candidates to succeed him are Ayatollah Kho'i of Najaf and Ayatollah Shari'atmadari of Qom.

1972 - Khomeini delivers another series of lectures entitled *Jehatk Akbar*, "The Struggle against the Appetitive Soul or the Supreme *Jehad*."

1974 - The oil boom quadruples Iran's oil income and allows the Shah to press ahead with reform at a breakneck speed. It is too much too fast, however, and the economy busts shortly thereafter. Throughout this period the Shah maintains stability through fierce repression of all opposition.

March, 1975 - The Shah establishes a one-party system in Iran in which all citizens must be compulsory members. The new party is called the Rastakhiz or Resurgence Party. This move by the Shah is a complete failure. His desire to mobilize a political base for the regime in reality is understood by the people as a violation of their last form of political independence, that being that as long as they do not challenge the status quo they at least do not have their personal or professional lives interrupted by being forced to demonstrate loyalty to the regime. As part of this initiative the Shah

chooses to abolish the Islamic calendar in favor of a calendar based on the establishment of the Persian Empire of Cyrus the Great, further alarming the populace, particularly the religious community, that the Shah is pursuing a new type of cultural fascism. Khomeini responds in 1975 and 1976 with a series of *fatwas*, first prohibiting his followers to join the Shah's party and second prohibiting the use of the Imperial calendar. These *fatwas* mark the beginning of Khomeini attempting to reassert himself on the Iranian political scene after a period of relative obscurity. During the next two years signs of opposition surface in the form of smaller scale protests. Domestic conditions slowly begin to deteriorate.

January 1977 - Jimmy Carter takes office and his administration's emphasis on human rights applies some pressure on the Shah to begin speaking of liberalization.

October 23rd, 1977 - Ayatollah Khomeini's oldest son, Mostafa, dies suddenly while in exile. Many Khomeini supporters believe he was assassinated by the SAVAK. Mourning events for Mostafa provide inspiration for organization and mobilization while the press coverage again returns Khomeini to the center of public attention. Khomeini himself refers to the death of his son as "God's hidden providence."

December 31", 1977 - President Carter visits the Shah in Tehran on New Year's Eve. Seemingly ignoring a letter sent to him by twenty-nine Iranian opposition leaders only a month earlier requesting UN and U.S. support in the pursuit of freedom and democracy in Iran, Carter toasts the Shah with champagne. On live Iranian television he expresses his gratitude for the Shah's "close personal friendship" and describes Iran as "an island of stability... a great tribute to the respect, admiration and love of your people for you."

January 7th, 1978 - An insulting profile of Khomeini is published with regime approval in a Tehrani afternoon newspaper. It immediately elicits protests among seminary students in Qom. This is considered by many to be the final fatal mistake of the Shah that would trigger the series of events ending in his ouster.

January 9th, 1978 - Protests in Qom lead to clashes with police in which multiple protesters are killed. This event becomes known as "The Massacre at Qom" and is immediately adopted as a symbol of revolutionary heroism.

February 18th, 1978 - The 40th day of mourning for the martyrs of Qom generates protests leading to more protesters killed and martyred in Tabriz.

March 28..31, 1978 - The 40th day of mourning for the martyrs of Tabriz generates further martyrs in Qom and elsewhere. This cycle of mobilization becomes known among some activists as "doing the forty-forty."

May 6-11, 1978 - The 40th day of mourning for March martyrs generates protests and ceremonies leading to further martyrs again.

June 17th, 1978 - The "forty-forty" cycle ends in part, because of the increased presence of armed forces and the desire of protesters not to push the police/army to violence.

August 1978 - Hundreds are burned to death in a movie theater in Abadan sparking huge protests among those who believe the Shah's agents to be responsible (the doors were locked from the outside and the fire department slow to respond). "Protests mushroomed from several thousand to hundreds of thousands."

August 26th, 1978 - The Shah appoints Ja'far Sharif Emami, a moderate with a clerical background, as the new prime minister. While Emami seeks a rapprochement with more moderate revolutionary forces, at this point moderates within the movement (particularly among the clergy) are too afraid of Khomeini and his supporters to leave the revolutionary fold.

September 4th, 1978 - On Eid-e Fitr, the festival ending the Ramadan fast, a scheduled and regime permitted demonstration supposed to be outside of Tehran, turns into a 200,000+ march to the center of the city.

September 7th, 1978 - A second major protest is held despite severe warnings from the regime and considerable reservations among the more moderate members of the opposition. During this demonstration a new slogan emerges "calling for the establishment of an 'Islamic Republic.'" For the first time there is no symbolic impetus for the protest (i.e. festival, mourning ceremony, etc.). It is protest for the sake of protest.

September 8th, 1978 - Early in the morning the regime declares martial law in Tehran and other cities. Military crackdowns on protests leave many dead. Casualty estimates range from fewer than one hundred to many thousands with the most reliable sources suggesting about 70-90. The day becomes known as "Black Friday." It sparks countrywide strikes among workers and for many signals the point of no return from which there will be no compromise between the Shah and revolutionaries.

