

In a Persian Mosque: Revolutionary Shi'a Islam and Independence in Iran

By M. Anees Aref

“If the religious leaders have influence, they will not permit this nation to be the slaves of Britain one day, and America the next.”[1]

“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.”[2]

“Neither East nor West, Islamic Republic.”

As if issued from the heights of a minaret, the cry for the reclamation of a nation's lost pride and dignity are heard in the words quoted above. They echo the bitterness of Iran's long subjection to foreign masters, and the necessity of a near holy struggle to rid itself of this humiliating bondage. The Iranian Revolution of 1979 saw the overthrow of the regime of Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi and with it the end of Iran's monarchy, an institution in one form or another dating back to the 6th century BCE and its founder Cyrus the Great. In its place emerged the Islamic Republic of Iran. The group who eventually emerged as the leading force behind this revolutionary movement was a faction of religious scholars led by the figure of Ayatollah Ruhulloh Khomeini. However, other participants including nationalists, socialists, and the merchant class of the bazaar (bazaaris) also were major actors in this revolutionary process with their own set of grievances and revolutionary goals. Groups such as university students and other secular-minded nationalists demanded greater political representation, national independence, and more effective state management of the economy. The religious scholars, or clerics, resented the regime's suppression of Islamic institutions in society and felt the traditional religion and culture of Iran was under attack.

Additionally, many of these groups were united in resentment of foreign domination of Iranian political and economic life, particularly that of the United States. This was in large measure due to the United States' support of the Pahlavi regime, the American-engineered coup of 1953 that removed Prime Minister Mohammed Mossadegh—a secular-minded, democratically elected leader—and the subsequent re-installment of the Shah. Due to circumstances which I will discuss throughout this essay, the Shia clerics and

Khomeini came to control the revolutionary movement and shape its outcome, leading to the establishment of the Islamic republic. This writer argues that Khomeini and his faction of clerics (mullahs) were able to use Shia Islamic rhetoric and ideas of independence and anti-imperialism in a way that unified both the secular and religious elements within the anti-Shah movement, allowing the clerics to achieve the greatest political gains in the process. To demonstrate how Khomeini and his faction of Shia clerics went about assuming this mantle of leadership in the revolutionary movement, this paper will particularly focus on Khomeini's rhetorical emphasis on political and economic independence as well as anti-imperialism. How the religious leadership implemented their goals within the new political system will also be discussed. Understanding these issues will better illuminate the achievements of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as the nature of its relationship with the United States and how this continues to impact regional and international conflicts in the present.

Outline of Content

First, a word on the organization of this paper. I will begin with a brief introduction to the historical background of the 1979 Iranian revolution. This will focus on the origins of Iran's modern tensions with the West, the development of secular and religious opposition to the Pahlavi monarchy, as well as some of the policies and institutional structures that gave rise to anti-regime sentiment. Next, I will give a brief account of the various ideological elements within the anti-shah opposition, particularly the leftist/secular parties, and the growth of the religious faction led by Khomeini. The body of the essay will analyze numerous primary sources with this historical background in mind. A consideration of how the new Islamic Republic implemented the goals of the revolutionary leadership, followed by a discussion of the legacy of the Iranian revolution and its significance for the present day will round out the conclusion.

Historiography on the Revolutionary Period

Scholarly research on the Iranian Revolution has focused on the relationship between various groups who participated in the revolutionary movement. Homa Firouzbakhch, whose studies have focused on the social dimensions of the movement, argues that it was the demographic forces of urban population growth and increased social mobility that did not see accompanying political representation, and different groups having the "incentive and the capacity to mobilize for collective action".[4] Firouzbakhch consults numerous population surveys and census statistical data to support these arguments. In exploring

the relationships between these different anti-shah groups scholars have focused on the various factors that united their opposition to the Pahlavi regime. In a 1983 interview with sociologist Ahmad Ashraf, historian Ervand Abrahamian reveals the long-standing relationship between the Shia clerics and the bazaaris of middle and lower economic standing. The mosques and the bazaar are generally located in close proximity to each other within Iran's urban set up, with the bazaar providing financial support for the mosque and the clerics providing support for the bazaaris in political issues with the state.^[5] Additionally, both groups have managed to preserve Iran's traditional urban culture.^[6]

