

The Political History of Iran: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic

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Abstract

Iran, formerly known as Persia, is one of the oldest countries in the world and has a rich history of approximately 18 dynasties, including the Mede, Sassanian, Samanid, Seljuk, Safavid, Zand, Qajar, and Pahlevi dynasties. The country has undergone significant political changes, transitioning from a monarchy system to an Islamic republic. The Islamic revolution began in 1978 with massive demonstrations against the legitimate government of Reza Pahlevi and was led by Ayatollah Khomeini. Finally, the legitimate government was overthrown, and Iran formally transitioned into the government of the Islamic Republic on April 1, 1979, with the broad Iranian public agreeing to a national referendum. In December of the same year, the country accepted the concept of a theocratic constitution, making Iran an Islamic Republic with the al-Faqih region.

Keywords: Iran, monarchy, Islamic republic, Islamic revolution, Ayatollah Khomeini

Introduction

Iran, formerly known as Persia, is one of the oldest countries in the world. Iran adheres to a system of government based on the principles of an Islamic republic, having previously been ruled by a monarchy for a long period of time. Throughout the monarchy, there were approximately 18 dynasties, including the Mede, Sassanian, Samanid, Seljuk, Safavid, Zand, Qajar, and Pahlevi. Generally, the change of dynasty occurred due to rebellion, coup, or attacks from other nations.

The Iranian revolution, also known as the Islamic revolution, began in 1978 with massive demonstrations against the legitimate government of Reza Pahlevi. Ayatollah Khomeini was the driving force behind the Islamic revolution, which ultimately resulted in the overthrow of the legitimate government. Iran formally transitioned to the government of the Islamic Republic on April 1, 1979, when the broad Iranian public agreed to a national referendum. In December 1979, the country accepted the concept of an Iranian government based on a theocratic constitution, with Khomeini becoming the supreme leader.

Khomeini's presence brought about significant changes in Iran, upholding nationalism and Islamic teachings in the 1980s. In addition to ending the 2,500-year royal tradition,

Khomeini successfully established the Islamic Republic of Iran. The 1979 Iranian revolution is a monumental event in the history of Iran, the history of Muslims, and world history. Khomeini's revolution not only affected the government infrastructure but also influenced the values of national, social, political, and cultural identity.

The upholding of Islamic teachings was strengthened by the existence of policies and laws to restore the order of Iranian society based on Islamic principles, particularly in the social field. The Government of Iran has been actively removing elements that are not Islamic, demonstrating their commitment to these policies.

Method

This article employs a qualitative literature review, which is typically used in research with a qualitative approach. Researchers utilizing this type of literature review often use a theoretical basis to provide an explanation of specific research guidelines and behaviors.

Signs of the fall of the Pahlavi dynasty began to emerge in early 1977 with the emergence of several figures in Iran who aimed to carry out a large-scale revolution due to the government of Shah Falevi, who was considered to be not supportive of the ulama. The mass waves of protests against the leadership of Shah Fahlevi were unstoppable, and all Iranian people from various backgrounds and political factions united in the demonstrations. The secular group, represented by the National Front and members of the Tudeh Party, worked synergistically with the Islamic-oriented group, represented by supporters of Imam Khomeini and Ali Shari'ati. Laborers and professionals, teachers and students, lecturers and students, farmers, and fishermen worked hand in hand uninterruptedly from 1978 to February 1979 in carrying out actions against the Shah.

Imam Khomeini continued to inspire the spirit of resistance from his place of exile in Paris. He routinely sent political speeches condemning the Shah to inflame the enthusiasm of the masses to fight against the regime. His speeches were sent on tapes and pamphlets which were brought to Iran by Khomeini's agents. At that time, Imam Khomeini became an idol who was hailed by the demonstrators, especially after the young figure who ignited the spirit of resistance, Ali Shari'ati, died in 1977. So practically, only Khomeini was the only hope as a resistance figure. Day after day of continuous demonstrations and mass mobilization had far exceeded normal life boundaries.

Due to the mass surge against the leadership, the Shah eventually lost all control over the situation. In a panic, after initial hesitation, he made the final move to stay in control of power, appointing Syahpur Bakhtiar of the National Front as prime minister. However, the maneuver failed, and the crisis worsened. On January 16, 1979, the country was in a state of revolutionary upheaval, and there was no hope left for the Shah, who eventually had to flee to Egypt on an airplane. Before leaving Iran, the Shah formed the State Council on January 13, 1979, with a total of nine members, including his confidants, in the hope that he would return to power after the crisis was over. The day after the State Council was inaugurated, on January 16, 1979, Mohammad Syah Reza, accompanied by his wife, left Iran by private plane. Syahpur Bakhtiar's appointment did not improve Iran's situation. Furthermore, on January 19, 1979, millions of people demonstrated demanding that

Shahpur Bakhtiar resign as Prime Minister and asked Khomeini to return to lead the country.

By the time Khomeini returned from exile in Paris on February 1, 1979, the struggle against the Shah had effectively ended. Although this charismatic figure played no direct role in overthrowing the Shah, there were those who wished to give him a leading role. Finally, on February 3, 1979, in public and with journalists, Khomeini announced the formation of the Revolutionary Council and asked Shahpur Bakhtian to resign as Prime Minister. Syahpur finally resigned, and his position was then handed over to Mehdi Bazargan. The Pahlavi dynasty, founded in 1925, was finally weighed against the power of the revolution. The fall of this dynasty was also the collapse of the monarchy system that had been implemented in Iran for 2500 years.