October 12th, 1978 - Facing pressure from Iranian authorities to help silence Khomeini, Iraqi security forces send Khomeini on a plane to France. He settles in

Neuphle-le-Chateau, a small village outside of Paris, and, utilizing the technology and freedom available in France to communicate freely, he turns his French home into a hub of revolutionary activity.

November 4th - 5th, 1978 - Students at the University of Tehran clash with security forces leaving some students dead. The following day more students rampage off campus destroying buildings. Shah responds with crackdown and with the appointment of a military government. Kurzman dates the "victory" of the movement to this point. He asserts that the Shah's military government did not 'dislodge' the popular perception that the revolution would inevitably succeed and thus sealed his own fate.'

December 10th, 1978 - Large protest/processions to commemorate *Ashura* bring 500,000-1,000,000 demonstrators onto the streets of Tehran.

December 11th, 1978 - A second *Ashura* procession again brings an estimated 500,000-1,000,000+ in Tehran and 6 to 9 million nationwide. It is quite possibly the largest protest event in human history. The marches are almost uniformly peaceful.

January, 1979 - As the revolutionary crisis peaks, some moderate voices within the revolutionary movement begin to express their concerns about the emergence of a clerical regime. Their voices are few and far between, however, and are easily drowned out.

January 16th, 1979 - The shah leaves Iran. He entrusts his monarchy to a regency council under the leadership of Dr. Shapour Bakhtiar.

February 1st, 1979 - Khomeini returns to Iran. He is greeted by millions who see him as the country's savior and who believe that he will offer them a better future.

February 5, 1979 - Khomeini announces the appointment of Mehdi Bazargan as Prime Minister of an interim government. Bazargan is "an Islamic modernist" with "widely accepted" democratic credentials. After a series of small conflicts between revolutionaries and military personnel loyal to the Shah, the Bakhtiar government concedes defeat. Against the protests of Bazargan and other moderates within the movement, Khomeini moves ruthlessly to punish those seen as key players in the Shah's now defunct regime. Within months, hundreds of Pahlavi officials are executed following summary trials, primarily out of vengeance for the martyrs of the revolution whose deaths they are deemed responsible for. As Khomeini's supporters organize and exercise increasing control over Iranian society, Bazargan's "official" government becomes much like Bakhtiar's as it competes with a more powerful "unofficial"

government. By late spring, a disillusioned Bazargan declares that he has become a "knife without a blade." April 1, 1979 - The new Iranian Constitution is ratified by referendum with its defining characteristic being the doctrine of *velayt-e-faqih*.

October 22nd, 1979 - The Shah is allowed to enter the United States in order to receive medical treatment for the cancer that will soon claim his life. When the U.S. refuses to hand the Shah over to the new Iranian regime or to force him to return the wealth he has stolen from the Iranian people, Khomeini and others are outraged. Up until this point, U.S. relations with the new Iranian regime have been relatively amicable. Despite Khomeini's prior anti-American rhetoric, when the U.S. embassy was initially invaded in the days immediately following the revolution, he responded swiftly to expel the intruders. Following the Shah's admittance to the U.S., however, Khomeini's suspicions of American evil intentions are confirmed and when the second Embassy takeover occurs he is less interested in intervening.

November 4th, 1979 - The U.S. Embassy is taken over by radical Iranian students who take more than fifty diplomats hostage. Bazargan attempts to remove the students but receives no support from Khomeini or the Revolutionary Council. He resigns two days later. The 'hostage crisis' lasts for 444 days.

October 24th, 1979 - The Iranian constitution founded on the idea of the is approved by popular referendum. Khomeini becomes the first supreme leader of Iran.

February 4, 1980 - Abolhassan Bani Sadr is confirmed as the first president of the Iranian Republic. Bani Sadr is highly regarded by large portions of the population for his democratic commitments and his credentials as a former member of the secular front. He is, however, undermined at every turn by Khomeini and the Islamic Republican Party (IRP). Though his position is temporarily bolstered by the outbreak of war, Bani Sadr and the IRP's disagreements come to a head in June of 1981. Khomeini strips him of his role as commander-in-chief of the armed forces and shortly thereafter he is impeached by the IRP controlled *Majles*.

September, 1980 - Iraq invades Iran beginning the nine-year Iran-Iraq War.

June 28, 1981 - A bomb believed to be planted by the Mojahedin-e Khalq (who supported Bani Sadr) explodes at the IRP headquarters killing seventy party members and some important leaders including Ayatollah Beheshti. The regime responds with the execution of political prisoners and the Mojahedin in turn respond with assassinations of more IRP party leaders. The executions increase and by the end of

1981 there are more than 2,500 who have been executed as political dissidents. In his determined quest to stop dissident attacks, Khomeini initiates huge propaganda campaigns to encourage Iranians to turn over dissidents to the government. In 1982, the leader of the Mojahedin, Musa Khiabani, is killed significantly crippling the organization's ability to continue its attacks on the regime.