Other scholarly research by Misagh Parsa has emphasized the bazaaris' economic grievances and subsequent mobilization for revolutionary action against the Pahlavi regime.^[7] Parsa argues that the Pahlavi's government's economic policies—particularly monetary policy and commodity price controls—caused major losses to bazaar merchants and businesses and resulted in hostile resentment towards the regime. Combined with the bazaaris' great capacity for mobilization and collective action, these factors played a leading role in the later removal of the regime.^[8] Parsa uses official newspapers, interviews with revolutionary participants, government documents and scholarly sources on Iran's economic development as primary sources for this study's analysis. This work builds on the Abrahamian/Ashraf interview mentioned above in its analysis of bazaari participation in the revolution, and offers abundant economic data and historical perspective on that group's position in Iranian society and its relationship to the monarchy. Parsa diverges from Firouzbakhch's argument for social mobility and the newly emerged Iranian middle class as being the significant source of discontent with the Pahlavi regime instead of arguing for the bazaar class's central role.

Scholarship has also focused on Iran's relationship with the outside world and its causes for revolutionary action. Evaleila Pesaran shows that hostility towards the Pahlavi regime's western backers was another important factor in unifying these groups, and that the idea of economic independence was central in revolutionary discourse surrounding this issue.^[9] Pesaran identifies a number of domestic and international influences on Iranian revolutionary ideology and discourse relating to economic issues, particularly Shia Islamic traditions concerning social justice, and Marxist-Leninist views of class struggle and anti-imperialism. As Pesaran demonstrates, struggle against foreign interests within Iran has roots going back to the previous century, and provided inspiration for the 1979 revolution's insistence on economic and political sovereignty. Taken together, these scholarly works reveal that this

was a multi-layered and fragmented revolution concerning political, economic, and cultural matters within Iranian society.

Research Goals/Primary Sources/Methodology

A careful reading of Imam Khomeini's (Ayatollah or Imam will be alternately used depending on the context) own words will demonstrate how he was able to unite the various factions opposing the Shah's government. Therefore, the primary sources consulted for this study will be a collection of writings and declarations by Khomeini containing essays, lectures, speeches, and interviews that offer valuable glimpses into his views on religion, spirituality, history, and various political and cultural issues in Iranian society.[10] My paper will use these sources to examine the rhetoric and revolutionary goals expressed by Khomeini and measure them against the revolutionary movement's outcomes and how they managed to unify the religious and secular groups who supported the revolution and ouster of Shah Pahlavi. The first source is a declaration delivered in 1963 from the city of Qum, Iran after a violent government assault on an Islamic school resulted in numerous deaths, and indicates the degree to which Khomeini felt the regime was attacking Islamic institutions and traditional Iranian culture. In a series of lectures in 1971 Khomeini makes the case for an Islamic system of government and the necessity for leadership by the religious scholars and clerics.[11] Here Khomeini also reveals his view of Islam not just as a unifying system of political, social, and cultural values and institutions, but as a tool of social justice and resistance against foreign oppression.

In addition to these declarations, two separate interviews given by Khomeini in 1978 and 1979 further reveal his views on why the American-backed Pahlavi regime had to be overthrown, what revolutionary obstacles remained, and the impact on regional and international politics the revolution's success may have.[12] Khomeini also offers some thoughts on Shi'a Islam's historical tradition of resistance to "illegitimate" authority, and the role religious scholars played in the current rejection of the "illegitimate" authority held by the Shah and his western backers. Here is where I will analyze the revolutionary concepts of independence and social justice derived from these Shi'a traditions. Having considered these sources and the abovementioned historical literature, it is hoped that the reader will better understand the rhetorical strategies employed by Khomeini's party to grab the reins of power.