The Iranian Revolution holds global significance as it marked the first time in modern history that religious figures (ulama) were able to successfully overthrow a modern regime and take control of the state. This event shattered the traditional pattern of relations between the state and religious movements, and dispelled doubts about the future not only for Iran, but for the entire Iranian people.

Discussion

Iran's Islamic Revolution in 1979 marked the awakening of its people based on Islamic teachings and values. Following the victory of the revolution, the Iranian government and its people worked hand in hand to rebuild the country across various fields. Islam, as a perfect religion, has always emphasized the significance of advancing knowledge and improving the standard of living of its followers. To achieve this, Islam teaches two main principles - firstly, to be independent and not rely on non-Muslims, and secondly, to have confidence and trust in the Almighty to advance the lives of Muslims.

After the Revolution, Iran implemented the Islamic Republic system, which is based on the concept of wilāyah al-Faqih. The holder of this power is referred to as wali faqih or rahbar (leader in Persian). The first Wali Faqih was Ayatullah Khomeini (1979-1989), succeeded by Ayatullah Ali Khomeini. In the executive branch, the supreme power rests with a president who is directly elected by the people. Iran's first elected president was Abu al-Hasan Bani Sard, who was eventually impeached for betraying the values and revolution of Iran. He was succeeded by Ayatullah Ali Khomeini (1981-1989), Hasyemi Rafsanjani (1989), Muhammad al-Khatami, and finally Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (2004-present).

Economic independence has always been a major concern for Iran since the early days of the Islamic Revolution. In the pre-revolutionary era, due to the political errors of the Pahlavi Regime, Iran was heavily reliant on the West, particularly the US. After the victory of the Islamic Revolution, Western countries sought to suppress and threaten the Islamic Republic of Iran in various ways, including imposing economic embargoes. Therefore, Iran has been striving to attain independence in agriculture and industry. These efforts persisted even during the difficult times of war imposed by the Iraqi Ba'ath Regime.

The armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran are striving to strengthen their military capabilities in the face of potential threats from their adversaries. The military aggression by the Ba'ath regime against Iran in the 1980s and the continuous threats from the United

States have taught Iran a valuable lesson that it must boost its defense power to face any form of enemy aggression.

Despite facing various pressures and embargoes, post-revolutionary Iran has persisted in advancing its defense capabilities, thanks to its military scientists and technicians. It is not surprising that Iran has achieved unprecedented success in modern weapon development. The Iranian Armed Forces have successfully produced and developed various types of rockets, including surface-to-surface, surface-to-sea, and surface-to-air rockets. Additionally, Iranian scientists have made significant progress in the manufacturing of helicopters and fighter planes, both unmanned and standard.

The Iranian military ground forces have also produced other modern warfare equipment such as tanks, armored vehicles, cannons, and various types of personal weapons. Moreover, Iran's sea defense power has achieved remarkable milestones, including the production of various warships, military fast boats, and other critical weapons. In the electronic military device field, Iran has also made significant innovations and has stated that it is ready to face the threat of electronic warfare.

Iran's impressive progress in the military industry has attracted the attention of many countries seeking to establish cooperation with Iran. Currently, Iran has exported its military industrial products to 57 countries.

Since the beginning of the Islamic Revolution, the Iranian government has initiated a campaign against illiteracy and has provided various opportunities for all individuals to receive formal education, from primary to tertiary levels. In recent years, the education sector in Iran has experienced significant progress and growth in both quality and quantity. The government and education practitioners continue to adapt their curriculum and teaching methods to incorporate new scientific findings.

The Iranian higher education system has also made considerable advancements and progress after the Islamic Revolution. An interesting trend in Iranian campuses is that more than 60 percent of students are women. This reflects the government's efforts to promote women's role in society.

After the Islamic Revolution, Iranian scientists and technologists made rapid progress and advancements, which can be considered a scientific breakthrough. Nanotechnology, one of the world's most complex and prestigious technologies, has been the focus of research for Iranian scientists for several years. Another notable accomplishment in the field of science and technology is Iran's achievements in stem cell research. Over the years, Iranian scientists have developed stem cell technology for medical purposes, which can produce various types of human cells. Iranian scientists have also used stem cell technology to cure previously incurable acute diseases. One of the most significant achievements in this field was the successful cloning of a goat using stem cells, which demonstrated Iran's progress in the field of medicine, particularly in stem cell reproduction.

The Iran nuclear issue is a well-known topic. Despite the Western opposition to Iran's progress in this field, Iran has achieved remarkable accomplishments in nuclear technology. Despite facing pressure and sanctions, Iran has made significant achievements in nuclear technology, which can be used for peaceful purposes, such as a source of electrical energy, medical purposes, and genetic engineering in agriculture and animal husbandry.

In the field of space technology, Iran's recent successes include the construction of a space launch station and the launch of the Safir satellite carrier rocket. All of these achievements are a result of the Iranian people's faith, hard work, unity, and the wise leadership of the Leader of the Iranian Islamic Revolution, and are a blessing for the victory of the Islamic Revolution.

Conclusion

The Islamic Revolution in Iran has brought about significant positive changes for the country and its people. The values of independence, science and technology, and economic justice have been emphasized and pursued, leading to progress in various fields such as politics, economy, society, and military defense. Iran has achieved remarkable success in areas such as stem cell technology, nuclear technology, and space technology, despite facing pressures and embargoes. The government's efforts to provide education opportunities for all, including women, have also resulted in rapid growth and development in the field of education. The Iranian people continue to strive for greater independence and progress, guided by the values instilled by the Islamic Revolution.

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