October 20, 1981 - Future supreme leader, Hojjat al-Islam Ali Khamene'i, becomes the third president of the Islamic republic, succeeding All Rajai (the IRP replacement for Bani Sadr who was assassinated by the Mojahedin). Khamene'i is the first member of the clergy to serve as president.

July 3, 1988 - An Iran Air flight is shot down by an American warship that claims to have mistaken the airliner for an attacking jet fighter. The 290 civilians killed raise Iranian anger towards the U.S., but above all, prove to be the last straw for the Iranian population which is fed up with the endless death toll being inflicted by the ongoing war with Iraq.

July 18, 1988 - Iran accepts UN Security Council resolutions dictating a cease-fire with Iraq. After explaining the decision as being in the best interests of Muslims and Islam, Khomeini retreats from the public sphere. Two days after the cease-fire, the People's Mojahedin (having rebuilt their strength in Iraq) invade Iran. The invasion triggers new patriotic zeal and it is crushed within a matter of days. Fearing more insurrection, however, and given a political justification, Khomeini initiates a purge of political activists in Iranian prisons. Several thousands, deemed to still adhere to their dissident beliefs, are executed in under three months. Khomeini's designated successor, Ayatollah Montazeri, is highly critical of the purge. Khomeini refuses to change his policies, and as Montazeri's critiques escalate to more general criticisms of the regime and Khomeini's political record, the two have a falling out.

January 1989 - Khomeini writes a letter to Gorbachev in which he recommends to the Soviet leader a number of prominent mystical thinkers including Ibn Arabi, Avicenna, Sohrevardi, and Mullah Sadra. He receives sharp criticism from orthodox clerics who believe his mystical interests to be heretical.

February 14, 1989 - Khomeini issues a fatwa against Salman Rushdie, a British author whose book, *The Satanic Verses*, is deemed to be heretical to Islam. Khomeini condemns Rushdie and all those responsible for the book's publication to death.

March 1989 - After a prolonged war of words, Khomeini reconvenes the Assembly of Experts and sends a letter to Montazeri dismissing him as his successor.

April 24, 1989 - At Khomeini's behest, the constitution is modified so that the supreme leader does not need to be a marja'-e-taqlid, paving the way for the nomination of Khamene'i, Khomeini's preferred successor. This goes against the philosophy that Khomeini has espoused until now which holds that only the most knowledgeable legal experts should be valid candidates to lead the government. In addition, the role of prime minister is removed.

June 3rd, 1989 - Shortly before midnight, Khomeini dies in the hospital at the age of 86. Technically he dies of a heart attack but it is a symptom of heart problems and cancer that have been causing the deterioration of his health for some time. His death is announced the following morning leading thousands of mourners to pour into the streets in cities throughout Iran.

June 4th, 1989 - An emergency meeting of the Assembly of Experts selects Khamene'i, at age 50, as the new supreme leader of Iran. He is instantaneously elevated from the rank of *hojjat al-Islam* to *Ayatollah*.

June 5th, 1989 - Millions of people attend the funeral procession of Ayatollah Khomeini in a "completely spontaneous and unorchestrated outpouring of grief."

Historical Speeches Of Ayatollah Khomeini

April 3, 1963

In Commemoration of the Martyrs at Qum

This declaration was given from Qum on the occasion of the fortieth day after the assault on Fayziya Madrasa that took place on March 22, 1963.

Source: Khomeini, R., 1981, *Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini (1941- 1980)*, translated and annotated by Hamid Algar, London, Mizan Press.

FORTY DAYS HAVE NOW PASSED since the beating, wounding and killing of our dear ones; those the victims of the slaughter at *Fayziya Madrasa* left behind have now been plunged into mourning for forty days. Yesterday the father of Sayyid Yunus Rudbari (may God have mercy upon him) came to see me, with his back bent and his face deeply marked by the great tragedy he has suffered. What words are there to console those mothers who have lost their children, those bereaved fathers?

Indeed, we must offer our condolences to the Prophet of Islam (peace and blessings be upon him and his family) and the Imam of the Age (may God hasten his renewed manifestation), for it is for the sake of those great ones that we have endured these blows and lost our young men. Our crime was defending the laws of Islam and the independence of Iran. It is because of our defense of Islam that we have been humiliated and brought to expect imprisonment, torture, and execution. Let this tyrannical regime perform whatever inhuman deed it wishes—let it break the arms and legs of our young men, let it chase our wounded from the hospitals, let it threaten us with death and the violation of our honor, let it destroy the institutions of religious learning, let it expel the doves of this Islamic sanctuary from their nests!