Historical Background to Revolution[13]

To understand the origins of the events of 1978/79, it is first necessary to digest a bit of modern Iranian history. Iran's recent tensions with the West have roots dating back to the 19th century under the dynastic rule of the Qajar shahs. After the wars with czarist Russia in the early part of the century, Iran's defeat resulted in the treaties of Gulistan in 1813, and Turkmanchai in 1828 and saw the handover of significant chunks of Iran's northern territory to Russia, as well as a number of commercial and economic concessions. These events were later followed by the 1857 Treaty of Paris, where the Qajars ceded to the British the major city of Herat, now situated in Afghanistan near its western border with Iran. The rest of the century and carrying on into the 20th would see the continued granting of concessions to foreign interests by the Qajar rulers and generate growing feelings of national humiliation and discontent, this in spite of minor attempts at resisting outside exploitation of Iranian resources in the 1905/06 Constitutional Revolution. One major concession that would later have direct bearing on the 1979 revolution was the access to Iranian oil given to the Anglo-Iranian Oil company (now known as BP) at around the turn of the century.

Following the eventual demise of the Qajar rulers by 1925 and the ascendance of the Pahlavi dynasty to Iran's monarchy, British oil interests would continue to operate in Iran until the 1950s, much to the consternation of great numbers of Iranians interested in national sovereignty and Iran's control of its own national assets and resources. This sentiment would be acted on in 1951 by the newly elected Prime Minister Mohammed Mossadegh. A nationalist-minded secular politician, Mossadegh boldly went on to order the nationalization of Iranian oil production, effectively terminating the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company's stake. This angered the British government, who would then lobby the American administration of President Dwight D. Eisenhower to intervene and reverse the effects of Mossadegh's policy. This would eventually lead to the events of 1953, where an American/CIA engineered coup overthrew the democratically elected Prime Minister Mossadegh and re-installed Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi to the throne. After 1953, the nationalist, leftist, and religious movements opposing the Shah and American imperialist policies would gather steam in response to this episode and the subsequent 25 years of political repression, economic inequality, and westernization in the lead up to the 1979 revolution.

Secular Influences

Amidst the political twists described above and the growing nationalist sentiment fueled by the Mossadegh episode, there was the development of revolutionary and economic thinking based on both leftist/socialist principles

found in the international movements of the cold war world of the 1950s and 1960s, as well as a growing strain of politicized Islamic ideology (sometimes referred to as Islamist). Pesaran describes how Marxist-Leninist ideas significantly influenced the anti-western and economic views taken by Iranian revolutionaries in the period after 1953. The communist affiliated Tudeh Party and other socialist groups continued to voice anti-western intervention in Iranian economics and politics throughout the pre-revolutionary period, and as Pesaran notes: “In spite of their brutal suppression by the state following Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi’s return to power in 1953, the remnants of the Tudeh and its splinter groups continued to influence and even perhaps drive the course of Iranian dissident activity.”[14] However, this leftist opposition to the Shah did not seek to simply imitate the model provided by the Soviet Union or international Marxist-Leninist movements, and sought to find a localized form of economic/political independence.

Growth of the Islamic movement

A number of Iranian thinkers would be influential in developing an ideology of anti-imperialism and economic independence along the lines of traditional Shia Islamic principles native to Iran. Khalil Maleki, a member of the Tudeh party, sought to break away from a “pro-Western or a pro-Soviet Stance”, advocating for a domestic form of Iranian economic independence.[15] Jalal Al-e Ahmad complimented this thinking with his proposal for a modernized understanding of Islam, using it as a tool for resistance against the corrupting and damaging effects of the West on Iran’s economy and society.[16] Probably the most influential thinker of the pre-revolutionary period who blended Shia Islamic and anti-imperialist principles together was Ali Shari’ati.[17] Shari’ati also argued for a domestic revolutionary form of independence, stressing the religious character of Iranian society, and demonstrated that “Islam, especially Shi’i Islam, was a radical ideology that could outdo Marxism in championing revolution and the class struggle as well as in opposing feudalism, capitalism, and imperialism.”[18] These various groups and thinkers indicate the merging of secular and religious modes of revolutionary thought in the period between 1953 and 1979, but it was the religious strand that would continue to grow in stature and influence within the anti-Shah movement. As Pesaran states:

“It was only when much of the secular opposition was quashed by the Pahlavi state that religion became perhaps the only vehicle through which the nationalist and socialist trends of the day could be spread. Indeed, by the 1960s, not only did the mosque present itself as an ideal forum for mass political action, but also religion itself, with its emphasis on social justice and

equality, fitted well with the slogans of the nationalist and socialist opposition.”[19]

Other factors existed for the growth of the Shia clerical political involvement in the 1950s and 1960s, but one sequence of events in particular generated strong support for the religious movement against the Shah Pahlavi government.

Khomeini in his Own Words

As was previously mentioned, while the secular/leftist opposition to the Pahlavi government was actively suppressed, the mosque was left relatively untouched. This freedom was disrupted on March 22, 1963 by a violent government crackdown on a religious school in the city of Qum, where Imam Ruhollah Khomeini served as a religious educator and an increasingly vocal critic of the Pahlavi government.[20]The incident resulted in the death of several students, and helped galvanize sympathy for the religious movement led by Khomeini against the Shah, particularly after Khomeini’s subsequent arrest and exile the following year. The events in Qum serve as the backdrop for Khomeini’s declaration entitled “In Commemoration of the Martyrs at Qum,” given forty days later in spring of 1963.[21] In it Khomeini is commemorating the victims of the assault, while further decrying the ills and criminal nature of the Pahlavi government. In fiery tones, Khomeini says “I have repeatedly pointed out that the government has evil intentions and is opposed to the ordinances of Islam.”[22] He cites the example of the Ministry of Justice’s new law removing the requirement of judges being Muslim males as proof of the regime’s intentions, going on to say in an indiscreetly sectarian manner: “henceforth, Jews, Christians, and the enemies of Islam and the Muslims are to decide on affairs concerning the honor and person of the Muslims...As long as this usurpatory and rebellious government is in power, the Muslims can have no hope for any good.”[23]Later in the declaration Khomeini also raises the issue of the Pahlavi regime’s proposed treaty with Israel, “...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?”[24] He follows this with “...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.” These passages are echoed elsewhere by Khomeini and other secular parties to the anti-Shah and anti-imperialist movement, and indicate the concern over Iran’s subservience to foreign (American/Israeli) interests. While they may seem to suggest an

anti-Semitic thread to Khomeini's views, they can also be interpreted as solidarity with oppressed Muslims in Iran—Iranian Jews did represent a major slice of the economic elite—as well as Palestinian Muslims facing Zionist aggression within Israel and the Palestinian territories.

While in exile, Khomeini remained politically active. From Iraq, Khomeini issued numerous writings and declarations commenting on political and religious matters within Iran, while continuing to actively condemn the Shah Pahlavi government. It is from the Iraqi city of Najaf that Khomeini delivered his famous series of lectures entitled “Islamic Government” between January-February 1970, where they were recorded and later published in book form.[25] As translator Hamid Algar points out in his brief introduction, the lectures were given to an audience of students of religious studies, and was tailored to them as the next generation of Iranian leaders.[26] The section entitled “Introduction” features Khomeini continuing to call for a comprehensive system of law based on Islamic precepts, and right from the outset he refers to the “governance of the faqih” (religious scholar) as necessary to bring this about. He goes on to discuss various groups of opposition Islam has had to contend with, from the early days of its founding to recent history he comments “From the very beginning, the historical movement of Islam has had to contend with the Jews, for it was they who first established anti-Islamic propaganda and engaged in various stratagems and as you can see, this activity continues down to the present.”[27]Khomeini continues Islam's list of adversaries with:

“...These new groups began their imperialist penetration of the Muslim countries about three hundred years ago, and they regarded it as necessary to work for the extirpation of Islam in order to attain their ultimate goals...throughout this long historical period, and going back to the Crusades they felt that the major obstacle in the path of their materialistic ambitions and the chief threat to their political power was nothing but Islam and its ordinances...”[28]