During these past forty days, we have been unable to obtain a precise count of the dead, the wounded, and those whose property has been plundered. We do not know how many people have been buried, how many are languishing in dungeons, how many have gone into hiding. In fact, all these years after the event, we still do not know the exact number of people killed at the mosque of Gauhar Shad, when the bodies were carried away loaded on trucks.

The problem we confront is that whatever authority you address will tell you: “Whatever was done, was on the orders of His Imperial Majesty; we had no choice in

the matter.” Everyone, from the Prime Minister down to the police chief and the governor of Qum, tell us in effect: “We received orders from His Imperial Majesty. The crimes at Fayziya Madrasa were committed on his orders. The wounded were expelled from the hospitals on his orders, and it was he who commanded us to attack your homes with commandos and whores and to plunder your homes if you attempted to do anything in response to Ayatollah Hakim. It is also His Imperial Majesty’s command that we seize and forcibly draft the *tullab*, without the slightest legal justification. Furthermore, it is the command of His Imperial Majesty that we attack the university and assault the students.”

Government officials attribute all these violations of the law to the Shah. If this attribution is justified, we must recite funeral prayers for Islam, Iran, and legality. If it is not, and they are lying in attributing all these crimes, violations of the law, and inhuman acts to the Shah, then why does he not defend himself, so that the people may know how they should treat the government and punish it for its deeds at the appropriate time?

I have repeatedly pointed out that the government has evil intentions and is opposed to the ordinances of Islam. One by one, the proofs of its enmity are becoming clear. The Ministry of Justice has made clear its opposition to the ordinances of Islam by various measures like the abolition of the requirement that judges be Muslim and male; henceforth, Jews, Christians, and the enemies of Islam and the Muslims are to decide on affairs concerning the honor and person of the Muslims. The strategy of this government and certain of its members is to bring about the total effacement of the ordinances of Islam. As long as this usurpatory and rebellious government is in power, the Muslims can have no hope for any good.

I don’t know whether all these uncivilized and criminal acts have been committed for the sake of the oil in Qum, whether the religious teaching institution is to be sacrificed for the sake of oil. Or is all this being done for the sake of Israel, since we are considered an obstacle to the conclusion of a treaty with Israel directed against the Islamic states? In any event, we are to be destroyed. The tyrannical regime imagines that through these inhuman acts and this repression it can deflect us from our aim, which is none other than the great aim of Islam—to prevent oppression, arbitrary rule, and the violation of the law; to preserve the rights of Islam and the nation; and to establish social justice.

But it causes us not the least concern that the sons of Islam should be drafted into the army. Let our young men enter the barracks, educate our troops, and raise their level of thinking; let a few enlightened and freedom-loving people appear among our troops so that, by the grace of God Almighty, Iran may attain its dignity and freedom. We know that the commanders of the great Iranian army, its respectable officers, and its noble members share our aims and are ready to sacrifice themselves for the sake of the dignity of Iran. I know that no officer with a conscience approves of these crimes and acts of brutality, and I am aware of (and deplore) the pressures to which they are subject. I extend a fraternal hand to them in the hope of obtaining the salvation of Islam and Iran. I know that their hearts are troubled by this subordination to Israel, and that they do not wish Iran to be trampled by the boots of the Jews.

I declare to the heads of the Muslim states, whether Arab or non-Arab: The *'ulama* of Islam, the religious leaders and pious people of Iran, together with its noble army, are the brothers of the Muslim states and share their interests. They abhor and are disgusted with the treaty with Israel, the enemy of Islam and Iran. I say this quite clearly; if they wish, let the agents of Israel come put an end to my life!

It is fitting that the Muslim nation, whether in Iran or abroad, should commemorate the great tragedy suffered by Islam and the disasters inflicted on the religious teaching institution on the fortieth day after their occurrence. If they are not prevented by the agents of the government, they should hold ceremonies of mourning and curse those responsible for these atrocities.

June 3, 1963

The Afternoon of 'Ashura

This speech, delivered at Fayziya Madrasa in Qum, is particularly notable for its fearless words of reproach addressed to the Shah.

Source: Khomeini, R., 1970, *Islamic Government*, in *Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini (1941- 1980)*, 1981, translated and annotated by Hamid Algar, London, Mizan Press.

IT IS NOW THE AFTERNOON of 'Ashura. Sometimes when I recall the events of 'Ashura, a question occurs to me: If the Umayyads' and the regime of Yazid ibn Mu'awiya' wished to make war against Husayn, why did they commit such savage and inhuman crimes against the defenseless women and innocent children? What was the offense of the women and children? What had Husayn's six month-old infant done? It seems to me that the Umayyads had a far more basic aim: they were opposed to the very existence of the family of the Prophet. They did not wish the Bani Hashim to exist and their goal was to root out this "goodly tree."