After setting Islam's struggle against outside forces within this historical framework, he describes Islam as “the religion of militant individuals who are committed to truth and justice. It is the religion of those who desire freedom and independence. It is the school of those who struggle against imperialism.”[29] Again, Khomeini positions Islam's followers as the agents of resistance. Throughout the lecture Khomeini also shows his disdain for the modern day subjection of Iran's politics and culture to foreign values and interests, and condemns the agents of imperialism both foreign and local for violating Iranian sovereignty. One can see how this anti-imperialist rhetoric

through religious appeals can be easily adapted to rhetoric expressed by the secular opposition parties in Iran, or other international revolutionary and anti-imperialist movements during the cold war era.

The 1970s would see the continued growth of anti-shah sentiment amongst vast swaths of the Iranian population and of the religious movement's importance within that opposition. Economic problems that existed in the country were exacerbated during this period, largely due to state policies that kept adding fuel to the opposition movement. Historian Misagh Parsa details how the Shah's government had passed a series of economic and monetary measures that resulted in dramatic levels of inflation and financial losses to businesses, particularly those of the small bazaaris, who served as a major support base for the religious establishment. [30] Wealth inequality also continued to deepen during this period, and the economy and its perceived injustices would focus more of the opposition's attention in the immediate run-up to 1978-1979.

As was mentioned earlier, Khomeini continued to issue writings and declarations while in exile, and his popularity and prestige continued to grow in Iran as his works were smuggled into the country and circulated.[31] Khomeini's eldest son was assassinated by the Shah's police on November 23, 1977, which was soon followed by denunciations of Khomeini by the government controlled press.[32] This sparked outrage and demonstrations the following day in Qum, which met with violent suppression but would continue across the country throughout 1978, with continued encouragement from Khomeini through proclamations. Shortly before the culminating events at the beginning of the following year that resulted in the Shah's forced departure from the country, Khomeini—still in exile—sat for an interview performed by Hamid Algar on December 29, 1978 at a villa in Neauphle-le-Chateau, France, where Khomeini now resided. Titled "Thirty Million People Have Stood Up", the interview has Khomeini commenting on the current political situation in Iran and what obstacles remained for the removal of the Pahlavi regime, American influence, and what the potential impact on regional and international politics may be should the revolution succeed. Khomeini's also offers some interesting thoughts on Shi'a Islam's historical tradition of resistance to "illegitimate" authority. Identifying this rebellious aspect of Shi'a Islam, he remarks "From the outset, Shi'is have opposed oppressive governments...According to Shi'i belief, only the Imams or those who act on their behalf are the legitimate holders of authority; all other governments are illegitimate...If the Iranian people are now rising up against the Shah, they are doing so as Islamic duty." [33] This passage is illustrative in two regards. One, it emphasizes the revolutionary aspect of Shi'a Islam native

to Iran, crucial to Khomeini's vision of Islamic governance. Second, it again expresses Khomeini's belief in the necessity of religious scholars (Imam, Faqih) being the guardians of any proper Islamic government, a sentiment echoed in another source discussed earlier in this paper (the Faqih, or religious scholars of the Qum declaration). By this point, Khomeini and his faction of clerics had effectively taken leadership of the revolutionary movement, and Khomeini claims as much in the interview.[34]

This theme of the religious movement's leadership is continuously expressed by Khomeini, but before further considering that, it is worth offering another quick word on how the clerics were able to consolidate their position. As was touched on earlier, the Pahlavi government's active suppression of nationalist and leftist groups, particularly through the instrument of the state secret police SAVAK, provided the opening for the religious faction to assume leadership of the anti-shah opposition. Additionally, the mosque had a strong support base from other segments of Iranian society, in particular the bazaar. Bazaaris and the religious establishment had long supported one another and formed an essential aspect of Iran's traditional culture.[35] Bazaaris formed the financial support base for the mosque, while the religious clerics would play "a significant part in the moral intellectual and political lives of the bazaar merchants, artisans and workers." [36] Indeed, there would emerge what Pesaran describes as "pro-bazaar" and "pro-state" views within the clerical faction, the former favoring limited nationalization and private property rights, and the latter advocating strong state control over economic matters and national resources. Both groups were united in desiring economic independence and rejecting western infiltration of the economy.[37] The religious scholars (Faqih) were well placed to lead the revolution. Khomeini talks about this in a second interview with Hamid Algar entitled "The Religious Scholars Led the Revolt". Originally published in a Persian newspaper, the interview took place on December 29, 1979 at Khomeini's residence in Qum, after the monarchy had been overthrown and the Islamic Republic of Iran established. The interview focuses on the role of the religious leaders in the revolution as well their position in the new political system. Khomeini characterizes their role thus: "Throughout the different stages of the Revolution, the religious leaders played the primary role. Of course, others also took part—university professors, intellectuals, merchants, students—but it was the religious leaders who mobilized the whole people." [38] Regarding their role in the revolutionary government, Khomeini says the religious scholar doesn't seek official leading positions such as President or Prime minister, but will perform a supervisory role, and that "He will exercise this role on behalf of the people. If the government begins to misbehave, the religious scholar will stand in its way." [39] This principle of the authority of

the religious scholars would be sanctified by the new constitution and a referendum held in March 1979 favoring the establishment of an Islamic Republic.[40] It further demonstrates Khomeini's conviction that the clerics were the designated guardians of this Islamic revolution and its ideals.

Islamic Republic's Implementation of Revolutionary goals

In the immediate aftermath of the shah's departure in January of 1979 and the collapse of the interim government in February, a provisional government was created headed by Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan, which would last until November. This government would take a moderate line and was, according to Pesaran, "willing to maintain the economic framework of the Shah's regime", keeping on much of the bureaucratic personnel of that regime.[41] This would not satisfy the agenda of either the pro-bazaar or pro-state factions of the other revolutionary parties. As the year went on, the departure of wealthy businessmen and capital and the pressure exerted by the more radical revolutionary elements for a more state-managed, "Islamized" economy weakened the position of Bazargan's government.[42] Bazargan's government wound up resigning after the takeover of the American Embassy in November 1979 by university students supporting Khomeini, which then resulted in the strengthening of the pro-state clerical faction within the government. Going forward, this clerical faction and the new Islamic Revolutionary Council would exert the most influence over the writing of the new constitution.[43] As Pesaran notes, the Assembly of Experts drafting the new constitution were concerned with ensuring against any foreign or imperialist domination over the nation's economy, citing Articles 3, 43, and particularly 153 with its outlawing of "any form of agreement resulting in foreign control over the natural resources, economy, army, or culture of the country", echoing Khomeini's calls elsewhere for national and cultural sovereignty.[44]

Articles 44, 81, and 82 would further enshrine these values of economic independence anti-imperialism. 44 divides the economy into "state, cooperative, and private" sectors.[45] How each sector would be defined remained ambiguous, and the designated private sector would seem to offer some concession to the bazaar class and private property interests. However, the article makes clear that a wide range of economic activity should fall under state control. Pesaran offers some of the Article's language: "the state sector is to include all large-scale and mother industries, foreign trade, major minerals, banking, insurance, power generation, dams, and large-scale irrigation networks, radio and television, post, telegraph and telephone services, aviation, shipping, roads, railroads and the like; all these will be publicly owned and administered by the state." Apparently, the Assembly of Experts

were interested in creating an economy based on Islamic precepts, as Assembly delegate Ayatollah Nasser Makarem-Shirazi comments, "...we wanted to create an Islamic economy that would be not Western capitalism and not Easter socialism. On this basis, we created these three sectors." [46] Article 81 prohibited concessions to foreign parties in a variety of areas such as commerce, industry, agriculture, mining or services. [47] Even the domestic private sector would remained heavily restricted in the abovementioned areas or in the attainment of monopolies in any economic activity, though conditions for concessions to Iranian companies would remain ambiguously up to government approval. [48] Article 82 was directed at foreign employment, requiring any foreigner to obtain a work permit from the government whether in the private or public sphere. [49] All these constitutional measures indicate the leadership's caution against foreign involvement in the nation's economy.