A similar question occurs to me now. If the tyrannical regime of Iran simply wished to wage war on the *maraji'*, to oppose the *'ulama*, what business did it have tearing the Qur'an to shreds on the day it attacked Fayziya Madrasa? Indeed, what business did it have with the madrasa or with its students, like the eighteen year-old *sayyid* who was killed? What had he done against the Shah, against the government, against the tyrannical regime? We come to the conclusion that this regime also has a more basic aim: they are fundamentally opposed to Islam itself and the existence of the religious class. They do not wish this institution to exist; they do not wish any of us to exist, the great and the small alike.

Israel does not wish the Qur'an to exist in this country. Israel does not wish the *'ulama* to exist in this country. Israel does not wish a single learned man to exist in this country. It was Israel that assaulted Fayziya Madrasa by means of its sinister agents. It is still assaulting us, and assaulting you, the nation; it wishes to seize your economy, to destroy your trade and agriculture, to appropriate your wealth. Israel wishes to remove by means of its agents anything it regards as blocking its path. The Quran is blocking its path; it must be removed. The religious scholars are blocking its path; they must be eliminated. Fayziya Madrasa and other centers of knowledge and learning are blocking its path; they must be destroyed. The *tullab* might later come to

block their path; they must be killed, pushed off the roof, have their heads and arms broken. In order for Israel to attain its objectives, the government of Iran has continually affronted us in accordance with goals and plans conceived in Israel.

Respected people of Qum! On the day that mendacious, that scandalous referendum took place—that referendum contrary to all the interests of the Iranian nation and conducted at bayonet- point²¹ —you witnessed a gang of hooligans and ruffians prowling around Qum, on foot and riding in cars, going down the streets and thoroughfares of this center of religious learning that stands next to the shrine of Fatima, the Immaculate One (peace be upon her)! They were shouting: “Your days of parasitism *are* at an end! Your days of eating *pulao* are over!”

Now, these students of the religious sciences who spend the best and most active part of their lives in these narrow cells, and whose monthly income is somewhere between 40 and 100 tumans—are they parasites? And those to whom one source of income alone brings hundreds of millions of tumans are not parasites? Are the *‘ulama* parasites—people like the late Hajj Shaykh ‘Abd al-Karim, whose sons had nothing to eat on the night that he died; or the late Burujirdi, who was 600,000 *tumans* in debt when he departed from this world? And those who have filled foreign banks with the wealth produced by the toil of our poverty- stricken people, who have erected towering palaces but still will not leave the people in peace, wishing to fill their own pockets and those of Israel with our resources—they are not parasites? Let the world judge, let the nation judge who ie parasites are!

Let me give you some advice, Mr. Shah! Dear Mr. Shah, I advise you to desist in this policy and acts like this. I don’t want the people to offer up thanks if your masters should decide one day that you must leave. I don’t want you to become like your father. Iranian nation! Those among you who are thirty or forty years of age or more will remember how three foreign countries attacked us during World War II. The Soviet Union, Britain, and America invaded Iran *and* occupied our country. The property of the people was exposed to danger and their honor was imperiled. But God knows, everyone was happy because the Pahlavi had gone!

Shah, I don’t wish the same to happen to you; I don’t want you to become like your father. Listen to my advice, listen to the *‘ulama* of Islam. They desire the welfare of the nation, the welfare of the country. Don’t listen to Israel; Israel can’t do anything for you. You miserable wretch, forty-five years of your life have passed; isn’t it time for you to think and reflect a little, to ponder about where all this is

leading you, to learn a lesson from the experience of your father? If what they say is true, that you are opposed to Islam and the religious scholars, your ideas are quite wrong. If they are dictating these things to you and then giving them to you to read, you should think about it a little. Why do you speak without thinking? Are the religious scholars really some form of impure animal? If they are impure animals, why do the people kiss their hands? Why do they regard the very water they drink as blessed? Are we really impure animals? I hope to God that you did not have in mind the *'ulama* and the religious scholars when you said, "The reactionaries are like an impure animal," because if you did, it will be difficult for us to tolerate you much longer, and you will find yourself in a predicament. You won't be able to go on living; the nation will not allow you to continue this way. The religious scholars and Islam are Black Reaction! And you have carried out your White Revolution in the midst of all this Black Reaction! What do you mean, a White Revolution? Why do you try to deceive the people so? Why do you threaten the people so?

I was informed today that a number of preachers and speakers in Tehran were taken to the offices of SAVAK and were threatened with punishment if they speak on three subjects. They were not to say anything bad about the Shah, not to attack Israel, and not to say that Islam is endangered. Otherwise, they can say what they like! But all of our problems and all our differences with the government comprise exactly these three! If we overlook these three subjects, we have no dispute with the government. Even if we do not say that Islam is endangered, will that mean that Islam is not endangered? Or if we do not say, "The Shah is such-and- such," will that mean that he is not in fact such-and-such? And what is this tie, this link, between the Shah and Israel that makes SAVAK consider the Shah an Israeli? Does SAVAK consider the Shah a Jew?