Conclusion

Thirty seven years later, the Islamic Republic of Iran still exists, with many of its revolutionary principles still in place. As we have noted throughout this essay, this is largely due to the ideas that drove the revolutionary movement, namely anti-imperialism, social and economic justice, independence, and the enshrinement of these principles in the new constitution. We have seen in a number of sources how Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini voiced these concerns in a manner that allowed him and his faction of religious scholars to unite the various anti-shah groups and take leadership of the movement, and achieve the greatest political gains in the new Islamic Republic that emerged. It is arguable that to varying degrees the Iranian example has inspired a number of other Islamist movements in the region, particularly the Lebanese Shia political party and militia Hezbollah, a major ally of Iran. Sunni Muslim militant groups have also emerged in the form of al-Qaeda and its offshoots, including the Islamic State/ISIS. Since the revolution, Iran continues to resist outside intervention and has maintained tense relations with the United States and its allies both regionally and internationally. This is most visible today with the current diplomatic debate over Iran's nuclear development capacity and its potential for acquiring nuclear weapons. Severe international economic sanctions were placed against Iran, though recent developments in the summer of 2015 have resulted in a new agreement whereby Iran will agree to limit its nuclear development in exchange for a loosening of the sanctions, a process that is ongoing. Additionally, recent regional conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq have indirectly seen an overlap of interests between the United States and Iran in certain political and military issues concerning sectarian tensions and Iranian links to Shia elements within the U.S. installed Iraqi government.

However, continued U.S. and regional hostility towards Iran continues to fuel other conflicts in Israel-Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, and to a lesser degree Yemen. Having reflected on these issues and the historical circumstances preceding them, it is clear that the Iranian Revolution and the clerics who led it have had a considerable impact on Iran and the outside world ever since.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Khomeini, Ruhullah. 1963. "In Commemoration of the Martyrs at Qum." In *Islam and Revolution*, by Ruhullah Khomeini, edited by Hamid Algar, 174-177. Berkeley: Mizan Press.

Khomeini, Ruhullah. 1971. "Islamic Government." In *Islam and Revolution*, by Ruhullah Khomeini, edited by Hamid Algar, 27-39. Berkeley: Mizan Press.

Khomeini, Ruhullah. 1981. "The Granting of Capitulatory Rights to the U.S." In *Islam and Revolution*, by Hamid Algar, 181-188. Berkeley: Mizan Press.

Khomeini, Ruhullah. 1980. "The Religious Scholars Led the Revolt." In *Islam and Revolution*, by Ruhullah Khomeini, edited by Hamid Algar, 329-343. Berkeley: Mizan Press.

Khomeini, Ruhullah. 1978. "Thirty Million People Have Stood Up." In *Islam and Revolution*, by Ruhullah Khomeini, edited by Hamid Algar, 321-329. Berkeley: Mizan Press.

Khomeini, Ruhullah, and Hamid Algar. 1981. *Islam and Revolution*. Edited by Hamid Algar. Translated by Hamid Algar. Berkeley: Mizan Press.

Secondary Sources

Ashraf, Ahmad, interview by Ervand Abrahamian. 1983. *Ahmad Ashraf: Bazaar and Mosque in Iran's Revolution* (March-April): 16-18.

Firouzbakhch, Homa. 1988. "A Structural-Demographic Approach to Revolution: The Case of the Iranian Revolution of 1979." *Civilisations* 38 (2): 85-104.

Parsa, Misagh. 1989. *Social Origins of the Iranian Revolution*. New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press.

Pesaran, Evaleila. 2008. "Towards an Anti-Western Stance: The Economic Discourse of Iran's 1979 Revolution." *Iranian Studies* (Routledge) 41 (5): 693-718.

General Works

Abrahamian, Ervand. 1982. *Iran Between Two Revolutions*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Axworthy, Michael. 2013. *Revolutionary Iran*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Katouzian, Homa. 2003. *Iranian History and Politics*. New York: RoutledgeCurzon.