Mr. Shah! Maybe those people want to present you as a Jew so that I will denounce you as an unbeliever and they can expel you from Iran and put an end to you! Don't you know that if one day, some uproar occurs and the tables are turned, none of those people around you will be your friends? They are friends of the dollar; they have no religion, no loyalty. They are hanging responsibility for everything around your miserable neck!

You know that vile individual—I'll mention his name at the appropriate time—who came to Fayziya Madrasa and whistled to signal for the commandos to gather, then ordered them to attack, to assault, to plunder all the rooms in the madrasa and destroy

everything. When he is asked, “Why did you commit these crimes?” he replies, ‘The Shah told us to do it. It was his royal command that we destroy Fayziya Madrasa and slaughter these people.’”

There is much to be said, far more than you can even imagine. Certain things are happening that endanger our country and our Islam. The things that are happening to this nation and those that are about to happen fill me with anxiety and sorrow. I feel anxiety and sorrow at the state of Iran, at the state of our ruined country, at the state of this cabinet, at the state of those running our government.

I pray to God Almighty that He remedy our affairs.

October 26, 1964

The Granting of Capitulatory Rights to the U.S.

Imam Khomeini delivered this speech in front of his residence in Qum. Together with the declaration he issued on the same subject, it was the immediate cause for his forced exile from Iran on November 4, 1964.

*Source: Khomeini, R., 1970, *Islamic Government*, in *Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini (1941- 1980)*, 1981, translated and annotated by Hamid Algar, London, Mizan Press.*

I CANNOT EXPRESS THE SORROW I feel in my heart. My heart is constricted. Since the day I heard of the latest developments affecting Iran, I have barely slept; I am profoundly disturbed, and my heart is constricted. With sorrowful heart, I count the days until death shall come and deliver me.

Iran no longer has any festival to celebrate; they have turned our festival into mourning. They have turned it into mourning and lit up the city; they have turned it into mourning and are dancing together with joy. They have sold us, they have sold our independence; but still they light up the city and dance.

If I were in their place, I would forbid all these lights; I would give orders that black flags be raised over the bazaars and houses, that black awnings be hung! Our dignity has been trampled underfoot: the dignity of Iran has been destroyed. The dignity of the Iranian army has been trampled underfoot!

A law has been put before the *Majlis* according to which we are to accede to the Vienna Convention, and a provision has been added to it that all American military advisers, together with their families, technical and administrative officials, and servants—in short, anyone in any way connected to them—are to enjoy legal immunity with respect to any crime they may commit in Iran.

If some American's servant, some American's cook, assassinates your *marja'* in the middle of the bazaar, or runs over him, the Iranian police do not have the right to apprehend him! Iranian courts do not have the right to judge him! The dossier must be sent to America, so that our masters there can decide what is to be done!

First, the previous government approved this measure without telling anyone, and now the present government just recently introduced a bill in the Senate and settled the whole matter in a single session without breathing a word to anyone. A few days ago, the bill was taken to the lower house of the *Majlis* and there were discussions,

with a few deputies voicing their opposition, but the bill was passed anyhow. They passed it without any shame, and the government shamelessly defended this scandalous measure. They have reduced the Iranian people to a level lower than that of an American dog. If someone runs over a dog belonging to an American, he will be prosecuted. Even if the Shah himself were to run over a dog belonging to an American, he would be prosecuted. But if an American cook runs over the Shah, the head of state, no one will have the right to interfere with him.

Why? Because they wanted a loan and America demanded this in return. A few days after this measure was approved, they requested a \$200 million loan from America and America agreed to the request. It was stipulated that the sum of \$200 million would be paid to the Iranian government over a period of five years, and that \$300 million would be paid back to America over a period of ten years. So in return for this loan! America is to receive \$100 million—or 800 million *tumans*—in interest. But in addition to this, Iran has sold itself to obtain these dollars. The government has sold our independence, reduced us to the level of a colony, and made the Muslim nation of Iran appear more backward than savages in the eyes of the world!

What are we to do in the face of this disaster? What are our religious scholars to do? To what country should they present their appeal?

Other people imagine that it is the Iranian nation that has based itself in this way. They do not know that it is the Iranian government, the Iranian *Majlis*—the *Majlis* that has nothing to do with the people. What can a *Majlis* that is elected at bayonet-point have to do with the people? The Iranian nation did not elect these deputies. Many of the high-ranking '*ulama* and *maraji*' ordered a boycott of the elections, and the people obeyed them and did not vote. But then came the power of the bayonet, and these deputies were seated in the *Majlis*.

They have seen that the influence of the religious leaders prevents them from doing whatever they want, so now they wish to destroy that influence!

According to a history textbook printed this year and taught to our school children now, one containing all kinds of lies and inaccurate statements, "It has now become clear that it is to the benefit of the nation for the influence of the religious leaders to be rooted out."

They have come to understand well that: If the religious leaders have influence, they will not permit this nation to be the slaves of Britain one day, and America the next.

If the religious leaders have influence, they will not permit Israel to take over the Iranian economy; they will not permit Israeli goods to be sold in Iran—in fact, to be sold duty-free! If the religious leaders have influence, they will not permit the government to impose arbitrarily such a heavy loan on the Iranian nation. If the religious leaders have influence, they will not permit such misuse to be made of the public treasury.

If the religious leaders have influence, they will not permit the *Majlis* to come to a miserable state like this; they will not permit the *Majlis* to be formed at bayonet-point, with the scandalous results that we see. If the religious leaders have influence, they will not permit girls and boys to wrestle together, as recently happened in Shiraz.

If the religious leaders have influence, they will not permit peoples innocent daughters to be under young men at school; they will not permit women to teach at boys' schools and men to teach at girls' schools, with all the resulting corruption.

If the religious leaders have influence, they will strike this government in the mouth, they will strike this *Majlis* in the mouth and chase these deputies out of both its houses!

If the religious leaders have influence, they will not permit a handful of individuals to be imposed on the nation as deputies and participate in determining the destiny of the country. If the religious leaders have influence, they will not permit some agent of America to carry out these scandalous deeds; they will throw him out of Iran.

So the influence of the religious leaders is harmful to the nation? No, it is harmful to you, harmful to you traitors, not to the nation! You know that as long as the religious leaders have influence, you cannot do everything you want to do, commit all the crimes you want, so you wish to destroy their influence. You thought you could cause dissension among the religious leaders with your intrigues, but you will be dead before your dream can come true. You will never be able to do it. The religious leaders are united.

I esteem all the religious leaders. Once again, I kiss the hand of all the religious leaders. If I kissed the hands of the *maraji'* in the past, today I kiss the hands of the *tullab*. I kiss the hands of the simple grocer.

Gentlemen, I warn you of danger!

Iranian army, I warn you of danger!

Iranian politicians, I warn you of danger!

Iranian merchants, I warn you of danger!

‘*Ulama* of Iran, *maraji*’ of Islam, I warn you of danger!

Scholars, students! Centers of religious learning! Najaf, Qum, Mashhad, Tehran, Shiraz! I warn you of danger!

The danger is coming to light now, but there are other things that are being kept hidden from us. In the *Majlis* they said, “Keep these matters secret!” Evidently they are dreaming up further plans for us. What greater evil are they about to inflict upon us: Tell me, what could be worse than slavery? What could be worse’ than abasement? What else do they want to do? What are they planning?

What disasters this loan has brought down upon the head of the nation already! This impoverished nation must now pay \$100 million in interest to America over the next ten years. And as if that were not enough, we have been sold for the sake of this loan

What use to you are the American soldiers and military advisers? If this country is occupied by America, then what is all this noise you make about progress? If these advisers are to be your servants, then why do you treat them like something superior to masters? If they are servants, why not treat them as such? If they are your employees, then why not treat them as any other government treats its employees? If our country is now occupied by the U.S., then tell us outright and throw us out of this country!

What do they intend to do? What does this government have to say to us? What is this *Majlis* doing? This illegal, illicit *Majlis*; this *Majlis* that the *maraji*’ have had boycotted with their *fatvas* and decrees; this *Majlis* that makes empty noises about independence and revolution, that says: “We have undergone a White Revolution”!

I don’t know where this White Revolution is that they are making so much fuss about. God knows that I am aware of (and my awareness causes me pain) the remote villages and provincial towns, not to mention our own backward city of Qum. I am aware of the hunger of our people and the disordered state of our agrarian economy. Why not try to do something for this country, for this population, instead of piling up debts and enslaving yourselves? Of course, taking the dollars means that someone has to become a slave; you take the dollars and use them, and we become slaves! If an American runs over me with his car, no one will have the right to say anything to him! Those gentlemen who say we must hold our tongues and not utter a sound—do they still say the same thing on this occasion? Are we to keep silent again and not say a word? Are we to keep silent while they are selling us? Are we to keep silent while they sell our independence?

By God, whoever does not cry out in protest is a sinner! By God, whoever does not express his outrage commits a major sin!

Leaders of Islam, come to the aid of Islam!

'Ulama of Najaf, come to the aid of Islam!

'Ulama of Qum, come to the aid of Islam! Islam is destroyed!

Muslim peoples! Leaders of the Muslim peoples! Presidents and kings of the Muslim peoples! Come to our aid! Shah of Iran, saves yourself!

Are we to be trampled underfoot by the boots of America simply because we are a weak nation and have no dollars? America is worse than Britain; Britain is worse than America. The Soviet Union is worse than both of them. They are all worse and more unclean than each other! But today it is America that we are concerned with.

Let the American President know that in the eyes of the Iranian people, he is the most repulsive member of the human race today because of the injustice he has imposed on our Muslim nation. Today the Qur'an has become his enemy; the Iranian nation has become his enemy. Let the American government know that its name has been ruined and disgraced in Iran. Those wretched deputies in the *Majlis* begged the government to ask "our friends" the Americans not to make such impositions on us, not to insist that we sell ourselves, not to turn Iran into a colony. But did anyone listen?