Footnotes

[1] Ruhollah Khomeini, "The Granting of Capitulatory Rights to the U.S." In *Islamic Government*, edited by Hamid Algar (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1964), 182.

[2] Ibid, 183.

[3] Evaleila Pesaran, "Towards an Anti-Western Stance: The Economic Discourse of Iran's 1979 Revolution", *Iranian Studies* vol. 41, No. 5 (December, 2008): 697.

[4] Homa Firouzbakhch, "A Structural-Demographic Approach to Revolution: The Case of the Iranian Revolution of 1979," *Civilizations* Vol. 38, no.2 (1988): 85.

[5] Ashraf, Ahmad. "Ahmad Ashraf: Bazaar and Mosque in Iran's Revolution." Interview by Ervand Abrahamian *MERIP Reports*, March-April, 1983.

[6] Ibid, 16.

[7] Misagh Parsa, *Social Origins of the Iranian Revolution*. (New Brunswick and London, 1989).

[8] Parsa, 299.

[9] Pesaran, 693.

[10] Ruhollah Khomeini, *Islam and Revolution*. Edited by Hamid Algar. (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1981).

[11] Ruhollah Khomeini, "Islamic Government." In *Islam and Revolution*, edited by Hamid Algar (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1971).

[12] Ruhollah Khomeini, "Thirty Million People Have Stood Up." In *Islam and Revolution*, edited by Hamid Algar (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1978); "The Religious Scholars Led the Revolt." In *Islam and Revolution*, edited by Hamid Algar (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1980).

[13] Pesaran, 694-699.

[14] Ibid., 696.

[15] Ibid., 697.

[16] Ibid., 697.

[17] Ibid., 698.

[18] Ibid., 699.

[19] Ibid., 698.

[20] Khomeini and Algar, *Islam and Revolution*, 16.

[21] Khomeini, "In Commemoration of the Martyrs at Qum." In *Islam and Revolution*. Edited by Hamid Algar (Berkeley, Mizan Press, 1963) 174-176.

[22] Ibid., 175.

[23] Ibid., 175.

[24] Ibid., 176.

[25] Khomeini and Algar, 25.

[26] Ibid., 25.

[27] Ibid., 27.

[28] Ibid., 27-28.

[29] Ibid., 28.

[30] Parsa, 302.

[31] Khomeini and Algar, 18.

[32] Ibid., 19.

[33] Khomeini, "Thirty Million People Have Stood Up," 327.

[34] Ibid., 325.

[35] Ashraf, 16.

[36] Pesaran, 703.

[37] Pesaran, 703.

[38] Khomeini, "The Religious Scholars Led the Revolt," 338.

[39] Ibid., 342.

[40] Pesaran, 705.

[41] Ibid., 705.

[42] Ibid., 706.

[43] Ibid., 707-708.

[44] Ibid., 708.

[45] Pesaran, 709.

[46] Pesaran, 710.

[47] Pesaran, 712.

[48] Pesaran, 713-714.

[49] Pesaran, 716-717.

Photograph

This work is now in the **public domain** in [Iran](#), because according to the [Law for the Protection of Authors, Composers and Artists Rights](#) (1970) its term of copyright has expired for one of the following reasons:

- The creator(s) died before 22 August 1980, for works that their copyright expired before 22 August 2010 according to the 1970 law.
- The creator(s) died more than 50 years ago. (Reformation of article 12 – 22 August 2010)

In the following cases works fall into public domain after 30 years from the date of publication or public presentation (Article 16):

- Photographic or cinematographic works.
- In cases where the work belongs to a [legal person](#) or rights are transferred to a legal person.

*The media description page should identify which reason applies.
For more information please see: [Commons:Copyright rules by territory#Iran](#).*

Ruhollah Khomeini, 26 April 2013, 20:14:33 (date uploaded), Sourced from www.irdc.ir through Wikipedia: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Roollah-khomeini.jpg>).