There is one article in the Vienna Convention they did not mention at all—Article 32. I don't know what article that is; in fact, the chairman of the *Majlis* himself doesn't know. The deputies also don't know what that article is; nonetheless, they went ahead and approved and signed the bill. They passed it, even though some people said, "We don't know what is in Article 32." Maybe those who objected did not sign the bill. They are not quite so bad as the others, those who certainly did sign. They are a herd of illiterates.

One after another, our statesmen and leading politicians have been set aside. Our patriotic statesmen are given nothing to do. The army should know that it will also be treated the same way: its leaders will be set aside, one by one. What self-respect will remain for the army when an American errand boy or cook has priority over one of our generals? If I were in the army, I would resign. If I were a deputy in the *Majlis*, I would resign. I would not agree to be disgraced.

American cooks, mechanics, technical and administrative officials, together with their families, are to enjoy legal immunity, but the *'ulama* of Islam, the preachers and servants of Islam, are to live banished or imprisoned. The partisans of Islam are to

live in Bandar ‘Abbas or in prison, because they are religious leaders or supporters of the religious leaders.

The government clearly documents its crimes by putting out a history textbook that says, “It is to the benefit of the nation to root out the influence of the religious leaders.” This means that it is for the benefit of the nation that the Messenger of God should play no role in its affairs. For the religious leaders of themselves have nothing; whatever they have, they have from the Messenger of God. So the government wants the Messenger of God to play no role in our affairs, so that Israel can do whatever it likes, and America likewise.

All of our troubles today are caused by America and Israel. Israel itself derives from America; these deputies and ministers that have been imposed upon us derive from America—they are all agents of America, for if they were not, they would rise up in protest.

I am now thoroughly agitated, and my memory is not working so well. I cannot remember precisely when, but in one of the earlier *Majlises*, where Sayyid Hasan Mudarris was a deputy, the government of Russia gave Iran an ultimatum—I can’t remember its exact content—to the effect that “Unless you accept our demand, we will advance on Tehran by way of Qazvin and occupy it!” The government of the day put pressure on the *Majlis* to accept the Russian demand.

According to an American historian, a religious leader with stick in hand (the late Mudarris) came up to the tribune and said: Now that we are to be destroyed, why should we sign the warrant for our own destruction?” The *Majlis* took courage from his act of opposition, rejected the ultimatum, and Russia was unable to do anything!

That is the conduct of a true religious leader: a thin, emaciated man, a mere heap of bones, rejects the ultimatum and demand of a powerful state like Russia. If there were a single religious leader in the *Majlis* today, he would not permit these things to happen. It is for this reason that they wish to destroy the influence of the religious leaders, in order to attain their aims and desires!

There is so much to be said, there are so many instances of corruption in this country that I am unable in my state at the moment to present to you even what I know. It is your duty, however, to communicate these matters to your colleagues. The *‘ulama* must enlighten the people, and they in turn must raise their voices in protest to the *Majlis* and the government and say, “Why did you do this? Why have you sold us?

We did not elect you to be our representatives and even if we had done so, you would forfeit your posts now on account of this act of treachery.”

This is high treason! O God, they have committed treason against this country. O God, this government has committed treason against the Quran. All the members of both houses who gave their agreement to this affair are traitors. Those old men in the Senate are traitors, and all those in the lower house who voted in favor of this affair are traitors. They are not our representatives. The whole world must know that they are not the representatives of Iran. Or, suppose they are; now I dismiss them. They are dismissed from their posts and all the bills they have passed up until now are invalid.

According to the very text of the law, according to Article 2 of the Supplementary Constitutional Law, no law is valid unless the *mujtahids* exercise a supervisory role in the *Majlis*. From the beginning of the constitutional period down to the present, has any *mujtahid* ever exercised supervision? If there were five *mujtahids* in this *Majlis*, or even one single religious leader of lesser rank, they would get a punch in the mouth; he would not allow this bill to be enacted, he would make the *Majlis* collapse. As for those deputies who apparently opposed this affair, I wish to ask them in protest: If you were genuinely opposed, why did you not pour soil on your heads? Why did you not rise up and seize that wretch³³ by the collar? Does “opposition” mean simply to sit there and say, “We are not in agreement.” and then continue your flattery as usual? You must create uproar, right there in the *Majlis*. You must not permit there to be such a *Majlis*. Is it enough to say simply, “I am opposed,” when the bill passes nevertheless?

We do not regard as law what they claim to have passed. We do not regard this *Majlis* as a *Majlis*. We do not regard this government as a government. They are traitors, guilty of high treason!

O God, remedy the affairs of the Muslims! O God, bestow dignity on this sacred religion of Islam! O God, destroy those individuals who are traitors to this land, who are traitors to Islam, who are traitors to the Qur’an.

And peace be upon you, and also God’s mercy.